John Frémont Returns to Central Oregon

Finding Fremont: Pathfinder of the West, six years in the making, is finally up and ready for visitors.

Over 75 members and guests were the first to see the exhibit at the members only opening Thursday, April 30. The exhibit’s grand opening was attended by Jerome Perez, state director for the Bureau of Land Management, William Cannon, Archaeologist for the Lakeview District BLM, Eugene Hattori, Curator of Anthropology, Nevada State Museum, Joel Tracy of the Fremont Howitzer Recovery Team, and Fremont Researcher and Photographer Loren Irving.

On Friday, May 1, over 100 guests enjoyed the first Museum Nights event, getting to spend time in the exhibit with its two principal curators, Eugene Hattori and Loren Irving and learning about the intricacies, details, and sometimes silliness that goes into building such a large exhibit.

Installation here wouldn’t have been possible without the help of Eugene Hattori and Jeanette McGregor of the Nevada State Museum, Pete Cecil of Singletree and Associates, and the best volunteers in the world. Working in partnership with the Nevada State Museum has been one of the greatest experiences of our careers.

We would also like to recognize the following volunteers and sponsors: Bette Andrew, Holle Young, John Kent, Pete Cecil,
Jessie Ann Benton was a child of privilege and politics; raised in Washington, D.C. under the tutelage of her father, Thomas Hart Benson, powerful senator from Missouri.

As a child she was introduced to influential players in government and often visited the White House where she became a favorite of President Jackson. In her childhood home, she listened to William Clark tell stories of his travels with Meriwether Lewis.

Jessie was well-educated, politically savvy, and shared the dreams of her father who was known as “The Great Expansionist”, envisioning a nation that stretched from coast to coast.

Jessie’s mother groomed her in the graces of a Southern Belle so when her mother developed serious health problems, Jessie, at the tender age of 15, easily entered into the political swirl of D.C.; attending parties and acting as her father’s social hostess.

It was inevitable when she met John C. Fremont, a handsome, dashing army engineer, she was entranced with his expeditionary tales. Even at a young age, Jessie was ambitious and imagined her ideas and ideals possibly fulfilled through this man.

She was 17 and he a decade older but Jessie was young, vivacious, charming; a slender girl with dark eyes and red hair. It was said that their meeting was love at first sight.

Despite her parents’ objections – after all, Fremont had no money or social status, a lowly army officer and of illegitimate birth - stubborn Jessie and lovesick John eloped in 1841. The Bentons finally relented to the marriage and the senator supported and aided John in his western expeditions hoping to gain more territory for the nation.

Jessie became a recognized author, transforming John’s notes of exploration into articles and books. She weaved his notes and letters into exciting, understandable stories. They became best sellers and Fremont was famous as “The Pathfinder of the West.” Her literary career continued throughout her life, supporting the family in difficult financial times.

John Charles Fremont was a controversial figure throughout his life but Jessie remained his ardent supporter. In the ensuing years, she used her extraordinary charm, intellect, and abilities to further his efforts as an explorer, politician, Civil War general and financial speculator. She was constantly in the midst of political forays, writing letters, publishing stories and books, directing her husband’s career behind the scenes. She was once called “General Jessie” by his critics.

She followed him from army posts to the California gold fields, San Francisco society and eventually returning to the Washington Senate, even campaigning for him for President, the first wife known to do so. By maintaining a high level of political involvement during a period that was extremely unfavorable for women, Jessie proved herself to be years ahead of her time.

Despite the restrictions she faced as a woman, she carved out a vital role for herself as a writer, dedicated abolitionist, and a champion of women’s rights. She demonstrated that women were capable of equal rights and full participation with their male counterparts in family life, business and politics.

After John’s death, Jessie lived in Los Angeles in a home presented to her by a committee of women as a token of their great respect. Jessie died in 1902 at the age of 78. She was cremated and buried in Angelus Rosedale Cemetery.

– Bonnie Burns

Frémont’s Howitzer

Jessie was serving as the expedition’s secretary, receiving all mail at St. Louis and forwarding what she considered important to her husband at the staging area in what is now Kansas City, preparing for the Oregon expedition. In an article she wrote for Century magazine, Jessie described her reaction to some upsetting news from headquarters.

