



HERITAGE CORRIDOR

History On The Hill

The Newsletter of the South Hill Historical Society

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Robert Parker Taylor

by Carl Vest, South Hill Historical Society

The South Hill Historical Society would like to acknowledge a very special individual now living among us on South Hill --- one who is closely linked to the history of this area. His name is Robert Parker Taylor (a.k.a. Bob Taylor), and he's a member of that small pool of local residents who can trace their family roots directly back to individuals who were in the Longmire-Biles wagon train when it crossed the Cascade Mountains, through Naches Pass, in 1853.

Some readers may remember, during the late 1960s and most of the 1970s, driving south on 94th Avenue when leaving Puyallup, and passing by a house which had a sign out front that read "honey for sale." It would have been just south of the Woodbine Cemetery and almost to the top of the hill on the east side of the road. That would have been the location of Bob and Jeanie Taylor's home.

The Taylors moved to 94th Avenue in 1967. They bought 3-1/2 acres and had come to South Hill from Seattle, where Bob worked as a business representative for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, representing the union to the Puget Sound Power and Light Company. Bob continued his work after the move, and until he retired commuted daily to his job in Seattle.

South Hill initially impressed the Taylors for several reasons. It was peaceful. There was little traffic. Many wild animals roamed about and Jeanie likes to recall watching the coyotes she would regularly see roving in the neighborhood. In fact, at the time, a rural atmosphere prevailed on the Hill as many people kept horses and other domesticated animals on their farms and large lots. Moreover, for the Taylors, some of their children lived nearby and that added to the pleasure of being in the area. To illustrate the tranquility, Jeanie likes to tell a story about some ducks.

It seems that someone once gave her a gift of several ducklings. Of course, they quickly grew into large ducks. These waterfowl liked to flock and as a group would wander up and down 94th Avenue. Since there was little traffic the ducks were in no danger. Jeanie says that neighbors would often call in a panic, telling her the brood was somewhere along 94th walking away from home. She was always amused by these calls and would tell them that eventually the ducks would come home, and not to worry.

Bob Taylor's bee interests began as a hobby. Initially he acquired some bees from someone in Olympia that he put behind his house on 94th Avenue. A Washington State agricultural inspector spotted them and stopped to inspect. This was a chance encounter, but the two hit it off, and ultimately became friends. Bob started accompanying the inspector on many of his exploration trips, becoming in time an unofficial assistant to the examiner. At one time Bob expanded his bee-keeping by getting permission to put bees on properties as far afield as Mt. Rainier. He especially prized the honey from the fireweed plant. Also, for many years Bob worked the bee booth at the Washington State Fair, sharing his love and knowledge of bees with the general public. Bob explains that the bee activity was never really a business, nor was it intended to be such. Most of the honey was given away to children, grandchildren, friends, and others.



Robert Parker Taylor

Bob Taylor was born in 1912 and grew up in the Yakima-Selah area of the State. His father, George Washington Taylor, was born in Ft. Simcoe, located just to the south of Yakima. Bob remembers the central Washington area as being mostly rural during his childhood and can recall many interactions with the

Indian population of that time, as well as having memories of a number of the pioneer families who had settled in the area.

The Taylor family was part of that group of pioneers who came to the Washington Territory in the 1850s and 1860s. The first member of the family to arrive was Verinda (Taylor) Longmire. She was the wife of James Longmire and had accompanied him to the Northwest on the overland trip from Iowa in a covered wagon. Their group formed the famous wagon train that crossed the Cascade Mountains, through Naches Pass, in the fall of 1853. After arriving in the Washington Territory, they settled on Yelm Prairie near Olympia. Verinda's brother, George Spray Taylor, was the second member of the Taylor clan to arrive. He also came to the Northwest in a covered wagon after being wounded during the Civil War and then discharged from the Union Army in 1865.

By the time George Spray Taylor arrived in the Puget Sound area, all the good land had been claimed. But land was available in the Yakima area and so he took up homesteading there, as did some of James Longmire's children --- who were

now old enough to be seeking land. So Bob Taylor grew up in a family whose members had been pioneers in a number of ways. Both the Longmires and Taylors had crossed the continent in covered wagons, and both had established homesteads and communities in a new region --- the Washington Territory. Collectively these people had many stories to tell and Bob as a young boy heard many of them over and over as he interacted with members of both families. One story he remembers is about trail conditions encountered in crossing the plains in covered wagons. Bob says his uncle, Harland Taylor, explained the following to him:

Uncle Harley often had commented about the wagon ruts they experienced when their wagon party crossed the plains. Harley explained to Bob that in many places the trail on which they were traveling would look flat and smooth. But this was because the ruts were filled with dust. You discovered this when you stepped or drove a wagon into the trough. It was usually deep and often treacherous. Thus, the appearance of the trail was often deceptive and required vigilance on the part of the traveler.

An example of stories Bob remembers about his childhood in the Yakima area is one told by his Aunt Rosa:

In the early days when his family lived on the ranch north of Selah, there were many Indians living nearby. Moreover, it was not uncommon for the Indians to drop by the house and ask for something to eat. His mother usually accommodated them and fixed a meal. Bob says that his Aunt Rosa was in the house once when seven or eight Indians came by. His mother fed them. They subsequently refused to leave. They wouldn't get out of the house. So his mother took a live blacksnake that was in the house at the time and shoved it toward the Indians one at a time and chased them out. The Indians thought this was a great joke, but they left. Apparently Rosa was very frightened, but Bob's mother very calmly moved the Indians out.

Bob Taylor never aspired to be a farmer or rancher as had his father and grandfather. Instead, during his lifetime he has worked at various jobs and in various locations. He picked hops, for example, and also worked in warehouses of various kinds. At one time he made cedar shingles. Another time he worked in a cannery shoveling coal. But eventually he found his calling in the union work that he did for most of his life. As required by his work, Bob has moved about the state living in the Yakima-Selah areas and across the mountains in Fairfax and Buckley. At one time he was a night watchman, working 12 hours a night, seven days a week. His union work required him to live in Portland, Vancouver, and Seattle.

The Taylors no longer live on 94th Avenue (or Ninth Street as Puyallup calls it). They now live in the Viking Estates near Pope Elementary School. The move was made in 2002. There were many reasons for the relocation, but basically due to their ages they could no longer maintain the 94th Ave property. Secondly, living in the Viking Estates put them closer to their children on South Hill. Thirdly, they did not like the major housing development being started between their home and the Woodbine Cemetery. They realized that de-

velopment would bring in more people and would increase traffic on the local roads. Fourthly, the Mall had been built since they moved into the area and the congestion was beginning to be more than they wanted to cope with.

Jeanie summed up their feelings by saying that she liked her house and the property. But the environment had changed and it was time to go.

Puyallup High Student Helps SHHS Research

During the month of May Jeffrey Arnold, a Puyallup High School senior, performed 20 hours of community service connected with SHHS. Paul Hackett was his mentor. The Society paid for the cost of printing photos and photocopying forms.

His senior project involved Jeffrey identifying ten old homes from a list of 150 provided by the Society. Eight of the homes were from South Hill, and two were from the city of Puyallup.

In the process the owners of the ten homes were contacted by Jeffrey, which led to a meeting with each of the current owners. At that time the homes were photographed from the exterior, and in some cases the living room was also included. Then Jeffrey wrote a short story about each of the visits. In addition he supplied the homeowner with a nine-page form which could be used to start the process of seeking to have the home identified and registered as a historic home.

Two of the homes which were used in Jeffrey's study were previously included in the television program, "My Home Town--South Hill". Another of the homes is the Lester home which is now owned by SHHS members, Ralph and Yvonne Thorpe.

As a result, Jeffrey received a certificate of completion of his 20 hours of community service for his senior project.

New Officers

At the annual meeting held on June 21 the following officers were elected for the coming fiscal year:

President--Paul Hackett
Vice-President--Don Glaser
Secretary--Joan Vosler
Treasurer--Ben Peters
Research Coordinator--Carl Vest
Newsletter Editor--Jerry Bates

There will be no meetings in July and August. We look forward to seeing all of you at our next meeting on Tuesday, September 20 at 11:15 at the Highlands.

Karshner Preservation Day

South Hill Historical Society volunteers shared their Saturday to participate at the Karshner Museum Preservation Day event May 7th. Thanks goes to all our members who turned out.



The Karshner Museum, 309 Fourth St. NE



Paul Hackett entertains



Mary and Don Glaser in period costume



Paul Hackett sets up our display and the "My Home Town--South Hill" video



South Hill old timer John Thun tells how it was

Your Chance to Represent SHHS at the Puyallup Fair

The SHHS fair booth will need volunteers for 6 two hour time slots (10AM to 10PM) each of the following five dates:

Sunday, Sept. 18; Monday, Sept. 19; Thursday, Sept. 22; Friday, Sept. 23; and Sunday, Sept. 25.

We need one or two people for each of these shifts. The volunteers will answer questions on what we

know about early South Hill, and maybe get information from people we talk with. Hopefully we'll sign up a few new members for SHHS.

I now have about 15 people interested in helping. You will each get a free ticket into the fair and free parking. Please call Bill Goelzer 253-841-4149 if you're interested.

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

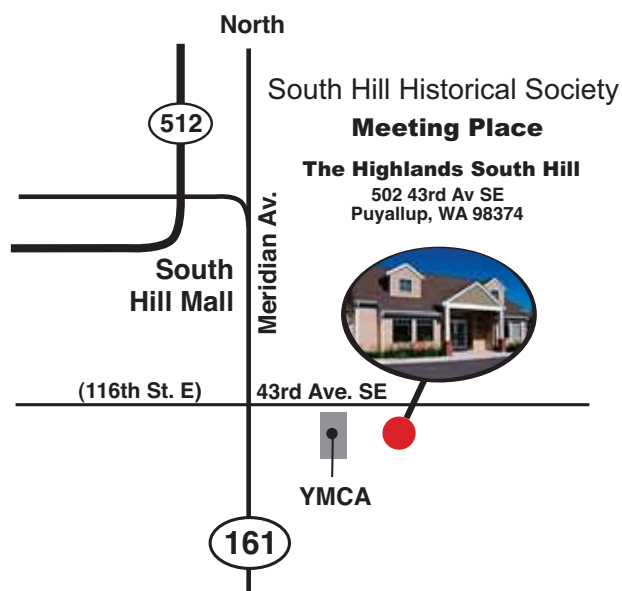
Note Please do not send cash.

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, Don Glaser
Secretary, Joan Vosler
Research Coordinator, Carl Vest
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:
Marge (Crosson) Swain, Carl Root, Dale Huff,
Barbara G. Ringo

Members due for RENEWAL:

March (Past Due)
Dorothy Gould

April (Past Due)
Wes & Suzy Perkinson
Ella Reese
Bill Riley
Bonnie Nicolet Starkel
Ward Bradley
Ben Peters

May (All Paid)

June
Bill Stover

July

John & Ruth Anderson
Chuck & Maybelle Hoenhaus
Don & Helen Otto
Roy & Sheila Rinker
Vern Rockstad

August

Juanita Nordin
Helen Rohlman
Clara Singer

Our Current Members

Andy Anderson
John & Ruth Anderson
Jim & Elizabeth Anema
Bob Ballou
Jerry Bates
Ward F. Bradley
Marilyn Burnett
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 & Amy Goings
Stanley & Ila Goter
Dorothy Gould
Paul Hackett
Karey Goelzer Hanks
James Hawley
Cecil & Doris Herbert
Charles & Maybelle Hoenhaus
Ernest & Irene Hopp
Dale Huff
Art Larson
Art S. & Marvella Massie
Olive McDonough
Laurienne Stewart Minnich
John A. Mosolf
Carolyn Nelson
Dorothy Nelson

Juanita Nordin
Mark & Dorothy Norris
Christopher O'Kelly
Don & Helen Otto
Ron & Lois Pearson
Wes & Suzy Perkinson
Ben Peters
Ella M. Reese
Bill Riley
Bernice Fisher Rinehart
Barbara G. Ringo
Roy and Sheila Rinker
Vern Rockstad
Helen Rohlman
Carl Root
Frank Ryser
William & Dori Scott
Clara K. Singer (Wallace)
Bonnie Nicolet Starkel
Lori Stock
Bill Stover
Marge (Crosson) Swain
Ralph & Yvonne Thorpe
Margo L. & Joe Tucci
Carl Vest
Neil & Celia Vincent
Richard & Joan Vosler
Vivian Wepfer
W. Lynn Williams
Kevin Wimsett
Marilyn Larson Winterton
Lenore Nicolet Winton
Allen & Ellen Zulauf

To: