

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Original Wasco County Courthouse Preservation Corporation to preserve the Original Wasco County Courthouse; to collect, exhibit and interpret items related to the governmental/legal history of Wasco County; to provide a venue for Presentations of local historical interest; and preserve and make available educational & research materials.

A Word From Your President...

Like everyone else here at the Original Courthouse Museum our president wears more than one hat. Therefore El Presidente and his lovely new bride were working on an archaeological dig for the past month in far off Germany. (The poor dears...) Having returned only days before we “went to press” it seemed unfair to expect him to shrug off the jet lag, catch up on everything yet alone compose a message about it all. So I’m sure you’ll all join me in giving him a hearty *welcome home* and a pass until the next issue.



Ships Passing (Us By...) In The Night.



For those of you who don’t know yet, the corporation that runs the American Empress has chosen to drop both The Original Courthouse and Fort Dalles from their Hop On Hop Off bus route for the foreseeable future. The abruptness of this decision on their part left us a little dazed and confused but this old gem has seen worse situations over the years and we are convinced that we will weather this adversity and come out on top. We will continue making changes and improvements to enhance our visitor experience and be better than ever when they realize the error of

their ways and pick us up again next season. One thing that this has made it difficult to ignore is our excessive dependence on out of town visitors to put “feet on the floor” at our little museum. Attendance numbers by locals and near locals are consistently low. You all know the story- nobody bothers with their own backyard when seeing the sights. But remember, ours is the oldest courthouse in Oregon... in fact, when it was built, it was the only courthouse between Independence, Missouri and the Willamette Valley! We are a valuable resource from adult history buffs to 4th graders studying Oregon history. But organizing these opportunities requires some serious “behind the scenes” coordination. So if you have ideas, connections and/or unexplored volunteer urges, get in touch and we’ll start something big!

And He Died Instantly... 11 Years Later...

Nathan Olney came west from Jefferson, Iowa on the Oregon Trail with the Barlow-Palmer wagon train in 1843 along with his parents and eleven brothers and sisters. Born in 1824, Nathan was already 19 when the family came west so he paid for his passage on the wagon train by handling the stock for another family and was ready to work once he got here at what would become The Dalles. By 1847 he had opened a trading post along Mill Creek (somewhere just west of our current Post Office...) and did a good business providing other emigrants who were re-supplying for the final push to the Willamette Valley.

Then the army post up on the heights got a new Commandant who changed its name from Camp Drum to Fort Drum, giving him the right to expand the land claimed by the army. This put Nathan's store on government land and he was forced to pull up stakes and move a little west to Chenoweth Creek where he started another trading post. The murder of several white settlers at the Whitman Mission near Walla Walla and the ensuing retaliation sparked the Cayuse War.

To augment the troops stationed at fort, Olney formed the Oregon Volunteers and headed it as Captain Nathan Olney. While protecting travelers on the road to the soon to be established Fort Simcoe north of the Columbia River his troops engaged in a skirmish with hostile



Captain Nathan Olney

natives and during the fighting Olney received an arrow to the head. Although the wound should have been fatal, the shaft and most of the arrowhead were removed and a feverish Captain Olney traveled for two days back to the army doctors at the fort in Dalles Landing. It was decided that it was too dangerous to attempt removing the tip of the arrowhead which was in the bone of his skull and so he was nursed back to health with the arrow point still in his head.

This seems to have done little to slow Nathan Olney down and he continued to run his store, established a ferry across the Deschutes River, then, with his older brother Cyrus, started a business trading northwest furs in Hawaii (of course this was after Nathan built the ship they used for their voyage...). Oh, and he found time to serve as a Probate Judge as well.

By 1862 he was a Deputy Sheriff under Charles White here in Dalles Landing and the following year when Sheriff White caught gold fever and "left for the diggings", Olney became the third Sheriff to serve in our courthouse building. The following year, in 1864, Olney tendered his resignation as he had been elected to serve as Marshall for the city of Dalles Landing.

After that he seemed to slow down a little, sold off all his holdings and moved to the Yakima Valley to settle, build a cabin start a cattle ranch. There time finally caught up with Nathan Olney and in 1866, while herding cattle, his horse stepped in a badger hole and threw him. When he hit the ground his head struck a rock in such a way that it forced that old arrowhead into his brain, killing him instantly.

Just A Reminder...

Remember... if you missed a February forum talk, want to see it again or share it with a friend, they are now available online. Just go to **YouTube.com**, enter **Original Courthouse History Forums** and click on the video you want to watch.

Also remember if this seems intimidating, like me, you probably know a 10 year old grandchild who can help you through the process...

Eric Gleason: *President,*
Vacant (your name here...): Vice President,
Rodger Nichols: *Secretary,*
Sheila Dooley: *Treasurer*
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with
Trish Neal: *Internet support,*
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Chris Bolton: *Newsletter Editor & Docent,*
Juanita Neitling: *Volunteer*

Our Esteemed Board of Directors & hangers on various and sundry



Elvis Has Left The Building...

By the time you are reading this The Original Wasco County Courthouse Museum will be closed for its general 2023 season. With the loss of our Cruise Ship visitors we went out with more of a whimper than a bang, but, undaunted, we held our heads high, stayed with our published hours and provided the same quality experience for the visitors that we had.

Even though we won't be open to the public until our famous History Forums in February (you know they're gonna be good...) Folks will be busy behind the scenes improving the safety and security of our property and working on new exhibits and stuff for an even better season next year. See you in February...

The Original Wasco County Courthouse is an Oregon Cultural Trust Partner. As a contributor to our organization you are eligible to participate in Oregon's Cultural Trust Tax Credit program. Donors who contribute to Oregon's cultural non-profits, including the Original Wasco County Courthouse, are eligible to make matching donations to The Oregon Cultural Trust and receive 100% tax credit for the Trust Donation (up to \$500 for individual, \$1000 for a couple filing jointly and \$2,500 for a Class-C Corporation).

Learn more at culturaltrust.org



Thank You For Your Support

HOURS AND ADMISSION FEES

Thursday, Friday and Saturday
MAY 4th through SEPTEMBER 30th

11:00am -3:00 pm

Extended hours for group visits

By previous appointment

Adults	\$4.00 each
Family Rate	\$8.00
Youth 12-18	\$3.00 each
Children 6-11	\$2.00 each
Children under 6	FREE
Adult Groups	\$3.00 each
Youth Groups 6-17	\$2.00 each

And as always, remember that if you are current on this year's Museum membership you always get in for free!

We need your e-mail address! No, we promise not to sell it to anyone. But once we have it, we can send you the newest newsletter *in full, postage free, color...* and with a few easy keystrokes you will be able to send it on to friends. Those of you without e-mail, please don't worry. We will continue to send the same information to you by snail mail. Remember our membership year runs from January 1st through December 31st each year. You can print this page separately, in black and white, and get yourself this snazzy membership application to fill out and mail in... And there is a second membership form just right for passing along to that friend you want to become a member too! Asking a friend to join with you helps us exceed last year's membership numbers, and filling in your e-mail address on your membership form is the easiest way to place yourself on the list to receive the full color newsletter, thereby saving yourself from a drab life in black and white...

Please take a minute and renew your membership and continue being a vital part of our historic preservation effort.



ORIGINAL COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION CORPORATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

2024

The Original Courthouse Preservation Corp. is a Federally designated 501(C)3 non-profit organization.

As such your donations & membership dues are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL
Please check appropriate box

Please mail this form and your check to:
Original Courthouse Preservation Corp.
PO Box 839 The Dalles, OR 97058

☐ \$15.00 Individual ☐ \$25.00 Family ☐ \$40.00 Sustaining ☐ \$100.00 Patron

☐ Additional donation _____ ☐ Donation in memory of: _____ ☐ in honor of: _____



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