March 23, 2021

Dear Society Members,

As you probably have heard, the SOHS Annual Membership Meeting will take place this Sunday, March 28 at 4pm. Typically, this is the occasion for distributing copies of the society’s *Annual Report*. Because this year’s gathering will be by *Zoom*, we are sending you this document in advance.

I encourage you to be present for Sunday’s Zoom meeting. There are many exciting things that will be reported.

You can register for the event on your computer at [https://sohs.org/am2021](https://sohs.org/am2021). The Zoom link will automatically be sent to you. If you have any difficulties with *Zoom*, please call Larry Mullaly at 541-531-1436.

Sincerely,

Doug McGeary, SOHS President

Enc.: *SOHS 2021 Annual Report*
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INTRODUCTION:

Dear Society Members,

On the occasion of the 75th Anniversary Year of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, I am glad to share with you our 2021 Annual Report.

This is a particularly exciting period for our volunteer-driven organization. Despite COVID, we have matched members with their interests and continued to do wonderful things. We have used the time to add new technology and education committees, cleaned our facilities, offered COVID-sensitive programs, and begun planning for a new museum. We have kept history alive!

This Report describes our accomplishments for the past year, both programmatic and financial, and shows where we are going.

So much is owed to so many. It is because of you that the society is active and looking to the future. I am grateful for all that you have done.

Sincerely,

Doug McGeary, President

BEGINNINGS:

On June 18, 1945, while combat still raged in the Pacific, Earl Snell, the governor of Oregon, mayors of Jacksonville and Medford, the editors of the Medford Mail Tribune and Grants Pass Courier, the three Jackson county commissioners, and more than 100 guests gathered for a dinner at the Jacksonville Courthouse. In a speech that evening Governor Snell endorsed the vision of converting the historic building into a museum. It would “honor the pioneers who settled the district,” he declared, “and would attract tourists and visitors to the county.” Inspired by the enthusiasm generated by this speech, a follow up meeting took place one year later at which the Southern Oregon Historical Society was formally founded. The year 2021 marks 75 years in which we have cared for the legacy that the community has entrusted us to preserve.
OUR MISSION:

The Southern Oregon Historical Society brings history alive by collecting, preserving, and sharing the stories and artifacts of our region's past. Through its interpretive programs, collections, and publications, the Society strives to educate the public and generate an appreciation of regional history for present and future generations.

OUR VISION:

We are a well-managed, volunteer-driven organization whose collections, programs, and venues make us one of the premier heritage resources of the Pacific Northwest.

We are a caring and welcoming society that strives to assure that the memories and mementos of the past will not be lost to future generations.

We are dedicated to encouraging equity and inclusiveness by recognizing the contributions of all people who live or have lived in southern Oregon.

More than 50 volunteers serve the society in leadership positions.
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW:

Like many non-profit organizations, SOHS was significantly impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic. All things considered, we have fared well. Membership dues, a significant part of our revenue, held steady. Because SOHS activities depend on service hours contributed by its members, most activities also went forward – albeit in modified form. There were, however, significant loses. Public Event revenues at Hanley Farm decreased 60%. The cancellation of weddings at Hanley Farm and the departure of Kid-Time from our downtown Medford Center resulted in a 53% reduction in rental income. This loss of revenue was reimbursed by the receipt of $66,000 of federal dollars in the form of Oregon Cultural Trust Coronavirus Relief Funds for Cultural Support (CRFCS), and the receipt of the CARES Act Payroll Protection Program. Both of these loans will likely be forgiven. The bottom line is that the society shows a positive ending balance of $34,457. At a time when many non-profit organizations are struggling to continue, the society has done a remarkable job!

JAN-DEC 2020 REVENUE

- Events & Sales: 13,470
- Membership Dues: 31,771
- Facility Rent Income: 39,260
- JCLS SOHS partnership: 39,000
- Grants and Donations: 175,637
- Other Misc.: 9,807

Total Income: 308,945

JAN-DEC 2020 EXPENSES

- Facilities: 30,865
- Payroll Costs: 94,731
- Operations/Insurance: 68,537
- Marketing: 13,847
- Programs: 4,449
- Services: 31,287
- Maintenance: 30,773

Total Expense: 274,488

NET GAIN: 34,457
STRATEGIC PLANNING:

How does a volunteer organization such as SOHS maintain so many activities? The answer is planning. In the summer months, our standing committees plan events for the coming year. These are then reviewed and approved by our Board of Trustees. In the summer of 2020, over fifty volunteer members of our society participated in this process. All of this effort is guided by our mission, goals, and objectives.