– continued on page 6
Historic Preservation Month kicked off Friday, May 1 at the Tower Theatre. First Friday crowds were treated to tours of the theater, information about current preservation projects throughout Deschutes County. DCHS former board of director Bill Boyd delighted the crowd as he discussed the history of the Boyd homestead building and their future preservation.

Protect the Past and Shape the Future – May Events

Celebrate the heritage of Deschutes County during May, a month dedicated to engaging in historic preservation. Presented by the following partners: The Deschutes County Historical Society, Deschutes County Historic Landmarks Commission, City of Bend Landmarks Commission, City of Redmond Landmarks Commission, The Tower Theatre Foundation, Deschutes Land Trust, and the BLM Prineville District Office.

MAY 14, 10am to 12pm - Camp Polk Meadow Preserve History Walk, guided by Kelly Madden, Deschutes Land Trust, Sisters

MAY 14, 6pm - “Queens of the Roleo” documentary at McMenamin’s Old St. Francis School Theater, Bend

MAY 14, 6:30pm - Bowman Museum presents “Oregon Historic Railroads Project”, Prineville

MAY 15, 1pm to 4pm - Digital Personal Archive Day at Deschutes Public Library, Bend

MAY 15, 7pm - Bend Landmarks Commission meeting at Bend City Council Chambers

MAY 16, 9am to 12pm - Water + Wood Walk with Leslie Olson, Skyline Forest, Bend

MAY 16, 10am to 2pm - Historic Redmond Walking & Bicycle Tours and Scavenger Hunt, Centennial Park, Redmond

MAY 16, 10am to 2pm Redmond Union High/Evengreen Elementary Alumni memorabilia collection

MAY 18 to 26 - Central Oregon Preservation Displays at La Pine Chamber of Commerce

MAY 19, 10am - Bend Genealogical Society: Writing Family Stories, with Emily Aulicino, Williamson Hall, Bend

MAY 19, 6pm - Bend Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting and Proclamation, Bend City Council Chambers

MAY 21, 7pm - Tumalo Project History, presented by Terry Holtzapple, BLM Prineville District, Central Oregon Association of Realtors (COAR) office, Bend

MAY 22 to 25 - Ponderosa Mountain Men Little Deschutes 29th Annual Rendezvous - Historic Village and Costumes, Hwy 58/ south of La Pine

MAY 26, 7pm - History Pub - “Pioneer Cemeteries of Deschutes County”, presented by Pat Kleiwer, McMenamin’s Old St. Francis School, Bend

ALL MONTH LONG: Guided Tours of Historic Downtown Bend - select Fridays & Saturdays in May, 10am, Bend Visitor Center
Local News Items

Frémont Medallions Now Available

Now you can take a piece of the Finding Fremont: Pathfinder of the West exhibit home with you. The collectible Frémont Medallion is available for purchase from the Deschutes Historical Museum in either silver or copper. Both medallions feature Maj. Gen. Fremont ca. 1861 with his Lost Cannon on one side and the image of the Carson City Mint Coin Press on the other side.

The medallion was designed by Mathew Howard, a graduate of Portland State University with a degree in a graphic Arts and Design, inspired by the Fremont exhibit and was struck on Coin Press No. 1 at the former Branch Mint in Carson City, Nevada currently the Nevada State Museum. The mint operated from 1870-1893.

The silver medallions are .999 fine silver, one troy ounce, and have the Carson City cc mint mark. There will only be 1,844 silver medallions minted.

Silver Medallion: $65/ members $58
Copper Medallion (not pictured): $15/members $13.50

Summer Shootout is Back June 20

Summer is right around the corner and that means it’s time to blow the dust of your Steeles and Aggies and “knuckle down” for the 2015 Summer Shootout Marble Tournament at the Deschutes Historical Museum Saturday June 20th. This year’s event is sponsored by The Bulletin and Gear Peddler.

Registration is $10.00 per participant and is open to kids from 7 years to 100 years. Not familiar with how to play? Don’t own your own set of marbles? No worries, all marbles for tournament play are provided and no previous experience is necessary we begin the event with lessons and practice play. We have two age categories, Children 7-12 years and Young at Heart 13 years and up, with the Grand Prize for each category being a Schwinn bicycle from Gear Peddler.

In addition to tournament play participants, their families and spectators will have the opportunity to visit booths of fellow non-profit organizations to learn about other family fun programs happening in Central Oregon this summer.

Register now by picking up a form from the Deschutes Historical Museum or Gear Peddler, or visit the museum’s website at www.deschuteshistory.org and download a form today!

