



DANIEL R EDGERTON VISITS CURRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

By Yvonne Pettyjohn

Museum Book Signing Event featuring Daniel R Edgerton Colonel (Ret.), historian and author of "War Drums Along the Rogue". The book is presented in two volumes.

Preparation for the book signing event June 22nd was in full swing two days before the day Dan Edgerton, a historian who spent eighteen years researching Indian wars of the Pacific Northwest, came to the museum to sign his very powerful book.

A wonderful array of food was presented. Alaskan smoked Coho and Sockeye were made into a delightful dip, recipe compliments of the fisherman Tom Ward of Haines Alaska, family famous for his appearance in the movie "White Fang". Washington state Elk sausage provided by Brodie Hoffer. Cheese, crackers and fresh fruit. Fresh absolutely delicious lemonade, lemons hand squeezed by Gil Davis. Finishing the food selection was Indian Fry Bread offered with butter and two different types of jam! Jeani, Barbara and Yvonne prepared the food. Ramona Shulka made and presented the Indian Fry Bread. She was a bit of a mystic woman, she was calm, cool and collected throughout a mishap, not her fault, with the bread. I knew of Ramona but had not met her until she donated photos to the museum shortly before our event. She offered to help and I was thrilled. She is an amazing woman.

Another Friend of the Museum came by and offered to help with whatever she could. And help, she did! Summer Matteson- Kinney and Mystic Woman united their minds and solved the Fry Bread issue! Summer had created the poster for our event. She also did a beautiful job of furnishing the media with our information about



Author, *War Drums Along the Rogue* volumes 1 & 2, Daniel R. Edgerton. Colonel (Ret)

our book signing event along with moving the Fry Bread issue along!

John and Loreeta Bell are wonderful Friends of the Museum. John made sure everything was running well and Loreeta handled books for customers who were having theirs signed.

Museum Treasurer Nancy worked with Barbara at the front desk collecting book payments and meeting guests. Jeani kept the refreshment table looking fresh and clean and was a Greeter along with another Friend of the Museum, Maureen Welborn. One of the guests had a question about a quilt and she asked Maureen! The quilt happened to be one Maureen had helped create so the guest received excellent information. (Continued on page 4.)



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Three publications yearly:
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Reminders from the Board:

- **ADDRESS CHANGES:** Every bulletin returned costs us \$0.75 plus another \$0.58 to mail it to the new address provided by the Post Office. Also please note the Society's mailing address: P.O. Box 1598 - Gold Beach, OR 97444
- **EMAIL:** info@curryhistory.com **PHONE:** 541-247-9396
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- **HOW YOU CAN HELP:** Please think of us when considering a tax-deductible donation or if you are interested in volunteering — we are looking for people interested in Curry County history.
- **GROCERY RECEIPTS:** We receive cash when turning in grocery receipts to McKay's Markets. Please drop off your receipts at the museum or mail them to the above address. They must be less than 12 months old when we turn them in to receive the rebate.

IMPORTANT DATES

BOARD MEETINGS

August 16
Sept. 20 Annual and Board Meeting
Oct. 18
Nov. 15

It is the mission of the Curry Historical Society to encourage and promote the study and understanding of the history, primarily of Curry County, but also the impact of neighboring counties and the State of Oregon as they relate to Curry County.

To accomplish this mission, the Curry Historical Society shall collect, preserve, exhibit, present public historical informational meetings, publish and make available materials of historical interest, and cooperate with other groups and individuals with similar aims.

Our primary focus is The Children of the County and bringing alive for them the History of Curry County.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

15 July 2022

Dear Curry Historical Society Members,

The Museum Board would like to personally thank each of you who sent in your 2022 dues and membership fees over the last few months. For those members who may not have taken care of this, please send in your dues when you are able. These donations are the life blood of your museum and are needed to keep the lights on and the history of Curry County preserved for generations to come.

We appreciate the support of many local businesses and if your business card is in our Echoes newsletter, be sure to send in your annual dues for advertising. It is only \$40 per business card for three newsletter printings annually. A great deal to reach all our museum members.

A few projects are in progress at your museum, including remodeling the annex for safety and future display expansion with grant funds. We are working with our neighbors to refresh the street signage in front of the museum. We recently upgraded the wireless internet with a Ziplify fiber upgrade so now it is faster and free! Check out our Facebook page for recent updates and upcoming events.

