

BYGONE TIMES

Newsletter of the TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January 2002

Thank You!

New & Renewing Members:

Kym & Brenda Andrist

See Letter from David Ripma, at right, for More Thanks

Calendar Of Events

Barb Kubik:

Sgt. Nathaniel Pryor, Corps of Discovery
Sun, Jan 20, 2 pm
Troutdale City Hall

Annual Meeting
Sun, Feb 24, 1 pm
Glenn Otto Park
Sam K. Cox Hall

Bark Kubik presents Lewis & Clark on the Sandy, Presentation of Member Awards, Election of Officers, and Mardi Gras Luncheon

Keith McCoy: Lewis & Clark Living History

Sun, Mar 17, 2 pm
Troutdale City Hall

Asian History: Live Interviews

Sun, April 24
Time & Location TBA

Cemetery Tour

Sun, May 19
Time & Location TBA

Troutdale Historical Society President, David Ripma, Gives Update & Thanks

Dear friends of the Troutdale Historical Society:

Your response to my letter in December with the grim news of Laura Newton's resignation and our financial discrepancies has been overwhelming and left every one of us with a lump in our throats.

Every day checks, large and small, arrive in the mail to help us out of what we called our "lurch". I must tell you that last month when we could see the bottom of the barrel of our bank account, it was a lurch, indeed.

Your donations will keep us afloat. To date, we have received more than \$5,000 from you along with kind notes, expressions of sympathy and only good wishes. At this writing in mid-December we continue to await police action and to hope for restitution. Our loss at this time is in excess of \$10,000.

However bleak the outlook, the response of our volunteers and officers has been the brightest spot. As I mentioned last week, volunteers have rallied from every corner to help us with office staffing, mailing, and other chores. Penny Balch has spent many nights going through our financial records and sorting out the de-

tails. She personally found ways to recover about \$1,000 and is working on building us a better reporting system and recommending processes that will prevent such a thing from ever happening again.

Further, we have had many good and talented people show interest in a job as our Troutdale Historical Society director. The inquiries surprised our board in December and they have made a decision to begin looking at candidates after Jan. 1, though we do not yet know when we can again afford a full-time director. In the interim we have hired our former depot worker and newsletter volunteer Dawne Morse to work part-time in the office to keep our systems going. Dawne is especially able with the data base in which we keep our membership and dues information, which will be critical in February when it is time to collect dues. Please give her your full confidence, as she has ours.

Now, allow me to thank you who have given your time, or sent in your envelopes with checks, especially noting the large gifts of Walter and Vi Nasmyth, June Nasmyth and Sharon Nesbit. Thank you to: A.E. and Flor-

(Continued on page 2)

Be Sure to Mark Your Calendar...

January: Sgt. Nathaniel Pryor, Corps of Discovery

Please join us at 2 p.m., Sunday, January 20 in Troutdale City Hall for the second in this year's Lewis and Clark series, a talk by historian Barb Kubik on Sgt. Nathaniel Hale Pryor, a "steady, valuable and useful member" of the Corps of Discovery. Kubik, past president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, explored Pryor's work with the corps while researching the expedition and its time in the area of the Sandy River basin for the Troutdale Historical Society.

The more she read, the more fascinated she became with Pryor, who was entrusted by the captains to take two men in a small canoe and explore the 'quicksand river.' Though his journal, if he kept one, has never been found, Kubik's research indicates he was accomplished and literate. His detailed observations resulted in skillfully rendered charts of the lower river. Kubik will relate his story and tell what happened after the trip was over.

February: THS Annual Meeting and Lewis & Clark on the Sandy

Historian Barb Kubik will tell of her findings on the

(Continued on page 3)

Tidbits ~ News ~ Thank You's

Thanks, Rick!

Author Rick Rubin, who spoke about the Chinookan Indians at our November meeting (standing-room only!) returned his honorarium to us.

Christmas at the Harlow House

It was a star-spangled Christmas at the Harlow House. Decorators Jean Hybskmann, Sharon Nesbit, Dorothy Sturges, Jean Holman, Florence Baker, Barbara Welsh, Mona Mitchoff and Jeff Lawry trimmed a tree cut and donated by Dennis and Mary Bryson with patriotic ornaments. Also on hand, Dawne Morse and her grandmother, Juanita, and Adrienne Clausen, who came to bring her wonderful soup.

At our Christmas open house Santas Bob Mitchoff and Jeff Lawry greeted children next to the tree. Dozens of people brought cookies and the leftovers were wrapped, tagged and delivered to folks in Troutdale who are always ready to give us a hand.

Harlow Who?

It takes some doing to surprise Jack Malcom, who has forgotten more Troutdale history than the rest of us ever learned. He recently told us how much he has enjoyed Doneva Shepard's history of Harlow Douglass. Jack said he hadn't even heard of Douglass before—no surprise since much of Douglass' life after WWI was spent in isolation on Larch Mountain.

We Like Ike (Handy)

We now have copies of the Ike Handy video, taped during an oral history interview last April. The price is \$15 (add \$3 if you would like it mailed). You can order by calling the Harlow House, 503-662-2164.

Larry Callister, teacher at Reynolds Resource Academy (RHS) & member of the Historical Society

writes...

"It boggles my mind to drive into Troutdale on a windy Sunday to not only see buildings on the north side of the street, but to see shoppers wandering between them...It still doesn't seem real. It has pretty well ruined my line that the town I grew up in was so small it only had one side of a main street!"

"Notice that [author Rick] Rubin said the Chinook had the good sense not to have any villages in the gorge, especially on the south side. And these were people who didn't mind going naked in the winter rains. What does this say about the brains of the white folks who settled and stayed in Troutdale, Corbett, and points east?"

Keeping Us Up and Running

Two people who do much to keep our facilities running, Mike Alderson (City of Troutdale) and Milt Belnap, our handy handyman, are both laid up with holiday surgery. Wish them a fast healing. Our front door, damaged by vandals, has been repaired better than new by Gary Law who, doubtless, did not charge as much as he should have.

Nasmyth Family Pencil Box

Reminding us that Troutdale's history is about the people who lived here, Walter Nasmyth presented a lovely old wooden pencil box that was used by every member of his family. Walt's wartime memoirs will be excerpted in this and other newsletters during the showing of our military exhibit in the Harlow House, every Saturday and Sunday, 1 to 4 p.m. ❖

President Ripma

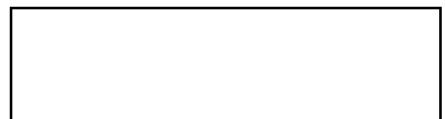
(Continued from page 1)

ence Happold, Alice Cornwell, Barbara and Nick Welsh, Chester and Lorraine Scott, Clover and Herb Nasmyth, Debbie Schoeper, Doris Woolley, Earl and Nadine Jordan, Edna Ellis (in memory of Bill Ellis), George and Virginia Perry, Georgeen Penketh (in memory of Ivan Harshbarger), Jo and Vaden Callister (in memory of Pat Gasser), John Dennison, Laverna Snell, Lois Coons (in memory of Merle Coons), Lois Moller, Martha Booheister, Pearl Ramseth, Robert Dunken, Scott and Eileen Cunningham, Sharon & Bill Nesbit (in memory of Gail and Barbara Ripma, Weir Owens, Ted Schulte and Mary Hughes), Sharon Petri and Tom Arbuckle (in memory of Jo and Don Palmateer), Steve and Betty Kaufman, Vera Rueck, William Ferguson, Shirley Yost, Marie Stone, Jean Buck, Fairview Rockwood Wilkes Historical Society, Lucille Tolbert, Margaret Stoeckel, Florence Baker, Lois Douglass, Bruce & Marilee Thompson, Robert Wenzel, Roy and Nancy Hoover, Gerald and Roberta Grimm, Bonita Jenkins, Evelyn DeYoung, Barbara and Orlin Huston Elsie Simmitt (in memory of Weir Owens and Mary Hughes), and Jack Malcom.

It is a pleasure to be your president.

David Ripma ❖

THS thanks David for his recent gift in memory of his parents, Barbara and Gale Ripma.



Walter Nasmyth and the War in the Pacific

Our Harlow House Military Exhibit boasts a drop-dead sexy picture of a bare-chested Walter Nasmyth taking soundings off the Caroline Islands in the South Pacific in November of 1944. That photo and many others are in his recently published biography.

His vessel, LST 19, was all over the South Pacific during WWII. In July, 1945, LST 19 was sent to prepare for the invasion of Japan, first taking on a load of ammunition in San Diego. "Slightly less than ten days later, just at dusk, the look outs reported the outline of Diamond Head on the horizon. While at sea we did not break radio silence, therefore we were totally unaware of atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As

dusk began to deepen red flares were seen over Pearl Harbor. The captain felt an air strike was in progress and ordered the ship to General Quarters, at which time we put about and headed out to sea. We could not raise anyone on the radio...

Shortly after daylight we made landfall and by voice radio requested permission to enter the harbor. A very inebriated person answered our request with, 'You guys can't come in here. You've got ammo aboard. The Goddam war is over. Go around to Kaneohe Bay.'

When they were finally anchored, the port section of the boat was granted overnight liberty, a rare treat since the war was over. The next day, he and his shipmates brought many of that

first liberty group aboard, passed out cold, in cargo nets. Then it was Nasmyth's turn to go to Honolulu over the Pali Pass. "By damn, it was a grand and glorious feeling to be celebrating the end of the war in the Pacific in the very place it began on December 7, 1941." ❖

Upcoming Events

Lewis & Clark expedition's experiences in the Sandy River basin at our Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 24, 1 p.m. in Sam K. Cox Hall at Glenn Otto Community Park. This event includes our annual business meeting, election of officers (see page 4), honors of the society, and a wonderful Mardi Gras luncheon.

March: Living History

The Lewis and Clark series finale is on March 17 when Columbia Gorge historian Keith McCoy gives us a living history performance as a member of the Corps of Discovery. That is at 2 p.m., Sunday, in Troutdale City Hall.

April: Asian History Month

May: 4th Annual Cemetery Tour

Our final two programs of the year are Sunday, April 21, when we honor Asian History Month with an interview with local Japanese-Americans, and May 19 when we enjoy "Stories in Stone," our fourth annual cemetery tour. ❖

Mary Wright Exhibit Planned

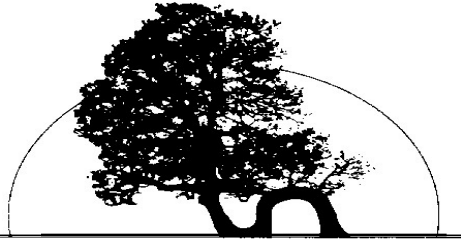
Lorraine Scott, daughter of Mary Bourgeois Wright, is leading a committee of her family members to create and fund a Troutdale Historical Society exhibit of Mary's photographs.

Many will remember Mary, wife of Bill Wright, as a gardener and expert flower arranger, but she was also a talented amateur photographer from about 1910 until her death in 1982. She started as a teenager on horseback in Springdale with her camera and glass plate equipment, learning to do her own developing. In the 1930s and 1940s she regularly won prizes in the Oregon Journal weekly photo contests, as well as national contests.

The Wright family will select the pick of her crop of hundreds of photos to create a traveling exhibit we can offer to schools, other museums, the lobbies of churches and banks and, perhaps, local galleries. The exhibit will

show what one girl with a great eye and a modest camera could photograph within a few miles of home. Her pictures show construction of the Columbia River Highway, the harvesting of old-growth trees, the tie drives on the Sandy River, the common, every day work of house keeping and putting up the harvest and pictures of homes so modest that no one every thought to photograph them.

The display will be easily portable, set up on folding panels with lights, captions and interpretive text and will be our first such exhibit. It will cost about \$8,000 but likely would be much more, but for the gifts of time and talent from the family. The first letters querying foundations for funding went out in early December. ❖



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

Troutdale Historical Society

104 S.E. Kibling Street
Troutdale, OR 97060

Phone:(503) 661-2164
Fax: (503) 674-2995
E-mail:

Troutdale_Historical_Society@juno.com

Inside THS

David Ripma, Board President
Mary Bryson, Curator
Sharon Nesbit, Historian
Doneva Shepard, Photo Librarian

Return Receipt Requested

Harlow House & Barn

726 E. Historic Columbia River Highway
Phone: (503) 661-2164
HOURS: Saturdays & Sundays, 1 to 4 p.m.

Depot Rail Museum

473 E. Historic Columbia River Highway
Phone: (503) 667-8268
HOURS: Closed Until May 2002

Thanks to Authors Cowling & Mershon

Many thanks to authors Tom Cowling and Clarence Mershon (with wife Colleen) who joined us Nov. 17 for a signing at the opening of our military exhibit in the Harlow House. Mershon's book features interviews with veterans in the Corbett-area. Cowling excerpted material about the war years from his book on Bridal Veil.

Corbett historian Clarence Mershon's newest book is on the history of the Historic Columbia River Highway, in the memory and eyes of those who lived beside it and helped to build it. Mershon knows his stuff. When the Stark Street Bridge collapsed on Good Roads Day, April 25, 1914, under a load of gravel intended for the new highway, two Mershons rode the bridge into the drink.

Clarence has gathered the personal recollections, diaries and photos of local families to develop a uniquely local view of the famous highway and its restaurants, roadhouses and fried chicken emporiums, as well as the people who worked in them. The treasure trove of photos includes a picture of a turtle bowl of carved basalt found during construction of the Troutdale Bridge.

We have copies of both author's books available at the Harlow House. ❖

Due to space constraints, the continuation of last month's story by Harlow Douglass will continue in February's newsletter. Thank you for your patience.

Long-time THS member and Troutdale resident Ernest Cereghino passed away Dec 26, 2001. Watch next month's newsletter for a tribute.

***Important Info
On THS Board***

Are you interested in becoming a member of THS' Board of Directors? Do you know someone who would like to serve? Nominations can be made in January and February for our board of directors and officers. Election of officials will be held at our annual meeting on February 24th.

Call the Harlow House at 503-661-2164, and leave word of nominations with President David Ripma. ❖