

## Welcome Class of 2013 Heritage Trees



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### From a company town to gardens along the seashore

The 2012 season was a busy one for the Heritage Tree Committee. In order to advance nominations from applications to award status, facts needed checking, historical narratives authored, and criteria fulfilled. As part of the nomination process, committee members performed onsite visits to ensure tree accessibility for the public.

The volunteers worked eagerly, in hopes of approving applications for two unusual nominees: The Orenco Elms, the central focus of a historic company town, and the Shore Acres Monterey Pine. Their work was successful, and this summer and fall, public dedications will be held to commemorate the new inductees. Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) would like to congratulate the communities and the volunteers for their tireless efforts in preserving these living testaments to Oregon history.

#### Shore Acres Monterey Pine

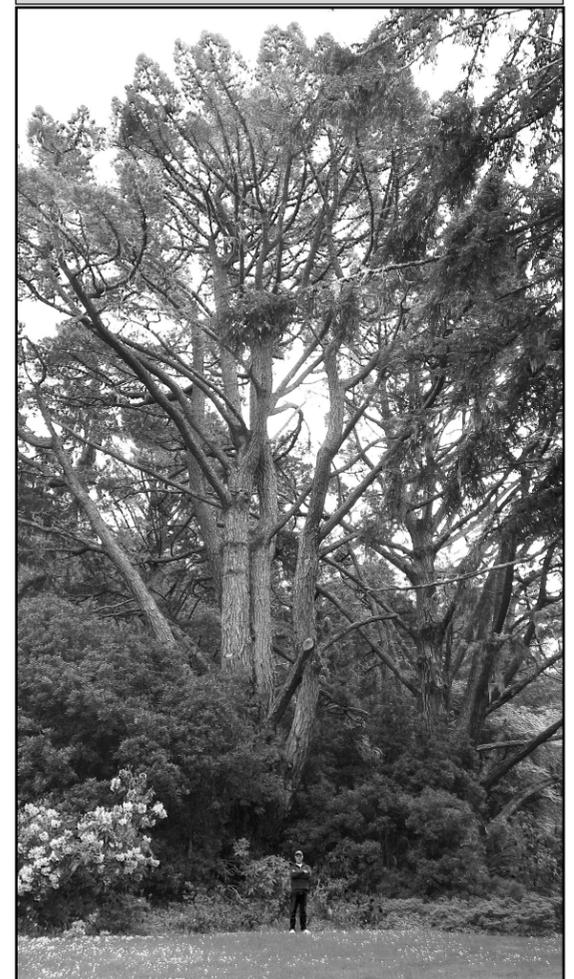
*Circumference: 208 inches*  
*Height: Approximately 95 feet*  
*Crown spread: 74 feet*  
*Age: Approximately 100 years*

Shore Acres Botanical Gardens is a gem of a state park; lush formal gardens, a secluded beach, and dramatic geologic landscapes are among the natural treats that await lucky visitors to the park. The gardens have become a public treasure—planned and executed by the Louis J. Simpson family over a century ago.

In 1906, the Simpsons cultivated five acres of their property into gardens that included many plant species from around the world. Included in the showcase of wildly extravagant flora were two California Monterey pine specimens, one of whom is co-registered as the largest of its species within the US.

The estate was significant for its time; the property hosted an indoor heated pool and a formal ballroom, lodge with cabins, a gardener's cottage, a dairy farm, and tennis courts overlooking the ocean. Although the original home was intended for summer use, the Simpson family made it their year-round home in 1915.

*Continued on page 2*



*Top: Spectacular waves crash on rocks near Shore Acres State Park.*

*Above: Shore Acres Monterey Pine Heritage Tree dwarfs OTE's Jim Renner (see speck in middle) who visited the gardens last year.*



OTE's Heritage Programs are now in partnership with Google's Field Trip mobile app. You can join the fun by visiting Google Play Store or Apple's App Store. The app is free and perfect for on-the-go history factoids.

**2013 Heritage Trees, continued from page 1**

“L.J.” Simpson was a lumberman, shipbuilder, and the city of North Bend’s founding father. As the son of a wealthy shipping and timber magnate, he helped his father’s business ventures to flourish, and spurred economic development of the surrounding area.

Prior to occupying the family’s retreat at Shore Acres, Simpson donated land to the City of North Bend. He encouraged industrial growth, constructed parks and sponsored community art. He also

served as the city’s first mayor until becoming a full-time resident at Shore Acres.

In July 1921 (the same year that Simpson’s wife Cassandra passed away), the family mansion burned to the ground. Fortunately, the gardens were spared any damage. Simpson lived in the gardener’s cottage

until a second mansion could be constructed on the original site. He remarried in 1922 to Lela Gardener, and the couple adopted two infant girls. The family moved into the new mansion in 1928.

