



1922 re-dedication of the Jackson House.



Anna Koonz, a granddaughter of the Jacksons, speaking at the 1922 re-dedication.

Images courtesy of Washington State Historical Society (2015.0.70)(2015.0.71)

The Discover Pass is required for day visits to state parks and access to other state-managed recreation lands. The pass provides access to millions of acres of parks, wildlife areas, trails, natural areas and water-access sites. The annual pass is transferable between two vehicles.

- Annual pass: \$30
- One-day pass: \$10 (transaction and dealer fees may apply)



The Discover Pass can be purchased online, by phone or in person. For details, visit [www.discoverpass.wa.gov](http://www.discoverpass.wa.gov) or call (866) 320-9933.

Thank you for supporting Washington state recreation lands.



**Jackson House State Park Heritage Site**  
4277 Jackson Highway, Chehalis, WA 98532  
(360) 864-2643

**State Parks information:** (360) 902-8844

Connect with us on social media

- twitter [www.twitter.com/WASStatePks](http://www.twitter.com/WASStatePks)
- facebook [www.facebook.com/WashingtonStateParks](http://www.facebook.com/WashingtonStateParks)
- YouTube [www.youtube.com/WashingtonStateParks](http://www.youtube.com/WashingtonStateParks)
- Instagram [www.instagram.com/WASStatePks](http://www.instagram.com/WASStatePks)

Share your stories and photos: [AdventureAwaits.com](http://AdventureAwaits.com)



If you would like to support Washington State Parks even more, please consider making a donation when renewing your license plate tabs. You also may place a check in a donation box when you visit state parks.

Donations are a significant part of the State Parks budget and are needed to keep your parks open and operating. For more information, visit [www.parks.state.wa.us/donations](http://www.parks.state.wa.us/donations)

### Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission



P.O. Box 42650  
Olympia, WA 98504-2650  
(360) 902-8500  
[www.parks.state.wa.us](http://www.parks.state.wa.us)

Commission members:

- Ken Bounds
- Mark O. Brown
- Sophia Danenberg
- Michael Latimer
- Steve S. Milner
- Diana Perez
- Lucinda S. Whaley

Agency director: Don Hoch

All Washington state parks are developed and maintained for the enjoyment of all people.

To request this brochure in an alternative format, please call (360) 902-8844 or the Washington Telecommunications Relay Service at (800) 833-6388. P&R 45-54001-01 (11/19)

## Washington State Parks

# Jackson House

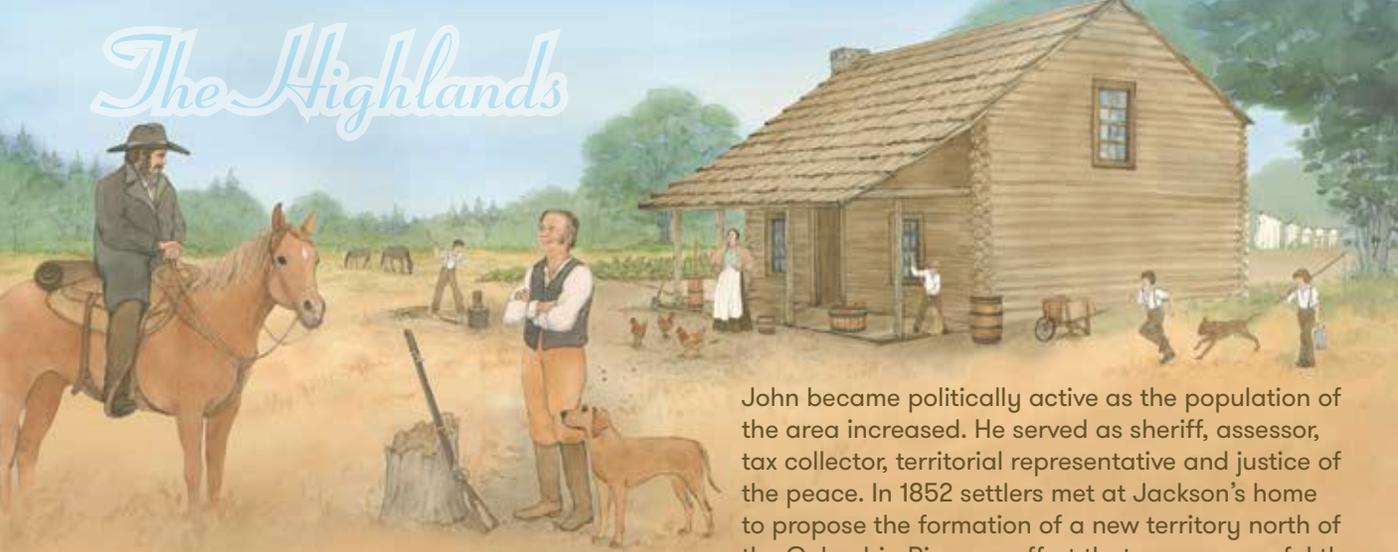
## State Park Heritage Site



EMBRACE YOUR NATURE

[www.parks.state.wa.us](http://www.parks.state.wa.us)

