

South Hill Memories

by Jerry Bates

In honor of the recent passing of member Joan Parks Vosler, this newsletter will feature a story she wrote of a walk to Woodland school as a young girl during the 1940s. She lived almost her entire life on the Hill. A member of a large family of four brothers and two sisters, she was a graduate of Puyallup High School. Among her accomplishments, Joan was the Republican Committee Chairwoman for the State of Pennsylvania. She was head of Accounts Payable Department at Holroyd Cement Company (of Puget Sound) until her retirement. She and her husband, Richard Vosler Sr., raised four sons. We all appreciated her as a great asset to the Society—always willing to get involved beyond just attending meetings which she rarely missed. She served many years as Secretary and head of the Nominating Committee. Joan was a talented writer. We included the following story in our recently published book *South Hill Washington*. She took great pride in her family's history on South Hill going back generations, and living in the community she loved.

Grade School Days

by Joan Parks Vosler

The chill of the foggy September mornings greeted us as we stepped out the door to head down past the old cedar tree, which we called the cow shade tree, on our two-and-one-half mile trek to Woodland School. An old lane that had been used to

skid logs ran along the fence of the cow pasture, but we soon entered the trail through the woods, which curved and twisted its way to the gravel road. Addie, our great Dane, always led the way. He never allowed us to pass him. He took his duties seriously. Many nights we heard Dr. Oboe and his hounds camped at the sandpit chasing coyotes by the light of the moon. Their sounds permeated the night and sent the hair standing on your neck. Addie knew what lurked about us and he was our protector. Once we were out on the gravel road where there were some houses, he would leave us and return home.



Painting by Jerry Bates

That trail through the woods holds many memories, among them spider webs outlined by the morning dew. In the winter, snow weighing down the branches blocked our way until our

older brother shook them so we could continue on the trail single file. In the spring we saw Johnnie jump-ups, trilliums, ginger leaves, wild currant in bloom, dogwood, deer tongue, Indian paint brush, tiger lilies, bleeding hearts, and moss turning fallen limbs and logs into peculiar shapes. There were also green tree frogs, rabbits, birds, squirrels, and croaking frogs, which I was told if I picked one up, I would get warts. Our mother had many bouquets of wildflowers we picked on our way home. Douglas fir, cedars, graceful hemlock, alder, and vine maples lined the path we had worn through the woods. When we got to the

gravel road, we would meet other kids on their way to school. Sometimes we waited for them, and other times we had to run to catch up.

Fifteen minutes before classes started the school bell rang. It did not take long for everyone to sprint to the school yard so we could be lined up to march into class. On the way home the sun would get warmer and warmer until those jackets and coats, much needed in the morning, would come quickly off. Following the pipeline road, we would always have Mt. Rainier in view. We pretended we were hiking all the way to the mountain, which in our imagination, became a huge ice-cream cone. When we became tired of walking, we often trotted for a while, then walked some more. Then we did a short sprint and walked some more. It was always fun to come to a hill that we could run down with our slickers held high to catch the wind like a sail.

When we arrived at the trail, Addie was always waiting for us, and we could hear our mother calling, “yoo-hoo, yoo-hoo.” We would answer in kind so she would know all was well.

I remember those days because they were filled with learning and adventure, most of the adventure provided by ourselves. The childhood friendships have remained all these years. The back twenty acres behind us is now a housing development, and a school bus takes the children to school. The adventures along the way to and from school are gone with our halcyon days.

Edward Zeiger

May 20, 1929 - October 2, 2021



We're all saddened by the passing of longtime South Hill Historical Society member Ed Zeiger. Of our membership, only a small number have achieved a community status that leaves a mark for generations that come after them. Having a school named after you certainly qualifies. Ed lived on the Hill since the 1950s, raised a large family, followed a distinguished

career in Education-teaching and administrative work beginning with Firgrove Elementary moving to Stewart Elementary, opened Wildwood Park Elementary and served as principal of Sunrise Elementary. He also had

a life-long commitment to the Puyallup Boy Scouts. He's impacted thousands of young people during a long career, receiving many educational and community awards from many organizations he served and benefited. The Puyallup School Board named its newest elementary school on South Hill after him.

Book Signing



Authors Carl Vest and Hans Zeiger spent a beautiful August afternoon at the Meeker Mansion. This book signing and purchasing opportunity was extended to our Society by the Meeker folks as part of their re-opening celebration following a long COVID closure. The event included a yard sale, food trucks, music, antique appraisals, 50 vendor booths, and more.

Icon of South Hill History Being Demolished



After years of Puyallup School Board consultation, coverage in the *Puyallup Herald*, this *Newsletter*, sidewalk picketing, community events, meetings, phone calls, presentations, info distribution, you can't say the *Save The School Committee* didn't give it all they had. Sadly, after the opening of the new Firgrove Elementary school, the old 1936 brick school is being demolished. Its history along with possible alternative uses, failed to convince the school district it was worth saving.

Good News

The Half Dollar Park Master Plan, sponsored by Council members Hans Zeiger and Amy Cruver, passed the County Council by a unanimous vote. See our Summer 2021 newsletter for the history and details of the long-awaited new park for South Hill.

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, 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.**

Where to Find Us



All society meetings will be canceled until further notice due to the coronavirus pandemic.



facebook.com/groups/
SouthHillHistoricalSociety

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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
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