



HERITAGE CORRIDOR

History On The Hill

The Newsletter of the South Hill Historical Society

Volume 9 Issue 1 Winter 2011

A Decade of the South Hill Historical Society

by Jerry Bates

A milestone was reached in January, 2011, as the South Hill Historical Society marked its tenth birthday. Since milestones call for assessment and reflection, let's take a look at ourselves. What has the SHHS accomplished? How has it evolved?

Let's start by acknowledging our founders, three community-minded history buffs, Ben Peters, Paul Hackett, and Carl Vest, who planted the seed on January 25, 2001, at the first meeting at a local Starbucks. Their vision? To record and document the history of their community, South Hill. They originally teamed up while attending Friends of the Library meetings at the South Hill branch of the Pierce County Library. These meetings exposed a need—that the Library could not fulfill—of providing resources for students or residents interested in local history. Our founding team has consistently, over the years, focused on this challenge.

Establishing an historical society was a challenge in other respects. How would they grow membership; promote the idea of an historical society; approach the tedious work of finding, gathering, and organizing their research/history? Add to this an identity crisis for South

Hillians. Most living here at that time and today are relatively new to the area, with little knowledge of the Hill ever having a unique history or being anything but a suburb of Puyallup. Many see the Hill as nothing more than urban sprawl fanning out from a congested Meridian Avenue.

The Society is an historical association first, but in doing its work, it also helped establish South Hill's unique identity. An identity that would emerge as its history of pioneers, farming, business and industry, was brought to public awareness.



Early Society accomplishments

Since our inception, the Society has had good media exposure, primarily the *Puyallup Herald* and the *Tacoma News Tribune*. In June, 2001, a News Tribune reporter interviewed society founder, Paul Hackett. The article announced his efforts to start a South Hill Historical Society.

The first meetings were small and held at the South Hill Library. Regular meetings followed at the Highlands Community Center. Early on, there were just enough of us to almost fill the back room at the Highlands, where the pool table stands today. Later, as attendance and membership grew, the meetings moved to the main room where they continue today.

Society Accomplishments

Looking back, this editor will try to summarize some of our significant achievements. There are no words or enough space to document all of the worthy projects and hard work of various officers and members who have contributed to the success of our Society. Instead, let's review key accomplishments.

Several of the most visible accomplishments happened early on. Historic markers identifying South Hill's Heritage Corridor were dedicated October 2001, and in June of that same year, the historic road signs project was launched. Both of these were due to the collaboration of society founder Carl Vest and then-County Councilman Calvin Goings, who gained the backing of the Pierce County Council.

The Heritage Corridor celebrates the path over the South Hill followed by the ancient Klickitat Native American trail that united the Eastern and Western Washington Indian tribes. This Naches Pass route was later followed by the early pioneer wagon trains and later developed into the Military Road. Today, information signs along the current roads that trace this route mark this corridor for the public.

Probably the most evident to those driving on the Hill are the historic road signs at most South Hill intersections. These signs, attached to current road signs, help preserve the historic names of roads on the Hill before all were changed to the numbered grid system. These old names are a daily reminder to motorists of their community's heritage.

On a more political note, again thanks to the efforts of member Carl Vest, the Pierce County government recognized our role in South Hill's future development. The South Hill Community Plan, adopted April of 2003 and part of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, became the official blueprint for growth on the Hill. Among many other growth issues this document addresses, it spells out the role of the SHHS to coordinate and document the history of the Hill and to have the support of the County in that effort. Our inclusion in the plan is significant, ensuring the Society's future involvement in the

development and growth of the community. At three years old, the Society was already on solid footing.

Probably the most significant media event occurred in April of 2005, when some of us became TV stars. The local cable series, "My Home Town," featured South Hill and the South Hill Historical Society. Hosted by Dorothy Wilhelm, the program devoted a large segment to the Historic Corridor which crosses South Hill. Society members narrated and described portions of the route as it was traced across the Hill.

And, awareness of the Society is enhanced by participating in one of the South Sound's annual BIG events--the Puyallup Fair. Since 2003, the Society has hosted a booth displaying maps and historical photos of times past on the Hill. Each year, Society members act as docents and engage fairgoers interested in our work. A lot of work goes into creating the art; securing the latest aerial maps; and coordinating the docents. Coordinators since 2003 included the late Bill Goelzer and current member filling this role, Debbie Burtnett, and volunteer members who 'man' the booth during our days at the Fair.

The Society's newsletter, *History on The Hill*, began in 2003 by editor and graphic designer, Jerry Bates (who joined the original group early in 2001). The newsletter has essential value for those who cannot attend meetings and is a recruitment tool. The publication ties together all members by informing them of current activities of the Society. However, of equal importance, the newsletter documents our history with stories of the past on the Hill, often told by members themselves.

Jerry Bates also created a South Hill Historical Society website in 2010, *southhillhistory.com*. Now, the world has access to our society! The site explains who we are and features memories of old-timers on the Hill along with a description of the Heritage Corridor. The site gives us an opportunity to promote ourselves by encouraging membership and giving information about our monthly meetings. The site is a complete archive of all the past newsletters that can be read online, downloaded, or printed. All of our

monthly Puyallup Herald columns are included and the site is proving to be a valuable resource for anyone with an historical interest in South Hill.

Research Historian Carl Vest is the main author of the monthly column, South Hill History, published in the Herald. Carl's topics cover a variety of subjects that shaped our past. The Society also supports a community effort regarding historical South Hill such as the preservation of the old Firgrove brick school. Two members, Don Glaser and Katie Bennett, have organized a yearly picnic/reunion of alumni, and invite the Society's participation. Officers and members also attend Woodland School reunion events.

Nuts and Bolts

As an organization, we have an infrastructure that makes everything else possible. The reason for being--to collect and document South Hill history--requires a lot of behind-the-scenes work. Founder Ben Peters, our Treasurer, has managed the business of the Society since its inception by keeping the books, maintaining the bank account, and documenting society expenses. Ben achieved another essential component--establishing our 501(c)(3) non-profit organization status with the Internal Revenue Service. The future of our society can be greatly enhanced by contributions made by the public and our membership. To accomplish this, we need the ability to accumulate tax-free donations.

Research

Carl Vest has a full South Hill research library in his home. He is constantly exploring a variety of clues to South Hill's past.

Another of our Society's strong promoters over the years has been Paul Hackett. A founding member, Paul has served as president for the first five years of the Society. He has given over twenty presentations to local organizations describing our work. Besides his public relations talents, Paul is a tireless researcher and has collected for thirty years a database of documents and newspaper clippings that have any connection to South Hill—3,427 clippings and documents so far! Add to this a contact file numbering 1,343 people and 140 video-taped

interviews—mostly of South Hill old-timers and their recollections of times past on the Hill. Paul estimates the Society has 250 hours of video overall.

The Society has collected South Hill artifacts, maps, and photographs which are stored away—hopefully, for future display.

Our membership roster tells history stories. Current president, Bob Ballou, is the son of Frank Ballou, for whom Ballou Junior High is named. Vice-President Hans Zeiger's grandfather has a school named after him, Edward Zeiger Elementary School. Past-president Don Glaser is a native-born son and grandson on both sides of his family--Glaser and Patzner. Both families have South Hill roads named after them. In 1895, Patzner Road School was built by Don's great-grandfather, John Patzner.

Looking Ahead

Challenges lie ahead as our membership is plateauing and we need a new generation of leadership and members to carry on our work. It's the hard work of motivated members that the society depends upon, so let's hope we can attract such people beginning with this article and in the years ahead.

Accomplishments

If our Society had never happened, would the accomplishment listed above have been made? Probably not. We have created quite a legacy in our ten years, a real, positive benefit to South Hill.

Pierce County honors the South Hill Historical Society

During the January 25, 2011 Pierce County Council meeting—the exact day of our tenth anniversary, a resolution was proclaimed celebrating the South Hill History Society's first ten years. Council Chair, Roger Bush read the resolution before the council and followed up with gracious comments relating to his high regard for our society and its accomplishments. The presentation can be viewed on

the web at <http://www.piercecountytv.org/pc/about/ourorg/communications/pctv/council.htm>

The Resolution:

Whereas, the South Hill Historical Society was founded by Paul Hackett, Carl Vest, and Ben Peters on January 25, 2001: and

Whereas, the Society serves the community by striving to acquaint residents and visitors with background about the evolution of South Hill as a distinct community: and

Whereas, hundreds of hours of interviews and other historical materials about South Hill, including newspaper articles; journals; family histories; artifacts; and photographs have been archived by the Society; and

Whereas, monthly meetings, a newsletter, website; and articles in the Puyallup Herald are used to inform South hill residents about their community heritage and instill a greater sense of identity; and

Whereas, a special effort of the Society was the creation of the South Hill Heritage Corridor, which commemorates the old Indian trade route known as the Klickitat Trail and its use by such immigrant parties as the Longmire-Biles wagon train; eventually the path became known as the Military Road and is now considered the north fork of the Oregon Trail; and

Whereas, the Society initiated a program of recognizing historic roads on South Hill, and obtained the support of the County to add original road names to a number signs as a way of emphasizing their history; and

Whereas, the Society works actively with other historic organizations within Pierce County and is an active participant in the Pierce County Heritage League; and

Whereas, the Society is celebrating its tenth anniversary as a well-established and successful organization and is looking forward to continuing its accomplishments;° **Now, Therefore, BE IT PROCLAIMED** by the Council of Pierce County.

The Pierce County Council celebrated the tenth anniversary of the South Hill Historical Society and congratulates its members for their dedication to preserving South Hill's past and keeping it alive for today and the future.

ADOPTED this 25th day of January, 2011.



Society officers Carl Vest, Bob Ballou and Ben Peters appreciate the Pierce County Resolution certificate honoring our ten-year milestone.

The Naches Trail Coalition Trail Mapping Workshop

Members of the South Hill Historical Society—Carl Vest, Jerry Bates, and Debbie Burtnett—met with a coalition of groups at the Meeker Mansion educational building to help identify the route of the old trail through Naches Pass and over South Hill. The coalition included local architects; members of local historical societies; and Oregon California Trails Association (OCTA) members including Dave Welch and Carl Vest. Formed in the early 1970s, OCTA seeks to protect the Historic Emigrant Trails by promoting research, education, preservation and creating public awareness of the trails.

President Johnson signed the National Trail System Act into law in 1968 “To establish a nationwide system of trails, and for other purposes.” Earth Day’s founder, Senator Gaylord Nelson, added the first of many amendments as the act encompassed more historic routes from east-to-west as well as the better known north-south routes such as the Appalachian Trail. When President Obama signed the Omnibus Public

Land Management Act of 2009 to study western routes used by emigrants, the Naches Pass Trail, a north fork of the Oregon National Historic Trail, was singled out.

OCTA is recognized as the spokesgroup for western emigrant trails, which have many active chapters. Members work with the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Department of Agriculture and other governmental groups through a collection of committees. OCTA's input to these agencies is always given serious consideration.

January's meeting planned strategies for mapping the path used by First Nations, emigrating pioneers, and the military. Indeed, the road signs throughout the region marked "Military Road" give us an idea where the old trail was located.

OCTA's Dave Welch of the Ezra Meeker

Historical Society (EMHS) is the National Mapping Chairman. Welch presented an "eyeball view of the Trail" extending from Walla Walla to Steilacoom, pointing out that "the map's inconsistencies require piecing things together." To that end, the group has divided the Trail into segments, assigned each segment to a historical society for in-depth study and mapping this summer.

Early maps provide clues where researchers look for evidence of the Trail. Swales [erosion caused by wagon wheel indentations in two parallel tracks]; following the ridgeline as did the immigrants; using diaries to reconstruct the route; along with modern technology such as GPS to mark the coordinates as closely as possible to "improve the information as our final goal," stated Welch. Available maps include Pierce County maps; Forest Service maps; military maps; and

the earliest maps, or GLOs (General Land Office maps), a department established in 1812 under the Land Ordinances of 1785. "These maps retain original place names of natural objects," explained Carl Vest of the SHHS. GLO maps also include township and range, the method by which land was surveyed and sold during westward migration..

Carl Vest's map collection provided the best view of the Trail through South Hill. "The earliest 1917 map shows a few key locations, but the 1936 map seems to be the important one for it

shows the trail better than the other maps...by 1941, the trail disappears from the Pierce County maps."

"The earliest maps showing Military Road are dated from the 1850s," explained Dave Welch. Welch uses terrain navigator pro for the research he has done.

Cartographer Allan Catanzaro is a specialist in graphic information system [GIS], "...agreed that this is the ultimate way to do this. But, it's very expensive and complex."

GIS is a computer system that processes data--such as topography, political boundaries, population density, faults, soil type, etc., as a layer of information. Each layer may be viewed singly, or all can be overlapped to produce a view that shows the relationships of the layers--e.g., combining human-geography creates a street map to determine where a bus route might go. The Global Positioning Systems (GPS) will be used to determine more specifically where the Trail was--in terms of latitude and longitude-- rather than in a generalized way used in consumer GPS devices. How does it answer questions about the Trail? For example, the pioneers stayed in the woods, rather than crossing meadows. Why?



Coalition members hard at work analyzing references to the Old Naches Trail.

Because the meadows were wet, and the “trail skirted the meadows as does the current jeep road,” explained Catanzaro.

This summer, you might see a group of people using a GPS unit to document Trail sites across South Hill, whose explosive growth in the 1970s has all but erased Trail markers. If you have evidence in your area of the movement of pioneers across the Trail, contact the South Hill Historical Society at their website, southhillhistory.com.

November General Meeting

By Debbie Burtnett

“Laurie Stewart Minnich, prominent in the Puyallup area...whose husband was mayor at one time and her son, Bob, a local historian and head of the Meeker Historical Society...” were guest speaker. She is from the Wildwood Park area and lived at the Luckett House facility. Luckett House today provides adult behavioral health and enhanced adult residential care such as assisted living services. It is an entity of



Laurie Stewart Minnich and son Bob Minnich identify the Puget Sound Sanitarium on the Hill overlooking Puyallup, visible in this old print.

MultiCare, and formerly part of Good Samaritan Hospital. The address is 1701 13th Street South East, 98372.

At one time the facility was known as Puget Sound Sanitarium for Mental and Nervous Diseases. It was founded in 1909 under Superintendent Dr. J. W. Snoke and consisted of five buildings. Laurie’s father was one of the early psychiatrists who came to the sanitarium in 1927 permanently-- having been a consultant. Her father purchased the institution with new ideas on how to better treat his patients.

The property upon which Laurie lived much of her life is in Puyallup--picture in your mind’s eye Wildwood Park and the Puyallup Water and Light Co. on 23rd Avenue, running east to west. The facility is located on the forty acres abutting Wildwood Park, right on the edge of the Hill. However, Laurie never really felt tied to Puyallup or South Hill due to the isolated nature of living at the hospital and “switched allegiance back and forth.”

Laurie lived at the sanitarium “in a house built in 1921...it was an isolated life.... Because the [mental] illness had a stigma...” Laurie Stewart recalled that Dr. Snoke of the Cooper Medical School in San Francisco had also worked at the Ft. Steilacoom facility and was known for “... treating his patients individually.” At the institution, she noted, usually one physician was on hand at all times.

Dr. Snoke sold the sanitarium to Laurie’s father, Dr. Stewart, and she said they “still hear from the Snoke family.” Of her father, Laurie said, “He came out here to start Whitworth College... my grandfather sent two of his sons to college to become English professors, but my father was based at Ft. Lewis during World War I (known then as The Great War) and became “most interested in studying shell shock.” She described some patients at the sanitarium suffering badly from ‘shell shock’ including one surgical nurse, a sensitive and beautiful woman--yet at times ‘lost her mind, screaming’ in flashbacks.”

Laurie recounted that she “grew up at this mental institution with a very large staff and, during the outbreak on the Hill of polio, became “even more isolated.”

She was able to persuade her parents into letting her attend Puyallup High School and lunched once a month at the Elks Club. She reminisced that she “got to know people in high school... could smell the berries up on the Hill...rode a pony into the woods...walked in the dark at night--never locked doors, and left the keys in the car! You can't do that today!”

She traveled the world but in 1944, her father was killed in an auto accident. Dr. Bennett kept the sanitarium/home for the next year- and- a-half. The facility was sold to Christian Scientists and later was an entity for mental health care as part of Good Samaritan. With the recent affiliation, Luckett House is now considered a MultiCare facility.

December General Meeting

By Debbie Burtnett

Vice-President Hans Zeiger had arranged for today's speaker, Stan Cross, currently of the administration of the Puyallup Fair. He noted his involvement at Rogers High School and helping plan Emerald Ridge High School. An article in the morning paper told the story of his family's donation for a park. The park will have to be funded from donations as that type of spending has been cut from the county budget. Stan rescheduled for the next month as the Society had changed their meeting date. Hans also asked for ideas for future speakers.



Society Vice President Hans Zeiger filled in as December's guest speaker

Since Hans Zeiger is also Representative-elect Zeiger of the 25th District and headed for Olympia in January, he be-

came our de facto speaker. Joan Vosler asked about the very close race. Hans responded that his win came down to thirty votes in a recount described as “ballot rehabilitation” which involved getting proper signatures on ballots and other details which validated votes. The election was certified on the 23rd. Hans commented on how much he was learning about the political process and said he felt that the “process was trustworthy and transparent.” Mary Glaser offered Hans some advice: “Nobody is going to get what they want [all of the time]...we all need to work together to get something done and avoid the special sessions” [that cost money], etc.

As a freshman undergoing orientation, Hans observed a special session on Saturday which dealt with budget cuts and added, “there are no easy solutions.”

Paul Hackett asked when Hans and others would start the new term. Hans responded that the “swearing-in is January 10 and the session begins.. I am seated in front of Rep J.P. Wilcox, with other folks from this area seated behind me and around me...”

Ben Peters commented that through public affairs videos, one could watch proceedings but the legislators encourage their constituents to visit during the year “to see how the political process works.” Hans responded that “seeing your legislator is a powerful thing...that's why lobbyists are so powerful...”

Other questions asked about the part-time legislature--e.g., how much time is devoted to the state and what percentage have other careers? Hans answered that quite a number do other things but the legislature is part-time four to five months yearly--making outside careers difficult. Hans added, “Some are of the mind it should be full-time work.”

Congratulations and wishes of “good luck!” were offered to Hans Zeiger from the Society.

January General Meeting

By Debbie Burtnett

Stan Cross was welcomed Jan. 15 as he addressed the South Hill Historical Society. Stan, a retired school administrator from Rogers High School, is a worthy addition to our collection of speakers. Currently, Stan is an administrator at the Puyallup Fair, but more importantly, he and wife, Joan, are working to create the first public park in Frederickson, on the western edge of the Hill.



In 1973, “Joan and I purchased 65 acres of land --an area well-suited for a public park. We never thought there would be a chance of realizing this dream,” explained Stan.

Stan & Joan Cross are working to create the first public park in Frederickson.

“The site is one-half mile from Canyon Road, with a nice view of Mt. Rainier with a 3,000 sq. ft. home situated there,” said Stan. Its history is long and varied. When this area was still a territory, several tribes lived in that area--they fished and washed in Clover Creek.” When the Homestead Act was initiated, a family received 160 acres to farm and build upon. Under the legislation, “land was practically given to settlers like Frederick Meyer who purchased the property in 1870 for farming and ranching and inherited by his daughter Wilhelmina. By 1930, the property was purchased by Louis Sutter Sr., who created the Mayflower Dairy and served the schools and residences in this area.” The last to inherit the property was Louis Sutter Jr., who sold to Stan and Joan. Louis asked the Crosses for time to relocate and

they gave him more than twenty years! Stan and Joan took care of not only their animals and property, but Louis, until his death.

In 2003, the Crosses sold the property to the County for development of a public park. Now, “the County still owns it but doesn’t have the money to do what needs to be done to develop the site,” said Stan. Stan and Joan Cross set up a Committee to raise those funds called the “Friends of Stan & Joan Cross Park” with a website address of www.FSJCP.org. A 501(c)(3) organization, all donations are tax deductible.

Their committee works with Frederickson and the Clover Creek County Council, and has elected a Board and just completed a strategic plan in January. Officers selected include Jim Austin, who brought Boeing to Frederickson. The Committee is working on a charter of incorporation; developing a master plan for the site; and envisioning future projects such as softball and soccer fields as well as an occasion center, possibly in the Cross’s former home.

Stan’s message to residents of Frederickson and South Hill is to “get behind the future park... make others aware of what is happening out there...we have already hosted a major garage sale and sell park T-shirts as well as accepting contributions for creating the park.” Advocates for the park include the Frederickson Clover Park County Council and Roger Bush with the County Council. Cost for development are high--perhaps \$10 million for the fields with an overall cost of \$60 to \$100 million. A bond will be on the ballot in the Fall of 2012 to help develop the park.

Help the newsletter

Do you have a story about old times on South Hill?

Personal experiences and past events are of interest to all our members, and it makes for a better newsletter! We are glad to assist, if you wish, with writing or editing your article.

The Editor: Jerry Bates at
jerrybates@mac.com or call 253-759-4601

From the Treasurer

by Ben Peters

A warm welcome to new member

Jeff Cunningham

Please call, e-mail or write any change of address to me, Ben Peters, 253-845-7028, *poppa-ben2002@yahoo.com*, 14602 106th Avenue Court E., South Hill, WA 98374.

Also, don't forget that we are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Dues, donations, etc., are fully deductible from your income taxes if you are able to do so. If you need a receipt for tax purposes contact Ben.

Updated Roster Available

A printed roster including members' home and e-mail addresses, plus phone numbers is available upon request (*restricted to members only*). Call me—Ben Peters—at 253-845-7028.

Dues Reminder

I will attach a sticky note to the Society newsletter mailed closest to your renewal date.

Where to Find Us

The South Hill Historical Society meets regularly on the **THIRD TUESDAY** of the month, 11:15 AM, (*no meetings July and August*) at the Highlands in the Community Center. 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 Paul Hackett at **(253) 845-7691**.



Our Current Members

Andy G. Anderson	Art Larson
John & Ruth Anderson	Marvella Massie
Jim & Elizabeth Anema	Olive McDonough
Bob Ballou	Laurienne Stewart Minnich
Jerry Bates	Ronald Moe
Susan Beals	Carolyn Nelson
Katherine Bennett	Dorothy Nelson
Marilyn Burnett	Juanita Nordin
Debbie Burtnett	Mark & Dorothy Norris
Roger Bush	Christopher & Gloria O'Kelly
Vernon Cox	Ron & Lois Pearson
Jeff Cunningham	Wes & Suzy Perkinson
Dave & Patti Curtiss	Ben Peters
Bob Crabb	Robin Reich
Karen Day	Bill Riley
James H. Dixon	Bernice Fisher Rinehart
Pat Drake	Roy and Sheila Rinker
Joan Ellis	Vern Rockstad
Linda Forsberg	Helen Rohlman
Arthur & Luverne Foxford	Earl Root
Don & Mary Glaser	Stan & Margery Salmon
Hazel Whitford Miller Goheen	Nancy M. Scraggin
Calvin & Amy Goings	Bonnie Starkel
David Hackett	Lori Stock
Paul Hackett	Bill Stover
James Hawley	Marge (Crosson) Swain
Philip R. & Shirley M. Healy	Ralph & Yvonne Thorpe
Cecil & Doris Herbert	Margo L & Joe Tucci
Evelyn Swalander Hess	Carl Vest
Charles & Maybelle Hoenhaus	Neil & Celia Vincent
Matt Holm	Joan Vosler
Ernest Hopp	W. Lynn Williams
Dale Huff	Lenore Nicolet Winton
Leslie & Velma Huff	Ed Zeiger
Jim Kastama	Hans Zeiger
John Knierim	

South Hill Historical Society Officers

President, **Bob Ballou**
Vice-President, **Hans Zeiger**
Secretary, **Debbie Burtnett**
Research Coordinator, **Carl Vest**
Treasurer, **Ben Peters**
Newsletter Editor, **Jerry Bates**
Public Relations Coordinator, **Paul Hackett**

History On The Hill is published quarterly
Copyright 2011

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, 14602 106th Avenue Court E.
South Hill, WA 98374-4905**



14602 106th Avenue Court E.
South Hill, WA 98374-4905

To: