INSIDE
The Yakima Valley did not escape the 1950s polio epidemic

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The UW Class of ’67—Better Known as the “Bookends Class”

By Mavis Amundson

rain was falling on the morning of November 22, 1963, when 18-year-old Judy Rosen headed for her English class at the University of Washington. Rosen, a freshman and graduate of Seattle’s Roosevelt High School, was an English major who loved writing. She opened the door to her classroom, she could see from the look on her professor’s face that something was wrong. “He waited until everyone was seated and then said that today our president was assassinated,” Rosen remembered. Then he dismissed the class.

“I think he was too overcome to speak,” said Rosen. “What I do remember is kind of a blank. I just left campus.” Rosen caught the old No. 7 bus to go home. It was homecoming weekend. The Huskies football team was scheduled to play the Washington State University Cougars. “My homecoming date was my soccer coach,” Rosen recalled. The game was rescheduled.

The assassination of John F. Kennedy was a national trauma and set the tone for the four tumultuous years experienced by the young adults who started as freshmen in 1963 and graduated in 1967. “I don’t think there are many people who do not know where they were or what they were doing at the time of JFK’s assassination,” said Don Swartz, Class of ‘67, a construction management major.

More than 50 years later, some members of the Class of ’67 consider themselves the “Bookends Class” because two events bookended their university experience—the Kennedy assassination in 1963 and the Vietnam War in 1967. “No question the ‘bookends’ events were part of our unique experience,” noted Swartz.

This year the Class of ’67 is marking its 50-year reunion with a variety of events, including a brunch, a banquet, and a panel discussion by current and former editors of The Daily, the University of Washington’s student-run newspaper.

“We lived through a time of rapid change in our country,” said Joel Benoliel, who graduated with a political science degree in 1967, went on to law school, and decades later coined the “bookends” theme. “While we concentrated on our own studies and goals for graduation, we had little to no control over the political events that swirled around us,” noted Benoliel, who is now a member of the university’s board of regents. “We simply reacted to the daily news as small pawns on a very large chessboard.”

As incoming students went to their classes in September 1963, protest was already in the air. Just a few weeks earlier, on August 28, 1963, the March on Washington, DC, for civil rights drew a crowd of roughly 250,000 to the National Mall. It was reportedly the largest gathering in the nation’s capital up to that time. As the sun beat down on the throng, entertainers including Peter, Paul, and Mary roused the crowd with civil rights songs such as “Blowin’ in the Wind,” and Martin Luther King Jr. gave his stirring “I Have a Dream” speech.

The next year saw the free speech movement gather steam at the University of California, Berkeley, following a clash between students and university administrators. Students rebelled at what they saw as the university’s arbitrary restrictions on political speech. After the controversy escalated to civil disobedience and arrests in Berkeley, the university’s regents agreed to honor the students’ right to free speech under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution.

Berkeley’s free speech movement inspired student activism on campuses nationwide, including the University of Washington. “The mid 1960s was a period of unrest on campus and across the country, primarily in response to the unpopular Vietnam War, mounting racial tensions, and the rise of the hippie generation,” recalled Gregg Herrington, Class of ’67 and a former editor of The Daily.

As the leading source of campus news, The Daily was in the thick of the turmoil. Four mornings a week—Tuesday through Friday—The Daily published news gathered by professionally minded journalism students who took their duties seriously.

Herrington was editor of The Daily from early February 1967 to the end of the school year. During that time, antiraw
speeches, vigils, nonviolent demonstrations, and similar events provided a steady drumbeat of news.

In February 1967, for example, the left-wing group Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) showed up in the Husky Union Building (HUB) and forced air force recruiters to abandon a table they had set up to speak with students about military careers, recalls Herrington. The following month the HUB was the setting for a silent antivigil. In contrast, in May about 1,200 students marched from Greek Row down University Avenue in support of the Vietnam War.

The Daily noted the arrival of hippies, which it called “fringies.” They stood out on a campus that then favored the clean-cut look of button-down shirts for men and skirts and sweaters for women.

That year an alliance of students, street people, and others organized the University District Movement, Herrington remembered. The group took on discriminatory practices of the University District business community as well as harassment by officers of the Seattle Police Department.

The women’s movement also began to stir on campus. Kathy Noland, who graduated with a degree in communications in 1967, helped mobilize a women’s liberation drive. She recalls that young women began questioning the university’s long-standing policy of enforcing nightly curfews for female students who lived on campus, noting that male students could come and go as they pleased, without a curfew.

Women who lived in dorms or sorority houses had to be in their residence halls by midnight on weeknights and by two in the morning on Fridays and Saturdays. The doors were locked behind them, according to Gary, who was then president of the Associated Women Students (AWS) and a budding feminist.

What rankled many female students was that the university treated its young men and women so differently. “I felt this discrepancy in curfew rules was wrong,” said Gary. She and other AWS officers took up the cause of ending the curfew. They launched a lobbying campaign that included the residence halls, student organizations, and the university’s last dean of women, Dorothy Rosevear Strawn.

Strawn helped the students write a proposal for ending all campus curfews. They submitted it to the dean of students as well as the university’s president and board of regents. A campus vote in early 1967 helped close this issue; 90 percent of the female students who cast ballots were in favor of ending the curfew, according to a news report at the time.

In February 1967, UW president Charles E. Odegaard abolished the mandatory campus curfew for women and gave each residence hall the option of setting its own curfew. “We won!” Gary exclaimed. “It was a huge victory.” On the national level, public support for the Vietnam War eroded. According to a Gallup Poll in August 1965, 61 percent of the public said the war was not a mistake. By July 1967, a month after the Class of ’67 graduated, only 48 percent said the war was not a mistake. In addition, discontent over the war was becoming increasingly confrontational.

According to the Washington Post, over 100,000 people protested against the Vietnam War in Washington, DC, on October 21, 1967. Afterward, tens of thousands of protesters marched to the Pentagon and some attempted to storm the building, leading to hundreds of arrests, according to The New York Times.

For many members of the Class of ’67, their four years at the University of Washington were crystalline and unique. They enrolled at the UW to learn about the world, only to have the world intrude with unforeseen and sometimes messy lessons of its own. The tumultuous times both inspired and challenged the students’ idealism. Yet, as much as society charged them, they helped change society by standing up for free speech, winning greater equality for women, speaking out for civil rights, and questioning an unpopular war.

Looking back a half century later, one can see the wisdom in the popular aphorism, “History doesn’t repeat itself, but it often rhymes.” World and national affairs are providing another dramatic and disturbing backdrop for students on college campuses today. “Now, 50 years later, we are back to protests, and instead of assassinations of political leaders, we watch wholesale murders of innocent people at the hands of ISIS and assorted crazies,” said Craig S. Sternberg, who received a bachelor’s degree in business administration in 1967.

Joel Benoliel noted, “The 2016 election and student reaction to it reminds us of the striking parallels that exist between our student years and the current student experience.”

As a regent, Benoliel often speaks with UW students and student leaders.

“There is an acute sense of powerlessness, frustration, and fear. This is exacerbated by the dramatic increase in the number of foreign students on campus today, who are justifiably fearful that they are being singled out for hateful attention or worse,” he observed.

For Benoliel, the bookends theme for the Class of ’67 is more relevant than ever. “Not only does it serve as a nostalgic reminder to students, faculty, and staff of the tumultuous times we had, but it serves as a lesson to current students who may justifiably feel like they are living in times that we have never seen before,” he said. “It may provide some comfort for them to know what we lived through and survived to talk about 50 years later.”

