

Historical Museum Offers Many Items of Interest to Visitors



THE BRIDE'S room at the Columbia County Historical Society museum is a typical old fashioned parlor with its 100 year old rocking chairs and other furniture. Note the hardanger embroidery cover on which rests

the old album. The bride wears the wedding dress worn by Mrs. M. B. Steers Sr. in 1910, the veil worn by Mrs. Izelle Conlon in 1929 and orange blossoms worn by Victoria Parrott Perry, date unknown.

Museums are always attractions of prime interest as anyone who has traveled with children well knows, for they always seem to be able to spot a museum sign and never tire of stopping to see the treasures they hold.

Vernonia is very fortunate to have the Columbia County Historical Museum located here in the former mill office building, but it is probably safe to hazard a guess that a lot of local residents have not yet explored it to see the many things of interest it holds.

The building was given to the City of Vernonia by the International Paper company after all their mill operations were concluded here and their office closed. They specified that it was given to be used for some community project.

For a number of years, the Columbia County Historical Society had been looking for someplace within the county in which to establish a museum. The building was offered to them on a 99 year lease basis and they accepted.

The city did considerable work on the building to prepare it for the use of the society. Living quarters were built for the use of curators and caretakers, and some other repairs were made. The society did other work to get ready for placing in it the treasures that were being collected. Cases for safe display of valuable items were secured and finally the day came in 1963 when it was ready to be opened to the public. Open house was held at the time of the 1963 Friendship Jamboree.

In the year that has passed since then, many more items have been added and those who attended the open house find it interesting to see the changes made. Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Hislop, the curators, keep the building open to the public Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday and on holidays from 1 to 5 p.m. Holidays show good attendance. July 4 was a big day.

There is no admission charge, but a box is conveniently placed to receive contributions to defray cost of lights, heat and upkeep.

To enjoy a museum, one needs to go unhurriedly when there is unlimited time to browse and speculate about items seen. For older people, the articles on display stir memories. For younger people, they create amazement at the type of household items and appliances people of their grandparents day made use of. It should stir in them a deeper appreciation for all the things that are theirs in this day and age.

As one approaches the building, colorful flowers bloom in hanging baskets along the front porch and the baskets, once items for much less attractive use, are spittoons which once were used in the Columbia county court house. Others are on display inside.

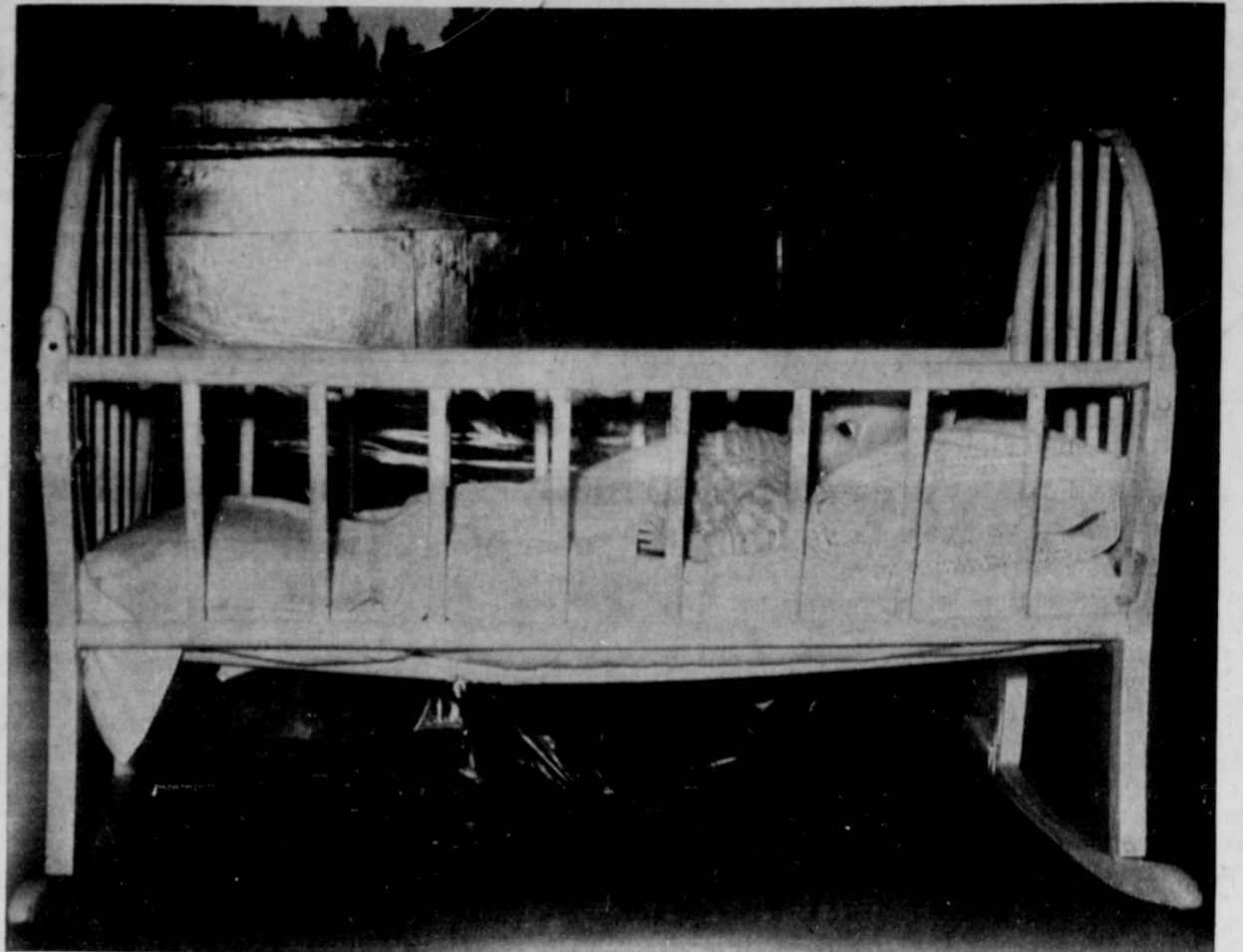
One of the most interesting parts of the museum is the bride's room which has been the project especially of Mrs. R. S. Lindsay. It is a typical old fashioned parlor with all

items in it authentic and old. The old parlor organ, the stands with the prized albums of yesteryear, the old wood rocking chairs with hand-made cushions and throws, the hand made rugs, everything speaks of an era that is past. The list on the door shows that items came from a number of county families and represent a lot of history.

High point of interest in the room is the pretty blond manikin dressed in the bridal gown worn February, 1910 by Mrs. M. B. Steers Sr., mother of Marion Steers. It is of net and lace over embroidered petticoats.

The lace wedding veil is of later vintage, and was worn by Izelle Dibbles Conlon in 1929. The orange blossom wreath which holds the veil was worn by Victoria Parrott Perry.

There is also a library where many old books, newspapers and records could keep one busy for hours. For instance, the books of the Nehalem Valley Creamery company of Mist are there. A perusal of the minutes book show that it was organized in 1908 and functioned until 1918. A list of 39 stockholders included the names of many well known Mist families. The minutes showed that D.



THE BABY of year 1880 usually enjoyed the luxury of a hand made cradle, one that mother could rock with her foot as she sewed, knitted or mended. This one was donated to the museum by Mrs. Rita Miller of Clatskanie who gave information that it is now over 80 years old.

W. Freeman was president of the company and A. R. Melis, secretary.

A book of stock certificates revealed that shares were \$5.00 each. A letter head proclaimed the company as "Cooperative Manufacturers of Fancy Creamery Butter".

An old scrapbook donated to the museum by Mrs. Albert Parker held a collection of colored picture cards such as were premiums with certain foods, and others that were attendance awards at school and church. Children of today are surrounded with such an abundance of colored pictures that they can't even imagine how they were treasured by children even 50 years ago.

Also on the shelves in that room are the first minutes of the board of Columbia County Commissioners, written August 26, 1854. The various communities of the county were listed, but Vernonia wasn't there. Why?

Well, there wasn't any Vernonia at that time.

Household items which were prized possessions of many housewives of years ago are cherry pitter, sausage press, apple peeler, cream skimmer, coffee grinders, butter bowl, paddle and molds, and, what could have been a household item, a small still.

For the farmer, there are the ox yokes, the grain cradles, and various tools.

Indian artifacts indicate that the Red Men roamed the forests of the county long before the white men came.

That electricity was not a utility in pioneer homes is evident from the various types of "sad" irons, heated on top of wood stoves, and the top of stove waffle iron.

A button hook reminds one of the days of high button shoes which now are seen only with Gay Nineties

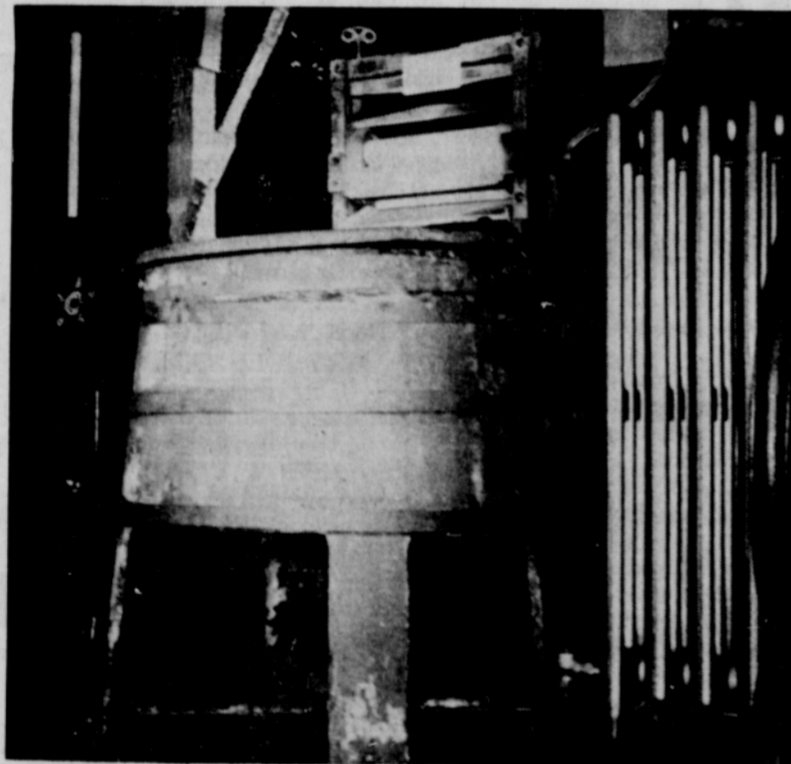
costumes.

Old lamps, an early day phonograph with cylindrical records, —the list is unlimited. One just has to browse and see for himself.

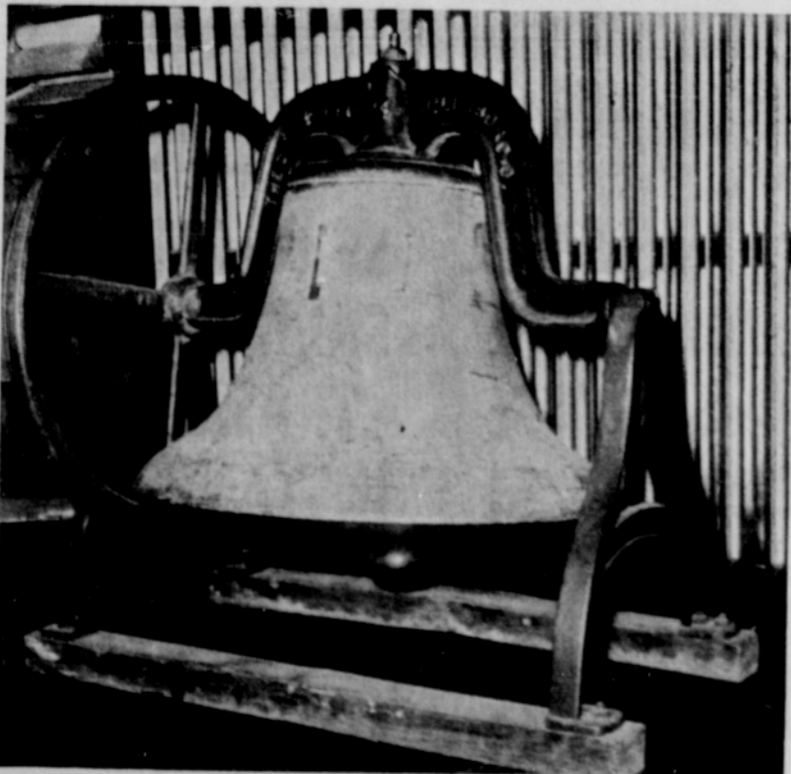
So — to those who haven't yet made that intended visit, take a day, spend lots of time, browse, look, speculate and dream. Then, add those items stuck away on shelves, in attics or cellars which will make the display that much more interesting to those who visit as years go by.

Phone HA 9-3462

**NEHALEM VALLEY
MOTOR FREIGHT**



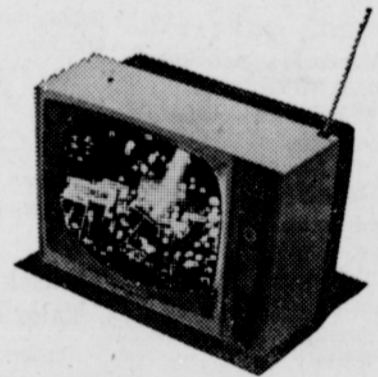
THE HOUSEWIFE of today, who has as a part of her standard household equipment an automatic washer and dryer, or who takes her laundry to the up to date laundromat, would feel abused indeed if she had to wash the family's clothes in a machine like this. The vintage of this one, which came from the Vern Dusenberry family, is not known, but it is one of the earliest. The wringer was donated by Mrs. Ralph Langdon of Scappoose.



THIS old bell, donated to the museum by the county court, had originally been the bell of the Methodist church in St. Helens when it stood on the hill back of what is now the J. C. Penney store. Instead of being on the building, it was on a frame on the ground. It was operated by ropes on the pulley-wheel at left of the bell. The story is that this bell was tolled when the only hanging in Columbia county took place.

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