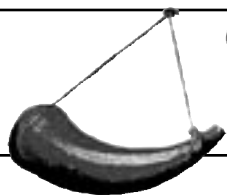


BECAUSE OUR HISTORY MATTERS



Prairie Gazette

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LAKEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JANUARY - FEBRUARY, 2008



Army test maneuvers held in area in '04

Prelude to establishment of Fort Lewis

On 11 November 1889, Washington Territory became the 42nd state and during the first session of the State Legislature in Olympia, a tax was enacted to establish a Military Department of Washington.

In June 1890, Adjutant General Russell G. O'Brien conducted a Brigade Encampment at American Lake, Washington. Organized into two regiments of infantry and a battalion of cavalry, 1,155 militiamen participated in the encampment which was named "Camp Ferry" after the incumbent governor, Elisha P. Ferry. The total cost of the encampment, including the payroll, was \$20,319.20.

Following on the success of the first brigade encampment, other encampments were held in 1892, 1894, and 1902. In 1903, the State of Washington purchased 220 acres of land at Murray, on the Tacoma - Olympia - Gray's Harbor Railroad line. Named after a local pioneer family, Camp

Murray remains the headquarters of the Washington State Military Department to this day.

In 1903, Congress approved, "An Act to Promote the Efficiency of the Militia." Providing for joint maneuvers between the organized militia and the Regular Army. The American Lake area was selected as the site of the first joint maneuvers involving the Washington National Guard. The maneuvers were scheduled for 8 - 17 July 1904.

In May, 1904, General Frederick Funston made a reconnaissance of the area and decided to establish three camps: near the north end of Lake Steilacoom; at Camp Nisqually on Sequallitchew Creek, close to the old Hudson's Bay trading post and at Murray Station on the Olympia branch of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

The Blue Forces were designated the First Brigade and were commanded by Colonel

Edward S. Godfrey of the 9th U.S. Cavalry.

The Brown Forces were designated the Second Brigade and were commanded by Colonel Charles H. Noble, 10th U.S. Infantry.

The Maneuver Headquarters was commanded by General Frederick Funston and was guarded by Troop G, 9th U.S. Cavalry and Company K, 19th U.S. Infantry. The Band of the 9th U.S. Cavalry was also assigned to the headquarters.

On 8 July 1904, all the troops were assembled and prepared for the first tactical problem. The regular Army was represented by 102 officers and 1,585 soldiers. The organized militia had 170 officers and 2,154 men in attendance. Hence the entire "Maneuver Division" consisted of 272 officers and 3,739 soldiers. The total force of 4,011 men was the largest military contingent ever seen in Washington to then.

See **ARMY TEST MANEUVERS** Page 3

142 Years and Counting: *Legacy of the Buffalo Soldiers*

The story of the Buffalo Soldiers – America's black soldiers – will be presented Feb. 12, as a Lakewood Historical Society program at the Lakewood City Hall Council Chambers.

Col. James Manning (Ret.) and other members of the Greater Puget Sound Chapter of the 9th and 10th Cavalry Association will present the program - "142 Years and Counting: The Continuing Legacy of

the Buffalo Soldiers" in commemoration of Black History Month.

The program will start at 7 pm and in addition to the speaker will include displays of artifacts and photos.



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Prairie Gazette

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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

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President's Message

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season that was filled with special joys and blessings. I'm sure all of you have set some goals to accomplish in 2008.

I hope one of your resolutions is to continue your membership in the Society. I'd like to thank all of you who have renewed your membership. Your retention is one of the best indicators that we are fulfilling your expectations and you want to continue to support us. For those of you who have not yet paid your 2008 dues, you'll find a renewal form and return envelope enclosed. Please return it with your check or credit card information by January 31st. We don't want you to miss out on any of our great newsletters or programs.

Dave Sclair is our new Editor and he has lots of great ideas that will ensure the continued success accomplished by Ed and Hayden last year. Each issue will include at least two feature articles either highlighting the previous program or providing additional material on a program scheduled. If there is anything you'd like to see in the newsletter please contact Dave (dsclair@comcast.net)

I'm also very excited about the high caliber of experience that we have with our new Board members. I know we will go far building on the progress we made last year especially with fund raising and community involvement. This year we are emphasizing recruitment of more business members as well as looking for Business Sponsors. Feel free to contact me if you or someone you know would be interested in this program.

Shannon Krueger and our Program Committee have lined up some really great presentations this year. Please find the "bookmark" like the one we distributed last year enclosed in this newsletter. We are making a special effort to coordinate Museum exhibits with the programs, thus enriching your experience and providing you with more in depth information. Please look for those announcements elsewhere in the newsletter.

In February we will be expanding our Museum hours to Tuesday thru Saturday, 10 am-4 pm and we will be soliciting more docents. If you think you'd be interested, please contact me. I'm available any time for questions or concerns as well. This is YOUR Society and we want to offer the programs and experiences you are interested in. Again, thanks for your continued support. We are going to have a great year filled with unique and wonderful experiences to share.

Becky Huber

Army test maneuvers

Continued from Page 1

The maneuvers consisted of six different "Tactical Problems" which often involved separate exercises for the troops. Among the action were attacks and defense of camps, attacks on convoys, amphibious invasions and raids. The maneuvers involved infantry, artillery and cavalry actions and were supported by Signal Corps and Hospital Corps personnel. When the maneuvers concluded on Sunday, 17 July, a grand review for Major General Arthur MacArthur was conducted by the troops on a field near Lakeview.

All in all, the 1904 Maneuvers were a great success and were important for convincing the United States Army on the suitability of locating a major military training area in the American Lake region. Other maneuvers were conducted in the same area in the years 1906, 1908, 1910 and 1912. The Army's interest in the region culminated with the establishment of Camp Lewis in 1917.

After serving as chief umpire during the maneuvers, Assistant Adjutant General, Major R. K. Evans made a detailed and perceptive report. The following portion is of particular importance to the history of Fort Lewis.

"The site on which the maneuvers were conducted is worthy of special consideration on the following grounds:

Sanitary features: this entire locality, comprising an available area of square miles is a vast bed of gravel, covered with a thin layer of loam, which supports scant carpets of grass and moss. In all weather it is equally free from dust or mud. The whole country is underlain, at a depth of about

30 feet, by an inexhaustible body of pure, cold water, which has its source in the perennial snows and glaciers of Mount Tacoma. This water is protected from surface contamination by an impenetrable stratum of hard pan, which can only be removed, in some places, by blasting. Here, from a sanitary standpoint, we have perfect ground, perfect water, perfect drainage and seepage conditions.

Accessibility: this tract is reached by rail and deep sea transportation. The Northern Pacific (railroad) traverses it, the terminus of the Great Northern is forty-six miles to the North, in Seattle, and of the Southern Pacific one hundred and forty miles to the south, in Portland. The shore of Puget Sound bounds it for several miles, offering as good landing facilities for the largest sea-going vessels, as can be found either at Seattle or Tacoma, and there is direct rail connection with the Pacific Ocean Port of Gray's Harbor.

Tactical Features: the terrain presents nearly every variety of feature necessary for the solution of ordinary tactical problems. There are numerous large open prairies, generally level, but in places sufficiently undulating to afford excellent examples of screening troops from sight and fire by a judicious use of apparently trifling irregularities of surface. There are woods of various sizes and densities, all offering cover from view, and generally allowing mostly free passage of the three arms, but

in places so dense as to constitute absolute obstacles for troops of all arms, in any formation. The tract is by no means level. This erroneous impression had gotten abroad, especially in the East, probably due to the fact that, until these maneuvers, no contoured map of it had been made or published. The accompanying maps, made by Captain Rowan, very hurriedly and with scant facilities, are sufficient to correct this impression. There are many ridges, hills and knolls, all more or less wooded, some of them rising to a height of 340 feet. The most unusual, beautiful and, from a military point of view, useful feature of this site, is the chain of five lakes which traverses it.

Strategic Advantages: the vast strategic importance of Puget Sound is fully appreciated by all soldiers and statesmen who have given the subject of world politics any consideration. It is the post of entrance and exit from the great Northwest. It is the only great harbor from San Francisco to British Columbia. It is four days nearer the Orient than San Francisco for ordinary steamers. Still another consideration is that the land is too poor for either agriculture or grazing and can be purchased very cheaply.