Mavis Amundson grew up in Seattle and graduated from the University of Washington in 1967. She is author of The Lady of the Lake and The Great Forks Fire and editor of Sturdy Folk: Personal Accounts of Life and Work on the Olympic Peninsula.
Polio Strikes the Yakima Valley, August 1955

By Roberta M. Smith Sahr

Ten years after the end of World War II, life was flourishing in Sunnyide, a small farming community of about 6,000 in the Yakima Valley. The postwar economy was strong in August 1955. Anyone who had a dollar could buy a hamburger and shake, and maybe even fries, at the Topper Drive-In or the A&W out on State Route 410 north of town. On “Buck Night” families could fill up an entire car and drive a short distance to see a double feature for just a dollar at the Starlite Drive-In Theater.

Groceries and gas were inexpensive; work was available for those who didn’t mind getting hot and sweaty. In the evening, after the supper dishes were done, most families gathered in front of their black and white television sets, adjusted their sets for school or church anyway. There was always at least one acerbic old lady sitting on the front porch of her house. When she noticed a group of children gathering for the evening news, she would say, “You kids get off the lawn or we’ll never get our grass cut!”

The summer of 1955 had been unusually warm. Hot, dry, breezeless days and airless nights followed one another for weeks on end. Sidewalks were raceways for young children who had good scabs on them. Friends shared Popsicles, suckers, soft drink containers, ice cream cones, bats, baseballs, and mitts. Hand-washing was often limited to dinner time. Few children took daily baths, especially if they had gone swimming. It was a carefree, happy time. Yet, lurking in the shadows of this unsuspecting town was a silent, virulent storm. Who would have predicted in 1955 that these infectious elements would have spread through the schools or sign up at their doctor’s office?

In 1955 the general public knew little about this disease except that it was devastating those who contracted it. They knew that paralysis and death were definite possibilities. The big questions were: Where does it come from? What are the symptoms? How is it treated? Can it be prevented?

In his book Polio: An American Story (2008), David Oshinsky reveals in layman’s terms what polio is and how it is spread:

Polio is an enteric (intestinal) infection spread from person to person through contact with fecal waste: un laundered, shared objects, contaminated food and water. The agent is a virus . . . which enters through the mouth, passes through the digestive system, and is excreted in stools . . .

We know now that polio multipied in lymph nodes, throat, and tonsils, but its main area of replication is in the small intestine. Who would have predicted in 1955 that these infectious elements were, in fact, present in Sunnyide?

In the 1880s, after centuries in which poliomyelitis was considered an endemic pathogen that appeared randomly in third-world areas, polio epidemics began showing up in Europe and other parts of the developed world, primarily in cities during the hot summer months. When the pathogen spread to the United States, the first official epidemic struck Brooklyn, New York, in 1916. After that, there were annual regional outbreaks and epidemics. The United States’ most well-known polio victim was President Franklin D. Roosevelt, also from New York, who contracted the disease in 1921 at the age of 39.

After a series of painful therapeutic attempts to recover some of his lost leg strength, Roosevelt began writing a book titled My 300-pound figure holding the caduceus. From that time on the town and resort have been known as Warm Springs. Roosevelt visited Warm Springs 16 times throughout his life; he died there of a heart attack in 1945, a few months before the end of World War II. Polio outbreaks increased until the early 1950s, when they appeared to peak. By then the disease killed, paralyzed, or maimed thousands upon thousands of people worldwide each year. In 1952 the United States experienced the worst outbreak of polio in its history. Nearly 60,000 cases were reported, of which 3,145 victims died and over 20,000 had mild to major disabling paralysis. Because so many young children were affected, the disease was also called “infantile paralysis.”

In 1950, William Hammon of Pittsburgh developed the first serum, but its effectiveness was short-term. Other researchers raced to develop a vaccine. In 1954 the Nobel Prize in Medicine was awarded to John F. Enders, Thomas H. Weller, and Frederick C. Robbins for successfully cultivating...
the polio virus in human tissue. This led to a live vaccine developed by Jonas Salk; field testing began in 1954. A few years later, Albert Sabin developed an oral vaccine. In 1955 polio outbreak in rural Sunnyside personalized this history for many Yakima Valley families. In late August, a week or so before school was to resume, precision workouts for Sunnyside High School’s football team began on the Lincoln Junior High School athletic field. Practices were held in the late afternoon, when the heat was still stifling. The boys, out of condition after the summer break, prepared huffily during the strenuous workout; a few became nauseous and weak from dehydration. Jim Mallery was one of them. An incoming senior and son of Sunnyside School District Superintendent Kenneth Mallery and his wife, Mary, Jim was a big kid in all ways except his height, which was 5 foot 7 inches and his weight, which was 120 pounds, along with his hunchback in personality. During the three years the Mallorys had lived in Sunnyside, Jim and his younger brother Peter, 13, had become popular among their new teenage peers. Two older brothers, John had graduated from high school and was preparing to begin his junior year in college.

Meanwhile, word began to filter through Sunnyside that several children in the community had become ill with what was termed a “hard” summer flu, including 12-year-old Mickey Reeves. Within days, the names of other sick children were added to the list. Mickey’s younger sister, four-year-old Julie, and their visiting four-year-old cousin Shelly fell ill, too. Two other Reeves siblings—Bobby, 14, and Jim, 17—remained symptom-free. No one realized that 17-year-old Jim Mallery, who had left football practice early one afternoon thinking he was coming down with the flu, was actually exhibiting symptoms of polio. A few days later, while Jim was still suffering from severe headaches and nausea and was too ill to return to practice, his younger brother Peter fell ill, too. The thought of paralysis agitated him, and he maintained a somber look. Jim’s parents tried to get him dressed for a doctor’s appointment.

Hiroshi Furukawa, the Mallery family’s doctor, made a house call and determined that Jim was sick enough to be admitted to Sunnyside General Hospital. Once jim was in the hospital, a spinal tap to have his cerebrospinal fluid tested. When the test results that came back two days later proved positive for the polio virus, Jim was immediately transferred by ambulance to St. Elizabeth Hospital in Yakima, 40 miles away, where a polio ward had recently been set up. Jim’s illness continued to escalate. Paralysis had begun in his legs and rapidly moved to his chest. An iron lung was hastily located and made available to him. Then, while he was asking a nurse how long he would be in the hospital because he had to get back to football practice, his face turned ashen, his head rolled to one side, and he stopped breathing. The polio virus had reached his brain stem. James Paul Mallery died on September 7, 1955, barely a week after falling ill during football practice.

While Jim Mallery’s condition was worsening, Mickey Reeves also lost ground. When paralysis began in both legs, he too was moved into an iron lung at St. Elizabeth Hospital. Fifty-eight years later, his brother Jim wrote:

I try to recall those terrible last months of 1955, but for the most part I draw a blank. Only snippets of events do I recall. My mom frantically taking [younger brother] Bobby in for Gamma Globulin shots . . . looking in thru [sic] the hospital windows for a glimpse of Mick . . . Jim Mallery’s funeral . . . football season being cancelled . . . my mom crying . . .

Gamma globulin is the part of human blood that contains antibodies. The gamma globulin shots given to Mickey Reeves contained polio antibodies that might help prevent, if not cure, polio. These shots proved to be 80 percent effective in temporarily stopping or reducing the development of paralytic polio.

