

# Silverton Country Historical Society

Museum and Office 428 South Water Street



*The year 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of Oregon granting women the right to vote, so we have decided to dedicate this year's newsletters to some of the noted women throughout Silverton's history. This month: a bit of information on Silverton Women's Clubs.*

## Silverton Women's Clubs

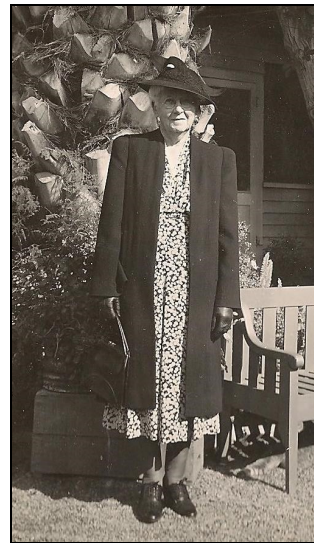
Men traditionally dominated the world's major organizations in the country's formative years, but it is a fact that from the earliest days women also met together on an informal basis—they gathered to help others, to learn about life around them or even to comment on social mores. These groups of women would share family news, talk about their homes, exchange recipes and otherwise support each other.

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, these informal groups were augmented by the establishment of formal women's clubs. The type, purposes, and work of women's clubs then and today, range across every conceivable area of public life. The soldiers returning from war, the promotion of temperance and the cause of women's suffrage ranked highly as issues of concern as women's groups developed.

Silverton was no different than any other small community. Unfortunately, we haven't obtained good information on the early years of these clubs, but we do know that one of the earliest women's groups to be established in Silverton, was in 1889 with the formation of the Women's Social Service Club. Mrs. Emily Wakeman, a newcomer to Silverton and wife of Liberal University's second President, Thadeus Wakeman, had been impressed by the Oregon Federation of Women's clubs and transferred her zeal to her new hometown. About 12 women met that first day at her home and elected Mrs. Wakeman as the president, Mrs. Sam Ames as treasurer and Mrs. Lou Ames as secretary. In the beginning the club met every Saturday afternoon in members' homes. Dues were 5 cents per month. The early membership reads like a microcosm of Silverton history: Mrs. June Drake, Mrs. G.B. Bentson, Mrs. G.W. Hubbs, Mrs. Percy Brown, Mrs. Oscar Cavender, Mrs. John Mount, Mrs. C.M. Wray, Mrs. Francis Hosmer and so on.....

In those days, club women really studied: art, music, literature, poetry, history, and homemaking were among the topics at monthly gatherings. As I said, records are sketchy for those early days, but we do know that in 1925 the Silverton Women's Club, by that time called the Silverton Women's Club, joined the Oregon Federation of Women's Clubs in a move destined to combine the energies of like groups to better promote group causes. The meeting dates had changed to twice a month on Mondays and then eventually to once a month.

Among early day achievements were the clearing of sidewalks of trash, cleaning up "improper" billboard advertising, insisting that grocers display food products above the sidewalk level away from passing dogs, and appealing to the city council to pass an ordinance prohibiting cows from running loose about the town.

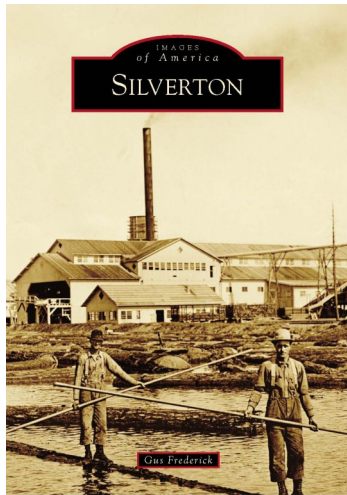


Mrs. Lou Ames, President,  
1900-1902

They also secured fire escapes for the Opera House, provided milk to underprivileged school children, sewed for the hospital and for charity. They named the city streets and had signs placed. They initiated clean-up days for the city park and bought swings and other playground equipment.

In 1913 they established the first library, initially in a private home and then upstairs at City Hall. The club continued support of the library after it moved into its own building. In 1923 they sponsored a Homer Davenport Day and established a memorial in his honor at the library.

*Continued on Page 3*



**Book Signing  
Gus Frederick  
Saturday, August 6, 1 to 4 pm  
Silverton Museum**

Get your copy of the brand new Arcadia publication, Silverton, by Gus Frederick. Gus will be available to sign your copy from 1 to 4 pm at the Museum.

Be among the first in town to own this definitive work on our hometown—  
Silverton

**Glassware, Volunteers Needed for Coin Toss Booth at Homer Days!**

Have fun **and** help your Museum.....



Here I am again, folks, with a reminder that we need containers to give people something to try for at our Dime Toss booth at the Homer Davenport Community Festival on Saturday and Sunday of the Festival. See how creative you can be with what you find in your kitchen cupboards, basement or garage. We want things that will catch a dime as well as someone's eye. A cute little wooden wheelbarrow has come in that I'm sure will appeal to many of the gals. Another example: Boys like cups with pictures of fish and cartoon characters. If you don't have anything around home, search at tag sales and Goodwill, where you can pick up items for a song.

Bring your donations (clean, please) to either my home, 211 Welch St., Silverton, and leave them on the porch, or drop them off at the Museum on Tuesday mornings or weekend afternoons between 1 and 4 p.m., if that is more convenient.

**And, second, if you are available to take a two-hour shift or even a one-hour stint on one or both days, call me at 873-0159.** I am taking names of volunteers starting now. It's lots of fun—just ask Molly or Rufus and their mates! Thanks a million, everybody!

*Kathy Hunter, Dime Toss Chair*

P.S. The Dime Toss brought in \$163 at the Strawberry Festival. Not too bad!



*Continued from Page 1*

Club projects included first and foremost, the library, along with other institutions such as Doernbecher Hospital, MacLaren and Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facilities, the Children's Farm Home in Eugene, the Salvation Army, the Silverton Country Historical Society and many, many more.

In the 1930's membership was 66, peaking in 1940 with 70. Membership declined, however, over the years as more organizations formed and women were able to be selective in their volunteer choices—and also as



more and more women joined the work force and had less time to devote to service organizations. I haven't been able to find out more about the disbanding of the Silverton's Woman's Club...hopefully this article might bring some details to light. It appears, though, that by the 1980's they were inactive.

In 1932, three members of the Woman's Club instituted Oregon's first Junior Woman's club here in Silverton. In the beginning, Silverton Juniors was a club for women between the ages of 18 and 35 (that upper age limit gradually became less stringent), with the by-laws, ceremonies and basic focus closely following the

Woman's Club. Many of the same projects were adopted by the younger women as well—in later years some special ones were added, such as the Bicycle Safety Days at Eugene Field School and Woodsy the Owl conservation programs. The group remained active until 1998-99 when the ever increasing demands of an active society led to a decline in membership.

In 1969 Silverton Zenith Women's Club was formed, and is still going strong today. Four of its founding members are still active in the group: Jeanette Olafson, Shirley Smith, Charlene McColly and Ruth Kaser. Zenith Women's Club appears to have been started as a bridge between the younger women in Juniors and the increasingly older membership of the Woman's Club. Over the years Zenith has worked on many projects for the benefit of Silverton, including annual scholarships for local students, layettes for newborns at Silverton Hospital, and most recently the Tree of Giving and the creation of Town Square Park.

In the heyday of women's groups the options for women to serve their community in Silverton included: PEO, Pythian Sisters, The Willard Women's Club, Eastern Star, Rebekahs, BPW, as well as auxiliaries for Elks, Jaycees, Kiwanis, American Legion, and Silverton Hospital. I am sure I have probably omitted several other groups as well! When I first came to Silverton, I joined Silverton Junior Women's Club, and as I looked over information for this story, lots of great memories flooded back to me. It is extremely satisfying to work with a group of friends to give something back to your community. Life long bonds are formed. And it is an indisputable fact that women's groups strengthened the framework for the Silverton we know today. Thank you, ladies!

