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RAPS Sheet: Monthly Newsletter

Retirement Association of Portland State  
(RAPS)

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## RAPS Sheet, February 2007

Retirement Association of Portland State

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## Retirement Association of Portland State

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Office hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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Darshana Patel  
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istockphoto.com/Whairi Seymour

Northumberland's 140-foot high, 28-arch Royal Border Bridge was dedicated in 1850.

## Our traveling retirees: Northumberland's delightful in spring

By Charlie White / *Professor Emeritus of History*

Last April we traveled to Northumberland, where we stayed with Ian West, a world renowned biology researcher who has come to PSU several times and who lived with us in Portland. It was a wonderful trip. In spite of my many trips and programs in Britain, I had never been to two desired sites, Hadrian's Wall and Holy Island (original home of the Lindisfarne Gospels). The fortified wall was very impressive—the Romans did a superb job of construction, and the soldiers' housing at the citadels along the wall had steam rooms, hot showers, and good recreation areas. Of course, the wall didn't work—the Scots and Picts moved into Roman Britain regardless. It seems that walls (and fences) have always been ineffective in keeping people out when there is a real attraction to move. But when old they do make nice tourist destinations so maybe they are worth something. Hadrian's Wall had a particularly long-lasting positive impact, as Britons in the following centuries gradually swiped most of the excellent stonework to build their castles and churches. While in the eighth-century Hexham Cathedral we noticed the crypt wall was through courtesy of Hadrian's hewn stones.

We read the tide table wrong, and hence weren't able to use the low tide causeway to get to Holy Island, but we did get a nice view of all the Farne Islands from two castles located on the bluffs above the North Sea. The mainland beach opposite Holy Island is off limits—there are still live explosives left from World War II. The tank traps on the beach, a defense against a German invasion that never happened, are still there, as

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## Upcoming programs

### **Feb. 15: Economist Thomas Potiowsky**

**Our first speaker in 2007** will be Thomas Potiowsky, professor of economics at Portland State. He will provide a talk on state economics. He was chairman of PSU's Economics Department and co-director of the Applied Economics Research Group, 1983-99; state economist from 1999 to 2006; and consultant on projects with EcoNorthwest. Please mark Thursday, Feb. 15, 1:00 p.m. We will meet in 236 Smith Memorial Student Union.

### **March 15: District Attorney Michael Schrunk**

**For March our speaker** will be Michael D. Schrunk, district attorney of Multnomah County since 1981. A graduate of Portland State and the University of Oregon law school, he has extensive experience in criminal cases, private practice, and professional associations, and served as consultant on national and international matters. This is our Lunch Potluck, so mark Thursday, March 15. Reservations are anticipated.

### **April 12: President's Luncheon**

**April is our annual** President's Luncheon and awards event. Please mark Thursday, April 12, at noon. Note: This is the second Thursday of the month.

### **May 17: Psychologist Leif Terdal**

**Our May speaker** will be Leif Terdal, Ph.D., clinical psychologist and professor emeritus at Oregon Health & Science University. He will provide a talk and slideshow entitled "Escape from Nazi-Occupied Norway: A Mother and Three Boys." Please mark Thursday, May 17, at 1:00 p.m. This meeting is also our ice cream social event.

### **January program: Snowed out**

**The snowstorm on Jan. 16** prompted the cancellation of our Jan. 18 tour of the Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science. We will reschedule the tour at a later date that offers more clement weather. (Visions of real-life bumper cars on SW Salmon Street still dance in my head.)  
— *Bob Tufts*

## President's Message

**T**he 2007 year started out with a bang in the form of inclement weather. I hope that it has gotten it out of its system. On Jan. 18 we had planned a tour of PSU's new engineering complex.

Although the roads were clear, there were patches of slippery stuff on the sidewalks around campus and neither Bob Tufts nor I wanted to risk someone slipping and getting hurt. So the tour was postponed. We'll keep you informed of the details.

I want to thank many of you for contributing to the State of Oregon Charitable Fund drive. According to Amy Ross, the University collected more than \$45,000, which will be distributed to many area charities. Proudly, we were able to help.

Additional thanks are offered to those of you who donated to the fund that supports the PSU pictorial history book. RAPS, as an organization, is also providing some financial support and will be rewarded with a share of the profits. This project is progressing well through the efforts of many dedicated people. If you have yet to contribute to this fund or want more information please call the RAPS office.

The new year brings out optimism in many. We hear about better prospects in state budgets and school funding, the stock market, political harmony, and dedication to new year's resolutions. It doesn't hurt to be optimistic because what we tell ourselves has an influence on how we feel and what we do. As Norman Cousins said, "Optimism doesn't wait on facts. It deals with prospects. Pessimism is a waste of time." So, go forth with good thoughts, a happy face, optimism, and the pursuit of good deeds.

Sincerely,  
*Bruce Stern*

## In memoriam: Whitney K. Bates, 1921-2006

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**W**hitney K. Bates, professor emeritus of history, born Feb. 4, 1921, in Brigham City, Utah, died on Dec. 9, 2006, after having been recently diagnosed with cancer. Professor Bates—generally known as “Whit” in the PSU community—joined the faculty in 1961 and retired as professor emeritus in 1986.

Professor Bates attended public schools in Utah and Seattle before enrolling at the University of Washington, earning a history baccalaureate degree in June 1941. After a term of graduate study at UW, he joined the Navy and served as a commissioned officer from April 1942 until July 1946. During the Pacific island-hopping campaigns and invasions, he was assigned to fleet support vessels. He concluded wartime service as a commander of a large auxiliary supply ship.

Upon returning to civilian life, Professor Bates met and, after a whirlwind courtship, married Emily Whiton in December 1946. Emily was a U.S. Army nurse who had just returned from duty in Europe. Emily died in 1999, and their sons, Charles and Thomas, survive their parents.

At the University of Wisconsin, Professor Bates pursued graduate studies specializing in United States economic history, earning a master’s (1948) and a doctoral degree (1952). In 1949-50 he received a Social Science Research Council economic history fellowship. Concurrently he held academic research and teaching assistantships, and he served as an instructor at various University of Wisconsin units. From 1953 to 1961 he held teaching appointments as an instructor and lecturer at the University of Maryland. His on-going research interests focused on post-Revolutionary War financial speculation in state indebtedness.

Professor Bates joined the Portland State College history faculty in 1961 as the institution was in the midst of transformation from a four-year college with a undergraduate curriculum into a comprehensive university. He actively participated in the process wherein the College’s departments expanded lower division offerings and devised appropriate upper division specialty courses to support this growth.

For several years, in addition to teaching, Professor Bates performed administrative assistance for Dean George C. Hoffmann, chairman of the Social Science Division. Professor Bates’s responsibilities included or-

ganizing the curricular calendar to facilitate systematic scheduling of required courses. Likewise he oversaw student advising in order to provide efficient and effective support for the instructional program.

Institutional growth coincided with significant academic governance developments, and throughout his career Professor Bates served on various appointed and elected academic committees. He regularly and emphatically voiced commentaries at Faculty Senate meetings presenting sensitive agenda issues, especially those concerning academic standards and faculty rights. As an active AAUP chapter member, he advocated its selection as the faculty collective bargaining agent and testified before the Oregon Legislature on behalf of equitable faculty salary adjustments.

Professor Bates enjoyed a wide circle of campus friends. Early on, the Ferdinand Society invited him to membership and, upon retiring, he quickly joined RAPS. He regularly participated in both groups’ functions up to the time of his death. Soon after settling in Portland, he organized a professorial seven-person poker group that met monthly. Whitney last played poker with four remaining group members on Nov. 10. Ironically, the Ferdinand Society, also founded by a history professor, recently became defunct.

Professor Bates enjoyed the outdoors and was skillful with a fishing rod. His gardening achievements included ornamental yard plants—especially roses—and specialty tomatoes. After a half century’s indulgence in pipe smoking, he withdrew from nicotine addiction by nibbling cinnamon sticks.

On a personal level, Whitney’s elaborate, ritualistic pipe preparations inevitably fascinated me, a lifetime, dedicated nonsmoker. Moreover, Whitney and I shared an active interest in Democratic Party politics, which we discussed only when attending functions in support of favored candidates. Indeed, we never mixed politics with our professions. Also, I am confident that his automobile and yard always sported more campaign signs than mine.

The RAPS governing board sends its heartfelt condolences to sons Charles and Thomas Bates. Whitney will be missed at our functions.

The Bates family asks that remembrances be sent to Raphael House.

—Victor C. Dahl, Professor Emeritus of History

## In memoriam: Asher B. Wilson, 1920-2006

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**A**sher B. Wilson, professor emeritus of theater arts, born July 7, 1920, in Long Beach, California, and reared in Twin Falls, Idaho, died in Portland on Dec. 7, 2006. At Stanford University, he earned B.A. (1942), M.A. (1951) and Ph.D. (1962) degrees in dramatic arts. Following wartime combat naval service (1943-1945), he began graduate studies in 1946 in preparation for an academic career in dramatic arts and literature.

