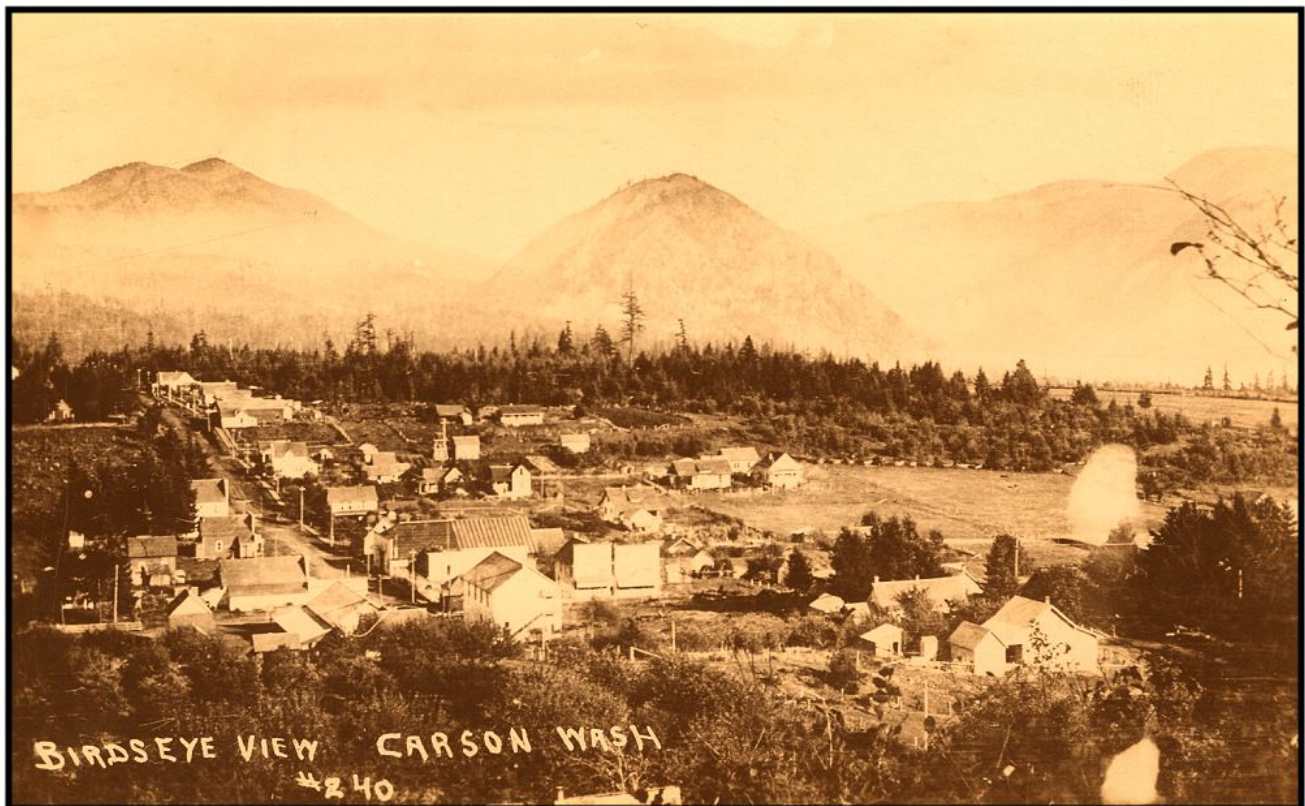




# WEBFOOTER EXTRA

March 2019

## Carson, Washington – Columbia River Resort Town in the Northwest



Birdseye view of Carson, Washington, circa 1920.

**WEBFOOTERS POST CARD CLUB**

PO Box 17240

Portland OR 97217-0240



[www.thewebfooters.com](http://www.thewebfooters.com)



**Street scene in Carson, Washington, circa 1910.**

The community of Carson, Washington, is located on the east bank of Carson Creek and the west bank of the Wind River, a little over one mile upslope from the Columbia River, at Columbia River Mile (RM) 154. The Carson area was settled in the late 1870s and early 1880s when sawmills were built using the waters of Carson Creek. Lewis and Clark passed by this area on October 30, 1805, calling the Wind River the "New Timbered River," after all the ash trees on its banks. A little controversy surrounds the naming of Carson, but the most likely scenario is that it is a tribute to Kit Carson.

