INSIDE
The art, life, and legacy of Delbert J. McBride
The Washington State History Museum offers event rentals tailored to suit your specific needs. From small business meetings and luncheons to auditorium events and receptions suitable for 20 to 350 guests.

Visit us online at WashingtonHistory.org/visit/wshm/rentals or call 253-798-5891 for details.

Korea 65: The Forgotten War Remembered features a series of oral-history profiles that cast light on a forgotten conflict—one that killed millions, separated families and helped shape the Pacific Northwest.

Nearly 37,000 Americans lost their lives in a conflict over communism. History remembers it as a forgotten war. Sixty-five years later, in first-person accounts, veterans and civilians remind us why the conflict is worth remembering.

Find this and other Legacy Washington books today at sos.wa.gov/store/books.aspx or call (360) 902-4151

E-book available at amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com

PACIFIC NORTHWEST HISTORY AT ITS BEST—just a click away!

Purchase current and past issues of COLUMBIA THE MAGAZINE OF NORTHWEST HISTORY from our online store. Keyword searches help you find issues containing articles of particular interest. Visit SHOP.WASHINGTONHISTORY.ORG.
COLUMBIA
The Magazine of Northwest History
A quarterly publication of the
WASHINGTON STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME THIRTY-ONE, NUMBER FOUR

Christina Orange Dubois, Editor & Graphic Designer
Maria Pascualy, Associate Editor
Robert C. Carriker, Book Review Editor
Carolyn Simmons, Copy Editor
Michael Berry, Greg Brewis, and Joe Lewis, Proofreaders
Julia White, Membership Secretary

CONTRIBUTORS
Edward Nolan, Lynette Miller, Nancy Jackson, and Eileen Price

FOUNDEO EDITOR
John McCelland Jr. (1915–2010)

OFFICERS
President: Larry Kopp, Tacoma
Vice-President: Robert C. Carriker, Spokane
Vice-President: Ryan Pennington, Woodinville
Treasurer: Alex McGregor, Colfax
Secretary/Director: Jennifer Kilmer

EX OFFICIO TRUSTEES
by Indec, Governor

Chris Reykild, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Kim Wyman, Secretary of State

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Sally Bartle, Lakewood
Natalie Bowman, Tacoma
Enrique Cerna, Seattle
Senator Jeanne Dammeier, Tacoma
David Devine, Tacoma
Suzie Dicks, Belfair
John B. Dimmer, Tacoma
Jim Garrison, Mount Vernon
Representative Zack Hudgins, Tukwila
John C. Hughes, Grays Harbor
Senator Sam Hunt, Olympia
Krist Novoselic, Naselle
Chris Pendl, Seattle
Bill Shewal, Seattle
Representative J. T. Wilcox, Roy

The Washington State Historical Society does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its program delivery and will provide, to the best of its ability, alternate formats upon request. For assistance, contact the ADA coordinator at 253-272-3500.

COLUMBIA (ISSN: 0892-3094) is published quarterly by the Washington State Historical Society; copyright 2017. All rights reserved. Nothing may be reprinted in whole or in part without express permission from the publisher. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in America: History and Life.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: Subscribe online at www.WashingtonHistory.org/support/ or call 253-798-5894.

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS: Direct inquiries and submissions to COLUMBIA, Washington State Historical Society, 1911 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98402; 253-798-5918; or jverboort@wshs.wa.gov. All unsolicited manuscripts and photographs submitted must include postage (in stamps) and suitable packaging to ensure their safe return. Although reasonable care will be taken with materials received, no responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials, including photographs. BOOK REVIEWS: Address all review copies and related communications to Columbia Reviews Editor, 1911 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98402.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Washington State Historical Society, 1911 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98402.

PRINTED ON FSC-certified 10% PCW recycle-content paper.

The Railroad Tunnels at Hanford 2
Ordinary technology in an extraordinary setting.
By Melvin Adams

Chinuk Wawa 5
How a trade pidgin unique to the Pacific Northwest became a community heritage language.
By Robert Foxcurran

From the Collection 12
Toys across time.

The Education of Delbert J. McBride 13
A Washington artist, museum curator, and historian whose Indian roots gave him a unique perspective.
By Maria Pascualy

The Washington State Capitol’s Tiffany Lights 20
The great chandelier and firepots in the Capitol rotunda illuminate and enhance our state’s magnificent temple of democracy.
By Susan Mayer

History Album 26
A Boland Christmas.

Retrospective Reviews 28
The Northwest works of Nancy Wilson Ross.
By Peter Donahue

Notices & Additional Reading 29

Columbia Reviews 30

From the Editor 32
A fond farewell.

COVER: One of a set of indigenous textile designs by Delbert J. McBride, artist and former curator of the State Capitol Museum in Olympia. Other images in the set include medicinal plants and clan symbols. McBride broke ground with his modernist application of native designs. (Maria Pascualy photo; estate of Richard Schneider)
The Hanford Site is an obscure, strange, and fascinating place. It is a monument to the history of engineering and the innovation of the scientist, but it is also a place of anomalies—some of them bizarre—a place with a unique cultural progression, a place that reveals the logical mind of the scientist and engineer while at the same time engaging the poet. Most of all, Hanford is a place of paradox—a concrete and steel monument to the birth of the nuclear age, surrounded by wild desert terrain.

Hanford, in Benton County, Washington, was home to one of the most expensive and complex scientific projects in the world while simultaneously encompassing a large wildlife refuge containing a plethora of plant and animal species, some possibly new to science and found nowhere else in the world. It is also a cultural paradox, beginning with the use of the area by several Native American tribes for fishing and hunting over thousands of years, continuing to early farming communities, and now a mostly decommissioned artifact of the history of the atomic age—a history that culminated at Hanford in the production of atomic weapons at the end of World War II and during the nuclear arms race of the Cold War. Yet, because of the secrecy and isolation of the site, the wild terrain of several hundred square miles of desert is juxtaposed with one of the most complex and extensive radioactive waste sites in the world.

In the 24 years I worked there, I was often amazed that while Hanford contained many elements of an ordinary city, those
familiar features often served very different purposes. Like an alternate, parallel universe, there was, for instance, a laundry that washed contaminated clothes and a park-like pond that teemed with wildlife despite the radioactive sediments in its depths (see “The Atomic Pond,” by Melvin Adams, Fall 2010 COLUMBIA). To me, though, the two PUREX plant railroad tunnels are among the most fascinating anomalies.

PUREX is an acronym for the Plutonium Uranium Extraction plant. The newest of five processing plants built at Hanford, its function was to recover plutonium from irradiated fuel rods. The plant is a massive, windowless, concrete structure called a “canyon building.” The name is apt—PUREX extends 40 feet below ground, 64 feet above ground, and is equal in length to three football fields. Its walls are six feet thick for shielding purposes, and it contains 33 miles of piping.

The plant went into operation in 1956 during the height of the Cold War and ceased operation in 1988. According to the US Department of Energy (DOE), PUREX processed more than 70,000 tons of uranium fuel rods during its active life; it will ultimately be decontaminated, demolished, and have some of its debris removed. However, the fate of the PUREX railroad tunnels is likely to be quite different.

While the plant was in operation, processing vessels, concentrators, tanks, centrifuges, pumps, agitators, steam heaters, liners, tube bundles, scrubbers, demisters, dissolvers, absorbers, and other PUREX equipment would sometimes need to be replaced. These items were highly radioactive and had to be handled remotely using shielding to
protect workers. Some were bulky and heavy. All were placed on railroad cars for removal. Smaller items were placed in steel-lined boxes and also loaded on railroad cars.

To accommodate the railcars, two tunnels were built, branching off from one end of the PUREX plant. The railcars were placed in the tunnels by remote controlled, battery powered locomotives. Because each tunnel has a single, dead-end track, the order of the railcars can never be altered. The tracks have a 1 percent downgrade with a bumper at the end of the tunnel so that cars cannot roll back out of the tunnel. Each tunnel has a hollow steel door that can be filled with water for shielding purposes. The water must be drained before the door can be opened.

Completed in 1956, Tunnel 1 is full at its eight-car capacity. It is 350 feet long, 22 feet high, and 20 feet wide. Tunnel 1’s post-and-beam construction includes 12-by-14-inch creosoted Douglas-fir timbers, a sand and gravel floor, and a mineral surface roof. It is buried under eight feet of backfill.

Tunnel 2 was built with a capacity of 38 to 40 cars, but only 21 cars were placed there. At 1,600 feet, it is over four times longer than Tunnel 1, and it was constructed with three-foot-thick reinforced concrete beams and a bitumen coated, arched steel liner for a roof. It, too, is buried under eight feet of backfill.

The most serious consideration in the ultimate disposal of the PUREX tunnels and railcars is the extremely high radiation and the existence of nonradioactive hazardous waste in containers on the railcars. Altogether, over 2 million curies of radiation exist in the tunnels. The nonradioactive wastes include lead, mercury, silver, chromium, cadmium, barium, and mineral oil.

The high radiation fields associated with some of the cars are the most problematic. For instance, one of the cars in Tunnel 2 registers 500 rem per hour at two feet. Exposures of 100 rem over a short period of time are likely to cause acute radiation syndrome, possibly leading to death within weeks if left untreated. Removing and disposing of the railcars and the equipment loaded on them while protecting the workers involved would be tremendously expensive.

On May 9, 2017, an emergency was declared at the Hanford Site at 8:26 in the morning when routine surveillance revealed that a 20-foot-long section of Tunnel 1 had collapsed. The emergency resulted in access to the site being suspended. Employees at work were ordered to stay in place, and ventilation systems were shut down as a precaution in case the collapse resulted in airborne contamination. By 1:35 in the afternoon, employees near the tunnel area were told to go home early because no airborne release had been detected.

Work started the next day to fill the breach with truckloads of a sand and soil mixture. It took 53 truckloads to do the job. Subsequently, an industrial strength plastic tarp was placed over the tunnel and anchored in place. DOE appears to have handled the emergency and the subsequent corrective actions in an exemplary manner.

The permanent solution for the tunnels will probably be to grout the cars and equipment in place in the tunnels and build a permanent isolation barrier over them. This alternative avoids exposing workers to risk and isolates the tunnels from the environment without moving them to another site that would require similar isolation. The collapse in Tunnel 1 is speeding up the decision-making process on the disposition of both tunnels, but details have not yet been released.

Among the things at Hanford that exist nowhere else in the world, the pair of PUREX railroad tunnels are undoubtedly one of the most interesting to ponder.

Melvin Adams worked at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation as an engineer and manager for 24 years. He is a published poet and author. His most recent work is *Atomic Geography: A Personal History of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation* (Washington State University Press, 2016).
During the 19th century, Chinuk Wawa, or Chinook Jargon, developed in the Pacific Northwest as a regional pidgin language. Like other such contact languages, it evolved naturally to bridge Indian and European languages for an interim period during the initial establishment of trade relations. Chinook Jargon has survived, however, unlike earlier trade pidgins that developed along the eastern shores of North America.

