

1 **Telling Our Story: Honoring the Past**
2 **The History of the Forest Grove City Library**

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4 *Volume 1: The Early Years.* Interview with Megan Havens, local historian.
5 Interview with Ruth Loomis, longtime resident of Forest Grove.
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9 Interviewer: Linda Stiles Taylor (LT)
10 Interviewee: Megan Havens (MH)
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12
13 LT: ...as well as a journalist, educator, and several other community roles...and today we'll
14 be talking about the early history of the library.
15

16 MH: [picture of Alvin T. Smith house] Okay, in this picture we have a shot, a photograph we
17 don't know exactly when it was taken, of, um, Abigail and Alvin T. Smith's log cabin that they
18 lived in. It was at the end of what is now Elm Street on a high rise of ground overlooking the
19 wetlands of the Tualatin River. They were the earliest European settlers in this area, that became
20 Forest Grove. Alvin Smith was a missionary; he came with Harvey Clark and Harvey Clark's
21 wife to preach to the Native Americans of the Oregon Territory. And that's important because
22 this town was settled by missionaries and that has left its mark on the character of the town all
23 the way up to the year 2000. Forest Grove remains a town that is educated, thoughtful and
24 committed to doing good, trying to make the world a better place.
25

26 MH: [video of MH] Alright...the City of Forest Grove wasn't called the City of Forest Grove
27 until fairly late in its history. Early on, it was called "West Tualatin Plains." And during the time
28 period when it was known as the West Tualatin Plains it was being settled by a number of
29 missionary families. And the names of some of those missionaries were: Alcana and Mary
30 Walker; Harvey Clark and his wife, whose name I can't remember at the moment, and A.T.
31 Smith and his wife Abigail; the Hinmans, Alanson Hinman and... he had two wives, and I can't
32 remember either of their names either (chuckles). They were by-and-large associated with the
33 Whitman Mission and the event that probably had the most importance for the long term history
34 of Forest Grove was the Whitman Massacre. Because this whole group of missionaries had all
35 been up at various mission stations throughout the Cascade Mountains, out into eastern
36 Washington State. And after the Whitmans were massacred in the great...misunderstanding of
37 the time period, all of these missionaries left their mission stations and had to literally come
38 down from the mountains and enter into the real life of making a living in what was pioneer
39 Oregon. And for many of them this was...um, to put it mildly, a shock (laughs). They'd been
40 on a quest, they'd had this romantic vision of what they were doing in this part of the world, and
41 that was Christianizing it, turning it into a better, less heathen place. And that was their life goal,
42 that was what they really wanted to do. And when they were forced to leave the mission stations,
43 they fumbled around for a number of years trying to figure out what they could do to give their
44 life meaning. And because they were all grieving and upset and in this sort of midlife crisis they
45 fought with each other (both laugh). They had great theological battles and they would quit
46 speaking to each other for years at a time. And they would found this church, and this church

47 would split off from that church, and there were rumors flying around. And the early history of
48 Forest Grove is actually very amusing (LT chuckles quietly). However, the people who first
49 recorded it were very interested in documenting its New England ancestry and the intellectual
50 superiority of this group of people and so they tended to downplay that aspect of their character.
51 However, in the end, what they ended up doing was, um, taking this energy that had led them
52 into the mission field and putting it to very good use, which was educating people. Which was a
53 desperate, desperate need in pioneer Oregon: they needed schools. There were lots of children
54 and no place to educate them. And everybody sort of had this understanding that if they wanted
55 to build a society with a capital "S", they had to educate their children. And meanwhile, of
56 course, the children are growing up, spending their time with Native American children. Most of
57 them spoke the Chinook jargon, which was a language that was a combination of the Indian
58 dialects, and French, and English and had a lot of hand gestures. And they were growing up
59 WILD, you know, without the benefit of the institutions of schools and churches, and the
60 children were perfectly content (laughs). They were not at all unhappy. It was their parents that
61 were distressed (LT chuckles). So their parents were living in these log cabins, and there was this
62 sort of accepted tradition that the educated among them would have a school. And it was a way
63 of making a little extra cash or bringing some money in.

64
65 And so the pioneers would walk through the woods to, um, the local minister's log cabin and
66 leave their children there, and maybe deliver half a cow the next time they butchered or some
67 sort of in-kind payment. Or the children would work. Always nice to have an extra pair of hands.
68 And so if you look at the census records or you read the diaries, you pick up that there were
69 always these extra children around. And some of them were there just to be educated. If you
70 have Harvey Clark living in a log cabin with his wife, who, I think eventually had six or seven
71 children, so during this period of the 1840s, she was sort of constantly pregnant, and constantly
72 nursing. And in addition to all of her own children, she had all these extra children who were
73 there to receive an education from Mr. Clark, Reverend Clark, who was also functioning as a
74 circuit rider, riding through the forest and visiting various populations and preaching to them. By
75 this time period that I'm describing, both A.T. Smith and Harvey Clark had given up the idea of
76 being missionaries. They couldn't find the Native Americans because most of them had died,
77 um....

78
79 LT: The Native Americans that were in this area, like the Atfalati that had been wiped out by
80 disease?

81
82 MH: They had been wiped out by a combination of disease, the Hudson River men pastured their
83 cattle in this area, and that was not particularly good for the environment. And then people
84 coming in, and you know, setting up their donation land claims, and not allowing the Native
85 Americans to hunt and gather as they had done for thousands years. So they were, (1) they were
86 dying from disease, (2) they were dying from malnutrition and lack of food, and (3) they
87 migrated, they had a migrational pattern. And so if you have Europeans who are used to settling
88 in one place and being there year round, and you have Native Americans who have a winter
89 home, and a summer home, and a spring home, and a fall home, it's very difficult to just catch
90 them long enough to preach to them, you know they have a very different pattern of lifestyles.
91 However, here in Forest Grove on – this is a knoll of land surrounded by the wetlands, and most
92 of the wetlands have now been drained and we don't think of them as wetlands anymore – but at

93 that time Forest Grove was a high piece of land that probably, there were prob...the rumors have
94 it that there were about three or four Indian villages in a four or five square mile area. And there
95 was at least one that was fairly permanent that was relatively close to where A.T. Smith settled.
96 Finding the exact locations is difficult, although apparently there are people that do know them.
97 But, one of the things – they don't want anyone else to know, because then the historical people
98 might come in and prevent them from developing the land that they own, and it is always kind of
99 problematical. So you have the Native Americans and you have the missionaries. They are
100 coexisting, but barely. And that's a pattern that gets established with a central group of people
101 who are kind of in charge with a marginalized group of people somehow sort of not quite
102 documented, but yet hints that they are there. And that's there from the beginning of Forest
103 Grove history and it gets repeated throughout. We'll come back to that in a minute. So, ok, you
104 have the need for schools. You have log cabins in the wilderness. And you have a group of
105 highly educated men and women who are trying to economically make their way in the world.
106 And the best service that they seem to offer is (1) founding a church, or (2) founding a school.
107 And so you have them competing, initially, for churches. And that's one reason why they start
108 fighting, because, you know, you have seven ministers within a five to 10 square mile radius and
109 they ALL want to have a church, they are going to fight with each other for the advantages.
110 Well, then they began to realize, well not only can they run churches, but they can also run
111 schools. And then you have this lovely, remarkable women named Tabitha Brown, who sort of
112 walks into this whole situation. And she has the business skills and the background to put it all
113 together into something structured that can last over a time period. The founding of Tualatin
114 Academy and Pacific University is generally attributed to Harvey Clark and Tabitha Brown. The
115 idea being that Tabitha Brown comes to visit her son, who lives in this area, meets Harvey Clark,
116 realizes that he and his wife are unorganized dreamers and that his wife desperately needs help,
117 and she moves in and takes over their lives...

118
119 LT: At this point she was a 66 year-old widow (MH: "Right, right" (nodding)) that weighed less
120 than 100 pounds, crippled...one of the few survivors of her wagon train...right?

