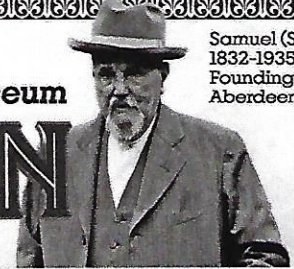


# BENN'S BULLETIN

Friends of the Aberdeen Museum



Samuel (Sam) Benn  
1832-1935  
Founding Father of  
Aberdeen, WA 98820

## City Offer for New Museum Building

The actual site location is private as of this writing pending final inspection and negotiation. Hopefully, there will be positive news soon. This movement forward will offer many opportunities and challenges. We will dedicate much of this issue to highlighting both financial and volunteer needs.



## Fire Equipment Restoration

City Council approved the restoration of 2 fire engines to pre-fire condition. The total cost will be \$275,000 plus shipping to Pennsylvania. Several folks have expressed an interest in supporting the fire equipment cause. Donations of any kind can take a few forms, so see the donation article on Page 3.

*Cont'd Page 3*



**So Many Ways to Help**  
*See Form Page 4*

## Aberdeen Board of History

### What you need to know

The terms of most of the members of the Board expire at the end of December. Here is a volunteer opportunity.

*Cont'd Page 3*

## History Legacy Donations

Grays Harbor Community Foundation will **add 20%** to any funds that are added to the Friends legacy fund before year end 2021 (up to \$10,000 so a **\$2,000 match!**). The principal of these funds cannot be touched. Monies added to this fund will assure perpetual support for area artifacts.

*Cont'd Page 3*

## Memorials

The Friends continue to dig through records saved from the museum fire. We have recently found records of over 400 memorial donations. We believe that there were more, as a couple of years appear to be blank. The list is at the Friends office. You are welcome to come by or call if you wonder if a loved one is included in the list. New memorials are noted in our newsletters, and we are still deciding on the best way to recognize the many memorials of the past. Please pass on any ideas for consideration. The form on page 4 has a place for you to enter new additions to our growing list.

*Memories*





## 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

Treasurer  
Nancy Cuyle

Members at Large  
Jennifer Bennefeld  
Douglas Orr  
Connie Parson  
Becky Carossino  
Michael Fancher

Trustees  
Skooter Scherieble  
Harold Warren

Volunteer Hours Last 3 Months 478 !!  
Thanks to our great team for supporting Aberdeen History

### 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.

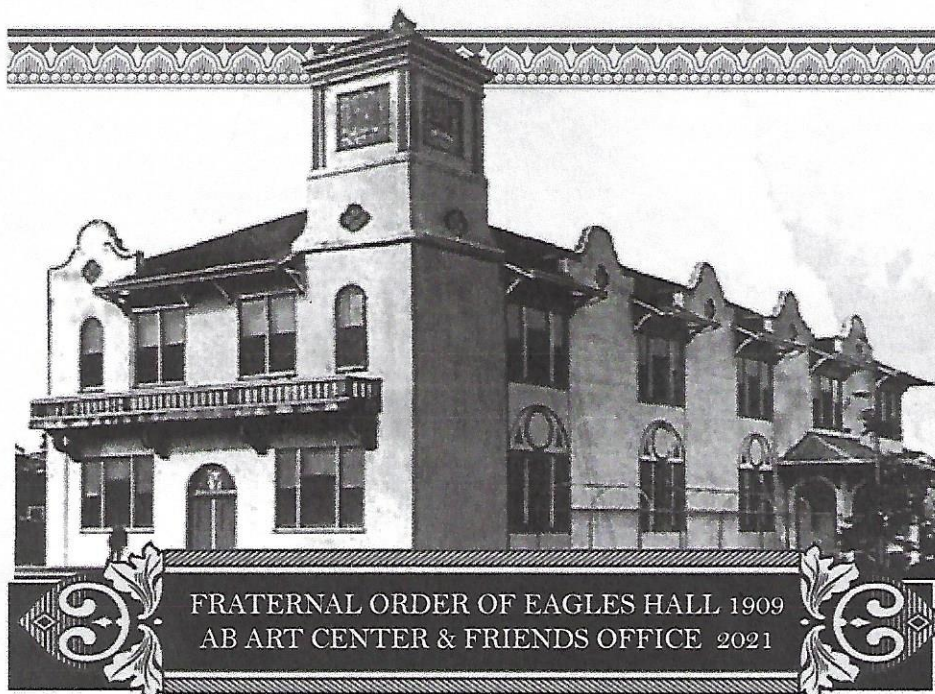
MAIL US:  
PO Box 722  
Aberdeen, WA 98520

CALL US:  
(360) 533-1976

EMAIL:  
friends98520@  
gmail.com

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](http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/publications.aspx)



FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES HALL 1909  
AB ART CENTER & FRIENDS OFFICE 2021



## Friends of the Aberdeen Museum

Cont'd from Pg 1

### Board of History

The City of Aberdeen Museum Board is a volunteer group appointed by the Mayor. Their function is to oversee the collection and display of Aberdeen area artifacts held by the City and advise the City Council. At this time, they carry a heavy load. They have City support for building work and contracting, but are without an experienced museum staff person. Each member serves a 3-year term and they elect officers annually. The terms of 6 members expire at the end of this year. While Mayor Schave can reappoint existing members, he can also consider new members to add perspective or different experience to the Board. As the Board moves into the next phase of development of a new museum, they will be looking not only at the overall design and concept of a new facility but also things like: remodeling, inventory, records, storage, displays, transportation, advertising, communications, grants, fundraising, artifact care... If serving on this Board is of interest to you, **now is the time to let the Mayor know.** You just need to write a letter explaining your interest and the experience you will bring to the Board. If you are not selected for the Board but are interested in being contacted for volunteer service on a Board sub-committee, be sure to include that in the letter. [mayer@aberdeenwa.gov](mailto:mayer@aberdeenwa.gov)

Cont'd from Pg 1

### Legacy

The Friends are partially funded by an endowment at Grays Harbor Community Foundation. The last few years, since there has been no museum, we have been able to leave almost all of our earnings to grow. The legacy fund ordinarily has earnings of about 4% which is available for support of area history preservation. However, the positive thing is that the **funds you generously give are there forever!** The base investment is never touched. The artifacts added to the collection are permanent and the Friends endowment is one way to insure there will always be funds to care for them. The Friends managed the collection for the City from 1981 to the fire, and we are committed to continuing financial and other support. **Any donation you can send this year will have the 20% match.** However, future monies left to the Friends in your will or other means will also be managed with care. Funds sent direct to the Friends or to the GH Community Foundation for the Friends Fund will count toward the 20% match. We are confident we will reach the 2021 goal of adding \$10,000 to the fund.

See From Page 4

Cont'd from Page 1

### Fire Equipment Restoration

Restoration won't start until next year, but now is the time to come forward if you want to help. The Ahrens-Fox and the steam pumper will be restored to pre-fire condition. The work could take up to 4 years. Donations can take several forms so see the donation article which follows.

### Aberdeen History Donations

Donation choices have different tax deduction results.

- 1. Donate to the City of Aberdeen Museum Fund.** You can make a general donation or specify use for the fire equipment. The City has committed to set up a separate line item to track that work. (Note: the City is not a charity.)
- 2. Donate to Friends of the Aberdeen Museum, a 501c3 charity.** You will receive a receipt for a charitable donation. The Friends were created by the City to assure patrons get tax recognition. The form included with this issue will allow designation of funds to usage.

### General Donations and Membership dues

Friends use dues to pay for our office, the newsletter, community outreach (like Rain Glow Festival, First Friday, Founders Day), and answering calls for research help and museum status. Your ongoing support is greatly appreciated. Each donation receives a tax receipt.





## Support Friends of Aberdeen Museum

Funds go toward preserving and celebrating history in our community

*All donations receive a charitable tax receipt*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership - Friend of the Phoenix** - Rising from the ashes is what Aberdeen does!

Family/Household -\$50/yr    Youth -\$5/yr    Individual -\$25/yr    Senior-\$20/yr  
 Business -\$100/yr    Sustaining Individual/Business - \$300/\$500/yr

I wish to remain anonymous, do not use my name in any publication or display.



**Memorial Donation** for \_\_\_\_\_  
Send acknowledgment to \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Legacy Endowment Donation** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Friends to receive investment earnings only  
or donations can also be sent direct to Grays Harbor Community Foundation PO Box  
615 Hoquiam, WA 98550 - for benefit of the Friends of Aberdeen Museum Fund

**Restricted Donation** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ For \_\_\_\_\_  
(i.e. Fire equipment restoration, general City Museum Fund, Friends outreach programs)

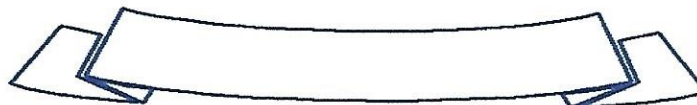
**Volunteer**    I would like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities  
I'm particularly interested in \_\_\_\_\_  
 I am interested in the volunteer waiver- earn my membership after 10 volunteer hours.

**Make checks payable to Friends of the Aberdeen Museum**



**DR. DONALD SCORALLE and JOE SCORALLE** by Bette Scorable

**JOHN YONICH** by Becky Carossino





**In Memoriam - John Yonich  
1954 – 2021**

By Ruth Hamilton

John Yonich grew up in Aberdeen and attended Weatherwax High School. After graduating, he went to the University of Washington, where he obtained a degree in business. He settled in Bellevue, WA, where he started his family and business. After many years, he returned to the Harbor and invested in several ventures, re-doing the Pearson building, an Italian restaurant, and the Elk's Building. He also pursued development of the Morck Hotel. His most notable project was the D & R Theatre restoration. The 1924 theatre had fallen into disrepair and Yonich restored and modernized the building, turning it into a successful venue, hosting a variety of performers and genres, including Metal Church, Aaron Neville, Josh Turner, Styx, Loretta Lynn, and Paul Rodgers. He had a vision and a love of Aberdeen and no doubt many more plans for its revitalization. His latest venture was the Nirvana Coffee Company next to the theatre.

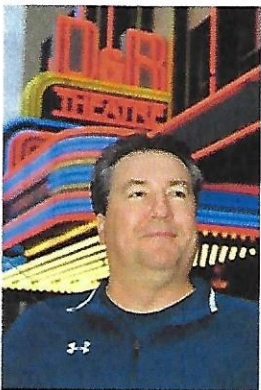


Photo Darrell Westmoreland

**The Asian Immigrants of  
Grays Harbor**

By Connie Parson and Ruth Hamilton

There is very little information on the Asian Immigrants of Grays Harbor prior to 1915, but this is what we found.

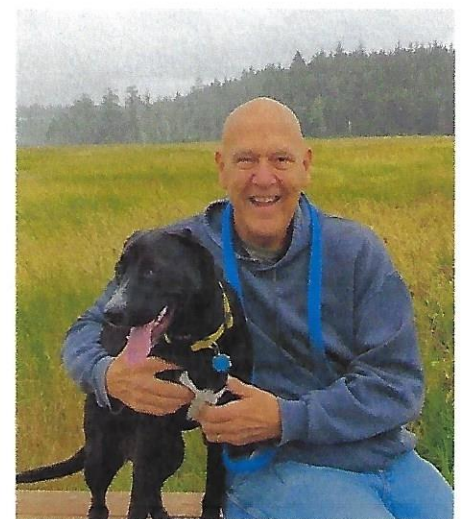
The GOLD RUSH drew many Chinese immigrants to the West Coast and some to the Grays Harbor area. They worked primarily as cooks, laundrymen, and suppliers for the miners. They also did some gold prospecting of their own. The second major increase occurred between 1870-1880 with the completion of the transcontinental railroad. Many Asians drifted, following the railroad, and proved adept at working in the salmon canneries. The Aberdeen Packing Company was located at the mouth of the Wishkah River in 1877. It was the first cannery built in the area. Almost all of the canneries used Chinese laborers (under a white boss) for the next 40 years. Their wages averaged \$280.00 per year compared to \$400.00 for white workers. Unfortunately, anti-immigrant sentiment was high and in 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act prevented any new immigration of Chinese laborers, including women.

The Chinese workers did not socialize outside their own kind. They dressed differently, enjoyed

We are thrilled that one of our Board members has been recognized for his contributions to the community. He received the Washington State Art Commission's Governor's Art & Heritage Luminary Award. The award recognizes contribution to art and culture, as well as, his outstanding leadership in community art.

This is recognition we see as well deserved. Besides serving on the Friends Board, Doug is a major driver of the Aberdeen Art Guild. He is the primary organizer of the highly successful Rain Glow Festival and profits from the event go to the Senior Center. But he doesn't begin to stop there. His murals around town are fantastic. His glass work on the side of Art Center is beautiful but the pieces he is creating for the Senior Center mini-park are outstanding.

But the very basis of his business in the Art Center is to highlight local artists. His whole persona is to assure that the Arts in Grays Harbor are showcased and successful. We are very proud to be associated with this generous man.





**Friends of the Aberdeen Museum**

Con't From Pg 5

opium and gambling, and were considered a threat to "civilized" society. These lower-paid workers were resented as economic competitors and social undesirables.

Upon completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1883, the area was thrust into a strained labor market. Violence broke out throughout the county and the Exclusion Act promoted the expulsion of Asians. Early census records did not list any Asians in Chehalis County before 1885.

Though they were here, they were not deemed worthy of counting. In 1884, a local newspaper listed two Chinese men who opened washhouses. Sing Sam Lee ran two in Montesano and John Wing operated one in Aberdeen.

In 1885, county assessor Alex Polson, listed Ling Ming Hing and Lang Fong as washermen. He also listed 30 more Chinese, but not by name. There were still no Chinese women or children in the county. By 1887, the Chinese count dropped to 17, then climbed to 38 by 1889 and by 1890 there were 104 Chinese residents. In Aberdeen, a midnight raid conducted in November 1890 forcibly ousted Chinese residents from the city. They were loaded onto the "Wishkah Chief", transported to Montesano, and left standing on the city wharf. Eventually, a small number of Chinese returned to Grays Harbor, but not to Aberdeen. The 1900 census listed only 24 Chinese residents, now joined by 25 Japanese people. Most were located in Hoquiam, with a few in Cosmopolis, Montesano and Moclips. By 1910, there were 79 Japanese residents. Most worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad, while others

worked in sawmills, as laborers, or as vegetable merchants. Many of the Chinese workers were still employed in the canneries or as washermen or cooks. A small number of East Asians from Afghanistan and India are recorded as working in the sawmills of Junction City and Cosmopolis.

Washington Congressman Albert Johnson in 1924 co-authored sweeping legislation that effectively closed America's borders to non-white immigrants for the next 40 years. While organized labor supported immigration restriction, industrialists argued it was necessary to provide affordable labor. Johnson's legislation resulted in the once free and unrestricted U. S. immigration policy being severely limited. The following categories of people were barred from immigrating: contract laborers, Asians (except Japanese and Filipinos), criminals, persons who failed to meet certain moral standards, persons with various diseases, persons likely to become a public charge, certain radicals, and illiterate individuals.

The Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943 to strengthen ties with China as an ally against Japan during WWII. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, many along the West Coast feared attack by the Japanese. Rumors and suspicion of anyone who looked Asian ran high. Aberdeen attorney, Karl Bendtsen pushed the "military necessity" rationale behind Franklin Delano Roosevelt's order mandating the internment of 117,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry. Grays Harbor's few Japanese were whisked away and interned for the duration of the

war. The full details of this dark chapter of history can be found in Klancy Clark de Nevers' book The Colonel and the Pacifist: Karl Bendtsen, Perry Saito, and the Incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, published in 2004.

Asian spouses of U.S. Military personnel were allowed to immigrate under the War Brides Act (revised in 1947), although they were previously prohibited. The Americans for Democratic Action went on record as favoring restoration of immigration privileges to all Asian countries and in 1952 the Immigration and Nationality Act ended the Asian exclusion from immigrating to the U.S. and becoming naturalized citizens. It allowed each Asian country a minimum of 100 visas annually.

The Asian community in Grays Harbor has never been large. Even today, less than 2% of the population is categorized as Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander.

Material for this article is drawn from the Polson Museum Nationality Study, review by John Hughes published in "Columbia: The Magazine of Northwest History", Summer 2004 on The Colonel and the Pacifist, news clippings, and internet searches.

