

Bygone Times

Newsletter of the

Troutdale Historical Society

January 2008

Please Mark Your Calendars

Jan 20

Clarence Mershon discusses the second half of his book "The Columbia River Gorge Highway, From the Sea to The Wheat Fields of Eastern Oregon."

Troutdale City Hall 2 p.m.

Feb 1

**First Friday at the Depot.
Wine tasting, Artist & More
5-9 p.m.**

Feb 17

Annual Membership Meeting
2 p.m. at **Sam Cox Building in
Glenn Otto Park.**

Member of the Year announced
and 40th Birthday Celebration
for Troutdale Historical Society.

We need your help!

We have been getting a large amount of emails bounced back to us. If you have changed your email address in the past few months, please call us with your new one or send an email to info@troutdalehistory.org so we can update our files. If you are not receiving our newsletter by email and would prefer it, let us know that also. Thanks!

Troutdale Historical Society Turns 40

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Truly Wright*

Centennial Celebration post cards are still available at the Depot. Stamp cancellations and the official poster are available at City Hall. All money goes towards the arch. These items would make wonderful gifts to anyone no longer living in the area to keep them connected to their Troutdale roots.

In the event of icy or snowy conditions, our meetings will be automatically cancelled. We will do our best to post a message on the answering machine, 503-661-2164 or you can call Terry at 503-810-0386.

2 From the Director's Chair

by Terry Huston

I hope everyone has survived the holidays and is ready for a happy and prosperous 2008. Who would have guessed we would have made it to this point when only eight short years ago, the world was supposed to come to an end. (A dear friend of mine spent the better part of a week dumping out all the jugs of water she had hoarded just to be able to flush her toilet in the event that the world went amuck at the new millennium. I kept telling her that her toilet would be the least of her worries).

I can not move into the New Year without mention of our losses of last year. We lost Peg Parsons, James Boman, Evelyn Lewis, Albert Mauck, Rhea Austin, Lorraine Wright Scott, Walter Nasmyth, Marge Schmunk, Gladys Norment, Margaret Stoeckel, Kaz Fujii and Ike Handy. So many of the people I remember growing up.

There were Parson kids, Boman kids, Mauck kids, Norment kids, Fujii

kids and Handy kids that I grew up with and they all felt like family. They will be truly missed by all who knew them and the community which was a better place to live because of them.

This year will see some new events at THS and I hope everyone will support them by attending.

We are going to bring First Friday back to the Depot starting on February 1st with wine tasting, of local wines from Stalena Simon of Corbett and artist Sarah Lowe will be here painting. Sarah has many wonderful cards on sale here in the Depot Store. There may also be music, but I could not confirm that by press time.

Future programs will include music, a blacksmith, retired railroad employees to talk about working on the railroad in years passed and much, much more.

A jury for the *End of the Line Store* at the Depot will start meeting in February and judge merchandise and art

work from local vendors to be featured in the store starting this Spring. Please stop by and support our local artists.

March 22 will be a reunion of sorts, of anyone who went to Troutdale. I feel we lost some people this year due to the change of place and date with the Centennial Celebration. It will be at the barn Museum from 5- ?? p.m. If you have phone numbers, addresses or emails of classmates, please pass them onto me so I can add them to the list.

There will be a second Museum Round Robin on April 12. The first one was such a success that we already have 20 people signed up who saw us on the last tour.

I will let you know as soon as a list of museums for the tour has been decided.



Stan Rathman was the lucky winner of the raffle at the November Meeting. The prize was a custom made birdhouse. Congratulations! Stan...

Volunteer Opportunities

1. Museum Host
2. Grant Writer
3. Museum Host
4. Office Help
5. Museum Host
6. Scrap booking
7. Museum Host

Please call Adrienne Clausen at 503-665-5288 to Volunteer

Upcoming Events

March 7

First Friday at the Depot

March 16

1940's Radio Show by Dennis Crowe. Come enjoy a radio show from the past before we had television. City Hall. 2-4 p.m.

March 22

Troutdale Reunion ~
at the Barn Museum
More info in February Newsletter

April 12

Round Robin Museum Tour
Museums yet to be decided

April 20

Oral History
Sharon Nesbit will interview
Elsie Simmitt

May 3

Tea & Tour at Troutdale House
next to the Depot

May ?

Cemetery Tour
Fort Vancouver & Beyond

Lifelong Troutdale Farmer and World War II Veteran Kazuo Fujii Dies ³



Kaz Fujii was well-known in East County, where the family name appeared on many fruit, vegetable and berry farms in the area. Kaz was also one of

the first draftees from East County during World War II, serving four years with the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an Asian-American unit composed mostly of Japanese Americans who fought in the European theater.

Kaz was born Oct. 9, 1919, in Troutdale, the second of eight children, to Bukichi and Yoshino (Yamakado) Fujii, both Japanese immigrants. Kaz attended Troutdale Grade School. He graduated from Gresham High School in 1937.

The family worked on the 49-acre farm on Cherry Park Road, where they raised cauliflower, cabbage, broccoli, brussels sprouts and berries; including blackberries, raspberries, boysenberries, loganberries and strawberries.

After Kaz was drafted into the Army, the family faced many challenges during the war and life on the Fujii farm changed forever on May 7, 1942. Several months after the Pearl Harbor bombing, the Fujii family, along with other Japanese-American families in East County, received orders to leave their farms and report to the Pacific Livestock Exposition Center in North Portland by May 12, as part of the infamous wartime Japanese internment.

Kaz himself did not go to the camp because he had already been inducted into the armed forces in June 1941. He attended training in Fort Warren, Wyo., and San Antonio and was stationed at posts in Texas, Georgia and Mississippi before being assigned to the 232nd Combat

Engineer Company, within the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Less than a month after arriving in Italy, Kaz was injured when the munitions truck he was driving hit a land mine, throwing him into the air. Though he had a concussion and experienced tinnitus for the rest of his life, Kaz did not seek medical attention immediately. Many believe he would have (and should have) received the Purple Heart had he sought medical attention.

Kaz continued to serve his tour through Italy and France, where he bore witness to a number of gruesome battles during the war, scenes friends and family say never truly left his memory.

By the war's conclusion, Kaz had earned four battle stars and about one-half of Kaz's squadron had been killed in action or severely injured. Kaz had a difficult time dealing with the fact that he made it home, and many of his friends did not.

The government allowed the Fujii family to return to the Troutdale farm in February 1945, and Kaz followed suit after his discharge in November 1945. At the conclusion of a long bus ride to Troutdale and a hike up the hill to his family's home, he told his mother, "I made it."

On Nov. 6, 1955, Kaz married May Nakata in Portland. May was born in Oregon, but spent the war years in Japan. Together the couple had two children, Tim and Karen.

Kaz continued to farm the land and in its glory days, Fujii farms encompassed multiple locations, totaling more than 450 acres of fruits, berries and vegetables.

"Kaz was a very hard-working fella," said Scott Cunningham, whose parents, Andrew and Charlotte Cunningham, tended the Fujii farm at Bukichi's request while the Fujii family was interned.

"He was a farmer, that's what he knew and that's what he did. He really loved that part of his life,"

Cunningham said.

In his later years, Kaz was an avid Trail Blazers fan and held season tickets for many years. He also loved to play golf and was a longtime member of the Oregon Nissei Golf Club. He played at courses all over the area, though he practiced most frequently at the Gresham Golf Course. Kaz was proud of holding perfect attendance with the club and for receiving Golfer of the Year. He at one time even shot a hole-in-one.

Kaz also cared for his wife for more than a decade, as her condition declined due to Alzheimer's, and she was moved from their home to the Glisan Care Center in Portland. He never missed a day to care and feed her and he would plan his whole schedule around her. Kaz was preceded in death by his wife April 15, 2001.

Kaz was an active member of the Oregon Buddhist Temple in Southeast Portland. He also took an active role in raising thousands of dollars for World War II Memorials in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, both of which he had the opportunity to visit with family.

Even after retiring from the day-to-day Fujii farm business, Kaz maintained a large garden in his backyard, and was out there every spring, even though the family would tell him not to.

Kaz's favorite fruit was strawberries and the night he passed away, his last meal was strawberries and ice cream. Twenty minutes later, he was gone.

A memorial service was held on Nov. 12, at the Oregon Buddhist Temple in Portland.

Survivors include his son, Timothy Fujii of Troutdale; daughter, Karen Fujii-Lindberg of Troutdale; brothers, Jim Fujii of Troutdale, Tom Fujii of Hillsboro, Toshi Fujii of Sun Valley, Nev., and Ed Fujii of Gresham; and sister, Kimi Yamada of Newberg.

4 Troutdale Icon Ike Handy is Gone But Will Never Be Forgotten



Longtime Troutdale resident Ike Handy passed away in November at the age of 90. He and his wife June had just celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in September with a big celebration at their home.

Ike, along with mechanic Dick Anderson, kept farm equipment, school buses, automobiles and the occasional bicycle all in tip top shape. And lived up to their motto, "Let Ike & Dick Make It Tick".

Ike was born to William & Grace (Gould) Handy on October 9, 1917 in Mound City, Mo. After coming West, Ike graduated from Lynch Grade School and went to work for the McGill's Nursery in Fairview.

On September 11, 1937 he married Lenora (June) Myers. Later that same month he was escort for the national president of the

Nurseryman's Association in a motorcade through the Columbia River Gorge en-route to the dedication of Timberline Lodge by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Ike went to work at the aluminum plant in Troutdale and while working at the plant, he and his brother Glen bought and opened Handy Brothers Service. Ike and June lived in and operated the station. Glen went into the nursery business after World War II.

In later years the station, also referred to as Troutdale's Country Club, was known for its bull sessions, grease gun fights and the coffee pot was always on. The "employees" at the station multiplied over the years as the "boys" grew up and starting working at the station.

Ike was a charter member of the Troutdale Lions Club, a 50-year member of the Masonic Lodge and at one time served on the Troutdale City Council and the Reynolds School Board. He supported the

Devers Eye Clinic and Boy Scout Troop 174.

He played the guitar and the piano and was famous for his storytelling. Ike loved hunting, fly fishing, bowling, square dancing and pitched on a fast pitch softball team. Family vacations were spent camping and traveling around the West. After retirement Ike and June traveled abroad and made many trips in their trailer.

Ike is survived by his wife June of Troutdale, sons Dale of White Bear Lake, Mn., Gene of Corbett, Neil of Portland and Greg of Troutdale. Also, a sister, Martha Kirby, six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Remembrances may be made to any of the following organizations, the Troutdale Lions Club, Devers Eye Institute, Troutdale Masonic Lodge, Troutdale Historical Society, Cherry Park Presbyterian Church, National Wildlife Foundation and Mount Hood Hospice.

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Thank-you

To Sharon Nesbit & Dave Ripma for their yearly donation of trustee fees from the Strebin Charitable Remainder Trust in honor of Vera Strebin.

Gladys Maude Norment

Longtime Gresham resident Gladys Maude Norment died on October 22, 2007.

The family held a memorial in November.

Gladys was born July 5, 1918, in Lincoln County N.C., to Henry and Maude (Hollingsworth) Ballard of Stanley, N.C. She graduated from Stanley High School in 1941.

On Sept. 23, 1945, she married Walter Norment. Walter was in the

Civil Air Patrol during WWII, and his friends invited the newlyweds to move to Troutdale to work at Troutdale Skyways. They moved during their first month of marriage to Troutdale, where Gladys became a homemaker and raised their two children.

Walter was mayor of Troutdale from 1955 to 1960. He died of a heart attack while hunting. He was the only Troutdale mayor to die in office.

In the 1980'S, Gladys was a part-time relief driver for Head Start. She also did some airport security work. After retirement and with her children all grown, she became a volunteer with Friends of Vista House.

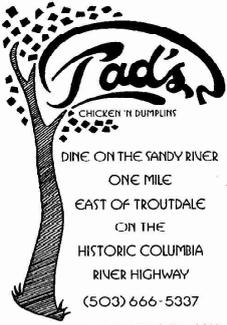
Survivors include her sister, Jean McCorkle of Paw Creek, N.C.; son, Walter Norment, Jr. of Newport News, Va.; daughter, Iris Norment of Troutdale; five grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

A Special Thank You

To the Tuesday Ladies and the "Santa's" (yes we had more than one) that made this year's Open House at the Harlow House such a wonderful event!

The Tiller Hotel

Do you have an old memory or funny story about the Tiller Hotel or any of the Cafe's that have been there in the past. Please call or email them to the office for an upcoming article about the old Hotel.



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 Phone 503-661-2164
 www.troutdalehistory.org

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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Troutdale, OR

Permit No. 5

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