

Footprints

on the sands of time...

ISSUE LXXIII SOUTHWEST SEATTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY & LOG HOUSE MUSEUM AUTUMN 2009

Telling our Westside Stories: The Land—The Duwamish Estuary

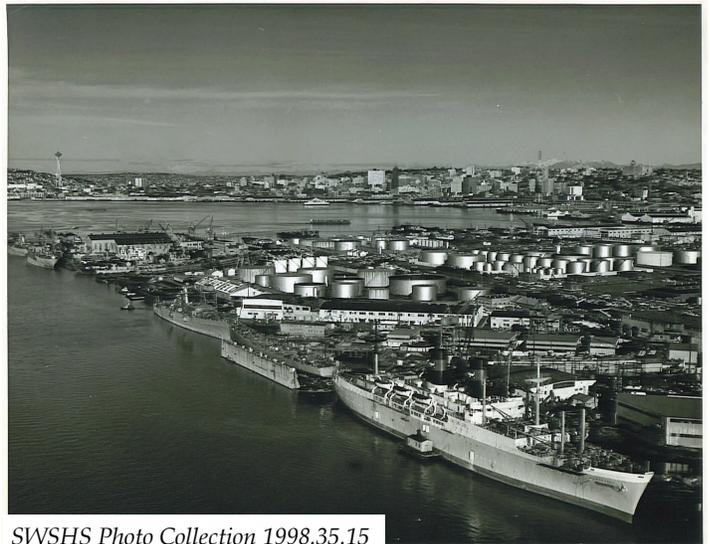
The dramatic development of the industrial area on the Duwamish River and estuary has been a defining historical event for southwest Seattle as recounted in a talk by George Blomberg of the Port of Seattle at the Log House Museum on September 8th.

In 1848, the estuary of the Duwamish River included 1450 acres of intertidal sand and mud, nearly 1300 acres of intertidal marsh, and 1450 acres of swamp or forested wetland. At low tide, residents of the Duwamish Peninsula could have walked over the mud from Duwamish Head to what is now Beacon Hill. The Duwamish watershed drained 1640 square miles, drawing water from Lake Samammish, Lake Washington, and the Cedar, Black, Green and White rivers. The watershed included 1900 linear miles of stream habitat accessible to five species of anadromous fish, and thousands of salmon migrated upriver each year to spawn. Marine life supported a thriving Native American population.

Today, the intertidal sand/mud substrate and marsh areas have been reduced by 98%; forested wetlands are non-existent. The water flow is 73% smaller, and only 8% of the former stream habitat is available to migratory fish. The number of people living along the river—in the longhouse at Herring's House, in Riverside homes, in houseboats—is much diminished although the river's banks remain a home of last resort for the homeless.

Yet this estuary is now the industrial heart of Seattle, including 8.2 square miles of land that was once water, supporting approximately 76,000 jobs with an annual payroll of \$2.5 billion. Harbor Island was for a long time the largest artificial island in the world. The deepened and straightened Duwamish Waterway extends up the river for 5.3 miles, providing water access to the industrial area.

Blomberg has been working on industrial development and environmental matters at the port



SWSHS Photo Collection 1998.35.15

since 1985, now in Seaport Environmental Programs. In a series of slides, he showed the growth of shipyards, lumber yards, slag from the steel mill, airplane production, concrete manufacturing, and pilings soaked with creosote. One slide showed a ship to railroad connection that allowed the seaport of Seattle to transport goods from coast to coast in 96 hours more than 100 years ago, effectively competing with the Panama Canal.

These years of industrialization have come at an environmental cost. Blomberg detailed restoration efforts at the Turning Basin, T-105, and T-107. He described the creation of Jack Block Park, a little-known park along Harbor Avenue cherished by at least one skater in the audience.

Judy Bentley

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SUMMER HISTORY WALKS

Footprints

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(one block south of Alki Beach)

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Saturday & Sunday

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Printing courtesy of



THE LOG HOUSE MUSEUM IS
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Alan Schmitz tells of life on the Schmitz Estate
Photo courtesy Keri De Tore and the WS Blog

On August 22, Alan Schmitz, grandson of Ferdinand and Emma Schmitz, led 30 history aficionados on a walking tour of the grounds of Sans Souci, which means without worry. This estate on the grounds of the present Me-Kwa-Mooks Park was home to this family of Seattle bankers, realtors and restaurateurs, from 1907 to the late 1960's, when it was torn down. The shoreline was donated in 1945 and the remaining hillside property in 1971. Emma Schmitz suggested the name Me-Kwa-Mooks, which means prairie point. to the late 1960's, when



The historic WPA built Community Center located at Steve Cox Park Photo Courtesy Sherry Richardson

On the July 25 the History Walk of White Center was led by SWSHS board member, Ron Richardson. The earliest settlers ran logging operations and struggled with farming among stumps. By the 1920's citizen initiatives had built roads, a streetcar line, a water hook-up, a power grid, and a commercial center at 16th and Roxbury. There was talk of bootleggers, as well as

it was torn down. The shoreline was donated in 1945 and the remaining hillside property in 1971. Emma Schmitz suggested the name Me-Kwa-Mooks, which means prairie point.

The Tour began in the big field which had been the Schmitz vegetable garden. Schmitz led walkers pas the former pond stocked with trout, past the stone walls of the half-circle driveways that led to the home, and pointed out the location of the former pond stocked with trout, past the stone walls of the half-circle driveways that led to the home, and pointed out the location of the 17-room house, the water tower, and orchard. The tour was jointly sponsored with the Olmsted Society. Joan Hockaday recounted the friendly relationship between Ferdinand Schmitz, Seattle Parks commissioner, and John Charles Olmsted, who took and interest in Schmitz's rose gardens.

After the tour of the estate, Jeff Sifferman and Ken Shaw led stalwarts on a north-south trail through the park, showing the work that has been done by many volunteers and organizations, restoring the native vegetation of the park *Judy Bentley*

servicemen and war industry workers flocking to 16th Ave. for excitement and usually finding it. There really was an 'Underground White Center

Along 16th Ave SW the tour group learned of White Center's colorful commercial district that originally included a drug store, bakery, grocery store restaurant, theatre, and, of course, a boxing arena that was later a skating rink.

Shelli Park, the force behind the group White Center For The Arts, talked about that group's future plans. The WCFTA facility will include gallery space, art classes, and performances. At the last stop, folks learned about a 'stimulus' project of another era, the White Center Community Center. It was built by the W.P.A. during the New Deal years providing jobs and leaving a building that still serves the community 70 years later. *Ron Richardson*

ANNUAL GALA SET FOR OCTOBER 31ST

Westside Ghosts will appear at Salty's on Alki, Saturday, October 31, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Join us for this very special event that is being celebrated for the first time on Halloween.

Westside ghosts will tell their stories while you enjoy the restaurant's popular buffet brunch. As part of the Telling our Westside Stories campaign, famous and not so famous people from Westside's past will come to life to tell their tales. The audience will participate in guessing the identity of the historical "guests". Guess right and you win a prize!

A silent auction will feature an array of unique and exciting items to bid on, including a catered Super Bowl party, private tennis lessons and a waterfront dinner.

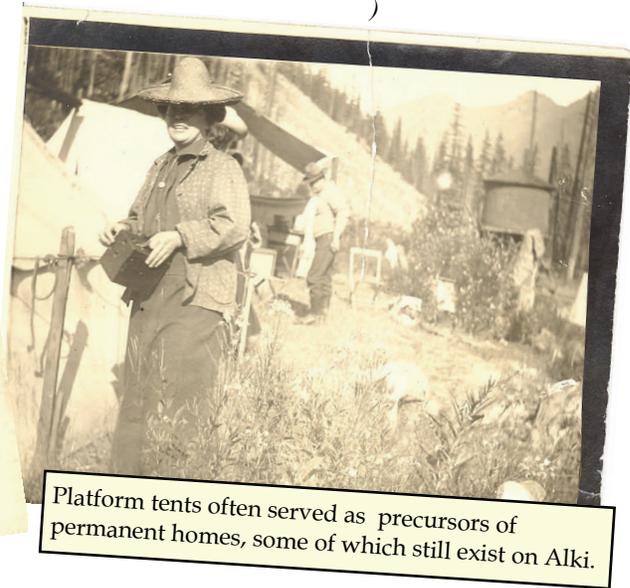
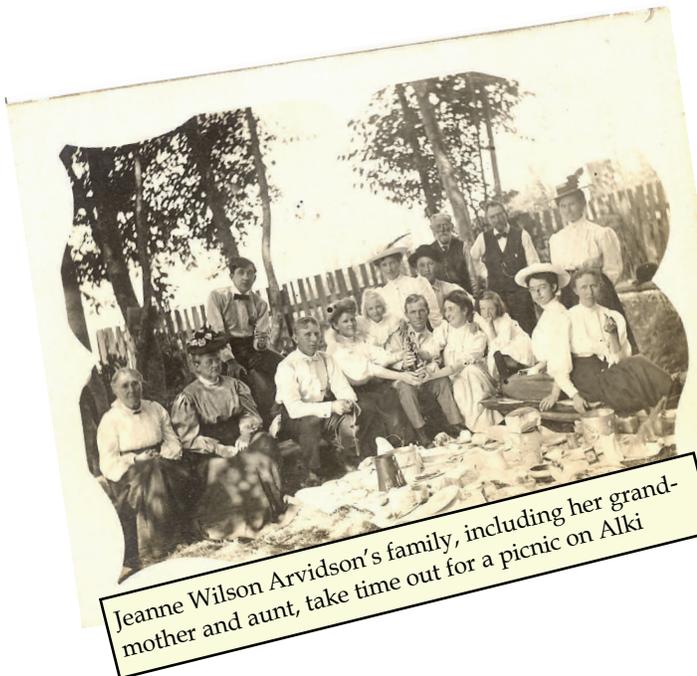
Please join us for the party. Cost is \$60 per ticket. For reservations, call the Log House Museum at 206-938-5293. Watch for your invitation arriving in the mail soon!



SWSHS Advisory Council Members

- Earl Cruzen
- Clay Eals
- Joe Follansbee
- Merrilee Hagen
- Jordan Hecker
- Sharon Huling
- Scott Hunt
- Barton Kale
- Joe McDermott
- Jack Miller
- Patricia Mullen
- Charles G. Payton
- Tom Rasmussen
- Greg Theobald
- Diane Tice
- Jerry Vandenberg
- Carol Vincent

THE PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTION



These photos were recently donated to the Log House Museum by Jeanne Wilson Arvidson. The photos show members of her family camping on Alki circa 1906. Even then Alki Beach was a recreation destination. People living in Seattle would have summer homes, or campsites, near West Seattle's waterfront. We love old photos of West Seattle! If you have any old photos depicting the west side in earlier times we hope you will take time to stop by the museum and share them with us. Sarah Frederick

TELLING OUR WESTSIDE STORIES UPDATE

At the annual Fourth of July picnic, we launched a three-year campaign called Telling Our Westside Stories. Each year the museum will gather stories and prepare a traveling exhibit that tells the stories of southwest Seattle. The first year's theme is the Land; the second and third are Work and Home. At the picnic, Steve Shay, reporter for *The West Seattle Herald*, interviewed members about their memories of the land.

Our goal is to raise \$150,000 over a period of three years to stabilize and enhance the program of the Log House Museum. One third of funds received will go into our endowment fund; one-third will become an operational reserve (in a savings account); and one third will fund current programs. We need 150 donors of \$1000 or 300 donors of \$500 or 600 donors of \$250.

Each month, it costs about \$5,000 to keep the museum open. Staff salaries average \$3000 (director, collections manager, bookkeeper, gardener, cleaning—all part-time). insurance, security, postage, phone, website, supplies and utilities account for another \$1000. Collections, exhibits, educational programs, and publications may cost another \$1,000. Income derives from memberships, donations, grants, museum store revenue, and program revenue.

Members have responded generously to this campaign. As of August 31, pledges had reached \$15,960. The endowment fund began with a \$1000 gift from Elliott Couden, founder of the Southwest Seattle Historical Society; we have now made our first investment of more than \$4,000 from this campaign. The board has also designated memorial gifts for the endowment, and an investment of \$500 was made from gifts received in 2009 in memory of Maryann Maginnis and Jacqueline Kelly.

You may receive a phone call from a board member or volunteer, updating you on this campaign and asking for your participation. We appreciate your support, and we want to hear your stories.



Calvin Bannon shares personal memories at annual picnic
Photo Courtesy Steve Shay

TELLING OUR WESTSIDE STORIES PLEDGES

\$1000

Allen and Judy Bentley
Peggy Cullor
Mary Lou Richardson
Dr. Virginia C. Stimpson
Joan Stover
Lou and Diane Tice
Elaine Townsend
Jerry Vandenberg
Carol and Charlie Vincent

\$500

John Bennett
Earl and Adah Cruzen
Shirley Egan
Andrew L. Nelson
Ron and Sherry Richardson

