

Stanwood Area ECHOES

Newsletter of the Stanwood Area Historical Society
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Stanwood Area Echoes

Issue No. 63 : Summer, 2019

EAST STANWOOD IN 1941



SAHS 95.118.02

Businesses on the south side of Main Street in East Stanwood included Hanson Cafe and Tavern, Norge Home Appliances, Tietjen's Hardware, Meadowmoor Ice Cream, The Home Supply Store, and a newspaper office called the East Stanwood Sun, which started as the East Stanwood Booster published by Gunderson Co., Inc. In 1935, Marie Wenberg became postmistress in East Stanwood taking over from C. J. Gunderson. The brick building on the left of the photo was known as the Gunderson Building, and it is still standing along with some of the buildings further down. The photograph was taken by Soren N. Sorensen on May 9, 1941.

For more on Marie Wenberg see page 3.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends:

Perhaps more than other holidays July 4th is one of community, when we all gather to celebrate our common pride in being an American. Nothing could be more apparent than our 44th annual Fourth of July parade and Ice Cream Social this year. We estimate that again over a thousand people lined the streets of Stanwood's west end or participated by marching in the parade. Our sincere thanks again to the North County Fire Department, the Stanwood Police Department and Stanwood's Public Utilities' workers for setting and manning the street barricades, Mayor Leonard Kelley for his remarks to the crowd and Judy Seegert for her inspirational invocation. But most of all thanks to all the kids who came and reveled in our organic demonstration of national pride. Those are the moments which later reveal their influence in the characters of these young citizens.

Another moving commemoration at the Floyd was Memorial Day last May. All too often we celebrate these dates without true contemplation of their meaning or lasting impact on our society and the world. Memorial Day, originally Decoration Day, marks the unofficial beginning of warm summer days and leisure activities so prolific around the Puget Sound. Begun to assuage the pain of so much loss by Confederate women following the Civil War, it was embraced by both sides and finally made a national holiday in 1971.

Barbeques and parties predominate. We enjoy the personal time given by the holiday but our distractions often absent us from a thoughtful reflection on how those joys were granted and who gave all to give so much to so many. The burden of American conflict today is carried by a small percentage of Americans—some say one percent of the population. Men and women of our volunteer Armed Forces join for myriad reasons, perhaps the last of which is a desire to confront an enemy on the battlefield. Loyalty, commitment and service rule their hearts and actions and it should rule our efforts to commemorate those no longer among us but resting in foreign fields or innumerable American cemeteries remembered every day by the families who suffered their loss and miss their presence.

Activities at the Floyd and our adjoining Community Veterans Memorial on May 27th centered on a program of veneration and remembrance for not only the 50 we honor on the Memorial's marble kiosks but also for those who cope with the unseen scars of sacrifice. It is a ceremony that never ceases to inspire and humble. Our great thanks again this year to Bill Keller and Jim Joyce whose tireless labors put together another moving program. We were honored to acknowledge 99-year-old Chuck Genovese who served during World War II on the USS McCord during some of the bloodiest battles of the South Pacific and Congressman Rick Larsen who attended.

Veterans again joined with us to perform the missing man table ceremony with its symbolic overlay of items meant to evoke those who live only in memory. Fifteen-year-old Avery Hilt of Lake Stevens added her incredible voice to a touching rendition of "American Tears." The program ended with a 21-gun salute provided by members of American Legion Post 92 immediately followed by the mournful strains of Taps, performed again this year by Middle School student Samuel Stanton. Joseph Cambell wrote that "A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself." Vanity cannot live in the hearts of such heroes. So, as you gather next time for a celebratory beginning of summer, pause just for a moment and raise a beer for those whose summers are now gone—and remember.

Sincerely,

Richard Hanks, President

Stanwood Area Historical Society

We are sorry to announce that long time member and lifetime trustee Alex Gedstad has passed away. Services will be on August 8th.

Please join us for the SAHS Board Meetings every month on the Second Tuesday at 4:00 pm on the second floor of the Eldridge Center. Everyone is welcome!

MARIE LOUISE ANDERSON WENBERG: POLITICAL ACTIVIST, TEACHER, POSTMASTER AND PARK NAMESAKE



Marie Louise Anderson Circa 1885

Born in Minnesota October 4th 1884, this carte de visite of a determined and serious little girl is the first in which she never smiled. In 1906 she graduated from Pacific Lutheran Academy in Parkland, Washington. She studied to be a teacher and taught at Parkland Parochial School.

