

The

ARCHIVE

QUARTERLY OF THE GRESHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

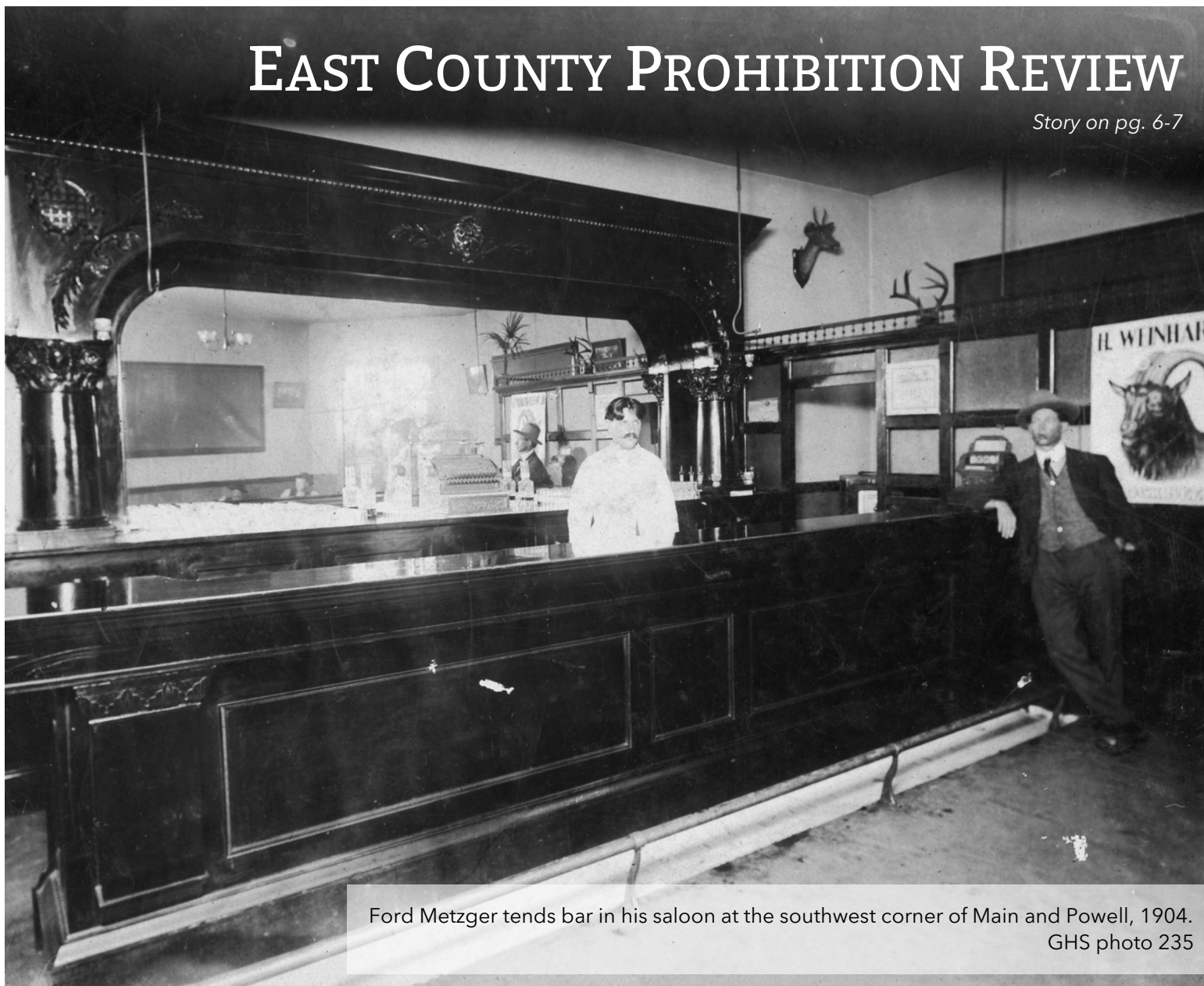
SPRING 2023



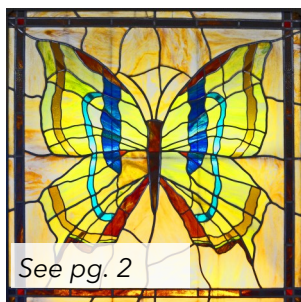
410 N Main Ave ♦ Gresham, OR 97030 ♦ PO Box 65 ♦ (503)661-0347 ♦ info@greshamhistorical.org

EAST COUNTY PROHIBITION REVIEW

Story on pg. 6-7



Ford Metzger tends bar in his saloon at the southwest corner of Main and Powell, 1904.
GHS photo 235



See pg. 2

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AT THE MUSEUM

UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 14** - Speakeasy Fundraiser (see next page for details)
April 16 - Historic Cemeteries Tour, 12-1pm (see next page for details)
May 6 - Plant Sale Fundraiser, all day at the Gresham Historical Society
May 13 - Historic Cemeteries Tour, 12-1pm (see next page for details)
May 13 - Gresham Stories, 1-2:30pm at Maggie Mae's Kids Bookshop
May 20-21 - "Berry Jamboree" story sharing event during open hours at Gresham Historical Society (see p. 10 for details)
June 17 - Historic Cemeteries Tour, 12-1pm (see next page for details)
July 16 - Tie Dye Fundraiser, all day at the museum



NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Digitization Project

We are excited to announce that the Oregon Heritage Commission has selected the Gresham Historical Society to head an archives digitization pilot project! Starting in April, we will be scanning and photographing key items in the collection, adding needed information to their database records, and documenting the process so that other museums will be able to replicate the work with their own collections. The end result is that parts of our collection will be available on the Northwest Digital Heritage online repository within one year!

OHC is generously funding this project through the end of June.

Digitization is time-consuming and costly, so OHC is generously funding this project through the end of June. The majority of the funds will go towards paying longtime GHS volunteer Helen Ryan to head this project. OHC will also create a site in their online database where we can upload digitized objects, thereby saving us the expense of online hosting. Stay tuned for updates as this project progresses!

New Membership Model

Effective this year, all membership dues will be tax-deductible. When you join or renew, you will receive an acknowledgement letter that recognizes your payment as a donation. We are also bringing back membership cards, thanks to new volunteer Marilou Bohmann who has graciously offered her services and expertise for member mailings. Thank you, Marilou!

In addition, a donation in any amount over \$20 will make you eligible for a complimentary annual membership. This is our way of saying "thank you" to our donors for their generosity and of keeping them informed about all the ways their gifts make a difference.

Butterfly Social

March Third Thursday was a special day for us, as it was the day that we dedicated the 7-foot sign that once adorned the Glass Butterfly. For fifty years an anchor point of Downtown Gresham, this beloved women's clothing store closed in 2021, leaving behind a legacy of community and friendship. While we mourn the Glass Butterfly along with others in Gresham, we are honored to be able to preserve this piece of its legacy.

Former mayor Shane Bemis was among the crowd of 80 people who joined us on March 16 to dedicate the butterfly. The Bemis family generously funded the moving, framing, and lighting of the butterfly, as well as its installation in our gallery. Cathy Van Zyl, daughter of store founders Don and Geri Van Zyl, recounted the history of the store and shared a display of family photos documenting its early history. Cathy made a \$500 contribution towards installing a historic lamppost, also from the Glass Butterfly, in our parking lot. The lamppost, formerly used at the defunct Hill Military Academy on Rocky Butte, is currently in storage until we raise enough funds to install it.



Former mayor Shane Bemis spoke at the Butterfly Social event on March 16.

AT THE MUSEUM

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The Gresham Historical Society
Presents the First Annual

SPEAK EASY

April 14 • 5:30 pm

Troutdale House
411 E Historic Columbia River Hwy
Troutdale, OR 97060

Join us for Dinner, Drinks, Games
and a Silent and Live Auction

Tickets

Individual: \$90

Couple: \$175

Table of 10: \$800

Includes Plated Dinner and
Signature Cocktails

Contact Sandra Rich at (503) 317-3907
or go to the Gresham Historical Society
Website for Ticket Purchases
greshamhistorical.org

Roaring 20's Attire Optional

FOR TICKETS, VISIT GRESHAMHISTORICAL.ORG/EVENT/SPEAKEASY

CEMETERY TOURS ARE BACK!

