

HAZEL WHITFORD MILLER GOHEEN --- HER STORY

by Paul Hackett, South Hill Historical Society

Meet a vibrant Hazel Whitford Miller Goheen, now 95 (she was born on May 3, 1910) whose recollections are marvelous and whose specificity is fantastic. Three hours of videotaped material give us up-close views of 1929-1944 on South Hill.

As a teen-ager in the late 20's times were hard for many people and for the Whitford family, but Hazel was no burden to her family. She was the third daughter. She didn't go with a "steady boyfriend" because she was focused on preparing to be a teacher. She went to Bellingham Normal for college.

"I worked as a grade school janitor 2 hours Mon.-Fri. and 2½ hours on Saturday while attending school. Then continued while graduation was going on with the same. I was paid \$.35 an hour. This paid my way through normal school. It is too bad boys and girls couldn't pay their way now—it costs so much now."

In May 1929, 19-year old Hazel did not attend her graduation because she could not afford a formal dress. Working after school as a janitor to save up money for appropriate teacher-clothes she opted out of the ceremony.

However on graduation no contract came her way.

Her cousin Alvah Huff, who was visiting grandparents in Custer, suggested she send her application to Firgrove, which she did. (The school was 3/4th mile east of Meridian and 136th. It burned down in 1934). She said she would come for a personal interview; they sent the contract immediately, so she signed it and sent it back. Mrs. Winnifred Huff picked her up at the Puyallup bus station and took her to meet the school board. When she was introduced to Mrs. Bock, after a bit Mrs. Bock said, "Are you the teacher?" as she looked down at the 5 foot-1-inch petite "girl" before her, dressed in one of the three new dresses she now owned.

Mrs. Patzner and Mr. Predmore were the other two members of the school board. (Patzner lived just east of the schoolhouse on 136th St E and the street was named after him). But she was hired and after that she got along well with the students. Hazel had good classroom control. She walked to and from the school through the woods.

At that time teachers could not date, could not smoke or drink, and had to be in at 8 PM. Her pay? \$100 a month plus \$5 for doing the jani-

torial work in her own room. Of course pay was by an "interest bearing warrant." She could cash the warrant "if there was enough tax money on hand". (Some teachers quit because they couldn't afford to teach when they could not cash their warrant.) However Hazel always got warrants she could cash. "That was good pay in those days," she says.

She taught 25 children in the 1st-4th grade. Another teacher taught the 5th-8th grades. Hazel took the bus to Seattle twice to bring back suitcases of discarded books from the Library. She also bought an encyclopedia, which she left at the school. Perle Park was a 4th grader and truly found interesting articles in the encyclopedias Hazel bought.



Hazel Whitford Goheen

Some of the students came from the "Rabbit Farms" where Dorothy (Nelson) lived as did the Gee's. The Rabbit Farms were an unrecorded plat of 73 1.5 acre parcels fronting on 122nd St E. Dick Starkel was also a student from the family chicken farm and the Powell and the Wright family children attended. Only about 40 students in all lived in the catchment area from 122nd to 152nd east and west of Meridian.

In 1929 there were almost no businesses on Meridian. At Meridian and 112th St E area there were the Miller's Grocery store and gas station, the Willows dance hall, where Hazel and her friends Shirley and Enid Wright and Eunice Stover danced to big bands. It was \$.75 for males and \$.25 for females; Kupfer's home was on the other corner (now Border's Bookstore).

This lasted two years until she took up the County Superintendent of Schools' suggestion that, for her advancement she should take a teaching job at Woodland School. They offered her \$115 and no janitorial work.

She taught at Woodland School from 1931-1934. When the school bell rang all would then march into the school. (They still do this, at Woodland alumni reunions, but march in place). Times were hard so although it cost \$.25 a year to be in the Woodland PTA, they made a "local" membership provision to pay only \$.10.

