

Footprints

on the sands of time....

ISSUE XXXV

SOUTHWEST SEATTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 1997

Museum gallery named in honor of pioneer Smith family

Families tend to stay put in West Seattle. Ask a resident how long his relatives have lived on the West Side, and you're likely to get an answer that counts generations rather than years.

Few, however, have roots as deep as **Hans Martin Smith Jr.**, whose great-grandparents Anna and Hans Martin Hanson settled at Alki Point in 1868.

Recently, to celebrate the important role that his ancestors played in early Alki history, Martin's children presented him with a surprise 74th birthday gift – a \$50,000 gallery-naming donation to our Society's Log House Museum.

The "Smith Family Gallery" plaque, presented to Martin Aug. 13 during a family gathering at the Alki Homestead Restaurant, will hang permanently in the main exhibit area at the museum, which is scheduled to open Nov. 13. The inscription dedicates the gallery "to the descendants of Hans Martin Hanson, Seattle's first Norwegian settler, and Alfred and Lorena Smith, builders of the historic Stockade Hotel on Alki."

By the way, it's Al-key, not Al-kye, says Martin, who is not shy about correcting anyone who uses the modern mispronunciation.

"When I was a little boy, I remember hearing people down on the beach saying Al-kye," Martin says. "Members of my family



'Skoal!'

With a hearty "Skoal to the Northland!," Martin and Beverly Smith (seated at table) celebrate Martin's 74th birthday surrounded by children and grandchildren at the Alki Homestead Restaurant.

Photo by Brad Chrisman

would nudge each other and say, 'Foreigners.' "

Today, Martin runs a successful development company, Martin Smith Real Estate Services. But it was his great-grandparents, along with their brother-in-law, Knud Olsen, who made what is probably the family's most astute real-estate investment. In 1868 the Norwegian newcomers bought 319 acres at Alki from David S. "Doc" Maynard, Seattle's colorful first doctor, who for 11 years had tried with limited success to establish a farm there. The sale price, \$450.

The Hanson and Olsen families continued to log and farm Alki for several years, but eventually they discovered a new way to turn a profit – renting beachside campsites to city-dwellers from Seattle. In the 1890s, Alfred A. Smith, who had married the
(continued on page 8)


LOG HOUSE
museum
"THE BIRTHPLACE OF SEATTLE"

*Order your Heritage
Brick by Sept. 25*

– page 8

*Luncheon honors
state leaders for a
history-making fund*

– page 2

*Museum's opening
exhibit will celebrate
Alki's 'Coney Island'
days*

– page 4

*King County-funded
Traveling Libraries
Project to debut
this fall*

– page 7

Luncheon honors state leaders for a history-making fund

On Tuesday, July 22, civic and local corporate leaders joined the Southwest Seattle Historical Society at a special luncheon to thank state officials and legislators for their foresight in balancing strong economic development with the preservation of special heritage projects.

The SWSHS's project to restore the log house at 3003 61st Ave. S.W. ranked fourth statewide in the newly created "Capital Projects for

Washington's Heritage Fund." With other local legislators, Secretary of State **Ralph Munro**, a heritage enthusiast, presented the SWSHS with a check for \$189,680, the final monies needed to restore the building in preparation for the opening of the Birthplace of Seattle Log House Museum this November.

The luncheon, sponsored by Food Services of America, was held at the historic Alki Homestead Restaurant, and featured a

News stories document progress at the Log House

The Log House Museum may still be a glimmer in our eyes, but already it's making the news. On July 9, a KING 5 TV News crew came to the house and reporter **Kerri Kazarba** produced a story, which aired during that evening's 5:00 News, about the reconstruction and replacement of the logs.

The following day, Channel 11 News sent a crew to the house and captured videotape of the house under renovation and an interview with **David Rogers** about the techniques he used to recreate the back wall of the house. A nice story aired that evening during the 10:00 News.

The West Seattle Herald has carried three recent front-page articles about museum



Photo by Deborah Mendenhall

Secretary of State Ralph Munro, SWSHS President Arlene Wade, State Rep. Dow Constantine, SWSHS Membership Secretary Carol Vincent and State Sen. Michael Heavey proudly display a ceremonial check for \$189,680.04 from the State Heritage Fund.

powerful address delivered by descendants of Louisa Denny and Chief Seattle. **Vicky Sheldon**, great granddaughter of Louisa Denny, and **James Rasmussen**, a direct descendant of Chief Seattle, recognized the commitment made by the Washington State Legislature to turn the tide of historical neglect, and recounted the story of our city's origins from both the Duwamish and pioneer perspectives.

projects. In the July 9 issue, an article featured the scene at Camp Long during production of a half-hour program and video for the museum titled *Alki: Birthplace of Seattle*. The documentary, produced by SWSHS member **B.J. Bullert**, will air on KCTS, Channel 9, sometime this fall and a shorter version will be viewable in the museum.

The following week, the Herald ran a story and photo about the reconstruction process of the log house's south wall, including an interview with Rogers' assistant **Joe Herrle**. The Herald also ran an Aug. 20 story about the Smith family's gallery-naming donation.

The SWSHS's project to restore the log house at 3003 61st Ave. S.W. ranked fourth statewide in the newly created "Capital Projects for Washington's Heritage Fund."

President's Message:

Dear Members and Friends,

After an intensive four-year effort, our dream of preserving the turn-of-the century log house at historic Alki is near reality. It will be a house for our Society to tell the epic story of our community and the origins of our city.

In May, **Julie Furlong** was hired as the interim executive director to help tell our story. Her extensive background in TV, advertising and public relations, is the perfect fit for the position, which focuses on exhibit preparation, public outreach and event planning. Her effective leadership and wit has re-energized the team as we move into the homestretch.

The Birthplace of Seattle Log House Museum will officially open its doors on Nov. 13, 1997, the 146th anniversary of the landing of the Denny Party. As work on the opening exhibit and gala festivities shift into high gear, it's heartening to reflect on the successes and outpouring of support in recent months.

We can now announce the Smith family gallery-naming gift of \$50,000. It was a surprise presented to **Martin and Beverly Smith** from their children, on Martin's birthday at the Alki Homestead on Aug. 13. After spearheading the generous gift, it was heartwarming when SWSHS Board member **Greg Smith** said, "The way this has been done makes my soul happy."

Thanks to all of you who urged your legislators to include Washington Heritage Funding in the new biennium budget. It worked! \$4.1 million was allocated for statewide heritage projects. Our museum was ranked 4th in the state and awarded \$189,000. Special thanks to our local legislators who were instrumental in making this grant possible.

Our goal from the outset has been to enlist 100 founding members of the museum. Major contributions of \$1,000 and more qualify for membership in this special group. Currently, we have 58 founders who will be permanently commemorated in the art piece in the museum courtyard (see the Founders List insert in this newsletter). SWSHS Board member **Sharon Huling** is heading up this Log House Circle Campaign, and Sharon tells us there are only 42 more openings to complete this founding member circle. Please call the office to find out how your family can join this circle.

An exciting contribution of \$10,000 in Microsoft stock from **Margie and Michael Alhadeff** prompted us to open an account with Smith Barney. Broker **Paul Carkonen** donated his services to handle this and future gifts of stock transactions.

New major corporate and foundation contributions have boosted our efforts. **Stan McNaughton**, chairman of PEMCO, committed \$20,000 to the museum; The Seattle Foundation donated \$5,000 toward exhibit casework; Boeing contributed two computers for the office, and founding member **Hugh Ferguson** challenged Ferguson Construction to match his major contribution. He also recruited McKinstry Mechanical Company to do furnace and duct work on a pro-bono basis. Hugh's enthusiasm for the museum is contagious.

Producer **B.J. Bullert** just completed her 28-minute "Birthplace of Seattle" video that will air on KCTS this fall, and part of which will be shown in our opening exhibit. **Brewster Denny** and **Robert Watt** were so pleased with the video that they are gathering the extended Denny clan together for a special viewing. Descendant of Chief Seattle, **James Rasmussen**, was particularly enthused. He was the music composer and spokesperson for the Duwamish people in the video.

Another video that chronicles the reconstruction of the Log House is being produced for the opening exhibit by **Richard Russell** of the RF Russell Co. and **Paul Marlow**. They generously donated countless hours to photograph the log work in progress.

Finally, a recent tour with **Walter Williams**, whose grandparents built the turn-of-the-century landmark Rose Lodge, resulted in an unexpected discovery. The lodge, located between 63rd and 64th on Wilton Place, (named after Williams' grandfather's hometown in New Hampshire) is still standing! Although converted into a six-unit apartment, a visit of the site revealed many original features. This historic building needs to be preserved.

In closing, we are assembling a team of docents and volunteers to operate the museum after its Grand Opening. Call Julie Furlong at 938-5293 to become a part of the team.

Also, save Nov. 8 for the Gala at Salty's benefiting the museum and celebrating the successful result of this community-wide effort.



Arlene Wade
SWSHS President

'Coney Island of the West'

Museum's opening exhibit will celebrate Alki's heyday as Seattle's playground

The museum's first exhibit, scheduled to open Nov. 13, 1997, will focus on the era around a century ago, when the preferred way to get to West Seattle was by boat and when fun-seekers from Seattle came by the thousands each summer to places they called "Al-Ki" and "Coney Island."

Museums tell stories.

Perhaps that's why the Log House Museum has emerged as such an appealing and timely idea.

In a world where it can be difficult to find meaningful connections, the history of our own community speaks to us directly. Like a child fascinated by a grandparent's tales, we draw near to listen because ultimately we know it's *our* story – the story of the places we know, and of the people whose paths we follow.

Through the museum, our historical society plans to highlight the many layers of our community's history, from its beginnings as the home of the native Duwamish people, to its current incarnation as a residential refuge from life in the big city.

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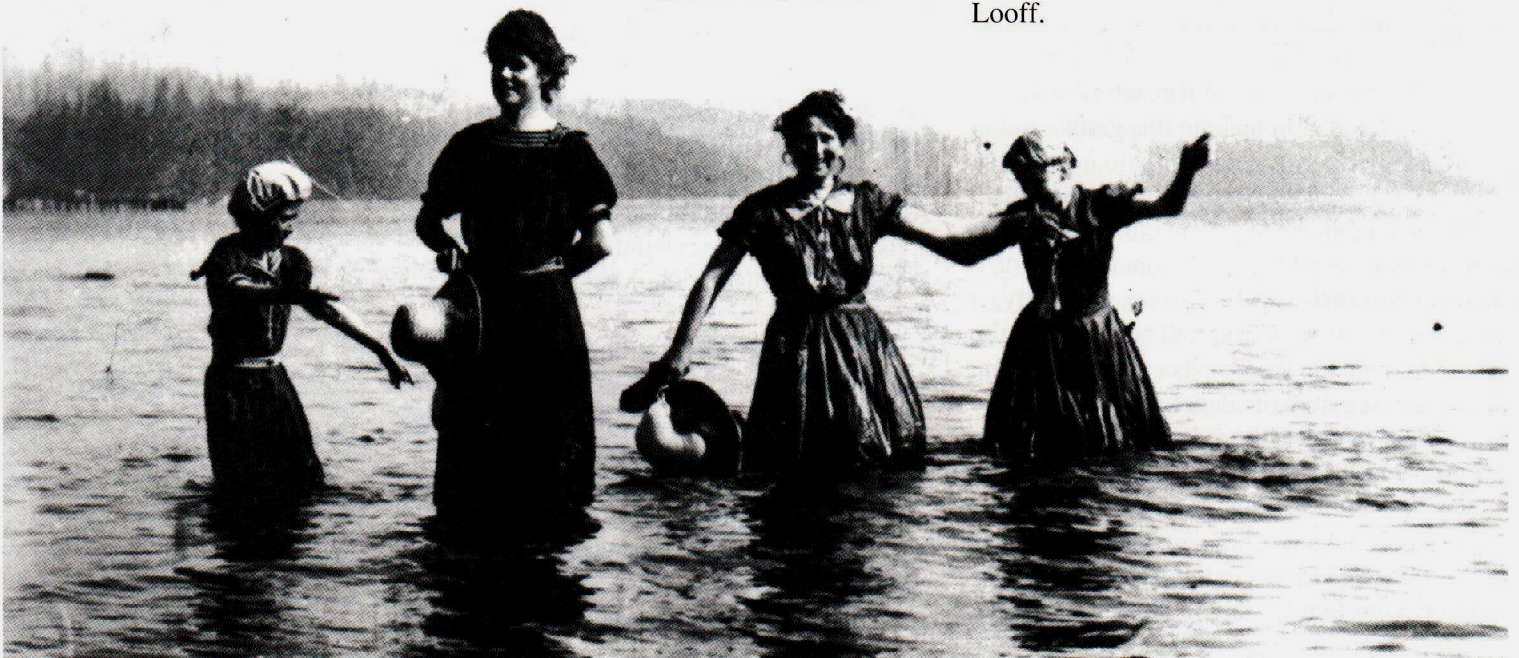
SWSHS collection

