

Brooks Historical Society Newsletter

2008 Vol. 2

Oregon's BiCentennial will be 2009

We gather, preserve and make available material relating to the history of Brooks and neighboring communities having natural, economical and cultural affinity

Historic Family of 2008: Aspinwall

Recognition and Reception: June 22, 2008



ASPINWALL FAMILY CELEBRATION

The Aspinwall Bros. were front and center in Brooks history. In 1902 patriarch Ashley Marion Aspinwall and wife Ellen left South Dakota and settled in Brooks with their seven sons and two daughters. Familiar to many longtime Brooks friends were Britt and Carl.

No.2 son Britt, married to Elva LaFollott, was Postmaster and Freight Agent at the Brooks Southern Pacific Railroad Station as early as 1905. He also served on the Waconda School Board, was Precinct committeeman and held the Waconda Precinct elections in his garage at the corner of River and Waconda Roads. In the 1920s and 1930s No.5 son Carl was the Brooks Postmaster.

The father, Ashley, and sons Britt, Jay Pierre, Hugh and Carl, were all involved in trend-setting fruit and berry growing, especially in the advancement of loganberries. Ashley died in 1908 but the Aspinwall Bros. continued on with berries and as orchardists,

growing cherries, peaches, pears and prunes for canning, drying and the fresh fruit market. They operated the Oregon Loganberry Co. in Polk County, first and probably largest company in Oregon. There were also the Brooks Fruit Growers Assoc., the Oak Grove Fruit Farm, Salem Fruit Union and Aspinwall's Big A Orchards.

Widow Ellen Aspinwall moved to Salem in 1913. With her at times were Harold, Mark, Kenneth and Helen. Son No.1 Ray had left Brooks for Salem and vicinity in 1929, son No.3 Phillip by 1915, son No.4 Jay Pierre by 1938, son No.6 Hugh by 1926 and son no. 7 Mark by 1917. Families of many of these sons and daughters still live in Salem.

Along with Ashley's family of 11 children, he had nine brothers and sisters. We have been in contact with at least four of those families. Both lines of descendants are blessed with excellent genealogists who have been most helpful and sharing of information and pictures.

Members and friends of Brooks Historical Society and of the Aspinwalls are most welcome to come to the Pioneer Family of the Year Celebration. It is Sunday, June 22 at the Brooks Depot Museum on the grounds of Antique Powerland. Sunday is part of the Society's "Free Weekend" but there is a Swap Meet the same day so you need identification to get in free. Call 503-390-0698 or 503-393-2053 for more information.



Mid Willamette Valley Before Statehood

Part two of four

This is the second in a four part series of the tale of the peoples and industries of the Mid-Willamette Valley, particularly French Prairie, as it was prior to Statehood.

Fur Trade and Explorations

Change came to the Native Americans in the early 18th Century as the Spanish, British and American ships began exploring the Pacific Ocean along the west coast of North America. The fur trade began with these great maritime explorers. Both Spanish and British ships converged along the west coast in the latter part of the 1700s, vying for safe harbors. They traded with the Indians for Sea Otter pelts which brought a high price in Canton where fuel was limited to cooking and much warm clothing was needed. The seamen gave the Indians much desired iron tools and beads, but they also left behind the first white man's diseases. The occasional attempts to land along the Oregon coast were not well received by the residents. Most of the favorable straits and ports were north of the Columbia River.

The first citizen of the United States to leave a lasting impact on the history of the Pacific Northwest was Captain Robert Gray, a Boston sea captain who came in 1788 on the sloop Lady Washington. In mid-1789 he returned to Boston on the Columbia via Hawaii and Canton, the first American to circumnavigate the globe. Gray came again to the Northwest on the Columbia. He found Gray's Harbor, and on May 11, 1792 entered a great river he named the Columbia. The American ships eventually drove out the Spanish and British traders.

Overland explorers and trade missions started with the British coming west from their stronghold in Canada in the northeastern part of North America. The North West Fur Company and the Hudson's Bay Company were fur trapping in the early 19th Century in the mid-west. They built many forts and settlements for trapping and trading. Americans did not build many forts in the Pacific Northwest during the trading days. Important to us on French Prairie was Fort Astoria, founded by John Jacob Aster's Pacific Fur Company. Two parties, one by ship, the other

overland, were sent to the mouth of the Columbia River in 1811. The men of the ship Tonquin arrived first and built Fort Astoria. The overland group was led by Wilson Price Hunt and arrived in 1812. Fort Astoria was a community of trappers, traders and their families. The War of 1812 forced the Americans to sell out to the North West Co. in 1813. Most of the trappers joined the Nor'Westers (later assumed by Hudson's Bay Co.) in order to stay in Oregon. Fort Vancouver, giant of all trading posts, was the focal point of the fur trade from 1825-1846. The Hudson's Bay Co. became an active participant in the settlement of the Willamette Valley when their retiring employees chose not to return to company headquarters in Quebec.

Other expeditions and brigades during this period were led by Tom McKay 1820, Nathaniel Wyeth in 1832, first all American expedition, and Peter Skene Ogden 1824.