Hazel taught 30 children in the 3rd and 4th grades. "They were really good children", she said. Students included Robert Litton, Maudine Swalander, Joe Sladek, and many "wonderful boys

and girls". Bernice Rinehart, (whose father was Grange Master) was in the 6th grade and knew Hazel.

She "knew both sides," the folks at Woodland school, and her friends at the McMillan Grange that included Patzner, Kehr and Mosolf families. One meeting the Woodland people asked Hazel why she went to the McMillan Grange. She told them about the Grange work and what it stood for. They were interested so she invited the McMillan Grange to come up to Woodland to talk to them. They decided that evening to organize the Fruitland Grange so named for two "reasons": there was another Woodland Grange in Washington State, and the school fronted on Fruitland Avenue.

Soon Hazel was making news in the state Grange work. She was turned down for the drill team due to her height, but she was featured as a princess standing on a bridge in a Grange tableau for State Grange in Tacoma in 1932. We have a picture of that event.

She was also very active in 4H work, as was Mrs. Predmore. Hazel led the singing when the county held their countywide meetings several times. Each county went in June to Pullman to participate in statewide activities. One time in the stunt contest she was "the Spirit of 4H club work" and Pierce County won the prize (a banner) She had 3 4H clubs at one time because a man club leader could not be found for the boys, so they were a cooking club and had cookouts for supper at Maplewood Springs, a long walk downhill.

She was county president of 4H leaders and later president of SW Washington 4H leaders. The county had people from Washington DC in the 30's and 40's to help communities with interest. The people were Mr. and Mrs. Jackson who came for plays and games. Mr. Knapp and wife came the next year for plays, acting, lighting, and positioning on stage.

In 1934 she taught at Kirby School in the Graham area. The school board wanted her because she had captained girl's baseball team to two County championships. Her husband-to-be was managing a county gravel crusher and "there would then be one too many persons working in a family". This problem was solved in 1934 when she married him, Clifford Miller, and moved to a home on Stewart Avenue, and then Hazel did not teach. In 1938 their only child, Faye, was born.

Later in 1939 she was one of hundreds of volunteers who built the Fruitland Grange building for \$10,000. It is still used today.

In 1942, due to the war effort with many women employed in the Todd shipyards, there was a great lack of teachers. Hazel returned to Firgrove School, which by then was located on Meridian. One of her happy moments was directing a spoof play, "Henry's Mail-Order Wife". Actors included Myra and Bill Geddes, Rufe Breckon, Margaret Felker, Betty and Roy Rinehart, and Clifford Miller, her husband. It was such a "laugh-getter success" that many Grange groups asked them to perform it. Again she taught for three years more.

She was involved in helping Leo Hutchins decorate a downtown fountain with daffodils. This led to

the creation of the Daffodil parade in 1930.

Later in life Hazel lived in Canada for 20 years. Now she lives in Blaine, the city in which she was born on May 3, 1910. Her daughter, Mrs. Frank Serviss and her husband Frank, live in the Puyallup area so she visits here quite often.

As the Puyallup schools celebrate 150 years of history, Hazel certainly throws a stunning spotlight on several of those years.

More About Shaw Road

*by Carl Vest,
South Hill Historical Society*

One of the wonderful things about researching the history of South Hill is the feedback that comes from the readers of the newsletter. In our last compendium, for example, a story about Shaw Road was presented. The article was based on some written records, discussions with a number of people, and inputs from the Shaw family. It included as much as we knew at the time. Almost immediately, as has happened with other articles we've published, readers came forward with additional information. So we are pleased to add fresh items to our story, and to suggest that the final chapter about the history of Shaw Road is yet to be written. So, if you know additional facts, please let us know.

Like most roads on South Hill, Shaw Road was not completed as part of one big construction job. Rather, it was developed in phases, or as small sections, one after the other, over a period of time. It now appears that the first section, about a mile in length, has its roots in the year 1914.

