



Gone Postal

What do we make of this mysterious concrete post?

See p. 2

Volunteer Corner

Working Hands-on with History.

See p. 4



The Homesteader

Deschutes County Historical Society Newsletter—May 2021

NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH

- ✂ Use the Historic Deschutes Mobile App to explore historic sites throughout the county. Free through your device's play store.



- ✂ Surf the [DHM YouTube Channel](#) for behind-the-exhibit interviews, ghost stories, virtual History Pubs, and more

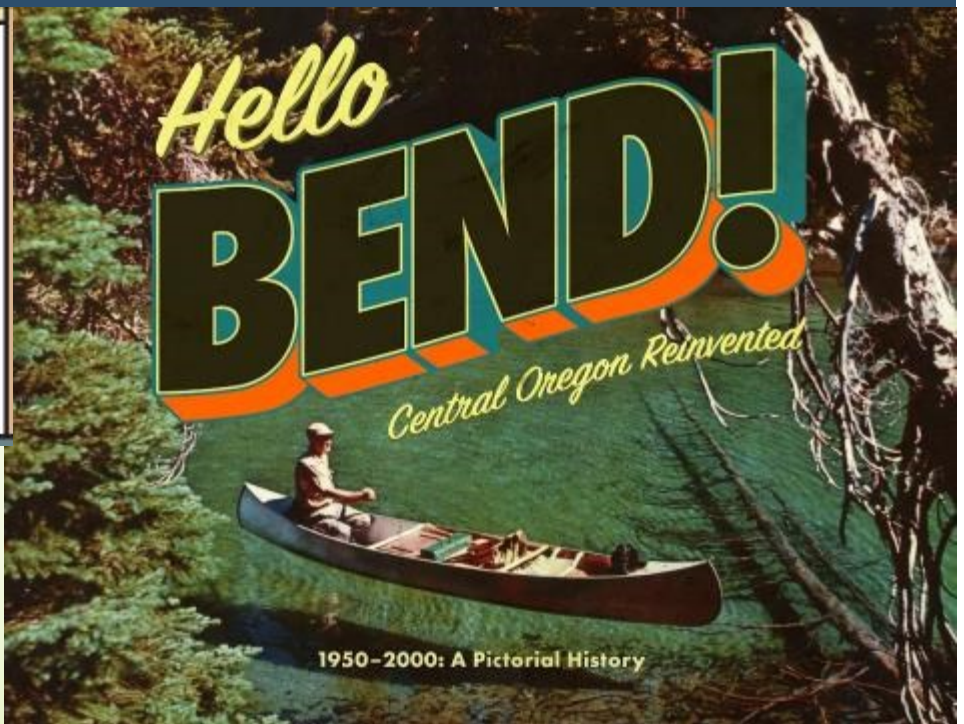


- ✂ Time travel with the Deschutes Public Library's ["By the Decade"](#) articles (deschuteslibrary.org/anniversary/)



- ✂ Pick up a self-guided brochure at the Deschutes Historical Museum to explore the historic Old Mill Neighborhood

- ✂ Attend Tetherow History Day on May 29 *See p. 5 for details*



We Need You to Help Document History

The Deschutes County Historical Society and The Bulletin have joined forces to gather and archive photographs documenting Deschutes County between 1950 and 2000. In addition to cataloging into our collections the archival photographs taken by Bulletin photographers over the years, we need your help to capture the dynamics of this fifty-year period. Beyond population growth and expanded city limits, communities once supported by timber and agriculture now center on recreation tourism, beer, construction, the largest medical center east of the cascades, and a vibrant telecommute work scene. The results will be presented in a new book, *Hello Bend! Central Oregon Reinvented, 1950-2000*.

The collections of the Deschutes County Historical Society are only as strong as our

- Continued on page 5

Hiding in Plain Sight

By Mike Berry

Hiding in plain sight for over 100 years is a relic of a bygone error in Bend. Over 10,000 cars a day drive past this object but it took the keen eye of a local resident to bring it to the attention of the Deschutes County Historical Museum.

