

# West Klickitat County Historical Society

# Newsletter

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Gorge Heritage Museum 202 East Humboldt, Bingen, WA.

The museum is on Winter season. Tours may be scheduled by calling 509-493-3228 or 509-493-1349 and requesting a visit.

## *Newsletter Staff*

*Editor/Writer – Geneva Meyers*

*Webmaster/Publisher – Jim Farrell*

**\*\*\*A Happy 2010 to All\*\*\***

## *Words From the Editor.....*

### *Dues are Due!*

Members please note, in November, you should have received a dues renewal membership card in the mail for the calendar year of 2010 (January through December). If you have not already paid your dues for the year, please, remember to do so. To those of you who faithfully keep your dues up to date, we thank you. This is truly appreciated. Also, a big thank you to those of you who have graciously made donations to the Gorge Heritage Museum (past & present). It's you who help to make the Museum the *Treasure House* that it is.

## **Treasury of Local History.....**

One might be amazed at the local history that is 'housed' in our little Museum in Bingen. As an example, one of our more active members, Gail Logan, was organizing some documents at the Museum, when she found a series of letters that were written in the late 1800's by a gentleman in White Salmon. Gail wrote a *thumbnail, biographical sketch* on the gentleman and copied some excerpts from these letters. She gave her 'writings' to me to share with our Newsletter readers. The gentleman's name was Albert J. Thompson, a native of Connecticut, who arrived in White Salmon in the late 1870's. He homesteaded on the top of what is now known as Strawberry Mountain. In 1881 he married a school teacher, Ella Eaton, the daughter of a pioneer family in Lake Oswego, Oregon. In 1884 he was elected Justice of the Peace for the White Salmon Precinct. Some time prior to 1903 he sold his property and spent his later years in Lake Oswego. What follows are excerpts from the letters that he wrote to his siblings back east while he was residing in White Salmon.

*"...finally found one piece of 80 acres that suits me and which I think was the best piece of vacant government land within 5 miles of the landing. This was on Tuesday (Christmas Day). Wed. morning at 5:30 I took the boat for Vancouver for I didn't mean to let anyone get ahead of me if I could help it. Got to V about 3 P.M. went straight to the land office and made a Homestead Entry on the N½ of the NW¼ of section 24 in Township 3, Range 10 East...I had to pay 16 dollars at the Land Office and the law requires me to commence my improvements on the land within 6 months from date of entry....."*

*".....Am boarding at my neighbors (John Purser), 2.75 per week for board and washing. I do a day's work now and then for him. I have a beautiful building spot. It is on nearly the highest ground on the place, ground slopes gradually to the NW & E"*

## Treasury of Local History continued...

and rises a little to the south. When I get some of the brush and timber slashed I will have a beautiful prospect.....”

“...One year ago only ¼ (160 acres) of this ‘section’ was ‘taken’ and only one person living upon it. Now all is taken. Four new houses have been put up within the year and now there are 13 persons living on this “square mile”....One man from Troy, New York by the name of Overbaugh, a carpenter. Another man named Cook, has settled here who had been a sea captain and is said to be well off...”

“...The wild animals are getting quite troublesome about here, now, especially in the settlements back from the River. There are not many Indians to hunt them now. A panther has killed a calf for Mr. Warner and I saw bear tracks on the River bottoms the other day 5½ by 8 inches. The Bear are fond of green corn, apples and young porkers and will turn a bee hive topsy turvy in a twinkling. There are three kinds, the big “cinnamon”, brown and black. The first is an ugly customer in a fight, but the others are cowards except when they have cubs along...”

In other letters Mr. Thompson writes about clearing his land, planting a Truck Garden and building his “shanty” and of the Indian Wars. He compared the Annual Meetings back home to the Oregon State Fair in 1878. (“I would rather see an old fashioned Cattle Show than all the agricultural horse trot.”) Western housewifery fared no better. (“They don’t know how to fix up things and not from lack of material.”)

**Trivia below.... One question is a repeat...see how well you can do....**

### Local History – Trivia Quiz

- 1) Name four ‘notable’ creeks, between Trout Lake and the Columbia River that flow directly into the White Salmon River.
- 2) Who was the famous author who is buried in the Lyle Cemetery?
- 3) Who was the love of this author’s life who died at a young age, and whose grave is near his?
- 4) Who was White Salmon’s Justice of the Peace in 1884?
- 5) Who named the White Salmon River?

## Pioneer Park

Lois Baker

As you might have read in the November 19 issue of The Enterprise, SDS Lumber Company has graciously offered to make a major renovation of Pioneer Park located in back of the Harvest Mart in White Salmon.

According to Jason Spadaro, SDS President, this park was never divided into cemetery plots, but served as a graveyard for area pioneers before the White Salmon Cemetery was developed along Snowden Road.

We have records showing the following area pioneers who were buried there. Perhaps there are more.

### In Remembrance

<b>Clarkson</b> , Chas. d – 1902 age 7	<b>Cook</b> , James H d – 1905 age 65	<b>Egan</b> , John d - 1902 age 22
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<b>Groshong</b> , Katie M. d – 1906	<b>Groshong</b> , Lloyd d – 1904 age 10 (son of Katie)
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<b>Hansen</b> , Renert d – 1884 age 34	<b>Hendrix</b> , W. 1835-1908 age 72	<b>Johnson</b> , John d – 1904 age 25
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<b>Lauterbach</b> , Margarethe d – 1899	<b>Lauterbach</b> , Emil 1892-1896 age 4 (son of Rudolph)
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<b>Locke</b> , Amy E. 1837-1902 age 65	<b>Locke</b> , Amy 1841-1905 age 64	<b>McCoy</b> , Wm. H. 1855-1902 age 47
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<b>Palmer</b> , Cornelius J. 1882-1882 age 60	<b>Williams</b> , Emerson 1864-1904 age 39
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<b>Williams</b> , Lydia A. d – 1905 age 13	<b>Ziegler</b> , Monroe A. d -1905 age 1	<b>Ziegler</b> , Harry F d - 1901 age 4 mos.
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### The Pioneer Graveyard

**The Museum is ‘looking’ for missing names of pioneers who are buried here...Please contact the Museum if you have a relative or know of someone who is missing from the list. We hope to know all of these pioneers’ names to recognize and honor their lives with the Pioneer Graveyard renovation.**

An article in The White Salmon Enterprise, October 1922, notes that another pioneer, **William Willets**, who died in 1874, and was buried on a hillside near his home, was given a special Service as his remains were re-interred in the Pioneer Graveyard. I, recently, read a note stating that Bob Overbaugh’s grandmother was buried there in 1890. Does anyone know the lady’s name? ~GM~

## Message from the WKCHS President

This year has gone by so quickly and many things have been accomplished at the Museum.

Active volunteers have devoted more than 5,000 hours in preserving and collecting information about the past. **Henry Balsiger** (Snowden) has continued to scan photo albums of local residents. He travels many miles visiting these people in their homes to record this information. Currently the museum has over 50,000 pictures digitized. **Mary Kapp** (Underwood), a retired librarian, has gone through our complete library collection. She has organized and archived the rare or fragile books, and helped with scanning the covers for addition to the computer database. **Mildred Lykens** (Lyle) has organized the scrapbooks and original property deeds. Having these items available for easy retrieval is such a great resource. Mildred is, also, the person who takes photographs of objects that are donated to the museum so they can be added to the database. **Jan Nelson** (Trout Lake) is serving on the accession committee, helping with the many hours of going through the donations and has been on the Board until recently. **Janet Holen** (White Salmon) has become our research person. She takes a request from the public and lets them know what we have and even provides additional resources that they might pursue to obtain their information. **Barbara Sexton** (Lyle) has set up our books on the museum computer. She is, also, a member of the accessions committee so does lots of data input from the items received and accepted into our collection. It is so wonderful to have the records all located in the same place. **Gail Logan** (White Salmon) has worked extremely hard trying to keep up with the donations and adding information to the computer database. **Geneva Meyers** (Pucker Huddle) is our newsletter editor. Her newsletters speak for themselves, always fresh and interesting. **Jim Farrell** (White Salmon) is our webmaster and also gets the newsletter formatted with pictures and out on the internet for Geneva.