MAJOR GOALS:

- Improve community awareness
- Increase public access
- Build our financial base
- Expand educational outreach

OUR OBJECTIVES FOR 2021-2023:

Across the next three years the Society will:

- Establish a permanent SOHS museum.
- Increase awareness and use of the SOHS Archives through tours, classes, programs, and outreach.
- Conduct a capital campaign.
- Encourage participation and contribution of under-represented populations.
- Maintain quality educational programs, that involve the SOHS Library, the collection, Hanley Farm, and our future museum.
- Build our social media presence.
- Increase our membership and volunteer base.
- Offer sponsored exhibits to the general public.
- Develop one or more successful signature events.
2020 HIGHLIGHTS:

- January 8 – The Research Library reports that the SOHS website reports 54,058 visitors for 2019.
- January 23 – SOHS accepts a major document trove in the form of Jackson County property abstracts from 1850-1930.
- March 12 – SOHS Spring Quarterly mailed; “Covered Bridges of Jackson County”
- March 26 – Letter from the SOHS president cancelling face-to-face meetings as well as the Children’s Heritage Fair, Living History Days, and Roots Music Festival.
- March 29th – Annual membership meeting cancelled
- April 2 – Research Library announces on-line research options available to the community
- April 23 – First Board meetings held via Zoom
- May 6 – First Windows in Time History Talk offered on Zoom
- May 9 – Covid Safe Heritage Plant Sale Held
- May 7 – Coordinating Committee recommends development of society-wide “COVID Re-opening” guidelines
- May 29 – Summer Quarterly mailed: “Celebrating Women Suffrage”
- June 7 – Email Campaign launched for new members featuring trial enrollments
- June 25 – Board approves Reopening protocols for Hanley Farm
- June 27 – Mini-Plant Sale
- July 5 – Materials from the SOHS Pinto Colvig Collection sent to the Deutcher Film Institut in Frankfurt, Germany for a year-long Disney Music Exhibit
• July 7 – Research Library reopens to the public by appointment

• July 22 – Board approves a policy statement on “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”

• August 28 – “Cars under the Stars Concert” takes place in Hanley front field

• September 10 – Fall Issue of Quarterly mailed: “Early Aviation in the Rogue Valley”

• September 11 – Phoenix Discovery Center was provided History Center rental space in the wake of the Almeda fire

• September 24 – Board approves new Technology Committee

• October 3 and 4 – Scarecrow Making

• October 22 – Board approves expanded Museum Committee

• October 22 – Standing Committee Charges and Goals approved for 2021

• November 27 – Wreath-making kits sold

REFLECTIONS:

As soon as histories are properly told there is no more need of romances.

Walt Whitman

Whatever we had missed, we possessed together the precious, the incommunicable past.

Willa Cather

History, as nearly as no one seems to know, is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely, or principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all we do.”

James Baldwin
2021
75TH ANNIVERSARY-YEAR CALENDAR

February 3 - Mailing of ballots for new board members.

March 6 and 13 — Farm Cleanup Days

March 16 – Spring SOHS Quarterly Mailing

March 26 and 27 — History Center Repurposing Sale and Open House

March 28 — Annual Membership Meeting via Zoom

April 24-25 – Heritage Plant Sale

June 3-September 2 – Summer Thursday Events at Hanley Farm

June 10 – Summer SOHS Quarterly mailing: 75th Anniversary Issue

July 25 – Volunteer Recognition Picnic

August 4 – Windows in Time Zoom Talk: “The Southern Oregon Historical Society Celebrates 75 Years”.

September 8 – Fall SOHS Quarterly mailing

October 9-10 – Scarecrow Festival

October 16-17-23-24 – Haunted Field Walk*

November SOHS Gala Anniversary Year Fundraising Event *

November 27 – Wreathmaking

* Still to be finalized.