

Benn's Bulletin Spring 2020



What are we doing?

You may wonder what the Friends of the Aberdeen Museum are doing now that there is no museum. After a tragic fire in June 2018 left the museum a smoldering shell, we had to step back and assess what options remained to us as an organization. We are determined to move forward and do what we can to keep history alive until a new museum is established. Our office at the museum was destroyed along with equipment and most of our physical records. We were able to salvage some equipment and replaced the non-salvageable with our insurance coverage.



The Friends' office is now located in the Aberdeen Art Center, 200 W. Market (K Street Entrance) in Aberdeen. Our phone number is still 360-533-1976 and we continue to maintain our website, www.aberdeenmuseumfriends.org and Facebook, *The Friends of the Aberdeen Museum*.

Each first Friday of the month from 5-8 pm, we join with the Alder Grove Gallery and the Rowan Tree Gallery at the

Aberdeen Art Center to welcome visitors and lovers of art, music, and history. The art galleries have new shows and feature original art by local artists. We display an array of photographs following a monthly theme.

Some highlights from last year included photos of Kurt Cobain,



the Morck Hotel/Rain Glow Festival, local taverns and breweries (old and current), historic blizzards and local veterans. From time to time, we display artifacts relating to our theme of the month.

In 2019 The Friends of the Aberdeen Museum participated in many local events, such as Historic Hoquiam Memories, the Aberdeen Sunday Farmers Market, the Founders Day Parade, Summerfest, the Grays Harbor Volunteer Fair, and Winterfest. Two major events were the Rain Glow Festival in downtown Aberdeen and Myrtle Street Dance on the division between Hoquiam and Aberdeen.

For the Rain Glow Festival, the Friends installed and staffed a night-time, lighted tour through the Morck Hotel, drawing nearly 600 visitors. We co-sponsored the Myrtle Street Dance with the Polson Museum featuring the history of Electric Park. Along with photographic displays, there were food trucks, two live bands, and a trivia contest between the mayors of Aberdeen and Hoquiam and lots of street dancing. Even the weather cooperated, giving us a balmy, breezy day of enjoyment.

In addition to the various events we joined this year, our volunteers have participated in continuing education by attending workshops through Washington Non-Profits and the Washington State Archives and we sent a representative to the Washington Museum Assoc Annual Conference in Spokane, WA. We are always looking for new opportunities to learn and grow our collective skillsets.

As part of the Hands on History grant, we have created a history suitcase featuring local veterans, for use in the school district. Currently we have a prototype under review and hope to create several more. Soon we are launching *History Chats* at the

Aberdeen Senior Center and other venues. This ongoing event will provide opportunities for folks to talk about a variety of subjects and share their personal stories. In conjunction with these chats, we plan to build our library of oral history interviews called the Voices of Grays Harbor. Our research library is being rebuilt and we are creating a digital archive of photographs. Soon we will complete a reading corner in the office, so that visitors have a comfortable spot to peruse our collections of stories and images. On the first Tuesday of each month, we convene for our Board meetings at 6:00pm in our offices. These meetings are open to the public. Following that meeting, some of our members also attend the City Museum Board meeting. In this way, we are able to stay abreast of current efforts so that we will be ready with volunteers for a future museum.

As you can see, we have many activities and events keeping us busy. Come join us!

Wishkah Tales of Bootlegging

One of the books lost in the Aberdeen Museum fire was the memories of an old Wishkah fellow - Ed Zavislak. We would love to have a copy if anyone comes across such but here is one Zavislak story still around.

Mitch (Snarski) was making a delivery in Aberdeen. He was parked in an alley between G & H Street, and as usual, he had left the motor running. As he came out the back door for the last jug, he saw a suspicious car just turn

into the alley. It was the Feds. He catapulted into the front seat and took off with a roar on to Market Street, down to First Street then on to Wishkah road. The Wishkah road was gravel at that time, but Mitch knew the road well. About 5 miles from town the road enters the Williamson curves, which were two long fairly sharp "S" curves, with high cut banks on the left and a deep ravine on the right. As Mitch entered the first "S" curve, he reached over to the dashboard and pulled a lever. Positioned above the manifold was a jar of castor oil. As the castor oil hit the hot manifold he laid down an impenetrable smoke screen (*Ed said unpenetratable but we know what he meant!*) When he went by the four of us (*Ed & three friends standing by the road*), he honked the horn, waved at us and was laughing. Small whiffs of smoke were still wafted about by the wind created by the moving car. About 10 minutes later, the car with the Feds pulled up, the rear wheels throwing gravel as they pulled to a stop. The driver hollered, "Hey you kids, which way did that Buick Touring go?" We looked at them with a blank look. Finally, Jim Womer asked, "What's a Buick Touring?" Muttering something about law,



order, and lack of cooperation, mixed with unprintable words,

they took off up the main road. In the meantime, Mitch pulled into his neighbor's place, and drove the Buick into the barn. Then he put a bridle on a riding horse and took off. He rode up a small hill, down the other side, and was by the Wishkah road when the Feds pulled up. "Mitch, were you in Aberdeen today?" one agent asked. "Hell no," replied Mitch, "I haven't been in town for weeks. Today, I've spent the whole morning looking for my stupid milk cow that got out. If you want to help, why don't you drive back the West Hoquiam road and wait for me by the first gully. I'll cross this hill and maybe we can flush her out." Shaking his finger at Mitch and with his face turning red, the agent roared, "We are not going to help you find your damn cow. But someday we are going to catch you with your moonshine and I hope the judge throws away the key." With a half-smile, Mitch watched as the agents drove off. He shrugged his shoulders, rolled a cigarette out of Bull Durham and brown paper, and then rode over the hill. The Feds never did catch Mitch, but finally he was put out of business by the repeal of Prohibition in 1933.

Every Little Bit Helps

When you make a purchase at Staples, consider applying your sales credit to Friends of the Aberdeen Museum

360-533-1976

Thank You

Rain Glow Festival

This event isn't until July (25th), but we are still on a high from the excitement of last year's Morck Hotel event. We want to make this year's event bigger & better so we encourage you to put the date on your calendar.

This year we are focused on Bootlegging & Brothels. So if you would like to participate in the fun, let us know. Send your contact information to our email friends98520@gmail.com or call our office at 360-533-1976.

Clarence Achey was a homesteader who gave this 1880's description of life on the upper Wishkah "We have no horses to keep here or wagons to buy for the simple reason that there are no roads on land. We are above the roads – the river is better than all the roads, for you don't have to feed a boat. It's 25 miles to town. We go one day and back the next, so travel with tides both ways." Note, "This mileage must have been 'miles rowed' on the winding river as the homestead was nowhere near that far by today's measures to Aberdeen. But the tide effects the river as far as Aberdeen Gardens so it would have been a help for many miles.

Musings

The Baila Dip

The Baila Dip is a place one should always be careful. Old timers know where that is --- do you?

Head out of Aberdeen past the bluffs & the highway takes a sudden dip then climbs back up. On the north side there is a lovely home and field -- at one time that was the Baila Nursery. The highway through the section with cars making turns into the nursery was dangerous so the Baila Dip was a place of caution.

Childhood Memories

Who remembers milk & ice cream delivery straight from the dairy? That was the best, fresh right to your porch. Even if you didn't have delivery, there was the excitement of a drive up the Wishkah. It was a special treat to stop at Firland Dairy's little ice cream cone shack. That was a treat! Best maple nut ever.

Ever wonder just what all those pilings in the Chehalis River are about?

Roy Vataja - local historian

The pilings in the Chehalis River, for the most part, were docks. Heading toward south side on the west was the Anderson-Middleton mill at the foot of Broadway, which began in the 1880's as the Weatherwax Mill before becoming the A-M which operated until the late 1970's. On the east, also on the north side of the river, were docks at the foot of G and F Streets. The foot of G was the site of the Sea Beach Clam Packing plant and the City Dock was at the foot of F Street for general freight shipments. Across the Wishkah River was the West & Slade Mill and behind tractor supply was the Wilson Bros Mill. When you reach south side the mass of pilings on the

east near Swanson's was Donovan Mill No 1. The base of their burner still sits in the weeds. Towards the west was the Saginaw Shake Mill near where the wreck of the tramp steamer "Sierra" sits in the mud. In addition, there are numerous pilings scattered about used to secure log rafts.

Hands on History

The Friends are very happy to announce their newest initiative, *Hands on History*, has been funded by the Grays Harbor Community Foundation.

The Friends of the Aberdeen Museum office has a reading corner. There are several different kinds of information being gathered and is continuing to develop it.

We are rebuilding the collection of City Directories lost in the museum fire. So far, we have 16 volumes, mostly later years. We appreciate any help with rebuilding this resource.

Books about Grays Harbor or written by Grays Harbor authors. This collection is small so far, but some interesting materials. It includes Saginaw Timber Company, Cappy Ricks Retires, The Colonel and the Pacifist, and biographies, stories & interviews with residents of Grays Harbor. If your parents or grandparents (or you if you are getting up there) aren't in this collection – why not? Come down to the office and look at the collection. We would love to have copies (not originals) of what you have.

If we have the story maybe you can add photocopies. One of the things we're working hard on right now is the Memoirs of Ed Zawislak – call if you can help.

The second piece of the Friends grant is the History Suitcases. The first suitcase, already developed and ready for check out, is about Grays Harbor Veterans. This collection includes information about the veterans, what they wore, medals, a teacher's guide, and additional research. It is available to any teacher to check out and use with their class. It is so all encompassing, we have been asked to prepare a collection that is a little less intense. We also have ideas for additional suitcases we are ready to develop. If you would like to join that working team, please contact the chair – Connie Parson at 360-591-9752.

A Comfortable Cup

Aberdeen herald, February 2 1893

An enthusiastic lover of chocolate affirms that for those who wish to keep the imagination fresh and vigorous, chocolate is the beverage of beverages.

However copiously you have lunched, a cup of chocolate immediately afterwards will produce digestion 3 hours after, and prepare the way for a good dinner.

It is recommended to everyone who devotes to bring work, the hours he should pass in bed; to every wit who finds he has become dull; to all who finds the air damp, the time long and the

atmosphere unupportable, and, above all, to those who, tormented with a fixed idea, have lost their freedoms of thought.

February's 1st Friday



Our February 1st Friday Open House was our largest yet. The Friends of the Aberdeen Museum met and chatted with 39 people. It was great! February being Kurt Cobain's birthday month, we had a display of photos over his life, which generated a lot of interest. The growing "Hands on History" corner sparked the attention of others. There is pleasure finding Gramma or Grampa written up and recorded in the Friends collection. But the most rewarding was the interest generated by our veteran's history suitcase.

Aberdeen Museum of History Update

The City of Aberdeen has had the initial contractor's read out on the viability of the "Boeing Building" as a museum. This is the brick building, just to the West of the Chehalis River Bridge, which was used by Boeing during WWII to

construct the tail section of the B52. The contractor felt the building is viable for museum use. They are now developing costs for the work they recommend be completed to make the building ready for the intended use.

Meanwhile, the museum collection has been returned from storage and work at the Renton Company that did the Armory recovery. A building on the port dock has been rented, shelving & fire suppression installed, work on inventory, and the recovery of the collection has been started. The City of Aberdeen Museum Board has evaluated a number of new potential additions to the collection. Anyone wishing to donate can go to <https://aberdeenmuseumofhistory.com/>

The City Museum Board is also welcoming a new member representing the City Council, Tim Alstrom.



Aberdeen Herald., April 04, 1912

Did you enjoy Winterfest?



There were so many activities to choose from, that it was difficult to get it all in. The gingerbread house contest had a new venue at the Salvation Army storefront and the creations were delightful. Santa was in town; word has it, he was available to share breakfast with hungry folks. There was caroling at GH Wine Sellars, music at the D&R Theatre and a free showing of the movie Elf. Farther out, there was music and dancing at the Historic Seaport and The Bishop Center held a concert of holiday music. A market/vendor fair filled Goldberg's storefront and provided many wonderful shopping opportunities. Local merchants offered special items for sale to tempt all the holiday shoppers. The Friends of the Aberdeen Museum had a booth at the vendor's market. We displayed historic photos of wintry scenes and Christmas past. Our booth was decorated with vintage posters (circa 1940s) of Santa and of the Nativity. There were holiday coloring pages for children and copies of our newsletter for grownups. We fielded questions about the

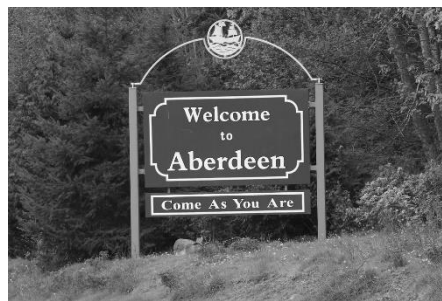
museum and gained some new volunteers. It was fun to play a small part in celebrating downtown Aberdeen.

Come As You Are

Is this Aberdeen's tagline, calling card, nametag, identity? As one enters town on Highway 12, the phrase appears on the "Welcome to Aberdeen" sign. Some will identify the words as lyrics written by Kurt Cobain, one of Aberdeen's own. In fact, the words were added in 2005 for the 10th anniversary of his death. The Morck Hotel, opened in 1924, printed these words in early advertisements. Cobain

sometimes stayed with friends living at the Morck after it was converted to apartments. Was he inspired by something he saw at the old hotel? Who knows? Maybe you know the story. If so, we'd love to hear it!

The Friends of the Aberdeen Museum are looking for stories. Come add to our library and help us keep history alive. While we are especially interested in stories of life in Aberdeen, our scope expands to all of Grays Harbor County. We know there are some great tales, yet to be heard, and we want to hear yours!



<https://images.app.goo.gl/BtMUBt7LxJTERK5D6>

Save The Date

First Friday

5-8

Mar 6, Apr 3, May 1
Friends of the Aberdeen
Office

Let's Talk History

March 11 10:30 AM
Aberdeen Senior Center

Historic Hoquiam Memories

April 18
Emerson Apartments
Hoquiam

Gifts For Easter

Nothing more pleasing than a
WALLACE NUTTING PICTURE

we have some very dainty ones
framed at \$1.25 each.

EASTER CARDS

A FINE ASSORTMENT

DAVIES' ART SHOP

313 East Wishkah Street

Aberdeen Herald, April 21, 1916

"THINK OF ME" CIGARS Two for 25c

You will travel a long way before you can use
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Aberdeen Herald, April 06, 1917

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Aberdeen herald, April 04, 1910

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Especially fine front rooms at very moderate rates
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R. E. FOY, Manager ABERDEEN WASHINGTON

Aberdeen Herald, April 06, 1917

Hotel Washington

ABERDEEN, WASH.



Where Everybody Feels At Home

Automatic Sprinkler Fire Protection

Aberdeen Herald, November 05, 1915



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Aberdeen, Washington
is Grays Harbor's leading hotel, offering metropolitan services and excellent food attested to by Duncan Hines.
Come as you are.

Photographed and Published by George Mead, Seattle, Washington

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Beome a Member!

Friends of the Phoenix
Rising from the Ashes

Membership funds go towards preserving and celebrating history in our community.

Membership Application and Record

Date _____

Member/Business

Name _____

Phone number(s) _____

Email _____

I would like to receive the quarterly newsletter. Mail _____ email _____

I choose the following Membership:

Family/household - \$50 per year Youth/Student - \$5 per year

Individual - \$25 per year Senior 65+ - \$20 per year

Business - \$100 per year Sustaining Individual/Business - \$300/\$500 per year

Memberships start from date of payment and last one year.

I wish for my name to remain anonymous, not to be displayed in person or in any Friends of the Aberdeen Museum, or Aberdeen Museum publications.

Would you like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities? Yes No

If so, please list areas you have interest in (i.e. event volunteer, office volunteer, data entry, fundraising, board member, etc.)

I am interested in the volunteer waiver program.

I understand that I can earn my membership after completion of 10 volunteer hours. This waiver can be requested again once my membership year ends.

Friends of Aberdeen Museum Board
Monthly Meeting
First Tuesday of each month
6:00 pm
Market and K (K Street Entrance)

Board Members

Patti Walden - Acting President
Ruth Hamilton - Secretary
Nancy Cuyle - Treasurer
Jennifer Bennefeld
Amy Herring
Douglas Orr
Connie Parson

*We are always looking for people who have a
passion for Aberdeen's history.*

Join us today!

FRIENDS OF THE ABERDEEN
MUSEUM

Market and K St (K St Entrance)

PO BOX 722

Aberdeen, WA 98520

(360) 533-1976

Email: friends98520@gmail.com

Visit our website:

www.aberdeenmuseumfriends.org

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