

# Newsletter

News For Clatsop County Historical Society Members

Spring 2009

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## THE MOST WICKED PLACE ON EARTH

By 1880, half of the fish canneries on the lower Columbia River were located in Astoria. The dangerous nature of fishing on the Columbia near the mouth of the river attracted a sizable and unruly assortment of transient fishermen during the spring salmon seasons, earning Astoria a very rowdy reputation. A reporter with *The Oregonian* wrote, "it is perhaps the most wicked place on earth for its population."

We have chosen the more inflammatory portion of this statement as the title for the new temporary exhibit at the Heritage Museum. "The Most Wicked Place on Earth" opens May 1st. The exhibit will examine the rise and fall of Astoria's "Swill town": the saloons and brothels and the men and women who owned and worked in them, the groups who fought to close them, and the churches and temperance organizations who sought to provide alternatives to a life of alcohol, gambling, and prostitution.

Visitors will be able to try their luck with a game of cards or with a spin of the roulette wheel in the Louvre saloon. From the church pulpit the more pious might try to convert the sinners in the crowd and have them give up their evil and wicked ways before they find themselves at the end of the hangman's noose.



## Jack Frost Visits the North Coast

December 2007 brought us hurricane force winds and destruction that we are still recovering from. This past

December brought snow and ice and its own form of troubles.

While the school children rejoiced, Jack Frost did his best to create a winter wonderland. Below are some samples of his work around the Flavel House garden. Additional images can be seen on the Historical Society's web site, [www.cumtux.org](http://www.cumtux.org), collections, photo gallery.



CLATSOP COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Newsletter is published by the Clatsop County Historical Society for its members and friends.

## 2009 OFFICERS

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Alma Jackson

## Director's Report

Thank you for all of your support in the past and especially in 2008. It has been a tremendous year for the Clatsop County Historical Society. We've had a terrific response to our temporary exhibits and our programs and, despite the economy and weather, enjoyed a substantial increase in attendance at the Heritage Museum and good numbers at the Flavel House.

The revitalization of the Heritage Museum continued with two temporary exhibits in 2008: Sign Design and a really wonderful exhibit, Victorian Vogue. We are busy creating a new temporary exhibit in the Parker Gallery that will open May 1<sup>st</sup> — The Most Wicked Place on Earth. That's how, in the 1890s, one reporter for the Oregonian referred to Astoria.

Our programs attracted large audiences. Mother's Day Tea & Scones, the Astoria Historic Homes

Tour, Old-Fashioned Fun & Games, Plum Pudding, a Victorian Christmas in the Flavel House, and the annual Holiday Dinner & Silent Auction were all well attended and received. Perhaps our most talked about annual event, Talking Tombstones drew five hundred people to Oceanview Cemetery.

Plans are in place to make 2009 just as exciting. All of our popular programs will return. The Astoria Bicentennial Celebration in 2011 is coming together. An ABC Headquarters will open soon on the river at 12th Street — next to the Baked Alaska restaurant. Lord Astor (John Jacob Astor VIII) has told us he plans on attending the Bicentennial Ball in 2011. We are also planning a "super homecoming" in September 2011 where anyone who has ever lived in Astoria will be invited back to town.

I hope to see many of you at the annual membership meeting on Sunday, April 5th at the Heritage Museum. The meeting and luncheon starts at 12:30 pm.

## Archives

The Mackinac State Historic Parks in Mackinaw, Michigan is the source of a recent donation of 49 large photographic prints of the Spruce Division's activities during World War I. Most of the photos were taken by photographer Clark Kinsey of Seattle at the camps and logging operations in Clatsop County with others in Raymond, Washington and nearby areas. They are a perfect complement to the photo album of the Spruce Division that has been in the CCHS collection for many years. (Accession #'s 09.006 and 86.083)



## Giftshop

We have several new titles in our Bookstore at the Heritage Museum and one old title that we are excited to have back again. *ASTORIA* by Washington Irving has finally been reprinted after many years of being unavailable. This "true" story of the Astor Party is a fascinating read...right up there with the Lewis and Clark expedition. With our own Bicentennial coming up fast (2011), it is time for all of us to brush up on our Astoria history. Reading *ASTORIA* is a great place to start.

Other new titles are *Astoria: An Oregon History* by Karen Leedom; *A Window to the Sea*, by Ky Jennings is a beautiful history of the area using photographs and stories; and most recent is Sue Glen's pictorial on the history of *Fort Stevens* as well as a pictorial on *Lighthouses and Life Saving on the Oregon Coast*.

Of course, the ever popular *Haunted Astoria* by Jefferson Davis, Liisa Penner's *Salmon Fever*, *Rivers End* and Greg Jacob's *Fins, Finns and Astorians* all explore various aspects of our area's past. And don't forget that these books, along with numerous other titles on local history and events, are offered to our members at a 10% discount.



## Collections Corner

Every year the Historical Society is the fortunate recipient of numerous donations that help us interpret the rich stories of Clatsop County. One of those artifacts and one of those stories is featured here.

In 1879 the Astoria volunteer fire department's Astoria Engine Company No. 1 purchased a 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Amoskeag Steam fire engine. When the engine was turned over to Chief Engineer L.D. Coffman, the chief was also presented with a silver trumpet inscribed, "To the Chief Engineer of the Astoria Fire Department, Presented by Wm. T. Everson." The inscription gave us valuable clues that allowed us to link the trumpet to a specific event and date through research in early Astoria newspapers.

*"Yesterday afternoon practically testing the new Amoskeag Steam fire engine, recently purchased for No. 1 of the Astoria Fire Department, Councilman Peter Runey as chairman of the committee on fire and water's purchasing committee at the house of No. 1 Co. turned it over to Engineer Coffman and presented to the*

*department at the same time on behalf of Mr. Everson, agent of the Amoskeag machines, a magnificent and costly silver trumpet suitably engraved with an elegant silver cord attached.... After the ceremony of presentation was over with the company and invited guests gave three cheers for Mr. Everson, three more for the mayor and city council, three more for the committee on fire and water and then retired to the engine room for refreshments."*

*Daily Astorian  
October 5, 1879*

The silver trumpet, known as a "presentation trumpet," is a ceremonial version of the functional speaking trumpet or horn. The "working" or "duty" horn was used to amplify the voice—much like a bullhorn today. "Presentation" or "parade horns" were given as gifts or as commemorative pieces. The Astoria Fire Department trumpet is elaborately engraved with floral designs and features images of firefighting tools and equipment. The steam fire engine engraved on the bell was one of several standard images that could be selected to customize the trumpets.

*The trumpet upon arrival and in the process of cleaning. Note: The mouthpiece and original silver cord are missing.*



## Astoria Bicentennial update:

The Astoria Bicentennial Celebration (ABC) committees have been meeting since March 2007 planning & developing the historic 200th anniversary of the founding of Astoria. Two public meetings were held in April and October of last year representing over fifty organizations that also helped shape the scope of the events being planned for 2011. Two more of these public forum gatherings will be planned for 2009.

Education is an important element of the ABC's mission. In September 2010 a teacher's institute led by Dr. Stephen Dow Beckham

will highlight the historic significance of Astoria including maritime and land-based fur trade, Euro-American settlement, and the U.S. Government's commitments to the mouth of the Columbia River. The 2010-2011 school year will give local students opportunities for field trips to new museum exhibits and to experience living history actors portraying key figures and professions from Astoria's past.

The ABC committee is focusing on three key public events in 2011; an Opening Ceremony, May 18th–22nd (which marks the date when Astoria was given its name), a Bicentennial Ball, August 13 (during Regatta) with honored guests Lord Astor from England and the Bürgermeister from Walldorf, Germany, and closing with a grand Astoria Homecoming, September 16–17.

The full details of these events are still being developed while financial support is being sought for all components of the bicentennial. The ABC 2011 headquarters and storefront will soon be operational at No. 1 12th Street, next to Baked Alaska restaurant. Watch for the

grand opening and ribbon-cutting sometime this March.

For further information contact Paulette McCoy, ABC 2011 Coordinator, email: abc2011@cumtux.org or visit the website [www.astoria200.org](http://www.astoria200.org).



*April 1809*

John Jacob Astor obtains a charter from the legislature of the state of New York for incorporation of the American Fur Company with a capital investment of one million dollars.

