

Flower Growing in Troutdale

In 1928, A.D. Kendall, station agent of the Troutdale Rail Depot, took a custom-made box, filled it with his most prized gladiolus, loaded it aboard a refrigerated rail car and set out for the American Gladiolus Society's annual show and competition in Toledo, Ohio.



Kendall, his wife and the glads all arrived in fine shape five days later and the Troutdale grown flowers carried numerous awards. His feat of shipping the flowers by rail wowed the other growers. Kendall and Clarence Parsons, who built the box to ship the flowers, were among the pioneers in the flower industry in Troutdale.

Also known for their gladiolus were the Malcom family. The late Jack Malcom never got over his love for flowers and became owner of a florist shop by the same name in Gresham. The Malcom family started their business in Troutdale where they raised gladiolus for the Portland market. Malcom's parents, Roy and Lytha Malcom, took the cut flowers to Portland to sell in the market. Flowers grown from bulbs, glads and daffodils particularly, were a flourishing crop here for many years.

The channel block building just south of the City Conference Building on Buxton was originally a warehouse for the storage of gladiolus bulbs. The bulb industry waned after World War II, partly because of a change in importation of foreign bulbs and partly due to damage to the crops from fluoride emissions of the aluminum plant in Troutdale.

Up on Cabbage Hill, just east of the Sandy River, the Wand family grew both glads and daffodils. Those flowers, and others in the area, were damaged by early fluoride emissions from the wartime aluminum plant built in Troutdale. Those emissions were curbed, and the plant is now gone, but few flower growers remain in Corbett.