

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

by Sue Corp

Changes are Coming! Each one of us recognizes the truth in those words, but, in the case of the SOU Retirees' Association, changes to our funding source will occur beginning in Fall 2011. At the October luncheon, Jeanne Stallman outlined how our funding source is changing.

SOU's Elderhostel program has generously supported the SOU Retirees Association by funding our luncheons and newsletters. This has allowed our Association to begin and continue to contribute to a scholarship fund with our luncheon contributions. As of Fall 2011, Elderhostel will no longer be able to underwrite the SOU Retirees' Association luncheons and newsletters. Our expenses per year are approximately the following:

Luncheon: \$700 per per luncheon, \$2100 per year
Newsletter: \$300 per newsletter, \$900 per year

As a result your council sought feedback at the fall luncheon through the use of a questionnaire. Briefly, some of the results are as follows: (34 responses)

Thirty-three supported a yearly membership fee of approximately \$20 per member. As one might expect, the suggested uses of this fee included funding the newsletter, partial funding of the luncheon, and distributing the remainder to the scholarship fund.

Twenty-five respondents suggested paid advertising to support the newsletter. Different delivery systems (e-mail, website) for the newsletter were also supported. A hard copy of the newsletter for those who prefer it was also supported, perhaps with a small fee. (One must also consider the logistics of such efforts, particularly in that only in bulk mailing do we see an appreciable reduction in postage costs.)

Nineteen respondents supported individual responsibility for luncheon expenses.

The Council will consider the results of the questionnaire as well as any additional thoughts which are gathered from Association members in order to make decisions for dealing with these budgetary challenges. Any suggestions or concerns which a member may have may be sent to any Council member can represent your thoughts to the Council.

You can now follow the Council's deliberations on line; minutes of their meetings will be posted on the web site.

(Any members desiring a copy of the results and/or a copy of the questionnaire may e-mail Sue Corp—sue_corp@yahoo.com). ▲

The Retirees Association's

WINTER LUNCHEON

Our speaker, Dr. Gary Miller, is the Director of the Office of International Programs (OIP) at Southern Oregon University. He is a professor of history and served as the chair of SOU's History Department for eight years. His academic specialty is the Spanish Empire, with publications focusing on colonial Mexico and Venezuela. The OIP is SOU's center for international outreach, offering connections for students, staff, faculty, and administrators to engage others worldwide. OIP offers study abroad programs for students (80-100 students a year), teaching abroad opportunities, recruitment and service to incoming international students, among countless additional opportunities. Prepare to broaden your international horizons, courtesy of Dr. Miller!

March 4, 2011

11:30 am – 1:30 pm

Rogue River Room

RSVP to Sally Klein by

Friday, February 24, 2011

Email (preferred): kleins@sou.edu

Or Telephone: 541-552-6049

SPRING LUNCHEON

You've certainly driven by the new Higher Education Center (HEC) in Medford, but do you know what's in there? Because our Spring Luncheon on May 20th will be held in this state-of-the-art facility, you'll have a chance to experience this successful integration between Southern Oregon University and Rogue Community College. SOU President Mary Cullinan is our scheduled speaker, and we're planning for a tour of the building following the on-site catered luncheon.

You are encouraged to think about car pooling to Medford as parking may be an issue. The Council is also looking into providing a shuttle service from a nearby parking facility. Stay tuned for more details at our March luncheon! ▲

Remembering Our Friends

Ray Tumbleson

by Bev Delazerda

I wonder how many people have seen the movie “Signal 30?” When I attended high school back in the ages, this movie was a main stay of driving education we were all required to take. Of course, the movie focuses on horrific accidents with trucks, cars, and always fires and mangled bodies!

Sometimes, I think this was a mistake. All I could see as a passenger in a car was this movie! I knew I would not be a good candidate to learn how to drive if all that was before my eyes were those horrific pictures. So I had to turn down my father’s generous offer to teach me to drive.

After a few years, as this picture began to subside, I felt I would be able to learn to drive. By this time I was in college and a friend of mine said he would teach me to drive. He had an automatic and we proceeded to go out for my lessons. I think he began to regret his offer but he was a trouper and stuck with the program through thick and thin and many close calls. Unfortunately, as luck would have it, he moved to Reno before I was able to take my driver’s test.

So, again, I was up the creek not having a car to obtain my driver’s license. One day, I was speaking with Ray Tumbleson regarding my dilemma. He informed me he had taught driver’s training during summers in California while he was working on his doctorate and he would be glad to teach me how to drive – even loan me his car to use for the driver’s test. This was heaven! After reviewing my driving ability, he taught me how to parallel park and then off to DMV we went. I was able to pass both the written and driver’s test that day! So with the help of Ray Tumbleson, I was able to get my driver’s license; that’s the kind of good friend Ray was to students. He has a special fond place in my OSU memories. ▲

Don Lewis

by Ernie Ettlich

One dark, blustery winter day in 1977, Don Lewis picked me up behind Churchill Hall for the drive to Portland and my orientation to the monthly meetings of the State Board of Higher Education. Within the first 75 miles I learned that the trip had another equally significant purpose: the assessing of every pie maker between Ashland and Portland! When Marie of Canyonville--then more than 90--decided to stop baking pies several years later, Don and I held a wake!

