


Brooks Historical Society

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3995 Brooklake Rd. NE
Brooks, OR 97303

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9265
Brooks, OR 97305

Brooks Depot Museum



Brooks Historical Society Membership

Adult Member ----- \$15.00
Student Membership ----- \$ 5.00
(Elementary and High School)
Business Membership ----- \$35.00
Donation ----- -\$ _____
(Donors eligible for Oregon’s cultural trust tax credit. See culturaltrust.org for details)

Name:
Address:
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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>

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 - Gary Clement

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
Interested in Powerland Heritage Park? Visit powerlandheritagepark.com

Brooks Historical Society Newsletter

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<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.

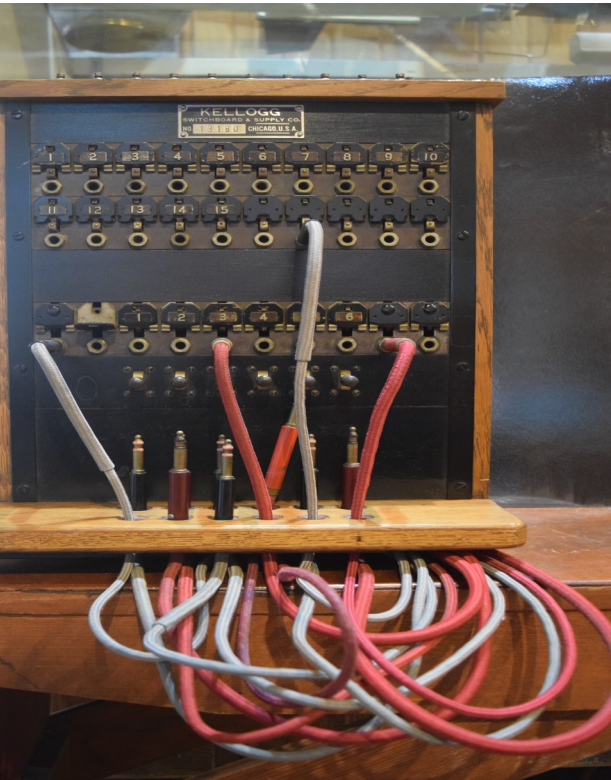
Check out the BHS Facebook page.



New Exhibit Traces History of Telephones

A new exhibit in the Brooks Depot Museum has telephones from 1910 to the present. It features two switchboards from the area, one the **first Gervais Telephone switchboard (below)** on loan from the Gervais Telephone Company.

This would be a great exhibit to share with youngsters who may have only seen



.The Caboose project:

A workday June 11 uncovered the need for extensive repairs to the side of the caboose that had been most exposed to the weather.



On the bright side, a volunteer has provided and cut the special white oak timbers needed for the landings on each end of the car. Another workday will be scheduled soon, To be notified of the workday, contact Paul Duchateau, 503-508-6108.

Schedule

July 28 & 29 and August 4 & 5 - Great Organ Steam-Up BHS food vending (also on July 27), and Used Book Sale.

August 25 & 26 Truck Show - BHS used book sale.

Sept 22 & 23 All Steamed Up Hops and Vines

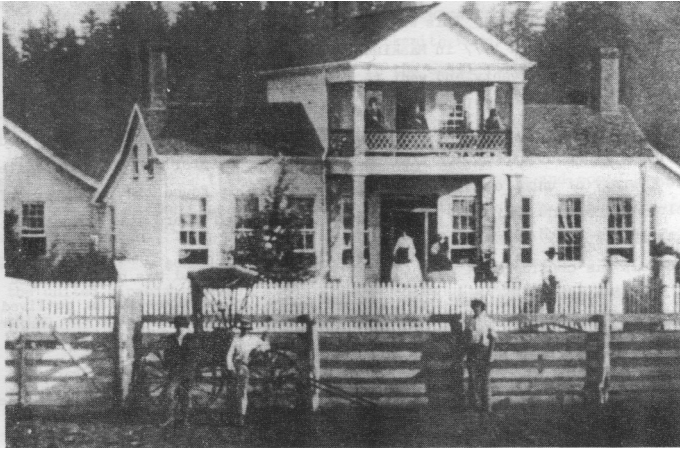
Transportation History in the Gervais Area

Before Gervais, in the 1840s, people and produce got to the Columbia River shipping centers by water craft on the Willamette River. Some of the earliest French Prairie farms were near the Willamette.

As farms were developed away from the river, crude roads were constructed. When the rains came, the roads turned to quagmires.

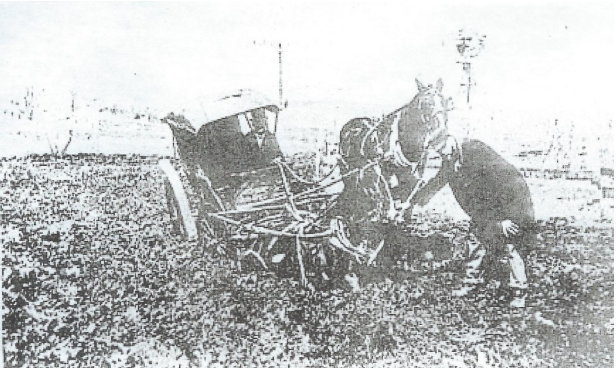
Sam Brown came to the Gervais area in 1850. By 1858 he had finished the house that still stands today on 99E. In 1860 the Pacific Highway connected Salem and Portland. The Sam Brown house became a stage stop.

Below: Sam Brown House in 1860



Waconda, a community since 1852, was at the crossroads of the newer Pacific Highway and a road from Parkersville to Fairfield where produce could be shipped down river. The roads were largely dirt and could be miserable when wet.

Stuck in the Mud



In 1870, the Oregon and California railroad wanted to extend a rail line from Portland to Eugene. The railroad went through Woodburn and down the valley about a mile west of the Sam Brown house. The railroad still passed through Brown’s property. A town was plotted along the railroad tracks. Buildings were moved from Waconda and St. Louis. These towns began to fade away, as did Belle Passi.

Gervais thrived as an agricultural center. Shipping produce by boat on the Willamette River now had some serious competition. Besides wheat, The rail road shipped oats, hay, hops and potatoes and could amount to 200 railcar loads a year.

With the railroad and its solid road bed, getting up and down the valley was now easy, even in winter. But in the wet season getting around town could still be a challenge. Gervais was built on a piece of ground that flooded every winter. The streets were planked. The sidewalks were built of wood and raised above ground level. A large ditch ran down 4th Street.

Bridges across smaller ditches were everywhere. Sidewalks were built several miles into the country. Summer brought relief from the mud, but some people still walked because of the dust.

N Goodman Store in Gervais



Around 1900 the automobile appeared. In May 1909 an auto driven by C. W. Cutsforth collided with a horse and wagon driven by M. Benjamin. The auto, in an attempt to pass the wagon, was run over by the wagon. Benjamin’s defense

was that the car was “driving at a high and reckless rate of speed.” A jury ruled in favor of Cutsforth and his car. Perhaps the time for wagons was nearly over.

But not quite. In 1913 a Mr. Crawford brought an airplane to Gervais. After several exhibition flights it was decided to move on to Woodburn. However, the distance between the two towns must have been too great to fly. The amazing new flying machine arrived in Woodburn on top of a horse drawn wagon.

In 1880 a narrow gauge railroad was laid from Silverton to Ray’s Landing on the Willamette River and went through Woodburn. This increased the importance of Woodburn as an agricultural shipping center. For Gervais, it began a slow decline as a shipping center.—from a presentation by Dan Groah, June 16, 2018



Join us for Steam Up!

Circle your calendars for the last weekend of July and the first weekend of August. Tour our museum and see the new exhibits and books, and sample our excellent breakfast and lunch menu items. Corn on the cob should be ready by then.



Our continuing Used Book Sale is getting a lot of attention. But don’t worry, there will still be a great selection during Steam Up and the Truck Show. There are books in boxes that have not yet been unpacked. So stop by, or stop by again, and see what is new each day.

Three Powerland Events Draw Visitors

BHS visitors and members enjoyed a fine afternoon of presentations on “**Historic Gervais**” on June 16, 2018. We heard about the Post Office, Telephone Company, transportation, warehouses, churches, various ethnic groups, and other aspects of Gervais history.

A Sanborn fire map of Gervais from 1892 was on display, giving information about various buildings, their construction, and capacity in the town. Of particular interest were the notations on a Chinese Laundry, and Chinese cabins, as well as a notation for the calaboose (jail). Our featured speaker was David Espinoza, a graduate of Gervais High School and author.

June 22-23, Brooks Historical was open for the **Branch 15 Swap Meet** with a limited menu and book sale

July 4-8 2018 – We enjoyed the colorful costumes and well-polished trailers during the **Fourth of July Civil War Reenactments and Vintage Trailer show**. Brooks Historical provided their usual excellent food, an open museum, and the used book sale.



Welcome New Members!

Kylie Pine
David Espinoza



New at the Museum

We now have these binders for reference:

- ◆ **Brooks Then and Now**
- ◆ **“Historic Gervais”**
- ◆ **Dr John P. Poujade and His DLC—**Compiled by Elaine Albright Clement
- ◆ **Gervais: Cutsforth Meats, William Larkin DLC, John F. Poujade DLC, Elisha Barnes Estate, 1880 Gervais Residents—**Compiled by Elaine Albright Clement