

# Bygone Times

Newsletter of The Troutdale Historical Society.



JANUARY, 1990

EDITOR: Sharon Nesbit, 665-0423

## STALK TALK...

Celery--prizewinning Troutdale celery--will be the subject of our Sunday, Jan. 14 meeting at 2 p.m. in Troutdale City Hall.

Not many people know that Troutdale once claimed the title of "Celery Capital of World" or that the finest celery in the nation was grown here in the 1920s and early 1930s. We once had a Truck stops and freeway businesses now stand where the celery grew.

January is when we recognize a historic site in our community by presenting a marker to tell visitors about our town. This year's plaque about the celery fields that once flourished near the freeway will be placed at Burns Bros. Truck Stop. Burns Bros. has kindly offered a whole wall at the truck stop for the marker and a display of historic photos on celery that they have prepared at their own expense.

In addition to presenting this marker to Burns Bros., we are inviting people who worked in the celery fields to join us for a panel discussion on the subject. We will tape the conversation for our oral history file and hope to compile a good list of the area's celery farmers and the story of how they raised their crop and shipped it to markets all over the nation.

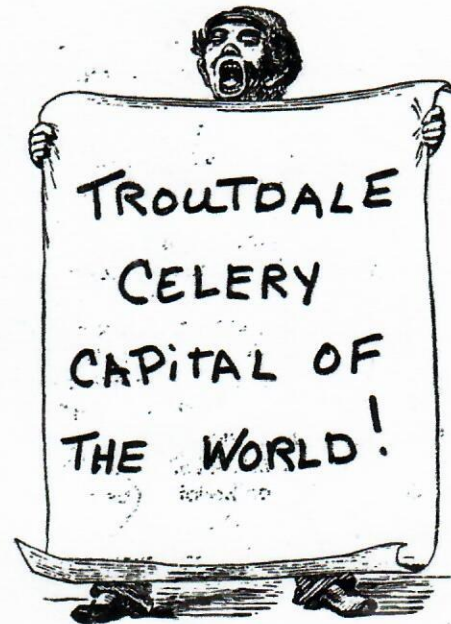
Though refreshments of celery would be in order after the holiday glut, we will have cookies instead, thanks to Nancy Cox and Sue Davis.

If the weather is bad and driving hazardous, the meeting is automatically cancelled. If you have any questions regarding cancellation, telephone Sam Cox, 665-9086, Alex Jones, 666-6718, or Sharon Nesbit, 665-0423.

## SOME NEW BUSINESS...

Among the items on our business agenda for this first meeting of the decade will be some changes in our society. For nearly 20 years we have been an all-volunteer organization. However, our successes and our growth have caused us to move closer to the day when we must pay an executive director to conduct our business, run our museums and coordinate our volunteers. That process began two years ago when we contracted with Cynthia Howe to recatalog our collections and run the Harlow House museum in the summer.

As a next step the board of directors will recommend a contract for \$100 a month with Sharon Nesbit who currently volunteers as executive director and historian of the society. The token fee, if approved by the membership, is part of a gradual step toward the day when we can hire a part-time employee.





THE PERKINS PLACE...

New member Janet Renfro has recently purchased the old Perkins Place on Beaver Creek at 901 Jackson Park Road and plans to restore it. She needs help with any information or pictures that anyone might have. Her business phone is 284-7917 or see Sharon Nesbit.

MURPHY IS VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH...

Many members may not know our Volunteer of the Month for January unless they stop by the Harlow House on the third Sunday of the month or unless they once bought a dress from her.

Two years ago when she closed her dress shop, Pauletta's, in Gresham, Virginia Murphy signed on as a volunteer host at the Harlow House. Virginia, who is 78 but lies and says she is 80, has yet to become a member of the society, though she thinks she just might do that some day. She has never attended a meeting. "I'm not a-go-to-meeting person," she says. But her enthusiasm for her work at the Harlow House is contagious and she gives the "disease" to our visitors.

Even though she no longer drives, she arranges transportation on her day to host.

"I, m so completely at home at the Harlow House," she says. "When I step inside it's just like going home." Murphy admits that on the days when the house is hers, she feels and picks up every little thing. Her favorite artifact is the pair of homemade brass knuckles made by an unknown resident of Edgefield Manor. Her least favorite "is that confounded wood stove." She abhors the fact that it has been electrified. And Virginia never lets a day of hosting go by without a stroll around the barn, just to see how things are going.

Virginia says the members of the Troutdale Historical Society have done a wonderful job with their museum. The feeling is mutual.

COUNTING FRIENDS...

ALEX JONES, VERA STREBIN, SHARON NESBIT, and GLENN and HELEN OTTO made gifts to the endowment fund in memory of Dr. Frank Packard...JEANNE PULLIAM sent a Christmas donation to the endowment fund...ARLINE SEIDL and FRANK and JEAN DRIVER made Christmas gifts to our barn fund...WARREN NESBIT made a donation to the general fund.

CHRISTMAS PAST...

More than 200 people visited our Christmas open house and special museum days at the Harlow House during the holidays.

MALCOM BOSLAR, DONNA KLUEHE, FLORENCE BAKER, BILL STONE, SAM COX and JEAN HOLMAN all donated greens for Christmas...The wonderful tree full of birds was a gift of EMERALD HYDRO-TURF, INC., owned by ARMAN and DONNA KLUEHE...The decorating was done by JEAN HOLMAN, DOROTHY STURGES, SHARON NESBIT, CATHY HAMME, DONNA KLUEHE, DICK JONES, RANKIN DAVIS, ALEX JONES and SAM COX. (Sam almost froze his fingers off putting the lights on the porch. He was heard to say that Christmas should be held in the summer.)

