

West Klickitat County Historical Society

Newsletter

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Gorge Heritage Museum 202 East Humbolt, Bingen, WA.

The Open Season for the Museum is from May 9th to October 17th. The Museum hours are from 11:30 AM to 4:30 PM Thurs-Sun. Tours may be scheduled during the off-season or for closed days by calling 509-493-3228 or 509-493-1349 and requesting a visit.

Newsletter Staff:

Editor/Writer – Geneva Meyers
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From the Editor.....

Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear...(of the 40's & 50's.) Recognize the phrase from the Lone Ranger program on **radio**? For other entertainment you had a choice of movies at the local **theaters** (Canyon or Cameo), where you could snack on popcorn, pop and candy for a total of 25 cents.

Drug Stores (Bingen & White Salmon) had 'fountain counters' where you could sit on a stool at the counter and order an ice cream treat or a soda-pop while listening to the juke box playing popular songs of the 'day'.

Remember the **telephones**? They were wooden boxes that hung on the wall (usually in the living room). There was an adjustable mouth-piece in the front and the ear-piece hung

on a metal *bracket* on the left side. The crank-handle was on the right-side to ring for service. One long ring for the operator to contact someone not on your line. If the party was on your line, you rang their number by cranking one crank for a short ring and three or four consecutive cranks for a long ring. All phone-numbers, on your line, rang into your home. You were not *supposed* to answer until it was your ring (eg – 2 shorts and a long or a short and a long and a short, etc.)

The **rural mailbox** was an actual wooden box placed on its side (some were metal barrels placed on a post or hung on a chain). Each rural household provided its own fabric mailbag with the head of the household's name and address printed on it. The mail bag was picked up by the 'mail-stage' (horseless by this time) and returned with mail in it. The bag was used over and over. In the winter the snow plows sent many a mail box flying into the air. The home-owners had to replace their boxes to continue receiving their mail. Lots of threats made to the State snow-plow-drivers in those days, as the home-owners' vented their frustration by exchanging stories of possible ways to *get-even* with the plows. Many of the small **Post Offices** were located in the back of grocery stores.

Milk came in glass bottles with card-board disks for the lids. You could skim the cream off the top, for whipping cream, or shake the bottle to mix the milk and cream for 'whole milk'. Remember the first **margarine** that came in a plastic bag with a small packet of yellow coloring to mix in, for color, by squeezing the bag?

Bicycles had only one speed and that was according to your strength and energy. I could never quite make it up

Cont.

Cont.From the Editor
the Husum Hill – ended up pushing, not too far
past where the road currently goes up to
Husum Hills' Golf Course.

Summer was a time for **swimming** several
times a week, in Rattlesnake Creek, where I
learned how to swim. Many of the Husum kids
gathered there at the *old pump-house*.

Most the homes had **ringer-washing-
machines, wood-burning cook stoves, out-
houses** and many other *conveniences of the
day*. Strange, I suppose, but I feel lucky to have
experienced them all.

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On a sad note, one of our old time locals who
was more than a local celebrity passed away
this year. Pete Graves, whose song "Bummin'
Around" has been sung by many well known
music artists. The first time I heard Pete sing
this song was at The Mt. Adams' Pageant in
1952....which brings up the subject of White
Salmon's Major Production. I was a pioneer
square dancer in the pageant. How many of you
remember this production? Did you or someone
in your family participate? If so, what 'part'
did you or your family-member play? I'd like to hear
from you. Let's see how many have memories
of this huge event. (neve@gorge.net / P.O. Box
2065, White Salmon or (509) 493-1518).

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Unfortunately, we are not able to have the
Home Tour in 2009 as we did not get enough
volunteers to help. We will try again next year.
Think about helping us, please. Let the Museum
know if you're interested in helping. We need
more volunteers!!

THE SEARCH FOR PHONE BOOKS & HIGH SCHOOL ANNUALS by Judy Farrell

The primary mission of the Gorge Heritage Mu-
seum is to document and share the history of
Klickitat and Eastern Skamania Counties. To
accomplish this mission, the Museum is en-
gaged in a continuous search for donations of
historical documents, photos and artifacts from
members of the various communities. Two very
useful historical documents are phone books
and high school annuals or yearbooks. These
publications have photos with names, busi-

nesses, location information, etc. They give us
information on who lived here and what busi-
nesses were here, when they were here, and
where they were located.

Do you have old phone books or school year
books that you are wondering what to do with?
The Museum has a collection of Columbia High
Yearbooks that we would like to complete. The
list below show the years we still need to com-
plete our Columbia High School collection. We
are, also, looking for any yearbooks from Trout
Lake, Glenwood, Lyle, Klickitat, Bingen and Un-
derwood. The Museum's collection of phone
books is complete from 1968 to the present;
and we have 1961, 1964 & 1966. We need all
other years.

If you have any of the yearbooks or phone
books for any of the years that we are missing,
and would like to donate them, please call the
Museum at 509-493-3228 or email the Museum
at ghm@gorge.net

Columbia High Yearbooks needed:

1918 and before
1922-1926
1928-1933
1947-1951
1963-2009

History is always "in the making".

As Editor of this newsletter, I have asked Mu-
seum Members to write a bit about themselves
or about their families. In response to my 'plea',
Mildred Lykens submitted a piece about herself
and Jan Nelson submitted a biography on her
husband, John. Hopefully other members will
follow by 'picking up the pen'. My good and
obliging friend, Henry Balsiger, has submitted
more material, and Judy forwarded me an arti-
cle from Janet Holen. Thanks guys 'n' gals



PLANT SALE
Gorge Heritage Museum Benefit
Saturday, May 9, 2009 at 9:00 AM

As you venture out on these spring days to remove the collections of undetermined old leaves and last year's dead foliage from the plants around your garden, please think of your Museum. Yes, think of us. We are having a plant sale the day before Mother's Day from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM or whenever we run out of plants. The sale will be mostly perennials from home gardens of members and friends of the Museum. Please pot up your extra plants to help us out on this sale.

Some of the items already potted are both white and pink Bleeding Hearts, Foxgloves, yellow Day Lilies, various colors of Columbines, purple Cone Flowers, white Daisies, yellow Irises, various ground-covers, native Violets, Penstemon, both white and pink Peonies, Lamb's Ear, fall Mums, both white and purple Lilacs, various colors of Sweet Williams, Jacob's Ladder, light purple-perennial Geraniums, small Fir Trees, small Cedar Trees, and much much more.

Leslie Jackson of Columbia High School Agriculture Dept./ FFA Advisor and some of her students, kindly volunteered to clean up the flowerbed at the Museum. They divided the perennials and potted about 50% of what was currently in the garden to be used at our plant sale. In addition, they are growing from seed some native plants that I have in my garden.

Perennial plants start at \$5.00 for 1 gallon size and \$8.00 for the 2 gallon size. We will have annual deck-pots, which were grown in the green-house by the students at Columbia High School, for \$10.00 each. All the money raised will be used for our ADA fund to make our Museum accessible to all.

Last year we raised a little over \$680 and this year our goal is \$1000.



If you have any questions call Etta Hepner, Chair of the Plant Sale. (509) 493-2352.

Current Museum Members will have the opportunity to shop at 8:00 AM on the day of the sale. It will be open to the general public at 9:00 AM.

Please support this event to benefit YOUR MUSEUM.

Thank you, Etta

If you haven't remembered to pay your membership dues.... It's not too late!

We'd like to thank all of the Members for their membership and other contributions which help in keeping our local heritage alive for future generations.

**We hope to see you at our next meeting on
Wednesday, April 22, 2009
at the Gorge Heritage Museum
7:00 PM**

GHM's NEW COMPUTER SYSTEM AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU by Jim Farrell

You've probably heard or read in a previous newsletter that the Museum has a new computer system, and said to yourself, "That's nice", and moved on. In other words, the news was "a big ho-hum". However, what does it mean to you, the public? In the past, if you wanted some historical information or photos, it would take a lot of time to locate the information because it was stored in file drawers or boxes. The information wasn't necessarily all in the same place or cross-referenced.