Prior to 1893, the nearest store and post office was at Cascade Locks, Oregon. To get there and back by rowboat was to say the least, very inconvenient. In that year, A.G. Tucker, an old bachelor, started a store in a miserable, tumble-down shack which was built by the sawmill company. The citizens of Carson applied for a post office and were granted a twice-a-week mail service.



Mr. Tucker, an ardent admirer of Kit Carson, suggested the name "Carson" for the post office and the name was adopted without objection. Years earlier, there had been a post office at Carson when it was known as "Sprague Landing" from 1879 to 1880.

Carson Hot Springs was discovered in 1876 by Isadore St. Martin. While on a hunting expedition with a friend, St. Martin noticed steam along the river and found the hot springs bubbling up among the rocks. They marked the spot and St. Martin later filed an Indian Homestead claim on the site.

St. Martin took his wife, Margaret, who suffered from neuralgia, to the hot springs. News of her relief spread rapidly and people began to arrive in great numbers to bathe in the springs. Those early bathers navigated up the Wind River to the original bathhouses.

In 1897, St. Martin began construction of the historical Hotel, completing it in 1901. The cabins and bathhouse were added in 1923 and are still being used.

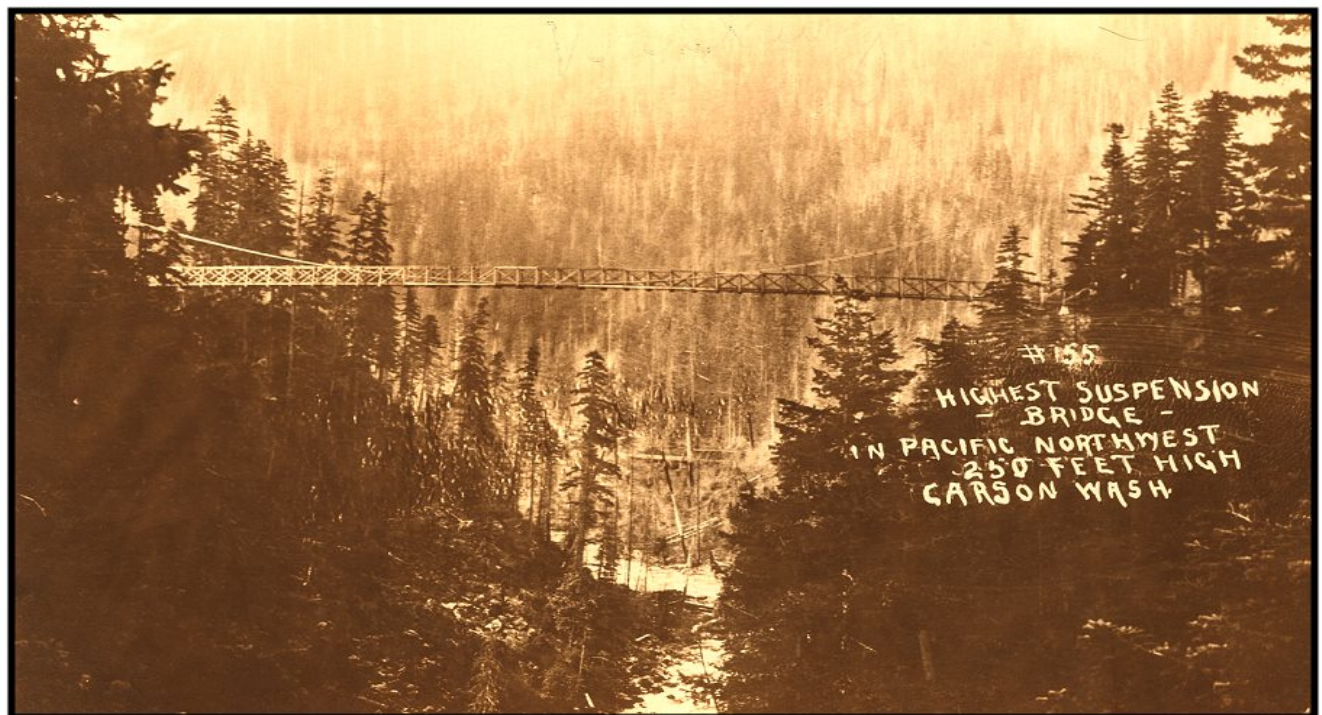


Patrons at Shipherd's Springs in Carson, Washington play croquet.





Patrons of the Mineral Springs Hotel salute the healthful effects of the water in Carson, WA.



Across the flats of the valley proper, where the soil is gravelly, road building (such as was needed) was comparatively easy but the crossing of Wind River canyon, three miles north of Carson, was a difficult task. In 1890, the first bridge was built across Wind River Canyon one-half mile upstream from the present cable bridge, by donation labor. Two years later this bridge was washed away and for many months a cable crossing was the only means of getting into or out of the upper valley. Next came a one-lane suspension bridge built in 1913. The current "High Bridge," built in 1957, is the fourth bridge to span the Wind River canyon north of Carson.



Henry Metzger, who settled in the Carson area in 1883, wrote in his article "History of Settlement of the Wind River Valley" ("Skamania County Pioneer", April 21, 1939, online at "rootsweb.com"):

"In 1880, A. S. Estabrook built the first sawmill in Wind River Valley, a water-powered concern on Carson Creek. About 1881, a company built a good-sized steam sawmill where the town of Carson now stands. Timber was cut from some 1,200 acres on the lower valley flat, and much of it was secured by placing 'fake' or temporary settlers on the land until the timber was cut. The logs were drafted to the mill with ox teams and the lumber flumed to the Columbia River and shipped to The Dalles by sailboat. In 1886, this sawmill stopped operations and it was packed up and moved out of the valley.

"The development of the valley was rather slow until about 1900, or soon thereafter, at which time hotels were built at both the St. Martin's and Shipherd's Hot Springs, 16 miles up the valley.

"By about 1910, the town of Carson boasted having five hotels, including St. Martins and Shipherd's, a restaurant, four stores, two large livery barns, a blacksmith, a barber, two butcher shops, a bakery, a weekly newspaper (for a short time only), a billiard hall, a dance hall, a brass band, two schoolhouses, a church and after the railroad was built, seven saloons. Four of these saloons were in town, one was at Shipherd's Springs, one was at St. Martin Springs and one was near the steamboat landing. The building of the Northbank railroad in 1907 brought a land boom to the valley. Uncleared stump and brush land sold for as much as \$100 per acre on the lower flat."



An unpaved road served as the entrance to Shipherd's Hot Springs Hotel at Carson, WA.





Summer Cottages at Shipherd's Hot Springs in Carson, Washington.



Government Mineral Springs Hotel was built in 1909 and burned in 1937.





Shipherd's Hot Springs Hotel at Carson, WA.



Shipherd's Springs Hotel, which opened about 1902 and burned in 1938.



# UPCOMING SHOWS

A vintage-style photograph of a man in a white shirt and dark pants standing next to a horse-drawn wagon. The wagon is dark-colored with white lettering that reads "TEA JEWEL CO.", "IMPORTERS MANUFACTURERS", "PORTLAND", "965", and "HEADQUARTERS CHICAGO U.S.A.". A horse is harnessed to the wagon. The background shows a wooden house and trees.

**ANTIQUE PAPER ROUND-UP**  
**APRIL 20-21, 2019**

FREE ADMISSION  
FREE PARKING

*39th Annual*

**1001 N SCHMEER RD - PORTLAND, OREGON**

[www.antiquepaperroundup.com](http://www.antiquepaperroundup.com)

Antique Paper Round-Up  
at Portland Meadows

A vintage-style photograph of a man in a dark jacket and hat standing next to a donkey-drawn wagon. The donkey is light-colored and harnessed to the wagon. The background is a dry, hilly landscape.

**Greater Portland Antique Paper Faire**  
**September 28-29, 2019**

Free Admission -- Free Parking

[www.portlandpapershows.com](http://www.portlandpapershows.com)

Free Appraisals

**Portland Meadows Turf Club**  
**1001 N Schmeer Rd**