

Trails Club History – the last 75 years by Sylvia Milne, Historian

Henry R. Hayek, 2nd TCO President, chair of the Progressive Business Men’s Club Trail Committee, printer and poet left quit a legacy to our club. Though he did not build a world famous scenic highway, as Sam Lancaster our 1st President, he coordinated the building of a trail up Larch Mountain connecting Multnomah Falls Lodge, Sherrard Summit and later Nesika.

Our only personal connection to Hayek, a limited edition book he wrote entitled, Between the Golden Suns, printed and published Christmas of 1928, nearly ten years after his service to the club. Curious, I purchased the only available copy. At first glance, the contents appeared unrelated to his Trails Club experience, yet as I turned the thick ornate pages, admiring the quality of his work, I felt a connection to his thoughts of life. The following quote from Hayek’s writings might have roots in his experience scouting the Larch Mountain trail...

ONENESS OF ALL

“Enter the primeval forest and tread the deep carpet which the firs and cedars have laid down for you. Mark the straightness of the trees of the forest. Let your eyes follow their trunks to the topmost branches. Behold the blue Heavens stretching serenely beyond the foliage. Everywhere seems boundless solitude, yet you are not alone. God is with you. And the breezes which caress you are wings of angel hosts which touch in passing. A drooping vine maple and a cluster of huckleberry embellish the fore ground. In the morning shadow of these nature has fashioned an earthen bowl where crystal water mirrors and glorifies the forest. You hope to refresh yourself at the spring, and to sit with your thoughts to meditate. An inexorable joy fills your heart.

Coming nearer the maple and the huckleberry there is a quick movement of something startled. An antlered stag had been drinking from the hollowed font but his head is up now and his eyes meet yours. But he cannot tarry long. He turns, leaps over a fallen giant of the forest and like a shaft of golden autumnal dawn is lost in the undergrowth.

On the moist earth beside the spring his cloven hoofs record his mark, undeniable proof that he was there. You kneel down beside the spot where he had stood, touch your lips to the self-same pool and drink where the stag had quaffed but a moment before. Thus you learn to understand the great oneness of all.”

As Leonard Murphy mentioned in his recent Trail Blazer article, *“the reader cannot fully understand nor appreciate the impact that the Trails Club of Oregon has meant to the development of the trails and protection of our natural resources of the Northwest without knowing about some of the volunteers and their contributions.”* What we know about Hayek from his book, he believed *“...that a man should enjoy two forms of compensation from his work: first, a material return in dollars and cents; second, a spiritual compensation from striving*

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to improve and advance existing standards in his chosen field of endeavor. “He goes on to say, “It has been his hope to devote himself to some especial undertaking at least once a year in the cause of fine typography and printing, and free from the thought of material reward or gain.” So it seems, Hayek was a practical man with limits, altruistic values with a short stay in the club.

Over the last century, our membership has shared an amazing cross section of talent and commitment to the club and the greater community. Though not a complete list by any means, the following individuals represent the diversity of leadership over the last seventy five years or so: **Henry Waespe** (early member, one of three who helped locate & purchase our property in the Gorge, famous for building the stone wall at the view point and honored for his commitment to the club with a distinguished service award in his name); **Eva Arrington** (Multnomah Basin resident/early member/State Fire Warden on Larch Mountain); **Darrel Tarter** (Oregonian photographer/club President/joined as a youth/loved club history/revitalized the organization in the 30s/ scheduled ski bus trips to Mt. Hood/participated in all levels of the club/encouraged the purchase a handmade table in the new Day Lodge at Timberline with our emblem in the center/remained active most of his 100 years); **Ding Cannon** (President of Standard Insurance/club President, leader & planner/ financial mastermind/ set the club up with an investment fund/organized TCO volunteers for 4 years to supervise fire lookouts state-wide/ sparkplug behind the development of Forest Park/active and faithful participant – hiked into Nesika just weeks before his death in 1988); **Fern Becker-Anderson** (born into the club/writer/Guardian of Nesika/zeal for sharing & creating the Nesika experience – cookies, flowers & small treats for member’s children); **Gerry Reneau** (USFS employee /TCO junior member/ woodcutter/skier/teacher/Lodge Trustee/ faithful servant); **Walt Ruse** (first 3 term president/successfully lead the Nesika Future’s committee until his health failed, appointed George Milne as his successor); **Ray Ellis** (club President/active fun member/Nesika lodge chair/remembered for meeting a challenge from George Milne, “fix the bridges and I’ll built you a lodge”); **Angelo Carella** (retired Vice President of the Federal Reserve Bank/club President/social planner/organizer/excellent chef/ met with Ray, Ding, & the USFS to bring the bridge replacement to fruition); **Walt Garvin** (Henry Waespe Award /developed water bar system to maintain runoff on access road into the Multnomah Basin); **Susan Saul, Ken Becker & Merrill Hugo** (successful efforts to maintain access to our property through government land/as club president, Susan Saul hired an archivist to assess our history collection); **Doug Winn** (Hoffman Construction, Licensed Architect/ drafted design plans for rebuilding of Nesika Lodge); **Lee Squier** (top secret microwave communications professional/skier/trip leader/guardian of Tyee); **John Hook** (club President/ Tyee Historian); **George Milne** (son of a Scottish Presbyterian minister/contractor/apprenticed with Italian stone masons/carried on Henry Waespe’s work/ answered a calling to create community through service – the rebuilding of Nesika); **Art Stangell** (born into the club

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/teacher/attorney/Mt. Hood ski patrol volunteer/painter/club legal advisor since the 80s); **Lou Sowa** (computer professional, created our 1st website/co-created bicycle committee with **Willy Swogger**, now strong under the leadership of **Alan Burrell**; **Doug Atterbury & Randy Dietrich** (computer professionals/excellent carpenters/ Nesika project historians - Randy (club President) the rebuilding and dedication of the lodge, Doug the rebuilding of Red Wing,); **Paul Sawyer** (trained by the USFS, dedicated to organizing trail maintenance); **Dottie Blattner & Marie Deuell** (active members/outing historians); **Norm Green** (TCO President/created PCT committee/ secured the last section of the PCT near Klamath Falls/photographed club activities, donated 3 banker boxes of slides); **Mary Mason** (past TCO Conservation chair/worked ardently with Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs/Friends of the Columbia Gorge to preserve local environment); **Leonard Murphy** (Surveyor/club president/engaged members in learning about conservation principals/ encouraged the club to make a sizable donation to the Mt. Hood Cultural Center); and **myself** (a social service professional /teacher/writer/hosted & cooked over 150 weekends split between Nesika and Tyee/led hikes/served as Social Trustee/organized family, social and work party activities/fulfilled a promised to **Mae Long**, continued her support of rebuilding Nesika; carried on **Arlean Ellis**'s passion for organizing club history/reestablished a history committee/initiated rental of club office in Oak Grove for work space/working to establish an accession log and digitize our club's history collection). Amazing the energy and commitment needed to maintain two properties, a calendar of outdoor related activity, protect the environment we love and tell our story.

The accounting of this most recent club history is based on reviewing Trail Blazers published from when I joined the club in 1979 to 1988 and personal experience. One person not mentioned former Nesika Mortar Mixer and Trail Blazer Editor Wayne Schweinfest.

I'd totally forgotten, or maybe I was too busy creating history, Wayne wrote an opinion column. What especially caught my eye, his plea for someone to record member stories and the fact he pegged the undercurrent expected to erupt during an annual meeting the year members voted on whether to rebuild the original cabin at Nesika. Had I not been there to witness a pencil driven easily into one of the structural logs, I too would have been one of those adamant no votes, not wanting to let go of our beloved 1st home in the Columbia Gorge.

In Wayne's November 1987 column he writes, *"It is rather commonplace to say that the upcoming annual meeting is a critical one in the history of our club. Such a statement is made almost every year. This year, however, gives particular meaning to the phrase."* Then in January, he reported an absence of *"acrimony,"* noting it was the most *"somber and business like"* annual meeting he had ever attended, not to mention the largest with 187 members present and only 17 no votes. Behind that seemingly smooth victory is quite a story.

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First of all, the Nesika Future's Committee operated transparently; posting Nesika Lodge updates in every newsletter for 6 months prior to the annual meeting. **Second**, George used his construction project management skills to organize work parties. Instead of wandering in late Saturday morning with limited supplies available, George recruited crews to accomplish specific projects generated by the Nesika Building Committee and brought materials in Friday night or before. For several years, his wife (me) prepared a Friday night dinner and Saturday breakfast to encourage an early start. **Third**, still rustic, improvements brought back activity. I coordinated a family outing, a weeklong work party and Fern Anderson and I co-hosted two Halloween parties with attendance of more than 80 members and guests. **Fourth**, Ding Cannon visited a Nesika work party to collect data on involvement since the bridges were completed.

Most powerful to the vote, Ding Cannon shared his findings of Nesika activity on September 27th at the 35th Old Timers event held at Tyee, asking for their support of this new project, one with the potential to build the kind of camaraderie which bonded them during the building of Tyee and the addition. I am relatively sure, their trust in him as a leader changed many votes.

Over the years, I've learned anything is possible if you are patient, persistent and a team player. A democratic system of governing (club bylaws) and the use of technology as a tool not a solution, is crucial to successful outcomes. There was once an up roar about how phone communication might ruin the club and then someone developed a successful phone tree. Though easy to refer a guest to our website to gather facts, our Trails Club camaraderie is something which must be created and experienced over time, as trust builds slowly.

Sylvia Milne, Trails Club 2015 Historian