The Washington State History Museum offers event rentals tailored to suit your specific needs. From small business meetings and luncheons to auditorium events and receptions suitable for 20 to 350 guests.

Visit us online at WashintonHistory.org/visit/wshm/rentals or call 253-798-5891 for details.
The magical life and times of Pacific Northwest inventor, entrepreneur, sleight-of-hand enthusiast and elephant collector Ray Gamble.

An unlikely and somewhat accidental band of young Seattleites created a fast-growing anti-Vietnam War effort and then faced the legal consequences.
History is something we think about year-round at the Washington State Historical Society and at COLUMBIA magazine, but autumn seems to sharpen our focus even more. The weather is changing after a hot and dry summer, which means more time indoors at home for reading history, and more visits to museums and libraries for exhibits and programs.

As temperatures cool off and the days grow shorter this year, organizations around the Evergreen State are preparing to mark the centennial in November of the Armistice that ended World War I. We’ve listed some of the related programs in 39 Counties, but nearly every Veterans Day observance this year, in communities large and small, will mark 100 years since that long ago “War to End All Wars” came to a close.

And since this wishful thinking of a century ago didn’t quite come to fruition, we find that war plays a part in all three stories in this issue. From a centerpiece at Fort Casey State Park on Whidbey Island, to the story of the “Seattle 7,” to the livelihood of Tacoma entrepreneur and magician Ray Gamble, military conflict is often a factor in what feels like the most local of history.

As always, we appreciate your continued support for sharing Washington history, and we welcome your comments, suggestions and story ideas for COLUMBIA magazine. Please send email to editor.columbia@gmail.com

Steve Scher
Book Review
Steve Scher is a freelance writer and communication instructor at the University of Washington. Hear his interviews with authors coming to Town Hall Seattle on the podcast In The Moment.

Jean Sherrard
Maps & Legends
Jean Sherrard is a Seattle-based photographer, writer, director and teacher. With Paul Dorpat, he produces the Sunday Seattle Times Pacific Magazine column Seattle Now & Then. A collection of their favorite columns, Seattle Now & Then: The Historic Hundred is due out in October.

Gwen Whiting
Collecting Washington
Gwen Whiting is the lead curator at the Washington State Historical Society. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Humanities from Washington State University and a Master of Arts in Military History from Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont. Whiting is currently at work researching and writing a biography of actress June Havoc.

Matthew Bell
Fort Casey’s Wayward Guns: Matthew Bell is a leading expert in coast artillery in Washington state. His childhood fascination has taken him bushwhacking through jungles, fighting the tides to reach obscure islands by canoe, and on overland treks from the Pacific Northwest to the Philippines. He is an active member of the Coast Defense Study Group, and when not obsessing over old forts, he enjoys photography and classic motorcycles.

Michael Sean Sullivan
Ray Gamble: Michael Sean Sullivan is a public historian, writer and historic preservationist. He has taught Pacific Northwest history at the University of Washington Tacoma for more than 20 years. He also writes and edits the website TacomaHistory.live.

Kit Bakke
1970 “Seattle 7” Conspiracy Trial: Kit Bakke was born and raised in Seattle. While in college out of state, she founded a chapter of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and later joined the militant Weatherman faction. She eventually returned to Seattle to work as a pediatric oncology nurse, and now spends her time writing and volunteering for local philanthropic groups.

Ronald Burke and Constance Burke
Used Books: Ronald Burke grew up in Bremerton and worked his way through the University of Washington aboard Washington State ferries. Ronald has served on the editorial board for the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society journal The Sea Chest for more than 30 years. He was editor for 15 of those years, with wife Constance as editorial assistant.
HIDDEN IN SEA AND ON SHORE

GWEN WHITING, LEAD CURATOR

The glint of glass on a rocky shore is the first hint of treasure for beachcombing Washingtonians. For decades, glass fishing floats have washed up on the Pacific Coast. A few of these floats, as mysterious as the currents that brought them, reside in the collection of the Washington State Historical Society.

But they’re not the only “mysterious” glass in the collection. The first documented production and use of glass floats was in 1840 when merchant Christopher Faye of Hadeland Glassverk in Norway created a glass ball to be fastened to fishermen’s nets. By 1910, Japanese fishermen had begun using glass floats as an alternative to scarce cork and wood.

Floats were blown from recycled glass bottles, and shaped through the use of a wooden board or piece of metal. The glass came in a variety of colors—aquamarine, clear, and amber among them—but the most ubiquitous on Washington beaches is green, a shade which comes from the recycled sake bottles from which these floats are made. These treasures come to Washington from Japan on the Kuroshio Current, also called the “black current” for its rapidly cycling dark waters. The current traps items that drift into the Pacific Ocean off Japan, and glass floats and other detritus can circle in the waves for up to 10 years until a storm or strong tide washes them up on West Coast beaches in the U.S.

But, as the Tacoma-based Monkeyshines art project shows, not all glass treasures found in Washington come from faraway. One day in November 2003, a pair of anonymous glassblowers, who identify themselves as Mr. and Ms. Monkey, decided to make a few glass balls to put out around Tacoma for the public to find and take. The “monkey” name came from a stamp used to decorate the glass balls, and because it was the Year of the Monkey on the Chinese lunar calendar.

The tradition caught on, and what is now known as the Monkeyshines project has continued for 15 years. Around Chinese New Year, a new crop of glass Monkeyshines balls will be hidden and then discovered in corners and crannies of Tacoma. Other artists and community groups have also joined in, hiding their own treasures for locals to find. Monkeyshines encourages individuals to do their own thing. It doesn’t have to be artwork. It can be simple acts of kindness. The intent is to make Tacoma a small town again where everyone knows their neighbors and takes care of each other.

Like all traditions, Monkeyshines has its rules: a Monkeyshines can never be purchased, it must be found. And only one may be taken per person. But as Ms. Monkey said, these treasured works of art are not the real prize. “The prize is getting to know your neighbors. It is hope, it is the city of Tacoma and its public parks, its businesses, its gritty resilience.”

And just like those orbs of glass from far away that appear on Washington’s beaches, you never know when or where hope will appear.

Fort Casey’s
In 2018 Fort Casey State Park marked the 50th anniversary of the return of vintage artillery that helped make the park an amazing outdoor museum. That the rare artifacts made it to Whidbey Island at all is cause for celebration.

Sitting on the western side of Washington’s Whidbey Island is a small, unassuming public park. Every day, it’s filled with visitors walking over on the ferry from Port Townsend, campers enjoying the campsites along the beach, and vacationers flying kites. Children and adults climb on and explore hundreds of feet of iconic turn-of-the-century U.S. Army concrete gun emplacements and the huge barrels and other machinery of vintage artillery guns.

Fort Casey is one of many state parks in Washington that was formerly a United States Coast Artillery Fort. These forts were designed and built in the late 1800s as protection for American harbors. There were six such forts built in Washington, and another sits just across the Columbia River outside Astoria, Oregon.

Left page: Pictured are Battery Worth, Battery Moore, and Battery Kingsbury, which together housed seven 10-inch guns on disappearing carriages. These guns guarded the Strait of Juan de Fuca during WWI. These 10-inch guns had a range of eight miles and retracted very quickly after being fired. Courtesy David Weese, Jr.

Fort Casey Admiralty Head Lighthouse, 2008. Courtesy John Stanton, fortwiki.com


Fort Wint Battery Hall Gun #1 in the foreground with Gun #2 across the clearing are still on the island. Broken chunks of concrete are all that remains of the center magazine. Courtesy http://corregidor.proboards.com/thread/987/fort-wint-subic-bay.

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**FIELD GUIDE TO COASTAL ARTILLERY**

**3-Inch Gun**
- Barrel Diameter: 3 inches
- Barrel Length: 170 inches
- Use: Fast firing at small vessels and minesweepers
- Total at Fort Casey: 4

**6-Inch Gun**
- Barrel Diameter: 6 inches
- Barrel Length: 300 inches
- Use: Firing at medium-sized ships
- Total at Fort Casey: 6

**10-Inch Gun**
- Barrel Diameter: 10 inches
- Barrel Length: 369.15 inches
- Use: Firing at the largest attacking vessels
- Total at Fort Casey: 7

**12-Inch Mortar**
- Barrel Diameter: 12 inches
- Barrel Length: 141.12 inches
- Use: Designed to fire much like a shotgun, with multiple shells raining down on a ship to puncture the un-shielded deck
- Total at Fort Casey: 16
These forts were active throughout both world wars, and were not shut down until the 1950s. The forts and the remnants of their activity are visible all along the Pacific Coast, and dot waterfront properties along the Atlantic Coast, too. For those who study this almost-forgotten part of history, Washington, and Fort Casey in particular, offer a unique opportunity to understand and appreciate the roles these facilities played.

At the end of World War II, it was clear that everything about warfare had changed. With the United States an atomic power, it was obvious that fixed fortifications were no longer necessary. As the United States started the demobilization of the military, many of the old Coast Artillery Forts were left sitting empty. By the 1950s, the federal government began transferring the old forts to interested entities.

In Washington, local officials expressed interest in acquiring them for use as state parks. The large properties were already in the best locations right on the water, they had ample land for campgrounds, and many of them came with multiple buildings available for park-related uses.

Fort Casey became a Washington State Park in 1956. In those early years, the old Admiralty Head Lighthouse sat boarded up, and the once neatly-kept grounds were grown over. It would be several years before the park opened for regular visitors.

In the late 1950s, one question on the mind of Washington State Park Historian Albert Culverwell was how to interpret the land at Fort Casey along with its odd collection of concrete structures. By 1958, work had begun to clean up the park and turn the lighthouse into an interpretive center when Culverwell received a fortuitous letter. Lieutenant David P. Kirchner, a naval pilot, had sent Culverwell a copy of an article that Kirchner had published in Proceedings Magazine titled “American Harbor Defense Forts” detailing this unique chapter in history.

Culverwell was intrigued by the history of coastal defense and the role that Fort Casey had played. Perhaps he had found the answers to his questions. And, since Kirchner lived on Whidbey Island, he had perhaps also found someone to help with those answers right in Fort Casey’s backyard.

Culverwell and Kirchner quickly developed a working relationship, with Kirchner creating the first interpretive panels regarding the history of Coast Artillery at Washington State Parks. The two agreed on one thing: no amount of interpretive panels or drawings could ever compare to having actual guns at Fort Casey.

Undeterred, Kirchner and Culverwell continued to work on the interpretation of Fort Casey. One day in 1960, Kirchner came back with exciting news from Fort Wint on Grande Island in the Philippines. There were guns on the island, from the period just after the Spanish-American War.

Kirchner and Culverwell quickly set their sights on the guns at Grande Island, and began working to bring some or all of them to replace the guns missing from Fort Casey.

Grande Island is a small piece of land sitting in Subic Bay. In 1906, it was outfitted by the U.S. Army with the latest in Coastal Artillery technology. Fort Wint was divided into a series of “batteries” or self-contained gun emplacements. Kirchner and Culverwell found Battery Warwick, with its two imposing 10-inch rifles mounted on disappearing carriages; Battery Hall and Battery Woodruff, both with two 6-inch rifles on disappearing carriages; and Battery Flake and Battery Jewell, each with four 3-inch rapid fire guns.

Kirchner and Culverwell also learned that the role of this small island during the Spanish-American War had been as a base for mining the harbor of Subic Bay; it did not see any action. In later years, WWI was too far away, and the Pacific still too volatile to remove these guns for other uses elsewhere, as had happened in the United States.

In the aftermath of World War I, the 1920 Naval Treaty resulted in the former allies agreeing to not update or modernize their holdings in the Pacific with the hopes that they could avoid an arms race. Without the ability to update or modernize fortifications, including Fort Wint,
During the 1920s, the men learned, guns at Fort Wint were used for practice by both the U. S. Coast Artillery Corps and Filipino Regulars. During World War II, the Philippines was ultimately occupied by the Japanese, but Grande Island again saw little action. When the war was over, the island was handed over to the U.S. Navy and, once again, the guns sat.

Through correspondence with other service men at the Subic Bay Naval Station, Lt. Kirchner confirmed that the guns were still there.

Kirchner felt that the best way to go about getting the Grande Island guns for Fort Casey was to contact the head of the Philippines Naval Command directly, which was quite a bold move considering that this man significantly outranked him.

But Kirchner’s boldness paid off, and his letter to Admiral Arthur F. Spring was well received. Not only did Spring confirm that there were still guns on the island, he wrote back indicating which types of guns were there and how much it would cost to retrieve them.

Admiral Spring estimated it would cost $3,300 to remove six of the guns on the island: two 10-inch guns on disappearing carriages and four 3-inch rapid-fire guns. There was no mention of the two 6-inch guns and carriages at Battery Hall. It is assumed that the road over to Battery Hall was so overgrown that the guns would not have been seen without some serious bushwhacking.

When news of the availability of the Grande Island guns reached park historian Culverwell, he wasted no time. In May 1960, he quickly went before the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to ask for $10,000 to cover the cost of getting the guns off of Grande Island, and to transport and then install them at Fort Casey.

The commission carried the motion to pay for the artifacts and asked Culverwell to proceed.

Meanwhile, in the Philippines, Admiral Spring started the work necessary for proper disposition of the guns. The U.S. Navy had a procedure for dealing with obsolete ordnance like the Grande Island guns. Section 7545 of Title 10 allows for the disposition of “obsolete material and ordnance” to state, municipal and other civic organizations.

The Navy’s process moved forward. In March 1961, the six guns on Grande Island were officially transferred, at least on paper, to the Washington State Parks Commission.

Now, all that remained was to physically transfer the guns from the Philippines to Whidbey Island. How hard could this be?

By the fall of 1961, the proverbial ducks were in a row and the U.S. Navy was ready to assign the task to their Bureau of Yards and Docks (“BuDocks”) and have them get to work figuring out how to get the guns off of the island. It proved to be no easy task.

The guns had been installed more than 60 years earlier. The only men qualified to work on them hadn’t been on the island since 1941, and the Coast Artillery Corps had been shuttered since 1950.

But BuDocks investigated the matter and solicited public bids to do the work, including the (literally) heavy lifting.

Unfortunately, Admiral Spring’s initial estimate proved woefully inadequate to cover the true costs. Rather than $3,300, removal of the guns from Grande Island would cost $31,000.

The bad news got back to the Washington State Parks Commission. The estimate was well beyond what State Parks was expecting, and the project appeared to be dead in the water.

But Culverwell and Lt. Kirchner weren’t about to give up.

Long-distance negotiations went back and forth between Olympia and the Philippines. At some point, a less costly compromise was suggested: to transfer only some of the guns from Grande Island to Whidbey Island.

U.S. Navy officials explained that the two massive 10-inch guns and carriages represented the greatest expense. The much smaller 3-inch guns would be comparatively easy and inexpensive to move.

Officials had hoped to open Fort Casey State Park, replete with all of the Grande Island guns, in time to capitalize on the millions of tourists who would visit the Pacific Northwest during the six-month run of the 1962 Seattle World’s Fair.

While the park did open in September 1962, just a month before the fair closed, there were no guns yet on display. However, the natural scenery and concrete structures of the batteries offered plenty of visual and historic interest for those who visited Fort Casey State Park in its early months of operation.

Then, just a month after the park’s opening, in October 1962, State Parks finalized a deal with the U.S. Navy to remove the four 3-inch guns from Grande Island and bring them to the Evergreen State. In March 1963, the guns had arrived in Oakland, California, aboard the USS Bellatrix and just two months later they arrived at Bangor Ammunition Depot, Washington, aboard the USS Skagit.
Unlike the large 10-inch guns that would have to be disassembled into easier-to-move pieces, the four 3-inch guns had simply been unbolted from their batteries and lifted straight up, crated intact, and then shipped.

