### Volunteer Opportunities

- Serve on one of our Boards
- Catalogue and store donated artifacts
- Assist with Housekeeping
- Rotate & create new exhibits
- Complete minor interior repairs (paint, plaster, woodwork)
- Organize archives
- Computerized data entry
- Plan events
- Present your favorite topic

### Inside this issue:

- Military Exhibit 1
- What's New 2
- What's New continued 3
- The really fun stuff! 4
- Christmas in the 1800s 5
- TV & Radio 6
- HMS Decorates 7

### Heritage Museum Advisory Board:
- Dennis Eberly
- Lois Martin
- John Young
- Anita Cantu
- Vickie McCubbin
- Jasper Smith
- Marilyn Morton, Liaison

### Heritage Museum Society Board:
- Kathy Pomeroy, President
- Vickie McCubbin, Vice-President
- Vacant, Secretary
- Amy Christensen, Treasurer
- Billy Kay Herrell, Director at Large

### Military Exhibit Re-opening was a Hit!

The evening of November 10th was a magical one at the museum. The place was packed with veterans and their families and several city and elected officials. They gathered to see the updated and expanded exhibit, to hear photo-journalist John Bruning speak about the effects of military service and warfare on small towns and to show their support for the museum.

Museum volunteer Amy Christensen’s exhibit design incorporated a contemporary look and feel through the use of painted accent walls, focused lighting and a chronological display structure. The exhibit begins with the Civil War era and ends with present day conflicts. It is full of detailed information panels, comprehensive and well organized artifact displays, a digital presentation and uniforms from all services and conflicts. The digital presentation includes the names of local residents who’ve served in the military; however, it is by no means all-inclusive. If you visit the exhibit and don’t see the name of a local resident who did serve, please notify the museum staff so we can update the presentation.

We were so pleased that local resident John Bruning was able to join us for the event and share some thoughts with us. His presentation focused specifically on his efforts to prepare Oregon National Guard personnel for action and his time spent embedded with the U.S. military in Iraq, Afghanistan and in support of humanitarian relief efforts. It was full of emotion and touched a chord with many of the attendees, specifically when he remembered his former mentee, Taylor Marks, a young Monmouth resident who was killed in Iraq in 2009. If you missed the event, WOU’s public education group (WIMPEG) graciously filmed it for us. You can access it via this link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUUViYN_m3I&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUUViYN_m3I&feature=youtu.be).
What’s Coming Up at the Museum?

Well, a lot of things! First up...

**Inventory**! We need to get a handle on our inventory. If you didn’t already know this, we have a lot of stuff in the museum and we’re not sure everything actually applies to our mission of maintaining the histories of Independence, Monmouth and Buena Vista. As such, we’re planning a comprehensive effort to inventory and double check catalog details.

Phase I of the inventory will be a “proof of concept”, where we’ll first coordinate training with our database provider, PastPerfect, then determine a course of action, procure any needed supplies, and inventory as much of the museum floor as we can within the scope of this first phase. Phase I is going to be graciously funded by the Heritage Museum Society, the non-profit that underpins so much of what we do at the museum. Phase II, inventoring our storage space and any follow-on activity, will be funded, as is our hope, through a grant.

**Native American Internship**! Next up will be our first ever joint venture with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Grand Ronde has agreed to finance the efforts of tribe member Stephanie Craig to authenticate our Native American artifacts, help us develop an exhibit, and conduct some culturally focused classes. We’re looking forward to working with her and establishing a solid relationship with our tribal neighbors! Keep an eye on our Facebook page for more information about the exhibit and classes. UPDATE: Regarding establishing a relationship with our tribal neighbors, we’ve just booked a presentation, ‘Kalapuya Then and Now’, with David Harrelson, the Cultural Resources Department Manager for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. It’s been scheduled for Monday, January 29th at 7:00 pm at the Independence Civic Center (river entrance), 555 S Main Street.

Continued on next page


**Continued...**

**Independence's Birthday!** Although the date seems far off now, we’re also working with the Heritage Museum Society to plan an Independence birthday celebration on February 24, 2018. Details are not yet finalized, but we can say this much now - there will be some scavenger hunt activity involving city businesses throughout the week before the birthday date (and prizes!). The celebration will culminate with an Open House at the museum on Saturday the 24th. Western Oregon University (WOU) intern, Lilly Miranda, and Vice President of the Anthropology Club there, will be working with us to help make the birthday celebration a stunning success.

**Latino-focused exhibit!** We plan to continue working with a group of Latino WOU students and their advisor, Dr. Maureen Dolan, to translate panels, develop a Spanish-language ghost tour, and create a bilingual docent program.

**Other Exhibits/Presentations:** We’re working on two! The first is a Kalapuya Indian presentation. We’re in talks with Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Cultural Resources Department director, David Harrelson, to put together the presentation. He’s a Kalapuya tribe member and has given talks on the subject to other groups.

As part of the development of this presentation, Mr. Harrelson, who also heads up the tribe’s Historic Preservation Office and the Chachalu Museum and Cultural Center, a joint meeting with him and his museum staff, our museum staff, Heritage Museum Society board members, and Museum Commissioners, is being planned as well. We hope to use this time to discuss our museums’ missions and identify where and when we can partner in the future. More information on this after the holidays!

The second project involves hosting an exhibit about Vanport. During its short life span (1942-1948) Vanport—Oregon’s second largest city and the nation’s largest public housing project—drew national attention and conflicting opinions. For the over 40,000 people who lived there, Vanport was simply their home.

When the Columbia River flooded on May 31 of 1948, Memorial Day, the entire city was erased from the map and from much of Portland’s memory in a single day.

Mixing archival photographs and historical records with personal testimonies of former residents, this pop-up exhibit presents the multifaceted story of Vanport and its vibrant community. It is a story of migration, housing, displacement, and perseverance. We hope to host this exhibit for one week in the first quarter of 2018 (schedules permitting). As always, stay tuned to our Facebook page and website for more details.
There are lots of fun things to do at the museum. But one of the most enjoyable things for those of us who work here is hearing the stories our visitors tell us. Oftentimes it prompts some research on our part. Case in point, several weeks ago Mr. Lowell Hanna dropped in to share some family photographs with us. He also wanted to know if we had any pictures of Hanna Bros. Hardware we could share with him. We did.

Now the story Lowell shared with us differs quite a bit from an entry in the 1987 version of the History of Polk County. According to the History of Polk County, Hugh Hanna and his brothers owned and operated Hanna Bros. Hardware up until it was sold to Messers Sloper and Cockle in 1913. But based on the names of the members of Lowell Hanna’s family (couple James L. Hanna and Elsie J. Hanna (nee Irvine) and children Leona A. Hanna, Mark I. Hanna, Bernice B. Hanna, and Gordon I. Hanna), we have not been able to find a genealogical connection between the two Hanna clans. If anyone can shed some light on this for us, we’d be eternally grateful!

Here are a couple of the family photographs Lowell Hanna shared with us.

Left to right: Mark Hanna, James Hanna, Leona Hanna, and Elsie Irvine Hanna.

Left to right: Bernice Hanna, Leona Hanna, and Mark Hanna.
What was Christmas like in the 1800s?

By the mid 1800s the American Christmas tradition included much of the same customs and festivities as it does today, including tree decorating, gift-giving, Santa Claus, greeting cards, stockings by the fire, church activities and family-oriented days of feasting and fun. But, for those in the Old West, far away from the more civilized life of the east, pioneers, cowboys, explorers, and mountain men, usually celebrated Christmas with homemade gifts and humble fare.

Christmas for many in the Old West was a difficult time. For those on the prairies, they were often barraged with terrible blizzards and savage December winds. For mountain men, forced away from their mining activities long before Christmas, in fear of the blinding winter storms and freezing cold, the holidays were often meager. But, to these strong pioneers, Christmas would not be forgotten, be it ever so humble.

Determined to bring the spirit of Christmas alive on the American frontier, soldiers could be heard caroling at their remote outposts, the smell of venison roasting over an open hearth wafted upon the winds of the open prairie, and these hardy pioneers looked forward to the chance to forget their hard everyday lives to focus on the holiday.

Though perhaps modest, these hardy pioneers made every attempt to decorate their homes for the holidays with whatever natural materials looked attractive at the bleakest time of year, such as evergreens, pinecones, holly, nuts, and berries.

For some, there might even be a Christmas tree, gaily decorated with bits of ribbon, yarn, berries, popcorn or paper strings, and homemade decorations. Some of these homemade decorations were often figures or dolls made of straw or yarn. Cookie dough ornaments and gingerbread men were also popular. In other places, wood was simply so scarce to “waste” on a tree, if one could be found at all. Other pioneer homes were simply too small to make room for a tree.

At the very least, almost every home would make the holiday a time of feasting — bringing out preserved fruits and vegetables, fresh game if possible, and for those that could afford it, maybe even beef or a ham. Many women began to bake for the holiday weeks ahead of time, leaving the plum pudding to age in the pot until Christmas dinner.

Many of the homemade gifts, including corn husk dolls, sachets, carved wooden toys, pillows, footstools and embroidered hankies, might have had the family members working on for months ahead of Christmas. Others knitted scarves, hats, mitts and socks. If the family had had a good year, the children might find candies, small gifts, cookies and fruit in their stockings.

Christmas Eve would generally find most families singing carols around the Christmas tree or fireplace. On Christmas Day, most would attend church, return home for the traditional Christmas meal, and spend the day visiting with friends and neighbors.

Then, as it is today, Christmas would also find many a mountain man, explorer, or lone cowboy, spending a solitary evening without the benefit of festivities. The more things change, some things inevitably remain the same.

© Kathy Weiser/Legends of America, updated April, 2017.
Heritage Herald

We Were On TV!

Polk Salad, a local access channel which includes "Organic conversations with the fabulous people of Monmouth/Independence and greater Polk County", hosted two of our spectacular volunteers this year. In February, HMS Vice President Vickie McCubbin shared information about the museum and the Heritage Museum Society. In October, new volunteer, Amy Christensen talked about her work updating and expanding our military exhibit and life as a military spouse. Both women have served as exceptional ambassadors for the museum. You can view their show segments at the links below.

Vickie’s segment (starts at the beginning of the tape): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88ZcLF8DVUQ&list=PLScqJ381h5SZP3Z3Ye8L-EDgILZ6QDeHt&index=27.

Amy’s segment (starts at 14:00): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5P3IqnIkNc&list=PLScqJ381h5SZP3Z3Ye8L-EDgILZ6QDeHt&index=33.

We Were Also On The Radio!

KMUZ’s Salem History Matters recently invited us to share a little about our museum and our history with their listeners. The show is hosted by Deb Meaghers and Christy Van Heukelem and “serves to engage listeners in the value of preserving and blending our rich historic legacy into our contemporary lives. Interviews with area historians, authors, historic property owners, neighbors in our historic districts, curators of local museums, commercial building owners and renovators offer insight into why preserving, living and working in our historic resources are so integral to our sense of community.”

The show was broadcast on December 7th and featured Museum Assistant, Shannon Cockayne, but if you missed it, you can listen to the podcast here: http://kmuz.org/?powerpress_pinw=13237-salemhistorymatters.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter via the mail, please let us know. Call us at (503) 838-4989 or send an e-mail to: orheritage@ci.independence.or.us. Sending it digitally - via e-mail or by posting on the web and social media sites - helps us save money!
The Heritage Museum Society Decorates!

The Heritage Museum Society elves visited the museum recently to ready it for the holidays. They ferreted through our stash of decorations, added some of their own and went to town sprucing up the place! Board members Kathy Pomeroy, Vickie McCubbin, and Amy Christensen put together displays throughout the museum. Community Services Director, Robin Puccetti and Museum Commission members Dennis Eberly and Lois Martin helped as well. We’re eternally grateful for the everyone’s effort to bring holiday cheer to the museum! [NOTE: Vickie was suffering from a migraine so we spared her having to pose for a picture.]
Upcoming Events

Event Name: Independence’s Birthday Celebration Open House
Day: Saturday, February 24, 2018
Time: 1:00 - 5:00 PM
Place: Heritage Museum, 112 S 3rd Street, Independence

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

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.