

Lakewood Historical Society Newsletter

Special Edition: Late September, 2006

Because Our History Matters.

Lakewood History Museum Progress

6211 Mount Tahoma Drive
Across from Columbia Bank

How many LHS members does it take to open a museum? 191!

Thank you to all that have donated items and contributed their time and talents to our brand new Lakewood History Museum. Because of our dedicated members, our Lakewood Museum is scheduled to open its doors Saturday, October 14th 11:00 am to 4:00 pm or join us the day before 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. It is coming together!

You'll see members hammering with donated hammers and nails, cleaning the glass of the donated display cabinets, mounting photos for exhibits, collecting new donations of memorabilia and sharing in this exciting process.

It is not too late to join the Museum team! We need you to join this fun and dynamic museum team.

Could you help in research or to prepare exhibits? Do you have retail experience and can help with store operations? Can you assist in scheduling the docent times? Call today 682-3480.

Tues, October 17th Program

History of the Mountain View Funeral Home

The October program will be held at the Mountain View Funeral Home and Memorial Park located at 4100 Steilacoom Blvd SW in Lakewood. Now operated by the fourth generation of the Thompson family, the company has been in Lakewood since 1915. It is now the largest combination of funeral home/cemetery in the Pacific Northwest.

Cindy Thompson attained her MBA from PLU and became President in 1996 when her father, Brewer Thompson retired. She will relate the history of the family company and its influence on the Lakewood community.

The program begins at 7:00 PM in the "Celebration of Life Chapel". Parking attendants will direct members and guests as they arrive.



LHS Website Launched

www.lakewoodhistorical.org

How many LHS members does it take to launch a website? Seven to launch it and 184 to build it! Many thanks to Janda Volkmer, Walter Neary, Steve Dunkelberger, Stephanie Walsh, Barbara Wyatt, Gary Fowler, and Becky Huber who provided ideas, support, leaves and text to launch our new website, Visit our LHS Website at www.lakewoodhistorical.org. Adam Welch of Hemisphere Design did the technical site development.

Oral History Project: Fifty Six Years On the Straight Part of Interlaaken Drive

By Sam and Natalie Brown

We came to Lakewood in 1950, via Longview, WA, Winnetka, IL, Philadelphia, PA and points in between. We had two children a boy, 4 years old and a girl two years old. And a Basset Hound.

Sam reported for work at Weyerhaeuser Timber Company's Public Information department in downtown Tacoma. We bought a house and five acres of land (for \$22,000!) on Interlaaken Drive, (on the straight part, not the curly part) across the bridge over Lake Steilacoom. Across the street from us were the Smythes (one kid), the Jake Curtises (two kids), the Slotts (two kids): the high Kid-Quotient was an important factor in our choice of address. Also no lake nearby for them all to drown in.

Neighbors on each side of us were Mrs. Perry, who baby-sat for us often, and on the other side, the Gordons, who had a Shetland pony. Further west were the Knechts with at least eight kids, and across the street from them were Lee and Maragart Merrill.

Our place was known as the Estabrook Farm, with two imposing cobblestone gate posts (too close together for hurrying drivers!), and a chicken house out back had been remodeled as humble living quarters for a rental property. We had a big front lawn and plenty of space for running and playing. A little fir tree was just the height of our two-year old.

Now, after fifty six years, it is at least 70 feet high, and the two year old is a 57-year old. The house has two stories, with three bedrooms, an upstairs in the attic, via a narrow stairway, and a tiny bathtub under the slanted roof, just fine for our needs.

Four more children had arrived by 1958, and there was a lot of adding on to both down and upstairs necessary: one bed room downstairs, and a big family room; upstairs a bigger bathroom for the five bedrooms was needed. The garage had a three-room apartment added, and the chicken house was demolished. The "farm" could not have been very productive, as the soil was almost all pebbles, a ridge of glacial moraine made a good coasting hill, but my veggie garden as only 12x12 feet, and carrots grew in the strangest shapes, around the stones.

Things that have changed in the 56 years we've been here:

- 1) The drive itself is much busier, with speed bumps being installed to slow down the traffic. We lost several dogs to speeder drives, alas.
- 2) Telephone changes to dial phonesets, and Area Codes and Zip Codes were required all over the country
- 3) We knew the mailman personally, and he came to the door to deliver packages. The cost of stamps moved up from three cents to present 39 cents. Our mailbox is still across the street, and too small for all the junk that gets crammed in.
- 4) The milk man we also knew and he brought the gallons of milk right into the kitchen, and put them in the ice box twice a week. Now we must lug it all from store to home ourselves – of course there are only two of us now.
- 5) Oscar the bread man came weekly in his truck, bringing baked goods right into our kitchen, too. We

enjoyed the company of all these helpers, and that of the repair men that seemed to be needed constantly, for washer, drier, stove, icebox, furnace and mysterious electric connections.

