

# Siuslaw Pioneer Museum

## How Did the Museum Begin?

I dug around in our wall of file cabinets in the Kyle Research Library and found the story!

In 1920, a gathering of old friends met at the home of Clara Haring, the first white woman on the North Fork and second white woman in the Siuslaw region, in honor of her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. A plan was made to perpetuate the memory of the Siuslaw region. The Siuslaw Pioneer Association was formed and Mrs. Clara Haring was elected president. Every year since then, a pioneer meeting and picnic has been held on a day dedicated to the memory of the Siuslaw Pioneers.

The Association's plans were to hold reunions of the early settlers of the Siuslaw valley. They encouraged residents of the Siuslaw valley to become associate members until residing here for 20 years when they would become active members.

They formed committees to place markers on graves of pioneers, identified pioneer orchards, and find a place to house pioneer relics. The Lutheran Church of Glenada (built in 1953) was chosen as the first location. Then a Lutheran Church was built in Florence, sold, and remodeled as a restaurant. That restaurant closed and was purchased by the Siuslaw Pioneer Association.

In 2005, Board President Del Phelps encouraged the board to raise funds to purchase the old Florence school house. They formed a consortium. When the sale was complete the group began to build display space inside in December 2005. They then moved everything from the old museum location. The museum opened to the public on February 1, 2006. A Legacy Fund was set up in 2007 to continue long term funding.

And the rest is history.....

Merilee Mulvey- Editor  
SPM Newsletter/Kyle Research Library



## Florence Historical Newspapers

The first Florence newspaper made its debut in mid-April, 1890. The WEST was established by the late Colonel B. F. Alley, who after his editorship of the paper in its first years was to become prominent in state affairs. The WEST was published until January 7, 1921, with the 37th issue of its 30<sup>th</sup> year.

Following the WEST, came the SIUSLAW REGION, which was published by A. K. Lulay. In 1923, Ralph Moore began publication of the FLORENCE NEWS and followed this in 1926 by launching the FLORENCE TIMES. Both papers were short lived. During the years immediately preceding World War I, Florence boasted 2 newspapers, one of them being the SIUSLAW PILOT with 2 issues per week.

The SIUSLAW OAR was established in Florence in June, 1928. The WEST, the REGION, the FLORENCE NEWS and FLORENCE TIMES, all four-page seven-column papers, were published in the old Bynd building (near the ferry landing) used as the papers' production plant.

The WEST was first printed on a **job press**. The OAR brought the typesetting machine to the plant later in 1941.

*Source: 4/16/1943; First Paper Started here 53 Years Ago. KRL archives newspapers history file.*

