Visit museums during September for Heritages Happens: Before you know it... it’s history!

Sat, Sept 10th
Baarsma. Update on Reconciliation Park

Thurs, Sept 15th, 6-7:30 pm: Lakes High School Grand Opening Celebration at Lakes High School

Tues, Sept 20th, 6 pm: Reconciling the "Tacoma Method", presented by Former Tacoma Mayor Bill Baarsma. Update on Reconciliation Park and the Three Radio Rogues. The shops opened their doors, as well as the dining and recreations rooms adjoining the theater. The theater itself, with nearly 600 plush blue seats, christened its silver screen at 6:30 that evening with the hit romantic comedy I Met Him in Paris, starring Claudette Colbert, Robert Young, and Melvyn Douglas. Veteran reel men H. T. Moore and Sydney Dean played the film twice, to accommodate all of the visitors. Besides being hailed as “one of the finest motion picture houses” in the region, the 24’x25’ stage was designed for live theater as well, complete with orchestra pit and dressing rooms. The theater also boasted a 100 seat balcony and two glassed-in viewing rooms; one to serve as a nursery for children, and the other to oblige those who wished to smoke during performances.

Initially, the "strictly first-class pictures," as the theaters' manager Sidney Dean called them, ran only on Fridays through Sunday with matinees on Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3pm. Films were usually changed on a weekly basis, and admission was only a quarter. The much acclaimed theater would celebrate its one year anniversary with a special weekend long showing of Walt Disney’s “magical creation,” Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Towards the end of the 1930's, and as the world again teetered on the edge of war, the Lakewood Theatre had the distinction of being the only theater in Tacoma to play European films.

For two decades, the 50 ft. tall spire of the theater was a beacon to both shoppers and movie-goers from all around Tacoma. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened for business, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre.

HISTORIC THEATRE GOES OUT WITH A WHIMPER
(part 1)
By Matthew Hulton
On the evening of Thursday July 8, 1937, Norman Clapp’s dream became a reality. At 6:00 in the evening, an estimated 3500 citizens of the greater Tacoma area gathered at the red brick veneer and white painted cedar and pine of an esoteric colonial-style building in the middle of Tacoma’s outlying prairies for the grand opening of the Lakewood Community Center. Founded by Clapp and designed by architect Silas Nelson, the complex would be one of, if not the first suburban shopping centers to be built west of the Mississippi. Shops included a health and beauty center, grocery and butchers markets, drug store, and what a July 1937 edition of the Tacoma News Tribune referred to as, “the most beautiful picture theater in the Northwest.”

There were many festivities for the opening of the center, which included outdoor performances by local groups the Four Esquires and the Three Radio Rogues. The shops opened their doors, as well as the dining and recreations rooms adjoining the theater. The theater itself, with nearly 600 plush blue seats, christened its silver screen at 6:30 that evening with the hit romantic comedy I Met Him in Paris, starring Claudette Colbert, Robert Young, and Melvyn Douglas. Veteran reel men H. T. Moore and Sydney Dean played the film twice, to accommodate all of the visitors. Besides being hailed as “one of the finest motion picture houses” in the region, the 24’x25’ stage was designed for live theater as well, complete with orchestra pit and dressing rooms. The theater also boasted a 100 seat balcony and two glassed-in viewing rooms; one to serve as a nursery for children, and the other to oblige those who wished to smoke during performances.

Initially, the “strictly first-class pictures,” as the theaters’ manager Sidney Dean called them, ran only on Fridays through Sunday with matinees on Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3pm. Films were usually changed on a weekly basis, and admission was only a quarter. The much acclaimed theater would celebrate its one year anniversary with a special weekend long showing of Walt Disney’s “magical creation,” Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Towards the end of the 1930's, and as the world again teetered on the edge of war, the Lakewood Theatre had the distinction of being the only theater in Tacoma to play European films.

For two decades, the 50 ft. tall spire of the theater was a beacon to both shoppers and movie-goers from all around Tacoma. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the Lakewood Theatre.
President's Message

This past month has been a whirlwind of activities for the Lakewood Historical Society. However, all of the good things have been tempered by the sad news of the passing of two of our board members.

Brad MacGowan died July 26th at age 81 of a heart attack. He was on our board from 2005-2008 and performed a vital role as a member of the Planning Committee for our Museum. He was also the current Chairman of the City of Lakewood’s Landmarks Heritage Advisory Board.

Dave Sclair died the same day as Brad at age 73 after a short battle with brain cancer. He was our current Marketing Chair and Newsletter Editor. The last project Dave and I worked on together was coordinating a move to a new location for our program presentations. The Parish Hall at St Mary’s Episcopal Church has been a good fit for us and we have thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the welcome given by the church.

The week prior to our BIG EVENT was highlighted by the Museum hosting the Lakewood’s Chamber of Commerce monthly “After Hours” complete with food and wine from Lakewood’s Stina’s Cellars. We had nearly 200 visitors for July, our highest on record. Overall we’ve had a 44% increase compared to last year. All of the marketing and promotion started by Dave has proven to be very effective.

As the saying goes, when God closes a door he opens a window. This has proven to be true in our situation. Just this week I have had not one but two people volunteer to be on the board. I am currently interviewing both of them and we’ll be accepting their nominations at our September meeting.

Our future looks full of promise. I am so thankful for the continued support you provide.

Your humble leader,

Becky Huber

P.S. Following the sad loss of our Newsletter editor Dave Sclair, we have a new editor, Stephen Neufeld, who also happens to work as Marketing Executive for The Suburban Times! (www.thesubtimes.com) with Dave’s son, Ben Sclair, the publisher of The Suburban Times.

Jeanne Nickerl
Doug and Alice Payne
Alice Peeples
Mary Lou Peterson
Michael (Skip) and Judy Rash
Larry Saunders
Ben Sclair (Suburban Times)
Sue Scott
John and Joan Shalkashvili
Colleen W. Smart
Cynthia Spiehl
Glen and Marlene Spiehl
Idelia Whittled-Stith
James W. and Dorothy L. Wickline
Darlene Wilder

Memorials in Honor of:

LTC Darwin C. Miller USA (Ret) by Helga P. Miller
Dave Sclair by John and Rebecca Huber by Gary and Karen Fowler
Brad MacGowan by John and Rebecca Huber
Bill Imhoff by John and Rebecca Huber
T. Olai Hageness by Carl and Ingrid Fyrboe
Jack Gamble by Kris and Sylvia Kaufman

CONTRIBUTOR

Robert W. Allen
Darlene Anderson
Sandra K. Anderson
Gene and Peggy Bal
Miles and Chieko Becker
Richard and Helen Bednarczyk
Stanley and Beverly Bills
Mary Bowby
Michael and Hae Yon Brandstetter
Vivi de年轻field
Philip Coates
James and Linda Curley
Kristin Davis
Keiko Decker
Duane Colt Denfeld
Patricia Dice
Lila Early
Allan (Buddy) and Jeanne Emmons
Ken and Evelyn Enslow
Pearl (Billy) Finley
Anita Fries
Scott Garras
Andrea Gernon
Joe and Carolyn Ghiarducci
Sandra Godfrey
Ruth Stevick and Lynn Gracey
George and Geneva Hamill
Whittaker M. Hemburn
John G. Hewston
Samuel G. Hewston
Frances L. Hilliard
Donald Hirt
William L. Jackson
Dorothy James
Diane M. Johnson
Joann Johnson
Roger and Shellite Johnson
Charles A. Johnstno
Johanna Jones
Jerry and Beth Julian
Michael K. Keahi
Michael W. and Cheryl A. Klien
Connie Coleman-Lacadie
Vornon O. Larson Mace
Nancy Mace
James Manning
Florence March
Eugene K. Maun
Thomas McCavoy
Helen McGovern
Genevieve A. McIntyre
Herb and Jane Meske
John Guy and Lorette Meske
LT(Ret) David and Kathryn Meyer
Maris (Tom) Mez
Carol and Jim Moreno
Mr & Mrs Sanford Ogawa
Gene and Margaret Pankey
Jan Reeder
Rob and Linda Rego
Dennis and Sachiko Roden
Robert and Christine Russ
Don and Katherine Russell
Louise Schumock
Barbara G. Scott
Claire (Candy) Stewart
Dugald and Nora Stewart
Val D. Stewart
Patricia Stolp
James and Mona Stone
Jim Taylor
Claudia Thomas

Bob and Candy Tingstad
Marvin and Melissa Tommervik
Brewer and Joanne Thompson
Cindy Thompson
Judy Turcott
Thea Vestal
Elle Washburn
Joan L. Walston
Karen M. Wiley
John and Dede Winters
Harriet R. Wolverton
Robert and Sarah Woodall

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

Lakewood Historical Society
Lesson: Mary Bowlby • Meg Justus

PRAIRIE GAZETTE

Prairie Gazette is the official publication of the Lakewood Historical Society. The newsletter is published four times a year. Distribution is directly to members and available at the Lakewood History Museum at the address listed below.

The staff of Prairie Gazette’s activity 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.

Content of this publication is copyright protected by the Society and/or the authors and artists.

