



Newsletter

Spring & Summer 2009

WE'RE MOVING ON...

It was a long recovery but we are pleased to report that our back display room will again be admired by all who visit the museum. You will find just a couple of changes which we all agree are favorable. The original low ceiling was destroyed by that tree that made an unexpected appearance in the middle of the room during the December 2007 storm. After careful consideration, we chose a new look, a soft gabled ceiling with two hanging pendant chandeliers. It's looking good, folks! Dan Chandler again came through with his expertise and with a bit of imagination and considerable skill, he made a good room great!

That storm did a near-clearcut on the hillside behind the museum and the few trees left standing were definitely a threat to the building. The Forest Service recognized this and agreed that these hazard trees should be removed. This wasn't as simple as one would think as some trees were leaning toward us with the downed trees pressed against them. Professionals came to task and made the job look easy. Thanks to T J Bexton, Les Miller and Bruce Vandervort we can rest assured that we will no longer have undesirable visitors dropping in on us!

Just before we were rudely interrupted by said tree, we were making plans to finish the kitchen area, that being our own work room. This had to be put on hold until now. We just ordered the cabinets and sink and our refrigerator and stove are still waiting for us in the wings. With the completion of the kitchen, Dan will proceed to the back "mud" room which we think would be ideal for our farming exhibit. Then it's to higher ground, upstairs where we have four rooms waiting their turn.

The out-of-doors is getting attention also. Harry Creviston has graciously volunteered to erect a pole build at the site of the old carport. For quite some time now we have had numerous pieces of logging equipment just waiting for a home and we think this is just the ticket. We're so excited!

We are open daily Memorial Day through Labor Day, 12 pm-5 pm. Closed Mondays. Will open by appointment. Tour groups are welcome. Call: (360) 288-2317 or 288-2417. Admission by Donation.

Preserving Our Photographs

The museum is the home to major collections of the original negatives of Dell Mulkey and of Dale Northup, two photographers active in the Lake Quinault and Olympic Peninsula area in the first half of the 20th century.

Preserving these images and making them available to historians and visitors without endangering the fragile originals is the first goal of our photo project.

The museum is fortunate to have a volunteer, Walt Devaney, with access to high resolution digital scanners capable of accurately recording the fine detail in these old photographs.

To clean, restore and preserve these images will be a long process. The first step is to scan all of the negatives and establish a catalog that can be browsed. The negatives can then be stored until time is available to revisit each image more completely.

So far, more than 800 photographs taken by Dale Northup have been scanned and stored as digital images. The Mulkey collection is much larger and more difficult, 1200 images have been scanned with many more still untouched.

By next summer, if funding is available, we hope to have a slideshow of many of the images on display in the museum.

The museum is also very interested in expanding the photo collection. Any members or friends who have family photos of the Quinault Valley and Lake Quinault to share should contact us. Especially valuable would be pre-1950 photographs or negatives. We would carefully scan the images and return the originals unharmed, along with CDs or DVDs of the digital images for you to keep.

Both Mulkey and Northup sold postcards with their best photos on them. These postcards are valuable to the museum, both for the history they contain and for the photographer's artistry they show in going from the raw negative to the finished print. Where possible, the museum would like to acquire these postcards as additions to the collection.

An Unexpected Find by Walter Devaney

This photo found in the Dell Mulkey collection appears to show a local gathering with Olympic Peninsula author Betty MacDonald, who wrote the early chronicle of life on the Olympic Peninsula, *The Egg and I*. Can anyone identify the occasion and the others in the picture? A book club meeting, perhaps? The picture probably dates from the mid 1950's. Judging by the pictures on the wall, Dell may have taken this picture in his own kitchen or possibly for the Aberdeen Daily World.



Upon discovery of this historical photograph, the museum acquired a copy of *The Egg and I*: Copyright, 1945, by Betty MacDonald, Fifth impression with the dust jacket and book in near-mint condition. You will find both as one of our newest displays in the Lake Quinault Museum.

If you have any knowledge about this photo please contact us: Lake Quinault Museum, PO Box 35, Quinault, WA 98575 or if you prefer you may call us: Phyllis Miller, 360-288-2317 or email: phyllisandrodney@hotmail.com

TALES OF YESTERYEAR by Isabel Fishel (Reprinted from the Quinault Rain Barrel 3-13-86)

There is an interesting story told about the Merriman family who came to Quinault in 1890. Little is remembered of them except for a story told by Bud Loomis. Bud's father, Byron Loomis took a claim about ten miles above the Lake in 1892. Their son, Nelson Taylor Loomis, better known by his friends as Bud or N. T., was nineteen years old when he came with his father to build their cabin before the family arrived.

It seems that Fred Merriman and his mother had come to Quinault in 1890 and taken a claim just south of Merriman Falls, which has their name. They were joined sometime later by Fred's sister and her husband, the Websters. Sometime after they arrived, Webster apparently went out in his canoe, upset it, and was supposedly drowned. It was rumored later that he was seen in Tacoma, but this was never confirmed.

One winter the Merrimans were in bad circumstances. No food and no money, so Fred went to Hoquiam to find work. The two women were left to fend for themselves. A confirmed bachelor, Neil McCarthy, had a claim just above them. It was he who saw that they were supplied with wood and food to keep them through the winter. In the spring they decided to leave, and asked Bud Loomis to take them out. There were no trails in those days, so they would have to go by canoe. It would mean a forty mile trip, and it was pouring down rain. Bud agreed to take the women in his canoe but would not be able to take their belongings, which included two trunks. He suggested that they get McCarthy to go along in his canoe. So it was arranged. McCarthy was not too anxious to go because he was not a good canoe man, and his canoe was not the best for such a long trip. It was too short and wide with straight sides. On top of that he was shy of women, but Mrs. Webster liked him and would have liked to have had him marry her daughter.

Bud arranged that Mrs. Webster should go with McCarthy, taking some of their belongings, and that Mrs. Merriman, with the rest of the things, would go in his canoe. They negotiated the Lake and about six miles down the river without trouble until they came to a place where there were four large rocks barely showing above the water. Bud got through all right, but stopped to see if the other boat had made it. McCarthy was having trouble. He got too close to the first rock to be able to make a sharp turn to take him past the last rock. He hit the rock broadside and the canoe broke in two pieces, scattering the personal goods. He grabbed Mrs. Webster by the coat collar as the boat began to sink, and caught one half of the boat to hang on to as he struggled for shore. Bud beached his canoe and left Mrs. Merriman and part of her stuff there while he went to the rescue. He instructed McCarthy to hang on to the boat and he would tow them ashore. McCarthy had reached shallow water by then and thought he could make it. Just then he slipped and lost hold of Mrs. Webster and they both went under, she had a strangle hold on him and they didn't come up. Bud decided that he had better go after them. When he pulled them out Mrs. Webster was unconscious, but they got her breathing again. They managed to get her to an Indian house around the bend. The Indians were home with a couple of their women. They tried to get the wet clothes off of Mrs. Webster, but her union suit would not budge. They had to get McCarthy to come and cut it off with his knife. He was very embarrassed but Bud was kind enough not to tease him about it. The Indian women fixed them a good meal of smoked salmon, potatoes and pancakes. They were able to salvage most of their things, and the Indians agreed to take them to Oyehut the next day where they were able to get passage to Hoquiam on a passenger boat.

Bud and McCarthy headed for home. It was nearly a month since they had left home. Many thought they had drowned, and were overjoyed to see them. It took them twenty days to return home because the rain had swollen the river. The only way they could make progress was to stay close to the bank and pull the canoe along with the brush along the river...

(This is the same trip we can make in less than an hour.)

Sadly, we must again say goodbye to a dear friend and charter board member. A victim of cancer, Criss Osborn passed away on Tuesday, February 3, 2009 at her son's home in Montesano. As one of our initial organizers and charter board members she was instrumental in the formation of the museum, from it's inception to what we are today. She was a hands-on gal, whether it be shingling the building, planting a flower, arranging an exhibit or directing a meeting, Criss was doing it. She was our authority on local history and of our Native American exhibit, to which she contributed greatly. With professionalism and dedication she oversaw our every need and did what had to be done, often by herself when no one else was available to help. A very good friend to us all, she is in that special place in our hearts. And, she is missed.



Shingling the Museum...Big Job!



Hanging curtains on opening day.



At a board meeting with John Clayton & Tom Northup



Museum auction with son, Ryan, Daughter-in-law, Liane and Grandson, Noah. 2004



Reaching high places....



She is so happy with her 'Charley Brown' tree



Taking a well deserved break...

Again, we bid a loving friend, "Adieu."