

Brooks Historical Society Newsletter

April 2013 Vol. 2

<http://www.oregonpioneers.com/marion/BrooksHistoricalSociety.htm>

We gather, preserve and make available material relating to the history of Brooks and neighboring communities having natural, economical and cultural affinity .

French Prairie Heritage Rose Garden Update

The French Prairie Heritage Rose Garden is a new repository for old roses that had been cultivated on the French Prairie prior to 1910. The rose garden is adjacent to the caretaker's farmhouse on the campus of Antique Powerland Museum Association. The garden connects the history of the area with the stories of roses. The informally designed garden is organized into separate rose collections.

The "Roses of the French Prairie Collection" reflects unique local history and honors pioneering families by exhibiting roses with historic ties to the community. One rose in this group is the Isham Rose that was brought across the Oregon Trail by James Jefferson and Clarissa Wynn Isham in 1852. This fragrant pink rose was first planted in Champoege. As the family moved down the Prairie, the rose was planted in Wheatland, then Labish Center, and eventually the rose was planted on the family plot in Hopewell Cemetery in Dayton. Cuttings from the rose will be planted in the new French Prairie Heritage Rose Garden at Antique Powerland.

Historic garden designer Linda Bonner is planning the layout for the rose garden at APMA. Linda brings years of experience and expertise to the project. She has designed gardens for the Philip Foster Farm National Heri-

tage Site in Eagle Creek, and is designing landscape renovations for The William Holmes House, also known as "The Rose Farm", in Oregon City. We are still looking for roses and other

plants with local history to add to the growing collection. Please share your plants and stories



with us!

The Isham Rose

Mark your calendars for Saturday June 8th. Between 1:00 and 3:00 Northwest Rose Historians will be featured at Heirloom Roses in St. Paul, in their new Learning Center, as part of the annual Rose Days celebration of roses. At 1:00 the talk is about Pioneer Roses of Oregon, and at 2:00 there will be a talk about Roses of the French Prairie, including the new garden at APMA

For more information call Kathleen at 503-539-1637, or email nwrosehistorians@hotmail.com

Oregon Electric Railway

By Adele Egan

A recently published book, **Willamette Valley Railways**, by Richard Thompson has a 21 page chapter on the Oregon Electric railway (O.E.). The line operated from 1903 to 1933. It was a real inter-urban run according to standard procedures, with a mix of regularly scheduled passenger trains and freight trains.

The first Oregon Electric train made the 50.7 mile trip from Portland to Salem on Jan. 1, 1908. The line reached Eugene four years later for a total of 122 miles.

There were converter stations located about 20 miles apart that received 60,000 volts of alternating current. The transformers at the converter stations changed the power to direct current and sent it out on the line at 1200 volts. The power was passed on to the locomotive by a rod which was attached to the overhead line, like we see on the trolleys.

Locally, **Waconda**, pictured below as it is



today, was one of these converter substations. The article includes a nice picture of the Waconda station under construction. It was a combined substation and agent's office. The building included offices for a station agent, telegraph operator and electricians, a ticket office and a waiting room. Agents were cross-trained to perform any of these duties. Waconda was a boon for local farmers who could ship their fresh peaches and other fruit direct to Portland.

There was a passenger shelter and warehouse at Hopmere, a freight depot at Quinaby, and there was a converter station at Donald, now a museum. Another bigger station with full service was at Chemawa. It was mentioned in the

Polk City Directory in 1909 with Robert G Henderson as "Post Master, grocer and agent" for the Oregon Electric Railway Co.

The substations were phased out when the O.E. converted to a 1200 volt operation.

In the early days, the O.E. provided overnight sleeping coaches, porter, and dining cars for the long trip to Eugene. An interesting feature of service was the chapel car for use in rural areas. The train could stop wherever needed.

Passenger service was dropped in 1933 and all electrical operations ended July 10, 1945. The right of way, tracks and running stock have passed through many ownerships: Oregon Electric (O.E.), Spokane, Portland and Seattle (SP&S), Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Portland & Western.

