

Bygone Times

A Newsletter of The Troutdale Historical Society.



FEBRUARY, 1991

Sharon Nesbit, Editor, 665-0423

HONEST ABE AND BIRTHDAY CANDLES...

The Troutdale Historical Society observes its 23rd birthday celebration at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 17, in Troutdale City Hall.

Barring bad weather (when road conditions are hazardous our meetings are automatically cancelled), we will meet to elect officers, greet Abe Lincoln (also known as Franklin Jenkins), review the last 23 years and eat birthday cake.

Jenkins, whose resemblance to Abe has often been noted, has promised to come in Lincoln regalia and tell us about the ol' rail-splitter. If you have Lincoln memorabilia, bring it along.

We also will review our society scrapbook, 23 years of the history, as updated by Clover Nasmyth. And we will recognize our retiring board members, Gene Bui and Rankin Davis, for their many years of service.

In keeping with our tradition, five birthday cakes will be baked by Lois Schulte, Heidi Wilson, Sharon Nesbit, Don Hessel and Nancy Cox. Sam Cox, ice cream fiend, will do the honors with the ice cream scoop.

TIME TO PAY YOUR DUES...

If an envelope is attached to your newsletter, it is time to pay annual dues.

Dues have been raised slightly this year, though it remains the policy of the board of directors to keep dues affordable. The costs are: individual membership, \$5; couple, \$8; family, \$15; lifetime, \$100; and a business membership with monthly listing in the newsletter, \$125.

In addition to our newsletter, members also receive a reduced membership rate in the Oregon Historical Society, reduced prices on sales items such as t-shirts, recipes and note cards and free admission to our museums.

Many of you send along a few extra dollars with your dues. Our new envelope allows you to designate your membership and the fund where you would like your donation applied.

This is an all-purpose envelope, so the notation at the bottom of the envelope, "My gift is in honor of," is intended for those who send in checks as memorial donations.



AND TIME TO ELECT OFFICERS...

Board members Gene Bui and Rankin Davis have said they will not run for re-election. We have two new candidates, David Ripma and Heidi Wilson, for our board of directors at February's election.

Ripma is an attorney who owns Sweetbriar Farm house. He recently won historic designation for the farm house. He volunteered at both the Troutdale parade and our Harvest Faire.

Heidi Wilson is a homemaker and community volunteer and was chairwoman of our auction at the Harvest Faire. In addition, she is a host at the Harlow House and exhibit chairwoman at the museum.

The rest of the slate remains the same: Sam Cox, president; Ted Schulte, vice president; Marge Schunk, treasurer; Barbara Welsh,

A TROUTDALE STORY...

Corra Starks, who died this summer in South Dakota at the age of 102, never forgot her roots in Troutdale. In 1969 she wrote of her memories here. An excerpt follows:

My parents moved to Troutdale from Nebraska early in 1889 when I was little more than 1 year old...My father, Herman E. Symes, was company ranch foreman for the original meat company located on the land which has since become known as the Sun Dial Ranch. (Ranch headquarters were near what is now the Troutdale airport.)

When we came from Nebraska (my mother's father and mother, Charlie and Sarah Roper) were living in the Troutdale area where Grandpa had fruit trees and sold honey.

We lived in the company ranch house and I remember the big long dining room with wide board floors. The wood shed was built high and in the back of the house. Mama cooked for about 30 company men but I remember only one whose name was Duffy. Mama had a Chinese cook to help her and I remember her making so many pies. I have forgotten the cook's name, but he was excellent help and very trustwrothy. He made regular trips 16 miles to Portland with the team and buckboard but one day he took the team to the livery barn in Portland, told them to take off the harness, curry and feed them, and he would be back after he got his groceries. He ordered \$30 worth of groceries and paid for them with his own money and started back after his team and that was the last anyone ever saw of him. Everyone who knew him felt sure he was shanghaied...there had been reports of that going on in Portland at that time.

I had two pet sheep at the ranch. They were orphans and they would follow me up all those steps in the woodshed to where the pears were put to ripen. When papa realized how good they were at going up the stairs, he trained them to lead sheep up the steps at the slaughter house and then turn and run back another way while the others went in.

My brother Charlie was born in the ranch house, Jan. 21, 1890, and I think it was the next winter that papa's windpipe cracked from breathing in so much cold while riding so he had to quit and we moved into town where he bought the livery stable on main street (now the Historic Columbia River Highway.)

We lived in a two-story house on the side of the hill toward the school from main street and we could see Mount Hood from the kitchen window....I remember sitting by the east window upstairs with mama when we watched the distillery burn (the distillery was located on the Sandy River near the Harlow House)...seeing those barrels exploding so blue and flying so high into the night sky. I don't remember what time it started but papa stayed with other men most of the night to keep the fire from spreading to the packing house. The distillery and the packing house were both built before we moved to Troutdale and were the mainstay of support of the town. I believe the distillery burned in 1895 or early in 1895.

I started to school in Troutdale when I was five...that was the fall of 1892 and I think it was a new school house at the time.

Old Indian John was a "good Indian." His daughter's name was Mary and I don't remember her husband but they were a hard-working family. Mary had done housework and washing for mama when Charlie was a baby and again before the twins were born. My twin brothers were born in the two-story house late in 1893 and died of whooping-cough when they were just three months old.

Some of the Troutdale business men built a one-room cabin for Indian John and he was so proud of that because it had a window...he called it his "windy," the first one he ever had.

In the fall of 1895, we moved from Troutdale to farm along the

PLANTING A SEED...

A few flower beds remain at the Harlow House in our adopt-a-flower-bed project for the next summer.

To date volunteer gardeners are BETTY KNIGHT, CLAUD FORQUER, JEFF and CONNIE VAN CLEAVE, LAUREN STOECKEL, ALEX JONES, DONNA KLUEHE and CINDY HAMMOND. Cindy, incidentally, will take charge of the herb bed. She is experienced since she also does the herb garden at the Pomeroy House north of Vancouver. We are fortunate that CATHY HAMME has returned and will continue with the English garden at the back of the house.

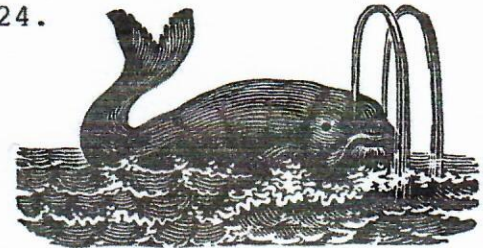
Two challenging beds on either side of the front driveway; a new flower bed near the street; a wildflower garden and the rhododendron bed remain orphaned.

The Green Thumb group will get meet for a sack lunch at noon, Saturday, March 2 at the Harlow House. If you would like to be part of the garden project call Lynda Harvey, 284-4224.

HAVING A WHALE OF A TIME...

Ten people have reserved seats on our April 6 Trek to Astoria and we have room for 10 more.

The trip includes transportation on an extremely comfortable bus, tours of three museums with possible optional stops at others, lunch on your own at Pier 11 and time to shop, a very nice dinner at the Sanctuary in Chinook, Wash., and a trip home through Seaside, hopefully with a stop to see the sunset. Price for all but lunch is \$50 a person. If you want to reserve a place, call Alex Jones, 666-6718, to get your name on the list.



WHO ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE DO...

As we begin our new year, here is a brief run down of what our historical society does and hopes to do.

- * We run two museums, the Harlow House and the Rail Depot museum.
- * We are about halfway through a \$120,000 construction project that will be our barn museum.
- * We have a large collection of artifacts, curated by Lynda Harvey who is paid a modest fee for her work and the hosting of the Harlow House.
- * We have about 10 books of historic photos identified and cataloged and maintain about six file cabinets of historical information.
- * We assist in historical research and encourage historic preservation, such as Edgefield Manor.
- * We produce note cards, recipes and T-shirts for sale.
- * We host two major events a year, help run Troutdale bingo and present a half dozen other gatherings as well publishing a dozen newsletters a year.
- * We educate people about local history through tours and programs.
- * And we have a lot of fun.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH - NANCY COX...

No one knows how often Nancy Cox, wife of President Sam Cox, has said, "I'll take care of it." Taking care of it can mean baking a cake, sending cookies or whipping up a whole lunch and carting it some place to feed a gang of hungry workers.

Nancy also is coordinator of volunteers for Troutdale bingo, a job she can do on the telephone, so long as she lets her 3-year-old grandson, Brandon, say hello first. She also womans the kitchen at our ice cream social and remembers what Sam forgets.

IN MEMORY...

Marjorie Mary Matches, 88, died Dec. 22. She was a member of this historical society and a resided in Troutdale for 80 years. Her father was A.D. Kendall, station agent at the Union Pacific Depot. Her husband, Arthur Matches, was mayor of Troutdale.

ALEX JONES has made a gift to the endowment fund in her memory.

HOMER IS REMEMBERED WITH GIFTS...

Memorial donations continue to come in from the friends of Homer Lumsden. Recent donors are: ROBERT and KELLY CASON; JAMES and NANCY MADSEN, MIKE and PAULINE MORROW, PHILIP and THELMA MUFFENBIER, BOB and DONNA HAWKINS, ALAN and FRANCES TOWNSEND, BYRON and EVELYN DEYOUNG, BOB and VERA STREBIN, CATHERINE MUGGE, and JO and VADEN CALLISTER.

ABOUT OUR MEETING DATES...

A discussion was held at our January meeting about changing our meetings dates to Sunday afternoon. Finally, a motion was made to leave choice of meeting dates to the board of directors.

Because of arrangements already made for speakers, our April meeting will be moved to Sunday, April 14, at 2 p.m. Tentative plans call for Barbara Abrams, Oregon Historical Society curator, on the care and keeping of our personal artifacts--photos, quilts, etc.

It is likely our May potluck, a joint meeting with local historical societies, also will be on Sunday afternoon, May 19, in the city park building. We are considering a dramatic presentation.

HISTORICAL TIDBIT...In 1920, George Perkins, Portland lawyer, purchased an 80-acre farm in Troutdale on Beaver Creek for \$8,250 and planned to become a gentleman farmer. He built a cabin on the north side of the creek, expanding it from 1929 to 1933. That "cabin" on Jackson Park Road is being restored by Mike Magee and Janet Renfro.

TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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