Native American groups along the coasts and riverbanks of the Pacific Northwest developed an active regional commerce long before any Euro-Americans arrived. Trading networks extended along a coastal region covering over 1,000 miles of shoreline—connected by ocean-going canoes—as well as hundreds of miles inland up the Columbia-Snake River system. In the late 18th century, outsiders entered this network of trading relationships, creating new opportunities for certain tribes.

The origins of the Chinook Jargon are found in the maritime trade that developed in sea otter pelts during the 1780s, following Captain Cook’s third and final voyage. Though the Russians had earlier initiated the trade through overland channels leading to northern China, British sailors and merchants established a direct maritime trade route for this highly valued luxury item between Canton, in southern China, and the Pacific Northwest.

The center for the sea otter trade in the Pacific Northwest was originally in Nootka Sound, on the west side of Vancouver Island. While the British and Spanish faced off in the early 1790s, the Americans soon supplanted both as the trade spread out along the coast, south past the mouth of the Columbia and north of Vancouver Island into Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands) and Russian America. In the wake of the Revolutionary War, American merchants had been forced to seek new trading opportunities outside the British Empire.

Soon a reduction in the use of intermediaries set in along the North American Pacific coast, as ships originating from the East Coast, especially Boston, entered into direct trade with the tribes scattered along the West Coast. Similarly, as time went on, the tribes of Nootka Sound and the lower Columbia were unsuccessful in their efforts to prevent penetration into the interior of the continent by shore-based Euro-American operations that increasingly targeted beaver and other furs.

As the trade shifted southward, relations intensified on-shore, with the Chinookan-derived vocabulary of the lower Columbia displacing many words of Nootkan origin.

The American explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark arrived at the mouth of the Columbia by an overland route established by the Hudson’s Bay Company in the winter of 1824–25, Fort Vancouver, with its shipping, manufacturing, and farming operations, became the largest metropolitan complex on the West Coast.
During their four-month stay over the winter of 1805–06, members of Lewis and Clark’s Corps of Discovery heard a jumbled mix of words from multiple languages. This included words from the local Chinook language and the Nootka Jargon, introduced from well up the coast, which also included a few dozen English words derived from maritime contacts. Over time, seasonal visits by ships were complemented by a growing land-based network of outposts at strategic points along the Columbia River and its tributaries, away from the treacherous coastline. Then, over the first several decades of the 19th century, a complex linguistic dynamic began to develop on the lower Columbia.

The primary Euro-American language in use also changed during these early years. Among the first wave of newcomers who came to reside in the Pacific Northwest after 1811, French was the principal European language, as it had been throughout the interior of the North American continent, regardless of which flag might have been flapping in the breeze nearby. However, the pervasive Native American–French bilingualism that had bridged the continent during the 18th and early 19th century never fully developed along the lower Columbia where the fur trade community came to be based. When the first permanent outpost was established at the mouth of the Columbia in 1811, an early form of this jargon was already in use. A local jargon, or “broken Chinook,” accumulated around the imported core of Nootka Jargon. Soon, many of these words, especially those derived from English, became supplanted by French words.

Through the sequence of business acquisitions and mergers, there was significant continuity in core personnel between the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) and its New York and Montreal-based predecessors in the Pacific Northwest—the American Fur Company and the North West Company. All three operated linguistically at three different levels. English served as the written language and was used by a small number of men, primarily among the officers, while the spoken language among almost all of the employees, and their offspring, was French. French was the language spoken by the officers when addressing their men or conversing with their own métis wives and children. Then there was the developing local pidgin, eventually evolving into the Chinook Jargon, which was spoken by indigenous groups, with native wives originating from local bands, and with and between the mixed-blood children.

One other ethnic component of this workforce also came to rely on Chinook Jargon—the Hawaiians. During the late 18th century, the recently united Hawaiian Islands developed into a mid-Pacific entrepôt. Except for the Spanish, virtually all European and American ships venturing into the northern Pacific stopped in the Hawaiian Islands to replenish supplies and crews, which included hiring laborers destined for shore establishments in the Pacific Northwest.

Individual employees of the Montreal-based North West Company, combined with those of the HBC who followed, were usually comfortable with one or more indigenous languages, as well as the language of Native American wives and in-laws. These were often one of the Sahaptian or Salishan languages within the Pacific Northwest; for those originating on the far side of the Rocky Mountains, it was Iroquois, Cree, Ojibwe, or another Algonquian language. The Chinookan languages were apparently a different matter altogether. Even though women of Chinookan origins constituted the largest component of Native American wives of Canadian employees of the North West and Hudson’s Bay Companies inhabiting the villages co-located at Forts George (Astoria) and Vancouver, few of their husbands ever penetrated the

*In their book Songs upon the Rivers, authors Foxcurran-Bouchard-Malette discuss the shifting usage over time of the French terms Canadien and Métis: Into the 19th century, Canadien had broader usage that embraced mixed Indian–white descendants. Multiple terms and identities included maternal tribal lineage as this human network extended across the continent to the Pacific. For the mixed ancestry distinction, the term boï-brulé was often used, along with various pronunciations of the French word métis. After the mid-19th century, the modern “Canadian” identity gradually emerged, including English-speaking residents of British North America. Consequently, over the years, ethnic distinctions were fluid and overlapping. Today, people are increasingly open to identifying themselves as multietnic or bicultural, especially among those numerous descendants of the transcontinental Métis who ended up in what is now the United States, whether or not they are tribal members.
complexities of their native tongue. A regional pidgin heavily seeded with Chinookan vocabulary thus developed, enhanced by a considerable infusion of French words.

The dramatic demographic decline among the lower and middle Chinookan-speaking population in the several years preceding 1834 also affected the local mix of languages. Estimates by anthropologist Robert T. Boyd place the fatality rate among the native population at around 90 percent during the early 1830s alone, caused by a sequence of epidemics culminating with an outbreak of malaria on the lower Columbia in 1830. In *Making Wawa: The Genesis of Chinook Jargon* (2008), George Lang indicates, “By the 1830s Lower Chinook was no longer in any way an effective vehicle of communication in fur trade society . . . the first generation of Wawa or Chinook Jargon speakers emerged from . . . the children of these men and their wives . . . around 1820.”

Still, there was one important ingredient provided by the seminal Nootka Jargon that is cited by Henry Zenk and Tony Johnson in the chapter they contributed to *Chinookan Peoples of the Lower Columbia* (2013). Even though the jargon of several hundred words was heavily laden with words derived from Chinookan nouns, pronouns, and particles, few are actually derived from Chinookan verbs. This is due to the evolving jargon having, in the interim, massively simplified its structure by dropping the complex Chinookan verb system and incorporating two all-purpose auxiliary verbs from the Nootka Jargon.

The early American and British seafarers contributed Nootkan-derived auxiliaries *mamuk-* (“make,” “do,” “cause to be”) and *cagu-* (“become,” “get to be”), which Chinook Wawa speakers learned to use in place of the Chinookan inflected auxiliary verb -x (“make,” “do,” “become”). Today, *cagu* is rendered “chaku” and *mamuk* as “munk” on the Grand Ronde Reservation. Consequently, given the demographic and linguistic meltdown along the lower Columbia, instead of bilingualism, the default option for these fur trade families was a dependency on an evolving trade jargon.

Other coastal populations also contributed to the Chinook Jargon’s vocabulary. Among these were the coastal Salish of Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor, especially Lower Chehalis, while usage expanded up the Salish Sea from Puget Sound to the Strait of Georgia and back to Vancouver Island. Over time, use of the jargon followed the trade networks and facilities of the Hudson’s Bay Company.
inland—through the territory of the upper Chinookan speakers in the Columbia Gorge, continuing into the country of Sahaptin and Interior Salishan speakers on the Columbia Plateau as well as the earliest métis settlements along the middle Willamette River. Chinook Jargon also penetrated the interior of what is now British Columbia, up the Okanagan River and Lake, then north into the watershed of a major tributary of the Fraser—the Thompson River.

By the time American wagons began to trickle in along the overland route in 1841 to join the well-established Canadien and métis settler families, the pidgin was widespread and had acquired its own internal logic. English speakers in the Willamette valley did not outnumber the French speakers until the end of 1843. Subsequently, a second wave of English words began to seep into the Chinook Jargon.

After the bloody Rogue River Indian War of 1855–56 in the southwestern corner of Oregon Territory, the Chinook Jargon also became the default language of the fragmented tribal survivors gathered on the reservation established along the western edge of the Willamette valley at Grand Ronde, some 30 miles west of the future state capitol of Salem. The Grand Ronde Indian Reservation included forcibly relocated people speaking a half dozen unrelated Native American languages, along with the voluntary addition of some of the local métis families.

Around the middle of the 19th century, the three coastal language groups—Chinookan, Salishan, and Wakashan (which includes Nootkan)—accounted for roughly three-quarters of the pidgin’s vocabulary, while French and English contributed the remaining 20 to 30 percent, depending upon individual users.

When Washington’s first territorial governor, Isaac I. Stevens, attempted to remove Native Americans from their homelands in 1855, the Chinook, along with the Cowlitz and several other tribes in the southwestern corner of the newly minted territory, refused to leave. Unwilling to relocate, and consequently unrecognized by the federal government, many Chinook families stayed along the lower Columbia. Many of the mixed-blood families stayed on as well. In their book, The Chinook Indians, historians Robert Ruby and John Brown cite a traveler passing through the village of Chinookville on the north shore of the estuary in the 1860s:

When the hundred French-Canadians, half-breds, and intermarried descendents of all finished processing their daily catches at that place, they “frolicked” at day’s end, punctuating the air
with sounds of a patois, a French and Indian jargon interlarded with some Scottish and English. They canoed fresh or dried and salted salmon in half-barrels to Astoria, selling them for six dollars per hundred pounds in the market place.

The Canadien and métis community’s migration up the Willamette valley beginning in the late 1820s included many Chinook and half Chinook wives and children. Later, there was an out-migration of these increasingly métis families south into the Umpqua country, west onto the Grand Ronde Reservation, and eastward into the middle Columbia Basin. There was also a later infusion of a few Chinookan-speaking Clatsop families to the Grand Ronde Reservation in 1875.

Well into the 20th century, Native Americans and métis continued to constitute a major component of the seasonal workforce for farms, ranches, lumber camps, and in towns and fisheries. During this latter phase of economic assimilation, mobility, and ethnic mixing, use of Chinook Jargon actually increased throughout the region, for both intertribal and interethnic communications.

P
idgins, like languages, are not static. George Lang developed a table (see table below) that captures the relative proportion of Chinook Jargon words derived from its multiple language sources, based on a sampling of three glossaries compiled in three different years: 1841, 1863, and 1894. The total number of words included in the glossaries increased over time as usage spread over a broader region and the speakers reflected the altered demographics associated with the new economy. Over this 53-year period, Nootkan continued its decline, while words of Chinookan origin increased proportionately with the word count and then declined slightly in terms of absolute numbers through the latter part of the century.

