

Stanwood Area ECHOES



Newsletter of the Stanwood Area Historical Society
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Zona McConnell, (1884-1977) Professional Musician



Zona McConnell (with violin) and her "Serenaders", undated promotional photo. (Courtesy Joan McConnell)

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Zona McConnell

(Continued from page 1)

In a recent Historylink.org story author Peter Blecha recounts the amazing career of Zona McConnell who taught music to Stanwood Camano students after moving to Camano Island. (See HistoryLink.org Essay 22601 “McConnell, Zona Lillian (1884-1977)” by Peter Blecha)

Zona’s granddaughter, Camano Island resident Joan McConnell, shared her remembrances of her grandmother’s stories of being a musician on the road with her girl groups in the 1920s and early 30s. She was impressed by Zona’s energy and fearless devotion to her music career in spite of obstacles for women.



Zona McConnell (above & below)
Courtesy Joan McConnell



Students of Zona are Ed Bryant (far left), Ed McConnell, Skip Lien (center) and Rolf Lystad



Zona had come to the Pacific Northwest in 1912 with her husband Dennis who was a railroad worker. Zona was a musician who could play many instruments from a young age and began teaching violin, banjo and piano. She also performed all over the region forming jazzy girl bands, performing at parties, dances, boxing matches, Battle of the Bands competitions, events that wanted musicians. She often lived on the road traveling as far as Alaska and finally settled back in Seattle about 1931 where she and Dennis adopted an abandoned child, Lorraine and later a son, Ed McConnell.

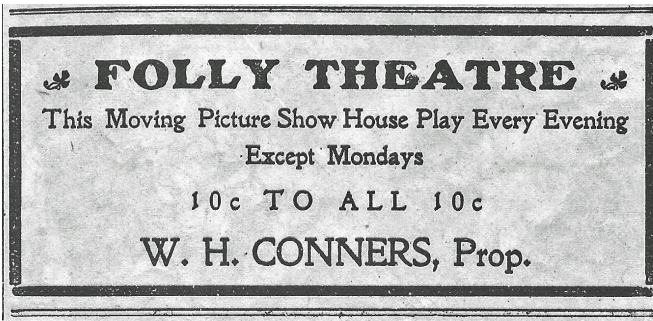
In 1933 she and her husband Dennis bought property at Madrona Beach on Camano Island and in the mid 1940s he retired. They completed a cabin in 1944 and she continued her teaching locally and began her Madrona Music School. She took the students with her to Seattle so they could perform at the Northwestern School of Music Luncheon Clubs, KING-AM radio and in Auburn, Bremerton, the Snohomish County Sportsmen’s Association, the Stillaguamish Grange Hall, the Sons of Norway Hall in Blaine, at the Washington State Federation of Women’s Clubs convention at Everett’s Normanna Hall, the Northwestern Festival at the College of Puget Sound, and the Washington State Fair in Puyallup.

Dennis died in 1956 but this irrepressible musician lived on Camano Island until she died at the age of 93. **See the complete story historylink.org Essay 22601.**



On the left is a snapshot of one of the recitals of Zona’s students in May 1957. It is also interesting because the recital took place in the Stanwood City Hall Auditorium. This stage is long gone but was an original feature of the 1936 City Hall building.

Early Theaters in Stanwood



Staged entertainment in Stanwood before 1911 was usually at the I.O.O.F Hall, the East Stanwood Town Hall, the People's Union Hall and sometimes at the schools. As movies became popular W. H. Connors, who was owner and operator of the Palace Hotel apparently started in the movie theater business with the Palace Photo Play. It is not clear how long that lasted but according to the Stanwood Story (v. 1, p. 69) he then started **The Folly Theatre** about 1911 in a new building at the Northeast corner of 270th and 102nd Ave Northwest and is currently a bookstore.



Meanwhile, the **Liberty Theater** opened in East Stanwood. In the photograph on the right it is the building with the arched entryway. *"East Stanwood's Liberty Theater opened in 1917 operated by Gus Nicklason who in turn sold it to H. E Kalanquin in December 1918"*.

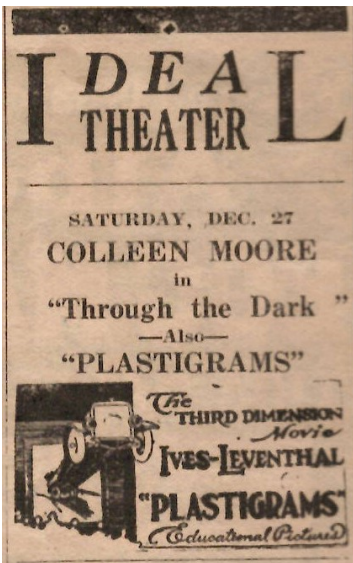
Beyond the theater is the furniture store and post office. On the right is a jewelry and watchmaker according to a 1918 Sanborn Map.

