

Gresham Historical *Quarterly Newsletter*

For members of the Gresham Historical Society



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Spring 2019

About Gresham Historical *Society & Museum*

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Pete White

Emeritus Members

Dick Dowsett

Utahna Kerr

Museum Director

Evan Smiley

Hours of operation

Wednesday 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Thursday 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Friday 2 p.m.–8 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Sunday 12 p.m.–4 p.m.

Closed Monday & Tuesday

Featured exhibition

Japanese Culture in Gresham: 1880 to Present Day

This exhibit looks at the history of Japanese immigrants, Japanese Americans and Japanese culture in the Gresham area, beginning with early immigration, through World War II, and forward through reparations and international culture appreciation.

Visit the museum!

**410 N. Main Avenue
Gresham, OR, 97030**

Getting here

Located in Historic Downtown Gresham, the Gresham Historical Museum sits on the corner of N. Main & NE 4th Street.

From Powell Blvd

Heading east on Powell Boulevard, turn left onto North Main Avenue. Drive North, and turn right on NE 4th Street.

Parking

There is a parking lot behind the museum, accessible via NE 4th Street. Street parking is available in Historic Downtown Gresham unless marked.



Follow us

**on Facebook and Instagram
for blasts from the past
photographs, snippets of
history, museum updates
and more!**



We couldn't do it without our volunteers!

Sally Arnold
Claudia Andrews
Mike Andrews
Silvie Andrews
Mark Brandt
Kate Eakman
Guy Edwards
Sandy Fancher
Marva Green
Valerie Greenaway
Wanda Harmon
Lily Hart
Wayne Horine
Bonnie Jepsen
Liz Jones
Utahna Kerr
Ila Lane
Skip Larson
Carole Linneman
Claudell Metzger
Madelyn Miller
Liz Morse
Becky Nuffer
Judith Scott
Alice Simonis
Larry Sims
Mardy Stevens
Heath Renfrow
Janet Westberg

See p. 10–11 for more
about volunteering!

Letter from the Director

I hope you all have enjoyed the winter months. The Gresham Historical Society hopes you had a warm holiday season and a happy New Year!

As you know, the museum has been closed to the public for the month of January, and we reopened our doors February 14, 2019. However, that isn't to say we haven't been busy as ever here at the museum, and we'd like to take this moment to let you know what we've been up to!

The Gresham Historical Society Board of Directors met earlier in January to begin laying our course for 2019, and we are looking forward to a productive and engaging year. The museum is updating its website with the help and generosity of Brainjar Media. The new website will be completed in March.

We have also recently begun reorganizing the Carl and Ada Zimmerman Research Room in order to make the space more accessible and easier to use. See page 6 for photos of the progress! As part of this reorganization, we are looking for computer-savvy volunteers to help update our collections database! Let us know if you would like to help! To learn more about volunteer opportunities see page 10.

The museum also updated the Tsuru Island exhibition to cover the history of Japanese culture in the Gresham area from 1880 to present day. We want to give a special thanks to James Card and the Gresham Japanese Garden Tsuru Island for providing additional artifacts and objects for the exhibition! Speaking of exhibitions, the museum is currently curating an exhibit on the history of the Gresham branch library, which moved from the Carnegie Library location to its current location 30 years ago this April! The exhibit will open this spring.

Last, but not least, don't forget to renew your museum membership! The support and donations from our members and patronage help keep our doors open. We greatly appreciate your support, without which we would not be able to do the exciting things listed above. We look forward to you coming by the museum soon!

Warm regards,

Evan Smiley
Museum Director

Membership Updates

Hello, Gresham Historical Society Members! Thank you for your dedicated support and membership to our museum. Your membership dues and donations keep our doors open and help the museum achieve its mission to collect, preserve, and share Gresham's history.

Membership dues for 2019 are due. You can find a membership enrollment form on P. 14. Please note that if you became a member after August 2018, your membership was carried over for the 2019 membership year.

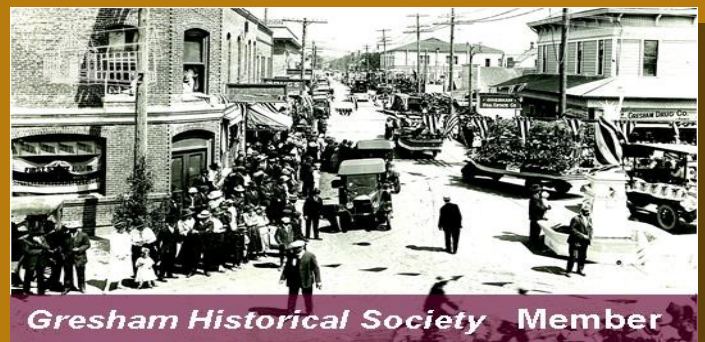
The Gresham Historical Society does not receive federal or state aid. Individual memberships and corporate sponsorships show our visitors and affiliate organizations that our community supports and appreciates local history, which helps us build public trust and be more successful in our community programming and grant-seeking endeavors.

The Gresham Historical Society Board of Directors is currently in the process of reviewing our membership program and membership benefits. Improvements to our membership program include improved communication with members, improved membership materials such as brochures, and the issuing of museum membership cards. We will begin mailing out membership cards within the next month.

Thank you for continued support, and we look forward to another year of making history happen!

Gresham Historical Museum Membership

The museum will begin issuing museum membership cards with the purchase or renewal of a Gresham Historical Society Museum Membership!



Improvements to the Carl & Ada Zimmerman Research Room

Over the winter break, Gresham Historical Society staff, Board members, and volunteers worked to make the Carl & Ada Zimmerman Research room more accessible and easier to use!

You can schedule your research appointment by calling the museum at (503)661-0347!



What's in the collection?

Serials

The Gresham Historical Serials Collection contains regional print publications, including:

- 143 bound volumes of the Gresham Outlook (1913–1999)
- The Gresham Historical Quarterly
- The Oregon Historical Quarterly
- Various historical society newsletters
- Regional periodicals and magazines

Oral Histories & Recollections

The Gresham Historical Society began collecting verbal histories in the 1980s. These materials contain personal accounts of Gresham and East Multnomah County history from their perspectives.

Photographs

The Gresham Historical Photograph Collection is our most extensive archival collection containing over 3500 prints, reproductions, slides, negatives and tintypes.



After!

The Carl & Ada Zimmerman Research Room contains Gresham Historical's non-circulating special collections library and archives.

The Gresham Historical Society collects and preserves books and archival materials that document Gresham and East Multnomah County History. Please contact the museum if you have any questions regarding our collections' content.

Government documents

The Gresham Historical Archives contains a collection of Gresham city, various regional organizations, boards and commissions, and U.S. government documents.

Vertical Files

The Gresham Historical Vertical Files document the regional history of a myriad of topics including various businesses, churches, clubs, events, historic buildings, industries, government endeavors, natural events, neighborhoods, organizations, and programs.

School documents

The Gresham Historical Archives contains a collection of materials that document the history of regional school districts, including:

- Yearbooks (1913–2005)
- Institutional documents such as strategic plans & budgets
- Course catalogs
- Alumni reunion ephemera

The History of Orient, Oregon

By Evan Smiley

Orient is an unincorporated community located in East Multnomah County approximately five miles southeast of Gresham, Oregon and four miles north of Boring, Oregon. Similar to Gresham and the surrounding areas, agriculture was the prominent industry in Orient. The Orient Post Office was established in March of 1896 and closed in 1908. Due to its unincorporated status, the primary documentation of the Orient community's history is in its school district records and the recollection of its past students and employees.



Henry Maxwell homestead c. 1860. GHS photo archive P10 383.

new school building, built that year by Fairview carpenter John Snover. The one-room building also served as a community center.

In 1880, Scottish immigrant Andrew McKinnon moved to the Gresham area with his wife Miyo Iwakoshi. Iwakoshi and her daughter are reported to be the first Japanese settlers in Oregon, and in following years, Iwakoshi assisted other Japanese immigrants in moving to the area. McKinnon purchased a railroad tie saw mill from J.W. Roork and renamed the business "Orient Steam Sawmill" in honor of his spouse. The community that developed near the mill adopted the name "Orient."

District 6 Jt. 300—later referred to as Orient School District—was organized in 1853 and included Cedar Victory, Lusted and portions of the Powell Valley and Cottrell School Districts. The first school building was located on the Archon Kelly homestead. In 1875, William Henry Maxwell donated two acres of land located on present-day Orient Drive for the construction of a



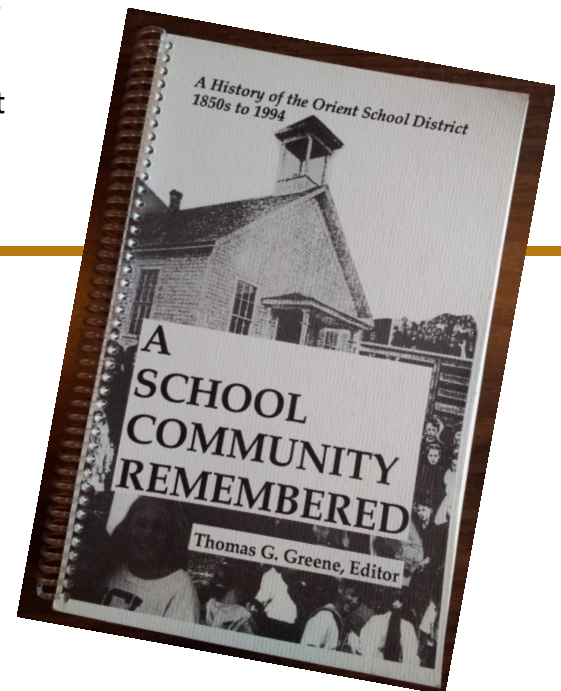
Miyo Iwakoshi c. 1930. GHS photo archive P22 3238.

In 1896, Orient School District built a two-story school building to accommodate the growing student population, leaving the one-room building vacant. That year, a group of ten male students purchased the one-room school building for \$125 and relocated it across the street. Over the next 20 years, the building switched owners, serving as the Woodsmen of the World lodge and then the Pleasant Home Baptist Church, known by the congregation as "The Chapel." The district reclaimed the building sometime between 1910 and 1915 and used it to house the 9th and 10th grade classes.



West Orient Middle School Building. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

In 1925, the West Orient Middle School building was completed, and in 1954, the East Orient Elementary School building opened. The Orient School District was incorporated into the Gresham-Barlow School District in 1994, leaving a legacy of community support and engagement that the schools still see today.



Sources

Barnum, A.J. "Handwritten Notes document early Orient History." *The Gresham Outlook*, Sept. 24, 2003.

Greene, Thomas. "A School Community Remembered: A History of the Orient School District 1850s to 1994." 1994. Area Schools Collection, Gresham Historical Society Archive.

McArthur, Lewis A. *Oregon Geographic Names*, 3rd ed. Portland, Ore.: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1965.

"Orient Community Derives Name From Old Tiemill Established There in 1880, Pioneer Recollects." *The Gresham Outlook*, Feb. 9, 1940.

Yasui, Barbara. *The Nikkei in Oregon, 1834-1940*. Portland, Ore.: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1975.

"A School Community Remembered: A History of the Orient School District 1850s to 1994" is available for reading in the Carl & Ada Zimmerman Research Room.

Become a *VOLUNTEER!*

The Gresham Historical Society relies on dedicated volunteers for most of our daily operations. Are you interested in joining the team? Here's what we're needing:

Docents greet visitors during our open hours and sometimes work on small tasks out in the main room. These volunteers will familiarize themselves with the current exhibits and some basic facts about the museum and Gresham history, but no special qualifications are necessary. We encourage anyone with a positive attitude and enthusiasm for history to apply. Two to six hours per month can make a huge difference!

Research Room volunteers work with the museum collections. We need volunteers to help catalog photos, documents and other artifacts. Research room volunteers should know their way around a computer and have a good eye for detail.

If you are interested in helping out, please email info@greshamhistorical.org or call us at (503)661-0347.

Volunteer Enrollment Form

Name

Street address

City, State, Zip

Home/Cell Phone

Work /Cell Phone

Email address

Skills & Abilities

Social

- ☐ I enjoy making conversation with others.
- ☐ I enjoy working on a team.
- ☐ I enjoy working independently.
- ☐ Other: _____

Technology

- ☐ I am comfortable using a computer, or willing to learn computer skills.
- ☐ I am comfortable using a telephone .
- ☐ I can type or have experience with data entry.
- ☐ I can use a scanner, copier, and printer, or am willing to learn how.

Physical

- ☐ I am comfortable going up and down stairs.
- ☐ I am comfortable using a ladder.
- ☐ I prefer sedentary work.
- ☐ I can lift up to 30 pounds.

Volunteer Spotlight

Utahna Kerr

Utahna Kerr is an indispensable member of the Gresham Historical Society. She has volunteered at the museum on a weekly basis for almost 40 years! She started helping in 1982 when the society began to make plans to move into its current home at the Gresham Carnegie Library



Utahna holds a pair of 19th Century underpants, something that can always make her audience laugh.

Utahna has done almost every task and job imaginable at the museum. From sorting through artifact donations, creating educational content, helping with museum events,



building. Utahna and her husband Larry would visit the local schools and teach about early Gresham history to eighth grade and fourth grade classes, bringing along antiques and stories to engage the students.

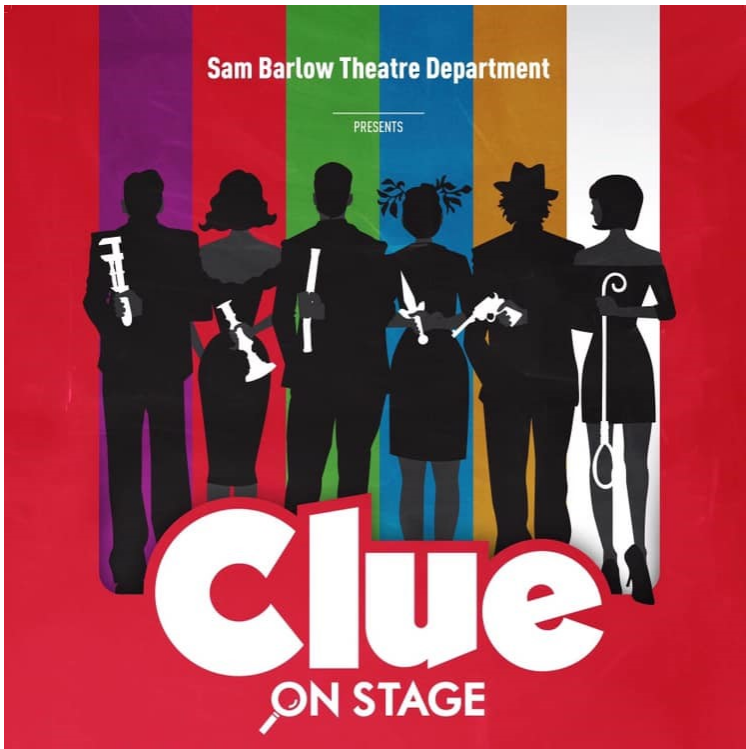
presenting on Gresham history, serving as a docent, or scheduling other volunteers, Utahna does it all and is a joy to work with! She has served multiple terms on the Board of Directors and several different committees and task forces. Her knowledge of our town and local history is an asset to the society. She can often answer even the most obscure questions of Gresham history that stump the rest of us.

At the Gresham Historical Society Board of Directors' annual retreat, we honored Utahna for all of her work throughout the years with the title of Emeritus Board member.



Utahna continues to volunteer at the museum on a weekly basis, clipping news articles and welcoming guests into the museum. When asked if she had a single most fond memory of all the years of her volunteer work here at the society, Utahna said that it is our sense of shared purpose and dedication to the preservation and sharing of our local history. Thank you, Utahna! Your continued support, effort, and love of our museum is what makes this place so special.

Upcoming Events



On a dark and stormy night, six unique guests, plus a butler and a maid, assemble for a dinner party at the home of Mr. Boddy. When their host turns up dead, it is clear that no one is safe! Soon the guests are racing to find the killer and keep the body count from stacking up. Based on the popular board game and adapted from the 1985 cult classic film, Clue is the comedy whodunit that will keep you guessing (and laughing) to the very end. General admission includes dinner, and each table has seating for 8

people. **February 28th and March 1, 2 & 3 at 6:30pm and March 2 & 3 at 12pm.**

Performances are located at the Gresham History Museum, 410 N Main Ave in Historic Downtown Gresham. Reserve your tickets at sambarlowtheatre.com.

BOOK SALE

The Gresham Historical Society is hosting an ongoing book sale at the museum! Stop by the museum to see the assortment of antique collection books, general history books, and more!

PURCHASE BY DONATION

Rent the museum

**The Gresham Historical Museum
is the perfect venue
for business and personal events!**

Built in 1913, the Gresham Carnegie Library is on the National Register of Historic Places and has been acclaimed as one of the finest examples of Tudor architecture in the Portland Metropolitan area. Rent the museum for your next event!

Standard pricing by attendance*

1-25 guests	\$125
26-45 guests	\$225
45-75 guests	\$375
76-100 guests	\$500

***For first 3 hours. Additional fees may apply for longer rentals, or if the event takes place during standard museum operation hours. See below.**

Standard museum operation hours

Sun	12PM–4PM
Wed	10AM–4PM
Thurs	10AM–4PM
Fri	2PM–8PM
Sat	10AM–4PM



Become a *MEMBER!*

DONATE Today!

Membership Enrollment Form

Member name *(Business name for Business Membership)*

Member 2 name *(if Family Membership)*

Street address

City, State, Zip

Home/Cell Phone Work /Cell Phone

Email address

Choose your membership

☐ Individual/Family \$20 ☐ Business \$50

\$_____ Membership amount

\$_____ Additional contribution

\$_____ Total amount

Payment information

☐ Check payable to the Gresham Historical Society enclosed

Please charge my credit/debit card \$_____

☐ American Express ☐ Discover

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Card number Exp. Date CVV

Signature

Donation Form

Name (or Business name)

Street address

City, State, Zip

Home/Cell Phone Work /Cell Phone

Email address

Friends of the Museum	\$20-\$99
Bronze	\$100-\$249
Silver	\$250-\$499
Gold	\$500-\$999
Platinum	\$1000-\$4999
Diamond	\$5000+

Donation Amount

\$_____ Total amount

Payment information

☐ Check payable to the Gresham Historical Society enclosed

Please charge my credit/debit card \$_____

☐ American Express ☐ Discover

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Card number Exp. Date CVV

Signature

To all of our
2018-19 Donors & Sponsors
Thank you!

Friends of the Museum

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Martin Stone
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Donor Levels *

Friends of the Museum	\$20-\$99
Bronze	\$100-\$249
Silver	\$250-\$499
Gold	\$500-\$999
Platinum	\$1000-\$4999
Diamond	\$5000+

Bronze

Brain Jar Media
Sandy Cartisser
Robert Estes
Marianne Ott
Carla Piluso
Jo Ann Reese
Regional Arts & Culture
Council

Silver

Larry Sims

Gold

J. Frank Schmidt Charitable Trust

Platinum

Chase Me Again

Diamond

Jim Chase
Jack Malcolm
Pat Stone

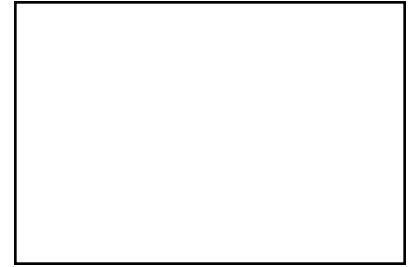
*Monetary donation, or in-kind value

We offer our sincerest gratitude to our anonymous donors who
contribute by way of the donation box in the museum.

All donations help make history happen!

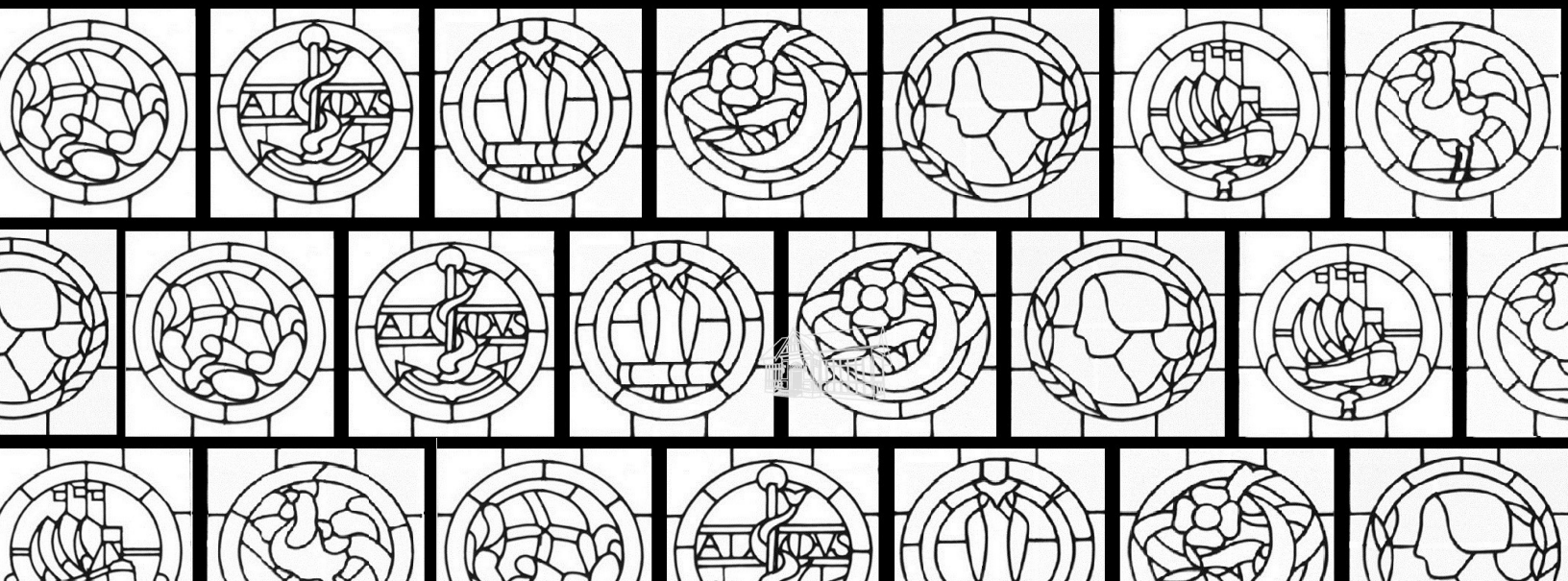


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Gresham Historical
Society & Museum

