



# Rainier Oregon Historical Museum

Established. 2015

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Number 4

2019

## RINEARSON SLOUGH (a)

By HILDA SCHREIBER



(b)

In West Rainier there is a slough that winds its way below the hillside, west of the Longview Bridge approach, for a distance of four miles as the crow flies, to the end of West Rainier where it empties into the Columbia River. Today it is no more than a large drainage ditch which is its present purpose. It catches the drainage from the hills flanking it and the tidal waters from the river and is controlled by river dikes and a modern pumping system. This is what is now referred to as Rinearson Slough.

There was a time before such modern control methods that the slough was very different and of much more importance. Before 1898, during the days of the trading boats, there was a landing place in the yard of a family living along the slough. Their name was Perrine and for that reason, it was then called Perrine Slough. Earlier, a man by the name of Major Rinearson made a home on the hillside just west of the bottom land and planted flowers and shrubs to beautify his place. Although he moved away before 1880, the plantings remained and young folks would row down the slough to picnic there and enjoy the beauty. It soon began to be referred to as Rinearson Slough. On old documents it was referred to by either name.

This slough was of importance as a means of transportation also, for it was a connecting link with the Hudson Community. People from Rainier or the Washington side of the river wishing to go to picnics or other reasons in Hudson, came down the slough in boats and walked up the hillside to their destination. A story is told of how young H. R. Dibblee carried custard pies up the hill to a picnic, tripped and fell just as he reached the location.

A wood burning trading boat owned by Johnson and Johnson, as well as other boats, would come up to the slough to Perrine's landing with household needs to sell or trade with the people. The people of the Hudson Community would come down a road that had been an old Indian trail in the past and hauled their supplies with oxen and sled. This road began where the Beaver Valley Grange hall is located and went through the Burn's (Lowe) place and crossed the Johnson (Schreiber) place down the hill.

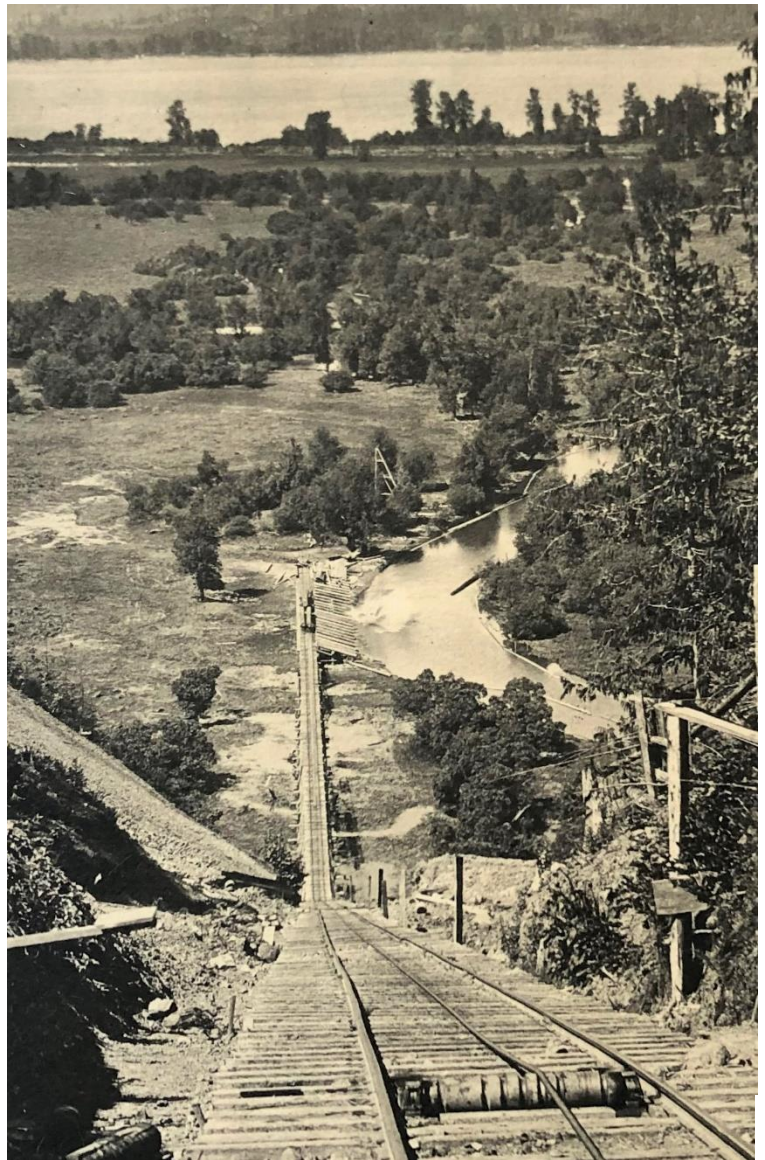
The slough was used also in these early days to get logs to market. The trees that grew near the banks of the slough were hand logged and sometimes a log jack had to be used to roll them down the hill into the slough. In 1898, Peterson's brought in locomotives and donkeys (1). They used a chute to get the logs over the hill, but this method was discontinued because there was so much damage to the logs.

