The Rediscovered History of Bend's Official Flower

by Erin Weaver

In 1925, Bend had a population just shy of 8,000. The streets were unpaved, Wall Street was hosting holiday horse races – and the city was in the midst of picking its official flower. In the April 6th, 1925 edition of The Bend Bulletin, a notice advertised a civic league-sponsored contest that aimed to select Bend's official flower. There were three criteria for nominations: the flower must be hardy in the Central Oregon climate, must bloom for a “long season,” and have “blooms of a single color.” With this in mind, the committee of the Woman’s Civic League elected the pink Clarkia as “potentially suitable;” the Calendula and the Delphinium Belladonna were also suggested. The following day, the Bulletin wrote an editorial in support of the effort, encouraging each of its readers to vote. As the chosen flower would appear in gardens and “floral displays” all around town, the Bulletin declared that it was “another election where a big vote [was] required,” and that it was “important that the flower selected should be the one which the majority truly favors.” Voting was conducted by mail-in ballot (see illustration), and was open for six days.

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The Last Original House on Arizona

by John Kent

A car parked the wrong way on NW Arizona Avenue? Nope, in 1970 Arizona Avenue was a two-way unpaved city street that pattered out between Wall Street and Broadway Avenue. Today it is a two-lane thoroughfare connecting to the parkway and road to Mount Bachelor. This house was once bordered to the south by the Great Northern Rail Yard Bend Klamath Falls Branch (the Great Northern RYBKFB) tracks, which were only sixty feet away from the porch. The rail line crossed the Deschutes River on a trestle near where the whitewater park is today, continued south and crossed back again just above Benham Falls.

south of the house were Bend’s city limits and a fence to keep the children out of the Brooks-Scanlon Mill. The last unaltered single-family-owned house on NW Arizona Avenue, carried the address of 512, was built in 1916 according to the Deschutes County Historic Preservation file number 1332. The house is named the D.G. Bagley house for its earliest renter. The 1917 city directory lists Bagley and his wife Agnes living in the house. David worked as a saw filer for Brooks-Scanlon mill. In 1917, the home had a front porch, a small bump-out porch on the back, and a shed on the alley.

This area of Bend once belonged to William Staats, who purchased the area September 27, 1902 for $648. In December the same year, Staats platted the area as the town site “Deschutes” one year before the township of Bend was platted. This is the area of old town Bend now bordered by NW Broadway Street on the west, NW Georgia Avenue on the north, NW Lava Road on the east and NW Arizona on the south. Today, the immediate area to the south is known as the Box Factory and is a commercial success on the old Brooks-Scanlon mill site. In 1905 Staats sold his merchandise stock to E.A. Sather as Bend came into existence as an incorporated town.

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At the same time, Staats resigned his position as postmaster, for the new post office of Deschutes a mile away in Bend served the needs of the small community. When he sold his stopping place and store, Staats said he would devote more time to his new neighborhood of “Deschutes,” which is not to be confused with the old “Deschutes” which became Bend, and the newer “Deschutes” north of town built a few years later with the railroad—proving Deschutes a sought-after name. Staats also platted the neighboring 80 acres as the “Staats Addition” to Bend.

In 1909 Staats and his wife Emma sold an undivided one-half interest in the Plat of Deschutes to Joseph Hunter and his wife, A.S., resulting in the birth of Hunter and Staats real estate company. Three months later, M.J. Roberts purchased lots 7-12 in Block 4 in the Plat of Deschutes from Hunter and Staats. But it is not until February of 1916 that they sold Lot 5, the site of 512 NW Arizona, to R.D. Davis and wife Matilda, who paid ten dollars for the bare land and other valuable considerations.

Research indicates that Davis built the small 688 square foot house adjacent to the mill and sold it in July 1916 to W.B. Cone and his wife Dorothy for $400. W.B. Cone came to Bend in the late fall of 1915 when the mills were under construction, working for Shevlin Hixon in the electrical department. He later became chief electrician for Shevlin-Hixon and worked for them for 36 years. Known as Sparky or Static, he wrote articles for the Shevlin Equalizer newspaper under the Electrical Department and played clarinet in the company band. He would later purchase 336 Delaware Avenue from Shevlin Hixon.

