

WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE

COMPILED BY BOB DUKE

From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

*10 years ago
this week — 2012*

The Astoria High School Class of 1952 graduated in a simpler time. It was a time before rock 'n' roll: Crooners like Nat King Cole, Tony Bennett and Doris Day topped Billboard's charts. "I Love Lucy" was in its first season. Gas cost about 25 cents a gallon and life expectancy was 68.4 years. Harry Truman was finishing his presidency, and the United States was in the middle of the Korean War.

The 1952 seniors were football players, cheerleaders, yearbook editors and glee club singers. They were the first four-year class at Astoria High School since 1924, entering together as freshmen.

Many of the 110 graduates went to college and traveled the world. Some classmates entered careers in law enforcement, sales, business, the maritime industry and the military. Others have been architects, engineers, teachers, nurses, dentists, mothers and fathers.

Now, most classmates are retired. Some have passed on. Twenty-six of them met for their 60th high school reunion Friday and Saturday.

WARRENTON – The Michelle D, a fishing vessel based in Warrenton, ran aground late Sunday night, hitting pilings near the mouth of the Skipanon River and getting stuck in the mud.

The U.S. Coast Guard Station Cape Disappointment is monitoring the boat and waiting for high tide in an effort to dislodge it. Its pollution response division is also monitoring the vessel to ensure that the 300 to 400 gallons of diesel fuel inside it doesn't pose an environmental threat.

"The vessel operator claimed they had experienced rudder failure," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Nate Littlejohn, adding that the initial report came into the Coast Guard around 11:40.

On Nov. 24, 1805, the Lewis and Clark expedition, by majority vote, decided to cross the Columbia River south into present-day Oregon, building Fort Clatsop and wintering over before leaving for the east in March.

By Dec. 27, in a journal entry, Capt. William Clark describes the party eating rotten meat out of necessity because of a lack of salt used in brining the venison the expedition depended on.

Ten modern explorers, with the help of interpretive rangers from Lewis and Clark National Historical Park and each playing a private or sergeant from the Corps of Discovery, trekked down from Fort Clatsop to Sunset Beach last weekend, retracing the approximate steps the expedition took to establish a beach camp, gather and make salt needed to preserve their meat, find and trade for whale parts and otherwise make the best of their time on the coast.

The weekend was an immersion in all things Lewis and Clark, one of the only adult courses put on by the national historical park, which organizes several youth courses.

50 years ago — 1972

ILWACO, Wash. — The skull believed to be that of powerful Chinook Indian Chief Comcomly will return this month to the land of his people for the first time in 139 years.

The flattened skull will be buried with a simple ceremony in a secluded plot donated by the Ilwaco Cemetery Association and marked only with a small plaque.

Descendants of the leader who greeted Capt. Robert Gray at the mouth of the Columbia River in 1771 want the burial to be unobtrusive so the gravesite won't become a tourist mecca.

They figure Comcomly's skull has been seen enough in the last 139 years.

Years of struggle finally resulted in the return of the skull from England to Clatsop County, where it was placed on display at the historical society's Flavel House Museum in Astoria in 1953.

People are impressed by the sights and sounds of a smartly stepping drum and bugle corps. Colors flashing, drums rolling in a steady cadence, horns quickening pulses with lofty, soaring soprano bugle calls and deep-throated basses booming out their forceful tunes.

As they march down field or street, 400 arms and legs move as one, drilled with military precision, heads snapping in unison, gloved hands swinging together stride for stride, polished shoes glinting as they raise and lower with quick efficiency.

The Sunsetters, recipients of statewide acclaim, are regularly called upon to perform in parades and exhibitions in Portland, Medford, Pendleton and other Oregon cities and in places as far away as Edmonton and Calgary in



2012 – Twenty-five members of Astoria High School's Class of 1952 gather for a photo for their 60-year reunion at Baked Alaska.



1972 – Buddy Stanley totes a set of drums.



2012 – Paul Gascoigne, left, is the new acting deputy fire chief for Astoria, following the resignation of Steve Strally. Wade Mathews, center, will now fill the lieutenant role and Aaron Bielemeier has been promoted to driver.

Alberta, Canada.

But getting to the top has been no easy task. Just ask any of the 60-some corps members, ranging in age from 11 to 19 years, how much time they put into practicing, and most of them will emphatically answer "a lot."

Jim Infinger, major-domo of the surprisingly complex operation, says, "They're good kids, and they work hard." His wife, Betty, estimates that for every 15 minutes a member performs on the competition field, more than 300 hours are spent in practice.

Warner Bros. will be filming in Clatsop County after all. The film crew for the "Delphi Bureau," now shooting on location in Portland, will set up cameras in Westport early Friday evening. They will film a chase scene with one car leaping on to the Westport ferry seconds after the vessel begins churning toward Puget Island.

The jump sequence is part of an ABC television thriller now being filmed in Oregon. Warner Bros. originally hoped to film the jump scene on the Old Youngs Bay bridge in Astoria after Multnomah County denied permission to use the Willamette River's Morrison Bridge for the same scene.

But state highway division engineers said "no" to the Astoria location, forcing Warner Bros. to secure permission from Wahkiakum County, Washington, road department officials who operate the ferry service on the Columbia River between Puget Island and Westport.

After "cooling off" a bit, the owner of an auto repair shop next to the proposed YMCA swimming facility in Astoria says he doesn't think he will attempt to halt the project.

Kenneth Heater, owner of C&C Body and Paint Clinic, said he wants to talk with the YMCA board of directors about plans for the new swimming center.

Heater suggested Tuesday he would appeal the Planning Commission's decision to grant the conditional use, but he said Wednesday it was probably too late to do anything about it.

The structure which received conditional use approval from the City Tuesday is planned for a

vacant lot between the existing YMCA and Heater's business on Exchange Street at 13th Street. He is concerned that pile-driving work planned for the swimming facility will pose a structural threat to his building.

75 years ago — 1947

SEASIDE – Justice of Peace J.W. Pietaria today fined Donald Fay Clevenger, 18, Portland, \$50 each on two charges growing out of Clevenger's driving a "hot rod" roadster to Seaside.

State Trooper Harold A. Kieger said Clevenger showed up in a routine road check. He gave a false name, the officer said. Kieger also found that the car, owned by the boy's father, had switched license plates.

Later, when Kieger located the Portland youth in Seaside, he learned his true name and charged him with operating a car while his driver's license was suspended. It was suspended for three years before the latest arrest. The youth testified that he was taking the car to sell it in Seaside. His father was aware of the transaction, the court learned.

The new pilot vessel Peacock got acquainted with her job Saturday. She was originally the minesweeper 117, launched in San Pedro, California, in 1942, but her first trip to the bar with pilots aboard Saturday had the air of a maiden voyage.

The 133-foot, wooden-hulled vessel had a new coat of paint, new civilian communications and 100 admiring guests when she put out to the lightship.

The vessel was acquired by the Columbia River Bar Pilots Association to accommodate the growing shipping industry of the river and to shoulder the burden of the pilot schooner Columbia, which will be placed on relief duty basis.

Sweeping by fishing vessels and other craft, the Peacock cruised along at 12 knots and was speeded up to nearly 15 knots. She has two 600-horsepower Cooper-Bessemer engines and two Buda auxiliaries for light and power.

The Peacock is named after both the U.S. sloop Peacock, which was lost on the north spit on July 18, 1841, and the spit which eventually was given the name of the man o' war.

SEASIDE – A beautiful blonde, blue-eyed school-teacher from the little town of Sutherlin is the first Miss Oregon.

Jo Ann Amorde, who was Miss Roseburg, and is now Oregon's first candidate for Miss America, won the cheering approval of thousands on Sunday as she was chosen from 17 contestants to receive the beauty crown.

Astoria attorney Harold T. Johnson said today that oyster stew was his favorite – especially the oyster stew served at the Astoria Elks Club dining room.

Last week, while eating lunch, he bit into a pearl. He said the pearl was about a 16th of an inch in diameter. Several jewelers eating at the same table quickly gave him a "curbstone" appraisal.

Johnson bragged that the pearl was worth \$38.50. The cook overheard him and wanted to add that amount to the price of his meal. It all ended with Johnson offering to trade the pearl for an elk's tooth.



2012 – The commercial fishing vessel Michelle D lists at the mouth of the Skipanon River in Warrenton.