Jim Mallery’s funeral service was held in Sunnyside on a cloudless, blisteringly hot September day. The church was completely filled by the grieving family, teachers, coaches, classmates, and members of the community. It seemed impossible that such a strong, healthy teenage boy could have been taken down so swiftly by this silent attacker. Jim’s brother Peter, who had been hospitalized briefly and whose first blood test had come back negative for the polio virus, was back at home. Still running a fever, he suffered intense aches in the back of his head while standing and pain in his back while lying down. Realizing that Peter was too ill to attend his brother’s funeral that afternoon, his parents took him in his pajamas to view Jim’s remains in the morning. Peter remembers little about that day, but his brother John recalls that Peter was traumatized at seeing his brother in a coffin. Back at home, Peter became so young his brother could not sit or lie down; he was in pain no matter what he did. He began pacing the floor and crying. His distraught parents could not calm him down. Deeply concerned, the Mallorys called Dr. Furukawa, who told them to return Peter to the hospital where the doctor would order a spinal tap and see if it was the test was analyzed immediately. That afternoon during Jim’s funeral service, the Mallorys received news that Peter’s spinal fluid test results had come back positive and he was being taken by ambulance to St. Elizabeth Hospital and placed in the polio ward where he would immediately be evaluated and placed in an iron lung if one was available. Following the funeral service and a shortened graveside service for their son Jim, the Mallorys rushed to Yakima to be with Peter.

The American people appear to have placed a great deal of trust in their officials in the mid 1950s. Jonas Salk at the University of Pittsburgh, and two other researchers, Albert Sabin of the University of Cincinnati and Hilary Koprowski of Leder Laboratories, had been conducting research into the development of polio vaccines for many years using both live and killed viruses. In early 1954, when the news broke that Salk’s vaccine had been perfected, the National Foundation
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Like the physicians in the Yakima Valley Medical Society, 

vaccine trials as premature, unregulated, and even dangerous. 

Still, many in the scientific community decried the Salk 

for Infantile Paralysis leapt into action. Well-funded and with 
little or no government oversight, it set into motion the Salk 
polio vaccine field trials. School districts across the nation were 

invited to participate, and Sunnyside was one district selected 

for the test vaccine to be administered to students in grades six 

and under. Nearly 2 million schoolchildren across the United 

States participated in vaccine trials in 1954 and 1955. 

Still, many in the scientific community decried the Salk 
vaccine trials as premature, unregulated, and even dangerous. 

Like the physicians in the Yakima Valley Medical Society, 

they wanted more proof of its safety and efficacy before using 

it. In a few cases, children who had received the vaccine still 
came down with polio, but it was unclear whether the vac 
cine had caused the disease or lessened its impact. Hearing 

about the trials in other areas, many Yakima Valley parents 

waited impatiently for the vaccine to become available. They 

gladly gave permission for their children to participate in the 

spring 1955 trials. 

A few years later, when an oral polo vaccine was developed, 
doctors preferred it because it was easier to administer to small 

children. The oral vaccine became a routine preventative 

measure until a more refined vaccine was developed using ele 

ments of both the Salk and Sabin vaccines. That vaccine has 

continued to be used extensively around the world. 

It was a somber, reflective senior class that graduated from 
Sunnyside High School in May 1956. Jim Mallory was 

memorialized during the ceremony and in the Mirror, the 

high school's annual. The swift death of the strapping 

young athlete and the maiming of other children in the 

area left this small Washington town stunned with grief and 

sad memories that would linger for a lifetime. 

Polio, a fickle disease, had affected Jim and Peter Mallory differently. Peter's polio appeared to start in its progression, unlike the way it galloped through his older brother. However, as he began to recover, it became clear that Peter would be paralyzed from the bottom of his rib cage down. In a telephone interview in October 2014, John Mallory said that after leaving Sr. 

Elizabeth's, his brother Peter spent several 

months in early 1956 at the Warm Springs Institute, where he received 

physical and occupational therapy. In 

another interview, Peter described his experience at Warm Springs as positive. The staff there taught him how to 

down, how to get up, and how to take 
care of himself. He said he was not overwhelmed by his situa 
tion and, having accepted that his life had now drastically 

changed, "was ready to move on."

After graduating from Centralia High School in 1962, Peter underwent two painful surgeries at Seattle's Swedish Hospital. In the first, his back was straightened. In the second, strips of muscle and fascia from his thighs were separated and threaded upward to support weakened muscles in his abdomen. After healing, Peter was able to support his upright torso and swing his body forward using leg braces and crutches. Today he is a semiretired lawyer and chief executive of the New Mexico Trial Lawyers Association. Now in his 72s, he is that organization's 

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handed down to support weakened muscles in his abdomen.

Mickey Reeves never regained the use of his leg muscles, except for isolated muscles in his right foot and ankle that allowed him to drive a car equipped with a hand brake. He used braces and braces for the remainder of his life. Pre 

fering to be called Mike as an adult, he died in 2010 after a long career as a computer specialist in Olympia for the State of Washington. Julie Reeves, after long months of 

painful therapy involving heat, massage, and exercise, is still 
symptom-free, but her cousin Shelly continues to suffer from a polio-weakened curved spine and withered leg.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

There were other polio victims in the Yakima Valley in 1955, but there was 

apparently no comprehensive attempt to collect all the data. Neither the Yakima Valley Medical Society nor the Yakima Health District 

has this information. There is no care for polio—only prevention. According 

to the World Health Organization, as of October 2014 only three countries 

in the world remain polio endemic: Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Pakistan, 

where vaccination is either rare, nonexistent, or banned.

Robert Smith Sahr was born and raised in Sunnyside. Jim Mallory and 

Jim Reeves were members of her senior class. She is a University of Washington graduate with a master's degree in education from 

Central Washington University and author of Anthem for Mike (2015), a 

biography, from which this article is adapted and expanded.

Recently, an original letter from noted aviator Amelia Earhart came 
to light in the Historical Society's Special Collections. It was written to an eager young 
pilot on the cusp of starting flight school. Alma Heflin (1910–2000) wrote to Earhart for advice in 

1936 and received a thoughtful and cautionary response. Earhart wrote that she believed "women 

should fly and fly as much as they can afford" because "only deeds count."

In 1957, Heflin received her private pilot's license and planned to start her own flight school. Her 

ambitions changed when she visited Piper Aircraft in Pennsylvania intending to purchase a plane 

but took a job offer instead. Impressed with her expertise, Piper gave her a sales position and eventu 

ally promoted her to publicity director. In 1938, Heflin was the first woman to lead the annual light 

plane cavalcade to Florida, and in 1941 she became the first female test pilot for a commercial air 
craft company. During World War II she flew as a bush pilot in Alaska and tested planes for the US 

Army'sCanceled "Crashepper"Squadron. In 1949 she married Archie McCormick, an air force 
pilot, and went on to have a long career as a teacher and child psychologist. Her cherished letters from Earhart stayed tucked in her scrapbook from the years when she was just beginning to fly. 

—Eileen Price
H umans have been intrinsically linked to the Elwha River watershed for at least 3,500 years. Based on its geography, the Elwha was the prototypical Northwest wilderness river, serving as a conduit for Pacific salmon to reach spawning habitat in the Olympic Mountains. Yet salmon could not access the 70 miles of traditional spawning habitat for over a century because of two dams constructed in the early 20th century. The damming of the Elwha River, as well as the logging required to create the dams, brought about a profound shift in the magnitude and type of human exploitation of the river—until 2014, when the Elwha again ran free.

The transformation can be tied to Thomas T. Aldwell, principal shareholder of the Olympic Power and Development Company. Aldwell is known for developing the Elwha and Glines Canyon Dams, which went on line in 1913 and 1927, respectively. The dams and their impoundments drowned our land populated with native flora and fauna and blocked vital fish passages. Pipelines carved unnatural paths through the surrounding forests and waterways. The prioritization of electric power over natural resources was good for local economic development, but it had serious negative environmental consequences, particularly with respect to salmon and other anadromous, or spawning, fish. By the 1970s, after years of mismanagement and a dwindling community need for the power source, people were calling for removal of both dams.