As Don and President Sours introduced me to the leadership of the eight state system schools, the chancellor’s office and the Board, I was impressed with the high esteem accorded this Dean of Administration from a small regional state college. Don was the most senior administrator having served for 30 years. Still the esteem came from more. Don exuded a quiet competence grounded in thorough knowledge interpreted with good sense and the highest integrity all wrapped up in a sense of humor. When Don spoke, even the university administrators listened!

Don was the consummate professional administrator, quiet, calm and inventive in the midst of crises yet with that sense of humor. Right after that first meeting, I was looking for the faculty files. With a glint in his eye, he escorted me to the private bathroom off the president’s office and there they were lodged neatly in the unused bathtub: “The president wanted them close by and thoroughly sanitized.” Sometime earlier, Rick Mattos, his long-time business manager, returned from a sabbatical in Europe to find his office empty of all but a board on two sawhorses—obviously the victim of recent budget cuts!

Don came to Southern in 1947 as a business instructor hired personally by President Stevenson during his first year. Almost immediately Stevenson drew him into the president’s inner circle who were to grow the college, not close it as Stevenson had been ordered. Don supervised the finance system and implemented Stevenson’s building program first with the Camp White temporary structures and then with the march of permanent buildings from the new library (Central Hall) through to the new theatre building. The campus he first saw had just three permanent buildings and a pond! The campus he left was much as it is today.

Don adopted the personal mantra, “community service is the rent you pay for living on earth.” He participated in conceiving, shaping, funding and building the original Rogue Valley Manor resulting in the Ashland RVM senior housing being named for him. He was active in preserving the Mt. Ashland Ski area, founding the Rogue Opera Association, serving in the Lions Club, and helping to develop Ashland’s water source system. He was an early member of the Ashland Junior Chamber, elected twice to the Ashland City Council and active in the Methodist church where he sang in the choir. Walking through town with Don gave the impression that everyone knew him and he every person by name.

Music was always central to Don. He loved singing and playing the harmonica. I never heard him play his tuba or trumpet—perhaps by his design! That love of music was passed on to his family for whom he was equally passionate. Martha was his beautiful wife—just ask him! They had six sons with whom he loved sharing music and more. He never tired of bragging about family.

Don retired in 1982 and since his death this past summer we are all left richer for his presence and life yet poorer now for his absence. ▲

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John McCollum

by Robert DeVoe

I first met John in the fall of 1964. I think the occasion of our getting acquainted was that Dean McGill had invited the two of us, as new faculty, to attend a luncheon of one of the local service clubs. In conversation we discovered that we had much in common: matching families, similar graduate school experiences, church affiliations and political sympathies, among other things. We began socializing, found that our families meshed well and soon established a close and continuing friendship.

One of the characteristic parts of that friendship was going on family camping trips together. In combination we made a fairly imposing gang: John and Helen with their five kids, I and my wife Donna with our four. Camping was the recreation of choice for the obvious reason that it was relatively affordable. John and I were both hustlers in those years because raising good-sized families was not something you could easily do on an academic salary. John was very good at getting funding for special projects and travel, and more than once he found a way to cut me in for a bit of editing or illustrating work. He was a generous and caring friend, as well as a highly accomplished professional educator, but my most treasured memories are of John as a camp breakfast cook.

One late summer we were camping in the Eagle Cap Wilderness on the Lostine River. Vivid in my mind is a picture of John huddled in his camp coat, collar turned up against the mountain morning cold. He is sitting on a bit of downed timber, hunched over a newly lit fire in the ring of rocks that serve as a fire pit. He is intent on the fire, feeding it twigs and small branches to build up that perfect layer of glowing material that makes a good cook fire. His face is softened by two or three days growth of stubble and by the pleasure he takes in what he is working at. Soon he will lay the blackened and scarred griddle over the coals and fill it with bacon strips. The meat will begin to curl and sizzle, the air will begin to carry and spread that unique aroma; children will begin to stir in their sleeping bags. When the bacon has crisped, John will break eggs into the pool of hot grease on the griddle. As things finish cooking they are scooped into a pie tin nestled close enough to the fire to keep them warm, but it is not long before the breakfast rush begins. First a couple of sleepy-eyed teenage boys straggle out and stand, hands in pockets, staring into the fire, trying to suppress the urge to grin at John's bantering greeting. Then a pair of small pajama clad girls wrapped together in a blanket slide onto the log next to "Papa John" who is now dishing up plates to order. A large bowl of pancake batter is placed beside him by one of his distaff assistants, and the next phase of the miracle begins. And so the scene plays out until everyone is full and happy. I saw and played and worked with John in many contexts, but I never saw him more content or fulfilled, than when he was being the camp breakfast cook. ▲

MESSING ABOUT WITH BOATS

by Rodney A. Badger

In my farewell speech to the SOU faculty in 1999, I declared my intention to restore old wooden canoes and boats and spend more time on the water paddling, rowing, or sailing them. A decade has slipped by astonishingly swiftly while other projects occupied my attention: running several canoe and raft trips down remote wilderness rivers, remodeling a house, living a couple months every year in France, immigrating and moving to Canada, and learning to live on a small island in British Columbia. I finished my first boat restoration in August.

Last spring I joined the Cowichan Bay Wooden Boat Society where I have access to a well-equipped shop and the generous advice of a professional shipwright and a dozen volunteers with vast experience in restoring their own boats as well as those donated to the Society's collection. Like most boat owners, they spend more time puttering with and talking about their boats than actually sailing or rowing them somewhere. I enjoy their company and admire their commitment to maintaining the legacy of wooden watercraft.

In late March I hauled a 9-foot dinghy to the shop for restoration. She was traditionally "clinker-built" of overlapping red cedar stakes (shaped planks) on oak ribs with mahogany transom, gunwales, and rub rails, all held together with copper rivets. She is a little broad in the beam, as are many of us these days, but she has a sweet sheer line sweeping forward to a full bow from a shapely transom. We should all hope for such graceful, winsome features as we age.

Years of hard use, weathering, and a boisterous family of otters had left their marks. Both outwales and one rub rail were broken. Her transom was cracked in three places. Spilled fuel, the smelly remains of the otters' fishy meals, and bits of rusty iron had stained the cedar floorboards. She was faded, tainted, and bruised, not a pretty sight. She needed a thorough cleaning, some structural repairs, and a complete refinishing.

While I have repaired a couple wood and canvas canoes, I had had no experience with lapstrake boats, so this project was a major learning experience for me. On my first day at the shop I told Eric, the resident shipwright, that I had set aside ten days to do the complete restoration. He looked at me as if I were a naive fool with no clue about the time, skill, and work the project would require. He was right, of course. The project required four months.

I had to accept on faith Eric's directions to saw or chisel away damaged parts of the boat without any certainty that my skills would be adequate for replacing them, but he or one of the volunteers provided instruction and help when needed. I learned an ancient, colorful, and salty vocabulary to describe the anatomical features of the boat. I learned to mill clear straight oak into ten-foot-long D-shaped strips, steam them until they were as pliable as boiled noodles, then bend and clamp them

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into shape, using the boat itself as a form. The new rails were then riveted onto the boat with square copper nails and dish-shaped copper roves, a fastening method that is centuries old.

For a couple of weeks I scraped and sanded off old paint and filled in voids and cracks in the hull and transom with various epoxies, fillers, and caulking agents. From a bit of brass I made a replacement for a rusty iron strap. All the seats and interior “bright work” were varnished, sanded, and varnished again. And again. The interior of the boat, the mahogany transom, and the new oak gunwales and rub rails were treated with tung oil, then the outer top strakes were painted a dark forest green.

For another two weeks I was in a seemingly endless cycle of applying a

layer of primer or white topcoat paint to the hull, letting it dry, and then sanding most of it off. Eventually I decided that, since I could not improve the quality of my work and get as smooth a finish as I would like, I would instead lower my standards and move on. Besides, she ain’t going to be no fancy frou-frou boat with an unblemished finish that is trailered fastidiously from one antique boat show to another without ever touching water! No, she will be a comfortable working boat with a well-earned patina in which I will fish, set crab traps, or row meditatively on a calm evening with a can of beer balanced between my knees.

Finally, with the boat’s first-ever name, *Arduinna Too*, painted on her transom, she was finished, and I hauled her home. We launched her recently, rowed out a

hundred yards from the house and set the crab trap. We caught five “keepers” on the first try!

In Kenneth Grahame’s *Wind in the Willows* it is Ratty, not the curmudgeonly Mr. Badger, who tells Mole, the newbie to life on The River, “...there is nothing—absolutely nothing—half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats... In or out of ‘em, it doesn’t matter. Nothing seems really to matter, that’s the charm of it.”

However, this Badger, who has left the academic wilderness of Ashland for a new life on the shores of the Salish Sea, has adopted Ratty’s philosophy as his own. He expects to mess about with boats, on the water or out of the water, for as long he is able to hoist oar, paddle, or paintbrush. ▲