



BYGONE TIMES

A Newsletter of the TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

February, 2000

Sharon Nesbit, Editor, 665-0423

Appliances and other 20th century wonders

Remember the Bendix washing machine? With its round glass door in front, it looked a bit like a white enamel television set. Remember how the vibrations sent it walking around the room?

Marlene Mahoney Loisdotter joins us at our annual meeting, **2 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 20**, in Troutdale City Hall, reading from her mother's diary about the arrival, installation and use of a Bendix washing machine and the uproar it set off in a tiny logging town.

Loisdotter is an instructor in journal writing and a teacher in women's studies. Her mother's diary and the story of the Bendix, is one of her personal treasures. Bring along your own story about the appliance that gave you the most wonder.



To revive the freshness of your dainty garments

Also, election of officers, payment of our annual dues and our annual business meeting. A slate of candidates and how to pay your dues on Page Two of this newsletter.

And, just for fun, a nifty truck wreck...

Red Wood loaned us this great photo of a convoy truck of new Packard autos, 5 of them, blown off the Troutdale overpass approach into a cabbage patch Nov., 1949.



CALENDAR February & March



Meetings

Sunday, 2 p.m., Feb. 20, Troutdale City Hall
20th Century Wonders: The Bendix, Marlene Loisdotter reads about the arrival of the first Bendix washing machine in a remote logging town.

Sunday, 2 p.m. March 19, Troutdale City Hall
Second Pioneers: Dustbowlers Interviewing families who found their way west on the "second Oregon trail" in the 1930s and 1940s.

Board of Directors

Wednesday, Feb. 2, 7 p.m., barn
Wednesday, March 1, 7 p.m., barn

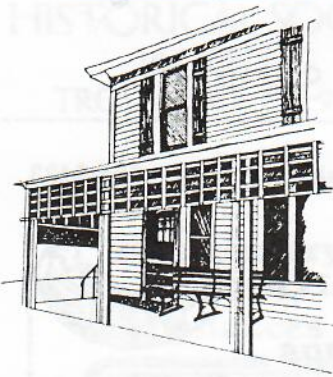
Coming Events

Saturday, May 6, Tea & Tour,
Brickhaven, near Menucha Corbett
June 3 & 4, Troutdale Ice Cream Social

Harlow House

Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 4 p.m.
Depot Museum & Store
Closed for the winter

Harlow House -- 100 years



Research reveals that the Harlow-Evans House first appeared on Multnomah County Tax records in 1900. Because of photos that might have been taken earlier, and some other stories suggesting an 1897 construction date, the house may be older. However, 1900 is documented in tax records, so that is the date we use. Consequently

this year marks the home's 100th birthday. Throughout the year, we will celebrate the centennial in a variety of ways. In the coming months we talk about the people who lived in the Harlow House.

Fred Harlow and family 1900--1915

Frederick Everett Harlow, born 1872, was the son of Capt. John Harlow and his third wife, Celestia (or Celeste) Colbath Barker. He graduated from the University of Oregon in 1896 and was admitted to the bar at Salem. The builder of the Harlow House became one of Troutdale's earliest lawyers serving as treasurer of the town until his resignation in 1913. The house was known as Judge Fred Harlow's home, apparently because he was a county justice of the peace.

In partnership with his brother, Louis (who later occupied the Harlow House), Fred opened the Harlow-Blaser-Harlow general store. The two brothers opened the town's first bank.

Fred Harlow worked in Multnomah County government as deputy clerk of the Circuit Court in 1897. He married a strikingly beautiful woman, Minnie Lucile Forman in 1893. Living with them at the Harlow House were two daughters, Lucile and Harriett. Lucile died of typhoid at the Harlow House at the age of 10 on Sept. 14, 1907. Troutdale school children walked down the trail behind the school to attend her funeral in the front parlor. She was taken to Portland in a funeral trolley car -- white for women and children -- for cremation.

In February 1913, the Harlows' Troutdale Bank failed. Though *The Gresham Outlook* assured readers that the Harlows had a reputation for conservative management and integrity, family members agree Fred was responsible for the losses, likely embezzlement. Ginger Harlow Allen, family genealogist, says Fred may have gone to California after the bank collapsed and that he was regarded as the "black sheep" of the family. Everyone claimed that Louis Harlow stayed around to pay off the debt.

Fred and Minnie Harlow left Troutdale after the bank failure, probably about 1915. Their daughter, Harriett, grew up to dance on the stage in the Pantages Theater in Portland.

