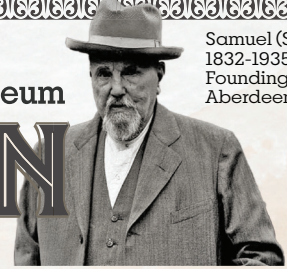


BENN'S BULLETIN

Friends of the Aberdeen Museum



Samuel (Sam) Benn
1832-1935
Founding Father of
Aberdeen, WA 98520



Who are the Friends of the Aberdeen Museum?

Who are the Friends of the Aberdeen Museum anyway?

Friends of the Aberdeen Museum were created by the City of Aberdeen to help with the community museum. Our mission and goals have not changed - keep the history of our area alive. We continue to be thankful for the support provided by you, our members and readers.

Since the fire we have realized that while running the museum for 37 years we were too inwardly focused. It has been gratifying these last few years to reach out and touch more of you. We have a new historic display each month and are open first Friday evenings. We ask the community to loan items for display and utilize photos provided from the Jones Collection. Exhibits have included: Cosi Pulp Mill, Fairbairn family & Natatorium, 5 generations of Jones photographers, storms, fire, football... We have participated in Rain Glow Festivals: a night at the Morck Hotel; brothels and bootlegging below the old Cecil

Hotel. We have appeared at Winterfest, Founders Day, Farmers Market, Hoquiam Days... We try to be wherever history can meet the community.

The artifacts that your families donated to the museum are wonderful. We also appreciate the items that you have retained but are willing to share for a short time. This work has truly been gratifying and has taught us where we need to be in the future.

We look forward to continuing to work with the community, City Museum Board and City management. We have been a part of the divisiveness recently splashed over all kinds of media. There were misunderstandings, but from that we have all learned. We believe that all parties can and will be on the same page pulling together to preserve the area's unique history. We hope you will be a part of that partnership.

We are now re-establishing a library with a growing number of books

containing local history. We have binders of "People of Grays Harbor" with information including interviews.

We have made one YouTube video, plan more and have developed a suitcase which teachers can check out highlighting the military contribution of Harborites.

We would love to add your contributions (copies of diaries, articles etc. would be great.)

We can always use volunteers and loaned materials for a month-long display. As we begin to need more help when we begin working with the collection. Hope to see you.

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

November

Honoring Grays Harbor Veterans

December

Retail on Grays Harbor



Rising from the Ashes is What We Do!

Like the legendary Phoenix Bird
We will Rise to See
a New Museum in the Community.



Friends of the Aberdeen Museum

2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Election Results. Thank you to our officers!

President
Ruth Hamilton

Vice-President
Patti Walden

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Jennifer Bennefeld
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Becky Carossino
Michael Fancher

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Skooter Scherieble
Harold Warren



A group of individuals, caring about the history, came to... This... in... 20... ter... been... Museum... as the non-profit 501c3 they are today... Using the City owned building...

VISIT OUR OFFICE

Market & K St
(K St Entrance)

Volunteers are in the office- Thursday and Friday 1-4 pm and during Aberdeen First Fridays from 5-8 pm.

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BENN'S BULLETIN:
Quarterly Publication

Did you know?

The state of Washington has easy to access history online? Newspapers, images, and most available to share free of charge. Check them out at:
www.sos.wa.gov/library/publications.aspx



Autumn



Friends of the Aberdeen Museum

November 2021

STAN "THE MAN" FOREMAN

Local Personality who "made it", died August 8, 2021

Locals may remember Stan for his time with local radio – KBKW, KXRO, KGHO or his work with Pat O'Days' Dunes – or maybe playing with the legendary Beachcombers. In all he worked in radio for 15 years, played in bands, and promoted records.

But he made

his most successful leap when he jumped to Capitol

Records

where he

used his radio

knowledge to

push their stars for 22 years.

Stan was special. In a time when digging up dirt on stars and the paparazzi were the thing of the day, Stan had nothing but good stories to tell about his contacts and he knew them all – Paul McCartney, Bob Seger, Bonnie Raitt, Garth Brooks...

He had a great story-telling style, so this shortcut won't do it justice, but it's a typical story. He went to see a new singer at a small club in 1964. She questioned whether it was worth his time. He assured her he had come to see her and was impressed with her spark and her song "What's love got to do with it?" It became a hit that sent

her on her way. 20 years later he was backstage as a reporter hoping for an interview. Her agent was turning everyone away, "Miss Turner is too tired". But Tina spotted the 6' 4" Foreman. She told the agent, "When Stan wants an interview, he gets one.

He came to see me when I was a nobody."

Once, Stan learned that the Beach Boys were playing

Saturday night in Seattle. He convinced the agent to book them for a night at the Hoquiam High School gym the Friday night prior. Vans would pick them up at the airport and return them to Seattle after the show. When Stan and friends met them, the band did nothing but complain: the drive was too long, the stage was too small, the sound wasn't perfect, etc. After a great show they headed up the old highway (long before the freeway existed). It was total darkness – no street lights, no other cars - it seemed like the backroads for the LA boys. Stan told the driver to pull over as he turned around and said, "If I hear one more complaint from back there, I will



Foreman and Tina Turner. 1984. He came to see me when I was a nobody." Photo courtesy of Maitland Ward

pull you out of the car, beat the S—t out of you and drive away." There was a long silence before a small voice said, "I'm sorry, Mr. Foreman, that's how we are."

Many years later, the band members he recognized Stan, and exclaimed, "You're that guy that threatened to beat us up. Boy, were we scared, we had no idea where we were!"

The thing about Stan, he never forgot a friend or his Harbor roots. He came back for the Aberdeen Museum Beachcomber Reunion Dance, the Weatherwax All Class Reunion and the Myrtle Street Dance sponsored by the Friends and the Polson Museum.

Anyone who had the pleasure of knowing him won't forget his legacy.

"LEGENDS DON'T DIE THEY BECOME LEGENDARY."

—Bruce Hughes, of the Beachcombers said of Foreman



THE ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS OF GRAYS HARBOR

1956, Tony Misitano, barber in Aberdeen & Cosmopolis worked for LaRosa's Barber Shop for many years. He was born in 1897 & left Italy at 14. He trained in Tacoma. He was a kind & gentle man - perfect for a boy's first cut. Photo courtesy of the Misitano family.

By Connie Parson

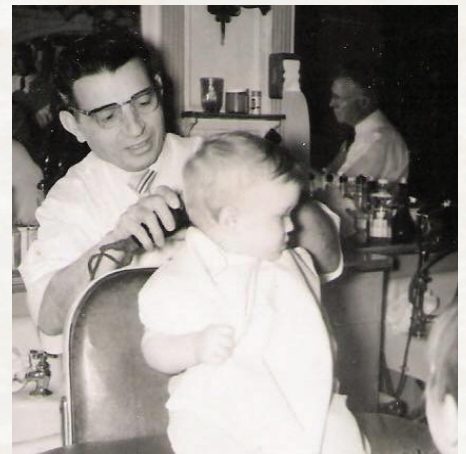
Like the residents of so many countries who experienced economic and natural disasters in the late 19th Century, the people of Italy also migrated to the USA. In 1880, Italians who immigrated were numbered at 300,000, mostly young men. By 1890 this number had doubled. By 1920 Italians totaled 4 million, making up more than 10 percent of the immigrant population.

Numerous Italians worked for the Anderson-Middleton (A & M) Mill in those early days. Even more worked for the door factory in McCleary. There were also many who started businesses of their own, such as grocery stores, restaurants and other small enterprises. The influence of these families was growing. According to census records the number of Italians in Grays Harbor in 1890 was five. By 1920 it had grown to 273.

Joseph and Amelia Baila were among the first Italians to come to the Harbor, arriving in 1890. Joseph's brothers John and Julis

followed and made the Baila name well known with their landscape and truck gardening businesses.

