

The Old Road Adapts & Benefits South Hill

by Jerry Bates

THE PIPELINE ROAD has been in the news recently in reference to the new Tacoma Eastside trail. This new Tacoma trail follows the old gravel Pipeline Road. Over the last several years, section by section, the Cross County Trail System has been heading our way following the old road. The route cuts a straight diagonal from East Tacoma, through Midland, Waller and Summit ending just shy of 128th ST. E and Meridian. The Pipeline Road is of special interest to our historical society members for two reasons — one current and one historic.

COMING SOON...

The development of Half Dollar Park on South Hill has been in the works since then County Councilman Calvin Goings came up with the idea in 2006. All indications point to it finally happening with the Cross County Community Connector Trail program currently underway — the long-awaited completed park will then serve as a trailhead. Let's hope our wait

happens sooner rather than later. The Parks & Recreation timeline shows completion 2021-2022.

According to their website, it's "working with the community surrounding Half Dollar Park and future park users to develop a master plan for the property. The master planning process will consider different potential park amenities and gather public feedback to determine which improvements will best serve the community. Construction of Half Dollar Park is anticipated to take place when the Pipeline Trail is developed. Construction will include a trailhead for Pipeline Trail and other park amenities identified through the master planning process."

The big picture, after all the planning and construction stages are complete, is to have a continuous system of trails connecting Commencement Bay to Mt. Rainier.



The view from Half Dollar Park looking southeast—as the Pipeline Road crosses South Hill.

Currently Half Dollar Park has links to the Nathan Chapman Trail connecting Heritage Park

complex and South Hill Community Park. The proposed route will then connect to the South Hill Community Trail Network. Trails will continue east to the South Hill's ridge area, at Tacoma Water (McMillin) 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/122nd St E down to the valley floor to connect to the Foothills Trail. The Foothills Trail currently runs from Puyallup to Buckley (see map).

ORIGINS OF THE PIPELINE ROAD

In the early years of the 1900s, rapidly growing Tacoma was in urgent need of clean fresh water. While many sources were candidates, finally one stood out — the mountain water of the Green River. To make the trip to Tacoma the water would be carried over a gravity-fed pipeline to a reservoir to be built on the hill west of McMillin (today's South Hill). During the years 1911-1913, a large reservoir was constructed. At the same time a pipeline was being buried across undeveloped land connecting the new reservoir with its benefactors in Tacoma. A huge wooden slat water pipe was buried across the route; the construction and maintenance road following it was named the "Pipeline Road."

THE MYSTERY PROPERTY

The Half Dollar Park property, according to a 2006 Tacoma News Tribune interview with Carl Vest*, shows up on an old 1915 county map as Half Dollar Berry tract, another map calls it Half Dollar Acre tract. The source of the name "Half Dollar" remains a mystery? Does anybody reading this know? Then let us know (mail@southhillhistory.com).

*Carl Vest is the South Hill Historical Society's Research Coordinator.

**SOUTH HILL
WASHINGTON**

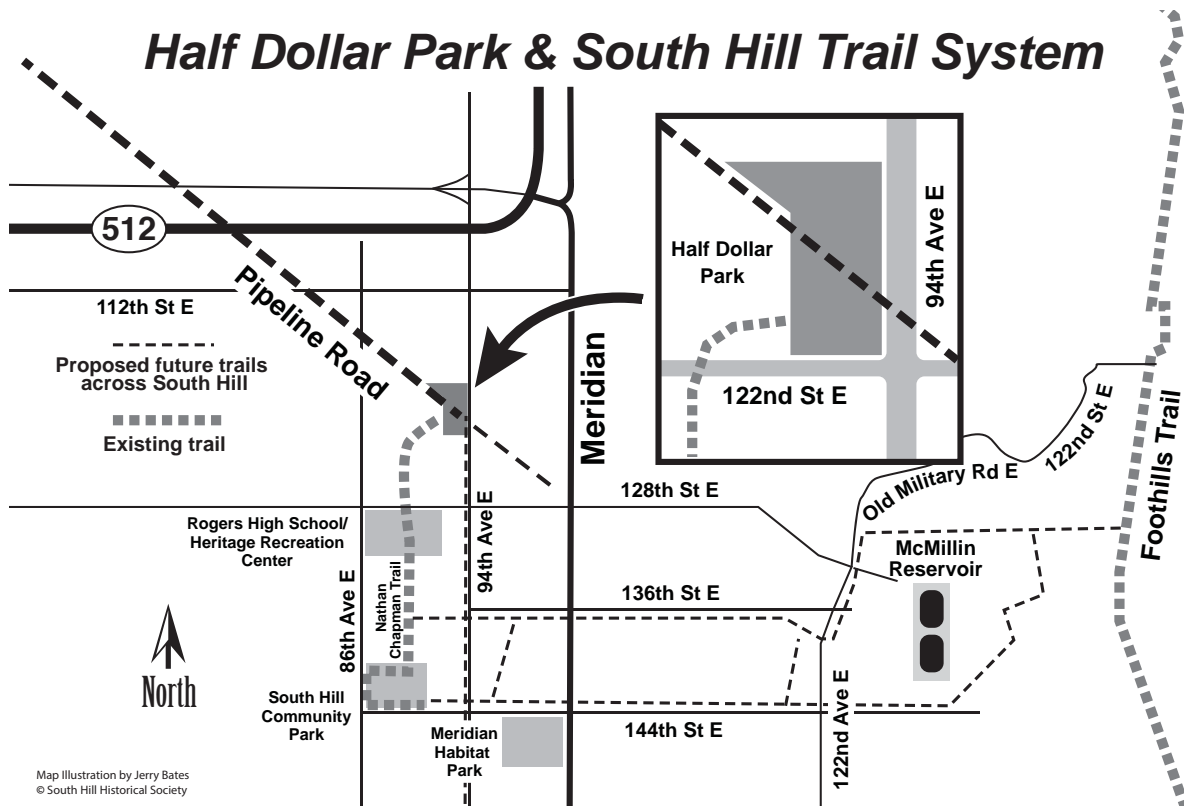
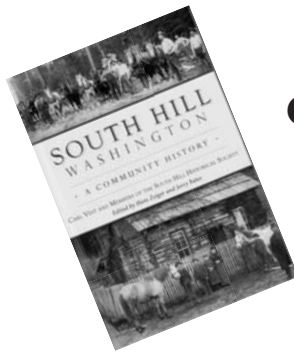
**Coming Book Sale
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From the Treasurer

by Ben Peters

Welcome to New Member June Hendricks

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

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History On the Hill is published quarterly
Editor Jerry Bates, Editor-at-Large Debbie Burtnett
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