In the foreground are the tracks of the H & H Railroad connection between the Great Northern and the mills in along the river. The first three buildings are no longer standing and in there place is a small building used as a banking drive-thru.

93.113.01c image cropped

AT THE FOLLY AND LIBERTY THEATERS

<p>LIBERTY THEATER EAST STANWOOD, WASHINGTON</p> <p>Saturday Afternoon at 2:30 P. M. Saturday Afternoon at 8:00 P. M.</p> <p>Return of the popular Comedian Mr. Dave Williams In his new Comedy Success "Ole, The Swede"</p> <p>Supported by an All Star Cast. Extra Vaudeville Features</p> <p>The story of a big-hearted Swede who always seems to blunder into doing the right thing at the right time.</p> <p>A Funny Comedy, full of amusing situations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IT IS TO LAUGH</p> <p>Adults 50c. Children 25c. Plus war tax.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THIS IS NOT A PHOTOPLAY</p>	<p>AT FOLLY—SATURDAY AT LIBERTY—SUNDAY "The Idol Dancer"</p> <p>A D. W. Griffith Production. This is the film that Griffith and his players were working on when the entire company was blown to sea in a disabled yacht and reported missing for several days by the entire press of the world. You no doubt saw the report in the newspapers.</p> <p>It is the most vivid and thrilling drama of the strange life and strange conglomeration of whites and natives of the South Sea Isles ever screened.</p> <p>Clarine Seymour plays Mary, "The Idol Dancer," one of the screen's most unique characterizations.</p> <p>Richard Barthelmess plays the Beach Comber. You'll remember his magnificent acting in "Broken Blossoms."</p>	<p>AT LIBERTY—SATURDAY AT FOLLY—SUNDAY "THE LIFE LINE"</p> <p>A Maurice Tourneur Production. Founded on the world famous Melodrama of the Sea.</p> <p>"THE ROMANY RYE" With Jack Holt, Selma Owen, Pauline Stark, Lewis Cody and a supporting cast of hundreds.</p> <p>FRIDAY, AUGUST 13th ROBERT WARWICK "IN MISSOURI"</p> <p>Two men strove for her love. One wore city clothes and a waxed mustache—The other offered love and honor. Which did she choose? International News. Vaudeville Movies. "Some Boy", Christie Comedy.</p> <p>MONDAY, AUGUST 16th Hazel Carey In "OVERLAND RED"</p> <p>The rollicking romance of a jocular vagabond in a rousing picture. "Asphyxiated Gases", a scenic. "Bride for Two", Christie Comedy.</p>	<p>TUESDAY, AUGUST 19th Wallace Reid In "THE LOTTERY MAN"</p> <p>Wallace Reid dreams of getting married in a bathrobe and a high hat, with minister, bride, and attendants yielding suddenly to the latest dance craze. See the Shimmy Widdling. Screen magazine. Ten-cent Cody "Breaks the Trust."</p> <p>AT FOLLY, WEDNESDAY—LIBERTY, THURSDAY. Sessue Hayakawa In "THE BRAND OF LOPEZ"</p> <p>A gripping drama of hot blooded Spanish Romance and Revenge. A story of a Matador's Revenge and Fate's Retribution.</p> <p>"A Barryard Romance", Comedy. THURSDAY, AUGUST 19th "PHANTOM HONEYMOON"</p> <p>The most unusual story of Love, Revenge and the Supernatural ever told in picture. "Are Wife's Unreasonable?" a Comedy.</p>
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The Ideal / Colonial Theatre

In May of 1920 the Ideal Theater opened on Main Street (270th). Its opening was much celebrated featuring the movies "The Beloved Cheater" and "The Bottom of the World—Sir Ernest Shackleton's Thrilling Attempt to Cross the South Pole". An investment of \$60,000 by Oscar O. Ruth of Stanwood brought this new building to Stanwood on Main Street across from the Folly. General admission after opening night was 30 cents for adults and 20 cents for children.

The architect was E. V. Houghton of Seattle. A lengthy news article

describes an "Old Mission Front" with a reinforced concrete canopy or pergola over the lobby with leaded glass doors that opened into the foyer. There was a spacious ladies retiring room, check room. It had an orchestra pit large enough for a twenty piece orchestra with a "number 25-type Photoplayer" which was operated by hand or a motor. The floor sloped 8 feet from the back to the front of the stage which was 25 feet across. The seating capacity was 500 people and there were 3,600 square feet of floor space. The stage was 24 feet across with thirty five foot drop screens and asbestos front curtains controlled by counter weights. It had six exits. We have never found a good photograph of this building near the time its construction but the photograph below is thought to be the Ideal. (*Stanwood Tidings*, May 28, 1920) (For more see ECHOES No. 62)

In 1929 Manager Hooper brought in electricians to install talking picture equipment to improve the experience. In 1941, the *Twin City News* reported that Manager Johnson installed a screen with augmented sound effects.

Advertising indicates there was a busy movie schedule at all the theaters that continued through the



Thought to be the opening of the Ideal Theater in 1920. Acc: Photographer: John T. Wagness



Depression and WWII. On November 4, 1943 there is an advertisement for the features showing at the Ideal Theatre and one week later with the very same type of ad and placement is for the Colonial Theatre. This would seem to indicate that is when the name of theater changed from the Ideal to the Colonial as it was last known (see opposite page). In 1946 it was listed in the phone book as the "New Colonial Theater". The 1969 demolition snapshots on the opposite page were taken by Pete Jensen (local nearby druggist) and in its place is now a bank parking lot, then known as the First National Bank of Stanwood which had been built the year before.

The theaters in Stanwood and East Stanwood were similar to those in other communities although after the



1992.41 Demolition of the Colonial Theater, 1969, Main Street



Stanwood Cinemas Arcade with restaurants and movie theater. (Note the Folly sign in the mural. (Staff photo)

demolition of the Colonial in 1969, there were no theaters in Stanwood until about 1999. There is a brief mention that the Colonial theater building became the “Camwood Inn” (?)(*Stanwood News* Jan 1, 1970, p.5)

It was in 1999 that a large new shopping development was built above the flood plain and included a large new Cinema. That Cinema along with a brick flooring in the shopping “mall” pays homage to Stanwood history in the elaborate colorful murals of “trompe d’oeil” historic brick street views by Jack Gunter and Karla Matzke who made this Stanwood Cinemas Arcade among the more unique in Puget Sound.



Brick Donors : July 2022—March 6, 2023:

Bruce & Doris Carlson, John & Patricia Coan, Aaron & Rebecca McCreery, Angela & Hardin Hanks, Cliff & Janet Larson, Steve Youngren, Steven & Norma Knopp, John Leque, Virginia Seay, Michael & Linda Dobner, Shirley Dorsey, RE Schmitt LLC, Joyce Larsen Linn, Steve & Leah Rice, Catherine & Edward Farrey, Judith & Ken Fernandes.

Stanwood Area Historical Society 2022 Elected Officers & Trustees

President ~	Joan Andrews	2023-2024
Vice President ~	Kathy Uroff	2023-2024
Treasurer ~	Steve Youngren	2022-2023
Secretary ~	Karen Prasse	2022-2023
Past President ~	Karen Prasse	2023-2024

Trustees

2022-24	Rose King
2022-24	Janet Utgard
2022-24	John Leque
2021-23	Clifford Larson
2021-23	John Smistad
Honorary Lifetime Trustees	
Pat Bronson & Margaret Utgard	

Next SAHS Board Meetings ~

April 12 Board meeting
Eldridge Center 11 a.m.

Open to the public !
New members and volunteers welcome.
Meetings 2nd Wednesday of the month, 11 am.

New & Renewed Memberships for 2023 so far

Memberships help cover costs of printing & mailing the newsletter. We accept new memberships at any time of the year so if you paid in late 2022 and received the newsletter in the mail, your membership is still active.

Vince Mendenhall, Laurie Ware, Robert A. Hall, Jeffrey & Linda Pearce, Celia & Marvin Fiones, Diane & Les Anderson, Joan Andrews, Jack Freberg, Anna Skrinde Bowron, Andreena Bergman, Hi & Pat Bronson, Steve Chappel, David & Diane George, Patricia Fay, Ed & Ramona Snowden, Dan Royal, Connie Ronning, Richard & Robin Hanks, Laurie Dilday, Allen County Public Library Genealogy, Vicki Lee Rensink, Barbara Wilderman, Chaim Bezalel & Yonah Ben Levy, Scott & Kathleen Chase, Steven & Cindy Sundberg, Jeffrey & Linda Pearce, . Joan & Charles McConnell, Jane Swartz, Phyllis Desoto, Rick & Kris Anderson, Ed & Ramona Snowden, Scott & Karri Fedale, Karen Prasse, Jack Archibald, Don Simonson



Contact Us!

You can learn more about activities and events planned for the future in our social media links:

<https://thefloydnorgaard.org>

<https://www.sahs-fncc.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/StanwoodAreaHistoricalSociety/>

<https://www.instagram.com/sahsfncc/>

<https://www.stanwoodveteransmemorial.com/>



Help Wanted

Guest Services Staff

The "Floyd" (as it is affectionately known) is a great place for weddings, concerts, arts and music, business events, luncheons, parties, ceremonies and more. It is operated by the Historical Society.

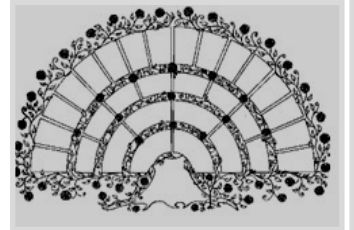
We are looking for individuals to be part of a team of "hosts" to be on site during the rentals to greet and assist with building accommodations.

Hours include weekend, weekday and occasional evening shifts as needed. Training will be provided for someone interested in occasional work.


Camwood Genealogy Workshop

meets on the first
Mondays of the month
in the Eldridge Center at
1 p.m.

Contact info@sahs-fncc.org for updates.



Paypal link is on our website sidebar
www.sahs-fncc.org



Donate to
Stanwood Area Historical Society

We collect and preserve the wondrous treasures of history that define our community.

\$10.00 USD	\$20.00 USD	\$50.00 USD	Other Amount
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Donate with PayPal

Donate with a Debit or Credit Card

Legacy Collection Art Postcards Are Available !

In 2022 twelve local artists were commissioned to create artworks inspired by artifacts from the Stanwood Area Historical Society historical collections. This unique collaboration brings new life to old objects, enticing one to view history in a new light and medium.

Local photographer and SCAAC board member, Judy Fernandes, designed a postcard for each artwork. A perfect gift, this pack of 12 postcards is a handheld art exhibit.

Sales from these cards will benefit the Stanwood Area Historical Society. Some of the artworks will be preserved in the museum collection to be featured in future exhibits and programs. Part of the exhibit is still on view.

Thank You to our participating artists:

Amy Martin, Chaim Bezalel & Yonnah Ben-Levy, Bobbi Samples, Jack Dorsey, Jack Gunter, John Ebner, Karla Matzke, Michelle Rushworth, Molly LeMaster, Sharon Snelling, Susan Cohen Thompson, Val Paul Taylor
The collection of 12 postcards are available at SAHS for \$15.00.



Keeping our Museum Open !

Thanks to Elaine Commins, a new docent and new education committee member and her husband Mark Commins for helping with odd jobs including a long awaited fix of shelving. More shelving projects await others who might be willing to help!

One of our most critical services is keeping our exhibits and historic buildings open for visitor on a drop in basis on Wednesdays and Saturdays as well as for guided visits by appointment.

Please call or feel free to drop by to ask the volunteers working when you visit. Our training program involves attending "tours" and shadowing current visitors

Stanwood Area ECHOES is published quarterly by the Stanwood Area Historical Society

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360-629-6110 ~ <http://www.sahs-fncc.org>

Editorial Committee: Members of the Board

SAHS is a private, non profit organization (501c3). We welcome your support and membership. Newsletter writing, research, proofreading, layout are all done by volunteers. Please help support this publication and other projects and programs with your membership dues, or business sponsorship. Contact us:

info@sahs-fncc.org

THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY FOR SUPPORTING AND SUSTAINING SAHS

Dec 1, 2022—March 6, 2023

Alan & Connie Hall
 Ken & Barbara Christoferson
 Margaret (Penny) Buse
 Anna Bowron
 Robert A. Hall
 Louise Lindgren
 Jane (Sundberg) Swartz
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Erling Skrinde—Anna M Bowron
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Roger Krogstad—Clarice Barnett
Josh King—John & Jana Smistad
Margaret Logen & Dan Logen—Barbara Logen
Cliff Henning—Rich & Kris Anderson

Join the Stanwood Area Historical Society

Join SAHS and volunteer today!

Memberships are due annually. This is a significant means of support for the Society and includes a subscription to the quarterly newsletter. Volunteer members help govern our society by providing assistance with programming, publications and planning for the future. Mail to: SAHS P. O. Box 69, Stanwood WA 98292

SAHS is a tax-exempt non-profit organization and depends for its financial support on gifts, bequests from individuals and groups, fund raising activities and membership dues. Your contributions are tax deductible to you and will be used in support of history education, exhibits and programs.

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Email (Program/Activities notifications) _____

Individual Membership: \$20.00 \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Family Membership: \$30.00 \$ _____

Contact us if you are a business and would like to support with a sponsorship

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General Supporting Donation: \$ _____

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