## WAGONS

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The nostalgia of those early days came back in 1999 when a relative found wagon remnants on their property near the South Fork John Day River. With those parts, Gregg built his first doctor's buggy.

"I always wanted one, so I messed around and built a buggy and started riding in parades," he said, adding he won a blue ribbon once in Canyon City in the Whiskey Gulch Gang's '62 Days Pa-

Later, John Day resident Jim Jensen, an expert in antique wagons, saw Gregg's first carriage. Jensen and his wife, Mary, own Oxbow Trade Co. in Canyon City, a warehouse and museum with dozens of horse-drawn vehicles, which sells nationwide and across the globe.

"Jim saw it and said I ought to start making things for him," Gregg said. "Cecil (Gagnon) and Jim taught me just about everything I know about woodwork, and style and the quality."

Cecil Gagnon of John Day, now retired, was another wagon builder for Jensen, creating patterns from old wagons to make new ones. Gagnon specialized in sheep wagons, while Gregg mainly made meadowbrook carts and buckboard wag-

"We knew when Gary finished something, it was going to be good," Mary

"It would be done right," Jim added.

As the wagon sales have slowed over the past few years, Gregg is less involved in the production.

Jim Jensen, who's been in the business of antique horse-drawn vehicles for 57 years, said despite the downturn, there is enough work to keep him busy.

"The older folks seem to



Eagle photos/Angel Carpenter

Jim Jensen, left, and Gary Gregg look at a pony-sized two-seated bobsled at the Oxbow Trade Co.

### Visit the Oxbow Trade Co. for tours

Mary Jensen, has many varieties of horsedrawn vehicles for sale, as well as harnesses, other wagon parts, and handcrafted western items and small decor.

The warehouse/museum was built as an opera house in 1902, and in the '50s, the building was used as a dance hall.

When the Jensens are available, they offer

The Oxbow Trade Co., owned by Jim and tours at the Oxbow, located on Highway 395 on the south side of Canyon City.

Horse-drawn vehicles located at the Oxbow include: chuckwagons, carriages, buggies, surreys, coaches, carts, sleighs, bobsleds, even an antique ice cutter. The Jensens will next be available for tours at the Oxbow in April.

For more information, they may be reached at 541-575-2911.



A wagon sits outside the Oxbow Trade Co. in Canyon City.

have all the vehicles they horses due to age and health need, and they have fewer

problems," he said, adding

the younger generations aren't as interested in them.

"It's changing times," Mary said.

Gregg said some people, including the Amish on the East Coast, still use wagons for work, but overall requests have diminished.

"We make 'em if they want 'em, and we try to make them to their specifications," Gregg said.

His most recent project was a meadowbrook cart, finished for Ray and Shelly Gibbons of Baker City last year. It's the type of horsedrawn vehicle a couple might take to church or on a picnic, Gregg said, adding he used



Wagon wheels at the Oxbow Trade Co. in Canyon City.



Gary Gregg, left, chats with Jim and Mary Jensen at their Oxbow Trade Co. business in Canyon City.

mountain ash, a sturdy yet lightweight wood, to build it.

In a letter to Gregg, the couple said they hooked the meadowbrook up to their horse, and were looking forward to many enjoyable slow-paced miles.

"We will always appreciate your craftsmanship," the Gibbons said in the letter.

Gregg said he's enjoyed the work that goes into building horse-drawn vehicles, and said his wife of 60 years, LoLeita, has been supportive of the hobby.

To stay busy without wagons to work on, Gregg has found a new, more modern project: restoring an old jeep. Yet, the horse-powered carriages of yesteryear still rear up and command his atten-

As he and Jim Jensen looked over a pony-sized two-seated bobsled a few weeks ago at the Oxbow, the sled sitting amid row after row of various horse-drawn vehicles, Jensen noticed the dash needed to be reattached.

"We can bring that into my shop," Gregg said, "and we can fix it."

He said it wouldn't take more than an hour.

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