History is alive at Historic Downtown Gresham's three historic cemeteries. These places of quiet contemplation are rich in information about our local heritage, if you know where to look. Volunteer tour guide Mike Andrews leads you on a walking tour that is by turns colorful, humorous, and poignant as it explores unexpected stories of the Gresham area.

This one-hour tour covers Gresham Pioneer, Escobar, and White Birch cemeteries, which are all adjacent to each other. Parking is available at West Gresham Grade School or at nearby Main City Park, and the cemeteries are easily accessible to bicyclists arriving from the Springwater Trail. See previous page for upcoming dates and times.

All tours are free and open to the public. No RSVP is required.



AT THE MUSEUM

EXHIBITS ON VIEW AT THE GRESHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAKING TRACKS TO GRESHAM: The Rise and Fall of the Electric Trolley

The interurban trolley from Portland first reached Gresham in 1902, beginning an era of passenger rail travel to and from East Multnomah County and beyond. This photo essay captures sights that were once everyday in East Multnomah County.

LISTEN TO THE BAND: A Centennial High School Marching Band Retrospective

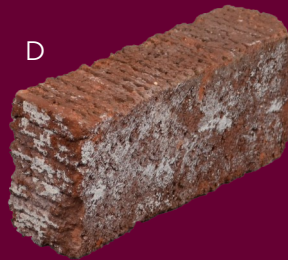
For many years among the premier high school marching programs in the region, the CHS band is gathering this year for an alumni reunion. This exhibit includes photos and memorabilia from all eras of the CHS marching band—including the future!

BEYOND MAIN STREET: The Other Communities of Gresham

You've heard about Orient and Rockwood, but how about Terry, Engleton, Sycamore, and Wilmot? The area that Gresham now encompasses was once made up of many small communities dotted across the countryside. Some remain, and some are lost to time.

EXHIBIT MATCHING GAME

All of the items below are on display in the above exhibits. Can you guess which objects go in which exhibit? *Answers on pg. 10*



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

5

We have been very busy since closing Christmas at the Museum and our second annual Gingerbread Contest. This popular fundraiser is growing every year.

In March, we opened two new exhibits, *Making Tracks to Gresham* and *Listen to the Band*. We hope you'll visit soon to learn something new about the interurban trolley in East Multnomah County and the Centennial High School Marching Band. During our open hours, Wednesday through Sunday, you can also see the seven-foot, leaded glass sign from the front of the Glass Butterfly (more on pg. 2).

On April 14, we are hosting a Speakeasy fundraiser at the Troutdale House (see pg. 3). Come enjoy an evening of food, cocktails, live and silent auctions, cigars, and many other activities. Funds from this event will support work on the historic 1931 Zion Church, which neighbors the museum and features distinctive Gothic Revival architecture and original brickwork. We purchased this building in 2017 in order to save it from possible demolition, and now we hope to restore it for the enjoyment of future generations.

Finally, we look forward to our second annual plant sale, which will take place in the museum parking lot on May 6, the Sunday before Mother's Day. We hope to see you there!



Sue Piazza

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Spring is a busy time at the Gresham Historical Society. Come to think of it, so is summer...and fall. And winter.

This year, in a departure from tradition, the museum stayed open in January and February while we changed exhibits. Visitors (hopefully) enjoyed a glimpse behind the scenes of exhibit production in a small museum, and we enjoyed the chance to meet new people - even though they occasionally brought a chilly draft into the gallery with them.

Spring is a time of year when many people, in the process of cleaning their homes, find belongings that they think might be a good fit for the museum. I wanted to take this opportunity to remind our readers not to leave donations by our back door or in our mail slot! The way we document donations relies on knowing who donated an item and when. Plus, misfortunes such as theft and damage from the elements can befall items left outdoors. If you wish to make a donation, please give me a call at (503) 661-0347. I would love to chat!

