

Deep Roots



NEWSLETTER OF THE TRAVEL INFORMATION COUNCIL HERITAGE PROGRAMS — VOLUME 13, APRIL 2024

30 Years of Service to the State



It's a sunny summer day in late June. A group of volunteers from Salemtowne Retirement Community are waiting outside their shop on the lower level of the Salemtowne Community Center. The rental van was loaded the day before with sandpaper, rollers, hammers, ladders, containers of Bondo, and a 5-gallon bucket of Behr Oxford Brown stain- everything you need to repair a historical marker in the field. The group hits the road promptly at 7 a.m.

Their destination? It depends on the trip. The volunteers have a goal to visit each of the state's 112 "beaver boards" every 2-3 years. With markers located in all corners of the state, they tackle one region at a time. Jack Carroll, Salemtowne's long-time foreman, carefully plans each trip; though it's hard to plan when you never know what you are going to find. The best-case scenario is a wash and a paint refresh, which will bring a weather-worn marker back to life. Other times, a marker has been shot at for target practice, backed into by trucks, or made into a woodpecker's home.

The crew has their field repair method down to a science. Once the door to the van opens, each member slides into their role like a well-oiled machine. The ladder goes up. One volunteer immediately begins rolling stain. Meanwhile, a second volunteer starts at the bottom and works their way up until meeting in the middle. Three coats of stain are applied and the white letters repainted.

Of course, there's art to the science. "We never know what we're going to find until we get to the job," Carroll said. Carroll recounts one of their more creative field repairs where he filled in a hole with a chunk of wood found nearby. After fastening it with screws and covering it with Bondo, visitors are none the wiser.

When the Travel Information Council (TIC) assumed administration of the Oregon Historical Marker Program in 1991, many of the markers created in the 1950s needed restoration. TIC and the Historical Marker Committee faced a problem with little funds and little to no labor. That same year, Salemtowne resident Dick Ackerman joined the Committee and soon persuaded his friends at Salemtowne to help keep the program alive by contributing their invaluable woodworking and construction skills. The first small group of Salemtowne Historical Marker Volunteers hit the road traveling throughout Oregon, inspecting and repairing markers in 1993. The crew adapted a woodshop space provided by Salemtowne to work on markers either new or too damaged to work on in the field.

TIC estimates that over the past three decades the group has volunteered over 8,000 hours of their time and traveled at least 18,000 miles around the state of Oregon.

Oregon Historical Marker Committee Chair David Porter says, "The legacy of the Salemtowne Historical Marker Volunteer Crew is remarkable. Their time and talent allow us to make history accessible to Oregon residents and travelers in the places it happened. We appreciate their dedication, professionalism, and generosity. We encourage Oregon residents to join us in thanking these volunteers for their good work."

The next time you come across a beaver board, tip your hat in honor of the Salemtowne Historical Marker Volunteers.

(Current members listed on back inset.)

IN THIS ISSUE

30 Years of Service to the State	1
The Work Behind the Words	1
Class of 2024 Heritage Trees	2
Heritage Tree Award Winners	3
Grove of the States gets a Maintenance Plan.	4

The Work Behind the Words

The core of the Oregon Historical Marker Program is maintaining the state's inventory of historical markers. Because the markers are constructed of wood, the maintenance cycle is constant.

It turns out there's a benefit to each marker's limited lifespan. When a marker begins physically deteriorating, the Historical Marker Committee revisits the interpretive text. The group



The Dalles to Canyon City marker in Antelope.

Continued on page 2

Class of 2024 Heritage Trees

The Oregon Heritage Tree Program is proud to introduce the newest inductees into the Oregon Heritage Tree Program.

The Northrup Creek Horse Camp Big Tree Trail (Clatsop County) is the home of western redcedar, Sitka spruce, bigleaf maple, red alder, and bitter cherry. The giant grand fir that stands at 208ft is the centerpiece of the collection and is Oregon's 84th Heritage Tree. It is believed that many of these trees are among the top five largest in the state.

The Big Tree Trail is located inside what used to be The Northrup Creek Grazing Experiment. The Experiment started in 1936 to study the seeding, fertilizing, grazing, and management of logged-off and burned-over timberlands and the effects of grazing on reforestation. Basically, the state was trying to solve a problem: how to make cutdown or burnt-up land profitable again. The project was overseen by the John Jacob Astor Experiment Station outside of Astoria and continued until the early 1950s.

Governor Charles Sprague visited the area in 1939 and notably gave a stump speech there promoting the State Forest Acquisition Act. Sprague initiated this legislation that became the state's first forestry rules and established a permanent forestry economy for the state. The legislation included conservation requirements for loggers to re-seed the forest by leaving seed trees, as well as reforestation efforts for burned areas, particularly those affected by the repeated Tillamook burns of 1933, 1939, and 1945.

