

Brooks Historical Society Newsletter

October 2013, Vol. 4

<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, economic and cultural affinity .

Annual Meeting Saturday, November 9, 10:00 am

The annual meeting of Brooks Historical Society will be 10:00 am on Saturday, November 9 at the Masons Lodge, in Brooks, Oregon. The lodge is just north of Brooks, at 9222 Highway 99E, Brooks, Oregon.

We have invited the new Executive Director of APMA, Pamela Vorachek, to attend.

The Agenda will include:

- Introductions
- Annual reports
- Elections of officers
- Plans for next year
- Potluck lunch

Please bring side dishes and desserts. Brooks Historical will provide the meat dish, soda, coffee and water.

Elections for 2014

The 2013 Nominating Committee was Frank Cunningham, Vicki Cunningham, June Gibson, and Leah Ott. They present the following slate of officers for 2014:

Slate of nominees for 2014 BHS Officers:

President -(1 year)- Louis Sowa
Vice President -(1 year)- Bob Brown
Treasurer -(1 year)- Dorene Standish
Recording Secretary -(1 year)- Vicki Cunningham

Correspondence Secretary (1 year)- Texie Lou Hilyer Price

Director position 3 (3 years- 2014-15-16) Marilyn Barner

Continuing Directors who were elected for the term indicated are:

Director 1-2013-2015 - Mary Ray;
Director 2 -2012-2014 - Leah Ott;
Director 4 -2013-2015 - Dan Groah

Nominations will be accepted from the floor during the annual meeting. Those nominated must be current members, and have agreed to serve.

Updates to the Museum.

Painting of the south and west sides of the museum has been completed, thanks to Frank Cunningham. He has plugged bee holes as he goes around the building and will address the sparrow problem on the NE side of the building.

The museum is now connected to the internet, making research, and publishing the newsletter at the museum much easier.

New Exhibits

Lena Riggi Basilone

Recent research has brought to light an extraordinary story of two amazing young people and a destroyer.



Lena Mae Riggi was born March 7, 1913. The family lived in the Parkersville area. She graduated with the 1932 Gervais High School

class along with other well known locals by the name of DeJardin, Lelack, Adelman, Henny, Schlechter, and Carl Francis.

Lena enlisted in the Marine Corps and was stationed at Camp Pendleton where she served as a field cook on the base, attaining the rank of Sergeant. There Lena met John Basilone, a decorated Sergeant in the Marine Corps.

They were married on July 7, 1944, while John was doing public relations for the war effort and resting from active duty in Guadalcanal in the South Pacific. They had only been married for seven months when John was killed February 19, 1945 in the taking of Iwo Jima. Lena never remarried, satisfied to volunteer countless hours of her time with women's auxiliary veteran groups where she lived in California until her death in 1999.

John Basilone served three years in the army, then joined the Marine Corps for duty in Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima as a Gunnery Sergeant.

He was the only enlisted Marine in WWII to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross. John was killed in the opening battle at the invasion of Iwo Jima. For his heroism in this grim battle he was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, the only one to be awarded all three medals.

Many non-military honors were bestowed on Sgt. Basilone following the war including his name on roads, highways, sports fields, and monuments. Of special interest is the naming of a United States Navy destroyer, the USS Basilone in 1947. His widow, Sgt. Lena Basilone had the honor to sponsor the ship, launched December



27, 1945 in Orange, Texas.

The Brooks Depot museum will honor Lena, John, and Destroyer Basilone DD 825 this summer in the WWII Memorial Exhibit.

Max Bibby

Also new in the museum is a photo of Ensign Max Bibby, of the US Navy Air Corp, 1943-1945, and a cross cut saw that had belonged to his family. Max's parents, Horace and Virginia Morrison Bibby bought a farm in Labish Center in 1916, where

they eventually grew strawberries, hazelnuts and a few onions. Max was one of four children.

After the war Max brought his wife, Arlene, to Lake Labish where he grew onions for 40 years, served on various boards, and started a business. He also enjoyed his membership in a Flying Farmers group for many years. One member of that group, Elma Appro, offered to paint an old crosscut saw for Max, a saw had been on his father's farm when he purchased it in 1916.

The 7 ft. long cross cut saw with a beautiful mountain scene is on display at the museum.

French Prairie Heritage Rose Garden.

The white picket fence around the rose garden has been completed. Kathleen reported she and Laura turned in a grant request to the Oregon Community foundation to enhance and expand signage and displays for the Rose Garden. They hope to plant the roses in October. A BHS member may donate a wagon wheel toward the garden. Kathleen garnered ideas for the Willamette Heritage exhibit on the French Prairie Heritage Rose garden March through May of 2014.

Ideas were offered to publicize the dedication of the FPH Rose Garden on June 21, 2014. Highlighted will be Father Schoener, parish priest at the Brooks Catholic Church who was famous in the early 1900s for his hybridized roses in Brooks. There are plans to place a memorial plaque honoring Fr. Schoener at the site of the church, which burned down in October of 1915.

Video Editor Needed

The BHS film team has made several videos recording the experiences of elders in our community. We would love to polish these gems with some video editing. Do you have experience editing video, or know someone who does? Have them contact Louis Sowa at lsowa@earthlink.net.

Other video opportunities include a video of the "Henry J" which was a predecessor of the Corvette, and the Curtis Trailer collection of horse-drawn vehicles.

Filing Workday

A filing workday was set for Wednesday, December 18 at 10 am to file newspaper articles, information from the internet, and other historical items. Come join other volunteers at the museum, and learn a little more about the types of materials we have in our collection.

New Books at Museum

BHS purchased two books recently which are now available to members and visitors to use in our reference library. The Henry E. Bender Book on *Southern Pacific Railroad Depots* has photos, diagrams and maps of these historic buildings. The book *Jesse Applegate; A Dialog with Destiny*, by Leta Lovelace Neiderheiser gives a comprehensive historical perspective of this Oregon pioneer.

In October, Marilyn Barner donated two books to our collection: *A Pictorial History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, by Wilfred P. Schoenberg, SJ, and *The Well Traveled Casket; a Collection of Oregon Folklife*, by Tom Nash and Twila Scofield.

Brooks Historical Society

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MISSION STATEMENT

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

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://www.oregonpioneers.com/
marion/BrooksHistoricalSociety.htm](http://www.oregonpioneers.com/marion/BrooksHistoricalSociety.htm)

Interested in Antique Powerland?

Visit antiquepowerland.com

Officers and Board

President - Louis Sowa

Vice-President - Bob Brown

Treasurer - Dorene Standish

Recording Secretary - Vicki Cunningham

Correspondence Secretary - Marilyn Barner

Board - Position 1- Mary Ray

Position 2- Leah Ott

Position 3- Frank Cunningham

Position 4 - Dan Groah

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 Antique Powerland:

From I-5 - take Exit 263 -- go west approx. 1/4 mile to: Antique Powerland, 3995 Brooklake Road, Brooks, OR 97303