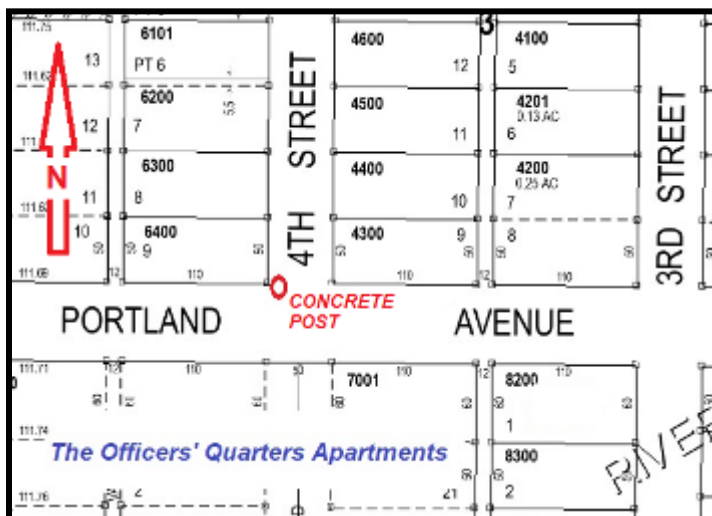
A citizen contacted the museum to ask about a concrete post at the corner of NW Portland Avenue and 4th Street. The 4 ½ foot tall post measures 6 inches by 4 inches in cross section with beveled corners and a pyramidal top. The concrete is “pebbled” and near the base some of the supporting rebar is exposed. Near the top are two threaded metal bolts that are flush with the concrete. The post is in the sidewalk next to a power pole.

The full time staff and volunteers at the museum are a smart, eclectic and dedicated group of history enthusiasts with wide and diverse areas of interests and expertise. Usually when a query comes in this talented collective is able to readily find an answer to the puzzle of the day.

In this case, museum staff bantered about possible purposes of this



Concrete post in NW quadrant of Portland Ave. and NW 4th St. intersection, looking east



Location of concrete post at intersection of Portland Avenue and NW 4th Street

obscure post. This street corner is across Portland Avenue from the Officers' Quarters Apartments which were built in the early 1940s as housing for military personnel assigned to Camp Abbot (now Sunriver Resort). Was this something erected by the Federal Government to designate Federal Property? Was it a survey monument of some sort? A bus stop indicator? A school crossing designation?

Photos were emailed to the City of Bend Public Works Department and various members of the Historical Society, specifically some of the old time locals, to see if they knew the purpose of the post. Everyone we contacted drew a blank until Historical Society members John and Jean Frye found the answer in New York City.

The Fryes found a website called “Forgotten New York” with

- 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
Tracy Alexander, Membership Officer



2021 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 DeBone, Beau Eastes,
Dan Ellingson, Terry Foley, Greg Fulton,
Karen Green, Loren Irving, Heidi Kennedy, 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

Continued from P. 2— Hidden in Plain Sight

an entry about “Ancient Mailboxes,” small US Postal Service mail collection boxes, or “letter boxes”, mounted on power poles or concrete posts. The posts are square pebbled concrete with beveled corners and pyramidal tops. Just like the one here in Bend! Some, but not all, of the NYC posts have the year they were installed stamped near the top. The website states that “... if you see a pebbled concrete post ... all of them once held a slotted mailbox”.

(Source: <https://forgotten-ny.com/1999/12/ancient-mailboxes/>)

The website had photos of bare concrete posts with big four-legged mail collection boxes (sort of shaped like R2D2 of Star Wars fame) next to them. The decommissioned letter boxes were removed from the posts when the large collection boxes replaced them, but the concrete posts remained.

With this newfound knowledge at hand, a search in *The Bend Bulletin* newspaper archives uncovered an article from November 29, 1920 (right, top) about mail service being expanded west of the river and the placement of 13 new mailboxes on concrete posts. This area along Portland Avenue, subdivided in 1915, was part of the growing, vibrant west side of the early 1920s. A December 7, 1920 article (right, bottom) stated that extension of mail delivery service from West Sixth to West Twelfth was planned would required employment of a third mail carrier, preferably mounted, to better facilitate early parcel delivery.

This old post has witnessed a great deal in the last 100 years and for some reason has survived scores of years past its obsolescence. Even the large mail collection boxes, for the most part, are now a thing of the past. Kudos go out to the City of Bend for not knocking it down during recent sidewalk improvements. I have not seen another one in town, so it may be the sole survivor of the class of 1920. It doesn't appear to be long for this world. The concrete is spalling off and a lot of the rusty rebar is exposed, so be sure to tip your hat to this old timer next time you drive down Portland Avenue.



(L) Example of mounting bolt placement from the “Forgotten New York” website



(R) Example of concrete post and letter box from the “Forgotten New York” website

NEW LETTER BOXES A MONTH OVERDUE

Although a bill of lading was received a month ago, a shipment of mail boxes ordered by Postmaster W. H. Hudson has failed to arrive, Mr. Hudson stated this morning. Concrete posts, on which the 13 boxes will be placed, have already been erected.

CARRIER SERVICE TO BE EXTENDED

Postmaster Hudson Asks Authorization From Department—Employment of Mounted Carrier Favored

Improvements in streets and sidewalks on the west side of the river, particularly on Newport avenue, have made possible the extension of carrier mail delivery from West Sixth to West Twelfth street, Postmaster W. H. Hudson declared this morning. Plans for this extension have already been sent into department headquarters, Mr. Hudson says, and a reply is expected to be received here by the first of the year.

Increasing the scope of carrier delivery on the West Side will necessitate the employment of a third carrier, and Mr. Hudson hopes to secure an authorization to this effect. The third man should be mounted, he believes, as in this way early parcel deliveries throughout the city would be greatly facilitated.

Mail boxes, 12 of them, have been received and installed and one more is to be sent here for the use of the courthouse.



Letter box and concrete post in circa 1920s photo of downtown Redmond. This view is looking south down SW 6th Street. The cross street is Deschutes Avenue.

The building on the left with the columns is the 1919 First National Bank building and across the street is the 1917 Lynch and Roberts building.

Volunteer Corner

Paula

Simila

By Bonnie Burns

Her first year at the museum, Paula Simila was voted Volunteer of the Year. And she hasn't slowed down since.

Paula volunteers in collections, assisting Rebekah Averette in the many phases of an artifact's journey from donation to data entry. She often researches items so the information is correctly entered. After classification, photographs, and data entry, Paula says, "I find homes for them in the museum." This task is becoming more difficult as the museum gathers more artifacts, filling up dwindling space. She longs for more storage.

One of the most important, but perhaps the least appreciated of museum tasks, is scanning photographs and entering correct data into Past Perfect (the museum's collections database). It is a tedious chore at times, but highly important. Paula not only mastered the technique and wrote the procedures, she patiently monitors and mentors new volunteers.

Paula is a child of Hollywood, the daughter of a stuntman! (We're talking John Wayne, cowboy-type movies!) She grew up as a Valley Girl, born and raised in the San Fernando Valley. She and her husband eventually moved up the coast to San Luis Obispo where they raised their two daughters, and later, a granddaughter. When her girls entered junior high, Paula went to work as an office manager for A.G. Edwards investment firm until retiring and moving to Bend in 2010.

Paula enjoys gardening to the extent she had the grass removed from her backyard so she could create her own paths of plants and flowers. She grows her own herbs as she is a gourmet cook who loves collecting cookbooks. In fact, she spearheaded the reprinting of the latest edition of the Pine Tavern Cookbook. It became a tradition for her to serve menus from the book each year for the Jubilee annual membership meeting. Paula also caters many museum receptions and exhibit openings, offering apropos menus for the occasion. Many may remember the Swedish Smorgasbord for "When Winter Comes" ski exhibit.