The process was reversed in Washington and the 3-inch guns went on display sometime in 1963 with little fanfare. They were a great addition to the park, but the old concrete batteries, still stripped of their original 10-inch guns, must have looked barren and incomplete.

However Washington State Parks had not given up on the coveted 10-inch guns. Though Albert Culverwell had left the agency in 1962, director Clayton D. Anderson and staff member Richard “Dick” Clifton kept up the efforts to get the 10-inch guns from Grande Island to Whidbey Island.

In early 1964, the new State Parks Director Charles Odegaard decided to reach out to local charities and businesses to see if they would be willing to contribute the funds necessary to pay the U.S. Navy. This proved to be a fruitless task. Copies of correspondence from the State Park Archives show that local companies, including Boeing and Weyerhaeuser, did not see this project as relevant to their own corporate history or to their respective industries.

Inset: The U.S. Navy lifts one of the 3-inch guns into place at Fort Casey’s Battery Trevor, May 1963. Photo courtesy U.S. Navy.

Would the two senators be able to leverage political capital to assist in getting the two guns off the island? They tried, but the U.S. Navy said no.

When this latest bad news reached the Parks and Recreation Commission in October 1964, Odegaard suggested that perhaps a small community group could possibly work to gather the funds.

Coupeville is the city on Whidbey Island nearest Fort Casey State Park. It is the county seat for Island County, and home to several community organizations.

In early 1965, Odegaard connected with Roger Sherman at the Coupeville Lions Club and explained the situation. By May, the club was working to gather donations to bring the 10-inch guns to Fort Casey.

Throughout 1965, Sherman and the Coupeville Lions spread the word. They even reached Governor Daniel J. Evans, who declared November 1965 “Guns for Casey” month. Unfortunately the added attention and publicity did little to move the needle on the fundraising campaign.

By early 1966, the two 10-inch guns on Grande Island had been in limbo for four years.

So perhaps it’s no surprise that delays in finding funding in Washington state meant that other parties now saw opportunity.

California, Oregon, and, most importantly, the Smithsonian Institution had all begun expressing interest in the Fort Wint artifacts.

In January of 1966, the U.S. Navy decided that enough time had passed with nothing to show for it, and they would let the Smithsonian have the guns if Washington State Parks was not going to act.

The ultimatum was clear: State Parks now had until December 31, 1967 to find $35,000. With the very real chance that the guns would be lost to another suitor, everything finally kicked into high gear.

After years of asking for money and “looking under the couch cushions,” it took the Washington State Legislature to get the guns to Fort Casey during the regular 1967 Legislative Session. Appropriating $20,000 to Washington State Parks, along with money raised by the Coupeville Lions Club and American Legion Post No. 129, they now had enough money to ask the U.S. Navy to proceed.

In August 1967, the task of getting the guns to Washington and getting them emplaced at Fort Casey was assigned to the Washington State Parks Chief of Interpretation Ralph Rudeen.

Lieutenant Gerard R. Stott, a maintenance and ordnance officer with the Naval Forces Philippines, was tasked with handling the guns. He came up with a two-phase plan: the “unbolting phase,” followed by the “transporting phase.”

At the end of 1967—nearly 10 years after Albert Culverwell had first envisioned replacing Fort Casey’s missing guns—the real work finally began.

Lt. Stott and his team started to dismantle the guns. This was not an easy task, considering that the crew was made up of ship fitters not used to working with vintage artillery. Add to this that these 70-year-old guns had been sitting unmaintained in the humid jungle for 27 years.

As the team took the pieces apart, they photographed and numbered the items and compiled a binder of notes and instructions detailing the process. When gigantic wrenches would not work, they broke out oxy acetylene torches and cut off the heads of nuts and bolts, and even used small explosives to blast some pieces off.

Lt. Stott said of the process, “I’m a maintenance man, I can take anything apart.”

The trunnion caps, a piece of hardware which physically connects the gun to the carriage, were nowhere to be found, until a brave soul climbed down into the counter-weight well and retrieved them. These had perhaps been tossed in by the retreating U.S. Army as the Japanese invaded during World War II. The breech blocks for both guns were also missing.

Once the guns were unbolted, it took more than a dozen trips with wagons pulled by mules to make the half-mile journey to the dock, and then nearly as many trips on U.S. Navy landing barges until all the parts reached the Subic Bay Naval Supply Depot.

The next step was getting the guns and carriages to the United States.

The SeaLand company stepped up to the task and offered to carry the pieces from Subic Bay to Seattle on one of their huge freight vessels.

After being picked up and loaded onto the deck of the SeaLand vessel San Francisco, the guns were finally headed east across the Pacific. But this part of the journey proved to be trickier than expected.

On May 25, 1968, the San Francisco and her crew were caught in an extreme storm. In the middle of the Pacific...
Ocean, the ship pitched back and forth. At one point, one of the guns broke loose. It slid across the deck and over the railing, and looked as if it would splash into the ocean.

Miraculously, as it slid toward the water, the gun snagged on its “trunnion band” — a built up section of the gun’s barrel — and the artifact was saved from dropping below the waves into the Pacific.

Unable to drag the 33-ton gun fully back onto the deck of the ship, the sailors secured it by chaining it in place. Several days later when the San Francisco arrived in Seattle, the errant gun was protruding over the side.

With the vessel’s arrival in Seattle, the parts were off-loaded and put onto barges to be sent to the Bremerton Naval Yard. After a thorough sand blasting, they were ready to be installed at Whidbey.

A group of volunteers from the Naval Yard was assembled to put the guns back together in their new home. One team had taken them apart, and another would put them back together.

Parts began arriving at Fort Casey’s Battery Worth in June 1968 and the team led by Surt Hunter started to put things in place. Using the binder created by Lt. Stott, they reversed the process that had taken place in the Philippines.

The crew started by chiseling away the old concrete on the battery, and then welded new threads onto the old cut off bolts.

One piece at a time, the carriage was put into place. The large base ring is 10 feet in diameter and holds paint can-sized bearings that let the piece traverse from side to side.

The work platform, where the gun crew could stand, went on top of that.

Next came the large side pieces of the carriage that hold the hydraulic cylinders. Each piece went on one by one, just the same as it had come off in the Philippines.

Unfortunately, a problem arose.

State Parks officials knew all along that the guns and carriages from the Philippines were newer and different than the guns and carriages that Fort Casey’s Battery Worth had been built to hold.

The replacement guns had features that did not physically fit onto Fort Casey’s concrete batteries. Thus, some elements of the newer Fort Wint 10-inch guns, including the circular work platform and a counterweight cage, had to be trimmed to fit.

After the years of work and long bureaucratic odyssey, it may have been somewhat anticlimactic when the Fort Casey State Park 10-inch guns were finally dedicated with a public ceremony on August 11, 1968.

Still, State Parks staff, State Representatives Pat Wanamaker and Charles W. Elicker, United States Senator Henry M. Jackson, the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Army, the 284th Coast Artillery Association, the American Legion, and the Coupeville Lions Club were all on hand to celebrate.

Five decades later, it is perhaps the greatest tribute to the vision and hard work of Albert Culverwell and Lieutenant Kirchner — and countless others — that most people assume the iconic 10-inch guns displayed on Whidbey Island are Fort Casey’s original equipment.
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WSU PRESS
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
Ray Gamble was born in 1886 and by 1913 he was operating a retail fish store in downtown Tacoma. As a young merchant with an inventive mind, Gamble figured out a way to take the sawdust he used on his shop floor to soak up fish smell and convert it into a fine wood flour. It turned out that through science, and not magic, the cellulose material was a perfect buffer and accelerant for explosives and would become a key ingredient in dynamite.

Ray Gamble was an impish Tacoma millionaire named Ray Gamble. Gamble's life story defies a concise telling, in part because he was continually revising it, continually perfecting the narrative as if it were patter to accompany a great parlor trick. However, based on credible accounts of his adventures and testimonials from his acquaintances, he did seem to live a magical life.
Camp Lewis (now JBLM) outside of Tacoma, and the DuPont Company was completing a massive explosives plant and company town nearby on Puget Sound.

In 1922, Gamble started a small enterprising fuel company that began supplying sawdust to home furnaces. He also did a brisk trade in his side product, wood flour, selling to the growing DuPont explosives plant and to several smaller dynamite-making operations near Camp Lewis, including the Giant Powder Company and the H.L. Denn Powder Company at Hawks Prairie.

Soon, Gamble's entire business was based on converting the locally abundant waste product of sawdust into the indispensable ingredient of wood flour. By the late 1920s, it had, almost magically, turned him into a millionaire.

Between its opening in 1913 and when it shut down in 1976, the DuPont plant provided high explosives for construction projects around the world, including the Panama Canal, Alaskan Railway and Grand Coulee Dam. DuPont produced over a billion pounds of explosives using wood flour provided by Ray Gamble.

But Gamble's interests weren't limited to byproducts of wood waste.

Just as the country's economy dematerialized into the Great Depression, Gamble appeared ready to spend his fortune mastering the fine art of magic and traveling the world as a collector. Gamble had a penchant for books on magic, unique sets of dice, unusual ceramic tiles and architectural fragments, and especially for rare and exquisite miniature elephants.

Told in several different versions over the years, Gamble had a favorite story of selling a package of shrimp to an elderly Chinese gentleman in exchange for a tiny carved elephant, which also came with the promise of good fortune. Soon after taking possession of the elephant, the story goes, an attorney who owed Gamble a bill walked in and handed him a $20 gold piece. It was like magic.

Over the course of his life, Ray Gamble amassed a collection of more than 3,000 carved ivory and gemstone elephants. They surrounded him at home, at work and in nearly every publicity photograph ever taken of him. Later, these precious pachyderms became much more than just tokens of good luck. After Gamble passed away, an auction catalog from his estate put the value of just a selection of items from his collection at well over a million dollars.

Gamble's interest in magic began at a very young age when he became fascinated by simple parlor magic and sleight of hand tricks. He became particularly skilled at card tricks, and published his first book on the subject, with fellow magician Herbert Schuh, in 1935. Gamble's affable and gregarious personality was perfect for bewildering audiences and made it easy for him to meet other amateur and professional magicians.

In 1932, Gamble was instrumental in the formation of the Pacific Coast Association of Magicians, and this group still sponsors one of the largest gatherings of magicians in North America each year. Gamble created a prize for the best card trick performed at the convention each year, with the winner's name engraved on an elaborate sculpted trophy that Gamble himself designed and donated.

During the mid-1930s Gamble founded and then served as first president of the Tacoma Ring of the International
Brotherhood of Magicians. In this capacity, he became a familiar face at conventions and gatherings of professional magicians around the world. Soon, he and his wife Addie were dining with celebrity illusionists and movie stars at Sardi’s in Hollywood and attending secret invitation-only “ sharings” of how-the-trick-is-done, presented by the best stage magicians of the day.

In 1936, the Gambles bought the ancestral mansion of the Walker Stone Quarry founder overlooking Commencement Bay in Tacoma. They transformed it into a manor house for magic shows and a place for their exotic collections and library.

The mansion became known as The Elephant House, and the Gambles hosted such luminaries of magic as Mrs. Harry Houdini, Chester Morris, Carter, Orson Welles, Edgar Bergen and even celebrity amateur magic enthusiasts including Will Rogers and General Douglas MacArthur.

Gamble also mentored a young Tacoma magician named Coe Norton. Norton would go on to play Mandrake the Magician in a 1954 television series on NBC based on a comic strip and radio character that some pop culture historians consider to be the first superhero.

In 1943, Gamble began one of his most ambitious and lasting feats, the right-before-your-eyes transformation of Tacoma’s Lincoln Apartments at 2nd and Yakima into the astonishing building renamed Casablanca.

Over a period of 18 years, Ray morphed the 1890 building into one of the Pacific Northwest’s most idiosyncratic and elaborate works of architecture. The 30-unit residential building had ultra-modern electric eyes, automobile turntables and push button controls for window shades. It also had antique mosaic tile walls and stairways, muraled hallways and exotic carved woodwork throughout the many rooms and corridors.

To this day, every corner of the building is filled with small details that suggest magic—glass block archways with neon lights inside, a fragment of a 13th century gothic ruin next to a Mexican tile landscape, a thermometer set into the wall with an aphorism is below about mild temperament. And the aphorism signed, naturally, by Ray Gamble.

Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s Ray and Addie Gamble continued their pursuit of rare elephants and of occasions to share secrets with fellow magicians. Every year they attended the Pacific Coast Magicians conference, and Ray continued to present his trophy to the best card trickster.

Addie Gamble passed away in 1961. In 1965, Ray gifted the Casablanca to the University of Puget Sound.

In the ultimate disappearing act which is eventually performed by every magician, whether amateur or professional, Ray Gamble passed away in Tacoma in 1972.

In April of 1936, Ray Gamble (left) was approving expenditures for the upcoming International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring show and banquet, while keeping the stage director of the show, Herb Schuh (right), conveniently tied up. Both men, in addition to being amateur magicians and escape artists, were prominent local businessmen. Courtesy TPL, Richards Studio T86-3.


Left page: Beatrice (Mrs. Harry) Houdini, Ray Gamble and other guests sit around a table believed to be located in the famed Sardi’s restaurant in Hollywood, circa 1936. Left to right: Edward Saint, unidentified man, Ray Gamble, Beatrice Houdini, unidentified woman and another unidentified man. Courtesy TPL, Richards Studio D6835.

Pacific Coast Magicians’ Association (PCAM) Poster advertising an association event. Mr. Gamble served as president of PCAM, an organization that he was instrumental in forming. Courtesy QuickerThantheEye.com.

Want to learn more about Ray Gamble?

The Northwest Room at the Tacoma Public Library has a collection of photographs, newspaper and magazine stories and manuscript materials related to Ray Gamble. Several biographies and articles have been published about him including *Genii*, Vol.3 No. 7 March 1939 (cover), *Linking Ring*, May 1948, *MUM Magazine* Society of American Magicians, June 1972 and a *Seattle Times* feature by Don Duncan, February 18, 1968.
On a cold and drizzly Monday, December 14, 1970 in Tacoma, Washington, federal Judge George H. Boldt sentenced seven young and militant Seattle anti-Vietnam war activists to six to twelve months in federal prisons up and down the West Coast. The six men and one woman, known as the Seattle 7, were on trial for having conspired while crossing state lines "with the intent to incite… and encourage a riot" and for damaging government property. The indictments had been announced, not in Seattle, but from Washington DC eight months earlier by President Nixon's Attorney General John Mitchell and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.

Judge Boldt had abruptly declared a mistrial in the Seattle 7 case after only a week of testimony and before the defense could present its case. He then refused to set bail for the imprisoned defendants, despite a ruling from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals that he do so.

The events during and surrounding the foreshortened Seattle 7 federal conspiracy trial exemplify the best that history serves up to the present: surprises, thought-provoking insights and guides to a possible future.

"The Vietnam war unbolted us from the social contract—it broke the bond between us and our government."

Tom Byers, SLF member

The Seattle 7 were an unlikely and somewhat accidental band of young Seattleites who created a fast-growing local antia war and community organizing effort they called the Seattle Liberation Front (SLF). The SLF was born in a room at the University of Washington's Husky Union Building (HUB) on Saturday, January 17, 1970. The gathering was called by Michael Lerner, a 27 year-old from the University of California, Berkeley who had a one-year contract as an assistant professor in the University of Washington (UW) Department of Philosophy. A charismatic speaker and Marxist, he had titled his Ph.D. dissertation *Justification for Democracy: The Marxist Perspective.*

Lerner was eager to try out his specific ideas for creating a community-based, socialist-leaning antiwar movement on a campus where he wouldn’t be competing with as many other antiwar leaders as existed in the San Francisco Bay Area. His new organization would have strong roots among workers and middle class families. Students would be an important part, but it would not be primarily a student organization. Nor would it be a traditional Marxist workers’ organization. It would reflect what he wanted America to be: sensible, committed, productive, middle class people working to make America a model of social justice and responsible internationalism.

