**Welcome to our Summer 2017 newsletter!**

There is a lot going on in Independence this summer to include an eclipse and off the chart temperatures! Here at the Museum, we’re looking at ways to update and rotate exhibits. To be able to rotate exhibits, we need to have some free space in our storage areas and we don’t. So, we’ve been evaluating our stored items to see what we can do with them all. Looking through these items has made us all a bit nostalgic for the Museum’s early days. As such, this issue focuses partly on those early days and events and the key supporters who made them happen!

**The Past: Museum opens Sunday**

*Reprinted from the Sun-Enterprise, June 30, 1976*

Doors of the Heritage Museum in Independence will open July 4 [1976] after nearly one year of preparation. Ribbon cutting ceremonies for the museum are planned with a number of local dignitaries expected at 2 p.m.

The Heritage Museum is located in the old First Baptist Church building at Third and B Streets in the city, a building purchased a year ago. During the year, the Museum Committee, under the direction of Virginia Miller, has set the foundation for the facility with fundraising events and a membership drive. During the past month, they have been accepting donations and loans of items that can be used for display.

In addition to several displays of local historical significance, the museum opening will also feature the private collection of Rob Page which includes ancient artifacts from the classical world.

Page has also arranged for a display of pre-Columbian, North American Indian artifacts dating from 800-1400 A.D. loaned to the museum by Aladdin House, a private firm in New York.
The Past: Blanchard: pilot, painter

Reprinted from the Itemizer-Observer, May 1985, by Julie Strong, Staff Writer

He is both a painter and a pilot.

And Mel Blanchard of Independence has combined the skills and experience of the two in creating large, detailed portraits of airplanes.

Eleven of his acrylic paintings are on display through the month of May at the Heritage Museum in Independence as part of the Imagination Celebration in Monmouth and Independence. They depict the early, simple planes from 1916 that a person could just about build in his backyard, Blanchard said, and others up to the sophisticated F/A-18 Hornet of 1985. Most of them are military “war birds,” he added, with his favorite the FB/5 of 1916.

His love of airplanes began at age 3, when he looked up at one and promptly wanted to ride in it. His first trip was at 13 and he received his pilot’s license at 28. He spent 10 years in the U.S. Air Force.

Blanchard owns two airplanes that he keeps at the Independence Airport. One he built himself, although he admits, “it’s kind of weird-looking.”

Before beginning to do a painting of an airplane, Blanchard pours over four or five books and is careful and accurate of the markings and details of each.

His interest in painting also began as a kid, he said, when he realized he could draw just about anything. He has a degree in art from Portland State and spent 15 years as a art teacher in Madras, and 11 years at Hillcrest School.

The Past: Heritage Museum receives grant

Reprinted from the Itemizer-Observer, July 17, 1985

Heritage Museum, 3rd and B Streets in Independence, will receive evaluations and recommendations for future direction and goal setting for professional consultancy services during fiscal year 1985-86.

The work will be funded by a Museum Assessment Program grant of $1,000 that was awarded the museum recently from the Institute of Museum Services, a division of the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities.

Paintings of airplanes dating from 1916 to 1985 by Mel Blanchard of Independence are on exhibit through May 1985 at the Heritage Museum (Photo Julie Strong)
The Past: Independence hosts tours Sunday

Reprinted from the Sun-Enterprise, September 23, 1987

Two events—a tour of historic homes and an open house at the Heritage Museum—are scheduled for Sunday [September 27, 1987]. Both events are open to the public.

The Historic Independence Interior House Tour of six homes in the area will be from 1-5 p.m. The tour is sponsored by the Independence Historical Preservation Corporation. Tickets are $5 and are available at any of the homes open to the public. The historic homes are Riley B. Cooper House, 1887, 4450 Independence Highway; J.A. Wheeler House, 1880, 386 Monmouth; McKinney House, 1905, 614 S. 5th St; the Patton House, 1915, 562 S. 6th; the Ferguson House, 1905, 214 S. 7th, and the Cox House, 1890, 729 S. C St.

