



## Antiques Wrapped

*Highlights from the 2024  
Antique Fair*

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## The Greenwood Gobbler

*Learn of the busy street's  
Truck-eating monster*

*See p. 2*



# The Homesteader

Deschutes County Historical Society Newsletter—SEPTEMBER 2024

## Van Vleet: Lens on History Opening October 2024

In October, the Deschutes Historical Museum will reintroduce the stunning photography of Roy Van Vleet to a new audience.

Wilmer Roy Van Vleet was an influential early Bend photographer who moved to Central Oregon in 1916, the same year Deschutes County separated from Crook County. He worked for the Shevlin-Hixon Lumber Company, served in World War I, then purchased and operated Elite Studios, a local photography business. His original plate glass negatives were inherited by his son, Wilmer, and donated to the museum in 2007. That same year, COCC professor George Jolokai, worked with the museum to select and develop 61 of the original 175 glass negatives.

What emerged was a stunning set of images capturing life in and around Deschutes County between 1908 and 1930. The photographs detail early twentieth century industries such as logging and farming, illuminate the allure and abundance of Central Oregon recreation such as fishing and hunting, and catalog the scope and breadth of our beautiful mountains, lakes, and forests. Other photographs capture quieter and more mundane, but equally fascinating, aspects of early twentieth century life in Central Oregon. Through these images we catch a glimpse of businesses, schools, homes and homesteads, and street scenes of daily life.

DHM staff has carefully selected a collection of these exquisite photographs for visitors to view up close. More of the collection will be made available to view on our website.

What can be interpreted about our community and history by examining what was, at the time, a relatively new method of documenting the world? The Van Vleet collection is a window into an earlier time and even the smallest details in the images help today's visitors explore early twentieth century Deschutes County.



# The Greenwood Gobbler

By Mike Berry

On a Sunday morning in the fall of 1975, I was in the process of opening Dick Hodge's Texaco Station at the southwest corner of Revere and Third Street when the phone rang. The frantic caller said his Ryder Truck had crashed into the underpass on Greenwood and since we were the local Ryder rental agency, he needed to know what to do. I called Dick at home, and he told me to grab the Ryder Truck binder in the office, lock up the station and meet him at the underpass.

I made the three-minute drive to the underpass in one minute flat which still gave me time to reflect on whether or not I had warned every truck rental customer to **NOT DRIVE UNDER THE GREENWOOD UNDERPASS. CLEARANCE IS TEN FEET, TEN INCHES. YOUR TRUCK IS TALLER THAN THAT!!!!** As it turned out, this customer had rented the truck in Portland to move to Bend, so I wasn't culpable.

The scene that I drove up to was that of a big Ryder box truck parked in the middle of the westbound lane, about 10 feet west of the underpass. A couple small pieces of metal littered the pavement behind the truck, and I thought "This doesn't look too bad." The truck had made it clear through the span and, from where I had parked behind it, did not appear too worse for wear. As I walked up, the customer and a policeman were prying the back door open. This revealed an empty truck box with a new sunroof - the top of the box having been folded, accordion style, like a giant paper fan into the rear half of the box. Dick Hodge sidled up and over my shoulder uttered "the Gobbler claims another one."

The Gobbler?

In 1911 the first railroad bridge over Greenwood was built when the Oregon Trunk Railway reached Bend. Even though the tracks were elevated on a slight fill slope, Greenwood had to be lowered under the bridge to provide vertical clearance for 1911-style traffic: horses, wagons, tin Lizzies, about 10 feet of clearance all told. The timber bridge span was supported by four piers (rows of wooden pilings) which created four narrow openings, two of them wide enough for traffic to use.

Due to the narrowness of the openings and the numerous timber pilings on either side of the travel lanes, accidents were frequent at the bridge and in 1925 a new steel structure replaced the wooden structure. A single concrete and steel pier separated the east and west-bound lanes. The very same pier that you see today along the center of Greenwood.

The new underpass was referred to in the paper as the "Greenwood Viaduct."



Bend Bulletin, February 20, 1953  
Note the bridge clearance sign wedged behind the cab



Greenwood Underpass, circa 1940s

- Continued on page 3

## Deschutes Historical Museum

129 NW Idaho Avenue  
Bend, OR 97703  
Open Tuesdays-Saturdays  
10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
541.389.1813

[www.deschuteshistory.org](http://www.deschuteshistory.org)  
[info@deschuteshistory.org](mailto:info@deschuteshistory.org)

### Museum Staff:

Kelly Cannon-Miller, Executive Director  
Vanessa Ivey, Museum Manager  
Rebekah Averette, Collections Manager  
Tracy Alexander, Membership Officer  
Michelle Patrick, Visitor Services



### 2024 DCHS Board of Directors:

Jane Williamson, President  
Karen Green, Vice President  
Heidi Kennedy, Secretary/Treasurer  
Adrian Bennett, Past President

### Board Members:

Mike Berry, Paul Claeysens,  
Tony DeBone, Greg Fulton,  
Erik King, Brad Lemmon, Liz Rink, Glenn  
Voeltz



Complete minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors are on file with the Museum office.

**Continued from P. 2— The Greenwood Gobbler**

Due to the low overhead clearance, the warnings of “Impaired Clearance” and “Clearance 10 Feet 10 Inches” were stenciled above on the bridge span. Despite these warnings the bridge soon earned the name of the “Greenwood Gobbler” (or the “Green Gobbler” since the steel was painted green) as some trucks failed to heed the low clearance cautions with calamitous results.

On September 16, 1943, an Army convoy involved with the Oregon Maneuvers wargame exercise was passing through Bend when disaster struck. Eighteen year-old Private William Collins of Oregon City was standing in the back of a troop transport truck that went through the underpass. His head hit the overhead steel structure and he was killed instantly. Soon thereafter the *Bend Bulletin* reported that:

*Orange lights, flashing both day and night, were installed on both sides of the overhead, flanking the painted warning “Clearance 10 feet 10 inches” ... [the] division engineer for the state highway department... set forth the opinion that the several accidents which occurred late in September involved [Army] trucks... whose drivers were unfamiliar with the low-strung structure.*

The article noted that several army truck tops had been sheared off by the bridge and that Pvt. Collins had been killed.

In later years various signs, lights and warning devices were installed on either side of the bridge. No matter how well the underpass was signed, accidents still happened. The bridge was a low-clearance and present danger to the motoring public. According to Greg Fulton of the Deschutes County Historical Society, the downtown Healy Furniture store even spec'd out a delivery truck that would pass safely under the Gobbler.

Finally in 1985 ODOT remedied the problem when they built the Division Street overpass bridge next to the “Gobbler”. This contract also lowered the Greenwood roadway under the 1925 steel span to facilitate safe overhead clearance under both bridges. In 1997 the Bend Parkway project replaced the 1985 Division Street bridge with a larger four-lane divided highway bridge. Due to the 1985 lowering of Greenwood, the “Greenwood Gobbler” no longer “accordionizes” trucks.



*Bend Bulletin, March 21, 1960*



*Bend Bulletin, November 9, 1984*

**Bend Bulletin**  
**August 11, 1962**

## Dynamite-laden truck crashes

A truck - and - trailer van carrying a load of dynamite struck the Greenwood railroad underpass east of First Street early this morning, according to city police.

Police said the Medford-bound vehicle, preparing to fuel in Bend, approached the underpass at about 20 miles an hour. The collision folded back the top part of the van and raised the under part off the truck. There were no injuries.

The driver, Pat H. Fitzgerald, 57, apparently was not familiar with the route and failed to heed the elevation marker. His truck, considerably damaged from the collision, was taken for repairs to Allison's Truck-Stop.

Police said some damage was inflicted to an electric sign mounted beneath the underpass.

## Map and Document of The Month



September's map of the month is a 1940 Robert Gould Bend map that has been color coded using a 1940 city directory. Brooks-Scanlon workers' addresses are blue for mill workers and green for forest workers. Shevlin-Hixon workers' addresses are red for mill workers and orange for forest workers. It is interesting to see the housing distribution around the two mills. (For more on Robert Gould, see Mike Berry's [March 2023 Homesteader](#) article).

The document of the month is a 1955 Suttle Lake Resort cabin and boat rate advertisement. We hope you can find time to visit the museum to see these resources in person. *As always, members visit free!*



## Know Nostalgia with

### The Deschutes Public Library

Once again DCHS is partnering with the Deschutes Public Library to offer free presentations about our local history. The "Know Nostalgia" programs will evoke a bittersweet yearning for the past guaranteed to warm the heart. Discover beloved roadside attractions along Highway 97 with Kelly Cannon-Miller, and explore the often overlooked stories of women in Oregon's asylum system with Rebekah Averette. These select presentations are free and open to the public, no registration required.

#### Route 97 20th Century Roadside Attractions

Much like the celebrated Route 66, Deschutes County had its share of roadside attractions and events that helped define mid-century travel and tourism. Join **Kelly Cannon-Miller** for a nostalgic trip down Highway 97.

[Tuesday, September 17 • 6:00 p.m.](#) • Downtown Bend Library | 601 NW Wall Street, Bend  
[Thursday, September 19 • noon](#) • Becky Johnson Community Center | 412 SW 8th St, Redmond

#### Women and the Oregon State Insane Asylum

Now called the Oregon State Hospital, Oregon's first official state insane asylum opened in Salem in 1883. Join **Rebekah Averette** to hear the surreal and peculiar reality of women patients from 1900-1910.

[Thursday, September 26 • 6:00 p.m.](#) • Downtown Bend Library | 601 NW Wall Street, Bend

For more information and to see a complete list of these programs please visit the library website at [www.deschuteslibrary.org](http://www.deschuteslibrary.org). People with disabilities needing accommodations (alternative formats or auxiliary aides) should contact Liz Goodrich at [lizg@deschuteslibrary.org](mailto:lizg@deschuteslibrary.org) or 541-312-1032.

## History Pub: The Sewells of Canyon City



*Presented by Zachary Stocks*

McMenamins Old St. Francis School

Tuesday September 24, 2024

7:00 p.m. Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

\$5 Fee, Registration Required



*The Sewell Family, photos courtesy of the Grant County Museum*

Columbus Sewell and family were the first permanent Black settlers east of the Cascades. Join Zachary Stocks of Oregon Black Pioneers to learn more about their incredible story, and what it can tell us about 19th century Black life in the high desert.

*Zachary Stocks is a public historian, museum professional, outdoor educator, and historical interpreter. His work focuses on 18th and 19th century America, with particular emphasis on African American history and the history of westward expansion. Outside of work, he enjoys birding, sea shanties, and spicy food.*

**To Purchase Tickets visit:**

<https://www.mcmenamins.com/events/258499-oregon-black-pioneers-the-sewells-of-canyon-city>



## Volunteer Help Wanted

Looking to volunteer with the Deschutes Historical Museum? Consider joining us this fall with fundraisers and school tours:

**October 11 & 12** Historical Haunts of Downtown Bend  
**November 8 & 9** Annual Chili Feed and Raffle  
**School Tour Guide** Thursdays and Fridays (dates TBD)

For more information contact Vanessa Ivey, Museum Manager, at [vanessa@deschuteshistory.org](mailto:vanessa@deschuteshistory.org)

We'd love to have you join us.

# 2024 Antique Fair Recap

The Third Annual Antique Fair was a rousing success, with 15 vendors, delicious baked goods, beautiful music, and great friends all around.

The day started out with most of the streets downtown closed for the Cascade Cycling Classic, which added some complications for folks finding their way to the museum. However, our intrepid vendors were ready to set up bright and early, and the crowds did not disappoint.

The “Friends of The Museum” booth featured a wide variety of ceramics, furniture, and most notably vintage Barbie Dolls with custom made clothes and original outfits!

DCHS member Scott Sholes wond the beautiful quilt donated by the Mt. Bachelor Quilt Guild’s Community Quilts group.

Unfortunately, the bike race did draw many customers away in the afternoon, but not before having their belongings appraised by Karen Stockton, who worked with over 20 visitors. Luckily we have already learned that the Cycling Classic organizers plan to change the date of next year’s event, so our second Saturday in August is secure.

We would like to thank the vendors who made this event possible: The Blue Nickel, Susan Mondry, Generations Jewelry, Eckworth Antiques, On the Fringe, Dominique Dubief, Eddie’s Iron Horse, Charles DeWild, Worthy Vintage Goods, Sally Griffin, Heather Hockett, Salvage Finds, Nicole Moye, Apple Pie Antiques, and Terrina Wrona. Thank you also to the Bend Genealogical Society and Madi Cakes Bake Shop for their support in making our visitors’ experience amazing.

**Mark your calendars for next year’s event: Saturday August 9, 2025!**



## OREGON FESTIVAL OF CARS IS BACK!

*Going strong at the DHM since 2018*



**Saturday, September 14, 2024  
from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**

Since 2018, the Deschutes Historical Museum has been hosting one of Oregon’s premier car enthusiasts’ car shows in Central Oregon, and this year is no exception. Join the fun on Saturday September 14.

The festival is FREE to the public, showcasing both classic and exotic cars from around the state. Cars will be on display from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Spectators are invited to vote on the People’s Choice Award until 2:00 p.m., with awards for Best in Show prior to closing at 3:00 p.m.

A portion of registration proceeds will be donated to support the ongoing work of the Deschutes Historical Museum.

## Memorials

**Charles Mattox**

Ruth Douglass  
Tom and Maggie Gunn

**Susie Penhollow**

Doris Drost Bennett  
Nancy Canfield  
Gayle Lowe

## Tributes

**Ralph C. Curtis**

Jean Curtis

# HISTORICAL HAUNTS OF DOWNTOWN BEND RETURNS OCTOBER 11 & 12



Since 2010, the Deschutes Historical Museum has been sharing the history and haunts of Bend's downtown district with hundreds of participants, visitors and locals alike. This year, the Historical Haunts of Downtown Bend tours will be celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> season.

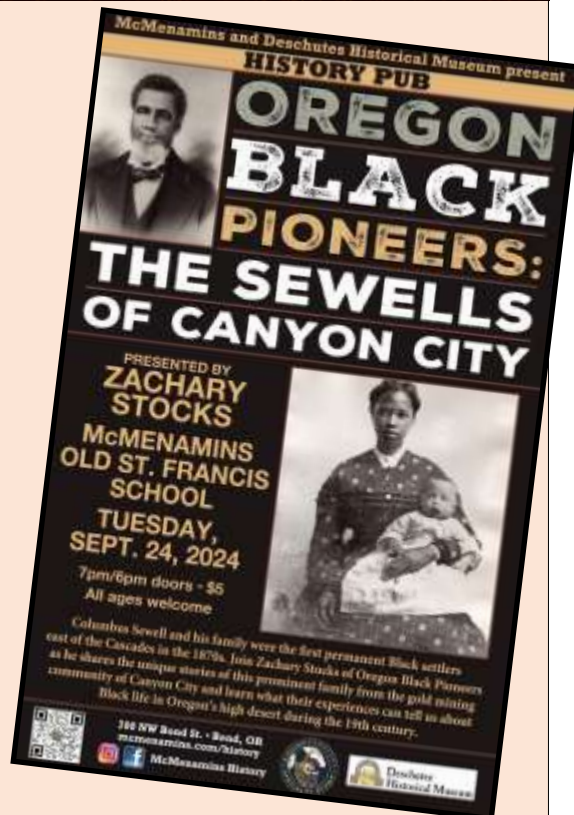
Over two nights the museum offers 26 one-hour tours with the first tour leaving at 4:00 p.m. Each tour starts at the historic Reid School building and ends downtown, covering approximately one-mile of flat sidewalks and alleyways.

Tickets are \$20 per participant and will be made available for purchase through Eventbrite. Members of the Deschutes Historical Museum receive 50% off. Tickets go on sale later this month. Watch our website event calendar for more details.

## Mark Your Calendars

### SEPTEMBER

- 14 **OREGON FESTIVAL OF CARS**  
10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. Deschutes Historical Museum  
For more information visit [oregonfestivalofcars.com](http://oregonfestivalofcars.com)
- 17 **KNOW NOSTALGIA: ROUTE 97 20TH CENTURY ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS**  
Presented by Kelly Cannon-Miller  
6:00 p.m. Downtown Bend Library  
601 NW Wall St, Bend
- 19 **KNOW NOSTALGIA: ROUTE 97 20TH CENTURY ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS**  
Presented by Kelly Cannon-Miller  
12:00 p.m. Becky Johnson Community Center  
412 SW 8th St, Redmond
- 24 **HISTORY PUB: THE SEWELLS OF CANYON CITY**  
Presented by Zachary Stocks, Oregon Black Pioneers  
McMenamins Old St. Francis; 700 NW Bond St., Bend  
Father Luke Room, 7:00 p.m., doors open at 6:00 p.m.  
[Reservations required, \\$5 per person](#)
- 26 **KNOW NOSTALGIA: WOMEN AND THE OREGON STATE INSANE ASYLUM**  
Presented by Rebekah Averette  
6:00 p.m. Downtown Bend Library  
601 NW Wall St, Bend



**SAVE THE DATE!**

 **Historical Haunts of Downtown Bend: October 11 & 12**