



RESTORICA

The LCPS mission is to preserve, protect, and promote the historic architecture in the Lower Columbia region. These structures are important assets that contribute to the area's history, culture, identity, and livability.



Mark your
calendar!

JANUARY LECTURE: ASTORIA'S ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND FURNISHINGS

If you are one of those people who can't tell a Queen Anne from an Italianate, or an Eastlake from a Stickley, do we have the lecture for you! Don't be ashamed—there are many of us who wish we knew more about architectural styles. Here is your chance to learn what's what from two local professionals: John Goodenberger, Astoria's Architectural Historian; and Lisa Studts, Curator of Interpretation at the Clatsop County Historical Society. There will be slides, pictures, and some actual furnishings to help illustrate some of the popular styles of architecture and furnishings found here in Astoria and around this area in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Please join us on Wednesday, January 22, 2002, at 7:00 pm at the Heritage Museum, 1618 Exchange in Astoria, for a fun and informative lecture presentation you won't want to miss.



Mark your
calendar!

OLD HOUSE FORUM

Just in time for the holidays, the third Old House Forum will be held at 7:00 pm on Thursday, December 5, 2002, at the home of LaRee Johnson, 1193 Harrison Avenue in Astoria. The Old House Forum gives LCPS members a chance to tour the host's home, get acquainted with one another, and discuss old house preservation in an informal environment. The first forum was held at the Italianate home of Steve and Kim Nurdling. The second was at Carolyn Hammer's home, the Benjamin Young Inn. Please call Kim Nurdling at (503) 325-6273 if you wish to attend. It's sure to be a fun evening!

SEISMIC DISTURBANCES:

PROTECTING YOUR PRICELESS HEIRLOOMS

On Saturday, September 21, LCPS held a workshop on securing heirlooms and other precious objects to protect them from seismic disturbance. Workshop attendees learned the different ways art conservators and museums secure their valuable artifacts from presenter Scott Reuter, an expert on securing such objects both for private collectors and for the John Paul Getty Museum. They also learned some easy and relatively common sense ways to protect their own valuables from the inevitable seismic disturbances of the Pacific Northwest.

According to Scott, there are two main methods museum professionals use to protect their collection from being damaged in an earthquake: 1) by restraining the movement of the object; or 2) by isolating the object and letting it absorb the shockwaves. The decision is based on the answer to this question: is it more important to protect the object from an earthquake, or to keep the object's historical integrity?

Scott advised attendees to do the best they can with their own valuables, using existing nail or screw holes whenever possible. He said that dental wax is a very effective and non-permanent way to secure some valuable objects, without the expense of museum wax or gel. Finally, Scott told the audience to make sure that not only the precious object is secure but that the mount, bookcase, or other object it may be sitting on and the objects around it are secure as well, because that too can affect the survival of the object during an earthquake.



CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY NEWS

by Lisa Studts

If you haven't been by the Heritage Museum in recent weeks, you will be surprised to see the progress on our new research room. We have already taken down the old fishing and logging exhibits and have started stripping paint off the old woodwork. The new research room will be a lot bigger and will offer more workstations to accommodate the increasing number of visitors to our archives. We are hoping to have the new research room and archives up and running shortly after the new year. We are also planning on upgrading our fishing and logging exhibits and will be housing them in a different gallery.

In addition to our archive project, we have a number of events for this holiday season:

November 16, 17: As part of the first annual Astoria Community Festival, CCHS offered free admission to all Clatsop County residents to both the Flavel House and the Heritage Museum as our way of encouraging support of our community's arts and cultural heritage.

December 6, 7: The annual **Victorian Dinner** will be held at the Heritage Museum. There will be a no-host social hour at 6:00 pm, with dinner at 7:00 pm. The cost is \$50 per person.

Dec. 16-23, 26-30: The annual **Plum Pudding** will be at the Flavel House from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. The cost is \$8.00 per person.

Hope to see you at one of our events, if not all three. If you need more information, please call us at (503) 325-2203.