Over 200 students, non-student activists, police and FBI informers attended Lerner's meeting on January 17. The big draw was a presentation by Jerry Rubin, a co-founder of the Yippies and one of the seven men on trial in Chicago for conspiring to aid and abet illegal street actions at the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

Among the non-student attendees at the HUB were four young white men, ages 19-22, who had earned their stripes in the antiwar, antidraft, antiracist movement in Ithaca, NY and on the Cornell University campus. The four were Chip Marshall, a newly graduated political science major; his friend Joe Kelly, also a Cornell graduate; Jeff Dowd, a high school graduate from Ithaca who later became the inspiration for The Dude in the 1998 Coen brothers’ film *The Big Lebowski;* and Michael Abeles, a Cornell freshman dropout, son of a Buffalo, NY tavern owner.

They had arrived in Seattle a scant three weeks earlier, with their own ideas about growing an antiwar, student and community-based organization in Seattle. They’d chosen to come to Seattle (where, like Lerner, none of them had ever been before) because of its history, in particular the Seattle General Strike of 1919, and the state’s strong Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) past.
Boeing’s presence as a major defense contractor also provided an obvious target for antiwar action. All five antiwar organizers also like the fact that Seattle was not too big, and that its antiwar movement seemed to be lacking strong leadership.

The sixth defendant was Roger Lippman, a native Seattleite, Reed College chemistry major dropout, and leftist organizer and theoretician who was working primarily in the draft resistance movement. Susan Stern, the lone woman defendant, had arrived in Seattle from Syracuse University in 1966 with her husband to attend graduate school at the UW. Stern’s politics grew along with the women’s movement, and she had a theatrical bent that developed into a strong speaking style.

An eighth person named in the conspiracy indictment, Michael Justesen, a UW undergrad from Seattle, chose to go underground and not stand trial. He joined a Weather Underground group in California and was finally arrested in 1977 on other charges. In court, the Seattle 8 became the Seattle 7.

The federal indictments against the eight were issued on April 16, 1970. By then, in addition to increasingly open opposition to the war, Americans had witnessed or participated in a full decade of public and often violent racial strife. On the home front by 1970, over 200 citizens had been killed and almost 13,000 injured in race riots in almost every large city in the country. Internationally, the growing American military operation in Vietnam quickly became a major problem to many students, personally and morally. Many found a voice in the Students for a Democratic Society, whose president noted,

Most of us grew up thinking that the United States was a strong but humble nation, that involved itself in world affairs only reluctantly, that respected the integrity of other nations and systems, and that engaged in wars only as a last resort...the incredible war in Vietnam has provided the razor, the terrifying sharp cutting edge, that has finally severed the last vestige of illusion that morality and democracy are the guiding principles of American foreign policy.
In Vietnam, although U.S. military and political leaders forecast imminent victory as early as 1967, the mounting casualties, rising costs, and lack of any explicit American military success were increasingly hard to ignore. Opposition to the war grew as reporters sent back daily news stories of the apparently unending injuries and deaths of soldiers and civilians on both sides. By 1970, 58,000 Americans had died along with several million Vietnamese.

These two threads of public activism and dissent were in both the background and the foreground of the Seattle indictments and subsequent trial.

"I have twin interests in life, seeing that people not die in wars nor expire of terminal boredom."

Jeff Dowd, defendant

The Seattle 8 were different from many of the antiwar activists of their time. They were not rowdy street demonstrators ready to throw rocks at any available window; they opposed bombing buildings; they did not confine the scope of their dissent to the university campus; and their activist work was not laced with tedious factional infighting. The SLF "went wide," as defendant Chip Marshall described it. Advocating as many approaches as possible, they gathered signatures for a statewide tax reform initiative written by Lerner, provided doughnuts and coffee to people standing in line at the unemployment office (Seattle's unemployment rate was 10% and rising in 1970), supported local workers' strikes, disrupted classrooms, packed food for Seattle's Black Panther Chapter's breakfast program, and led mass street demonstrations.

"Chalked on the blackboard were possible areas for action—water and air pollution, abortion, the proposed Interstate 90 freeway, Boeing...It could well have been a session of the legislature. But a further reading of the blackboard might dispel that notion—revolutionary art, free rock concerts, nude stage productions."

By February and March 1970, SLF, however small and new, however fun-loving and adolescent, was beginning to engage poor, working, and middle class Seattleites beyond the university campus with helpful alternatives and direct social and health services that had the potential to increase their influence far beyond the antiwar movement. Country Doctor Community Health Center and the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, two of the community service organizations founded by SLF collectives and members, are thriving to this day, providing thousands of Seattle citizens with health care, legal services and more.

The Department of Justice began to notice this uptick of activist work in Seattle. They quickly and inaccurately linked its leaders to their two familiar targets: Weatherman and the Black Panthers. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was determined to destroy both organizations, requiring his local offices to report to him weekly on their progress. FBI agents disrupted protests and harassed activists by training and paying provocateurs, planting drugs in activists' apartments or cars, sending anonymous letters and press releases, conducting warrantless break-ins to install listening devices or steal papers, making intimidating and slanderous phone calls, setting off car bombs, harassment arrests, and other "dirty tricks."

The FBI titled this array of secret and illegal activities the Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) and aimed it specifically at black leaders and people opposed to the Vietnam War. COINTELPRO tactics were fully described in
secret FBI memos, only released in 1975 when a Senate committee investigated and forcefully condemned their practices.

As the Seattle 7’s trial testimony would show, the prosecution repeatedly tagged the defendants with the Weatherman label. Hoover told the Seattle FBI office that SLF “is dominated by the Seattle Weatherman faction of SDS” and that SLF is “in reality nothing but a Weatherman front.” This could not be further from reality, as both Chip Marshall and Michael Lerner frequently and publicly declared their strategic and tactical criticisms of Weatherman. Marshall noted, “We were not into Weatherman’s violence or terrorism and stuff like that. We’re not interested in being the vanguard. We want to be the majority.”

The Department of Justice was equally alarmed at SLF’s friendly working relationship with the Seattle chapter of the Black Panthers. The Panthers’ national presence in their black berets and military garb, slung with ammunition belts and gripping shotguns, frightened many people. The Seattle chapter stopped that practice in the fall of 1969 because its leaders realized it interfered with their primary goal of improving the health and welfare of black Seattleites. Most of the Seattle chapter’s activities were focused on providing breakfast programs for school children, rides for families to visit relatives in jail, combating real estate redlining, starting a neighborhood health clinic that provided free immunizations and sickle cell anemia testing, and protesting discrimination in local high schools. The Seattle group led by Aaron and Elmer Dixon and twenty or so others, about half of them women, was the first Panther chapter to be formed outside California. Aaron Dixon was a UW student and also a founder of the Black Student Union, along with Larry Gossett who later became an elected member (1993-2013) of the King County Council, including a stint as its chair.

The Seattle Panthers welcomed white SLF members’ help with their social service projects, which was unusual for a Panther chapter. But the view from Washington DC was that Panthers were only—and all—about guns and shooting policemen, so anyone who helped them was a terrorist.

“I thought that what was likely to happen would be civil disobedience of a non-violent sort. I thought we would be able to get into the building and sit in the hallways...We would be shutting it down, but not through any particular acts of violence.”

