

Prairie Gazette



Spring 2017 The Official Publication of the Lakewood Historical Society

Museum: 6211 Mt. Tacoma Drive SW, Lakewood WA 98499 OPEN Wed-Sat, 12 Noon-4 pm (253) 682-3480



Time...for some answers. A Basic Chronology of the Lakewood Clock.

*Editor's Note: Three years ago, we posted the graphic below to our Facebook page along with some questions about the provenance of the beautiful old "jeweler's clock" that until recently stood near the intersection of Gravelly Lake Drive SW and Bridgeport Way—a Lakewood landmark. At the time, no one came forward with any answers. But now, thanks to the invaluable assistance of **Rob Ketcherside**, member of the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board, we are able at last to replace the *mystery* with a bit of *history*:*

The clock at **Lakewood Colonial Center** was a creation of Seattle clock maker and manufacturing jeweler **Joseph Mayer**, who sold it to **Burnett Brothers Jewelers** in 1911. Using a movement from **E. Howard** of Boston, the clock was a product of Mayer's "transitional period" during which he was designing his own cases but relying on Howard to supply the time-keeping mechanisms within (see close-up on page 4).

First installed early in 1911 at 720 1st Avenue in Seattle, the clock was moved three times between then and 1936, accompanying the Burnett Brothers to as many new locations. Its next move came in 1957 when it was sold to the **Provident Loan Society** and installed in front of their store at 411 Seneca Street.

There the clock remained until 1979 when **Arthur W. Henry**, great-grandson of **Horace C. Henry**, president of the Provident Loan Society, had it removed and stored at a construction yard in Woodinville, WA. He

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PRAIRIE GAZETTE

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The staff of Prairie Gazette actively encourages input from the Society's members as well as the general public regarding story ideas of any other aspects of this newsletter, and the Lakewood Historical Society.

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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

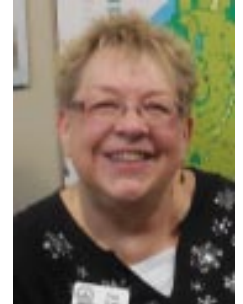
President's Message

Our first Flapjack Fundraiser, held March 11th at the Lakewood Applebee's, was a success! Thank you to all our members, families and friends who attended. I think this will become an annual event.

Speaking of members, I hope you have taken the time to renew your membership to the Lakewood Historical Society. Please renew by May 1st in order to keep your membership current.

More great programs and events are being planned for 2017, including a very special event at Thornewood Castle—only current members will receive invitations.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 253.588.6354. Looking forward to seeing everyone at our next program.



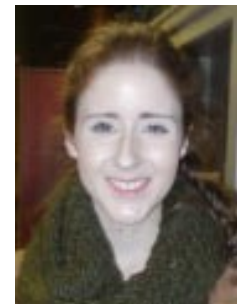
Sue Scott

Manager's Musings

Hello again readers! I am proud to announce that since the last "Manager's Musings" I have finished going through the artifacts and the museum is all caught up in the process of entering our collections into the data system. Properly managing collections and accepting donations is quite the tedious process, which includes official forms, a monthly Collections Committee meeting, and inventory of the donation in both of the museum's databases. Having the opportunity to work at the museum three days a week has allowed me to effectively and efficiently take on the backlog of items and get us up to speed.

Now that the museum's collections are better maintained, I have been able to focus my efforts to strengthening our presence on social media. Doing so has boosted our attendance at monthly programs, and spread the word through advertising for our major fundraisers. Keep an eye out for our bi-weekly posts so you can learn fun historical facts!

Looking ahead, I am working on our newest upcoming temporary exhibit, as well as sprucing up our current exhibits. Be sure to drop by the museum late in the Spring to check out these exciting changes!



Emma Pierce

Time Traveling at Lakewood Historical Museum

Seeking a way to go “time traveling” this spring?

Stop by the **Lakewood History Museum** on Mt. Tacoma Drive in the Lakewood Colonial Center and spend a few hours or longer perusing the pages from the *Suburban Times*, *Lakewood Log*, and *Lakewood Journal*. You'll be amazed at what you might find in the pages of those old newspapers. Here are just a few examples gleaned from those yellowed pages:

In the January 19, 1967 edition of the *Suburban Times* (**Vernon Shomshak**, Publisher), the front-page featured a story about the globetrotting Mayor of Steilacoom, **George Salzar**.

The story's headline read:

Foreign Aid

It pays to be a mayor...that is, if you're as ingenious as George Salzar.

Salzar and his wife, **Grace**, left on tour on July 19 and visited mayors of Madrid, Rome, Weisbaden, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Vienna, Budapest, Athens, Istanbul, Teheran, Karachi, New Delhi, and Taipei.

Many of these city officials, who had never before heard of Seattle, now know, thanks to George Salzar (who was, at that time, Exalted Elk of Tacoma's Elks in addition to serving as the town's mayor) where Steilacoom is.

“I was amazed at the reception we got. Everywhere there is respect for a mayor.”

Among the souvenirs collected on this “round the world trip”, a new wardrobe that he purchased in Hong Kong for \$168: a suit, tuxedo, 2 sports

by Nancy Covert

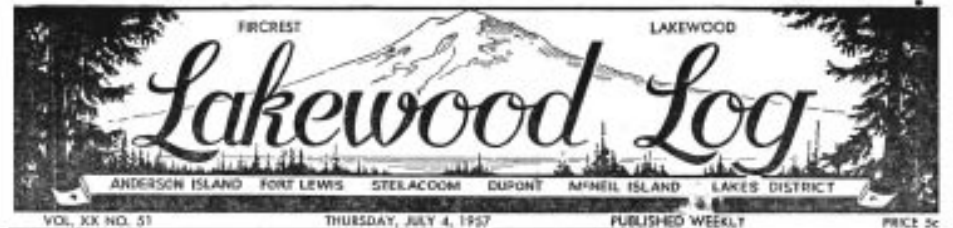
coats and a pair of trousers.

The Mayor of Rome presented Salzar with a gold medal, while he collected a gold key from Taipei's mayor, as well as countless memories.

Other stories gleaned from the pages of one of the many bound

A later issue included the dire prediction that future SummerFests might be discontinued. (The City of Lakewood revived the tradition, and the 2017 SummerFest will be held on July 8.)

Later that year, the paper reported about the derailment of a Union Pacific train in Steilacoom.



COUNTRYSIDE

about the Armed Forces Police car swarming Tacoma's edge streets and denouncing pedestrians and Military people who would like to spend some money on recreation in Tacoma. . . And we note where Al Hedlund is back with Hedlund Engineering Co. . . It says so right in Thursday's Seattle Post-Intelligencer and a news clipping from Salem, Oregon that shows the completed plans for a model new State Reformatory to be built near there. The model structure has been designed by Paul A. Saylor, Capt. formerly Warden at McNeil here, and former Mayor Reformatory, and Walla Walla State Prison head, Mr. Saylor, a nationally recognized authority on penology, was hired to Oregon because the last-headed Langlo Administration could not go along with Mr. Saylor's local plan. So Oregon again leads Washington in wholesome reform measures and Washington has behind it. Hedlund Engineering Co. is the local contractor.

Ernie Hedlund Solves Steilacoom Lake Beach Problems With Novel Self-Propelled Gravel Barge



Long a headache for Steilacoom Lake residents is the problem of creating smooth, clean beaches on shorelines that once were mere dirt-covered benches above a swamp or creek bed. Steilacoom Lake, until about the time of World War I, was much smaller lake than it is today, and was mostly a swamp, with a pair of creeks flowing down the middle. To solve the problem of creating clean beaches, Ernie Hedlund, local entrepreneur & Sand & Gravel retailer, built a self-propelled gravel barge. A small gas engine on the barge's deck propels the barge. Thus a customer can have a beach on a few hours.

volumes stored at the Museum include this headline:

Lakewood Firemen earn nationwide recognition

followed by a story placed below on the page, telling how the same firemen were meeting with county officials to “beg for shorter work hours and holiday compensation.”

A few editions further on, there was a story about that year's upcoming Lakes SummerFest and the selection of **Mrs. William (Ann) Riley** as that year's Queen Mother. Mrs. Riley was from Oceanside, CA. and had worked as a United Airlines stewardess.

A 1967 edition included several in-depth history features, including one about a man named **Charles Rough** (pronounced “rowe”) who had served as one of the last cavalrymen in WW I. He and his wife settled in the Lakes District, just off Steilacoom Boulevard, in 1923.

A detailed story about **Nisqually Chief Leschi** was published in the July 1967 edition, under the headline:

Nisqually Chief a victim of white man's vengeance

TIME from page 1

wanted to preserve it as a token of his family's place in local history: great-grandpa Horace had become quite the prominent citizen of Seattle after his arrival in 1890. For one thing, the **Henry Art Gallery** at the University of Washington bears his name—and so did one-third of the tripartite building that housed his Provident Loan Society (the **White-Henry-Stuart Building**, since demolished and replaced by **Rainier Square**).

