



Lacey Historical Society

Lacey Community Museum - Dedicated 1980

Volume 06 Issue 1

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Chambers Prairie Log Cabin

The recent discovery of the "hidden" historical Chamber's log cabin from Lacey's pioneer days is creating a strong effort to preserve it. The Society's offer to discuss locating the cabin on our property adjacent to the City of Lacey's Historical Museum has been well received by the Lacey Historical Commission.

Tri Vo, the Horizon Pointe developer, has been understanding in allowing until fall of 2006 for the log cabin's future to be resolved.

Susan Scofield who has lived in Lacey's oldest building for the last 20 years moved out in February, 2006. We thank her for awakening the historical community to the cabin's existence and possible demolition. The Lacey Historical Commission has contacted a professional experienced historic building mover. The Commission is also doing the research necessary for building preservation. The main issue now seems to be the cost of building relocation and preservation. Costs are estimated at \$150,000.

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Shall the 10th Lacey School Reunion meet in August 2006 or 2007?

See page 2 for more information

We need to hear from you!

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Lacey Historical Society supports this opportunity to preserve Lacey's vintage 1851 log cabin. The forty year old City of Lacey needs to respect and honor its 155 year old community roots.

Log Cabin Timeline

Recently Carol Lewkowski, a distant family member of the Thomas Chamber's family, heard about the discovery of her ancestor's cabin. Excited, she contacted Lacey's Museum Curator, Amber Raney to learn more about it. Drew Crooks, Lacey's Museum Historian compiled the following timeline account.

Timeline

- 1 1851: John Chambers settled in Township 17 North, Range 1 West of the Willamette Meridian. He took a donation land claim of 320 acres in Sections 3,4, 9, and 10.

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Lacey School Reunions

The Lacey Historical Society needs to have three or four alumni join Amy Turner and Nora Brown to plan details for the next gathering of the Lacey School classmates. The first order of business would be to decide what year the event should be held. LHS is offering to sponsor a potluck affair at the Jacob Smith House should that be requested. Please let us know your opinion. What is critical to continuance of gathering events is support of several alumni volunteers to spearhead planning, notification and alumni list management. A major alumni "Roster List" effort was begun in 2005. **THE LIST NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED!** The current list is a Microsoft Word data base file. This list can be turned over to anyone with Word 2002 or MS Office XP software. The hope is to establish a Lacey School student and teacher register.

If you are willing to help support this job, please contact:

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- 2 August 25, 1857: George Tykel sold to George F. Whitworth land in the Northwest corner of the Northwest quarter of Section Four, in Township 17 North, Range 1 West. This land was to be the site of "a building or buildings to be used for church, school, or college purposes."
- 3 February 1, 1858: The Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Washington passed "An Act to Incorporate the Presbyterian Church and School of Chamber's Prairie."
- 4 July 10, 1859: The Presbyterian Church of Chambers' Prairie was dedicated by the Reverend George Whitworth. It was the "First Presbyterian Church Edifice in Western Washington."
- 5 1860: The Reverend R. J. Evans came to organize the Presbyterian Church at Chambers' Prairie.
- 6 May 25, 1860: The Pioneer and Democrat newspaper published an advertisement for the "Chambers' Prairie Institute" with the Reverend R. J. Evans as principal.
- 7 1862: The Reverend Evans became "the first settled" pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Olympia. He oversaw the construction of the first church building for Olympia's Presbyterian congregation, but died in 1863 at the age of 28.
- 8 March 6, 1863: Minutes of the Presbytery of Puget Sound noted that Chambers Prairie Church was having difficulties and had only 4 members in communion.
- 9 October 17, 1864: William M. Calhoun was born in St. Martin, New Brunswick.
- 10 June 20, 1867: Maggie Chambers was born at Chambers Prairie to Andrew and Margaret Chambers.
- 11 February 25, 1875: Donna Geiger was born in Brazil, Indiana.
- 12 December 24, 1884: Essie Geiger was born in Rich Hill, Missouri.
- 13 December 26, 1889: Margaret Chambers married William Calhoun.
- 14 July 27, 1895: The Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of Olympia leased the Chambers Prairie Church to the Chambers Prairie School District #8. It was to be used as a schoolhouse.
- 15 1897: The "Thurston County School District Boundaries" book showed a mark that is apparently the Church/Schoolhouse in the northwest corner of Section 4.

