



Troutdale Historical Society

BYGONE TIMES

Mark Your Calendars!

SUNDAY

January 20, 2013

Barn Museum

2 p.m.

Tom Cowling Presents "Palmer, the second of three ghost towns on Bridal Veil Creek."

TUESDAY

February 12, 2013

6:00 p.m.

Fundraiser for THS Highway Exhibit Tippy Canoe Auction & Dinner

Sunday

February 17, 2013

Barn Museum

2 p.m.

Brandon Spencer-Hartle From the Historic Preservation League will present "Historic Preservation 101"

Sunday

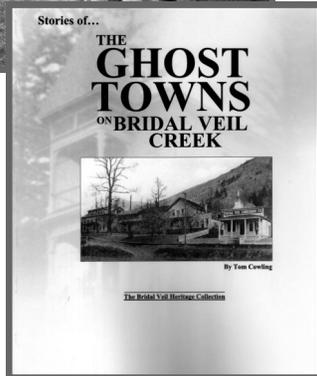
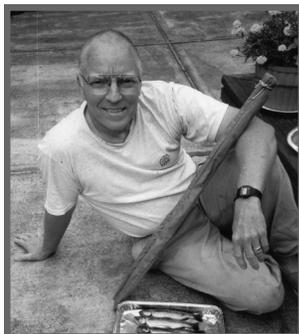
March 17, 2013

Barn Museum

2 p.m.

TBA

Tom Cowling Continues "The Ghost Towns of Bridal Veil Creek" at THS January 20 Program at the Barn Museum



Tom Cowling will discuss the ghost towns along Bridal Veil Creek. The discussion will focus on the communities of Palmer and New Palmer that were farther up than Bridal Veil, and handled the logs that fed the Bridal Veil mill. Cowling fished Bridal Veil Creek, enjoyed Gorge winters, swam in the Columbia River, rode the school bus to Corbett on the Historic Columbia River Highway, and worked in the mill some summers. His family left town in 1960 when the mill was sold at auction. Bridal Veil now consists of just a post office and cemetery, but Tom recalls when it was a thriving town. Only a few rusty artifacts can be found at the Palmer town sites now, but they were once bustling communities with schools and post offices. The program is free and light refreshments will be served.

For more information please call the Troutdale Historical Society office at 503-661-2164.

In case of bad winter weather, program will be re-scheduled.

"Love the Highway" THS Historic Scenic Col. River Highway Exhibit Fundraiser

Where: Shirley's Tippy Canoe Restaurant

28242 E. Hist. Columbia River Hwy.

Troutdale, Oregon 97060

When: Feb. 12, 2013 6:00 PM Happy Hour, 6:30 PM Buffet Dinner

No Host Bar

Program: Auction – Pat and Pat Brothers

Introduction to Hwy Exhibit – Len Otto and Clarence Mershon

"Tales of Tippy," A History – Stories from the crowd

Cost: \$50.00 per person, \$90.00 per couple (**\$25/\$40 is Tax-deductible**)

Bring your sweetheart to this fundraiser. Exhibit to open in 2016 in celebration of the 100 year centennial of the completion of the highway.

RSVP to THS office by February 7th-503-661-2164

Save the Date-!

More Growing up in Troutdale

By Betty (Smith) Leavenworth

After WWII began many people went to work in the ship yards in Portland for 98 cents an hour, a great increase over the depression wages. Building "Victory Ships" was the jobs to have and many young men lied about their age saying they were 18 when they were really 16 or 17.

We lived on the Bill Fritz Farm from June 1941 until August of 1944. During this time my dad went to work at the aluminum plant in Troutdale. My mom worked at Tad's first restaurant in Troutdale as a cook and waitress. Every summer my sister and I picked strawberries and raspberries. From the library in Gresham a bookmobile drove around the farm areas between Troutdale and Gresham once a week. My sister and I would check out 5 books each.

Every Saturday our dad would drive us to Gresham to grocery shop we would always stop to eat dinner at the restaurant at Main St. and Powell Blvd. Dad would park on Main St and go into the tavern while mom and us girls would go into Safeway and buy groceries with our ration books. Afterwards mom would send us into the tavern to let him know it was time to go home. He never got drunk he liked to watch the card games being played and yes have a beer or two.

