



Map base Pierce Co. Parks & Recreation

IT'S BEEN fifteen years since the original South Hill Community Plan was completed. The plan was a collaboration between Pierce County and South Hill residents to design a future community based on the priorities of the people living here. Quality parks and outdoor spaces ranked among the top concerns. Things have been moving along over the years, and currently we enjoy facilities such as Heritage Recreation Center, the Nathan Chapman Memorial Trail, Meridian Habitat Park and the South Hill Community Park. Progress continues with future projects being

planned such as development of the Hopp Farm and Half Dollar Park. In addition to the parks, a South Hill trail system is also a priority and some exciting plans are under way.

For our January 2019 General Meeting, Kimberly Freeman of Pierce County Parks and Recreation presented an overview of current and future Pierce County projects. Kimberly is familiar to some of our early members who helped develop the South Hill Community Plan. During her long career with the county, she served in the plan-

ning department and worked on the first South Hill Community Plan. Today she works with Parks and Recreation.

Kimberly began her presentation covering the vast network of trails in Pierce County—existing and proposed. Then she focused on what's planned for South Hill and surrounding areas.

The Trails

The people of Pierce County have asked for more than 400 miles of trails. Many are in the future or in the planning stage and some are established. Of particular interest to our members is the proposed South Hill Community Trail Network and the Cross County Community Connector Trail. The Cross County Trail starts at the Tacoma Dome Station connecting to Pipeline Road and following it to Half Dollar Park located by the Sewer & Traffic Operations complex on 94th Av. (STOP Facility). Funding is available with construction starting in 2021-2022. From the Pipeline Road Trail, there will be a link to the Nathan Chapman Trail between the Heritage Park complex and South Hill Community Park, 86th Av. and 144th St E. The proposed route will then connect to the South Hill Community Trail Network. Trails will continue east to the South Hill ridge—east of the Tacoma Water Reservoir down the ridge to the Foothills Trail. The part of the trail descending the ridge is pending due to the steep terrain. An alternative may be following the Military Road down to the valley floor to connect to the Foothills Trail. The Foothills Trail runs from Puyallup to Buckley.

The Parks

The **Heritage Park** complex (located next to Rogers High School) recently finished converting a baseball field and soccer field to artificial turf. Such turf has become a controversial subject as the former artificial turf made of ground automobile tires is a possible carcinogen. "Envirofill is the name of the new turf made with acrylic

coated sand and it's safe for the kids," commented Kimberly. Using artificial turf to replace natural grass prevents the highly used fields from turning to mud and is much less costly to maintain.

Meridian Habitat Park at 144th and Meridian continues to be a challenge. Kimberly said, "The people continue to think it still belongs to the church (site of the old Amphitheater)." A new entryway arch at the corner of Meridian and 144th St. E is an effort to dispel that assumption. It's called Sway, with arching seedpod like structures illuminated pink and purple at night, including a brightly lit digital marquee with park information. The Sway is also the park's out-



New entrance artwork for Meridian Habitat Park

door art. Kimberly explained that all county projects have to spend 1% on art. The Arts Commission selected this artwork especially for Habitat Park. The idea was something to get the public's attention announcing the "park" on this site. On the grounds, work is continuing towards the master plan. Extensive landscaping is underway to improve the old amphithe-

ater space with a stage to be built for music and theatrical events. A great lawn is planned in the shape of a huge circle ringed by a trail system that continues into the woods. Possible uses for the great lawn could include food trucks and events; perhaps a farmers market. The existing playground is being enlarged in three phases. It's the only playground in the county with a net climber—"very popular with the kids, they love it," said Kimberly. The next project at the park is lighting, parking and roadway work.

We asked Kimberly what has become of the effort to convert the old church into some kind of community center. "A study of the building has been completed. It will cost \$2 million just to bring it up to necessary standards, accessibility, etc. — with still no ideal solution. Kimberly explained, For 2019 we're going to ask: What does the public want from this building? Then, determine what's the most cost effective answer." Kimberly is also

aware of the effort to save the old Firgrove School building for perhaps a similar function. Our Society's Save The School Committee is working with the School district, the County Council, and State Senator Hans Zeiger to resolve the school's fate. At this point Parks & Recreation agreed to keep channels of communication open and keep the dialogue going.

