



A Bit of History...

Jane Hattan was born in 1819 and her brother, Mark in 1821 in Rockbridge County, Virginia. By 1838 the family was living in Illinois, where Jane married Morris Baxter. Family records disclose that in 1843 Morris "mysteriously and unexpectedly disappeared with a considerable sum of money and was presumed murdered by 'Bandits of the Prairies'." Little is known of Horace Baker's early years except that he was born in Vermont in 1802, and by his probate records, his heirs included two daughters and one son in Ohio, and a son living in Benton County, Oregon. These children would have ranged in age from 4 to 14 when Horace came to Oregon.

On April 22, 1845 Jane left her children - Carlin, age 6; Julia, 5; and Mary, 2 - with her parents, Forsythe and Mary Hattan in Illinois, joined her brother, Mark and his bride of six days - Martha, and Horace Baker for the journey to Oregon. Due to late arrival in Missouri, they missed the famed "Barlow Road" wagon train of 1845 and had to wait for departure of the first wagons on May 7, 1846.

Among several talents, Horace Baker was a stone mason, and after reaching the Clackamas River on October 10, he chose to settle at this location because of its mountain of basalt rock. Mark Hattan settled a half-mile southwest. Horace and Jane had agreed to a common-law marriage and filed their Donation Land Claim as husband and wife. Jane lost her 320 acres when it was learned they were not "legally" married, but regained her claim following their wedding vows in Clackamas County on September 19, 1852.

For unknown reasons, Jane never returned for her children. Carlin died in the Civil War in 1861; Julia married Joseph Mumpower in 1857, and in July 1882 their family moved to Oregon (Carver). Horace Baker died in January 1882. Jane visited Mary and her family in Illinois in 1883 and returned to her cabin, where she resided until her death in December 1898.

In the early 1850s, a California company reneged on a special order for hand-hewn logs. Though the original Baker residence is nondescript, Horace purchased the 12-inch square logs, hand-hewn on all four sides, and in 1856 built the 20x30-foot house which is known as Baker Cabin. The walls are stacked nine logs high. With the exception of the top and bottom logs, which are mortised at the corners (i.e. fastened together by placing a cutout hole in the top log, over a peg in the log beneath it), the logs between are lapped together without mortising, using no pegs or nails to fasten them together. The much larger sleeping-attic on top of the cabin is supported with beams and ceiling joists placed in cantilevered fashion by supporting the beams outward and beyond the base walls. The cantilever across the front forms a covered entrance porch; the one on the east side

shelters the open exterior stairway which rises from the front porch to a second-floor porch or veranda. On the west end of the building a massive fireplace, six feet wide and six feet high, occupies one-third of the wall. The stone used in the construction of the fireplace, hearth and outside chimney came from this property. Stone from Baker's Quarry was also rafted down river and used in other early construction, which included the original Oregon City Courthouse, Oregon City Locks, Portland Hotel, Pioneer Post Office in Portland and Tillamook Lighthouse.

The cabin was occupied for approximately 50 years, until being abandoned in 1901. In October 1937 descendants and neighbors organized The Old Timers' Association of Oregon, directed by Bill Heales (President until his death in 1963). They bought 1/2 acres with the cabin from John and Mary Hattan for \$200, and undertook restoration of the unique cabin for posterity. Other early board members included William, Grant and Paul Mumpower, Owen Hattan, Albert Cook, David Oiler, Maurice Woods, Sylvester Link, J. Earle Jones, and Ruth Schmale George. Several logs had dry rot and the chimney was partially collapsed. The building was completely dismantled, with the logs of each wall laid out in the order they were removed and marked with Roman numerals. New logs were hewn to replace the bad ones, and the others were easily replaced in proper order by the numerals - which are evident today. After restoration, a dedication ceremony officially named the building Baker Cabin.

The Association was renamed Baker Cabin Historical Society in the mid-1970s - to better identify its purpose of restoration and preservation of the property. Baker Cabin was entered in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. Subsequent restoration work on the cabin was accomplished in 1994. A storage/display building was donated in 1995 by Roy Hattan, who was Jane Baker's second-great grandson.

The quaint white church located on the south end of the Historic Site originated in Logan. Beginning as a Sunday School in the home of its founders, John and Elizabeth Zurbuchen, this German Methodist Church was built in 1895. As were many other German churches, this church was abandoned in the early 1920s.

Ernest Heinrich, lifetime Carver resident and honorary lifetime Director of the Society, acquired the building for The Old Timers' Association, and paid for its six-mile move to the Historic Site in 1967. The building was restored in 1970 to represent a typical pioneer church, and rental of it is the Society's main source of revenue. More than two thousand weddings, vow renewals, memorial services and christenings have taken place in the Baker Cabin Pioneer Church since its restoration.

Annual dues from membership in the Society help support the preservation treasury. Individual Membership is \$7.50; Individual Senior, \$5.00; Family, \$10.00; Supporting, \$25.00; and Individual Life Membership, \$100.00. Further information regarding planned events, membership admission, and rental of the Baker Cabin Pioneer Church may be obtained from the Society's reservation desk at (503) 631-8274.