It is hardly surprising that English vocabulary tended to displace words from indigenous languages by the latter part of the 19th century. As for words of French origin, their percentage of the lexicon did not fluctuate widely over this period, increasing roughly in proportion with the expanded use of the vocabulary over the course of the century.

A few examples are in order of modern-day Pacific Northwest place names and other well-known proper nouns derived from the Chinook Jargon lexicon that are of Native American origin. Many of these are sprinkled around western Washington. Highly visible examples include Mount Pilchuck (“red water”) and the Skookumchuck River (“strong or powerful water”), and Tukwila (“hazelnut”). Alki Point is a neighborhood in West Seattle; alki meant “the future,” “before long,” or “by-and-by.” Then there are recent developments in the outer suburbs east of Seattle, such as Sahalee (or Sahalie)—derived from the word for “sky,” “heaven,” “uppermost,” “top,” “over,” “high”—of PGA golf tournament fame, or the Klal Kits (“outdoors,” “exterior,” “out”) neighborhood of nearby Issaquah.

### Evolution of the Chinook Jargon Lexicon*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>1841</th>
<th>1863</th>
<th>1894</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nootkan</td>
<td>18 (7%)</td>
<td>24 (5%)</td>
<td>23 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinookan</td>
<td>111 (44%)</td>
<td>221 (45%)</td>
<td>198 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>34 (13%)</td>
<td>94 (19%)</td>
<td>158 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>41 (16%)</td>
<td>67 (13%)</td>
<td>570 (52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Salishan)</td>
<td>48 (19%)</td>
<td>79 (16%)</td>
<td>138 (12%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* NOTE: wide variance by locale and over time. From Making Wawa: The Genesis of Chinook Jargon, by George Lang, with permission.
**A Chinook Jargon Sampler of French-Derived Words**

**WAWA VOCABULARY** words derived from French-speaking Canadians offer insights into the dynamics of demographic and linguistic mixing in the Pacific Northwest during the second quarter of the 19th century. The two principal Chinookan language translators of Euro-American origins were Gabriel Franchère and Michel Laframboise. John Jacob Astor hired them in Montreal in 1810, and they arrived at Fort Astoria on the Tonkin in 1811. When the North West Company took over Astor’s Pacific Fur Company during the War of 1812, Franchère returned to Montreal. Michel Laframboise took his place as interpreter in 1814. It is doubtful that either man ever really mastered Chinookan; they probably relied on some mixture of the actual language and early broken Chinook pidgin.

The French-origin subset of the Chinook Jargon vocabulary is not always obvious because it was first filtered through the pronunciation of Chinookan and Coastal Salishan speakers. For example, an R was either dropped completely or became an L, and a B or F became a P. Then there were multiple anglicized spellings superimposed on these altered pronunciations. Hence, the settlement founded by “Pierre” Charles, an Abenaki Indian from Quebec, ended up on the modern-day Washington map as Pe Ell, and La Bouche became La Push, a town situated at the mouth of the Quillayute River on the Olympic Peninsula.

To provide readers with a feeling for the idiom, a few terms from the core vocabulary are included here, making heavy use of Chinook Wawa, a dictionary authored in 2010 by former Cowlitz tribal chairman Roy I. Rochon Wilson. To start with, there is the word transcribed variably as marci, masi, masse, or masha, derived from merci for “thanks.” Lametsin was the word for “medicine” or “doctor”; sivash, from the French sauvage, for “Native American.” Lamontai meant “mountains” in general and, more specifically, the region covered today by western Montana and the bordering regions of Idaho and British Columbia.

One particularly interesting term is the Chinook Jargon adoption of the French word droit, for “right,” as in la main droite, for “right hand”; or “straight,” as in tout droit. This provides a good example of the broader usage and meaning these words took on within the limited vocabulary of a developing pidgin. This Chinook Jargon word was later written phonetically by transcribers variously as dret, drait, delate, and dilit, with the latter two spellings prevailing over time. As in Pe Ell, derived from Pierre, mentioned above, the L sound tended to replace the close but alien R sound (if it was not dropped altogether, as in masi). In addition to “right,” delate and its cohorts were used to mean “okay,” “direct,” “correct,” “truthful,” “straight,” “definitely,” “sincerely,” “sure,” “accurate,” “very,” and to provide emphasis. It was generally used to strengthen an idea. Klatawa delate meant “go straight”; delate wawa, “straight talk” or “promise”; wake delate, “not right” or “imperfect”; delate hyas klashe, “magnificent” or “awe-inspiring”; delate kumtux, “to know with certainty”; delate naika sick tumtum, “I am very sorry”; and delate yaka kumtux, “an expert.”

**IN CHINOOK** Jargon, Euro-American outsiders were divided into four categories. All Americans were called “Bostons,” as a significant share of those participating in the maritime trade had been from that city, while the Canadiens had long ago come to call all English-speaking colonists to their south, Bastonnais. The British were called “King George (or Chauch).” Canadiens, métis, and other French speakers, because they formed a larger group, retained the original term for all outsiders, pahsiooks, which meant cloth-men or men wearing cloth. All other foreigners were called “Dutchman.”

Much of the French-derived vocabulary falls into the following categories: body parts (closely associated with sign language and gesturing); tools and utensils of metal fabrication that were newly introduced as trade goods; domesticated animals brought into the region for the first time, as well as a few of those living in the wild; new foods with associated utensils and furnishings; and words tied to the Catholic religion, as the Catholic missionaries from Quebec immediately adopted the Chinook Jargon for the

Other words captured in proper nouns are the University of Washington’s Tyee (“chief,” “leader,” “superior,” “president”) yearbook and Saltchuk (“saltwater,” “ocean”), an amalgam of water transportation and distribution companies based in Seattle. Similarly, there are dozens of Chinook Jargon-derived place names scattered throughout British Columbia. Also of note is the University of Idaho and Northwest’s “tonkin,” derived from the core vocabulary are included here, making heavy use of its creolized form, to be spoken among members of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of northwestern Oregon; this nativized version is called Chinuk Wawa.

Linguist Peter Bakker summarizes in a recent book review the unique aspects of “Chinook pidgin” and how Chinuk Wawa became the “vernacular of interethnic communication . . .” on the Grand Ronde Reservation. In that review, published in the Fall 2015 issue of the Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages, Bakker recommends both George Lang’s Making Wawa (University of British Columbia Press, 2008) and Chinuk Wawa: As Our Elders Teach Us to Speak It (Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, 2011) and comments:

CW [Chinuk Wawa] is so important because it was once perhaps the most widely spoken pidgin in the world . . . Furthermore, CW is one of very few reasonably well-documented pidgins that creolized and became the primary language for a
purpose of propagating their faith.

Beginning with body parts, the jargon word lemai or lamah is derived from the French la main, for “hand.” The term for “left hand” was cultus lamah, cultus meaning “bad.” However, in typical jargon fashion, the word lamah was used in a broader sense, meaning also “arm,” “finger,” “handle,” or “sleeve.” The same was true of the Chinook jargon word for “head,” which was sometimes written as latet, from the French la tête. This also meant “brains,” “sense,” or “intellect.”

The largest single category of French terms that filtered into the pidgin included metal tools and practical trade articles. Those involving a more intensive approach to land use include lahash, from la hache, for “ax” or “hatchet”; lasee, from la scié, for “saw”; lapell, from la pelle, for “shovel”; and la shalloo, from la charrue, for “plow.” Tools included lesiso, from les ciseaux, for “scissors”; lematto, from le marteur, for “hammer”; lapeosh, for “hoe”; and laleeem, from la lime, for “file.” Then there is lakaset, for “box” or “trunk”; lekal, for “key”; lebal, for “bullet”; lauku, from le clou, for “nail”; and laplash moola for “saw mill,” from la planche for “board” and moulin for “mill.”

New words came into the lexicon for food and associated livestock, along with the requisite beasts of burden used for transportation. The word lapool was used for “chicken”; lemel, for “mule”; and lemooto, from the French le mouton, for “sheep.” Beasts of the wilder sort included lelu, from le loup, for “wolf,” and shavash or sivash kosho, meaning “Indian pig” (seal). Among the beasts of the wilder sort included lelu, from le loup, for “wolf,” and shavash or sivash kosho, meaning “Indian pig” (seal). For transportation the word lapool was used for “chicken”; lemel, for “mule”; and lemooto, from the French le mouton, for “sheep.”

A number of speakers. . . . Before English took over, CW was the main interethnic language of the reservation, effectively replacing and replacing the indigenous languages. . . .

It is noteworthy that the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde attribute an important role in the generation and preservation of the Chinook Jargon to the Canadiens and their Native American wives and métis descendants. To quote from their book, Chinuk Wawa, the language was already well-established as a regional lingua franca when Grand Ronde Reservation was founded in 1856. Indeed it was already established as a language of family life, especially among Canadian French-speaking fur company employees who had married local Indian women. Many of these so-called voyagers were part-Native to begin with, the result of “their centuries-old practice of intermarriage with Indian women and Métis. A number of families so founded made their way to Grand Ronde, where they became part of the historical reservation community.

Over the last four decades, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde have worked to preserve the jargon, or Wawa, ultimately designating it as their community heritage language. In the 1970s, Grand Ronde elders who had grown up speaking the language began teaching Chinuk Wawa classes, and a formal language program for children was established during the 1990s. The tribe’s immersion language program is now producing a new generation of native speakers.
Each era in history is reflected in popular toys of the time. For girls, dolls and doll houses seem to have predominated for generations. For boys, more “active” toys were advertised—trains, planes, automobiles, and chemistry, construction, and electrical sets. Ives Toy Manufacturing Company, a major US toy maker between 1910 and the mid-1920s, specialized in toy trains. This 1911 catalog notes, “Just as playing with wooden blocks is laying the foundation by which later to solve the problems of Euclid—so the Ives Miniature Railway, though extremely simple, teaches the fundamentals of Physics.” It continues, “Bank presidents, debutantes, college professors and other grown-ups have caught the fascination in Ives Railways bought for youngsters in their families. Invariably, the miniature railway has become an institution in the household.”

The Society’s collection of toy catalogs reflects changes in society and technology over time. The Washington State History Museum will feature an exhibit of toys from the collection—Playdates—beginning January 20, 2018. Playdates is a companion to a major traveling exhibit on toy history and the importance of play, Toytopia, which opens February 16.
In a letter he wrote to a friend in 1968, Washington State Capitol Museum curator Delbert McBride complained about the inadequate grant he had received for writing a book on Washington Indians. He railed about how even such a pittance would have made all the difference for Klee Wyk, the now-defunct art studio and gallery he had founded on the Nisqually tide flats. Klee Wyk focused on applying Native American imagery to contemporary arts and crafts. McBride, an enrolled member of the Quinault Tribe, was uniquely positioned, through his ancestry and his formal art training, to experiment with Indian iconography.
Rather than recreate traditional objects, which he felt could never compete with ethnographic pieces in museums, McBride developed Northwest Coast designs that the Klee Wyk artists then applied to cups, curtains, and cocktail tables. McBride's functional work fit the "Good Design" aesthetic that prevailed in museums and art schools during McBride's student years and then took off commercially after World War II. "Is there art in a broomstick?" asked Time magazine in 1953; "Yes, says Manhattan's Museum of Modern Art, if it is designed both for usefulness and good looks." Klee Wyk was a commercial venture, but McBride also created personal easel work that explored a hybrid modernist Indian aesthetic.

In the Klee Wyk studio, McBride, as chief designer, had his partners fabricate slab-built totems in stoneware, not wood, and assemble blankets with glass tile instead of woven wool. The clay Haida masks and mosaic killer whales Klee Wyk sold for the home and garden were won of the alternative to peace. McBride was prone to reading and spent hours with his grandmother loomed large in his memory as an adult, especially when, as a college student, he turned to the Indian side of his background. He was an enrolled member of the Quinault Tribe but also had ancestral ties through marriage to the Cowlitz, Puyallup, and Nisqually Tribes. His Indian maternal great-grandmother, Catherine McLeod Mounts, was at the signing of the Medicine Creek Treaty, and Chief Klapat Sca-da-wah and Haidi- awan of the Cowlitz Tribe were also direct ancestors. His mixed heritage included his great-great-grandfather, a Scotsman named John McLeod, who worked for the Hudson's Bay Company. His great-grandfather, Daniel Mounts, was the Indian agent and a farmer on the Nisqually Reservation. McLeod and Mounts, like many other settlers, married Indian women.

McBride's adolescence and formative years were marked by the economic crisis of the Great Depression, and the psychological insecurity of World War II. Indian identity was typically constrained and repressed. When he was four, the 1924 Snyder Act was enacted, which admitted Native Americans born in the United States to full citizenship. Yet, a report by the federal solicitor general published in 1937, when McBride was 17, found that Idaho, New Mexico, Maine, and Washington denied Indians the right to vote if they did not pay taxes.

An intellectual from childhood, McBride was prone to reading and spending time alone or accompanying his elderly grandmother, who spoke Salish and lived on an adjacent homestead. The hours spent with his grandmother loomed large in his memory as an adult, especially when, as a college student, he turned to the Indian side of his background. He was educated at DuPont School No. 7 and Lincoln High School in Tacoma, where permanent residence in Pierce County on land owned by McBride's grandmother, Catherine Mounts McAllister, land that was the future site of Klee Wyk.

The McBride home was situated on part of a 1,000-acre farm that had been home to Nisqually Indians. Red Salmon Creek, which ran through the property, had once run thick with salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. Various McAllister relatives lived in different homes on the property.

Delbert John McBride was born May 16, 1920, in Olympia, into a working-class family. According to his birth certificate, his mother, Pauline McAllister, was 30 and his father, Albert McBride, was 38 and a truck driver. The McBride family grew to include two more brothers—Malcolm and Albert Jr. They lived and worked on the Brown Farm in what is now the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. Later the family took up permanent residence in Pierce County on land owned by McBride's grandmother, Catherine Mounts McAllister, land that was the future site of Klee Wyk.

Delbert John McBride was born May 16, 1920, in Olympia, into a working-class family. According to his birth certificate, his mother, Pauline McAllister, was 30 and his father, Albert McBride, was 38 and a truck driver. The McBride family grew to include two more brothers—Malcolm and Albert Jr. They lived and worked on the Brown Farm in what is now the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. Later the family took up permanent residence in Pierce County on land owned by McBride's grandmother, Catherine Mounts McAllister, land that was the future site of Klee Wyk.

The McBride home was situated on part of a 1,000-acre farm that had been home to Nisqually Indians. Red Salmon Creek, which ran through the property, had once run thick with salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. Various McAllister relatives lived in different homes on the property.
he did well in all his subjects but excelled in art and writing. In 1938 as a high school senior he wrote a review of the Seattle Art Museum's Northwest Annual Exhibition, which illustrates his nuanced understanding of fine art:

Peggy Strong's picture has been called "clever." It is, but it is more than that. I don't know Peggy Strong, but from looking at that picture, I feel that it is by no means the best she will be able to do. I think she has a great future ahead of her. The picture satisfies me; I like the contrasts and the strong colors. Another picture, which impressed me, was the Walter Isaacs portrait. This is influenced by Cézanne and gives an impression of solidity, with very good handling of planes; its heavier coloring is in contrast to the gay feeling of Miss Strong.

That year, Peggy Strong received the award for her oil painting Mountain Merry-Go-Round while Walter Isaacs placed second for his Portrait of Miss Grey.

McBride's artwork as a young man—the pieces that have survived—include well-rendered portraits and sketches in pastel, pencil, and watercolors of family members, flowers, and landscapes. In 1938 he won an award from the National Library Students' Peace Posters contest with very different imagery—the poster consisted of a formal family portrait, complete with the family pet, all wearing gas masks. This dark vein of humor was more evident in his conversations, especially when commenting on politics or the social scene.

McBride knew about his Indian roots, but he did not consciously focus on his heritage until he was college age. He was the first in his family to earn a college degree, but limited family finances meant that his education came in fits and starts. Like many other young people, he had to earn his tuition. In 1938 he registered at the College of Puget Sound (CPS, now the University of Puget Sound), majoring in art, and completed two years. In 1940, while still at CPS, with its art faculty of one, he joined the National Youth Administration (NYA), a New Deal program that placed 16-to-25-year-olds in paid work-study positions.

The NYA assigned McBride to work with anthropologist Erna Gunther (1896–1982) at the Washington State Museum in Seattle (now the Burke Museum). Gunther specialized in the art and ethnography of the Northwest Coast, and she had a long history of championing Indian objects as art when the general public still considered carvings and baskets as curiosities, souvenirs, or art of lesser aesthetic value than Western art. In 1939 Gunther curated a revelatory Northwest Coast Indian art exhibition at the Golden Gate International Exposition that was lauded in the museum world and the press. Langdon Warner, curator of the Fogg Museum at Harvard, wrote in the introduction to the catalog:

Oriental scholars will be naively amazed to discover that Vancouver Island for instance nurtured a school of painters that produced heraldic twenty-foot pictures packed with meaning and beauty. Few of us know that for sheer imagination in the convention of natural forms and for clean-cut craftsmanship they rival our beloved Japanese color-prints.

Gunther's interest in educating the public eventually led to a radio series on Northwest Coast art and then a television show, "Museum Chat," presenting Native American art.

Gunther assigned McBride to make oversized drawings of Indian artifacts in the museum collection that would be used as classroom teaching aids. This gave McBride the opportunity to study the "real thing" firsthand while having the benefit of Gunther's instruction. Gunther also introduced him to a more rigorous approach to native culture in terms of research methodology. Around this time he turned toward his own Indian roots, perhaps inspired by being with anthropologists who saw value in Washington's first peoples. He and Gunther became lifelong friends and traveling companions.

McBride's introduction to the work of another important woman in his life, Canadian modernist oil painter Emily Carr (1871–1945), probably began...
A

fter the completion of his work-study appointment with Gunther, McBride moved to Los Angeles to study commercial art and design at the ArtCenter College of Design, a prestigious school with an international student body. ArtCenter prided itself on being run by a faculty of professionals who were leaders in their fields; Ansel Adams, one of America’s most important photographers, taught photography at ArtCenter while McBride was a student there.

McBride’s interest in commercial art was not a contradiction. Many serious artists supported themselves by doing commercial work. Salvador Dalí designed fashion covers and inside spreads for Harper’s Bazaar, and Mark Tobey worked as a fashion illustrator. ArtCenter gave McBride a solid design background, which is reflected in his strong compositions and his workmanlike approach to art. A painting or sculpture was a problem to be solved in a series of detailed drawings where line placement, color choices, and medium were all worked out. McBride left ArtCenter at the end of 1942, again without completing a degree, and moved to San Francisco. He was drafted around this time, but the army rejected him because of his poor eyesight.

San Francisco was a gay mecca in the late 1940s and 1950s. McBride returned to this city again and again over the years. He made and maintained close friendships there until his death. Although his sexuality was not an issue with his family, he kept
his personal life to himself. Much like his Indian ancestry, his homosexuality was acknowledged but not advertised. Washington had a more conservative culture than San Francisco; one of his long-time friends—noted Seattle architect Lionel "Spike" Pries—was forced to resign from his faculty post at the University of Washington after he was caught in a homosexual vice sting in Los Angeles.

Called back home by the family, McBride left San Francisco and in 1944 took classes at the University of Washington. He then spent a year bedridden with tuberculosis before returning to work. From 1946 to 1950 McBride worked in advertising. He did a long stint at Tacoma Engraving and a couple of other firms, but he kept taking art classes and exhibiting. In 1949 he exhibited two landscapes—Nisqually Flats and Country Road—at the Southwest Washington Annual Art Exhibit, sponsored by the Tacoma Art Society, at the College of Puget Sound. Sketches from this period, often done on buses or at bus stops, record the down-and-out people of Tacoma. At Cornish, in Seattle, he took classes with James E. Peck (1907–2002), a watercolorist who also ran his own advertising agency.

In 1951, McBride exhibited Killer Whales at the Pacific Gallery Artists Mid-Winter Exhibit at the Washington State History Museum. The painting is a flat abstracted rendering of a double-whale totem on the Skeena River, quite unlike his realistic landscapes in watercolor. Another painting, Abstract, appears to rearrange in an almost cubist manner eye forms and formline Northwest Coast shapes to create something new. The painting is executed in black, white, blue, and ochre—Northwest Coast colors. Abstract was exhibited at the Puyallup Fair that same year, 1951. Given the limited exhibit venues available in western Washington, the Puyallup Fair exhibit hall attracted serious artists, and the cash prize was welcome. The painting caught the eye of San Francisco art critic Alfred Frankenstein (1906–1981), a nationally known music and art critic. Frankenstein encouraged McBride to keep experimenting with native imagery. This recognition from an outsider with clout in the art world boosted McBride’s determination to work in this Indian vein.

Around this same time, McBride also started building on the family property in Nisqually and planning Klee Wyk—his Indian art business venture. He built a modest home and studio and then added other buildings—a workshop, gift shop, and gallery (see "Klee Wyk: Artists on the Nisqually Flats," by Maria Fasualy, Winter 1998–99 COLUMBIA). Klee Wyk opened officially in 1953, the year of Washington’s territorial centennial and the year McBride began a degree program at the University of Washington (UW). In 1953, Erna Gunther exhibited Klee Wyk photographs and textile designs in

FAR LEFT: Example of sketches McBride made while waiting at bus stops in Tacoma, c. 1949.

LEFT: McBride’s trips to the Skeena River region of British Columbia inspired such work as this untitled 1953 oil painting.

BELOW: McBride excelled in a variety of mediums; Salish Mother and Child, c. 1955, demonstrates his ease with clay sculpture.
Once he entered the museum field, McBride did not make art again, but he led a rich curatorial life in Spokane, and then in Olympia.

