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FORWARD

This paper is being published for the purpose of keeping the public and fishermen informed of the facts and happenings in regard to the Columbia River Fishing Industry and people connected with it. Historical articles and pictures will also be emphasized. The advertisements which appear within make it financially possible to publish this paper and we hope you will in return patronize and thank the business people who contribute to this cause. Anyone who wishes to contribute articles, pictures, stories, or ads, please contact the editor at:
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The Columbia River Gillnetter is one of the only remaining publications on the west coast devoted exclusively to gillnetting. We have been making a difference for 30 years, but our continued existence is threatened by increasing production and mailing costs. Now more than ever, we need a voice to represent our side of the issue, and the Gillnetter is an important contact with fishermen, lawmakers and the public. If you would like to help, send donations to Columbia River Gillnetter.

The following individuals have made a contribution to the Columbia River Gillnetter Publication, which will be used to help continue the publication and mailing of the free informational newspaper. We thank them for their support.

February 2007 - July 2007

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This paper was started 30 years ago to help keep you informed on Gillnet issues. As we are nonprofit, we depend on advertising and donations to keep publishing and mailing this newsletter. Please make your contributions to: Columbia River Gillnetter, P.O. Box 627, Astoria, OR 97103
From The Editor

People, Power and Population

As the population grows ever more, here in the Northwest and accordingly along the banks of the former "great river of the west", the Columbia, the development demands, including hydropower, goes up with it. As we struggle with the many river related problems facing us today, keeping it clean, keeping it cool, keeping it moving, and just plain keeping water in it, we realize that there is only so much room for human habitation and development while still maintaining a healthy environment.

This is the river that was, at one time, the greatest anadromous Salmon producing stream in the world. Along with the Sacramento and Klamath, it supplies the majority of the Salmon stocks available along the Pacific Coast. We have not been good stewards however and often we have allowed corporate exploitation to supersede reasonable expansion of our growth and development. From the Corps of Engineers dam building frenzy of the 1940's and 1950's and the Bureau of Reclamation, we are now paying the price of a stagnant, warming river that has very little resemblance to the natural Columbia of old.

Lest we become worse “prisoners of congestion” than we already are; we need to evaluate our future directions, carefully, and be prepared to give as well as take on new developments. The fragile Columbia River, with it's remaining life, is especially prone to these dangers. So if we truly believe what we say about wanting to leave Salmon for our children and grandchildren to enjoy in the future, we had better sit up and take notice. We must carefully weigh the quality of living against financial gain.

"Fish Gotta Swim" - I recommend and urge you to read Zeke Graders and Glen Spains article in the July Issue of Fisherwoman's News. They both represent the Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherwoman's Association; Zeke as executive Director in San Francisco and Glen as Northwest Regional Director in Eugene. It is an excellent Editorial on the importance of maintaining water levels in our western rivers and streams. They ask and answer the question: What is at stake? A lot! They refer to Global Warming, Dams, Peripheral Canals and reservoirs, and "merely a drop in the bucket" Water Grabs. All this in relation to our Pacific Coast Fishery.

We have lost three outstanding men to death recently. These are men who have contributed generously to our society and recognized the importance of having a healthy Columbia River for maintenance and propagation of Salmon runs. They were good friends of mine and will be missed. Only one of them was an actual fisherman. Don Goodall and Ken Carlstrom were both 88; John Haglund, the only fisherman, was 87. (see obits)

Editor - Jon Westerholm

Join your Union

The CRFPU board has authorized lessor membership price of $100.00 or $50.00 per year for those who want to help out.

The yearly voting membership remains at $150.00.

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Send to: Jon Westerholm, CRFPU,
P. O. Box 627, Astoria, OR 97103
The Lurline

1878 was the banner year of the steamship Building for the Oregon Steam Navigation Company. The finest of which was the Lurline, built in 1878 by Jacob Kamm. He built the first Columbia-Willamette Stern Wheeler in 1855. During the late 1800's and early 1900's well over 100 stern wheelers were built in the Portland Area.

Lurline was 157 feet in length, had a 30 foot beam, and drew 6½ feet of water. Her first captain was James Gray who was known for showing off the boat, especially it's speed, was once suspended for 7 days for speeding on the river. It spent most of it's time on the water traveling from Portland to Astoria.

The Lurline ended it's 50 year career in 1927 and was replaced by the steamer "Beaver".

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LESS RIVER FLOW, LESS FISH

I have been fishing in Alaska the months of June and July for the last forty years. Now, getting back on the Columbia River the thing that has surprised me more than anything is that there is hardly any river flow. In my early years on the river we always had a spring run off, where we would have downstream flow sometimes for up to two months. This was nature's way of flushing out the river and also giving the small fish a better chance to survive in the fast flowing murky water which used to push them out into the ocean escaping from predators and disease.

The results of less flow is that each year the river gets warmer and the shore lines get covered with a green slime type grass, and shore lines erode.

A couple of weeks ago we took a trip east of the mountains and coming back down along the gorge behind each dam it looked like a man made lake, it was hard to see if the river was even flowing.

Some dams are necessary to generate power and for flood control. Our snow fall in recent years has been large enough to still allow the Columbia again to be the great river that it is and in bringing back the river flow to help to bring back the runs like it was in my early years when it was the mighty Columbia.

Power Companies are using too much of the water for their own benefit and they tell the public that we are getting cheap power. The people of the Northwest are willing to pay more for their power if they are sure that more water is allowed to flow downstream and in turn save our fish runs and restore their numbers back to the Columbia.

Jack Marincovich
Executive Secretary
CRFPU

CRFPU Executive Secretary In Action

Jack Marincovich

At the homestead in Clifton

Cannery workers reunion at pier 39
Aug. 2006
To the Editor

Jon,
I really enjoy reading the Columbia River Gillnetter. Maybe it's the Swedish part of me plus I LOVE salmon. Here's a little something to help publish the newspaper.

Deb Boone
Seaside Oregon

The Gillnetter,
Thank you for continuing to send such a wonderful publication. I hope this donation will help you to keep it rolling. Thank you again and I love all the old pictures.

Aaron Brethauer
Moscow, Idaho

Dear Jon,
Can't thank you enough for a job well done, brings back a lot of memories!
Respectfully Yours,
Elmer Hjorten
Shoreline, Washington

Jon Westerholm
My $50.00 contribution to the Columbia River Gillnetter enclosed. My father, Arne Meier, was a lifelong member of the CRFPU. I really miss the many hours I spent on the drift with him on the River when I was a kid.
Regards,
Pelle Meier
Puget Island, Washington

Dear Columbia Gillnetter Staff,
May I convey to you my deepest appreciation for your diligence and commitment in producing such a wonderful publication. Since I lost my husband, Bobby Nelson, and my other relatives who were also gillnetters, The Gillnetter Magazine is so informative about the past and the present of the gillnetting industry. Please find enclosed a $50.00 check for your Columbia River Gillnetter publication...in memory of Bobby Nelson. I look forward to reading your future publications.
Sincerely,

Charlene Nelson
Brush Prairie, Washington

2 Columbia River Gillnet Permits for sale:
Contact Charlene Nelson at 360-944-1322,
Brush Prairie, WA

Hey Jon,
I just received my first issue of CRG as a gift from my brother-in-law and sister there in Brownsmead. What a treat! Having lived and worked at the Big Creek Hatchery and through conversations with the Westerholms', I know a lot of the people, names, and stories mentioned in the publication. I retired from ADF&G and continued to see people from the Astoria area in Alaska. It is said that "History" is dead, but it is very much alive and important to all of our heritages, regardless of our origin, occupation, or education. I have read every page from cover to cover and enjoyed every bit of it. Looking forward to the next issue, even here in the great salmon state of Montana!
Thanks a bunch
Alan Quinby
Kalispell, Montana

Hello!
Enclosed find my donation to the Gillnetter paper. It keeps getting better and better.
Thanks and hello to everyone!
Harold Stensrud
Hermiston, Oregon

