

BYGONE TIMES

A Newsletter of the TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

March, 1999

**The
day
they
used
too
much
nitro
at
the
bank**

**2 p.m.,
Sunday,
Mar. 14**

**"It's a
real
crime"**



Troutdale's bank, now Richard Weill's law office, looked like this after safe crackers used far too much explosive in an attempt to blow the vault.

Troutdale's pool hall robbery, safe cracking and other crimes subject of March program

Connie Purvis, our video and audio tape librarian and transcriber of our oral histories, has always had a fascination with crime and other catastrophes.

Join us at 2 p.m., Sunday, March 14, in Troutdale City Hall while she visits the scene of some Troutdale's best crimes, casualties and curiosities. Purvis has studied up on the Great Troutdale Pool Hall Robbery, the explosion at Troutdale's bank, pictured above, and other events that gave pause in our community's history.

Don't miss her study of the dark -- and often hilarious -- side of Troutdale.

And programs coming up...

On Sunday, April 18, 2 p.m., in city hall, an interview with Ernie Cereghino and his clan. Then, on May 16, Cemetery Hunting, a tour of local cemeteries with historian Stan Clarke.

Cowboys drive horses through early Troutdale

Long time Troutdale Historical Society member Edna Ellis brought her daughter Claudell by the Harlow House. She told Director Deb Cook a story.

When Edna was a little girl, cowboys used to drive wild horses by their house, the Bramhall place on Troutdale Road. Thousands of horses at a time would stretch from Baseline Road (Stark Street) past her house.

Some were crippled and old but many were beautiful, young and spirited. Edna felt that many probably died on the trail that stretched from southeast Oregon where they rounded up.

She and her mom would just cry and cry.

The cowboys took the horses to the Sundial Ranch where they would be held until processed at the old meat packing plant. The flesh and bones were processed for fertilizer, the hooves were sent to a glue factory and the hides (which were worth more than cow hides) were sent elsewhere to be processed.

This was in 1921-24/25 before Bissingers came.



Troutdale to host Treasures of Oregon

In celebration of its 125th anniversary of collecting and preserving Oregon's history, the Oregon Historical Society will share its extraordinary collections with all Oregonians through a stunning, new traveling exhibition.

Housed within an enormous trailer, this "museum on wheels" will bring the richness of the Oregon story to Troutdale on April 30 and May 1, 1999.

It will be on display at Glenn Otto Community Park. There is no charge. More information will be forthcoming.

Gifts to the Endowment fund

in memory of
Mary Malcom Allen
D. June Powers

in memory of
Byron DeYoung
D. June Powers



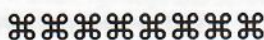
Spring Trek Reminder

Spaces are limited so be sure to reserve your place on the Spring Trek to eastern Washington Cascades. The dates are May 13, 14, 15, 1999. The price is \$300 and includes one group meal and a box lunch. Call 661-2164 to reserve a spot.

Gift memberships

to
Kathy Miner
Suzu Daggett
from
Bob Strebin

Special thanks to **Sandy Wright** and **Pam George** who have spent untold hours arranging, collecting, fixing and creating our latest scrap book...to **Ruthe Ayers** who generously volunteered her time to prepare and serve punch at our February Meeting... to **David Ripma**, **Bob Strebin**, **Mary Bryson**, and **Deb Cook** who supplied hors d'oeuvres and beverages for the Troutdale Chamber of Commerce after hours downtown business merchants meeting which was held at the barn museum on Feb. 15, 1999.



Questions & Answers...

Recently, Connie Purvis was curious about the origins of the name of Jordan Road. Connie, like many of us, uses the Lewis and Clark exit from I-84 and only recently noticed that the short stretch of road in that area was named Jordan. The new interchange planned at that exit also is called Jordan Road interchange by the state highway department.

Connie, who takes care of our oral history library and transcribes our tapes into manuscripts, sent an e-mail message asking where the name came from.

"Beats me," said Sharon Nesbit, "never thought of it before."

But then -- and it is funny how often this happens -- Nesbit ran across a single paragraph in the March 1929 *Gresham Outlook* that explains the source:

"Dan Jordan, who owns land across the Sandy River from Troutdale, has built a large two-story frost-proof warehouse for products of the farm. He is now dikeing 120 acres for truck gardening and potatoes."

Jordan's warehouse appears in an early 1930s panoramic picture of Troutdale, taken from the Bissinger water tower.

Treasurer's Report

1/31/99

by Penny Balch

Operating Fund	\$6,459.95
Barn Account	\$7,982.27
Director's Fund	\$50.00
Capital Imp. Fund	\$7,346.40
Endowment Fund	\$33,216.95

Cookie Search

Special thanks to those who brought cookies to the February Program Meeting. Several people requested the recipe for the delicious nut filled cookies. Please call 661-2164 or send the recipe.

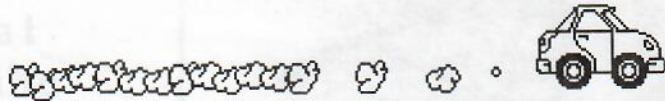
The Gutless Wonder

by Walter Nasmyth

This is a short story about Herman Blazer, the mayor of Troutdale. In 1939 he bought a brand spanking new Lincoln Zephyr with a V-12 engine. As the name implies, the vehicle could go like the proverbial wind and was capable of speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour.

When Herman purchased the Zephyr, everyone at the automobile dealership took for granted that Herman could operate a car with a gear shift. Not so. The only car he had driven was a Model T Ford. The Model T was equipped with just three pedals, the left pedal was low gear, the center pedal was reverse gear and the right pedal was the foot brake. The Model T certainly had nothing in common with a vehicle equipped with a three-speed transmission and the shift lever mounted on the steering column.

The first time Herman drove the Zephyr, he put the gear shift in high gear and slipped the clutch to get the car moving. Of course, the Zephyr would react. It would cough, snort, spitter and sputter and in general revolt against the treatment it was receiving at the hands of the mayor. When the car finally got



underway the engine would ping, rattle and make unearthly noises as if it were about to fly apart.

Herman's first trip up town was to the railroad depot. Going down the hill was no problem, but starting back up the hill from a standing stop in high gear was a tad more difficult. By the time His Honor got the Lincoln up the hill to the highway, the clutch was smoking and the engine was grossly overheated. All in all, the car was a real disaster brought about by His Honor's treatment of it.

Herman made sure everyone in Troutdale knew what a "Gutless Wonder" his new V-12 Lincoln Zephyr really was. People would attempt to explain to him how to use the gears, but to no avail. He would just continue to complain about the "Gutless Wonder."

Milo Coons and his family lived near Beaver Creek, just west of the old Advent Christian Campground and Herman lived just west of the Coons family. They sort of looked after him for he had a tendency to forget where he had left the car. Milo's two sons, Merle and Leo, would have to backtrack over the route of the mayor's travels in order to locate and retrieve the car. To avoid looking for a lost car, Merle and Leo volunteered to drive Herman wherever he had to go, which met with His Honor's approval.

When Leo would get the Zephyr on the highway without Herman as a passenger he would give the Lincoln a real workout. Leo's favorite expression was, "I really blew the carbon out of the Zephyr today." Leo would start from a stop and dig out, winding up the engine of the Zephyr until he reached 40 miles per hour in low gear, then speed shift to second and wind the car up to 80 miles per hour. I don't believe Leo ever hit the maximum speed in high gear the Zephyr was capable of reaching. People who saw Leo putting the Lincoln through its paces, agreed that he truly had blown the carbon out of the Zephyr's engine.

Year later, when I would run into Leo around the Portland area, he always chuckled about the Mayor and his "Gutless Wonder."

Calendar for March & April

Meetings

Sunday, 2 p.m. March 14, Troutdale City Hall

Crimes Casualties and Curiosities, a program of curious local events by Connie Purvis

Sunday, 2 p.m. April 18, Troutdale City Hall

An oral history interview with Ernie Cereghino and his clan

Board of Directors

Wednesday, March 3, 7 p.m., barn

Wednesday, April 7, 7p.m., barn

Coming Events

Saturday May 1, Tea & Tour,

Forest Hall at Bridal Veil

April 30 and May 1

Treasures of Oregon at the Glenn Otto Park

June 5 & 6

Ice Cream Social

Sept 18 & 19

Harvest Faire

Harlow House

Saturdays and Sundays 1 to 4 p.m.

Depot Museum & Store

Closed for the winter

February meeting marks anniversary and loss of Director, Deb Cook

The February Program meeting marked the 31st Anniversary of the Troutdale Historical Society. As a part of this annual business meeting, the members elected officers for 1999. Bob Strebin conducted the elections and the members elected the following: David Ripma, President; Mona Mitchoff, Vice President; Penny Balch, Treasurer; Jean Holman, Secretary; Florence Baker, Board member; Sheryl Maydew, Board member; and Mary Bryson, Board member.

Following the business meeting, members and guests were treated to a slide show of road houses, restaurants, and gas stations of the Historic Columbia River Highway by Steve Lehl and Chuck Rollins.

After the slide presentation President, David Ripma presented outgoing director, Deb Cook a card and a gift from the historical society. This was followed by a short reception.

**Troutdale. Historical
Society**
104 S.E. Kibling
Troutdale, OR
97060

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

**CRIME, CASUALTIES
& CURIOSITIES**



Troutdale
city Hall
2 p.m., March 14

A little reminder:



**Have
you paid your dues
yet?**

Members who
owed dues received an
envelope last month on
their newsletters
announcing the time to
pay annual dues.

If you lost your
envelope or are
uncertain if you owe dues, give us a
call at 661-2164 and we'll check the
records.

**Tea & Tour benefit
May 1 at Forest Hall**

Invitations are available for our
tea and tour at Forest Hall on
Saturday, May 1.

If you wish to attend either
seating, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., please
phone the Harlow House with name
and address and ask for an invitation
to be mailed to you.

Return to:

Troutdale Historical Society

104 S.E. Kibling Street
Troutdale, OR 97060
Telephone: (503) 661-2164



- I want to be a member of Troutdale Historical Society. My donation indicated below.
- Please add my name to your mailing list.
- Please send me information on volunteering.

Membership levels:

- \$8 Individual
- \$12 Couple
- \$20 Family
- \$50 Director's Club
Individual
- \$75 Director's Club
Couple

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State ZIP: _____
Telephone: Day _____ Evening _____
FAX #: _____ E-Mail address: _____

The Troutdale Historical Society
is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization

Open House Scheduled for Safety Action Team

Everyone is invited to the open house for the
Corbett Safety Action Team Office (Sato)
which is located in the Corbett Community
Church at 34309 NE Mershon Rd., on Sat.,
March 13, 1999.

The event will feature the official opening of
the new office, hot dogs and coffee and punch
for lunch, a fly-in by the Lifeflight Rescue
Helicopter at 1p.m., officers from the
Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, Oregon

State Police, and US Forest Service.

Guest speakers include Multnomah County
Commissioner Sharron Kelly and Sheriff Dan
Noelle.

This is an opportunity for the community to
learn what the safety action office does, what
services are available to the community, and to
pick up safety brochures. The event runs from
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.