

News from Highline Heritage Museum

Volume 86

April 2018

The Mission of the Highline Historical Society is to collect, preserve, and tell the stories of the Highline region and its people.

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We're Building a Time Capsule!

Something many new businesses do when they first open is put a time capsule in their wall, to be opened sometime in the future. We need to do this also. However, since the Heritage Museum already collects a great many of the items that go into a time capsule we needed to come up with a new idea. We already collect newspapers, memorabilia and photos of our community. So, instead, we want to include your memories in our time capsule. We are inviting all of our readers to put together a page to send to us that tells us about a day in your life. Put your name, address and age at the top of the page and start writing. It can be topical, such as: My favorite place to shop, and why; How my family celebrates holidays; Where we like to go on vacation; What I especially like about a club I belong to; What is the best thing about my child's school?

When your page is completed, please email it to Cyndi Upthegrove (cyndiu@comcast.net). She will compile them and our curator will print them on archival paper and seal them in a waterproof box. The box will be sealed into an inside wall in our museum store. It will be opened in 50 years and printed as a book about Highline in 2018. Start writing everyone!

A Historical Time Capsule

On Christmas Eve 1907 a group of men gathered beneath the Paris Opera and carefully wrapped two lead and iron containers containing 24 recorded discs. Each were sealed and locked in a small storage room with a note that read "This will teach men 100 years from now about the state of our talking machines and the voices of the principal singers of our times" The project was the idea of Alfred Clark who was the founder and president of EMI's ancestor, the International Gramophone Company. In 1989, during the installation of air-conditioning it was discovered that the archive had been broken open and one of the urns was empty and a gramophone was missing. The remainder of the archive was immediately transferred to the National Library of France for safekeeping.



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

One of the nice features of my job is to spread the news of Highline Historical Society success; and this is one of those occasions when there is such news to disseminate.

Following long negotiations and since our last newsletter, we were able to execute a favorable sustainable energy loan from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. This infusion of funds allows us to finish our new museum building in Burien. Although the building doesn't look a great deal different outside from what it was when winter started, the interior has seen great progress. This includes installation of piping and wiring inside the walls, and installation and taping of drywall. Interior painting is scheduled for the third week of April, plus a final coat of exterior paint, weather permitting--a test patch of green is visible on the east side of the building. Soon plumbing and lighting fixtures, the movable/motorized storage system for our archives and collections, and the carpet will be installed. Pending is the re-assembly of display cases previously donated by the Roaslie Whyte Doll Museum, plus production and installation of the initial exhibits. This is exciting and exhausting for our staff and volunteers.



Though the end of the tunnel may be in sight, this is not time for any of us to take our foot off the pedal. We are still actively raising money for this project. I encourage each of you to continue participation in our various loyalty programs at Bartell Drugs, Fred Meyer and QFC/ Kroger companies, and Amazon Smile. I encourage each of you to consider "Giving Big" to Highline Historical Society through the Seattle Foundation gift-matching event scheduled this year for May 9th. And, most of all I encourage each of you to invest some of your "sweat equity" wherever your talents may lie during our current year of great need. This includes the transfer of collections from our rented premises at Sea-Tac Airport, installation of display cases and exhibits at the new building, and even more imminently on June 9 when we again will host the Highline Garden Tour. We could still use volunteers for shifts at the lovely gardens.

Thank you, and congratulations to our magnificent staff and volunteers who have brought us this far.

Mike Emerson



Paula Becker is the award-winning author of *Looking for Betty MacDonald: The Egg, The Plague, Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle and I*, and co-author of *The Future Remembered: the 1962 Seattle World's Fair and Its Legacy* and *Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition: Washington's First World's Fair*.

She is an expert on the history of world's fairs, and she narrated *Structural Engineers of the 1962 Seattle World's Fair*. She is featured in the documentary films *When Seattle Invented The Future: The 1962 World's Fair*, which aired on PBS stations nationwide; and *Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition: Washington's Forgotten World's Fair*, which aired on Seattle's KCTS-9. Becker has written for HistoryLink.org since 2001, and is a staff historian. Her 300+ History-Link essays document all aspects of Washington state history.

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Comments or information for publication may be sent to Editor, at the Society address, or email at highlinehistory@gmail.org

Note: The Highline Historical Society respects our donors' and friends' confidentiality. We do not make our mailing lists available to other organizations.