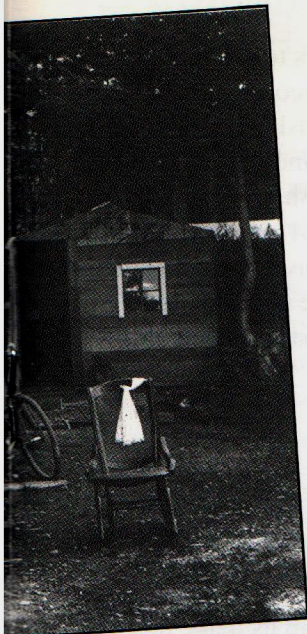
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"Al-Ki" and "Coney Island."

When the story first unfolds, all of Alki Point is quiet farmland owned by two Norwegian-immigrant families, the Olsens and Hansons. By the end of the final chapter, around 1913, Alki has evolved into a full-fledged resort, complete with a phenomenally popular municipal bathing beach and bath house, a bandstand built over the water, rows of rustic lodges and summer cabins, a landmark hotel, and an expansive amusement park billing itself as "Coney Island of the West."

The amusement park, of course, was Luna Park, built at Duwamish Head in 1907 by master carousel carver and showman Charles Looff.





Bernards – Gladys (left), (right) and daughter Marie at their Alki campsite with tented friend around 1900.

Local history buffs may be surprised to learn, however, that years before Luna Park opened, Duwamish Head already was known as “Coney Island Beach” to thousands of Seattleites, who discovered that West Seattle’s sandy shore was just a nickel and an eight-minute ride away aboard the ferry “City of Seattle.”

The Log House itself plays a part in the story. Built as a carriage house by

William and Gladys Bernard around 1903, the building serves as an example of the transition that was taking place at Alki at the turn of the century, when people began replacing summer tents with permanent homes.

The Bernards’ residence – which survives today as the Alki Homestead Restaurant – was the most elaborate home built at Alki during the period. The opening exhibit will feature a number of Bernard family items, including the guest book that guests signed when they visited “Fir Lodge.”

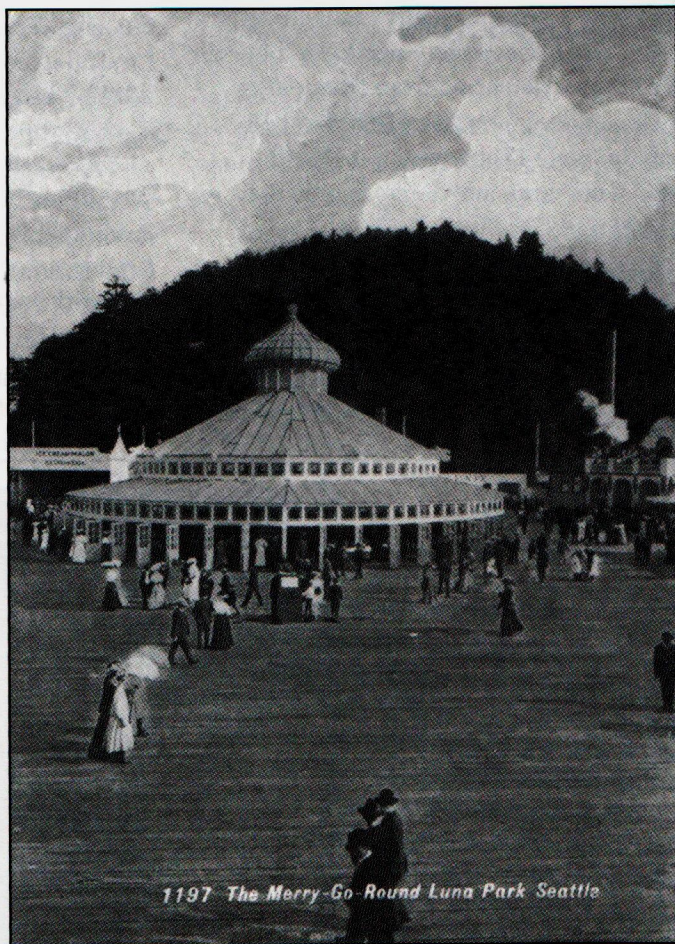
In addition to the main gallery, the Log House Museum will include a video room. There, visitors will view *Alki: Birthplace of Seattle*, a new documentary

produced by SWSHS member **B.J. Bullert**. Another video, made possible through the generous support of the **Richard F. Russell Co.** and videographer **Paul Marlow**, will tell the story of the acquisition and renovation of the Log House.



Courtesy of Paul Dorpat

Luna Park billed itself as “Coney Island of the West” when it opened in 1907.



Courtesy of Pat Flier

Postcard showing the Looff carousel at Luna Park, between 1907 and 1913.

Memorabilia wanted

Do you have photos, souvenirs or memorabilia from Alki’s early days?

Our Society’s Exhibit Committee is looking for items to put on display at the Log House Museum.

Please call the SWSHS office at 206-938-5293 for more information.

Huling leads Completing the Circle campaign

This summer, SWSHS Board member **Sharon Huling** will be Completing the Log House Museum Circle!

What does that mean, you ask? The Log House Museum Circle is a one-time opportunity for 100 local families to become founding members of the museum. With a donation of \$1,000 or more, these founding families' names will be permanently emblazoned in the museum's courtyard.

To invite local families to learn more about the museum and become a part of this circle, Sharon has graciously offered to host a series of events in her home. The first of the three events was held at Sharon and **Steve Huling's** house on July 24 and it was a great success, including the sunshine. Sharon tells us it was the first time the sun was shining while she entertained! That's a good sign!



Julie Furlong

Furlong hired as executive director

In June, the SWSHS hired **Julie Furlong** to serve as its executive director.

Furlong most recently worked as the public service manager at Elgin-DDB, a Seattle advertising and public relations agency. Prior to that, she was the director of community relations at KSTW Channel 11 for almost five years.

As director, Furlong will manage the preparation and Nov. 13 opening of the Log House Museum.

"We feel fortunate to have someone like Julie with the talent to help us make this opening truly grand," said SWSHS President **Arlene Wade**.

Briefly noted . . .

Thank you, Bob Pontius

The trucking company owned by SWSHS member **Bob Pontius** usually hauls iron and steel. But when the Society needed to have a cargo of logs transported from Rhododendron, Ore., Bob graciously offered to help, picking up the load at contractor **David Rogers'** workshop, and delivering them to the Log House.

Carousel alive and well

Ever wonder what happened to the carousel that operated at Luna Park 90 years ago? Well, according to carousel expert **Scott Ringwelski**, it's alive and well, and operat-

ing merrily in Long Beach, Calif.

