

WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE

COMPILED BY BOB DUKE

From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

*10 years ago
this week — 2012*

Palurette McCoy spent her last day as executive director of the Astoria Bicentennial getting ready for the big bash to say goodbye to a year full of cheerful memories.

She looked happy, perhaps a little wistful, as she ushered guests into the McTavish Room of the Liberty Theatre in Astoria for the lavish New Year's Eve dinner on Saturday night.

"Well, to me it is both happy and sad. For four years I've been part of the bicentennial and it's been a big part of my life. I'm going to miss it," McCoy said.

"This is our final farewell to the bicentennial," said McAndrew Burns, executive director of the Clatsop County Historical Society. "We are sold out to capacity. It's a five-course, plated dinner."

SEASIDE — Wetlands restoration expert Doug Ray loves old, brown Christmas trees.

In the past four years, they've helped him bring 2,000 baby coho salmon into a formerly dry side channel of Seaside's Necanicum River.

"They're like magnets for fish," he said. "The fish will stay under the cover of the branches during the day and come out at night to feed."

The Pacific Northwest could be using recycled Christmas trees all over the place to help salmon, Ray said. Within days of putting the trees under water, a brown algae starts growing on the needles. Other critters flock to the branches to feed, and a new food web is born.

As a geologist for the United States Geological Survey, Brian Atwater solves mysteries.

He picks up clues — the number of rings around a western red cedar, the sand layers along the banks of the Columbia River, sand filled cracks exposed during low tides — and tries to fit them into the science of earthquakes and tsunamis.

Then he looks for other evidence and finds it, in the amateur writings of a Japanese peasant in 1700 and in Spanish-language documents produced at the same time.

What conclusion do these clues lead to? That in the Northwest region of North America, a Cascadia earthquake occurred and launched a tsunami in Japan on Jan. 26, 1700.

A co-author of the book, "The Orphan Tsunami of 1700," Atwater discussed the mysteries of earthquakes during a Columbia Forum talk on Wednesday night.

While only remnants remain of the 300-year-old massive magnitude 9 earthquake, its effects still are reflected in modern maps produced by geologists today, noted Atwater, who projected a tsunami evacuation map of Warrenton on a screen.

"A strange mix of mud, trees and Japanese documents — they all go into making these maps," Atwater said.

50 years ago — 1972

A new building on W. Marine Drive is presently under construction and will eventually house three new businesses, according to owner Dr. John Hickman.

Hickman said leases have been signed for the businesses already — a Farmers Insurance outlet and a variety store.

The new development is east of and adjacent to a new office built and presently occupied by Hickman.

Fort Stevens never fired a shot in anger during its 84 years of active military service, but nevertheless fully deserves the designation of Historic Place just given it by the National Park Service.

Fort Stevens is unique among the many harbor defense posts that studded the coast from Maine to Texas and from San Diego to Puget Sound because it is the only one that had shots fired at it since the War of 1812.

The old fort's greatest day was June 22, 1942. About 11:15 p.m. the Japanese submarine I-25, commanded by Lt. Comdr. Meiji Tagami, fired 17 rounds from its deck gun at Fort Stevens.

The bombardment lasted about a half hour and was totally ineffective. One round fell about 100 yards in front of Battery Russell, but the rest hit only sand and brush south of the fort.

There was no return fire. The principal reason was that the Coast Artillery doctrine called for a fixed harbor defense port to withhold fire when a lone hostile vessel shot at it, as such an attack presumably would be for reconnaissance, to draw fire that would disclose exact location of the guns.

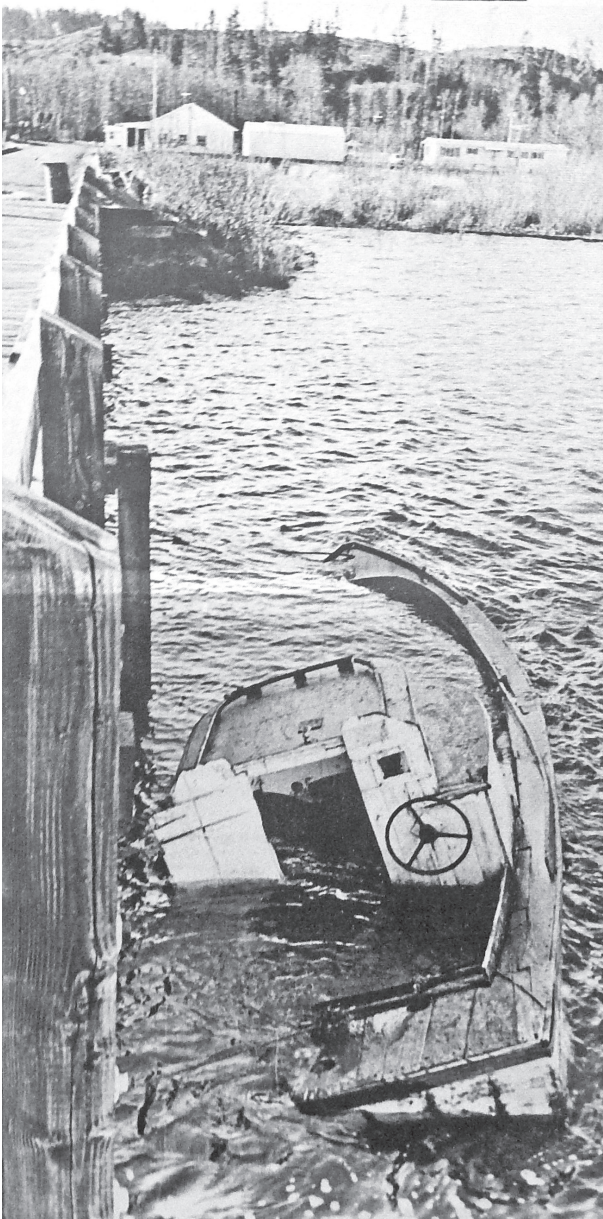
SEASIDE — The ocean is an important source of livelihood and pleasure for many area residents. They



The McTavish Room at the Liberty Theatre hosted the Astoria Bicentennial New Year's Eve dinner in 2012.



Brian Atwater shows samples of trees that tell the story of tsunamis and earthquakes at a Columbia Forum talk in Astoria in 2012.



A partially-sunken gillnet boat sits along the pier near Tongue Point in 1972.

work on it, travel on it and play in and near the water.

But relatively few actually live on it. The Bellis family is one of a growing number of people moving water-

ward for eating and sleeping as well as for vocational pursuits and pleasure.

Recently, Dave Bellis, his family and a half dozen friends launched the 53-foot cement sailing vessel at the Hammond Mooring Basin. Construction of the blue and white floating home has been a major preoccupation for the Bellis family for more than two years. During that time, the Starbrite, as it is called, took shape on a driveway adjacent to the Mr. B's Restaurant on S. Holladay Drive, an establishment until recently owned and operated by Bellis.

Sale of the restaurant, according to Marilyn Bellis, enabled the family to devote full time efforts to building the boat. The restaurant sale will also allow them full use of the new home, being financially able to travel and live comfortably for the next 10 years, she added.

75 years ago — 1947

Astoria is operating under its new charter, which went into effect with the beginning of the year 1947.

The City Commission will recognize committee appointments and the like under the new charter at its next meeting Jan. 6. Otherwise, there will be no noticeable effect, as no alterations in the operation of the city government are provided in the document.

Sale of the Astoria Bottling Works business at Ninth and Bond streets from Mr. and Mrs. A.W. Kendall to Bill Van Dusen, local insurance man, and his brother, Brenham Van Dusen, was announced today. The transaction became effective Jan. 1.

Amount involved in the transaction was upwards of \$100,000.

Both Van Dusens will be active in the business. They said they are making no changes in operation of the business or its franchises.

Loading of ice on the fisheries vessel Pacific Explorer is started and the ship will soon take on supplies and provisions for her maiden voyage as a floating fish plant.

Nick Bez, president of the Pacific Exploration Co., which leased the ship from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, was in Astoria Thursday. He asserted that the factory ship offered Northwest fishing vessels an opportunity to engage in distant fishing. Without having such a receiving station to deliver their fish, local boats could not fish grounds at great distance from their home port, he commented.

Astoria's title as the fishing capital of the Northwest is at stake.

Local fish receipts fell off drastically in 1946, from almost 70 million pounds in 1945 to 41 million pounds, a drop of more than 40%. Astoria's chief rival, the Port of Seattle, enjoyed a good halibut year and waxed fat during the Office of Price Administration era.

Confined for three months in a U.S. Navy hospital with a mild case of snow blindness, an Astoria naval air photographer was sent back to active duty with his unit just in time to board the Philippine Sea, an Essex-type carrier taking part in Admiral Byrd's expedition to the Antarctic.

Paul Zimmerman, photographer, second class, veteran of five years of recent duty as an aerial photographer, wrote to his father, Circuit Court Judge Howard K. Zimmerman, that operations on both of his eyes were successful and that he was flying to Norfolk, Virginia, for reassignment with the unit which has been training in the Arctic for the Antarctic expedition.

Young Zimmerman became afflicted with keratitis and inflammation of the cornea of both eyes while on duty with a U.S. Coast Guard ice-breaker, which penetrated to within 486 miles of the North Pole during a June to October voyage between Greenland and Ellesmere Island.

Loss of his sun glasses while on the ice cap of north Devon Island, first large island west of Greenland, with a party of U.S. Marines, caused him to sustain the injuries to his eyes.

The coldest weather in the nation, this first day of the new year, covered a broad area from the New England and Great Lakes states southward through the Mississippi valley into the Gulf of Mexico.

Temperatures were below freezing as far south as Corpus Christi, Texas, and sub zero readings were general in the New England areas as well as the Great Lakes region.



Workers use heavy equipment to remove a nearly 70-foot log in the Necanicum River resting against the Avenue U Bridge in Seaside in 2012.