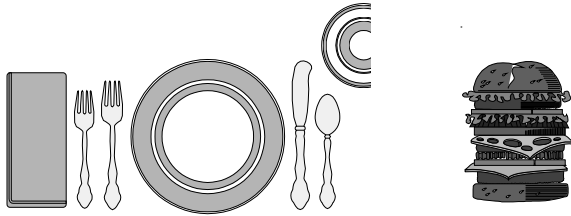
Old World Diseases Enter Oregon Territory

Oregon-Washington had an Indian population of some 55,000 in 1780. By 1850 the number dropped to around 13,000 as disease and other factors took their toll. More than anything else they suffered from disease brought unintentionally by the whites, carried by explorers sailors, fur traders and settlers. Old World diseases moving to New Worlds went with the opening of new lands.

Ships trading for sea otter brought Smallpox to the Indians along the coastal waterways as early as 1775 and on to 1855. Lewis and Clark noted in 1805 that the local Indians lacked the vigor of the Indians they encountered across the plains. The greatest killer of all was an 1830-33 epidemic that began at Fort Vancouver and ran along the lower 200 miles of the Columbia and the lower 100 miles of the Willamette Rivers. It was known as "Intermittent Fever" now thought to be Malaria.

Of the four major epidemics the above two came by sea. Another epidemic of Smallpox was brought by wagon trains in 1852-53 to the upper Columbia River region. The emigrants also brought measles and cholera in 1846-47.

BBQ with Desert
Son's and Daughter's of Labish
Saturday June 21,2008
Place: Labish Center Church
Time: 11AM
Cost: \$12.95
Catered by "Adam's Ribs"
RSVP: Jack Lowery—503-551-8385



The Sons of Labish are in the process of preparing volume three on the crops grown in the lake bottem

Calendar of Events

April 6

First **Steam-up Meeting**

June 1

4th annual **Highschool car show**

June 21 & 22

Brooks Historic Society Weekend
 Local History and stories of times past

July 11-13

International Harvester
 Great Western Harvest Bee

July 19

Vintage Car and Motorcycle Museum
 Swap meet and car show

1st Tuesdays 6 PM

Powerland Site Meeting
 Dennys in Woodburn

2nd Wednesdays 7 AM

Sons of Labish
 Breakfast meeting

July 26-27, August 2-3

Great Oregon Steam-Up

NEW MATERIAL IN OUR MUSEUM

We have aquired many Old Brooks School Photos and Farming Labish Photos.

If you are interested helping identifying them contact Brooks Historical 503-390-0698 or stop by the Depot Museum First Sat. of each Month. We are eager to meet with you. At other times please call first to make arrangements.

Brooks Grade School Memorabilia Returned

Many photos and articles were collected for the Brooks Grade School Book in 1983. When questioning the School officials much to our sadness we were told the info and photos used had been lost. Just a few weeks ago Mr. James found the Lost box in his possession He brought it to our Depot Museum. We will be forever grateful.

There are many photos that we are trying to identify and if you have any time and can look at some let us know.

Also many old farming photos, Japanese Agriculture, Labish, and Onion warehouse also need folks identified.

Come see all the historical books and collections we have.

Also have some of those books For Sale.

Watch for some Stories from the past coming in the next few newsletters taken from the returned collection.

Contact Brooks Historical at 503-390-0698

Silent Auction Collection Time

Our 5th annual Silent Auction is one of our best fund raisers

of the year. It is time to collect items for this event.

Held each year

the first Saturday of The Great Oregon Steam-Up. This year will be held July 26, 2008.

Please ask anyone you can -remember we are a 501c3 Non-Profit and will furnish tax receipt.

If you have plants, services, or new items please contact us at 503-390-0698 or 503-393-2053

Welcome New Members:

Jack Lowery

Joe Hynes

Marvin Lander

Pat Rawlinson

In Memory of Members of our Community

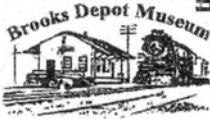
Sumi Oshiro

Brooks Historical Society

1 (503) 390-0698

3995 Brooklake Rd. NE
Brooks, OR 97303

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9265
Brooks, OR 97305



MISSION STATEMENT

The objective of the Brooks Historical Society and Depot Museum is to be educational, to stimulate an interest in, and a knowledge of, the history of Brooks, Oregon, and the surrounding area.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- Adult Member ----- \$12.00
- Student Membership ----- \$ 5.00
(Elementary and High School)
- Business Membership ----- \$30.00
- Donation ----- \$

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/zip: _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

**Checks should be written to
Brooks Historical Society
Mail to: PO Box 9265
Brooks, OR 97305**

OFFICERS and BOARD

- President - Raverta Corbett
- Vice-President - Frank Cunningham
- Treasurer - Dorene Standish
- Recording Secretary - Adele Egan
- Correspondence Secretary -
Marilyn Schlechter Barner
- Board - Bev Cuff Singer
Ray Smith
Louis Sowa
June Smith

MEETINGS

The Brooks Historical Society meets at the Brooks Depot Museum at 10AM the first Saturday of the month.
Directions to the museum at Antique Powerland:
From I-5 - take Exit 263 -- go west approx. 1/4 mile to: Antique Powerland 3995 Brooklake Road, Brooks, OR 97303