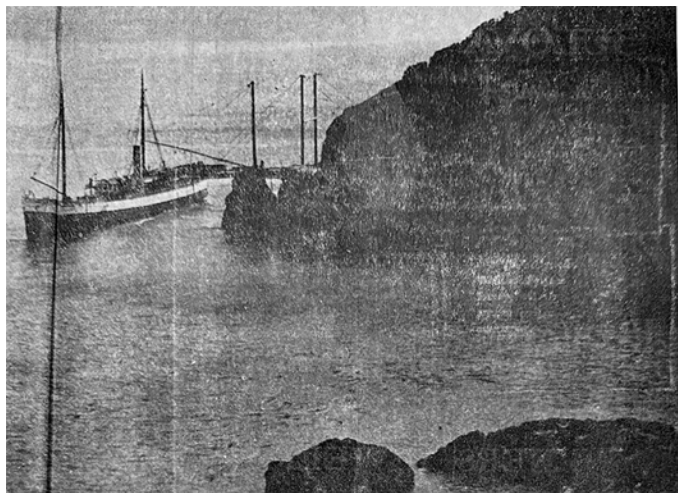




WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Mandy Keady

Researching the roots of unusual words and phrases can often yield bemusing bits of trivia, but digging into the origin of place names can turn up some extraordinary stories. I've always enjoyed this type of snuffling about in books and files, and for this edition, I'm sharing my discoveries about Sisters Rocks, Frankport, Marchmont Road, and Hooskanaden Creek.



Steam Schooner Emily, Frankport 1901
CHS Archives

Three Sisters Rocks, or Sisters Rocks, is part of the beautiful and rugged coastline north of Gold Beach toward the end of Coy Creek Road. Not much is mentioned about the name origin of this distinctive rock formation, but it is associated with Frankport, around which there are a few eyebrow-raising tales. Howard J. Newhouse, a longtime Curry County surveyor, recalls his experiences with this landmark in his book *Rogue River Rogue*.

“S.H. Frank and Company, San Francisco Tanners ... needed tan oak bark for its California Leather tanning operation. The tan oak bark was

getting difficult to obtain in northern California. Tannic acid was obtained from peeling old growth bark off the tree trunks; it is quite thick and cherry red when peeled ... The only county in the state of Oregon with any tan oak is Curry.

“The California company began to exploit this fact, searching for a source and a shipping point ... [An] ample source of the tree was located on two coastal streams, Euchre Creek and Mussel Creek. Frankport became the shipping solution. It was located between the two creek drainages and could provide a deep-water port. It was also protected from the strong northwest winds.

“S.H. Frank bought the upland area ... and in May 1893 built a dock and supporting facilities ... Frankport Village had a horse-drawn railroad one-quarter mile long to move the tan oak bark from the storage area to the dock, a bunkalation building (bunk house), some barns, and other smaller buildings ...

“By 1903, a different method had been devised for tanning, and tan oak bark was out. Except for commercial fishermen looking for shelter, the little port lay idle until [the 1950's]. Sause Brothers Ocean Towing, always on the lookout for usable ocean property, bought Frankport from S.H. Frank and Company ... and Brownie Coldiron, a local contract logger, got Frankport back on track. *(Continued on page 4...)*





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By Curry Historical Society

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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
- **WEBSITE:** https://curryhistory.com
- **BOOKSTORE:** Full of great books
- **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

September 18
October 16
November 20
December 18

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

July 2024

Dear Curry Historical Society Members;

A tragedy recently befell one of the Museum's former long-time Board members and Editor of our Echoes Newsletter. On March 25th this year, Warren Laville passed in an auto accident on Hwy 101. Warren was a great light and brought enthusiasm in all of his projects while he served the Museum. One of Warren's final projects with the Museum was overseeing the construction of the lifeboat cradle for the Mary D. Hume lifeboat preservation project. A Navy man, it was fitting that Warren took on this project for the museum. He will surely be missed and our condolences go out to his wife Mary LaVille and their extended family.

It is finally Summer and the beautiful weather the Oregon Coast is known for is here. Be sure and stop by the Museum during our business hours of 10A to 2P Tue through Fri and check out the new local history books we have added. We also recently opened the Museum on Saturdays from 10A to 2P from June through the end of August. Remember members have free admission to the Museum. The adult entry fee is \$5 donation and kids under 12 get in free! Thank you so much to all our volunteers, board members and membership for their efforts to keep the doors open and support the Museum.

We received good news recently on our replacement street sign project. The City of Gold Beach has approved the new design submitted by Jennifer Burns of the Wildflower Inn. The Museum Board approved her sign design at our June Meeting and the \$12,000 replacement sign project will be moving forward this year with funding contributed by Wildflower Inn and the City of Gold Beach. There will be no cost to the Museum for the new updated street sign!

Progress is being made on the new Point of Sale system so the Museum can take credit and debit cards for memberships, donations and book purchases in the future. The service offered through Block should be in testing phase this summer in time for rolling it out around the Christmas Bazaar. The website update project is complete, with the ability to add new features and historical information to the Museum website and we are planning to populate more historical information about the Museum to our site at curryhistory.com

We are blessed to live in such a wonderful and scenic coastal community and destination. Remember to get outdoors and enjoy your summer travel and experiences wherever your travels take you, including local hikes, beaches and river sports. As always, we would like to encourage you to volunteer, lend a hand and if you have a soft spot for local history, we can always use your assistance to man the front desk. Be sure to take the time to stop by our Board meetings on the third Wednesday every month at 5:30P to share your vision of the preservation of local Curry County History. Ideas are wanted for the next great project at your museum!

Best Regards, Your President

Dave Sanders

(Continued from page 1...)

tanoak (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*)



from Trees to Know in Oregon, CHS Archives

In his book *Characters, Legends, and Mysteries of Curry County, Oregon*, Walt Schroeder shares how Coldiron's get-it-done mindset contributed to Frankport's story.

"Brownie had one of the more successful logging operations in Curry County during the fifties and sixties. He logged for the Evans Products Mill at Hunter Creek. One year the Evans Mill at Vancouver, British Columbia, found themselves short of logs. Their local suppliers were on strike and the company asked Brownie if he could help. Brownie said, 'Sure I can help you', then started to think how he could do that. The Vancouver mill was over 600 miles away and the highway ran through several large cities. Then he looked at where he was currently logging (Euchre Creek) and at the cheapest and easiest way to haul logs. By water, of course, and there was the old port at Frankport just a few miles from where they were logging ... [I]t was in bad shape, but that did not deter Brownie. He contacted Sause Brothers Ocean Towing Company to see if they could haul the barges and received a qualified answer. How long would the tugs be tied up? Sause could not afford to have his tugs and crews tied up for more than 72 hours. Brownie assured

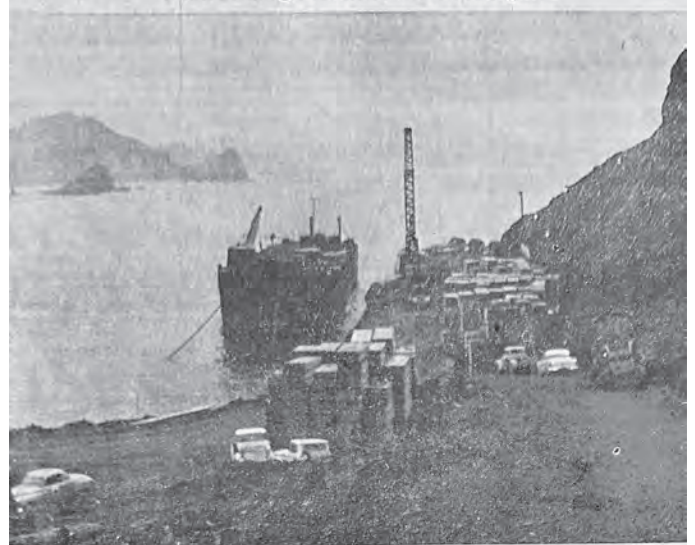
them they would not spend much time at the dock. The logs would be there when the barge came in and get loaded quickly.

"Brownie drew up a plan to build a dock. He was logging about seven miles from the port, and he would need nine 110-foot logs for the edge of the dock. To get those long logs to Frankport, he devised a unique system. They took the trailers off two trucks, placed one end of the logs on one truck and lifted the other end of the logs high enough for another truck to back up under them. The logs were four to six feet in diameter at the butt end. With their cargo firmly chained to the bunkers, the over-weight and over-length trucks drove to Frankport with one going forward and the other backward the entire seven miles.

"When they got to the steep grade going down to the port, Brownie would meet them on the D-8 Cat. The front truck would place his truck bumper in the curve of the Cat blade, and the D-8 would back down the hill to insure they did not have a runaway.

"The crib logs were an easier matter even though they too made an over-length load. By drilling the logs and attaching them to rock with bolts and 1 ½ inch rebar firmly set into the solid

First Barge Loads At Frankport



The Sause Bros. barge Humboldt Woodsman loaded about one million feet of Douglas fir at Frankport last week, the first barge of the year to be brought in there. The barge Del Norte Woodsman arrived Tuesday and loaded about 1,300,000 feet. All of the lumber was from U. S. Plywood and Evans Products. Sause Bros. plan to bring about one barge a week into Frankport.

CHS Archives

rock, the dock soon took shape. Three other logging companies brought 14 or 15 loads in addition to Coldiron's 87 loads. The first barge was loaded with a half-million board feet, was lashed down and ready to move in eleven hours."

The barge's arrival at Vancouver greatly impacted the strike – it was settled.

Newhouse continues Frankport's story with ambitious East Coast plans. "A little known Sisters Rock Community was proposed by W.W. Chambers in 1969. Mr. Chambers owned all the land surrounding Frankport. He hired the firm of Bruce Campbell Graham Associates, Architects and Planners from New York, as well as an economic development consultant, J.C. Wilson, Jr., also of New York. Their charge was to generate a development plan for Chambers' land."

The feasibility report for this plan stated, " 'An Oregon ocean front tract of over 750 acres of property including approximately two miles of privately owned beach front has been assembled equidistant from Seattle and San Francisco. The site is located on U.S. Highway 101, a new and improved super highway and one of the principal north-south routes on the West Coast. This location offers an excellent opportunity for a community development of residential homes, condominiums, resort hotel, boatel, motel with supporting commercial service operations – all commanding a sweeping view of the Pacific Ocean and the Sisters Rock harbor, an integral part of the development.

"The area is planned to support a population of over 7,000 persons comprised of permanent residents generally 45 years and older and transients or tourists of all adult age groups. The site has been laid out to include an air strip above the harbor, 27 holes of golf with fairway residential lots, a central community service area, a complete marina complex, resort hotel and recreational supporting activities. The site location appears ideal for including within the complex a private boarding preparatory school. The historic harbor at Sisters Rock, Frankport,



The Sause Bros. barge Mastodon I takes on a load of logs at Frankport for Evans Products company's Vancouver, B. C., plant last week. A second barge was scheduled to be loaded this week.

CHS Archives



The new Evans Products plywood mill takes shape at Hunter Creek against a background of mountains and timber. At right is a giant crane used to handle the big peelers, one of the few such machines in this part of Oregon. Mill, which will employ around 45 men, is expected to be in operation around the middle of November.

CHS Archives

can be serviced with Rogue River jet passenger boats from Gold Beach ...'

"The plan was accompanied by a rather large topographic map that indicated where all the improvements would be located. The consultants produced a very impressive outline that never

saw the light of day in Curry County ... Actually it would never have worked. No geological report was included. Had one been done, that in itself would have precluded any use of the property. It was all gradually slipping into the Pacific.”

Newhouse winds down Frankport’s story with a U.S. District Court decision in 1985 as a result of an ownership dispute between Sause Brothers Ocean Towing Company and the Bureau of Land Management. Sause Brothers was beginning commercial removal of rock from Sisters Rocks, and the Oregon Shores Conservation District 4 was made aware of the activity. The BLM became involved and decided the Sause property actually belonged to the U.S. Government and filed suit to force Sause to quit title.

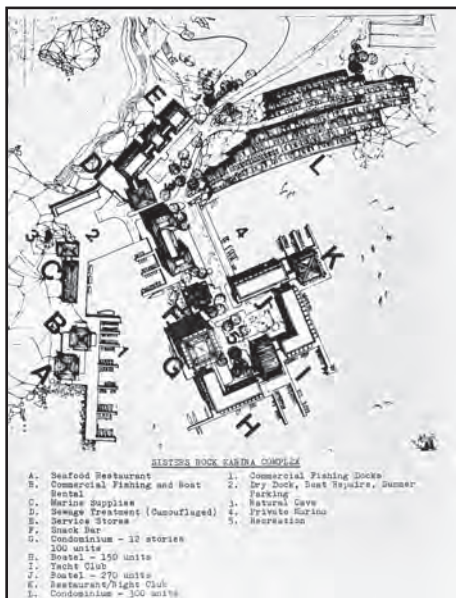
“The crux of the whole case revolved around the BLM’s contention that the Murphy meander line run in 1857 was the true boundary of all the Government Lots [in question] and was not a meander line. True, the Murphys had stated they could not run the Coast Guide Meridian due to the rugged interior, so they offset and meandered the shores of the Pacific Ocean. So the term ‘meander’ was used from the very beginning. ‘Meander’ in surveying means a line run along irregular courses, such as the ocean shoreline,

so they could determine the acreage in fractional forty-acre tracts.

“Since those were the days when we had an agrarian society, and surveyors were getting \$6 per mile for township lines, little effort was put into spending time going around every rocky promontory along the coast which no respectable homesteader would buy. But now the BLM held tough to the permanent boundary principle ...

“On January 31, 1985, [the judge] handed down his opinion, and he ruled in favor of Sause Brothers Ocean Towing. Little happened to Frankport after that. The docks washed away, the LCDC [Land Conservation and Development Commission], 1000 Friends of Oregon, and the Department of Environmental Quality all stood in line to prevent quarrying rock. The only thing of significance happened in June 1987 when a large fishing boat tried to off-load eight tons of marijuana. That caper was a total failure. They all got caught, and the fishing boat, intent on escaping, ran aground and foundered. So today, Frankport is about the way it was in 1890.”

Not a bad invitation to explore Sisters Rock State Park!



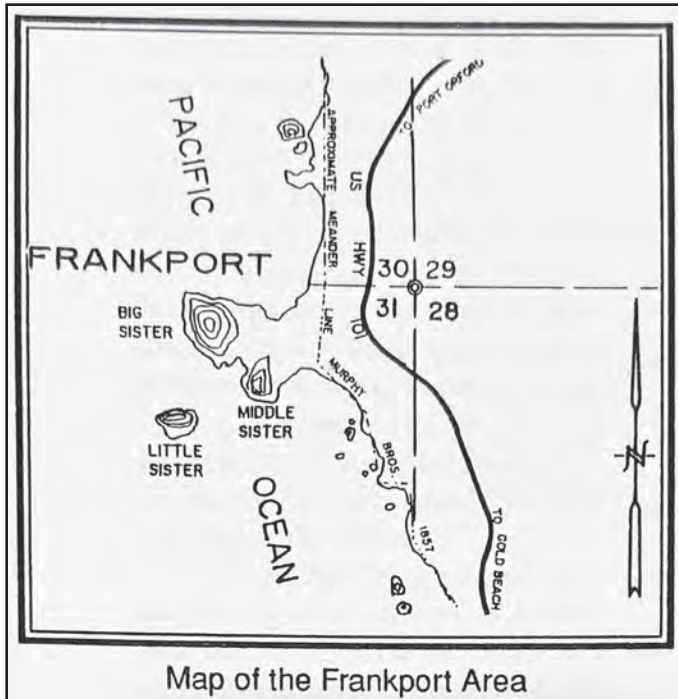
Sisters Rock Marina Complex, CHS Archives



Sisters Rock Resort Hotel Complex, CHS Archives



Agate Beach Condominium Complex - CHS Archives



Map of the Frankport Area

CHS Archives

Newhouse, Howard J. *Rogue River Rogue*. np, pp.194-209, 1995.

Schroeder, Walt. *Characters, Legends, and Mysteries of Curry County, Oregon*. Marceline,

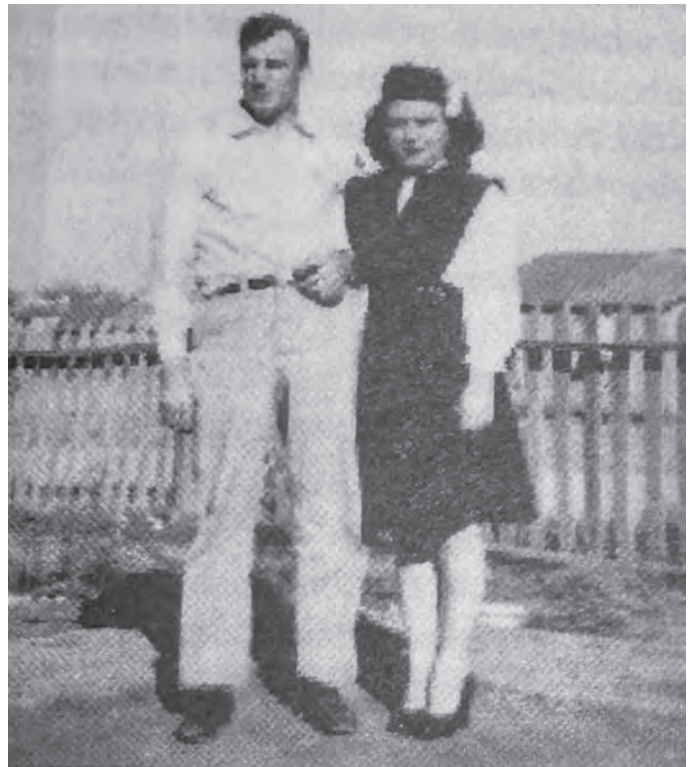
Walsworth Publishing Company, pp. 95-97, 2007.

More about **Brownie Coldiron's** ingenuity and resourcefulness:

Jesse Howard "Brownie" Coldiron was born in northern Indiana. During his school years, his family moved twelve times, but Brownie finished high school in Indiana. He was awarded a scholarship to Purdue University, "but with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, he studied the machinist trade in night school and was soon making parts for the Norden Bomb Sight. Then he headed west once again and operated a bulldozer, [helping build] Farragut Naval Base in Idaho. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served in the South Pacific as an airplane mechanic, crew chief, and trainer.

"While training as an aviation machinist in Norman, Oklahoma, he met Florence "Flo" Lea Taylor of Eldorado, Oklahoma. She worked

as an aluminum welder for Douglas Aircraft in Oklahoma City. They were later married ... After a short honeymoon, Brownie went back to the South Pacific." At war's end he was in the Marshall Islands; and amid the confusion of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, the Navy considered him lost. He got no mail, nor did he get paid. "If the Navy lost [him, he] would have to go find the Navy. Brownie caught a ride on a destroyer escort as far as Pearl Harbor and then a troopship to San Francisco. In a few months ... the Navy got things straightened out and Brownie got paid and was sent to Bremerton, Washington, the closest discharge center to where he had enlisted ... As soon as he got his discharge papers, he caught a train from Seattle to Oklahoma. He had to change trains in Denver. To add to his anxiety about catching the connection, the train from Seattle developed a mechanical problem (one of the train wheels had locked and skidded until it had worn a flat spot) and was limping along about 40 miles



Brownie and Flo Coldiron

CHS Archives



Flo and Brownie Coldiron

CHS Archives

west of Cheyenne. The track was adjacent to a highway, so Brownie grabbed his sea bag, bailed out and hitchhiked to Denver in time to make his connection. It was a joyous reunion when Brownie arrived in Oklahoma and was greeted by the love of his life.

“ ... In January 1946, [Brownie and Flo] bought a 1930 Chevrolet with a rumble seat, loaded all their worldly goods in the car and headed west. They spent a night in Brookings in an old hotel in that town of about 300 people (Gold Beach was twice that size with 600 people.) The next day they headed for Powers, where Brownie’s dad was the pastor of the church. Brownie’s brother Oscar was living there and working as a timber faller. When Oscar’s partner got hurt, Brownie took his place and found his calling.

“Another example of Brownie’s ingenuity was his combining of the best features of two different makes of chain saws. The Disston saw was a reliable one. It started easily, was durable, but had a scratch tooth chain. The chain was modeled after a crosscut saw and it was slow. The Titan saw had a chisel tooth chain; and while not as reliable a saw, the chisel tooth was faster and more efficient. With some modifications Brownie and his brother took the best features of each saw and had a real cutting machine. They could out-cut all of the other fallers and buckers.

“In 1955 Brownie and Flo came to Gold beach where he bid on and won the Gold Beach

District’s first timber sale held by the Forest Service. A few old Civilian Conservation Corps roads ran through the woods, but most were inadequate for loaded log trucks; so in addition to running two logging sides, he and his crew also built many roads. They even built an emergency airplane landing strip and also helped fight forest fires ...

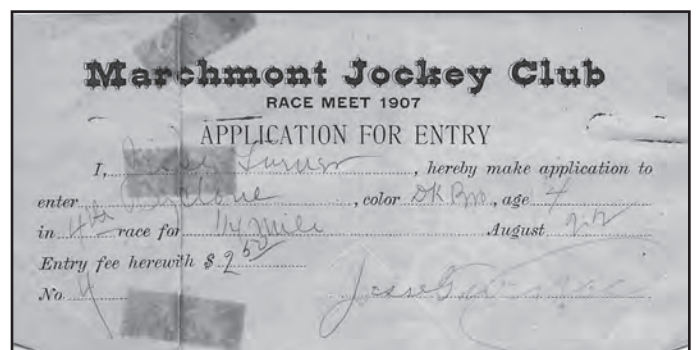
“Brownie was also a member of the Port of Gold Beach Commission in the late 1960’s. During that time the Army Corps of Engineers obtained about one million dollars to build a breakwater to protect the small boat basin damaged by winter and spring floods. When the breakwater was nearing completion, an usually high flood washed it away, and the Corps paid off the contractor and walked away.

“Fellow Port Commission members Don Wisely and Brownie were not discouraged. They took the lead in organizing local equipment owners with heavy equipment and with some help from the County and rock from Bob Knox’s quarry, they build the breakwater that still stands today. Another example of local ingenuity and a can-do spirit” and another name origin mystery solved--Coldiron Hill Road.

Schroeder, Walt. *Characters, Legends, and Mysteries of Curry County, Oregon*. Marceline, Walsworth Publishing Company, pp. 95-97, 2007.

The Marchmont Jockey Club

Marchmont Road, off North Bank Rogue River Road, is another interesting name whose



CHS Archives



***View of the finish line from the grandstands
CHS Archives***



***The racetrack area included tents,
a caretaker's house, barns, grandstand,
and a dance partition.
CHS Archive***



CHS Archives



CHS Archives

origin I've wondered about. Searching for answers led to R.D. Hume and his racetrack in 1907 and 1908.

"R.D. Hume was a lover of good horses. In 1880 he purchased two mares and a stallion and built two exercising tracks. After 1885 he kept his horses for breeding purposes only. But in 1906 he started exhibiting and racing his horses at county fairs and other race meets in southern Oregon. They made a good showing and led to higher prices for his stock and increased breeding fees.

"In early 1907 Hume had a racetrack built on a hilltop flat overlooking the Rogue River and started racing his horses against all comers. The "Sport of Kings" gave him an opportunity to play "squire" among his neighbors and to impress them with his wealth and business empire.

"Hume named his racing track and stables *The Marchmont Jockey Club*. The racetrack had a grandstand, refreshment stand, and tenting spots for overnight race enthusiasts. The 1908 season featured four races a day Monday through Thursday. People came from Marshfield (Coos Bay) and Crescent City and brought with them cash and booze. Between the horse races, baseball games and just visiting took place all around the track.

Hume died in 1908."

Schroeder, Walt. *Characters, Legends, and Mysteries of Curry County, Oregon*. Marceline, Walsworth Publishing Company, 2007.

... FROM THE MUSEUM NEWS DESK: MEMORIES OF WARREN

By Yvonne Pettyjohn

Warren Laville and his wife Mary were members of the Curry Historical Society Board where Mary served as secretary and Warren became Editor of Curry Historical Society newsletter *Echoes* when Meryl Boice resigned that position in June 2015. He was a superior researcher although he claimed he was not editor material; he excelled in making history front page information in the *Echoes* until eye issues caused him to resign his position as Editor of the *Echoes* in October 2020.

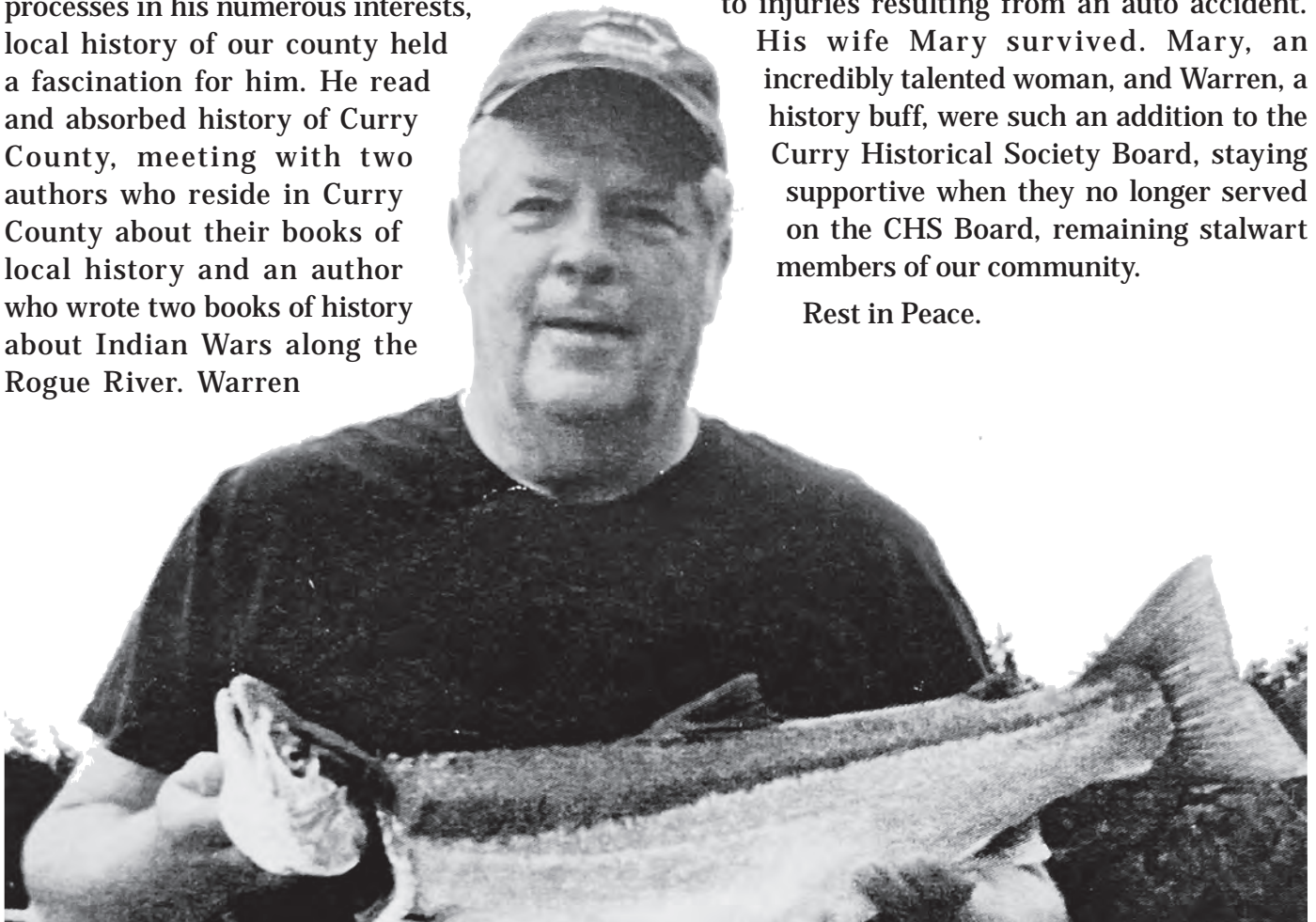
Being a man of powerful thought processes in his numerous interests, local history of our county held a fascination for him. He read and absorbed history of Curry County, meeting with two authors who reside in Curry County about their books of local history and an author who wrote two books of history about Indian Wars along the Rogue River. Warren

had a desire to begin a project to provide signage showing historical hotspots in our county. He researched and discussed the project with several people and began building a plan.

Warren was also a collector of great thoughts, ideas, projects and people. He caught the most delicious rock fish for my husband--we enjoyed the fish, it was such a treat. He authored two books gifting me a copy of both, which I read; one was hoot, and the other ended much too soon. Warren had great wit. He was a good, kind man and a dear friend to me.

