



BYGONE TIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Sunday, Jan. 17, 2 p.m.,
Sculptor Rip Caswell,
Glenn Otto Park.**

Troutdale's sculptor Rip Caswell speaks on "Casting Heroes in Bronze," Sam Cox building, Glenn Otto Park.

**Saturday, Feb. 27, 2:30
p.m., Dedication of Trout
Bronze at Harlow House.**

Artist Jordan McGee comes from Florida to dedicate his work at the site of the Harlow House trout ponds. Refreshments and a gathering at the Harlow House.

OUR MUSEUMS IN WINTER

King of Roads: Exhibit, now with videos, on the Historic Columbia River Highway in the barn, open, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday.

Harlow House: Every Sunday afternoon, 1 to 3 p.m., with videos to view from our oral history interviews.

Rail Depot Museum: Join Kelly Broomall on Fridays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., to see our railroad artifacts.



Rip with Lancaster

- **Sunday, January 17**
- **2:00 p.m.**
- **Hear sculptor Rip Caswell speak about "Casting Heroes in Bronze"**

Sculptor **Rip Caswell** learns about his heroes while he creates them. Extensive research enhanced his rendition of Adm. Chester Nimitz and some other World War II heroes he has sculpted. Here, Samuel Lancaster—with a slide rule tucked in his pocket—points the way. Lancaster and Sam Hill will be featured in the Visionary Park monument to celebrate the Historic Columbia River Highway's anniversary.

Join us for what promises to be another informative and enjoyable program.

A Trout Returns to the Harlow Ponds

At 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27, we gather at the Harlow House for the dedication of *River Bend*, a bronze trout sculpture by Jordan McGee.

Now a Florida art teacher, McGee was mentored by Troutdale sculptor Rip Caswell and will travel back to Oregon for the dedication.



His trout sculpture, created while working with Rip, is being given a home in *Harlow House Park*, site of Capt. John Harlow's trout ponds. Join us for refreshments and activities afterward.

To learn more about Capt. John Harlow and his trout ponds, see LeAnn Stephan's displays in the Harlow House.



Workers at the Bissinger Wood Pullery, Troutdale, August 1938

“SHEEP PIT” MEANT SURVIVAL DURING DEPRESSION

The much talked-about “sheep pit” behind the old Bissinger Wool Pullery just north of the Rail Depot museum was excavated and cleaned in December, another step toward turning the former Troutdale sewer treatment plant and adjacent properties into a riverside development.

We may never know if the material found there was left from the days when Union Meat Company slaughter house was in Troutdale, (roughly 1882 to 1907) or if the pit was a product of Bissinger Wool Pullery. The latter industry opened in Troutdale in February 1925 on the north side of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, the site of the former packing plant.

The pullery, it was announced in 1920, was to be built in Troutdale to replace an aging facility in Sellwood. It was nearly five years before it was ready to open. When it did it required an initial workforce of 40 to 75 men. (Among those who worked there when he was a teenager was Scott Cunningham, Troutdale Historical Society past president.) The pullery building was described as concrete, covering almost an entire block and two stories

high. It was positioned next to the tracks to receive rail carloads of animal hides, many taken from winter-killed stock in the Plains states.

The bales of dried hides were received on the lower floor of the plant where they were soaked and washed. On the upper floor the hides were painted with sulphate of sodium, which made it possible to strip the wool from the hide. The wool was washed, dried and compressed into 450 pound bales to ship to Eastern markets, The Gresham Outlook reported. Apparently the hides were shipped elsewhere to be tanned.

In 1930, 30 men worked at the plant, described as “the source of an immense flow of money into the Troutdale district (insuring) the maintenance of houses and local industry.” Beverly Resberg wrote that her uncle, James Roberts, worked there and brought home soap sacks which her mother, aunt and grandmother turned into drapes, slip-covers and even a summer coat for her. The 1938 pictures above shows a work force of more than 70. By the 1930s business had begun to wane as products like rayon came on the market. We don’t

have a date when the plant closed, but it was likely sometime after World War II. In later years it was used for production of television cabinets.

The wool pullery was a feature of the popular “Ripley’s Believe it or Not” series when workers found a flattened, but still living kitten, stretched out between heavy hides that arrived in a box car. The workers worked diligently massaging the kitten back to life until it was able to walk and play. It became the factory mascot and lived to a ripe old age.

The Bissinger plant likely did not smell very good, and the work must have been hard. And had to have been significant pollution to the Sandy River. The water tower built to serve the plant in about 1930 still stands and is a Troutdale landmark.





Julie Stewart's children's corner in the highway exhibit gets a regular workout.



Member Jim Glenn found the far eastern end of our Highway 30, the Historic Columbia River Highway, on his vacation last year near Atlantic City, N.J.



This is what the East Wind will do with a tarp, as pictured in December at the barn while workers fought to get a new roof on our exhibit hall.

"What a Thrill"

Donna Hawkins, longtime THS member, was visiting our highway exhibit in the barn recently, remembering what a thrill it was to ride the road when she was a child.

Donna, who is 94, traveled the highway in a car with her mother and grandmother in the 1920s on summer trips to visit family in Canada near Calgary.

"I remember driving along the road, looking out and all my favorite places," she said. "Once we passed Multnomah Falls, I would tell myself that Oneonta was next. I'd lean forward and watch for it so I could peek up the canyon. It is still one of my favorite places. I see kids going along in cars now, their heads down, buried in their devices. It's such a shame."



Adrienne Clausen and Donna Hawkins shown at a THS gathering several years ago.

President's Corner

Our Barn Exhibit Hall is a treasure. It houses our stellar *King of Roads* exhibit and the bulk of our artifacts. We have a lot invested in it.

Our board of directors went out on a limb in October, voting unanimously to borrow from our precious contingency fund to protect our investment with a new roof. We could have replaced it with composition roofing, but we opted for the far more long lasting, extra heavy duty metal. The roof and gutters are now installed—just in time to staunch a leak in our office—and they look fabulous.

Most rewarding of all, you answered our plea for help, and much of what we borrowed from our contingency fund has been replenished. Thank you, *thank you, thank you*. Donations of \$500 or greater earned the contributors a place on a Barn beam. And, you still can get your name on one of those beams; all donations of \$500 and above qualify. Please be sure to note on your donation that it is for the "Barn roof." And, thank you in advance.

Our exhibit is getting attention. The *Travel Oregon* folks from the PDX airport kiosk visited on a field trip, and the State Parks staff from the Columbia River Gorge District did the same. We have rack cards at the airport and in area hotels, motels, and restaurants. Word of mouth is powerful, and we are getting visitors who have heard we have something worth seeing. While few museums ever operate in the "black," by all standards we are doing pretty well and expect to continue on our positive path.

It's been an eventful year. Thank you for your support.

If you have not yet visited *King of Roads*, we are open five days a week Thursday through Monday (hours vary so check first, please) and we welcome each and every person who comes through the door. You are part of that "word of mouth" I mentioned, so feel free to brag on us a bit. I know I do.

Sincerely,

Len Otto
Len Otto

Visit the Edgefield Winery Tasting Room, where you'll be surrounded by wine at every stage of its process. Enjoy live music nightly while sampling our many varietals, or order a couple of glasses and hunker down in a chair or loveseat. Enjoy small bites by candlelight, too. Take a bottle of your new favorite wine with you when you go.

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OUR NEW METAL ROOF made possible by the generosity of:

BARN BEAM NOTABLES

These folks have earned their names on a Barn Beam for having given \$500 or more to our new roof:

Bob Baker
Jo Callister
Rip Caswell
Jean Driver
Al & Bettianne Goetz
Mary Lou Johnson
Ann & Art Kracke
Yolanda Nusser
Joann Otto
Len & Gloria Otto
Dave Ripma
Marilee Thompson
Jean Ridings
Doug & Elise McGuire
McMenamins, Inc.
The Nesbit Family
Louise Blohm

We also are very grateful for the donations made by these folks:

Eileen Holzman
Joyce Belcher
Gale & David Underhill
Dick Anderson
Richard & Linda Paz

Rosie & Larry Puderbaugh
Carolyn Rundorff
Cherie & Steve Wallace
Terri & Ron Best
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Herb & Mary Jean Mohn
Paul & Marilyn Toenjes
Margaret (Maggie) Splawn
Twila & David Mysinger
Jack Tatlock
Laura Anson
Jeanette Kloos
Marlene Parker

There's still time to get your name on the Barn Beam. "Upgrade" your existing donation, or make a new donation in the amount of \$500 or greater. Help us replenish our Contingency Fund.

Thank you greatly!

Len Otto

Len Otto

DONATE WHILE SHOPPING

Fred Meyer Rewards Card:

Go to www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards—THS gets contributions from Fred Meyer. Please enroll, using our non-profit number **85937**.

AMAZON SMILE

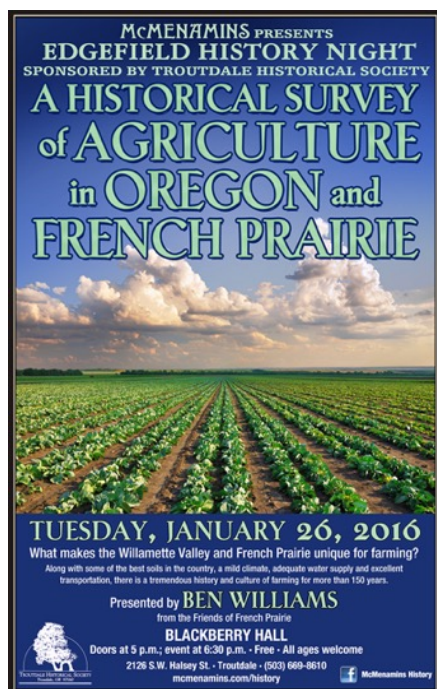
Support KING OF ROADS Exhibit

Go to <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/93-0738777>

Simply select **Troutdale Historical Society** as your charity. Shop as you normally would. THS receives a contribution from Amazon.

McMenamins Half-Night

On the night of October 12th, the **Power Station** pub at *Edgefield* held a "Half-Night" to benefit the *King of Roads* exhibit. We were delighted to receive a check just days later—enough to keep the lights on and doors open for almost three months. Thank you to the McMenamin brothers and the gracious staff at *Edgefield*! We hope you can join us in 2016.



Edgefield History Nights

Always informative and entertaining, please join us as we co-sponsor these worthwhile events:

January 26: Ben Williams presents *A Historical Survey of Agriculture in Oregon and French Prairie*

February 23: Sue Armitage presents *Shaping the Public Good: Women Making History in the Pacific Northwest*

March 29: Chuck Rollins & Steve Lehl present *A History of Latourell*

Every month except December

NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

Barn Host **Al Goetz**, who worked on Mondays with his wife, Bettianne, died unexpectedly, Dec. 11 at his Fairview Lake home. A teacher, builder and businessman, he paid attention to stuff that didn't work, so we have him to thank for fixing the toilet in the restroom at the barn.

A man who could fix things will be missed. Our condolences to Bettianne, who continues her job at the barn.

A celebration of Al's life will be Sunday, Jan 24, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. in Glenn Otto Community Park.

Audrey and Jon Lowell are invaluable as pinch hitters, filling in at the barn when we have holes in the calendar. They, as well as Joanne Losinger, Sharon Nesbit, LeAnn Stephan, Nell Simien and Kelly Broomall recently hosted more than 80 Troutdale Elementary School students on a field trip to learn about community.

Jeannie Driver celebrated her 90th birthday in October. She now lives at Cherry Park Plaza. She and Frank were regulars on our many treks.

Services were held in November for another intrepid trekker, **Evelyn DeYoung**, who died at age 95. Always curious and always concerned about history, Evelyn, sister to **Jo Callister**, was instrumental in seeing that the Zimmerman House was named to the National Register of Historic Places.

Kelly Broomall is our volunteer in the depot, normally on Fridays. He has been keeping flood waters at bay in these recent rains. He will continue to keep an eye on things in the winter, but we reduced depot hours to Fridays in January and February in order to make sure the highway exhibit in the barn is fully staffed. Kelly will also be making the wood burned signs to go on the barn beams recognizing \$500 donors to our barn roof.

Many thanks to **LeAnn Stephan**, who has taken on the job of volunteer coordinator in January and February. And also thanks to **Andrea Heim**, who keeps the

Harlow House open on Sunday afternoons.

Julie Stewart is pinch-hitting at the computer when it comes to curation of artifacts. **Joy Beldin**, for instance, recently gave a collection of books that emphasizes how much literature has been written about the historic highway and the Columbia River Gorge. We are still looking for a person who likes detail work with computers to archive our library and our artifacts. If you have such skills, given President Len Otto a call.

Al and Joyce Stoeckel have contributed many hours in cleaning services to the barn and house since last summer.

Our board members: **Diane Castillo-White** is selling surplus items from the depot store. We had a space in the Troutdale Antique Mall through Christmas. Keep an eye on board member **Sharon Petri**. She thinks there should be more \$100 *Lovers Oak* members on our rolls, so she is setting out to find some. We are fortunate to have **Rip Caswell** as neighbor and board member. Nothing makes us happier than seeing Rip show up with a power tool when signs and other stuff needs to be hanged. Ditto, **Len Otto** and **Rich Allen** who will be doing some needed wiring to keep our alarm system from going bonkers. **Marilee Thompson**, treasurer, deserves a medal for keeping our books going on a creaking old computer, and then getting things back together on a new one.



NEW LIFE FOR OUR OLD DEPOT

In early December, *Troutdale Historical Society*, the *West Columbia Gorge Chamber of Commerce* and the *City of Troutdale* worked out a plan for restoration at the Depot with a goal of seeing the chamber move into the Depot and make use of it as a city visitor center.

This is kind of a "natural," since so many visitors already find their way to the Depot. The plaza in front of the Depot will become one of the new bike hubs catering to cyclists, so the Depot will be back in business serving travelers. The city has committed \$117,000 to fixing up the building, with new heating, air conditioning, improved ceilings and lights and decor appropriate to the period and style of the 1907 building.

Troutdale Historical Society will continue to care for the exhibit and create a new display and interpretation with a script for chamber hosts to use regarding Troutdale's history of railroading.

The chamber's seven day a week presence will keep our *Rail Museum* open to visitors every day. We will give up a small amount of space in the waiting room and station agent's office (the main rooms now used for the museum purposes) to allow more office space. For the

present, we will continue to keep our photo and book library in the basement.

This is the outcome we hoped for when the board of directors decided in the spring to move our Troutdale Historical Society office from the Depot to the Barn so our half-time employee can help keep the Barn open. This is the *first time* that we have maintained consistent and regular hours at the *Barn Exhibit Hall*, five days a week in the winter, seven days a week in the summer. It will be increasingly important this summer with the 100th anniversary of the *Historic Columbia River Highway*.

It will likely take about a year to get the Depot ready. In the meantime we are cleaning out back closets and cubby holes. When construction starts, we will "cocoon" and store artifacts until we can set up again.

Matt Leamy | Art Director

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Santa (Benno Milmore) with Adelynn Losinger, granddaughter of our King of Roads exhibit host, volunteer Joanne Losinger.



Girl Scouts 42383, Cadettes, decorated the Harlow House for Christmas in November. They are Tiffany Woodin, Amy Ross and Kaitlyn Hamilton.



"AMAZING & EXCELLENT"

More than 1,000 visitors have seen the King of Roads exhibit since we opened in the Barn, July 12.

In addition to the Oregon State Parks workers in the Gorge, shown above, we received hosts from the airport's *Travel Oregon* office, six different classes from Troutdale Elementary School, several senior citizen bus tours, members of the Historic Highway advisory committee, a couple of car clubs, and tourists who stop to learn about the highway.

The biggest reaction—surprise. Most don't expect to see an exhibit like ours. Responses in our guest book include such words as "Amazing" and "Excellent."

None of it would be possible without our volunteers who keep the doors open at our Barn, Harlow House and Depot: Al and Bettianne Goetz, Jeanette Kloos, Joanne Losinger, Andrea Heim, Sonya McDowell, Norm and Charlene Thomas, Joy Beldin, Jon and Audrey Lowell, Sharon Nesbit, Kelly Broomall, Helen Wand and Len Otto.



Tom Foertsch, Corbett metal fabricator, donated his labor to create a frame and stand for our Barn sign which was installed Dec. 19 by him and Rip Caswell. The Barn sign was broken some years ago and repaired by the Reynolds High School wood shop.



HUNTING A VALLEY FORGE ANCESTOR

Arnold Lampert Williams, Corbett, never guessed where he would end up when he began to pursue the history of his great-grandfather Albert (AD) Kendall from Troutdale.

"The history associated with him was fascinating, I would have never believed that my Grandmother Evelyn (Kendall) Lampert never told us kids of her ancestry! Well, I pledged to explore grandma's family and, boy, did I find out something only a few Americans can put claim too."

Williams relates that his great grandfather, first train station manager at Troutdale, was a son to Jackson Kendall, a Civil War veteran. His father, Asa Kendall, was a veteran of the War of 1812. And Asa, one of nine children, was the son of Joshua Kendall, who served with General George Washington at Valley Forge during the terrible winter of 1777-1778 when the fate of the new nation was hanging in the balance.

Last summer, having established his fourth great grandfather as a veteran of Valley Forge, he carried the documents to the site in Pennsylvania and saw his ancestor's name placed on the "muster" list. They saw the replica huts where the army of 12,000 suffered through the winter, but also retrained.

"It was a sobering moment to know what it took to attain liberty and freedom," he said.



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website: www.troutdalehistory.org

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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 the knowledge of the locality's past.

Officers, Board, Staff:

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Vice President, Sharon Nesbit

Treasurer, Marilee Thompson

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Rich Allen, Rip Caswell, Sharon

Petri, Diane White

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David Ripma, Scott Cunningham

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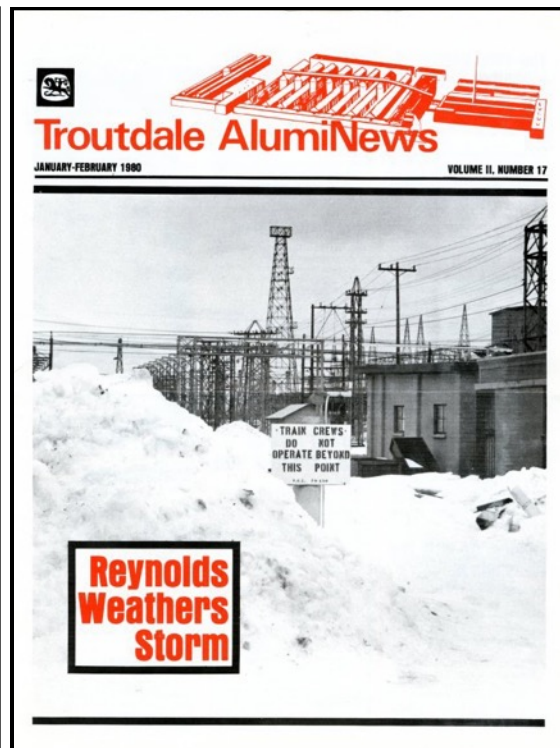
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Reynolds/ALCOA workers

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- **Glenn Otto Park**
- **Call 503-661-2164**
- **Leave name, address, phone & other contact information**

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Historical Society**

Remember, Troutdale Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization, so your donations are fully tax deductible and help support our museums, programs, and the preservation of artifacts and local history. Thank you for your continued support.