Both the early 20th-century dam construction and the 21st-century dam removal have had significant ecological and societal impacts. The story of human interaction with the Elwha is circular in nature, providing a provocative case study of how temporal human decisions—wise or not—shape our environment and reflect our changing values.

The Elwha River watershed was formed by the last ice age’s Fraser Glaciation event, which occurred between 25,000 and 10,000 years ago. When the 5,000-foot-thick glacial ice retreated from the Puget Sound lowlands, it had carved out the modern landscape, including the Elwha River, flowing from the nearly 8,000-foot elevation of the Olympics to the Strait. With an area of 321 square miles, the Elwha River is the largest watershed in the Olympics and the most important river system for salmon and other species of anadromous fish on the Olympic Peninsula.

River hydrology is controlled by two peak-flow seasons, first during early winter precipitation and then after snowmelt in the spring. The US Geological Survey, which has continuously monitored annual streamflow since 1918, indicates that 78 percent of annual peak flow occurs between November and January. Historically, the Elwha River was regarded as the most prolific fish-producing stream on the Olympic Peninsula. Prior to dam construction, the Elwha supported healthy populations of all native species of anadromous salmonids, including Chinook, coho, chum, pink, and sockeye salmon; steelhead trout; sea-run cutthroat trout; Dolly Varden or sea-run native char; and bull trout. To the people of the Klallam Tribe, the river was the center of culture and economy. To this day, both river and salmon are viewed by tribal members as central to their way of life. As Beatrice Charles, a Lower Elwha Klallam elder, described the connection in 2002: “We were told that the salmon belonged to us, it was given to us by our maker. It was part of our culture . . . our way of life.” Three bands of the Klallam Tribe live on the northeastern corner of the Olympic Peninsula: the Lower Elwha Klallam, Jamestown S’Klallam, and Port Gamble S’Klallam. The Lower Elwha Klallams, traditionally named “nux-klay-um” or “Strong People,” form the northernmost band of the tribe that has long lived along the Elwha River. They traditionally relied on salmon and local cedar forests for most of their subsistence resources. Port Angeles harbor was the site of two major Klallam villages situated in the center of the 13 Klallam settlements distributed along the southern shore of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

The Elwha River watershed on Washington’s remote Olympic Peninsula includes much of the interior of the Olympic Mountains inside Olympic National Park. The Elwha headwaters are completely within the park, in some of the most pristine wilderness in the continental United States, and flow north into the Strait of Juan de Fuca.
written accounts of the pre-dam fishery are limited. Tribal oral history includes good details about the salmon fisheries. While some individual accounts from early white settlers are extensive and detailed in certain aspects, they had surprisingly little to say about the native community, suggesting that positive interactions were limited. Aldwell, who was called the Port Angeles "town historian" for more than five decades, had a keen eye for detail about natural settings and described many local events in his writing, but his focus was primarily on the town, economic opportunities, and his investments. He scarcely made any mention of the native community.

After Aldwell’s initial encounter with the Klallam, his attention turned to the damming of the river to facilitate their industry. Accounts of poor sanitary conditions, mortality associated with disease and alcohol abuse, and the need for education and farming paint a negative picture of general decline in the native culture that is typical of a community being overwhelmed by new arrivals. Aldwell and white settlers in general seemingly did not realize or were not much concerned about the impacts their logging activities and dams would have on the Klallam people’s way of life. He represented an almost unimaginable move. The town of Port Angeles and the logging operations on which the local economy was based expanded to include most of the traditional hunting and fishing grounds promised in perpetuity to the tribe.

In 1857, Angus Johnson became the first recorded permanent white settler in Port Angeles. By the 1860s, enough settlers had arrived to formally organize the townsite. Early commerce focused on trade with the Hudson’s Bay Company post across the strait in Victoria, British Columbia, 17 miles north. When the U.S. Customs operation was transferred from Port Townsend to Port Angeles in 1892, an economic boom began at Edie Hook and extended east to Ennis Creek. By 1894 the federal government opened the reserve for public sale, and the lots were auctioned off to squatters.

In 1890 and quickly became known for the Klallam people. The aspiration young entrepreneurs saw an opportunity to harness the river’s energy to power the growing economy of Port Angeles. A Canadian by birth, he arrived from Ontario in 1890 and quickly became known for his energy and ambition. His autobiography makes it clear that he appreciated nature, but more than the natural beauty of the river, he valued the potential impact the development of dams could have on Port Angeles. He states, “There is something about belonging to a place. You want to control more and more of it, directly or indirectly.” In his view, “Land was something one could work with,” and the Klallam were very much a part of that territory.

In 1894, Aldwell met R. M. Brayne, an Oregon pulp mill owner, who was interested in a power site. Brayne agreed to purchase the site and proposed to develop it as a water power and timber property. Aldwell persuaded the community of Port Angeles that the Elwha River would be a source of cheap power and recruited the necessary investors to make the vision a reality—a remarkable feat, given the remote location.

On October 31, 1912, while still under construction, the dam burst, sending a torrent of water and debris downstream. The Klallam received no warning. Luckily, there were no fatalities. The few native residences that remained along the river were flooded, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the Elwha Dam attained a vision of Aldwell and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses. Olympic Power built the dam, and the power company did not provide any compensation for these losses.
Historic American Engineering Record, Library of Congress

Local demand for power prompted construction of a second dam 13 miles upriver from the first dam. The Glines Canyon Dam and its impoundment, Lake Mills, was completed in 1927. Affordable local power from the Elwha and Glines Canyon Dams was a chief reason Port Angeles was able to survive the Great Depression. As the economy rebounded and population growth resumed during World War II, demand for electricity grew. Eventually Crown Zellerbach required more power than the Elwha and Glines Canyon Dams could provide. By 1950, the company’s pulp mill was consuming all the power generated by the both dams and buying more from Bonneville Power Administration, a large hydroelectric project on the Columbia River.

The unique resources of this area were nationally recognized even in the 19th century. In the early part of the century, Americans commonly viewed wilderness as something to be tamed and exploited for commerce. Few were concerned with preservation in its natural state. Those attitudes gradually shifted as people were encouraged by philosophers such as Henry David Thoreau and naturalists such as John Muir. Action to deliberately restrict resource exploitation and preserve wilderness in the public trust was not taken until the late 19th century, when the first national parks and national forests were established.

President Grover Cleveland designated the Olympic Peninsula’s forested areas as the Olympic Forest Reserve in 1897, part of a conservation and management program that was a precursor to the National Forest System. In 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt designated a portion of the forest preserve as Mount Olympus National Monument, primarily to protect the dwindling habitat of Roosevelt elk, which were facing decimation from hunting pressure and timber harvesting. In 1935, US Representative Monrad C. Wallgren sponsored a bill to establish the Olympic Peninsula as a national park. Congress passed Wallgren’s bill in 1937, authorizing the creation of Olympic National Park.

The conservation movement supported dam removal, causing the FERC to relicense Elwha Dam’s relicensing. Crown Zellerbach applied to the FERC to relicense Elwha and Glines Canyon Dam in 1968 and 1973, respectively. The Klallam Tribe adamantly opposed relicensing both dams. Because Glines Canyon Dam lay within Olympic National Park, the legality of relicensing was questioned. However, the FERC moved forward with its evaluation and environmental review to assess both hydroelectric projects. The conservation movement supported dam removal, causing the FERC licensing process to be contentious and drawn out. By the 1980s, 12 major conservation groups opposed the relicensing...
The lack of compelling economic benefit from the anti-gasoline hydroelectric plants, the unique character and quality of habitat in the Elwha watershed, and a vision of a sustainable non-logging economy led to a slow consensus among local residents, conservationists, the National Park Service, and other stakeholders favoring removal of both dams. Removal of the Elwha dams is an unprecedented large-scale river restoration project, costing $525 million. In a carefully orchestrated process, and after two decades of planning, concurrent removal of the Elwha and Glines Canyon Dams began in September 2011. On August 26, 2014, the final series of blasts brought the remnants of the Elwha Dam down.