Sometime in 1914 Petitions to establish Shaw Road were submitted to the Pierce County Commissioners. One must say "sometime" because in the County records there are two different Petitions and both are undated. As a result of these requests, however, the County Engineer undertook a survey of the proposed road and filed a report dated December 15, 1914. The Engineer also filed a document titled Field Notes, which show that his survey was undertaken between October 3 and 21, 1914. So, while the solicitations show no date it must be concluded they were filed before and initiated the Engineer's work.

Sixteen property owners signed one Petition, which appears to be the initial request to establish the Road. It carries the appeal that "... said road be known as the Shaw County Road." One member of the Shaw family is among the signers: Mrs. CB Shaw. Eleven property owners signed the other application. There is some endorsement overlap, however, as several property owners approved both requests. But from the language, the eleven-signature document appears to be the second submission. A Mr. CB Shaw signed this appeal. It also suggested that the road be one mile in length.

After considering the requests made by citizens, and approving the work done by the County Engi-

near, Pierce County Commissioners on November 5, 1915 approved a road of 3,943 feet (three-quarters of a mile), crossing Section 35 of Township 20. Naming it Shaw County Road was approved at the same time.

The Society will continue working on the history of Shaw Road as it relates to South Hill. Again, we request feedback from our readers.

Your Chance to Make a Difference on South Hill

The county is in the process of buying the Amphitheater property at 144th and Meridian. The facilities at the site could house county services such as a senior center, farmers market, Boys & Girls Club etc. (The South Hill Historical Society has been recommended to receive space at the facility).

The 36-acre property consists of wetlands and wooded areas ideal for a park.

There's a catch to all this. The county is \$900,000 short of the purchasing price of \$6.9 million. An effort is now being directed at the State Legislature to make up the shortfall.

Let's not let more South Hill open space be turned into housing development.

Let your support be known, call 1-800-562-6000 and leave the following message to our legislators: "Please include \$900,000 for the Amphitheater purchase in the State Capital Budget."

South Hill Historical Society will be featured on the April telecast of My Home Town!

Lights, camera, action! Some of us will get our little slice of fame as part of the cast on the television program *My Home Town*, hosted by Dorothy Wilhelm on Comcast cable channel 76. The program will be repeated all through the month of April, going into 240 thousand homes of Pierce County.

We all gathered at the Willows Court building, Willows Gardens independent living complex. The facilities offered an impressive backdrop, fireplace and all, for the filming of our segment. Every one was interviewed individually, camera rolling, explaining their historical artifact. Due to the necessity of editing five hours of filming into 28 minutes, not all the participants at the Willows Court gathering will be in the final version and those that make it will get a minute or less. Longer segments in April's program will be included featuring members of our society on different subjects at different locations. All in all, South Hill Historical Society coverage will account for almost half the show—not bad.

Don't miss the program: Monday at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., Thursday at 5:00 p.m., Friday at 6:30 p.m., Saturday at 10:30 p.m. and Sunday at 7:00 p.m. repeated all during the month of April.



Dorothy Wilhelm interviews South Hill Historical Society members at Willows Court prior to taping the April episode of *My Home Town* television program, to be seen on Comcast cable channel 76.

We have tax exempt status at last!

After months of back and forth correspondence between the IRS and the Washington Secretary of State we finally received Federal income tax exemption under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to our Society can now be deducted from a donor's federal income tax.

We must thank Paul Hackett for his time and persistence pursuing this task. Thanks also goes to those that volunteered to help Paul.

South Hill Historical Society Membership/Renewal Form

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Home E-mail Address _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Renewal, check here

Annual Dues: Society membership \$25.00

Note Please do not send cash.

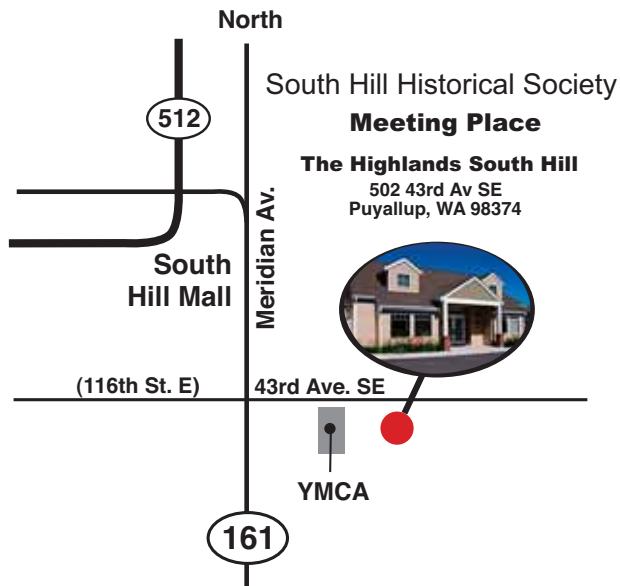
Make check or M.O. payable to South Hill Historical Society and mail with this application to:

SHHS Membership, 11711 92nd AV E, Puyallup, WA 98373

Where To Find Us

The South Hill Historical Society meets regularly on the **THIRD TUESDAY** of the month 11:15 AM at the Highlands in the Community Center **(No meetings July and August)**. This complex is located at 502 43rd AVE SE, adjacent to and east of the Mel Korum YMCA.

We welcome you to our monthly meetings. For more information contact our president, Paul Hackett, at **(253) 845-7691**.



South Hill Historical Society Officers

President, Paul Hackett
Vice-President, Carl Vest
Secretary, Carolyn Nelson
Treasurer, Ben Peters
Newsletter Editor, Jerry Bates



11711 92nd AV E
Puyallup WA 98373

From The Treasurer

by Ben Peters

A warm welcome to our newest members:

Linda Forsberg, Marilyn Burnett,
Ralph & Yvonne Thorpe

Members due for RENEWAL:

April

Andy Anderson
Mildred Dobbs
Cecil/Doris Herbert
Olive Parks McDonough
John Mosolf
Mark/Dorothy Norris
Wes/Suzy Perkinson
Ella Reese
Bill Riley
Bonnie Nicolet Starkel
Ward Bradley
Dorothy Gould
Paul Hackett

Jerry Bates
Carolyn Nelson
Carl Vest
Ben Peters

May

Don/Mary Glaser
Art/Marvella Massie
Dorothy Nelson

June

Art/Luverne Foxford
Bill Goelzer
Vivian Wepfer

Our Current Members

Andy Anderson
John and Ruth Anderson
Jim and Elizabeth Anema
Bob Ballou
Jerry Bates
Ward F. Bradley
James H. Dixon
Mildred A. Dobbs
Linda Forsberg
Arthur & Luverne Foxford
Lloyd Freudenstein
Dianna & Fred Fritz
Don and Mary Glaser
William (Bill) Goelzer
Hazel Whitford Miller Goheen
Calvin and Amy Goings
Stanley & Ila Goter
Dorothy Gould
Paul Hackett
Karey Goelzer Hanks
James Hawley
Cecil and Doris Herbert
Charles and Maybelle Hoenhous
Ernest & Irene Hopp
Art Larson
Art S. and Marvella Massie
Olive McDonough
Laurienne Stewart Minnich
John A. Mosolf
Carolyn Nelson
Dorothy Nelson

Juanita Nordin
Mark and Dorothy Norris
Christopher O'Kelly
Don and Helen Otto
Ron & Lois Pearson
Wes & Suzy Perkinson
Ben Peters
Ella M. Reese
Bill Riley
Bernice Fisher Rinehart
Roy and Sheila Rinker
Vern Rockstad
Helen Rohlman
Frank Ryser
William & Dori Scott
Bonnie Nicolet Starkel
Lori Stock
Bill Stover
Betsy and Bill Stubbs
Ralph & Yvonne Thorpe
Margo L & Joe Tucci
Carl Vest
Neil and Celia Vincent
Richard and Joan Vosler
Vivian Wepfer
Pam and Don Williams
W. Lynn Williams
Christine Wilson
Kevin Wimsett
Marilyn Larson Winterton
Allen and Ellen Zulauf

To: