



## 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...

My warmest regards to all of you during this holiday season, as we look forward to another new year at the Original Courthouse museum! The last year was another good one, which began with the February history forums, before going onto another season of being open for local, national, and international guests under the lead of Docent Extrodinair Chris! Meanwhile us volunteers kept the grass mowed and the weeds cut (mostly Sherry), put up a wayfinding sign (Linda, Chris, Jacqui, and Eric), broke and fixed the sprinklers (Eric), and put holiday lights in the windows (Karl)! Chris and Sheila worked with Optomist Printers to get a new directional sign made for the museum, and the Chamber of Commerce let us hang it on their post by the swimming pool parking lot exit, where it will have great visibility and will lead visitors to our door!

Karl has put together another great slate of new and interesting programs for February. I hope to see you all there!

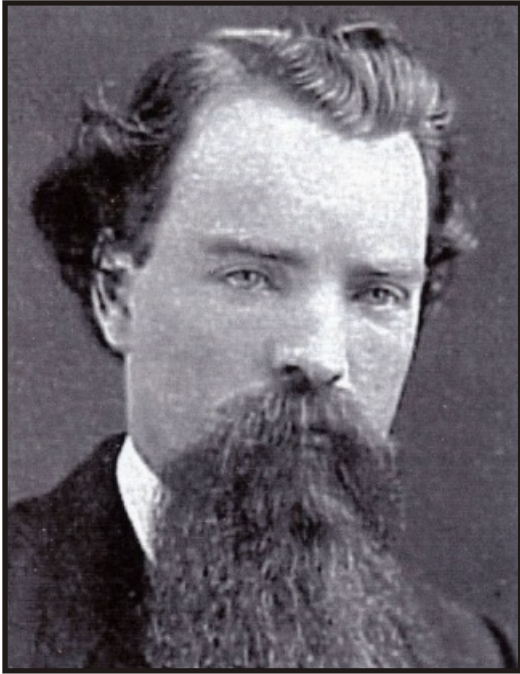
-Eric Gleason, President

## On The Road Again

Well, sure enough, its that time of year again. We are busy gearing up for yet another of our outstanding February Forum headlong dives into local and regional history. Once again our own Karl Vercouteren has found us four new topics to fill our Saturday afternoons. You'd think after all these years he would have exhausted the history well, but nope... kinda makes you wonder about the old saying that history repeats itself. You'll find a complete guide to all the events on page three. Please remember, like Antiques Roadshow or Prairie Home Companion, this year we are taking the History Forum out for a test drive. 'The final installment on February 22nd is about the Granada Theatre so we're having it there. In situ as it were. Also be sure and note that previous scheduling mean that this one event will start at 12:30 instead of 1:30. See you there!

# James Baxter Crossen Wasco County Sheriff 1876-1878, 1878-1880/1884-1886

*My brother Esau is an hairy man... Genesis 27:11*



James Crossen was born in 1838 in Ireland and immigrated to America with his family when he was 2 years old. Like many 20 something young men he abandoned a career in his father's furniture store to seek his fortunes in the gold fields of California in 1859. When that hadn't panned out after four years Crossen first crossed paths with The Dalles in early 1863 when he passed through on his way to try his luck in the gold strike in Placerville, Idaho. By the end of that same year he returned to The Dalles and settled down. Here he worked for the railroad, The Umatilla House and then local freighting until 1876 when he got himself elected on the democratic ticket to a two year term as Wasco County Sheriff. He was the 16<sup>th</sup> person to hold that position and the 8<sup>th</sup> since the establishment of the city's first courthouse. He was a popular sheriff and got himself re-elected to the office for another two year term in 1878. In 1880 James Crossen retired and was replaced by two term sheriff John T. Storrs.

Crossen fell back on the furniture business of his youth until 1884 when he successfully filled the office again as the 18<sup>th</sup> Wasco County Sheriff for another 2 year term. He passed away in 1918 in Malheur Co.

Sheriff Crossen apparently favored the spirit of the law over the letter of the law, which might explain his being seen in 1878 taking walks about town on the arm of suspected murderer Mary Leonard who was an 11 month resident of Sheriff Crossen's jail.

If nothing else, you have to admit the man knew how to sport a good crop of facial hair...



## It's A Sign...

Since we were unceremoniously dropped from the American Empress and its HOHO bus tour route we have been working hard to increase our visitorship from the independent tourist and curious local demographic.

We have something worth a visit and there are a good number of folks in search of something to do so all we gotta do is connect the two. To that end we have designed a nice, big, outdoor sign that will help us to strut our stuff. After a good deal of negotiating, re-working and telephone tag we have reached an agreement and a finished 4'x5' sign is awaiting installation. It will be hung on the existing "oxen yoke" sign

pole on 2nd Street, right next to Mill Creek at the west end of the Aquatic Park parking area. That puts it right around the corner from us and right along the pathway of any tourists just off the freeway in search of the Chamber of Commerce or a chance to gas up and see a few sights.







ORIGINAL WASCO COUNTY COURTHOUSE - 1859  
**REGIONAL HISTORY FORUM SERIES FOR 2025**

Programs begin at 1:30 p.m. in the upstairs courtroom of the 1859 courthouse,  
410 West 2nd Place, The Dalles  
behind the Chamber of Commerce / Visitors' Center

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**Saturday, February 1**

**Fire Lookouts: Personal Reflections, History, and Preservation**



*Barbara Telfer spent three summers staffing lookouts and Rick McClure was Heritage Program Manager for the two nearby national forests.*

Mountaintop observation stations—lookouts—were largely phased out by aerial observation. The program outlines the effort to preserve the stories and remaining examples of these iconic structures that represent early wildlands management.

**Saturday, February 8**

**The China Crew at the Seufert Brothers Cannery**

*Eric Gleason and Jacqueline Cheung are local archaeologists and historians.*

Skilled Chinese workers created a well-regarded high quality product for shipment around the country and across the globe during seasonal salmon runs. Records of the local Seufert Cannery shed light on these workers, their lives and labors.



**Saturday, February 15**

**Joseph Brown, Jewish Merchant: Buried Outside the Fence**



*Sandy Bisset and Georga Foster are local historians and genealogists.*

Joseph Brown was an area merchant during the early “wild west” days. An ill-fated trip from Walla Walla to The Dalles during the winter of 1862 led to his death. His Jewish faith resulted in burial outside the fence of Pioneer Cemetery.

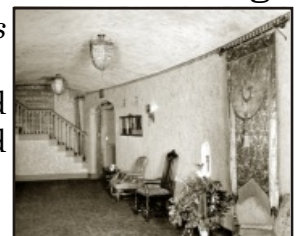
**Saturday, February 22**

**NOTE: PROGRAM STARTS AT 12:30, AT THE GRANADA**

**Historic Granada Theatre: The Entertainment Destination of the Gorge**

*Chuck and Debra Gomez, co-owners of the Granada, restore art deco theatres into performing arts venues.*

Learn about the history of the first theater west of the Mississippi designed for the “talkies”. Hear about current and future community functions and national acts, and enjoy a tour of the vintage venue.



**Admission is free for the February programs**

***Donations gladly accepted! – Downstairs monitor for those unable to climb stairs.***

## Our Esteemed Board of Directors & hangers on various and sundry



**Eric Gleason:** *President,*  
*vacant: Vice President,*  
**Rodger Nichols:** *Secretary,*  
**Sheila Dooley:** *Treasurer*  
*sitting Board members:*

**Sandy Bisset,**  
**Karl Vercouteren,**  
**Sherry Mumford,**  
**Carol Stace,**  
*and Linda Wilson*

*with*

**Trish Neal:** *Internet support,*  
**Duane Powell:** *Technical support,*  
**Chris Bolton:** *Newsletter Editor & Docent,*

**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](http://culturaltrust.org)



*Thank You For Your Support*

## HOURS AND ADMISSION FEES

Thursday, Friday and Saturday  
MAY 1st through SEPTEMBER 27th

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!

Please help sustain history in The Dalles by supporting the Original Wasco County Courthouse and our partner organizations.

*Original Wasco County Courthouse*  
*Fort Dalles Museum & Anderson Homestead*  
*Wasco County Historical Society*  
*The Rorick/Moody House*  
*The Wing Hong Hai Building*  
*St. Peter's Landmark*  
*The Neon Sign Museum*  
*The Veterans' Museum in City Hall*  
*The Granada Theater*  
*The Dalles Mural Society*  
*District 21 School Museum*  
*The Dalles Fire Museum*  
*Columbia Gorge Discovery Center & Museum*  
*Wasco County Pioneers*  
*The Dalles Civic Auditorium*

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

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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