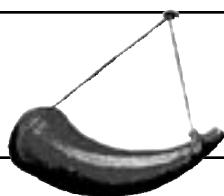


BECAUSE OUR HISTORY MATTERS



Prairie Gazette

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LAKEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Winter 2009

The Big One

The story behind Lakewood Library's giant tree

By Hayden Mackley

(The following article is reprinted from an earlier copy of Prairie Gazette.)

Somewhere out in the forest near Packwood, there remains the stump of the largest Douglas Fir tree ever logged. In the hot summer of 1946, three men worked for the better part of two days to fell the 12-foot-wide giant, with not much more than a standard 8-foot power saw. They had to notch in 3 feet on four sides with their axes before they could move in with their saw. The loggers named the tree simply "The Big One."

The massive cut stump of the tree quickly became a minor celebrity in the area, as it was trucked to the Northwest Door Company plant at 1203 East D Street in Tacoma. The company's president, Herman E. Tenzler, decided that something of the tree should be on display to the public, and so a cross-section was cut. With great fanfare, it was unveiled to the public, complete with signs showing the age of the tree and famous events during its lifetime.

In the early 1960's Tenzler, through the Tenzler Foundation, became the principal donor for a new building for the Lakewood Library, which had previously existed in temporary shop-spaces and basements. In 1963, the Flora B. Tenzler Memorial Library, named in memory of Tenzler's late wife, opened on the corner of Wildaire Road and Gravelly Lake Drive. The Northwest Door Company also donated its tree cross-section to the library, which was installed beside the library's doors in

July 1965.

The log continues to impress library-goers to this day, standing as a testimonial to the history of the area. The rings of the trunk tell the tree's life story, recording bitter winters, summer droughts, fires and lightning strikes. Close inspection of the tree's rings reveal that it was 586 years old when felled, first breaking through the forest floor as a seedling in the year 1359. It was already a large tree in the early 16th century when a forest fire ravaged

Continued on Page 6



Holiday Open House at Museum drew a nice crowd of members and interested area residents, a number of whom joined the LHS.



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Prairie Gazette

Prairie Gazette is the official publication of the Lakewood Historical Society. The newsletter is published six times a year. Distribution is directly to members and available at the Lakewood Historical Museum, 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr. SW, Lakewood, WA 98499

The staff of Prairie Gazette actively encourages input from the Society's members as well as the general public regarding story ideas or 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 the website for information on events and activities.

www.lakewoodhistorical.org.

EDITOR

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President's Message

This will be a winter we won't soon forget! Suffering from "cabin fever" after being cooped up in the house for a week, I finally ventured out of my driveway to get much needed groceries. I'm so glad I only own cats that use a box and not a dog that had to be walked twice a day!

This is the time of the year to reflect on what we have accomplished in the past year as well as make plans for the future. Negotiations with Clover Park Technical College in obtaining a long term lease for the Mueller-Harkins Hangar are moving forward. That relocation is probably three to five years away so we are looking at renting a larger space in the Colonial Center.

I'm especially pleased with the addition of our new board members - Marion Ball, Bill Harrison, Gary Hess and Dave Sclair. I am confident that we are poised and ready to assume the challenges that face us. Our biggest challenge is fundraising. We are no different than many other non-profit organizations that are having difficulty in receiving enough donations to meet operating expenses. We will be doubling our efforts and coming up with more creative fundraising activities this year.

Because of this concern it is even more important that our members renew their membership. Not only do we want you to not miss receiving our newsletter but also to be able to participate in "members only" activities. A membership form is provided for your convenience. We'd also like you to consider making a donation to the Annual Fund at this time. This is also a good time to consider volunteering for the Society. We are especially in need of more docents to staff the museum. Thanks to all of you who have volunteered in the past.

I'd like to thank all of you who attended our special events this past year. We were so pleased how everything turned out for the 10th Anniversary Celebration at the McGavick Center in October. It was a perfect location to celebrate this occasion. We had a good attendance at our Annual Meeting in November in spite of the "monsoon" rain we had that night. The winter weather delayed its onslaught so we could start the Christmas season with our Open House at the museum. We have some special programs and events scheduled this year that I want to be sure you don't miss.

Thank you for your dedication and loyalty.

Your humble leader,

Becky Huber

Pierce County READS 2009



Shaped after Pierce County READS successful 2008 community one book program, Pierce County Library System is launching a second program in January 2009. The program is premised on everybody in the county reading the same book, at the same time, sharing and discussing the book and coming together as a community. The goal is for residents to come together, share an activity and strengthen their community.

