



A train travels down the street in Ilwaco, Wash.

Courtesy Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum

# ‘The Cantankerous Farmer versus the Ilwaco Railway and Navigation Company’

By AMY BOZORTH  
For The Daily Astorian

ILWACO, Wash. — The Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum presents a lecture, “The Cantankerous Farmer versus the Ilwaco Railway and Navigation Company,” at 2 p.m. April 11.

Have you ever wondered who’s buried in the lonely little cemetery west of State Highway 103, just north of Long Beach? Wander up the grassy knoll to the white picket fence and you’ll find two gravestones, a husband and wife. The inscriptions are worn but clear, “John Briscoe, born in Newtowne, Conn. Aug. 15, 1812. Died May 9, 1901” and “Lucy A. Briscoe, wife of John Briscoe, Who Passed from Earth to Heaven Oct. 24, 1881”

Who were these early settlers of the Long Beach Peninsula?



Michael Lemeszko

What story do their lives play in our local history?

Local historian, Michael Lemeszko asked himself these questions and his interest led him to the Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum and the Community Historian Project. The research skills he gained through the project led him deeper into the Briscoe family and the emerging story of the cantankerous farmer, John Briscoe. A colorful

figure both as the fifth representative for Pacific County to the Washington Territorial Legislature and as a probate judge, Briscoe’s “feuds” with developers and landowners were many and his legal wrangling was well known.

Briscoe’s legal dealings with the Ilwaco Railway and Navigation Co. are one chapter in the colorful life of this early settler and the subject of Lemeszko’s lecture at the Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum’s Annual Meeting. The lecture is free and open to the public. The museum is located at 115 S.E. Lake St. in Ilwaco. It is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday to Saturday, and noon to 4 p.m. Admission is free on Thursdays, free thanks to the sponsorship of the Port of Ilwaco.

Amy Bozorth is PR/membership coordinator for the Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum.



Courtesy Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum

John Briscoe was a representative to the Washington Legislature and a canterkerous opnent of the railroad. A lecture April 11 is focused on him.



Courtesy Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum

John Briscoe’s grave.

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