

TILLAMOOK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Tillamook County Historical Society became a 501(c)3 in 1984 to bring together those persons interested in preserving the history of Tillamook County. TCHS is exploring new ways to reach out to people for 2023. We are tentatively planning three main special meetings to be held on Saturdays, with business meetings every other month. Keep checking on our Facebook page for updates.

We are a separate organization from the Tillamook County Pioneer Museum and Tillamook Pioneer Association, concentrating on doing a number of projects such as placing historic plaques, conducting historical tours, printing books about local history and producing a semi-annual newsletter with local history topics and upcoming events. Annual dues are \$20.00 for Family Membership.

If you would like to keep receiving this newsletter, please make sure your dues are paid for the current year. We will be dropping those who are more than a year behind from the mailing list. Thank you.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOUR EMAIL HAS CHANGED!



Watch for updates on our facebook page.

www.facebook.com/tillamookcountyhistoricalsociety/

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P.O. BOX 123, TILLAMOOK, OR 97141

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TILLAMOOK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 123, TILLAMOOK, OR 97141

JANUARY 2023

TRYING TO EVOLVE TO MEET THE TIMES....

At the December 10th meeting, we reviewed 2022.

- We had small attendance at regular meetings.
- Some new members have brought new ideas and energy.
- Business meetings on Tuesdays during the week are difficult for working people to attend.
- We planned several field trips and presentations on weekends to broaden public participation.

One included a children's history project at Hoquarton House and the Tillamook County Fair. Another was a popular Tillamook Historic Home walking tour. The inclusion of the Cemetery restoration project in TCHS, headed by Lisa Sears, has interested new people.

AND AT THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD JANUARY 10, 2023



With the above information, we are adapting and making some changes for 2023. There will be business meetings *every other month*.

The dates for those are: March 14; May 9; July 11; Sept. 12; Nov 14.

The business meetings will be held at the Tillamook Library, at 1 pm in the Hatfield room. Members and the public are always welcome to attend. (Thanks to Rob Russell for the photo).

All presentation get-togethers will be held on Saturdays.

The first of the year will be a tour of the **Old Wheeler Hotel**. Katie Brown, proprietor, will be giving an informal talk about the history of the town, the building (formerly the Rinehart Clinic), as well as her efforts these last 15 years in restoring the hotel as a destination getaway. If you want a peek beforehand, visit their website www.oldwheelerhotel.com

The date for this will be **Saturday, March 18 at 11 a.m.** There will be limited seating of 25 for this, on a first come, first serve basis.

The second event will be **Saturday, May 27 at the Tierra Del Mar Community Center**, presenting the book written by Diane Sears, *Tales of Tierra Del Mar*, a charming look at the history of the area along the shore. The proceeds of this book will go to the Tillamook County Historical Society.

The third event will be unveiling a book that came about due to the research of Vince Bogard. Entitled "*Whitney Logging Company along the Kilchis River*," you will be transported back to the logging/railroad era of the late 1910s through 1920s, through first-hand articles written by Daniel Strite. The proceeds of this book will go to the Tillamook County Historical Society.

The final event of 2023 will be a presentation where Lisa Sears and her volunteers will describe what and how they tend to the gravestones/markers of our ancestors in the county.

Reminders for dues comes in January, with the mailing of the first newsletter of the year. We rely on these for income, including the newsletters - especially with the rising costs of paper and stamps. Please know we do appreciate your support.

Tillamook County Historical Society 2023 Officers:

Sally Rissel, *President*; Eric Simmons, *Vice President*; Lisa Sears, *Secretary*; Barbara Aufdermauer, *Treasurer*.

Board members: Vince Bogard, Jan Burt, Diane Colcord, Eleanor Dayton, Charlie Wooldridge.

OLD WHEELER HOTEL TOUR

The town of Wheeler would not exist if it weren't for the gumption and tenacity of a young man by the name of Coleman H. Wheeler. In the mid 1890's, he chose a spot on the south end of Nehalem Bay to build his sawmill, plat a town and pursue the necessary infrastructure to support a city that would rival San Francisco.

The Pacific Railway & Navigation Company had completed a rail link between Portland and Wheeler in 1911. The railroad facilitated the influx of travelers and the transport of timber from the vast old-growth Tillamook Forest through which it ran, to the lumber and shingle mills of Wheeler. Roads were being laid, a new jetty was in the works to better utilize the waterways and the town's population had swelled from a small few to several hundred.

The growth and imaginings of such a venture caught the eye of an incorporated group of high profile politicians and businessmen from Tillamook City, who invested heavily in the economic development of Wheeler. The Hotel Wheeler was one such investment, built in 1924 to replace the previous Hotel in town, which burned in 1923. The original, The Rector Hotel and the Hotel Annex, flourished along with the rest of Wheeler during an economic boom.

Things took a turn for the worse in the early 1930's; not only was the Great Depression taking its toll, but in the summer of 1933 the first of a series of major forest fires broke out which utterly devastated the timber industry in the area. The conflagration, known as "The Tillamook Burn" changed the environment, the economy, and the people of northwest Oregon forever. Patronage of the Hotel Wheeler declined until, in 1940, Dr. Harvey Rinehart purchased the building and began operating it as the Rinehart Clinic, which became well known as a facility for the treatment of arthritis. Patients would come from all over the States and stay in hotel rooms on the upper floor of the building while receiving treatments on the first floor and basement. The clinic eventually offered all forms of medical services until it closed its doors in 1981. The current Rinehart Clinic, now practices family medicine to this day in a modern facility just up the road here in Wheeler.



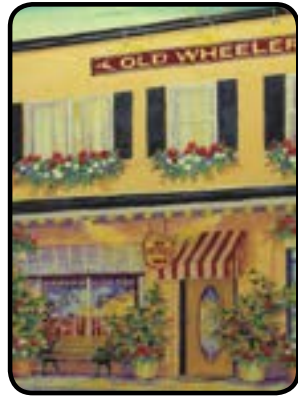
Rinehart Clinic 1950

The building changed ownership a couple of times in the '80s and '90s. Some improvements were made including new store-fronts and updated wiring, but essential maintenance had not been performed and by the late 1990's the building was showing serious signs of deterioration. In the fall of 1998, the Laszlos, who were just passing through Wheeler while traveling in their motor-home, stopped for a cup of coffee and ended up staying to refurbish the building, transforming it into a charming, comfortable, and unique place to stay.

In 2008 it was purchased by Katie Brown, who is continuing the tradition of constant improvement of this great old hotel as a project like this is never truly "finished".

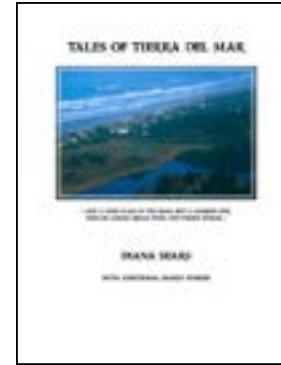


The "social activity" room which will be used for the TCHS meeting.



A painting of the Old Wheeler Hotel by a visiting Frenchman.

TCHS BOOKS AND MORE BOOKS!



Diana Sears wrote a collection of stories about Tierra Del Mar during her Monday Writing Group. Members of the group thought they were so interesting they encouraged her to write them down. She produced a loosely bound book in 2005 titled *Tierra Del Mar Tales*. It contains Sears family stories of early Tierra Del Mar and contributions from other early property owners.

Tillamook County Historical Society member, Lisa Sears, suggested that we print the book to preserve the valuable history of this little community for future readers. When resident, Jim Spring, heard that TCHS was interested in printing the book, he suggested we even gather more stories from long-time residents. The TCHS is in the process of putting this new book together with some of those additional stories. We will introduce and sell these books at the homeowner's meeting on Memorial Day, May 27th, from 11 am to noon. All proceeds will go to the TCHS. You can contact TCHS president, Sally Rissel, to reserve or purchase a book. Email: heronlanding123@gmail.com

Watch for the June newsletter and information about our next book, *The Whitney Logging Company Along the Kilchis River.*, compiled by Vince Bogard.



Life at a Pioneer Homestead on the Pacific Ocean by Orlo Rexford Chamberlain
Recollections of Orlo Chamberlain's boyhood on the property that later became Camp Meriwether. His grandfather homesteaded the property in 1886. \$15.00



The Adventures of Dr. Huckleberry by E.R. Huckleberry MD
Reprinted by the TCHS in 2017, Dr. Huckleberry moved to Tillamook in 1923 and was a doctor to county residents, especially sawmill employees. His book includes the history of logging and Tillamook County's small towns. \$20.00



History of the Little Nestucca Country by Alexandria Rock
Miss Alexandria Ley came to teach school in Oretown, Oregon, in 1887, soon marrying Hardy Rock. She wrote the book when she was 81. It is a wonderful recollection of the people and events in South Tillamook. The TCHS reprinted the book in 2007. \$15.00



Guide to Historical Markers of Tillamook County by William E. Minshall
This book attempts to list all the historic signs and markers in the County, along with background descriptions and photographs of each site. The book is organized in sections making it easy to visit and follow. The book was published in 2004. \$15.00



Keeping Memories Alive, A Life Lived in a Tillamook Forest, Forest Grove and Beyond.
As Jim Reeher, author, says: *Told and re-told the tales of our youth, Glisten like gold untarnished with truth.* A delightful collection of first-hand memories of things, places and happenings of years gone by that we can all relate to. The book was published in 2019. \$20.00

Books are available at the Tillamook County Pioneer Museum and some retail stores or by contacting Sally Rissel at heronlanding123@gmail.com

"So please, oh please, we beg, we pray, Go throw your TV set away, And in its place you can install A lovely bookshelf on the wall. Then fill the shelves with lots of books."

Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*