

Available now: 'Historical Guide to Union County, Oregon Roads'

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UNION COUNTY — Union County history writers Dave and Trish Yerges have released their latest history book titled "Historical Guide to Union County, Oregon Roads."

This 450-page soft-covered book is a hybrid gazetteer that lists 300 county road names and their origins. Each road entry describes the road's location and the person, place or thing after which it was named.

When the road was named after a person, the authors, who live in Summerville, compiled a short biographical sketch based on numerous public records, private memoirs and interviews. The book cites its sources in the body of each road entry, and it includes an index with 7,800 listings at the back of the book.

"Historical Guide to Union County, Oregon Roads" is a culmination of 24 years of past Union County historical writing in addition to current and never-before-compiled historical data.

"This entertaining and historical book will present many 'I didn't know that!' facts and some



Dick Mason/The Observer

Trish and Dave Yerges' new book — "Historical Guide to Union County, Oregon Roads" — includes an index with 7,800 listings.

well-hidden secrets too," Trish Yerges said.

The volume includes century farm and ranch stories, Oregon Trail stories, memoirs never before published, the story of who settled here before Benjamin Brown, corrections of long-misspelled road names, the story of the first wedding performed, agricultural and lumber mill stories, the origins of town names, the

first burials, stories of homesteading successes and failures, and a treasure trove of dates, places and family genealogies.

Trish said that while they were digging for facts, they also overturned some long-held beliefs.

One of those is about Catherine Creek, which was thought to be named after the daughter of pioneer Thomas Godley.

"However, our online genealogy research showed that Thomas Godley never had a daughter named Catherine," Yerges said. "Furthermore, Catherine Creek was found written on an 1863 map of Union County and the Thomas Godley family arrived in Union County just after 1870."

Another story involves Morgan Lake, which has been connected to Enoch Morgan, a

foreman on the crew that built the dam on Morgan Lake from 1901-1903.

"However," Yerges said, "the name Morgan Lake was known years before the dam was built, according to a news article we found dated Sept. 17, 1903, which read: 'The principal reservoir is located at an elevation of 1500 feet above La Grande, known for years as Morgan Lake.'"

She continued: "We believe we solved the mystery of who Morgan Lake was named after, and the evidence seems to back this second historical story that was related to us. We recorded the journey of our investigation so that readers could be convinced of this second historical account."

The book also contains information about Perry's namesake, D.W.C. Perry.

"He was far more than a railroad engineer as past histories have stated," Yerges said.

Cost for the book is \$40, plus shipping/handling, or arrange for pick up by calling Dave Yerges at 541-910-0155 or sending an email to weframe@eoni.com.

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