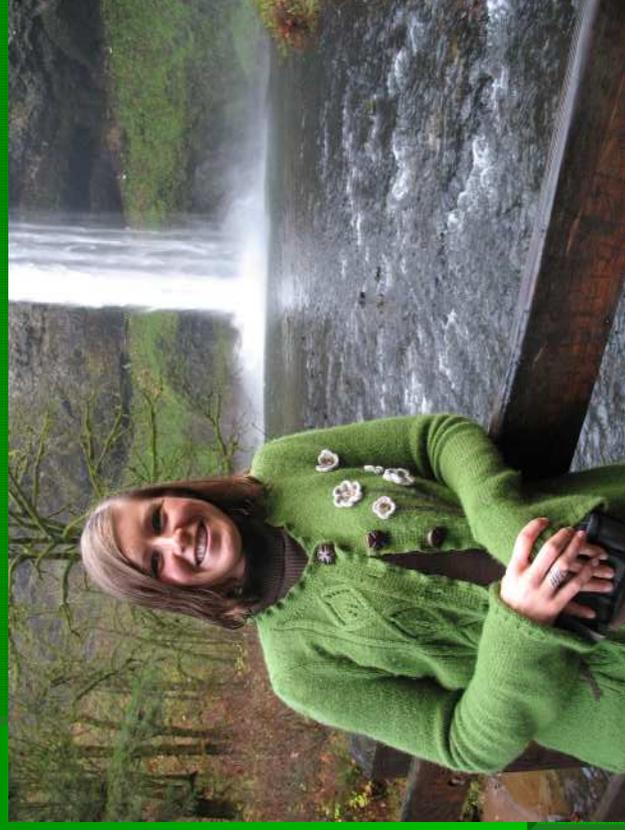


# Silver Falls State Park: LI861 Archives in the Park



**Jenny Gapp**  
**Fall 2008**  
**SLIM, Emporia State University**

# SFSP Archives, a photo essay

---

Upon contacting the Interpretive Ranger, Dorothy Kwaiser-Brown, at SFSP, I discovered that The Park was without a proper archives. They were in possession of objects, interpretive displays, historical photographs, reports, oral histories, maps, and scrapbooks; but without a formal way to organize or house their collection.

The Park has been conducting a series of oral interviews entitled “We Were There” under the past several Interpretive Rangers. Each year The Park hosts a “homecoming” for “old-timers” living in the area to reminisce and record their memories of The Park’s earlier years.



Dorothy Kwaiser-Brown,  
*SFSP Interpretive Ranger*

My initial meeting with Dorothy took place on Friday, October 10, 2008.

The “archives” were in disarray, housed in a cardboard box, a plastic file folder, and a milk crate—all stored in the attic of The South Falls Lodge. It came to my attention that material relevant to the history of The Park was spread as far as San Francisco, where the archives of The Civilian Conservation Corps reside. The YMCA also has a history with The Park, Camp Silver Creek was established in 1936 as the Silver Creek Recreational Demonstration Project. Built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) under The Roosevelt Administration, the camp still operates today under the YMCA’s jurisdiction. The Oregon Transportation Division is also known to possess relevant historical photographs and papers.

The Oregon Historical Society, The Silverton Public Library and Silverton Historical Society were also identified as potential partners and institutions to solicit for archival material relevant to The Park. The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department headquarters also house a significant portion of SFSP materials.



The state of “the archives” at the beginning of the project.



The South Falls Lodge appears on the National Registry for Historic Buildings. This view looks at the back entrance.

**Community Events:**

Mother's Day Wildflower Show, AI Faussett Days, State Parks Day, Christmas Festival, Earth Day

The project took place in The South Falls Lodge in the heart of The Park. A "garage" stands adjacent to The Lodge, where interpretive displays have been housed in the past. The garage is not heated and The Lodge uses a fireplace downstairs and electric space heaters upstairs. Consistency of temperature is ideal for an archival collection. Park Staff will need to consider whether the attic of The Lodge is ideal for a permanent collection.

The Lodge hosts community events throughout the year, providing opportunities for archival displays and fundraising necessary for implementing infrastructure to improve control over temperature. National guidelines for "improving" historic buildings will also need to be considered.



## Friday, October 17, 2008

---

In addition to a *PowerPoint* outline of recommended handling and care of archival materials, I created a flowchart providing an overview of possibilities for the archives. The ultimate goal was to take as many archival information packages as possible, re-house them, and catalog them in *Past Perfect*, a cataloging software.