Welcome New Members

Robert Marvos & Priscilla Jones-Marvos
Mary Morgan
Joe Stevens
Dorothy (McKay) & Rick Fuhrman
Kathleen Lippitt
Kolby Kirk
David & Diane Holmes
Lincoln Mayer
Robert Fox
Tom Calderwood
Lee & Peggie Fischer
Allan Bruckmen
Caroline Lincoln
Carolyn & Richard Herb
Nick Murray & McKenzie Dean
Kirk & Dottie Ward
Dennis Rilling
Mark & Jeanni Capell
Queens of the Roleo Documentary

The Deschutes Historical Museum presents “Queens of the Roleo” a documentary from local Bend filmmaker, Dave Jones, May 14, 2015, 6:00 p.m. at McMenamins Old St Francis Theater.

Roleo refers to the sport of ‘log-rolling’ and the film documents the story of four girls and one coach from Lewiston, Idaho who took international ‘log-rolling’ competition by storm.

The screening is presented as part of Historic Preservation Month 2015. “Historic preservation ultimately is about saving our cultural identity, whether it is capturing human stories in a documentary or saving a historic structure,” says Kelly Cannon-Miller, Executive Director for the Deschutes Historical Museum.

Tickets are $10.00/person at the door and proceeds benefit Historic Preservation Month educational activities.

With John Frémont looking on (from upper left): Bonnita Thomas Stahlberg and Sue Fountain; William Cannon, BLM, speaks about BLM’s educational programs; Loren Irving talking to Carl Elliott in the exhibit; Eugene Hattori, Curator of Anthropology, Nevada State Museum; visitors Ruth Burleigh and David Brown enjoy the exhibit; John Kent; and DCHS President Nate Pedersen welcomes everyone. Photos: Chloe Miller.
Frémont’s Howitzer
continued from page 3

“One day there came for him (John) from his colonel, the chief of Topographical Bureau; an order recalling him to Washington, whither he was directed to return and explain why he had armed his party with a howitzer; saying that it was a scientific, not a military expedition, and should not have been so armed.

I saw at once that this would make delays which would involve the overthrow of great plans, and I had no hesitation in risking for him all consequences. Upon this expedition hinged great results. I wrote Mr. Fremont that he must not ask why, but must start at once, ready, or not ready. Only GO! ... And as we acted together unquestionably, he did go immediately.”

Jesse wrote the colonel what she had done, explaining, “that the country of the Blackfeet and other fierce tribes had to be crossed, and that the Indians knew nothing of the rights of science, but fought all whites; that these tribes were in number and the party not 50 men, therefore the howitzer was necessary...”

– Bonnie Burns

Frémont Returns to Central Oregon
continued from page 1

George Shackelford, Anita & Carl Elliot, Linda Morrison, Carol Selle, Michelle Patrick, Kathy, Brian & Conner Fish, Anna Johnson, Chris Schmokel, Bonnie Burns, Chloe Miller, David Miller, Jim and Nancy McCarthy, Karen Green, Jeff Richardson, Doug Hildebrandt, Dave Jones, William Cannon, Worthy Brewing Company, Loren Irving, Paula Similia, Vanessa Ivey, Shey Hyatt, and Linda Orecelletto. Thank you to board members Sue Fountain, Marsha Stout, Susie Penhollow, Nate Pedersen, Loren Irving, and Karen Green for their support making our opening ceremonies a success.

Membership Renewal
Available Through Paypal

You can renew your membership dues or donate directly from the Deschutes Historical Museum website.

Visit the Donate/Join page and click the Donate button at www.deschuteshistory.org.

Paypal offers secure online payments, and you, the member, maintain control of your personal financial information.

You can even make your donation a monthly gift by just clicking the box!

Mark Your Calendars

May

19  Volunteer meeting: Historic Preservation with Heidi Kennedy
Deschutes Historical Museum, Old Classroom at noon - 1 p.m.

26  History Pub: Pioneer Cemeteries of Deschutes County
Presented by Pat Kliewer
McMenamins Old St. Francis Father Luke Room 7 p.m., doors at 5:30 p.m.

June

16  Volunteer Walking Tour
Deschutes Historical Museum, Noon-1:30 p.m.

20  Summer Shootout Marble Tournament
Deschutes Historical Museum

30  History Pub