

The

ARCHIVE

QUARTERLY OF THE GRESHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WINTER 2024



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



Nighttime photos of a silver thaw that struck Gresham on January 1, 1984. *Gresham Outlook* staff photos.
GHS 2021.011.0086



See pg. 6-7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

At the Museum **pg. 2-5** ♦ Christmas at the Museum **pg. 3**

History Feature **pg. 6-7** ♦ Meet the Team **pg. 8**

Annual Appeal **pg. 9**

Membership **pg. 10-11** ♦ End Matter **pg. 12**

AT THE MUSEUM

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 30-Dec. 21 **Christmas at the Museum**

Annual holiday fundraiser offering live music, visits and photos with Santa, gift wrapping and a holiday wreath making workshop. Don't forget to cast your vote in the museum's Gingerbread House Contest. (see pg. 3)

Nov. 30 **Carols in Context: A Historical Sing-Along (5:00 p.m.)**

Warm up your vocal cords for this family-friendly community event. Music teacher and band Michael Lasfetto will lead this event, featuring familiar Christmas carols and the surprising history behind them. This is a ticketed event. Please see page 5 for more details.

Dec. 28 **Annual Membership Meeting & Year-End Party**

Special event for members and volunteers (see pg. 3)

Jan. 22 **Exhibit Opening Reception (4:30 p.m.)**

An informal gathering for members and volunteers. Check out new exhibits that feature Gresham in the 1960s and 1970s, plus a showcase of historic maps from the archives. Light refreshments served.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Online Exhibit: *Beyond Main Street*

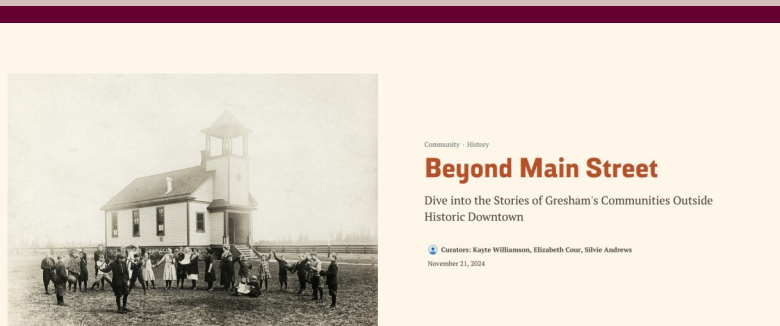
A volunteer effort of over a year has come to fruition with the launch of *Beyond Main Street*, an adaptation of a 2023 in-person exhibit that examined the history of satellite communities that are now part of Gresham.

and Wilkes, and others that are lost to time, including the historic communities of Terry and Cedar.

Kathleen Williamson in particular has spent over 150 hours researching, writing, and formatting *Beyond Main Street*. Her efforts have made this exhibit a true masterpiece of curation. The stories incorporate images and objects from the GHS collection, making it a dynamic experience worth lingering over.

Another online exhibit currently in development will feature *Gresham Outlook* news negatives from the 1980s and 1990s. This exhibit, a school project of longtime volunteer Delilah Abraham, is scheduled to launch in January.

Beyond Main Street is a masterpiece of digital curation.



Header of Beyond Main Street exhibit on Storymaps.

Volunteers Kathleen Williamson and Elizabeth Cour pulled content from the original exhibit and contributed their own research to create the online exhibit, which uses a mapping program called Storymaps to show historic sites juxtaposed with modern features. Visitors can learn about communities that still exist, such as Orient, Pleasant Valley,

Digitize Your Home Movies With Us!

GHS can digitally preserve your home VHS tapes! This service is available to anyone as long as the content of the tape is not under copyright. Funds will support the museum's operating budget. The first tape will cost \$25, with discounts for larger quantities of tapes.

AT THE MUSEUM



Presented
by



Christmas at the Museum is back! Here are a few highlights:

- Free gifts for the first 500 guests—ornaments and gingerbread cookies!
- A gallery full of festive decorations
- Lighted snow globes, Christmas candy, and new merchandise for history-lovers in the Museum Store

Christmas at the Museum will run from November 30 to December 21, Thursdays through Sundays.

Visit greshamhistorical.org/christmas-at-the-museum for event tickets and more info.



Thursdays through Saturdays: see the amazingly creative gingerbread houses and vote on your favorites!



Saturdays: Santa Claus is here all day and waiting to hear what's on your Christmas list!



December 15 and 21: Santa's elves will wrap your presents for you. They appreciate donations!



Dec. 8 at 3:30: Learn to make your own professional-quality wreath with all materials provided!



Dec. 6 at 7pm: Enjoy an evening of holiday cheer with Thea Enos and her wonderful jazz band!



Dec. 19 at 7pm: Join local musicians Dan Davey, Don Norton, Bill Athens, and Tim Rap for a cozy evening of jazz!

AT THE MUSEUM

The 2024 Annual Membership Meeting is coming up!

This member-exclusive event will end the year with a bang. Here's what to expect:

- A history talk on the Bridal Veil Lumbering Co. (see pg. 5)
- Reports from the president, treasurer, and executive director
- Recognition of our most outstanding volunteers of the year
- Wine, hot cider, and hors d'oeuvres

Date: December 28, 2025

Time: 4:30-7:00 p.m.

Location: Gresham Historical Society

Not a member yet? You can still attend the party if you join before December 28. See pg. 10 for more information.



Save the date for the 2025 Speakeasy Dinner Auction!

Dust off those glad rags and return to the jazz age for this annual "fun-raiser" at Persimmon Country Club to support a great cause – historical preservation. The Roaring 20s theme is enhanced by a lively auctioneer, who keeps the tempo moving and participants on their toes through spontaneous games and audience interactions.

Guests can enjoy cocktails and a sit-down dinner, as well as taking their chances on gift items, event packages, vacation getaways and more, in both the silent and live auctions.

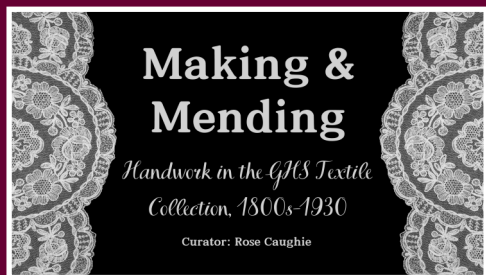
The 3rd Annual Speakeasy Dinner Auction promises to be the bee's knees, so mark your calendar and watch our website for ticket information.

Date: February 21, 2025

Time: TBD

Location: Persimmon Country Club

EXHIBITS: CURRENT AND UPCOMING



Making and Mending is a celebration of the once-great art of textileworking.

Closes December 22.

Coming Up in 2025

✦ *Gresham in the 60s and 70s*, an exploration of life and politics in a time of historic change

✦ *Putting Gresham on the Map*, highlights from the GHS map collection

AT THE MUSEUM

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES CONTINUES IN 2025

This volunteer-led event will celebrate its 1-year anniversary early in 2025. On the last Saturday of every month, join us for this fun and informal lecture series to learn about

When: 5-6pm the last Saturday of every month

Where: Gresham Historical Society main gallery, 410 N Main Ave, Gresham, OR 97030

Cost: \$5 per person (FREE for members!)

Lecture Schedule through March

November 30: *Carols in Context: A Historical Sing-Along* presented by Michael Lasfetto (see below)
(Note: This event is \$10 per person and \$5 for members. Admission includes voting in the Gingerbread Competition and refreshments.)

December 28: *Bridal Veil Lumbering Co.* presented by Chuck Rollins & Steve Lehl (see below)
(Note: This event is exclusive to members and volunteers. See pg. 10 for info on signing up!)

January 25: *Eccentric Tales of Boring* presented by Bruce Haney

February 22: TBA

March 29: *The Gresham Outlook: An Insider's Perspective* presented by Anne Endicott

April 26: *A Curated Story of Coded Quilts and the Underground Railroad* presented by Dr. LaVerne Lewis
Topics and presenters subject to change. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram for updates.

On **Nov. 30, at 5 pm**, Sing along to Christmas carols and learn their surprising history! The program will include well-known favorites, holiday deep cuts, and everything in between. \$10 admission includes a song booklet, a vote in the 2024 Gingerbread Competition, and a free ornament or cookie. This event is kid-friendly and FREE for children ages 5 and younger.

Presenter Michael Lasfetto is a school music teacher, community band director, church organist, and piano instructor with a background in instrumental and choral music.



Member exclusive!

Crown Point historians Chuck Rollins and Steve Lehl present a photo slideshow of the Bridal Veil Lumbering Co. This history talk will take place at the **Annual Membership Meeting and Year-End Party** on December 28. See pg. 4 for more information.

