

OPINION

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OUR VIEW

Newenhofs deserve our thanks

Talk about a roller coaster of emotions!

When it was announced in 2015 that after more than three decades of very frustrating and sometimes comedic family soap opera, the Flavel properties were going to be sold, most Astorians were delighted.

Many held their breaths, though. Of course, it seemed good news. But would the buyers be local — or from out of town? And what would happen to the 117-year-old, four-story, Colonial Revival-style mansion at 15th Street and Franklin Avenue, one of the most prominent historical landmarks in Clatsop County?

The home was built in 1901 for Capt. George Conrad Flavel, a bar pilot and son of the famed Capt. George Flavel, one of the first licensed bar pilots here. The 5,000-square-foot property had fallen into dangerous disrepair, but there was an overwhelming consensus that it was worth saving.

Surely, surely, surely a buyer would not knock it down?

When the news broke that local businessman Greg Newenhof had bought the property — and planned to restore it — you could almost hear the cheering all the way to the county line.

The Daily Astorian dutifully reported all this and waited for the day Newenhof would announce he was done and invite our photographer up the hill to record the transformation.

It was getting very close. Reports were that he was about a month away, having spent thousands of hours reshaping things. He had already replaced



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Greg Newenhof in 2016 in front of the Flavel home on 15th Street and Franklin Avenue.

much of the home's siding, broken windows and doors, had the roof, chimney and flooring repaired, rewired the inside and built new steps.

So it was with immense sadness that Newenhof died earlier this year. As well as a great loss for his family, it was a loss for our community.

As his family grieved, up stepped his younger brother, Jeff Newenhof. Despite taking on extra responsibilities at the family company, City Lumber, he saw it as a mission to allocate the time to complete Greg's vision.

It's not quite finished, but this week a celebration will be held to mark some significant progress. The mansion will open Saturday for self-guided tours of upper floors, thanks to a collaboration

between City Lumber and the Clatsop County Historical Society. The basement will remain closed — it's still filled with items left behind from the Flavels' estate.

Other activities include a Thursday lecture by local historian John Goodenberger and a showing of family home videos at the Columbian Theater. On Friday, attendees can sample cocktails at the home, view the videos, and bid on a chance to attend a dinner at the rather more lavish Flavel House Museum on Eighth Street.

The proceeds will go toward the historical society's plans to publish a book about the Flavel family. Sporadic ink has been spilled telling the Flavel saga over the years, but despite Calvin Trillin's ter-



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Greg and Jeff Newenhof in 2015.

rific 1993 New Yorker article, there still is no definitive biography. This will be it, and there is no doubt that Goodenberger is the history writer to do it justice.

The Flavel name is one of the most storied in Astoria's history. Both Newenhofs have earned their place in the latest chapter of the saga. They have transformed an interest in their town's history into a practical and very welcome way to preserve its colorful past and share with others.

As well as being a must-read for residents and visitors, the book will honor Greg Newenhof's memory in a tangible way.

And when the restoration is complete, the home will go back on the market and another new chapter will begin.

Water under the bridge



Compiled by Bob Duke

From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

10 years ago this week — 2008

State Sen. Betsy Johnson was right.

A licensed commercial pilot from Scappoose, Johnson suspected the three 195-foot-tall liquefied natural gas tanks planned for the Oregon LNG facility on Warrenton's Skipanon Peninsula would intrude into protected airspace around the nearby Astoria Regional Airport.

As it turns out, the tanks would protrude 30 feet past the airport's protective boundary.

That means Oregon LNG will need a waiver from the Federal Aviation Administration to build the tanks, which are about the height of a 17-story building and nearly as wide as a football field is long.

The nine faces in the 65-foot-long mural on Broadway tell a story dating two centuries ago, when the Clatsop and Nehalem peoples lived on the land that is now Seaside.

They may not be beautiful faces, but they are striking. The lines around their mouths indicate a hard life. Although they don't smile, they appear to be at peace. But, for Diane Collier, chairwoman of the Clatsop-Nehalem Confederated Tribes, their eyes say everything.

"They're all our relatives," she said. "What impresses me are their eyes; its like you can read their minds. We are seeing our ancestors on that wall, and they'll be remembered.

Nearly 150 people — some, like Collier, whose great-great grandparents and other relatives are pictured on the mural — gathered to honor those who walked before them during a dedication ceremony Sept. 6.

50 years ago — 1968

Richard Peck, Northwest Aluminum's executive vice president, returns to New York from Astoria this week for consultations with prospective partners in the project, he said.

Effort will be made to hammer out an agreement that will enable completion of a lease with the Port of Astoria and prospectus for sale of \$152 million in industrial revenue bonds by the port to finance construction of the company's Warrenton plant.

Peck said time is growing short for financing by the industrial revenue bond method, but if arrangements cannot be completed in time, private financing will be arranged. He said



2008 — From left, Diane Collier, chairwoman of the Clatsop-Nehalem Confederated Tribes, artist Roger Cooke, who created the mural, and Roberta Basch, a Clatsop-Nehalem tribal member, attend the dedication of a mural depicting the tribes.

there is no doubt the project will go ahead.

An encounter with Russian fishnet floats and cable Sept. 3 off Westport, Washington, cost Veikko Romppanen more than \$9,000 in lost time and damage to his drag boat, the Valhalla 11, he estimated.

The 60-foot Valhalla was following a Russian stern trawler up the coast when the discarded net was encountered, Romppanen said, fouling the propeller shaft.

Any decision on where rebuilt Highway 30 will be routed in the Astoria area appears to be a long way off, from comments by the State Highway Department.

Division Engineer Ray Asbury said from Salem, "We've taken aerial maps and a meager amount of looking at it, but we've made no thorough study yet and have come up with no ideas as to the route. We've put our crews on other work."

The significance of where the Portland-to-Astoria road will be routed in Astoria was highlighted last week when Cornell, Howland, Hayes & Merryfield, planners and engineers, unveiled at a public meeting a proposed revision of the downtown area. Their plan is to move part of Marine Drive, which now carries the through traffic, north along the railroad tracks so that big areas can be set aside for off-street parking.

The question in the minds of the planners and city officials is, though, whether the state will continue to route the highway traffic over Marine Drive or move 30 in behind the Astoria hills. It makes quite a difference to city planning whether Marine will be carrying four lanes of highway traffic or will just be a city street.

75 years ago — 1943

Here for a week seeking young women for enlistment in the WAVES, Ensign Lucia Brown of Tennessee, with headquarters in the Portland recruiting office, is hopeful of signing up a number of lower Columbia young women for naval service. She has her headquarters at the Merwyn hotel and will be assisted by Hal Eustis, local recruiting officer.

Ensign Brown says there is a very real and pressing need for more women in the naval service, pointing out that there are now only 28,000 of the needed 50,000 women between the ages of 20 and 36 who have had at least two years of high school work and are eligible, providing they are not married to naval men or have children under 18.

In recent weeks a 5-year-old used water heater was sold privately in Clatsop County for the same price brought when new, according to David J. Lewis, local war price and ration administrator. Such a sale is in violation of ceiling prices, Lewis indicated.

The private sales of certain used appliances are subject to price ceiling controls to protect the consumers from exorbitant charges, Lewis emphasized. Ceiling prices have been placed on nearly all used and reconditioned household appliances. Consumers who buy or sell one of these items can check the applicable ceiling by calling the price clerk on their war price and rationing board.