Also open, no admission, the Presbyterian Church (Independence Women’s Club), 1862, 340 S. 3rd St.

The Heritage Museum, 3rd and B Streets, will host their annual “Fall Homecoming” on Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Two new displays, refreshments, and music played on a 100-year-old organ will be featured in the open house. There is no admission charge, but donations will be accepted.

The new displays include model shipbuilding by Harry Bernhard of West Salem and a selection of the achievements of Francis Holt, Independence businessman, inventor and engineer.

In addition, Charles Stone of Independence will have faceted and cabochon stones on display. Cookies, coffee, and apple cider pressed on the spot in a Whitman’s Americus Press, circa 1880s, also will be available.

Ginny Cronk will play the 100-year-old Estey & Co. organ and Russell Seleen will accompany on the banjo.

Hosts and hostesses will be on hand to answer any questions.

The Past: Display opens at Heritage

Reprinted from the Sun-Enterprise, April 16, 1986

Currently on display at the Heritage Museum, Third and B St., Independence, are Ken and Delores Brinkeroff’s fairy tale plate collection and Hubbard Duncan’s iron collection.

Brinkeroff’s plate collection consists of china plates with colorful designs of the Grimm Brothers Fairy Tales as well as other favorites: The Shoemaker and the Elves, Rapunzel, and the Little Mermaid.

The Duncan collection consists of historical irons. They range in type from a gasoline iron, a charcoal burner and an early electric model. Included in the display is one belonging to Duncan’s mother, the oldest in the collection.
The Past: Museum steeple, tower being repaired

Reprinted from the Sun-Enterprise July 8, 1992

The 24-foot high steeple and bell tower atop the Independence Heritage Museum will be back in place one of these days soon. There’s been a team of volunteers helping contractor Del Venenga for weeks now restore that aspect of the former First Baptist Church.

“It’ll be just like it was in 1888 when they built it,” Venenga said the other day. Venenga has had much experience restoring old buildings and received an award from the City of Salem for one project of his.

Helping him put thing back to original condition have been Dennis Eberly, Bill Baker, El Agena, Chuck Grell, Bill Nix, Randy Sims and Fran Ingblom.

The museum society is saving the original shingles that have been removed during restoration. They are available to people as collector’s items for donations to the museum to help offset restoration costs.

“The shingles have all been stamped showing 1888,” according to Bill Baker, who has put in 50 volunteer hours so far. “Donations would be tax deductible, remember.”

Up to now the restoration has cost about $7,000. “And there’ll be another $8,000 to get the steeple up,” Baker said.

And when the steeple is finally up there will be the chiming of a bell again, too, not the original, but one donated by Lila Vanderhoof.

Many people believe the old church steeple was toppled during the famous Columbus Day Storm, but that is not so. The steeple had been taken down four years earlier because it had shifted on its base.
The Past: Tools help recount history

Reprinted from the Statesman Journal, May 18, 1991

Dennis Eberly likes hands on history.

And he has the tools to teach it—tools handed down from a great-grandfather who built buggies and wagons that carried westward-bound pioneers around town and across the plains.

Eberly’s great-grandfather, John Lewis Eberly, owned a wagon and buggy shop in Sioux City, Iowa, during the 1850s and moved into the carpentry business in the 1860s. The hand tools from both businesses were passed down through the Eberly family, falling into Dennis Eberly’s hands in the 1960s.

Eberly first used the wheelwright tools to restore a badly deteriorated front wheel from a wagon that had carried a great uncle on the Oregon Trail in 1890. Then, together with his son Troy, Eberly used them to build a wagon wheel replica that he still uses for demonstrations.

“My joy is demonstrating these tools and showing people how they work and making them live again,” he said.

The antique tools include wooden mallets and block planes, steel draw knives and spoke shaves, and a spoke pointer that resembles an oversized pencil sharpener.

Eberly keeps them in top working condition; a draw knife manufactured in 1832, for example, still boasts a razor-sharp edge.