The Great Depression took a heavy toll on the Simpson fortune and L.J. was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1940. The Simpsons retreated from Shore Acres (to nearby Barview) in 1942, virtually abandoning the site. The US Army moved in and occupied the estate for the duration of World War II. At the end of the war the mansion was condemned, and in 1949, the Simpson home was razed to the ground.

Today, the gardens and the surrounding estate are beloved by thousands of visitors who explore Sunset Beach, Shore Acres, and Cape Arago State Parks.

**A tree overtakes its brother to become a “big tree”**

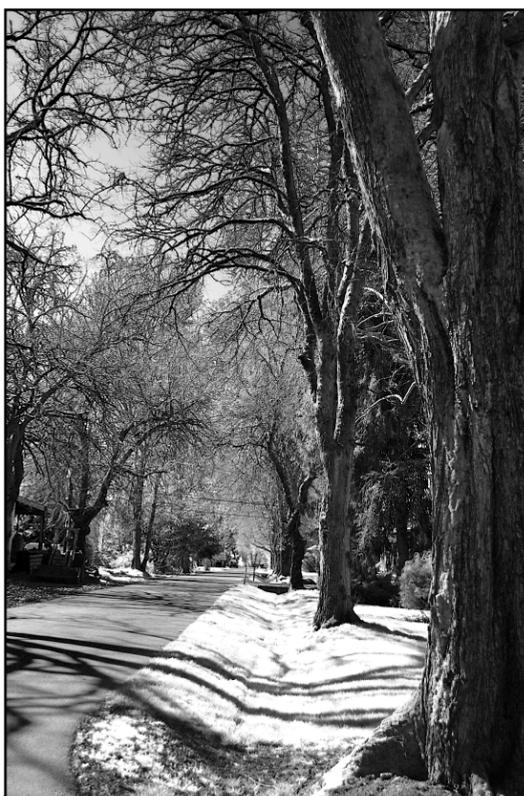
The Oregon Heritage Shore Acres Monterey Pine Tree was planted between 1906 and 1921 by L.J. and Cassandra. The pine and its sibling are located near the greenhouse. Outgrowing its brother, the award-winning tree was recognized in 2002 as the largest of its species in the US by American Forests’ National Register of Big Trees.

OTE’s Rules and Policy Advisor Jim Renner, visited the site in 2012. He was astonished by the gardens (and size) of the two pines, yet nearly missed seeing them due to what he calls “sensory overload.”

“My first impression was ‘Oh my gosh, would you look at that?’ because suddenly there they are, and you just can’t take it all in,” said Renner. “On the east side of the formal gardens, just south of the beautifully constructed, white formal gazebo are the two pines.

“The champion and its ‘little’ brother tower over the gardens and look out to the ocean. When the rhododendrons bloom in May, it is truly heaven on earth,” Renner said.

OTE hopes that more visitors will “take it in” and join us on June 28th, for the dedication ceremony. Full details will be available on the OTE website in May.



*Top left: Gardener’s cottage at Shore Acres Gardens housed the Simpson family when rebuilding their mansion after a fire in 1921.*

*Above: Streets lined with elms planted by Oregon Nursery Company employees and Orenco residents in 1906.*

**Orenco Elms**

*Circumference: 80 - 150 inches  
Height: Approximately 30 - 80 feet  
Crown spread: 15 - 45 feet  
Age: Approximately 100 years*

What makes Orenco and its street trees unique? Perhaps it is a combination of history and passion; Orenco’s residents are conscious of their neighborhood’s most visible roots—and proudly share their modern lives with 100-year old trees.

According to Bonnie Kooken, President of the Orenco Neighborhood Association (ONO), the community motto is “Orenco is one with its trees.”

“In 1906, Orenco was created as a company town, but not in the usual sense,” Kooken writes. “Residents of Orenco were employed by the Oregon Nursery Company and participated in governing their community. They also shared in the company profits and built and owned their own homes.”

**Growing a name**

In 1906, the Oregon Nursery Company established a booming, highly respected world-class nursery—one of the largest in the US. The owners and employees developed a city government with a city hall, fire department, grade and high school, two churches, three general stores, (one contained the post office), a drug store with a resident doctor, confectionery, pool hall, barbershop, hardware and lumber yard, two livery stables, blacksmith shop, box factory, willow factory and a printing plant. The new town was dubbed Orenco—a clever abbreviation of the company name.

Orenco had a strong influence in Washington County and could be considered the Intel of its day, employing more than 200 local workers. The nursery propagated and grew over 1,400 varieties of trees and plants. The large stock consisted of ornamental and shade trees, fruit trees, nut trees, shrubs, vines, roses, etc. Stock was shipped across the US and abroad, and used by local farmers and residents for their homes and personal orchards.

**Community caretakers, tree preservationists**

Hillsboro City Manager Michael Brown expressed public sentiment in a letter submitted with the nomination application:

“Orenco is a distinctive and historic community... and the elm trees are an important part of the community’s character,” he wrote. “The trees are a reminder of Orenco’s origins. The elm trees and the narrow streets make this historic community a favorite place for locals and visitors to walk or bike. Preservation of the Orenco elms will continue to be a priority for the city.”

Residents and members of the Hillsboro Planning Commission developed an ordinance to protect and preserve the remaining 127 trees for generations to come. Local arborist Jeremiah Northcut keeps watch over the elms to ensure their health.

Humans are not the only fans of the Orenco elms—a wide variety of wildlife have settled into their wide branches. The trees also offer needed shade from Oregon’s blazing summer heat.

“Orenco residents watch birds and squirrels establish their nests and raise their families,” writes Kooken.

Kooken adds, “We watch for fall colors and bemoan the fact that soon we will have to rake the leaves. But we welcome spring when the trees start to leaf out and their cycle continues.”

Orenco’s Heritage Elms now enter a new cycle of preservation and appreciation—their induction into Oregon’s Heritage Tree Program. Dedication activities will take place this coming fall. ♦

## Information overload in the digital age

By Richard Engeman, Historical Marker Committee Chair

Information overload. Misinformation proliferation. Are these digital-revolution-era problems that the Historical Marker Committee needs to address, and if so, how?

The Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) Historical Marker Committee tries to take the visitor's viewpoint and provide the expertise to create signs that are concise, accurate, and enlightening—and put them where they will do the most good. We want our signs to say what's important, and why it's important, in language that is engaging and to the point. We also need to accomplish that in 250 words or less.

In addition to routine maintenance, our markers need intellectual repairs. What does that mean? Well, sometimes we need to do some “history” maintenance and repair work. Many older signs use language that is inflammatory or disparaging; some omit important information or context; some contain outright errors. We wish this were not the case, but it is, and our committee is facing that fact. We have developed a list of those signs that need to be reviewed, revised, or reconsidered, and we are gradually improving the

quality of the historical information we put before the public.

Sometimes change for the good is propelled by seemingly bad fortune. For example, high winds and wood rot weakened a historic “beaver board” sign in Garibaldi, toppling it over. The board's narrative honored the landing of Captain Robert Gray's ship at Tillamook Bay in 1788. Prominently located along Highway 101, this marker had some serious history problems. It erroneously stated that Gray was a US naval officer, for example. It neglected to mention why Gray was sailing in

the area and why he made a landing there. The sign's narrative also boasted some particularly awkward and redundant phrases. It needed some reworking.

Serendipitously, Gwen Carr of the Oregon Black Pioneers traveled with her family to Tillamook and stopped to read the marker a few weeks before the wind damage. She wrote to OTE and suggested the narrative might include the fact that Gray's crew included Marcus Lopeus, the first documented person of African descent to reach present-day Oregon. The resulting revised narrative is much more informative, markedly more accurate, and easier to understand. And, it is also easier to read. Our wizards at Salem towne created the new sign and successfully routed the text in a new font that includes lower-case letters.

But not to worry. There are still many of the historical wooden heritage markers, fondly known to us as “beaver boards” that remain historically accurate, are still standing tall and firm, are still legible, and are still routed ALL IN CAPITAL LETTERS. But we do hope to (tastefully) add digital links to the markers that will provide additional, accurate information through modern technology. ♦

**Richard Engeman is the author of several books published on Oregon History, including “The Oregon Companion” and “Eating it Up in Eden: The Oregon Century Farm & Ranch Cookbook.”**



*An early illustration depicting the Columbia Rediviva—the vessel which bore Captain Robert Gray and Marcus Lopeus to Oregon.*

## Calling all pinecone people

Portland hosts Oregon Arbor Day and Arbor Month

OTE's Heritage Tree Program representatives will be on hand at the PSU Portland Farmers Market to celebrate Oregon Arbor Day on April 20, 2013 from 8:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Join OTE's Heritage Tree Committee members; they'll be on hand to answer questions about the program and talk about the OTE - Google Field Trip mobile app partnership.

In addition to Arbor Day festivities, Portland is celebrating Arbor Month with even more educational and family oriented events. The complete Arbor Month calendar and more information are available at: <<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/61386>>



## Remembering Maynard Dawson

Last December, Oregon lost one of its premier big tree advocates and the founder of the Oregon Heritage Tree Program, Maynard C. Dawson.

Oregon Heritage Tree Committee member Paul Ries shared his tribute to Maynard on his blog.

“Oregon lost a true treasure when Maynard Dawson passed away in December at age 87,” Ries wrote. “Many, many people throughout the state knew Maynard, sometimes affectionately as ‘Maynard the Tree Man.’ He was a passionate and tireless advocate of trees and history who made Oregon a better place for all of us.”