On March 25, 2024, Warren passed away due to injuries resulting from an auto accident. His wife Mary survived. Mary, an incredibly talented woman, and Warren, a history buff, were such an addition to the Curry Historical Society Board, staying supportive when they no longer served on the CHS Board, remaining stalwart members of our community.

Rest in Peace.



**Warren Laville,
September 3, 1948- March 25, 2024**

HOOSKANADEN CREEK

By Mandy Keady

The first glance at this sign along Highway 101 probably requires a second or third look to even be able to guess at its pronunciation. Such a challenging name is worth a little digging to find its roots. My search turned up an intriguing article from the April 1978 issue of *Via*, Oregon Department of Transportation's newspaper.

"A creek with several names, spellings and pronunciations is still a creek, but this one has baffled Highway Division officials, map makers, librarians and history buffs: Hooskanaden Creek.

"Or is it Houstenader Creek? Ask a simple question and you end up on a week-long journey through maps and telephone conversations. The more you look, the more names—or misnomers—you find. Confusing, but fascinating.

"The creek popped into the limelight when the December rainstorms caused an extensive mud slide on Highway 101 at the creek, just south

of Pistol River on the southern Oregon coast. Damages were estimated at \$1 million.

"In compiling a press release about the slide, [an] ODOT Public Affairs Specialist... uncovered more 'official' names for the creek than he bargained for. He gave up, labeling it the 'slide area', which applies because the area is famous for mud slides.

"The confusion over the creek isn't new. In 1958, George Wills, resident engineer at Brookings, responded to an inquiry about the name from [a] construction engineer...

"... Wills wrote, 'It's my opinion that the name is of Indian origin and quite likely a proper spelling cannot be determined.' Wills found five spellings:

"Hooskanaden (from an 1893 government plat); Houshanaden (1940 Waller's Map); Houshananden (1952 Highway Map); Houstenader (1954 quadrangle sheet); and Hostenaden (1955 Metsker Map)...

"The question you have to ask is how authoritative is your source?' said Faith Steffen, ODOT librarian. The U.S. Geological Survey is considered the highest authority, she notes. The Oregon Water Resources Department is also a highly reliable source. Both use 'Hostenader Creek.'

"The U.S.G.S. based its information on quadrangle sheets, which are compiled through field research, says David Weiss, hydrologist for the Water Resource Department. 'Field crews determine local usage of the name for the sheets,' he said.

"However, locals in Curry County use Hooskanaden and scoff at the name Hostenader...

Highway workers there use Hooskanaden...

(Continued on page 13...)



This doesn't look like the site of a million dollar slide at Hooskanaden Creek near Pistol River at the southern coast, now that a gravel road has been opened. But notice the deep cracks in the earth . . . they extend for half a mile toward the beach. The entire hillside slid toward the coast during the December rainstorms, destroying the road's alignment. This temporary road was built through the slide. Plans for finishing the road are underway. An

**April 1978, *Via* Oregon Dept. of
Transportation News
CHS Archives**

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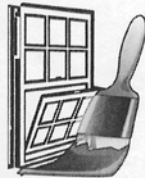
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(Continued from page 11..)

"No one knows how the U.S.G.S. found 'Houstenader' but there are theories... The variety of names stems from the numerous persons who researched the area, including a Dutchman who may have mispronounced 'Hooskanaden.' Another theory holds that handwriting in old files may have faded through the years turning N's into R's and O's into U's, etc.

"But even Hooskanaden is considered another mispronunciation of yet another name. According to Dodge History, a book about Curry County, the creek was named after the Wish-Te-Na-Tan Indian tribe, who lived in the area at the mouth of the creek. This name was first recorded in 1854...

"Ms. Steffen noted that ODOT will approach the Oregon Board of Geographical Names for a final decision of the creek's official name."

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regarding how Jerry's Flat Road got its name

Gold Beach Chamber of Commerce: an album covering the events in Curry County in 1996
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From Maureen Wellborn:

- map of Curry County, Oregon
- postal doll
- six letters addressed "To You" carried by the postal letter carrier doll
- postmaster desk items – nameplates and paper weights
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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.