

A Career of Service

VETERANS Day is every November 11th, and our general meeting follows later in the month. In the spirit of the national holiday, we dedicated our November meeting to honoring our South Hill Historical Society veterans!

Wayne Beals, husband of our Society's Secretary Susan Beals, certainly meets any criteria needed for a person serving his country and his community. Wayne was our speaker for the November meeting. He has spent most of his adult life in public or military service—initially, in the U.S. Army followed by years in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve and concurrent to that, thirty-eight years in local police work.



Wayne Beals

Wayne was born and raised in Illinois. As a young man, he followed in his older brother's footsteps by joining the U.S. Army Special Operations. Wayne said, "To a 17-year-old boy, it seemed really exciting jumping out of airplanes, going to foreign countries trying to convince people to do what we would like them to do." In 1975, he was assigned to Fort Lewis as a member of 2nd Ranger Battalion, then on to Fort Benning, Georgia for eight months of Ranger School. He trained with foreign officers, U.S. Navy Seals, Special Forces, Marines and West Point

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Washington Trust For Historical Preservation

Will the old Firgrove School make their list?

The fight to keep the old Firgrove School from the wrecking ball continues. Our hopes were high for its preservation based on the Puyallup School Board pronouncements in late 2016. Unfortunately, they have now reversed their position. Within three years, the old school will be demolished and the valuable property it occupies sold.

It's going to take a very ambitious effort not only from our Society but, more importantly, from the community to save the building.

The Washington Trust For Historical Preservation publishes a yearly list of Washington State's most endangered places. Applications for being included on the list are accepted every year. Making this list would be a big plus in the fight to save our old school building on South Hill!

The Trust claims to be "the voice for preservation in Washington State." They work to be a "problem-solver" for local groups such as ours trying to preserve historical landmarks. They provide media attention, technical help and financial assistance. We have been in contact with them and they encourage us to submit an application.

South Hill Historical Society President, Wes Perkinson, has completed the official application and information the Trust requires. We're making the case for being included on the list—giving them background information on the years-long effort to save the school that began in 2003.

For more information about this organization visit the Website at: <http://www.preservewa.org>.

graduates. Wayne recalled, “They started with 185 men, [but] when we got done there were 35 of us; two of them passed away during training.”

Then he was back at Fort Lewis and the training continued, Pathfinder School, Combat Aircraft Controller School, Jump Master School and High Altitude Parachute School—and this school almost got him courts-martialed! While in the air with a bunch of “rabble-rousing Green Berets,” as a prank they road a Schwinn bicycle out the back of a C141 over a drop zone. Wayne described all the crazy details!

Wayne trained with military units all over the world—English, German, and Canadian Commandos. He also trained for northern warfare in Alaska. From that cold environment he was sent to the heat of Panama for more training.

In 1977, he met Susan. “I had to make a choice—become a warrant officer helicopter pilot or marry my wife—thank goodness I married my wife.”

He left the army as a sergeant and began his law enforcement career of 38 years. At the same time, he joined the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve. He was in the Tacoma Police department for 25 years and a detective for the Fife Police Department for 13 years. Of all his military service, he has the highest respect for the Coast Guard, “One of the finest organizations I’ve been a part of—your tax dollars are well spent!” said Wayne. He was with them for 28 years serving in the Maritime Safety Office, “I boarded hundreds and hundreds of foreign ships.”

Wayne feels he’s done his duty; nowadays he’s known as a “consultant.” His business is called Washington Historical Collectables. He’s a weapons expert and appraiser of military collectables from uniforms to samurai swords. He works with a Fife law firm and other major law firms earning lucrative consulting fees. He evaluates weapon collections of the wealthy for insurance companies and is a certified expert on record with the Federal and State court systems.

As you can imagine, Wayne’s a very busy guy and we all appreciate the time he spent with us—and his years of service to country and community.

The Historic Corridor

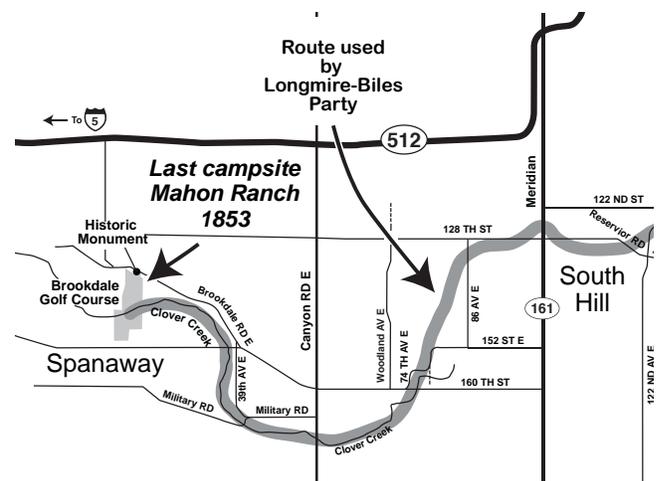
Possible threat to historic site

We are all familiar with our ‘South Hill’ section of the Oregon Trail—the branch from Walla Walla that crossed the Cascades by way of the Naches Pass to Fort Steilacoom—our Historic Corridor. Where does the trail go after leaving the Hill? Again, most of us know it winds off the Hill to the area of the present day Sportsman’s Club off Canyon Road and from there follows Clover Creek to the pioneers’ last encampment at the Mahon Ranch, today’s Brookdale Golf Course. There’s a large monument built at the golf course parking lot commemorating the historic site and the actual campsite on the golf course along the creek. The Mahon family cemetery is also there. The Christopher Mahon family welcomed the new settlers and cared for them while they fanned out over the area establishing their own homesteads.

The Threat

A new development is planned for the site, 388 homes. It’s a ways off yet and hasn’t been approved by the County but bulldozers could be on the way! The owner of the Brookdale Golf Course is negotiating its sale. The local neighbors are in an uproar contemplating the increased noise, traffic and stress on the existing infrastructure that almost 400 new homes will cause.

A similar attempt was made in 2007 without success, but today our county is one of the fastest growing in the nation with an acute shortage of housing. Let’s hope for the best!



Memories of the Old Mill

This story is from our Website, submitted to the Society in 2007.

It was fifty years ago, and this is what I remember. It was also a most wonderful time of my life, I might add.

January 12, 1957 was my first visit to the Old Mill. The music was grand, "Good Old-Fashioned Dance Hall Western Music."

Let me tell you how this all came about.

On June 30, 1956, soon after my graduation from Entiat High School in eastern Washington, I boarded a Greyhound bus headed for Seattle. My father, John S. Olin, tried to put on a brave smile as

he kissed and hugged his little girl good-bye, but I saw the tears. I told him I would be back often and not to worry about me. My school buddy, Doris Huffman, and I were going to start a new life in the big city and become rich.

The dream of young girls in those days was to become a movie star, a famous dancer, or an executive secretary. Of course, I wanted to be all three. Never doubted that I could do it, not for one moment. I was just a country girl from an apple ranch on the Columbia River, but I had big ideas (I guess I read too many movie star magazines.) In the '50s, innocence abounded so the road ahead was clear, and without any fear I contemplated the future.

My girl friend and I were picked up at the Seattle bus station by my Uncle Claude Cooke. We stayed with him and his wife for about a week. During that week I found a job at Frederick and Nelson department store. Took an orientation class on how to be a sales clerk and was immediately put on the floor to work. I was required to wear a suit and high heels which was a disaster (I was used to blue jeans, sweatshirt and saddle

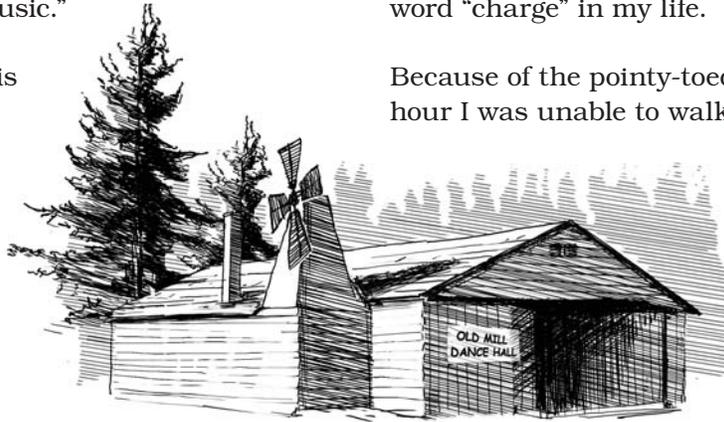
oxfords.) Each purchase had to be written down in a sales receipt tabular, each sales receipt had seven carbons, and the pages were numbered. I could not get it right!! Some sales were cash; some sales were charge. "Charge?" The word was not in my vocabulary. I had never heard the word "charge" in my life.

Because of the pointy-toed high heels, after one hour I was unable to walk. I had to buy myself some slippers. And I limped out of Frederick and Nelson. A lesson learned. I was no glamour girl, and a job that required me to dress to the hilt and wear high heels was out of the question. I decided a glamorous job was not worth the pain. No executive job for me!

My Aunt Blance Yatsunoff (who had worked at the telephone company for years) pulled some strings and I was hired at the General Telephone Company. I became a draftsman. Great job—casual dress—no high heels!

Doris found a job too, and we soon found our own apartment. We went to Woolworth's and bought 4 glasses, 4 plastic plates, cups, saucers, bowls, 2 little tin pots, a frying pan, and a toaster with sides that came open (someone must remember those.) We got 2 sheets, 2 pillow cases, and 2 pillows. We then went grocery shopping. I remember so well what we bought: orange juice, 1 loaf of bread, 1 gallon of milk, 2 cans of Spam, 2 cans of beans, 2 lbs. of potatoes, 2 cans of tomato soup, and 1 box of crackers, 1 lb. of flour, 1 lb. of sugar, and 1 quart of milk.

Our first apartment building still stands at East Madison and East Union with 13th Avenue cutting behind it. We did not stay long in this apartment because the door into our apartment consisted of French doors covered with wallpaper. Besides, one night we thought we saw someone



The Old Mill Dance Hall

(The old structure remains at the current site of South Hill RV Sales, 12414 S. Meridian)

Drawing by Jerry Bates

burying a body down by a billboard in the alley. Our imagination ran away with us, and we nearly scared each other to death. It took us a month, but we found a safer place.

Our new apartment was in the Texado at 1128 13th Avenue in Seattle. It is still standing and is still an apartment house.

Over the Christmas holidays in 1956, I traveled via train over to Entiat to see my family. Upon my return I found that Doris had moved. She had found a place closer to work. She had taken with her 2 glasses, 2 cups, 2 saucers, 2 plates, 2 bowls, 1 pot, and 1 frying pan, 1 sheet, 1 pillow case. (I got the toaster which I still have today.)

As the story continues, I was working at the General Telephone Company as a draftsman. The General Telephone Building was (is) on East Madison. Here I met many local girls from Auburn, Kent, and Puyallup. One of the girls, Norma Johnson, had a brother living in Seattle. He said "yes", and so goes the story of the rest of my life.

It was January 12, 1957. We spent hours primping. Norma, Sandra, Mary Lou, and I were picked up by Norma's brother at 6 PM on the dot and were on our way to the "Old Mill". Upon arrival, the music was playing and people were just having a wonderful time. It did not take long for nice gentlemen to ask us to dance. Oh, the music was great. Good ole western music! We never sat down the whole night. There were soldiers from Fort Lewis and airmen from McChord Air Force Base. There were many more guys than girls.

Along came the most handsome man I had ever seen in my life and asked me to dance. He was so polite that he called me "Ma'am". He told me he was from California. Well, I thought everyone from California was a movie star. His name was Jack. As I think back, "movie star" must have meant really, really handsome to me. I only danced one dance with Jack that night. I kept looking for him, but there were so many dances and so many men to dance with that I lost track of him. When the dance was over, we girls got back into the car and headed for home, but we were hungry so we stopped at "The Mint Cafe" on Cole Street in Enumclaw for a much deserved hamburger and fries and a shake. Let me tell

you, after all that dancing our curly hair was straight, our makeup sweated away, we had grit in our mouth, and even our teeth were dirty from the sawdust we had ground up on the dance floor. I think we wore out our shoes, too. Luckily we had Sunday to recuperate because it was 7 AM to work on Monday.

At The Mint

As our food was being served, guess who walked through the door? Jack!! There he was again, smiling at me with these perfect white teeth, coal-black hair, nice casual suitcoat, just as neat as a pin. . . . I thought to myself. . . I look awful. . . too late now, he had taken a seat beside me and pinned me in the booth. He had some buddies with him, and we all talked until the early morning hours. I gave him my name, address, and telephone number. (I still have the paper that I wrote it on.)

The next Saturday night we girls headed for the Old Mill to do it all over again. I sat in the canteen at the Old Mill for a little while waiting for my special guy (Jack) to come through the door. Then all of a sudden I saw another guy even more handsome than Jack. He had coal-black hair and a light aqua-colored jacket. I said to myself, "To heck with that guy I met last week. I am going to go out of my way to meet this guy." As I nonchalantly moved toward him, he turned, smiled, and to my surprise he just happened to be named "Jack" also. He politely asked me to dance. Infatuated and googly-eyed, I accepted.

While we were dancing, I smelled something just awful. It was a very bad smell. I wanted to get away from him, away from that smell, so I excused myself to go to the restroom. In the restroom there was plenty of commotion. The girls were wiping mustard off their sweaters and dresses. I did not have any mustard on me, so I began helping the other girls. It was so funny, and everyone was laughing. I emerged from the restroom laughing so hard that it made my stomach hurt. Outside Jack was waiting for me. He took my hand and we started to dance. Then Norma asked, "My gosh, what is all over his jacket?" He turned around and the whole back of his jacket was covered with stinky mustard. Every person we had bumped into on the dance floor had mustard on them. Rumor had it that some girl was mad because I had stolen her boyfriend.

I am guessing that when we had danced past the canteen, she had squeezed a whole container of mustard on the back of Jack's coat.

From that day forward "Jack" was called "Mustard" within our circle of friends.

As time went on, the number of girls going to the Old Mill increased from four to ten. My Uncle Ed Pierce had moved to Seattle. He had an old 1949 GMC Suburban. He was a very trusting person and told me that I could use the truck on Saturday night to go to the Old Mill. His daughter, my cousin Rondella, wanted to go too. I had to travel via the metropolitan bus out to Alki Avenue, pick up the Suburban, drive all over Seattle picking up the ten girls. We sang songs and just had the greatest time driving out to Puyallup. Mary Lou was scared to ride over the railroad tracks. We had to drive over one set of railroad tracks to get to the dance. When we crossed the railroad tracks, she always closed her eyes, kicked her legs, and screamed. We always laughed. And the tracks were a sign that we were getting close to the Old Mill. The excitement mounted and we rolled down the windows and burst out in unison singing, "Give us some men who are stout-hearted men". . . and so on. (This song was sung by Nelson Eddy in the musical "Stouthearted Men" with Jeanette McDonald.) We would arrive at the dance, meet our boyfriends, and dance all night.

Sometimes we would get to the dance early just so we could all get a chance to dance with one special guy we called "Little Elvis." It was only safe to dance with him before his other fan club arrived (on motorcycles.) When they arrived we faded into the woodwork. Boy, that kid could really do the "Bop."

Somewhere in this memoir I must write about the music and the dance. There was a song the band played called "Pink Cadillac." It was probably a two-step. There was a drum crescendo which turned into a tom-tom sort of beat. Everyone was bopping and stomping the floor in rhythm to the drum. This dance was called "The Old Mill STOMP." The drummer would play the same beat for about four minutes and then instantly STOP. . .the entire band was silent. Everyone just kept dancing to the beat, and that building rocked on its foundation. Believe me, it was a test of endurance. You never knew when the

band was going to fire up again. No matter how long it took, no matter how long we stomped, no one ever got out of step. It was a sight to see.

One cold Saturday night in April 1957 we could not use the Suburban. We did not care. No matter what, we had to go to that dance, even if we had to walk the fifty miles. Aunt Blanche and Uncle Bill finally gave in to our whining and begging and decided to take us to the dance. Like good sports, they drove all over Seattle picking up the girls. After awhile they were having a good time too. Our laughter and fun was just too contagious. By this time the usual group of girls had increased to ten plus my two cousins. Only six of us and one of my cousins went that night. Aunt Blanche and Uncle Bill reminded us repeatedly that we would have to find our own way home. We told them we would walk home if we had to; we were not about to miss the dance. We wore extra heavy coats that night. Fifty miles in winter was a long way to walk.

We were just getting into the "Old Mill Stomp" when something landed on the floor at my ankle. It looked like a rock. Then smoke started coming from it. I didn't care; I was a stompin' fool. Then the smoke got heavier and soon filled the entire Old Mill, and we were all crying and laughing at the same time. Someone got us all out safely. It turned out to be a teargas bomb. Gee, was that girl still mad at me?

Well, as luck would have it, Jack (the handsome gentleman that I had chosen for my own) had seen fit to bring a new buddy from Fort Lewis (Lefty) who just happened to have a car. Jack asked if he could drive me home to Seattle and if one of my friends would like to join Lefty. Of course, I told him "yes". My cousin was the only one who did not have a boyfriend at the dance, so she was the one who kept Lefty company. Exiting the Old Mill without grace and glamour, the girls followed Jack and me to Lefty's car. To the surprise of Jack and Lefty, all seven of us piled into the car. (Try to imagine all these crinoline petticoats and poodle skirts squeezed into that car.) The boys were speechless. As tradition would have it, off we went straight to "The Mint" for our hamburger, fries, and shake. It was quite embarrassing figuring out the check. Jack wanted to pay for me, Lefty did not want to pay for anyone, and some of the girls thought the boys should

pay it all. We got through that ordeal. The next challenge was giving them directions to drive all over Seattle to drop off the girls at their homes. To make it a little easier on Lefty, I had a couple of girls stay with me. Immediately after the car door closed, that car and those boys took off like a bullet. They did not look back, they did not say "good night". THEY WERE GONE!! I think that we girls just overwhelmed them. Poor guys, they probably expected more mature women. But we were just girls. I was wondering whether I would ever see Jack again. I DID!

Jack and I continued to go to the "Old Mill" almost every Saturday night. Since neither of us had a car and he was stationed at Fort Lewis and I lived in Seattle, it was the only way we could see each other. In October Jack went on leave to his home town in San Fernando, California and brought back a 1952 Dodge. Now he would come to see me on Sunday.

Keep in mind, I told you that I was a country hick, gullible, and believed anything anyone told me. I asked Jack what his favorite food was. He told me "Spam." Each Sunday when he came to visit, I proudly set in front of him a large platter of Spam sandwiches (he never told me any different.)

Jack and I used to go all over the Seattle area on Sunday drives. We went to the Zoo and the Wharf (remember that little shop with the mummy and the flea circus?) We were in Seattle when a new hamburger joint came out and hamburgers sold for 10 cents. I think the place was called "Dick's", but it could have been called "McDonald's". It may have been the first McDonald's. Looking back now, I still regret that I never saw Underground Seattle.

On October 31, 1957 on our way home from the Old Mill, Jack asked me to marry him. We never went to the Old Mill again. We were married December 28, 1957 at St. James Cathedral in Seattle (in the chapel.) After he was discharged from the army on July 7, 1958, we moved to San Fernando where we stayed until 1977. We then moved to Redding, California where I still live. We have five children—four boys and one girl. My beautiful, handsome Jack passed away December 20, 1993.

Four of us married the men we met at the Old Mill in Puyallup. Mary Lou Sanford grew up in Racine, Wisconsin, and Robert Granstrom grew up in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Growing up they lived 20 miles apart, but they finally met at the Old Mill, married and had two children. They have both died.

Norma is in a rest home in Kent or Auburn. She has had a stroke, but she can still talk fine. She remembers the names of many of the girls because she remained in the area and at the job longer than I did.

Uncle Ed has passed away, and Aunt Emmy is in her 80s. Rondella is fine and lives in Reno. Aunt Blanche and Uncle Bill are alive and well in Moses Lake. My other cousin (who kept Lefty company) died at the age of 36 of cancer. My daddy, John Olin, died at the young age of 60 during the Hong Kong flu epidemic.

The rest of the girls, I wish them well, but I have lost track.

Sincerely, Beverly

From the Editor:

Beverly Olin Brunet discovered our organization while searching the Internet for information on the Old Mill dance hall. We sincerely thank her for mailing us her memories of a special time in her life, and a dance hall that many of our members also remember fondly.

Have Something For The Newsletter?

We accept anything relating to South Hill history. For example: family history, a current event, an announcement, or old photographs.

We're glad to assist with writing or editing.

*Contact Jerry Bates
mail@southhillhistory.com*

From the Treasurer

by Ben Peters

Welcome to New Members

**Calvin Goings
John & Carrie Loshbough
Dennis & Debra Massie**

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, 10:45 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.

In Memoriam

The South Hill Historical Society
regrets the passing of

W. Louise Walsworth

Our Current Members

Andy G. Anderson	Laurienne Stewart Minnich
Andy & Ruth Anderson	Bob Molke
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Marion Armstrong	Dorothy Nelson
Bob Ballou	Juanita Nordin
Jerry Bates	Dorothy Norris
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Marilyn Burnett	Dr. Jerry Ramsey
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Visit our website!
southhillhistory.com

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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 _____

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Zip _____

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:

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



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