Dad was a member of the Troutdale Grade School Board in the early 1940s. In August of 1944 we moved to Troutdale and lived in the big house on 7th street. The Troutdale School owned

this house, which was for teachers or the principal to live in. Since all school personnel had their own homes they let my dad rent it because of being on the school board. Now that we live in this house we didn't have to ride the school bus we just walked the one block to school. My dad also worked as a janitor at the school. Once in a while Mildred and I would go help dad out as he cleaned the school.

In September when school started my mom was hired as a part time school bus driver from there it turned into a 30 years job. Many kids rode my mom's bus and could tell you lots of stories about her (all good).

During the 40s most of the teenagers attended the Troutdale Community Church on Sundays and 1 week night activity. Reverend and Mrs. Morgan were the preacher and teacher. We would sing the song "The Little Brown Church in the Vale". We changed some of the words to this song and called it "The Little White Church in Troutdale".

In the 40s some of our entertainment was: movies in Gresham, Multnomah County Fair, and Uncle Nate's "Stars of Tomorrow" every Saturday in Portland. It was also broadcast on the radio. Two of the young stars were Johnnie Raye and Jane Powell mom took

Mildred and I to see this show a few times, but there was always the radio. We listened to the war news, soap operas such as, Ma Perkins and Stella Dallas kids shows like Captain Midnight, Jack Armstrong, Amos and Andy, and other I can't recall. The Cinnamon Bear was on every year in December. Lot's of music on the radio was Country Western, Operas, and of course the Big Bands. We played board games such as Chinese checkers, Monopoly, and Dominos all kinds of card games and marbles.



I was a member of the 4-H club and had my own little garden. I entered my carrots in the Multnomah County Fair and won a red ribbon (2nd place). I was in the Baking group and entered a Sponge Cake in the county fair and won a blue ribbon (1st place)! I was also a Girl Scout and yes sold cookies. I was one of the girls who sold the most. Our reward was to go to Portland to see the original movie of "The Swiss Family Robinson" (not the Disney version). Some of the kids would walk from Troutdale to the Multnomah County Poor Farm (as it was called then) on Saturdays to watch movies with the residents. Another area many of us visited was the hobo camp under the railroad bridge on the Troutdale side of the Sandy River. We also climbed the bluff and walked across the Railroad Bridge. We were told by our parents not to do

Continued Page 3

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Bygone Times

these three things we did it any way shame on us!!!! Many of the kids in Troutdale took piano lessons; including me from Mable Evans who was the first white baby born in Troutdale in the Harlow House. This is recorded history at the Harlow House.

In 1944 a movie producer from Hollywood picked Gresham fairgrounds for the setting of their film "Thunderhead" after a nation wide search. Part of the reason was the ornate gateway which once stood at the entrance on Main Street and part of the reason was the race track in a small town setting which was called for in Hollywood's sequel to "My Friend Flicka". Roddy McDowall was the fifteen year old star who, along with a 35 member camera crew invaded Gresham to the delight of local citizens. Harold Weber, Gresham Highs music teacher, was hired for three days to play the bugle to announce the races. Bob Wright, who was thirteen at the time and a friend of mine, offered Roddy McDowell an apple, posed for a picture with the star and held a handful of balloons on the paddock roof during a filming. Bob said fifty years later an experience I will never forget.



Roddy McDowall and fellow cast members filming "Thunderhead" in 1945 at the Multnomah County Fairgrounds in Gresham.

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In Memory of June Sherman-Nasmyth - Louise Blohm

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Bridge Brunch set for Glenn Otto Park on April 20

Want to hear the story about who painted the first line down the middle of a highway in Oregon?

Then you will want to be part of building our historic highway exhibit in the barn.

We have big plans to build an exhibit telling the story of the Historic Columbia River Highway what the road meant to local people in terms of working on it, traveling it and selling jelly, chicken dinners -- and sometimes, boot-leg booze -- at the side of the road.

Troutdale's bridge at the Sandy River was built in 1912, one of the first links to the highway, so this spring, Saturday, April 20, Sharon Nesbit is planning a 100th birthday party for our bridge to begin raising the considerable money that it costs to build an exhibit.

There will be festivities at the bridge, followed by a brunch in Glenn Otto Community Park in the Sam Cox building, and a rare opportunity to see Steve's Lehl's magic lantern slides of the Columbia River Highway and to see Sam Lancaster, builder of the highway, reincarnated by Oregon historian Chet Orloff.

We are encouraging guests to wear clothing of the era. This is an invitation-only event, so if you want to attend -- the event will be \$50 a person, most going to the exhibit fund -- then please write, call or email us to be on the guest list and receive an invitation.

Troutdale Historical Society Office is 503-661-2164 or email terry@troutdalehistory.org. Our mailing address is 219 E. Historic Columbia River Hwy, Troutdale, OR 97060

The following day, April 21, will be our annual meeting at the park building at 2 p.m. interviewing local treasure and historic resource, Clarence Mershon. That gathering is free, of course, and we welcome you to one or both events.

A note from Sharon Nesbit:

The Oregon Historical Quarterly, Fall 2012, is a special issue on women in Oregon, marking the 100th anniversary, of women getting the vote in the state.

It includes a picture of Troutdale resident Helen Althaus of Sweet Briar Farm, who was a notable lawyer in and helped found the Queen's Bench, a development organization for women lawyers. Helen, who served on the Troutdale council, was a chemist in the early stages of her career, but lost that job at Reynolds Metals, to returning servicemen after the war was over. Historical society president, David Ripma, lives in the Sweet Briar Farm House.

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William Boelke

William Boelke, husband of longtime member Vivian Boelke, died Dec. 4, in Spokane at the age of 82.

He was a paratrooper in the U.S. Army and worked for the Army Corps of Engineers and several locations, including Bonneville Dam. The couple were longtime Gresham residents until recent years when they moved to Spokane to be closer to family.

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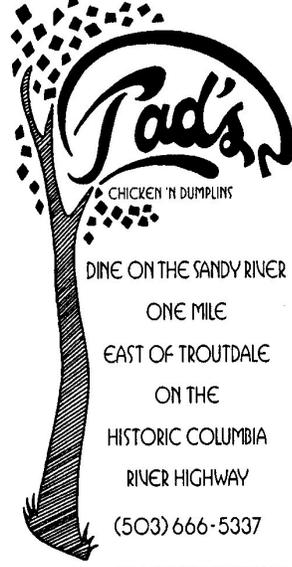
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Bike Riding: Then and Now

By Jim Glenn



Whether it was that told me I would never forget how to ride a bicycle was right, for the most part. I can still ride a bicycle but there have been some noticeable changes over the years in my riding style since my youth. Curbs now help me mount and dismount and the headgear makes me feel safe. The 18 gears make feel smart even though I only use one of them and I don't remember wedgies ever being an issue way back when.

Last summer when my grandson Nathan conned me into going on a bike ride around the neighborhood and to the local park, he insisted I wear a helmet for safety. He sure looked mortified when I came marching out of the garage with my leather football helmet sitting firmly on and around my head. There is a BMX trail in the park that was pure enjoyment for Nathan and extreme torture for me. When I was a kid, our BMX Trails were everywhere and we called them Hungry Hill, the Curly Qs, Blue Lake Road, and Baseline too.

That bike ride got me to thinking about the days when Tommy and I roamed East County on our bikes. Those bikes by today's standards wouldn't even make it as acceptable trash. Describing them as being defective would be an understatement on the grandest scale. Some non essential parts like fenders, chain guards, rubber

peddles and pistol grips were all missing from both bikes. That little horizontal bar sticking out from the sprocket with the rotating steel sleeve was all we had for peddles and the tires had more patches than we could remember applying. We wore those cheap flip flops that provided absolutely no protection whatsoever for our feet and if I didn't have my foot centered perfectly on that steel bar when braking, the sleeve would spin, allowing my foot to slip off and drag on the asphalt making toenails optional.

“...He sure looked mortified when I came marching out of the garage with my leather football helmet ...”

An event that Tommy and I both recall vividly was the time we decided to take a ride up Woodard Road one fine summer day to visit some friends which proved to be quite thrilling for both of us. The old timers in the area called it Foothill Road and about half way up the dog gone road I figured Pikes Peak would be a more suitable name. After playing with our friends up there for a few hours,

it came time to head for home. I was saying good-bye to the kids when Tommy hopped on his bike and headed out hollering “Beat-cha.” Beat-cha was the ultimate call to arms when uttered by one of us to the other. There weren't any rules to define or specific guidelines to discuss. Just win at all costs. Thinking about the humiliation and scorn of losing a beat-cha challenge could get the adrenaline flowing quicker than anything I've ever experienced. I ran to my bike and was on it in flash chasing Tommy down the hill we had conquered a few hours earlier. We were approaching warp speed as we raced past Seidl Road. When we leaned into that first curve, I was hoping those old slick tires would hold the road and the inner tubes would hold their air pressure. Coming out of the curve we saw a pick up truck stalled almost dead center in the road with the driver in front of the truck propping up the hood with a broom handle. Tommy swerved to the left avoiding both the truck and the ditch and whizzed on down the hill disappearing around the next curve. I wasn't quite as fortunate as I maneuvered to the right and just as I got along side the farmer, he popped the radiator cap. The loud, sudden noise and the escaping steam startled me. I jerked the handlebars further to the right while stomping on the brakes. In my panic, I didn't center my right foot on that steel bar causing my foot to slip off. My bike stopped instantly when it hit



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the ditch, launching me up over the handlebars and once past that mythical teakettle I caught a huge break by landing on my head. No brain, no headache was my motto. I rolled over and once back on my feet, I grabbed the bike for a quick once over. The bike was okay except for a couple of broken spokes which I quickly twisted around adjacent spokes. I figured if my bike was okay, then I was okay too and off I went in hot pursuit of my brother. I never in my life rode a bike faster than I did that day going down Woodard Road. The gaps from the missing spokes combined with my Mickey Mantle baseball card firmly in place, made my bicycle sound like a "Popping Johnny" (John Deere tractor) on rocket fuel. I pulled into Ben Mayo's "filling station" where Tommy greeted me with that special grin that only a little brother uses when

beating his big brother at anything. While gulping down what was left of Tommy's bottle of pop, Mr. Mayo advised me to go over to the water hose and rinse the blood off my foot and that's when the pain started. My rear tire was flat by the time we were ready to head for home so I filled it with air at Mayo's and then again at Handy's service station which got me almost to The County Poor Farm. While pushing my bike the rest of the way home, it gave me time to reflect on the day's activities. Although my foot was hurting and Tommy was wearing the imaginary yellow jersey from that day's stage of our own little Tour-de-Troutdale, I felt pretty good. We both rode rockets down Foothill Road and survived. The worst part was yet to come when I got home. Mom had me wash up my injured foot. She then plucked off my dangling toe-

nail before applying some of that red Merthiolate. She might as well have poured gasoline on it and lit a match. That stuff was medicine?

When my Grandson and I got back to the house, Grandma was waiting with some liquid refreshments for her special road warriors. The little nipper took his with ice cubes while I took mine with a fist full of aspirin and a power nap.

Donations for the February 12th auction will gladly be accepted at the Depot Museum Office at 473 E. Historic Columbia River Hyw. In Troutdale From 10-2, Tuesday-Saturday! Can you offer a ride up the historic highway in a vintage car? Do you have a quilt? An unwanted gift card left over from Christmas? ...503-661-2164

We would love to have your stories about growing up or living in Troutdale.

Contact Terry at the Depot office, 503-661-2164 or

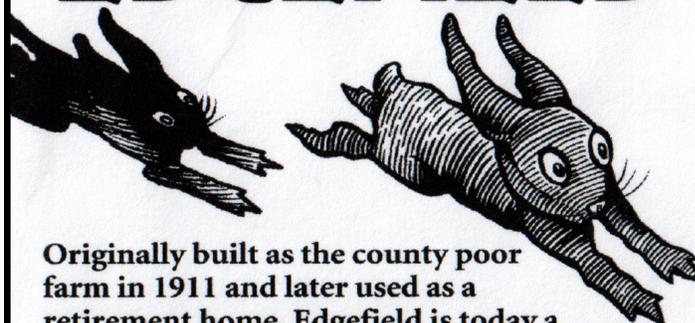
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THS is a 501c3, so your donations are tax-deductible and help support the museums, programs preservation of artifacts and our local history. Thank you for your continued support!

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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