

ACTRESS BRINGS HISTORY ALIVE

Portraying the virtuous life of a Victorian woman

Pittock was a champion of women and children

By Rebecca Herren
Cannon Beach Gazette

Visitors to the Seaside Library had an opportunity to meet a Victorian heroine, Georgiana Pittock. Pittock championed for the rights of women and children, became a suffragette and founded Portland's Rose Society and Rose Festival.

She founded the Ladies Relief Society, joined the Portland Women's Union in 1912 as a suffragette, played a key role in building the Martha Washington Home for single women, supported the Boys and Girls Aid Society and the Parry Center for Children.

"It's so good to be back in Seaside after such a long time," said Pittock — never stepping out of character — as she thanked the Seaside Museum, Seaside Library and guests for coming out to hear her talk.

Mrs. Pittock and her chauffeur, Herman Hawkanson, were the subjects for historical re-enactors Mary and Michael Hutchens during their presentation "Georgiana Pittock: Her Last 10 Years, 1908-1918" on Thursday at the library.

Pittock adored flowers, especially roses. Along with friends, she held backyard rose shows, which gave the Portland Rose Society its first exposure. She became a



REBECCA HERREN/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE
Georgiana Pittock (Mary Hutchens) and her chauffeur Herman Hawkanson (Mike Hutchens) visited the Seaside Library.

founder and the inspiration behind Portland's famous Rose Festival in 1907 with her good friend Harry Lane, a former mayor of Portland and supporter of the Lewis and Clark Exposition.

She married Henry Lewis Pittock when she was 15 years old. Henry Pittock, who was a typesetter when Georgiana married him, later became the owner and publisher of The Oregonian for nearly 60 years. He became successful in real estate, banking, railroads, mining, lumber mills and the pulp and paper industry.

A role in history

It all began for Forest Grove actress Mary Hutchens in 2006 when she answered an ad for a Rose Festival his-

torical re-enactor. She got the job and thereafter, Hutchens spent months preparing for the role. She researched and memorized Georgiana's life, down to the most insignificant details that make up both the public and the private life of a historical persona.

In 2007, "Georgiana" made her first appearance in 89 years at a rose planting and tea party held at her home, the Pittock Mansion.

When Mary's contract ended with the Rose Festival after four years, she became independent and, together with her husband, they have continued to share the Pittock story to schoolchildren, residents at assisted living facilities, libraries, civic centers and philanthropic organizations — always in full



SUBMITTED PHOTO
The real Georgiana Pittock of Portland around the turn of the 20th century.

period costume.

The Pittocks played a major role in the history of Portland and to the growth of Oregon's largest city.

The Pittock Mansion was built on Portland's original "lover's lane" above Burnside. Built in the style of a French Renaissance chateau in 1914, it was a progressive masterpiece for its time.

Amassed on 16 acres with 44 rooms, it included all the latest technology. A central vacuum system, a telephone and intercom system with intercoms in every room, refrigeration, indoor plumbing and electricity. There was a dumbwaiter and a passenger elevator was installed for Georgiana after her stroke. (The elevator is still operable today.) Henry Pittock used Oregon artisans and craftsmen and insisted that all materials used including marble, tenino stone and wood came from the Northwest.

The Pittocks were deeply connected in their community and spent much of their time

improving the lives of local residents. Family and community were central to them and they shared their home with some of their children and grandchildren. Generations of Pittocks lived in the mansion up to 1958 when it became too much to endure.

Now a museum, the mansion has become a popular destination for visitors, bird watchers, event planners and gardeners. Though it seems lavish, it is a testament of who the Pittocks were as pillars of the community in both business development and philanthropy.

Pittock suffered a stroke in 1913, just before the mansion was completed. Sometime afterwards, she started to read The Oregonian for the first time. She never cared for it before, but started to feel her world getting smaller. Because of the Spanish-American War, there were stories about German atrocities, propaganda, spies and submarines.

"I liked that stuff," she said. "I know I shouldn't have, but they opened my mind."

Seaside connection

The Hutchens divided their program into two parts. The first story covers the years 1845 to 1907 and includes the wagon trains that brought the Burton family to Oregon; Georgiana's marriage to Henry Pittock, the formation of the Portland Rose Society; the Lewis and Clark Exposition and the Rose Festival.

The Hutchens' portrayals covered part two of the program: the last years of Geor-

giana's life, the building of the Pittock Mansion, the evolution of women's voting rights in Oregon, World War I and her final years suffering from the debilitating effects of a stroke.

"In 1905, the Seaside Signal cited that I was here in Seaside," said Mrs. Pittock, "and for the next eight summers, I visited Seaside with one of my daughters or with my granddaughter Georgiana Leadbetter as a respite from the city."

She said they traveled by one of the four trains in and out of Seaside, took walks on the Pacific Pier, bought taffy at Pool's Confectionery (now Phillips Candy) and stayed, not in one of the five hotels in Seaside, but in a local boarding house on Third Street because "I was frugal."

Her daughters always tried to get Mrs. Pittock to try new things like going to the cinema. "I would never attend the cinema in Portland," she said, "it would be scandalous. But I'm at the beach," she said laughing heartedly. The movies were four minutes long and were mostly about new technology. This news peeked Henry Pittock's interest and soon he, too, attended the cinema in Seaside, arriving by the "daddy train" on weekends.

Mary and Michael Hutchens visit Seaside as often as possible. But unlike the Pittocks who chose to stay in boarding houses, the Hutchens own a vacation home in Seaside and on those occasions when a respite from their residence in Forest Grove is needed, they take the short drive to the coast.

'Room to grow' the Cannon Beach arts

New director offers vision for the future

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

As an artist and newly minted program director of the Cannon Beach Arts Association, Cara Mico does not have a preferred medium.

Instead, when asked, she started to list all of the different ways she likes to create art: oil and acrylic, piano, dance and literature.

Her answer is reflective of her overall vision for the arts association to diversify the definition of what art can be in Cannon Beach.

"Art is translating. No matter the interpretation, it's still just understanding the world," Mico said. "It's all art to me."

The Cannon Beach Arts Association supports, funds and enhances the arts and artists in the city and the region through education, events and exhibits, and has been doing so since 1986. The association provides art scholarships, an internship and an individ-



BRENNA VISSER/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Cara Mico stands in the Cannon Beach Arts Association in front of paintings done by Meagan Sokol.

ual artist grant. The summer camp, for which the Stormy Weather chamber grant is designated, draws a mix of local and out-of-town students.

The association's previous director, Jane Brumfield, stepped down in December to open the new Imprint Gallery and Studio in Cannon Beach.

Mico's journey into the world of art started in Portland when she was child. She started drawing and painting at a young age, but didn't realize she could make her talents into a career until high school.

She attended Otis Col-

'Part of what drew me into working at a gallery was because I genuinely care about the artists I promote.'

Cara Mico

lege of Art and Design in Los Angeles before she decided to make the switch to study environmental science. She moved to San Diego and then to Oregon State University to study it, with the logic that this degree and her job as a consultant would be more practical. But soon she found herself missing making art.

"It wasn't going to make me happy," she said.

So she made a U-turn, and enrolled in the University of Oregon's master of arts administration and non-profit management program, where she expects to graduate in June. She returned to her North Coast roots and started as program director in February.

"Now I get to spend my

entire day with artists, and have paint all over me, and I get paid for that," she laughed.

As director, her primary work will be to promote local art in the gallery, as well as act as a bridge between the needs of the artists and board of directors. "Part of what drew me into working at a gallery was because I genuinely care about the artists I promote," she said.

As the director, Mico plans to maintain and sustain the scholarship and internship programs, but hopes to expand workshop offerings to make them more consistent, diverse and available.

Another goal is to expand representation from artists of color. She hopes to work with local historical organizations to include more work from Hispanic artists, as well as highlight more Asian-American and Native American art.

"Right now we are focused in the fine arts, but there is a lot of room to grow, like with graphic design or portfolio development," she said. "There are lots of organizations with similar goals around the coast. I want to connect with those with similar missions to ours."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Mark Bates' cheesemaking workshop comes to Cannon Beach.

Would you like to make some cheese?

"Introduction to Cheese and Cheesemaking Workshop," a one-day event, will be held at the Cannon Beach Chamber Community Hall on Saturday, April 8, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The workshop includes a cheese tasting of the seven major cheese families and a hands-on session where participants work in pairs to convert milk to queso fresco. Other sessions focus on the history and categorization of cheese and learning about the key steps of the cheese making process. A second tasting rounds out the day.

The class is offered and

taught by Marc Bates, the "Cheese Guy of the North Coast." He has 50 years experience in the industry. During this time he managed the Washington State University Creamery and made "Cougar Gold" cheese and more recently managed the OSU Creamery where he assisted with the startup and development of "Beaver Classic" cheese. Bates has taught numerous cheesemaking short courses in Washington, Idaho, Oregon and California.

For more information, email cheeseguy@charter.net or phone Marc Bates at 509-595-8652.

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