

Lee Mission Cemetery Newsletter

July 2020



From the President

In these past few months there have been many challenges that we all have been facing and we are doing our best to keep the cemetery looking good but have struggled in doing so at times. For this I apologize and I will work at trying to get it looking better.

I am thankful for the volunteers who came out to put flags on the headstones for Memorial Day, which makes the cemetery look so nice. Some of our volunteer groups who come out through the year were not able to this year due to restrictions but we look forward to having them back at the cemetery.

I thank you for your support and interest in the cemetery and we will continue to do our best for it.

--Tom Bowers, Board President

Cemetery Rules and Regulations:

When a grave site is purchased, a deed is sent to the purchaser with a copy of the rules and regulations. These maintenance rules are also posted in the Cemetery. We ask that you not leave food items, glass containers, or items that may provide a hazard on the graves. The cemetery does not have garbage service. Any resulting garbage has to be removed by volunteers and disposed of. When you are replacing flowers please bring a garbage bag with you and take the resulting garbage home to your personal garbage receptacle for pickup.

Anyone wishing a full copy of the rules and regulations can contact the cemetery and a copy will be provided. The section pertaining to maintenance is provided below:

Maintenance Rules and Regulations:

1. Artificial flowers and decorations may be used only from October through March. During the months of April through September only fresh flowers may be placed on the graves. The cemetery association maintains the right to remove any article, planting or keepsake which is not consistent with the historical, natural and maintenance needs of the cemetery.
2. No plantings or shrubs will be allowed without written approval of the Board of Directors of the Cemetery. No fencing or other structures are allowed on graves.
3. Cemetery personnel are empowered to remove, at their discretion, any plantings found on any grave or lot. Any trees or shrubs not authorized or posing a threat to the surrounding graves or markers may be removed by the Cemetery Association.
4. The Cemetery is open for the public's use. From time to time the gates may remain locked due to weather related damage to trees and roadways. It is the intention to allow access as much as possible.
5. All persons using the cemetery are expected to remove any trash or remains from any plastic or artificial decorations which have been placed as a part of their visit.

WANTED: Articles regarding your descendants that are buried in Lee Mission Cemetery. Each article should be about one family and no longer than 500 words. The board reserves the right to shorten your article to fit the space available in the newsletter that is published twice a year (Jan and July). We would prefer that the article is typed; however, all article will be accepted. Deadlines for articles are June 15 and December 15. Submit articles to Lee Mission Cemetery, PO Box 2011, Salem, OR 97308-2011.

Donations

Lee Mission Cemetery is a 501(c)13 not-for-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible. 100% of donations made to the Cemetery go toward improvement and maintenance. Officers and board members volunteer their time and receive no compensation.

Lee Mission Cemetery, P O Box 2011,
Salem, OR 97308

Lee Mission Cemetery is licensed through the
Oregon State Mortuary Board
Phone: 971-673-1500

Board of Directors

Tom Bowers, President
Sherrill Hochspeier, Secretary-Treasurer
Phyllis Gillis
Margaret Stephens
Sean O'Hara
Julie Staten
Michael Staten

Contact Information:

Lee Mission Cemetery: 503-851-1803
Lot Sales (Rick): 503-559-2242

Web Site: www.leemissioncemetery.com

Send comments, additions and corrections regarding
website or newsletter to
s.a.hochspeier@comcast.net

Events Leading to the Establishment of Salem's Oldest Cemetery Are Linked to the History of the Methodist Church in Oregon

In 1834 Jason Lee was sent west by the Mission Board to establish a mission to the Indians in Oregon Territory with four helpers: his nephew Daniel Lee, Cyrus Shepard, Philip L. Edwards and Courtney M. Walker. Joining a party of adventures and trappers led by Captain Nathaniel Wyeth, the group left Independence, Missouri, late in April of 1834.

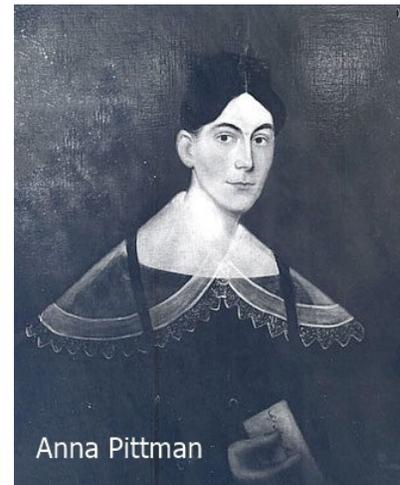
Upon their arrival on the "Walamet," they chose a site near the present-day Wheatland Ferry landing, on the east side of the river, and proceeded to construct a 32' x 18' mission building. The sashes for the four windows of this first 'home' were made by Jason Lee with his jackknife. Even before the Mission House was completed, the first Indian children were received and active missionary work was begun.

