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Willamette Valley Voices: Connecting Generations

A publication of the Willamette Heritage Center at The Mill

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In This Issue

This edition of *Willamette Valley Voices: Connecting Generations* is the first of the Willamette Heritage Center’s new biannual publication. The goal of the journal is to provide a showcase for scholarly writing pertaining to History and Heritage in the Oregon’s Willamette Valley, south of Portland, written by scholars, students, heritage professionals and historians - professional and amateur. Its purpose is to promote historical scholarship focused on the communities of the area. Each edition is themed to orient authors and readers to widely varied and important topics in Valley history.

Willamette Valley Voices’ first edition shares articles about Public Spaces. Public spaces, both built and natural, anchor the Valley’s communities and shape and inform community identities. Identity-making around community anchors is an important way to reinvigorate city centers and downtowns. Civic institutions and public spaces help create vibrant towns and destinations, as well as serve as catalysts for revitalizing the neighborhoods and areas around them.

The articles in this first issue vary greatly in topic, but generally seem to fall into three areas: Those that focus on history specific to a city, town or place - “Dancing its Way into your Heart: Cottonwoods Ballroom 1930-1960” by Toni Rush & Jim Creighton and “Salem School Names” by Fritz Juengling; topics that have a largely statewide emphasis, though they also have broader implications - “Oregon State Insane Asylum: A Sanctuary” by Diane Huddleston and “*The First Women to Cross the Continent by Covered Wagon, Welcomed by Dr. John McLoughlin in 1836*: Thoughts on Pathways of Heritage” by Rosalynn Rothstein; and finally those place a Willamette Valley public space into a more regional and/or national context or story – “The Big Green: Historical Perspectives on the Willamette National Forest, 1893-1993” by John Scott, “St. Louis Woman: Marie Dorion and the St. Louis Cemetery” by Johan Mathiesen and “A House Built of Cedar Planks” by David G. Lewis. What the authors in this issue think about the places they described and investigated says as much about what is important to us today as it does about the pasts of these public spaces.

Exploring the Valley’s heritage is a part of a continuing process and dialogue of which *Willamette Valley Voices: Connecting Generations* is the newest vehicle for preserving the Valley’s history and sharing its stories.

Keni Sturgeon,
Curator and Editor

Willamette Valley Voices: Connecting Generations
A Journal of Willamette Valley History

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Image, cover: The 8th grade class and two teachers in front of the second Hayesville School (c1915). It was built in 1909 and burned down in 1923. Image courtesy of the Willamette Heritage Center.

The Importance of Public Space as Community Anchors

Joy Sears, Restoration Specialist
Oregon's State Historic Preservation Office

The University of Oregon campus; the Jacksonville Cemetery; Mount Hood National Forest; sidewalks in historic residential neighborhoods; and the Wallowa County Courthouse Square in Enterprise. Other than being some of my favorite public spaces, they are all composed of both natural and built environment elements. Public spaces are liked for a range of reasons that allow you to be part of a gathering or to be alone with your thoughts. All in all, the aforementioned array of public spaces are just a few of the wonderful locations that are our community anchors, and are important aspects of our society. I have always been drawn to these places no matter what city, state or country I have been visiting. These public spaces say just as much about our history as they do about how we live today.

I have lived in old houses with my family all my life, and a majority of my relatives lived in older houses, so I was always around a mostly rural and do-it-yourself environment. When I was a kid, my love of old buildings lead me to believe that I should be an architect when I grew up. As I went to college, I realized, that despite my love of old buildings, being an architect was not for me. So I stayed rooted in my fine arts background and included some architectural history and American studies along the way. After I spent time in Europe exploring their centuries of history, I began to learn more about historic preservation, which I immersed myself in upon my return to the States. When I pursued an American studies minor and began to discuss historic preservation with my professor as a potential career path, he told me that I needed to move to get greater exposure and experience. Toward that end, I looked at the list of universities that offered master's degree programs in preservation. He told me that it had to be my decision to choose where to attend school. Since I didn't know exactly what path I wanted to take, I looked for programs with a more hands-on focus and in the end, applied to vastly different programs at the University of Vermont and the University of Oregon, far from my Midwestern roots.

When I was accepted to the preservation program at the University of Oregon, though I had been to the state on vacation in the past with my family, I came to the university sight unseen in the largest city I had ever lived. It was love at first site when I walked on campus and saw the Second Empire architecture of Villard and Deady Halls, the two oldest buildings on campus with broad green lawns and large trees. The Memorial Quad, bordered by a cluster of historic buildings which include the historic library and the art museum. Education will always be a community anchor with public spaces that draw us - sometimes for reasons we cannot truly express in words.

One of the great spaces on the university campus is the pioneer cemetery on the edge of campus. Cemeteries are sometimes treated as parks in urban areas like Eugene and Salem, and I love to wander through them. To some, this may seem a morbid fascination but cemeteries are a fact of life. Without the settlers and pioneers who came before us, we would not have spaces like the cemetery that teach us about the history of an area, cemetery art and funerary practices. Whenever I am in Jacksonville, Oregon, one of my favorite things to do is to stroll through one of the oldest cemeteries in Oregon. The Jacksonville Cemetery, with tons of great headstones, monuments and large trees, is located on a hill overlooking downtown. I find the deer are as frequent visitors as people. Cemeteries can even be thought of a green space as they, like Jacksonville Cemetery, usually cover a large amount of acreage.

Most of our open green spaces were set aside for a reason. One of the green spaces that was thankfully set aside by the federal government for present and future generations is Mount Hood National Forest, which is my favorite camping area. Why? Granted it is not a place for everyone, but it is open, forested, remote and generally quiet, depending on what area you visit. My favorite campground, deep in the forest, is a place I go to get away and commune with nature. There is no electricity, running water or improved restrooms. Inevitably wildlife shows up to visit. Campfires are great. In the end, I think about not going home.

Speaking of home, when I first moved to Salem in 2005, I immediately started looking around the neighborhood, which I later learned was called Grant Neighborhood, where the State Historic Preservation Office in the North Mall Office Building is located. I have never been one for commuting long distances or paying for parking at work, so I was looking for a small house with a yard within easy walking distance. The neighborhood that borders the capitol complex of buildings is a tree filled, nice looking family area. After work I would wander around the neighborhood in house buying mode. One night when I was surfing the Internet for real estate in the local paper, I came upon a house just on the border of the neighborhood I wanted. I grew up with old houses so I know they all have their quirks and problems which are inevitable. Regardless, whatever house I bought was going to be a fixer upper. I was sold as soon as I walked in! The house was built in the 1930s on a small dead-end street named



Figure 1. Gravestone of an Oregon Pioneer in the Jacksonville Cemetery. Courtesy of the Friends of Jacksonville's Historic Cemetery, Inc.

Knapps Place bordering Mill Creek. Yes, the poor little house needed work, especially after being a rental, but I saw its potential as it had good bones and promptly bought the property that is three blocks from work.

All the houses on my street are modest compared to the houses immediately across the creek. From the research I have done so far, my little street was mainly occupied as rentals their entire lives so they have seen quite a wave of people over the past 80 years, and it shows in many ways. The houses all have small to virtually non-existent front yards of various configurations and vegetation. These compact houses sit almost cheek to cheek and while we all have sidewalks in what there is of our front yards that border our narrow two lane street, it is a popular pedestrian thoroughfare to downtown and most people walk in the much wider and smoother street unless cars are in motion. Most of these pedestrians may not realize it, but my neighborhood is a part of their public space.

No matter where I visit, I am fascinated to walk down the public right-of-way sidewalks and alleys, looking at houses and buildings of all sorts and sizes. I prefer older established neighborhoods and sections of communities with many layers of history because I want to see how their public spaces evolved. I tend to seek out historic districts or historic buildings in particular since I am in the historic preservation field and know about the National Register of Historic Places. When I was younger, I would run around taking pictures with my 35mm camera. Looking at my photos, my parents would always ask “where are all the people?” since I usually just had architectural shots. I do admit I have a collection of photos that show me hugging architecture and trees over the years.

Government buildings are another type of public space that always warrants my attention. These building used to be architectural points of civic pride, surrounded by green park spaces, and were usually the center of a town and community. The buildings varied from libraries to city halls to county courthouses. Sometimes these continue to be sources of civic pride in towns, like those in Corvallis. In other cities, like Salem, many of those buildings were deemed “old fashioned” and obsolete, and the decision was made to demolish them and sell the valuable land they occupied. I grew up in a small town in Minnesota which had a wonderful early 20th century brick county courthouse across from the local school. The building’s historic main entrance was located on the side facing a grassy lawn area. Fast forward many years, the building is still there but more office space was needed and the idea to tack a new building onto the front of the courthouse in place of the open area came to fruition. I went to junior and senior high across the street and walked by the courthouse with its new addition nearly every day. When I finally saw a historic photo of the courthouse taken not long after it was built, I was appalled by the absolute lack of long-term thought and planning that went into building the highly contrasting concrete addition on the front in what would have been, and could have

continued to be, a grand entry. The courthouse is still there but the school across the street has been demolished and has been a vacant space for more than a decade.

For my small hometown, the closure of the school in the middle of town, the loss of the architecturally significant entry to the courthouse and its accompanying green space, has lessened the anchoring and identity of the community. Sadly, decades later, the space that Salem’s grand historic city hall occupied is only remembered by a marker on the corner of the an asphalt parking lot as the city has moved south away from downtown.



Figure 2. The Wallowa County Courthouse.

An excellent example of a public building serving as a vehicle for civic pride is the Wallowa County courthouse square. Built in 1909 – 1910 in Enterprise, it embodies what I picture small town America at the beginning of the 20th century to be. The large rectangular Bowlby stone courthouse sits in the middle of a broad green square. There is a bandstand adjacent to the courthouse that features music on various nights in the summer. People bring their lawn chairs and blankets and socialize for a few hours. To me, it is an idyllic summer scene, but I realize that this is not for everyone.

On that note, I feel sometimes that I was born in the wrong era. I think I would have been happy to live from 1900 – 1940 when our worlds were smaller. Roads were fewer and their condition generally depended on the weather so you lived where you worked and did not travel nearly as much as most of us do on a daily basis. Mass transit consisted of street cars and trains in those days. You most likely travelled by foot, horse and/or wagon, unless you were successful enough to own an early car, which was novelty. The Great Depression left its mark on the United States. The New Deal-era projects employed a vast amount of the population which resulted in the construction of notable public spaces like Mount Hood Timberline Lodge, Crater Lake Lodge, Oregon Cave Chateau, CCC-built Silver Falls State Park, Bonneville Dam, the Yaquina Bay Bridge and probably most importantly, the Oregon State Capitol. These are some of our best known assets, and sources of state-wide pride. Where would we be without these important public spaces that have become the anchors of our communities?

Dancing its Way into your Heart: Cottonwoods Ballroom 1930-1960

Toni Rush, Western Oregon University, and Jim Creighton

While there are many places in the mid-Willamette Valley that have wonderful memories behind them, there is one particular location that encompasses the memories of those from the Albany-Lebanon area - the Cottonwoods Ballroom. Imagine a place where one could go to dance and hear music on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights, and every other night of the week. In this place you could not only go with a group of guys or girls for a big night out on the town, you could also take a family because there was no age limit. In this place one could relax and listen to house bands play original music, local to the region; on other nights one could hear the tunes of some of America's best known bands, including Johnny Cash and Fats Domino. The Cottonwoods Ballroom, once located on Highway 20 between Lebanon and Albany, was a place where people could experience these moments. The dance hall was more to the people of the region than just another building; it was a place where they could enjoy themselves, socialize with friends, experience great entertainment and make life-long memories. Throughout the dance hall's existence, the types of bands that played there changed. Once a place where big band and country music was popular in the 1940s, the dance hall followed the development of "rock and roll" into the 1950s. The Cottonwoods Ballroom holds some of the fondest memories for those in the region.



Figure 1. Woody Herman performing on November 9, 1947.

1930s

The Cottonwoods Ballroom was built by Gladys and Harry Wiley around 1930. The dance floor itself was about 7,500 feet, one of the largest in the state. Advertisements from this time refer to the Santiam Cottonwoods Dance Pavilion as a place where people could enjoy both “Old Time Music” (western) and “Modern Music” (popular). Cottonwoods not only included major performers, but also local bands, such as the Cottonwoods Cubs and the Willamette Valley Boys, who provided regular entertainment for the weekly dances. Prices for dances were 50 cents for Gents and 10 cents for Ladies.¹

According to Jim Creighton, a Cottonwoods historian, the 1930s were some of the most intriguing to his studies. Creighton’s research includes fascinating interviews, as well as articles and advertisements from the *Albany Democrat Herald* and *The Lebanon Express*. Creighton discovered that during the 1930s, many traveling “colored” bands played at Cottonwoods. He has heard rumors from locals that “colored” performers were not allowed to stay in the hotels of the area and had to travel to Portland to find lodging.² Perhaps this was the Golden West Hotel, the only hotel in Portland during the early 30s that would allow “colored” people to stay.³ However, rumors also tell of how an anonymous farmer from the region allowed some of the performers to stay overnight in his barn, sleeping on the hay, instead of making the long trek to Portland on Highway 99 before the days of Interstate 5. In the Lebanon-Albany area, African Americans were a rare sight in the 1930s and many residents saw a Black person for the first time on stage at Cottonwoods.⁴

During the 1930s there was to be no mingling or dancing between the races because segregation was still in effect throughout Oregon. According to the Oregon State Bar, business owners were allowed to discriminate by race in Oregon until 1953. That year was a turning point in Oregon legislation concerning race relations.⁵ Most of the “colored” bands were said to have traveled in old buses. Band members would come off their bus, perform at the Cottonwoods, go straight back to the bus, and travel to their next performance. A unique example of these bands of the time was The Harlem Playgirls, an all-girl African American band, consisting of 12 performers, who appeared at Cottonwoods on July 28, 1935. Advertisements in the Lebanon Express described them as the “World’s Greatest Colored Girls

¹ “Cottonwoods Ballroom.”

² Creighton, Jim, “Cottonwoods Interview” Interview with author, email interview, Albany Oregon, February 29, 2012.

³ Creighton Interview.

⁴ Creighton Interview.

⁵ Ruterford, Charlotte, “Oregon State Bar Bulletin,” September 2004, www.osbar.org/publications/bulletin/04jan/heritage.html.

Dance Band”.⁶ The Harlem Playgirls were a swing band in the 1930s and 40s who played all across the United States.⁷

According to Joseph Whitecotton, the ladies of Jazz and Swing were not well known through the time period.⁸ This band, along with other all-colored groups such as the Eli Rice Orchestra, Gene Coy’s 11 Black Aces, and the St. Louis Black and Tans brought their musical skills and entertainment to the region. Creighton believes that perhaps many of these bands were left over from the time of vaudeville. These bands were brought to Cottonwoods by Cole McElroy, a band leader from the 1920s who owned the Spanish Ballroom in Portland. At the time, McElroy’s was the only dance hall in Portland that catered to African Americans.⁹ Research indicates that McElroy also put on these shows at the Willamette Park Ballroom in Eugene. Because of the Ballroom in Eugene and the correspondence between the halls, this can be seen as part of a large circuit these groups followed. These traveling bands may have provided the roots of jazz and blues in Oregon. Cottonwoods provided a place for them to perform music when many other dance halls in Oregon denied showing their performances. It was not until after World War II that African Americans settled in Portland and created a lively jazz culture, sometimes referred to as “Jumptown.”¹⁰ This development changed how Black performers were interpreted through the following years.

1940s

A big change to the Cottonwoods came in 1940 with the divorce of Harry and Gladys Wiley, the owners of the dance hall. As co-owners, they had picked the bands that would play at Cottonwoods together; following their divorce this changed. Harry moved to Lebanon, opened the Knot-hole Café and became involved in local politics. Following the divorce, Gladys maintained ownership and operation of the dance hall and The Cottonwoods Tavern across the street until her death in 1966.¹¹

The World War II era also brought changes to the dance hall. Most men were sent off to serve in the war effort and Cottonwoods adapted by featuring bands such as Hazel Fisher and Her All Girl Band, who performed regularly in 1943 and 1944. Hazel and her band became a huge

⁶ “Harlem Playgirls” Advertisement, *Albany Democrat Herald*, July 25, 1935.

⁷ Tucker, Sherrie, *Swing shift: "all-girl" bands of the 1940s*, Durham Duke University Press, 2000, pp. 37.

⁸ Whitecotton, Joseph. “The Ladies of Jazz, Swing and Beyond.” February 16, 2010. www.ou.edu/cls/online/lstd4700jaz/pdf/ladies.pdf.

⁹ “McElroy” Albany Democrat Herald, April 9, 1936.

¹⁰ Dietsche, Robert, *Jumptown: The Golden Years of Portland Jazz, 1942-195*, Oregon State University Press, 2005, 7.

¹¹ Creighton Interview.

draw for soldiers from nearby Camp Adair, who flocked to Cottonwoods throughout the war. During the war, the prices for visiting Cottonwoods increased to 75 cents for men and 50 cents for ladies. The dance hall changed from the 1930s to the 1940s and now featured new bands to cater to its changing clientele.

One amusing story from the war years featured a man who drove a Ford Model A to Camp Adair offering rides to Cottonwoods. Soldiers would pitch in a nickel each and then cram as many of them into the Model A as possible. The car would go all the way to Cottonwoods (about 20 miles) with soldiers crammed inside, standing on the running boards and draped over the fenders. At Cottonwoods, another group would be ready to return to the base and the procedure was repeated as the car drove back and forth all weekend.¹² Another interviewed source, who wishes to remain anonymous, told stories of how when he was 14 years old he his father asked him to pick him up from Cottonwoods because he would be too intoxicated to drive home. He remembers dropping his father off at the tavern across from Cottonwoods a few hours before the concerts would begin. Following the performances, he would drive back to pick up his father in their old Ford and many of his buddies would jump aboard as well, fearful of their wives seeing them such a condition.¹³ While alcohol was not served in the dance hall, many people stashed a bottle in their car and made trips out to the parking lot during the show to “get some air” and enjoy a drink. Another option was to simply walk across the street to the tavern.

After WWII, America rejoiced with the music from the big band era. Cottonwoods brought them all to the mid-Valley with performers like Louis Armstrong, Bob Crosby, Count Basie, The King Cole Trio, Harry James, Gene Krupa, Woody Herman and Duke Ellington, as well as more local bands, such as Al Benning and his Orchestra from Salem, who provided entertainment on the weekends. Many of the big name bands played at Cottonwoods during the week as they traveled between shows in the bigger cities like Portland and Eugene.



Figure 2. The Nat King Cole Trio.
<http://compassrosebooks.blogspot.com/2010/09/nat-king-cole-trio-nostalgia-was-never.html>.

¹² Creighton Interview.

¹³ Anonymous, Interview by Author. Discussion. Lebanon Oregon, February 19, 2012.

These singers would have provided quite the entertainment for the people of the Albany-Lebanon area. Nat King Cole, who is known for his career as a pop vocalist, got his start in a smaller, less well-known band, the King Cole Trio.¹⁴ Early shows-at the Cottonwoods, brought in new music to the region, and provide some interesting insight into the music people enjoyed. During the “Big Band” era, performers such as the King Cole Trio were popular around the state and in the Valley.

Cottonwoods during the 1940s underwent a series of changes. The types of music featured were changing, from African-American bands and the jazz music of the late 30s and early 40s, into an era where people became attracted to larger bands and to the beginnings of country music. The dance hall was more than just a place to dance during this time; it was an escape from the war and a place where soldiers could come and see ladies perform. Cottonwoods was not a stagnant dance hall and the owner, Gladys Wiley, was capable of running the dance hall alone following her divorce, as seen in its growing popularity, and the patronage that she received from people that came to her facility. One could argue that the 1940s and 1950s represented the heyday of Cottonwoods.

1950s

Entertainment in the 1950s continued with big bands and a gradual focus on country music. This was followed by the development of Rock and Roll in the late 1950s. Country bands were well represented at the dance hall by the likes of Bob Wills, The Sons of the Pioneers, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Lefty Frizzel, Hank Snow and many others. Arkie and the Jolly Cowboys was a house band during this time and quite popular. The leader of this band, Byron Julius Benedict, a.k.a. Arkie, grew up in Arkansas and moved to Portland with his family as an adult where he organized his band which featured 14 members.¹⁵ Later, they became the first house band to perform at the Division Street Corral in Portland, Oregon. Following his “semi-retirement” in 1948, he bought the Jolly Motel in Albany and eventually relocated to a ranch outside of Salem, Oregon. He showed people of the community that their neighbors were also performers, and many in the community showed up to express their support.

