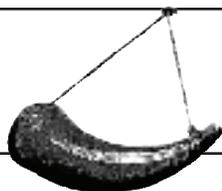
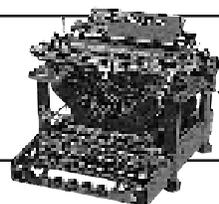

BECAUSE OUR HISTORY MATTERS



Prairie Gazette

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LAKEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY



WINTER 2011

Annual meeting highlights

Avril, Nelson named to board; officers re-elected

The annual meeting of the Lakewood Historical Society saw two new board members elected and a trio of veteran members re-elected. New board members include Jack Avril and Barbara Lord Nelson. Re-elected directors included Board President Becky Huber, Treasurer Gary Fowler and Director Bill Harrison.

The meeting, held at the Little Church on the Prairie Nov. 9, was highlighted by Sam Mitsui's presentation on the Japanese American Experience during World War II. Huber said the meeting also included reports from the Society's standing committees.

There were more than

50 members and guests in attendance.

Newly selected board member Barbara Lord Nelson moved to Lakewood 50 years ago with her husband who was stationed at McChord Air Force Base. With five growing sons, she purchased the largest house she could find in Glenwood Acres and two of the boys still live in the neighborhood. Los Angeles, Poulsbo and Guam are homes for the other sons.

She worked for the Clover Park School District, The Suburban Times, operated a welcoming service called Person-to-Person, and had talk shows on KTNT, KMO

and KLAY radio stations.

Avril is a 1950 graduate of Clover Park High School and the University of Washington's Class of '58 where he received a BS degree in Ceramics Engineering. He spent 20 years as an engineer in various disciplines followed by another 20 years performing forensics investigations.

Avril is an active member of the Ancient Warriors, an alumni group of Clover Park graduates from the 1940s and 1950s. Many of the group were "sport jocks" and they currently meet twice a month. He served on the LHS Board in 2006-2007 and was membership committee chair.

How a school district helped build the community

The new year will bring the Lakewood Historical Society's museum a new, updated look with a new exhibit featuring the Clover Park School District and how it helped build the community of what has become the city of Lakewood, according to an announcement by Society President Becky

Huber.

This exhibit will feature a timeline, historic photographs and artifacts, and oral histories from current and former Clover Park School District alumni and staff. It will tell the story of how the district began as five small independent schools, which banded

together in 1928 to become more than the sum of their parts, then grew even further with the outbreak of World War II and the necessity of educating the influx of citizens brought in by the enormous expansion of the military in

Continued on Page 3



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Cyrus Happy III
Elizabeth Poinsett

Museum Consultants

Mary Bowlby
Meg Justus

Prairie Gazette

Prairie Gazette is the official publication of the Lakewood Historical Society. The newsletter is published four times a year. Distribution is directly to members and available at the Lakewood Historical Museum, 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr. SW, Lakewood, WA 98499

The staff of Prairie Gazette actively encourages input from the Society's members as well as the general public regarding story ideas or any other aspects of this newsletter and the Lakewood Historical Society.

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MEETINGS

The Lakewood Historical Society formed in 1998 to preserve and share Lakewood's rich history through programs, displays and publications. The Society offers frequent programs on topics of historical interest. Most programs are free and open to the public. Visit the website for information on events and activities.

www.lakewoodhistorical.org

EDITOR

Dave Sclair

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President's Message

It is hard to believe another year is gone and winter is definitely here. It is a time to reflect on our accomplishments this year and there are many that we can be proud of - not the least of which is your continued support and generosity to the Society and Museum. We ended 2010 in much better financial health.

We have been awarded a grant by the City of Lakewood from the Lodging Tax Funds to help the Society in the promotion of tourism through marketing, publicity and promotion of the History Museum, educational exhibits and programs provided by the Society. This city support will help us maintain the momentum developed over the past couple years and continuing in 2011.

The additional funds have allowed us to begin the much needed reorganization of the museum. I am especially excited about the new museum layout and new exhibit on the History of the Clover Park School District, planned to debut in February. We will have a "Grand Opening" with an evening event so watch for the date. It will coincide with the celebration of Elizabeth Mann Poinsett's 100th birthday. Her mother, Iva Alice Mann, was the force behind the formation of the school district in 1928, so it is a perfect time to honor them both.

Even though all of us who attended the "Max is Back Vaudeville Show" in May had a great time and enjoyed the entertainment we are unable to plan a similar event due to the current health challenges of Marcus Walker who portrayed Max Frolic. Rather, a different fund raising event has been scheduled for the Summer of 2011. The current owner of Madera (or Villa Carmen) has generously donated her home as the venue. A committee has been formed and we'll announce the details soon.

Several statistics accumulated this year indicate our marketing efforts have been effective under leadership of Dave Sclair. Not only does he edit our outstanding quarterly newsletter he also ensures that announcements for our regular programs and events are publicized in the media. The most significant examples of our success are museum visitors have increased 65% over last year, the number of group tours has quadrupled, our outreach programs contacts increased 66%, monthly program attendance was up 30% and our membership has grown 11% to over 300. A full report will be made available early next year.

All of the expanding commitments require an engaged board whose leadership is necessary to succeed. The new board members add a great deal of experience and enthusiasm and I'm looking forward to working with them. We also need volunteers who are willing to carve out some time from their busy schedules to assist on committees. Please call me to see where you can help.

I can never give you enough thanks and recognition for all of your support you have given me.

Becky Huber

How a school district helped... continued from Page 1

the area, to become the unified school district it is today.

“It will probably be necessary to close the museum for a short period while a new exhibit based on the history of the Clover Park School District is being created,” she explained. The closure will be kept to an absolute minimum and the entire project is slated

Do you have family history of the Civil War

Nick Adams, a retired elementary school teacher, will be our May 2011 speaker with a focus on the beginning of the 150th anniversary remembrances of the American Civil War. He has written a book, *The Uncivil War: Battle in the Classroom* that is about fictional classmates who are given an assignment to discover their Civil War roots.

To help him prepare, he would be interested in the names of any Lakewood families who have Civil War veterans in their past. Many former soldiers moved west in the 1870s, 80s, and 90s. More recent immigrants to our community brought family connections with them. If you fit either category, please contact him at carmodnick@comcast.net, or notify the Lakewood Historical Society by calling 253-682-3480.

to be completed by the middle of February.

The Society leader pointed out that there have not been any major changes to exhibits in the museum since it was opened in 2006. Huber said there have been additions and minor changes during the four years since the doors opened but this will be the first major overhaul of the exhibits as well as creation of a brand new one.

In many ways, the Clover Park School District is an example of the growth of school districts across the state of Washington, in its unification and growth triggered by worldwide events like the war and the peaceful baby boom that came afterwards. The Clover Park School District is unusual in the extent that local military facilities were and are intertwined with its operations, and in the technical college this partnership spawned. A third essential part of the Clover Park School District’s development came about because Lakewood did not incorporate as a city until less than twenty years ago. Because of this, the district has been and still is a central focal point for the community in this part of Pierce County.

Meg Justus was hired as a museum consultant in October to do the majority of the research and development for the exhibit. Other new ele-

ments that will be added to this exhibit includes a rotating art show in the entry area sponsored by the Lakewood Arts Commission; new labeling for the current permanent exhibits and a new layout in the front of the museum.

Located in the historic Lakewood Colonial Center at 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr. SW, the museum has continued to attract increasing numbers to its doors.

“All of this is an important story that needs to be told. And one that will be of interest to anyone who is interested in schools, local history, the Lakewood area, or the way community is created,” Huber said, “and it is exciting to be able to pull it all together in one exhibit.”

A special evening event will be held to debut the grand opening of the new layout and exhibits. The date and time will be announced later

**Have you asked
a relative, friend
or neighbor to join
you
in a visit to the
Lakewood
History
Museum?**

Why Not!

Lakewood women recall lifetime in Lakewood

By Candy Tingstad

“When it was time to move from my big house to a smaller one, I knew I had to continue to live in Lakewood. It is my home.” Thus began a delightful afternoon conversation with sisters, Venette Hagen and Dee Martinac.

The Maybin sisters, born to Venette and Corky Maybin, moved to Lakewood in August of 1929 at the ages of eight and nine. Their home on Alfaretta Street was a short walk to Lake Steilacoom. At the time, open prairie afforded spectacular views of Mt Rainier from many places in the “Lakes area.” Describing their childhoods as idyllic, active, and memorable, they both miss the carefree, less stressful days of a simpler time. Families did not lock doors, they left keys in car ignitions and knew most people in the area. The Armstrong’s farm property included a pond, by the waterwheel on Clover Creek, where the kids gathered by bonfire to skate in the winter, meet friends and view Mt Rainier in the setting sun. Lake Steilacoom frequently froze solid enough for skating. Swimming, climbing trees, playing tennis in the street, and baseball with the boys, added to summer fun. Eventually there was one tennis court built at the junior high, on the current Clover Park High School property.

In 1929 there were five elementary schools, and Clover Park Junior High School. For high school the choices were Stadium or Lincoln “in town.” Dee and Venette chose Stadium. Lakewood boys they called “The Bobs,” Barlow and Doten,

often provided transportation into town for after school events and dances. There were few cars in those days, perhaps only three in the Stadium parking lot. The “townies” at Stadium seemed to think the Lakes area kids were “hicks from the sticks,” but Venette and Dee would not have changed their childhoods for life in the city.

For Venette and Dee, the Oaks dance hall plays in their memories. Before becoming the Lakewood Ice Arena, on Lake Steilacoom, Dee went to a dance there at age 14. There were marathon dances there during the depression. Venette would cross the lake by boat, climb onto the high-dive platform and watch couples dancing on Saturday nights.

When Norton Clapp was considering building the Lakewood Colonial Center he hired “the Bobs” to sit at the triangle, which is now about Gravelly Lake Dr. and Motor Avenue, to count the cars going by. He was looking for business trade. The only significant store in Lakewood was in the building that later became the Little Church on the Prairie. The Maybin family also shopped in the Japanese markets which lined the area around 84th and South Tacoma Way.

By 1929 the trolley from town had ceased running, but

the trestle remained over Ponce DeLeon Creek. The Krogh’s owned a gas station with one pump, and a very small store, memorably stocking candy for the school children to buy. The Andersons lived in the one house next to Park Lodge. Dee remembers the wood racing track, then no longer in use, which later became Mueller Harkins Airport, and later the Navy Base, before Clover Park Technical College.

Golf was always a draw to the Lakes area. The ‘girls’ remember a 27 hole golf course near what is now Hipkins and Steilacoom Blvd. They think the owners lost it during the depression. They have both been members of the Tacoma Country and Golf Club for 61 years.

Graduating from high school in 1938 and 1939, both eventually married and settled in Lakewood. When asked about changes over time, they cited the building of the first Villa Plaza Shopping Center, and the impact of WWII as huge contributors to population growth. Although they miss the days of their perfect childhoods, and wish some things were different, they would not choose another place to live. Lakewood is home, and where their heart-warming memories abound.

**Now is the time for all good members to join in
the aid of the Lakewood Historical Society**

Sponsor a new member * Become a museum docent

Attend a monthly program * Serve on a committee

Your help is needed now!

Lakewood Historical Society

6211 Mount Tacoma Dr SW, Lakewood WA 98498

253-682-3480 <http://www.lakewoodhistorical.org>

A photographic journey into 2010 programs

2010 has been an activity-filled year for the Society with monthly programs drawing the largest crowds we've ever seen.

Dick Blumenthal started our program series in January with a presentation on Lt. Charles Wilkes' 1840's exploration of Puget Sound.

In February Steilacoom resident Nancy Covert brought us the history of local newspapers, called Black and White and Re(a)d all over.

The photos of Bart Smith enchanted a large crowd in March as "The Trail Guy" took us with him photographically as he hiked the 11 National Scenic Trails, a journey of 16,500 miles.

A vaudeville style variety show, "Max is Back," starring Lakewood Playhouse's Marcus Walker took place in May.

May saw the Society touring the historic 1921-built Rhodesleigh Estate home on Lake Steilacoom.

Steilacoom resident and historian Joan Curtis took us out to McNeil Island with her highly entertaining story about the "Bad Boys of McNeil Island in June."

A tour of the Lakeside Club facilities on American Lake highlighted July Society adventures.

Lakewold Gardens was site for the August meeting with tours of the grounds as well as a showing of the remastered DVD "Where the Blue Poppy Grows." It was recently shown on PBS.

The fascinating history of how Lakewood Industrial Park grew from its origins as a US Navy Supply Depot was shown by manager Tim Puryear in September using photos from the industrial park's archives.

Background of the area's historic cemeteries was presented in October covering the Old Settlers' Cemetery, Masonic Cemetery, Jewish Cemetery and Western State Hospital patient cemetery.

November's annual meeting was highlighted by Sam Mitsui's presentation, The Japanese American Experience in World War II.

The year-ending program was a holiday open house at the Museum.



May - Rhodesleigh Estate home on Lake Steilacoom



June - McNeil Island



February - Newspapers



March - Trail Guy Bart Smith showing photos

LAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM
2010 MUSEUM FUND CONTRIBUTORS - December 31, 2010 YTD

Goal: \$25,000

Actual: \$20,777 from 160 donors

City of Lakewood Lodging Tax helps support history museum promotions, displays & exhibits.

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**LAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM
2010 FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Beginning Cash on Hand - January 1, 2010

Checking	\$ 1,907.36
Money Market	\$10,807.58
Total	\$ 12,714.94

Income

Grants	\$30,077.67
Memberships	\$ 5,405.00
Donations – Museum Fund	\$13,017.75
Sponsorships	\$ 1,500.00
Memorials	\$ 1,250.00
Special Events & Fund Raisers	\$ 5,185.00
Bank Interest	\$ 120.53
Other	\$ 672.55
Total Income	\$57,228.50

Expenses

Operations & Administration	\$ 5,354.21
Web Site Development & Maintenance	\$ 545.00
Contract Services – Museum Consultants	\$ 6,198.44
Permanent Museum Study	\$ 1,060.15
Insurance	\$ 1,780.00
Museum Lease	\$18,000.00
Museum Exhibits	\$ 654.61
Postage, Copies & Printing	\$ 1,838.00
Museum Annual Fund	\$ 4,063.17
Special Events & Fund Raisers	\$ 4,275.73
Marketing/Publicity/ Advertising	\$12,398.34
Total Expenses	\$56,067.65

Ending Cash on Hand – December 31, 2010

Checking	\$ 1,902.28
Money Market	\$11,973.51
Total	\$13,875.79

.... and more of our generous contributors in 2011

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Dale and Marlene Wirsing

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Programs and Activities for Winter 2011

All sessions start at 7 pm in Lakewood Library meeting room

Tuesday, January 18 - **“History of Lakewood Ice Arena”**

Before it was an ice arena, the building opened in 1923 as the posh Oakes Pavilion with dancing to a live orchestra. In 1938, it was converted to the Ice Arena by Norton Clapp. It was demolished in 1982 when the roof collapsed.

February - **Opening of updated and revised museum and the new exhibit, “History of Clover Park School District.”**

March & April - Programs yet to be scheduled

May 17 - **“Uncivil War: Battle of the Classroom”**

To commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the start of the Civil War, author Nick Adams will review his book.

SAVE THIS DATE! July 31st will be our special event at Madera!