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 our website for information on events and activities.

www.LakewoodHistorical.org

---

Financial Statement

7 months YTD thru July 31, 2011

Cash on Hand
January 1, 2011: $13,875

Income: Grants $20,624
Memberships $6,025
Donations, Sponsorships and Memorial gifts $13,330

Special Fund Raiser - Villa Madera $6,080

Total Income: $46,059

Expenses: Operations, Administration, Insurance and Special events $13,646
Contract Services $2,496
Museum lease payments $10,500
Museum exhibits $3,095
Marketing/Publicity $9,426

Total Expenses: $39,163
Cash on Hand—July 31, 2011: $20,771
PARTNER - $200 to $499
Angela and John Connely
Larry and Carol Else
Gary and Karen Fowler
Horace Gamas
Clyde and Jean Kalahan
Mac and Bette Kirk
Clark and Sharon Montgomery
Raye Staples
Henry Schatz
Titus Will Families Foundation
Mike and Mary Jo Tucci
David and Barbara Young

Memorials in Honor of:
- Elizabeth Poinsett by Helen Amsbary
- Margaret J. (Peggy) Bal by Patty Ann Forsyth
- Carl and Ingrid Fynboe by John and Rebecca Huber
- Kris and Sylvia Kaufman by Laurel Lemke
- Eugene K. Maun by Lissette C. Meyer
- Helga Miller by Mathew D. Miller and Shelia C. Brunckaker-Miller by Jim, Ann and Karen Paillio of Frances and Mayo Prentice by Robert and Skardt Huss by Patricia G. and Lorele Slolop by Bob and Cindy Tingstad by Sharon M. Wheeler by Dorothy Wilhem by Paul and Rebecca Wulfestieg

ASSOCIATE - $100 to $199
Marion S. Ball by Edie Brewer
Ron and Christine Cronk
Rhona Diehl
Charles T. Eckstrom III
Susan B. Fields
Joe and Carolyn Giallarducci
Sandra and Clarence Glasse
Margaret S. Glover
Lawrence and Natalie Humphrey
Charles Hyde
Brad Jones
Clara and Otte Ladd
Leona W. Long
Brad and Liz MacGlowen
W. H. (Howie) Meadowcroft

Pierce County History
Being Showcased in September 2011

The Heritage League of Pierce County (HLPC) is a consortium of more than 40 organizations that preserve our rich, vibrant heritage. Located throughout Pierce County, these exciting museums, sites and organizations await your visit. Learn about pioneers, Native Americans, agriculture, logging, maritime heritage, and wooden boat building. Take part in re-enactments, education programs, workshops, and hands-on opportunities. Open this passport, plan your adventure and discover that Heritage Happens... before you know it, It's History!

The Lakewold Historical Society has been a member of the HLPC since 2006 and is pleased to be a part of Heritage Happens. The brochures are available at the Lakewold History Museum at 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr SW across from Mt. Tacoma Community College. Visit as many places during the month of September in order to be eligible for a prize. Start your adventure today. For more information, go to www.piercecountyhistory.org

Lakewold History Museum
NEW MEMBERS
January thru July 2011

Dr. Robert W. Allen
Walter A. Baade
Henry W. and Mary E. Backous
Better Properties Real Estate, Towne and Pat Congdon
Phillip Carman
Cardiag World, Steve and Susan Cowpethwaite
John and Angela Connely
Jan and James Cook
Kristin E. Davis
Ken Dysch
Terry Ripoli
Peter R. Reiner
Les Schwab Tire Center
Terry Ripoli
Jeanne Nickerl
LTC (Ret) David and Kathryn Meyer
David and Carol
Kristy Kernen
Arthur and Melissa Howarth (Moe)
Mary Lou Sclair
Claude Remy & Claire Spain
John and Rebecca Huber
LTG (Ret) William (Bill) Harrison
John and Rebecca Huber
Claude Remy & Claire Spain-Remy
Dave and Mary Lou Sclair

2011 Goal: $25,000 for Operations, Education, Exhibits, Programs and Community Outreach
Actual: $17,700 from 147 donors plus $2,445 in Memorial gifts from 24 donors - $20,145 total

SPONSORS, BUSINESS and ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
AA Party Rentals
B&B Glass
BCR Design
Better Properties Real Estate
Cartridge World
Comcast
Gramor Development WA
Harborstone Credit Union
Lakewood Ford
Lakewood Chamber of Commerce
Lakewold Gardens
LeMay Enterprises
Les Schwab Tire Center
Merit Construction
Murray Pacific Corporation
Northwest Commercial Bank
Paktek Inc
Patriots Landing
Puget Sound Energy
Smith-Western Company
Sound Transit
The Suburban Times
The Helen & John Vogt Foundation
Water Rights Inc

PREMIER - $1,000 or more
Comcast
Helga P. Miller
The Helen and John Vogt Foundation

PATRON - $500 to $999
Harborstone Credit Union
LTG (Ret) William (Bill) Harrison
John and Rebecca Huber
Claude Remy & Claire Spain-Remy
Dave and Mary Lou Sclair

Werner Dillenburger's artwork is on display in Lakewold History Museum's “Artist Corner” through September 10th

As a native of Germany, he had the good fortune to study at the Institute of Graphic Arts in Hanau, Germany. He enjoyed instructions by artists such a Fritz Goering, a well known watercolorist as well as other painters. This led to an assignment in fashion illustration and eventually studies in fashion design and textile engineering.