Scientists have estimated that the dams trapped a staggering 21 million cubic meters of sediment, enough to cover the city of Seattle (83.8 square miles) in a three-inch-thick layer. Management of the sediment accumulated behind the two dams was as great an engineering challenge as physical removal of the structures. In order to increase the rate of salmon survivability and other impacts below the Elwha Dam, removal required a staged drawdown strategy over a period of three years to control the release of fine sediment. After years of modeling, the Department of the Interior decided that demolition work would be halted during salmon migration and for two weeks for every 15 vertical feet removed from the dams. This allowed the river to slowly sweep sediment downstream. During the two-week shut-down period, biologists tagged and relocated salmon above the dams using a large fish trap.

The sediment load has had short-term negative impacts to the river and marine environment. The sediment in the lower basin has filled in pools and gravel beds with fine sediments, degrading habitat and spawning areas. The release of fine-grained sediment also affects water quality, channel geomorphology, potential for flooding, habitat productivity, and coastal processes. Scientists have estimated that with anticipated recovery rates of sediment transport regimes relative to background conditions, the process will take until between 2018 and 2021. The sediment has rebuilt riverbanks and gravel bars, and approximately 70 acres of new beach and estuarine habitat at the river’s mouth. What was once only a kelp-covered cobblestone bottom is now sand and which provides excellent habitat for Dungeness crabs, clams, and other species.

Just two weeks after the dams were removed, the first salmon returned to the upper watershed. It is still very early in the restoration timeline, but indications so far are positive with respect to recovery of the spawning fish populations. Anadromous fish species in Northwest rivers not only provide food and recreation, they also maintain ecological connectivity and nutrient transport from the marine environment to alpine habitats.

Elimination of salmon and related species from the upper Elwha River watershed profoundly changed the entire ecosystem, as did their reintroduction.

While the salmon are already finding their way back to their ancestral spawning habitat, many of the former reservoir areas remain disturbed mudflats, with little biological activity. In the largest plant restoration project in park service history, scientists are giving nature a jump start to reclaim approximately 920 acres of land. Over a seven-year period they are planting over 50,000 pounds of native seeds and over 400,000 plants in the former Lake Aldwell and Lake Mills reservoirs.

Early ecological recovery on the Elwha River is happening much more quickly than originally projected. Scientists counted more than 4,000 Chinook salmon above the former Elwha Dam the first season after dam removal. In February 2016, Lynda V. Mapes, an environmental reporter for The Seattle Times, stated that “the middle river and tributaries went from no coho at all before dam removal, to producing approximately 32,000 outgoing salmon fry in 2014. Chinook red [spawning] adult counts are more than 350 percent and steelhead 130 percent from 2013 to 2015.” As the environment continues to heal itself, many birds and small and large mammals are thriving, including beaver, elk, and river otter. The Elwha story is an excellent example and proof-of-concept of how fast rivers can recover, given optimum conditions.

The Elwha shows that full dam removal is a viable option for many aging dams. It is already influencing other proposed projects. Currently, plans are being made and federal approval is being sought to remove four large hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River in Oregon. If completed, this ambitious project will surpass the Elwha as the largest dam removal project in US history. The federal government is evaluating other large-scale dam removal projects on the Snake River to improve salmon restoration efforts in the Columbia River basin.

Columbia National Park rangers have now turned the former dam sites into educational exhibits and interpretive centers. The Elwha River is offering up opportunities for recreational use that were not previously possible. Rafters, hikers, and other recreationalists are navigating miles of new land and waterways. The National Park Service estimated that park use increased over 60 percent in 2015 alone. However, the river is a dynamic system that is constantly changing. Winter storms have caused flooding that blocked roadways, made it more difficult to access some trailheads, and destroyed two popular campgrounds—Elwha and Alhade.

Olympic National Park ranger Lisa Meoli is an environmental historian at the environmental consulting firm HoydsFinder and holds a master of arts degree in history. She is on the board of directors of the Magnolia Historical Society in Seattle.
EDWARD STEPTOE’S EARLY INDIAN ENCOUNTERS

By Ron McFarland

Edward Steptoe, a Virginian, was a 25-year-old cadet at West Point when he read news accounts of the Dade Massacre in Florida that took place on December 28, 1835. Major Francis L. Dade had departed Fort Brooke, near what is now Tampa, with 115 soldiers and a single artillery piece. They were headed for Fort King, near present-day Ocala, when some 200 Seminole warriors ambushed them near the present town of Bushnell. Only three men survived and only one lived long enough to tell his tale. Among the dead were four young officers—Steptoe probably knew at West Point, since the corps of cadets in the mid-1830s typically numbered just 250 or so; two had graduated in June 1835, the end of Steptoe’s sophomore year. These were tumultuous times. The Alamo fell in March 1836, and the Republic of Texas emerged victorious at the Battle of San Jacinto a month later.

The Dade Massacre triggered what historians call the Second Seminole War, which lasted into 1842. The first such war ran roughly 1814–1819 and the third, 1855–1858. Andrew Jackson invaded Florida in 1818. In 1821 the Spanish ceded the territory to the United States. Succeeded by Martin Van Buren, Jackson was “a genuine fighting man,” remarked one Seminole leader still in Florida, turned up at Fort Pierce, Territory, where he was close to the action and eventually engaged in combat with the Seminoles. He may have been at Fort Marion in St. Augustine when the famous Chief Osceola was captured there, famously seized under a flag of truce.

In a March 10 letter to his father William, a physician with offices near the city of Lynchburg, Virginia, Steptoe tells of the death of Captain Samuel L. Russell of the Second Infantry Regiment, killed in February by Seminoles on the Miami River, and of “another classmate of mine & a most particular friend” who was wounded by Chief Coacoochee’s band. New York native Captain Russell was, Steptoe wrote, “one of the gentlest, most amiable men of my army acquaintance.” He also notes one of his comrades was shot at Palatka (about 20 miles south-east of St. Augustine) “at a spot across which I have repeatedly ridden with one soldier, or else, alone, on my way to the Ocklawaha,” and “since I have returned here [to Fort Pierce] I have strolled away gathering shells, etc.—perhaps ten miles from the fort—when two Indians could have cut me off easily. I tell you these things to show how rash this continued & tiresome war rending enemy are.”

In the same March 10 letter, Steptoe—a master of understatement—claims never to have been in better health, except for having been shot in the foot. In October 1840, he welcomed newly fledged West Point Second Lieutenant William T. Sherman to Fort Pierce. We have no record of his relations with “Camp” Sherman, whose biographer describes the posting as “a languid life, pleasantly different from the rigidity of West Point.” Sherman mentioned meeting Steptoe in passing and described fishing and catching green turtles for the mess table. “We live well here,” Steptoe told his father. “The finest fish & oysters you ever saw, & very abundant. I have boats & horses to sail or ride—guns & dogs—books,” a good assurance, he said.

On May 1, 1841, Coacoochee himself, the most important Seminole leader still in Florida, turned up at Fort Pierce.
demanding “food and liquor.” We have no account of how Steptoe, then serving as the post’s commissary officer, responded to that noteworthy event, but he most likely was at the fort then, as he filed a routine report on a personnel matter dated May 31. Historian John K. Mahon observed that Coacoochee “freely came and went” from Fort Pierce for some 30 days before he was made prisoner on June 4 and sent to Tampa for eventual transport to Indian Territory. In a hasty letter to his father dated June 11, 1831, Steptoe indicated that orders have been received “to lay fast hold of Coacoochee & warriors.” And, he opined, “Once in the fort, if they get out alive it will be quite a miracle.” Presumably, Steptoe was unaware of the chief’s capture in the field a week earlier.

In a letter dated September 27, 1841, Steptoe told his father that “despite the fierce heat of summer” he had “crossed the Everglades twice, or been, in other words fourteen days in boats in a vast expanse of water, not a foot of dry land in view day after day.” This expedition is likely the one historian Joe Knetisch mentioned, in which Steptoe and Fint Lieutenant George Taylor commanded 50 men in eight boats sent to “explore the branches of the ‘Alestookatee River,’” probably the south fork of the St. Lucie.

The action was part of an unusual summer campaign launched by Colonel William Worth, late fall and early summer being generally preferred as cooler and dryer. Although “Navy & Army cooperated,” Steptoe wrote, no spring being generally preferred as cooler and dryer. Steptoe was convalescing at Red Sweet Springs near Lynchburg, Virginia. In a letter sent to his half-brother, William Jr., from West Point, where he was serving a year as an instructor in infantry tactics, Steptoe praised the “profession of arms” as “honorable but cautioned that he made his observations away from “Pa’s eye,” as he suspected their father regarded him as not “much better than a rational murderer.” He also offered a relatively rare self-appraisal: “My nature is silent for the most part, and when my course is plain before me, active.”

The most notable observations in Steptoe’s letter to William, who did not matriculate at West Point—serving instead as a captain in the Second Virginia Cavalry during the Civil War—concern the officer’s life:

“If the Government declares a war, however unjust, its citizens are as much bound, individually, to help in its preservation, as to there being generally preferred as cooler and dryer. Although “Navy & Army cooperated,” Steptoe wrote, no spring being generally preferred as cooler and dryer. Steptoe was convalescing at Red Sweet Springs near Lynchburg, Virginia. In a letter sent to his half-brother, William Jr., from West Point, where he was serving a year as an instructor in infantry tactics, Steptoe praised the “profession of arms” as “honorable but cautioned that he made his observations away from “Pa’s eye,” as he suspected their father regarded him as not “much better than a rational murderer.” He also offered a relatively rare self-appraisal: “My nature is silent for the most part, and when my course is plain before me, active.”

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he had followed orders handed down by superior officers. That he did so effectively is proven by his promotions and brevets in rank, but in Utah Territory he was for the first time left to his own devices. “Under the circumstances,” he wrote, he was “confident” his orders to hand over the accused murderers “would not be obeyed” and “would probably cause the Indians’ immediate dispersion.”

The best policy, in my judgment, is to hold their suspicions, if possible, and use the first opportunity to capture them. Accordingly, I shall leave here on the 12th instant, with the mounted men of my command, ostensively as an escort to the U.S. judges who then set out on their southern judicial tour. This will enable me to see the country, and, if a favorable opportunity offers, to seize those criminals—about 30 in number. It is not likely, however, that their flight—supposed to be, generally, more rapid—will result in their escape; but that could only have been if the whites—supposed to be, generally, more or less implicated—will suffer them to be taken without resistance.

“If this plan shall fail,” Steptoe continued, “I propose to make a rapid night march upon them when the weather has become a little colder & they are obliged to quit the mountains.” Had he pursued this strategy, a major confrontation might have occurred, or perhaps more likely, the Indians would have dispersed. Clearly, though, Colonel Steptoe was willing to undertake aggressive offensive action in the field.

On the other hand, in another letter to Colonel Cooper, dated November 10, he indicated concern over the vulnerability of settlers living in Fillmore: “I felt reluctant,” Steptoe continued, “to create for them an enemy whom they would be left to combat alone.” By that date, Steptoe had met at Nephi, about 85 miles south of Salt Lake City, with Governor Young and John E. Kinney, chief justice of the Utah Territory Supreme Court, and agreed to appeal to Chief Kanosh of the Pahvant, who was then living near Fillmore, “assuring him of personal safety & requesting to see him” to arrange a negotiated surrender of the perpetrators. He sent a similar dispatch to Walker, “Chief of the Utes, generally.”

When he reached Fillmore, Steptoe found Kanosh awaiting him with a few braves. Chief Walker “declined to come,” Steptoe notified Cooper, “It seems that about 25 Pahvants & some Pi-utes, or ‘White Knives,’ were directly concerned in the massacre; most of whom came to see us, but wary—only a few at a time. It is probable that all who would have presented themselves together upon my assurance of safety, but that could only have been given in sincerity & good faith.” Historian David H. Miller takes Steptoe’s refusal to deceive the Indians as evidence of the “extreme personal honesty that accompanied all his transactions.” Steptoe did not indicate in his correspondence that he suspected Mormons were complicit in the Gunnison Massacre, despite rumors to that effect circulating in the East.

could be assured of returning to the army after his term of office. Federal policy forbade that option. After delivering the livestock, Steptoe returned to the post of garrison duty at Fort Monroe, Virginia, known as Old Point Comfort.

In January 1856, Colonel Steptoe arrived at Fort Vancouver in the newly created Washington Territory along with Colonel George Wright, the senior officer, in the midst of what historian Kurt R. Nelson calls the “Great Outbreak,” a rash of conflicts between the late 1840s and the late 1850s with various tribes from southern Oregon (the Rogue River War) through central Washington (the Yakama War) and eastward, including the Whitman Massacre at Wailatpu, near present-day Walla Walla, which occurred in November 1847.

On his way with Wright to build forts at Walla Walla in late March 1856, Steptoe and his forces participated in the Battle of the Cascades, also known as “The Cascades Massacre,” where he recommended young Lieutenant Philip Sheridan, an 1853 graduate of West Point, for his action against combined forces of the Cascade and Yakama Indians. At least 17 settlers in the Cascade community lost their lives. In a letter to his father from Fort Dalles dated August 22, 1856, Steptoe writes, “I have encountered no stirring life: The Indians in the South all wanted peace & it was granted to them.” “You would be amused,” he continues, “if you could see my household & general arrangements—very much like those of an emigrant (except that there are no Females).” In addition to three horses and a wagon, his entourage consisted of “one black boy, one little Indian boy (whom I bought out of slavery & who is a most promising servant by the way), a cow” and a dozen chickens. Whether the young African American was a slave is unknown.

A proclamation dated August 21, Colonel Steptoe tersely asserted the US military’s policy in the western territories: “No emigrant or other white person, except the Hudson’s Bay Company, or persons having ceded rights from the Indians, will be permitted to settle or remain in the Indian country or on land not settled or not confirmed by the Senate and approved by the President of the United States.” In this document Steptoe was expressly carrying out the orders of General John E. Wool, commander of the Department of the Pacific and nemesis of Governor Isaac Ingalls Stevens. Added
to the proclamation was a paragraph that might at least somewhat have mollified the pro-development governor: “These orders are not, however, to apply to miners engaged in collecting gold at the Colville mines.”

In a letter addressed to Stevens and dated February 11, 1856, General Wool indicated he intended to prosecute the war against the Indians “with all vigor, promptness, and efficiency” with his additional forces, “provided the extermination of the Indians, which I do not approve of, is not determined on, and savage war pursued, and volunteers withdrawn from the Walla Walla country.” Wool’s provisions, particularly the one regarding withdrawal of the volunteer, did not sit well with Stevens. The general informed the governor at the end of the letter that he had directed Colonel Wright to “take the Walla Walla country at the earliest moment practicable,” and to “give protection to the Cayuses from private war prevented, and volunteers not six months after his involvement in the Battle of the Little Bighorn, he had indeed not married and questioned his aptitude for a military career, despite his West Point education and 20 years of distinguished active duty, mostly in the field. Significantly, he did not mention having suffered a mild stroke in October 1857.

In January 1858, Major William W. Mackall, assistant adjutant general of the army’s Department of the Pacific, informed Steptoe that Mormons had been arming Indians who were likely headed north. Steptoe initially considered sending forces toward Fort Boise, as the so-called Utah War had commenced in spring 1857. For various reasons, including a petition for protection sent by gold miners in the Colville region north of present-day Spokane, the seizure of 13 head of livestock by the Palouse Indians from the Fort Walla Walla vicinity, and the murder of two miners near present-day Colville, he supported General Wool’s decision to close Indian lands in the Walla vicinity, and the murder of two miners near present-day Colville, sent out Troops who attacked them briskly & rescued the Governor. He did not elaborate, any more than he did in a letter he wrote to his wife some 20 years earlier, when he mentioned being wounded in an engagement against the Seminoles. The next day, he reported, there was some “skirmishing around my camp,” but they were “now all quiet & begging for peace.”

In a letter to Adjutant General Cooper, dated November 1, 1856, Steptoe began, “This Post is now, no doubt, permanently established, for there is probably not one other in this district that which will in my judgment we are reduced to the necessity of waging a vigorous war, striking the Cayuses at the Grande Ronde, and [Yakama leader] Kam-tah-kun wherever he may be found. The assault on Governor Stevens’s wagon train as he left the council may well have prompted Steptoe’s apparent change of heart, but as indicated above, 1857 offered a hiatus in hostilities that included the Battle of Grande Ronde in mid-July 1856, when Colonel B. E. Shaw and his Oregon volunteers killed at least 60 members of the Walla Walla, Cayuse, and Umatilla tribes—mostly women and children.

Col. Steptoe’s letters home to Virginia over the decades were not very self-revealing, but those extant from spring 1857, particularly to his sister Nannie, reflected on a severe winter, suffering from catarrh, and feelings of having wasted his life in various ways. He lamented not having married and questioned his aptitude for a military career, despite his West Point education and 20 years of distinguished active duty, mostly in the field. Significantly, he did not mention having suffered a mild stroke in October 1857.

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By Peter Donahue

EVELYN MILLER HARTWICH:
"GRANDMOTHER OF WASHINGTON POETS"

P oetry thrives in Washington today. The Poetry Out Loud program is flourishing in our high schools. The Washington State Poet Laureate designation, begun in 2007, is a great success. From Carolyn Kizer and Richard Hugo to David Wagner and Tess Gallagher, we proudly tout our legendary poets past and present. We are home to Poetry Northwest, one of the great poetry journals, and two Pulitzer Prize-winning publishers, Copper Canyon Press and Wave Books. We boast one of the few bookstores dedicated exclusively to poetry, Open Books, and poetry readings abound.

Yet, the poetry scene here has not always been so vibrant. For the first half of the 20th century, a handful of poets kept the poetry fires burning. These dedicated few were mostly women, organizing writing clubs, editing journals, teaching classes, giving lectures, publishing their own poems, and promoting poetry at every turn. Among the most determined and hardworking of these was Ethelyn Miller Hartwich (1884–1970).

Hartwich grew up in South Dakota, and in 1927 helped found the South Dakota Poetry Society, which serves the state to this day. In 1932 she and her husband, Homer, moved to Tacoma. Soon after, through a program sponsored by the Association of University Women, she began teaching college-level poetry writing classes to women who could not otherwise afford them. Her students in the program eventually formed the Tacoma Poets’ Corner, a group dedicated to sharing and publishing one another’s work. At the same time, Hartwich oversaw the College of Puget Sounds chapter of the American College Book Club, which encouraged the literary efforts of students through writing contests and publishing opportunities.

In 1937, Hartwich inaugurated the Washington Verse column in the Tacoma News Tribune, which published poems submitted from across the state. In 1941 she edited an anthology of poems called from her column called In Valiant Quest. In his foreword to the anthology, University of Washington English professor Lawrence Zillman notes that “these do not pretend to be great poems; they are, whether they pretend to be or not, consistently good poems.” In other words, they are written by ordinary Washingtonians. And with titles such as “Ode to the Narrows Bridge,” “The Brooms at Steilacoom,” and “Ships in Lake Union,” many have a focus on the particulars of place.

In 1934, Hartwich founded the Washington State Poetry Foundation. Three years later, the organization published Washington State Poetry, a sizeable anthology that Hartwich compiled from open submissions as well as previously published poems, including works by three of the state’s best-known early poets: Ella Higginson, Mary J. Emslieborn, and Audrey Wurdemann. Hartwich was proud that the poems in the volume represented 35 communities from across the state, from Neah Bay to Walla Walla. In her introduction, she makes the point that poetic expression in Washington is “neither archaic or extremely modern” but instead offers “a simplicity which is the result of profound experience.”

The poems in Washington State Poetry mostly follow traditional poetic forms using standard rhyme schemes. Hartwich’s preference for such poems is evident not only in her own poetry but also in her teaching assignments. In one from 1942, she instructed her students to write “1. One poem in trochaic meter, 8 lines, not too long, a-b-a-b, all fem. 2. The same with alternate masculine and feminine endings.” In today’s free verse era, such an assignment would be unthinkable. In the mid 20th century, the contest between formal and looser poetic forms still raged, and more innovative sensibilities had yet to fully reach the remote Northwest. Nonetheless, despite favoring formal verse, Hartwich could hardly be considered a poetry highbrow. She called herself a “teapot poet,” one who wrote heartfelt but well-mannered poems, and even gave a talk once on the “Place of Minor Poets,” among whom she counted herself.

Hartwich was also a member of the Seattle Branch of the National League of American Pen Women. According to its newsletter, The Whirling Swan, which Hartwich edited, the Seattle Branch welcomed “women who do professional, paid-for work in writing, lectures, art, musical composition, radio, or handcrafts,” and believed that “the Pacific Northwest has a creative base which has barely been tapped.” The Seattle Branch was also remarkably active, especially in Poetry Department, for which Hartwich served as chair. Other notable members included poet Helen Maring, who founded the Seattle Poetry Club in 1926 and served as editor of its quarterly journal, Muse and Mirror, and poet Pearl Logan Woodbridge, who gave regular talks on modern poetry and was an officer in the Seattle Verse Writers Club and the League of Western Writers.

For her many memberships, Hartwich, Maring, and Woodbridge were considered “clubwomen,” an appellation that minimizes the impassioned yet professional approach they took toward poetry. Moreover, in addition to her literary endeavors, Hartwich was a social activist. She served on the Washington State Committee for Academic Freedom, formed in 1941, to counter the state’s notorious Interim Committee on Un-American Activities (Cardwell Committee) in its attacks on university professors. In South Dakota she had been a suffragist and, during the state’s enactment of voting rights for women in 1916, and in Washington, as a member of the League of Women Voters, she proudly never missed an election.

It was her literary efforts, though, that earned her the most recognition. When she was editing and organizing, she was writing and publishing her own poems, including a number of widely read pieces about Northwest pioneers, such as the epic “Jason Lee and the Oregon Country.” Among her popular poems, including the popular “Seattle Rose,” were made into songs. In acknowledgment her achievements late in her life, The Seattle Times dubbed Hartwich “the grandmother of Washington State poets.” While the moniker is not the most illustrious, it may be fitting for a woman who, with an old-fashioned love of poetry, committed herself so thoroughly to nurturing poets and promoting poetry in Washington.