In 1955, at the age of 35, and two years into Klee Wyk, McBride graduated magna cum laude from the University of Washington with a degree in art and a teaching certificate. Klee Wyk was a success. Lucrative architectural commissions were coming in, the gift shop did a lively business in bread-and-butter items like wind chimes and pendants, and they had well-attended lectures and demonstrations in the gallery. They even started a small collection of ethnographic objects as a teaching collection. Finances, however, continued to be a sore point, especially for McBride, who hoped to make a living through his art. Despite the brisk business, the company was just surviving. It was too late to turn the situation around by the time they discovered that one of the partners had been embezzling funds.

McBride taught art in South Sound high schools during these years. He made good connections in museums and universities with his Klee Wyk lectures and exhibitions, and after a time saw another way to support himself. In 1957 he taught a summer class, “Architectural Use of Mosaic,” at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and participated in an exhibit where several of his Klee Wyk designs were purchased by the University Museum. Audrey Hawthorne, a seminal Canadian figure in the study of Northwest Coast art, purchased textiles, plates, tiles, and letterpress prints. At this same time, a New York firm expressed interest in Klee Wyk textile designs and McBride prepared a set of samples. While at the University of British Columbia, he also gave a talk on the Skeena River using photo documentation from his earlier trips. His reputation as an Indian artist and lecturer was established through his lecture circuit.

Klee Wyk continued to struggle financially and perhaps McBride’s friendships with curators led him to think that museum work might be a viable option. Moreover, the State of Washington had plans to build a highway that would eventually go through Klee Wyk’s front door, and the partners expressed a desire to move on to other work.

In 1962, just before accepting a position as art curator at the Cheney Cowles Memorial Museum in Spokane, McBride wrote to a friend: “My present work is satisfying, but I find the demands on my time and the income less than I can continue to live on. For those reasons I have decided to return to teaching or into museum work. The latter is my preference.”

In Spokane, McBride curated exhibits of German Expressionist painters and gave talks entitled “Abstract and Symbolist Painting,” in which he discussed the work of Picasso, Dalí, De Chirico, Miró, and Tanguy. He served nationally as a curator and judge on Indian art exhibitions and projects, but his work at the museum focused mostly on traditional Western art. The job satisfied him, but it kept him away from his relatives, especially his mother and aunt, who by now were quite elderly.

In 1966 he accepted a position as curator at the Washington State Capitol Museum in order to move back to the Olympia area. In June 1966, McBride wrote his friend, painter Will Barnet, that in the gallery he had hanging Edward Hopper’s Early Sunday Morning and “work by Ben Shahn, Andrew Wyeth, Lamar Dodd, and Morris Graves.” Under his influence, the State Capitol Museum...
became an important art center. In late 1966 the Washington State Department of Transportation finally bulldozed 30 feet of dirt over the site of the Klee Wyk studio as part of the construction of Interstate 5, erasing all physical evidence of its existence.

Del McBride’s design work for Klee Wyk was pan-Indian. For example, Indian people in Washington did not produce totem poles, but McBride often featured them in his personal and commercial work. He later wrote that he “personally preferred the more simple things done by Salish people, which I feel were neglected by museums which display the more spectacular pieces from B.C. and Alaska.”

In later years, as curator at the Washington State Capitol Museum, a position he held from 1966 to 1982, he had the opportunity to highlight Indian art closer to home, and he also helped usher in a renaissance in Indian art by Indian artists. These new artists wanted to relearn traditional techniques and then experiment within those forms. The pieces these new artists created, however, were meant for museum walls and living rooms, not ceremonies.

In a report written in 1971, McBride listed his activities at the State Capitol Museum, which include the employment of Indian museum interns, the development of the Archives of Northwest Indian Art, work at two correctional institutions with Indian youth providing education in crafts and traditional Indian arts, Indian carving workshops for native artists at The Evergreen State College, cattail weaving workshops, and wood carving with a master Lummi carver. Beyond this work he served as a juror on countless art exhibition panels, gave lectures at conferences and libraries, and helped researchers looking for answers about local history and art.

Klee Wyk had an unofficial 10-year life span (1951–1961), which included two years in the planning phase. The art studio disbanded in 1961, although the remaining partners continued to produce the odd object with the Klee Wyk seal. Those 10 years bracketed McBride’s high point as an artist. Once he entered the museum field, McBride did not make art again, but he led a rich curatorial life in Spokane, and then in Olympia, that was filled with accomplishments and honors.

Why did he stop creating art? In a letter to a close friend—former State Capitol Museum curator/director Clark Brott (1960–62), McBride wrote: “I must still have some kind of mental block when it comes to putting paint on canvas . . . maybe I’m still waiting for some kind of mystical illumination—another tamamous power vision such as led to a very productive decade at Klee Wyk.”

As the regional art history of Washington is cobbled together, more interest is being focused on Klee Wyk as a collective and on the personal work of Del McBride as an artist and museum curator who also had Indian roots. In the museum field today there are still very few Indian curators, and the contemporary art scene still mostly excludes native artists.

From 1961, when he moved to Spokane, until his death in 1998, McBride was a well-known, respected historian—the go-to person for all things South Sound. He traveled to research Native American art at the Museum of Man in London and the Museum für Völkerkunde in both Hamburg and Vienna. He was well-connected in the art world, and he rubbed elbows with politicians like Governor Daniel J. Evans, who named McBride to the Washington State Arts Commission board, on which he served from 1966 to 1975. He was able to retire early on a state pension in 1982 but continued curating exhibits in venues across the state. He was consulting on Remembering Medicine Creek, a Washington State History Museum exhibit on the Medicine Creek Treaty, when he suddenly fell ill and died shortly thereafter, on July 19, 1998.

Maria Pascualy was chief curator for the 1996 installation of the Great Hall of Washington History, the main exhibit in the then-new Washington State History Museum. She met Del McBride when she curated Remembering Medicine Creek. In 2011 she curated Klee Wyk: Artists on the Nisqually Flats for the History Museum. She retired this past summer after 10 years as COLUMBIA’s associate editor.
The splendid bronze chandelier and the ancient Roman style firepots are the centerpiece light fixtures decorating the great rotunda of Washington’s Legislative Building. In its striking originality and exceptional execution, the chandelier dominates the central space, and the firepots (see page 24) embellish the base of the four massive piers that support the masonry dome. Envisioned by architects Walter Robb Wilder and Harry Keith White when they designed the building, the fixtures were created by Tiffany Studios in New York. After their railroad journey from the East Coast to Olympia, they were installed in the rotunda in 1928. Ninety years later they continue to adorn the heart of the State Capitol.

The firm of Wilder and White—consisting of two talented young New York architects—was selected in 1911 to design and build Washington’s Capitol Group in Olympia. Both men had worked as draftsmen at the major New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White. The company was known for its large-scale buildings in the classical American Renaissance style, such as Rhode Island’s capitol, the predecessor and model for Washington’s Legislative Building. Wilder and White formed their own partnership in 1907. Olympia’s Capitol Group was their first project on a monumental scale.

The Legislative Building’s foundation was laid in 1922, after completion of the Temple of Justice and the Insurance Building. By 1925, as the exterior’s architectural ornaments were being carved in the spirit of ancient Rome, Wilder and White were making plans for the building’s interior decorations. A large-scale production of bronze light fixtures was part of their program, including unique designs for the principal public locations. The rotunda’s chandelier and firepots were major fixtures in this special group. With the approval of the Olympia Capitol Committee, which consisted of Governor Louis F. Hart, State Auditor C. W. Clausen, and State Land Commissioner Clark V. Savidge, the work began in 1926.

While the focus here is the light fixtures—in terms of their singular design and likely inspirations from a decorative, symbolic, and historic perspective—an examination of the way they capture and enhance the character of the building, particularly the dome and inside rotunda, is also important. Wilder and White referred to the dome as the crown and central unit of the Capitol Group and surrounding southern Puget Sound landscape. In their own words, “It combines more elements of magnificence than any other... It sets the impression of the whole... The greatest effort must be centered here for all effect beyond that of practical convenience.”
Wilder and White's dome is in the lineage of a revered Greco-Roman architectural form that since antiquity has been associated with the idea of sacred, cosmic, celestial—sometimes referred to as a “heavenly vault.” A well-preserved and famous example is ancient Rome’s Pantheon, whose innovative engineering served as a model for later, taller domes in European church design, including Michelangelo’s Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

The tall dome that originally symbolized the sacred religious edifice in Europe has come to represent the sacred civic temple in the United States, standing for individual freedom, the voice of the people, and the house of their elected officials. The tall dome dominates the landscape in which it is built. An early and iconic example is the dome of the United States Capitol, whose height was increased during the Civil War. Its tall, hemispherical form became the model for many state capitol buildings around the nation.

Wilder and White placed their dome at the heart of the Legislative Building and the capitol complex as a whole (see page 22). They incorporated the square and circle with the Greek cross, which has arms of equal length. These pure geometric forms are considered the pinnacle of architectural perfection. In the plan of the rotunda, the Greek cross in a square takes form in the large piers that set the corners of the square and carry it upward to the fourth floor, from which springs the circular wall or drum that forms the base of the dome. The cross is formed by the equal extended arms of the marble stairs at the principal cardinal directions, coming up to the landing at north and south, and going up from the landing at east and west. With its central location, the rotunda is the main axial feature around which the chief functions of the building are placed.

Wilder and White planned to decorate this large interior with marble facing in the upper section, large-scale murals, and massive bronze light fixtures. Decorative programs such as this were the norm for state capitols at the time. However, Roland H. Hartley, who was elected governor in 1925, had run on a cost-saving platform. He considered Wilder and White’s plans for murals, sculpture, and marble facing to the top of the rotunda to be an extravagance and eliminated them. The planned murals were not carried out, and the marble above the arches of the piers was scaled down to painted plaster decoration. The chandelier and firepots however, were approved for production, along with 19 other original designs—all part of the set of 489 bronze light fixtures planned for the building.
The chandelier and firepots were delivered last because their monumental proportions and intricate design required great attention in execution. The chandelier arrived in sections and was assembled on the landing of the rotunda floor in September 1928. It was hoisted to the center crossing and apex of the inner dome and suspended with a heavy 101-foot chain. The most dramatic views of the chandelier are on the fourth floor, where ornamental bronze railings frame the open space, and at the entrance to either legislative chamber gallery.

The firepots arrived fully assembled and were placed on the platform ledge extending from each of the four piers, positioned on the intercardinal directions of northwest, northeast, southeast, and southwest. The fully sculpted male and female figures (see page 24) and ornate details are most visible from the rotunda landing and up the steps to the third floor, where the legislators enter their chambers.

Enhanced by the glow of the chandelier’s 200-plus encircling light bulbs and the soft golden light emanating from the top of the firepots, there is an atmosphere of quiet dignity in the rotunda. The lights never go out. The steady glow from the chandelier reflects on the bronze Washington state seal embedded in the floor. During the day, the upward and uplifting flow of natural light filtering through the large arced windows and the smaller ones encircling the drum seems to lighten the weight of the dome’s interior. This inner glow was diminished in 1965 when 22 of the 30 windows encircling the great dome were blocked with reinforced concrete to strengthen the dome against earthquakes.

