

THE ISLAND HISTORIAN NEWS



The Orcas Island Historical Society Newsletter

Spring 2016 Volume 2, Issue 1 Price \$3.00

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

"*Wings Over Orcas Island - An Aviation History*" is this year's feature exhibit in the Pioneer Museum's main gallery. Opening May 14th, the same day we celebrate the 60th Birthday of the Museum here in Eastsound, the exhibit will feature stories and images of some of the earliest moments in aviation history on, around and above Orcas Island.



For example in 1930 three US Navy amphibious airplanes dropped out of the sky to land at Olga. Their mission, a meeting between the Captain of the Navy aircraft carrier USS Saratoga and renowned landscape artist **John Fery** of Olga. During World War II, our island's "Home Guard" trained, manned watch towers and searched the skies for any sign of enemy planes.

After the end of World War II, Harold B. Ferris bought an Aeronca Chief plane to more easily commute to the ship he was captaining for Matson Maritime. His hayfield soon became an airfield and the post war aviation boom took off on Orcas. Even famed industrialist Henry Kaiser paid Eastsound "airport" a visit in his gleaming DC-3 aircraft.



In the Spring of 1947, **Bob Schoen** started Orcas Island Air Service (OIAS) and hired **Roy Franklin** as a pilot; Franklin later bought Schoen out. OIAS became the **first** small scheduled commuter airline in the US, later changing its name to Island Sky Ferries. Over the next 2 decades it continued growing and changed its name again to San Juan Airlines.

Dr. Heath, an island physician, soon became a steady client, flying off island with his patients who needed medical treatment on the mainland. These so-called medical or mercy flights continue to this day.

Orcas Island was home to several "Women with Wings." Roy Franklin taught a young high schooler named **Janet Ferris** to fly. Jan soloed and logged 47 hours. Her story and those of other women pilots like **Carol Clark** and **Trudy Crandall Erwin** will also be part of the exhibit.



The exhibit will also feature aviators like **Bob Waunch**, **Bob Foulk**, **Bob and Harry Patton** who have chosen Orcas Island to build their retirement nests and will include aviation ephemera and artifacts as well as vintage videos of Orcas aviation. If you have a story about or a piece of aviation history you'd like to share or loan us, please let me know.

MUSEUM HOURS

Pioneer Museum

Winter Hours

Wed—Sat. 12-3,
Or By Appointment

Spring Hours

Beginning April 1

Wed—Sat. 11am –
4pm

Sun. 12-3 pm

Crow Valley School Museum

Opens Memorial
Day Weekend
2016

Fridays & Satur-
days

12-4

OFFICE HOURS

Tues—Sat.

10:30-4:30

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Cruise Into History: "Smuggling in the San Juans"

Learn about the colorful history of SMUGGLING in the San Juans! On May 15th, climb aboard with **Eclipse Charters** as we cruise to several historical locations in the San Juan Islands. The cruise will feature a narration of the history of smuggling in the islands by a **local historian** including smuggler's haunts, actual events, and fun facts.



The Cruise includes a **hot lunch from Orcas Village Store** featuring their famed clam chowder, Napa salad, goodies, snacks and hot or cold beverages.

The Eclipse leaves from the Orcas Ferry Dock at 12:30 and returns at 5:30. The cost for all of this is still just \$99 plus tax. **Reservations** must be made through Eclipse Charters. They can be contacted by calling 360-376-6566. All ticket purchases are payable to Eclipse Charters,



Boede Family, History in One Act"

To be Part of This Year's Playfest



When **Janet Brownell**, a television and feature film screenwriter, agreed to write a short skit about the Boede family, for the Orcas Island Historical Society, we were thrilled! Little did we know what would happen next.

Basing her script on historical facts from the archives and exhibits at the Pioneer Museum, Janet wrote a play that is a conversation between **John Boede** and two of his sons and one of his daughters.

The play does an excellent job of sharing the history of this family that lived in some of the cabins that are now part of the Orcas Island Historical Museum. This year marks the 60th year since the Boede cabins and several others were moved to Eastsound and joined together to create the Pioneer Museum. There will be several events celebrating the museum's birthday.

After reading the script, **Jake Perrine**, local drama teacher and actor, thought the skit would be great to enter in the 2016 Actors Theater of Orcas Island's Playfest at the Grange. **Michele Giskey** thought so, too. After reading it, Michele said, "This is great! Strong characters, great period dialogue, and conflict and resolution . . . Everything we look for!" The play will be one of several included in this year's Playfest.

We hope everyone will go and see, "Boede Family, History in One Act" by Janet Brownell. The performances are **April 29 and 30, May 6, 7, and 8**. Tickets are \$10. The Boede Family is one of several plays. **Don't miss it!**

HISTORY MATINEES

This year's ever popular History Matinees start up again on **April 17th**. The matinees will be held on Sundays from 3 to 4:30 at the **Eastsound Fire Hall**.

All our history matinees will focus on elements of aviation history on the island, to complement our new exhibit: **Wings Over Orcas**.

Our first matinee will feature **Audrey Wells** and several other members of the mercy flights team describing the history of their organization and how they got hooked on flying.

Docent Trainings

Do you want to:

- ◆ explain the history of the cabins a little better?
- ◆ be more familiar with the store inventory?
- ◆ know how to work the Square™?
- ◆ be comfortable in your role as a Docent?

Our Director, Clark, and Linda, the Pioneer Museum Docent Coordinator, will be instructing at the Docent trainings Tuesday, April 19th 1:00-2:30 pm and again on Friday, April 29th 10:00-11:30 am.

OUR DIRECTOR IS TRAVELING

Clark will be attending **Community Potluck Dinners** around Orcas to celebrate the 60th Birthday of the Pioneer Museum. He will share information about our new exhibit "Wings Over Orcas", the ongoing "Orcas Voices Project", the History Matinees, and other Historical Society Projects

Clark will be in **Olga** April 9th, **West Sound** May 21st, and **Deer Harbor** on June 10th. If you attend any of these potlucks please join Clark in celebrating our Museums.

Help needed

Transcribers: If you have computer skills, help us transcribe our oral history tapes.

Gardeners: Help maintain our front garden and create a historical kitchen garden.

Writers: If you love to write, we have a variety of projects waiting.

Docents: Friendly people who can donate a few hours a week to greet visitors to our Museums. No prior experience needed!

Call the office at 360-376-4849 or e-mail us at info@orcasmuseum.org

60th Birthday Celebration and Community Picnic



The Pioneer Museum is 60 years old this year and we are having a celebration. 60 years ago some far-sighted individuals on Orcas moved 6 original homestead cabins into the center of Eastsound and joined them together to create the Pioneer Museum.



Come join us on **Saturday, May 14th at 11:00** for the Birthday Party, the Pioneer Museum's Opening Day for the summer season, a Community Picnic, and the inauguration of our new Wings Over Orcas Island exhibit.

There will be **cake** and **ice cream** for all, thanks to the generosity of Island Market. Kids can enjoy **root beer floats** and there will be organized old-fashioned **games** with fun **prizes** for the kids. Bring your favorite **picnic lunch** and some folding chairs or grab some food at the Farmers Market and join us on the lawn for a fun packed old fashioned afternoon for all the family.



We will have a **Timeline of Orcas Events** beginning in the days of Bison Antiquus and ending on the Museum's 60th birthday. Members of the Society will be asked to annotate the Timeline to show when their family first came to Orcas Island. The Timeline will become part of the Pioneer Museum's exhibit for the rest of the year.

Save The Dates

April 2nd Docent Tea at Crow Valley School

April 17th First 2016 Historical Matinee.

April 19th Docent Training 1-2:30

April 23rd Crow Valley School Clean Up Day 10-1

April 29th Docent Training 10-11:30

April 30th Pioneer Museum Clean Up Day 10-1

April 30th Birdfest Art Walk at Pioneer Museum

May 14th Pioneer Museum 60th Birthday Party

May 15th Cruise into History

June 12th Historical Matinee

July 2nd Historical Days

July 17th Historical Matinee

August 21st Historical Matinee

September 3rd Annual Auction

September 18th Last 2016 Historical Matinee

B1G1 Membership Drive

We now have 205 new or returning members, a **57% increase** in memberships! This is VERY exciting news!

There is a monthly winner of the B1G1 Membership Contest and you can be that winner! You will receive a special gift from the gift store. Just tell your friends to:

- **join the Historical Society** (they can do it online at www.orcasmuseums.org) and

- **put your name in** as the person who suggested they join so your name will go into our monthly prize drawing.

AND be sure to tell them about all the **great benefits of being a member**: free admission to the Orcas, Lopez, and San Juan Historical Museums, copies of our newsletter, a 10% discount in the Pioneer Museum gift store and invitations to all Museum events and the Historical Society's annual meeting.

Best benefit of all? Knowing that you are a part of preserving the unique history of Orcas Island! Every member, every volunteer, every visitor is essential to our Pioneer Museum and our wonderful Crow Valley School Museum. **Be One, Get One!**



SPRING CLEANUP COME LEND US A HAND

We have 2 work parties scheduled in April to get our two Museums ready for their busy summer season and we could use your help!

On **Saturday, April 23rd**, volunteers will meet at the **Crow Valley School Museum** at **10:00** to spruce up the building and the grounds. We need folks to help clean the windows, pull weeds, and dust, sweep and straighten inside. Rebecca, our Crow Valley docent coordinator, and Clark, our director, will be there to oversee the work party. Bring gloves, a smile and enthusiasm and we will supply the rest. The work should be finished by 1.

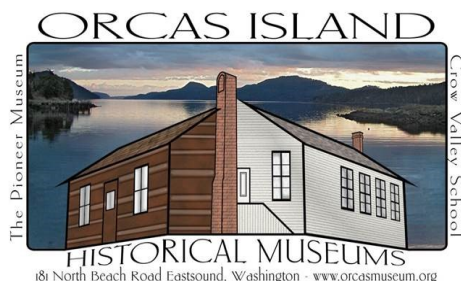


The following **Saturday, April 30th**, volunteers will assemble at the **Pioneer Museum** downtown at **10:00** to give it a freshening up after its winter quiet period.. Volunteers are needed to help us dust artifacts, sweep, vacuum and spruce up the grounds. Clark will be directing the work crew. All you need to bring are gloves, enthusiasm and good cheer, We will supply everything else. We plan to be done by noonish.

LOOK INSIDE TO FIND:

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Orcas History Lives Here!



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