



The Elizabeth Lofts

Quarterly Newsletter

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

VAXED AT LAST

Bob reflects on the emotional ride to full vaccination, inspired by accompanying music.

JUST DOWN THE ROAD

Paula suggests a change of scenery for your daily dose of fresh air and exercise.

EQ TALKS: A CONVERSATION WITH DITA PEPIN

Dita shares her life experiences in the world and culture of the professional ballerina.

WINGS AFTER COVID

Hesitant but determined, Larry takes to the air for the first time after the pandemic grounded most potential fliers.

FILM NOIR: THE DARK SIDE OF THE SCREEN

Paul explores the film noir genre with illustrations from the classic "Double Indemnity."

NEW IN THE PEARL

Larry captures new business sightings in the neighborhood!

GET TO KNOW OUR STAFF

Rodolfo brings his personal style to the concierge desk.

AROUND TOWN

Ideas and activities, in the building and out, to keep you busy and entertained.

April 2021

Editing by Paula McGee, Design & Layout by Michelle Heckman





NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to EQ 7

Within these virtual pages we hope you'll find entertainment, astute observations, general news and more awareness of the community you live in. It feels like the turn of a sundial as we march through the months of Covid while spring turns to summer.

Hopefully you are well and have learned some practical truths about who you are and how you live in these changing times. Sometimes it seems we have all the time in the world. Other times it feels like the twilight of another era passing. Take some time to refresh, renew and enjoy the gifts you've been given and then encourage someone else to do the same.

If you think we newsletter staff are having as much fun as a frog in a glass of milk, contribute an article, a poem, a book review or a story. Contact us at EQ@elizabethlofts.org

Don't forget all EQ's are available on the [website](#) with some archival footage of our EQ Talks presentations. Go to *community* in the upper right and in the dropdown menu, select *newsletter*.

Till we turn 8, be well our friends.

Bob Garsha

for the EQ Staff

April 2021

[RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

VAXED AT LAST

Or How I Journeyed Through the Oregon Vaccination Roll Out

by Bob Garsha

Like all of you, it was with great joy and a sense of relief when I found out the new Administration would do everything in its power to get the vaccine program underway. Hooray - like a Nuclear cloud blowing away! But I soon found out I was now a ward of the state. To clear that up, I was on my own to navigate the numerous website opportunities to get an appointment. Well, that was a challenge to say the least. Not my internet skills but the sudden message of *no appointments available* every time I tried to make an appointment. A personal values moment came up for me, should I tell them I take care of my aged parents? I am a front-line worker? My immune system is compromised? It took less than a second to say no way - toe the line.



Finally, after at least a month of trying, I got an appointment. The one caveat - it was at the Convention Center. I felt there would be throngs of people and I had the feeling I would be thrown to the lions, that was the image that went through my mind.

As a naïve Oregonian and NY Transplant I had gone out of my way to avoid the Convention Center. So be it, I thought. I'm going all in. First appointment available was a Sunday. That can't be that bad, I thought. So, I drove over, saw the line of cars and those needing assistance, and thought oy vey!



As I said, being an ex-New Yorker, I parked on the street, always trying to stay one step ahead of the masses. In line I thought my fellow vaccine recipients seemed awfully cheerful. Then I met some volunteers and they were out of the box the nicest, most organized group. Courteous and quick and smiling. I navigated entry no problem. "I'm in," I said. "Cool!"

One queue to another, I met retired teachers, your neighborly friendly sort, National Guardsmen and 30 and 40 somethings all doing what they felt called to do. I was truly humbled. Oh, and the shot—sat down, rolled up my sleeve and became aware I was getting a Pfizer vaccine from a retired pediatric nurse. It was a Hallmark Card or an It's A Wonderful Life moment!

Shot administered, now over to the waiting area for fifteen minutes in case I have a reaction. I really was watched over - not personally but the volunteers stayed on task. Fifteen minutes up and I walked out, thanking any one I could find. Not that I didn't fear Covid anymore but I gained an understanding that I was part of something greater than me.



A nation, though so divided, at times has been brought to its knees by this unwelcome assailant. I thought of my grandkids, my wife, my friends and family who, so far, have all been spared. I thought of those who didn't make it and I grieved.

I now have completed both doses and at this EQ's publishing I will have exceeded the 14 days beyond the final vaccine dose.

***Now it's up to you
.....vaccinate!***

Now I can say I have learned even more to take one day at a time. I feel fine, and thanks in large part to the volunteers I met. But a lot has happened. One thing I know for sure -- you never know what the simple step of volunteering can mean, not just to someone like me, but to the lives of your neighbors and in many cases people who just needed a helping hand.

The volunteers, each and every one, gave me a sense of unity that I had missed for so long.

Below is a link to a song created just for these times

Don't Hesitate Vaccinate 

Courtesy of Mitch Woods



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

JUST DOWN THE ROAD

By Paula McGee

Many of us have spent the past year very VERY close to home. If you are feeling a bit claustrophobic when it comes to your options for exercise and fresh air - maybe you have visited Forest Park and Washington Park so often you know every turn in the trail and every leaf on every bush - here are a couple of suggestions for new territory to explore on foot or by bike. Places where you can safely spread your wings a bit - and they are just a short drive away. So get out there - stretch your legs, breathe deep and enjoy!

Champoeg State Heritage Area

28 miles from the Elizabeth Lofts

[Champoeg State Heritage Area](#)

features a rare combination of history, nature, and recreation. Situated south of Newburg along the scenic Willamette River, Champoeg's forests, fields, and wetlands recreate the landscape of a bygone era.

This is the site where Oregon's first provisional government was formed by a historical vote in 1843. A thriving town of 200 was established, only to be washed away during a great flood in 1861. This rich history earns the park's placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

A diversity of activities await. Enjoy walking or biking on the paved trails that pass historical landmarks and hug the river. Play the 18-hole disc golf course under the oak trees, relax at the multitude of scenic picnic areas, or fish or kayak from a dock on the Willamette River.

The ecologically rich landscape is home to more than 130 bird species, including seasonally nesting [western bluebirds](#) and [acorn woodpeckers](#).





