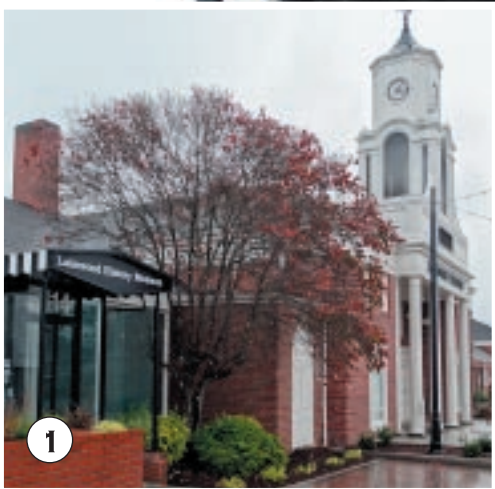


Prairie Gazette



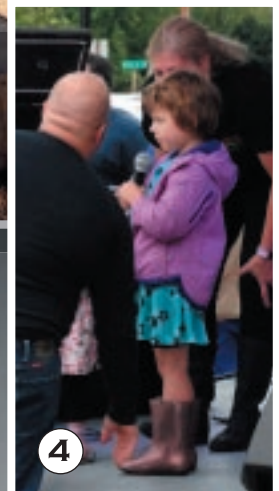
Fall 2019 The Official Publication of the Lakewood Historical Society



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- 1 Two long-shuttered local landmarks, now home to Lakewood's history.
- 2 LHS Treasurer Jim Curley (behind desk) greets guests on opening day.
- 3 Crowd enjoys festivities on opening day of Colonial Plaza...
- 4 ...including serenades courtesy of Kids' Karaoke.
- 5 Striking stonework, with plaque commemorating the Plaza's dedication.
- 6 One of many rooms soon to be filled with artifacts—so much space, compared to our previous location!

MORE PICTURES INSIDE—plus the story of two grand openings in one day: our spacious new **Museum** and Lakewood's terrific new public space, **Colonial Plaza**.

Special GRAND OPENING Issue!

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PRAIRIE GAZETTE

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MEETINGS

The Lakewood Historical Society formed in 1998 to preserve and share Lakewood's rich history through programs, displays and publications. The Society offers frequent programs on topics of historical interest. Most programs are free and open to the public. Visit us on Facebook or our website for information on events and activities:

www.LakewoodHistorical.org

President's Message

Well, we did it: moved the History Museum to the "new" space formerly occupied by the Terrace Restaurant and the lobby to the Lakewood Theater. Quite an effort and, of course, we're not done yet. Getting items unpacked and setting up displays will make this a work in progress for a while. Thanks to Mountain Moving and Storage for their help in getting the museum moved. And a big shout out to **Dave Ross** & his wife **Linda** and **Oscar Maysonet** for their great work in getting the "new" museum painted and doing a wonderful job on the flooring! Thank you.



Sue Scott

Then the City of Lakewood hosted the grand opening of Motor Avenue: **Colonial Plaza**. It was a wonderful evening (no rain!) and we opened the museum. Over 225 people came through that evening! And a big shout out to **Tom Johnson**, the Lakewood House of Donuts, for donating six dozen donuts for our visitors to enjoy! We hope those visitors will come back to see how we are doing.

It was a busy summer for our outreach events: The Lakewood Farmer's Market, the Lakewood Senior Center open house, Community Day at Lakewood Gardens, and of course the big one: SummerFest which gets bigger every year.

Recently, **Becky Huber** and I along with Board members **Glen Spieth** and **Darryl Owens** were invited to the dedication of



the **John W. Walstrum Center for Advanced Manufacturing Technology** at the Clover Park Technical College (photo, left). Dr. Walstrum was President of CPTC from 2007-2013. The late Dr. Walstrum (and his wife **Penny**) were members and supporters of the Lakewood Historical Society.

Mark your calendars: The **Annual Meeting** is being planned for November 19 at the St. Mary's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 10630 Gravelly Lake Drive, beginning at 7 p.m. Please join us.

Again, if you have a few hours a week to doцент, please give me a call at 253.588.6354.

And as always, thanks for your continued support of the Lakewood Historical Society & Museum.

Please! Don't forget our ANNUAL FUND CAMPAIGN!



Four Heroes, Ten Years Gone

Left to right: Officers Greg Richards, Tina Griswold, Ronald Owens, Sgt. Mark Renninger

In a stark reminder that history has its tragedies as well as its triumphs, this issue of the *Prairie Gazette* contains stories both upbeat—our new museum, the opening of Colonial Plaza—and sobering: the passing of an old and dear friend (see page 4) and a remembrance of four of our city’s finest who, ten years ago come November 29, made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

To those who lined the streets of Lakewood to witness the passing of the officers’ funeral cortege it may have seemed that no good could ever come out of so senseless and appalling an event.

