



History On The Hill

The Newsletter of the South Hill Historical Society
South Hill, Pierce County, Washington

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HERITAGE CORRIDOR

Trail Marker Update

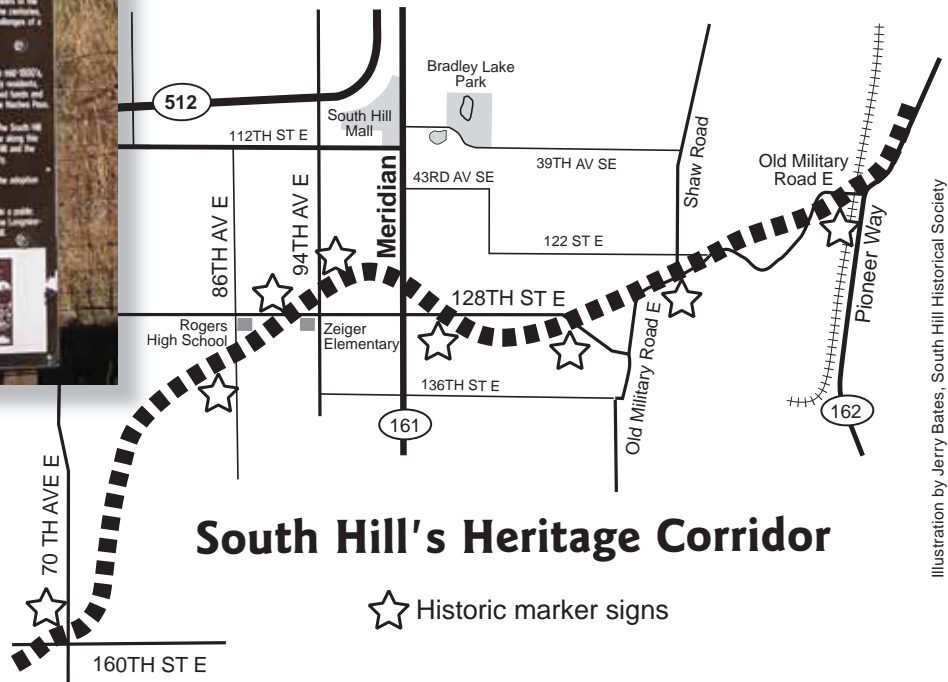
By Jerry Bates

EVERY October we revisit the crossing of the Cascade mountain range by the 1853 Longmire-Biles wagon train—by way of the Naches Pass. Our research director Carl Vest routinely has an article in the *Puyallup Herald* commemorating the journey. As the newsletter editor, I dedicate every fall issue of *History On The Hill* to some aspect of that early crossing. Our Heritage Corridor—thanks to that crossing—became part of the North Fork of the Oregon Trail. However, this “corridor” is not solely a wagon train route. It began as the ancient Indian Klickitat Trail between eastern and western tribes. Not long after our first pioneers made their journey it became the Military Road between Fort Walla Walla and Fort Steilacoom. In the days long before Merid-



Historical marker sign

ian (Ball-Wood Road) and the growth of Puyallup, the main flow of local commerce and travel was east-west across South Hill along this same path.



South Hill's Heritage Corridor

☆ Historic marker signs

Illustration by Jerry Bates, South Hill Historical Society

Our roadside markers placed along the Heritage Corridor illustrate the above story. They were installed over twelve years ago. Over that time, the plywood and Plexiglas signs have deteriorated. Some of them are in pretty bad shape. Last summer, the Pierce County Sign Shop visited each marker along the corridor assessing the condition of each. Some of the signs cleaned up well enough to remain in place while others need replacing. The County's plan is to upgrade the plywood and Plexiglas markers with all steel versions, reproducing the original design as close as possible. Eventually they will all be replaced, as needed, and should last well into the future.

Historical Markers

Here is Where

By Debbie Burtnett

A new book recently published, waxes philosophically about historical markers. The author, Andrew Carroll, in *Here Is Where*, writes wistfully “knowing an era has passed.”

His mission was great in scope when you consider the numbers of markers, known and unknown in the United States; e.g., 15,000 in Texas alone. He set out to find the history of events and accomplishments that aren't in standardized history books and to document “unmarked history sites throughout the country.”

Examples? In 1864, a young man fell of a Jersey City train platform in front of a moving train. He was Robert Todd Lincoln. His rescuer was Edwin Booth, actor and brother of President Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth. Another incident, closer to western hearts, is documented in Hohenwald, TN, where Meriweather Lewis died. The site is now a clearing in a forest with a marker noting the “immortal touch of melancholy fame.” On this 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement, Rosa Parks's historical markers range from AL, to TN to Michigan. However, eleven years prior to the Montgomery event, a Virginia woman, Irene Morgan, was arrested for not giving up her seat to a white person. Her lawyer was Thurgood Marshall, the future Supreme Court justice, who argued the Linda Brown case for desegregation in schools before the Court in 1954-55. Mr. Carroll's book is filled with such stories of the ordinary man in history. Such strange coincidences are woven throughout its chapters.

An Idaho policeman, Sergeant Mike Miller, is quoted: “I think the more that people, especially young people, know more about where they live, the more pride and ownership they feel about the

place, and the less likely they are to disrespect or vandalize it.” Andrew Carroll called it “History as crime fighter.”

This sentiment has often been expressed at South Hill Historical Society meetings. Getting the younger generations interested in state and local history takes a back seat their jobs, families, and the price of gasoline! Remember those Sunday drives taken by families in the 1950s and 1960s? Often the family might stop by an historical marker for a little break and learn something or take photographs. We can't afford to do that anymore in terms of time and money.

Definition/The Historical Marker Database

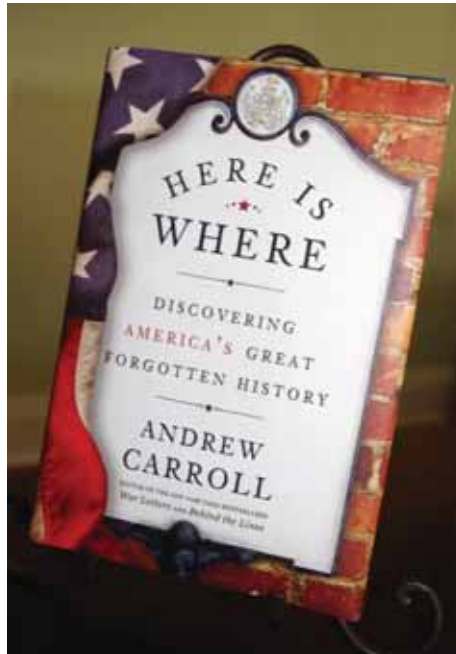
An historical marker is a plaque or sign that commemorates an event or person of historic interest and to associate that point with a specific location we can visit. You can 'collect' them by using your camera and entering your 'finds' on a website founded in 2006—the Historical Marker Database.

A group of “self-directed volunteers” organized into a Board of Editors and Contributing Editors, along with over three hundred active contributing correspondents, created an illustrated searchable online catalog of historical information “gathered from roadside and other permanent outdoor markers, monuments, and plaques.” *HMdb.org* Adding to the database is a great hobby for history enthusiasts.

Even if a marker is already in the database, new photos and directions are welcomed. Your photo, date, and name will be credited unless you wish to remain anonymous. Editorial guidelines are detailed on the site.

NOTE: If readers of "Here Is Where" would like to recommend unmarked sites across America, go to www.HereIsWhere.org to describe your own “little-known spots ... worthy of attention.”

Editors NOTE: Debbie Burtnett will continue this topic in following newsletters.



Book by Andrew Carroll
Here is Where

Art Larson's Earliest Memories of South Hill

by Jerry Bates

Art Larson volunteered to share some of his early memories of South Hill for September's General Meeting. We're fortunate to have Art as part of our Society — full of memories — plus being a very entertaining speaker. Just turned 90-years-old, he is still active and articulate, with a long fascinating history of service to our community, and beyond having served as a young naval officer in WWII. Of special significance to us on South Hill, Art managed the launch and formation of Rogers High School, the Hill's first high school. Many of our members were former students either during his days at Puyallup High

School or while he was principal at Rogers High School.



Member Art Larson

titled *Geezerhood — What to Expect From Life Now That You're Old As Dirt*. Art, in good humor, said he's used to taking such guff.

Art's family migrated from Astoria, Oregon, to Tacoma, packed into a Model-T Ford with his "mother and father, four children, my mother's Dad and my grandmother."

Art's father was a Lutheran Pastor who had three churches, a Swedish language only church in South Tacoma; another close to Horace Mann School at 54th and I Street; and a church in Auburn—he served them all every Sunday. It was while accompanying his Dad on the trips to Auburn that Art formed his earliest memories of South Hill. Art says, "In the 1930s there were yearly floods of the Puyallup River going over its

banks, making it difficult to travel around. Fortunately, Model-Ts were built high off the ground so you could go through the flood waters." The trip to Auburn usually included Art and sometimes the entire family. They came to South Hill from South Tacoma by way of the old Airport Road (112th Street today), then down Military Road to McMillin, then on to what is now called 410—in those days called Ely Hill Road. At that time the road "was like a snake" going up the hill out of the valley. After topping the hill, they traveled on to Buckley and Enumclaw and from there a road went to Auburn. His dad would hold services even if only two or three of the congregation showed up "not many people braved the storms and high water," related Art.

While crossing the Hill Art told us "there was nothing up here, a house or two and a service station—that's was my first memory of South Hill."

Art skipped ahead to 1948, when he was teaching eighth and ninth grade classes in Puyallup, and was offered an assignment to teach drivers' education, Art asked "Does that mean I'll teach on a high school level?" — for drivers' education, the answer was "yes," but the rest of his subjects—"no." Those other subjects were Washington State history, U.S. History, General Science, PE, and Health. "I accepted the job," Art stated. During those classes, most of the students wanted to drive by their houses to honk the horn and show-off to their parents that they were driving. This took the young drivers and their teacher to the Rabbit Farms and beyond--at that time mostly gavel roads. "We never got lost, but came close," added Art.

Art went on to another early memory of the Hill. His wife, Lorraine, taught two years in Parkland. In order to get there you had to climb South Hill and take Airport Road because they lived in downtown Puyallup. "I didn't think she was a very good driver, and kept my fingers crossed everyday—but she drove Airport Road for two years, through snow and sleet," stated Art proudly.

Art Larson and Rogers High School

We were all anxious to hear Art talk about the founding of Rogers High School. "When Rogers was on the drawing board, most everything up here was vacant lots, farms, and chicken ranches," described Art. The days of the Rabbit Farms

were long past. A large section of land on the corner of 128th and 86th Avenue was chosen for the future site of the school. Art told how he and Don Hartung, Principal of Puyallup High School, logged all the alder trees off the site. “Scrap trees,” said Art, “they had plenty of firewood.”

Art said, “When establishing Rogers, we had a school but we didn’t have enough children—what are we going to do?” He came up with the solution. “They were already transporting students from Waller Road to Puyallup High School, why not just change the bus route and move all those kids to Rogers?” In 1968, before Ballou Jr. High was built in 1971, Art found himself a “high school principal” with a student body of seventh grade through tenth grade. Only a portion of the students were at high school level. However, he learned early on how to deal with the younger junior high level kids. One example was after-school fights among the boys. Art asked us to remember when we were that age — girls would argue and the boys would fight to settle scores. Those fights would happen at the gravel pit a half-mile from the school. Art and his fellow teachers learned it was all a matter of timing. Rather than rush to the scene to break it up, they would wait till the boys wore themselves out. Art said, “We still called their parents and took care of the problem — after a while it wasn’t any fun [for the kids] to go over to the gravel pit.”

Art continued to tell us stories of how Carl Sparks (longtime Puyallup High School Coach) would get jobs for the teachers during summer at local canneries. Teachers in those days didn’t get paid from the end of June till the end of October. Art was in the Naval Reserves, which helped him in addition to being summer foreman at Valley Packers—thanks to Carl Sparks.

Many of us who have served jury duty recall Art as a familiar face at the County City building, where he volunteered to help the staff for jury orientation. Prior to that he conducted tours of the courts and County City building for many years, “until the schools ran out of money for field trips.” He promised his wife he would quit the jury duty job when he turned eighty-nine, which he did. Amused, he mentioned recently receiving a jury summons to report to jury duty — October 14th.

Last word

Art says, “When you get to be old like I am

and graduating classes you have had at either Puyallup or Rogers High School invite you back for their reunion, it is amazing. I went to one Saturday and those people have got to be pushing seventy and they still want to remember way back — what do you remember? — you can tell them anything because they’re still very gullible.”

Crossing the Naches Pass

by Jerry Bates

Our resourceful vice president, Terry Maves, filled in this month for the scheduled October general meeting speaker. For “filling-in,” Terry put together quite an elaborate multimedia presentation. He began by asking our knowledgeable group “what happened 160 years ago this month?” The answer quickly came “the crossing of the Naches Pass.” Most of us who have been with the Society any amount of time are quite familiar with this event. In the fall of 1853, the Longmire-Biles wagon train slowly struggled across the Cascade Range following the Naches Pass Indian trail. They were the first organized migration of white settlers with the goal of reaching the Puget Sound country. The party crossed South Hill to reach their last campsite at the Mahan ranch — today’s Brookdale Golf Course. In 2001, their crossing of South Hill was recognized by a Pierce County Resolution — giving birth to our Heritage Corridor.

Terry recounted probably the most famous episode that occurred during the crossing — lowering 36 wagons down a treacherous embankment



Terry Maves, October's presenter, describes the Naches Pass crossing in 1853 by the Longmire-Biles wagon train. He also recounts his participation traveling the pass in four-wheel vehicles.

to the Green River. The story in later years was detailed from the memory of George H. Hines, a barefoot nine-year-old member of the party. He sent an account to Ezra Meeker in 1905, which was included in the book *First Three Wagon Trains*, co-authored by James Longmire. Terry read passages of the account from an enlarged page reproduced from the book. Lowering the wagons down the long, nearly vertical slope was only possible by extending the length of their only rope available for the job. Slaughtering three oxen and using their hide furnished the extra “rope” needed! A risky two-day descent followed, wrecking two of their wagons.

Terry and several members of our Society traveled this treacherous route across the pass with four-wheel drive vehicles. Slides were shown of their adventure including the rough “road” and the beautiful Government Meadows at the summit. Many informative signs and markers were also photographed during the excursion. The signs were constructed and installed by a Sumner WA Boy Scout troop in 1980. Some of the signs in the slides were read aloud during our meeting, each giving interesting facts of the Longmire-Biles crossing 160 years ago. As Carl Vest writes each year on the anniversary, “it should be remembered.”

Terry also requested the membership to make contributions to our small collection of artifacts. Many of you may have old items that would be interesting to the younger generation. Why not share that old item with the society? Maybe lend or donate it? We have dry heated storage space available. Contact Bob Ballou, stonebluebob@comcast.net, 253-845-6071.

Puyallup Library Anniversary & Digitization Project

by Jerry Bates

The Puyallup Library turned 100-years-old, October 19th. Saturday evening on that date, a community open house and birthday party was held at the library. The South Hill Historical Society was invited to participate in this anniversary celebration. Library director Tim Wadham and staff put on quite an event, live string ensemble, excellent refreshments and book signings by

Northwest authors.

However, the festivities had another purpose in addition to the birthday party. As many of you may already know, our society along with Meeker/Puyallup Historical Society, the Karshner collection and the Washington State Fair are in collaboration with the Puyallup Library to create a “digital” archive of local historical documents, photographs, items and memorabilia. This is going to be a large and complex effort that will require a lot of volunteer and professional involvement, and you guessed it — money. Saturday’s event was designed in part to raise funds for this project. Jerry Korum has given a generous grant of \$12,000 for the digitizing effort—with the agreement the library must raise matching funds.



South Hill Historical Society participated in the birthday celebration of the Puyallup Library’s 100th-year milestone. This is a view of the history room corner of the library (history room door in the background). Members Jerry Bates and Terry Maves were on hand to help attendees curious about South Hill history.

I would urge SHHS members to help out in this challenge—what better way to preserve local history. As Tim Wadham pointed out in his October 9, 2013 piece in the *Puyallup Herald*, all our local archives are vulnerable, flood, fire—even train derailment/explosion, as happened in Lac-Mégantic Quebec last July. That tragedy wiped out the local library history archive. Lets hope we avoid such a fate, but we should have a way to protect our collections. The digitization effort would help solve that problem by having our valuable local archives digitized and stored on re-

mote servers. Another benefit of digitization, not only would it increase security but it would increase public accessibility. All the digitized information would be available on the Internet. We are thankful and fortunate to have the history room at the Puyallup Library. But most of our local societies and organizations historical documents and photographs are stored away in various locations with restricted access, or no access at all, to the public, students, and those of us who often do research. What good is it to have collections sitting in dark rooms (including private homes) or on shelves behind locked doors or places not often visited? How many of you have scheduled time in the history room of the downtown library, or spent time in the attic of the Meeker mansion or even visited our Grange archive room? All this information—if cataloged and digitized—could, and should, be easily available to anybody with an Internet connection.

If you would like to make a donation to the digitization project to match the Korum Foundation gift, contact Tim Wadham, 253-841-5483, twadham@ci.Puyallup.wa.us

School District Shows Interest In Our Work

by Jerry Bates



Puyallup School district directors Christine Moloney & Mark Vetter.

Attending the September General Meeting were Christine Moloney and Mark Vetter, directors for the Puyallup School District. Mark and Christine develop curriculum for the school district and are interested in establishing a partnership with the South Hill Historical Society. Fourth and seventh

graders are required to study local history and our Society is eager to furnish any support the teachers or the students need. Recently, members Terry Maves and Ben Peters have been visiting local elementary schools talking with the staff and promoting our Society, offering our support with their local history needs — and they have received very enthusiastic responses. Director Christine Moloney announced she has sent our website link southhillhistory.com to all Puyallup school librarians to share with their students and teachers. They're still in the early stages of developing curriculum for the 2014-15 school year, which will start in January/February. Vice President Terry Maves urges all members who may live close to one of South Hill's elementary schools to be a contact and sponsor for our Society — so be thinking how you can help! Let's encourage the younger generations to understand and appreciate their roots and the history in their own backyards! Contact Terry (253-606-0821) or Ben (253-845-7028).

Congratulations Hans!

by Debbie Burtnett



Lieutenant Colonel Mark Moran & Second Lieutenant Hans Zeigler. Academy of Military Science Graduation and Commissioning ceremony.

Hans Zeiger, former vice president of the South Hill Historical Society and District 25 Representative, was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the WA Air National Guard at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama in early October. Lt. Col. Mike Moran, base civil engineer at Camp Murray, performed the commissioning, a special honor as "he was my Boy Scout leader in Troop 174," stated Hans.

From the Treasurer

by Ben Peters

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

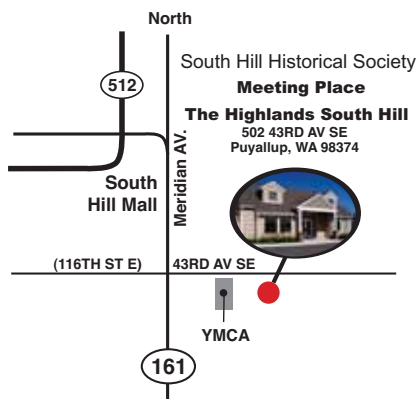
A printed roster including members' home and e-mail addresses, plus phone numbers is available upon request (*restricted to members only*). Call me—Ben Peters—at 253-845-7028.

Dues Reminder

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

The South Hill Historical Society meets regularly on the **THIRD TUESDAY** of the month, 11:00 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.

Where to Find Us



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

Our Current Members

Andy G. Anderson	Laurienne Stewart Minnich
Andy & Ruth Anderson	Kaye Murrell
Elizabeth Anema	Carolyn Nelson
Marion Armstrong	Dorothy Nelson
Bob Ballou	Juanita Nordin
Teresa Best	Mark & Dorothy Norris
Jerry Bates	Gloria O'Kelly
Katherine Bennett	Ron & Lois Pearson
Marilyn Burnett	Wes & Suzy Perkinson
Debbie Burtnett	Ben Peters
Vernon Cox	Bill Riley
Dave & Patti Curtiss	Bernice Fisher Rinehart
Karen Day	Roy and Sheila Rinker
James H. Dixon	Vern Rockstad
Pat Drake	Helen Rohlman
Joan Ellis	Earl Root
Arthur & Luverne Foxford	Jean Ross
Ira Gabrielson	Stan & Margery Salmon
Don & Mary Glaser	Bonnie Starkel
Calvin & Amy Goings	Lori Stock
Paul Hackett	Bill Stover
Alberta Hagen	Marge (Crosson) Swain
Cecil & Doris Herbert	Ralph & Yvonne Thorpe
Evelyn Swalander Hess	Margo L. & Joe Tucci
Wilma Walsworth Hinshaw	Lee Van Pevenage
Alan & Linda Hoenhous	Carl Vest
Maybelle Hoenhous	Neil & Celia Vincent
Matt Holm	Joan Vosler
Leslie & Velma Huff	W. Louise Walsworth
John Knierim	W. Lynn Williams
Mike Kupfer	Lenore Nicolet Winton
Art Larson	Ed Zeiger
Terry Maves	Hans Zeiger
Olive McDonough	Allan S. & Ellen M. Zulauf

South Hill Historical Society Officers

President, **Bob Ballou**
Vice-President, **Terry Maves**
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Treasurer, **Ben Peters**
Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, **Jerry Bates**

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Editor Jerry Bates, Editor at Large Debbie Burtnett
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South Hill Historical Society Membership/Renewal Form

Name		
Address	Phone	
City	State	Zip
E-mail Address		
Signature _____ Date _____ Renewal, check here <input type="checkbox"/>		
Annual Dues: Society membership \$25.00 <i>Note: Please do not send cash.</i>		
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: