

AUMSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

The traditional image of the Oregon Trail is of oxen-drawn wagons crossing wind-blown plains, leaving ruts which can still be seen. The reality is that when the pioneers reached The Dalles on the Columbia River, there was no wagon road leading to the Willamette Valley. Native Americans and fur trappers used a pedestrian path, which could not accommodate wagons. Some early pioneers left their wagons at Fort Hall, further back on the trail. A few people were provided with water transport by Hudson's Bay Company. Others built rafts. Numerous people drowned and some families' personal belongings were swept away while going down the Columbia. Their livestock was driven over the narrow path .

When Samuel Barlow and his immigrant party arrived at The Dalles in 1845, many people were stranded there for lack of transport. He went in search of a possible wagon route south of Mt. Hood. His wagon train was joined in Tygh Valley by Joel Palmer's wagon group. The men started road work by cutting trees and burning them. It was a difficult task, but the pioneers eventually reached Oregon City. The rudimentary road was steep and twisting, but this Old Barlow Road was very helpful for later wagon trains. Now it is a scenic place to visit.

Two AHS members lost their husbands in June. Joanne Pond's husband James had been an electrical lineman. His job took him to a series of work places. Sometimes the family accompanied him and they were able to visit many historic sites. Char Bartosz's husband Vern was a mechanic for many years. Prior to that, he was an Aumsville policeman. AHS extends its sympathy to both families.

The newest AHS member is Linda Gardner of Molalla. She has visited the museum several times. AHS wishes to thank All About Computers for their generous assistance.

The museum is open from 11-2 on Saturdays throughout the summer, with extended hours on market days and during the Corn Festival. For more information about AHS and the museum, please contact Ted Shepard at 503-749-2744 or Karlene Santibanez at 503-749-2585.