England has its Aldershot, which is considered a model camp of instruction. If our government acquires the American Lake site, it will possess a tract having advantages superior to those of the training camp of the British Army in every respect."

Do you have possibly historical items?

The Lakewood Historical Society is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Gifts to the society are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please contact the museum if you have questions or want to consider making a contribution.

6211 Mount Tacoma Dr SW, Lakewood, WA 98498 253-682-3480

Mountain View Funeral Home and Memorial Park

Lakewood facility started in 1915

The Historical Society's August program was all about the history of that Lakewood icon, the Mountain View Funeral Home and Memorial Park. Held in Mountain View's newest facility, the Celebration of Life Building, the history was given by Cindy Thompson. A fourth generation member of the Thompson family that has managed Mountain View since 1915, Cindy told the story of the cemetery and funeral home over the years, drawing on family memories and cemetery records.

1915: Birth of a Cemetery

The history of Mountain View began with James R. ("JR") Thompson who first came to the Tacoma area in 1906 from Butte, Montana where he had been engaged in mining. JR and his partners invested in 80 acres of land located on Steilacoom Boulevard.

The need for burial services in Tacoma was growing fast, leading Thompson to file for incorporation of the Mountain View Cemetery in 1915. The first burial was in December 1915.

In 1906, JR Thompson built the family home on Steilacoom Lake, naming it Holly Hedge. The children spent their younger years here, attending schools in Tacoma before leaving for boarding schools. J.R. instilled his philosophy early on, that the children should obtain quality educations in fields of interest to them and not rely on or have the expectation that they would work in the family business. J. Arthur

graduated from the University of Washington in 1927.

When JR passed away in 1927, he left his company shares to his son, J. Arthur Thompson and his daughter, Connie Staatz. J. Arthur didn't take up an active role in the business until 1939 however, when he acquired his sister's shares of the business in exchange for the estate's mining assets. He also took over shares owned by real estate mogul Norton Clapp, who had joined the partnership in 1931, in exchange for the deed to a cemetery in Vancouver, B.C.

More Than a Cemetery

When J. Arthur Thompson took on the management of Mountain View, he saw the need for improvements, including the need for combining funeral and burial services to meet the needs of the bereaved. In the early 1900s, there was still a large schism between the cemetery business and the funeral business, to the extent that it was illegal in some states to combine the two services. The first known combined funeral and burial business was instituted in 1937 at Forest Lawn in California.

With financing from the local Puget Sound National Bank, J. Arthur began by building a funeral home and converting the 1933 crematory into the Garden Chapel. By offering funeral services in conjunction with burials, Mountain View became one of the nation's first combination funeral home/

memorial parks.

The controversy didn't end there, however. J. Arthur came up against considerable opposition from funeral homes in Tacoma, boycotting Thompson's business. Tacoma funeral homes banded together and started their own burial site, the New Tacoma Cemetery located in University Place, causing a decline in services at Mountain View.

Mountain View bounced back and in 1948 introduced the concept of pre-need funeral and burial arrangements. Maury Hume was hired as the first pre-need sales manager, using J. Arthur's car to make door-to-door calls with a staff of two, Jim Long and Bob Berg. The salesmen would receive a 1% bonus if they brought a family to see the funeral home. Meanwhile, another loan from Puget Sound Bank completed this round of improvements including construction of the Garden Court Terrace for double depth burial. This became a key for future pre-need sales.

Meanwhile, J. Arthur moved the family from the Holly Hedge home to Norton Clapp's former home, four blocks down Interlaaken Drive. Later, J. Arthur moved the family again to the Key Peninsula. He had purchased 360 acres near Key Center in 1928 and moved there permanently in 1951. His son, Brewer "Buck" Thompson, left home at age 13 to be educated in the family tradition, first at Exeter

Expansion of the business

During the war years from the 1940's to the 1970's, Mountain View had contracts to handle all active duty deaths from Japan, Korea and Alaska. Staff would deliver caskets and shipping containers to the train and Mountain View staffers would attend all of the burial services, often being the only ones present

In 1956, Buck Thompson began working full time at Mountain View after graduating from Stanford and serving two years in the Air Force. He trained as an embalmer in his early years at Mountain View. Soon after, his father retired, leaving the business to his son's management. J. Arthur died in 1975 leaving his company shares to his four children. Buck had 50 percent of the stock and over an 8-year period the company retired the three girls' stock, making Buck the sole owner.

With most of the loans paid off, the earnings were put back into business expansion, with several new facilities built during the 1950's and 60's. The Garden Mausoleum was built along with a new well and the lower sections of the grounds were expanded. Mountain View purchased adjoining land, and a new maintenance shop was built to accommodate growth. The Valley Chapel was added in 1962-63.

The Fourth Generation

Cindy Thompson was born in Texas when her father, Buck Thompson, was stationed there with the Air Force. She graduated from Clover Park High School and followed the family tradition of training for work in other fields, working in health care for several years

as an Occupation Therapist and health care manager. In 1987, Cindy came on board as a funeral director in charge of special projects and grief programs while she apprenticed as an embalmer and funeral director. She earned her MBA at Pacific Lutheran University going to night classes.

In 1992, disaster hit the Mountain View Garden Chapel when an arsonist started a fire in an outside trash can. Unfortunately the hydrant on Steilacoom Blvd was no help as it turned out to have no water pressure. As a result, the Garden Chapel burned to the ground. The Mountain View staff rose to the challenge, reorganizing two of three scheduled services for that day by moving to new locations, renting chairs, organs, and all the other accouterments.

An immediate rebuild was started with a newly designed Garden Chapel taking place, using the original bricks and recreating the pews, alters and other furnishings. All of the music and hymnals had to be replaced. The plans for the original Chapel, built in 1933, were used to assist in the design. With a concerted effort, the renovated Garden Chapel was up and running in under eight months.

When Buck Thompson retired in 1996, his daughter first took up the position of manager, and later became president and CEO. Under her management, the Wildwood and Garden of Remembrance Mausoleums were built. The Celebration of Life Building was completed. This innovative building is a one-of-a-kind, offering a new chapel and two large rooms for after-service receptions. They also sold

a block of 500 grave sites to the Vietnamese Corporation to resell to family members.

While it is uncertain whether or not a 5th generation Thompson family member will one day take over the business, it remains certain that the family feels strongly about Mountain View's place in, and commitment to the community.

Special Services and Traditions

- * The Easter Sunrise Service was first held in 1944 and continues to be a community tradition to the present.
- * In the 1950s, the company acquired an airplane that was often used to provide specialized services within 600 miles for many years.
- * An annual Christmas lights tour illuminating the memorial park was begun. From 1955 and on to today, Christmas wreath sales benefited the Mary Bridge Hospital.
- * A Memorial Day Service has been a long tradition at the Veterans Memorial.

Mountain View by numbers

- * State laws now require 15% of funds from services to go into an endowment fund to provide perpetual care for the infrastructure and grounds when a burial site is filled.
- * Mountain View is an 'S' Corporation, meaning that no dividends are issued and all profits are put back into the business.
- * Mountain View staff: 72 full-time-equivalent employees including administrative, sales, funeral directors (13-14), grounds, cemetery records and summer staff (14).
- * The facility covers 164 acres, of which about 95 acres are developed.
- * 600-700 markers are placed in the cemetery every year.
- * Density levels have changed over time: gravesites may now be two deep, with cremation urns placed above that.

**LAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM
MUSEUM FUND CONTRIBUTORS**

December 20, 2007



Lakewood History Museum

*Thank You, Museum
Fund Donors and
Sponsors*

Gifts: \$24,602

Goal: \$100,000 by July 31, 2009
for Operations, Education, Exhibits,
Programs and Community Outreach

City of Lakewood Lodging Tax
supports museum promotions

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**LAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 FINANCIAL REPORT
 November and Eleven (11) Months YTD 2007
 November 30, 2007**