Banks-Vernonia State Trail

24 miles from the Elizabeth
Lofts

Where the railroad once was king, the woods now reign again. A century ago, this railway made life better and easier for early Oregonians and the burgeoning lumber industry that fueled their prosperity in the northwest

corner of the state. But while the trains are long gone and their tracks dismantled, the path they carved through the wilderness remains, having since been put to splendid use. [The Banks-Vernonia State Trail](#) (BVT) stands today as Oregon's first rail-to-trail.



The Banks-Vernonia Trail, a multi-use trail paved over a decades-old train bed, allows the walker, jogger, biker or mounted rider the chance to catch a whiff of Oregon history while delighting in the forest's renewed splendor. 21 miles of tree-lined, easy-grade pathway conducts you through sun-dappled glades and across swift, clear streams, filling your nose with wildflower scents and your ears with the songs of birds. 13 old bridges and wooden trestles rise up to acquaint you with days of the past.



The Banks-Vernonia Trail can be accessed at any of 6 points along its progression – including trailheads at Manning, Buxton, Tophill, and Beaver Creek, as well as at Banks and Vernonia themselves – and permits only non-motorized use at a safe, slow speed. Precisely the opposite, ironically, of the trains that once ran there. Nature has a way of making things come full circle, a theory proved in lovely, pastoral abundance by a rail-to-trail like the BVT.



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

EQ TALKS: A Conversation with Dita Pepin

with Chris Steele

I met Dita through the Elizabeth Lofts book club and also the knitters group. Her daughter, Jen, owns the J.Pepin Gallery in one of the Elizabeth Loft's commercial spaces and Dita and her husband Al own a condo in the building. Dita shared remembrances of her days as a professional ballerina in the Netherlands. I love the ballet and am always in awe of the strength and grace of these performers, so I welcomed hearing Dita's insights and her experiences in this profession.

Dita grew up in the Netherlands in the southern province of Brabant, in a very old medieval town, Bergen op Zoom. At age 12, she began taking ballet classes. By the time she was 15, she had decided to pursue ballet as a career. Her mother was resistant to this idea, as she believed that there was no future as an artist, only poverty, but some friends convinced her that Dita danced when she moved and most likely had natural talent. Dita was not deterred, continuing her quest until her mother and ballet teacher agreed to take Dita to Amsterdam for an audition at the National Ballet Company school. She wore only a white shirt and tights, and not the standard leotard. Throughout the audition, Dita heard the other girls snickering every time she crossed the floor, "feeling like a fool." However, Dita persevered. At the end, the director said to her mother, "That child really wants it. I'll take her and she can enter the school." I think the director saw the dedication required of a ballerina.



At 18, Dita was invited to the annual auditions for the performing company, but at that time she was in bed with the mumps. Although her mother was against it, Dita was again adamant and her mother relented. Dita did the audition, along with about 60 other dancers. In the dressing room she was asked why her cheeks were so swollen and Dita covered by saying she had a cold and a tooth ache. No one else got sick, and Dita was one of only two students who were accepted.

Merde. . . . Break a leg!

So began Dita's career in the ballet, working her way up slowly but steadily each year. She immediately started touring, traveling throughout Europe. The daily workout started at 10 am in class, followed by rehearsals lasting until 3 or 4 pm. Then the real day began. Performances started at 8 pm and if she was lucky there would be time for a sandwich and a container of Bulgarian yogurt with lots of sugar in it for energy. After makeup and a warmup, performers would wish each other good luck by spitting at each other and saying merde (shit in French). This makes the American theater expression "break a leg" seem positively polite in comparison.

Still new in the company, Dita performed in the corps de ballet of Les Sélphides, a ballet set to music by Chopin. First performed in St. Petersburg in 1907, it is considered to be the first ballet with no plot, expressing only a romantic reverie about mood and dance. Dita's chance came when a dancer became ill, and she learned the part in the morning and performed that evening. Dita claims the performance to be a disaster, as she tried unsuccessfully to follow the other dancers; she was up when they were on a knee and down when they were up. She was in tears, but the ballet master told her "well done," most likely because rather than give up, she continued the performance. As she spent more time in the company, learning a ballet became much easier.

According to Dita, she did not have the perfect body for ballet. Her hips were turned in, making leg extensions more difficult. She had one teacher who put her on the floor in the middle of the studio, positioning her legs like a frog. The teacher would walk by and step on her knees while tears ran down her face. Much of ballet is painful, and professionals learn to accept this. Self-consciousness must be overcome. Possibly these were the lessons being taught along with the effort to improve her flexibility.

“Being on stage and feeling that joy,
that lightness, was almost spiritual.

The Dutch National Ballet gained recognition in the 1960's for developing new training techniques, and many prominent choreographers and teachers were invited to contribute to the development of new modern dance forms. At one point, Dita was lucky to be taught by Abdarakhman Kumusnikov, from the Kirov. She believes he helped improve her technique. He focused his training on total development from head to toe with great emphasis on the movement of the arms. This was an improvement over her earlier training which focused mostly on the development of the legs, leaving Dita feeling blocked creatively due to her difficult turnout. Dita believes Kumusnikov completely changed her dancing. She had always loved the movements but now felt the energy flow from her "fingertips to her toes." Dita expresses it this way: "Being on stage and feeling that joy, that lightness, was almost spiritual. Even now, when I hear the music or think of dance, I get that same feeling."

The company performed all over Europe. Every spring they went to Spain, where festivals were held in all the big cities. The theaters they visited had different stages. Barcelona had a very old theater with a "raked" stage, built on an angle that slopes upward away from the front of the stage. The stages were raked so people could view the entire stage. Dita remembers that doing pirouettes on a raked stage could be tricky, but by holding herself much straighter she felt her turns improved. Multiple turns, or fouettés could be difficult; in Swan Lake the black swan must do 30 fouettés on one leg, and on a raked stage there was a tendency to move downstage as you turned instead of staying on one spot. Dita remembers that jumps on a raked stage were much higher, especially if starting from the back of the stage.



