

Brooks Historical Society Membership

Adult Member ----- \$15.00
Student Membership ----- \$ 5.00
(Elementary and High School)
Business Membership ----- \$35.00
Donation ----- \$_____

Name:

Address:

City/State/zip:

Phone

E-mail

Checks should be written to:
Brooks Historical Society
Mail to:

PO Box 9265
Brooks, OR 97305

Videos, Books, & Research Collections for
sale: Visit our website at [http://](http://www.oregonpioneers.com/marion/BrooksHistoricalSociety.htm)
[www.oregonpioneers.com/marion/](http://www.oregonpioneers.com/marion/BrooksHistoricalSociety.htm)
[BrooksHistoricalSociety.htm](http://www.oregonpioneers.com/marion/BrooksHistoricalSociety.htm)

BHS Officers and Board

President - Frank Cunningham
Vice-President - Dan Groah
Treasurer - Dorene Standish
Recording Secretary - Vicki Cunningham
Correspondence Secretary - Marilyn Barner
Board - Position 1- Louis Sowa
Position 2- Leah Duda
Position 3- Sharon Shelton
Position 4 - Carl Barner

Meetings

The Brooks Historical Society meets at the Brooks Depot Museum at 10 am the first Saturday of the month.

Directions to the museum at Powerland Heritage Park: From I-5 - take Exit 263 -- go west approx. 1/4 mile to: Powerland Heritage Park, 3995 Brooklake Road, Brooks, OR 97303. We are in Building 6.
Interested in Powerland Heritage Park? Visit antiquepowerland.com

Brooks Historical Society Newsletter

April 2021

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

MISSION STATEMENT

The objective of the Brooks Historical Society and Depot Museum is to educate and stimulate an interest in and knowledge of the history of Brooks, Oregon, and the surrounding areas.



COVID Concerns

Due to the requirements of COVID 19, Brooks Historical is **cancelling our Brooks Historical Society Celebration Day** scheduled for June 19, 2021. Our museum will be open by appointment only this season

At this writing we are uncertain if major events like Steam-Up will be held this year. Options on the table are to hold the event as usual, or with timed entry tickets purchased beforehand online, to have a drive-through event like we had in 2020, or to cancel it all together. Keep informed on our Facebook page, and on the APMA Facebook page and website.

Smaller events of under 50 people held *outside only* are allowed with restrictions such as masking, required cleanings of surfaces, and social distancing.

Branch 15 Swap Meet June 25 and 26

Though our museum will be closed, Brooks Historical will participate in the Swap Meet, Friday and Saturday, June 25-26. \$8 admission, kids 12 and under free. Check out Branch15edgeta.org for the latest information.

Thank you Donors!

Brooks Historical Society has received many generous donations in the past, and we thank you for each of them! This January, we received many additional donations because of YOUR awareness of the difficulties COVID closures have provided in keeping up our funding.

We also thank those who have made donations directed toward the caboose repair. We are continuing work on that project.

We especially want to thank the Davidson family, who are Wattier descendants, for the donation of a framed flour sack, two framed pictures, and ledger books from the Parkersville Wattier flour mill and the saw mill. The ledgers are historically important because purchases are listed by family from 1897 on. It also includes a lot of family history.

We also remember Harriet Taylor for her generous donation several years ago which we have used to scan and preserve electronically many of the local family histories, and other historic documents.

Donations like these help us to preserve local history and "keep the lights and heat on" in our museum. Thank you again.

Abstract of Title
By Dan Groah

An Abstract of Title is a booklet that records the legal history of a property. Sounds boring, huh! Dull legal papers. But it is history. And in this case, local history. Every time a property changes ownership there is a page in this book that records that happening. The participants and the dates are most interesting. The details can be dull due to legal speak.

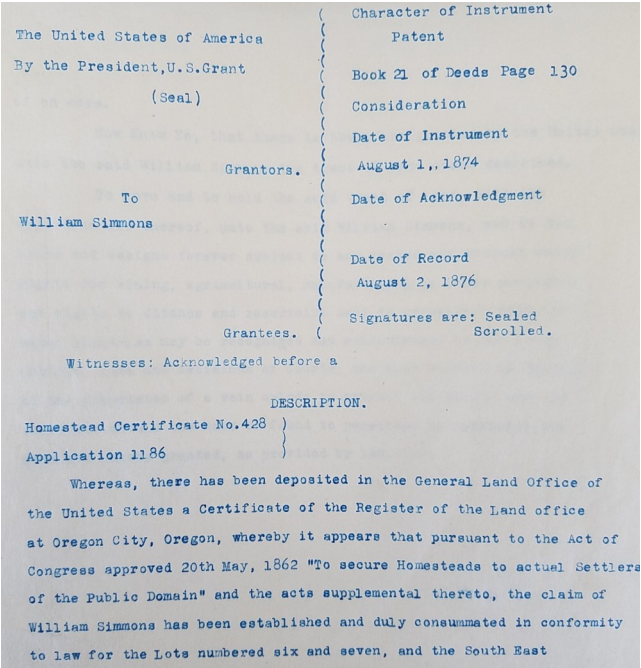
The Abstract of Title for my family's farm starts with the legal description. This is the geographic location of a property in the terms of the Willamette Meridian township and range. This is a land survey system that starts at the Willamette Stone in the west hills of Portland. Starting from the Stone, all land in Oregon and Washington is laid out in squares six miles on a side. Each square has thirty-six smaller squares called sections. Each section has four quarter-sections. And each quarter-section has four smaller quarter-sections. A given property is identified within this grid and the number of acres stated.

