

NEWSLETTER OF THE TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BYGONE TIMES

November/December 2013

Upcoming Events

Mark Your Calendars!

**Sunday, Nov. 17,
2 p.m. the Barn Mu-
seum, Oral History/
Interview of Korean Vet-
erans.** Please call our of-
fice, 661-2164, to partici-
pate.

**Saturday, Dec. 7,
11 a.m.— 4 p.m.**
Christmas Open House at
the Harlow House Muse-
um.

**Friday, Dec. 6, 4
p.m. to closing:** First
Friday at the depot
with a Christmas sale
on our historic high-
way calendars.

**January 2014, Sun-
day, January 19, 2
p.m.**
Chuck Rollins—Fish
Stories

**February 2014,
Sunday, Feb. 16, 2
p.m.**
Chet Orloff— The Sam
Lancaster Story

Korea: The Forgotten War Veterans speak, 2 p.m., Nov. 17. barn The Forgotten War: Korea

In the U.S., the war was initially described by President Harry S. Truman as a "police action" as it was an undeclared military action, conducted under the auspices of the United Nations. Coming on the heels of World War II, it is sometimes called the Forgotten War.

Lewis Runpakis from Troutdale is a retired Marine Gunner Sgt., who was stationed in Korea from Nov. of 1950 to Nov. 1951 and was part of the Chosin

Reservoir. Sgt. Eugene Shirley, Marine Corps, and also speaking Charlotte Perkins Kogle, wife of Floyd Kogle. She traveled to many Korean War reunions with Floyd. They were high school sweethearts at Corbett. She waited for him to come back from Korea to marry.

Please join us for this reminiscence in honor of Veteran's Day.



**Join us for Christmas at the Harlow House
11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 7**

**A Troutdale tradition, a Christmas tree
In the window, Santa seated nearby.
Steaming wassail, homemade cookies
And the old house decorated for the holi-
day.**

**Thanks to the Tuesday ladies for staging
This event.**



Our Neighbors at the County Jail

By Sharon Nesbit
Photos by Len Otto

Of all the people who have lived within our town -- neighbors, workers, folks at the poor farm -- the Troutdale residents who seemed to escape our attention -- except when they escaped -- were residents of the county jail at Edgefield.

Until our Oct. 5 tour of the jail, now part of McMenamins Edgefield, we did not know that the cook went

out and picked Himalaya blackberries to make pie. The jail was a favorite among prisoners in the county because of its comparatively good food. We did not know about the jail veterans who checked in and out as regularly as the rest of us go to work. We did not know about Scotty, the nurse, and the day her car took a sled ride down the icy hill. Or the time when prisoners all had to give up smoking behind bars.

Our tour, a benefit for our highway exhibit, brought together paying guests -- thank you to those who signed up -- and three former county employees who worked in and around the Multnomah County Correctional Institute. It made \$1,000 for the highway exhibit.

In addition to getting to see the jail, a fascinating structure of spokes on a center wheel, we got to poke in the considerable collection of stuff it takes to equip and decorate McMenamins properties. We wandered rows of toilets, a spooky aisle of showers, the dormitory wings and the center core where officers kept track of everyone.

Best of all, were the experiences shared by Rick Miller, a sheriff's deputy there for many years, and Bob Skipper, Rick's boss and former Multnomah County Sheriff, and Bruce Stannard, Troutdale resident who worked for the county hauling stuff back and forth to the jail. Listening in and recording was Tim Hills, McMenamins historian, who will one day use the material when the building is put to use, possibly as a hotel.

We got to hear how the prison worked, and about the escape tunnel that would allow officers to get out underground. We got the explanation for the fat rolls of cables strung along the walls. Every time a new system was installed, no one knew what the old cables were for, so they just put new ones in. And about Sparky, who wired everything, and checked the juice by putting two raw ends together to see what happened.

Skipper explained the decision to stop tobacco smoking in all jails, cleaning the air, the paint on the walls and the lungs of all inside the facilities. Of course, after visiting day, the first thing the guards had to check was the guest restroom where contraband, mostly tobacco, was sure to be found.

We learned how no jail ever escaped having a little Prune-O, basically any fermented concoction made of fruit, even bread scraps, to provide

"Christmas cheer."

And we heard in the early days, when it really was minimum security with a single fence, how prisoners climbed the fence leaving pronounced trails to the dog track and the Brass Rail Tavern. And about one regular who was found sleeping outside the fence because he'd been too drunk to climb the fence before the 11 p.m. bed check.

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Bob Skipper revisits the central core of the jail



Rick Miller (Bruce Stannard in the background) goes over county jail procedures

MCCI opened in 1963 and closed about 2005 or 2006. In the beginning its residents were the Rocky Butte prisoners who were brought out to the farm on a daily basis to work on the farm and in the jail laundry.

Mayor Bob Sturges and Dorothy Sturges lived just uphill and remember several nights when guards chased escapees through their horse pasture.

Miller even remembers the night that one prisoner jumped on the back of the Sturges horse, (named LePage by Bob Sturges, for those of you who remember the name of the glue) and tried to get away. The horse was still in the pasture, but that didn't seem to make much difference to the prisoner.

Our Volunteers:

David Munson came out of retirement this last month to once again winterize the barn and the Harlow House. He is preparing a booklet on how to do it, but is ready to retire the job after many years of doing so. It would be wonderful to have a handy person who likes such work to assume responsibility for the care of those buildings, light bulbs, etc. And thank you, Dave.

And thank you to Rich Allen who spent 3 hours recently, trying to puzzle out problems with our computer. And to Larry and Janet McGinnis and Jean Holman who hosted the Harlow House. Thanks also to Jim Glenn for taking on the interview in October with Scott Cunningham and Ed Fujii. And to Jean Hbyskmann hosting at the Harlow House.

To Sharon Nesbit for helping with the newsletter. And to Sharon and Julie Stewart for dressing up as witches

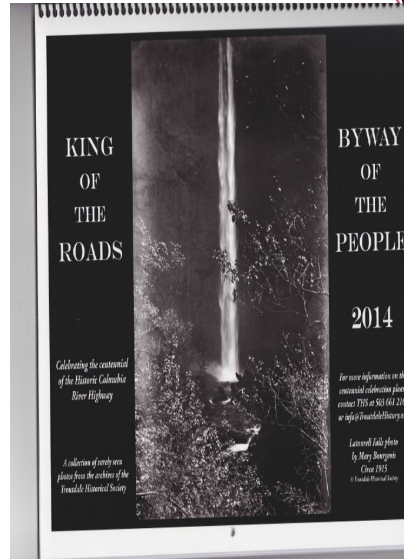
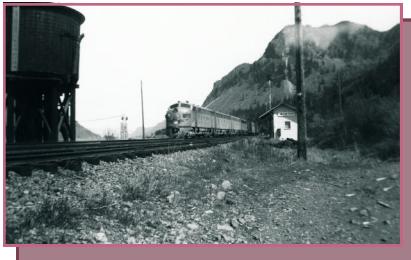


On Monday Oct. 21 McMenamins Edgefield welcomed these scouts, Cub Scout Pack 177, for a tour of the old poor farm led by Nell Simien. And we hosted second graders from Cascade Heights Charter School on Oct. 25.

Some Christmas ideas for you...

Nell Simien has gleaned our photos and the files of collector Dave Sell and has come up with a whole new batch of historic rail photo post cards. Come into the depot and see the collect, \$1 each or 6 for \$5.

And this December is the time to get a good sale on our Historic Columbia River Highway calendars, 2 for \$15 as long as they last. !



Jim Glenn and Edward Fujii visiting at the barn on Oct. 20



Edward Fujii, 90, joined Scott Cunningham and Jim Glenn for a conversation at the barn for our October meeting.

We have videos available of the interview that day — \$15 apiece at the depot.

Or, if you are interested in any of our past video collections, we have a supply of our past interviews.

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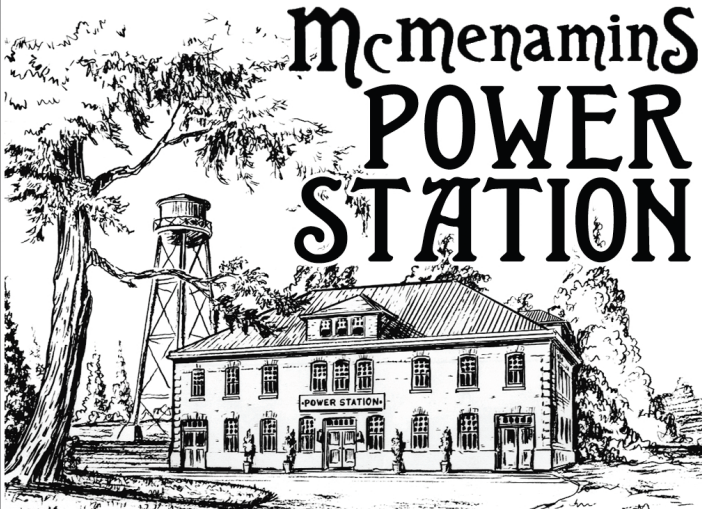
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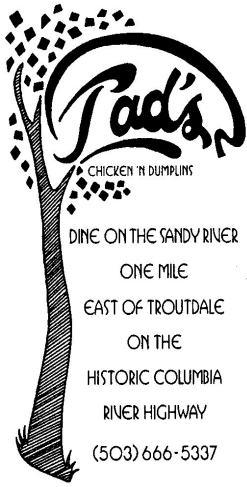
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Back in 1911, the Power Station served as none other than the poor farm's power station and laundry facility. Today you can grab a pint, have a bite to eat, watch a movie, or have a private event in this restored historic building.

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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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