



BYGONE TIMES

February 2014

Upcoming Events

Mark Your Calendar

**Friday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m.
the Troutdale House**
(next door to Depot) Love
The Highway Dinner & Auc-
tion

**Sunday, Feb., 16, 2 p.m.
Barn Museum,** Kristin
Stallman, film and talk on
the Historic Columbia River
Highway

**Sunday, March 16, 2
p.m. Barn Museum,**
The Railway Historical Soci-
ety

**Sunday, April 2014, 2
p.m. Barn Museum** Jim
Glenn interview with Rich-
ard Espenel, Growing up in
Troutdale

Saturday, May 17, Cemetery
Tour with Stan Clarke, Sites
this year, rose City Ceme-
tery, NE Portland, Japanese
Cemetery, Gypsy/Romano
burials/ and spectacular
granite stones. Sack lunch
at Peninsula Park and then
the Victorian Columbian
Cemetery

More Events to follow

“Love The Highway” Valentines Dinner & Auction,

Friday, February 14th—6 p.m. The Troutdale House, 411 E. Columbia River Highway, Troutdale, OR.

Buy your tickets today proceeds to support our upcoming exhibit “King of Roads—Byway of the People”

Check out a few of the exciting
items you can bid on

“Murder at the Four Deuces”

1920's themed Murder Mystery
Dinner held at Historic Forest
Hall. Limited to 24 people @ \$50
per person!



“Ride down the Historic Columbia River Highway for 2 in a Model T Ford”

Experience the “King of Roads” from the back of
a 100 year old car



Kristen Stallman, coordinator for the Oregon Department of Transportation, in the Columbia River Gorge scenic area will talk to the Troutdale Historical Society about the Columbia River Highway and state trail at **2 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 16, in the Barn Museum, 732 E. Historic Columbia River Highway.**

The history of the Columbia River Highway is a tale of visionaries, civic leaders, skilled engineers and talented artisans. In 1913, Samuel Lancaster designed the first 20 miles of what is now known as the Historic Columbia River Highway Lancaster's work resulted was a world class scenic highway that once stretched from Portland to The Dalles.

Starting in the 1940, the construction of a freeway through the Columbia River Gorge severed the original route in a number of locations. The Oregon Legislature in 1987 directed ODOT to preserve and enhance existing portions of the historic highway.

Much work has been accomplished since that date. However, 10 challenging miles remain. Interested groups have joined together to advocate for the completion by 2016, the 100th anniversary of Lancaster's masterpiece. Stallman will provide an overview of the history, current status, and future plans for the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail.

Admission is free. The public is invited. Refreshments will be served.

Len Otto

A story for you today that I have never heard, and I want you to have it in case you have not heard it. If you have heard it please fill in more details. I would love to know more

Seems like Robert Lewis and Roy Meger (longtime proprietor of the Troutdale General Store) were not as well behaved in their teen years as later. This comes from Karen VanSlyke/Frank/Sayler, niece of Lewis. (She cut my hair today.)

When the two boys were teens, they took a notion to take a wooden boat to which they had access, launch it either in the lower Sandy or the Columbia at Troutdale, and proceed by boat to Astoria... without their parents' knowledge. They made it, too, rather a remarkable feat.

The parents apparently had to drive to Astoria to retrieve them, and presumably the boat. Not happy campers, I'm sure. What a hoot: Roy Meger!

I have no idea of how long such a trip would take; it would depend on tides, wind, all kinds of things, but I'm thinking a couple days at least. Probably

more.

Karen has a photo of Roy and her uncle Robert at the time of the escapade.

When she showed Roy the photo and the accompanying caption and asked him if he really had done that, he mumbled some comment about what bad boys they had been. It made me smile.



Nancy Cox

After enjoying Christmas with her family, Nancy Cox, 90, Troutdale, widow of longtime Troutdale mayor, Sam Cox, died Dec. 27.

The partnership of Sam and Nancy Cox spanned decades of public service in Troutdale and many years dedication to the Troutdale Historical Society.

We always remember that Sam Cox, who died at age 75 in 1998, referred to Nancy as “the old lady.” And more than once failed to tell her that he had invited a local garden club to visit his gardens.

“I’d look out the window and see Sam with 30 women in the yard, and I’d throw a cake in the oven and put on the coffee pot, and it would be done by the time they were finished. Because, you knew, that he would have invited them for cake and coffee,” she once remembered.