The carousel, he says, was carved by the famed Charles Looff in 1906 and installed at Luna Park in 1907. After a fire destroyed much of the amusement park around 1913, Looff moved the carousel to San Francisco, where it ran until the 1970s. Most recently, it's been operating at a park in Long Beach.

This year, however, it sold for more than \$1 million. Next stop, San Francisco, where it will be installed on the roof of the Moscone Convention Center.

SWSHS Executive Director **Julie Furlong** already has come up with a catchy name for the new attraction. How about "The Looff on the Roof"?

'Roomie' Reunion

Among the attendees at our Society's June 29 open house were (left to right) **Evelyn Benson**, **Erma Couden**, former City Councilman **George Benson** and SWSHS founder **Elliott Couden**. George and Elliott, they divulged, have been acquainted since the late 1930s, when both were boarders at a private home near Greenlake.

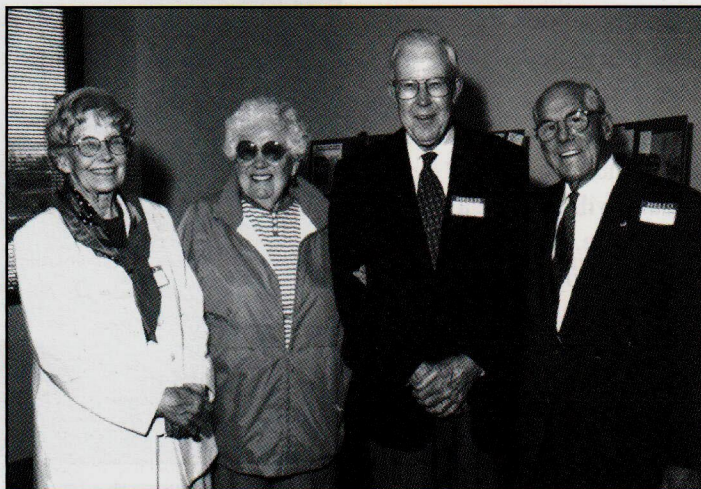


Photo by Deborah Mendenhall

Traveling Libraries Project to debut this fall

By Pat Filer

The newest addition to our Society's Heritage Outreach program, the Traveling Libraries Project, is ready for piloting in local schools this fall.

The SWSHS Education Committee was awarded a second King County Cultural Resources Grant last year to continue to enhance its local historical education programs. The success and popularity of the Heritage Education Kits, which made their debut in local schools last year, along with a well-planned educational vision for the Log House Museum and SWSHS, has paved the way for continuing, and much-appreciated, support from King County's grant program.

Developed to provide a convenient and comprehensive set of research and resource materials for students and educators, the four Traveling Heritage Libraries feature a combination of visual aids, audio and video tapes, computer software, magazine and newspaper articles, interviews and BOOKS, BOOKS and MORE BOOKS. Together with the Heritage Education Kits, the libraries provide a unique resource for continuing student heritage activities such as oral reports, term papers, poetry, song or legend writing activities, documentaries, drawings, or other related classroom projects.

The libraries will be "piloted" this fall in our local "partner" schools, Alki Elementary School and Madison Middle School. Input from teachers and students will then be used to improve and refine the project.

Materials examine West Seattle history, as well as general and early West history, through both pioneer and Native American viewpoints and authors. Local school educators and librarians, Seattle Public librarians, and representatives of the Duwamish Tribe

were invited to review the materials and provide valuable input to the project during its development.

Each of the four traveling libraries is housed in its own unique hand-painted wooden bookcase, inspired by local historical themes. One will remain permanently at the SWSHS education office/library for members of the SWSHS and eventual public use.

Both the Traveling Libraries and the Heritage Education Kits are currently on display at our Society's Jefferson Square office for educators to examine for possible inclusion in their curriculum plans. Society members are encouraged to stop by as well.

There are lots of exciting and rewarding ways for members to get involved in the program as volunteers. For more information or to schedule review or rental of either the Traveling Library or the Heritage Education Kits call the SWSHS Education Department at 935-5293.

— Pat Filer is a SWSHS board member who serves as the Society's heritage education specialist.



Linda Chase (left), Education Committee chair, and Pat Filer, heritage education specialist, are shown with a display of some of the heritage education projects which have been funded through King County Cultural Resources grants.

Education Department to continue outreach education plans with third consecutive King County Cultural Resources Grant

King County Cultural Resources Division has awarded the SWSHS education department with another grant to continue its heritage outreach program. This is the third year in a row that a grant has been awarded to our education projects.

This year's plans include enriching the current heritage projects by developing an activity/project curriculum guide, an assem-

bly program and an in-service manual and video for teachers and educational volunteers. The grant also provides funding for Heritage Education Specialist **Pat Filer** to administer and supervise current projects, and plan and implement future educational outreach programs for the SWSHS and Log House Museum.

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Order your Heritage Brick by Sept. 25

As the Log House Museum's Nov. 13, 1997, opening date approaches, it's time to begin engraving the first batch of Heritage Bricks. If you haven't ordered yours yet, now is the time. In order for your brick to be installed by Nov. 13, you must order by Thursday, Sept. 25.

The bricks – engraved with one-, two- or three-line inscriptions – will be used to

pave outdoor areas at the museum.

Give your family a place in history! Order your brick now so it will be there when the museum opens.

Heritage Brick kits were mailed to all SWSHS members this summer. If you need an additional order form or have questions, contact **Marianne Had** at the SWSHS message line, 206-938-5293.

Smith Family Gallery:

(continued from page 1)

Hansons' daughter Lorena, took the family one step further into the resort business. Catering to the summer crowd, he established a rustic store and hotel he called the Hotel Alki.

In 1903, Alfred replaced his Hotel Alki with a larger, more substantial structure at the corner of 63rd and Alki avenues. Built by Norwegian shipbuilders, with logs placed vertically instead of horizontally, the new building called to mind a frontier fort, and Alfred gave it a fitting name — the Stockade Hotel.

For more than 30 years, the Stockade stood as one of Alki's most recognizable landmarks. But during the Great Depression, the hotel fell upon difficult times.

"Mother and Dad moved into the hotel in an effort to save it," says Martin, who fondly remembers boyhood days there in the early

1930s. Sadly, however, the building was torn down a few years later.

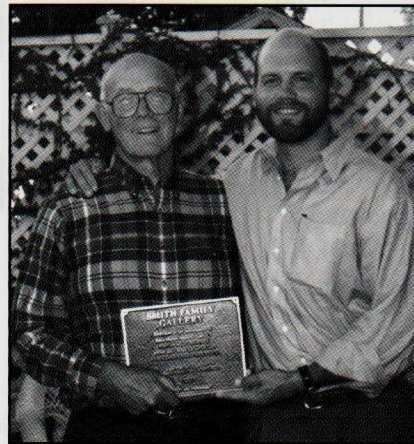
A Mercer Island resident since 1955, Martin says he's always felt a strong connection to Alki, and was "very surprised and pleased" when his children – **Greg, Sally, Mickey and Bryan** – presented him with the gallery-naming gift.

He told his family that his father, Hans Martin Smith Sr., would have been delighted, too: "I told them Father would be doing cartwheels down the beach if he was here."

Gathered around a table at the Homestead's patio, family members raised their glasses and joined in what had been

Hans Martin Sr.'s favorite toast, "Skoal to the Northland!"

Greg, who joined our Society's board earlier this year, spoke for his sister and brothers. "We're pleased to have had the opportunity to do this," he said. "Nothing ever felt easier."



Martin (left) and SWSHS board member Greg Smith display the "Smith Family Gallery" plaque.

FOOTPRINTS

(Editor: Brad Chrisman)

Newsletter of the Southwest Seattle Historical Society
c/o South Seattle Community College
6000 16th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98106

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