



## Mistress of ceremonies

**M**useum patron Mary Krpalek, dressed in period costume, served as mistress of ceremonies during annual patron event. The program was modeled after the Chautauqua Assembly, which was a popular summer event in Albany at the turn of the 20th century. See Page 6 for more pictures and details.

## 'Big Blow' wallops community in '62

**BY EDWARD LOY**  
MUSEUM MEMBER

Even today — nearly fifty years after the event — ask people who were living in Albany on Columbus Day 1962 about the "Big Blow," as the storm came to be labeled in the media, and they will remember vividly its destructive power and the devastation left in its wake.

A preview of the "Big Blow" had come the day before. Thursday, October 11, was unusually wet and windy for early autumn. That storm peaked in the mid-valley about 10 a.m. with winds over 35 miles per hour accompanied by heavy rain.

By early Friday, weather forecasters were predicting a more powerful and vigorous storm would sweep across western Oregon later that day. A unique weather pattern caused this new storm to emerge from the remnants of Typhoon Freda. Freda had formed near Wake Island in the Pacific

on October 3 and had nearly dissipated a week later while off the California coast.

Forecasters expected gale force winds to begin pounding the central Oregon coast and the Willamette Valley by the early afternoon as the storm moved northward.

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Saturday, September 10,** Rhys Miller Classic car show featuring Ford Thunderbirds at the Museum's parking lot, 136 Lyon St. S. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Tuesday, October 4,** annual membership meeting and board of directors election at the Museum, 136 Lyon St. S., 5 p.m.

**Friday, November 11,** Veterans Day Parade, downtown historic district, 11 a.m.

**Sunday, December 11,** annual Christmas Parlour Tour of historic homes, downtown historic district, 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

## Sam Simpson pens famous Oregon poem

**BY KAY BURT**  
MUSEUM MEMBER

Twenty-three-year-old Sam Simpson, now without gainful employment, took mental stock of his situation. The powerful J. Quinn Thornton, pioneer homesteader and Albany attorney, had taken Sam in as his partner in the late fall of 1867, and had opened his home to him as a boarder. But by April, Thornton had decided to dissolve their partnership. Sam would be marrying fellow Willamette University student Julia Humphrey in just three short months.



**Sam Simpson**

In the past six months, Sam had become familiar with downtown Albany and its environs, bursting with vitality and commerce. He could have taken one of several steamboats to Salem or to Eugene in these high water months, and would have gazed at the marshy banks of what now will become Albany's Talking Water Gardens. Most days after working in the Thornton law office, he

boarded the ferry at the base of Ellsworth Street and walked up the gentle rise toward J. Quinn Thornton's homestead near today's West Thornton Lake Drive. Sam's path would have skirted Fairmount Lake, now named after his benefactor, and a part of which will soon become a wetlands preserve.

But Sam was now without work! The States Rights Democrat posted the notice in the April 11 edition. Most

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# A Last Look: Thanks to many

BY JOHN BUCHNER  
BOARD CHAIRMAN

This issue marks my last as Museum board member and chairman.

It has been a good ride for me — 10 years on the board and six as chairman.

However, there remain many volunteer jobs at the Museum and I expect to enjoy helping with some of these, including this newsletter.

Thanks are in order to many individuals who have and continue to support the Museum — both as volunteers and financial backers.

Not the least of these is founder and former chairman Jerry Brenneman. He, too, continues to volunteer and assist with many projects. It is he more than anyone else that has kept the Museum going and growing.

I still remember the day he visited me at the *Albany Democrat-Herald*, a few weeks prior to my retirement as publisher in 1999, about becoming involved with the Museum. It was an invitation that wasn't easy to turn down. Jerry had been my high school history teacher.

As a board member, it became obvi-

ous of the effort Jerry had given to the Museum, and still does. In those early years, it was just hard work by a few people that kept the Museum operating. After his retirement from the school district, he donated many hours — more than 40 hours a week when we moved into the present building. Thanks to financial assistance from a few, the Museum was able to grow into the institution it has become today.

I remember when he had about a dozen volunteers and no membership dues. Last year we set a record of 500 paid memberships — that means probably more than 750 people contribute in some fashion to the Museum. The annual operating budget runs about \$100,000 annually.

During the last 10 years, the Museum has graduated from strictly a volunteer-managed nonprofit to one with a professional staff of three part-time employees and many more volunteers. Board members have grown to be policy makers as well as workers.

