



Tumwater Historical Association

Volume 30, Issue 3

Your Community is Your Heritage!

Winter 2011

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**2nd & 4th Mondays—
Homestead Quilters**— Tumwater
Methodist Church, 12:30-2:30
pm

**2nd Thursday —THA Board
Meetings**—Schmidt House,
5:00—6:20 pm

**November—March —Crosby
House** CLOSED for the Winter

**12/11 —THA Annual Meeting
Schmidt House, Potluck—Finger
Foods, 1:00-3:00 pm**

**12/12—THA Quilters Monday
Tumwater Methodist Church
12:30—2:30 pm**

— 2012 —

**1/21— Board Retreat at Corinne
& Vern Tobeck's Home**

The THA Board will conduct its annual retreat in January to plan 2012 events. We'd love to hear what you would like to see in 2012. Please send your suggestions for to ctobeck@comcast.net.

Milk For Tumwater and Olympia

—By Don Trosper

As we remember Tumwater history it's easy to center our focus on the brewery. I find that there is very little written about the other thirst-quenching liquids that were important to families in our area. Of course, the water of "It's the Water" fame has always been important to us, but what about the milk and related dairy products consumed in the Tumwater and Olympia area? Certainly we have many of our readers who remember fresh milk in bottles delivered to your door by the milkmen. That milk had to be raised locally to keep its freshness, so let's briefly look back at the early 1900's and the Thurston County dairies that brought us all that good milk, cream, butter, and cheeses so many grew up loving.

Many families had a cow or two if they had any acreage in the surrounding rural areas, but those who lived in the towns needed to purchase their milk from dairies. In the 1900's there were various sized dairy farms with drivers to deliver their product to Olympia and Tumwater. Dargold has been a big provider, probably the biggest. Perhaps the next largest operation was the Weiks family's "Evergreen Dairy" along the Black River near Littlerock. They had a number of drivers around town delivering to stores and

homes. The "Meyer's Golden Guernsey Dairy" in the Delphi Valley near Waddle Creek Road was next in line with two routes. They would deliver on alternate days with no days off and naturally many would come to pick up their dairy products in person at the farm. Other Mom and Pop farms produced milk for sale but didn't have deliveries, such as Merv Shay's raw milk dairy on South Bay Road.

The Meyer's Golden Guernsey Dairy milk trucks made their rounds through Olympia and Tumwater in the early morning hours, usually with the Meyer children running the bottles back and forth between the truck and the porch. One of those children was the last living farming brother, Lawrence Meyer. He said that his father and brothers first bought the farm in 1919, arriving there in their old Tin Lizzie. The father was a Swiss stone cutter, working his way from Minnesota to Montana lining smelter kilns and paving roads with bricks. He came west to add his efforts to the Tacoma smelter, the Capitol building and the bridge work at Mt. Rainier. The older brothers worked in the ship yard in Tacoma during WWI. "There wasn't much to do on Sundays," Lawrence said for an article in the Olympian Totem in 1980, "so they looked at the ads and saw

there was some land for sale down here." They eventually found some land in the Delphi Valley and they bought the first 50 acres for \$2,200. They started out with five cows and once a week hauled their few cans of milk to the Olympia Creamery located at Water and State in Olympia. The operation grew as more of the family got involved and built a stone barn, a milkhouse and stone bar. They acquired more cows but also bought a lot of chickens for a hatchery that eventually totaled 10,000 chickens with 3,000 chicks per year in the hatchery. The brothers felt they were being cheated by the downtown creamery so they began a dairy operation of their own. The next generation of children began driving and shagging bottles (transferring the bottles from the trucks to the porch and back) and helped with the chores. It was a real family operation and there was always singing along with the early hours and hard work. In fact, one of those children must have taken the music to heart. Burt Meyer and his wife Di are well known in our area for their involvement in folk music and making of instruments. Burt was a teacher at Tumwater High School for many years beginning in 1969/70.

Wishing You All A Wonderful Holiday Season!!!!

HISTORICAL GREETINGS TO YOU!

—BY DON TROSPER, PRESIDENT

What a good year it has been for the Tumwater Historical Association. The past couple months have been very eventful with a wonderful "Welcome Homesteaders" event at the site of the original Bush Farm off Old Hwy. 99 on September 18th. Ray Eagan did an exceptional presentation portraying Ezra Meeker talking under the original Butternut Tree about his association with Mr. Bush and the family. Earlier many of our board attended the anniversary celebration at the Nelson Farm south of Tumwater in costume and I

got to give a talk on area history at the customer appreciation event a couple weeks later at The Barn and Great Western Supply.

Perhaps the highlight of the year was our big event held at the Tumwater Falls Park on October 2nd. It was actually three events in one: the New Market Homesteaders' Cider Sunday, the Thurston County Birthday celebration and our joint twice yearly venture with other area historic groups called "Thurston County Through the Decades" portraying the 25 year period of

1875 to 1900. The weather cooperated and there was great participation by a large number of people. Our next event in that series will be in Lacey this spring.

Our annual meeting open to all members and interested members of the general public will be held December 11th at the Schmidt Mansion at 1:00 p.m. Come on by as we talk over old times and plan for new old times in 2012. Next year should be another good and historic year.

**"Thank You
Karen Johnson!"**

Karen has graciously researched and supplied all of the historical news clippings that have been made a regular part of this newsletter—without recognition. Karen is also responsible for the fashion photo on page 3."

TUMWATER EYES NEW STREET PLAN; SCHEDULES HEARING

The Tumwater Town Council Tuesday evening scheduled a hearing December 19, starting at seven o'clock in the evening, for the adoption of a six-year street program. A tentative outline presented by city engineer John Swift calls for an outlay of \$421,600 over the six years.

The council moved that the town take over two sewer lines built by Tumwater School District with the understanding the town will operate and maintain them. The sewer lines are the Swenson extension on West Lee Street, and the extension on West Dennis Street from Capitol Boulevard to the high school.

Town operation of the extensions means people living on the sewer lines will be subject to paying three dollars a month. The money will be used to pay the school district for construction costs.

The council also moved that residents along the extensions be notified by letter that they are subject to being so charged.

A motion to set up a hearing for vacation of the alley bordered by Third and Fourth Avenues and B and C Streets was approved.

A move that a no parking sign on Sunset Drive be removed and the curb repainted was approved.

—Daily Olympian, December 6, 1961

NARROW ESCAPE

A man by the name of Brown had a narrow escape from drowning at Tumwater a few days ago. He fell in the stream above the dam of the lower mills and was carried over the falls by the current. Captain Horton, happening to be in a small boat near the ware house of Crosby and Co., saw him just in time to pull him up just as he was going down for the last time.

—Overland Press, December 9, 1861

HUNTING CLUB

Four Tumwater youths took their first lesson in woodsmanship as members of a junior hunting club. A week end was spent in the Rock Creek area with a trailer camp as base for the daily outings. They were accompanied by Larkin Gibson of Seattle and Gale Jenson. The boys practicing hunting skills are Larry Steele, Terry Gibson, Val Jenson and Ricky Jenson.

—The Daily Olympian, November 2, 1961

THA HOMESTEAD QUILTERS' NEWS

—BY KATHLEEN KOONTZ

Our Homestead Quilters have been involved with many of the THA fall community outreach events as well as participating in the Thurston County Fair in August.

Our 2011 Quilters' Getaway, on October 29, was successful with a great variety of projects being worked on. We had a bed turning, demonstrations and door prizes. We always enjoy sharing this activity with the Olympics West Retirement Community who graciously host this activity.

The 2011 fund raiser quilt will be given away at the THA Annual Meeting on December 11.

The 2012 fund raiser quilt is well on the way to being ready for quilting and is very striking with varied star blocks.

We participated in the Michael T. Simmons Harvest Festival on November 4. Our Homestead Quilters demonstrated quilting techniques and projects.

It will soon be time to start planning for the Tumwater Middle School Homesteader quilt project which our quilters help with. The girls did a fabulous job with the 2010-11 quilt; so, we are looking forward to this year's class.

Other plans in the works are a bonnet making session and a winter field trip.

Our Monday quilting sessions at the Tumwater Methodist Church will continue November 14 and 28, December 5, January 9 and 23, February 13 and 27 at 12:30 pm.

We will hold our quilters' annual Christmas lunch on Saturday, December 12th.

Please know you are most welcome to join us at these quilting times, no experience necessary, just an interest in quilting. Call 943-1383 or 943-7527 for information.

CROSBY HOUSE ACTIVITIES

—BY BEV YORK (AKA: MRS. MARY LINCOLN CROSBY)



What a wonderful grand finale to our second season portraying life at the Crosby House in the 1860's! **Sixteen re-enactors and two guest musicians, joined us in October for our day of celebrating the harvest with a special autumn dinner menu.** On display was a Boston Marrow winter squash (an heirloom variety from mid-17th century). It has a very smooth texture when baked and bright orange outer shell, when ripe. Stan and Diana Kildow entertained us with Irish and Scottish music from long ago. They sang as Stan played his concertina and Diana played her guitar.

Several new faces brought a host of talents and experience to share with all who were able to attend or visit in October. The Daughters of the Pioneers report that the number of visitors has increased since we began our presentation with Living Historians. If you haven't had the opportunity to visit, please join us April through October on the 3rd Sunday of each month, from 1 to 4 pm to see what is happening!

The gardens have been put to bed for the winter. Thank you to everyone who had a hand in the gardens this sea-

son, they are shaping up nicely. A special "Thank you" to Connie Barclay, a Master Gardener, who volunteers weekly to keep the gardens full of promise!

We will open the 2012 season on April 16th. Mrs. Cheryl Reams will demonstrate how to making a bonnet of the mid-19th century style. She has made many lovely bonnets, some of which have been worn by our re-enactors while on walks through the Historic Park district.



Pictured is our own Miss Fannie Crosby on the settee with a bonnet Mrs. Reams brought in to share with us.

Do mark your calendars to attend!



WHERE ENDS THE OREGON TRAIL

—BY CHUCK HORNBUCKLE

“INSTALLMENT ONE OF TWO”

Ask six historians and you may get six different answers. One question we can answer with some certainty is, “Where are the Oregon Trail Markers”?

Two years after Ezra Meeker set out on his epoch journey in 1906 retracing the route he traveled in 1852 the Daughters of the American Revolution approved a proposal to honor the memory of Oregon Trail pioneers in Washington. The marking project was suggested by Judge Ellis in 1908 according to Mrs. Ellis who was chairman of DARs Oregon Trail Committee.



End of the “Oregon Trail” monument in Sylvester Park in downtown Olympia

Nearly 100-years ago on Saturday, February 22, 1913 local citizens gathered in Capitol Park (now Sylvester Park) to dedicate the first monument marking the “End of the Oregon Trail”. Among those addressing the enthusiastic crowd were pioneer Ezra Meeker, George Himes, Curator of the Oregon Historical Society, W. H. Gilstrap, Curator of the Washington State Historical Society, and Judge Overton Gentry Ellis. Washington State Governor Earnest Lister along with Hazard Stevens son of Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens addressed the historic gathering. Gilstrap’s spoke on “Patriotism”, while Himes shared his thoughts on the “History of the Oregon Trail” and Ezra Meeker recalled his experience on “The Ore-

gon Trail vs. the Pioneer Way”.

Over the next three years other western Washington DAR chapters joined the Olympia’s Sacajawea Chapter to place markers at sites suggested by George Himes, Hazard Stevens and Ezra Meeker. The Fort Vancouver Chapter of the DAR was directed to place a unique marker at the north bank of the Columbia River bridge. Each of the dedication ceremonies were well attended by local and regional citizens, and featured speeches by dignitaries, patriotic songs, and children’s choirs. It was declared the Pacific Highway would be part of the road and for that reason was built along the Oregon Trail. The State Highway Commission promised its aid and cooperation in marking the historic pathway.

The second marker was dedicated in Tumwater at the falls of the Deschutes River on Friday, August 18, 1916 on the site of the first house built when the white settlement was founded. On behalf of the D.A.R., Mrs. Eliza Ferry Leary, daughter of the first governor of Washington, presented the marker to the state and the city of Tumwater before a crowd of pioneers from all over the northwest. Participants in the dedication programs read like a “who’s who” of early citizens.

Dedication of the Tumwater marker had culminated more than two years’ of work by the DAR committee in studying state history to ensure the accurate placement of markers along the old road between Puget Sound and Oregon including marker design, materials, and construction.

Following in quick succession of the Tumwater dedication monuments were placed on Bush Prairie on September 10, 1916; Grand Mound



Dedication of Bush Prairie “Oregon Trail” marker near Old Hwy 99 and 88th Ave SW

and Centralia on Thursday October 12th; Jackson’s Prairie and Toledo on Wednesday October 25th; and Kalama, Woodland and Kelso on Thursday October 26th. The Kalama marker is located near where Ezra lived briefly.

The “unique” marker at the north end of the Columbia



“Oregon Trail” monument at Clark County Historical Museum in Vancouver.

River bridge in Vancouver was dedicated on October 25, 1917 and rededicated on March 28, 2003 following its relocation to the Clark County Historical Museum.

Eleven of the 13 markers features a bronze plaque with the inscription “Oregon Trail 1844 – Marked by the Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution”. The Olympia marker reads “Marking the End of the Oregon Trail – Erected by Sacajawea Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution Olympia, Wn 1913”, and the Vancouver marker reads “In Memory of the Pioneers of the Oregon Trail 1844 . Spirit of the Trail, DAR and SAR in the State of Washington 1916”.

“Happiness comes not from having easy work but in the afterglow of satisfaction that accompanies any unselfish task well done.”

—Author Unknown

The Tumwater Historical Association

Invites You to Join in Their

2011 Annual Meeting & Celebration of Accomplishments

Sunday, December 11, 2011— 1:00 PM

The Historic Schmidt House
330 Schmidt Place SW - Tumwater

Bring a friend and celebrate all things historical!

All are Welcome!!!

Learn what the Tumwater Historical Association (THA) is all about.

Enjoy a slide show and join in the discussion of THA's 2011 activities.

Elect THA Officers and Trustees for 2012

(Proposed slate of officers—Other nominations may be made from the floor)

President	Don Trospen
Vice President	Bob Cooksey
Treasurer	Dave Shade
Secretary	Sandi Gray
Trustee 2	Corinne Tobeck
Trustee 3	Anne Kelleher
Trustee 5	Gail Tracy
Trustee 6	Karen Johnson

Celebrate with Conversation, Refreshments and THA's Quilt Raffle Drawing

1st Prize	Charm Quilt (80" x 66") with pillow
2nd Prize	Embroidered Table Runner
3rd Prize	Small Quilt

Refreshments and Conversation

Featuring "Hot Spiced Cider, Hors d'ouvers and Delectable Desserts!"
Have a favorite you'd like to share? Bring it along, the more, the merrier!

PHOTO GALLERY . . . THA IN ACTION!

Cider Sunday/Thurston County Thru the Decades—1875-1900 October 2, 2011 — Tumwater Falls Park



Welcome Homesteaders September 16, 2011 — Bush Farm



On Sunday, September 24, the annual "Welcome Homesteaders" event was held for the Tumwater Middle School 2011-2012 Homesteader class and their parents. It was held at the Bush Prairie Farm under the butternut tree and sponsored by the Tumwater Historical Association. The Tumwater Historical Association sponsors this group of 8th graders throughout the year. The Thurston County Historical Commission contributed funds and brought a display about George Bush and his son Owen and the South Puget Sound Community College archeology students and staff brought artifacts from the Bush Farm. The best part (besides the kids in pioneer dress) was Ray Egan's impersonation of Ezra Meeker talking about his good friend, George Bush. Ray is an extraordinarily talented storyteller and to hear the story of George and Isabella Bush under the butternut tree they planted 166 years ago was pretty amazing. Thanks to Mark and Kathleen Clark and all who participated for a very special event.

NEW THA MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

—BY CHUCK HORNBUCKLE

Want to avoid the hassle of annual THA membership renewal along with dues increases?

During their June meeting Board members authorized a life membership category similar to what other groups enjoy.

The new category has been designated as the "Pioneer Life Membership" honoring those hardy emigrants who settled the Thurston County area. Lifetime members will receive a numbered Certificate appropriate for framing. A copy of the Certificate is shown below.

The Board also set lifetime dues at 20 times the category dues. For example, if you join or renew as an individual the

dues would be 20 times \$20 or \$400. If you are over 65 the dues would be 20 times \$10 or \$200.

Join or renew between now and January 31, 2012 and receive a 10-percent discount.

As a new member you will receive the new and expanded THA Newsletter containing local history articles and announcements of future activities such as our annual Pioneer Fair, Cider Sunday, the "Thurston County thru the Decades" series, and more.



THA Annual Dues

- Individual \$20
- Family (Household) \$25
- Senior Citizen/Student . \$10
- Business \$50
- Contributing Friend 50+
- Lifetime—Individual . . . \$400
- Lifetime-Senior (65) . . . \$200
- Estate Planning, (Information available upon request)

THA Membership

"Your Community Is Your Heritage!"

Join THA today!

For an application write or call

THA Membership
P.O. Box 4315
Tumwater, WA
98501-0315

(360) 943-6951

**THANK YOU
FOR
RENEWING
YOUR DUES!**

Renewals

Ann Chenall
Ron & Kay Nelson
Helen Spain

TUMWATER HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 4315 TUMWATER WA 98501-0315
(360) 943-6951

MISSION

"The Tumwater Historical Association is organized for educational and cultural purposes relating to the history of the Tumwater area, its life and people."

The Tumwater Historical Association (THA) is an active organization that was incorporated on October 2, 1981 with 200 charter members. THA is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization governed by the board of directors. The board generally meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Schmidt House in Tumwater, starting at 5:00 PM.

THA offers a variety of activities funded through membership dues, grants, donation, and entry fees. THA offers its members and the community the opportunity to partake in a variety of historical and education activities, such as:

- Pioneer Fair
- Cider Sunday
- THA Country Store
- Historical Field Trips
- Oral History Program
- THA Homestead Quilters
- Heritage/Living History Programs
- New Market Homestead Living History Museum

Call (360) 943-6951 or send an e-mail to ctobeck@comcast.net to request information about any of the above activities or to learn how you, too, can become a member of the Tumwater Historical Association.

"Your Community is Your Heritage!"

**The Tumwater Historical
Association Board of
Directors Thanks You for
Your Continued
Membership
In THA!**

THA Motto

*"Your Community is
Your Heritage"*



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Corinne M. Tobeck, Editor

THA Website!

[www.tumwaterhistorical
association.org](http://www.tumwaterhistoricalassociation.org)

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NEW MARKET LANDS TANNERY

—BY BEV YORK (AKA: MRS. MARY LINCOLN CROSBY)

The settlers of the New Market community must have been happy, for a variety of reasons, when a Tannery was opened in their community. The raw materials they needed to make leather shoes, harnesses for horses, oxen and mule, as well as other articles of clothing such as belts and much more, were in great demand, albeit short supply in the early days of our community.

The tanning of hides involved a lot of heavy and smelly work to do by oneself. Historically, there were two ways to make a solution to enable someone to tan hides: (1) "Mineral" was used by making a paste of the brains of an animal, thus resulting in the production of white tanned leather. The leather could be dyed by the rubbing of oils, by smoking the leather over a fire, or by

dying to the color of choice. (2) Vegetable tanning was made from oak bark, which had been chipped and soaked to make tannin (a required substance). The hides needed to be soaked, turned and soaked for a week or more, until the hair came loose enough to remove. Deer, elk and moose hides are very heavy, especially when wet. The smells from this solution, suffice to say, was not of wine OR roses. The tanning process would continue by more scraping and stretching. Once the hides were free of debris, they would be worked until they were dry and soft, this process would take up to five hours per hide! Very labor intensive methods, to say the least.

Many of the settlers arrived with shoes completely worn out. In this day, it was important for settlers to be skilled at

many handicrafts to survive. There are many shoe lists in local antique shops. It is this author's opinion, that there were also a number of skilled shoemakers about in that day. Fortunate was the community to have such a one, too. Winter came early some years, snowfall on October 15, in 1860! Shoes would have made a great trade item either at the general store or for other needed items amongst neighbors.

A Harness Maker would have need of leather for making harnesses of all manner for the various teams used to pull wagons or plows over this rough terrain. And the list goes on . . . needless to say, the Tanner was a welcome new member to the community of New Market.