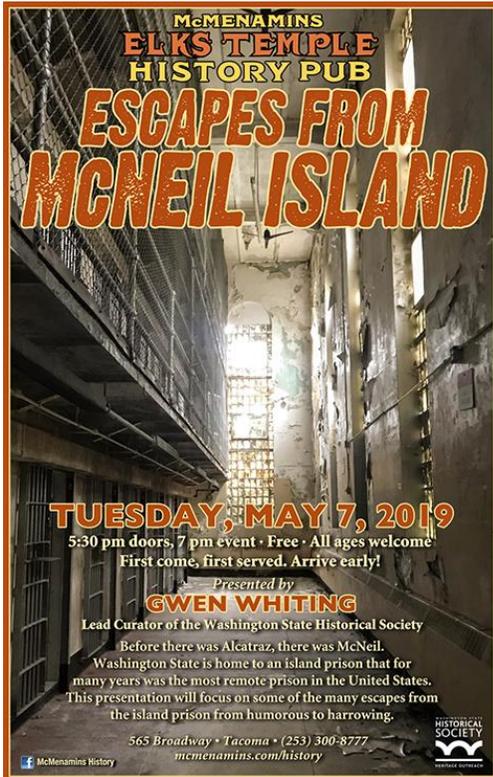




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## Opportunities for historic fun in Tacoma next week

**Tacoma, WA** – The South Sound community has embraced McMenamins Elks Temple, and the Washington State History Museum (WSHM) is excited to team with the McMenamins History Department to present a new free monthly History Pub series at the Elks Temple’s Spanish Ballroom. The inaugural program is on Tuesday, May 7 at 7:00 PM.

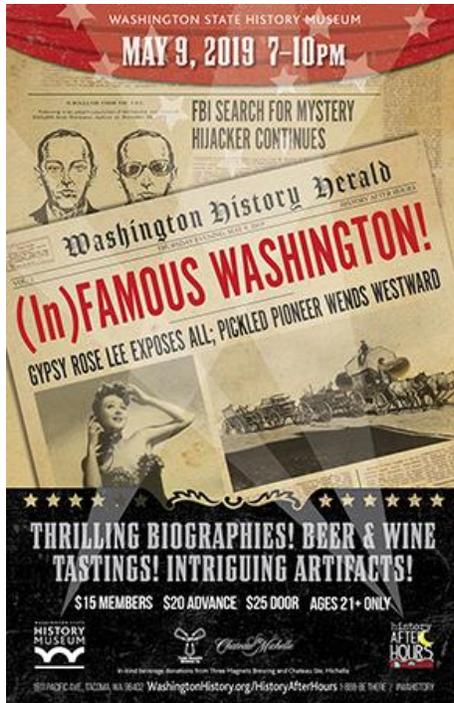
Join the museum’s Lead Curator Gwen Whiting for [Escapes from McNeil Island](#) and hear about unsanctioned departures from this remote prison that predates Alcatraz. See behind-the-scenes photographs taken by the museum’s research team on their visits to this off-limits site.

“We’ll explore McNeil Island through the lens of daring and humorous escape attempts that happened over the years, interspersed with a bit of history about the prison

itself,” said Whiting. “We’ll also touch on a few of the more notorious prisoners on the island such as Roy Gardner, known as King of the Escape Artists, and celebrity impersonator Frederick Peters. It will be a lighter look at ‘Washington’s Alcatraz’ in a casual atmosphere.” For a deeper dive, see the Washington State History Museum’s exhibit [Unlocking McNeil’s Past: The Prison, The Place, The People](#) – but go soon because it closes on May 26.

“Partnering with the Washington State History Museum is a perfect pairing for us in this monthly event,” said McMenamins historian Tim Hills. “They have a remarkable staff, amazing public outreach and of course rich archives and historical resources that literally chronicle the varied experiences and stories of Washington State.” This will be the tenth History Pub series at McMenamins locations in Oregon and Washington.

History Pub is free and open to all ages. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Doors open at 5:30 PM for general seating; the Escapes from McNeil Island presentation starts at 7:00 PM. McMenamins Elks Temple is also offering a 15% discount on hotel accommodations for May 7 History Pub guests.



On Thursday May 9, the Washington State History Museum hosts History After Hours from 7:00-10:00 PM. The theme of this ages 21-and-over event is “(In)Famous Washington.” Through games and activities, guests will learn about famous (or infamous) people from Washington’s past such as burlesque entertainer Gypsy Rose Lee and her director/actress/dancer sister June Havoc, the Pickled Pioneer Willie Keil and more.

“Our History After Hours events are lively opportunities to have fun and engage with history through creative games and activities with our many partners. For the ‘(In)Famous Washington’ event, Deb Freedman, an award winning author and teacher from the Tacoma Historical Society, is leading a ‘Tacoma Herstory Jeopardy’ game, highlighting incredible women of Tacoma’s past. And our lead curator Gwen Whiting will be standing by at the ‘Wheel of Havoc,’ ready to pull back the curtain on people like Gypsy Rose Lee and June Havoc,” said Molly Wilmoth, Lead Program

Manager at WSHM. “And who doesn’t love the chance to learn and drink in the museum after hours? We’re fortunate to have sponsorship from Three Magnets Brewing and Chateau Ste. Michelle who will be providing limited edition craft beer and award winning wines.”

Other partners presenting at the event include Ben Helley from Washington State Archives, Sam Wotipka with Washington State Parks and Recreation, and Jo Wolfe, director of the Skagit County Historical Museum. From traveling the Oregon Trail to building Washington’s highway systems, our partners will be spinning a few interesting yarns in their explorations of infamous Washingtonians.

History After Hours tickets include two beverages from Three Magnets Brewing and Chateau Ste. Michelle, a collectible stemless wine glass, games, crafts and access to the exhibition galleries. Tickets can be purchased [online](https://www.washingtonhistory.org/events) at WashingtonHistory.org/events or at the door on May 9.

As lead curator, Gwen Whiting’s related exhibitions have included *Unlocking McNeil’s Past*, *Hope in Hard Times: Washington during the Great Depression*, and *COOPER* (about Northwest skyjacker Dan “D.B.” Cooper). Whiting is currently writing a biography of actor June Havoc. Herstory Jeopardy leader Deb Freedman is retired from twenty years with the Tacoma Public Library and is now in her second career as a volunteer, researcher, writer and presenter. In 2015, she received the prestigious “City of Destiny Award” from the City of Tacoma in recognition of her work as a volunteer for Tacoma Historical Society. She has also created a [website](#) about the history of Tacoma Jewish residents which she plans to incorporate into a book.

Find more information about these and other events at [WashingtonHistory.org/events](https://www.washingtonhistory.org/events).

# # #

**Washington State Historical Society** partners with our communities to explore how history connects us all. The Society's most visible activity, the Washington State History Museum (WSHM) is located in Tacoma's downtown core along Pacific Avenue among a thriving cultural scene. The museum features interactive permanent exhibitions about Washington's past in the Great Hall, unique rotating exhibitions highlighting the Society's collections, and dynamic feature exhibitions.

**Address:** 1911 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98402

**Hours:** 10:00AM–5:00PM Tuesday through Sunday. Third Thursday of each month, 10:00AM–8:00PM.

**Admission:** [Free for members](#); Adults \$14; seniors (age 65+), students (age 6-17) and military (with ID) \$11; free for children 5 and under; family rate \$40 (up to two adults and four children under age 18). Patrons with a [Washington Quest card](#) and licensed Washington Foster Parents can attend for \$1 per person or \$2 per family.