The Society is a proud member of Discover Burien, the Assn. of King County Historical Societies, the South King County Cultural Coalition, Washington Museums Assn. and the American Association of State and Local History.

We are also funded by grants from Humanities WA and the cities of SeaTac and Burien.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EXHIBITS

*SeaTac Exhibit
Angle Lake Station*

Presently on Exhibit in SeaTac City Hall: The Angle Lake Station. This exhibit is about the new Angle Lake Light Rail Station located on S 200th Street one block west of Highway 99. It includes a discussion of some of the challenges that are encountered and dealt with when creating such a large community project. An inside look at our tax dollars at work.



*Remembering Alvin
Anderson*

Opening on May first at SeaTac City Hall: Remembering Alvin Anderson. This SeaTac pioneer was a friend to all, and one of the city’s most recognizable and endearing citizens.

*Final GiveBIG
is coming*

We are pleased to announce that Seattle Foundation’s eighth and final **GiveBIG** will be Wednesday, May 9, 2018. This is the day each year when your donation to the Highline Historical Society is matched by a generous donor pool at the Seattle Foundation.

*An Afternoon with
Paula Becker
May 20, 2018*

The Truth and I: Reading Betty MacDonald in the Age of Memoir: by Paula Becker. - SeaTac City Hall, 2 PM, May 20th. This compelling talk is about the author of *The Egg and I*, which reportedly sold one copy every 22 seconds in the 1940s. Although she wrote autobiographically, Betty’s relationship with truth was slippery. Her biographer, Paula Becker, ponders how Betty’s kind of nonfiction relates to the popular genre of memoir today. What - then and now - does “truth” in memoir mean?

*Highline Garden Tour
June 9, 2018*



Highline Garden Tour will be held on Saturday June 9, 2018. Please join us for a tour of beautiful gardens in Burien, SeaTac and Normandy Park. The tour also includes local art, plants for sale, coupons for discounts from local merchants and an opportunity to volunteer! We need 40 volunteers for this event. Without your help we will have to cancel. Please contact Cyndi Upthegrove (206-246-6354) to put your name on the volunteer list.

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newsletter sponsor



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charity rating organization.



We are pleased to share Gene Pugh's oral history conducted with Alvin Anderson in 1998. He was an engaging gentleman and knew everyone in town. This history is quite long and is continued on our website. - Ed.

Alvin Anderson

I've lived here for 86 years in this house next door. This area was called Riverton Heights. The original school, called Riverton Heights School was just off the Kelly Road at 138th Street. Kelly was the first pioneer up here in the town of Sunnydale. He blazed the trail up here. Most of the Kelly Road is abandoned now, however there is a section of it from 142nd to 144th still running. It ran from Robbins General Store to the town of Sunnydale. As new pioneers came out here the Kelly Road was pushed on all the way to Des Moines and Normandy Park and Miller's Beach. Kelly's Road would be from 142nd to 144th and then the Des Moines highway was built on top of Kelly's Road.

My father bought a piece of land out here. He emigrated from Sweden at the age of 19 along with his 16-year old sister. The two of them went to their aunt in Cleveland, Ohio. The 16-year old girl was able to get a job with a rich family, and there she learned to speak English. Then she met a man named Fred Anderson and they got married. My father worked for several years on the Great Lakes. After learning English and earning his first citizenship papers he decided to make a tour around the United States.

When he came to Seattle he found people from Scandinavia and an area much like the town where he came from in Sweden. He came from the middle part of Sweden, a little town named Djorbyn. When he got to Seattle he found all these people who were willing to help him. He found a fellow by the name of John Nordstrom. He had just been up in Alaska and made a little money in gold mining, so he came back to Seattle and opened a shoe shop. That became the basis for building the Nordstrom department stores.

To see that the young people did not get into trouble, they formed athletic and educational organizations and saw that they got jobs. There were three main jobs they could do here: work in the forests as a logger, work in the sawmills making lumber, or they could take the lumber and build a new town. My father chose to become a carpenter. From the time that he came here in about 1907 until forty years later he worked building the city of Seattle.

One day some Swede who had been here longer convinced my dad to take a ride on the Interurban. He was going to show him a house. He got out here on the Interurban from Occidental and Yesler Way. They came over a landfill. (The tide flats) had all been filled. Spokane Street had not been filled in yet so they came over a trestle there. They came out to the town of Georgetown. There the Interurban took down the trolley and got onto the line that had a third rail. From there all the way to Tacoma the line ran on the third rail.



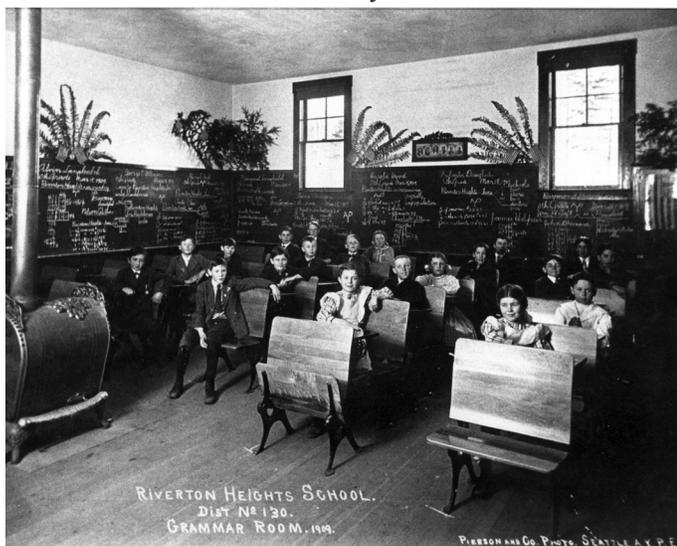
But when they stopped at Riverton the boys got off and walked up the hill. On both sides of the street there were wooden sidewalks all the way up to 42nd Ave. At the section line the sidewalk stopped. From 42nd on up the hill the sidewalk stopped and they had to walk on dirt roads. Dirt roads were good for horses but they weren't any good for automobiles. For automobiles they had to fill the holes with dirt and gravel. He came up here and they saw this house, just a small house out in the woods. It had been previously logged off.

My Dad worked as a carpenter in town. He was making good money, \$4 or \$5 a day. Most people were working for maybe \$2 or \$3 a day. Anyway, he used the place up here for raising potatoes. My mother put in a vegetable garden and that kept them going in fresh vegetables for part of the year. Most of the year we relied on meat and potatoes.

When he got off the Interurban, after a day's work, he

got off at a little town there called Riverton. (There's no town there now.) The town of Riverton was at 42nd Avenue S. and 130th Street, right down by the river. The Interurban followed the river down through Kent and Auburn and then it cut through the hill and went through a tunnel and came out someplace near Fife, eventually went to Tacoma. It was sponsored by Stone and Webster, two engineering students who came out here at the turn of the century. They were MIT graduates who had a dream of connecting Vancouver BC and Portland, Oregon. They built the line from Tacoma to Seattle, they then built the line to Everett and eventually went up to Bellingham. But the automobile came in and made the Interurban obsolete. People would rather have their private cars.

The automobile was invented about 1887. Benz was the man's name. He put a four-cycle gasoline engine on a buggy and he sold it. He made several of them that year and sold them too. Then he made more and he made improvements. He found that the engine had to be more powerful. If the engine was more powerful he had to find a way to cool it. So he cooled it with water and the water had to be cooled by a radiator. So that resulted



in the radiator being in front followed by the engine followed by the driver. And behind the driver was a seat for the passenger and so the five-passenger car was developed.

About the turn of the century the automobile began to take shape. The powers-that-be realized that if the automobile got into the hands of the working man, if the working man could buy a car, then their (powers that be) way of life was in jeopardy. So they had to have some way that they could control the automobile so that it would be only for people of certain qualifications. Well, somebody by the name of Selden had taken out a patent on the gasoline engine. Anybody who drove a car had to pay royalties to the holders of the Selden patent. So the automobile was possible for only the privileged few. Henry Ford didn't agree with that. He thought the auto should be for everybody.

After years of litigation Ford finally broke the Selden patent in 1911. It took until 1920 until every family had a family car.

So when my father first came out here, it was many years before every family had a car. Des Moines Way was built in 1916. It was a brick road. The way from Seattle to Tacoma was by going by the valley highway through Renton, Kent, Auburn, Puyallup and so on. It was a long way around. Somebody thought of a short cut. They went up the brick road to Des Moines and then from DM by gravel road all the way to Tacoma. And that road took on the name of Highline Road.

When they were going to build a new high school here in 1923, there was a contest (I was in grade school at the time.) to find a name for the new high school. So they named it Highline High School, after that road. You can still follow that road to Tacoma.

My father came from Seattle to Riverton on the Interurban. From there on, he would walk. It was wooden sidewalk all the way to the Section line which was 42nd Avenue. That was the end of Riverton. Past that it was Riverton Heights, and we had to walk on gravel roads then, all the way up here.

He raised chickens, had a big chicken house. Somebody came around and picked up eggs twice a week, and we got a little money that way. Of course we got eggs for eating, and chickens. My father raised potatoes and my mother raised vegetables, and that's how we lived. We raised a pig from time to time, but we never did learn to salt it to keep it. Some people could salt it, but we didn't know how to do it.

This was not a Swedish community. My mother and father spoke Swedish to each other, but they always spoke English to me because I was going to live here the rest of my life and I had to learn English. It was that way with all of the others; the children did not speak Swedish, always English.

There were not many people around here. 24th Ave was "the end of civilization" so to speak. Anybody who lived on 24th or east of here could walk to the Interurban. Anybody who lived west of 24th, it was too far to walk. Everything south of 146th was wilderness. Very few people lived south of 146th. One fellow, named Evan Green, had a big chicken ranch at 160th and 24th South and that's right in the middle of the airport now. Every time I go past that place I think that instead of chickens there are now big airplanes flying around there. Green

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MUSEUMS

WHY MUSEUMS ARE F***ING AWESOME

MUSEUMHACK

\$15.7

Billion

DIRECT

those employed directly by museums the wages these museums pay their operation expenditures taxes

\$14.6

Billion

INDIRECT

the employment and GDP contribution made by the suppliers of those establishments (e.g. security providers, IT support, and legal services)

\$19.6

Billion

INDUCED

economic activity via the consumer spending of wages by those employed directly by museums or in their supply chains.

\$50 BILLION

Total GDP impact of museums on the US economy

Museums indirectly support **136,800** jobs

MUSEUMS SUPPORT 726,200 JOBS

Museums support **217,300** induced jobs

Museums directly employ **372,100** people

\$4

Billion

State and Local Taxes

+

\$8

Billion

Federal Taxes

=

\$12

Billion

Total in Taxes

Source: Museums as Economic Engines: A National Study, commissioned by the American Alli-

owned the telephone company, and my dad wanted a telephone. When I was a little kid my dad and I walked up there to negotiate for a telephone. I was more interested in the railroad he had there between the chicken houses where he had cars that he could push around to take the chicken feed and manure around. Green was the owner of the first automobile around here. He was a big shot. He did not walk to the Interurban.

...24th was the end of civilization. That was because of the herd law. East of 24th the herd law was in effect. If you had an animal, a cow or horse, you had to keep it in a pasture. West of this road you could just let the animal run loose. People had cows out here, and in the morning they'd turn the cow loose and it could forage for its food. There were no cars here at the time. In the evenings the cow was pretty sensible and it came back home to be milked and fed. In the morning she was milked and fed and then turned loose. We had several cows running loose here back of the house because there was no herd law. But right across the street, east of 24th, there was the herd law and you had to keep it in the pasture. There was a big piece of land here, the Montgomery's farm, He had it all fenced in. He must have made money on his farm. I don't know what he did; he didn't have any milking cows, but whatever he did he must have made money. He took a trip to Jerusalem with his wife. They're dead now.

There was a ten-acre farm across the street. He had a big barn back there and a big house.

I am the only pioneer left around here. There's none as old as I am.

There were kids to play with at the school. We had a school up there. The Riverton Heights School (old one) was a two story building, two rooms down and two rooms up.. When I went to school, of those four rooms only two were occupied. We had no electricity, no plumbing, no sewer system. We had two outhouses out in the back and that was it. In a few years my dad and a few other people got together and donated \$10 or so apiece and they got the poles set from 24th down to Riverton. They had electricity down there because the Interurban ran on electricity. So of course Riverton had electricity and we just tapped into it. Puget Sound Power and Light did it. We paid for the poles and they came out and set them, so we got electricity up on 24th Avenue. And some of it ran down to the school.

You can continue with the story of Alvin Anderson at www.highlinehistory.org

Recent Donations and Memorials

The following items were recently donated to the Society. Special thanks to these far-sighted individuals for helping HHS preserve authentic artifacts and archival materials of the recent and not-so-recent past, as well as for both restricted and unrestricted cash donations. For more information about donating items to HHS, please send an email to editor@highlinehistory.org, or call 206-246-6354. You are helping to tell our stories.

Note: Unless you have made prior arrangements, commencing on January 1, 2018, the Society will not be accepting new donations into our collections until the museum opens.

From **Thomas Hulse** for the collections, a cedar canoe dating to the late 1800s. It is 17 feet long and will be hung in the collections area of the museum.

From **Clara McMichael**, for the collections, a Mt. Rainier High School graduation night t-shirt, Class of 2014.

From **John Ostergard** for the archives, a collection of papers from or about Dr. Angus Clark - letter, articles, obituaries.

From **Roger DeLorm** for the collections, four promotional ballpoint pens from Highline Savings and Loan.

From **Betty Parente** for the archives, a Mt. View Garden Club notebook containing various records, photos, and clippings.

From **Chris Antes** for the collections, a selection of items from Tyee High School, OSC, Valley View Elementary and Bow Lake Elementary that includes ribbons, medals, passes, t-shirts and photos.

From **Jane Dunbar** for the archives, 2 snapshots of the late **Richard Dunbar** and a set of 4 letters of remembrance from his family.

From **Donna Stillings** for the collections, a selection of (14) model airplanes; (2) plywood boards covered with red felt and pinned with collection of pins; (1) board consists of wings (metal pins) from various airliners, approximately 1" each, ~115 count; (2)nd board consists of various miscellaneous airplane and airline metal pins, varying in size up to 1" square/diameter, ~140 count.

From **Tim Robinson** for the collections, **Jerry Robinson's** golf club set, high school annual, and USMC banner.

From **Barbara McMichael** for the collections, a Mt. Rainier HS T-shirt and Pancake Chef menu.

From the **Highline School District** for the collections; various district readerboards, signs, mosaic panels, Sunnydale bell plaque and fence top finial.

From **Jeanne McCain** for the collections, a vintage Wizard Cuff Card Clip Poker Gambler Cheating Device

Donations continued...

From **Yvonne Miller** for the collections, a framed Sumi ink print by **Verla Ardous Turner**.

From **Patti & Charles Burgess** for the collections, a small bowl from Frederick & Nelson, wristband from Crossfit in Burien, and two photos of **Arden Lefler**.

From **Kitty Milne** for the collections, (8) center-folded poster boards for City of Burien 10th Anniversary, with photos, stickers, and newspaper clippings.

Wish List

This is a list of items we need for the museum (in addition to collections and dollars, of course). Are any of the following items something you could provide?

- a Keurig coffeemaker for the volunteer and staff break area
- a stepladder for the collections storage and archives
- a nylon Washington State flag (3' x 5')

Treasure Your Past – Make a Bequest to Highline Historical Society

By naming the Highline Historical Society in your will, retirement plan, or life insurance policy, you are investing in the preservation of our history and keeping your own story alive. To find out more, please discuss philanthropy options with your financial planner.



A Painless Way You Can Help Us

Many of you may not be aware that you can help the Society raise money by identifying us as the recipient of matching funds by local businesses. For example, **Fred Meyer (and their other Kroger business, QFC)** have rewards cards that many of you may use. By going to their website and checking Highline Historical Society on their list of participating charities, you will make it possible for us to receive dollars when you shop, without affecting the rewards you receive.

To register the Society (Organization # 83185) for your rewards card at **Fred Meyer** go to this website:

http://www.fredmeyer.com/company_information/FM_Community/Pages/community_rewards.aspx

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TIME DATED MATERIALS

Changes?

Please make the corrections on your label.

*Circle the appropriate spot below, and
return to the Society. Thank you.*

Name misspelled

Contact person changed

Address wrong

Duplicate mailing



Continuing with this month's theme of Riverton, we are happy to share this recent addition to our collections from our friends at the West Seattle Log Cabin Museum. Thank you, Bob Carney.