



## Spring Fashion Debuts

*The big reveal of Spring Fashions! See p. 2*

## Volunteer Corner

*Lorlee is the friendly face of the DHM on Thursday afternoons. See p. 4*



# The Homesteader

Deschutes County Historical Society Newsletter—April 2022

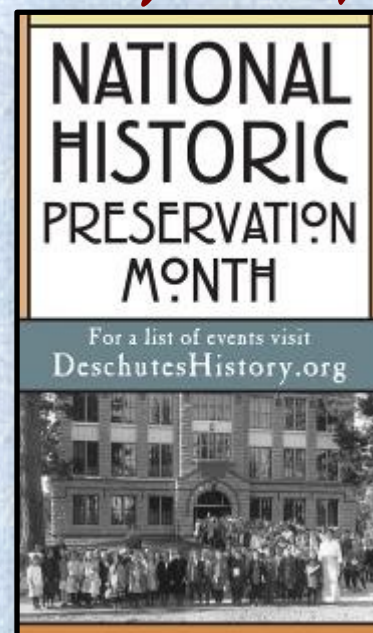
## *Spring has arrived at the Deschutes County Historical Society!*

Staff and volunteers are ready to welcome a rebirth of activity with smiling faces and lively programming!

At long last, “Maxville to Vanport” featuring the Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble takes place at the Tower Theatre on April 27, rescheduled from 2020, see page 6 for details. We are busy planning for next month’s National Historic Preservation Month, and the month-long celebration of archaeology in Oregon with the virtual return of the Oregon Archaeology Road Show. This year’s theme is “The Archaeology of Water”.

As we continue to stretch our programming muscles, look forward to more opportunities to engage with Deschutes County history through new exhibits, added artifacts, guided tours, volunteer positions, and onsite events. We hope you will visit soon to “put some history in your future!”

*Coming in May!*



## OREGON ARCHAEOLOGY ROADSHOW ALL MONTH LONG MAY 2022



# Downtown Bend's Spring Opening

By Vanessa Ivey



Vanessa Ivey, aged 10 1977

Spring has always been a time for new collections, bright colors, and trending styles. As a kid, it meant a new, bright yellow cotton Easter dress just above the knees with white collar and yellow knee-high "Happy Days" socks to match. Television shows like *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* and *Call the Midwife* have filled the airwaves with fantastic vintage fashions.

Recently, I discovered Bend had a special way to celebrate the start of spring. For more than three decades, the city hosted its annual "Spring Opening". From 1927 into the early 1960s, Bend's merchants and the chamber of commerce sponsored an unveiling of new merchandise. Scheduled between the spring equinox and Easter, the March event showcased downtown Bend

businesses. Merchants decorated their windows, hiding the contents from view before the big reveal, and printed special spring fashion advertisements in *The Bend Bulletin*.

For one night only Wall and Bond Streets closed. A special space on Oregon Street staged the newest



Penney's Spring fashion ad, Bend Bulletin April 4, 1946



Rebekah Averette in '40s fashion, as featured in the JC Penney's advertisement above

models of automobiles with 300-watt lights placed at intervals along the street for perfect visibility. Then around 7:30 p.m. participating shop windows unveiled the new merchandise: furniture, fashion, and more for hundreds of spectators lit up to view. Judging proceeded with awards for the best window displays. A parade followed with the Bend High School band leading the march, and local floats following. The festivities included street dances often with two or three bands, and then continued late into the night with dancing and music at the Hippodrome (the Deschutes Public Library sits on the site today).

The first year, 1927, Mannheimer's decorated its windows as a woman's dressing room. "Silken underwear, lounging robes, pretty footwear are shown. Dainty organdy pillows, lace and

- 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  
Michelle Patrick, Visitor Services



## 2022 DCHS Board of Directors:

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

## 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](http://www.deschuteshistory.org)  
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**Continued from P. 2— Spring Opening**

embroidery trimmed are displayed." Wetle's north window displayed "...the spring mode in the popular black and white color scheme. Dainty and varied colored women's wear are shown with the latest in women's footwear," and Cashman's window was "built around the green and white theme with men's wear displayed."

It was not just clothes. Candles featured in the windows of the Idylwood and Childers & Armstrong. Horton's drug store had a candy window and display of Eastman Kodak cameras. The latest cosmetics, perfume, books, furniture, and new electronics were all on show. Even the Boyd's market had a display of meats in the window.

In 1931, merchants held the annual Spring Opening during the day. A new addition to the program was the "parade of pets", in which boys and girls of Bend marched with their pets and competed for prizes. This was also a local favorite on the Fourth of July.