In 1837, in response to the urgent pleas of Jason Lee for funds and reinforcements, the Board of Missions dispatched the "First Reinforcement" to aid the Methodist Mission in Oregon. This reinforcement included: Mr. Elijah White, wife, infant son and an adopted son, George, 14; William Holden Willson, a carpenter, who had formerly been a cooper on a whaling ship and later made furniture for the Methodist Mission houses. The three unmarried women were Misses Anna Maria Pittman; Susan Downing, the fiancée of Cyrus Shepard; and Elvira Johnson, who married the Rev. Henry Kirk White Perkins at the end of her first year in Oregon.

On July 16, 1837, two months after their arrival, in a beautiful fir grove east of the Mission House, Anna Maria and Jason Lee were joined in marriage, as were Cyrus Shepard and Susan Downing. (Both marriages were short-lived as the bride from one and the groom from the other were deceased within the year.)

By this time, several log cabins, a hospital building and a schoolroom - all of logs - had been added to the Mission compound. Although the first reinforcements were valued, they were much too meager for the work which needed to be completed. Because of this, Jason Lee returned to the East in the year 1838 to recruit more aid.

Sadly, shortly after his departure, Anna Maria Pittman Lee, the first white woman to see the Willamette Falls became the first white woman to be buried in Oregon soil. Following the difficult birth of a son in June of 1838, she and the baby died and were buried in a single grave at the Methodist Mission. The mission carpenter provided a home-made casket. Rev. David Leslie preached the funeral sermon and Mrs. Lee was laid to rest, with her little son clasped in her arms.



Meanwhile, a scout sent by Dr. John McLoughlin from Ft. Vancouver caught Lee at St. Louis, Missouri, and notified him of his great loss. Lee continued on to the east to complete his mission.

What is now known as the "Great Reinforcement" of the Methodist Mission – with a total of fifty-two individuals – arrived in the Oregon country in 1840, escorted by Jason Lee and his new wife, Lucy Thompson.

Because of the swampy, unhealthy conditions at the Mission on the Willamette, it was decided to relocate the Mission and the proposed Indian Manual Training School to a site at what is now 960 Broadway in downtown Salem. Here a creek with adequate water to run the lumber and grist mills was available. At this location in 1941, Jason and Lucy Lee moved into one of four apartments in the first frame building in Salem, with the Judsons, Parrishes and Raymonds as neighbors.

Lucy Thompson died March 20, 1842, a little over two years after her marriage to Jason Lee. Her illness was

brief. She died in the arms of her husband, leaving to his care an infant daughter, then but three weeks old, whom he named Lucy Anna Marie, after both wives. She was buried at the site of the current cemetery on D Street in NE Salem, and within a short period of time, Anna Marie Pittman Lee and her infant son were moved to the new location. Although the date on the iron gate at the entrance to the cemetery is noted as 1838, the date of Anna Marie's death, the first known burial at this site was that of Lucy Thompson in 1842.

In the ensuing years, the hardships and differing philosophies of the various missionaries created tensions with the laymen and unfavorable reports produced the recall of Lee as head of the Oregon Mission. Lee's last years on this earth were filled with tragedy. He lost his superintendency of the mission in 1844. In the eyes of the church he failed his mission because they felt he had focused on the physical care of the native population instead of their spiritual well being. He returned to Stanstead, Canada in poor health, and died there shortly before his 42nd birthday in 1845. It wasn't until 1906 that he was re-interred in the Lee Mission Cemetery in Salem beside his two wives, baby son, and daughter.

The burials of Anna Maria and Lucy were followed in later years by other early missionaries and pioneers: Alanson Beers, Gustavus Hines, Alvan F. Waller and Josiah L. Parrish.