“Maynard's love of trees and history found a natural confluence through his idea of recognizing trees that have an important history (or heritage),” wrote Jim Renner, former Heritage Tree Administrator. “Maynard's ideas took root with establishment of municipal and county heritage tree programs in Salem and Marion County, then spread to Yamhill County and beyond. In

1994, Maynard began an effort to establish a statewide program and in 1995, found OTE, the agency which shared his vision. That November, the Heritage Tree Committee held its first meeting and launched the first state heritage tree program in the US. And who was the charter member? Maynard Dawson, of course!”

Ries proffers a delightful image of the man who was the champion of Oregon's trees. “As new people joined the committee, Maynard was



*Maynard C. Dawson*

always there to greet them with an ‘I love trees’ button, and of course to bend their ears with a story or two.”

Maynard Dawson will be honored in a tree-planting ceremony in 2014. More details will be published on OTE website as they become available. You are welcome to share your own stories about Dawson; simply email them to [admin@oregonte.com](mailto:admin@oregonte.com). ♦



## Historical Marker projects headed for installation

Oregon Historical Marker Committee members tackled several in-depth marker projects over the last year. Members worked in partnership with community and Tribal leadership to source grant funding for a series of markers in Coos Bay. In the City of Dayton, matching dollars were pledged in order to erect Dayton's Courthouse Square Park Heritage Marker.

### The Historic Hollering Place Wayside and the Coos People: A series collaboration

At the historical site of the Hanis Coos village of Kie-mes-each, a new marker will highlight the story of how inhabitants called across the bay for canoe rides to the Miluk people on the opposite spit. As Europeans moved into the region, they dubbed the area "Empire City." The 1850s gold rush transformed the site into a major transportation link between sea and land travel. The Henry Luse Mill was built in 1855 and lumber exports then became the region's most lucrative trading commodity. In addition to coal, the Empire City docks handled local farm produce, dairy products, and fish harvests.

As companion pieces to the large central marker, three smaller pedestal markers will also be installed at the wayside. The smaller markers highlight the following: the Coos People, and their artistry in basket weaving and use of natural materials in tool and canoe production; the Coos Bay Dune Field, and the geologic and human influences that shaped their formation and future; and historic sightseeing opportunities at the mouth of the Coos Bay, pointing the way to 10 unique locations.

The Coos Bay historical marker series was made possible by funding provided by the City of Coos Bay, the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, and the Three Rivers Foundation. Volunteer research and administrative oversight by OTE and independent Coos Bay residents helped the project adhere to its deadline. A dedication will take place on June 29th at the Clamboree Festival, so stay tuned to OTE's website and Facebook page for details.

### Courthouse Square Park: A new marker commemorates Dayton's founding father

The City of Dayton has significantly enlarged its heritage tourism footprint this year—in great part, due to efforts by Kelly Haverkate and the Dayton Community Development Association (DCDA). The new Courthouse Square Park and Fort Yamhill Blockhouse historical marker is a result



Top: Pier at the Hollering Place Wayside, Coos Bay. Image courtesy of Coos Historical & Maritime Museum (CCHM 007-25.287)

Middle: Participant in the Coos Bay Clamboree Hollering Contest, held each year in July.

Bottom left: Historic image of the Dayton's blockhouse.

of strategic planning by the DCDA and its partners and volunteers, to revitalize and attract more visitors to Dayton's historic downtown.

"One of Dayton's great strengths is its rich history," said Haverkate. "We need to tell our story in a way that will reach the largest audience."

Dayton will replace their weathered Blockhouse historical marker with a Courthouse Square Park interpretive panel. The new panel honors Dayton's founding father Joel Palmer and illustrates how the blockhouse was moved by horse and wagon train in 1911 from the edge of the Grande Ronde Valley.

The DCDA received a Heritage Grant from the State Historic Preservation Office and Oregon Parks and Recreation. DCDA volunteers provided in-kind assistance, and the City of Dayton provided the matching funds required for the grant. Installation of the new marker is slated for mid-June 2013. OTE will post an event schedule to our website when it is finalized. ♦

## Heritage Committees

### Heritage Tree Members

Nancy Appling  
Roger Brandt  
George Forbes  
Doug Grafe  
Jennifer Karpis  
Charlotte Lehan  
Craig Leech  
Peter McDonald  
Molly McKnight  
Tim Nitz  
Arne Nyberg  
Paul Ries  
Al Tocchini  
Ed Washington

### Historical Marker Members

Eliza Canty-Jones  
Richard Engeman  
George Forbes  
Robert Keeler  
Marty Klug  
Dick Matthews  
Stan McDonald  
Clark Niewendorp  
David Porter  
Wayne Sharp

### Salemtowne Volunteers

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Jack Childers  
James Childers  
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Richard Potter  
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