The forties brought full-page special spring opening editions in *The Bend Bulletin*, with trending colors and styles articles highlighted next to sketches of latest fashions. Following the war, after a three-year pause, the event attracted thousands of visitors. Bend's retail merchants promised the opening in 1947 would have real meaning, "... as many items which have been scarce during the war and in the reconversion period are now available in quantity."

*The Bend Bulletin* declared the 1950s styles to be, "The most feminine clothes in many a season... The new frocks are even more colorful than the spring gardens will be, when they burst into bloom. One of the unusual new shades is mimosa, something between antique gold and chartreuse. There are hyacinth, jonquil yellow and new intense blue."

Local eateries advertised Spring Opening specials "Bring the Family Downtown for Dinner." You could eat Crab Louis at the Skyline Steak House for 65 cents or enjoy a Special Jumbo Hamburger with fries for 25 cents at the Pine Tavern.

By 1963, the event disappeared from the news. Advertisements still announced spring sales and new items. However, the chamber of commerce sponsored event, bringing attention to the downtown businesses and their modern merchandise, faded from the annual calendar. Over the years, local businesses continued to find new ways to reach a growing population, through radio, television and colorful advertisements.

For a bit of fun the museum selected a few items from the collection and matched them with their 1940s ads. With the popularity of shows like *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* and *Call the Midwife*, we may be seeing more of these past fashions make their way back into the mainstream.



**Top to bottom:**  
**Red 1940s hat from DHM collection; March 1940 article from Bend Bulletin; 1940s JC Penneys "New for Easter" Fashions ad from Bend Bulletin; Orange 1940s hat from DHM collection**



# VOLUNTEER CORNER

## Lorlee

### Ackerman

*By Sue Fountain*

Visitors to the museum on Thursday afternoons may wonder about the bicycle parked in the downstairs library. No, it isn't part of an exhibit; it belongs to volunteer Lorlee Ackerman. She rides her mountain bike when she comes to volunteer for her job at the front desk, and she brings it inside for safety.

Lorlee has been a DCHS volunteer for the past five years, and her pleasant smile is welcoming to visitors as she tells them about the museum and its exhibits. With her love for antiques and old objects, she feels very comfortable at the museum. She has lived in Bend since 1989 and visited here before then. In 1986 she and her husband were living in Honolulu and came to Bend on a ski trip. Lorlee fell in love with the area. As an avid skier, she wanted to move here, but that didn't happen for a few years.

Her husband, Tom, grew up in Honolulu which explains why they lived there. Lorlee worked at various jobs during that time, many in the restaurant industry. She did catering and planned banquets for large groups. Also, Lorlee learned to paddle a 6 person outrigger canoe. In her first year of paddling, she joined a 12 woman crew who crossed the Kaiwi Channel from Molokai to Oahu in the women's race for the Outrigger Canoe Club.

After eight years in Honolulu, they decided to move to the mainland, and they settled in Bend. Tom owns a construction company, and Lorlee works with design. Together they have remodeled several houses in Bend.

Their first home was on Harmon Boulevard, just in front of the Drake Road home of Helen Peak. Mrs. Peak was a legendary teacher at Kenwood School, and Lorlee enjoyed meeting her. Later when the house became available, Lorlee and her husband were able to buy it. They still refer to it as "Helen's house."

Lorlee has two daughters who were raised in Bend, and are now launched into their careers. One lives in New York, and the other daughter lives in Eugene. With an empty nest, Lorlee now devotes much of her time to collecting "old stuff." She loves to find quality items from the past, saying that furniture made from old wood and fine craftsmanship is more satisfying to own than modern pieces. Lorlee is also a collector. For instance she has a collection of aprons and soft leather gloves. Women rarely wear aprons around the house the way they did in the past. The same is true for gloves. There was a time when a woman didn't leave the house without her gloves. Lorlee joked that she has accumulated so many things that she may have to buy her own booth for the Antique Fair that DCHS is sponsoring in August. We hope that she does!