The Santa display was the work of HEIDI WILSON in cooperation with her sister, LISA HIGGINS. Heidi, in a black historic dress, acted as hostess in the rear parlor at the open house. The fat, bearded fellow in red in the front parlor was TED SCHULTE.

The wooden bird ornaments offered for sale were by CURT and GERRY VON AHN who donated 25 percent of their sales to our society. The wonderful cookies were by all of you who baked a batch to contribute. And a thank you to our own Girl Scout troop led by LINDA MURPHY who made candy cane mice and donated to us to sell.



GREETINGS ALL YEAR LONG...

Heidi Wilson, who is in charge of our rotating displays in the Harlow House, has created an exhibit of postcard greeting cards for all the holidays of the year.

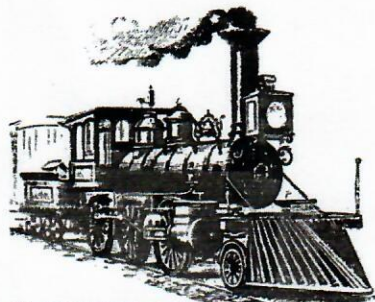
The beautifully colored postcards were sent to friends to honor holidays and birthdays in the days before greeting cards were developed. The selection of cards shown in the display case in the rear parlor are partly from Heidi's own collection and partly from a large assortment of cards given to us from the estate of Dr. Irene Douglass Waldo.

The exhibit, which will be on display until May, can be seen each Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. when the Harlow House is open to visitors.

Heidi's next exhibit, to be in place for our summer visitors, will be on travel. If you have old travel souvenirs, motoring clothes, maps or other tourist items that you might like to loan for the display, call her at 667-9900.

IN MEMORY...

Acil Wright, a longtime member of this society, died in late December at the age of 89. Ace was the husband of Truly Wright, who was Troutdale's city recorder. His gift to our museum, a pair of Indian-beaded riding gloves, is on display in the Harlow House.



RAILROAD ARTIFACTS SHOWN..

Cathy Hamme made the display of our society's railroad artifacts currently on exhibit at Gresham's new library. All local historical societies were asked to display items in a special exhibit for the opening of the library.

NEWS FROM THE NEIGHBORS...

The good news from Gresham is that the Gresham Historical Society has signed an agreement to purchase that city's old Carnegie library for use as a future museum. Betty Chizum is the new president of the Gresham Historical Society.

Up in the Corbett area, Steve Lehl has been elected president of the Crown Point Historical Society. Steve, who also is a member of the our historical society, wants to see the Crown Point group move ahead with plans for a museum in Corbett.

And the folks in the Fairview-Rockwood-Wilkes Historical Society are helping with the 100th anniversary celebration of the Fairview School.

THE BUSINESS AT HAND...

If you are worrying about whether or not your dues are up to date, rest easy. Next month's newsletter will let you know.

If you owe annual dues, \$4 a person a year, your February newsletter will come with an envelope attached. If you pay your dues promptly, it would be a real relief to the treasurer.

February will also mark our 22nd anniversary and is our annual election of officers. Vera Strebin and her nominating committee are at work on a slate of candidates now. If you are interested in office, please call Vera at 665-2756.

Our February program should be fun. We have asked veteran smelt watchers, Glenn Otto and Ted Schulte, to talk about smelt runs in



TRAGIC END FOR WILLIAM HESS...

In November, Mary Battenfield and Bill Munn, Tulsa, Oklahoma, came to Troutdale looking for information on their grandfather William Hess. Thanks to material from the estate of Josephine Helming Jackson, we were able to supply them with photos and material about their grandfather and great-grandfather, William Henry Hess.

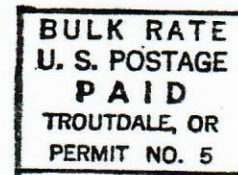
They recently sent us the story as they know it. William Henry Hess, born in Germany in 1835, immigrated to the U.S. and was a Colonel in the Union Army in Missouri during the Civil War. He and his wife had five children but later separated due "to his strict, ill-tempered ways." He came to Troutdale where his eldest daughter, Louisa, was married to local saloonkeeper Louis Helming. Hess liked to be called Colonel and was an innkeeper famed for his good German sausage. He died in 1926 in the soldier's home in Roseburg.

His son William Hess worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad and had similar marital misfortune. He lived with his family in Oklahoma until 1906 when his wife's father came to his home, found his daughter and grandchildren without heat or adequate food and took them away. Hess never saw them again. He, too, came to Troutdale to live with Louis and Louisa Helming. He worked in Louis Helming's saloon until local prohibition forced Helming to convert the bar to an ice cream parlor in 1914.

Family members speculate that the ice cream parlor could not support Hess and he lost his job. He was known to drink to excess. On Nov. 6, 1915, he shot himself in Troutdale at the age of 41.

The family wants to learn more about their grandfather and great-grandfather including the name of the hotel Colonel Hess ran. If you can help, telephone Sharon Nesbit, or drop a note to the society at the address on this newsletter.

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TROUTDALE, CELERY  
CAPITAL OF THE  
WORLD -- LEARN  
ABOUT IT, JAN. 14.

Nesbit, Bill, Sharon & Warren  
623 Buxton