Dame Margot Fonteyn

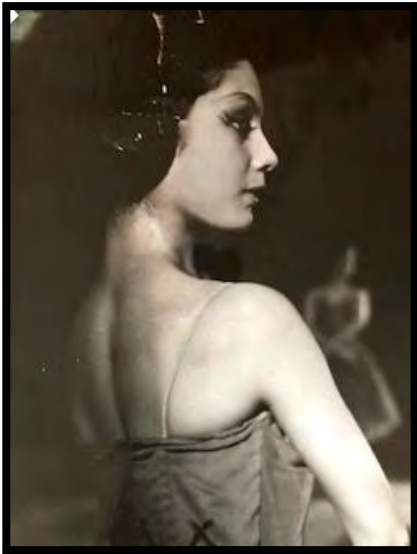
For some performances, guest artists would join the company. In Monaco, Dame Margot Fonteyn was the guest artist. Dita recalls that Margot was much smaller than she looks on stage, only 5'4", and incredibly beautiful. Fonteyn enjoyed a long and illustrious career, dancing into her 60s, most famously paired with Rudolf Nureyev for 18 years. When the Company danced in Monaco, the entrance to the theater was through the casino, but Dita was under-age and had to be escorted through the gambling area. What fantastic adventures for such a young ballerina!

Mistakes sometimes happened on stage. Dita claims her dancing wasn't always perfect and glorious. In Spain, Dita went into an arabesque and her partner was supposed to catch her. For some reason that night, he turned the wrong way and Dita fell flat on her face; she only remembers hearing the audience gasp, but she was quickly up on her feet and continuing the dance. During an open-air performance in Spain, a wasp went down her costume and stung her. Dita was forced to put her hand down the garment to pull out the offending creature. The next day she suffered an allergic reaction and was taken to a pharmacy for a shot so she could perform again that evening.

“It was the biggest love of my life actually. . . .”

Dita recalls her years in ballet affectionately. “...so wonderful. I can still feel it, thinking about it, I’m getting teary eyed, is that weird? All those years? It was the biggest love of my life actually.” Shortly after Dita had achieved the level of soloist, her career ended abruptly when her mother terminated her contract with the ballet, still believing that ballet had no long-term security for Dita. At that time, marriage was the expected future for a young woman. Dita accepted this, regretfully, but acknowledges that she was very young (only 24) and her mother made all the decisions. Dita remained very close to her mother, and this decision did not impact their relationship. Her mother encouraged marriage to a German gentleman living in New York, but the marriage was not successful.

Over the years that followed there were other opportunities for her to express her fearless independence. After leaving her first marriage, Dita worked for Chevron, starting in New York and transferring to Brussels, where she first met Al, now her husband for 45 years. They did not start their relationship until another job transfer brought Dita to San Francisco, where she again ran into Al, and they married and settled in the San Francisco Bay Area.



Dita

Dita’s confident determination did not disappear with her ballet career, and she used her language skills to good effect in the various jobs she held in Europe and the U.S. At one point she took dictation of a letter in Italian (a language she does not speak), writing down what she heard and using the dictionary for spelling.

After marrying Al, Dita saw a job advertisement for the San Francisco Opera. With her love of music, this seemed to be a perfect fit. She ended up managing their travel, being trained in the job by the departing travel manager, the author Armistead Maupin, well known for his book series Tales of the City. She remembers she never stopped laughing the entire week due to Armistead’s famous humor. The job afforded access to plenty of opera music and the opportunity to meet notable opera stars. She eventually became the personal assistant to the managing director of the opera, Kurt Adler. In this role she took notes at rehearsals and was sometimes backstage during performances. Tuesday nights at the opera were black tie nights, and Dita was required to wear an evening gown. One of her tasks was to visit the dressing rooms of visiting performers to deliver their check for that night’s performance. She met such notables as Beverly Sills, Joan Sutherland, Plácido Domingo and Pavarotti.

Dita left her opera job when Jen was born. For enjoyment she took some ballet classes at the Contra Costa Ballet school. One day she was asked to substitute for a teacher who was unexpectedly absent. The next day she was told the students had asked for her to teach them again. Eventually she was teaching daily classes until a move to San Francisco made for a difficult commute. One of her students was Elizabeth Loscavio, who went on to a professional career in ballet.

Later in her marriage, a move to the Napa Valley provided a small vineyard on their land. What best to do with all those grapes? Dita had them made into a beautiful merlot, which they shared with friends until she started getting calls from people asking to purchase it. She had one call from a distributor who asked if he could come taste the wine. Although she did not have a tasting room, Dita was not deterred and invited the gentlemen to a local deli where she was allowed to pour her wine. A sale was made.

Dita and Al came to Portland after their daughter Jen moved to the city for a job. These days, Dita enjoys time at her home in North Plains. The pandemic has kept her mainly house bound although ZOOM book group events and ZOOM knitting are social outlets. Before the pandemic, she sometimes manned that desk at J. Pepin Art Gallery. Ballet may not be actively in her life anymore, but the memories live. She still enjoys travel, which was a great part of her life in ballet as well. She still maintains the grace of a dancer, as well as the strength of character the ballet required, and this has woven its way into the other adventures in her life.



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS



NEW WINGS AFTER COVID

By Larry Rosenblum

With everyone getting vaccinated, it's natural to think about what we are going to do first. For me, I flew in mid-March to DC to see my 99 year old mother who suffered a medical emergency in February. So how has air travel changed thanks to Covid?

The first difference is that Portland no longer has non-stop flights to DC although they appear to be resuming in April. Since my sister from Tacoma was also going, I drove up to her and took a flight from Sea-Tac. My sister has a bad back and so she was flying first class. To my surprise, first class was only \$680 round trip compared to \$380 for economy.

They say that something goes wrong on every trip. Usually it's a forgotten sweater or packing the wrong shoes. But lucky us, we got it out of the way quickly. Alaska Airlines texted me at 2:30 in the morning to tell me my 8 AM flight to BWI had been cancelled. At that time of night, you don't know if it is a bad dream or a living nightmare. Thanks for the ample warning!

Yes . . .the flight was cancelled

After calling Alaska and listening to insipid music for 20 minutes, yes the flight was cancelled and they rebooked me on the next day's flight and my sister on the day after that. This didn't work for us, so we got them to book us on an 8 AM flight but to Dulles Airport. Not ideal, but it works. The car rental was still for BWI airport. Even though I made the car rental from Alaska's website, they couldn't set up a new car rental or cancel the old one. It was fairly simple to get a car at the new airport, but cancelling and getting a refund for the old one turned out to be a hurdle I still haven't completed weeks after the trip.

