Homestead, ho!

Builder Dennis Schilling buys 111-year-old landmark, begins restoration work after forging parking-lot agreement with us

One of West Seattle's most beloved landmarks, our "mother ship," closed and dormant for more than six years, has a new owner and is slated to be fully restored.

The 1904 log building, first known as Fir Lodge and for the past 65 years as the Alki Homestead restaurant (famed for family-style chicken dinners), was purchased by builder Dennis Schilling from Tom Lin. The sale closed on Friday, March 13, 2015.

Schilling is working with a structural engineer and studying uses for the Alki Homestead, including reopening a restaurant there, when habitable.

A Mercer Island resident who restored Alki's bricked Shoremont apartment building in 2012, Schilling entered into a contract with Lin last December to purchase the Alki Homestead.

A crucial factor in his decision to close the transaction was an agreement he forged with our organization to modify the easement we hold for the Alki Homestead parking lot.

Our board has agreed that Schilling can use part of the parking lot to build an apartment building of up to six units to help him finance the restoration. The agreement is contingent on Schilling's restoration of the Homestead, guided by the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board.

The agreement leaves us with fewer but sufficient parking spaces for use by staff, volunteers and visitors to our "Birthplace of Seattle" Log House Museum a half block south.

Our museum building was constructed in 1904 as the carriage house for Fir Lodge. We have operated it as a museum since 1997. We secured city landmark status for both Fir Lodge / Alki Homestead and our museum in 1996. In January 2009, fire damaged a portion of the interior of Fir Lodge / Alki Homestead, and the building has been closed and dormant since then.

"We are thrilled that the Alki Homestead will be brought to life again," says Marcy Johnsen, our board president. "We are grateful that Dennis has stepped forward to restore this treasure, and we thank all who aided this quest, including the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board, Seattle City Council member Tom Rasmussen and our Homestead coalition partners at Historic Seattle, the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation and 4Culture."
Don’t forget the Admiral

What is life, one might ask, if we don’t have our memories?

Plenty of us can ponder the pain of that question based on experiences with the disorientation of loved ones beset by Alzheimer’s or other incurable maladies. Think, for example, of Robert DeNiro in the movie “Awakenings.”

Memory loss also can turn comic. Witness “50 First Dates,” in which Drew Barrymore’s mind becomes a clean slate with every sunrise.

Silly or serious, the point remains. Our lives are about making memories -- joy, sadness and every emotion inbetween, just as the most affecting feature films often tell us.

Why do I have movies on the brain? It’s the inspiring news announced recently that our beloved Admiral Theater is setting sail on a bright future, with added screens, digital projection and all-around renovation.

Our organization (and I personally) have a deep stake in the health of West Seattle’s only moviehouse. In 1989, many of us poured our lives into a successful drive to secure city landmark status for this 1942 art deco treasure, whose lobby (as the Portola Theater) dates to 1919. We were thrilled when a new owner re-launched the theater in 1992 after a three-year closure.

The landmark campaign caught fire precisely because the Admiral was a place where countless memories -- first dates, first kisses, you name it -- were etched into the community’s psyche.

Good news shines on the Admiral marquee, Feb. 28, 2015.

My first Admiral memory goes back before it was twinned in 1973, when it was a single auditorium with (no typo) 1,000 seats. I was home from college and set up by my mom to take a friend’s daughter out for a nice evening. As we drove to West Seattle, she smoked on the way, and I was not thrilled. At the Admiral we saw (if memory serves) a second-run 1968 Western called “Shalako,” incongruously starring Sean Connery and Brigitte Bardot. We sat in the balcony. Nothing “happened.” That can be a memory, too.

The upgrades at the Admiral this year aim to give us more memories and thus more life -- a future in a building that reminds us of our past.

So if you’re thinking of seeing a film downtown or elsewhere across the bridge, please think again. Especially in this transition time, the Admiral needs your support. It’s part of keeping our community alive. Remember?

