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Cover: Untitled, c. 1946, oil on board. Formerly in the collection of the Seattle School District, this painting's present location is unknown. Seattle-based artist Yvonne Twining Humber (1907-2004) was always drawn to unusual architectural structures and how they integrated into the urban landscape. This painting depicts Seattle's Triangle Hotel and Bar in the mid-rise section of Pioneer Square, probably during a postwar Fourth of July celebration. See related story beginning on page 19. (Courtesy David Martin)
The Cultural and Historical Significance of the AYP Exposition

By Michael Herschensohn

Attracting nearly 4 million visitors to Seattle over the summer of 1909, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (AYPE) transformed the city. As Washington's first world's fair, the AYPE put the state on national and international maps. The fair, erected on the previously forested southern portion of the University of Washington campus, included formal exhibition halls; magical waterfalls and a fountain; elaborate gardens; a street of rides, amusements, and ethnological villages called the Pay Sreak; and a magnificent vista across Lake Washington to Mount Rainier.

Local history often nibbles on the edges of important events, overlooking their primary regional, national, and sometimes international relevance. John C. Olmsted's design plan of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition reads like a multilayered cultural road map that explains in broad terms the meaning and significance of Seattle's first world's fair and the messages it transmitted to visitors. By embracing urban planning history—e.g., the work of John Reis—and literary criticism as a framework for analysis, I believe we can derive its meaning from the purpose and interrelationships of the fair's structures. What follows is my understanding and interpretation of the exposition—not necessarily those of its creators.

The AYPE's ground plan functions on at least three different levels. On one, by borrowing the landscape of our distant lake, forests, and mountain, it sets up a dialogue between the trading city of Seattle and the Washington wilderness. On another, it reveals an underlying organization akin to elements of the human body. And on yet another level, it shows Seattle neglecting its local design capabilities for what some might see as a sophisticated Atlantic seaboard view of the world. In the end, this cultural map relates to the hundreds of activities marking the exposition's centennial celebration.

The exposition's ground plan reveals historical references that lend it meaning—Peter Charles L'Enfant's 1791 plan for Washington, D.C., for example. George Washington selected the native Frenchman and former captain of engineers in the Revolutionary War to plan the nation's capital. L'Enfant designed a grandiose city over whose orthogonal grid he laid a series of broad boulevards radiating from circles or focal points. The city's two most prominent focal points are occupied by the president's house (the White House), which L'Enfant imagined at five times its final design, and the Capitol, which, like the United States Government Building at the AYPE, sits at the head of a long axial vista (the Mall) to the Potomac River. Olmsted's AYPE plan echoes L'Enfant's design and captures the duck-foot plan that reappeared in American cities such as Cleveland, Detroit, and Buffalo. The ridge on which Olmsted laid the axial view of Mount Rainier made his repetition of L'Enfant's concept somewhat difficult to read, but the reference to Washington, D.C., and the center of American democracy is undeniable.

The huge United States Government Building, which stands at the head of the primary axis leading to the vista of Mount Rainier—is capped by a dome like those of our national Capitol and most state capitols. Not only does this dome rival the stately peak at the other end of the vista, it also announces the important role of the federal government in the American union. The use of a dome at this
in the AYPE's ground plan, along with the exploitation of vistas, focal points, water features, promenades, and the clear articulation of the primary structures' relationship to one another, signals a keen awareness on the part of the landscape designer (J. C. Olmsted) and San Francisco architect Galen Howard of the rich layers of meaning their efforts would convey to the visiting public.

Placing the domed Government Building at the head of the AYPE does more than rival Mount Rainier—it serves to take a dialogue with the natural resources of the West and calls attention to the federal government's ownership of the region's wild spaces and its right to exploit them. As many AYPE speeches and publications stated, the fair's organizers sought to draw attention to the huge value of Washington's natural resources: water, timber, and its great outdoors. The juxtaposition of the two domes—one built and the other natural—also expresses the tug-of-war between the city and its natural surroundings.

If the buildings around the central court express the American city enhanced by the gardens spread out before them, then the gardens are the transition to the wild lake and mountains beyond, which cannot be brought into the city. This dialogue has its roots in the prevalent tension in American history between the need for cities and the lure of clean air, water, and wild places. It is no surprise, then, that the all-important event of the summer of 1909—the New York to Seattle Ocean to Ocean Endurance Race—witnessed the Wild West being conquered by the gasoline-fueled automobile.

In the majestic, domed Government Building, every arm of the federal government had an exhibit. The largest ones, installed front and center, facing the Cascade Court, Geyser Basin, and the bulk of the formal exhibit buildings, belonged to the Navy, Department of the Interior, Agriculture, and Labor. The exhibit halls were designed to be unobtrusive, with the emphasis placed on the exhibits themselves. It can be no accident that the Alaska Building stood adjacent to one side of the primary federal exhibition hall and the building housing the Hawaii and Philippines exhibits was similarly placed on the other side, forming an arch across the Geyser Basin and the top of the Cascade. The nation's military strength was referenced in the opening day parade of American troops and members of the Japanese navy, coupled with staged maneuvers between army and navy units and the prominent military campground just beyond the exposition's southern boundary.

The Alaska Building's place in state history is also assured by the University of Washington Board of Regents' purchase in 1909 of the George T. Emmons collection of Tlingit objects on exhibit there, a core holding of the Burke Museum and partial subject of the Burke's 2009 exhibit, *AYPE: Indigenous Voices Redux*. Many will say that the Alaska Building's prominent place in the ground plan reflects the exposition's raison d'être—the 10th anniversary of the Klondike Gold Rush. Surely the $1 million worth of gold exhibited there made that point. From a federal perspective, however, the success of the gold rush was a justification for the Alaska Purchase (often called Seward's Folly), a point echoed over and over again at the AYPE dedication of Seward's statue (now in Volunteer Park) in late September. Even though you can now drive there, Alaska was this country's first extraterritorial expansion.

If the ground plan reflects human forms, the European and Oriental Buildings flanking the Cascade are joints. They articulate the space between the geo-specific exhibitions and the industrial/agricultural zones that define the Arctic Circle and surround Geyser Basin. Reading the heart of the exposition, we see that a central government supported by a strong military asserts its place in the world through diplomacy and conquest while relying economically on a strong and innovative industrial base, a rich agricultural sector, and lucrative mineral extraction.

The curved facades of these buildings embrace what might be called the soft belly, around which people still promenade today.

American overseas expansion, growing military might, and economic expansion have relied on a compliant international community. The AYPE ground plan manifests this dependence. Missing, however, are the strong legs required to make this reading of Seward's intentions compelling. In my view and that of the fair's presiding official, John E. Chilberg, the international
community did not show up at the AYPE; there was plenty of room for the governments of other nations to construct their buildings on the southern arch of Pacific Avenue. Also missing from the center of the exposition was anything local. Only the King County Building was relatively close to the belly. Its interior was as bare as all the other exhibition buildings.

Compared to the clear articulation of the fair's strong central axis, the placement of the entrances was plainly weak. The main entrance brought visitors from the streetcar sheds on Brooklyn Avenue. If we can believe the numbers, most people came to the fair in streetcars. The Seattle Electric Company reported that 70,000 of the approximately 90,000 people who visited on Opening Day came in trolleys. Another 7,500 came by boat after taking the cable cars from downtown over to Leschi and Madison Park. The balance of attendees probably took taxis, drove their own cars, or rode a private boat across Lake Union. Surely a number of folks simply walked over. It was no accident that the visitor had to make a pretty important choice after entering the grounds through the main gate. The education/entertainment functions hinged there—go straight ahead to the Court of Honor and the industrial, military, and commercial displays or turn right to head down the Pay Streak.

The alternate land entrance at the fair's southern end adjoined another streetcar terminal, an automobile parking area, and what we now call the Lake Washington Shipping Canal. It was dominated by a massive torti arch whose wonderful mixture of Japanese and Native American forms strove to be simultaneously Alaskan, Yukon, and Pacific. It was a long walk from the south gate near Montlake up Rainier Vista to the Government Building.

Beyond the ground plan itself there is other evidence of the exposition's messaging via buildings and landscapes. Almost nothing built at the AYPE was built to last. The main exhibition halls were all simple wooden shells constructed of timber trusses and two-by-fours. The exterior of these majestic structures consisted either of staff (plaster of Paris strengthened by jute) or stucco, and most of the large buildings were picked out by electric stud lights, making the fair a spectacular show at night.

On the inside, the temporary quality of the buildings was no secret. Architectural drawings call for wainscoting up to the lower window sills. Above that and to either side of the large glazed surfaces we see naked wooden studs with nothing but the structural sheathing on the outside. There was no pretense—no decorative trims, swags, or bull's-eyes, and certainly none of the razzle-dazzle of the buildings' exteriors. Each government department or vendor was simply assigned a certain number of square feet to occupy as it saw fit—very much a trade show in the spirit of today's home and garden shows.

It is this tension between the ultra finished (but fake) quality of the exterior and the tedious plainness of the interior that confirms the metaphorical purpose of the exposition. It isn't all smoke and mirrors. These are real buildings, but they are unfinished—built cheaply to sell ideas and then be pulled down. Almost all of the exhibition buildings borrow the European revival style first used at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In Seattle's case, the style affirms the trading goals of the city's business community and its desire to sell Seattle to the world.

When we think about 1909 and try to relate Seattle to the rest of the world, we remember that this first decade of the 20th century marked the beginning of modern times—Einstein was proposing his theory of relativity while Picasso was exiting his Blue Period and moving toward his Cubist phase with Georges Braque. Marcel Proust began À la recherche du temps perdu in 1909; and Igor Stravinsky premiered L'Oiseau de feu—The Firebird—the first of his three revolutionary ballets for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, the following year. Most interestingly, Sigmund Freud's 1905 work, Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, would have been on the radar of most of the educated public by 1909. Undoubtedly there were quite a few of them in Seattle in 1909—many probably able to read German.

Of course, it didn't take Freud to invent sexuality and the use of sexual imagery to convey meaning. It is no surprise to come across some design elements in the ground plan that would have transmitted sexual connotations, even in 1909. Just in front of the Government Building, on axis with Mount Rainier and the grand ceremonial entrance on 15th Avenue, the architects placed the tallest object on the grounds (aside from the dome)—the Alaska Monument. At the top of a 70-foot column, on a 20-foot pedestal, Finn Frolich—the official AYPE sculptor—had installed a giant sculpted bald eagle perched on a globe. The undeniable maleness of the monument proclaims the success Seattle experienced as a result of the Klondike gold rush as well as the maleness of those who planned the AYPE, owned Seattle's banks, managed Seattle's factories, and worked in Washington's woods. The triumphant position of this American symbol on a pedestal surrounded by swastikas (used by many cultures throughout the past three millennia to represent life, sun, power, strength, and good luck) is transparent.
Softening this columnar monument at the top of the fairgrounds and spilling from its base was the Cascade whose rushing waters were received by Geyser Basin. This fluid femininity surrounded by exquisite gardens engendered a transition to the undefined wilderness in the distance. It may even have been an allusion to the revolutionary right to vote that Washington men would accord women in 1910. This push-pull, yin-yang, masculine-feminine dynamic is yet another sign of the modern sophistication that Seattle wanted the world to see at the AYPE.

The Pay Streak was a separate zone, independent of the more significant buildings at the exposition's core. Compared to the heart of the grounds, the Pay Streak was an odd mixture of randomly sized plots with an ostensible absence of organization and planning that left the look of the buildings and the activities they housed in the hands of the (mostly white) concessionaires. Those elements plus the name—Pay Streak (which means "the gold at the bottom of the stream following a freshet")—make clear the entertainment zone's relationship to the core of the AYPE and hint at the bill-paying role such an entity played at this and other American world's fairs. Chicago encouraged the separation of amusements on The Midway; St. Louis's grand 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition—a mere 1,240 acres (about 1,000 acres larger than the AYPE, by the way)—kept The Pike close in but still quite separate from the core exhibits. Ultimately, the randomness of the Pay Streak and the "imported from other fairs" quality of the flimsy structures, however curious and however successful with the crowds, makes it even easier to read the rational dialogue intended by Olmsted and Howard.

At first I felt that the messages transmitted by the ground plan and the meanings expressed in the fair's primary structures and their relationship to Washington's great outdoors made the balance of the exposition seem increasingly irrelevant to its larger purpose. The ground plan resembled a giant cookie with crumbs scattered about the perimeter of the larger, more important, more powerful central axis defined by buildings facing the Yukon-Pacific Exposition—AYPE for short—belonging away down the list in point of size but away up the list in point of beauty. Taken as a whole, the general effect is beautiful... it is a pretty little fair—perhaps even a beautiful little fair. Certainly, it is very, very pretty.

Later Howe notes, "There is not much to be seen inside the buildings.... The Government Building is quite finished and is interesting and instructive to all those who have never seen a government building. But having seen one, you have seen them all." Finally, she puts Seattle in its place: "I think a small fair fails chiefly with its exhibits. At St. Louis there was so much to see."

Howe made me realize that the AYPE, with few exceptions, was not much more than a trade show. What made it special was the dialogue between the two domes, which I no longer viewed as a struggle between the city and the wilderness. Rather, I began to see it as a conflict between what was conventional world's fair and what was uniquely Seattle. Not just the lakes and forests and the mountain in the distance, but all the local cookie crumbs scattered about the grounds—those are what make the exposition Washington's, King County's, Seattle's. And it is exactly those special local elements that have drawn historians, both professional and amateur, to a reconsidering of the AYPE in this centennial year.

Some of the local cookie crumbs include the Hoo-Hoo House; the Arctic Brotherhood Building; the California Building; the Natural Amphitheatre and its programming; the Women's State Building; the Mars Airship; the Hot Air Balloon; the statues of James J. Hill, Edward Grieg, George Washington, and William H. Seward; the Swedish Building; Norway Day; Ed Chilberg; St. Olaf's College Marching Band; and the Viking Ship.

As my good friend Ed Baker once told me, "All important history is local." This look at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition confirms his view.

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The Women of Seattle’s Black Musicians’ Unions

By David Keller

GERTRUDE HARVEY WRIGHT was a member of Seattle’s first African American musicians’ union during its brief and rocky existence from 1918 to 1924. Virginia Hughes, a “Mrs. Austin,” and Edythe Turnham are the other female members listed in the rolls of the American Federation of Musicians’ Local 458. These trailblazing women worked with their male counterparts both at union headquarters and on the bandstand. Following the demise of the short-lived local, they joined and helped run Seattle’s follow-up segregated union, Local 493, which endured for over 30 years, from 1924 to 1958. In addition to their trade union activities, these female musicians helped keep jazz alive from the 1910s through the World War II glory days and on to the fabled bebop era of the 1950s. All four women learned to maneuver their musical careers within a complicated Jim Crow union system. This is their story.

At the turn of the century, Seattle’s African American population numbered only 466. Musicians were rare among the city’s black female population, most of whom worked as maids or launderers. Most black men fared little better, gaining employment as cooks, railroad porters, waiters, or elevator operators. African American men also found work as longshoremen and as stewards on ocean liners such as those operated by the Pacific Steamship Company, but they were subject to the “last hired, first fired” rule following the World War I economic boom. Decades later, in the early 1940s, newly arriving blacks had obtained work as longshoremen and as stewards on ocean ships. They became round-the-clock shift workers. With money in their pockets, they sought after-hours respite in the clubs where Seattle’s black musicians thrived.

Beginning in the Prohibition era, Seattle’s black population had an active music scene that also attracted white revelers. Numerous jazz clubs—including the Mardi Gras, the Black & Tan, and the Rocking Chair—sprang up around Jackson Street, extending from 5th to 12th avenues and from Yesler Way to Weller Street. Other community venues—such as the black YMCA at 23rd and Olive, the Washington Social Club at 23rd and Madison, and the Black Elks Club on 18th and Madison—provided places for Seattle’s African American men and women to meet, talk, dance, and listen to music.

Tuba-playing Powell Barnett had joined the white musicians’ Local 76 in 1913, taking advantage of its 1893 charter, which invited membership of “all instrumental performers.” Five years later Local 458 was officially chartered on August 9, 1918, when Barnett and a small group of African American musicians banded together. However, Jim Crow union work rules kept black women and men underpaid in a two-tiered system and forbade them from socializing at the white union hall. They were also denied entry into the lucrative downtown, public parks, radio, hotel, and orchestral music markets. Balkanized into territory in and around Jackson Street, where most of Seattle’s black population lived due to restrictive covenants, these black musicians held sway in small clubs and speakeasies.

Gertrude Wright stepped into the complicated world of union negotiating early on, first appearing in Local 458 correspondence on February 23, 1924. Born in 1888 in Seattle, Washington Territory, Gertrude was the first child of Eva Ellis Harvey and Charles Harvey. In 1914 she married George Wright.
with whom she had two sons. She participated in First American Methodist Episcopal church activities, and in 1915 was also a member of the DuBois Dramatic Club. During the early 1920s she played piano in small jazz bands, performing in Seattle and mountain towns such as Gold Bar with fellow Local 458 members Robert McCurdy and Frank Waldron.

Unfortunately, Seattle's first black musicians' union operated somewhat haphazardly and finally collapsed in April 1924. Just prior to the collapse, Gertrude Wright, along with Robert H. McCurdy, Charles Adams, Leon Jackson, and S. L. Murray, wrote to international officials in an unsuccessful effort to save the union.

Nine months later, in December 1924, Seattle's African American musicians established a second segregated union, the American Federation of Musicians' Local 493. For over 30 years Local 493 successfully elected musician-leaders of both sexes and established and controlled union-scale jobs at clubs and halls within its territory in and around Madison Avenue and Jackson Street.

Some statistics help provide a perspective on these early female musicians. At any given time women were a minority within the "colored" union. In December 1924 there were 35 black union musicians; that figure grew to 55 six months later, with females making up about 10 percent of the membership. By 1929 piano-playing Andrus (or Ann) Coy was a 493 musician, along with her...
husband, Texas bandleader Gene Cov, and the ten men in their band, the Black Aces, then based in Seattle. In 1941 if not earlier, Evelyn Bundy Taylor became a 493 dues-payer. At this same time Bundy Taylor was also a board member of the scrappy union. In later years other African American female unionists included: Pati Brown and Patricia Braxton, piano; drummer, club-owner, and vocalist Myrl Fransisco; Derniece Melody Jones and Elsie Martinez, piano and organ; trumpeter Magie Shumate; Merceedees Walton, piano and vocals; Gwendolyn Webb, bongo and vocals; and Ruby Bishop, now 89, who still plays piano and sings professionally.

EDYTHE TURNHAM sparkled during the Roaring Twenties as a pioneering female member of this black union. She was both a bandleader and piano player. Born Edith Payne, she came to Spokane in 1900 from Topeka, Kansas. Seven years later she married drummer Floyd Turnham, who was then waiting tables at the Spokane Club. Edythe began performing in the 1910s on a vaudeville circuit through eastern Washington and Idaho as part of a family minstrel troupe. Edythe, Floyd, and their son Floyd Jr., who became a renowned alto saxophonist, relocated from Spokane to Tacoma in 1920. Around 1927 Edythe and family moved to Seattle. Shortly thereafter she and her union quintet were performing at venues like the Copper Kettle, the Alhambra, the Black Elks Club, and the Bungalow Dance Hall. By 1926, when the family was being referred to as “popular musicians,” they had just bought a new home at 707 22nd Street. That same year Edythe’s band also featured two union officers, trumpeter Charles Adams, and tuba man Powell Barnett.

Turnham was a talented and charismatic musician and bandleader who next led her own big band. This group, originally billed as The Knights of Syncopation, became the Black Hawks in 1928. As a prominent Local 493 member, Turnham and her Black Hawks hit big in 1928 with a photo and story in the white union’s newspaper, Musieland. Indicative of her stature at this time, the bandleader worked with white manager John Dallavo. He booked Turnham’s Black Hawks for an international tour on John Considine’s Orpheum Circuit from "Winnipeg to Long Beach," including a week-long run at Seattle’s Orpheum Theatre. An unidentified 1928 press clip from the tour praised “Edythe Turnham and her jazz band of Negro players,” noting their “real Southern flavor.” The Turnham family later moved to California, where the band did well as the Dixie Aces and Ms. Turnham continued to work until around 1945.

Evelyn Bundy is noteworthy as the only female board member of Local 493 to be identified. Bundy first came to prominence in Garfield High School’s band. During her school days she and drummer Leonard Gayton formed the popular and well-regarded Garfield Ramblers. Following high school Bundy took over the band’s leadership, renaming it the Evelyn Bundy Band. Formed in 1926, it was an influential and early fixture of the Seattle jazz scene.

Bundy was born into a musical family and studied with Seattle music patriarch and 493 stalwart Frank Waldron. She sang and played drums, piano, saxophone, and banjo. Fellow musicians and 493 men in her early bands included the Adams brothers—Jimmy and Wayne, who played trumpet and saxophone, respectively—and with pianist Creon Thomas. Bundy’s band played at various venues and black society functions. In 1929 she married Charles Taylor, who worked as a plasterer and also helped publicize her band. Their son, Charles Taylor Jr., who became a prominent Seattle bandleader and saxophonist, gave a youthful Quincy Jones his first job.

Above: Evelyn Bundy with son Charles Jr., c. 1926.

Left: In October 1932, The Plantation, a lively roadhouse just outside the Bothell city limits, featured Edythe Turnham and her band.
During the 1930s the Bundy-Taylor home became an important place for travelling musicians to socialize after their performances. Charles Jr. recalled an array of famous musicians like Lionel Hampton, Erskine Hawkins, and Lena Horne all stopping to jam and enjoy the convivial atmosphere of their downstair music room and bar. By 1941 Evelyn Bundy (Taylor) broke Local 493's male-dominated pattern, becoming its first female board member. Leonard Gayton, Marion Borders, and Frank Bufford rounded out the 1941 board. Taylor and other 493 members were busy that year co-hosting the 46th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Musicians, held at Seattle's Olympic Hotel.

Despite the occasional female administrator like Bundy, and fitting a pattern for the era, black union officials were overwhelmingly male. Bass horn player Powell Barnett is listed as the first president, followed by Charles Adams. Robert H. McCurdy is named secretary. In 1925 Barnett again became president. A tantalizing 1926 reference to a “President Turnham” (Floyd or, possibly, Edythe) could not be pinned down. Another president is listed only as “Johnson,” while “Barnett” is so named in 1934 and 1935. During these early days the black union met at the white local's headquarters on Fourth Avenue at Lenora, though its members still could not socialize there.

A leadership change came in the late 1930s when the Jamaican-born saxophonist Gerald Wells ran Seattle's black musicians' union, reigning as president through 1949. By then the union no longer met under Jim Crow conditions at the white headquarters. Meetings took place at Gerald and Elizabeth Wells's home. This was in a Benjamin McAdoo-designed fourplex located at 401 19th Avenue East. Here again, women played an important role. Elizabeth Wells recalled,

The Musicians' Union was in our home, in our hallway really. You'd have to pay each year for the charter, and of course,

The International Sweethearts of Rhythm

TRAVELING, DUES-PAYING BANDS were an important source of income for Local 493. When out-of-town black bands played Seattle, they usually fed the local's coffers by paying work dues, bringing in much-needed revenue. The International Sweethearts of Rhythm—members of the American Federation of Musicians' union—comprised a rare all-female interracial band that played the Negro touring circuit across the country during the 1940s. During World War II the military draft decimated the ranks of the country's traditionally all-male big bands. This situation provided work for various all-female groups, including the International Sweethearts and the black All-Star Girl Orchestra of Texas-born Eddie Durham. Both of these bands played concerts in Seattle in 1944. With parallels to “Rosie the Riveter” in Seattle's bustling World War II economy, the International Sweethearts toured frequently and were surely a source of race and gender pride among Seattle women in Local 493 and the entire African American community.

The International Sweethearts originated from the Piney Woods School in Mississippi, traveling internationally as a swing big band from 1940 to 1949. The term “International” in the band's name served as a protective cover for band members who were black, white, Chinese, and Mexican. According to leader Anna Mae Windburn, “We had so many mixed girls, mulattas...” as well as white alto player Roz Cron, who was coached to describe herself as “mixed.” Such a covert line-up resulted in frequent run-ins with the police, though not in Seattle. “So we had quite a time,” Windburn noted, “we did a lot to break down prejudice in the South.” The band also helped shatter the common myth that female musicians could not play. Defying this stereotype, the Sweethearts swung hard. This “all-girl” group was a popular favorite of the tough audiences at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, and from 1941 to 1945 they performed at the venue just as often as their male counterparts.

The International Sweethearts of Rhythm, c. 1944. Left to right: Anna Mae Windburn, conducting; Willie Mae Wong, baritone saxophone; Roz Cron, alto saxophone; Helen Saine, alto; Grace Bayron, tenor; and Pauline Brady, drums.
none of them had any money, including my husband. And so I'd have to get the charter for them. Women were able to find jobs more readily than men.”

Band leader, pianist, and vocalist Derniece H. "Melody" Jones also broke ground as a prominent Local 493 member during the mid-1940s. Born in Chicago in 1906, Jones moved first to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. After finishing high school she moved to Harlem. There, at rent parties and in the Lafayette Theater, she met composer, recording artist, and stride piano legend Thomas “Fats” Waller. He offered her tips on her piano and organ playing. Jones stayed busy working in New York theaters and cabarets during this era. She was also a veteran of USO tours beginning in 1941, traveling throughout the United States and the Far East. Jones was a seasoned professional musician by 1945 when she began performing regularly in and around Seattle. Today she is also remembered as the person who brought a then-unknown Ray Charles to town from Tampa, Florida. On the point of leaving the Emerald City for a 1948 USO tour in Germany, she gave her gig at the Black & Tan to Garcia McKee. She also gave him money for the 17-year-old Charles’s Trailways bus ticket. McKee, a union guitarist, brought the blind piano man in for a trio show along with fellow union bassist Mildred "Big Swede" and Ray Charles Robinson’s career got a boost in the clubs and speakeasies governed by Local 493.

