Veterans Hospital Celebrates 90 Years of Service

Information compiled from a 30-page history of the American Lake VA Hospital, by Gary Reese and Frank Jackson, in the Tacoma Public Library’s Northwest Room archives.

By Nancy Covert

Seventy-five years after Capt. Charles Wilkes led his marines in a celebration of the first American Fourth of July on the plains of American Lake, known then by its Native American name of Spotsith, a group of 150 Tacoma businessmen presented a petition to the Board of Pierce County Commissioners asking them to call a special election to authorize the issuance of $2 million in bonds for purchasing the American Lake site for a Cantonment.

The Commissioners agreed, and the election was set for January 6, 1917. Authorization passed, and the American Lake site was purchased. Snow-clad Mt. Rainier guarded its eastern horizon, and American Lake bounded it on the west.

A revocable license from the War Department, signed by the Secretary of the Army and dated January 3, 1923, leased 377 acres of the army’s 67,000-acre Camp Lewis (later Fort Lewis; today Joint Base Lewis McChord) for the Veterans Hospital at American Lake, said to have the most beautiful physical setting of all the Veterans Administration hospitals.

The 377 acres includes approximately 91 acres in lawns, 25 acres in general farming, five acres in berries, and approximately 60 acres in a nine-hole golf course, all surrounded by an additional 1,120 acres of wooded lands. The soil is filled with rock fragments characteristic of glacial drift. The buildings, of Spanish-American type architecture, are nestled along a beautiful shoreline of 1.8 miles.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs website, the United States has the most comprehensive system for veterans of any nation in the world. This system traces its roots back to 1636 when the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony were at war with the Pequot Indians. The Pilgrims passed a law stating that disabled soldiers would be supported by the colony.

The Continental Congress of 1776 encouraged enlistments during the Revolutionary War by providing pensions for disabled soldiers. In the early days of the Republic, individual States and communities provided direct medical care.

Continued on page 10

What's Inside:

- President’s Message
- Hawaiian Raffle
- Dr. Klopping, DDS
- Donors, Members
- Finances
- Our First Shopping Center
- Remembering Harold LeMay
- New in the Artist’s Corner
- We Need Your Help!
- Authors Want Your Photos
- Local Historians Honored
- Programs & Events

American Lake Veterans Hospital, Lakewood, Washington

“I spent the first eleven years of my life in a mental hospital. Before you gasp and say, ‘Well, she certainly seems OK to me,’ let me explain that my father, Dr. Norman Mace, was a psychiatrist at the Veterans Hospital near Tacoma, Washington.”

—Peggy Mace Bal

Programs and Activities for Winter 2013

Thurs, March 7th, 5:30-7 pm - Reception for new artist, George Zantua, Lakewood History Museum, 6211 Mt Tacoma, DR SW, refreshments served.

Tues, March 19th, 7 pm - History of Women in Aviation: Then and Now; celebrating Women’s History Month, the WASPS (Women’s Airforce Service Pilots) of WW II and women pilots from McChord Field will be honored.


SAVE THE DATE! New Exhibit opens Sat, April 6th, Lakewood History Museum, 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr SW, Ribbon Cutting at 1 PM, refreshments served.

Tues, April 16th, 7 pm - Lakewood’s Pioneer Commercial Development, history of Lakewood Colonial Center, opened in 1937 and Villa Plaza, opened in 1967; the planned shopping centers that provided the Lakes District residents with all of the services and products within their own community.

Monthly programs are held in the Parish Hall at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, 10630 Gravelly Lake Drive SW, next to the Lakewood Library.

Find us on Facebook (search for Lakewood Historical Society Washington State) or check our website for more information and current events: www.LakewoodHistorical.org
President’s Message

There are several comments that I wanted to make regarding the past year’s accomplishments. Foremost, is recognizing the generosity of our members and friends who have made donations to the Annual Museum Fund. We exceeded last year’s total with contributions from nearly 200 people. This ensures the continued operation of the History Museum that has become a vital tourist attraction in the Lakewood community. We again had over 1,100 people visit the Museum and over 1,200 attended our events, programs and activities.

Another popular activity will be pursuing the installation of several new historic markers. Plaques for four sites have been fabricated: the Old Settlers Cemetery, the Heath Farm, the Lakewood Ice Arena and Thomewood Castle. We plan dedications but they are awaiting the “perfect” rocks to mount them on. If you happen to know where boulders can be located, please contact Glen Spieht at 253-584-3930.

We have some exciting programs planned this year. Several of them will showcase local businesses. The first was presented on Feb. 19th featuring Harold LeMay, founder of LeMay Enterprises. His fame as a car collector exceeded even his success in business but the story behind the man and his business is just as fascinating, as you’ll see on page 6.

In March we will be celebrating Women’s History Month by showcasing Women in Aviation: Then and Now. The WASPS (Women’s Airforce Service Pilots) and current women pilots assigned to McChord Field will be honored.

If you have a topic you would like presented as a program don’t hesitate to inform any of the committee or involve yourself in short term projects. See the details under NEED HELP on page 8.

This year we will be doing more outreach in the community. One of the new activities will be participating in Jim Lakewood Farmers’ Market in partnership with other heritage organizations. The City’s pilot project was a huge success last year. This year it will be weekly on Tuesdays from 11 am-3 pm starting June 4th through September 17th. Look for more information in the next newsletter.

Lakewood Historians Receive Awards

By Phil Raschke

The Heritage League of Pierce County recently presented their Third Annual Recognition Awards at the Washington State History Museum. Karen Hass, President and Master of Ceremonies made the awards following recommendations from the League’s awards committee.

Phil Raschke, Becky Huber and Steve Dunkelberger

The Lakewood Historical Society received the Heritage League 2012 Institutional Achievement Award for their acclaimed “The Future Remembered” program which highlighted the 50th Anniversary of the Seattle World’s Fair and related events in the Lakewood area. The program included a special 12 page edition of the Society’s “Prairie Gazette” newsletter. Becky Huber, President of the Lakewood Historical Society accepted the award.

Lakewood resident Phil Raschke received the League’s “Community Connections” award for his “Historical Phil” radio series which airs daily at 9:30 a.m. on KLAY Radio, 1180 AM. The “Historical Phil” show provides Pierce County listeners with a daily historical look at interesting people and events in the Pierce County area. Cited programs included “Tacoma’s Old History Museum. Karen Hass, President and Master of Ceremonies made the awards following recommendations from the League’s awards committee.

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activities for war veterans.

A pair of plain wrought-iron lanterns sit atop opposite cobblestone columns that mark the entry to the Veterans Hospital in Lake City. Occupational therapy patients early on in the hospital’s history crafted the lanterns, according to a history archived in Tacoma Public Library’s Northwest Room. A researcher encounters numerous examples of work done by occupational therapy patients throughout the years.

The solid-looking facility, constructed in the second decade of the 20th century, is approached by a meandering two-lane road that begins south of the hospital in Lakewood, just off Gravelly Lake Drive. One side parallels the lake; the other parallels the golf course, while the boundary of Joint Base Lewis McCord seems to embrace the entire site.

A row of flagpoles lines the left side of the hospital’s approach—fitting for a military medical treatment facility.

The history of the medical facility located in Lake City at the western end of the road known as “Veterans Drive” began in 1923, five years after the Armistice was signed to end the “Great War.”

The American Lake facility was the 54th hospital to be built by the War Department for the care of World War I veterans. The Hurley-Mason Company was awarded the contract for the construction of the facility. Many of the stucco and terra cotta buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are still enjoyed by patients and staff for their esthetic beauty.

The medical center was dedicated in 1924 and chartered with a single mission: neuropsychiatric treatment. On March 15, 1924, the first 50 patients were admitted to the hospital by transfer from Western State Hospital at Fort Stellicacoom.

During the years, the hospital has grown from its initial mission to that of a multi-care facility. In the 60’s and 70’s Ambulatory Surgical Services, a 76-bed Nursing Home Unit, Blind Rehabilitation Services, a Substance Abuse Treatment Program and a 60-bed homeless domiciliary were added to the scope of care to veterans.

Additional special programs were added in the 80s and 90s, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, a Residential Care Program and a Post Traumatic Stress Treatment Program.

Building 81 was renovated in 1998 and an addition built that allowed for reorientation and expansion of Primary Care and a Women’s Health clinic.

Ongoing remodeling, upgrading and expansion of the facilities will doubtless continue, while every effort is made to preserve the historic character of this campus.

The Veterans Administration came into being in 1930 when Congress authorized the president to consolidate and coordinate government activities for war veterans.

AUTHORS Continued from page 9

Association. He is also a school board member and parishioner at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church and School.

Neary, also a former editor of the Lakewood Journal, served on the Lakewood City Council from 2004 to 2011. Neary is communications director for Comcast in Washington and a member of the Lakewood Landmarks and Heritage Advisory Board and the board of the Washington Coalition for Open Government. He was a co-founder of the Lakewood Historical Society’s museum. Neary writes about local government issues at electing2blog.com

Images of America: Lakewood remains on sale at such locations as the Lakewood Barnes & Noble and is available at the Historic Fort Stellicacoom Association and Lakewood Historical Society.

Veterans Hospital Continued from page 1

After the Civil War, many State veterans homes were established. A new system of veterans services was instituted when the United States entered World War I.

No. 81, primary hospital building. Tiled roofs, "adobe" walls show Spanish-American influence.

The ground floor, two bedroom, two bath condominium, located in Kihei, Maui, has a stunning ocean view and is just steps from the beach. It is fully furnished with an all electric kitchen and can accommodate four people, no children please.

By Nancy Covert

Society Sponsoring Raffle for Hawaiian Condo

Thanks to the generosity of Society member Gerrie Zaratsky, the Society is sponsoring a raffle for one week’s stay in a beachfront condo on Maui, Hawaii in September, 2013.

The ticket price is only $5 and the lucky winner also receives $500 towards travel expenses. Because the total number of tickets is limited to 1000 the odds are very good. The drawing will be held on Saturday, July 13th, 2013 at the annual City of Lakewod’s SummerFEST at Fort Stellicacoom Park.

Buy your tickets now by visiting the Lakewood History Museum at 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr SW, during regular museum hours Wednesday-Saturday, 12 noon to 4 pm. For more information call Barbara Lord Nelson at 253-582-2330 or Becky Huber at 253-582-8682.

In the early 1930s, Norton Clapp began developing plans for the Lakewood Colonial Center with the idea of building a complete service center for the community that was then part of the Lakes District. The Center was to include a medical doctor, dentist, barber, beauty shop, drugstore, grocery store, theatre, hardware store and general store.

Mr. Clapp and Dr. Taylor scouted the Dental Board to see who recently passed the exams. Dr. Edward Klopping was one of three out of 32 who succeeded in passing, having graduated Cum Laude from Creighton Dental School in Omaha, NE. Klopping also was in the Dental ROTC program. Immediately after his June 2, 1937 graduation, he and his wife, Kathleen, moved to Auburn where his wife’s relatives lived.

Once he heard about the opportunity, he looked the site over, and then arranged a meeting with Clapp. “At this time I knew I would not be able to afford to equip the office property and in keeping with the rest of the Lakewood Center,” Dr. Klopping recalled for a story in the 50th Anniversary Press edition. “I explained to Mr. Clapp my position and what a wonderful opportunity it would be for me. He agreed to buy the equipment for me, and I would...”
LAKEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY—2012 DONORS

2012 Goal: $25,000 for Operations, Education, Exhibits, Programs and Community Outreach

Actual: $23,165 from 193 generous donors of $200 to $499

City of Lakewood Lodging Tax helps support the Lakewood History Museum displays and exhibits as well as Society community outreach, programs and educational programs.

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Thank You, Museum Fund Donors and Sponsors!

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HONORARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Bill Harriett and Bob Brunke
in honor of their Community Work with Robert Warfield

NEW MEMBERS

SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER

Schatz Adventure
Burton and Doris Johnson
Ron Karsbach
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Andrea Litton
Leona W. Young
Dottie (Dorothy) Rider
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Steve and Diane Styskal
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Colleen Smart
Donald and Jane Simpson
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H. Dale Piercy
L. T. Murray
Ellis Morehead
L. T. Murray

Dunkelberger and Neary's 2005 book Images of America: Lakewood is now working with the same publisher and a group of Lakewood Publishing Company, responsible for hundreds of those sepiacolored images of America books, has a new series that focuses on people, and so the book will be called Legendary Locals of Lakewood.

Dunkelberger and Neary are planning a new seven-month effort to find dynamic pictures of interesting people from Lakewood’s past and present.

“We’re very excited to focus on people and highlight the great individuals who built Lakewood into what it is today, and are working to make what it will be in the future,” Dunkelberger said.

“The area that is now the City of Lakewood sat front and center to the formation of the region in ways many people don’t realize. We want to tell that story through the people who made it happen since history is not a matter of dates and places. History is about people, remembering how types created Lakewood.”

This book is meant to work as not only a companion to their first book, but also as a stand-alone narrative of the evolution of the land from open prairie to the Lakes District to suburban city on the rise.

“A couple of remarkable things happened after the first book, one wonderful, one not, that really belong in any comprehensive history of our community. We will be proud to highlight Claudia Thomas as the first African-American mayor in Washington. And of course, Steve and I just had to agree to do this book when Arcadia approached us because of the events of Nov. 29, 2009. The deaths in the coffee shop

Dunkelberger and Neary's 2005 Images of America: Lakewood

Dunkelberger and Neary are currently working on a second Lakewood history book. And the authors are eagerly looking for photographs that represent the people who made Lakewood, Washington a great place to live and work.

Steve Dunkelberger and Walter Neary, authors of the 2005 book Images of America: Lakewood are now working with the same publisher and a group of Lakewood Publishing Company, responsible for hundreds of those sepiacolored images of America books, has a new series that focuses on people, and so the book will be called Legendary Locals of Lakewood.

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New Artist Display Installed in Museum

On February 20th, George Zantua, the newest member of the Rainier League of Artists, installed his artwork in the very popular Artist’s Corner in the Lakewood History Museum. An evening reception is planned for Thursday, March 7th from 5:30 to 7 pm. Refreshments will be served.

George Zantua

He began doing art for fun in high school and even considered getting a Fine Arts degree. However, his desire to help others led him to the University of Washington for an education in social work. His art took a “back burner” except for selling some for additional income or donating it to fund raisers for community organizations.

After attaining a graduate degree in guidance counseling, he worked at various jobs, including vocational school counselor in Seattle, investigator for the Washington State Human Rights Commission, counseling supervisor for employment programs in Hawaii and counseling supervisor for homeless programs at the Metropolitan Development Council.

We Need Your Help!

The Board has realized that we no longer can accomplish all of the goals and manage all of the activities ourselves. We need your help if the Society and Museum are to continue to grow.

Each of you has unique talents and abilities that could be used effectively for activities and projects that the Society is shaping up to do. Depending on your other time commitments, there is something for everyone.

Listed below are the areas you may consider: a permanent committee that meets monthly, short term special projects for periodic events; or individual tasks done on an as needed basis on your own schedule.

Committees:
1. Program Committee: Assist in organizing and producing the monthly programs.
2. Membership Committee: Recruit new members, maintain membership database, coordinate periodic mailings, make follow up calls/e-mails.
3. Finance Committee: Assist treasurer in the financial management of the Society and Museum, make recommendations to board; maintaining documents and records.
4. Fund raising: Annual fund drive, special events, signature event.

Special Projects:
1. Exhibits: Assist in coordinating temporary displays in the museum to include the Artist’s Corner, every 2-3 months.
2. Outreach: Help staff booth/space at annual events such as SummerFEST, Sister City International Festival, Senior Center Open House; seasonal community events such as Farmers’ Market (new endeavor); make presentations to a variety of community groups.
3. Historic Markers: Plan and promote periodic installations and dedications of markers; assist in producing map with sites listed.

Individual Tasks:
1. Docent in museum: Greet/guide visitors, assist in tours, minimum 4 hours/month.
2. Administrative Assistance: Provide clerical support and assist in record keeping; add contacts to databases. Must be “computer literate” and knowledgeable of current software such as Excel.
3. Researchers: Compile reference book for docents; research and write stories of people, places and events in the Lakewood area for quarterly newsletter.

Lakewood Historical Society Financial Statement

Cash on Hand, 12/31/2011
Checking $1,402.56
Money Market $21,029.77
Total $22,432.33

Income
Grants $45,500.00
Memberships $5,620.00
Donations – Museum Fund $14,690.42
Sponsorships $500.00
Memorials $1,485.00
Special Fund Raisers $5,493.00
Bank Interest $70.57
Other $379.52
Total Income $73,738.51

Expenses
Operations & Administration $8,086.31
Web Site $5,062.50
Contract Services $8,025.36
Insurance $1,780.00
Museum Lease $18,000.00
Museum Exhibits $600.63
Historical Markers $5,010.00
Postage, Copies & Printing $2,374.85
Museum Annual Fund $1,638.12
Special Events/Fund Raisers $12,106.67
Marketing/Publicity $21,948.24
Total Expenses $65,912.43
Cash on Hand - 12/31/2012
Checking $1,974.35
Money Market $9,563.81
Total $11,538.16

Lakewood’s First Shopping Center

By Nancy Covert

“Lakewood Community Center was designed and built for the people of the Lakes and Prairie districts of Pierce County by residents of the district. The success or failure depends upon the use by you and your family and not whether the builders make or lose money. While every effort has been made to make the Lakewood Community Center a lovely place with the finest furnishings and equipment, there will be no premium prices for using the center. Every effort is being made to feature city prices in all departments, and though they are commercial, the thought being that if it render a service to the community. As time passes and the various uses of the Center become available such as the Rifle Range and the Recreation Hall, it is hoped that you and your friends will spend many happy hours here, using the Center to the fullest advantage.”

What do you most remember about Lakewood Colonial Center? The movie theatre? The Terrace Restaurant? Dr. Kopping’s Dental Office? This all-in-one place-shopping concept was constructed on the edge of Lakewood in the mid-1930s and marked its Diamond (75th) Anniversary this past year. A formal celebration, however, is scheduled for this year (Watch for details.)

Gradually, the Colonial-inspired architecture expanded, and its movie theatre became a big draw for area residents, especially the younger crowd who flocked to the Matinees.

Credit for this shopping complex has long gone to Norton Clapp, one of the men responsible for the famous Seattle World’s Fair landmark, the Space Needle. Other information, however, asserts that Mr. Clapp’s first wife was the moving force behind this project. While the jury’s still out on the answer, most folks will agree that having the Center had made a big difference to the city.

Join the Lakewood Historic Society on April 6th for the Grand Opening of the exhibit on the Community Center and Villa Plaza.
**Update on 472nd Signal Company**

by Becky Huber

Captain Nicole Protz, commander of the 472nd Signal Company, has had regular communication with the Society since their deployment in late October, 2012. It has been a huge challenge for her because her 50 personnel are scattered in 8 different locations, some with only a few people. Here are the actual locations if you can even find them on a map?? Masum Ghar, Kandahar Airfield, Zangabad, Edgerton, Panjwai, Daman, Sperwan Ghar and Shoja.

She and her command team have made every effort to help keep the morale up by celebrating birthdays, holidays, promotions and reenlistments on a regular basis. They have also opportunities to work outside of their normal routine by participating in other unit’s activities.

Here are comments from Nicole about her soldiers. “Not a day goes by that they don’t do something to simply amaze 1SG and me. Whether it’s going out of their way to assist other units in the Brigade, digging a trench to ensure that the property, or just waking up with a smile on their faces, your soldiers are ready and willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish the mission to the best of their abilities.”

Please keep the care package donations coming. Our goal is to have a box of Girl Scout cookies for each soldier, so we need 53 boxes! Drop them off at the tents, inventorying all of our property, or just waking up with a smile on their faces, your soldiers are ready and willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish the mission to the best of their abilities.”

**Monthly Program**

Recalls Harold LeMay

by Nancy Covert & Chuck Mathias

Patrol cars, U.S. mail delivery vans, bright red fire engines—all familiar sights to Lakewood residents. Oh, and don’t forget the bulky Lakewood Refuse trucks. Anyone with a hankering to see them again—and literally thousands of other vehicles of every type—need only pay a visit to the former home of one of the most remarkable characters ever to come out of Pierce County.

Charlie Maxwell, long-time General Manager of LeMay Enterprises refuse and recycling, recapped the history of this essential business and his 40-year friendship with the late entrepreneur Harold LeMay, the man whose name is associated with many enterprises, especially his fabulous automobile collection—the largest private car collection in the world, according to no less an authority than the Guinness Book of World Records.

Mr. Maxwell relates the story of the LeMay family to a near-capacity audience.

Mr. Maxwell’s presentation, attended by a large number of LHS members and friends, included snapshots of LeMay’s history, some of his famous cars, a recap about the LeMay’s annual end-of-August car show, and the history of Marymount Academy in the Society since their deployment.

Charlie told fascinating stories of his friend and employer, the late Harold LeMay.

Mr. Maxwell relates the story of the LeMay family to a near-capacity audience.

He went on to explain that, born (to a single mother in 1919) with literally nothing, Harold throughout his life remained a man who, if he had only two left-handed work gloves, would turn one of them inside out to wear on his right hand rather than throw both away and buy a new pair.

He carried this philosophy over to the way in which he transported his newly-purchased cars for his collection, finding creative, thrifty (and possibly questionable, at least as far as the authorities were concerned) ways to load three on a one-car trailer: one in the middle, one hanging over the end—and big enough to hold a car in case he and his beloved wife Nancy stumbled across a “must-have” for the collection while on vacation.

Harold and Charlie would compete to see who would get their prize-laden trailers home to Spanaway first—from as far away as Hershey, PA—and Harold finally tired of arriving to find Charlie already seated at the dinner table (evidence, by the way, of Harold’s insistence that if you were an employee, you were also family).

The next time they set off with Harold’s latest purchases in tow, Charlie went only a few miles before his wildly-bouncing trailer forced him to the side of the road. As Charlie inspected his load, Harold pulled alongside, rolled down his window and, with touching concern, asked what the problem might be?

Charlie replied that someone had loaded the third car backwards, with its engine hanging over the end of the trailer. The weight distribution was all wrong, and it would probably take hours for he and Harold to reload it properly.

“Oh,” Harold replied. “See ya!” A friendly wave, and Maxwell was left standing in the gravel at the side of the road.

And for once a famished Charlie got to watch a grinning Harold, seated at the head of the table, finish up the remains of a sumptuous dinner.
Update on 472nd Signal Company
by Becky Huber

The 472nd Signal Company in Afghanistan

Captain Nicole Protz, commander of the 472nd Signal Company, has had regular communication with the Society since their deployment in late October, 2012. It has been a huge challenge for her because her 50 personnel are scattered in 8 different locations, some with only a few people. Here are the actual locations if you can even find them on a map?? Masum Ghar, Kandahar Airfield, Zangabad, Edgerton, Panjwa’i, Daman, Sperwan Ghar and Shoja.

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Here are comments from Nicole about her soldiers. "Not a day goes by that they don’t do something to simply amaze 1SG and me. Whether it’s going out of their way to assist other units in the Brigade, digging a trench to ensure that the shower water run-off doesn’t flood the tents, inventorying all of our property, or just waking up with a smile on their faces, your soldiers are ready and willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish the mission to the best of their abilities.”

Please keep the care package donations coming. Our goal is to have a box of Girl Scout cookies for each soldier, so we need 53 boxes! Drop them off at the Post Exchange or the dressers at our four locations.

Shower water run-off doesn't flood digging a trench to ensure that the tents, inventorying all of our property, or just waking up with a smile on their faces, your soldiers are ready and willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish the mission to the best of their abilities.

Monthly Program
Recalls Harold LeMay
by Nancy Covert & Chuck Mathias

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Charlie Maxwell told fascinating stories of his friend and employer, the late Harold LeMay.

"Frugality." He even had a custom motor home built with a special compartment Mr. Maxwell relates the story of the LeMay family to a near-capacity audience. He carried this philosophy over to the way in which he transported newly-purchased cars for his collection, finding creative, thrifty (and possibly questionable, at least as far as the authorities were concerned) ways to load three on a one-car trailer: one in the middle, one hanging over the end—and big enough to hold a car in case he and his beloved wife Nancy stumbled across a “must-have” for the collection while on vacation.

Mr. Maxwell, as well as humorous program, as well as humorous anecdotes about Harold’s famous car collecting expeditions.

Just one of many examples: in response to the question of how Harold could afford to add to his immense collection in the days before he hit it big in the recycling business, Mr. Maxwell replied in a single word: “Frugality.”

For you Facebook fans, follow the unit at this address: 472nd-Signal-Company-4th-SBCT-2-ID.

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Celebrating a birthday far from home. Museum or at any of our programs or events. We appreciate monetary donations for postage. Call Sue Scott if you have any questions at 253-588-6354. For you Facebook fans, follow the unit at this address: 472nd-Signal-Company-4th-SBCT-2-ID.

