

# Valley & State

## Anne Hathaway house turns 100

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The 100th birthday of what is believed to be the oldest, continuously operated place of public accommodation in Ashland is being celebrated Sunday with an open house.

Joseph T. Currie, a single man with gold mining and real estate interests, built the two-story, white house at 586 E. Main St. as a boarding house. It is now operated as Anne Hathaway's Bed and Breakfast.

"Over its 100 years, the house has been the temporary home of thousands of Ashlanders and visitors to Ashland," said Deedie Runkel, current owner with her husband David. "It was a boarding house for more than 60 years and has been operated as a bed and breakfast inn since 1982."

Railroaders, nurses, teachers, students, telephone operators and printers are among those listed as boarders at the house in Polk City Directories. It is believed that the house was temporarily put into service as Ashland's hospital after the 1909 fire at the Southern Oregon Hospital since Margaret Thom, hospital superintendent, boarded at the house.

"At another time, 10 women students lived in the house, sharing the one bathroom on the second floor," Runkel said.

In the 1930s, it was also a dinner house known for setting "the finest table in town," according to a Daily Tidings article.

"This is a reputation we strive to uphold to this day," Runkel said.

In the 1940s and early 1950s, the Bean family lived in the house.

"My mother told me that the first time you were given a name was when Mormon Missionaries affectionately referred to you as the 'Beanery,'" wrote Linda Bean Woods in a letter to the house this week. "Ashland was a very small town during the late '40s and a Mormon Missionary returning to Utah wrote a letter back to Ashland and simply addressed it to the Beanery. My mother was actually surprised when the Post Office knew that it needed to go to you at 586 East Main.

"In 2004 when I came to Ashland I truly felt like I had returned home!" she wrote. "I recall standing in the kitchen watching Deedie make scones and thinking it was no different than standing watching my dear mother cook as I had during the first nine years of my life. Deedie didn't even seem to question having a guest like me that seemed to come to stay and act like they had just returned home after a long absence. Few innkeepers could do as well as Deedie and Dave do at making folks feel at home within your walls."

Owners of the property have included a number of people involved in the civic and business life of the city, including Kate Jackson, a current city councilor, and her husband Chuck Keil,

a former school board member; Graham Lewis, past president of the Chamber of Commerce; Adell and Bonnie Forney, who owned the Rolling Pin Donut Shop on East Main Street; and Robert and Agnes Hendrix, former owners of the Plaza Bakery on North Main Street.

Jackson named the house Anne Hathaway in 1994 for the wife of William Shakespeare. Previously, it was called the Edinburgh Lodge when Lewis and his wife, Bunny, were the owners.