As an early female instrumentalist, Jones worked with another dynamic union woman. This was the drummer, vocalist, and club-owner Myrtle "Myrt" Francois. Francois and Jones formed a popular local band called Melody and Mirth. These two became role models for up-and-coming Seattle women who aspired to be professional musicians. (Patti Bown—pianist, composer, and 493 member—described drummer Francois as an early inspiration.) Melody Jones’s time as a leader was not without incident, and she recalled losing jobs because she was not a light-skinned or "high yellow" female entertainer.

Veteran "On the Scene" photographer Al Smith snapped a picture of her band performing at an undisclosed Jackson Street nightclub. Indicative of the relaxed attitude towards union regulations, the institution of "The Kitty" was widespread as a "tip jar" and was often prominently displayed. Since it was against union regulations to accept tips, this practice was disparaged by Local 493’s business agent, the baritone saxophonist and bandleader William Funderberg.

During the postwar era internationally acclaimed vocalist, bandleader, and living legend Ernestine Anderson began to make a name for herself in Seattle. At just 18 years of age, she was featured in a unionized, interracial band. While Anderson was not a 493 member, as an actress and vocalist she was a member of Actors’ Equity Association. Following this arrangement, she worked regularly with union musicians, including 493 men Ulysses G. "Jabo" Ward and Robert Russell on tenor sax and trumpet, respectively, who were in her band for this concert.

It was the middle of 1946 and local impresario, KXA radio personality, and integrationist jazz crusader Norm Bobrow was producing the well-received "Northwest All-Star Swing Concert". Bobrow was a friend to many Local 493 members, including its president Gerald Wells, and is also credited with bringing swing music to the attention of Seattle’s white majority.

The band featured at the Northwest All-Star Concert illustrates the complexities of dual unionism in Seattle. Guitarist and teacher Al Turay, a self-described "Big Swede" and lifetime member of the white union, was a fellow traveler with Local 493 players. The easy-going guitarist seemed ever-present at black, after-hours jam sessions in Jackson Street clubs and loved to sit in, picking up pointers along the way.

Another musician in the band was Ernestine Anderson’s bassist, Bill Rinaldi, who was the first white musician to join the otherwise all African American union when in 1937 he simply gave up on Local 76 and joined 493. In fact, he may have joined the black union in the early 1930s when he played with New Orleans ‘Creole’ saxophonist Joe Darsenbough’s band, the Geneseo Street Shufflers. The Shufflers and Rinaldi played the rough-and-tumble Silver Dollar Saloon in heavily unionized Grand Coulee, Washington. The decade surrounding the construction of Grand Coulee Dam...
(1933–1942) was a wide-open period that found other 493 bands like Gene Coy’s Black Aces, with Ann Coy, playing the boozetown taverns there.

Noting its relaxed attitude toward race and its inclusive environment, famed trumpeter and union stalwart Floyd Standifer referred to Local 493 as a “Rainbow Coalition.” The trumpeter maintained that this was not the case with the white union, whose leaders did not respect 493 players’ musicianship. Along with a handful of whites like Rinaldi, the black union also had members with Hawaiian and Hispanic surnames.

Patti Bown is the fourth and final Local 493 member spotlighted in this account. Born in Seattle on July 26, 1931, she came from a musical family. Patti and three of her four sisters had perfect pitch. Although Patti’s mother could play the blues, she did not want her daughter to become a jazz musician. Bown was a natural at the piano. She grew up during a musically rich period alongside Quincy Jones, Floyd Standifer, and Ray Charles, who taught her how to accompany singers. She remembered, “When I walked home from school, I passed the pool parlor and the Mardi Gras, and they always had jazz playing. My mother was saying ‘No!’ but the music was sensuous and it said, ‘Yes!’”

In 1949 Bown received a music scholarship to attend Seattle University. She also studied at Cornish School of Fine Arts and the University of Washington. In 1952 she performed with the Seattle Symphony and had dreams of working with her sister Edith (who went on to marry jazz arranger Jerry Valentine) as a piano duo.

At 22 she was a full-fledged member of Seattle’s black musicians’ union, joining officially on December 27, 1953. Local 493 operated out of the Blue Note, at 1319 East Jefferson Street, where Bown signed on. This clubhouse-style setting, complete with bar and dance floor, became the go-to, after-hours spot for fabled jam sessions. Here locals like Bown could learn their craft, trading riffs with touring greats like trumpeter Thad Jones from the Count Basie Orchestra. In a fascinating arrangement, the Blue Note was both an administrative union hall and a cultural center for bebop music.

Departing for New York in the mid 1950s, Bown remained a union musician and became a member of Gotham’s AFM Local 802, which was never segregated. After at first scuffling in the Big Apple, she eventually performed with Quincy Jones, Gene Ammons, and Dinah Washington, among others. In 1959 Columbia Records released the first of two albums she recorded thanks to a good word from Jones. Patti Bown Plays Big Piano featured the hard-swinging pianist in a trio setting with drummer Ed Shaughnessy, of “Tonight Show” fame, and bassist Joe Benjamin. Bown went on to work with Quincy Jones on other projects, such as his Pure Delight album, and was a regular at the Village Gate jazz club in New York.

In 1959 Bown and two other members of Seattle’s black musicians’ union got a shot at international fame in Europe. Quincy Delight Jones, then 26, did not forget “my hones from Seattle,” and hired three of his fellow 493 musicians to work with him in a dream band. Bown played piano; Buddy Catlett, bass; and Floyd Standifer, trumpet. They were all part of the orchestra for the blues opera Free and Easy. Having left Seattle earlier to tour with Lionel Hampton, Jones was then living in Paris. Through impresario John Hammond, Quincy met Stanley Chase, a producer of the Harold Arlen/ Johnny Mercer show for which “Q” was to provide a stage band. Set for a four-city tour of the European continent, the show was to go on to London and finally to Broadway in New York.

Events did not go as planned. In addition to his Seattle pals, Jones hired
Clark Terry, Budd Johnson, and female trombonist and arranger Melba Liston. They rehearsed for two months in Holland, but the show folded after a brief Paris run. Quincy, noting that this was "the best band I ever had," reached into his own pocket to keep the band together. Traveling through Europe "like vagabonds" on the strength of their well-received Birth of a Band album, it was a rollercoaster of a tour. A few good breaks and a lot of love kept the band in Europe for 10 months, although Jones returned to the United States "dead broke and deeply in debt." Still, he saw fit to praise all the members of the tour, describing Bown as "a child prodigy."

The changing times hit Seattle's unionized jazz musicians. By the mid 1950s the influence of Seattle's segregated musicians' union was tapering off, signaling the end of what had been a way of life for more than three decades. It became clear that Local 493 would have to merge with Local 76. Tubablowing Powell Barnett had retained dual membership in both locals and was a natural to help with the merger. Barnett, along with 493 women Ruth Sykes and Ruth Rhymer, negotiated from 1954 until 1956, when the two unions formally agreed to amalgamate.

Despite favorable votes on both sides in December 1956, the actual merger did not take place until January 14, 1958, after a holding committee settled the black union's financial concerns and sold the building and lot of the "Blue Note," 493's beloved clubhouse headquarters.

At that point the days of dual musicians' unions in Seattle were history. Many promises had been made about better conditions coming for all, but when the two groups finally amalgamated in 1958, economic payoffs eluded black musicians. Yet from 1918 through 1956 a small group of determined union women performed shoulder-to-shoulder with their male partners and helped create great jazz in the region. They also kept alive the black musicians' union—a product of the times—which managed its own affairs, established its own headquarters venue, and became a hub for a racially diverse membership.

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This article is excerpted from a longer manuscript on the history of Seattle's black musicians' unions. Research for this project was supported by a grant from 4Culture.
FOREST FIRES HAVE LONG BEEN PROBLEMATIC IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST. READ THE WRITINGS OF ANY EARLY EXPLORER AND YOU WILL LIKELY FIND MENTION OF THE PALL OF SMOKE THAT HUNG HEAVILY IN THE ATMOSPHERE, OBSCURING VIEWS AND OCCASIONALLY EVEN MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO BREATHE. SOME OF THE FIRES WERE SET BY INDIAN INHABITANTS TO CLEAR LAND, OTHERS WERE CAUSED BY LIGHTNING. AT A TIME WHEN THE FORESTS WERE CONSIDERED INEXHAUSTIBLE, SUCH EVENTS WERE OF LITTLE CONCERN. AS THE RESOURCE BEGAN TO SHRINK, THE POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FOREST FIRES BROUGHT PREVENTION EFFORTS TO THE FORE. THE LUMBER INDUSTRY AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BEGAN TO ORGANIZE AND LAUNCH FIRE PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS. THESE THREE COLORFUL STICKERS ARE EXAMPLES OF SUCH EFFORTS. ISSUED IN THE 1930S, THEY WERE OFTEN STUCK TO AUTOMOBILE WINDSHIELDS AS A REMINDER TO THE MOTORING PUBLIC.
"The Housewife’s Dream Come True" in the Early 20th Century

BY JACQUELINE B. WILLIAMS & DIANA JAMES
n apartment must have a kitchen. It is this room that distinguishes an apartment from a flat or a boardinghouse. A kitchen also is the perfect room for installing modern conveniences. When apartment building owners realized up-to-date kitchens would attract tenants, they mentioned the amenities in their promotional materials. Advertisements in local newspapers often included phrases such as “the housewife’s dream come true” or “the last word in kitchen design and equipment.” In the early years of the 20th century, some Seattle working-class families and those living in rural areas usually lacked the new labor-saving appliances that apartments featured.

Apartments began fronting Seattle streets in 1901. Compared to the East Coast, Seattle was a relative latecomer to apartment living. This delayed entry, however, proved beneficial. Because the city had already introduced home services such as clean water, gas, and electricity, apartment owners were able to offer kitchens with hot and cold running water, electric lights, and gas ranges. With the advancement of technology, architects and builders installed gleaming new electric stoves and porcelain-lined refrigerators that made ice cubes—two pinnacles of American technology. “Every practical feature of modern convenience arranged with a view to the quick dispatch of housework will be found here,” trumpeted an advertisement of the Fleur-de-Lis Apartment. By the end of the 1930s, when the number of appliances manufactured in America had already exceeded the total for the preceding century, builders could choose from an assortment of models.

What is more, Seattle apartments made their appearance just when Americans had begun spending money to achieve a more leisurely lifestyle. No longer content with self-denial, consumers challenged the moralistic approach to spending and began a debate on how to “economize in a world where yesterday’s luxuries seemed to become today’s necessities.” By the first decades of the 20th-century Americans had “more money and more time to purchase more goods. . . . Society’s task was, therefore, no longer how to make do with less, as it always had been, but instead how to live with much more,” said historian Thomas Schlereth.

Tenants in many of Seattle’s apartments, scattered throughout the city, were among those who desired the accoutrements of a good life. Apartment owners recognized the advantages of having a building with no vacancies and filled their buildings with distinctive furnishings. In fact, a 1927 survey of Seattle apartments showed higher occupancy in the “better class of apartments” and lower occupancy in a lesser class of apartments that “because of obsolescence or location are not as desirable.” Examining the advancement of technology in apartment kitchens between 1900 and 1939 is another way of observing the new consumer society.

The increasing array of kitchen appliances, cabinets, and implements that became available in the early 20th century added to the attractiveness of kitchens. But architects and builders needed more than a choice of goods. They had to be aware of the arrangement of cabinets and the best place to install a sink and cooler or icebox; they needed to know that women wanted compact, efficient kitchens with little wasted space; and they had to pay attention to the kitchen’s color. Furthermore, the architect and builder had to be familiar with the advice of reformers who stressed scrupulously clean, sanitary surfaces to battle against germs and diseases. “Soap and water should be no enemy to its contents....

"Every practical feature of modern convenience arranged with a view to the quick dispatch of housework will be found here."

RIGHT: The first Hoosier kitchen cabinets were assembled and "built by skilled cabinetmakers" at the Hoosier Manufacturing Company, New Castle, Indiana, around 1899. By 1910, when this brochure was published, Hoosiers were factory assembled. Special features included a flour sifter, metal-lined bread drawer, coffee grinder, and potato and onion bins.

FACING PAGE: An electric range, an icebox, and plenty of built-in cabinetry complement this c. 1920s Seattle apartment kitchen.
Dirt should show,” said housekeeping expert Elizabeth Gilman.

Seattle builders could find information and ideas in the Apartment Operators Journal. This publication regularly printed helpful recommendations regarding the best paint to apply to kitchen walls, optimal placement of a fan to eliminate kitchen smells, whether the sink should be near the stove or the refrigerator, and the importance of providing adequate shelf space. An advertisement for the Buckley, an apartment building on Seattle’s Capitol Hill, indicated that apartment owners paid attention to this advice:

Not so many years ago the kitchen was thought a place of drudgery that no beauty nor taste could be connected with, but today this room must be as presentable as any other part of the home. Therefore the floor is covered with inlaid linoleum in attractive design. The walls enameled in a color scheme composed by a capable decorator. The range in white enamel is the latest electric model. Cabinets, drawers and accessories, even to the china closet are in keeping.

When the Buena Vista Apartments opened in 1907, their advertisements announced that each unit had a freestanding Hoosier kitchen cabinet unit. In a list of positive features for each apartment, the Manhattan Flats mentioned a dish cupboard and a flour bin, also freestanding. Of the many freestanding kitchen cabinets on the market, the Hoosier unit, made by the Hoosier Manufacturing Company of New Castle, Indiana, is the best-known. Beginning around 1899, the first units were assembled and “built by skilled cabinetmakers.” But within a few years, the company standardized parts so they could be replaced and began to manufacture the cabinets on an assembly line. Some of the special features included a sifter mounted on the bottom of the flour bin, places to store potatoes and onions, metal-lined bread drawers, cutlery drawers, spice racks, some of which rotated for easier use, lidded jars for coffee and tea, coffee grinders, and a work table, designed at the optimal height for working while seated. By 1920 the company had made two million Hoosiers and the name became the generic term for kitchen cabinet units. Caught between a market that wanted built-ins and a depression and war that halted the manufacture of consumer goods, the company ceased its business in the early 1940s.

Built-in wood cabinets eventually replaced the freestanding ones. A number of apartments stressed “ample or abundant cabinet space” in the kitchen or mentioned special items such as a “metal cupboard counter top at the side of each where hot dishes may be set without fear of marring the woodwork.” Built-in wooden cupboards, such as those in the Sovereign and Charlesgate, had cutlery drawers, bins for flour and sugar, and a pull-out dough board.

Apartment builders made a point of mentioning that their apartments used local lumber for cabinets, doors, and windows, and credited the company. Washington’s abundant timber led to a well-developed lumber industry. In 1907 the O. B. Williams Company sold glass china closet doors and cupboard closet doors at prices from $1.00 to $1.25 each. By 1919 lumber manufacturing was Seattle’s “chief industry” and was “keyed to the local market, requiring construction lumber and finished products.”

For women used to hauling wood or coal to feed their wood- or coal-burning ranges, and spending hours “blacking” the stove to prevent rust, the gas range must have seemed like a miraculous appliance, heaven-sent to lighten housework. Besides producing a quicker source of heat, it required neither bulky fuel nor excessive elbow grease to remain lit and clean.

Gas ranges benefited from the development of manufacturing processes that produced lightweight steel. “Easier to transport, rolled steel conformed better to turn-of-the-century systems of centralized production and national distribution, making for a general switchover from locally produced...
cast iron to centrally produced rolled steel in American industry," wrote Susan Strasser. In 1905 gas companies around the country joined with the National Commercial Gas Association to introduce these ranges and campaign for the use of gas as a cooking fuel. They trained personnel to service gas systems and set up showrooms to demonstrate how best to use gas appliances.

To increase its market share of the gas appliance business, the Seattle Lighting Company ran a series of advertisements extolling the virtues of gas and promised to help install their newly gas ranges. In one ad, entitled "A Talk on Gas Ranges," the company asked women to call for a company representative "to tell you about our many styles and their various advantages." Other announcements told of gas's economy and convenience: "Every up-to-date Architect, Builder and Property owner now realizes this fact and thoroughly provides every apartment house, residence, business block and factory with thorough equipment of gas piping," said a 1907 advertisement.

Seattle furniture stores also made a pitch for gas ranges. The Century Furniture Company trumpeted the popular "Jewel" gas range, which had "one giant burner, a simmer burner, and three single burners" that "suffice for every necessity and contingency." To further ensure purchases, the furniture store promised to connect the gas ranges for free and said it would accept the old range or stove as partial payment for the new Jewel.

A number of apartments stressed "ample or abundant cabinet space" in the kitchen or mentioned special items such as a "metal cupboard counter top at the side of each where hot dishes may be set....."

to this subject [cooking with electricity], and to give you assistance in building up this load." Eight years later Edison Electric Appliance Company allocated money for advertising electric ranges and provided lecturers for a cooking school. Between 1924 and 1927 the number of ranges in Seattle homes jumped from under 3,000 to over 11,000.

During the 1920s various business and civic groups vigorously promoted the sale of electric appliances. In 1923 the Seattle Electric Club, which had as its members businesses concerned with any and every aspect of electricity, celebrated an Electric Week. The exhibit, held in a large tent in Bothell, a suburb of Seattle, showcased cooking demonstrations and promoted the idea that "the work is done by the most willing of servants, electricity harnessed to push buttons... Let Electric Mary do your work.... [She] will take a big load off the shoulders of any housewife".

Two years later the Seattle Times backed the Progressive Seattle Exhibition. Though it did not focus exclusively on electricity, the exhibition's spotlight shone on electric appliances, including radios. To entice customers, merchants showcased electric appliances during daily demonstrations. At the Puget Sound Power and Light booth, company representatives told visitors they would receive assistance in selecting the appropriate range as well as prompt service after the installation. "Our facilities and success in equipping thousands of Seattle homes and apartment houses with electric ranges and service enable us to demonstrate the best in electrical cookery," said a spokesman for the company. Between January and September of 1927, Puget Power announced, "more ELECTRIC RANGES have been installed on our lines than there were in the entire state of Washington only six years ago!" The utility company sold Westinghouse, Hotpoint, and Crawford electric ranges and offered very low time payments.

Before refrigerators became popular and necessary kitchen equipment, apartment houses installed coolers as a way to extend the life of perishables: The cooler, sometimes referred to as a cooling closet, can best be described as a cupboard, often made of wood, with one to three shelves. The back side, set against an outside kitchen or dining area wall, had a three- to five-inch opening covered with perforated tin or wire screen. This allowed air to flow in while keeping insects out. Standing
in mute testimony to the past, these small openings, usually located below or at the side of a window, are still visible on many early Seattle apartments.

Coolers sufficed in Seattle's moderate climate. Though not cold enough to keep perishable food such as meat from spoiling, they worked well for the short-term storage of fruits and vegetables, jars of jam and preserves, and cheeses. A cooler was comparable to having a small cellar in the kitchen. Owners and tenants considered them an important apartment amenity.

Real estate promotional material for apartments indicates that in addition to, or in place of coolers, buildings furnished refrigerators. Until the 1920s, these were actually iceboxes. The icebox usually had a finished ash, pine, or oak shell that was lined with zinc, slate, porcelain, or galvanized metal. Iceboxes came in a variety of sizes and shapes and had doors that opened to reveal adjustable shelves, with a separate compartment for ice. A pan set in the bottom held melting ice water, which had to be emptied frequently. Tenants eagerly awaited the weekly delivery of ice. "The ice man" would break up the large blocks into sections for ease in carrying up the stairs to the waiting iceboxes. The neighborhood kids would gather around the wagon to get an ice sliver to suck on," recalled Al Wilding who lived in several Seattle apartments during the 1930s.

Because the ice melted and iceboxes leaked, these "refrigerators" could be exceedingly messy. Whenever possible, they were placed on a back porch. This was a most convenient place for the apartment that had back steps—the renter did not have to be home when the ice man delivered. He could just bring the ice to the porch, open the icebox door, and insert the block of ice. As late as 1924 the Roy Vue apartments, in Seattle's Capitol Hill district, bragged that each apartment would have outside porches, "containing a large refrigerator." In apartments without porches the icebox would frequently be housed on a wall with an opening onto the apartment corridor or in the entrance hall of individual apartments. Bernice Ovadia, who lived in the Monmouth Apartments, recalled that their icebox was in the front hall. "Sometimes we had to get up at night to empty the water from the melting ice. That was a very unpleasant task."

Once manufacturers figured out the mechanism for electric refrigerators to make ice cubes and freeze food, that technological wonder became one of the new appliance's most important selling points. Apartments promising true refrigerators reminded prospective tenants that each apartment had its own, enabling tenants to make "their own ice and frozenainties." The ice cube trays of the 1920s and 1930s were made of tin or nickel-plated copper with plated brass dividers, and required a dunking under warm water to remove the ice. Many an anxious homemaker ruined her elegant frozen dessert by dousing the tray with very hot water in order to speed the process.

In the mid 1930s, when engineers finally solved the choice of coolants and other design dilemmas, the refrigerator was well on its way to becoming an indispensable machine. Along the way, companies tested many improvements. One, the Electro-Kold, employed a single machine, located in a basement or other out-of-the-way place, to operate 20 kitchen refrigerators in individual apartments. Another system converted the older iceboxes into refrigerators operated by electricity. The president of Modern Appliances for Frigidaire distributors explained how it worked, but because the process was rather complicated, he reminded people that the company would happily sell them a new electrical refrigerator, "complete, with the mechanism in its own cabinet."

Most apartments chose that option.

Although modern amenities were most evident in the kitchen, the entire apartment benefited from technological advancements. Bathrooms acquired built-in tubs with showers, telephones became common, rooms were wired for radio aerials, and garages became a necessity. Aware of the importance of appealing to the middle class, apartment owners hired decorators to choose specially designed wallpaper and select fabric for lobby furniture. Clearly, owners paid attention to the wants and needs of prospective tenants. That so many Seattle apartments, built so long ago, are still fronting Seattle streets is testimony to their role in the urban landscape.

Jacqueline B. Williams is author of Wagon Wheel Kitchens: Food on the Oregon Trail (University Press of Kansas) and The Way We Are: Pacific Northwest Cooking, 1843-1960 (Washington State University Press). Donna James is at heart, and by training, a preservationist. She and Williams are currently researching early (1900-1939) Seattle apartments. Research for this article was partially funded by a grant from 4Culture.

COLUMBIA 18 WINTER 2009-10
WASHINGTON has a diverse and accomplished cultural legacy that includes a number of prominent painters, photographers, and printmakers who were active in the early 20th century. Some have gained regional recognition through exhibitions, catalogues, and scholarly research, while others remain unfamiliar to the general public. Even though some of these forgotten artists achieved national and occasionally international reputations during their lifetime, their art and careers remain on the periphery of Northwest art history. Gender bias and indifference by local art institutions have played a role in this.

The career of painter Yvonne Twining Humber (1907-2004) is a case in point. In 2007 the Frye Art Museum presented a small exhibition of her Depression-era paintings that mostly featured work she produced on the East Coast while working for the Federal Art Projects (a program of the Works Progress Administration) in New York and Boston before her move to Seattle in December 1943. Already an established artist when she arrived in the Pacific Northwest, Yvonne Twining had just married Seattle businessman Irving Humber on December 5, 1943, after knowing him for only two weeks.

It was a marriage arranged by her mother and aunt who had found in Humber a suitable provider for the 35-year-old artist, whose income had ceased when the WPA program ended. Ten years her senior, Humber had been visiting some friends in the Berkshires when they were initially introduced. At first Twining thought her mother and aunt could not be serious about the pairing, even telling friends that her family wanted to marry her off to an "old man who looked like a grandfather." She soon found that they were serious and that she must acquiesce to the marriage as a means of providing for herself and her mother, who had been widowed since 1917. After the initial shock of marrying a stranger and relocating across the country, the artist soon...
found her new husband to be a sensitive man who, besides being a successful businessman, was a classical pianist, accomplished photographer, and fluent speaker of several languages. Once the move had taken place, Yvonne Twining—now Yvonne Twining Humber—immediately became involved with the Seattle art community and set out to resume her promising career.

The style of painting Humber had developed was in direct opposition to the work of local celebrated artists Mark Tobey (1890-1976), Morris Graves (1910-2001), and Kenneth Callahan (1905-1986), who were already reaching a national audience. Her contemporaries welcomed her unique painting style, which became so recognized that the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) gave her work a solo exhibition in 1946. When Irving Humber learned of this honor he quipped, "I didn't know that I married a real artist."

With the exception of Yvonne and surrealist Margaret Tomkins (1916-2002), whose work she greatly admired, few local female artists were being included in national exhibitions at that time. Unfortunately, just as her reputation as one of the area's finest painters had become established, a series of personal tragedies altered the direction of her life and career.

Frances Yvonne Twining was born December 5, 1907, in New York City, the only child of Harry E. Twining and Emma Potts Twining. Her parents, both involved in the arts, had lived in Paris before her birth. Harry Twining was a gifted amateur watercolorist and her mother Emma was a classical singer and pianist. Shortly after Yvonne's birth the Twinings returned to Europe, settling in England, and remained there throughout her early years. After her father's death in 1917, Yvonne and her mother returned to the United States and settled in her mother's hometown of South Egremont, Massachusetts, in the Berkshire Mountains, where the budding painter was fortunate to have several professional artists as neighbors during the summer months.

Having exhibited artistic talent and interest from an early age, Twining attended the National Academy of Design from 1925 through 1931, studying primarily under Charles C. Curran (1861-1942), Raymond Neilson (1881-1964), and Sidney Dickinson (1890-1980), all established American Impressionists. A turning point in her life and career came in 1932 when she won the first of two consecutive Tiffany Foundation fellowships at Oyster Bay on Long Island.

She recalled that each morning Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) would receive the student artists in his palatial home, Laurelton Hall, sitting on a chair that resembled a throne, surrounded by his own opulent art and decorative objects. Although Tiffany died the following year, his foundation continued to support young artists for many years thereafter.

While she was at the Tiffany estate, Twining produced vibrant and loosely painted oils of the surrounding landscape. Some of the young painters she befriended at the foundation began to challenge the techniques they had been taught. Twining would occasionally venture into the city with artist friends to explore the “Italian Primitive” paintings at the Metropolitan Museum and attend various commercial gallery exhibitions, including Alfred Stieglitz's An American Place. Although her conservative instructors at the National Academy discouraged modernism and abstraction, she was beginning to observe her own creative process from a new point of view. Twining gradually abandoned her loose, impressionistic style in favor of a hard-edged and meticulously scrutinized approach. She also discovered primitive and folk art as well as 19th-century trompe l'oeil painters. With these stimulating new interests, she also expanded her palette, experimenting with a range of pigments and techniques.

"Public Market" (Pike Place Market), c. 1945, oil on canvas. One of Humber's most notable paintings, she composed it in her studio from numerous on-site sketches of vendors and shoppers.
she began to combine a sophisticated and unique hybrid of Precisionism and folk painting.

As her talent matured, the country sank ever deeper into an economic depression, offering little hope for her future as an artist. Twining's finances had been minimal even before the Depression began, although she had made a small income by producing advertising art and personalized cards in the Berkshires. When the government-sponsored Public Works of Art Project began in 1933, she became employed as an easel painter in New York City until the program ended six months later and was replaced by the Works Progress Administration. To participate in this new program she had to return to her home state of Massachusetts. Reluctantly, she left the stimulation of New York for Boston, where she worked on the Massachusetts WPA project as an easel painter from 1935 to 1943. During this period she established a national reputation for her deft handling of urban and rural subject matter. Her paintings, frequently singled out by critics who praised her unique personal style, were often reproduced in newspapers and art publications.

Yvonne's works from this period are characterized by a sharp, crisp delineation, often employing vibrant colors and conveying an optimistic outlook that was contrary to the harsh reality surrounding her. Although she often worked on site and directly from her subjects, she usually altered the perspective and placement of forms to create an interesting composition, even if she had to sometimes fabricate the subject matter to suit her conception.

Twining took her involvement on the Federal Art Projects seriously, checking in promptly at the WPA office each morning to receive art materials and working for at least eight hours each day. She traversed the city by bus, carrying her canvas and supplies with her in search of subjects. On a number of occasions she obtained permission to enter office buildings or warehouses where the higher elevation gave her a more interesting vantage point from which to observe her subject. Although the times were difficult and the work was physically challenging, she remained grateful for the opportunity afforded by the government projects to continue painting throughout the Depression.

Although her work garnered excellent reviews and frequently appeared in print, Twining was dismayed by her inability to find a dealer to represent the works she had produced outside the WPA project. After the program ended in 1943, she worked briefly in a munitions plant and produced some commercial illustrations for extra income.

While Twining became romantically involved with a few men over the years, nothing had developed into a serious relationship prior to her arranged marriage. Her husband, Irving Humber, owned an established and successful wholesale business at the corner of Yale and Howell streets in downtown Seattle. A few weeks after the
newlyweds arrived, Emma Twining relocated from Massachusetts to live with her daughter and son-in-law in their Magnolia neighborhood home.

Yvonne Humber had loved the mountains and hills of her beloved Berkshires, but she was awed by the incredible beauty and scale of Seattle's landscape. The expansive bodies of water and massive mountain ranges were unlike anything she had ever seen on the East Coast. Having existed on the edge of poverty most of her life, she was ecstatic to be living in a lovely home that offered a sweeping view of Puget Sound with the Olympic Mountains in the distance. The expansive bodies of water and massive mountain ranges were unlike anything she had ever seen on the East Coast.

Humber explored the city as she had previously done on the East Coast, finding interesting elements of downtown Seattle to record. The "false front" architecture in the outlying rural areas—a truly Western manifestation—held great allure. During the summer months she delighted in the numerous fairs and circuses that enlivened the region. Her interest in these colorful events ranged from the large, traveling three-ring circuses to smaller rural events where she could record the intimate moments of workers, animals, and children. One of her favorite destinations was the Ellensburg Rodeo, where she made numerous sketches and recorded many of her observations in black-and-white photographs that she would later use as reference material for paintings and prints.

In 1944 Humber joined the Women Painters of Washington (WPW), which increased her exhibition opportunities and allowed her to form close bonds with several other female artists. She served as WPW president in 1947-48, and was an active member of the Northwest Watercolor Society, the Northwest Printmakers Society, and the National League of American Pen Women, from whom she won first prize for a painting in the organization's national exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution in 1946.

This national honor preceded Humber's solo Seattle Art Museum exhibition in November of that same year. Her painting of Pike Place Market was extremely popular. Besides being a highlight of the SAM exhibition, it appeared in other national exhibitions as well. By the following year the museum had purchased two of her paintings for its permanent collection. One of these, a downtown Boston street scene, Humber began while working for the WPA and completed within the first few months of her arrival in Seattle. The other, "Spoiled Carnival," depicted a scene from the Puyallup Fair that was painted in her studio from a series of on-site sketches done the previous year. At first she set out to produce a panoramic view of the fair in her usual vivid and upbeat style, but after learning about the fair's association with the Japanese internment during the war, her observation shifted...
"Spoiled Carnival," 1945, oil on canvas, 22" x 38" (55.9 x 96.5 cm), was the second Humber painting SAM purchased for its permanent collection.

"Carnival Performers' Entrance," c. 1944, oil on canvas. This large-scale work—one of Humber's favorites—hung in her living room until she sold it at the first Bellevue Arts & Crafts Fair, which she helped organize in 1947.

...to a darker response. As she later explained, the painting's menacing clouds and blustery weather, which subdued the joy of the event, became a personal metaphor for her frustration at the politics that excluded local citizens from the simple joy of attending the fair.

In a glowing Seattle Times review of her SAM exhibition, fellow artist and critic Kenneth Callahan (1905-1986) stated:

The one-man show of paintings by Yvonne Twining Humber at the Seattle Art Museum included in this month's exhibition shows work quite different in style than we are accustomed to see [sic] by this region's painters. The carefully delineated realism almost rigidly designed is not uncommon among contemporary American painters although it is in contrast to the fluid type of painting most prevalent in this region. She has had marked success in regional exhibitions since her arrival, having exhibited often and frequently been awarded prizes.

As Callahan says, Humber's work distinguished itself from the popular artists active in Seattle at that time—later referred to as the "Northwest School," Mark Tobey, Morris Graves, Guy Anderson (1906-1998), and Callahan himself had yet to be featured in Life Magazine where they were officially dubbed "the Mystic Painters of the Northwest" in September 1953. As opposed to the intense technical training Humber received at leading East Coast art schools, her male contemporaries in this group received little formal art instruction. The fact that they were self-taught may have reinforced the so-called mysticism of their unique vision, but their sometimes glaringly apparent lack of technical skill appears to have limited their expressive range.
Their work and that of their followers was characterized by the use of water-based mediums such as tempera and gouache on various types of paper, often loosely painted and displaying strong Asian and surrealist influences. Humber, on the other hand, worked in oils, employing her hard-edged style and concentrating on urban and rural scenes as she had done in Massachusetts. The contrast of her work with the mystical modernism of her regional contemporaries gave her a unique local reputation.

At the height of her artistic powers an unfortunate series of tragedies and misfortunes forced Humber to stop painting. Her husband’s mother, thought to have been lost during World War II in the concentration camps at Terezinstadt, miraculously was found and came to live with them in Seattle. As a Holocaust survivor, Mrs. Humber the elder was emotionally and physically devastated by her ordeal and required a great deal of support and care. Yvonne’s mother, also in residence, provided additional challenges. In 1952 Yvonne Humber gave birth to a daughter, her only child, who unfortunately died when only a few weeks old. Over the next few years Humber’s mother and mother-in-law both passed away. In 1960 Irving Humber died unexpectedly while the couple was traveling in Greece. He never told her that he had been diagnosed with terminal cancer a few months earlier.

During these difficult years Humber was unable to find the time or inspiration to paint. Following her husband’s death she was obligated to maintain his wholesale business and pay off the debts he had left behind. Gradually she regained her financial stability and began painting and printmaking again. When in 1976 the United States’ bicentennial ushered in a retrospective interest in the government-sponsored WPA art projects, her paintings appeared in several East Coast exhibitions. In the last two decades of her life Humber’s work was rediscovered nationally and included in prominent exhibitions. She continued painting and drawing well into her 90s.

Yvonne Twining Humber died on May 13, 2004, in Redmond. Before her death, however, she endowed the Twining-Humber Award for Lifetime Achievement through Seattle’s Artist Trust. The award, established in 2001, gives an annual $10,000 prize to a Washington female artist over the age of 60 who has dedicated a substantial portion of her life to art. Humber also provided a large bequest to the Women Painters of Washington, an important regional arts organization of which she was a member for over 50 years.

David F. Martin, co-owner of Martin-Zambino Fine Art in Seattle, is a leading expert on early Northwest art. He is a recognized authority on the Washington state WPA, regional printmaking, American women artists, gay and lesbian artists; and photography.

“Circus Side Show,” c. 1948, oil on board. Humber sketched this painting from the actual event. The workers performing their duties and the performers preparing themselves held her interest more than the spectacle itself.
"Seattle Breadline on Western Avenue, Winter of 1934-35,"
by Ronald Debs Ginther

This image (#1967.137.20) 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 word or term.
J OSEPH C. Conine had not written to the Washington Standard, an Olympia-based newspaper, since the 1880s. Though his pen had been on hiatus, it was certainly not for lack of opinions. There was plenty to worry and write about in 1896—economic despair and disparity were growing across the nation. In the June 19, 1896, edition of the Standard, editor and publisher John Miller Murphy headlined a letter to the editor titled “Pertinent Questions” and signed “Yours muchly, J. C. CO9.”

When Murphy’s friend Conine (CO9) sat down at his farm near Yelm and wrote to “ED[itor] STANDARD,” he resumed a practice that would continue for over two decades. In Conine’s mind the political system had become unresponsive. He wanted to warn Thurston County voters that the deck was stacked against them and the playing field tilted in favor of those with money and connections. For his part, editor Murphy would later call Conine “the Sage of Yelm.”

The Yelm community saw in Conine a dairy rancher, civic improver, and rhetorical hell-raiser. Twice married, Conine’s second wife was the daughter of early Yelm settler James Longmire. Throughout his life J. C. Conine was a partisan Democrat though he had worn the Populist label in a run for county sheriff in 1894—a race he lost.

That first letter, probably written in longhand on coarse paper, set the pattern of future Conine missives. The Standard’s motto stated, “Hew to the Line: Let the Chips Land Where They May,” and Conine was ready to hack. Starting at the local level, he avowed that the Daily Olympian printed lies. County government, dominated by Republicans, was wasting the people’s money. Mischieffully referring to the GOP (Grand Old Party) as the DOP (Damned Old Party), Conine argued that the Republicans only pretended to care about the people and that those who supported that party were tools of the bosses. Simply put, the Republicans were “vultures.”

Conine made it a point to deny that he had any interest in elected office:

Now, Bro. Murphy, there are no strings on me. I have no political ax to grind. I am not husting for office—never did. ’Tis true I ran for Sheriff two years ago, but the man who says I solicited the honor is a liar and a demagogue and bribed with British gold.

Six months later, in the 1896 election, Joseph Cowan Conine was elected to the Washington State House of Representatives.

One must look at the economic conditions under which western farmers labored in the first years of the 1890s to understand Conine’s rise to elected office. Returns on a bushel of wheat, a pound of potatoes, or a bale of cotton had seldom been lower in anyone’s memory. Increased production had driven prices down. When the Panic of 1893 hit, wheat, which had sold for 82 cents a bushel, fell to 36 cents between January and September 1893. Potatoes now might net one or two cents per pound. Eggs earned the producer a little over a penny a piece.
Farmers, however, had fixed costs. While a mortgage payment lived in divine stasis and bank loans for equipment purchases still came due, it was costing more to grow crops than one earned selling them. Farmers could sell off some land or borrow against their property, but those desperate measures might not buy them enough time; farm foreclosures had increased markedly of late. As a dairyman, Conine understood the farmers’ predicament all too well. In his view, government ought to play a stronger role in providing economic support to farmers.

The impact of the depression widened, disrupting lives from coast to coast. In Tacoma, 14 banks failed; in Everett, all of them went under. Major railroads were declaring bankruptcy. With the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad two decades earlier, small lumber mills had grown up in the hills encircling the Yelm prairie, primarily turning out railroad ties. The timber industry of the Yelm area, to which some farmers had turned to ease their economic woes, eventually fell victim to these shifting economic fortunes. As railroads floundered, mills that cut ties closed up.

Yelm merchants felt the squeeze as well. Education also took a hit. The fall in tax receipts made it necessary to cut the school budget. As a member of the board of directors at the Eureka school, just south of Yelm, Conine was faced with the necessity of cutting teachers’ pay. Over a two-year period it dropped from $45 to $25 a month—a 45 percent decline. Conine felt the trend in salaries was unconscionable, regardless of economic vicissitudes. Education was, after all, a pillar of democracy.

In the Yelm area, the only surplus commodity seemed to be anger. Forces beyond the people’s control wiped out their savings, destroyed their livelihoods, and darkened their future. To make matters worse, the two major parties seemed more interested in the petty advantages of partisanship than the welfare of the people. Many American farmers found comfort in the...
Populist Party's rhetoric and goals. Mainstream politicians seemed less responsive to voters and more attentive to the needs of industry owners and their banking allies. Increasingly, farmers wanted government to act as a counterbalance to the trusts, railroads, and banks. Only the federal government could regulate interstate commerce or alter the tariff level. That meant national reform.

The Populists wanted to bring back silver to replace the gold standard, inflate prices, and drive up farm income. For the fat cats at the top of the economic pile, they advocated a graduated income tax. Government-secured postal savings banks would offer alternatives to the hated, unreliable commercial banks. The newly founded Populist Party's Omaha Platform of 1892 called for railroad and telegraph nationalization. Certain public land grants acquired by the railroads during their construction were to be returned to the people. The unemployed would be given work. Private charity, recognized as having certain limits, was to be replaced by a governmental solution that would play a larger role in the people's welfare.

Recognizing the political side to this economic structure, the Populists promised all power to the people. There was a call for lawmaking by the people through initiative and referendum. U.S. senators would be chosen not by the state legislature but rather under the scrutiny of the voting public. The Electoral College was to be abolished. Condemning the courts' use of injunctions to interfere in labor disputes, Populists promised to rein in the judiciary. Combined, these platform planks represented serious changes to the United States' economic and political landscape.

Populist support in Thurston County increased from 1892 to 1894 as people grew disaffected with the major parties, which proved unwilling or unable to stem the tide of economic loss.

Democrats and Populists learned something from the local and state elections of 1894: though the Populists lost most races that year, the combined vote totals of Populists and Democrats were greater than what Republicans had polled. Disaffected Silver Republicans, Democrats, and Populists combined their forces and presented a united front—the Fusion ticket—to attract voters in the fall of 1896. They set their sights on Gold Democrats and straight party-line Republicans. One of the most energetic campaign seasons in Thurston County history ensued, and J.C. Conine was a loud part of it.

The most important issue for the Populist wing of the new coalition was Townsend and Southern Railroad. The Standard made sure there was an endless supply of bad news for the Republicans.

Nothing related to the Republicans was exempt from criticism. When Republican supporters gathered at the Olympia Theater, the Standard even found fault with the songs chosen by their glee club. Following a Republican meeting to select delegates to the state convention, the paper cynically reported that the large number of delegates chosen was in marked contrast to the few people attending. Readers discovered in September that the "Gold Bug" meeting in Tumwater attracted an embarrassingly small crowd—17 people. In Shelton a Republican congressman received a "frosty" reception from the assembled loggers. In other cases, Republican meetings with sizable turnouts were revealed to contain many Populists swelling the ranks—there, no doubt, to scout the opposition, hoot down their inaccurate statements, and give three cheers for Bryan. According to the Standard, one McKinley Ole Club member summarized Republican fortunes this way:

"Talk about Populists being thick! They grow on bushes out there. Populists to the right, Populists to the left, Populists before and behind us. The meeting became so chilly for our boys, that I retired from the hall in disgust, thinking that, at least, outside I could get clear of the atmosphere... Thought to drown my sorrow and soothe my nerves [with liquor]. Finishing the bottle, I threw it over in the brush. What was my consternation to find I had hit a Pop square on the head and he jumped up, hollering "Hurrah for Bryan."

The Republicans were even labeled Anglophiles, a strong accusation of
elitism and monarchical desires. When one of their meetings concluded with "My Country 'Tis of Thee," the Standard reported instead that "God Bless the Queen" had been played for the monarchy-loving, upper-class Republicans. The paper failed to report that the old British melody had been sung with American lyrics.

The Standard's campaign reporting ensured that its readers understood the differences between the two men running for the nation's highest office. While Bryan traveled 10,000 miles through all sections of the country, McKinley sat on his "veranda in Canton [Ohio]." Bryan's other virtues included support by the people, whereas McKinley was the tool of the businessman Mark Hanna, a man whose wealth and power were "tainted with the sweat and blood of oppressed downtrodden labor."

Editor Murphy of the Standard loved to depict the Republicans as elitist and out of touch with the common man. According to witnesses at a Republican rally in Bucoda, the speaker had the audacity to argue that "loggers have had too much wages in this country...especially teamsters." The choice was clear and the future almost assured, the Standard commented, "Republican candidates are watching with fear and treblemng the political barometer, and in their overheard talk they sometimes acknowledge a belief that it will be a big snow." The article concluded, "Not even the McKinley Glee Club could lift their spirits."

On the other hand, the Fusionists were gaining momentum. For starters, the Fusion organization set up shop in a large Olympia storefront at the corner of Main and Third. Supporting Bryan and John Rogers, the Populist candidate for governor, the "Bryan-Rogers Central Silver Club would serve as a general rendezvous for silver men and their friends. It would be kept open at all times and well supplied with chairs and tables, and such articles of comfort as may be introduced in a club-room calculated for instruction and a union of popular sentiment on the vital issue of the great battle...The tables will be well supplied with campaign literature. All are welcome.

A Bryan-Rogers Glee Club showed up at rallies, entertaining the crowd with song and organizing political feelings into cheers for the good guys. The paper announced that women had organized their own Bryan club, complete with red, white, and blue skirts which were "natty and exceedingly becoming." Members of the Grand Army of the Republic (veterans of the Civil War) formed a Bryan club. The paper reported that Henry George, nationally known for decades for his "single-tax" position, predicted a Bryan triumph.

The Bryan forces had assembled a highly successful parade in Tacoma, twice as long as the Republican version held earlier. The Standard published a map of the United States predicting how the states would vote in the November election; Bryan was going to win the Electoral College. A local business school held a straw poll in which Bryan won. "It's in the air," reported the Standard. Even schoolchildren were breathing "the air of political freedom" in Tumwater where a straw poll in Miss Wilcox's room recorded a four to one vote for Bryan over "Boss" McKinley.

Pro-Bryan speakers appeared all over the county. A. D. Ward, an Everett attorney, spoke to the faithful in late August and delivered a speech that the paper could only describe as "volley after volley of canister and grape [which] effectively demolished the enemy's breastworks." Other speakers were greeted with "unbounded" enthusiasm. Sometimes Republican and Fusion candidates spoke from the same stage. Huzzahs for Bryan, according to the Standard, always drowned out any pro-Republican chant.

In nominating J. C. Comine to run for one of the 27th District's legislative positions, the Fusion ticket chose a political candidate who was a two-time loser. Earlier in the decade Comine had run and lost in his bids for county sheriff and assessor. The Standard, however, was in his corner. Editor Murphy promoted him as a man of "marked ability...sound judgment...[and] pleasing address" who, most importantly, would "not be swayed by corporate power."

A week before the election Standard readers were reminded of Conine's sterling character as well as his impressive story of service to his nation and community. He began teaching at age 17 back in Iowa. While serving the United States during the Civil War, he was captured at the Battle of Pea Ridge and spent time in solitary confinement in a Little Rock cell where he lived on a diet of cornbread and water. When paroled, he reenlisted and eventually
achieved the rank of sergeant. He had farmed in Illinois, Iowa, and Washington and taught school for over 20 years, also serving as a justice of the peace and notary public. In conclusion, Murphy wrote, “Mr. Conine is a man of sterling integrity and he has the grit to stand for the right against all opposition.”

THE DAILY Olympian marked its Republican opposition to Conine’s campaign referred to “Co9” as the “flatulent populist nominee for the legislature.” From the Olympian’s perspective, Conine was nothing more than a blowhard; it almost did not matter that his politics were also suspect. The paper did not treat his candidacy kindly. The October 5 edition found fault with Conine’s knowledge of math and extrapolated from that a reflection of his deficient economic understanding. The Olympian article began by quoting an earlier Standard article in which a writer called “Dusenberry” (undoubtedly Conine himself, using a nom de plume) assessed the attendance at a Republican McKinley rally in Yelm. Dusenberry reported that a mere 50 people attended the meeting but then counted 75 Populist Bryan men in attendance as well. The Daily Olympian lamented that it was this type of math, similarly used in Populist attempts to equate less valuable silver with gold, that so endangered the nation.

The Conine/Dusenberry letter proudly mentioned the cheers for Bryan that must have embarrassed the gathered Republicans. Once again the Olympian begged to differ: Instead of the massed voices of Populists cheering Bryan on, the audience heard a single dissenting voice, which sounded “more like the shrill rebel yell described by war veterans.” That single voice belonged to J. C. Conine. (The comparison of his voice to that of a rebel doubtless infuriated him.) In the Olympian’s version, Conine’s proposal of cheers for Bryan found no support at all. Heads turned toward the diminutive man, the “flatulent populist,” but his attempt at disruption fell upon deaf ears.

Conine the candidate served as a pawn in a classic political battle between the two rival newspapers. On only one particular issue did Conine’s position diverge from that of John Miller Murphy and the Standard. He opposed women’s suffrage while Murphy supported the idea. This was a sore point between them, and to exploit this difference of opinion the Olympian published a letter from Yelm signed “Dem” in an attempt to drive a wedge between the two men. A group of Republican women in Olympia had organized the “Woman’s Non-Partisan Sound Money League,” with an office and club in a donated vacant storeroom at the corner of Sixth and Main. Editorializing in the Standard, Murphy characterized these women as nothing more than the “wives of bank officers and old time political hacks” and asserted that the women were actually undermining their chances of achieving suffrage.

Quick to defend the reputations of these “honorable” women, the Olympian scolded Murphy for attributing such base motivations to women he knew and respected. As to Murphy’s claim that by organizing themselves the women were harming the cause of suffrage, that was simply wrong. And anyway, the Olympian concluded, “Everybody knows that one of this country’s candidates on the people’s party ticket, for representative, is an avowed enemy of the measure.” That avowed enemy of suffrage was Conine. The Olympian was telling Murphy to get his own house in order before he started worrying about how women might harm their chances for success.

Conine traveled the county spreading the new gospel of silver. As a Populist he elaborated on the problems confronting the nation and the state. In addition, on one occasion he spoke at a rally near Yelm that, according to one estimate, attracted over 300 cheering Populists.

THE STANDARD WAS IN CONINE’S CORNER. EDITOR MURPHY PROMOTED HIM AS A MAN OF “MARKED ABILITY…SOUND JUDGMENT…[AND] PLEASING ADDRESS” WHO, MOST IMPORTANTLY, WOULD “NOT BE SWAYED BY CORPORATE POWER.”
A number of letters promoting Conine's candidacy and the Populist cause appeared above his name in the Standard. When referring to the Republicans and their supporters, Conine spared no invective: The "syndicate was in the saddle." The Populists were there to fight the "money power" and the "money sharks." The Republicans were dominated by "unprincipled scoundrels" and the party supported "pernicious legislation." The gold standard, the Crime (or Coinage Act) of 1873, the protective tariff, the "greenback controversy," the banking system, and other legislative measures supported by Republicans were so evil as to require a "new vocabulary to describe [them]."

The resulting legislative agenda was not beneficial to the common farmer or worker but reflected the "avarice" and "greed of the Shylocks." The "oil trust," "sugar trust," "salt trust," and even the "nail trust" were taking money "from the pockets of labor" and making "colossal fortunes for a few lazy barnacles." The Republicans and their wealthy supporters had as much concern for the people as a "vulture has for the lamb, or a hawk for a dove." Once elected, Republicans sang "the song of Vanderbilt, the people be damned."

Just how damned were the laboring classes? According to Conine, the people were in "bondage." Interest rates could be as high as 20 percent and property values had declined by as much as 50 percent. Wages were low. Workers, ruled by injunction, had Pinkerton agents patrolling their towns. Misery, poverty, and pauperism were the realities of the laboring masses who in fact produced the wealth they did not enjoy. The government seemed more interested in the construction of penitentiaries, jails, asylums, poorhouses, and soup houses, than in the "welfare of producers." It was time, Conine wrote, to "get on the populist bandwagon." In one letter he compared the current problems facing the nation to a boil on one's body. Political and economic corruption was feeding the boil. "In fact, at the present time this boil has attained such colossal proportions...that it has been decided by universal consent to apply a surgical remedy, and William J. Bryan has been selected to perform the operation with his silver lance." It was time for the "piratical crew" to be "relegated to the shades of oblivion and smolder in their own rottenness."

Candidate Conine made sure to link arms with Bryan in his letters and speeches. Bryan would bring justice for the "toiling masses." William McKinley was in the pocket of the moneyed interests. He had been "bought and bound and owned" by gold interests. McKinley was the "tool of the money power." Worse still, McKinley had changed his traditional position on the silver issue and was a "captive" of the "soulless syndicate." By contrast, Bryan, although he was young, was at least "free." He had spent his career fighting "tyranny" and "oppression."

On October 31 the Standard published its last pre-election edition. A predicted victory for the Bryan, Rogers, and Conine ticket in the state and the county was merely a matter of days away. By the time the next edition of the Standard was printed voters already knew the outcome. William McKinley had won the presidency, but in Washington Fusion candidate John Rogers had won the governorship. Likewise, Fusion candidates swept Thurston County, winning nearly every major race. Joseph Conine would serve in the state legislature from the 27th District.

J. C. Conine had been chosen by the people to represent their wishes in government, one of the greatest honors a republic may bestow on one of its own. He had ridden a wave of national discontent into the halls of power. In January he rode to Olympia to begin his service to the people.

An unseasonably warm January had plumped the buds of trees and flowers, creating a fresh, green backdrop of natural renewal. The fifth session of the Washington State Legislature was supposed to do the same. Alas, the triumphant surge to the Elysian Fields of the Olympia statehouse did not signal the blooming of direct democracy and a living wage for everyone. When Conine returned to Yelm at the session's end in March, snow fell, signaling that a colder reality had overcome his high hopes.

As Conine rode back to his ranch at the end of the session, he could be proud of a few legislative triumphs: There was immediate financial relief in the form of a tax exemption for the first $500 of one's personal property and a similar tax break for improvements on real estate. Bank foreclosure procedures became less draconian, benefitting the property owner who was about to lose his land. A referendum for a single tax was slated for the 1898 election. Railroads, so often a target of Populist wrath, escaped with only a cap on tonnage rates. A new law changed the method of apportioning state money for schools, a boon to the poorer districts with which Conine was familiar. His committee on prisons had engineered a sentencing reform. Workers would benefit from changes in laws regarding pay and mine inspections. Women received the right to oversee estate probate and the chance to receive the right of suffrage at a later date. Overall, however, the session was frustrating and disenchancing. Much of the legislative agenda failed to make it to the governor's desk.

Conine did not run for reelection in 1898. It was just as well, for the Republicans stormed back into power in the state legislature, signaling an effective end to the state's populist moment. He continued to write to the Standard about issues of the day for the next 20 years. In over 120 letters Conine, inspired by the nation's ills and convinced of his own correctness, continued to be an incisive critic of the establishment, weighing in on subjects from Prohibition ("agin' it!") to pension increases for Civil War vets ("about time!") and enjoying the moniker John Miller Murphy had bestowed upon him: "The Sage of Yelm."
By William H. Wilson

THE WAR LEAGUE

Asahel Curtis's Plan for Peace

In 1932 Seattle-based photographer Asahel Curtis wrote an antwar essay mocking the world's penchant for conflict and the failure of peace organizations to prevent violence. The logic for his argument was simple: peace efforts have been futile, resulting in war; therefore a "league for the promotion of war" could bring peace. At the time he wrote this essay Curtis was well known in Washington for his excellent documentary photography, fervent support of Mount Rainier National Park, dedicated regional boosterism, and vigorous advocacy of improved streets and highways. This essay reveals that his private thoughts ranged far beyond such workaday endeavors.

In 1932 there was plenty for 58-year-old Curtis to worry about. The continuing, apparently unsolvable Great Depression severely curtailed his photography business. He was a faithful Republican at a time when that party had to shoulder the blame for causing and failing to cure the national economic disaster. The Republicans were almost certain to lose control of the presidency and become the minority party in the November elections. On the international scene the situation was no better. In Asia and the West, totalitarian governments threatened or used armed force despite the cooperation envisioned through the League of Nations, disarmament conferences, and nonaggression pacts.

Curtis did not write in an intellectual or emotional vacuum. By 1932 the United States was in the grip of a powerful reaction against participation in World War I and the international involvement it represented. Peace groups, scholarly studies of the war's origins, and novels—e.g., Ernest Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms (1929)—all cautioned the public against war or any activities that could lead to war. Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Democratic victor in the 1932 presidential election,
though not an isolationist, renounced his previous support for United States' membership in the League of Nations.

Curtis's essay is undated, but he likely wrote it in the spring or summer of 1932. "We have just had a war that wasn't a war," he wrote, a probable reference to the "Shanghai incident" of early 1932 involving a Chinese-Japanese clash in and around Shanghai following Chinese protests over the Japanese takeover of Manchuria and related disturbances.

Shanghai was home to a large international settlement, so the brutality of the "incident" was widely circulating over the globe. Japan's prestige never recovered from what was seen as its aggression, overreaction, and needless destruction of life and property. Total casualties (killed, wounded, missing in action) numbered about 13,000, a significant human toll for such a brief "incident." The property loss was severe, including the destruction of the Oriental Library—a trove of priceless manuscripts, paintings, and books—and China's leading publishing house. Japan minimized the bitter urban battle, which is probably what prompted Curtis's "war that wasn't a war" comment.

Curtis wrote this essay with tongue firmly planted in cheek. He surely knew that no major nation would surrender its war-making power to a "league for the promotion of war," as his plan required. Yet the essay shows a Curtis who is more than merely cynical or pessimistic about the direction of events in the early 1930s. It conveys the hope that a supra-sovereign could enforce peace and the reasoned conviction that war is enormously expensive, scarcely glorious, and rarely produces its hoped-for results. His argument for fielding armies composed of the "aged, infirm, and unfit" could be seen as an affirmation of the observation that large-scale conflict destroys the best of a nation's youthful ability and talent. The obvious cruelty of sending incompetents into battle could have been a swipe at the eugenics movement then still in vogue. The essay is informal because Curtis presents his proposal as that of a senator who, while campaigning for the presidency, is outlining his plan to a "friendly" newspaper. Part of the essay follows:

When I am President I am going to establish a League for the promotion of war. We have had Leagues for peace and we got war so I say let's have a league for war and we may have peace! Anyway war has never been really organized or conducted on a business basis.... This League would have full charge of all wars and preparations for wars and this would save more than all the disarmament conferences can ever hope to. I would have all nations agree to leave their wars in charge of the League. If some of the nations did not agree, the War League could quickly convince them of their error.

Of course, there would be difficulties between some of the nations and some of them would want to have a little private war...
a nation wanted a private war, they could vote on how big a one they wanted. They would then deposit with the League this amount of money in gold, subject to draft for war expenses. They would also name the country with which they wanted to fight. If the nation they named could prove to the League that it could not afford a war, it would be permitted to draw on this same fund. Of course, if both nations drew on the same fund, it would lessen the duration of the war but the results would probably be as satisfactory...

Past wars have been fought on borrowed money, leaving posterity to pay the bills. I contend that this is basically [sic] wrong. Posterity is going to have enough troubles of its own. To avoid this passing of the cost on to posterity, I propose...the payment of all bills as the war progresses and the closing of hostilities before all the funds are exhausted. Two of the most expensive features of all past wars have been pensions to disabled soldiers and their families and the payments to neutrals, for damages. To take care of this, I propose that twenty-five percent of the fund be set aside to settle claims of neutrals and that the full amount of a paid up life insurance policy for each combatant be deducted from the fund before hostilities begin.

In order that a war might have the proper dramatics, I propose that the War League have a navy with a skeleton personnel and enough trained officers to put an army in shape. Of course, as both nations would be served by these officers and ships, the results would be more satisfactory than the present arrangement because they would have a definite code for fighting the same as we now have in the prize ring. I feel that such a serious matter as war deserves as much thought and as careful planning as prize fighting.

If and when these financial preliminaries were arranged satisfactorily, the next matter for consideration would be the private soldiers and sailors. (All officers would be supplied by the League.) I consider that in the past we have approached this from the wrong point of view as we have all other war matters. I would select for the original draft those citizens of the least use to the nations. Perhaps we should begin with the national lawmakers; then the local or State officials. I would follow this with the prisoners in the Federal penitentiaries, state penitentiaries and local jails. If this did not provide a sufficient force, I would take the old and infirm to supplement the force. The loss of life would probably not be so great because the fighting might be devoid of pep but with both sides similarly equipped, the results would be as satisfactory as with a more vigorous force. Then too, the loss of these men would not be as severe a blow to the nations as would the loss of the young men. Rather, by this plan we might even improve the race through the elimination of the aged, infirm and unfit.

Of course, members of Parliament or Congressmen and Senators might be reluctant to vote for war, knowing that they would be among the first to participate but this hesitancy should not seriously interfere with the welfare of any nation.

I believe that by determining in advance how much they were willing to spend to “save face” and having to get the money together in advance, the nations would have an opportunity to consider the seriousness of war. When they had the money ready they might even find something else they would rather do with it.

Curtis' antiwar essay was unpublished and probably never circulated very far among his associates. Because it was both isolationist in its rejection of international peace organizations and interventionists in its proposal for a global “War League,” it was bound to offend both isolationists and interventionists. It is a tract of its times, but a novel one in its inversion of the standard “peace” or avoidance of war solution in favor of a league to enforce vigorous standards of war. Perhaps his best suggestion was this: if countries had to pay the full cost of a war in advance, they might realize their money would be better spent elsewhere.

William H. Wilson is an independent historian living in Seattle. His current interest is the life and work of Asahel Curtis.
The Novels of Allis McKay

By Peter Donahue

White Winter Pearman, Rome Beauty, Jonathan, Spireenberg, Delicious, Winesap, King David...novelist Allis McKay understood that in the upper Columbia River region, it's all about the apples.

Allis McKay (1889-1985) was the pen name of Alice Klamm (née Alice McKinstry). She grew up on an apple ranch in the Big Bend area north of Wenatchee. Books filled her home, and she began writing at a young age. After moving to Chicago in the late 1920s, she ran in the Big Bend area.

Eventually, though, she returned to the Northwest and focused her next three novels on her family's history of homesteading and apple growing in Washington.

They Came to a River (1941) tells the story of Chris Hallowell, whose family settles on the banks of the Columbia in the late 1800s. Her father runs a winch-operated ferry, and as a child Chris learns to distinguish between the two sides of the river: "Our Side climbed up and ended in a rolling prairie-land of wheat, that went over to Spokane and beyond. But Their Side had lakes and glaciers and mountain passes, and clear at the back a range of snow-capped peaks."

Chris watches as her neighbors plant their first apple trees and lay irrigation pipes. She listens to them complain of bees that leave the fruit unfertilized and codling moths that threaten entire orchards. As a teenager she works in a mill, stacking shook for packing boxes, and when she marries a rancher she learns how "harvest swept everything before it." She spends her mornings in the kitchen cooking for the pickers hired by her husband and her afternoons in the packinghouse working the hopper, grader, and sorting table. By 1910 the apple harvest means so much to the small community in which she lives that when one rancher murders his brother, the judge lets him out of jail long enough to save his crop.

Allis McKay's knowledge of the region, however, extends beyond the apple industry. She fully appreciates the summer heat and winter winds, the canyons and flats, the wildfires and mud slides, the bunchgrass and sagebrush—and, of course, the river. Chris often sits by the river for long stretches, observing its seasonal changes, waiting for the steamboat to pass, and reflecting on how "life was like the river... Nothing could turn it aside."

McKay's third novel, Goodbye Summer (1953), follows Chris Hallowell's teenage son, Steve, as he leaves the apple ranch for Seattle in the years leading up to World War II. While attending Broadway High School, Steve socializes with the young artists and actors from the Cornish School of Allied Arts (though McKay changes the names of both institutions). He's a youthful romantic set free in the city, so much so that even the rain adds to "the fresh sense of adventure he felt."

Steve also encounters two figures who together represent the 1930s shift in the Northwest labor movement from the ragtag idealism of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) to the organizational juggernaut of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The first man is an old Wobbly who lives in a houseboat on Lake Union and prints subversive pamphlets; the second is the powerful secretary of the Union Labor Council. The first acquaints Steve with the down-and-out people in Pioneer Square while the second offers him a ride in his chauffeur-driven limousine.

When circumstances force Steve back to the family ranch, he takes the first chance he gets to run up to Electric City, the booming new settlement on the edge of Grand Coulee, where "The Dam and the people that lived for the Dam had something that drew him." Ultimately, though, he returns to Seattle to make his way in life and love as best he can.

In her final novel, The Women at Pine Creek (1966), McKay returns to the early settlements along the upper Columbia to tell the story of...
tow sisters who aim to “prove up” an abandoned homestead. Despite the hardships, including claims that “this isn’t a country for women,” Mary and Althea make a go of it—gardening, raising chickens, planting an orchard, and defying the doubts of their ornery neighbors. Yet soon after Mary starts teaching at the one-room schoolhouse, she falls in love with a young homesteader named Ben Lucas, putting a strain on her relationship with her sister until, to everyone’s surprise, Althea herself becomes betrothed to an elderly lawyer from Wenatchee.

After Mary marries Ben, she finds herself struggling to adapt to her new role as an apple rancher’s wife, and her marriage nearly comes undone before she realizes how much Ben means to her—and that, like him, she is now “part of this land.” In this respect, The Women at Pine Creek, which won the Washington State Governor’s Award, is ultimately about how the region and its inhabitants define one another, and how women not only survived but sometimes even flourished on the frontier.

Although far too little is known today about her life and writing, Allis McKay was highly active in the Northwest literary scene following World War II. In 1946 she was the sole woman presenter at the landmark Writers Conference on the Northwest held at Reed College in Portland, appearing beside the likes of Stewart Holbrook, Ernest Haycox, and Carl Van Doren. “In calling ourselves regional writers,” she said in her remarks at the conference, “we are in no way limiting ourselves. We are only showing that we expect to use our indigenous material to the best advantage... to bring a reader to the Northwest and help him see it, feel it, and smell it.” And so she has. 

Peter Donahue’s new novel, Clara and Merritt, about longshoremen and Teamsters in Seattle in the 1930s and 1940s, will be published in May 2010.

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### Additional Reading

**The Cultural and Historical Significance of the AYP Exposition**


**Sweethearts of Jazz**


**Seattle Apartment Kitchens**


**Yvonne Twining Humber**


**The Sage of Yelm**


**The War League**


Women's Votes, Women's Voices
The Campaign for Equal Rights in Washington
Reviewed by Carli Schiffner.

On the eve of the centennial of women's suffrage in the state of Washington, Women's Votes, Women's Voices provides a concise, colorful, and engaging review of the challenges women overcome in their struggle. The author, Shanna Stevenson, has done a delightful job of weaving primary documents into a reader-friendly format that invites the reader to turn the page. In the research and review of this publication, Stevenson consulted leading women's history experts in the state like Karen Blair (Central Washington University) and Sue Armitage (professor emerita of history at Washington State University). Stevenson brings together suffrage material that has long been scattered in various archives, special collections, and museums throughout the state. She divides the work into six distinct sections: "Gearing up for the Fight"; "Suffrage Successes and Failures"; "The Twentieth-Century Campaign"; "Women Change the Political Landscape"; "Modern Washington Women Pursue Equal Rights"; and "Women Making a Difference."

In "Gearing up for the Fight," Stevenson provides a brief overview of the women's suffrage history in the United States from the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention through the turn of the 20th century. In providing this national perspective, Stevenson ties the events of the Pacific Northwest into this framework, thus providing context for the Washington movement. In the second section, "Suffrage Successes and Failures," Stevenson chronicles the lives of regional female suffrage leaders like Abigail Scott Duniway and Clara Pottle Sylvester. Sections three and four detail the successful 1910 effort to garner the vote for Washington women and the following years when women are officially part of the state political system. The next section, "Modern Washington Women Pursue Equal Rights," years to tell the story of women's struggle for equality in the late 1960s and early 1970s but is missing the primary voice from those who participated in the movement. The section concludes with a brief review of Washington women moving into key political positions throughout the state since the late 1980s. Stevenson's last section, "Women Making a Difference," highlights a variety of women who have "made a difference in their own time and place." Albert an excellent selection of women to draw attention to, the stories of each of these women might have been better placed throughout the previous five sections in their historical context or frame of reference.

Stevenson has brought the colorful, rich history of suffrage into the hands of the reader. Throughout the work, numerous illustrations have been included to provide a visually stimulating component to the prose. Handbills about women's suffrage rallies and campaign buttons are but a few of the images sprinkled throughout Stevenson's work.

To date there is little comprehensive literature on women's history overall in Washington. There are stops and starts—a history of the Mercer Girls here and a look into the life of Abigail Scott Duniway there—but what has been lacking until now is a comprehensive history that draws women's experiences together for the cause of suffrage. Stevenson has successfully done this and just in time for the Washington suffrage centennial celebration.

Carli Schiffner received her doctorate at Washington State University. She is dean of Arts and Sciences at Yakima Valley Community College and a trustee of Humanities Washington.

Breaking Ground
The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and the Unearthing of Tse-whit-zen Village
Reviewed by Dr. Roland Dewing.

Lynda Mapes, a Seattle Times environmental reporter, presents the first book published under the imprint of the Capell Family Endowed Book Fund. This fund supports the publication of books that deepen understanding of social justice through historical, cultural, and environmental issues.

When the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) started construction of a massive dry dock along the Port Angeles waterfront to build pontoons and anchors for repair of the Hood Canal Bridge in August 2003, human remains appeared almost immediately. Members of the Lower Elwha Klallam tribe, the original inhabitants of the area, were contacted and asked to assist in the preservation of artifacts and human remains. As construction continued, hundreds of skeletons and thousands of artifacts proved that Tse-whit-zen, a principal village of the Klallam people, had been uncovered. The tribe agreed to continue on the project for $3.4 million and employment of 100 Klallams to assist with cultural preservation. After more than 300 skeletons were recovered, the tribe demanded a halt to the project. Even though the state government had legal authority to proceed, officials anxious for reconciliation offered 300 acres of state land, continuation of the archeological study, and funding for a museum. The tribe rejected the proposal and called it a poor attempt at bribery. Faced with an overwhelming public relations problem, WSDOT walked away in December 2004 after having invested an estimated $90 million.

Mapes covered the controversy from the start, writing a series of reports for the Times. Three years after the project ended, her
research evolved into Breaking Ground. Mapes chronicles the historic background of the site, giving a detailed account of the native way of life. The tragic travails incurred with the arrival of Europeans, which included ravaging diseases, economic exploitation, and ultimate dispossession of tribal land, are all well delineated, as is the industrial development of Port Angeles. Construction of the soon-to-be breached dams on the Elwha River receives special attention.

A veteran journalist who writes well, Mapes relies on personal interviews for much of the story of the dry-dock controversy. Her obvious sympathy for the Klallam people gained her the trust of the tribal leadership and access to sources not available to the general public. She also obtained lengthy interviews with government officials and business leaders involved in the project. How WSDOT managed to miss the presence of a major archeological and cultural site and how they were convinced to step construction is examined thoroughly. Breaking Ground is superbly illustrated with almost 100 pictures, mostly in color, plus maps and other primary documents.

Having taught in the public schools and lived in Port Angeles from 1958 to 1964, this reviewer's frame of reference differs with New York native Mapes's critical portrayal. Although conservative, Port Angeles was not as provincial as outsiders might think. The history of local Indians was well-known to mainstream citizenry, and the cultural gap, though prevalent, seemed no greater than in other towns with Indian neighbors.

Personal interviews have a dubious reputation for accuracy, and Mapes would have done well to further investigate and elaborate on several. For example, she quotes a tribal leader who claimed an Indian child was clubbed to death with a two-by-four in Port Angeles and nothing was done about it. Rather than acceptance at face value, this grave allegation merits a thorough investigation.

Although somewhat predisposed, Breaking Ground makes a significant contribution to the continuing evolution of government's often troubled relationship with American Indians and their tribal governments. It explores an issue that will emerge again and again with an ever-expanding population and the need for further development.

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Rolland Dessing is emeritus professor of history at Chadron State College, Nebraska. He currently lives in Reno.

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America's Nuclear Wastelands: Politics, Accountability, and Cleanup
Reviewed by Dr. Blake Stonecker

While Lynne Stembridge sat through a sermon titled "The Silent Holocaust" at a Spokane Unitarian church, she made a decision to act. The dangers of plutonium production seemed real, so Stembridge—a part-time office worker, mother of two, and self-described parson—joined a church study group that soon morphed into the Hanford Education Action League (HEAL). Unlike headline-grabbing groups of the 1970s and 1980s, however, HEAL would not espouse antinuclear organizing. Instead, it focused on public education by producing thoroughly researched literature centering on the Department of Energy's (DOE) disregard for best scientific practices and public health protection at Hanford. The result? HEAL played a leading role in halting plutonium production at Hanford, contributing to the renewed emphasis on cleanup and citizen involvement in the Columbia Valley. Wastelands author Max Power lauds Stembridge as a model of "the engaged citizen," a person who should become a hallmark of future efforts to navigate the political quandary of nuclear cleanup.

Few individuals are as qualified as Power to lead a crash-course on the past, present, and future of cleanup efforts. A former senior policy advisor for the Washington State Nuclear Waste Program and a current member of the Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board, Power has been involved in myriad advisory and working groups at Hanford and DOE for more than 20 years. In these capacities, Power held a frontline seat as the legacy of Cold War secrecy, mistrust, and contamination undermined contemporary efforts to manage nuclear waste.

Wastelands is both a descriptive history of nuclear politics and a prescriptive vision of future cleanup organizing. Power leads an impartial tour of America's nuclear evolution—from the Manhattan Project and skepticism engendered by Three Mile Island to post-Cold War reform. Overly systematic at moments—details on the convoluted legal and regulatory basis for cleanup come to mind—Wastelands accounts for different risk tolerances and asks how clean is clean enough. Along the way, Power skillfully relates the high-stakes game of Hot Potato played by states and the benefits of nuclear energy without bearing its long-term costs. Despite political wrangling, Power notes that cleanup accomplishments are plentiful—waste transportation has proven safe, New Mexico's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant has operated flawlessly for a decade, and DOE has completed cleanup at 75 percent of its sites. Still, he insists that remaining cleanup projects are among the most scientifically and politically intractable. By the time we reach the final chapters, the knot seems too tight to untangle.

Enter Lynne Stembridge. In the face of a secretive nuclear culture, Power argues that educated and assertive citizens—that is, a mass of Lynne Stembridges—must engage the nuclear industry to achieve the openness, trust, and accountability required for successful cleanup. It is in this capacity as a prescriptive policy analyst that Power shines. Indeed, only a concerned citizenry coupled to an accountable industry can erode the thick cement walls that have kept nuclear knowledge safely hidden—with occasional spills—for more than 50 years.

Blake Stonecker is an assistant professor of history at Wabash College in Indiana. An Oregon native, he received his doctorate from the University of North Carolina and has written on the Clamshell Alliance and other early manifestations of antinuclear activism.

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COLUMBIA 39 WINTER 2009-10
Renewed interest in pictorialist photography has recently focused attention on the work of Tacoma photographer Wayne Clinton Albee (1882-1937). Albee's commercial studio photography allowed him to experiment with personal work that often documented the world of theater and dance. He photographed early dance pioneer Ruth St. Denis and her husband Ted Shawn and completed a series of nudes of dancer Doris Humphrey. Albee's interest in photography began early. Byron Harmon, the documentarian of the Canadian Rockies, owned the photographic supply store in downtown Tacoma where Albee clerked as a teenager. In 1915 Albee won second prize in a photographic salon juried by Alfred Stieglitz—often called the father of modern photography. By the time Albee opened his own studio in downtown Tacoma he was part of an important circle of Washington photographers that included Edward Curtis, Ella McBride, and Yukio Morinaga. In the late 1920s Albee relocated his commercial studio to La Jolla and curated photographic salons in California until his death in 1937. He is buried in Tacoma. The Washington State History Museum owns several of his photographs, including this 1920s transitional modernist portrait of an unidentified woman.

—Maria Pascualy
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What makes Washington different from anywhere else in the world? Is it the landscape? Our people? Certain events?

Washington State History Museum Director, David Nlcanrd, has picked out some of the best representations of our state from the Washington State Historical Society’s collection to display. View some of the features, events, people and landscapes that make Washington distinct.

This exhibit not only identifies icons, but explores why and how these icons came to be symbols of our state. More than 65 items have been selected to represent Washington in this exhibit. View Ezra Meeker’s covered wagon; see a chunk of concrete from Galloping Gertie; hear Dave Niehaus announce the Mariners 1995 American League Division Series win over the New York Yankees; and look over representations of our plentiful natural resources, World’s Fair materials and much more.

Icons of Washington History is presented by the Washington State History Museum and supported by Ben B. Cheney Foundation, Click! Cable TV and Sequoia Foundation.