In 1901 or 1902, John Yeon and Pelton came along and built an incline from the top of the hill to the water. It was 3200 feet long and varied from 5 to 33 per cent grade. Two and later three trucks loaded with logs and controlled by a large cable from an engine at the top of the hill were dumped into the slough from a rollway by the men who had come down the hill on the load of logs (2). The tidal action of the river was the power that took the logs to the mouth of the slough where they were made into rafts to be towed away by river boats. Logs were taken this way until the fall of 1911.

At least once a year when the snows melted in the mountains, the river would be high and flood the whole bottom. Both sides of the slough were bordered with boom sticks to keep from losing the logs and extra boom sticks were placed so as to keep the incoming tide from bringing the logs back from where they came. These sticks were fastened only on one end which left them free to swing with the tide and so block the passage as the tide came in. A man on patrol saw that the logs moved freely to the river.

The land through which the slough ran was used by H. R. Dibblee to pasture cattle when the water was low. When high water came, he would move the cattle to land on the hillside.

Late in 1912 the Portland Lumber Company built a switch back railroad. With a locomotive[,] logs were hauled down to the slough, three loads in front and three loads behind. Robert Johnson operated the first unloading donkey. This means of logging continued until about 1920.



When the Northern Pacific Railroad was completed through the bottom in 1898, a railroad bridge was built over the mouth of the slough where there was a flag station. With the service of four trains a day there was always someone coming or going from the Rinearson stop. Besides the train station, there was a camp warehouse, cook house, bunk house and an oil tank. There were also boat houses along the slough bank where workmen and their families lived.



The slough was diked in 1921 when the logging was finished. Later a pumping system was installed and other improvements made. This diking and flood control has made a great difference in the land along the slough which is used for dairy grazing, mint growing and general farming.

After the logging activity came to an end, the station was called Tryon. Today at the mouth of Rinearson Slough there is a little marina where small river craft are moored.

(d)

Notes: (1) A donkey, or donkey engine, was used to lift, drag, and move logs. (2) "Trucks" were a set of railroad wheels with a log bunk and stakes attached, not unlike a modern-day log trailer used behind a modern-day log truck.

References: (a) Reprinted with permission from the Columbia County Historical Society Publication, Volume X 1971. (b) Log raft in Rinearson Slough, by permission from the Oregon Historical Society. (c) Photo of the Yeon and Pelton Incline looking north towards the Columbia River. Logs can be seen being dumped into Rinearson slough below (Mike Clark collection). (d) House boat on the Rinearson Slough, hand dated March 28 1914 (Mike Clark collection).

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## President's Report

### by Kay Heflin

This year our museum had a very busy and productive year. I want to commend and thank our board members for their hard work during the events that we held during 2019. Each and every one contributed and dedicated their time to make our museum a success. I couldn't ask for a better group of people with whom to work. Because of our events and the persistence of our Treasurer, Martha Van Natta, our membership has grown from 126 to 170 members in 2019. Thank you for renewing your membership each year and supporting our museum. Coming in the future is a historic walking tour of Rainier. Mike Clark, our Historian, and I, are working with Alan Hulsopple to create this.

### Rainier Oregon Historical Museum - 2019 A Year in Review

**June 22:** "Meet and Greet" event for Grand Marshall Margie Clark

**July 12 through July 14:** Booth at Rainier Days in the Park and hosted Grand Marshall Margie Clark in the parade.

**Sunday, July 28:** This was the third year our museum has hosted the Rainier All-Class Alumni Picnic at Hudson Park. Mark the last Sunday in July on your calendar for 2020.

**Saturday, September 7:** The 1937 movie, "God's Country and the Woman," with scenes from Prescott, and the Clark and Wilson Mill at Prescott, the Toutle River, and Mt. St. Helens was shown in the city chambers room at the Rainier City Hall. Upstairs in the museum was our logging exhibit and a presentation by Kay Heflin about the Simon Benson Cigar rafts. Due to the success of this event, the board has voted to repeat the event next September.

**September 19:** ROHM Annual Meeting and election of officers.

I was re-elected to serve four more years as President of ROHM.

Teresa Bentley was appointed as position Director #2.

Delyla Laughlin was appointed as Director #3.

**October 22 & 23:** Rainier Elementary classrooms visits

**November 2:** Fall Bazaar at Rainier Senior Center

**November 9:** Veterans Exhibit. Thank you to our board members, Martha VanNatta, Tunie Betschart, Rick Burnham, Duane Bernard and Delyla Laughlin for doing a wonderful job decorating and setting up our Veteran Exhibit. It turned out beautifully. Also, thank you to volunteers Pat (Hadlock) Valpiani, Larry Will and Joanne Bernard.

198 Veteran photos and snapshots were on display. You can purchase a CD of all the Veteran photos for \$5.00 at the museum on the third floor of Rainier City Hall from noon until 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays or contact me at kay-lynn2@hotmail.com. This CD would make a great Christmas present.

The best of holidays to you and a Happy New Year. Thank you for your continued support of our museum.

Kay Heflin, President of ROHM.



On September 7 ROHM held its annual logging exhibit. The photo at the left is a father and son trying out the remote-control log Grapple. At right Kay Heflin did a presentation about the Simon Benson Cigar rafts.



On September 19 ROHM board members and newly elected officers for 2020: Front row left to right; President Kay Heflin, Vice President Duane Bernard, Treasurer Martha Van Natta, Director Tunie Betschart, and Secretary Sherry Evans. Back row: Left to right; Director Delyla Laughlin, Director Rick Burnham, Director Carl Nys and Director Teresa Bentley.



On October 22 & 23, two Rainier Elementary second grade classes and two third grade classes visited the museum to learn about Rainier History. Jerry Kelly displayed historic items for the children to see and examine: shoes, hammers, vacuum cleaners, canes and a corn sheller. Board members Duane Bernard and Sherry Evans presented Rainier history and early pictures of Rainier to the students. Jerry and Huong Kelly, and Martha and Robert Van Natta assisted the children in learning about the antique items.



On November 9 ROHM held its annual Veterans Exhibit. Photos of Rainier veterans were on display as shown in the photo at left. At right, Rainier Veteran Mike Tolleshaug views his family's military pictures. He also saw his grandfather's army helmet with a dent by a bullet.



### New Display Cases

On November 19, volunteers drove to the OHS (Oregon Historical Society) Vault in Gresham, to pick up display cases for the museum. Left to right is Larry Will, Rick Burnham, Janet Wisdom, and Duane Bernard. Janet Wisdom is the Facilities Coordinator at the OHSU warehouse.



**Congratulations to Larry Will!** Larry was voted ROHM's Volunteer of the Year. He is always willing to work when asked. At the December 12 board meeting, Duane Bernard presented Larry (at right) a 2020 ROHM membership and certificate for a meal at the Cornerstone Restaurant. Thank you, Larry. We appreciate all your help.

## ROHM Director Teresa Bentley

I was born in Longview, Washington. I attended school there, graduating from Mark Morris High School in 1968. I went to the University of Washington where I graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology in 1972. I worked with senior citizens in nursing homes for two years. Planning to go back to school and earn a master's degree in social work, I took a job at Longview Fibre Company to finance my further education. As time passed, I came to enjoy my job and the financial benefits that it gave me. I also developed some good friendships, and I met the love of my life and future husband, Lowell Bentley. I moved in with Lowell on Christmas Eve of 1979. We were married in 1981 at our home in Rainier. Thus, began a lifelong adventure of learning to live with a Norwegian! We have enjoyed camping and hunting—especially in Eastern Oregon. I like gardening and canning the produce from the garden. I fell in love with Rainier, and I have been involved in several volunteer efforts locally. I am honored to be on the board of directors of the Rainier Oregon Historical Museum.

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### OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

(8-15-19 through 12-5-19)

We have 170 members now.

Amy & Jim Everman  
Carl Ferguson  
Claire Jenkins  
Rachel Kelley

Jim & Karen Larson  
Darlene Pearce  
Rosemary Scandale  
Dave Scott

Steve Scott  
Jake Watkins

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### WE CHALLENGE YOU

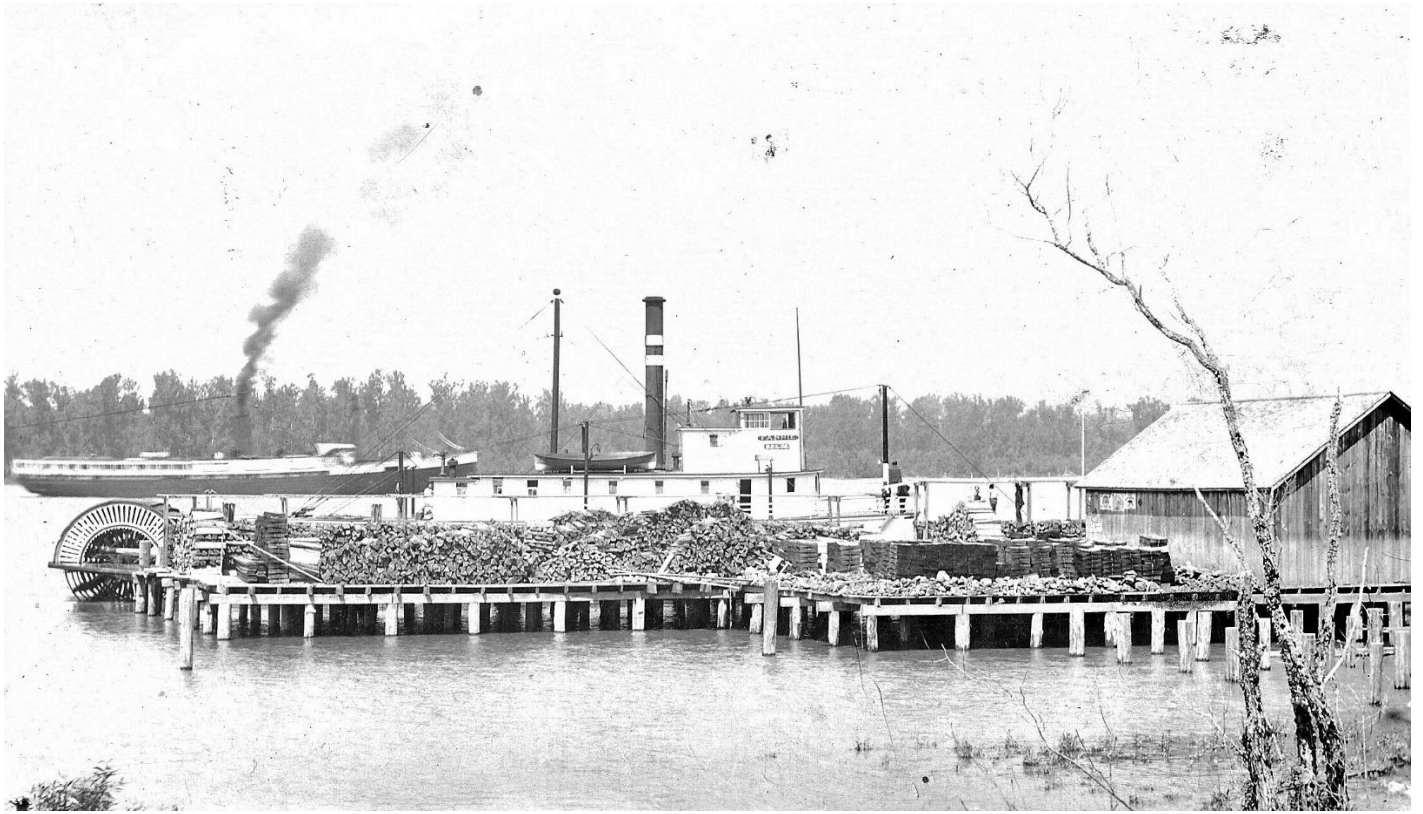
We hope you will like our "new" newsletter. The board voted recently to try this route one time to see what kind of feedback we get. I think you'll agree it is an improvement. Our main reason for trying this is hopefully to make Martha's, Kay's and Mike's jobs easier. Yes, it will cost more. But to avoid being too rough on our budget, my wife, Joanne, and I are paying for this first issue (about \$200). But we are challenging you, the members, to accept our challenge to pay for future issues. Mike usually puts out three issues per year, and I'm hoping that some of our members will choose to pay for at least some of them. I promise to twist his arm a bit to see that you get adequate recognition in each issue you sponsor. We can put out a beautiful color, professional newsletter without costing us too much, and also make some of our jobs easier. Thank you.

Duane Bernard, Vice President

Joanne Bernard

### A Historical Meeting

November 18, 2019, was a historic day for our museum. Several board members have been searching for a new location for the museum for a couple years - either a suitable building that we could afford or the right location on which to build in the future. We feel we need a place to expand, although we're very grateful to the city of Rainier for the space provided. We've met several times with dignitaries and others to no avail, until recently! Mayor Jerry Cole mentioned this to Rainier School Superintendent Michael Carter, and the stage was set. The "search committee," Martha Van Natta and I, met with Michael Carter and Jerry Cole in October. This was followed by several board members, Martha Van Natta, Teresa Bentley, Rick Burnham and I, meeting with the Rainier School District Board on November 18. After a brief explanation of what we needed, the school board voted unanimously to proceed. We anticipate a long-term ground lease on the Rainier School District campus. The mutual agreement will benefit the museum and the school kids of this area for year to come - A win-win situation! - Duane Bernard, Vice President



Steamer "Fannie" loading wood at the Deitz Wharf – 1894 (from the Tom McCaskey collection)