Michael Lerner, defendant

In mid-February 1970 in Chicago, the trial of the Chicago 7 concluded. As the jury began deliberating, Judge Julius Hoffman abruptly sentenced the as-yet-innocent-until-proven-guilty defendants and two of their attorneys to prison for up to four years on 159 charges of contempt of court. The timing and content of Hoffman’s ruling sparked immediate street demonstrations in dozens of cities around the country.
The crowd that massed along its Fifth Avenue entrance that rainy and cold Tuesday afternoon in February numbered about 2,000. That was big for a Seattle demonstration, which meant that veteran protesters were a minority—which meant less control and more uncertainty.

U.S. Marshal Charles Robinson was in charge of courthouse security. A 17-year FBI veteran before becoming U.S. Marshal for Western Washington, he had brought in the Seattle Police Department, the King County Sheriff’s office and the Washington State Patrol to manage the defense of the building on this protest day. He prepared for violence, stuffing a hundred tactical squad and riot police in the public library across 5th Avenue, ready to reinforce another hundred stationed inside the courthouse building. FBI agents with cameras were positioned at windows on the ninth floor of a hotel across from the courthouse, taking both still and video shots of the people attending the protest. Robinson had perhaps over-prepared, and the government’s force likely escalated, rather than diminished, the violent skirmishes over the next three hours.

As the crowd grew, the SLF leaders weren’t sure what to do. Lerner described it:

So I get there. I’m one of the organizers. People are asking me, ‘What are we going to do?’ The doors are locked and there are police inside and I’m thinking, I don’t know. Maybe we’ll conduct something out here, but we hadn’t brought sound equipment. I don’t know why we hadn’t thought about the possibility that the doors would be locked. Stupid, but anyway, we hadn’t. And then, all of a sudden, from the other side of the street hundreds of police appear in riot gear and start attacking the demonstrators. And that’s how it

on the southern margin of the city’s retail core. The crowd that massed along its Fifth Avenue entrance that rainy and cold Tuesday afternoon in February numbered about 2,000. That was big for a Seattle demonstration, which meant that veteran protesters were a minority—which meant less control and more uncertainty.

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Eighty-nine people were arrested that day, but none of them was named Kelly, Marshall, Dowd, Stern, Lerner, Lippman, Abeles or Justesen. In fact, Lippman was in San Francisco at the time, and Kelly was visiting friends in Colorado.

Grand juries are convened by prosecutors to hear witnesses and to decide if the evidence they presented justifies an indictment. It is extremely rare for a grand jury to refuse a prosecutor’s recommendation to indict. No judge is present at grand jury proceedings, subpoenaed witnesses are not allowed to have an attorney present and their Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination are waived. Witnesses are called, one by one, into the courtroom. They are not told the nature or scope of the allegations, or whether or not they themselves are targets of the investigation. No press, no spectators, no other witnesses are allowed in the room—it is an intimidating experience.

If a witness chooses not to respond fully to a prosecutor’s question, he or she faces jail time for the duration of the grand jury, usually eighteen months, which is doubled if the grand jury is looking into riot-connected offenses. In all cases, the witness is jailed instantly upon refusal to answer a question; no appeals are allowed. Transcripts of grand jury proceedings are never made available, even decades later.

In addition to intimidation and distraction, grand juries are used as fishing expeditions to gather information in an attempt to compensate for sloppy or illegal police or FBI work. All these motives were in play against the antiwar movement (and the Black Panthers) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Department of Justice reshaped and heavily funded its Internal Security Division to use the grand jury process itself as a way to extract information and drain manpower and money from activist organizations, often so effectively that the government did not bother to move the process to a formal trial—their goal to damage the protest movement had been accomplished.

The conspiracy indictment against the eight Seattleites hinged on the TDA demonstration. They were accused of planning and leading TDA, and were indicted under the same federal ‘intent to riot’ law that had been levied against the Chicago 7 for their alleged roles in the demonstration at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Known technically as the Civil Rights or the Fair Housing Act (also called the Rap Brown or Anti-Riot Act), 18 U.S.C. 2101 had been passed in a panicky flurry in Congress in 1968 in response to
escalating riots in black neighborhoods after Martin Luther King, Jr. was murdered in April that year. This statute, still in force, makes it illegal to cross state lines “with intent to incite, organize, promote, and encourage a riot.” It carries penalties of up to five years in federal prison and heavy fines.

The law has been repeatedly criticized in legal circles as vague, unconstitutional and unnecessary, in part because it appears to make one's thoughts the crime, rather than one's deeds, and because there are already adequate existing state laws against rioting. The SLF leaders were also charged with conspiring to damage federal property, doubling their potential prison time.

None of the other cities' TDA protest leaders, even those whose demonstrations were larger and more violent than Seattle's, were similarly accused.

After much pre-trial jockeying, including a change in venue, the trial opened on November 23, 1970 in Tacoma with the Honorable George H. Boldt presiding. The defendants faced ten year prison sentences and fines of thousands of dollars. Judge Boldt was a federal district judge who was accustomed to organized crime cases with savvy defendants and experienced attorneys on both sides. With the Seattle 7, he was faced with an unruly bunch of antiwar activists fresh from their middle class homes and their school civics lessons that taught them that American justice was fair, that there were no political trials, only criminal ones, and that the accused was guaranteed a jury of his or her peers. Their reality proved otherwise.

The first line caught by the transcriptionist in the courtroom was spoken by a defendant: “Please stand for a moment of silence, your Honor, in honor of those people killed by United States bombs in North Vietnam.” About fifty spectators rose to their feet and cheered, fists raised. Judge Boldt immediately told the marshals to eject two of the noisiest spectators. Using the tools they were familiar with, the defendants’ courtroom behavior was much appreciated by their supporters, but it frequently dismayed their attorneys and frightened the judge.

With these opening salvos, the defendants and their supporters signaled loudly that they initially felt safe in using their trial as one more opportunity to organize against the war. This position, however, was based on incomplete knowledge (Lerner had never been arrested before and none of the seven had faced a jury trial in federal court), and one that was entirely eroded during the course of the trial.

Lerner recalled thinking,

How do we use this trial to help educate people about what’s wrong with the war? That was the main thing we could do. We couldn’t imagine there would be a jury that, once they heard us, would actually convict us of these crimes that were totally bogus. So it didn’t occur to us that we could get convicted. Not really. At least not until the trial started…

The lengthy and argumentative Seattle 7 jury selection process was an eye-opener for the defendants and their supporters. They knew that black people were railroaded in court all the time and even with the Chicago 7 case in mind, they just didn’t expect it to happen to them. When it did happen, they thought they could debate and organize their way out of it on the basis of the righteousness of their antiwar cause.

That hope was dramatically undercut as members of the jury pool continually and repeatedly stated under oath that they had no strong feelings one way or the other about their country’s war in Vietnam. The defendants, whose daily lives for several years had been completely devoted to ending the war, couldn’t believe that such people existed.

The prosecution, led by U.S. Attorney Stan Pitkin presented its case over the next few days. Their star witness was Horace “Red” Parker, a 33 year-old manager of a paint store
who had contacted the FBI a year earlier, offering to infiltrate Seattle's antiwar scene, provoke its members to more militant (therefore more criminal) activity, and inform the FBI of the words and movements of SLF leaders, all in exchange for weekly government pay.

More than his testimony, Parker's existence came as a shock to the defendants—they hadn't realized they'd been infiltrated so successfully. But his testimony was riven with inconsistencies, confusion and equivocation. The defense quickly took advantage of Parker's weaknesses, bringing to light his dependence on the money the FBI was paying him, his drug use and drug dealing, his lying about having been in the Green Berets and his providing the paint that was splashed on the federal courthouse building during TDA. Parker ended his day in court under defense cross-examination when he was cornered into admitting that he hated the defendants so much that he was willing to lie on the stand to convict them.

The defendants may have won this battle, but their underlying lack of a coherent defense strategy undid them in the end. They never were able to agree on whether their goal in the courtroom was to stay out of prison or to use the trial as a platform for doing what they did best, which was political organizing. This lack of an agreed-upon strategy meant that their actions in the courtroom were often scattershot, off-the-cuff and confrontationally dysfunctional.