121
122 MH: Right. Um, Yes. And she's generally portrayed as this sort of sainted woman, who just
123 wanted to care for the poor orphan children. And that's, that's a load of garbage (laughs with
124 LT). If you read her letters that we have copies of, two or three letters I forget exactly, that she
125 wrote in later life back to people she'd known back east, she was a business woman and she
126 really cared about being successful. And when she was recounting, her life and what she'd made
127 of it, she said "I own a white house, I have a cow, I have land, I loan money to people, and they
128 pay me back (LT laughs). Um, she was – well, we don't need to get into the whole history of
129 Tabitha Brown, but she was a very, very interesting person. And that she arrived in Forest Grove,
130 and put her skills to work to...yes to serve the poor orphan children, but basically to create a
131 living for herself, so that she was independent from her children and supporting herself in her old
132 age. That she arrived here was just wonderful and she took all of these disparate people and
133 nudged them, pushed them, manipulated them, you know, sort of said: "You will do it this way."
134 And she managed to get them to all agree to, build a log cabin, and allow her to live there and
135 take care... (break in footage)

136
137 MH: ...A number of them were orphans who'd been deserted by their parents or their fathers,
138 who took off for the '49 gold rush in California. A number of them were half-breed children.

139 Some of them were just people who, children whose parents just couldn't educate them, couldn't
140 care for them, and basically brought them there and left them, and paid a small fee. So you have
141 this cabin in the wilderness, where Tabitha Brown is running a boarding house for children. And
142 then you have the UCC church, which at that point was another cabin in the middle of the
143 wilderness....

144
145 LT: It was the Congregational...

146
147 MH: The Congregational- It's now called the UCC church, but at that time it was called the
148 Congregational church, and you have some of these missionaries who come in. And one of the
149 missionary wives, and we don't know which one, agreed to teach the younger children. We
150 think, oh gosh...we think it was Cushing Eells wife, whose name was Myra, M-Y-R-A, I've
151 heard it pronounced different ways. We do know that Cushing Eells, – I think it was Cushing,
152 and there are several Eells and I'm going to get their names mixed up, but it's easily verified
153 which is which... did teach the school, at this school that was held in the Congregational church.
154 He taught the older children, and we think it was his wife that taught the younger children. At
155 that point, there were probably fewer than 50 books in the whole community, and a good many
156 of them would have been copies of the bible.

157
158 We know that when Professor Marsh came from New England, he was appalled at the lack of
159 certain basic things like dictionaries. There was no *dictionary* in the area, and when he went
160 back east, some two or three years later, he made a point of bringing back four or five
161 dictionaries...or maybe it was two or three, I don't remember exactly, but he brought back more
162 than he had use for. And I know that the Walkers, which were another missionary family – this
163 is Alcono Walker and his wife Mary Richardson Walker- bought a copy of that dictionary. And
164 there's a lovely, lovely story from Samuel Walker, who was Mary's youngest son, that said that
165 his mother had this obsession with knowing the right definition of words. And whenever she
166 heard a word she didn't know, she would go home and before she went to bed that night she
167 would *look it up* and make sure that she had the right definition. And she was known to correct
168 local preachers, after they would preach the sermon. She'd go up to them and tell them they'd
169 used the word *wrong* (MH and LT laugh out loud) and, and I have somewhere a list of the books
170 that the Walkers had when they died, and there were five or six of them that clearly came over
171 the Oregon Trail with them when they first went to become missionaries. And that was probably
172 one of the larger collections in town, if not *THE* largest collection in town.

173
174 So you have a sense that there really weren't a lot of books around at that point, and so they were
175 able to start a school that became Tualatin Academy and became Pacific University with very,
176 very little on hand except for what was in their heads, and the knowledge that most of them had
177 received going through various universities back east. There are in the Pacific University
178 Archives records of the books that belong to Pacific University and I don't know what they were.
179 I know there were a number of hymn books, um, that were music – I don't know whether they
180 belonged to the Congregational church or were part of the university or what. I know that
181 Professor Marsh brought back some books. One assumes that as they hired more professors from
182 back east, and talked them into coming out to this little, tiny town, that they brought more books.
183 Nobody's every tried to track it down and document it. But you can assume that it was – that
184 many of the people who lived here in town, at that time, were functionally illiterate. But then you

185 have this core group of missionaries who were *highly* literate and *highly educated* for their time
186 period. And very concerned about that state of affairs and setting out to remedy it. So, that's the
187 pioneer era. If we want to go, we can go into a little bit more depth on it, but that's basically
188 where it's at at that point in time (break in footage).

189
190 LT: So, following the pioneer era...

191
192 MH: Well, it's hard to tell exactly when the pioneer era ends. In the 1840s, you have a close
193 group, a population that is relatively homogenous primarily coming from New England. There's,
194 as I said before, a heavy percentage of missionaries. In the 1850s, this pretty much holds true.
195 The density of the population increases, there are more and more people coming in, and you still
196 have people filing for donation land claims. There is still land available. And most of them are
197 farming in order to make ends meet. By the 1860s, you begin to see a change in the census.
198 There are more people, the density of the town itself is increasing, there are more people living
199 in town. And you begin to see a phenomenon on the census records where they, the local
200 families, are boarding people who are attending the university. So you'll see all the family
201 members listed and then there'll be three or four people who are "single," who are living in the
202 house and given their age they are probably attending the university. Some of them are listed as
203 students. And that trend continues, up through the present, although it's decreasing in
204 importance as the dormitories get built.

205
206 But in the (18)60s, 70s, and 80s, the main draw of the town, and the main reason people came to
207 settle here, well in the (18)60s and 70s definitely was to send their children to Tualatin Academy
208 or Pacific University. And you see the phenomenon of a number of families having a large farm
209 out in the country and a small house where mom lived with the kids in the winter, so that the
210 children could go to school. In the 1880s, you actually – if you look at the census, and I'm trying
211 to remember this off the top of my head, so it should definitely be verified, but in the 1880s you
212 begin to see some ethnic diversity and rather than the - in the census it lists where the parents of
213 the given person listed on the census were born, and early on most of the time they were either
214 born in New England or England or Scotland or Ireland or Wales. It begins to change in the
215 1880s, where we begin to see people whose parents were born in Germany or Switzerland or
216 eastern European countries, and the number of Irish people, of course, increases at that time. And
217 of course, beginning in the 1860s you had the train, which was running through town at that
218 point, beginning to increase the amount of money coming into town. And by the 1880s, you
219 actually have Forest Grove functioning for the wealthiest of people as a suburb of Portland,
220 because they can catch the train into Portland. And that's when the large mansions begin to be
221 built. And you also have the phenomenon – by that time most of the available large acres of land
222 was gone, there were still large forest tracts that were being cut for timber. And that's probably
223 why Adeline Rogers and her husband originally settled in Forest Grove, there were some
224 beautiful houses available, there was an easy train into Portland and it had access to the large
225 timber lands to the west. And we know, there's a newspaper account of the Rogers' son coming
226 to visit and going with his father and some other unknown gentleman out to look at a forest tract
227 that they owned and were planning as develop as timber, to *cut down* as timber. So we know
228 that they were involved in that whole process. I can't remember when they settled here, I think it
229 was in the 1880s however, do you know?

231 LT: (softly) It was 1898, they'd come to Hillsboro first...

232

233 MH: Yeah...

234

235 LT: ...And then moved to Forest Grove.

236

237 MH: Ok, so they were a little bit later than that, but we know there are families in the 1880s who
238 are following this pattern. So you begin to have a definite class structure at that time period,
239 where there are extremely – extremely is a relative term, but wealthy people living in elegant
240 mansions, with servants to wait on them and a lifestyle very different than the early pioneers who
241 were living, all of them, living in log cabins with relatively similar lifestyle. You know, living
242 off of the land that they were farming and trying to get their grain to an easy outlet, which since
243 there weren't any roads was actually a fairly difficult thing to do. So you begin to have the
244 development of culture in a different sense than you had with the missionary pioneers, whose
245 main goal was to educate their children. This is the "Robber Baron" (or industrialist) period, and
246 it had its influence on Forest Grove. There is an attitude toward the land and towards people that
247 was pervasive throughout America at the time...that you were there to make as much money as
248 you could and from where we're sitting it was *exploitation* of both people and the land. And
249 they're very, very poor people in Forest Grove at that time.

250

251 Lester Mooberry wrote a book called *The Gray Nineties* about his family's attempt to, um, make
252 a living on one of these small farms on Spring Hill. He technically lived in Cornelius. And he
253 describes riding the family wagon into Forest Grove and, you know, here he is a poor kid with,
254 you know, one set of clothing and lucky if he had shoes that year, and he went to a one room
255 schoolhouse that his sister taught. And they were lucky to have his sister teaching because she
256 actually got paid *cash* to *teach*, and that's what paid their taxes, which just horribly embarrassed
257 his father. And they had, sold their land in Illinois, moved out west to make a go of it, they had
258 an orchard that they were waiting to bear fruit, and when it finally did bear fruit there was no
259 market for the fruit. And it was a depressed time period. And he describes the neighbors around
260 him, um, as being – a large number of them didn't speak English at home and they were eastern
261 European. And there was one- the lone account that I know of someone of African background
262 living in the area at the time, who was also trying to make a go of it and ended up dying, did not
263 make it. And it's a very *poor* group of people that he describes. And in the midst of this, there is
264 this person who comes out to raise horses, you know, who has this big fancy farm and has like a
265 *horse* farm in the middle of all these poor immigrant people. And you go into Forest Grove and
266 there are these huge mansions on the hill, and these merchants who lived in town and whose
267 children had things like bicycles, and were living- they could go and get ice cream at the local
268 store. And had fancy clothes and shoes, and had more than *one* set of shoes, you know, and the
269 merchants were living off of this immigrant population. They came into town on Saturday, and
270 tied up their horse and buggy at the hitching rail, and went and did their shopping, such as it was.
271 And they didn't have a lot of money to spend, but they were spending money. So you have these
272 segments of society developing that didn't exist in the pioneer era, and that's the whole point of
273 that whole story. [chuckles]

274

275 And of course, because you have segments of, you know, class levels, there is also this social
276 consciousness that's developing, that has its roots in the missionary, "doing good" background of

277 Forest Grove. And it's complex, in that in the one hand, the town sees all these terribly poor
278 people and really wants to help them, but they don't have any organized way of doing that, so
279 you expect, you know, that there are a lot of handouts happened, or people who are given
280 employment cleaning houses, or weeding a garden, or just sort of social consciousness on a very
281 unprofessional and unplanned level. And, in the 1890s it begins to seem as though it needs to be
282 planned. And the number of- if I'm remembering correctly, I don't remember exactly what
283 decade- the number of laws dealing with vagrants and unruly behavior increases, so obviously
284 they are responding to a need. There's increasing diversity of the number of churches and the
285 people attending them. And we have, a woman who in the 1890s begins- who obviously has a
286 sense of publicity because her name keeps showing up in one of the local papers- and she is
287 running a "secular" church. And we don't know what a "secular church" is, but it sounds like it
288 might be a group of atheists? And this is *dangerous stuff* in a missionary community. She's
289 meeting in Wurz Hall, and Wurz Hall was donated to the town for use as a public building by a
290 man named Michael Wurz, *who was an atheist! From Germany!* Who actually died, I think in
291 the 1870s, and Wurz Hall remains a town institution all the way up through the turn of the
292 century. And he donated it to the town with the understanding that *anybody* could use it no
293 matter *what* their belief system was. So here we have Mrs. A.E. Barker, in the 1890s, holding
294 *church* in this building, and it describes the topics that she's going to discuss, what happens after
295 we die, and what is the meaning of salvation, and you assume this all has to do from an atheist
296 point of view, and at the very end of one of these articles it says "Good Music!" (cracks up) so
297 she obviously had a sense of what drew people. She went down to McMinnville, at one point it
298 said "there will be no secular church because Mrs. A.E. Barker is going down to help found a
299 church down in McMinnville." (footage break)

300
301 MH: ...Stairs from one of the store fronts, we don't know where, we don't know what was in the
302 library, we don't know what it's purpose was, but it's the first sign that there was any- it's not a
303 library, it's a Free Thought Reading Room, I got the name wrong- it's the first sign that anyone
304 is doing anything organized in the sense of- other than the University- of having books available
305 for anybody to look at and read... (footage break)

306
307 MH: ...Library and you may know more about this than I do, I've tried to find some information
308 about it. The first reference to a Reading Room that I know of, and this is just personal because
309 it's reading that I've done, is Louisa May Alcott's father, Branson Alcott, at one point ran a
310 Reading Room for the transcendentalist thinkers that included Ralph Waldo Emerson and his
311 whole group. And they had tracts and essays and books available on the subject, and people
312 would drop in and drink coffee and argue (LT laughs softly) and you would have presentations.
313 They were kind... of like a, like a chat room (laughs), you know for...

314
315 LT: ...Pre-internet days...

316
317 MH: Right! A way to get PR and ideas out. And so, to have something like that in Forest Grove
318 is interesting. Um... at the same time we begin to see here from the women (footage break)

319
320 MH: ...So, okay, one the one hand we have the Free Thought Library and on the other hand you
321 have this organization: Women's Christian Temperance Union which was run by women, it's a
322 women-run organization. And here again we have Mrs. A.E. Barker, the Women's Christian

323 Temperance Union. It's fascinating that at this time period women were organizing themselves
324 into groups in order to address some of the social ills. And they were going about it in some
325 interesting ways, and there have been lots of really interesting books done recently on the
326 subject, so we won't go into that, but it's interesting to note that this was a national- you know,
327 across the board everywhere in the United States- women were organizing themselves, and it
328 develops out of the Civil War when, women were organized to raise money and support the
329 troops, and they took those skills and developed them into their own groups to continue to do
330 that kind of work. And they really are in Forest Grove from the very beginning, and that's a
331 whole other set of tapes, would be the history of women's movements in Forest Grove. But those
332 missionary wives organized themselves from day one, they were getting together.

333
334 Okay, so, we have Women's Christian Temperance movement, and at some point, and there's
335 very little document for this, but in several different interviews with several different people they
336 all agree that the WCTU at one point had a Reading Room. And we don't know where exactly,
337 although it was apparently above a store front and it was a *reading room*, and it disseminated
338 information against drinking. And it had- this is all heresay, now, it had as its goal, getting,
339 reducing the rowdy elements of the population in Forest Grove.

340
341 LT: Promoting sobriety and...

342
343 MH: Yes, and all of that. And where, how it was funded, and who funded, where it was and all
344 of that, we really don't know very much about. I'd *love* to find it out, and whoever sees this,
345 finds any kind of documentation on the WCTU, I'd love to find the minutes of the organization
346 or something. But nobody seems to know whatever happened to them, or where they- they're
347 probably in someone's attic somewhere or got burned on a big bonfire, and that thought just
348 breaks my heart to think about.

349
350 Okay, in 1896 the first group of people interested in Christian Science gets together in Cornelius,
351 and this is important. The Christian Science movement at that time was part of a much larger
352 movement that we might loosely relate to what we call New Age philosophies nowadays. It was,
353 it probably ties into the sort of secular church that Mrs. A.E. Barker was running, there may have
354 been some relationship between the two, but philosophically, it was a belief system that *thoughts*
355 could influence the world. That the way you could *heal* people through prayer, that you could
356 *read* other people's minds. And this was a movement that was affecting people throughout the
357 country. And it was all led by *women*. Most of the major leaders were women! So on one hand
358 you have all of these women who came out of the Civil War having learnt business skills, how to
359 organize and run things. And parallel to that you also have this sort-of religion, this system of
360 thinking about the world, led by women. They were (pauses) interesting people (both chuckle) to
361 say the least!

362
363 And I don't think it's an accident that Mrs. Rogers, who - and many of the other women who
364 were very important in founding the Forest Grove City Library, um, were Christian Scientists.
365 They were coming out of WCTU, they were influenced by these organizations. Now, the other
366 person, um, the two people that are most commonly associated with the founding of the Forest
367 Grove City Library are Adeline Rogers and Emma Penfield. Emma Penfield was the president of
368 the WCTU, and as we used to say about my grandmother: "a card-carrying member of the

369 WCTU," *all* her life. This was a very, um, it was probably the *main* thing that she did, Mrs.
370 (Miss) Penfield. Getting, helping to found the Forest Grove City Library was just sort of accident
371 that grew out of her- I, my belief is that it grew out of her involvement in the WCTU. I suspect
372 that she helped get this reading room going, and when they weren't able to support it or make it
373 to work, she sort of accidentally took some of the books and the pamphlets and the things that
374 were part of *that* reading room. And she had just opened a store, actually at that point it was a
375 corner of somebody *else's* store, um, and I think she just kind of transferred the WCTU reading
376 room into her store because she could support that and it was fairly simple and there wasn't a lot
377 of money involved.

378
379 LT: It was basically a bookshop/ lending library combination in the corner of an existing shop...

380
381 MH: Right, right and she used some of her own books. This was actually a fairly common thing.
382 There were at least two other stores in Forest Grove at the time that kept books available for
383 people to borrow and return.

384
385 One of them was owned by a remarkable man named Friend S. Barnes, who was a jewelry and a
386 watchmaker. And famous throughout the country, for making yew bows- bows, like bows and
387 arrows for archery. And he would go into the Cascades once a year and select the wood to make
388 these bows that had to be made out of yew, 'Y-E-W.' He also had a set of, I forget, he donated
389 them to the library, they were 25 or 30 books that he kept in his shop for people to borrow. And
390 there was another store in town, and I can't remember- I think it was the Wattres' (sp?) store that
391 also had a circulating library that they got from some organization in Chicago. So the name, the
392 books sort of got sent out and sent back again, that kind of thing. So, it wasn't uncommon for
393 people to have books and things in their library. And that's sort of why I think that Mrs.
394 Penfield- *Miss* Penfield, she wasn't married, um, library was a combination of her own and it
395 probably came out of the WCTU because of her close association with it. But that's speculation,
396 I don't know that for sure.

397
398 Emma Penfield was an interesting character in her own right. And she was a direct descendent
399 of the Beecher family, and that includes, um, Harriet Beecher Stowe who of course wrote Uncle
400 Tom's Cabin which was, which probably *caused* the Civil War depending on who you read (LT
401 laughs). Her, and, let's see Harriet Beecher Stowe's older sister, Katherine Beecher, was an
402 early, depending on who you talk to, either an early feminist or an early *anti-feminist*. She was
403 one of those people that had a lot of really strong opinions, and didn't make *anybody* happy (both
404 laugh). And her, let's see, then the brother was, um, oh, gosh, I'm forgetting... Henry Ward
405 Beecher, who was a preacher in New York who was caught up in just a horrible scandal, where
406 he was caught fooling around with one of his parishioner's wives and it was a major national *fuss*
407 that he was... I can't remember if he was put on trial but his church threw him out and it was a
408 huge controversy. In fact it was such a controversy that Mary Richardson Walker, all the way out
409 in Oregon, mentions it in her journal, you know, so that was quite a big thing.

410
411 So, you have Emma Penfield, who was raised in New England, who taught at one of the major-
412 Northfield Mount Herman, and educated in one of the New England- one of the seven sisters,
413 coming out to the West Coast and making a home here. She probably taught at the University for
414 awhile, she apparently taught languages, then she realized there was no place to get good

415 stationary so she opened a shop and became a business person. And part of that was her putting
416 in her little books- the little books in the little corner of her shop and that evolved into- according
417 to the tradition- into the library.

418
419 Okay, and then we come to Adeline Rogers, who is a Christian Scientist. She and her husband
420 came from New Hampshire. They, um, apparently her family owned large tracts of land in New
421 Hampshire. Um, it was probably lumber, they probably cut it down for timber. We don't really
422 know very much about it, but they apparently had quite a bit of money. She married her husband,
423 they lived in a small town in New Hampshire. He worked as a dentist and they had one son,
424 Anson. Um...and I can't- I think it's in the 1870s, ...they- his health deteriorates, which is a
425 Victorian euphemism for many different things [both laugh], so who knows! Maybe he just had a
426 mid-life crisis and got bored.

427
428 But they leave New Hampshire and go to Hong Kong. And George works as a dentist in Hong
429 Kong for a number of years. And somewhere in all of that Adeline makes several trips to Europe
430 and has exposure to the continental movement of the Beaux Arts. Beaux Arts, (to LT) do you
431 know how to say it? I don't know. B-A-U-X. Um, and, becomes cosmopolitan and... you know,
432 the sort of- I always picture her with her furs wrapped around her neck, being very elegant (LT
433 chuckles).

434
435 They came back to the States, traveled around, lived in Mexico, had, ah-lived on an orange...
436 farm, orange farm. Orange plantation in Florida for awhile and finally end up in Oregon because
437 the climate [makes air quotations] "suits them." Um... and they buy a beautiful house that was
438 built by a violin maker, over in what is now known as Old Town, and settle in there with their
439 collection of porcelain and Chinese objects. And um, begin to become civic leaders in the town,
440 in the tradition of the time period, which means that *he* makes money by exploiting the land and
441 taking the train into Portland and generally being a leisure man of the upper class. And *she* gets
442 involved in civic affairs.

443
444 LT: Although he didn't last long...

445
446 MH: ...He died in 1900...

447
448 LT: ...When they came to Hillsboro, he had a few good years, but shortly after coming to Forest
449 Grove he passed away....

450
451 MH: ...And she lives on until 1920...

452
453 LT: ...1922....

454
455 MH: ...1922... So, they are in town for about 10 to 12 years, he's not there for very long, but she
456 is, for about 20 years, I guess, how does that add up?...Yeah. (break in footage)

457
458 MH: Okay... so we're gonna?

459
460 LT: Mrs. Rogers in...

461
462 MH: Okay, so (reading from notes on her lap)... Mrs. Rogers is part of the Christian Science
463 Society and they started meeting in 1896. By 1901 they've actually been organized into a
464 society. In 1903, um... there's a public meeting in the college chapel to discuss the founding of a
465 reading room. So we had these precursors, and there's some mixture of opinion as to whether the
466 Christian Scientists had a reading room at that point... but I- there are some people who say
467 "yes, they did have a reading room." So you have the WCTU, you have the Free Thought
468 Library, Mrs. A.E. Barker's, and you have the Christian Scientists. And this is all a reading
469 room, *not a library*, with the distinction between the two being somewhat vague, but a reading
470 room is a place where people go to read, and there's some sense of it being *propaganda* and not
471 just a *wide* cross section of literature.

472
473 Okay, so at this point you began to have the town interested in founding a reading room or
474 library. And at first they are working with the university. All the local professors sort of show up
475 and pontificate about the need for a library: "What a wonderful thing it would be." And also the
476 university is also beginning to explore about the need to have a bigger library. They, being- take
477 this for what it's worth, okay [both laugh]- they're *male*. By and large, the university is run by
478 *men*. And they are able to muster the finances to, and the know-how and the ability to get a hold
479 of the Carnegie library people. And they begin to work with them to get a loan to build a
480 Carnegie library. And there are a number of things that have to go into that. By that time, the
481 Carnegie library people were very smart about making sure that the communities that they were
482 going to give the money to could donate half of it or support the building, and fill up the book,
483 and all of those- fill it up with books and keep it *running*. And so you had to show a certain
484 amount of local backing, and a certain amount of- and lot of universities were getting Carnegie
485 libraries at that time because they could *do* that.

486
487 So, on one hand you have this movement over here with the university, and on the other hand
488 over here you have this- these women run organizations trying to reach out to the very poor
489 people in community through their reading rooms. Trying to educate them to the need to be
490 sober, or educate them to the need to use *prayer*, live *good lives*, *whatever*. So there are these
491 two simultaneous things going on at the same time.

492
493 Okay, um, in 1904 Mrs. Rogers is elected as president of the Christian Science Society. And that
494 is, that whole movement is growing in town. They began to build a building, and she basically
495 funds that. Loans them the money and they pay her back. But she's putting her money into that
496 end the town. And, okay, um, let me look at my time sheet here (reads from notes). There is a
497 new block of buildings going up along what is known as 21st Avenue. On one side, you have the
498 Congregational Church, which is no longer in a log cabin. Um, it's a fairly new building at that
499 time. And there's a whole church block which is, has beautiful old trees and this grassy place
500 where the town has, it gathers to hear to music concerts there in the summer, there's a *circus*
501 there at times. It's a *town center*. And across from the church, across on 21st Avenue, is a new
502 row of shops going in. And Mrs. Pen- why do I keep saying Mrs.? Miss Penfield has rented a
503 corner of the store and it hasn't evolved into a library yet. Sometime right about in this period,
504 and I'm still am trying to track the exact *date* down, the Oregon State legislature passes a law
505 supporting public libraries and setting up a certain amount of funding for towns that have a
506 *library*. Now here again is one of those tricky distinctions between having a *library* and having a

507 *reading room*. Um, so the early records of the town getting together, in various forms, either for
508 professors to lecture, or for the Civic Improvement Society to talk about how important it would
509 be- they usually are talking about a *reading room*. And it's after the legislature passes this law,
510 that you begin to hear talk of a library.

511
512 Okay...the town begins to say "Okay...", this is when you begin to have the men start getting
513 involved in the city library because suddenly there's funding [both laugh]. There's *money*
514 involved. And it doesn't have to come out of their pockets, it comes out of the state's pockets.
515 And they've paid taxes and so it's only *fair* that their town have a library. And you begin to read
516 about various groups of committees meeting and forming to talk about how to take advantage of
517 all of this, and the end result somehow – and I would *love* to know how! – I have this idea that
518 these groups of women met and had tea and said, "Ok, we're gonna have a library. We're going
519 to figure out how to do this, I'll go home and talk to my husband, and you go home and talk to
520 your husband, and we're going to get them together, and they're going to do *this*." (LT: laughs).
521 And so they told their husband's "You're going to do *this*," and that's what they (did). But the
522 women couldn't *do* it, they had to have the support from the men. And it must have been
523 *extremely* frustrating to them, or maybe it wasn't maybe it was just the way life *was*. But they
524 finally figured out how to take advantage of this state funding. So, you begin to hear about, um,
525 the Board- now, let's see, I'm going to find the exact, um, let's see (reading from document):
526 September 8, 1905, Miss Emma Penfield opens a book store. November, 1905, so it's a few
527 months later, the women's club is organized. So, that's the first we begin hearing about the
528 Forest Grove Women's Club. And it's generally believed that they were organized to support a
529 library.

530
531 LT: And they are still in existence-

532
533 MH: [nods] And they still-

534
535 LT: [interrupts] And they are still good library supporters today.

536
537 MH: [nods] Mmm, they become much broader than that, and end up doing a lot more than that,
538 but we generally believe that they were formed to support the library, which really didn't exist
539 yet. But those were the women sitting at home over their teacups saying "you go home and tell
540 your husband *this!*"

541
542 Okay, [reads from document] So in December 1905, something called the Civic Improvement
543 Society. And this apparently was a group that met on an ad hoc basis to do any number of things,
544 and I *think* they were the ones who advocated actually putting in real sidewalks. And, um, some
545 various things.

546
547 LT: Trying to fence lifestyle.

548
549 MH: Yeah, just some little details that made life a little easier so that way "nice" people would
550 move into town. Okay, so the quote here is: [reads from document] "the **script** gets together to
551 discuss a founding of a city library. They are presided over by Walter Hoge, H-O-G-E, and this
552 woman named Cornelia Marvin," isn't that a wonderful name? [LT laughs], from the State

553 Library Association comes to speak, and she says “that a reading room is good, that’s okay,
554 reading room’s are okay, but a library’s *better*.” [both laugh] So if you want to be taken
555 seriously, have a library. This causes trouble, because, of course, all of these women have
556 invested in a reading room, and they see that the reading room is important because of having
557 people come and see their all of their literature and all the things that they are trying to do. And
558 they are not ready to give up their reading room, this is my theory, I’m just guessing at all this,
559 because I know how small towns work. But out of that meeting, they form a library and they
560 ask Miss Penfield to be the librarian, *finally*, [laughter] after many, many years of various groups
561 trying to do various things. But for years, it’s always referred to as a reading room and a library.
562 And so you have these two ideas put together, and gradually it evolves to become a library with a
563 reading room, and then finally the reading room is dropped and it’s a library. Ta-DA!

564
565 By 1906, there’s a library board appointed by the city council, and the board members are
566 Professor Marsh (it doesn’t say which Marsh, there are several Marshes involved in the
567 university at that time), Mrs. A.F. Rogers, Reverend Boyd, Mr. A.G. Hoffman, Mr. Edwin Allen
568 and Mrs. Hollinger. And if I’m not mistaken, Mrs. Hollinger is also part of the Christian Science
569 movement, but I haven’t checked that one, so So that’s the beginning of the library.

570
571 LT: Shortly followed by taxation!

572
573 MH: Yes! It was.

574
575 LT: A year later they had their first city library tax.

576
577 MH: It was a one mill tax, whatever that was. I would love to know exactly how much money
578 that represented. You assume it’s a percentage of a dollar or something like that. But it’s an
579 interesting development because it means that everybody had recognized that this reading room /
580 library concept was a good thing and it was worthwhile supporting.

581
582 Uh, I think the interesting thing about this time period is that the library was not viewed in the
583 sense that we view a library. This is what I pick up, there’s very little information. It was to
584 reform, you know it was to provide a good influence for the uneducated and the bad people, not
585 bad, but wilder parts of town. And you don’t have the sense that in the “old town” the people
586 living in the big houses and the big mansions took advantage of it. It was intended for the
587 poorer people of town, the people who didn’t have books of their own and who needed, the
588 people who were coming in from the countryside.... Like in The Gray ‘90s, Professor Mooberry
589 who was coming in and looking at all the rich people who lived in town. The people who rode
590 the wagons in to do the shopping on Saturday, bringing their butter and their eggs to trade for
591 groceries, and who didn’t have anywhere to go and sit down. The young mothers who were
592 nursing their babies didn’t have a place to go and sit. The young children who were tired would
593 go in and sleep. You have the sense when you look at it that it was not just a place for books, but
594 a place where people went to rest, to be quiet, and to be healed, in the sense that I want to take to
595 the whole Christian Science piece of it....

596
597 LT: A sanctuary...

599 MH.... A sanctuary, um, but a place of peace and a place where there were people who *were*
600 going to help take care of you. And also influence you because part of the whole Christian
601 Science movement was that you could *influence* the people around you, not just through prayer,
602 but just by your thoughts, and you could change people by the way that you thought about them
603 and the things that you did for them, so I think that was a very strong motivation behind it all.
604 And so you, and also the whole social, the beginning of the social service movement, which
605 developed out of groups like the WCTU, um, trying to reform society, so that's the other piece
606 that is very strongly present at that time.

607
608 LT: Because certainly in Forest Grove's particular case, the fact that the library began with a rest
609 room, as they called it, which was more than a bathroom, ...

610
611 MH: Yes, there's always that confusion....

612
613 LT:...It wasn't just a bathroom, it was a room for people to be and ...

614
615 MH: It was a room where people rested...

616
617 LT:...And so forth and to gather, that was unique in the State of Oregon. It wasn't, despite what
618 was going on in social services...

619
620 MH: It's the only case that I know of where you have that juxtaposition of the social service
621 element with the books and the library. It's fascinating. I don't know of any other example, I
622 mean, in some of the reading that I've done, you get hints of it, and ideas, that this was sort of
623 maybe an underlying idea, but it's very, very clear in the case of Forest Grove. And it's even
624 clearer when you look at who was hired as the first librarian after Emma Penfield, and that was
625 Mrs. Sanborn, whose background was in the social service movement.

626
627 LT: Sanford.

628
629 MH: Sanford? Thank you.... Mrs. O.M. Sanford.

630
631 LT: Mrs. O.M. Sanford.

632
633 MH: Mrs. O.M. Sanford and if I'm remembering correctly, she came up from California, where
634 she'd been involved in the settlement house movement, and had worked with Jane Adams and a
635 number of the people who were going and working in slums doing social reform, and that was
636 her, she came out of that background, she was also tied in with, I believe, the WCTU to some
637 respect, and she was also involved in animal rescue and some of the early animal shelter type
638 movement. And she is generally described as a person who was more than a librarian. She
639 reached out to people and helped to care for children who came through the library, and she
640 provided a place for the young girls to come and eat their lunch when they were working, and
641 one gets the sense that she quietly channeled a good many donations to charity or found people
642 jobs, or, really functioned formally as a librarian, but informally as a social service worker in the
643 community.

645 LT: And her period of tenure was significant, 1908 to 1928 which was, you know, a generation
646 of people came through under her generous watch.

647
648 MH: Um-huum, and during most of the time she was there, it remains the reading room,
649 emphasis is still there. I forget exactly when it begins to disappear, but I think it's after she dies,
650 and is no longer the librarian there. So that's a very strong part of the library throughout her
651 tenure, and I don't think that's an accident.

652
653 LT: So in 1908 when Mrs. Rogers actually deeded, or donated the library to the city..

654
655 MH: Yeah, we can go back, um, so throughout that time period, Mrs. Rogers, or the early time
656 period, Mrs. Rogers is actively financially supporting the library, and at one point she decides to
657 donate her house, which is in Old Town, in what's now known as Rogers Park. And it's a very
658 elegant, Victorian house, and she says she will donate it to the city to be used as a library.
659 (break in footage)

660
661 (Video shows oval portrait of Mrs. Rogers)

662 MH: Certainly maybe as late as 1920, but I don't think so, I'm guessing from the costume, 1910,
663 and it says that she is the founder of the Rogers City Library, and, I'm not sure whether she's
664 actually the founder, but she was its most generous benefactor for many, many years, which
665 probably means that she gets that title as a major supporter. It probably was founded by a
666 number of people all working very closely together.

667
668 (Video shows photo of Mrs. Rogers's residence)

669 MH: Okay, this shows a picture of Mrs. Rogers's residence which is located where Rogers City
670 Park now is, the building no longer stands. Mrs. Rogers donated it to the City of Forest Grove
671 in 1907 with the understanding that she would be allowed to live in it until her death, and then it
672 would become the City Library.

673
674 LT: Surrounded by this beautiful....

675
676 MH: Surrounded by a beautiful park with a garden, and all of her collection of Chinese artifacts
677 and things that she had picked up in all of her travels, would stay with the house, and it was
678 generally held to be just an incredible gift. Um, she changed her, whether she changed her mind
679 or whether the city changed its mind is not known, um, however, about two years later, they
680 made another bargain. I believe it was 1909 in March, the city met to sort of make a tradeoff, in
681 that Mrs. Rogers got her house back, and in return she bought the storefront that the library was
682 then in, and deeded that to the city, so they kind of just traded.

683
684 Her motivation in doing that is really unknown. We can speculate that both she and the city
685 came to the realization that what the library did was important and that it couldn't do the same
686 thing if it was located away from the downtown area, which Mrs. Rogers house was in a
687 residential area and not near the downtown stores. If it was located in that elegant, beautiful
688 house, it would not provide a rest area for people who were shopping, it wouldn't have been near
689 the university and it wouldn't have been near the public schools, and these are the people who
690 are described as using the library, were the young children who couldn't go home for lunch, the

691 young men of the town who wanted to go and read the newspapers, the farmers and their wives
692 and children who were coming in to town to do their shopping once a week. Um, all of these
693 people, it would have been harder for them to get to the library if it was located over in Old
694 Town, but it also would have changed the nature of the library so that it was, not a storefront and
695 it would have become a more intimidating, imposing edifice.

696
697 LT: Fourteen room mansion, 14 foot high ceilings, very elegant...

698
699 MH: Right, very elegant. And very difficult to maintain, bottom line...(MH laughs)

700
701 LT: And expensive.

702
703 MH: And expensive, and that's why it got, eventually that's why it was torn down. It was
704 impossible to maintain that house (or at least that is what the people who tore it down said), and
705 it was a very practical exchange, and probably reflected a growth of understanding on her part as
706 to what a library should be about. She was coming out of the New England tradition of classical
707 libraries that you know, had busts of classical people, like Cicero and Julius Caesar, in niches
708 and so this is just a practical change on her mind set and the library's mindset and probably the
709 city's mindset as well and so I think it's important.

710
711 LT: And here we have....

712
713 MH: (photo of woman) Mrs. S.G. Sanford, who may have been the person responsible for
714 changing everybody's mind about where the library should be. She was appointed to be the
715 librarian in September of 1908. Mrs. Rogers originally deeded the property in 1907 and she took
716 it back in 1909 and the appointment of Mrs. Sanford was a kind of pivotal event in there. And so
717 with her background in settlement house work and social reform, she may have been the one to
718 go to everybody and say lets keep it the way it was.

719
720 MH: This is a photograph taken from a water tower. Um, it's looking west. Pacific Avenue is
721 entering the photo at the lower left hand corner. 21st avenue is on the lower right. B Street is
722 behind the houses at lower left. I don't know if all of this is in this photograph as the camera is
723 taking it. It gives you a sense of how small a town Forest Grove was at this time....

724
725 LT: This is 1902.

726
727 MH: This is 1902, around 1902, the turn of the century. Even the larger houses in the area had
728 lots of space around them. Most of them had gardens, many had out, had barns. There is a
729 description from this time period of riding into Forest Grove, which was known as Garden City
730 because everybody grew big gardens, and everybody had chickens. And it was a small town and
731 it had an increasingly small town feeling to it. A larger town, the connections to Portland were
732 more and more important, but it is important to realize it's not the town we know now.....
733 (break in footage)

734
735 MH: This is a photograph of a general store from around 1904, in the downtown area of Forest
736 Grove, and if you look you can see a pretty wide diversity of things being sold in this store, and

737 you can get a sense that the people who are there are wearing, some of them are wearing
738 handmade clothes, some of them are wearing store bought clothes. There are fancy shoes. There
739 are people in town who do have money and they are spending it locally, but you also have the
740 sense that this is an old-fashioned general store. There is everything from suspenders and
741 bonnets to pots and pans, and it is not a fancy place, um in Portland or somewhere else. It still
742 has a country feeling to it. This is what most of the stores near the library would have looked
743 like.

744
745 MH: This photograph is taken about 1906. Um, still at the turn of the century, and it is of
746 looking south on Main Street and on one side you have all of the stores with a real sidewalk
747 which was a great benefit on rainy days, which we have a few of in Oregon. The ladies' skirts
748 didn't get very muddy, which they always complained about for many, many years. Every time
749 they had to go to the store they got absolutely muddy and dirty, etc. And then on the other side
750 of the street you have a row of wagons and horses tied up along what was known as the hitching
751 rail. The most prominent thing on that side of the street is a tree and right next to the tree is a
752 wagon loaded up with milk cans, and this is a pretty clear sign that farmers were coming in to
753 Forest Grove from outside of town and tying up their wagons and taking their goods across the
754 street to trade for merchandise. There are still primarily horse and buggies, but there were some
755 people in town who had automobiles and bicycles, in fact there's a bicycle in the picture. You
756 can just barely see it if you look close enough. There are also telephone and electric wires, and
757 the thing at the top of the picture, you can just barely see, it's kind of shaped like a Christmas
758 tree, that's I believe the fire bell, which was important, (chuckle).

759
760 MII: This is the Minnie and John E. Bailey House. 2422 15th Avenue, in the part of town that we
761 now call Old Town. The house was actually built in 1892, this photograph was taken in 1905,
762 and the Baileys were one of the store owners. We've been looking at the inside of the stores and
763 the outside of the stores, and this is where the store owners lived, and you can see they're pretty
764 prosperous. There are bicycles, there's a lovely fence in front, the roof is in good shape, there's
765 gingerbread on the house and the people who live there are wearing very nice clothing, probably
766 store bought. These are not pioneers. These are people who are living a relatively well-to-do,
767 comfortable, prosperous life. The majority of the people living in town at that time were living
768 in this style of house, this style of way, most of them merchants. I'd say the majority of the
769 people we know the most about at that time were living this way. However, there was also
770 another segment of the population that we know they were there because they were on the
771 census, but we don't know much about how they were living, what their houses looked like,
772 where they were economically, but they were not as well off as the people in this picture. They
773 were the ones...(break in footage).

774
775 MH: Okay now, this is a picture of the same house that we just looked at with the fence in front,
776 pulling back and looking down the street. There are trees in the middle of the road, the road is
777 unpaved, but you can see that there is a whole street of very prosperous looking, well cared for
778 gardens and houses. And this is what Old Town Forest Grove looked like about 1912. The
779 people who founded the library, the ones who funded it, who donated the books, lived in this
780 kind of house. The people who went to the library, who used it, lived very differently.
781

782 MH: This is a shot looking across Main Street, where the main row of stores is, to the church
783 square. The Congregational church isn't actually in the picture. This is the area south of the
784 church where there was a large common area with trees and grass, and it looks like there are
785 people having some kind of picnic or some sort of a social event in this picture. This was an
786 important part of the town. It provided a buffer between the stores and the university up until the
787 1919 fire, and we'll talk about the 1919 fire in a minute. But it is important to understand that
788 during the time that the library was founded, the downtown area of Forest Grove had this block
789 in the middle that was tree covered, and the buggies lined up along one side of Main street and
790 the shops were on the other side and the library was to the north of that, just across from the
791 church.

792
793 MH: Okay, this photograph was taken about 1915. It's looking east on 21st Avenue. On the
794 right hand side is the Congregational church, straight ahead is Pacific University, you can just
795 barely make out Marsh Hall behind all the dark pine trees. On the left hand side it looks like a
796 horse standing right in front of what was the public library at that time. So it's right across from
797 the Congregational church, right next door to the university and just down the street from the
798 main shopping area of town. Right next door to it, with the funny gable, actually 2-3 stores
799 down is a garage, or a carriage shop at that time, it became a garage... I guess by 1915 it was a
800 garage, called the Palace Garage, and it shows up in other photographs and there's a bicycle
801 parked right in front of it. And then there's a number of other buildings that changed their
802 purpose throughout the years.

803
804 MH: This is another shot of the same row of shops going down 21st Avenue looking toward the
805 college. However, you can kind of see them a little better. The library, there's a little sign right
806 here that says City Library. And then next to that there's a bazaar and a bookstore, then you
807 come on down the street and here's that funny gable that was the garage, the Palace Garage, I
808 believe it was called. And then here's the ice cream stand right there. Do you want to say
809 something about that?

810
811 LT: I thought that was delightful because it is such a short distance from the library. And in the
812 1970s, when the library moved to Pacific Avenue for a time, there was an ice cream parlor right
813 down the street from us and the staff used to, "happy hour" was going down to the ice cream
814 parlor for a "tall, cool one". (laughter).

815
816 MH: So apparently this was a longstanding tradition! (Laughter). There is a car parked right
817 there and that's the congregational church and here's Marsh Hall, looking through the trees.

818
819 MH: One of the major events in the library's early history is the fire that occurred July 20, 1919,
820 and in this photograph you see the ruins of the library. The whole set of buildings along that side
821 of 21st Avenue burned, there was very little that was salvaged. And the library, many of the
822 books from the library were salvaged and put on the lawn of the university, and according to an
823 article from the time period, a lot of them disappeared. Nobody's quite sure whether they were
824 stolen, whether they burned up or whether they were just not usable anymore and someone
825 dumped them in a trash heap. But it was a major setback in the library's history, and major
826 setback in the development of the town, or not necessarily a setback but an impact. We're going
827 to look at another map, of what got burned and how.

828 MH: This is a copy of the Sanborn Fire Insurance map. It was made in 1912 and there was some
829 variation in the actual buildings that burned. The fire started here and spread both to the north
830 and to the south. Here's the public library, so this whole block of buildings burned to the ground
831 and had to be totally rebuilt, and most significantly the First Congregational Church across the
832 street also burned to the ground and there's some very dramatic stories of the bell in the steeple
833 ringing out just before the whole thing collapsed to the ground and people talked about the
834 emotional impact of this church burning. It was the second major fire for the Congregational
835 Church in a relatively short space of time. They had just managed to rebuild the church and it
836 was done in a very modern, for the time period, style and had cost a fair amount of money. So in
837 order to refinance another building, of another church building, they sold half of the blocks to the
838 south of the Congregational Church and storefronts were built down there and the town lost its
839 central common area, which had an impact on the feeling and the character of the town, I
840 believe. It went from being a New England town with a common, with the shops along the one
841 side and the university on the other, to almost having two centers that were not at peace with
842 each other. So, you have main Street going down one side of the Congregational Church and
843 College Way going down the other, and there's a sense of dislocation between the two parts of
844 town that's more than just a space issue. It also has to do with the nature of the residents, the
845 people who live in the town and how they relate to each other. And this is all happening right at
846 the end of WW I when there have been major social changes and upheaval because of the war.
847 And it's really the end of, it's the beginning of the modern history of Forest Grove and the fire is
848 a really convenient, pivotal point to look at that. The library is reconstructed in pretty much the
849 same place, but there's a different feeling to the town and the history and what gets focused on in
850 the newspapers that may or may not have anything to do with the fire and the subsequent
851 reconstruction, but it's easy to use that as a pivotal event.

852
853 MH: Shortly after the fire a group of women go to the City Council and ask the City Council,
854 was the place insured, how is it going to get rebuilt? You know, the library is important, what do
855 we need to do to get it back up and running again. And the newspaper account said the women
856 did this, and asked what they asked, but it's not clear about what the answers were, and this
857 picture may represent one of the answers, which is: This is the Forest Grove Women's Club that
858 was founded at about the same time as the library and has had a longstanding history of
859 supporting the library. And this is a photograph of a circus that the Forest Grove Women's Club
860 put on to raise funds to help rebuild the library, and I actually remember when this picture was
861 first given to Eric Stewart, and we were looking at it and he had not looked at it really closely
862 and I was sitting there looking at it and I said, "Eric, all of these are women!" and he said
863 "What?!" (laughter) and we looked at it again and we realized that even the ringmaster who at
864 first glance is male, was actually a woman and that's when he began putting the pieces together
865 and realized what the photograph was a picture of and why it was important.

866
867 LT: It 's part of a longstanding tradition of the Forest Grove City Library, as we've alluded to
868 in other portions of this history, that hats and costumes are not strangers to our library's tradition,
869 either in the past or the present.

870
871 MH: Yes.

872

873 MH: This picture was actually taken in 1973 and it shows the storefront that was built after the
874 fire. They salvaged some of the walls and were able to rebuild the rest and put a stucco, I think
875 it's called a Willamette cream stucco, or something like that, along the front and this remained
876 the library until the 1970s when it moved into its new facility.

877

878 LT: Um hmm. 1978. A little changed in terms of the architecture. (laughter).

879

880 LT: So after the fire in 1919.

881

882 MH: They actually rebuilt pretty fast. I've got the newspaper article here. The fire was in July
883 and by September they were contracting with J.S. Loins to build a new building that was going
884 to have a *cement floor*, and the Palace Garage, which was the one with the funny gable in all
885 those pictures, that was almost already rebuilt by that time, so when you look at the photograph
886 of the Forest Grove Women's Club that says Palace Garage, that was the rebuilt Palace Garage
887 behind them. So it's kind of interesting to see, yes, all of these buildings were wood buildings
888 with brick fronts and that's why the town burned so often and there was this history of most of
889 the major buildings going up in smoke at some point or another, but they did rebuild fast. They
890 were very good at getting it done.

891

892 There's a series of things that happened in the following decade in, let's see, June of 1922 the
893 newspaper says "Philanthropic woman goes to her reward", which I love. And Adeline Rogers
894 died at that point.

895

896 I.T: At age 90.

897

898 MH: At age 90 and she donated a large sum of money to the library out of her personal income.
899 And I think about half of it, some percentage of it was to go towards buying new books every
900 year, and the rest was kind of for the establishment of a capital fund.

901

902 LT: I think it was \$200 a year.

903

904 MH: Yeah, it doesn't sound like much to us now, but it was probably fair large.

905

906 LT: Significant in those days.

907

908 MH: Yeah. And it's kind of interesting just to note that the house that she had donated to the
909 city and took back, was left empty on its beautiful piece of property until her son just basically
910 shut the door and walked away from it and abandoned it.

911

912 LT: Because he was a bookseller in Spokane.

913

914 MH: Yeah, he was out in Washington and had no interest in it and didn't pay the taxes and it was
915 repossessed, I think, by the City. And eventually the house was pulled down and all of the local
916 kids played on that block and it became kind of public space, and a guy named what, D.E.
917 Brigham? Is that right? Do you remember?

918

919 LT: Sounds right, yeah.

920
921 MH: ...Kind of, started taking care of it and it turned it into a park and more and more people
922 got involved in helping him take care of it, and finally the city took over the management and it's
923 now known as Rogers Park. And one of my children's favorite things to do whenever we go to
924 Rogers Park is I have to tell them the story of the wonderful lady, Adeline Rogers, who donated
925 the library, so we have our own family myth about where the park came from and where the
926 library came from and it is all centered around Adeline Rogers. Someday, maybe I'll get to
927 meet her up in heaven or something and tell her that. I think she'd enjoy it.

928
929 MH: Mrs. Sanford remained the librarian until her death in 1928. I said Sanford right, not
930 Sandberg?

931
932 LT: Sanford.

933
934 MH: There's a wonderful, in an article in 1923, there's sort of a report about the library and why
935 it's such a good thing for the town, and I'm actually going to read a part of it because it talks
936 about who's using the library and how it's being used in a way that kind of supports the social
937 service side that we've been talking about.

938
939 So if you don't mind me taking the time, I'm going to do that. This is from the *News-Times*
940 April 12, 1923: "With our limited resources, we could not be expected to make much of a record
941 in just library work. Community center might be a better name for so many things of helpfulness
942 go on there. Sometime ago, a woman with three children to support came here. She wanted to
943 work in the cannery, but her six year-old girl got out of school before the older children, and
944 what would the little one do until the others came home? The woman was told to talk with the
945 librarian and she did, and that family remained in town a year a two, the child coming to the
946 library where she played with her dolls or was amused with pictures whenever her mother went
947 out to work." Then, um,: "Sixteen persons at one time have eaten their lunch in the rest room
948 where are conveniences for making hot drinks and during school days, from 6-10 students eat
949 lunch there. Babies are made comfortable and happy, tired women lie down while waiting in
950 town, women hunting work and women hunting help come there, and women anxious and
951 worried with all sorts of problems find sympathy, hope and cheer. A young girl just on the point
952 of giving up the struggle to continue her school and go into a restaurant to work was helped.
953 The anxious mother came to the library and after a few hours of consultation and planning, the
954 clouds of despondency rolled away and the girl graduated and today holds a good position in
955 Portland, an honor to her family and town."

956
957 And the article actually goes on and on and it concludes: "When Mrs. Sanford is asked why she
958 does not keep a record of these things and include it in her yearly report, her reply is 'Keep a
959 record of neighborliness? never! The red tape that plays such a prominent part on modern
960 philanthropy kills much of the good we try to do. It is bad for the recipient but worse for the
961 dispenser, for it strains most of the milk of human kindness out of the effort when it is tabulated
962 as case so and so'"

963
964 LT: And she actually, in fact, worked until her death at age 80.

965

966 MH: Until her death in 1928. And so whatever she was doing it must have just made her life
967 what was worth living. She just kept on doing it right up to the day she died, one gets the
968 impression. And the history of the library, at the point of her death, the sense of really strong
969 characters and that sense of being a community center, it still sort of remains but it isn't quite as
970 strong. And I think that has to do with the change in the understanding of what a library was,
971 and what it was supposed to do, but it also has to do with the character and the personality of the
972 people who started the library and the reasons for starting it. By the time she dies, there's a
973 much more professional, you probably know more about this than I do, there's more of a
974 professional understanding of the library and what librarians did and not so much of a sense that
975 they were there to do social service work.

976

977 So the next series of librarians. It's hard to know... We don't have the strongest sense of their
978 character and who they were, and it's hard to know whether that's just because they're so close
979 to us in time that nobody bothered to document their history. Once we get into the '30s and '40s,
980 we really don't know as much about the library and how it was used.

981

982 LT: We do know that when Mrs. May Holmes became the librarian in 1928, was followed by the
983 depression and that was one period that they documented there was a 33% increase in use
984 resulting from the unemployment in the area and the fact that people needed a place to kill time.

985

986 MH: And books to read because they couldn't afford to do anything else. So we know that....

987

988 LT: And that was certainly a social service function to keep people off the streets and....

989

990 MH: So that was important. And I don't know much about how World War II and the '40s
991 impacted the library.

992

993 LT: Mrs. Hazel Moore came in 1937 and in 1941 the first children's alcove was built. And so
994 that there was more of an understanding that they needed their own separate space.

995

996 MH: Um hmm, and that more and more children's books were being written I would assume, so
997 that justified a separate area to contain them so that they could be found easier.

998

999 LT: As the natural trend went away from being a junior adult to having a specific childhood,
1000 there were more and more things geared to childhood.

1001

1002 MH: So that was the '30s and '40s and then we get up into the '50s and you're starting to
1003 document that now with a series of interviews that you are doing with other people.

1004

1005 LT: And we know that during the war, Rogers Park became a trailer park.

1006

1007 MH: That's right, that's right. And we do have a picture of that somewhere.

1008

1009 LT: The housing with the war effort, right?

1010

1011 MH: Right, well actually it was after the war, is my understanding. There was a shortage of
1012 housing with all of the soldiers returning and they had to find somewhere for them to live and
1013 they put trailers in Rogers Park. (break in footage)

1014
1015 LT:Going to Pacific University during that time and Marshall _____, who was a student
1016 and lived in Forest Grove in those years will have an interview with us and hopefully more
1017 research into that era will be forthcoming in the future.

1018
1019 MH: Well I think it's just beginning to be understood that it's history and if we don't capture it
1020 quickly, some of the oral history, some of those memories are dying fast. And the job of going
1021 through the microfilm of the local newspapers of the town..... Eric Stewart did a lot of the early
1022 work, up until about the late '20s of going through them painstakingly and of putting anything
1023 that he found that referenced libraries into a notebook, but nobody has done it for the '30s and
1024 '40s yet, and there are far more newspapers available for the time period and the newspapers are
1025 bigger, so it's a big task for someone to take on, but it needs to be done.... Do we want to
1026 take a few minutes and sort of summarize what we walked through just quickly? (Yes)

1027
1028 So, in the early pioneer era we have individual books in people's houses, but not very many.
1029 Probably most of them were bible or religious works. We do have the lovely addition of some
1030 dictionaries being brought into town by Professor Marsh. We probably actually didn't say that
1031 there were probably some scientific books, oh by the professor who did the geology, I'll think of
1032 his name in a minute. There are some things around town, floating around having to do with
1033 early geology and stuff like that. But until the 1880s and the 1890s when we begin to have
1034 some sort of sense of social service and a need to build up public institutions in order to have the
1035 commitment to poor people being educated and also having a good town that people will want to
1036 move to. So you sort of have these two movements combined, and that's when you begin to get
1037 the rise of public libraries and you get financial support from the state level coming in, and that
1038 combining with the women's groups and their commitment to social service, lead to the
1039 development of the Forest Grove Reading Room and that concept grows into a library in order to
1040 get the funding from the state. That's a really brief summary, but it gives a sense of an
1041 overview. And then we have the lovely people like Mrs. Rogers and Mrs. Sanford coming in
1042 and having the library be a combination of a social service, community oriented, supportive
1043 community center with the books, with the newspapers, making for a very unique place in time.

1044
1045 LT: We have you to thank, Megan, for gathering much of this research and making this possible
1046 to capture the early history.

1047
1048 MH: Yeah, it probably also ought to be said that a lot of the original research was done by
1049 Margaret Gilbert, who interviewed many of the people who were involved in starting the library,
1050 before they died and did some of the early documentation. A lot of her work was built on by
1051 Eric Stewart and a lot of the photographs that we've shown pictures of were gathered together by
1052 Eric Stewart. The work that I've done is building upon what they did and a lot of the
1053 information that I've provided came from them and their sources.

1054
1055
1056