

Footprints

on the sands of time ...

Glimpse the heritage spirit at our
Champagne Gala Brunch – pages 4-5

ISSUE LXXXIX

SOUTHWEST SEATTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY (WWW.LOGHOUSEMUSEUM.INFO)

WINTER 2015

While city rebuilds its downtown seawall, the Ye Olde Curiosity Shop comes alive at our museum to...



Boosted by grandfather **Will Koshnick**, kindergartener **Matilda Jones** peers into nickelodeon.

'Stretch people's imaginations'

Want to see a moose rack, a Russian tea samovar, a stuffed iguana, a Japanese glass fishing float or a range of colorful Native American carvings?

Look no further than our "Birthplace of Seattle" Log House Museum, where our main gallery features a tangible taste of Ye Olde Curiosity Shop, the downtown tourist site founded in 1899 by West Seattleite **Joseph "Daddy" Standley**. The shop is closed through June for seawall repair.

Below we present remarks from Standley's 90-year-old grandson, **Joe James**, great-grandson

Andy James and great-great-grandson **Neil James**, with the shop's "chief wrangler," **Peg Boettcher**, from the Oct. 24, 2014, exhibit opening.

Their comments may inspire you to stop in and learn more about this legendary family enterprise. Don't forget to try the Charlie Chaplin nickelodeon. (We supply the nickels.)

Joe James: My grandfather had a great sense of humor and loved to entertain people, talk to people in the shop. People would be looking at something to buy, he'd start talking about it,

(Story continues on page 6)

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 Ehlert**, AAA Travel: 206-933-4103.



Our mission

"To promote local heritage through education, preservation and advocacy"

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FOOTPRINTS

is the official publication of the Southwest Seattle Historical Society.

Editor
Clay Eals

Printing thanks to

**Where to find us**

The Southwest Seattle Historical Society's home is the "Birthplace of Seattle" Log House Museum.

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museum manager:
sarah.baylinson
@loghouse
museum.info

Want to volunteer?

Call or e-mail us!

Website

www.loghouse
museum.info

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Log House Museum



A friend steps down

No question, it was a shock, but after three four-year terms, it was understandable. West Seattle's **Tom Rasmussen** announced Jan. 23 that he will not run for a fourth term. After Dec. 31, his council career will be over.

There is no better way to say it: Tom was -- and will remain -- an invaluable champion of our mission. He is on our Advisory Council, he has buoyed our preservation efforts publicly and behind the scenes, and he has spoken at our events and been a major financial contributor.

We are deeply indebted to him for his counsel, generosity and heart. Thanks so much, Tom!

Clay Eals, executive director

(Left) With City of West Seattle 1902-05 council minutes in the foreground, Seattle City Council member **Tom Rasmussen** points out rare records during a tour he arranged for us as a Gala prize, as **Scott Cline** (left), city archivist, and winners **Siri & (father) Randy Nelson** look on.

One of our giants, Erma Couden, turns 100!

Hello, all, and welcome to 2015! I am excited for this year, for as much as we have grown as an organization, we plan to keep on moving forward, expanding outreach to the community and providing opportunities for your participation, promoting heritage through education, preservation, and advocacy.

"We stand on the shoulders of giants" is a phrase repeated by many, recognizing the efforts of those who came before us. One of those giants is **Erma Couden**, and she recently celebrated her 100th birthday!

Erma was regaled in style with a big party at her home of Horizon House downtown on Jan. 10, 2015. Attending were more than 100 people -- her family from near and far, and friends new and old. It was terrific, and I was privileged to be among the crowd to sing "Happy Birthday" to such an amazing woman.



West Seattelite and former Seattle Mayor **Greg Nickels** and his wife, **Sharon**, greet **Erma Couden** at her 100th birthday party Jan. 10, 2015.

