



# BYGONE TIMES

## Mark Your Calendars!

**March 18  
2 p.m.**

### **Len Otto:**

US Army Corps of Engineers building in Troutdale. The Troutdale City Conference Building, 223 Buxton, Troutdale.

**April 15  
2 p.m.**

Oral History  
Glenn Otto Park in the Sam Cox Building. Sharon Nesbit  
Interviewing a valued community member TBA in April's *Bygone Times*.

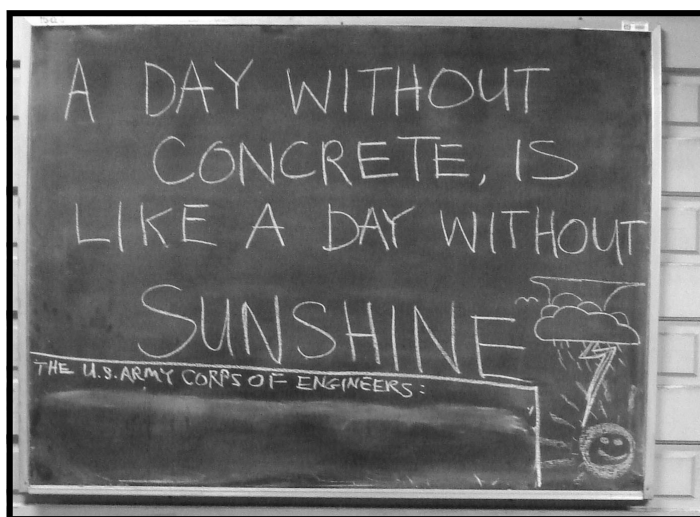
**May 12  
2012 Cemetery  
Tour.**

Group will meet at the Barn Museum. Bus will leave at 9 a.m.  
Destination TBA

## THS March 18 Program: Len Otto presents “The Army Corps of Engineers” Troutdale Lab

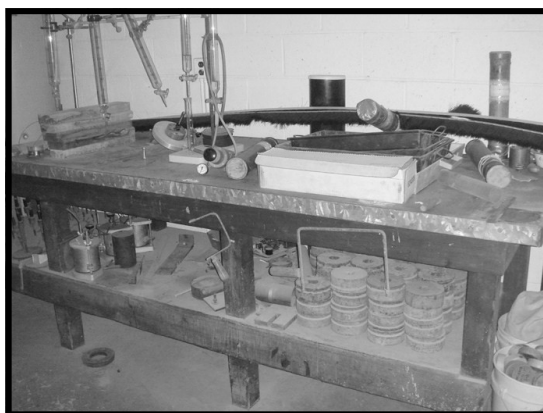
From wartime warehouse to state of the art testing laboratory, the US Army Corps of Engineers Troutdale Lab did it all: chemistry, concrete, soils, and petrography.

The North Pacific Division (NPD) Materials Laboratory, also known as the Troutdale Lab, was built in 1941-1943 as one of the two warehouses constructed by the Defense Plant Corporation in association with the Troutdale Aluminum Plant. The two warehouse buildings were purchased by the North Pacific Division of the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) in 1949 and the east building was remodeled in 1950 and became a division of the Federal dam system in materials testing laboratory for the USACE.



The period of significance is 1949-1954, reflecting its association with and contribution to the post-war expansion of the Federal dam system in the western United States.

Join Len Otto in a photographic tour of this 62,000 square foot historic building on Sunday, March 18, at 2:00 p.m. in The Troutdale City Conference Building, 223 Buxton, Troutdale.



## *Bygone Times*

### **Thank you to renewing members:**

Maxine & Bruce Stannard	Bonnie Harlow Taylor	Joann Otto	Jean Driver
Ray & Nancy Hoover	Wilma Konkell	Leroy & Patti Smith	Jean Torland
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Herbet Nasmyth	Marilyn Morrison	Greg & Sue Handy	Leona Balch
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Dale & Bonnie Handy	Steven & Deborah Yost	Ray & Karen Davenport	

### **Welcome New Members:**

Dale & Karon (Cox) Eggers	Bob Baker
Robert Winkler	Joyce Belcher
Joanna Klick	Marcelline Norman

