

STANWOOD AREA ECHOES

Newsletter of the Stanwood Area Historical Society
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Stanwood Area Echoes

Issue No. 54 : Spring, 2017

WILLIAM McDougall Family of NORMAN CA. 1912



Photo Courtesy of Steve Youngren

Shown L to R: Nan McDougall (Williams), Mary McDougall, William McDougall, Bill McDougall, Annie (Rourke) McDougall, Frank McDougall, Cicily McDougall (Jolley). A traveling photographer, working his way through the lower Stillaguamish Valley, captured the William McDougall family in a relaxed mood on the porch of their Norman home. William

and Anne of Scottish and Irish heritage, emigrated separately from Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia to the Stilly Valley. William arrived in Seattle in 1889 on the day after the Great Seattle Fire. Anne O'Rourke and William were married in Everett, acquired land in Norman, and built the house in 1908.

(more on William McDougall on page 4)

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends:

A very smart man once told me that the only permanent thing in life was change. Words that, for me, have found great validity at various times. Change can also be difficult since it forces us from our personal comfort zones. But the rewards can be startling.

We tried something new on the weekend of March 25 and 26th—a collaborative effort between historical gatekeepers in Stanwood and on Camano Island. A seemingly simple thing but one fraught with past assumptions and not a few biases. What resulted were two days of people learning the area's incredible history and enjoying themselves at the various venues—twelve on the Island.

The Stanwood Area Historical Society was pleased to act as the welcome center for the Camano Island Historic Sites Tour. The Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center was filled with organizations representing the historical, tribal and cultural history of the area. Our thanks to each and every one of the participants who brought their knowledge and enthusiasm to the Floyd and provided such a rich and diverse experience for our visitors.

The exhibit *Waistlines and Hemlines* on the Floyd's third floor was refreshed with a renewed emphasis on not just women's fashions but the contributions that those women made to the larger community of Stanwood and Camano Island. We often get a better understanding of the larger historical picture by understanding the individual stories that make up the narrative of a community's existence. At the D.O. Pearson home, Clara Stanwood Pearson (ably presented by Lenni Corser and assisted by Daniela Tierra) revealed a bit of 19th century life to patrons.

We also added a new exhibit on local veterans entitled *For All Who Served*. We hope soon to offer that in conjunction with our new Veterans Memorial. Ground breaking for the Memorial is on schedule for this spring as soon as the weather cooperates. The exhibit presents the stories of men and women who sacrificed all in service to their country but also, in artifacts and letters, the stories of those living through that American moment.

It is our hope that the Tour's cooperative effort sets a new precedent for what can be accomplished when we all pull in the same direction. Change can be unsettling but it can also open doors to great possibilities. There is a line in a Camano play I'm quite familiar with: "The present is our gift today." Let's take advantage of that.

Sincerely,

Richard Hanks, President

Stanwood Area Historical Society

Stanwood Area Historical Society Effective January 1, 2017

OFFICERS TERM (2Yr)

President	Richard Hanks	2017-2018
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Janet Mayer	2017-2019
Sandy Robinson	2017-2019
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Clifford Larson	2015-2017
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Newsletter Editors

Richard and Robin Hanks

NEW TIME

**SAHS BOARD & MEMBER MEETING -
Second Tuesday at 4:00 pm
on the second floor of the museum.
Everyone is welcome!**

A LANE OF LIGHTS

The Stanwood Area Historical Society often gets information requests from virtual visitors who find our website and contact us by email about family history or other odd bits of historical information. One question that was asked more than once from virtual visitors was about the Richfield beacon that was installed east of Stanwood in 1929. For a bit of a time I thought it was just a legend but finally we talked to the right people and actually have information on it. Our virtual inquirer, Mike May, was looking for a photograph and Dan Logen has shared this one with us. It was in his family collection.

The house still exists, although it has been enlarged since the photo. According to Dan Logen: *"The only person I know who remembers the tower died earlier...at age 95. That was my father's sister Jean Kallock, who lived in the house in the photo. I have talked to her in past years about the tower. She mentioned neighbor boys and maybe her brothers climbing the tower. I don't know how far up they went! She remembered how bright the light was every night. She remembered the steel parts lying in the field just to the north for some time after it was dismantled."*

By Karen Prasse

More on the Obelisks of light from Mike May:

The original intent of the Richfield Beacons was both for aircraft navigation and for advertising. Airplane travel was in its infancy and Richfield's idea was to create a "lane of lights" along the west coast from Mexico to Canada for pilots to follow day and night, as well as a landmark for drivers. Each tower was 125 feet tall with a 24-inch, 8,000,000 candlepower rotating beacon on top. Most towers had a second fixed directional beam that pointed to the nearest airfield. Two sides of the triangular tower had "RICHFIELD" spelled down them in huge neon letters. These sides would be seen by motorists approaching on the road from either direction. The third side had a two-letter code at the top, also in neon, in even larger letters, for pilots to tell which beacon they were passing. The code for Stanwood's tower was SW, and it did not have a directional beam as it was too far from any lighted airfield.

