

BYGONE TIMES

A Newsletter of the TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

March, 1998

Sharon Nesbit, 665-0423

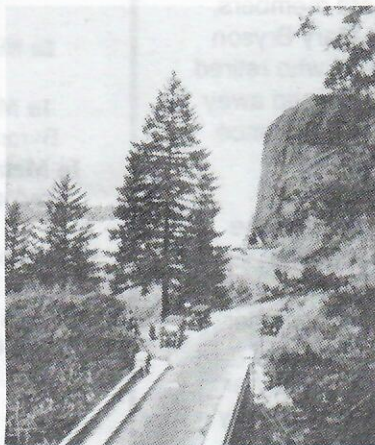
Geology, our oldest history, forces that shaped this place



Some of our most historic spots in the Columbia River Gorge -- illustrated by these two pictures of the She Who Watches petroglyph at Horsethief Lake State Park in Washington and Shepperd's Dell near Bridal Veil -- are shaped by a science we call geology.

Maude Winning is host for a meeting on Sunday, March 15 at 2 p.m. in Troutdale City Hall on the geology of Troutdale and the Columbia River Gorge.

The featured speaker for this program will be Dr. Marvin H. Beeson . Dr. Beeson is with the geology department of Portland State University.



A little reminder: Have you paid your dues yet?

Members who owed dues received an envelope last month on their newsletters announcing it was time to pay annual dues.

If your lost your envelope or are uncertain if you owe dues, give us a call at 661-2164 and we'll check the records.

Calendar

March & April

Meetings

Sunday, March 15, 2 p.m.
Geology of Troutdale and the Gorge.
Troutdale City Hall.

Sunday, April 19, 2 p.m.
An interview with Garthe Brown, Troutdale City Hall.

Sunday, May 17, 2 p.m.
Memory of the Doolittle Store, opening with reception at store site, Oregon Country Quilt and Fabric, then to Troutdale City Hall.

Board of Directors

Wednesday, April 1, 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, May 6, 7:00 p.m.

Events

- ♦ Tamura Reception, Sunday, March 22, 2- 5 p.m.
- ♦ Spring Trek, April 24, 25, & 26
- ♦ Tea & Tour, Yoshida Home, Saturday, May 2
- ♦ Troutdale Ice Cream Social, June 6 & 7

Harlow House
Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 4 p.m.

Depot Museum & Store
Closed for the winter

SPRING TREK REMINDER

Mark April 24, 25, and 26 on your calendar, and join us on our three-day Spring Trek. We'll be visiting some fantastic spots in our neighbor to the north, Washington. Included are Mt. St. Helens, a McMenamins pub, a couple of museums, and a rhododendron garden.

Get on the list by calling Deb at 661-2164. She can answer your questions and supply you with the necessary details.

Charter members, election of officers, airport history highlight Feb. meeting



Charter members Al Stoeckel, Dorothy Sturges, Sue Davis, Sam Cox, Nancy Cox, Edna Alexander, seated, and Kay Struckman prepare to enjoy the 30th anniversary cake.

They learned, they elected, and they celebrated at the Troutdale Historical Society's annual meeting on February 15, 1998.

Society President David Ripma began the meeting by giving a State of the Society report. He informed members that in general, the society is in good shape except for the general fund. That fund is lacking, and Ripma stated that society members might get a "begging letter"-asking for a nominal donation sometime in the future.

Ripma went on to explain to members Ellen Brothers has resigned due to health concerns, and Deb Cook has been hired as the new director. Also, Connie Purvis agreed to be the audio/video librarian, Mary Bryson assumed the curator's duties, and Christina Balsiger came on board as the Harlow House displays coordinator.

Bob Strebin, barn chairperson, told about the ongoing work at the Barn Museum. Finishes touches remain to be completed, but they should be done this spring. Also, the upcoming smelt exhibit is

progressing on schedule. No opening date has been set yet.

Bob Strebin handled the election of officers. David Ripma was reelected as president. Mona Mitchoff again fill the position of vice-president. Jean Holman remained as secretary and Penny Balch as treasurer. The society elected two new board members, Cheryl Maydew and Mary Bryson replacing Mike Dubesa who retired and Dick Jones who passed away last summer. They join Florence Baker who was reelected.

Maude Winning coordinated the program for the thirtieth anniversary meeting. She spoke on the history of the Troutdale Airport, illustrating her presentation with a timeline of important dates. Included in her talk was information from society members Bob Sturges and Walt Nasmyth. Winning welcomed comments from the audience, too.

After the program, members were invited to celebrate the society's thirtieth birthday by enjoying cake and coffee and looking through the scrapbooks that document the history of the society.

DONATIONS

To the General Fund

Jan Vreeland
Don Lloyd
Gerald & Roberta Grimm
Val Lantz
Alice M. Cornwell

In Memory of Jack Burns Gwen Burns

In Memory of Dick Jones
Byron and Evelyn DeYoung
In Memory of Merle M. Coons
Gordon L. & Ione G. Doolittle

New Members and Gift
Memberships
Patricia Turner from Lois Moller
Annell Carlson from Lois Moller
Edward & Nedra Palmquist from Edna
Alexander

To the Director's Club Wm. & Sharon Strebin

Judy Bronkey
Gwen Burns
Florence Baker
Bob Strebin
Bob & Dorothy Sturges
Gerald & Roberta Grimm
Sam & Nancy Cox

The Troutdale Airport

by Walt Nasmyth

The summer of 1936 was a very exciting time in Troutdale for that was the year a Boeing bomber crashed on the airport runway while attempting an emergency landing. The plane was from a bomber squadron stationed in Vancouver, Wash.

The pilot had no choice but to attempt the landing and everything went fine until the full weight of the plane began to bear on the landing gear. The sand runway could not support the weight and the wheels sank into the sand, which caused the plane to flip over on its back. No one was badly injured and the plane sustained little damage.

My brother, Herb, Terry Spencer and I hiked down to the airport to view the (huge at that time) bomber. We climbed through the barbed wire fence surrounding the airport and walked round and around the open cockpit craft. It was truly an impressive sight to behold, even though it was upside down.

During the spring and summer of 1938 and 1939, the forest service used a gull-winged aircraft to practice dropping five-gallon cans of fire retardant with an explosive charge attached that would detonate and spread retardant over a wide area. We kids in the area would go down to the airport and scavenge the yellow and red insulated wire used to detonate the retardant charge. We used the wire to lace hunting knife sheaths, cartridge belts, etc.

Early in 1942, Slim Mitchell and I went to work on the Troutdale airport as laborers. When the boss saw me driving a '29 Model A Ford flat-bed truck he took for granted I had a driver's license, which I did not, for I was only 15 at the time. He drove me into Portland to the Parker Schram Construction Co., located at 82nd and Lombard Street, where he showed me a brand-new 1942 six-cylinder Ford dump truck with a large ground tank in the dump bed. He told me to drive it to the airport where I would be watering down the fill placed by the turnapulls.

The job was going quite well and Herb had taken a job at the airport as an oiler on an old gas-powered Keystone drag-bucket type excavator and I continued to drive truck.

One day an excavator flagged me down and had me back the truck up to a very deep drain line ditch to wet down the fill around the concrete pipe. The tank had no baffles and the water in the tank would slosh back and forth when the truck came to a stop. Needless to say, the sloshing caused the truck's rear end to slide into the ditch. When I tried to pull the truck out of the ditch, the underpowered six-cylinder engine did nothing but bog down, until an axle snapped due to slipping the clutch. The boss had to wave in a cat to pull the truck out of the ditch and drag it out of the way. His exact words were, "That's it for the that under-powered S.O.B."

We again made a trip to Portland and I drove a regular tanker with a V8 engine back to the airport. The new tanker did twice the work with half the power expenditure.

The procedure to fill the tanker with water was quite a challenge to say the least. There was a spring with a small pond on the south side of the airport, just north of what is now the I-84 freeway. A tripod was built with a 1.4 inch hose from the output side of the handy bill pump and a 2.5 inch suction was dropped into the pond for water pickup. The pump was an old Briggs and Stratton engine that was quite temperamental at best.

In order to keep down the dust in the area, the boss had me water down the entire construction site working from 4 p.m. until midnight. One night while cranking and calling the engine everything but a Briggs and Stratton, the crank slipped out of my hand and sailed out into the pond. There was only one thing to do and that was to bare my bod, crawl into the pond in the dark and feel for the crank. It took some doing to locate the crank, but at last I found it. I crawled out of the pond as cold as the proverbial well-digger's afterburner, dressed and began another cranking and cursing session. I cranked and cranked until the engine finally let out a big burp and started running. In just a few minutes I had gone from half-frozen to sweating profusely. That is how the night shift went.

When the excavating and earth work was complete that was the end of the job. Herb went with the excavator as an oiler and I went to work in a machine shop in Portland where Herb would join me at a later date.

I failed to mention that all of the construction equipment and the job shack were located on the property of the old Sundial Ranch, adjacent to the old ranch house.

Walt adds: Sometime in the mid 1930's, Stan Harris, owner of a nursery on Cherry Park Road, flew his Taylor Cub airplane under the railroad bridge at Troutdale.

In 1937 a pilot flew charter flights out of the airport. He owned a 1926 Travelair -- a twin open cockpit biplane. He charged \$2 for a 15 or 20-minute flight. One day when Wayne Espenel and I were at the airport, the pilot tried to talk us into a ride. Of course, we were stone-broke and when we told the pilot he said, "Oh hell, there's nothing gong on anyway, so you guys hop in the front cockpit and I'll take you up for nothing. We both made a mad dash for the plane. Man, what an experience, my first flight." The airport at that time was nothing but two wheel-tracks the length of a pasture with a barb wire fence to keep out the cows.



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

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TROUTDALE, OR.
PERMIT NO. 5

In March
Geology of
Troutdale
And the
Columbia River
Gorge
Sunday, March 15
2 p.m. at the
Troutdale City Hall



Page 4

Honoring the Tamuras

A reception honoring Kaz and Helen Tamura will be held on March 22, from 2p.m to 5p.m. in the Sam Cox Building. Everyone is invited to attend to give a hearty thanks to the Tamuras for all they have contributed to the society over the years.

Museum gets TLC

While replacing some rotted boards and posts on the front porch, Bob Strebin discovered that the Harlow House had some problems with her underpinnings. "Like with any old house, once you start repairing one thing, you run into a bunch of other things that need fixing", lamented Strebin.

On several days, Strebin could be found folded up under the front of the house, removing dirt and sand so necessary repairs could be made. It is committed volunteers like Bob Strebin who are instrumental in keeping the Troutdale Historical Society running smoothly.

Calling Volunteers

On Tuesday, April 7, 1998, at 7 p.m., all who are interested in volunteering at the Depot Museum are meeting at the Harlow House. All former, present, and future volunteers are asked to attend. Marge Schunk, Depot Museum Chairperson is coordinating this organizing session.

Tea and Tour Set

Make your plans to attend the first Tea and Tour Fund-raiser for the Harlow House. This year's benefit will take place on Saturday, May 2, 1998. Plans include two seatings for tea at Junki and Linda Yoshida's Sandy River home. The morning tea and tour will begin at 11:30 a.m. If you prefer an afternoon tea, plan to attend at 2 p.m.

To receive an invitation, call 661-2164 and leave your name, telephone number, and address. The price is \$35 per person.

**Troutdale Chapter 80
Oregon Eastern Star**

invites everyone to their

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Sunday, March 15, 1988
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
at the Masonic Temple
2nd and Dora St.
Troutdale, Oregon

Adults \$4.00
Children 7-10 \$3.00
Children 6 and under \$1.50

Placemat ads available for \$10.00
Free breakfast ticket with purchase of ad
For information call 255-3743