The proximate cause of the trial's end was an argument over a tangent: the court's process for admitting or not admitting spectators into the courtroom. The spectators were all supporters of the defendants, driving and busing to Tacoma early every morning. Overflow spectators were denied entrance to a dry and warm vestibule and had to content themselves with waiting for their turn in the cold and rain outside. Most, but not all, of the defendants were incensed by this behavior and frequently argued in the courtroom for better treatment of the spectators.

This lobbying reached a pitch point when the defendants delayed their own entrance into the courtroom, causing Judge Boldt to march down the hall to the defense conference room with a phalanx of marshals to demand their presence. The defendants opened the door, said they were just on their way and raced en masse toward the courtroom. Jeff Dowd later said that all the shouting and shoving and running was like participating in a roller derby. The marshals, confused by the sudden motion, chased after them. A newsman in the hallway noticed a marshal hitting and swearing at one of the defendants, who yelled to the judge, “Did you see that?” “The Judge,” the newsman wrote, “appeared frightened by the incident.”

Reaching his chambers door part way down the hall, Boldt quickly veered off into his room to compose himself. The defendants ran on past and into the courtroom. They noticed, to their surprise, that the jury was seated, listening intently to the commotion in the hallway. Chip Marshall immediately walked over to them. Leaning affably against the jury box, he said, “We would like to explain to the jury why we refused to come in at the beginning of this trial. There are a number of people who have been kept outside every day in the rain, people who are getting sick, and all we ask is that the marshals allow these people to come into the lobby, which they have not done.”

When Boldt returned to the courtroom, he was appalled to discover a defendant speaking directly to the jury, and immediately called a mistrial. He then summarily charged the defendants with contempt of court and shipped them off to federal prisons up and down the west coast. Boldt refused to set bail over the Christmas holidays. After some back and forth with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, bail was set, and the defendants were out of prison by late January 1971, pending a new ruling on the contempt charges. The case unwound over the next three years, with the defendants eventually completing more prison time for contempt, and having a difficult time picking up their lives as they assumed U.S. Attorney Pitkin would soon be scheduling a retrial of the original conspiracy case. Finally, in March 1973, Pitkin formally dismissed the original charges, writing to his superiors in Washington DC that the case wasn’t strong enough to successfully prosecute.
ARMISTICE CENTENNIAL EVENTS
Around the state, many communities will mark the centennial of the Armistice that officially ended the Great War, later known as World War I, on November 11, 1918. Museums, libraries and other cultural organizations are hosting exhibits and special programs throughout the autumn, and Veterans Day commemorations will include special tributes to those who fought in that long ago conflict.

SEATTLE
WWI America Exhibit and 100 Years of Flu
Wednesday, October 3, 5:00 PM, Seattle’s Museum of History & Industry (MOHAI)
www.mohai.org
On October 3, 1918, the worldwide Spanish influenza epidemic arrived in Seattle, with 700 cases and one death reported at the University of Washington Naval Training Station. Learn about the initial deadly influenza outbreak during this special program, along with information about how to stop the spread of the modern flu.
This program is presented as part of WWI America, a traveling exhibition from the Minnesota History Center, in partnership with the National Constitution Center and the National World War I Museum and Memorial. WWI America will be on display at MOHAI through February 2019.

RITZVILLE
Washington at War: The Evergreen State in World War I
Saturday, October 13, 1:00 PM, Ritzville Public Library
www.humanities.org
A little over a century ago, the U.S. entered The Great War to fight alongside our European allies. But Washington’s home front experience began long before the country entered the war, and continued afterward. Led by historian Lorraine McConaghy, the program begins with an illustrated introduction to the war's themes before offering a “Readers’ Theater:” a script that is read aloud together, allowing participants to speak the history they are discovering.
This talk is presented by Humanities Washington and the Washington State Historical Society in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of America’s involvement in World War I.

SPOKANE
Exhibit: The Inland Northwest and the Great War
Opens Saturday, October 6
Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture
www.northwestmuseum.org
The MAC presents an in-depth look at how World War I touched Spokane and surrounding communities 100 years ago and remembers and celebrates the Spokanites who went to war. Featuring artifacts and photographs from the MAC’s collection and special programs to mark the centennial of the Armistice.

WSHS launches “Suffrage100wa,” grants available!
Facebook, Instagram, Twitter: @suffrage100wa
Website: www.suffrage100wa.com
Celebrate the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage in 2020! Check out our dedicated website and social media for resources and info on events.

Nov. 11, 2018 will be the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI. See some of what’s happening across WA to commemorate this occasion! WashingtonHistory.org/WWI
HISTORY PODCAST
COLUMBIA Conversations
Voices from COLUMBIA Magazine and around the Pacific Northwest are now as close as your digital device with the monthly COLUMBIA Conversations podcast. Visit ColumbiaConversations.org for the latest episode!

OLYMPIA
WDVA World War I Centennial Celebration
November 11, 11:00 AM
Capitol Rotunda
www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva/world-war-i-centennial

The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) and partners are creating a big, bold World War I Centennial event! Join in honoring those who served and those who participated in the war effort on the home front.

Take part in commemorating the WWI Armistice, signed on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. The Rotunda will be filled with WWI history, guest speakers, artifacts and more.

Do you have stories, artifacts, or a group that may want to participate in this event? Contact Gary Lott at the WDVA, GaryL@dva.wa.gov for consideration.

Photograph of the Winged Victory statue with the Legislative Building in the background, Capitol Campus, Olympia, WA, Thurston County. The statue is a monument to World War I participants. Collection of WSHS 2012.123.65

OLYMPIA
Exhibit: The Year That Rocked Washington
Capitol Building, State Reception Room, third floor
www.sos.wa.gov/legacy/

The Year that Rocked the Washington is an exhibit prepared by the Secretary of State’s Legacy Washington program with a focus on the tumultuous year of 1968 and what it meant to people in and from the Evergreen State.

Washingtonians in the exhibit and accompanying oral histories include notable elected officials, civic leaders and figures from arts and culture. Some of those featured include U.S. Representative Norm Dicks, Governor Daniel J. Evans, King County Councilmember Larry Gossett, Seattle City Councilmember Phyllis Lamphere, Green Beret Sgt. Bryon Loucks, Secretary of State Ralph Munro, Seattle Mayor Wes Uhlman, civic leader Jim Ellis, disc jockey Pat O’Day, and novelist Tom Robbins.

The Year That Rocked Washington opened in September, and will be on display until July 2019.


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Rediscovering John Okada

Review by Steve Scher

The writer and teacher Shawn Wong, one of the contributors to John Okada: The Life & Rediscovered Work of the Author of “No-No Boy,” says that Okada’s 1957 novel is at the very foundation of what he knows about Asian-American literature. But little has been written about Okada himself. This new volume remedies that.

John Okada was born in Seattle. His parents had emigrated from Japan. Just a few years before Pearl Harbor, Okada was playing sandlot baseball, going to school, and helping his parents run a hotel in Seattle. He started at the University of Washington in September 1941.

A few months later, his life changed. Okada wrote a poem the night of December 7, as Pearl Harbor smoldered. "I Must Be Strong" revealed the passion, patriotism and turmoil that would emerge in his life and his novel. The first stanza reads:

I know now for what war I was born.
Every child is born to see some struggle,
But this conflict is yet the worst.
For my dark features are those of the enemy,
And my heart is buried deep in occidental soil.
People will say things, and people will do things,
I know they will, and I must be strong.

By Executive Order, without due process or trial, the U.S. Government forced thousands of Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast into desert prisons. Okada, his family and his friends found themselves behind barbed wire and staring into the barrels of machine guns in the hands of fellow Americans.

Like thousands of other American citizens of Japanese descent during World War II, Okada eventually joined the military and fought in the Pacific.


He wrote a letter to a prospective publisher in February, 1956. It is available for the first time in this volume. In the letter, Okada said that No-No Boy was about a conflicted Japanese American who chooses to continue his life in America, “a country which has made mistakes and will make more but, at the same time, it is a country which is striving constantly to rectify the conditions which breed those mistakes.”

