

LANE
COUNTY
HISTORY
MUSEUM

the ARTIFACT

FALL 2018 | NO. 229 | EXHIBITS, EVENTS, AND HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS



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PIONEER DIARIES IN THE DIGITAL AGE • 2019 PREVIEW • PIONEERING IN THE 21ST CENTURY
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**LANE
COUNTY
HISTORY
MUSEUM**

**EVERYTHING
YOU NEED
TO KNOW**

WHEN AND WHERE

Tuesday–Saturday 10am–4pm
740 West 13th Avenue, Eugene, OR

CALL US

Office (541) 682-4242

TICKETS

Adults \$5
Seniors (60+) \$3
Youth (15–17) \$1
Kids (14 & under) FREE
Members FREE

*Go to LCHM.org to learn more about
free entry dates.*

FOLLOW US

facebook.com/lchm.org/
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BECOME A MEMBER

Sign up! The benefits include:

- Free admission to museum
- Invitations to members-only events
- Subscription to *The Artifact*
and *Lane County Historian*

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SHOP AT THE MUSEUM STORE

Come by our store for new books, cards,
post cards, posters, photos, old fashioned
toys, and much more! Inventory reduction
sale—50% off!

THE ARTIFACT IS PRODUCED BY:

Editor & Design: Stephen O'Brien, LCHM
staff members, and Guest contributors

LOOKING FORWARD

OCTOBER

17

History Pub

6:00 pm–8:30pm. Ninkasi Brewing Co. 133 Blair Blvd.
“Bully! Teddy Roosevelt Rides Again!” Joe Weigand
impersonates Theodore Roosevelt for an interactive
and exciting experience.

FREE EVENT—TICKET REQUIRED

tinyurl.com/Theodore1017

NOVEMBER

12

History Pub

6:00 pm–8:30pm WOW Hall.

Dr. Brett Rushforth “Five Million Secrets: Native
American Slaves and the Making of America.”

FREE EVENT

14

Trivia Night

5:30 pm–7:00 pm. 5th St. Public Market Eateries.

History Pub Trivia: Test your knowledge of the
1910’s and 1920’s! Tables ready 5:30, Trivia starts at 6.

FREE EVENT

22

Museum closed.

DECEMBER

1

Last Chance to view our exhibit *Toys! Historic
Playthings from Lane County*

6

Museum closes at 2pm.

25

Museum closed.

*Cover: KE1342, The Rainbow Restaurant located at 820 Willamette Street in
Eugene, 1927.*

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

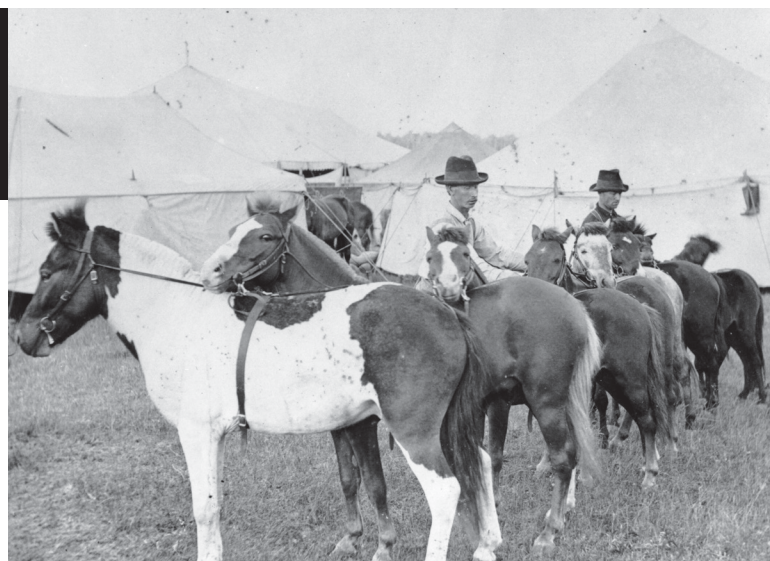
by Bob Hart, Executive Director

The fertility of the Willamette Valley owes much to the Lake Missoula floods at the tail end of the Pleistocene Age, with mineral deposited by the melting of ice age glaciers. The Museum of Natural and Cultural History, affectionately referred to as MNCH, is about to mount in its sculpture garden artistic recreations of two Columbian mammoths from this formative period in our history to commemorate the megafauna that Native Americans encountered in this neck of the woods during the Pleistocene Age. In other notable news about our sister institution, MNCH has received a National Medal for Museum and Library Service from the Institute for Library and Museum Services in recognition for excellence in outreach programming! Kudos to our colleagues' success!

Our History Pub collaboration with the UO History Department continued with Dr. Dennis Jenkins speaking on 14,000 year old coprolites (in simpler terms, fossilized poop) and their significance to the peopling of the Americas. Dr. Jenkins presentation will be followed up on October 17 by Joe Wiegand, one of the country's foremost living history presenters. A performer who fully embodies our 26th president, Bully! Teddy Roosevelt Rides Again is sponsored by the Oregon Historical Society. As we are anticipating quite a crowd, there is a change of venue to the Ninkasi administration building (on Blair, not the tasting room on Van Buren).

Our members can look forward to some increased marketing efforts in the coming year as we attempt to raise our community visibility. Our in-house marketing team is assisted in this effort by an Oregon Cultural Trust community development grant allowing us to retain the services of the Turell Group to help streamline our image and better reach new audiences.

Our new 13th Avenue signage has gotten quite a positive reception from the public. Members should look forward to some additional positive changes to our landscaping, part of a campaign to improve our exterior in our current 1959 building. Also in the works is a mural based on a historical photograph to serve as a backdrop for the Clerk's building, Lane County's oldest wooden building. We remain a candidate location for the city's 20x21 mural project, so stay tuned.



Above: GN6855, Ponies are lined up for an unspecified show in front of circus tents circa 1900.

Lastly, there is a happy rumor abroad that our dear friend Dr. Condon may make a reappearance this spring. He will be available for public geological and paleontological presentations with his specimens and magic lantern projector. Follow the museum social media or visit our website for more updates on Dr. Condon's return.

Sincerely,

Bob Hart

P.S.

The Lane County Historical Society gives grants of up to \$2,500 through our annual Heritage Outreach Grant program. These grants are awarded to organizations, businesses, and individuals across the county for history-related projects that best help further our institutional mission. The deadline is November 1, 2018, so spread the word about this opportunity to use our resources to make a difference. Our History Excellence Awards, given for individual achievement, organizational excellence, and lifetime achievement in history enrichment are due December 1, 2018. Get those nominations in soon!

Grants and awards will be announced at the February 16 at the LCHS annual meeting hosted at the museum. For more information and application forms, go to our "Media" page on lchm.org.

NEW EXHIBIT - PORTRAITS

by Faith Kreskey, Exhibits Curator



Our latest exhibits are here to teach everyone something new about Lane County. During the County Fair in July, we opened two brand new exhibits in our upstairs gallery. Both are drawn from our great collection of archival material and artifacts.

Portraits: Native Americans from across Lane County showcases images from our photographic archives that represent local indigenous people from the 1870s to the 1940s. The images are portraits, from formal studio pictures to quick snap shots that offer a truer representation of local Native Americans during a period of great cultural trauma. The photos represent people who, despite the adversity they faced, still found ways to honor and continue their cultural traditions. Many photos show signs of social fractures created by these changes: itinerant workers from the Warm Springs reservation, or the perpetuation of a false narrative that claimed Native Americans were a people facing extinction.