Interested in learning more about the topics covered in this issue? The sources listed here will get you started.

Pacific Northwest History Conference Slated for October

“Hidden Histories, Diverse Publics,” is the theme of the 66th Pacific Northwest History Conference, coming up October 12–14 at Hotel RL, Red Lion at the Park, in Spokane. Join the Northwest history community for sessions that tell the forgotten stories of well-known histories and offer new interpretations of events. This conference will include historians, archivists, and community members. More information will be available online starting August 1, 2017, at WashingtonHistory.org/support/hon��/ pnwhc/. Meanwhile, for more information, contact Susan Rohrer at 509-586-2166 or susan.rohrer@wsu.edu.


Pacific Northwest: Expand your experience in Spokane by taking urban history walking tours and working with archivists, librarians, and curators at local research facilities and gallery locations. Conference details and registration will be available online starting August 1, 2017, at WashingtonHistory.org/support/hon��/ pnwhc/...
The view to the river is the book’s principal chapter, as it brings together Palmer’s photography with sprightly paragraphs identifying the main characteristics of the watercourse. The reviewer counted 70 of these illustrated thumbnail sketches. Admireable as that may be, keep in mind that this tome is not a comprehensive look at Oregon’s rivers. In fact, there are more than three times 70 countable streams in Oregon. Some rivers—the Umpqua, Rogue, Willamette, Columbia, Snake, and Deschutes—get preferential treatment with multiple photographs. It is seeing and learning about the little-known rivers of Oregon, however, that makes this book so valuable. The Willamette and Chetco Rivers, for example, are the wildest major river on the Pacific Coast south of the Olympic Peninsula. Did you know there is a North Fork of the Middle Fork of the Willamette River? Oregon’s McKenzie River flows 502 cubic feet per second yet, it suddenly disappears down underground lava tubes for three miles before resurfacing. The Nehalem is the river most commonly associated with Oregon’s coast, yet the Coquille River actually has the greatest volume of flow.Ó

It seems odd that Pacific Northwest history lacks a comprehensive biography of Ezra Meeker (1830–1928). As Oregon Trail pioneer, farmer, author, civic promoter, and town builder, Meeker has cast a long shadow on Washington history. His personal papers are in the library of the Washington State Historical Society, and there is abundant newspaper coverage of his many activities, so a biography is seemingly possible. To perform the task of writing a full biography, I nominate Dennis M. Larsen of Olympia, a retired Yelm High School history teacher who has already written books on three episodes central to understanding the ambivalent life of Ezra Meeker. Larsen’s latest book is Hop King: Ezra Meeker’s Boom Years (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2016, 268 pp., $26.95 paperback). The title alludes to the fact that during his long life of 98 years Meeker achieved great financial success and also suffered significant losses in the boom and bust economy of Washington Territory.

Meeker’s road to riches began in 1867 when he planted his first two acres of hops. The hop is a perennial vine in the hemp family that is green for its flowers, which are dried and almost exclusively used for brewing beer. Meeker used shoots from plants shipped from Great Britain two years earlier to an Olympia brewer who hoped to encourage Washington Territory farmers to try a new crop. Jacob Meeker gave hops a try and passed some of the cuttings to his son Ezra. The plants flourished and Meeker cleared $185 on his first crop. In subsequent decades he expanded his acreage and built a hop-drying kiln. As his yield increased, so did his business contacts. Henry Weinhard in Portland became an early customer, and by 1882 Meeker was bypassing California middlemen and selling directly to New York exchanges or to the E. Meeker and Company branch office in London. Buyers in Japan and Asia followed. Hence the nickname, “Hop King of the World.”

One of the wealthiest men in Washington Territory, Meeker felt a responsibility to be a good citizen. Larsen points out that he served as postmaster for Puyalup, established a library for the town, urged the creation of a local school system, and began a founding trustee of Puylalup Water and Light Company. As his bank of hop growers expanded to over 100 by 1900, he hired hundreds of pickers, many of them Native Americans and Chinese immigrants. Beyond Puylulp, Meeker wrote for a time as the agricultural editor of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. In 1870 he published a book on the economic potential of Washington Territory, an 80-page pamphlet that was distributed free by the Northern Pacific Railway. A decade later he wrote a book, Hop Culture in the United States. Soon many other farmers were growing hops in Washington Territory.

Alas, hops farming giveth and it taketh away. Meeker’s road to financial disaster began in 1891 when an infestation of hop aphids attacked a hop shipment and destroyed it. As the West Coast intellectual community was falling apart, Meeker was one of the wealthiest men in Washington Territory. “I quit the business,” Meeker brooded, “or rather the business quit me.”

The hop blight pretty much wiped out hop farmers west of the Cascades, but the industry managed to survive and even thrive in the Yakima Valley, as it still does today. In fact, 75 percent of the US hop harvest still comes from Washington. For Ezra Meeker, the downturns of the early 1890s were a setback but not a deathblow to his ambition. Before the decade was out, Meeker laid plans to join a gold rush, a story Larsen wrote about in 2009 in Slick as a Mitten: Ezra Meeker’s Klondike Enterprise (See “Columbia Reviews” in the Summer 2010 COLUMBIA). Meeker was a businessman, entrepreneur, historian, merchant, and civic leader. There are many more stories to tell about the one-time “Hop King of the World,” but the account of his boom years is one of the best. Please, Dennis Larsen, give us more.

In 1852, Ezra Meeker drove a wagon to the Pacific Northwest on the Oregon Trail. In 1925, William Chester Clark drove a Chevrolet nicknamed Leaping Lena from West Virginia to the Pacific Northwest, and along the way he visited the Pacific Northwest. The account of his journey as a joyride down Memory Lane as they recall a time when a long day of driving logged 150 miles (or less), the number of blown out tires was too numerous to count, and highways frequently lacked pavement. Additionally, Mount Rainier National Park attracted only 160,000 tourists during an entire summer season, the Columbia River Highway was considered “in a class by itself as a scenic route,” and Olympia was “unique among the state capitals in that wild land comes up to its very doors.” An introduction and excellent annotations help make this book wonderfully memorable.
Lumber Baron and Hop King Meet at the Ferry Museum

Taco Mumma, founder of the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company, talks with bearded “Hop King” Ezra Meeker in the exhibition hall of the Ferry Museum, c. 1916. A Paywall farmer, Meeker became wealthy growing hops for use in brewing beer. The Ferry Museum was absorbed by the Washington State Historical Society in 1931. Hewitt was a lifelong supporter of the Ferry Museum, otter times writing checks for all expenses. Long-time Historical Society members will recognize several of the sculptures in the image, such as The Going Out, a sculpture of a man by Ed Davis, left, and the bust of Robert Laird McCormick (far left), which now greets Research Center visitors in the foyer at the main entrance.

—Maria Paccaudy

“Taco Mumma, founder of the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company, talks with bearded “Hop King” Ezra Meeker in the exhibition hall of the Ferry Museum, c. 1916. A Paywall farmer, Meeker became wealthy growing hops for use in brewing beer. The Ferry Museum was absorbed by the Washington State Historical Society in 1931. Hewitt was a lifelong supporter of the Ferry Museum, otter times writing checks for all expenses. Long-time Historical Society members will recognize several of the sculptures in the image, such as The Going Out, a sculpture of a man by Ed Davis, left, and the bust of Robert Laird McCormick (far left), which now greets Research Center visitors in the foyer at the main entrance.

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