

# Sikh: Plans to hold celebration of Ghadar Party founding in July

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Five years ago, Ogden's article about East Indians who lived in Astoria and founded the Ghadar Party at the city's Finnish Socialist Hall in 1913 resurrected the forgotten history not only for modern-day Astorians, but also for Indian families who may not have realized they had ties to the area. It also led to the installation of the first bronze sign. Located at the Maritime Memorial Park under the Astoria Bridge, it proved to be an important site for tourists from India and Indian communities across the United States.

It is critical for stories like the one about the Ghadar Party and the Indian workers who lived in Astoria's Alderbrook neighborhood to be included in the region's history, especially where certain stories might have come to dominate the narrative and exclude others, Ogden said afterwards.

"I think we need to expand what we include in the stories of this place," she said. "We need to complicate that narrative."

When the sign was stolen in October, news of the theft went around the world, even appearing in Indian newspapers. But former Astoria mayor and master of ceremonies Willis Van Dusen commented that the theft provided an opportunity for people to gather and bring the history to the forefront once again. Local businesses and Sen. Johnson donated money to replace it.

The event was supposed to be held outside where the



Dancers perform for Astoria residents and representatives of the regional Sikh communities at an event Saturday marking the Ghadar Party.

Katie Frankowicz/The Daily Astorian

original sign stood, but harsh winds and rain forced everyone indoors to the Holiday Inn conference room. The room was packed with people, with Sikh families figuring predominantly among the crowd.

The Indians who journeyed to the Pacific Northwest seeking jobs and better opportunities found themselves driven out of communities in Washington state. Many found jobs and temporary homes in towns and cities along the Oregon side of the Columbia River, but still faced hardships because of their distinct culture, appearance, language and ethnicity.

Gurinder Singh Khalsa, founder and chairman of a Sikh political action committee,

asked: Who are immigrants?

"The definition of immigrant for me is a person who has the courage, who has the drive, who has the vision and who has the determination to leave their own country, leave their own family, to leave their own community, own culture, and come to a new land," he said.

For Ogden, given the current policies and views arrayed against modern-day immigrants, and times when Sikhs were still singled out because of their appearance — the men with their long beards and turbans — after the 9/11 attacks, the story of the Sikhs in Astoria and the founding of the Ghadar Party remain very

important. Those stories continue today, she said, watching as people came to take pictures with each other and look at the new sign.

"How often does a historian get to see history come to life?" she said. "It doesn't get any better."

Avtar Singh Adampuri of Renton, Washington, said that while Sikhs are proud of the roles they have played, they do not always collect and preserve their own histories.

"We thank you that you did it, you took care of it," he said.

There are plans to hold a celebration of the Ghadar Party's founding in mid-July. Organizers hope it will become an annual event.

# Play: Old fairytale has relevance today

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humanity in yourself. Belle is the human, coaxing it out of the 'beast.'"

Flood's story mirrors the heroine, a beautiful, bookish nerd who doesn't appreciate her hometown until she is away from it.

The 25-year-old returned to the coast last year to have a baby and become a hands-on leader of Peninsula Association of Performing Artists, the group her mother founded.

Her parents, Gary and Cindy Flood, operate a 33-acre Long Beach farm, raising beef and training German shepherd puppies.

She attended Ilwaco schools and Clatsop Community College, and was a stalwart in local theater, notably in 2008 as milkman Tevye's rebellious second daughter, Hodel, in a community production of "Fiddler on the Roof," a role she reprised four years ago.

At George Fox University in Newberg, she studied acting and directing while earning credentials in technical theater and design. She appeared in "The House of Bernarda Alba," an all-women show about repression and conformity, "Servant of Two Masters," an Italian commedia dell'arte that showcased tumbling, and "Parade," an edgy musical about a 1913 murder trial that exposes anti-Semitism.

After graduation, Flood spent a short while in Connecticut working as stage manager for a community theater before returning to

the West Coast. She and her partner, Billy Phillips, have a son, William, who just turned 1.

David Immel, a retired professional entertainer who lives in Long Beach, played Tevye in PAPA's 2014 production of "Fiddler on the Roof." He described Flood as an asset to the theater community.

**'She is very focused, that's what's remarkable about her.'**

**David Immel**  
retired entertainer

"She is very focused, that's what's remarkable about her," he said. "She keeps everybody on point. It's refreshing to me to see that kind of professionalism in this area in someone so young."

"She's got it all — amazing talent and she's beautiful. She's more grounded now than ever with the baby."

Flood began taking piano lessons from longtime PAPA director Barbara Poulshock when she was 6.

Poulshock will be musical director and Cindy Flood, a former Los Angeles dance teacher, will be choreographer.

"Beauty and the Beast," the musical based on a Walt Disney movie, will be staged at the Fort Columbia Theater in Chinook in July and August.

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