Bill Lewis Editor: We are living in a vastly different time. We have heard that way too much in the last several weeks.

For some of us who are retired, it is almost a non-event. Our retirement checks keep coming in and shopping has been made much easier by ordering on-line from the local stores.

But for way too many people, it is not very easy at all. It is good to see the programs that are making sure that school children and adults are getting food. Even though there is a feeling of absolute helplessness, it is good to support those programs. It restores a little bit of our control.

Though we would love to have this all end, the medical community is telling us that it is not over. History shows us that is true. It is important to protect yourself and others. Do wear a mask when out in public and practice social distancing.

You are all in our thoughts and prayers. The Trumpeter Staff hopes that you stay healthy and safe.

Todd Kepple—Museum Manager

The Klamath County Museum, like all museums around the country, is learning to do business a new way as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. With our doors closed and no opportunity to host programs as we are accustomed to, we experimented with doing some live programs through our Facebook page.

While not professional programs by any means, we still found our Facebook videos had a following roughly equal to what we might have expected to turn out for a regular Museum or Historical Society program. We produced four videos on Facebook Live, and they can all be viewed on the Museum’s YouTube channel. There’s one on logging and lumbering, two on history of local schools, and one on the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918.

Continued

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This summer the Museum will resume its regular program of walks, hikes or drives on Saturdays, though participation is strictly limited due to restrictions on group sizes. Watch the Herald and News for announcements of these events.

All of the programs we had planned for the spring will presumably take place at some point, including our History Fitness Hike in the Klamath River Canyon.

Feel free to contact the Museum by phone at any time if you have questions. Our front desk is staffed during our regular business hours, which are 9-5 Tuesday through Saturday.

Ron Loveness’s Historic Tours of Klamath Falls

Last summer my wife and I and our friend Adrienne summoned all our collective courage and went on Ron Loveness’ open car tour of Klamath Falls. We went in a bright orange Volkswagen “Thing”.

The tour was fun, exciting and very educational. Mary Ann and I have lived in Klamath Falls since 1965, and Ron took us to places we have never been and told us so many things we didn’t know.

Ron is a great guide mostly because of his love of history and his love of sharing it with other people. He is a fountain of information. But this is what he says: “History, as you know, produces lot of conflicting reports and stories. I’ve got several books, many with differing accounts, so I will not intentionally mislead you, but I will not swear in court that what I am telling you is the truth.”

The tour of the wilds of Klamath Falls begins with Ron’s story about his 1974 Volkswagen “Thing”. He calls it his “Mexican Porsche” as it was built in Mexico, and the VW was designed by Ferdinand Porsche prior to WWII. It has a rear air-cooled engine like other early Volkswagens, and models of it were used by the Germans in World War II. The “Thing” is the actual name that Volkswagen gave this model for sale in the U.S. in 1973 and ’74.

At the beginning of each tour, Ron takes a picture of his passengers in safari helmets to get in the spirit of the trek. These authentic safari hats came from India by way of Disneyland.

After that picture, when the tour was about to start, Mary Ann and I realized we had left our hats in the car. Ron let us wear two of his sun hats.
Thank goodness they had chin straps, so they stayed on our heads in the open air touring car.

Ron Loveness comes from a family of lumbermen. His family moved to Malin in 1949. Ron finished high school there and went on to the University of Oregon. He was the business manager for the family lumbering operations. He later was special projects manager for Modoc Lumber Company in Klamath Falls.

Ron bought the VW Thing in 1976 so his sons could participate in after school activities. They hated it—lousy heater and little power. Other farm boys had 4X4 pickups with powerful V8 motors while the VW Thing couldn’t even spin its tires in a gravel parking lot.

Because his sons only used the car as a last resort, Ron put it in storage. Later he had a great idea of using it for guided tours of Klamath Falls to show off the town. Lucky for us!

Ron is involved in preserving the history of this region of the country. He has donated tours to be auctioned by local non-profits for their fundraisers. He is a lifetime member of the Klamath Historical Society, belongs to the Shaw Historical Library and other local organizations. He offers tours to all Historical Society volunteers. So far his register contains over 250 names accumulated over the past 25 years of touring.

Ron is on the Trumpeter Staff and is also a frequent contributor to this newsletter.

If you are interested in taking Ron’s Tour, you can call him at: 541 591-0686

Peter Burnett by Ron Loveness

Considering that Peter Burnett pioneered the early development of both Oregon and California, relatively little was written about him outside of his own writings. In 2018 the Oregon State University Press published THE TROUBLED LIFE OF PETER BURNETT, by R. Gregory Nokes of West Linn, Oregon. This is the first full-length biography of this complicated character.

Gary K. Hart, former California State senator and California Secretary of Education commented,
“We know so much about our eighteenth-century East Coast founding fathers and yet know so little about our nineteenth-century Pacific Coast founders. R. Gregory Nokes helps fill this void with a fascinating book about Peter Burnett, an early Oregon pioneer emigrant and California’s first governor.”

Burnett was described as having an impressive appearance, comparable to Paul Newman. He was very articulate and persuasive but these attributes did not always translate into common sense. He was humorless, egotistical, defensive to a fault and hampered by the inability to work with others. He was the third of eight children in a family of modest means.

He had little formal education but was intelligent and well read. Burnett proved to be a quick study, teaching himself law. In 1828 at age 21 he married Harriet Rogers who was then 16, and they eventually had six children.

In 1843 when Burnett was 36 he helped organize the first major emigrant wagon train to head for Oregon. This quest for free land became known as the Great Migration of 1843. It consisted of 130 wagons and 900 people. He was elected captain after a rousing speech as a “smooth tongued advocate” for what the emigrants would accomplish in Oregon. He resigned seven days later, which was a common trait most of his life.

This wagon train included Lindsay, Jesse and Charles Applegate as well as Markus Whitman who was making his third trip to Oregon. The route would become known as the Oregon Trail and was the first to take wagons as far west as the Columbia River.

Burnett brought two slaves, one, a teenage girl, drowned at the Cascades while filling a bucket of water.

Lindsay and Jesse Applegate each lost a son due to drowning while rafting down the Columbia. This was reportedly a reason the Applegates later blazed the South Emigrant trail into Oregon in order to avoid the treacherous Columbia River.

Burnett left his wife and children at The Dalles and traveled on to Fort Vancouver, returning with John Fremont to retrieve them.
In 1844 Burnett was elected to the nine-member Legislative Committee, the first elected legislature of the Oregon Territory. He became intimate friends with fur trader John McLoughlin of the Hudson’s Bay Company. Jesse Applegate was also in the first Oregon Legislature.

Property tax legislation included Burnett’s enforcement policy: If you did not pay your property tax, you partially lost civil rights and were barred from filing lawsuits in court.

Burnett believed Oregon should be a free state, so to discourage slavery his committee had an exclusion law for Negroes. Burnett was also against Chinese citizenship, but not Indians, as many in the Northwest had married Europeans.

Burnett’s exclusion law had a companion “lash law” banning Negroes from settling in Oregon but allowed Negroes who were already in the state to remain. To discourage them from staying, they had to submit to a lashing of not less than 29 nor more than 39 lashes every six months.

True to form, Burnett resigned from the Legislative Committee after two months and in 1845 was elected the first Supreme Court Judge of the Oregon Territory.

Jesse Applegate’s committee expunged Burnett’s “lash law” provision in 1845.

Oregon was the only state admitted to the Union with an exclusion clause in its constitution. Jesse Applegate didn’t sign the Oregon Constitution, objecting to its exclusion clause and other discriminatory provisions. The clause was not removed until 1926.

Burnett wrote a 38-page letter in response to a critical single page letter from his nemesis, Oregon Historian and fellow Territorial Legislator Committee member, William H. Gray. Jesse Applegate also sarcastically criticized Burnett in a letter to his brother, Lindsay, in 1846.

Gold was discovered in California on January 21, 1948, a week before Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadeloupe Hidalgo, surrendering its claim to California and much of the southwest. The treaty was signed near Mexico City and neither side was aware of the gold discovery.

Oregonians were among the first people outside of California to learn of the discovery. News was leaked by Captain Newell of the sailing vessel Honolulu which had stopped at Fort Vancouver the following July to purchase picks and shovels, supposedly for coal miners. But before weighing anchor, Newell revealed they were actually for gold miners.

The response was immediate … two thirds of the able-bodied Oregon men, including Peter Burnett, soon headed for the gold fields.
Twelve of the twenty two members of the new 1848 Territorial Legislature were in this exodus.

Lacking a quorum, the Legislature was unable to convene until the next year. The *Oregon Spectator* suspended publication for a month because its printer joined the exodus.

Peter Burnett wasn’t content to load his belongings on a mule and plod southward to California over a pack trail. It took Peter just eight days to recruit 150 travelers with 46 wagons and ox teams.

He took as his guide the veteran fur trapper Thomas McKay, son of John McLoughlin’s wife, Marguerite. Marguerite was the daughter of an aboriginal and was the widow of Alexander McKay.

The Burnett party was the first to successfully take wagons all the way from Oregon to California. Burnett took two wagons with ox teams, two horses and six months of provisions. He also carried enough lumber to build a rocker for placer mining.

The Burnett party brought tools to rebuild difficult portions of the Applegate Trail, including the steep and rugged section in the Umpqua Canyon. Burnett followed the Applegate Trail to a point southwest of present day Malin, Oregon, where it came from the east into the Tule Lake Basin, near what later became known as Bloody Point. *Note*: this occurred before The Modoc War, before California and Oregon became states and before the Civil War.

The Burnett party broke a new trail for about 50 miles to where the Pit River enters Big Valley, northeast of present-day Lookout, California. There they unexpectedly encountered “to our utter surprise and astonishment” an unknown trail – the Lassen Cutoff – which they followed for the next 150 miles.

Danish-born Peter Lassen was another of the restless adventurers so common in early California. His trail led to his Mexican land grant ranch in Tehama County in which he’d hoped to develop a city.

The Burnett party, moving at a faster pace, caught up with Peter Lassen near Mt. Lassen. By that time, half of Lassen’s wagons had been abandoned and the rest converted to carts to more easily maneuver through the heavy timber.

The Burnett wagons had traveled 500 miles in a little more than a month.

An amazing feat considering that the Applegate Trail was laid out to enter Oregon from the east. Very few emigrants previously were able to get their wagons through the Umpqua Canyon.

There were several “wagon slides” on the Green Springs portion where emigrants had to empty their wagons and lower their wagons with ropes.
Subsequently, early stage lines and freighters still had to unload their wagons and pack goods up those slides to travel east, then double-team empty wagons to ascend the grades.

True to his normal behavior, Burnett soon left his marginally profitable mining claim in December, 1848, intending to set up a law practice in San Francisco. Instead, Burnett stopped a Sutter’s Fort and established a law office, sharing space in the fort with a dentist, an old friend, Dr. William Carpenter.

Sutter’s son John August Sutter, approached Burnett to help him handle finances for the Sutters, who were deeply in debt. The elder Sutter had become a Mexican citizen and had acquired land grants from two Mexican governors. He developed them on credit and then foolishly bought Fort Ross from the Russians for $19,000, to be paid with wheat. Sutter’s crops had poor yields and no payments were made for 3 years.

Bancroft’s “History of California” stated that Sutter “would perhaps have bought anything at any price if it could be obtained on credit.” Others have reported that Sutter was very benevolent to miners and neighbors, but lacked business sense. He mostly missed out selling supplies for profit during the gold rush.

Burnett made his first fortune helping the Sutters, faring better than his clients. He then moved on and was appointed governor of the California Territory.

He became the first elected governor only to resign nine weeks after California was admitted to the Union.

His rambling 12,000 word second annual address to the legislature had included “necessity and propriety of excluding free persons of color from the state.” He argued that a “war of extermination” with Indians was inevitable if blacks were allowed in the state.

He called for the temporary (until prisons were constructed) death penalty for conviction of robbery and major property crimes. Executions would save money. Lives of persons already convicted would not be spared. The Legislature imposed no such penalty.

In a letter to brother George Burnett, a modest farmer in Oregon, Peter wrote, “I’ve fancied myself to be rich, and the balance of my life, I have known myself to be poor, and I hardly know now which is happier of the two, but if there was any difference if was in favor of the poverty.”

Looking back in his autobiography on his time as governor he found no fault in his leadership. But, unintentionally, he underscored a major weakness as he bragged, he had neither sought nor taken advice from others. “I do not follow the opinions of others unless they agree with my own….”

In 1857 Burnett was elected to fill a vacancy in the California Supreme Court.
He retired from public life a year later at age 54, devoting the next several years to reading and writing several books. In 1861 he published “The American Theory of Government,” a compilation of radical, bizarre and patent unworkable ideas. He believed states had too many rights and the Feds too little power. Changes he urged included the president having the power to appoint state governors at will, subject to senate approval. Senators should be elected for life.

Burnett came out of retirement in 1863 to write bylaws for a San Francisco bank and soon became the bank’s president. He wrote, “the discipline in a bank must be as rigid as that in an army.” According to a history of California banking, Burnett became one of the prominent bankers of San Francisco during the 1860s and 1870s. Burnett retired in 1880, a year after his wife, Harriet, died. Burnett died in 1895 at age 88 hampered by palsy near the end, so he could no longer write.

I became intrigued by Peter Burnell when the Modoc National Forest placed large signs near the ends of the Burnett Cutoff. (See photos.)

In 2015 The California Trail National Historic Trail System and Trails West published A GUIDE TO THE LASSEN TRAIL and BURNETT CUTOFF.

There are 13 railroad iron markers set along the trail which more or less follow California Highway 139 and Modoc County Road 95, known as “Lookout Road” and a portion of little used Modoc County Road 96. Each iron rail describes the conditions encountered by the group as they traveled. Marker BC-2 near Copic Bay states, “…. It being late in the season, the water in the lake was very low, muddy and almost putrid.”

Burnett’s route was later used by J. Frank Adams in 1903 to transport a dredge from McArthur, California, via horse-drawn wagons to Lower Klamath Lake. Even later, this route, though not paved, became the first “Dallas-California Highway” that originally traveled through Malin.
ODELL LAKE

Located in the northwest corner of Klamath County is Odell Lake. This large lake has Highway 58, the Willamette Pass, on the north side and the Union Pacific Railroad on the south side. This fact provides wonderful views of the lake either by car or by train.

The lake was named after William Holman Odell by Byron Pengra in 1865. I am sure the lake had several other names given by both Native American and early pioneers.

William Odell was a pioneer from Indiana and was involved in surveying an early wagon road between Boise, Idaho, and Eugene, Oregon. He was appointed to the post of Oregon Surveyor General in 1871. Byron Pengra was the superintendent of construction on the Oregon Central Military Road and the Surveyor General of Oregon from 1862 to 1871.

The lake is in a basin formed by a glacier. That glacier flowed southeast from the crest of the Cascade summit. The resulting “terminal moraine” formed the southeast end of the basin. Terminal moraine is the rocks and gravel pushed by the ice as the glacier moved.

There is no dam; it is a natural lake fed by Trapper Creek. The outflow from the lake in on the southern end, and it is Odell Creek. Odell Creek flows from Odell Lake to Davis Lake.

Odell Lake covers 3,582 acres. It has 13.3 miles of shoreline. It is six miles long and 1.5 miles wide. Its deepest depth is 282 feet and the average depth is 132 feet.

The surface elevation of the lake is 4,787 feet. The summit of the Willamette Pass is 5,128 feet. This summit is also known as the Pengra Pass.

There are several campgrounds around the lake and two lodges.

The Odell Lake Lodge in the southeast end of the lake was once a station for the Southern Pacific Railroad. The place was also known as the Odell Lake Resort at that time. Today is it the Odell Lake Lodge. This historical lodge building was constructed in 1903.
On the northwest end of the lake is the Shelter Cove Resort and Marina. Shelter Cove has a store and restaurant and, of course, several docks and a boat ramp. It is also a stop on the Pacific Crest Trail. Shelter Cove has a post office, showers and a campground. This allows hikers to get supplies, get clean and get some rest.

Odell Lake is renowned for its fishing. There are rainbow trout, sockeye salmon, lake trout, bull trout and mountain whitefish. But be warned: heavy duty fishing equipment is required. You never know what is going to grab your hook, an 8-inch rainbow or a 40-pound lake trout. The largest fish caught in Odell Lake was a 40 lb. 8 oz. mackinaw (lake trout) in 1985. The fish was 45.5 inches long.

Whether you are fishing, camping or just picnicking, Odell Lake is one the most beautiful spots in Oregon for recreation.

**Willamette Pass Ski Resort**

The Willamette Pass Ski area was founded in 1941 when a special use permit was issued by the federal government for establishing a winter recreation area. That area straddles the Lane and Klamath counties line.

The first owner/developers were Roy and Edra Temple. They built the first lodge and installed some rope tows on Eagle Peak.

In 1949 George Korn purchased the ski area and installed a Poma ski lift that was used into the 1970s. George Korn owned and operated the ski area for 25 years. When he sold, it was purchased by groups of investors.

These investment groups varied until 1982 when the area was purchased by the Wiper family. The family invested a great deal in upgrading the ski area. New ski lifts were installed including the Twilight triple chair lift. The new lodge was built in 1983. In the following years additional lifts were added including the first high speed lift in the state of Oregon. It was the first area in Oregon to have a snow making system. Today the area has a total of six winter lifts. They serve an area of 555 acres which has a vertical drop of 1,563 feet.

In 1993 the Willamette Ski Resort hosted the Subaru U.S. Speed Skiing Championships. It was held on the RTS, known as one of the steepest ski runs in the U.S. (52 degrees at the steepest). Skiers reached speeds of 116.56 miles per hour. Yes, there were injuries and some of those skiers were flown to the hospital by helicopter.
The resort is a year-round destination with two seasons: winter and summer. In addition to skiing, the winter season offers snowboarding, a groomed Nordic ski trail and inner tubing.

In the summer season the area is open for hiking, sightseeing, disc golf, geocaching, and downhill mountain biking. In the summer, the Eagle Peak Accelerator is converted into a 6-person gondola for sightseeing.

On motion, the following resolution was adopted: Resolved that we are determined to get up a rousing celebration at Linkville, and that we extend a hearty invitation to everybody to participate. On motion, the secretary was instructed to forward the proceedings to the Times and Sentinel with the request to publish them. On motion, adjourned, sine die.

George Nurse, Chairman; O.C. Applegate, Secretary

July 27, 1872. The Fourth at Linkville, Linkville, July 5th, Editor the Times: The glorious anniversary of American liberty, an occasion that gladdens and animates and unites all American hearts has been aroused again and in the Lake country met with a rousing reception.

The Linkville people to their honor made all necessary preparations and as the hour for the celebration exercises drew near a new evergreen grove, improvised for the occasion might have been seen waving by the river's side. Rows of green firs shaded the streets of the picturesque little village on every side.

The new hall of Angle and Stevenson which had risen as if by magic, looked down the street, flags waved, wagons freighted with people, good things for the table, came in from all directions and the fatted calf killed that all might make merry, baked and blistered in the barbecue. At 11 o'clock a.m. the procession was formed in town under the direction of the marshal of the day, J.D. Applegate and his aids, N.D. Stevenson and William Forsythe and marched to the grove.
Never before since those days when thousands of red men set their snares in the Cascade mountains and rode our beautiful streams in their swift canoes, has so long a procession wound its way along the ever-raging floods of Link River. Arriving at the grove, Dr. C.M. Sartelle of Salem read the grand old Declaration in a way to increase our admiration for those brave old heroes who planted the banyan tree of our common country so deep in the American soil that the storms of aristocracy and oppression forever howl and blow around it in vain.

Mr. O.C. Applegate, the orator of this day, then followed with an able and beautiful oration which was received as it richly deserved to be with enthusiastic applause, after which the sumptuous repast spread beneath the evergreens was served and lemonade cooled with ice from the Cascades flowed freely around the board.

The afternoon was spent in promenading, boat riding, etc., and in preparing for the ball which commenced rolling the same evening and continued until old Sol looked over the mountain's top the next morning.

Throughout the day and night everything was orderly and systematic. The display of lovely damsels at the ball would have done credit to a larger and older place. The supper at Uncle George Nurse’s hotel did honor to himself and his house. The current of good humor flowed like our own river both day and night and everybody voted the first Fourth of July celebration at Linkville a decided success.

A.H.M.

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2019 KCHS Officers
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klamathcountyhistoricalsociety.org
Bill Lewis—Webmaster
Email the Society at:  
BillLewis62@Hotmail.com (Webmaster)

Museum Happenings
Check the Midge for museum details and a list of other cultural happening in the community. Get on the list by sending your email to midge@co.klamath.or.us

Did you know?—The Trumpeters and Echoes are now online and can be viewed at:
http://klamathcountyhistoricalsociety.org

It is time to renew your Membership
Membership fees are due at the end of each year.
Individual $15.00
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Life Member $125.00
Make checks payable to the Klamath County Historical Society
Mail to or drop off at the Klamath County Museum
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