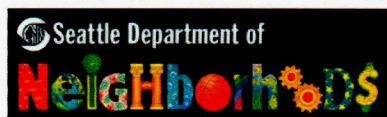


Erma, whose late husband, **Elliott**, was our organization's founder, has all of the elegance of an esteemed elder and is as spry as ever. She supported Elliott throughout his time with our historical society and has continued a legacy (with daughter **Gini**) as a strong supporter of our organization. Erma, we are so fortunate to have you with us, and we wish you as many more birthdays as you already have!

So as we dig in to 2015, I want to give another big thank-you to all of you who support the Southwest Seattle Historical Society. Without your ongoing donations of time, energy and fiscal support, we would not be able to move forward. I look forward to seeing many of you and meeting newcomers throughout this next year.

Marcy Johnsen, board president

We deeply appreciate the financial support of:





Tasha Miller (standing right), the newest elected member of our Board of Trustees, is introduced by **Marcy Johnsen** (standing center), board president, during our Nov. 15, 2014, Annual Meeting at the Southwest Branch of Seattle Public Library.

Members elect officers and trustees, amend bylaws

Twenty-five members of our organization gathered for our Annual Meeting held on Nov. 15, 2014, at the Southwest Library.

For 2015, **Marcy Johnsen** was re-elected president, **Tia Hallberg** was re-elected vice-president, **Ron Arant** was re-elected treasurer, and trustee **Peder Nelson** was elected secretary.

Previously serving trustees **Kerry Korsgaard** and **Nancy Sorensen** were elected to three-year terms as trustees. Newcomer **Natasha "Tasha" Miller** was elected to a three-year trustee term.

(A longtime trustee, the talented and valued preservationist **Alan Peterson**, has resigned his board position. Two board spots are now open.)

The members also approved changes to our bylaws. The revisions approve our newly condensed mission ("to promote local history through education, preservation and advocacy"). The amendments also indicate that the Executive Board of officers and trustees will set the dates of Annual Meetings and will be responsible for making bylaw revisions, by two-thirds majority.

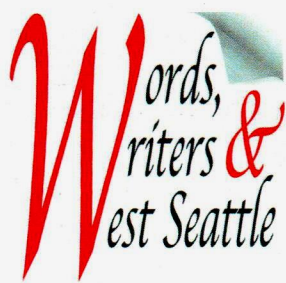
*Interested in board service? Please contact **Marcy Johnsen**, president, at marcyjohnsen@comcast.net.*

Find variety at 'Words'

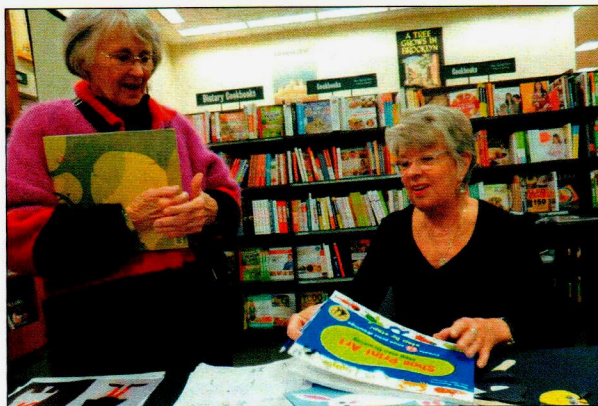
Genres cover memoir, outdoors, history, children's/adult fiction

Join us for the popular "Words, Writers & West Seattle" series. It's the first Friday evening 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 well into its second year. Contact her at 206-280-9983 to book new installments. And thanks to Barnes & Noble, from any purchases made while attending, **10 percent** of proceeds go to our organization. Coming up:



Visit loghousemuseum.info, our website, to see and hear video of previous authors' talks in this series!



Connie Gunn (left) secures an inscription from **Karen Robbins**, author of *Shoe Print Art: Step into Drawing*, at the Dec. 2, 2014, session of "Words, Writers & West Seattle."

