



How Redmond Won the Airport Battle

*Look into Redmond's storied
aviation history*

See Page 2

Festival of Cars Returns to DHM

*The free Show and Shine with
classic and exotic cars returns
Sept. 14*

See Page 6



The Homesteader

Deschutes County Historical Society Newsletter—September 2019

RASTOVICH FAMILY FARM CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



The Rastovich Family
invites you to attend
a celebration of the
100th anniversary of
their family farm.

Saturday, September 21, 2019

11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Rastovich Ranch, 21925 Rastovich Road, Bend

Come see what farming was like 100 years ago!



Hay Rides

**Antique Farming Equipment
and Cars on Display**

Tours

**Barley Beef Burgers
and Beer for sale**

MEMBER EVENT: 100 YEARS ON THE RASTOVICH FARM

**Friday, September 13
4-6 p.m.**

You are invited to attend a reception celebrating 100 years of continuous operation of the Rastovich Farm. Rob Rastovich, whose grandparents George and Anna Rastovich were the original homesteaders, will give a presentation about the changes in farming over the years to keep the farm operating. Get a sneak peek about the upcoming celebration that takes place on the farm Saturday, September 21.

Refreshments will be served.

There is no charge, RSVPs are not required.

From Vision to Reality: Roberts Field

by Janet Alexander

The air age began in Redmond on May 6, 1920, when C.P. Thompson landed his 110HP Thompson-Canuck canvas covered biplane on the old Redmond fairgrounds site, now occupied by Fred Meyer. He gave 15 minute rides to whomever could afford the \$5.00 fee and declared that Redmond had the best landing field he had found since leaving Portland.

In the mid 1920s the American Legion encouraged local posts and city councils to jointly construct landing fields. The roof of a nearby barn would get painted with the town name and often an arrow pointing to the landing field. It was a popular program and many ancient grass runways lie beneath a vast complexity of a modern airport.



Barn painted with town name for landing field

About the same time, Standard Oil published a booklet identifying emergency landing fields. Those books and painted barns served as the only guidance system for early pilots.

In 1924 Redmond's American Legion Post #44 asked Porter "Mack" Houk, early airplane enthusiast and Legionnaire, to join the city in developing a Legion landing field. The council and the Legion established airport committees and put up \$500 each. Houk and several Redmond businessmen located 160 acres east of the present airport on "government land",

signed a lease for about \$20 a year, began clearing junipers and building an access road. Government men donated their time surveying and leveling the area.

Not everybody was an enthusiast. Mayor Teater, a skeptic of air travel, told Houk he doubted "if them there flying machines will light on your field". His doubts were for naught. In 1927, with the airport still under construction, the Chandlers of Orange, California flew to Redmond in their 6-passenger cabin monoplane to visit in-laws, Francis and Billie Wilson, Redmond Hotel's owners. Their pilot, very complimentary about the field, said that it had a "good possibility for a real airport".

For many years Redmond held twice yearly work days clearing rocks and leveling the field. The Airport Committee would ask each business to close shop and help with the work. If they couldn't close or couldn't work, the Committee asked them to send an employee or contribute \$3.50 to support a day's work from a jail inmate. Later, it was called Airport Day and it turned into a festive work and fun day.

Meanwhile, in Bend, the city council took no action on several requests for a landing field. In frustration aviation enthusiasts turned to Bend's American Legion's Post #4. In June, 1928 the Legion bought 80 acres and turned it over to the newly formed Aero Club. They developed Knott Field, but a hill near the field occasionally made take-off and landing iffy. It was eventually abandoned.

For every project there is a formative event; for the Redmond airport it was the August 1929 visit of Harry H. Culver, president of the National Association of Real



Harry Culver in his "flying office"

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**Deschutes
Historical Museum**

129 NW Idaho Avenue
Bend, OR 97703
Open Tuesdays-Saturdays
10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
541.389.1813

Museum Staff:

Kelly Cannon-Miller, Executive Director
Vanessa Ivey, Museum Manager
Rebekah Averette, Registrar
Tracy Alexander, Membership Officer



2019 DCHS Board of Directors:

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Sue Fountain, Vice President
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Heidi Kennedy, Bill Olsen, Susie Penhollow,
and Jane Williamson.

