



# History On The Hill

The Newsletter of the South Hill Historical Society

Volume 11 Issue 1 Winter 2013

HERITAGE CORRIDOR

## Hazel

*We were all saddened with the passing of our eldest member this winter, Hazel Whitford Miller Goheen. Hazel died January 3, 2013, at 102 and seven months. Hazel had a zest for life we all admired, and we will miss her lively presence at our Society meetings. As a tribute to Hazel in this issue, I thought it would be appropriate to feature the excellent lead article that Paul Hackett wrote about Hazel's life, originally published in our March 2005 newsletter. — Editor*

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 teenager in the late 1920s, times were hard for many people and for the Whitford family as well. But Hazel was no burden to her family as the third daughter. She didn't go with a "steady boyfriend" because she was focused on preparing to be a teacher. She attended Bellingham Normal for college.

"I worked as a grade school janitor two hours Monday through Friday and 2 ½ hours on Saturday while attending school. I was paid \$ .35 an hour. This paid my way through normal school. It is too bad boys and girls can't pay their way now--it costs so much," said Hazel.

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's clothing, she opted out of the ceremony. However, on



**Hazel Whitford Miller Goheen, always a lively presence at Society general meetings, pictured here, April 2010.**

graduation, no contract came her way.

Her cousin, Alvah Huff, was visiting grandparents in Custer, suggested she send her application to Firgrove, which Hazel did. The school was located ¾ mile east of Meridian and 136th Street. It burned down in 1934. She said she would come for a personal interview. The school board sent the contract immediately, so she signed it and sent it back. Mrs. Winifred 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 asked, "Are you the teacher?" as she looked down on the 5 foot 1", petite "girl" before her, dressed in one of the three new dresses she now owned.

Mr. 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 school was named after him). Hazel was hired and got along well with the students. She had good classroom control. She walked to and from the school through the woods.

At that time, teachers could not date, smoke,

or drink, and had to be in by 8 PM. Her pay? \$100 a month plus \$5 for doing the janitorial work plus 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 first through fourth grades. Another teacher taught the fifth through eighth 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 fourth grader who “truly found interesting articles in the encyclopedia” that Hazel bought.

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 Wright children attended Firgrove. Only about 40 students in all lived in the catchment area (a geographical area served by an institution) 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 was Miller’ Grocery store and a gas station; and the Willows dance hall where Hazel and her friends Shirley and Enid Wright and Eunice Stover danced to big bands. Entry fees were \$ .75 for males and \$ .25 for females; the Kupfer home was on the other corner (now Borders Bookstore).

This stage of Hazel’s career lasted two years until she took the County Superintendent of School’s 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 each morning, all would march into the school (They still do this

at Woodland alumni reunions but march in place). Times were hard, so although it cost \$ .25 per year to join the Woodland PTA, a “local” membership provision was created to cost only \$ .10.

Hazel taught 30 children in the third and fourth grades. “They were really good children,” she said. Students included Robert Litton, Maudine Swalander, Joe Sladek, and many other “wonderful boys and girls.” Bernice Rinehart (whose father was Grange Master) was in the sixth grade and knew Hazel.

Hazel also “knew both sides”—the folks at Woodland School and her friends at the McMillan Grange that included Patzner, Kehr, and Mosolf families. At one meeting, the Woodland people asked Hazel why she went to the McMillan Grange. She told them about 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 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. The Society owns a picture of that event.

She was also very active in 4-H 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 4-H Club Work” and Pierce County won the prize, a banner. She had three 4-H clubs at one time because a male club leader could not be found for the boys. They formed a cooking club and had cookouts for supper at Maplewood Springs, a long walk downhill.

She was county president of 4-H leaders and later president of SW Washington 4-H leaders. The county had people from Washington, D.C., in the 1930s and 1940s to help communities

with interest. The people include Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, who came for plays and games; and the next year, Mr. and Mrs. Knapp joined for plays, acting, lighting, and positioning onstage.

Hazel was involved in helping Leo Hutchins decorate a downtown fountain with daffodils, this led to the creation of the Daffodil Parade in 1933.

In 1934, she taught at Kirby School in the Graham area. The school board wanted her because she had captained girls' baseball teams to two county championships. Her husband-to-be was managing a county gravel crusher and "there would be one too many persons working in a family." This problem resolved when she married him. Hazel and Clifford Miller then moved to a home on Stewart Avenue and 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, many women were 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, Ruffle 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. Hazel taught for three more years.

Later in life, Hazel lived in Canada for 20 years. Now she lives in Blaine, the city in which she was born on Mary 3, 1010. Her daughter, Mrs. Faye 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.

### **Hazel passes**

There must have been 400 people at the Puyallup Community Baptist Church on Janu-

ary 12, 2013, for Hazel's memorial service. Survivors include daughter Faye Serviss grand-children George (Gael) Serviss and Lisa (Steve) Frisinger; great-grandchildren Scotty and Kyle Frisinger; sister Winifred VanDyk; numerous nieces and nephews, and her extended family in Saskatchewan, Canada.

## **Professor Vest — South Hill History 101**

Our first General Meeting for 2013 featured our Society's Research Director, Carl Vest. Carl's talk had two parts. First, he gave an overview of the South Hill memorial project and second, he tested our knowledge of South Hill's historical places and noteworthy people.

### **Memorial Project**

Thanks to funding by an anonymous sponsor, SHHS now has the opportunity to create a memorial to the early settlers on South Hill. This process is in its early stages. Carl has publicly launched this effort with an article in the January 23rd edition of the *Puyallup Herald* entitled "Input sought on South Hill Memorial" which solicited the general community for "opinions and suggestions." During Carl's talk, he proposed three different approaches that could be used for a memorial — a physical monument like a headstone, or a pylon with a face like the Vietnam wall in Washington D.C.; either of these



**Society  
Research  
Director  
Carl Vest  
tests our  
knowledge  
of South Hill  
history.**



two could be in a public place, one of the parks on South Hill for example, maybe at the library. A “living” memorial could be established; using money in a bank account, as we do for high school scholarships and other uses. Carl felt this would be the less desirable approach as it is less visible. Carl heads the committee that will bring the memorial to fruition; and he’ll keep us posted.

### Quiz Time

With everyone fidgeting in their seats, Carl passed out the first of three questionnaires for signatures and return to him. The first form had five blanks for us to fill in—listing South Hill pioneers (1930 or earlier). The next also required five names—listing prominent South Hillians alive or deceased. The last handout was a map of South Hill. Carl asked us to locate with numbered circles these places: 1. Firgrove; 2. The Willows; 3. Puyallup Heights; 4. Kupfer’s Corner; 5. The Rabbit Farms; 6. Starvation Gulch; and 7. Woodland. Carl reminded us that these were once well-known communities often used for directions and as reference points by locals. Today, the closest we have to such “communities” are housing developments registered with the county, such as Gem Heights, etc.

Carl warned us that this was a research project and he may do another!

## Ask Ed Zeiger

Our speaker for the February General Meeting was Ed Zeiger. On short notice, Ed gave a fascinating look at his life and career teaching on South Hill. He moved to the Hill in 1952 after purchasing a “dumpy old house” on five acres consisting of two adjoining Rabbit Farms plots (72 & 74), for which the original price was \$5,000. He raised a family there has lived on the property ever since. In recent years, Ed sold \$26,000 worth of timber from the site. Thirteen years ago, he built a new house on the high part of the property. According to Ed, it’s the highest point in Puyallup, with a beautiful view of Mt. Rainier.

Ed was a longtime teacher in Puyallup and

South Hill. He served as teacher and principal at the old Firgrove School from 1958 to 1960. He went on to teach at Stewart Elementary from 1960 to 1966; opened Wildwood School and stayed fifteen years. In 1981, he opened Pope



Ed Zeiger

Elementary and spent the last five years of his career at Sunrise School. Ed reminisced that his best years were teaching at the old Firgrove three-room school. “The farm kids were wonderful students.” What made it special was that he had a chance to do everything—coach football and basketball; organize the school play; and teach chorus.

Ed’s talk was oriented for answering many questions from our membership—and many stories emerged.

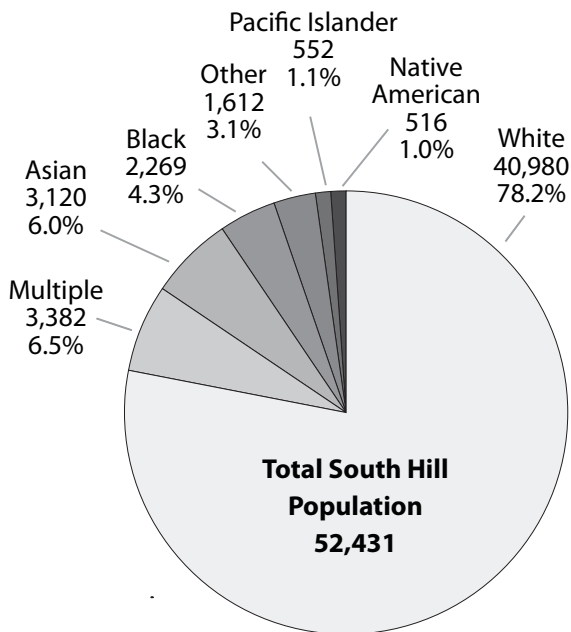
Meridian, which ran in front of the school, was a two-lane highway with a fifty mile per hour speed limit. To slow traffic, two ‘Suzie Q’ stands (picture of a patrol girl on a pole) were put in the middle of the road. Cars kept brushing up against them. Ed petitioned the state to change this regulation and have ‘Suzie Qs’ on each side of the road instead. In this effort, he measured the width of the highway for his report—eighteen feet wide, only nine feet per lane—a little over the width of an average garage door opening. How Meridian has changed!

Many stories followed, such as the well-fed

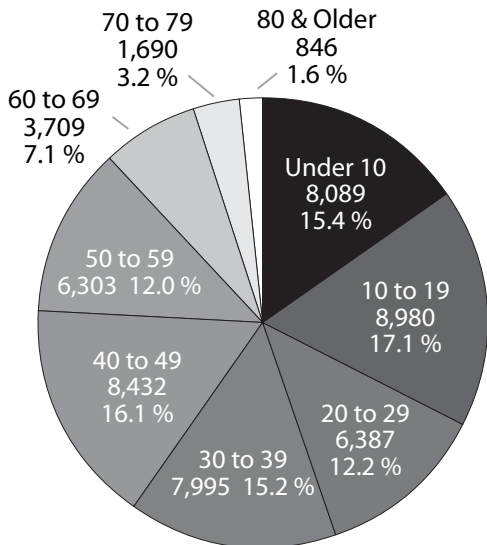
chickens on the farm next to the school, thanks to the lunchroom staff throwing food scraps over the fence. When Ed enforced kids taking only what they could eat for lunch, with no leftovers, the well-fed chickens suffered.

Between Ed's memories and those shared by the membership at the meeting, the hour sped by. Ed's legacy to our community lives on with one of our newest elementary schools being named after him.

## South Hill Today Population, Race & Age\*



Hispanics are not considered a race by the Census Bureau; there are **4,442** on South Hill (included in above total)



\* Data from 2010 US Census, [www.data.spokesman.com](http://www.data.spokesman.com)  
South Hill Historical Society

## Some General Info

### Meeting start times.

General Meeting 11:15 AM  
(see page 6 for more details)  
Officers' Meeting 11:00 AM

### Video Policy

We have a vast library of VCR tapes that have been individually converted to DVD discs that can be viewed on televisions using DVD players or your home computer. Most General Meeting guest speakers are digitally recorded by Bob Ballou. The speaker receives a free DVD of his or her presentation. All additional DVD requests will cost \$3.00 each.

Our DVD collection also includes many years of interviews with South Hill people of interest. All DVDs are available for borrowing by SHHS members.

For a list, contact Paul Hackett.  
[phackettyes@comcast.net](mailto:phackettyes@comcast.net)  
253-845-7691

**Newsletter helpers, contributors,  
proofreaders needed**  
Contact Jerry Bates 253-973-2564,  
[jerrybates@mac.com](mailto:jerrybates@mac.com)

# From the Treasurer

by Ben Peters

Welcome to our new members  
**Kaye Murrell & Mike Kupfer**

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

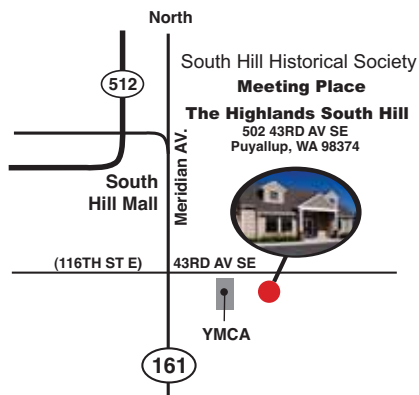
A printed roster including members' home and e-mail addresses, plus phone numbers is available upon request (*restricted to members only*). Call me—Ben Peters—at 253-845-7028.

## Dues Reminder

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

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.

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

## South Hill Historical Society Officers

President, **Bob Ballou**  
Vice-President, **Hans Zeiger**  
Secretary, **Katie Bennett/Kaye Murrell**  
Research Coordinator, **Carl Vest**  
Treasurer, **Ben Peters**  
Newsletter Editor, **Jerry Bates**  
Editor at Large, **Debbie Burtnett**  
Public Relations Coordinator, **Paul Hackett**

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South Hill Historical Society

# 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: