

Footprints

on the sands of time....

Issue IV

SOUTHWEST SEATTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 1988

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

A MEMORABLE VISIT

Your President, and spouse, recently visited a truly charming historic house on the Kent-Auburn border. We urge you to inspect it the next time you're out that way.

The Erick Sanders mansion has been described as "one of the best preserved examples of a pre-World War I mansions to be found in South King County."

Built in 1912, this officially designated King County landmark, located on a large tract of land, is owned by the Advent Christian Church and is used for church services. The two-story structure features stained glass windows brought from the Alaska Yukon Exposition of 1909.

Sunday tours are conducted by church members. Caretaker Stan Flewelling will give impromptu tours on weekdays. The address is 5516 S. 277th St., Auburn, WA 98001. Proceeding easterly from I-5 on the S. 275th St. exit the road winds down hill. Just before reaching the valley floor one must make a left turn onto the property. A sign is at the entrance but it and the mansion cannot be seen until one is abreast of it. So, the trick is to slow down as one nears the valley or you'll pass it by!

NEW HISTORY BOOK IN PROGRESS

The Washington State Chapter of the American Public Works Association has embarked upon a major project which is to publish a "History of Public Works in Washington State, 1889-1989".

The history book when complete will include several important elements.

1. A general history of public works throughout the state. This will reflect structures, water and

sanitary systems, bridges and highways, irrigation and power systems, dams, and other public works.

2. Brief histories of public works agencies-cities and districts will be included to reflect their growth and major development over the years.

3. Brief histories of private firms that have been part of the public works fields-contractors, consultants and suppliers are included as they have been a part of history and have carried out the work of governmental agencies.

4. Biographical sketches of many individuals, active in public works born now and in the past, will be in the book. When completed, it will mark the role of public works in the state. The book will be ready for distribution for the State Centennial in 1989. It will be a high quality valuable reference book for libraries, historical societies, agencies, companies, and individuals.

Our society has indicated our desire to join in this historical project in whatever way we may contribute.

HISTORIC FT. LAWTON UPDATE

About a dozen National Register Buildings owned by the City of Seattle have been threatened with demolition despite an agreement to the contrary which ended up in court. The City was found to be inadequately complying with the terms of the property transfer and the buildings still stand. The City Council is now about to review its stance. YOU are invited to attend a public hearing 6 p.m., May 3rd, in the City Council Chambers, 11th floor Municiple Bldg., 600 4th Ave., Seattle, to express your interests and concerns.

BLUE HERON WEATHER WATCH

From the inception days of this society charter member Fred Fletcher has represented us in seeking Landmark status for the dead end of Carroll Street abutting Puget Sound, the former site of an historic boat dock serving South Alki. Advancing years and failing health have slowed Fred's efforts lately, but fresh interest in the site has emerged from another source.

Lifelong West Seattle citizen, artist and Beach Drive resident Lezlie Jane, operating under the name of Lezlie Jane, Inc., has developed a creative site piece design expressly for this location. She describes it as "an open air community weather watch" featuring a semicircular railed concrete landing with a 12 foot radius. Inside it would be a 2 foot by 16 foot concentric semi-circular tiled concrete bench, looking at a 4 foot high central column. Inlaid into the sides of the column would be a variety of charts and weather related instruments protected under shatterproof glass.

A centerpiece would be a 16 foot high steel pole topped by a glass and steel weathervane in the shape of a stylized Great Blue Heron.

Lezlie is prepared to act as general contractor at an estimated cost \$50,000.00. She has received positive responses from several City of Seattle agencies, the West Seattle Chamber of Commerce, and local Kiwanis members.

It has been suggested that this would make a wonderful Centennial project. We will continue to seek Landmark status as well as to help bring this lovely, creative idea into fruition. Lezlie may be contacted at 938-4922.

TOTEM THEATER PROJECT

The Totem Theater folks are embarked upon an exciting quest to establish a cultural center in the West Seattle area. This will include a fully-equipped theater, space for offices, shops, storage, etc., in a well designed, conveniently located structure.

Our society has been cordially invited to participate in this community asset through our ideas and financial support. We may be afforded space for meetings and displays. Contributions are

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c/o SSCC, 6000 16th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98106

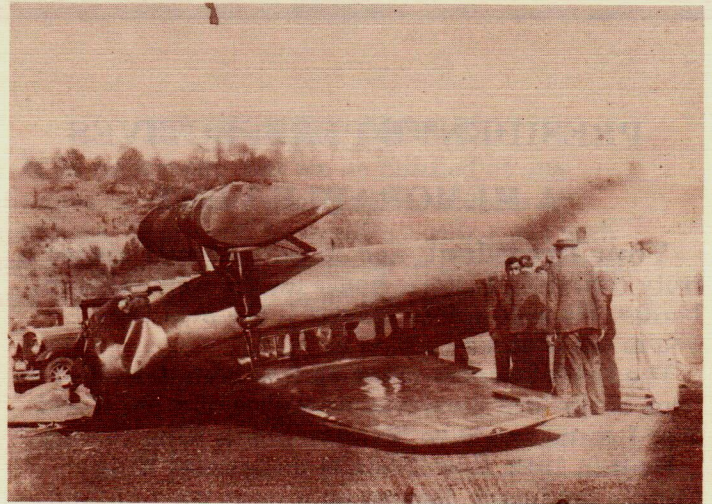
Editor: John F. Van Gilder

Editorial Board: Elliott N. Couden, Margaret Mary Davies,
Clay Eals.

now being solicited. The West Seattle Totem Theater can be reached by

Phone at 937-7843 or by mail at P.O. Box 16534, Seattle WA 98116.

We heartily commend this worthwhile project and encourage all interested members to support it.



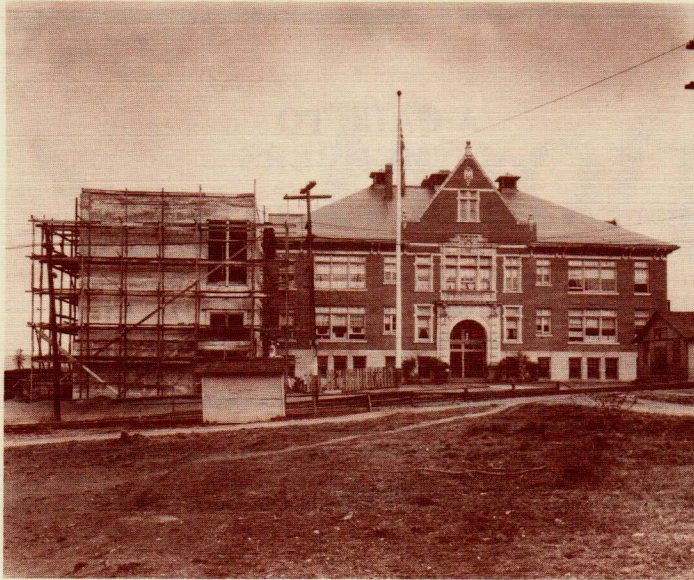
FLIGHTS OF FANCY (A/K/A Fancy Flights)

Our In-House aviation historian, "Win" Leggitt, has memories of early Boeing Field, Bryn Mawr Field (Renton), Thun Field (Puyallup) and Boise, Idaho. He pulls this mind-drifter out of his noggin. It happened on Boeing Field in 1935:

"Billy Williams, flying a Shell Oil Co. Lockheed "Vega", came straight from the north over Georgetown to land at the same time a Fairchild "22" with student and instructor were landing from the south. They met in almost direct alignment. The metal prop of the Fairchild cut the Vega fuselage in two just aft to the cabin section. The Vega went over on its back and the Fairchild slewed around minus the left landing gear unit.

"I had a dream, two nights before, that this Vega had an accident on the field and that it caught fire. While we were running out to the wreckage one of our shop men said, 'Hey Win!! Your dream!! Maybe we shouldn't get too close'.

There was gasoline forming a small lake around the two 'planes'. However, it didn't ignite and a news reporter that was in the Vega was dragged out a bit bruised. Williams had a cut on his pointy head."



Gatewood Elementary School, during construction of its west addition of eight rooms and a lunchroom-auditorium, 1922.

(Note Fauntleroy Street Car Line Tracks)

GATEWOOD SCHOOL, AND OTHERS

It's save-the-old-schoolhouse time again, for those who are so inclined.

The Seattle School District intends to build a new Gatewood Elementary School about two years from now, the main question is whether officials will decide to save the school's facade and renovate the structure, or whether they'll simply tear the whole thing down and build anew.

A district-sponsored committee of parents and others has been meeting regularly at Gatewood, 4320 S.W. Myrtle St., to discuss the issue. The public is invited. Remaining meetings are April 5 and April 26, both Tuesdays, at 7 p.m. in the school auditorium.

Of course, cost is an issue. But school officials haven't figured out how much more it would cost to preserve part of Gatewood, as opposed to razing it. The latter option would cost about \$4 million.

