

# Benton County

## Genealogical Society

### NEWSLETTER



Located in Philomath, Oregon

Founded in 1971 in Corvallis, Oregon

Volume 40 No.6: June 2022

<https://www.bcgs-oregon.org>

Hello fellow BCGS Members,

I am sorry we had to cancel our June meeting, I appreciate your support and for those who were able to attend the April and May meetings. A light turnout.

I've been advised by several members they did not yet feel comfortable in a group setting. With the latest increase in positive covid tests, I understand.

Have a safe and fun summer, you deserve it. Watch for updates later on resuming our meetings in September.

**George**

A sincere HURRAH to George for leading us through the muddy waters of COVID for two years. You kept us together as a group by informing members of ideas and asking for feedback. WELL DONE!

Can anyone believe this is June already? I know I can't. I hope you're planning to have fun this summer. I'm definitely going to work in the garden and be rewarded by lots of good vegetables and fruits to eat and freeze. I plan to work in some genealogy, too! Have a happy summer and look forward to a BRAND NEW YEAR of genealogy when we see each other again. P.S. last newsletter until September **Sue Van Laere, editor**

## HOW DID PEOPLE HAVE FUN DURING THE 1930'S?

Money had to stretch for most of our relatives in the Depression. Entertainment had to be simple and homemade. My mother's family must have been very clever with their money because they knew how to have fun on little. Many of the events they went to were potlucks with perhaps a dance, too.

My mother wrote about having fun with little cash.

...I can't ever remember having wieners at home, and lunchmeat was confined to the few times my folks went to a barn dance. My mother would actually buy bread from a store and grind up minced ham with pickles. She would make up loaves of bread into sandwiches, fill a large dishpan and cover it with a damp dishtowel (there was no such thing as plastic wrap or foil.) Along with this would go quart jars of homemade pickles and a cake. At the dance all the food would be put together and, sometime before the kids started falling asleep, everybody would stop dancing and eat.

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Even as a child I felt the competition in the air, especially with the ladies' homemade pickles and cakes. That store-bought was a great treat to us and desserts were scarce in our lives so we took advantage. Sometime in the early morning hours, parents would wake their kids and get them into the Model T and we'd head for home.

One time it had rained steadily all night, and we were probably seven to ten miles in the country on dirt roads. The ditches were level full with water and only a Model T could have ever got through that mire. Once all the ladies and men took their shoes and stockings off and helped push. It was sunrise that morning before we got to town, and everyone cleaned up and went to Mass.

**From my mother Marge Simmons Winkler's writings**

There were other popular ways to have fun with little or no money. My mom's family put on skits. In the photos below they're pretending to get married. From left to right, the groom is being "captured," the preacher is marrying the couple and in the last picture they're on the way to their honeymoon.



#1 Man in the middle is my grandfather Lafe Simmons. Lady on the left is an aunt.



#2 The bride? The preacher is an aunt, and the groom with the hat is my grandmother Helen Meyers.

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For the honeymoon Helen must have taken the part of the bride and the groom is one of the aunts.

## **PLAYING CARDS = HARVEST FESTIVAL = THE RADIO**

**Playing cards** was a popular way to have a fun evening (if you pick the right people to play with!)

“My folks played cards incessantly, once a week anyway. One lady had the temper of a shrew. Especially her husband caught it if she was his partner and he made a foolish play. She’d shout and her face would be beet red, looking as though she could have a stroke. That lady lived about 27 years longer than my placid little mother.”

**Church Harvest Festival** came in the fall.

“My Uncle Al ran the roulette wheel and, among the prizes, were colorful Indian blankets. Somewhere in my memory are Cupie dolls too. Another stand had bamboo fishing poles with the lines up and over a hanging sheet. There was a small bag tied to each one that held a little prize.

There were lots of other stands including one that my father always worked in, frying five-cent hamburgers. He’d take our three-burner kerosene cook stove (we used it in the summertime instead of our big old kitchen range) and would put on a big dinner in the church basement. All the food was donated. My mother usually made two or three pies, and then we’d all be mad because we couldn’t afford to go to the dinner and couldn’t have any pie either.”

### **The Radio**

Radio was popular in the 30’s and many families had one. It was a source of entertainment such as music and skits, information and political issues. My mom had this to say about my great-grandmother’s radio: “In [the living room] there was a buffet with a long radio and a large black horn on top. Everybody would sit glued to it, but all I can remember is a horrendous amount of static and a tinny-sounding, screeching soprano.”

