



# Bygone Times

Newsletter of the  
*Troutdale Historical Society*

February 2009

## Mark your Calendar

### February 15, 2009

Annual Business meeting, Member-of-the-Year announced, Election of Board and officers and Joint meeting with Fairview-Rockwood-Wilkes, Gresham, Corbett-Springdale for a photo contest. Find your old photos and write down as much info as you know about it before the meeting. Meeting at 2:00 p.m. at Glenn Otto Park in the Sam Cox Building.

### March 15, 2009

Program information for March Program Meeting will be in next month's newsletter.

### April 19, 2009

Sharon Nesbit will do an oral history. More about it in next month's newsletter.

### Cemetery Tour

May 16

Stan Clarke will be leading a tour including Eagle Creek and surrounding area. It will probably involve another stop at the Philip Foster Farm and the hard-to-get-into Eagle Creek Cemetery

### Tea & Tour

Due to lack of historic homes available for tours, there will be no Tea & Tour this year. The Tuesday Ladies are planning something really fun for August. Keep watching the Bygone Times for more info.

## Clarence Mershon to talk of the "Women of the Greatest Generation"

Due to the wind storm in January that cancelled our January program meeting, Clarence Mershon's program "Women of the Greatest Generation" will be presented at the February Meeting at Glenn Otto Park in the Sam Cox Building. He will be featuring stories of local women who

worked in the ship yards, at the ammunition box factory in Bridal Veil, at Boeing and in the military.

The Meeting date is February 15 at 2:00 p.m. Members of the Corbett/Springdale Historical Society, the Fairview/Rockwood/Wilkes Historical Society and the

Gresham Historical Society have been invited to attend.

Bring your old photos of the east county area. You may win a prize for best photo. Light refreshments will be served. It is open to the public, admission is free, but donations are always welcome

## Our Greatest Treasures are Stories From Members

by Sharon Nesbit

Among the great treasures in our historical society library are the life stories written by our members. As we have learned from the letter of Newt Parsons or our pioneer diaries, there is just no substitute for the first-person account.

Stan Rathman, one of the veterans featured in our interview in November of World War II vets—and wasn't that a great and interesting meeting—sat down and hand wrote his life story, adding pictures and souvenirs and even a copy of our Troutdale Historical Society newsletters.

We arranged to photocopy Rathman's story, which he concluded in 2003 (but intends to finish), and our librarian Jennifer Munson is now entering it into our historical society li-

brary.

Stan went to sea with the Navy Seabees during World War II and even then, was a prolific writer. One of his stories is about correspondence during World War II, a subject we did not touch on in the November interview.

He had a number of "pen-gals" and includes their photos in his story, except that the space for Mary McKuen is blank "because someone stole your picture," Stan wrote.

Of his war-time correspondence, he wrote: "This was my first time away from home so was a little homesick. We had lots to keep us busy, but in the evenings I started writing letters. Of course, I wrote home, but also I wrote all my aunts and uncles, grandma, cousins and school mates, especially girls...and ev-

eryone wrote back. There was one other who wrote. I had never forgotten the little Canadian girl, my puppy love, Mary...I didn't know her address so I just sent it to Mary McKuen, General Delivery, Windygates, Manitoba, Canada. It turned out to be her address and she wrote back...I would get a letter from her about once a week every week. I would answer right a way so that she would answer back. The others would write me but none so faithfully has Mary."

It is an aspect of war time that we tend to forget in these days when we can contact soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq by e-mail.

Those old letters, too, are treasures. Don't throw any of them away. They are history.

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**Troutdale Historical Society has the distinguished honor of winning the Hampton Inn Save-A-Landmark program building refurbishment for the state of Oregon. There were two other sites in the voting. The old civic stadium in Eugene and Fort Clatsop. The Depot Museum entry won the contest. Hampton Inn will be here with a crew of about 40 on March 26th to clean, paint and ???**  
**More information as we learn the process.**

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It has certainly been a busy and really strange winter so far. (Let's hope the worst is behind us).

Lots has been happening around the Depot. Thanks to all who voted for the Hampton Inn Save-A-Landmark Program. This will give us much help in cleaning up and painting in and around the museum.

A big thank you to:  
**Mary Bryson, Jean**

**Hybskmann, Jean Holman, Mona Mitchoff, Dorothy Sturges, Barbara Welsh and Florence Baker** for the beautiful decorations in Harlow House during the holidays and all of their work for Christmas Open House. A sincere thank you to Santa's helper, **Bob Mitchoff** for stopping by to pass out candy canes and talk to the kids.

Due to the wind storm that blew through in January, we cancelled the January Program meeting and Clarence Mershon's presentation on "Women of the Greatest Generation." Clarence has graciously volunteered to come to the February program meeting. It should be a very interesting program. With Clarence, they always are. February's meeting, of

course is our business meeting and will be held at Glenn Otto Park in the Sam Cox Building. Hope to see you there.

Thanks to all who have donated to the Harlow House paint fund. It looks like it may be a reality by late summer.

Have a Happy Valentine's Day!

*Terry*

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## Thank you for donations to the Harlow House Paint Fund!

Pat Stone	John Fagan	Roy & Joyce Davenport	Doug & Elsie McGuire
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## Thank you for donations to the operating fund!

Albertsons's	Donna Erwin	Debbie Burton	Carol & Walter Ottoson
Jean Holman	& Columbia River	David Ripma	Bob & Louise Dix
Walsh & Associates	Gallery	Sharon Nesbit	Evelyn Schmidt

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**I need help with the newsletter! Does anyone know anything about Pagemaker and have a few hours to give each month??? Give me a call at the office 503-661-2164 or on my cell 503-810-0386...thanks, Terry**

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## Remembered

Former state senator and legislator **Vern Cook**, Troutdale, died Dec. 6 at the age of 83. Cook was a lifetime member of the Troutdale Historical Society and was granted that honor because of his legal services to our organization in incorporation. He served a total of 24 years in the state House and Senate between 1957 and 1981. He previously served as Troutdale's city attorney. He and his wife lived in the Sandy Dell area of Troutdale.

**June McGinnis Sherman Nasmyth**, Troutdale native

and 2001 member of the year of the Troutdale Historical Society, died Tuesday, Dec. 2 in Newberg at the age of 91. "She was a pillar of the Troutdale Historical Society," said former president David Ripma. June met her second husband, John Nasmyth, at Troutdale a historical society meeting. The two married on Jan. 3, 1989, held their wedding reception at another meeting and became frequent travelers on our Troutdale treks. In addition, she and John were major donors to the Troutdale Historical Society barn and gave the society its very first computer

and printer. She was born May 17, 1917 in Troutdale to Morris and Gladys (Lumsden) McGinnis. Her grandfather, Horace McGinnis, was a pioneer celery grower in the community. Her father, also a celery farmer, was a mayor of Troutdale from 1948 to 1950. Her mother taught most of the children in Troutdale to swim in the Sandy River.

A couple of other deaths deserve notice. **Ernest Swigert** died. A Portland philanthropist and animal lover, who once picked up a wounded possum on the road and took it to a vet, died Dec. 10. He, his brother Henry, and

his sister Nani Warren, once came to our historical society meeting to talk about their family's party in the history of the Sun Dial Ranch, which was owned by their father. They provided us with quite a few documents that helped to tell the story of the ranch and the development of the dike system that protected it from floods. Also dead is 89-year-old **Ann Sullivan**, an Oregonian reporter, who had a soft spot in her heart for historic buildings and wrote often about preservation efforts in some of the historic buildings in East Multnomah County.

**Stan Rathman**, Wood Village, and longtime Troutdale resident died Dec. 17, just a few weeks after he and his brother, Vern, were guests for our November historical society meeting, an interview with World War II Veterans. We are grateful to Kim Cook, interviewer, and the

program committee for preserving the stories of these veterans. Stan, 83, died of stomach cancer. His wife, Vorita, died in 2004. He and his family came to Troutdale in 1943 from North Dakota. Stan followed his older brother Wilbur to War, ending up in the U.S. Navy Seabees.

He shipped out of Norfolk, VA., two days before D-Day and was as surprised as anyone that he ended up in the Pacific in Hawaii. After seven months there he spent the rest of the war running a salvage yard on the island of Guam. He really liked the native people there, and his

life story, which he wrote by hand, includes photos of islanders. He got a job with what was then Valberg Lumber after the war and remained on as shipping supervisor and lumber broker for Vanport Manufacturing for 41 years.

**Len Otto**  
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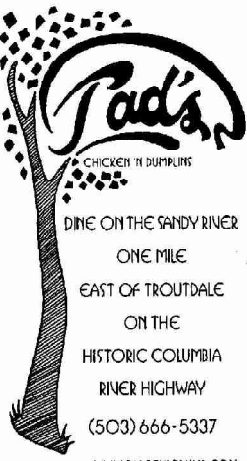
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Troutdale Historical Society  
 104 SE Kibling St.  
 Troutdale, OR 97060  
 Phone 503-661-2164  
 www.troutdalehistory.org

**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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**Our Thanks...from THS...to the  
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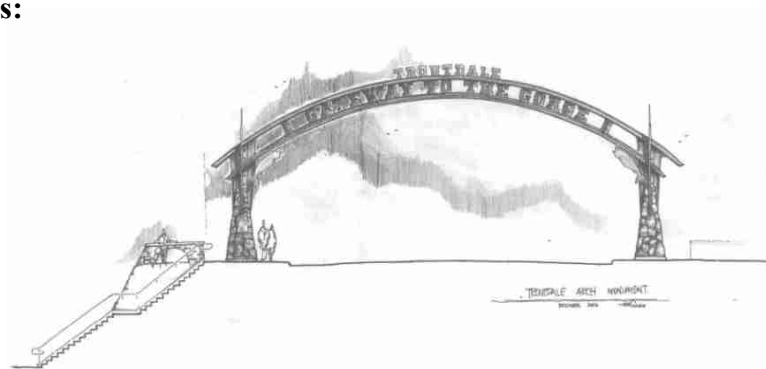
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**In Memory of June Nasmyth**

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**In Memory of Stan Rathman**

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**Centennial Monument Donations  
 Richard Allen**

**It is not too late to get your name on the Arch at the \$1,000 level or higher. The deadline has been extended to March 15th. You can mail your check to the Troutdale Historical Society, 104 SE Kibling St., Troutdale, OR 97060**