



# Rainier Oregon Historical Museum

Established. 2015

Find us at “[www.rainiermuseum.org](http://www.rainiermuseum.org)”

Number 3

2018

## The Hammond Lumber Company

By Mike Clark



*The Hammond Lumber Company railway was built 1912. It was removed in 1918 after the completion of their logging operation. The 5 smoke stacks seen belonged to the OK (Oregon-Kansas) Lumber Co. that was renamed the Rainier Mill and Shingle Co. in 1910.*

South of Rainier, Oregon, stood a forest of millions of board feet of the finest fir in Columbia County. This caught the eye of the Hammond Lumber Company. To harvest it, and then transport it to the Columbia River, they decided the best course of action was to build a railway through Rainier, from the river front, south along Fox Creek up into the interior for several miles. On May 9, 1912, John Ayres, representing the Hammond Lumber Company met with the Rainier, Oregon, City Council where he presented a petition that would allow his company to do just that. The railway, as described in the petition, would be constructed on, over, under and across Union (now C) and Water (now A) Streets. They would take responsibility for changes in streets necessitated or caused by the performance of the work and for any damages to either persons or property. The petition asked for the right and privilege of the use of this right of way, for the period of twelve years.

Hammond Lumber Company at this time was one of the largest lumber companies on the West Coast, including the world's largest redwood lumber company and the world's largest lumber yard in Los Angeles. It was founded by Andrew B. Hammond in 1900. He was born in 1848 in Saint-Léonard, New Brunswick, Canada, left home at 16; and he worked in logging camps of Maine and Pennsylvania. He moved to Montana in 1867 where he worked as a woodcutter and as a store clerk. From there his futures took off. He became partner in a mercantile firm that became Missoula Mercantile Company, the largest mercantile between St. Paul and Portland. Hammond and his partners then received the contract to build the intermountain section of the Northern Pacific railway line, from Helena to Spokane. In the 1890s, Hammond moved to the West Coast and built two more railroads. By the time his company arrived in Rainier, they were already experienced in both logging and railway construction.

In February 1913 the Hammond Lumber Company began construction of their logging railway. From the river the track was elevated over an area mostly flooded during the winter then dropped down under the Fox Creek Bridge and went south along Fox Creek until it reached the summit of the divide after which it dropped off into the Beaver Valley Country at its terminus 8 miles away. A logging camp was then established. To use standard railway flat cars, the average grade of the track was 8 percent with a maximum curvature of 10 degrees.



*This is a detail from a postcard of a Hammond train delivering a load of logs. Water street (now A) was a board walk west of town that ran parallel with the main railroad tracks (if you look closely you can see pedestrians on it). B street (then called Commercial) did not cross Fox Creek. Written on the back of the post card; "This is a picture of the Hammond Lumber Co. railroad. They are on their way to the Columbia River with logs, they go down backwards. All the timber South is cut down for 1 1/2 miles."*



*The photo at left, looking northwest, shows the Hammond elevated railroad track ending at the river where the logs were unloaded. The tank shown near the end of the track held fuel oil for the steam locomotives. Oil was used as the main source of fuel rather than wood or coal. The photo at right, looking eastward, shows the track going under the Fox Creek Bridge. The Methodist Church can be seen in the upper right. The school house sat west of the tracks (from where this photo may've been taken).*

By June, 1914, the Hammond Lumber Co. doubled its output. They were using eleven donkeys working in the timber, and they added a new locomotive. A donkey steam engine was used to lift, drag, and move logs and also to load logs onto cars.



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*This postcard shows the Hammond elevated track as it continued south into the forest. Fox Creek can be seen at right. At the top of the steps, leading up to the house on the left, a woman can be seen brushing the hair of a young girl when magnified.*



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*The two photos show the Columbia Hospital opened by the Hammond Lumber Company to serve both the community and their company employees. They hired Dr. Henry Zophar Tharp (shown above) as it's Physician. Dr. Tharp stayed only for a short while, joining the Army during WWI. He worked as an army doctor, and his wife volunteered as a nurse both stateside. This house is located on the SW corner of West C St. and East 1<sup>st</sup> St. south of the old Odd Fellows Hall. Dr. Florence Ditto and her husband, Dr. Johnson Ditto, continued using the house as a hospital in the 1920s and later by Dr. Maurice Kenney.*

By 1918 the Hammond Lumber Company ceased operation, and they began to remove their railroad as agreed to with the city. They lifted the last of steel rails into Rainier on October 31. It took, however, several more weeks for the men to remove the heavy trestle work within the city limits. This part of the road was the most elaborate consisting of an overhead trestle over the S. P. & S. tracks through the city. In addition, all piling needed to be pulled, many of which are over 30 feet in length. A great deal of the equipment had been taken to Seaside where the company was building an extensive railroad logging system.

