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May Hutton...
A “diamond in the rough”
Breaking Ground
The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and the Unearthing of Tse-whit-zan Village
LYNDA V. MAPES
Foreword by FRANCES CHARLES

IN 2003, A BACKHOE OPERATOR hired by the state of Washington to dig a massive dry dock on the Port Angeles waterfront unearthed one of the largest and oldest Indian village sites ever found in the region. Excitement about the archaeological significance of the site gave way to anguish as members of the Klallam Tribe, working alongside state construction workers, encountered human remains, including many intact burials.

In Breaking Ground, Lynda Mapes, an award-winning reporter for the Seattle Times, engages tribal members, archaeologists, historians, city and state officials, and local residents and business leaders to explore how the site was chosen, the decision to abandon the project, and the aftermath and implications of those controversial choices.

This beautifully crafted and compassionate account, illustrated with nearly 100 photographs, illuminates the collective amnesia that led to the choice of the Port Angeles construction site.
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While May Arkwright Hutton would never have been mistaken for a highborn member of the social elite, her unpolished flamboyance and passionate resolve brought her a measure of notoriety. See related article beginning on page 6. (M.94-9.1, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, EWHS, Spokane)
Tragedy at Waiilatpu: A New Look at Old History

By Robert H. Ruby

This essay was prepared with the assistance of Cary C. Collins.

As a surgeon by training and a historian of American Indian and white relations by avocation, I have witnessed incredible changes over the course of my dual working life. When I took my medical training at Washington University in St. Louis in the early 1940s, I could hardly have imagined the breakthroughs in medications, equipment, and techniques that would be introduced in just the few short decades after my graduation. I have been privileged to observe at close hand the tremendous benefits that these achievements have brought to so many and the unquantifiable and remarkable impacts they have had on our society and nation.

It is my sense that the historical profession has undergone a similar transformation. As a young surgeon in the early 1950s, I spent eighteen months as medical officer in charge of the Pine Ridge Indian Hospital, working among the Oglala Lakota people. While fulfilling my assignment there I developed a keen interest in and sensitivity to the plight of the American Indians and the many challenges and contradictions that confronted them as they responded to and endured the overwhelming stresses that befell them with reservation life. Having grown up on a farm outside Mabton, Washington, I never knew anything in my own upbringing that prepared me for the level of poverty, despair, and downright hopelessness that I encountered in South Dakota.

Drawing on my experiences at Pine Ridge, I eventually relocated to Moses Lake where, with my longtime collaborator, the now-deceased John A. Brown, we began studying and writing about the Indians of the Pacific Northwest. That was in the 1950s, but in those days the stories we told and the ways we told them little resembled what many writers of Indian history are producing today. Back then we dwelt almost exclusively on the people and events that had largely been shaped by European Americans. Today, I am heartened to report, historians are not only incorporating Native American voices into their narratives, but they are also including Indian understandings, views, and analyses of what took place. Indians and tribes are now retrieving, writing, and publishing their own histories. This, to my way of thinking, is a stunning turnaround.

For example, in 2006 an old friend, the late Alvin Josephy Jr., edited nine essays written by Native American authors on their perceptions of the importance—or unimportance—of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Similarly, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have published a comprehensive tribal history. These occurrences and others like them are not just...
breakthroughs but revolutionary treatises that have the potential to reshape the way Indian history is presented to and understood by the general public—just as in medicine the invention of penicillin or, more recently, the introduction of the cholesterol-reducing statin drugs, has alleviated suffering and extended life spans.

With this as a backdrop, I would like to say a few words about an event of which I have been a student for some six decades. It was an audacious act and one as polarizing as any in the annals of Pacific Northwest history. On November 29, 1847, thirteen people, including two children and one woman, met a violent death at Waiilatpu—near present-day Walla Walla—while another fifty or so of their companions were taken prisoner.

To the smattering of settlers then living in Oregon, this constituted a crime of such horrendous proportions that it came to be called the Whitman “massacre,” in reference to Marcus Whitman, who headed the mission where the awful deeds were carried out. Five Cayuse men—known among tribal people today as the “Cayuse Five”—were eventually charged with the murders. Following a four-day trial (only two days of which were spent in hearing testimony) conducted in Oregon City, hundreds of miles from their homes and families, they received the death sentence. Without delay or any real formality, all were hanged and their bodies buried in unmarked graves, the specific whereabouts of which remain unknown.

On its face this would seem to be a cut-and-dried historical incident: People were killed; suspects were arrested, tried, and convicted; and, ultimately, harsh justice was meted out to the fullest extent of the law. This is how the Whitman Massacre has been presented for decades to thousands of students in classrooms and textbooks. Now, early in the 21st century, there is another story that needs to be told—the recounting of what happened on that admittedly grisly day so many years ago as related by the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla people in the oral histories and family stories passed down through the generations. The tribes that had invited Marcus and Narcissa Whitman to live among them could not find a way to stop what, from their perspective, had turned into an outright invasion of their homeland and an aggressive and deadly assault on their families, belief systems, and way of life. They concluded, in the end, that they had no alternative but to kill the missionaries.

Optimally, the tribes should, and I hope eventually will, tell this story themselves. With that as a given, I would like to suggest how the newfound open climate that has taken such welcome and solid root in the historical community might cast the circumstances surrounding the Waiilatpu slayings in a somewhat different light.

I first became acquainted with members of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla tribes in the 1960s. Since then I have learned that their perception of the Whitmans and the objectives of their Waiilatpu mission differ fundamentally from that of the non-Indian perception. To tribal members, for example, the fact that the Whitmans lived there at tribal prerogative and the mission was situated within what the tribes considered to be their ancestral homeland granted them a certain influence or authority over what would be allowed to take place there.

In the weeks and months leading up to the killings, concerned Indians had warned the Whitmans to leave, that to stay at Waiilatpu would be to place their lives in peril. They not only ignored such counsel but continued to engage in conduct that was certain to antagonize tribal sensibilities. Notably, the missionaries were lending substantial aid and comfort to settlers traveling the Oregon Trail—support that served to increase the number of outsiders in the region. The tribes, through their extensive trade contacts and from what they had been told by literate mixed-blood French-Canadian fur trappers, were savvy to what had happened to tribes east of the Mississippi and were determined to prevent the same pattern from repeating itself on the Columbia Plateau. For them this was an issue that extended beyond simple preference—it cut to the core of their survival.

Their options for ridding themselves of the Whitmans and their cohorts, however, were limited. They could request, cajole, and even threaten them to leave, which they had done. But when those measures failed to produce the desired result, the Whitmans seemingly held the upper hand—a hand that was becoming stronger with each passing season and each train of incoming wagons. The hard truth
is that the Indians had come to view the Whitmans as squatters who sought to subordinate them. Many had also soured on the missionaries’ religion and their strong-armed tactics toward children, forms of harsh corporal discipline that to Indian parents was tantamount to child abuse. Even worse, when the Indian children and adults grew ill and many died from the measles, the tribes concluded that the stern and ill-tempered Dr. Whitman was using his knowledge of medicine to poison them.

By failing to take wise measures to ease pressure on the Whitmans or by engaging in conduct that directly intensified the Whitmans’ danger, other non-Indians in the region complicated and aggravated the situation. An example of withheld assistance involved the Catholic missionaries, who were rivals to the Whitmans. As the death toll from measles mounted at Waiilatpu, priests stopped by to assist, helping to bury the rapidly increasing number of dead. The priests learned of rising sentiments within some tribal factions—harsh feelings that were being fueled by what the mixed-bloods were saying—that Dr. Whitman was poisoning the children. Rather than responding to this allegation, which—according to Catholic church records—the priests knew to be a fiction, they opted instead to say nothing, thereby allowing emotional wounds to fester and a toxic environment to worsen.

British employees of the Hudson’s Bay Company also inflamed the volatile situation. They accurately though, in hindsight, recklessly informed the Cayuse that the mission’s presence and the Whitmans’ willingness to assist settlers on their western journey had become a positive factor for prospective pioneers in deciding whether or not to emigrate. How much longer could the Cayuse countenance the presence of such a double-edged threat agitating against their interests and welfare? In the days and hours before the death option was invoked tribal members must have searched their souls for an answer to that question.

Controversy exists over the identities of the killers. The Cayuse Five—their names were Clokomas, Kiamasumkin, Isaasheluckas, Tomahas, and Tiloukaikt—paid the ultimate penalty of death, but according to Cayuse sources these men surrendered themselves to the U.S. Army at Fort Dalles and did so for a specific purpose: To protect the Cayuse homeland and people from further harm. But should this in any way be construed as an admission of their guilt? Consider the words of Tiloukaikt, spoken during the trial proceedings in Oregon City: “Did not your missionaries teach us that Christ died to save his people? So did we to save our people.”

According to Antone Minthorn, a tribal elder and leader who lives on the Umatilla Indian Reservation in northeastern Oregon, the Cayuse people interpret this statement to mean that the Cayuse Five martyred themselves to ensure the survival of their families, relations, and fellow tribal members. In the words of Minthorn, “There was no proof that those particular five Cayuse men were the ones who killed Marcus Whitman and his people.” He believes the Cayuse Five were patriots acting on behalf of a sovereign people. Considered from this perspective, Minthorn asks, “Should these five men have been tried as individuals or detained as prisoners of war?” To put it another way, whether or not the Cayuse Five were the actual murderers, the acts were committed in the name of national self-defense.

None of this was even a consideration in the drama played out in Oregon City, a trial that, from an Indian standpoint, should never have taken place because the Whitman affair occurred in the heart of Indian country over which the settlers held no legal jurisdiction. By tribal rights, the dictates and principles of Cayuse law should have guided the outcome.

A little known (outside of Indian country, that is) but prevalent cultural practice hints at just what such a judgment would have been. Known as “tewatat” or “medicine doctor tradition,” healers or shamans who failed to cure were subject to the reprisal of death at the hands of the deceased’s relatives. Marcus Whitman was a doctor, and there is ample evidence to indicate that the Cayuse people viewed and interacted with him as such. The measles epidemic that was then raging through the region undoubtedly exacerbated the situation. Whitman attempted to treat many of the sick, but in the end some two-fifths—as many as 197 of the 500-to-700-member Cayuse tribe—perished.
This is a startling statistic under any circumstance but a devastating number considering the small population of the tribe.

From the Indian point of view Whitman had a hand in those deaths, and in this context his own death was a justified safeguard, one intended to remove an ineffectual shaman who, if left unchecked, might have jeopardized the lives of many more Cayuse people. Hence, what seemed from an American standpoint an incomprehensible act of criminal brutality was, from an Indian viewpoint, an acceptable and understandable solution—a necessary cultural expedient imposed to ensure the tribe's survival.

These comments only begin to address the many complicated and complex aspects of the Whitman case, which is a subject ripe for fresh exploration and interpretation. It is crucial that such discussions and arguments begin and continue, not only to provide a deeper and more nuanced historical account but to construct a deeper, more accurate understanding of the Cayuse people—then and now. To some extent, we are all hostages of the past. Our view of historical events shapes our impressions of historical actors and their descendants up to the present.

History, I have learned, is a battleground of competing ideas and interpretations. Those who are able to limit rival versions of the past possess the power to control a good deal of what is going on in the present. In other words, the past has brought us to where we are and the past will guide us into the future. In our national memory American Indians have been marginalized and in some ways their sense of identity has been reduced to a reflection of how others have perceived and portrayed them. For the Cayuse people, the broader tragedy of the Whitman Massacre was that it failed to free them from the domination of outsiders. Instead, it perpetuated the influence of non-Indians, particularly in their ability to define and control public understanding of Cayuse history over the past 160 years. This is a disadvantage that the tribes are now working to overcome and correct.

In no way do I propose to speak for the tribes or the families involved. I do suggest, however, that at Waiilatpu on that turbulent afternoon in November 1847 one people, shoved over and over, again and again, with their backs to the wall and seeing nowhere else to turn, took up arms and finally began to push back.

Robert H. Ruby is coauthor with John A. Brown (1914-2004) of numerous works on Native American history. Ruby is a retired physician, a former member of the Washington State Historical Society's board of trustees, and 1999 recipient of the James B. Castles Heritage Award for his work related to the history of the Columbia River Basin.
Two well-known phrases—“Diamond in the Rough” and “Lady Bountiful”—describe real people whose meeting in Spokane early in the 20th century led ultimately to the creation of one of Spokane's best-kept philanthropic secrets—the Hutton Settlement. Built east of the city in 1919, it is still home to children in need of a safe haven.

Formed in 1887, the Ladies' Benevolent Society was the oldest charitable organization in Spokane. The members of the society's board—wives and daughters of Spokane's founders and its leading business and professional men—embodied “Lady Bountiful.” Strong women with a clear sense of themselves, they personified the Progressive Era’s commitment to such reforms as mothers' pensions, child labor laws, juvenile courts, and other issues centered around children. The all-woman board of the Ladies' Benevolent Society operated an orphanage called Home of the Friendless.

The “Diamond in the Rough” was May Arkwright Hutton—best known for the marvelous combination of passion and audacity she brought to Washington's campaign for women's suffrage. History's emphasis on her colorful personality has overshadowed her contributions to social causes and reform.

May Arkwright was born July 21, 1860, in a coal-mining community near Youngstown in northeast Ohio—the illegitimate daughter of Isaac Arkwright. When she was 10 years old her father took her out of school and sent her to care for her blind grandfather, Aza Arkwright. Preparing her grandfather's meals made an excellent cook out of the young girl. She also guided the old gentleman to meeting halls and the town square where they would listen to speakers analyzing current events and commenting on political issues. On one landmark occasion the speaker was William McKinley, who was then just a young Ohio lawyer with political
ambitions. After McKinley’s speech, Aza Arkwright invited him back to the house for some of his granddaughter’s homemade doughnuts and cider. May later recalled that McKinley had talked that evening about women’s rights. His words made her realize that women and men did not have equal rights.

ABOR RELATIONS and working conditions in the Ohio coal mines were worsening, and miners began to leave for the inland Northwest, lured by reports of gold in the Coeur d’Alene Mountains. A Northern Pacific Railroad pamphlet with exaggerated claims for the region’s potential wealth attracted May Arkwright from the Midwest.

Grandfather Arkwright always told her to “hitch [her] wagon to a star,” and in 1883—at age 23—she boarded a train for Spokane Falls en route to the Coeur d’Alenes. On the westbound train out of Chicago she met Jim Wardner, an entrepreneur and town planner. He was promoting his new townsite on the south fork of the Coeur d’Alene River, and in the course of the trip May agreed to work in his cafe at Wardner Junction.

By working hard and saving her money, she acquired the means to open her own boardinghouse by the time a narrow gauge railroad was planned to run into the Bunker Hill & Sullivan Mine and on to the town of Burke. Her skill in the kitchen won her a host of customers and friends, including a quiet young railroad engineer named Levi Hutton.

Hutton and his locomotive were familiar and popular figures in Idaho’s silver valley. He had been orphaned at the age of six and badly treated by the uncle with whom he was sent to live. While opposites may indeed attract, May Arkwright and Levi Hutton had one thing in common—their far from idyllic childhoods. They were married on Thanksgiving Day in 1887 and soon moved to Wallace, where May opened a dining room.

Eastern capital controlled most of the mining in the Coeur d’Alenes, and working conditions and labor relations in Idaho’s silver district turned May into a staunch champion of labor. Threats of violence hung over the labor scene in 1899 when union miners struck the Bunker Hill over wages.

The Mine Owners Association had been waging covert warfare against the union—and the men retaliated on April 29, 1899, when nearly three-quarters of the 1,500 mine workers did not show up for work. Men wearing bandana masks over their faces commandeered Levi Hutton’s train. Others
climbed on board as they headed to the railroad's powder house. There they picked up a load of dynamite, stuck a gun in Levi's ribs, and ordered him to take them to Kellogg, where about 200 armed men got off and pushed on toward the Bunker Hill Mine.

The mine blew up at around two in the afternoon—and the blast was felt for miles. Five days later Governor Frank Steunenberg declared martial law. Federal troops herded all men holding union cards into an enclosure at Wardner. The hijacked Levi Hutton ended up in the "bull pen" as well. He could not—or would not—identify the masked miners; he knew it would be suicidal to do so.

The mine paid the partners a huge amount of work to realize the mine's potential. But work they all did, and by the end of 1903 the mine was yielding a net profit of $40,000 a month. In 1906, the year before the Huttons moved from Wallace, the mine paid the partners $880,000. By 1925, before the mine was worked out and closed down, the Huttons' investment in the Hercules Mine owners would be those first few people who struck the mother lode at the fledgling Microsoft.

Few people in the Coeur d'Alenes at that time could resist keeping an eye on the main chance, and in 1889 two young men had optimistically staked a claim that they named the Hercules Mine. Levi Hutton had worked with them at the claim when he was not running his locomotive. He and May had saved enough from her earnings at the dining room and his with the Northern Pacific to invest in the Hercules. They purchased a 3/32 share for $880. Their stake finally amounted to about a 10 percent interest.

On June 2, 1901, after years of hard, grueling labor, the men broke through to a vein of ore that would change all their lives. May Hutton followed developments at the Hercules and kept the miners well fed when they gathered each evening in her dining room to eat supper and discuss their plans. It still took a huge amount of work to realize the mine's potential. But work they all did, and by the end of 1903 the mine was yielding a net profit of $40,000 a month. In 1906, the year before the Huttons moved from Wallace, the mine paid the partners $880,000. By 1925, before the mine was worked out and closed down, the Huttons' investment in the Hercules Mine owners would be those first few people who struck the mother lode at the fledgling Microsoft.

May Hutton did not even come close to the 19th-century ideal of genteel American womanhood. A large woman, she was vocal and opinionated and able to hold her own in the earthy give-and-take of life in the Coeur d' Alenes. When Levi landed in the stockade she lost no time in trying to free him, making daily visits to the prisoners and badgering the authorities. In their own salty language she harangued the military guards. Levi was finally released, but his failure to cooperate cost him his job with the Northern Pacific. This meant he was now free to work full-time at a mine claim in which he and his wife had a minority interest.

May Hutton was now completely free to pursue the causes she cared passionately about. She met the same rebuffs from society leaders in Spokane that had assailed her in Wallace, but she plunged undeterred into political and suffrage activities. One who knew them at the time said that Levi Hutton was the ideal husband for May. He understood her enthusiasms, supported her in most of them, and rarely tried to hold her back as she forged ahead. Reportedly, he only admonished her not to make "a holy show" of herself.

An affirmed and committed Democrat, May Hutton had run for the Idaho
state senate from heavily Republican Shoshone County in 1904 and lost by a narrow 80-vote margin. She had taken part in the successful Idaho women's suffrage campaign, and gaining the right for women to vote in Washington became her paramount goal. She recruited large numbers to the cause, and the Spokane Equal Suffrage Association grew to be the largest such group in the state.

Puget Sound-based followers of Emma Smith DeVoe, the suffrage leader whom May knew from her Idaho activities, soon saw her as a threat to their prestige and power. Things took an ugly turn when DeVoe supporters dug for scandal in her past and tried to expel her from the state organization. In 1909 the treasurer of the state association returned May's dues with a note saying that she was ineligible for membership because of "your habitual use of profane and obscene language and of your record in Idaho as shown by pictures and other evidence placed in my hands by persons who are familiar with your former life and reputation." May was angry, to say the least, but it took more than that to deter the woman who had confronted martial law and survived the rigors of the mining frontier—she promptly organized the Washington Political Equality League and kept the suffrage issue alive in eastern Washington.

May Hutton had wanted to take the suffrage battle into the arena of party politics. This was one major bone of contention for the DeVoe faction in western Washington, who wanted to keep the suffrage issue above politics. As a delegate to the Democratic Party's 1912 state convention in Walla Walla, May cast her vote for William Jennings Bryan and, not surprisingly, his support for free and unlimited coinage of silver. The convention did not give Bryan its dues, but it did send May Arkwright Hutton on to Baltimore, making her the first woman ever named a delegate to a Democratic National Convention.

Woodrow Wilson won the party's nomination in Baltimore, where May rubbed shoulders with the political elite. She won national celebrity and did as she pleased; her colorful reputation had preceded her. The eastern press found her irresistible and added to her reputation by reporting such escapades as doing her own laundry and hanging it from her hotel window.

**But long before her fling in Baltimore, May Hutton had left her charitable mark on Spokane.** Soon after the she and Levi moved from Wallace, May wrote to a friend there that they intended to make friends in Spokane and "work for the betterment of humanity." The couple's charitable works defined the rest of their lives.

Levi joined in his wife's humanitarian work, but she emphatically maintained, "I look after the charitable donations of the Hutton family," and one who knew them well said later that often May was the first to move into action. Early on she discovered Spokane's Florence Crittenton Home for unwed mothers. She related sympathetically to the young women there and to the stigma of disgrace that unmarried mothers bore in those days. She provided something of a matrimonial bureau for them—combining the surrounding farms and ranches to find them suitable husbands—and the Huttons' home became the site of many of their weddings. She maintained a long affiliation with the Crittenton Home board of trustees, and Levi served as its treasurer for years.

Soon after moving to Spokane May Hutton befriended the Home of the Friendless—the orphanage maintained by the Ladies' Benevolent Society. In the spring of 1908 she wrote to a suffrage colleague, "All energies are directed this week toward raising $40,000 for the Home of the Friendless in Spokane." The orphaned Levi Hutton related as sympathetically to the children there as had his wife to the Florence Crittenton women. When she became involved, he too embarked on a close and generous association with the orphanage, which was soon renamed the Spokane Children's Home.

May continued her push for reform. After the suffrage victory in 1910 she had been one of the first women to serve on a Spokane County jury; she spearheaded the creation of Spokane's juvenile court and the drive to secure matrons to supervise female prisoners in the city jail. The mayor appointed her to her newly established city charities committee. Though they often disagreed, he asked her to stay on when her term expired. He said there was no one with "her common horse sense and warm heart" to replace her.

May Hutton's reach extended far beyond Spokane—she was an inveterate letter writer, and the collection of her letters at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture in Spokane is a gold mine for researchers. One of the Women's History Consortium's projects in celebration of the Washington women's suffrage centennial has been to scan the letters for online retrieval. The letters show that May's correspondents ranged across a broad spectrum and included such luminaries as John D. Rockefeller, William Jennings Bryan, Hiram Chittenden, and William O. Borah.

When she returned from Baltimore after the 1912 Democratic National Convention, May and Levi started construction of their dream home—a stately white colonial structure at 17th Avenue and Crestline. Completed in early 1914, it cost an incredible sum for the time—$68,000. The former Iowa farm boy bought enough land to build a small barn and keep a cow so that the one-time boardinghouse cook could have all the fresh cream she desired. They had more land than they could utilize and, in typical fashion, donated a large portion east of the house for the Lincoln Park...
playground—a gift to the children of Spokane that endures today.

Reveling in her new home, May Hutton held a housewarming for 2,000 guests that July. By then, though, her health had begun to decline. Later that summer she suffered a third bout with the kidney affliction known as Bright's disease, which left her bedridden.

She had become such a potential force in national politics that William Jennings Bryan, who had recently resigned as President Wilson's secretary of state, paid a visit to her sickbed during a peace-oriented tour of the West. Her condition improved to some extent, and she even organized another action group—Spokane Women for World Peace. The illness, however, had a devastating effect. Her "last hurrah" was to host a lawn party for delegates to the convention of the State Federation of Women's Clubs in the summer of 1915.

That autumn, on the afternoon of October 5, May was upbeat as always when she received friends at home, but early the following morning she died peacefully in her sleep. The funeral, held in the Huttons' home alongside Lincoln Park, drew a huge throng. The press reported that the crowd reflected a cross-section of Spokane, "society women and working girls, businessmen, rough miners and men from skid row, and young girls with babies in their arms and tears in their eyes. They had all come to say goodbye to a friend." People who over the years had grown to appreciate her goodness and the city where elite society had once spurned her now hailed May Hutton as "author, suffragist, philosopher, humanitarian, and probably one of the best-known women in the great northwest...[who] in Spokane was generally beloved for her charitable and public-spirited activities."

The house itself was flooded with floral tributes that day—including an enormous spray of red roses from the Ladies' Benevolent Society.

The widowed Levi Hutton continued his generous support of the Spokane Children's Home. In May 1917 he received a thank-you note from its secretary: "How good it was of you, Mr. Hutton, to again remember the Spokane Children's Home with the magnificent present of $100.00...[how] gratifying to the Ladies' Benevolent Society to have such a thoroughly good and loyal friend." That same month he bought a new Pierce-Arrow, had his old car repaired and painted, and gave it to the society. They immediately voted "to sell the horse and wagon [since the car will facilitate] gathering up things" such as donated clothing.

Bigger and better things were to come from Levi Hutton—he volunteered his
office in the Hutton Building for the organization’s meetings, and after one of those meetings, during which they discussed their $5,000 mortgage on the Children’s Home building, Hutton paid it in full.

In a small record book that he kept, Hutton wrote on August 27, 1917: “I have this day purchased one hundred eleven acres of land ten miles north east of Spokane for a place to build an orphan’s home.” He told the press, “I am giving the children’s home to be erected on the site to the Ladies’ Benevolent Society of Spokane without any strings.” Emphasizing that he was building a home, he said:

*I have a warm place in my heart for orphans because I know what it means to be an orphan…. No orphan in the Inland Empire will be turned away…. no matter what his sect, creed or color may be. It will be a real home for boys and girls…. My ambition had always been to build such a home and when I met with the Ladies’ Benevolent Society….and laid my plan before them, they approved it and the idea of my youth began to bear fruit.

To say that the ladies approved it understates their reaction. The group’s September meeting was described in the minutes as “a regular jubilee.” Levi Hutton had no reservations or qualms about dealing with women on an equal footing. He closely involved the board’s ladies in planning for the new home in the valley. He wanted them to understand all the plans and satisfy his goal of bringing a mother’s touch to his home for children, which he had decided to call the Hutton Settlement. The ladies made major design and furnishing decisions and devised their own committee system for operating the home, which continues in practice today.

Five buildings went up in the Spokane Valley—an administration building and four fine residences that still are known as “the cottages.” They were designed by architect Harold Whitehouse, whose list of credits includes Spokane’s glorious Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Seattle’s Church of the Epiphany, and academic buildings for both the University of Washington and Washington State University. Whitehouse’s settlement buildings received national recognition in 1920 from Architectural Forum when that prestigious journal ran a three-part account of the campus’s planning and construction.

HUTTON TOOK quiet pride in his creation as it rose in the shadow of the foothills, not far from the Spokane River. Whitehouse did everything possible to meet Hutton’s wish for a “homelike atmosphere.” Each cottage—two for boys, two for girls—accommodated 25 children. One matron presided in each cottage. All other staff lived in the administration building, which contained a combination auditorium-gymnasium and a fully equipped infirmary. The Hutton Settlement was managed by a resident superintendent on the campus and an administrator in town with offices in the Hutton Building. Levi himself filled the latter role. He visited the campus frequently, and the children living there in the 1920s called him “Daddy Hutton.”

His own farming background and strong work ethic determined that the Hutton Settlement would essentially be a working farm. In the years prior to World War II boys were supervised by a resident farmer as they worked in the fields and cared for the cattle, hogs, and chickens. The girls gathered produce from the huge garden and helped with canning and preserving under the watchful eyes of their cottage matrons. During the school year the children attended public schools in the area, and the ladies on the board encouraged and supported those who qualified for college or vocational school after their graduation from West Valley High School.

Some who grew up in the Hutton Settlement during the 1920s and 1930s remembered sledding in the winter, playing indoors in the cottage basements and screened porches, and...
spending long summer evenings in popular activities like run-sheep-run, red rover, and dodgeball. The addition of an outdoor swimming pool in the mid 1920s provided welcome relief during the hot Spokane Valley summers.

In February 1919—during the final phase of planning for the new home—the board received a severe blow with the sudden death of its president, Fannie Shaw Lewis, who epitomized board dedication and involvement. Shortly after the Lewises’ move to Spokane in 1884, Fannie had joined the Ladies’ Benevolent Society, and she had been its president since 1907. From Levi Hutton’s first suggestion of a new children’s home, she had worked with him and Harold Whitehouse to create the Hutton Settlement. The board elected Agnes Cowley Paine to succeed her. She was reluctant to accept, but after thinking it over she agreed that, “for the sake of the little children,” she would do all she could. Her contributions to the Hutton Settlement turned out to be monumental.

In turning to Agnes Cowley Paine, the Ladies’ Benevolent Society tapped deep into Spokane history. The Cowleys were among the first non-native families to settle Spokane. Agnes Cowley was born in 1873 into an exceptional family. Her college-educated mother and her father, an ordained minister, created a home that radiated a deep sense of mission, a love of learning, and an advanced regard for the rights and abilities of women.

As president and prototypical Hutton Settlement board member, Agnes Paine embodied the spirit and qualities that have sustained the Hutton Settlement. Strong, educated, and caring women have followed her onto the board, including her own daughter—Margaret Paine Cowles—who joined the settlement board in 1935 and served for 56 years. Board membership is a lifetime commitment, and the board ladies’ stewardship has been shrewd and prudent. In running the Hutton Settlement they have been guided by Levi Hutton’s deed of trust, which transferred to them not only the property in the valley but all of Hutton’s real estate holdings in the city as well—and they were considerable.

The home opened in November 1919; incorporation followed in January 1920. The board women had continued to run the Spokane Children’s Home while dealing with construction and design decisions regarding the new facilities. Hutton Settlement and Benevolent Society board rosters overlapped for quite some time—Agnes Paine served as president of both boards until 1921. Dual memberships gradually tapered off, but a few Hutton Settlement charter board members stayed with both organizations into the mid 1930s.

Any have assumed that Levi Hutton, in building the Hutton Settlement, was simply carrying out his wife’s wishes—that the two of them planned it or that he built it in memory of her. That was not so. While it certainly reflected May Hutton’s interests and sympathies, the Hutton Settlement was Levi’s creation. In a letter to Spokane’s Spokesman-Review, he stated that the settlement was his idea and that he and May had never discussed establishing a children’s home. But of the woman who had said she looked after the charitable donations of the Hutton family, he remarked, “I am sure were she here today she would heartily approve all I have done.”

The Huttons were an unlikely duo—the brash and resolute May Arkwright and the mild-mannered, hard-working Levi who toiled for years in the Hercules mine. They were of like mind, however, when it came to sharing their wealth with Spokane and working with aggressive dedication for the causes they believed in. May Hutton’s discovery and support of the Home of the Friendless had linked Levi to its all-woman board. No one in Spokane at the turn of the 20th century could possibly have imagined the enduring philanthropic legacy that would arise from that meeting of a “Diamond in the Rough” with “Lady Bountiful.”

As an independent historian Doris Pieroth has long been active in Washington’s heritage community and written a number of books and articles on women’s history topics. This essay is taken from her June 2008 Curtiss Hill Lecture, presented at the Washington State Historical Society’s annual membership meeting.
Exhibitors at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle in 1909 produced huge amounts of promotional material for free distribution. The Canadian government, most western states, and a wide variety of manufacturers were among those who printed and distributed unknown quantities of folders, brochures, pamphlets, and booklets. Nearly every county in Washington established an AYP committee to gather and publish glowing reports with the aim of attracting potential settlers. The pamphlets illustrated here are just two of the many examples in the Historical Society's collection. Published by the Grant and Lincoln County AYP committees, they are fine examples of the "boomer" literature from a time when dry land, irrigated farming, and available land were an attractive combination, and the AYP Exposition was the perfect outlet.
The seal of a city speaks to inhabitants and visitors alike as an icon, a historical marker, a symbol that defines the city and gives it character. How such a design becomes the accepted standard, however, involves characteristics inherent to many creative public works. Both the selection procedure and the design itself may be subject to controversy, debate, and politicization. This was very much the case for artist James A. Wehn, popularly referred to in his day as "the first sculptor of Seattle." He put a great deal of energy and effort into creating a city seal for Seattle in the first part of the 20th century. Though he eventually succeeded, his design work had to overcome many hurdles, not the least of which was the city government itself.

The earliest official record of a City of Seattle seal dates to July 29, 1899, with the adoption of city ordinance no. 5478. This first seal sported no symbol and little design. More than anything it resembled a notary's emblem, consisting entirely of a circular arrangement of the words "The City of Seattle—Washington—Corporate Seal." In the years following, the simplistic nature of this design was repeatedly called into question.

Efforts to have a more graphic seal initially included a 1909 competition sponsored by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. A corresponding city council resolution on February 15 of that year established three prizes to be awarded for designs received from the public. No further action came about as far as a new seal, however, and an account of the 1909 design competition in the Chief Seattle Tilikum relates that "through mismanagement of the competition and conflict with the mayor's office no seal was adopted by city officials."

Meanwhile, the idea of a new seal was being considered by other interests in the city. James A. Wehn, a young sculptor who had been awarded the city's first public sculpture commission—a statue and monument honoring Chief Seattle—had been thinking about the possibility of including a city seal in the base of his statue. As part of his commission Wehn worked with a committee of artists and prominent citizens, including the eminent Pacific Northwest historian Clarence B. Bagley. The completed statue was well-received and widely acclaimed as Seattle's "first public sculpture," but a seal was not incorporated into the base. This may have had something to do with the fact that Seattle had five different mayors in the five years (1907–1912) Wehn worked on the statue project: William Hickman Moore, John F. Miller, Hiram C. Gill, George W. Dilling, and finally George F. Cotterill, who accepted the statue on behalf of the city. As had been the case in 1909 with the Post-Intelligencer design competition, interest
From the earliest years of his training as an artist, Wehn dedicated himself to realism and classical ideals...
that his design had garnered support from historian Clarence B. Bagley and the city's comptroller, Harold Carroll, whom Wehn referred to as "the custodian of seals for the City."

A letter dated October 26, 1928, from Charles Stimson to Mayor Edwards outlined how Wehn's design had been reviewed and approved by the CAC and the Seattle Fine Arts Society. Stimson received a favorable reply from the mayor's office and was instructed to send the design on to W. D. Barkhuff, chairman of a special committee for the mayor's office, for further consideration. Several months later Stimson emphasized in a letter to Barkhuff: "The present city seal is not in keeping with the dignity of this city and our committee felt that such a seal would be advisable for the city to have."

In a follow-up letter to Barkhuff dated January 8, 1929, and timed to bolster Stimson's message, Wehn further explained the symbolic emphasis of his design as well as the details of his investigation into a seal for the city: "The inception of this design came about while I was modeling the new light standard for the City. Upon the base of the standard was a suitable place for such a design. Upon investigation it was found that the City had no seal other than the notary seal type."

In a November 18, 1962, Seattle Times interview, Wehn related that the design submitted to Barkhuff for consideration in December 1928 languished in the mayor's office. It was another five years before the existing city seal again came under scrutiny by Seattle's elected officials, this time at the prompting of another Wehn ally—arts patron and advocate Richard E. Fuller.

The year 1933 saw the successful completion of a new Seattle Art Museum at Volunteer Park, another milestone in the development of the city as a center for artistic and cultural activity. Carl Gould designed the new museum and Richard Fuller provided financial backing. While not directly involved with the museum's design, Wehn approached Fuller and Gould with the observation that the cornerstone of the new building would be an excellent place for a city seal.

Further discussions about the prospect of a cornerstone seal amongst Wehn, Fuller, and other members of the Seattle arts community proved fruitful. Both Gould and James Delmage (J. D.) Ross—often called "The Father of City Light"—became instrumental allies in Wehn's continued effort to provide the city with a design worthy of an official seal designation, both in terms of its artistic merit and emblematic authority. To this end, in the spring of 1933 Gould organized an art committee made up of five local artists and prominent Seattle citizens whose job it would be to study the issue of an official city seal, review designs, and make a recommendation to the mayor's office and the city council. J. D. Ross was on the newly formed committee, which was nearly identical in purpose to the Civic Arts Committee of 1928.

Wehn's design for a city seal was similar to the one he had proposed in 1928. At its center was a profile of Chief Seattle, whom the artist continued to regard as central to Seattle's founding and historical identity. J. D. Ross had suggested to him that the figure should be "a noncontroversial subject" and that "one pioneer could not be singled out without offending others." From this standpoint, a profile of the Suquamish chief was an excellent choice. Beyond all that, the image of Chief Seattle was stamped in Wehn's memory from the time when, as a young boy in 1896, he took a trip with his father and mother to visit Suquamish, "where a great number of Indians lived and where Chief Seattle is buried."

The figure of the chief was not the only element to receive scrutiny by the art committee in 1933. One element that drew the members' attention was the pair of dolphins. Committee members wondered whether salmon or even trout might be more appropriate and whether the dolphin designs looked too modern or abstract. In defense of the design, Wehn reiterated his former validation of the dolphins as representative of a seaport community and stated that the dolphin design reflected an effort "to keep up with the times."

In all, the art committee reviewed five drawings by Wehn, each with slight variations, over a two-month series of meetings. By mid 1933 the group's members agreed that the design was ready for consideration by the Seattle City Council. Once again Richard Fuller was to be the emissary for...
The councilman had his own idea for a city seal, preferring "a
design presented of Arthur A. Denny, the city's foremost pioneer." The idea of having an official Seattle seal with which to adorn the cornerstone of the art museum was indeed raised in city council sessions, according to a 1933 article that covered council proceedings. Councilman Frank J. Laube called for a proposal to invite local artists to submit designs and form a city council committee tasked with reviewing submissions and making a recommendation. Laube said he initially called on Harold Carroll for an official copy of the city seal to place on the art museum's cornerstone, only to be informed by Carroll that no such design existed. The councilman had his own idea for a city seal, preferring "a design recently used by a local publisher which featured a bust of Arthur A. Denny, the city's foremost pioneer."

Fuller urged the mayor to present the design to the city council. Fuller's public status as president and director of the new Seattle Art Museum was not lost on Mayor Dore. However, other interests at the city council level were also at play with regard to an official seal, and long-time city comptroller Harold Carroll was beginning to weigh in on the matter.

The idea of having an official Seattle seal with which to adorn the cornerstone of the art museum was indeed raised in city council sessions, according to a 1933 Post-Intelligencer article that covered council proceedings. Councilman Frank J. Laube called for a proposal to invite local artists to submit designs and form a city council committee tasked with reviewing submissions and making a recommendation. Laube said he initially called on Harold Carroll for an official copy of the city seal to place on the art museum's cornerstone, only to be informed by Carroll that no such design existed. The councilman had his own idea for a city seal, preferring "a design recently used by a local publisher which featured a bust of Arthur A. Denny, the city's foremost pioneer."

It is clear from the 1933 record that, despite the offer of Wehn's design and the appealing prospect of having a city seal to affix to the art museum's cornerstone, the city council chose not to spend time reviewing prospective seal designs—by James Wehn or anyone else. Some council members felt it was not advantageous to have Wehn's design presented at that time and argued against diverting city funds from street repairs, sewer projects, and other city public works to pay for a seal. This proved to be a major point in favor of Carroll's proposal, for which he sought city council approval three years later.

Wehn, meanwhile, was busy with other projects. Between 1933 and 1936 he produced a sculptural piece for the Longview Post Office, a bust of Dr. David S. Maynard for Harborview Hospital, and a memorial to his friend J. D. Ross for the Seattle City Light Building. In 1935 the University of Washington commemorated the centennial of the death of Lafayette (the French general who served under George Washington during the Revolutionary War), and Wehn, an admirer of French art, contributed a medallion of his own design to the celebration.

By 1936 the topic of an official seal was once again gaining momentum in city government. At the forefront of this renewed effort stood Harold Carroll, who had previously supported Wehn's seal design. This time, however, Carroll had enlisted the design skills of one A. J. Mahoney to generate a new seal design. Carroll approached the mayor's office with the initial Mahoney design in the spring of 1936. The media now referred to the recurrent subject of a corporate seal as an "intermittent agitation of many years." An article in the June 18, 1936, Seattle Times noted that Mayor Dore gave the Mahoney design a warm reception:

The mayor had before him today an attractive design for the proposed official ornament, with a picturesque etching of old Chief Seattle in the center. He plans to send it to the city council for consideration. This design was prepared by A. J. Mahoney, structural draftsman in the City Engineering Department, at the request of City Comptroller Harry W. Carroll, who said he had been urging adoption of an appropriate seal for about twenty-five years.

The article made no mention of the seal designs James Wehn had previously submitted. It appears that Mahoney's design had the mayor's tacit endorsement and only lacked the city council's official approval. In his 1962 history of the City of Seattle seal, Wehn noted that, "while there was a competition, to everyone's surprise only one other design was submitted: this was from the City Engineer's Office." Wehn's design continued to receive support from members of the Seattle art community, including Fuller and the art committee members who had reviewed his designs in 1933. Fuller, in particular, maintained close ties with Judge Austin E. Griffiths, who was city council president in 1936. Wehn would need the judge's support if he were to pose a challenge to the Mahoney-Carroll design.
Carroll's plan for submitting the Mahoney design to the city council moved forward, with a meeting of the council's Finance Committee scheduled for June 24, 1936, to review designs. This would be Wehn's next opportunity to present the case for his design, as Mayor Dore acknowledged in a June 22 letter wherein he advised the council members that "the need for it [a city seal] can be discussed more fully and more intelligently by Mr. Carroll than anyone else." Dore added that "this office has been informed that persons interested in the artistic life of the city want an opportunity to furnish other designs for the city seal."

Mahoney's drawing presented a full-face view of Chief Seattle in the center with "Seal of the City of Seattle Washington" around the outer border and the words "Incorporated 1869 / Chief Seattle" around an inner border. Wehn's design, the one approved by the art committee in 1933, offered a profile view of Chief Seattle in the center with the twin dolphins at the bottom. The border text read "Corporate Seal of the City of Seattle - 1869." The differences between these two designs became a major element in the city council's seal selection deliberations.

Present at the council's June 24 meeting to discuss the seal designs were James Wehn and long-time friends and supporters Milton Dix and E. L. Gale. Nine "city fathers" also attended, including Judge Griffiths, presiding. Neither Carroll nor Mahoney attended this meeting. The "perturbed committee of art lovers," as they were called in a follow-up Post-Intelligencer story the next day, was allowed to make its case before those assembled. Each spoke in turn beginning with Wehn, who had brought a copy of the Mahoney-Carroll design to the meeting to illustrate his points. The fact that the city council had received the Mahoney-Carroll design prior to the meeting, along with the mayor's endorsement, meant that Wehn and his supporters would need to make a compelling case.

In his remarks to the assembled council Wehn stressed that his design offered lasting value in terms of its composition and its realistic and dignified rendering of Chief Seattle's features. He pointed to his earlier studies of Native Americans as well as his many public works of Indian figures—including the Chief Seattle statue at Tilticum Place—as indicative of his knowledge and artistic abilities in this regard.

Both Dix and Gale then spoke in turn, reemphasizing the need for a seal design of artistic merit that rendered the central figure in either three-quarters- or full-profile. The Mahoney-Carroll design, they noted, showed the face of Chief Seattle in full view. Not only did it not adhere to artistic conventions for such a design, they argued passionately, it was also imperfect: the nose was askew. They pointed out that the Mahoney-Carroll design was actually based on photos of an earlier seal James Wehn had done as a mold and therefore not an original design.
that the figure was indeed Chief Seattle, the council members unanimously voiced their adoption of the design as the city government’s official seal. A formal ordinance of adoption for the seal design would be pending, they said.

Carroll was undeterred by the outcome of the June 24 meeting. He wasted no time afterward in having Mahoney prepare another drawing, this time with a three-quarter profile of Chief Seattle. With the submission of this revised design, he also petitioned the city council to postpone voting on an ordinance adopting Wehn’s seal in order to allow time for consideration of this new design. Wehn’s personal notes from this time regarding the ongoing seal debate include a handwritten quote attributed to Woodrow Wilson as to the official function of a comptroller: “to regulate the assessments, collection, and disbursement of the public money.”

The comptroller succeeded in prolonging the city council debate. As a result, a second meeting took place to bring about a final resolution to the issue. It was held July 13, ostensibly for the purpose of making a formal motion to accept the Wehn design. Richard Fuller himself attended along with Milton Dix and E. L. Gale. Wehn was not present, but both Carroll and Mahoney were there to present a case for their revised seal design.

Once again Dix and Gale spoke of the Wehn design’s artistic merits, which had already been approved unanimously in the previous council meeting. They also pointed out that Carroll’s proposed design, given its overall composition, would be less practical for engraving on official papers. Fuller addressed the matter of financial backing for the seal project, and reiterated his earlier offer. Mahoney and Carroll were given an opportunity to make a case for their design. Neither of them refuted the earlier claim that Mahoney’s first submission was not an original design. The city council adopted Wehn’s design on the spot, by a vote of 8 to 1; council member Robert H. Harlin’s was the lone dissenting vote.

In the end, press reports paint a picture of Carroll as a good sport following the city council’s final decision. He immediately went over to the opposing group, shaking hands with each of them and commending them “on their clean, ethical fight in the interest of their artistic ideas.” As Fuller had promised, one seal was cast in bronze, mounted on native wood, and presented to Mayor Dore in a public ceremony commemorating the Chief Seattle monument at Tillikum Place. The other plaque was cast in aluminum and installed on the Seattle Art Museum’s cornerstone on January 14, 1937.

On January 11, 1937, ordinance no. 67033 repealed the old notary-type seal by adopting James Wehn’s seal design. Mayor Dore approved the ordinance the following day and sent the sculptor a letter the day after that expressing his thanks for the final design. Wehn, in his turn, sent a letter to his friend E. L. Gale thanking him for his timely intercession and for lending his support to the greater cause:

What I have expressed to you before, I wish to repeat—that regardless of the artistic merits of the Seal, which I designed and modeled, without your wonderful cooperation and loyalty during the struggle with the city council for the adoption of this work of art, it may again have been delayed for a period of years, as has happened in the past. Generally, the business man’s soul is so steeped in commercialism that to arouse his interest in art is next to impossible; seldom has it been my lot to associate with one who’s [sic] finer nature so generously responded to the struggle of art to hand on to posterity some worthy work.

James Wehn died on October 2, 1973. For 66 years the “first sculptor of Seattle” created monuments, bronze and stone busts, and architectural enhancements; many of these are now scattered throughout the city. Wehn left a legacy in Washington of over 100 public works plus close to 1,000 other studies, sculptures, sketches, and assorted media works now housed in the Washington State Historical Society’s permanent collection.

The artist’s death coincided with a renewed effort by the Seattle Board of Public Works to create a new city symbol and develop a “corporate identity program.”

In response to this perceived need for city government to have a cohesive look throughout its various departments, the David Strong Design Group unveiled a trio of new logos in July 1974. One of these, based on Wehn’s official seal design, presented a silhouette profile of Chief Seattle, albeit rendered with highly stylized lines and curves. The other two logos, made for Seattle City Light and Seattle Parks, featured simplified designs of a sun and a plant, respectively. The Strong Group intended that the department logos would offer unique identity for the individual city departments and the Chief Seattle logo would find more general use “on such things as standard memo forms.”

Today an aluminum plaque of the Strong Group’s 1974 Chief Seattle seal design and a wood carving of Wehn’s original 1936 design adorn the Seattle City Council chambers and the Office of the Mayor, respectively. That James Wehn created a design of both unique character and controversy is demonstrated through the historical process of its acceptance and its pervasiveness as an enduring symbol for the City of Seattle. The artist’s own commentary on this is given voice in this revision of a Gautier quote: “All passes except Deathless art alone—the Bronze survives the ruined throne.”

Fred Poyner IV is the registrar and digital assets manager for the Washington State Historical Society and has served as both a curator and art historian in the Pacific Northwest since 1992. He is currently working on a biography of James Wehn and his contributions to Washington’s public art.
These circus posters and many others in the Washington State Historical Society's collection can be viewed and ordered online at WashingtonHistory.org. Just click on Research WA and select Image Collections or Collections Catalog, then type in a search for “circus posters.”
In the night of November 6, 1920, a thin man stepped off the late train at Tacoma's Union Station. His face was illuminated for a moment as he lit a cigarette and watched a streetcar pass on rain-slicked Pacific Avenue. In the match's amber light, anyone watching him from across the street could have confirmed his identity as Dashiell Hammett, a Pinkerton detective and sickly veteran of World War I.

Hammett was entering the city during a period of social turmoil, political corruption, and extraordinary violence. He was 26, weary beyond his years, and far from realizing that the events of the next few months would help give rise to a new form of modern American fiction.

That winter in Tacoma supplied important elements in a creative reservoir that Dashiell Hammett often returned to as he wrote almost dozens of short stories and five major novels, including his masterpiece—The Maltese Falcon. Hammett is generally credited with creating modern American detective fiction and bringing realism to mystery writing. He conceived the hardboiled, cynical private detective operating in a dark urban landscape where both crooks and cops are lawless and situational ethics and quick wits are the best defense. This characterization became a cultural archetype familiar in literature, radio, film, television, and even computer games.

Dashiell Hammett was in Tacoma for treatment of tuberculosis at the Cushman Institute, a brand new U.S. Public Health Service hospital on McKinley Hill. He was coming off a stint with the Pinkerton Detective Agency, during which he worked inside the unsettled labor dispute between mine owners and the radical Industrial Workers of the World in Butte, Montana. When he began coughing blood and his weight dropped below 130 pounds, he was sent to Tacoma and the newly opened hospital specializing in shell-shock veterans and "lungers" with TB.

Looking back on his winter in Tacoma, Hammett recalled a life that moved from hospital to library to downtown speakeasies and movie houses. He remembered reading three or four newspapers every morning and then poring through books on medieval history, avian migration, and astronomical observation in the afternoon. He became a student of all things and an attentive witness to the details and realities of Tacoma's public streets and private places.

The Tacoma Hammett found that winter was emerging into modernity with automobiles rushing past trolleys and skyscrapers punching up a new skyline. Garish chasing lights on Broadway lured audiences into the Pantages, Rialto, Strand, Apollo, Victory, Hippodrome, Colonial, and Tacoma theaters. In Japantown alone there were 50 hotels, 20 restaurants, and a curious block of windowless barber shops, medicinal herb dealers, and heavily trafficked, nondescript shops.

A heavy drinker, Hammett found that Tacoma during Prohibition was not a bad place to be. Soft drink parlors, pool halls, and all-night drugstores were the usual fronts for drinking establishments, but below Pacific Avenue, in the blocks controlled by Peter Sandberg and lower profile gangsters, one could even get a bottle from the dry cleaner. Adult entertainment was a significant part of the downtown Tacoma business economy, and a fair share of the earnings went to city hall, the mayor's office, and the public safety commissioner.

Hammett saw it all close up and doubtless followed the November 25 story in the Tacoma News Tribune of three gunmen who robbed a Japanese business of $25,000. He probably began to follow a string of stories that provided a blunt diary of the city's descent into a season of violence. The November 29 Daily Ledger reported: "43 Jailed in Tacoma Police Raids" while the city hall-aligned Tribune reported that Police Chief Harry Smith "declares Tacoma Underworld is Going to be Given a Thorough Cleaning."

Three days later the Ledger headline blared, "Woman Murdered, Shot in Apartment at 1017 South J St.," followed on December 6 with "Masked Bandit slain in Gun Duel at Pool Hall." On December 9 the Ledger banner read: "3 Tacomaans shot by gunman; 2 may die." For Hammett, surrounded by day with the sick and wounded soldiers of the Great War and by night with the busy streets of anonymous faces, it was both reality and inspiration.
On December 15 a downtown shooting of a very different nature appeared in the headlines. A young beat cop in the dangerous neighborhood around 19th and Jefferson called sharply to a man in dark clothes coming toward him around eight o’clock in the evening, just after an armed robbery had been reported nearby. The man began to run away, and after firing a couple warning shots in the air, the officer fired into the street near the runner, some 100 yards away. The bullet sparked on the wet street like a flint on stone and ricocheted up, mortally wounding the man. The patrolman, W. H. Craft, discovered that the victim, not recognizing Craft as an officer, simply fled out of fear of being robbed. The innocent man turned out to be a father of six—a carpenter at Tacoma’s St. Paul Mill out for a walk to meet two of his sons. The police inquiry that followed exonerated the young policeman, but within a year he had left the police force and disappeared from city directories and public records.

The news was back to bloody normal on the day following this tragic shooting. The December 16 Ledger announced: “Bandits Murder Tacoma Grocer in His Store” and “Tacoma Woman Kills Husband with Axe.” Both newspapers reported on the police chief’s pronouncement: “Time for Shotgun Patrols,” which meant the police were switching to “cars and sawed-off shotguns.” The headlines leading up to Christmas 1920 reported: “Police Shotgun Car Gets into Action in Tacoma” and quoted Mayor C. M. Riddell’s assertion that “more police and strenuous measures needed to cope with crime situation.” Behind the tabloid headlines he heard barroom rumors about election payoffs and bickering among politicos.
on the take. It was a “Nightmare Town,” a title Hammett later used for one of his best-known stories.

During the day Hammett could ride the streetcar to the library; visit People’s Department Store with the pretty nurse from Montana he had met at the hospital, and marvel at the steel girders being erected for the new 16-story Scandinavian American Bank Building under construction at 11th and Pacific.

Amidst his dark fascination with Tacoma’s troubles Hammett regained his strength and fell in love with Nurse Dolan. Their first daughter was conceived that winter in Tacoma, and they were married in July after he was given a clean bill of health.

January 1921 brought unexpected and monumental news to Tacoma, and Hammett would have followed every detail. On January 16 work on the towering steel skeleton of the Scandinavian American Bank halted so abruptly that rivets set in the steel beams 15 stories up were left loose and unhammered. Newspapers up and down the West Coast reported on the bank’s failure—a novelty in good economic times almost a decade before the Great Depression. The Ledger reported on the criminal actions of bank president Ole Larson and repeated brave comments about finishing the building as a hotel and assuring depositors of their money through a governor-appointed bank commissioner. One out of eight Tacomans had their money in the Scandinavian American Bank, and most of it was lost or tied up for years. The City of Tacoma sued and recovered all of the $160,000 it held in the bank. The bare steel frame of the largest skyscraper ever built in Tacoma loomed over the city’s busiest intersection for most of the decade.
It was "the biggest story of the century" in Tacoma, and at its core was a more insidious brand of criminality, the kind that was bred in paneled boardrooms and privileged North End mansions. To Hammett it was a reality where the only good guy was the individual on the street trying to do the right thing without being victimized by crooks, politicians, cops, or the powerful forces in a community.

Hammett's Tacoma winter ended in February 1921 when he was transferred to a public health hospital in San Diego. He and Josephine moved to San Francisco where he again worked for the Pinkerton Agency, then began writing short magazine stories. In the decade that followed Hammett formed a distinct, modern storytelling voice that he used to revisit the dark realities of his days as a detective, barroom listener, and unflinching observer of cities abused by violence, political power, and corruption.

But for readers and critics alike, Hammett has always been an enigma. He produced almost all of his writing in little more than a decade, and then for the rest of his life he watched with little comment as his ideas and characters were copied, exploited, and elevated into public acclaim. His best biographer, Richard Layman, and others believed that the clearest insight into Hammett's personal and literary view of the world lay in the parable Sam Spade relates to fatal beauty Brigid O'Shaughnessy in The Maltese Falcon.

The parable floats disconnected in many ways from the central plot of the book, and it was an obvious cut when John Huston directed the 1941 film version with Humphrey Bogart as Sam Spade. It's a story about random occurrences and a man named Flitcraft whose well-ordered life was redirected one day when a beam falling off a building narrowly missed killing him. A chip off the sidewalk where the beam crashed down flies up and nicks his face like a little red kiss of fate and he reacts by abruptly walking away from his daily existence without giving notice or explanation.

Like many important artistic works, the parable's inspiration can be traced to a specific time and place in history. Hammett specifically set the parable in Tacoma; to read it is to go back to that winter of 1920 where the flint spark of a random bullet changed the life of a young man named Craft, where a steel building frame with loose beams hung over a busy street corner, and where a young writer-to-be discovered a timeless city that will last as long as hardboiled detectives, film noir, and a certain black bird.

Michael Sullivan is a principal with Artifacts, a historic preservation consulting company in Tacoma. He is a former Washington State Historical Society trustee, past president of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, and an advisor to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. An adjunct faculty member at the University of Washington Tacoma, he has taught Pacific Northwest history since 1993.
Changing Perceptions of a Lower Columbia Landmark

Just above Grays Bay, Washington, in Wahkiakum County, Pillar Rock juts out of the Columbia River. William Broughton, of the Vancouver expedition, gave this unusual formation its name on October 25, 1792. The now well-known local landmark has appeared in explorers' journals and numerous publications and illustrations for more than 200 years. During that time the geological feature has changed, along with public perceptions of its place and use in the landscape.

The rock itself is made of basalt and rises approximately 75 feet from the river bottom some 1,000 feet south of the Columbia's northern bank, just off the tiny settlement of Pillar Rock. At one time a village of Wahkiakum Indians occupied that spot. Several versions of Native American legends about Pillar Rock exist. They differ in the details, but the general story line goes something like this: a local man fell in love with a woman from a band that lived across the river, and Coyote turned him and his canoe to stone as a punishment for disobeying tribal law when he tried to elope with her.

William Clark mentioned Pillar Rock in his journal entries for November 7, 1805. The expedition camped near the feature, noting that it was 50 feet high and 20 feet in diameter. Pillar Rock, while a novelty, apparently did not merit a flowery description like the one given to the bluffs on the Missouri River or the Oregon coast. It was simply a handy marker for a campsite they used twice, first on the downstream journey and once again on November 25 when they were heading upstream to cross the river in search of a winter campsite. It was near Pillar Rock that Clark wrote, "O'cean in View! O the joy." Historians have questioned whether they actually did see the ocean from this locale. A glance at Clark's map shows that words similar to the famous expression are written on the mainland near Pillar Rock. Did they climb the steep rocky hillside on the nearby mainland and see the ocean from there? Did they use a telescope in an attempt to spot the goal of their long journey? The nearness of the ocean—the expedition's objective—was obviously much more important to them at that time than an unusual geological feature.

Later explorers also noted the landmark, a term used here in its literal sense. Since transportation was waterborne for much of the 19th century, Pillar Rock was a useful feature with which to orient a vessel in the sandy shoals and foggy reaches of the lower Columbia. An early-20th-century postcard actually named it "Pilot Rock." The basalt column marked a well-known fishing spot as well, appearing in the log of the brig Dryad in the 1830s as the "fishen place."

The Wahkiakum Indian village near Pillar Rock became a salting station for the Hudson's Bay Company's early salmon trade. Indians supplied the company with the raw product—salmon—and the company's employees salted it in barrels. A letter from John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver dated July 6, 1832, to James Birnie at Fort George (Astoria) instructs him as follows: "The Broughton arrived at 2 p.m. and immediately sails on her return to the Pillar Rock with a cargo of empty barrels.... I request you will..."
For much of the 19th century, Pillar Rock was a useful feature with which to orient a vessel in the sandy shoals and foggy reaches of the lower Columbia.

John Dunn, an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) post at Fort George in the 1830s, noted, “So plentiful is the fish, that they supply the white men with it in abundance. It is now made a lucrative article of foreign trade. Indeed large quantities of it are sent to the Sandwich Islands [Hawaii], and other places.” The HBC particularly prized the Pillar Rock fish for its exceptional quality, as it was caught close to the Columbia’s mouth while it still had a high oil content and the flesh had firmed due to the physical transition from the ocean to freshwater. An August 2, 1832, letter from Duncan Finlayson in Oahu to John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver describes the salmon trade:

I may venture to assure you that the salmon will at all times meet with a ready market, and command a good price. I have therefore sent by the Eagle to Fort Langley about 300 bushels salt, so that Mr. MacDonald may increase his quantity to 300 barrels. It may, however, be proper to remark that the Columbia Salmon is much more esteemed and meets with a much better market price than that of Fraser’s River; indeed so confident am I that the Salmon keep an account of the Salmon Trade, so as to ascertain its costs.... We must salt all the salmon we can, and on the return of the Broughton she will be sent to you with a load of empty barrels, and so on till we have sent all we have.”
Translating from the world of commerce to the world of science, naturalist Thomas Nuttall provided the first detailed description of the rock itself when he observed cliff swallows nesting there in the 1830s. "The face of Pillar Rock, an isolated columnar mass of basalt near Chinook, at the estuary of the Columbia, was rendered still more fantastic and picturesque by the nests of the Cliff Swallow with which it was faced; a small colony having taken up their abode here. These were, as usual, made of pellets of mud, enclosed at the top, but without the retort necks." The rock itself, while basalt, is somewhat crumbly, with numerous fissures and cracks. In 1844 explorer Charles Wilkes wrote, "The rock is twenty-five feet high, and only ten feet square at its top; it is composed of conglomerate or pudding stone, and is fast crumbling to pieces. I found great difficulty in ascending it."

An 1851 issue of Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion contained the first known image of Pillar Rock. The magazine was a weekly literary and illustrated magazine. The wood engraving shows Pillar Rock in the grand Romantic tradition as an imposing monument of solid rock, belying its actual more bedraggled appearance. The artist also shows several Indians in a canoe, loggers standing on a log raft adjacent to the rock, fishing vessels and a small schooner—indications of the commerce of the time.

This picture is one of the few illustrations extant of Native Americans in the Wahkiakum area in the mid 19th century. Two of the vessels are flying American flags, an indication of the area's recently changed status. Resolution of the Oregon Country boundary dispute between the United States and Great Britain in 1846 required the Hudson's Bay Company to move its operations north to Canada. The trees on the adjacent hills seem small, perhaps indicating regrowth after early logging. The picture suggests the intrusion of commerce into a scene dominated by the monolith.

In August 1884 Harpers Weekly Magazine published an engraving of a Pillar Rock scene. In a word, the image can be described as busy. Fishing boats fill the water all the way to Tongue Point on the Oregon side of the river. Two stern-wheelers are passing each other through the midst of the fleet. Contrasted with the earlier Victorian drawing-room image,
however, one can see that the fishing boats have multiplied and mechanized travel has arrived on the Columbia—and there are no Indians. By this time great waves of smallpox, malaria, influenza, tuberculosis, and other illnesses—imported along with trade goods in the first half of the 19th century—had decimated the tribal populations along the Columbia River. Their place in the fishing business had largely been taken over by immigrants from the Scandinavian countries, the Dalmatian Coast, Great Britain, and the east coast of North America. Commerce was no longer depicted as an intrusion, having become a vigorous part of the landscape, surrounding and dominating the natural feature.

In 1877 John Harrington opened a salmon cannery at the site of the old Hudson’s Bay salting station. Pillar Rock, the landmark, was on its way to becoming Pillar Rock, the brand. “Smokestack” industry had arrived at the “fishen place.” Harrington’s early salmon label for the Pillar Rock brand dates from 1885. It is similar to the Harper’s illustration, and includes a chunky Pillar Rock, two stern-wheelers passing, and numerous gillnet boats and their occupants. Closer inspection reveals that the boats have an image of Pillar Rock on their sails, and in the background on the right-hand side is a crude picture of the Pillar Rock cannery. This label image was refined over a number of years, becoming increasingly stylized. By the 1920s Pillar Rock had become more of a silhouette, the fishing boats were reduced to five in number, circling Pillar Rock itself in a sort of carousel formation. A tidier version of the cannery appears on the right side of the image.
the image and, for the first time, birds circle in the air: Nuttall’s swallows, or seagulls feasting on the offal that went straight into the river from the cannery?

The 17th Lighthouse District superintendent, Robert Warrack, ordered placement of a red light atop Pillar Rock in 1922 to serve as an aid to navigation. Additionally, a ladder was constructed on the side of the rock to provide maintenance access. Later in the 20th century, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers blasted part of the top off Pillar Rock to facilitate installation of a range light that would guide ship traffic along the river’s shipping channel.

Today Pillar Rock, the brand name, is just that—a name. While salmon is still canned under the Pillar Rock brand by Ocean Beauty Corporation, which owns the trademark, current can labels do not bear any pictorial reference to the rock. Pillar Rock is still a landmark for vessels, but only by virtue of the range light perched on its top. The Pillar Rock Cannery still stands, but salmon processing in it ended in the 1950s. Stern-wheelers that stopped at every little village along the Columbia up until the 1930s have given way to ships from foreign nations that rapidly transit the estuary in favor of upriver ports such as Longview, Kalama, Vancouver, and Portland.

The last two centuries have seen many changes in both the appearance of Pillar Rock and human perceptions of it. Prior to white exploration, Native Americans lived near it, fished in its shadow, and created stories of its origin. As the first explorations gave way to an era of trade and commerce and the Indian population all but died out, Pillar Rock became a landmark for vessels. It was an important fish-exporting locale for over a century, whether that fish was packed in salt or cans. Early images show the vitality of human endeavor in the area. Late 19th century capitalism sought to bend the natural world to its own purposes, as illustrated in the exuberant Harper’s engraving and the salmon labels of the era.

As industry developed new technologies for harvesting, processing, and transportation, it made more sense to centralize fish packing into larger establishments that were not so isolated. The 20th century dam-building era decimated the Columbia’s spring and summer Chinook salmon runs, for which the area was particularly well-known. Salmon packing at the Pillar Rock cannery became a thing of the past. The estrangement of 20th-century society from the environment is perhaps best illustrated by the absence of the monolith from the Pillar Rock canned salmon label as well as the disappearance of the migrating salmon, not to mention the alteration of the landmark itself. Although Pillar Rock, the rock, is still there, it is the range light perched on it that ships now use to navigate by.

We of the 21st century do not have legends about Pillar Rock. It exists in name only for us, either on a can containing salmon from other rivers or as a river mile marker for vessels from other countries. We argue about whether Lewis and Clark could see the ocean from Pillar Rock two centuries ago; perhaps the more important question is, can we see Pillar Rock today?

Irene Martin is a writer who specializes in the history of the lower Columbia region, particularly its fishing history. She is a recipient of the James Castles Heritage Award (1998) and the Governor’s Heritage Award (2000), and author of The Beach of Heaven, a History of Wahkiakum County, and Legacy and Testament, the Story of Columbia River Gillnetters.
MEET ME at the STATION

It was a mere chance meeting between museum volunteer Marshall Wilson and David Nicandri, director of the Washington State Historical Society. An informal conversation gave birth to the idea of the 1950s model railroad exhibit that opened in 1996 with the new Washington State History Museum. That discussion took place in 1993, when the new history museum only existed as an architect's model and a few drawings.

Marshall Wilson is a charter member of the Puget Sound Model Railroad Engineers (PSMRE). Like many other members of the group, he first came to the Pacific Northwest while in the military and decided to make it his home. Combining a keen eye for detail and a skilled dexterity with small tools, he was drawn to a hobby with the complexity of a system and the richness of a historical artifact. Wilson became active in the local club that provided a temporary display for the history museum when it was still housed in the old museum near Tacoma's Stadium High School (now the Washington State History Research Center).

The conceptual plans for the new museum hung along a wall near the room in the old history museum where Wilson passed many volunteer hours staffing the temporary model railroad exhibit. "I spent a lot of time looking at the designs, when traffic was slow," he recalled. "I gradually got to understand how they planned to use all the exhibit space.

I noticed that on the top floor there was all this space that was 'to be developed.' That got my attention because I am always thinking about railroad layouts and any open space is an invitation to build."

One day when David Nicandri wandered by, as he often did, to enjoy the model railroad, Wilson stood looking at the plans for the new museum's top floor. As they both considered the drawings, Wilson casually pointed to a section of empty section of the top floor and said, "I could put a layout in there." Nicandri's response was encouraging. Before long, Wilson had begun assembling information and recruiting compatible souls to help develop a formal proposal.

"The museum wanted [a layout] to represent Washington state railroading [and said the exhibit] would have to be open to the public any time the museum was open, and that it would...be in operation...any time the museum was open. Those were the primary stipulations at that time," said Wilson. Though he was no expert on Washington's railroads, he knew that five railroads passed through the state and that the Northern Pacific and the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific (more commonly known as the Milwaukee Road) had their western terminus there. He searched a Washington map to see if there was any place in the state where all five railroads converged. There were several cities that came close, but only one seemed ideally suited to the project.

The Model Railroad Exhibit at the Washington State History Museum

Jacob Carter, a veteran model railroad enthusiast, operates the controls in the PSMRE layout at the Washington State History Museum.

BY NAOMI JEFFERY PETERSEN & JIM MURRIE
Wilson found that while other organizations had created layouts depicting parts of some of the cities where railroads came together in the Northwest, none had focused on historic Tacoma, a major rail center and port in the heart of the Puget Sound region. The PSMRE layout would depict the 90 miles between Tacoma and Stampede Pass.

"And is there a more beautiful building anywhere for a centerpiece?" said Wilson, in reference to the former Union Station next door to the site of the new history museum. The museum's architecture echoes the red brick arches of the 1911 beaux arts structure, which now serves as Tacoma's U.S. district courthouse and holds pride of place—in miniature—at the center of the history museum's model railroad layout.

Wilson recalled, "Once we decided to model the local area, the choice of era was fairly easy... we wanted the transition era (1950s), from steam to [diesel and] electric, because the Milwaukee was electric. The fact that it was pre-merger [before the Great Northern and Northern Pacific became part of the Burlington Northern Railroad], and the fact that all the railroads except the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway (SP&S) came here made it ideal for capturing the essential elements of railways in the Pacific Northwest."

The two railroads with tracks depicted in the model are the Northern Pacific, which owned the majority of track in the area, and the electrified Milwaukee Road. The Great Northern and the Union Pacific contracted trackage rights from Northern Pacific and shared the use of Union Station—so named because of that cooperation.

Surrounding the exhibit is a glass wall that protects the exhibit but also allows it to be viewed in its entirety. The unique design of the wall (courtesy of BLR&B Architects, Tacoma) permits sections of the glass to be lowered for photography, maintenance, or interaction between museum visitors and the PSMRE volunteers who operate the trains from inside the exhibit. Although a computer system operates trains for visitors any time the museum is open, on the first Saturday of every month members of the PSMRE come in and operate the exhibit the same way real railroads were operated in the 1950s.

Today all of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad's communications originate in an office in Texas, and much of the operation is computerized. By contrast, in the 1950s a telegraph operator was needed at each station to pass orders to train crews. During the monthly operating sessions trains are assembled according to simulated orders for individual cars requiring delivery to separate stations. The operators use clocks, timetables, and radios to re-create a day in the life of a mid-20th-century railroad. The existence of over 300 turnouts along the tracks is testimony to the complexity of the museum's railroad display. This is not a simple matter of running trains in a circle; it is a miniature working railway system—one of the finest in the nation.

From the beginning of the project over 14 years ago, realism was a priority. The builders literally became historians and industrial archeologists. Because of the detail required, a number of the model's structures have been multi-year projects. In many cases the builders had to draw their own blueprints based on photographs and then construct a building stick by stick. At times they had to make their own molds to cast parts unique to particular structures and trains. Bill Claypool, who modeled the ASARCO smokestack, recruited a jeweler to fabricate the ladder attached to its side.

The exhibit depicts the terrain as well as the industry. The art—and irony—of this exhibit is revealed in the painstaking
The detail and historical accuracy of its structure and operations juxtaposed with the equally breathtaking liberties taken in depicting the landscape. The distance between key locations, individually modeled to exceptionally accurate scale, is at times shortened and the direction of the track adjusted. Central Washington University professor Gina Bloodworth called it “brilliantly designed, but a cartographer’s nightmare to depict,” in reference to its use of selective compression. After all, 96.2 real miles, or 506,680 feet, would require 5,792.9 feet in the exhibit’s 1:87.5 “HO” scale. The model railroad engineers managed to compress that distance into just a 10th of that—they used 580 feet of mainline track with another 2,620 feet for sidings and yards. The layout manages to collapse the distances between a few representative structures to only 38 feet. The effect is still plausible because people’s field of vision is normally limited to their arms’ width, and each scene is carefully rendered to draw the viewer into it.

One measure of the exhibit’s success can be found in the comments of visitors who have lived and worked in the areas depicted. For example, Jim and Cereta Fredrickson, during a visit to the exhibit, recognized the living quarters they occupied while working as telegraphers at the Stampede Pass tunnel and the steep hill behind the telegrapher’s shed. Cereta remembers the long winter she spent there with a toddler and how nervous she was about the possibility of avalanches from above the dwelling, the dangerous railroad tracks in front of it, and the precipitous hill on the other side.

The entire exhibit was constructed to a standard far more exacting than the typical model railroad. This includes the details seen by the public as well as those areas that are generally unseen. The initial plan for the railroad was converted by PSMRE member Paul Rising, a Tacoma architect, from Marshall Wilson’s early sketches to a 1:12 computer-assisted design (CAD) “blueprint”—fully dimensioned down to 1/16th of an inch. Topographical drawings were also made showing the elevations of hills and grades in the finished exhibit.

The CAD drawings allowed the exhibit’s benchwork—its infrastructure—to be built off-site by a team led by member Bob Stumpf before the museum was ready for occupancy. This part of the project management was so successful that construction of the railroad could begin two months before the gallery was ready, and when the benchwork subsections were delivered to the museum they fit exactly. This process—as flawless as a subcontractor delivering an aircraft part to Boeing for final assembly—was possible because several members are in fact Boeing engineers and professional carpenters.

The end result of the PSMRE’s efforts is a smoothly operating world-class exhibit. Although modifications are constantly in progress on any given day, there is never any obvious indication of a project under construction. Also unseen but tremendously important are the hidden electrical and control systems. From the very beginning the model railroad engineers modified commercial systems—and even occasion-ally designed their own—to allow for unobtrusive monitoring and control of trains, tracks, and signal systems.

For well over a decade, the history museum’s model railroad exhibit has provided an outlet for the creative talents of the Puget Sound Model Railroad Engineers and supported the educational mission of the Washington State Historical Society by telling the story of Washington’s 1950s railroads. Seven simple words—“I could put a layout in there”—gave rise to an incalculable effort on the part of a community-minded group of hobbyists and fostered increased public understanding and appreciation of an important element of Washington’s transportation history.

Naomi Jeffery Petersen is a professor of education at Central Washington University and an outreach education consultant. Jim Murrie is a member of the Puget Sound Model Railroad Engineers who, as a docent for the Washington State History Museum’s model railroad exhibit, has spent many hours explaining the exhibit’s features to museum visitors. Petersen and Murrie have collaborated on several projects related to the exhibit.
The Novels of Ada Woodruff Anderson

By Peter Donahue

It's no coincidence that Ada Woodruff Anderson published the first of her three novels at the same time Seattle was preparing for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. The Northwest was stepping out and, like the AYPE, her novels served to celebrate the Northwest while also educating a national audience about the region—a task to which the author was well suited.

Ada Woodruff Anderson (1860-1956) was the daughter of Captain Samuel C. Woodruff and Martha Crosby (great-aunt of Bing Crosby). When her father died in Hong Kong, where the family was then living, her mother brought young Ada and her brother to Washington aboard a sailing vessel that nearly shipwrecked on the rocks off Cape Flattery. The family moved to Tumwater, where Ada attended grade school. After graduating high school in San Francisco, she returned to Thurston County and taught at the county school on Yelm Prairie. In 1882 she moved to Seattle, married businessman Oliver Phelps Anderson, and began writing. She sold short stories to magazines such as Harper's and Century before publishing her first novel.

Set in the 1870s, The Heart of the Red Firs (1908) concerns Alice Hunter, a spirited school teacher in the Puget Sound backcountry who falls for Paul Forrest, a rugged young timber cruiser. Just as the AYPE had its midway (called the Pay Streak) to draw visitors to its more instructional exhibitions, Anderson used romance and high adventure to take readers on an extensive tour of the Northwest. Though Alice has pledged her troth to a local judge and is desperately courted by a Canadian fur-trader-turned-opium-runner, her heart remains with Paul, who gives up timber cruising to manage a mill, hoping to save enough to stake a gold claim in the Cascades. In the course of the novel Alice climbs partway up Mount Rainier (echoing Hazard Stevens's account of having done so in 1870), homesteads a plot of land deep in the forest, goes salmon trolling, sails through the Archipelago de Haro (the San Juans), trots across Orcas Island, courses down the Deschutes River, and rescues Paul from a landslide that reveals the vein of gold he's been seeking.

In The Strain of White (1909) Anderson depicts Washington Territory during the 1850s at the time of the treaty councils. Set in the Palouse, Upper Columbia, and Puget Sound regions, the novel portrays the interactions between tribal leaders and government officials as well as between inland and coastal tribes. Chief Kamiakan (Yakama) and Chief Leschi (Nisqually) figure prominently as characters in the story, and Governor Isaac Stevens also makes an appearance. The main character is Francesca, the illegitimate daughter of the American commander at Fort Nisqually and a Yakama maiden. Raised by French missionaries, she struggles to find where her allegiance lies—with the Yakamas fighting to hold onto their ancestral lands or the white settlers attempting to bring "civilization" to the frontier—all the while resisting the advances of a Walla Walla warrior and yearning for frontiersman Billy Haworth. The novel reflects early-20th-century attitudes of whites toward Native Americans—sympathetic, patronizing, and, by today's reckoning, often offensive. It nevertheless offers an engaging take on the complex issue of racial identity as Francesca moves between the two groups. Fittingly, she is fluent in the Chinook jargon, which Anderson uses liberally in Francesca's dialogue. Finally, though, "the strain of white" in her prevail, and Francesca warns Seattle of the impending Indian attack. Like Pocahontas before her, she helps rescue the whites from the hostile Indians.

While Anderson's first two novels enjoyed a sizable readership, her third novel became a national best seller. The Rim of the Desert (1915) is set in the years following the Gold Rush when Seattle came into its own and speculators, eyeing the sagebrush lands east of the mountains, began envisioning the arid region as the profitable "fruit belt" it would become. The novel follows Hollis Tisdale, a former prospector, who seeks to fulfill his fallen Alaska partner's dream of developing a tract of land in the

Illustration from The Strain of White, drawn by Frances Rogers.
Wenatchee Valley through reclamation. Yet the man's widow, Elizabeth Weatherbee, has similar notions, and the two must clash before realizing they share a common goal—and mutual affection.

While numerous passages flashback to Hollis' adventures in Alaska, most of the action moves back and forth across the Cascades. Seattle is home to aristocratic investors and socialites, while Wenatchee is "something racy...a little wicked, yet with unexpected depths." In Seattle people have parties on their yachts and admire the view of Mount Rainier. In and around Wenatchee people tend their orchards, "[e]verywhere boughs laden with a gold and crimson harvest." And when Elizabeth takes her first bite of a Wenatchee Jonathan, she turns positively rhapsodic: "'It's like nothing else in the world,' she said finally. 'No, wait.... It's like condensed wine; a blend of the best; golden Angelica, red port, amber champagne, with just enough of old-fashioned cider to remind you it is an apple.'"

Like any knowing novelist, Anderson successfully weaves local historical events into her story. When Hollis boards the Oriental Limited eastbound across Stevens Pass, little does he know he will be trapped in the Wellington disaster, which killed 96 people on March 1, 1910. An avalanche swept away a passenger and mail train yet missed the Limited—a tragedy recounted recently in Gary Krist's *The White Cascade: The Great Northern Railway Disaster and America's Deadliest Avalanche* (2007).

Though written in the popular adventure-romance mode of the day, Ada Woodruff Anderson's three novels constitute important literary documents, each offering significant insight into Northwesterners' views of themselves and their history at the start of the new century. The author, furthermore, brought a welcome cultural pride to the region, as made clear in Charles T. Conover's *Mirrors of Seattle* (1923) when, citing local writers who have national reputations, Conover recognizes "Mrs. Anderson" as "the real thing."


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**Additional Reading**

**A Diamond in the Rough Meets Lady Bountiful**


**The Politics of Design**


**Dashiel Hammett's Tacoma**


**Pillar Rock**


**Meet Me at the Station**


Seven Months to Oregon: 1853 Diaries, Letters, and Reminiscent Accounts
Edited by Harold J. Peters. Tooele, Utah: The Patrice Press, 2008; 443 pp., $39.95 cloth, $24.95 paper.
Reviewed by Carol Hammond.

This is the story of the Hines family's 1853 journey from Buffalo, New York, to Portland, Oregon Territory, told in their own words. They traveled during one of the peak years of traffic on the Oregon Trail, and they became prominent missionaries and pioneers where they settled in California, Oregon, and Washington. The Hines party was composed of four brothers and their families: Gustavus, Obadiah, Harvey, and Joseph. All but Obadiah were Methodist ministers who had asked to be assigned to Oregon by the Methodist Episcopal Missionary Board. The Judsons and Bryants, who were friends, traveled with them. Harold Peters, editor of this book, is a descendant of Catherine Hines, a sister who did not make the trip.

Two of the accounts included in this volume are already well known to historians and Oregon Trail enthusiasts. The diary of Celinda Hines, an unmarried 25-year-old when she made the trip, has been published as a book and is currently still in print. There are, however, notable differences in this most recent presentation of the material. Additional accounts from this large family have been located, most importantly that of Harvey Kimball Hines; and rather than standing alone as individual reports, all of the entries made on a particular date or about a single event or place are put together and organized so that the reader has several perspectives interspersed rather than a single narrative. Letters and reports from Joseph Hines are inserted chronologically as he traveled at the same time but on a completely different route, going by sea and across Panama.

A variety of other relevant documents are occasionally included, but the individual writers are clearly identified in bold type as the journey unfolds. This format is quite successful. While preserving the style of each author, it allows for easy comparison of the different accounts and their descriptions of places and events. It provides more detail and differing opinions, and in some cases, clues to resolving mistakes that one writer may have made about a particular location but that another did not. This is the first time the separate accounts of this single journey have been put together.

The editor has provided extensive notes about sources and an explanation of events and places that add a great deal to this work. Because of his genealogy research, Peters is able to tell us what happened to many of these people once the story of the journey ends and they arrive in Oregon in October 1853. He includes many family and other historical photographs as well as 1850s-era and topographical maps to show the route and identify locations mentioned. A scientist with a doctorate in physics and a self-described "amateur historian," Peters has given us a useful, wonderfully documented and excellently edited new look at a well-known pioneer family and their fellow travelers on the Oregon Trail.

Carol Hammond is associate vice president of information services at the Thunderbird School of Global Management in Arizona. She is an expert evaluator of first-person Oregon Trail journals.

Coming to Stay
A Columbia River Journey
Reviewed by Katherine Coppie Potter.

Where is home? It is a deceptively complex question that author Mary Dodds Schlick answers for herself in her memoir Coming to Stay. Though raised in the Midwest, Schlick discovered her home crossing the Columbia River as the young wife of a Bureau of Indian Affairs official. Throughout this deeply personal and insightful narrative, Schlick welcomes the reader into the story of her life, just as she herself was welcomed into the communities and homes of the Columbia Plateau Indians.

From the 1950s through the 1970s, Schlick accompanied her husband during his career moves, in many ways a woman of her time. She bore three children on the Colville Reservation, raised them on the Warm Springs Reservation, and buried one on the Yakama Reservation. Yet Schlick's writing reveals that she was far from ordinary. When she came to the Northwest she made it her home with honest curiosity and an open mind, immersing herself in the native culture until she became inextricably part of it.

Recalling this journey, Schlick writes, "Our new neighbors had honored us with the expectation that we would learn their ways. Slowly through the years of softer voices, a gentler pace, we had begun to learn to take life as it came." No doubt Schlick did learn and mature among the Plateau people, but she perhaps was too modest to recognize that her own patience, generosity, and acceptance made her akin to her neighbors. Soon into her memoir it is clear that she became a friend, a family member, and an advocate.

An unassuming yet active member of the community, Schlick used her experiences in technical journalism and childhood education to better her friends' lives. Not wanting to force her opinions upon them, she worked beside them to make improvements from within. As she helped to develop a cooperative kindergarten in Warm Springs and covered community stories for the Yakima Mirror, Schlick watched the growth of tribal self-governance with pride, even as it meant her time on the reservations was at an end.
Coming to Stay is the authentic, sometimes emotional journey of a woman discovering herself and her home while looking back on a beautiful life well-lived. Upon the burial of her husband, Schlick reflects, “As we few stood again on that rocky ridge at Satus Point and heard the Washaat song fade into the wind, I knew for certain that we had come to stay forever.”

Mary Dodds Schlick previously authored Columbia River Basketry: Gift of the Ancestors, Gift of the Earth. Former adjunct curator of the Native American collection at Maryhill Museum, she remains on their honorary board of trustees.

Katherine Copple Potter, raised in Washington near the Colville Reservation, is currently working for the National Park Service after completing a graduate degree in museum studies from the University of Oklahoma.

Crooked River County
Wranglers, Rogues, and Barons
Reviewed by Gordon Ladds.

The history of central Oregon during the 19th and early 20th centuries is typically American: the untamed frontier, adventurers, vigilantes, and uncommon brutality. Journalist David Braly captures the spirit of the harsh landscape and its inhabitants in his book Crooked River County: Wranglers, Rogues, and Barons. Although the specific history of the region may be new to the reader, the themes are very familiar. Beginning with the Canadian fur traders and white immigrants of the 1820s, Braly traces the history of the area until the beginning of the Eisenhower era.

Braly’s work is fast-paced and easy to follow. Much of the book is formatted as short histories of events or people. Braly succeeds in tying the stories together for the reader into a comprehensive history of the region’s heroes and anti-heroes. Crooked River County is written in a style that welcomes the reader to explore its content. The author successfully establishes a relationship between central Oregon’s historical events within a broader picture of American history. His correlation between local and national histories is apparent in the stories of President Abraham Lincoln’s cabinet authorizing ethnic cleansing of the region’s warring Paiute tribe, the influx of immigrants after Congress passed the 1909 Homestead Act, and the New Deal projects dotting the area during the mid 1930s.

Unfortunately, the reader may quickly forget many of the stories as there is a lack of focus within the book. Had Braly focused on a smaller time frame, Crooked River County would not seem to be just a collection of short stories or articles. Although figures such as James Blakely and Chief Paulina of the Walpali band leave a lasting impression on the reader—as they did on the region—too often the chapters seem to lack unity and the author’s scope is too wide.

The author has summarized the first 130 years of the region’s history into one volume. The depth of detail and research is admirable; the writing style and format reveal the author’s background in journalism. The book lacks appropriate footnotes but has an adequate bibliography. Braly includes an index of personages by chapter and multiple pictures and illustrations within each chapter. For serious historians, these may be unwelcome distractions. Crooked River County is worth the time of a reader who enjoys a fast-paced historical narrative.

Gordon Ladds is an independent scholar with a special interest in the Pacific Northwest east of the Cascade Mountains.

Current & Noteworthy
By Robert Carriker, Book Review Editor

Big Dams of the New Deal Era: A Confluence of Engineering and Politics by David Billington and Donald Jackson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007; 416 pp; $36.95) has not been widely advertised or reviewed in the Pacific Northwest. Perhaps that is because the book’s broad sweep takes in dam projects by both the United States Reclamation Service and the Corps of Engineers on the Colorado River, the Missouri River, and California’s Central Valley in addition to a single chapter on the Columbia River. A second look at the volume warrants this conclusion: the lone chapter on Bonneville Dam and Grand Coulee Dam is pretty darned good. Especially when paired with the classic on the subject, Paul Pitzer’s Grand Coulee: Harnessing a Dream (Pullman: Washington University Press, 1994.)

The merit of Pitzer’s work is well known: his excellent presentation of the political schemes to advance, but also those to prevent, the establishment of a Columbia Valley Authority in the Pacific Northwest, and his analysis of the controversy over the use of Grand Coulee’s power to subsidize the development of irrigation for the Columbia Basin Project. David Billington, an engineering professor at Princeton University, brings a whole new area to the discussion. That he can do so with great clarity is to the credit of coauthor Donald Jackson, a history professor at Lafayette College. The 1,845-page “308 Report” (1932) on the hydropower potential of the Columbia River is the beginning point. From there the narrative moves to the plans for and the building of Bonneville Dam, followed by Grand Coulee Dam. Engineering aspects are presented in a highly instructional manner: the implementation of coffer dams, the merits of a high dam over a low dam, aspects of gravity overflow design, the use of portland cement versus pozzolanic cement, and the equation for turning the flow and density of river water into hydroelectric kilowatts. Any teacher seeking to construct a lesson plan on the beginning of Columbia River dams would find pages 152-199 valuable.
This photograph is from an Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (AYPE) photo album that writer Helen Elizabeth Vogt donated to the Historical Society in 1985. We see two unidentified men with cameras reflected in a glass globe in what appears to be the formal rose garden near the Music Pavilion. Gazing globes were ubiquitous in Victorian gardens in England around that time. American landscape architect and photographer Loring Underwood wrote in 1907, two years before the fair, that a globe in the garden "interprets the charm of the landscape so that the eye sees all the beauty caught and intensified in a small sphere." Globe forms were part of the symbolic language of edgy pictorialists at the turn of the 20th century.
Finding Chief Kamiakin
The Life and Legacy of a Northwest Patriot
Richard D. Scheuerman and Michael O. Finley
Photography by John Clement
The arrival of unprecedented numbers of White immigrants incited a cataclysmic upheaval that would threaten the freedom and tribal integrity of the Plateau's native people. Chief Kamiakin, a prominent Yakama leader, resolved to fight for their traditional way of life and against transgressions upon the land. Finding Chief Kamiakin is his story.
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Olmsted's Pacific Northwest
Joan Hockaday
Landscape architect John Charles Olmsted was mentored by Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of New York's Central Park. In the early 1900s, the meticulous, visionary protégé brought his famous stepfather's pastoral aesthetic to premier parks throughout the Pacific Northwest—green retreats that still refresh urban souls in Portland, Seattle, and Spokane.
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Slick as a Mitten
Ezra Meeker's Klondike Enterprise
Dennis M. Larsen
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CORRESPONDENCE

Thanks
First let me thank you and the others involved in producing such a handsome version of my article, “Miners at Work” in your Winter 2008-09 issue. The activities director at the retirement community where I live made a color copy of the article and put it on the bulletin board here along with a picture of me. I have to say I liked that. I also showed the article to the librarians from the King County traveling library, and they said they would make sure the King County Library in Bellevue had a copy. Several other people expressed interest in purchasing a copy, too. Your publication is a beautiful combination of history and art, and people seem to respond to that. Thank you again for letting me be a part of the last COLUMBIA.

—Bernice L. Thomas, Bellevue

We Stand Corrected
Recently I showed the Governor’s Mansion article (Winter 2008-09) and its picture of Governor Hartley in his car to David Dilgard at the Everett Public Library. He questioned whether the caption was correct in identifying the car as a Studebaker. He noticed it was right-hand drive, which Studebaker didn’t have. Also, Hartley and his father-in-law were fond of Pierce-Arrows, which did have a right-hand drive. If you look closely at the hood ornament, you will see it is a circle with an arrow through it.

I just spent an entertaining hour reading the latest issue of COLUMBIA and felt it was finally time I said “thanks” for continuing such a fine publication. We leave it in the lobby seating area in our small local historical museum, and many folks enjoy browsing the multiple issues there. As an old car collector I have to offer one minor correction to the latest issue. There’s a picture of a governor supposedly in a 1928 Studebaker. Needless to say, such a picture drew my eye. I believe that if examined closely, one would find that the car is a Pierce-Arrow of about 1918 vintage.

—Fred Cruger, Granite Falls

The Now-ness of History
I appreciate your publishing my Carl Maxey review, but I especially wish to thank you for the several small edits and revisions that brought it up to date—right up to January 20, 2009. That reinforced my intent to place Maxey in our immediate context.

When author Jim Kershner had a reading in Bellingham, he discussed at some length how he came to write the book and how he collected the information. I often wonder these days what will happen when professional journalists like Kershner are no longer around due to the collapse of newspapers.

Thanks for your long-time work on COLUMBIA. We are fortunate to have such an appealing, sound regional publication.

—Robert Keller, Bellingham

A morsel of genuine history is a thing so rare as to always be valuable.
—Thomas Jefferson

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