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(Chambers Prairie Timeline Continued from page 4)

- 16 September 20, 1902: The Morning Olympian newspaper reported that Chambers Prairie School District #8 had rejected a bid for a new school house as being too high. The District was planning to call for new bids.
- 17 November 2, 1902: According to the Morning Olympian. Chambers Prairie School District #8 was re-advertising for bids to build a new schoolhouse.
- 18 February 1906: Andrew and Margaret Chambers sold for one dollar to the Chambers Prairie School District #8 twenty rods of land in the extreme North East corner of Lot One in Section Four, Township 17 North, Range 1 West of the Willamette Meridian. The land was to be used for a schoolhouse.
- 19 1906: A new schoolhouse was built at the end of Ruddell Road by the Chambers Prairie School District.
- 20 1917: The southwestern portion of Chambers Prairie School District #8 broke away and formed a separate district. School District #79.
- 21 1920: The remaining portion of Chambers Prairie School District consolidated with Lacey School District #10 to form School District #308.
- 22 June 20, 1921: Northwest Trust and State Bank platted Chambers Homestead Tracts. Lots 28 & 29 of the Tracts is where the Chambers Prairie Log Cabin is presently located.
- 23 1932: House, presently painted yellow, built on Lots 28 & 29. It would be used by William and Maggie Calhoun as a summer residence.
- 24 Late 1930s: According to Elmer Fromm, the Log Cabin was moved from the Spurgeon Creek Road to its current location to house two school teachers who came here from Los Angeles, California for the summers. The teachers were sisters Donna and Essie Geiger. They were relatives of Maggie Calhoun.
- 25 July 21, 1942: William Calhoun died at St. Peters Hospital in Olympia at the age of 77.
- 26 1944: Elmer Fromm left the Chambers Prairie area. He believes that when he departed there were four building on Lots 28 & 29: the 1932 Calhoun house, an old schoolhouse [the 1906 structure?], a barn-like structure where the caretaker lived, and the Log Cabin.
- 27 1945: The Geiger sisters. Donna and Essie, moved permanently to the Chambers Prairie area following retirement from teaching in California.

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- 28 October 2, 1949: In a Sunday Olympian article it was noted that Mrs. Maggie Calhoun "spends the Summer months in her Chambers Prairie home, returning to Seattle with the advance of cold weather. In true feminine fashion, her only admission as to age is that a fifty-year-old schoolhouse next door to her home was built after her marriage." Was this schoolhouse the 1906 structure?
- 29 1950s: The 1906 Chambers Prairie Schoolhouse was moved to a new location off College Street, and remodeled into a private residence.
- 30 July 21, 1953: Maggie Calhoun sold Chambers Homestead Tracts 28 & 29, where the Log Cabin currently sits, to Mark and Priscilla Lindeke.
- 31 November 9, 1953: Margaret Chambers Calhoun died in Seattle at the age of 86.
- 32 March 2, 1955: Priscilla Lindeke sold Lots 28 & 29 to James and Hazel Kester.
- 33 October 3, 1955: The land in question was purchased from the Kesters by James and Beryl Pearson. According to Gayle Buslach, the Log Cabin was standing at its current location at the time of this transaction.
- 34 February 14, 1957: Donna Geiger died in Olympia at the age of 81
- 35 April 18, 1971: Essie Geiger died in an Olympia area rest home at the age of 86.
- 36 1973: Chambers Road was renamed 66th Avenue.
- 37 Ca. 1985-2005: Susan Scofield rented the Log Cabin from the Kesters and Buslachs.
- 38 By 1989: Lots 28 & 29 had passed to Kurtis and Gayle Buslach. Gayle is the daughter of James and Beryl Pearson.
- 39 2005: The Buslachs sold Lots 28 & 29 to Viking Investments, a company which is building the Horizon Pointe housing development.

***Do you have any information, memories or photos to contribute to this research?
Everything would be welcome! Please feel free to contact:***

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