



The Meadowlark

Quarterly Newsletter



Crook County Historical Society
246 North Main Street
Prineville, Oregon 97754

September 14, 2023
Email-mekia.ogborn@co.crook.or.us
www.bowmanmuseum.org

Pioneer Queen Annual Luncheon

Sunday March 3, 2024
11:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

The first Sunday of March is the annual celebration of the Pioneer Queens. The event will be held in the Crook County History Center community room. This event is intended to honor all current and past pioneer queens. It will begin with a potluck lunch and presentation of the present and past pioneer queens. An encore program will be presented by historian Steve Lent on The Upper Country. The program was given at the museum annual membership appreciation breakfast in December and only a few queens were present and it was decided that it would be entertaining to all for the queens.

HONORING THE 2023 PIONEER QUEEN

Dee Berman

Deanna "Dee" Rachor was born on October 5, 1947 at the Prineville General Hospital that was located on First Street. Her parents were Floyd and Evelyn Rachor. She has deep roots in Crook County. Her great-grandparents, August and Amelia Wolke, immigrated from Germany and first settled in Washington. The family moved to Powell Butte in 1910 and homesteaded. The four younger children of the family moved with them and included, Anna, who would become Dee's grandmother.

August Wolke passed away in 1912 and Amelia worked to support her family by serving as a mid-wife for Dr. Belknap. Anna married Charles Rachor in 1916. Their son Floyd was born September 5, 1921 in Prineville. Floyd graduated from Crook County High School. After he graduated he entered the U.S. Army Air Force. He was a gunner on a B-24 in Europe and he taught gunnery school during World War II. After the war he came back to Prineville and married Evelyn Pence on May 18, 1946. He worked for Alexander Yawkey Lumber Company. He went to work for the Crook County Road Department in 1947 and worked there until his retirement in 1986.

Dee attended schools in Prineville and graduated from Crook County High School in 1965. She married Don Berman in 1970. Don was born in Yakima, Washington in 1946 and moved to Prineville with his family in 1955. He graduated from CCHS in 1962. They have a son and two daughters.

Don and Dee were involved in the meat cutting business in Madras and Prineville for several years. Dee worked in the finance department for Crook County. She was elected as Crook County Clerk in 1994 and served in that capacity for twenty years retiring in 2014. Through the years she has been an active volunteer in numerous city and county organizations.



2023 Pioneer Queen Dee Berman

Director's Corner

Hello Crook County Historical Society Members,

I hope this letter finds you well and filled with excitement for the possibilities that lie ahead in the coming year.

As we embark into the new year, I am filled with a sense of gratitude for the incredible work that our Museum and Historical Society has accomplished over the past year. From engaging exhibits to thought-provoking lectures, we have continued to uphold our mission of fostering an appreciation for our history. Our dedicated staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to preserve our history and offer fun and educational programs, and for that, I am profoundly grateful.

As we look ahead to the year before us, I am excited about the opportunities that await us. We are looking forward to the grand opening of the Belknap Exhibit Center on March 16th. We are thrilled to announce the inaugural exhibits for the Belknap Exhibit Center will be *History of Early Crook County Doctors* and *History of Crook County's Pioneer Queens*. In addition, we will be hosting artist Dave Dittman's *Along the Oregon Trail* this summer. Throughout the upcoming year, we will be hosting a variety of historical lectures by our very own Steve Lent and other local historians. Along with our historical lectures, we look forward to welcoming local authors and artists to showcase their work at the museum. Lastly, keep an eye out this spring as the Bowman Museum will be starting a monthly trivia night.

Whether through innovative programming, expanded outreach efforts, or the continued preservation of our historical treasures, I am confident that we will continue to make a lasting impact in our community. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation to each and every one of you for your dedication and commitment to our cause. As we embark on this new chapter together, let us do so with enthusiasm, optimism, and a renewed sense of purpose. I am excited to see what we will accomplish together in the year ahead and am honored to be a part of such an extraordinary community.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Warm regards,

Sean

Sean Briscoe
Executive Director
A.R. Bowman Museum



President's Message

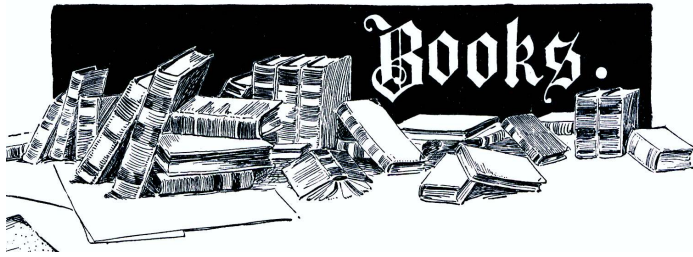
Greetings CCHS Members!

I hope your year is off to a fantastic start! We are so excited to announce our Grand Opening event for the new Belknap Event Center! Please join us on Saturday, March 16th anytime between 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. The Bowman Museum, Caboose Park and The Belknap Center will be open. We will have cookies and punch and our very own Dr. and Mrs. Belknap (Garrett Luther & Lexie Tombleson) will join us! We can't wait for you to see the new building/exhibit. Our first March event will be on Sunday, March 3rd in the Bowman Museum for our quarterly meeting to honor our pioneer queens. Please join us for a potluck lunch at 11:00 am, say hi to our lovely queens, and listen to our one and only history expert, Steve Lent, who will give a presentation on the Upper Country. These are just the first of several exciting things taking place at your museum this year so stay tuned! See you in March!

Dawn

Dawn Alexander



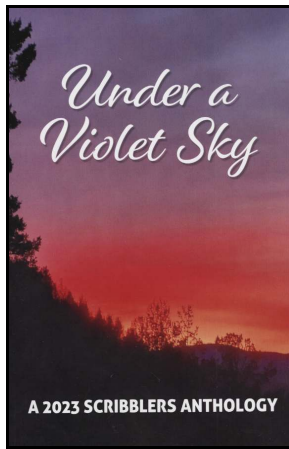


New Books at the Museum

MEMBERS RECEIVE 10% DISCOUNT

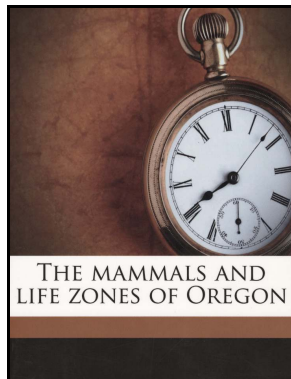
Under a Violet Sky
 by Scribblers Writing Club
 \$15.00 Paper 249 Pages

This is an anthology of local writers of the Scribblers Writing Club. It contains poetry and narratives of life experiences and creative works. It is the seventh volume of anthologies by the Scribblers. Highly recommended for those that want a flavor of local writing.



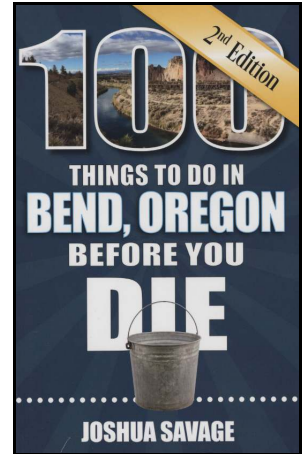
The Mammals and Life Zone of Oregon
 by Vernon Bailey
 \$29.95 Paper 416 Pages

This classic publication on Oregon Mammals was first published in 1936. It has been out of print for several years. It is often referred to as the “bible” on Oregon mammals.. It contains numerous photos and maps of different life zones in the state. The original publication is very rare. This is a specially printed reproduction fo the original. It is a must for those interested in the mammals of Oregon.



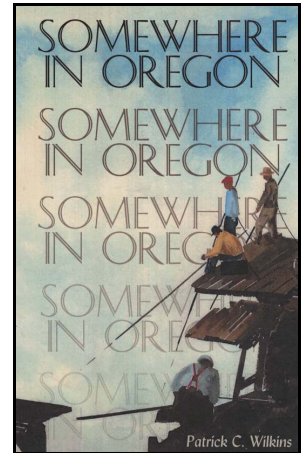
100 Things to Do In Bend, Oregon Before You Die
 by Joshua Savage
 \$18.00 Paper 144 Pages

This is a definitive listing of entertaining places to visit in and around Bend. Each page is dedicated to revealing a unique site or thing to do in the region. It covers natural places, exciting adventures available and the many breweries and the Ale Trail. There is a brief description of each subject covered.