\$250

Gayle Anderson
The Boeing Company
Ronald J. Champoux
Marty and Ann Dirks
Bob and Ada Hallberg
Donald Kelstrom
Flora Belle Key
Candace Lein-Hayes
Andrea Mercado
Joan Bailey Mraz
Oscar Mraz
Judy Pickens
Michael E. Purdy
Jackie Standley Scott
Audrey Zemke

Verda Hansberry
Dan and Eleanor Laxdall
Alan Mendelssohn
Tom Rasmussen
Hildie Sheftel
Gael Treesiwin

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Summer is never a quiet time at the Log House Museum. Visitors arrive by water taxi and shuttle, sometimes bringing a cherished photograph or battered wool bathing suit for the collections. Beachgoers stop by for cool shade; bus riders enjoy the bench in front of the former gift shop; children gawk at the totem pole and old Statue of Liberty. In July and August we celebrated a Fourth of July picnic, launched a new program and fundraising campaign, and conducted two walking tours. In May, June, and September, the museum hosted three history talks on the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition, the Olmsted legacy in Seattle, and the environmental history of the Duwamish River/Waterway and estuary. All of this activity is good but not a vacation for staff or board.

The executive board has also taken leadership in fulfilling the Society's mission of protecting and preserving historic sites. We continue to monitor the Homestead Restaurant/Fir Lodge site and encourage its protection and restoration. The board has been asking the owner to protect the building from the elements, maintain the grounds, and share his plans for restoring the site. Board members have also attended the design review meetings of the Seattle Department of Planning and Development with regard to proposed develop-

ment at The Kenney. In August, the Landmarks Preservation Board designated the Seaview Building, a century-old building with a cupola visible to many neighbors and an historic view of the sea, as a landmarked site. This building, which reflects Independence Hall in Philadelphia, was designed by the architecture firm of Graham and Myers. The designation did not include the interior of the building but does include the gardens to the west of the building. Any changes to the exterior of the building in a Kenney renovation would need approval from the Landmarks Board.

The Sanctuary at Admiral, formerly the Sixth Church of Christ Scientist, was also designated a landmark this summer. The owners plan to provide a venue for celebrations and events.

The generosity, support, and participation of members sustain this work. After serving on the board and as Treasurer for many years, Aleta Woodworth resigned effective Sept. 1. Joan Stover has agreed to serve as Treasurer through the end of the year and to be nominated at the annual meeting. Joan has just retired from full-time teaching in chemistry at South Seattle Community College. She is also a certified financial planner.

Consider joining us in these endeavors.

Judy Bentley



Judy Bentley
President
jbentley@sccd.ctc.edu

Executive Board

Judy Bentley
President

Marcy Johnsen
Vice-President

Joan Stover
Treasurer

Tia Hallberg
Secretary

Flora Belle Key
Membership Secretary

Trustees

Ron Richardson

Joey Richesson

Linda Turner

Tony Vincent

SWSHS OFFERS CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF THESE MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

Donna Beeson—Donna and her husband John were founding members of the Log House Museum. August, 2009

Helen Sutton—Owner of La Grace Dress Shop and community leader. SWSHS Collections donor. July, 2009

GIFTS OF TRIBUTE

In Memory of Maryann Maginnis

Mary Cocivera

Don Gregory

Marilynn Miller,

Norma Byrce

In Memory of Jackie Kelly

John Kelly

Carol & Charlie Vincent

In Honor of Elliott & Erma Couden

Dr. Virginia Simpson

In Memory of Steven Mraz

Joan Mraz

Carol & Charlie Vincent

Staff

Andrea Mercado
Museum Director

Sarah Frederick
Membership and

Collections Manager

Diane Ward
Bookkeeper

BOARD PROFILE

Joey Richesson, Trustee

A native Seattleite and current resident of Ballard, Joey's heart really belongs on Alki. As a child, her family moved frequently to a wide range of Seattle neighborhoods and Joey claims it's easier to name the communities she didn't live in while growing up. Although she had only lived five months on Alki, Joey has always felt intensely bonded to the community and to the friends she made here. Some of her favorite memories of this time in her life were spent at the log home of her best friend and partner Marcy Johnsen. That log house, once owned by the Johnsen family, would become the Log House Museum.

Having volunteered at the museum since its' opening in 1997, Joey was pleased to join the Executive Board in 2003. She felt that her varied background as an administrative manager, freelance writer and interior designer offered a variety of useful skills so that she could be a strong force behind the scenes helping with the museum's future development. Board and Staff would all agree that she has accomplished her mission.



