

Friends of the Siskiyou County Museum



Aviation History in Siskiyou County

A new display for the Siskiyou County Museum

In late 2016 a chance discussion between Museum Director Lisa Gioia and Terry Weathers led to the formation in early 2017 of the Aviation History in Siskiyou Display Team, a diverse collection of pilots and aviation enthusiasts. This team started with the clear understanding from Lisa that there was little funding available for such new displays and that financing the project would be one of our challenges. The team was delighted to see the Friends become organized where donated funds can be funneled through.

Our first shot in the arm came last December when Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 654 in Montague (our only county-wide pilots organization) voted to donate \$2,000 to the effort. A further boost came when just this month Walt and Ruth Coppock of Scott Valley arranged a \$5,000 grant for the project from their family foundation. In both cases, Friends Treasurer Karen Cleland promptly deposited the funds in a bank checking account for the exclusive use of this aviation history display effort.

The Aviation History in Siskiyou display will take the place of the excellent but aged Trappers display on the Museum's first floor. Topics covered will include,



Airports: the seven public use airports in Siskiyou County

Siskiyou Aces: pilots and other contributors to aviation history here

Aerial Firefighting: including spotting, retardant dropping and smoke jumping

Ground based aids to aerial navigation: the lighted towers and radio aids

Helicopter developments unique to Siskiyou County

Balloons: their colorful events

Military activities, including WWII local wreck site analyses



Montague Airport Aug. 4, 1919

Team coordinator Terry Weathers says, *We've got a great team working on this project, which we hope to have ready to install this fall, but we are eagerly seeking volunteers, such as those with graphic arts capability or willing to tackle research like going through some 40 years of Siskiyou Pioneers looking for aviation related articles.*

Anyone interested in helping or with questions, please contact Terry Weathers at 530-598-2234 or via email at tmw@sisqtel.net.

Director's Message

From Lisa's Desk

It is the busy time of year for the Siskiyou County Museum! We have had several school field trips; our last one was on June 7th. Having the pitter-patter (more like stomping) of little feet resound in the museum and the outdoor museum is what we love; it is so important for our children to have a sense of their history. The kids come armed with a scavenger hunt, encouraging them to have fun while they read exhibit labels and search for artifacts. We have a wonderful docent in Twyla Morford who dresses in period clothing and guides the students and teachers, telling stories and imparting information about exhibits. This addition to our school tours makes the experience entertaining and educational.



During the tourist season we also welcome visitors from far and near. We have already had people from Germany, Japan, San Francisco, and Pennsylvania, to name just a few who seek

to learn more about our regional history. We ask them to take a "selfie" and to post to our museum Facebook page and many have done so. In fact, we've received several Five-Star Reviews on Trip Advisor!

Some new exhibits in the works include Aviation History and a Veteran's Exhibit. The committee working on aviation history has received two small grants

so far. We thank those donors who want to help see this little-known aspect of Siskiyou County history receive its due.

The Veteran's exhibit will be just as special and it has been a long time coming. We hope to have it installed by November in time for Veteran's Day. The exhibit is a long-term one and will be installed on the museum's second floor. In addition, the museum is working in conjunction with the Siskiyou Arts Council to gather oral histories of local veterans. Their stories are so important and we hope to preserve them for future generations. If you know a veteran who would like to participate in our project, please contact Lisa at the museum at 530 842-3836.

Whether it's been a long time since you've visited the Siskiyou County Museum, or even if you are a frequent visitor, we urge you to continue to support by bringing friends and family, becoming a member of the Friends of the Siskiyou County Museum (it's only \$10.00 for an annual membership!), and/or volunteering for one of the many museum opportunities we need help with.

Have a wonderful and safe summer! See you all soon. *Lisa*



Soft woolen yarn and socks from Bessie Creek Farm are some of the new products for sale in the Museum Store.



**Friends
1 Year!!!**

Museum Spotlight

Tulelake Museum of Local History



by Jill Livingston

Located on the far eastern boundary of the county, the Tulelake Museum is one of several smaller museums that are fun and interesting adjuncts to the Siskiyou County Museum in the county seat of Yreka. The narrower focus of these community museums gives them each a unique feeling and means that you will learn about this part of our very large county in more depth. The Tulelake Museum, unlike most of the smaller facilities, is open all year and not just seasonally. Since it is located on the grounds of the Tulelake-Butte Valley Fairgrounds, the museum is open whenever the fair office is open.

The Tulelake region has a rich history. The three main “stories” that come out of the region are the Modoc War of 1872-3, the homesteaders that came in several waves through the first half of the 20th century, and the nearby WWII Japanese interment camp. Each of these topics is replete with well-interpreted exhibits. There is much more in this museum than you might expect!

The photo shows some of the outdoor exhibits. Many pieces of vintage farm equipment are on display in the shadow of the guard tower from the interment camp. The “cab” on the tower is original while the support structure was rebuilt at a lesser height for better viewing by museum visitors. Behind the guard tower is one of the original tar paper barracks from the camp. Most of the buildings went to local farmers after the camp closed. This barrack was subsequently donated to the museum. Inside the museum you will find notebooks full of photos of and information about the Japanese residents. The museum is easy to find at 800 S. Main Street. For more information call 530-667-5312.

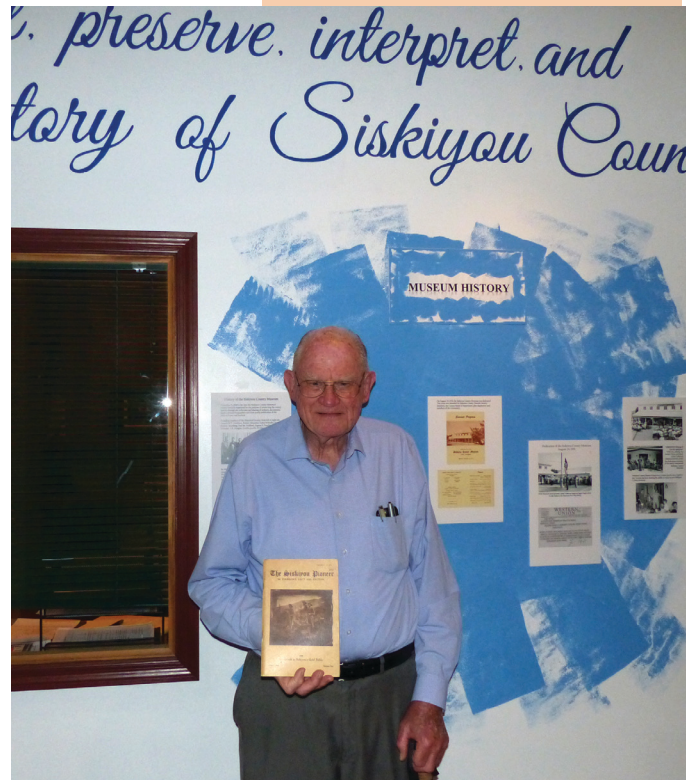


(left) Trail expert Richard Silva talks about the various routes of the Yreka Trail during a field trip with CalFire in May. Director Lisa Goia went along for the fun. Richard recently donated his large collection of maps to the museum.

(below) During a visit to the museum last summer, Walter Pollock holds a copy of the Siskiyou Pioneer he edited in 1957, A Guide to Siskiyou's Gold Fields. He returned in 2018 to speak at the February Siskiyou Stories presentation.



(above) The stairwell was a blank canvas for many years. Now it is decorated with oversized enlargements of Siskiyou County scenes. You can pick up a list of photo locations in the office.



One of our monthly Museum Mystery Artifacts, a music stand from a local Big Band Era band, generated quite a bit of interest when Lisa unveiled it at our May General Meeting. For those who wish to know more, here is an article taken from the 1994 Siskiyou Pioneer. Author Bob Ohlund passed away in 2011.

My post-W.W. II idea of organizing a “Big Band” in this area was not original. Big bands were popular before, during and after World War II. They were also commonly referred to as “Swing Bands”, meaning the band groups played swing type popular danceable music, with such instrumental groupings as 4 saxophones (or reed) section, 2 or 3 trumpets, 1 or 2 trombones, pianist, drummer, bass violin or sousaphone, and 1 or 2 vocalists.

After the breakup of Archie Legg’s fine Big Band following the war, there seemed to be a need for a big band, and I knew there was plenty of local talent and experienced musicians in this area. I had previously played in various dance bands, including Bradley’s Orchestra. With the urging of several friends, I proceeded to organize the swing band called “The Cascadians”. Band leadership not being part of my experience, I called upon the wealth of musical knowledge and leadership held by Warren “Pop” Behnke, who was in 1946 the music teacher at Yreka High School. Warren and I gathered together a number of musicians for an organizational practice in the old Yreka High School upstairs band room. There we decided on the name Cascadians and that Warren would be our leader and booking agent.

The original band members were: Warren Behnke on 1st trumpet, “Chick” Robinson on 2nd trumpet, Bob Ohlund on 1st Alto Sax, Howard Trivelpiece on 2nd Tenor Sax, Jack Behnke on 3rd Alto Sax, Otie Bottoms on 4th Baritone Sax, John Turner on Trombone, Louie Macartea on Drums and Bernice Cardoza on Piano.

We now had ourselves a 9-piece swing band. Warren and I purchased for the band the orchestrated music and crystal band sound equipment from “Pete” Pedersen, whose pre-war orchestra had dismantled. My father, a fine carpenter and cabinet maker, built music stands out of plywood, and a large wooden box to carry them in, which took 2 people to carry. The sound system with 2 speakers was also very heavy, and it took almost an hour to set up our band and system for each gig.

The Cascadians

Our first job was April 5, 1947 at the Greenview Grange Hall. We were really crammed in with 9 musicians and all the equipment on that very small stage. Customarily we started playing at 9 pm till midnight, 1 hour for “lunch”, and back playing from 1 am to 2 am. In later years we played from 9 pm to 1 am with a ½ hour break in between. In the beginning, we were paid by arrangement, as low as \$7 each, and later years this increased to a high of \$25 each.

Shortly after we started, Velma (Behnke) Cummins became our pianist, and our drummer changed to Bob Carlson for several years, Vernon Lark from Mt. Shasta for a limited time, and in the last years, Bunny Rowe from Montague. For a short time after our start, we had a bass violin player whose identity escapes me. After John Turner left, Ivan Swickard took over on Trombone for a couple of years.

As time progressed, it became evident that we could not economically maintain a 9-piece band, and reduced our musicians to 6 members, i.e. 3 Saxes, 1 Trumpet, Piano, and Drums. Warren Behnke doubled as vocalist throughout this period.

The Cascadians were well liked and played the most popular danceable music available. We wore dress white jackets with a bow tie, and presented a classy appearance.

Most dance events were for charitable or local fund drives. We played many jobs for area high school proms and other school activities. Howard Trivelpiece kept a record in his “Black Book” of where we performed: Fort Jones Community Hall, Greenhorn Grange Hall, Apache Dance Hall, Hawkinsville Hall,

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Schedule of Events

July 13

Siskiyou Stories @ noon.
FSCM General Meeting @ 1:30.

Aug 10

Siskiyou Stories @ noon.
FSCM General Meeting @ 1:30

August 8-12

Siskiyou Golden Fair, including Museum display

Sept 14

Siskiyou Stories @ noon.
FSCM General Meeting @ 1:30

Oct 6

2nd annual *A Walk Through History* at the
Outdoor Museum

Note: This is one of the *As It Was* segments written by FSCM member Gail Jenner and broadcast on Jefferson Public Radio.

A “Bad” Character Who “Died” Twice

by Gail L. Jenner

Sailor Jim—whose real name was Danforth Hartson—was one of Siskiyou County’s early scoundrels. He reportedly shot a number of Indians and was believed to have been involved in a murder for which he was never tried, and the townspeople looked upon him with much suspicion and disdain.

In 1857, Hartson was finally arrested for the murder of John W. Burke, at Canal Gulch, near Hawkinsville—right outside Yreka, California. As Burke lay dying he charged Hartson with the killing.

The trial began on May 5, 1857, and the prosecution was conducted by District Attorney E. H. Stone. The jury heard the evidence and convicted him. On the 18th, Judge J. Montgomery Peters sentenced Hartson to death by hanging, the date to be July 15, 1857.

The day of his hanging arrived and Hartson was escorted to the gallows. As the fatal drop was made, the crowd was horrified to see that the noose had slipped from around his neck. He fell through the platform to the ground below where he was quickly gathered up and returned to the platform.

As the noose was slipped around his neck a second time, Hartson said, “For God’s sake, don’t do that again!” He also made a confession that he had indeed killed Burke. This time, there were no mistakes made.

Source: Wells, Harry L. *The History of Siskiyou County, California*. Oakland, D J Stewart & Co., 1881, pp. 100-01.

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The Corral in Dunsmuir, Hilt Community Hall, Mt. Shasta Armory, Yreka 49ers Celebration, Montague Hall and Ashland Normal School.

Inevitably, times change and with the growing popularity of the rock and roll Elvis Presley era coming into being, the Cascadians and the Big Band types became less in demand, and as near as I can remember, we probably played our last job as the Cascadians in about 1961. The band disbanded, each playing for other events where their services were needed.

Good News!

We are pleased to announce that FSCM has received a grant from the McConnell Fund of the Shasta Regional Community Foundation to help make our signage and statuary art installation in front of the museum a reality! Thank you, thank you, thank you.