Clay Eals, executive director

‘We could not be more thrilled by recent awards’

Hello, all, and happy spring!

So much is going on that it is hard to grasp it all, but foremost is my gratitude to you, our members, volunteers, community partners, staff, board and Advisory Council, for without all of you our organization would not exist. Nor would we achieve the programs, education, exhibits and advocacy for preservation that our mission inspires.

Because of your hard work and dedication, we have received two terrific honors (see page 4.)

The West Seattle Chamber of Commerce named us the Nonprofit of the Year, and the Association of King County Historical Organizations is giving us its Single Impact Event award for our June 6, 2014, totem unveiling ceremony. The award event is Tuesday, April 28, at the Museum of History and Industry. I hope to see many of you there. We could not be more thrilled by this recognition of our impact in the community. The awards propel us into other projects and events.

Speaking of which, our annual “If These Walls Could Talk” tour on June 28 will focus on the home of Joseph Standley, founder of Ye Old Curiosity Shop. Restoration of our parent building, Fir Lodge/Aiki Homestead, is under way with new owner Dennis Schilling, and we will celebrate that at our annual picnic July 4 with the sentiment that “This Place STILL Matters!”

I look forward to seeing many of you and meeting newcomers in these next months.

Marcy Johnsen, board president
What makes the Junction special?
Survey to capture essence of West Seattle’s business hub

For the first time, the historical character of the West Seattle Junction will be documented in a professional survey. Funded by 4Culture, the West Seattle Junction Historical Survey, launched on March 18, 2015, will interview property owners to identify elements that define the Junction’s character, giving it uniqueness and allow it to thrive as the business hub of the West Seattle peninsula.

The project teams our organization with the Southwest District Council, the West Seattle Junction Association, the Junction Neighborhood Organization and ArtsWest.

The 4Culture grant totals $10,000 and states that while The Junction “has undergone dramatic changes,” the district retains a “small-town feel.”

One aim of the survey is to determine if buildings in The Junction would qualify for nomination as Seattle landmarks.

Through this summer, 45 property owners will be invited to be interviewed about their building histories. Findings will be merged with architectural data, and results will be publicized.

‘Words’ picks up steam
Twentieth talk approaches in May; genres range from fiction to history

Join us for the popular “Words, Writers & West Seattle” series. It’s the first Friday of each month at Barnes & Noble Westwood Village. All sessions run from 5 to 7 p.m.

In the capable hands of chair Dora-Faye Hendricks, the series is approaching its 20th installment. Contact her at 206-280-9983 to book new installments. Thanks to Barnes & Noble, 10 percent of proceeds from any purchases made while attending go to our organization. Coming up:

Flanked by Susan Melrose of the West Seattle Junction Association and Husky Deli owner Jack Miller, jeweler Jack Menashe endorses the survey at its kickoff: “I think this organization and what we’re going to do is really going to be helpful, and I really, really take my hat off to all the different groups that are participating.”

Visit loghousemuseum.info our website, to see and hear full-length video of the Junction survey press conference.

Friday, May 1, 2015, Jan Koutsky, My Grandma, My Pen Pal (Boys Mills Press, 2012, children’s fiction)

Friday, June 5, 2015, Sarah Fox, Downwind: A People’s History of the Nuclear West (Bison Press, 2014, Western history and environment)


Friday, Aug. 7, 2015, Alice Ann Kuder, Since I Last Saw You (The Telltale Scribe, 2013, fiction)

Theresa McCormick, author of A Far Cry from Here: Growing Up and Out of Fundamentalism, speaks to a capacity crowd at the Feb. 6, 2015, session of “Words, Writers & West Seattle.”