According to the architects, the rotunda’s multilayered visual and spatial effect “goes beyond the practical” and holds special meaning and significance. Insight into the creative development of the chandelier and firepot would have been documented in the papers of Wilder and White and Tiffany Studios, but all such documents—including the original contract drawings, job records, and correspondence—seem to have disappeared or been discarded. Still preserved, however, are the Capitol Committee’s minutes, blueprints, and correspondence, housed in the Washington State Archives.

Wilder and White’s elevation plans from the summer of 1926 show the chandelier as a large, long oval, 12 feet high and 8 feet in diameter, and outline the pier light standards as tall rectangular forms measuring 9.6 feet high and 4 feet wide. The architects requested that the fixtures “be designed for efficient illumination and ... also have a highly decorative quality and a massiveness suitable to their surroundings,” and capture “the character and architecture of the building.”

Plans were submitted to three major US companies that had an established reputation in the manufacture of monumental fixtures—Edward F. Caldwell Company, Sterling Bronze Company, and Tiffany Studios. The final selection of Tiffany was based on the quality and workmanship of their products. Although the firm created individual decorative objects for other state capitols, Washington was the only state to commission the company for a major collection of bronze light fixtures for its capitol.

Louis Comfort Tiffany was the leader in decorative art and interiors in the later 19th to early 20th centuries. Although his company, Tiffany Studios, was best known for multicolored glass lights, mosaics, and stained glass, the design and casting of bronze items was also a major aspect of the business.

Tiffany Studios employed its own designers and craftsmen, and also hired independent artists from abroad for special projects. Carl Moser was commissioned to design the Legislative Building’s unique set of light fixtures. Moser was a prolific European artist—a painter and woodcutter with numerous exhibits to his credit—who lived in Austria. His artistic style and fine renderings are evident in his preparatory blueprints for the light fixtures. Following a few small revisions and the Capitol Commission’s approval, Moser’s drawing went into production at Tiffany Studios’ New York foundry.

Moser increased the chandelier’s originally proposed length from 12 to 25 feet, and designed a richly ornate and elaborate...
WASHINGTON WAS THE ONLY STATE TO COMMISSION TIFFANY STUDIOS FOR A MAJOR COLLECTION OF BRONZE LIGHT FIXTURES FOR ITS CAPITOL.

Oval with decorative extensions on top and bottom. His enlarged version cast in bronze weighed five tons. The heavy effect of the metal was lightened with an elaborate and see-through decoration in the chandelier’s large midsection.

Each layer of ornament was drawn from ancient classical motifs and prototypes. Crowning the chandelier, with open wings and flowing robes, are three ethereal 45-inch-high Greek goddess Nike-type figures. Illuminated from above with a ring of lights, they are the personification of victory, which evolved to represent female angels in the Christian era. A dramatic example of the Greek version is the dramatic nine-foot-tall Winged Victory of Samothrace in the Louvre.

The chandelier’s belly is encircled by a wide band of repeated relief panels with fantastic human, bird, and floral subjects, all in the classical spirit—two tendril-limbed, winged males flanking a large, mask-like horned and bearded face; a panel with a heraldic open-winged eagle; and one with rich floral and scroll-like foliage. They are highly stylized, symmetrical, fanciful, and light-hearted motifs that extend beyond their original symbolic meanings.

Near the bottom, six-inch-tall reliefs encircle the base; below that a pinecone pendant knob terminates the chandelier. Between the central horizontal bands is the large section in open metal with acanthus, palmetto and lotus ornaments. Further enriching the piece, rings of shimmering lights are distributed in a double row around the belly, single circles near top and bottom, and one closer to the top of the dome.

Below: Winged Nike-type figures, 45 inches tall, crown the 25-foot-long Tiffany chandelier.

Top Right: Relief panels with fantastical human, bird, and floral motifs encircle the middle of the chandelier.

Bottom Right: Alternating male and female heads adorn the bottom of the chandelier.

Louis Tiffany and Tiffany Studios were known for dramatic light fixtures of spectacular showmanship, favoring unusual shapes with richly layered and encrusted surfaces. Inspired by art of the past, Tiffany took particular interest in church interiors and liturgical objects and the sacred atmosphere they created. The company’s style reflected Tiffany’s lifelong interest in historical art objects and traditions.

In planning the grand chandelier and its dramatic location, Wilder and White and Tiffany Studios likely collaborated in designing more than just a beautiful centerpiece. They knew that connecting with a historic precedent would elevate its significance and create a powerful visual statement. Without the documentation showing how they arrived at the final version, only comparable prototypes from art history can provide clues regarding what they had in mind.

The vase-like oval shape with its narrow neck and round belly, the heavy ornamentation in open metal—the whole continuously lit and hanging from a chain in a central location—resembles the sanctuary lamps and censers that have adorned
sacred places of worship for centuries. Sanctuary lamps and censers were executed in metal—silver, bronze, or copper. Lamps tended to be fastened to a single or multiple chains and hung in the sacred part of the building. Censers also had chains attached, to hang or swing across the cathedral’s transept during services. Pierced ornamentation was common. In censers it served as an aperture for the smoke of the burning incense to escape. In sanctuary lamps it was purely decorative; a band across the belly and sculpted figures around the neck were common.

Tiffany Studios produced these types of liturgical items for decades. A large number of their commissions were religious in nature. In fact, the company had a major department devoted to ecclesiastical interiors and decorative arts. Under Louis Tiffany’s direction they looked to art history objects for creative ideas and were able to refer to Tiffany’s extensive and continuously growing visual archive.

The Tiffany Chapel at the Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 is a famous example of the company’s liturgical work, which subsequently generated many church commissions. In the midst of the highly attended secular “White City,” as the fair site was called, Tiffany successfully created an atmosphere of reverence. The Tiffany Chapel consisted of a monumental three-dimensional cross in multicolor glass that was lit and suspended over an altar and surrounded by decorative objects that included sanctuary lamps. More than 30 years later, and in a similar fashion, Tiffany Studios transformed the age-old sanctuary lamp into a monumental masterpiece suspended in the heart of Washington’s Capitol Building.

Similar to the chandelier, the four identical pier light standards at the corners of the rotunda relate to vessels used in sacred ceremonies. Although Wilder and White originally referred to these fixtures as pier light standards, they were later characterized and renamed ancient Roman style firepots, which they clearly are—in typical Tiffany fashion. The final product is a light standard of striking originality, in keeping with the classical Roman style of the Legislative Building.

The firepot’s bronze globular bowl fitted into a stand is a highly decorative version of the cauldron-tripod stand from antiquity. Cauldrons were cooking vessels in ancient Greece, and their use also evolved into religious objects for offerings and other procedures. It was a common object in Roman ritual practices, with coals burning inside and flames shooting to the surface. Most often in bronze or copper, their decoration ranged.
from fantastic human and animal forms to vegetal, floral,
or geometric ornaments.

Tiffany’s firepots emulate the ancient form, freely combine motifs, and exemplify the transformative aspects of the era’s decorative designs (see facing page). The legs of the large cauldron are actually architectural fluted pilasters with composite capitals at the top, ending in animal claws at the bottom. The striking figures between each pilaster are alternating partially human identical males and females. Their lower bodies are actually plants growing out of the square pillar. On the head of each figure, a vegetal ornament—a spreading stalk of acanthus-like leaves—supports a large medallion. The females’ medallions show a scene from nature and the males’, an ancient Greek merchant vessel under sail. These human-like figures are archetypes that frequently appeared in the retinue of the Greek god Dionysus. She has the look of a nymph—a mythological nature spirit—and he is a bare-chested, bearded satyr. With foliated lower bodies, they are fantastic hybrids with an air of mystery and otherworldliness.

Beyond being strong decorative supports at each corner of the rotunda, the firepots recall a time when the ancient Roman senate held ritual ceremonies using a tripod and cauldron. Preceding the legislative assembly, the senators were required to burn incense to promote a devout attitude toward their duties and “to increase their respect for the gods.” Wilder and White and Tiffany Studios must have planned this connection for their design. As the Washington legislators go into their chambers, golden light emanates from the firepots—the same way embers burned in the cauldrons when the Roman senators entered their curia, or meeting space.

The Legislative Building’s bronze fixtures were produced in a new era of lighting when electric technology replaced that of gas. This allowed for new opportunities in illumination and design and was particularly advantageous in the lighting of large interior spaces. The subject of innovative and imaginative fixtures was frequently addressed in trade publications and professional circles and organizations.

The increased interest in the design of light fixtures is evident in the publication of historic surveys. Books and articles with photo illustrations provided new visual sources for inspiration. Most relevant was the book on Metal Crafts in Architecture, by Gerald K. Geerlings (1928), featuring photos of historic ecclesiastic church objects, such as incense burners and hanging sanctuary lamps. It showed architects how sacred relics could be transformed into unique electric fixture designs that could dramatically decorate building interiors. This was the likely path taken by Carl Moser and Tiffany Studios in their monumentalization of the historic sanctuary lamp design for the Legislative Building’s rotunda. As for the firepot, they refashioned the ancient Roman cauldron with tripod stand into a massive light standard.

With the collaborative efforts of Wilder and White, Carl Moser, and Tiffany Studios, the grand chandelier and firepot designs were true to the original specification—to be unique, massive, and highly decorative, and to reflect the character of the Legislative Building. In comparing them to chandeliers hanging in the rotunda of other state capitols—they stand alone in innovation, size, and design. From among those with a great dome, such as Arkansas, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Rhode Island, Utah, and West Virginia, none of their chandeliers show the level of complexity and grandeur of Washington’s. With the exception of Missouri’s, they are basic circular forms ranging from brilliant crystal balls to large rings and tiered circles.

Washington’s great chandelier and firepots provide a new dimension to the Legislative Building and the empowerment of the secular environment with magnificent and “everlasting” centerpieces. Tiffany Studios once more proved to be masters in producing works of art that can also be perceived as monumental sacred relics—symbolic expressions for a temple of democracy that represents the voice of its people.

Susan Mayer is an independent researcher with a doctorate in art history and years of experience in college teaching, public speaking, and writing. With special interest in the architecture and decor of the State Capitol, she enjoys giving tours there and making public presentations on the subject.
Prolific photographer Marvin D. Boland captured Christmas Eve at the Tacoma residence of James A. La Gasa, a resident physician at Fannie Haddock Hospital. Originally from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Marvin Boland moved to Tacoma in 1912 and ran a series of photographic studios from 1915 through the 1940s. Besides portraits, Boland’s photographic interests included cityscapes and landscapes, architecture, industry, celebrities, and events. During World War I he became Fort Lewis’s official photographer and documented wartime shipbuilding activities and home front life. In 1950, Boland died, camera in hand, while photographing naval ships in Bremerton. The Washington State Historical Society acquired Boland’s expansive collection from his estate in 1957—in all, more than 70,000 images.