Fred and Minnie ultimately divorced and he married a woman named Letitia. Fred and Letitia made their home in Portland. In her old age and fallen on hard times, Minnie returned to Fred. Letitia cared for both her husband and her husband's first wife, until they died, according to Ginger Harlow Allen.

Gifts to Troutdale Historical Society

In memory of Richard Cereghino
Walt and Vi Nasmyth

To the Endowment Fund
Jack and Roberta Burns

For the Executive Director's Fund
Jeanne Pulliam

People and things to know

Do you have questions about an upcoming program meeting, your dues, museum hours, when you've signed up to host the Harlow House or to bring cookies? If you need answers for these or other questions, call our new director, **Carnetta Boyd**. Carnetta began her official duties at the Harlow House on Jan. 6, 2000. She has been busy learning the many jobs that go with her new position and getting to know the volunteers and members of the society. Her previous job was with St. Mary's Home for Boys in Beaverton, so she really appreciates not having a long commute to work. Carnetta and her husband Sonny recently moved to their home in the Columbia River Gorge. According to Carnetta, "We moved to this side from Aloha, and we just love the area."

How do you know if you need to pay your dues? All of you received an envelope in this newsletter. If you owe your dues, you have a plain mailing label. If you have a dot on your mailing label, you don't owe dues, but we won't turn down a contribution sent in the return envelope.

February brings our annual business meeting and the birthday of the historical society. This year's slate of candidates for the Board of Directors contains some familiar names and some that are new. **Dave Ripma** is running for president, **Sheryl Maydew** for vice president, **Jean Holman** for secretary, **Pat Smith**, for treasurer, **Terry Smoke**, **Ed Thiemann**, for board members and **Elliot Moore** as an ex officio board member. Be sure to attend the meeting on Feb. 20, 2000, cast your vote, learn about 20th century wonders, and celebrate the 32nd birthday of the society.

Richard Cereghino dies at age 77

Richard Cereghino died in Portland Dec. 21. He was born and raised in Troutdale and is the brother of Ernie Cereghino. Though disabled by a stroke, Richard joined the rest of his family last year in an interview with us about their lives on the farm at Troutdale.

First visitors at Harlow House, this century

Robert & Ragna Reed were the first people to sign in at the Harlow House on Jan. 2, 2000, the first day of our museum operation in this century. The Reeds are from Molalla and he came for a visit because he had spent the previous fall working in Harlow Canyon on the drainage project.

A fish story

Dan Piluso

I was in my early teens when the first "real" smelt run in years made its way up the Sandy River. We, like most families who lived along the river, had quickly pulled in more smelt than we could, or would, ever eat.

We fried, baked, breaded and smoked hundreds of the little critters. For me, smoking was the most tasty preparation, if not the most appealing in appearance. They look like hundreds of little bark-covered sticks with fins after spending a night in the smoke house -- Jerky with a face.

Smoking the tiny fish, unlike other methods of cooking, gave the advantage of not needing to gut and clean the little devils. This lack of internal intimacy with my future meal may have contributed to my preference smoked smelt.

My mother, a great one for old-time gardening tricks, found that strategic placement underground of left-over smelt was fine fertilizer. This was perhaps the Native American version of those little fertilizer spikes you see in garden centers today. Mom would use a wooden stake, poke it into the ground to produce a smelt-sized hole about six inches deep, and drop the now stiff fish in tail first covering it with dirt. While this trick was wonderful for our tomatoes and the garden in general, it was not so wonderful for our neighbor, Eloise.

The incident occurred as my mother was showing off her bountiful garden to Eloise in a stout rain. The rain exposed hundreds of morose little fish heads, sticking straight up out of the ground with their mouths agape. I'm sure visions of Satanic smelt-worshipping rituals probably crossed Eloise's mind before she crumpled to the ground in a heap.

I did discover that there could be a financial side to the smelt run without having to touch what was now becoming, after many a meal, a loathsome fish.

Under the bridge adjacent to what is now Glenn Otto Park, there is a rock island that surrounds the center abutment of the bridge. My partner in crime and best friend, Greg, and I set up a rubber raft tied to two ropes which allowed us to pull the raft from the river bank to the island under the bridge. As the masses of smelt dippers beat the water along the river bank, they would drive the tiny fish to the center of the river and right by our island. This is where we placed our sign reading, "Raft rides five dollars."