# The Highlands



The John R. Jackson House is an important site in the early territorial history of Washington state. It was one of the first pioneer homes built north of the Columbia River. Soon thereafter, the home became a hub of activity where travelers rested, trials were held and meetings that led to the creation of the Washington Territory took place. Later, the home's preservation by a local women's club led to it becoming one of the first state parks in Washington.

Jackson settled in the area in 1845 and built the now-standing cabin in 1850. With its glass windows, split-cedar floor and staircase leading up to a sleeping loft, the home was considered luxurious for the mid-19th century in the pioneer west.

The Highlands, as John called his farm, quickly became a key site in the northern reaches of the Oregon Territory. Its location midway along the Cowlitz Trail—an important north-south route between Oregon City (then the capital of the Oregon Territory) and Puget Sound—made the home an ideal place to stop and rest and to conduct business.

As traffic through the area increased and the size of their family grew, the Jacksons added several additions and outbuildings to their home. It was used as a post office, grocery store, hotel, tavern and even a U.S. District Court. Visitors to their home included Ulysses S. Grant and Isaac Stevens, the first territorial governor of Washington.

John became politically active as the population of the area increased. He served as sheriff, assessor, tax collector, territorial representative and justice of the peace. In 1852 settlers met at Jackson's home to propose the formation of a new territory north of the Columbia River, an effort that was successful the following year.

Jackson died in 1873. In 1882, Matilda moved into a new home on the property, and the cabin and its attachments were abandoned.

The Jackson House fell into disrepair for several decades until Anna Koontz, a granddaughter of John and Matilda, began an effort to preserve it. Koontz was a member of the St. Helens Club of Chehalis, a women's literary and civic group. She suggested the club take on a project to restore the home. In 1914, the club raised \$500 to restore it. Work began on June 16, 1915, and was completed by Oct. 4, 1915. Using what materials could be salvaged, local tradesmen reconstructed the building to mimic the appearance of the original 1850 cabin.

On Nov. 22, 1915, in the first meeting of the Washington State Board of Park Commissioners, the Jackson House became one of the first two properties accepted as a state park. The efforts of the St. Helens Club were celebrated in a ceremony in 1922, when the Washington State Historical Society unveiled the decorative cobblestone wall that adorns the entrance to the property. Additional restoration work was performed in 1934 by Civilian Conservation Corps members who were stationed at nearby Lewis and Clark State Park. The Jackson House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. The cabin was restored again in 2017 and ADA access was added to the site.

## John R. Jackson



1804-1873

John R. Jackson was part of a wave of westward migration that occurred in the Pacific Northwest after Great Britain and the United States signed the Treaty of Joint Occupation in 1818. Born in Staindrop, England in 1804, Jackson immigrated to New York in 1823 or 1833 (accounts vary) and became an American citizen in 1835. He moved first to Missouri and then to the Oregon Territory in 1844. From Oregon City, Jackson made several trips north toward the southern end of Puget Sound. In April 1845, he finally settled in the area that became known as Jackson Prairie, about 7 miles south of Chehalis. Here he built his first crude cabin. During these first years in the area, Jackson was occupied with farming and extending his holdings, but he also had time for public service. He was appointed sheriff, served as a territorial legislator and census taker, assessed land, collected taxes and was elected justice of the peace.

## Matilda Jackson



1811-1901

Matilda (Koontz) Jackson arrived in Oregon City by the fall of 1847, where she met John Jackson. The Koontz family traveled the trail by wagon train from Missouri. Matilda's first husband, Nicholas Koontz, drowned in the Snake River while attempting to help oxen cross. This tragedy resulted in Matilda giving birth prematurely to an infant daughter who died several days later. Matilda and her four young sons were taken to the Dalles Mission to recuperate. Several weeks later Matilda, although still weak, took a canoe down the Columbia River to Oregon City. Her sons came on horseback later. John and Matilda were married in 1848 and had three children of their own. Over the years Matilda became known for her warmth and for the welcome care she gave weary travelers. "Grandma Jackson" died in 1901 at the age of 90.