HISTORY FEATURE

THE MARK OF A MYSTERY

By Anne Endicott

This September, Gresham Historical Society (GHS) volunteer Claudia Andrews was working her usual shift at the museum when a longtime member came in and reported that Mile Marker 11, located at Southeast 197th and Stark, was missing. He said the 150-plus-year-old marker appeared to have been sheared off near its base at ground level.

This wasn't the first time that particular marker had gone MIA. In November 1997, it disappeared but turned up two years later in a boat belonging to a Gresham guy, who claimed to have found it behind a tavern. He told police he and some friends had hauled the 500-pound stone monument to his home, where he set it aside to one day be used as his grave marker. Contractors sank the post in concrete at its original site, where it remained until September 2024.

News of the marker's disappearance (again) was concerning for members of the historical society, who



The story begins in 1851, when 30 area residents petitioned Clackamas County for a new east/west road to replace the rutted wagon trail running from Portland to the Sandy River. (At the time, modern-day East Metro fell under Clackamas County's jurisdiction.) Government surveyors planned the route using a public land survey system developed in Ohio in 1785, and Baseline Road (now known as Stark Street) opened in November 1854.

At some point following the end of road construction, workers added large stone monuments carved from basalt rock to mark each mile from downtown Portland to the Sandy River. A total of 15 markers originally stood along Baseline Road, nine of which remain today.

So given their historical significance, when one disappears, it's cause for a five-alarm Sherlock Holmes emergency to locate and hopefully recover the marker.

feared loss of yet another piece of history. Given my former life as a newspaper reporter, Executive Director Silvie Andrews challenged me to reawaken my investigative reporting skills and solve the mystery.

After poking around some on my own and hitting dead ends, I waltzed into Gresham City Hall, hoping someone would take pity on me and help. I was able to connect with Skuyler Jacobs, program technician with the city's Transportation Department. A former US History teacher, Jacobs was intrigued by the mystery and went on the hunt.

Gresham police records showed that around 11 p.m. Sept. 12, a car jumped the curb at 197th and Stark, knocking over a speed sign and damaging nearby shrubbery. Jacobs contacted the city's

Continued on next page

Left: Mile Marker 11 before the accident. Courtesy of PDXccentric blog, "Stark Street Milestones." **Center:** Single vehicle accident on September 12, which presumably broke the obelisk from its base. Courtesy of City of Gresham. **Right:** broken-off base of Mile Marker 11 during the investigation. Courtesy of Anne Endicott.

HISTORY FEATURE

THE MARK OF A MYSTERY (CONT'D)

Operations Department, only to learn that while often called to clean up after car accidents, they weren't involved in the incident on Sept. 12. Jacobs' fear was that a contractor occasionally tasked with accident clean up had possibly hauled away the marker not knowing what it was. Turns out, the contractor was not involved either.

Mile Marker 11 sits on the south side of Stark Street, sort of on the property line between a convenience store and the Mobile Park Plaza, a senior living community. Jacobs was unable to connect with a manager at the mobile home park office, so he grabbed a shovel and started digging in the newly disturbed dirt at the site. Just maybe, he thought, the stone monument had been accidentally buried during cleanup after the accident. When that proved fruitless, Jacobs threw in the towel.

At that point, I picked up the trail. I wandered into the management office for the mobile home park and located a business card for the park manager/ maintenance director taped to the office door. A phone call sent me to the voicemail for Brandon Patterson, where I left what might have been a rather babbling message about the missing stone obelisk.

Patterson was on vacation, but kind enough to return my call. He knew exactly what I was talking about because he and his crew had cleaned up the vegetation after the accident. A Troutdale resident, Patterson knew about the historical mile markers and recognized the stone for what it was. He and his workers picked up the marker and took it to their maintenance facility for safekeeping.

So on Wednesday, Nov. 20, a former US History teacher, a groundskeeper, and one nosy retired reporter celebrated as a city crew reinstalled Mile Marker 11 in its rightful home.



A small group rededicated Mile Marker 11 on Nov. 21.

ARE WE THERE YET? THE HISTORY OF THE STARK STREET MILE MARKERS

As settlements and commerce began to push east from Portland in the late 1800s, the need for a well defined-road connecting the two places became apparent. Travelers would begin their journey from Portland on Baseline Road at what is now approximately the intersection of MLK Boulevard and Stark Street. Guiding their way were stone markers installed every mile along the route, giving travelers a way to measure their progress. Each basalt-carved monument was engraved with a "P" near the beveled top, with the mile number designating the distance from Portland carved beneath. Referred to as obelisks, the markers were once nearly 6 feet tall and weighed 500 pounds.

There exists some contention over the exact beginning point, with some sources naming the east bank of the Willamette River and others naming the Multnomah County Courthouse, neither of which comes close to matching the appropriate distance to the remaining mile markers. Complicating matters, many if not all of the remaining obelisks have shifted from their original sites due to around 150 years of road construction and development.

Nine of the original 15 markers can still be seen posted along Stark Street, three within Gresham City Limits (Mile Markers 11, 13, and 14 - all listed as Class 2 local landmarks). Locating the remaining obelisks is a wonderful way to bring local history to life.

Further reading:

starkstreetmarkers.blogspot.com/2008/05/willamette-stone.html

pdxccentric.wordpress.com/e6-stark-street-milestones

amerisurv.com/2005/04/30/romancing-the-stone-at-willamette-meridian

LET'S GET ACQUAINTED

GHS is fortunate to possess a bevy of volunteers tasked with researching and cataloging everything from photographs to textiles and oral histories. They greet visitors to the museum, lead historical tours and lectures, and provide the heavy lift with property maintenance and repair.

An 11-member board of directors oversees the financial side of GHS and the museum, conducting fundraisers to support upkeep on GHS buildings and day-to-day expenses. The board also works closely with Executive Director Silvie Andrews to aid with grant funding, collections acquisitions, and marketing.

The generous donation of our volunteers' time ensures Gresham's history will continue to unfold and be available to future generations.

So let's get acquainted!

MIKE ANDREWS, JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES

A 10-year volunteer with GHS, Mike describes his role as: "I'm on the maintenance committee, I play a mean Santa during the season [editor's note: not literally], I work on exhibit stuff, I coordinate the docents, I help set up and take down museum events, I conduct the cemetery tours, and I work with the collection."

Mike grew up in the Gresham area and calls himself a "big fan" of local history. He refers to GHS' volunteer corps as "educators" who bring commitment and dedication to sharing Gresham's story with others.

"GHS is the keeper of Gresham's past and it takes the lead in educating folks about how Gresham grew up and how it has changed," he said. "History is the foundation of any community."



CASSIE RAFALSKI, GHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A Gresham native, Cassie considers herself an ambassador who unites people in celebration of the vibrant history of her hometown. With a background in event coordination, marketing, and design, Cassie is able to further her passion for community engagement by sharing her skills with both GHS members and visitors to the museum. For Mother's Day, she hosted a floral crown making workshop, and during Christmas at the Museum, she will help guests create a holiday wreath (tickets available now!).

But Cassie's driving passion is to make history and culture more accessible, particularly to the area's young people.

"I hope to inspire the next generation by instilling a sense of pride in their local heritage," she said.

ANNUAL APPEAL

Dear Members and Friends,

As we near the end of the year and enter the season of giving, I want to share a little bit about what the Gresham Historical Society has given back to our community this year.

If you're reading this, you probably already know that history is an important part of how we relate to the places we live and the people around us. These areas of common ground are more important now than they ever have been. GHS supports connections as part of our mission to *preserve and share our community's past to enrich its present and future*. In 2024, we found new and exciting ways to fulfill that mission. The year started with "Black History in Gresham," the first history talk in a monthly public lecture series that will continue into the New Year. Many of these lectures are now available as videos on our YouTube channel, @greshamhistorical. Spring saw us beautifying the museum grounds with herb beds, blueberry bushes, and a pollinator garden, just in time for the Plant Sale Fundraiser in May. In June, we launched a grant-funded podcast, *Voices of Gresham*, that presents a unique look at Gresham's past using stories from our oral history collection. *Voices of Gresham* has been a smashing success with over 1,500 downloads to date! Record numbers of visitors flocked to the museum during the two-day Indigenous Arts Festival to peruse Indigenous Marketplace artist stalls and watch a spectacular drumming and dancing performance by Turquoise Pride. Finally, we're boosting our digital presence with online exhibits (see pg. 2) and more of our collection online at northwestdigitalheritage.org/s/gresham.

Your support is crucial to our ability to plan and carry out these programs. We rely on donations and membership dues for much of our operating budget, which includes upkeep on our two historic buildings (the 1913 Gresham Carnegie Library and the 1931 Zion Church next door). Your support helps us stay relevant in a rapidly changing world.

There are two important ways that you can help. The first is to donate! Donations from businesses and individuals are an important part of our annual budget. Plus, they're tax-deductible! The second way you can help is to spread the word to your friends, family and acquaintances. Sharing our events on Facebook, talking to friends about upcoming programs you're excited about, and leaving reviews on Yelp and Google are great ways to help us share our mission with more and more people.

From all of us at the Gresham Historical Society, thank you for your support. We wish you the warmest and happiest of holidays.

Sincerely,

Silvie Andrews

Executive Director

Donate online:



greshamhistorical.org/donate

GIVE THE GIFT OF HISTORY

Everyone has at least one friend or relative who's impossible to shop for. **Why not get them a membership to the Gresham Historical Society?**

It's more than just a shiny card—a GHS membership is also a year's worth of discounts, free events, and historical tidbits in their mailbox or email inbox.



MEMBERSHIP

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.

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

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

Please make checks payable to *Gresham Historical Society*.

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT/RENEWAL FORM

Member or Family Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

CHOOSE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Each membership level includes 10% off museum store purchases, a subscription to the quarterly newsletter, and invitations to members-only events throughout the year.

- ☐ **Individual** \$25 membership for one adult
- ☐ **Dual** \$35 membership for two adults
- ☐ **Family** \$50 benefits for two adults and all family members under 18
- ☐ **Business** \$150 two membership cards for any employee
- ☐ **Business Plus** \$500 two membership cards for any employee and your business logo in the Quarterly of the Gresham Historical Society
- ☐ **Patron** \$1,000

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

How do you prefer to receive your newsletter? ☐ Email ☐ Print

NEW!! ADD-ONS AVAILABLE

Show off your love of local history with a selection of GHS merchandise, available as an add-on to your membership or donation. A percentage of each purchase is tax-deductible. Price includes shipping.

- ☐ **Glass Butterfly Pin** \$20 high-quality enamel pin measuring 1"x1"
- ☐ **Baseball Cap** \$25 cream-colored cotton with embroidered logo
- ☐ **T-Shirt** \$30 burgundy cotton; unisex fit
- ☐ **Mug** \$35 hand-thrown stoneware; made in USA

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 _____

MEMBERSHIP

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE JOINED, RENEWED, OR DONATED SINCE SEPTEMBER:

Individual

Kristin Klotter
Suzanne McQueen
Stacy Knuth

Dual

Sue Piazza & Michael Patrick
Mary Jo & Paul Warr-King
Joyce Belcher & Harry Moffitt
Jane & Mike Mace
Fred & Teresa Gilbert
Kevin Lecroy

Family

David, Haley, Coulson & Iris Grigg
Tabitha Boschetti

Business

Gresham Memorial Chapel
Tokola Properties

Business Plus

Mt. Hood Community College

Patron

Joan Albertson
Gresham Sanitary Service

Polar King Sign Restoration Fund

Carén Ingram
Jeremy Reidlinger for Leroy and Barbara Reidlinger
Caroline Oblack Leroy and Barbara Reidlinger
Scott Maxwell for Howard and Gerry Maxwell
Elizabeth Mayer
Linda Bergmann
Mike & Claudia Andrews

OUR GRATITUDE TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS PLUS MEMBERS FOR THEIR VITAL SUPPORT!



Gresham Outdoor Public Art
Imagine the Possibilities



MT. HOOD
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



PICTURE THIS
PRODUCTION SERVICES
& Stage





Snowy road in Gresham, circa 1920. GHS 1770

The Gresham Historical Society is a private, nonprofit 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. These levy funds pay the salary of a full-time museum director, which helps keep us free and open to the public.

Our mission is to preserve and share our community's past to enrich its present and future.

HOURS

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

CONTACT

Web: greshamhistorical.org/contact

Email: info@greshamhistorical.org

Phone: (503) 661-0347

Board and Staff

President Sue Piazza ✦ **Vice President** Lon Shiiki ✦ **Treasurer** Leslie Radke ✦ **Secretary** Cassie Rafalski

Board of Directors Debby Brown ✦ Anne Endicott ✦ Karen Johnston ✦ Fred Gilbert ✦

Carson Loveridge ✦ Vicki Moen ✦ **Emeritus** Utahna Kerr ✦ Carla Piluso

Museum Director Silvie Andrews ✦ **Public Historian** Stephanie Vallance

Intern Melissa Beveny ✦ **Textile Curator** Rose Caughie