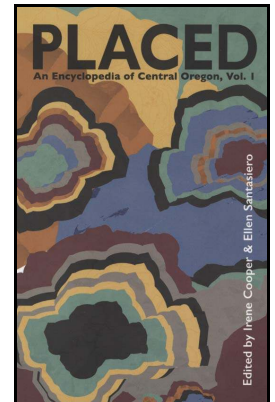
Somewhere in Oregon
 by Patrick Wilkins
 \$14.95 Paper 201 Pages

Patrick Wilkins for many years was a roving reporter for a Portland television station presenting features on the many intriguing places of Oregon. The book captures a range of Oregon sites and characters. There are brief descriptions and narratives on a wide variety of places in the state. An entertaining look at many unknown places.



Placed: An Encyclopedia of Central Oregon
 Edited by Irene Cooper & Ellen Santasiero
 \$19.95 Paper 179 Pages

This book is a composition of collected stories and poems that covers areas from Fort Rock to Burns to Warm Springs. There are contributions from 37 authors writing about their unique perspective and experience of the high desert.



MEMORIALS

Since November 27, 2023

Alvin Lowery
by, LaVonne Ritches
Jeff & Ruinda McCormack

Dr. Dennison Thomas
by Barbara Groff
Jeff & Ruinda McCormack
Doug & le Kathy Crane

Maurice & Joan Gerke
by Jennifer Sherman

George Russell
by Mary Russell

Skip Russell
by Mary Russell

Sherry Eriksen
by David Scott

Fred Bushong
by Betty Bushong

Jerry Robertson
by Jeff & Ruinda McCormack
Beth Grimes

Donna Demaris
by Jeff & Ruinda McCormack
Mary Albert
Dawn Alexander
Beth Grimes

Sue Springer
by Jeff & Ruinda McCormack
Steve Lent & Barbara Fontaine

Donna McCormack
by John & Lynne Breese
Steve Lent & Barbara Fontaine
Ray & Linda Gillett
Gary & Ramona Romine
Beth Grimes
Barbara Groff
Wayne Breese
Edwin Coates
Ellen Harrison
Mary Russell

Roger Hudspeth
by Jeff & Ruinda

Becky McLean Moore
by Beth Grimes

Barbara Chadwick
by Beth Grimes

Marvin Kelso
by Beth Grimes

Clyde Penhollow
by Beth Grimes

Marty Howard Sr.
by Beth Grimes

Ted Comini
by Beth Grimes

Dale Comini
by Beth Grimes

Barbara Pangle
by Beth Grimes

Bob Sheppard
by Beth Grimes

Jerry Pimentel
by Beth Grimes

Nyla Evans
by Beth Grimes

Jack Groves
by Beth Grimes

Denis Grader
by Beth Grimes

Royce Chadwick
by Beth Grimes

Leland Ashcraft
by Beth Grimes

Mike Templeton
by Beth Grimes

Norm Thompson
by Patricia Thompson

Marie Hill
by Steve Lent & Barbara Fontaine

Elsie A Noble Peeler
by Joyce Clark

Bill McCormack
by Mary Russell

Welcome New Members

Della Dornon
The Humphreys
Diane Nunley
Barbara Lokting
Marv & Vicki Sumner
Gary Gregory
Sharon Cheshire

The Most Home-Like Restaurant in Prineville

Mother Thompson's

Oregon Grill Diner

Mrs. Mary E. Thompson, Prop.

On the Banks of the Ochoco, Prineville, Oregon

Advertisement 1927

The Establishment of Major Sawmills in Prineville 1930s-1940s

by Steve Lent

There were several small saw mills scattered throughout the forested areas of Crook County prior to the 1930s. Large timber companies such as Alexander-Yawkey and Rodgers and Youman Timber Co. had acquired large holdings of timber in the Prineville vicinity but were not yet ready to begin major operations. The arrival of rail lines to Bend in 1911 provided an avenue to ship processed lumber from Bend to outside markets. By 1916 Shevlin-Hixon and Brooks-Scanlon mills were operating and Bend became a boom town. It became one of the leading producers of ponderosa pine in the United States. Prineville lagged behind as the community did not have a connection to the rail lines until 1918. Even after the City of Prineville Railroad was constructed it was not a reliable means of transportation as it was originally hastily built and did not have ballast gravel between the ties. Derailments were common in the early years of the railroad. Lumber companies were not ready to commit to large scale operations in Prineville and were waiting for market conditions to change to make it profitable before operations began.

In 1925 F. L. and D. Davidson established a small mill known as Davidson Brothers Sawmill. It did not reach full capacity until 1928. The mill had a capacity of about 30,000 feet per day but averaged between 20,000 to 25,000 feet per day.. They hired between 30 and 40 men to work in one shift. Logging crews cut and hauled logs to the mill. The primary timber supply was from private holdings on McKay Creek and near Grizzly Mountain. The mill did not operate during the winter months. In 1929 Davidson Brothers purchased a mill near Grizzly and gave up their lease at the mill site on Lamonta Road.

Ochoco Box and Lumber Company next occupied the site on



W.L. "Pop" Forsythe

Lamonta Road. By 1935 Dant & Russell had purchased the site and began milling operations and employed between 35-40 men either at the sawmill or in the woods.

The Dant & Russell mill site was sold to Pine Products Corp. The company was incorporated in 1935. Pop Forsythe, who worked for Dant & Russell, was involved with Howard Crawford in the Tum-a-Lum Lumber Company and took over management of the company. The Pine Products Mill burned in 1936 but was rebuilt. Pine Products began full scale production in 1937 cutting about 50,000 feet on a daily shift. They began stockpiling lumber and began shipping out rail cars to eastern markets.

Alexander-Yawkey began acquiring large tracts of timber land north of Prineville. The Alexander-Yawkey company was headquartered in Wisconsin. The company was reluctant to commit to major operations until there was an assured and consistent market and an adequate transport avenue. Also they were waiting for a market demand

for western pine to develop. Once Pine Products began operating with two shifts a day it encouraged the Alexander-Yawkey interests to commit to operating in the Prineville vicinity. The company chose to have milling operations in the woods and transport rough cut lumber to a processing plant which was established just north of Prineville. The first sawmill was built near the junction of Little McKay and McKay Creeks about 14 miles northeast of Prineville.. The processing mill in Prineville had a rail line extended from the main City of Prineville Railway tracks for loading cars from the facility. A planing mill, dry kiln, and sorting chain were constructed and a large yard for storing processed lumber was graded.

Alexander-Yawkey constructed a logging road to their mill site and built a portable mill with housing for mill and logging crews. They had chosen to have milling operations near the site of their logging and they felt it was more efficient than hauling logs to the mill in Prineville. The sawmill was operational by the fall of 1937. The first lumber was sawed at the McKay mill on Jan. 13, 1938. They directly skidded logs from their company owned lands to the mill site. Buildings at the mill site were constructed with skids so once a timber supply diminished the buildings could be moved to another location. Over 20 buildings were constructed at the field mill site. Buildings included a cookhouse, mess hall, meat storage building, grocery supply building, bathhouse, bunkhouses and small cottages. Cottages were built for family men and their families. The mill employed between 35 and 50 men including logging operations.

The finishing plant in Prineville was completed in 1938. It is ironic that there was a major concern by the company that there was an acute



Ben Alexander

shortage of housing for construction workers on the processing mill in Prineville. A similar shortage is occurring in Prineville today as the massive data centers have difficulty in finding housing for construction workers.

Once the saw mill and the processing mill were completed full production began. The processing mill employed up to 100 men. From 1938 to 1943, the field mill was moved four times to be close to timber supplies. The company thought that they could mill through the winter at the outlying mill sites but Central Oregon weather was more severe than they thought. After several feet of snow fell on the mill, operations had to be shut down until the weather cleared. In 1943, it was deemed no longer more economical to have sawmill operations in the field and the main sawmill was moved to Prineville at the same site as the processing plant. Unfortunately the new mill burned to the ground in 1945. It was rebuilt however. It became one of the largest lumber processing mills in Prineville. All operations were moved to the Prineville site. Alexander -Yawkey sold their operations and was re-established as Alexander-Stewart in 1951.

A.R. Rogers and C.M. Youman who had timber holdings in Minnesota land southeast of Prineville in 1907. Although they both had separate lumber companies they were partners in the Rogers-Youman Lumber Company. Ochoco Lumber Company was incorporated in 1923. At that time they purchased the timber holdings of Rogers-Youman, which was estimated to be one million feet or about 73,000 acres in Crook County. The company continued to purchase more timberland. The economy was not suitable at that time to establish a large mill in Prineville. Also there was concern about being able to ship lumber to eastern markets. The Prineville Railway was established in 1918 but was not adequate in 1923 to ship large quantities of lumber.

Much of their acquired timberlands were not contiguous and was somewhat problematic to manage. The company was in financial difficulty and by 1931 the company was in default by \$750,000. The Forest Service did buy a large tract of the company's land which provided badly needed funds.

The company managed to weather the difficult national economic decline. Although milling operations were delayed, the company did have a large timber base. The development of Pine Products and Alexander-Yawkey boosted the company into action. The company was one of the first to advocate for an improved City of Prineville Railroad that could handle large lumber shipments and stabilize the rail line. Construction on a mill in eastern Prineville began in April 1938. There were two companies, Ochoco Timber Company which owned the large tracts of timbered land, and Ochoco Lumber Company. The lumber company was the operating concern for the Ochoco Timber Company.

A mill operation at Sand Point, Idaho was purchased and equipment was moved to Prineville and set up at the Ochoco mill site. The city of Prineville Railway extended a short siding to the

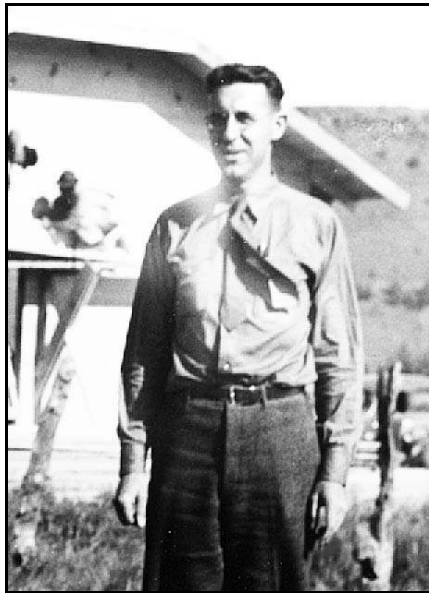
mill site. The mill became operational on September 8, 1938. Logging operations had begun before the mill was completed. Paul Kelly constructed logging roads on Wolf Creek, a tributary of Ochoco Creek. There was an employment boom as many applied for logging jobs as well as mill jobs. A mill pond was established at the mill with water diverted from Ochoco Creek. A trial run of operations was begun with a single shift with the sawyer carriage cutting only one way along logs. An attachment was added to the sawyers carriage that took the logs through the saw both going and coming. This increased output by about ten percent. R.G. Watts was appointed the manager of the mill and W. E. Lamm was president of Ochoco Lumber Company. The mill was a nine-foot band mill. A modern planing mill was built with drying sheds and loading docks. Lumber was stock piled during the start-up and the first shipments began on Oct. 20, 1938.

Ochoco Timber Co. originally had plans to develop a logging railroad to their timber holdings similar to the logging railroads utilized by Brooks-Scanlon and Shevlin-Hixon mill in Bend. The rail gradient proved to be very difficult to construct a useable line and the idea was abandoned.

The first logging operations began with a company logging camp established on Wolf Creek. Paul Kelly constructed roads and contracted to do logging operations. Logs were loaded on trucks and hauled to town. Unfortunately in Jan. 1939 the log truck operations were found to be carrying loads too heavy for the state road system and the Public Utility Commission (PUC) plates on four log trucks were taken by the state highway department. This curtailed operations at the mill until loads could be adjusted and meet requirements of the highway department. The trucks were not cleared for operation until March 9, 1939. Paul Kelly had been on vacation during the shut down and was called back when the ban was

lifted and logging operations began again.

By December of 1939 Ochoco Lumber had added four dry kilns and a planer to the mill operations. The other two main mills in Prineville, Pine Products and Alexander-Yawkey also added dry kilns. It was expected that out-put would be increased and a better grade of lumber would be produced. The addition of dry kilns increased employment at the mills.



Stuart Shelk

In 1944 Ochoco Lumber Company shifted logging operations to the Pilot Butte and Cadle Butte areas. A new road was built through the Combs Flat area. A large portion of their timber holdings was in this area. A road was upgraded by Crook County from Prineville to the top of Webdell Hill. The lumber company then built a road that extended north of Pilot Butte. The road would later be known as Burma Road. An agreement with Crook County made Ochoco Lumber responsible for maintenance of the county road during log hauling periods.

J. Floyd King became manager of the mill after the resignation of R.G. Watts late in 1939. King died in 1944. Stuart Shelk was hired as the mill superintendent. A new lumber stacker was constructed and a new boiler and

smokestack was constructed in 1950. The mill was geared up to begin high production going into the 1950s.

The three large mills were a big boom for the economy of Prineville as the Depression was still detrimental to local economies. Prior to World War II the beginnings of the lumber industry in Prineville was finally established. There was still a highly variable market and price fluctuations but the

The mills were ready to start producing lumber on a large scale. The mills were experimenting with sustained yield and selective logging to aid in providing a long term timber source. Alexander-Yawkey and Ochoco Lumber had large timber holdings to harvest but Pine Products depended largely on buying timber from private lands. Forest Service timber was not yet ready to be harvested on a large scale.

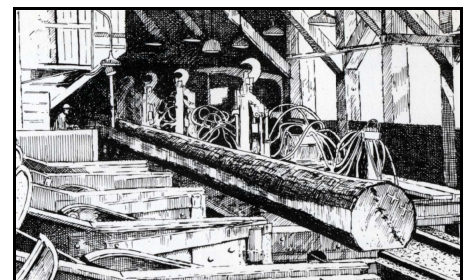
Another company that began milling operations that would lead to another major mill in Prineville began with operations at Camp Watson in Wheeler County.

John Hudspeth and his brothers moved from Oklahoma in 1936 where they had operated a mill at the Camp Watson site. They did not own land but did acquire the timber cutting rights. The mill was an isolated region. A mill and camp were constructed. Once the mill became operational in 1939 Hudspeth shipped over 100 cars of rough cut lumber over the City of Prineville Railway. Hudspeth also established several other milling operations, mostly in Wheeler County. John Hudspeth rented a site from the City of Prineville to establish a planing mill near the railroad on Lamonta Road. He leased the property for \$1.00 per year. A railroad siding was constructed to the site. John Hudspeth made his residence in Prineville. Finally in 1947 Hudspeth Pine Inc. started operation at a new sawmill site in Prineville. The mill had a capacity of about 70,000 feet of lumber per shift. Most of his operations in Wheeler County were transferred to Prineville with the exception of the Bridge Creek Mill near Mitchell. A

grand opening was held on November 20, 1947. The Hudspeth mill relied primarily on timber harvested from private lands and purchase of timber from the Forest Service.

Plans for the mill included construction of dry kilns, a fuel house, warehouses and shops. A big pond for logs was placed in a depression below the mill site along Lamonta Road.. Logging was done mostly by contract but Hudspeth did have their own logging equipment and log trucks.

The Hudspeth Mill created many more new jobs in Prineville. It became apparent that Prineville would soon be a prosperous community. The community had four major sawmills operating and plentiful jobs were available as World War II came to an end. There was a big increase in demand for pine timber for constructing homes nation-wide and the mills in Prineville were gearing up to provide the lumber needed for the building boom. The 1930s and 1940s set the base for a significant transition to one of the largest lumber producing communities in the United States. The next few decades would see Prineville rise to be known as the Ponderosa Capital of the World. The stage was set for not only lumber production but for the secondary wood products industries this made Prineville one of the busiest lumber communities in the United States. The city of Prineville Railway also prospered as a result with large shipments leaving daily. Improvements needed to be made to expand the railway infrastructure and the mills helped provide funding to make the railway a more stable system of transportation for lumber shipments.



Band saw Headrig

Collections Nook

from the Desk of Deanna Smith

Hello Members!

It is my pleasure to join you all as the Collections Manager here at the Bowman Museum. My first day was October 25th, and with the whirlwind of the holiday season I missed out on writing a collections update this past fall. As I'm nearing the end of my fifth month here in Prineville, it's very clear how much the community cares about the Bowman Museum. I greatly look forward to meeting more members as time goes by, as well as working to help keep the momentum going by improving the existing exhibits.

Hopefully by now you all know how close we are to opening the new Belknap Exhibit Center next door to the Bowman Museum. Since my first day on the job, I've been hard at work preparing items for this new display space. As we draw closer to March, it feels like time to introduce you all to the inaugural museum display planned for the new Belknap Exhibit Center.

We are thrilled to announce the grand opening of two new displays that touch on two important figures in Prineville's history: Dr. & Wilda Belknap. Our first-floor exhibit titled "Dr. Belknap: Crook County Doctor," is a testament to the remarkable achievements and milestones of Dr. Belknap's work as a rural doctor at the turn of the century. Upstairs we hope to have a more permanent display that touches on Prineville's pioneer queens, and Wilda Belknap's work shaping the Pioneer Association, and eventual merge that created today's Crook County Historical Society.

What can you expect from these exhibits? Our first-floor display will take a deeper look at who Dr. Horace Preston Belknap was, and his dedication to serving the people of Crook County. The museum recently accepted a large donation of medical instruments, medicines, as well as a temporary display of Dr. Belknap's doctor bag. Upstairs we will have space dedicated to showcasing each pioneer queen, as well as how Wilda Belknap played a role in the formation of the Crook County Historical Society. We have several queens' dresses that we would like to continue to display, and we will finally have a place to do so. In short, I'm excited to be able to show off all our hard work on this project. It has been a true community collaborative effort, and we are eager to open the doors to all our members.

We hope to see you during our grand opening on March 16, and stay tuned for our upcoming new exhibits this summer!



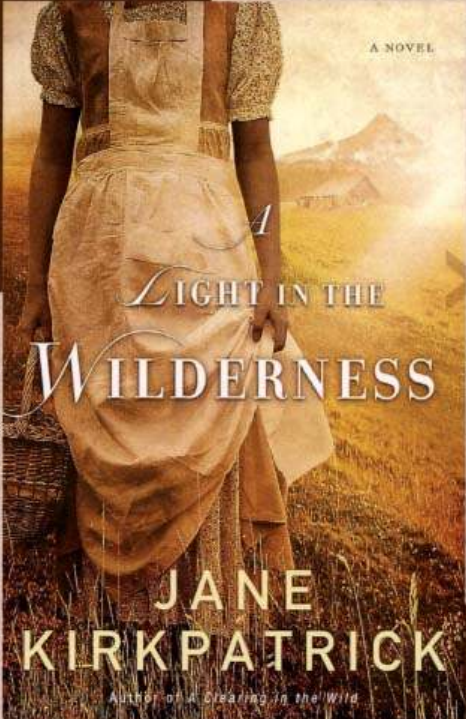
Deanna Smith

Deanna



New Feature

A museum staff member will review a book from our book store each month. This month staff member Mekia Ogborn chose to review Jane Kirkpatrick's *A Light in the Wilderness*.



February Book Review

A Light in the Darkness

Letitia Carson's story in a "A Light in the Darkness" by Jane Kirkpatrick is an inspiring example of resilience. Despite being a former slave on the Oregon Trail, she never gave up. Even after her white husband passed away, leaving her in a difficult situation with her children that threatened her freedom, Letitia remained strong and resourceful.

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Bowman Museum & Crook County Historical Society

✦ VOLUNTEER ✦ N E E D E D

Join our team of dedicated volunteers at the Bowman Museum and be a vital part of preserving our community's legacy. Whether you're a history buff or just eager to make a difference, we welcome your passion and commitment.



We Need Help :

- Belknap Center Volunteer
- Collection Management
- Ranchers Memorial Volunteer
- Photograph Management



For information call or email
541-447-3715 | deanna.smith@crookcountyor.gov



NEW BOOK

FARM ANATOMY ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

Fun, Hands-On Learning



Experience the fun of hands-on experiments and activities with easy-to-understand lessons that teach you all about farm life.

Book Title: **Farm Anatomy**
Author: **Dawn Alexander**