*See job press image on page2.*

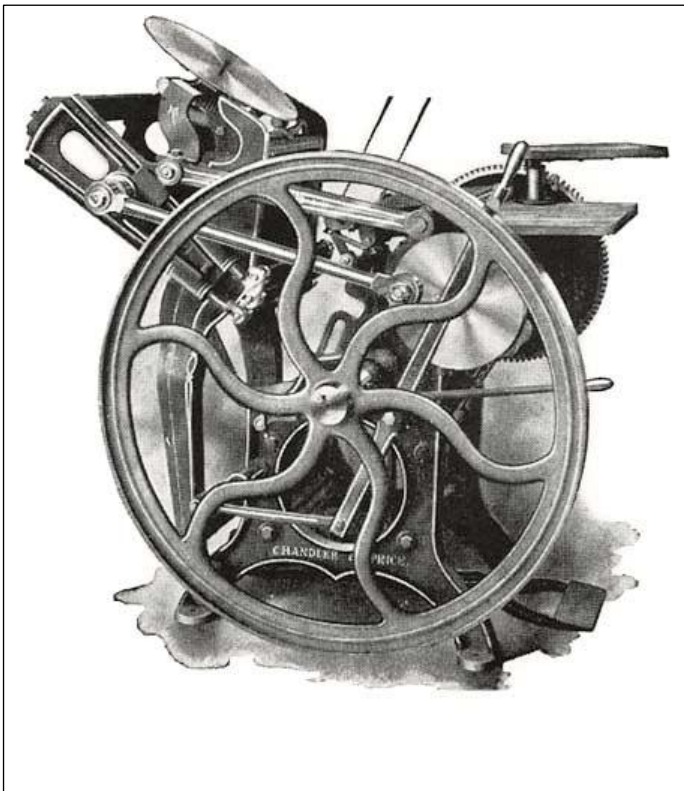


**Images of a Pill Counter from the museum**

Historical weighing devices for pills and medication in Oregon, particularly in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, centered on precision balance scales used by apothecaries and country doctors. These included sensitive balance scales with small weights for compounding, often housed in wood cases to protect from air currents.

19<sup>th</sup>-century pill machines, often available from wholesalers, were used to roll ingredients into a log and divide them into individual doses. Ingredients were often ground in a mortar and pestle, mixed with a binding agent, and then rolled on a pill machine, featuring grooves to create identical doses.

Traveling physicians in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest commonly used portable, boxed balances and leather-bound kits with specialized bottles to measure drugs carefully, ensuring accurate doses. Pharmacy stores often displayed large brass scales, which served both functional and commercial purposes, often displaying customer weight. Early Oregon doctors and pharmacists used these tools to ensure accurate dosages in a frontier environment, often preparing from raw materials in their offices.

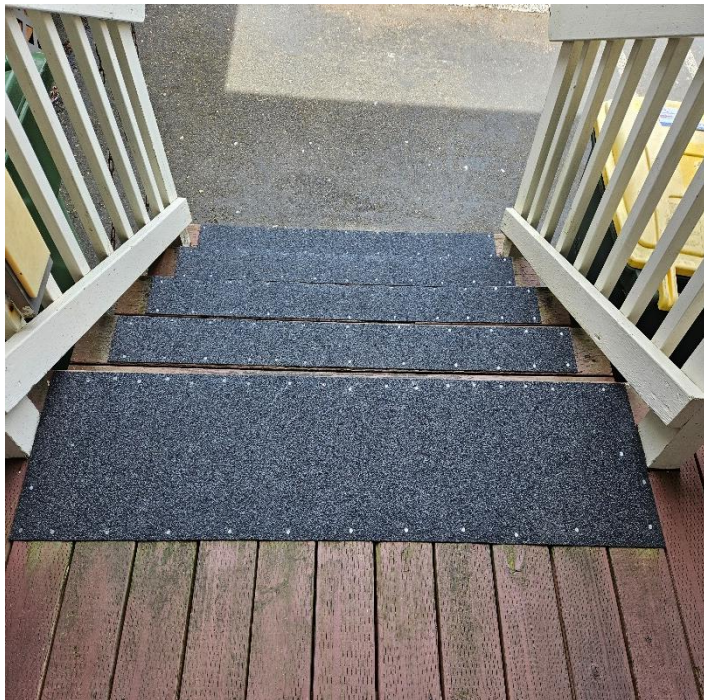


In 1890, newspaper and commercial printing relied on letterpress technology. "Job presses" handled everyday commercial needs, while flat-bed cylinders and rotary presses printed newspapers.

Platen presses like the Gordon Jobber started being manufactured around 1881. They featured a heavy cast-iron frame, a foot-treadle to power the flywheel, and an automated circular inking disc.

Country newspapers used smaller, portable Washington hand presses or mechanical flat-bed cylinder presses that could handle full broadsheets.

*Source: general drawing of a job press.*



## Building Maintenance Continues

Now that two of the sides of the museum have been completely repaired due to dry-rot damage, the SPM Board is beginning to assess other exterior needs for cleaning and repair.

Board Member, Mr. Garcia, replaced the damaged treads on the entrance to the Kyle Research Library.

Just like a typical home needs routine cleanup from weather impact, our museum complex has the same issues; coastal mildew buildup, dirt, windows needing cleaning, railing repair, etc. This is the time of year when the rain is abating and the sunny days make cleaning a bit easier!

## *Become a Volunteer DOCENT...!*

### **Docents Needed!**

Being a docent for the museum is an interesting and easy way to greet the visitors who enter the museum. You are welcoming them into a house filled with history where they can learn about Florence and its inhabitants! It's an easy job and you will have a fellow docent to be with during a typical 4-hour shift one day during the days the museum is open (12-4) Wednesday-Sunday.

After collecting the admission fee, our volunteers then give a brief overview of what the museum has to offer. Training is provided by our current experienced docents. Being a substitute is also needed. Sometimes a Docent is unable to do their shift, so having a list of substitutes that could be called is an important part of the process of keeping the doors open at the museum. If you are interested, leave a message with your contact information on our museum email account so we can contact you:

Library e-mail [library@siuslawpioneermuseum.com](mailto:library@siuslawpioneermuseum.com)

### **A Bit of Shipping History in Mapleton, Oregon... *The Siuslaw Pilot Newspaper Sept. 1914***

Mapleton has had for many years shipping facilities by way of steamers that stopped in this port, which in years gone by were only those of shallow draught, for up to ten years ago the mouth of the Siuslaw River was very shallow and of uncertain depth, but since the harbor improvement has been in operation there has attained such a permanent depth that vessels of quite heavy draught have no difficulty in making the entrance, so that now this city will have shipping facilities by water as well as by rail.

The **Willamette Pacific Railway**, which is now fast nearing completion to Mapleton, will give us the additional shipping facilities afforded by this rail connection with all the markets of the world, as it is confidently expected by those who are in a position to know, that this line –Willamette Pacific—will be the short line between Portland and all California points of the Southern Pacific, of which system this road is a part, as the management are building this road first class in every way, eliminating all excessive grades, putting in permanent concrete and steel structures over every stream, and laying very heavy steel rails in anticipation of heavy traffic to come on the line.

## Willamette Pacific Depot is Located at Mapleton

*The Siuslaw Pilot Sept 17, 1913*

The question of where the depot would be located at Mapleton has been settled. According to reliable information it will be established in that part known as Coast Land Company's Addition to Mapleton, at what is known as Railroad Ave, and Water Street...  
...The railroad company will grade and fill and otherwise improve the streets and property that it owns for depot purposes and with the coming of these things this beautiful spot at the head of tidewater on the Siuslaw then will soon be a model little city.

## New Line Open to Mapleton

*The Oregonian Nov 3, 1914*

The Southern Pacific announces the opening of the Willamette Pacific R. R. (Coos Bay Line) Eugen to Mapleton (58 miles from Eugene). Boat connects with train for Acme and Florence.

Train for Mapleton and intermediate points will leave Eugene as follows:

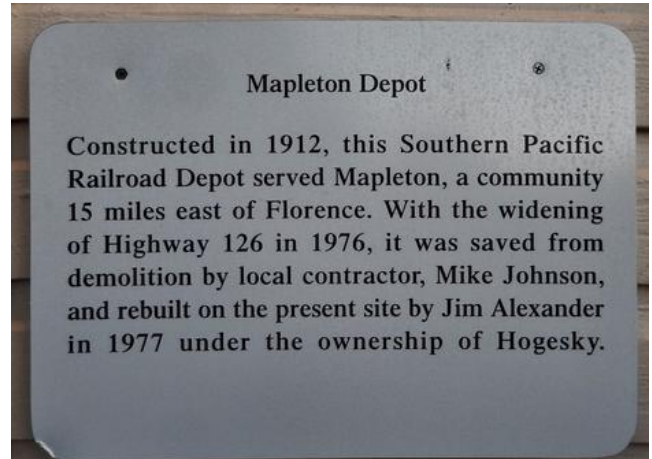
Leave Eugene daily.....8:00 a.m.  
Arrive Mapleton.....11:30 a.m.  
Leave Mapleton.....1:30 p.m.  
Arrive Eugene.....5:00 p.m.

Connections with train for Mapleton and intermediate points made at Eugene by Train No. 15, leaving Portland at 1:30 a.m. Standard sleeping car on this train Portland to Eugene (open for occupancy at 9:30 the evening before.)

## Mapleton Train Service Opens

*The Oregonian Oct 22, 1914*

Florence, OR. The first shipment of freight to be brought in over the new Willamette Pacific Railroad arrived at Mapleton Sunday. It consisted of a carload of cans for the Florence Canning Company, which were loaded on a barge and brought to Florence.



The historical marker above is located on the front entrance to what was originally the Mapleton Train Depot building. It is now the home of the Waterfront Depot Restaurant & Bar. This building is now located in the city of Florence at 1252 Bay Street in Old Town Florence.



*The Siuslaw News 3/31/1977, page 3-B*

## Train Depot Finds Home on Bay Street

The City of Florence does not have rail service but it does have a railroad depot. The Mapleton train depot, which was threatened by demolition last fall, is being reassembled in pieces on a Bay Street foundation.

According to Charlie Camp, area residents and the public relations department of Southern Pacific railroad, the Mapleton Depot was built in 1912 and 1913 for Joe Morris, a Mapleton dairyman and merchant.

## Upcoming Events

July – September 2026

July 13 Board Meeting at museum  
Aug 10 Board Meeting at museum  
Sep 14 Board Meeting at museum

Meetings held at Kyle Research Library 4:00 p.m.

**Keep abreast of happenings at the museum...**

**Visit us at:**

Library e-mail [library@siuslawpioneermuseum.com](mailto:library@siuslawpioneermuseum.com)

Newsletter e-mail: [siuslawpioneermuseum@gmail.com](mailto:siuslawpioneermuseum@gmail.com)

★ **website** [www.SiuslawPioneerMuseum.com](http://www.SiuslawPioneerMuseum.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/Siuslaw-Pioneer-Museum>

## Endowment Fund

An endowment fund in the Museum's name has been established with many financial gifts from our members. Donors who wish to contribute to this fund should make their contribution payable to:

*"Western Lane Community Foundation"*  
and specify  
*"Siuslaw Pioneer Museum Endowment"*  
on the check

Mail check to:  
Siuslaw Pioneer Museum  
P. O. Box 2637  
Florence, OR 97439

*Please keep in mind that checks specified to the endowment fund are to be used as specified by the endowment maker for special projects or the general endowment held by the foundation.*

### SPM MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION **Please Print**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Name of your business \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor, Patron, & Lifetime levels will have your business listed on the museum website

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ New mbr \_\_\_\_\_ Renewing mbr \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Check Payable to: Siuslaw Pioneer Museum Member year runs Jan 1 – Dec 31**

MAIL TO: Siuslaw Pioneer Museum, PO Box 2637, Florence OR 97439

#### MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

Individual	\$25.00	Business/Friend	\$50.00	Patron	\$175.00
Family	\$40.00	Sponsor	\$95.00	Lifetime	\$1,100.00

**If you wish to pay by credit card, you are welcome to go to our website membership section**

**Additional Gift amount for the SPM General Fund: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**



P.O. Box 2637

Florence OR 97439

Return Service Requested

MAILING LABEL

*Newsletter Printing contributed by the Florence Branch, Banner Bank*

## SIUSLAW PIONEER MUSEUM



The Siuslaw Pioneer Museum is located on the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Maple streets in Old Town Florence.

Our location address is:  
278 Maple Street

Our mailing address is:  
P.O. Box 2637  
Florence OR 97439

### Meet our Board of Directors and Trustees

President	Pam Mann	Trustees:		
Vice-President	Craig Sanders	Nicole Lewis	Pat Rongey	Daniel Lofy
Secretary	John Barnes	Annie Schmidt	Kyle Lewis	
Treasurer	Dorothy Hosking	Brian Alexander	Rafiel Garcia	

Board meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at the museum. These meetings are open to all members. Call ahead for space availability.