

The Henry Weinhard Memorial Totem Pole.



Henry Weinhard's first cargo of supplies cleared the bar at the mouth of the Columbia, June of 1855.

Those on board toasted the event with horehound and rye - a concoction said to help ward off a cold. A lady had a sloe gin.

No one thought to raise a glass of beer.

Six hours later, when the tiny steamship landed in Portland, two old-timers celebrated their reunion at "The Grief and Grin" with a watered-down potion resembling whiskey. Twenty-five cents for two shots.

The Oregon Territory had little else to offer thirsty residents. So when Henry's brewery began operation, the residents of the area, from Puyallup to Yachats, from Astoria to Walla Walla, were cheered. It goes without saying that Henry was as well.

"Here's to Henry!" Thanks to their new neighbor, cold beer "on tap" was five cents. Henry, and his beer, were overnight heroes.

There were stories about him in The Portland Spectator. The lofty and prestigious Columbia House invited him to lecture. The mayor of Portland hailed him in an official proclamation and a "special" session of the legislature even wrote him an official letter.

Not to be outdone, several congenial fellows from the Tillamook Indian Council

commissioned a fine totem pole to be built in his honor.

The redwood spire was all of twenty-five feet tall, had a bear on the bottom, which was crowned by a wildcat, on which was perched the eagle from Henry's family crest.

At the very top, above the spread wings of his eagle, sat a bust of Henry Weinhard himself. "And not a bad likeness, either," chuckled Henry's friends as the totem was ceremoniously installed. An amused news reporter only described Henry as "gracious."

The totem stood for a day and a half.

During a driving rain the night of The Dominion Day Celebration someone pulled the totem from the softened ground, and its disappearance remained a mystery. Some however, have noted that Henry and a few close friends shared a few bottles around a particularly brisk bonfire that night.

ABOUT HENRY'S BEER.

In 1865, Henry Weinhard made a beer using only the finest hops, the most expensive two-row barley, and a brewing process that was measured in results instead of time.

Favorably compared to the finest beers of the world, it was so costly to produce that it unfortunately remained a beer he reserved for the private enjoyment of his close personal friends.

Henry Weinhard's Private Reserve.

