

Press Release

September 4, 2012

THE OREGON ENCYCLOPEDIA



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A partnership of Portland State University, the Oregon Historical Society, and The Oregon Council of Teachers of English

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The OE History Night at the Edgefield in September

The Oregon Encyclopedia (The OE) continues its monthly series of History Nights at McMenamins pubs with programs at the Edgefield Power Station Theater. At each History Night, The OE will look back at the people and events that have shaped our communities. Visit www.oregonencyclopedia.org for History Night locations and more details.

“Along the Sandy: Our Nikkei Neighbors”

Presented by Clarence E. Mershon

Tuesday, September 25, 2012

6:30 p.m., doors open at 5:00 pm

McMenamins Edgefield Power Station Theater, 2126 SW Halsey St., Troutdale

Retired schoolteacher Clarence E. Mershon grew up on a beautiful farm near Troutdale in the 1930s and 1940s. He spent his childhood running, chasing, and playing with neighborhood friends. Many of his neighbors were Japanese Americans. Mershon played with these friends and watched the older Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans) play basketball for Columbian High School (now Corbett High.). Later he witnessed U.S. Army soldiers posting the wartime exclusion order to remove Japanese Americans from their homes. In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which excluded any person from designated military zones to preserve national safety. Mershon recounts: “The day our neighbors left my sister and I stood by the road waving goodbye. Shio Uyetake, one neighbor, said later. ‘When we drove by, we saw you and Isabelle crying. We thought then, not everyone wanted us gone.’”

Through photos, historical research, and personal recollection, Mr. Mershon will talk about the history of Japanese American families living in east Multnomah County and their experiences during the Great Depression, the incarceration of Japanese Americans, and Nisei from the area who served in the U.S. Armed Forces during the war. Several of Mershon’s Japanese American neighbors and friends will attend to recall their experiences growing up in east Multnomah County. Clarence Mershon is a retired school teacher and past president of the Crown Point Country Historical Society. He is the author of *Along the Sandy: Our Nikkei Neighbors*.

The OE is an online resource for information on the state’s significant people, places, events, institutions, and biota. Over 1000 entries and essays have been published online, and new entries are added every day. For more information visit www.oregonencyclopedia.org.

The OE is a partnership between Portland State University, the Oregon Council of Teachers of English, and the Oregon Historical Society. The OE has received support from a collaborative of the state’s five cultural partners—the Oregon Arts Council, Oregon Council for the Humanities, Oregon Heritage Commission, Oregon Historical Society, and the State Historic Preservation Office—with funding from the Oregon Cultural Trust. The Oregon Council of Teachers of English, the Oregon Heritage Commission, the Oregon University System, Willamette University, and private donors have provided additional support.