At first, business was slow but we discovered advertising. We would dip our net in the black ribbon of fish going by the island and allow our audience on the bank to see us struggle to lift the nearly full net of fish out of the water. We would then lift the fish to the other side of the island out of sight of the crowd and release them to repeat our performance. It only took a few dips like this until we had a small line of netters along the bank with five dollars each clenched in their hands.

As with any good idea, we had to deal with



competition. Two "adults" got a raft and rope and set up shop right next to us offering four dollars a ride. This lasted only a few hours as the local river patrol must have taken pity on us. They commenced a thorough inspection of the raft of our rivals. Lacking life jackets and a fire extinguisher in their boat, the ticket, I was told, was \$200. We also underwent an inspection for proper life jackets and other items. During the inspection, the officer said to be safe and that we had a "great idea here," winked and left. We never saw our rivals again.

The officer was right. We were raking in money and never touched a smelt. I could see my lifetime profession before me. The smelt had other ideas and in less than two weeks, the run ended.

Today my feelings on smelt are part nostalgic and part culinary. A sign in the smelt exhibit in the Troutdale Historical Society barn museum sums it up best when it says something to the effect: "I would pay five dollars for the first smelt of the season and would pay five dollars not to have eat any more thereafter."

Dan Piluso is a 30-something who grew up on the Sandy River at Troutdale and still lives on Jackson Park Road. The Troutdale Historical Society smelt exhibit, with records of runs from 1900 on, is open each Saturday and Sunday, 1-4 p.m.

In honor of the coming spring and -- who knows? -- maybe a smelt run, this picture provided by Terry and Jodi Smoke of Nostalgia Antiques in downtown Troutdale.



The Troutdale Dairy Queen believed last fall that they were offering a Swiss melt, but it sure look like a smelt basket.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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20th century
wonders,
appliances



Feb. 20
Troutdale City Hall

Profile: Mary Elizabeth
Hughes by Arlene Wands

The nursing students didn't know what to make of her. Mary Hughes stood in front of her class, holding a cane and decked out in a bright purple outfit. With a red hat. And red shoes. "When I am an old woman," she recited, "I shall wear purple."

"I teach the 'Aging' class a little differently," Mary noted. An understatement, this, from someone who understands well the demands of aging. She's sharp, independent, sassy – and, as her students at Mt. Hood Community College will testify, *very* imaginative.

Oh, she sometimes has her doubts. "Is it time to quit?" she wonders. "What do they think of this old lady teaching classes?" But she packs her doubts away for another day and heads off to class. Carrying freshly-baked cookies for her students.

If anyone should doubt the importance of history, one need only talk to Mary. As the country folk used to say, she can really tell you how the cow ate

the cabbage. With a memory that spans a couple of world wars and a hefty handful of presidents, Mary has walked the walk.

She was born in Junction, Idaho and spent her early years on a ranch, where her father was a foreman and her mother, the cook.

"My mother was a wonderful woman, very intelligent," Mary said. "I always thought of her as a nurse, tho she wasn't trained as one. When the phone would ring in the middle of the night, Mama would get up, saddle her horse, and ride out to deliver a baby or take care of someone." Her mother also had a strong social conscience. "Mama would take my father's Stetson hat and stand outside the local saloon – this was a time when a lady would *never* go inside a saloon! – and take up a collection for folks in need."

Her mother died when Mary was only nine. "My mother came down with pneumonia," she said. "Back then, there wasn't much you could do. There were no antibiotics. We'd use mustard plasters. 'Denver Mud' they called it,

came in a jar. You spread it on a cloth and put the cloth on your chest."

She spent the next few years living on an Ohio farm with relatives. ("I milked six cows twice a day!" she boasted, smiling.) By 1934, as the Depression gripped the nation, Mary was cooking for the railroad. "We lived in railroad cars," she said. "I cooked three meals a day for 20 hungry men."

Mary met and married Bob Hughes, and became a nurse. "Nurses today have no idea what it was like then," she noted. "Polished shoes, uniform below the calf. And if a doctor came around, you had better jump up and give him your chair!" She ultimately also received her teaching certificate from Portland State.

Frank Sinatra once sang of being "a puppet, a poet, a pauper, a pirate...", but he had nothing on Mary. She has packed a lot of living into her life. She's a wonderful historian, who can introduce the older folks to things they might have forgotten and the younger folks to things they've yet to see. Visit her, every first Sunday, at the Harlow House.