Nancy presided over a chaotic household filled with four children, her husband’s elderly sister and an assortment of animals, including a profane parrot and the inevitable baby pheasant being nursed back to health on the kitchen counter. She liked laughter and visiting with friends and family and was a master of the droll comment.

She also held down a job for 35 years with Pacific Northwest Bell, commuting to Portland from Troutdale, and commenting often on spectacular sunrises in her rearview mirror. Both Nancy and Sam Cox were children of the Depression, coming west to escape hard times in the middle of the country.

Nancy was born in Alva, Oklahoma on September 3, 1923, to Robert and Myrl (Edwards) Seyler. Named for two aunts she was Nettie Loulla, but over the years Nancy to friends and family, Aunt Lou to nieces and nephews and Nettie to co-workers at the phone company.

After escaping the Dust Bowl in 1937, her family lived for a brief time in Fairview, moving to Hurt Road on Broughton Bluff east of Troutdale. In an interview about Dust Bowl days, Nancy recalled how frantic her mother was to can all the fruit they found going to waste in Oregon. “She even tried to can strawberries,” Nancy remembered.

Sam and Nancy were married May 27, 1950. They were pioneers in adopting Korean war orphans through the Holt program, eventually acquiring four children, Jon, Lisa, Tori and Jarin.

In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by her son, Jon; brother, Robert Bernard Seyler; and sisters, Edna Alexander and Sue Peetz Davis.

She is survived by daughters, Lisa Shaer and Tori Muck, son, Jarin; grandson, Brandon Muck, numerous nieces and nephews and their families, and long time family friend, Bob Strebin.

When the Historic Columbia River Highway officially was dedicated in 1916, it provided the public “a passport to the gorge”. The Oregon Highway Commission called it “one of the most scenic highways in existence.” In 1957, Frank Sterett, a staff photographer for *The Oregonian*, wrote that back in 1915 his neighbors had a White Steamer that required lighting a fire in the pilot light under the boiler in the car before it would get up enough steam to run. For safety, the whole family went out to the garage and pushed the car out to the driveway before lighting the fire.

A trip to Multnomah Falls in those days could take an entire day since the posted speed was 25, but with all the other families enjoying the new highway, “a guy was doing good if he could go ten”, he said, on that short strip of paved road. The roadway was an instant success, but it just couldn’t accommodate the larger trucks and buses that were created for bigger transport or provide a quick trip to a destination east of the falls area.

After 20 years, sections of the highway began to fade. In the ‘30s, portions of the road were bypassed to make way for Bonneville Dam. In the late ‘40s, construction started on a water-level highway through the gorge, leading to the abandonment of several sections of Lancaster’s road, and by 1954, this new “water-level” freeway stretched all the way to The Dalles. By the ‘50s, safety concerns caused transportation officials to fill and close the Oneota Tunnel, the Mosier Twin Tunnels, and Mitchell Point Tunnel. In 1967, four-lane Interstate 80N (now Interstate 84) was completed, connecting Portland and The Dalles, making the Columbia River Highway a scenic, yet antiquated, red-headed step-sister to the Interstate.

By the early 1980s, people recognized the need to preserve Lancaster’s “King of Roads”, and efforts were launched to “Remember, Restore, Reconnect” abandoned or destroyed portions of the original highway. Spearheaded by efforts of the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee, the road was designated a “scenic byway” in 1997. In 2000, portions of the highway became a National Historic Landmark as the first scenic highway in the country (all of the highway, including adjacent recreational sites, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1983).

Sections of the highway were recently repaved; the restoration and clearing of some of the original tunnels that had been filled in with rock have been completed, and 63 of the original 77 miles of the road have been restored either for bicycle paths or hiking routes. The first section, between Tanner Creek and Eagle Creek, was restored and re-opened in 1996 by Oregon Department of Transportation. This included restoration of the Toothrock Viaduct, the Eagle Creek Viaduct, a new bridge over the Toothrock Tunnel, and a new stairway. The Eagle Creek to Cascade Locks section was restored in 1998 by the Western Federal Lands Division of the Federal Highway Administration. This section included restoration of the Ruckel Creek Bridge, construction of trailheads at Eagle Creek and under the Bridge of the Gods in Cascade Locks and a new undercrossing of Interstate 84.

The Hood River to Mosier section restoration began in 1995 and was completed in 2000. The Mosier Twin Tunnels were opened in 1996 to hikers and bikers. The Moffett Creek to Tanner Creek section was completed in 2000, lengthening the western section of the HCRH State Trail to 5.2 miles. This section restored the Moffett Creek Bridge, the longest, three-hinged, concrete flat arch bridge in the country when it was completed in 1915. And just last September, 2013, the final 1.6 mile section of trail connecting John B. Yeon State Park and Cascade Locks was opened to the public, making it possible, for the first time, to travel by bicycle from Troutdale to Cascade Locks without using the Interstate shoulder.

Future projects include restoring the remaining gaps between Wyeth and Hood River with state trails and bicycle routes. Jeanette Kloos, founder and president of the Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway, says, "We have made progress, but work needs to be done." Their extraordinary work will be part of our centennial exhibit at the Barn Museum, slated to open in 2015.

Nobody's Perfect by Jim Glenn

One thing I feel I need to clarify is the relationship that I had with my little brother Tommy. It was not that of extraordinary brotherly love, nor were we conjoined at the hip. We made so many travels around East County with each other by a simple command. Whenever I headed out of the house in quest of my next great adventure, I made sure I had one foot out the back door to ensure my escape before hollering out where I was going and Mom would give her blessings with "Take your brother."

I'm always proud to tell folks I have five brothers and each of us has two sisters. All attended Wood Village Baptist Church on an individual time frame. Well, all except my oldest brother, Ralph, who had enlisted in the U. S. Army before my family moved from Troutdale to Wood Village. I'm not excluding my other siblings from this story, it's just that Tommy always tagged along whether I liked it or not, so most of my memories of the church involve him.



None of the Glenn family meals started with "Amen," so Mom sent all her kids to Sunday school to learn about the Word of God. That first Sunday morning Mom was in a frantic state of mind and when we headed out the door she let us know that we better be on our best behavior. There never was an "or else" with Mom because we all knew she didn't take prisoners.

Most of the Dads were standing around in groups of 3 or 4 in the church parking lot, some of them smoking one last cigarette before going inside and all of them enjoying the moment which seemed out of character from the way they acted in their yards. Inside the church were all the Moms smiling and talking to one another and having genuinely good time. I was impressed at how well organized everything went that first Sunday. The Preacher with a couple of prayers spaced around the congregation singing two songs from the hymnals, a quick sermon about somebody starting a rock fight and then the kids were all sent to the classroom for the school part of Sunday School. I was pretty confused in the beginning with all the new words the Preacher used.

I never could figure if I was a “thee,” a “thou” or a “ye.” And I don’t even want to talk about all those “thou shalt not’s.” During a quiet spot in a song that the congregation sang almost every week Tommy would whisper to me, “What’s a sheave?” At the song’s conclusion the Preacher would thank everyone and say, “it’s always good to know the Glenn boys are in attendance.”

Surprisingly, Sunday school was a pretty interesting time. The teacher would tell us stories about the heroes in the Bible each week. Several years later I figured out why Moses led all those homeless folks around for so many years. Tommy wore out several sling shots preparing for the day he, too, would volunteer to challenge his own Goliath.

A year or two after we started going to Sunday school we got a new teacher. Clarence Lofstedt grew up in Corbett and became a giant of a man both physically and morally. Because he was so tall, he encouraged us kids to call him Tiny rather than Mister. He told great stories about the people and events in the Bible and explained everything so that every kid understood. When he realized how much Tommy and I loved playing sports he got permission from our folks to take us to see Portland Beaver baseball games. He took us to a Shrine High School All Star football game and many trips into the Columbia River Gorge to explore the many trails. Tiny and his wife had two infant daughters and he was looking forward to the days when they would get old enough to take to all those wonderful places. The good Lord decided He needed Tiny with Him and took him before he could fulfill all those things he dreamed of doing with his girls. Tiny had a profound and positive influence with my brother and me.

One time the Preacher called everybody in church a sinner. I didn’t hear another word the rest of the time I was at the church. When the sermon was over I made a bee-line for home. My Mom was smart and she would know that I wasn’t a sinner. She agreed with me. She said that Tommy and I were not sinners, we were heathens. Mom always knew how to make a kid feel good. It took me a few years to figure that one out, too.

One Sunday the prettiest girl I ever saw came in and sat down next to Tommy for the Christmas sermon. I had never seen her before but then the church was always packed at Christmas and Easter so there were many people in attendance for those two services that I didn’t recognize. On the way home I asked my brother if she said anything to him. He told me that she didn’t, all she did was sweat.



