

TRINIDAD MUSEUM SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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'EXPLORING OUR HISTORY'

1992

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

1992

YESTERYEARS

By: Axel Lindgren

On that rainy 4th of July day 1992, I attended the annual July 4th Celebration in Old Town in Eureka. Both sides of "2 Street" were lined with booths which displayed fine arts and crafts of all sorts, foods cooked in the styles of distant lands, dancers, and super-loud music!

I wandered up one side of "Deuce Row" and down the other, and . . . Lo' and Behold, at the end of the line was the most interesting of all the exhibits -- a wall covered with yesteryears' Humboldt Standard front-pages and headlines.

Many of the front page captions were about Trinidad; i.e., the whaling station; boulders taken by N.W.Pacific RR from Potato Rock Quarry to build the jetty on Humboldt Bay; the big salmon runs at Trinidad Bay and, of course, the thriving timber industry east of the terminal of the Northwest Pacific RR Depot. Other concerns during those times were the rivers (the incubators of our fishery) and the diversion of water to other parts of the state after the projected dams were built.

For me, the most interesting article was ... "Trinidad Man Shot in Local Bar on 3rd & D streets." The incident occurred in July 1929.

Robert Stevens\* (23-years old) son of Bill Stevens (who was widely known as "Oregon Bill") and \*Grand-

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The T-M-S Docents enjoyed a tour of the HSU Natural History Museum in August, followed by a picnic lunch and a self-guided walk to view some historic buildings of downtown Arcata.

In September, Docents enjoyed an historic tour of the Bald Hills area led by TMS President, Ned Simmons.

A mushroom "hunt" led by Virginia Waters, Curator of Natural History for T-M-S, is planned for later this fall. All TMS members are welcome to take part.

T-M-S Docents meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month, April through September, at 10:30 a.m., in the Museum building. Docent members come from as far as Arcata and McKinleyville to keep our museum open to the public -- on Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons. They have donated over 170 work-hours. This season visitors came from England, Canada, Germany and Puerto Rico, as well as from eight other states in the U.S.

The museum is now closed for the winter months, however, it can be opened by special request for members with visiting friends or relatives, and for small group-tours. Call Ned Simmons #677-0716 or Axel Lindgren at #677-3473.

If you would enjoy being part of this fine group of volunteers, call Anne McCrory #677-0152, or Charles Fleschner at #677-0186.

By: Glenn Saunders

son of "Trinidad Bob" and Old Queen, along with his father, mother, two sisters and Fred Charlie (Grandson of "Lagoon Charlie") all came to town on-a-spree which was about to end unless another jug of 'Muscadoodle' could be had.

"Robby," as he was known to his family, was the "spittin' image" of his Dad -- long, lean and gritty. The difference was "Oregon Bill" was a man and Robby was a punk. He entered the bar displaying this punk attitude and made his order known. The 32-year old Italian bartender responded by placing a full gallon of Muscatel on the bar. Robby grabbed it but he was short on the purchase price. The bartender reached for his revolver. He didn't shoot Robby in the back but, as he turned, the bullet hit Robby in the side penetrating both lungs.

Robby was taken to the Union Labor Hospital (now known as General Hospital) located on Harris & H Sts in Eureka. Upon arrival and after a quick examination, it was determined that recovery was a-slim-possibility. In 1929, that doctor was right ... Cause of death: internal bleeding.

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Historical Note: October 12, 1992, Quincentennial Day -- 500 years ago, Columbus set foot in the Western Hemisphere.

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**Members:** Please **LOOK** at the date on your mailing label . . . . . Are you **due** for renewal in October? An envelope is enclosed for your convenience. If you are **past-due** (July) but renew your membership at this time, your new renewal date will be 10/'93. "Thank you" for your continued support.



In 1924, C.J. McConnaha (my Grand-uncle) and John Spinas built a garage and Service station on the corner of Hwy 101 and Main Street. It was called the "Modern Garage," and was serviced by Standard Oil Company of California. For a period during the early years, it had a 12-cylinder Pierce Arrow tow truck . . . . which would be quite a showpiece today!

Successive owners over the years were Spinas, Bill Small and Harold Daniels; then Spinas, Daniels and Wes Nungester; followed by Woodworth and Mann. They operated a machine shop in conjunction with the station and did welding and repairs of all kinds. Mildred Webster (well-known in Trinidad) worked for her Dad, Bill Small, after she graduated from High School, pumping gas and bookkeeping for many years until she married.

In 1970, we purchased the building & property. **Chevron U.S.A. Inc.**, approached us about their building a new up-to-date facility on the site and leasing the property from us. Operators of the new station were: Tom Richardson for 8-yrs, followed by Norm & Marg Simas until Sept. 30, 1992 (The present station has been in service for 21-years.)

With the expiration of the lease in 1991, and after an extension of 15 months, the environmental laws required that the underground tanks be taken-up and the property cleaned of contamination by Chevron. This, on top of the fact that the present station did not meet Chevron's current gallon volume minimum requirements, has resulted in the demise of this landmark at the entrance to the City of Trinidad.

The economic blow to the City will be felt by all the businesses in the Greater Trinidad Area. It is a very sad and disappointing occurrence for all of us who live here and work so hard to keep the necessary services needed in our small community. G.S.

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