

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: Eva Coolidge.

Eva Coolidge

The year is 1883. You are 26 years old and you have grown up in Silverton, Oregon, a child of privilege; the oldest child of Ai and Sarah Coolidge. Your father is easily the wealthiest man in town, at least in terms of land holdings and being co-owner of the only bank for miles around. August 22 will be your 27th birthday and it is time to do something totally out of the ordinary for women of your age and time. You want to climb Mt. Hood.

And so it was reported in The New York Times, August 13, 1883, that Miss Eva Coolidge, R.C. Ramsby and Mrs. Renshaw of Washington Territory joined a University party from Salem in reaching the snow line of Mt. Hood on July 12th.

Think about it. No sunglasses, no skin protection, long skirts. Horseback all the way to the snow line. Side-saddle? Maybe you rode the train from Salem to Portland? Would you have worn bloomers? Would you have packed your own food? Snow shoes? Water?



Back row from left:
Ai Coolidge, Jr.,
May Coolidge Adams,
Eva Coolidge,
Alfred Coolidge.
Front: Ai Coolidge,
Sarah Frances
(Allen) Coolidge.

The discomforts of the trip are mind-blowing to this 20th century child of comfort and convenience.

Unfortunately, Eva Coolidge left no surviving diary that told of her experiences of climbing Mt. Hood. There had been previous expeditions up the mountain beginning in 1847 and she probably wasn't the first woman to climb a high peak.

The fact that she did so, thanks to the *New York Times* article, gives us a glimpse of the woman who went on to be President of her father's bank.

She was born in Silverton in 1856. She probably went to school at one of the first schools in the town; in fact she's probably one of the children standing in front of the school built in 1862 (*the first school built on the site of the future Eugene Field and the same structure that is still standing on North 3rd Street—we have a photo on display at the Museum*).

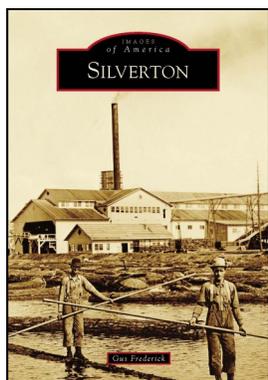
She was born after Silverton became a town and she would have been 3 years old when Oregon became a state. She would have grown up hearing her parents and her parent's friends tell the stories of how they crossed the plains; their trials and hardships and their successes in their new, chosen land.

Did she go to University? Did she ever work in the Coolidge-McClaine bank as a young woman? Did she belong to the Women's Social Science Club? Did she attend the Methodist Church, just one block from where she lived with her parents? Very little is known of her private or social life.

Based on the census records listing of "Occupation," she only had one: housekeeper. That was in 1895 when she was 38 years old. She was listed as a hostess for a program for the Women's Club, but she wasn't listed as a member. Willamette University has no record of her as an alumnus nor do they have any records of that 1883 ascent of Mt. Hood, even though their President, Thomas VonScoy, accompanied or led the climbers. As of this date, we have found no other evidence of deeds of adventure, other than trips to Portland and California.



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Images of America
Silverton
By Gus Frederick

Copies available at the Museum.

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

Dime Toss Catches Lots of Winners at Homer Davenport Days!

The Society's summer money-maker, the Dime Toss Booth, provided a captivating activity for many people, young and old, at events this summer in Silverton. We featured the booth at the Strawberry Festival and at Homer Davenport Community Festival, as it's been renamed.



You'll recall my earlier pleas for contributions of containers of all sorts to give people something to throw their dimes away in...er, into. Many containers were dutifully turned in at the museum or at our home, and thank you, thank you to all those folks who found their own stuff or purchased things at tag sales or Goodwill for the booth. We had plenty to make it fun and interesting! Some of the donations were really nice, so nice I wanted to keep them for myself! But I didn't.

A sign of the difficult economy we're living in

and through is that we did not net as much money as last year. We brought in just under \$300, but that's still good, isn't it? The \$25 raffle prize at Homer Days went to a 10-year-old Silverton girl.

My sincere appreciation goes out to these volunteers who managed the booth, two at a time: Kay and Rufus LaLone, Norm English and Rich Gallagher, Chris Schwab, Ray and Kathy Hunter, Trish and Craig Jensen, Marsha and Tom Worthen, Linda McKay. And that includes putting up and taking down that big old booth. Thank you, everyone.



Kathy Hunter, Project Chair

Eva Coolidge (*Continued from Page 1*)

According to information from the National Register of Historic Places, Eva Coolidge “became president of the Coolidge & McClaine Bank after her father, Ai Coolidge, died July 1908.” In the “*Banker’s Magazine*” Vol. 86, No. 1, Feb. 1913: “One of the exceptionally few women holding such a high position of honor and trust is Miss. Eva Coolidge, recently elected president of Coolidge and McClaine Bank; a progressive business woman.” One source listed her as President and a Director in 1909.

In 1912, Eva built herself a large house on the corner of W. Main and Coolidge Street, currently occupied by the Parkinson family. She built right beside her parent’s house which was torn down in order to build a duplex.

Eva died Feb. 28, 1919, at the age of 62, of a hemorrhage of the brain. She had met friends at the Gem Theater when she collapsed; she remained unconscious until her death. Her obituary describes her as a “quiet, unassuming woman who never made a display of her charitable acts with the money at her command”... She was an active worker with the Mispah Circle; a group of women who cared for people in need.

She is buried in the Silverton Cemetery in the Coolidge family plot.

Carolyn Hutton

Landscaping at the Museum

Thanks to Robin Anderson, Gary Ohren, Kay LaLone and Kathy Hunter for all the work they have done on the landscaping around the Museum. Following the removal of some seriously overgrown shrubbery by the City of Silverton, Robin and Gary trimmed the remaining rhodies and shrubs to a controllable level. After the stumps of the unwanted bushes are removed, Kay and Kathy have plans for new, more easily managed plantings. They have already begun leveling piles of dirt and placing a few plants. Trust me, before long the exterior of the Museum will be a showcase of foliage!



Kay LaLone working between the Depot and the Museum on August 10th. The Museum Improvement Committee has undertaken tearing out overgrown shrubs and replanting some of the landscaping, aided by City workers.

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.

And on **November 21st at the Silverton Museum**, the annual “Whazzit” Program, where you can bring your unusual historical items to hopefully be identified...or possibly to stump the “experts.”

Images of the Homer Davenport Community Festival—2011



Homer Days at the Museum

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped staff the Museum on Friday, Saturday and Sunday of the Homer Davenport Community Festival: Ruth Kaser, Jack Hande, Carolyn Hutton, Carolyn Simmons, Kay LaLone, Shelly Vandehey, Linda McKay and Chris Schwab. Highlights of the weekend included all the fun of Gus Fredericks book signing for Silverton, and the delight of spending time with Nancy Rose (Timothy Davenport's granddaughter and Homer's niece), and her son Dr. Timothy Rose, his son Maxwell and Maxwell's son, Tyler. Two other groups with ties to the Davenport family also stopped by. It felt like one glorious family reunion! On Saturday alone we had over 50 visitors. Thank you, Silverton!

Oregon Cultural Trust Sponsors Oregon Days of Culture—2011

The Oregon Cultural Trust was authorized in 1999 to increase public and private support for Oregon's arts and heritage programs, specifically non-profits. Since 2002, Oregonians have contributed over \$25 million to the Trust and the Trust has awarded over \$11 million in grants to every corner of the state.

Between October 1st and 8th, Days of Culture will be celebrated at more than 500 events around the state. Many are free; most are family friendly; all represent the lively cultural expression that happens every day in our communities. A few of the upcoming events are listed below. Find all event listings at <http://www.oregondaysofculture.org> — and while you're there, submit your photo of Oregon culture for the chance to win \$1,000 in cash, fancy cameras, and other swell prizes.

Art is a Verb: Alfred P. Maurice - Exhibit 10-1 | Monmouth, OR
Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month in Lincoln City! 10-1 | Lincoln City, OR
Raven Art Show & NW Blacksmith Association Archival Exhibit 10-1 | Government Camp, OR
Images From Indian Ford Meadow Plein Aire Paint Out 10-1 | Sisters, OR
Train Robbery - Eagle Cap Excursion Train 10-1 | Elgin, OR
First Weekend Art in Toledo 10-1 | Toledo, OR
Pittock Mansion Tours 10-1 | Portland, OR

Workshop—How to Research House History

Who lived in your house before you? What did your house look like originally? Why is there a bathroom on the back porch? Researching the history of your house can answer those questions and many others. It might also shed light on the development of your neighborhood. Tibby O'Brien and Morgen Young will demonstrate the steps of uncovering the history of vintage houses and other buildings from 10 - 11:30 a.m., Sept. 10 at the Architectural Heritage Center, 701 SE Grand Avenue, Portland. For further information, visit www.visitAHC.org or call (503) 231-7264.

Museum Website

Tracy Duerst has been diligently working on updating our website: <http://www.silvertonmuseum.com>. Keep checking it for new photos and messages. And of course we accept suggestions for items to include. E-mail us at Silverton.museum@live.com.

New Addition to the Museum!

The estate of Dr. R.E. Kleinsorge recently gave the Museum the roll top desk that Dr. Kleinsorge used daily in his office. Be sure to come see it and several others items that were recently added to the Doctors' Room collection.



Arrived safe and sound!



For those of you who pay attention to these things, you may have noticed that this issue of the newsletter was a little later than usual. To help defray costs and conserve volunteer energy, we are strongly considering transitioning the publication of the newsletter to an every other month, or even quarterly, schedule. Bear with us as we figure this out. Thanks for your patience.

Have a happy rest of summer!



428 SOUTH WATER STREET
 OFFICE PHONE 503-873-7070
 EMAIL US
 SILVERTON.MUSEUM@LIVE.COM
 SILVERTON 97381

WWW.SILVERTONMUSEUM.COM



School starts
 September 6th!

Pictured here:
 Emerson and Washington
 Irving Schools

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	

Thank you to our new and renewing members—

Maggie McBride
 Kevin Griffin
 Herb and Bee Lay
 Jim and Tanya Little
 Diane Hill
 Robin and Wade Anderson
 John and Carmen Smith
 Shelly Vandehey
 Richard Engeman

Susan Dillon and Michael Milhausen
 Joseph and Carolyn Wahlster
 Steve and Cheryl Wareham
 Ed and Julie Bowles
 Barbara Bassett and Roger Roper
 Jean Tomison Kennedy
 Gordon Munro and Melanie Rae
 Bill Kleeman

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

Thank you!

And **Thank You** to these generous donors—

Nancy Rose Tom and Barbara Pelett Norman