After serving at the College of Idaho (1950-1953) and the University of Nevada (1955-1959), Professor Wilson came to Portland State in 1959 to found the Theater Arts Department. Only four years earlier, the fledgling college had been designated as a degree-granting institution to meet the metropolitan area's burgeoning higher education needs. Professor Wilson immediately assumed a challenging leadership role, developing performing arts instruction and generating campus theatrical productions in consonance with the objectives of a comprehensive university.

During the ensuing years up to retirement in 1989, as professor and department head, Asher—as he was known throughout the campus—oversaw curricular growth and recruited faculty to support an appropriate theater arts educational program embracing both theory and practice. During his tenure the department launched at least 50 campus productions, including opera, lyric theater, Greek drama, Shakespearean plays, and legitimate theater performances. To further the University's community outreach, he founded the American Theater Company, Oregon's first equity theater company (1968-70), and for 20 years he produced PSU summer stock programs at the Cannon Beach Coaster Theater.

Campus colleagues universally respected Professor Wilson as a gifted artist, educator, and productive academician. He served on many significant faculty governance committees and assisted in reviewing numerous graduate theses and dissertations. Architec-

tural firms engaged him to furnish expert briefings for feasibility and planning studies required for theater construction at the University of Nevada, and for conversion of PSU's Lincoln Hall auditorium into a performing arts center.

Through his efforts, PSU's Theater Arts Department emerged as a high-quality artistic resource that has afforded excellent opportunities for academic training. Hundreds of students enrolled in its classes, preparing for dramatic arts careers. Professor Wilson's enduring legacy leaves an indelible influence throughout the Portland metropolitan area's educational systems and extends to the local community of professional theater companies.

Everyone who knew him enjoyed his wit and generous nature. On a personal note, I met Asher soon after we came to PSU in 1959 and, whenever possible, I was one of many who sought him out at coffee breaks, Ferdinand Society events, and—after retirement—at RAPS functions. We shared an affinity for and commiserated over our cranky, elderly, but still serviceable, Fiat roadsters. Asher fully understood his car's mechanical functions and, if compelled, could make necessary adjustments.

At a memorial service held at Portland's First Baptist Church on Jan. 21, former students paid tribute to him as their mentor for pursuing successful dramatic arts careers. Indeed, we all owe a debt of gratitude to Asher for many contributions that have brought distinction to the University.

Professor Wilson married Marcia Shaughnessy in 1943; she died in 1995 after a lengthy illness. Four sons, Asher B. III, Clark S., Dr. James E., and Mark L., four grandchildren, and Professor Asher's sister, Patricia, survive them. We extend our heartfelt condolences and sympathy.

Remembrances should be sent to the Asher B. Wilson Endowed Scholarship Fund, School of Fine and Performing Arts, Portland State University.

—*Victor C. Dahl, Professor Emeritus of History*

## RAPS club reports

### Bridge Group meets Feb. 13

Our next meeting will be at the home of Irene Place at Willamette View at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13.

If you would like to play or have any questions about the group, please call (503-292-0838) or email ([colipat@easystreet.com](mailto:colipat@easystreet.com)) Colin Dunkeld as soon as you can and no later than Friday, Feb. 9. —Colin Dunkeld



RAPS hikers refuel after the Jan. 26 Springwater Corridor hike. Left to right: Laird Brodie, Robert Pearson, Marge Terdal, Linda Dodds, and Mary Brodie.

### Hikers to ramble a railroad line

The next hike will be on Friday, Feb. 23, on a section of the Banks-to-Vernonia linear park. Because this is an old railroad line, any elevation gain is not perceptible. We will hike a different section than our April 2005 hike. Lunch will be at a restaurant in Vernonia.

We will meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Cedar Hills Shopping center by Big Lots and car pool from there. This is the shopping center on Parkway next to Highways 217 and 26. It is not the larger Cedar Hills Crossing in Beaverton on Cedar Hills Boulevard. An alternate meeting place will be at the park headquarters next to the old trestle.

We welcomed a new member of our group last month. Linda Dodds joined us on our Jan. 26 Springwater Corridor hike. The weather was cool but clear. A pair of woodducks were among our bird sightings. Some of us also saw muskrats. After the hike, we had lunch at the Powerhouse Pub at the McMenamins Edgefield facilities.

Please confirm your participation for our Feb. 23 hike with Larry Sawyer at 503-771-1616 or [larry\\_sawyer@comcast.net](mailto:larry_sawyer@comcast.net) by Thursday, Feb. 22.

—Larry Sawyer

### Snow is no match Book Club

A few intrepid souls, including two new members, met on snowy Tuesday, Jan. 16, to discuss *The Blind Assassin* by Margaret Atwood. This book, a winner of the Booker Prize, was described by Sally Jacobsen as post-modern fiction. There really were at least four story lines throughout the book: written narrative of the protagonist who wrote about her own life, fiction novel based on a romance between the protagonist and her lover, science fiction novel written by the lovers, and short newspaper articles about the characters in the book. This complex structure of the novel was confusing for some of us, especially in the early chapters. Eventually, the interwoven stories came together, and we found it to be an intriguing and rich read.

The next gathering will be at the home of LaRay Barna on Feb. 20 at 1:30 p.m. Her address is 17560 SE Walta Vista, Oak Grove. Contact her at [barnal@pdx.edu](mailto:barnal@pdx.edu) or 503-786-9630 to RSVP and for directions. The February selection is *Saturday* written by Ian McEwan, a Booker Prize-winning author. The novel is described on the back cover:

**In his triumphant new novel, Ian McEwan, the best-selling author of *Atonement*, follows an ordinary man through a Saturday whose high promise gradually turns nightmarish. Henry Perowne—a neurosurgeon, urbane, privileged, deeply in love with his wife and grown-up children—plans to play a game of squash, visit his elderly mother, and cook dinner for his family. But after a minor traffic accident leads to an unsettling confrontation, Perowne must set aside his plans and summon a strength greater than he knew he had in order to preserve the life that is dear to him.**

Looking two months ahead, we selected *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* by Kim Edwards for March and *The Piano Tuner* by Daniel Mason for April.

Come join us!

—Mary Brannan

### Awards nominations due March 16

Please check out the enclosed instructions for the nominations for the RAPS Faculty-Staff awards for 2006-07. The deadline for the submission of nominations is March 16. Submit nominations or questions to Darshana Patel, 503-725-3447, [raps@pdx.edu](mailto:raps@pdx.edu).



istockphoto.com/Gordon Cable

Hadrian's Wall didn't do the job it was supposed to, but it succeeds today as a popular tourist destination in northern England.

## Northumberland in spring . . . *continued from page 1*

are machine gun bunkers on the knolls above the beach. The invading army would've had a tough time. Interestingly, one of the bunkers is located on the site of a Neolithic fort, constructed to repel invaders coming from the sea.

We took the train north to spend two nights in Edinburgh. Since Thatcher, British Rail has been privatized and there are several competing companies, resulting in not being able to get on a train going your way, even though it's bound for your destination. There are also competing bus lines—in Edinburgh we had to look carefully at the bus identification before boarding. We stayed in South Queensbury on the water, where we had a superb view of the old 1890 Firth of Forth cantilever rail bridge (still in regular use) and the 1964 suspension highway span. Edinburgh was wonderful—the latest super-modern Scottish Parliament building contrasted vividly with medieval Holyrood across the street. We were there the week after the Queen's birthday, and I enjoyed pictures of Elizabeth from childhood to her 80th birthday portrait. The endless books of names of the Scots who killed each other, together with the tattered flags of the warring clans, still grace the Edinburgh Citadel, a reminder once again of the continuing barbaric nature of humankind.

On the way back we alighted at Berwick, where Ian West was to pick us up. We had a couple hours, so we had a lovely stroll on the banks of the River Tweed, marveling at the 140-foot high, 28-arch railway Royal Border Bridge, dedicated by Queen Victoria in 1850 and still in use. It had never been repaired until some work was done in the 1990s. It's a marvel, and we used our photo of the bridge as our computer wallpaper!

Ian West is the perfect host. He lives in the village of Longhirst, a settlement of about 20 houses with no store. But it does have a conference center situated on a large country estate. We visited castles and homes in Northumbria, saw the remains of many of the famous Newcastle coal mines, and enjoyed contacts with the villagers. The famous Trevelyan family (many students in my English history classes struggled with his histories) lived a few miles from Longhirst, and we toured the family's lovely home. A number of letters were on display, testifying to the community and welfare work of the family. The whole estate is very well preserved and a real gem. The "tre" prefix is Cornish meaning family, and the Trevelyans originally were Cornish, but they had lived in Northumbria for several generations.

Northumbria is delightful in the spring—flowers everywhere. A wonderful place to visit.