



Decoding Street Names

Unraveling the mystery of Stannium Ave. See p. 2

Back When Travel was Welcome

Deschutes County's early days of tourism See p. 5



The Homesteader

Deschutes County Historical Society Newsletter—May 2020



Downtown Bend, 7:30pm Friday, April 10, 2020 Photo by Brent Barnett

No one said living through history was easy.

Few things have the power to change the course of human history as disease. The COVID 19 pandemic is a unique moment in history unlike any other. Never has the entire global population tried to band together to defeat a disease through the simple coordinated act of self-quarantine. It is quite remarkable.

Thanks to the internet, humans can connect as never before. We can still see each other's faces, sing and dance, laugh and weep together. We can virtually tour museums, attend work meetings, and download schoolwork and books from the library. Our mobile devices can download meditation apps to help our anxiety in the face of the haunting disease that lurks at us from the nightly news.

However, the COVID 19 experience is vastly different across our community, one household to the next. Some of us will not escape the disease and fall ill. Not everyone has the technology for all the things above. Some of us will experience unemployment, food insecurity, childcare issues, or fear of homelessness. Business owners are afraid of losing everything. Essential employees are denied the stay-at-home experience; they instead fear bringing the disease home. High school and college seniors leave school adrift, facing an uncertain future without the traditions and ceremonies their accomplishments earned them, nor the guidance provided by these simple acts of acknowledgment.

May is National Historic Preservation Month and this issue of the newsletter would normally offer programs and heritage walks, now cancelled, postponed, or offered as a Zoom presentation online. The Deschutes Historical Museum has spent hours fielding questions about pandemics of the past. In these moments, our connection to history provides relief,

- Continued on page 6

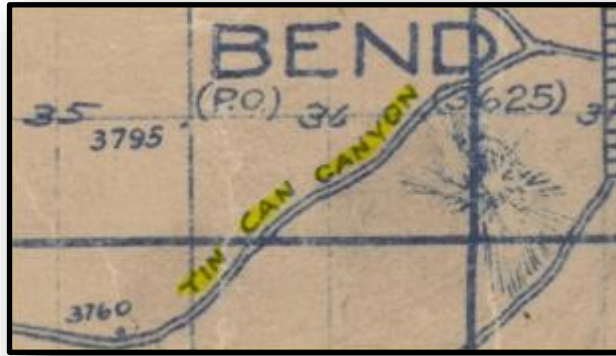
What's in a name? Tin Can Canyon and Stannium Road

By Mike Berry

Four years ago, I was showing my wife Maureen the 1915 "Map of the Deschutes River Valley" by surveyor Robert B. Gould. Her keen eye caught an interesting feature on the west side of Bend, a road with the annotation of TIN CAN CANYON

"What's that?" she asked. I had no idea, so I called Local History 4-1-1 (John and Jean Frye) and of course they knew about it. John said it was the early 1900s dumping ground on the edge of town, and when they moved into their house at the west end of Galveston around 1971 their "...old neighbor across the street used to bottle hunt along this area. There were cans and bottles everywhere between Galveston and Tin Can Canyon". Local resident Jim Crowell remembers that 75 years ago the area was a "big ol' playground" for him and a rifle platoon of other 7-year-old boys armed with BB guns.

Gould's map shows the west end of Bend in 1915 being NW 15th Street. A road extends west from Milwaukee and then splits at a "Y". The north leg goes to what is now Shevlin Park (roughly along the route of today's Shevlin Park Road) and the south leg goes through "Tin Can Canyon" and then continues westerly to Tumalo Falls (present day Skyliners Road follows a good portion of this 1915 road). Gould's map covers hundreds of square miles, and is not an accurate survey of the area. Some of the features are obviously drawn freehand on the map, and this is the case with the north part of Tin Can Canyon. In the sketch to the right his 1915 location of the canyon is the blue line and the red line represents the actual location of the canyon based on topography and conversations with people in the know.

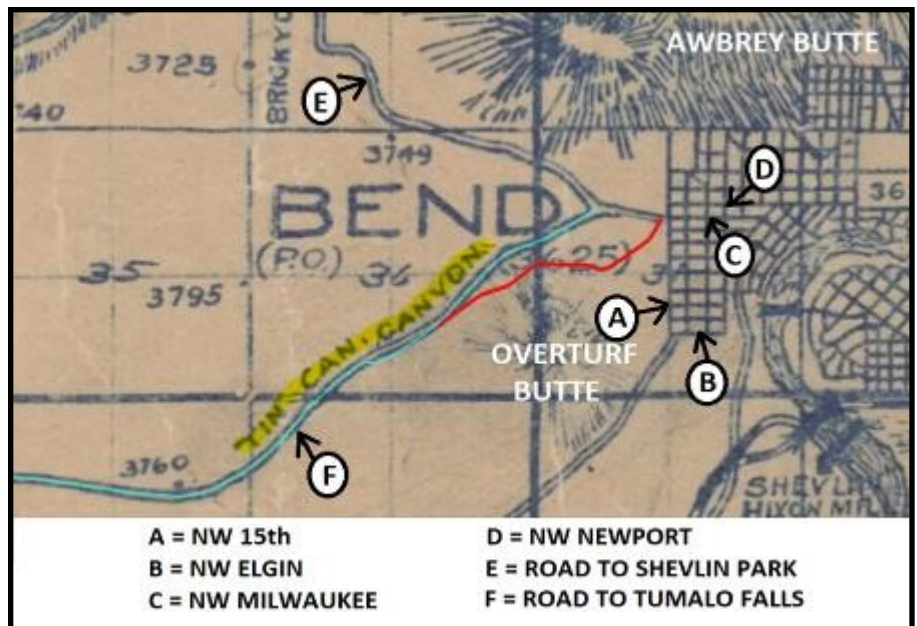


"Tin Can Canyon" shown on R.B. Gould's 1915 "Map of the Deschutes River Valley"

I sort of qualify as one of the people in the know as I had lived in a rental on Stannium in 1977-1978. The rental was the second house from the corner of Milwaukee and Stannium. It was a dirt road with a few houses (mainly trailers) for the first 500 feet. It then turned into a double-track dirt road that meandered through the woods to Skyliners Road near the old Humane Society.

It was an idyllic and seemingly remote location. From there it was a 5-minute walk to the Green Mindt grocery store (now Newport Market) to the east and a vast tract of undeveloped forest and dirt roads to the west. I recall some old tin can dumps in the area, but they were everywhere on the outskirts of town back then.

- Continued on page 3



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, Collections Manager
Anne Goldner, Development Coordinator
Tracy Alexander, Membership Officer



2020 DCHS Board of Directors:

Sue Fountain, President
Adrian Bennett, Vice President
Jane Williamson, Secretary/Treasurer
Marsha Stout, Past President

Board Members:

Mike Berry, Mark Capell, Paul Claeysens,
Tony DeBane, Beau Eastes,
Dan Ellingson, Greg Fulton,
Karen Green, Andrea Hunnell-DuPree,
Loren Irving, Heidi Kennedy, Bill Olsen,
and Susie Penhollow,

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

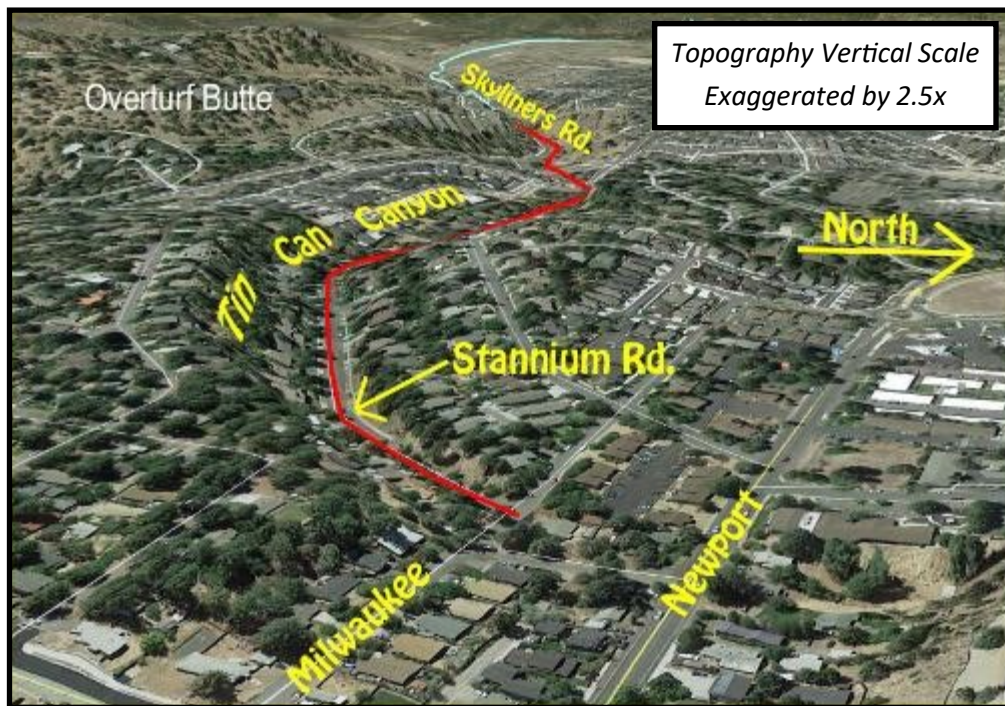


www.deschuteshistory.org
info@deschuteshistory.org

Tin Can Canyon's location today

This 2019 Google Earth aerial photo below shows Tin Can Canyon's location (red line) based on actual topography and old USGS quad maps. The canyon runs along the route of Stannium Road and then along Skyliners Road at the north base of Overturf Butte.

The Google Earth image below looks westerly down Tin Can Canyon along Stannium Road and then on to Skyliners Road. The red line is the canyon bottom. In the distance is the blue line representing the 1915 location of the road per Gould's map. The vertical scale is exaggerated 2.5 times to accentuate the canyon's location.



Stannium Road

The area along Stannium Road wasn't subdivided until 1925, ten years after Gould's 1915 map was published and 20 years after the City of Bend was incorporated. The subdivision's name is the "Bonne Home Addition to Bend Oregon". The surveyor was Robert B. Gould. The plat of Bonne Home shows the majority of the roads as extensions of roads from the 1912 subdivision to the east Northwest Townsite Co's Second Addition to Bend. This area was also surveyed by Gould, with the same road names as the existing roads (Milwaukee, Lexington, Jacksonville, etc.). All the extended road's names are of various cities in the U.S.

The standard north-south/east-west road grid was modified

to fit the terrain of Tin Can Canyon, with Stannium running along the bottom of the canyon and Knoxville and Kingston paralleling the tops of the canyon. The only two new road names created in Bonne Home Addition are "Knoxville" (another existing U.S. city name) and "Stannium". Why wasn't this road named after a U.S. city?

Sometimes subdivision developers named roads after themselves, family members or the places they had previous lived. The Bend Company developed the 1925 Bonne Home Addition, and the two company members who signed the subdivision plat, Clyde McKay and J.C. Rhodes, didn't have family members named "Stannium". There are no major (or minor) U.S. cities named "Stannium".

Road names can also come from historical, physical, geologic or other natural features such as Camp Polk Road, Serpentine Drive,

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

A special shout out to the members of the Deschutes County Historical Society who, during this crisis and the museum closure, have sent in donations or have increased their monthly sustaining circle donation amounts. Museum staff are working hard to capture the historical moment we are living in with photographs and written stories from the community, so that in another 100 years people will know how we responded to this crisis, in the same way that we have been asked how our community responded to the 1918 Flu Pandemic.

A special "Thank you" to US Bank who has come forward during this historic financial crisis to support us in our mission to preserve and promote local history. We welcome them to our membership at the annual Business Membership level of \$250. US Bank's downtown Bend location at the corner of Bond and Oregon has continued since 1910 as a location for a banking institution, providing essential financial assistance to all members of our community. US Bank pledges, "We're here to help navigate important milestones and strengthen futures together."

Continued from Page 3—What's in a Name?

Lava Lane and Ponderosa Lane. It turns out that Stannium Road falls into this second category, in a very clever way. From the 1855 book "Geology, Mineralogy and Crystallography" the table of Chemical Composition of Minerals has the entry below.

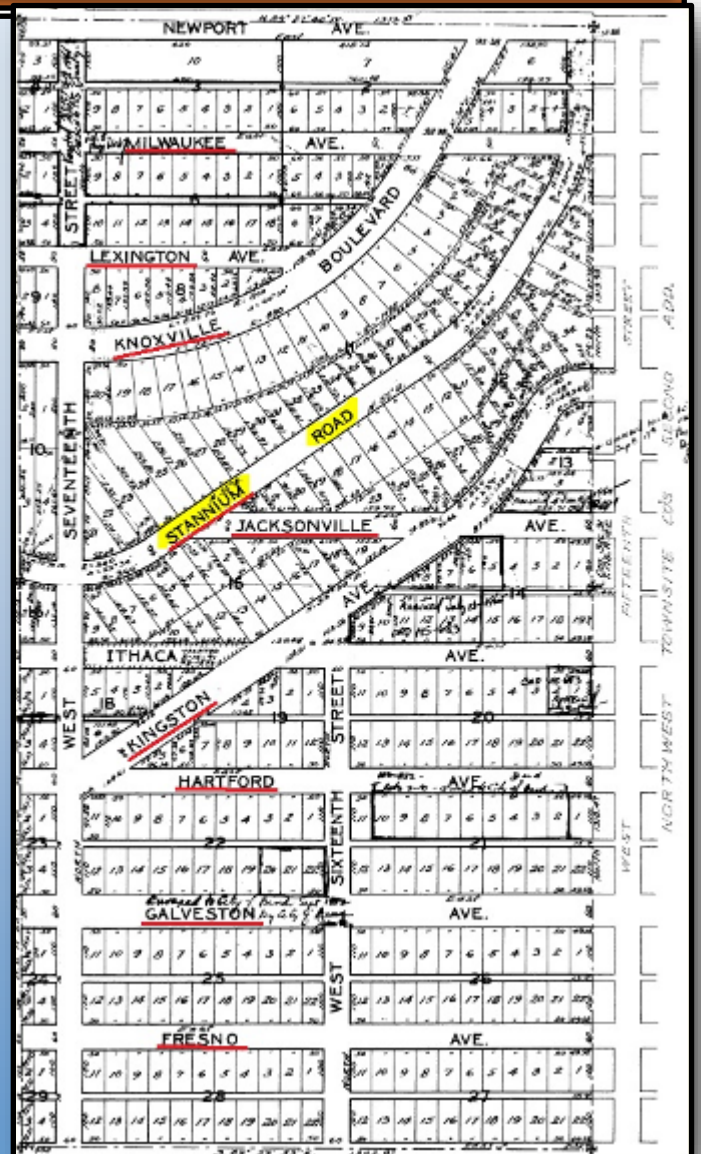
S, Sulphur	200.00
Sb. Stibium (antimony)	1612.90
Sn, <u>Stannium (tin)</u>	735.30
Ta, Tantalum	1148.40
Te, Tellurium	801.80

Chemical Composition of Minerals table from 1855 book "Geology, Mineralogy and Crystallography"

So, the Latin for "tin" is "Stannium". In 1925 the newly created road running through Tin Can Canyon was named "Stannium Road" in recognition of its longtime local name. Nobody wants to buy a lot on Tin Can Canyon Road, but Stannium Road... now that's another thing.

There were many "Tin Can Alleys" around Bend in the early 1900s and the local paper periodically had pleas for citizens to use the city dump rather than disposing trash along the roads in the region. A notable headline on the front page of the April 1, 1927 *Bend Bulletin* compared the potential size of the growing litter problem with the Great Wall of China: "Chinese Wall of Rubbish Around Bend Attacked by City Beautification Group." The article went on to say that "A city circled by a Chinese Wall of tin cans, with alleys littered by orphan automobiles and strewn with unsightly debris — this was the picture of Bend of the future, drawn from present practices, presented to a group which met last night in the city council rooms and organized a Bend beautification association". The paper said that the city dump west of town near Century Drive was rapidly losing popular favor and unauthorized dumps were springing up along the edges of town and on the highway to Lava Butte.

Earlier newspaper articles in the 1910s spoke of other "Tin Can Alleys" on the roads beyond the City Limits. Apparently, none of them warranted inclusion on Gould's famous map or memorialization in their official city road name.



Portion of 1925 subdivision plat of "Bonne Home Addition to Bend"

Festival of the Deer

By Sue Fountain

A recent headline in *The Bulletin* read, "Bend Order Discourages Tourism." What?! It was such a reversal of what we usually hear that I thought I was dreaming when I read it. But no, the order was due to the coronavirus. Many things have felt dreamlike in these times of quarantine and social distancing.

You can bet, though, that as soon as the virus is gone, tourism will be highly encouraged once again. It has always been a big economic factor in Central Oregon. In the early 1900s Alfred Aya, Sr. founded the La Pine Townsite Company with the goal of attracting settlers to move to the town of La Pine. Aya and other members of his Townsite organization also sent out flyers urging tourists to come to Central Oregon for recreation. "Deer hunting is the best in the country and the beautiful lakes surrounding the area are filled with big trout."

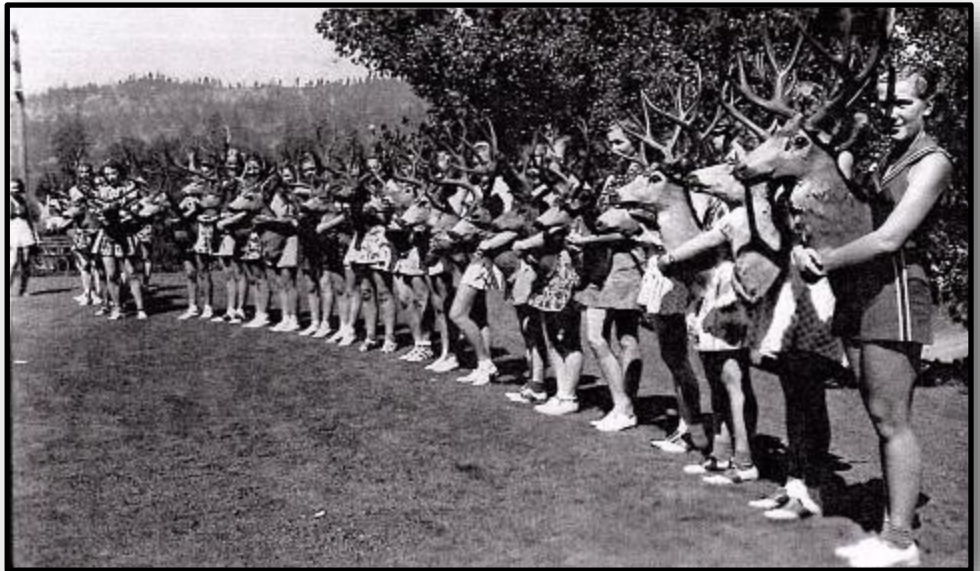
In 1937, Bend saw a more elaborate bid for tourism before the opening of deer hunting season. Promoters combined the idea of hunting the biggest bucks with a type of beauty contest. According to the August 17 issue of *The Bend Bulletin*, the event was staged as a short film for Universal Studios to be shown in theaters before the feature-length movie. Billed as the Festival of the

Deer Season, twenty-five young women wearing short skirts stood in a line holding large, antlered deer heads on the lawn behind the Pilot Butte Inn. A call went out to residents asking for deer heads with a "fine set of antlers" to be brought to the Pilot Butte Inn the evening before the contest. Donors were advised to attach their names to the horns to ensure a safe return.

The winner of the contest was whoever held the largest set of antlers. John Wetle, founder of Wetle's Department Store, was named as the "Deer King," and it was his role to be the judge. Helen Irvine carried the deer head with the most massive set of horns; it had a spread of 29 inches. Wetle crowned her Queen of the Deer Season by placing a wreath made of ponderosa pinecones on her head. Helen was the daughter of Bill and Edith Irvine of Bend. Bill was the paymaster for Brooks Scanlon, and he also served on the city council.

Many of the other contestants who vied for the ponderosa crown reflect the history of Bend residents in the 1930s: Rosemary Cashman, Polly Miller, Betty DeArmond, Alice Gage, Barbara Fuller, Joan Vandeventer, Lorraine Eby, Mary Ellen Banks, Marjorie Morris, Mattie Gassner, and Helen Wetle. Helen Wetle was the daughter of John Wetle, the Deer King. There is a picture of the Deer Season Festival hanging in the hallway at McMenamins with Helen leading the line-up of young women.

As for Helen Irvine, the queen of the event, her daughter Sandra Curtis donated information and photos describing the celebration. Sandra confided that her mother always said she was crowned "Diana of the Deer," but that was not verified. Whatever she was called, the Festival of Deer Season is another look at the unique events that are part of Bend history.



Helen Wetle is the first in line



Helen Irvine wears the crown

Continued from Page 1—Living through History Isn't Easy

knowing we've been here before and come through the other side stronger. It also highlights the importance of our collections that preserve and document these major events. In another 100 years, future generations will want to understand what happened in 2020 when COVID 19 shut down the world. That is why historical societies and museums across the country are asking communities to submit their experiences for the record.



What will future historians want to know about us, the survivors of 2020? We are hard at work capturing this history--we have a bottle of locally made Oregon Spirits Distillery hand sanitizer and homemade masks. Our first piece of shared COVID inspired artwork comes from Bend High School's Lily Alexander. Videographer Brent Barnett shared drone images of an empty downtown Bend on a Friday night. Photographer Gary Calicott is chasing images of store lines, closures, roped off playgrounds, offers of free food, and empty streets. We need your experiences, too. Here are some prompt questions for you:

Teachers and educators: COVID presents an unprecedented challenge--how has your school risen to the challenge? What has been the greatest frustration? What has inspired you? How have your students responded?

Doctors, nurses, and medical staff: You are our front lines--your stories will shape how the world responds next time. What changes did you see as it happened? What gave you strength? What needs to change in the future? What do you want historians to understand?

Students: Did COVID change your view of the future? Did it change how you feel about school and your teachers? What was the most challenging? How did you stay focused?



Artwork by Lily Alexander, Junior at Bend Senior High School

Calendar Updates:

CANCELLED:

- All Historic Preservation Month events
- Archaeology Road Show

POSTPONED Dates TBD

- Maxville Exhibit at DHM
- From Maxville to Vanport at the Tower Theater

May 21 Deschutes Public Library's "History By the Decade: 1960s" presentation will be available on the DPL YouTube channel as a streaming video

Museum Hours:

Closed until further notice, messages and emails checked regularly for photo orders and gift shop purchases.

Essential employees: what line of work are you in? How have your customers responded to you? What gave you inspiration? What frustrated you?

Stay-at-home warriors: Who was home with you? How did you combat quarantine blues? How did you prepare to go out when you needed to? Were you able to work from home or did you lose your job? Have you struggled to keep a business you own going?

In 1953, [Dr. J.D. Donovan sat down for a recorded interview with Kessler Cannon](#) (click above link to download from the Deschutes Public Library website) to talk about his memories of the 1918 Flu Pandemic in Bend. He worked in the emergency hospital in the athletic club gymnasium where the disease struck down healthy 20 year olds in front of their eyes. He remembered the time as 'heartfelt.' People sacrificed in order to care for each other in the face of the terrifying disease. His voice from all those years ago shows us what hasn't changed in 100 years: our sense of community, our depth of heart, and how we care for one another.

You can share your stories by emailing the museum: info@deschuteshistory.org or mailing us materials to 129 NW Idaho Ave, Bend, 97703. DHM will be collecting data, stories, and eventually, oral histories like Dr. Donovan's, on COVID 19 for years, as the impacts will continue well beyond the reopen measures.

Thank you to the essential employees, thank you to those staying at home, and, to the front line hospital staff, thank you for your dedication and strength.