John Jenna and his brother Joe came early in 1900. They worked at A & M but later opened Jenna's Grocery. The boys brought their sister Mary to Aberdeen where she met and married John Lupo. John Jenna was an outstanding accordion player and was in great demand at weddings and parties. Many of the men and their families came through Ellis Island. Some were hired by the railroad. One of these families came to Aberdeen via Chicago. Vincenzu (Cundari) Contris and his family were from the general area around Arcavacata, Cosenza on the west slopes of the Sila Mountains at the instep of the boot that is Italy. Vincenzu arrived about 1906, leaving behind a wife and young son. In 1908, after moving to Aberdeen and saving enough monies he sent for his family and built a home for them. Soon they were surrounded by other Italian couples. Vincenzu and his wife Teresa helped many of these



couples settle in the area. He helped build their homes, some of which still stand today. Larry Covall and Mary Russo arrived in early 1908 and were married that September. Larry became a long time employee of A & M.

Joseph Meredkoni came in 1908. He met and married Maria Rovella whose brother Michael had emigrated earlier. Another member of the Rovella clan, Esther, came in 1910 and married Domenico DePaoli. Cervisi and Pasqualina Nunziato and 2 children became Aberdeen residents in 1909 where he worked in railroad construction. Juiolio and Gemma Giuntoli had a family of 3 when they came to the Harbor. The Giuntoli's



"The Specialist" by Chic Sale - who builds "Buildings for Necessary Things"



Friends Lending Library

A few issues back we told you that Friends members could check books out of our growing library and that anyone is welcome to come in and read.

Most of the books and photo binders are related directly to area history.

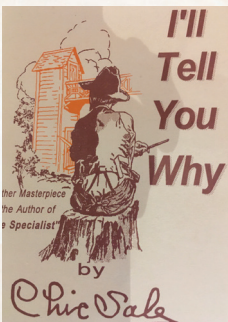
But we just made an exception to expand our reach. It's a couple of little books by Chic Sale (1885-1936). They can each be read in about 5 minutes.

While they aren't specific to Aberdeen, they are

about a time in history all folks of a certain generation shared. Chic Sale was a bit of a character. He played in silent movies, on Broadway, and was also a writer. His most famous character is a specialist at building "buildings for necessary things". The little book sold nearly a million copies and was published in 6 languages. Later it was made famous again as a Frank Crumpit song (who also made the

first recordings of songs like - Tip Toe Through the Tulips, and I Used to Love You But It's All Over Now.)

"New books out in January, say you get it New Year's Day, you should reach the harness section somewhere round the first of May." That phrase may bring up memories or stories Gramma told which are worth revisiting - if not - you had best read "The Specialist!"



ITALIANS CONT'D

became well known, as they operated the Pastime Cigar Store and Tuscano restaurant.

There are a few books written about local Italians. "Italians in Washington State: Emigration 1853-1924" by David Nicandri was published in 1978 as part of the Washington State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. Angelo Pelligrini, an English professor at the UW, authored "Immigrants Return" in 1951. The Polson Museum compiled a study of the Immigrants of Grays Harbor from 1853 to 1915. Aberdeen and Hoquiam Timberland

libraries, and the Friends have copies of this study.

In 1932, George Ficele proposed that an Italian club be formed.

In 1937 the club became chartered and known as the "Amerigo Vespucci Men's Lodge 1814 of the Order of Sons of Italy." The original charter members were George Ficele, Tony Paganelli, Joe Louiso, Pete Torri and Carlo Cundari. In May 1951, the Carbone brothers of Tacoma suggested that ladies be accepted into the lodge. A new charter was granted on June 14, 1951 and the lodge

became known as the Sons and Daughters of Italy. This Lodge remains active in Aberdeen to this day.

From the time Italians moved to Grays Harbor (then called Chehalis) County, they contributed much to their new homeland and took an active part in their community. There are many Italian immigrants and their descendants who are not mentioned in this article. Please accept my deepest apologies. We would love to know your stories.



Brothels & Bootlegging - Rain Glow Festival



The Characters of Rain Glow Festival: Shannon Dunnuck, Becky Carossino, Nancy Guyle, Brian Hoel, Jennifer & John Bennefeld, Connie Parson, Rose Hirschler, Ruth Hamilton, Margaret Gortez

What a smashing success this event was for the Aberdeen community – besides just being fun! Maybe you missed it or made the event but didn't get to talk to each of our "actors". Either way here is some information you may enjoy. Brothels were everywhere. Just look up as you drive around town. If there is a building with a lot of small windows on the second floor – that's a strong clue. The rooms were small with just space for a single bed and

a wash stand. Most rooms were not plumbed, just provided with buckets of water which were used to fill brothel wash pans (called by some – peter pans) Men were required to use them. When finished the dirty water was tossed out the window – look out below! Many loggers could not read, English at least. Sailors coming in on the ships often spoke or read little if any English. So a consistent practice was to decorate each room with a unique wall paper. Men were

directed to a room by showing them what paper to look for. Aberdeen was such a rough & tumble place with loggers & soldiers frequently getting "into it" that Fort Lewis banned any soldier from Aberdeen. The MP's patrolled the area looking for violators. One great story was of a soldier who visited a car repair shop and asked for some overalls. He put them on & "went a visiting". He couldn't get in trouble for being out of uniform – it just wasn't visible.



One guesses that there were a lot of large hats to cover short haircuts.

Another story is of a group of recent Shelton high school grads who followed a common practice & headed to Aberdeen – to get educated. At the brothel they were told they were underage and therefore could only have cokes in the bar, but anyone with the money was welcome upstairs. A common belief is that the brothels were “cleaned out” with the raid of Captain Yantsin in 1959. The fact is that some closed down but mostly there was just a lower profile.

One story told by a grocery delivery clerk from 1951-4 is of the infamous madam Nellie Curtis. She came into the grocery one day decked out in furs & jewelry. She walked through with a maid trailing behind winking at the clerks. Nellie looked over the new items the store had added, then walked out. The grocery order was called in later and delivered to the brothel as was the standard procedure.

That fact is, that local retailers profited highly from the brothel business. They frequently bought new clothing, fancy furniture, liquor, wall paper, groceries. It was lucrative for taxi drivers who met the ships at the

dock. Eventually the brothels closed but the taxi drivers knew at which residences to drop patrons off --- probably they still do!

Bootlegging

Prohibition was enacted in Washington before the rest of the country (1916). The national ban lasted from 1920-1933. Then Washington passed a law that hard liquor could only be sold in state operated stores and they added “sin tax”. Many stills continued to operate, providing “hooch” at a lesser price and with no limits on the “proof.”

At the Hilltop gas station, one could request Coke with a bit of a kick from the kid who pumped your gas. They had one of those low square pop machines where the bottles were in rows in cold water. There was a special back row where one could just pull out a Coke bottle full of something much “hotter” - \$1 per bottle.

Another story was of a Wishkah bootlegger. He was in a town alley delivering his wares when he saw a big black car headed his way. He jumped into his running vehicle and put the pedal-to-the-metal. He kept it running flat-out until he reached a narrow section of the Wishkah Road with bluff on one side and river on the other. Then he reached

RAIN & GLOW THANK YOU

Our Brothel & Bootlegging display was fun. We truly thank all the wonderful volunteers that made it happen. Your enthusiasm and support mean everything. In addition some local organizations deserve recognition for their support:

Aberdeen -

Aberdeen Art Center
Aberdeen Auto Spa
Driftwood Players
Mother Crow's Gallery
Northwest Surplus &
Outdoors
Servpro Grays Harbor

Hoquiam -

Ginger's Green Garage
Polson Museum

under the dash and pulled a lever which dumped a bottle of cod liver oil on the very hot manifold. Black smoke poured out so thick the revenuers had to stop or risk a river plunge. They didn't catch him.



The **FRIENDS OF THE**
ABERDEEN
MUSEUM



We hope that you enjoy the
Autumn Edition of
Benn's Bulletin.
It is produced quarterly
by volunteers who encourage
everyone to,
"Know their Roots"

Please share with folks you think
will enjoy our efforts.



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Fall 2021 Newsletter