Of all the things the church did to get everybody involved the best event each year was the annual church picnic at Guy Talbot State Park on US Highway 30 in the Columbia River Gorge. The picnic was always a potluck affair and everybody would bring a dish that was almost too good to eat. The ladies of the congregation would prepare their well-guarded secret family recipes and bring their offerings for all to enjoy. I would eat a little of everything that wasn’t looking up at me. I always ate too much of the main fare and had little room for the pies, cakes and cookies. Those ladies could sure set a picnic table. After the meal Tommy and I would go up over the highway on the overhead pedestrian walkway and up to Latourell Falls running all the way to the upper falls before returning to the picnic area at a slower pace.

When Camelot in the White House came to a tragic ending on the streets of Dallas, Texas my whole family took the news pretty hard. We all wanted to know why and how the President could be taken from us so quickly. On the following Sunday morning my sister, Dianne, and Mom took that long walk that led from our home to the one constant in our lives in those simpler times, the Wood Village Baptist Church.

But, back to that very first trip to the church. When we got home, Mom was a bundle of nerves. She just knew that her two in-house knot heads had done something to embarrass the family and asked all sorts of questions about how everything went. All the while Tommy was serving himself a fresh-baked cinnamon roll and sat down at the kitchen table. Before assaulting the pastry, he looked her in the eyes and said, “Nobody’s perfect.” Mom almost fainted as she collapsed in the chair nearest her.

THS + CAL = Great Learning, Great Promotion

by Len Otto

Exciting things are happening! The Troutdale Historical Society (THS) Exhibit Committee's goal of getting students involved with the Historic Columbia River Highway exhibit is making great progress. On December 17th, the Center for Advanced Learning (CAL) received news that a \$50,000 Oregon Arts Commission (OAC) grant for which they had applied had been funded in full. It was the *only* application to receive the full \$50,000. The THS King of Roads Exhibit will benefit from all of it.

In late summer of 2013, several members of the THS Exhibit Committee approached CAL Director Carol Egan and teacher Cane Prevost about developing a website for the King of Roads exhibit. Both Carol and Cane were enthusiastic, but had bigger and better ideas in mind. Cane teaches not only web design, but marketing, and already had a partner in Gresham residents Steve and Haley Lewis' advertising firm, *Lewis Creative*.

The OAC grant, *Connecting Students to the World of Work*, will enable CAL students to do a number of things:

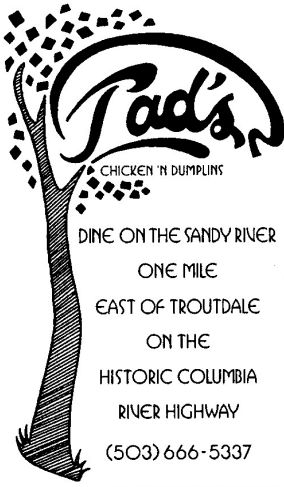
- develop a full fledged advertising campaign for the King of Roads exhibit with print, video, and voice media
- develop a King-Of-Roads.org website for the exhibit
- the four paid internships will be filled by CAL students. Lewis Creative will work with two students on the final design of the website, two students on the print, voice, and video advertising component.
- work with Troutdale Historical Society (THS) members on the content of the exhibit, advertising campaign, and website, including field trips to the highway, the videotaping of local experts (Steve Lehl, Jeanette Kloos, Kevin Price, and others) for the exhibit, advertising materials, and developing hands on learning activities for younger students of all ages.

As the OAC press release stated, "Awards range from \$22,000...to \$50,000 for the Center for Advanced Learning's...development of an ad campaign and promotional website for the Troutdale Historical Society's recognition of the Historic Columbia [River] Highway anniversary." The money received by CAL will be used not just for the internships, but will pay for the printing and distribution of materials to appear at visitors' centers and rest stops around the state, and exposure on television and radio.

The website will be paired with the existing THS website, but will be specific to the exhibit, showcasing some of the stories we hope to tell, some of the photos and artifacts that will be present, and likely a video or two of people talking about the highway and its history.

The CAL students' talent and energy are wonderful assets in helping develop this important project. We are excited to be able to provide this opportunity to them. We also are excited for the kind of exposure Troutdale, THS, and the *King of Roads ~ Byway of the People* exhibit will

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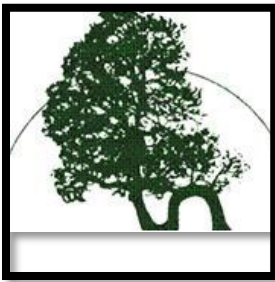
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Mission Statement: To gather, preserve and make available material relating to the history of the community of Troutdale, the Sandy River, the Columbia River Gorge and nearby area: To stimulate interest in and knowledge of the locality's past.

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