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## Skinner Ranch House Restoration

by Marilyn Skinner Lanier



A century ago, Thomas Lewis Skinner (Tom) and Violet Glover Skinner bought the two-story white clad ranch house on the western outskirts of Jordan Valley, Oregon from the Parks family.

Tom was the son of Silas Skinner who built the Skinner Toll Road to carry silver and gold ore from Silver City, Idaho to Jordan Valley during the heyday of silver and gold mining at the turn of the twentieth century. Violet was the daughter of Gardner Batts Glover and Elizabeth Shea Glover who had emigrated from Canada to Malheur County in the 1880s.

Violet, or “Gaga” as she was affectionately called by her grandchildren, raised the couple’s four children in this house – Thomas (Tuck), Gardner, James (Jim), and Rae – during the 1920s and 30s, and lived in the residence until she passed away in 1981. At that time, the house and the ranch were passed on to her four children.

A portion of the ranch was eventually sold, but the acreage around town including the house and all of the outbuildings were acquired by the children of Gard and Virginia Skinner – Gard Jr., Steve, Rick, David, Libby and Jon – all of whom reside in Boise, Idaho. In the early 2000s, the siblings began to slowly restore the house so that they and many other family members could continue to return to a place beloved by so many in the extended family.

Over the years, the project expanded in scope, involving repainting of the exterior; replacing all the windows and roof; upgrading the electrical and plumbing; and refinishing the main living room.

In 2019, David purchased the property from his siblings and took over the project with the goal of completing the restoration. Since then, several upgrades have occurred, including replacing and expanding all of the concrete work on the exterior of the house; replacing and refinishing all the floors; remodeling the kitchen; restoring all of the doors and woodwork; rebuilding the carport and patio; and salvaging the original outhouse used by the family until the bathroom was constructed in 1939.

Tom & Gaga’s house has been transformed into a fully furnished five bedroom, one bathroom, fully operational home, complete with washer and dryer. Future plans include adding a bathroom to the upstairs, rebuilding the homestead shack and barn, and building new fences.





On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July this year, several members of the Skinner family gathered to celebrate the restoration. Now all the descendants of Violet Glover and Tom Skinner can come and not only enjoy Jordan Valley and beautiful Malheur county, but also wrap themselves in the warmth and rich heritage of their family history.