In March, we marked one year since being awarded the City of Gresham Community Assistance Grant to fund an ambitious oral history project. Public historian Stephanie Vallance joined us in July 2022 in a part-time position funded by the grant. Since then, she has recorded seven interviews with local residents, including Mayor Travis Stovall, and dramatically improved the records of around 200 oral histories previously existing in the collection. The goal of this project is twofold: to find out what we already have, and to supplement that with new interviews that address gaps in the existing record. We are excited to see how the project progresses in its second year.



Silvie Andrews

EAST COUNTY PROHIBITION REVIEW

By Anne Endicott

The early Rockwood community may have been known for its “famous potatoes,” but from the early 1900s to the mid-1920s, it was also home to a thriving roadhouse and speakeasy business. Most were scattered along what is now Stark Street, from 12-Mile Corner to 162nd Avenue. Along with good food, entertainment, and an occasional meeting with a lady of the evening, the hallmark of a roadhouse was usually chicken dinner and the common knowledge that owners and management turned a blind eye to the consumption of “spirits.”

The most popular roadhouses at the time were the Twelve Mile House (near what is now 223rd and Stark), the Taxi Inn and Birdleg’s Place (also on Stark), the Old Homestead near Rockwood, and Canary Cottage on Foster Road. Although patrons knew which establishments brought moonshine in through the back door or allowed guests to carry their own flasks, the real reason roadhouses were so popular was because they stayed open after 1 a.m., when Portland dance halls closed for the night.

Members of the temperance movement were fully aware of the questionable goings-on at roadhouses. They enlisted the help of the local sheriff to conduct raids and were successful in temporarily shutting down places like the Twelve Mile House and the Old Homestead in March 1918.

In January 1920, Multnomah County commissioners considered a bill to shut down dancing



Twelve-Mile House, circa 1915.

at 1 a.m. in roadhouses and dance halls in the county outside the Portland city limits.

“It is necessary for the protection of our girls,” said one commissioner, adding that dancing used to begin at 8 p.m. and conclude before midnight. “Now, my daughter doesn’t expect to get to a dance before 9:30 o’clock.”

The bill was expected to face stiff debate and opposition among county commissioners, who were concerned that legislation against roadhouses would mean a loss in tourist attractions.

But once the Prohibition Act became law in 1921, making it illegal to manufacture, sell and transport “intoxicating liquors,” the battle between law enforcement, local temperance groups, and roadhouse proprietors heated up.

In April 1922, a Portland woman died in a car accident while returning from an “alleged jamboree” at the Twelve Mile House. Her death sparked a debate over whether “pleasure palaces” (roadhouses) should be held to the same regulations as dance halls, which were required to take out a license and close at 1 a.m.

Proprietors argued that roadhouses served dinner, differentiating them from dance halls, which only served sandwiches and soda. Sheriff T. M. Hurlburt conceded that raids conducted by his deputies had failed to uncover any liquor sales or consumption, even though it was common knowledge drinking did occur.

A month later, dance hall licenses were issued to eight roadhouses and “dance resorts,” but were subject to revocation should dancing continue after 1 a.m. General belief was that roadhouses wouldn’t survive under the regulation because the bulk of their patronage arrived after Portland’s nightlife shut down at midnight.

But Anthony J. Tully, owner of the Homestead Inn (formerly the Old Homestead) took umbrage to the new regulation and filed for a temporary restraining order in July 1922. Tully called himself a “restaurateur” and claimed to have built a reputation for fine dining, not dancing. He requested time to prove that his establishment did not fall under the provisions of the new regulations that defined dance halls.

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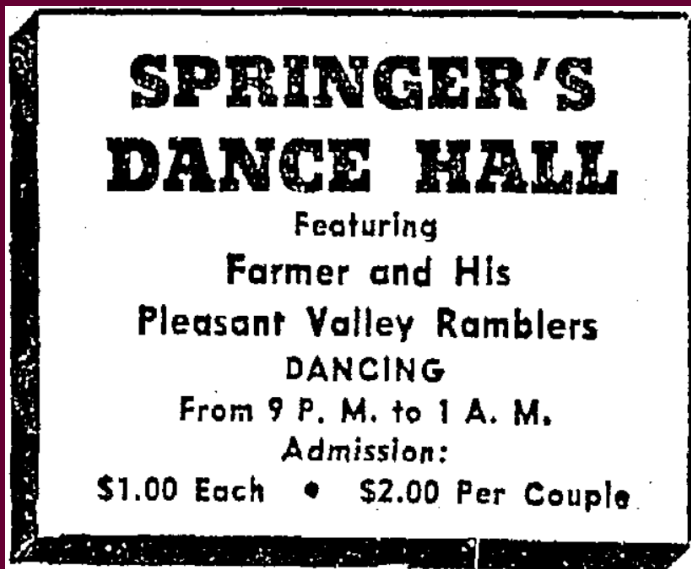
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Tully went on to say he had been jailed for allegedly violating the law and that county deputies had threatened to ruin his business. The restraining order was to keep deputies from interfering with his business, and he called their actions “inoperative and unconstitutional.”

“It is discriminatory and a violation of the bill of rights,” Tully said.

There was one dance hall, however, that avoided the bullseye on other Gresham-area establishments.

Arin Springer operated a small wood shop on Richey Road, between 190th and Foster. In the evenings, he opened the building to his neighbors for dancing, with music provided by Felix Chiodo and the Dahlquist Orchestra. Word got out, and soon, Springer’s wood shop was busting at the seams with merry-makers. In 1928, he built a barn to accommodate the crowds. Though larger digs were appreciated by dancers, women did complain of catching their high heels in knotholes on the dance floor.



Oregonian ad for Springer’s, dated July 22, 1953.

Springer’s operation was nominally above board. The seven-piece Dahlquist Orchestra played “the latest dance tunes,” a public address system was installed, and food was served during intermission.

Festivities were carefully monitored by floor manager Frank Eberhardt, whose assistant, Floyd Burch, was an off-duty Portland Police officer who also sang with the orchestra. Still, dancers managed to imbibe by hiding bottles of hooch in barn benches with hinged tops.

Despite all the controversy over to regulate or not to regulate, one element of the seemingly questionable party business remained mostly under the radar – moonshiners. Consumption or purchasing home brew wasn’t something talked about at Sunday dinner, but local residents knew where to go if they wanted a jar.

With liquor sales illegal, moonshiners found themselves exercising some creativity to keep law enforcement and local temperance groups out of their business. Some strung wire across the driveway, which rang a bell when someone approached; one “shiner” built a ledge part way down inside his well to hide his distillery and tools; and another dug a tunnel from his house to the chicken coop, where his still was located.

To further conceal their identity, shiners would pay local youngsters 50 cents a gallon to deliver their product on bicycles to area roadhouses.

The Twelve Mile House made an attempt at rebranding in the early 1920s, changing its name to the Cross Roads Inn. Still, it was obvious the glory days of the notorious roadhouse were waning. In 1922, three Texas men bought the property with intentions to build “a new grandstand, stables other equipment necessary to maintain a first class racing track and facilities.” Race cars eventually replaced the grand parties and entertainment at the Twelve Mile House, and by 1935, it sat neglected and deteriorating. The building was destroyed by fire in 1938.

Springer’s retained its identity as a music venue until the 1970s. Known as Springer’s Ballroom, it hosted fans of big band, swing, and country and western music until 1969, when it became an attractive site for the likes of the Grateful Dead, Boz Scaggs and the Byrds. A shift in the music scene to larger and Portland centric facilities gave birth to Springer’s Flea Market in the mid-1970s, which operated at the same site until it burned to the ground in 1987.

Did you know? Fred T. Merrill, owner of the controversial Twelve Mile House, originally came to Oregon as a champion bicycle racer and later claimed credit for popularizing the bicycle in Portland. He owned a bicycle store called the Cyclery before coming to Gresham.

MEMBERSHIP

Not a member already? You can join on our website, at greshamhistorical.org.

Or, fill out the form below, bring it to the museum, or mail it to us at PO Box 65, Gresham, OR 97030. Make checks payable to the Gresham Historical Society.

Membership at the Gresham Historical Society supports the continued preservation and sharing of our local history. Now, more than ever, we rely on member support to continue our mission.

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT/RENEWAL FORM

Member or Family Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

CHOOSE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Each membership level includes a member card, a subscription to the quarterly newsletter, and invitations to members-only events throughout the year.

- Individual** \$20 membership for one adult
- Family** \$30 benefits for two adults and all family members under 18
- Business** \$100 two membership cards for any employee
- Business Plus** \$200 two membership cards for any employee and your business logo in the Quarterly of the Gresham Historical Society
- Patron** \$1000 annual parking pass to the Gresham Historical Society lot on 4th Street

I wish to make an additional donation in the amount of \$ _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Payment method (circle one): Cash Check (payable to Gresham Historical Society)

Please charge my credit/debit card \$ _____

Card number _____ Expiration date _____ CVV _____

Signature _____

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Monetary Contributions

Your unrestricted gift supports the daily operations of the Gresham Historical Society and the maintenance and preservation of the Historic 1913 Gresham Carnegie Library.

Recurring Donations

Your unrestricted recurring gifts provide the predictable, ongoing support that allows the Gresham Historical Society to perform necessary financial planning.

Gifts in Memory or Tribute

Each year, the Gresham Historical Society receives gifts in memorial and tribute. Honor the passions and achievements of those in your life through legacy giving.

Appreciated Securities or Stock

Charitable gifts of stock are a wonderful way to provide ongoing support for the Gresham Historical Society. Check with your tax adviser for details.

Planned Giving

Include the Gresham Historical Society in your estate planning and be a part of Gresham's legacy.

MEMBERSHIP

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE JOINED AND RENEWED SINCE DECEMBER:

Cody Abbott
 Claire Lider
 Historic Downtown Gresham Business Association
 Erica Keathley
 Angel & Thea Hayes
 Dr. Gary Johnson
 Don & Marilyn Neher
 Michael Patrick & Sue Piazza
 Karilynn D. & M. Patton Echols
 Lon Shiiki
 Cheryl Grigg
 Karen & Steve Johnson
 Mike & Karen Consbruck
 Liz Morse
 Don & Sharleen Jessup
 April Avery
 Rosemary Shepperd Guttridge

Gayle & C.J. Rue
 Becky Nuffer
 Ann Margaret Rice
 Wayne & Pamela Horine
 Robert Stephen Eses & Mary Jeanne Oliva
 Emma Olson
 Richard Witmer
 Sunny Han's
 Sandy Cartisser
 Georgene Honke
 Joe Breniser
 Jo Ann Reese & John Fagan
 Helen Wand
 Charlotte Becker
 Sandi Metzger
 Ken & Martha Manske
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 Martin Stone
 Carol Neilsen
 Terry Nishikawa
 Scott Terryah
 Fred & Teresa Gilbert
 Cassie Rafalski
 Donna Nichols
 Patricia Wand
 Laura Shown
 Alice Harris
 Rose Marie Noojin
 Carl A. Kato
 Matt Miller
 Janine Morgan
 David Porter
 Mark & Valerie Wagenknecht

OUR GRATITUDE TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS PLUS MEMBERS

FOR THEIR VITAL SUPPORT!



BERRY PICKING REMEMBERED

A lesson in teenage money management found me in the strawberry fields near Eugene during the summer of 1970.

With elementary school firmly in the rear view mirror, I was anticipating three blissful months, with no agenda, before tackling the rigors of high school in the fall.

Until my dad dropped the Eugene Register Guard's classified section in my lap. Find a nearby school bus stop and go pick berries, he said.

In those days, farmers ran newspaper ads listing pick up locations for berry pickers. You found one close to your house, showed up at the appointed hour (usually 6 a.m.) and off you'd go to rural countryside you didn't know existed. The return trip would deposit you where you started, often sunburned and thirsty, around 2 p.m.

I remember making my lunch the night before, which included wrapping a can of soda in aluminum foil and placing it in the freezer overnight (the idea being the soda would freeze, and then thaw, nice and cold, by lunch the next day). We dressed in layers, especially the first couple weeks when mornings were still cool, and it was always advantageous to align yourself with the popular kids early in the season. Nobody wanted to go home wearing a day's worth of rotten fruit.

While I don't recall exactly what we were paid for our labors in 1970, I do remember it wasn't much. But like the Gresham youngsters and teens in the 1940s, my wages were earmarked for school supplies or clothes.

What did you do with your berry picking money?

-Anne Endicott

STORY SHARING DAY: BERRY JAMBOREE!



We're gathering the history of berry picking in Gresham! Did you pick berries in Gresham growing up? We'd love to hear your story! For one weekend in May, we're inviting everyone with memories of childhood berry picking to come to the museum for a short interview with our public historian, Stephanie Vallance. Were you a diligent worker, or did you spend more time throwing berries at your friends? Did you save your berry money to buy school clothes, or did you spend it all on candy?

When: Saturday, May 20 from 10 to 4 and Sunday, May 21 from 12 to 4. Drop in at any time!

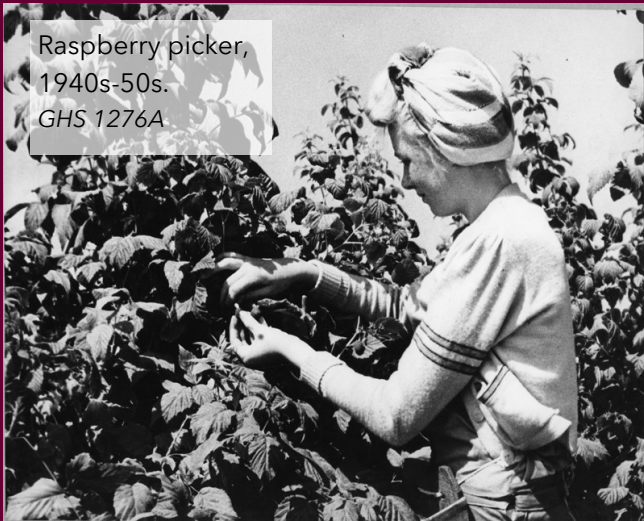
Where: Gresham Historical Society, 410 N Main Ave, Gresham, OR

Participants will get to keep a recording of their interview.

Exhibit Matching Game Answers (see pg. 4 for puzzle)

- A)** Drum major uniform, *Listen to the Band* **B)** Ticket punch, *Making Tracks* **C)** Railroad crossing sign, *Making Tracks* **D)** Brick, *Beyond Main Street* **E)** Athletic jersey, *Beyond Main Street* **F)** Band uniform, *Listen to the Band*
G) Berry hallocks, *Beyond Main Street* **H)** Mini MAX train, *Making Tracks* **I)** Clarinet, *Listen to the Band*

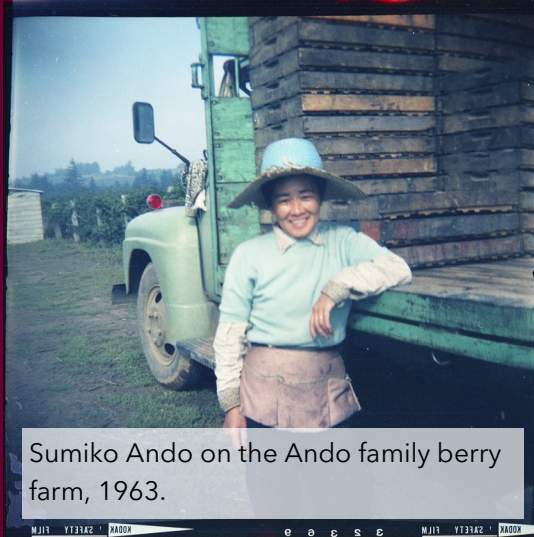
BERRY SEASON IN IMAGES



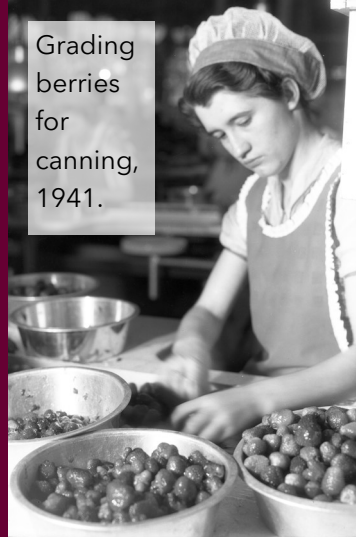
Raspberry picker,
1940s-50s.
GHS 1276A



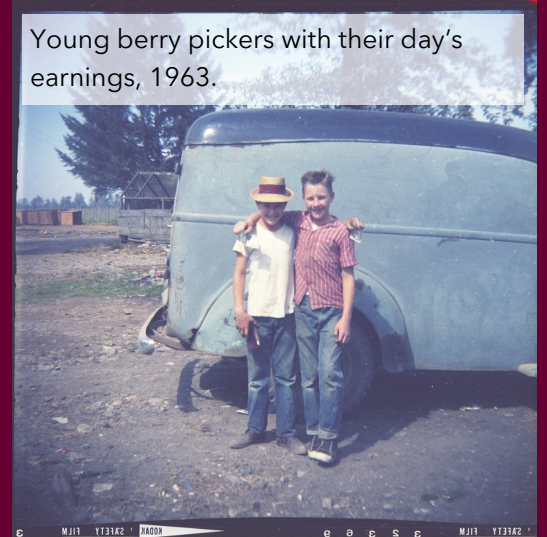
Young pickers board a bus to the berry fields, 1950s.
GHS 1623



Sumiko Ando on the Ando family berry farm, 1963.



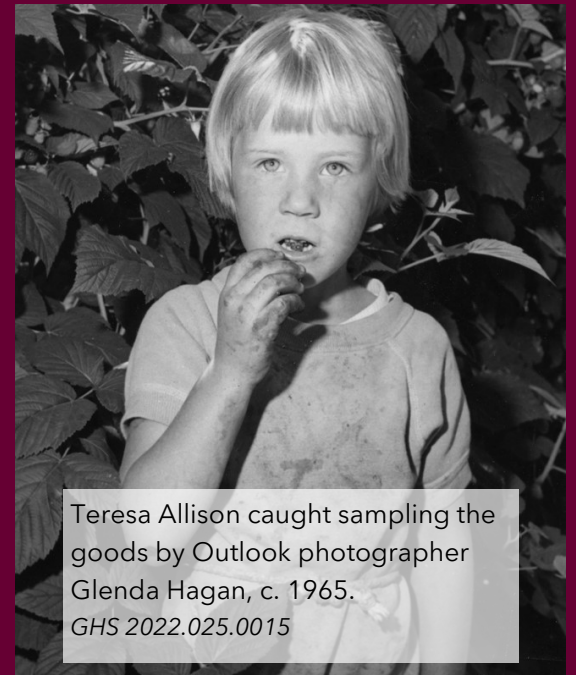
Grading berries for canning, 1941.



Young berry pickers with their day's earnings, 1963.



Berries destined for the Gresham Berry Growers cannery, early 1900s.
GHS 2216



Teresa Allison caught sampling the goods by Outlook photographer Glenda Hagan, c. 1965.
GHS 2022.025.0015

GRESHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

410 North Main Avenue
P.O. Box 65
Gresham, Oregon 97030



Pickers in a strawberry field in the Gresham area, 1941. GHS 2001.003.0005

IN-KIND PRINTING SERVICES FOR THIS NEWSLETTER PROVIDED BY:



The Gresham Historical Society is a private, non-profit organization that manages the Gresham Historical Museum and special collections library and archive, located in the 1913 former Gresham Library building in Historic Downtown Gresham.

Founded in 1976 and funded through donations from the community, the Gresham Historical Society was run exclusively by volunteers for the majority of its history.

In 2010, Multnomah County voters passed a property tax levy to support local history. Those levy funds pay for exhibitions and for us to have a full-time museum director, which helps keep us free and open to the public.

Our mission is to collect, preserve, and share our local history.

HOURS

Wednesday-Saturday	10am-4pm
Sunday	12pm-4pm
Monday-Tuesday	Closed

CONTACT

Web: greshamhistorical.org/contact
Email: info@greshamhistorical.org
Phone: (503) 661-0347

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