



Hosmer Treasure

The man, the lake, the canoe!

See p. 2

Keeping it Local

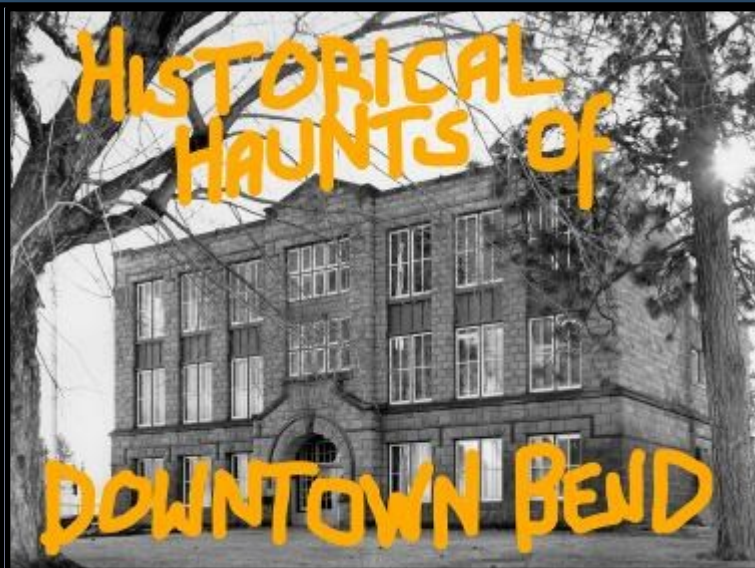
Meet Ed Barnum, volunteer and member of a longtime Deschutes County family

See p. 4



The Homesteader

Deschutes County Historical Society Newsletter—OCTOBER 2023



Deschutes Historical Museum has shared the history and haunts of Bend's downtown district since 2010 with the annual **Historical Haunts of Downtown Bend** tours **Friday October 13, and Saturday, October 14** for some freakish family fun. Strolling through Bend's historic downtown, escorted by a knowledgeable museum guide, the walking tours stop at the Deschutes Historical Museum's favorite locations where the past is brought back to life.

Over two nights we offer 32 one-hour tours with the fun beginning at 4:00 p.m. Each walking tour starts at the historic Reid School building, now home to the Deschutes Historical Museum, and ends downtown, covering approximately one mile of flat sidewalks and alleyways. Tours leave every 20 minutes. As the featured locations are operating businesses, tours do not enter any buildings.

Tickets are \$15 per person. Members will receive a promo code for \$5 OFF, to use at the time of purchase. The promo code will be sent to members in a separate email.

While you wait for your tour, wander the halls of the museum exploring Deschutes County's history, checking out our latest exhibit *Klunkers & Stumpjumpers: A History on Two Wheels*. Stop in the research room and view past ghostbuster footage of the "Brosterhous Ghost." Admission to the museum is free with your tour.

SPACE IS LIMITED- This popular fundraiser and member drive for the Deschutes Historical Museum does sell out. Tickets for this event are not refundable but are transferable. Not yet a member of the museum? Purchase four (4) or more tickets and receive one (1) Household Museum Membership *FREE*.

TICKETS FOR THIS EVENT ARE ONLY AVAILABLE ONLINE THROUGH EVENTBRITE AND ARE ON SALE NOW.

[CLICK HERE to purchase yours.](#)

New to the Collection: Paul Hosmer's Willits Canoe

By Rebekah Averette

When Leslie and Steve Skelton reached out to the museum a few years ago asking about our interest in providing a home for one of the Hosmer Willits canoes, our response was a resounding yes. By "Hosmer Willits canoe" we mean a Willits brand canoe that belonged to THE Hosmers of local legend. We are talking about the indefatigable "sage of the Sagebrush Country" Paul Hosmer for whom Hosmer Lake was named. Paul and his wife Hazel had two sons, Jim and Paul Jr. Jim Hosmer's famous photograph of his father floating in a canoe on Devil's Lake was featured in the July 4, 1955 Life Magazine; it is instantly recognizable to Central Oregonians. Leslie and Steve Skelton, daughter and son-in-law of Jim Hosmer, were gracious enough to offer one of the family canoes to the museum. We are thrilled to play a part in preserving this important piece of Deschutes County history.



Paul Hosmer on Devil's Lake; photo taken by Jim Hosmer

I would venture to say that most Central Oregonians have been to or at least heard of the eponymous Hosmer Lake and people from around the country recognize the beautiful Jim Hosmer photograph taken on Devil's Lake. Old timers and local history enthusiasts might also know that Paul Hosmer was a lumberman. Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, he landed a job at the Shevlin-Hixon lumber mill in Bend in 1915. He left to serve in World War I, then returned to Central Oregon and worked for Brooks-Scanlon as the editor of the company magazine, the *Pine Echoes*. He served as the *Pine Echoes* editor for 41 years until he retired from Brooks-Scanlon in 1961. Paul passed away just a year later, in 1962.

Throughout his career, Hosmer was a prolific writer, publishing numerous articles in publications around



Paul Hosmer's newly restored Willits Canoe

the country, including the *Saturday Evening Post*. He also published several books, including "Now We're Loggin'" (1930), which featured stories about the lumberjacks and millworkers he knew and worked with every day. Paul was also a talented photographer, boxer, musician, avid outdoorsman (skiing, sailing, fishing, canoeing, and hiking), and amateur naturalist. It was Paul who came up with the name "Skyliners" for the new Bend ski club in 1927, and served as its president in 1929 and 1930. In 1962, "Mud Lake", one of the jewels of the Cascade Lakes, was posthumously renamed "Hosmer Lake" in honor of Paul, who had spent many hours exploring the waters and shoreline in his canoe.

Paul Hosmer passed his love of the outdoors on to his sons, Jim and Paul Jr., who spent their summers canoeing and sailing the waters near where the family had a cabin on Elk Lake, and their winters skiing the local slopes and trails. Jim Hosmer said of his father "His idea of having a good time was to walk in the woods with his canoe and paddles and go canoeing."

"The history of the first Willits Canoe owned by Paul Hosmer is a mixture of oral and written history. The best information available is that Paul Hosmer bought the Willits used from the University of Oregon Canoe Club," according to Steve Skelton, Jim Hosmer's son-in-law. Paul Jr. would eventually own two additional Willits canoes, gifting one to his father.

- 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



2023 DCHS Board of Directors:

Adrian Bennett, President
Jane Williamson, Vice President

Board Members:

Mike Berry, Paul Claeysens, Tony DeBone,
Terry Foley, Greg Fulton, Karen Green,
Heidi Kennedy, Erik King, Susie Penhollow, Liz
Rink, and Scott Stuemke.



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— Paul Hosmer's Willits Canoe

So what *is* a Willits canoe and what makes it so special? Patrick Chapman of the McFarland Lake Canoe Company in Olympia, WA is an expert on the repair and restoration of Willits Canoes. He did extensive research on Floyd and Earl Willits, brothers and



Detail of cedar planks on Willits canoe

owners of the namesake canoe company. During the life of the company (1908 to 1967), the Willits brothers built less than 1000 canoes. The ultralight, hand-crafted canoes cost about \$250 when they were originally purchased by the Hosmers, which was a tidy sum at the time. Their lightness and the care with which they were crafted made them extremely lithe and responsive in the water and Paul Hosmer clearly knew a quality canoe when he saw one. Interviewed about the canoes by the *Bend Bulletin* in 2020, Steve Skelton said that "What (is) unique about the Willits is that it's a steam-molded cedar hull, where each piece of it was individually molded by the two brothers who did this. The hull is only about a quarter of an inch thick, so the canoes are ultralight."

The canoes were used and loved by several generations of Hosmers and a number of years ago Jim and Steve completed a careful restoration of the second Willits canoe owned by the family. The restoration involved removing the fiberglass the family had put on the canoe, which was done to eliminate the need for a new coat of varnish every year. The fiberglass, however, added a great deal of weight to the canoe and eventually the interior waterproofing layer failed because of the heat of the sun on the fiberglass. When the elder Paul Hosmer died in 1962, Jim Hosmer decided to remove the fiberglass and began the years long process, completed by Steve, of restoring it to its original condition.

At some point, Paul Sr's first Willits canoe was sold to a neighbor, who added fiberglass to its hull. After a number of years languishing under a porch, Steve and Leslie reacquired that canoe in 2021. Recognizing its significance and value to



Hosmer family at their dock with the Willits canoe in 1937

Central Oregon history, Leslie and Steve reached out to the museum to gauge our interest in accepting Paul's original Willits into our collection. We were thrilled to find out that the Skeltons had already conducted a great deal of research on the history of the canoe and included with their gift copies of historic records showing the dates the canoes were built, which could be matched to the serial numbers on each canoe the Willits brothers crafted.

Record of Sales & Canoes Built Annually				
Year ending Aug. 31	Total Sales	Canoes Built	Canoe Numbers	Remarks
1930	\$666.46	352	367-468	1930-1931
1931	\$666.46	29	469-498	1931-1932
1932	\$666.46	29	499-528	1932-1933
1933	\$666.46	29	529-558	1933-1934
1934	\$666.46	29	559-588	1934-1935
1935	\$666.46	29	589-618	1935-1936
1936	\$666.46	29	619-648	1936-1937
1937	\$666.46	29	649-678	1937-1938
1938	\$666.46	29	679-708	1938-1939
1939	\$666.46	29	709-738	1939-1940
1940	\$666.46	29	739-768	1940-1941

Records of sales from the Willits company archives

An artifact of this size in our rather small museum presents a bit of a challenge; just exactly how and where do we display it? For now, it is resting snugly in our research room, to the delight and interest of many visitors who peek their heads in and exhale, "OH! It's a CANOE!", often followed by "It's BEAUTIFUL!" A Willits canoe truly is a work of art. I am not a watercraft expert by any stretch, but there is something graceful in the simple, smooth, serene lines of a Willits that draws my gaze and makes me want to reach out and run my hand along its length. Woodworker and DCHS board member, Greg Fulton, has graciously offered to create a cradle to hold the canoe and display it for visitors.

Our other challenge is deciding how much or little to restore the canoe? There is a delicate balance between preservation for the safety and longevity of the artifact and maintaining the character of the artifact and the story it tells through natural degradation and wear. It is not unlike a human face, on which the story of a life is written with lines and imperfections; often it is those very lines that reveal much of the character and beauty of a person. Steve Skelton removed the fiberglass prior to bringing the canoe to DCHS and has generously offered to help with any restoration we decide to do in the future. Our intention is to consult with the experts at the McFarland Lake Canoe Company for their recommendations on how best to preserve and maintain it without taking away from the natural beauty and craftsmanship of the canoe. We are hoping that next summer will see Leslie and Steve Skelton working with us at the museum caring for the canoe as Leslie shares more of the rich history of growing up at the cabin on Elk Lake, that is still very much a part of their family.



Leslie Skelton with her father Jim Hosmer in a restored Willits canoe; photo courtesy of The Bulletin



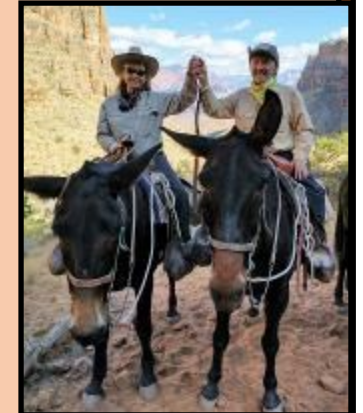
The Hosmers on Elk Lake, 1937

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Ed

Barnum

By Rebekah Averette



Meet lifelong Central Oregon resident, Ed Barnum. A descendant of the locally renowned Rastovich Family, Ed has long been connected to DCHS, volunteering for many years at our annual Chili Feed, which features the famous Rastovich “Millie’s Chili” recipe. His mother Marie Rastovich Barnum and her sister Millie Rastovich Chopp spearheaded the annual fundraiser many years ago. His maternal grandparents, George and Anna Rastovich, were Yugoslavian immigrants who homesteaded land east of Bend in 1919. The Rastovich farm is still in operation today, was the first Century Farm in Deschutes County, and is the source of Barley Beef, featured in the famous Millie’s Chili.

In 2022, while beginning the process of compiling and writing the Barnum family history, Ed was inspired to start working as a collections volunteer once a week. He participated in several projects including organizing, cataloging, and scanning previously uncatalogued artifacts from the Marjorie Smith collection and transcribing the courtship-era letters of locals Ernest and Flossie Smith, which date from the early twentieth century. Ed is currently compiling a more complete history of Tumalo, using resources in the collection and museum library.

Ed’s father Cleo Barnum moved to Tumalo from Grass Valley, Oregon in 1939. Ed was born in 1947 and grew up in the small Deschutes County community just outside of Bend. A few years ago, Ed became interested in gaining perspective of how the Tumalo old-timers fit into the development of the community he still calls home. Ed has written seventeen pages of history, with much more to come! He has noticed that while much has been written about the “troublesome” development of the Tumalo Irrigation Project, there is less work that captures the broader scope of the community. With the rapid growth of Bend towards Tumalo and Redmond, the project is timely.

Barnum recalls he and his brother having little exposure to big city life. He has a fond memory of his dad taking him to Bend for his first haircut, followed by a trip to the McGill Drug store counter for ice cream. When asked what flavor he wanted, Ed replied “regular,” as vanilla was the only flavor he had ever tried! He also enjoyed hunting for deer in the Ochocos with his dad, trolling for trout in a rowboat at Three Creeks Lake, and picking huckleberries with his cousin Susie Penhollow during long day trips at High Rock near Mt. Hood.

Ed attended Tumalo Grade School in the original two room schoolhouse, then Redmond Union High School, now home to Redmond City Hall. He graduated as Salutatorian in 1965, and was the Student Council Manager, a member of the Honor Society and Key Club, and received the Peter Luthy Woodworking Award his senior year.

After a year at COCC, Ed transferred to U of O, where he majored in architecture. Ed left college to serve in the Peace Corps in the Andes Mountains of Ecuador, working with the Mestizos to develop wheat and potato production, then in the Andes Mountains North of Lima following the 1970 Ancash earthquake to inspect the extensive structural damage left in the wake of the disaster. He left the Peace Corps in 1971 to complete his architecture degree at U of O, at which time he documented the Hindman barn at Camp Polk near Sisters.

Although Ed eventually chose carpentry as a career, over the years he worked in Prineville and Crook County restoring the Ochoco Inn fountain, the county park at the Prineville Reservoir, and helped plan the Ochoco Creek Park amphitheater. He also served for a time as the Crook County Historical Society president. He later became a licensed building and landscape contractor, and worked twenty years for Sun Forest Construction. He completed his career as an independent carpenter, mainly in the Northwest Crossing neighborhood. He met and married his wife and soul mate, Jo Ann, at the age of 55, in 2003. Ed retired in 2017.

Ed and Jo Ann enjoy camping and have traveled extensively throughout Oregon, Utah, Arizona, Alaska, the Panama Canal, and across the Eastern Seaboard. Ed finds peace and joy in exploring nature, whether it be hiking, backpacking, or cross-country skiing. It has been a pleasure getting to work with and know the kindhearted, accomplished, and thoughtful Ed Barnum.



“History Pub” Returns with Chelsea Rose of the Oregon Chinese Diaspora Project

Our 12 year-old History Pub program is looking for a new home. Thankfully, OSU history professor Janet Rankin offered a room on the OSU Cascades campus that had three screens and plenty of free parking. Without time to promote the program in our Homesteader newsletter, we relied on emails, social media and word of mouth. We were worried that turn out would be light. Wow, were we wrong! All 75 chairs were filled with familiar faces and newcomers alike.

Chelsea Rose, archaeologist with the Oregon Chinese Diaspora Project, shared amazing photos, timelapse videos, and 3D models of the archaeological work being done around the Kam Wah Chung & Co. Museum and National Historic Landmark in John Day. To learn more about this work, visit www.oregon-chinese-diaspora-project-sou.hub.arcgis.com/

October History Pub will once again take place at the OSU Cascades campus. See page 6 for details.

The cycling community has lost one of its pioneering greats. Gary Bonacker, owner of Sunnyside Sports and one of Central Oregon’s original mountain bikers, passed away on September 28, 2023 after a 20+ years long battle with cancer.

We loved reliving Gary’s ride down Mount Bachelor, pictured in our newest exhibit about the history of mountain biking in Central Oregon.

It was a special day when Gary Bonacker stopped by the museum on April 29, 2023 to see the *Klunkers and Stumpjumpers* exhibit, and found photos of himself jumping into the history books. He wouldn't have called himself a history maker, but he was. He will be missed.



38th Biennial Great Basin Archaeological Conference

October 18-21

**Riverhouse Convention Center
Bend, OR**

The Great Basin Archaeological Association, which promotes the study of the peoples and cultures of the Great Basin of the western United States and its relationship to adjacent regions, will hold the 2023 conference at the Riverhouse Convention Center in Bend. Registration is required.

Visit <https://greatbasinanthropologicalassociation.org/gbac/gbac-registration/> for information about this year’s program, registration fees, accommodations, and related events.

Tributes

Ralph C. Curtis

Jean Rotter

Nadia

Alexander Zawinsky

Please consider designating the Deschutes Historical Museum as a beneficiary in lieu of flowers. Gifts in memory of your loved one will be included in the Homesteader, and help us to carry out our mission of sharing the stories of Deschutes County.

2023 Creepy Doll Contest

Last October, Collections Manager Rebekah Averette (below left) curated a creepy assortment of dolls from the museum's collection to feature on Facebook. What resulted was a contest of sorts for the Creepiest Doll. "Doll #2" (below right) won the 2022 contest with a terrifying majority!

A new group of dolls has been freshly plucked from their resting places to make their debut. Follow the Deschutes Historical Museum on Facebook to participate in this year's fun and freaky contest.



History Pub: October 24, 2023 7:00 p.m.

Righting The Wrongs

OSU Cascades Campus; Ray Hall

During World War II, American Legion Post 22 removed names of 16 Nisei (Japanese American) servicemen from a public honor roll, prompting national outcry. Almost 80 years later, Post 22 helped dedicate Highway 35 in honor of Oregon Nisei veterans and then publicly apologized on Veterans Day 2022. Linda Tamura will highlight Hood River's hidden history as well as recent events bringing the community together. The program will include conversations with Oregon Nisei Veterans Highway collaborators Eric Ballinger and Dick Tobiason (Bend Heroes Foundation) and 13-year-old Mia Ballinger, all Bend residents. Pictured left to right: Linda Tamura, Eric Ballinger, and Dick Tobiason.

Mark Your Calendars

OCTOBER

13 & 14 HISTORICAL HAUNTS OF DOWNTOWN BEND

Deschutes Historical Museum 4:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.

Tickets required, [Purchase online through EVENTBRITE starting Oct. 1](#)

18-21 GREAT BASIN ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

The Riverhouse 3075 N Hwy 97, Bend, OR

Visit greatbasinanthropologicalassociation.org to register

24 HISTORY PUB: RIGHTING THE WRONGS

Presented by Linda Tamura, Professor Emerita of Education at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. She is a Sansei (third generation Japanese American) and daughter of a World War II veteran.

OSU Cascades Campus, Ray Hall 7:00 p.m.

No reservations necessary, free parking



SAVE THE DATES!

*More information
coming soon.*

November 10 & 11

Chili Feed and Raffle

11:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Deschutes Historical Museum

BARLEY BEEF