The book signing held at the museum for Dan Edgerton and his books "War Drums along the Rogue, Volume 1 & 2" was a great success. Thank you to Mr. Edgerton for his time and talent and to all the volunteers that helped out and really added excitement to the event. We even had authentic fry bread for everyone to try. Stop by the museum for your copy and any of the other local history publications we offer to the public. They make great gifts and support your local museum!

Future events include a Fall Relic Sale, and a parking fund raiser for the Curry Fair event. For just \$5, you can park in the museum parking lot and get free admission to the museum during your visit to the Fair in Gold Beach during the celebration July days 28th, 29th and 30th.

As always, we would like to encourage you to volunteer in your community and if you have a soft spot for history, we can always use volunteers to man the front desk. We will be electing museum officers at the 20 September meeting and the public is welcome to attend.

Keep Moving Forward,

Best Regards, Your President

Dave Sanders

DANIEL R EDGERTON VISITS CURRY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM, CONTINUED

Gil and Marian Davis had family who were visiting. All four came to the museum and helped remove 20 balloons from my car, tied them offering help and did what they could. Two returned later and offered to help with anything they could after purchasing two volumes from Dan Edgerton and trying the Indian Fry Bread. Gil and Marian offer the best support, they always show!

Dave Sanders arrived at the event when his work day was finished, he roamed the rooms visiting with our guests. Yvonne was pleased to see him, her boom box would not play music, Dave did something because it began to play flute and drums! Can't serve Native American food without the music.

Throughout the afternoon Dan Edgerton held his own in the book signing room. He answered questions and gave extra information about his two volumes. The guests were interested in his information and he had it. I was happy to see an audience listening so intently to the author. I wish Dan all the luck. We purchased extra books and sold most of them. At last count we had 7 sets left. I hope he sells 278 more books so he will be eligible for a second printing. We were extremely fortunate that Dan drove all the way from Bend, Oregon to attend our event that lasted four hours. I think he gave his all, supporting our museum. I think a movie of his two volumes would be superb!!

These two volumes are very special to my heart for so many reasons. This history presented in this book belongs to Curry County.



Daniel Edgerton during book signing



Guests enjoying the repast

Our Curry Historical Society promoted this book. The author has rich ties to Agness in Curry County. Four old Indian families of Agness and Illahe had representation in this event. That said, my heart is full and I Thank Dan Edgerton for the two volumes of "War Drums Along the Rogue". Yep, a movie would be superb!

My Thanks to everyone who is mentioned in this feature. Vanessa, thank you for staying to help clean up. EVERYONE, this could not have happened without your input and help!

Thank You and Thank You Dan Edgerton!



Ramona and Editor



Marion and Dave



Loreeta



Jeani and Nancy

IS “NUGGET” TOM’S LOST GOLD LEDGE HAUNTED?

By Dale Vincent, Nov. 9, 1947

The Sunday Oregonian

“Headwaters of the South Fork Sixes River Still Conceal Mystery of a Wild Man Who Discouraged Many Prospectors

In 1871 “Nugget” Tom had a small Gold Claim in Star Gulch near the headwaters of the Sixes River in Curry County. For a long time he had been wondering if there wasn’t a ledge up above him that his placer gold had all come from. If he could find that it would make him rich. But Nugget Tom was a little old for tough mountain climbing, and this region was one of the wildest and steepest of the Oregon mountains.

Nevertheless, late in the fall of 1871 Nugget Tom packed his gold pan, pick, shovel, and with food enough for several days made his way steadily up Star Mountain at the head of Star Gulch. It was a long and tedious job, hammering and pecking at each favorable-looking out cropping, but evening found him high above, on the wild, lonely mountainside, where he made a dry camp.

The next day dawned bright and clear, but Nugget Tom was uneasy. He felt that someone or something was watching him. Doggedly he kept at his job, but quite often he would catch himself whirling to look back. Carefully he would scan the bushes. Not a thing was in sight. Old Tom then laughed at his fears and finally high on a ledge, his hammer knocked off a piece of quartz that fairly took his breath away. It was rich with free gold. Hurriedly he knocked off sample after sample which he stowed in his back pack.

