



Rainier Oregon Historical Museum

Established. 2015

Find us at “www.rainiermuseum.org”

Number 3

December 2020

President’s Report
By President Kay Heflin

Land Donated to ROHM for a New Building



Ground breaking for a ROHM building October 28, 2020 on property donated by Steve and Jan Oliva. Left to right; ROHM President Kay Heflin, Treasurer Martha Van Natta, Director Delyla Wildfong Laughlin, Secretary Sherry Evans, Columbia County Commissioner Margaret Magruder, ROHM Vice President Duane Bernard and Rainier Mayor Jerry Cole. Photo by Joanne Bernard.

The Rainier Oregon Historical Museum was thrilled when Steve and Jan Oliva generously donated property to ROHM to be used for a new museum. The property is located at 708 West A Street, (near the Rainier Senior Center). ROHM received the deed on September 21. This wonderful gift will have a huge impact on our museum and its future. Ground breaking was held on October 28, 2020.



Jason Schmidt of JRS Trucking donated his time and equipment to excavate the land. Jason worked very hard for a day and a half clearing brush and trees. His work was very much appreciated, and we highly recommend Jason if you have a need for any land clearing or hauling.

Vice President of ROHM, Duane Bernard, organized a work party and equipment to finish the clearing of the property on October 31, 2020. Those

Work party clearing property for a new museum October 31, 2020

helping were; Alan Bozarth, Ron Fadden, Dave Scott, Mike Clark, Rick Vance, Lowell and Teresa Bentley, Dan Bernard, Marvin Wilburn, Larry Will, Jerry Kelly, Robert Van Natta, and Duane Bernard. Dorian Graff donated the use of a chipper for the day, and Dave Scott donated \$20 to pay for the diesel. ROHM wishes to thank, Dave, Dorian and all the volunteers who came to help and especially Vice President, Duane Bernard, who worked tirelessly making phone calls and working with the City and County until we had a deed in ROHM's name.

Funding for our building is already under way. Our current balance is \$16,221. We have a long way to go to raise enough money to start building our museum, but we are greatly encouraged by those who have voiced support. If you would like to donate to our building fund, you can send a tax-exempt donation to ROHM, P.O. Box 762, Rainier, OR 97048. Make a note on your check that it is for the Rainier Museum Building Fund. All donations are very much appreciated.

A Brief History of ROHM and Our Future

The museum started with a single filing cabinet. In 2013 Mike Clark asked Rainier Mayor Jerry Cole if the city could purchase a filing cabinet so he could organize historical documents and photos that were spread across several shelves in the city library so Mike could place them into a cabinet for safe keeping. Later, Mike connected with Kay Heflin on social media. Both agreed that a museum was needed for Rainier. So, on July 12, 2015, Mike, Kay, Martha Van Natta and Rick Burnham met at Marjorie Clark's home to discuss starting a museum. Also attending was Barbara Larsen, invited by Kay. Barbara was with the city of Vernonia and Columbia County Museums, and she showed us what forms to file with the state and federal government to become a non-profit organization. A second meeting was held on August 14, also at Marjorie Clark's home, for further discussion. Those attending; Mike, Kay, Judy Lepin, Carl Pellham and Rick Burnham settled on the name Rainier Oregon Historical Museum and voted on officers. Kay was chosen as President, Martha Van Natta (who wasn't present) as Vice President, Judy as Secretary and Mike as Treasurer. Kay soon filed for our incorporation and tax exemption status. The museum was incorporated on September 23, 2015. Tax exemption status was granted on October 20, 2015. Soon after that, we sent a one-page newsletter out with the Rainier City water bill; and people started joining the museum.

In July 2017 the museum moved into a newly remodeled room on the third floor of Rainier City Hall. We were very grateful that Mayor Jerry Cole and the city allowed us to use this space. The astonishing success of the museum has caused us to outgrow this space quickly. A great number of historical items have been donated, and we're now lacking the space needed for archiving and the additional display cases for exhibits.

ROHM has also been involved with community activities and projects. Starting in 2018 the museum has sponsored both the All-School Alumni Picnic and the choosing of the Grand Marshal for the Days in the Park parade. We have had a booth at the Rainier Days in the Park. We have held many events including a logging event, events to honor veterans, and an event to remember the Elsinore, a boat that ferried workers back and forth between Longview and Rainier. Also, with the help of Rick Burnham, Jerry Kelly, and others, we held classes at the museum to teach local history to school children who were visiting from Hudson Elementary.