Cone sold 512 Arizona in 1919 for $1250 to Hans Kulstad. Hans Kulstad came to Bend in 1919 as a widower at the age of 71 and worked as a watchman for Brooks-Scanlon. Kulstad’s additions are the last in nearly 100 years, adding a boarding room that eventually is given the address of 512 ½ Arizona Avenue. The boarding room was not unusual for the housing needs of the neighborhood, with the Portland Hotel nearby at 526 Arizona. Between 1924 and the late 1940s, the city directories show a series of family and friends who alternate between renting at the Portland Hotel and renting 512 ½.

Kulstad passed away in 1934 and the next two owners continued to rent 512 ½. By 1979, Mrs. Marie Riley lives at 512, with James Matear renting 512 ½. By 1983, James purchased the house and moved into 512, where he still lives in the last unaltered house on NW Arizona Avenue.

- John Kent

512 NW ARIZONA AS IT APPEARS TODAY, ADJACENT TO THE NEW FOOD CART PAD
"Community Beauty" by Jenny Ellsworth Selected as Memorial Sculpture

by Kelly Cannon-Miller

The Museum is excited to announce that after spirited conversation and fantastic input from our membership and the public, Jenny Ellsworth of Oregon City (fairyforge.com) was awarded the contract to build a memorial sculpture on museum grounds. The sculpture features materials from Klondike Kate Rockwell’s rock hound collection and celebrates women’s history in Deschutes County. The piece is commissioned in memory of Charlene Blahnik. Jenny’s piece, titled Kate’s Dress, features repurposed shovels to form the shape of a classic Victorian era dress. “The committee agreed that while there was support for all four candidates and their concepts, Jenny’s piece best fit all the criteria we were looking for from this project,” said Executive Director Kelly Cannon-Miller. “The combination of shovels representing the hard work of homesteading married with the idea of women’s dress styles really hits at the complexity of life in the west.”

The public comment period brought thoughtful and engaged comments, with each of the four concept sculptures winning fans. The other three submissions were from Melissa Cole of Spokane (melissacolestudios.com), John Fleming of Seattle (johnflemingartist.com), and Cyrra Robinson of Tumwater (cyrrastudios.com). Work on the finished piece will begin this summer with installation this fall.

Memorials

Helen Rastovich Barrett
Thelma Broddech

Shirley Ray
Wilma and Dotson Merritt
Lennard Sholes
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In the end, after 54 votes were cast, the Delphinium Belladonna emerged victorious – beating the Calendula by only two votes. The choice was “generally liked” by Bend residents, and it was the hope of the committee that visitors to town would notice the Delphinium's prominence and the “uniformity of [Bend’s] gardens.” Florists and amateur gardeners alike were encouraged to include the flower whenever possible, and the civic-league announced that they were making “special arrangements for securing the seed at low cost,” so that any interested resident might help make the bloom more prominent around town.

Despite this official selection in 1925 – and the Bulletin’s claim that “the flower will be planted by every one growing flowers of any kind in Bend this year” – the choice of the Delphinium as Bend’s flower seems to have been forgotten about for many decades. While conducting a search for an obituary on behalf of a library customer, I found reference to the call for an official flower and shared the story with Nate Pedersen, DCHS Past President, who in turn passed the story on to the Bulletin. They covered the Delphinium’s story in the March 5th, 2018 edition, (link to: http://www.bendbulletin.com/lifestyle/6046023-151/how-the-delphinium-x-belladonna-became-the-deschutes) which detailed the flower’s official selection in 1925 and, for Bend’s current residents, provided tips for keeping the Delphinium happy in their own gardens.

Over 90 years after its rise to town-wide glory, the Delphinium may begin gracing Bend’s flower beds once more. When planning your garden this summer, make sure to add some “local color”!

Sustaining Circle
Matching Challenge Update

Thanks to the generous support of our members, we are half way to our goal of 16 new Sustaining Circle Members whose entry level ($5 per month) pledges will be matched by DCHS board members!

Sustaining Circle membership programs are great for non-profits and members. First, they provide stable gift giving over the course of a full year for non-profits, who regularly struggle with fundraising boom and bust periods. Second, they create a paper-free, don’t-worry-about-renewal-dates way for members to maintain their membership. They are also great for members’ budgets, too, enabling a way to provide support at a higher level without breaking their budget. How does it work? We use two secure software programs, “DonorPerfect” and “SafeSave,” to securely store your debit or credit card information with your membership. Each month, the amount you pledge is deducted from the designated account. You get can relax knowing that your membership is up to date and you’re helping keep history alive in Deschutes County. To help us reach our goal, You can securely join online through our website at www.deschuteshistory.org/sustainingcircle/. Need assistance? Message Tracy Alexander at tracy@deschuteshistory.org to get signed up.
VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED

JULY 4TH FREE DAY

The Deschutes Historical Museum is looking for volunteers to help welcome visitors to the annual Free Day at the museum.