Dear Editor,
My wife Dorothy and I were both members of the 1935 high school class with Don Riswick, Bobbie Anet, and Wally Johanson. John Warren was coach at that time and went on to Oregon to help develop what came to be known as "The Tall Firs" and went on to win the 1939 National basketball championship. Many years later Don began to organize 1935 class reunions, but Bobby and Wally had both died. Wally Palmberg was at the last one Dorothy and I attended and I can't remember the year but it was a long time back. In year 2003 Dorothy and I moved into Hearthstone-a retirement home in Beaverton-when I gave you my change of address. Here we are, delighted in finding Peggy (Chessman) Lucas a very actively involved resident. Dorothy had known her from high school days. We are all saddened by her recent death but have gained another ex-Astorian in Bill Dresser who moved in shortly after. We look forward to receiving future issues of the Gillnetter.
Yours very truly,
Ed Erickson
Beaverton, Oregon

Dear Editor,
I am 88 years old now and live on a small 5 acre lake called Halls Lake 2 or 3 miles from Bellinger Lake in the Lynnwood/Edmonds area north of Seattle. I raised salmon, from eggs received at the State Hatchery in Issaquah, in my little backyard facility. I worked with Bob Baye who is known for his program teaching Washington schoolchildren the are of hatching salmon eggs and growing them into fry. Our 2 lakes are connected by a small stream and run eventually into Lake Washington. Thanks for the paper. I always look forward to reading it.

John Wahl
Lynnwood, Washington
Guest Editorial

Fish and Politics

According to statistics printed in the March, 2007 issue of the National Geographic Magazine, it started in 2004 alone, Federal and State agencies spent over 350 million dollars on efforts to restore salmon and steelhead stocks. This is mind boggling when you consider this amount does not include what has been spent before and after 2004 and it appears the effort is still at square one.

In Washington State, tens of thousands of people are walking all over spawning beds during critical periods of spawning and egg incubation. Boats capable of destroying nest eggs with the force generated by high powered propeller or jet driven boats are operated in spawning areas. Drifting boats that sometimes drag their anchors to slow the boat down will destroy any nest of eggs in the Anchors path. These fish destroying activities are not and have never been restricted.

House bill #2054, introduced by Representative Joe McDermott in 2005, would have provided the protection necessary for salmon and steelhead to successfully reproduce unhindered. The bill never got out of committee.

In 2007, Senator Erik Poulsen introduced Senate Bill #5876. Before introduced the bill, I had spoken to him about the fish killing in-river activities that were going on, and suggested using the same language that was used in HB2054 that would have had a positive effect on the ability of salmon and steelhead to reproduce. The bill that evolved would not have accomplished anything. It said, “department shall produce educational materials discouraging activities that harm or disturb the spawning beds of salmon and steelheads”. Enacting such legislation would be no more effective than encouraging people not to rob banks or drive recklessly.

I want to point out that in 2005, Senator Ken Jacobsen co-sponsored a bill (SB5787) with Senator Dan Swecker to allow salmon pen farming in the strait of Juan De Fuca. Senator Swecker is very active in the salmon farming group. It should be obvious to anyone that this bill was designed to die and that legislation to protect salmon and steelhead has little or no chance of being enacted as long as the present situation exists in Olympia.

I am convinced that if there will ever be any legislation enacted to protect salmon and steelhead during critical spawning and incubation periods, it will have to come from the congressional level.

Getting the people in Congress to move is not a task for a few people. It will require everyone who has an interest, directly or indirectly, in restoring the salmon and steelhead stocks to do their part by contacting their Senators and Representatives in Congress. They need to be told what is going on regarding unrestricted fish killing activities that are occurring during critical spawning and egg incubating periods. Remind them fish destroying activities are violations of the Endangered Species Act and must be regulated if the fish stocks are to have the opportunity to reproduce unhindered.

Tell your Senators and Representatives in Congress that legislation to protect salmon and steelhead reds during critical periods does not presently exist. Let them know that this issue has not been addressed and legislation to put an end to the carnage on the spawning grounds is common sense and is long overdue. Point out that wading around on spawning habitat and operating powerful boats during critical periods is like planting a vegetable garden then walking all over and driving tractors on the planted area. Remind them that billions have been spent to restore the fish resource with little to show for it. Tell them it does not cost anything to not engage in activities that interfere with the ability of the fish to reproduce.

The people in Washington, D.C. need to hear from people other than lobbyists and lawyers. There are many thousands of people who are directly or indirectly affected by salmon and steelhead. If they are not speaking out, the people in Washington, D.C. will not get the message. When elected officials get huge amounts of mail from constituents they take notice. To quote Edmund Burke who said, “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” It is important for everyone to be heard if anything is to be accomplished.

John Jovanovich, Seattle.
Upper Columbia River Summer Chinook

Upper Columbia summer Chinook are destined for production areas and hatcheries above Priest Rapids Dam. Historically, Upper Columbia summer Chinook spawned in the Columbia, Wenatchee, Okanogan, and Similkameen rivers. Since completion of the Columbia River hydropower system, summer Chinook reds are found in the Columbia, Wenatchee, Okanogan, Methow, Similkameen, Chelan and Entiat rivers. Artificial production programs release over 2 million yearlings and 1.5 million sub-yearlings annually. Since 2002, the majority of the hatchery production returning to the Columbia River Basin has been mass marked with an adipose fin clip. Natural spawning populations also contribute to the run. Since 2005, the Columbia River summer Chinook run consists only of the upper Columbia component, and run size is the sum of the Bonneville Dam count and the number of fish caught in lower river fisheries during June through July 31. Snake River summer Chinook are a component of the upper river spring Chinook run. Upper Columbia summer Chinook are not ESA-listed, and the population is currently considered healthy.

The upper Columbia summer Chinook run size remained at low levels throughout the 1980s and 1990s, with runs averaging 19,800 fish in the 1980s and 15,600 fish in the 1990s. Supplementation programs and improved natural habitat have played a significant role in the increased abundance trends observed since 1999. The average run size between 2000 and 2005 was 63,300 adults, which was three times greater than the average run size of the 1980s and four times greater than the average run size of the 1990s.

2006 Run

The 2006 upper Columbia River summer Chinook return totaled 76,200 adults, compared to the preseason forecast of 49,000 adults. The 2006 run was the third largest since 1980 and continued the recent positive abundance trend.

2007 Forecast

The forecast for the 2007 upper Columbia River summer Chinook run is 45,600 adults to the Columbia River. The 2007 forecasted return is less than the 2006 return and, though slightly less than recent years, the forecast continues a positive abundance trend compared to the last two decades.

Sockeye

Sockeye salmon in the Columbia Basin have declined substantially from historic levels. Most of the
original production of sockeye occurred in nursery lakes located in the uppermost reaches of the Columbia and Snake River basins. Upstream passage was blocked by the construction of several key dams including: Grand Coulee Dam (completed 1941) in the upper Columbia system; and by Swan Falls (1901), Sunbeam (1913-1934), Black Canyon (1914), and Brownlee (1958) dams in the Snake River system. Landlocked sockeye salmon, commonly called kokanee, are still produced in many of the areas that formerly contained anadromous runs.

The Columbia River sockeye run consists of three stocks, the Okanagan, Wenatchee, and Snake River stocks. The Okanagan and Wenatchee stock abundance is cyclic, with occasional strong return years followed by years of low returns. Sockeye have been adversely impacted by hydroelectric development in the basin. Upper Columbia River sockeye consist of four different age groups. Fish returning to Okanogan Lake in the Okanogan Basin are typically three- and four-year-old fish. Those returning to Lake Wenatchee in the Wenatchee Basin are typically four- and five-year-old fish.

The Snake River sockeye run is extremely depleted. This stock was ESA listed as Endangered in November 1991. The five-year average return to the Stanley Basin is 12. The 2006 return was 3. In some years in the 1990's no fish returned. Production is maintained through a captive brood program and most returning adults are products of this program. The 2007 forecast return to the Stanley Basin is 50-100 sockeye. The total allowed incidental harvest impacts are 6%-8% of the river mouth run size of sockeye. In most years the total harvest impacts are less than 5%.

**2006 Run**

The 2006 return of sockeye to the Columbia River totaled 37,100 adults, compared to the preseason forecast of 31,100 adults. The 2006 return was similar to the 2005 return, and included about 10,300 Wenatchee fish and 26,700 Okanogan fish. The Snake River component of the run consisted of 79 fish, which is greater than the five-year average of 58 fish.

**2007 Forecast**

The forecast for the 2007 Sockeye run is 27,300 adults to the Columbia River. The forecast includes 6,600 Wenatchee fish and 20,700 Okanogan fish. The Snake River Sockeye return for 2007 is forecast at 300 fish, which would be the largest run since 2000.

**Shad**

Shad are an introduced species brought to the West Coast from Pennsylvania stock in the 19th century. Since the extensive development of mainstream hydroelectric projects, shad runs have increased markedly in abundance and have extended their range into the upper Columbia River and into Hells Canyon of the Snake River. Since the late 1970's, all shad runs have exceeded one million fish, with a peak of over six million in 2005. Shad run timing extends from mid-May through early August at Bonneville Dam, with peak daily counts occurring in June. Since the timing of the shad run overlaps with upriver Chinook, sockeye, and steelhead runs, harvest opportunities for shad are strictly regulated to minimize handle and impact on ESA listed salmonids.

**2006 Run**

The 2006 minimum shad run size was 4.7 million with a minimum spawning escapement of over 4.6 million above The Dalles Dam, plus an unknown number below The Dalles Dam. The non-Indian (lower Columbia and Willamette River) recreational and commercial combined catch of 130,666 shad was the lowest since 1987 and amounted to 2.8% of the estimated total minimum run size. The 2006 shad run in the Columbia River was the fifth straight run over 4.0 million, but substantially lower than the 2005 record return of 6.3 million shad.

Information Provided by ODF&W / WDF&W

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Salmon For All News

Virgil Moore to leave ODFW

In a move that took many by surprise, Virgil Moore, hired as ODFW Director in the summer of 2006, announced his resignation on June 22,, 2000. He leaves ODFW to return to Idaho Fish & Game where he will assume the duties of deputy director. Citing the fact his family had remained in Idaho after he took the job in Oregon, Mr. Moore expressed a strong desire to return home.

Hatchery fish don't count
In a decision released June 13, 2007, U.S. District Court Judge John Coughenour ruled that NMFS erred in counting hatchery fish when assessing ESA status of salmonid stocks. He voided the Hatchery Listing Policy instituted following Judge Michael Hogan's ruling in Alsea et al v. NMFS that hatchery fish must be counted when they are found to be part of an Evolutionary Significant Unit. Judge Houghenour's ruling is diametrically opposed to the ruling in Alsea I, opening the way for review of the matter by the the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

The seasons that were at this writing, the spring and summer seasons on the Columbia main stem have come and gone. Spring season was not as productive as it was in 2006, but the overall catch of ~3,000 spring salmon met pre-season expectations. Once again, the run was late, but ended up exceeding the pre-season forecast by a few thousand fish, leading to one last "emergency" Compact on June 13. Another ~6,000 spring salmon were landed in SAFE fisheries.

The summer season originally was to feature three main stem openers of 10 hours each. TAC met on July 5, 2007, to downgrade the run-size from 45,600 to ~40,000. As a result, the third opener was rescinded. The total commercial catch was 1,034 summer Chinook. Recreational fishing exceeded allocation by a significant margin, giving recreational fishers 2/3 of the combined catch.

Oasis Project dies in Senate
In Oregon legislative news, HB 3525, otherwise known as the Oasis Project, was approved in the waning days of the legislature. The bill, regarded by many as a blatant water grab that did not even remotely attempt to be fish friendly, would have created huge new Columbia River water allocations east of the Cascades. Fortunately, its companion bill in the Senate, SB 483, died in committee. But we can expect to see this proposal again.

Fish First and the CCA
Gary Loomis, founder of Fish First, has brought in the Coastal Conservation Association, an anti-commercial fishing group from the Gulf Coast, to form Northwest chapters. The specific intent of this move is to eliminate commercial fishing, beginning with gillnetting. Loomis claims gillnetters specifically targeted the coho from his Cedar Creek STEP program, reducing a run of 16,000 to 6,000 in one year. While Loomis deserves credit for the success of his Cedar Creek coho project, the numbers he claims appear to be spurious at best according to expropriation data compiled by WDFW. Further the notion that somehow gillnetters were even able to maliciously target his fish is completely preposterous.

Loomis is the inventor of the graphite fishing rod, and a very wealthy man. As such, he was able to finance the CCA's move to the Northwest. The CCA has successfully eliminated most net fisheries along the Gulf Coast, with the exception of the state of Alabama. Their operating mode is to work through legislative action, but that easily could change in the Pacific Northwest, where the usual method of engaging in fish fights is to make a run at the ballot box. In the past, the voters of Washington and Oregon have repeatedly rejected such efforts, and by considerable margins. It's a colossal waste of resources.

Executive Director SFA Hobe Kytr

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**Lurdine**

John Hendrickson built the steel hulled paddlewheel powered craft twenty-five years ago, in his brother-in-law's yard right here in Clatsop County on the John Day River. With the help of expert welder Al Schultz, he completed his copy and vision of the Lurdine in 1983. Ever since his younger days on the Columbia River watching boats going back and forth he had marveled at the long, sleek, fast Lurdine and also the Undine. They plied the Columbia River until the early 1930's.

The Lurdine is 65 feet long with a 15 1/2 foot beam and the 10 foot by 10 foot paddlewheel (no prop) is powered by a 671 “Jimmy” diesel engine. He operated the sternwheeler along the Astoria waterfront for 2 or 3 summers, when it was new in the middle 1980's. As far as Hendrickson knows the boat is now located on the Siuslaw River at Florence with a new name, Westward Ho.

*Information Provided by John Hendrickson, John Day*

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Boats – Boat shops – Shipyards

In the early 20th century the ever-growing demand for more gillnet boats on the Columbia River to meet the needs of the Commercial Fishing Industry created boat-building shops in many areas on the river and a construction frenzy ensued. This activity spilled over to the other bays and estuaries up and down the Pacific Coast of Washington, Oregon, and Northern California as fishing took place there as well. Of course, Puget Sound, Grays Harbor, and the Sacramento River, where salmon gillnetting on the West Coast originated, were the classic locations.

Other developments that added to this boat-building growth and demand were the ocean fishery, the advent of salmon trolling, the huge Alaska fishery, and WWI in 1917. Now it was no longer just a small boat shop putting out a few small boats but rather shipyards with oceangoing craft as their product as well – and in larger numbers.

Phoenix V

In the spring of 1943, WW II was going full bore with most of the local population of able bodied men 18 and over in the service, creating a serious shortage of manpower. Salmon was in high demand so during the spring season all those that were able to, worked in the canneries or gillnetted for the prime Spring Chinook.

General Petroleum (Mobil) Oil Corp had a distributorship at the Port of Astoria that was owned by George Sheahan and managed by my brother-in-law, Ed Niemi. I, at age 16, signed on as a deckhand on the Phoenix V which was their cannery launch converted to a mini-tanker holding 5,000 gallons in a tank in the hold and numerous 55 gallon drums on deck. Swede Zan-kich was the skipper. We made a round trip upriver every Wednesday as far as Cathlamet, Washington. We carried 5,000 gallons of diesel oil for the logging trains in Cathlamet and made numerous stops to deliver drums of gasoline to fish receiving stations along the way.

Two of the stations that stand out in my memory were Nahcotta and Clifton was at the North entrance to Chaddix slough (also spelled Shaduck, or Shattuck) near Brownsport. I assume that Nahcotta got its name from a riverboat that was abandoned near there in the mud flats. The nameboard from it was nailed to a piling that the receiving scow was moored to. The remains of the hull can still be seen on a runout tide. At the time there were several fishermen living in Brownsport one of them being “Uncle” George Davis who was at one time a “market” duck hunter and a gillnetter.
After leaving there we proceeded up river to Clifton where Jalmer Thompson was the “mayor” and also in charge of the receiving station. The only way we could get moored was by putting a bottle of Old Crow in a landing net lowered from the dock. With that done, a line was thrown to us.

There were some other stops along the way but my memory of them is too dim to recall them. On our arrival at the log dump in Cathlamet we passed a hose up to a tank on land. It stored the fuel for the logging “Shay” locomotives that brought timber from the surrounding hills. Our pump was run by a one cylinder 5 Horse Union engine that took a great deal of flywheel flipping along with a few choice words to get it running. Once we got the stubborn engine chugging it was just a simple operation to empty our tank. With our decks holding empty drums and the main tank drained, we had a relaxing trip back home.

The Phoenix V was around for many years after it was “retired” and was used at one time as a floating home moored in the West End Basin. The boat tied alongside the Phoenix V, Blonde, was a converted launch into a pleasure craft. It was owned by Milton B. Henderson who owned an ice company in Portland and was a friend of Joe Dyer and George Fulton.

*Story by Dick Thompson, Astoria*

**Smith Point – Young’s Bay**

1900 to 1980

Smith Point at the northeast prominence of Young’s Bay is named after Samuel Cole Smith who took a land claim there about 1850. He was one of the first to sell salted salmon from the Columbia River. He died in 1870 yet part of the Astoria shoreline still has his name.

As you cross the Young’s Bay Causeway and Bridge from Astoria to Warrenton today, view all of the old dilapidated piling along the Smith Point shoreline to the South. These are the remains of two old boat shops surrounding a WWI shipyard.

In 1917, the Kankkonen/Wilson Brothers, of earlier Union Cannery fame, established the Wilson Bros. Shipyard to build wooden ships and barges for the war effort. For a few short years it was very active and provided many jobs for the local work force.

The Columbia Boat Building Co. (CBBC) was erected just above the shipyard in 1924 by Tolonen, Pakonen, and Piri. They specialized in Columbia River Gillnet boats during the 50 years of operation but also built wooden boats for the ocean troll fleet and for other uses on the River. (See article in Winter 2007 edition Boat Building Finnish Family by Bruce Tolonen.)

The area just below the shipyard across Young’s Bay, closer to the SP&S railroad trestle in the earlier years and the highway crossing of today, was where the Astoria Motorboat Construction Company was located. It was started about 1910. They built hundreds of carbon copy double-end Columbia River Stern Picker gillnetters. They came with the new one cylinder engines that were then replacing sail power. These boats were well equipped for greater efficiency with engine, rudder, basket around prop, and 2 or 3 planks higher over the water then the old sailboats. They had a higher bow for seaworthiness and a nice wood or tarp cover over the forecastle.

*More about AMCCin the next Issue*
Pakonen & Son Boat Yard
Aberdeen Washington

Toivo Pakonen moved with his father, Andrew, from Astoria to Aberdeen in 1940 to start a new boat building business on Grays Harbor.

Following is the Pakonen family story as told in a letter to Toivo's daughter Tanya Boede. She and her husband Fred are retired teachers and live in Edmonds, Washington. Some additional information has been provided via telephone communication from Vern Heikkila in Westport, Washington.

I had a conversation with my mother, Delilah, about the early days at the Aberdeen boat yard and also what she knows about the Pakonens when they lived in Astoria. She is 87 and lives in the house in Aberdeen at the boat yard that my grandfather, Antii (Andrew) and my father built in 1947-1948.

My mother doesn't know for sure what brought my grandfather, Andrew Pakonen, to Astoria, but besides the fishing industry we know that he had a half-brother and sister in Astoria. He emigrated from Finland and joined the Finnish community in Astoria. He met my grandmother Eva Sepponen, also a Finnish immigrant, in Astoria. They were married in Astoria in 1917.

Antii and Eva lived in a float house on Young's River (Young's Bay?), and later had a house on Alameda Street. We know that in the early years Antii worked as a gill-netter and during the winter he worked in a boat yard on Taylor Street in Union Town. Toivo said that 1925 he went into partnership with two others and started the Columbia Boat Building Co.

My father was born March 2, 1918, in Astoria. He grew up around boat building and the fishing industry. He attended Astoria High School where he played on the varsity basketball team in 1936.

After working in the Columbia Boat Yard, Antii wanted to start his own business with his son. After looking at different locations they found property in South Aberdeen on the Chehalis River which at that time was the Anderson Spar Yard. They bought the property and moved to South Aberdeen and started the business in February of 1940. Toivo was just one month from turning 23 years old. Aberdeen also had a large Finnish community and Toivo met my mother, Anna Delilah (King) Kuningus and they were married on August 16, 1942.

In the beginning there was a small building (shack) on the property which was used as an office for the spar yard. I remember as a young girl being in that building which my grandparents used in the beginning as their house. In 1947-1948 my grandfather and my dad built the house at the boatyard that my grandparents called home. My brother, Wayne, was born in 1947 and he has lived in this house since 1950. There are two of us, Wayne and myself. I am the oldest. I was born in 1943.

The boatyard was a natural business for the area and provided a good living for the two families. My grandfather and my father did most of the work themselves, but the fishermen were also allowed work on their own boats. My dad and grandfather built the "shop" building and installed two sets of
ways for hauling boats in and out of the river. They also built the floats. The winter crew in those busy years consisted of Ero Sipila, Torsti Harynen, and Walt Hekkila, from Aberdeen, and Archie Bakonen, Emil Williams, and Eino Pietila from the Astoria area. The skills that Antii learned in Astoria were passed on to my father and then to my brother. In the early years several boats were built and launched at the shop. Among them were the 'Miss Helen', the 'Sue', the 'Vernie Paul', and the 'Southside'.

In 1955 the City of Aberdeen wanted to deepen the Chehalis River channel for commercial shipping and needed a place to put the sand dredged out of the river. The boatyard property was handy and the current "sand lot" was created for dry boat storage. Mom remembers that in those years they charged $1 a day for dry boat storage.

My grandfather, Andrew, passed away from a sudden heart attack in November 1959. By then my brother Wayne was beginning to work around the boatyard and he eventually became the Son in Pakonen and Son. I graduated in Education from what is now Western Washington University and taught 23 years in the Everett and Edmonds' school districts.

My brother made his living at the boatyard until just a few years ago, but times were very different for him. The fishermen were not building as many wooden boats as in the 1950s and the business became more of a repair business along with boat storage on the sandlot. Hard work and long days were always the norm at the boatyard.

Wayne has two sons, Sean now 36 and Eric now 33. Sean and Eric worked at the boatyard but found it was not what they wanted to do. Both are currently working in other areas. The business is still operating as a boat repair business under the management of Mike Brittain, but on a limited basis.

Another person who has knowledge of the earlier years of the boatyard and the fishing business is Vern Helkkila. He and his father built the 'Vernie Paul' at the boatyard. Vern is a retired fisherman and lives in Westport – we have been friends since we were kids.

Toivo never lost his love of basketball and continued to play in city league games for many years. You could always see him watching sports events. He also loved to dance especially the vigorous Scandinavian polkas and schottisches. He and his father built a sauna at the boat shop and this Finnish custom was carried on by he and his family.

Story by Tanya Pakonen Boede
The Double Ender

Two views of the traditional double end Gillnetter of the teens, 20s and 30s equipped with one, two, and four cylinder engines with such names Union, Standard, Palmer, Hicks, Gray, Universal, and Kermath. Both pictures were from the 1935 period with the fleet being a special parade, in front of Astoria, for the opening of the fishing season. The individual boat is in the Ilwaco Boat basin. Notice the same boat with the CRFPU Combine white stripe around it, to the left front in the parade. Also notice the sleek all white boat with the high bow and square stern in the foreground. It obviously is just off the boatyard ways with cabin and pilot house yet to be completed.

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Warrenton Boat Yard

The Salmi family have owned the boat yard in downtown Warrenton on the Skidanon River for over 60 years. The brothers Steve, Charles, and David now operate the marine repair and maintenance business. They took over the company fulltime two years ago upon the death of their father, Elmer Salmi. They actually had bought him out in 1990, upon his retirement. Uncle Ray Salmi still lives in the area.

Grandfather Ed Salmi moved to the area in 1946 from Minnesota after WWII, and with son Elmer established the boat yard and ways at the site of an old cedar shingle mill. Improvements to the facility have been made over the years, including concrete work in 1972 and new docks, although they do not have moorage rentals.

The Salmi Brothers will continue the boat yard into the future helping to keep the Columbia River and Pacific Ocean marine stock afloat and remembering their father's love of boats.

Interview with Steve Salmi

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Columbia Ward Bunkhouse

A typical Alaska commercial fishing camp, this one is at Columbia-Wards Cannery in Kenai. The company was owned by Ward's Cove Packing, of Seattle, at this time.

The lower left photo shows veteran Cook Inlet fisherman Charlie Ask, on the left, and Del Barendse standing in front of the "Moosehorn Bunkhouse".

The dayroom, lower right photo, in the main bunkhouse gives you an idea of the main activities between fishing days. Lots of important tack, plenty of skookum coffee, and the ever competitive card games. Here, a hot cribbage game between Alan Takalo, right, and Charlie Ask.

A large number of Columbia River gillnetters migrate north to various places in Alaska, in June and July, to take advantage of salmon fishing opportunities. Such places as Cordova and Prince William Sound, Naknek, and Bristol Bay, Kenai and Cook Inlet, and Kodiak. There they join other fishermen mainly from up and down the Pacific Coast from San Diego to Seattle as well as the local Native Alaskans to participate in the sockeye (red) salmon harvest.

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The 3rd Annual CRPA/Bumble Bee Canery Workers Reunion 2007 Saturday, August 11th, 3-6PM

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Three recent birthday celebrations at the Uptown Union Town Supreme Court morning coffee meeting at the cannery restaurant. Left to right Eldon Korpela, Jon Westerholm, and Don Abrahams with cakes provided by the cannery and proprietor Dana Gunderson, making the presentation in the middle picture. Ages not revealed!

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Snag Diving On The Columbia River

The use of snag nets and snag divers to keep the bottom clear of obstructions to drifting gillnets became the predominant thing to do by the late 19th century on the Columbia River. Certainly the foundation to the formation of the CRFPU in 1884 had that as one of its most important purposes.

With the increased use of diver nets with a heavy leadline that drifted along the bottom of the river on the ebb tide, and the formation of diver drifts after the turn of the century, snag pulling became a must. More formal legalized snag union drift organizations, up and down the river, were formed by the 1920’s and 1930’s to make gillnetting even more profitable and efficient. Perhaps only the advent of nylon and monofilament after WWII, in web manufacture, and the building of aluminum and fiber-glass boats, played a more important part in modernizing the present day gillnetter.

The snag divers in those early years were hard-hat divers with heavy lead shoes and air compressors. That limited their abilities of speed and movement under water. The advent of modern day diving with swim fins, air tanks, and scuba gear about 50 years ago changed all that. As Hannu Laukkanen aptly describes in his “Snag Diver Stories” from the past two issues of the Gillnetter, the versatility of the present day diver has made the job and expense of pulling snags much easier.

One of the best divers at the end of the hard-hat era was Bill Whitten from Altoona. As was often the case, he was also a gillnetter. He dove for many years in the mid-river above Tongue Point and later became mentor for his son Bill, Jr., and Ross Lindstrom.

There were, of course, many snag divers over the years that put the hard hat on and went down to clear the bottom of different sections of the river for the various groups of gillnetters from Astoria to Oneonta, such as Joe Reinakka, to name just one.

In 1962 Ross Lindstrom recalls putting on the old heavy diving gear, just once, to dive for a snag with help from Bill, Sr. It was a dark different world down there and he found his movement severely restricted by the heavy suit and equipment. One piece of advice from the old diver ran through his head, “never lose your head – keep cool” and he completed the task. With the use of the lighter and easier to handle scuba gear that was becoming popular at this time, Ross and Bill Whitten, Jr., dove for many more years on the river.

The CRFPU in those years had built and maintained a snag scow
that was vitally important both to operate from, and also to pull heavy objects off the bottom. It was of barge-like steel construction with a raised bow section holding a heavy-duty anchor chain and cable, and a large A-frame on the stern. This was the scow that Bill Whitten, Sr. used the majority of the time during his many years of snag diving. The Fisherman's Union (CRFPU) did the scheduling for the many drifts that used it.

Mounted on the aft deck were two engines. One to operate the diver's air compressor, and the other with a winch and drum system to pull both the snag cable and the anchor chain. The operator of this donkey system on water, was always a very experienced individual. The front two-thirds of the scow had a superstructure covering the engines and equipment with a completely enclosed cabin section in the front with a wood stove for heat and a table and benches. On the roof were mounted two sets of rails to rack the snag nets between jobs. At least one drift association, Mayger, had their own snag scow.

Bill Whitten had one tender, Dave Hillsbury, that he used most of the time. A good, smart, and experienced tender to handle the lifeline, air hose, and telephone line, was of critical importance for doing a good job and at the same time maintaining safety for the diver. The number of snags pulled on one tide or a series of tides before the opening of a salmon fishing season was usually astronomical. The number of snagging sessions needed on some drifts during a year was sometimes many. The majority of snags pulled were hemlock logs dropped from log rafts being towed, which then sunk to the bottom and sanded in.

The following quote from the Mayger drifts log book in April of 1970 by Gary Viuhkala will give you an example: "This April before the May season opened we pulled snags on our drift for eight days using eight locating nets, our own snag scow, and hiring an experienced diver. We pulled 102 snags, 89 of which were hemlock logs. The cost of keeping our drift clean this year will be close to $10,000.00"

Information for this article provided by Ross Lindstrom
Editor - Jon Westerholm
News Briefs

LNG - To Be or Not to Be

The latest step in the long push by Northern Star Natural Gas Co., of Texas, to establish a receiving and storage plant at Bradwood Landing, on the Columbia River 20 miles above Astoria, was a public testimony hearing before the Clatsop County Planning Commission held at the Astoria High School Auditorium, on July 10. Several county zone changes were being requested by the company. It lasted for some 12 hours, with about 40 people yet to testify at the end of the day-long session. Another hearing session will be held later to complete the testimony.

The Opponents of the project seemed to dominate in numbers, especially towards the end of the first testimony. A lead-off staff report to the commission had already recommended a denial of the requests by Northern Star for zone changes. Boiled down to the key points.

They were:
- Proposed facility is larger than the counties comprehensive plan allows.
- Poor road access.
- Inadequate local emergency services.
- Dredging and ballast waters dangerous to Salmon.
- No Decommission Plan.
- Pipeline right of way problems.

Northern Star continues to flood the area with repetitious flyers, mailings, newspapers ads, radio and television ads. Time and local resistance will tell.

Global Warming Ready or not

Recent calculations in climate conditions indicate quite surely that the Planet Earth is warming up. The year 2006, the latest year that statistics have been completed, will be the 6th warmest year since record keeping began in 1880. The 10 warmest years have occurred in the past dozen.

In the continuous United States, 2006 will be the 3rd warmest on record being slightly cooler than 1998 and 1934. Never mind what you've heard about this warming, this is a slow motion situation that will take decades to play out. Suddenly, the crisis is upon us.

This warming trend, reflected in our weather and climate conditions, most surely is being felt here in the North West. Lack of proper cooling water in
the Columbia and other rivers, with even drought conditions in some areas, have created unstable conditions for migrating Salmon. It is happening right before our eyes and we are the cause!

**Exxon Valdez - Closing In**

Exxon oil Company, now Exxon-Mobil, and their strategy of endless appeals, in the epic Prince William Sound Alaska oil spill court case, has bounced the case back and forth between Federal and State courts for over 10 years. They are now appealing the last 9th Circuit Court of San Francisco's decision of reducing the settlement from $5 Billion to $2.5 billion, in their favor, by using another technicality in the law. They are simply so big that they don't care about the rights of others. Their lawyers are being well paid to implement this strategy which is to crush litigation from any place at any time, regardless of the size. They will use whatever resources necessary to fight it to the end, as we are seeing in this case.

Attorneys for Alaska Fishermen, Cannery Workers, and Native Villages damaged by the spill back in 1989 are awaiting final settlement and speculate that the the 9th Circuit Court or U.S. Supreme Court are unlikely to hear Exxon's appeal again. It does however give the oil giant more time in their seemingly endless delaying tactics. The end is in sight.

**Chefs Go to Washington Save Wild Salmon**

In May, a group of prominent chefs from across the country called on the U.S. Congress to remove the dams and restore rivers to protect Wild Salmon along the Pacific Coast. It was a bold move by a group of cooks who realized that our government was not doing enough to save fish and this "last great wild meal". They told congress that habitat loss, and not fishing was destroying the wild species.

The chiefs efforts had been spurred on the April ruling of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejecting the Bush Administration's Salmon Plan and echoing Portland U.S. District Judge James Redden in finding the Federal Plan for saving Salmon from the damage incurred by Hydroelectric Dams on the Columbia & Snake River systems, inadequate.
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FRESH TUNA
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The 1962 Red Salmon Season on Cook Inlet

Long time Astoria and Alaska Gillnetter, Eldon Korpela tells the unusual story of his 1962 Salmon season experience.

Leaving Snug Harbor on July 5, 1962 aboard the fishing vessel Julie, I steered in a Northeast direction up Cook Inlet. The water surface was calm and the sky clear making any jumping salmon visible for long distances. I had a gut feeling that the fish had moved up the Inlet and were somewhere East of Kalgan Island. After crossing the Kalgan Bar and reaching the thirty fathom mark, I pointed my bow to the North. There were a number of boats to the East headed North and I figured that if they saw any fish they would stop. Feeling that fish somewhere to the North were already showing on the surface, I opened the throttle on the Julie.

I could see jumpers ahead and the further I ran, the more fish I observed on the surface. One net in the water ahead was getting good hits so I ran a half a mile above it and started my lay out. It's a feeling only a gillnetter can really appreciate to see the salmon violently striking his net immediately behind the boat. The surface was white with splashing water clear to the end of my net, which was marked by the buoy I had just thrown overboard. I was praying that my net would not have a backlash on the reel which would have halted my layout and cost me fish and money.

After about an hour of observing fish hitting, the action slowed down so it was time to clear my net. Fresh or live salmon are easier to clear form the net before they stiffen up. As I was picking my net and reached the end of the first of my three shackles of net, I estimated that my first drift would be good for about five or six hundred fish.

Art "Skip" Hilton, who had spent the weekend in Kenai, pulled up to me with his white bow picker and asked, "Where are the fish?" "I think it's better a couple of net lengths to my West," was my reply. I thought that I was doing Art a favor until later when I learned what had happened to him. After he had laid out, he lit a cigarette and was enjoying the hits along his entire net when he noticed that sections of his cork line started to disappear under the water's surface. Art immediately started picking his net by hand with his bow roller. He did not have a net reel as I did. Art didn't have time to clear fish so he started pulling his net in with the fish still entangled. The net that he had been issue had the old stye floats which were split into who halves and were much smaller than the one piece type that were on my net.

I knew nothing about Art's problem until about an hour later when he cruised up to my boat. I could only see a small pile of...
net and fish in his midship’s open net locker. “What the hell happened?” I blurted out glancing at the expression on his face. “It just went down and broke off” was his confused reply. That had to be the near ultimate tragedy for a gillnetter. Lots of fish around and he doesn’t even have a net to lay out.

“I’d head for the river and pick up a spare,” I suggested, not knowing any method of consoling him. Heading Northeast towards the Kenai River was the last time that I observed him that day.

I had my net cleared about noon and did not have to travel very far until I ran into the fish again. Observing my catch, it appeared to consist of about sixty percent red salmon, which were the more preferred “monkey” fish. Maybe Art’s net was full of chum which are a couple of pounds heavier than a red salmon, but I was still mystified by the rapid sinking of Art’s entire net. Maybe he hit the “mother vein”, a solid mass of salmon traveling in a small area.

My fish locker was already over half full with five to six hundred fish from the first drift. After picking up from my second drift, I had filled the locker. It was about five o’clock in the afternoon and there were still lots of fish in the area but I needed to locate one of our fish receiving scows to throw my fish off.

By this time, the Julie had as much fish in her that she could safely hold and still allow me to lay my net out of the reel. I did locate one of our company delivery scows along the East beach after a forty-five minute run. Fortunately, there wasn’t a line of boats waiting and one side was open for delivery. Since each of the four species has a different value, I needed to check with the tally man occasionally on his count of each species of fish that I had pitched aboard. This game me short breaks.

By the time I had my fish ticket in hand and pulled away from the scow, it was about 6:30 in the evening. I checked the fish ticket that I had received from my delivery. It showed 842 reds and 503 chum. 1300 or 1400 fish appeared to be about the limit for the Julie in order for it to function safely.

I ran back to the West again toward the area that I had left earlier and located a spot where the nets in the water were getting good hits so I laid out. After an hour of good fishing, I needed to clear my net and search for a safe and productive night set which would also provide me with some much needed rest. While clearing my net, I had a call from Abby who was only a short distance away. He had located a good spot for the night. By the time I had my net aboard again, I had another 500 fish on the Julie.

I laid out my net below Ab’s for my night set and could immediately see fish “plunking” into my gear. The time was about an hour before midnight but still light enough to read my tide table outdoors. I took naps of at least an hour each after which I would check my net to see that I hadn’t drifted into a stick patch or another net. This went on until 4 a.m. or so, after which I began my pick up to have my net aboard by the 6 a.m. closure. Clearing the first two shackles took me about an hour and a half. There were more fish in my net than I had anticipated. I was in a fleet of boats but they were scattered in an large area. I could see Ab drifting and picking about a quarter mile to the North. He still had about two shackles in the water. It was ten minutes to the 6 a.m. quitting time and I had twenty fathoms of net out, full of fish, when I saw a small plane to the North flying in an East and West pattern in my direction. I immediately had a feeling that it could be an Alaska Fish.
and Game plane and that I can't clear twenty fathoms of net in ten minutes.

I needed to wrap the net with the fish still in it on my reel, which I did. Another check of my watch indicated that the time was four minutes to six. I called Ab since he still had two of his thirty fifty fathom shackles in the water. "My reel's haywire", was his response. "How about helping me double line my net aboard", he asked. "Sure, I'll be right over", was my immediate answer. I tied my boat to his bow and the two of us began pulling his net with the fish still entangled aboard. After about twenty minutes of pulling we had his two shackles back in to the stern of his vessel after which both of us were headed North on the flood tide to the Kenai River.

On the morning of July 6, after my period's fish delivery, Jim Johnson, superintendent of Pacific American Fisheries met me at the company dock and informed me that I had been laced under arrest. Of course, I was stunned by the fact that I was under arrest and immediately began to search for information on how to plan my strategy. My watch already had the correct time or that of the local radio station.

I learned that there were many other fishermen in a somewhat similar situation because of what occurred at the end of the fishing period. Ab, of course, was one of them, since he did have two-thirds of his net in the water when the place flew over us. One of my questions was, "Why were we singled out when half of the fishing fleet had their nets in the water at closing time?" Jim answered that one when he informed me that our two company boats had Alaska Department of Fish and Game license numbers displayed on the top of our vessel's cabin in twelve-inch numbers. The Fish and Game agent listed the numbers that he could most easily identify from the air.

One fisherman's vessel had been taking on water and was in danger of sinking so who other fishermen had tied up to him, one on each side, while they all helped keep his boat afloat and get his net in.

Another fisherman, a set netter whose net was tied to the beach on the inside end and anchored on the outside end, was arrested. The story was that he had a large log tangled in his net and therefore could not get his net out of the water. It was obvious that whose who were placed under arrest were easy to identify and the circumstances for having their nets in the water after 6 a.m. were ignored. Ab's comments were that, "We are going to fight this together."

End of Part One. To be continued in our next edition.
Mystery Photo

The Mystery Photo subjects from our last edition were correctly identified by readers Bob Wegdahl, Bruce Crookshanks, Stuart Haas, and Gary Soderstrom, as former Mayger gillnetters Wad Mustolla and Phil Hyke.

Leroy Wika also recognized the mess at their feet as a diver net completely filled with pulp mill pollution sludge in the 50's.

The CRFPU gillnetters led the way to get the pulp and paper companies to clean up the mess they were putting into the Columbia River. It is amazing that salmon were able to survive this intrusion on their habitat.

Fred Coons from Aberdeen pointed out that this same picture appeared in the Fall 2000 edition of The Gillnetter.

1. Do you recognize this gillnet boat and its Captain?

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Poets Corner
Summer 2007

We feature fisher poem laureate, Dave Densmore, with one of his latest creations. Also with the poem, Moan of the "cleone", by an unknown author.

LADY IN GREY

She comes slipping quietly,
Drifting across my deck,
Softly caressing,
My hair, cheek, and neck.

Deeply engrossed in work,
Didn't sense her presence, until her touch.
I've always loved her beauty,
Though she doesn't always show that much.

The lady in grey is gentle and quiet,
Yet I've seen her in a fury wild.
At times she seems to smother my soul,
Even as she comes so soft and mild.

Her presence, though not always welcome
Holds so much beauty for me.
At times, so lost in her embrace,
Her beauty is all I see.

Yes, sometimes that's all I see
As she wraps me in her embrace,
But I'm amazed at how deep this love,
As she caresses my upturned face.

Oh, she and her companions
Have completely saturated my life
And when I am one with them,
I know how trivial is life's strife.

She comes down from the hills,
And moves across fields, water, and bog,
Bringing her soft caresses,
The lady that's known as fog.

Dave Densmore
Feb. 9, 2007

THE MOAN OF THE "CLEONE"

A long drawn wail, a cough, a sigh,
disturbs our rest at night
While stout hearts curse the author,
and weak ones cower in fright;
Some said it was a cow in pain, or
that Mac had cut a hog
But creeping up the Bay we saw,
'twas Whistling Eddie Skog.

The Cleone's speed is five knots straight,
in calm and pleasant weather,
But with head wind she goes astern,
or else stops altogether.
When her whistle blows, her steam runs down and so she loses way
And thus is several hours late, on her passage either way.

To Uncle Hans it's bliss divine to hear
that doleful cry;
He'd cock his ear, and spread his wings as down the hill he'd fly.
With a stream of Swede and a word
or two that none could understand
He sure thought Whistling Eddie was the noblest in the land.

The Moonshine outfits in the hills,
would quiver at the sound;
The Crabs would bark, the Clams
forsake their favorite feeding grounds.

The Hens would crow, the cows
would squeal, and so would every dog;
At the passing of the Cleone and Whistling Eddie Skog.
The Cleone's lines are sweet and true,
she is a noble craft;
With one Mast stuck up foward, and
nothing stuck up aort.
And with her load of logs on deck,
about four ricks or less;
But when her awful whistle blows,
we fear she's in distress.

We hope that good old Santa Claus,
will note our fearful plight;
And put a horn in Eddie's sock, when
he hangs it up at night.
For then we'll lie in bed in peace and
breathe a silent prayer;
As the Cleone's horn to us is borne,
on the still and ambient air.

In the book of regulations, for steam boats on the Sea;
He will find a section of the law laid
down for such as he.
That "unnecessary whistling shall in
no way be allowed"
But of "Cleone's" consumptive cough,
Capt. Skog is strangely proud.
Please take a tumble Eddie, and
strive to make amends;
Don't split the ear drums of your
Foes and likewise of your friends.
Give rest unto the Clams and Cow,
the Chickens and the Hog;
So that all may shower their bless-
ings on Commander Eddie Skog.

...Author unknown

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Do You Remember?

We begin with this issue of the Gillnetter, a new series focusing on past members of our Columbia River fishery and maritime history.

In each issue we will feature 2 or 3 prominent people from the River Past.

Helmer Lindstrom

Helmer Lindstrom was as hard-nosed a gillnetter fisherman as ever came out of Alderbrook. Growing up in a family of 5 brothers and 5 sisters you had to be tough and quick to survive. His dad, who was a carpenter and builder, came to Astoria in 1887. He also did some fishing. Helmer went fishing the first time with his dad in 1923 at the age of 18.

Helmer’s brother Adolph was a boat builder and he worked in the boat shop more then he fished until 1929 when he got married. He used to say that he wasn’t a boat builder but rather a reconstruction and repair expert. He got satisfaction out of changing things around, making them longer, wider, higher, and if it called for 10 pounds of nails using 20. Reusing an old school Scandinavian phrase, when Helmer worked on a boat it came out of the shop “Hell for Stout”.

He went more for gillnetting after he got married, and soon he and his brother Carl purchased drift rights on Woody Island which they very productively fished for many years. Eventually, Helmer’s two sons Bob and Ross, as well as Carl’s son Dick, fished. Today Ross is the remaining gillnet connection to this historic Astoria family.

Helmer was very active in the Gillnetters Fishermen Union (CRFPU). He held various offices and served on several committees over the years. He was in charge of coordinating and scheduling the Union snag scow and Diver to the various drifts and having maintenance and repairs done when necessary. His son Ross became Executive Secretary of the CRFPU.

Helmer’s brother Fred, who was named after their father, went to Dental School and became a dentist in Astoria for many years. His other brother was Hugo.

Ross Lindstrom provided information for this story.

Editor – Jon Westerholm

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I REMEMBER CLANCY

My Dad, Clarence Russell, (Clancy to all his numerous friends) was a newcomer to the fishing industry in the early 1940's. He came from a logging family and had spent his early years working for Weyerhaeuser in the logging camps around Ostrander, Washington, but was hungry to try something new.

His foray into the fishing industry began in the Cowlitz River dipping smelt. There he made acquaintance with Jim Totef, from Kalama, Washington, and was invited to help Gillnet fishing on the Columbia with Jim. Clancy, a quick learner, fell in love with commercial fishing and soon was logging days and fishing every spare hour he could during the seasons which were numerous at that time. He and his wife, Mary Jane (Johnson) Russell and their young daughter, Dannette (Danni) and infant son, Jerry, moved to Carroll's, Washington in about 1945. He bought an old Joe Gordon boat which needed lots of repair and he jumped headlong into a new career. By now he was gypo "contract" logging for himself to make ends meet in between seasons. Those were hard days but full to the brim. He forged ahead learning the craft of making and mending nets, snag diving, and the art of laying out a Gillnet from the professionals around him. Harry Reither, the hard hat diver on the drifts, Virgil Howard, Paul Unger, Walt Tarbox, and many others form the Carroll's Slough drift, schooled him in the ways of the river. They were good people who appreciated the hard work of the newcomer with a quick wit. He learned about snagging the drift and tended Harry's air supply and hoses when he dived to unhook a snag from the snag net and hook it up to pull. A second son, Michael, was born in 1948. Later that year Jim Totef invited Clancy to join the crew aboard the Theresa T., part of the White Fleet, which Jim fished out of Kodiak, Alaska. He continued fishing summers with Jim throughout the 1950's.

By this time he was fishing several drifts: Carrolls Slough and the Prescott, the Frog Hole, at Astoria near the bridge, and a drift near Stella. There were newer and better boats too, the DanJerMik, then a beautiful boat with a teak stern we called the Johnny R (Johnny being Mary Jane's nickname as a teenager) and his last boat, the Johnny Too. This was his only new boat he ever owned, a fiberglass stern picker that he commissioned to be built by Tollycraft, a boat builder in Kelso, Washington. It was his dream boat, with a beautiful comfortable cabin. Mary Jane would join him for days at a time on the Vancouver drift near the I-5 bridge. These were happy times fishing with Ted Farnsworth, Bud (Walter) Berry, Al and Patty Newkirk and many others; dinners between tides at the Quay with some of the others. They became close friends, and watched out for each other especially Bud (who was like a brother to Clancy) and his wife Marie.

In 1967 Bud Berry told Clancy that Harold Dobinspeck was looking for fishermen to skipper his 12 new aluminum Gillnetters built by the Matsumoto shipyards of North Vancouver, B.C. which were to be added to his Kenai fleet in 1968. Clancy had Bud put in a good word with Harold. Soon Clancy and his youngest son, Mike, were flying to Kenai, Alaska to fish summers on the Arapaho, a 32' aluminum stern picker with a 9' beam. When Mike left for a teaching job in Germany and Clancy invited is 13 year old grandson, Joe Pederson, to be his boat puller. Joe worked with his Grandpa for 3 or 4 summers. The last summer, true to his nature Clancy took care of business; he and Joe finished putting the boat away and walked together back to the trailer and Mary Jane. As he approached the trailer he clutched his chest and collapsed. The heart damage was too severe and he died in Anchorage, Alaska 11 days later.

My best memories are of fishing with Dad, feeling the rolling of the boat, listening to him whistle while laying out the net. Watching him bend to look over the power roller rhythmically as he pulled in the net, one, two, three loops, toss it neatly on the pile and bend to see what was coming. Racking nets was another treat. Mom would pack a huge lunch (as always). We'd all 5 (Dad, Mom, Jerry, Mike and me) climb on board off to the net rack he shared with Walt Tarbox we'd go. We'd work first pulling the net out of the boat and into the bluestone tank, then eat lunch and the let our lunch settle while we racked the net out of the bluestone tank and into the river to wash out the bluestone and rack it back onto the net poles to dry. Then the fun, we'd all go swimming behind the float out of the current. Later when we moved to Kelso, Dad would spend winters mending or putting up nets in the basement. He would mold his own lead lines in the garage and it was our job to cut all the teats off the lead and pound them smooth. Pete (Danni's husband) joined Clancy in the fishing too. The first time he went with Clancy they caught a huge sturgeon with his brand new floater on the first and only drift that night. The fish rolled and rolled, bailing up half the net. They spent the rest of the night untangling it from the web. There wasn't much left of that winter's work. The second time they caught a huge sinker log which stopped the boat midway through the drift; it also tore up the net badly. So Pete opted to help Clancy's luck by staying off the boat.

Danni Russell Pederson
A Wave Goodbye

Jeff Brooks 1940-2007

Jeff Brooks, a lifetime resident of the Seaside area passed away on February 21, 2007 after a long fight against illness. He was born in Astoria, Oregon to Harvey and Dottie Brooks on August 6, 1940. He graduated from Seaside High School in 1958. After high school he enjoyed working in the logging and commercial fishing industries, professions true to the area. These professions require a strong work ethic and devotion, which are a direct reflection of Jeff's amazing qualities. He served in the Oregon National Guard for several years, after joining in 1961. In 1969, he married Linda Seger and was father to five children; Mike Mellissa, Mark, Chris and Joshua. Jeff was a compassionate man impacting the lives of numerous people throughout his life, and being a true friend to others. He married Diane Brown in 1988 and became father to her two children Michelle and David. Jeff is survived by his son, Mike Brooks; daughter, Mellissa Meacham; son, Mark Brooks; son, Chris Brooks; son, Joshua Brooks; daughter, Michelle Alexander; son, David Brown; sister, and sixteen grandchildren.

Kenneth “Ken” Carlstrom 1918-2007

Ken Carlstrom died Saturday, May 12, from post-operative pneumonia. He was 88.

He lived most of his life in the Knappa/Svensen area, before he and his wife moved last December to a retirement community in Springfield.

He was born August 3, 1918 in Astoria to Carl and Edith Ekholm Carlstrom. He graduated from Knappa High School in 1935 and later entered a 4 year journeyman program for auto body repair and painting. He was drafted into the military and spent four years in the military police at Paso Robles, CA.

After the war, he returned to Astoria and married Mildred Wallin. He owned and operated C & C Body and paint Clinic from 1946 until he sold it in 1966. He then worked at Tongue Point Job Corps from 1966 to 1975 teaching auto body repair and later managed the Job Corps Downtown Center.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Millie; daughter, Luanne Lynn; grand daughter, Tiffany Kinney, grandson Tyler Lynn, and two great grand daughters. He was proceeded in death by his adopted son Jerry Haglund.

Hazel J. Demase 1931-2007

Hazel J. Demase died in Astoria Saturday, June 9, at the age of 75. She was born in Loveland, CO., on July 31, 1931, the daughter of William L. and Stella Harrod, and moved with her family to Warrenton in 1938. She attended Warrenton High School and on Dec. 11, 1948, married Clarence V. Demase in Warrenton. After their marriage, they settled in the Clifton area of Astoria and most recently in Svenson home which they built in 1968. She is survived her husband Clarence V. Demase of Svenson; sons daughters and grand children and great-grand children. She was preceded in death by a son Michael Demase; two brothers and two sisters.

Don A. Goodall 1918-2007

Don A. Goodall, 88 of Dunedin, Fla., formerly of Astoria, died Monday May 7, 2007.

He was born Sept., 3, 1918, in Astoria, to Harris Allen and May Goodall. Following graduation from Astoria High School in 1936, Mr. Goodall was briefly in the Merchant Marines, then spent two years at Oregon State College.

He married Grace Gramms, also a native Astorian, June 14 1940. She preceded him in death.

In 1940, Mr. Goodall was employed at the Astoria Daily Budget as a news reporter. Subsequently, he was a professional Boy Scout executive in Montana, then enlisted in the US Navy in 1942. He was honorably discharged in 1945.

In 1957, Mr. Goodall joined the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. In 1959 he was promoted to the Washington staff. In 1969, he was named director of government relations for a multinational corporation. In 1977, he was elected president of the business-government relations council.

Mr. Goodall is survived by a daughter, Sharon Goodall Pearson, and two grandsons. In addition to his wife he is preceded in death by a daughter.

Gottfrid John Haglund 1919-2007

Gottfrid John Haglund (Johnny) died in Astoria, OR on Feb., 2007, at the age of 87. He was born in Astoria on May 3, 1919 to John and Amanda Haglund and was raised on a houseboat in the Knappa area.
John graduated from Knappa High School in 1937. When he was 21 he volunteered in the US Navy. John served aboard sub-chasers and naval blimps defending the Oregon coast against sub attacks.

On August 14, 1945, he had the honor of running a gig from his ship, the Cumberland Sound, a seaplane tender, to pick up General MacArthur from a seaplane and take him over to the USS Missouri for a conference a few days before the Japanese Imperial Government signed the Declaration of surrender. In 1950 he married Sharon Hoffman. They raised their two children in the Alderbrook neighborhood of Astoria.

John was a patient quite man with a strong self assurance. He was a hard worker and lived up to the standards of his generation. He loved to tell stories about his time in the war and fishing in Alaska. John was deeply loved and will be missed by all who new him.

**Albin (Abby) Edwin Ihander 1928-2007**

Albin was born in Astoria to Louis and Mary Ihander. He attended Astoria High School and played basketball and football. He attended Oregon State University where he received his degree.

Albin started fishing with his father at the age of 15 in a sailboat in Bristol Bay, Alaska. He commercially fished the Columbia River since High School. Albin fished the Columbia River all his life and continued to fish in Kenai, Alaska where he had his boat "Pawnee". On the morning of July 12, 2007 he went out fishing and fell in the boat which resulted in a major head injury, causing his death at the age of 79. This was his 65th year of fishing.

He is survived by his wife, two sons, one daughter, six grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

**Michael L. Malinen 1948-2006**

Michael L. Malinen, 58, of Warrenton, died Saturday, Nov. 18 2006, in Astoria. He was born March 19, 1948, in Astoria, to Earl and Zona Malinen. His parent preceded him in death.

Raised in the John Day area, he graduated from Astoria High in 1966. He married Cheryl Morgan in 1969. They later divorced. In 1984, he married Julie Ward. She survives, residing at the family home in Warrenton. His hobbies were fishing, hunting, camping and crabbing. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his two sons, a daughter and a grand-daughter.

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