CHAIN OF TITLE.

		GRANTORS	GRANTEES	WHERE REC'D VOL.	PAGE	KIND OF INSTRUMENT
1	2	United States	Wm. Simmons	21	130	Pat.
3		Wm. Simmons et ux	Oscar Simmons	20	569	W.D.
4		Wm. Simmons et ux	Oskare Simmons	22	580	W.D.
5	9	F. Levy -vs- Wm.S.	Simmons #730			
10	30	F. Levy -vs- Wm.S.	Simmons et al #3684			
31	34	Jno.W.Minto, Sheriff	M.L.Jones	35	120	S.D.
35	36	M.L.Jones et ux	N.P.Williamson	35	565	W.D.
37		Wm. Simmons et ux	N.P.Williamson et ux	29	540	Q.D.
38						

The Abstract of Title records the chain of ownership. My family's property was established long before we owned it. In the beginning were the Kalapuyans. Then the British Europeans. After the Wolf Meetings at Champoege, an agreement with England made it a United States territory. Soon, additional settlers required an ownership system so land claims wouldn't overlap. That is where the Abstract of Title for my family's property begins.

On August 2, 1876, the grantee or recipient of our future farm was William Simmons. The property was given by the grantor or provider, U.S. Grant, President of the United States. This was a donation land claim given on unclaimed land usually on the condition that it be developed by a certain time. William Simmons, his wife and a relative, Oscar Simmons, apparently farmed the Labish Lake bottom



part of the land. In 1883 the family got behind on loans which led to legal action resulting in the loss of the property. The Simmons' land was sold at a sheriff's auction on July 13th, 1883. The presiding sheriff was John Minto junior. You may have heard of the senior John Minto. He has a Cascade pass named after him. Also, there is Minto Creek, Minto Island, Minto Mountain and Minto Park.

The buyer at the auction was M.L Jones. In June of 1888, Jones sold the land to N.P. Williamson. In December of 1888, Williamson sold it to Joseph Meyers. On July 5, 1889 a David Crumley took possession. Three days later it went to Joseph Tyson. And at last Mr. and Mrs. Tyson sold the farm to my great-great grandfather, George O. McIlwain for

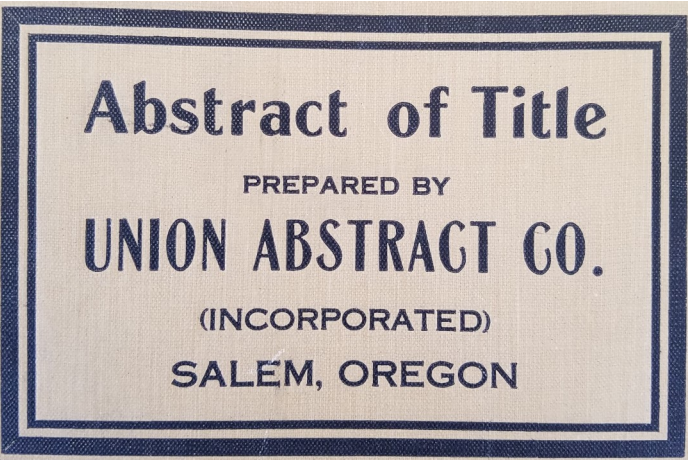


John Minto Jr. \$2400 on October 13th, 1891. After that, the property again changed owners but stayed in the family. One of the last entries in the Abstract of Title was the recording of a mortgage on August 19th, 1922 made by my great grandfather, C.E. McIlwain. Apparently, the money was paid back because the farm is still in my family today. The very last entry records the transaction of 4.74 acres of land sold to C.E. McIlwain by J.C. Hayes in June of 1922.

The description of property boundaries on this piece is unique. One side states ..."Beginning at an iron pipe which is 3.00 chains N 10 degrees 15 minutes W from the corner between section 14 and 23 in T. 6 S. R. 2 W. of the Willamette Meridian." What if the iron pipe disappears? Another side begins at an iron pipe on the right bank of the Little Pudding River; "Thence meandering the right bank of said river up stream to a point 3.77 chains N. 2 degrees 30 minutes W. etc. etc. etc." What if the river alters its channel?

I know of one corner on the part of the farm where I grew up that was (and I

guess still is) marked with a Model T axel. Another corner still has a crude concrete monument. That was the way land corners were marked out in days past. There were other transactions on our farm after 1922 but they were within the family and were not recorded in the Abstract of Title prepared by the Union Abstract Company of Salem Oregon.



Thank You Volunteers and Boy Scouts!

Spring clean-up got a little more intense with broken branches and trees from the February ice storm. Hard-working APMA volunteers worked many days to get it cleaned up. Thanks also to Gray Wolf Chapter of Order of The Arrow, Scouts of America, Cascade Pacific Council!! They came to help with clean up on March 6th! We thank you!!

