

Wasco County Historical Society

Spring 2025



1850 Moody/Rorick House

Bonneville Lock and Dam: A Gift from the People of the Great Depression **Saturday, June 7, 2025, 11:00 a.m.**

St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel
601 Union St.
The Dalles, OR

Pat Barry spent nearly three decades as the lead park ranger at the Bonneville Lock and Dam Visitor Center. Join Pat as he shares an insider's view of the dam's history and tells stories about this northwest icon in an entertaining and interactive illustrated talk. He will be covering everything from construction, to floods, to power, river traffic, salmon, Bonneville in films and television and more. Test your knowledge about Bonneville while you enjoy rare photos. There will be time for questions and an opportunity to purchase Pat's book, *Bonneville Lock and Dam: A Gift from the People of the Great Depression*.

Aug. 9th, Saturday, 11:00 a.m., Moody/Rorick House, PAULA KUTTNER, said by her friends to be a local "Historian Extraordinaire", will share her 28 years at Ft. Dalles Museum with its history and dedicated fellow historians who preserved it to what we enjoy today! Her experiences included community outreach, training volunteers & staff, preservation of artifacts, setting up and expanding the exhibits, etc.

Life at Maryhill Museum and the Great Sam Hill & Loie Fuller **Saturday, July 12, 2025, 11 :00 a.m.**

Moody/Rorick House
300 W 13th St.
The Dalles, OR

Colleen Schafroth, Director Emeritus at Maryhill Museum of Art will share about Maryhill Museum of Art's history from its inception by Sam Hill and Loie Fuller through her time at the museum-its successes, challenges, and rewards-from her perspective.



President's Message WCHS, Spring 2025

Spring Greetings Friends!

“The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future”

Theodor Roosevelt, Writer, Naturalist, Soldier, Cowboy, President 1901-1909

The weather is beautiful - feels like we went straight from winter to summer! The Rorick House grounds are looking gorgeous thanks to Gardener Audrey and Board members who planted perennials and bulbs last year, looking forward to a bonanza of spring blossoms! The grape hyacinth planted decades ago continues its' rogue take-over of the back forty, and the Oregon Grape “Mahonia” is exploding with yellow blooms! Huge shout-out to Charlie for tackling so many projects and making the House safer, more secure, and showcasing its' vintage beauty by design! Let's review the history of “The Oldest House in The Dalles” ...

The Moody/Rorick House, head quarters for the Wasco County Historical Society, was built in 1850, probably by a noncommissioned officer stationed at brand new Camp Drum, later known as Fort Dalles. Most of the military property became part of Dalles City in 1884. The house was bought by Malcolm Moody, who owned it until his death in 1925. Moody was a fine merchant and US Congressman 1898-1904, also was son of Zenas Moody, governor of Oregon 1882-86. In 1916 Moody raised the parlor ceiling with scissor trusses and added the parlor fireplace with basalt stone from the Fort's bakery. He also enlarged the house with the dining room addition. Moody never lived in the house himself but rented it out. Moody left the property to his dear friends Anne and Elizabeth Lang. The Lang sisters were cultured New England women noted for their devotion to education and philanthropy. They were also devoted to Malcolm Moody: one was briefly engaged to marry him, but seemingly he could not choose between them.

The three remained close all their lives and none ever married. The Lang sisters lived in a house in town that Moody built for them. In 1929, they sold the little house to newly-weds Eck & May Rorick who lived in it their entire married lives. The Roricks built the small bedroom for May's mother when she came to stay with them in 1933, and the attractive family/dining room in 1951, with the 1916 dining room reserved for Eck's grand piano, noting that he only played the black keys in F. Also admire May's decorative cabinet paintings as well! It was the Rorick's wish that their home would be left to an organization which would preserve it. In 1991 it became the property of non-profit WCHS. The house is a registered The Dalles Landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (Historic The Dalles Day 2003 Bulletin) HISTORY NEVER GETS OLD!

