

# BYGONE TIMES

A Newsletter of the TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January, 2000

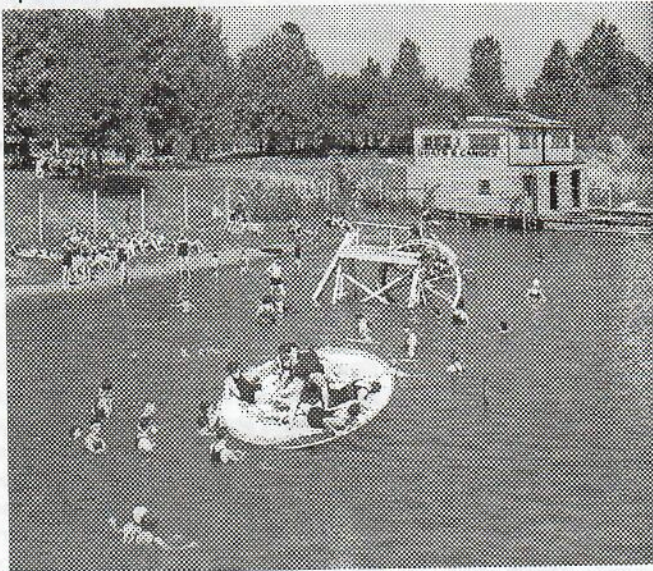
Sharon Nesbit, Editor, 665-0423

On January 16:

## In the bleak of winter, how about Blue Lake?

We have been trying for several years to catch the Welsh 'kids' -- Mary Lou Welsh Johnson and Nick Welsh Jr. - to share the story of Blue Lake Park, the place where we all grew up in the good old summer times of our youth.

This year, it happens. Our January 16 program, at 2 p.m. in Troutdale City Hall, will be on the history of Blue Lake Park and the Welsh family, headed by Nick and Maidie Welsh, parents of our speakers.



Nick and Mary Lou will share pictures of the early years of the park development, the dance pavilion, the big bands that played there. And the tragedies, the fire that took the Welsh home, the Vanport flood that almost drowned it. If you worked or played there, be present and join in. Barbara Welsh will kibitz and bring cookies. Jan Vandiver is in charge of refreshments.

### A reminder:

In the event of icy or snowy weather and hazardous driving conditions, our meetings are automatically canceled. We will do our best to post such a message on the answering machine at the Harlow House, 661-2164.



## CALENDAR

### Meetings

Sunday, Jan. 16, 2 p.m.

Good, old days at Blue Lake

Mary Lou Johnson & Nick Welsh  
Troutdale City Hall

Sunday, Feb. 20, 2 p.m.

Thirty-second Anniversary

20th Century Wonders: The Bendix

A diary reading by Marlene Loisdottir  
Troutdale City Hall

### Harlow House Museum

Saturday & Sunday, 1-4 p.m.

Depot Museum closed for the winter

### Board of Directors

Wednesday, Jan. 5, 7 p.m.

In the barn. All members welcome

Wednesday, Feb. 2, 7 p.m.

In the barn. All members welcome



## Breaking news:

### Our Time line

Work on our Troutdale Historical Society time line is down to final touches, proof-reading and other small details. We hope it will be installed in our museum by our annual meeting Feb. 20, in which case we will conclude that meeting with a visit to the barn to see it.

### Our office staff

Shortly before Christmas, we learned that Becky Marcus, who has staffed our office so capably since August, must resign to return to increased duties at her other job with the Gresham Downtown Development Association. As we still have not raised sufficient money to hire a full-time director for our society, we are in search of a person to keep our office running.

### The depot museum

Our depot museum and End of the Line museum store are closed for the winter. Marge Schmunk, chairwoman, says it is too cold in the building to ask volunteers to serve there in winter months.

Fortunately, that may change. Kevin Minkoff, newly introduced to our organization, has agreed to head a feasibility study by a committee representing Troutdale Historical Society, the Troutdale Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Troutdale. They will look at work to be done in the depot to turn it into a visitor center, offering the museum and our store and travel information.



## Odds & Ends...

### Treasures of Oregon

In late November, the Oregon Historical Society travel exhibit, Treasures of Oregon, ended its 1999 road trip around the state. It drew 65,000 visitors along the way, including at Troutdale, where it stopped for two days, the last day of April and first day of May.

It arrived at difficult time, as Director Deb Cook was leaving and we were stretched to host our annual Tea and Tour. However, with the help of **Bob Strebin & Paula Goldie** and a skilled OHS crew, it happened. We were proud to see our society listed in a full page ad in the Oregonian Nov. 21 as a participating organization.

### Lions Club Honors Sam

On Oct. 23, the Troutdale Lions Club presented the first-ever Sam Cox Humanitarian of the Year Award posthumously to **Sam Cox. Mayor Paul Thalhofer** made the presentation.

Sam was our longtime historical society president and volunteer. The Lions created the award as part of the 50th anniversary celebration and intend to present it annually to an active volunteer in Troutdale, Corbett, Wood Village or Fairview.

The Lions organization, with Sam always present, gave 50 years of service to this community and, provided start-up money to the fledgling Troutdale Historical Society more than 30 years ago.

### Caboose Gets Once Over

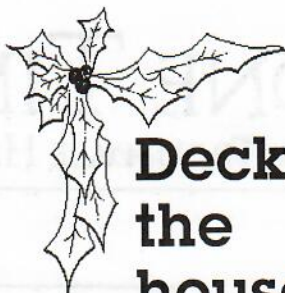
Reasonably clean and ready for showing, we opened our Troutdale Caboose at our Nov. 14 meeting with a special party for those who helped make it happen. That includes **Campbell Crane** and their representative **Tony Steelman** and **Ken LaFord** who did the work for Union Pacific.

Ken gave us a lot of tips on how the caboose worked. We will also receive help from **Steve Saari**, who hoped to be first owner of the caboose and who promised to reupholster the seating and benches in the car.

### Troutdale Sand & Gravel

**Betty Johnson** came by Harlow House recently and presented us with a set of laser copy photos of Troutdale Sand and Gravel operations.

**Ted Schulte**, who worked there many years, is helping to identify scenes.



## Deck the house...

No one ever knows quite how it happens. The Christmas crew gathers at the Harlow House. A few plans have been made ahead, some stuff gathered, and huge piles of greens fill the porch. Bob Strebin came on a day when it wasn't windy to put up the outside lights. Plus he thinks it's a little windy inside the house when all the women are present.

The women wander around and chat, look at the stuff gathered. Someone says, "Why don't we..." Someone else says, "Why don't you?" Others come by and say, "Let's try..."

Suddenly, the house takes shape. Even individuals working on their own spots develop a theme. By the time Adrienne Clausen brings the vegetable soup for lunch, there's a real program going.

We stop to eat, remembering Alex Jones, who brought the first soup. And Sam Cox and Dick Jones and those early lunches back now 20 years ago at the Harlow House. And Ellen Brothers' eggnog. Sharon Nesbit and Jean Holman singing off-key.

A big scurry at the end. Too full to comfortably bend over our tasks, we sweep up needles. Mona Mitchoff brings her quickdraw vacuum. Frieda Ryland sizes things up and promises to bring a few touches more. Dorothy Sturges builds a last-minute wreath. All Florence Baker's holly is gone. It is beginning to get dark and the candles come on in the windows. Bob's lights twinkle outside. The tree that Bob and Ilona Skipper gave is trimmed to the top and the boxes of decorations are down stairs. Adrienne cleaned up the kitchen and made us eat our Brussels sprouts.

Mary Bryson found places to tuck things away. And the old house looks new again, and ready for the first Christmas of the next 100 years.

**Jordan & Skipper Nursery, Orient, donated the Harlow House Christmas Tree. Say thanks if you should stop there.**

## Y2K bug bites genealogists

Numerous research requests nearly swamped our ship in the latter part of the year with people polishing up their histories and genealogies.

We had a request for information about William C. Jones, whose donation land claim is Sweetbrier Farm. In that same line came a query about an Emmett Archibald Tucker, born 1904 at the Williams Farm, which must also be Sweetbrier Farm, then owned by Emmett Bigelow Williams, grandfather of Helen Althaus.

Mark Kelsey, new owner of Cedar School, asked for information on that building. And quite by coincidence, the niece of Mrs. Albert Quay, who wrote the first comprehensive history of the Cedar School, got in touch asking for information on the Iliff Chapel. Fortunately, thanks to long-ago loans of photos from Bill Baker and Isobel Zimmerman, we had pictures of that little chapel, which was later moved to Rockwood and made part of Rockwood Methodist Church.

A Washougal man showed up and was thrilled to find our books at the Harlow House, and our pictorial history book on sale, all with photos of his family from the Ough-Latourell clan.

And, nicest of all, Terry Leach, who lives in the former Brink home at 7th and Buxton, called to ask if we might have photos of her old house that she could frame and give her husband for Christmas.

Fortunately, Ruth Evans Sundling, had loaned us such a photo. We had a negative and a print shot of it for our files. Our photo librarian Bev Welker had cataloged it. Working from our photo files, we found the negative, and were able to copy it and provide it in two sizes for the Leach family, a bit of photographic history for the walls of the old home they are restoring.

That's the way it is supposed to work. It is a pleasure when that happens and a credit to our organization.

### Horseman Bill Ansenberger featured in Senior Outlook

Karen Banfield, East County writer, profiled Troutdale resident Bill Ansenberger in a December *Senior Outlook*. Ansenberger, 83, has lived in Troutdale 40 years. He and his horse are still next to the post office. Before development, e once used to ride all over, to the county farm and down through Weedon Nursery to the Sandy River.



**Curator's Corner**  
by Mary Bryson

Picture a flapper in a black crocheted dress hemmed with 18 inches of shimmering fringe, a bride elegantly attired in a gown with a long, sweeping train, a tiny baby in a christening gown of white pintucks. These clothing items are just a few of the society's vast collection of vintage clothing. Barbara Welsh and Mary Bryson "rediscovered" them while cleaning a closet in the Harlow House Museum. Among the clothes were shirts worn by Newt Parsons, father of Faye Parsons Harlow, "picnic pants" once owned by Gladys McGinnis, mother of member June Nasmyth, and three wonderful wide-brimmed, 1920s era hats.

Barbara Welsh graciously volunteered to help with curatorial duties and has been aiding in finding, cleaning and pressing, and repacking the clothing collection. Many thanks to you, Barb.

Added to our collection this month is a 1920s era booklet on the Mt. Hood National Forest donated by Shirley Yost of Corbett.

Many thanks to Florence Baker who allowed us to show antique toys owned by her late husband Bill. They constitute the major portion of our Harlow House Christmas exhibit. Thanks also to Altha Paul who offered her child-sized Windsor rocker, hand made by her grandfather 76 years ago, and her antique doll to display in it. Both are a part of the Christmas decoration on display upstairs in the Harlow House.

If you have items that you think would fit our Troutdale Historical Society collection and would like to donate them, please call Mary Bryson at 661-2164 and leave your name and number. If you have ideas about future exhibits, call the Harlow House Museum, 661-2164, and give your input. If you have a couple of hours a week or a month and would like to help with cataloguing and inventorying the society's collection, call 661-2164, and leave your name and number.

**Gifts to Troutdale Historical Society**

**Sharon Nesbit's birthday**  
Bill Ferguson  
Jan Cooley  
Bob & Mona Mitchoff

**Year-end gifts**  
Bonnie Irwin  
Lola Fellman  
Sharon Petri

**Names in the news:**

**Vern Rathman** is recovering at home from bypass surgery You can write him at 39200 S.E. Serban Road, Sandy, OR, 97055.

Our organization is grateful to **Erik Tucker**, the backhoe driver who lost his job in a dispute about reporting Native American artifacts found at a work site in the Troutdale industrial area.

**Lewis and Clark buffs sought for exhibit plan**

Do you know a Lewis and Clark buff? People devoted to the story of the expedition are sought for a committee to build a Troutdale Historical Society Lewis and Clark exhibit.

We are thinking of a natural history exhibit, illustrating plants and animals the explorers found here. On their return east, the party spent a prolonged period in this area and the journals are full of information about plants and animals found in the Sandy River area. If you are interested in joining a group that will explain this to the visitors expected here for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, telephone the Harlow House Office, 661-2164.

Our first gathering of Lewis and Clark buffs will occur in March or April.

**So you are worried about paying dues?**

It is the the first of the year and you wonder if you owe dues to the Troutdale Historical Society?

Well, good. We like members who remember us. Your dues help pay for our newsletter and the costs to mail it.

But rest easy, dues to our organization come due in February -- the same time we hold our annual meeting. Your February newsletter will contain a membership envelope if you owe dues for the year. Many members send us a few dollars more, and we like that a lot as well. In order to use that money most efficiently, we do not use our precious paid staff time to write and mail acknowledgements of gifts of less than \$5, but we thank you just the same.

And, if you are interested in making a gift of time, our annual meeting February 20 is our election of officers. We have three positions open in our board of directors, a board members at large, replacing Mary Bryson, and the post of treasurer, replacing Penny Balch, and the vice presidency, replacing Mona Mitchoff.

Please call the Harlow House if you are interested, 661-2164.

**Troutdale in the Year 2000**

Calendar Order Form  
Mail: Troutdale Historical Society  
104 S.E. Kibling St.  
Troutdale, OR 97960

Please send me \_\_\_\_ copy(s) of the Troutdale Historical Society calendar.

Calendars are \$10 each. Shipping and handling is \$2, no matter how many ordered.

Name:-----

Address:-----

City/ZIP:-----

Telephone:-----



**TROUTDALE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
104 KIBLING  
TROUTDALE, OR 97060

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

*Lazy summer  
days at  
blue lake  
park*



**Jan. 16**  
**Troutdale City Hall**

## **Profile: Florence Baker**

(Troutdale resident **Arlene Wands**, a fine writer, has volunteered to profile our volunteers. This first article comes from a visit at the **Harlow House** with **Florence Baker**, faithful host there.)

"I was born and raised in North Portland," said Florence Baker, whose Oregon roots go at least as deep as the Columbia. She laughed. "When I was younger, I always swore I'd never live east of 82nd Street." She paused to chuckle at the irony. "And here I am!"

"Here" is the heart of Troutdale, matriarch of a local farm with a fascinating history -- both she *and* the farm. Florence was the historical society's 1999 "Member of the Year," and with good reason. She's the quintessential volunteer. Working the Harvest Faire, decking the halls at the Harlow House, serving at the ice cream social. Ask her why, and she can't imagine

why *not*. "I enjoy it!" she says. "You know, you just can't sit down and watch life pass by."

Florence and her late husband, Bill, ran a local farm/dairy back when Troutdale was nearly all farms. "We had 35 cows at one time," she said. "We also grew raspberries and, later on, peaches and pears." Mention apple cider, and locals who remember those "good old days" will tell you the Bakers made the best apple cider around. "Back then, the people who worked at Senn's Dairy would come over and get cider all the time," she noted. "We stored it in a 250-gallon tank, and we had to refill that tank every day!"

Bus loads of kids would show up at berry-picking time, eager to earn a little money for school clothes. Bill Baker was known to pass out silver dollars for "perfect attendance," and Florence tells of a man, now in his 40s, who claims to still have three of those silver dollars.

Another coveted prize for a job well done was an airplane ride with Bill.

"The boys were especially enthusiastic about this," laughed Florence. That plane also took Florence and Bill to "fly-in" breakfasts all over the state -- she can still picture Bill flying high in the sky with their Scotty dog. "He'd put the dog in the luggage cart and off they'd go," she said.

So many newcomers are unaware of Troutdale's rich history, and this saddens Florence. She can't imagine *not* being interested in the past. Stop in for a chat with Florence at the Harlow House, 1-4 p.m., fourth Sunday of every month. She has wondrous tales to tell.

### **WANT TO BE A VOLUNTEER?**

**Volunteer coordinator Adrienne Clausen is always searching for museum hosts to tell the story of Troutdale to visitors. If you would like to help interpret our history to visitors, please call her at 663-0895.**