

Albany Regional Museum History 1980 – 2005

Acknowledgment*

The compilation of this brief history was made possible only by the existence of Museum board meeting minutes and the collection and safe keeping of related documents. Thanks go to Museum secretaries and acting secretaries and in particular to the Museum's guiding light, Gerald Brenneman, who was personally responsible for most of that effort.

***Gary Kingston, October 4, 2005**

Prologue

Attendees of a slide show in 1978 fostered the idea of an Albany museum. They were at the old Armory Building viewing the program, "Albany, A One Horse Town" being shown in the Linn County meeting room. A discussion after the show bemoaned the increasing loss of Albany area history. The question was how it might be gathered and preserved. Those most concerned signed a sheet of paper to indicate willingness to meet and look for ways to meet those ends. Roz Clark (Keeney) acted as the initiator by calling the signees to a meeting.

The Albany City Council, through its appointed Historic Advisory and Museum Commission (HAMC), was showing interest at the same time in obtaining the former Oregon Electric Railroad building (currently a pizza parlor business) as a museum site, but found it not available.

Possibly catalyzed by the "One Horse Town" committee discussions, the HMAC called for the establishment of a Museum Steering Committee and charged it to organize, establish, and maintain a museum. The committee was to be organized by the fall of 1979.

Members of the Roz Clark (later Keeney) One Horse Town Committee and HMAC representatives made up the Museum Steering Committee. The HMAC arranged for the first meeting December 6, 1979, at the Albany Fire Hall. It was to be an exploratory talk with Albany City Librarian Wayne Suggs. The subject was possible use of the old downtown Carnegie Library basement as a museum site. Mr. Suggs was receptive to the idea as he was looking for a place to put archival materials, and a museum could be that place. He indicated that a cooperative effort was

feasible and could be beneficial to all concerned.

At the meeting West Albany High School history teacher Gerald Brenneman, a One Horse Town Committee member, was elected chairman of the Museum Steering Committee, beginning for him what would be a far greater, long-term commitment to an Albany museum than he would have suspected at the time. Other members of the steering committee were Roz Clark (Keeney), Robert Potts, Bonnie Orr, Lee Rohrbaugh, Sten Parker, Jean Willborn, Dennis Orr, Jerry Wilken, Melanie Wilken, and Ruth Rhyne. Under Brenneman's leadership the new committee was directed to make a proposal to the Albany Library Board of Directors for use of the downtown library basement space. The Steering Committee also was to look at other site alternatives (they would not find any suitable at that time), and it was to undertake drafting of Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws for a nonprofit museum corporation. Incorporation was urged by local attorney John Boock Sr.

The Albany Parks Kiddie Kraft program was using the 2,600 square foot library basement. Hearing of this plan parks personnel expressed great

displeasure at the prospect of being evicted.

The HMAC proposed the former Albany Planning Mill site as an alternative location, but to use it would have required acquisition of some adjacent land; that killed the idea.

The Museum Steering Committee, on May 27, 1980, proposed its plan to the Albany Library Board. Jerrie Crook, president of the Albany Public Library Board responded favorably to the proposal on June 25, 1980, and agreed to turn the Carnegie Library basement over for museum use on July 1, 1981. Kiddie Kraft was to be out of the basement at the end of the school year.

In September 1980 Bill Burk, director, Southern Oregon Historical Society, met with the Steering Committee at the Hereford Steer Restaurant to outline what was needed to get a museum started.

On December 1, 1980, Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws for the Albany Regional Museum were completed by the Steering Committee and submitted to the State of Oregon for approval. The incorporators and temporary board members listed on the papers were Gerald

Brenneman, lead member, Bonnie Orr, Bob Potts, Jerry Wilken, and Kristen Schuttpelz. That same month an informational meeting was held at the Wilken's home to gather together persons who could be prospective board members. The new by-laws called for twelve.

1980--Albany Regional Museum Created

The State of Oregon incorporation document officially recognizing the Museum's establishment and its nonprofit status was dated December 18, 1980.

A meeting was held January 6, 1981 at the Brenneman home to elect Museum officers. The gathering resulted in the election of Bonnie Orr, chairman, Rodney Tripp, treasurer, and Gerald Brenneman, secretary.

Completion of the board of directors' roster came on February 16, 1981, at the Home Federal Savings & Loan boardroom. Nine additional board members were elected: Meredith Wiley, vice chairman, and board members Art Crossley, Platt Davis, Maria Delapoer, Connie Petty, Kristen Schuttpelz, Jerry Wilken, Barbara Wilson, and Marty Rosenson.

The Albany Regional Museum (ARM) was now official with a home in the Carnegie Library basement, as of July 1, 1981, and a fully elected board of directors to begin what would be a very large job based on volunteer help that would turn out to be primarily the board itself.



Carnegie Library, first Museum site

Jim Tolbert, graphic arts instructor at Linn-Benton Community College, was asked to design a museum logo.

The ARM was asked to conduct its first opening with a display, a collection of historic Albany photographs and artifacts as part of the summer Historic Home Tour on the 24th of July.

To get ready for the opening, the basement needed renovation (wood stripping, painting and cleaning). This was a hectic time because the children's program departure had left only weeks to accomplish the minimum effort to make the space

presentable for the tour date. The volunteers came through with a successful first opening, but it took its toll on the board. Some members were feeling “burn out” common to volunteer programs.

Museum renovations continued through the fall of 1981. Enthusiasm was declining, but determined volunteers prepared for a second opening in the spring of 1982. Things were getting so bad that a “crisis memo” was sent out November 2, 1981, from the secretary to the board outlining the doldrums being experienced and the need to do something about the situation. A board meeting was called on November 17, 1981, following a work party on November 12, 1981, that saw only Bonnie Orr, Scott Pirie and Gerald Brenneman in attendance. The board meeting brought out only five people. It was decided to put off any more meetings until January 1982.

1982--Dealing With Burn Out, More Openings and Transitions

The first meeting of 1982 (January 12) began the year with \$1,760 in the treasury and eight members in attendance, an improvement over most recent months. The second opening was close at hand and work was needed to get the refreshed display of

photographs and artifacts ready for the 1982 Spring Art Festival. The artifacts focused on early Albany architect Charles Burgraff.

The third exhibit came shortly thereafter in conjunction with the Albany Historic Home Tour. Featured were items recently acquired by the Museum from the Burkhart Estate. Also exhibited was an early-days parlor scene on the Museum stage.

The year’s exhibit season was concluded in December with a flourish that included refreshments, a traditional early day living room Christmas scene on the stage, new items from the Burkhart Estate, antique trains and a display of old- style Christmas cards.

In April Bill Lewis, from the Linn County Museum at Brownsville, was made an Ex Officio member of the board.

