

Bygone Times



Newsletter of The Troutdale Historical Society.

FEBRUARY 1988

EDITOR: Sharon Nesbit, 665-0423

OUR 20TH ANNIVERSARY...

We--all 504 members of us--will take the time to pat ourselves on the back when we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Troutdale Historical Society at 2 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 21, in the Great Hall at Troutdale City Park. (Please note the different day, time and place.)

The festivities planned for the 20th birthday party include birthday cake and ice cream. We will do the routine business of our annual meeting, election of officers, collection of dues, etc. But most of the party will be spent in recognizing our charter members (a list is printed on Page Five), former officers, and retiring officers. We plan a few awards and honors, a photo display of our presidents and a roast of Ted and Lois Schulte who are retiring from their respective jobs of treasurer and membership secretary.

The thing that will draw a crowd at the meeting will be our updated scrapbook of society history that Cathy Hamme has put together. You will see photos of early ice cream socials, pictures of all of us when we were younger, thinner and had more hair, a raft of old newspaper clippings and other things we've sort of forgotten about in the last 20 years.

We hope you'll be there to mark this day with us. This newsletter includes a 20-year history of our society.

WE ARE THE TROUTDALE 500...

At our January meeting, an event that packed city hall to the rafters, Frank and Jeanne Card became our 499th and 500th members. In fact, we signed up eight new members for a grand total, at this writing, of 504.

The trick now, is to get everybody who owes dues for this year, 1988, to reenlist. If an envelope is attached to your newsletter, it is time to pay your 1988 dues. Just include \$3 a person along with your names and addresses to be part of the Troutdale 500.

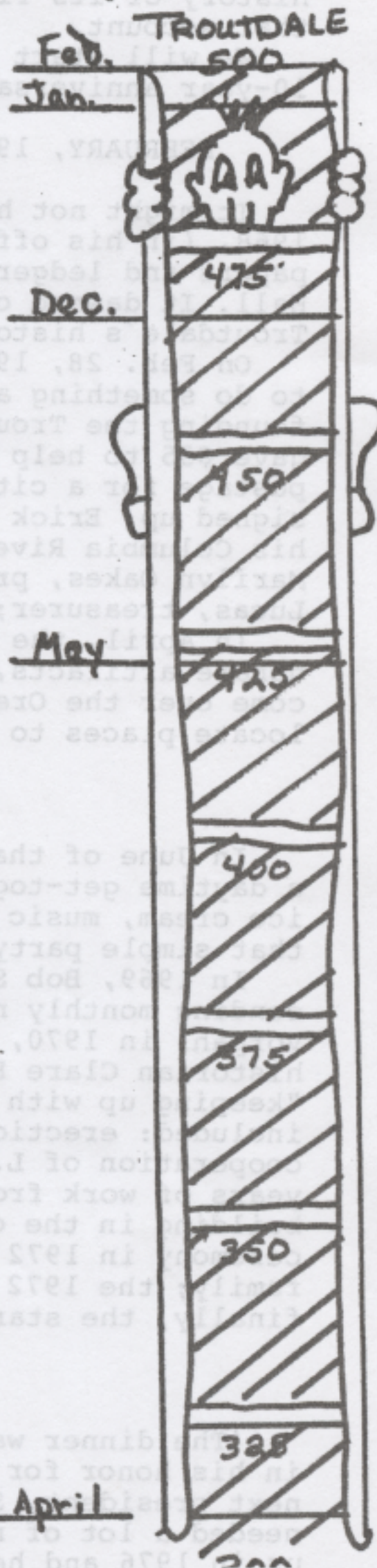
Any questions? Call our new membership secretary, Joyce Stoeckel, 665-0026.

Those who are Oregon Historical Society members can renew their memberships to OHS at the special affiliate society rate of \$20.

CHRISTMAS WISHES GRANTED...

Our plea for a 1950s aluminum Christmas tree was answered by Harold and Eleanor Bangs who gave us a dandy.

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TWENTY YEARS OF THE SOCIETY HISTORY...

In February, 1978, the Troutdale Historical Society published a history of its first 10 years. It is time to add another decade to that account.

We will start by reprinting the history written in 1978 for our 10-year anniversary:

FEBRUARY, 1978 TEN YEARS - THE TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

It might not have happened if Glenn Otto hadn't been in jail. In 1968, (in his official capacity as mayor of Troutdale) Otto found old papers and ledgers stacked in the basement jail of Troutdale City Hall. It dawned on him that no local effort was being made to preserve Troutdale's history.

On Feb. 28, 1968, more than a dozen local residents met and decided to do something about preserving the city's colorful history by founding the Troutdale Historical Society. The Troutdale city council gave \$35 to help the new society and the Troutdale Lions paid the postage for a city-wide newsletter. In March, 63 charter members had signed up. Erick Enquist (deceased) spoke at that first meeting about his Columbia River fishwheel business. The first officers were: Marilyn Oakes, president; Ray Moore (deceased) vice president; Joe Lucas, treasurer; and Sharon Nesbit, secretary.

In April, the late Vic Kyle became the first local resident to donate artifacts, an ox yoke and a set of pioneer kettles said to have come over the Oregon Trail. That was the start of a mad scramble to locate places to store museum items.

Ice Cream Social Begins

In June of that year we hosted a simple little ice cream social as a daytime get-together for our members. Three-hundred people came for ice cream, music and an old-fashioned good time. In subsequent years that simple party grew to include almost 600 people.

In 1969, Bob Sturges was president. He initiated the practice of sending monthly newsletters. During the presidency of the late Don Vorpahl in 1970, we were deep in the study of the Oregon Trail with historian Clare Belsher. From 1971 to 1975, it was a matter of "keeping up with Jones." Highlights of the presidency of Alex Jones included: erection of a state historical marker in 1971 with the cooperation of L.E. (Bud) George of the state highway department; two years of work from 1971 to 1973 to remodel and open a concrete block building in the city park for use as a museum; a historic and colorful ceremony in 1972 to receive a Civil War cannonball from the Erickson family; the 1972 publication of a cookbook of pioneer recipes; and, finally, the start of our traditional and delicious potluck dinners.

The 1976 Bicentennial

(The dinner was not really Jones' idea--the first dinner was held in his honor for his years as president. The idea originated with our next president, Sam Cox, who has never passed up a free meal.) Cox needed a lot of nourishment because the nation's Bicentennial was on us in 1976 and he led the campaign to have Troutdale named a

SOCIETY HISTORY (CONT.)...

Bicentennial City. It was that year that the society spearheaded an effort to preserve, move and restore the Troutdale Rail Depot. We also won a second prize for our float in the Fourth of July parade at Corbett, observed the 98th birthday of the late Wiley Wilson and led hundreds of people through our museum.

By 1976, we had accumulated \$2,300 in the bank and talk began on adding an addition to our museum as a memorial to the late Dick Knarr and other deceased members who had brightened our history with first-person recollections of early-day Troutdale. Thanks to help from the federally-funded Comprehensive Employment and Training Act construction began in the summer of 1977 with Ted Schulte supervising. The CETA program also gave us two full-time employees for our museum, curator Bert Whalen and typist Pauline Holcomb, (now deceased) and it provided the boost necessary to complete restoration of the depot, which was dedicated in November, 1977.

Heading into its 11th year, the Society is continuing on-going projects, which include aiding and encouraging historical preservation of the downtown business area, expanding and improving exhibits in both the park museum and the rail depot and gathering history for a book on Troutdale.

THE SECOND DECADE - THE TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The second decade of the society will probably go down in history as the Harlow House or the Sam Cox decade. The City of Troutdale's need for our museum building in the park resulted in a trade in 1979. We exchanged our old museum for a down payment on the Harlow House, which the city purchased after the death of its last occupant, Mabel Evans.

With only a week's notice, we moved out of our museum into a house that had been sitting empty for a year, was covered with soot from a furnace backfire and had no heat or hot water.

With Cox leading the effort, we scrubbed and fixed and insulated and installed caretakers. Ken and Linda Grassman, lived there six weeks without hot water and were roused out of their beds on their first night by the Troutdale police.

Ted Schulte personally did much of the original restoration work. New Year's Day, 1980, found him and Steve Kenney sliding around on the roof fixing a leak.

Christmas Open Houses Begin

In 1980, we began the first of our popular live interviews, taping Morris and Gladys McGinnis for the oral history collection. And that year was the first time we decorated the Harlow House for Christmas. The star attraction was the restored wood stove, which we found in pieces in the basement.

Some 700 people came to the ice cream social that year. At Sam's suggestion we had a plant sale, which was a huge success. That summer we argued unsuccessfully to save the old maple trees in front of the Buxton home.

By December of 1981 we added steaming hot wassail to our Christmas celebration, decided to build a gazebo at the Harlow House with money donated to the Ada Cox memorial and a month later opened

SECOND DECADE, SOCIETY HISTORY (CONT.)...

our 1982 meetings with a discussion of moonshiner Nettie Connett. That year Multnomah County closed Edgefield Manor and we fell heir to three truckloads of items and a new volunteer, Curt Kaiser, who helped us catalog them. We roasted Bob Sturges at the conclusion of his 10 years as mayor of Troutdale with a sit-down dinner for 100 that earned \$500 toward our Harlow House mortgage. Sam Cox was elected mayor of Troutdale that November, 1982, and continued in his job as historical society president.

In 1983, we heard Helen Althaus read for a second time to our group the letter her great-grandmother wrote home about her trip over the Oregon Trail. It became a book in 1987.

Our 15th anniversary was a slide show of Troutdale's buildings in 1972 and as they looked 10 years later in 1983. Our officers were: Sam Cox, President; Alex Jones, vice president; Helen Otto, secretary and Ted Schulte, treasurer.

Dreaming Of A Barn

It was in 1983 that we first began to dream of building a barn back of the Harlow House for display of agricultural equipment. And Vera Strebin decided it was high time we collected photos of all the mayors of Troutdale. Curt Kaiser prepared a nomination to place the Harlow House on the National Register of Historic Places. It became official on Feb. 16, 1984.

That year we earned \$3,000 to help pay our mortgage. And we had our first fall pie sale on the front porch of the Harlow House. That, as well as our ice cream social and our booth at the city picnic, helped pay the bills.

We added a Membership Secretary, Lois Schulte, to our list of workers, just to keep up with growth of our society.

In 1984, we added the children from Sweetbriar School to our walking history tours, an event that Troutdale children had experienced for a number of years.

In January, 1985, we filled Troutdale City Hall for a program on the city's gas stations and began a system of rotating exhibits at the Harlow House. The following month was our celebration of Troutdale mayors when we dedicated the portraits of 22 men and women who had served the city since 1907. In March we had a spring luncheon and an old-fashioned fashion show. Cathy Hamme took over the plant sale at the June ice cream social and that summer she volunteered as groundskeeper at the Harlow House, starting a tradition that now draws many people just to see the yard.

Home Tour Started

We also had our first home tour, a tour of historic houses in the Columbia River Gorge, the biggest fund raiser in our history. And John Nasmyth, determined that we build our barn, began making substantial donations to the barn fund. It was that year, too, that we held our first Troutdale Grade School reunion and packed city hall to the rafters for a slide showing of historic photos on the Columbia River Highway.

In Feb. 1986, we kicked off a campaign to pay the \$4,400 owing on the Harlow House mortgage. At the same time, we launched a campaign to

SECOND DECADE, SOCIETY HIST. (CONT.)...

convince Multnomah County not to demolish Edgefield Manor. We also joined other service clubs in sponsoring Troutdale bingo and held a second Columbia Gorge home tour. Our membership by June, 1986, was 335.

Donations of \$100 each started coming in as we neared our goal of paying off the mortgage. It happened in December, 1986, and we had a mortgage burning ceremony the following January, a dream of nearly 20 years come true. The Harlow House was first mentioned as a possibility for a city museum when that first small group got together back in 1968.

Not content, Sam Cox, still mayor and historical society president, launched a campaign in 1987 to sign up 500 members by our 20th anniversary in Feb., 1988. We had 360 at that point.

That same year we continued the battle for Edgefield Manor, rented the house for a fashion photo session, toured Troutdale country homes, and found a Harlow House putterer in Dick Jones. And volunteers, under the direction of Doris Caramella, worked two days a week at the depot museum, playing host to summer visitors.

Living History Exhibited

In September, 1987, we began our year with a living history exhibit at the Harlow House pie social with Cathy Hamme portraying Laura Harlow. We cooked dinner for 100 people at the Troutdale School reunion, prepared a list of historic sites for an update of the city's historic site inventory, participated in the implementation of

Troutdale's downtown plan emphasizing the city's historic buildings, produced a cinnamon and apple Christmas theme at the Harlow House, hired a professional museum consultant to prepare a plan for the administration of our historic collections and resolved to begin work on our barn.

In the third decade of the Troutdale Historical society, we hope to see completion of our barn museum, with both it and the Harlow House open five days a week. We look forward to a book of Troutdale history and to many of the same events we have enjoyed for the last 20 years. We vow to continue to celebrate Troutdale as it was and bring the joy of those lively times of the past to those here in the present.

OUR CHARTER MEMBERS...

(* Denotes deceased) Edna H. Alexander, Emil Carow *, Georgia Mae Carow, Beryl P. Cook, Ada Cox *, Clara Cox *, Nancy Cox, Sam Cox, Rankin Davis, Sue Davis, Louise Dix, Luella Dix *, Robert Dix, Teresa Doolittle *, Mary Ray Eaton *, Jack Evans, Mabel Evans *, Arthur A. Heimstra *, Justa L. Hewitt *, Mary Hughes, Robert Hughes, Laura A. Imthurn *, Charles V. Jackson *, Mary Knarr *, Richard Knarr *, Barbara Lampert, Don Lampert, Evelyn Lampert *, Nora Lewis *, William Lewis *, Dorothy Lucas *, Joe Lucas, Arthur Matches *, Marjorie Matches, Miriam McGinnis *, Roy Meger, Ray Moore *, Sharon Nesbit, Marilyn Oakes, Glenn E. Otto, Helen Otto, Dale Parsons, Margaret Parsons, Olive Parsons *, Ethel Peterson, Marlin Pope *, Martine Rathman, Vernon Rathman, George Schatz *, Louise Schatz *, Arthur Scofield, Emily Scofield, Frank Simons, Irene Simons, Alfred Stoeckel, Margaret Stoeckel, Kay Struckman, Dorothy Sturges, Robert M. Sturges, Don Vorpahl *, Laura Vorpahl, I.B. Wand and Truly Wright.

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NAMEDROPPERS...A special thanks is owed JUDY JONES who did all the lettering on the photos we gave to Troutdale businesses...While we are keeping up with the Joneses, DICK JONES put the Harlow House basement in order, a previously horrible mess that made grown men cry...HERB and CLOVER NASMYTH conducted and taped an interview with W.R. JACKSON, Fairview...IG and ALICE WAND are hard at work identifying 70 men shown in an old Bissinger Wool Pullery photo that Jackson loaned us...VERA STREBIN, FLORENCE BAKER, DOROTHY STURGES, CLOVER NASMYTH and EDNA ALEXANDER made cookies for the nearly 100 people who attended our January meeting...And ROY MEGER and ELSIE SIMNITT actually closed the Troutdale General Store in order to be there to receive there plaque. There were, as well, representatives of nine Troutdale businesses on hand to accept their historic photos...GENE and NEIL HANDY said there wasn't much work done at their garage the next day because everybody was busy looking at the picture of the station as it appeared in 1929...New members are: RICHARD and PAULA GOLDIE, LOUISE BRAIM, MERLE D. CUMMINGS, FRANK and JEANNE CARD, HARRY and SYLVIA FOWLER, KENNETH SIMNITT and RICHARD EDGELY.

OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED...

The slate of officer at our Feb.21 meeting will be: Sam Cox, president; Ted Schulte, vice-president; Doris Caramella, secretary; and Gene Bui, Rankin Davis and Bob Sturges, board of directors. Alex Jones, former vice-president, will be the representative from the Board of Trustees. We are still seeking a treasurer. If you can help, call Sam Cox, 665-9086.

TROUTDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
104 S.E. KIBLING ST.
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WE ARE 20 YEARS OLD!
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FEB ' 1988
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