—Eileen Price
UNDENIABLY NORTHWEST READS

Writing the Northwest
A Reporter Looks Back
Hill Williams, Foreword by Jim Kershner
Amiable, award-winning journalist Hill Williams spent decades reporting Northwest news. Now, in his distinctly regional and most personal book, he transforms his stories about unforgettable people, places, and events into inviting, candid narratives.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-345-3 • $22.95

Peace Weavers
Uniting the Salish Coast through Cross-Cultural Marriages
Candace Wellman
Throughout the mid-1800s, Coast and Interior Salish families arranged strategic cross-cultural marriages—peace-weaving alliances that played a crucial role in regional settlement. Like others, the four intermarried women profiled left a lasting legacy in their Puget Sound communities.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-346-0 • $27.95

Voice of the Old Wolf
Lucullus Virgil McWhorter and the Nez Perce Indians
Steven Ross Evans
First published in 1996, Voice of the Old Wolf is the only full-length biography of Lucullus V. McWhorter (1860-1944)—rancher, adopted tribe member, friend of Yakima and Nez Perce warriors, stirring spokesman, and writer of classic Western histories.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-349-1 • $26.95

We Are Aztlán!
Chicana Histories in the Northern Borderlands
Jerry García
Mexican Americans/Chicana/os/Chicanx form a majority of the Latino population in the United States. Focusing on the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest, multidisciplinary papers examine how Chicanx have challenged racialization, marginalization, and isolation in the northern borderlands.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-347-7 • $29.95

Carry Forth the Stories
An Ethnographer’s Journey into Native Oral Tradition
Rodney Frey, Foreword by Leonard Bends
Intertwining his own as well as stories from interviews, oral histories, and elders, seasoned anthropologist/ethnographer Rodney Frey offers a model for engaging with indigenous peoples as well as personal and professional insights into the power and value of storytelling.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-348-4 • $29.95

Atomic Geography
A Personal History of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation
Melvin R. Adams
Thoughtful, often surprising vignettes from one of Hanford’s first environmental engineers sift through its rubble, abandoned documents, factories, and surroundings, recalling challenges and sites he worked on or found personally intriguing.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-341-5 • $22.95

Hop King
Ezra Meeker’s Boom Years
Dennis M. Larsen
A risk taker and outstanding entrepreneur on a local and global scale, Oregon Trail pioneer Ezra Meeker’s staggering success in the hop industry helped transform the landscape, economics, and politics of Puget Sound.

Dividing the Reservation
Alice C. Fletcher’s Nez Perce Allotment Diaries and Letters, 1889–1892
Nicole Tonkovich
Pioneering ethnologist and federal Indian agent Alice C. Fletcher helped write the Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887. Her writing reveals how she and others executed that law among the Nez Perce.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-344-6 • $29.95

The Bridge of the Gods
A Romance of Indian Oregon
Frederic Homer Balch
Set in 1690s Oregon, this regional classic was the first fictional work by a Northwest writer to feature Native Americans. When the bridge of the gods falls, so do a missionary, an Indian prophet, and a fierce chief’s gentle daughter.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-344-6 • $29.95

We Are Aztlán!
Chicana Histories in the Northern Borderlands
Jerry García
Mexican Americans/Chicana/os/Chicanx form a majority of the Latino population in the United States. Focusing on the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest, multidisciplinary papers examine how Chicanx have challenged racialization, marginalization, and isolation in the northern borderlands.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-347-7 • $29.95

Orphan Road
The Railroad Comes to Seattle, 1853–1911
Kurt E. Armbruster
Seattleties were bitterly disappointed in 1873 when the Northern Pacific chose Tacoma as the future terminus for its transcontinental railroad. Lavishly illustrated, Orphan Road depicts the growth of railways across the Puget Sound region.
Paperback • ISBN 978-0-87422-326-2 • $32.95

Available at bookstores, online at wsupress.wsu.edu, or by phone at 800-354-7360
The Northwest Works of Nancy Wilson Ross

By Peter Donahue

Nancy Wilson Ross (1901–1986) is one of the most important writers to come out of the Northwest. In the mid-20th century she bridged what seemed an unbridgeable gulf between the truly sophisticated Northeast and the impossibly provincial Northwest. She achieved this feat as an astute fiction writer, popular historian, and expert exponent of Eastern philosophy. She did so as well through friendships and correspondence with cultural leaders from both coasts.

Ross was born in Olympia, Washington. She attended the University of Oregon in Eugene, graduating in 1924. Her second novel, Take the Lightning (1940), is a town-and-gown tale based loosely on her alma mater. In the late 1920s, she married Charles W. Ross and moved to Germany, where they both attended Bauhaus, the modernist school of art and design. While there, Ross published her first novel, Friday to Monday (1932), set in a small upstate New York town like the one her husband came from. Then, just before the Nazi regime closed Bauhaus in 1933, the couple moved to New York City. Not long after that, they bought property on Hood Canal (near Vinland on the Kitsap Peninsula), built a house there, and became seasonal residents.

It was during this period that Ross wrote Farthest Reach: Oregon and Washington (1941), a blend of regional history, sociological analysis, and travel log that creates an impressive profile of the two states. In the book, Ross crisscrosses Oregon and Washington visiting cities, towns, ranches, farms, homesteads, and wilderness areas. As part of her tour, she meets some of the region’s exceptional residents, such as Kate Stevens Bates of Olympia, daughter of Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens, and Lucullus V. McWhorter of Yakima, Indian rights advocate and friend of Okanogan writer Mourning Dove. To this day, Farthest Reach remains an informative and rewarding work. Ross concludes it by noting how “the Pacific Northwest is still pioneering.”

In 1942, following a divorce from her first husband, Ross married playwright and theater producer Stanley Young and settled on Long Island with him. Her next book was Westward the Women (1944), a history of Northwest women that anticipates second-wave feminist scholarship. Ross declares, “It is men who have written the world histories, and in writing them they have, almost without exception, ignored women.” She profiles notable Northwest women (Narcissa Whitman, Abigail Scott Duniway, Bethenia Owens et al.) and less recognized women (Molly b’Damn, Julie “Madame” Bauer, Sister Joseph et al.). In remarking on how many of these women diligently kept diaries, she notes: “any intelligent woman can tell us more about what life was actually like in the Far West in early days than we could ever get from the reports of a dozen explorers intent on the main theme of conquest of a strange land by force.”

Following World War II, Ross traveled throughout Asia, honing her early interest in Eastern philosophy. She also published four more novels, all of which pursue philosophical themes. This emphasis is especially evident in her sole Northwest novel, I, My Ancestor (1950). In the novel, Philip Stewart, a heavy-drinking executive with a threadbare marriage, flees New York City to seek the father he has not seen in 25 years. The father, a free speech radical during the IWW era, is now a recluse on a speck of an island in Puget Sound. After flying to Seattle—and taking a chapter-long tour of the city—Stewart makes his way by ferry and then dingy to the remote island, where he reunites with his father and immerses himself in Northwest mysticism.

At the heart of Stewart’s spiritual healing lies nature. Ross is masterful at evoking the sensory experience of Puget Sound. Smell: “He became aware of a slow scent of salt and cedar, of burning brush and tide flats, moving toward him on the still clear air.” Sound: “The birds still sang even in the fog, and the water tapped the old pilings of the dock, where the barnacles feasted, with unchanging, unagitated rhythm.” Sight: “He let his eye wander toward the gnarled, out-thrust limb of the old fir on which now a heron was making an awkward landing,”
braking its wings against the air, thrusting its legs down like sticks.”

This sublime experience of nature is complemented by encounters with Northwest eccentrics: Clarence, the local storekeeper’s son who talks to animals; Clare, the anthropologist who gathers Indian stories (and has an affair with Stewart); Lawrence, the moody abstract artist who paints strange birds (modeled after Ross’s friend Morris Graves); and Stewart’s own father, who quotes obscure theosophists and delivers weekly spiritual musings to a motley gathering on a nearby island. At one point, Stewart wonders what his New York associates would think of the topics he discusses with his new acquaintances—“jealous sea gulls, talking ravens, sensitive bears, Zen ’idiots,’ egg teeth”—and just shrugs.

In the 1960s, Ross moved away from fiction and wrote primarily about Eastern philosophy and religion. She published three books on the subject that put her in the ranks of D. T. Suzuki and Alan Watts in advancing Buddhism and Zen in the United States, including her last book, Buddhism: A Way of Life and Thought (1980). Gary Snyder and Jack Kerouac read her books, and avant garde composer John Cage, who attended her talk on Zen and Dada at The Cornish School in Seattle, commented on how important it was to him in “its insistence on experience and the irrational rather than on logic and understanding.”

Though Ross was known to have a grouchy side (not unlike Clare in I, My Ancestor), her friends and correspondents were legion, from William O. Douglas and Martha Graham to Joseph Campbell and Thomas Merton. However, she never lost sight of her Northwest origins—in 1964 she wrote the introduction to Nellie Cornish’s autobiography—and in every respect was one of the region’s great cultural ambassadors.

Peter Donahue’s new book, Three Sides Water, a trilogy of short novels set on the Olympic Peninsula during different historical periods, will be released in May 2018.

Call for Award Nominations

The Historical Society invites nominations for its annual awards recognizing excellence in advancing the field of history in Washington. The honors to be presented include: the David Douglas Award, Robert Gray Medal, Governor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching History, and Peace and Friendship Award.

Important: The awards ceremony will take place at the Society’s annual meeting in September 2018. Nominations are due May 1, 2018. For details, see: www.WashingtonHistory.org/about/awards/ or contact Susan Rohrer (253-798-5203, susan.rohrer@wshs.wa.gov).

Railroad Tunnels at Hanford


Chinuk Wawa


The Education of Delbert J. McBride


The Washington State Capitol’s Tiffany Lights

Waterway
The Story of Seattle’s Locks and Ship Canal
By David B. Williams, Jennifer Ott, and staff of HistoryLink, Seattle: HistoryLink and Documentary Media, 2017; 158 pp.; $24.95 paper.
Reviewed by David L. Nicandri.

Maybe it’s because I grew up two blocks away from Locks 2 and 3 on the Cayuga-Seneca branch of the New York State Barge Canal and my paternal grandfather helped build them as a pick-and-shovel workingman, but I can’t remember when I’ve enjoyed a book as much as this one. The writing is engaging and perfectly suited for a popular, nonacademic audience, and Waterway is brilliantly illustrated with maps, photos, mechanical drawings, and compelling photos. The text is peppered with informative sidebars, including biographical sketches, a timeline, and a variety of diversions into subjects ranging from Chinese labor contractors to Herschel, the sea lion. I had never before understood the origins, perpetuation, and operational dynamic of Fishermen’s Terminal on Salmon Bay, but now I do.

