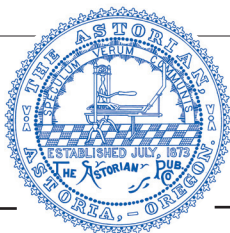


OPINION

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THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873

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Water under the bridge



Compiled by Bob Duke
From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

10 years ago this week — 2008

Akio Egawa, consul general of the Japanese Consulate in Portland, paid his second visit to Astoria in two years.

And this time he wasn't forced to leave quickly to avoid an impending storm. His visit in February 2006 was cut short by the threat from an Oregon Coast squall.

Egawa was here Thursday to help celebrate the Feb. 3 anniversary of the 1824 birth of Ranald MacDonald, the Astoria native who is believed to be the first English teacher in Japan — the town was then known as Fort George.

Egawa said his job is to promote Japanese interests in Portland, and he was delighted to attend the gathering.

Plans for a four-story hotel on the riverfront between 38th and 39th streets cleared another hurdle Tuesday.

On a 4 to 2 vote, the Astoria Planning Commission gave final approval for a height variance request from developer Floyd Holcom that will allow the proposed hotel to be considerably taller than the maximum 28 feet allowed in the tourist-oriented Shoreland zone. The variance had received tentative approval at the May 6 meeting.

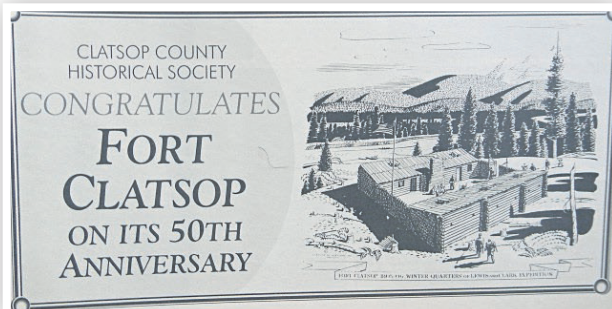
The National Park Service is sprucing up Lewis and Clark National Historical Park.

After all, how often do you have a 50th anniversary celebration?

The park celebrates its 50th this weekend.

Park employees have mowed grass along the highway leading up to the park's entrance, creating a refined look in sharp contrast to the acres of trees blown flat beyond the road.

David Szymanski, the superintendent, said help from the



An advertisement from 2008.

public has played an important role in preparations for this weekend's celebrations.

He said following the Dec. 2-3 storm that blew down hundreds of trees in the park many people called offering their help for the cleanup. But conditions were too dangerous for the park to allow people to help.

50 years ago — 1968

Presidential candidate Robert Kennedy invoked the spirit of Lewis and Clark and lashed at the "politics of joy" preached by Herbert Humphrey as he addressed more than 2,000 people in the Safeway parking lot Friday.

This was the major public appearance of a morning's visit in Clatsop County in which the candidate also hiked on the Clatsop beach and splashed briefly in the surf for national network television cameras.

Approximately 100 small boats, about evenly divided between pleasure and commercial craft, were reported out across the Columbia River bar early Thursday by Cape Disappointment Coast Guard station.

Crewmen were alerted for possible accidents at sea over the long holiday weekend as were airmen at Astoria Coast Guard Air station, a spokesman said.

Coast Guard patrols by air and sea observed 37 Russian trawlers and one Japanese vessel operating off the Oregon and Washington coast during the week ending May 23, according to the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries.

Construction West, Inc., resumed work Wednesday on grading 200 cleared acres of the Northwest Aluminum company

plant site at Warrenton. Work halted Thursday for Memorial day but will resume Friday, weather permitting.

Consumption of fish in the United States has almost doubled in 10 years, but the American fisherman's share of the domestic market has plummeted from about 60 percent to 29 percent.

The United States has dropped from second to sixth among the world's fish-producing nations.

"This is a tragedy of our times," says Sen. Warren G. Magnuson, D-Wash.

"And there is no indication that this downward trend will be reversed," said Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass.

75 years ago — 1943

First shipment of 11 cases of cigarettes, consigned to Co. L of Astoria, New Guinea, will go forward this week, contributions to the Overseas Cigarette Fund having reached the \$250 necessary for the purchase of 110,000 cigarettes at 5 cents a package. The company adds one case for each 10 purchased. The cigarettes will be distributed free to the overseas men through army service officers.

Much has been heard here about the mosquito pest of New Guinea, where many Astoria young men are fighting with the 41st Division and the "mossies" seem to be a topic of quips among the men over there. A couple of the tall tales which have gained currency among the troops are contained in a recent letter written home by Sgt. Bob Chessman of Co. L. One has it that a soldier woke up in the middle of one night and heard the "dog tags" about his neck jingling. Looking down he was amazed to see two mosquitoes turning them over and reading the inscriptions. They shook their heads in disgust as they winged off to another cot, one of them remarking, "wrong type blood." The other is to the effect that one species of mosquito is so large that, when one alighted on an airdrome, the ground crew filled it half full of gas before discovering it was not a bomber.

Rear Adm. Ross F. McIntyre, surgeon general of the Navy, and President Roosevelt's personal physician, said in San Francisco Wednesday that the navy will start soon on construction of a 500-bed temporary hospital at Tongue Point to handle wounded servicemen moved here from the San Francisco bay area and Seattle.

LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Daily Astorian.

Letters should be fewer than 250 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone number. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar, and, on occasion, factual accuracy. Only two letters per writer are allowed each month.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand and, rather than mentioning the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters in poor taste will not be printed.

Send via email to editor@dailyastorian.com, online at dailyastorian.com/submit_letters, in person at 949 Exchange St. in Astoria or 1555 North Roosevelt in Seaside, or mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103.



GUEST COLUMN

Oregon must take action to fight climate change

Clatsop County is unique — 94 percent of its total acreage is covered in forests, whereas the percentage statewide is about 48 percent.

It is also unique in another way. — ours is the only county along the Oregon Coast that has virtually no federal forests. Because of multiple favorable factors, it is widely regarded as one of the best places in the country for growing trees.

The forests here have always been very important to the residents. They provide needed wood products and jobs, a beautiful backdrop to the east as you walk along the ocean, and countless opportunities for activities such as camping, fishing, hiking and hunting that are appealing to us and many tourists.

What's becoming increasingly apparent is that the forests also provide another significant benefit we have always taken for granted — their ability to remove or sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. This is vitally important now because of the unanimous conclusion by the best climate scientists around the globe that not only is climate change real, it is happening right now. The pace is accelerating due to the rapid increase in carbon dioxide and other chemicals in the atmosphere, collectively called greenhouse gases.

Although this region has not been as severely impacted as many others, anybody who reads newspapers or watches the daily news is aware of the impacts of climate

change, including more frequent and severe storms, highly unusual weather patterns and rising ocean levels causing frequent flooding. The oceans have also become more acidic as they absorb more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, disrupting marine life.

The scientists are warning us that we must take positive steps over the next 10 years to slow down or reverse these trends. The global community's efforts to reduce or eliminate fossil fuel emissions are essential, but will not be sufficient if we want future generations to enjoy the quality of life that approaches what we have enjoyed. Our best hope for reining in climate change is the so-called "natural solution." This requires that the sequestering capacity of forestry and agriculture be maximized by reforming longstanding practices.

In the face of these sobering facts, we need to know if our government leaders and other private forest and agricultural owners are doing their part to advance this crucial goal by implementing and/or enforcing the best management practices.

The state needs to begin by reforming the destructive practices of so-called "investment-type" owners. These companies have acquired many millions of acres throughout the state over the past 15 years, but primarily along the Oregon Coast. Since it became widely known that Oregon has the weakest private forest regulations along the West Coast, there has been a global land rush reminiscent of the gold rush in the mid-1800s. These absentee owners' overriding concern is to get a favorable return on investment; they have little or no concern

for the land itself. To reduce labor costs while clearcutting the trees, they use heavy equipment that is degrading the forests and streams and compacting the soil. They poison the water, air and all forms of life with excessive and careless aerial spraying of pesticides and fertilizers.

With harvest rotations as short as 25 years, they have reduced forest cover, a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. (Cover is defined as sufficient growth in the canopy as seen from the air to cover or shade one-third of the ground. That takes about 15 years for the trees in this county. This is also the age at which trees can begin to build their sequestering capacity.) They have been clearcutting 45 percent faster than new replacement plantings can grow, creating one million fewer acres of forest cover in Oregon over the last 15 years.

A recent study documented how the practices of both investment-type logging and, to a lesser extent, the state are contributing one-quarter of all state greenhouse gas emissions, exceeded only by the transportation sector. Due to an accounting trick in effect since 2002, their impact on emissions is not counted, though these damaging practices cost the people of the state many billions of dollars.

The contribution of Oregon's forestry practices to climate change must be prioritized as one of the state's most urgent issues. Prompt action could result in a 90-95 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. That in itself would be a tremendous achievement.

The state should require that every large industrial timber company's logging books be

available for periodic state audits, to ascertain the acreage of young trees at least 15 years or older that have not been previously credited to an earlier operation. Unless they have acreage of this type that equals or exceeds the acreage of the operations planned for the coming year, they must cease all planned logging operations until a re-audit shows there have sufficient acreage to balance these planned operations.

Under these rules, I believe most owners would simply walk away and seek a comparable return on investment elsewhere around the globe. I also think many large industrial owners who practice responsible and sustainable forestry may actually welcome these restraints on investment owners who are tarnishing all of their reputations.

Clearly the land that has been severely degraded needs to be restored. Legal review would determine if the investment owners have a liability for restoring and replanting these damaged holdings, but, meanwhile, state authorities should move promptly to prevent further degradation and emissions while they seek funding to restore these degraded ecosystems. Restoration operations could also foster rural economic growth by creating many additional jobs to do this essential work.

Prompt action to fight climate change is a way for Oregon to re-establish its reputation as a national leader in environmental policies.

Carolyn Eady, an Astoria resident, has been involved in or tracked forestry issues for 20 years. She is involved in Indivisible North Coast Oregon and the Columbia River Estuary Action Team.



CAROLYN EADY