



BYGONE TIMES

Newsletter of the Troutdale Historical Society

November 2004

Please Mark Your Calendars

November Program: Native Plant Presentation

Paul Slichter

Sunday November 21

2 p.m.

Troutdale City Hall

Christmas Open House

Saturday Dec. 4

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Harlow House

January Program

Sunday Jan. 16

2 p.m.

Troutdale City Hall

February Annual Meeting

Sunday Feb. 20

2 p.m.

Sam Cox Building

Glenn Otto Park

Please let us know if you move... or if you are forwarding your mail... Post office will not forward the newsletter....and charge us for returns. Thank You.

503-661-2164 THS office.

Native Plant Presentation

Gresham High School Biology teacher **Paul Slichter** will do a native wildflowers and flora presentation Sunday, November 21 at 2 p.m. at the Troutdale City Hall council chambers. Paul, a member of the Oregon Plant Society, has prepared a slide show and information that includes plants discovered by the Lewis and Clark expedition members while they were in this area.



Can you help identify? We don't have an information about this wonderful photo. We are hoping someone out there recognizes the school building, at least.

Last month's newsletter photo now has names to go with the faces. Thank you to **Faye Jackson (Alexander)**, **Joanne Kerslake**, **Elice Swanson**, and **Shirley Loeffel (Ellis)**.

School Reunion

Everyone enjoys reliving their grade school days, or so it seems. Maybe it's just reconnecting with classmates not often seen, and in some cases not recognized, or it could be walking down the halls of the "old school building", or it just might be the retelling of school tales. Whatever the reason, former Troutdale & Cedar School students spent a couple of hours on Sunday, Oct. 17, 2004, at the Troutdale School visiting with former classmates. Some were reunion "first timers" and others attend nearly every reunion. Whichever group they belonged to, all had a wonderful time.



Troutdale School photo from 1910 postcard

Program chair **Helen Wand** organized the meeting with lots of help from **Len Otto**, a former student. Len now teaches at Sweetbrier School so certainly knows his way around a grade school. He arranged for the school to be open and for a school district employee to be present so that attendees could roam the halls and visit their former classrooms. Len also coaxed great stories out of the attendees. We learned about bomb drills, favorite (and some not so) teachers and principals, "candy showers" and teachers who enjoyed them and one who didn't! Some reminisced about the effect that WWII had on the school and on their classmates of Japanese descent. **Elsie Simnitt** and her brother **Art Meger**, informed us that they arrived in Troutdale when they were just children. They moved here from Canada and spoke only German in their home. When they tried to enroll in school in April, they were told they couldn't attend because they couldn't speak English and to return in the fall after they'd learned English. That's exactly what they did! They learned English by playing with other children their ages.

Walter Nasmyth brought many photos from the THS collection for everyone to enjoy and even got some help with identifying "unknown" children in the pictures. **Herb Mohn** brought a photo of a championship baseball team. Others brought their diplomas along with photos. **Jack Elmer** and his wife **Iva Sue** provided their wonderful chocolates for everyone to enjoy. They also donated a box of chocolates to be raffled. (**Walt Nasmyth** was the lucky winner). Thank you **Jack and Iva Sue**.

Thank yous are due to all who attended and shared their stories. Also, thank you to **Jan Vandiver** for providing the refreshments. Of course, thank you to **Len Otto** and **Helen Wand** for organizing the meeting and to Reynolds School district for allowing all the opportunity to visit the classrooms.

Troutdale Marks 90th Anniversary Closing The Saloons

An excerpt from THS Chronological History...

By the turn of the century, Troutdale was wide open with "a saloon on every corner and one in the middle." Troutdale was positioned near two other cities, Fairview and Gresham, who aspired to a more circuspect reputation. Fairview, established by church goers, banned alcohol sales and Gresham residents took care to limit the number of pleasure emporiums in their town. It was left to Troutdale, a crossroads of rail, river and logging traffic, to provide lively entertainment and liquid nourishment.

Aaron Fox, a Jewish storekeeper, was instrumental in incorporating the city as the Town of Troutdale in 1907 and became its first mayor. The chief reason for the incorporation appeared to have been the necessity to exercise some control over the rowdy saloon business. The first city ordinances dealt almost exclusively with problems at taverns. Stiff license fees of \$400 were required of each drinking establishment (there were six or seven at any given time) so it was not necessary for the new city government to levy any kind

Closing The Saloons (continued next page)

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Closing The Saloons (continued from prior page)

of tax. Late in 1913, one year after women got the vote in Oregon, Clara Latourell Larsson was elected Mayor of Troutdale, one of the first two or three women mayors in the Northwest. Part Indian, once-divorced and daughter of the well-known and respected Latourell family in the Columbia River Gorge community of the same name, she was married to John Larsson, owner of a "respectable" saloon. The temperance movement, which traveled hand-in-hand with the women of the suffrage movement, won its way in 1914. It is likely that Clara Larsson had no objection to alcohol since her husband's saloon provided their income, and because in later years, she worked in the Troutdale liquor store. So even though Mayor Larsson was probably not of the temperance persuasion, voters, many of them women, elected to close Troutdale's saloons that year. She presided over the closing of her husband's saloon. Shutting the city saloons ended revenue from their hefty license fees and city government, left impoverished, was forced to levy a tax to support itself.



c prior 1907. Saloon located on Historic Columbia River Highway, downtown Troutdale. Both saloon windows proclaim: "The Quiet Resort"



c1914, or prior Interior view of the bar in Helming's saloon. Louis Helming stands behind the bar. Customer on the right at the bar is Bill Hess. Man on the left is UNK.



c1914, or after Helming's saloon-turned-confectionery after Troutdale voted 16-9 for prohibition. Louis Helming stands behind the bar, now a soda fountain.

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Wednesdays With Walt

Walter Nasmyth is a brave man and took on the task of being THS photo librarian when the system was not only in disarray, but ready to be moved into the computer age. This month most of the historical society's photo system — more than 1,000 images — is now on computer with the help of Heather Hutzenbiler and Sharon Nesbit and an occasional assist from Sheryl Maydew and Vi Nasmyth. There's still much to be done, proof reading, chasing down lost images, and adding new photos to our collection — not to mention cussing out the computer — but last month's newsletter is a good example, with pictures popped onto its pages from our Past Perfect computer archival system. The work is ongoing. New photos come in all the time. Requests for photo images are frequent. And there is always a tangle of lost, missing and confused. Someday, perhaps, it would be great to mount a historical society photo exhibit from our collections. It would be good at this point, now that Walt has mostly quit swearing, to add another volunteer to carry the work through the winter months. We enjoy Wednesdays with Walt, 9 a.m. to noon, and often, with a good lunch afterward. If there is a person out there who enjoys old photos who would like to join in the effort and be trained in the photo library,



Walt Nasmyth & Sharon Nesbit, THS photo library 10/27/04

please call the office, 503-665-2154.

Third Quarter Donations: Thank you to the following for their generous donations to Troutdale Historical Society: **Dorothy Sturges, Bobbie & Jerry Matches, Potts Estate (Judy Norby), Martha Booheister, Barb Kubik, Florence Baker, Sally King, William & Lois Moller, Diana Thompson, Albertsons Community Partners.**

**Thank You Bob & Louise Dix
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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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