

Brooks Historical Society Newsletter

July 2011 Vol. 3

<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

First **25** Years

As the celebration of our first 25 years for the Brooks Historical Society goes on, we are reviewing the rich history of our Membership activities. In the April issue the Founding Members were listed. Many have passed on but a goodly number are still active members today. However, not all of our wonderful officers and volunteers were "founders." We will be reviewing those stalwart members who came on the scene early, especially as activities picked up when the depot came into our ownership. Oh my, that did require a lot of dedicated organizers and fund raisers. Not everyone involved can be highlighted, but a few really stand out and will be written about this summer, as will those who came on the scene later and have worked as hard, if not harder, to keep the wheels turning.

All members and volunteers are valued and put in many hours keeping the doors open with labor and/or funds for operations and maintenance. Contributions can be many and constant while others are known for a significant "splash" still remembered. All efforts were appreciated. But for fun we want to name a few names that are often mentioned in conversations thru' the years tho' not known by more recent members. Bear with us as we reminisce and excuse us if a special friend of yours seems overlooked. They are all relevant but space is limited.

First who come to mind are those who stayed the course over a long period of time, but are no longer with us or active members.

Texie Hillyer - Recording Secretary Treasurer 1990-1998, she was active in membership drives and fund raising, donating the use of her home for garage sales and committee meetings. She and Texie Lou took extensive inventories of all artifacts in detail and set up a permanent record book and computer list. Texie's sage advice was an asset at board and committee meetings.

Patsy Brutka - always a driving force, she worked hard behind the scenes and on membership drives. She never shied away from knocking on doors asking for funds.

Phyllis Rattray - Corresponding Secretary for six years and President for four, an active Docent and hostess, she helped with anything from floral decorations to painting parade entries to putting out a Newsletter -- whatever was needed.

Mary Jane Chambers - Founding Secretary, President two years, hosting meetings at the Bank, organizing events like the dedication and three times hosting Oregon Trail Wagon Trains stopping at Powerland.

More to come in next newsletter

BHS 25th ANNIVERSARY 1986 to 2011 A Little History

1st Decade - 1986 - 1995

The first project was to assist students at the Brooks Elementary School in writing a history of their school. Recording oral history was part of this effort. Incorporated as a non-profit, research of the history of the community continued.

The next big project was bringing the old Brooks Southern Pacific Depot to Antique Powerland where it was set up as a symbol of early dependence on rail shipping for produce grown in the rich valley.

Even before the arrival of the depot the Society had an exhibit at Powerland's Annual Steam Up. In 1987 and 1988 it was held in the Beilke's snowmobile trailer. There were tables lining both sides filled with antique farm tools. The next year was a tent on the site of the future home. In 1990 the museum was open to the public to see the combined exhibits of BHS and OERHS.

To restore the building to its original orientation of an office and a freight shipping room, the Brooks Historical Society joined the Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society for this monumental project so the Trolley people could share the freight room to display their artifacts. Under the leadership of Greg Bonn, President of OERHS, the restoration was completed by the two groups in 1990.

Years 1996 to 2005

In the second decade our exhibits expanded and OERHS moved into a larger museum of their own. Our museum was open for more and more events on the grounds. The Office area was dedicated to transportation (steamships, trains, trucks) and the Freight Room housed displays on farming, domestic life and Native Americans. More emphasis was placed on gathering local family histories and genealogy books were developed as a research program.

Years 2006 to 2011

In the past few years fund raising efforts increased to provide for a heating system and improvements and upkeep of the old building. Food vending provided the funds and increased the need and attraction of volunteers. Publications improved with a more professional Quarterly Newsletter. Powerland's addition of the Passport project introduced children to more of the museums on the grounds and advanced our ability to educate the youngsters as they searched for clues. Our popular silent auction also attracted a larger following as they viewed the preferred treasures displayed both inside and outside of the depot.

Introduction of the Pioneer Family of the Year on our free week-end in June has brought families from all

over the Northwest to the museum to exchange family histories of their Pioneer ancestor who came and stayed and added to the development of the community.

Our current goals are to be an active and involved partner museum at Antique Powerland as we all make plans to be a first-class designation for the travelling public interested in learning about the past. We are always encouraging memberships, especially those newer to the community and of the younger generation and welcome them to join our volunteers for a fulfilling pastime.

Madame Marie Dorion and the Pacific Fur Company

Pierre Dorion Jr. was the interpreter and Hunter for John Jacob Aster's overland expedition to the Pacific Northwest in 1811. Pierre was of mixed blood -a Sioux mother and a Canadian French father; he spoke French and English. His father, Pierre Dorion Sr., was with the Lewis & Clarke Expedition.

Marie Dorion, his wife, only woman travelling with some 60 men, with two small children, Baptiste and Paul, was only the second woman, after Sacajawea with the Lewis & Clarke Expedition in 1804, to travel overland from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast. Marie was of Missouri of the Iowa tribe from the upper Mississippi River. She knew French, English and Indian sign language.

They left St. Louis October-10, 1810 with the John Jacob Aster Expedition, travelling up the Missouri River by boat, a large keel boat and smaller wide bottomed "piroquis," about half the length of a keel boat. They over-wintered on the upper Missouri River.

On their travels they feared the Sioux but found the Iowa and Arikara amicable. Having an Indian woman and children made it easier to deal and trade with the various tribes along the way.

On July 18, 1811 the expedition left the boats and the Missouri with the Arikaras and continued on west on foot or horseback with 80 horses, 60 men, Marie and the two children and took off across the plains and desert. They had traded for horses with the Arakaras, later with the Cheyenne for more horses and even later for more horses from the Crow.

Upon reaching the great divide in the Grand Teton the waters ran west. When deep enough the horses were left with the Shoshones, small canoes were dug out of cottonwood and pine trees and they took to the water again, following the Snake River. Later they abandoned the Snake, leaving the trading goods in caches and walked on. They were starving. It was while crossing the Blue Mountains that Marie Dorion gave birth to a little girl, the first white baby born on the trail. She lasted only a week, too weak from their malnutrition to survive.

The party reached Astoria February 15, 1812. The Dorions were the first family to settle in the community in Oregon.

Notes taken from "Only The Earth: The Story of Marie Dorion" by Ruth Schmerber of St. Louis, OR, 1990.

ASTORIA'S 200th ANNIVERSARY

The City of Astoria is celebrating its 200th Anniversary this spring. John Jacob Astoria's Pacific Fur Co. sent two parties to the mouth of the Columbia River to set up a Fur Trading Post in 1811.

The party that came by ship, the Tonquin, arrived first in 1811, built Fort Astoria and established the settlement in the name of the United States.

The overland expedition led by Wilson Price Hunt also started out in 1811, from Missouri, and arrived in 1812 after an arduous trip across unplotted routes and great hardship.

With the Hunt Party was Mdm. Marie Dorion, wife of Pierre Dorion, interpreter and hunter for the expedition. She has the distinction of being the first woman after Sacajawia of the 1804-5 Lewis & Clarke Expedition to cross the entire unsettled lands lying west of the Mississippi River, travelling by foot, horse and boat.

It is this woman, just as brave and strong and historically important, that the B.H.S. is honoring in 2011 as our Historic Pioneer of the Year. The fact that Marie Dorion/Venier/Toupin remained in Oregon and settled here on French Prairie with her families is what makes her so dear to us.

Of Historic Note: the John Jacob Aster Expedition for the Pacific Fur Company established the first white settlement in the Oregon Country; the French-Canadian retired employees became the first farmers in the Willamette Valley; and the route the Astorians discovered on returning to Missouri in 1813 later became an important part of the "Oregon Trail."



2011 Calendar of events

Annual Great Western Binder Bee	July 15, 16 and 17
Brooks Historical Society Annual Silent Auction	July 30
Great Oregon Steam-Up	July 30, 31, and August 6, 7
Pacific Northwest Truck Museum Truck Show	August 27
Smithsonian Museum Day - Free Admission!	September 24

Brooks Historical Society is now Open for the Season

We are now open with many events. Our Fund raising Season is quite short. We will be selling food at all events for Antique Powerland and The annual Silent Auction will take place the first Saturday of the Great Oregon Steam up. This year is July 30, 2011, We are accepting donated items to auction, please call Dorene at 503-393-2053 for pick up or to drop off donations. Remember the last week end in July and the first week end of August, See event dates in this newsletter .

Marie Dorion Recognition

The open house event was held on June 18, 2011, at The Depot Museum. There were 102 descendants and admirers of Marie Dorion

Well known Author Jane Kirkpatrick was one of the speakers. She is well known and has published many books nation wide. In attendance were many faithful admirers of Jane.

Our own Jennifer Gobin Bailes also was kind enough to speak. She is a descendant of Madame Dorion and well versed on her Indian heritage that she holds dear.

A door prize was of an Indian maiden which was appropriate to the Indian heritage of Madam Dorion won by Judy McClaughry.

We have put together several history books on the life and heritage of the French Prairie icon. Come visit our Museum and Historical library. We have several new Family History books. We also sell copies of many of the Families History of the French Prairie and Brooks community.

Grandma Gobin

by Neva Ramp McCrea

I knew a "Grandma Gobin", who lived in Brooks. My parents W Howard Ramp and Edna J. Jones Ramp, owner of Ramps Corner store-General Mercantile and Service Station, on Highway 99E and Brooklake rd.

My memories are: my Mother baked 2 ducks smothered in delicious sage dressing. My Dad and I took one to "Grandma Gobin," and Joe.

I was about 5 or 6 years old- we also took candies and oranges. Grandma Gobin was blind, and so appreciative for food we brought to her.

Being so young, I don't remember much more to tell you.

The story of Madam Marie Dorion sparked some past events to me.

Sincerely
Neva Ramp McCrea

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,

OFFICERS and BOARD

President - Larry Leek

Vice-President - Louis Sowa

Treasurer - June Smith

Recording Secretary - Dorene Standish

Correspondence Secretary - Marilyn Barner

Board - Position 1- Bob Brown

Position 2- Ray Smith

Position 3- Frank Cunningham

Position 4 - Dean Cuff

Adult Member ----- \$12.00
Student Membership ----- \$5.00
(Elementary and High School)
Business Membership ----- \$30.00
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**

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