Former Clatsop County Judge Guy Boyington, one of the original framers of the state forest arrangement, envisioned that the foreclosed lands could be made productive if forest land management was available. Clatsop County became the first county to participate.

You can visit the Big Tree Trail inside the Northrup Creek Horse Camp, located between Jewell and Birkenfeld four miles north of Hwy 202. The trail is just under one mile and is open year-round for hiking. Hikers must start at the gate during the seasonal closure of the camp, which adds two miles.



Photo courtesy of Oregon Explorer, Oregon State University (Oregon Digital)

Governor Sprague addressing a group from a tree stump in a burned over area in the Northrup Creek Experimental Area, 1939.



Photo courtesy of Oregon Explorer, Oregon State University (Oregon Digital)

Cows and young calves are in a good feeding area of cut over land, Northrup Creek Experimental Area.

Continued from page 1

reevaluates not only the story being told, but whose vantage point it's told from and who else can be brought to the table to tell the story. The committee asks new questions and seeks emerging research.

This past year the program installed a second iteration of The Dalles to Canyon City Wagon Road marker in Antelope. Originally installed in 2003, the marker tells the story of the discovery of gold in the upper John Day basin and the rush of people and supplies that arrived over a series of trails that became The Dalles to Canyon City Wagon Road. For the 2023 replacement, the committee consulted with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to include the traditional name of the principal tribal village on the lower John Day River and the traditional name of its people.

Additionally, Oregon Black Pioneers contributed the story of Columbus Sewell based on their recent research. Sewell was an African American pioneer in Oregon in the early 1860s, despite the exclusion laws that prohibited Blacks from settling in the state. He was born in 1820 in Virginia and made his way west in search of gold after serving in the Black Hawk War. Upon arriving in Oregon, Sewell worked a claim until he found success hauling freight on The Dalles-Canyon City Road. The 1870 the census listed Sewell's occupation as teamster. Sewell regularly made the 6-week round trip journey between Canyon City and The Dalles aboard a wagon pulled by 12 horses. Sewell lived in Canyon City with his wife Louisa and their two sons and worked into the 1860s.

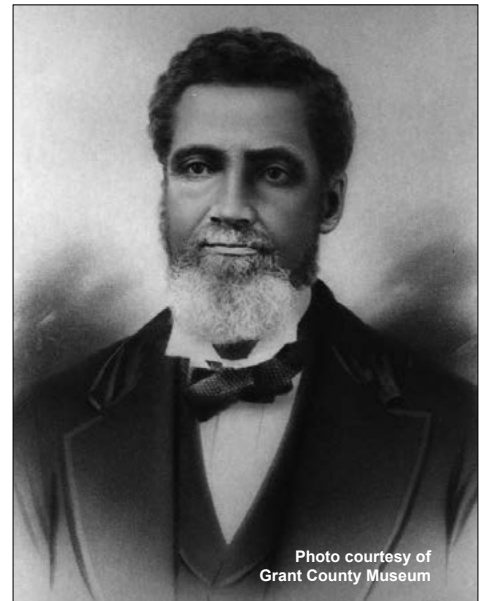


Photo courtesy of Grant County Museum

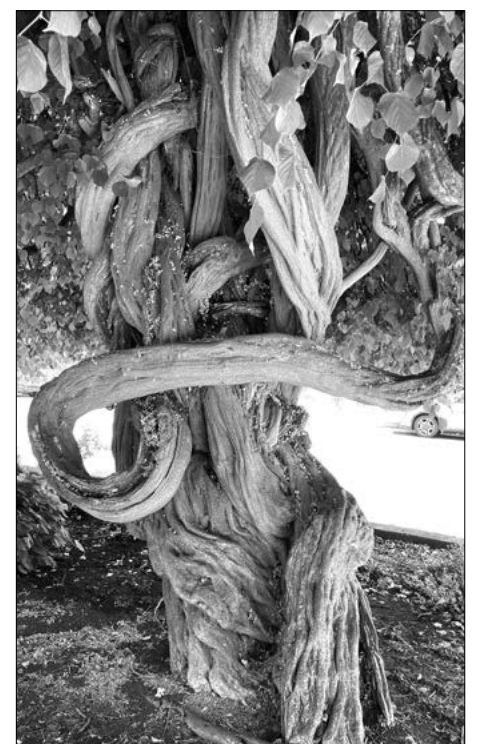
Columbus Sewell, early teamster

Moyer House Linden / Wisteria

To become the best version of ourselves, we often need a little help. This is true of linden tree and wisteria vine at the Moyer House in Brownsville. Together the two have become Oregon's 83rd Heritage Tree.

The linden and wisteria were planted by John and Elizabeth Moyer. Elizabeth Brown (1841-1922) arrived in the Calapooia Valley via the 1846 Blakely-Brown wagon train and John Moyer (1829-1904), a carpenter from Ohio, arrived by horseback in 1852 after a short journey of just three months. The two married in 1857 and raised their children in a much humbler home on the property. John gained wealth as an early entrepreneur in lumber, cattle, a sash and door factory, and early business investment.

They built the showpiece 1881 Moyer House to display their success. Formal landscaping adorned the front garden, which included the linden and wisteria, facing Main Street. The two appear in historic images as early as 1882. Planted concurrently with the house construction, the tree and vine have grown to enormous size over the course of 142 years. The wisteria relies on the linden for support, and in spring the wisteria's profuse blossoms pop out everywhere amongst the linden branches.



The braided wisteria vine relies on the linden for support.

They have become a landmark in Brownsville, and the Moyer House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 as an example of an Italianate home.

The tree and vine are located in the NE corner of the Moyer House front yard, 297 Main Street in Brownsville, and are easily accessible to the public. Visit Linn County's website for updated information on tours of the interior of the house.

Heritage Tree Award Winners

The Oregon Heritage Tree Committee recognizes exceptional efforts of Oregon citizens for promoting the appreciation of trees in Oregon and educating the public about the value of heritage trees through two award programs.

Maynard Drawson Award

The Maynard Drawson Award was created to honor a native of Oregon and a veteran of World War II who was best known as a tree advocate. Drawson led a campaign in the 1970s to preserve the Valley of the Giants and in 1995 helped launch the Oregon Heritage Tree Program, the first state-sponsored heritage tree program in the country. This award recognizes exceptional, meritorious, and extraordinary work promoting the appreciation of trees over an extended period.

2024 Winner--- **Phyllis Reynold's** knowledge of Portland's trees is legendary. So is her advocacy for them. As a lover of trees from a young age, Phyllis recalls growing up near and exploring present-day Hoyt Arboretum where she continues to volunteer in her 90s. Phyllis was a founding member of Portland's Heritage Tree Committee in 1993 and chaired the committee from 1999-2006. Under her leadership, the city's program became one of the most established programs in the country and unique in including legal protection of heritage trees for their life. She is a published author, including two editions of *Trees of Greater Portland* and *Hoyt Arboretum, It's Story*.

She has led a sustained commitment to educating the public about the value of heritage trees as an urban Forestry Commissioner and close friend of Hoyt Arboretum. Phyllis has inspired generations of tree advocates through her books and volunteerism. As she told the Oregonian, *"Trees are art. The wind prunes them into elegant shapes. I can't imagine my life without them."*



*Phyllis Reynolds of Portland,
2024 Maynard Drawson Award Winner*



*Giana Bernardini of Philomath,
2024 Heritage Tree Hero Award Winner*



*Nancy Broshot of Oregon City,
2024 Heritage Tree Hero Award Winner*



*Mike Oxendine of Talent,
2024 Heritage Tree Hero Award Winner*

Heritage Tree Heroes of the Year

The Heritage Tree Heroes of the Year Award recognizes individuals and groups who are engaging communities through education about the importance of trees and raising awareness about Oregon's history told through trees and forests.

Congratulations to the 2024 Winners!

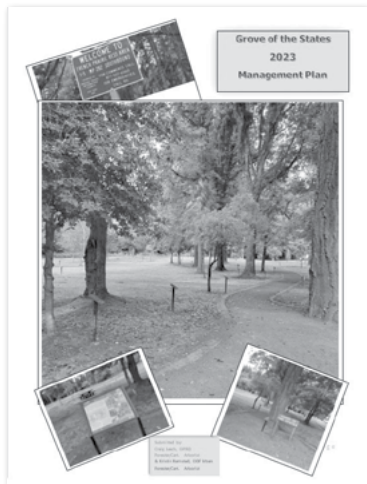
Giana Bernardini (Philomath) has been the driving force behind the creation of the City of Philomath's Heritage Tree Program. She worked steadily from her first letter to city council in December 2021 to the inception of the city's new program in March 2023. During that time, Giana gathered information, ideas, images, and examples from other city tree programs, helped craft criteria, and ultimately resigned from her position on the Planning Commission to apply for an appointment to the Tree Board. In her application to the Tree Advisory Board she wrote, "I moved to this area because I love the forests, and I love this town because of the trees. I am a strong believer in the ability of an urban forest to improve livability, benefit the environment, and increase overall joy in a community." Thanks to Gina's leadership, the City of Philomath has a Heritage Tree Program with five initial trees: an American elm in front of the library, a giant sequoia that serves as the community's Christmas tree, a black cottonwood, a white oak, and a deodar cedar. Nominations are open for future submissions!

Nancy Broshot (Oregon City) is a volunteer on Oregon City's Natural Resources Committee (NRC) where she uses her background in biology as professor and Chair of Environmental Studies at Linfield College to support Oregon City's Heritage Tree Program. When the program started, it included the requirement of having an arborist evaluate each potential nomination. This was cost-prohibitive to many. Nancy led the NRC to review and revise the municipal code including the removal of the arborist report requirement for Heritage Trees. This modification has helped remove financial barriers and make nominations more accessible to community members. The result has been a more robust Heritage Tree Program for Oregon City that went from two heritage trees to twelve heritage trees in a short period. Nancy is also instrumental in assisting with Heritage Tree nominations and supporting the Tree Board by reporting nominations to the city council. A colleague noted, "Her knowledge is exceptional. All I have to do is text and she has been a resource."

Mike Oxendine (Talent). If you live or work in Southern Oregon and have any connection to trees, chances are you know Mike. Mike helped form the Talent Urban Forestry Committee, served on the board of Oregon Community Trees, leads planting days for the community, hosts educational tree climbing competitions, and started a program to turn Talent's landscape and tree debris into compost. He has rightly been described as a "do-er." One colleague noted with a laugh, "If you can befriend him, you can get something done. Because he will just get it done." Mike's tireless commitment and passion for preserving our natural legacy makes him a natural supporter of heritage tree projects. He assisted in the Peace Tree planting in Ashland, helped assess the Ewing Young Oak, and inventoried over 1,000 trees in Talent. The work he's doing today will nurture the heritage trees of tomorrow. He will do anything to make the world a more treeful-place.

Grove of the States gets a Maintenance Plan

Located at the southbound French Prairie Rest Area on I-5, the Grove of the States is the nation's first arboretum representing each state's official tree. Created in 1967, restored in 2015, and dedicated as a State Heritage Grove in 2017, GoS received some serious TLC in 2023!



Management Plan: *Heritage Tree Committee members Craig Leech and Kristin Ramstad volunteered their expertise to create a maintenance plan for the Grove.*



Maps: *New maps identify all 50 state trees and replacements, which will assist future maintenance of the Grove.*



ODF Structural Pruning: *TIC's partners at the Oregon Department of Forestry conducted structural pruning as training for their interns.*



ODF Crew: *The crew from ODF pruned the young trees to promote a strong central leader with well-spaced, smaller diameter branches along the main trunks. Over the duration of a tree's life this improves branch spacing, reduces potential for storm damage, improves the appearance of the tree, and reduces future maintenance costs.*



Clean-up Day: *TIC staff and volunteers kicked-off regular Spring Clean-up Days at the Grove. While a certified arborist evaluated the health and well-being of each tree, TIC's sign crew repaired down signage, and volunteers began creating landscape rings around the trees and signage.*



Bark Mulch: *Accidental nicks by lawn mowers can damage trees at the base. TIC's French Prairie Rest Area staff and Heritage Tree Committee volunteers distributed bark mulch to all 50 trees with the goal of creating a visual barrier for seasonal mowers.*

Heritage Committees

Historical Marker Members:

- Katie Bush
- Kelly Cannon-Miller
- Nancy DeSouza
- Robert Garcia
- David-Paul Hedberg
- Sarah Jalving
- Robert Olguin
- Amy Platt
- David Porter (Chair)
- Ed Washington

Heritage Tree Members:

- Nancy Appling
- David-Paul Hedberg
- Jennifer Karps
- Craig Leech (Chair)
- Charlotte Lehan
- Molly McKnight
- Arne Nyberg
- Brittany Oxford
- Kristin Ramstad
- Al Tocchini
- Ed Washington
- Samantha Wolf

Salemtowne Volunteers:

- (Historical Marker Maintenance)
- Alan Avery
 - Jack Carroll (foreman)
 - Kenn Carter
 - James Childers
 - Donald Conrad Jr.
 - Richard DuBois
 - Stan Gregory
 - John Mangini
 - Herman Mitzel
 - Howard Palmer
 - Leonard Schultz
 - Owen Stockard

TIC Heritage Program Staff

- Beth Dehn, Heritage and Community Assets Manager
- Jessica Carbone, Executive Assistant

Deep Roots is published annually. For additional copies, please call 503-378-4508.

The Oregon Historical Marker and Oregon Heritage Tree Programs are administered by the Travel Information Council.

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