We arrived at Sea-Tac and my sister tried to check her bag at one of the computerized kiosks. She had no luck and got in line. While waiting, dozens of people checked in via the kiosks. No one wiped the keyboard. So everyone is potentially exposing themselves to the virus. If someone is supposed to wipe the units down, they were nowhere in sight. At Dulles there was, at least, hand sanitizer but no wipes.

Next we proceeded to TSA. After a short walk, the agent then re-directed us to another entry point because this one was, in her words, way overcrowded. So we walked. The next thing I realized is that I love PDX. Unlike Sea-Tac, PDX is small with moveable walkways and well-marked signs. Sea-Tac has none of this.

We may have been flying first class, but we have souls for steerage. I was carrying my luggage because I'm too cheap to check bags (Yes I know the bag is free in first class!!!) and because my luggage believes in separate vacations. My sister was bringing a cake. Not one she baked with love, but a store bought cake. And no, it wasn't a special occasion. For years, my Mom brought her famous meatloaf whenever she visited my sister and so this was my sister's way of returning the favor. FYI, no one thinks my Mom's meatloaf is famous except my mother, but we are not dumb enough to say so.



*Hummingbird Cake
Metropolitan Market*

We are walking with luggage and cake in hand to the other end of the terminal where the line is just as long.

We get in line. Social distancing, fuhgeddaboutit! The line moves at a leisurely pace and when we turn a corner I think we are at the end of the line, but instead it transitions to another corral. Great, TSA is taking line management lessons from Disney World! Finally, we get to the point where the line splits into several where TSA agents are doing their thing. I have a gift for picking the slowest line and it does not fail me here. Incidentally, there was no sign to remove our shoes and I believe it is no longer required, but I do it anyway because I am a well-trained dog. My TSA agents are very diligent at their jobs and about half of the bags are removed and inspected. I can't complain because I had an 8 ounce bottle of hand sanitizer in my suitcase and I forgot to remove my tablet from my briefcase. They caught both, but surprisingly didn't confiscate the sanitizer.

I'm now worried about the time. Even though we arrived at the airport at 6:40 for an 8:15 flight, it's now nearly 7:45. We walk to the trains. I have no idea where, but I follow everyone else. We leave from gate D, so it is 2 trains to get there. Fortunately, they run more often than the MAX and we arrive at the gate less than 15 minutes before take-off. We are ushered on and took our very comfy seats.

PODS - boarding in "PODS"

I can't report how full the plane was or how boarding went, but in conversations with neighbors there were a number of refugees from our original BWI flight. On the return flight which was uneventful, Alaska did several things for safety. After first class and special needs passengers were boarded, the remainder was boarded in pods. That is, people who were travelling together all boarded at the same time and there was a time gap between each pod. The boarding agent said the flight was full, but in fact only about two-thirds of economy seats were occupied. I don't know if she did this because she was trying to get people to check carry-on bags or Alaska is trying to not completely fill the plane. Most middle seats were empty except when it was obviously a family or couple who wanted to sit together.

I don't know about economy seating, but Alaska is serving meals again. It's nothing fancy or hot. The choices were a ham and cheese wrap or a fruit plate. I'm a peasant. I packed lox and bagels for the two of us, so we ate well. Alaska requires passengers to wear facemasks except when "briefly eating or drinking" and a couple of hand wipes are placed next to each seat. As a concession to Covid, they don't do any kind of transactions that require hand payment by cash or credit cards, so no liquor. They do have free wine in first class and yes wine in a can is everything you feared it was.

Long ago, they removed screens from your seat. Now they have an intranet that you can access on your phone, tablet or computer. Wi-Fi is available at a charge, but it's free to T-Mobile customers. Lots of movies and TV shows are available as well as music. If you want something new-ish, download it from Netflix before you get on the plane.

So once you have your shots, air travel can be on your list again. The CDC has just cleared air travel again for the fully vaccinated but with a number of cautions. So if your flight isn't cancelled or you aren't held hostage by TSA, travel will be temporarily more pleasant than usual. If money is no object, the first class seats are wonderful – wide and well padded. Although, I expected flowers in the first class bathroom.



Happy Travels!



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS



FILM NOIR: The Dark Side of the Screen

By Paul Roelofs

The film noir genre had its beginnings in the silent film era of the late 1920s and early 1930s and was dominated by characteristics of dark atmosphere, long shadow effects, and jarring camera angles, providing the audience with different (and often startling) perspectives and perceptions. Then there were unsavory characters – and often a good measure of violence. The plots frequently focused on lust, murder, corruption, the exploits of hard-boiled private detectives, and unlucky protagonists, drawn to their foreshadowed end.

The genre includes many extraordinary motion pictures that became classics – and to be sure, the genre had its share of not-so-great and forgettable “B” movies. Many noir films featured both top stars of the day and up-and-comers, including Burt Lancaster, James Mason, John Garfield, Robert Taylor, Rita Hayworth, Richard Widmark, Lana Turner, Gene Tierney, Alan Ladd, Humphry Bogart, Orson Welles – and the quintessential noir actress, Gloria Grahame.

The classic noir films were largely produced from 1940 to 1950. There were a handful of notable exceptions released in the 60s (including Alfred Hitchcock’s *Vertigo*) and even a major noir classic in the 70s (Roman Polanski’s *Chinatown*).

At the conclusion of this article, I’ll share a list of some of my favorite noir films.

The Gold Standard for Film Noir

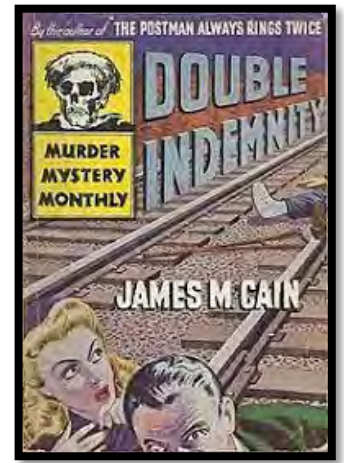
Film noir as an authentic and compelling film genre occurred in 1944. That’s when rising Austrian-born screenwriter/director, Billy Wilder, took on the production of *Double Indemnity*. Though a relatively early noir, nothing has quite surpassed it in possessing all the dominant characteristics of a classic noir movie. In fact, *Double Indemnity* not only became the ultimate noir, but also one of the finest films of any genre.

