KLAMATH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRUMPETER

Summer 2015

Upcoming Meetings Schedule

May 28: Uniforms of WWII, by Beth Sanders, 7p.m.
June 13: Annual Bus Tour “Lake Creek, Eagle Point.”
June 14: Pacific Terrace walking tour, 4 p.m.
July 19: Linkville Cemetery walking tour, 6 p.m.
July 26: Annual summer picnic, Williamson River
September 24: World War II Legacies in Southern Oregon, Oregon Historical Society Panel, 7p.m., location: TBD

Museum Events

May 23-24: Heritage Days, Fort Klamath Museum
May 30: Link River Festival, Link River Canyon
June 20: Native Plant walk, Museum, 10am
October 9-11: Nights at the Linkville Cemetery

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by Ryan Bartholomew

Klamath County Historical Society
Meetings are held at 7 pm on the fourth Thursday of March, April, May, September and October in the Armory-Museum at 1451 Main Street, Klamath Falls.

September 24 Membership Meeting

WORLD WAR II LEGACIES IN SOUTHERN OREGON

The “Oregon Transformed” series considers long-term impacts of World War II in local regions around the state within broad thematic frameworks. Presenters in Klamath Falls will address the themes of “consent and dissent,” “revisions to the landscape,” and “human migrations” by discussing subjects including wartime and post-war transformation of the woods caused by WWII and the way it set up the region for the Timber Wars of the 1990s, treatment of the Bly balloon bombing by policymakers and media, and Japanese American internment at Tule Lake and the remembrance (or not) of that history during the decades since. Panelists will offer carefully prepared presentations, leaving plenty of time for audience questions and discussions.

Laura Jane Gifford is a historian of modern American politics with a special interest in the unique dynamics of Oregon’s political landscape. Questions about her family heritage led Linda Tamura, author and Professor of Education Emerita at Willamette University, to write about Japanese Americans during World War II and how her community responded. Jeff LaLande is a historian who has lived in southern Oregon for over 45 years and has written on a range of topics about the region. This program is presented in association with the Oregon Historical Society’s exhibit WWII: A World at War, A State Transformed and is presented in partnership with the Klamath County Museum.
The Petroglyphs: History and Hype

By Ryan Bartholomew

For over a century, the mystery of the petroglyphs on the Peninsula (Castle Rock) near Newell has intrigued local novice historians and archeologists. How old are they and who carved them are questions yet to be answered definitively. The carvings are all located within traditional Modoc territory so it is commonly accepted that it was the ancient Modocs who carved the petroglyphs. Although it is quite difficult to date a petroglyph since material was removed in their creation and not added, recent scientific analysis of the site places their creation between 6400 and 2600 years ago. The method used to determine their age was largely based on the historic lake levels of Tule Lake. During historically low periods, the petroglyphs were carved and during high water periods the petroglyphs were under water.

Contrary to the latest scientific theory, an alternative theory has maintained traction for many decades. The alternative theory places their creation, or at least one unique panel of the petroglyphs, in the hands of a group of red-haired explorers. This theory can be traced back to Judd Howard, known today as the “father of the Lava Beds.”

Howard thought the petroglyphs resembled ancient writings found in Europe and he wrote dozens of letters, accompanied with pictures, to experts around the world to ask their opinion of his theory. While responses were postponed by World War II, some responses eventually came. Some responses stated that while the writing closely resembled ancient alphabets, they were not an exact match. Talking with tribal members, Howard was encouraged that his theory was supported by Modoc oral history:

Petroglyphs May be ‘Ogam’ Or Ancient Irish Writing, Latest Theory Maintains
By Doris Payne, Herald and News, October, 1942

Many have been the conjectures as to the origin of the strange characters inscribed on the Tule Lake Peninsula. Many have been the scientists who have made a study of them, but as yet no one theory is generally accepted and no key has been found to unlock their meaning.

Now comes a tale from an Indian source which gives impetus to the idea that they may have been ogam or ancient Irish writings brought here by seafaring Norsemen. Moreover, it might have led to a translation of at least some of them if Hitler hadn’t stepped into the picture! Yes, Hitler, as it will be shown.

The Story was told by the late Jeff Riddle, son of Winema. Jeff had always been keenly interested in the lore of his people and in addition to his “Indian History of the Modoc War” had written over 300 pages of manuscript which has since been lost.

The story he told of the writings, as related to J.W. Shook, is this. In the old days, when the Indians lived at Eulalona village near the present Fremont Bridge, Jeff’s Great Grandfather became so feeble that he was confined to the camp and would pass the time telling stories to the children.

He was so very old, that one day the children ventured the opinion that he was able to tell such wonderful tales because he was the oldest man in the world. “No,” he said in effect, “my great-grandfather was much older than I. He used to tell me stories his great-grandfather told him. I simply tell them to you as I heard them.”
This particular story as Jeff recalled it was that when the great-grandfather farthest removed was a little boy, 34 white men with candy beards, knives of strange stone (metal) and cross bows came to the Modoc country. At first the Indians treated them coldly. When they found the strange people friendly, however, and adept at bringing down game with their cross bows, they permitted them to live in their camp at the peninsula for the winter.

By the time the spring came, two of the white men had married Modoc women and elected to remain with the tribe. Among their descendants were Link River Jack and Winema.

The rest of the white men decided to leave, but prior to their departure, they chose a smooth faced offset of rock on the Peninsula about 30 inches wide and over a yard long. On its surface, they chipped strange characters with a deer horn stylus. Then, after impressing the Indians strongly with the idea that these marks were “sacred” and must not be defaced, they set out in a northwesterly direction and were never heard of again.

After they left, the children of the tribe carefully avoided the white men’s writings on the rock, but having learned the trick, they proceeded to carve similar markings, embroidered by their own imaginations. Shook, in telling the story as it was told to him, gave Howard credit for discovery of the original writing and for recognizing the similarity between it and the ancient Irish writing familiar to the Norsemen, known as ogam.....

Howard took pictures of the writings and obtained the names of Norwegian and Swedish universities, as well as the name of a man who had made a lifetime study of ogam in Norway. Copies of the pictures were sent to each of them. And that is where Hitler came in. He invaded Norway just two weeks after the letters had been mailed. No replies were received, thus postponing, along with so many other things, the possibility of further light on the origin and meaning of the petroglyphs “for the duration.”

Howard died before the mystery was solved but others, such as Kenneth McLeod, continued the quest. By the time McLeod began his study of the petroglyphs, vandals and the forces of nature had taken their toll on the carvings. Disturbed by the probability the symbols would soon be lost forever McLeod developed a method of making castings of the carvings. The castings were able to capture detail that photographs could not and the importance of these castings cannot be overstated.

As for the unique panel of petroglyphs that resembled ancient European alphabets, McLeod speculated they were carved by metal and were much younger than the other petroglyphs, perhaps 150 years old in 1961. His theory closely matched Modoc oral history and he provided additional evidence from the Peter Skene Ogden expedition. Ogden, who in history books was this area’s first white explorer, wrote in his journal on November 18, 1826: “Thank God!” The road to the “Clammittee” we all know.” This indicates the trail he was on had been traveled before, perhaps by the red-haired explorers.

**History or Hype:**

With the creation of Lava Beds National Monument in 1925 came a wave of excitement from business leaders in the communities surrounding the park. Some thought the park designation would create a solid stream of tourists like those seen at Yosemite and Yellowstone. Malin, Merrill, Klamath Falls, Alturas and other communities were proclaimed by their leaders as “the Gateway to the Lava Beds.” The Southern Pacific Railroad, highway associations and even Pacific Power featured articles about the Lava Beds in their tourist publications. Alongside descriptions of the lava tubes and accounts of the Modoc War, were often sections dedicated to the mysterious petroglyphs. As with almost every historical site, details were often exaggerated and theories became historical fact in an effort to support commerce and tourism. One of the most extravagant accounts of the petroglyphs comes from the travel section of the November 10, 1929 addition of the Oregonian:
Mystery of Klamath Basin, By John Kelly

Before Columbus discovered America there was a colony of Europeans in the Klamath Basin of Oregon. Who they were or how they came or what became of them is a mystery which some day may be solved by archeologists.

Make sure of this fact: Klamath basin was peopled with a considerable number of men and women who had a written language centuries before the Genoese navigator sailed in the Santa Maria. They were in the Klamath country possibly 1000 years ago.

It is also a fact that this colony existed for several hundred years before it disappeared. These Europeans may have been Norsemen. Irish, ancient Britons or something similar, with possibly a sprinkling of Italians—Roman citizens.

Proof of these statements is offered in the carved writings of these white men, carvings which have withstood the ages, and which can be seen and studied by anyone interested in the subject. This series of writings is the most complete to be found in the United States.

There are more carvings in one mass than all other scattered specimens which from time to time have been discovered elsewhere on the North American continent.

South of Klamath Falls is Tule Lake, and projecting into the lake is the Peninsula. This peninsula is of volcanic origin. The Peninsula is formed of volcanic mud, tuff, which has hardened into soft stone. It is capped with a flow of lava. A geologist would go far to examine the Peninsula, for one side of the crater has been stripped away, showing the cavity filled with tuff and lava. It is like the side view of a massive molar exposing the filling to a dentist.

At one time from the base of the Peninsula extended the broad expanse of Tule Lake. At least three occasions, if not four, the lake waters receded; the waters coming and going slowly, each recurrent lake leaving its traces on the cliff. At present the lake is dry and for miles around the base are the fossil shells of fresh water clams, glittering fragments of mother of pearl mingled with coarse sand and innumerable...
artifacts of Indians. Mortars, tortilla boards, arrowheads are found in profusion and even other rare articles, such as stone dishes and a lamp have been uncovered by the winds.

Along the face of the tuff cliff for 1200 feet are carved writings. An almost continuous stream of markings, comparable in length to six city blocks. So regularly repeated are many of the signs that no doubt exists that this is a system of writing. In no respect do these carvings resemble the familiar Indian paintings so common in all parts of the Oregon country.

Carvings extend from the base of the cliff to 20 feet above ground. Those near the base are two inches in length and have been carved with a fine pointed instrument. Those higher up are two feet in length, horizontal, and were graven with a larger cutting tool. Whether the lower and more delicately incised marks are examined, or the larger ones a score of feet up the cliff side, both reveal the same characters.

There are, apparently, two systems of writings, one being waving and straight lines; the other is circular. On one isolated panel, which presumably has no association with other two systems mentioned, is a series of symbols resembling signs of the zodiac.

One system suggests the ogam writing of the Druids of ancient Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. The second system is on the order of the runes of the Scandinavian countries. In fact, some of these later signs have been identified as runic and Gothic and translated as such within the past few days.

Nor are the carved writings confined to the cliffs of the Peninsula. They have been found in Fern cave and other caverns in the vicinity, and have been discovered in the crater of a volcano, a crater that once bubbled hot water and mud, and which may, in the days of its activity, been visited by the European remnant.....

Scientists estimate that the filling and emptying of Tule Lake required from 50 to 100 years, and if this occurred three times the time element between the original and final carvings ranged between 150 years and 300 years. Presumably each of the three sets of carvings on the lower level were made by different generation of the same marooned colony of European adventurers. The third set of carvers never saw the individuals who dug out the first designs. This is of importance in indicating the length of time that the white colony existed in the Klamath basin and in the neighborhood of the Peninsula. The period must have spanned several centuries at an age when Europe was developing its culture, civilization and government.

Repeated many times in the carvings is the sacred oak of the Druids, and at least twice appear carvings of the Druids’ sacred lamp. The Druids were priests and teachers. As a class they were peaceful and had a distaste for war. They were a professional, educated class. The best account of the Druids can be found in the writings of Julius Caesar, who encountered them when he invaded Britain about 53 A.D. These Druid signs of sacred oak and sacred lamp occur with the runic and ogam carvings on the cliff.

A rune was, in ancient times, considered a mystery, a secret letter, and formed the earliest alphabet of any Germanic peoples. Rune inscriptions are found on stone mainly in Scandinavia and England. In Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia and East Anglia there are traces of runic dating from the middle of the seventh to the tenth century. The earliest historical date of runic is the fourth century, when the gothic bishop Ulfilas took two runic signs for his alphabet.

In Ireland runes are not unknown. Whether the invasion by the Norsemen from the eight to the tenth century had anything to do with it is not certain. But while the Irish had some runic, they used a system of writing of their own called ogam, named from one of their legendary pagan gods. Ogam is something like modern shorthand. It consisted of a straight line from left to right. Strokes, perpendicular or diagonal, crossed the straight line, which served as a base, and the number of these strokes and whether they were above or below the line, had a definite meaning. On the Peninsula of Tule Lake are hundreds of feet of carvings which fit the description of the ogam system.
Runic originally was straight lines, but later became waving, or zigzagging like a series of capital M’s joined together. Then, to make definitions more exact, dots and dashes were added to be used as accents.

This is the type of carving which predominates on the Tule Lake cliff. The straight and also waving lines, besprinkled with dots and short strokes, are used and grouped methodically.

According to a settler in Klamath County, the carvings are not a historical chronicle of the European Colony, but the writings are unrelated texts. This settler, Andrew Johnson, was taught runes in his native land before he went to school. Although living not many miles from the cliff, he had never seen the carvings nor heard of them until some snapshots were shown him. The writing reproduced on one of the photos, he explained, said that “seven animals different from those in our country” had been found, and he identified the description of one animal as probably a mule deer. Unfortunately, Johnson could not read all the photos, as they had not been properly made. When the photos were first made by Howard he did not recognize the importance of the dots and dashes and therefore did not mark them with white paint so that these accents would reproduce in the camera. Lately he has ascertained that these accents are the vital part of the writings.

If the theory of Johnson is correct, the cliff of the peninsula was used as an immense blackboard on which was carved texts for teaching. Here the young of the colony were instructed. It was a vast open air school. As a coincidence it is worthy of note that the east side of the Tule Lake valley is known to the Modoc as “the Valley of Knowledge.” If the cliff was a school blackboard where lessons were conducted, the appropriateness of the Modoc designation is significant. But why did the Modoc give it that name? In Modoc language it is called “Walla Was-Skeeny.” Take a simple Latin textbook and it will be seen that valley in Latin is “vallis” and knowledge is “scientia.” The Modoc words are “wallis” for valley and “skeeaintia” for knowledge.

When and how did the Modoc incorporate Latin words into their vocabulary? Did the Latin come from some of the European Colonists at the peninsula? There is more than a coincidence in the appearance of Latin in the Modoc language. In Latin the lily is “lotus”; in Modoc it is “wocus.” In Latin “walled in” or “ramparts” is “moynia.” A mountain north of Olene, Klamath County, is called by the Modocs Moynia.

There are still other similarities between the Modoc language and Latin. Between Merrill and Malin is Adams Point. Latin for his is “collis.” The Modocs refer to the point as “Colil.”

No one has given study to the strange intermingling of Latin and Greek words in the Modoc Language.....
Once again, the Klamath County Historical Society teamed up with the LDS Church and the City of Klamath Falls for an annual Linkville Cemetery Clean-up day. After hours of hard work, participants were treated to a hot dog lunch. The beautiful day was capped off by another outstanding Cemetery tour narrated by Carol Mattos.

Phaedra Budy returns for another load of mulch.

Volunteers made quick work of three large mulch piles.

John and Jack discuss the art of grilling the perfect hotdog.

Hotdogs topped with condiments galore...the perfect ending to a tough morning of work.

Photos by C. Tipton
In Memory of
Liz Budy

During labor Day Weekend 2014, we lost our outstanding President and dear friend, Liz Budy. Out of respect for her wishes no obituary will be featured in the Trumpeter. However, we think it is appropriate to highlight what the Historical Society was able to accomplish during her presidency.

During Liz's presidency the Klamath County Historical Society experienced a dramatic modernization and expansion. The Trumpeter was converted to a new format utilizing Microsoft Publisher, the standard for modern newsletters. Liz was proactive in choosing outstanding featured writers and topics for the Trumpeter. To cut down on costs, Liz utilized the internet and e-mail to an extent we had never seen before as an organization.

Liz's love for the Linkville Cemetery cannot be overstated. Working side by side with Carol Mattos, the cemetery underwent several restoration projects. Liz applied for and received grants to restore several headstones including the Patzke grave (balloon bomb victims), the unknown sleeper as well as many others. Liz spearheaded projects to memorialize the victims of the Houston Hotel fire with a headstone and she also oversaw the replacement of O.C. Applegate's headstone.

Probably the most dramatic impact of Liz's tenure was coordinating for one "big name" presentation per year. These included the premier of a PBS/OPB documentary on the Modoc War and the Dennis Jenkins presentation on the Paisley Caves.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all who made memorial contributions in Liz's honor. The funds will go to good use at the place Liz held near and dear to her heart, the Linkville Cemetery.
Memberships for 2015 are due!

Membership fees are due at the end of each year.

Individual $15.00
Supporting $30.00
Life member $125.00

Make checks payable to the Klamath County Historical Society.

Mail or drop off at
Klamath County Museum
1451 Main Street
Klamath Falls, OR 97601
Annual Bus Tour June 13th

Sign up now at the Klamath County Museum
$25 per person
Seats are limited, first come first served

Join us for a journey over the Hill to Great Meadow, beautiful Lake Creek, and Eagle Point. Learn the interesting history of Lake of the Woods and these fine communities. We will visit two museums, two covered bridges and the Butte Creek Mill.