



"Preserving the past for the future"
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Fred & Evie's Deer Island Store and Shared Memories

Written by Kay Foshaug Heflin, President of ROHM.



Fred & Evie's original store on North side of Highway 30 at Deer Island.

Fred and Evie Foshaug operated the Deer Island Store for 24 years from 1946 until 1970. The original Deer Island Store and gas station was located on the north side of Highway 30, across from where the current Deer Island Store is today. It was built by Evie's uncle, Red Parmer, his wife Rena and Evie's dad, Orville Malcom. It was named Parmer's Service Station. Evie was eight or nine years old when the Parmer gas station was built. When Fred and Evie bought the service station in 1946, they changed the name to Fred and Evie's. They took out the living quarters in the back and expanded the

service station to sell groceries, cold drinks, meats and fishing tackle. Five years later they were informed that Highway 30 was being widened. The Oregon State Highway Department bought them out for \$10,000. In an interview with Evie, she said that they had three trailers behind the old store and gas station that they rented to ODOT workers, widening the highway. They were allowed to keep operating until the new store was completed. They moved across the highway into the new store in 1951. They lived above the store until they sold the store in 1970 to Joe Whitsett. The current owners are Dave and Jill Lawrence. They continue to provide good service to the community. After retiring, Fred and Evie's nephew, Gary Malcom, currently opens the Deer Island Store in the early morning hours and pumps gas and enjoys working and carrying on the legacy of good service that his aunt and uncle created.

Knowing the importance of preserving history, this is my way of honoring the memories of my uncle and aunt, Fred and Evie Foshaug. I am going to share Aunt Evie's memories and the memories of people whose lives they touched. Jack Zimmer worked for Fred and Evie for many years. Jack's daughter, Jackie, said that Fred was always teasing her and her sisters. Jackie's sister, Leona, told of how her young son loved it when Fred would put her son on his lap when he mowed the lawn. After the store was sold, Leona worked and lived upstairs at the Deer Island Store for 18 years. Leona always thought of them. she said every door knob, the original front doors that were all touched by Fred and Evie and her dad, reminded her of them when she touched the same ones for years. Leona remembers Aunt Evie driving over to the store and buying a newspaper and an ice cream. It was such a joy when she did.

My favorite early memory of visiting Uncle Fred and Aunt Evie's store was that my twin sister and I could pick out an ice cream or a pop. The pop was kept in one of those old coolers that was filled with water. I would pick out an ice-cold Orange Crush. I can still taste it to this day.

I asked Aunt Evie what stood out as her most memorable memory. She said it was when a local teenage boy came driving up to the store in front of the gas pumps and came in yelling "my car is on fire; my car is on fire." They quickly moved the car away from the gas pumps.

Jan, Aunt Evie's niece, rode her bicycle down Canaan Road every Saturday morning and crawled into bed with Aunt Evie and spent the day with her. Jan remembers just after the cement floor was poured in the new store, Fred and Evie let her invite her school friends to the store for a skating party. Fred and Evie also had a big party to celebrate opening the store. Fred and Evie did so much for the community. Fred was a volunteer fireman and built a storage building next to the store to house the fire truck. Every year Fred would help deliver boxes of groceries and a big turkey to people who needed extra help during the Christmas season. Teenage boys would come to the store asking for a job that they could do to earn enough money to take their girlfriends on a date. Fred would always find something for them to do. One time Fred needed to have a hole dug for a tank. There was a group of boys hanging out at the store, and he asked if they would be interested in the job. There was one boy who didn't ask how much they were going to be paid. His name was Cumin, and after graduating, he went to work for them full time. Fred and Evie loved kids and never had any of their own, but they managed to make an impression on many kids' lives.



Aunt Evie pumping gas into Dr. Kenney's car at their old gas station in early 1951.

Fred had ties to Rainier, and Evie had ties to Shilo Basin. Fred was born to Emma and Klaus Foshaug, March 20, 1921, at the Johnson/Foshaug family home in Rainier. The home was built by Fred's grandfather, Reinhart Johnson, in 1906 and was located at 922 W. "B" Street. The home was inhabited by Foshaug family members for 110 years until it was sold in 2017. Fred's first job was working at the Barbey Packing Co. where fish and beans were canned. The cannery was located on the waterfront behind the Old Rainier Bank. The narrow road that led back to the cannery was the drive-up teller entrance to the Bank of America. The cannery canned fish during the fishing season and beans in the summer. Fred was working at Longview Fibre when Evie and Fred were married, June 30, 1943. Evie worked for Fred and "Ma" Mathers at the Mathers Store in Kentucky Flats, just a block west of the Foshaug family home. (Some may know this store as Jack Brusco's first grocery store.)

Three years after being married and at the age of 25, they bought the original Deer Island Store from Evie's aunt and uncle for \$1,000 and moved to Deer Island.

Evie was born March 15, 1921, in Shilo Basin to Orville and Ethel Ola (Parmer) Malcom. In 1921, Rainier had its own hospital, located on the NW corner of W. First and C Street. (Kitty-corner to the Methodist Church).



Fred & Evie's new store on South side of Highway 30 as shown during construction in 1951.

Dr. Florence Ditto, from the Rainier Columbia Hospital, drove to their home in Shilo Basin, to deliver Aunt Evie. Evie's mom had baked a ham and made fresh bread to be prepared for the birthing event. Doctor Ditto enjoyed the ham and fresh bread and became so full she took off her corset. To Evie's mom's surprise, she discovered that Dr. Ditto was almost due to have her own child. Dr. Ditto gave birth to a baby girl, named Martha, about five days after she delivered Aunt Evie. Evie's dad worked away from home in a logging camp during the week. Evie remembers her mom loading her and her three sisters on the family horse and selling butter, cream and eggs to a nearby logging camp. Their family depended on their gentle horse to help them deliver their farm goods and make ends meet. One day the horse became tangled in barbed wire and tore a big flap of skin loose on his chest. Evie's mom cleaned the wound and stitched the skin back in place. The horse stood still never moving while her mom stitched him up.

Aunt Evie is 101 years old and living in an assisted living home in Clackamas. She is doing well and still sharp as a tack. Uncle Fred passed away October 12, 1994.

I hope this article encourages you to talk to your relatives and preserve your family memories.



Deer Island Store and gas station as it looks today. Photo by Kay Heflin.

New Museum Progress

By Duane Bernard, ROHM Vice President



We are proud to report that after many revisions and decisions, we are in the process of getting the final plans drawn and have started permit applications.

The grant committee has been hard at work on various grants, both large and small; sometimes successful, sometimes not. Donations have been far better than expected, but now we are committed and still need your help and money. We intend to build a museum you will be proud of, with construction probably starting in the spring. Please continue to help us by signing a pledge card, or becoming a life member, or remembering someone on the memorial plaque, etc. Now is a critical and exciting time for the Rainier Oregon Historical Museum (ROHM).

We Have Great News!

By Kay Heflin, ROHM President

The Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon has notified ROHM that out of a total of over 35 applicants, ROHM is among 17 grant applicants chosen to be endorsed and forwarded to the Oregon State Legislature for funding through the Cultural Resources Economic funds (CREF) for capital construction projects. We will be notified after June 2023, if the state legislature awards us our grant and how much we will be awarded.

Museum Dues

We have a good deal for you! Museum dues are being raised by \$5 beginning January 1, 2023. However, you can get the 2022 rate of \$20 for next year if you pay it this year. If you pay after December 31, you will get next year for \$25. If you are just joining the museum as a new member, you can have the rest of this year and next year for \$20 if you join before the end of the year. So, you may want to take advantage of this offer. Your payments may be mailed to ROHM, PO Box 762, Rainier, OR 97048, or you can drop them off at the museum on the 3rd floor of the Rainier City Hall on Saturdays from noon to four (except holiday weekends). A copy of the membership application/renewal form is included with this newsletter.

New ROHM Board Members Elected



Election was held for new ROHM board members at annual board meeting held September 8, 2022. Left to right, in front; Secretary Sherry Evans, Director (and Membership Chairman) Teresa Bentley, Director Debra Elliott, Treasurer Martha Van Natta, President Kay Heflin, and Director Tunie Betschart. Left to right in back; Director Matt Alexander, Director Delyla Laughlin, Vice President Duane Bernard. Photo by Robert Van Natta.

New ROHM Board Member Debra Elliott

I couldn't be more proud to be a new Rainier Oregon Historical Museum board member! I have been extremely impressed with both the commitment of this group and what they have accomplished in such a short time when it comes to realizing their goal to build the new Rainier Museum. As an avid history buff and museum lover, I am excited to be part of the team supporting the effort. (Debra is included in the above picture.)

I am a retired teacher and school administrator. Although I primarily grew up in and graduated from Warrenton, I have lots of memories of spending time with family and friends in St. Helens, Rainier, and Clatskanie. I have enjoyed living on Delena Mayger Road for over 40 years, but didn't know about the great resources that were available locally to learn more about the history of this area. The current museum has so much information! If you haven't visited it on the 3rd floor of Rainier City Hall on a Saturday afternoon recently, please consider checking it out. There are some great exhibits. You can also access everything from past yearbooks to archived pictures and newspapers. Who knows...you might find an article about or picture of a great-grandparent! I've had such fun going through those archives. And if you aren't a member of the museum, we can sign you up!

In memory of our ROHM members who have recently passed:

Claire Jenkins

Willard McCollam

Bob Johnson

Kenneth Vance

Linda Larson

Ron Wade



ROHM Booth at the Days in the Park Festival

Our booth (at right) was at the 2022 Rainier Days in the Park festival July 8, 9 and 10. Martha and Robert Van Natta took their turn greeting passersby who were interested in our town's history. The ROHM booth has been at each Days in the Park festival since 2016 except during the pandemic in 2020. Photo by Mike Clark.

All-Class Picnic, July 31

The All-Class picnic at the Hudson Parcher County Park, hosted by ROHM, was a success this year with approximately 130 attending. It is a favorite among Rainier High School Alumni to meet each other at least once a year. It is scheduled each year on the last Sunday of July. The raffle for a beautiful gift basket was held during the picnic, and Joanne Bernard was the winner. Photo by Kay Heflin.



Class of 57, clockwise left to right: Jan Prouty, Sherri Davis and Carolyn Pike.



ROHM Logging Event

The annual ROHM logging event was held September 10 at the City Hall. Logging has been Rainier's main industry starting in the mid-19th century until today. There were exhibits in the museum, and Jerry Kelly (at left) gave a presentation in the city chamber room of his "Tools of the Trade" logging tools and showed how each tool was used in logging years ago. The 1937 film "God's Country and the Woman," about competing lumber companies, was shown throughout the day. Games and educational toys were available for the children. Photos by Martha Van Natta.



Calendar of Events 2022

November 5 (Sat.) 9 - 2 PM	Fall Bazaar at the Rainier Senior Center. Baked goods, craft items and museum products.
November 12 (Sat.) Noon - 4 PM	Veterans Exhibit at the museum. Special exhibits with a military theme. Artifacts from local servicemen. Dozens of photos of local military members.
November 26 (Sat.) Noon - 4 PM	Will be open Saturday after Thanksgiving
December 24 (Saturday)	Closed Christmas Eve
December 31 (Saturday)	Closed New Year's Eve

NEW MEMBERS SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER

(through to October 10, 2022)

We have 279 memberships* now.

Carolyn Bennett
 Bernie Blunk
 Tom & Marianne Brusco
 James (Jamey) Clark
 Patrick Davis
 Jay & Alison Derum
 Debra Elliott
 Virginia Elliott
 Don Euhus
 Jim Gallien
 Donna Goebel
 Cynthia Johnson
 William Scott Jorgenson
 Donald L. Kalberer
 Rick Lance
 Kris Moore
 Charlene Niemala
 Todd Nofziger
 Art Norred
 Heather Paradiso
 Kathleen Pritchard
 Kerry Rea
 Linda Sarr
 Carolyn Samples

Brad Stafford
 Greg & Christina Teschner
 Marwayne Wagner
 Cheri Wells
 Chuck & Jennifer Williams
 William Womack

HONORARY MEMBERS

Columbia County Museum Association
 Steve and Jan Oliva
 Vernonia Pioneer Museum Association

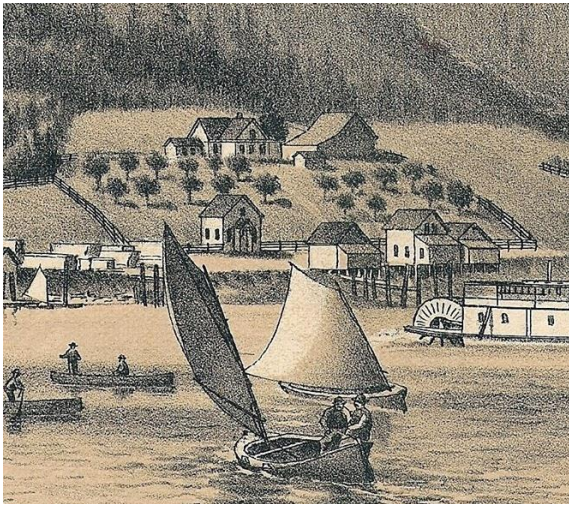
LIFETIME MEMBERS

Mike Avent
 Greg Beck
 Lawrence (Buzz) & Alice Beck
 Steve Beck (memorial)
 Harold & Elaine Davis
 Carol Girt
 William & Mary Harrison
 Mark & Sue Pitra
 Rainier Masonic Lodge #24
 Charles Skeans
 Dale Strom
 Teevin Bros.
 Pat Valpiani
 Robert & Martha Van Natta

* Memberships can be an individual member, a couple, or a family. All paid and honorary members will receive our newsletter.

Contact information: ROHM President Kay Heflin: kay-lynn2@hotmail.com or 360-751-7039.

This issue was produced by ROHM President Kay Heflin, Newsletter Editor Mike Clark, and Assistant Editor and Proofreader Martha Van Natta. Uncredited photos were contributed by interested parties.



The Dibblee house and barn as it looked in Rainier, Oregon at the time of the Merrill Blanchard's murder. The house still exists on the north side of Highway 30 and between East 3rd and 4th Streets.

The Murder of Merrill Blanchard A Rainier, Oregon Tragedy

Compiled by Mike Clark

On Sunday morning, December 26, 1886, Merrill Blanchard Jr. left his sister Sarah Dibblee's house. He had gone only a short distance, walking through a field, when he was approached by Thomas Sullivan. It was reported that Sullivan asked Merrill "Are you as good a man this morning as you were last night?" When Blanchard replied, "I guess so," Sullivan sprang at him with a two-edged dirk (a dagger) and stabbed him in the left side, four inches below the arm pit, near the heart. Sullivan then walked off. Blanchard staggered against a fence and two men assisted him into the Dibblee house.

An encounter between the two started the night before. Sullivan had shown up at Sarah's house drunk and insisted on sleeping on her porch. When Merrill ordered him to leave, Sullivan became belligerent and wanted to fight. It became necessary for Blanchard, who was a very strong athletic man, to punish Sullivan with severe blows and then eject him forcibly from the property.

Rainier was remote and had no doctor. A messenger was sent across the river to Freeport for the physician there, but he was too busy with critical cases to leave them. Two men then started after dark in a boat for St. Helens, about thirty miles distant, to secure Dr. Moore. However, Blanchard's condition quickly deteriorated. He had vomited blood during the night, and his prognosis was not good. He died the next day on Monday, December 27, at age 28. A telegraph was sent from Kalama to A. P. Delin & Company in Portland, and they sent a coffin to Rainier by boat.

Sullivan was about 30. He had been a sailor, but he had left the sea four months prior to the murder. He came to Rainier to seek employment at the shingle mills and logging camps. He was arrested the following Monday afternoon by Sheriff T. C. Watts, of Columbia County at his cabin seven miles back of Rainier. He offered no resistance when the sheriff came, and he volunteered no statement concerning the crime. Sheriff Watts first took the prisoner to St. Helens. But because there was no jail in Columbia County, Sullivan was transferred to a jail in Multnomah County. He was held there without bond until the next term of court.

Merrill came west from Maine and eventually settled in Seattle where his parents resided. He came to Rainier to visit his sister Sarah, wife of John Dibblee, and his half-brother Dean Blanchard, a very prominent Rainier businessman. Years after his death, it was rumored that Merrill was buried near the Dibblee house next to his young nephew, also named Merrill. But it was later revealed that Merrill's body had been taken to Seattle and buried at the Lake View (Masonic) Cemetery. Both his parents were also interned there: his mother Lucy Blanchard (in 1879) and father Merrill Blanchard (in 1889).

Thomas Sullivan was indicted by the grand jury of Columbia County for manslaughter and was tried in St. Helens May 19, 1887. He was convicted and sentenced to twelve years imprisonment at the state prison.

(note: the above article was extracted from eight newspaper accounts of the murder and conviction of Thomas Sullivan. The facts between the newspapers varied greatly. This was the best attempt to compile as close as possible what actually happened. Newspapers used: Morning Oregonian 12-29-1886 pg3, Statesman Journal 12-29-1886 pg3, The Oregon Weekly Statesman 12-31-1886 pg5&pg8, The Telephone=register 1-4-1887 pg2, The Vancouver Independent 1-5-1887 pg4, The Eugene City guard 1-22-1887 pg3, The Daily Morning Astorian 5-18-1887 pg1, The Democratic Times 6-3-1887 pg 4.)