Ladies of the Boraburdur (Outskirts Press, 2007, adult fiction)

Friday, April 3, 2015, **Jake & Cathy Jaramillo**, *Seattle Stairway Walks: An Up-and-Down Guide to City Neighborhoods* (Mountaineers Books, 2002, outdoors)

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)

Our Board of Trustees

- Marcy Johnsen, president
- Tia Hallberg, vice-president
- Peder Nelson, secretary
- Ron Arant, treasurer
- Bonnie Gromlich
- Dora-Faye Hendricks
- Kerry Korsgaard
- Inez Lindsey
- Tasha Miller
- Dave Montoure
- Nancy Sorensen

Our Advisory Council

- Judy Bentley
- Earl Cruzen
- Merrilee Hagen
- Jordan Hecker
- Sharon Huling
- Scott Hunt
- Pat Jablonski
- Flora Belle Key
- King County Council member
- Joe McDermott
- Andrea Mercado
- Jack Miller
- Patricia Mullen
- Charles Payton
- Seattle City Council member
- Tom Rasmussen
- Greg Theobald
- Diane Tice
- Jerry Vandenberg
- Carol Vincent



Fitting the event theme, unique totem poles grace each table courtesy of the Ye Olde Curiosity Shop.



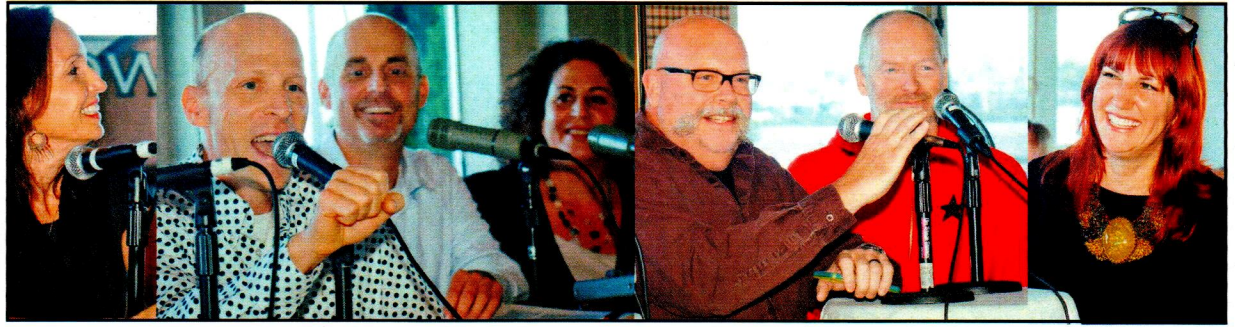
Marcy Johnsen, board president, welcomes crowd.



Minou & Brad Reisinger of The Whittaker project.



Judy Pigott (left) purchases Golden Ticket from volunteer **Anne White**.



The "Why West Seattle?" music panelists (from left): former Soundgarden manager **Susan Silver**, performer **Chris Ballew** (Caspar Babypants), hosts **Marty Riemer** and **Jodi Brothers**, Pearl Jam fan club manager **Tim Bierman**, Easy Street records owner **Matt Vaughan** and Sub Pop Records vice president **Megan Jasper**.

It was our grandest **GALA!**

Big thanks to everyone attending and who helped put on our Champagne Gala Brunch, held Saturday, Nov. 8, 2014, at Salty's on Alki and attended by 227 people.

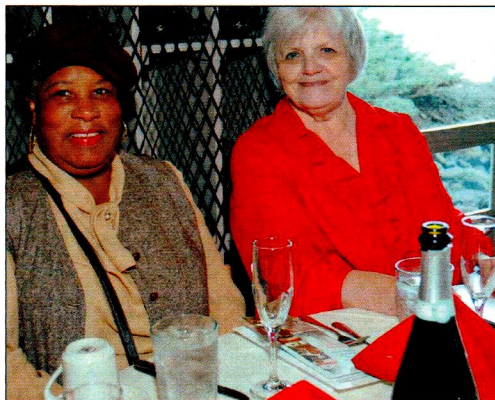
Because of many-faceted contributions, and led by Gala Committee members **Valerie Wilds** (chair), **Diane Venti**, **Sandy Donnen**, **Liz Day**, **Lissa Kramer**, **Kathy Blackwell**, trustee **Inez Lindsey** and **Bethany Green**, we raised a record \$61,000, about two-thirds of our annual budget.

To see more photos and video, visit our website.

Photos by Gail Wodzin of Gail Anne Photography



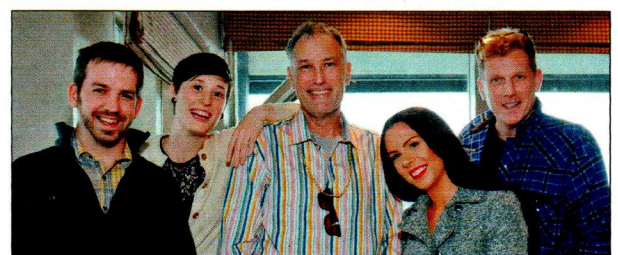
Maggie MacNeill (in goldenrod), the eventual winner of the Golden Ticket for our Alaska Totem Cruise, joins others in making a toast to our 2014 Champagne Gala Brunch.

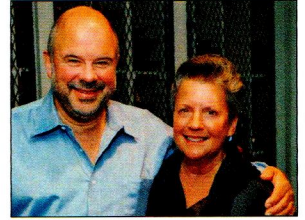


(Left photo) **Virginia Johnson** (left) and **Merrilee Hagen**, former board president, enjoy the Gala. (Right photo) **Erma Couden**, widow of our founder, **Elliott Couden**, acknowledges applause for her upcoming 100th birthday (Jan. 13) . She is flanked by daughter **Gini Stimpson** and friend **Earl Cruzen**.

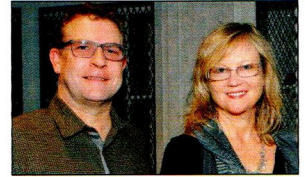


(Left photo) Volunteers (from left) **Charlene Moss**, **Floie Vane**, **Sandy Hirano**, **Valerie Van Tine** and **Bethany Green**, volunteer coordinator. (Right photo) Guests (from left) **Evan Clifhorne**, aide to Seattle City Council member Tom Rasmussen, **Aurora Bennett**, **John Bennett**, **Susie Bradley** and **Bobby Whittaker**.

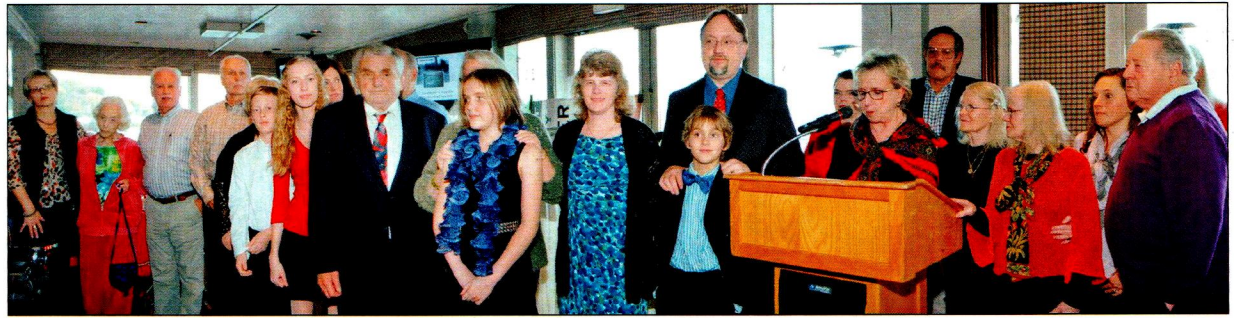




(Above) Advisory Council member **Jack (& Heidi) Miller**. (Below) **Rod Moody & Tina Anderson**.



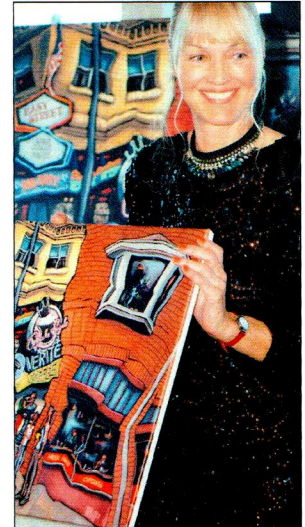
(Left photo) King County Executive **Dow Constantine** introduces his 6-month-old daughter, **Sabrina**, to the Champagne Gala Brunch crowd. (Right photo) Gala guests eagerly bid during the Fund-a-Dream portion of the program.



(Left photo) **Gerrit Kischner**, Schmitz Park Elementary School principal, greets **Janet Halton Ames**. (Right photo) Schmitz family members stand for recognition at the close of the inspirational presentation by **Vicki Schmitz-Block** (at center of podium), her daughter, **Julie Schmitz Broker** (partially hidden and to Vicki's immediate right), and her son, **Dietrich Schmitz** (to Julie's right).



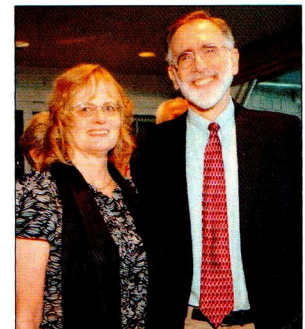
(From left) **Vivian Bowden, Sylvia Odom, Connie Wentzel**, (center photo) **Diane Tice**, owner of The Pacific Institute, and family **Nicole & Oscar Mraz**, (right photo) **Dick & Delores Barnecut, Bonnie Beerman & Ken Lowthian**.



Volunteer **Sandy Donnen**



(From left) Chef **Bill Ranniger, Bettina Carey** and owner **Duke Moscrip** of Duke's Chowder House, sponsor of our Alaska Totem Cruise. Volunteers **Nancy McPhee** (center) and **Liz Day** sell Totem wine and *Apron Strings* cookbook.

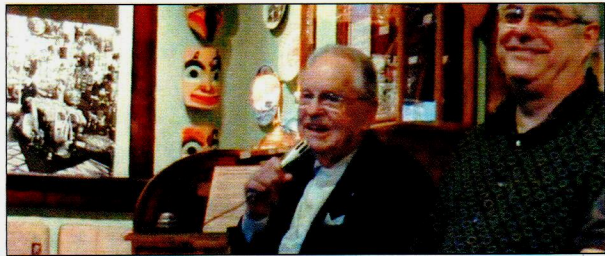


Catherine & Mike Purdy



Original signs and rarities from the Ye Olde Curiosity Shop collection adorn the ceiling shelf of our museum's focus area.

'Everybody is interested in the odd things'



Joe (left) and **Andy James** speak at Oct. 24, 2014, opening of Ye Olde Curiosity Shop. "We'd deal directly with the Indians, almost on a daily basis," Joe said. "They'd come in with their totem poles, baskets and masks."

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.

Historic Seattle tours Nucor Steel and the Mount

On the 2015 Historic Seattle calendar are tours of West Seattle's Nucor Steel (March 13) and Providence Mount St. Vincent (Sept. 3).
Info: historicseattle.org, 206-622-6952.

(Continued from page 1)

giving them all the history, he'd fall in love with it all over again and then refuse to sell it to them.

He really was a one-man chamber of commerce, writing letters to people all over the world telling them how great Seattle was.

I started working there when I was 12 in 1936 during a convention of the Shriners. In high school, I'd work after school and on Saturdays. It was fascinating. You'd meet a lot of interesting people from all over the world. I spent almost 60 years at the shop.

Curiosities stretch people's imaginations. We tried to handle items that were curios as well as some that had practical value, but everybody is interested in the odd things.

We sold an awful lot of Indian items in the early days. We'd deal directly with the Indians, almost on a daily basis. They'd come in with their totem poles, baskets and masks.

When my grandfather was in the third grade in Steubenville, Ohio, he got a book from the teacher for having the neatest desk in class. It told about the wonders of nature and artifacts from all over the world. It so whetted his appetite that he spent the rest of his life collecting curios.

A lifetime of collecting

As a boy, he used to roam the banks of the Ohio River and across the river in West Virginia and get all kinds of Indian items. He collected those. He spent his whole lifetime collecting.

When he was about 21, he heard about the Denver Gold Rush and went to Denver to work. He was so upset about having to cheat customers, he quit and went up on a little knoll to raise his hand up to God and swore that he would never work for anybody else as long as he lived.

So he started his own grocery store, which was a big success because any interesting item he found, he'd tack it up. They said pretty soon you couldn't see the groceries from the curios.

He heard about the Gold Rush in Alaska, packed up his four kids and the curios he had collected, got a ride in a caboose on the train and went to Seattle. He met an Indian who helped him build a little shack on the waterfront. That

was the beginning of Ye Olde Curiosity Shop.

He made a success out of it because he was friendly to people going in and out of Alaska. They'd bring him beautiful items from the Eskimos: carved ivories and Indian items. He gave them a fair price. He treated the Indians with respect, and he treated the customers fairly.

Andy James: I used to come down after school in grade school and sweep the floor. Over the years, every time I thought about something else, I realized I liked work at the store. It just stuck.

The saga of Sylvester the mummy

One of the biggest things is **Sylvester**, our mummy. The story we got was he was found in the Gila Bend Desert in Arizona. He was shot and perfectly preserved within 48 hours. He's preserved intentionally with arsenic. The people who examined him said he is the finest example of an arsenic mummy they've seen. Arsenic was a very common preservative around the Civil War.

There's always some old weird thing that you've got to make work, especially the arcade machines. One of my favorites is our merry-go-round organ. It's enjoyable and a challenge to find parts and make sure you understand how something works and how to put it back together.

Neil James: I started working at the shop about 10 years ago when I was 14, and I've been there ever since. When I first started, I was putting shop stickers on things or pricing things in the warehouse. I love the fact that, no matter how many times you go there, you can find something you've never seen before in some corner that you have no idea what the story on it is or what it is.

A place for out-of-town family to visit

People say that when they have family in from out of town, they always take them to this place. Everybody, from little kids to adults, can be mystified at something that's in there.

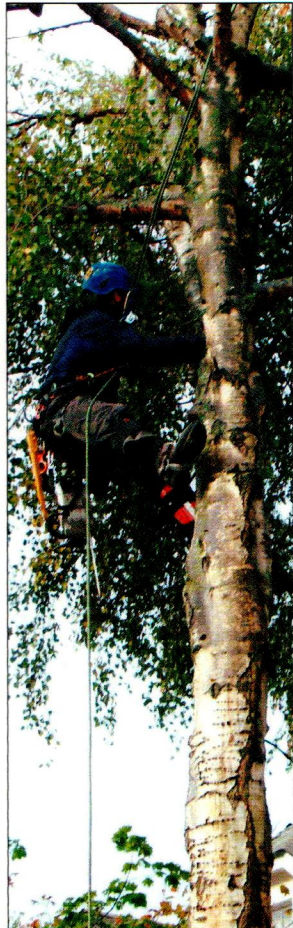
Peg Boettcher (curator of our Ye Olde exhibit): Every single inch of the shop was crammed with curios and strange things, and I love that look. It's what people expect of a curiosity shop. It's filled with odd things that make them wonder.

This exhibit kind of wraps around, like the shop. It includes Daddy Standley's desk from Denver. It not only was a desk that he used, but every other subsequent generation also did. I never changed a thing. All of the drawers are filled with a microcosm of times past.



Gala gridiron grins

Enjoying the 'Hawks at Alki Fatburger with expert commentary from NFL coach **Ken Flajole** and supporting our organization — what could be more fun on a Seattle Sunday? Flajole (lower left), former 16-year assistant coach for four NFL teams including the Seattle Seahawks, joined **Eric Bell** (to Flajole's left) and seven of Eric's buddies to take in the Dec. 7, 2014, 'Hawks game with the Philadelphia Eagles at Alki Fatburger, which donated the lunch as a live-auction item for our 2014 Champagne Gala Brunch. Others in the group (counter-clockwise from Eric) were **Ricardo Cruz**, **Scott McClellan**, **Alex Shearer**, **Robert Ponselle**, **Lindsey Smith** (Alki Fatburger manager), **Christopher Goethe**, **Liz Day** (volunteer who organized the package), **Charles Smith** and **Robin Warma**. Big thanks to Ken, Eric and Alki Fatburger!



Removal of birch tree opens garden options

No one likes to see a mature tree depart, but at times a greater good intervenes. Such was the case for the tall, twin-trunked paper-birch tree adjoining the courtyard of our "Birthplace of Seattle" Log House Museum.

The non-native birch was removed at our direction by local contractor **Kathy Holzer's** arborist firm Out on a Limb on Oct. 15, 2014. The tree had grown too large for its location, continually and dangerously branching into power lines and damaging the roof of our Annex.

The work was overseen by **Carol Vincent**, who chairs our volunteer Native Plant Garden Committee, and **Kerry Korsgaard**, trustee.

Removal of the tree is a major step to improve the native-plant garden around our museum for the education and enjoyment of the community. To join the rapidly expanding committee, please contact Carol at carol.vincent@comcast.net.

(Left) Out on a Limb arborist **Nic Thune** begins pruning of the birch, then (right) reduces the tree to its trunks.

Photos by Carol Vincent



Out on a Limb arborists (from left) **Nic Thune**, **Alex Ayers** and **Paul Art** display pieces from the cut birch tree.



Cooking up sales, smiles on the porch

Will Vannice of Renton displays the copy of our new cookbook *Apron Strings: Recipes and Recollections of the Duwamish Peninsula* that he acquired during our "Cookies & Cider on the Porch" event prior to the Christmas Ship visit to Alki on Dec. 13, 2014. Joining him are the book's editors (from left) **Joan Stover**, **Joey Richesson** and **Dayle Banks**. With 114 recipes and stories from 49 local contributors, the unique book debuted in October. It sells for \$25 at our museum.



Cruising in the chill

At the New Year's Day Polar Bear Swim on Alki Beach, Volunteer **Liz Day** promotes our Alaska Totem Cruise presented by Duke's Chowder House, whose manager, Greg Green, and server, Autumn Kline, handed out free chowder.

FOOTPRINTS

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

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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.



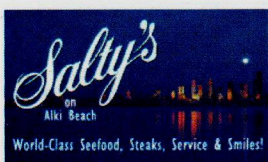
What's coming in winter and spring 2015

- Friday, Feb. 6, March 6, April 3, May 1 and June 5** 5 p.m. **Words, Writers & West Seattle**, Barnes & Noble Westwood Village, 2600 SW Barton
- Saturday, Feb. 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6** 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

Thinking of volunteering?
 ← **Come to one of these!**
 Or e-mail bgreen496@yahoo.com

Southwest Seattle Historical Society board meetings are held at 7 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month in the South Seattle Community College President's Board Room. You are welcome to attend!

Big thanks to our sponsors and supporters for our Champagne Gala Brunch:



Dufour Construction