Another popular house band throughout the 1950s was Tommy Kizziah and the West Coast Ramblers. Tommy was a janitor at South Salem High School by day and a talented performer by night. These localized bands were known as being more than just singers, they were the people who lived in their communities and lived dual lives. Arkie was a “semi-retired” hotel

¹⁴ McEniry, Kelly. “Nat King Cole: The Early Years,” May 16, 2002, <http://library.umkc.edu/spec-col/kingcole.htm>.

¹⁵ Shockey, Nancy, “Byron Juius “Arkie” Benedict”, November 16, 2008, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=31440907>.

owner, Kizziah was a janitor. The people who made a name for themselves at Cottonwoods oftentimes were people who lived in the area's local communities and wanted a fun activity that worked with their passion for music. Bands like the Jolly Cowboys and the West Coast Ramblers often played live on local radio programs in the day and then played at Cottonwoods that same night so people could see them in person. On the radio, the disc jockey would close the show by saying, "If you like what you hear come out to Cottonwoods tonight."¹⁶

Other bands that played at Cottonwoods included The Maddox Brothers and Rose, a country group consisting of Rose Maddox and her brothers. They toured the dance halls of the West Coast constantly and were a big draw at Cottonwoods, playing about once a month throughout the 1950s. The Maddox Brothers and Rose have a very colorful past. They struggled during the Great Depression and as a means of finding money for their families to survive on, they tapped into their musical talents to create a band, using the daughter, Rose, as the main vocals, her brothers playing the instruments. When her brothers were drafted into the Second World War, the band halted for a few years, but picked up again in 1946 when they returned safely home. The band was advertised as the "most colorful hillbilly band in America" and they were known for their lively and often comical performances. They were very big on the West Coast, but never quite made the national scene even though they performed at the Grand Ole Opry in the 1950s.¹⁷

Other bands that played during this time included Tex Ritter, country music singer and movie actor. His concert would have brought in a large and diverse audience, both those interested in his singing, and others interested in his emerging career as an actor. According to David Dicaire, between 1936-1945, Tex Ritter appeared in over 60 cowboy films and was a "bonafide star," gaining quite a group of supporters throughout the country, including the Albany-Lebanon area.¹⁸ His appearance at Cottonwoods would have brought many people to this establishment and made this a place to go and spend the night dancing with friends and seeing some big stars perform.

These types of stars became a major focal point of what people wanted to see from Cottonwoods. Big bands continued to play and other bands included Heck Harper and his Wagon Masters, who performed at Cottonwoods on June 13, 1958. From 1953 to 1956, Hector Flateau, "Heck Harper" hosted the Bar 27 Corral, a children's show on KPTV in Portland where he sang and told stories from the "old west." He also had a radio show on

¹⁶ Creighton Interview.

¹⁷ Whiteside, John, "Maddox Brothers and Rose: America's Most Colorful Hillbilly Band," 2004.

<http://www.modestoradiomuseum.org/maddox%20brothers.html>.

¹⁸ Dicaire, David, *The First Generation of Country Music Stars: Biographies of 50 Artists Born Before 1940*, 2007. McFarland and Company Inc., Jefferson, 2007, 63.

KGW and worked with several big western bands, including the Skinny Ennis Orchestra, Tex Williams, Spade Cooley and Sons of the Pioneers. To this day, Harper is fondly remembered by many people who appeared on his show as children. At his Cottonwoods appearance, children under 12 were let in free to see their hero.¹⁹

The late 1950s showed the increasing popularity of early Rock and Roll and musicians such as Fats Domino, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Gene Vincent, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Bobby Darin, Duane Eddy, Johnny Cash, The Drifters, and the Coasters all performed at Cottonwoods. Throughout this time, Cottonwoods also remained a venue for many Pacific Northwest bands including Clayton Watson and his Silhouettes, The Teen Kings and The Checkers.

The development of Rock and Roll brought new types of performers to the Albany-Lebanon area, ones that were large names across the United States. The three performers who arguably could be considered the most well-known of the performers at the time would be Johnny Cash, Fats Domino and Jerry Lee Lewis, all of which made an appearance at Cottonwoods. Johnny Cash and his Tennessee Trio appeared at Cottonwoods on June 26, 1959. Cash was 27 years old at the time and had a big hit with "I Walk the Line." People from the Willamette Valley were able to see this international country star early in his legendary career. One person Creighton interviewed remembered going to the show and actually meeting Cash. As the story goes, after the show this fellow and a couple of his friends hung around with Cash on the front porch of Cottonwoods talking and drinking beer late into the night. He described Cash as "just a guy far from home who seemed to enjoy visiting with people."²⁰ Many people who remember going to Cottonwoods also remember meeting and sometimes even dancing with the performers who played there. In many cases, these performers went on to big careers and into the Hall of Fame. The early performances increased support from the community and brought more people into Cottonwoods.

Antoine Dominique "Fats" Domino was described by many as an "absolute superstar."²¹ Fats Domino performed at Cottonwoods three times and each time brought in a large crowd. While Cottonwoods is not represented in Fats Domino's biography, posters and newspaper ads used for Cottonwood's advertising show that Domino made these appearances. The advertisements put his shows on weeknights and, as his biography states, Fats performed in both Klamath Falls and Portland, Oregon, making Cottonwoods a place he could earn extra money while

¹⁹ Creighton Interview.

²⁰ Creighton Interview.

²¹ Coleman, Rick, *Blue Monday: Fats Domino and the Lost Dawn of Rock and Roll*, Cambridge, De Capo Press, 2006, 114.

traveling in between these other venues.²² Fats Domino is still alive and now considered a national treasure. He was in the news in 2005 when hurricane Katrina destroyed his home and for a time he was thought to be dead. Domino was found and rescued and still performs occasionally. Singers like Fats Domino encouraged other performers like him to come to Cottonwoods.

One such performer was Jerry Lee Lewis, who played Cottonwoods on July 24, 1958 in the wake of a scandal that almost ruined his career. Earlier in the year he had married his 13 year old second cousin, resulting in a loss of support for his music. Almost overnight, Lewis went from charging \$10,000 dollars a night to \$250 a night at an endless succession of small dancehalls.²³ “The Killer,” as Lewis was called, gave his usual frenzied performance as he pounded mercilessly on the piano, kicked the piano stool across the stage and even played it with his feet. As he was walking offstage, Gladys Wiley was there waiting for him. Not amused by these acts, Gladys did not hesitate to express her anger for beating up the house piano, though it is likely that Lewis did not care. In time, he overcame the scandal that clouded him and went on to be admitted into both the Rock & Roll and Rockabilly halls of fame. As of 2012, Lewis is still alive and performing, he has been listed at 24 of the top 100 performers of all time.

The 1950s marked the end of the heyday of Cottonwoods. The artists during the 50s, like those who came before, brought large crowds into Cottonwoods and created a place where people could go to spend their nights with their families and friends, thanks to the bands that graced the region with their presence.

The glory days at the Cottonwoods Ballroom ended abruptly at the end of 1960 when Gladys Wiley closed the doors to cope with health problems. Cottonwoods reopened under new management and featured Tommy Kizziah as the house band, but it only stayed open about a year more. The dance hall was leased by the Big Western Music Club in 1967, who hosted local bands and dances. For a while, the building housed the “Cottonwoods Trading Post,” the big dance floor being used to show items for sale. In 1978, it was re-opened as “The Ol’ Cottonwoods,” as dancing was making a comeback during the time of disco. Creighton likes to say that Cottonwoods “suffered the indignity of being a disco.”²⁴ Eventually, the building was used as a bingo parlor until 1995 when part of the roof collapsed and the building had to be torn down.

²² Coleman, 114.

²³ Creighton Interview.

²⁴ Creighton Interview.

The incredible history of the Cottonwoods Ballroom was seemingly lost and mostly forgotten until 2003 when Creighton began his research out of curiosity. Before the initial research done by Creighton, there was no place to “look up” Cottonwoods, as nobody had recorded this piece of local history. Today, the research continues as more about this iconic dance hall comes to light. Before television dominated entertainment, people listened to music on the radio and saw their favorite performers in person while dancing and socializing. In time, the dance halls succumbed to changing tastes as TV brought entertainment into homes, and live shows increasingly became large concerts as venues became bigger. For many people of the mid-Willamette Valley, the Cottonwoods Ballroom and other dance halls like it provided excellent entertainment with personal experiences and the opportunity to see and even meet legendary performers.

The experiences of people who went to Cottonwoods, and to other places like it across the country, make up a large part of American social history which is the heart of community. Here in Oregon we have our own piece of America’s heritage, a piece that influenced the culture of our area. Research on Cottonwoods Ballroom continues, as it still has many tales left to uncover and share.

Authors’ Note: We are still looking for more histories on the Cottonwoods Ballroom and would love to hear the stories of those that went to the Ballroom and have memories of their time there. If you would like to tell us your stories please feel free to contact Jim Creighton or Toni Rush.

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Salem School Names

Fritz Juengling, PhD

This article attempts to explain the origin of Salem's school names, both public and parochial, from kindergarten through the university level with a discussion of naming categories. Also included is the year that each school was established which appears as the number in parentheses.

Determining the date of establishment for some schools, especially those that are very old, is sometimes difficult. Dates can represent the year in which the school was organized, the year the building was completed, or the year the school opened its doors to students. Confusing the matter further is the fact that some schools have had several buildings during their history, have been renamed or have been moved. North Salem High School and Middle Grove are cases in point. North Salem High School began in 1905 as Salem High School at a site different from where North now stands. The present building was completed in 1936, but the name "North Salem High School" came about only in 1953. Do we go with the name or the building, and if the building, the original or the newest version? The Middle Grove building was actually moved several times before ending up on its present site at 4950 Silverton Road NE.



Figure 1. North Salem High School. Image is in the public domain.

As schools are a focal point of the community and bear the responsibility for the education of our children and young adults, their names are chosen with great consideration. Naturally, most religious schools have names of personages or ideas from a religious background, usually saints or Mary, Mother of Jesus. However, a priest, a Hebrew word (interestingly, *Salem* is also derived from a Hebrew word, as it is an Anglicized version of the Hebrew word *shalom*, meaning "peace") and a made-up play-on-words have also given names to a few of Salem's religious schools: *Blanchet*, *Corban*, *Queen of Peace*, *Saint Joseph*, *Saint Vincent de Paul* and *Sonshine*.

The names of public schools generally fall into five broad categories. First, many reflect Oregon's pioneer heritage or early settlement history. Having settled at the terminus of the Oregon Trail, such people have been prime candidates for having schools named for them. The number of schools that fall into this category is testimony to the pride that Salem residents, past and present, feel toward Oregon's pioneer heritage: *Baker*, *Bush*, *Harritt*, *Judson*, *Leslie*, *Parrish*, *Pringle*, *Richmond*, *Stephens*, *Waldo* and *Walker*. Interestingly, all of these schools are elementary or middle schools.

Englewood School, Salem, Oregon.

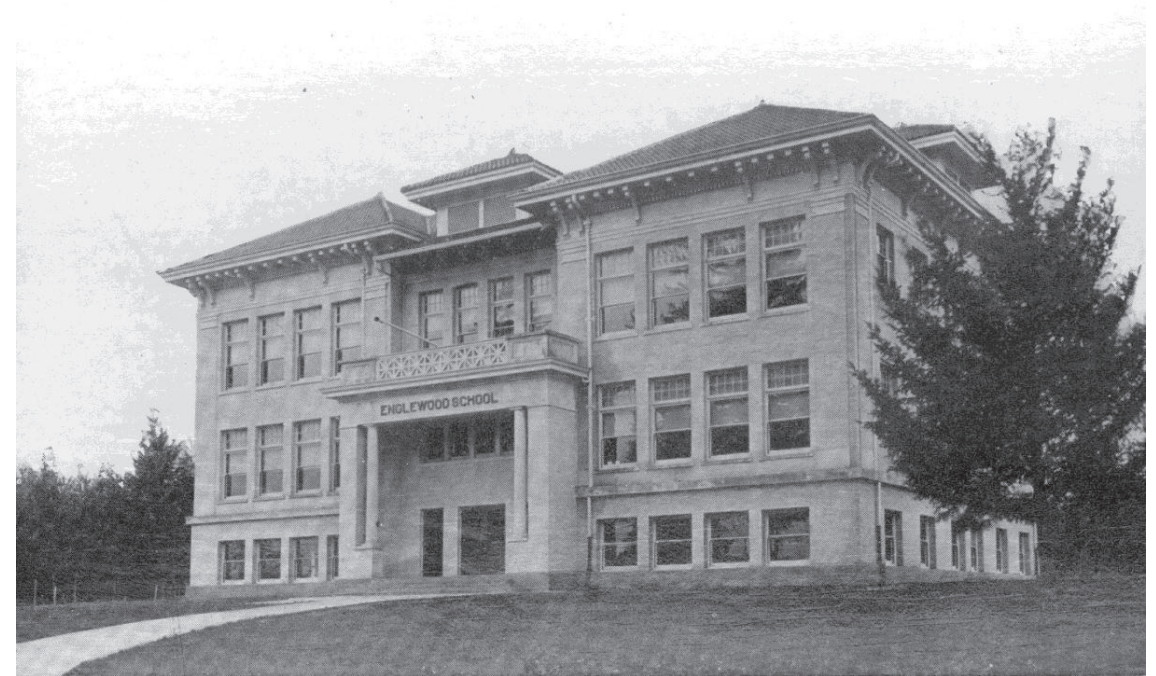


Figure 2. Englewood Elementary School in the early 1930s. Image courtesy of the Willamette Heritage Center.

Second, some schools, many of which are no longer in operation, were named after the community in which they operated. This naming practice has served as a primary model since the beginning of Salem's schools and represents the largest group in terms of number of schools, with nearly two dozen, including: *Auburn*, *Candalaria*, *Chapman Hill*, *Chemeketa*, *Claggett Creek*, *Clear Lake*, *Englewood*, *Four Corners*, *Fruitland*, *Hayesville*, *Hazel Green*, *Highland*, *Howard Street*, *Keizer*, *Liberty*, *Middle Grove*, *Morningside*, *North Salem*, *Rosedale*, *Salem Heights*, *South Salem*, *Tokyo International University of America*, *West Salem* and *Willamette*.

Third, a number of Oregon politicians have had schools named for them. Of the seven schools in this category, *Farrell*, *McNary*, *McKay*, *Roberts*, *Sprague*, *Straub* and *Whiteaker*, the last five were governors. Interestingly, all but two, *Whiteaker* and *Straub*, are high schools. From time

to time, there is a suggestion of naming a high school for the very popular governor Tom McCall, but Salem already has two high schools with the “*Mc*” prefix and the suggestion is sadly dismissed with the explanation that another such name would lead to too much confusion. The school district does not need more substitute teachers showing up at the wrong school each morning!

Fourth, six U.S. presidents have been honored with a school named after them: *Grant*, *Hoover*, *Kennedy*, *McKinley* and *Washington* (and the defunct *Garfield* school). Given the importance of presidents, it is surprising that a few more have not been so honored. Conspicuous by their absence are Jefferson and Lincoln (although there was at one time a Lincoln elementary school). This naming model is perhaps the most interesting, as not a single president has had a Salem school named for him since Kennedy in 1964 - nearly a half century! The abrupt halt in this naming model can be interpreted as a reflection of the disfavor that our national politicians have fallen into since the time of Kennedy. The turbulence of the 1960s and the Watergate scandal seriously affected the way Americans view their president and the federal government. One can hardly imagine a school being named for Johnson or Nixon. The Bushes are probably out if for no other reason than we already have a Bush school. Even those presidents who were popular face serious opposition from many people. Most likely, many years will have to pass before some actions are forgotten and one of these presidents is deemed worthy to be so honored by most of the people in the Salem community. If none of those passes muster, perhaps we will have one worthy in the near future; we can only hope.

The halt of naming schools for presidents was replaced almost overnight with a new practice. Beginning in the 1960s and continuing to the present, teachers, administrators and other educators in School District 24J, have had schools named for them. The popularity of this practice is telling. First, this shows a change in priorities in the community - why not recognize local achievement and excellence in education? Second, not a single school was named for an educator before Faye Wright in 1963 and it has now become the second most common type of school name, with 16, and it shows no sign of stopping. Included in this category are *Crossler*, *Faye Wright*, *Gubser*, *Hallman*, *Hammond*, *Houck*, *Lamb*, *Lee*, *Mary Eyre*, *Miller*, *Myers*, *Schirle*, *Scott*, *Sumpter*, *Weddle* and *Yoshikai*. All of these schools are either elementary or middle schools.

There are other Salem schools whose names do not fit neatly into any of these five categories. They might be named for people, such as Jane Goodall or David Livingstone; for a landscape characteristic, as *Brush College* or *Forest Ridge*; or for some educational idea, such as *Optimum Learning Environment*, *Valley Inquiry* or *Brush College*.

A final thought: All of the schools named for presidents, Oregon politicians and early pioneers were named for men. However, of the schools named for educators, ten have been named for women, two for couples and five for men. This is due to a couple of factors. First, women are more numerous in the education profession, especially as teachers of the younger grades. Second, the view of women, their achievements and community importance in the last few decades has changed considerably. These two factors have combined to begin to give women’s contributions to Salem the recognition they deserve.

In many cases, the people for whom schools were named and those who knew them are gone and their accomplishments are fading into our forgotten history. It is hoped that this article will help to preserve the memory of these people and their accomplishments.

Elementary Schools

Abiqua (1993), an independent school, was named for Abiqua Creek, which is a tributary of Pudding River. The meaning of the name is unclear, although McArthur says it may refer to a small tribe or a camping place along the stream, while Bright suggests it might mean ‘hazelnut’ in Kalapuyan.

Auburn (1955) Joe Albert, who owned considerable property in this area, named the area Auburn. The school is named after the area. Although *auburn* now means reddish-brown, it comes originally from Latin *albus*, meaning “white.”

Baker (1951) is named for Chester Baker, a pioneer whose family owned land in that area.

Brush College (1905) was so named because of the nearby ground cover. The appellation “college” came from the school offering the highest learning available in the area (originally the settlement of Eola and later the West Salem Addition) in the late 1800s.

Bush (1936) was named for Asahel Bush, the editor and publisher of the *Salem Statesman* during the latter part of the 19th century. He donated 57 acres toward the formation of Bush’s Pasture Park.

Candalaria¹ (1955) school is named for the community Candalaria Heights. The name Candalaria came from a Mr. Looney who grew pears, apples, plums and cherries; and traveled extensively. On one of his trips, he was so impressed by a certain ranch that he saw in Cuba, El Rancho de Candelaria, that he named the hill in Salem after it. *Candelaria* comes from a nickname for the Catholic feast of the Purification of the Virgin, on which day candles were blessed by a priest and lit to invoke the protection of the Virgin. *Candelaria* ultimately comes from the Latin word for “candle.”

Chapman Hill (1986) was named for James Rolla Chapman, originally from Illinois. He came to Oregon in 1891. After a stint in Portland, he moved to Salem and developed one the

¹ I am indebted to Mr. Coburn Grabenhorst for this information. Judson (1959) claims that the name came from Samuel A. Clarke, not Mr. Looney.

largest fruit and nut farms in the Northwest. He was also interested in international politics and drew up a charter for a “United States of the World” which he submitted to Presidents Taft and Wilson.

Clear Lake (1892) was named for the Clear Lake District, which in turn was named for Clear Lake because of the clear water in the lake. The name dates from 1892, but a new school was built with the same name in 1994.

Concordia Lutheran School (1996) carries the name of many Lutheran schools. They are named for *The Book of Concord* or *Concordia*, published in 1580, which outlines the doctrinal standard of the Lutheran Church. Lutheran is a designation for those who follow the teachings of the German monk and reformer, Martin Luther.

Cummings (1953) was named for Arthur Cummings, an early resident of Keizer who was active in community affairs.

Englewood (1910) was named for the Englewood District. The district may have gotten its name from the area in Los Angeles of the same name, but with a different spelling, Inglewood. Such changes in spelling are not unheard of, for example Milwaukie, Oregon and Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Faye Wright² (1963) was named for Faye Wright who was the second woman member of the Salem School board. She served as a board member from 1932 until her death in 1954.

Forest Ridge (2002) focuses on environmental studies and images of lush green ecosystems for which Oregon is known is evident in the school’s name.

Four Corners (1949) was named for the area in east Salem of same name. That area got its name from the “four corners” of the intersection of Lancaster Drive and State Street.

Fruitland (1936) is a locality east of Salem so named because the excellence of the soil produced fruit in abundance.

Grant (1908) was named for the Civil War general and 18th President of the United States Ulysses S. Grant. The Grant school was originally known as ‘North School,’ which was changed to Grant in 1908. The present building dates from 1955.

Gubser (1977) is named for Joy Hills Gubser, a teacher at Leslie and Parrish Junior High Schools and Salem High, then principal at Leslie. She supervised the Social Studies curriculum in Salem’s senior and junior high schools from 1928 until 1942. She was Associate State Superintendent for the Department of Education from 1949 until her death in 1971.

² Some readers may find it odd that Faye Wright and Mary Eyre have been alphabetized under their first names. This is no mistake. I have lived in the Mary Eyre area since its opening. The families whose children attend that school always refer to it as “Mary Eyre.” Perhaps “Eyre” is too short or the syllable not distinct enough to allow it to stand by itself. Nevertheless, both names are used. On the other hand, the Salem-Keizer School District refers to it as “Eyre.” However, the Federal government sides with the families and lists it under “Mary Eyre.” When I lived in South Salem, I knew many children who attended Faye Wright Elementary. All of them called it “Faye Wright.”

Hallman (2001) is named for Hilda Myers Hallman who was a special education teacher and directed the program for disabled students. She also worked at MacLaren School for Boys.

Hammond (2001) is named for Geraldine Elizabeth Hammond who served as principal at Rosedale and Pringle elementary schools and helped coordinate the district’s multicultural program.

Harritt (2003) was named for Jesse W. Harritt, an early homesteader in the area. The site of this school was part of the original homestead granted him in 1848. He saw the importance of education and helped establish Sublimity College in 1857 and Brush College in 1860.

Hayesville (1909) - During the presidential campaign of 1876, the local residents voted to name the locality north of Salem after the candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes. The school is named after the locality. The present building was opened in 1963.

Hazel Green³ (1954) came from the numerous hazel trees in the area.

Highland (1913) was named for the area of town called Highland Addition. There are two stories on how this area got its name. First, the platter wished to differentiate this area from North Salem, which was flat and extremely wet during the winter before it was drained. The second is that the name originates from the flood of 1861 during which most of Salem was under water. The exception was an area north of town where there was “high land.” The area was henceforth known as “Highland.” In any event, the area is so named because it lies on higher ground than Salem.

Hoover (1952) was named for the 31st President of the United States, Herbert Hoover, who spent part of his youth in Salem.

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran School (2002) is a name made up of several elements. *Immanuel* is the name of the Messiah as prophesied by Isaiah (Isa. 7:14). *Evangelical* is ultimately from Greek, meaning ‘pertaining to the gospel and its teachings.’ *Lutheran* is, of course, a designation for those who follow the teachings of the German monk and reformer, Martin Luther.

Kalapuya (2011) was named for the Kalapuya Indians who lived in the Willamette Valley and Umpqua River valley. The name *Kalapuya* is of uncertain meaning.

Keizer (1973) was named for the then-suburb of Salem. In 1982 the residents of Keizer voted to incorporate and Keizer is now its own city. It was named for Thomas Dove Keizer, a North Carolinian who was a leader in the emigration of 1843 and a member of the legislative committee in 1844. Keizer is an Anglicized form of the German *Kaiser*, which is related to the Russian *czar*. Both words are from the Latin *caesar*, which became the word for supreme leader of the Roman Empire because of Julius Caesar. The word, however, was his family name and probably meant ‘hairy.’

³ I am indebted to Mr. John Zielinski, whose family has lived in the area for generations, for this information. I was later able to confirm this in *Stories by Oregon Pioneers*.

Kennedy (1964) was named for John F. Kennedy, 35th President of the United States.

Lamb (2001) is named for Virgil D. Lamb who was an educator in Salem-Keizer for 33 years. For 16 years of those years, he was at Four Corners.

Lee (2002) was named for Robert and Susan Lee. Robert Lee taught science at Judson Junior High and Sprague High. In 1987 he was honored as Salem-Keizer's Teacher of the Year. He also worked as math and science coordinator and later was the Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Department for the district. Susan Lee started her teaching career in Salem-Keizer in 1969. She also served as Coordinator of the S-K Volunteer Services Center. She was principal of Middle Grove, Lake Labish, McKinley, Baker and Schirle elementary schools.

Liberty (1908) School. Most schools that have the same name as their community take their name from the community. In this case, the opposite seems to be true; the area in south Salem took its name from the school, which got its name from Liberty Street. The street was named at the close of the Civil War, after the idea of freedom.

Livingstone Junior Academy (1898), a K-10 school associated with the Seventh-Day Adventists, was named for the famous African explorer, David Livingstone.

Mary Eyre² (1977) was named for Mary E. Eyre, whose connection with the Salem public schools began in 1904 when she enrolled as a second grader. She became a teacher at Salem High in 1922 and retired in 1962. She was active in civic affairs and was twice president of the Marion County Historical Society.

McKinley (1915) was named for the 25th President of the United States, William McKinley.

Middle Grove (1947) School was moved to this site and so named because it stood in the middle of a grove of fir trees.

Miller (2000) was named for Marion Miller who was principal of Bush and Morningside Elementary Schools.

Morningside (1953) was named to identify the building with the area it represented and, by extension, to the morning as the beginning of the light of day, and hence, knowledge and education.

Myers (1973) was named after Arthur Myers who was principal of Liberty and Highland Elementary Schools, teacher at Parrish, and Assistant Superintendent of Salem-Keizer School District. He worked for 43 years in education. This was the first school in Salem to be named for a living individual.

Optimum Learning Environment Charter School (2002) is devoted to environmental issues, as its name suggests. It is in the same building as Forest Ridge Elementary School. It is a 'school within a school.'

Oregon School for the Deaf (1870) serves deaf and hard of hearing students from kindergarten through high school and up to 18 years of age. Originally known as the Deaf and Mute Institute, providing free public education to deaf children, it is one of the oldest continuously operating schools in Oregon. It also has transitional programs for young

adults. It has two charter schools on its campus (Valley Inquiry and Jane Goodall Environmental Charter Schools).

Pringle (1937) was named for an early pioneer, Virgil K. Pringle, who arrived in Salem and took up a land claim in 1846.

Queen of Peace (1964), a Catholic school, is named for Mary, mother of Jesus.

Richmond (1912) was named after an area of Salem called the Richmond Addition, which in turn was named for the Reverend J.P. Richmond, one of about 50 who came in the "Great Reinforcement" to the Methodist Mission on the ship *Lausanne* in 1839-40. Oddly, upon arrival Richmond was stationed at the mission site near Fort Nisqually in Washington State, and records indicate he never lived in Salem.

Rosedale (1952) is about six miles south of Salem and is named for the dale (valley) filled with wild roses where the highway from Salem to Albany crosses Battle Creek. The school is named after this locality.

Saint Vincent de Paul (1925), a Catholic school, is named for Vincent, a son of poor French peasants, who was born in 1581. He started many charities, such as hospitals, orphanages and homes for the aged. He died in 1660 and was proclaimed a saint in 1737.

Saint Joseph (1941), a Catholic school, is named for Joseph, earthly father of Jesus.

Salem Academy (1945) is a non-denominational Christian school that began as Salem Academy Christian School. The name "academy" implies the high standards for which the school strives. Salem Academy covers grades K-12.

Salem Heights (1938) is named for the area of town with the same name, which came from the fact that the area sits on a hill.

Schirle (1974) was named for James R. Schirle who taught at Bush Elementary School. He was well-liked and respected by both staff and students. He was also president of the Salem Education Association. He passed away in 1973 at the age of 50. This was the first school in Salem to be named for a classroom teacher.

Scott (1977) was named for Harry W. Scott who was a bicycle shop owner in Salem from 1919 until 1963. He would fix children's bikes, often for little or no cost. He loved children. He was on the School Board from 1946 until 1961, serving as chairman for five years. The Chamber of Commerce named him Salem's First Citizen in 1962.

Sonshine (1980) is a private Baptist-affiliated school. Its name is a play on words, evoking the idea of light - sunshine, but coming from *Son*, i.e. Jesus Christ, and *shine*. This is further supported by Jesus' quote "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

Sumpter (1978) was named for Mable P. Sumpter, a long-time teacher in the district. Sumpter was principal at Hoover Elementary in 1952. The sign in front of the school reads "Mable P. Sumpter Community School."

Swegle (1923) was named for George Swegle, who donated land for the school.

Valley Inquiry Charter School (2005) is named for the Willamette Valley and the idea of students 'inquiring' to learn. It is located on the Oregon School for the Deaf campus, next door to the Jane Goodall Environmental Middle School.

Washington (1949) is named for George Washington, the first President of the United States.

Weddle (2001) was named for Carmalite Weddle who was principal of the Keizer Elementary District before it was incorporated into the Salem-Keizer School District. She was the first principal of Kennedy Elementary beginning in 1964. She was also president of Salem Area Seniors, encouraging seniors to volunteer at the public schools.

Yoshikai (1994) was named for Alyce Yoshikai who served in the Salem-Keizer School District for 30 years as teacher/principal at Roberts, Halls Ferry, Baker, Richmond, Candalaria, Hayesville and Schirle. She was also Director of Elementary Education and served on the boards of many associations, including United Way, Hospital Board of Trustees and the Salem Art Association.

Middle Schools

Abiqua *ibid*.

Claggett Creek (2001) is named for the nearby creek, which was named for a State Fish Protector who was in the area in the 1920s, Ben Claggett.

Concordia Lutheran School *ibid*.

Crossler (1995) has the distinction of being the first school in Salem named for two persons, Darrell and Jody Crossler. It has since been joined by Lee Elementary. Darrell taught, was assistant principal and principal at Parrish Junior High and then principal at Judson. Jody was a counselor at Auburn and Liberty Elementary Schools.

Goodall (2000) was named for the Jane Goodall, famed primatologist. Jane Goodall Environmental Magnet School was founded in fall 2000 and in the fall of 2004 became the Jane Goodall Environmental (Charter) Middle School. It was housed in Waldo Middle School until 2011 when it was relocated to the Oregon School for the Deaf campus.

Houck (1995) is named for Carlos "Cub" Houck, member of Salem City Council and School Board.

Howard Street Charter School (1997) occupies the old Leslie Middle School building. It is named for the street that it is on, which was named for Mr. Howard, a livestock man and meat dealer.

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran School *ibid*.

Judson (1957) was named for Lewis H. Judson, Methodist missionary and early pioneer. He came to Oregon in 1840 and owned much of the land between Mission and Hood streets in Salem. He helped found Willamette University and was present at the Champoege meeting, casting a vote for the Provisional Government.

Leslie (1927) was named for David Leslie, Methodist missionary and early pioneer. He came to Oregon in 1837 and acted as chairman of a committee to draft laws for the Oregon Country in 1841.

Livingstone Junior Academy *ibid*.

Oregon School for the Deaf *ibid*.

Parrish (1924) was named for Josiah L. Parrish, Methodist missionary and early pioneer who came to Oregon in 1840. He served on the committee to draft laws for the Oregon Country in 1841.

Salem Academy *ibid*.

Stephens (1995) was named for early pioneer Adam Stephens who purchased land for \$30 and a horse northeast of Salem that later became Hayesville (q.v.). The school was actually built in 1994, but was used for one year by Parrish Middle School during its renovation.

Straub Middle School (2011) was named after Oregon's 31st governor, Robert Straub, who served from 1975 to 1979.

Waldo (1957) was named for Daniel Waldo, pioneer who came to Oregon in 1843. He served as district judge in 1845 and county treasurer in Champoege County in 1847. In 1845 he built a school which may have been Oregon's first public school.

Walker (1961) was named for Walter M. Walker, early pioneer, Polk County Commissioner (1848), and member of the Territorial Legislature (1856).

Western Mennonite School (1945) is named for the religious community, which ultimately derives its name from Menno Simons (1496–1561), an Anabaptist leader from Friesland, The Netherlands.

Whiteaker (1967) was named for Oregon's first Governor, John Whiteaker, who served from 1859 to 1862.

High Schools

Blanchet School (1995), a Catholic school, was named for Archbishop Francis Norbert Blanchet, the founder of the Archdiocese of Oregon City. Born in Quebec in 1795, he came to the Oregon Country in 1839 and celebrated the area's first Mass. He died in 1883, having done much to establish the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest. The school has grades 7-12.



Figure 3. Leslie Middle School in 2005. Image courtesy of the Willamette Heritage Center.

Barbara Roberts (1996) was named for Oregon's 34th Governor, the first woman to hold that office, who served from 1991 to 1995. She also was Oregon Secretary of State and Majority Leader in the Oregon State House.

Chemawa (1880) Indian School was known first as the Indian Industrial and Training School in Forest Grove, Oregon. About the time it was moved to its present location in 1885, it became known as the Salem Indian Training School and shortly thereafter by its present name, which, in the language of the original inhabitants of the Willamette Valley, the Kalapuyans, may have referred to a part of the river where there were deposits of gravel. Others believe the word meant "happy home." Interestingly, many Indian names in the Willamette Valley begin with *che-* or *cham-*.



Figure 4. Chemawa Indian School around 1910. Image courtesy of the Willamette Heritage Center.

Early College High School (2006) allows students to pursue college education during their high school years, similar to a dual enrollment program. The name reflects this program. It is located on the Chemeketa Community College campus.

Farrell (1914) is named for Robert S. Farrell, Jr. who was an Oregon politician, serving as Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives and as Oregon's Secretary of State. The facility began as the State Industrial School for Girls and later the Hillcrest School of Oregon. It became co-gender in the 1970s and male-only in 2008, when it became Robert S. Farrell, Jr. High School.

Livingstone Junior Academy *ibid*.

McKay (1979) was named for the Oregon's 25th Governor, Douglas McKay, who served from 1949 until 1952. He was also Secretary of the Interior in the Eisenhower Cabinet.

McNary (1965) was named for Charles McNary who served as U.S. Senator from Oregon from 1917 until his death in 1944. He was co-author of the McNary-Haugen Bill, which was an attempt at farm relief in the 1920s.

North Salem (1936) was originally called Salem High School, "North" took on the geographical designation when "South" was built in 1954.

Oregon School for the Deaf *ibid*.

Salem Academy *ibid*.

South Salem (1954) is Salem's second high school and was named to contrast it geographically with Salem's other high school, North Salem High School.

Sprague (1972) was named for Charles Sprague, Oregon's 22nd Governor from 1939 until 1943. He was also editor of the *Oregon Statesman* and delegate to the United Nations.

West Salem (2001) is named for its location in West Salem.

Western Mennonite School *ibid*.

Colleges and Universities

Chemeketa Community College (1970) Chemeketa is supposed to have been a Kalapuyan word meaning "gathering" or "resting place." It may also have been the name of one of the Kalapuya Indian bands.

Corban University began in 1936 in Phoenix, Arizona, as the Phoenix Bible Institute. In 1946 it moved to Oakland, California, and became the Western Baptist Bible College. In 1969 it moved to its present location in southeast Salem. For the 1978-79 school year, it dropped "Bible" from its name, becoming Western Baptist College. In 2005, the name was changed to Corban College, *corban* being Hebrew for 'gift of god.' In 2007, the name was extended to Corban College and Graduate School. In 2010, it became Corban University.

Willamette University (1842) is the oldest university in the West and began with a meeting of early Methodist missionaries at the home of Jason Lee in 1842. It was named the Oregon Institute and was to be a school for the missionaries' children and for the children of newly arriving settlers. In 1853 the Provisional Government of Oregon granted a charter to the school as "Wallamet University." The spelling was changed in 1870 to "Willamette." The meaning of the word Willamette is not known, but one theory holds that it means "spill water," as the name was applied to the river above the falls.

Tokyo International University of America (1989) was so named because it is the American affiliate of the Tokyo International University. *Tokyo* is Japanese for "big city in the east."

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Oregon State Insane Asylum: A Sanctuary

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Figure 1. Vintage postcard image of the Oregon State Insane Asylum. From Oregon State Hospital collection.

Over time, a public space can take on the negative stigma of its historic associations, and this can be perpetuated through public memory, real or imagined. Mental institutions are spaces that conjure up mysterious imaginings, morbid curiosity and even dread. They are associated with scenes from movies, like "The Snake Pit" or "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," or classic horror novels that depict raving lunatics in restraints, chaos, filth and punitive discipline or psychological torture carried out by sadistic scientists and their assistants. These kinds of associations with mental institutions began when stories surfaced about real atrocities taking place in hospitals like St. Mary Bethlehem (a.k.a. Bedlam) in London. Mid-nineteenth century reformers, however, were determined to shut down places such as this in the United States, and physicians began implementing compassionate care without use of restraints, called Moral Treatment.¹ States began building grand, palatial institutions to house and care for the mentally ill, and these institutions were called asylums. While that term has a negative connotation today, in the 1800s its meaning conveyed hope to many because it indicated a haven or a place of sanctuary.

¹ Many physicians believed that home treatment was ineffective and that the home environment may be in part the cause of a patient's mental disorder. The asylum was to be a positive environment where the physician could help patients change their behavior and employ methods to control their behavior without use of restraints. Gerald N. Grob, *The Mad Among Us: A History of the Care of America's Mentally Ill*, (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 64.

The Oregon State Hospital, originally known as the Oregon State Insane Asylum, was built in 1883, nearly at the end of the Moral Treatment era, and its history is intricately connected with Portland's Hospital for the Insane and that facility's superintendent, Dr. J.C. Hawthorne. This essay gives a brief history of one of Oregon's more misunderstood and stigmatized spaces and hopefully informs the reader about a time when such institutions were intended to be havens for the mentally ill. The primary sources drawn upon are Dr. Hawthorne's statements concerning his philosophy of care which he included in the Biennial Report (Oregon Hospital for the Insane) of 1880 to the Oregon Legislative Assembly, as well as Biennial Reports of 1885 and 1893 concerning the Oregon State Insane Asylum, and the Board of Charities and Corrections Report of 1892.

In Oregon's early years, the responsibility of caring for the mentally ill was to be the undertaking of the person's family or friends, if they were able. If this was not possible, the community where the person lived pitched in to help with care. Oregon passed an act in 1853 giving designated guardians custody of insane persons and their property, and in 1855 the act was expanded to include an allowance to reimburse the guardian if the insane person was indigent. During this time, county judges were given the authority to commit dangerous, mentally ill individuals to the county jail.

Early beliefs concerning the causes of insanity were that it could be passed on genetically, or it could be the result of immoral living or habits, and that in most cases it was incurable. Places like Bedlam were able to exist because insanity was believed to be incurable and the inmates were considered to be no better than beasts. In the mid-1800s, however, some doctors concluded that insanity could, in fact, be cured if treatment started soon after symptoms manifested. Some doctors theorized that insanity could be exacerbated by the person's home environment and that special places should be built to provide a wholesome, positive atmosphere in which treatment could be rendered and controlled. The institutions provided, under the supervision of a doctor, control and protection of patients from their own impulses, and from ridicule, isolation, aggression and abuse from the outside world.² As stated by I. Macalpine and R. Hunter, "During the time of Moral Treatment, the insane were not seen as animals, but as suffering humans who had gone astray and who could be led back to the right path through kindness, compassion and rational conversation. Moral treatment was a profoundly social form of treatment."³

As of 1862, the State of Oregon did not have a state-run asylum, and until one was built, the State contracted with Dr. J.C. Hawthorne to care for patients in his facility, the Oregon Hospital for the Insane, in East Portland.⁴ In the section of the 1880 Biennial Report titled "Care of the Insane," Dr. Hawthorne addresses society's opposing ideologies pertaining to the care of insane persons and asserts that there was no answer that would be fully accepted:

² Christopher Payne and Oliver Sacks. *Asylum: Inside the Closed World of State Mental Hospitals*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), 2.

³ I. Macalpine and R. Hunter, *George III and the Mad-Business*. (London: Pimlico, 1993). The Sanctuary Model. <http://sanctuaryweb.com/moral-treatment.php> (accessed 03/21/12).

