

STANWOOD AREA ECHOES

Newsletter of the Stanwood Area Historical Society
P.O. Box 69
27108 102nd Ave NW
Stanwood, WA 98292
www.sahs-fncc.org



Stanwood Area Echoes

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SAHS #90.57.01



STANWOOD, July 4, 1891 -- On the left is State Representative Charles Terry. Next is Clara Stanwood Pearson, for whom the township was named. Then D. O. Pearson and his grandson Fred Rhoades. D.O.'s hand rests on his father Daniel Pearson's chair and Rachel Pearson & Ernestine Engle are on the grass in

front. D.O.'s sister, Flora Pearson Engle stands on the other side of their father. Guy Pearson and George Ketchum are standing behind. To their right is John and Bertha (Pearson) Rhoades with their son Eddie. Sitting is Eva M. Pearson, her beau, and D. Carl Pearson in the straw hat. (See story on page 3)

A WOEFUL RHOADES' TALE

One of the most popular songs of 1896 was "In the Baggage Coach Ahead." Former railroad porter and songwriter Gussie L. Davis, tells the melancholy story of a man on a train late at night holding a baby as it mournfully cried. Verbally chastised by other passengers, when asked why he did not take the babe to its mother, the man sadly replied, "I wish I could, but she's dead in the coach ahead."

For the Pearson family of Stanwood, that story became personal. The 26-year-old daughter of D. O. Pearson, Bertha, died that year of heart failure while lying next to her husband, Dr. Daniel McEacheran, at their home in Fosston, Minnesota. Her body was shipped back to Stanwood. For a time it was family lore that the song was written about poor Bertha. Over the years other families made similar claim to the deceased in the baggage coach. The math certainly eliminated Bertha, however, who died on December 23, 1896, months after the song was published.

But, the short, woeful life of Bertha Pearson certainly deserved heart-rending lyrics. Born in April, 1870, she was 13 when she married John F. Rhoades, who was 13 years her senior, in February 1884. The following June she gave birth to her first child, Fred Rhoades. The dark, handsome John was clerking for Bertha's father in 1883 where he undoubtedly knew the comely Miss Pearson.

The year 1883 also saw John return to run the family farm following the death of his father. The elder Rhoades was one of the few physicians in the area, having moved his family from northern California to a homestead in the Florence area in 1878. He operated his medical practice from a barn on the south slough of the Stillaguamish River.

John and Bertha Rhoades had another child, Edwin Ernest, two years after Freddie's birth. The picture on the front page of this edition shows the extended Pearson family along with the entire Rhoades family, gathered for a July 4th celebration. The picture does not present the complete picture of apparent unhappiness of John and Bertha's life. A year following the family gathering, the now divorced couple married new spouses—Bertha to Dr. McEacheran and John to Linnie Fenderson.

A glove maker by trade in California and a farmer in Washington, John found new opportunities in politics. He was elected twice on the Republican ticket as county assessor, starting in 1889. During this time he moved the family to Snohomish.



Four Generations: Bertha, D.O., Daniel Sr. and Donald Archibald McEacheran ca. 1896

Freddie and Eddie Rhoades remained in their mother's custody as the step-children of Dr. McEacheran. The McEacheran's son, Donald Archibald, was born in 1894 following the family's move to Minnesota. Described as amiable, unobtrusive and cheerful-faced, Bertha preferred a "tea-chat of a friend's table or sitting room to the larger and freer festivities of balls and dances." Tragedy struck poor Bertha again in 1895 when nine year old Eddie fell from a wharf at Utsalady while his mother was visiting friends.

The final chapter in the troubled life of Bertha McEacheran took place after her death and marks a strange ending to the star-crossed family. Five years after the death of Eddie Rhoades, Fred Rhoades also drowned but under "strange circumstances" as described in an area newspaper. Fred had lived with his grandfather D. O. Pearson after returning from Minnesota. As a youth in the Northwest, he found usual employment sometimes at sea aboard the steamer *Lily* with Capt. C.R. Durgan or the logging camps. In late May he became a worker for "Sherven's Mill" on Camano Island. He and fellow logger, William Whitehead, rode the *City of Denver* to Whatcom County on June 11th. He was last seen on the streets of Fairhaven on June 17th.