# Grace Ann Vandeventer McNellis

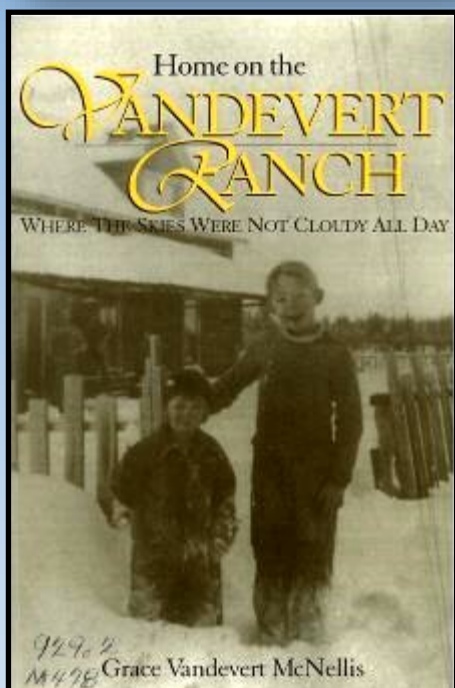
*July 4, 1929 - March 9, 2022*

The Deschutes County Historical Society is sad to say goodbye to our dear friend Grace Vandeventer McNellis. Grace was born and raised at the "Homestead" on the Little Deschutes River in Bend, Oregon. She moved to Gig Harbor, Washington in 1954 with her husband Thomas McNellis where they raised their five sons Tom, Mike, John, Steve and Joe. Grace enjoyed family camping trips, her son's sporting events and her work in real estate.

In her later life she enjoyed visiting the family's homestead, now known as Vandeventer Ranch, and giving talks at the Deschutes Historical Museum and the Sun River Resort which borders the ranch where she grew up. She was a history buff and loved to share her stories with all who would listen. She authored two books about her family's homestead and the surrounding area, including "Home on the Vandeventer Ranch" (pictured left) which is available to view at the Deschutes Historical Museum's library. Most important to her was the time spent with the family and friends. Her highlight each year was her birthday on the fourth of July... it was all about her!

She was preceded in death by her father Claude Vandeventer, her mother Pearl Vandeventer, husband Thomas McNellis, sister Mary, brother Claude and son Tom. She is survived by her brother David, sons Mike, John, Steve and Joe, 13 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren, 9 great great grandchildren and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

Museum staff will miss our treasured visits with Grace and while we mourn her loss, we are grateful for her dedication to capturing the history of our county and celebrate a life well lived.



*Grace and husband Tom McNellis (left) and Grace with her brother Claude on skis in 1932 (right)*

*Photos from "Home on the Vandeventer Ranch"*

## Tributes

**Michael E. Bedwell**

Dedrei Oldham

**Ralph C. Curtis**

Jean Rotter



## Volunteer Tour Guides Needed!

Do you have an interest in Deschutes County's story, enjoy sharing fun facts with all ages, and like wandering through historic neighborhoods?

The Deschutes Historical Museum is looking for you!

The museum is abuzz with tours. School groups are visiting again, in-house group tours are happening, and summer walking tours are planned to begin in May for Historic Preservation Month. Plus, April is time to get a head start recruiting for our Historical Haunts of Downtown Bend tour.

- Training provided
- Tours are generally an hour-and-half long (with some exceptions)
- No memorization required
- Teens welcome.



If interested contact Vanessa Ivey,  
museum manager:

**(541) 389-1813**

**vanessa@deschuteshistory.org**



## Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble "Maxville to Vanport"

**April 27, 2022 7:30 p.m.**

**Tickets: Reserved Seating \$17-27  
(plus historic preservation fee)**

"Maxville to Vanport" is a multimedia concert of songs and short films with live music performed by the Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble and featuring vocalist Marilyn Keller. It tells the story of two historic blue collar Oregon towns with a special focus on the African American Oregonians that made them unique. The concert contains a joyful score of jazz, blues, R&B, and gospel-inspired music with music by Ezra Weiss, text by Renee Mitchell, video by Kalimah Abioto, and historical consultation by Gwendolyn Trice of Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center. Created in a community-guided process in 2018, this project celebrates a little-known part of Oregon's history.

"The hardship and joys of this period of Oregon's history, as viewed through the eyes of its earliest Black citizens, informs the work of Weiss and Mitchell. The music is austere and stately, evoking the landscape of the eastern part of the state and the period when Portland was more spacious."

— Robert Ham, *Portland Mercury*, May 23, 2018

***Tickets that were purchased for the original  
scheduled event in 2020 will be honored***

**[Click Here to Buy Tickets](#)**

# NEW TO COLLECTION *by Rebekah Averette*

The most frequent questions I get asked by visitors are “How do you get all this stuff?” and “What’s the coolest thing you have at the museum?” The “coolest thing in the collection” is a tough question. Many amazing, unique artifacts are housed at the historical society! When museum director Kelly Cannon-Miller sees me at her office door, sporting an absurd grin on my face, she knows that something special has just come through the door.

In the last month we received numerous items that threw us into fits of glee. This brings me to the answer of the question: how do we get all our “stuff”? Occasionally we accept large collections from a family, individual, or organization. These are often planned months in advance and may occur in phases. For example, we received a large institutional archive from the St. Charles Foundation about two years ago. Within the last couple of years, other larger donations include La Pine founder Alfred Aya’s papers (donated by a close family friend) and a collection of archival materials from the Bend Chamber of Commerce.

We also receive calls or emails daily from people hoping to donate just one or a few treasured family heirlooms. Other potential donors find themselves with important pieces of local history acquired through yard sales or collecting over the years. These donors may have a long personal or family history in Deschutes County. Part of the joy of accepting family artifacts is the opportunity to talk to donors about their memories of growing up in the area. We appreciate when people recognize that their possession could be an artifact whose addition to the museum’s collection will help preserve local history for future generations.

While the lion’s share of the collection comes from donations, sometimes we find something so special and unique that we are willing to make an expenditure to acquire it. Such was the case with a Pilot Butte Inn Pendleton blanket that we acquired in March. A gentleman in Portland who deals in antiques spotted the blanket at a sale and, suspecting it might be something special, purchased it. Conducting a little online research, he learned that the Pilot Butte Inn held special significance in Bend. He was thoughtful enough to contact the museum and inquire as to our interest. We knew immediately that this rare find belonged at the DCHS, and arranged to purchase it. We are extremely grateful that board member Mark Capell offered to cover the expense on the museum’s behalf. Once photographed and cataloged, the blanket will be displayed with other Pilot Butte Inn artifacts in the “Cruisin’ 97” exhibit.



A few days after this transaction, I received a fairly common call from the front desk: “A gentleman is here who thinks he has something you might be interested in.” Much to my delight, the potential donor, a Bendite and BHS graduate, had in his possession two signs that made me giddy! One is the magnificent Tumalo Mountain sign shown at right. Not so coincidentally, it is the same sign previous board president Sue Fountain is posing next to in a photo featured in the *“Hello, Bend!”* book (p. 30). At the time of photo, Sue and her husband were spending the summer on Tumalo Mountain as fire lookouts. The donor spotted the photo in the book and realized he had the very same sign in his basement (he even tried to match scratches visible in the photo to scratches on his sign)! Asked how he came to own this treasure, the donor remained largely mum, but mention possible teenage shenanigans. Apparently obtained under similar circumstances, he also produced a small, blue Mt. Bachelor sign featuring an early version of the instantly recognizable Bachelor logo.



The museum is thrilled to add these three special pieces to our collection. Each artifact at the museum has its own unique journey and story before finding its way to what will be its final home at DCHS.





## Deschutes Pioneer Association Crowns new Pioneer Queen Shirley (McCallum) Kilpatrick

Shirley McCallum Kilpatrick will reign as the DPA's newest Pioneer Queen for 2022.

Born in 1930 in Terrebonne, Shirley has lived in Central Oregon her whole life. Growing up on the High Desert, she lived part time with family in Fort Rock on the McCallum homestead, attending elementary school in Silver Lake. Her father later moved the family to 350 acres in Deschutes Junction off Deschutes Market Road. Shirley attended the Deschutes Market grade school and Young School east of Bend. Following her father's ranch loss at Deschutes at the end of the Depression, the family moved to Bend where Walter found work with

Brooks-Scanlon and bought the Linster house on the corner of Revere and Harriman. One of her fondest memories is swimming in Bend's first swimming pool, the Kirtsis Swim Tank, located on the Deschutes River.

Shirley attended and graduated from Bend High School in 1949. She worked at the historic McGill Drug and Owl pharmacies in downtown Bend. She married Melvin J. Kilpatrick (Mel) of Bend following his WWII service in occupied Japan. Their new lives found happiness on the west side of the Deschutes near the First Street Rapids, not far from where Shirley grew up across the river. While Mel worked at the Brooks-Scanlon Mill and also volunteered and became a paid member of the Bend Fire Department, the couple also owned Owl Taxi. Shirley was the primary driver, taking "many happy men home from Bond Street." She coined the phrase "When it is time to go phone 46-'O'!" which featured in a long running KBND radio ad.

Shirley and Mel raised two daughters, Tina and Toni, along with their brother Kevin in the home which Shirley still lives. She continues to stay active maintaining her yard and league bowling.

She represents the true spirit of our Central Oregon Communities and will represent Central Oregon as the 2022 Deschutes Pioneer Association Queen.

## Mark Your Calendars

### APRIL

- 17 EASTER SUNDAY**
- 27 "MAXVILLE TO VANPORT" with the Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble**  
7:30 p.m. Tower Theatre *See p. 6 for information*

### Save the date:

- MAY:** Historic Preservation Month, as well as the virtual Oregon Archaeology Roadshow
- JULY 4:** Celebrate the anniversary of the Deschutes County Historical Society with our Open House and Ice-cream Social
- AUGUST 20:** Antique Fair at the Deschutes Historical Museum



*Maxville logging families,  
Ona Hug Collection, gifted by son,  
Chuck Bertleson, courtesy of  
Maxville Heritage Interpretive  
Center*