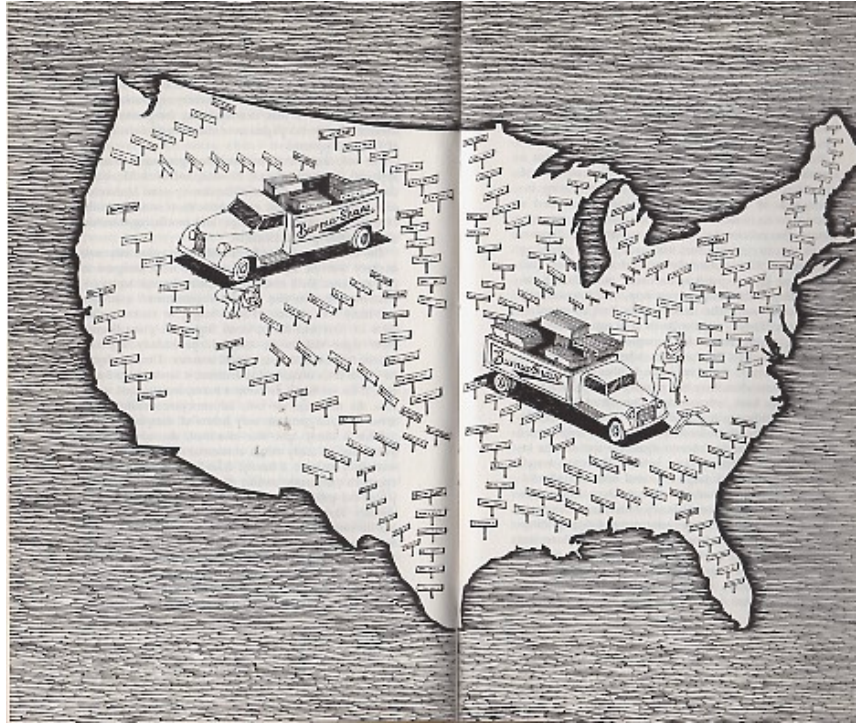
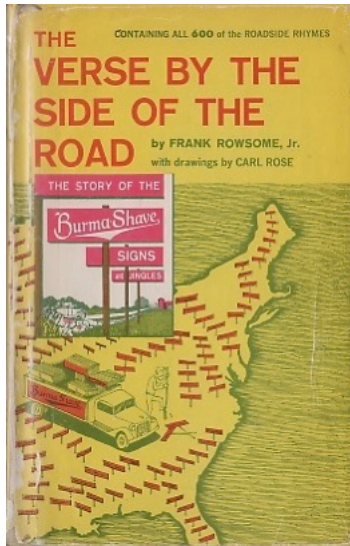
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I’m sure many families were just like my Meyer and Simmons families in Bancroft, Iowa. In the Depression, they were stuck where they were and they made do with what they had. A lesson to learn! **Shared by Sue Van Laere**

## THE STORY OF THE BURMA-SHAVE ROADSIDE SIGNS

Recently I found a small book telling all about those signs that some of us remember seeing on the highway. These advertisements were first used in the late 20's when the Depression began. Their short, clever rhymes were hits from 1927 to 1963. I remember seeing them when I was young.

The book also contains 600 of THE ROADSIDE RHYMES. I'll donate it to the library.

Shared by Sue Van Laere



### Below, a preview of some of the rhymes

1929

YOUR SHAVING  
BRUSH  
HAS HAD ITS DAY  
SO WHY NOT  
SHAVE THE MODERN  
WAY  
WITH  
BURMA-SHAVE

1930

HINKY DINKY  
PARLEY VOO  
CHEER UP FACE  
THE WAR  
IS THRU  
BURMA-SHAVE

1940

DON'T PASS CARS  
ON CURVE OR  
HILL  
IF THE COPS  
DON'T GET YOU  
MORTICIANS  
WILL  
BURMA-SHAVE

1941

IF MAN BITES  
DOGGIE  
THAT IS NEWS  
IF FACE  
SCARES DOGGIE  
BETTER USE  
BURMA-SHAVE

1952

WE'VE MADE  
GRANDPA  
LOOK SO TRIM  
THE LOCAL  
DRAFT BOARD'S  
AFTER  
HIM  
BURMA-SHAVE

1963

WE DON'T  
KNOW HOW  
TO SPLIT AN ATOM  
BUT AS TO  
WHISKERS  
LET US AT 'EM  
BURMA-SHAVE

PLEASE CONSIDER HOW YOU CAN HELP **BCGS** BY TAKING A LOOK AT THE OPEN POSITIONS BELOW.

**The Society needs your help**  
**MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!**

### List of open positions

#### Membership:

Greet people and collect names at the monthly meeting. Keep track of new members.

#### Historian:

Insert newsletter, obituaries, pictures, special events into the society notebook.

#### Library Chair(s):

Accession and de-accession materials, attend board meetings once a month, oversee projects, write a short article each month for the newsletter.

#### Society Photographer:

Take photos at events, especially of swearing-in of officers and speakers, send photos to newsletter editor and society historian.

#### Programs Committee (need two to three volunteers):

Select, arrange for, organize, and execute programs for general meetings.

**Contact President George at [bcsor@gmail.com](mailto:bcsor@gmail.com) and he will direct you to the right person for information about the position you're interested in. Thanks for doing your part!**

Benton County Genealogical Society

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#### Appointed Positions

Membership: OPEN

Librarian: OPEN

Programs: OPEN

Historian: OPEN

Photographer: OPEN

Audit: Connie Patterson

Refreshments: Pegge Gee

Host: Kathryn Moss

Research: Lois Courtney

Book Sales: Maridee Symons

Website: George Davidson

Facebook: OPEN

Publicity: Lois Courtney

Library Volunteers: Lois Courtney

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