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Unmarked Jacksonville Grave Reclaimed

David Miller Has a Headstone After Almost One Hundred Years

Medford's first property owner and drugstore owner, David Henry Miller, died in 1917, but his grave has been unmarked until now. Chuck Sears, a relative of Miller's by marriage, found that Miller's grave had no headstone and this year purchased one and arranged for its placement. Miller will be honored at a graveside ceremony in the historic Jacksonville Cemetery on Sunday, November 1, 2015 at 2 p.m. The event is open to the public, and members of the Sears, Naylor and Scott families who may have been related to Miller by marriage are particularly invited to attend.

Southern Oregon Historical Society's Associate Curator of Collections Tina Reuwsaat was among the first to speak with Chuck Sears as he researched his relative and notes, "The Southern Oregon Historical Society supports and celebrates Chuck Miller's respect for the past as he creates this memorial for the future."

Southern Oregon Historical Society's website www.SOHS.org has a photo and brief biography of David Henry Miller. Mr. Miller arrived in southern Oregon with his parents and his wife in 1875, living first near Jacksonville, and bought property in Medford in 1883. In 1893 he was a founder of the Medford Business College and from 1893 to 1898, Miller was Medford's postmaster. He also served three terms on the Medford City Council, in 1902 was elected Jackson County Treasurer, and later served a term in the Oregon State Legislature. From 1905 through 1917, Miller lived in Gold Hill and operated a store there. He was tragically killed by a train in Gold Hill because he was too deaf to hear its approach.

Chuck Sears always wondered why David Miller's grave had no headstone. "He's an important early figure in Jackson County to not even have a marker on his grave. I'm reasonably sure he didn't have a headstone in the first place, but why, it's a mystery," he says. "It kinda nagged at me for all these years, and I finally decided I was just going to go ahead and do it." David Miller's final resting place in the historic Jacksonville Cemetery will at last have a marker and his service honored.

About The Southern Oregon Historical Society: Since its inception in 1946, the Southern Oregon Historical Society has collected, preserved and shared photographs and documents that reflect the lives of Rogue Valley residents. The Archives include many pioneer stories, but also those of later settlers, and of people born and raised in the Valley. The mission of SOHS is to make history come alive by collecting, preserving, and sharing the stories and artifacts of our common heritage. For more information call, 541-773-6536 or www.sohs.org.

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