⁴ Oregon State Hospital. http://www.asylumprojects.org/index.php?title=Oregon_State_Hospital

And this must always be the case, so long as there exists in human nature the warm, fraternal feeling of the man of philanthropic principles on the one hand; and the selfish, misanthropic and self-wrapt man, on the other. To the former, the answer which comes to the question in the cherishing care and kindly and curative treatment received by the insane in all civilized communities, is full of satisfaction, while to the latter, the same treatment appears to be wholly unnecessary and fraught with expense and avoidable outlay to the State. . . Such men have mistaken their age. They would have more fully realized their ideal a hundred years ago, when that mode of treatment was carried to perfection [put the ill away out of sight and clothe and feed as cheaply as possible to cut down taxes] in Bedlam, and in the numberless well-named mad-houses that blotted the fair face of the globe. . . On the contrary, I am able to state that, as a rule, the citizens of this State have not complained of the burden of taxation imposed upon them by necessity existing and that always will exist, so long as we remain civilized people, of caring properly for the insane, and affording them, not only a meagre living, but a good chance for cure and restoration to them daily walks and usual avocations.⁵

The recognition and acceptance of insanity by doctors and staff at the new institutions was considered a great kindness by many patients. Oliver Sacks includes in his book, *Asylum: Inside the Closed World of State Mental Hospitals*, an excerpt from a letter written by a grateful patient, Anna Agnew, to the superintendent of a hospital in the Eastern United States where she had received treatment. Her letter indicates asylums were places where "one could be both mad and safe, places where one's madness could be assured of finding, if not a cure, at least recognition and respect, and a vital sense of companionship and community."⁶ As stated by J. Bushfield, "Patients were to be treated with respect, as adults, not as children, and were to be urged in the direction of self-restraint and self-control."⁷

In 1840 there were 18 mental institutions throughout the United States, by 1880 there were 139.⁸ They were intended to be places of refuge, protection and sanctuary for the mentally ill. Therapeutic care and possible cure was for the most part attainable, if patient populations were low. Dr. Hawthorne reported that as of August 31, 1880, the number of patients in his Portland hospital was 286 (281 State patients and five private patients). During the previous year (1879-1880), of the 286 patients, 91 were discharged as cured (83 State patients and eight private patients).⁹ Of the "discharged as cured" patients, only ten had been hospitalized for over one year. Out of patients remaining in the hospital, 125 were believed to be incurable, 105 curable and 51 doubtful.¹⁰ Dr. Hawthorne reported categories of disease for the 191 State patients admitted during the complete biennial period of August 31, 1878 through August 31, 1880, as

⁵ J.C. Hawthorne, "Care for the Insane." *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of the Oregon Hospital for the Insane to the Legislative Assembly, Eleventh Regular Session, 1880*. (Salem: W.P. Keady, State Printer, 1880), 8.

⁶ Sacks, *Asylum*, 5.

⁷ J. Busfield, *Managing Madness: Changing Ideas and Practice*. (London: Unwin Hyman, 1986). The Sanctuary Model. <http://sanctuaryweb.com/moral-treatment.php> (accessed 03/21/12).

⁸ Sacks, *Asylum*, 7.

⁹ Hawthorne, *Biennial 1880*, 4.

¹⁰ Hawthorne, *Biennial 1880*, 8.

follows: acute mania (134); chronic mania (21); melancholia (6); dementia (8); idiocy (9); epileptic insanity (12); and general paralysis (1).¹¹

It should be noted that according to current medical and psychiatric knowledge, the categories of dementia, idiocy, epileptic insanity and general paralysis do not necessarily pertain to true mental illness, but are found as natural processes of aging in geriatric populations or are conditions of mentally normal disabled persons. The State could not refuse admission of patients, and it may be assumed that people admitted under the last categories described by Dr. Hawthorne could have been sane and only suffering effects of old age and poverty or handicapped persons with no more appropriate institutions or medical care available during the time period. Thus, the Asylum was beginning to be used to house other neglected or unwanted segments of society which would ultimately contribute to overcrowding and be detrimental to the Asylum's original intent - to provide a quiet, restful sanctuary to administer compassionate care to hopefully cure the mentally ill.

During the period of this biennial report (1878 to 1880), Dr. Hawthorne testified that it was necessary, due to overcrowding and for the comfort and welfare of the patients, to build a new 150-foot long, two-storied extension to the north wing of the hospital.¹² Dr. Hawthorne advocated for the continued care of the insane by the State and stated, "In my last report, I called attention . . . to the importance of considering the question of a proper site and providing a sufficient amount of land, in connection with the subject of erecting a building suitable for a State hospital for the insane."¹³ Dr. Hawthorne's hospital housed far more State than private patients. The number in the hospital as of August 31, 1880 was 281 State and five private patients, and the number of State patients was continuing to rise (on August 31, 1878 there were 233 State and two private patients).¹⁴ It was under these circumstances that plans were begun to build the State Insane Asylum in Salem, Oregon, which opened in October 1883. By then, Hawthorne had 370 State patients, and all were transferred from Portland to the new Asylum, and put under the care of Dr. H. Carpenter.¹⁵

The new Asylum shared 350 acres of land (for farming) with the State Penitentiary and was situated out of town on high ground. The building resembles the Kirkbride architectural design for asylums of that time and is situated in a country/park setting. The 1883 Asylum had a farm with livestock and gardens where some patients performed light duties. The women also performed light housekeeping chores and sewing. These activities were considered to be therapeutic in that they offered patients productive activities to complete, which gave them purpose and helped alleviate boredom.

¹¹ Hawthorne, *Biennial 1880*, 6.

¹² Hawthorne, *Biennial 1880*, 8. Emphasis belongs to this article's author.

¹³ Hawthorne, *Biennial 1880*, 18.

¹⁴ Hawthorne, *Biennial 1880*, 4, 3.

¹⁵ H. Carpenter, *Reports of the Board of Insane Asylum Building Commissioners and of the Trustees of the Oregon State Insane Asylum, with a report of the Medical Superintendent, 1885*. (Salem: W.H. Byars, State Printer, 1885), 12.

According to Dr. Carpenter's report, assistant physicians were employed to help with the care of patients and resided at the hospital. They helped supervise staff, ensured that the needs of patients were attended to, and they were to "exert what moral influence they can with them, and endeavor in every way to promote their comfort and recovery. . . Violent patients, whom it is necessary to place under special restraint, must be carefully observed . . . and it shall be the duty of the Assistant Physicians to frequently report to the Superintendent the condition of such patients."¹⁶

Nearly ten years later, in 1892, the State Board of Charities and Corrections officers inspected the Asylum and commented on what in that short amount of time had become the limited grounds and over-crowded conditions there:

. . . there is little to engage the attention or stimulate the interest of patients, and, for the most part, they sit all day about the corridors and assembly rooms, listening to each other's ravings, and incoherent talk. It cannot be imagined that this massing of patients, causing such conditions to exist, can be conducive to that mental quiet and freedom from annoyance so necessary in the cure of insanity. Considering these conditions, it speaks well for the management, that many of the inmates are improved, and about one-third of all the patients received are in the end discharged as cured, and of these so discharged, two-thirds remain less than three months in the institution. It must, however, be accepted as a fact, manifest to anyone who will examine into the subject, and plainly seen by the officers themselves, that the cures are not so numerous or so rapid as they would be were the conditions better calculated to effect them; many remain much longer than they otherwise would, and the number of permanent inmates is larger than it would be were the institution moulded more upon the plan of a **hospital** for the cure of insanity, and less upon that of an **asylum** for the safe keeping of insane persons.¹⁷

The Board felt something should be done to provide sufficient medical attendance, stating,

¹⁶ Carpenter, *Report 1885*, 9.

¹⁷ State Board of Charities and Corrections, *First Biennial Report For the Partial Biennial Period Ending 12/31/1892*, (Portland: F.W. Baltes and Company, Printers, 1892), 241-42.



Figure 2. Fountain in front of the main entrance of Oregon State Hospital in Salem, Oregon, 1940 by Ben Maxwell. Salem Public Library Historic Photograph Collections, Salem Public Library, Salem, Oregon.

The superintendent, being the chief executive officer, is naturally a busy man, and besides him, there are but two physicians to look after the bodily and mental infirmities of 800 persons, some of whom are on the farm, three and one-half miles distant from the main asylum. . . These physicians do all that men can do, but it is evident that this . . . not sufficient attention to give the patients of an institution designed for the cure of insanity. This is especially so in the asylum, where patients are huddled together in over-crowded wards, and compelled to bear with each other under conditions that would make trouble between some persons possessed of all their original mental poise and self-control.

By the Biennial Report of 1893, Dr. Rowland, the acting superintendent of the Asylum, asked the Legislature for the assistance of a board of consulting physicians who would meet with the present staff once or twice a week and help treat Asylum patients. He wrote:

The medical staff, composed of only three physicians, is inadequate to the onerous duties imposed. Ten years ago, the Legislature regarded this same service necessary, notwithstanding the fact that, when the Asylum was opened on the October following, there were only three hundred and seventy inmates whom to commence the term. Now, however, we commence the ensuing term with seven hundred and ninety-four, making the number more than twice as large as that of the former period. . . there is a larger percentage of unfortunate people who might be cured, if given the fullest and best medical attendance, but with the present staff, this is a physical impossibility, and, hence, an injustice to the patients, as well as to their physicians.¹⁸

This report gave the disease categories of 522 admissions during the biennial period, and when compared to the one of 1880, the numbers had approximately doubled: acute mania (326); chronic mania (124); acute and chronic melancholia (7); dementia (14); idiocy and imbecility (20); epileptic insanity (27); general paresis [a.k.a. paralysis] (4).¹⁹

In conclusion, it is evident that Dr. Hawthorne was concerned for the welfare of the mental patients under his care and was able to help cure some of his wards. He recommended that the State of Oregon use its resources to build an adequate state-run asylum to alleviate overcrowding and ensure the continued safekeeping and therapeutic treatment for the mentally ill. Just a few years after the Oregon State Insane Asylum was built, however, Dr. Rowland was concerned about the care (or lack thereof) that his patients were receiving, and his frustration was conveyed in his 1893 Biennial Report to the Legislature, in which he reported on the over-crowded and understaffed condition of the Asylum. Due to these circumstances, more consistent and individualized care essential to Moral Therapy became impossible to accomplish, and in time led to patients receiving little more than custodial care. The Asylum still provided a place for mentally ill persons to reside, but due to the lack of funds to maintain

¹⁸ L.L. Rowland, *Fifth Biennial Report of the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent of the Oregon State Insane Asylum to the Legislative Assembly, 1893*. (Salem: Frank C. Baker, State Printer, 1892), 11.

¹⁹ Rowland, *Biennial 1893*, 22. I have grouped acute and chronic melancholia together, as well as idiocy and imbecility, as these categories were added since the report of 1880.

deteriorating buildings, exacerbated by overcrowding and the inability of staff to handle the sheer numbers of patients (many not mentally ill), the negative stigmas soon started to set in.

Even with the negative stigma attached to the Oregon State Hospital, the community and State have cared enough about this public space to salvage and rejuvenate the old sections to remind us of the original haven - the Asylum, and at the same time provide new structures and spaces to continue the humanitarian mandate of physicians like Dr. Hawthorne and Dr. Rowland, and the State of Oregon in providing a safe place to care for the mentally ill.

The First Women to Cross the Continent by Covered Wagon, Welcomed by Dr. John McLoughlin in 1836: Thoughts on Pathways of Heritage

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Figure 1. Dr. John McLoughlin welcomes the first women to cross the continent by covered wagon in 1836. Painted by Barry Faulkner and Frank H. Schwarz. Photo courtesy of the author.

Interpretations of heritage sites and the politics of preservation have implications for public artworks housed within those sites. Beyond this, tourists and visitors to these sites produce digital mementos and images from encounters with these the artwork, encounters which are open to interpretation in online forums. A specific mural in the Oregon State Capitol building will serve as a focal point for further understanding of the role public murals have in interpreting heritage in the context of visitors' digital visual representations. A mural, which at the time of its creation had its authenticity challenged, helps provide awareness of authenticity in heritage sites, and can be examined to point to larger issues of heritage production in online forums. This production is separated from the physical spaces heritage has typically been tied to, but nonetheless indicates a pathway of heritage production being performed by visitors. I will look at the mural, *The First Women to Cross the Continent by Covered Wagon, Welcomed by Dr. John McLoughlin in 1836*, painted by Barry Faulkner and Frank. H. Schwarz in the style of depression-era murals. I will analyze a historical interpretation and critique of the mural to

provide some context for the contemporary role this mural serves in the Oregon State Capitol building.

Heritage constructs itself by maintaining a boundary between the present and the past. This boundary is built by professionals working in various fields that categorize heritage and the sites where it is interpreted. Laurajane Smith, a scholar of heritage studies, argues the discourse around heritage has two sets of practices, the conservation and management of heritage sites and the facilitation of the visitation of these sites. For her, "cultural heritage management and the acts of visiting heritage sites as a tourist or other visitor become acts directly implicated in the occasional construction or reconstruction, but most certainly the maintenance, or more precisely *conservation* and *preservation* of social and cultural meanings."¹ Therefore, everyone who visits a heritage site is actively involved in interpretation and ultimately the maintenance of social and cultural meanings of those sites.

The Oregon State Capitol building is certainly a heritage site, as well as an active legislative building. In the physical and digital descriptions of the rotunda at the Capitol building, the murals are constructed as visual portrayals of Oregon's history. Aside from the mural I am specifically discussing, the other three in the rotunda are: *Captain Robert Gray at the Mouth of the Columbia River in 1792*, *Lewis and Clark on Their Way to the Pacific in 1805* and *First Wagon Train Migration in 1843*. These scenes were selected for their perceived historical significance and each mural is related in an exact time in the past by the inclusion of a year in the title. Following Smith's conclusions, these four murals, and the setting of the Capitol building, maintain and perpetuate social and cultural meanings. But how has this maintenance been changed by the interpretation of one of the murals, and public art at heritage sites in general, through digital media by visitors? Let us first start by analyzing the response to the mural at the time it was painted.

There is a historical context for the event depicted in the mural, as well as a historical context for its reception at the time it was painted in 1938-1939. Take for example, the criticism by Barry J Neilson, which appeared in the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* in 1939, of the accuracy of the landscape and the choice of individuals depicted in this mural. But it is not just *The First Women to Cross the Continent by Covered Wagon, Welcomed by Dr. John McLoughlin in 1836* which received criticism. The content of the other three, painted at the same time, is criticized as well. Neilson was an Episcopal priest and in his retirement a researcher who wrote extensively on Pacific Northwest History with a specific interest in topics like John Colter, a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and early exploration of the Pacific Northwest region.² Neilson says of *The First Women to Cross the Continent by Covered Wagon, Welcomed by Dr. John McLoughlin in 1836*, "instead of any Oregon episode the arrival of missionaries to Idaho and to Washington at a British fort in Washington was selected as the scene for this third

¹ Smith, Laurajane, *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge. 2006, 12.

² "Northwest Digital Archives Guide to the J. Neilson Barry Papers." http://nwda-db.orbiscascade.org/nwda-search/fstyle.aspx?doc=oip_mss1.xml&t=k&q=J.+Neilson+Barry, accessed April 2nd, 2012.

mural.”³ For Neilson, the content of the mural is suspect because although Dr. McLoughlin is a prominent Oregon figure, the meeting depicted took place in Vancouver, Washington.

Neilson also included a critique of the landscape portrayed by the artists. In one case, “a fort utterly unlike Fort Vancouver is placed upon a fictitious hill where the current airfield is, and a fictitious point is fabricated close to where the interstate bridge now is.”⁴ Furthermore, “the landscape beyond suggests Chesapeake Bay Scenery, instead of the lofty ridge by Linnton six miles away.”⁵ Exact historical and geographic accuracy might not have been as important to all viewers as it was to this historian, but viewers might still notice that artistic interpretations, more than historical accuracy, were made. While Neilson had an eye for authenticity that not every viewer of this mural or every visitor to the rotunda will have, his question of authenticity are valid, and allow us to ask: How can we think about the role of public art presented at heritage sites in a broader framework, using the example of this mural, while also thinking about how authenticity is created at heritage sites?

Public murals, including contemporary murals with a stronger basis in community self-representation, serve a role in framing an analysis of events in historic, aesthetic and cultural contexts. When speaking about the murals in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C., Ann Uhry Abrams states, “the eight Rotunda paintings should thus be viewed as historical images frozen in a cultural, social, and political time warp, for as such they provide excellent insights into the priorities and prejudices of the early nineteenth century.”⁶ Abrams delineates the ways in which different political and cultural climates impacted the style and subject matter of the murals in the National Capitol Rotunda. The same would necessarily be true of the murals in the Oregon rotunda. Later we will see that online digital representations of these murals serve the same purpose and also manifest heritage in a way that validates cultural roles as an extension of heritage sites. The Oregon Capitol mural celebrates the arrival of non-Native women to Oregon, constructing the role of women in a specific historic context.

American murals in the “beaux arts” style, created before the mural being discussed here, were designed to embellish and decorate the walls of public buildings. This involved the celebration, and not the criticism, of American culture. In this context, “although women were depicted endlessly, Woman was absent. The women in the murals were the *tabula rasa* of desires and ambitions of their male creators, whether they were the artists, architects, or members of building committees, their identities acted out the ideologies of male-dominated society.”⁷ Although there is a marked difference in the style of beaux arts and that of the Depression-period style of the murals in the Oregon rotunda, we can see a connection between

3 Neilson, Barry, J. “The Murals in the State Capitol,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 40 (1939): 157.

4 Neilson, “The Murals in the State Capitol,” 159.

5 Neilson, “The Murals in the State Capitol,” 159.

6 Abrams, Ann Uhry, “National Paintings and American Character,” in *Picturing History: American Painting 1770-1930*, ed. William Ayres. New York: Rizzoli. 1993, 65.

7 Van Hook, Bailey. *The Virgin and the Dynamo: Public Murals in American Architecture 1893 – 1917*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press. 2003, 178.

the women depicting themes such as virtue and justice in the beaux arts style and the portrayal of women in the Oregon rotunda mural.

The murals of the Oregon rotunda paint a positive picture of Oregon cultural heritage including a visual representation of the “first women” to reach Oregon. Although not specifically funded by the New Deal, the Depression-era style of the *First Women to Cross the Continent by Covered Wagon, Welcomed by Dr. John McLoughlin in 1836* does match the New Deal aesthetic. “Overall, the New Deal funded murals that were representational and figurative without abstraction or extreme distortion, positive rather than socially critical.”⁸ Do visitors who take away visual mementos of the mural challenge this portrayal of Oregon heritage or the context in which it is presented in the Capitol building? Or are they continuing online a representation of Oregon heritage that is in line with the discourse created in the physical space of the rotunda, a dialogue which accepts the authenticity of the mural and the ideologies inherent in the image?

A short period of observation of online forums and websites constructs how *The First Women to Cross the Continent by Covered Wagon, Welcomed by Dr. John McLoughlin in 1836* and the other murals in the rotunda in general, function for visitors to the Capitol. Visitors are collecting visual mementos and souvenirs, most often digitally. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, when writing about souvenirs and mementos although not in a digital context, states they “are generally valued more for what they signify, for the larger biographical whole of which they are a part, than in themselves” and they “offer access to the interior of the lives they signify.”⁹ The collection of digital images of the mural, and public art in heritage sites in general, holds meaning for the individual who creates them, but also extends the process of heritage construction from the physical site where the mural is housed into the broader world.

Take for example a screen shot of a YouTube video in which a user provides a virtual tour of the rotunda and specifically focuses on one of the murals. This user presents the heritage site to a digital audience, an audience who can add their comments to the user's experience, often creating new and/or different meanings. After visiting a heritage site, the maintenance and preservation of social and cultural meanings continues in to the digital realm, and the digital images themselves are now agents of heritage. In the context of images in the media and media studies at large, W. J. T. Mitchell argues, “If digitization has produced a change in the ontology of images, it might, then, be more plausibly sought in the changed conditions of their ‘being in the world’ - the changed conditions of their production of circulation, the exponential increase in the number of images, and the rapidity of their transmission, especially via the Internet.”¹⁰ The interactions with images through social media platforms and websites, extends heritage production to all of these spaces, while referencing the supposed authenticity of the original mural in the Capitol rotunda.

8 “Public Murals” Diana L. Linden in *Encyclopedia of American Cultural and Intellectual History* vol. 2, 553.

9 Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. “Objects of Memory: Material Culture as Life Review,” in *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres*, Ed. Elliott Oring. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press. 1989, 331.

10 Mitchell, W. J. T. “Image” in *Critical Terms for Media Studies*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell and Mark B.N. Hansen. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 2010, 44.

This specific mural interprets heritage in a public space and mediates Oregon history to visitors to the rotunda. However, the interpretation of heritage continues outside the physical space the mural has been painted on, and is physically visible in; it is now visible online in user-created content and on institutional webpages. A hyperlink on the Oregon State Legislature's webpage takes an online visitor to the webpage of an image of the mural with no written interpretation of the image. There is, however, some written interpretation on the preceding link. The image of the mural is accessed under the heading *Take a Virtual Tour of the Capitol*,¹¹ along with information about the other murals, the senate and house chambers, how the Oregon State legislative process works and other information about the grounds and artworks on the Oregon State Capitol campus. Once accessed, visitors and those managing heritage sites are engaged in cultural performance since visitors are taking ideas from heritage sites out into their lives, ideas that influence visitors' beliefs about their individual and group identity.

