

WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE

COMPILED BY BOB DUKE
From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

10 years ago this week — 2009

The 115th annual Astoria Regatta is over. The king is dead, long live the king. Time to begin planning for next year.

The five-day festival finished up on Sunday with a bluegrass concert by Small Town at the Clatsop Community College Performing Arts Center.

"This is a wonderful community," said U.S. Rep. David Wu, who was present at the Memorial Ceremony at Maritime Park. "I'm very glad I've had the opportunity to join in on different parts of the Regatta weekend."

Wu — along with other officials, including Capt. Douglas E. Kaup, commanding officer of Coast Guard Group/Air Station Astoria — placed flowers at the edge of the Columbia River to honor the men and women in the Navy and Coast Guard and the Columbia River Bar Pilots.

"This is the one thing worth being admiral for," said 2009 Regatta Admiral Paul Mitchell after the ceremony.

The strains of the Portland ensemble Festival Brass filled the air Saturday as dozens gathered atop Coxcomb Hill for the grand re-opening of the Astoria Column.

The 164-step staircase to the top of the famous landmark was closed for safety reasons in December 2007 when cracks were discovered. Now, a year and a half later, a new staircase is in place, and that was cause for public celebration, reminiscences and thanks.

A teenager goes out into the ocean at Seaside and suddenly is trapped in a rip current. His father dives in after him, but he, too, is caught. He can't save his son, and he can't get back to shore on his own.

A lifeguard, who is in the area looking for a lost child near the 12th Avenue access, sees the trouble in the ocean and rescues the father and son.

The scenario, which occurred earlier this month, might have turned out differently if the city of Seaside hadn't found money for the lifeguard program.

Stymied by decreasing city funds because of reduced lodging taxes, less revenue from building permits and lower collections of property taxes, the city budget committee this year gave up trying to find money to finance the lifeguard program.

At the last minute, however, City Manager Mark Winstanley proposed pulling \$27,000 from the Seaside Civic and Convention Center operations and capital improvements budget and from the Prom improvement fund.

The money will finance the program this year, and if the city finalizes a deal on the old library building, enough money will be available for another five years.

50 years ago — 1969

The city of Astoria officially welcomed its Regatta fleet in ceremonies at the East Astoria Mooring Basin and the port docks.

The Canadian Navy training vessels *Porte de la Reine*, flagship of the task unit; *Porte Quebec*, *Hiramichi*, *Chowichan* and *Oriole* are tied up at the east basin and the *USS Brush*, Portland Naval Reserve training vessel, at the port docks.

The man at the wheel of the station wagon with the Nebraska license plates pulled up to the curb.

"Excuse me, Ma'am. Could you tell us what this here 'Regatta' your town is advertising is all about?"

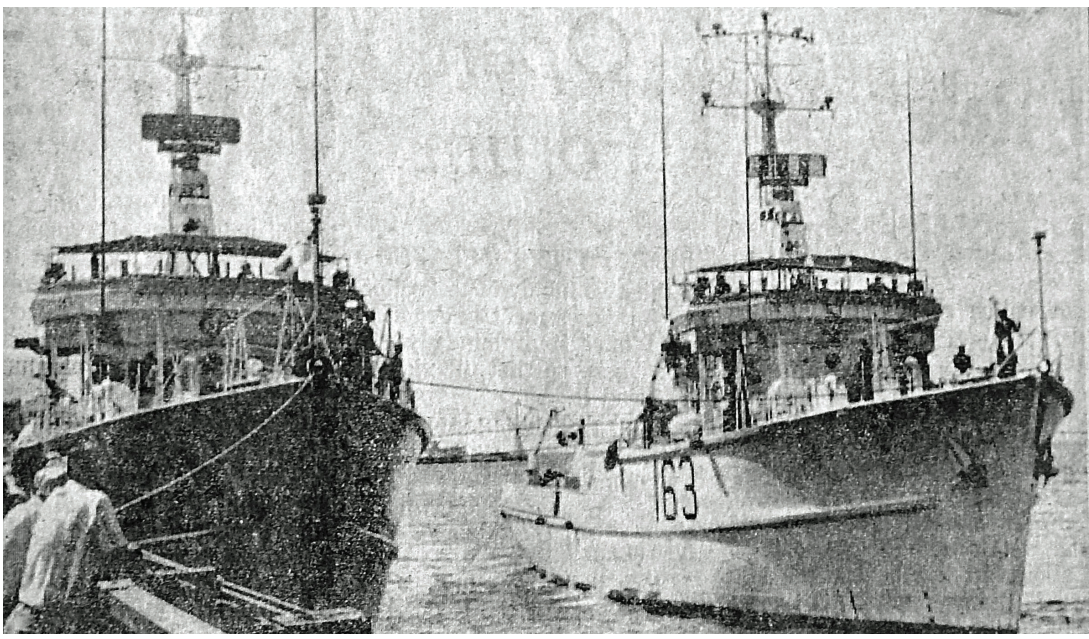
"You see, we're strangers in town, camping out at the beautiful Fort Stevens State Park and we've never seen a Regatta," his pleasant-faced wife explained.

"A Regatta is really a water festival," we explained, "with boat races and that sort. Astoria's Regattas started way back in the 1870s and have been continuous, with the exception of World War I and World War II year, so this is our 49th Regatta, to be exact. However, now we include many land events in our Regattas, such as the crowning of our Regatta Queen Thursday night ..."

Clatsop County Historical Advisory Committee has approved a site for a marker commemorating the bombardment of the Fort Stevens area by a Japanese subma-



1969 — Dick Thompson's sketch of the proposed marker near the shell hole where a round from Japanese submarine I-17 landed June 21, 1942, along the DeLaura Beach Road.



1969 — Minesweepers Cowichan and Hiramichi arrive for Regatta.

2009 — An audience was treated to the Astoria Regatta fireworks and music of Bruce Smith and Boda Boyuz from the Hotel Elliott's rooftop terrace.



1969 — Ken Petersen (left), skipper of the charter boat Irish at Warrenton, shows a 44-pound Chinook landed from his boat.



1969 — Omar Stephens Jr., Victor Ken, Jack Temple and Lief Ericksen put up Regatta banners in Astoria.

rine in 1942.

The committee visited the area and selected a spot beside DeLaura Beach Road, 300 feet west of the junction with Ridge Road.

The county commissioners have already authorized funds and the committee will go ahead with erection of a marker as designed by Dick Thompson of Astoria Granite Works.

Spec. 4 Harry G. Richcreek, of Astoria, has written home that he and other members of his unit in Vietnam would love to get some fish hooks so they can enliven their diets.

His mother, Jane Richcreek, Astoria, asks anyone interested and having old fish hooks around to send them to: Co. A, 2nd Bn., 7th Air

Cavalry, APO San Francisco.

The unit has been in heavy battle near the Cambodian border.

Interior Secretary Hickel's proposal that construction of any dam on the middle Snake River be held up is good, if surprising, news to the fishing industry and others interested in natural resource conservation.

75 years ago — 1944

Floyd Swensen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Milton Swensen of Seaside, tells an interesting story of conditions on Guam in a letter received from him this week.

Young Swenson, overseas since February with his Marine Corps unit, landed on Guam in the early stages of the invasion and saw real service in the "mopping up of the Japs" in their caves and hideouts.

In his letter, the Seaside boy tells of the surprise of himself and other Marines when they encountered parties of natives on the island singing "America" and their own special war song, "Uncle Sam Come Back to Guam."

More than 300 of Clatsop County's 650 4-H club members jammed the county 4-H club fair building with exhibits opening their annual three-day fair today in competition for trophies, honors and cash.

Mr. and Mrs. James Hogg, 581 Irving Avenue, recently received reassuring word from their son, Forrest Glenn Hogg, a Navy radio electrician and a prisoner of the Japs since the fall of Bataan. In a letter to his wife, dated July 4, 1943, at Osake camp, Japan, and received in this country only a few days ago, the former Astoria boy says:

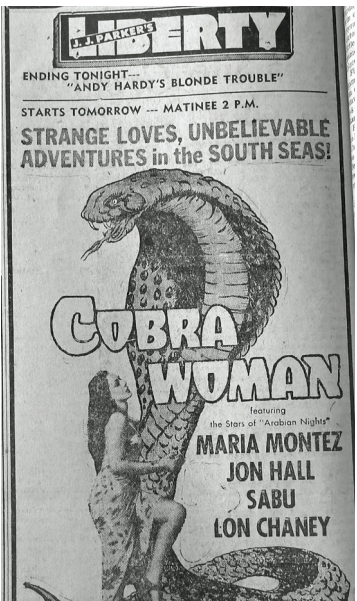
"I am permitted to write a few words to let you know how I am getting along. As yet, I haven't received any letters or packages from you but I am expecting a letter any time, and hoping for a package. I am still alive and kicking and in fair health. I am working every day now except Sundays. As you can see by the address I have been moved to a new camp and do a different type of work.

"I hope you keep in touch with my mother as I am not permitted to write enough letters to write to you both. When you write you will have to give me word from them as well as yourself.

"I am hoping and praying for an end to the war any day. Of course we don't know when it will end but we pray for a quick end of hostilities."

There were several large live-bait boat albacore deliveries here over the weekend, most of the larger deliveries going to the Van Camp cannery, which has stepped up operations in recent weeks and is joining other canneries now in an appeal for cannery labor.

The Van Camp company received the Washington with about 24,000 pounds, the Seattle boat Soupin with more than 45,000 and the Spitfire with 30,000 pounds. The Thelma H., with more than 15,000 pounds, went to the Columbia River Packers association. Tuna receipts over the weekend were generally heavy.



1944 movie poster.