

Lakewood Historical Society Newsletter

August/September 2006

Because Our History Matters.

Tuesday, August 15, 2006
Member Only Event
"A Lakewood Hidden Treasure-
American Lake VA Hospital"

Our August program will be at the American Lake Veterans Hospital in Lakewood beginning at 7:00 PM. Established in 1924, this beautiful facility has served the needs of thousands of military veterans through the years. Hospital staff will discuss the milestones in the history of this facility. After the presentation, members may take a tour of the grounds which is considered to be one of the most beautiful settings in the VA system. Light refreshments will be served after the tour.

The Hospital is located at the end of Veterans Drive in Lakewood. Follow the hospital entrance road for about ¼ mile and you will be directed to the parking lot. Members are encouraged to arrive no later than 6:45 PM. The presentation will be held in Building #9, the facility's Auditorium and Volunteer Services Offices. It is at the north end of Chase Drive on your left after you enter the VA grounds. Members can be dropped off directly in front of the building, but all vehicles must be parked in the designated location. This is a member's only event due to security considerations. If you are not yet a member you may join prior to the program. For more information about this meeting call John Huber at (253) 582-8682.

Tuesday, Sept 19th Program
Free to Members
"Jim's Park-A Lakewood Heritage
Garden"

On Tues, Sept 19th, LHS members will have a unique opportunity to tour one of Lakewood's premier gardens. Jim Senko saw the potential for the 3-acre heavily wooded area adjoining his own property and purchased the Isabelle Engle estate in 1998. His love and passion for growing things since the age of 11 has culminated in his development of one of the Northwest's most extensive collections of rhodies, azaleas, camellias and other native plants. No matter what season, you will find something to smell or taste. Jim has freely shared his garden with over 1600 visitors from all over the world; his greatest reward is seeing the enjoyment and delight in his guests.

In order to accommodate as many visitors as possible, Jim has agreed to have TWO tours that day. You can attend either 3:00 PM or 6:30 PM. Each group is limited to 35, Be sure to sign up early. The tour is free to members and a suggested donation of \$5.00 from non-members. Call Becky or John Huber at 582-8682 to reserve your spot.

The garden is on the corner of Lake Louise DR SW and Holden DR SW near Lake Louise Elementary School. (Because of elections you will unable to park in the school lot.) Please carpool due to limited parking spaces. Be sure to wear comfortable walking shoes. Assemble at Jim's home at 10919-101st AVE SW 15 minutes before you tour starts.

Committee and Project Reports

Lakewood History Museum Update

The new museum at 6211 Mount Tacoma Drive is taking shape and is looking "spiffy," if still a bit empty. We are on the way to having a real office thanks to used furnishings donated by the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce and others. An updated list of current needs will be published soon.

The interior painting has been completed, with over half the work being done with the very able and appreciated help of volunteers MSgt. Jan Storbakken, McChord AFB Reserves and MSgt. Cortney Anderson, Ft. Lewis 1/10 Special Forces Recruiting and his artistic wife Janean.

We are still in the process of obtaining necessary permits from the City to comply with accessibility and other requirements but are looking forward to opening the doors in late September. Details will be announced by invitation to members and others in advance.

Exhibit planning is ongoing, as is the search for artifacts, photos, documents, and various items relevant to Lakewood's history. If any of our members (or friends and neighbors) have things to donate or share temporarily, please call (253) 682-3480 or email us at contact@lakewoodhistorical.org. You may also contact Janda Volkmer at (253) 222-7941.



We hope you will join us as we make history with the new Lakewood History Museum!

Janda Volkmer

LHS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donations are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Lakewood Historical Society
PO Box 98014
Lakewood WA 98499
(253) Phone: 682-3480

- 1) Give gift memberships to friends
- 2) Volunteer for a committee
- 3) Volunteer for the new Museum,
- 4) Donate archival, artifact, memorabilia, and ephemera items
- 5) Donate office equipment and supplies
- 6) Write a check to your LHS.

Lakewood History Museum Volunteers needed!

Collections: Inventory, accession catalogue

Docents: Greet/guide museum guests 1-2 times/month

Educators: Help with children's exhibits/programs

Researchers: Artifacts; exhibit themes; local history

Writers: Write history vignettes, exhibit text, labels,

Program: Help organize/produce programs of interest

Technology: Help set up and manage systems

Retailers: Help set up and manage the museum store

Carpenters: Construct exhibit scenes and display cases

Electrician: Install track lighting / misc. switches

Plumber: Change out bathroom sink

Other: What's your specialty?

Planning Committee Report

The Planning Committee has been examining two important issues facing LHS: fund raising activities and name of museum opening in the fall. At the July, 2006 Board meeting, the committee recommended the following to the LHS board:

(1) The best current option for fund raising is a compound one:

- a) start an Annual Fund Drive for museum operating expenses immediately, after preliminary organizing and planning,
- b) have a major, multi-year capital campaign aimed at raising money to purchase the Boatman-Ainsworth house as well as to acquire and convert the hangar at Clover Park Technical College into a museum, or to build an equivalent new building as a permanent museum, and
- c) continue the Annual Fund Drive for operating expenses.

(2) The name of the storefront museum should be "The Lakewood History Museum."

The first target is to raise money to finance the daily operation of the museum. The museum will launch a visible and active historical program in Lakewood. It will provide better visibility for the LHS, space to display exhibits, operating skills to LHS prior to investing into a permanent facility and promote tourism to Lakewood. It will require skills to pay the rent, pay a director (part time), build display cases, create displays, run a museum, and initiate effective fund raisers.

The Planning Committee reviewed other museum strategies to ensure a smooth, well-run

and well-funded museum. Other museums have entrance fees, sales from a museum store, ticket sales for speakers and presentations, and rentals for special occasions. LHS is actively seeking volunteers to provide time and donations in the operation of the Museum. Please call 682-3480 to be a part of the team to implement effective procedures to ensure a self-sufficient and smooth Lakewood Museum store.

The Planning Committee will continue the process to secure a permanent facility. Discussions have been conducted on the strengths and weakness of several facilities with the Boatman-Ainsworth house and the hangar at Clover Park Technical College being the most viable locations.

Brad MacGowan

Oral History Project

The Oral History Project committee has accomplished this month's goals:

- ✓ Received printing donation from Lakewood Printing for mailing
- ✓ Received donation (500 envelopes) from Bill and Donna Cable
- ✓ Received donation (500 return address labels) from Chris Finnegan
- ✓ Requested grant for Transcription equipment and transcribing computer software.
- ✓ 300 letters with release forms mailed

This committee is looking for additional help to solicit personal memories and stories from Lakewood's history. Please call Bill and Donna Cable at 584-6147 for more information. The committee is prepping for its next mailing and needs printing, envelopes, postage and mailing lists.

Bill and Donna Cable

An Oral History of Lakewood, WA

By Phillip Hugh Kneip

From Oral History Project of LHS (

Lakewood Memories

By Phillip Hugh Kneip

My grandmother, Gertrude Christine Ohbert came over from Sweden by herself when she was just 14 years old to live with relatives in Bemiji, MN. Eventually moving to Washington.

On June 23, 1906, she married Charles Frederick Linman. My mother, Alice Victoria Linman was born in 1908.

Charles Linman died when my mother was five. My grandmother remarried and with her new husband, built a house on Meadow Road and 100 Street.

My father, Phillip A. Kneip was born in Dupont, WA, and went to school there until he was ready for high school. Then, he would get on the trolley in Dupont to go to Lincoln High School. My mother would get on the same trolley at Park Lodge and after changing trolleys near Meadow Park, they would go onto Lincoln High School. They married in 1929 and I was born in an apartment near Lincoln High School on January 25, 1932. We lived for a short time at the Bosworth's house near Dekoven Inn. Dad built a tarpaper house across 100th street from my grandmother on Meadow Road. Ned and Neal (twins) and Kay eventually joined the family.

I started grade school at Park Lodge in 1937. Ms. Gyne was the first grade

teacher. Ms. Taylor taught second and third. Ms. Williams, fourth, Ms. Shane, fifth, Mrs. Tripler taught sixth and was also the principal. Ms. Tripler let and I had Ms. Payne for the sixth grade. The custodian was Mr. Taber. He would bat balls at recess for us and the baseball team rode in the back of his '35 Ford pickup when we went to other schools for games.

Sometime in the fall of 1944, when I was only 12, and a student at Clover Park Jr. Sr. High School, the fire chief, Luke Carraway came into our Boy Scout meeting looking for volunteers for the fire department I looked like I was 16 so I was recruited. When there were fires a night, my dad, Phillip A. would drive me there. He eventually joined, and become the first volunteer fireman to receive retirement from the State of Washington.

Between school years, I worked for Jack McConnoughly , a contractor and for Ed Wambem, putting in septic tanks. I drove dump trucks and ran a back hoe. Wambem's house and truck yard was next to Clover Park High School on the East side.

After high school, some college at the University of Washington and Army service in Korea, I had a career at Boeing and retired in 1988.

Written June 30, 2006

July LHS Program Review: A Walk into History... Look How Far We've Come

Last month we enjoyed a re-cap of recent Lakewood history as summarized by the three consecutive mayors who have led our city since our 1996 inception.

General Bill Harrison, Lakewood's mayor for its first 8 years from 1995 to 2003, introduced us to the many tasks that the first city council had to complete upon incorporation. Per state law, the council had to pass over 600 ordinances. The council met 4 – 5 evenings a week for many months in order to lay this important groundwork. Recognizing Lakewood as one of the most ethnic and economically diverse cities in the state, General Harrison felt that his most satisfying accomplishment while mayor was working with his fellow council members toward a better city.

Doug Richardson, Lakewood's mayor, from 2003 to 2005, discussed the origination of Lakewood's police department. In its early years, Lakewood was a "contract city", contracting with Pierce County for police services. In January, 2004, Lakewood began building its own police department with operations completely up and

running by November of that year, several months before the final contract expiration date with Pierce County. Doug Richardson continues to reside on the city council and acts as a military liaison with Ft. Lewis and McChord.

Claudia Thomas, Lakewood's current mayor, originally ran for city council because she believed in community service and was strongly encouraged by others to do so. She brought our history presentation to modern day discussing the future of Lakewood. "We dare to be different" is her mantra as she envisions a user-friendly city, strong cultural awareness, good schools and a reduction in crime.

While working through occasional controversy, the passion that these three leaders had through the quest for incorporation, while working with Lakewood's citizens and city council and reaching goals into our city's future is obvious. As the years go by, each important accomplishment, driven by this passion, will be yet another event on the historical timeline of Lakewood, Washington.

Stephanie Walsh

Among the Best in Lakewood

The following LHS members and supporters made cash donations to the LHS since our last newsletter. Thank you!

Fred Schumaker, B&B Glass Co Inc
Carol Imholt
John Humphrey
Larry and Natalie Humphrey
Robert and Marie Remen
David and Janet McDonald
V.M. Greco, OOH's and AAH's of Oakbrook

Lakewood Printing for their paper and printing donation in support of the Oral History Project.

B&B Glass for glass for a display case.

Bill and Donna Cable for donation of envelopes for the Oral History Project.

Chris Finnegan for return address labels for the Oral History Project.

Lakewood Hardware and Paint for discounting paint and supplies for the museum

Mark Your Calendars

Tuesday, August 15

Members and Guests Only Event
American Lake VA Hospital

7:00 pm

Tuesday, September 19

"Jim's Park"

Free Tour to LHS Members

3:00 PM or 6:30 PM

Space Limited tour

Please call ahead: 582-8682

Become a LHS Member Today

Join the Lakewood Historical Society today for only \$15 for an individual membership or \$25 for a family.

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