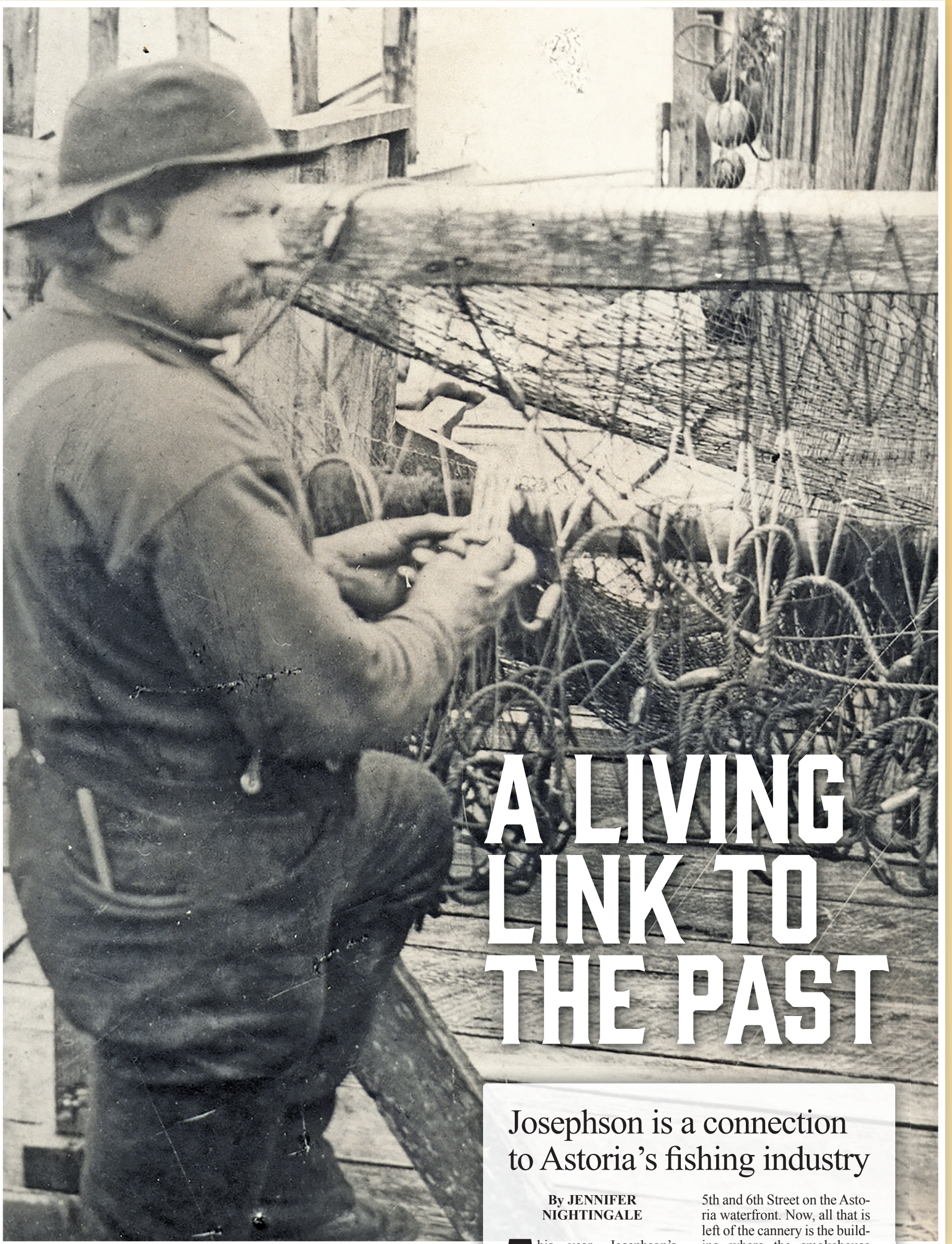


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A LIVING LINK TO THE PAST

Josephson is a connection to Astoria's fishing industry

By JENNIFER
NIGHTINGALE

This year, Josephson's Smokehouse celebrates its 100th year of smoking fish.

Store owner Mike Josephson is the fourth generation of his family to lead the store. Throughout the smokehouse's duration, Josephson and his family have adapted through changing times and conditions to continue the family's tradition of welcoming visitors into the historic shop.

Humble beginnings

Josephson's great grandfather, Jacob Baker, fished in the lower Columbia River during the 1870s. In the 1880s, one-fifth of Astorians were fishers, according to the U.S. Census. At the time, there were over 39 canneries along the lower Columbia River.

In 1883, Astoria was called the fishing capital of the world. More than 630,000 cases of salmon were packed that year, the equivalent of 43 million pounds.

The building that houses the smokehouse was built in 1898 as part of the Marshall J. Kinney Cannery, which at the time was the largest fish cannery in the world. Kinney's cannery was located between

5th and 6th Street on the Astoria waterfront. Now, all that is left of the cannery is the building where the smokehouse stands. Only the boiler, pilings and ballast rocks remain.

For 30 years, the Josephson building housed the head offices of the Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union. The union, organized in 1875, was considered by many the heart and soul of Astoria. Members pushed for higher prices for fish, and worked to improve safety, navigation and salmon conservation.

The business grows

The union faced significant environmental challenges in the 20th century, with upstream dams, irrigation gates and toxic industrial discharge. In the 1930s, the union initiated the first significant legal action against polluters on the river. In 1938, Anton Josephson purchased the building and moved his smoked salmon business into what is now the smokehouse.

Mike's father, Cecil, fished for 43 years in the Astoria gillnet fishery. In 1955, he began buying salmon in small quantities from fishermen that he knew from his many years of commercial fishing.

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Mike Josephson's great grandfather, Jacob Baker, in 1894 in Astoria at Kinney's net rack.



Jennifer Nightingale

Mike Josephson is the owner of Josephson's Smokehouse.