He came to the United States in 1960 and worked for major companies such as Day's Tailored Clothing Company in Tacoma, WA and Jantzen Swimwear Company in Portland, OR.

Lakewold was his home from 1961 until 1972 and then returned again in 1999.

In 1980 he established his own Sportswear Company in Tacoma and retired several years ago. He is now able to devote his time to what he loves the most—painting with watercolors. In his spare time, he has built several kayaks that he enjoys on the Lakewold lakes and the waters of Puget Sound.

Thank you to all our sponsors, donors, members and visitors!

Thank You,
Museum Fund
Donors and Sponsors

If the new mall and play-house were bad for the Lakewold Center, then what happened a decade later would be catastrophic for the Lakewold Theatre. Almost 32 years to the day that the Lakewold Theatre screened "I Met Him in Paris," on July 1, 1984, the Villa Plaza opened its two-screen Cinéplex with Jack Lemmon in The April Fools.

In order to compete, the Lakewold Theatre would show films 7 nights a week. The theater made it through the 1970's, relying on the Colonial-style architecture and high-class dining of the adjoining Terrace restaurant to entice citizens to the screen. In mid-December of 1978, the Lakewold Theatre attracted more than local attention when the short-lived Paramount Studios television show "Sweeptakes" chose the location to cast and film 500 extras chosen for audience reaction-shots inside of the theater.

The ad for the Lakewold Theatre in the TGFl section of the Friday Tacoma News Tribune went from a large ad with a unique font in the late 70's to a mere footnote in the early 80's. By early 1984, it was under the umbrella of the Galaxy Bargain Cinemas, with evening shows for $2, and matinees for $1. On Friday, May 25, 1984, the Lakewold Theatre, showing the war drama "Purple Hearts," made its last appearance as a graphic ad. It spent the next three days omitted from the TNT movie listings altogether. On the following two days, it again appeared in its usual spot under the "Suburbs" heading; however no films were listed next to it. On Thursday, May 31, 1984, the Theatre presented "Purple Hearts" at the usual times of 7:00 and 9:05 pm. The following day in the TGF under the "Suburbs" heading, next to Lakewold Theatre was a single word: "closed." 47 years later, the community was summing it up in one word.

The Colonial Center celebrated its 50th anniversary three years later, and although the theater's tower and bell were renovated and touched up with a new coat of oyster-white paint, and a 400lb cake was designed to resemble the theater, the theater itself was not used in the celebration. A 78-year-old Norton Clapp returned to the site originally dubbed "Clapp's Folly" to give an outdoor speech about how his iconic structure had been so folly at all and in fact had thrived and helped form the center of the young prairie community.

In December of 2000, the City of Lakewold held its annual Christmas party in the Lakewold Theatre, with Santa Claus on the stage. Since then it has been used sparingly, if at all. (End of Part 1)
THE 1920’S RETURN TO LAKewood

Sunday afternoon, July 31, 2011, over 200 people descended on the three-acre estate of Villa Madera. Guests enjoyed the ambience of a bygone era, feasting on fabulous hors d’oeuvres and sipping local wines. The only sounds heard were the strains of piano music and lively conversation. There was a noticeable absence of modern devices, not one cell phone was heard. Every possible need had been anticipated. Guests were shuttled from the Clover Park High School onto the property by vans supplied by Lakewood Ford (below).

Numerous volunteers served as hostesses and tour guides ensuring everyone had a good time. Soldiers (above) from Joint Base Lewis McChord assisted guests to and from the main activity area and provided a constant stream of food, navigating up and down the long flight of stairs from the kitchen.

Once guests arrived on the former tennis court area of the lakefront property, they had the opportunity to visit five different food stations, one large table devoted to desserts alone (below). Once guests arrived on the former tennis court area of the lakefront property, they had the opportunity to visit five different food stations, one large table devoted to desserts alone (below). Another table (above) displayed a magnificent fresh fruit tower. The liquid refreshments table offered lemonade, iced tea and water for those who chose not to drink wine.

Mutual friends were greeted and introduced to new acquaintances and visitors from out of town. One couple from Florida was lucky enough to attend with their friends from Lakewood. Multiple clusters of people were seated at large tables under the shade of a large tent. Others stood at small tables that offered views of the lake. Couples and individuals strolled the grounds admiring the lush landscaping.