*Chris Schwab and Shelly Vandehey*

*Small note for those of you who notice these things.....yes, sometimes I used "woman's" and sometimes "women's." That's because there seemed to be that same inconsistency in what records and articles we do have. I admit, I just gave up trying to figure it out!!*  
C.S.

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Coming in September at Willamette Heritage Center at the Mill—

*Treasures from the Trunk: Quilts and Their Makers After the Oregon Trail Journey.*

Friday, September 23 through Saturday, December 24, 2011—sponsored by Greenbaum's Quilted Forest. Call 503.585.7012 for more information.

*Getting Started with Oral History.* Workshop—Saturday, September 17th, 10 am to Noon. Call Shara at 503.585.7012 to register.



## June Member Program—Saturday, June 18th—2:00 p.m. Downtown Walking Tour

A small but enthusiastic group ignored the possibility of rain to stroll through town and learn about the history of some of Silverton's splendid architecture. We followed the basic format found in the Historic Walking Tour brochure developed by the City of Silverton around 2008. Copies are available at the Museum and the Chamber of Commerce office, if you'd like to take the tour yourself. The Museum also has copies of an earlier pamphlet produced in 1996 by Historic Silverton called *A Walking tour of Historic Silverton, Oregon*, which is similar to the more recent publication, but includes a History Time Line. Our tour on Saturday was enhanced by the many personal remembrances of growing up in Silverton by long time resident, Jack Hande. As usual, a good time was had by all.



### Museum Open During Homer Davenport Days!

In order to keep the Museum open all three days of the festival, August 5, 6, and 7, we **must** call on you to offer your help. We will need:

- 3 volunteers on **Friday** from 1 to 4 pm
- 2 volunteers for **Saturday** from noon to 4 pm
- 2 volunteers for **Sunday** from 10 am to 1 pm
- 1 volunteer for **Sunday** from 1 pm till 4 pm

This is such a fun time to be a host at the museum. Do consider offering your help. Don't worry if you have never done it before. It is as easy as welcoming friends to your own home!

Call Chris at 503-873-4529 to sign up for a shift.

### Homer Davenport Days — August 5-7, 2011

Reminder: Homer Kin to attend the Davenport Community Festival!

The Homer Davenport Community Festival is pleased to announce the Grand Marshalls for the 2011 Homer Parade: the direct descendants of Timothy Woodbridge Davenport, Homer's father and Silverton pioneer. T.W. Davenport, known locally as "The Sage of Silverton" for his incredible intellect and humanity, passed away one hundred years ago this spring. As such, the 2011 Davenport Community Festival will be honoring the life and works of Homer's primary inspiration, mentor and teacher – his father.

Coming down from Seattle will be Nancy Rose, who is Homer's niece and T.W.'s granddaughter. Her son, Dr. Timothy Rose, PhD., T.W.'s great-grandson and name-sake, will accompany her. Dr. Tim's family, including son Maxwell, will join them, making a total of four generations of Davenport descendants in attendance.

Timothy Woodbridge Davenport, was in his own right a remarkable person. He was a medical doctor, pioneer farmer, surveyor, Indian agent, store owner, State legislator and more. Born on July 30, 1826, in Columbia, New York, Timothy traveled West with his family in 1851, settling in the Waldo Hills South of town, close to GeerCrest Farm. He was a distinguished and highly respected member of Silverton's community leaders. He passed away on April 26, 1911, at the age of 84, and is buried next to his sons Homer and Clyde in Silverton Cemetery.

For more information go to: <http://HomerDavenport.com/>

### Friends of Silver Falls Library Book Sale

Just another reminder, the Friends of Silver Falls Library will be holding their annual book sale, Friday, August 19, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, August 20 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Silverton Library, 410 South Water Street. There will be two rooms of excellent deals from trade fiction to children's books to textbooks, to non-fiction works in every category. Don't miss it!

### Thank You

Thank you to Victoria Sage and **Zebra Print** for helping with the last minute printing of the June newsletter while our printer was being repaired. We are very glad she is here!

### 2011 School Tours!



This "Thank You" booklet from the third graders at Eugene Field School says it all:

Tyler wrote: Today I went to the Silverton Country Museum And learned that they used big saws. They made lumber at the lumber mill.

Marie remembered a story from the schoolroom: Dear Silverton Contry Museum, I learned about the inkwells. Our guide told us if you were a boy and there was a girl who was sitting in front of you and you were a boy who lived in the olden days then you would probably be putting that girl's hair into the ink well!

And Aluvia summed it up: I had a great time. Thank you Silverton country museum!

That's why we do it, folks!

### Aumsville Centennial

August 3 through 6th

Aumsville celebrates 100 years!

Historic Displays at the Aumsville Museum and Community Center;

Aug. 3rd—Official Ceremony, Music and Birthday Cake.

Aug. 4th—Classic Car Cruise-In

Aug. 5th—Historic Treasure Hunt for children

Aug. 6th—Antique Appraisal Day 9 to noon

Cost \$2 per item appraisal, limit 2 items.

For more information go to [www.aumsville.us](http://www.aumsville.us)

or call City Hall 503-749-2030

### Tools for Survival

### Oregon's Past As Told by the Weapons That Witnessed Its History

Exhibit at Willamette Heritage Center  
at the Mill.

A display of knives, bows and guns telling the story of who used each weapon and the time period in which it was used. The exhibition runs through August 20 at the Museum, 1313 Mill St S.E. in Salem and is open 10 am to 5 pm daily except Sundays. Admission is \$6, \$5 for ages 55 and older, \$4 for students, \$3 for ages 6 to 17 and free for children under 6. Everyone is free on Tuesdays.

### SILVERTON SONNET by Christopher Wicks

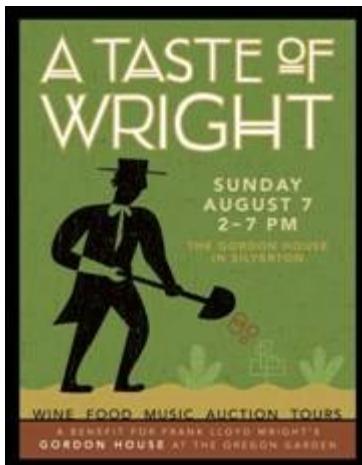
*This is a sonnet with a Shakespearean rhyme scheme. It is an acrostic, in that the first letters of each line, read downward, spell "In Silverton, Ore." The author was born in Silverton, where he still lives.*

In that it may entail its complications,  
Now choice, now chance, fortunate or forlorn,  
Simply to dwell in this or that situation –  
Is this: no one may choose where he is born.  
Love comes unbidden, we may not withhold –  
(Vulgar elitism, opening its maw,  
Errs when it seeks to make itself too bold,  
Ranting that we're provincial or bourgeois -- )  
Truth is, our homes choose us. We can't fake roots.  
Our bones and minds and blood come from this soil,  
Nor can pale urban envy steal these fruits:  
Our thoughts, our joys, tears and triumph and toil.  
Riches, power or fame may come to some;  
Ere chasing these, we know we have a Home.



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**A Taste of Frank Lloyd Wright at the Gordon House  
on August 7**

Spend a summer Sunday afternoon exploring the very real relationships of farm, food, family, friends, and Frank Lloyd Wright at the Gordon House on August 7, 2 to 7 p.m.

It's a festival and a culinary extravaganza that benefits the preservation of Wright's legacy in Oregon.

Make your reservation today with your charge card:

\$30 each or \$50 for two; a family group for \$60;  
or a party of 10 for \$200 on line or talk to a real person at  
503/874-6006.

**Mark your calendar NOW!**

**Your S.C.H.S. Board**

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

Thank you to our new and renewing members!

Mary Ellen McCleary Fleck  
Jon Digerness  
Delana Beaton

Larry Brown  
Linda Wiley

And thank you to these generous donors!!

Nancy Bleakney in memory of Vic Hadley  
Tess Reams (T.H. Small descendent)

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

**Thank you!**