

The purpose of the Spanaway Historical Society is to assemble and preserve the history of the Spanaway area; that the knowledge gained therein may be used for the education and improvement of the community.

Tracing School History 1860 - 2011

"The heritage of the past is the seed that brings forth the harvest of the future."

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Spanaway School c1895 - in distance



The 2nd Whittier Schoolhouse · c1897
Students · c1896



Spanaway Elementary Dedication October 6, 2011

Chester P. Creso "Early Spanaway"

The opening of the first school in Spanaway was on August 21, 1861. In 1863, the Superintendent listed 12 students between the ages of 4 - 21. The school year varied from 3 to 8 months. By 1880, 38 of the 80 students in the area attended the log schoolhouse or the frame schoolhouse - built for \$160. Fred Meyer was the school clerk. Gertrude Bresemann recalled from 1884 to 1888 she and her brothers and sister walked at least 2 miles, from the north end of the lake and around through what is now the town of Spanaway. They passed the old log cabin of Henry de la Bushalier and the house on the Locke homestead. John Rohr, who operated a hardware store in the town, recalls when the teacher, Mrs. McKeney, suggested the students consider names for the school. The name of John Greenleaf Whittier won and District 25 was thenceforth Whittier. In 1895, A. Simons donated property for the building of a new school. (Photo) The new school was a two-story building, with four rooms and a basement. The two lower rooms were used to teach and the upper rooms used as a lunch room and to play in during the bad weather. Each room had a large wood-burning heater. The children drank from a common water bucket, using a common dipper. All "plumbing" was of the outdoor variety. The school term lasted from three to six months.



"A cougar was shot by Schultz's spring about 300 feet from Whittier School." C. Melvin McKeney

C. Melvin McKeney "Early Spanaway"

I took my 8th grade examination in the woodshed of the old Whittier School. Those were the days when all the kids didn't make it through the 8th grade. They had to stay home and work instead of going to school, as money was hard to come by. After 8th grade, I attended Tacoma High School (later named Stadium) and it was the only high school in Pierce County. In good weather I rode my bicycle all the way. Harold Evans was the only other high school student from Spanaway. I remember well the foundation that was built with the three R's in Whittier. I also remember well the very effective therapy we had; as it increased our ability to study and it was a great aid to discipline, and was plentiful because it grew wild all about us. It was called the Hazel Switch. Some of the old things are obsolete, but some were good medicine and should still be used.

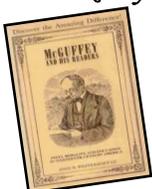
The plan uses an "L" shaped design which houses classrooms in one wing and shared program spaces - library, music classroom, gym, and cafeteria - in the other. By opening onto the stage, the music classroom also serves as a performance space. The commons and gymnasium can be opened up to create an assembly space for students and the community. The stage/commons/gym is easily isolated from the remainder of the school to accommodate community use after hours. The food and clothing bank at the school provides a community service for students. A greenhouse and fenced garden area on the corner of 165th Street South and Park Avenue is a focal point for the school's relationship with the community.

Chuck Overaa, "It was a rule not to play in the front yard of the school. If you got caught on the grass you'd be taken to the library where the mimeograph machine was located and be told to bend over the table and get ready to be swatted with a switch."



Esther Swanson, "Spanaway School was a brick building and when I was in the 8th grade our classroom was under the stage. We called it 'The Dungeon.' The lighting was poor, but Mrs. Hagen was a good teacher and I graduated in the spring. One of the 2 bus garages was used for a kindergarten classroom and lunchroom. The other garage was also a classroom."

Chuck Overaa, "To get to school we walked through the prairie and cut across fields. The buses were only used for kids who lived out in the country. Mr. Anstehh was the janitor and he kept a wood fire in the furnace to run the steam radiators in the classrooms. One year the Kircher and Hermansen boys put a wagon on top of the schoolhouse roof on Halloween night and then had to take it apart to get it back down the next day."



Bill (Rip) Rohr, "All of us boys carried a pocketknife. It was considered a tool, not a weapon. At recess we would go out on the playground and play mumble-peg. Sure couldn't do that now!"



IN MEMORY

We will miss our longtime and supportive Spanaway Historical Society members

Janet Critchley

&

George Vanek

"A little tribute, small and tender . . . just to say we still remember."

2011 IN REVIEW

SHS is fortunate to receive many donated services to help maintain the museum. We would like to thank:



- Don Foster for all of the hours spent in taking on the job of creating a data base and cataloging library materials. Don has discovered 85 first editions and 23 of these books include author's signatures.
- The Lion's Club Work Parties have continued their support in keeping the museum buildings and grounds in operation. From setting up tables for the picnic in July to cleaning out the fridge in September that was unplugged in July (Pew!) they are the backbone of the museum's workforce.
- Shirley Zlock and Stan Lee for representing the SHS at the Puyallup Fair at the Pierce County Heritage League booth. They chatted with history buffs, supplied SHS handouts and provided answers to many fairgoers.
- Barb Bowman for the many hours of diligent work at the Pioneer Cemetery. By documenting data for the website www.findagrave.com, several very appreciative genealogists have had successful results in their research.
- Art and Donna Pressel for watering, mowing and weeding the lawn on a weekly basis during the year.
- Marilyn Goddard for keeping the SHS albums up to date with photos, newspaper clippings and memorabilia for both current and future use.
- And one great big "Thank You" to the many folks who show up on Working Wednesdays, Saturday Work Parties, Special Events and perform At Home tasks. Their time and effort is what keeps SHS operational.

ACCESSIONS

- June Whipple continues her quest of searching for treasures at local Second Hand stores and the results have added a vintage wedding garter, two books for the library and a c1910 sugar bowl. She also provided the Historian with clippings for the Scrapbook Collection.
- Two c1900 wicker baby buggies, a Shirley Temple doll, 2 toy train sets and 2 "Dick and Jane" books have been added to the Toy Inventory.
- Stan Lee donated a beautiful c1900 set of China that was a family heirloom.
- Don Foster provided the museum with a much needed computer. Along with the PC, Don is also donating his time and expertise.

RESOURCES

An archival map case has been installed in the upstairs Library with over 50 topographical, political and aerial maps available for research during open hours of museum.

It's Time for Holiday Parties!

In case you haven't heard, Sue Overaa is well-known for being the *SHS Party Girl!* When stormy weather covered the yard, sidewalk and rooftop with branches and debris, Sue organized a *Clean Up Party*. When it was time to get the house spic 'n span for December's Open House, Sue was wielding a vacuum cleaner and enlisting others to join her in a *Housework Party*. When the Lion's Club volunteers were working on the Do To list, Sue was coaxing the antique stove to heat up hearty hot dishes - just in time for the *Work Party* lunch. Sue's positive attitude, energetic personality and willingness to help out whenever or wherever are truly appreciated!

Positive Pleasant Progressive
The Perfect Party Girl



AT THE MUSEUM

The SPRING YARD SALE was a successful event with the SHS teaming up with the local Lion's Club to provide tables heaped with donated treasures. Not only were funds raised to maintain the museum, but the event also gave the community an opportunity to see the museum and visit with members. Thanks to all of you who helped with donations, setting up, sales and cleaning up during this event!

Another memorable Potluck Picnic & Silent Auction was held on a warm & rainy July Sunday. The scattered showers didn't dampen the spirit of members and friends who enjoyed the Banjo Band Sing-Along, 2nd and 3rd helpings of delicious side dishes and tours of exhibits. An unplanned First Exhibit for the Log Cabin resulted when Art and Steve moved the grill inside to be sheltered from the weather as they served up platters of hot dogs and burgers.

Many thanks to the dedicated Board Members of 2011 for their hard work and productive efforts! We are looking forward to a great 2012 with the newly elected Board Members:

President: Shirley Zlock
Vice President: Georgina Gonyeau
Secretary: Shirley Mathis
Treasurer: Virginia Connors

Thank you for "stepping up to the bat!"



Mark Your Calendar!

Wreath Sale - Orders Nov. 10 - 30
Call ahead to Pick up at Museum: Dec. 4 - 21
Toy Drive Donations - Nov. 1 - 30
Holiday Open House - Dec. 4

Holiday Open House
Sunday, December 4th
From 1-3 PM
Join in the Fun and . . .



"Belly Up to the Bar!"
"Sugar Time"
"Cabin Fever"
"Ham It Up"
"Oh, Darn It!"
"What's In Store?"



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Please take a minute to check your membership status. We still have 34 members who have not renewed for 2012. Please send your payment to: SHS, P.O. Box 1238, Spanaway WA 98387 as soon as possible. Your support is very important to the continued existence of the Historical Society. Thanks!

MUSEUM INFORMATION

812 East 176th Street

Along with the special events, the museum is open every Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM and on the 3rd Sunday of each month between 2:00 - 4:00 PM. For Group tours of any size, contact the museum at: 253-536-6655 or 360-832-6662

Did You Know The Use Of This Artifact?



What is it? *It's a Pig Scraper!* Almost every farm raised pigs and most farmers did their own butchering. After the pig was killed and the blood saved (all parts of the pig were used) it was hauled to a tub of hot water and a long-handled brush was used to agitate the bristles while in the hot water. After 5 minutes or so, the pig would be hauled out onto the table and the bristles scraped hard and furiously with the scraping tool shown above. If the bristles didn't come off easily the first time, the process would be repeated. If you need to scrape a pig any time soon, pig scrapers are available on Ebay for \$12.99!



? New Mystery Artifact?

Answers to "Do You Know?"

- ♦ The name of the train that ran between Tacoma & Spanaway was "Old Betsy".
- ♦ The name Spanaway originated from the Lushootseed dialect "Spa'du-we" meaning "dug plants" or a place to gather roots. Early settlers anglicized it to Spanaway.
- ♦ The first plats of land in Spanaway were surveyed by Mr. Funk and his assistant. . . a large black dog!
- ♦ The fire that destroyed the majority of Spanaway's business district in 1922 was started in an incubator where 100 chicks had just hatched.

Community Connection

SHS is supporting the 'Mom & Pop' Gifting Program for needy Bethel District children. You can participate with either a cash donation sent to: SHS, P.O. Box 1238, Spanaway WA 98387 or drop off a new toy at the museum during open hours before November 30th.

For current events and loads of information about the Spanaway area, www.celebratespanaway.com is your best resource!

Memberships

General - \$8 Spouse \$5
Seniors age 65+ - \$6 Spouse \$5
Student age 18-22 - \$6
Under 18 - \$5