The County has purchased the **Hopp Farm**, on the corner of 136th St. E and 122nd Av. E. The current owner's lease will expire in 2021-2023. Planning for a park will then start. Public input favors having a dog park on the property with other amenities to be added.

Half Dollar Park will be the subject of a public input process beginning this year. The idea is to work with the surrounding community and get the kids involved. Kimberly explained, "[We are] asking them what they want to see there. Middle school and high school kids are hard to engage in parks. It's easy to get little kids and adults involved, difficult to get teens and tweens."

Cross Park, in Fredrickson, on Military Road and 38th AV E, has been a long time in the making. The park idea was initiated as a result of the Stan and Joan Cross Foundation that raised over \$100,000 for a future park. Pierce County is in the final stages of planning the Fredrickson Community Center on the site using the restored and expanded old dairy barn. "The locals have been adamant to keep the vintage barn," said Kimberly. The park property is on Clover Creek and has historical significance—being on the route followed by Longmire-Byles 1853 wagon train on its way to Fort Steilacoom. The route was to become the historic Military Road.

Kimberly also gave an overview of major improvements for both Sprinkler Recreation Center in Spanaway and Lake Tapps Park.

Pierce County Parks and Recreation has a lot going on. With the improved trails and parks, the future looks bright for us living on South Hill.

We hope to see Kimberly again as progress continues.

Hans Zeiger Remembers Local World War II Generation

South Hill Historical Society member Hans Zeiger serves in the Washington State Senate for the 25th District and the Air National Guard in addition to many other organizations. But he is also a writer, author, local historian, a native of Puyallup-South Hill, and a familiar presence at our monthly meetings. For the November 2018 General Meeting, Hans gave a presentation and book signing promoting his new book *Puyallup in World War II*, published by History Press. Hans told of his work researching and interviewing veterans over many years in preparation for his book. The end result is a collection of stories telling of the lives and events affecting many local young men

and women of the World War II generation. The book also describes what life was like living in Puyallup during that extraordinary time.



Hans Zeiger

Hans started this project in December 2007. He told us, "While watching the movie *Band of Brothers*, about the campaign through Europe during WWII, I realized I had a narrow window of opportunity to talk to the WWII generation—I thought I'd better do that while I've got a chance." He completed 120 interviews with Puyallup World War II veterans including Japanese residents interned at "Camp Harmony." The effort hooked him on local history.

It was during this time he attended one of our meetings and joined our Society.

Hans covered selections from the book while focusing his presentation on South Hill people. The book begins during the Great Depression. It's 1936 and two Puyallup athletes were sent to the 1936 Berlin Olympics— Gertrude Wilhelmsen and George "Shorty" Hunt, both Puyallup High School graduates. Both were accepted for the games, but transportation costs had to be paid by the athletes, and times were hard and money short. Who would pay for the trip to Germany and back? "Well, the community lobbied its service organizations and along with the business community, raised the funds," said Hans.

"George "Shorty" Hunt was part of the University of Washington rowing team famous then and brought back to public attention recently thanks to the best selling book *Boys in the Boat* followed by a PBS special and movie.

Gertrude Stelling Wilhelmsen set a javelin throwing world record in advance of the Olympics. She was unique among the American athletes at the Berlin games because she spoke German fluently. She attended a propaganda meeting with Joseph Goebbels and Hermann Goering but declined an invitation to meet Adolf Hitler—deferring to watch teammate Jesse Owens run one of his sprints.

On the Hill

Hans told us the stories of some South Hill residents in the military during World War II. He began with a familiar name, longtime Society member Roy Rinker. He and wife Shelia, as we all remember, were both very active in our Society. During the war, Roy and Ray Glaser were very close friends while stationed at Kingman Army Airbase in Arizona. Ray Glaser was killed in a B-17 crash in 1943 while returning to Kingman

from McChord Air Base after a Christmas leave. After the war, Roy Rinker visited his friend's home where he met Ray's parents. While visiting he met Sheila; they dated, married, and lived the rest of their lives on South Hill.

Lt. Richard Sloat lived in Woodland from the Puyallup Class of 1936. He became the student body president at the College of Puget Sound; taught drama and English. He joined the Marine Corps, was a tank commander, and survived the battle at Tarawa by escaping his damaged tank—but was later killed on Saipan. The tank remains on the beach to this day, and a book was written about its crew.

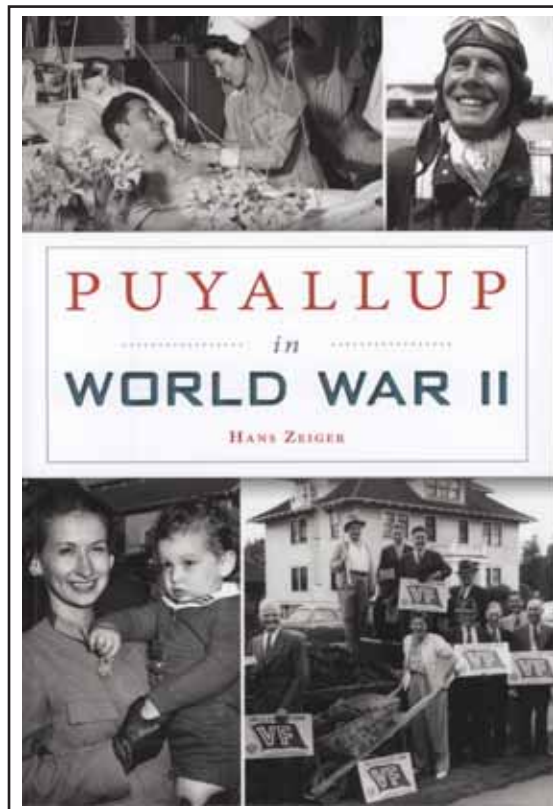
Lt. Ray Botsford lived in Puyallup Heights (the north crest of South Hill on Meridian), serving in the Army Air Corps. He was killed in England in preparation of the D-Day Invasion of 1944.

Eunice Barth Gilliam was from a South Hill family. She was the lead telephone operator in Puyallup including the war years. Eunice was determined to preserve and tell the story of her town at war. She visited classrooms at area schools and told of local war heroes she had known. She put together a scrapbook of newspaper clippings carefully collected during the war—a valuable resource for Hans

while writing his book. Eunice was brought to Hans' attention thanks to member emeritus Paul Hackett who recorded an interview with her. She also lobbied the city council to erect the Veterans Memorial at Pioneer Park. Eunice passed away shortly before Hans started his book. The City of Puyallup Veterans Memorial was dedicated in 2002.

Editor's Note:

Eunice's daughter, Chris Nimick, spoke at our May 2012 general meeting. During her presentation, she spoke of her mother's telephone operator experiences. This meeting is covered in the Sum-



Hans Zeiger's new book looks back at war time in Puyallup.

mer 2012 *History On The Hill* newsletter. (Chris passed away April 2016.)

The Fruitland Grange did its part during the war by challenging other granges to a race during the summer 1944 Bond Drive. The Fruitland Grange raised \$1.2 million towards purchasing a B-29 bomber with the city of Puyallup's name painted on its side.

Hans also talked of the event that brought the war directly to the Hill—the Japanese balloon bomb strikes—a story that readers of this newsletter are quite familiar (*History On The Hill*, Fall 2017 issue.) This subject raised comment from the audience for markers to be erected at the sites where the bombs struck. Member Carl Vest said he has approached the County with this request with no action by them yet.

Many comments followed the presentation. Bob Ballou reminded us that Wilfred Letourneau was the first boy to die from the Hill during the early

years of the war.

Lorraine Larson also reminded us that we had our own WW II veteran in attendance—her husband Art Larson. Art served in the Pacific as a naval officer. With a little coaxing, Art reminisced about his experience of visiting the battleship Missouri prior to the peace signing ceremony in Tokyo Bay. Read Art's story in Fall 2012 issue of *History On The Hill*.

Editor's Note:

Another World War II veteran must also be mentioned in this edition — Fred Kupfer Jr., a member of South Hill's original pioneer family who lived through the bloody North African and Italian campaigns of World War II. Read his story through letters he sent home—covered in the Winter 2012 issue of *History On The Hill*. All newsletters from 2003 to present are available for reading and downloading on our Website southhillhistory.com.

Mitchell-Gould Road & Mitchell-Gould Extension

By Carl Vest

A historic road sign, posted at the corner of Meridian Avenue and 152nd Street, declares that 152nd Street was at one time known as Mitchell-Gould Road. Questions are often asked as to why it was so named.

It all started in 1925. And actually Mitchell-Gould Road was developed in two phases. First, on December 2nd, 1925 the County Commissioners approved a proposal to build a road across the east-west center of Section 21 of Township 19. The technical specifications describing where it would be built depicts the location of present day 152nd Street. The proposal was based on a survey done by the County engineer in April 1925.

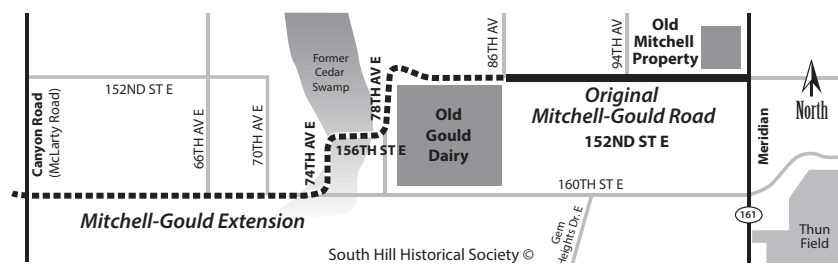
The road, as originally built, started at Meridian

Avenue and went in a westerly direction. It did not cross Meridian to the east and ended at the western boundary of Section 21. Or, to quote the County Order, "... the total length being 1 mile and 115.0 feet." The development of the road

was justified as follows: "... that there is no other road which is of equal utility for the citizens residing in the vicinity of said proposed road, the terminal

points, general course and length... ."

Why was it called Mitchell-Gould Road? It had to do with land ownership. A Mr. J.B. Mitchell owned the property at what is now the location of the South Hill Collision Company (Meridian and 152nd). He donated land. The Gould family owned a farm at the western terminal point. While they did not donate land, their dairy opera-



tion was probably the real reason it was built. It provided an outlet for their products. Thus, the road was named for the two landowners at each end of the project.

The second phase of development occurred in 1931. In June of that year the County received a Petition from 22 citizens living in the area, requesting that Mitchell-Gould Road be extended to the West to connect with what is now Canyon Road (then known as Malcolm-McLarty Road. The County engineer surveyed a route. Various landowners donated land. The project was approved. Rather than give the new road a second name it was decided to call it the Mitchell-Gould Extension and it is so recorded in the County archives.

The Extension did not follow the same westerly direction as the original. There was the problem of crossing Cedar Swamp (see Herald, August 14, 2008, page B3). So the road was extended in a westerly direction to a point where it intersects present-day 78th Avenue. Then construction was south to contemporary 156th Street (about one-half mile). The development then was westerly to current 74th Avenue (about one-quarter mile). On 74th Avenue the road was advanced south to the intersection of modern 160th Street. Finally, it was built along that path to what is now Canyon Road. All this zigzagging was to get around Cedar Swamp.

So while Mitchell-Gould Road started out as being the equivalent of today's 152nd Street, it eventually evolved into a rather complicated road system. It has served the public well since the 1920s.

Trolley Up The Hill

by Jerry Bates

The Old Line trolley, TR&P Line (Tacoma Railway & Power Company), Puyallup's first, operated from approximately 1889 to 1919. The trolley line started in Puyallup, then wound its way up the hill through Maplewood Springs (south of the Washington State Department of Game, Puyallup Fish Hatchery, see map) to 104th ST E and Woodland AV. This was the location of the trolley's Woodland Station for South Hill passengers. From there it went west through Summit

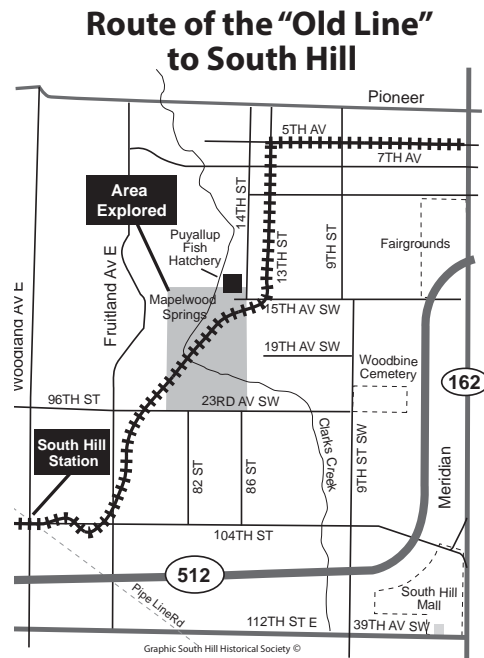
and Midland to Fern Hill and connected with the Tacoma/Spanaway trolley.

For residents of Puyallup and the Hill, it was, for a time, the only means of public transportation to Tacoma—a very roundabout route for those living in Puyallup.

The part of the Old Line between Maplewood Springs and Woodland Station followed a path of least resistance to get from the valley floor to the top of the Hill. This path was the ravine that follows Clark's Creek. The trolley was notorious for its unsound accident-prone trestle that skirted along the treacherously steep ridge that climbs above the creek and the springs.

The Old Line was eventually replaced by the "Short Line", the PSE (Puget Sound Electric Railway) which was a much more direct route to Tacoma for people in Puyallup. The Short Line electric trolley left Puyallup and crossed the Puyallup River, then went west through Firwood and on to a point west of Fife called Willow Junction. From there it followed what in later years would be Pacific Highway, US 99, which runs into Tacoma's Puyallup Ave., then on to downtown Tacoma.

The era of electric trolleys came to an end in the late 1930s when buses, that were more versatile and less expensive to operate, rapidly replaced trolleys, not to mention the ever-growing use of private automobiles over roads that were continually being improved.



From the Treasurer

by Ben Peters

*Welcome to New Member
Keith Hunter*

Please call, e-mail or write any change of address to me, Ben Peters, 253-845-7028, poppa-ben2002@yahoo.com, South Hill Historical Society, Box 73582, 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.

Dues Reminder

I will attach a sticky note to the Society newsletter mailed closest to your renewal date. **No need to fill out the membership form unless there is a change of some kind.**

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.

We welcome you to our monthly meetings. For more information, contact Wes Perkinson at (253) 241-5397.

Our Current Members

Andy G. Anderson	Gary Leicht
Andy & Ruth Anderson	John & Carrie Loshbough
Elizabeth Anema	Dennis & Debra Massie
Marion Armstrong	Terry Maves
Bob Ballou	Laurienne Stewart Minnich
Jerry Bates	Bob Moltke
Susan Beals	Carolyn Nelson
Katherine Bennett	Dorothy Nelson
Teresa Best	Juanita Nordin
Marilyn Burnett	Ron Pearson
Debbie Burtnett	Wes & Suzy Perkinson
Bruce Carpenter	Ben Peters
Richard Casmier	Dr. Jerry Ramsey
Vernon Cox	Robin Reich
Gary Cressman	Bill Riley
Dave & Patti Curtiss	Gail Rinehart
Robert & Lynn Daughtery	Vern Rockstad
Karen Day	Helen Rohlman
Pat Drake	Earl Root
Joan Ellis	Stan Salmon
Ira Gabrielson	Dave Smarr
Mary Glaser	Lori Stock
Calvin Goings	Marge (Crosson) Swain
Paul Hackett	Ralph & Yvonne Thorpe
Alberta Hagen	Jade Trevere
Evelyn Swalander Hess	Margo L. & Joe Tucci
Wilma Walsworth Hinshaw	Lee Van Pevenage
Alan & Linda Hoenhaus	Carl Vest
Joe & Rhoda Hoenhaus	Neil & Celia Vincent
Maybelle Hoenhaus	Joan Vosler
Matt Holm	Ed Zeiger
Keith Hunter	Hans Zeiger
Myrna K. Kucklick	Allan S. & Ellen M. Zulauf
Art & Lorraine Larson	Beverley Zook

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Vice-President, Joe Hoenhaus
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Treasurer, Ben Peters
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History On The Hill is published quarterly
Editor Jerry Bates, Editor-at-Large Debbie Burtnett
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South Hill Historical Society Membership/Renewal Form

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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:

**South Hill Historical Society, Box 73582,
South Hill, WA 98374**



Box 73582
South Hill, WA 98374

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