In addition to her collection duties, Paula is on the Development Committee to explore more museum activities for fund raising. It seems that she enjoys finding new ways to contribute. She admits to loving the variety of tasks and the many friendships she has developed through the years. As many agree, "It's the people."

All photos by Rebekah Averette



NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH

Free Community Event

Tetherow History Day

May 29, 12:00-3:00 P.M.

5810 NW Tetherow Rd. Redmond, OR



Redmond Area Park and Recreation District and the Deschutes Historical Museum are hosting a Tetherow History Day event to celebrate the unique history of Tetherow Crossing Park, and to highlight RAPRD's efforts to preserve the Tetherow Homestead. Built in 1878, the homestead is the oldest structure in Deschutes County. This homestead was one of the first sites where pioneer families could safely cross the Deschutes River, and the home also served as an inn, general store, blacksmith, and was the site of the first brewery in Deschutes County. We will have activities for all ages, including:

- Old-fashioned handcrafts like rag dolls, whittling, and nature art
- Butter-making
- Covid-safe games
- Live acoustic music from Jack 'n' Joe on guitar and banjo
- Penny candy
- ODFW Pelt Kit
- Tours of the property with historic photos

[Click Here For more information about the AJ Tetherow Home](#)

As a local government agency, RAPRD abides by state and local public health ordinances including capacity restrictions, mandates on social distancing, face coverings, and sanitizing procedures. We don't know exactly what those public health rules will be at the time of this event, since they may change between now and then, but we will make announcements closer to the end of May about applicable COVID health and safety measures.

Continued from P. 1— Help Document History

community makes them—the photographs we save are the ones donated by people who want to preserve our stories. If you have ever said “I wish you knew Bend when...”, this effort needs you.

Subjects to get started:

- Businesses: store fronts and owners
- Bend Central District: changes along 3rd Street before and after the relocation of Hwy 97
- Community Events: from the Water Pageant and Potato Festival to Pole Peddle Paddle
- Timber and Mill Changes: logging, equipment, trains and trestles Downtown
- East Side Development: Mt. View High School, St. Charles Hospital, farms and irrigation now gone
- Outdoors: Three Sisters Wilderness, Mt. Bachelor changes, Newberry Volcanoes National Monument, lodges and camp grounds
- Schools, Hang Outs, Drive In Theaters
- Mountain View Mall and Bend River Mall

How to submit your photographs:

- Email digital copies to the Deschutes Historical Museum
- Drop off or mail your photographs to the Deschutes Historical Museum to be scanned and returned
- Bring your photographs to The Bulletin June 10-12 to be scanned while you wait
- Be sure to identify who, when, and what are

Memorials

George Poetschat

Lennard and Delane Sholes

Tributes

Ralph C. Curtis

Jean Rotter

History Mystery Answer:

Wallace Barton and Jennie Sellers

By John Kent

While staffing the front desk on a late summer day at the museum, a “You have email” popped up on the screen. It was from Robert Ferrell Wells (think Dr. Ferrell of Bend’s early days) of New Mexico. He had several questions about his grandmother’s first husband, Wallace B. Sellers and about two city lots in Crescent, Oregon that he purchased prior to 1912. Thus, Michelle Patrick and I began our front desk search to uncover the story of Mr. Sellers’ impact on early Bend for Mr. Wells, and as the subject of the April Homesteader’s “History Mystery.”

Wallace Barton Sellers was born into a second generation of loggers on 19 September, 1877 in Eagle Point Wisconsin, near Chippewa Falls. On a freezing cold day during the Northern Minnesota winter in 1902 he, along with a team of horses, fell through the ice while crossing a lake. He contracted a severe cold while saving the team, a cold so bad it eventually killed him in Bend, Oregon ten years later.

At the time of the accident, he was a trusted employee of Tom Shevlin (think Hixon) working as manager of the Nichols Lumber Company at Akeley, Minnesota. At the age of eighteen he entered into the employ of the T. Shevlin Lumber Company working with D.L. McKay (think Clyde) and remained in their employ until his death. Due to his faithfulness and business ability, he rose to a position of honor and trust with his company. That same year, 1902, he married Miss Jennie Williams of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. The cold he contracted from falling through the ice culminated in tuberculosis and doctors advised a change of climate and his company sent him to Denver, Colorado thence to New Mexico and finally to Bend, Oregon in 1905.

In 1904, prior to moving west, Jennie gave birth to a son, Ronald, in Chippewa Falls where she lived with family while Wallace transferred west and eventually set up office in Bend. Mr. Sellers was one of the pioneers of Bend and for many years served as Alderman in which he was always notably active. He was one of the board of trustees of the Presbyterian Church and was particularly interested in the erection of a handsome church for Bend. In 1906 he and his boss, B.W. Lakin, rigged up a tennis court in the rear of their office in Bend prior to the one Putman and Lara built between their houses on Congress Avenue. A few months later, B.W. Lakin opened an office in Portland and left Wallace in charge of the Bend office. When Mr. Sellers returned from a business trip to Portland that same year he was accompanied by his wife and little son who came from Chippewa Falls to join him in Bend. They were living at the Pilot Butte Inn while searching proper family housing.

“Blaze Does Damage” read the head line of the January 4, 1907 *Bend Bulletin*. At nine A.M. Saturday morning the Pilot Butte Inn was found to be on fire causing about one thousand dollars worth of damage. The alarm was given and soon the volunteer fire company was on the ground and had three streams of water fighting the blaze. The fire spread so rapidly no one thought it could be saved but in just a few short minutes after the water struck the flames, the fire was under control. The fire was caused by a curtain blowing against a hot stove in the room occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Sellers and son Ronald. Practically the entire contents of the room were burned, including their clothing, and Christmas gifts. The fire was the



- Continued on page 7

first test of the Bend water system in fighting fire and a rough start for the new family.

Later that same month Miss Agnes Williams of Chippewa Falls, Jennie's sister, reached Bend after a trip through heavy snow storms in Montana. The Sellers family rented the Goodwillie cottage. It was there where a surprise party was given in honor of Mrs. Sellers by a number of Bend ladies. The ladies met downtown at the bank and as luck would have it Mr. Sellers was there also, and they told him the details of their plot. Mr. Sellers heartily agreed to help. He told them where the key to the house could be found and agreed to send Mrs. Sellers home for some reason. The ladies were calmly seated when Mrs. Sellers made her hurried appearance, wondering why the doors, which had been closed and locked, were wide open. The afternoon was spent enjoying games and refreshments. About fifteen guests were present. These ladies went on to form a women's group called "The Whatsoever's" and met at Mrs. Sellers house. It was in the early summer 1907 that W.B. closed a deal with Hunter and Staats land company disposing of a part of their personal timber holdings, the deal involving twenty two thousand dollars. The gentlemen decided that timber had about reached the top price until a railroad is built into the area. "Just as soon as I find transportation facilities adequate, I shall build a mill in the Deschutes country" said Mr. Shevlin in Portland, Oregon in 1907. According to the paper, Mr. Shevlin maintained an office in Bend with W.B. Sellers in charge.

Between 1910 and 1912 Mr. sellers was involved in nearly 20 real estate purchases in downtown Bend, including 164 Hawthorne Ave. which remained in Jennie's name until her death in 1946. The original house built on that lot in 1914 still stands today. W.B., Jennie, and Agnes had four separate cash sale timber claims in Central Oregon. They even purchased two city lots in Crescent that are still in the family today.

News of the Sellers' social engagements were regularly in *The Bend Bulletin*, although the paper belatedly reported on January 13, 1909 the occasion was Master Ronald Sellers' fifth birthday party. There were ten little men present and a great big birthday cake with five candles. The following year his birthday was next-day news.

In 1910, W.B. Sellers ran for office in an "exciting and close election". Dr. Merrill won as mayor with only one vote to spare with S.C. Caldwell running a close second. Sellers and H.E. Allen each secured 42 votes for Alderman and when straws were drawn, as statute provides in case of a tie, Sellers won. Later that year W.B. circulated a petition to the county court to move the county road known as the Bear Creek – Paulina Road, running east of the Pilot Butte Inn, as there is no need for cattle/sheep drives within the city limits.

Wallace Barton Sellers died in Bend July 16, 1912. In spite of ill health he attended to business until within a few days of his passing. Members of the Masonic lodge were in attendance at his bedside for six days and nights rendering all possible aid to Mrs. Sellers. The masons also accompanied his body to Portland by train to be cremated. Bend's city council responded thusly:

Whereas, death has recently taken from us Wallace Barton Sellers, who at one time was a member of the Common Council of the city of Bend, and was always identified as a conscientious worker for the best interests of Bend, and was respected and loved by all who worked with him in city affairs and in private life.

Therefore, be it resolved, by the Common Council of the city of Bend that the loss of Mr. Sellers is a great loss to Bend, and that the council hereby expresses its great appreciation of Mr. Sellers' high character and extends its sincere commiseration to Mr. Seller's survivors. 7 August 1912.

Jennie Sellers went on to marry Dr. Ferrell, who was himself widowed the next year, and it was her grandson Robert whose inquiry revealed Wallace and Jennie's early Bend adventures, cut short by Wallace's ill health.



Letter to The Editor



Alleyway between Elgin and Fresno Aves, near Overturf Park

Last month's article in The Homesteader about alleys on the west side of Bend prompted a nostalgic discussion among my sisters, Lois Morris and Doris Bennett, and me. We grew up on West 2nd street with an alley behind our house, a common pathway serving residents for the west side of 2nd Street and the east side of Aubrey Road (Hill). The alley extended up the hill to the beginning of a little dirt street named Utica which connected west to Aubrey Road.

The alley was the major access for our coming and going from our garage in the back and for walking to and from school. We all three spent many hours playing in the alley during our early years. It was a safe place to play with little or no vehicle traffic. We remember playing ball, marbles and various other games with neighbor kids. During the winter months we played in the snow with our sled and little skis.

More than once we experienced significant flooding in the alley and in our backyard due to sudden water runoff from Aubrey Hill after very bad summer rain storms. The alleyway would become a raging river. One time in particular the flooding water came through our chicken yard and some of the chickens were swept up and drowned from the swift water. Another time a big storm caused a large water run off through the neighbor's place and washed a lot of their garden into our back property causing a big clean up for us. After that my dad planted a hedge to hold back the deluge.

Thanks for reminding us.

Jean Drost

The Homesteader staff would love to hear from you. If you have a question, comment, or a correction about one of our stories, please write to us. Also, you may have a story of your own to submit, and we welcome that as well. Write to us at: info@deschuteshistory.org Attn. Homesteader



Summer Walking Tours are Back!

DHM Walking Tours Return in June

The Deschutes Historical Museum is pleased to announce that beginning June 5th their summer walking tours are returning, albeit looking a bit different due to COVID guidelines.

This season the museum presents three tours representing historic, architectural, and social significance to Bend's downtown district. Returning will be **"Early Days of Bend"**, and **"Reflections of History: An Architectural Tour"**. The newest tour celebrates a century of Drake Park, as it turns one-hundred this year, **"Soul of the City: A History of Drake Park."**

Mark Your Calendars

MAY

- 29 **TETHEROW HISTORY DAY** 12:00-3:00p.m. at Tetherow Crossing Park
Free community event to celebrate the unique history of Tetherow Crossing Park, and to highlight efforts to preserve the Tetherow Homestead, the oldest structure in Deschutes County.

