

Albany Regional Museum's The Albany Old Times

EDITION II

DECEMBER 1989

MUSEUM ROOTS

The Albany Regional Museum was founded in 1980 by citizens who felt that it was important to develop a museum in Albany to care for and exhibit artifacts and keep history alive for future generations. It is a non-profit institution incorporated by the State of Oregon to acquire, document, preserve and interpret materials that illustrate the history and development of Albany, Oregon and those areas within its sphere of influence. The city government also felt that it was important and gave the museum the use of the basement of the downtown library for display and storage of artifacts.

Since that time volunteers have worked to improve the basement facility (stripping wood, painting walls, creating offices and a locked storage area, repainting floors, putting in a security gate, making displays, etc.) and make it a safe place for donated items.

Our next exhibit will open in the Spring of 1990, after a "Sneak Preview" for the Christmas tour, December 10, 1989. It will feature Albany in the Victorian Era and will re-create scenes of downtown Albany as it looked in the 1880-90's. Several facets of Victorian life will be featured including: a general store, an office, a parlor, clothes, transportation, and business. We will also display photographs and a time-line of the period. In addition, we will have a smaller exhibit in our "Rotary Room" that will feature the native Americans and pioneers.

THE VICTORIAN EXHIBIT WILL INCLUDE A DISPLAY ON PIONEER ALBANY AND THE NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE OF THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY. THE MUSEUM WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE THE LOAN OF ARTIFACTS REFLECTING THIS PERIOD OF OUR HISTORY.

For thousands of years the Indians of the Willamette Valley adapted their lives to the environment. Each band had enough

land to give its people a comfortable living with plenty of food. The bands north of the falls mostly used salmon for food, while south of the falls roots were most common. They also ate meat, trout and other small fish, and berries.

These people must have had a pleasant social life. Bands visited each other, especially in the winter. They played games, gambled on the outcome, and sat around the fire telling stories about their traditions. Under usual weather conditions, they had a pleasant and comfortable life. Their traditions. They were very skillful in making stone, bone and wooden tools, and beautiful baskets. They also developed several ingenious ways of hunting deer and elk and of trapping fish.

The Indians of the Willamette Valley, known as the Kalapuya, were divided into bands. They were loosely organized and had a head man, but had no formal chief as did many others tribes. The head man was the richest member of the band but was not allowed to tell anyone what to do. The band consisted of several families much like our extended families

The bands in the valley lived peacefully together even though their languages were different. Chinook tribes lived in the Northern end of the valley, below the falls, (at what is now Oregon City) and the Kalapuya in the Southern part, above the falls. Although their cultures were different, they were friendly and often inter-married.

When European settlers arrived in the 19th century, disease and other hardships brought great changes to the Kalapuyan way of life. Nevertheless, there are still Native people in Oregon who are of Kalapuyan descent, and who remember their great traditions.

THE ABOVE INFORMATION ON THE KALAPUYA INDIANS IS TAKEN FROM "INDIAN LIFE IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY" BY FRANCES CUSHING HALL.

Board Members of the Albany Regional Museum

Gerald Brenneman
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40'S EXHIBIT A SUCCESS

Did you see our excellent exhibit, "Albany in the 1940's"? Several thousand people did during its existence. Many of those persons were ex-servicemen who visited the "Camp Adair" room and relived their experience while in the military near Albany. Several of them donated their medals, photos, and other memorabilia from their time in the military to the museum.

Written lessons about the 1940's exhibit were created for high school students to learn more about Albany in the 1940's. Approximately 100 students from West Albany High School looked for answers to questions found in the various displays of the exhibit. The students found this an exciting and interesting way of learning history. Plans will be made to do the same with our next exhibit but to include materials for all grade levels.

We had a busy summer with the 1940's exhibit with approximately 600 visitors, two-thirds of them from out of town! Represented were 12 different states and 3 foreign countries, Japan, Canada, and France.

SHARE FAMILY HISTORY

Are you a descendent of a long time Albany family? Do you have mementoes, photos, artifacts, and historical items from their past which would be of interest to Museum viewers? Would you loan the Albany Regional Museum these items for a period of three months? The museum will provide a special case to display them. Be the first Albany family to share your special mementoes with the community. Contact Kristen Shuttpelez 926-8485, Gerald Brenneman 926-2547 evenings, or Roz Keecey at 926-1517 during the day.

NEWS IN THE 1870's, 80's, & 90's

Cows On The Loose

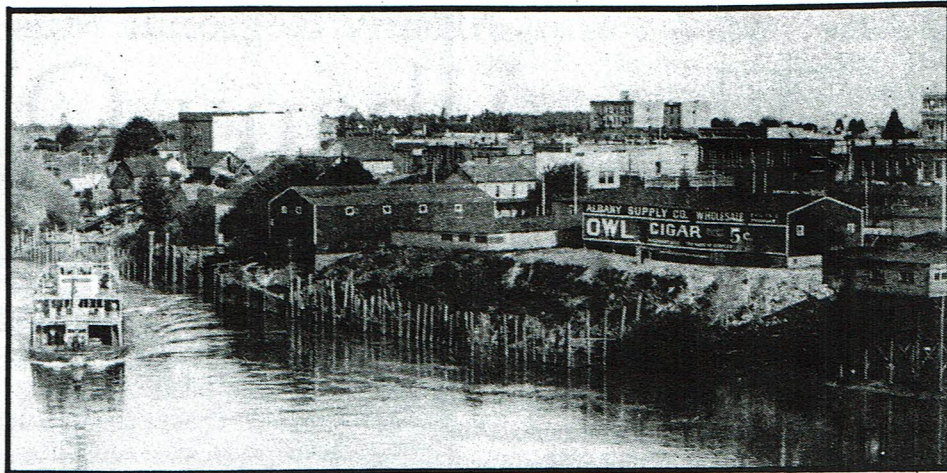
The City of Albany Ordinances for the year 1890 were strict, even for their time. Neither horses, nor mules or donkeys could run at large, and they could not be tied to awning posts or shade trees. Cows were not included, however, and Frank Redfield, a local grocer, proclaimed at the time that his pet peeve was cows wondering across the street to sample the fresh produce he had displayed in front of his store. Urging reform of the law to include cows, he protested that he had even seen them with their front legs in the bed of a farm wagon parked out in front of the store, which contained hay or vegetables. Not only that, the law prohibited putting bells on cows or any animals in the city limits. Animals caused all sorts of problems. The ordinance that prohibited manure downtown was quite specific. Although stable owners were allowed to build a small house or boxes next to the stable to store the manure in there was the warning--"such a person must remove the manure from such box before the same becomes so full as that it will fall therefrom into the alley".

Shingle Social

In 1877, the Will Fortmiller's made the society column when they held a "Shingle Social" in their home. That meant the "eatables" were served on sweet-scented cedar shingles, much like we would use paper plates today. Or if none of these appealed to you, you might stop in at the little shop on First street called the Ice Cream and Oyster Shop. According to Mary Bates, "My Uncle Franz owned the Ice Cream and Oyster place, a confectionery really. Out back you could get oysters, and they had a horse hitched to a churn making the ice cream. He walked in a circle (sort of one horse power), and after a while they turned him around and he walked the other way until the ice cream was made. That was about 1890".

Surrey's

Surreys were a fancy way to travel to the city in the 1880's. Whether you choose the word surrey or bus, the vehicle was a horse-drawn pleasure carriage seating as many as 12. According to Mary Bates, surreys became important to the hotel trade.



WILLAMETTE WATERFRONT 1916

"Everyone was competing for the people who came in on the trains to come and stay at their hotels. My grandmother decided she had to have something special. She always bought her milk, so she got a cow and kept it down the road a ways in a pasture, and then she had this box, and she took all the money she would have spent on milk, and saved it till she got enough to buy a surrey. She wanted to have the fanciest rig in town because she knew people would get on it because they thought that it would take them to the best hotel."

An interesting incident that occurred in 1877 was a collision between the surreys from the Russ House and the Revere Hotel on their way back from the Southern Pacific depot. A Mrs. John Rogers, who was crossing the street at the time, was hit by the surrey from the Revere House and later died from the injuries.

Philadorian Society Debates...

In 1890, the Philadorian Society was debating such important questions as: Resolved: The press has done more toward elevating the morals of mankind than the pulpit. Resolved: Man descended from the ape. It was decided that the pulpit was most important and that the apes were still in the jungle and not your next-door neighbor.