References: Photos 1, 2 & 5 contributed by Mike Clark. Photos 3 & 4 contributed by Tom McCaskey. Photos 6 & 7 and information on Dr. Tharp contributed by Byron Caloz. The Columbia County Historian Home Page: Hammond Lumber Company. Andrew B. Hammond-Wikipedia.

# Museum News

By ROHM President Kay Heflin



It's been a busy summer for our museum. In April we had standing room only for the unveiling of the model ferry boat, Elsinore. We continue to collect local logging pictures and history of the local mills and logging operations. We have extended the logging exhibit until next spring when we will have a special open house. Currently you can visit the museum and see the logging incline and displays of local logging mills from the early 1900's. We will be adding to the logging exhibit throughout the winter.

The Longview model train club will be adding a diorama of the logging incline soon. If you have any logging items or pictures or history, bring them in to our museum any Saturday from noon to 4:00 P.M. We would especially like pictures of past or present local loggers.

## Rainier Days in the Park

Our museum had a booth at the Rainier Days in the Park in July. We accepted the mayor's request to appoint a grand marshal for 2018, and we chose John Stennick. Our Vice President, Duane Bernard, drove John in the parade in Duane's 1928 Model A Ford with Joanne Bernard riding in the rumble seat.



## Rainier Alumni All-Class Picnic

ROHM hosted the Rainier All-Class picnic the last Sunday in July. We are still receiving praise and compliments about how attendees enjoyed the picnic, and they were grateful that the museum took over the responsibility of the picnic. There were over two hundred alumni and their spouses who attended the picnic. We added a history table with albums showing class photos from Rainier, Hudson, Fern Hill and surrounding communities. The logging incline exhibit was on display, and we had yearbook CD's for sale and other

history-related items. This was our first year to host the alumni all-class picnic. We are already planning what we can do to make it better next year. This year we brought in a portable restroom. We had it installed close to the picnic area so attendees wouldn't have to walk so far to the parks restrooms. Our board is already addressing the need to add another ice table for cold food and ways to make the lines for signing in move faster.



## **Our Museum Needs Your Help!**

In our last newsletter we announced that we were beginning to take donations for a building fund. We are still taking donations for the building fund, and an account for this purpose has been opened. However, it could take some time to raise enough money to purchase a larger location. We need to have more members volunteer to help do the work necessary to keep the museum operating. We need members with computer skills and volunteers willing to work on projects and work once every six weeks, or so, when the museum is open on Saturdays from noon to 4 P.M. Please contact our museum at [rainiermuseum@hotmail.com](mailto:rainiermuseum@hotmail.com) or Ph. 360-751-7039, or come in to the museum any Saturday and talk to us.

## **Annual Membership Meeting**

By Martha Van Natta

The Rainier Oregon Historical Museum is holding its annual membership meeting on Thursday, September 13, 2018, at the Rainier Museum at Rainier City Hall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor from 1:00 to 2:00 P.M. We will be considering an amendment to the bylaws to expand the board from seven to nine. All members are invited to attend beginning promptly at 1:00 P.M.

The following positions are up for election:

Vice President - Incumbent, Duane Bernard, plus any nominations from the floor

Director #3 - Incumbent, Rick Burnham, plus any nominations from the floor

Secretary - To be filled by nominations from the floor (contingent on the bylaw change)

Director #4 - To be filled by nominations from the floor (contingent on the bylaw change)

Director #5 - To be filled by nominations from the floor (contingent on the bylaw change)

Election is to be held immediately after the nominations are closed.

Please come and give us a hand. We need your input and help to keep the museum running at an optimum level.

If you are interested in any of these positions, please plan to attend. We need your votes and your help.

## Recognition of Our Local Veterans

The Rainier Oregon Historical Museum will be honoring our local veterans on Saturday, November 10, 2018, from noon until 4:00 P.M. We are currently adding 27 new additions to last year's veterans' photos. If you have any family members whom you would like to have honored in this year's event, send your photos to [kaylynn2@hotmail.com](mailto:kaylynn2@hotmail.com) or bring them by the museum on a Saturday. We welcome military photos of anyone who lived in Rainier or its surrounding communities. Please include their military photo, rank, and information on where and in which war they served. We also would like snapshots or any other information about their service. We will make a TV video of the snapshots and an album. A CD of all the Veterans will be available to purchase.

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### ROHM Board Member

Carl Nys



I was born at Cowlitz General Hospital in 1940 and grew up on a stump ranch in Fern Hill, and attended Fern Hill school for 4 years. I then was sent to Rainier Elementary because of school consolidation and damage to Fern Hill school because of the earthquake. I then went to Rainier Union High School and graduated in 1958 then attended Lower Columbia Junior College 2 years and then went on to OCE (now Western Oregon State University) graduating in 1962. I then taught school in Brookings, Oregon for a year before moving to Longview in 1963 and began longshoring and holding many offices in ILWU Local 21 the next 30+ years, retiring in 2000. I married Linda Mason of Rainier in 1960. We have 3 children, 9 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren, none of which live in the local area. I have a brother, Paul, who has a farm on the Meissner Road and had a sister Janet and brother David both deceased. My brother, Paul, and I spent most of our early years with our dad, Donald Nys, accompanying him on his many logging and sawmilling ventures in the 50's in Columbia County, so we learned about logging at an early age.

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### Grateful Museum Thanks Blahm Estate



The museum was very surprised, thrilled and extremely grateful to receive a generous bequest from the Estate of Heather Penny Blahm in June. The museum will put this money to good use.

Penny was a long-time resident of Rainier, as well as a Rainier High School social studies teacher and later a counselor for the Rainier Middle School. She was responsible for beginning the Rainier golf team and volunteered to teach it even after she retired. She was a fierce advocate for her students whom she loved, very generous with her time, serving on the school board after retiring from her counseling duties. She was a straight shooter when asked her opinion and was altruistic to the bone. She volunteered on several boards and she loved her Bunco gals, playing with the same group for 32 years. She loved animals, especially her cats and her dog. She worked diligently to make Rainier a better place.

Her daughter-in-law, Janice Blahm, and Jan's mother, Nola Russell, are charter members of the museum. Penny was a member as well.

## New Membership

We now have a membership of 112 (that includes two honorary members) as of the end of August 2018. New members who recently joined us:

Tunie Betschart  
Vince & Kathy Cooney  
Bob & Linda Johnson  
Pat Lincoln  
Sandy & Judy Lincoln  
Donna Massey  
Morris Pike  
John & Hazel Sanders  
Larry Will

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## Monetary Donations

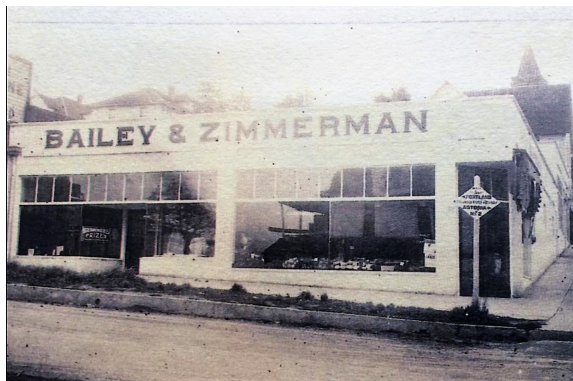
We are grateful to the people and organizations who have donated to the Rainier Oregon Historical Museum between June 2018 thru August 2018. Their gifts have made it possible for our museum to continue to grow.

Estate of Penny Blahm  
Dale Fisher  
Bob & Linda Johnson  
Sandy & Judy Lincoln  
Donna Massey

John and Hazel Sanders  
Frank Strong  
Sonja Uihlien  
Jan Wolz

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## Then and Now



*Bailey & Zimmerman's grocery opened in October 1925 at a newly constructed building at the SE corner of East 1st St. and East B Street (Hwy 30). In 1928 they sold their business to the Rainier Mercantile Co. that stayed at that location until relocating in 1934. Hallberg's grocery, then moved in from "A" Street. Hallberg's remained there for 42 years until it was sold in 1976 by Roland Curteman (the owner at the time). For a short time it was the Mountain View Market. The building is now occupied by Bell Studios. This was also the site of the K.P. (Knights of Pythias) Hall that burned down in 1916. The "Then" photo provided by Margaret Barton-Ross.*



# RAINIER OREGON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Established. 2015

[www.rainiermuseum.org](http://www.rainiermuseum.org)

## Membership Application

Memberships for current members are not due until December 31, 2018. You will be notified in the end of the year newsletter.

**Thank You to all our members who continue to support our museum. You make it possible for our museum to exist.**

*I would volunteer to work in the museum or at museum events, yes\_\_ no\_\_*

*Individual \_\_ or Family \_\_ membership \$20 \_\_\_\_\_*

*Gift membership \$20 \_\_\_\_\_*

*\* Tax deductible donation:*

*Building fund donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or regular donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_*

*Total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_*

*Print Name \_\_\_\_\_*

*Address \_\_\_\_\_*

*City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_*

*Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_*

*Newsletters sent to you by: email \_\_ or by mail \_\_*

*Signature \_\_\_\_\_*

**Enclose your check with this form and mail to: ROHM**

**P.O. Box 762**

**Rainier OR 97048**

*\*Contributions above the membership fee is a tax deductible charitable donation. ROHM is a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization. Our tax ID # is 47-5361161.*

- Our yearly membership runs from January 1 through December 31. If you have any questions contact President of ROHM, Kay Heflin, at [kay-lynn2@hotmail.com](mailto:kay-lynn2@hotmail.com), cell# 360-751-7039 or Vice President, Duane Bernard at [jdmbarnard@msn.com](mailto:jdmbarnard@msn.com), Ph.# 503-556-9661.*