

# Shanghai Tunnels Give Rare Glimpse of Old Portland



AP  
Michael Jones is trying to restore some of Portland's underground tunnels and open them for guided tours.

**JOSEPH B. FRAZIER**  
**THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
It would start with a thirsty working stiff on the town with his back pay, swaggering into the half-bars/half-bordellos called boarding houses and hard on the heels of whisky, women and song.

But soon the ceiling would start to spin, his legs wouldn't obey, and oblivion moved in like a fog. He would awaken on a ship at sea.

He had been Shanghaied, addled with a drugged drink, hustled into an alley or dropped through a trap door to an underground tunnel leading to the harbor, bundled in a blanket and sold for a few dollars to a captain in need of a crew.

The practice flourished on Portland's rough-and-tumble Skid Road waterfront from the 1860s until it began to wane around World War I. The laws, such as they were, weren't enforced. Sailors of the day weren't considered worth the effort. Some of the tunnels are still there, and they have provided a lifetime of fascination for Michael Jones, who is trying to restore them to their original condition and open them for guided tours, something he already has begun on a limited basis.

Portland was known as the worst port on the West Coast for Shanghaing, putting even wicked San Francisco in the shade. Many of the boarding houses were owned by the Shanghaier, or "crimps" as they were called.

"Portland was vice-ridden and corrupt," Jones said. "It catered to people who played as hard as they worked, and those are the people

who were Shanghaied."

Jones does not romanticize the Shanghai days. "There is nothing romantic about it," he said. "It was human abuse at its worst. It's a piece of our history that's not very nice."

Jones, 49, who has relied heavily on decades of oral histories and the little that has been written for his information, says he hopes enough time has gone by so that Portland can confront this aspect of its past.

Even now, he says, when he meets people whose forebears had first-hand knowledge, they say something like "The family talked about it in whispers."

Some of the men who were Shanghaied would be gone for years before they could work their way back. Some were fatally drugged, Jones said.

"The knockout drops were powerful," Jones said. "They had to last from 13 to 16 hours, until the ship was at sea, because if they didn't, the man might jump overboard and try to swim to land."

"The first thing they did was take away their boots," he said. "They sprinkled broken glass on the floor, so that if someone got free he wouldn't get very far very fast." Jones plans a museum in one of the subterranean rooms for the things he has found there.

"What was found in the underground will stay in the underground," he said, ducking through the low brick archways that connect rooms to the tunnels.

Jones says he thinks the tunnels were built for Shanghaing, but others are skeptical.

# Piedmont to Vote on a New Neighborhood Affiliation

STORY CONTINUED FROM METRO FRONT

The city guidelines state, "There must be a substantial reason to move," and that such changes "must not be done lightly nor as a result of momentary problems or personality disputes." Such "problems or personality disputes" have often played an unstated role in the movement of neighborhoods from one coalition to another. They were suspected of being a factor in the transfer of the Alameda, Grant Park and Sullivan's Gulch neighborhoods from Central Northeast Neighbors to the Northeast Coalition in the early 1990s.

Radigan and Fisher say that they have developed an ongoing affiliation with the north neighborhoods over common issues such as concerts and events at Portland International Raceway and Portland Meadows, and the future development of the Expo Center.

Radigan makes no overt criticism of the Northeast Coalition, but it is implied in what she does say. Asked why Piedmont has sent no representative to NECN board meetings she says, "We couldn't find a volunteer who was willing to go." She also says that she and other long-time leaders will be leaving soon, and that North director Tom Griffin Vilade can provide the "leadership and support"

the newcomers will need.

Vilade told the Portland Observer, "It doesn't make any difference to our office whether they're in North or Northeast. They'll make the decision on where they make common values." However, he clearly is not opposed to the idea. "We see Piedmont as people tuned in to the same issues and adding additional strength." Northeast Coalition president Willie Brown is frustrated both by the move and the way it has come about. "I am opposed to it until we get all the information," he told the Portland Observer. "If Betsy Radigan wants her neighborhood to leave, she should come and tell us about it instead of going to ONI first."

Referring to some of Radigan's comments, Brown said, "When they were dealing with the Rosemont property redevelopment, they didn't go to Kenton for help...It doesn't matter what coalition you're a part of. If you don't participate, you won't get support." Brown and other NECN leaders say they fear losing their influence on issues affecting inner northeast. "The City Council says they want to keep the coalitions strong, but we have the Portland Development Commission and Tri-Met doing projects without working with us," Brown said.



# Classifieds/Bids

## Sub-Bids Requested

Park Rose Transit Center  
Contract No. BA010624BW  
Portland, OR  
Bid Date: April 6, 2001 @ 2:00 p.m.  
Slayden Construction  
P. O. Box 625 Stayton, OR 97383  
(503) 769-1969 FAX: (503) 769-4525

We are an equal opportunity employer and request sub-bids from emerging small businesses and from women and minority enterprises. CCB #45621

## Advertisement For Bid

Sealed bids for the Finley Hall Piping Rehabilitation project will be received by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education until 2:30 PM, local time, May 1, 2001. Bids will be opened and publicly read aloud on May 1, at 2:30 PM local time. All bidders must be registered with the Construction Contractor's Board.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting Facilities Services, 100 Adams Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-2001 or telephone 541-737-7694.

## SUB-BIDS REQUESTED

From certified MBE/WBE/ESB  
Subcontractors & Suppliers for:  
REGION 1 FY2001 FISH PASSAGE CULVERT (GUS CREEK)  
NEHALEM HIGHWAY, COLUMBIA COUNTY  
(Survey, Electrical, Paving, Pavement Striping,  
Landscaping, and Permanent Barricades)

Submit Bid By: April 11, 2001 @ 3:00pm

## EUDALY BROS. EXCAVATION

6920 NE 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave. PORTLAND, OR 97218  
TELEPHONE (503) 288-7469 fax (503) 288-7460  
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## Sub-Bids Requested

Portland Public Schools  
Ockley Green Middle School-4/10/01 10:00 AM  
And  
Clark Elementary School-4/12/01 10:00 AM

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Portland, OR 97201-2551  
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School District

Seismic, ADA Modifications and Fire & Life Safety  
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## Sub - Bids Requested

Tri-Met, Interstate Max Project Line Section 10-C

Bids Due on or before April 20, 2001

## DBE Subcontractor Open House

Thursday April 5, 2001 4:30-6:30

OAME Conference Room

4134 N. Vancouver Avenue, Portland Oregon

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## Hamilton Construction Company

Attn: Bob Sherman  
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