Gatewood is on the district's list of 16 buildings that need to be rebuilt or renovated to bring them up to safety standards. Gatewood is thought to be unsafe in the event of an earthquake because it is built of unreinforced brick masonry.

One of the oldest schools in West Seattle and White Center, Gatewood was built in 1910, and a wing was added in 1922.

Gatewood is not the only old school on the chopping block.

Seattle's superintendent William Kendrick has proposed to the Seattle School Board the closure of three elementary schools in West Seattle -- Hughes, Cooper and Genesee Hill. Only one of the three (Genesee Hill) would be retained by the district in case of future enrollment growth, under Kendrick's plan.

The other two (Hughes and Cooper) would be placed into a "non-essential" category, meaning that the district could raze those buildings and lease the

property to private investors, as was the case with Jefferson Elementary, which was razed in 1985 to make room for the Jefferson Square shopping/apartment complex.

Hughes was built in 1926 and remodeled in 1949. Cooper was built in 1917 and remodeled in 1922 and 1944.

Kendrick's plan is only that -- a plan. The School Board will make final decisions June 8.

There are two public meetings at which citizens can comment on the proposed closures. They are:

-- Wednesday, April 13, 7 p.m., at Genesee Hill Elementary School, 5012 S.W. Genesee St.

-- Saturday, April 16, 10 a.m., at Chief Sealth High School, 2600 S.W. Thistle St.

The district has published a 136-page analysis of Kendrick's plan and is selling copies for \$10 to interested citizens. The fee covers printing costs. The packets can be bought by calling 281-6700 or visiting district headquarters at 815 Fourth Ave. N. near the Seattle Center.

HELP WANTED!!

Mr. Tom Weiler has a project that may be assisted by some of our members. He is assembling data on the background and source of Seattle street names. If you can provide any insights on the following **West Seattle** area thoroughfare/place names call Tom at 547-8946. According to Tom an asterisk(*) indicates it existed prior to 1908.

AIKIN(S)/ANDOVER ST.*/ARCH
AVE.*/ARNOLD AVE.*/ARTHUR PL.*/ATLAS
PL.*/AVALON WY./BENTON PL./BRACE PT.
DR.*/BRADFORD ST.*/BRANDON
ST.*/BRONSON WY.*/CARROLL
ST.*/CHARLESTOWN ST.*/CLARMAR
PL./CROFT PL./DIRECTOR PL.*/DODGE
PL.*/DONALD ST.*/DONOVAN ST.*/DOUGLAS
PL.*/ENGLEWOOD/FERDINAND
ST.*/FINDLAY ST.*/FLORIDA/FRATER
AVE./FRONTENAC ST.*/GARLOUGH*/GLENN
WY.*/GLENRIDGE WY.*/GOLD CT.*/GORDON
PL.*/HEINZE WY.*/KENYON ST.*/LEDROIT
CT./LOTUS AVE.*/MANNING
ST.*/MARGUETITE CT./MILL(S) ST./MORGAN
ST./PL.*/MYERS WY./NORTHROP/OLSON
PL./PADILLA PL./PALM AVE.*/PORTER
WY./PRINCE ST.*/PRI(T)CHARD
ST.*/SHELDON PL./SNOW CT./STANLEY
AVE./SULLIVAN ST.*/SUMNER
AVE.*/TILLMAN ST./URSALA (URSULA)
PL./VICTORIA AVE.*/WALKER ST.*/WRIGHT
AVE./YANCY ST.* (also, WILLIAMS PT. and
BRACE POINT)

NEW HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS

'Distant Neighbors': A comparative history of Seattle and Vancouver" McDonald, \$27.95.

"The Great Northern Railway: A History". Hidy, Scott & Hofsommer.

"No Step Backward" Petrik, \$19.95.

ROSTERS

From time to time we print updated rosters of our membership. You may request a copy by calling Mr. Couden at 932-2290.

WE HOST A.K.C.H.O.

On Tuesday, November 22, our society will host a general membership meeting of the Association of King County Historical Organizations (AKCHO) at South Seattle Community College. We belong to the Association and our members are invited to attend. Details will appear in a later newsletter as well as in local weeklies.

A CALL TO ALL MEMBERS

Many of you will be contacted in the near future concerning "stories" for this society's records. We know that there are a number of untold, in-depth items of historic interest, and we want them for our archives. Short anecdotes and memories will be printed here in future issues as space permits. So, you are requested to take pen in hand and get these to us at your earliest convenience.

HAVE YOU MOVED?

It is important that we be notified of any changes in address or telephone numbers of members. There will be mailings going out with some frequency to all members in good standing and we need accuracy to do the job.

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