



Camp Abbot Barracks

Where can this historic building be found today?

See page 2

Memento Mori

The story behind a hair-raising exhibit item

See page 3



The Homesteader

Deschutes County Historical Society Newsletter—January 2021

COVID-19 Update

Under the State of Oregon's closure, the Deschutes Historical Museum remains closed under the protocol for 'Extreme Risk' designation of Deschutes County. As a reminder, museums must close during Extreme Risk periods.

When the county returns to 'High Risk' or lower, we will be able to open again under COVID-19 restrictions for cleaning and occupancy. Until then, staff is working behind the scenes and available for information requests, photograph requests, and store sales.

Staff can be reached at info@deschuteshistory.org or by calling 541.389.1813 to leave a message.



Rough Years in History

Pandemic. Economic crisis. Political division. Natural disasters. Was 2020 the worst year in history? The past year created turmoil, pain, and loss. Comparing it to other years of loss, however, is an apples to oranges game. There are centuries of bad events, pain and suffering, disease, economic and natural disasters from which to choose a year that far beats 2020. We ask the question looking for comfort in history; our ancestors survived, we can, too.

The eruption of Mount Tambora in Indonesia in 1815 ranks as one of the worst natural disasters in recorded history; its effects on the atmosphere caused crop failures and famine around the world in 1816. The American Civil War decimated the country with staggering costs in human lives and economic turmoil, caused by a political chasm over slavery decades in the making, the strength of the fragile union tested with each new state created—would it be a free or slave state? Throughout the late 1800s, Native American tribes suffered the loss of their way of life and their freedoms in multiple wars against the United States. World War I and World War II brought death and destruction the likes of which the world had never seen, and all the world hopes will never see again. History does provide perspective on what 2020 asked us to endure.

Was it a good or bad year? It was both. While 1863 was a desperate year in the civil war, it also brought with it the Emancipation Proclamation—the first step on the painful road to equality in America, a road still under construction. History reminds us that humankind fills every year with both tragedy and triumph. For the museum, 2020 meant cataloging as much of it as we can with the knowledge that future historians will come up with their own view on our successes and failures. As we document the number of ways that Deschutes County residents have rallied around each other and answered calls for help during this year of crisis, we hope future historians agree that our triumphs outpaced our missteps.

Camp Abbot Barracks by John Kent

During WWII Oregon had three U.S. Army camps— Camp White near Medford, Camp Adair near Corvallis and Camp Abbot near Bend. The Bend location was chosen by the Army because it resembled the European environment where the land battles were being fought. Though relatively short lived (less than 16 months), Camp Abbot was the only Combat Engineer replacement and training center west of the Mississippi. Two hundred barracks were needed for the ten thousand troops that were trained during each 17-week cycle. When Camp Abbot closed, a lot of the barracks and other buildings were removed and sent to North Fort Lewis by a Navy SeeBee detail to be used as housing for the thousands of troops aboard transport ships in the Puget Sound awaiting housing after WWII. Everything else left over and not used by the Army, was put up for bid by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in Portland.

Making a bid for two two-story barracks were Frank and Ruth Graves of Summer Lake. In the 1900s Bend was a hub for medical care, just like today. In 1924 the Graves moved to Bend for Ruth to give



Two story barracks at Camp Abbot

birth to their first child Jaunita. For the several months they lived in Bend, Frank had a job at Brooks-Scanlon lumber company mill. After Jaunita's birth they returned to Summer Lake.

In 1946, after trading a gravel pit on the east side of Highway 31 for property across from the State Game Refuge headquarters, Frank and Ruth decided Summer Lake needed a hotel and restaurant. Hunters were flocking to the area. They put in a bid for two Camp Abbot two-story barracks and won. They hired two men to take down the two-story barracks and the buildings were



Camp Abbott barracks today, Summer Lake - Continued on page 5



**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
Tracy Alexander, Membership Officer



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



www.deschuteshistory.org
info@deschuteshistory.org

Spotlight on an Exhibit:

Victorian Hair Art by *Bonnie Burns*

An item on the second floor of the Deschutes Historical Museum in the Homesteader's room often elicits such comments as "Eew!", or "Gross!" Upon inspection, the item looks rather ordinary; flowers and leaves, a skeletal bouquet in a shadow box. Made by the Weist family women in 1879 in Spring Grove, Pennsylvania, it might have been brought to Bend in the early 1900s as an heirloom. The gross comments no doubt arise from the fact that the floral arrangement (above, right) is made of human hair.

Using hair for art work goes back centuries and found in many forms and cultures but it flourished in the Victorian Era. (1837-1901). When Queen Victoria's beloved Albert died suddenly, the queen went into mourning for the rest of her life. Thus mourning became a popular trend on both sides of the Atlantic. (The Civil War in America fostered a growing need for means to mourn and remember the dead.)

Queen Victoria became obsessed with making art and jewelry from her and Albert's hair, and it influenced all manner of fashion and accessories. Women's elaborate Victorian hairstyles required long tresses so there was a plentiful supply of raw material. For the sake of art and fashion, locks of hair were chopped, curled, braided, woven, and manipulated into works of art and jewelry. Even scraps of leftover hair were pulverized into pigment for painting mourning scenes.

Although royalty commissioned works of hair art, most creations were the results of "fancy work" by women commemorating family history or loving keepsakes. They used hair to create decorative art work for their homes, including wreaths to remember a loved one. Using hair from the deceased and possibly living family members, a U-shaped wreath was placed with the open end up, signifying the ascent to Heaven of the deceased.

Another type of mourning wreath was to place the hair of deceased members on the perimeter with the hair of the latest to die placed in the center. The Weist wreath has a similar design but there is no provenance to indicate if this is a mourning wreath or a family history. It does have several hues of hair color meaning several "donors". It was made using the "gimp" method of weaving long strands of hair with thin wire around a knitting needle. The "loops" pulled from the needle could then be made into

various shapes; hearts, vines, flowers, or leaves. Thickness of the loops varied by using different sizes of needles, or rods. Often, wooden or glass beads, buttons, or seeds were added to the wreath.

The popularity of hair work diminished with the outbreak of WWI. Life was gearing more toward reality and away from sentimentality. Photography was stepping in for remembrance, and hair styles were becoming shorter. Today, Victorian Era hair work is sought by collectors and can bring hundreds, if not thousands of dollars, and that's not gross.



Detail of the hair art above



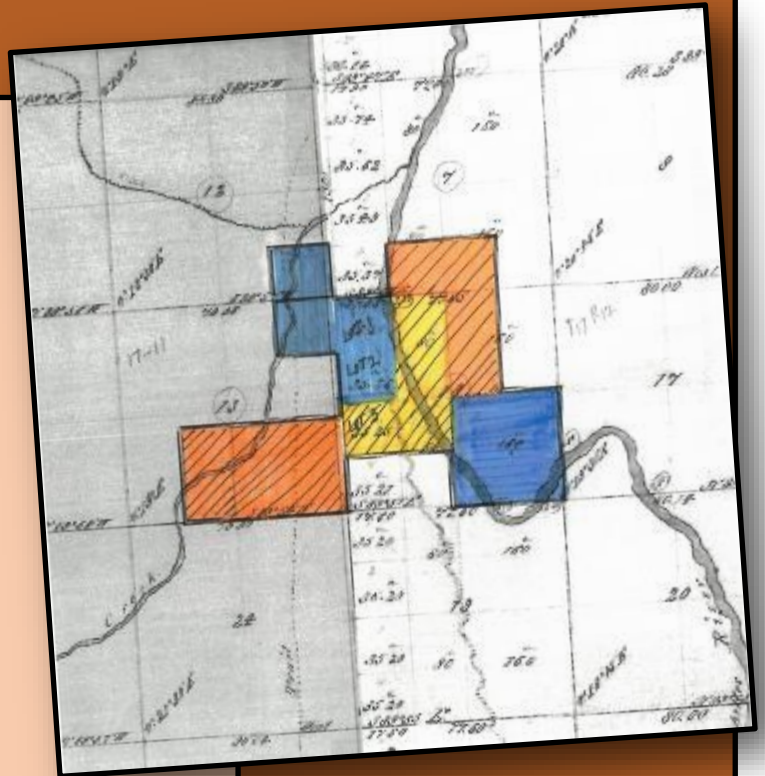
DCHS NEWS

Coming Soon: Searching for Homesteads 101

Have you ever heard stories about your family's homestead and wondered where it was? Or you own property and would like to learn more about the history of your land?

Join Museum Manager, Vanessa Ivey for a new three-part series, **Searching for Homesteads 101**, this February via Zoom webinar.

Learn how to decipher the code of property surveys and what local online resources can help you in your quest. Using examples from around Deschutes County, Vanessa will show you that the process of uncovering property history isn't such a mystery when you know the steps to follow and where to look. Registration details available in next month's "Homesteader."



Thank You Roundhouse Foundation

One of the few things that went right in 2020 was a surprise grant of \$1000 from the Roundhouse Foundation in Sisters!

It is such a joy to not only receive financial support from a community arts resource like the Roundhouse Foundation, but it is even better to have the trustees acknowledge our valuable work in preserving our county history.

Thank you Oregon Cultural Trust and Deschutes Cultural Coalition



As part of the CARES Act, in October the Oregon Cultural Trust was tasked with granting out \$29 million dollars to support arts and cultural organizations closed due to COVID-19. The Oregon Cultural Trust oversees a broad consortium of county coalitions, including the Deschutes Cultural Coalition, to make sure their funding reaches every corner of the state. The Oregon Cultural Trust system was the perfect vehicle to get funding out quickly to organizations across the state. We are proud to say that the Deschutes County Historical Society was one of the organizations selected to receive a grant to support DCHS operating costs during 2020 closures. Thank you to the Deschutes Cultural Coalition for their work processing our local grants, and to the Oregon Cultural Trust for making these grants possible.

Continued from P. 2— Camp Abbott Barracks

reconstructed as one-level units and a restaurant out front. As Ruth was a superb cook, the restaurant exceeded their expectations and they prospered.

It was a long journey from a military Barracks to the Lodge at Summer Lake, still in use today.



Original pine boards from Brooks-Scanlon mill



A look from the dining room past the original rest rooms, center of the old barracks with rooms added to either side.

*The Lodge at Summer Lake is located at 53460 Hwy 31,
Summer Lake, Oregon.*

Visit lodgeatsummerlake.com for more information



*Frank and Ruth Graves, at their golden wedding anniversary,
First Methodist Church in Bend, OR. Photo: Bend Bulletin, 1973*

Memorials

Denis Berrigan

Don and Nancy Wick

Joe Dysart

Brigitte Dysart

Darlyne Hoover Haynes

Brigitte Dysart

Mei Li Michele Lantz

Curtis Lantz

Mike Puddy

Cheryl Puddy

Bruce White

Cathy White

Thank you, Dear Supporters

Your response to our recent annual giving drive has been heart-warming to all of us. Especially during such a challenging year, it is wonderful to have your continued support. I recently read an anonymous quote that stuck with me: "To know a town you need to know its memories." I believe that's why so many of you generously support the Deschutes Historical Society; you want to keep the memories and history of Central Oregon alive. Thank you all for your kind and very generous donations.

Sue Fountain, Board President, DCHS

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