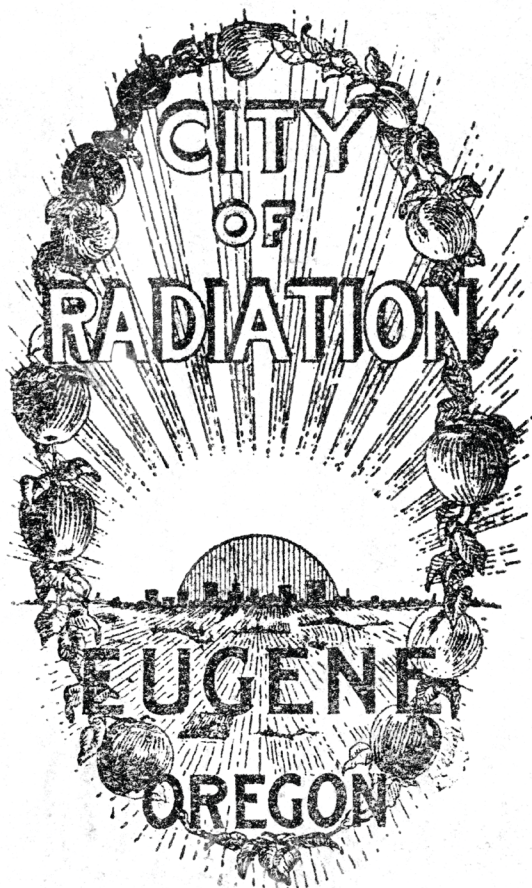
These specific images were chosen because they depict something truthful about the way Native Americans lived in Lane County. Some were purchased by the sitters themselves, and we can hope that they chose how they were photographed, which was not always the case, as strange as that sounds. These portraits may more closely reflect a historical truth, unlike the images produced by white ethnographers who styled and posed their subjects to create photographs that reflected white ideas about authenticity, not the realities of Native American life. Other photos are more casual snapshots that give us a glimpse into how people worked and lived every day, like a photo showing a couple bringing in their catch of fish, or a group of women dressed in hand made ensembles walking in the Oregon Trail Pageant. This exhibit will be on view until Summer 2020.

Above right: L82-516-295, Portrait of a boy associated with Mrs. R.C. Claghorn, November 1940.

Above left: GN8078, A young Native American man waits on a railroad depot platform in the Springfield area circa 1915. It is likely that this photo is an impromptu portrait taken by an itinerant photographer.

NEW EXHIBIT - *WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT!?*

by Faith Kreskey, Exhibits Curator



If you want to find out why Eugene was known as the "City of Radiation" in 1912, you'll need to check out this exhibit!

What did it take to become a U.S. citizen 100 years ago? What was the biggest West Coast photo fad of the 1920s? How much did a ham sandwich cost in 1940? You can find the answers to these questions along with many other astonishing facts in *Lane County... Would You Believe It!?* This potpourri of historical artifacts and curious stories from Lane County's past are presented with left of center photographs from our archives that are rarely seen. Wildly popular during the Lane County Fair, visitors have learned many surprising facts about local history. *Lane County... Would You Believe It!?* will be on view until July 2019.

Below: ER346, Members of the Eugene Radiators march behind Queen Susannah (Mary Gierhart) and a member of her court during the 1929 Sunset Trail Celebration Parade.



History is constantly evolving. While learning about the people, places, and events that have been highlighted as important gives us a basic understanding of the past, today we are able to use a wide variety of resources to discuss topics that may have gone unnoticed before. New approaches to interpretation and research broaden our view of the past, making old narratives richer and more meaningful to our lives today.

Telling old stories in a new way is a necessary part of creating a larger and more comprehensive view of our shared past. This exhibit is made of a series of small displays that feature new research from our collection on a variety of subjects, ranging from serious to surprising. Many of the artifacts are on display for the first time with interpretation. Several of the topics started as mysteries, interesting documents or photographs that had been overlooked for years and are now better understood thanks to research by our staff and volunteers.

Curiosity is an underrated skill in the field of history. A need to understand an odd photograph or unidentified artifact can propel research into new and interesting directions. History is more than just data and dates made into a concrete timeline of major events. It is the small details that provide us with new insights into a past we've forgotten. With these exhibit I hope visitors will see and learn something new about Lane County.

PIONEER DIARIES IN THE DIGITAL AGE

by Lee Harrison

The Lane County History Museum's collection of pioneer diaries are finally going digital, an important step that allows the public to access these historical documents more easily. First up in this project is the diary of Charlotte Pengra. New versions of Charlotte's diary, along with our other pioneer diaries, will be available for purchase on demand through our museum store when this project is completed.

The Pengra Story

On April 7, 1853, Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra left her home in Illinois to make a new life in Oregon with her husband Bynon and their 3-year old daughter Ella. The Pengras traveled with 30 other emigrants, including four families and six single men.

Charlotte writes that after walking 10 to 20 miles every day, the women would begin preparing the evening meal while the men took the livestock to graze. After dinner was served and cleaned up, the cook fires would be used for stewing fruit, baking biscuits or bread (maybe even a pie!), and heating water. After cooking, there was laundry, then mending clothing, tents, and wagon covers. Charlotte wrote in one entry about being stalled by a hard rain, when the women took advantage of the downtime: "washing, baking, cooking and scolding. Oh, what times we Orregonians do have."

Charlotte's diary ended August 28, 1853, some time before they reached their future home in Springfield. An annotation in the diary points out that Charlotte's writing had been getting smaller, perhaps due to a lack of paper, but more likely a lack of strength from the illness that had struck their family. Charlotte writes that her daughter Stella had fallen sick with dysentery towards the end of August. Charlotte and Bynon also fell ill in the days before the end of the diary.

The Pengras completed their journey successfully, settling in what is now Springfield. They established Springfield Flour Mills in 1854, in partnership with Bynon's brother William.

Traveling the Trail

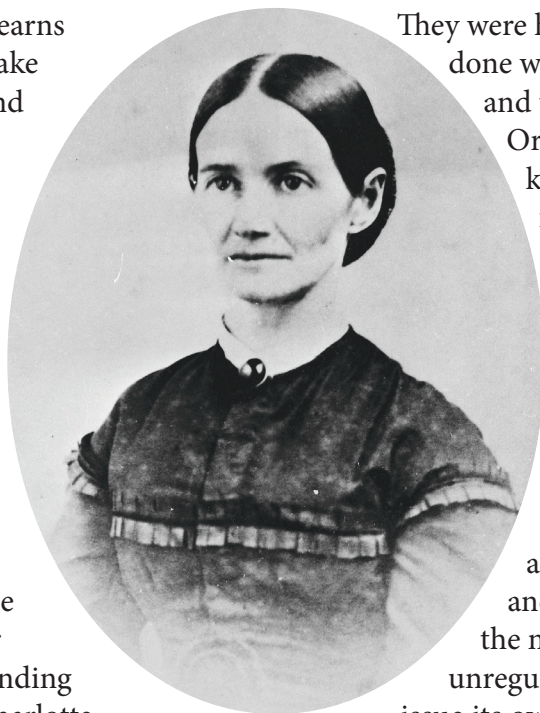
Charlotte's family opted to travel west by wagon rather than by sea. While people often envision Conestoga wagons rolling across the prairie towards Oregon, the truth is that Conestogas weren't practical for the journey.

They were heavy freight wagons that would not have done well on mountain trails and river crossings, and they required more draft animals.

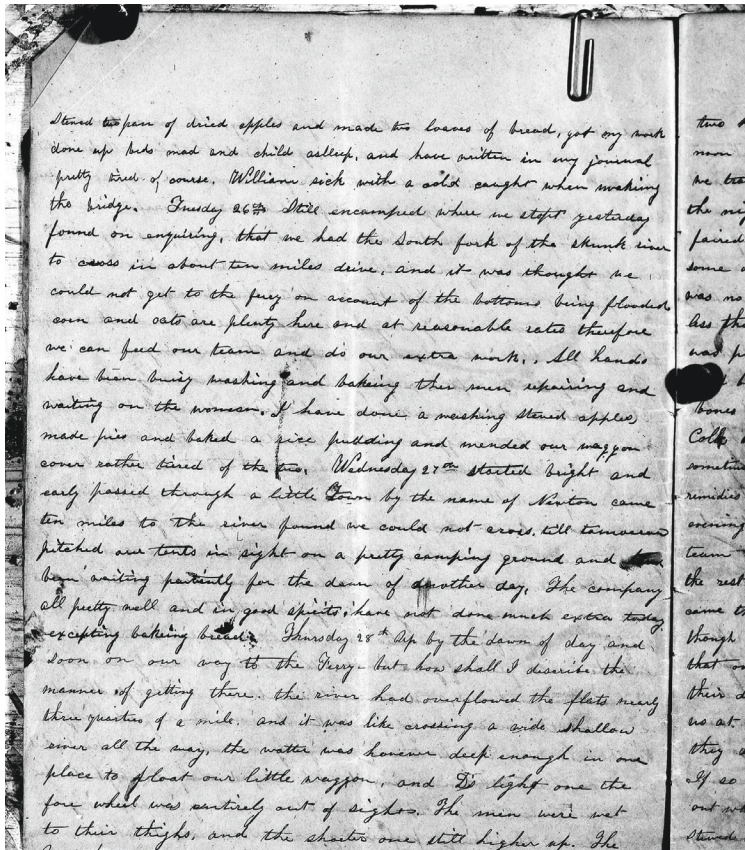
Oregon immigrants drove a lighter wagon known as a prairie schooner that required fewer animals, reducing the need for grain and forage which could be scarce along the Trail.

