Upcoming Meetings Schedule

**May 26:** How transportation transformed Basin Ag. Ryan Bartholomew, 7p.m.
**Jun 18:** Summer Bus Tour, Langell Valley
**July 24:** Linkville Cemetery Tour
**Sept 22:** Membership meeting, topic TBD

Museum Events

**History Fitness Hike:** May 21 "Algoma to Hagelstein"
**Heritage Days:** May 28 & 29, Fort Klamath
**Rockhounding outing:** July 9, 10 a.m.
**Museum Foundation Banquet,** October 6. Kami Horton from Oregon Public Broadcasting, speaker
**Modoc Bus Tour,** October 8, $25

Check the County Museum or Klamath County Historical Society websites for a list of events

In Memory of Liz Budy

We would like to thank everyone who made a memorial contribution to the Klamath County Historical Society in honor of our past president and dear friend Liz Budy. In total, $2850 was received.

During the past several months, we have discussed how the funds should be used to best honor Liz. Due to her passion for the Linkville Cemetery, we quickly decided a project at the cemetery would be a fitting tribute.

After discussing several potential projects, we, with help from Todd Kepple and city officials, decided on an interpretive sign at the entrance of the Cemetery. The sign will feature a brief history of the cemetery and a map of the cemetery highlighting some of the more notable graves. The map will be the same one that has been featured in the Linkville Cemetery brochure for the past several years.

Since early spring our secretary, Sailo Bailo has led the effort to make the project a reality. We are hoping to have the project done by late summer or early fall and unveil the sign at a ceremony.
Nestled between Upper Klamath Lake and Crater Lake lies some of the most beautiful country in the state, the Wood River valley. The majestic Cascade Mountains that border the valley feed the springs that supply the area with its crystal clear streams and creeks. Throughout the valley are lush fields of grass, dotted in the summer by thousands of head of cattle. It was in this valley that the Army established what was considered the most beautiful frontier Army Post, Fort Klamath, in 1863. Although the post closed in 1890, the valley was soon home to another Fort Klamath, a quiet community just off of the beaten path, that remains an important hub to the citizens of the valley.

Originally printed in Rachel Applegate-Goode’s “History of Klamath County.” 1941

The community of Fort Klamath, its history is that of the beautiful Wood River Valley of which it is the trading post and social center. Prior to 1873 some herds of stock, mostly sheep, were brought in for pasture during the summer season, but the first person to keep cattle in the valley year round was John Loosley, a native of England, who had come to Klamath Agency to install a flour mill in 1872…..In the early days to cattle could range over the whole valley.

In the 1880s the country began to be fenced and cattle business along conventional lines was followed until about 1917, when a new way of utilizing the lush natural pasture began to be adopted by the owners—a system known as “taking cattle on gain.” This means that the pasture is rented in the summer to owners of large beef herds, the animals being weighed upon entering and leaving and the rental paid in accordance with the number of pounds gained. By the early 1920s almost all locally owned stock had disappeared, the new system involving much less labor and risk to the pasture owner. As a side line, some dairy business has been carried on the Fort Klamath Cooperative Creamery being built on the Wood River three miles south of town in 1895. This afterward passed into private ownership and another cooperative creamery started in the village about 1911, opened and closed at intervals until 1926, when it finally closed. Another profitable development in recent years is the small seed factory—particularly Alsike clover. Fort Klamath has not benefitted largely by the lumber business. A small sawmill built at the head of the valley by Kingdon Brothers about 1900 and bought and moved to Annie Creek by Utter and Burns about 1909 was burned in 1927 and not rebuilt.

Perhaps the most colorful chapter in Fort Klamath history is that concerning the Crater Lake ski race (which deserves to be told at much greater length)—a race of 42 miles, the going trip up the precipitous mountain gaining 2000 feet, said to have been the longest ski course in the world and certainly one of the most picturesque, attracting to its competition the best performers in the northwest. The first race, in 1927, was sponsored by the Fort Klamath Community Club, the prime movers being Antone Castel and Linsy Sisemore. This later developed into the Crater Lake Ski Club, which included members throughout the county. The big race was held annually until 1938 and then discontinued in favor of a more varied program of winter sports in Crater Lake park.

Traffic jam in downtown Fort Klamath as the crowd gathers for the 1st annual Crater lake Ski race, 1927. Klamath County Museum photo
Wood River Valley Collage

Historical Fort Klamath barns, Klamath County Museum Photo

The crystal clear Wood River

Looking north toward the Crater Lake rim,
Bill Wilkinson photo

Fort Klamath School, built 1916

Sunset in the Wood River Valley,
Bill Wilkinson photo

Kimball park and the headwaters of the Wood River, Bill Wilkinson photo
In May 1922 voters of Klamath County authorized the formation of the Klamath County School District. The purpose being to oversee all of the elementary schools located outside of the Klamath Falls City School District. Prior to this time each community established a school board that managed the affairs of their own schools.

In 1911 and 1912 School District No. 7 in Fort Klamath was under the direction of the school board consisting of E.S. Turner, E. M. Leever, R.A. Moon and M.F. Loosley. All of these men were “old timers” in the Wood River Valley, except for Mr. Turner who was a recent arrival from California.

Mr. and Mrs. Turner had what was considered by some to be the advantage of a higher education in Southern California. The settlers in and near Fort Klamath looked for them for leadership in the management of the local school. However, the Turner’s background and education had not prepared them for the close association with the Native Americans, which they soon found to be part of life in Fort Klamath.

During this time, 1905 – 1912, there were several families of full or mixed blood Native Americans living in Fort Klamath while farming or ranching their allotments on land nearby.

There was some separation of the races, but there was a growing association in the business life of the community and many lasting friendships were forged between individuals who had common interests. All of the children attended the same school, and of course played together both at school and in town.

This was the way of life in this small community, at least until the Turner’s came onto the scene.

While the Turners were uncomfortable with the situation, they took no overt action to change the situation until a “crisis” occurred in the spring of 1912.

At that time one of the Native American boys appeared at school with a rash on his face. This was at about the same time the first telephone system was installed in the Wood River Valley. With the aid of the party line, gossip ran wild. The minor rash became more exaggerated with each telling and soon the rash became a case of venereal disease.

The school board declared the only solution was the immediate removal of all white children from any and all contact with the Native American children. A room in an old building in the business district of Fort Klamath was rented. One teacher was hired and all of the white children who had been attending Public School No. 7 were moved to that location. The result was very unsatisfactory, but the arrangement continued until the end of the school year in 1912.

During that summer, the school board continued to consider the problem. By the start of the school year in September a teacher had been hired to teach the Native American children in the one room school in town. Thus leaving the more spacious, better equipped building and grounds for the exclusive use of the white children.

It was generally agreed by the school board that this action would encourage the Native American families to send their children to the fine schools provided at the Klamath Agency. As a result a teacher for the Native American students was hired for only three months. As it turned out, Miss Hillie Carter, the special teacher, reported for duty every day for three months and never one had a pupil in attendance.
In accordance with their instructions from the school board, the three teachers in Public School No. 7, refused to allow any of the Native American children to attend. At that time there were about six Native American families living in Fort Klamath, with about 8 children affected by this decision. The parents made other arrangements for their children’s education. Some were sent to Reservation Boarding Schools, a few of the girls were sent to Medford to attend school at the Catholic Convent and the daughters of Billy Crawford and his wife were sent to Klamath Falls.

The members of the school board, and some other residents, thought that that was then end of the issue. But it was not as simple as that. On September 24, 1912 William Crawford filed a petition in the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon in Klamath County, naming the school board and its members as defendants. William Crawford, a white man, and his wife Eliza Barclay Crawford, a Klamath, had five children ranging from 6 to 18. The children named in the lawsuit were Juanita Crawford, Naoma Crawford and Rosetta Crawford.

On September 27, 1912 Judge Henry Benson issued an order that the actions of the school board be immediately countermanded and that they take no further actions to deny any children admittance in the established school. The legal wrangling went on an extended period of time, eventually being heard in the Oregon Supreme Court. On December 30, 1913 a decision was made in favor of William Crawford.

On May 18, 1914, after two years, Judge Benson issued an order that the Crawford children be re-admitted to the Fort Klamath School No. 7, with no action to be taken against the children by the school.

The Willowbrook School was established at about the same time as this contention was going on. It was located 2 ½ miles west of Fort Klamath at the intersection of Nicholson and Hackler Roads.

The school was in operation from 1912 to 1916. Bernadine Hannon was the first teacher. Theresa Beckett, Anna Butler Loosley, Willeska Roberts Loosley were to follow with Mattie Foster being the last.

It has been said that the school was established to be more convenient for some of the children from area ranches. In reality, Willowbrook was much farther than Fort Klamath School No.7. Some of the families whose children attended Willowbrook School were: Turner, Copeland, Nicholson, Pomeroy, Briscoe, Gordon, Ferguson and Hartley. The empty school building stood for many years until it collapsed under a heavy snow load.

Sources:
Race Segregation in the Fort Klamath Schools by Elizabeth Sisemore
Crawford vs. School Board et al, Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Klamath County – Equity 405
90 years of Schools by Buena Stone
Conversation with Bill Nicholson, March 2016
First Klamath Falls Salute Days—Thursday, Friday and Saturday—Pay Tribute To Fort Klamath
The Last of the Fort Klamath Cattle Drives

By William Nicholson

Stewart and Ted Nicholson started wintering their cattle in the "bald hills" around Paskenta in the late 1930's. Paskenta is located approximately 35 miles south and west of Red Bluff, California.

The cattle were shipped by rail from Chiloquin which is 13 miles from Fort Klamath. They were driven or trailed from Fort Klamath starting at daybreak and sometime in the afternoon loaded on to rail cars in Chiloquin. Usually there would be around 500 head of cattle.

The train trip to Red Bluff took somewhere between 12 and 18 hours which meant that the cattle stayed overnight on the train and were fed and watered in the corrals at Red Bluff. Early the following morning the cattle drive started for Paskenta. This trip took 2 days with an overnight stop at the Tony Laurence Ranch.

This was the mode of transportation for cattle until the early 1950's when the cattle trucks came into the picture. Today the trip takes 5 to 6 hours, a far cry from the 3 days it took from prior years.

I have many memories of the cattle drives, most are good, some bad. Many times they took place in bad weather conditions, since it was usually late fall or early spring when we started them. I can remember being so cold I thought my fingers and toes would fall off. Sometimes the steam from the animals formed a large cloud over them. When possible we would get off the horses and walk, which seemed to help some.

In those days we didn't have the modern winter clothing we have these days. Thermal wear and Gore-Tex was unheard of. One thing that helped a lot, even though somewhat unorthodox, was women's nylon hose. We would cut sections off and slip it over our head and ears. This along with a felt hat worked well.

Driving cattle down the highway creates a lot of problems for cowboys and motorists alike. Neither understands the other. The proper procedure for an auto approaching a bunch of cattle is to drive slowly and quietly as possible right into the herd. In this manner chances are good that the animals will continue in the same direction without problems. Unfortunately many times this is not the case. Some motorists felt it necessary to stop some distance from the cattle, sometimes with the wife or kids jumping out of the car to take pictures. Others approached honking their horn or other unnecessary noise. Cattle, being out of their environment and quite nervous at best, wouldn't understand all the commotion and turn back. This caused them to mill around and sometimes break out.

The lateral distractions while driving cattle were equally bad. Take for instance, open residential driveways that animals always seem to think is a way to escape. Then we had the barking dogs running out to protect their area, or the housewife outside waving a dish towel trying to keep the cattle from trampling her flower bed. There were many break-outs or "wrecks" as we used to call them in situations like this. On one occasion as we were leaving Red Bluff, a horned cow darted into a residence with a barking dog in hot pursuit. As she came out from the backside, she had a piece of torn sheet hanging on her horn, obviously from an encounter with a clothesline. The lady of the house was not happy.

There used to be a cattle trail that started at the Klamath Indian Agency heading south and east tying into the Chiloquin road. This trail was a shortcut which cut off a few miles of the trip. If conditions were dry, this section of the drive was as miserable as any I can remember. The pumice dust was so bad that many times we couldn't see the cattle we were driving.
The real challenge was when we would finally arrive at the outskirts of Chiloquin. We would stop the cattle there to prepare for the final portion of the trip. Two major obstacles faced us at that point, the Williamson River and the railroad, both of which we must cross. Of course driving cattle through the center of town wasn’t any bed of roses either. Anyway, one rider would gallop his horse down to the railroad depot to check on trains that might be coming through. Remember this was during World War II and this section of the railroad was one of the busiest in the United States. It was the major north-south road on the Pacific Coast. The stationmaster used telegraph as their means of communication in those days. After we received clearance from the stationmaster to come in, we would start the cattle at a fast pace and this is where the fun started.

Chiloquin has a population of approximately 1,000 and its dog population nearly the same. It seemed that all of the dogs would gather to welcome us to town. Beyond this, we had a narrow bridge to cross the river, then the railroad tracks, a sharp turn left past a service station, up the hill past the railroad depot to the corrals. There were so many obstacles that we felt very fortunate if we arrived at the corrals with all the cattle and cowboys on the first try. On occasion, some cattle disappeared. Probably ended up in somebody’s locker.

Sometimes our horses were loaded on the railroad cars for the trip south, but in most cases we hauled them in a stock truck. While the cattle were in transit we would prepare for and make the trip south. Sometimes the whole family would move for the winter at this time. The journey was a lot different in those days. There wasn’t a freeway and in the earlier days, Shasta Lake and Dam were not in existence. The road was narrow with many curves. As mentioned before, this was the time the nation was at war and we had a nationally mandated speed limit of 35 mph. The reason was that rubber and fuel were strictly rationed. Anyway, the trip took considerably longer than it does today.

We would stay at the Tremont Hotel in Red Bluff waiting for the cattle to arrive. After the cattle were unloaded, fed and watered, we prepared for the long drive to Paskenta which would begin early the next morning. There were many obstacles and distractions we had to face leaving Red Bluff as the one mentioned above. Our route took us out the Red Bank Road through a residential section, across some narrow bridges, poor road fences and open driveways. Of course we had the dogs, kids and cars to contend with also.

After leaving the populated area, the drive became long and uneventful. We traveled across long stretches of rolling terrain with little to keep our mind on what we were doing.

Finally after 3 to 4 days, we arrive at our destination. The work is not done yet for the cattle have to be sorted to different fields and etc., but the stress and anxiety of the trip was over and the cattle and cowboys enjoyed a well deserved rest and wait for the return trip.

A few years ago, in an act of vandalism, a flagpole was stolen from the Landrum Wayside. This winter, KCHS member and former museum Manager, Judith Hassan, spearheaded a campaign to replace the stolen pole. Judith’s hard work has paid off. A grant from the Klamath County Cultural Coalition, private donations and funds from the museum, Mills School and KCHS have been gathered to make this replacement project a reality. Once the pole is in place, a dedication ceremony will be held. Date and time to be determined. Excellent work Judith!
April 23: We had another great turn-out this year for the clean-up. Special thanks to the City Parks Dept. and the LDS church for joining us on this important annual project.

A new authorized feature to clean-up day, power tools.

Photos by C. Tipton

Attacking the mulch mound, an annual tradition

The traditional post-event hot dog lunch
KCHS Officers
President: Ryan Bartholomew
Vice President: Bill Lewis
Secretary: Sally Bailo
Treasurer: Avis Kielsmeier
Board members:
Phyllis Goebel
Jack Inman
Carol Mattos
Jackie Bonner
Bill Anderson
Sue Fortune, Past President

Memberships for 2016 are due!

Mem**bership 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