

2016-17 PROGRAM SEASON

All programs are held on the second Thursday of the months listed below at the Whatcom Museum Rotunda Room at 7:30 p.m. Free and open to all.

December 8, 2016: Annual History Holiday open mike for members and friends. Share a story, project, artifact, or whatever interests you about local history. Contact Wes to get on the list (see info at right).

January 10, 2017: Wes Gannaway on early area historical anecdotes and photographs.

February 9: Janet Oakley on pioneer foods and their presentation.

March 9: Josh Stilts on his newly published book "Whatcom Fish Tales" about the local commercial fishing industry.

April 13: Edradine Hovde on the restoration of the Pickett House.

If you miss a program this season and for the past couple of years, most of them are available online thanks to Dal Neitzel of BTV-10. Go to YouTube and search for Whatcom County Historical Society.

2016 WCHS BOARD

President/Publishing: Carole Teshima, 393-6782
V-P/programs/newsletter: Wes Gannaway,
384-4209, debnwes@comcast.net

Secretary: Gretchen Anderson

Treasurer: Janene Aker

At-large: Donna Pattinson, Al Currier, Susan Kingman, Janet Oakley, Edradine Hovde, Kim Thornadtsson

Territorial County Courthouse info:
Wes Gannaway, 384-4209; debnwes@comcast.net

Territorial Courthouse Committee :
Wes Gannaway, Janet Oakley, Donna Pattinson, Susan Kingman

Hospitality: Jere Edwards

WCHS Journal/New Publications:
Lance Lindell, editor - lance.lindell@gmail.com
Kim Cunningham, graphic designer

HISTORY NEWS



Volume 22 Issue 2

Whatcom County Historical Society

November 2016

Lake Samish Reflections by the Lake Samish History Group

Thursday, November 10, 2016, 7:30 p.m.
Whatcom Museum Rotunda Room • 121 Prospect St. • Free

The Lake Samish History Group will present highlights of their journey to publish a book on the history of Lake Samish. This book is the result of more than ten years of research, interviews and collection of material by a small group of Lake Samish history buffs. The idea of documenting what life was like on the lake in the last century was conceived early in 2006 after receiving a letter written by former resident, which recalls the first Lake Samish Boat Parade in 1931. After seeing this letter, several residents initiated an informal community archive of stories and photos. Then four years later the actual Lake Samish history project began by

collecting family stories through interviews.

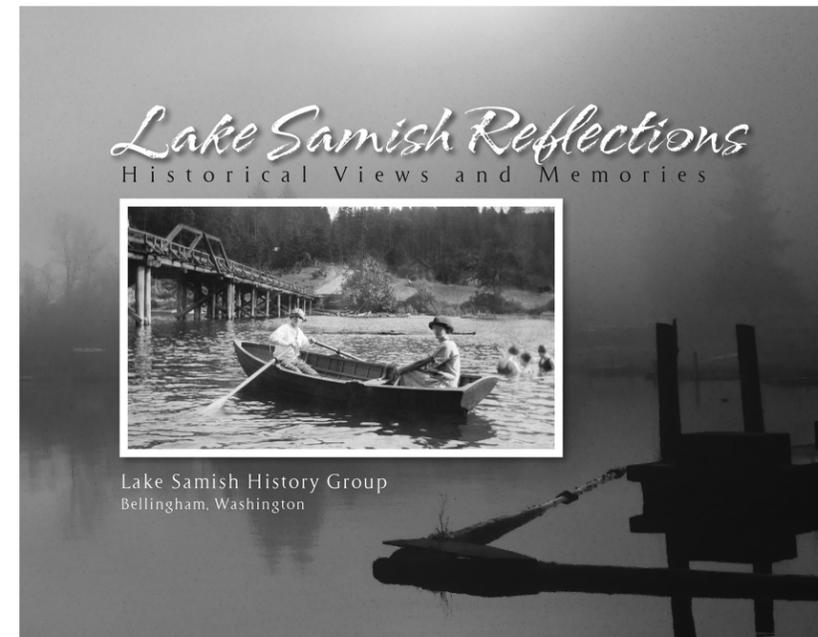
Over time, the scope of the project was broadened to include the historical context of Whatcom County and the Pacific Northwest. The history group redefined its mission as an endeavor to document changes in the community after 1890 while creating snapshots of life at Lake Samish. Eventually, we also realized the Lake Samish story would not be complete without including the indigenous people who have inhabited the area for thousands of years.

By 2012, the commitment to publish had been made even as we continued to interview and do research. Unfortunately, as time lumbered on, the realization set in that we needed to draw the line on incoming data and change to an outgoing focus: publication of what became *Lake Samish Reflections*.

Table of contents:

- Chapter 1: Coast Salish Habitation
- Chapter 2: Settlement in the 1800s
- Chapter 3: Land Division and Infrastructure
- Chapter 4: Natural Resources
- Chapter 5: Recreational Resources
- Chapter 6: Community Resources
- Chapter 7: Family Stories

Books will be available for purchase in December.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

www.whatcomhistory.net
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225

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LOCAL HISTORY NEWS & NOTES

Board Member Elections

Every year prior to the December program the Whatcom County Historical Society holds a short general membership meeting per bylaws to elect board members. This year, the following board members are up for re-election to a two-year term: Wes Gannaway, Edradine Hovde, Al Currier, and Janet Oakley. Continuing for the second year of their term are: Janene Aker, Gretchen Anderson, Donna Pattinson, and Kim Thornadtsson. Susan Kingman and Carole Teshima will be moving off of the board to commit time to other projects.

We urge anyone with an interest in Whatcom County history or historical preservation to strongly consider standing for election to the board. There are many different interests represented on the current board and room for whatever special topic interests you. Please direct questions about board membership to President Carole Teshima at whatcomhistory@gmail.com or 360-393-6782 or contact any of the current board members listed on the back.

The Board will then elect officers for the year at their first regularly scheduled meeting in January.

Engraved Pavers Are Set!

Stop by at the next open house every 2nd Sunday from 1-4 to see your engraved paver at the lower entrance to the T.G. Richards building next to the new lift.

To reserve one of the 10 blanks left, email whatcomhistory@gmail.com or mail a check for \$50 per brick paver to: WCHS, 1308 E St., Bellingham, WA 98225. Include your inscription of 18 letters or spaces per line up to two lines. All but \$12 is a tax deductible donation to the building's preservation.

Moments in Time: The Sinking Floor of the T.G. Richards Building

The T.G. Richards building (aka the Whatcom County Territorial Courthouse) now located at 1308 E St. was built in the summer of 1858. The brick walls go all the way to the beach level and sit on slabs of Chuckanut Sandstone. The center of the floor was held up by pilings cut from portions of tree trunks. By 1872, a portion of the south wall was held up by boards, and the floor was sinking.

Whatcom County fixed the floor and built a bulkhead along that side to keep the tide from washing out the wall. When LaConner was settled, the District Court was moved from the town of Whatcom to LaConner because the judges wouldn't hold court in the brick building due to the danger of the collapsing floor. The County made major repairs to the building again in 1888.

By 1942, the maintenance man for the Jehovah's Witness Church, which occupied the building at that time, tried to to repair the floor again. In 1960, Carl Akers, who owned the building and used it for his taxidermy business, finally tore up the floor, filled the bottom with wheel-barrel loads of pea gravel, and poured a concrete floor, permanently fixing the 82 year-old problem. The Whatcom County Historical Society was gifted the building by the Akers in 2004 and completed restored it. For more on the building's uses and history, see www.whatcomhistory.net.

Send your news and questions about local landmarks or stories to: whatcomhistory@wwu.edu. We are also happy to print brief notes on topics you have researched.

MORE NEWS & NOTES

The T.G. Richards Building, 1308 E St., is building is open for public tours from 1-4 p.m. the second Sunday of every month (the same time as the nearby Pickett House). Private tours may also be arranged. The building is partially ADA accessible. It is all available for rent on a regular weekly, monthly or hourly basis for events or classes. It seats 49 per floor with a small kitchenette. Please email whatcomhistory@gmail.com or call 360-384-4209 for more information or to arrange a tour.

The Annual Benefit Garage Sale was a huge success thanks to all of our members and supporters! We raised a record of slightly more than \$2000! The money will go toward insurance, maintenance, and mortgage payments for the T.G. Richards building. With the unexpected cost overrun for installation of the ADA lift, the Society's mortgage was increased to \$90,000. If you find it in your heart to help the Society pay down the mortgage or help with additional fundraising, please contact any board member listed on back.

Thank you to these members for renewing or joining:

Subscription: Kathy Hasenjaeger

Individual: James Berg, Becky Burns, Earl Cilley, Susan Kingman, Kelli Linville, and Steve Lyons

Sustaining: Dennis DeMeyer

Special thanks to: Dennis DeMeyer for \$25 donation.

Whatcom County Historical Society Membership 2016-2017 Season

Clip or copy and mail with payment to WCHS Membership, 1308 E St, Bellingham, WA 98225, or pay online

NEW RENEW I would like to volunteer, please contact me

- \$15 One year newsletter subscription
- \$25 Individual membership or non-profit organization, newsletter + one copy *Journal* + 10% member discount
- \$50 Sustaining member or business member, (same benefits as above) + discount on building rentals
- \$100 Supporting member (same plus choice of historic photographic print from Whatcom Museum, call 393-6782)
- \$250 Patron member (same as all above, plus special future recognition)

Additional donation \$_____ In memory of _____

Additional donation \$_____ for preservation of Territorial County Courthouse on E Street in Bellingham

Name: _____ Check and leave blank if same as mail label

Business/Organization name: _____

Street/Box _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Please send me information on Building Rentals ___ and/or Richards Building Preservation efforts ___

Expiration date on newsletter mailing label may not be updated until second issue after payment.

The Whatcom County Historical Society is a registered 501(c)3 organization. Your membership is tax-deductible, except for value of gift items.

Please call (360) 393-6782 for information about your membership and benefits