IT IS NOT TOO EARLY . . .

. . . to be thinking about our Third Annual Garden Tour. Would you like your garden on the tour? Do you know of a garden that should be on the tour? Would you like to volunteer to help organize the tour? If your answer is affirmative to any of these questions, please call Melissa at (503) 325-1892.

CITY OF ASTORIA PROVIDES
RENOVATION INFORMATION

The Astoria Community Development Department maintains a resource collection of printed materials that can be viewed at City Hall, and in some instances, checked out. Two valuable resources that can be checked out are the Historic Landmarks Resource Manual, and Historic Guidelines Notebooks (2 volumes). The Manual and Notebooks include information on architecture and history, historic properties, historic areas, exteriors, masonry, roofs, storefronts, siding, interior spaces, structural and mechanical, sites and landscaping, windows, additions, asbestos, energy conservation, painting, and regulations and codes. Another resource available for checkout is A Field Guide to American Houses, Virginia and Lee McAlester, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984.

A large number of pamphlets and photocopies supplement these resources. These documents include Historic Preservation League of Oregon Fact Sheets; a partial list of historic renovation companies and contractors who provide fixtures and salvage parts; a list of the nearly 50 renovation books available at the Astor Public Library; sources of period wallpapers; and information on Special Assessment and National Register Programs. Copies of National Parks Service (NPS) Preservation Briefs are available on topics like reducing lead-paint hazards and choosing siding materials. (These NPS briefs can also be found at www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps.) In addition, the Community Development Department has past issues of Restoria and helpful website addresses.

City staff have accumulated an extensive collection of historic photos of buildings, and they can help individuals with research and building design. Historic inventory sheets of information on over 1,400 individual properties are made available to the public and provided to anyone interested in a specific property. Astoria city staff provide historic preservation information to an estimated 260 individuals per year.

KUDOS

To Owens-Adair Northwest Oregon Housing Association Inc., for power washing and repointing bricks on the Owens-Adair Apartments in Astoria.

To the First Presbyterian Church of Astoria, for re-roofing their sanctuary and replacing rotted wood siding.

To Venerable Properties, for repainting the Odd Fellows Building in downtown Astoria.

To Liberty Restoration Inc., for being recognized by the National Trust as one of the top 12 restoration projects in the United States.

To Paul Williamson, for the exterior painting, new stairs, and yard renovation that are part of his careful restoration of the Queen Anne cottage at 1691 Irving Avenue in Astoria.



FRUIT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BOWL

by Fred White

It started with an exercise machine which needed a clean, cheerful spot in the basement. While this became a great excuse to do some major house cleaning—scraping off loose, moldering floor tiles, scouring and sealing the floors and walls, finishing it off with painted walls—the project soon escalated into: Fruit at the bottom of the bowl! This refers to a short story of the same name by Ray Bradbury, about a home break in and heinous crime. The perpetrator, in his ensuing paranoia, begins wiping down any surface which might carry his fingerprints. He is finally taken away, several days later, as he is wiping the fruit at the bottom of the bowl.

My fingerprints first appeared on the project early this year. The cleaning and sealing and attention to the basement walls prompted discussion of seismic retrofitting, and thoughts of earthquakes made it impossible to ignore the condition of the foundation. So we took up a cousin's offer of a seismic survey. The cousin works as a structural engineer for a San Francisco-based company which specializes in seismic retrofitting, and in exchange for dinner and a tour of Astoria, he started us off on our project.

To get a perspective on the complexity of the project, let's first look at a few historical fingerprints. Master carpenter Al Mittett, Sr., who built our house for his family in 1924, used concrete blocks for the foundation—not the modern type which can be filled vertically with concrete and reinforcing bar, but ones which are hollow horizontally. Hollow bricks, basically. In the late 1940s, a garage was built on the back of the property, along with a wide concrete driveway which was poured up to the foundation wall of the house. In the spring of 1950, the Irving Avenue slide pushed our house's foundation, causing cracks and breaks, many of which remained hidden beneath the the foundation's mortar finish. When we bought the house in 1996, one section of the foundation was settled three and one half inches. We hired a local contractor to jack up the house and add concrete to the foundation. He also installed three buttresses in the basement to hold up a severely compromised back wall of the foundation. I tried hard to ignore that wall, and other portions of the foundation, until this year's project forced my attention. More fingerprints!

In order to understand the results of our seismic survey, it is helpful to know how a seismic retrofit differs from new construction. Current building practices call for using a variety of hardware—in addition to the usual contingent of nails—to hold buildings to their foundations and to provide strength throughout the building. Sills are bolted to foundations, floor joists are connected to sills by metal fasteners,

one story is tied to the next by straps, rafters are tied down by hurricane clips, and, depending on location, the whole structure may be tied top to bottom by steel rods. In addition, plywood sheathing provides strength and stability unmatched by the individual sheathing boards used in older construction. It can rightly be argued that lumber used in old houses, milled from old growth timber, can't be matched by modern materials. But building practices in the past ignored seismic conditions. Sills were merely laid on foundations, floor joists were toenailed in enough to hold them in place, and then the building commenced, board by board, nail by nail. This practice left older homes, their occupants, and their possessions vulnerable to injury or damage in an earthquake.

OK, OK, so we're all going to end up in the river anyway. So says the local "conventional" wisdom. "Not so!" says Scott Reuter, a museum exhibit preparator with years of experience in securing art work so it will survive California's active seismic happenings. Scott notes, with the authority of experience, that earthquakes come in all sizes and magnitudes, and much can be done to reduce personal and property damage caused by less than the "Big One."

Keeping a house on its foundation and internal supports is the purpose of seismic retrofitting. Our structural engineer used a checklist for wood frame construction developed by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration). From this, he generated a prioritized list of steps to be taken in our seismic retrofit.

The first item on the survey's priority list was to secure the posts supporting the center section of our house. In a typical old house, these posts are located in the basement or crawl space. The bottoms of the posts are usually set on concrete pads, and the tops are nailed into the horizontal beams which support the floor joists. The weight of the house holds the posts in place. But in an earthquake, the house may move enough to free the bottoms of the posts, resulting in loss of support to the center of the house. To secure the posts, L-shaped brackets are connected to the bottom of the posts with large bolts and attached to the concrete floor by more large bolts. The tops of the posts are reinforced by flimsy sheet metal brackets and short nails. Seems hokey to me, but I'm not a structural engineer, and when a company named the Simpsons spends millions developing hardware . . . I'm comforted, however, by the words of science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke: "*Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.*"

continued on next page

The second priority was connecting the house to the foundation. There are several brackets designed specifically for retrofitting, and wherever possible, I used brackets which are bolted—or nailed, using the same short nails—onto floor joists and are connected directly to the foundation wall, using large bolts and epoxy. However, the assumption can't be made that the remaining structural components of the house are all sufficiently tied together. Remember that the sills are only sitting on the foundation, and the floor joists were only toenailed onto the sill just enough to hold them in place during construction. Extra strength is gained by using additional hardware to connect rim and floor joists to the sills and to each other.

Four other items were on the list of priorities. First, the hot water heater should be strapped to a secure post or wall stud. Second, the natural gas line needs brackets to hold it firmly in place, especially at 90 degree bends. Third, the shelves for storing our canned goods need front supports to keep our glass jars from tumbling off the shelves. And fourth, the chimney should be braced, because the majority of residential damage in earthquakes is from chimneys falling. But bracing a chimney is troublesome, both technically and aesthetically, and we aren't sure what we'll do about it. We're counting on the good condition of the mortar joints to hold it together.

For some old house owners, there may be additional steps to secure the house structure. Our house, like most houses built in the 1920s and later, has floor joists that are set directly on the sill. But some houses from this time period—and most houses from the Victorian era—were built with cripple walls supporting the main structure. A cripple wall, which is a short wood-framed wall built between the foundation and the floor joists of the first floor, carries the weight of the entire structure. An unreinforced cripple wall may collapse during an earthquake, thereby crippling the house. The inside of a cripple wall can be reinforced with plywood and closely spaced nails. A building inspector or structural engineer can supply the proper specifications.

Fortunately, our house doesn't have cripple wall construction. But with the house mostly tied to the foundation, I had a further problem: the cracks brought about by the infamous 1950 Irving Avenue slide. Upon close inspection, it is clear that the slide moved the then-newly-poured concrete driveway, mentioned earlier, which shoved the top section of the foundation. It was a contest between a large, six inch thick driveway and a block and mortar wall. The driveway won, by three and one-half inches. The movement, and the ensuing settling, also caused vertical breakage, not all of which followed grout lines. Much of this was hidden beneath the mortar finish, but—more fingerprints!—much was visible as surface cracks. There are fingerprints of others on this too. For example, was it wise to pour such a large concrete driveway directly against a foundation wall?

Fortunately, there were solutions for repairing the foundation short of pouring a new one. Where there were vertical breaks, I removed the broken area with a jackhammer and stuffed the voids in the blocks with concrete, thereby creating new joints of close to one foot in width. I reinforced the horizontal cracks, which occurred along grout lines, with epoxy, which is considerably stronger than mortar. I'll complete the job with a surface treatment of mortar.

But wait—I've only just started wiping the fruit in the bowl! In the midst of jack hammering, we had rain—.06th of an inch. And, Murphy be blessed, it all ended up in the basement, working its way through a newly opened crack. All of a sudden this nice cozy indoor job moved outside. I was expecting a broken downspout and found that and a clogged drain line as well. The bad news was that the line was clogged beyond where it could be cleaned out, a fact I discovered one drain tile—and ditch expansion—at a time. The good news was that the digging was a gardener's delight, the best soil I (a former gardener) have ever dug. I hated putting all that wonderful soil back in the ditches. But what better time to add French drains to carry away excess surface water than when there's an already-dug ditch, so the job expanded again.

There are still lots of fingerprints left on this job, and although my neighbors were probably close to having me taken away as one week's digging extended to the next and the next, I'm still not at the bottom of the bowl. For example, whose fingerprints are on that Tesoro Alaska pen I found inside the clogged drain tile, 50 feet from . . . mutter, mutter. Haul him away, Jack!

Tools and parts used for tying our house down:

I purchased a rotary hammer drill, which functions as a normal drill, an impact drill, or as a jack hammer. This tool has been invaluable for drilling into concrete and for repairing the foundation. I purchased all the hardware for the project from local building supply stores, which had a better selection and lower prices than Home Depot. The following hardware is all listed in the Simpson Strong-Ties catalog, which is available at building supply stores or by request from www.strongtie.com:

- HD2: brackets for attaching the bottoms of the center support posts to the concrete slab
- FJA: brackets for attaching the floor joists to the sills
- HFA6: brackets to tie the sills directly to the foundation when the floor joists aren't conveniently close to the foundation (special order, freight extra)
- A35: framing anchors for connecting the tops of the support posts to the beams, and for connecting joists to the sills
- SET22: a two-stage epoxy, which requires a special dispensing gun and a mixing nozzle. Epoxy is used to secure the anchor bolts used with the three brackets listed above.



AGENDA**JANUARY 22, 2003**

7 - 9:00 pm

Heritage Museum

1618 Exchange, Astoria

Business meeting:

Call to Order, Treasurer's
Report, Membership ReportASTORIA'S ARCHITECTURAL
STYLES (see page 1)Questions & Answers
For the Good of the
Organization**DID YOU KNOW?**

Since 1966, Astoria has placed 41 properties on the National Register of Historic Places, received two National Landmark designations, two National Register Historic Districts, designated six local historic sites, and placed 708 properties on the local historic register. So far in 2002, the Community Development Department has processed 37 Certificates of Appropriateness for immediate approval by staff and 19 Certificates of Appropriateness after review by the Historic Landmarks Commission.

CLASSIFIEDS

LCPS member Elizabeth Serreau is offering her services to old house owners. An accomplished artist in Cannon Beach, Serreau will create a pen and ink drawing of your house. If you are interested in high quality renderings, please call her at (503) 436-9607. Or you may reach her by e-mail at eserreau@pacifier.com.

FROM THE CHAIR

The Lower Columbia's beautiful fall weather was as invigorating for the soul as it was for our historic buildings. Throughout the area, fresh exterior paint was applied while siding, windows, and porches were repaired. And roofs were replaced in what seemed like record numbers.

As surprisingly phenomenal as the weather was the attendance for our film series "Astoria On Film." In four sold-out, or nearly so, performances, 876 tickets were purchased. The program had appeal well beyond our membership. It was rewarding to speak with an 80-year-old woman who saw her father for the first time in 30 years, and to hear the laughter of others who saw themselves, their children, and their friends. The film was an ample reminder of why the recording and preservation of history is so important. The connection to the past was palpable in every performance. Now is the time, as the weather becomes poorer, to gather photographs or old home movies and have them transferred to CD. Your children, grandchildren, and others will thank you for them. And while you're at it, make an extra copy for the Clatsop County Historical Society. They will thank you too.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONNAME ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP PHONE NUMBER () EMAIL

- ☐ Apply \$5 workshop fee
☐ \$10 Membership (Individual)
☐ \$20 Contributing (Two at same address)
☐ \$50 Supporting
☐ \$

Please indicate which areas you would be able to assist the organization as a volunteer:

- ☐ Planning meetings ☐ Membership
☐ Publicity
☐ Education
☐ Advocacy
☐ Newsletter
☐ Grant Writing
☐ Other

Please make checks payable to:
 Lower Columbia Preservation Society
 Post Office Box 1334
 Astoria, Oregon 97103



LOWER COLUMBIA PRESERVATION S.O.C.I.E.T.Y

PO Box 1334
Astoria, OR 97103

NOTEWORTHY WEBSITES: The **National Park Service** has just launched a new website designed to educate and inspire local communities as they work on historic preservation issues. There are several Oregon projects that are featured on this site: www2.cr.nps.gov/workingonthepast/index.htm

Bosco-Milligan Foundation Architectural Heritage Center: www.architecturalheritagecenter.org

The **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation** has created a new online guide to financial assistance for historic preservation projects, geared toward the preservation community and the general public. It emphasizes federal funding, but it also touches upon state, tribal, local, and nonprofit funding opportunities. *Sources of Financial Assistance for Historic Preservation Projects* is available at www.achp.gov/funding.html.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of November 18, 2002

New members: About Face Remodeling, Vicki Baker, Leslie and Brian Burke, Mickey Cox (Astoria Inn B & B), Elizabeth Crocker, Mickey and Yvonne Edwards, Lynette S. Hubert, Robert Lockett, Steve Mansfield, Josh Marquis and Cindy Price, Michael and Jean McGonigle, Leslie Miller, Jay Raskin and Elizabeth Serreau, Darlene Velder Story, Ken and Joyce Stuber, Joyce Tegfeldt, Donna L. Thompson, Paul Vanderveldt, Ron Walker, Paul Williamson, and Mary Walther.

Renewing members: Marilyn J. Anderson, Liz Banholzer, Carol Elkins, Steve Emmons and Jim Atteberry, Rae Goforth, Rose Grafton, Robert and Joan Johnson, Jean and George Harrison, Bonnie Little, Patrick and K.C. McGee, Bob and Shari Moyer, Joe Murray and Peggy Nikkila, No. 10 Sixth Street, Ltd., Patrick and Lindi Overton, Frank and Lynda Stewart, Lisa Studts, Roberta and Anthony Stramiello, Jr., Larry and Carol Thomas, Michael and Diane Tiedeman, and Pamela Tillson.

LOWER COLUMBIA PRESERVATION S.O.C.I.E.T.Y

Current Board Of Directors:

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