In 1980, Henry gifted the clock to a man bearing an even more prominent name in local history: his step-father, **Norton Clapp** (Arthur's father, **Horace Relphe Henry**, had died in 1943 when Arthur was about a year old and his mother **Jane (Bumiller) Henry** had remarried in 1952).

Clapp had the clock installed on his estate on Orcas Island late in 1980, and there it stayed until he had it restored and moved to his commercial property in the Colonial Center in 1998...

...which brings us to the present (and some very recent developments...)

Monday, February 20, 2017 at the old FedEx location at Bridgeport & Gravelly Lake Drive. Your Editor intends to take a photo of the clock to replace the somewhat low-resolution version seen on the cover of this newsletter.

But in a shocking development—he's too late! Where once the Grand Old Lady stood, only a discolored patch of concrete and a few bent bolts betray that she was ever there.

Visions of scrapyards troubling his mind, Your Editor was

greatly relieved to discover Mr. Mayer's glorious timepiece—bowed but unbroken—lying on two wheeled pallettes inside an abandoned supermarket nearby.

Turns out the old FedEx (and the empty Multicare Clinic it shared the building with) is soon to be demolished, with a new

business rising in its place.

Good news for a corner of the city that's long lain fallow.

But—do the developer's plans include a place for Joseph Mayer's massive ticker? Will it be restored to its original gilded glory? Will it run again—ten years and more after its hands last circled the dial?

Only TIME will tell...



Above: As seen through a window at its base, the "Howard" movement at the heart of Mayer's clock.



Lone cone. All that marks the spot where for 19 years our majestic timepiece stood.

Below: The clock that just disappeared—found at last in an abandoned supermarket!



Nancy Lee Covert departs on a long-awaited journey

JANUARY 6, 2017

From *The Suburban Times*

Nancy Lee, the eldest daughter of **Robert H. Covert** and **Eva May Yochem**, born December 1, 1942 at St. John's General Hospital in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, left on her next adventure on Tuesday, January 3, 2017. (Her daughter adds here that 2017 is a prime number, so she left in the prime of her life).

Educated at Perry High School, the University of Pittsburgh, Big Bend Community College and Central Washington University, she graduated in 1978 from CWU in the newly minted University's first class that August, eager to begin her new career as a reporter.

Thanks to the encouragement of **Dave Johnson**, BBCC's Public Relations Coordinator and founder of the *Grant County Journal*, Nancy followed the journalist's trail—or as Robert Frost wrote, “the road less traveled” for the next 30 years, working primarily on northwest community newspapers from Moses Lake to Spokane, to Priest River, Idaho; back to Washington for the *Bainbridge Review*, *Island Sportsline*, *Market Times*, then to Olympia as Editor/PR Spokesperson for the Washington State Grange.

She relocated to Steilacoom and embarked on a different phase of her writing career, becoming involved in many other aspects of writing, serving as PR Spokeswoman for the Town of Steilacoom as well as editor of its newsletter, *Around Town*.

When voters approved I-695, a piece of legislation they believed would “save money!” Nancy switched her allegiance and considerable writing skills to the Steilacoom Historical School District as its first Media Relations Coordinator.

During a 10-year-period Nancy had the opportunity to teach future journalism students in elementary, middle and high school classes. Her memberships in Kiwanis, Chamber of Commerce, Steilacoom Historical Museum Association, as well as the Grange and numerous other historical societies

in the area, provided her with an opportunity to increase her knowledge and understanding about Washington State History. Although years earlier she had vowed that she'd be true to Pennsylvania, after more than 50 years in the Pacific Northwest where she raised her sons and daughter, she decided that, “Washington was her home.”

Besides the opportunity to be deeply involved in a variety of activities in the Town on the Sound, she partnered with two other local writers, producing a comprehensive school district history book, and a children's story about “Mrs. Orr's Pear Tree.” She also had stories published in three anthologies and authored one novel.

After retiring in 2010 Nancy continued to freelance for numerous publication such as *The Suburban Times* (952 stories!), and *Columbia History Magazine*.

When she moved from Steilacoom to Lakewood—after 20 years in the town—she embarked on extensive research for another history book about the towns around American Lake: Lake City and Tillicum.

Her resume, while not extensive, is full of journalistic achievements, and only begins to summarize some of the many adventures she enjoyed after deciding to follow “the road less traveled.”

Nancy's children include **Steven Wolff**, **Jenny Holmstrom-Wolff** (and **Jay**), and **Jeffrey Wolff**, two grandchildren, **Korey Holmstrom** and **Jasmyn Holmstrom**, sisters **Roberta Jean Anderson**, **Dorothy Sue Mackovich**, and **Margaret Elizabeth Grajcar**, numerous nieces and nephews and many friends.

“**Keep asking questions and GET THE FACTS!**”, she reminds those she leaves behind. Hopefully she now knows the answer to Life's Biggest Questions. WHO AM I? WHAT AM I DOING HERE? In the meantime, get busy learning about history!



More photos and remembrances of our good friend Nancy on the following pages ...



Remembering Nancy

Blunt and brusque are among the strong attributes that defined Nancy. She had a lively mind, passionate spirit, and investigative soul. She was never short of story ideas. She embedded and involved herself in local history in the Town of Steilacoom as well as in her more recent work regarding Lakewood, American Lake, Lake City, and Tillicum. Nancy shied away from nothing. She had an opinion about everything. If she found that she was incorrect about any assumption she made, which was seldom, she was quick to admit she was wrong.

She still preferred in-person, face-to-face contact with friends, not a larger and possibly unknown network of 'friends.' She relied on using the computer at the public library for internet access. She eschewed wasting her time watching television so she didn't even own one.

—Jaynie Jones

Nancy was a special friend. She inspired me to want to learn more about our local history. Her writings presented a unique perspective and provided in-depth details that made our history even more interesting. Nancy was one of a kind. This has left a huge hole in our hearts and it is going to be hard to move on.

—Becky Huber



Loyal fans Barbara Scott and Nancy share the Rainiers Stadium bleachers with founder Ben Cheney's statue.



With fellow author Ed Kane, signing books at the Lakewood History Museum, 2014.



Nancy's Memorial at the Steilacoom History Museum, January 7, 2017. Left: (l to r) daughter Jenny Holstrom-Wolff, sons Steven and Jeffrey Wolff, grandchildren Korey and Jasmyn Holmstrom, son-in-law Jay Holstrom. Above: Standing room only for attendees remembering and sharing stories of Nancy's life and works.

I was constantly thankful that our community had Nancy because she did such a marvelous job writing Steilacoom and Lakewood based stories. These were stories I did not have time for and I lacked her personal connection. I do not know how we will manage without Nancy. She will be missed.

—Joseph Boyle

Nancy Covert was an enthusiastic supporter of Historic Fort Steilacoom over the years. She provided some speakers for programs, publicized our events in the *Suburban Times* and elsewhere. She took photos for publications and was a presenter at two events. Nancy also wrote some articles for the Fort newsletter. She served refreshments after programs, at times. Her help was appreciated and she will be remembered.

—Carol Stout



When local puppeteer Jeanne Charlot's creations were donated to the Museum in 2015, Nancy (l) served on the exhibit committee with Dorothy Wilhelm, Jim Curley and Dick Meier.

We will definitely miss this darling who made it her top priority to write. She had a genuine knack for letting the world know about the unique and wonderful activities and beauty found right in our Steilacoom and Lakewood backyards. May we all continue to see what Nancy saw every day.

—Stephanie Walsh

Nancy is someone whose writings added to our sense of community and history. She will indeed be missed.

—Mike Brandstetter



Above: Plying the waters of Puget Sound, the yacht *El Primero*—once owned by Chester Thorne (of Thornewood Castle fame) and subject in 2013 of one of the many, many articles Nancy wrote for this newsletter.

Trench and Camp: the official WWI military camp publication

A look back at a century in the making

by Nancy Covert

“Camp Lewis built at lowest cost,” read the Sept. 12, 1917 headline in the *Tacoma Daily Ledger*. Captain **David Stone**, a West Point graduate, was assigned as Quartermaster for the cantonment to be built on land at the south end of American Lake. Total cost was \$6,517,488—or \$142 per capita—the lowest per capita cost of any cantonment or National Guard Camp.

Several months earlier, another *Ledger* story reported that the Hurley-Mason Company had been awarded the contract to build the Northwest military post. “The firm was recommended by the general munitions board, and the work will be done on the cost plus percentage profit basic adopted for all cantonment contracts.”

