

St. Paul Mission Historical Society (SPMHS)

P.O. Box 158
St. Paul, Oregon 97137
Newsletter – Fall 2021

We hope you enjoy this Fall 2021 edition of the St. Paul Mission Historical Society (SPMHS) newsletter. We welcome your suggestions for future articles. Please feel free to contact any of the Board members with your comments and suggestions.

Mission of the Society: Preservation of the history of early Oregon and the French Prairie region of the Willamette Valley. Preservation includes establishment of a historical trust for artifacts, written and spoken history of the St. Paul and French Prairie area, and publication of historical records of early Oregon.

The Annual Meeting of the St. Paul Mission Historical Society has been CANCELLED for the second time, due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. The safety of our members is of upmost concern and the Board felt cancelling the meeting this year was the appropriate thing to do.

Elections:

Since we are unable to hold the annual in-person election this year, balloting will be done by mail. The terms of Tim Bergquist, Gretchen Brown, Brenda Howard, and Gerry Lenzen on the SPMHS Board expire this year; all but Gretchen have agreed to continue on the Board. Society members may vote for members of the Society other than those named by writing in their names in the space provided on the last page. Write-in candidates should be members of the Society in good standing. Ballots must be postmarked no later than November 15, 2021.

If you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors (three-year positions), please contact President Claudine Lake Smith at cmarielake@stpaultel.com. The Board is to consist of at least eleven members and no more than nineteen. The term is three years. The Board is short of the minimum number and would welcome anyone who is interested. The Board usually meets the third Thursday of each month (except October and December) at the MarionAg building two miles east of St. Paul.

2021 Activities:

See later in this newsletter for updates, accomplishments, and goals.

Website:

www.spmhs.com.

Click on “Collections” to search thousands of photos and other historical St. Paul materials.

Murphy House Tour:

Please contact Claudine Lake for tours of the Murphy House. It is located behind the fire hall in town.

Dues:

It is again time for our annual dues drive. Because the annual meeting where we would collect most dues has been cancelled, we are asking you to complete the form on the last page of this newsletter and send it to the address indicated.

Society Purpose and Objectives:

These are contained in Article I of the SPMHS By-Laws:

ARTICLE I **Purposes and Objectives**

The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized are: Exclusively charitable, scientific, literary and educational, particularly regarding history and historic preservation in the St. Paul Mission and Champoeg areas in Champoeg County of the early Oregon territory. The corporation may engage in any lawful activity, none of which is for profit, for which corporations may be organized under ORS Chapter 61, provided that such activities shall be exercised exclusively for the furtherance of the foregoing purposes of the corporation within the meaning of Sec. 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

Board of Directors 2020-2021:

Claudine Lake Smith, President
Connie Lenzen, CG, FNGS, Secretary
Donald Koch, Comptroller
Gretchen Brown
Tim Bergquist, PhD

Gerry Lenzen, Vice-President
Benda Howard, Treasurer
Bill McKay
K'Lyn Brentano

Board Accomplishments 2020-2021:

- Completed work on the Schwemm Family Foundation grant to digitize three Banker Boxes of family histories and put them on the SPMHS PastPerfect site.
- Received a \$5,000 grant from the Oregon Community Foundation.
- Worked on organizing and cleaning the Brentano House contents.
- Contracted Murphy House landscaping.
- Investigated the Northwest Digital Library and is exploring a partnership with them to make more of the St. Paul historical material available.

Board Goals 2021-2022:

- Complete uploading Harriet Munnick notecards to the SPHMS website.
- Upgrade the exterior and interior of the Brentano House, including roof, windows, and doors.
- Apply for a grant to upgrade the Murphy House with electricity in every room, and a handicap accessible bathroom (which requires water and sewer).
- Develop appropriate signage for both the Brentano and Murphy houses.
- Upgrade the website to current standards and make the archives more accessible.

Thanks to the following for their support this past year:

- Tim and Eve Woodland family for work on the grounds.

In Cooperation:

The SPMHS is working with the newly established non-profit Friends of Historic St. Paul to address the historical aspects of the St. Paul and French Prairie area. The first project undertaken by the new historical group is renovation of the 1914 St. Paul Creamery building, also known as the Columbus Club.

Oregon Community Foundation Grant:

In May 2021, the SPMHS received a \$5,000 grant from the Helen E. Austin Pioneer Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation (OCF). Both Ken Austin III and Loni Parrish have been very strong supporters of Helen Austin's work with Joe McKay and the SPMHS. Helen Austin was a long-time member of the Society.

Northwest Digital Heritage:

Website: <https://www.northwestdigitalheritage.org/>.

“A new partnership between the [Washington State Library](#), the [Oregon Heritage Commission](#), and the [State Library of Oregon](#), Northwest Digital Heritage leverages existing infrastructure and best practices created through the [Washington Rural Heritage](#) project to extend access to Oregon-based libraries, museums, and cultural heritage organizations. We also operate a service hub of the [Digital Public Library of America](#) (DPLA), which helps bring these unique and local Northwest collections to a wider audience. Funding provided in part by the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#).”

The SPMHS is investigating a partnership with the Heritage to make the Society’s historical archive more widely available.

Brentano House:

K’Lyn Brentano headed a work group consisting of Claudine Lake, Don Koch, Gerry Lenzen, and Connie Lenzen to sort through the materials in the house. Garbage was removed. Fr. Scott Beier, the new St Paul priest, and his friend, Fr. David Jasper, took possession of the Catholic Church vestments and artifacts that were stored in the house. Books were sorted and those books that deal with St. Paul area history and families were set aside for a future research center. Photos were triaged. Those that had no connection to the St. Paul area were donated to Goodwill.

The following items need to be done before a plan can be made for the house:

1. Contract with an engineer to certify the structure is sound and can be restored.
2. Obtain written commitment from the stakeholders involved in the restoration of the house. In 1994, Richard Brentano paid to move the Brentano House from the St. Paul Rodeo grounds to its current location where it was deeded to the SPMHS.
3. Investigate insurance coverage for volunteers and workers during restoration.

4. Preserve the Brentano House from further deterioration. There are leaks upstairs, birds are finding their way into the house, the roof has moss on it, and one of the front windows is missing and boarded up.

In Remembrance:

George T. Brown (1923-2019) was a long-time member of the SPMHS and wrote some interesting genealogies for the early French-Canadian settlers in the Oregon Country. The year before he died, he donated his extensive French-Canadian research materials to the Genealogical Forum of Oregon. They are now included in the catalog at the GFO. This is his obituary:

<https://obits.oregonlive.com/us/obituaries/oregon/name/george-brown-obituary?pid=192709115>.

Treasures from the Archives:

The SPMHS is charged with preserving the history of the St. Paul area. Thanks to the Austin Family Fund and the Schwemm Family Fund, thousands of St. Paul images can be accessed online from the SPMHS website, www.spmhs.com. To search these images, select the “Collections” tab and then the “keyword” search tab.

Depending upon what was donated to the Society, you can find photos, Harriet Munnick’s notecards, family histories, diaries, newspaper clippings, and much more.

One of the photos is the following one of five men in a car.



The back of the photo has the citation:

“Joe Gooding Bill Gooding
Fred Gearin Jack Davidson
Tom Coleman

Foresters returning from
Sublimity July 1911 taken
in Woodburn”

Sometimes you run across an entry that has the image shown at the right. It’s a clue that the artifact contains multiple pages. Click on the word “Fonds” or “Manuscript” to locate the PDF link at the bottom of the new window.



2020.1.47 - Manuscript

(see **Coleman**) Murray, Barney (Ber)

Record Type: Archive

St. Paul Church Bricks:

The original wooden St. Paul Catholic Church was replaced in 1846 with a brick structure.

This photo of the church is in the SPMHS online PastPerfect collection.



The bricks were made on site.

Some of the original bricks are in the custody of the SPMHS – along with this hand-printed explanation.



Dues:

It is time for our annual dues drive. Your dues allow us to continue the work of preserving St. Paul history. Below is a membership application form. Please complete and return it with your annual dues to the address below.

If you are a Life Member or Benefactor, please update your membership information so we can keep our files current. Many of our Life Members continue to donate to the society, and we thank you for your support.

Our sincere thanks to all of our members for supporting St. Paul history. If you would like to contribute to the digitization of historic artifacts and maintenance of our collections, your additional donation would be greatly appreciated.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Individual: \$20

Senior: \$15

Family: \$35

Supporting: \$75

Corporate: \$200

Benefactor or Individual Life: \$500

Ballot:

Indicate your choice by an "X" in front of the name of the persons for whom you are voting.
(Can vote for up to five people.)

Tim Bergquist

Brenda Howard

Gerry Lenzen

Maurice Smith

[Write in candidate]

Send your dues and ballot no later than November 15, 2021 to:

St. Paul Mission Historical Society, P.O. Box 158, St. Paul, OR 97137. Thank you!!