Complete minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors are on file with the Museum office.



www.deschuteshistory.org
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Estate Boards founder and builder of California's Culver City and Universal Studio City. Culver, an air travel enthusiast, had outfitted his Stinson SM-1A Detroit as a luxurious flying office and flew across the country speaking to real estate boards.

He opened his Bend speech by exclaiming, "You should see what we saw in the air... then you'd know Bend is one of the best places in the United States". Harry proclaimed, "Air transportation is not in the future. It is here today. And every 'ship' that lands represents income for a town in money spent on gas, oil, supplies and services."

John Roy (J.R.) Roberts, partner in Redmond's Lynch and Roberts Department Store, attended Culver's meeting, became a believer and went on to be the planner, promoter, fund raiser, arm twisting, never deterred, optimistic creator of an airport for Redmond.

While the Depression years slowed growth everywhere, Redmond, spurred on by Roberts, kept the faith and continued to hold Airport Days. Using town equipment, the American Legion, the Works Project Association (WPA), the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) and town volunteers extended and graveled the runways. Ted Barber and Shelby Towner, based at Redmond, offered flight instruction and charter flights. Towner built the first hanger. In 1935 Redmond applied for and received a \$1000 federal grant to upgrade the field to a Grade A airport.

About this time the Deschutes County Commissioners proposed a shared landing field between Redmond and Bend. According to Mack Houk there wasn't suitable acreage between the two cities. Redmond said it wasn't about to start another site and Bend wasn't keen to partner with Redmond. Sharing was not suggested again. In 1940 Oregon Airways planned to extend scheduled service into central and eastern Oregon. Knowing this, Roberts urged Redmond to upgrade runways to CAA standards, then invited his friend, H.E.



Celebration of the arrival of the first flight of United Airlines at Roberts field October 1, 1946

Stearns, president of Oregon Airways, to review the Redmond airport. Stearns was impressed and selected Redmond for their expanded passenger and freight service but the move had to be approved. That March there was a meeting in Seattle ostensibly to review status and suitability of central Oregon airports for expansion. In reality, with war looming, the government was inventorying airports for military bases. At that meeting Bend learned their current landing field could only serve as an emergency landing field. Upset, Bend's committee declared that "We have sites here superior to or equal to the field being developed in Redmond." Bend was invited to a September meeting in Washington, DC and asked to bring additional information and site maps.

As a result of the Seattle meeting, the WPA was awarded \$30,000 to expand Redmond's gravel landing strips. Redmond celebrated National Aviation Day, August 19th, with flags flying, bands playing and tremendous enthusiasm.

In September, Roberts flew to Washington, DC with Oregon Airways officials. They presented their expansion plans and other data to the Civil Aeronautics Authority and left. But Roberts, sensing a developing situation, maintained contact with assorted experts and when on January 9, 1941 a telegram arrived from Washington, DC asking, "How much will it cost to build a Class III airport in Redmond? Reply tomorrow." Roberts had the data ready the next day.

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SEPTEMBER 14 10 a.m.— 5:30 p.m.

Do you own an old barn? Join Restore Oregon for the 2019 Heritage Barn Workshop in Bend!

Heritage barns are an iconic symbol of Oregon's agricultural and rural heritage. The annual Heritage Barn Workshop will be held in Bend at the Bend Park and Recreation District's historic Hollinshead Barn. Restore Oregon has partnered with the Deschutes County Historic Landmarks Commission to provide this exceptional educational opportunity.

For more information and a complete agenda, list of speakers, lunch menu, and to [PURCHASE TICKETS](https://www.restoreoregon.org/event), visit:

[Restoreoregon.org/event](https://www.restoreoregon.org/event)



DCHS NEWS

New Faces at DHM

The Deschutes Historical Museum is lucky to have three college interns helping museum staff in the collections department.



Jodi Clark (R) and Sami Eastwood (L) are both college sophomores attending online classes with Chaminade University in Honolulu, Hawaii. Both are history and English majors with a focus on American history. They have jumped head-first into their work, handling every task with detail and enthusiasm. They have

learned to catalog new artifacts and properly store them for preservation. They have also enjoyed exploring the collection and created a first floor exhibit about artists and musicians in the Bend area.

Sami is also a budding author of Young Adult fiction. She published her first book, "Blackstone Asylum", in 2017. Jodi manages social media for both her parents online business and her brother who is a professional online gamer.

Liza Rosier is a graduate student in the Public History department at Portland State University. She is writing her thesis on the preservation of historic homes around Oregon. Liza has been working at the historic Hollinshead house in Bend. She is inventorying, photographing, and cataloging the artifacts in the house. To conclude her internship, she will write a report detailing her recommendations for the preservation of the Hollinshead House and its contents for future generations. Outside of her graduate school work, Liza is the secretary of the board for Cedar Mill Historical Society who are working with the Tualatin Hills Park and Rec to save the John Quincy Adams Young house on NW Cornell Rd in Beaverton. Liza does historical reenactments, enjoys cemetery preservation and tours, and studying newspapers online.

Please join us in thanking these interns for their remarkable and important work this summer!



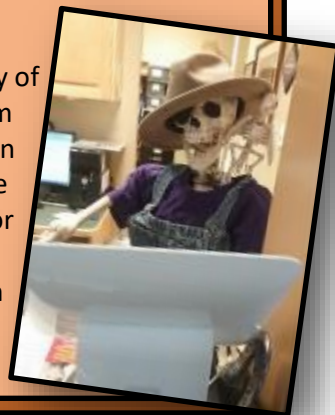
GET YOUR HAUNT ON!

**Historical Haunts of Downtown Bend
October 11 & 12**

The Deschutes Historical Museum is counting down the days before it's time again for historical haunt walks of 2019. The museum is looking for brave souls to volunteer at this annual fundraiser Friday, October 11 and Saturday October 12, between 3:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Short of counting coffins, there are all sorts of volunteer roles to fill, including tour guides.

The Historical Haunts of Downtown Bend started in 2010 with three guides. Today, eight guides lead visitors through historic downtown Bend with tours that run between 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. each night leaving from the museum. Space is limited and is on a first-come first-served basis.

Tickets go on sale at 10:00 a.m. day of the event: \$10 per person, museum members \$5 per person. Admission to the museum is included with the tour price. For more information, or if you are interested in volunteering, contact Vanessa Ivey, Museum Manager, 541-389-1813 or Email: vanessa@deschuteshistory.org.



**Monthly Volunteer
Meetings Resume
with New Time on
Third Tuesdays
1-2:00 p.m.**

Now that summer is over it is time to kick-off a new series of volunteer meetings at the Deschutes Historical Museum.

Our first meeting is Tuesday September 17 at 1:00 p.m. in the research room, and our topic is "The Rest of the Year... what's left for 2019".

PLEASE NOTE: we are still meeting the third Tuesday of the month; however, the time of the meeting has changed. **It is now an hour later due to increased use of the room.**

Volunteer meetings are a great time to meet other museum volunteers, expand your knowledge of local history, learn what the museum is planning, and much more. Current volunteers, and those interested in becoming a volunteer are welcome. Contact Vanessa Ivey, Museum Manager, vanessa@deschuteshistory.org or call 541-389-1813 for more information.



DESCHUTES PUBLIC
LIBRARY

Know Government:

Oregon and The Votes for Women Movement

With Kimberly Jensen, Western Oregon University

September 6 12-1:00 p.m. Sunriver Library

September 7 12-1:00 p.m. East Bend Library

In August 2020 the nation will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, which placed women's voting rights into the United States Constitution. Most Oregon women had been voting citizens since achieving woman suffrage in 1912. This presentation will detail how and why Oregon women and their allies achieved voting rights in 1912, and how various Oregon women contributed to the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Kimberly Jensen is Professor of History and Gender Studies at Western Oregon University in Monmouth, Oregon. She is the author of *Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War* and *Oregon's Doctor to the World: Esther Pohl Lovejoy and a Life in Activism*. She is a board member of the Oregon Women's History Consortium.



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A Class III Airport was a big deal; it had paved runways, lights, maintenance buildings, shops and hangers. Roberts figured the airport would become a base. He knew the CAA would need a civilian pilot training program to supply the military with pilots. He had personnel and space ready when the government asked him January 23, 1941 to start a school. Ground School began in July of that year. By August five men were ready for final exams. Classes filled so quickly the school expanded twice.

On December 7, 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. On January 15, 1942 the CAA dedicated \$500,000 to the WPA for paving and lighting the Redmond Airport. Construction began January 23 and 6 months later two miles of runways were reinforced and paved. The asphalt paving was laid at the rate of 95 tons/hour. The runways were lighted and an entire base village was built. On July 23 the base was turned over to the Army and bomber pilot training began. The base had as many as 115 B-17s stationed there and many hundreds of pilots were trained.

In 1946 the base, with all its buildings, infrastructure, machinery and equipment, was returned to Redmond for \$1.00 and the town named it the J.R. Roberts Airfield. The newly formed Airport Commission leased facilities to Ballentine's Air Service and Cal Butler's Farm Air. United Airlines, West Coast, Republic Airlines and then Horizon supplied scheduled service. Butler expanded his crop dusting service by converting B-17s into tankers for fire fighting.



Entrance to Roberts Field Airport today

By the mid 80s the military facilities had reached the end of their usefulness. The terminal was inadequate. The runways were deteriorating. The FAA wouldn't agree to an air traffic control tower, and money was tight. Fortunately Bob Briggs, council member and mayor, saw the crisis coming and took things in hand. He lobbied Congress for a control tower, found \$3.9M for terminal expansion, rebuilt the runways and brought the airport up to modern standards. The airport expanded twice again, extending runways, adding terminal space and flights including non-stops to Salt Lake City, Phoenix, and Chicago.

Today, funding and approval come from the Federal Aviation Administration but planning still comes from Redmond citizens enthusiastically contributing the time and effort that keeps Roberts' vision alive and growing.



The Deschutes Historical Museum is pleased to announce that, for the second year, we are both the home and beneficiary for the 2019 Oregon Festival of Cars on Saturday, September 14. For years, Central Oregon has been home to the Oregon Festival of Cars, a fun Show and Shine of both classic and exotic cars from around the state. The festival is free and open to the public! Cars will be on display from 10 a.m. to 3p.m. Spectators are invited to vote on the People's Choice Award until 2 p.m., with awards for Best in Show prior to closing at 3 p.m. A portion of the registration proceeds will be donated to support the ongoing work of the Deschutes Historical Museum.



Mark Your Calendars

SEPTEMBER

- 6 & 7 OREGON AND THE VOTES FOR WOMEN MOVEMENT**
 Sept. 6: 12-1 p.m. Sunriver Library
 Sept. 7: 12-1 p.m. East Bend Library
 Presented by Kimberly Jensen, Western Oregon University
- 13 RASTOVICH FARM MEMBERS' EVENT**
 4-6 p.m. Deschutes Historical Museum, See p. 1
- 14 FESTIVAL OF CARS FREE EVENT!**
 10 a.m.—3 p.m. Deschutes Historical Museum
- 14 RESTORE OREGON'S HERITAGE BARN WORKSHOP**
 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at Hollinshead Barn *Ticketed Event See p. 3*
- 17 VOLUNTEER MEETING**
NEW TIME: 1-2 p.m. Deschutes Historical Museum
- 21 RASTOVICH FARM CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION**
 11 a.m.—3 p.m. Rastovich Ranch, 21925 Rastovich Rd
- 24 HISTORY PUB: ROBERT SAWYER, CONSERVATION, AND THE MAKING OF CENTRAL OREGON**
 Presented by Bill Lang, Emeritus Professor of History at PSU

McMenamins Old St. Francis
 Father Luke Room, 7p.m., doors open at 5:30 p.m.
First-come-first-served seating, no reservations required.

SAVE THE DATE! HISTORIC HAUNT WALKS RETURN OCT. 11 & 12

McMenamins History and Deschutes Historical Museum present...

HISTORY PUB

ROBERT SAWYER, CONSERVATION, AND THE MAKING OF CENTRAL OREGON

Presented by **BILL LANG**
 Emeritus Professor of History at Portland State University

Robert Sawyer was 32 years old when he came to Bend in 1912, within five years he had purchased the *Bend Bulletin*, a publication that gave him a platform for his views on Central Oregon for 26 years. An opinionated and forceful newspaper editor, Sawyer was conservative to his core, but also a dedicated environmentalist and defender of federal forests in no small way, Sawyer helped shape the human and natural environments of Central Oregon.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2019
 7 pm - Doors at 5:30 pm - Father Luke's Room - Free - All ages welcome
 Photo Courtesy: Oregon Hist. Soc. Research Lib., 56003530

McMENAMINS OLD ST. FRANCIS SCHOOL
 700 N.W. Bond St. - Bend - (541) 382-5174
 mcmenamins.com/history

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