The City enriched ARM’s treasury in May with \$5,000 from the motel-hotel tax receipts.

By December 1982, a year and a half had past since ARM took over the Carnegie Library basement and four successful openings had been carried out. Nearly half the attendees at these events came from out of town.

This gave heart to the Museum board for a promising future. When the Museum became fully operational and staffed, they believed their efforts would prove to be an important benefit to the city.

Up to this point monetary contributions and help had come from businesses, individuals, clubs and the City of Albany. A close working relationship had been established with local museums including the Horner Museum at Oregon State University (the place where Dr. John L. Hill's Albany museum materials were sent after its closure), and the Benton and Linn County Museums, respectively.

Confirmation of the Albany Regional Museum's accomplishments and guidance for continued progress came from an evaluation performed by the Oregon Museum Association on July 9, 1982. The study was conducted by five museum directors from around the State.

Al Gaines took Museum leadership in late 1982 after Bonnie Orr resigned. She was relocating to Bend, Oregon. Meredith Wiley, who had dropped out the previous year and moved to Portland, was replaced as vice chairman by Kristen Schuttpelz.

Robert Emery came aboard as a board member. The executive committee was activated.

The year ended with about \$5,800 in the treasury.

1983--First Professional Employee Hired

The January meeting established the long-range goal for the board to be a policy setting and advisory body. This expression no doubt was to pacify an overworked board of directors upon whom the heavy burden of project work had been placed. It was a practical necessity, but reassurance that there was no intent to keep it that way was helpful, at least in spirit.

Charlene Ellingson resigned from the board in March, and Robert Potts, Ex Officio member, suggested Dick Milligan as her replacement. Milligan signed on also as an Ex Officio member. Presumably this was status similar to emeritus in the academic world.

At mid year a problem of adequate seating at the Museum was greatly alleviated by Bob Potts' donation of 60 chairs that continue to seat members and guests.

In the fall Al Gaines resigned as chairman. There was

no prospect for an immediate replacement, so Vice Chairman Kristen Schuttpelz stepped into the duty. Three new board people were added: Duane Hedy, Beth Powell and Scott Pirie.

Jeanette Meek was hired to set up a collection and cataloging system. This took \$1,300 out of the treasury (leaving only \$995). It was money well spent as she, by year's end, had created for the ARM a formal collection policy and cataloging system with all the necessary forms. She resigned at the end of the year to take a museum job in North Carolina. Her work further emphasized to the board the need for professional staffing if the ARM was to attain its goals, but the question of how to fund it restricted the options.

A November Veterans Day exhibit drew 97 visitors, including Oregon Gov. Victor Atiyeh, and the December Historic Home Tour brought in 36 to view exhibits.

1984--Grand Opening & Regular Museum Hours

This was a landmark year in which regular open hours were established and initiated with a Museum "Grand Opening." It was set for May 12, 1984, and ran for a week, from 1 to 4 p.m., in concert with "Preserving Oregon's Past"

week. After that, the Museum was open every Wednesday and Saturday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., staffed by volunteers.

Having regular hours enhanced the status of the operation, but increased even further the burden upon the volunteer board workers.

The Spring Arts Festival was occasion for a Museum fundraiser using a display featuring a "Museum Gothic" photographic backdrop painted by Maryann Traut.

For the Museum opening, displays included a Burkhart office, Burgraff exhibit, One Average Day photo exhibit on loan from the Oregon Historical Society and a Linn Genealogical Society display.

The ARM participated in the June quarterly meeting of the Oregon Museum Association.

The Museum was open, as previously, for the July 1984 Summer Historic Home Tour. In the fall new memorabilia and a phonograph exhibit were put on display.

Kristen Schuttpelz continued as acting chairman. Several board members resigned:

Duane Hedy, Pam Frazier and Toni Mountain. Harry Clay also resigned in an argument about Museum plans and purpose. He apparently was looking for a revival of the Albany Historical Association that would be an umbrella group over the subject and in particular the ARM.

The idea of starting a quarterly newsletter was floated and thinking on new exhibits was established for the coming year. In mid-November it was decided to close the Museum until at least February 16, 1985, at which time it would be reopened with a new exhibit. Connie Petty proposed an exhibit be about the life of Abigail Scott Dunning, Albany's famous suffragette, and to tie it in with Women's History Week set for March 3-9, 1985.

The Albany Rotary Club was giving significant financial support to the Museum through its Pops Concert receipts. The Museum received approximately \$1,200.

The Museum mini-civil-war that was first instigated by Harry Clay was furthered by Art Crossley, a member of the board. He talked of reviving the Albany Historical Association and he then resigned from the ARM board.

Planning seemed to be on the board agenda and the need for a five-year plan was an issue along with the need for new board members.

Roz Clark (Keeney) was working on grants for the Museum.

1985--City Historical Resources Director, Membership & Dunning Exhibit

The City Tourism Office, originally with the Chamber of Commerce, promoted the hiring of a coordinator for the various history interests of the City. The Albany History Association had spoken of this need earlier in the year. The ARM January 9, 1985, meeting explored the idea of hiring a Museum director by April 1985 and to have a volunteer program established by the same time. There was some jockeying for control and direction of the city's history resources. The end result was the City hiring Roz Clark Keeney as an historical research director with an office at the Museum. This provided an on-site liaison between the ARM and the Albany Visitors Association that began a relationship that continues today. This seemed to stop the disruptive organizational power plays that had been going on.

The major exhibit event for the ARM was the March 7, 1985 opening of the Abigail Scott Duniway display coordinated by Marylee Murray, Kris Schuttpelz and Connie Petty. Ms. Duniway, a famous suffragette, had been an early 1860's Albany resident.

New board members in the year were Steve Porter, Rich Liebaert, Marty Rosenson and Rosemary Schoblom. Kristen Schuttpelz continued as acting chairman, co-chaired the role with the new vice chairman, Beth Powell.

A side note for the year was that former ARM Boardman Harry Clay resigned from a position in the city tourism group. He either felt his mission had been accomplished or he just gave up. The record does not indicate Art Crossley's state of mind at this point.

1986--The "Grand Ball" Inaugural

Lynda Cook took Roz Clark Keeney's post until March 1986 to provide the history coordinator a few months maternity leave.

A photo exhibit "Albany History, Lifestyles, and Architecture" went up in May and replaced a Calapooia Native

American exhibit. The University of Oregon lent a "Pacific Rim" exhibit for the year.

Plans were developing with the assistance of Roz Clark Keeney for obtaining a curator for both the ARM and the Monteith Society.

Elections of officers occurred in March and the new chairman, Marianne Straumfjord, proposed that an executive committee operate the Museum. The new officers were brought to office with an "Inaugural Ball" (party!) in May.

The Oregon Electric building (Ciddici's Pizza today) came up again as a possible Museum location; a grant for \$30,000 was being worked on; and consideration was given to buying a circus train, but no action was taken.

The annual treasurer's report showed \$698 (it would dip to \$290 in March 1987).

The Museum's board operations were under an eight committee structure: administration, collections, exhibits, public relations, volunteer organization, funding, programs and physical plant.

1987--The Library Lease is Running Out & It Might Close

The officers were shifted about and new board members appeared, one of whom, Russ Sprague, would become a solid fixture for many years.

The major exhibit of the year celebrated the 1920's.

There was an urgent need for Saturday volunteers, the Museum's lease was running out and needed to be renegotiated, and there were threats of complete closure of the downtown library.

The annual Christmas Parlour Tour concluded the year.

1988--Museum Break In & In With The '40's & Out with the '20's

Election of new officers again occurred in the spring. The board swelled to an unauthorized total of 19, but given the attrition experienced and the work to be done, it was undoubtedly an expedient move.

The previous year's 1920s exhibit was to be replaced with a 1940s display featuring Camp Adair, the USO and the Red Cross. A June potluck was held to celebrate its opening.

In April a thief(s), later learned to be juveniles, broke in by going down a manhole that led to the library's furnace room. Insurance covered the loss after the \$100 deductible. A security system became a priority. The library staff had complained the previous year that books were being stolen, and they felt exit was through the Museum's side entrance.

A summer trainee, Ann Brookhyser, was employed. Elaine Weinberg left the chair position at mid-year with a move to Portland. Catherine Fobar (LaSuer) filled in from the vice chairman position.

Another thief in the fall made off with a Hawaiian five dollar bill in a display case.

Still nervously holding on to the library basement space, the ARM board gave consideration to the Veterans Building, but it was a passing thought. The Visitors Association wanted Roz Clark Keeney, historical coordinator, to move her office out of the Museum.

The board chose the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. as the best meeting time.

The year concluded with the printing and mailing of an "Albany Old Times" newsletter. The

treasury had \$312 and the newsletter printing was not yet paid.

1989--No Lease, No Library, No Home?

The 1988 “Albany Old Times” printed in November cost about \$100, but it brought in nearly \$200 in donations.

The Albany Historical Association continued to stir the issues of who was in charge and seemed to be exerting influence on the City Tourism Commission. The ARM felt the need to be a part of the group to protect its interests. A proposal was circulating to close the downtown library when the Museum’s lease expired. The ARM was actively discussing ways to break away from the continuing uncertainty and back-biting conflicts. One thought was to acquire the Rohrbough building which was for sale. Rumors were circulating that the City wanted the Museum’s basement space back and was considering the Old City Hall (formerly the post office) as a museum site. In September an agreement was reached with the City for a 5-year lease extension at the library.

A Victorian (1880-1890) exhibit was planned for the year. Initially it was considered for July,

but it stretched into the fall, and then to a soft opening during the Christmas Parlour Tour. There was much work involved to produce the exhibit and enthusiasm was again on the wane. By year’s end the Victorian exhibit prospects were dim. But the exhibit work accomplished was looking good. Donations for the display were sparse and loans of materials few.

A new summer intern, Oscar Hult, was brought on to help organize the Victorian project. In August, he submitted a letter of recommendations and an evaluation of the Museum, and he ended up doing accession work.

Catherine Fobar (LaSuer) resigned from the board and her chairman’s role around mid year. Kris Schuttpelz and Gerald Brenneman picked up the reins and served out the year as co-chairmen.

A quilt show during a July Victorian Week celebration proved to be a successful fund raiser. It brought about \$900 to the treasury.

The “Albany in the 1940s” exhibit initiated the previous year was a success and was visited by several thousand visitors. Visitors during the summer alone totaled about 600 and two-thirds of them

were from out of town (12 different states and three foreign countries).

1990--Victorian Exhibit, Potts' First Book, More Resignations

Roz Clark Keeney resigned early in the year as the City Historical Resources Director. She was replaced by Gail Blasquez. The ARM began representation at the Albany Historical Association meetings, and sent Kim Sass to cover ARM's interests. Rumors continued that the library might be closed. Trying to stay positive, the ARM board thought it might be a possibility for the Museum to take over the entire library building.

The Victorian exhibit had its grand opening in May, and additional displays on the subject were planned to include historic architecture photographs and a doll house replica of the Victorian Marshall house.

Catherine LaSuer, a summer intern, reported on the summer activity during which the Museum was open 56 days, from 1 to 4 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday. There were 612 visitors. The July 28, 1990, Summer Historic Home Tour brought 104 people to the Museum. Catherine renovated the Museum office into a resource center of old Albany records such

as Linn County records from 1890 to 1960, yearbooks, city directories, telephone books, newspapers and pioneer information on Albany.

Robert Potts' first book of Albany photographs was published toward year's end with a signing party at Rainbows End bookstore. About 800 copies sold in 30 days, giving the ARM \$1,100 in profit.



Robert Potts, Photo Historian

Kristen Schuttpelz, after years of dedicated work, resigned in the fall. Catherine LaSuer was elected her replacement in the dual role of chair and vice chair.

A repeat of the previous year's quilt show again brought cash to the treasury; this time only \$175 because the Senior Center wanted part of the ticket sales. The Albany Rotary Club Pops Concert proceeds continued to provide financial support to the ARM.

Rumors of the downtown library closure persisted at the close of the year. There was \$2,658 in the ARM bank account.

1991--We Wanted the Oregon Electric Building & Timber Carnival Featured

The 1989 library basement lease for five years was optimistic and ended up running through June 1, 1991 – only two years. The Oregon Electric Railroad station building was again under active consideration as a relocation site. The building was for sale. It carried with its sale a \$20,000 asbestos removal burden. The ARM bid \$55,000 (including the asbestos removal fee) but lost out to a pizza parlor. The old City Hall was looked at again but was not believed to be suitable.

A Timber Carnival display was executed and promoted in an Albany Democrat-Herald story by Cathy Maddox. Another run of the popular quilt show made \$190 for the ARM. New exhibits were planned covering Albany's connection to the Civil War, Spanish American War and World War I.

Bob Potts' photo history books of Albany were selling well with a release of Volume II and the

ARM treasury as a result was flush with \$4,300 at year end.

1992--No Lease, No Home and A Traveling Exhibit

A traveling exhibit featuring the discovery of the Columbia River was recommended by Glenn Harrison, president of the Linn County Historical Society. It ran from May 27 through June 22, 1992.

Artifacts from the Hale Shoe Shine Parlor were put on display. Its opening was heralded with an Albany Democrat-Herald newspaper story. The Hale family children expressed their gratitude in a letter to the Museum.

The Democrat-Herald announced the release of yet another Robert Potts photographic history book (Volume III of "Remembering When"). His book sales had become the prime source of operating revenue for the Museum.

Robyn Olsen took over the Albany Historical Resources Director's job. Catherine LaSuer announced in August that she was moving to Arizona. Jerry Wilken took over the job of chairman. LaSuer had supervised the printing of two of Potts' books and led the

Victorian exhibit creation, besides serving as chairman.

The ARM continued casting about for a possible home.

Consideration was given to the Sew & Vac building on First Avenue. It would have required considerable reconstruction and that discouraged further consideration. The City had set the rental value of the library basement at \$5,700 annually, plus the City paid over \$700 annually in utilities (this was for the entire building). Also, the Albany Visitors Association was providing a \$1,250 grant for Museum summer staffing.

The board meeting time was again changed to be the first Wednesday of the month. It was decided that each meeting should be opened with an agenda. The ARM treasury closed the year with \$4,900 in the bank. Visitors for the year had totaled about 1,600: 948, Albany; 489, other Oregon towns; 125, other States; and 22 from nine foreign countries.

1993--Wilken in Charge and ARM Treasury Cash Increases

Publication of Potts' Volume IV of "Remembering When" was put off in order to build cash for paying printing costs.

An Oregon Trail exhibit was worked on. Gerald Brenneman was holding down the Saturday open hours.

Ed Hereth gave instruction on the cataloging system.

Visitors totaled 1,646 and the treasury was holding nearly \$8,000.

1994--Kastl New Chairperson, Potts' Volume-IV Printed, Another Museum Site Proposal

The fourth volume of Potts' series of Albany historic photographs was printed.

There was a proposal by the Albany Visitors Association to locate the ARM at 313 Broadalbin St. SW, the former Lincoln Market site. The Museum board in a letter to the City supported the move. This move would have joined the ARM with the Albany Fire Department Museum.

Museum attendance jumped to 1,930 for the year and the treasury closed the year with \$7,600 in the bank.

Rick Rogers worked on a magic display.

In general, the record of events became sparse for lack of

meeting minutes; possibly for lack of board meetings.

1995--Another Museum Chairperson and the Museum Troubled

The new museum president, Karen Rogers, called for help (only three or four people were doing all of the work). Board meetings were moved from Wednesday to the second Tuesday of the month.

A \$25,000 grant had been sought to obtain the Lincoln Market site. The grant was turned down, so the Museum site hunt continued.

Barbara Johnson took on the cataloging job Ed Hereth had been doing for years. Carol McKay volunteered to help.

Jerry Wilken, long-time board member, resigned early in the year.

A booth was set up at the Linn County Home Show. A new display "Going to the Movies" was initiated and the Museum was maintaining open hours 12 to 4 p.m. Wednesday and Saturday and by appointment.

Attendance was better than ever at 2,150 and the treasury grew

to \$9,500. The City grant for summer interns grew to \$1,600.

1996--The Missing Episodes & Start of the Golden Decade

As has been the case with some old television shows, this year is missing its records. We do know that the Museum had a full officer's slate for the first time in five years. At the helm was Gerald Brenneman, the only remaining original board member, as chairman; Russ Sprague, vice chairman; Charles Bottomley, treasurer; Margo Coleman, secretary; and Carol McKay, Cataloger.



Gerald Brenneman, Chairman

Attendance dropped to 1,792 for the year. The decline was attributable to reductions in school field trips brought about by two new state measures reducing funds for such activities. The treasury continued to grow and showed \$11,500 at year end.

Hewlett-Packard donated a personal computer to the ARM that allowed for application of a computerized cataloging record; Carol McKay became the program expert.



Russ Sprague, Vice Chairman

This year was the beginning of what was to become a winning decade of stability, growth and prosperity for the ARM under the Brenneman/Sprague leadership along with the financial guidance of Charles Bottomley and the support of a hard-working board that wasn't waiting for the earlier stated board goal of being solely overseers of the Museum.

1997--We Need an Inventory and A Mission Statement

The Museum set open hours for September to June as 12 to 4 p.m. Wednesday and Saturday; June to September was increased to Tuesday through Saturday, same hours.

Carol McKay, cataloger, called for a complete inventory of Museum holdings. Charles Bottomley, treasurer and former financial executive, made a strong issue of the need for a mission statement; he made it an imperative associated with modern business management.

The Museum lease of the library basement had long since expired. The ARM wrote the City stating the need for more space. Lack of storage had been a problem for years. The most recent hopes for space at the Lincoln Market had failed, as had consideration of the Sears Roebuck & Co. warehouse building.

Board member Eugene Mroczko was preparing an aviation display.

Records of 1997 meetings were as sparse as those for 1996. It became apparent that without someone with a sense of history taking the minutes, the record might suffer.

Eviction by the City came in a notice from the City Library Board that ARM would have to vacate the Library by December 1999.

1998--Another Newsletter and McKay Will Inventory

Carol McKay at the January board meeting again called for an inventory of Museum holdings; the call was repeated at the February meeting. The call was heard at the March meeting. At the June meeting she brought it up again and the go ahead was given to set up an inventory system; her plan was to start with the locked inventory.



Carol McKay, Cataloger

Another possible museum site was considered. This time it was a building near the Monteith House. There was a rumor that the Nissen Ford dealership on Second Avenue and Lyon Street might become available. It had historic significance as a former stable.

A part time docent for 16-hours per week was employed (later expanded to 20 hours per week), and the Museum was

opened noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

A second newsletter was produced and a copy machine was obtained.

A railroad exhibit, opened in December of the previous year, was to be supplemented with a steam wheeler exhibit being planned.

Visitors totaled 2,067 and savings at year end totaled \$23,000. Two \$5,000 donations by individuals caused the significant jump in funds. A year remained to find a new home – December 1999.

1999--A New Home Thanks To an Albany Philanthropist

The year began with Museum consideration of the Pacific Power building on Second Avenue and Ferry Street as a new site; but by May the ARM was in negotiations with a major contributor for the acquisition of the old S. E. Young building at Second Avenue and Lyon Street. By October William and Doris Scharpf had provided the necessary funds for the purchase of the structure. The Museum took title on June 28, 1999.



William and Doris Scharpf

It was calculated that the Museum would have to raise \$50,000 to finance needed renovations. Birchfield Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc., helped in that regard by donating a new heating and cooling system.

A new agreement was worked out with Robert Potts regarding his "Remembering When" publications. Volume V was to be printed by Potts rather than by the Museum, as had been done with the previous four volumes.

The ownership of a new building meant acquiring insurance, publicity about the donation, a remodeling plan, clean-up and painting, budgeting for the remodeling and the move, and preparing a rental agreement for a portion of the space. An operating budget to cover heat, lights, and telephone (previously paid by the City) was instituted.

The building provided a second floor and a basement. The second floor, by City ordinance, could only be occupied by 12 people at a time unless a fire escape was added. The basement could not be used, even for storage, without installation of a sprinkler system.

A garage sale fundraiser was planned. Donations of items to sell at the Antiques in the Street sale were solicited. Methods and means of making the physical move were pressing topics for the board.

Work parties got under way and board meetings were scheduled for every two weeks to insure proper oversight.

Nancy Strobbe resigned from the Museum staff assistant (docent) job. A job description was drafted by Charles Bottomley for hiring a replacement.

Nellie Wilson was hired in the summer as the new assistant/docent.

Letters of thanks were sent to Rod and Randy Tripp for their negotiations support and most favorable (to the Museum) commission rate in the real estate transaction; to William and Doris

Scharpf for their generosity that made the building acquisition possible through their donation of Nike stock; and to Don Cowgill, representative of the building owners, for making the building price attractively affordable to the ARM.

The year concluded with a generous gift of stock from Rod and Marty Tripp. The Museum created a reference room in their honor. Sale of the stock put \$5,200 in the treasury.



Rod & Marty Tripp Reference Room Stained Glass Entrance Sign

Persistent roof leaks plagued the new site. This problem would continue for a number of years during the rainy season (all year to non-native Oregonians!), eluding numerous attempts to identify all of their locations. Modest satisfaction was gained from determination that high winds caused some of the elusive leaks.

A new, full board of directors was elected in October for the fiscal year 1999/2000. Three-year terms went to Armando de Rueda, Terry Crook, Jack Gillespie and Mike Briggs; two-year terms went to Gerald Brenneman, Russ Sprague, Margo Coleman and Charles Bottomley; and one-year terms to Carol McKay, Eugene Mroczko, Lois Bottomley and Berry Price.

It was noted that the Museum building's second floor had been used previously by the Assembly of God Church, by the Knights of Pythias, by the Sea Scouts and for archery practice.

Both Museum sites (the library basement and the newly acquired building) were open for the Christmas Parlour Tour December 12, 1999, from 2 to 4 p.m.

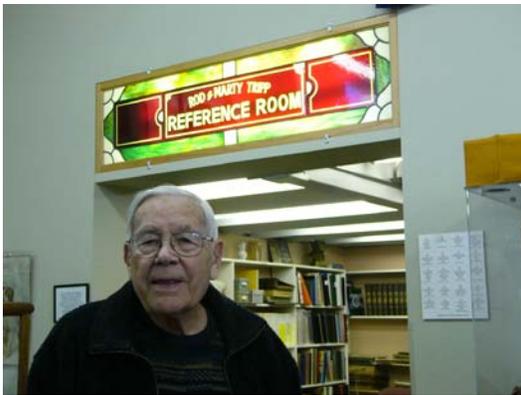
The big move from the Carnegie library basement to the Young building was scheduled for January 2000.

2000--Museum Moves and the Grand Opening

The move did not occur on schedule (January as planned) but did begin in March, and it would continue for months.

The heating and cooling system being donated by Birchfield Heating & Air Conditioning was valued at \$12,000 and was part of a total \$26,000 in professional services donated since the S.E. Young building was acquired.

The reference room to be established was named “Rod and Marty Tripp Reference Room”. The entrance sign to the room was to be executed in stained glass and donated by Senders Stained Glass.



Rodney Tripp, a Museum founder

Terry Crook resigned from the board in April and was replaced by recently retired Albany Democrat-Herald Publisher John Buchner.

The former Museum site (Carnegie Library basement) was to be closed permanently on April 24, 2000.

Corvallis Moving & Storage Co. was scheduled initially

to make the big move on May 8, 2000; it was rescheduled for May 10. The move was done free of charge as a donation to ARM.

Connie Petty was organizing a fund raising activity involving a performance by a group called “Three Guys from Albany” (New York). The group was traveling around the United States and visiting all the cities named “Albany.” Their performance in Albany, Oregon, was a part of a community art show. The Three Guys effort added \$360 to the Museum’s coffers. A book signing by Izzy Covalt was scheduled for a May 16, 2000 open house, but Izzy didn’t make it.

Zed Merrill was in town during May to film Albany interviews for a World War II documentary being done in conjunction with ARM.

The conversion from hardware store to museum was a major summer 2000 project spearheaded by Gerald Brenneman and project manager Lois Bottomley.

Fifty-five volunteers contributed more than 3,000 hours to the conversion. Forty-two individuals and businesses provided \$31,769 in in-kind assistance.

A building restoration fund campaign raised \$3,445. Two grants, one from the Oregon Community Foundation (\$10,000) and the other from the Oregon Heritage Foundation (\$20,000) also aided the project. Finally, the Museum itself provided \$30,232 from its own operating funds. In total, \$63,677 was spent on roof repairs, brick repointing, wall repairs and exterior painting.

Membership was at 37 in June and a goal was set to bring it up to at least 100 by August. A contest was established within the board to see who could bring in the most new members. Lois Bottomley won after recruiting 43 of the 164 members as of August 1, 2000; membership would reach 220 by year's end.

The first opening of the Museum occurred May 12, 1984, at the Carnegie Library site; the second Grand Opening was scheduled for September 9, 2000, at 136 Lyon St. SW as reported in a September 8, 2000, Democrat-Herald. An earlier August 16, 2000, Democrat-Herald story announced the planned September 9 opening and gave a history of the building:



The Young Building at its new site at Second Avenue and Lyon Street

- Constructed in Italianate style in 1887.
- Cost \$12,000 to build.
- Designed by Portland architect Warren H. Williams.
- Built at First Avenue and Broadalbin Street (current site of Wells Fargo Bank).
- First served as Young store.
- Building moved to Second Avenue and Lyon Street in 1912.
- A. D. Moody, Portland, was the moving contractor.
- Building moved by Peter Rittner and a team of horses.
- Newspaper reported on June 21, 1912, that the move started May 29 and took several weeks.

- First occupant after the move was the Parker Grocery & Meat Market.

By summer the Rod and Marty Tripp Research Room had a new stained glass sign. A plaque honoring Bill and Doris Scharpf for their contribution of the building was placed on a Museum wall.

John Buchner was spurring the fund raising committee and had added new deputies, Michael Kok and Mary Jacq (Jenks) Burck, to the team.

The rental space, a part of the building facing Second Avenue, was vacated by the occupant, a karate training business, at mid-year.

By year's end the Museum had posted income of over \$48,000 from grants, gifts, membership, sales and rentals. (Besides the business rental there were a number of rented parking places on the north side of the building.) Museum assets were nearly \$381,000 and it had zero liabilities. It was a new era for the ARM that boasted nearly 2,500 visitors for the year.

2001--Bill Scharpf Dies and Endows the Albany Regional Museum

In January, Charles Bottomley resigned as treasurer and was replaced by retired Linn County Treasurer Shannon Willard. Bottomley continued to keep the books and remained on the board until mid-year when he reduced his work status to docent and bookkeeper.



Charles Bottomley, Treasurer, Bookkeeper, Docent and Recipient of the first Gerald L. Brenneman Volunteer Award.

The ARM entered the cyber age through receipt of a Hewlett-Packard computer donation by the company, the purchase of a cataloging program "Past Perfect," and sending cataloger Carol McKay to a training workshop to learn how to make it all work.

Graffiti on the building (painted out by Gerald Brenneman) and continuing water leaks (particularly in the business rental) pestered operations. Discovery that a major structural

support beam in the basement needed replacing added to management worries. The rental needed to be filled, operating expenses were facing a monthly \$700-\$800 shortfall, and the paper copier gave up the ghost. A used one was later found for purchase and after that the hospital donated a cast off. On a happy note Gerald Brenneman was nominated for the Albany Distinguished Service Award.

After only a half year in office as treasurer, Shannon Willard resigned in deference to Charles Bottomley's bookkeeping work, which Shannon felt was all that was needed for the job, and all that Bottomley needed was a break from several years of intense financial guidance of the ARM. Shannon remained on the board.

By August 2001 membership was at 203 (87 people had not renewed).

The building painting contract and roof repair cost came to \$63,678 of which grants paid \$30,000; the balance was funded by donors, memberships, the building restoration fund, fund raisers and book sales.

Sadly, on September 4, 2001, Bill Scharpf, the ARM's greatest benefactor, died. In his

passing came new life for the Museum through his endowment of the ARM as one beneficiary of the William F. Scharpf Trust. The funds given were for establishing a professionally managed endowment fund that would provide income to the Museum for major projects. The Oregon Community Foundation was selected to administer the fund.

Edward Hereth also died in September 2001. He had volunteered at the Albany Regional Museum for many years, doing much of the early cataloging and compilation of historic articles in the "Hereth Binder Files" held in the Tripp research room.

Margo Coleman, an energetic board member and secretary for many years, resigned in September 2001.

In September 2001, Gerald Brenneman, chairman of ARM, met with Glenn Harrison, president of the Linn County Historical Society, and with Sam Lanahan of the Venetian Theater to discuss creation of a comprehensive history of Albany. Lanahan had contributed some cash to the project. The notion was floated in the respective organizations' newsletters to seek volunteer(s). The response was mute.

The ARM October annual membership meeting was a great success. Paid membership totaled 219.

Zed Merrill's documentary "The Last Day of Innocence" was made available for sale by the Museum. It was based on Albany interviews and accounts of Albany before and during World War II. The video made the top ten list of the International Telly Awards of 2002.

Magnolia Music rented the Museum's business space vacated by the karate school. (That space was at one time the Foley Jewelry store). Magnolia was to move in during February 2002. A work party was formed to get the area ready. The East Linn Christian School of Lebanon fielded a group that assisted Lois Bottomley and Gerald Brenneman in cleaning, sanding and painting.

The Museum logged about 2,600 visitors in 2001 and showed \$38,000 in income for the year.

During the year, Elmer Gatchet, a volunteer and an electrician, along with board member Berry Price, updated wiring in the Museum; it was an effort much appreciated every time a light switch was thrown or when an electrical outlet was needed.

2002--The Roof Still Leaks

Roof leaks were in season as the year began and those in the business rental area, along a shared wall between the main Museum building and the rental space, were of particular concern. The rental area was now occupied by a new renter and the Museum had floored the space with new carpet.

An Albany history video was being discussed. Early participants were Harrison, Powell, Mroczko, Buchner, Brenneman, Ellsworth and Potts. Zed Merrill was to be the producer and director; he needed \$20,000 to get the project going. A list of Albany people to be interviewed for the project was needed.

Gerald Brenneman and Carol McKay attended the winter Oregon Museum Association meeting in Salem. The ARM board spoke of the need for a strategic plan. April Bollish volunteered to do computer work and Rebecca Bond was working on a bulk mailing permit. The ARM declined an offer to have it take over a "History of Tangent" book project. It was a chore not needed in light of the ARM's own Albany history projects—text and video. However, it did contribute \$60 for

the effort that was later refunded when the Tangent project failed.

At mid-year Bottomley called it quits for both treasurer and board work, but he continued on as a volunteer doing bookkeeping and docent work.

The Scharpf Trust Endowment money was received in July and in August it was moved to the Oregon Community Foundation for management.

The October annual meeting elections brought Michael Kok to the board and the role of treasurer. Hasso Hering, editor of the Albany Democrat-Herald, was speaker of the well-attended meeting and gave an entertaining history of newspapers in Albany.

Board member John Buchner and his committee of Gerald Brenneman, Berry Price, and Michael Kok introduced a talking points outline of strategic plan ideas to the board. It dealt with three sectors of Museum functions: 1. Operations, 2. Product, and 3. Organization. Some of the short and long-term goals outlined were:

- Wheel chair accessible bathrooms.

- Lyon Street access and remodeling to its historic condition.
- Second floor remodeling and access.
- Elevator addition.
- Increased rate of cataloging accessions.
- Educational programs sponsorship.
- Construction of portable traveling exhibits.
- Expanded holdings of Albany memorabilia.
- Revision of Museum bylaws.
- Increasing membership.
- Hiring of a manager.
- Establishment of a volunteer docent group.
- Hiring of a bookkeeping service.

Board member Berry Price, along with volunteer electrician Elmer Gatchet, continued the wiring project into the second floor and also lighted the attic.

By year's end the visitor count reached 3,152 and membership was at 232. Income for the year was \$33,000.

2003--Getting Down to Business and Increasing Membership

The year led off with a January board discussion of short and long-term goals, development

of a computer web page by Kathleen Buchner, installation of a telephone line for computer hook-up, hiring of an administrative coordinator, the need for new exhibits and the display of new accessions. Russ Sprague put an exclamation mark on all of that by reiterating the need for job descriptions and calling for a standard operating procedures manual. Jack Gillespie rang the bell for newsletter articles to go in the now regularly scheduled quarterly, "Albany Old Times." Money was voted by the board to partially fund Zed Merrill's Albany history video project.

The February board meeting was opened with a printed agenda and the treasurer presented a detailed report of Museum finances.

The ARM was functioning as a corporate entity with operational continuity from month to month. The Museum's collection/donation box was uncommonly plump with \$35.

Giving credence to the old adage "fools step in where angels fear to tread," Museum board member and patron Gary Kingston volunteered to work on the written Albany history project.

The usual bad news to start the year was that rain was still getting into the building, but this time it was flooding the basement. Another leak in the rental space was attacked by a handy man. It didn't solve the problem, but his effort cost only \$15.

Membership was made a priority for the year. A spring membership drive was carried out with a very large mail solicitation, based on mailing lists from various sources. By June there were 260 members registered, moving toward the 300 member goal.

Zed Merrill at mid-year had completed 21 video interviews for the Albany history video project. He was working on the script, although financial support was still wanting. A backer or grant support was being sought.



Zed Merrill, Author and Video Producer

The ARM offered encouragement to its growing

patron level support (40 at that time) by treating them to a July bus trip to the Polk County Museum at Rickreall, Oregon. The Buchners (John, the board member, and Kathleen, a member volunteer) followed the patron event with an August social for the board at their home.

Winter rain leaks were followed by bees that decided the front point of the Museum roof would make a good home. The board declined their admittance without membership, and Vice Chairman Russ Sprague volunteered to have them evicted.

Diane Frampton had been elected secretary but due to illness was never able to carry out her duties. She officially resigned in June 2003.

August was a good financial month with the first receipt of earnings from the endowment fund. Gerald Brenneman and Berry Price were going all out in the basement to get it cleaned up and sealed from water. Russ Sprague and John Buchner were working on a standard operating procedures manual. Kathleen Buchner was well into the design and implementation of a Museum web site.

The October annual meeting featured retired Linn County Circuit Court Judge Jackson Frost speaking on "Stories from the Courthouse." Accomplishments were reviewed, and membership was reported at 293, 42 of which were patrons. Some accomplishments reported were:

- Establishment of a repair/maintenance fund.
- Addition of new exhibits, Indian artifacts and Albany souvenir china.
- Contest held, "What-Cha-Ma-Call It," to identify numerous historic objects.
- Remodeling second floor room (Lois Bottomley in charge.)
- Establishment of a training and travel fund.
- Received a \$2,800 grant for educational activities.
- Established both an internet web site (www.armuseum.com) and an e-mail address (armuseum@peak.org).

A booth was set up at the October Linn County Home Show. 100 visitors signed the guest book.

John and Kathleen Buchner attended the fall Oregon Museum Association meeting in Portland. John also represented the Museum at a November Oregon Parks and

Recreation Department Heritage Conservation Division meeting.

The November Veterans Day Parade brought Zed Merrill to town (from Portland) to highlight his new book, "Tales from World War II." The book was for sale at the Museum. The ARM endeared itself to the many parade watchers by providing a portable restroom on the Museum parking lot. Coffee was served in the Museum. About 100 visited and had coffee; about 200 visited the restroom.

Jack Gillespie published four issues of "Albany Old Times" as scheduled for the year. The Christmas season had the Museum open for Albany's annual Christmas Parlor Tour.

It was announced at the December board meeting that the membership had reached the 300 goal.

Plans were in the making for a new, major exhibit having to do with the Albany schools.

Income for the year was about \$83,000 to cover operating expenses of \$32,000. Life was good. Now if that darned leak could be located!

2004--Things Just Kept Getting Better

Although numerous physical plant items remained to be addressed, such as fire escape, elevator and restroom needs, focus was shifted toward those things that would enhance the Museum's community presence: membership, docent/staff abilities, exhibits and quality Albany artifacts.

Two awards within the Museum community were established. One was for financial and/or volunteer support to the Museum by members and volunteers. The second was an annual award for an outstanding ARM volunteer:

Albany Regional Museum Pioneer's Society Plaque

- 10 years continuous service to the ARM, or
- \$1,000 or more cash contributions and membership dues for individuals, or
- \$2,500 or more cash contributions for businesses, and
- Current involvement with ARM at the time the name is added to the plaque.

The first names proposed for the plaque were John and Kathleen Buchner, Russ Sprague, Carol McKay, Gerald and Kathryn

Brenneman, and Dayt and Esther Elston.

Gerald L. Brenneman
Volunteer Award

The first recipient was Charles Bottomley, former board member, treasurer, bookkeeper, docent and member volunteer.

Board member effectiveness was strengthened through participation in Oregon Museum Association meetings and other similar experiences that increased the collective knowledge of museum science and operations.

A booth at the Linn County Home Show was a continuing function; this time it was February 6, 7, and 8, 2004, with volunteers at the county fair grounds activity. Mike Martin of Security Alarm continued donating the annual building monitoring fee. Museum personnel occasionally tested the system by accidentally setting it off. Gerald Brenneman upon hearing it made more than one running gallop across town to reconcile the alert.

Priorities of the previous year were reviewed for accomplishment and consideration was given to new ones to add for the current year, 2004. Lois Bottomley continued working with

contractors who could reasonably address the Museum building's structural needs. John and Kathleen Buchner closed out the previous year's work by taking down the 2003 Christmas decorations.

The need for restroom housekeeping came up and the possibility of hiring a cleaning service was considered. Lois Bottomley volunteered that to save the Museum the expense she would take care of it. What more could be asked of a board member (or the Museum chairman who performed the duty more than once)?

Volunteer Elmer Gatchet, the electrician, working with board member Berry Price, was given a budget for supplies. The board supplied Price with a 21-foot-ladder needed in the heights of the attic wiring.

A new membership drive was launched to increase the 300 membership of 2003 by 10 percent. The drive was begun in April to target the June 2004 through May 2005 annual membership period.

Gerald Brenneman attended the March 2004 Oregon Museum Association meeting at Coos Bay, Oregon.

A volunteer was sought by Gerald Brenneman and Rebecca Bond to take on the soon to be launched school exhibit project. Oscar Hult was hired to help design and set up the school exhibit. Kristen Schuttpelz and Mary Jacq Burck volunteered to chair the effort.

A task force committee, established to implement board goals, was looking for a part-time museum coordinator. The committee was co-chaired by Mary Jacq Burck and Kristen Schuttpelz. Other members were Gerald Brenneman, John Buchner and Michael Kok.

Ultra violet blocking film was placed on windows in the newly remodeled upstairs work room. It was the same material used on the inside of the downstairs windows. (For the record, it is never to be washed or it will be ruined).

Gerald Brenneman had been negotiating for many months with the Oregon Department of Transportation to have the State place highway signs announcing the presence of the Museum. The Museum would have to pay for them, but even so the State turned down the request with the

argument that the Museum was an “urban” entity.

Nancy Daniels and Shannon Willard worked up a new identification contest for the Museum to sponsor. Pictures of historic houses were posted at the Museum and contestants were to identify their locations in town.

A \$250 grant was received from the Oregon Heritage Foundation.

An April slide show at the Museum was sponsored by the ARM and the Albany Landmarks Advisory Commission. Slides of historic Albany houses were shown. More than 50 people attended. Bob Potts signed his numerous photo books which were on sale by the Museum.

Kristen Schuttpelz and Mary Jacq Burck were pursuing items to be used in the school exhibit. Oscar Hult was constructing the exhibit. A July 18, 2004, Democrat- Herald article by Cathy Ingalls described the exhibit.



Burck and Schuttpelz at exhibit

A new exhibit was donated to the ARM by Boy Scout Don Gillham. It was a scale model of the 1888 Red Crown flouring mill in Albany. He supervised and built the model with the help of other scouts as an Eagle Scout project. Supervising others was a key aspect of the merit badge. His work was presented June 12, 2004.

An “Upstairs” tour of Albany buildings occurred on May 7, 2004. It brought 35 visitors to the Museum’s second floor; no more than 12 at a time as required by fire code restrictions.

Michael and Janet Kok attended the June 6 and 7, 2004, Oregon Museum Association meeting at the High Desert Museum, Bend, Oregon.

Zed Merrill received word that an anonymous donor had pledged \$20,000 for production of the proposed Albany history video.

John Boock, Jr., patron and owner of the vacant lot north of the Museum building, spoke to the board about his plan to develop the space into an artistic garden. The Museum had been nervous about what might eventually take place there and was pleased with that outcome.

The August meeting was a dinner held at Wyatt’s Restaurant as a thank-you and team-building treat for the board.

The Linn Benton Lincoln Education Service District (ESD) U.S. History project, in its second year and involving grant money, assigned seven teachers to intern at the Museum for the summer. The teachers worked on educational materials, indexing and inventorying.

As in most years the Museum was a part of the Albany Historic Home Tour in 2004.

Heating and cooling issues with the rental space were resolved by the extension of ductwork from the Museum into the rental area. A \$50 permit was required from the City. Stephens Heating and Air Conditioning of Corvallis did the job.

Forty-six patrons of the ARM were treated in October to an Albany Civic Theater performance of “The Murder Room,” a fast-paced British comedy. It was followed by an hors d’oeuvres reception at the Museum.

The October 5, 2004, annual meeting drew a “door busting” crowd of 120 people to hear guest speaker John Baker, author of the book “Camp Adair.” Russell Sprague was honored for his years of service as he retired from the Museum’s board and vice chairmanship. Charles Bottomley was awarded the “Gerald L. Brenneman Volunteer Award.”

Building structural work in the basement being supervised by Lois Bottomley was completed in the fall.

A reception was held October 20, 2004, to celebrate and honor Eagle Scout Don Gillham, his Red Crown model display and the Calapooia District of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Task Force Committee of John Buchner, Gerald Brenneman, Michael Kok, Kristen Schuttpelz and Mary Jacq Burck developed the criteria for hiring the Museum’s administrative coordinator in October. After an

extensive interviewing process, the task force recommended the hiring of Bill Maddy, a native of Albany. The board voted approval and Maddy began work on October 25, 2004. Cathy Ingalls of the Albany Democrat-Herald featured the new administrator in an October 29, 2004, news account.

By November Lois Bottomley’s structural restoration project saw emplacement of new braces in the attic. But there was still a rain leak somewhere in the front of the roof.

The November board meeting returned officers Brenneman, Kok and Ellsworth to their respective offices of chairman, treasurer and secretary. John Buchner was elected vice chairman to fill the vacancy created with the retirement of Russell Sprague.



John Buchner and Russell Sprague, Museum Vice Chairmen

The Oregon Army National Guard's Bravo Company, 52nd Engineers of Albany created a Museum display for the November Veterans Day Parade. The exhibit told the story of the unit's recent deployment in Iraq. The Museum served cookies and coffee, and returned the previous year's successful portable restroom station to the parking lot for parade watchers.

The Christmas Parlour Tour had the Museum open from 2 to 7 p.m. on December 12, 2004. It also served as a reception to introduce Bill and Deborah Maddy to Museum members and to the public.



Bill Maddy, Administrative Coordinator

The Museum's attic had insulation by year's end, the school display was nearly completed, the leak in the front of the roof was found, but wind-driven rains still delivered water into the rental.

Jack Gillespie resigned from the board for health reasons.

There were 335 members, 62 patrons, and seven major donors by December 2004. The proposed operating budget for 2005 was \$55,000. Visitors for the year totaled 3,353. There were 53 volunteers who contributed 3,103 hours of their time.

2005--Celebration of 25 Years of Albany Regional Museum History

Museum goals for 2005 were presented at the outset of the year along with a listing of operations committees for the year. A membership goal of 350 was set. Retired accountant Wes Price was appointed to replace Jack Gillespie on the board and the board reached a consensus for membership in the Albany Chamber of Commerce.

The highlighted goal of the year was to hold a Chautauqua-like celebration of the Museum's 25 years of existence. This occurred on July 29, 2005, at the Albany

Senior Center with Captain Meriwether Lewis (re-enacted by Idahoan Tim McNeil) appearing at a catered, buffet dinner.

Nearly 200 people attended the event including the board's first chairman, Bonnie Orr. Other dignitaries present included Mayor Charles McLaran, City Manager Wes Hare, and Museum founders Rodney Tripp, Robert Potts, Maria Delapoer, Connie Petty and Kathryn Brenneman. Benefactors Doris Scharpf and Rodney and Martha Tripp also were recognized.

"Captain Lewis" gave a theatrical performance in costume based on Lewis' letters home to his mother and the Lewis and Clark journals. The program was tied to the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition which was being celebrated around the United States. The program also met one of the Museum's goals of providing educational programming for the community.

Wes and Diane Price chaired the anniversary committee. Attendees received a commemorative booklet and lapel pin as anniversary mementos. The dinner menu included tossed green salad, summer green beans and cherry tomatoes, biscuits with butter and honey, lemon thyme

chicken breast, pork roast with peach chutney, blueberry pie and ice cream, coffee, tea and lemonade.

The 2005 year concluded with a board "thank you" dinner in August at Riley's Billiard Room and Cafe, participation in a fall home show, the annual meeting in October and involvement with another Christmas Parlour Tour.

The annual meeting included election of new board members, presentation of the annual "Volunteer Award," and a talk on the "Cultural History of the Santiam Kalapuya Indians." Retired forester Tony Farque was the speaker.

The 25 years of Museum history draws a picture of the dedication of community citizenry engaging in an appreciation of what came before them. It has shown how many contribute in multiple ways and how time, circumstance, opportunity, and persistence reward a dedicated objective bannered by only a few people; some participating for a short while and others over the longer term. In the latter case one name shines brightest in this story, that of Gerald Brenneman.

P.S. Maier Roofing Co., hopefully, fixed the roof leaks in July 2005!