Photo courtesy of
Joey Richesson

Joey says, "My time on the Board has been so rewarding because it has given me a chance to use my skills and to learn many new ones. Anyone interested in local history, fund-raising, outreach, writing, event planning, museum assistance or PR would find participation on the Board, or as a member of the SWSHS, a lively and rewarding endeavor."

Carol Vincent

Business Members

- Ballentene Railing
- Better Business Bookkeeping
- Chelan Café
- Clear Channel Outdoor
- David Kehle, Architect
- Dunville Gallery
- David Leavengood, Architect
- Hossmann Family Foundation
- Jackson, Morgan, Hunt, PLLC
- Northwest Art and Frame
- Our Lady of Guadalupe School
- The Pacific Institute
- Tom's Automotive
- Tuxedos and Tennis Shoes
- West Seattle Herald

*Mission of the Southwest Seattle Historical Society
"...to advocate the collection, protection and preservation of historic artifacts and sites, and to sponsor programs and events that enhance our community's heritage"*

FEATURED READING FROM THE MUSEUM'S GIFT SHOP

Greenscapes: Olmsted's Pacific Northwest
by Joan Hockaday, \$29.95

James Olmsted, son of Central Park planner Frederick Olmsted, is responsible for some of Seattle's most impressive park designs. Like his father he believed that green spaces within an urban environment promoted better city living. Olmsted's design can be seen in West Seattle at the Hia-watha Playfield, Rose Lodge and Schmitz Park. He also designed the Alaska Yukon

Pacific exposition grounds at the University of Washington as well as Golden Gardens park in Ballard. Olmsted worked in the Pacific Northwest from 1903-1911. There are many excerpts from letters sent home to his wife back east comparing some of the scenery to that back home. Many of the images used in this book belong in the Log House Museum's collection.

Sarah Frederick

JOIN NOW!

- Yes, I want to support the work of the Log House Museum!
- \$15 Senior/Student \$25 Individual/Non-Profit
- \$40 Family \$100 Pioneer
- \$150 Business \$250 Settler

Please send me information about volunteer opportunities.

I am enclosing my donation of \$ _____ to support your work.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

e-mail: _____

Cash _____ Check: _____ CC: (Visa or MC) # _____

Expiration Date: _____ Signature: _____

Please make checks payable to the Southwest Seattle Historical Society (SWSHS)

Return to SWSHS, c/o Log House Museum, 3003 61st Ave. SW, Seattle, WA 98116

The Log House Museum is a project of the SWSHS, a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization, Tax ID #91-1297010.

All gifts are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED

Annual meeting of the Southwest Seattle Historical Society will be Saturday, November 14, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the West Seattle Library 2306 42nd Avenue SW.

Every year at the annual meeting we elect new board members and officers for the year. We invite you to consider joining this energetic, history-loving, preservation-passionate board. Terms are for three years. The board meets almost monthly. Board members also serve on committees such as facilities, administration, program, outreach, and fundraising. You don't have to be a board member to serve on a committee. If you're interested, contact Joey Richesson at Eunice.Snit@aol.com or Judy Bentley at jbentley@sccd.ctc.edu.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Nancy Hallberg and Peter Junkerman
Parker Sroufe
Constance Speth
Joan Stover
Alan Mendelsson

VOLUNTEER GREETERS URGENTLY NEEDED

Can you volunteer for at least a two hour shift once a month or more to greet visitors at the Log House Museum during open hours on Thursdays through Sunday from 12 to 4 p.m.? With a volunteer greeting museum visitors, the staff is then able to focus on grant writing, collections maintenance and other necessary tasks. Greeting guests is the #1 priority of the museum; we're there to share history with the public. Become a valuable member of the museum's volunteer team. Contact Sarah Frederick at 206-938-5293 or e-mail loghousemuseum@comcast.net. Subject "volunteering".

FOOTPRINTS

Newsletter of the Southwest Seattle Historical Society
& "Birthplace of Seattle" Log House Museum
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***SW Seattle Historical Society Annual Gala
It's Halloween!***

***Join the ghosts of Westside's past for an
entertainingly ghoulish afternoon***

Brunch, program and silent auction

11:30–2:30 Saturday, October 31

Salty's on Alki



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Saturday, September 19 | Time Capsule interment at Alki Statue of Liberty Plaza, 2 - 3:30 p.m. (Meet at Log House Museum at 1:30 to accompany the time capsule) |
| Saturday, October 31 | Brunch with Westside Ghosts, Salty's, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. |
| Saturday, November 14 | Annual Meeting, 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., West Seattle Library |