This occurs on a number of levels, and research indicates that instead of simply a passive consumption of the information presented to visitors or tourists, the information is acting on self and group constructs visitors hold. If this challenges the passivity of heritage audiences "this must make a conceptual space for the recognition of the multiplicity of meaning that any aspect of tangible or intangible heritage inevitably must have. It also must make problematic the idea of space and place, particularly with respect to how these are physically and emotionally encountered."¹² The authenticity of the mural is challenged by Barry J. Neilson at its initial creation because of its subject matter and imagery, based on his expert status as a historian. Currently, the authenticity is analyzed by the visual mementos of encounters with this mural, both virtual reflections by visitors and representations of the mural on institutional websites. This is not to say these encounters are necessarily against the dominant narrative only that these encounters with heritage continue outside the physical space of the heritage site, on YouTube the same way they do on the Oregon State Legislature's official website.

In her work, Regina Bendix brings up an example of digital cultural heritage where certain digital knowledge is in danger of becoming lost due to rapid technological change. There is now a temporal tension inherent in cultural heritage including, "the non-contemporaneity of the matters and materials under discussion; the presence of things dateable to different paths in a present- and future-oriented lifeworld; a highly differentiated awareness of history, which has come part and parcel of education and daily life."¹³ Heritage is no longer solely being interpreted through the physical sites, subject to preservation. Heritage is also being interpreted

11 "Oregon State Legislature," accessed April 23rd, 2012. <http://www.leg.state.or.us/capinfo/>

12 Smith, Laurajane, *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge. 2006, 74.

13 Bendix, Regina, "Heritage Between Economy and Politics: an Assessment from the Perspective of Cultural Anthropology," in *Intangible Heritage*, ed. Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa. London: Routledge. 2009, 256.

through online visual representations of visitors' experiences with it. Preservation efforts are being extended to purely digital realms, which are also perceived of as being in danger of disappearing. More analysis of pathways of heritage that extend from physical spaces into user-created online content, however, should be conducted.

The images and videos people post might have their authenticity questioned, however, the images visitors create and access digitally are a valid collection of non-physical heritage sites that, in the case of the Capitol mural, can be compared and contrasted with the institutionally created and maintained original at the heritage site. Ultimately, any analysis of heritage sites must now consider those interpretations of digital materials created by visitors that extend the maintenance of the cultural and social values implicit in heritage into online, globally accessible forums. This must be done even if these online forums are not those of the institution that maintains the physical heritage site.

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The Big Green: Historical Perspectives on the Willamette National Forest, 1893-1993

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The Big Green sits off to the east of Salem, misty and magnificent. Better known as the Willamette National Forest, it is the largest public space overseen by one landlord in Marion County. It covers twenty-seven percent of the county and has been under the stewardship of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for more than one hundred years. What is offered here is not a full-blown history of the forest, as space limitations prevent that, but some decade by decade historical perspectives focusing on unusual events, ideological shifts and public interaction on the forest. This is a story of how the citizens of the Valley have impacted the forest and how the forest has impacted them. On a final note of introduction, this distillation of key events of the Willamette National Forest would have been impossible without the work of forest historian Gerald W. Williams, and the late forest historians Lawrence and Mary Rakestraw; the author is indebted to them for their years of painstaking work.

The First Nations Era

Oregon Indians were living in the Valley and the Big Forest for thousands of years. The Big Green was a land of Douglas-Fir, sometimes ten feet in diameter, growing along the river courses and running well into the mountains. Western red cedar, grand fir, western hemlock, Pacific-silver fir, Alaska-cedar and noble fir, then and now, also graced the forests of the western Cascades. Collectively it is believed that the forests of the Pacific Northwest compose the greatest biomass in the history of the planet. As author David Middleton notes, "The weight of the forest is twice that found in the mythic tropical rain forests, and if the creatures of the earth are included in the tally, the sheer number of species present in these forests exceeds that found anywhere else."²

The forests were home to Roosevelt Elk, black-tailed deer, black bear, bobcat, mountain lion, pine marten, river otter, beaver, Cascade timber wolf, pekan or fisher, and occasionally grizzly bears, along with scores of smaller species. The forest was not unbroken; however, the Kalapuya and Mollala peoples managed the forests using fire to create prairie openings in the Valley and meadows on the sides of hills and mountains. As early Oregon pioneer John Minto recorded in 1908 at the age of eighty-six, "The Molalla tribe...set fire in the Cascade Range...fire was their agency in improving game range and berry picking."³ And just as

1. "Marion County Comprehensive Land Use Plan Background and Inventory Report." Salem: Marion County Planning Division, 1982, 51. Figures here were used in determining the portion of the county with in the Willamette National Forest.
2. Bill Foertney and David Middleton, *The Nature of America*. New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1997, 39.
3. Gerald W. Williams, *The U.S. Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest: A History*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2009, 16.

muscles are striated, there were bands of trees moving down the hillsides of different ages and sizes. Some sections of the forest were broken up by the fire and were heavy with snags and open forage. Abundant summer huckleberries were a gift the mountain hillsides gave annually to the people. The First Nations were also the first-namers of the Cascade forests, and such names as Santiam, Molalla and Olallie refer today both to the Indian people and the land and water resources of our mountains.

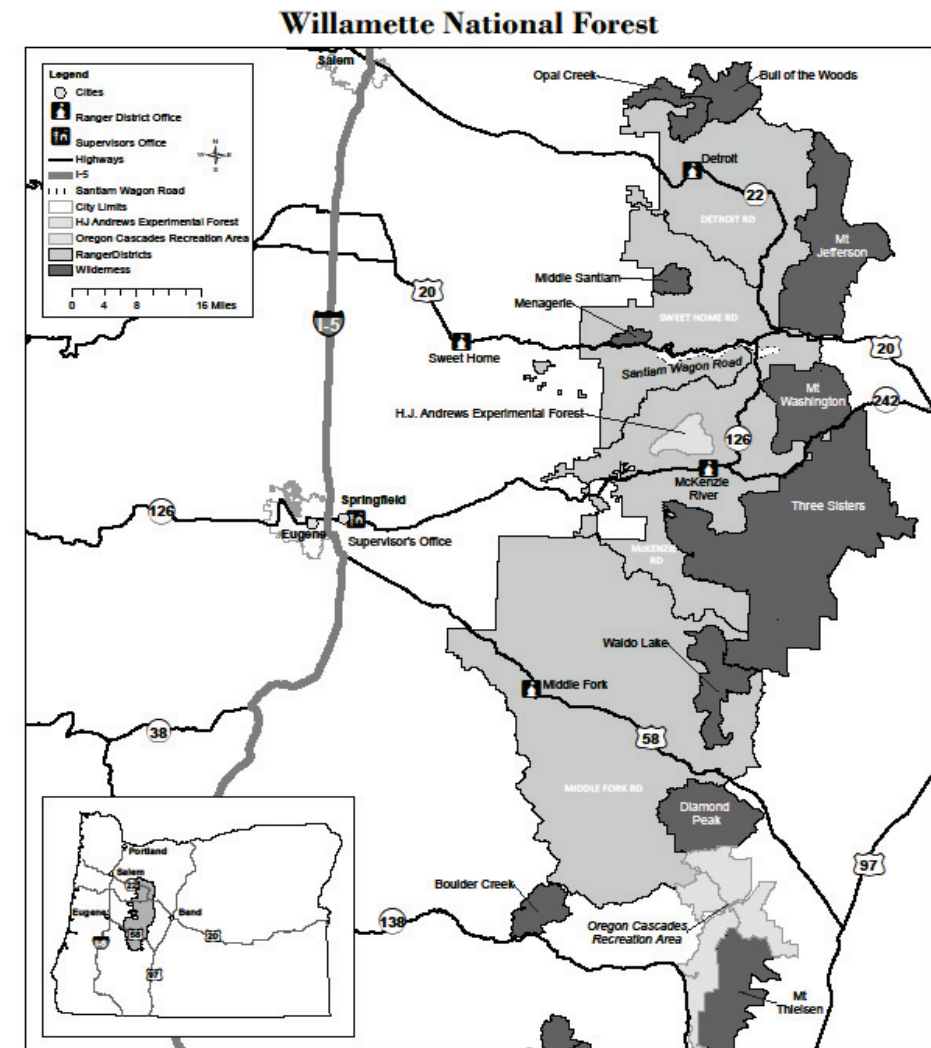


Figure 1. The Willamette National Forest.

Establishing the Federal Forest, 1890s

In the century of settlement, the 1800s, the Willamette Valley and nearby hills were so rich with big timber and venison there was little reason to take the resources from the mountain valleys of the Cascade Range. It required days of travel to get from towns along the Willamette

River into the heart of the Old Cascades and the high volcanic peaks along the crest. But change was in the offing. Oregon in the 1880s saw great industrial and inventive transformation. As a case in point, in the early 1870s, Salem had no electric lights, no telephones, and no transcontinental connecting rail lines. By 1890, the city had all three. In 1883 the Northern Pacific Railroad reached Portland, with connections out of Salem, that could take travelers to Chicago in less than a week. In 1887 the Southern Pacific line was completed going over the Siskiyou Summit and into the Golden State. Wild land was becoming farm and ranch land. In 1890, historians and census bureau officials noted that there was no more “frontier line;” the Great West had been largely settled. The accompanying tragedy, which must never be forgotten, was that the numerous Indian nations had largely succumbed to disease or been forced onto secondary reservation lands.

Accompanying the changes of the late 19th century was a shift in mentality regarding the millions of acres under the dominion of the United States General Land Office. Instead of selling land or giving it away as homesteads, a priority was placed on holding land in reserves to protect natural resources as the country industrialized and became a world power. Under the Forest Reserve Act of 1891, President Grover Cleveland used his authority to establish, within the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Cascade Range Forest Reserve. The date was September 28, 1893.⁴ The Big Green was huge. It was 235 miles long, running from Mt. Hood to south of Crater Lake, and was nearly four and a half million acres in size. Persuasive voices in Oregon, including William Gladstone Steel and Salem’s Judge John Breckenridge Waldo, had long been advocating for the creation of such a reserve.⁵

Management Shift to the Department of Agriculture & Early Controversies, 1900-1910

Gifford Pinchot, the Chief Forester over the reserves, did not suffer incompetence gladly. In the 1890s the forest stewards were political appointees, and the Yale and European educated Pinchot insisted on trained foresters of proven ability. Theodore Roosevelt agreed. In addition to more rigorous hiring procedures under the Civil Service, the forests were shifted out of Interior and into the Department of Agriculture on February 1, 1905. Later that year the name of the division was changed from the Bureau of Forestry to the Forest Service.⁶

The Cascade Forest Reserve was quartered in 1908 into the Oregon, Cascade, Umpqua and Crater National Forests. The Cascade Reserve, and part of the Oregon, comprised what is today Willamette National Forest. In 1911, the southern part of the Oregon and the northern part of the Cascade Reserve were joined to form the Santiam National Forest. Finally, in 1933, the Willamette National Forest came into being as the Santiam and Cascade were organized as one forest of nearly 1.7 million acres.⁷

4. Williams, *U.S. Forest Service*, 41.

5. Lawrence and Mary Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette National Forest*. Eugene: USDA Forest Pacific Northwest, 1991, Ch 1. 1 & 2. <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed March 27, 2012.

6. Williams, *U.S. Forest Service*, 59.

7. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12 Ch 3. 4 of 56.

The Big Green was the center of several controversies even in those early years. For starters, was publically owned forest and meadow land to be available for sheep owners to graze their private stock? Pinchot was an advocate of multiple-use of the forests, but on the subject of sheep grazing he agreed with preservationist John Muir.⁸ Sheep punish the land, as they graze meadows down to the bare soil. Despite this, and strong voices against the wool growers, some grazing was allowed, and the challenge for forest managers was to regulate this activity by having the shepherds regularly move their sheep to new forage.

Another controversy from the early twentieth century was the “widespread use of homestead laws to get the title to homesteads to be sold to lumber companies.”⁹ The most egregious example of devious use of public lands was the “11-7” case of 1904-1905. These “homesteads” were near Marion Forks in the Santiam Canyon in township eleven and range seven. Ten claimants, who were supposed to have lived on and worked their claims, were proven to have never been within thirty miles of their claims. After a lengthy trial in Portland, a number of people were convicted and did jail time or paid fines. The convicted included Oregon U.S. Senator John H. Mitchell, Congressman John Williamson, and U.S. District Attorney Franklin P. Mays.¹⁰



Figure 2. First auto to cross the Cascade Range. 1904 Oldsmobile "Old Scout" with driver Dwight Huss drove over the Santiam Wagon (Toll) Road for the opening of the Lewis and Clark Exposition. Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

As forest historian Gerald Williams notes, one of the most unusual events on the Big Green in the Theodore Roosevelt years was the trans-America auto race of 1905. “Old Scout,” a seven horse-power Oldsmobile, won a two car race across the country in 44 days, 3 hours and 25 minutes.¹¹ The cars were racing in conjunction with Portland’s Columbia Exposition. This was an event organized in recognition of the one hundredth anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. “Old Scout” led the way through central Oregon and crossed the mountains on the Santiam Wagon Road, which ran

8. Williams, *U.S. Forest Service*, 52.

9. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12 Ch 3. 13 of 56.

10. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12 Ch 3. 17 of 56.

11. Williams, *U.S. Forest Service*, 35. Dwight B. Huss and Milford Wigle were the driver and mechanic in the winning car. See “Dash Across the Continent” and “Continued Upon Journey” in the *Daily Oregon Statesman*, June 21 & 22 1905 and “Old Scout in Salem and “Old Scout Wins Race” in *The Morning Oregonian* June 21 & 22, 1905.

from Prineville, through Sisters, over the summit into Sweet Home, and then Lebanon. The winning team arrived in Portland on June 21, 1905 and won \$1,000.00.

One hundred years ago, the animal kingdom in Oregon was still largely divided into the “good” animals that one managed for game and the “bad” animals that killed game. Bounties on predators started with a low of \$2 for a bobcat and topped out at \$50 for a wolf. A dead cougar could earn a hunter \$30.¹² The population of wolves, wolverine, cougar and Grizzly bear plummeted all over the West, including in Oregon’s national forests. Today a bounty system organized against all carnivores would seem extreme, but we must remind ourselves that in those years the majority of people still lived on farms and used the horse and buggy. What families ate they mostly raised themselves and did not visit town on a moment’s notice. Poultry, sheep and cattle were taken by foxes, coyotes and wolves then just as they are today. The reduction in the number of predators, most folks would have argued, had a direct impact on with survival.

The Forest and the Kingdom of the Car, 1910-1920

1910 to 1920 was the decade of the car. Until this time, the Big Green was not visited by large numbers of people. It was simply too hard to access a largely roadless forest, and there was enough standing timber to meet the demand for lumber by using privately owned wood lots and tree farms. There was an exception, the harvesting of some Incense cedar and Sugar pine in the early days of the Cascade Reserve. Incense cedar is the “world’s leading pencil wood,”¹³ and is found from the Oregon Cascades south into the mountains of California.

Times were changing, and as historian Carlos Schwantes records, the number of Oregonians per automobile in 1910 was one to one hundred and twenty-seven; by 1920 there was one car for every 6.8 people.¹⁴ The auto went from an oddity to a necessity in a relatively short period of time. Cars meant roads, and roads meant access to once faraway places. In 1919, Oregon was the first state to levy a gasoline tax for the purpose of constructing roads.¹⁵ The Federal Road Act of 1916, and other measures soon after, propelled road construction in the forest.

Accompanying the roads were summer homes and campgrounds. The first of Oregon’s national forest campgrounds was at Eagle Creek in the Columbia Gorge – opened in 1916.¹⁶

12. Williams, *U.S. Forest Service*, 74. The Rakestraws note that the price per wolf pelt had dropped to \$32.50 by 1924, suggesting that there were so few wolves left there was little demand to rid the forest of the remaining wolves. However, the highest bounty was still rewarded for this least common predator showing that feelings against the wolf ran deep. By 1940 wolves in the Cascades were so rare it was hard to verify a genuine sighting of *Canis lupus*. Today, we once again have a wolf in the Cascades, as a lone male wolf wandered away from his pack in the Wallowa Country and was tracked into northern California in the winter of 2011-2012.

13. Stephen Arno And Ramona P. Hammerly, *Northwest Trees: Identifying and Understanding the Region’s Native Tree*. Seattle: The Mountaineers. Seattle. 1977, 115.

14. Carlos Arnaldo Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History*. Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, 371.

15. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 370.

16. Williams, *U.S. Forest Service*, 95.

Also related to recreation, the Pacific Crest Trail, known in Oregon in its early days as the Skyline Trail, was first blazed in 1920 by a team of men under the leadership of recreation ranger Fred Cleator. The men roughed out a trail from Crater Lake to Three Finger Jack Mountain and communicated their progress to forest headquarters by means of carrier pigeons.¹⁷

In those years, as the Rakestraws note, the principle use of the forest was still for grazing sheep. For the ranchers it was a bargain at two pennies per animal per month. The Eastern Oregon forests saw far more sheep grazing on their upper elevation meadows than did the Big Green, which was heavier with trees. For example, on the Wenaha Forest in the northern Blue Mountains, there were more than 100,000 sheep being grazed in the summer of 1913.¹⁸ On the Big Green in 1910 (which was the peak grazing year) there were 44,600.¹⁹



Figure 3. McGreer’s sheep grazing on Tombstone Prairie, 1927. Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

The Inter-War Years, 1920-1940

In the early 1920s there was a decision to upgrade our national forest maps and the Big Green was in the initial selection. The upgrade was needed. Today, we know that the Willamette is peppered with over 350 lakes ranging in size from Frosty Lake at one-half acre to the magnificent Waldo Lake at 6,420 acres and over 400 feet deep.²⁰ During the aforementioned survey, over 120 lakes were found and mapped for the first time, and some mountains depicted on old maps were “not found” and expunged from the records.²¹ There was also a growing interest to plant fish in the forest’s lakes. Forest rangers planted 96,000 fish in 1921, and that number grew to 215,000 in twenty-one lakes in 1936.²²

Some of the very earliest logging on the forest was railroad logging near the village of Detroit during World War I. By 1894 a rail line operated by the Corvallis and Eastern Railroad ran up

17. Williams, *U.S. Forest Service*, 99.

18. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 103.

19. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 3. 20 of 56.

20. “Lakes of the Willamette National Forest.” Portland: Information & Education Section – Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, revised 7-81.

21. Williams, *U.S. Forest Service*, 101.

22. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 4. 11 & 12 of 27.

the Santiam to Idanha where the Hoover Lumber Company had established a mill.²³ The first really large lumber sales on the northern end of the Big Green, however, occurred in 1924 along the Breitenbush River close to where it debouches into the Santiam River. The Humbug Creek sale exceeded seventy-seven million board feet [mbf] - a board foot is wood a foot square and one inch thick. Lumber extraction on the forest increased, reaching 514 mbf in 1929.²⁴ But 1929 was a year of disaster as The Great Depression caused the lumber industry to constrict dramatically. Schwantes reports things grew so desperate that men were intentionally setting the forests on fire and then seeking work as fire fighters.²⁵

Fortunately, the nation's forests, with the Willamette as a leader, proved to be a tonic in dire times as Franklin D. Roosevelt used them to supply work for the Civilian Conservation Corps [CCC]. Hundreds of thousands of young men were enrolled for up to four six-month terms as forest workers.²⁶ The men were from 18 to 23 years old and remitted \$25 of their monthly pay of \$30 back home to their all-too-often unemployed parents. From 1933 to 1942 Oregon annually averaged over fifty operational CCC camps with each camp housing 200 workers; the great majority of these camps were located in the national forests.²⁷



Figure 4. Bunk houses at Oakridge CCC camp F-25, Willamette National Forest. Courtesy of Oregon State University Archives.

The work of the CCC was a great boon with regard to the long-term vision that forest supervisors had for their forests. Tree thinning, trail building, fire breaks, reforestation, road building, constructing lookout homes and towers (396 houses and 281 towers on the Region Six-Pacific Northwest forests), etc., were accomplished in the forests.²⁸ There were four major CCC camps on the Big Green, with one, the Cascadia, located on the northern end of the forest where Canyon Creek meets the Santiam River. During the CCC years, there were thirty-seven lookouts built on high

places in the forest and over eighty "campgrounds, picnic sites, winter sports areas, organization camps and observation points."²⁹

Of interest to historians was the finding of an old wagon road in 1936. It was attributed to an 1853 attempt to cross the Cascades and improve upon the standard Oregon-Applegate Trail. The travelers suffered when they were caught in the October snows of the high mountains. A team of Willamette Valley workers had blazed the trail, but had not removed the downed trees from the trail, thus stranding the pioneers. One vintage wagon was recovered along the trail and placed in the Lane County Museum.³⁰ In the late 1850s, with sufficient time and supplies, a military wagon road over Willamette Pass was constructed near this 1853 trail.

The Forest in the Second World War, 1940s

World War II created an immense demand for the Big Green's lumber. Furthermore, the need for lumber was enduring and changed the face and management of the forest in the decades that followed. The amount of timber sold increased ten-fold in just over ten years from 14 mbf in 1932 to 144 mbf in 1944.³¹ War needs propelled this juggernaut, as did a doubling in the price for lumber between 1940 and 1944. The ability to "get out the cut" by means of new power saws assisted in this process. Reluctance to jettison the familiar cross cut saws was addressed in 1942 when a seven foot diameter Douglas fir was cut down with a power saw in just 18 minutes, as opposed to two hours using cross-cuts.³²

This sharp increase in demand also ended the discussion of the 1930s over selective cutting versus clear cuts. Clear cutting triumphed. Douglas fir is not tolerant, which is to say, it does not flourish well under the shade of cedar and hemlock trees. Clear cutting hastened the ability to get out the cut, simplified road building schemes and allowed a pure, sun rich, replanting of Douglas fir on optimal open sites.³³ Clear cutting remained the industry standard until the "new forestry" approach, touted by Jerry Franklin, won a noteworthy following in the 1980s.³⁴

A welcome assist on the Big Green was the general public's willingness to work on the forest during the war years. Volunteers, many from local hiking and mountaineering clubs, manned forest lookout stations. Salem's Chemketan Hiking Club staffed the Battle Ax Mountain lookout on the boundary of today's Opal Creek and Bull-of-the-Woods Wilderness Areas.³⁵

29. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 4. 16 of 27.

30. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 142. A relief party finally reached the train and helped bring people into the valley. To learn more, see *Oregon Historic Trails Report*. Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner & Joyce White. Salem: Oregon Trails Coordinating Council, 1998, p.227-229

31. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 4. 7 of 27.

32. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 134.

33. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 137

34. William Dietrich, *The Final Forest: the Battle for the Last Great Trees of the Pacific Northwest*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992, 117-119.

35. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 4. 19 of 27.

23. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 3. 41 of 56. Early Oregon entrepreneur, T. Egerton Hogg, had envisioned a transcontinental railroad crossing through Oregon. Idanha is as far as he got.

24. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 93.

25. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 382.

26. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 116.

27. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 4. 17 of 27.

28. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 118.

Of equal importance were the husband and wife teams who helped to protect the forest from the possibility of Japanese incendiary bombs torching the Willamette. The teams provided a twenty-four hour watch from the forest towers.³⁶ Their work began in 1942 and continued until radar warning systems were put in place in 1944. This was the year Japan sent thousands of fire balloons eastward across the Pacific. Fifty-four of the roughly 2,000 magnesium balloon bombs that reached North American were found in Oregon.³⁷

Women were employed on the Oregon and Washington forests for the first time in large numbers during the war. In District Six alone there were 246 female employees.³⁸ Oregon and Washington's large numbers of war-era female workers (46% of Boeing's 50,000 workers at the height of the war were women) sparked fears of financial downturn and high inflation after the war. But the fears were unfounded and the demand for lumber remained strong. The projected economic downturn was checked by thousands of returning servicemen going to college on the G.I. Bill instead of taking jobs and by the unprecedented demand for new home construction.³⁹ War workers earning double-time had saved money and were big spenders in America's post-war economic boom. Instead of dropping, demand for lumber from the Big Green grew, and out of 155 national forests, the Willamette became the number one producer of lumber for many years.

Leopold or Lumber, 1950-1970

In 1949 Aldo Leopold's classic work, *A Sand County Almanac*, was posthumously published.⁴⁰ Leopold set forth – with a Wisconsin woodsman's common sense - a holistic approach to land management. He taught his readers to “think like a mountain,” which is to say that a mountain, to truly be a mountain, is not just a shape against the horizon but rather the entire host of plants and animals, soils and springs, everything that makes the mountain a biological storm of interconnected life.⁴¹ A wolf had as much of a claim to live on the mountain as did a warbler, or a wildflower. Thus by application, Leopold believed that forest silviculturists needed to recalibrate their primary mission away from just the annual cut in order to see the forest in all of its ecological richness. There were other foresters who shared this vision, but these folks were ahead of their time. Intensified logging continued to typify management of forests like the Big Green. What ensued was a fifty year wrestling match pitting two ideologies which led to resource wars on the forest. In the 1950s this fight of protection versus profits was still in the future.

For the first time in years, the Willamette turned a profit in 1951. Demand was high because much of Oregon's private and corporate timberlands had been cut. Furthermore, the 1944

Sustained Yield Management Act was worded so as to favor federal forests ramping up the cut to meet public and foreign demand for lumber.⁴² There was some discussion as to what “sustained yield” actually meant, but what it did not mean, as time would tell, was that the Willamette would set a stable bar for an annual allowable cut in millions of board feet and then be able to match that cut on into perpetuity. The number of sales went up each year, and the volume of board feet went up as well. The cut in 1950 was 308.5 mbf. Road building replaced rail lines, and the miles of road on the forest went from 950 miles in 1954 to nearly 3,800 by 1972.⁴³

Activities included the construction of the 3,580 acre Detroit Reservoir on the Detroit Ranger District in 1952. This project required moving the small town of Detroit a half mile northwest and uphill from its original location.⁴⁴ The reservoir, which averages over one hundred feet deep, is one of Marion and Linn Counties most popular public spaces with campgrounds, a marina and nearby hiking trails. The Big Green received thirty-one inches of rain in December 1964, leading to a huge flood which sent walls of water and trees down the North Santiam and Breitenbush Rivers and which left a 230 acre debris field in the reservoir.⁴⁵ The same flood also caused a landslide that cut off the water supply to a fish hatchery near the McKenzie River with the loss of over 2.3 million Chinook and Steelhead fingerlings.⁴⁶

Mining was another focus in the forest. For decades unscrupulous squatters had abused the spirit of the Mining Law of 1872 by using the law to secure forest homesteads without actually mining their claims. In 1955, the old law was revised, and by 1960 forest personnel were actively evaluating and reassessing the validity of the claims. Of 216 claims on the Willamette, 199 were considered to be questionable and some families lost their forest getaways.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the removal of timber on the claims was now forbidden unless overseen by the forest employees. The most contentious mining claim reviews - ones that seemed to defy resolution - were along the Little North Fork of the Santiam where mining disputes and road easements quarrels had gone on for decades.⁴⁸

Wilderness debates – over saving land in pristine condition or not - was a topic reaching full steam in the 1960s. The subject was a bellwether showing that the public, in the words of one former forest supervisor, had become “less deferential” and now insisted that their voices be

42. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 4. 26 of 27.

43. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 5. 11 of 41.

44. Lewis L. McArthur, *Oregon Geographic Names*. Fifth edition. Portland: Western Imprints: The Press of the Oregon Historical Society, 1982, 220.

45. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 221.

46. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 249.

47. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 5. 6 of 41.

48. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 5. 11 of 41.

36. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 131.

37. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 131.

38. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 160.

39. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 423.

40. Aldo Leopold died fighting a fire on a neighbor's farm in 1948. His son Luna prepared his father's draft of *A Sand County Almanac* for publication the next year.

41. Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac: With Essays on Conservation from Round River*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1970, 137.

heard in the management of the Big Green.⁴⁹ Land had been set aside as primitive areas on the national forests as early as the 1920s, but as Williams notes, of sixty-seven areas so designated, only four actually excluded road building, logging and grazing.⁵⁰ The Wilderness Act of 1964 saw these primitive areas treated differently. The Act required the wild land to be “untrammeled” and with “the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.”⁵¹ Moreover, groups like the Sierra Club saw a rise in membership from just under 6,000 people in 1947 to more than 70,000 in 1970. Accordingly, there were intense and ongoing debates about what qualified as wilderness and how much should be saved.⁵²

The region on the Big Green grabbing a national spotlight was the French Pete Creek Valley and whether or not it should be added to the Three Sisters Wilderness Area. But on the northern end of the forest there was another heated debate about the proper status and management of Marion Lake and whether or not the lake should be added into the Mount Jefferson Wilderness Area. There were strongly polarized opinions on this matter. Marion Lake is a beautiful 360 acre lake with a stunning view of Three Fingered Jack, off to the south.⁵³ Fishermen from the Salem, Lebanon and Albany areas had for many years been rigging up tandem tied bicycles and using them to roll small boats two and one-half miles up the trail to a little marina on the lake. There was also a ranger station there. Under a strict constructionist reading of the Wilderness Act it seemed clear that the boat dock and ranger station were in violation.

To complicate matters, in 1966 the National Historic Preservation Act was passed and focused a beam of light on old structures which were historically a “living part of our community life.”⁵⁴ The ranger station (at one time a home) and the marina had been a part of the Marion Lake culture for many years. In October 1968, wilderness purists won the debate and the lake was added to the wilderness area; the boat dock was removed and the ranger station razed. A compromise would have been to add the lake to the wilderness but still respect the culture of use that had developed. It should also be noted that with the passage of the Wilderness Act, the public use of the wilderness areas skyrocketed. For example, the Three Sisters Wilderness Area saw an increase in use that went from 64,000 to 193,000 visitors between 1965 and 1971.⁵⁵

49. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 5. 2 of 41.

50. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 145.

51. “The Wilderness Act of 1964.” Wilderness.net. University of Montana. <http://www.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=NWPS&sec=legisAct#2> - accessed March 23, 2012.

52. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 5. 17 of 41.

53. “Lakes of the Willamette National Forest.” Portland: Information & Education Section – Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, revised 7-81.

54. “National Historic Preservation Act of 1966”, As Amended through 2006 [With Annotations]. <http://www.achp.gov/docs/nhpa%2008-final.pdf> - accessed April 26, 2012.

55. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 6. 22 of 45.

The purist vision was taken to extremes, to the point that it would only be enough for some wilderness lovers if every last untouched acre on the forest were to be forever off limits, including no thinning on parts of the forest which had not seen a fire in decades. In fact, fire suppression had worked too well and created huge fuel loads which led to the 97,000 acre B&B Fire of 2003. An argument offered in response to those who bemoaned the taking of large amounts of lumber off of the Willamette National Forest was Ewald Street in Salem, Hill Street in Albany, Yamhill Street in Portland, and Washington Street in Eugene. It was thousands of similar streets lined with hundreds of thousands of homes built with lumber that had come off of the Big Green in the Northwest including those owned by the environmental community, who wanted to lock up the forest. This counterargument carried a lot of weight.

Clash of the Titans: RARE I and RARE II, 1970-1985

In spite of the wilderness additions of the 1960s, the cutting of timber on the Willamette continued at a tremendous rate. Big Green, with few exceptions, annually provided from thirteen to sixteen percent of the total volume of Pacific Northwest lumber harvested in the 1970s and 80s.⁵⁶ This figure is impressive given that the Willamette is just one of sixteen forests in Region Six. The greatest volume of lumber ever taken off the forest was 945.1 million board feet in 1973.⁵⁷ Big Green was the alpha male when it came to PNW lumber harvests.

Simultaneously, new laws were being passed by Congress which mandated greater public input in the management of forest resources. Forest supervisors, in a nearly impossible balancing act, worked to address the concerns of scores of lumber companies and tens of thousands of forest workers, against the concerns of environmental organizations which were trying to save all facets of the forest. Congress passed a raft of new legislation related to the national forests. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 mandated that environmental impact statements accompany forest planning. The Endangered Species Act of 1973 sought to identify and, if possible, restore endangered species of plants and animals on federal lands. The Freedom of Information Act of 1974 secured access to federal records for the general public, including Forest Service documents. The National Forest Management Act of 1976 required public input up front in the initial stages of forest planning, not just as an afterthought.⁵⁸ Citizens of very disparate values engaged in fierce debate over the forest.

But it was the process initiated in the 1970s, called the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation, RARE I and RARE II, which most dramatically raised questions about what qualified as sound

56. This figure was arrived at by using tables in the appendices in the work by the Rakestraws; *History of the Willamette National Forest*. Appendices. P. 4 of 5. <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, and figures arrived at from tables provided in the oft cited work by Gerald Williams, *The United States Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest*, Appendix E, 371 & 372.

57. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Appendices, 4 of 5.

58. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 6. 37-41 of 45.

stewardship on the Big Green. Every national forest in the country was required to catalog each roadless unit 5,000 acres in size, or larger, and evaluate the unit against the standards set down in the Wilderness Act of 1964. Nationwide, during RARE I, 1,448 areas were identified for review. On the Willamette there were ten areas so identified by forest personnel and, initially, four units were recommended for possible designation as wilderness.⁵⁹ These areas were relatively high in elevation and bordered the already existing Mount Jefferson, Mount Washington and Three Sisters Wilderness Areas. Selecting only four units raised fervent protest from backpackers, biologists and much of the general public, a cry that could be heard all the way to the Potomac. The deduction made was that the rest of the forest was suitable for lumber sales. Similar protests occurred on forests all over the country and environmentalists got RARE I thrown out and revived as RARE II in 1977.



Figure 5. Jefferson Park, Mt. Jefferson Primitive Area, Willamette National Forest. Courtesy of Oregon State University Archives.

RARE II was equally controversial, as interested parties tried to gerrymander oddly shaped units in or out of consideration based on loving wilderness or loving lumber. The proof that Oregonians cared deeply about this issue is that out of 260,000 opinions registered regarding RARE II, 58,606 were from Oregon, that is over twenty-two percent of the national respondents.⁶⁰ Each Big Green unit was critiqued under a Wilderness Attribute Rating System Score based on a given unit's natural integrity, apparent naturalness, opportunity for solitude, primitive recreation, and other ecological, geological and cultural factors.⁶¹ Only two Willamette areas made the final cut for wilderness designation: Bull-of-the-Woods (most of which is in the Mt. Hood National Forest) and additions to the Mount Washington Wilderness.

It was during the RARE II years that Earth First!, a hard-core environmental group, was formed and attracted a notable following in Eugene. Earth Firsters occasionally resorted to

“monkey wrenching” – spiking trees and fouling the gasoline tanks of timber company equipment. They targeted the Willamette in 1985 to protest some old growth timber sales, with old growth being defined - when using a very minimalist definition - as trees which are at least twenty-one inches in diameter, over 180 years in age, and characterized by ragged tops and deeply furrowed bark.⁶² The wilderness defenders began building micro-living stations in the tree tops to stop the upcoming clear cuts. In one such contest in the canopy, Ron Huber lived in his tree for ten days thus stopping a timber harvest until deputies from the Sweet Home District brought in a huge crane and wrestled Huber out of his tree.⁶³

Families which depended on timber sales for their income thought of Earth First! contemptuously, so much so that some had posters and bumper stickers which said “Earth First! We’ll log the other planets later.”⁶⁴ RARE II ran into a road block in the form of the Ninth Circuit Court in San Francisco, and the process of wilderness protection was temporarily derailed.

Not popular with many people, was the Oregon Wilderness Act of 1984 which saw the total percent of the Big Green dedicated to wilderness rise to just short of 381,000 acres out of nearly 1.7 million acres, or about 22.7% of the forest. The majority of the land in wilderness was above 4,000 feet. Two new wilderness additions, Waldo Lake Wilderness and Bull-of-the-Woods Wilderness, are each about 37,000 acres in size and serve to demonstrate the frustration surrounding forest land use. Both areas are heavily forested with some big trees, trees that timber companies wanted to harvest, while organizations like the Oregon Wilderness Coalition had lobbied to have more acreage locked up.

The Tipping Point, 1985-1993

What concerned forest biologists like Chris Maser of Oregon State University (OSU) were the forgotten creatures of the Creation. Long before the Northern spotted owl became the best known indicator species under the Endangered Species Act (or the next meal of contemplation for a lumber jack), Maser had studied the amazing interconnections of the plants and animals on the Big Green. Statements, such as the following by former Regional Forester Dick Worthington, could not have encouraged Maser: “The reason the Region 6 had such a low amount [of proposed wilderness] was the high value of timber on these areas,” or “In reality, classification of land as wilderness means locking up large acres for the use of very few people.”⁶⁵ Did the public need to use every portion of the forest, in order for the forest to be considered public? Were there not low elevation animal treasures within the forest which could not be measured in dollars?

59. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 6. 21 of 45.

60. Rakestraw, *History of the Willamette*, <http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/willamette/chap1.htm> - accessed 3-27-12, Ch 6. 21 of 45.

61. “Wilderness Attributes and Their Components” PART II: CREATION OF CLASSIFIED WILDERNESS AREAS. <http://www.caves.org/section/ccms/Wild/PARTIIICR.htm> - accessed April 26, 2012.

62. Appendices – Volume I. Final Environmental Impact Statement: Land and Resource Management Plan. Willamette National Forest. Volume I. B-19. Portland: Pacific Northwest Region. 1990, Appendix B – 19.

63. Williams, U. S. Forest Service, 266.

64. “Transitions. Inland Empire Public Lands Council. Volume 9, Number 4, July/August 1996. <http://www.waterplanet.ws/transitions/tr9607.pdf> - accessed April 26, 2012.

65. Williams, U. S. Forest Service, 290.

Maser and his colleagues' mastery of forest knowledge is impressive and worth recounting here. The Big Green's old growth was primarily a travel zone, and winter hiding cover, for the big ungulates - deer and elk - but it was also packed with up to 150 species of smaller animals and well over 1,000 invertebrates. As William Dietrich in *The Final Forest* notes, the O.S.U. biologists determined that the clear, cold old growth streams were able to raise "seven times the fish" as a stream in a cut over area.⁶⁶ Areas all too often thought of by timber industry leaders as biological dead zones were life zones. Each old giant Douglas fir was dressed with up to 440 pounds of oxygen generating needles.⁶⁷ A single tree was a sky scraper of life for Pileated woodpeckers, Chickaree squirrels, Pine martens, Golden-crowned kinglets, Oregon red tree voles, mosses for metabolizing tree growth, etc.

At the basement level, Maser observed mycorrhizal fungi which enabled the root hairs of big trees to extract nutrients from the soil. Nocturnal northern flying squirrels lived in the big trees where they would launch and glide over 150 feet from fir to fir. Nesting underground in the old-growth of the Big Green were California red-backed voles eating truffles (underground fungi), which were packed with life giving spores. Vole and squirrel frass, or droppings, served as chemically rich conduits scattered throughout forest to perpetuate the cycle of life.⁶⁸ Up in the town house - the upper story of the forest giants - lived the Oregon red tree voles, one of the world's "most specialized arboreal (tree dwelling) mammals".⁶⁹ Potentially hundreds of generations from one family of needle-eating tree voles flourished in a giant fir as they "disperse[d] vertically up and down" the tree. In turn, the voles served as food for pine martens, weasels, bobcats, northern spotted owls, northern saw-whet owls and other predators. Such were the roles of the voles, and other forest creatures in this complex biological system.

The northern spotted owl, *Strix occidentalis caurina*, was part of this matrix, and because of its particular needs, it gained ever growing attention beginning the 1970s and 80s. Once again, it was OSU biologists which set off the alarm regarding the status of the owl and it was near Box Canyon on the Big Green where the first serious studies of the owl took place.⁷⁰ Scientists determined that the owls needed very large home ranges of old growth or their future was bleak.⁷¹ On the Big Green, a 2002 study looked at 161 owl roosting and nesting sites and found 69% were occupied by pairs of owls with a total population of "at least 225 non-juvenile and

66. William Dietrich, *The Final Forest*, 106.

67. Chris Maser, *Forest Primeval: The Natural History of an Ancient Forest*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1989, 99.

68. Maser, *Forest Primeval*, 14-19.

69. Chris Maser, *Mammals of the Pacific Northwest: From the Coast to the High Cascades*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1998, 220.

70. Dietrich, *The Final Forest*, 47.

71. The population of owls, even with old growth areas set aside for their protection, has continued to drop. Barred owls, which are aggressive competitors, moved into the PNW in surprising numbers and have contributed to the decline of *Strix occidentalis* at a rate which has been estimated at a population drop of about 3.5 % a year. See "The Defenders of Wildlife": <http://www.defenders.org/northern-spotted-owl/basic-facts> - accessed April 26, 2012.

67 juvenile owls on the forest."⁷² But the population of the owl continued to drop in the Pacific Northwest. The owl was an endangered "ace" that the wilderness advocates played in drawing attention, not only to the bird, but also to the rapid depletion of the ancient forests of the Pacific Northwest. Men like Maser wanted to save the "ace" and the whole deck of cards as well.

Species protection was just one of three factors in the late 1980s moving the Willamette towards significant change. Second, was the growing number of employees working on the forest who insisted the Willamette represent the people's conservation wishes as fairly as it had the demands of big timber. The principal leader in this movement was Jeff DeBonis, who planned timber sales on the Blue River District. DeBonis saw too many clear cuts and had a change of heart towards forest management. He chose Gifford Pinchot as a model for the balanced conservation the forest had turned away from beginning in the 1950s; he determined he would move the pendulum back.

In 1988 he started the Association of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, or AFSEEE, and a newsletter called "Inner Voice".⁷³ Contentious opinions among forest service employees were cast far and wide through the new technology of email. DeBonis struck a responsive note, and ultimately hundreds of forest service employees voiced the opinion that under federal environmental mandates, and with the forests belonging to the American public, the forest stewards needed to turn away from the unsustainable volume of timber being harvested and manage the forests with new purpose.

Finally, as biologist Chris Maser had witnessed on the Big Green, "by the 1970s, 65 percent of the timber cut occurred above 4,000 feet in elevation, and because the average tree harvested [had] become progressively younger and smaller, the increase in annual acreage cut has been five times greater than the increase in volume cut during the last forty years."⁷⁴ Santiam Pass is at 4,800 feet and if the cutting continued unabated the timber sales would have eventually become subalpine fir. Schwantes concluded: "Many sawmills would have inevitably closed for lack of logs even had there been no owl. The Pacific Northwest timber industry was simply running out of suitable places to cut." Congress pressured forest supervisors to continue enormous lumber sales through the 1980s, however, and ultimately the forests "could not support the heightened level of cutting without sustaining severe environmental damage."⁷⁵ By the late 1980s, this damage was becoming apparent to even long time lumbermen.

Conclusion

By 1993, the year President Clinton called for the Forest Conference in Portland to discuss managing the forests as ecosystems and not - of first importance - as tree farms, the

72. "The Ecology of Northern Spotted Owls (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) on the Willamette National Forest, Oregon Habitat Use and Demography." Corvallis: Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University, 2002. <http://www.reo.gov/monitoring/reports/nso/HJA2002-annual-report.pdf> pages 2, 4.

73. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 266, 267.

74. Maser, *Forest Primeval*, xviii.

75. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 488.

Big Green's direction had already changed. This was true of all the forests of the Pacific Northwest. In Oregon and Washington, the volume of lumber harvested dropped dramatically: 1990 = 3.879 billion board feet (bbf); 1991 = 3.166 bbf; 1992 = 2.140 bbf; 1993 = 1.666 bbf.⁷⁶ On the Willamette, a similar note: in 1990, 526 million board feet was harvested; by 1993, 221.2 mbf. The trend has continued downward. A synergy between interest groups on the forest was more evident with the turn of the new millennium than in the near violent days of the early 1980s. There would still be changes and controversy on the forest, such as the wilderness designation for Opal Creek in 1996, appeals against lumber sales, and big fires - like the B & B in 2003. But after one hundred years, the Big Green seemed somewhat settled as to mission and management.

The first fur trappers to cross the Big Green, over the Indian trail at Santiam Pass, were most likely a small Hudson Bay Company group led by Finan MacDonald and Thomas McKay.⁷⁷ It was the summer of 1825, and the botanist David Douglas, for whom the fir was later named, was with them. We can imagine what Douglas saw: Yew trees whose bark contained the then unrealized cancer-fighting agent called Taxol, Mountain hemlock trees with starry needled tree tops pointing east towards the sun, rare Phantom orchids growing on and around giant nurse logs on the forest floor. For Douglas, the Big Green was a place of adventure, and it is a place for adventure still.



Figure 6. Old growth Douglas-fir with hemlock understory, 1944. Elevation about 3,300 feet. Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

76. Williams, *U. S. Forest Service*, 372,373.

77. Merle Wells, "Finnan MacDonald" in *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West*. Vol. five, ed. Leroy R. Hafen. Glendale, Arizona: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1968, 213.

ST. LOUIS WOMAN Marie Dorion and the St. Louis Cemetery

Johan Mathiesen, Author/Photographer

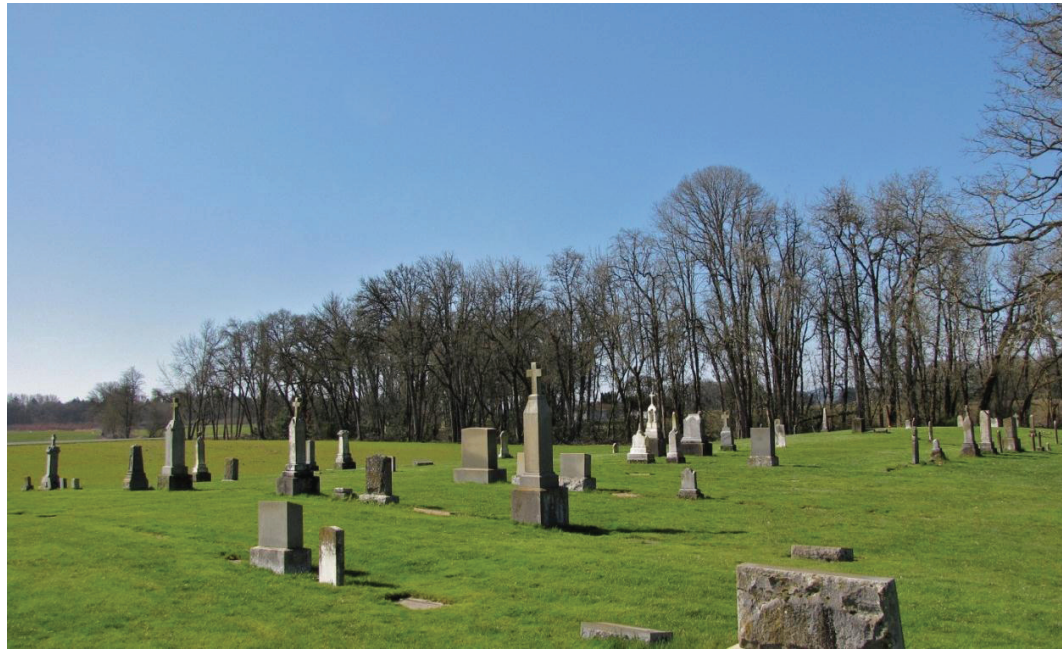


Figure 1. The St. Louis Cemetery (St. Louis, Oregon). Photo courtesy of the author.

Gabriel Franchère described the 1812 Willamette Valley in a few swift pen strokes: “The banks on either side were bordered with forest-trees, but behind that narrow belt, diversified with prairie, the landscape was magnificent; the hills were of moderate elevation, and rising in an amphitheatre. Deer and elk are found here in great abundance.”¹ Franchère had come to Oregon around the Horn aboard the *Tonquin* in the employ of John Jacob Astor (never referred to as plain “John Astor”) to help establish Astoria as a fur trading post and port. He’d gone to the valley to look for food, there already being a supply station there.

Nine years later, Robert Stuart wrote of the Valley as having “astonishing beauty; the fertile soil is gilded with groves of white oaks, ash, cottonwood, black walnuts, birch, and hazelnuts; gently sloping hills show on their flanks and peaks enough pines to blanket the most beautiful scenery imaginable. Innumerable herds of elk fill the valleys, and equal numbers of deer and bear live in the hills. Fish are scarce above the falls; salmon and sturgeon don’t go beyond; but

¹ Franchère, Gabriel. *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America in the Years 1811, 1812, 1813, and 1814.* Translated by: J. V. Huntington. New York: Redfield, 1854. Retrieved 3/9/12, <http://user.xmission.com/~drudy/mtman/html/franchere/index.html>.

otherwise their lack is compensated for by the vast numbers of beavers living on the edge of the Ouallamat. It surpasses everything discovered in this part of North America to date.”²³

At the same time the *Tonquin* left New York for Oregon, an overland party departed from St. Louis, Missouri, intending to reach Astoria at about the same time the *Tonquin* should arrive. They, too, were in the employ of Astor. Before departing for the coast, they wintered over on the Missouri River. The expedition leader, William Price Hunt, took the opportunity to return to St. Louis for more supplies and recruits, and on his way back ran into Daniel Boone, then eighty-five years old. The only recruits he managed to muster were Pierre Dorion⁴ and his wife, Marie, who came burdened with two small children, Jean Baptist, five years old, and Paul, age two. Furthermore, Marie was several months pregnant.

Pierre was a Metis. Metis are persons of mixed Euroamerican (often French)/Native American ancestry. They form a separate class of indigenous people in Canada and have had their own flag since 1814, a white infinity symbol on a blue field. Pierre’s father was French Canadian and his mother was Dakota Sioux. By some accounts, Pierre is known as “the first white resident of South Dakota.”⁵ Marie, for her part, was full Iowa Native American who, at that time, still lived in Iowa. She married Pierre as a teenager.

Pierre and Marie joined the fifty-seven or fifty-eight (depending on who you read) members of the Hunt expedition after being encamped on the banks of the Missouri along with, for a brief time, Sacajawea and Toussaint Charbonneau who were returning home from visiting William Clark in St. Louis. It was a small world.

And a dangerous one. We tend to gloss over the fact that Sacajawea was a slave who had been purchased by Toussaint from the Mandans, where she’d been living. Sacajawea was a Shoshone from the Rocky Mountains. There was some debate amongst the party as to Toussaint’s worth to the expedition but none debated Sacagawea’s qualifications. Slavery was practiced among native tribes. As a rule, slaves were traded a long distance from their point of capture to minimize their willingness to escape. Slaves were a major component of inter-tribal trade. Sacagawea’s knowledge of Indian tongues made her an excellent translator, and accidentally meeting her brother was a great stroke of luck for Lewis and Clark.

² Stuart, Robert, *Voyage from the mouth of the Columbia to Saint Louis, on the Mississippi*, [1821]. Retrieved 3/11/12, <http://www.mtmen.org/mtman/html/wphunt/wphunt.html>. Translation by the author.

³ Lenzen, Connie, CG, St. Paul Mission Historical Society, quoting a US Navy spy, William Slacum, sent in 1837 to “obtaining information about the Oregon settlements.”

“Slacum described the land that he saw. ‘For a distance of 250 miles in extent by 40 in breadth, including both sides the river, (6,500,000 acres) the land is of the most superior quality, rich alluvial deposite, yielding in several instances the first year 50 bushels of fine wheat to the acre. The general aspect of the plains is prairie, but well interspersed with woodlands, presenting the most beautiful scenery imaginable.’

“He concluded that the “Willhamette” was the finest grazing country in the world. In 1818, the Hudson Bay Company had one bull and two cows. In 1836, they had upwards of 1,000 head of neat cattle.”

⁴ Dorion’s name gets spelled in a variety of fashions, often within the same account. I’ve seen it spelled variously as Dorione, Dorian, and Daion, as well as the standard Dorion.

⁵ National Women’s History Museum, <http://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/biography/biographies/marie-dorion/>. Retrieved 3/11/12. How far away from South Dakota Dorion would have been considered a “white person” is an open question.

Sacajawea was also pregnant when she undertook her voyage six years prior to Marie Dorion, and her progeny, born during the journey, was also named Jean Baptiste. As a male, it is beyond my capacity to comprehend childbirth in any sense, but performing it on the side of a footpath through the wilderness stretches my credulity. Oregon didn't have founding fathers so much as founding mothers. Hunt, leader of the expedition, noted the Dorion birth in his journal; they were near where North Powder, Oregon, would someday be:

On every side of us snow blanketed the mountains. The pregnant woman gave birth to her child early the next morning. Her husband remained with her in the camp for a day, then rejoined us on the 31st. His wife rode horseback with her newly born child in her arms. Another child, two years old and wrapped in a blanket, was fastened by her side. One would have thought, from her behavior, that nothing had happened to her....

On the 7th we came to a small stream that led us to an extremely narrow pass through mountains of immense height. Everywhere we found horse trails used by the Indians in hunting deer which must be plentiful here, for we saw many herds of black-tail. The snow disappeared entirely. The Dorion baby died.⁶

As far as we know, the child was never named.

Marie's story didn't end there. After the expedition reached Astoria, Marie and Pierre joined a nine-person (plus two small children) crew back at the mouth of the Boise River in Idaho. From there, her husband headed off with two other men for a remote trapping camp. When word came that there might be trouble with a group of "Bad Snakes," Marie set out to warn the remote camp. Unfortunately, she arrived too late and found Pierre and another man already killed and the third badly wounded. She packed the wounded man onto her horse with her two boys and headed back to the main camp, but the fellow died on the way. Arriving at the main camp, she found everyone there had been butchered in her absence.

She and the children crossed, in the middle of winter, into the Blue Mountains where she survived by killing, smoking and eating her horse.⁷ Come spring, she made it to the Columbia River where she was rescued by Walla Wallas.⁸ Sticking with the French-Metis brand, she moved north to the Okanogan and married Louis Venier, with whom she had a girl, Marguerite, before he, too, was killed. After marrying for a third time (Jean Baptiste Toupin with whom she had two children, Francois and Marianne), she moved to French Prairie and

⁶ *Voyage of Mr. Hunt and his companions from St Louis to the mouth of the Columbia by a new route across the Rocky Mountains [1821]*, "<http://www.mtmen.org/mtman/html/wphunt/wphunt.htm>." Retrieved 3/14/12.

⁷ Or horses, depending on one's source; some accounts claim two.

⁸ Op cit, Franchère, Gabriel. Franchère describes the encounter with the survivors: "About eight o'clock, we passed a little river flowing from the N. W. We perceived, soon after, three canoes, the persons in which were struggling with their paddles to overtake us. As we were still pursuing our way, we heard a child's voice cry out in French — "*arrêtez donc, arrêtez donc*" — (stop! stop!). We put ashore, and the canoes having joined us, we perceived in one of them the wife and children of a man named Pierre Dorion, a hunter, who had been sent on with a party of eight, under the command of Mr. J. Reed, among the Snakes, to join there the hunters left by Messrs. Hunt and Crooks, near Fort Henry, and to secure horses and provisions for our journey. This woman informed us, to our no small dismay, of the tragical fate of all those who composed that party."

took up farming. For that, they buried her under the altar of the rough-hewn, log church at St. Louis.⁹

St. Louis is not the heart of French Prairie, that would be St. Paul, northeast of the crossroads of St. Louis. Running from Salem-Keizer to Champoege, from the Pudding River to the Willamette River, French Prairie was, however, the agricultural heart of Oregon. It is called "French Prairie" on account of Marie Dorion and her French Canadian and Indian friends who were the first to settle there. It was here that Étienne Lucier, a Canadian of French descent, was the first farmer to put down roots in the Pacific Northwest.¹⁰ He was followed by other fur trappers from the Hudson's Bay Company who married Native women and found farming the mild Willamette Valley to be preferable to hunting beavers in the snowy mountains. They were, for the most part, Metis.

Technically, any Native/white mixture is a Metis, but their foundation in Canada as a self-recognized entity stems largely from the original French fur trappers and *coureurs de bois* who opened up the interior of North America to Europeans. Unlike the British, and later the Americans, who tried to recreate a little bit of their homeland wherever they went, the French were content to infiltrate existing communities by moving in with the women. Their offspring became the Metis. During the critical expansion period, when east coast Canadian-American power was taking over western North America, the Metis were at the vanguard. They provided the man - and sometimes woman - power that filled in every exploratory and commercial venture in the new lands. The majority of Oregon trappers were either Metis or Hawaiians. The difference being the Hawaiians apparently all went home, while the Metis blended into the local population. Modern Oregon begins, not with sailing ships coming up the Columbia but with Metis moving into the Willamette Valley.

The Metis brought with them, not only their unique blended culture and style, but their religion: Christianity; specifically, Roman Catholicism. This was fine except that the first Christian ministers in the Oregon Country were Methodists, Jason Lee, et al, at Salem. Eventually, the Metis petitioned for and received Catholic priests who established parishes in St. Paul, St. Louis and Gervais. By and by, other towns would replace the Metis villages in importance; Woodburn would become the de facto capital of the Prairie.¹¹

⁹ Op cit, National Women's History Museum.

¹⁰ Albert Lucier (1880-1899) has the only white bronze marker in St. Louis Cemetery. "White bronze" is a euphemism for zinc.

¹¹ A 1910 census of Woodburn provides us with interesting demographics: out of a population of 1617 people, 593 were born in Oregon; the Midwest provided the next large group with 99 people having been born in Wisconsin, followed by 75 from Illinois, 69 Minnesota, 65 Indiana, and 57 Michigan. Perhaps more revealing are those born out of the US with a startling 56 having been born in Greece, more than twice as many as the next country supplying foreign-borns: Canada with 25. At that late date, probably few of the Canadian-born were from the original stock, but their history might have attracted other Canadians.



Figure 2. Modern photograph of the St. Louis Church. Photo courtesy of the author.

The 1847, the St. Louis parish began in a 25'x25' log cabin under which Marie Dorion was buried in 1850. That building was replaced in 1880 by the present structure and there's some dispute as to where the original church was located and hence an equal debate as to the whereabouts of Marie's remains. The new cemetery is directly behind the church and vicarage.

Bypassed by the highway and eclipsed by surrounding towns, St. Louis and its parish dwindled in the twentieth century. Seven houses now comprise the entire hamlet and the parish has been integrated with Gervais, a nearby, Metis-named, community. The white board church is surmounted by a squat bell tower with a utilitarian spire and minimalist cross. The sides are opened with four Gothic lancet windows each and a stained-glass, lancet-pointed window rises above the front door, with the date 1847 fitted in glass. The rectory sits modestly behind the church,

off to the side, and is approached by a long straight concrete walkway, the yard dominated by an aging cottonwood. The priest has been replaced by a doctor and his family. Across the road blackberry bushes creep over an old shed and snake through the windows. Time goes by before a vehicle passes on either road. It's as quite here as it was in Marie's time.

To the north of the church a separate building, the church hall, pulls close to the road, and flanking its north wall, a one-lane track with the official name of "Dorion Ln." leads back to the cemetery. The lane makes a gentle curve approaching the cemetery through a close-cut field giving the visitor time to appreciate the sober yet fertile setting. The cemetery is backed by a copse of trees and farm fields buffer it from the St. Louis Rd.

The Metis here were soon replaced and augmented on the Prairie by inflowing Americans, Germans and Irish, whose names are etched onto most of the headstones in the acre-or-so graveyard; but the legacy of the French-Canadians remains carved into a handful of early stones which mark the graves of people named Gregoire, Poujade, Coulet, Dubois, Belleque, Aral, Lemery, Courville, Forcier, Lebrun, Crespeau, Foisy and Durette. Luke Gagnon, who signed Dorion's death certificate as a witness, is buried here. There are La Chappelles and Lachappelles here, and one can only imagine the debates that went on around the dinner table as to how to spell the family name.

A debate surely dwarfed by the fracture over which way to orient ones headstone. For the most part pioneer cemeteries orient their stones (and bodies) east-west, and for the most part, so does St. Louis, but a noticeable chunk of old stones resolutely face north-south as if there were a great philosophical split within the community over respectful positioning. As one would imagine, I've found nothing referencing that phenomenon. I suspect the secrets have gone to the grave.

One of the more enigmatic headstones in the cemetery recalls the Toussaint Charbonneau/Sacajawea saga: that of Linda Charbonneau (one "n"; 1950-1957). The spelling difference, as we've seen, is no guarantee that they weren't related. The child born to Sacajawea on the trail was known, variously, as Toussaint Charbonneau (Jr.); Pompey Charbonneau (there's butte in Montana named after him, Pompey's Pillar); or, more familiarly, as Jean Baptiste (surely the most popular Metis name of the time). Jean Baptiste led a full and traveled life. Raised by William Clark after Sacajawea's death, he ventured extensively in Europe and North Africa and was quite a linguist; yet his heart never left his homeland and he returned to the West to trap furs, led hunting expeditions, be a mayor, and mine for gold. He contracted pneumonia while heading to the gold fields of Montana and died in far eastern Oregon where he and a clutch of people are buried next to a former stage stop.¹²



Figure 3. Grave marker of Linda R. Charbonneau. Photo courtesy of the author.

What he didn't apparently do was have children; at least I've found no such intimation in any biography of him. He had a sister, Lisette - possibly named after the great Spanish fur trader, Manuel Lisa - who, also apparently died childless at age twenty-one; which most likely means that young Linda only coincidentally shared a surname with the more famous Jean Baptiste.

The end of French Prairie came in 1848 when a gathering of settlers at Champoege on the banks of the Willamette River voted 52-50 to join with the Americans rather than the English. Two Canadians crossed over and voted with the Americans, giving them their victory, but in many ways the vote only sealed what they all knew as a foregone conclusion. The wagon trains from the United States had been pulling into the Valley since 1843 and it was evident Oregon was going to be American. The Canadians were more concerned with securing their land-rights than who governed them, and in that they were fairly successful.¹³ In the end, though, only a

¹² Sangres.com: A Reference and Travel Guide for the Rocky Mountain States <http://www.sangres.com/montana/history/jb-charbonneau.htm>. Retrieved 3/18/2012.