# Memorials

**Jean Anderson**  
Lloyd Billings

**Mildred S. Anderson**  
Leonard, Kenneth & Nancy Haglund  
Jon Westerholm

**Roger A. Berg**  
Edith H. Miller

**Evelyn Bredleau**  
Edith H. Miller

**Kay and Evelyn Bredleau**  
Shirley Tinner

**Richard R. "Dick" Brown**  
Shirley Tinner  
Joyce L. Smith

**Capt. Joe Bruneau**  
Shirley Tinner  
June Spence  
Rae Goforth

**Darlene M. Bumala Burke**  
Don and Edith Helligso  
Joe and Gwynn Bakkensen  
Carol C. Lambert

**Allen V. Cellars**  
Don and Carol Haskell  
McAndrew Burns  
Rae Goforth

**Lila H. Haggren Collman**  
Susan Anderson Schimpf  
Don and Carol Haskell  
Rae Goforth

**Gladys J. Cummings**  
Daniel and Clair Stephan

**Peter J. Daniels**  
Doris C. Daniels

**Deloris Jean Davis**  
Fred Larson

**Betsy J. Duncan**  
Hazel Reith  
Steven and Sharon Young

**Jim Fablen**  
Buddy Hoell

**Geraldine E. "Gerry" Goin**  
Edith H. Miller

**Stanley L. Hauer**  
Edith H. Miller  
Rae Goforth

**F. W. "Bill" Heiner**  
J. Marlene Taylor  
Edith H. Miller

**Lee Howton**  
Buddy Hoell

**John Hugill**  
J. Marlene Taylor  
Buddy Hoell

**Feenan Jennings**  
Buddy Hoell

**Gertrude "Gertie" H. Johanson**  
Jack and Adele Middleton

**Jack L. Kennedy**  
Toivo and Shirley Mustonen

**Eugene H. "Joe" Knutsen**  
Donald E. Link  
Nancy R. Haglund  
Alice E. Thompson  
Ronald and Charlene Larsen  
Ethel L. Wilson  
Edith H. Miller  
Jim and Ruth Hope

**Darrell L. Korhonen**  
Susan Hart

**Sylvia S. Koskela**  
Walter and Joean Fransen  
Louise Leding Nelson

**Mary J. Laird**  
Margery Waterhouse Moss

**Marjorie L. Larson**  
Virginia Kernes

**William J. "Bill" Leahy, Sr.**  
Jim and Ruth Hope  
Lee and Paulette McCoy  
Clare Carson  
Bob and Mary Lovell

**Marjorie Leback**  
Jane Merydith  
Harvey F. Peeke

**Howard Lovvold**  
Shirley Tinner

**John W. Lum**  
Buddy Hoell  
Ted and Pat Bugas  
Joan Pratt  
Rae Goforth

**Edwin L. Luoma**  
Ruth Shaner  
Rae Goforth

**Everett Marque Marriott**  
Fred Larson  
Buddy Hoell  
Ronald and Charlene Larsen

**Thelma E. McCoy**  
Marian McBride

**Christina N. Meyer**  
Karen Radich

**Paula Thompson Morrow**  
Evelyn Leahy Hankel

**Arvid V. North**  
Buddy Hoell  
Bart and Kathie Oja

**Arlene O'Bryan**  
Fred Larson

**Mary E. "M.E." Olsen**  
Darlene Gandy  
Maxine Jaeckel  
Roger L. Larson & Family

**Mary Elizabeth Owen**  
Jim and Ruth Hope  
Harvey F. Peeke

**Alice Ranta**  
William Scholze Family

**Kenneth Reade**  
Don and Edith Helligso  
Joe and Gwynn Bakkensen

**Judith S. Rudolphi**  
Gordon and Darlene Story

**Thelma Koski Rundel**  
Steve and Sharon Young

**Laura Seeborg**  
Karen Kirstyn Walker  
Judith Walker  
Richard Seeborg  
Steve and Tena Seeborg  
June Christensen  
Terry and Joyce Seeborg Eidell  
F. L. Thompson

**Corinne Sjolund**  
Curt and Shelley Ahola  
Mariatta Hill  
Ella Hill

**Melvin R. Snell**  
Buddy Hoell

**Harold Henry Snow**  
Susan Anderson Schimpf  
Toivo and Shirley Mustonen

**Beverly Jean Swanson  
(1940-1958)**  
John H. Milde

**Verna Hutonen Sweet**  
Sarah L. Howell  
Gerald and Agnes Johnson  
Roy and Gertrude Kinnunen  
Bob and Loava Franchini  
Karen Van Cleave  
Bonnie L. Logan  
The Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> Guides  
Gladys Hutonen Wilhelmi  
Gerald and Ethel Amundson  
Gary and Ellen Austin  
Orville and Marymar Iverson  
Thalia Massoni  
Mavis Bradshaw

Joyce Sipe  
Emil (Wes) Nyberg  
Willard Nyberg  
Elsie Ford  
Darlene Coffey  
Marlene Janko

