


# BYGONE TIMES

A Newsletter of the TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

December, 2000



## Festive WRITES OF CHRISTMAS

 Join us for our opening reception at the Harlow House, noon to 4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 2. Unveiling of our Christmas-trimmed historic home and our vintage Christmas card collection.

Bring a plate of cookies to share,  
Enjoy a cup of hot wassail.  
VISIT WITH SANTA.

## Harlow House featured in historic home book

The Harlow House is one of the 48 Oregon historic homes profiled by Kathleen Wiederhold in her newest book, *Exploring Oregon's Historic House Museums*. This is a great book that really does feature homes from around Oregon.

Harlow House is one of only eight historic sites in the Portland area profiled, with the majority of the profiles coming from the Willamette Valley area. Sharon Nesbit and Mary Bryson worked with Kathleen on our five-page profile which includes two photos: one from the outside and a nice shot of the fireplace.

Retail price for this book is \$19.95, but you can purchase it from us for only \$15.00. This would be a great Christmas gift! (Kathleen Wiederhold has also published *Exploring Oregon's Historic Courthouses*.)



## Have greens to trim the house?

The best part of Christmas at the Harlow House is having a profusion of fresh evergreen boughs, holly, laurel, rose hips and what have you, to decorate in the old fashioned style. If you have greens, please cut them, put them in a big garbage bag and leave them on the front porch of the Harlow House by the morning of Nov. 29.

## Huge artifact raises question: Whatizzit?

Our largest artifact, the caboose, might have some competition with the donation we received from Bill Fisher a couple of weeks ago.

Dubbed "The Thing," by Bob Strebin, described as a "pulpit" by Fisher, thought to be part of the furnishings of the old Harlow Bank by Sharon Nesbit, it is a monstrous wooden enclosure, about 5 feet high, 5 feet long and 4 feet deep, well finished on the outside, with a crude desk and shelves inside. Our interest in it is that it was stored in the old Larsson warehouse on the railroad tracks in Troutdale where other Harlow Bank things were, as well as the buggy chassis used by Clara and John Larsson.

Thanks to Bob and Terry Smoke for risking life and limb to move it into Dick Jones' workshop. Laura Newton, Troutdale Historical Society's new director, invites the curious to come by the barn museum for a special showing and to take a guess. Her phone number is 503-661-2164, to make sure she is in the office.

## Calendar

November, December,  
January

### Harlow House Decorating

Wed., Nov. 29, 9 a.m.

### Christmas at Harlow House

Sat., Dec. 2, noon to 4 p.m.

House open Saturday & Sunday, 1-4 p.m.  
through December, except Christmas Eve

### Board of Directors Meeting

Wed., Dec. 6, 7 p.m.

Wed., Jan. 3, 7 p.m.

In the barn

### Bridal Veil Remembered,

photos and memories by Steve Lehl & Chuck Rollins

Sun., Jan. 21, 2 p.m.

Troutdale City Hall

*In the event of ice or snow creating hazardous driving conditions, Troutdale Historical Society events are automatically canceled.*



## Christmas Story



*Capturing  
Christmas Past  
1934-1941,  
(continued)*

*by Ginger Harlow  
Allen*

These were the politically incorrect years with religious programs in the schools as well as local churches, programs of caroling, tableaux and recitations. Nanaw, having memorized poetry and essays in her youth, was fond of recitation, consequently Bonnie and I were encouraged to follow suit.

Besides church and school programs, much of our entertainment came from radio, then an influential and pervasive part of every-day life. During Christmas it was turned on in the afternoon soon after Bonnie and I came home from school so we could hear the Cinnamon Bear broadcast from Ripma & Wolfe Department Store in Portland. After dinner, as I sat on the table in the dining room wrapping gifts or while making Christmas cards, I along with the rest of the family listened to Fibber McGee and Molly, the Jack Benny show with Dennis Day and Rochester, the Firestone Hour or Bob Hope. Nanaw, busy at the kitchen counter, liked the volume turned so she, too, could hear the programs as she went about her innumerable chores. The popular vocalist of the day may have been Rudy Vallee or Bing Crosby, but I was a square, my idol was Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians.

Among the mementos I found after mother's death were some old Christmas seals she'd saved for years. I remember, before Scotch tape, the frustration of wrapping packages with similar stickers. The few seals Nanaw did buy, Bonnie and I put to good use, all the while cautioned against indiscriminate use.

Christmas Eve we loaded the car with the festively wrapped packages and the food Nanaw was to provide for the holiday meal. Our

contribution, besides sharing the expense of the main dish, was Sunshine Salad, made with lemon and orange Jell-O, mixed with grated carrot and crushed pineapple. In a metal cake container was Nanaw's special dessert, old-fashioned apple cobbler, from her mother's recipe dating from 1849. This concoction was made by taking a 10-inch double crusted apple pie; as it cooled, Nanaw spooned it into a large compote-like dish. It was served with whipped cream in the early years, or, as refrigeration improved, vanilla ice cream. thinly-sliced cheddar cheese accompanied this delicacy.

In the early 1930s Aunt Eunice lived at the top of the hill in Troutdale. What I remember about this place was the trek to the outhouse and a family of "pet" black widow spiders Aunt Eunice kept in a covered fish tank, with a separate nursery for the baby spiders.

Almost everyone dressed for special occasions. Small girls with perhaps, a ribbon in one's hair, black patent Mary Janes and a party dress. Boys wore white shirts with miniature bow ties and a young man's version of slacks. men might put on their one and only suit -- the one they wore to weddings and funerals or for church, if they happened to go. This might be the only time all year long the suit was worn. The showstoppers were the women. They sparkled in taffeta, satin or velveteen cocktail-like dresses, 2 or 3-inch heels, silk hose and their best jewelry. My otherwise circumspect and modest uncles and aunts and cousins reveled in their festive dress, throwing aside worries and cares for an evening of celebration.

The party began with holiday cheer, punch for the kids and--much against the principles of the teetotalers, Nanaw and Aunt Eunice--spiked egg nog for adults. The main course was either roasted turkey, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes and gravy and sweet potatoes, or a bone-in ham, creamed potatoes and peas. Whatever was served, the meal invariably included onions in white sauce, the sunshine Jell-O salad and

relishes. The cobbler was serve with coffee, after the gifts were opened.

The question Dick, Bonnie and I begged to know was, "When can we open our presents?"

We were there to exchange presents. Bonnie and I, several years older than Dick, passed out the gifts. The adults drew names but packages for we children were plentiful and our present stash grew with every pass. Contents of the packages for children could be one of the following, a book or two, some board games like Monopoly, jacks, checkers, pick-up sticks or, perhaps, card games of Old Maid or Rook. Girls often received a desired tea set or a doll, while boys favored a baseball and mitt or a toy truck. Roller skates and tops were also popular gift items. No Christmas was complete without a present of needed clothes, underwear, a blouse or shirt and possibly, a sweater, mittens or a warm stocking cap.

In the aftermath, gift cartons, tissue, wrapping paper, ribbons and the rare commercially made bows were collected, the papers smoothed out and folded, ribbons untied and neatly wound around a home-fashioned cardboard spool. All were packed in a box to be used again next year. "Waste not, want not" echoed throughout the living room.

After dessert and coffee, the women cleared the tables and gathered in the kitchen to wash up, gossip and talk over family affairs. The men snoozed in their chairs or read the Oregonian. By 9 p.m. the celebration was pretty much over and it was time to load up and go home.

One Christmas, Bonnie and I hurried into the house to turn on the tree lights while the rest unloaded the car. Suddenly, we were aware of a conspiratorial aura in the room Surprise! Uncle Clarence was pulling a big shiny red wagon to the tree. A wagon was something we'd asked for. When it wasn't under the tree, we assumed we weren't getting one.

We were as surprised as the adults were pleased that they'd been able to pull it off.

### On our wish list:

A small (\$300 price range) copier for our Harlow House office. It would save our director's and volunteers' valuable time in making copies at other locations.

A person with interest and skills in photography to mount and set up an exhibit of some of our historic photos.

Folks willing to bring cookies for our upcoming meetings. Please call Janet Vandiver, 503-665-4854.

### Welcome to our new members

Keep in mind, a membership in the Troutdale Historical Society is a nice gift to give for Christmas. Just call 503-661-2164.

**Bruce & Joanne Ray  
Earl & Nadine Jordan  
Thomas & Brenda Bunker  
Lucile Vogtmann**

**And welcome to Director's Club:  
Elsie Simnitt**

### GIFTS

#### To the Lewis & Clark exhibit and general fund

June Nasmyth

*In Memory of  
Helen Tamura*

Evelyn DeYoung  
Michael & Elaine Dubesa  
Debbie & Greg Schoepper

*In Memory of  
Edna Alexander*

Evelyn DeYoung

## From Laura at Harlow House

A good friend takes delight in asking about my new job at the "hysterical" society. It makes me laugh because when I received the official word that I was the new director of THS, I became truly hysterical.

Hysteria, thanks to Webster's, is defined as a mental illness in which a person may become highly excited. While I know I'm not mentally ill (even though my family and friends have their doubts), I am definitely "highly excited" about my job. Why, you ask? Let me share some of the things that make me so hysterical:

● Seeing the hysteria an empty, cold caboose brings on Halloween night to sugar-high children (I also saw some hysteria from a few parents.)

● Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. As THS plans to take part in this nationwide celebration, hysteria takes over as I realize the potential Troutdale has not only to educate the community about Lewis & Clark, but also to show off Troutdale's history to a few thousand visitors.

● Meeting great people who understand my hysteria about local history and shake their heads in understanding when I tell them about the great wrought iron dictionary stand I purchased at the Fairview Rockwood Wilkes Off The Wall sale.

● School children who visit us on field trips show some hysteria about our time line and about smelt. It is imperative that we make an impression on these young Troutdale citizens—they are the future of THS.

● More than 500 people support THS and our mission of preserving the history of Troutdale. (This perhaps makes me the most hysterical yet.)

I may not be a textbook case of hysteria (yet), but as THS grows and our reach into the community increases, you may just see my picture next to "hysteria" in the dictionary that sits on my new stand!

Thanks to each of you for supporting THS and especially to those who have contributed for the hiring of this position! I look forward to seeing you all for Christmas at the Harlow House.

**Laura Newton is the director of the Troutdale Historical Society. You may reach her at 503-661-2164, or e-mail: troutdale\_historical\_society@juno.com**

## Where our money comes from and where it goes

We are grateful to June McGinnis Nasmyth for a major gift to our historical society in October which jump-starts our Lewis & Clark exhibit with \$5,000 and also provides a back-up for our operating fund in this first year of paying the salary of a full-time director.

It helps to have some idea where our money goes. Most years we are truly non-profit, our income and outgo being just about a perfect match.

So far this year, for instance, we have spent \$3,385 to clean, repair and run the Harlow House, including utilities and telephone. To off-set that amount, we received \$830 in admissions at Harlow House.

Expenses in the barn, utilities, alarm and maintenance, were about \$1,000, off-set by \$261 in direct contributions to the barn. Our depot costs were about \$400.

Our big expense in the barn this year was completing payment on our time line in the amount of \$3,838. Another \$3,000 was spent last year on the time line. (We are not complaining. The delight of school children in our time line and the visible learning that goes on while they study it is the real reward.)

In more good news, our endowment fund in the Oregon Communities Foundation is just a few dollars away from \$50,000. Gifts to our endowment fund come largely as memorial gifts. It is our pledge not to touch the principal but to use the interest in operating our society. This year, so far, we have received nearly \$2,000 in endowment contributions.

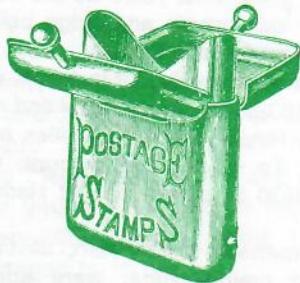
We get about \$2,500 every year in dues and generous members give us another \$5,000 in gifts to our director's fund or operating fund.

We made about \$5,000 this year at the ice cream social, \$4,500 at Harvest Faire, \$2,200 from our two annual treks, \$2,300 from our tea and tour, and in our one-time event, the dinner and auction at McMenamins, about \$7,000.

So far this year we have spent \$10,000 running our office, buying postage, supplies, and insurance and paying a wage for our director. We have spent nearly \$8,000 bringing newsletters, programs, pictures and services to you, our members. Thank you for all you have done. If a year-end gift is a consideration for you, we would put it to good use.

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

## WRITES OF CHRISTMAS



Holiday Open House  
at Harlow House  
Dec. 2, noon to 4 p.m.

## Schultes move to foster care home

Ted & Lois Schulte have given up their home in a retirement apartment complex and moved into a foster care home in Gresham. Characteristically, they are tidying up details. Lois and Ted went over and identified some Troutdale Sand & Gravel pictures donated to our collection that required Ted's expertise. They will now be added to our file.

Both have been long-time volunteers. Ted helped expand our first building in the park, was the first to work on restoration of the Harlow House, was our treasurer for many years and helped launch the barn project. He has been Santa at the Harlow House every Christmas for 20 years. Lois kept our membership rolls and mailed our newsletter for at least five years. Their address is 3631 S.E. 23rd Street, Gresham, 97080. Phone number: 503-492-6841.

## Namedroppers

Troutdale Historical Society president David Ripma was called to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, shortly after his successful reelection to the Troutdale City Council because of the death of his mother, **Barbara Jean Ripma**. We have established a fund in her memory at our Troutdale Historical Society office for those who want to make a contribution...Thanks to **Adrienne Clausen, Sharon Nesbit and Rose Mary Joslin** for hosting 82 Scouts and their parents Nov. 11 for tours of the Harlow House, Barn and Depot. The Scout Master said our tour was one of the best, most wholesome and educational events their troop has found...**Bob Strebin** has had a large to-do list in the wake of a visit from the fire marshal in October. We have new fire extinguishers, signs and other precautions.

## Items of Note:

Thanks for museum hosting services this month to **Mario Ayala, Florence Baker, Jack & Marion Burns, Adrienne Clausen and Laura Newton**.

If you can help out in December greeting people who come to see our Christmas decorated house, please call Adrienne at 503-663-0895.

Congratulations to **Judy Jones** and her family at **Tad's Chicken n' Dumplin's**. October marked 50 years since Judy's mother, Olga, bought Tad's. Not many families keep the same business for half a century.

The Tuesday Ladies volunteers set up a remarkable exhibit of military clothing and other items for November and Veteran's Day. **Walter Nasmyth** came for an interview and **Dale and Betty Baldwin** were also interviewed providing us with a story and photo in the East Metro Oregonian.