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New Artist Display Installed in Museum

On February 20th, George Zantua, the newest member of the Rainier League of Artists, installed his artwork in the very popular Artist’s Corner in the Lakewood History Museum. An evening reception is planned for Thursday, March 7th from 5:30 to 7 pm. Refreshments will be served.

He began doing art for fun in high school and even considered getting a Fine Arts degree. However, his desire to help others led him to the University of Washington for an education in social work. His art took a “back burner” except for selling some for additional income or donating it to fund raisers for community organizations.

After attaining a graduate degree in guidance counseling, he worked at various jobs, including vocational school counselor in Seattle, investigator for the Washington State Human Rights Commission, counseling supervisor for employment programs in Hawaii and counseling supervisor for homeless programs at the Metropolitan Development Council.

George Zantua

We Need Your Help!

The Board has realized that we no longer can accomplish all of the goals and manage all of the activities ourselves. We need your help if the Society and Museum are to continue to grow.

Each of you has unique talents and abilities that could be used effectively for activities and projects that the Society is involved in. Depending on your other time commitments, there is something for everyone.

Listed below are the areas you may consider: a permanent committee that meets monthly, short term special projects for periodic events; or individual tasks done on an as needed basis on your own schedule.

Committees:

1. Program Committee: Assist in organizing and producing the monthly programs.

2. Membership Committee: Recruit new members, maintain membership database, coordinate periodic mailings, make follow up calls/e-mails.

3. Finance Committee: Assist treasurer in the financial management of the Society and Museum, make recommendations to board; maintaining documents and records.

4. Fund raising: Annual fund drive, special events, signature event.

Special Projects:

1. Exhibits: Assist in coordinating temporary displays in the museum to include the Artist’s Corner, every 2-3 months.

2. Outreach: Help staff booth/space at annual events such as SummerFEST, Sister City International Festival, Senior Center Open House; seasonal community events such as Farmers’ Market (new endeavor); make presentations to a variety of community groups.

3. Historic Markers: Plan and promote periodic installations and vaccinations of markers, assist in producing map with sites listed.

Individual Tasks:

1. Docent in museum: Greet/guide visitors, assist in tours, minimum 4 hours/month.

2. Administrative Assistance: Provide clerical support and assist in record keeping; add contacts to databases. Must be “computer literate” and knowledgeable of current software such as Excel.

3. Researchers: Compile reference book for docents; research and write stories of people, places and events in the Lakewood area for quarterly newsletter.

We hope that you and your friends will become available such as the Rifle Range and the various uses of the Center thought being that it render a service to the community. Every effort has been made to feature city prices in all departments, and though they are commercial, the thought being that it renders a service to the community. As time passes and the various uses of the Center become available such as the Riffl Range and the Recreation Hall, it is hoped that you and your friends will spend many happy hours here, using the Center to the fullest advantage.”

LAKEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Cash on Hand, 12/31/2011

Checking: $1,402.56
Money Market: $21,029.77
Total: $22,432.33

Income

Grants: $45,500.00
Memberships: $5,620.00
Donations – Museum Fund: $14,690.42
Sponsorships: $500.00
Memorials: $1,485.00
Special Fund Raisers: $5,493.00
Bank Interest: $70.57
Other: $379.52
Total Income: $73,738.51

Expenses

Operations & Administration: $8,086.31
Web Site: $5,062.50
Contract Services: $8,025.36
Insurance: $1,780.00
Museum Lease: $18,000.00
Museum Exhibits: $600.63
Historical Markers: $5,010.00
Postage: $2,374.85
Museum Annual Fund: $1,638.12
Special Events/ Fund Raisers: $12,106.67
Marketing/Publicity: $21,948.24
Total Expenses: $65,912.43

Cash on Hand - 12/31/2012

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The Lakewood History Museum.

Wednesday-Saturday: Noon to 4:00 pm

Lakewood Colonial Center
6211 Mt Tacoma Drive SW
Lakewood, WA 98499

Your doorway to Lakewood’s Past.
LAKEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY—2012 DONORS

2012 Goal: $25,000 for Operations, Education, Exhibits, Programs and Community Outreach
Actual: $23,165 from 193 generous donors

City of Lakewood Lodging Tax helps support the Lakewood History Museum displays and exhibits as well as Society community outreach, programs and educational programs.

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Paul and Rebecca Wulfesteg

HONORARY CONTRIBUTIONS
Bill Harrington and Bob Brunke
In honor of their Community Service
New Members

SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER

Shawn Adams
Burton and Doris Johnson
Ron Kraslitch
Edward C. Kugler III
Andrew Littot
Leona W. Living
Dottie (Dorothy) Rider
Diana L. and Melissa Tomkewicz
Marylu and Peter Wallerich

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Mike and Sue Raney / Beverly Bills

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Barb Lawlor
by John and Rebecca Huber
Brian C. Davis
by Kristin E. Davis

Lakewood Journal
Lakewood Historical Society, is a journalism and media professor at Pierce
Continued next page
Page 9
lakewoodhistory.tumblr.com/ post/37866874604/current-list

▶ If you know of a great picture of someone already on the list, the authors would love to hear from you.
▶ If you represent an organization in Lakewood (service club, church group, etc.) that has been around at least 20 years, the authors would like to consider including a representative picture of the group in the book. We really need your help here, because we know there are a lot of great organizations in Lakewood. The person could be a founding member, or a significant member of the group (a board member, a pastor, someone somehow who brought the group to excellence, a very longtime member, etc.). The more dynamic the photograph, the better the odds that it can be included in the book! The authors will have to rely in part on the visual interest of the picture: they will need to provide the photograph with pictures of people doing things and showing expressions, and not just staring into a camera.

▶ Finally, if you know of a person who really should be in the book, but you don’t know of a picture, the authors would like the idea anyway! Feel free to make your suggestion.

Steve Dunkelberger, a former reporter and editor of the now-defunct Lakewood Journal that helped found the Lakewood Historical Society, is a journalism and media professor at Pierce College and an online editor of the Tacoma Weekly as well as a freelance writer for various publications around the region. He is also a founding member of the Lakewood’s Landmark and Heritage Advisory Board and a member of the Historic Stellacoom Museum.
activities for war veterans. A pair of plain wrought-iron lanterns sit atop opposite cobblestone columns that mark the entry to the Veterans Hospital in Lake City. Occupational therapy patients early on in the hospital’s history crafted the lanterns, according to a history archived in Tacoma Public Library’s North-west Room. A researcher encounters numerous examples of work done by occupational therapy patients throughout the years.

The solid-looking facility, constructed in the second decade of the 20th century, is approached by a meandering two-lane road that begins south of the hospital in Lakewood; just off Gravelly Lake Drive. One side parallels the lake; the other parallels the golf course, while the boundary of Joint Base Lewis McChord seems to embrace the entire site. A row of flagpoles lines the left side of the hospital’s approach—fitting for a military medical treatment facility.

The medical center was dedicated in 1924 and chartered with a single mission: neuro-psychiatric treatment. On March 15, 1924, the first 50 patients were admitted to the hospital by transfer from Western State Hospital at Fort Stillicoom.

During the years, the hospital has grown from its initial mission to that of a multi-care facility. In the 60’s and 70’s Ambulatory Surgical Services, a 76-bed Nursing Home Unit, Blind Rehabilitation Services, a Substance Abuse Treatment Program and a 60-bed homeless domiciliary were added to the scope of care to veterans.

Additional special programs were added in the 80s and 90s, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, a Residential Care Program and a Post Traumatic Stress Treatment Program.

Building 81 was renovated in 1998 and an addition built that allowed for recreation and expansion of Primary Care and a Women’s Health clinic.

Ongoing remodeling, upgrading and expansion of the facilities will doubtless continue, while every effort is made to preserve the historic character of this campus.

The Veterans Administration came into being in 1930 when Congress authorized the President to consolidate and coordinate government.

Page 10

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Society Sponsoring Raffle for Hawaiian Condo

Thanks to the generosity of Society member Gerrie Zaratsky, the Society is sponsoring a raffle for one week’s stay in a beachfront condo on Maui, Hawaii in September, 2013. The ticket price is only $5 and the lucky winner also receives $500 towards travel expenses. Because the total number of tickets is limited to 1000 the odds are very good. The drawing will be held on Saturday, July 13th, 2013 at the annual City of Lakewood’s SummerFEST at Fort Stillicoom Park.

The ground floor, two bedroom, two bath condominium, located in Khei, Maui, has a stunning ocean view and is just steps from the beach. It is fully furnished with an all electric kitchen and can accommodate four people, no children please.

Buy your tickets now by visiting the Lakewood History Museum at 621 Mt Tacoma Dr SW, during regular museum hours. Wed-Sat, 12 noon to 4 pm. For more information call Barbara Lord Nelson at 253-582-2330 or Becky Huber at 253-582-8682.

Dr. Klopping’s Dental Center at Lakewood

In the early 1930s, Norton Clapp began developing plans for the Lakewood Colonial Center with the idea of building a complete service center for the community that was then part of the Lakes District. The Center was to include a medical doctor, dentist, barber, beauty shop, drugstore, grocery store, theatre, hardware store and general store.

Mr. Clapp and Dr. Taylor scouted the Dental Board to see who recently passed the exams. Dr. Edward Klopping was one of three out of 32 who succeeded in passing, having graduated Cum Laude from Creighton Dental School in Omaha, NE. Klopping also was in the Dental ROTC program. Immediately after his June 2, 1937 graduation, he and his wife, Kathleen, moved to Auburn where his wife’s relatives lived.

Once he heard about the opportunity, he looked the site over, and then arranged a meeting with Clapp. “At this time I knew I would not be able to afford to equip the office properly and in keeping with the rest of the Lakewood Center,” Dr. Klopping recalled for a story in the 50th Anniversary Press edition. “I explained to Mr. Clapp my position and what a wonderful opportunity it would be for me. He agreed to buy the equipment for me, and I would...
President's Message

There are several comments that I wanted to make regarding the past year's accomplishments. Foremost, is recognizing the generosity of our members and friends who have made donations to the Annual Museum Fund. We exceeded last year's total with contributions from nearly 200 people. This ensures the continued operation of the History Museum that has become a vital tourist attraction in the Lakewood community. We again had over 1,100 people visit the Museum and over 1,200 attended our events, programs and activities.

The Society received the Institutional Achievement Award from the Heritage League of Pierce County at their annual meeting in recognition of the special edition of the “Prairie Gazette” celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Seattle World’s Fair and the April program presented by the authors of “The Future Remembered”. See the rest of the story under AWARDS on page 11.

In early February the Society Board had a half day retreat to discuss, review and plan the goals for the next year with emphasis on fund raising and marketing. We realized we are setting big goals that will need more volunteers to assist us in the planning and executing of them. We will be asking for you to consider joining an ongoing committee or involve yourself in short term projects. See the details under NEED HELP on page 8.

This year we will be doing more outreach in the community. One of the new activities will be participating in the Lakewood Farmers’ Market in partnership with other heritage organizations. The City’s pilot project was a huge success last year. This year it will be weekly on Tuesdays from 11 am-3 pm starting June 4th through September 17th. Look for more information in the next newsletter.

Another popular activity will be pursuing the installation of several new historic markers. Plaques for four sites have been fabricated: the Old Settlers Cemetery, the Heath Farm, the Lakewood Ice Arena and Thomewood Castle. We plan dedications but they are awaiting the “perfect” rocks to mount them on. If you happen to know where boulders can be located, please contact Glen Spieht at 253-584-3930.

We have some exciting programs planned this year. Several of them will showcase local businesses. The first was presented on Feb. 19th featuring Harold LeMay, founder of LeMay Enterprises. His fame as a car collector exceeded even his success in business but the story behind the man and his business is just as fascinating, as you’ll see on page 6.

In March we will be celebrating Women’s History Month by showcasing Women in Aviation: Then and Now. The WASPS (Women’s Airforce Service Pilots) and current women pilots assigned to McChord Field will be honored.

If you have a topic you would like presented as a program don’t hesitate to inform any of the board members so we can put it on the schedule later this year or next year for sure.

As always, we thank you for your continued interest and support.

Beverly Huber
Veterans Hospital Celebrates 90 Years of Service

Information compiled from a 30-page history of the American Lake VA Hospital, by Gary Reese and Frank Jackson, in the Tacoma Public Library’s Northwest Room archives.

By Nancy Covert

Seventy-five years after Capt. Charles Wilkes led his marines in a celebration of the first American Fourth of July on the plains of American Lake, known then by its Native American name of Spotsith, a group of 150 Tacoma businessmen presented a petition to the Board of Pierce County Commissioners asking them to call a special election to authorize the issuance of $2 million in bonds for purchasing the American Lake site for a Cantonment.

The Commissioners agreed, and the election was set for January 6, 1917. Authorization passed, and the American Lake site was purchased. Snow-clad Mt. Rainier guarded its eastern horizon, and American Lake bounded it on the west.

A revocable license from the War Department, signed by the Secretary of the Army and dated January 3, 1923, leased 377 acres of the army’s 67,000-acre Camp Lewis (later Fort Lewis; today Joint Base Lewis McChord) for the Veterans Hospital at American Lake, said to have the most beautiful physical setting of all the Veterans Administration hospitals.

The 377 acres includes approximately 91 acres in lawns, 25 acres in general farming, five acres in berries, and approximately 60 acres in a nine-hole golf course, all surrounded by an additional 1,120 acres of wooded lands. The soil is filled with rock fragments characteristic of glacial drift. The buildings, of Spanish-American type architecture, are nestled along a beautiful shoreline of 1.8 miles.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs website, the United States has the most comprehensive system for veterans of any nation in the world. This system traces its roots back to 1636 when the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony were at war with the Pequot Indians. The Pilgrims passed a law stating that disabled soldiers would be supported by the colony.

The Continental Congress of 1776 encouraged enlistments during the Revolutionary War by providing pensions for disabled soldiers. In the early days of the Republic, individual States and communities provided direct medical care.

Continued on page 10

Programs and Activities for Winter 2013

Thurs, March 7th, 5:30-7 pm - Reception for new artist, George Zantua, Lakewood History Museum, 6211 Mt Tacoma, DR SW, refreshments served.

Tues, March 19th, 7 pm - History of Women in Aviation: Then and Now; celebrating Women’s History Month, the WASPS (Women’s Airforce Service Pilots) of WW II and women pilots from McChord Field will be honored.


SAVE THE DATE! New Exhibit opens Sat, April 6th, Lakewood History Museum, 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr SW, Ribbon Cutting at 1 PM, refreshments served.

Tues, April 16th, 7 pm - Lakewood’s Pioneer Commercial Development, history of Lakewood Colonial Center, opened in 1937 and Villa Plaza, opened in 1957; the planned shopping centers that provided the Lakes District residents with all of the services and products within their own community.

Monthly programs are held in the Parish Hall at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, 10630 Gravelly Lake Drive SW, next to the Lakewood Library.

Find us on Facebook (search for Lakewood Historical Society Washington State) or check our website for more information and current events: www.LakewoodHistorical.org

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