

'WE CAME BY BOXCAR'

## HISTORY of Maxville celebrated at virtual GALA

JOSEPH — The Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center in Joseph will present a virtual gala and live performance, "We Came by Boxcar," Saturday, Oct. 24.

The event will take the audience on "a journey through timber culture and heritage," according to the press release, that explores "the untold stories of one of Oregon's Black and multicultural logging communities."

In its heyday, between 1924 and 1933, Maxville, about 13 miles north of Wallowa, was the largest town in Wallowa County. Unlike most timber towns in the Pacific Northwest, it was home to African American loggers and white loggers who worked side by side felling timber.

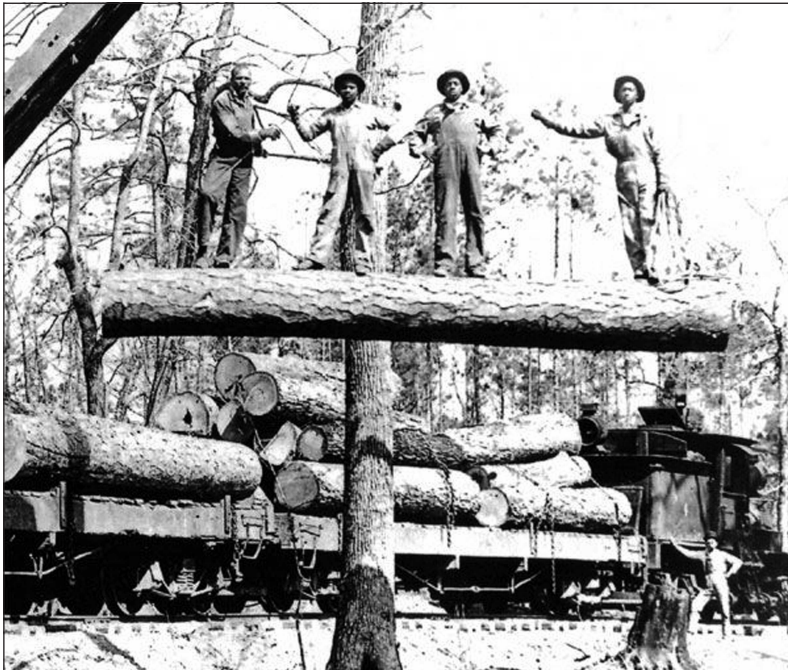
In the early 1920s, the loggers and their families came to Maxville from the South and the Midwest in search of work. The Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company, which owned

the town at that time, brought the Black workers and their families to Maxville even though Oregon's exclusion laws prohibited "free Negroes" from moving to the state to live and work.

Economic conditions, especially the Great Depression and consequent downturn in the lumber market, led to Maxville's decline. In 1933 the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company closed its operations, and Maxville eventually became a ghost town.

Decades later, the children and grandchildren of the original logging families began researching the history of the town and uncovering the stories of their ancestors. This effort led to the founding of the Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center.

To find out more about the center and the virtual event, go to [www.maxvilleheritage.org](http://www.maxvilleheritage.org) or the center's Facebook page.



Loggers pose for a photo near Maxville in Wallowa County (circa 1920-1933). The Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center in Joseph seeks to uncover and preserve the stories behind photos such as this.

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