Prairie schooners carried less, so migrants needed to restock supplies as they traveled. Charlotte mentions paying for supplies with British pence and shillings as well as American cents and dollars. The use of both foreign and domestic coin was still common in the mid-19th century because minting was unregulated. Any bank or state was able to issue its own currency that functioned as legal tender, even though the U.S. government had been issuing official currency since 1776. Along with a lack of regulation, there were precious metal shortages in the United States. Foreign coins were not banned as legal tender until 1857, after gold and silver were discovered in California and Colorado.

The Northern route of the Oregon Trail is 2,100 miles and could be driven in around 31 hours today with no stopping. The cost (including gas, food, and lodging) would be around \$500, which is \$15 in 1850s currency. It cost an average pioneer family nearly \$1,000 to make the trip, equal to over \$30,000 today.



Center: GN5269, A portrait of Charlotte Emily Stearns Pengra.



Above: GN4961, A page from Pengra's diary dated Tuesday, April 26, 1853 through Thursday, April 28, 1853.

Charlotte recommended bringing an additional \$150 (\$3,590 today) for supplies, toll roads, and ferries. Charlotte mentioned ferry fees ranging from \$3 to \$9 (around \$90 to \$295 today) per wagon, plus additional fees for ferrying livestock. Bridge tolls were significantly cheaper, ranging from ten cents to two shillings (\$3 to \$7 today). Ferries and toll roads were a lucrative business for entrepreneurs, with both European settlers and local Native Americans profiting from immigrant wagon trains. Charlotte wrote of crossing an "Indian toll bridge made of brush thrown into the stream," an unsteady but economical option that cost only 10 cents per wagon to cross.

The Diary

Charlotte's writing shows that she had a wry take on this "adventure." After a rainstorm, she wrote "you who have never experienced the pleasure of being awakened sundry times during the night by the falling of pearly drops into their faces, can scarcely imagine the exquisite pleasure." A few weeks later, the immigrant party was still being deluged by frequent rain, and after an especially bad storm Charlotte wrote "Rained hard all night, but thanks to money and the disposition to use it I with the rest of our family was well sheltered and enjoyed a good nights rest in "mine Inn." On another soggy morning,

she quipped that they "left our quagmire bright and early." Just off the Snake River in Oregon, Charlotte was unimpressed with the desert country, commenting, "I will say that this part of Orregon is the most fertile for rocks and sagebrush of any part of the world that I have ever seen."

Charlotte had a talent for understatement when it came to describing the hazards of the Trail. "Disagreeable" and "unpleasant" were the harshest words that she used to describe her journey, whether referring to horse teams getting stuck in mud, or driving "down some steep decents [descents] that would make you folks in the States turn pale".

The transcription is necessary partly because the original penned text can be difficult to read. Penmanship aside, writing conventions have changed a lot in the intervening 165 years. Charlotte used archaic spellings for many familiar words; for example, wagon was spelled "waggon", water was "watter." During the first few months of diary entries Charlotte spelled "prairie" as "prarie," which she later corrected. Oregon was spelled "Orregon," and "cabin" had two b's, but "village" was changed to "vilage." Some verbs retained their silent "e" after adding "ing" (ie: rageing, haveing, and makeing).

Charlotte used punctuation and capitalization very differently as well. Periods were used sparingly, and commas are almost nonexistent. Hyphens were often used instead to mark sentence breaks. The lengths between periods in this diary would have many English instructors pulling out their hair.

The diary also contains idioms that are puzzling to modern readers. Sometimes their meaning can be determined by context, like Charlotte's use of "forenoon" instead of morning. Others are complete head scratchers, like "baiting the team." While images of baiting a fish hook come to mind, that doesn't quite work. As it turns out, "baiting" has an archaic use that means "to feed animals." Another interesting turn of phrase was "leg bail," which was used to describe someone running from something. Charlotte used this phrase about a man they encountered, "another came puffing and blowing shortly afterward and Said that they [Indians] came out after him. So he took leg bail."

NEW EXHIBIT IN 2019: *PROJECTED LIGHTS, ILLUMINATED IMAGES*

by Faith Kreskey and Nick Chase

The prevalence of photos and camera technology today has certainly changed the meaning and impact of still images. The idea of a “snap shot” is fairly recent, and the concept of a “selfie” wasn’t even a glimmer in the minds of trendy youth 80 years ago. So what did photos mean then? And with who were the people interested in taking pictures?

On January 19, 2019 Lane County History Museum opens *Projected Lights, Illuminated Images*, an immersive new exhibit that will feature projected ephemera and displays connecting photographic and projector technology of the past to our present-day habits and gadgets. An ambitious collaboration between LCHM Digital Archivist Nick Chase and Exhibits Curator Faith Kreskey, *Projected Lights, Illuminated Images* will put on display the Museum’s surprisingly large collection of projection and camera artifacts, and showcase our expansive photo collection in an exciting and compelling way. *Projected Lights* aims to answer the question posed above to help us view the images that surround us in a new way.

Though the way we view images has changed radically since the heyday of the Magic Lantern, *Projected Lights* invites visitors to rediscover an old way of seeing through replicas of authentic technology. Can we imagine the spectacle caused by shimmering, colored shadows projected by a Magic Lantern when it made its debut during the 17th Century? This early slide projector had such an impact that it could still be found in American households into the 20th Century.

The exhibit will talk about the LCHM photographic collection as more than just its historic content. The LCHM photographic collection represents the life’s work of local photographers who sought to document their rich and varied experiences. The collection of images from the photography studio operated by John and Clarence Winter in the late 19th century is notable for its portraits of working-class families and people of color, pointing to an ethos of cultural inclusivity rare for rural Oregon during this period. J.M. Nighswander was a great experimenter, pushing the boundaries of what could be done with amateur technology at the turn of the

20th century. Working mainly in rural Lane County, he created compelling images that capture lived experiences that go beyond mere content through his use of timers and negative touching. In the 1920s Elizabeth Romane made the decision to leave her husband to continue operating her successful studio in Eugene. Scheduled for conservation by Digital Archives in the coming year, her many scrapbooks that document her business and career will be put public view for the first time.



WR118, Dora de Cillie wears dress decorated with photographs in an 1891 advertising photograph for the Winter Photo Company of Eugene.

Projected Lights will feature tableaux, recreations of early projection fantasies, and a full-length film made by local amateurs in the 1920s, to help visitors better understand the meaning the photographic medium has to our culture. It will also include a rather surprising subject that shows how little people have changed: portrait retouching, which was a topic of robust conversation in the 1800s. These larger conversations will be supported by a display drawn from the Museum's sizable Dr. Dennis Schuelke camera collection.

Put together from hundreds of historical photographs from the museum's archival collection, antique cameras, and projection devices that were once rarities, *Projected Lights, Illuminated Images* will enable visitors to experience the rich story of capturing and projecting images by engaging new and old technologies in a

multimedia environment. The exhibit opens January 19, 2019 and runs through January 31, 2020. Check our Facebook page and website for updates about upcoming exhibit opening receptions and events.

Below: DH27947, A magic lantern projector



PIONEERING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

by Nick Chase, Digital Archivist

October 2018 marks a landmark step forward for the Lane County History Museum's digital presence: the expansion of the Museum's website.

If you visit lchm.org, you'll see some obvious changes, like the cleaner design thanks to our staff Graphic Artist, Stephen O'Brien. Stephen works daily to make the website more navigable and better reflect the Museum and our work here. You might also notice that photographs from the Museum's collection appear as part of Stephen's updated layout. These changes are all part of a shift in the Museum to not only to tell the stories of Lane County, but to tell the story of what we do here day-to-day.

In the right hand column of links you'll see the addition of an Instagram account. Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer Yeh manages our Facebook presence, and her role has expanded to sharing photos via Instagram. If you have the app, follow us to see weekly news about current and upcoming exhibits, community events like History Pub and History Trivia Night, and to get a look at artifacts not currently on view—even sneak-peaks into our storage areas where we are still conducting inventory projects. You won't find that content anywhere else—it will be exclusive to our social media, so be sure to follow, like, and share!

As of August, our in-house photo database shot up from a little over 37,000 scanned photographs to 40,942 digitally accessible photos. This September—after two weeks of frustration and troubleshooting—all of those photos are available for browsing on our website. There are new features available from the photo database too: you can email a photograph to a friend, and you can place a photo order directly from an image as you're viewing it. If you're looking for something in particular, the updated photo search engine is significantly more robust, offering results for just about any search.

The most exciting addition to the website is the searchable Manuscripts Index. This is a significant research tool that makes it simpler for professional as well as "armchair" researchers around the world to peruse our collections of printed materials. The Index is the result of a collaboration between LCHM Archivist Cheryl Roffe and the department of Digital Archives, Design and Marketing. While you might think there is a natural connection between these two areas, LCHM has only recently been able to support fluid collaborations between physical Archives and Digital Archives thanks to a successful fundraiser and large bequest from the Hattie Mae estate.

DIGITAL LAB UPDATE

by Nick Chase, Digital Archivist

Over the next year more and more of our collections will become accessible to the public through digital technologies. This is a direct result of member contributions offered in support of the Museum's proposed Digital Lab. Last Spring the board looked to the future of the Museum by choosing to fundraise \$10,000 to build the Digital Lab (see *Artifact*, Spring 2018). By the end of August we reached 70% of our goal from your generous donations, as well as an unforeseen gift of \$10,000 from the Hattie Mae Estate (see *Artifact*, Summer 2018) earmarked for making Museum collections more publicly accessible.

This funding enables the department of Digital Archives, Design and Marketing to make technology purchases that will have significant impact on the Museum's ability to digitize, scan, or otherwise "capture" some of our most delicate material. We can now simultaneously preserve these items and make them immediately accessible to the public. Maps, newspapers, large format slides, photographs, scrapbooks, and oral histories are among the many objects we plan to archive digitally.

An exciting aspect of the newly founded Digital Lab is our ability to support other departments in the Museum. This coming winter Digital Archives, Design and Marketing will collaborate with Exhibits Curator Faith Kreskey to realize *Projected Lights, Illuminated Images*, an exhibit that will explore images—and the process of imaging—as it has evolved in our local history. Digital Archives will also work with our Registrar to build a photo database of physical objects here in the museum.

Planning is underway to begin work on these collections, as well supporting our Collections Department in documenting artifacts. While some of the projects—photo documenting objects, for instance—are straight forward enough, other projects present some interesting challenges. Eugene photographer Elizabeth Roman's uncatalogued scrap book collection jumps to mind, as the decaying books sit in a secondary storage area without environmental regulation. These will be quarantined when they are brought into the main museum to be documented. Another challenge will be documenting

collection's items that are now considered hazardous materials before they are (appropriately) disposed of. The Museum's Map Collection contains maps old and new in a variety of sizes and shapes, the largest measuring about 7 by 4 feet. This presents an entirely new set of circumstances to work with, so we have our work cut out for us!

As we build the Digital Lab, we have to keep an eye on the future. In the last few years, the Museum has been able to just keep abreast of the times by fundraising for specific projects. The Don Hunter Project notably initiated a meaningful step forward in the ability to make high resolution scans of our photo and slide collections. This most recent funding puts LCHM in a fantastic position to continue developing our digital presence, and expand public access to our collections. But, as we all know, technology today is not a one-time purchase. In order to stay current, we'll have to keep looking ahead and expanding our ability to digitally capture our collections in an archivally viable standard.

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To make a gift online, visit lchm.org. Questions? Please
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the ARTIFACT

Exhibits, events, and historical happenings

FALL 2018 NO. 229

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