Double Indemnity quickly became the standard by which all other noir films have been measured. It didn’t come easily. The script was consistently turned down by censors over a period of six years as objectionable due to its storyline of brutal crime, inspired by adultery – and the promise of money. This censorship was imposed by the Studio Relations Committee, which had been formed to implement a strict censorship code. Informally, it was known as the “Hayes Code,” after its founder, Will H. Hayes. But finally, Wilder found a way to make the script work without losing the passion, the lust, and the greed of the plotline.

Double Indemnity was adapted for the screen by Billy Wilder and his current writing partner Raymond Chandler, from a novel by James M. Cain. Cain also

wrote the classic novels, *Mildred Piece*, *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, and *Out of the Past* – all of which became noir film classics. *Double Indemnity* blends all the essential elements of great film noir: a sinister plot, dark imagery, moody and dramatic black and white photography, compelling dialogue, and classic noir characters. In *Double Indemnity*, there's the self-assured, wise-guy sap, a villainess femme fatale, and a cunning detective (in this case it's not a typical shamus like Sam Spade or Phillip Marlowe, but oddly, an insurance company Claims Manager).

Double Indemnity stars Fred MacMurray, Barbara Stanwyck, and Edward G. Robinson. Each actor faced a risky decision in taking on their respective role and each initially refused Wilder's offer to appear in the film. But Wilder had a vision, and he pressed on.



. “Yes, I killed him. I killed him for money – and a woman – and I didn’t get the money and I didn’t get the woman.”

Fred MacMurray had been enjoying a very successful career as a box office favorite with a devoted audience, appearing in light comedy roles. Wilder offered him the role of Walter Neff, a savvy, fast talking insurance agent who becomes sucked into an evil plot of murder. MacMurray was reluctant to have his appealing screen image tarnished by playing a ruthless murderer, but Wilder eventually convinced MacMurray that accepting the role would demonstrate another dimension for MacMurray as a fine actor.

Like MacMurray, Barbara Stanwyck was already an immensely accomplished actress and popular box office star. She was concerned about accepting the role of Phyllis Dietrichson, an icy, seductive and scheming villainess. But she finally accepted the part and played it boldly, becoming the ultimate film noir femme fatale. Her performance raised her credentials as an actress who could handle a wide range of complex roles.

Edward G. Robinson was perhaps the most difficult to convince. Robinson had been a major star, with top billing in a string of successful gangster films. Wilder was now asking Robinson to become a supporting actor as insurance Claims Manager, Barton Keyes. After much coercion, Wilder was able to help Robinson understand the *Double Indemnity* role was an opportunity to transform his career and become a character actor. Robinson finally submitted – a decision that served him well in his long career.

The Perfect Crime

Double Indemnity begins with on-screen narration by mortally-wounded insurance salesman, Walter Neff, using a dictating machine in his Los Angeles office late at night preparing a memo to inform his company's Claims Manager, Barton Keyes, that he's a murderer. Walter lays it out for Keyes, “Yes, I killed him. I killed him for money – and a woman – and I didn’t get the money and I didn’t get the woman.”

As he continues to dictate, the audience is led through a series of dramatic flashbacks. These start with Walter visiting the home of Mr. Dietrichson to renew an auto insurance policy, only to find Dietrichson is

not home. But instead, Walter finds Mrs. Dietrichson. She descends the stairs of her home, looking cool and seductive – and at this moment introduces the audience to the spider-woman who will soon capture her prey. As she appears, the camera focuses from Walter’s point-of-view on Phyllis’ glittering anklet. As Walter begins to discuss the lapsed auto policy, he immediately becomes less interested in the auto policy and far more interested in Phyllis.

The following is an example classic Billy Wilder, rapid-fire, sardonic dialogue – and it sets the tone for the film and the plot...committing the perfect crime.

Walter: That’s a honey of an anklet you’re wearing.
Phyllis: You’re a smart insurance man, aren’t you?
Walter: It’s a living.
Phyllis: You handle all kinds of insurance?
Walter: All kinds.
Phyllis: Accident insurance?
Walter: Sure, all kinds of insurance.



Walter again is attracted by the anklet – and the leg upon which it is wrapped. Then, in a classic sequence of sexual innuendo, they playfully engage in a double-entendre conversation about speeding and traffic tickets – a driving-faster metaphor, suggesting what is to follow.

Walter: I wish you’d tell me what’s engraved on that anklet.
Phyllis: My name, Phyllis.
Walter: Phyllis, huh. I think I like that.
Phyllis: But you’re not sure.
Walter: I’d have to drive it around the block a couple of times.
Phyllis: Mr. Neff, why don’t you drop by tomorrow evening around 8:30. He’ll be here then.
Walter: Who?
Phyllis: My husband. You were anxious to talk to him, weren’t you?
Walter: Yeah, I was. But I’m sort of getting over the idea, if you know what I mean.
Phyllis: There’s a speed limit in this state, Mr. Neff – 45 miles an hour.
Walter: How fast was I going?
Phyllis: I’d say around 90.
Walter: Suppose you get off your motorcycle and give me a ticket.
Phyllis: Suppose I let you off with a warning this time.
Walter: Suppose it doesn’t take.
Phyllis: Suppose I have to whack you over the knuckles.
Walter: Suppose I bust out crying and put my head on your shoulder.
Phyllis: Suppose you try putting it on my husband’s shoulder.

After Walter’s advances are coldly rebuffed, he heads for the door.

Walter: 8:30 tomorrow then. You’ll be here too?
Phyllis: I guess so. I usually am.
Walter: Same chair, same perfume, same anklet?
Phyllis: I wonder if I know what you mean
Walter: (as he exits the house): I wonder if you wonder.

Walter can't get Phyllis off his mind. Their first meeting created a strong, mutual sexual attraction. Walter mostly remembers the pure physical magnetism he felt for her. But Phyllis also has other ideas.

When Walter returns for his appointment, he discovers Mr. Dietrichson is not home. Phyllis then discusses not only renewing the auto insurance, but also buying additional coverage – accident insurance for her husband, who works in the oil fields supervising his crew. Walter suggests a policy which includes a cash benefit that would pay out \$50,000 (big bucks in those days) in case her husband gets killed. It could also include a clause called 'double indemnity,' which would pay twice as much, should Mr. Dietrichson get killed in a 'particular' way. The payout would then be \$100,000.