Current traffic on the Portland & Western line is very busy. There are frequent spurs and sidings for dropping off and picking up cars. At Hopmere there are now warehouses both north and south of Brooklake Road. The frequent switching causes delays for the heavy trucks and car traffic on Brooklake Rd. and River Rd. NE. Freight includes logs, lumber, gravel, grain, fertilizer, fuel and general freight.

Thank You Ag Show Volunteers



Brooks Historical Society volunteers manned a booth at the NW Agricultural Show in Portland on January 29, 30 and 31. Thanks to all our BHS volunteers for supporting BHS and APMA: Carl Barner, Marilyn Barner, Tom Chaney, Dean Cuff, Terry Cuff, Frank Cunningham, Vicki Cunningham, Adele Egan, Mary Ray, Dorene Standish, and George Standish.

Curtis Project

By Louis Sowa

Antique Powerland is working out the process of acquiring the Curtis Trailer Horse Drawn Vehicle collection. This is quite an extensive collection for which Antique Powerland will need another large building. Charlie Philpot is heading the building project. The Truck Museum has been organizing the move. Some of the vehicles have been moved from the Curtis property to a private storage near Tigard. It is expected the rest will be moved in the near future. At least three have been moved to Powerland. BHS is in a unique position to make video documentation of the project, since we have the cameras and production equipment.



One of the Many Vehicles in the Collection

Video Project

By Louis Sowa

I believe as part of our historical information preservation that we need to continue and expand the video production we started last year. I have been working on simplifying and at the same time increasing our capability. For straight forward interviews it is possible to do with less equipment. At the same time I have been working on our ability to record on more than two microphones.

Our current major bottleneck has been editing. I have spent my efforts improving the capturing the videos so that they need less editing.. Editing is another major part of video production. Vicki and Frank Cunningham helped put me in contact with Nicolas Walcott. Nicolas is a student at Lane County Community College and has been doing some video including editing. He is currently working with a couple of the raw video files we produced. We expect to have a show and tell at the BHS May meeting. We have thirteen raw files at the museum that may be viewed.

I would like to expand our videos to include videos of projects at Antique Powerland and in the community. Dan Groah took some video of the start of the Curtis trailer acquisition project. I would like to make a video of the entire project see the (Curtis Project) article for more information.

Historical Books Available for Sale

Copies of two local history books are for sale at Brooks Historical Society.

Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, Compiled by Harriet Duncan Munnick. \$50.00. This book has translations of the St. Louis Register , Volume I (1845-1868) and Volume II (1869-1900), plus the Gervais Register (1875-1893) and Brooks Register (1893-1909). There is an index for each section, and some photos of each area. There are annotations for many of the names, giving historical notes.

St Paul, Oregon 1830-1890 by Harvey J. McKay \$25. As described in the forward, "This book is an attempt to tell the authentic story of this historically important community, St. Paul, Oregon, and the people who lived there during the 1830-1890 period. It includes a history of events, some photos, information on pioneer families of the area, and a section of writings by individuals of the period.

Call to inquire about shipping charges. Checks should be written to Brooks Historical Society.

Brooks Historical Society

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MISSION STATEMENT

The objective of the Brooks Historical Society and Depot Museum is to be educational, and to stimulate an interest in, and a knowledge of, the history of Brooks, Oregon, and the surrounding area.

OFFICERS and BOARD

Adult Member ----- \$15.00

Student Membership----- \$ 5.00

(Elementary and High School)

Business Membership ----- \$35.00

Donation ----- -\$_____

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Position 2- Leah Ott

Position 3- Frank Cunningham

Position 4 - Dan Groah

Checks should be written to

Brooks Historical Society

Mail to: PO Box 9265

Brooks, OR 97305

MEETINGS

The Brooks Historical Society meets at the Brooks Depot Museum at 10AM the first Saturday of the month. Directions to the museum at Antique Powerland: From I-5 - take Exit 263 – go west approx. 1/4 mile to: Antique Powerland 3995 Brooklake Road, Brooks, OR 97303