Cash on Hand	10/31/2007	12/31/2006
Checking	\$1474.94	\$ 5417.72
Money Market	\$7289.26	\$ 1061.35
Certificate of Deposit	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$10,701.60 (a)</u>
Total	\$8764.20	\$17,180.67
Income	November 2007	11 Months YTD
Grants	\$8446.21	\$46,413.16 (b)
Memberships	\$1365.00	\$ 5995.00
Donations - Museum Fund	\$1175.00	\$22,276.39
Sponsorships	\$ 0.00	\$ 1000.00
Special Fund Raisers	\$ 250.00	\$ 2960.00
Bank Interest	\$ 23.16	\$ 392.16
Other	<u>\$ 190.00</u>	<u>\$ 380.26</u>
Total Income	\$11,449.37	\$79,416.97
Expenses		
Operations & Administration	\$ 291.90	\$ 2709.20
Web site	\$ 30.00	\$ 375.00
Contract Services	\$6060.00	\$48,423.00 (c)
Insurance	\$ 0.00	\$ 1927.00
Museum lease	\$2000.00	\$21,600.00
Museum exhibits	\$1398.32	\$ 3536.16
Postage, copies & printing	\$ 91.89	\$ 3108.37
Fund Raising	\$ 200.00	\$ 2475.00
Raffle (Airline Tickets)	\$ 0.00	\$ 920.58
Marketing/Publicity	\$ 0.00	\$ 1222.50
Other	<u>\$ 25.00</u>	<u>\$ 184.37</u>
Total Expenses	\$10,097.11	\$86,481.18
Closing Cash on Hand 11/30/2007		
Checking	\$1650.53	\$ 1650.53
Money Market	\$8465.93	\$ 8465.93
Certificate of Deposit	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Total	\$10,116.46	\$10,116/46

- (a) \$5756.57 transferred to Money Market account 2/13/07
 \$5105.98 transferred to Money Market account 7/14/07
 (b) Includes \$18,722.53 received from 2006 City of Lakewood Grant
 (c) Includes \$28,077.00 paid for 2006 Contract Services

Prepared 12/04/2007

LHS joining Pierce County READS project

Lakewood Historical Society has joined several participating partners in supporting the Pierce County Library System and The News Tribune's first Pierce County READS, a campaign to have everyone in the community read the same book at the same time.

The book will be announced Feb. 3 by the Pierce County Library, TNT and online at Piercecountylibrary.org. The program

will conclude with a presentation and book signing by the author of this best selling title at PLU's Olson Auditorium, April 26.

Pierce County READS is targeted for adults, college and high school students.

In addition to the prime sponsor, Key Bank's Key Foundation, grants were awarded by Washington State Library, Secretary of State, Institute of Museum

and Library Services.

Rainier Pacific Foundation is an event supporter. Others are Associated Ministries, Barnes & Noble, Borders, Clover Park Technical College, Fort Lewis Library, Garfield Book Company, King's Books, McChord AFB, Mostly Books, PLU, Pierce College, Pierce County Library Foundation and donors, Pierce County Library Friends organizations, Puyallup Public Library, Roy Public Library and Sumner Arts Commission.

January - March Programs and Exhibits

Tuesday, Jan. 15, 7-9 pm

Western State Hospital's Museum. The hospital museum tour will cover the history of mental health issues from the days of the Washington Territory through the 20th Century.

Western State Hospital Hospital Administrative Building.

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 7-9 pm

142 Years: The Legacy of the Buffalo Soldiers. Honoring Black History Month, Col. James Manning (Ret.) and 9th and 10th Cavalry Association members tell the history of their military service since 1866.

Lakewood City Hall Council Chambers, 6000 Main St SW

Tuesday, Mar 18, 7-9 pm

William H. McNeill, the Captain of the S. S. Beaver . Dr Jerry Ramsey, historian, will present a re-enactment of William McNeill, an American fur trader hired by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1836 to captain the S.S. Beaver, the first steamship in Puget Sound.

New Exhibit at the Lakewood History Museum

Jan 9 through Mar 29 Northwest Treaty Trail: 1854-1856
A display on the tumultuous journey of Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens, the Indian leaders who met with him, and the events that changed thousands of lives.

NOTE: New Museum Hours

**In effect:
February 5th
Tuesday-Saturday
10 AM-4 PM**

Closed major holidays
New docents are
always welcome
and needed

**Contact Docent Chair:
Edie Brewer
253-588-4650**

Help the Lakewood Historical Society

Volunteers are needed
in many areas. Please
call: 253-682-3480

Your experience and
willingness to help is
needed.

Lakewood Historical Society

Program

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 7-9 pm

Lakewood City Hall

Council Chamber

142 Years and Counting:

**The Legacy of the
Buffalo Soldiers**

Lakewood Historical Society
POBox 98014
Lakewood, WA 98496