Walter then sums it up, "It's just like the first time I came here, isn't it? We were talking about auto insurance, only you were thinking about murder. And I was thinking about that anklet." The seduction of Walter by Phyllis is complete.

Walter comes up with a clever plan to get Mr. Dietrichson to sign an accident policy application, when he believes he's signing an auto insurance renewal. Then Walter and Phyllis create a complex and devious plot to kill her husband.



After the murder takes place, and the insurance company is on the hook for the payout, Claims Manager Keyes, becomes increasingly suspicious. "There's a little man inside of me that always tells me when something is wrong. And he's telling me now." He soon believes Mrs. Dietrichson is responsible for the murder and that she must have had an accomplice. Interestingly, he never suspects that person is long-time, trusted salesman and personal friend, Walter Neff.

"I can hear my footsteps. It's the walk of a dead man."

As Keyes, presses on with his investigation, and gets closer and closer to the true nature of the crime, Walter at first becomes uneasy, then terrified the whole scheme will unravel and he will be discovered as a murderer and pay the ultimate price. The Wilder dialogue says it all about Walter's growing fear, "I can hear my footsteps. It's the walk of a dead man."

Double Indemnity received seven Oscar nominations, including Best Picture. Also nominated was Wilder as Best Director, Barbara Stanwyck for Best Actress, Wilder and Chandler for Best Writing, Miklos Rozsa for Best Music, and John Seitz for his extraordinary black and white cinematography.

Double Indemnity was among several other Wilder motion pictures that arguably became the best films of their respective genres:

Sunset Boulevard from 1950 (my personal favorite film) – best drama (as well as being an exceptional noir-style film).

Witness for the Prosecution in 1957 – best courtroom drama.

Some Like It Hot in 1959 – best pure comedy.

In 1960, more well-deserved recognition for Billy Wilder came with *The Apartment*, where Wilder personally won Oscars for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Original Screenplay. The film also won Best Art Direction and Best Film Editing, while capturing Oscar nominations for Jack Lemon as Best Actor and Joseph LaSelle for Best Black and White Cinematography.

Paul's Favorite Film Noir motion pictures...

The Third Man (1949)

The Night of the Hunter (1955)

Strangers on a Train (1953)

The Night and the City (1950)

M (1931)

Chinatown (1974)

Laura (1944)

The Big Sleep (1946)

Caught (1949)

Murder My Sweet (1944)

The Big Heat (1953)

The Maltese Falcon (1941)

The Lady from Shanghai (1948)

The Big Combo (1955)



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

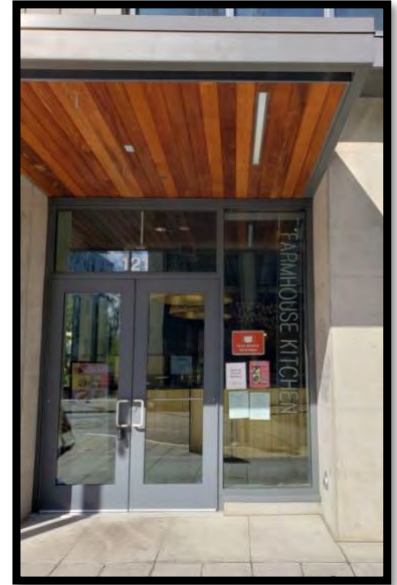
RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT'S NEW IN THE PEARL

Photographed and Compiled by Larry Rosenblum

The pandemic has wreaked havoc on local businesses, but some new shoots are popping up in the Pearl. Happy exploration!

The Farmhouse
121 NW 9th Avenue



Everybody Eats
138 NW 10th Avenue



The Hungry Hero Dessert Co.
437 10th Avenue – Opens in June





Verde Cocina
1131 NW Hoyt Street

Aviv
100 NW 10th Avenue



The Italian Cooperativa
1250 NW 9th Avenue



Momoyama
1022 NW Johnson Street

The Botanist
910 14th Avenue
now with massive rooftop lounge



We're Almost There!
Don't blow it now!

EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

GET TO KNOW OUR STAFF: Rodolfo Lopez

By Paula McGee

Each issue we interview one of our amazing staff members who do such a great job of making our lives and our homes safe, secure and beautiful. In our comings and goings, we stop at the concierge desk to pick up a package or ask a question and we may chat a moment, but it's hard to get to know these important people in those brief encounters. This issue we asked Rodolfo Lopez to share with us a bit about himself and his interests.



Did you grow up in this area? How long have you lived around here?

I was born in Mexico and grew up in Salem since the age of 3. I moved to the Portland area in 2016 and have lived in a few different areas since then including Hillsboro, Beaverton, Happy Valley and currently South Waterfront.

What was it like moving from Mexico to Salem, OR? Was the transition challenging? Or were you too young to remember?

Spanish is my first language, so the most challenging part was learning a new language (English). Once I started attending school, I quickly learned English and was able to communicate fluently in both languages. Everything else was fairly easy to adapt to. Since I was so young, it's difficult to remember the actual process of arriving here. My only memory is from a photograph that was taken of me sleeping on the airplane, so I dozed off on my first airplane flight.

What brought you to The Elizabeth? What type of work were you doing before?

I was working as a Market Specialist prior to starting at The Elizabeth. A Market Specialist oversees the sales of merchandise and has the responsibility of engaging with clients and store employees in order to increase sales through product knowledge, training and in store sales support. Most of my job experience has been related to working with retail brands like Nordstrom, Michael Kors and Macy's, to name a few. The position is a highly sales driven job in order to increase sales from the previous month/year to meet the metrics that are required for a retail company to succeed. This also includes making sure that multiple store locations have the necessary stock and inventory to keep up with the demand of the consumer. However, once COVID came around last year and caused a lot of store closures, I



had no option than to pursue a different career path. That's when I joined the concierge staff at The Elizabeth. Luckily it has been a blessing in disguise for many reasons. I am grateful to be able to challenge myself in my current position as a concierge and I have learned many things that I never expected. It has allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and I can gladly say that I am content to be where I am at now.

What do you like to do in your free time? What are your interests/hobbies?

In my free time I enjoy traveling the most, that is what keeps me inspired and motivated. It has obviously been harder to travel with COVID, but I have a couple destinations planned this year. My absolute favorite place has to be New York City! I studied there for a year in college and loved everything about it. From the food to the entertainment, you can find it all here. They say that NYC has the best pizza, but I personally found some hidden treasures when it comes to amazing pad thai, falafels and classic burgers that are superior. I also can't forget the celebrity sightings right before my eyes including Jake Gyllenhaal, and Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen. They say that East Coast people tend to be cold, however I had some of the most unforgettable acts of kindness from strangers while I was living there, so don't believe everything they say!

Next on my list of travel destinations are Las Vegas and Puerto Vallarta later this year. This will be my first time going to Puerto Vallarta so I'm looking forward to the beaches and the seafood that I hear is their specialty down there.

I also enjoy learning new languages, I am currently working on relearning French. I took some classes a few years ago but forgot most of it due to lack of practice using the language.

I believe in giving back to the community so I also do volunteer work. I enjoy a variety of things including helping plant new trees outdoors in park restorations. I don't mind getting a little dirty if it means something good will come out of it. I also have five nephews/nieces, so working with kids has also become second nature for me when volunteering at the Salem Public Library or The Portland Children's Museum. This usually entails helping kids learn how to read or setting up a variety of activities for them to enjoy in a Discovery Room. I have also been working with a group of friends to collect books and clothing for non-profit organizations like [The Children's Book Bank](#) and donating clothes to the shelters around the city.

What are the best parts of your job and what are the worst/hardest? And what, as residents, can we do that would be helpful?

The best part is being able to make connections with the residents that live here and share all the hidden gems that the Pearl has to offer in terms of food and entertainment. One of my most recent favorites for seafood is Momoyama. I was introduced to it by a resident and after trying out their calamari and ceviche, I was hooked! I also frequent Papi Chulo's for Mexican food or a margarita on a sunny day. For coffee and pastries, I like Nuvrei. If you haven't tried their Rosewater Croissant, you are missing out. And if you are in the mood for a cocktail, Teardrop Lounge transports you into a swanky ambiance that makes you feel like you are playing the role of a movie character living the lush life. Once again, the entertainment part has not been as prevalent currently with COVID, but I am sure once things get better there will plenty to talk about.

The hardest part of my job definitely has to be memorizing and remembering all of the residents' names and faces. This has proven to be quite a challenge during COVID since we are all wearing



masks, and for me it makes it a little more difficult to recognize someone when they are wearing a mask. I apologize if I have called anyone the wrong name.

I honestly feel like everything the residents do now is perfect. I felt welcomed when I first started working at The Elizabeth because of the friendly nature of the residents. At first, I was slightly intimidated only because I did not know what to expect, but just being friendly to a new concierge is the best way to make them feel welcome.

I appreciate all of the kindness and all of the residents in the building for allowing me to be have the opportunity to be a part of The Elizabeth and I would like to just say thank you for everything!

*Need help with a Halloween Costume?
Rodolfo has experience!*



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org
RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

AROUND TOWN

Compiled By Larry Rosenblum

In the Building

There is a lot going on in the Elizabeth Lofts.

Book Club - The Elizabeth Book club continues meeting on the second Monday of each month at 4:30 via ZOOM.

➔ The book being discussed on May 10th is The Sunrise by Victoria Hislop. If you enjoy lively discussions of interesting books and would like to join in, please contact Judy Douglas at judyvdouglas@verizon.net.

Knitting Group – They start with knitting, but they make friends. The club meets in person with masks on the first and third Wednesdays of the month @ 7pm. Contact Chris Steele at Chris@bsteele.com for all the details.

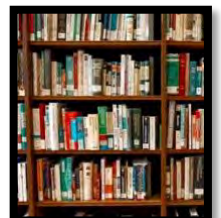
Welcoming Committee – This recently formed group continues to look for volunteers to welcome new residents to the building and generally make the Elizabeth Lofts a more warm and friendly place. If this interests you, please contact Bob Garsha at welcome@elizabethlofts.org to offer your help.

EQ - the newsletter you are reading right now! We are not just a pretty face. We are also an opportunity to exercise your creative muscles. We need writers, photographers, editors and graphic designers and artists. Contact us at EQ@elizabethlofts.org to volunteer.

ELEC – the Elizabeth Lofts Emergency Committee is a group of residents who have come together to make people and the building safer, more secure and more resilient in the event of an emergency.

➔ **We need volunteers** to help us plan for disasters by joining the committee, or as special advisors on issues like medical care or construction. We also need people who we know in advance are ready to help when need strikes. If you would like to learn more or can help, contact ELEC at elec.leads@elizabethlofts.org.

Community Room Book Shelves – A librarian with too much time on their hands recently organized the lending library. Lots of good reads. Check it out!



Virtual Events and other Activities

Portland's 5 Centers for the Arts have a [series of virtual events](#).

Portland Center Stage at the Armory has [recordings of their virtual offerings](#), from original works to staged readings to community partnership events. Look for [upcoming events](#) too!

12 Portland virtual [classical music performances](#).

[The Shows Must Go On!](#) Every Friday, Sir Andrew Lloyd Weber (or whoever runs his YouTube) has been posting videos of concerts, tributes, and filmed productions of Andrew Lloyd Weber shows.

[Lots of live concerts](#) - mostly rock 'n roll and [online pop music concerts](#)

The National Symphony has a [series of live online performances](#) and an archive of past events.

[Wine & Vinyl Hour](#) – Every Thursday @ 6PM Mayer Hawthorne performs on YouTube.

A different concert every Friday @6pm streamed live by the [45th Parallel Universe](#).

[Chamber Music Northwest](#) – Jason Vieaux (5/15)

[Oregon Symphony](#) – music, talk and the Symphony's story time for kids and returns in October

The Grammy's has compiled a [list of streaming concerts](#) from a wide range of musicians.

[Metropolitan Opera](#) , [Berlin Philharmonic](#) , [Seattle Symphony](#)

[Theatrical Performances](#) – most are pay-per-view

Britain's [National Theatre](#) and [The Globe Theatre](#) – some content is free

[Playbill's](#) list of live theatrical performances. Check back each week.

