



## Hello everyone. Please let me introduce myself.

### I am the grand old lady who lives on First Avenue in Stayton.

I look pretty good, don't you think? My people at the Santiam Heritage Foundation have worked very hard to spruce me up over the last few years. Let me tell you about myself.

My days started in 1903 when Martha and Charles Brown built me as a showcase home to display all the nice things you could buy from the Brown Lumber Mill. Boy was I a looker! I was an elegant residence, "one of the finest in the county" according to an article in the December 1903, edition of the Stayton Mail. The Browns took good care of me for 25 years.

There were two boys and one girl in the family. They were great fun because they all played musical instruments. They played music a lot and it was even more fun when they filled my double parlors with guests.

In 1925 Charles died unexpectedly. What was Martha to do? She loved me, with my big back yard. Charles had just started a new business. It was called the Batt Factory and was down by the Stayton Ditch. Wool and straw were mixed together to make a thin mattress. These were used as bedding. In small towns in the 1920's, women seldom worked outside the home. But Martha sold me and she and her sons took over the business. She ran the factory for many years and was very successful.

### By 1928 things were looking up for me.

I was to get a whole new lease on life. The Kendricks bought me and turned me into a hospital. It was a mixture of happy and sad times. So far, my people have located more than 100 babies that were born in my upstairs. Many of the mothers were from isolated logging camps. Usually, they stayed with me for a week. Some of the patients were men who were hurt in logging or farm accidents.

In 1934, I underwent a complete makeover with 4 rooms added upstairs and one added to my first floor. This made the hospital more efficient, but I did lose some of my charms. In 1939 the Hospital closed.

### A new chapter in my life was about to start.

The Nightingale family moved in. They were a large family. Many of the children were already grown and no longer lived with the family. But the younger ones loved playing in my many rooms and with all the hospital equipment that had been left behind. Members of the family have come back on occasion and reminisce about those days.

### Next came the Weddles.

The Weddles were a well-known family in town, as they were the proprietors of the local mortuary. The rumor was they would make me into a funeral home.

## THE VALUE OF HISTORY

**IDENTITY** » History nurtures personal and collective identity in a diverse world. People discover their place in time through stories of their families, communities, and nation. These stories of freedom and equality, injustice and struggle, loss and achievement, and courage and triumph shape people's personal values that guide them through life.

**CRITICAL THINKING** » History teaches vital skills. Historical thinking requires critical approaches to evidence and argument and develops contextual understanding and historical perspective, encouraging meaningful engagement with concepts like continuity, change, and causation, and the ability to interpret and communicate complex ideas clearly and coherently.

**VIBRANT COMMUNITIES** » History is the foundation for strong, vibrant communities. A place becomes a community when wrapped in human memory as told through family stories, tribal traditions, and civic commemorations as well as discussions about our roles and responsibilities to each other and the places we call home.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** » History is a catalyst for economic growth. Communities with cultural heritage institutions and a strong sense of historical character attract talent, increase tourism revenues, enhance business development, and fortify local economies.

But instead in July 1949, the family moved in. There was another major change to my appearance when an outside staircase was built and an apartment was put in upstairs in the mid-1950s.

For over 38 years, three generations of the Weddle family lived here. Members of the family were so fond of me that Wendy Weddle Stone is now president of the SHF. Then I was sold to the Huntleys, and time had taken its toll. I sat vacant and lonely for nearly 10 years. Everyone in town wondered, what would become of me.

## **In 2000 Stayton Cooperative Telephone Company bought me.**

SCTC surprised everyone by selling me to the newly formed Santiam Heritage Foundation in 2001. The last 18 years have been spent turning me from an "eyesore," into what people have called "a big beautiful wedding cake." When my hospital additions were removed, my people found my original green color, which was hidden for a very long time. So, now I'm back to the original colors Charles & Martha painted me!

## **My people have big plans for me.**

When I am fully restored I will once again be a welcoming place for weddings, receptions, reunions and activities of all sorts. There will again be music and laughter. Now it's 2019 and people are renting my first floor to make new memories. But my upstairs still needs work to be usable. My people say that \$25,000 will finish my upstairs. That may sound like a lot of money to you. However, when you put it into the perspective of that's less than 10% of the money spent restoring me so far, it doesn't seem like so much.

My second-floor woodwork has been stripped of the white paint, stained to match the rest of my dark woodwork and finished. And, my stair rail is complete again after nearly 65 years!

Next, my people will tackle the walls and ceilings of my original 3 bedrooms, hallways and water closet. My people are awaiting a grant decision that will fund half of the plaster work that's needed. If the grant is approved, my people will need \$9,000 to match it. After that my floors will be the last thing needing refinishing and Viola! I will be complete again!

## **I have been very fortunate to have the community's support over the years.**

*My people continue to need your support to finish my second floor, so those rooms can be used. If you'd like to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit [www.brownhouse.org](http://www.brownhouse.org) to donate online or mail a check to P.O. Box 161 Stayton, OR 97383.*

This is a very exciting time because, as my people approach completing my restoration, they are moving into a transition phase:

from restoring me, so I can be available for rentals to make new memories, and putting to use the historic materials donated to my people. Ernst Lau, who was the original historian for my people, bequest his collection of historic materials to my people and the descendants of Charles and Martha Brown donated many personal papers and photos to my people. They plan to use these materials to educate people, young and old, local and visitors about me and the surrounding area in support of The Value of History, as compiled by History Relevance.com and endorsed by my people, the Santiam Heritage Foundation Board of Trustees. They are also excited to have some new volunteers who have the skills to help share the historic material in an interesting way for people who do most everything electronically now. If this sounds interesting to you, my people are always willing to welcome new volunteers. If you have questions, please email [cmbrownhouse@gmail.com](mailto:cmbrownhouse@gmail.com) or call 503-769-8860. You can also use these contact methods if you're interested in renting me for your upcoming special event. I make special events into unique ones.

I am now open on a regular schedule. On the second Sunday of each month, I am open from 12 noon to 2 PM for tours and visitors. Stop by to say hello and see what a makeover can do for a 116-year-old lady.

**ENGAGED CITIZENS** » History helps people envision a better future. Democracy thrives when individuals convene to express opinions, listen to others, and take action. Weaving history into discussions about contemporary issues clarifies differing perspectives and misperceptions, reveals complexities, grounds competing views in evidence, and introduces new ideas; all can lead to greater understanding and viable community solutions.

**LEADERSHIP** » History inspires leaders. History provides today's leaders with role models as they navigate through the complexities of modern life. The stories of persons from the past can offer direction to contemporary leaders and help clarify their values and ideals.

**LEGACY** » History, saved and preserved, is the foundation for future generations. Historical knowledge is crucial to protecting democracy. By preserving authentic and meaningful documents, artifacts, images, stories, and places, future generations have a foundation on which to build and know what it means to be a member of the civic community.

Source: History Relevance.com

## **A Special Thanks for Recent Grant Awards from:**