CORRECTION: Apologies for our misspelling the last name of arborist Paul Ort of Out on a Limb in the winter 2015 Footprints.
Financial and in-kind donors

Individuals
Sandra Adams
Carrie Akre
Catherine Alexander
Beverly June Alger
Janet Ames
Gayle & Marvin Anderson
Tina Anderson & Rod Moody
Beth & Ron Arant
Maureen Bailey
Dayle Banks
Calvin Bannon
Deb Barker
Murl Barker & Ron Miller
Dolores & Dick Barnece
Sarah Barton
Sarah Baylinson
Nerissa & Tim Beaver
Bonnie Beerman
Eric Bell

Volunteers
Ann Anderson
Jef Anderson
Ron Arant
Deanna Armstrong
Adèle Arutunian
Sarah Balmer
Dayle Banks
Deb Barker
Brandon Beal
Barry Bede
Judy & Allen Bentley
Kathy Blackwell Harper
Bob Bollen
Vicky Bruck
Bob Carney
Brad Chrisman
Mary Croyer
Trish Cosgrove
Klem Daniels
Lynn Davis
Liz Day
Lynn Dennis
Eda Depman
Heather Diaz
Sandy Donnen
Suzanne Duffy-Kane
Meg Eals

Aurora Bennett
John Bennett
Judy & Allen Bentley
Donna & Robert Bergman
Joseph Bieller
Tim Bierman
Deb & Bill Bigelow
Michael Brawner
Denise Bisio
Julie Schmitz Broker
Jodi Brothers
Carol & Richard Buchmiller
BJ Bullert
Judy & Hudson Burke
Nancy & Jim Brinton
Berlina & Thomas Brock
Charleena Mose
Edie Neesen
Debbie Neifer
Peder Nelson
Amy O'Donoghue
and her students at
Madison Middle
School
Brady O'Neill
Vicky Pistor
Sofi Phillips
Chas Redmond
Rachel Salwen
Colleen Schau
Jean Sherrard
Kathia Soto
Tanna Sunderlin
Rachel Steendahl
Lisa Toomey
Valerie Van Tine
Stefanie Van
Anne & Sam White
Valerie Wilds
Gail Wodzin
Katie Endler
& Chris Ballew
Phyllis Engstrom
Lucia Ertz
George Jean Erickson
Bob Ewing
David Fievez
Alice & Bill Fitch
Ken Flajole
Beverly Fletcher
Eleanor Fordyce
Ron Fraback
Joan Frydenlund
Stephanie Gerding
Nora Gibson
Amelia Gilbert
Laurence Gill
Bethany Green
Christina Greene
Bonnie & Rear Adm.
Richard Gromlich
David Groves
Virginia "Ginger" Haag
Merriee Hagen
Betty Hall
Alyson Hallberg
& Mike Langen
Nancy Hallberg
& Peter Junkerman
Tia Hallberg
Debra Haller
Verda Hansberry
David Hansen
Janice Harper
Kathy Harper
Suzanne Hartley
Kareen Hansen
Mary Beth Hatfield
& Rick Green
Margaret Hayes
Mary Hayes
Evelene & Richard Haywood
Jordan Hecker
Dora-Faye Hendricks
Heather Hess
Jan Hoekdaay
Bosley Holmquist
Mary Howland
David Hrovatich
Sharone & Steve Huling
Ruta & Pat Jablonski
Andy James
Neil James
Jeany & Joe James
Megan Jasper
Denise Johnson
Marnie Johnson
Mary Johnson
& Joey Richeson

Beverly & Mike Johnston
Patricia Jones
Barbara Kaiser
Dorothy Kaloper
Carol Karlstrom
David Katt
Terry Kegel
David Keile
Alison & David Keith
Kathy Kelleher & James Caivin
David Kelifer
John Kelly
Kim Ketcham
Flora Belle Key
Kathy & Gerry Kingen
Gerrit Kischner
John Knowlton
Mary & John Kohl
Kerry Kosgrove
Lisa Kramer
Rita Krueger
Phyllis Lamphere
Greg Large
Candace Lein-Hayes
Nae & Mark Lembersky
Florence Lenz
Elmer Lindsey
Inez Lindsey
Monica Lindcott
Ken Lowthian

Gathering at Feb. 21, and Tasha Miller, trusty secretary; Bonnie Giroand (inset) Tia Hallben

Morgan Lyle
Cami & Chris MacDonald
Frank MacDonald

Celebration! Thanks to you, two awards come our way

We are thrilled to learn of two awards received recently by our organization.