All of that has changed. Now with a few clicks on the computer, at one of our three new public terminals, a whole world of local history becomes available to you. There are now over 35,000 photos in the database. There are family histories and genealogical data. There is historical information on businesses, civic organizations, landmarks and places, as well as Native American history, and much more. Some, about a third of the information, is already cross-referenced. More data is added and/or cross-referenced almost daily.

So what do you have to do to access this abundance of historical data from Western Klickitat County and Eastern Skamania County? Just call the Museum at 509-493-3228 and schedule an appointment. Someone at the Museum will be there to show you how to access the information, and you're off on a journey through time. It's easy and best of all, it's free! This is a great tool for students, families or classes preparing for reunions, or someone just interested in the history of the area.

There is a nominal fee for copies of documents and photos; and some lead-time for printing may be required.

My Husband, John *by Jan Nelson*

John was born to John and Solveig (Trygstad) Nelson in Seattle, Washington, the third of three children. His father was a native of Sweden and

his mother was a native of Norway. When John was four years old, the family moved back to Norway and Sweden.

In 1947 the family returned to America, living on John's Uncle Andrew's dairy farm in Quilcene, WA. John's parents agreed to stay a year on this farm so that Uncle Andrew and his family could go back to Sweden for an extended visit. John began his first grade of school while in Quilcene

When John was in the 5th grade, his family moved to Bingen, WA where they lived in one of the little, blue rental cabins that are no longer in existence; and John attended Bingen Elementary.

John's father transferred from the Quilcene National Fish Hatchery to the Spring Creek Fish Hatchery in Underwood, WA., where the family moved into one of the brand new homes provided by Federal Housing; and John finished his 5th grade of school in White Salmon.

John graduated from Columbia High School, White Salmon, WA. in 1960. He attended the University of Washington in the ROTC program. He finished one year of college and was forced to 'drop out' because married men weren't allowed to be in ROTC in those days.

I was born and raised in the north end of Seattle, the oldest of 5 children. John and I met in the summer of 1961; and we were married six months later.

John attended college for the next eight years to get an Associate's Degree in electrical engineering, while working two jobs and supporting a young family. Both he and I had jobs in the grocery industry, which ironically turned out to be how we made our way to Alaska in 1969. Sight unseen, with two little girls, off we went to Bethel, Alaska, a bush village with population 900, and all of seven miles of bad road.

Ten years and four children later, we returned to the "outside" where we lived in the Seattle area for three years. We finally settled in Trout Lake, WA. We love the country, the weather, and of course being near John's old chums and on familiar stomping grounds doesn't hurt, either.

.FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE VISITS WHITE SALMON.

Please mark this date on your calendar- Tuesday, May 12 at 7:00 pm at the White Salmon Library. Jane McEldowney will present her fascinating portrayal of Florence Nightingale entitled, "Called to Nursing".

This event is co-sponsored by Soroptimist International of Mt. Adams and the White Salmon Library. Watch The Enterprise for more information on this event.

If you have questions, you may contact Janet Holen.

Mildred Lykens' Story

I first moved to Washington state at the age of 7 from Los Angeles, CA. where I was born. I attended schools in Lyle, WA from the 2nd grade through my Freshman year, when my father's work took the family away. I graduated from Grant's Pass High School in 1959. I later married and had three children and many occupations until striking out on my own in 2001. I returned to my 'home town' of Lyle where I remembered being happiest.

In order to survive, I held down many jobs until I reached the magic age of Social Security.

I began writing at the age of 60. After making my life-changing move, I mailed updates of my new life to friends and family left behind. Many of these recipients expressed their desire for more, with one in particular encouraging me to become a writer. This encouraged me to become a newspaper reporter for the Goldendale Sentinel and the White Salmon Enterprise. My next challenge was to write the story about my paternal grandfather and his very young outlaw gang; and the woman who hid the gang from both the law and his pious wife. This two-book series holds documented facts, verbal history and logical fiction, which weaves the tale of "The Tirrell Gang" and "The Lykens Legacy". My research found me criss-crossing the states from Kentucky to Texas to Arizona, locating relatives both dead and alive, previously unknown to me.

My new life freed me to become involved in community service. I immediately volunteered for, and received, a position on the Lyle Community Council, where I hold the position of Secretary. I also belong to Lyle Alumni Reunion, the Horizon Project, Twin Bridges Museum, Sundowners' RV Club, as well as the West Klickitat County Historical Society/Gorge Heritage Museum.

I am strengthening my relationship with God by attending the 100 year old United Methodist Church, a block from my home.

Life is good. God is in charge. I like it that way.
~M.L~

Local History Trivia Quiz

- 1.) What Klickitat County town was once named Rockport or Rockland Flats?
- 2.) What was the previous name for Gifford Pinchot National Forest?
- 3.) What was the name of the first passenger and mail service between White Salmon and Glenwood?
- 4.) What old time, well known family had the cattle brand the 4L?
- 5.) What local man was acknowledged as being the 'Dean of western mountaineers'?
- 6.) Who was the founder of Hunters' Hill north of Husum?
- 7.) Who was the local who attracted "Ripley's Believe It or Not" as combination Black smith and Dentist?
- 8.) Who established The Enterprise newspaper in 1903?
- 9.) What was the first spelling of Klickitat (County)?
- 10.) Who raised the first wheat crop in Klickitat County?

IT'S A SMALL WORLD

by Janet Holen

I first became interested in the history of the area when I discovered that my grandfather, whom I never knew because he died before I was born was somehow connected to White Salmon. Shortly after my husband and I arrived here in 1990, one of my Minnesota cousins sent me a post card she had found amongst our uncle's possessions. It is a Christmas postcard, mailed from White Salmon to my grandfather at his home in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Because of the postmark, December 25, 1915, I assume that the post office was open for business on Christmas Day.

The signature on the postcard is simply "Burdick". I found my grandfather, S.F.S. How, along with a Burdick listed as members of a Quartermaster crew serving in the Philippines in an old history book of the Spanish American War. I called all of the Burdick's listed in the White Salmon phone book at the time I received the card, but none knew of an ancestor who served in the Spanish American War. There are no Burdick's in the phone book today. I was, and still am, awed by the coincidence of my Minnesota grandfather serving in the Philippines and meeting a fellow from White Salmon, a place where his unborn granddaughter would some day live.

HELLO....from the world of Henry Balsiger and Linnie Talman.

During the past four years we have helped at the Henkle Middle School with square dance lessons.

For those of you with families, this is a great activity for the whole family. Square dancing is one of two forms of exercise that help keep us well, both physically and mentally.

This year the square dancing did not develop as well as in the past due to seemed lack of interest. We have only one middle school student who is continuing with lessons. We take her to The Dalles with us so that she is able to enjoy

dancing that one can do all over the world.

Should any one wish to join the square dance community, let us know. At our dances, everyone is welcome to come and join the fun, even though you may not yet dance.

While this may not seem like a Museum activity, when one goes back through photo history, as I do, there are lots of photos of local folks enjoying square dancing. White Salmon, at one time, had one of the largest square dance clubs in the state of Washington.

The following is a list of local people from the square-dance club called The Rhineland Quadrilles, who attended Nationals.

Harley & Frances Johnson
Stan & Edie Larsen
Norman & Verda Bargabus
Spencer & Jenny Garwood
Neil & Lois Johnson
Lee & Marg Kelson
Merle & Doris Reeves & Denise
Blair & Dorothy Shippey
Chuck & Marilyn
Merle & Berneice Biesanz
Frank & Virginia Bayer



Trivia Quiz Answers

- 1) Dallesport
- 2) Columbia National Forest
- 3) Wyers Stage Company
- 4) Lauterbach
- 5) C.E. Rusk
- 6) John Morgan Mordecai-Jones
- 7) Frank Groshong
- 8) Thomas Harlan
- 9) Clickitat
- 10) John W. Burgen

Who Are They?

No. 1



Dorothy Johnetta Mable Doris

Dorothy Johnetta Mable Doris

Do you know who these people are? Where or when the photo was taken? If you do, please contact the Museum and share what you know with us.

No. 2



**Who?
When?
Where?**

No. 3



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 memberships are available as follows

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Membership \$ _____

Gift / Donation \$ _____

Total \$ _____

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P.O. Box 394, 202 East Humboldt St.
Bingen, WA 98605