Introductions of the membership tea, patron program and Rhys Miller Clas-

sic car show have become community events not to miss.

I need to single out a few other persons who have particularly helped me during my terms. Recruiting accountant Michael Kok to advise, monitor and direct financial matters has been crucial to our operations. Mary Jacq Burck, a member of the pioneer Jenks family, is the leader of our Development Committee and serves in many Museum roles. Bill Maddy, as our first paid administrator, helped in the transition to a more professional staff. Maddy remains a Museum volunteer. He was followed by our current administrator, Tami Sneddon, who was the first to bring professional museum experience to our operation. Her enthusiasm, knowledge and growth as a coordinator have contributed immensely to the Museum's position as a viable community asset. My wife Kitty has been and is a big help with my projects.

There are many exciting things on the horizon at the Museum. The updating and remodeling of the exhibits, the remodeling of existing space (yes, a public restroom will become a reality!) and the possibility of an art gallery on the Museum's second floor.

The fun is just beginning. Come join us.

# Thank you to the 2010-11 patrons of Museum

Each year the Museum recognizes its major donors.

There are four levels of gifting.

Patrons are individuals or couples that contribute \$115 or more annually to be members of the Albany Regional Museum.

\*History Circle recognition is for individuals or couples that contribute \$250 annually.

\*\*Chautauqua Circle recognition is for accumulative gifting. These individuals or businesses have given cash gifts totaling between \$1,000 and \$9,999.

The \*\*\*Brenneman Society, named for Museum founder Gerald Brenneman and his late wife Katie, recognizes individuals or businesses that have exceeded lifetime gifts of \$10,000.

Patrons for the 2010-2011 year include:

Mary Arnett  
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# Sam Simpson

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sources state that Sam penned "Beautiful Willamette," between April 11 and 18, 1868. Perhaps this poem was a kind of farewell to the area, as well as a reaction to his current lack of employment. It is believed that he sat at the base of Calapooia Street in downtown Albany (on the southern bank of the river) looking downstream.

Shortly after composing the poem, Sam handed it to M.V. Brown, a friend and one of the owners of the States Rights Democrat. "He (Sam) spent a great deal of time in the Democrat office with Brown and M.H. Abbott, who was Brown's partner and also editor... So, when he wrote the poem which was destined to live as the greatest piece of poetry ever written in this state, he handed it to Brown." (Albany Democrat, September 18, 1909). The poem was sandwiched between two ads on page 3 with only the author's initials.

Upon leaving Albany, Simpson experienced some happiness. He had dedicated three poems to Julia before their marriage on July 30, 1868. She is described as popular and with a beautiful voice. Mary Robinson Gilkey, a fellow Willamette classmate, recalled that "Among my schoolmates that I remember with a great deal of pleasure was Sam Simpson, Oregon's sweet-voiced singer, who was not only bright as a dollar, but very popular with his fellow students. He married Julia Humphrey. I was present at their wedding." (Conversations with Pioneer Women, Lockley).

Julia and Sam then settled in Corvallis. The 1870 census reveals that Sam still identified himself as an attorney. However, he turned to writing and journalism that year, becoming editor of the Corvallis Gazette. The couple divorced in 1875, and Sam worked in many other Oregon cities over the next 25 years. The major problem was alcohol and Sam struggled unsuccessfully with its grip for the rest of his life. He eventually became a Grub Street writer in Portland doing hack work and writing in several genres.

Upon his death, Oregonians rediscov-

ered Samuel Simpson. The Albany Democrat capitalized on this interest by locating the original 1868 poem and creating a postcard. The September 24, 1909, article touts that "A new postcard is a novelty. It is an exact reproduction of the original poem of Sam Simpson, 'Ad Willamettam,' as published in the Democrat April 18, 1868." The short article goes on to say that, "This poem is one of the best in the English language and will be a splendid booster to send east."

Simpson became known as "Oregon's Poet Laureate" and his Willamette poem was a standard piece of memory work in the State's classrooms through the 1920s.



**Willamette River in 2011 near the end of Calapooia Street.**

"Beautiful Willamette" embraces the Romantic Movement's common theme of reverence for Nature and the greater themes the reader can learn from observing Her. Looking at the river in mid-April, Sam would have observed the fast-flowing river

"From the Cascades' frozen gorges/Leaping like a child at play." (The rest of stanza one becomes the refrain and is inscribed on Simpson's tombstone in Portland's Lone Fir Cemetery.)

Stanza two contains lovely imagery that can be easily memorized. It has an immediacy that Sam was witnessing on that April day: "Spring's green witchery is weaving/Braid and border for thy side;" However, stanza three turns from the river's beauty and ponders: "Life's old questions,/Sad suggestions,/Whence and whither? Throng thy stream." Could these be the lines indicating that Sam was contemplating his future with apprehension?

Stanza four has fatalism with the river roaring toward the ocean and scattering its waves.

Today Samuel L. Simpson is regarded as a fine regional poet who experienced Oregon from its beginnings, and who was labeled as "Sweet Singer of Oregon's Beauty."

## Albany resident offers idea to honor first poet laureate

Albany resident Betty Orr grew up when Samuel Simpson's poem was well known. The longtime reporter and historian says that Oregon's first poet laureate should garner more attention in

## 'Beautiful Willamette'

*From the Cascades' frozen gorges,  
Leaping like a child at play,  
Onward ever,  
Lovely River,  
Softly calling to the sea,  
Time, that scars us,  
Maims and mars us,  
Leaves no track or trace on thee.*

*Spring's green witchery is weaving  
Braid and border for thy side;  
Grace forever haunts thy journey,  
Beauty dimples on thy tide;  
Through the purple gates of morning  
Now thy roseate ripples dance,  
Golden then, when day, departing,  
On thy waters trails his lance.  
Waltzing, flashing,  
Tinkling, splashing,  
Limpid, volatile, and free  
Always hurried  
To be buried  
In the bitter, moon-mad sea.*

*In thy crystal deeps inverted  
Swings a picture of the sky,  
Like those wavering hopes of Aidenn,  
Dimly in our dreams that lie;  
Clouded often, drowned in turmoil,  
Faint and lovely, far away  
Wreathing sunshine on the morrow,  
Breathing fragrance round to-day.  
Love would wander  
Here and ponder.  
Life's old questions,  
Sad suggestions,  
Whence and whither? Throng  
thy stream.*

*On the roaring waste of ocean  
Shall thy scattered waves be tossed,  
'Mid the surge's rhythmic thunder  
Shall thy silver tongues be lost.  
O! thy glimmering rush of gladness  
Mocks this turbid life of mine!  
Racing to the wild Forever  
Down the sloping paths of Time.*

*Onward ever,  
Lovely River,  
Softly calling to the sea;  
Time that scars us,  
Maims and mars us,  
Leaves no track or trace on thee.*

— Sam Simpson

our area, especially since he penned "Beautiful Willamette" literally on our shores. Orr would like the City of Albany to place a plaque at the entrance to Talking Water Gardens honoring Simpson's contribution to this site, which is a short distance from where the poem was composed. "Beautiful Willamette" could be inscribed on the plaque as the City's tribute to one of its important early residents.

# Mid-valley records 'hurricane force' winds

National Guard ensures order, prevents looting

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Their predictions proved accurate when barometric pressures sank to near record lows across western Oregon and winds increased in velocity throughout the afternoon. The storm peaked as it walloped the Oregon coast along its full length. A gust of 138 miles per hour was recorded at Newport, while a gust estimated at 179 miles per hour struck Cape Blanco, and one estimated at 170 miles per hour hit Mount Hebo near Tillamook after winds had destroyed the measuring instrument.

At some points in the Willamette Valley the storm was nearly as strong as along the coast. A gust of 127 miles per hour clobbered the Corvallis weather station shortly before the observation tower began to fly apart, causing the staff to abandon it for safer ground. A blast measured at 116 miles per hour buffeted the Morrison Street Bridge in Portland.

Locally, winds strengthened throughout the mid-afternoon and reached "hurricane force" by about 4 p.m., according to the *Democrat-Herald*. By 5 p.m., there were trees and electric power and telephone lines down all over the city, hampering efforts of Albany police and Linn County sheriff's office to coordinate a response to the emergency. Potential chaos was avoided in part by local CB radio operators who voluntarily stationed themselves in their cars at the courthouse to relay information throughout the county.

In the downtown business district, doors and windows of many stores and offices were damaged or shattered, leaving the businesses vulnerable to looters. About 6

p.m., city officials requested the assistance of the local unit of the Oregon National Guard to ensure order and prevent looting. The guard commander, Lt. Darwynne Knofler, ordered all available Guardsmen to report for duty at the armory on Lyon Street.

One of the responding Guardsmen was SP4 Donald Albright who owned and operated Don's Tower Grove

that seven of the 14 mature walnut trees on his property had blown down. Ironically, the walnut trees were one of the main reasons Don and his wife Wilma had purchased the property not long before. By that time he had received notice that he was to report in full uniform for Guard duty downtown. At the armory he encountered his friend Bob Taylor, the nephew of Taylor-Johnson

subsidized. City crews were assigned to begin cleaning up the worst of the debris blocking streets; motor vehicle headlights were aimed at downed trees so workers could cut them up and move them. By Saturday morning, property owners were nailing plywood over broken windows and placing tarps on damaged roofs. The city was tending to its wounds. The "Big Blow" has been



Front page of Saturday, Oct. 13, 1962, *Democrat-Herald*.

Shell service station. About 3 p.m., Don had driven his '59 El Camino to Waverly School to pick up a friend's son and take him to the Tower Grove Western Auto store. As he passed Waverly Lake on Old Salem Road, he was amazed to see what he estimated were three-foot waves racing across the water's surface. While on his way back to Tower Grove from the school, Don could see in his rearview mirror trees falling across the road. At 3:30 p.m., a series of gusts flattened his station's Shell sign along with the sign's 10-inch diameter pole.

At that point Don observed that motorists were not lining up to buy Shell gasoline, so he locked the door and drove to his house on South Geary Street to check on his family and survey the damage. There he discovered

VW owner Merle Taylor, who had driven there in a Volkswagen Microbus.

Recognizing the cargo-carrying advantages of the Microbus, the Guard commander assigned Don and Bob the job of delivering sandwiches, coffee, and water to the thirty-some M1-rifle-toting Guardsmen patrolling the streets of the business district. It should be noted that the M1s were symbolic of authority; there were no rounds in the rifles' clips. For the rest of that evening and through the night, Don and Bob carefully steered their way around fallen trees and power lines that littered nearly every street. At 9 a.m. the next day, the Guardsmen were released from duty.

With electricity out almost everywhere, downtown was dark by 7 p.m. The wind had

rated the most powerful Pacific Northwest windstorm of the 20th Century. Forty-six fatalities were attributed to the storm in California, Oregon, and Washington, and hundreds more people were injured. Property damage in the three states totaled \$230 million in 1962 dollars. Adjusting for inflation and allowing for population increases, property damage would likely amount to over \$5 billion if the storm were to occur today. Over 11 billion board feet of timber was blown down, more than the annual harvest for Oregon and Washington at that time.

The impact of the "Big Blow" touched deeply the citizens of Albany along with other millions of people in its path. It is an unforgettable page in the history of our community.



One of several groups that toured Riverside Cemetery.

## Cemetery Tour features veterans from Civil War

This is the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

Graves of veterans from that conflict buried in Albany's Riverside Cemetery were noted during the annual cemetery tour July 27.

Each year during the week of the July Historic Home Tour in Albany, the Museum sponsors the cemetery walk-through and identifies individual markers of note.



Cynthia Murphy talks about George Carrel.

been recently restored by St. Mary's Church. Train was a postmaster and editor of the Albany Daily Herald. Dr. David Fitchett presented the biography.

Christian H. Voss, a Union Soldier wounded in the Battle of Vicksburg, came to the Willamette Valley in 1876. His great-grandson, Bill Maddy, presented his biography.

Robert Veal served Co. H., 121st Ohio Infantry, and was a principal in R. Veal & Son furniture factory. Museum volunteer Pat Thompson spoke about his life.

Edward F. Sox, an educator and hardware store owner, served in the 140th Regiment of Illinois Volunteer Infantry. Museum volunteer Mary Arnett presented his biography.

R.S. Richardson, a retired Albany merchant who served in Co. G, 45th Illinois Infantry, was profiled by Museum sum-

This year, in addition to the veterans, several residents of homes on the 34th annual home tour, were also the subject of presentations by volunteers from the Museum and the Monteith Historical Society.

More than 150 attended the event.

Ten Union veterans were profiled; one of those was also a resident whose home was on the tour. No Confederate veteran markers were found. Two others profiled on the tour were not Civil War veterans but were noted because of their historic homes.

Veteran markers included Samuel Smith Train, 92nd Illinois Infantry, whose home has



David Fitchett portrays Samuel Train.



Bill Maddy tells story of his great-grandfather, Christian Voss.

mer intern Michael Richardson (not related).

Archibald Monteith, nephew of Albany's founders, served Co. F, 28th Regiment, Wisconsin Infantry. Monteith Society President Oscar Hult presented the biography.

James B. Jenks served in the 107th Minute Men of Missouri, as a scout for the Union, but being from Virginia, his sympathy was with the South. His biography was presented by his great grand-daughter, Mary Jacq Burck.

George W. Hughes was born in 1849 in Linn County. He joined the 1st Regiment of the Oregon Cavalry. Nicole Jenkins presented his biography.

George Carrel was the last remaining member of McPherson Post GAR still residing in Albany, passing on Aug. 13, 1938. He served with Co. D, 7th Illinois Regiment. Monteith Society docent Cynthia Murphy presented his biography.

Abraham H. Goltra was a member of Co. D, 7th Illinois Regiment volunteer infantry. Residing in Roseburg at the time of his death in October 1938, he was the last member of the McPherson Chapter GAR. Museum founder Jerry Brenneman presented the biography.



# Chautauqua comes to patron event

A page from Albany's past, the Chautauqua Assembly, came to life at the Museum's annual patron social August 9.

Staged at the Flinn Block auditorium on First Avenue, generously provided for the event by its owners, more than 80 attendees witnessed a program of historic Albany photos, vocal and instrumental music, prose and poetry readings, audience patriotic singing and a dessert of peach pie and ice cream. It was just like the Chautauqua programs in Bryant Park at the turn of the 20th century.

Those turn-of-the-century Chautauquas were once described by President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, as "the most American thing in America." It was an era before radio or television.

This particular event recognized members who annually give \$115 or more to support the Museum.

Producers of the assembly were Museum Secretary and Development Committee Chair Mary Jacq Burk, and former board member and current development committee member, Kristen Schuttpelz. Many volunteers and Museum staffers assisted with the event.

Patron Mary Krpalek, appropriately dressed in period costume (see Page One photo), served as mistress of ceremonies. She described the program to the audience as "local and gifted talent presenting performances that might have taken place during an earlier time on the Albany stage."

Retired educator Kitty Buchner began the evening with a PowerPoint photo history of Albany Chautauquas. This was followed by tenor Dean Keeling with a selection of old favorites that included "Let Me Call You Sweetheart." Dramatic readers Jane Donovan and Leslie Hogan shared comments by local Albany residents gleaned from the pages of early Albany newspapers and other sources.

North Albany Middle School student, Alyssa Nelson, serenaded with songs people of her age would have heard in the early 1900s, that included Look for the Silver Lining. Her brother, Ryan, gave a spirited piano solo rendition of "Maple Leaf Rag." Their father, Andy, band instructor at North Albany Middle School, played ragtime on his clarinet and concluded with "Happy Days Are Here Again."

Following the reading of a patriotic poem, "The Flag Goes By," the entertainers accompanied by pianist Burck, led the audience in a standing rendition of "America the Beautiful." A dessert of peach pie and ice cream with background music provided by the "Musical Chairs," a trio consisting of piano, cello and violin, completed the evening. The trio members are Charlotte Houser, Kris McLaughlin and Kitty Buchner.



**At left, performers lead audience in patriotic song.**

**Below, patrons enjoy pie, ice cream and conversation.**



**At left: Conversations and smiles. Above: Museum founder Gerald Brenneman and wife, Kathy.**

## Thank you to 2010-11 Museum patrons

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Joe & Laine Simon\*, \*\*  
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 Don & Marilyn Wimer\*\*  
 Bob & Vickie Woods

## Museum members to elect board directors October 4

Election of board members, volunteer awards and a review of the 2011 year will highlight the annual membership meeting of the Albany Regional Museum.

Members in attendance will vote to fill four board positions. The election is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 4, at 5 p.m., at the Museum, 136 Lyon St. S.

Three directors are seeking re-election to three-year terms.

They are Kim Sass, Samaritan Albany General Hospital Foundation; Dr. David Fitchett, retired orthopedic physician; and Larry Bardell, board

vice-chairman.

Judy Weissert, retired newspaper marketing manager and Museum patron, seeks the position currently held by retiring board chairman John Buchner.

All four candidates declared their intentions to run prior to the September deadline, according to nominations committee chairman Michael Kok.

Administration coordinator Tami Sneddon will recognize volunteers and announce the Gerald Brenneman Volunteer Award winner.

Light refreshments will be served.

## Museum founder Rodney Tripp dies

Rodney Tripp, 95, a Museum founder and first treasurer, died June 24.

Tripp was an Albany volunteer, philanthropist, businessman and civic leader for more than 70 years. He was described in the local newspaper as "Mr. Albany."

His wife, Marty, preceded him in death by a few months. Both were involved with the Museum since its founding in 1981.

The Museum is the recipient of annual funds from the Rodney and Martha Tripp endowment administered by the Oregon Community Foundation.

Tripp had lived in the community since age three, moving to Albany from nearby Brownsville. A partner in the family's real estate and development business, Tripp was a Rotarian, Navy veteran and a past president of the Albany Jaycees and the Albany World Championship Timber Carnival. Tripp as a young boy was an Eagle Scout.

Survivors include his daughter, Julie Lou, and his son, Randall.

## Historic violin made right here in 'River City'

James Richards of Livermore, Calif., gifted the Museum his father's violin that was made by James' grandfather, Hiram Stewart Richards. The elder Richards was a violin maker with a shop in the early 1900s at 309 Lyon St. James' father was Harmon Tryon Richards. James reported that his grandfather not only made the instruments but also cut and cured the wood used in construction.



## Memorial roll adds six names

Six names have been added to the Museum's memorial roll since the spring 2011 newsletter.

The names include Frank Weis, Harold Stebbins, Richard Applegate, Loy Marshall, James Hope and Rodney Tripp.

Special needs of the Museum are met with memorial gifts that honor a family member or friend. The most common gifts are in the amounts of \$25, \$50 or \$100.

Names of those memorialized are

listed in this newsletter, on the Museum's web site ([www.armuseum.com](http://www.armuseum.com)) and are posted for a limited time at the Museum.

A card of remembrance is mailed to a designated recipient (spouse, next of kin or other) and a thank-you card to the person or persons making the donation. The card can be used for tax documentation.

Contact the Museum at 541-967-7122 or stop by the reception desk at 136 Lyon St. S., for additional information.

**Our mission statement:** "To preserve, exhibit and encourage knowledge of the history and culture of Albany, Oregon, and its immediate surroundings through collection of artifacts, documents and photographs."

### MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP FORM

To renew or begin your annual membership, indicate the type and fill in the form below.

<input type="checkbox"/> Friends of the Museum	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Business	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Patrons	\$115
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Patrons	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> History Circle	\$250

☐ I want to learn more about the Chautauqua Circle and Brenneman Society.

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

The Museum is a nonprofit  
501 C-3 corporation.

**Albany Regional Museum**  
136 Lyon St. S., Albany, OR 97321  
(541-967-7122)

[www.armuseum.com](http://www.armuseum.com)



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Noon to 4 p.m.  
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Bookkeeper

## Looking Back: My 80th year

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MUSEUM MEMBER

On June 30th, I turned 80 years old.

I was born in the home of my paternal grandparents on North Eighth Avenue on June 20, 1931.

My first remembrance of Albany was being with my parents in the Montgomery Ward store on the southeast corner of First Avenue and Lyon Street. I recall us coming down the stairway after my father had purchased himself a new hat. Later the building became the USO during World War II, and then a youth center. Frager Furniture occupied the building for a number of years. A popular four-lane bowling alley was in the basement. Today, the building houses Boda Furniture, 104 First Ave. E.

First Avenue (also then part of Pacific Highway 99E) and Second Avenue from Lyon to Washington streets was the hub of the city's business district. A customer could buy a new car or have your own repaired and serviced at several locations. You could do your banking at one of three banks; visit your medical doctor, dentist or lawyer.

You could buy stamps at the post office or check out a book at the Carnegie Library (You

can still do this.) You also could drop off your laundry and pick up your dry cleaning, purchase a ticket at the Greyhound Bus terminal for trips north, south, east or west. There were three movie theaters where one could look over the offerings for each evening or decide on the weekend matinees.

There were several men's and women's clothing stores in the business district and you could have the soles of your shoes replaced. There were hair salons for the women and barbershops for the men. In addition, there were a number of restaurants and many other specialty shops to serve one's needs.

I especially enjoyed going with my mother to the grocery stores and meat markets on Second Avenue. A Safeway operated at the northwest corner of Second and Ellsworth Streets. Dooley's was another downtown favorite. The Grocerveteria was in the middle of the block between Broadalbin and Ferry Streets.

Only a few of these businesses survived the "shopping center" surge of the 1960s and 70s, but under different names. It is a new downtown now, with several restaurants, fewer professional offices, more banks, three museums and several antique stores. It still is worth checking out.