With quick furtive glances behind, and with his pack hanging heavily on his back, he started for his cabin far below. Coming to a sheer cliff, thirty feet below Nugget Tom sat down to rest. Momentarily he had forgotten his fear of something watching him, and as he sat down

overlooking the gulch below, disaster struck from behind.

The next day a searching party found Tom, broken up at the foot of the cliff, but still alive. They carried him home to his cabin and patched him up. One of the search party found a lump in Tom’s jacket pocket. Taking this out, he saw as rich a piece of gold quartz as he had ever seen.

Tom, being unconscious, could tell them nothing so two of the boys went back to the foot of the cliff. There they picked up Tom’s gold pan, pick, and shovel. His pack had broken open and rich specimens were strewn down the mountainside. These they recovered and went back to camp, hoping to get some information from Tom as to where he had found them, so he could stake a claim.

Many days later, when Nugget Tom had regained consciousness, he would not talk. For many weeks, when he was recovering, he tried to piece together the mystery of what had hurled him over the cliff, and why. For he had come to the conclusion that he had been pushed over by someone or something.

The next spring, Tom again headed for the fabulous ledge, determined to be more alert this time. Quietly one day he sneaked away with pack, pick, and pan—and there was a gun this time, which he intended to use if necessary. Now six months later, he did not have a feeling of something watching him. But the hard fall had done something to Nugget Tom’s mind. He could not find the ledge again.

For four years he hunted, continually getting more feeble, and as he was somewhere around 80 years old, he gave up the disheartening hunt, and left the country.

In 1899, twenty years later, in the spring, two prospectors by the names of Robbins and Benson decided to put forth a concentrated effort to find “Nugget” Tom’s lost gold ledge. So outfitting

themselves for a long stay in the mountains, they started to the head of Star Gulch on the south fork of the Sixes River, with a determination few prospectors have.

Thoroughly they studied the mountainside for any indications. A small trace led them up a little streambed to its very source, a stream that dried in the summer, but was now running freely. On a ledge above the stream they struck it—but on close examination, it was found to be not the ledge of “Nugget” Tom. But it was rich, so they worked and carried crushed rock to be panned down by the spring.

At noon, they knocked off for lunch and fried their bacon and bannocks over a little fire and rejoiced over their accomplishment. On returning to the ledge, Benson looked back and froze in his tracks as he pulled his gun—but not soon enough to stop this thing from throwing all their camp stuff over the cliff.

It was neither man nor beast, the saddened men said afterwards. It was big and powerful, stood erect, and there was yellow fuzz over its body. They started to shoot as it bounded out of sight but none of their bullets seemed to take effect, and the wild man disappeared.

They named their mine “The Wild Man” and soon sold it. But no one ever came to work it—although rich rock showed in sight. The reason for its abandonment was probably due to the wild man episode, which story was all more fearful because of a previous of unexplained deaths which took place in the middle 70’s, a year or so after “Nugget” Tom left the country. Four men were already buried on Huckleberry Knoll, overlooking Bear Pen flats. Their names were Johnson, McLoan, Madigan, and Jenson.

WILD MEN: Believed Responsible for Mystery deaths

The demise of these four men occurred over a period of time and whether they were murdered or died of natural causes has never been explained. Circumstances and clues, however, in

this case indicated that the victim had met his fate at the hands of one of the mysterious wild men.

There was a legend amongst the Indians about a lost tribe of Indian devils called the SWALALAHISTS that lived on the upper reaches of the Sixes River, and were such demons that no other Indian would ever go into that country for fear of being killed by them. These Swalalahists, or wild men, as seen by the various miners were described as standing well over six and a half feet tall, and weighed 200 to 260 pounds. They had massive jaws, powerful shoulders, powerful torsos and their bodies were covered with a short coat of yellowish hair. Their teeth were cat-like, their eyes were bulging and black and seemed to burn into a man. They could run and bound with all the swiftness of a deer.

It is possible that one of these dreaded Indian devils of Sixes River overtook “Nugget” Tom. Tom was never certain. Benson’s and Robbins’ description was very concise. Once the wild man even had his tracks measured by a “Doc” Elgin, who, one early autumn morning as the sun was coming up over Rusty Butte, was going for a pail of water. As he approached the stream, his eyes fell on an unbelievable creature standing at the water’s edge.

The thing bounded away immediately, but not fast enough to take his track—with him. These “Doc” proceeded to measure. It has been recorded that the monster’s tracks measured sixteen inches in length and eight inches at the toes.

It is not hard to believe that the above stories have kept the upper Sixes area unpopular and unpopulated., and it is quite possible that “Nugget” Tom’s rich quartz ledge still lies broken, in plain sight of those who would care to take their chances with the wild men—if they are still there.”

MINING

By Yvonne Pettyjohn

Ending North Curry

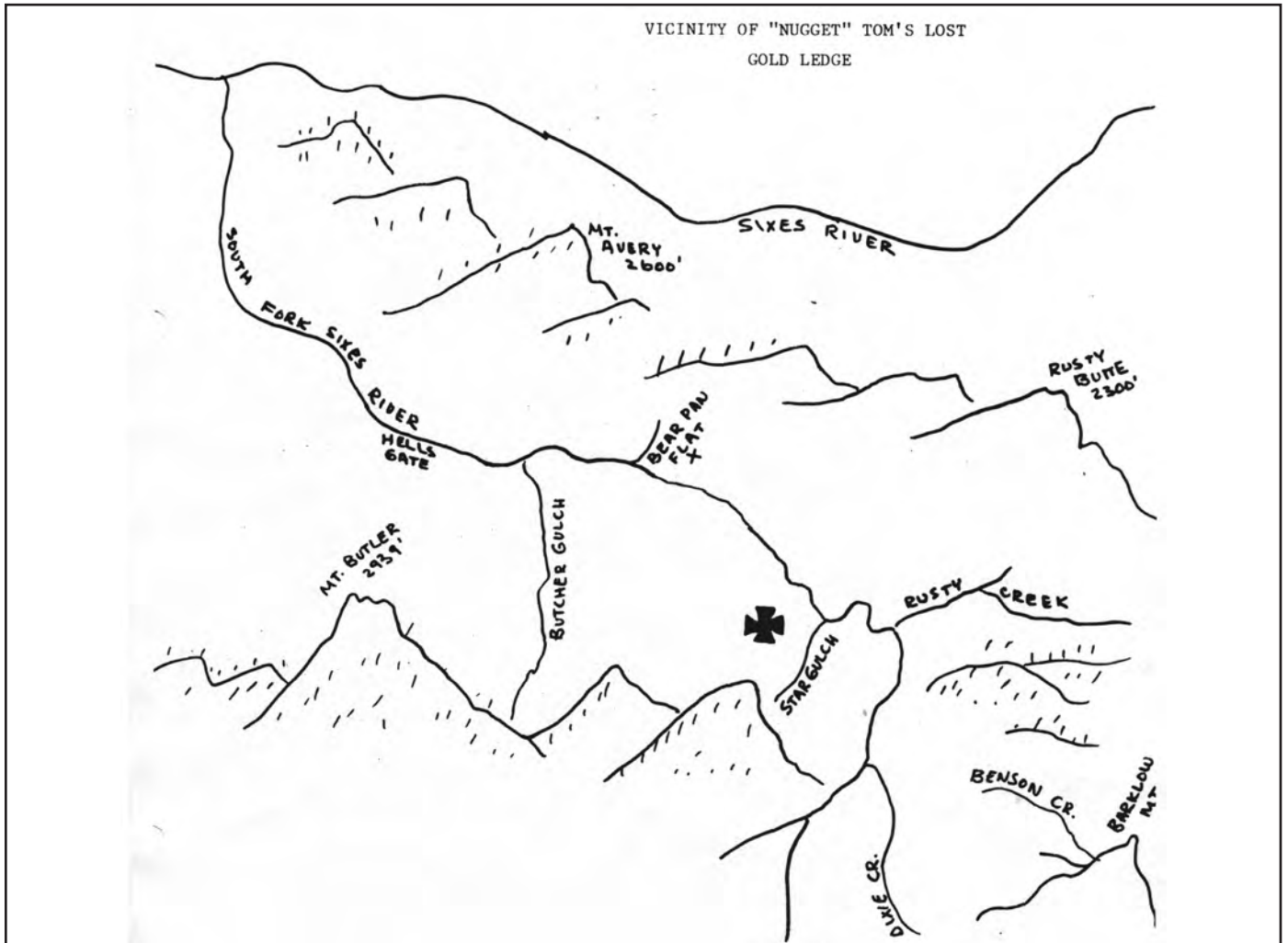
Curry County has so much history, I did bite off more than I could chew thinking light mining information in the county of Curry could be covered in two Echoes installments. After finishing the Rogue River, there will be information about a small amount of mining the beautiful rivers, Illinois and Chetco.

Mining on the Rogue River

I do not have many stories to accompany these wonderful photos provided by the Curry Historical Society.

A small story about Gold Bar perhaps. When I was about six years old, I sometimes stayed with my grandma in a house she rented at Gold Bar. The house was about a mile downriver from Hal Seeley's lodge in Illahe.

Dr. Seeley's lodge was built along the river bluff across the river from the old Jergin's place on the East side of the Rogue. My grandma worked for Dr. Seeley, cooking, in a huge yellow kitchen that she kept immaculate. The lodge was beautiful, hardwood floors, a river rock fireplace, rugs on the wall alternating with fishing creels and hunting equipment, big sofa and dark heavy wicker chairs with large striped fabric covered cushions, just beautiful. The yards were kept up by a caretaker who lived in Myrtle Point.





Above: Mining at Mule Creek, children's identity unknown.



14675A Siskiyou National Forest Curry Co. Two large hydraulic giants at work on placer ground claimed by Red River Mining Co. of Marial OR. Sluice boxes to right and center.

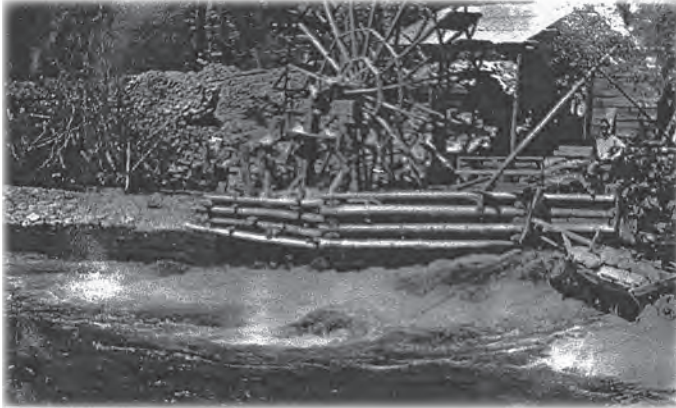
Back to the house my grandma rented! She had chickens and my job was to collect eggs and feed the chickens. Just a few years ago I realized the basket Grandma let me use was one my great-grandmother, her mother-in-law had

made! The chicken house was built alongside a deep wide gully that held the most beautiful rocks, some were boulders that were a shiny, sugary, white and grey with big gold stripes and jags that shone.

Gold Bar, now a place we have no access to, the Forest Service developed the land into very nice campgrounds. The area is now gated, I don't know why and now the thought has occurred that I should ask.

Information about Marial Billings Akesson taken by Kay Atwood, presented in Curry Echoes 1978

“When Marial was born in 1984, her father was busily engaged in mining operations. By the time Marial was six years old she was travelling up the Mule Creek canyon to the Tina H mining



Miners Camp on lower Rogue River.

claim and living with her mother and brothers in cabins constructed by Thomas Billings. At regular intervals heavy mining equipment was packed in by mules., pulling large sleds made of logs, and Marial recalls that the sleds were called “lizards.”

Taken from the October 17, 1906 issue of “The Tribune” established in Port Orford

“H. Neely has found gold bearing quartz on his ranch at Frankport. Such quartz exists near Fromm’s old place on Brush Creek, thus showing that the mineral wealth of Curry is yet unknown. Keep looking boys, for the day of development is close at hand.

We understand that Mr. Keyser, of N.Y. has obtained the Bailey beach mines, and will give the black sands a thorough, scientific trial—something that has never before been done, except in an experimental way by Dr. David T. Day, at Portland. Great interest will be attached to Mr. Keyser’s work, as it means much if successful.



A wing dam on the Rogue River between Agness and Illahe at the Old Diggins Riffle. Circa 1912. House in center is the Price home, white on tree to right of center was an old shag roost, white gravel on left are tailings from Gold Bar Placer Mine.

The Gold Bar Company at Big Bend, after such a long struggle with their ditch, is now ready and feverishly awaiting the fall rain. Bancroft is on the Elk river, Jamieson on the Sixes, and soon there will be more dirt flying than ever before in Curry County, but nothing to what will eventually be!

Mr. Gilbert, Supt. of the Los Angeles Mining Co. which is opening an extensive hydraulic plant on Blossom Bar on the Rogue river, was at the county seat last week on business. He is much encouraged over his prospects, but it will be several months before the mine is in operation.”



These men are moving mining equipment down the Rogue. Saddle Peak in background.

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By Keith Lundy Hoofnagle \$13.00

NOTHING BUT A BLAZE

By James Boyle \$10.00

... FROM THE MUSEUM NEWS DESK

By the Editor

My apologies for omitting the names of Walt Schroeder and Edna Riley on page 4, April-August issue of the Echoes.

Please see our Memorial Wall at the museum. Should you wish to honor a loved one or friend with an engraved plate, please inquire at Museum Front Desk.

Vanessa Short has been volunteering in our Photo Department for a couple of years and has been the best in her contributions of thoughts and ideas. Although her passion is Genealogy, she has some definite ideas about using the museum's collection of oral history. Vanessa has supported both book signing events by helping clean after our guests have moved on.

Our museum annex has been named Estlund & Hoenie Annex. Signage has been completed and a photo provided. The sign is very well done and the persons for whom the building was named, now have their history with the Curry Historical Society and Museum preserved.

If the front page of this Echoes looks different that's because the Curry Historical Society board chose to drop the word County from our name. Reason being, the Curry Historical Society does not receive funding from Curry County. We raise the money to keep our doors open.

Museum Board members, Barbara Gauntlett, Roger Donoho and Jeani Adams have been working in the Estlund & Hoenie Annex planning their strategy for eventual display of the museum's wonderful acquisitions throughout the years. They have put much thought and time into this huge project and I am very excited having attended one of their brainstorming meets where they made a couple of decisions that broke a creative block! Roger has painted some areas that required a little color. He did a wonderful job, it looks just right. Jeani has a pet project which is the John Mather Memorial

within this large project and she is eager to get to it. Barbara was not able to attend this meet, Marian Davis dropped in, perfect timing because her input was necessary for some planning.

A sale at Estlund & Hoenie Annex is being discussed, date and time not determined at this time.

We are sorry to read about Lowell Kreutzer's passing, he occupied a large piece of history in Curry County. Mr. Kreutzer made very generous donations to our museum.

Our Curry Historical Society is happily anticipating a visit from Cow Creek Tribe Elders in August, they will be taking a Jet Boat trip up the Rogue River and touring our museum while in Gold Beach.



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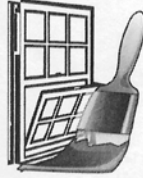
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100 year old Native American stone tools
and fishing bobs found in Curry County

We thank all of our donors. Your donations keep our museum alive and relevant.

In appreciation,

Marian Davis, Accessions Director



Curry Historical Society
Alice Wakeman Memorial Building
29419 Ellensburg Ave. (Hwy. 101)
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**Keeping History
Alive!**

Curry Historical Society

The museum is located across from the Fairgrounds, and although we are small, we are organized. We do not have a Curator, but depend entirely on willing volunteer help. We are open from March through December.

We have many wonderful historical donations, which enhance our exhibits. Since this was once the home of the first Indian nation, we have an exhibit to honor them. We are also a county that at one time was a mining and early logging area with fishing, farming, and cheese factories. Our other exhibits represent these industries.

Note the watercolor presentation of the Rogue River and all its tributaries and lodges and a historical exhibit of our Isaac Lee Patterson Bridge, judged as the most beautiful bridge known at that time. It opened in 1932, and reconstruction was finished just recently.

We have a small gift shop and some interesting books for sale by local authors about our early pioneers and Indians. We welcome all visitors, and look forward to your visit. We share with our members the Echoes, a newsletter publication with historical stories.