Following that she also

taught in Tacoma, Port Madison, and Quincy and Arlington public schools until about 1910. In May 1911 Marie Louise Anderson and Oscar Wenberg married at the Parkland Lutheran Church and two years later in 1913 Marie and Oscar Wenberg bought a farm near Florence Washington.

That same year Marie became Matron of Josephine Old People's Home;* Oscar was Superintendent for three years. In an account by Bertha Logen who was a one of the caregivers there "Mr. Wenberg was chaplain and tended the coal burning furnace and various tasks, while Mrs. Wenberg kept the books and took care of business and social jobs" ...the home had a barn and cows on the 10 acres with a garden large enough

to grow produce for the 18-19 residents. In the 1920 Census Oscar is listed as a wheat farmer, he and Marie have two children, Marie and

Johan. She was active in many organizations during these years including Stanwood's Monday Study Club and the Stillaguamish Grange. She joined the Snohomish County Federated Womens Club as a founding member. She was also a member of the Snohomish County Legislative Federation and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. She and Oscar both became political activists.

In 1922 (the same year East Stanwood incorporated) she appears in a newspaper promotion advertising her candidacy as the Farmer - Labor nominee for the Washington State Legislature from the 49th District. Her slogan was "Dare to do right" and "Wring Out the profits and operate for service." The Farmer Labor party was a small third party primarily representing workers and labor rights at a

time when companies didn't provide sick leave or worker's compensation. It won about 19 percent of the vote that year. In 1936 there were strikes and walkouts threatened at the mills and canneries. The local companies did not recognize the union but in most cases they already paid higher than union wages so union activism in Stanwood was short-lived (see Echoes Winter 2019). She lost to Alonzo Willhite and R. D. Deselle (both Republicans) at a time when the top two votes became the two



representatives of the district.

Marie never ran for office again but worked for her husband and continued to advocate for her causes. As a member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) she opposed amending the "dry law" to permit manufacture or sale of wine or beer, though it was upheld.

(Continued on Page 4)



(Continued from Page 3)

Marie and Oscar lived on a small farm near Norman in the Stillaguamish Valley through 1930. Oscar was farming and Marie continued teaching.

In 1935 at the age of 50, Marie became postmistress in East Stanwood, taking over from C. J. Gunderson who had established the East Stanwood Post Office in 1913. The post office building in East Stanwood was originally located in the building that later became a barber shop on the south side of the street. Later Gunderson, an influential businessman in East Stanwood moved it to his hardware / furniture / store (the Star Furniture Company building). Her husband Oscar had a partnership in the Gunderson's hardware store at the time. Gunderson was also the local undertaker. In 1929 Gunderson replaced his original furniture building with a new building to house a new East Stanwood Post Office and that building still stands with his name on it.

While working as Postmaster in 1936, Mrs. Louise Wenberg was made President of the Snohomish County Rural Recreation Committee. In this role she began a campaign to purchase 20 acres on the east side of Lake Goodwin from C. D. Hillman for \$1500 to be established as a park. In 1939, Oscar was elected to Washington State House of Representatives and served through 1952. His political platform included support for labor, pensions, the Grange program and the public utility. He also was influential in the effort towards funding the construction of the Stanwood Camano Mark Clark bridge and the new Camano Island State Park.



Portrait of Marie Louise Wenberg

In November of 1939 Marie Wenberg, as President of the Snohomish County Rural Park

Association dedicated the small County park at Lake Goodwin. Funds for the park came from the W.P.A. in the amount of \$8,160 and the balance from the County. Though Rep. Wenberg's standing as a legislator inevitably helped this cause an editorial in the *Arlington Times* Aug. 30, 1956 stated "It was Mrs. Wenberg who kept up a persistent campaign that came precariously close to failure until finally the plot became county property and was made available to the State." *The Twin City News* (Nov 9, 1939) reported that "the park will be known



The Wenbergs (far left and second from right) and county officials who established Wenberg County Park named for Marie Wenberg. SAHS# 2001.132.20

hereafter as Wenberg park, honoring Mrs. Louise Wenberg, through whose untiring efforts the work was carried on." Various individuals and organizations also donated time and equipment for grading and graveling the road and building ball fields and picnic areas. The County park became a State Park in 1947 but went back to being a Snohomish County park in 2009.