Richfield formed a company called Highway Communities, Inc. to purchase land and set up the system. The plan was to have a service station at each site, and eventually a full set of amenities – hotel, cafe, gas. The first few towers with service stations opened in December 1928 in California. Almost all California sites had a service station,



May 1930 – The beacon was located on Pioneer Highway before Hwy 99 by-passed Stanwood 6 miles to the east. It is shown behind the house with Thomas & Robert Logen standing in front.
(Photo Courtesy of Dan Logen)

with the same building plan in a mission revival style. Further north, the stations were redesigned to an English Norman style. Highway Communities had construction crews that went from site to site, erecting the towers and building the stations. During 1929 it seems the priority was to get all the towers up and running as quickly as possible. They accomplished this, but after the great depression hit, many of the sites in Oregon and Washington ended up not getting their planned service stations before Richfield Oil went into receivership. In the end there was just one fully-realized development with hotel and cafe in Barstow, CA.

Technological advances in air travel, as well as the federal government setting up their own official system of aerial beacons, meant that the Richfield towers were quickly obsolete as navigational aids. Many beacons were already discontinued by mid-1931. The towers continued to act as advertisement for the service stations, but there is very little information on the sites like Stanwood where no service station was built. Publicity of the time sometimes listed all the beacons that were planned or erected to that point, and Stanwood is listed in those sorts of accounts. The only locally-sourced information on the Stanwood beacon that I found in my online searches were a couple of newspaper ads from October 1929 about a land auction, where the land for sale was described as 1/4 mile north of the Richfield Beacon. I live in Las Vegas so my searches have been limited to whatever resources are available online, since I can't look through paper records in person.

There were only about three dozen Richfield beacons. As one of about 10 sites at which any physical evidence remains, Stanwood is in some rare company in a brief but very interesting chapter of aviation and automotive history!

LOGGERS OF THE HERO TREE

The 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition was a vast celebration of American technical and inventive wizardry which exploded after the Civil War. The Exposition's 633 acres along Lake Michigan supported great, colossal structures created by some of America's finest architects which housed seemingly endless exhibits. A showcase for an emerging America, the Fair's oversized architectural wonders presented the overly abundant products and ideas of a country quickly heading into a new century. Many firsts were on display including the dishwasher, Cracker Jack, spray paint, debut of the 264-foot Ferris Wheel and what was touted as "one of the tallest flagstuffs in the world."

The flag pole could easily be seen above the roofs of most buildings marking the front of the Washington state pavilion. Reportedly standing 238-feet and topped with a crow's nest, it was praised as "straight as a gunbarrel;" this beauty of a Snohomish County fir was a "hero" of the forests just south of Arlington in the community of Edgecomb. The honor of trimming and barking the tree was given to William McDougall of Silvana, co-owner of the logging camp of McDougall, Jackson and Veazie.

McDougall was born in Nova Scotia in 1865 migrating around 1887 and spending some time in Michigan before coming to Washington in 1889 just as the state achieved statehood. He lived in the Silvana and Norman area for the next 61 years where he operated a farm alongside his logging activities. He married Annie Rourke in 1895. At the age of 73 in 1938 he was asked to recount the story of the "king of all flag-poles" for the Stillaguamish Association of Washington Pioneers.

His detailed account describes the initial failure of felling a great Douglass fir on the edge of Kent's Prairie after receiving the order from Washington fair officials in the fall of 1892. The first effort was unsuccessful when the tree broke too short. Special precautions were taken for the second effort — swampers leveling the ground "like a railroad grade...cutting away all heavy roots projecting from adjacent trees." The "fallers" began their work and with a sharp cracking at its base the "mighty monarch" struck the earth amid a cry of exultation by the head man. McDougall went about his work skillfully, taking care not to mar "the beautiful work of nature."

The tree was cut into two 108-foot lengths according to McDougall, and hauled by four pairs of horses over a skid road to the nearest crossing of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Official accounts of the

pole's height differ from McDougall's and newspapers of the day. Regardless, it was spliced together in Chicago and raised.

On a visit back to Michigan in 1903, McDougall overheard a lively discussion about the Fair's Washington state pole. The men believed the flagpole a fake—it had to be "two [separate] trees spliced together." McDougall took some pride in debunking the slander through his eye-witness report. William McDougall continued living on his farm in Norman after his retirement from logging and died in Mt. Vernon in November 1950. His former partner William H. Veazie had a much more tumultuous time following his partnership with McDougall. Scandals surrounding Veazie kept his name in the newspapers and one defamation in particular pointed to the deceitful elements of his character.

William Veazie was born in Maine in 1836 where he married Emma Walker in 1867 and by 1870 was living in Minnesota as a merchant. He and Emma had four or five children including son Harry E. Veazie. William divorced Emma around 1884 and married, or so she thought, Hattie Klingensmith who also bore him several children. By 1887 William and his new family had moved to Tacoma where the self-proclaimed capitalist became wealthy by investing in logging operations with money for trotting horses as well according to news accounts. The same year the Hero Tree is felled, William Veazie told his "wife" that she was really his mistress since he had staged the marriage ceremony. However, to safeguard his assets, he earlier had Hattie sign over all deeds of property to his son Harry.

Harry was sympathetic to his step-mother's shame and plight and was determined to correct the wrong. While his father was away, the 24-year-old convinced Hattie, roughly 16 years his senior, to marry him. Upon his return, the infuriated William vowed to disinherit them both at which time Harry reportedly laughed, saying that "the Veazie estate, valued at \$150,000 can never be taken from him."

William Veazie went on to other difficulties—accused and arrested for embezzlement by partner Alex Yantis which resulted in the dissolution of their logging company. The Bell-Nelson mill company also brought suit in early 1900 against William for "obtaining money under false circumstances." Veazie died in a Tacoma hospital in May 1904 still touted as a senior member of the lumber business, "Veazie, McDougall and Jackson."




Rendering by Warren Porter Skillings, 1892. Courtesy of the University of Washington Digital Collections.

The Veazie story would have one final, tragic twist, however. Harry and Hattie and their younger son moved to Scappoose, Oregon in 1901 where Harry operated a transfer and motor truck business. Harry's lifeless body was found just before Christmas floating in the Columbia River near St. Helens where the couple had purchased lots for a new home. The incident was ruled a robbery and murder. Hattie died in Scappoose a widow in 1923.

William McDougall and William Veazie were two sides of the same coin—the “sturdy pioneer” and the reckless gambler. A newspaper account may have gotten it about right: It was a life typical of hundreds of other men with whom [they] worked shoulder to shoulder—“in the old days when timber was timber and men were men.”

By Richard Hanks

Sources: *Arlington Times*, August 4, 1938; *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, December 22, 1899; *New Ulm Review*, July 24, 1895; *Seattle Daily Times*, December 26, 1911; *Morning Olympian*, January 2, 1900; *Tacoma Daily News*, May 28, 1904; Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, *In Search of Regional Expression: The Washington State Building at the World's Columbian Exposition, 1893*, *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (Fall 1995); Obituary files, Stanwood Area Historical Society; Birth, death, census and data files of Ancestry.com.



Stanwood Area History Museum & Research Library, Pearson House & Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center

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Stanwood Area Historical Society
360-629-6110

Research Wednesdays
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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 & Research Library.

For more information, call Bill Blandin,
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TOURISTS ENJOYED THE CAMANO HISTORIC SITES TOUR

The Camano Island Historic Sites Tour was a huge success and we are planning our next event for April 6th, 7th and 8th, 2018. The fourteen historic sites, in Stanwood and on Camano Island, registered up to 250 people at various events. We know from the data collected with the passports that over half of their visitors lived on Camano Island, but we did get people from outside Stanwood and Snohomish County and some stayed overnight. We hope to expand the distribution area of our literature and increase the events schedule to grow these numbers next year.

At the Welcome Center in Stanwood (Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center) the Stanwood Area Historical Society was joined by five authors signing books on Camano Island and Fir Island & Conway, Josephine Caring Community, The Stanwood House, Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society, the Stillaguamish and Tulalip Tribes, and the Camano Island Quilters Guild, Hero Quilts and Cama Beach Quilters.

Visitors toured the third floor of the Floyd to see our exhibits on *Waistlines & Hemlines: Honoring*

Remarkable Women and For All Who Served and they toured Stanwood's heritage *Pearson House Museum*. We surveyed those who came to our historic site and 90% of our visitors went on a tour of one of our sites and 75% of them had never visited the SAHS complex before, which afforded us a huge opportunity. Most of our visitors were from outside the area and half of them learned about the event from family and friends, a quarter of them learned about it from the newspaper. A very positive outcome of the survey was that 100% of our visitors were very happy with their experience and all of them were likely or extremely likely to return.

With the dates now set for next year's Historic Sites Tour, we are hoping to include even more scheduled events and volunteers. Watch our Facebook pages or websites for future information. If you missed the play "*Maude & the Kids - A Phoney History*" you are in luck. There will be an encore performance at the Camano City Schoolhouse on April 29th, 2017 at 7:00pm with a \$10.00 suggested donation at the door. For reservations please call 360 969-9094.

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AT THE FLOYD

April 29, 2017 • 12:30 p.m.

*Spring Tea and
Vintage Fashion Exhibit*

May 21st • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

History and Hors d'oeuvres
The Stanwood Memorial Barn

July 4th • 11:30 a.m.

Parade and Ice Cream Social



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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.

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

Call 360-629-6110 or visit www.sahs-fncc.org

SAHS Memorials

In Memory Of:

Ken Christoferson Sr.	- Margaret Utgard
Ken Christoferson Sr.	- Cliff & Janet Larson
Ken Christoferson Sr.	- Bill Williams
Ken Christoferson Sr.	- Janet Utgard
Ken Christoferson Sr.	- Loren & Pat Kraetz
Maxiner Gresset	- Susan Neely
Lila Gran Branford	- Margaret Utgard
A. Virginia Seabury Peterson	- Susan Bradley
Margaret Logen	- Barbara Logen
<i>On February 17th, which would have been her 99th birthday</i>	

SAHS Donations

Carolyn & Murry Spector
Camwood Genealogy Workshop
Lucille Kibbee
Jack Archibald

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] _____

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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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