Under Stone’s command, the cantonment was completed well in advance of the arrival of its first troops, and at that low per capita cost. That October the first edition of a national military newspaper, **Trench and Camp**, was available for the soldiers to read.

The front page story in that paper’s first edition, published Oct. 8, 1917, featured “A Message from the Commander in Chief, President **Woodrow Wilson**.”

To the soldiers of the National Army,

You are undertaking a great duty. The heart of the whole country is with you. Every-
8 thing that you do will be



watched with the greatest interest and with the deepest solicitude, not only by those who are near and dear to you, but by the whole nation besides. For this great war draws us all together, makes us all comrades and brothers, as



all true Americans feel themselves to be when we first made good our national independence. The eyes of all the world will be upon you, because you are, in some special sense, the soldiers of freedom.

Let it be your pride therefore, to show all men, everywhere, not only what good soldiers you are, but also what good men you are, keeping yourselves fit and straight for everything, and

pure and clean, through and through.

Let us set for ourselves a standard so high that it will be a glory to live up to it, and then let us live up to it and add a new laurel to the Crown of America.

My affectionate confidence goes with you in every battle and every test. God keep you and guide you.

—Woodrow Wilson

Decades before *The Ranger*, *Airlifter* and other Fort Lewis/McChord military newspapers were published in Pierce County, copies of *Trench and Camp* were read by doughboys stationed at Camp Lewis. Micro-filmed copies of this early 20th century publication are available in the Pacific Northwest Room at the Tacoma Public Library and also at the Lewis Military Museum.

Trench and Camp was published by the National War Work Council of the YMCA, in partnership

with various city newspapers, for soldiers during World War I. The weekly paper was printed in different editions for each of the 32 cantonments, including Camp Lewis. About half the material was supplied weekly from a central editorial office in New York, with the other half provided by local reporters.

Its purpose was “to print the news, to inform, to stimulate, and to help relieve the tedium and monotony of camp life” for soldiers, as well as “to be a graphic account of the life of our soldiers, whether they be drilling or fighting, at home or ‘over there’” for civilians.

Contributions from soldiers include descriptions of the entertainments at the camps, athletic contests, educational lectures, jokes and poetry, as well as personal columns telling of their experiences. The papers also sponsored cartoon con-

tests, resulting in many good pictures portraying camp life. In addition, each *Trench and Camp* was a channel of communication to the troops from the President, Congress, and War Department.

Running as an insert in area newspapers circulated in 32 cantonments, such as the *Topeka State Journal* edition at Camp Funston at Camp Riley, Kansas, or the *Battle Creek Enquirer* or the *Evening News* edition for Camp Custer at Battle Creek, Michigan, this publication was not the “child” of any particular contingent, but rather of the Young Men’s Christian Association, a government auxiliary.

The usually eight-page paper was printed at cities near the various camps. The paper at Camp Dodge in Kansas claimed that it was the “first one” to be published.

A selection of headlines from local Camp Lewis editions, worth pondering, include these from some 1917 editions:

Seven miles of weiners at one camp mess; feeding of the multitude at Tacoma post is some task: buy beef by the half million pound.

Hazardous job is that of mule shoers

Danish war song sung in camp

348th Artillery to stage big rodeo

Says wholesome recreation is antidote to world’s evils

Greeting colored soldiers from California at the camp

Cares for Jewish men at the camp

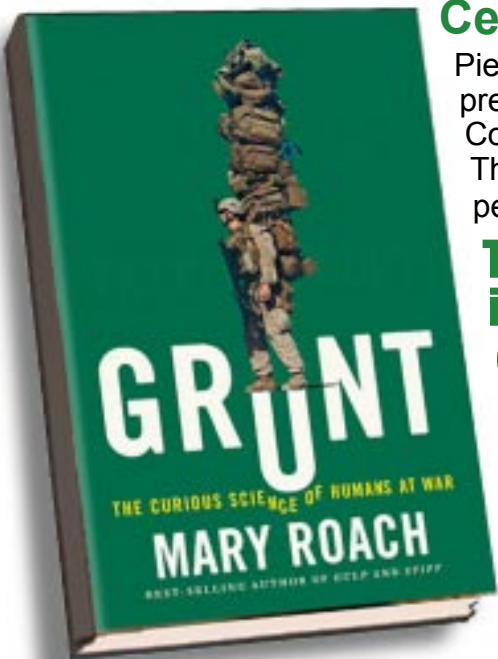
Aviators fight in duel like knights

See *TRENCH* page 11



**PIERCE COUNTY
READS**

**AUTHOR
MARY ROACH**



Celebrating a decade of reading together.

