

Silverton Country Historical Society

Museum and Office 428 South Water Street



Next year, 2012, marks the 100th anniversary of Oregon granting women the right to vote.....one of the first states to do so and a full eight years before the ratification of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In honor of the women who fought so hard to bring this about, we thought that this year's newsletters would try to focus on some of the noted women throughout Silverton's history. We begin with the woman who is credited with the platting and naming of Silverton, Polly Coon Price.

Polly Lavinia Crandall was born the oldest of ten children in New York on November 24, 1825, and as her



obituary states, "received a good education there." Polly's family wanted to go west, but could not afford the passage. Her father purchased a house boat and floated down the Ohio River, working odd jobs at settlements along the way. After reaching Marietta, Ohio, probably in 1842, the family had saved enough money to travel by steam

boat to Wisconsin. The family lived on a farm there for the next ten years, Polly and her brothers laboring on the farm, planting crops and clearing land. Polly became a teacher and married another school teacher, Thomas Coon, in January 1845. In 1850, Thomas traveled west and settled in the Willamette Valley where he continued teaching,

Twenty-six year old Polly and her small daughter Cornelia, crossed the plains in 1852 to join her husband in Oregon in a wagon train organized by her parents, Paul and Sally Crandall. They traveled from Wisconsin via the Barlo trail. Shortly after she arrived here, Thomas's health failed; he passed away in January of 1854. Polly gave birth to a son, Thomas Roy Coon in March of that year.

Thomas Coon had a donation land claim on Silver Creek, comprising land where much of Silverton is now located. Upon the death of her husband, Polly had the claim surveyed into lots and sold them off to form the

center of the new town. It is said, that in filling out the plat, she was asked for a name for the plat and she gave the name Silverton for Silver Creek which flowed through the area.

In 1855 she married Stephen Price, a millwright, who had built the Smith and Barger grist mill, the first flour mill in the area. Together they had a son, Eugene.

In 1855 Polly's father and brother, Clark, moved the two story building that housed Ai Coolidge's store about two miles from Milford to Silverton to a lot that Coolidge had bought from Polly Price for \$25. He continued to operate out of the store while it was being moved. The two-story wood frame building was later used as a hotel.

Polly continued her interest in schools. In 1868 she was a member of the examining board of the Marion County Teacher's Association.

Polly Crandall Coon Price died on October 22, 1898 just a month short of turning 73. She is buried in Hood River where her son Eugene was also an educator.

A diary kept by Polly Coon, "A Journal of a Journey Over the Rocky Mountains" was published in 1956 as part of a series of volumes compiled by Dr. Kenneth L. Holmes, a history professor from Western Oregon State College (as it was known then) in Monmouth. The collection is called "Covered Wagon Women: Diaries and Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890." Polly's diary is found in Volume Five. We have a typewritten copy of her diary here at the museum for anyone interested in looking at it.

Chris Schwab

Sources: Jeff Brekas, Florence Read Bowman, Mildred Thayer

SCHS 2010 Annual Meeting

It was deja vu all over again when Saturday, January 22 dawned sunny and beautiful.....just like the last two years, it was the sunniest day in weeks as SCHS held it's annual meeting at Oak Street Church.

Thank you to our dedicated members who gave up a great day in the yard to support their Historical Society! And thank you to Oak Street Church for again providing us with the perfect venue!

We had the usual business meeting with its reports and boastings of projects done, displays heralding the past year, encouragements to pay dues. With great pleasure we welcomed two board members, **Kay**

LaLone and a returning **Marsha Worthen** and we recognized **Gary Ohren**, our volunteer of the year. An emotional Chris showed the Society's appreciation to retiring curator, **Carolyn Hutton** with gifts and flowers and President Ray Hunter reported on the new access way.



The afternoon was capped off with an information packed presentation by **Victor Madge**, local architect and dedicated Silverton historian, who filled us in on how the City's Downtown Master Plan will include a his-

tory focus. While the plan primarily emphasizes improving transportation, streets, lighting, etc., it also gives consideration to improving signage--making signs easier to read and providing consistency, reducing clutter and enhancing access to the town. And part of that proposed signage will be including displays of historical references in the form of 6 to 8 information kiosks or sign boards strategically placed around town and visible both from passing cars or pedestrian traffic. Historic Town Square Park is planned for the first one. Check the local papers for opportunities for input from the public. SCHS looks forward to helping with this project.



Thank you, Carolyn!

After Board Member Molly Murphy reminded everyone about SCHS's participation in the Hidden Gems Exhibition at the Willamette Heritage Center, Ray adjourned the meeting. Members and visitors then enjoyed refreshments and visiting.

Chris Schwab



To the Board of S.C.H.S.

This is a big Thank You to a great group of people who give their time and energy in support of the historical society and who do not follow orders!

They had strict instructions to not "do" anything on the occasion of my 'retiring' from the curator job. However, I have to admit, I'm kinda glad they ignored me.

They blessed me with a gift certificate for dinner at Caruso's and one for Powell's Book store; a lovely bouquet of flowers and a wonderful calendar made by Chris Schwab who took the time to personalize it with photos from the 10 years I served as curator.

So to Chris, Robin, Larry, Rufus, Marsha, Molly, Kathy and Ray ----- Thank you so very much. You really made me feel special.

I look forward to taking orders from you guys!

Carolyn



Kay LaLone

Welcome New Board Members!

We are please to welcome two new members to our board. Both ladies have husbands who are or were on the Board, so they can't say they didn't know what to expect! Marsha Worthen's husband, Tom, had served on our Board until other activities pulled him away...Marsha graciously filled out the rest of his term. Apparently she had such a good time, that she offered to join us for another term. She brings a positive attitude and a nice detail-oriented perspective that only an accountant can offer!

We got to know Kay, who is married to our dedicated Treasurer, Rufus LaLone, because she was always there whenever we had a claim on Rufus' time. So, when the Board position became open, we couldn't think of a better person to fill it. We appreciate Kay's talent as an artist and her knack for seeing beyond the expectations of a project. Thank you to both ladies for serving on our board.



Marsha Worthen

2010 Volunteer of the Year—Gary Ohren

Gary joined the Historical Society in May of 2009. A relative newcomer to the museum, he has made a lasting impression, not only on the museum facility but with those of us on the board.

He had heard of our plea for volunteers and while he didn't think he wanted to be a host, he was very willing to wield hammer, screwdriver or clippers to whatever task needed to be done. In the short 20 months since he brought those skills through our front door, he is there, just about every Tuesday, asking, "What have you got for me to work on today?" If by chance we're all caught up, he'll go outside and work on the shrubs or trim the grass.

Some of the things I really appreciate about Gary are his swift learning curve (show him where the supplies and tools are stored and we never had to show him again), his willingness to tackle just about anything, his steadfastness (finishes everything he starts and doesn't take short cuts), and if he sees something that needs to be done, he'll do it.



I started listing some of the things Gary has helped with and quickly ran out of room, so here are just a few:

- Helped put the finishing touches on the Observation Post.
- Patched a bad hole and leak in the Doctor's Room, then helped us paint the whole room.
- Completely re-finished a donated hospital bed used in the old hospital on N. Water Street. (He packed it home, piece by piece, on his bicycle!).
- Removed one of the over grown shrubs at the corner of the front porch.
- Dug up and helped re-set the old museum sign made by Al Hollin that sat in front of the Depot for years. It's now in a new location at the back of the museum.
- He's moved boxes, broken down boxes, repaired picture frames, re-organized our tool drawers, worked on the storm windows, helped with the garage sale, set up metal shelves.
- A framed, broken glass sign that told about the North and South Water Street railroad tracks was repaired by Gary. It was found in the basement still with the dirt on the broken pieces; I couldn't bring myself to discard it. Maybe I knew that someday we would be blessed to have a volunteer like Gary.

Gary moved to Silverton with his parents as a young boy; graduated from Silverton High School, Class of '57, and worked for Roth's IGA for many years. He and his wife, Nancy Raid Ohren, are busy with volunteering wherever they're needed, plus singing with the chorale group from Trinity Church and square dancing once a week and they enjoy traveling.

Gary wasn't able to be at our annual meeting to receive his plaque, so Chris and I had a little celebration at the museum the following Tuesday. We think he was surprised. Thanks for everything, Gary!

Carolyn Hutton



Hidden Gems: A Mid-Valley Heritage Invitational Extravaganza! **At The Willamette Heritage Center**

CONTACT: The Willamette Heritage Center at The Mill, 503-585-7012,
www.missionmill.com

WHAT: ***Hidden Gems: A Mid-Valley Heritage Invitational Extravaganza!***

WHEN: Through Saturday, March 12

WHERE: 1313 Mill Street SE, Salem, OR 97301

COST: FREE with Mission Mill Museum admission; FREE admission for members of the participating museums and organizations

18 Mid-Valley heritage, cultural and history museums and organizations the opportunity to bring their most unique, interesting and/or important treasures together in one show!

Throughout the exhibition's run, visitors can take a walk through history as they view a wide array of local, regional and nationally important objects. *Hidden Gems* encourages the preservation and appreciation of our local organizations that do so much every day to foster understanding and enjoyment of our community's heritage.

Participants include—

Antique Powerland Museum Association, Aurora Colony Historical Society, Bush House Museum, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Forest History Center, Frank Lloyd Wright Gordon House, Historic Deepwood Estate, Hoover-Minthorn House, Independence Heritage Museum, Jensen Arctic Museum, Keizer Heritage Museum, Linfield Anthropology Museum, Oregon Northwest Black Pioneers, Oregon State Hospital Museum, Settlemier House, **Silverton Country Historical Museum**, St. Paul Mission Historical Society, Willamette University Archives, and Yamhill County Historical Society.

For more information, please contact Keni Sturgeon, 503-585-7012 or email
kenis@missionmill.org.



Attention Members!!

We still need volunteer hosts for the 3rd Saturday, one more for the 4th Saturday and also the occasional 5th Sunday. Please call the Museum at 503-873-7070 if you can spare just 3 hours once a month. And of course a curator! Thank you!

SCHS at Hidden Gems Exhibition Opening



Trunk from the Depot



Chris and Carolyn and the crowd!



Jack Hande's display for the Observation Post and Tom Hartley's Red Sox uniform.



Kay and Rufus LaLone, Larry Thomas, Norm English and Carolyn Hutton at the Hidden Gems opening reception.

Coming Up—Mark Your Calendars!

March Program—Monday, March, 21—7 p.m. at the Museum

Christopher Wicks, Silverton's own talented composer and organist, presenting a program on the history of the pipe organ in Silverton's churches. More information next month.

Celebrate Bobbie the Dog

Saturday, February 12 from 1 to 2 pm at 206 S. Water St. next to the Coffee Station. Hosted by the Silverton Mural Society. Bobbie look-alike contest with prizes. Dick Moles with his accordion and dog Sweetheart. Lori Webb, muralist, will tell the Bobbie story. And if that isn't enough, an appearance by the Chicken Dancer!

www.silvertonor.com/murals for more information



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Important! Ancestry Detectives Meeting Date Change in February

The next Ancestry Detectives Meeting is Tuesday February 15, 10-noon, at the Silverton Senior Center. (This is a change in date, as there was a conflict.)

Topic: Finding Your Ancestors in Census Records

Part one – in depth study of census records for everyone from Beginners to Advance.

Part two, in March, we will cover Solutions to the problems, Online Research and Off-line research. Census Records are the most used records by genealogists, so if you want to learn how to use them, learn more about different types of census records (yes there are more than just the usual population records) then you won't want to miss our next two meetings.

Our March meeting will be on the regular second Tuesday of the month schedule - Tuesday, March 8, from 10-noon at the Silverton Senior Center.

Thank you to our new and renewing members!

Bob Dedrick	Norman English
Marilyn Dedrick	Fred and Ruth Kaser
Aileen Contrad	Doug and Tracy Duerst
Rory Nichols	Mark Myers
Creative Carpentry Remodeling Spec., Inc. (Jay Sorgen)	

Your S.C.H.S. Board

Ray Hunter	President
Larry Thomas	Past-Pres.
Norm English	Vice- Pres.
Chris Schwab	Secretary
Rufus LaLone	Treasurer
Vacant	Curator
Kathy Hunter	Membership
Molly Murphy	
Robin Anderson	
Marsha Worthen	
Kay LaLone	

If you received an overdue notice with your newsletter, we appreciate your prompt response.

Thank you!