¹³ One of the more balanced histories (author: Melinda Marie Jetté) of French Prairie available is from the *Encyclopedia of French Cultural Heritage in North America*. Much of my understanding come from this article; http://www.ameriquefrancaise.org/en/article-31/French_Prairie_Oregon.html. Retrieved 3/19/12.

handful were able to truly succeed and put their stamp on the future. Most sold their land and drifted off to Portland or to other states.¹⁴

The Irish came to Portland in large numbers¹⁵ and the Germans settled all over the Willamette Valley, and their presence at St. Louis is recorded in granite in the St. Louis Cemetery: Finney, Meithof, Fahy (and Fahey), Mahony, Grassman, Bauer, Egan, Leith, Stute, Seifer, Manning, Hauptman, Hager, Dougherty, Englehart, Vanderbeck, Bradetich and Ferachweiler, among others.

Not everybody has left the parish. Pierre Belleque voted against joining the Americans at Champoege, yet a Frank Belleque was buried in St. Louis in 1973 (along with his wife, Maggie, in 1967). The church fronts on Manning Road, and 2007 saw the burial of Berna Manning (b. 1929). The foremost scholar of French Prairie, Melinda Marie Jetté, is a direct Metis descendant from the Prairie (although she doesn't currently reside there).

Though small, there's still room left for new arrivals at the cemetery. Furthermore, it gets regular use and is always maintained. It is a typical pioneer - or "heritage," as they now like to call them - cemetery used only by the few people who have an emotional attachment to the place. One can probably assume that the majority of burials come from within a few miles of the yard, probably members of the congregation. Gilmer Miller (1934-1990) wanted it known that he surveyed the cemetery in 1973, and he had that carved onto his stone.

Other new stones, in keeping with the sentiments of the times, tend to offer greater insight into the deceased than the pioneer stones which most often restrict themselves to relationships ("wife of..."), origins (born at...), and chapbook homilies. Consider the broken stone for Thomas Fitzgerald who died in 1860 at age forty-three. We know he was "a native of Cork, Ireland," and was left with the benediction, "May his soul rest in peace." Other than the date of his death, May 16, and a cross at the top of his marker, we know little about who he was: an Irish Christian who could afford a headstone. Compare that with the simple flat stone for James Schmitt (1950-2009); it tells us he "loved books, woodworking, photography." In four words we have a much more nuanced idea of who Schmitt was than Fitzgerald. Likewise, we know that Lillian Chesley (1904-1991) was a "homemaker, dancer, friend, and player"; while her husband, Walter, was a "traveller, dancer, storyteller, and muser." Muser! What did he muse upon, her homemaking? Presumably they danced together, and who knows what she played at? Still, we almost know the Chesleys. We can imagine playing cards around their kitchen table, eating cookies, and listening to Grandpa tell stories. "It's your turn, Gramps."

¹⁴ An 1838 (I presume) census of French Prairie acreage finds the largest farm, 125 acres, in the hands of Joseph Gervais, who gave his name to the nearby town. Out of sixty-five tilled acres he coaxed 1000 bushels of wheat, whereas Charles Plante from his sixty tilled acres only pulled 800 bushels. Jean Baptiste (another JB) Perrault only harvested 500 bushels from his sixty acres. Connie Lenzen for the St. Paul Historical Mission, "Settlers on French Prairie, Oregon Territory, in 1836-1838." Retrieved 3/19/12, <http://www.lenzenresearch.com/STPaulpages/spfprairie.html>.

¹⁵ Mount Calvary Cemetery in Portland is virtually an Irish cemetery and retains close ties with Ireland to this day. A handsome and intricate Celtic cross was recently installed there.

Certainly, we want M. Ruth Schmerber (1934-1990) as our neighbor. Ruth is celebrated on her tombstone as "She who taught us about birds and/ Flowers soars forever brightly/ In our heart." We don't know how Matthew Dryden (1971-2005) died, but we do know he participated in the Persian Gulf War as his military headstone notes. Because veterans qualify for free headstones from the Veterans Administration, military headstones are common in almost every cemetery, but Dryden's is the only one in St. Louis. The VA will now pay for short epitaphs, as well, but Dryden didn't avail himself of that option.

The Future?

While closing in on two-hundred years old, it would be hard to call the St. Louis Cemetery anything beyond middle-age. A youthful middle-age, at that. It still has its slim figure and, obviously, its lovers. I would hope they'll keep from having a fence around the graveyard; this way the separation of the quick and the dead is not so apparent. As lawn gives way to field, the line between them fades. Where the past ends and where tomorrow begins is not so closely held.

The fate of St. Louis is the fate of French Prairie. The Willamette River still forms the western and northern boundaries of the Prairie, but the Pudding River on the east has been replaced by Hwy. 99 and Interstate 5; and to the south the burgeoning metroplex of Salem/Keizer pushes north. Woodburn already spills over the highway and bulges into the Prairie. Wilsonville threatens the northeast corner. French Prairie was settled because it contains some of the best farm land in the world. The world. That's a big place. It's also where our state was born. Some companies would like to build warehouses or facilities on the Prairie; it's close to Portland. What happens to St. Louis depends on how the Prairie is protected. Wisdom and luck will both be needed.



Figure 4. Steeple of St. Mary's Church. Photo courtesy of the author.

Protected, there's no reason St. Louis and her cemetery can't last for another two-hundred years. Do I hear four-hundred? In 1981, Christine Saafeld, age twelve, was laid to rest in St. Louis. In the lower right-hand corner of her stone is the name Andrew J. and the single date 1989. The face of her supine stone carries an etching of, presumably, Christine holding onto the hand of a younger child walking beside her, Andrew, perhaps. They walk under clouds, a rainbow, and a brilliant sun. Her epitaph speaks, not just to them, but to the cemetery, the community, and ultimately, the human race: "It takes eternity/To live life to the full."

A House Built of Cedar Planks

David G. Lewis, PhD
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Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

In 2009, the Grand Ronde Tribe completed its plankhouse. The project had been pursued for a decade and involved Tribal Council members, people from different tribes, elders, students, federal agencies, and many families at the reservation.

The Grand Ronde plankhouse, named *Achaf-hammi* (Yamhill Kalapuya for *A House Built of Cedar Planks*), is built in a mixture of traditional tribal styles, some from the Columbia River and some from the Willamette Valley. The contemporary tribe is a confederation of some twenty-seven tribes and bands from throughout western Oregon. The major groups who came to the Grand Ronde Reservation are the Middle Chinook, Kalapuyas, Upper Umpqua, Takelma, Athapaskan, Molala and Tillamook. As such, contemporary tribal members are inheritors of all of these cultures and many of the members have five or more tribes they may claim as relations. This situation makes the culture of the tribe incredibly complex, and thus the project to construct a plankhouse very complicated.

In recent years, many members have found cultural support in their Chinookan heritage as the tribe has pursued programs to restore canoe traditions and the *Chinuk wawa* language. The tribe currently has a preschool and kindergarten immersion program for *Chinuk wawa* and the community has developed a “Canoe Family” to pursue cultural education of the tribal community in canoe travel and the cultural traditions and ceremonies associated with visiting tribal neighbors to the north. These canoe-related programs alone have attracted over 100 tribes and at least 10,000 people in the Northwest on annual canoe journeys where the tribes voyage together through Washington waterways for two weeks during the summer in common cultural practice. At Grand Ronde, the Canoe Family has largely embraced Chinook traditions, but has also participated in canoe races in Coos Bay, and has sponsored intertribal canoe



Figure 1. The plankhouse with its Trail of Tears Pole in place. Photo courtesy of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

journeys on the Willamette River. Other tribes in Oregon have followed Grand Ronde’s lead by developing their own restored canoe traditions.

Parallel with the development of the canoes and language traditions, tribes have worked to build ceremonial houses, known as longhouses or plankhouses, where cultural traditions may unite the communities in common ceremonies. The term plankhouse is more closely related to the structures of western Oregon, as the houses are made from large planks of the western red cedar. The sturdy design takes advantage of the straight grain of cedar and its ability to weather well, resisting rot and degradation. These are essential qualities in the Northwest with its rainforest-like environment, where everything degrades quickly when left out in the weather. As such, hide houses like tipis were not built here. Eastern Oregon had other styles of longhouses built from large woven tule mats cast over a frame, but this style was only common up to the eastern edge of the Cascade Mountains.

Plankhouses were first built as living quarters for multi-family groups. Some plankhouses were also built as ceremonial or dance houses. Plankhouses in a ceremonial context embody the spirit of the community as a central place to concentrate annual events. Some traditional annual events were First Fish Ceremonies and plankhouses near rivers would be a part of these. Intertribal gatherings were common at plankhouses where it became a place to exchange gifts and honor your friends and neighbors. The plankhouse at Grand Ronde is used today for Potlatches (giveaways), naming ceremonies, intertribal gatherings, annual seasonal ceremonies, the Grand Ronde Restoration Celebration, the Youth Culture Camp and for hosting cultural education groups.



Figure 2. Don Day (center) being blanketed (honored) by the tribe, David Rogers is second from left. Photo courtesy of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

Yurok elder, Walt Lara, who was a traditional plankhouse builder at the Yurok Reservation in northern California. After witnessing how Lara split 20 to 40 foot cedar logs with metal

wedges into perfectly flat planks, Day was inspired to work even more traditionally. After transferring to the University of Oregon (2000), Day began a study of the traditional technologies of the Grand Ronde Tribe. Day immediately secured agreements with the Ranger Districts of the Willamette National Forest to get cedar for cultural uses.

Day had been a logger in earlier years and so knew how to work with large logs. He began experimenting with wooden wedges made from yew and oak woods. During his experimentation over a period of five or six years, he re-created the traditional indigenous technology of splitting cedar using only wooden wedges and wooden mallets. During this period, Day invited many tribal members to help learn how to split logs. This group Day called his “Regular Crew” and included myself, Leslie Riggs, Dietrich Peters, Norman Peters, Jesse Peters, and Michael Michelle and occasional crew like Gary Lewis, Larry Lewis, Bob Tom and Peta Tinda (*Smoke Signals* newspaper reporter), and others who only participated once. For many years we toured around western Oregon displaying the planksplitting techniques in Eugene, Yoncalla and Coos Bay. Day eventually built a small plankhouse for the permanent exhibit at the Museum of Natural and Cultural History at the University of Oregon (2004), and in 2007 a small plankhouse for the *Big People Small World* show, which still stands on the Roloff Farm near Hillsboro. In 2009 and 2010 Don designed and hand-built the interior walls of a Lane Community College longhouse interior room while employed by the Grand Ronde Tribe. Day’s fame has led him to consult with the Haida of the Queen Charlotte Islands, on planksplitting.

Sometime in the early 2000s, Day proposed the idea of building a plankhouse at the Tribe to contain tribal ceremonies. Other tribes in western Oregon had built plankhouses: Siletz had been the first in the 1990s with a traditional dancehouse, followed by Coquille a decade later with a more modern facility. The methods and inspiration for the return of the plankhouses came largely from the dancehouse built at Nelechundin near the Tolowa Indian, Smith River Rancheria, California by Loren Bommelyn in the 1980s. Bommelyn taught many of his techniques to people in Oregon and has been a regional cultural leader in the areas of language, dance, song and ceremony.

In the early 2000s, the Grand Ronde Tribal Council supported the notion of a plankhouse and many years of planning and work commenced with the Cultural Resources Department and the Culture Committee being a big part of the planning efforts. During this time, the tribe developed good relations with the Willamette National Forest and Day was able to secure continuous cultural-use permits to gather cedar logs. He spent hundreds of hours cruising forest roads to find big cedar. This relationship continues today with the Detroit Ranger District helping the Tribe to acquire big cedar logs from the bottom of the reservoirs to be used in carving projects.

Planksplitting trips in 2004 included roughly a dozen tribal members gathering at the ranger district offices and then convoying up to a site where Day had found a number of good sized logs. Day would cut the logs into 10 foot segments with a chainsaw and the team would follow his direction to split the logs into large planks. We would normally get about 20 large planks from a log. The planks would then be stacked in two trucks and convoyed again to Day’s house, where he would shape them into usable planks.



Figure 3. A high view of the plankhouse with volunteers working. Photo courtesy of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

Splitting a log required a half-dozen Yew wedges (manufactured by Day), and the team would follow direction to set the wedges to guide each section to be a straight plank. Day would say, “listen to the log” and we could hear it splitting after just a few strikes of the wooden sledge (usually a segment of a small Douglas fir with a study limb attached). One wedge, buried into the log, would eventually have split the log in half, but we helped speed the progress by setting additional wedges to equalize the pressure and stress on the plank to help it remain straight. Western red cedar and redwood have the unique quality of having straight grain running the length of the tree, enabling this method of splitting to occur. As the years advanced, Day modified his methods using a froe to begin a straight line, and using advanced techniques of equalizing the splitting pressure to split multiple planks at the same time from one log.

In 2007, the tribe began working on the plankhouse project in earnest, choosing a site for the house adjacent to the tribe’s new Pow wow grounds below Fort Yamhill State Park off Highway 22. The tribe hired a contractor, Dave Rogers, to build the house. The contractor dug the pit and prepared the area for water drainage. The tribe had secured an agreement from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to harvest a limited number of large Douglas firs from the tribe’s reservation forest. These trees were seasoned for a year, and cleaned to become the prominent center posts and cross-beams of the house. In 2008, the frame of the house began to take shape and the post and cross-beams were closely fitted to remain stable for many years. Following the erection of the frame, tribal members began volunteering to help with building the exterior and interior walls from milled cedar planks.

The milled planks were from old growth cedar logs that had been helicoptered out of the Willamette National Forest a few years previously. Day had found the standing logs, which had died from a fire and then partially buried by a landslide in the middle of the forest near Sweet Home. The tribe hired a helicopter crew and in one day the twenty- foot sections were transported to a staging area where they could then be transported to the tribe. The decision to mill the logs was made to save wood, as the tribe did not know if we would have enough cedar to complete the planned 60 feet by 100 feet plankhouse.



Figure 4. A close-up of the Trail of Tears Pole. Photo courtesy of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

In 2008, the majority of the heavy sections of the plankhouse were completed and the tribe took over the project completely, employing the staff of the Cultural Resources Department, especially Bobby Mercier and Brian Krehbiel, to work on the project on a daily basis. They led a crew of other staff and community volunteers to complete the walls and lay the roof. Some problems with the roof design became apparent as there were significant leaks and about half of the roof had to be taken up and re-laid with addition supports and water protection. In 2009 the house was completed and traditionally opened with a Potlatch with many of the

neighboring tribes. Traditionally, other tribes had to be there to welcome a new plankhouse into the community and their members conducted much of the traditional opening.

The Grand Ronde cultural community spent about a year gathering giveaway donations for the opening. They also worked on songs and dances appropriate for such a traditional event. Finally, they prepared traditional regalia for the opening in the tribe's cultural classes. Many tribal members took responsibility for learning the practices so that the house would be opened appropriately.

Since 2009, additional work has commenced to develop the landscaping, to build a wood shed and to prepare the cooking facilities. An important project was the erection of a pole near the house. Cultural staff, Bobby Mercier and Brian Krehbiel, worked with tribal community volunteers at the carving shed to create the pole. The Trail of Tears Pole commemorates the forced removal of the tribes to the Grand Ronde Reservation in the winter of 1856.

The plankhouse is one of the major steps the tribe is taking towards restoring its cultural traditions. For over 160 years, the tribe has undergone colonization and many people lost connections with their tribal culture. The federal government worked diligently to suppress the tribal traditions, eliminate the cultures and to assimilate everyone into "American culture." In the 20th century, the efforts of the federal government were effective and much was lost. After Termination (1954), only a few families retained much of the culture. But since Restoration (1983), the tribe has been undergoing a rebirth and the traditions are coming back; the plankhouse is one of the major elements that enable the return of tribal traditions. The environment of the house, its spirit and power, gathered from the spirit of the community - a community that has endured so much loss only to find a way to return from a final precipice - is strong. As the community relearns and restores its spirit, the house will gather more power and other traditions will return. We are seeing the revitalization in the return of tribal oral histories, of its language and history, and the development of a museum complex to tell its own story. Without the foundation of the plankhouse much of this would not be possible.

Achaf-Hammi is the ceremonial house of the Grand Ronde tribe. There, the tribe welcomes guests to the reservation, and holds ceremonial events in support of the culture and community. There, any of the tribal traditions may be practiced and the community is in the midst of bringing back the traditions of giving names, celebrating the wealth of the seasons, honoring the ancestors, commemorating the restoration of the tribe, and recognizing the intense struggles of the tribes who came to the reservation more than 150 years ago.

Author Biographies

Joy Sears

Joy Sears serves as the Restoration Specialist for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that is under Heritage Programs in the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. Prior to joining the Oregon SHPO in 2005, she served as the Restoration Specialist for the South Dakota SHPO for five years dealing with technical advising for historic preservation. She received her Master's in Historic Preservation from the University of Oregon in 2001. Her introduction to historic preservation fieldwork was discovered in her undergraduate studies with a minor in American Studies with an emphasis in Heritage Preservation in her native Minnesota.

Toni Rush

Toni Rush grew up in Lebanon, Oregon and recently received her Master's degree from Western Oregon University (WOU) in Spring 2012. She views history from a multi-cultural standpoint, focusing on racial minorities, the Civil Rights Movement and female activism. Her goal is to become a high school history teacher and she is currently working on obtaining a Master's of Arts in Teaching from WOU and the initial teaching license.

Fritz Juengling, Ph.D.

Dr. Juengling did his undergraduate studies at Western Oregon University, where he received his Bachelor's degrees in International Studies with a German emphasis and Secondary Education, both with Honors. He received his Master's degree and Doctorate in Germanic Philology (The study of Germanic historical linguistics) with minors in both English and Linguistics at the University of Minnesota. He has taught German, Old English, English, and Latin at the high school and/or college levels.

Diane Huddleston

Diane Huddleston is finishing her Master's Degree in History at Western Oregon University. Her focus of study is North American history and she is interested in America during the 1950s and 1960s, the history of civil rights, and cultural history. After graduation she would like to pursue other research projects, either on her own or in collaboration with other historians, as well as writing and teaching.

Rosalynn Rothstein

Rosalynn Rothstein is a graduate student in the Folklore Department at the University of Oregon and has a B.A. from Grinnell College in Comparative Literature. Rosalynn studies verbal performance in the workplace, issues of authenticity in various contexts, and expression of belief in online forums.

John Scott

John Scott started teaching History at Corban University in 2000. He has an M.A. in History and Government from the University of Portland and previously taught at George Fox University. Scott founded the Westrek hiking and backpacking program at Corban. Westrek offers students college credit in Human Performance and Pacific Northwest History while visiting wilderness areas in the American West. His wife, SuEllen, works as an Administrative Assistant for the Secretary of the Oregon State Senate. They both enjoy studying the history, birds and botany of the Pacific Northwest. Scott has served as a board member of the Willamette Heritage Center since 2010. He can be reached at jscott@corban.edu.

Johan Mathiesen

Johan Mathiesen is an author/photographer living in Portland, Oregon. Author of "Mad As the Mist and Snow: Exploring Oregon Through Its Cemeteries," he has been recording Oregon cemeteries since 2004. His Flickr site, DeadManTalking, documents more than 620 Oregon cemeteries in 15,000 photographs. A Wisconsin native, he has been prowling the back-roads of the Pacific Northwest since 1969 and in a couple succeeding generations has managed to increase the local population by nine people, not including his wife (okay, she was included in the succession). He is currently working on a guide to Lone Fir Cemetery in Portland, where he and his wife have plots.

David G. Lewis, Ph.D.

David G. Lewis is the manager of the Cultural Resources Department for the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community. He earned a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Oregon with his dissertation, "The Termination of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon." An enrolled member at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, his ancestral heritage is Clackamas Chinook, Takelma, and Santiam Kalapuya. While at the University of Oregon, Lewis was director of the Southwest Oregon Research Project. Lewis has taught throughout western Oregon, including Willamette, Linfield College, OSU, and the U of O. Lewis regularly travels throughout western Oregon and presents on topics of Grand Ronde History, Tribal Genealogy, and Oregon Tribal Termination.



Image: Early photo (c1889) of nurses believed to be at the Oregon State Hospital in Salem, OR. Inset: drawing of the Oregon State Insane Asylum, c1890. Images courtesy of the Willamette Heritage Center.

Proof

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