

BYGONE TIMES

A Newsletter of the TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

December, 1996

Sharon Nesbit, Editor, 665-0423

Merry Christmas

Come to Christmas at the Harlow House

The Harlow House in all its Christmas finery can be seen every weekend Dec. 1 - Dec. 22, Saturday and Sunday, 1 to 4 p.m.

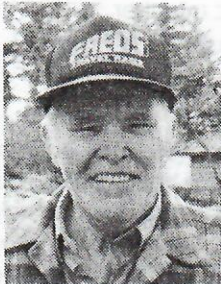


Don't miss this year's ornament -- a glass ball of Victorian potpourri or our special exhibit, Penny Balch's Barbie doll collection.

JOIN US FROM NOON TO 4 P.M., SAT., DEC. 7 FOR OUR SPECIAL CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

*SANTA CLAUS, HOT WASSAIL, HOMEMADE COOKIES
PLEASE BRING COOKIES TO SHARE*

Ted Schulte likes to figure out how to do things better, easier



Anyone who ever worked at Troutdale Bingo knows Ted Schulte thinks, tinkers, figures and schemes, and always comes with a better contraption -- the rolling cart he developed to store and carry off the bingo equipment being a fine example.

Ted, who spent 14 years as our historical society treasurer, was interviewed for our oral history collection at our Nov. 17 meeting. He and his first wife came to Troutdale on July 17, 1938, working on land on the Sandy River north of the freeway bridge that they would later buy. To do that -- to arrive without much more than a dime and to buy property -- required watching every penny, Ted said. For recreation, he and his wife would take a dime and, to save money, walked to Troutdale to see the movies that were shown outside behind what was then Doolittle's store.

"If you had the dime, you put it in a box," Ted remembered. "A dime was a dime. And that was our recreation."

Smelt runs, when they came, provided a few extra bucks. The best in Ted's memory was in 1977 when the run was so thick that a commercial fisherman renting space on Ted's land took 26 tons of fish a day out the river. The smelt were boxed and sent to California to feed the animals at SeaWorld.

Ted survived the 1948 flood, which sent water up around the foundations of his house. He and his family stayed in the home, traveling by boat to Troutdale. Strangers of all were the carp who came on to his property in the shallow flood water. At night Ted could hear them out front eating the grass on his submerged lawn.

His favorite job, he said, was figuring out how to make things work better at the Troutdale Sand & Gravel operation on the Sandy River, the site now of the Columbia Gorge RV Park. Later Ted would raise ponies on his farm and run the 4-H pony and horse clubs. He supervised the addition to the first Troutdale Historical Society museum and was the first person in charge of the restoration of the Harlow House.

**A you-asked-for-it
Recipe:
Sesame cookies**

as tasted at our November meeting
2 cups butter or margarine, softened
1 1/2 cups sugar
3 cups flour
1 cup toasted sesame seeds
2 cups shredded coconut
1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts or almonds

Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add flour and mix well. Stir sesame seeds, which have been toasted to a light brown, coconut and nuts. Divide dough in thirds. Shape each into a long roll two inches in diameter. Freeze.
TO BAKE: slice into 1/4 inch slices while frozen and bake on ungreased cookie sheet for 30 minutes at 300 degrees. The long baking time is needed to brown the cookie.

Russ Akin dies Nov. 18

Russell Akin Jr., a lifetime member of our historical society, died Nov. 18 at his home of cancer at the age of 80.

Akin, whose father was mayor of Gresham, started Big Creek Lumber Co. in Corbett, later moving the mill to Hebo. In the early 1960s, he purchased Troutdale Sand & Gravel which he operated until 1978.

During the years of the sand and gravel operation, he often would clean Troutdale streets of snow and ice with his own equipment rather than wait for state and county crews.

The habit inspired a conversation one evening at Wood Village where city council members complained after a storm that their roads weren't cleaned but Troutdale's were.

When it was explained that Akin did the favor at Troutdale, there was a long pause and then someone said: "Well, how do we get him to move here?"

Columbia Gorge Rock Art:

Returning by popular demand:
James Keyser
Forest Service archeologist
Feb. 16, 2 p.m.

**We keep stirring
the historical pot**

Some of the things we do don't show up much, or come to fruition so much later we tend to forget we did it.

Just so you know, these are some of our historical activities this month:

We worked with the Legacy Health system to find a medical-related historical photo for a publication they are planning.

We are cooperating with the University of Oregon architecture department to provide historic photos of Edgefield for their publication.

We are helping Troutdale PTA put together a history of their organization.

We are creating a home page for the Internet coordinated by Tom Fenton.

We are copying smelt photos for our collection and possible use in our smelt exhibit.

We are working with Bob and Louise Dix and Troutdale parks to prepare historical markers for the trail from the Harlow House to Strawberry Meadows.

Thanks to Connie Purvis, we have a typed transcript of an interview Len Otto conducted with Floyd Splawn on smelt in Troutdale.

And Beverly Welker sorted, filed and cataloged hundreds of historical society photos of events, meetings and gatherings, most taken by Dick Jones.

Save this date:

Sunday, Jan. 19

2 p.m. in
Troutdale City Hall
our program on

**The History of
Multnomah Falls**

**See the tax man
coming?**

**A gift to the
Troutdale Historical
Society
is tax deductible**

**This elf
and Bill Jackson
look nothing
alike:**

**Jackson doesn't
wear the silly hat.**



**But you can buy
one of Jackson's cute
little
wooden trains
at our
End of the Line
Museum Store**

**Hours:
Sat., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sun., 1 - 4 p.m.**

A gift to the
Endowment Fund
in memory of
our member
Robert King
from his wife
Jamie King

She writes: "In loving memory I am enclosing a gift in appreciation of all the wonderful times we had with everyone and especially the great bus trips, which Robert so enjoyed - they were always the highlights of the season for him."

Welcome:

New to our membership are:
**Dickie Rief, Anne Main and
Joann Otto**
a gift from
Helen Otto

Working at the Harlow House

A reflection on an afternoon as a volunteer

by Sharon Nesbit

I look at hosting the Harlow House as a way of keeping in touch with our past and with our mission.

But I also use my time there as therapy. I find it a way to cool down after a hectic week -- a few hours in this serene old house. Sundays I bring the paper and give it a thorough reading. Other days I use the typewriter upstairs to write letters long over due to friends who think I'm dead.

At my own house it is sometimes hard to find the minutes to toss out dead flowers, let alone cut and arrange new ones. At the Harlow House I wander around the yard clipping nifty stuff, always trying to come up with that artless and off-beat kind of bouquet that Cathy Warren or Jean Hybskmann can do.

I check to see that the little Glade scent plug-ins are filled. I watch for light bulbs burned out, or I dust the row of chrome toasters in the pantry, stopping to admire the skills of toaster designers, who seem to me to have no equal among appliance designers.

Sometimes I put on gloves and pull weeds in a flower bed. Other days I wash the windows on the outside so they gleam wet and black. And some days I pick out dishes and table clothes and reset the table according to the season. The house, it seems to me, does not breathe life unless it is changed and tinkered with. It's our museum, I figure, we can fix it the way we want, so long as it reflects the period we are asking visitors to remember.

On hot days I get a glass of iced tea and read my book on the porch, just like a lady of leisure -- or the way I imagine it must have been before phones and fax machines and VCRs and computers and cell phones entered our lives.

And once or twice a day, or more, a guest, or several, comes to call and, like any hostess, I show

them the house, telling the stories, answering questions and thinking that people who like history and old houses, are always fun to meet.

It was more difficult than ever this last year to find volunteers for this job, to the extent that our hard-earned funds went to pay a host once a week. We needed enough volunteers so each worked only one day a month. The problem is that our hosts barely learned their jobs before summer was over. Like working in someone else's kitchen, it takes getting used to.

By the time we dealt with the inevitable emergencies that kept people from coming, the folks who forgot or those who set off the burglar alarm, the summer was chaos and a time-stealer, hours that I needed to write a Troutdale history, time our director needed to do administrative duties.

I don't know how to solve these problems, other than to try to expand our faithful corps of volunteers. And we do have faithfuls who never fail to meet their commitment. Some of our volunteers -- apparently with all their mending done and their letters written -- think the job is boring.

We need to work at finding jobs for them. We hope by next year to have work to do in curating our collection. Wouldn't it be lovely to find a volunteer to come each month and see to seasonal decorations, Easter eggs in the spring, leaves in the fall? Or another to arrange new exhibits every two or three months? Our members have fascinating collections if we just had time to call them, make arrangements and set up an exhibit.

All kinds of creativity are possible. I see a corps of volunteers as the masters (and mistresses) of the Harlow House, meeting two or three times a year to coordinate, plan repairs, set priorities, or consider maintenance and restoration issues. Interested? Call me.

Volunteering here is a chance to work quietly, with occasional visitors coming to call. We make them welcome and blush modestly when they say, "What a nice old house you have here."

Name Droppers

The Troutdale School celebrated its refurbished library Nov. 21 with an open house. Among the items Pam Fenton and Deb Cook used to mark the day was material from our files, the minutes of the Troutdale PTA, which was the first PTA chapter organized in Multnomah County outside of Portland. The minute books, incidentally, were in the possession of June Nasmyth, who donated them to us...Some people call it coincidence, some call it a corinky-dink, but either way it was remarkable that last month's newsletter story by Walter Nasmyth about the inmate from the county farm who played the imaginary fiddle was echoed in the newsletter of the Fairview Rockwood Wilkes Historical Society by writer, Jeanne Adams, who also remembered the gentleman with the phantom fiddle. In November, Walt brought us a whole new set of stories, so look forward to more from the Nasmyth files...Margaret McBeth Johnson, wife of the late Orville Johnson, longtime school principal at Troutdale, died in November...Tom Fenton is helping our society prepare a Home Page where visitors to the Internet can find out about us...Will the person who has Sharon Nesbit's park building cupboard key please confess...Alice Wand is in charge of finding cookie bakers for our meetings. Our next need will be our January meeting. If you can help, call her at 695-5343...Thank you to Elsie Stoeckel, Dorothy Larson and Alice for the goodies at our November meeting...and to Dick Jones for video taping our interview with Ted Schulte...Thank you to Adrienne Clausen for cooking soup for our Harlow House decorating party...and to Mike Hamme, who once again provided the tree...Ellen Brothers made the decorations with an assist from Cathy Warren...Penny Balch loaned her Barbie dolls...Decorators were Jean Holman, Dorothy Sturges, Sharon Nesbit, Florence Baker, Mona Mitchoff and Ellen Brothers.

Smelt Dipping Tips by Walter Nasmyth

Should the smelt run in the Sandy River this spring, Walt Nasmyth worries that it has been so long since a run, we have forgotten how. Here's a set of rules to study on, which, Walt adds: "pertain to the good old days when there were such things as salmon and smelt in the Sandy River":

1. The session begins with the handle of the dip net held in both hands with the net hanging downward.
2. The handle of the net is fed through the hands until the right hand is near the upper end of the handle.
3. The net is then swung upstream as far as the handle of the net will allow. Keep the net hanging downward.
4. When the maximum distance of the handle has been achieved, the net is flipped over and pulled downward into the water with one smooth motion.
5. The dip net is then pulled downstream with the left hand while pushing upstream with the right hand. The dip net is pulled downstream due to the fact that fish have no reverse gear, regardless of what you have heard. The smelt cannot back away from the net, although neophytes believe they have that ability.
6. When the dip net has reached the maximum

distance downstream from the dipper, the person then pulls the net toward them by pulling the handle of the net hand-over-hand toward the dipper. This action closes the net and locks the fish in the net so they cannot escape or leap out.

7. Another thing to keep in mind, if a person attempts to lift a net loaded with smelt vertically out of the water, they will either rupture themselves or break the net handle.
8. When the net nears the hands, swing it landward toward one's fish container. When the net reaches the container, it is flipped over in one motion and the fish are either in the container or all over the river bank.
9. The above instructions can be reversed when fishing the east bank of the river.
10. When checking an area for smelt a person can stick the handle of the net in the water. One can feel the smelt swimming into the net handle as they continue upstream.
11. One thing must be kept in mind is that if a person is dipping smelt in an area where the current is quite swift, a net full of smelt may cause one to go for an unscheduled swim and the water is mighty cold that time of year.

Pat & Ellen Brothers
 46125 E Hist Col Rvt Hwy
 Corbett, OR 97019

BULK RATE
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 TROUTDALE, OR
 PERMIT NO. 5

**Christmas at
 Harlow House
 Santa, hotwassail and
 cookies!
 Sunday, Dec. 7, noon to 4 p.m.**



**TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 104 S.E. KIBLING STREET
 TROUTDALE, OR 97060**