 *Jamie Crouse*, President

UPCOMING EVENTS

2025 CALENDAR

FUN & NECESSARY EVENTS

May 24-25 Memorial Day Weekend

IOOF Cemetery 18th & Cherry Hts Rd
Greetings/Snacks/Info Hosted by WCHS

June 7 Program: Bonneville Lock & Dam

St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel
601 Union Street, The Dalles
with Pat Berry: see flyer for details
Bonneville Visitor Center Manager

July 12 Program: Life at Maryhill Museum

and the Great Sam Hill & Loie Fuller
The Historic Moody/Rorick House
300 West 13th, The Dalles
with Colleen Schafroth, see flyer for details
Director Emeritus Maryhill Museum of Art

August 9 Program: The Accidental Historian

The Historic Moody/Rorick House
300 West 13th, The Dalles
with Paula Kuttner, see flyer for details
Manager Fort Dalles Museum

August 14-17 Wasco County Fair

WCHS Booth Vintage Historical Scenes
Wasco County Century Farms & Information
Fairgrounds Road, Tygh Valley

August 22 - Sept 1 Oregon State Fair

Criterion School from South Wasco County
4-H and Open Class Exhibits
Oregon State Fairgrounds, Salem, OR

October or November

Annual WCHS Membership Meeting
Details TBD

(Originally published in *The Dalles Optimist*, Friday, October 8, 1926. Reprinted here with no changes, although references to modern locations have been added for the sake of clarity.)

HISTORY OF GRAVITY WATER SYSTEM TOLD

By Mrs. Lulu D. Crandall

On the top of the bluff immediately back and south of the Court street school building [now the *State Office Building*] may be seen a substantial stone wall of native basalt, laid up in cement. It has the appearance of a fortress or a fortification. Old Fort Dalles had no need for such protection against the Indians. This wall is the last evidence we have of a protection greater than again [sic] Indians, that of protection against fires. Fires, which in our light and dry climate, with the prevailing west winds have always been so disastrous and dreaded.

This wall is the west side of the first water storage reservoir that supplied the homes in The Dalles with running water and sprinkled the yards for the first lawns of white clover, and irrigated the Lombardy poplars and weeping willows, that were planted in the streets, that soon gave a beautiful appearance to the pioneer town that had been only sand and rocks.

This reservoir was put into use late in December of 1862. Prior to that time "Waterman Johnny", an exceedingly genial Irishman, conducted a thriving business by selling Columbia river water to the homes at "two bits" a barrel. He drove a big gray horse, hitched to a two-wheeled dray which had on it an immense cask fastened on the tilting deck. This he drove down on the sand beach and into the river deep enough to fill his cask without further dipping. Then he jogged around town to the back doors and filled up the family water barrel. There was no water wasted in those days.

During the rainy season a trough was arranged to drain the rain from the roof to a big barrel. This rain water was used in doing the "family wash", being exceedingly soft, while the well water, which soon ran "Waterman Johnny" out of business, was hard.

It took some time to dig wells in those days in



our rocky back yards. Only old-fashioned black powder was available and often could not be used, and the solid rock had to be "hand picked" a very tedious and expensive job, before water was struck at a depth of 15 or 20 feet.

Old Fort Dalles was supplied with water from Mill creek, carried in a wagon full of water barrels, drawn by a mule team driven by a soldier. He was always on the job and as the parade ground was covered with white clover and it was watered from these barrels. The white clover was called "lucerne", as it had been introduced from Lucerne, Switzerland, by Father Fouissaint Mesplie, the first resident priest of St. Peter's mission. It was from the "garrison" that the white clover sod was cut for the gardens down town and the seed was blown and "ran wild" and settled at the springs or other damp places. Some of it is recognized yet as the "lucerne" of Old Fort Dalles days.

The wonderful "Wasco spring" on the high school block that supplies the buildings was called the "Government Spring" and watered the very fine gardens cultivated by the sol-

diers on that flat.

Many householders brought their buckets and kegs to this spring for drinking water that was always cool in summer and never froze up in winter. There were several other springs on the bluff besides this one. There was a fine spring on the W.N. Wiley block where is located the "Sugar Leaf Rock" [*Sugar Loaf Rock, 318 W. 11th Street*]. Both of these had been used by the Wascopam mission from 1838 to 1848.

Another spring in the Neyce and Gibson tract [*area bounded by present day Kelly Avenue, Federal Street, 10th Street and 7th Street*], now called the "Mays tract" was piped and furnished five or six families. Down town were fine springs on the Laughlin claim [*bounded by Laughlin, Taylor, 1st and 5th streets*] and other claims which were of inestimable value.

With wells came windmills and with our prevailing winds, the cisterns were kept full and wonderful gardens grew where before was only sand and rock.

By the year 1862 the town had grown so fast that the opportunity presented itself to one Robert Pentland, of Portland, who had had some experience with the water system of that city, to come to The Dalles and establish a system here.

He came in the spring of that year, bringing his family, consisting of his wife, Mrs. Jane Pentland, and a daughter, Miss Anna Pentland, then a talented young lady of about 22 years of age, and two small sons, Edwin and Charles.

Pentland had money enough to acquire the right to the "head" on Mill creek on the old Rogers place, about a mile from town, where he put in a dam and carried the water across the government flat, which is now the Old



Fort Dalles Military Reservation, to Dalles City about ground in a box flume, and emptied it into the reservoir on the bluff on court street. It is the west side of the reservoir that is still standing [*portion still visible today*]. The dimensions of the reservoir were about 18x12feet by five feet deep and it held a sufficient quantity of water for domestic use, unless a fire was raging, then it soon emptied.

The mains were laid down town by December, 1862, and great was the rejoicing in the homes when a tap was set in the kitchen sink and a hose in the yard.

As the town grew more water was needed than Mill creek could supply, and Pentland went up to Newell's prairie, now called Books [*sic*] Meadows, and dug a ditch connecting a small stream called Dog creek, that formerly emptied into "Dog river," now Hood river, into Mill creek. This ditch eventually became a part of The Dalles water system as we have it today.

The Pentlands were English. Robert Pentland left his family, wife and daughter, then little more than an infant in England, and came to the United States in time to take the emigrant train, in 1845, that was called "the lost train". This was the trail that found the first gold in Eastern Oregon, the famous "Blue Bucket Mine." Arriving at Oregon City he worked for Dr. McLoughlin, in his flour mill as miller.

In conjunction with the water works in this city Pentland built a mill at the end of Third street called the City Mill, where he manufactured a fine brand of flour. The Pentland mill building is still standing and is now called the "city barn" where the horses owned by the city are kept.

Pentland was a public spirited man and did more than any other to encourage the farmers to plow the bunch grass hills and sow wheat and rye. He was strong for schools, churches, and any opportunities that came to town for the education of pleasure of our people.

His daughter, anna, taught school for several years before her marriage to Samuel L. Brooks. The old-fashioned house at the end of Fourth street, now owned by Joe Stadelman, for years the Dr. Shackelford home, was built by Robert Pentland, and was a fine house in its day.

The Pentland home was always open to give hospitality to the stranger of note who came to the pioneer town.

Pioneer Plaque and Picture Album Story 2016 to 2020

Jamie Tenneson Crause asked me to write about the creation of the 4 large picture albums that are in the Wasco County Pioneer Collection for the spring 2025 WCHS newsletter.

This project started with a discussion in a Pioneer meeting in 2016 about the Several brass plaques that the Pioneer Association had installed in the 1940s. The first one I was aware of was on the Oregon Trail Monument just west of Biggs Junction on Old Hwy 30 placed by the Wasco Count Pioneers in 1940. It is being relocated because it was discovered that the monument was on private property and ODOT is preparing to move it a little farther west in the Public right of way. Most of us at the Pioneer meeting had not known about them or had forgotten. Another plaque is on the Columbia Basin property on West 10th Street marking the location of the original Catholic settlement 300 feet to the south. The DAR also has 7 plaques marking historic locations and grave stones in the Pioneer Cemetery and thanks to Rose Denslinger for providing them. There is one on the north side of the door on the front of City Hall. The reason for this project was concern that brass plaques get stolen and sold for the value of the metal and without a picture of a plaque it is hard to replace.

I started by taking pictures of the plaques as I found them and then I noticed that there were so many other features that are part of the local history. So often questions are asked about what a building or street looked like in the past. I continued taking pictures of signs, buildings, construction features, and any other item I thought interesting especially those that change by construction, use of ownership, weather, and unintended mishaps. An example are the changes at the Sunshine Mill appearance as compared to the 1980s when it was a flour mill. We have old pictures from the turn of the century but often do not know of changes in mid-century or just 20 years back. I believed that the “era of now” needed to be recorded so I continued taking pictures around town and the county. From 2016 to 2020 I added the Historic Highway to the west and 197 south to Dufur and Maupin on to Antelope one Christmas when snow was on the ground. The jail cell was still there! And a stop in snowy Shaniko! Then the County Fair entrance with all the beautiful rock work at the entry. Picture taking continued with the help of Rose, Jan Leininger, Linda Oram, Jean Vercouteran, and Widge Johnson.



When Covid-19 closed us down in 2020, I had taken two shoe boxes full of pictures so I decided it was time to put all these pictures into an album. I had the pictures in envelopes by subject and location. Only one copy of each. It took most of a year but I would not stop until my kitchen table was cleared and the 4 volumes were finished.

They are titled “INVENTORY OF HISTORICAL PLAQUES, SIGNS, BUILDINGS & OTHER UNIQUE FEATURES OF WASCO COUNTY 2016-2020”.

Each volume is subtitled by location

Vol. I Columbia River to 3rd Street from Mill Creek to the East Roundabout on 2nd Street,

Vol. II Fourth Street to Scenic Drive from Mill Creek to Dry Hollow Road,

Vol. III Mosier to Mill Creek from Columbia River to 10th Street, and

Vol. IV East of 2nd Street Roundabout to Deschutes River from the Airport at Dallesport south on Hwy 197 to Dufur, Tygh Valley, Wamic, Maupin, Bakeoven, Shaniko & Antelope.

They have been available for viewing at a WCHS meeting a couple of times. I want folks to know that these albums exist and fulfill the goal of recording a part of our beautiful Wasco County history. My goal was and is to provide a source for answers to the future questions about what plaques and features looked like in the 2020 era.

By Carolyn Wood
541-980-8469

WASCO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

It's time to renew your membership to Wasco County Historical Society! Benefits you will enjoy:

- Summer Programs & Timely Newsletters on Historical Topics
- Preservation of Historical Wasco County Memorabilia
- Network with Local Historians and Vintage Lovers

We're looking forward to another great year together, and just check out the different membership levels available... Please consider a Patron or Sustaining designation, it makes a big difference in our ability to care for our vintage 1850's cottage and grounds! Business/Corporate level Sponsors~~Yes Please! Let us know if you have questions and we'll get right back to you! Cheers to another great year together and being a part of our Wasco County History legacy ~~ Many thanks again for your continuing support!

With Gratitude,

Jamie Crouse/President ~ Audrey Crader/VP ~ Ruth Cutler/Sec ~ Tedd Lovell/Treasurer

Board: JuDee Clark/Carol Root Seeber/Charlie Remington/ Amy Kaser/Paula Kuttner/Jill Durow

Wasco County Historical Society 2025/2026 Membership 300 West 13th Street, The Dalles, OR 97058

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone/Cell _____

E-Mail _____

Wasco County Historical Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

_____ Individual \$25

_____ Family \$35

_____ Sustaining \$50

_____ Business \$50

_____ Patron \$100

.....
Please keep this receipt for your tax records.

Wasco County Historical Society 501c3 # 93-1081765

Date _____

Amount: _____



1850 Moody/Rorick House

Wasco County Historical Society
300 West 13th Street
The Dalles OR 97058



Attr: Rembrandt Peale, 1800
White House Archives

*Thomas Jefferson, 3rd President of the United States 1801-1809. American statesman, diplomat, lawyer, architect, philosopher, and Founding Father
Primary author of the Declaration of Independence, 1776*



*A Visit to Colonial Williamsburg
"History is not there for us to like or dislike.
History is there for us to learn from."
-- Kurt Smith, interpreter at Colonial Williamsburg*

*"I love when people come and suddenly they realize they're not just talking to... an actor who has a script, they realize that you can ask Thomas Jefferson anything,"
--Kurt Smith, who has interpreted the author of the Declaration of Independence for nine years.*

...The real Jefferson wrote over 50,000 letters in his lifetime, and Smith has read them all. "When I first came on here, I was given six months of study..." he told me. "My job is to present Jefferson as honestly and as truthfully as we have," he said... My job is to just get him right."

-- By Laura Jedeed for Politico