In collaboration with the organizations mentioned in previous slides it may be possible to consolidate records concerning SFSP and house them in either the garage, The Stone Shelter, or an entirely new building at an alternative location in The Park.

In The South Falls Lodge with materials in need of re-housing.

The Park recently increased its total acreage to 9,065 acres. A Master Plan outlines developments to be made on the north end of The Park. Being a work in progress in may be possible to advocate for a state of the art museum & archives building as a part of the long-term vision.

# Park Staff & Volunteers



(L – R) Dorothy Kwaiser-Brown, *Interpretive Ranger*, Carl Shepherd, *Park Ranger* and Jennifer Godfrey, *Interpretive Assistant*.

Andy and Lou, volunteers with *Friends of Silver Falls*

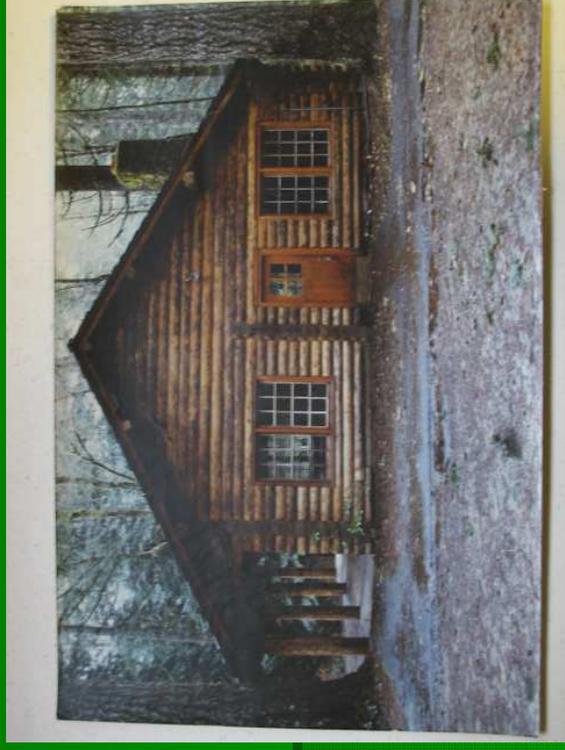


In addition to these individuals, *Park Manager*, Kevin Strandberg was also present for the project overview presentation.



### The Stone Shelter

SFSP celebrated its Diamond Anniversary, or 75 years in September 2008. A plaque commemorating the event sits over the fireplace in The Stone Shelter.



### The Log Cabin

These two buildings are located in a historic preservation area near the South Falls Lodge. Neither are rented out to the public and only used for Park events. Both have the potential to be used for displaying interpretive materials in the archives.



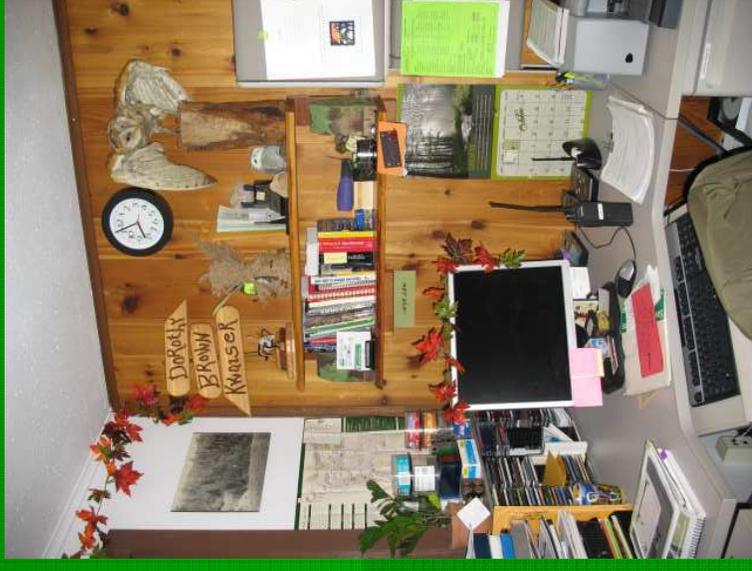
# Saturday, October 25, 2008

---

A furry creature greets visitors on the back stairwell of The South Falls Lodge.



Kwaiser-Brown's office is located on the second story of The Lodge. This began my first "hands on" day in which I began sorting and re-housing at risk items.





Archival quality plastic pocket sheets, folders, and boxes were used in the initial re-housing.

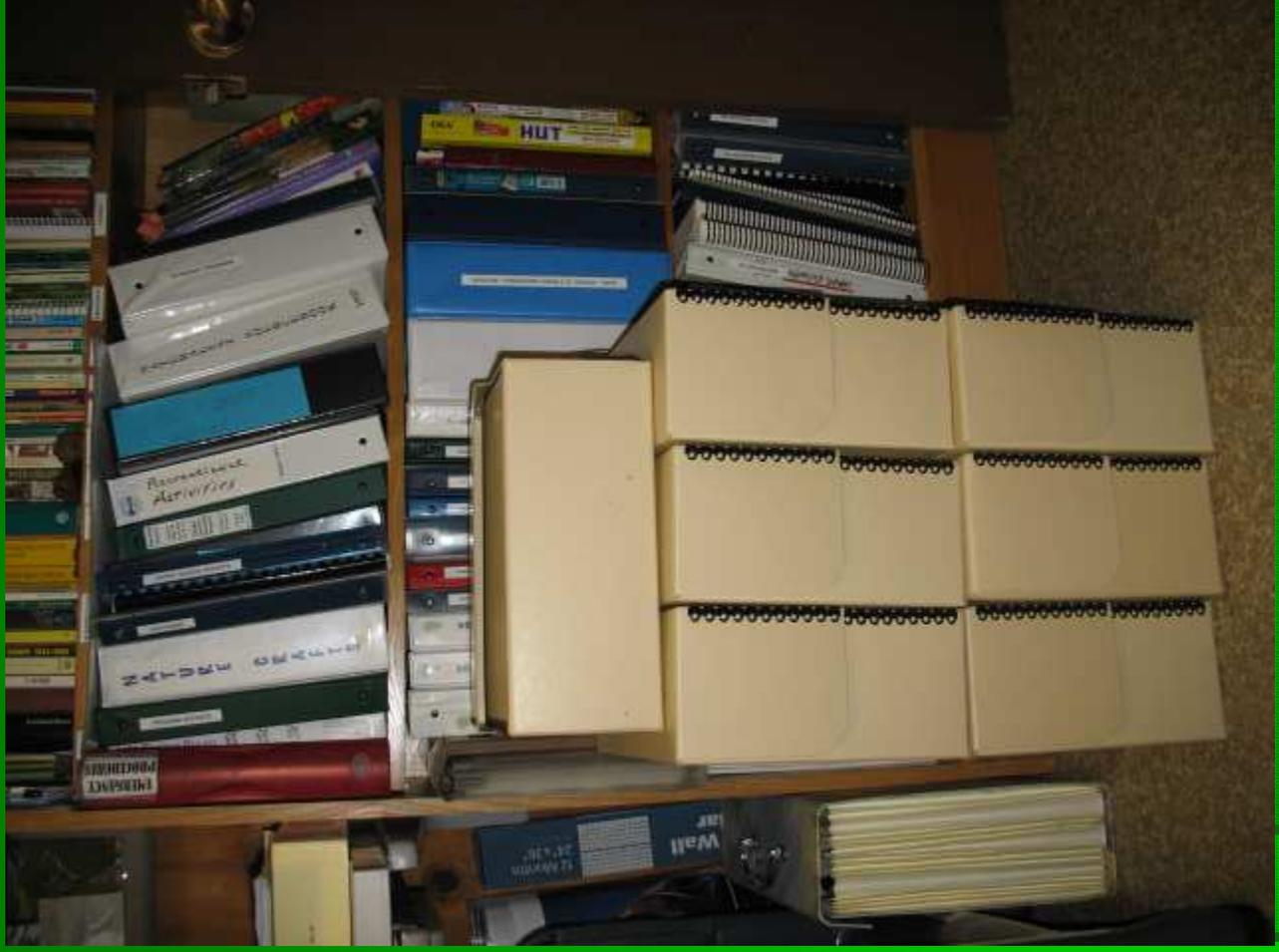


A small pile of office items jeopardizing the collection included paperclips, binder clips, staples, and sticky notes. These were removed during re-housing.



Unique items such as tree bores, photographic negatives, park maps, and newspaper clippings emerged from the milk crate. You can observe the yellowed tape barely holding the tree bores to the paper.

Park newsletters, flyers for community events, collections donated by former volunteers with *Friends of Silver Falls*, and informational brochures were also identified. Parts from former interpretive displays, multiple copies of public hand-outs, along with items determined to have no archival value were left in previous housing for Park Staff to determine relevance to the collection.



One box of unsorted photographs had already been re-housed by volunteers. After logging two and a half hours I increased that number to seven. Fragile and oddly shaped items were placed in a large archival flat box.

Kwaiser-Brown intends to eventually return the items to the attic inside a metal file cabinet. *The Interpretive Assistant*, Jennifer Godfrey, has been transcribing oral histories from the “We Were There” series. The team will continue to work on scanning, fine tuning the housing, and cataloging after my involvement with the project ends in December.

## Saturday, November 1, 2008

---

### Historical Photo Scans:

After removing items from a final file folder, work began on scanning three boxes of photographs. Four boxes house paper archives, not including the flat box.

My experience with handling photographs at The Estes Park Museum in Colorado came in handy. I brought in several pairs of white cotton gloves from my Library at Cascade Junior High. Archival quality tissue paper will have to be cut to size and included in some of the file folders at a later date. When possible, photographs were enclosed in plastic sleeves. Additional materials will need to be purchased in order to accommodate the size of the collection.





**The Shot:** This photograph (left) depicts a pair of bucks staring down the camera lens. During the scanning process I frequently cropped and rotated the scans. I did not make edits effecting brightness, contrast or saturation. When cataloging, judgments will have to be made on originality and provenance.

**The Process:** Using the scanner (seen below, far right) I carefully handled photographs dating from the early 1900's to the 1990's. Several hundred remain to be scanned, and prints from other collections may be acquired in the future in order to centralize the collection.





These photographs were irresistible. Large, glossy black and white prints in good condition, they appear to have been taken sometime in the 1960's or 70's. Subjects and photographer are unknown, but possibly came from an established collection elsewhere.

## Tuesday, November 11, 2008

---



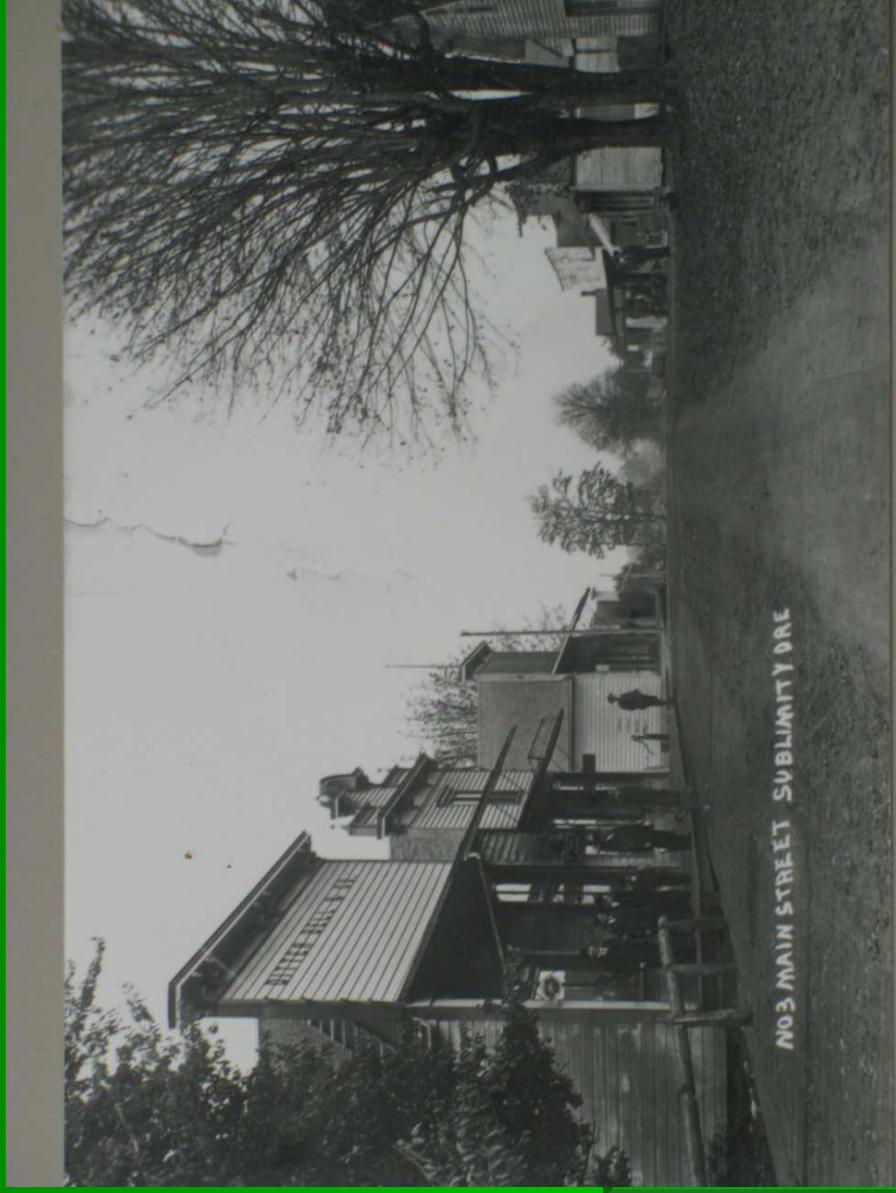
Scanning of historical photographs continues. Logged 2.5 hours. 118 scans completed over November 1<sup>st</sup> and today. Discovered photographs of Fred Rupp, postman in the vicinity of SFSP. It appears he delivered his mail despite record snowfall. These photographs were grouped together in the folders and should be cataloged with provenance attributed to The Rupp Family.

**Marketing the Collection:** I noticed that *The Estes Park Museum Store* sold prints of selected photographs housed in their archives. Selling prints from the SFSP Archives in *The Friends Store* might help supplement income for the maintenance of The Archives.

# Historical Photographs: a few finds

---

## Sublimity, Oregon



Looking closely at the building on the left you'll see the name Ditter. While the building no longer exists the name lives on in Ditter's Town Square, a complex that stands near the same site today. The Ditters were one of the first families to settle in the area. Sublimity lies to the south of The Park.

Sublimity acquired its name by reputation—as being a “sublime” place to live.

# Silverton, Oregon



To the north of The Park, Silverton boasts being “The gateway to Silver Falls.” Silver Falls City once existed in the heart of The Park, a booming logging town. It appears this photograph depicts a camp established by “S. L. Cos.” perhaps an abbreviation for Silverton or Silver Falls Logging Company. An obscure marking in the corner indicates the photograph was taken in 1911.

# Furred & Feathered Friends of Silver Falls



A river otter, a bird, a chipmunk, and a deer are captured on film; documenting a few of the many native residents of The Park. The photographers are unknown.

## Aerial view of SFSP June 25, 1981



This photographic print came from a collection at The Oregon Transportation Division. It had a numerical reference on the reverse: A791-290. It is my assumption that this information will make it easier to trace who the photographer was and why the photograph was taken.

A whole series of aerial shots emerged from the collection. It would be interesting to do comparative shots in 2011, 30 years after these were taken.

## Saturday, November 29, 2008

---



Kwaiser-Brown was present for this final day on the project. We worked together on unraveling *Past Perfect*, a cataloging software commonly used in museums. We successfully cataloged four photographs, attaching an electronic copy of the photograph to each record.

**SFSP in the News:** Oregon State Senator, Fred Girod, briefly campaigned last year to turn SFSP into a National Park. This idea instigated both opposition and advocacy from the surrounding community. The popular YA novel and teen blockbuster movie, *Twilight*, was partially filmed at Silver Falls. Scenes from the film, *The Hunted* were also recorded here.

Archiving letters, documents, and films associated with The Park will not only increase the size of the collection, but offer a more complete picture of the ongoing Park story. Generating a scope for the collection and creating policy and procedure for SFSP Archives should address issues of relevance.

# Reflection

---

My experience was wholly satisfying and my only regret is that I did not have more time to spend with the collection. It was immensely rewarding to have taken a small piece of the archives through the entire flowchart proposed at the beginning of the project—from milk crate to electronic record.

I am looking forward to seeing The SFSP Archives grow and as long as I live in Sublimity, would consider volunteering my time for the project in the future.

Thanks to Park Staff and volunteers that accommodated me in this venture.



“Fos”, named for “Friends of Silver Falls” or perhaps the orange hair of Fozzie Bear, this stray was caught napping in Dorothy’s chair. It is hoped that he will become a part of the SFSP team, eradicating pests that may attempt to eat the archives.