



# LACEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 2020 Winter Newsletter

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**'To be a voice for the early citizens of Lacey, and to be their stewards protecting the historical heritage they have given us'**

Greetings to all of you from your LHS Board of Directors. As 2020 draws to a close, we hope you are well and wish you and your loved ones a healthy, peaceful holiday season.

It was regretful that we had to cancel this year's annual meeting because we enjoy your company and love to share historical information with you about Lacey's past.

None of us know what to expect in 2021, but hopefully we will once again be able to hold our annual meeting & potluck dinner next September.

Please stay well in the coming year.

### **2020 Officers & Trustees**

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#### **Shared Memories. Did you know.....**

The first lavender farm in the State of Washington, third largest in the world, was located on the Yelm Highway and Ruddell Rd SE. Their lavender was sold to Yardley, in France. In 1930, the owner lost his business during the depression. In the 1970's lavender plants were still blooming in that location!

#### **Bits and Pieces from the Past: by Ken Michael (2019)**

Grew up in the recently demolished big home at 1501 Golf Club Road, first a family farm and then Fir Lane Mobile Home Park which my parents developed.

Pan City was a golf course and the pro was Art Eckout who became irritated when our milk cow visited the golf course.

Lived on Hawks Prairie from 1971 to 2017 where I operated Kens Auction Service. Became good friends with Bruno and Evelyne Betti who had settled on Hawks Prairie in 1948. They bought 400 acres for \$12 an acre.

My mom was first PTA president at North Thurston High School. The gavel is in the Museum.

#### **News from Olympia Historical Society & Bigelow House Museum**

The Olympia Historical Society & Bigelow House Museum, in partnership with other county heritage organizations, is marketing and distributing books to meet the Thurston County Historical Commission's goal of promoting an interest in Thurston County history. These books are \$30.00 for softbound and \$40.00 for hardbound plus sales tax and mailing costs.

The books will be available at Lacey City Hall for purchase, first come, first served. No holds (since we have so few). City Hall is currently operating under reduced hours — Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 am to 5 p.m.



**Part 2 of 2 (See Part 1 in 2020 Summer newsletter)**

Margaret's grandfather, George Himes, crossed the Oregon Trail in 1853 with his parents Tyrus and Emeline Himes and three siblings. They and their companions were headed toward Oregon's Willamette Valley, but after hearing of all that the Puget Sound had to offer, decided to switch course. They were among the first to cross the Cascades by way of Naches Pass, a shorter but more difficult route. Arriving at their destination in October, Tyrus Himes purchased the improvements of Henry Fowler and took out a Donation Land Claim on the site of today's Woodland Creek Community Park. The Himes' journey is well documented, because George wrote about it on numerous occasions. As an adult, he would revisit the Lacey/Olympia area and provide articles about the past for the *Daily Olympian*.

At the young age of 14 in 1858, George started keeping a journal, documenting precious information about the everyday life of the early residents. In 1861 he went to work learning to set type at the *Washington Standard*. He found the working conditions less than ideal, so in 1864 left for Portland where he took a job as a typesetter for *The Oregonian*. Just a few years later he went into business for himself.

"Historian, archivist, printer and journalist" are just some of the words his fellow Portland residents used to describe George Himes. He published *The Commercial Reporter* and the *Oregon Churchman* and numerous books. He was an active citizen in Portland: a charter member of the Oregon Humane Society, active in the YMCA and the Indian War Veterans group. He was a member of the Portland Library Association, the Art Museum and Oregon Geographical Society and the Sons of the American Revolution. But it was because of his many contributions to preserving the history of the state and city that made his name revered.



Margaret Anna (Buswell) Fuhrwerk  
George Himes Granddaughter

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In 1873, he helped to establish the Oregon Pioneer Association. He was the first curator of the Oregon Historical Society, a job he held until 1939, a year before his death. He collected history wherever he could find it, by interviewing original pioneers, going into basements and attics of old houses in Portland in search of historic documents and artifacts. For his relentless achievements, a park in Portland has been named after him.

He married Anna Riggs in 1866 and together they had 11 children. Margaret Anna Fuhrwerk was the daughter of his ninth child, Mildred Florence and her husband Guy Buswell.



*Himes House in Portland, Oregon*

Margaret shared many of her grandfather's characteristics. She grew up in Oregon and had a love of history, in particular Pacific Northwest History. She was proud that her grandfather had contributed so much to the collection of the history of the area. She herself joined the Tualatin Historical Society. She also shared his love of writing. When only nine years old, she contributed a story to the *Young Oregonian*. In 1946 she graduated from Oregon State University with a degree in journalism. While there, she served as the managing editor of the *Oregon State Barometer*, the campus newspaper.

Wanting to enhance her education in the field, she attended Iowa State College on a journalism fellowship. It was there that she met her husband, Victor Fuhrwerk. They moved to Celina, Ohio for his work. Like her grandfather, she became active in her community joining the University Women's Club, Celina Historical Club, the American Cancer Society, and she served on the Mercer County Council on Aging Board of Trustees.

Active as she was in Ohio, she never forgot her Pacific Northwest roots. A member of the Lacey Historical Society for a number of years, she loved reading all the memories and stories that our members have contributed to the newsletter over the years. She also sent in her own.

Margaret Fuhrwerk died Oct. 1, 2019. Her children wanted to sustain their mother's contributions to the collection of history. It is because of them that we honor Margaret's memory with her own story.

By Margaret (Lanny) Weaver

## **THE ULERY PROPERTY: 'The Reserve at Lacey'**

The Reserve at Lacey, a massive apartment building for adults 55 and over, now sits at the intersection of Pacific Avenue and Carpenter Rd. Most recently this site was occupied by Albertsons, the construction of which in the early 1990's necessitated the removal of a gas station and the historic 1923 *Ulery House*. To compensate for the loss of the house, the City of Lacey and Albertsons designed a plaque to be placed on the southeast side of the building with details of the history of the former house and its owner. But the plaque told only a small part of the long history of the site.

The 10 acre parcel which is now the 'Reserve at Lacey', was part of the original 320 acre Isaac Wood Donation Land Claim of 1852. The Olympia Steilacoom Road (now Pacific Ave.) traversed the claim as early as 1858. It would seem the ideal location for some commercial or industrial activity, but in fact for most of its early life it was farmland. One major exception was a small schoolhouse, known as the Wood School District which occupied the site sometime in the 1880's. The schoolhouse moved across the street to the current site of the Safeway store in 1892. The 10 acres continued to be farmed by a succession of owners, including Asa M. Rowe, and Charles Wilson. In 1893, George Warren Carpenter, Lacey's first postmaster, petitioned the Thurston County Commissioners for a north-south road to intersect the Olympia Steilacoom Road. That road took his name, Carpenter. Even though the addition of the road enhanced the potential for business, the property at the intersection of these two roads remained farmland.

William Franklin Ulery, originally from Ohio, and his wife the former Mary Shockey, arrived in the Lacey area around 1920. In 1923, he purchased the 10 acre parcel to use as a farm. With money from a \$1,000.00 mortgage, he built a Craftsman style house, a common style of architecture in the 1920s, but unique for the Lacey area. It featured elaborate extended rafter ends and the front of the house was covered with rock, which the Ulerys transported from the Nisqually River in a horse and wagon.



**'The Reserve At Lacey' Apartment Complex**

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**(Continued ) THE ULERY PROPERTY: 'The Reserve at Lacey'**

As Ulery retired from farming, he took advantage of the site to create an alternate form of income for himself. He leased property to various individuals who were encouraged to erect buildings with multiple purposes in mind. Included were a lunch room and a service station.

Mr. Ulery died in 1944. His widow Mary deeded the property to her oldest son William M. Ulery. The house and property stayed in the family until 1966 when it was sold to local musician Johnny Lewis, whose Music 6000 business sat on the site of the current McDonalds. Lewis later sold the 10 acres to Albertsons.

The original plaque that sat on the Albertsons building is now in the possession of the Lacey Museum. A replica of that plaque will grace the outside of the 'Reserve at Lacey.'

By Lanny Weaver

**In Memory of Jean (Simonson) Spencer (as of 2013)**

Jean (Simonson) Spencer, the daughter of John G. Simonson lived in Union Mills just east of Lacey. The family bought a home in Union Mills at the beginning of World War II. They moved to the Lacey area from Glendive, Montana.

John Simonson's sister, Martha Jordon and her family lived in Lacey on Pacific Avenue where the future Lacey Museum will be built. Martha sold her home to the Lacey Fire Department. Martha remarried A. Kincy who owned and operated the Kincy Hardware Store in Olympia, Washington.

Edward Spencer met Jean Simonson at Fort Lewis in 1945. Jean was a cashier at the Madigan Service Club. We dated about 7 months and married on July 12, 1947. We now live in Cary, Illinois and have two boys and one daughter, 14 grandchildren, 30 great grandchildren.

We just celebrated our 66th anniversary. Ed will be 90 years old on Oct. 13th, and Jean will be 87.

Contributed by her loving husband, Edward Spencer in 2013