



Highline Historical Society News

Volume 50

April 2009

From the Curator of Collections

The Mission of the Highline Historical Society is to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret the history of the Highline region and its people, and promote appreciation of the region's heritage.

Highline
Historical Society
2007 Trustees

Terry Anderson
Scott Andrews
Mauricio Ayon
Michael Emerson
Lloyd Herman
Lynda Isernio
Helen Kludt
Gary Long
Kitty Milne
Fran Reid
Jerry Robinson
Cyndi Upthegrove



Curator Nancy McKay

Storing Your Photographs Properly:

Photographs are found everywhere; museums, libraries, historical societies, archives and, most importantly, our homes. Taken for granted, they are fragile and easily damaged. Fading, stains, distortion and other physical changes are signs of deterioration. Unfortunately, deterioration is often the result of the instability of certain photographic processes and materials; cellulose acetate negatives, nitrate negatives, & color slides & prints are examples. While the nature of our collections may be outside our control, deterioration can be initiated or hastened by poor storage conditions and display techniques, which **are** our responsibility.

Storing your photos in appropriate envelopes, sleeves, albums and boxes is fundamental to their preservation. These enclosures make them last longer because they protect against light, dust, handling, air pollutants, and rapid fluctuations in temperature and humidity. They must be made of materials that are strong, durable, and chemically stable to provide long-term protection.

Suitable materials for storing photos and negatives are now available, but buyers should select a supplier that specializes in products for archival use. Materials that come in contact with photographs must pass the Photographic Activity Test (PAT), an accelerated aging test that verifies that they will not damage sensitive photographic materials.

Guidelines for preparing your photographs for storage:

- * Handle prints and negatives along the edges, preferably wearing white cotton gloves. Dust and oils from your fingers can cause permanent damage.
- * Remove photographs and negatives from poor quality enclosures if it is possible to do so without causing damage. Remember to keep all information from the old pages. If prints are dry mounted or glued to old album pages and mats, do not attempt to do the work yourself.

Continued next page

IN THIS ISSUE

From the President	Page 2	Percy Blaker Reminisces	Page 4
Upcoming Events	3	Recent Memorials and Donations	7

From the President

We are very proud of the progress we have made documenting our communities. You have only to pay a visit to our collections to know what I am talking about. Nancy McKay, our boundless Curator of Collections is doing a wonderful job with her band of cheerful volunteers. They are working each week to catalog our photo collections and three dimensional artifacts. If you would like to join this project, you will find yourself very welcome. The only criteria for working in our archives is the ability to get yourself there, a willingness to learn a few procedures and a desire to learn new stories. Here at the Highline Historical Society our Trustees volunteer their time, volunteers label and mail this newsletter and volunteers work in the Director's office. We have many jobs that can use another pair of hands.



Society President Terry Anderson

President Obama is encouraging all Americans to participate in the life of their communities. Here is a wonderful opportunity to make a difference. We need your help and you will be proud of the difference your time can make. In addition to caring for the collections, we need Garden Tour volunteers, writers, office help and help with research. To inquire about volunteering, please call Cyndi Upthegrove at 206-246-6354. She will help you find an appropriate match for your time, interests and abilities.

After all, if not you, then who?

Happy Easter!

Terry Jarvis Anderson

Photos -Continued from page 1

Place the entire page in a folder or plastic sleeve.

- * Remove extraneous materials such as paper clips, rubber bands, old clippings and notes. If important, these can be placed in envelopes and stored separately.
- * Note any badly damaged items, place them within individual folders, and set them aside for professional conservation treatment. Do not undertake any "first aid", and never use pressure sensitive tapes or glues to mend photographs. It is far better to make a copy print and store the damaged original.
- * If it is necessary to have identification on the photograph itself, write brief notations lightly on the back with a lead pencil (No. 2 or softer). If the surface of resin coated paper does not accept pencil, use a film marking pen to write on the back edge.

This information is to provide the preliminary background to help you take care of your prints. However, this can't provide all the answers if your collections are extensive, in poor condition, or include valuable works of art and rare examples of early photographic processes.

In our new Highline Heritage Museum, we are looking forward to displaying our growing photographic collections to showcase Highline history. We will also have the space to hold classes for our members and the public where you can bring in your vintage photographs and learn how to properly care for them.

- Nancy

Highline Historical Society News

is published by the
Highline Historical Society
P.O. Box 317
Seahurst, WA 98062

Comments or information
for publication
may be sent to Editor,
at the Society address,
or email at
editor@highlinehistory.org

Note: The Highline
Historical Society respects
our donors' and friends'
confidentiality. We do not
make our mailing lists
available to other
organizations.



CULTURE
KING COUNTY LODGING TAX

The Society is a
proud member of
Discover Burien,
the Assn. of King County
Historical Societies,
the South King County
Cultural Coalition,
Washington Museums Assn.
and the
American Association of
State and Local History.

Upcoming Events and Programs

**SeaTac Exhibit
Scrapbooks!
Until mid-July**

SeaTac Exhibit - City Hall - 4800 S 188th St. - Weekdays 9-5

Using selections from the Society's extensive (almost 100) scrapbook collection Curator Nancy McKay has put together a very fun and nostalgic exhibit. These scrapbooks cover events, people, organizations and special times for 100 years in Highline. Stop by and bring a friend.

**Highline Garden Tour
Saturday, June 13
10:00 - 5:00**

Volunteers Needed! Exchange 4 hours assistance with this year's Garden Tour for a ticket to attend. For more information please call Cyndi Upthegrove, 206-246-6354. Jobs include set-up & take down of tents and signs, ticket taking, and garden hosts. This year's gardens are lovely. Ticket also provides admission to Marianne Binetti's talk, "Stealing Beauty - Best Garden Ideas from Around the World".

**Volunteer Appreciation
Party**

Save the Date! August 13, 2009

**Commemorate the
Day of the Dead!
Nov. 1-2 at Burien's
Community Center**

**Ofrendas in Highline !!
Burien Community Center (425 SW 144th St.)
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM - Nov. 1st and 2nd**

Members and friends are invited to visit the Center and view the Ofrendas placed there by members of our local Highline Latino community. Curator Nancy Salguero McKay and students from Tyee High School and Highline Community College will be commemorating their own families. You will find many familiar members of the community participating.

**Online Fundraising
Auction
Start Your Christmas
Shopping!
Nov. 15 - Dec. 15**

In lieu of an annual fund letter, the Society gives our supporters an opportunity to bid online for services, dinners, holiday items and funded items that provide the funding to help us care for our collections. We look forward to your participation in this event. We need donated items, and we need bidders. Watch for more information as we come closer to the event.

**Please Thank Our
Newsletter Sponsor!**



The Perfect Fit Bank.®

Burien • 206-243-6869



Collections volunteers Lynn Castillo and Mike Emerson mull a photo being scanned.



Nearly 30 calls per week come in to the office of the Highline Historical Society - and we actually don't have an office. Instead, calls come to my home and I try to sort them out and forward requests to the appropriate people for answers. Many of the calls are about early Highline; where did someone in particular live, how was their name spelled, where was a certain business located and do you have my mother's high school photograph? I recently found a wonderful article in a 1947 issue of the Highline Times that answers some of the questions I am frequently asked. My thank you to Highline pioneer Percy H. Blaker, who wrote this article himself. - Ed.

Percy H. Blaker Reminisces

It would appear that someone has told the editor that I am a pioneer, seeing that he has asked me to write some kind of history of the settlement and early days of this district, and I cannot quite qualify as such, this as a member of the Pioneers' Association, for I have been told that to be a member of that body one must have been in the state before 1890 while I arrived in April of 1890. Missed it by only four months.

However, as I have been asked on several occasions to give talks on the settlement of what is now known as the Highline District it was necessary for me to dig up the information that I did not already know. This I have done mostly by consulting my very good friends and older pioneers - Eban Kelly, son of the founder of Sunnydale and until the Bow Lake Airport forced him out, a resident of the district; Harry Wood, who with his parents homesteaded the property on which both the Sunnydale Grade School and Highline High School stand, and until his death just recently lived on Maple Wild Way near Three Tree Point, and Walter Bissell now a resident of Burien. The Bissell homestead lay along what is now First Avenue extending from S.W. 152nd Street to Five Corners. To these I have been and am grateful for the information furnished.

As the history of our country has been that of people seeking land upon which to build homes and raise their families so is the history of this district, and I believe this holds true, with the possible exception of a small story here and there, and these were established by residents, until perhaps 1910 or thereabouts. But, to start at the beginning, we will have to drop down into the Duwamish Valley.

Around the late '60's and early 70's (1860's and '70's) about the only means of transportation between the thriving village - or could it then be called city - of Seattle and the settlers, farmers along the Duwamish Valley up as far as Kent was - believe it or not - a very small steamboat. If one will but look at the present river and its curves and bends from where the present Duwamish Waterway ends up to Kent he will wonder, how in the world anything that operated by steam could make it, although in

those days the river had considerably more water in it than at present because Lake Washington's outlet was through the Black River, which cut around from near Renton and emptied into the Duwamish at what is now known as Renton Junction near the racetrack; and also the White River flowed north as often as south and emptied into the Green and Duwamish where it now goes into the Puyallup.

Over this, many fights, and real gun battles they were, and dynamiting parties were held. This may be hard for many people of today to visualize, but until the White River was permanently turned south and the Lake Washington canal was completed which lowered the lake about six feet and turned all runoff water through the Black River and into the Duwamish, the whole valley, clear up to the White River would overflow perhaps several times during the winter. I have seen it many times when the water spread from bank to bank across the valley with only highpoints and buildings tops showing and people being taken out in rowboats. Must have been a good pilot on board the little steamer at such times to keep it in the stream.

No, the steamer wasn't an oil burner, but fuel used cord wood which it would pick up along the way, usually cut by some of the settlers as a means of obtaining a little extra cash with which to buy Mother a poke bonnet, gingham dress or something.

It was into this picture that there dropped a young Irish lad by the name of Michael Kelly - don't ask me where he came from, how he got there or ever heard about the Duwamish Valley because I was never told that - and he started working on a certain ranch part of the time and cutting wood for this boat part of the time and hunting what was left - and from reports there was quite good hunting in those days.

Also there arrived at this ranch a young lady, niece of the lady of the ranch, to visit her aunt and the visit was prolonged quite some time, in fact - yes, you guessed it. It was a

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

case of love at first sight evidently on both sides for they were soon married.

Mike, as he was known to all, soon came to the conclusion that as a family man he had to do something besides cut wood. So he decided to look for a ranch for himself, but nothing left in the valley suited him.

One day he announced that he was going over the hill to see what was on the other side, and taking his trusty rifle, started up the hill due west, something that evidently no one up to that time had done. Only one who knows what our western Washington country was like before man arrived and ruined it can visualize what a trip like that meant because it was real bad stuff to work one's way through, even though beautiful and grand with all its majestic trees.

He tramped on up to the top and finally started going down, supposing that he was approaching Puget Sound for he knew that it was somewhere in that general direction, but instead of the Sound he came upon a valley and decided to explore it. He found it very heavily wooded, the soil, which was mostly pure rotted vegetation, deep. Two good streams of water flowed through the valley - one from the east and another from the north - besides various springs and a wonderful raised spot for buildings.

He put down his gun and stuck up notice of intention to homestead the spot, which he did. Arriving back home, he informed his wife that he had discovered the Garden of Eden; that is, that he intended to make it such. Events proved that the valley he discovered is just about as near that certain place as any in western Washington for it has always been recognized as the richest ground in King County.

This valley is what is known as the Sunnydale valley, starting on the south end at the Sunnydale grade school and running north and northeast, being skirted by the Des Moines brick

road, the north end being at about 148th St. - not very long 'tis true, but just look at the amount of good things to eat that are grown in that small place.

Mike continued working in the valley, but managed to clear a trail up over the hill and spend what time he could clearing up the homestead or enough to hold the place, and he finally got up a log house. I believe it was the year 1869 when he discovered his Garden of Eden, and it was three years before he could move the family - yes, it was a family - into their new home.

Can you imagine what a celebration that must have been?



The Blaker homestead, located on 8th Avenue S, & S. 146th, where the telephone company building now stands. Photo Highline Historical Society.

Just a little clearing with a little cabin, perhaps not more than two rooms at first - though when I first saw it they had a very fine house - and the giant fir and cedar trees all around fairly reaching up to heaven. (What wouldn't many a man give for just such a place now?)

Word soon got around some way or other about Mike's discovery and settlers came flocking in, the second filing on the claim next to his place on the south. I believe that Harry Wood's father was the third settler, filing on the property bounded now by 152nd Ct. on the north and the Three Tree Point road on the south, the present Des

Moines brick road on the east and reaching back to include the site of the high school. In fact, he donated the original two acres on which the present Sunnydale grade school is situated. The first building was erected in 1889, I believe.

The U.S. government had put through what was, and still is, called the Military Road for purely military purposes, but the new settlers all along the road would use it as far as they could and then make a branch road or trail off to their property. This is the way the Sunnydale road was made, branching off the Military Road only a couple blocks from where the Military Road now leaves the Des Moines brick road, or perhaps some call it Des Moines Way. The old Military Road dropped down the hill and followed the river into Seattle.

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

Mike made his road as all of them were made, by taking the easiest way, and if a tree wasn't too big so the wagon wheels could go on each side of the roots it was sawed down close to the ground; but if too big, they just went around it - so you can imagine that the roads were somewhat crooked, but they finally reached their destination.



*Author Percy Blaker delivered his produce to the Pike Place Market by horse and cart.
Photo Highline Historical Society.*

The next settler took up where Mike ended and ran it to his place; and so it went until it finally reached down to what is now known as Normandy Park, where people by the name of Gardner had settled.

Another branch left Mike's road about at the present 146th St. and swung west to the Bissell's place and over to the east end of Lake Burien, named after the first settler there, though they spelled their name Burian.

It wasn't long after Mike's discovery, until that part of the present Highline district now bounded by 140th on the north, 1st Ave. on the west, south to about 170th and east to around where the present airport is was quite thickly populated; so much so that by 1890 the school had about 60 or 70 pupils, and believe it or not, one room and one teacher - but did we have fun?

Other people, land hungry, soon heard about Mike's discovery and began coming in so that soon quite a group could get together. How and why did they give the name "Sunnydale" to this first settlement, which at first covered everything from Des Moines to the city limits of Seattle and from the top of the valley rim on the east to Puget Sound on the west? I have heard this account several times from Mr. S. G. Clark, one of the very first settlers near the Kelly home. Bulldozers were unknown in those

days and to clear land or build houses or barns the settlers would exchange days. Jack would help Jim for a week or so and Jim would do likewise, give Jack that many days in return. This was true with Kelly and Clark. Clark on this particular day was helping Kelly and it was a very hot day. Pausing in the work they were doing Kelly mopped the perspiration from his head and looking at Clark said, "You know Gard, there are getting to be so many people around here that we have got to get some kind of a name for it pretty soon, and the way that old sun is beating down on us right now I think that the word sun has got to have something to do with it. What do you think about Sunnydale?" And that is how Sunnydale got its name.

With the coming of settlers of course came children, which meant that a school was needed and the first one was started in 1883 in a small log cabin just south of the present Sunnydale school. In a couple of years it was necessary to move into a larger one and in 1888 a swell one room building made of lumber and painted white, with real seats and desks, was built on the site of the present school. The seats and desks in the new building were greatly appreciated by the pupils from the old building where the furniture had been all hand made by the settlers and from what has been said the seats were just plain benches and not too much effort had been used to smooth down the rough planks.

In the meantime the increasing population made other schools necessary. Des Moines erected its first school in 1886 and ten years later Angle Lake put up a one room building. The Boulevard Park district followed in 1898 with the building which burned down a year ago after having been used as the Riverton Heights Field House for some time. A school was later consolidated with the Sunnydale district. The first school in what is now the Mt. View area was held in 1893 but the building was not erected on the present site until 1911.

The need for a high school became apparent with the influx of population incident to the increased industrial activity in Seattle during the first World War. After the war, plans were begun which resulted in the first unit of the present High School building being erected in the years 1923-24.

A King County School Teachers Directory issued by the County Office for the year 1913-1914 which gives the names of the teachers in each school is interesting when compared with a list of the teachers in the Highline Schools today. Sunnydale had A. J. Bookmeyer, principal, Emma Petterson, F. Kellog, Myra Renshaw; Angle Lake, Huldah Peterson, principal, Blanche Dyer; Mt. View, Lizzie Kaufmann; Boulevard Park, Anna Kyle, principal, Alice Shaw, Abraham Rickles; Manhattan, Margaret Fleming; and Lake Burien not on the list as it was not yet organized, a total of fourteen teachers. How many are there today?

Continued on back page

Donations and Memorials

The following items were recently donated to the Society. Special thanks to these far-sighted individuals for helping HHS preserve authentic artifacts and archival materials of the recent and not-so-recent past, as well as for both restricted and unrestricted cash donations. For more information about donating items to HHS, please call 206-246-6354 or send an email to editor@highlinehistory.org
 You are helping to tell our stories!

From **William and Catherine Milne, and John and Cynthia Uptegrove**, donations in memory of **Dottie Harper**.

From **May Pendergrass**, an unrestricted donation for care of the photographic collections.

From **Wendy Sayan**, for the archives, two high school physical education curriculum books; *Track and Field Fundamentals for Teacher and Coach* (1969), and *Modern Foil Fencing Fun and Fundamentals* (1972).

From **Garth and Ginny MacDonald**, a 1972 lighted world globe, to be used in the Highline Schools exhibit in the museum.

From **Debra Kerrigan**, a 1963 “Bonanza” lunch box, a 1979 “Charlie’s Angels” lunch box, and two Hazel Valley Elementary School t-shirts (circa 1990), to be used in the Highline Schools exhibit in the museum.

From the estate of **John Dietrich**, three boxes of family photographs and memorabilia. The materials date back to the late 1800’s and include excellent photos and journals of his father’s duty in WWI. See examples below.



Join The Highline Historical Society

Benefits of an annual HHS Membership Include...

- Quarterly newsletter
- Bi-Monthly E-News about heritage-related events
- Patron members receive the quarterly magazine of the Washington State Historical Society
- Free admission to Society programs
- Free admission to our future museum

Become a Member Today

Please indicate your membership classification below:

- ___ Individual - \$20
- ___ Family - \$30
- ___ Commercial/Business - \$50
- ___ Patron - \$125

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

(necessary to receive Monthly E-News)

Make checks payable: *Highline Historical Society*, or charge your membership to:

_____ Visa _____ MasterCard

_____ Account Number

Expires: _____

Signature: _____

Mail to: P.O. Box 317, Seahurst, WA 98062

This application is for **new members only**. Renewing members will be notified by mail.

Correction: Last issue (#49) had two photographs of John Roger’s Service Stations. One of them was mislabeled. We are advised that one of the photos was of his station on SW 152nd and 4th Ave SW, while the other was correctly captioned as being at his Seahurst site on 21st. We thank Jim Hughes for correcting our records.

P. O. Box 317
Seahurst, WA 98062

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Seahurst, WA 98062
Permit # 93

TIME DATED MATERIALS

Changes?

Please make the corrections on your label.

*Circle the appropriate spot below, and
return to the Society. Thank you.*

Name misspelled

Contact person changed

Address wrong

Duplicate mailing

Continued from page 6

The Three Tree Point property was platted around 1902, and by 1910 a number of houses had been built around Lake Burien and White Center but the transportation as to roads was really terrible. So a movement was started and sponsored by the residents and property owners between there and the city to establish a car line. This was accomplished and began operating in 1911 or 12 and what a ride it was. The Toonerville Trolley had nothing on it at all. During the winter a bad landslide on the hillside inside the city took out the tracks for quite a distance and it was abandoned until the city took it over later.

The closing down of the car line was a bitter blow to many people. Property all along the way had been platted and many had started building homes. Seahurst and NoKomis Park had been started as summer homes but many were, as elsewhere, just waiting for transportation, and when the city of Seattle offered to take over the line and operate it if it was turned over to it debt free, which I believe was about \$30,000, the money was raised without a great deal of effort. The city then operated it until paved roads came into the district and patronage disappeared, but there is no doubt but that the old Lake Burien car line, as inadequate and poorly constructed as it was, was one thing that was the means of starting building up the part of the district that it served both inside and out of the city. Another thing that helped especially the other side of the district was the establishing of the present Des Moines Way. Lafe Hamilton who had been a

resident of the district at one time became County Commissioner for the South District and while in office re-established the old road and extended it clear to Des Moines, and before the road was even paved the Neal Brothers of Des Moines established a bus service. True it was quite some bus and quite some service, but it was the beginning of the service we now have serving the entire South End. Looking back over fifty plus years it doesn't seem possible that such a change could possibly be made as some of us have seen - and we wonder what our grandchildren will see around here fifty plus years from now.



Des Moines Memorial Drive - the Mike Kelly Road
Photo Highline Historical Society