Deschutes County Historical Society Newsletter—February 2021

Webinar consists of three, one-hour sessions at 11:00 a.m. on Fridays, February 12, 19, and 26
Free to DCHS Members

February 12: Breaking the Code: An introduction to the Public Land Survey System
We will start with getting organized, sharing helpful resources, basic homestead history, and an introduction to the Public Land Survey System (PLSS).

February 19: Navigating the General Land Office (GLO) Records
It’s time to put the PLSS into practice as Vanessa walks you through the Bureau of Land Managements’s GLO records. Discover where to find property deeds, original survey plats, field notes, and other fascinating information about the property you are investigating.

February 26: Where to Go Next...
This week we will wrap up by exploring the county assessor’s office and touch on other useful resources; newspapers, maps, Earth Point, and DOGAMI Lidar Viewer.
Each session will include time for live Q & A

DCHS Virtual Webinar:
Researching Homesteads 101
FREE for DCHS Members

Have you 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 Deschutes Historical Museum Manager Vanessa Ivey for our first webinar series, Researching Homesteads 101.

Learn how to decipher the code of Public Land Survey System, and what local online resources can help in your quest. Using examples from Deschutes County, Oregon and Payne County, Oklahoma, Vanessa will show that the process of uncovering property history isn’t such a mystery when you know the steps to follow. This webinar is designed for beginning genealogists or homeowners researching their property.

CLICK HERE To register, or call 541-389-1813 for registration assistance

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A Picture Tells a Story by Sue Fountain

On September 29, 1921, the students of Bend High School went on strike in support of the principal, Mark A. Paulson, who had been fired by the school board.

I have seen this photo of students on strike many times in books and articles about Bend history, and my impression was that it was mostly a lark for the students. They appear to be having fun, holding hands as they weave through downtown. The caption says that they were striking in support of their principal, who had been fired.

I came across this photo again recently, and I began to wonder why he was fired, and why the students were so incensed that they left school in protest. Searching through the Bend Bulletin archives, I found that Mark Paulson, the high school principal, was fired for insubordination and failure to maintain proper discipline. But I was curious to learn more about these charges and the students’ response.

What I found is that it all led back to football. The school board wanted Mark Paulson to fire the new football coach, Frank Rockwell, for incompetency. However, Rockwell also taught science at the high school, and there was no objection to him as a teacher, so Paulson refused to fire him. Meanwhile, the school board sent to Baker High School for George Dewey, who could serve as a coach and teacher. When Dewey arrived, though, Paulson would not let him in the school building.

For the three previous years Charles Erskine, a local attorney, had coached the Bend High School football team. The team liked him and wanted him to return as their coach, but Erskine was not sure he could, because he was busy with his practice, and the coach was supposed to be a member of the teaching faculty. But the team said they would refuse to play for Dewey and would turn in their jerseys if he was hired.

Digging deeper into the newspaper articles, I found that in addition to being upset about the coaching situation, the students didn’t think it was fair that their principal...
Saying Goodbye to Leon Devereaux

August 26, 1923–January 21, 2021

Leon Devereaux was the kind of guy that warranted the creation of the phrase ‘they broke the mold when they made him.’ So many words can describe him, but genuine is perhaps the most comfortable fit. A big heart and a joyous laugh, in many ways he personified the storybook rural boy makes good life.

Leon was born in Bend August 26, 1923 and grew up in a budding city full of possibility. He graduated from Bend High School in 1941, and like many graduates of 1941 across the country, the entry of America into World War II derailed many plans and took him far from home. He flew a Corsair F-4U in 40 combat missions; his WWII heroism from the decks of the U.S.S. Shangrila the stuff of movies, complete with a crash landing. On his return home, he married the graceful Marian Mowry and had three children; they were married 74 years. He worked for Brooks-Scanlon for 38 years, was elected to city council, and served as mayor in 1968.

Leon served as a board member and president of the Deschutes Pioneer Association and served on the board of the historical society from December 2004 to December 2009. He worked volunteer shifts at the front desk of the museum, welcoming visitors to learn about his hometown. He was a steady, gracious presence with enthusiasm for preservation. He would try and answer any question we threw at him, and if he didn’t know the answer, he often knew who else we should ask.

In his 97 years, so much changed. Not just in Deschutes County, but the world, too. Leon wanted us to chronicle those changes, save the stories of our shared past and pass them along—not in an effort of nostalgia, but to inform new residents and shape the future. To ensure that no matter if the size of Bend was 15,000 or 115,000, it was important to him that a sense of pride in a place and community could provide for them as it did for him. We, the DCHS family, are so grateful to have known Leon and learned from him.
We Want Your Year Books!

