

## THE BENTON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY - PART 4 -

On page three in the first Mid-Valley Genealogical Society History Book we find a news release that tells of the meeting held 9 October 1971, when the group became official. It reads, in part:

"A group of people interested in Genealogy, who have been meeting with members of the 'End of the Trail Researchers', some writers and publishers who have been issuing a quarterly bulletin of early Oregon statistics, have formed an organization, probably to be named the 'Mid-valley Genealogical Society' in order to plan programs, and help others interested in researching their family history."

The article goes on to say that Erma Brown of Salem, a Certified Genealogist, had been sending publications for their study, that the Library showed interest by bringing a book display to the meeting, and that attendees brought personal material. The program, the selection of officers, the intent of the group to cooperate with the County Historical Society, and Charter membership information were reported. The article ends with:

"It was voted to continue to hold the meetings in the Elizabeth Ritchie room of the Public Library, on the second Saturday of each month, with the workshop starting at 11 a.m. and the program at 2 p.m."

The meetings were held at the Corvallis Library for nearly ten years, through May 1981. The June meeting was held at the Meadow Park Mobile Estates Recreation Room. Except for November, which was cancelled because of flooding, meetings were held from September 1981 through February 1982 but there is no record of the place of meeting for those months, as no newspaper publicity was saved.

It was about this time the Library was experiencing growing pains, and needed the Ritchie Room space for library use. The March, 1982, meeting was held in the First Christian Church. We had the use of two rooms at most meetings, and our books, and refreshment equipment, which had been brought from the Library, were stored in a large cabinet built by member Vernon Stryker.

The meetings were advertised to start with a Workshop, at 11:00 am, on the featured States and Countries of the month, the business meeting at 1:00 pm and the Program at 2:00. Many months a Beginner's Class would be announced for 10:00 am, led, according to the publicity by Elizabeth Akin, though others assisted in this service.

The Society continued meeting at the Christian Church through September 1991, when negotiations with the Benton County Historical Society for library space in one room of the Annex, the former Parsonage for the Philomath United Methodist Church, and the use of the building on second Saturdays for regular meetings was completed.

The change of meeting place from the Church in Corvallis to the Historical Society Annex did not seem to detract from attendance, as it remained about the same as formerly. But in early 1994 the group was made aware that the number of people at the business meetings exceeded the number of persons allowed in the building by safety regulations. By May 1994 the group obtained the use of a room in the Philomath United Methodist Church for Business Meeting and Program at 1:00 and 2:00 pm. It soon became apparent that to switch the morning and afternoon activities would be advantageous, so that change was put into effect in January 1995.