Alanson Beers, who was instrumental in founding the Provisional Government, at Champoeg, Oregon in 1843;

Gustavus Hines, who delivered the Independence Day address at Champoeg, July 4, 1843, and presided the next day at the meeting to adopt laws for the government of the Colony. His person was large, his voice had great force and compassion, his appearance was commanding and majestic;

Alvin F. Waller, who built the first Protestant church west of the Rocky Mountains in Oregon City, built the first church in Salem, erected the first brick building on the campus of Willamette University, and was one of the founders of the Pacific Christian Advocate in 1855;



Josiah L. Parrish, a blacksmith as well as a missionary to the Indians, who became the first Methodist preacher to be ordained in Oregon, and was Oregon's first breeder of purebred sheep and an original trustee of the Oregon Institute, (forerunner of Willamette University). Parrish Middle School, his namesake, is located on what was once part of his donation land claim. His wife, Elizabeth Winn Parrish, who is buried by his side, founded an orphan's home in what is now one of the buildings located on the grounds of the Oregon State Hospital in Salem and donated 4.77 acres from her half of the original donation land claim to make up the original part of Lee Mission cemetery, deed January 7, 1869.

The cemetery was then incorporated by the state of Oregon June 27, 1869, the incorporators being Charles Croft, Rev. I.D. Driver and Rev. J. L. Parrish. An additional 6.5 acres were deeded August 29, 1887, to the cemetery from the Board of Directors of the Oregon State Insane Asylum for \$50.00. Three years later, on November 24, 1890, and additional 4.40 acres were deeded to the cemetery from Lavina Patty, widow of Rev. W. R. Patty.

After the cemetery was well established, the bodies of many early missionaries and pioneers were exhumed from the cemetery on "French Prairie" and from the one on Mill Creek, near the site of the Jason Lee Home, and re-interred in Lee Mission Cemetery.

[This information is excerpted from the Foreword published in the Lee Mission Cemetery Book, 1842-1996 compiled by Stephenie Flora and Sherrill Hochspeier]

LEE MISSION CEMETERY DONATIONS
January 2020 - June 2020
Thank you to our donors!

Friend \$1-\$49

- Mary J. Brock – *In memory of Margaret Hadley Irvine*
- Leona C. Fuller
- Lura Dymond – *In memory of Thomas Allan Gregory*
- Peter & Norma Gekakis
- Karen Ro Heuberger - *In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Roe Betterton*

Supporter \$50-\$99

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- David R. Shaw
- George L. Knox
- Kim Blanding
- Wanda E. Blanding – *In memory of Lt. Robert P. Blanding*
- Andrea & David Turner – *In memory of George Wesley & Mary Margaret Turner*

Sponsor \$100-\$249

- Paul V. LaRue – *In memory of Jason Lee, UMC*
- Thomas & Patricia Glass
- Kathryn A. Karr – *In memory of Bert & Ada Karr*
- Wilbur & Lela Jackson
- Kathleen Bowers
- Albert & Virginia Furtwangler

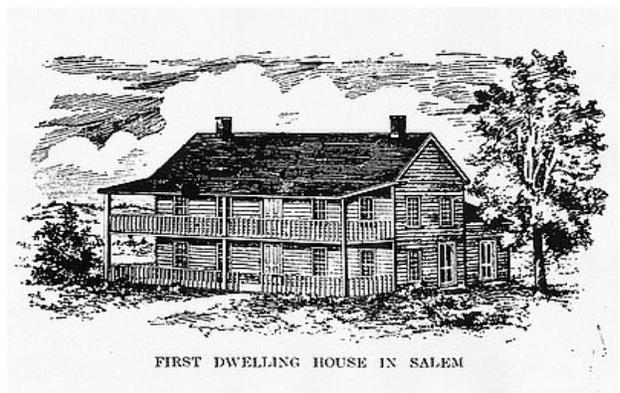
Preservation \$250-\$499

- Patricia H. Clark
- Cora Hallauer – *In memory of Robert “Fred” Hallauer*
- Sharon Karr – *In memory of Bert & Ada Karr*
- Jean W. Hand – *In memory of Richard Gillis & Phil Hanni*
- Phyllis L. Gillis – *In memory of Richard M. Gillis*



This engraving, published in a state history in 1912, depicts the house built by the Rev. Jason Lee at the present site of Salem in 1841.

From:
The Oregon History Project
<https://oregonhistoryproject.org>





*Lee Mission Cemetery
PO Box 2011
Salem, OR 97308*