**Jim Tindall** (Husum) is writing articles for the newsletter about citizens from our area. **Abigail Corson** (Bingen) is busy during the growing season tending to the garden and making sure it is watered. We always receive many comments about the great job she does for us. **Jeff Elmer** (Portland, OR) continues to do research and make corrections and additions to our timeline. He has completed scanning all the Ruralite Magazines that we have in our collection, which is about 95% of all that were printed. Jeff has now taken on revising the "Citizens of the Century" booklet. This was an original book published about 20 years ago. The revised version will include pictures of each of the individuals. **Sally M. Stillman** (Underwood) has become a member this past year and has taken on the task of Fund Development. This includes grants and all areas of raising funds for our museum. This is a huge task; and her enthusiasm and willingness, to use her past associations with other museums, is so appreciated. **Betty Schmid** (Trout Lake) has stepped up to serve on the Board this next year and help coordinate the Women's Suffrage quilt project. **Catherine Levi** (Portland, OR.) did a demonstration on spinning yarn on Museum Day. What a treat to see this unique art. **Betty Berry** (Bingen) made cookies for Museum Day. **Kathy Portner Wilkes** (Rosalia, WA.) is working on a history project - Remember the Kidas: Kay, Kenjiro and George. You don't have to be local to work on something for the Museum. **Linnie Talman** (Snowden) has spent many hours working to make new signs for the gallery. The larger font is so much more easy to read. **Oren Johnson** (Lyle) has designed the new entryway display to say to the visitor, "Welcome, come see all the treasures we have inside for you to enjoy."

Volunteers are always needed. We still have 4 computer terminals and can use more people helping to input data into the system. We schedule this on the basement calendar, so that I can work with you and answer your questions when they come up. Most of the items and pictures collected in the past two years are now in the computer system, but we

have about 20 years of data to still input. It's so interesting to see what people put in their diaries or what they felt was important to record. The early years don't have as many items so I am striving to complete this by the end of April 2010. To see a person's face light up when they see pictures of their grandparents or pictures of the items they have donated is priceless. You then realize they have a special place in their hearts for the Museum and all the work it has taken to achieve this extensive database.

Tell us what you like to do. We have other areas such as restoration of items donated, the building maintenance, lawn mowing, snow shoveling, cleaning of the building, preparing cookies for special events, helping out at a special event, such as Museum Day, when we need a ready volunteer.

As this year came to a close the Museum was broken into and vandalized - over the Thanksgiving weekend. The projector that was a gift from the Mary Hoyt Stevenson Foundation was taken. This is how we projected our pictures onto the wall for the guests to see when they were visiting the Museum. Our Museum only carries liability insurance so it will be necessary to raise funds to replace this as well as the two doors that were 'kicked in'. The person or persons took the time to disconnect the projector instead of cutting the cables. Unfortunately the projector won't work without the software and some other computer parts that are necessary to activate it. We hope to have this replaced by the time we open in May.

In the coming year our goal is to purchase the building we are currently leasing from the City of Bingen. This building is nearly 100 years old and will have some challenges to bring it up to today's codes but we are committed to preserve it and have it placed on the historic registry. Early pictures of the town of Bingen always show this building as a focal point when few other buildings are in the picture. With this building comes the 100 X 100 lot. Through the generous donations of local residents our collection has grown to the extent

that additional display areas and storage space are needed. This will give us the needed space for a carriage house, for the larger farm implements that we have and a place for the Wilhelm Suksdorf house.

Myrtle Overbaugh 'gifted' her home to the Museum. This home was sold and the proceeds placed in an endowment. To that sum we have added additional gifts. We would like to complete the transaction before we open for the season in May 2010. As a 501c(3) we can purchase this property directly from the city, as long as we pay "fair market value", which at this time we believe would be the best price. Once it's owned by the Society, we can rent out the basement meeting room on occasions, which will help meet our monthly expenses. We need \$70,000 more to reach our goal.

The annual plant sale will be held again this year. May 8, the day before Mothers' Day. If you have some extra pots or deck planters that you don't need and would like to donate, please call the Museum. We could use them for our sale. Also, if you have some extra plants this spring, that you'd like to donate...we would appreciate it. Maybe plant your extra plants into your extra pots..... Our goal is to raise at least \$2,500 this year.

National Museum Day will be the last Saturday in September . Geneva Meyers and Barbara Sexton are the co-chairs for that day. Expect to hear from them soon about the activities of that day.

It's been an honor to serve as your President this past year. I see many good things happening in the future for our Society and the Gorge Heritage Museum.

~ Etta Hepner ~

**The following people have so generously donated to our building purchase fund for the calendar year 2009.**

Jerry & Lois Baker  
June Buma  
Stuart Chapin  
Abigail Corson  
Linda Doherty  
Jim & Judy Farrell  
OJ Hecomovich  
Dorothy Henkle  
Etta Hepner  
Roger & Janet Holen  
Frances Johnson  
Howard & Nancy Kinzey  
Edith Lange  
Gail Logan  
Mildred Lykens  
Mary & Jack Kapp  
Geneva Meyers  
Barbara Sexton  
Elaine Spencer  
Sally & Michael Stillman  
Rees & Eloise Stevenson  
Marilyn Winebarger  
Shaul & Catherine Levi  
Sean & Kathryn Tackley

*Thanks to all of you for helping us to have a permanent 'home' for our Museum. It is not too late to contribute to our building fund.*

**These are the current members of the Gorge Heritage Museum. If your name is not on this list we invite you to pay your dues and become one of us. Members receive free admission to the museum and children 15 and under may accompany them for free. In addition you receive our quarterly newsletter for 2010.**

Jerry & Lois Baker  
Henry Balsiger & Linnie Talman  
Roy & Betty Barnes  
Ken & Cindy Barstow  
Troy Bryan  
Wayne Carlock  
Stuart Chapin  
Doug & Brenda Charters  
Jan Clark – Mountain Logging Inc.  
Abigail Corson  
Bud & Jean Cuffell  
Robert & Elsie Dickey  
Linda Doherty  
Jeff Elmer  
Bev & Bernard Elsner  
Jim Farrell  
Judy Farrell  
Mary Ann Fritchey  
Robert Glovka  
OJ Hecomovich  
Charles & Della Henderson  
Dorothy Henkle

Etta Hepner  
Paul Hertz / James Rauchman  
Jessica Hoff  
Roger & Janet Holen  
Lorie & Roger Hull  
Frances Johnson  
Jack & Mary Kapp  
Howard & Nancy Kinzey  
Gayle Krenz  
Shaul & Catherine Levi  
Gail Logan  
William & Joyce Luebke  
Mildred Lykens  
Bill Manley, Jr.  
Mike & Priscella McMillen  
Geneva Meyers  
Rick Mindt  
Jan Nelson  
Gini & Andy Nichols  
Donald & Mary (Glovka) Ohnemus  
James Patrick  
Larry Price  
Jim Randall  
Don & Carol Schaak  
Elizabeth Schmid  
SDS Lumber Co  
Barbara Sexton  
Elaine Spencer  
Rees & Eloise Stevenson  
Wally & Priscilla Stevenson  
Sally & Michael Stillman  
Sean & Kathryn Tackley  
Cam Thomas  
Darlene Thompson  
Jim & Pam Tindall  
Ann Ward  
Jim & Helen Webb  
Bill Whidden  
Marilyn Winebarger  
Helen Woodings

**Have you ever wondered what you could do to help the Museum? The Museum just happens to have a WISH LIST of things it needs (big & not so big).**

- Office Supplies:  
Scanner w/large, flat screen  
Computer Paper – Multiuse (96 bright, 20lb)  
Computer Paper – Multiuse (96 bright – 28lb)
- Archive Items:  
Acid Free Tissue Paper & Storage Boxes
- Paper Products & Cleaners – Toilet Tissue, Paper Towels, Glass Cleaner (Windex or other)
- Help with Purchase of the Suksdorf home and/or of the Museum Building and Lot
- Pay a monthly Utility Bill  
Electricity  
Natural Gas  
DSL (computer service)

## HISTORICAL VIGNETTE

Sally M. Stillman

This is the first of a series of vignettes based on archival materials and pictures in the collection of the Gorge Heritage Museum. Beginning in 2010, each issue of the GHM Newsletter will include a similar historical vignette featuring early immigrants and inhabitants of this vibrant geographical region.



We begin with this picture of the 110 year old Indian squaw identified in some references as Se-cho-wa and in other references as Pe-Tow-Ya or Le-Tow-Ya. She is the daughter of a Walla Walla Chief. It should be noted that the Walla Walla, the Cayuse and the Umatilla are river peoples, and extended family relationships as well as social and economic interests existed between many members of these three tribes. As this diversity suggests the Native Americans on the Columbia Plateau were multi-lingual.

## Historical Vignette continued....

Seated in front of the 'longhouse' (a unique structure of her tribe) on the Umatilla Reservation in the fall of 1900, the elderly Indian woman is being interviewed by the author, Eva Lucinda Emory Dye. Historical records indicate she was recounting her meeting with Lewis and Clark in 1806, when she was a child. In that year Lewis and Clark were returning along the Columbia River from their sojourn on the Pacific Coast. It should be noted that she was the last of the old tribe to speak the Cayuse language. This limpid language was formerly one of the most widely spoken of any of the Indian languages in the Northwest.

According to many records, Lewis and Clark were welcomed warmly by the elderly Indian woman's father, Chief Yellepit (whose name is also spelled Yelleppit and Yellepitt). It is well documented that the Chief and Lewis and Clark exchanged many gifts, including "a very elegant white horse" for Clark and a sword and Peace Medal engraved with a portrait of Thomas Jefferson for the Chief.

Some have thought that the large cornhusk storage bag leaning against the 'tule' mat-covered lodge or teepee was made by this elderly woman in an earlier time. This loose warp technique that is characteristic of Columbia River Basketry is an art form that reached great heights of expression in the Columbia River region. Although baskets served primarily functional purposes, they were constructed with great care and decorated with sophisticated designs. The design of this storage bag indicates Cayuse or Walla Walla origins.

Eva Lucinda Emory Dye (1855-1947) was an American writer, historian, and prominent member of the Women's Suffrage movement. A graduate of Oberlin College and author of several historical novels, fictional yet thoroughly researched. She is credited with "romanticizing" the West. Her best know work, "Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark" (1902), is notable for being the first to present their guide, Sacajawea as a historically significant character in her own right.

This photograph was taken by Major Lee Moorhouse – a photographer, miner, surveyor, rancher, businessman, civic leader, Umatilla Indian Agent, real estate operator, insurance salesman, and Assistant Adjunct General of the Oregon State Militia. He was well known for his photography that documented Native American lives in the Columbia Basin. And he preferred that his subjects wear or pose with his own extensive artifact collection in an effort to document the Indian culture of the past rather than provide their present and very trying experiences of the times.

Walla Walla means "many rivers". This accords with our understanding that Se-cho-wa derived from the Native Americans who inhabited the Columbia Plateau region of the northwestern United States. Specifically they occupied the territory along the Walla Walla River and along the junction of the Snake and Columbia Rivers in the territory that is now part of northern Oregon and southwestern Washington. The exact locale of this picture is unknown.

Information in this 'Historical Vignette' was drawn from the Gorge Heritage Museum Archives, the Oregon Historical Society, the UC-Berkeley Archives, the Internet and from Mary Schlick – Adjunct Curator, Native American Collection, Maryhill Museum of Art.

### Trivia Quiz Answers

- 1) Trout, Gilmer, Spring, Rattlesnake, Buck, Mill, (you may know others..)
- 2) Fredric Homer Balch
- 3) Genevra Whitcomb
- 4) Albert J. Thompson
- 5) Erastus Joslyn

*We hope to see you at our next meeting on  
Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2010  
at the Gorge Heritage Museum  
1:30 PM*

Unless you've already paid them.....  
Don't forget **YOUR DUES!!!!**  
Thank You

# Gorge Heritage Museum

**Print and mail this form with a check to:**

West Klickitat County Historical Society  
Gorge Heritage Museum  
PO Box 394  
Bingen, WA 98605

## Museum Admission

Sixteen & older	\$5.00
Fifteen & under w/Adult	Free
WKCHS members	Free

## Museum memberships are available as follows:

Individual	\$20
Family	\$35
Supporting	\$100
Life Member	\$1000
Business	\$100

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Gift/Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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