Lots of flapper dresses were in evidence; none was more stunning than the dress worn by our fearless leader, Becky Huber, in a red and purple number with lots of fringe and sequins (above). The most popular photo op at the event was next to the vintage automobiles, a 1929 Chrysler Roadster on loan from LeMay Family Collection Museum and the 1939 Bentley now owned by the Carman great granddaughter. A lucky few left the event shuttled back to the parking lot in the Bentley (below).

The highlight of the day was a guided tour of the home. Only the downstairs rooms were open to the public but many architectural features and décor original to the home were evident. The Carmans (the original owners) were world travelers and delighted in finding new treasures that made Villa Carman special. Rooms visited included: The Library (below);

Dining Room (above); and, Living Room (below).

The memories will live on with attendees. Next year’s event has yet to be decided but, you can count on it being special.

Villa Madera is owned by Kyle Smith and Gayle Hampton-Smith (left) who purchased it from Linda Evans in 2002. As quoted by Mr. Smith in an interview at the event, “Gayle found the home of her dreams and...we absolutely love living here and sharing it”. It is a spacious Spanish Colonial Revival mansion that looked like it could have been plucked from Santa Barbara, CA or the Mediterranean. Originally known as Villa Carman it was built in 1920 by Joseph Lincoln Carman, a Tacoma businessman. The L.T. Murray’s purchased it in 1939 and renamed it Madera. The property was subdivided into spacious lots in 1978 and became known as the gated community “Madera”. The memories will live on with attendees. Next year’s event has yet to be decided but, you can count on it being special.
Sunday afternoon, July 31, 2011, over 200 people descended on the three-acre estate of 

VILLA MADERA.

Guests enjoyed the ambience of a bygone era, feasting on fabulous hors d'oeuvres and sipping local wines. The only sounds heard were the strains of piano music and lively conversation. There was a noticeable absence of modern devices, not one cell phone was heard. Every possible need had been anticipated. Guests were shuttled from the Clover Park High School onto the property by vans supplied by Lakewood Ford (below).

Numerous volunteers served as hostesses and tour guides ensuring everyone had a good time.

Once guests arrived on the former tennis court area of the lakefront property, they had the opportunity to visit five different food stations, one large table devoted to desserts alone (below).

Another table (above) displayed a magnificent fresh fruit tower. The liquid refreshments table offered lemonade, iced tea and water for those who chose not to drink wine.

Mutual friends were greeted and introduced to new acquaintances and visitors from out of town. One couple from Florida was lucky enough to attend with their friends from Lakewood. Multiple clusters of people were seated at large tables under the shade of a large tent. Others stood at small tables that offered views of the lake. Couples and individuals strolled the grounds admiring the lush landscaping.

Lots of flapper dresses were in evidence; none was more stunning than the dress worn by our fearless leader, Becky Huber, in a red and purple number with lots of fringe and sequins (above).

The most popular photo op at the event was next to the vintage automobiles, a 1929 Chrysler Roadster on loan from LeMay Family Collection Museum and the 1939 Bentley now owned by the Carman great granddaughter. A lucky few left the event shuttled back to the parking lot in the Bentley (below).

The highlight of the day was a guided tour of the home. Only the downstairs rooms were open to the public but many architectural features and décor original to the home were evident. The Carmans (the original owners) were world travelers and delighted in finding new treasures that made Villa Carman special. Rooms visited included:
The Library (below);

VILLA MADERA is owned by Kyle Smith and Gayle Hampton-Smith (left) who purchased it from Linda Evans in 2002. As quoted by Mr. Smith in an interview at the event, “Gayle found the home of her dreams and...we absolutely love living here and sharing it”. It is a spacious Spanish Colonial Revival mansion that looked like it could have been plucked from Santa Barbara, CA or the Mediterranean. Originally known as Villa Carman it was built in 1920 by Joseph Lincoln Carman, a Tacoma businessman. The L.T. Murray's purchased it in 1939 and renamed it Madera. The property was subdivided into spacious lots in 1978 and became known as the gated community “Madera”.

The memories will live on with attendees. Next year’s event has yet to be decided but, you can count on it being special.

Page 4

Page 5
PARTNER - $200 to $499
Angela and John Connelly
Larry and Carol Else
Gary and Karen Fowler
Horace Gamas
Clyde and Jean Kalahan
Mac and Bette Kirk
Clark and Sharon Montgomery
Raye Staples
Henry Schatz
Titus Will Families Foundation
Mike and Mary Jo Tucci
David and Barbara Young

Memorials in Honor of:
Elizabeth Poinsett
by Helen Amsbary
Margaret J. (Peggy) Bal
by Patti Ann Forsyth
by Carl and Ingrid Fynboe
by John and Rebecca Huber
by Kris and Sylvia Kaufman
by Laurel Lemke
by Eugene K. Maun
by Lisette C. Meyer
by Helga Miller
by Mathew D. Miller and
by Shari A. Cumbaker-Miller
by Jim, Ann and Karen Paillio
by Frances and Mayo Prentice
by Robert and Skidrute Riss
by Patricia G. and Loralei Stolp
by Bob and Cindy Tingstad
by Sharon M. Wheeler
by Dorothy Wilhem
by Paul and Rebecca Wulfestieg

ASSOCIATE - $100 to $199
Marion S. Ball
Edie Brewer
Ron and Christine Cronk
Rhona Diehl
Charles T. Eckstrom III
Suzan B. Fields
Joe and Carolyn Ghiarducci
Sandra and Clarence Glassie
Margaret S. Glover
Lawrence and Natalie Humphrey
Charles Hyde
Brad Jones
Clara and Otto Ladd
Leona W. Long
Brad and Liz MacGlowen
W. H. (Howie) Meadowcroft

Lakewood Theatre
from page 1

If the new mall and play-house were bad for the Lakewood Center, then what happened a decade later would be catastrophic for the Lakewood Theatre. Almost 32 years to the day that the Lakewood Theatre screened “I Met Him in Paris,” on July 1, 1984, the Villa Plaza opened its two-screen Cineplex with Jack Lemmon in The April Fools.

In order to compete, the Lakewood Theatre would show films 7 nights a week. The theatre made it through the 1970’s, relying on the Colonial-style architecture and high-class dining of the adjoining Terrace restaurant to entice citizens to the screen. In mid-December of 1978, the Lakewood Theatre attracted more than local attention when the short-lived Paramount Studios television show “Sweepstakes” chose the location to cast and film 500 extras chosen for audience reactions shot inside of the theater.

The ad for the Lakewood Theatre section of the Friday Tacoma News Tribune went from a large ad with a unique font in the late 70’s to a more footnote in the early 80’s. By early 1984, it was under the umbrella of the Galaxy Bargain Cinemas, with evening shows for $2, and matinees for $1. On Friday, May 25, 1984, the Lakewood Theatre, showing the war drama “Purple Hearts,” made its last appearance as a graphic ad. It spent the next three days omitted from the TNT movie listings altogether. On the following two days, it again appeared in its usual spot under the “Suburbs” heading; however no films were listed next to it. On Thursday, May 31, 1984, the Theatre presented “Purple Hearts” at the usual times of 7:00 and 9:05 pm. The following day in the TGF under the “Suburbs” heading, next to Lakewood Theatre was a single word: “closed.” 47 years of serving the community was summed up in one word.

The Colonial Center celebrated its 50th anniversary three years later, and although the theatre’s tower and bell were renovated and touched up with a new coat of oyster-white paint, and a 400lb clock was designed to resemble the theater, the theater itself was not used in the celebration. A 78-year-old Norton Clapp returned to the site originally dubbed “Clapp’s Folly” to give an outdoor speech about how his iconic structure had been so folly at all and in fact had thrived and helped form the center of the young prairie community.

In December of 2000, the City of Lakewood held its annual Christmas party in the Lakewood Theatre, with Santa Claus on the stage. Since then it has been used sparingly, if at all. (End of Part 1)

Pierce County History Being Showcased in September 2011

The Heritage League of Pierce County (HLPC) is a consortium of more than 40 organizations that preserve our rich, vibrant heritage. Located throughout Pierce County, these exciting museums, sites and organizations await your visit. Learn about pioneers, Native Americans, agriculture, logging, maritime heritage, and wooden boat building. Take part in re-enactments, education programs, workshops, and hands-on opportunities. Open this passport, plan your adventure and discover that Heritage Happens... before you know it, It’s History!

The Lakewood Historical Society has been a member of the HLPC since 2006 and is pleased to be a part of Heritage Happens. The brochures are available at the Lakewood History Museum at 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr SW across from Columbia Bank. Visit as many places during the month of September in order to be eligible for a prize. Start your adventure today. For more information, go to www.piercecountyhistory.org
President's Message

This past month has been a whirlwind of activities for the Lakewood Historical Society. However, all of the good things have been tempered by the sad news of the passing of two of our board members.

Brad MacGowan died July 26th at age 81 of a heart attack. He was on our board from 2006-2008 and performed a vital role as a member of the Planning Committee for our Museum. He was also the current Chairman of the City of Lakewood’s Landmarks Heritage Advisory Board.

Dave Sclair died the same day as Brad at age 73 after a short battle with brain cancer. He was our current Marketing Chair and Newsletter Editor. The last project Dave and I worked on together was coordinating a move to a new location for our program presentations. The Parish Hall at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church has been a good fit for us and we have thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the welcome given by the church.

The week prior to our BIG EVENT was highlighted by the Museum hosting the Lakewood’s Chamber of Commerce monthly “After Hours” complete with food and wine from Lakewood’s Stina’s Cellars. We had nearly 200 visitors for July, our highest on record. Overall we’ve had a 44% increase compared to last year. All of the marketing and promotion started by Dave has proven to be very effective.

All of my expectations were exceeded by the success of our fund raising event at A Walk Into History at Villa Madera on July 31st. It would not have been successful if we hadn’t had the help of all of our volunteers. Over 50 people ensured that all of the needs of our guests were met. The addition of 13 soldiers for the 472nd Signal Company, our unit we sponsored last year when they were deployed to Iraq, provided the much needed service of assisting guests, running errands and delivering food. Please be sure to read the special coverage of the event with photos elsewhere in this issue.

Our opportunities for outreach continue to expand. The Heritage League of Pierce County is sponsoring “Heritage Happens” for the entire month of September. (See more details elsewhere in the newsletter.) We are fortunate to be able to promote it at the Western Washington Fair so be sure to stop by the booth at the Fair Museum. Hoping by our booth on Sat. September 10th for the 3rd Annual Lakewood Salutes at the Lakewood Towne Center. We will again participate in the ever popular Lakewood Chamber’s Boo Bash at Great American Casino on October 26th. See the calendar for more details.

As the saying goes, when God closes a door he opens a window. This has proven to be true in our situation. Just this week I have had not one but two people volunteer to be on the board. I am currently interviewing both of them and we’ll be accepting their nominations at our September meeting.

Our future looks full of promise. I am so thankful for the continued support you provide.

Your humble leader,

Becky Huber

P.S. Following the sad loss of our Newsletter editor Dave Sclair, we have a new editor, Stephen Neufeld, who also happens to work as Marketing Executive for The Suburban Times (www.thesubtimes.com) with Dave’s son, Ben Sclair, the publisher of The Suburban Times! Say “Hi!” if you see Stephen around town or involved with music ministry at Little Church on the Prairie.

Jeanne Nicker
Doug and Alice Payne
Alice Peeples
Mary Lou Peterson
Michael (Skip) and Judy Rash
Larry Saunders
Ben Sclair (Suburban Times)
Sue Scott
John and Joan Shalashkivsh
Colleen W. Smart
Cynthia Spleth
Glen and Marlene Spleth
Idelia Whittled-Stith
William J. and Dorothy L. Wickline
Darlene Wider

Memorials in Honor of:

LTC Darwin C. Miller USA (Ret) by Helga P. Miller

Dave Sclair by John and Rebecca Huber by Gary and Karen Fowler

Brad MacGowan by John and Rebecca Huber

Bill Imhoff by John and Rebecca Huber

T. Olai Hageness by Carl and Ingrid Fryboe

Jack Gamble by Kris and Sylvia Kaufman

CONTRIBUTOR

Robert W. Allen
Darlene Anderson
Sandra K. Anderson
Gene and Peggy Bal
Miles and Cheika Becker
Richard and Helen Bednarczyk
Stanley and Beverly Bills
Mary Bowby
Michael and Hae Yon Brandstetter
Vincent Burchfield
Philip Coates
James and Linda Curley
Kristin Davis
Keiko Decker
Duane Colt Denfeld
Patricia Dice
Lila Early
Allan (Buddy) and Jeanne Emmons

Ken and Evelyn Enslow
Pearl (Billy) Finley
Anita Fries
Scott Garmas
Andrea Gernon
Joe and Carolyn Ghiarducci
Sandra Godfrey
Ruth Stevick and Lynn Gracey
George and Genevra Hamill
Whittaker M. Hennion
John G. Hewston
Samuel G. Hewston
Francis L. Hilliard
Donald Hite
William L. Jackson
Dorothy James
Diane M. Johnson
Joann Johnson
Roger and Shirlie Johnson
Charles A. Johnston
Johanna Jones
Jerry and Beth Julian
Michael K. Keahi
Michael W. and Cheryl A. Killen
Connie Coleman-Lacade
Vorn O. Larson
Nancy Mace
James Manning
Florence March
Eugene K. Maun
Thomas McCavoy
Helen McGovern
Genevieve A. McIntyre
Herb and Jane Meske
John Guy and Lorette Meske
LT(Ret) David and Kathryn Meyer
Maris (Tom) Mezs
Carol and Jim Moreno
Mr & Mrs Stanford Ogawa
Gene and Margaret Pankey
Jan Reeder
Robin and Linda Rego
Dennis and Sachiko Roden
Robert and Cherie Russ
Don and Katherine Russell
Louise Schumock
Barbara G. Scott
Clara (Candy) Stewart
Dugald and Norita Stewart
Val D. Stewart
Patricia Stolp
James and Mona Stone
Jim Taylor
Claudia Thomas

Bob and Cindy Tingstad
Marvin and Melissa Tommervik
Brewer and Joanne Thompson
Cindy Thompson
Judy Turcott
Thea Vestal
Ella Washburn
Joan L. Walston
Karen M. Wiley
John and Dede Winters
Harriet R. Wolverton
Robert and Sarah Woodall

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

Financial Statement 7 months YTD thru July 31, 2011

Cash on Hand
January 1, 2011:
$13,875
Income:
Grants
$20,624
Memberships
$6,025
Donations, Sponsorships and Memorial gifts
$13,330
Special Fund Raiser - Villa Madera
$6,080
Total Income:
$46,059
Expenses:
Operations, Administration, Insurance and Special events
$13,646
Contract Services
$2,496
Museum lease payments
$10,500
Museum exhibits
$3,095
Marketing/Publicity
$9,426
Total Expenses:
$39,163

Cash on Hand—
July 31, 2011:
$20,771
Programs and Events
Visit museums during September for Heritage Happens: Before you know it... it’s history!

Sat, Sept 10th, 10 am-4 pm: Lakewood Salutes at Lakewood Towne Center
Thurs, Sept 13th, 6-7:30 pm: Lakes High School Grand Opening Celebration at Lakes High School
Tues, Sept 20th, 7 pm: Reconciling the "Tacoma Method", presented by Former Tacoma Mayor Bill Baarsma. Update on Reconciliation Park

Remember, monthly meetings are held in our new location in the Parish Hall at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, 10630 Gravelly Lake Drive SW, next to the Lakewood Library.

*Group Tours arranged by appointment*

Historic Theatre Goes Out With a Whimper (part 1)

By Matthew Hulton

On the evening of Thursday July 8, 1937, Norman Clapp’s dream became a reality. At 6:00 in the evening, an estimated 3500 citizens of the greater Tacoma area gathered at the red brick veneer and white painted cedar and pine of an esoteric colonial-style building in the middle of Tacoma’s outlying prairies for the grand opening of the Lakewood Community Center. Founded by Clapp and designed by architect Silas Nelson, the complex would be one of, if not the first suburban shopping centers to be built west of the Mississippi. Shops included a health and beauty center, grocery and butchers markets, drug store, and what a July 1937 edition of the Tacoma News Tribune referred to as, "the most beautiful picture theater in the Northwest."

There were many festivities for the opening of the center, which included outdoor performances by local groups the Four Esquires and the Three Radio Rogues. The shops opened their doors, as well as the dining and recreational rooms adjoining the theater. The theater itself, with nearly 600 plush blue seats, christened its silver screen at 6:30 that evening with the hit romantic comedy I Met Him in Paris, starring Claudette Colbert, Robert Young, and Melvyn Douglas. Veteran reel-men H. T. Moore and Sydney Dean played the film twice, to accommodate all of the visitors. Besides being hailed as "one of the finest motion picture houses" in the region, the 24'x20' stage was designed for live theatre as well, complete with orchestra pit and dressing rooms. The theater also boasted a 100 seat balcony and two glassed-in viewing rooms; one to serve as a nursery for children, and the other to oblige those who wished to smoke during performances.

Initially, the "strictly first-class pictures," as the theaters’ manager Sidney Dean called them, ran only Friday through Sunday with matinees on Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3pm. Films were usually changed on a weekly basis, and admission was only a quarter. The much acclaimed theater would celebrate its one year anniversary with a special weekend long showing of Walt Disney’s "magical creation," Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Towards the end of the 1930’s, and as the world again teetered on the edge of war, the Lakewood Theatre had the distinction of being the only theater in Tacoma to play European films.

For two decades, the 50 ft. tall spire of the theater was a beacon to both shoppers and movie-goers from all around Tacoma. In a bit of an ironic twist, the Lakewood Center, the forerunner of the urban shopping center in the West, was being overrun by the next generation of urban shopping center, the mini-mall: in 1957, the Villa Plaza opened up, mere walking distance from the colonial-style complex. In 1960, The Lakewood Players, the local acting troupe that called the basement of the Lakewood Theatre home, found a new home. They abandoned the theater and moved to their new location, off of Bridgeport Way, a year later. (Continued on page 3)

Be sure to see the story and full-color photographs of the Villa Madera Annual Fundraiser on pages 4 and 5!