But in their own small way, just by turning out in the hundreds to pay their respects, these citizens were beginning the process of dispelling the gloom hanging over our



“Every year we have marked the day with a food drive, and now a blood drive, to honor the four officers. We will be doing the same thing this year and hope the community continues to come out and support us.”

Mike Zaro, Chief, Lakewood Police Dept.



city after the darkest day in its young history.

In the weeks and months that followed, the community transformed its initial outpouring of grief into a positive force—one seeking to express as never before its support and gratitude for our “servants in blue”. A most substantial and enduring example came in 2015 when Lakewood’s newest elementary school was given the name “Four Heroes”—and the support continues to this day.

A few examples: flags donated by AMVETS Post 1 to replace the tattered ones flying over the officers’ memorial plaza, volunteer maintenance of the plaza’s grounds by Knights of Columbus Council 6806, and the annual Fallen Officer Food Drive to which the community has donated \$172,776 and 150,549 pounds of food (see below)

Information about the 10th annual LPD food and blood drives coming soon. Check [facebook.com/Annual-Fallen-Officers-Food-Drive](https://www.facebook.com/Annual-Fallen-Officers-Food-Drive) for updates

Remembering Ruth Hofto

William Howard Taft was president when **Vivian Ruth Hofto** was born. She was two years old when the *Titanic* sank. She was 31 when the US entered the Second World War. And she was 109 when she passed away on July 22, 2019 in University Place, Washington.

Born in Black Diamond on May 13, 1910, Ruth was one of four children of Jane and George Ayers. Her father was a coal miner who often needed to move his family to other mining towns.

The family moved to Tacoma around 1928, where she first met a young man named Henry Hofto. Ruth and Henry married in 1934 during the darkest days of the depression when jobs were scarcest. But Ruth found employment at the J. C. Penny department store and helped support the family. At the same time, she was helping Henry, a musician and a builder, with his business while also pursuing her love of art and crafts.

Active in a number of arts organizations—Lakewood Artists, Tacoma Arts and Crafts, Allied Artists—she exhibited her multimedia works extensively in juried



shows, winning many awards. She loved doing oils and acrylic landscapes, paper collage, woodcuts, and copper enamels.

In 2007, at age 97, Ruth was asked to give a gallery showing of her works at the Lakewood Library and was still creating new works when a stroke left her with impaired vision and hearing and some loss of speech in 2009.

Her paintings hang in museums in Black Diamond and Issaquah, depicting a world from long ago. Ruth and Henry celebrated 64 years of marriage before Henry passed away in 1999. Ruth had loved

traveling with him and their daughter Jacqueline, taking many trips across countries and continents to attend Jacqueline's musical competitions and performances.



LHS Past President Becky Huber with Ruth at her 107th birthday party.

On Ruth's 107th birthday, the mayor of University Place honored her with a special proclamation. King 5 News interviewed her at a party and shared the video with several local television stations.

Two birthdays later, a growing realization that Ruth was quite likely the second-oldest person in the state of Washington had the media calling again.

Reporter Craig Sailor's article in the Tacoma News Tribune described the celebration—and the preparations leading up to it.

"Two cakes, both with '109' on them, were waiting for Hofto. The larger one had created a commotion earlier at Costco.

"They stopped us," said Jonie Emrick, director of the care facility Ruth moved into shortly after suffering another stroke. She was referring to store staff and employees. "They said, "Wait a second, can we see that cake? 109?" They called other people over."

In 2012, at age 102, Ruth displayed her works in the "Artists' Corner" of the Lakewood History Museum. Our thanks to daughter Jacki for donating her mother's painting of Mount Rainier, on display in our new location at 6114 Motor Ave SW.

shows, winning many

"Jacki Hofto said her mother has a good quality of life. 'They take such good care (of her),' Jacki said of the care facility staff.

"Friend Carol Lobdell of Tacoma has known Hofto for about 20 years. She said Hofto has always had a sunny disposition.

"Such a sweet lady, always laughing, always wanting to go to the German restaurant in Lakewood."

We close these reminiscences with a quote from Ruth's memorial on Mountain View's website:

She had a wonderful life and was an inspiration to all who met her.

From this...



...to *THIS*...



...thanks to the vision of our city planners.

Memories of what a sad, neglected strip of asphalt Motor Ave used to be are already fading, soon to be replaced entirely by happier impressions the good times coming to Lakewood's newest public space, **Colonial Plaza**. The crowds that came to the Plaza's grand opening already have a few stored up—dancing the night away, or staking out the taco truck, or being serenaded by Kids' Karaoke.



The impetus to transform Motor Avenue into a place that would attract enough foot traffic to support both new and existing businesses came from the desire to change public perception of Lakewood as a sprawling suburb and to create a true urban core.

Most importantly to our members (and to anyone who loves local history), the city's plan to attract visitors to the Plaza resulted in the **Lakewood History Museum's** move into the space formerly occupied by two of the region's most iconic landmarks, the old **Terrace Restaurant** and the **Lakewood Theater**.

Now, as the years go by and the memories accumulate, we'll be front and center, recording it all for posterity. It's what historians do, after all.





A Historic Day for Lakewood

- 1. 40 years ago, this sunny space was the Terrace Restaurant's Coffee Shop.
- 2. Across the hall, the Fireplace Room—first of our exhibition halls open to visitors, soon to be joined by others.
- 3. **Cindy Duhamel**, anonymous serviceman, board member **Glen Speith**.
- 4. Deputy Mayor **Jason Whalen**.
- 5. Whalen and Chamber of Commerce CEO **Linda Smith** stand ready as Lakewood's first mayor, **Bill Harrison**, looks on.
- 6. LHS Treasurer **Jim Curley** greets visitors
- 7. Distinguished guests **Denny Heck** (US Rep, 10th Dist.), **Melanie Morgan** (State Rep, 29th Dist.), **Steve Conway** (Sen., 29th)
- 8. Having addressed the crowd at the ribbon cutting, Congressman Heck drops by to say hello to LHS President **Sue Scott**.

The amazing life of Lakewood's Luzena Wallace, the woman who gave Idaho its name!

Story and photo by Phil Raschke

Who was this woman named Luzena Brazelton Wallace?

Well, she was raised in Iowa, married a young attorney named **William H. Wallace** and soon had three children—two daughters who died in infancy and a surviving son. Her energetic lawyer husband temporarily left her behind while he set out to create a new life in the wilds of the Pacific Northwest.

Once he became settled, he sent for Luzena who soon departed from New York with their son for the arduous voyage to the Washington Territory. She arrived very sea sick on the shores of Seattle in late January, 1855. But her journey was not quite over—in her later writings she recalled boarding the passenger sloop “Sarah Stone” and sailing from Seattle to Port Townsend to Olympia and finally Steilacoom where she re-united with her husband.

William had just become the new Pierce County representative to the Territorial Assembly. Later in the year, however, relations with local Indians deteriorated and William moved Luzena and their son to the safety of the Army post at Fort Steilacoom while he served in the Territorial Volunteers.

With the end of hostilities, William decided to run as the territorial delegate to Congress, but lost to ex-governor **Issac Stevens** who was later killed in the Civil War. But Luzena and her husband had a dear friend back east named **Abraham Lincoln**. And when Lincoln became President he appointed Luzena's husband governor of the Washington Territory.

Soon after the appointment, William was also elected as a delegate to the United States Congress where he worked to create a new territory within the vastness of the current Washington Territory. In 1863, the new territory was finally approved and Lincoln appointed William the first governor. As wife of the governor, Luzena was

given the honor of naming the new territory.

She had always loved the first name of her young niece living near Colorado Springs. The niece was named after the beautiful daughter of an Indian chief whose name meant “Gem of the Mountain”. The name, translated, was pronounced...**IDAHO!**

Following the end of the Civil War, Luzena was back in Washington D.C. with her husband to help renew his appointment as Idaho's territorial governor. Lincoln agreed to the appointment and invited the couple to join him that evening for a play at the Ford Theatre. Tired from their long journey, they thanked Lincoln, but declined the invitation. The date was April 14th, 1865 and history was about to be made later that evening.

Following Lincoln's assassination, William served as a pall-bearer at Lincoln's funeral, but the new administration never issued the promised appointment. Both

Luzena and William decided to return home to Steilacoom where in 1871 he became the town's first elected mayor. William passed away in 1879, but Luzena lived until 1899. Their young son grew up, married and spent the rest of his life in Washington D.C.

Today, Luzena and William rest together in a small pioneer cemetery located just behind Western State Hospital off Steilacoom Blvd. A recent historical preservation project honored their memory by giving them both a new headstone in 2010.

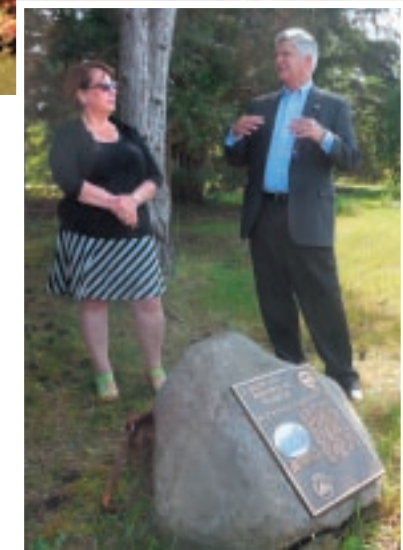
So next time you're driving pass Western State Hospital, give Luzena and William a respectful nod in honor of their historical contributions to our early days when we were known as the Washington and “Idaho” Territories.

*Historical Footnote: William H. Wallace's uncle was **Lew Wallace**, a former Union Army general and author of the famous novel “Ben Hur”.*



Historical Markers of Lakewood: 3rd in a Series

THE BOATMAN-AINSWORTH HOUSE



Present at the dedication:
Councilmember Marie Barth,
Mayor Don Anderson—May 2016

As the oldest private home still standing in Lakewood, the Boatman-Ainsworth house was a natural for a historical marker ...and so it came to pass. A large stone with plaque attached was placed in 2014 and dedicated in May, 2016. Located in the front yard of the home (directly across 112th St SW from Clover Park High School), the marker is on private property, so please keep a respectful distance when visiting. It's easily seen from the road—no need to get closer.

The plaque features a photograph of the house, and reads as follows:

BOATMAN-AINSWORTH HOUSE

Willis Boatman came to the Northwest by wagon train in 1852 and first settled in Steilacoom. In 1854, he



Charming inside (first floor parlor, above) and out.



Willis Boatman and wife Mary, circa 1860

used until 1878 when the house and land was sold to Captain John Ainsworth,

founder of the Oregon Steam Navigation Company. Ainsworth expanded the house by adding the front portion. In 1889, the house and land were sold to Walter J. Thompson, a territorial legislator and founder of Merchant's National Bank of Tacoma and Tacoma Savings Bank. While owned by Dr. & Ms. Craig Gunter, the property was designated a Lakewood landmark in 2002 by the City of Lakewood. This marker provided by the Lakewood Historical Society, the Lakewood Landmarks & Heritage Board and the City of Lakewood.

Set the Wayback Machine to 1951...



*Its soda fountain made the **Lakewood Pharmacy** a favorite hangout of local teens in the fifties. Though the pharmacy itself is long gone, its distinctive curved front windows remain (see ad at right).*

*We're sure the gent on the right liked his haircut more than his expression would indicate. After all, the **Lakewood Center Barber Shop** stayed in business another 16 years...*



Post-apocalyptic Lakewood? Nope, pre-development Lakewood. Easy to see why the Colonial Center was a "hub" back then...the "wheel" around it was a lot smaller than it is today.

...when Colonial Center shops RULED!



...but that's peanuts compared to the hands-down longevity champ. **Dr. Ed Klopping**, seen here, kept his drills spinning from the Center's opening in 1937 until his retirement in 1990—53 years! His office is still there, occupied by a different dentist, of course.



Anchoring the northwest corner of the complex was **Tradewell**, Lakewood's first real supermarket. See that other sign, the one as prominent as the store's name? The windmill meant the **Van de Kamp** chain had one of its in-store bakeries here—a popular draw for shoppers all over the western US at the time.



Ads for the pharmacy and a few other fondly-remembered Colonial Center shops, taken from the 1954 Steilacoom Centennial Celebration Official Souvenir Book. Some, like Fraser's and the Terrace, would hang on for another twenty, even thirty, years.



**Lakewood
Historical
Society**

P.O. Box 98014
Lakewood, WA
98496

Lakewood's Nights of Lights
December 1 - 31, 2019

“Be part of a Lakewood Tradition ~ Bring back the magic of the holiday season and ‘Go Blue’! Let’s brighten our city’s image. Decorate your business with blue lights for the holiday season.”

That’s from a flyer you may have seen around town lately in which the Chamber of Commerce urges the reintroduction of a tradition for which Lakewood was well-known in the recent past. When the blue lights in the trees all around Colonial Center were turned on, you knew it was time to get serious about your holiday shopping! Today, the lights have an added significance as reminders of the sacrifice made by our four heroes in blue (see page 3).

So, if you’re a business owner or in a position to influence one (or more), please give the Chamber’s appeal some serious thought. Call Linda Smith at 253-582-9400 to discuss how you’re willing to participate, and check out facebook.com/LakewoodBlueLights or lakewood-chamber.org/lakewoods-nights-of-lights. Also—watch for them around our new museum!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**Lakewood Historical Society Annual General Meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 19, 7:00 pm
St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, 10630 Gravelly Lake Drive SW, Lakewood WA**

Check www.lakewoodhistorical.org for notices about upcoming programs.