



**ST. BRIDGET'S CHURCH
GETS NEW SHEATHING
AND AN UPDATE!**

It is my pleasure to report that the Fort Rock Valley Historical Society has had very good success in obtaining grants for *St. Bridget's Catholic Church* restoration project. Midstate Electric Cooperative Operation Roundup community fund granted \$1000. for foundation work. This was followed by a grant from Lake County's Collins McDonald Trust for \$9000. Both of the organizations are great supporters of Lake County community projects. It is with great thanks that we accepted these grants.

With receiving these grants, our society will be able to use these as matching funds that will help on our grant request to the Meyer Memorial Trust for the additional funds we will need to finish the church project. Their grant announcements will be made after this newsletter is published.

Our committee has learned that it is possible for us to do our work using email. This is a real benefit as committee members are very busy and not able to meet physically. Maybe other members that do not live in the Fort Rock area will be interested in serving on our committees. If so, please let a board member know how you would like to help.

*-Hank Burroughs,
FRVHS Grant Committee Chairman*

St. Bridget's Catholic Church, originally named *St. Rose's*, was the only church built in the area by local homesteaders. Before the church was built, services were held in the local school houses. *St. Rose's* was built as a result of conflict between the Protestants and Catholics of the area and

constructed in 1918 on land donated by Alex Belletable in the Fleetwood area. At that time, there were approximately 20 Catholics living in the Cougar Valley and vicinity.

A donation of \$500. was made by a priest from Fort Wayne, Indiana for a church to be built in honor of *St. Rose of Lima*, in memory of his mother. The lumber was purchased from the local Forest Reserve Service. The trees were felled and milled locally for the church construction project and was built under the direction of John Ernst and Alex Belletable. Mr. and Mrs. John Cummings donated the bell and Marguerite Steigleder donated the statue for the altar. The church was painted by John Cummings and Simon Boedigheimer. Services were held once a month.

Although *Bridget Godon* refused to attend Mass since *St. Rose's* was on Belletable property, she later acquired the land. In the 1930s, local priest, Father Schmidt renamed the local *St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church*, *St. Bridget's* after *Bridget Godon*.

The church was always on private property, and most recently owned by the *Godon Family*. It was deteriorating and had been vandalized. It was moved to Fort Rock in 1988 and restored as we know it today where we enjoy *St. Bridget's Catholic Church* at the Fort Rock Homestead Village Museum.

*-from Portraits; and
Ray Hatton's Pioneer Homesteaders*

**FORT ROCK POST OFFICE
MAY BE CLOSED!**

Fort Rock Post Office was first established during the homestead era in 1908. It was in the Fort Rock General Store on the southwest corner of Pitcher Road and Fort Rock Road. The post office was moved to the west side of Cabin Lake Road opposite Fort Rock Restaurant & Pub. Later, it was due south of the intersection of Cabin Lake Road and Fort Rock Road, then it moved into the present Fort Rock General Store. It moved into the present building in the mid-1980s. Now, the Fort Rock Post Office is on a national list for closure. Can a town exist without a post office? Or will it go the way of Wastina, Fremont, Connley, Arrow and a dozen other homestead towns which no longer exist? Visit our website www.fortrockoregon.com to listen to an OPB radio broadcast featuring Fort Rock. Then write your congressman and senator to offer support for keeping our post office open.

SECURITY NEWS

I just want to let everyone know that our security system has been beefed up and is working well. The Lake County Sheriff's department sent a deputy to talk to us about our protocol for answering the alarm. We learned a lot and are happy to say that the North Lake Deputies are keeping a special watch on the Museum and are quick to respond to each alarm. We have ten monitors set up throughout the museum and hope to add a few more in 2012. We have a monitor watching the outside of the office/ reception area, which can be monitored by computers at home. We have strengthened the system so that there are not as many false alarms due to weather. All in all, these improvements greatly enhance the security of the Fort Rock Homestead Museum. We are open to any good ideas that you may have. Thanks for all your support.

*-Dan Davis, Chairman
Security Committee*

SECOND GAS PUMP ON DISPLAY!

Paul Bowers used a grant from Ed Staub and Sons Petroleum Products, local fuel supplier to Lake County. With the grant, Bowers was able to repaint, repair, and refurbish an early Mobilgas petroleum pump. This is a visible model where the operator used a handpump to fill a glass jar atop the pump, then gravity fed it into an empty barrel or car tank (no electricity required!). With help from Don Franks and Bob Tuttle, they erected it on a platform in front of the blacksmith shop. This location was chosen in recognition that quite often in the early 1900s, the village blacksmith was versatile enough to fix early automobiles and trucks and sell a little gas too.



Pictured (above): FRVHS 2nd Vice-President, Don Franks polishes up the refurbished Mobilgas pump ready for display at the Homestead Village Museum!

REMINDER:
Dues are payable each January!
Please check the year by your name on address portion of newsletter. If not current, please remit 2012 membership now to avoid being dropped from membership Please fill out form below and mail with your dues payment. We appreciate your continued support of the Fort Rock Valley Historical Society news and the museum and historical efforts.
\$10 annual dues.

FORT ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Date _____

INFORMATION AND DUES PAYABLE

JANUARY OF EACH YEAR!

Name(s) - Family _____

Mailing Address (include city, state, zip code) _____

Email _____

_____ new _____ renewal

Dues: \$10.00 annually; Payable to :
 Fort Rock Valley Historical Society
 PO Box 84, Fort Rock, OR 97735

Your family membership receives this newsletter published biannually and free entrance to the museum.

_____ I want to be a member for
 ONE YEAR year: \$10. _____

_____ I want to be a member for
 TWO YEARS year: \$20. _____

Additional donations are tax deductible.
 Additional donation: _____

Total enclosed: _____

_____ I would like to receive newsletter via email.

Office use:
 Membership _____ Card _____

**Fort Rock Valley Historical Society
 Board of Directors**
Museum phone: (541)576-2251
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www.fortrockoregon.com

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Newsletter
 Jana Kittredge
bellagrafa@yahoo.com—please send newsletter information

Upcoming Events
Fort Rock Grange Holiday Bazaar
 Saturday, November 5, 9am-3pm
 Bring non-perishable food for community food drive.
 Information: (541)840-3800

Genealogy Workshop
 Saturday, November 5, 10 am – Noon
 at Oregon Historical Society, Portland
 Cost: \$15 OHS members, \$20 non-members, RSVP: libreference@ohs.org
 (Space is limited so sign up soon!)

FRVHS Annual Officer Elections
 November 8th Meeting, 10 am
 Homestead Village Museum Office
 Information: (541)840-3800

Election Day
 November 8

**FORT ROCK
 HOMESTEAD
 VILLAGE MUSEUM
 OPEN**

through October 31st
 Thursday—Monday
 10am—4pm

A great place to take friends,
 family and guests to learn about
 the history of the Fort Rock area.

Admission:
 \$4. adults
 \$2. students 5-17
 children under 5 are free

FIRST PERSON

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

By the time you read this, the museum will be closed for 2011. It was a growth year, and that allowed your board of directors to accomplish some important projects. Visitor numbers surpassed 2,300, which was 500 more than last year. We opened earlier (April 15th) and closed later (October 31st), stayed open 5 days a week, and greeted visitors 160 days.

Barbara Corwin pictured here with myself, was hired to staff the visitor center. She and her husband Bud have been in the Fort



Rock Valley area 30 years. She did a great job for us during four busy months of summer. This resulted in a financial benefit to her as well as the local community, and her unique sales ability resulted in better movement of our books, t-shirts, and gift items than ever before. The board got her a credit card machine that helped sales also.

The FRVHS was blessed with several member donations and 2 large grants this year. These funds allowed us to renovate St. Bridget's Catholic Church. This centerpiece of the museum grounds was built in 1918. Lately it began sagging a little in one corner, and the walls moved in our ever present winds. We added shear panels to the walls, firmed up the foundation, leveled the floor, and added new milled pine board siding to match the original, then sanded the window frames and gave them a good coat of wood preservative. A new cedar shingle roof is planned for 2012.

FRVHS was included in Oregon Archaeology Celebration Month this year. Several thousand posters around the state announce activities during October in all areas of the state including eastern Oregon. Don Franks and I will lead a tour of the

USFS buildings at the historic Cabin Lake Ranger Station on Saturday October 15th. This compound originated during the homestead times when Fort Rock, Wastina, Connley, Fleetwood, and a myriad of other little towns were founded here. The history of these buildings and the role their staff played in local railroad logging is part of the story of the valley. We'll give 2 free tours, and kids are welcome. Please call me to reserve a spot. I hope you can join us.

International visitors from France, Germany, The Netherlands, Austria, Australia, South Africa, Korea, and Japan toured the Fort Rock Homestead Museum. Our webmaster added a widget to our website to translate our pages into several dozen other languages. Our weakened US dollar makes USA a real bargain for foreign travelers, who compare our gas prices against theirs (\$4 vs \$7-10/ gal.) and enjoy the cheaper fuel costs, inexpensive motels, and affordable meals on the Oregon Outback Scenic Byway.

Your membership in the FRVHS helps keep the museum open, so we can preserve homestead buildings, tell the stories of homestead families, and help support the local economy in Fort Rock Valley.

Also, the annual membership meeting will be held Tuesday, November 8th at 10am at the museum. Besides the regular business agenda, there will be election of board members for 2012. Anyone wishing to participate in the operation of the FRVHS, a 501(c)(3) corporation, is encouraged to contact me before the meeting and then plan to attend. The board meets as often as needed to conduct necessary business of the corporation, which typically is twelve times a year. Board meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

-Jack Swisher, President FRVHS

All day picnics became a major social event for Fort Rock homesteaders. Each 4th of July, a picnic was held at the South Ice Cave, 15 miles North of Fort Rock.

-from Portraits: Fort Rock Valley Homestead Years

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

If you're looking for something to do to help out the Fort Rock Homestead Village Museum, lend a hand. You can bring your RV out and spend a few days. We could sure use some help!

Desired to accomplish job list:

1. Level paths & make wide enough for walking 2-abreast.
2. Build a pedestal for power at the shop area on back room of General Store, and run electric line from power pole.
3. Rebuild sitting bench by school.
4. Take a look at school outhouse and fix it so it is a display item, or demolish it and get rid of the junk.
5. Pull brush from 20' circle around every building, for fire break.
6. Run a trench from church faucet to vegetable garden, lay pipe, and erect frost-proof faucet by garden.
7. Fix the Carl Webster door so it doesn't sag (probably needs glue and dowels).
8. Replace broken rope for school bell, using something stronger.
9. Move chuckwagon back (or leave where it is and set wheels on concrete blocks above the dirt & moisture for this winter).
10. Shellac Conestoga wagon boards.
11. Spray Thompson's water seal on new boardwalk, 2 coats.
12. Finish pulling headgear off old boom, drill holes & attach pulley system on new boom, and erect new boom at old well-driller.
13. Crawl under Stratton House to find out why floor is soft and spongy in the middle, then build brace system for existing floor joists to firm it up again.
14. Paint new sandwich board sign: "Museum Open."
15. Paint 3' tall letters on mansard: "Homestead Museum."



Museum Master Gardner, Lowell Franks

Fort Rock Valley Historical Society
PO Box 84
Fort Rock, OR 97735
www.fortrockoregon.com

“Working together to preserve Fort Rock’s heritage and history.”

Did you know Tabitha Moffatt Brown (1780-1858) was honored by the 1987 Oregon Legislature as “*Mother of Oregon?*” She represents the distinctive pioneer heritage and the charitable and compassionate nature of Oregon’s people. At 66 years of age, she financed her own wagon for the trip from Missouri to Oregon. The boarding school for orphans that she established later became known as Tualatin Academy and eventually was chartered as Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon.

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