After 10 years at the end of the war in 1945 Marie Wenberg resigned as East Stanwood Postmaster at the age of 61. In 1952 her husband Oscar Wenberg died of a stroke where they lived with their daughter. Marie lived twenty more years and died Nov 15, 1972 at age of 84.

As with all of our stories, please send comments, remembrances, information and corrections for our files about the life of Marie Wenberg.

by Karen Prasse

*later Josephine Sunset Home now Josephine Caring Community

Sources: "Farmer Labor Candidate for lower House" East Stanwood Press, Stanwood News, Arlington Times and Everett Herald. "Will incorporate Recreation body" Arlington Times Apr. 2, 1936 "Credit where is due" Editorial August 30, 1956 Arlington Times; Wenberg Luce Family Records Stanwood Area Historical Society; "Mrs. Wenberg Active in Civic Affairs" [paid advertisement] Arlington Times, Nov. 2, 1922 "The Emergence of the Farmer-Labor Party in Washington Politics, 1919-20" Hamilton Cravens The Pacific Northwest Quarterly Vol. 57, No. 4 (Oct., 1966), pp. 148-157 (10 pages). Interview with Louise Wenberg Luce (daughter - in - law) 2008. Stanwood Story, Vol 2, Page 90.



**The Floyd Norgaard
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SAHS Memorials

In Memory Of:

Einar Skrinde	Dolly & Bill Bowron
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Ilene Klett Armintrout	Clayton Olsen
Helen Tangen Heller	Margaret Utgard

SAHS Donations

John Schopf



**Family
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Researchers!**

Camwood Genealogy Workshop meets the FIRST Monday of each month at 1 p.m. on the 2nd floor of the Eldridge Center.

For more information, call Bill Blandin, 360-387-3375



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AND
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AND
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SANDWICHES**

**Stanwood Area Historical Society
Effective January 1, 2019**

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>TERM (2Yr)</u>
President, Richard Hanks	2019-2020
Vice President, Dan Lien	2018-2019
Recording Secretary, John Smistad	2019-2020
Corr. Secretary, Margaret Utgard	2019-2020
Treasurer, Dave Eldridge	2018-2019
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Janet Mayer	2017-2019
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Clifford Larson	2018-2020
Mary Margaret Haugen	2018-2020
Penny Buse	2019-2021
Robert Branigin	2019-2021
Kathy Uroff	2019-2021
Alex Gedstad	Lifetime Trustee
Pat Bronson	Lifetime Trustee

Newsletter Editors Richard & Robin Hanks

EVENTS @ THE FLOYD

August 10 & 11 • 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Small Craft Advisory
Fine Arts Craft Show**

Sept. 15th • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

**History and Hors d'oeuvres
Harriette Shelton Dover
Documentary**

Sept. 20-21 • 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Stanwood Camano
Historic Sites Tour**

Sept. 26 • 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

**General Membership
Meeting & Elections**

Oct. 20th • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

**History and Hors d'oeuvres
To Be Announced**



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RENT THE FLOYD



The Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center Public Hall is available for the arts, music, theater, cultural events as well as a banquet hall for family events, weddings, reunions, birthdays, conferences & business meetings.

Proceeds from rentals and events benefit the continuing preservation and rehabilitation of the Public Hall and SAHS educational and historical projects and programs.

To get prices or make a reservation, call our Business Manager, Diane Anderson, at 360-629-6110 or email her at sahs.diane@gmail.com.

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GET INVOLVED...STAY IN TOUCH

The Stanwood Area Historical Society is a special place. It collects and conserves the wondrous treasures of history that define our community. Your participation would not only assist in this crucial protection of our past, but would make you part of our important work. You can make a difference. Join SAHS today!

Memberships are due annually in January. This is a significant means of support for the Society and includes a subscription to the newsletter. SAHS is a tax-exempt non-profit organization and depends on gifts, bequests from individuals and groups, fundraising activities and membership dues for its financial support. Your contributions are tax deductible and will be used only for the preservation of the history of our area.

Individual Membership: **\$20.00**

Student (Under 15) Membership: **\$5.00**

Family Membership: **\$25.00**

Lifetime Individual Membership (+65 yrs of age): **\$100.00**

Name [Please print] _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____



P. O. Box 69 ~~~ 27112 102nd Ave. N. W., Stanwood, Washington ~~~ www.sahs-facc.org Photographer: G. D. Horton, circa 1886, Stanwood Stillaguamish River Waterfront

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