A project commemorating the centennial of the Lake Washington Ship Canal’s completion in 1917, Waterway is organized into seven sensible chapters, starting with the topographic fundamentals. Lake Washington, formerly an extension of the inland sea that came to be called Puget Sound, was separated from saltwater as a function of isostatic or postglacial rebound when the weight of the ice that carved the oceanic inlet was lifted at the end of the last Ice Age, creating the narrow Montlake isthmus. Lake Union originated at the same time, as a kettle lake formed by a large chunk of ice melting in place as the Puget Lobe of the ice sheet receded.

Less than a decade after the first American pioneers settled Seattle, city founder Thomas Mercer first verbalized a vision of reconnecting Lake Washington to its saltwater roots with a canal. To the modern eye, the purpose of such a project—creating an inland deep-water harbor as an extension of the Elliott Bay commercial shoreline—seems redundant and unnecessary, which proved to be the case. But driven by the same can-do, environmental reshaping ethic that shortly thereafter transformed the Columbia River, several generations of canal promoters ultimately succeeded in forging a partnership between the federal government—through the agency of the Corps of Engineers—and King County, which financed a large portion of the work.

“By 1917,” the authors point out, “Lake Washington was too far away from the center of the city to be a part of the manufacturing boom, and residential development had become extensive enough to block the start of a new nucleus of activity.” Railroads proved more efficacious in moving cargo in and around Lake Washington’s periphery, and the automobile culture’s floating bridges proved more conducive to creating suburbs than industrial centers. Relatively few ocean-going craft ever transited the locks, but the new infrastructure proved a boon to recreational boating and the region’s commercial fishing fleet. As the authors explain, Fishermen’s Terminal, which facilitates 50 percent of the country’s seafood catch, “could not operate economically without the savings in maintenance made possible by the freshwater harbor” at Salmon Bay.

Waterway concludes with a chapter on the canal’s environmental consequences, which reads as an integral element to the text and not a mandated bolt-on added to suit modern sensibilities. The demise of the Black River, the Cedar River diversion/channelization, and the manner by which salmon adapted to man-made redirection of water flows, are all compelling stories. Seattle may well be, as the authors assert, “the only major U.S. city with a lock connecting saltwater and freshwater,” but they effectively make the larger point that “few other places...are as central to the city’s identity.”

David L. Nicandri was executive editor of COLUMBIA from 1988 through 2011 and is the immediate past director of the Washington State Historical Society.

Woodland
The Story of the Animals and People of Woodland Park Zoo
By John Bierlein and staff of HistoryLink. HistoryLink/Woodland Park Zoo, 2017; 200 pp; $26.95 paper.
Reviewed by Maria Pascualy.

John Bierlein, retired longtime manager of exhibits and interpretation at Woodland Park Zoo, and HistoryLink, the online encyclopedia of Washington history, partnered to write this illustrated account of Woodland Park Zoo. Every page of the softcover volume is illustrated with at least one well-selected photograph. The volume is divided into 20 chapters that relay the zoo’s development from the late 1800s to 2015.

A forward by long-standing supporter and celebrity Betty White suggests the book was written for the shelves of the gift shop; but, despite some occasional dips into public relations, the authors do a commendable job of telling the story of the zoo and its animals. The author has included all the historical detail that local history buffs might want about an organization established in the 19th century in the small town of Seattle.

Woodland Park Zoo sits on what was originally forestland. In 1889 real estate developer Guy Carleton Phinney turned it into a
re-created English hunting lodge. He fenced in deer to facilitate his hunting parties and later added an English garden and hotel. When he died in 1893, his long-range plan to build an estate for his family died with him. The property ended up in the hands of the city.

The park’s identity as a tourist destination with animals and family activities slowly broadened as the City of Seattle developed the Phinney property. The first animal inventory in 1904, when the park was still little more than a menagerie, included eight species of mammals and nine of birds—including elk, bears, and eagles. By 1931 the zoo had 326 animals representing 56 species. Today the zoo has 1,000 animals representing over 300 species.

An important date in the zoo’s history is 1974. That year, architect David Hancocks, who later became the zoo’s director, headed a taskforce to develop a master plan for the zoo. His decision to hire landscape architects Jones and Jones revolutionized zoo design. The firm came up with an ecological model wherein the animals’ environment of origin was recreated for them to inhabit; cement cages were discontinued. With this new approach, Woodland Park Zoo became a model for zoo design worldwide.

After the animals were well-housed, other challenges developed as circuses and the idea of captive exotic animals lost favor with the public. In 2015 the zoo ended its controversial elephant program and exhibits. The increasing number of visitors—2015 set an attendance record of 1.3 million guests—suggests that patrons accept change and support the zoo’s broader focus on public education about the animals, habitats, and ecosystems that are, more than ever, in need of protecting, and the conservation programs that effectively help bring solutions to imperiled wildlife and wild places.

Maria Pascualy retired as associate editor of COLUMBIA this past summer. She is a longtime fan of Woodland Park Zoo.

Writing the Northwest
A Reporter Looks Back

As I look back over a misspent life, I find myself more and more convinced that I had more fun doing news reporting than in any other enterprise,” H. L. Mencken wrote not long before his death in 1956. “It is really the life of kings.”

Hill Williams’s long, eventful life was not misspent. In his half-century as a reporter, he had more fun—and adventures—than he ever dreamed of as a kid on roller skates hawking the Saturday Evening Post in the Tri-Cities. His newspaper career began at 10 cents an hour on his father’s weekly, the Pasco Herald, in the 1940s. When Williams retired from The Seattle Times in 1991, he was one of the finest science writers in America. He subsequently wrote two award-winning books. His latest book, Writing the Northwest was, sadly, his last. He died in March 2017 at age 91. From Hanford to Hiroshima, Celilo Falls to Tiananmen Square, this memoir is a moveable feast.

Many books by old newspapermen dwell on “cop shop” yarns and newsroom hijinks. Williams instead shares important historical lore about the industry during the first half of the 20th century. One of his early after-school jobs in his father’s composing room was casting the “pigs”—slender bars of lead—that were lowered, inch by inch, into the melting pots of clacking Linotype machines. Recycling the type from the previous week’s paper required skimming off the scum that formed as it melted at more than 620 degrees. “I worked very, very carefully, remembering that a predecessor on that job had dropped molten lead into his shoe.”

As a roving reporter at the Tri-City Herald a decade later, Williams carried one of the Speed Graphic cameras famously wielded by snap-brim fedora wearing news photographers at prize fights and four-alarm fires in the 1930s. Compared to the “slick little digital cameras of today, the old Speed Graphic seems like a dinosaur,” Williams wrote. “It weighed more than four pounds and required both hands to use it.” His vignette about climbing a ladder on an oil-storage tank, “the camera bumping my behind,” amounts to a primer on the lost art of sliding the four-by-five sheet film holder “into a spring-loaded attachment on the back of the camera.” If you did it right, it seated itself “with a satisfying clunk.” If you did it wrong, trouble developed. “It all becomes almost automatic. But if you’re not careful you can shoot blank film, make double exposures, get fuzzy images, or fog the film by careless handling of film holders.”

On the science beat at The Seattle Times, Williams’s knack for cutting through scientific jargon emerged during the 1950s when he covered the campaign to clean up Lake Washington. The rapid postwar growth of Seattle and its suburbs saw the once-magnificent lake “deteriorate into a murky, smelly . . . embarrassment.” Williams’s interviews with University of Washington scientists documented that “phosphorous was the biggest chemical culprit in the treated sewage effluent, causing an explosive growth of algae.” His front-page stories helped pass a landmark 1958 referendum to modernize wastewater treatment in King County.

In his peripatetic career, Williams took his readers from the ancient hills of the Palouse to the Strait of Juan de Fuca to meet an old Makah whale hunter who at 80 could still paddle a 32-foot canoe; on a ride below the surface of Puget Sound in the Nautilus, the world’s first nuclear-powered submarine; and on a visit to Harry Truman, the “tough old goat” who refused to leave his lodge near Mount St. Helens. “He was shoveling the last of the snow off the walk in front of his lodge” when they waved goodbye 15 days before the mountain exploded on May 18, 1980.

Writing the Northwest is a fond goodbye by a great reporter.

John C. Hughes is chief historian for Legacy Washington, the Secretary of State’s oral history program. He retired as editor and publisher of The Daily World in Aberdeen in 2008 after a 42-year career in journalism. Hughes is the author of 11 books on Northwest history.
A Fond Farewell

How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.
—attributed to Winnie the Pooh/A. A. Milne

For 30 years it has been my honor and joy to work on this magazine, which was founded by John McClelland Jr. to bring regional history to the people. Writing history for historians has its place in scholarly publications—the Pacific Northwest Quarterly among them—which are produced under university auspices. History publications for the general public are on shakier ground, dependent as they often are on less liberally funded historical organizations. It is to the Washington State Historical Society’s great credit that it has continued to publish COLUMBIA for over three decades, and it has been my privilege to be involved in producing the magazine for most of that time.

John McClelland’s goal for COLUMBIA was “to overcome widespread apathy about acquiring knowledge of what has gone before. . . .” He felt that “publishing history attractively packaged and interestingly written” was about more than education—it was about pride in “what has been accomplished by the people who have struggled to develop this northwest corner of the nation.” Having made a career of staying true to McClelland’s vision for COLUMBIA, I look back on 30 years well spent.

My departure is made easier because I’m able to hand COLUMBIA’s editorial reins to Feliks Banel, whose work in communications has delved deep into the history of the Pacific Northwest. Formerly deputy director of Seattle’s Museum of History and Industry, Banel has more recently been lecturing at the University of Washington’s Department of Communication, producing history features for local media, and working on a variety of other history- and media-related projects. He brings to COLUMBIA a passion for the past and extensive experience delivering regional history to the people.

I can’t close without expressing my appreciation and thanks to David Nicandri, director of the Society now retired, who hired me and was COLUMBIA’s executive editor for 24 years; Robert Carriker, who has been the magazine’s book review editor since the very first issue and is more than halfway through a second 10-year term on the board of trustees; Maria Pascualy, recently retired, who was my associate editor for 10 years; the entire Collections Department staff, which has provided extensive illustration research and regular content for the magazine; a long list of former staff members and interns, too many to name, who worked on the magazine over the years; and a cadre of dedicated volunteers whose assistance has been invaluable—foremost among them Carolyn Simonson, who has lent her editing and proofreading skills to COLUMBIA since 1989; and, of course, the authors.

My most heartfelt thanks go to you, the reader. Without the interest and support of subscribers and Historical Society members, COLUMBIA could not exist. I bid you all a fond farewell.

—Christina Orange Dubois, Editor
“If history were taught in the form of stories, it would never be forgotten.”
—Rudyard Kipling

Share Washington history with people you care about by giving them a Historical Society membership. Member benefits include free museum admission and a COLUMBIA subscription. Call 253-798-5894 or visit www.WashingtonHistory.org and click on SUPPORT.
TOYTOPIA
PLAY YOUR WAY DOWN MEMORY LANE!
FEBRUARY 16 – JUNE 10

COME OVER AND PLAY!
www.WashingtonHistory.org/Toytopia
1911 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma, Washington
1-888-BE THERE (1-888-238-4373)