- 6) Shopping for groceries was easy – Ralph and Marie Hancock’s Lakewood Lockers, at Washington Blvd. and Interlaaken.

Nowadays, it’s just a convenience store, no fresh foods, so we don’t use it. The QFC does us very well. Other shopping used to be at the Lakewood Country Store for almost anything we need. Now, it’s gone and the space is empty – the convent, Visitation Villa was sold and become Villa Plaza, a shopping Mall which morphed in the Lakewood Towne Center, with a big movie multiplex included, causing the Lakewood Center movie house to close.

And strangest of all, the fabled Lakewood Terrace restaurant closed never to be replaced! We remember Toki the waitress, who knew everybody’s drink and food order before they did, and Benny Andersen, the first and best manager. There are no more “white tablecloth” eateries now in our “city.” Everything is quick and plastic. More allasses!

- 7) Gasoline was around 50 cents a gallon, and we had a good friend in Bill Cooley and his Chevron Station on Gravelly Lake Drive by Park Lodge School. Now that gas is \$3 a gallon, the station is closed and Bill retired long ago and moved to Green Valley, Arizona. Now we must fill our own tanks by ourselves, unless we display my Disabled sign.
- 8) North Pacific Bank, in South Tacoma at 56th Street, was the nearest bank for us in 1950; a good ten mile drive, round trip, for us. Puget Sound National Bank built a nice red

brick barn, across from the Country Store, which is now the original Columbia State Bank. Now there are at least ten other Banks and Credit Unions in Lakewood!

- 9) The Lakewood Community Players was a source of entertainment in the Olden Days. We first attended their plays in the York Room, basement of the Terrace restaurant. “The Rainmaker” was the first play we saw there. Some were presented in the Mellinger Funeral Home on Bridgeport Way. Finally the Players built their own Theatre-in-the-Round, which is still used, even though it is too small back stage. It is thriving under semi-professional management the last few years, and called the Lakewood Playhouse. Each production improves on the last, it seems to us. I wrote their Newsletter, mimeographed, for a while, in the 1970’s, and served as president for a year, and was in only one play, Auntie Mame, with two bit parts. My most enduring gift to the Players was the making of 12 seat cushions for the uncomfortable folding chairs that audience had to sit in.
- 10) When we came to Lakewood in 1950, we attended a tiny house-church on Gravelly Lake Drive and Lake Street, recently established as St. Mary’s Episcopal Church. The first Vicar was the Rev. Newton Carrol. At present, the sixth Rector is the Rev. Ken McCulloch. Fifty six years later, we are still involved as choristers, vestry person (Sam 3 times), Sunday school teacher (Nat, kindergarten, and Adult Ed. 5 years, and informal Archivists).

11) After a series of capital fund drives a large parish hall/sanctuary was built (1952), then offices and school rooms, then the present church Sanctuary (1957), and finally a large nursery and a whole day school with room for pre-school, kindergarten and grades 1 through 5 (2002-6). St. Mary's Episcopal School now has its staff of 21 full- and part-time teachers for its 100 students. The Church staff of seven attuned to the spiritual needs of the congregation of some 226 families and individuals (and, needless to say, the choir is one of the best in the Diocese!) All this, crammed on the original lot at Gravelly Lake Drive across from Clover Park High School!

Written by Sam and Nathalie Brown,
September, 2006

Sam and Natalie Brown contributed this story to The Oral History Project of LHS. The Oral History Project collects stories and recollections of Lakewood history. These stories, photographs and recordings capture the essence of Lakewood's history. Your memories are an important part of preserving history.

Please send hand-written, typed or recorded stories of what you remember about Lakewood in days past. Volunteers with the Oral History Project can also arrange home visits to record those important stories. Contact Donna Cable and Margaret Gunther at 584-6147 for more information.

Among the Best in Lakewood

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

Sharon N. Montgomery

Elizabeth Poinsette and Cynthia Speith received special recognition at the September Tacoma Historical Society meeting at Stadium High School ceremony. Elizabeth is a 1929 graduate and Cynthia is a 1933 graduate of Stadium High School.

Many thanks to the Lakewood History Museum volunteers who donated items and time to prepare for the opening of our Lakewood History Museum. We are creating a special recognition for these community volunteers who have donated items, time, talent and dollars to support the opening our Lakewood History Museum.

LHS Members who have already purchased their "Black Coffee" tickets to support this fun fundraiser. This will be a great event! Tickets are still available.

TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE CALL TODAY

Lakewood Playhouse
**Agatha Christie's
Black
Coffee**
A Hercule Poirot
Murder Mystery
September 30th
at 2:00 PM
A Special Fundraising
Performance for the
Lakewood Historical Society
TICKETS
253-588-0042
www.lakewoodplayhouse.org
Tickets only
\$20.00
Take I-5 to Exit 125, next to the Pierce Transit Center
in the Lakewood Towne Center
Produced by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, Inc.

Museum Docents and Tour Guides

Steep Yourself in History at the Lakewood History Museum

Join us as a Volunteer Docent at the Lakewood History Museum and help make history as the latest new museum in Pierce County joins its prestigious partners in this cradle of Northwest history. Docents and tour guides welcome entertain and educate visitors with the fascinating history of our region, from the era of prehistoric glaciation to the present.

Open hours will be 11 – 4 pm, Friday and Saturdays from October 2006 through February 2007. Beginning in March 2007 the Museum will be open from 11 am – 4 pm, Wednesday through Saturday. Sundays may be added in the summer months. Your requested time commitment is 3-5 hours per month.

Your orientation and training will help you discuss local history, exhibits, artifacts and museum goals as well as knowing about nearby sites of interest

and visitor information on the City. An added benefit will be occasional tours of other museums to learn more about the area. An annual recognition event will honor our volunteers to express our gratitude. We hope you will join us.



Lakewood History Museum
6211 Mt. Tacoma Dr. SW in Lakewood's Colonial Center
contact@lakewoodhistory.org
253 / 682-3480

LAKEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & HISTORY MUSEUM

Mail In Form to Volunteer for Museum

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Day; _____ Evening; _____ Weekend; _____ Mobile

Email: _____

Availability: _____ Days; _____ Evenings; _____ Weekends

Questions? Please call the museum at 682-3480.

Elections

The planning and goal-setting of our LHS is guided by dedicated members who serve as Officers, on the Board of Directors or chair a Committee. Will you step up and take on this challenge? Will you be a part of this exciting team?

It is election time and the Nominating Committee is soliciting names of LHS members who can help guide our organization to the next step. If you would like to be a part of this leadership, please complete the attached form and send it to LHS.

The Executive Committee is composed of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Committees

Executive Committee: Board Officers
Governance

Collections & Acquisitions: Manage and develop collections

Education Program: Develop programs for students and adults

Exhibit Planning: Create interesting and unique exhibits of interest

Event Planning: Recognition, fundraising, annual meeting

Facility Planning: Planning for a permanent museum

Finance & Budget: Financial management and oversight

Fundraising Development: Annual fund, capital campaign

Membership Development: Recruit and support membership

Programs: Organize and present programs of interest

Public Relations & Marketing: Promote the Museum and its Mission

Mail In Form to be an Officer, Board Member or on a Committee

I want to serve on the Executive Committee as (select one):
 President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer.

I want to serve on the Board of Directors

I want to volunteer my talents on the following committee (select one or more):

Education, Exhibit, Event, Facility, Finance,
 Fundraising, Membership, Programs, Public Relations

I want to chair the following committee (select one):

Education, Exhibit, Event, Facility, Finance,
 Fundraising, Membership, Programs, Public Relations

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Day; _____ Evening; _____ Weekend; _____ Mobile

Email: _____

Lakewood Lancers Champions of 1964 Recognized

On September 8, 2006, the Tacoma Athletic Commission honored championship high school football teams and their coaches of the 1960's. Players, coaches and friends from the 1964 Lakes High School team were present to receive the honor.

In 1964, the Lakewood Lancers finished the season as the Puget Sound League's only unbeaten team with their 8-0-1 record. During the 1964 season, Lakes registered four shutouts and allowed an average of only six points per game and regained the Kiwanis Club Trophy by defeating rival Clover Park, 27-14. Their season had one tied game

against the Puyallup Vikings. In the last play of the game, the Vikings quarterback made a 17-yard gain, but did not break the 0-0 score. The Puget Sound League rules state that the winner of a tied game is determined by the team compiling the most net yardage. The statistics were completed and found that the Vikings had 12 more yards than the Lancers. All achieved in the last play of the game.

The Puyallup Vikings earned the division's league playoff post against Northern Division winner Kent-Meridian — and won.

Barbara Wyatt



Back Row: Bob Saxton, Coach Chuck Forsland, Doug Karmen, Judy Estes Karmen with Gary Larsen standing behind, Carmen Sterba, Sandy Althrusa Williamson, Linda Staples Forkenbrock, Greg Vine, Betty Fulton, Ray Staples
Front Row: Don McPherson #44. Bill Saxton #28, Stu Williamson #6, Linn Larsen, Pat Macintyre #40.

Mark Your Calendars

Saturday, September 30

Black Coffee performance 2:00 pm
At Lakewood Players
\$20 per ticket

Saturday, October 14th

Lakewood History Museum
Opens its doors
6211 Mount Tahoma Drive

Tues, October 17th

History of the Mountain View Funeral
Home

4100 Stellacoom Blvd SW

7:00 PM in the "Celebration of Life Chapel"

Become a LHS Member Today

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

Lakewood Historical Society
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