The first award was announced Monday, March 23, 2015, by the Association of KingCounty Historical Organizations (AKCHO), which chose our June 6, 2014, Admiral Totem Pole unveiling as the winner of the association’s 2015 Single Impact Event Award.

The award will be presented at 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, April 28, 2015, at the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI). The event is free, and RSVPs are due by Monday, April 20.
from AKCHO and West Seattle Chamber of Commerce

The second award was announced Thursday, March 26, 2015, by the West Seattle Chamber of Commerce, which chose us as 2015 Nonprofit of the Year.

The award was presented at the chamber’s annual breakfast Thursday, April 2, 2015, at Salty’s on Alki. Visit our website to view the breakfast ceremony and our award presentation.

Big thanks to all members, donors and volunteers who made these awards possible. It takes a village!
A West Seattle evening with West Seattle’s Art Wolfe

For world-traveling Art Wolfe, home exerts a powerful pull. In his own words:
“Everything that represents the Northwest, everything that represents Seattle is so true to who I am. There’s no question that I would live here the rest of my life. I live one-and-a-half miles from where I was born and one mile from where I grew up. So my roots are strong and unwavering.”

In an intimate gathering of our supporters on Feb. 11, 2015, at the Colman Estate in Fauntleroy, Wolfe, the famed nature photographer and native and lifelong resident of West Seattle, graciously presented an hour-long show of his most famous works and little-known early West Seattle images.

This special event was captured on video and can be seen on our website.

We extend thanks to hosts Maryanne Taginey and David Jones, as well as volunteers Klem Daniels, Sandy Donnen, Sandy Hirano, Kerry Korsgaard, Nancy McPhee and Diane and Antonio Venti, contributor Mark Jaroslaw and sponsors Live Oak Audio Visual and IT Headquarters, along with financial contributors who attended and Wolfe himself for making the event a success.

Wolfe detailed how he was born at West Seattle General Hospital in the Junction, attended Fauntleroy Elementary School and delivered papers to the family next door that spawned the mountaineering twins Jim and Lou Whittaker.

“I had a little bird book and a mammal book and tree book,” he said. “I knew virtually every fern, every tree, every bird, every mammal in the forest of Lincoln Park, so I was a naturalist at 7 years old without even knowing the word ‘naturalist.’ That was a huge thing for me.”

He talked of how, in junior high school, he first aimed to be not a photographer but a watercolor artist. “I had two teachers who had immigrated to Seattle from the Midwest, and along with them they brought these little black-and-white photos of the farmhouses (in which) they grew up,” he said. “I painted these pictures and framed them and matted them and sold them back to the teachers at $30 apiece. That was incredibly important for me to realize when I was 13 that I could make money for the work I was doing.”

As a young adult, his father, a wedding photographer, gave him a World War II-era speed-graphic camera, and Wolfe began photographing mountains from their summits.

“It became much easier to create original photographic compositions than sitting at a blank canvas and trying to conjure up a painting or a composition,” he said.

Displaying an early photograph of a sunset looking west from his block, Wolfe said it “probably was instrumental to influence me as to what I do as an adult, because I always looked westward towards the mountains, and there was the allure to go farther.”

Annual party for volunteers set April 18!

If you have volunteered for us, please accept our thanks by way of an appreciation party, from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, April 18, 2015, on the roof (Sky Lounge) of Youngstown Flats. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Bethany Green, our volunteer coordinator, at bgreen496@yahoo.com.

Give the gift of a membership!
It’s easy. Visit us at loghousemuseum.info, click “Membership,” print the form, fill it out and mail it in with check or credit-card info. Or sign up at an event or at our museum!
Our staff is in transition!

Sarah Baylinson, our museum manager since fall 2012, accepted the full-time position of collections manager at the Bowman Museum in Prineville, Ore., and began work there in March. We thank her for her service and wish her well!

Serving as our interim museum manager is Lissa Kramer, a West Seattleite who has worked in museums and public programs for 15 years, most recently at the Issaquah History Museums, while also volunteering for us in exhibits and on Gala Committee. Stop into our museum during open hours to meet Lissa. A search is under way for a permanent museum manager.

---

'The kids just love it'

Dorothy Kaloper, who lives near Schmitz Park and is about to turn 89, has assembled a story for the ages — 50 copies for everyone in her extensive family. It's in the form of a 354-page softcover book that recounts the saga of her life and family in words and more than 1,000 photos, printed on high-quality paper in an appealing horizontal format. It features family trees going back 700 years, maps, recipes, Eastern European and local cultural references and even three pages detailing the status of Dorothy and her late husband, John, as circle donors for the restoration of our museum building in 1997. The project took three years with the help of a consultant, and Dorothy is thrilled with the result. As she says, "The kids just love it." To ask her about the book, call us at 206-938-5293.

Setting sail to The Kenney -->

"West by Water," our enhanced West Seattle maritime exhibit, has a new home at The Kenney, the distinctive, 106-year-old continuous-care facility at 7125 Fauntleroy Way S.W. Based on a previous exhibit at our museum, the display covers the Mosquito Fleet, the first ferry on Puget Sound, the DIX disaster and the 101-year-old Alki Lighthouse. Examining the exhibit (right) is Alma Penberthy, resident of The Kenney. Come see it soon!

Cruise with Duke's to see totem poles in Alaska and support our organization

Reserve now for Sept. 19-26

Always wanted to go on an Alaska cruise? We have a unique opportunity for you: a seven-night cruise aboard the ms Westerdam of the Holland America line, presented by Duke's Chowder House, with special totem-pole stops. From each booking, $25 goes to our historical society. More info: Mary Ehler, AAA Travel: 206-933-4103.

Alums to smile in front of totem

As part of the 2015 West Seattle High School Alumni Association all-school reunion, set for Saturday, June 6, we are inviting classes to have their photos taken that morning and early afternoon in front of the Admiral Totem Pole, unveiled exactly one year prior outside of our museum.
FOOTPRINTS

Newsletter of the Southwest Seattle Historical Society
c/o “Birthplace of Seattle” Log House Museum
3003 61st Ave. SW, Seattle, WA 98116-2810

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Do we have your e-mail address? Let us know so that you can stay up-to-date! Please e-mail bgreen496@yahoo.com to get on the list.

Give the gift of a membership! It’s easy. Visit us at loghousemuseum.info, click “Membership,” print the form, fill it out and mail it in with a check or credit-card number. Or sign up in person at an event or at our “Birthplace of Seattle” Log House Museum.

What’s coming in spring and summer 2015

Saturday, April 18 .......................... 6 p.m. ................ Annual Volunteer Party, Youngstown Flats Sky Lounge, RSVP bgreen496@yahoo.com
Friday, May 1, June 5,
July 10, Aug. 7, Sept. 4 ...... 5 p.m. ................ Words, Writers & West Seattle, Barnes & Noble Westwood Village, 2600 SW Barton
Saturday, May 2, June 6
July 11, Aug. 1, Sept. 5 ...... 11 a.m. ................ Volunteer Intro, our museum, 3003 61st Ave SW
Sunday, June 28 .......................... Noon & 3 p.m. .... “If These Walls Could Talk,” home of Joseph Standley, Admiral area (details TBA).
Saturday, July 4 .......................... Noon ................ Annual Picnic, our museum courtyard, 3003 61st Ave SW

Our board meetings are held at 7 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month in the South Seattle College President’s Board Room. You are welcome to attend!

Big thanks to our sponsors and supporters: