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Retirement Association of Portland State
(RAPS)

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RAPS Sheet, April 2009

Retirement Association of Portland State

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Retirement Association of Portland State

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Picking up the pieces of PSU's history

More than 60 years into its history, Portland State has its first archivist. Cris Paschild joined the University last August, and she's in the midst of organizing the jumble of records that those 60 years of faculty records, committee decisions, meeting minutes, and presidential initiatives have produced.

Paschild's presentation was part of RAPS Program/Speaker Series for 2008-2009. She spoke to about four dozen RAPS members on March 19.

"A university's history is so integral to its success, and to getting students interested, involved, and invested in being here," Paschild said.

Sadly, Portland State made little investment in archiving its own history. "When you don't have an archivist in place and you don't have a system or a program, you're really at the mercy of whether someone decides that they're interested," Paschild said.

Fortunately, Paschild pointed out, Jerome DeGraaff, a history librarian, took it upon himself to begin the archives program in the 1970s. In the 1990s, Gordon Dodds, who wrote *The College that Would Not Die*, a history of the University, "gave a lot of shape" to the material. But in the period between DeGraaff's pioneering work and Dodds's involvement, more than 100 boxes went missing.



Cris Paschild

"There are some very poignant and depressing memos from Gordon Dodds in which he's saying, 'I found your inventory, and there were all these boxes, and I can't find them now.' And they're gone; we can't find them. I think they were probably thrown out, unfortunately. We're hoping those days are over."

RAPS has played a role in supporting the preservation of the University's history for more than five years. It spearheaded a project, Creating a Culture of Tradition, that encouraged Portland State to develop and implement a systemic process to preserve its history.

A university of Portland State's size produces a mountain of documents. Paschild explained that the Oregon University System mandates record retention rules—what needs to be kept, for how long, and who can access it. Some records must be kept forever, others must be destroyed. But some records—faculty senate minutes, administrative records, accreditation documents, and hundreds of others—are the kind of documents, perhaps considered mundane when created, that eventually will have historical value.

Next up:
President's Luncheon
Thursday, April 16, 1:00 p.m.
UNIVERSITY PLACE, 310 SW LINCOLN ST.

President's Message

The results of the RAPS election are in. Congratulations to the newly elected board members: Clarence Hein, president-elect; Priscilla Blumel, member-at-large; Joan Shireman, continuing as secretary; and Bob Vogelsang, continuing as treasurer. Thanks to all who voted and to the Elections Committee—Bob Tufts, Maxine Thomas, and Dan Johnson.

I continue to be impressed by the commitment of many of you to the RAPS mission. One example is the new RAPS Scholarship Committee. Bob Vogelsang and Larry Sawyer (co-chairs), Mike Fiasca, and Dave Krug are working on guidelines for a new scholarship. The board suggested recipients be limited to juniors, seniors, or graduate students in a field focusing on geriatrics or an interest in aging. Department chairs could recommend students, and the recipient would be selected either by the scholarship committee or by the RAPS Board. Funds would come from retired faculty and staff and possibly the general public. At this time, it would not be an endowed scholarship; the amount to be granted each year would depend on how much money has been collected. We are open to suggestions or comments from all of you on such a scholarship.

The February program on history preservation and the March program by Cris Paschild, Portland State's archivist, reminded us of the importance of keeping a record of "milestone" events at Portland State. As retired faculty and staff, all of us are in a good position to identify significant past developments and accomplishments in our units. You could help by going through old photos, key documents, or other materials and writing about their importance to your unit. Steve Brannan, chair of the History Preservation Committee, would be glad to answer questions you might have.

All retired faculty, staff, and guests are invited to attend the President's Annual Luncheon on April 16. The lunch is sponsored by President Wiewel, who will talk about current economic realities and their effect on the University. You will also learn about building and remodeling projects under way and have an opportunity to socialize with your friends and colleagues and meet other retirees. I look forward to seeing all of you there.

—Marge Terdal

Check the envelope—your 'RAPS Directory' update is in it

The envelope that contained this issue of the *RAPS Sheet* also included a form that allows you to update your listing in the 2008-2009 *RAPS Directory*.

The *RAPS Directory* will not be reprinted this year; the update will be printed on a sheet of paper that will be mailed with the June issue of the *RAPS Sheet*. You may attach the update to your copy of the *RAPS Directory* with a paper clip, a staple, glue, a binder clip, a rubber band, a hammer and nail, or any other device of your choosing.

The update form can be utilized in three ways:

- ◆ If your listing in the *RAPS Directory* is outdated (or wasn't correct to begin with), fill out the form with the correct information, sign it, and send it to the RAPS Office.
- ◆ If you were not listed in the *RAPS Directory* that was published last fall, and you want to be included in the update, fill out the form, sign it, and send it to the RAPS Office.
- ◆ If you are happy with your listing (or your lack of a listing) in the *RAPS Directory*, fold the form into a paper airplane and sail it into your recycle bin. The deadline for returning the update form to the

RAPS Office is Wednesday, May 13.

If you didn't receive an update form with this issue of the *RAPS Sheet*, request one from MiMi Bernal-Graves, RAPS office manager, at 503-725-3447 or rapspdx@pdx.edu.

Make April 17 'RAPS Night' at 'Falstaff'

RAPS members are encouraged to attend the Friday, April 17, performance of *Falstaff*, a production of the School of Fine and Performing Arts.

The Giuseppe Verdi opera is inspired by the famous comic character in Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The opera will be presented April 13, 15, and 17, plus a Sunday matinee on April 19, at St. Mary's Academy auditorium, 1615 SW Fifth Ave., Portland. Tickets are \$13 for students, faculty, and staff.

The April 17 performance is "RAPS Night" in support of the School of Fine and Performing Arts programs.

Tickets may be purchased through the PSU Box Office in Smith Memorial Student Union. You can also purchase tickets by calling the Box Office at 503-725-3307 or through www.ticketmaster.com.

RAPS club reports

Book Club: 'Stubborn Twig'

Marge Terdal will host us on Monday, April 10, at 1:30 p.m., in her home at 997 SW Westwood Dr., Portland. Contact her at 503-244-5714 or terdalm@pdx.edu to RSVP and for directions. We will discuss the book selected by the Oregon Reads Oregon library program, *Stubborn Twig*, by Lauren Kessler. It is described as:

A factual account of three generations of a Japanese-American family living in the Pacific Northwest. It begins in 1903, when Masuo Yasui arrived in Hood River, Ore., to seek his fortune. This part of the story is similar to other immigrants' tales—years of hard work, loneliness, and struggles with a new language and customs. The striking distinction appears around 1919, with the rise of anti-Japanese sentiment. Yasui, his brother, their wives, and children had sacrificed much to establish a thriving general store and owned several orchards. Yasui, who spoke fluent English, was the acknowledged leader of the Japanese community in the area and an active member of the orchardists' cooperatives, the Methodist Church, and the Rotary Club. His family continued to have great success despite discrimination. Their lives were painfully disrupted, however, on Dec. 7, 1941. Yasui was arrested as a spy and imprisoned for the rest of the war; his relatives were scattered and some were interned. Readers learn how racism and internment continued to affect the choices and decisions of second-generation family members. Part sociological study, part American history, part family saga, this title will make a significant addition to any library.

An optional additional read is *When the Emperor Was Divine*, written by Julie Otsuka, which is a fiction book about the Japanese internment on the West Coast during World War II.

—Mary Gordon Brannan

Bridge Group: Sits down April 14

The RAPS Bridge Group will meet on Tuesday, April 14, at 1:00 p.m. at Willamette View, 12705 SE River Road, Portland. For information about the group, please call Colin Dunkeld, 503-292-0838.

—Colin Dunkeld

Hikers: Heading to Silver Falls

Our April 24 hike is to Silver Falls State Park. We will meet at 9:00 a.m. on the roof of PSU Parking Structure 1, which is on SW Broadway across from Neuberger Hall. Faculty members are asked to bring their parking permits. Suggestions (to Larry Sawyer) are welcome from expected hikers. Please bring a sack lunch.

Marge and Leif Terdal and I enjoyed the March hike from Fields Bridge Park and the Willamette Meteorite interpretive trail, on the Tualatin River, into West Linn's historic Willamette District and down to the Willamette River and its confluence with the Tualatin—and return. The brand-new meteorite trail celebrates the meteorite's journey from Canada to West Linn to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. A "tell-tales" phone number is posted: 503-343-3597, 24#, for the curious.

Contact Larry Sawyer at larry_sawyer@comcast.net.

—Bob Tufts

PAST TENSE

Gordon Solie begins long career in 1960

Gordon Solie '59, one of PSU's pioneering professors of music, was a bassoonist for the Portland Symphony Orchestra before even completing his bachelor's degree.



Recruited by Portland State in 1960, Gordon also earned an M.M. at University of Arizona in 1968 and proved to be an outstanding teacher and musician over his 28-year career.

Hired first as a bassoonist instructor and director of bands, Gordon also taught conducting, music education, music history and literature, music theory, and his passion: Latin American music. As a musician, he spent many years as a bassoonist with the symphony, and nearly 40 years with the Portland Opera Orchestra as well as with many chamber ensembles.

Upon retirement, he became an active board member in REEPS (now RAPS), serving as president and receiving the association's Outstanding Retired Faculty Award in 2000. He serves on RAPS' History Preservation Committee and has been instrumental in researching and establishing a database on the Music Department's graduates. As a professor emeritus of music, Gordon's artistic interests continue to evolve. He has published music for woodwind instruments for 10 years, established Editions VIENTO, a nonprofit organization, and has 250 works published with 20 composers and arrangers in nine countries.

Past Tense features glimpses into Portland State's history. To submit a story (or an idea for one), email the RAPS History Preservation Committee at raps@pdx.edu.

Archivist . . . *continued from page 1*

An archivist has two main goals. "One is preservation," said Paschild. "Everything is moved into acid-free boxes and acid-free folders. If the staples are rusty, we remove them. Fragile materials are put into supporting Mylar. We also have secure storage and, to the best of our ability, climate control."

The other goal: putting things into logical order so when someone looks for something, the archivist can find it. That can be a challenge. (See box below.)

Organizing the files is critical to supporting reference and research. The inquiries are quite diverse, from someone who wanted to know who taught Music 260 in fall 1972 to a movie costume designer who needed background on how Portland college students dressed in the '70s to an inquiry on PSU cheerleading squads from the World Cheerleading Hall of Fame.

Losing history before it can reach the archives is always a danger, Paschild said. When offices are relocated, stuff is tossed out. When retrenchment hits, and departments and programs are cut or restructured, things tend to go missing.

Another danger is workload: when people are overworked and understaffed, "it's hard to get people focused on working with the archives because they have so much to do. The question that always comes

up is, Who's going to do it?"

Paschild holds M.L.I.S. and M.A. degrees from the University of Michigan and a B.A. from the University of Oregon.

What you can do

University Archivist Cris Paschild offered some concrete suggestions for RAPS members who are interested in helping preserve Portland State's history.

- ◆ Volunteer in your department on a history project. "You're the experts in the work your department does and did, and how it evolved to where it is," she said. "Because faculty and staff might feel overwhelmed, if you were to come in, there's the possibility of getting some work done."
- ◆ Get people to tell their life histories of what they did at PSU. "Those are valuable historical artifacts," Paschild said. And, she pointed out, you should think about telling your own story.
- ◆ Consider donating material you have to the archives. "People sometimes think what they have has no historical meaning, but a lot of times it does. I encourage you not to just assume that the archives would not be interested."

You can contact Paschild at 503-725-9883 or by e-mail at paschild@pdx.edu.

Making sense of a really big mess

When University Archivist Cris Paschild spoke to RAPS on March 19, she provided a vivid example of the challenges that Portland State's haphazard record-keeping has created. "There are four or five boxes labeled President's Office, but the date span is all over the place," she explained. "If you're looking for a paper for a specific president, it's really unclear where to start looking. You want things to be organized in a logical fashion that reflects the structure of the university."

CURRENT STRUCTURE

Box 127-133 President's Office 1969-73

Box 134 President's Office: office files, 1970-76

Box 135 President's Office: misc. reports and files, 1957-72

Box 141-143, 145 President's Office, files, 1970-74

Box 142 President's Office: Park Blocks Riots, May 1970

Box 144 VP for Administration: office files, 1969-73

Box 146-148 Dean of Undergraduate Studies: office files, 1971-72

PREFERRED STRUCTURE

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

Office of the President

John Francis Cramer, 1955-1959

Accreditation

Committee

Correspondence

Inauguration

Program Planning

Special Events

Speeches

Subject Files

University Policies

Branford P. Millar, 1959-1968