

Press Release

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THE OREGON ENCYCLOPEDIA



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

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The OE History Night at the Mission in December

The Oregon Encyclopedia (The OE) continues its monthly series of History Nights at McMenamins pubs with programs at the Mission Theater in partnership with the *Northwest Examiner*. 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.

“The Life of Vesper Geer: A Biographic Documentary”

Presented by Michael Turner

Monday, December 3, 2012

7:00 p.m., doors open at 6:00 pm. Free and open to the public.

McMenamins Mission Theater, 1624 NW Glisan Street, Portland

Have you ever explored your family history through the photographs, letters or interviews left by previous generations? If so what did you learn about your heritage or the history of a time and place in the not so distant past? The December OE History Night offers a glimpse of one woman’s commonplace yet extraordinary life throughout the 20th century. Vesper Geer was the 4th-generation owner of the Geer homestead in Salem, the oldest frame-built house in Oregon to remain in the same family. Vesper was born in the kitchen of that old house in 1917, and passed away there on New Year’s Eve, 2010.

Through a documentary written and directed by Michael Turner, this OE History Night tells the story of Vesper Geer. It chronicles her love for the small farm and her struggle to keep it in the family through her photographs, letters, journals, audio tapes and video recordings. *The Oregonian* reviewed the films as, “A beautifully conceived and executed tribute to continuity and preservation.... Rich for the eyes, ears, and memory.” The *Willamette Week* described it as, “A gentle meander through one woman’s average existence.”

Michael Turner is the artist-in-residence at GeerCrest Farm and Historical Society. His first feature length documentary, *The Life of Vesper Geer*, was constructed entirely of archival materials and premiered at the 2012 Oregon Heritage Conference in Salem. He won Best Documentary for the film at the 2012 Teeny Tiny Film Festival.

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.

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