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WEEKEND BREAK

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Submitted Photo

Arvi Ostrom, behind the bar, in the Snug Harbor Tavern



Paul Conte/For EO Media Group

Ken Carlson, Arvi Ostrom's grandson, looks through his grandfather's vast collection.

'BEHIND THE BAR'

ARVI OSTROM, OWNER OF THE SNUG HARBOR TAVERN IN UNIONTOWN, LEFT BEHIND VAST, HIDDEN BODY OF WORK

By **KAELIA NEAL**
 For EO Media Group

The world is only beginning to appreciate the talent and massive output of Arvi Ostrom, an Astoria native who quietly produced thousands of works of art during his lifetime.

Ostrom, who owned the Snug Harbor Tavern in Uniontown, passed away in 1995. While in hospice care, he had one last request.

"He said, 'Will you take care of my art for me?' the day before he died," said Ken Carlson, Ostrom's grandson. Carlson, an artist and a musician himself, shared his grandfather's interest in art, so naturally he agreed.

But what Carlson figured would be a few hundred pieces turned out to be more than 10,000 that Ostrom left behind.

"At that time I didn't really know what he had done," Carlson said. "No one did."

In order to create so many pieces,

Ostrom must have averaged about three a week.

For the last 22 years, Carlson has made it his mission to display his grandfather's collection. "I felt like his stuff should be honored," Carlson said.

Recently, he opened an exhibit, "Behind the Bar: The Folk Art of Arvi Ostrom and the Snug Harbor," at the Clatsop County Historical Society's Heritage Museum to display selections of Ostrom's work. Carlson collaborated with Astoria artist Darren Orange, who said "it's really an honor" to be involved.

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ABOVE AND BELOW: Five pieces by Arvi Ostrom



MORE ONLINE

A documentary of Ostrom's story titled "Portrait of an Unknown Artist," featuring Carlson, Burns, Orange and Ostrom's daughter Jean Montgomery, can be seen at <https://goo.gl/fEQL6P>