Pierce County Library System and *The News Tribune* proudly co-present Pierce County READS to continue bringing together Pierce County residents to engage, read and talk about great books. This decade-long program focuses on books that challenge our perceptions and further our understanding of the world.

The 2017 Pierce County READS selection is best-seller “Grunt: The Curious Science of Humans at War,” by Mary Roach.

“Roach is such a winsome presence. ‘A goober with a flashlight,’ she calls herself. Funny but not glib, nosy but not prurient, Roach is the consummate tour guide.”

—*The Guardian*

Check out piercecountyreads.org for events, book discussions and more.

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PAST PAPERS from page 3

The July 7, 1967 edition contained a long article about the Lakewood Colonial Center celebrating its 30th anniversary.

“They may have called it ‘Clapp’s Folly’ in 1937—whoever heard of building a shopping center out in the middle of a sparsely developed prairie?” **Norton Clapp**, the Center’s developer, replied that one day the area would become a city.

That year’s volume also included a story about the performance of “Heritage Follies,” a risqué vignette of early Lakes District life, featuring dancers from Jo Emery’s School of Dance. The play, co-written by Capt. **Meredith Thomas** and Capt. **Frank Bean**, was being presented at the Lakewood



The “Space Needle” that might have been?

Players Theatre. (A recent phone call to Lakewood Playhouse confirmed that there

possibly is a copy of this drama in the Playhouse Archives.) Finally, one last story of interest—an editorial about a “Space Needle” for Lakewood:

“...[R]egarding the outcome, the observation tower concept is one of the best ideas to come from an otherwise dull municipal agency,” was the paper’s comment on the proposed design of the Lakes District’s new water tower. The writer proposed that the tower include a platform on the structure’s top, and that it should be the largest water tower in the state. The tower, just off Bridgeport Way, is today known as the inverted flashlight.

Speaking of water, the paper also included a drawing of Lakewood Water District’s new office near Washington Blvd. and Gravelly Lake Drive.

TRENCH from page 9

Home guard starts campaign for respect to the flag

200 Pies each day at Hostess House

Santa Claus will surely be at Camp

Big Anvil chorus at Remount Depot

Huge pipe organ installed in YMCA Building
(the organ was a gift of Mrs. William Rust)

Photos in the 1918-19 issues featured an assortment of military bands, commanding officers, a panoramic view

of the cantonment, and one showed the camp bakers who baked “eight-and-a-half tons of bread daily.”

Each edition, inserted in the Tacoma newspaper, included reports from each “building”—information about coming movies, boxing matches, “Smokers” and other events between the soldiers.



FLAPJACK FUNDRAISER BIG SUCCESS!



Thanks to a great turnout, your Society netted \$895 serving breakfast to supporters at the Lakewood Applebee’s, March 11.



Board member Kris Kaufmann stands ready with refills...



...as Sec. Sharon Taylor & Pres. Sue Scott wait tables.



Lakewood Historical Society

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Spring 2017 Programs & Activities

Tuesday, April 25th, 7-9 pm

Update on New Exhibits Planned for Lakewood History Museum.

St Mary's Episcopal Church, 10630 Gravelly Lake Drive SW. Review of big changes planned for the Museum by our Museum Manager, Emma Pierce.

Tuesday, May 23rd, 3-5 pm

Tour of Lewis Army Museum. To celebrate National Historic Preservation Month, visit newly remodeled museum showcasing the military history of the region. Limited to 50 people, RSVP by calling or stopping by the Lakewood History Museum, 6211 Mt. Tacoma Dr., 253-682-3480. Details will be provided to attendees before tour.

Thursday, June 8th, 10 am-1 pm

Open House at the Lakewood Senior Activity Center, 9112 Lakewood Dr SW. Be sure to stop by the Society's table at this event.

Tuesday, June 20th, 10 am-3 pm

Lakewood Farmers Market, Lakewood City Hall, 6000 Main St SW. Be sure to stop by the Society booth to participate in the trivia contest and drawing.

Tuesday, June 27th, 2-4 pm

SAVE THE DATE! Tea at Thornewood Castle. Exclusive fundraising event limited to Members Only. Invitations will be sent after May 1st.

*Find us on Facebook (Lakewood-Historical-Society-Washington-State)
Or check our website for more information and current events: www.lakewoodhistorical.org*