(Continued on page 6)

FUNDRAISING BEGINS FOR THE COMMUNITY VETERANS MEMORIAL



The Community Veterans' Memorial proposed by the Stanwood Area Historical Society is an idea four years in the making. While honoring all who have proudly worn America's uniform, it will pay specific tribute to those who did not return from this country's conflicts. The names of these heroes, from World War I to Afghanistan and Iraq, will be etched on brick and granite kiosks within the memorial park. The memorial will be located adjacent to The Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center--the historic public hall owned and maintained by the SAHS at 27130 102nd Ave. NW in Stanwood.

The memorial started as the passion and focus of Bill Keller and Jim Joyce who, struck by the solemn power of the Vietnam wall, realized that such a memorial to local servicemen and women of the greater Stanwood/Camano area was absent.

For almost a year, Jim & Malynda Shipley of the Crab Cracker have been running short stories on many of those who will be honored on the memorial. The images of the proposed memorial presented here represent the work of Dan Nelson and Jayme Zold of Designs NorthWest Architects. The Stanwood Area Historical Society would like to sincerely thank everyone who has been involved in getting us to this point.

This project will take the combined efforts of many generous people and the following local

businesses have already offered their time and resources to the project:

Consultant Kevin Wiederstrom

Harry Taylor of Taylor's Escavators

Ken Christoferson of Stanwood Redi-Mix

Bruce Aalmo of Island Masonry Co.

Dale Gellner of Mutual Materials Mukilteo

And while much has been accomplished, there is still much to do. We still need the services of an electrician, landscaper and money to purchase the needed flag poles for the memorial. We would greatly appreciate any and all donations to this cause. Those wishing to make a donation please send it to **SAHS, P.O. Box 69, Stanwood, WA 98292—Attn: Community Veterans Memorial.**

If you have a question or comment concerning the proposed memorial you can write to sahsrh2@aol.com.



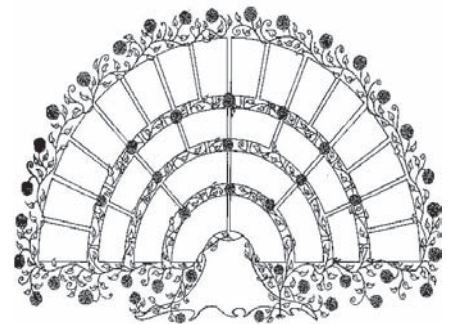
The Fallen

World War I	Harvey Baker Bert Stevens Andrew Wik Joseph Edward Bruseth Andrew Engebretsen Jacob B. Teiseth Albert Buli Ray W. Bunton Emma J. Thorsen Frank Hancock
World War II	Gerhard Lane Robert F. Harrison Harold McCann Leonard Broin Charles Isham Peter Rekdal Ernest Moser Gordon Lord Dorman Riker Robert K. Nelson Andrew W. Riker Ed Pearson Robert S. Bransmo Don Leach Orville Knutson Vivien D. Mickel Dannie Hess Floyd Perin Robert G. Baker Wesley D. Sigerstad Richard Hiday
Korean War	Harold E. Horton Earl Christensen Clarence Hartley
Vietnam War	Warren Gary Peterson Frank Lee Smith George Michael Broz Elliott L. Peters Francis D. Campbell Jacob Clark Laan
Iraq	Justin W. M. Hebert Cody Shea Calavan Charles E. Matheny IV
Afghanistan	Robert Lindenau



HOURS		
Wednesday	1pm	- 4pm
Friday	1pm	- 4pm
Sunday	1pm	- 4pm

Family History Researchers!



Camwood Genealogy Workshop meets the FIRST Monday of each month at 1 p.m. on the 2nd floor of the Stanwood Area History Museum.

Fred Cruger from the Granite Falls Historical Society will be at the February 1, 2016 meeting to do a mapping software demonstration.

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



Eddie and Fred Rhoades, ca. 1886

life preservers. A note was found in his pocket which read: "If I should be dead will the one that find my body please send it to D. O. Pearson, Stanwood, Wash.

Yours truly

Fred Rhoades

Stanwood.

A separate page read: "Grandma kiss Donald for me and tell him I am gone to a better land for when you get this I will be dead. You don't know how I am crying when I write this. Good bye forever.

Fred.

(Give my watch to Donald)"

Newspapers speculated that poor Fred, said to be a "quiet, gentle boy," was shanghai'd off the streets of Fairhaven. Crimps—or those in the business of supplying sailors, voluntary or not, for work on steamers--proliferated along the northwestern coastline at the end of the 19th century. Rather than endure the rigors of life at sea, Fred sought freedom in the icy waters off Whidby, but lost.

A story that surely would have broken his mother's heart, had it not already been broken.

By Richard Hanks and Karen Prasse

(Continued from page 3)

On June 30, 1900 farmers near Coupeville on Whidby Island found Fred Rhoades' lifeless body floating near the shore. He was dressed in dark clothing, red sweater, no shoes and wrapped in two

(Sources: *An Illustrated History of Skagit and Snohomish Counties*, 1906; Family scrapbook, Pearson Collection, Stanwood Area Historical Society; Alice Essex, *The Stanwood Story*, vols. 1-2; Federal census records, 1880-1900; Ancestry.com)

We Appreciate the Local Support of:



AT THE FLOYD

April 24th • 4 - 6 p.m.

History and Hors d'oeuvres

Richard Blumenthal

July 4th • 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Hero Quilts - Red, White & Blue

Parade & Ice Cream Social

Parade Starts at 11 a.m.

Ice Cream Social Starts at 11:30 a.m.

May 15th • 4 - 6 p.m.

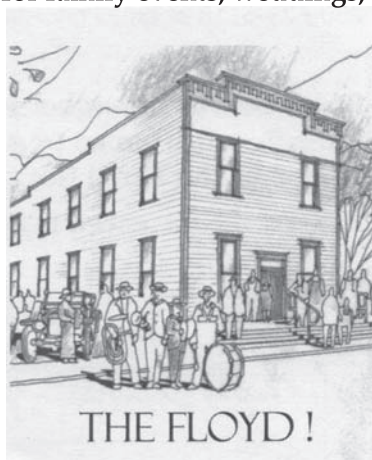
History and Hors d'oeuvres

Chuck Fowler

Rent The Floyd

The Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center Public Hall is available for arts, music, theater, cultural events as well as a banquet hall for family events, weddings, reunions, birthdays, & business meetings. Call 360-629-6110 or www.sahs-fncc.org

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



SAHS Memorials & Donations

In Memory Of:

Aileen Lund - Margaret Utgard
 Bud Wheeler - Marilyn Wheeler
 Christopher & Minnie Olsen - Les & Virginia Fillion
 David Armintrout - Margaret Utgard
 Don Moa - Ray & Shirley Breum
 Don Moa - Ted Snowden
 Don Moa - Janet Mayer
 Don Moa - Margaret Buse
 Don Moa - Dennis & Shirley Anderson
 Don Moa - Bill Williams
 Don Moa - John & Joan Case
 Don Moa - Clayton & Joann Olsen
 Don Moa - Margaret Day
 Don Moa - Cliff & Janet Larson
 Don Moa - Dave & Diane Danubio
 Don Moa - Mauruice Edlund
 Don Moa - Dave & Rosemary Edwards
 Don Moa - Luther & Dee Jonson
 Don Moa - Margaret Utgard
 Don Moa - Sno-Isle Fire County Commissioners Assn.
 Don Moa - Rick & M'Lisse Williams
 Donna Ferrill - Marilyn Wheeler
 Garry Lund - Margaret Utgard
 Garry Lund - Anonymous Donor
 Gary Husby - Ray & Shirley Breum
 Gary Husby - Anonymous Donor
 Irene Sedy - Rose & Jerry King
 Larry Wheeler - Marilyn Wheeler
 Margaret Logen - Nancy & Carl Garlow
 Margaret Logen - Elmer & Gladys Norgaard Trust
 Margaret Logen - Rose & Jerry King
 Margaret Logen - Floyd & Marilyn Templeton
 Margaret Logen - Karen Lee
 Olive Gayle Hatton Schulz - Margaret Buse
 Otto Leuschel - Margaret Buse
 Ronald Douglass - Margaret Utgard

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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 now includes a subscription to the newsletter and **10% off all publications, rental of The Floyd and special events** for most memberships*. 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***

(*Newsletter Only)

Name [Please print] _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____



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

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