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Joann Otto

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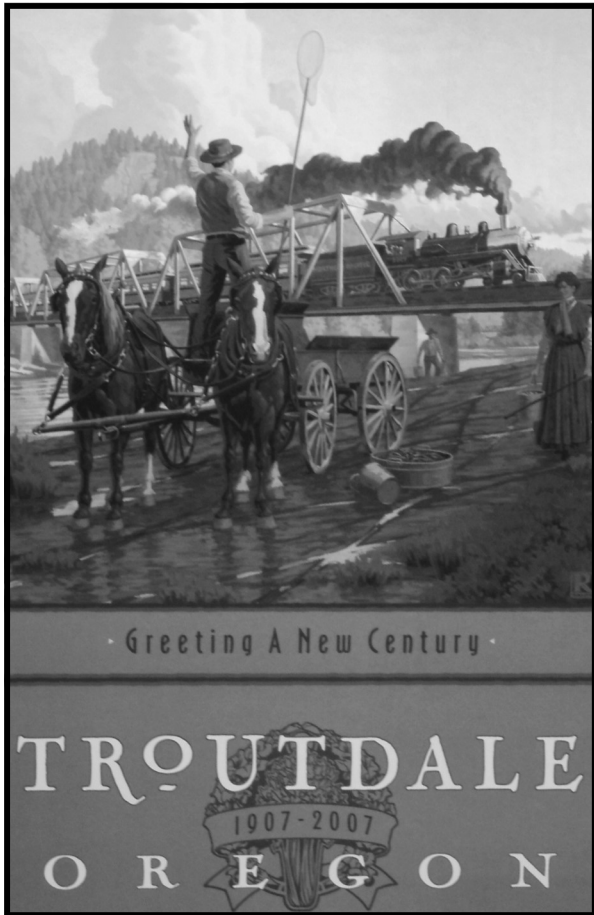
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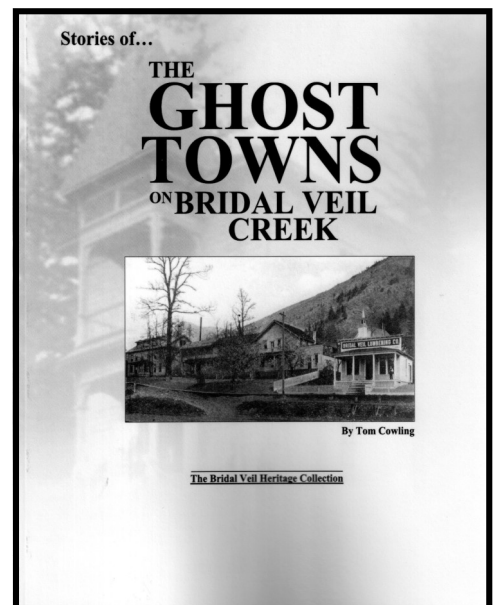
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At long last we  
have copies of  
Tom Cowling's  
newest book, *The  
Ghost Towns on  
Bridal Veil Creek*,  
in the Depot Store.  
The first printing  
of Tom's book sold  
out before we  
could get any of  
them. The price of  
the book is \$25.



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## Memories of ‘Living by the River’

By Jim Glenn

The rental cabins have long ago been removed and the hole where they once stood has been filled in and paved over, creating the parking lot for Glenn Otto Community Park.

Mr. and Mrs. (Elliott and Ruby) Staten owned and operated those low income rental units as well as a filling station at the west end of the Sandy River bridge on the Old Columbia River Highway.

Mr. Staten took to me and Tommy from the first time we met and our friendship lasted long after we moved away from Troutdale. Colorful and perhaps eccentric would be two choices to describe the spry old gentleman who taught us various things in those early years including mumble-peg, a knife game that every boy of that era played. He told us the game required three pieces of equipment. A knife and a pair of shoes. Me and Tommy ran barefoot for the most part in the summer. Guess it was his way of telling us it was best played in winter.

He showed how to select the best firewood on our trips up to the Larch Mountain area to get firewood for his rental units. It was on one of those trips that he taught us the Tarzan holler that would have made Johnny Weissmuller envious, and Tommy would answer with a similar holler of his own. They had established a communication system of their own.

One thing we remember about Mrs. Staten is the fantastic home made popcorn balls she would hand out at Halloween. We would eat them before



we got more than a few steps away from the front door of that old filling station and when we went back for a second visit, she would give us caramel apples.

**“That old guard rooster never attacked our Mom and we had a theory about that.”**

Before it was Glenn Otto Community Park, the land was occupied as a campground by Advent Christian Church for their annual summer retreats. My folks rented a house towards the south boundary of the campground where we lived for a few years as America transitioned from the

war years and into the prosperity of the 1950s and beyond.

There was a long driveway coming off the old highway and as Tommy and I started walking that late autumn day recently with the sun shining and a slight hint of the east wind, we stepped back in time to the years when two little tow-heads roamed freely throughout the campground. Past the tabernacle on our left, now called the Sam K. Cox Building was a large fish pond that had several gold fish and a large rock garden surrounding most of the pond. That rock garden was a favorite destination during “hide and seek” games.

A few feet farther on our right was a rental house where my very first best friend lived. Just past this house was a pumice block building that some say was built by the 80-year-old caretaker of the campground, Mr. Cass, all by himself. But I know better. When I’d come home from kindergarten, he would be working on the building and I would stop to help him. I couldn’t do much, but I sure tried and when he tired of me getting un-

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## Bygone Times

derfoot, he'd hand me a trowel and tell me to go play with it and not to hurt myself.

And past that building was an old wooden water tower that was eventually torn down and subsequently carted off, but not before one of Tommy's bare feet found a rusty nail in the rubble that resulted in a quick trip to Doc (Corrine) Chamberlain's office in Gresham.

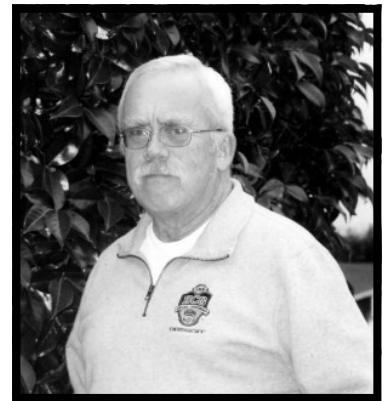
Past the water tower was a rest room with indoor plumbing for the annual retreaters and next to it was a chicken coop right next to the bank overlooking Beaver Creek. Next came the yard with the chopping block and piles of firewood near the back steps of the house. In certain trees back there near the south end of the park, we located old disconnected electric wires and ceramic electric insulators from a bygone grid that provided electricity to the different buildings throughout the campground that have all been removed by floods, storms and progress.

With a chicken coop, there had

to be chickens and we had a few, including a big red rooster that one day showed up for work in deranged state of mind. He became a self-appointed guard rooster and no one entered the yard without his personal approval. Tommy was born fearless and his favorite tactic for getting past the rooster was to simply run straight at it while bellowing that crazed Tarzan noise. The berserk fowl, startled at first, would get out of his way, then light out after him in hot pursuit, with flapping wings and a red feathered crown standing tall on its head. With the extra speed the wings provided, the chicken pretty much lost its maneuverability. So just as Tommy was about to be overtaken, he'd juke to his left, then right and scamper up the back steps to the safety of the screened back porch. I would follow suit and upon reaching the porch, there was Tommy catching his breath with an ear to ear grin and waiting for Mr. Staten's return whoop.

That guard rooster never attacked our Mom and we had a theory for that. We figured the rooster had to know Mom was the cook and, to avoid being the guest of honor for Sunday dinner, left her alone.

Jim's story will continue next month in the *Bygone Times*.



Jim Glenn

**We would love to have your stories about growing up in Troutdale. Contact Terry at the Depot office, 503-661-2164 or [terry@troutdalehistory.org](mailto:terry@troutdalehistory.org). Everyone has stories to tell!**



This advertisement appeared regularly in the *Beaver State Herald*, an early Gresham newspaper. Found by THS member Ann Kracke while doing research in the OHS archives. Ad circa 1906.

**Happy 95th  
Birthday  
to THS member  
Lois "Arlie" Harris**



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## Troutdale and THS Loses a Friend

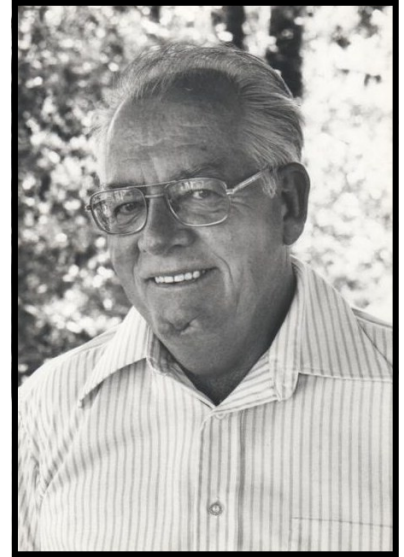
### Vernon Rathman,

Vern Rathman, former mayor of Troutdale and longtime community supporter, died Friday, Feb. 17. He was 84 and a resident of Sandy.

A celebration of his life is scheduled from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 17, at First Baptist Church, 224 W. Powell Blvd., Gresham.

Vern served as mayor of Troutdale from 1960 to 1964 and was involved in several civic organizations, including the Troutdale Lions and the Troutdale Historical Society. He was an excavating contractor and served on the city's first planning commission.

Vernon and his wife, Martine, co-founded the Windy Whirlers Square Dance Club, which first met in members' homes and later moved into Troutdale City Hall. Martine preceded him in death in February of 2010.



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## Beverly Welker Potts

Beverly Welker Potts, 80, died on Feb. 15, 2012.

Beverly, the daughter of Charles and Edna Welker was born Sept. 28, 1931 in Portland. She died in the loving care of the staff of Adams House of Oatfield Estates. She was preceded in death by Robert Potts, her husband of seven years. Beverly attended Franklin High School and Vanport. She received her B.A. from Portland State University, and her Master of Librarianship from The University of Portland. She worked as a long distance operator at Pacific Northwest Bell and taught at Central School in Seaside. When she retired, she was a librarian at William Knight Elementary in Canby. Activities during retirement included cataloging photos for the Troutdale Historical Society, driving for Loaves and Fishes and reading on air for Golden Hours.

## Carol Patricia Erh

Gresham resident Carol Patricia Ehr, 82, died on Feb. 18.

Pat was born Sept. 22, 1929, in Weiser, Idaho. The family moved to Portland at the start of World War II and Pat attended Jefferson High School. During her senior year, the family moved back to their ranch in Eastern Oregon, where she graduated in 1947 from Vale Union High. She attended Eastern Oregon College.

On Feb. 5, 1955, she married Richard Ehr. They resided in the Parkrose area. After raising their children, Pat and Dick moved to Gresham where they resided for the past 25 years. Pat enjoyed helping Dick, an architect, build architectural models as well as much of their furniture.

Pat was an avid swimmer and skier. She was a cook, seamstress, knitter and creator of her own patterns. She also enjoyed reading, jigsaw puzzles and card games, especially bridge. She was involved in Meals On Wheels and the League of Women Voters. Pat was an interviewer for the U.S. Census Bureau for 21 years. She traveled throughout the western states and to China, Russia, Europe, the Panama Canal and other places. Pat volunteered for Troutdale Historical Society for several years reviewing articles for the library.

Survivors include her husband; sons, Milton Nelms of Tasmania, Australia, Stuart Ehr of Sisters and Douglas Ehr of Portland; daughter, Marcia Chisholm of Gresham; sister, Ginny Snodgrass of Portland; six grandchildren; and four step-grandchildren.

Contributions can be made to Medical Teams International, P.O. Box 10, Portland, 97207



## THIS NEEDS YOU!

Can you volunteer at one of our museums for a Saturday? or for a special tour? Take photos at an event? **HELP** on the newsletter? Dust? Scrapbook? **HELP** with fundraisers? Do you know or work for a company who would donate goods or services?...Call the office to volunteer. The smallest task helps a lot!

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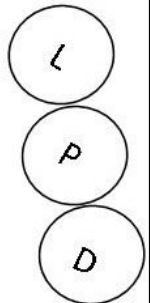
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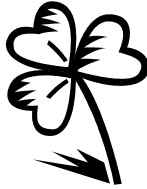


**Troutdale Historical Society**  
104 SE Kibling St.  
Troutdale, OR 97060  
www.troutdalehistory.org  
503-661-2164

**Mission Statement:** To gather, preserve and make available material relating to the history of the community of Troutdale, the Sandy River, the Columbia River Gorge and nearby area: To stimulate interest in and knowledge of, the locality's past.

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