Portland Art Museum's [Film and New Media Happy Hour](#), [PAM and NWFC at Home](#), and a podcast [Art Unbound](#).

[British Museum](#), [National Gallery of Art](#), [The Met](#), [2500 more museums](#) – seriously!

[Open Culture](#) – online classes on all kinds of topics and seminars

[Harvard Online](#) – yes that Harvard and lots of classes are free

[Coursera](#) – A large collection of free online courses

[Learn Out Loud](#) – audio and video personal development courses

[Personal Growth Courses](#) – the name says it all



[Sky Watch](#) – you need to find a dark place and a cloudless night for [meteor showers](#).

If you have a library card, [Kanopy](#) provides access to free movies, books, podcasts and more.

[Open Library](#) – online free books and [OverDrive](#) – portal to public libraries for e-books and audiobooks

[Stitcher's](#) collection of podcasts

[LibriVox](#) – ebooks and audiobooks in the public domain and [1000 Free Audiobooks](#)

The [Oregon Zoo](#) has Zoom meetings with the animals and it's re-opened as well.

Don't forget free virtual get togethers. [Zoom](#), [Google Hangouts](#) (requires free Chrome browser), [Houseparty](#) is especially good for playing games, [Facetime](#) for iPhone users, Facebook's [Messenger](#), and of course [Skype](#).

Check These Out Before They Are Gone

[Ryan Pierce and Charlene Liu](#) – Elizabeth Leach Gallery (417 9th Ave.) by appointment only through May 27th.

Woodland Tulip Festival – ongoing through May 2. [Tickets](#) must be purchased in advance.

Earth Day is April 22nd, but should be every day. [Check out all these events](#).

[Lora Webb Nichols](#) and [Johnnie Chatman](#) – photography at the Blue Sky Gallery Wed.-Sat. till May 1. 122 NW 8th Ave.

[Cinco de Mayo 5k, 10k & half marathon](#) – May 1 (Don't they know what cinco means?)

The real Cinco de Mayo – May 5th. No word if 13th Ave. will host its annual party, but there are lots of cerveza and tacos in the Pearl.

Call your Mom! Mother's day is May 9th

[Rose Festival Treasure Hunt](#) – clues drop Memorial Day weekend

Has the virus taken a bite out of you?

Well bite back! [Vampires Masquerade Ball](#) – May 29th @ Portland Art Museum

[Starlight Parade and Fun Run](#) – June 5th @ 8PM

National Trails Day – free admission to Oregon and Washington State parks – June 5, 12 & 13

[Rose Festival Grand Floral Parade](#) – June 12th 10AM @ Downtown Locations



[Dragon Boat Races](#) – June 12-13 8AM-5PM @ Downtown Waterfront



[Gay Pride Festival & Parade](#) –
June TBD @ Zidell Yards/ Parade @ Burnside and Park Ave.



Father's Day – Buy your Dad a beer! June 20th

[Portland International Beer Fest](#) – June 18-20 @ North Park Blocks

[Waterfront Blues Festival](#) – July 2-5 @ Zidell Yards

[Portland Craft Beer Festival](#) – July 4 @ Fields Park

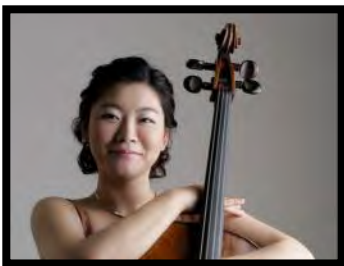


[The Big Float](#) – July 10 @ downtown Willamette River

[Mississippi Street Fair](#) – July TBD @ NE Mississippi Avenue

[Oregon Brewers Festival](#) – July 28-31 @ Tom McCall Park

Live Performances



[The Dinner Detective](#) – participatory murder mystery Sat. nights @ Downtown Embassy Suite

[Chamber Music Northwest](#) – still online only

[Oregon Music Festival](#) – June 20 through July @ various locations

[Music on Main](#) – Will be back in 2021 @ Main Street between Broadway and Park

[Portland Center Stage](#) @ the Armory. Still waiting on their 2021 season.

[Portland Center for the Arts](#) is 5 venues offering music, theater, comedy and more.

[Moda Center](#) has many of the biggest music acts.

[Oregon Ballet Theater](#) is reimagining itself. See what they are up to.

It's only rock'n roll. No, there's much more at the [Crystal Ballroom](#) (1332 W Burnside)

It's not around the corner, but the [Aladdin Theater](#) has some great music

We miss Jimmy Mak's, but fine jazz can be found at the [Jack London Revue](#) and at [Wilf's](#)



Not the Usual Hollywood Blockbusters

[Living Room Theater](#) (10th and Stark) and [Cinema 21](#) (616 NW 21st Ave.) offer more than the usual fare

[NW Film Center](#) offers a variety of new and classic films in the Whitsell Auditorium (inside the Portland Art Museum)

Thanks for Reminding Me

[Portland Art Museum](#) reopens April 10th. Explore [current exhibitions](#) and [Ansel Adams](#) starting May 5th.

Local galleries open their door every First Thursday evening. Here's a [map of participating galleries](#). Don't forget the [Portland Art Museum](#) is free from 5-8 PM.

The [Saturday Market](#) reopens on April 17 and is next to the Burnside Bridge

[PSU Farmers Market](#) – Saturdays 8:30-2pm @ SW Park and Montgomery

OMSI is open again. Groups are limited to six people. [Advance ticket purchase](#) is strongly recommended.

There is nothing better than a good book, except listening to the author talk about it. Check out what's happening at [Powell's](#)

The Oregon Trail is now paved with wine. Why not spend a day along the [Oregon Wine Trail](#) enjoying a glass of your favorite?

"I'm ready for my close-up, Mr. DeMille" is not part of Oregon film history, but *Sometimes A Great Notion* is part of the [Oregon Film Trail](#).



The outdoors is usually an option and the Oregonian came up with a list of Oregon's 7 Wonders and then reconsidered what else deserved to be on the list. [Check out the list](#) and then go exploring.

There is more fun than we can mention. So check out the [Willamette Week's](#) or [Portland Mercury's searchable list](#) of events in the area.

We endeavor to make this list accurate, but some events may change their dates or be cancelled and a few may have occurred before we could publish.



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS