

Lower Columbia Preservation Society advocates for the preservation of architecture and sites that contribute to the area's history, culture, livability and sense of place.

The City of Astoria owns several significant historic sites, many of which contain artifacts, monuments and/or reconstructions that are important to both local and national history.

Retaining these historic sites and keeping them public spaces provides authenticity and site-specific "sense of place" for both visitors and local residents.

LCPS would like to thank the groups and individuals who have partnered with the City of Astoria to maintain, improve and interpret Astoria's parks.

We are currently working with the City of Astoria to finalize an agreement to maintain the 1852 U.S. Customs House reconstruction and site.

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## **SATURDAY, AUGUST 4th, 2018**

# **HISTORIC PARKS TOUR**

1:00 - 4:00 PM - SHIVELY HALL, 1530 Shively Park Road

2:00 - 4:00 PM - TIDAL ROCK (15th & Commercial)  
POST OFFICE SITE (15th between Exchange & Franklin)  
FORT ASTORIA (15th & Exchange)  
CUSTOMS HOUSE (34th & Lief Erikson)

Join LCPS for food and fun at Shively Hall beginning at 1:00 PM.  
Then tour other historic park sites in Astoria from 2-4 PM.  
Shively event is free for LCPS members and \$5.00 per adult for non-members.  
Tour is free and open to the public.



In 1991, the Government Services Administration provided a \$90,000 grant to the City of Astoria to erect a memorial in celebration of the bicentennial of the U.S. Customs Service. Local historic building consultant John Goodenberger provided research materials and preliminary plans for the reconstruction. Although the original location was already in use by the Bethany Lutheran Church, the City of Astoria was able to provide a lot of vacant land just 50 yards from the original site.

Historic builders Gregg Olson and Linda Whitehead of Salem, Oregon and Allen Nelson of Albany, Oregon worked together with Goodenberger and the City of Astoria U.S. Customhouse Committee to build the replica between October 1992 and May 1994. Special care was made to reconstruct the entire structure using like-tools and methods of the 1850s. This effort included hand-hewn beams and the creation of a hand-planer to recreate molding for the pediment.

## SHIVELY PARK (1906)

Shively Park Road

Shively Park was Astoria's first public park and was named after Astoria pioneer John M. Shively. Large city parks were all the rage in city planning at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Astoria had been looking for a large piece of land centrally located for public use. John M. Shively had passed away in 1892, but in 1898, his son Charles offered the city a deal. If the city would purchase seven acres of his centrally located property, at the price of \$2,500, Charles would donate an additional 5 acres to the cause. The park would be named after his father to commemorate John's role in Astoria's growth and development.

Horticulturalist A.J. Johnson donated plants, skill and time to help design and build the park. Additional funds for park development came from other prominent businessmen and civic organizations.

Shively Park was dedicated on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1906 and was listed as a local historic landmark in 1983.





Crowd at Amphitheater, Centennial Park 1911



Native American Performers at Centennial  
Celebration 1911

## **CUSTOMS HOUSE (1852)**

Historic reconstruction built 1992-1994

3455 Leif Erikson

The original U.S. Customs House in Astoria was built in late 1849 and was destroyed by fire in 1852. No known drawings or photographs exist of that original structure and the only known description of it is that it was “very neat, plain and of course pretty.” The current reconstruction, built in the 1990s, is based on photographs and documentation of the customs house built in 1852.

John Adair was appointed “Collector of Customs for the District of Oregon and Inspector of Revenue for the Port of Astoria, in the Territory of Oregon” by President James K. Polk in August of 1848. His duty was “...to assume the right to collect duties and revenue from other countries on their outgoing cargoes of timber and wheat and imports of European and Oriental goods.”

The area around the customs house became known as “Adairsville,” and was over a mile from the Shively and McClure areas being developed to the west. For a long period of time, no road connected Adairsville to the main town of Astoria and access was only by boat. The Customs Service was moved to the downtown area in 1861. A large stone customs house and post office was built in central Astoria in 1874. The 1852 Customs House was demolished in 1901.





## CENTENNIAL PARK (1911)

Formerly located on the Shively Park grounds

The location and size of Shively Park made it the natural spot to host Astoria's centennial celebrations in 1911. Much additional design, planning and building was required to get it ready. Additions to the park grounds for the centennial celebrations included:

- A 3,500 seat amphitheater
- Several convention and exhibition halls
- A reconstruction of Fort Astoria designed by prominent local architect John E. Wicks
- Landscape and gardens designed by Arthur L. Peck (founder of OSU's Landscape Architecture School)

The improvements and celebration cost approximately \$100,000. The State of Oregon contributed \$50,000. \$10,000 was gifted by the Astor family. The remainder of necessary funds were collected through private donations, a county tax, and multiple fundraisers put on local social organizations and churches.

Trees now block the view of the bay and obscure much of the landscape which once held the Centennial Park grounds and amphitheater. Many staircases and a picnic pavilion are the last physical remnants of the once grand centennial site.

Shively Park was designated as a Local Historic Landmark in 1983.



### **SHIVELY FOUNTAIN (1906)**

Relocated to Maritime Memorial Park in 2011



### **WEINHARD-ASTORIA HOTEL ENTRANCE (1909)**

Archway relocated to Shively Park in 1923

### **TIDAL ROCK (PRE-1811)**

Corner of 15<sup>th</sup> and Commercial

George H. Himes, then secretary of the Oregon Historical Society, rediscovered this important landmark in July of 1908. It was, at that time, beneath the Johnson Fruit and Cigar Store. The store building burned in the fire of 1922 and later a Pacific Power & Light substation was located on the site.

The rock itself, and its specific location was of paramount importance for activities of Fort Astoria. It allowed ship captains to determine the tide line and therefore know how close to the shore they could anchor.

The site was dedicated as a historic landmark on April 12, 1986.

*The site is currently undergoing improvement and maintenance as part of the Tidal Rock Project, a group of local artists using the site for art installation and performances. Visit their facebook page @TRPAstoria.*



## **FORT ASTORIA (1811)**

Historic reconstruction built 1956  
Corner of 15<sup>th</sup> and Exchange Street

From the *Oregon Inventory of Historic Properties*:

Astoria began when John Jacob Astor's ship the Tonquin, dropped anchor on April 14, 1811, and crewmen started the construction of Fort Astoria on what was then the bank of the Columbia River. Log footings of the original building were unearthed in 1931 during excavation for a hospital. The park area and replica of one of the fort's bastions were developed in 1956. Today the site is maintained by the City of Astoria as a park and features a reconstructed blockhouse and explanatory historical sign. The blockhouse, constructed in 1956, is of wolmanized fir with cedar shake roof; the two rows of pickets extending to the concrete wall are also of wolmanized fir posts. The backdrop, depicting other buildings comprising the original Fort Astoria, is painted on to a concrete wall which forms the north boundary of the historic site lot. A large wooden plan outlines the floor plan of the original Fort Astoria and later Fort George. Ranald MacDonald, first man to teach English in Japan and the son of Hudson Bay fur trader Archibald MacDonald and Princess Raven, daughter of Chief Comcomly, was born on this site and on May 21, 1988, a bilingually inscribed marble monument was dedicated to the memory and achievements of this remarkable man.

This property was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.



## **SHIVELY HALL (1920s)**

Built in the 1920s, this building was constructed for community gatherings and as a "comfort station" for Shively Park visitors. The Angora Hiking Club often met there. It has continued to be used by the community as a meeting hall and private event space.



**First Postoffice West of the Rocky Mountains.**

Photo of the home used by John Shively as the first U.S. Post Office west of the Rocky Mountains, 1847.



Obelisk placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1955.

## **FIRST POST OFFICE SITE (1847)**

15<sup>th</sup> Street between Exchange and Franklin

This site is the location of the first United States Post Office west of the Rocky Mountains.

In 1847, John M. Shively was appointed as the first postmaster of Astoria by President Polk. Shively, having just returned from the east coast, took up residence at a house previously occupied by Ezra Fisher, a missionary. Shively operated the post office from this home until he left his post in 1849.

After a new post office was constructed in the heart of downtown Astoria, the original building fell into disrepair. According to the *Oregon Historic Resource Survey Form*, "In 1906, the Shively Improvement Club advised the City of Astoria to destroy the landmark. No organization could be found to restore the structure."

In 1955, the Astoria Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution placed a plaque and monument at the site.

*The site is currently being maintained by Pam and Dave Armstrong (Rose River Inn Bed & Breakfast) in cooperation with the City of Astoria.*