

BYGONE TIMES

A Newsletter of the TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

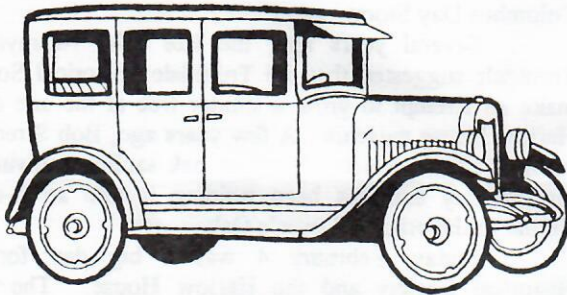
March, 2000

Sharon Nesbit, 665-0423

Talking to the second migration, pioneers of Dust Bowl and WWII

Our program, **Sunday, March 19, 2 p.m. In Troutdale City Hall**, will be interviews with families of the "Second Migration," those who came West in the late 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s, hoping to make a life here when dust, drought, poverty and itchy feet caused them to pick up and move.

Did your family come in a 1925 Chev, instead of a Conestoga. Was your load a bunch of kids, instead of fruit trees for the New Eden?



Please join us to tell your story of your arrival in this promised land. Sharon Nesbit will be conducting interviews. Charles Jennings, our videographer will tape the stories for our oral history collection. And elsewhere in this newsletter, please see Sam Cox's wonderful story about his trip West.

Annual Meeting and Board Elections

By Carnetta Boyd

We had our annual meeting with board elections at our February 20th meeting.

The elected board are: Dave Ripma ~ President, Florence Baker ~ Vice President, Pat Smith ~ Treasurer, Jean Holman ~ Secretary, Sheryl Maydew, Ed Thiemann, and Terry Smoke as board members. We also have a young man, Elliott Moore, who is now an ex-officio board member.

Pat Smith and her husband Kenneth live in Troutdale. Pat is on the City Council, she's a bookkeeper for Motel 6, and she's a volunteer at the Harlow House.

Ed Thiemann and his wife Phyllis own Brickhaven Bed & Breakfast, on the scenic highway.

Terry Smoke and his wife Jodi own Nostalgia Antique Store in Troutdale.

CALENDAR March & April

Meetings

Sunday, 2 p.m. March 19, Troutdale City Hall

Second Pioneers:

Dustbowlers, interviews with families who found their way west on the "second Oregon trail".



Sunday, 2 p.m. April 16, Troutdale City Hall

A chat with Clara and Laura, a reenactment

Meet Clara Larsson, Troutdale's first woman mayor, and Laura Harlow, Troutdale's second woman mayor, in an historic interview.

Board of Directors

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

Wednesday, April 5, 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

Journaling and the Bendix

By Carnetta Boyd

Marlene Loisdotter, the guest speaker for our February meeting, teaches women's studies and journaling at Mount Hood Community College and at various other locations.

Marlene brought us some great insights on the value of journaling. She told us some great stories of her family and how her mother won a new Bendix washing machine. She became the envy of her friends and family (she also ended up doing much of their laundry).

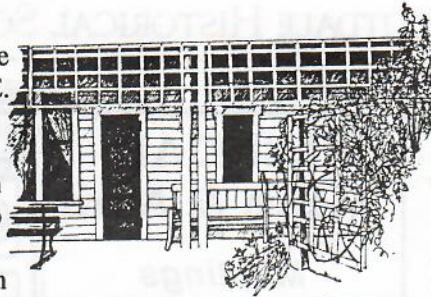
Thank you Marlene, for your time and for sharing your life with us.

Harlow House -- 100 years

Continuing an account of the people who lived in the Harlow House for the last century.

A Gresham Outlook article in 1918 indicates that C.E. Gholson "has bought the lease of the Harlow farm from Mr. Quinn, and with his family has moved into the Fred Harlow House.

Mr. Simms, who has been farming the tract for Mr. Quinn, has gone to southern Oregon to do road work."



Louis & Laura Harlow 1920--1940

The 1900 census shows Lou and Laura Harlow living with Lou's mother, Celeste Colbath Harlow, widow of John Harlow, in a small rambling home north of the present Harlow House. The home was also occupied by two boarders and Sam Chin, a Chinese servant who was the cook and later taught the Harlow grandchildren to cook. Also on the property for many years was a man named Blackie, possibly an African-American, who lived in a little house back of where the gazebo now stands. He was a retainer/caretaker and friend to the family.

Louis Harlow and Laura were married in 1898 in Portland. They had three sons, Jack born in 1903, Sam born in 1905, and Robert, born in 1910. It was apparently in the old Harlow home to the north that Lou and Laura's boys set up an elaborate train set with track extending throughout the house. According to Ginger Harlow Allen, kids came from miles around to marvel at the train setup.

The family suffered when the Harlow bank failed as a result of Fred Harlow's embezzlement. Family lore insists Lou Harlow stayed to pay off the debts after his brother left town. Like his brother, Lou Harlow had a law degree, but never practiced law, working all his life as a clerk of the Multnomah County Court. Close friends say he was plagued with depressive illness, but also that he was hospitable and made the finest dill pickles in the county.

Lou was the second mayor of Troutdale in 1910. Laura was the second woman mayor, elected in 1924. (Troutdale's first woman mayor and Laura Harlow's friend, Clara Latourell Larsson was elected in 1913.) In October of 1920, the Harlows moved into the "Fred Harlow Place" and put their old home up for sale. (The original Harlow house was later torn down, giving way to a new home built for the Lee Evans family.) It was Laura Harlow who sent away for a pattern so she and her sons could make the fireplace ornamentation of hammered and pierced copper. It says "Salve" which is Latin for greetings, or welcome -- thus the word salutations.

(Continued next month)

The New Lover's Oak

The first Lover's Oak, an S-shaped tree which is the logo of the Troutdale Historical Society, grew near the banks of the Sandy River, northeast of the Troutdale airport. The landmark tree was shaped by debris and flood waters in the 1800's when floating logs bent an oak sapling to the ground. The tree grew up around the flood debris shaping the native oak into the form of the letter S lying on its side.

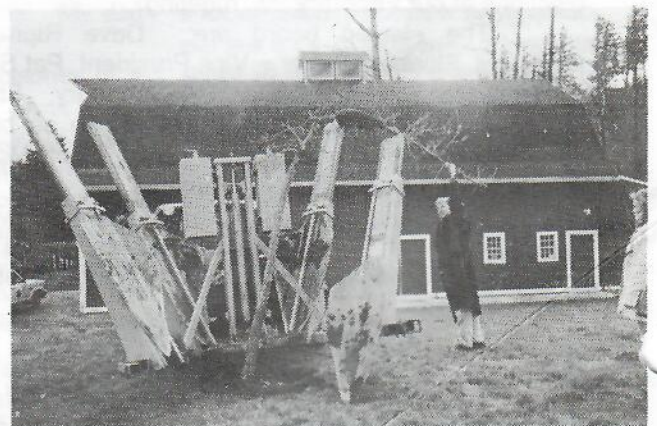
The distorted trunk offered a gently curved seat that was a meeting place and courting spot for generations of Troutdale residents who took an afternoon's walk to the tree. Dozens of Troutdale residents took snap shots of the unusual tree, posing friends and relatives in the curve of the trunk.

In 1941, when the aluminum plant was built for war-time production of aluminum for airplanes and other war materials, the area where the tree grew was off limits to local residents. Fenced and protected by the government, the tree was forgotten during the war and seldom visited after the war. It blew over in the 1962 Columbus Day Storm.

Several years ago, the late John Nasmyth of Troutdale suggested that the Troutdale Historical Society make an attempt to grow a similar tree at the site of its Harlow House museum. A few years ago, Bob Strebin, a member of the society, found an oak sapling growing on his property and has been training it into an S-curve similar to the original Lover's Oak.

Friday, February 4 was a big day for the Historical Society and the Harlow House. The **New Lover's Oak** was transplanted from the Strebin farm to the Harlow House. It looks great in its new home and it definitely belongs there.

Thank you Bob Strebin for your dedication in caring for and training our Lover's Oak. Thank you Val Lantz of the City of Troutdale, for coordinating this effort, and to Michelle Rosemberger, and Everett Smelser at the City Parks Department for all the work you did. We also want to thank Mr. Roland McGinnis from the Fir Land Tree Farm for taking such good care while transplanting our *new landmark*. It will be enjoyed for many years to come.



OFFICE REPORT

Hello, my name is Carnetta Boyd. I'm the new director at the Historical Society. I'm glad to be a part of the great group of people who make this all-possible.

I was born in Lubbock, Texas but only lived there the first four years of my life. My father was in the U S Air Force for twenty-three years, so we moved every four years or so. When my father retired from the military, he went to seminary for four years, so I went from "Air Force Brat" to "Preachers Brat", I mean, "Kid".

I have lived in Japan, California, Washington and Oregon and feel very fortunate to have done so.

I have been very busy trying to familiarize myself with the duties of my new position. There is much work to be done and I am definitely up to the task. I look forward to meeting you in the days and months ahead.

GIFTS

We have received so many gifts we don't have room to list them all, so we will list them *all* next month.

**Troutdale
in the Year 2000**

Calendar Order Form

Mail: Troutdale Historical Society
104 S.E. Kibling St.
Troutdale, OR 97060

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

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

**Sam came west
with a squirrel**

To prime the pump for our upcoming meeting on Dust Bowl families, this story that Sam Cox loved to tell about his trip West.

"He came west the with the Dust Bow migration, blowing into Troutdale with his family in a 1932 Plymouth, a pet squirrel riding on the dashboard.

The squirrel would stay on the dash until another car came along, and then it would dive over the back seat into his sister's best hat.

"Maybe it was his goofy arrival in Oregon, 30 days at 30 mph with one tire in the gravel the whole way -- two flat tires in the first 29 miles, Sam remembers -- that made the mayor of Troutdale so irreverent.

The squirrel got away, climbed up a tree while they were changing a tire. Sam's brother refused to depart for Oregon until he got his squirrel back. The county sheriff arrived and shook the tree, rattling the rattled squirrel from his perch. The poor creature dropped like a rock on the hard ground and lay dead still. Sam's brother was in the process of burying his pet when it revived and the family continued their wayward progress west."

Our Condolences

Bill Booheister passed away on January 22nd, 2000. He and his wife Martha have been members for many years and have volunteered frequently at our events.

Quick Updates

CABOOSE - Mary Bryson, our Curator, contacted the Multnomah County Work Crew coordinator and arranged to have them come and clean the Caboose at the Depot. It looks great!

BLUE LAKE VIDEOS - Videos of last month's meeting on Blue Lake Park will be available soon at \$15 each. Please call the Harlow House to place your orders. **Phone 661-2164**

DEPOT UTILIZATION COMMITTEE A committee has been formed among the Historical Society, Chamber of Commerce and the City of Troutdale to get the funding necessary to make the rest of the Depot habitable for the Chamber Visitor Center.

**Meet Our High School
Volunteers**

By Adrienne Clausen

The new millenium brings us three Reynolds High School student volunteers who are involved in the **Extra Mile** program at their school.

Elliot Moore is a sophomore who is very interested in the historic preservation of his hometown. He has been involved in helping the Fairview-Rockwood-Wilkes Historical Society and he is now an ex officio member of our board of directors. He volunteers at the Harlow House on weekends. He is raising a Jersey calf for FFA and his new "baby" is a pick-up truck. In the coming years, we hope he'll become more involved in our society.

Zy Xiong is a 17-year-old senior Harlow House volunteer. She has welcomed visitors and conducted tours. At Reynolds High School, Zy has served as the publicity director for DECA, an association for marketing students, she is a member of the Future Business Leaders of America, and she also is a member of the International Club. Zy enjoys the history of her new hometown having recently moved here from southern California. Upon graduation, she will attend Mt. Hood Community College for two years then move on to Portland State University, majoring in International Business.

Our third high school volunteer is **Elizabeth (Liz) Stern**, a 17-year-old junior who plans to become a Marine Biologist rehabilitating marine animals. Liz and her mother have been involved in volunteering with Friends of Seasonal Workers and Service Workers. They have helped in procuring housing, legal, and medical services. Liz recently spent a long weekend in San Francisco working in a food bank. At school, Liz is involved with the Dance Team.

It is easy to see that these young adults are very busy and any time they can find to volunteer for us is very much appreciated.

If you have some time that you could volunteer at the Harlow House or the Depot Museum, please contact Adrienne Clausen, volunteer coordinator at 663-0895 or 661-2164.

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**A talk with
the Dust Bowl
pioneers**

**March 19
Troutdale City Hall**

Profile: Jim Cook
by Arlene Wands

"You'd better keep an eye on your arm, because I've been told I can talk it right off," says Jim Cook. Well, the fact is, the man has seen so much and done so much and *knows* so much about local history, it could be said he has earned the right to pass it on. Besides — he's doggone interesting!

Occasional proprietor of the Troutdale Railroad Depot, and retired railroad worker, Jim Cook is Troutdale-born and bred. His folks originally lived in Bridal Veil, where his Dad plied the blacksmith trade and his mother lent Dad a much-needed hand.

"My mother was a well-muscled woman," said Jim. "She could swing a 16 lb. sledge hammer all day, cutting steel for my Dad. He'd hold the chisel and she would swing that sledge." He added, "Nobody could take her place, as far as my dad was concerned."

The folks moved to Troutdale around 1920. By this time, his Dad had abandoned the blacksmith business to

work in a much more lucrative trade — car repair. He purchased a garage on old Hwy. 30 (the building still stands!) and put his ingenuity to work. Noticing the number of broken-down cars littering the landscape from The Dalles to Portland, (parts had been impossible to get because of "the war effort"), his dad paid local kids to gather the abandoned train bearings scattered around the railroad tracks. "He would melt those bearings down and recast them for cars," said Jim. "and people came from all over for help. My dad was a mechanic all the way!"

Jim has fascinating memories of a Troutdale few remember. "Smelt runs!" noted Jim, with obvious relish. "Three dips in the Sandy River, and we had all the smelt we wanted. I remember one time a young lady took her bloomers off, tied the ends, and dipped those bloomers into the river. She got so many smelt she couldn't lift the bloomers back out!" He recalls when the area was "ranches, just ranches, all the way to Portland." He can still see the Wool Pullery. And the Belrose

Streetcar that ran out past the county poor farm. He remembers when Troutdale was a major *celery* producer. And Mayor Herman Blazer had a huge box factory here. It was a Troutdale long-ago and far-away.

Jim Cook began workin' on the railroad, for 39 live-long years. "When I started with the 'S P & S' (Spokane, Portland and Seattle), I was part of the survey gang," said Jim. "\$140 a month *plus* travel expenses! Thought I'd gone to heaven." He cut a lot of brush, drove a lot of stakes, became a rail inspector and saw *a lot* of Oregon — and wishes, above all, he'd kept a few of those tie tacks. "When you put new ties in, you would put down a little tack that had a date on the head. If, later on, you discovered a tie that was cracking, for example, you'd get the tie tack number and find the other ties with the same number, to check 'em." Tie tacks are the stuff of museums now.

Ask Jim about smelt runs, and railroads, and that long-ago Troutdale. And while you're at it, ask him how to "wipe a train." Pretty interesting stuff.