**Pamela Sue Tadei**  
Buddy Hoell  
Rae Goforth  
Shirley Tinner

**Jacqueline S. "Jackie" Taylor**  
Shirley Tinner  
Rae Goforth

**Ruth B. Thomson**  
Jean and George Harrison

**James M. Treber**  
Buddy Hoell

**James Russell Welch**  
Susan Anderson Schimpf  
Don and Edith Helligso

**Mary L. Williams**  
Violet Paulson  
Jean O'Bryan  
Wallace and Karen Martens  
Randy and Debby Stemper

**John Mervyn Wilson**  
J. Marlene Taylor

**Zandra "Sandy" Winters**  
Buddy Hoell  
Hugh and Carol Seppa

**Wendell Wyatt**  
John and AdaAnne Wolcott  
Neva T. Campbell  
Fred and Mariel VanNatta  
Amy Powell  
John E. and Serena L. Hart  
Pacific NW Waterways Assoc.  
Carl Mautz  
Ted and Pat Bugas  
Supercargoes & Clerks Union  
Local 40  
Janet A. Gillaspie  
Natalie Cellars  
Jay and Cynthia Nickel  
Bob and Virginia Kearney  
Joe and Laurie Ferguson  
Robert and Kandis Nunn  
Tom and Ramona McDonald  
Frank A. Bauman  
Timothy and Kristen Horgan  
Eileen M. Hanley  
Edith H. Miller

**Thank You!**



## Annual Meeting To Focus on Competition for the Oregon Coast



The Pacific Northwest coast was a hotbed of international competition between 1775 and 1815, when four nations—Spain, Russia, Great Britain, and the United States—sought control of the region. By 1805 it was apparent that the key to regional dominance focused on the mouth of the Columbia River. Most students of American history are familiar with the scientific goals President Jefferson established for the Corps of Discovery, but Jefferson also had his eye on political and economic power as he sought to map the vast territory recently purchased from France.

Mark Eifler, Associate Professor of History at the University of Portland, will discuss the remarkable geopolitical ramifications of the region: the end of Spain's already weak hold on the Pacific Northwest, a frenzy of Russian activity to seize the coast, the further opening of the door for American and British fur traders, and setting the stage for John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company.

Though a relative newcomer to Oregon (he was born in Kentucky) Mr. Eifler's interests in the region are long standing. His research and teaching focuses on the American West and the Pacific Rim. Rather than seeing the Pacific Coast as place where trails from the East ended, he sees it as a meeting and gathering place of many groups—Native, European, American, and Asian—whose paths

wound through many different experiences. His first book, *Gold Rush Capitalists*, examined the rise of Sacramento, California. He is currently working on a book on the geopolitics of the early Pacific Northwest.

This event sponsored by:

  
Windermere  
Pacific Land Company

## Gearhart Homes Tour Returns

The Gearhart Historic Homes Tour is back for 2009 and will take place on Sunday, April 19th from 1pm-4pm. Tickets will be on sale at the Trails End Art Gallery, 656 A St, Gearhart, on the day of the tour. However, tickets can be purchased in advance at the Flavel House Museum Visitor's Center, or by phone 503-325-2203. Admission prices are \$8.00 for CCHS members and \$10.00 for non-members.

This event sponsored by:  
Gearhart  
Builder's Supply

## Mother's Deserve a Break

*"A mother is the truest friend we have, when trials heavy and sudden, fall upon us; when adversity takes the place of prosperity; when friends who rejoice with us in our sunshine desert us; when trouble thickens around us, still will she cling to us, and endeavor by her kind precepts and counsels to dissipate the clouds of darkness, and cause peace to return to our hearts."*

—Washington Irving

On Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, the day before Mother's Day, you will have an opportunity to honor the mothers in your life by treating them to a relaxing cup of tea during the annual Mother's Day Tea & Scones event in the Flavel House Museum.

Tea is served from 1:00 - 4:00 pm. The cost is just \$8 for CCHS members and \$9.00 for non-members and includes a self-guided tour of the house.

## Recent Happenings:



Above, NNB Radio General Manager Paul Mitchell (left) just informs radio personality Tom Freel he is to be auctioned off at the annual Holiday Dinner.



Below: Archivist Liisa Penner provides a tour of the Heritage Museum to students from the Star of the Sea School



**CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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## CCHS Calendar of Events

April	☞ April 5	<i>Annual Membership Meeting</i>	12:30 pm—2:30 pm	<i>Heritage Museum</i>
	☞ April 19	<i>Gearhart Homes Tour</i>	1:00 pm—4:00 pm	<i>Trails End Art Gallery, 656 A St, Gearhart</i>
May	☞ May 9	<i>Mother's Day Tea and Scones</i>	1:00 pm—4:00 pm	<i>Flavel House Museum</i>
Exhibits	☞ May 1	<i>The Most Wicked Place on Earth</i>	Daily	<i>Heritage Museum</i>