

WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE

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From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

10 years ago this week — 2010

The former Safeway block in downtown Astoria has collapsed.

The block behind the American Legion, which has caused a great deal of concern in the past, was battered by heavy rain this weekend.

"We knew we had a severe problem. But I never anticipated this," Mayor Willis Van Dusen said.

WARRENTON — There's an exhibit inside the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park's visitor's center titled: "How many days does it rain in the winter at Fort Clatsop?" It was apropos Sunday during the national park's annual Holiday Open House.

"I've been doing this for 10 years, and this is the worst weather ever," said Tom Wilson, who was one of several people reenacting Christmas 1805 when the Lewis and Clark Expedition stayed near the Pacific Ocean. The retired Astoria fourth-grade teacher helped create the living history programs at the park.

Strong winds roared through the forest canopy and a steady downpour drenched the men and women participating in the reenactment just as they did the Corps of Discovery 205 years ago.

A massive fire on the waterfront in Astoria destroyed two historic buildings Thursday night and Friday morning.

No one was injured.

The fire is believed to have started at the Cannery Cafe around 10:30 p.m. Employees at the cafe saw smoke and flames. They evacuated the building and called 911. As firefighters responded to the call, they noticed smoke coming from the adjacent No. 10 building, which housed some 28 businesses and organizations, including Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare, the Lazy Spoon Cafe, Salon Verve and CASA, among others.

Bartender Saralee Cokely was inside Cannery Cafe preparing to close when she and a chef smelled smoke.

"It was crazy stuff, dude" she said. "It was intense. Everything seemed to be OK. I was just going through my routine, and a cook stays with me to walk me out so I don't have to close up alone — thank God — and we walked into the restaurant area and we both could smell smoke, like burning plastic and really hot.

"He grabbed a fire extinguisher and I thought maybe someone threw a cigarette in a garbage can or something. But I tried to turn on the lights and everything short circuited and nothing turned on."

Cokely said the cook found a fire on the bathroom floor on the second floor. He put it out with the extinguisher while she went into the storeroom where the ice machine was. Looking through a vent, she said she could hear crackling and see flames and debris.

"The whole attic was lit up like the Fourth of July. It was crazy," Cokely said. "I said, 'We've got to get out of here!' I called 911."

50 years ago — 1970

Landings of coho (silver) salmon during the Columbia River fall salmon fishery approached 4.9 million pounds, making this season the best since the mid-1920s, the Oregon Fish Commission announced.

Columbia River Chinook landings were the best since 1951 and almost reached 4.8 million pounds.

The bulk of both the coho and Chinook landings were below Bonneville Dam. Only 184,000 pounds of coho and 700,000 pounds of Chinook were caught in the Indian commercial fishery above Bonneville.

The war of words, between commercial fishermen and the Oregon Fish Commission over the sale of spawned hatchery fish continued here Wednesday night, in the final of a series of five fishermen's town hall meetings held along the coast, but nobody seemed any closer to a solution to the problem.

Several fishermen contended the sale of 91,000 spent hatchery fish has had or will have an adverse effect on the price fishermen receive from the packers, but commission spokesmen continued to express their disbelief.

"I still have difficulty believing that the few good quality fish we sell can compete with troll fish to the extent it reduces the price," said Robert Schoning, director of the commission.

He said most of the hatchery fish sold was of poorer quality than the troll-caught fish sold to packers and that a state purchasing agent hand-picks the top quality fish for serving in state institutions. This year, the state received 20,000 pounds of fish, free of charge, for this use and state institution officials claim they cannot use more, he said. He also said 95% of the hatchery fish are sold after the troll season has ended.

A proposal on rezoning the Clatsop College District regarding election of board members will be submitted to the state attorney general's office for an opinion, college board members were told Thursday night.

Board member Art Fertig, who helped draw up the proposal, said today the college should hear in about 10 days from the attorney general's office. He said the attorney general was being asked whether the board has the authority to rezone the district by itself, or whether such a proposal must be voted on by the people.

Asked about the contents of the rezoning proposal, Fertig said he would release it only when word is received from the attorney general.

75 years ago — 1945

Public interest in the welfare of the Columbia River salmon industry from the time fish runs began to

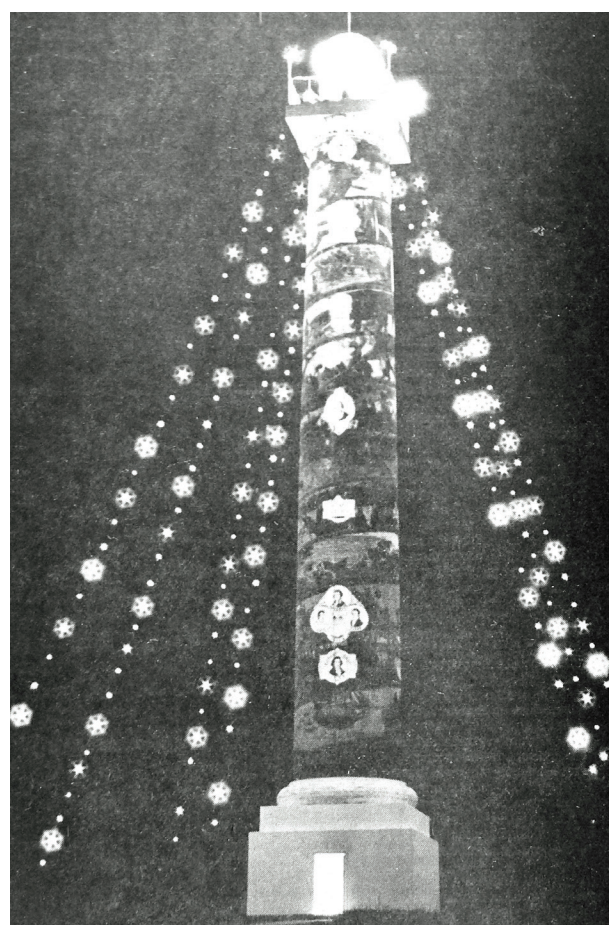


The sink hole in the former Safeway lot in downtown Astoria in 2010.



LEFT: The dining room of Cannery Cafe, built on pilings over the Columbia River, is left charred and exposed after a fire spread through the building in 2010.

BELOW: A crowd gathers along Marine Drive to watch as flames reach high into the sky after a fire broke out at the Cannery Cafe and moved to the No. 10 building next door, destroying both in 2010.



The Astoria Column, the city's 'Christmas tree of lights,' decorated by the Astoria Jaycees in 1970.

decline resulted in the establishment of the Food Industries Laboratory here in 1940. Today it is known as the Seafoods Laboratory and is located at 1236 Taylor.

While this laboratory undertook the first state supported research in the processing phases of local fisheries, it is obvious that the packing industry has conducted in its 79-year history a great deal of study in the preparation of fish, making and sealing of cans and the proper care of raw material and finished product.

William Hume, the first salmon packer on the Columbia River who put up 4,000 cases at Eagle Cliff, Washington, in 1866 was himself a pioneer research worker in production, processing and selling.

Techniques of catching salmon were far short of today's skills. He tried both seines and drift nets. That model of seaworthiness, the Columbia River gillnet sailing boat, was still a blueprint in the mind of some now forgotten shipwright. His fish were cooked in open pots much like salmon mulligan. The retort was yet to come, one of the greatest developments in the processing of canned foods. It was perfected by some obscure

salmon cook, a worthy research man. In the selling field, Hume had not only the task of inducing people to eat salmon, but eat it out of a can. He had more success teaching this new eating trait to Englishmen than Americans.

It was in the tradition of trade secrets that research in the Columbia salmon industry thrived. Its achievements in the making of cans, alone, pioneered the canning age into the world.

By a vote of 5 to 1, the Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union voted at its annual election on Dec. 11 to initiate a petition of outlawing stationary gear, such as fish traps, seines and set nets, from water of the Columbia River. The same measure, as voted for by the membership of the union, calls for prohibiting commercial fishing, except by treaty Indians, above Bonneville dam.

This proposal was submitted by the union's annual delegates conference held in late November to a vote of the membership. Some opposition to sponsoring an initiative measure at this time was voiced in consideration of the measure by the delegates to the annual meeting. Afterwards, a member of the union's legislative committee individually advised the union membership that he considered promotion of a bill to outlaw traps and other stationary gear as inopportune at this time when various elements in the industry are allied in sponsoring vital conservation programs.

Washington state ruled out stationary fishing gear in 1933 and Washington members of the union have since recommended similar legislation in Oregon.

The Pacific Northwest was still on the verge of a sliver thaw today, but weather bureau spokesmen said the icy conditions of Sunday would not be repeated "to any great extent."

Light, freezing rain was forecast for today with the mercury possibly dropping to 28 degrees in outlying areas surrounding Astoria and on the higher elevations.

Mayor Orval Eaton and his wife suffered bruises but were not seriously hurt when the mayor's car skidded on ice and piled into the bank on the Wolf Creek Highway on a trip to Portland on Saturday.

Concerned over their 8-year-old son, who was in the back seat, the mayor and his wife jerked the door open, whereupon the lad stepped calmly out, pointed to a small tree beside the road, and commented: "Daddy, here's a fine Christmas tree."