Now as we plan our new museum, we can design it to meet our needs. There will be room for displays, archiving, a library for both history and genealogy, a computer room for research, and a meeting room that can double as a classroom. We are currently talking with the Rainier Fire Department to potentially display the Rainier Fire Department's 1936 fire truck at the new museum. It has been beautifully restored, and we hope to use it to transport the Grand Marshal in future Rainier Days parades.

Current Museum Projects

ROHM will apply for a grant to pay for hiring an inspector to evaluate the cost and what repairs are needed to preserve the Hudson Community Church. Once we know the cost to preserve the church, the museum board will decide if it will move forward or abandon the project. The Hudson Community Church is an important part of the Hudson history. Built in 1909, the church was a gathering place for the community for many years. Church services, weddings, funerals and meetings were held in the building. The mission of our museum is to preserve the history of Rainier and its surrounding communities.



ROHM has had to delay working with ODOT to open up the section of the old Columbia River Highway (Highway 30), from the Little Jack Falls Road to Little Jack Falls. There will be a meeting with the residents living on Little Jack Falls Road, to air concerns that they have about opening this section of Columbia River Highway to bikes and foot traffic.

The repairs and leveling of 30 headstones at the Woodbine and Knight of Pythias cemeteries has been completed. There are seven additional headstones to be repaired by the Rainier Cemetery Sexton. These repairs were made possible by the grant received from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) Heritage Program. The Rainier Museum will continue to work with the Rainier Cemetery by applying for another grant that will be used for further improvements to the Rainier Cemetery Districts 13 cemeteries. You can save \$150 if you purchase a gravesite before January 1, 2021, by contacting the Rainier Cemetery District at 503-556-9697 or office@rainiercemeterydistrict.com. The levy for the cemetery district failed in the 2020 November 3 election. They are in dire need of funds to make improvements to the cemeteries. If you would like to donate money to the cemetery district for improvements, you can send your donation to ROHM, PO Box 762, Rainier, OR. 97048. Make a note on your check for "Rainier Cemetery Fund."



This is an example of a "before and after" headstone repair made with the Cemetery grant. Photos by Judy Lepin.

Museum News

The Rainier Historical Museum welcomes our newest board member, Alice Beck. Our board is looking forward to having Alice on our board. She will be a great asset to our museum. Alice will be replacing former board member, Carl Nys, who had to resign his position for personal reasons. We will miss Carl and all the special things he has made for our museum including a frame for the donated stained-glass sign from Betty's Fashions clothing store and a display partition for photographs. Carl left his mark on our museum, and we were grateful to have him as a board member.

Mike Kreger of the Masonic Lodge was a special guest at our November 12 board meeting. Mr. Kreger presented our museum with a check for \$500 from the Masonic Lodge for the ROHM building fund. This is a wonderful gift, and it is very much appreciated by the ROHM board. Mr. Kreger also became the 200th member of the Rainier Oregon Historical museum.

We appreciate all members who have faithfully renewed their annual memberships and who have helped to support the museum. Your membership makes it possible for our museum to exist and grow. Each and every membership to ROHM is important to our museum. We also want to thank Delbert Granlund for paying for the printing of this newsletter. If you would like to sponsor the printing of a newsletter, contact Duane Bernard at 503-556-9661.

Each of you take care and stay safe during this terrible pandemic.

President of ROHM, Kay Heflin

Wishing you all a joyful holiday season and a very Happy New Year from our museum board: President Kay Heflin, Vice President Duane Bernard, Treasurer Martha Van Natta, Secretary Sherry Evans, Directors Rick Burnham, Teresa Bentley, Delyla Laughlin, Alice Beck, Tunie Betschart, and Museum Historian and newsletter editor Mike Clark.

New ROHM Logo



A new logo for the Rainier Oregon Historical Museum has been adopted by the museum board. It was designed by Alan Hulsopple. He provided several versions with the one shown above as the one chosen. The two-man crosscut saw represents Rainier's logging history, and the ship's wheel represents Rainier's maritime history.

Rainier Mineral Soap makes a comeback



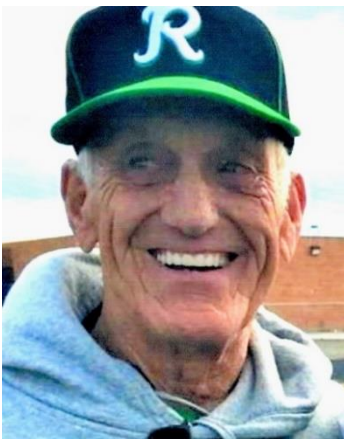
The Rainier Oregon Historical Museum recreated a popular soap that was manufactured in Rainier in the first half of the 20th century. This was meant to be a souvenir to be sold at our Rainier Days in the Park booth and at the museum. But a funny thing happened. People who bought the soap, used it, and they were surprised by the results. Requests for more bars have been received, and ROHM has decided to have more produced as long as there is a need. One of the testimonials we received is as follows:

“A Client of mine gave me a bar and it is the best soap I have ever used. I have severe allergies, and I get rashes, I also have eczema. I have yet to find a bar of soap that I could use until I tried this soap, it cleared up my rash and eczema within 3 days. Thank you.” Tobi Damewood

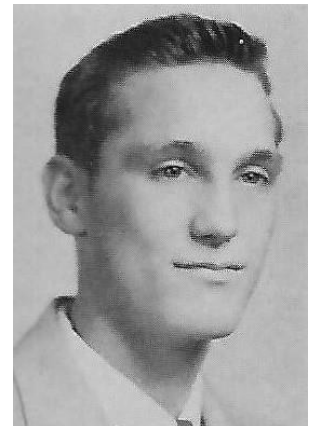
For anyone interested in this soap, please contact Kay Heflin at the following e-mail kay-lynn2@hotmail.com for details on purchasing. All money collected goes to the museum fund.

In Memoriam

Loyed Allen Rea



Loyed Allen Rea was the 2020 Grand Marshall for the Rainier Days parade that was held on July 11. Sadly, he passed away on Nov. 6, 2020. Loyed was born in Rainier on March 11, 1936. He attended Rainier schools and was a standout athlete. He was chosen by ROHM to be Grand Marshall in appreciation for his commitment to the community. His family said that he was very honored for the recognition.



Darlene T. Rea

ROHM member Darlene T. Rea passed away on November 21, 2020. She was born in Rainier September 21, 1938. She was involved in Rainier activities and her late husband "Mick" of 63 years and she were well liked in the community. She will be dearly missed.



The 1918 Flu Pandemic in Rainier, Oregon

By Mike Clark

Between 1918 and 1920, history's deadliest pandemic claimed the lives of approximately 50 million people worldwide and 675,000 in the United States. Nearly 200,000 Americans died from the "Spanish flu" in October 1918 alone, making it the deadliest month in the country's history. Scientists aren't sure where the Spanish flu originated, but troop movements towards the end of World War I help spread it globally. The name Spanish flu came from the fact that Spain was the only European country to have openly reported the flu, while the other countries suppressed the seriousness of the epidemic.

The first case in Portland was reported early in October 1918, and at the same time the virus was quietly spreading throughout the cities and backcountry of rural Columbia County. There were many questions about this new virus, but it appeared to start with a fever and the symptoms of a common cold. It had a particularly severe effect on the upper respiratory system, causing difficulty breathing, and it often resulted in a lethal form of pneumonia that caused the lungs to fill with blood. Many vulnerable citizens became victims of this deadly virus, including children and the elderly, but it also spread quickly among the healthy population of young and active individuals without underlying health conditions.

The severity of the flu epidemic reached the front page of the October 17, 1918, issue of the Rainier Review. It featured the headline, "INFLUENZA STILL GAINING" that reported 85 new cases in Portland (bringing the total to 587). Portland established an emergency hospital at the Public Auditorium and asked that other towns to care for their own patients because Portland was now overflowing. Another headline "UNCLE SAM GIVES SPANISH FLU ADVICE" gave a thorough explanation of the origin of the illness, how it spread, the symptoms and what precautions to take. And sadly, the headline "SPANISH INFLUENZA TAKES RAINIER BANKER" reported the death of Carleton Lewis. He organized the State Bank of Rainier in 1906, and he was the current president. He contracted the flu on his way home from Maine where he had been called on the account of the illness and death of his father. He passed away shortly after his return to his farm near Warren. He was very charitable and well-liked by the community. This same issue offered these suggestions; "The Spanish influenza does not like lemons. The drinking of lemonade by those threatened with the disease is advocated by those who claim to know" and "In order to avoid Spanish influenza do not live in rooms with a temperature below 65 or above 72." But one was more of a warning than a suggestion "Don't think the "flu" is for the other fellow and not for you. The only person who is immune is the one who observes simple health rules. Break these rules and the flu may break you."

The following week, in the October 24 issue, the headline read: "SPANISH INFLUENZA IS CURBED HERE, REPORTS OF NEW CASES IN RAINIER AND BACK COUNTRY FEWER." It stated that Rainier appeared to have met the Spanish influenza right at the proper time by closing all public meetings and schools. There had been fewer cases reported in Rainier than any other city in Columbia County, with no deaths recorded from the disease up to that time. However, about 20 cases of bad colds and grippe had been recorded, but doctors who were attending those cases stated that they had been light and in no way serious. A general improvement in most of the cases under surveillance was another encouraging point in the epidemic. With both the old and new cases on the wane, local doctors believed that the outbreak was well under control. City officials commented that further and stricter observance of the closing rules that included avoidance of crowds, was thought best, as long as the epidemic showed any tendency to spread in Oregon. This program, that was adopted by the city, would bring the plague to an early end. But there wasn't an early end, for it continued for several more weeks.

The November 15, 1918, issue of the St. Helens Mist reported that Rainier was adopting a curfew ordinance because of the Spanish influenza epidemic. Several of the younger set had congregated on the streets in the evenings, and it was best to put a stop to such gatherings. This seemed to be the quickest way of handling the situation. The curfew would ring hereafter at 8:30 o'clock.

The Review, in the November 28th issue, reported that the second week of school, after the reopening, showed a slight increase of attendance over the first week. This was encouraging but a great many

children who were out, they believed, should've been in school for they had been seen on the street and in public places. The school respected the desire of the parent to protect the child from sickness, and the school would not attempt to enforce the compulsory school law. But the school felt that the epidemic danger was over and that parents should at once cooperate in securing full and regular attendance and that there was no reason for a parent to refuse to do so. The school then closed on December 12 planning to reopen after the New Year.

“CITY COUNCIL MEETS TO ADOPT QUARANTINE” was on the front page of the Review December 12 issue. Due to a sudden increase of influenza cases, the council decided doctors were to report new cases to the city and those persons would be quarantined. A provision allowed the unaffected bread earner of the household to attend to his duties. A closing ban of businesses was deemed unnecessary since outside persons visiting from other towns, that had no ban, would scatter the epidemic here just the same.

A Review headline in the December 26 issue announced “SCHOOL WILL OPEN AGAIN NEXT MONDAY.” After a careful survey of the influenza epidemic, the school board decided to open schools on December 30. It was the opinion of local doctors that the epidemic had run its course and any children showing symptoms would be sent home.

But, even as the epidemic slowed, illnesses and deaths caused by influenza were being reported in the Review. The January 2, 1919, issue told of an eight-month baby, Walter Craycraft, who had passed away on December 30. And in the January 23rd issue, though an article proclaimed that the influenza epidemic showed improvement and that there was only one new case, the Review also reported the deaths of 6-year-old Catherine Lewis and 37-year-old Anna McLeod. The February 6, 1919, Review issue stated that influenza in Rainier was almost “stamped out,” but noted that Mr. and Mrs. Jim Kilby had come down with the influenza.

(Thank you Brandon Sundeen for sharing information from your article “Life at a Standstill: When the Pandemic of 1918 Reached Columbia County” printed in the Columbia County, OR 2020 Spring-Summer historical booklet)

OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

(8-11-20 through 12-9-20)

We have 205 memberships* now.

Ray & Clarice Anderson
Debra Coffman
Jennifer Havens
Sharon Hofmeister
Jan Spika Kenna
Mike & Kitty Kreger
Sue Lawrence
Steve & Jackie Nichols
Lucas Van Natta
John & Jenny Zimmer

Contact information:

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

ROHM Vice President Duane Bernard: 503-556-9661

ROHM Historian and newsletter editor Mike Clark: clarkmikew@aol.com

LIFE MEMBERS

Lawrence (Buzz) and Alice Beck
Mike Avent
Harold & Elaine Davis

HONORARY MEMBERS

Steve & Jan Oliva
Carl Pellham
Columbia County Museum Association
Vernonia Pioneer Museum Association

*Memberships can be an individual member, a couple, or a family.

This issue was produced by ROHM President Kay Heflin, newsletter editor Mike Clark, and assistant editor and proofreader Martha Van Natta. ROHM expresses its gratitude towards Delbert Granlund for funding the cost of printing and mailing of this issue.



Rainier, Oregon, looking East on “A” Street following a snow storm in about 1910. On the left edge of the photo is the Rainier Bank. Beyond is the Hotel California and across the street to the right is the Grand Hotel. Both hotels were destroyed in separate fires in 1924. The bank building survived, but the second floor was removed. Photo from the Mike Clark collection.

Rainier Oregon Historical Museum
106 W. B Street
PO Box 762
Rainier, OR 97048