To further Pierce County Library's commitment to provide and encourage reading opportunities for all, the Library will present Pierce County READS with the program's co-presenter, The News Tribune. For the second year, Key Foundation is the major corporate sponsor of Pierce County READS. Washington State Library provided funding with a grant and is an event sponsor.

Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace ... One School at a Time by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin has been chosen as the book for the Pierce County Reads 2009. A true story of

compassion, perseverance and dedication, this is one man's mission to promote peace, repay a debt and keep a promise. While accomplishing his goal, he sets an example that is nothing short of inspirational. That person is Greg Mortenson, and his story is *Three Cups of Tea*.

The Lakewood Historical Society and History Museum is a community partner to get people involved and engaged with Pierce County READS. Please call Becky Huber (253-582-8682 e-mail:craftyhuber@comcast.net) if you are interested in forming a book club.

The Lakewood Library is participating with the following programs:

Tea Time - Saturday, Jan. 10, 2 pm

Community Conversation - Saturday, Feb. 7, 11 am

Worldwide Literacy- Saturday, Feb. 7, 1 pm

Storytelling - Thursday, Feb. 26, 7 pm

Tea Time

Taste different types of black

tea and learn the difference between the countries that produce them from Tea Madame La Donna Olmstead.

Community Conversation

Discuss themes from *Three Cups of Tea* including volunteerism, the golden rule and social activism during an informal conversation with the community led by Pastor Ralf Kalms from Christ Lutheran Church.

Worldwide Literacy

Learn about local and international literacy efforts and how you can help children such as the Afghan and Pakistani girls in *Three Cups of Tea* learn to read and have better lives. Ruth Anderson from Tacoma Area Literacy Council presents the program.

Storytelling

Listen to tales of peace, justice and humor from the Islamic world told by accomplished local storyteller Cathy Spagnoli.

Author Event: Pierce County Library READS 2009
Meet author David Oliver Relin Sharon McGavick Student and Conference Center at Clover Park Technical College, Lakewood

Saturday, March 14, 7 p.m.
Author will speak, entertain and sign books.

Please go to the Pierce County Library System's website, www.piercecountylibrary.org for more information on other activities and events that are planned for the program.

LAKWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM
2008 MUSEUM FUND CONTRIBUTORS
December 31, 2008



Lakewood History Museum
Thank You, Fund Donors & Sponsors

Gifts: \$14,217

Goal: \$25,000 by 12/31/08
for Operations, Education,
Exhibits, Programs and
Community Outreach

Lakewood Lodging Tax
helps support history museum
promotions, displays & exhibits.

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Jacueline Walker
John and Penny Walstrom



Here are some recently donated articles of historical significance. Do you have items you can add to the museum's collection?

The Big One... *Continued from Page 1*

the woods. The scars show that the tree was injured but lived on, while a neighboring tree collapsed against it, presumably during the fire.

Over the next 70 years the tree compensated for its leaning companion by adding fat rings to one side of its trunk and narrower ones to the other. In this manner, the tree straightened and grew vertically once more.

After several hundred years more, the Douglas Fir had outgrown all of its neighbors. Such height provided abundant sunlight, but also made the tree vulnerable to lightning. It was struck by a bolt when it was 420 years old, the same time

as the revolutionary war was being waged on the east coast. A large top section, at least 40 feet, broke off as a result of the lightning strike and the massive electrical charge burned through the inside of the bark to the ground. The tree grew no taller after that, but continued to live and widen its base for another ***Be sure to attend the Jan. 22 program on the history of the Lakewood Library . See Page 8 for details.***

century and a half before it was logged.

According to news reports of the tree's logging at the time, it was harvested because it was damaged and already beginning to rot. While the logging of old growth

forests nowadays is a more controversial issue than in 1946, the Northwest Door Company used the display outside its plant to promote "wise forest management" and published a leaflet to tell the tree's story in the first person. The company went to great lengths to assure the public that this is how the tree would have wanted to go. "In my 586th year ... as the song of the saw and the shouts of the logging crew grew closer, I know my destiny was to be fulfilled ... Because of (forest management) provisions, I leave my forest friends with no regrets. Under the guiding hand of man, there will be many others to take my place. It is my destiny that I go into a new and varied service. I am about to be fashioned into a thousand useful items."



Celebrating 70 Years of the

Lakewood Playhouse

The current exhibit of Lakewood Playhouse memorabilia will remain on display thru March 14. It includes many playbills, poster, photos, costumes and much more.

Do you have items of historical significance?

The Lakewood Historical Society is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Gifts to the society are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please contact the museum if you have questions or want to consider making a contribution.

6211 Mount Tacoma Dr SW, Lakewood, WA 98498 253-682-3480

**LAKESWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
YEAR END FINANCIAL REPORT - DECEMBER 31, 2008**

Cash on Hand	11/30/2008	12/31/2007
Checking	\$ 1387.72	\$ 2414.68
Money Market	\$ 2661.77	\$10,260.29
Certificate of Deposit	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Total	\$ 4049.31	\$12,674.97

Income	December 2008	12 Months 2008 YTD
Grants	\$ 6000.00	\$58,309.37 (1)
Memberships	\$ 95.00	\$ 4285.00
Donations - Museum Fund	\$ 585.00	\$11,967.00
Sponsorships	\$ 0.00	\$ 2250.00
Special Fund Raisers	\$ 0.00	\$ 2100.00
Bank Interest	\$ 7.58	\$ 294.38
Other	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 807.54</u>
Total Income	\$ 6687.58	\$80,013.29

Expenses		
Operations & Administration	\$ 252.86	\$ 4343.25
Web site	\$ 0.00	\$ 765.00
Contract Services	\$ 0.00	\$20,325.00 (2)
Insurance	\$ 0.00	\$ 2033.00
Museum lease	\$2100.00	\$24,700.00
Museum exhibits	\$ 18.05	\$12,089.24
Postage, copies & printing	\$ 144.91	\$ 3805.93
Museum Annual Fund	\$ 0.00	\$ 2855.15
Special Events	\$ 0.00	\$ 3185.01
Marketing/Publicity	<u>\$ 50.00</u>	<u>\$10,415.61</u>
Total Expenses	\$2565.82	\$84,517.19

Closing Cash on Hand 12/31/2008		
Checking	\$ 1556.72	\$ 1556.72
Money Market	<u>\$ 6614.35</u>	<u>\$ 6614.35</u>
Total	\$ 8171.07	\$8171.07

Reserve for Unpaid 2008 Services		
Consulting Services	<u>(\$5400.00)</u>	<u>(\$5400.00)</u>

Cash Available	\$2771.07	\$2771.07
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(1) Includes \$12,309.37 received in 2008 from 2007 grant

(2) Includes \$6615.00 paid in 2008 for 2007 services

Prepared 12/31/2008

Program Announcements for Winter 2009

Thursday, January 22, 2009, 7 pm, Lakewood Library Meeting Room - “History of the Lakewood Library” Library staff and volunteers from Friends of the Library as well as members of the Tenzler family will share the history of the library built in 1963. Learn about “the big one”, a section of which is on permanent display in front of the library.

Tuesday, February 17, 2009, 7 pm, Clover Park High School Performing Arts Center - “A Visit with Aunt Harriet”. In celebration of Black History Month, Karol Brown will perform a spellbinding portrayal of Harriet Tubman as a 92 year old looking back on her life. She shares her stories about her family, her faith and risked her own freedom by helping runaway slaves gain freedom on the Underground Railroad.

Thursday, March 19, 2009, 7 pm, Lakewood Library Meeting Room - “Indiana Handfield-Jones Explores the State Archives” Jerry Handfield, the Washington state archivist, formerly from Indiana, will focus on the importance of public records to the researcher and historian.

Exhibits Announcements for Winter 2009

Jan. 7- Mar. 14, 2009; “Celebrating 70 Years at the Lakewood Playhouse” - A sampling of playbills, posters, props, and costumes of the 70 years of drama, comedy and musicals. Exhibit is curated by Halley Phillips, the artistic director of the children’s drama program.

Jan. 7- Feb. 28, 2009; “Vintage Kodak Cameras” - The display of early 20th century Kodak cameras has been extended. Cameras are from the collection of Don Tempel.

Do you have a special collection? We are especially interested in items of Hawaii or Alaska celebrating the 50th Anniversary of their statehoods. Both states had direct links to our area going back to the Hudson’s Bay Company in the 1800’s. Please contact Becky Huber at 253-582-8682.

Lakewood Historical Society
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