

# Silverton Country Historical Society

Established in 1974

Over Forty-five Years of History in the Making



Museum and Office  
428 South Water Street

Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year from  
Your Historical Society!



## How Two Buildings Became One

Part 2

By Fred A. Parkinson

*(Editor's note: Part one of this story chronicled two commercial buildings that were built side by side a few years apart and then profiled the individuals who constructed them. Finally, the use of each building up to the time of a major remodel was recounted.)*

The Worden building's 1929 remodel ushered in a new era. With the availability of new office and retail space in the downtown business core, new tenants found their way to the new and improved building. In addition to the new commercial space at ground level, the completion of the second story added seven extra offices to the structure.

On the Oak Street side of the building, current tenant, jewelry store owner A. L. Lerfald, remained at 206 Oak Street where he had been located since soon after the Silverton Service Station opened in 1922. He continued in that location until his passing in 1942.



Worden Building after the 1929 remodel

A 1930's era photo taken a few years after the remodel shows a traditional barber pole outside the 204 Oak Street location currently occupied by Johnny's Barber Shop. That space had been a tire shop in the original Silverton Service Station. When the previous owner, Gary Wolfard, retired in 2012, his shop was generally acknowledged as the oldest business in Silverton continuously run by the same owner, having been operated by him since 1968. It is likely that 204 Oak Street just might be among a handful of similar businesses (although with different owners) that have operated in the same location for over 90 years.

The corner location at 114 N. Water was occupied by 1932 by the Homeseekers Agency, a real estate and insurance firm that remained in business until the 1980s, although not at that same location. After they moved to the Masonic Building, it appears that a series of hair salons would do business in that space, a trend that continues to this day.

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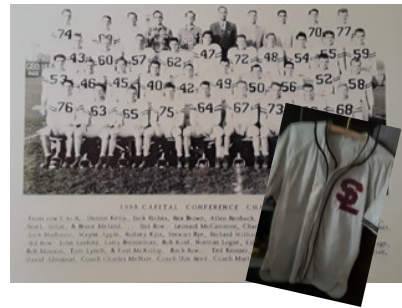
### Curator's Corner

#### Silverton: Town of Champions

The recent state championship win for our Silverton Foxes brought to mind the many pieces of sports memorabilia that we have at the museum. Recently, Marvin Thompson, one of our members brought in his baseball uniform that he had worn when the Silverton Legion Baseball team came in second in the state in 1940. We have a treasure trove of Red Sox pieces including uniforms and trophies. Some of the oldest treasures are pictures



from the women's winning basketball team of 1908 and the men's basketball team, winners of the 1909 Inaugural Oregon State High School Basketball Tournament. The history is clear, Silverton has a lot to be proud of in the dedication of its youth, coaches, parents and supportive community. The football team of 1955 won the Capitol Conference and because the conference was not eligible to play for the state championship the business owners put together funds that allowed the players and coaches to attend the state playoffs. Over the years the leagues have changed, but one thing is sure the devotion of the athletes who compete has not.



Our more recent championships have included the 1991 3A Football State Championship and notably several of those players are the fathers of the 2021 winning team. In the spring of 1994 the girls' basketball team won the 3A State Championship and again our ladies were successful in winning the 2016 5A State Championship. Silverton High School has distinguished themselves by winning the 5A Football State Championship and what is amazing is that the only team they lost to this year was Tualatin who went on to play Central Catholic for the state 6A championship. That team fell to Central Catholic by a touchdown.



In looking through the folders of information that the museum has regarding our sports teams, it is evident that there is no 'I' in team. The community has played a major role in helping our teams to succeed as well as parents and of course the coaches and players. In almost every photo of the teams from the past, the coaches are always part of the group picture.



CONGRATULATIONS! Goes out to all of the current athletes and those who support them and not forgetting those who have come before. This exciting win for our high school and community has certainly brought a bright light to what has been a tough year and a half for all of us, but especially for our student athletes

*Judy Lowery*

#### Save The Date—

SCHS Annual Member meeting will be held Saturday, January 22, 2022 at the Silverton Senior Center. More details in the January Newsletter, but.....Homer's friend Teddy Roosevelt might make an appearance! See you then.

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## How Two Buildings Became One Part 2 (continued)

The Russell Shoe Store resided in the middle storefront at 112 N. Water Street for several years in the late 1930s. After they moved out, a series of other businesses occupied the location through the years. Some of these included, but perhaps were not limited to, the Redmond Photography Studio, a furrier and gift store, Bloch's Electrical Shop, the Babyland children's store, Silver Creek Sporting Goods, and Optometrist Robert Hurlburt. This spot is currently the north portion of the I've Got Rocks in My Head jewelry and rock shop.

The Silverton Bakery, having moved from around the corner across Oak Street, took up residence at 110 N. Water that had previously been part of the adjacent Taylor-Palmer building. The bakery remained in that location until April 1956. In June 1957, Dr. Gordon McNeilly moved his practice from the Silverton Clinic on Phelps Street to the bakery's former location, where he would remain until he retired in 1986.

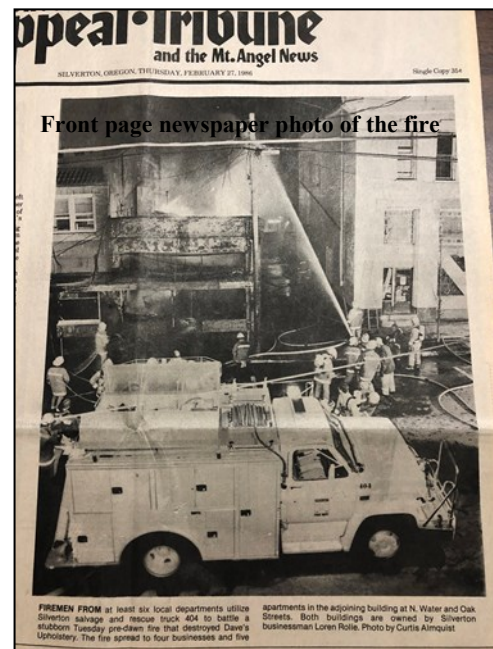
At the time of the remodel in 1929, the adjacent Water Street Meat Market at 108 N. Water continued to operate in the ill-fated former Taylor-Palmer building, now owned by Earl Garver and William Graham. Known by 1936 as an I. G. A. grocery store, the business was bought by L. F. Tucker (son-in-law of Earl Garver) and his business partner, Clarence Morley. When Garver and Graham sold the building in 1949, the Tucker and Morley Grocery moved to the former Gem Theater building a block north on the opposite side of N. Water Street. For the next 20-plus years many businesses, including The Holland Co. Appliance Store, Inga and Augie's Gifts, the Gav Hus Gift Store, Tonole's Auto Parts, Thrifty 88 Variety Store (moved in 1966 to E. Main Street), and Fabric Center located there until Dave's Upholstery moved to the spot in 1973.

Over the next few decades, several businesses occupied offices in the newly completed second story, including Dr. Eber Teter, chiropractor A. L. V. Smith and an insurance agent. Sometime after 1954, all of the upstairs space was converted into apartments, according to a quote in the March 13, 1986 *Silverton Appeal-Tribune and the Mt. Angel News*.

Under the headline, **"Fire Takes Downtown Businesses"**, the February 27, 1986 *Silverton Appeal-Tribune and the Mt. Angel News* reported "..... fire investigators had determined that electrical arcing in the attic of Dave's Upholstery was the cause of a Tuesday predawn fire that damaged five businesses and five apartments in downtown Silverton...." During the early morning hours of Tuesday, February 25, 1986, the night watchman at the Palace Theater noticed heavy smoke rising in the downtown area and called in a report to Silverton Dispatch at 2:15am.

When the first fire crews arrived at the scene, they saw flames rising from Dave's Upholstery at 108 N. Water Street. The fire soon spread to the adjacent building, damaging five businesses and five apartments upstairs. What ultimately became a four-alarm fire utilized fire equipment from as far away as Salem and Woodburn, as well as units from outlying rural fire departments, bringing the total equipment count to over 13, employing over 90 firefighters. The fire was eventually put out at 6:16am, according to the paper.

Silverton businessman Loren Rolie, owner of the Towne House, owned the two buildings at the time of the fire. The fire damaged Dave's Upholstery, the office of Dr. Gordon McNeilly, The Hair Hut, Gary's Barber shop and Friendly Florist. Five upstairs apartments were also damaged. The total damage to both buildings was estimated at \$196,000.

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## How Two Buildings Became One Part 2 (continued)

It took several months to determine the fate of the two damaged buildings. Fire inspectors, insurance adjusters, and building contractors roamed the site to determine the feasibility of rebuilding the two structures. Rolie had earlier indicated his preference to repair the existing buildings, but, as reported in the March 20, 1986 *Silverton Appeal-Tribune and the Mt. Angel News*, “Rolie said it is largely up to the insurance company to decide if the buildings should be repaired or if the company would recommend replacement of the buildings.” It was ultimately determined that the 108 N. Water Dave’s Upholstery building would be taken down and replaced with parking spaces for the apartment dwellers upstairs, thus sealing the fate of the former Taylor-Palmer building. The adjacent former Worden building would be repaired.

Most of the fire damaged businesses were able to find temporary quarters while the building was being repaired. The Dave’s Upholstery business that would not be rebuilt, was able to utilize the recently vacated Cooley’s Gardens building on James St, while Friendly Florist occupied a portion of the Gentzkow Gallery on High Street. Hair Hut employees were able to serve clients at another local hair salon. Physician Gordon McNeilly, whose 110 N. Water office next to Dave’s Upholstery was one of the more heavily damaged businesses, decided to retire soon after the fire.



Historic Worden (Rolie) Building today

It was a relief for Silverton when it was announced the historic Worden building would be repaired and not replaced. It would have been a great loss for Silverton had the building with such a rich history been torn down, just as the Opera House was a great loss to the downtown area when it burned on the opposite Oak Street corner 51 years earlier. The historic nature of the building would ultimately be preserved after the rebuild. However, the exterior would be changed a bit. Perhaps due to the overall damage the outside sustained, the prominent elliptically shaped awnings that were the last vestiges of the original Silverton Service Station were replaced with enclosed metal awnings that provided night illumination to the sidewalk below.

As the 100-year anniversary of its construction looms in 2022, the historic Worden Building still stands today on the prominent corner of N. Water and Oak Streets, a sign that one old building, that used to be two, can endure almost anything, just as it did on that chilly night in 1986.

### Stu Rasmussen—September 9, 1948—November 17, 2021

This past month our community lost one of its most original and brightest citizens. And we here at the Museum lost a really great friend. In the midst of his active life, he found time to be a supporter — even volunteering for a stint in our dime toss booth. He encouraged us to participate in his innovative Mayor’s Charity Ball that gave non-profits like us an opportunity to do a little bit of fundraising and have fun doing it. Stu really cared about Silverton and we were the better for having him here.



### Nancy Havens Rose—2021

We were also saddened to hear of the passing of another dear friend of Silverton history, Mrs. Nancy Havens Rose, Timothy Davenport’s granddaughter and Homer’s niece. She had visited the Museum in recent years and always shared cheerful updates on her life when she corresponded with us. We will miss her positive spirit.

# Some Christmas Memories.....



**Christmas at Silverton High**  
 By Caroline B. \*  
**The SHS Informant, December 21, 1932**

'Twas Christmas day at Silverton High.  
 You could feel it in the air,  
 Even the fair Miss Schroeder had some holly in her hair.  
 Then all of a sudden from the office,  
 Ringing loud and clear,  
 Came a carol from Mr. Kramer  
 To spread 'round Christmas Cheer.

Mr. Wells with a sprightly step,  
 Came running toward Miss Chase.  
 She was standing 'neath [the] mistletoe,  
 And a blush spread o'er her face.  
 Miss Spenker smiled as she read a card,  
 She said it came from the mail.  
 "Which male is that?" Miss Sinclair cried.  
 But she did not give detail.

"Merry Christmas"! said Miss Elliot cheerfully,  
 "Same to you," said Mr. Delay,  
 Because everyone was happy on that Christmas Day



Another feature of Evergreen School was the Christmas Program, put on for the adults each Christmas. Separation of church and state was of little concern in those days, and of course everyone at the school was Christian and Protestant. The program usually consisted of three different plays, several recitations and numerous Christmas carols, all performed by the students, with Miss Mascher playing the piano. Most of December was taken up with practicing for the event, which was always presented on the Friday night before the beginning of the Christmas vacation. Curtains, costumes and stage were all makeshift, and while the performances were seldom award winning, they were sometimes amusing. I recall one in particular in which my older brother, Bob, had a leading role in a play which required a rather long soliloquy at the end. The play went fine, but he was barely into the soliloquy before he realized that he didn't remember it. There was no provision for prompting. He stumbled, started over again, then stumbled again. He then did something that I thought then and now was as graceful and dignified a resolution of the dilemma as could be summoned. He paused, looked straight at the audience, and in a very calm and dead pan voice said, "Aw forget it," and walked off the stage. I thought he would catch it from the teacher or my folks, or both - - - but he didn't. It was so out of character for him that everyone simply overlooked it.

—Harold Dickman



St. Nicholas used to come to our house in early December, when we lived on Sheridan Street. He threw a bag of candy into the open kitchen window. We first watched for him there, then mother would suggest that we go to the bedroom window, because he might go there when we weren't looking. She promised to call if he came. Sure enough, Mother soon called, "He's here," but we just couldn't get to the kitchen fast enough. We always just missed him. I guess it took a few years for me to realize that Dad wasn't in the room when "St. Nicholas" threw the candy in....

Ron English





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*Celebrating Over 45 Years in the Community*

**WWW.SILVERTONMUSEUM.ORG**

**Thank you to our new and renewing members,  
our generous donors and to anyone who has  
given anonymously to the Museum or any of its projects.**

***You're the best!!***

Barbara Renback      Jodie and Ken DeSantis      Jeff Marcoe  
Darin Rybloom                      Peter and Meg Thompson

Bob and Marilyn Dedrick                      Nellie Graves

The Family of Ernie and Eleanor Hento

Jane Jones

And to Norma Hynes Benjamin—In Memory  
of Marlin Hutton



Just a reminder...the Museum is closed for the winter. We plan to reopen the first weekend in March. But—we are still here for help with research, accepting donation items and answering questions—or just visiting. You can usually find us here Tuesday mornings from 9 am till noon. We have some big plans to keep us busy, so be sure to keep us in mind for a visit in the spring.

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**We are so grateful for the support of all our members and donors!!  
Remember: Membership renewals are all due December 31**

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Thank you!**