Since its grand opening July 4, 1980 the Deschutes Historical Museum has served ice cream and opened its doors for free to the public in celebration of its anniversary. This year the event will be on a Wednesday, with the fun starting at 10 a.m. We will have games on the lawn, a presentation in the library, and of course otter pops and ice cream. The day’s activities are broken down into three hour shifts. If you are interested in helping out or would like to learn more please contact the museum’s manager Vanessa Ivey: vanessa@deschuteshistory.org, or call 541-389-1813.

Save the Date!
CHILDREN’S FESTIVAL
RETURNS TO DHM
JULY 28, 2018

The Deschutes Historical Museum is pleased to be the venue for Balloons Over Bend Children’s Festival for a second year. Last year, with the heat of the sun and the forest fires burning all around, the Museum’s grassy yard and tall trees for shade were a summer time relief for the hundreds of visitors to the event, which benefits the local non-profit organization, Saving Grace.

With all the activities anticipated this year, DHM has decided not to run the marble tournament. Instead we will have our own space welcoming visitors to the 104 year-old Reid School, sharing the history of Deschutes County while still getting in a game of hopscotch and marbles. This event introduces families to the museum, as for many it is their first time. We are looking for volunteers to help make their visit a special one.

For more information on this event please contact Vanessa Ivey, Museum Manger at vanessa@deschuteshistory.org or call 541-389-1813.

Mark Your Calendars

JUNE

2 HERITAGE WALKING TOUR: Architectural Tour
10:30 a.m. Deschutes Historical Museum

9 HERITAGE WALKING TOUR: Early Days of Bend
10:30 a.m. Deschutes Historical Museum

16 HERITAGE WALKING TOUR: Architectural Tour
10:30 a.m. Deschutes Historical Museum

23 HERITAGE WALKING TOUR: Early Days of Bend
10:30 a.m. Deschutes Historical Museum

26 HISTORY PUB: THE 1920s OREGON KKK AND ITS OPPONENTS:
A Case Study in Resistance. Presented by US Cultural and Modern History professor David A. Horowitz
McMenamins Old St. Francis
Father Luke Room, 7p.m., doors open at 5:30 p.m.
Beginning in June, we will return to first-come-first-served seating, no reservations required.

30 HERITAGE WALKING TOUR: Architectural Tour
10:30 a.m. Deschutes Historical Museum

31 Reminder: July 4 FREE DAY AT THE MUSEUM
10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Please contact Vanessa Ivey for volunteer opportunities

THE HOMESTEADER
Heritage Walking Tours of Downtown Bend
June 2-August 25 2018

The Deschutes Historical Museum invites you to spend your morning with us walking around Beautiful Downtown Bend. All tours leave from the Deschutes Historical Museum at 10:30 a.m. Advanced registration is required.

We recommend the following: wear comfortable walking shoes, dress for the weather, bring water, and don’t forget your camera! It does get hot so a hat is good too.

The Early Days of Bend
Travel back to when the river was wild, the Ponderosa Pines were plentiful and Bend the Beautiful was a town in the making. Learn about early Bend through the stories of six “Bend-ites” and how these residents helped transform a young hamlet into a booming town. Tour Starts at the Deschutes Historical Museum (Reid School) and ends at Lone Crow Bungalow on Wall Street.

June 9, June 23, July 7, July 21, August 11, August 25
Time: approximately 1 hour
Length: less than a mile traveling through old neighborhoods and parkways. The ground can be uneven at times and is not recommended for wheelchairs.
Price: $5.00, Deschutes Historical Museum Members FREE

Reflections of History: An Architectural Tour of a Neighborhood
Stroll through Drake Park Neighborhood Historic District and take a step back in time when walking was the thing to do and neighborhoods were all about proximity. The tour will introduce the architectural styles represented in the neighborhood while sharing history of a changing community. Tour begins and ends at the Deschutes Historical Museum.

June 2, June 16, June 30, July 14, August 4, August 18
Time: approximately 1.5 hours
Length: One (1) mile through historic neighborhood. The sidewalks can be uneven at times.
Price: $5, Deschutes Historical Museum Members FREE

ADVANCE RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED.
PLEASE SIGN UP BY 4 PM THE DAY BEFORE TOUR.
Call 541-389-1813 or register online DESCHUTESHISTORY.ORG
Advanced registration is required.