High Bikes

In 1887 high bicycles were in mode, one in Albany being reported as "56 inches skyward", the highest in the state. On the Fourth of July, a bicycle tournament was held for all high bicycles at the track in front of the court house. Four times around equaled on mile. The race was won by Tom Overman in a record time of four minutes forty seconds.

Theatre in Albany

Before the appearance of the Chatauqua, there were few dramatic performances in Albany. Albany was often passed by, or as one source says, "received the absent treatment" from travelling troupes. However, in 1889, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was presented in the "casual upstairs hall"... in its unabridged version, which apparently caused quite a stir. In 1893, "King of the Opium Ring", and "Lady Audley's Secret Lover", were presented. Traveling troupes did not care for the informal theatre accommodations here. (Albany built an opera house in 1890, but burned down six years later.) and within a few short years drama was reduced basically to the annual Dr. Hamlin's Wizard Oil Show, and Pete and Toby shows.

Ferry Crossings

Because this is an area of rivers, ferry boats were an important way to cross the river before the bridges were built. The ferry rates during the latter part of the 19th century varied according to each ferry-master, but an example of fares were: wagon and team - 75 cents, pack horses and mules - 20 cents, foot travelers - 12 cents, loose cattle - 10 cents, sheep and hogs - 5 cents, and 100 pounds of freight - 5 cents. Not all animals rode willingly, said Emily Ward. "My father had an apple ranch in North Albany, and we had to ride the ferry to get across the river. We had a horse named Charlie, who would not go on the ferry, so every time we went we had to blindfold him".

These stories are from "Ah, Yes, I remember it Well..." compiled and written by Bonnie Orr, the Albany Regional Museums first Chairman of the Board, and Doris Doherty.

A Brief History of Albany, Oregon

Albany was originally the home of the Calapooya Indians, an ancient tribe believed to have been in the Willamette Valley for about 5,000 years. They camped in the Bryants Island park area in the spring and moved around the valley to forage and hunt for food.

Abner Hackleman, a farmer from Des Moines County, Iowa, was the first white settler. He was the captain of an 1845 wagon train of 40 wagons carrying emigrants across the Oregon Trail. He took up the first donation land claim on the future site of Albany and built a log cabin. He lived in the Willamette for about a year, then returned to Iowa to fetch his family. But he died before he could return. In 1847, his son Abram came to Oregon and located his father's claim which is now the east side of Albany. Also, in 1847 the Monteith brothers came from New York state, and made a claim at the confluence of the Willamette and Calapooia rivers, intending from the beginning to be city builders. They purchased their claim for \$400 and a pony, from Hiram Smead who was holding Abner Hackleman's 2nd claim (Smead had come on the wagon train lead by Abner in 1845).

In 1849 Thomas and Walter Monteith built the first frame house in Albany. It still stands at 518 Second Ave. This house became the community center; Albany's early sermons were preached there, Indian treaties were signed there, and in 1856 political leaders met there to establish the Oregon Republican party.

For a short time there were actually two rival villages; the Hackleman clan claim and the Monteith's claim. In 1853, the Hackleman faction got the 1st post office to locate on "their" side and named the area Takena. Two years later the Monteiths succeeded in getting the Legislature to change the name back to Albany. Early newspaper accounts from that period refer to stores located in the "upper" and "lower" towns. The city was not incorporated until 1864 because of political conflict.

The first church group to be established in Linn County were the Methodists. They were here as early as 1834 and were missionaries from the Jason Lee Mission near Salem who were hoping to convert the peaceful Calapoolia Indians.



Abram Hackleman

The gospel was first preached in Albany to settlers in 1851. Dr. RC Hill called a three day meeting in the Abner Hackleman cabin. The ladies were seated in the cabin and the men and Indians stood outside.

The Presbyterians came soon afterward with their first church built in 1860. It was taken apart and reassembled on Riverside Drive and is now called the Orleans church. In 1891 Whitespires was built to replace it.

The first east side church was established in 1866 and was called St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church South. It still stands at 238 third Ave. SE and is Albany's oldest surviving church.

Albany college, which was a Presbyterian affiliate, was established in 1867 on land donated by the Monteith brothers. Their brother Rev. William J. Monteith was the first president. It was located at 9th and Ferry St. where Central School is now located. The campus was moved in 1926 to the present site of the Bureau of Mines. The school was then moved to Portland in the 1930's and renamed Lewis and Clark College.

Educated was considered important early in Albany's history and by 1851, R.C. Hill, Albany's first physician, established the first school. The first school building was built in 1855 at the corner of 4th and Broadalbin. Later at about the same location the Old Central School was built (near the Linn Co. courthouse).

Agriculture was Albany's first industry. In 1850 Linn County's white population numbered 994 belonging to 172 families, living on 138 farms. A total of 6,041 acres of land had been cleared and planted in crops. For more than four decades, 1845-1885 wheat was the principle crop around Albany and Linn County.

In conjunction with agriculture, Albany's first industry was the Al-

bany Magnolia flouring mill built in 1852 and located on the Calapooia River at the west end of First Avenue. It was owned by Walter and Thomas Monteith, J. Biggs, Sam Hill, and Sam Althouse.

Use of readily available water resources further marked Albany's progress in industrial development.

500 Chinese laborers who had been brought to the valley to build the railroad, dug the Santiam canal in 1872-73. It cost \$62,000 and superseded the use of steam as the city's main source of energy.



Walter Monteith

A little later, main branches were constructed through the east and west sides of town along what are now called Thurston St. and 8th Ave. They emptied into the Willamette and Calapooia Rivers. The warehouses along its banks before emptying into the rivers.

Albany became the manufacturing and transportation hub of the Willamette valley, with foundries, blacksmith shops, furniture factories, tanneries, a bag factory, carriage factories, flour and flax mills, creameries, and sawmills.

In 1852 the first steamboat, the "Multhomah," arrived in Albany. It had been built in New York City, shipped in pieces around Cape Horn, and reassembled in Oregon City.

Steamboats traveled on the Willamette and were the main source of transportation of people and goods for about 30 years. They enabled trade to flourish. Boats running upstream carried mail, sheep, cattle, kerosene and everyday items. Flour, woolen goods and pottery went downstream to be shipped to larger markets.

In 1870 the first locomotive whistle was heard in Albany. The arrival of the first train was celebrated as the greatest event in Albany's history. Albany businessmen raised \$50,000 to ensure that the Oregon and California Railroad would come through their city, instead of being by-passed by a few miles eastward. It was a good investment because it strengthened the economic base by enhancing agricultural transportation.

By 1910, 28 passenger trains departed daily from Albany going in five different directions.

In 1912 the Oregon Electric Railway linked Albany with Portland and Eugene. At the time of its construction it was the most modern electric railroad in the west and one of the main sources of employment in the area. Five trains daily ran from Albany to Portland. Fruit, hogs, lumber, berries, potatoes, onions, and celery were sent to the markets. The company ran the interurban electric cars over this track until May 13, 1933.

Political life in early Albany must have been exciting. From the beginning the town was divided. The Republican northerners lived on the west side (what is now the Monteith Historic District). Many residents were merchants and professionals with Union sympathies. Residents of the east

side (the Hackleman Historic District) were mainly working class Democrats who sided with the Confederacy. The east and west sides were so often on different sides of the fence politically, they went so far as to plant a hedge separating the sides of the town near Baker St.



Thomas Monteith

1891 marked the construction of the first bridge across the Willamette. Before that the only way to cross the river was by ferry boat. The old steel bridge crossed at Calapooia St. It was replaced in 1926 by the Ellsworth bridge.

By 1900 Albany had a population of 6,000 people, up about 3,000 since 1878. It had 13 churches, a college, 2 dailies and 4 weekly newspapers, a fairground with a splendid race track, two banks, six hotels, two telegraph offices, an express office, and an all-night telephone service. It had a sewage system, electricity, and an efficient fire department with two steam fire engines. The volunteer fire engine company had been organized in 1888 and by 1889 there were 65 volunteer firemen and a first-class engine.

Our town has grown and changed through the years. Citizens are proud of their heritage and proud of the historic buildings that survive to help the story of our progress.

A PEEK INTO THE POTTS' FAMILY HISTORY

The earliest inscription in the Potts' family Bible is one that might be written in a farewell gift to a loved one. It is dated September 20th 1880 and signed by F.M.'s big brother, Joseph. F.M., his wife, and son Leslie were headed for Oregon. They were to end up on a rented farm between Lebanon and Sweet Home for several years. Molly's brother James McDaneil lived near them and worked at the Waterloo branch of Thomas Kay Woolen Mills until it burned down. Later he went to the Salem Mill.

The Potts family moved to Albany where F.M. took a job as janitor at Madison School while Molly ran The Crest, a combination restaurant and sweet shop, which was located on second street about where the driveway into Two Rivers parking lot is now. Molly was well known for her chicken tamales. They lived in an apartment upstairs. The potts were members of the First Christian Church and two of Molly's recipes appear in the cook book put out by the Ladies of the Church in 1901.

Leslie worked at the Albany Woolen Mills until he lost his left arm in the shredder. Dr. B.R. Wallace Sr. had to leave in the middle of a shave from Curtis Churchill to care for Leslie. Rosemary Potts Shoblam related that her brother Bob Potts was told years later that the arm was taken across the river and buried in the woods. After the accident Leslie worked at The Crest with his Mother. "I've been told he made great milk shakes," says Rosemary.

The Crest moved to First Street in the west part of the Flynn Building. The original ceiling is still in the building.

Molly died in 1911. Leslie married Mary Louise Hanke who had been working at the Crest. They had three children, Clarence, Robert and Rosemary.

In early Albany the houses were usually built on large lots. Sometimes only four to a block. That gave plenty of room for a barn to house the family horse and buggy, a chicken coop, a pig sty and a wood shed. Vegetable gardens took up a good part of the backyard. We grew the usual things we

eat now" says Rosemary, "Potatoes, corn, carrots, cabbage, swiss chard, beets, turnips, onions, cucumbers, beans and peas." Food for the family tended by the older children of the neighborhood handy man. What wasn't eaten at once was canned and stored for winter. Fruit and nuts trees and grape arbors provided food and shade. Flowers were grown in front yards, in borders and in odd spots. Lilacs, roses, iris, daffodils, cantaberry bells, violets, daises, black eyed susans, pinks, peonies, sweet peas. Seeds, bulbs and starts of favorites from "back east" were shared by neighbors. Wild flowers and ferns came from the nearby fields and woods. Boxwood hedges or fences marked property lines.

Chickens and pigs disposed of vegetable peels and table scraps and furnished eggs and meat for the table. Some families kept cows.

Many families had a hired girl who worked for room and board while attending High School, or a grandmother or aunt who helped with the housework and child care.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Enroll me as a member. I have enclosed \$_____

A.R.M. is a non-profit corp., Donations are tax deductible

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membership categories

(check one)

business \$50.00

family \$15.00

individual \$5.00

senior citizen
or student \$3.00

I am interested in:

more information, donating money or artifacts, becoming a volunteer.



FIRST AVE., looking east from Ferry St.

A VIEW INTO OLD ALBANY

If you stand in the Two Rivers Market parking lot and face west you will see across the street is the Pacific Power and Light Building and parking lot. You may remember it was built in 1977 but what businesses were located at this site before then? The first Albany City Directory printed in 1878 tells us that the Wagon and Carriage Factory of Willert and Busch was located at 58 Ferry Street. (Since that time the address has been changed to 200 Ferry Street.) Previous to this date Fred Willert had a business partner named Enoch Sloan. They worked in a two-story building. On the second floor a man, Henry

Sucsens painted. He also painted many other projects around town as well. There were three wagon and carriage factories in Albany during this time. These businesses were very busy before the automobile became popular making the wagon makers no longer necessary.

After the demise of the wagon factory the site was turned into a Marble Shop by George W. Harris, a marble cutter. The Marble Shop was later run by Guss and Will Straigner. "Will soon moved to Salem but Guss continued the marble business for a few years. Later Guss became the head of a prominent shoe store; working along with his son."

Then in 1887 a new structure was built on the site, the W.C.T.U. building. The "Modern Travelers", the first woman's club of Albany met in this building. The club started a Library. The Library was moved one block south when Mrs. Young donated land for the new Carnegie Library building which is still the downtown Albany Library today.

After a time the W.C.T.U. building was razed and the Magnolia Laundry was built. The Magnolia Laundry was a large business and the building was a landmark. When it was taken down after World War II the lot stood vacant until the Pacific Power and Light Company improved the lot.

This article was paraphrased from Fred Nutting's Book "Old Time Albany".



The museum is run totally by volunteers and its only source of income is from fundraisers and donations. If you would like to contribute, make your checks out to Albany Regional Museum. Send to 302 Ferry St., Albany, OR 97321.



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