A fourth-grade teacher at Henry Hill Elementary School in Independence, Eberly also uses the tools to give his students hands-on lessons in Oregon history.

“It just makes it come alive that someone they know has had a hand in creating a wagon wheel,” he said.

The students, he added, are fascinated with antiques. “The children love them,” he said. “They’re amazed that anything can be that old and still work.”

Dennis Eberly will demonstrate use of antique tools from noon to 2:30 p.m. Sunday at the Heritage Museum in Independence as part of this weekend’s Independence Historic Celebration.
Heritage Museum Society Corner!

It takes the whole diverse community of the Independence area to keep our museum going forward. When several Western Oregon University students visited the Heritage Museum a few months ago, they liked what they saw, but wanted more. They wanted to make a contribution – not with a cash donation, but with their time, effort, and expertise. They made a second visit with their University Sociology Professor, Dr. Maureen Dolan, and suggested an expansion of the Latino displays in the museum and the development of a bi-lingual docent program. These students had been involved in the Inclusivity Resolution passed by the Monmouth City Council in April of this year and wanted to extend their outreach to the area museum.

In a joint effort by the students and their professor, the Heritage Museum Society, and the Heritage Museum, several existing panels regarding the Latino influence in Independence to include the Braceros program, will be translated into Spanish by this group of students.

On June 2nd, a panel discussion regarding inclusion and local Latino history was also held. The discussion was led by Monmouth Mayor, Steve Milligan. He pointed out the need to include all people in the community, honoring their diverse points of view, ethnic background, abilities and disabilities. WOU students and MEChA members, WOU President Rex Fuller and The Heritage Museum, represented by Museum Assistant Shannon Cockayne, also participated in the panel.

Once the panels are translated, they will be displayed first at Western Oregon University and then will move to a location in Independence. Eventually the panels will become part of a permanent cultural exhibit at the Heritage Museum.

We appreciate all Heritage Museum Society members’ support for this and other ongoing society projects. Not a member yet? Please check out the back cover of this newsletter for all the details and a membership form.

Heritage Museum Society Bylaws Update

The Heritage Museum Society Board is recommending the addition of two new sections to their bylaws. These additions will clarify Board participation for applicants. They are as follows:

Article III – Members
Section 2. All Board of Directors will be required to be members of HMS.

Article IV – Directors
Section 9. All Board of Directors members are required to have a vetting Background Check to adhere to the Heritage Museum Policy.

The Board requests that members who disagree with the above changes please email their questions or concerns to orheritage@ci.independence.or.us by July 30th. Members who agree with the changes need not respond. No response implies agreement with the changes.
We’re stuffed!
**Upcoming Events**

**Event Name:** Architecture of Internment Exhibit  
**Day:** Weekdays, August 15 - 25  
**Time:** 8:00 am - 5:00 pm  
**Place:** Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main Street, 2nd floor lobby.

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**Become a Member to Support Your Museum**

Membership fees and monetary donations go to the non-profit Heritage Museum Society. *Benefits of membership include, but are not limited to, newsletters, special events notices, and 10% off purchases.*

Return this section and make checks payable to:

Heritage Museum Society  
P.O. Box 7  
Independence, OR 97351

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Name: __________________________________________________________________________________________

Mailing Address: _________________________________________________________________________________

City: _______________________________

State: _____ Zip: ________

Best contact phone number: _________________________________

E-mail: _________________________________________________________________________________________

*Allowing us to email notices reduces use of natural resources and mailing expenses. We respect your privacy and will not use your email for any other purpose.*

Please circle the type of membership you would like:

Senior: $10.00  Individual: $25.00  Family: $50.00  Business: $50.00  Life Member: $500.00

Donations: We couldn't continue to operate without the generous contributions from our friends, members and volunteers. Please continue your support during the year with donations and purchases from our gift shop. Thanks to those of you who have contributed in the past. Remember, your donation is usually tax deductible and matching your donation to the Oregon Cultural Trust could yield a tax credit on your Oregon tax return. For more information visit [www.culturaltrust.org/donate](http://www.culturaltrust.org/donate).