Thank you to Leslie Olsen for her donation of the first four Summit High School annuals! This donation is just in time for celebrating Summit High’s 20th year of operation.

Did you know that we have a growing collection of high school annuals? We are missing many—especially those from La Pine, Redmond, and Sisters High Schools, as well as those from the 80s forward. Please call us if you are interested in donating yours!
was fired for standing up for what he thought was right. So 300 Bend High School and Junior High students left school in protest and walked through town with their hands joined. As they serpentined through the streets, they chanted, “We want Paulson and fair play!” That afternoon, 200 students returned to class, but the next morning they were met with picketing students in front of the school, trying to deter them from entering. Dee McRoberts, student body president, addressed the crowd and continued to call for a reinstatement of Principal Paulson. McRoberts and the editor of the school paper, Thomas Going, were suspended and asked by the acting school principal to resign their positions. Charles Erskine spoke to the students and explained that Paulson and Rockwell had legal recourse, so the students should end their strike. Most students returned to class.

It took many weeks before there was a final hearing on the matter. What looked like a harmless protest by students for a few hours turned into a long ordeal. For two months the arguments continued, with meetings of concerned parents and citizens who claimed that the school board was at fault. On November 3, 1921, the newspaper reported the final decision: Principal Mark Paulson was dismissed. Charles Erskine (left) remained as coach for that season.

We often talk about how we wish we had asked our parents or our grandparents more questions about their lives. This is one of those times when I wish I could ask my mother if she was in that crowd of students who went on strike. She would have been 13 at that time, and since the junior high students were included, she may well have been there. She certainly would have known all about it. It makes me wonder about what other stories or pieces of information we are missing. It’s a good reminder to ask our elders about their lives and the history of our community. The museum staff always welcomes oral histories about Central Oregon.
To Our Members:
During a normal year we would be sending out an invitation to you for our Annual Meeting in February. As we all know, this is not a normal year. Due to COVID, the DCHS Board of Directors voted to cancel the 2021 meeting. So many sentences start with “Due to COVID,” we are sorry to add one more.

It is always so enjoyable to get together with each other in February. We greet old friends, catch up on the news, and find out what the museum staff has accomplished during the year. Maybe by this summer we can plan some kind of gathering. At least by fall we should be able to count on the Chili Feed as a meeting spot.

For now, please be careful, and be sure to sign up for the COVID vaccine. Deschutes County is doing a great job with organizing vaccines for those who are 75 and older.

Hoping to see all of you soon,

Sue Fountain
Board President

Celebrating Our Historic Parks

Two of Bend’s most beloved parks, Shevlin and Drake, turn 100 years old in 2021. Bend Parks and Recreation District is celebrating these important milestones with a look back at the history of Shevlin Park and Drake Park. They will be highlighting how the parks continue to make memories for Bend residents and visitors today. It’s hard to imagine our community without these two important places.

BPRD has created a centennial webpage to share stories and photographs of conserving, protecting, gathering, recreating, reflecting and working -- commonalities of Shevlin Park and Drake Park. They have kicked off their webpage launch with a reprint of Mike Berry’s story from October, 2020 The Homesteader (volume 46, issue 10) on the creation of Shevlin Park. During the year, the Deschutes County Historical Society will continue to partner with BPRD on these two great milestones, sharing additional stories and historical resources.

The website will add first-person stories and memories of the parks, as well as schedule virtual and in-person activities and talks to commemorate the year-long celebration. Be sure to visit the site and sign up for email updates on upcoming talks and activities. We also encourage you to take the party to social media. If you have a favorite historic or family photo, share it on Instagram with the hashtag “#DrakeShevlin100years”. For more information and to sign up, visit www.bendparksandrec.org/DrakeShevlin100Years or click on the link above.

Mark Your Calendars

**FEBRUARY**

12  RESEARCHING HOMESTEADS WEBINAR: BREAKING THE CODE: An Introduction to the Public Land Survey System  
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

14  OREGON’S 162ND BIRTHDAY

19  RESEARCHING HOMESTEADS WEBINAR: NAVIGATING THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE RECORDS  
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

26  RESEARCHING HOMESTEADS WEBINAR: WHERE TO GO NEXT...  
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

*See Front Page for more information about registration for the “Researching Homesteads 101” Webinar, free to DCHS Members*