Okada’s novel is full of upheaval, confusion and rage. Unwrapping these emotions and exploring a recent history many wanted to ignore, left Okada a lonely voice outside mainstream literature in the 1950s.

Okada’s voice is lonely no more. Longtime Seattle journalist Frank Abe, producer of the PBS documentary Conscience and the Constitution has written a thoughtful biography, bringing the writer to life through oral histories from Okada’s friends and family. Abe’s co-editors are history professor Greg Robinson and literature scholar Floyd Cheung, and together, the three to bring context to Okada’s life and work. They’ve also included essays from scholars who argue over Okada’s ideas, characters and relevance.

Most welcome of all, the book presents Okada’s early writings, many in print for the first time. Okada’s voice is often funny and satirical. In an essay in the book, Floyd Cheung writes that the early pieces reveal Okada already considering “the absurdities of a world unhinged.”

When he died, Okada had been struggling with his unfinished second novel about the Issei, the first generation of Japanese to emigrate to America. The unfinished manuscript was discarded by his grief-stricken widow. Was it the great American novel he hoped to write? We won’t know. Maybe he already had.

TV DEBUTS IN SEATTLE... AND ASTORIA?

A few media industry people know that November 25, 2018 will mark 70 years since regular television broadcasting began in the Pacific Northwest.

But very few know that it’s also the 70th anniversary of the debut in Oregon of what might be the very first cable TV system anywhere.

Seattle’s KRSC, which later changed its call letters to KING, went on the air on Thanksgiving Day 1948 with a high school football game from Memorial Stadium in Seattle. It was West Seattle versus Wenatchee for the state championship.

The Seattle station became the first TV broadcaster north of Los Angeles and west of the Twin Cities. During that first broadcast, cameras mounted in the north grandstand captured the action on the muddy field and transmitted it to perhaps only hundreds of TV sets in operation in the Seattle area that day.

But, simultaneously, a small handful of people some 150 miles away in Astoria, Oregon, were also watching the football game from Seattle. Washington and Oregon, once both part of the Old Oregon Country and Oregon Territory, were united once again, if only electronically.

How did this happen? It was all thanks to a man named Ed Parsons.

“[Ed Parsons is] the founder of cable TV,” said McAndrew Burns, director of Astoria’s Clatsop County Historical Museum. “He’s the first guy to run cable television and to create that invention.”

“He had an apartment right next door to the tallest building in town—the Astor Hotel—and supposedly he put some sort of a receiver antenna and ran a wire into his apartment,” Burns said.

Though there’s a modest monument in Astoria to Ed Parsons’ role in creating cable TV, he’s never really gotten the credit he deserves.

“I certainly think that there’s folks on the East Coast that claim that they invented [cable TV], but the Cable Center in Colorado certainly gives this story the most credence, and it’s the earliest date,” said Burns.

And the final score of that November 25, 1948 football game? Viewers in Seattle — and Astoria — caught all the action before it ended in a 6-6 tie.
SEEKING JIM GIBBS
By Ronald Burke with Constance Burke

A few years after World War II, a retail establishment called the Marine Photo Shop opened on the Seattle waterfront. The proprietor was photographer and collector Joe Williamson, who specialized in serving the maritime industry. With an interest in history, he had assembled a very large collection of images covering ships and shipping, going back to the beginning of photography.

There were those who frequented the shop to engage in conversation with Joe, in addition to looking over and buying photos. A few of them got to know each other fairly well, and came up with the idea of forming something like a maritime fan club where they could invite others to meet regularly to discuss their shared interests.

Hence, in 1948, the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society (PSMHS) was formed as an official organization, and began holding meetings roughly once a month.

The five founding members of PSMHS were Joe Williamson (who became the first president of the society), Tom Sandry, Bob Leithead, Austen Hemion and Jim Gibbs. Eventually, about 20 years later, they began publishing a maritime history journal called The Sea Chest that is still available today. The organization has been affiliated with Museum of History & Industry in Seattle for many years, and recently shortened its name to Puget Sound Maritime.

James A. Gibbs, Jr., usually called “Jim,” was one of those founders of PSMHS, and he served for one year as the second president of the organization in 1951.

In those days, Jim was working to put out a weekly trade journal called The Marine Digest. He soon became the editor of the publication, and served in this capacity until 1972.

It might be said that Gibbs began his maritime career by enlisting in the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II. At one time during his Coast Guard career, Jim served a tour of duty at the old remote offshore Tillamook Rock Lighthouse in Oregon that was nicknamed “Terrible Tilly.” Even though this was a difficult experience for him, it sparked his lifelong interest in lighthouses.

In fact, in 1959, when a lighthouse structure on Smith Island on the east end of the Strait of Juan de Fuca had failed and was to be replaced by a “skeleton structure,” Jim purchased the old structure and had it moved by PSMHS member Leiter Hocket to Skunk Bay on the Kitsap Peninsula, near the town of Hansville. Leiter tells all about this in his book, Water Work.

The original lighthouse structure that Gibbs had purchased consisted of ten triangular cast-iron components, which he then had mounted on a newly built wood structure at the new location. Once installed in Hansville, Gibbs set up the lens to put out a continuous red light. At that time, it became the

FROM THE SHELF
Jim Gibbs was a prolific writer and he wrote quite a few maritime books that remain on the bookshelves of local maritime enthusiasts, and which are readily available at used bookstores and online. He was considered an authority on Pacific Coast lighthouses and Northwest shipwrecks. A few selections include:

Sentinels of the North Pacific; A History of Lighthouses and Lightships, published by Binfords and Mort, Portland, OR, 1953.

Pacific Graveyard, published by Binfords and Mort, Portland, OR, 1950. This is a narrative of the ships lost where the Columbia River meets the Pacific Ocean, and is dedicated to Jim’s wife Cherie.

Newspaper photo of Jim Gibbs when his book Pacific Graveyard was published. Courtesy Ronald Burke.
first and only privately owned lighthouse on the Pacific Coast. In 1970, Jim sold the renovated structure to the Skunk Bay Lighthouse Association, who continue to maintain it as a private retreat. A brief account of this lighthouse is mentioned in the March 1981 issue of *The Sea Chest*.

My wife Connie and I had the privilege of paying a visit to Jim at his home in Yachts, Oregon during the summer of 2005. At this time, he was the only founder of PSMHS still living.

Jim was a gracious host. He resided in a tidy, cozy home next to “Cleft of the Rock Lighthouse,” a new structure that he had built in 1976. The name is a reference to the hymn by Fannie Crosby, “He Hideth my Soul in the Cleft of the Rock,” which is based on Exodus 33:22.

It was fascinating to be taken on a tour of the lighthouse as well as to visit in his home, where an area of the house filled with maritime artifacts was dubbed the “Wreck Room.”

Jim had been a widower since his wife Cherie passed away in 1999, but he was happy to still have her little Dachshund dog Tinker to keep him company, as well as a daughter and son-in-law who lived only a short distance away. It is our understanding that Jim Gibbs remained actively involved in the Oregon lighthouse community and was able to stay in his home until he passed away at age 88 in April 2010.

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**FORT CASEY’S WAYWARD GUNS**


**RAY GAMBLE: THE MAKER, MAGICIAN AND MAN WITH AMBITION**

Magician post by Michael Sean Sullivan for his Tacoma History blog https://tacomahistory.live/2016/02/27/magician/


**DISSENT & CONSEQUENCES: THE 1970 “SEATTLE 7” CONSPIRACY TRIAL**


**MAP & LEGENDS: YAKIMA RIVER CANYON ROAD**

There are landscapes that seem to reflect some version of ourselves, that uniquely call to us and that we might recognize in a sort of objective correlative. A Seattle-born wetlander, I’ve found one such oddly familiar territory on the dry side of Washington state.

On the morning of September 11, 2001, I was taking a road trip to the Yakima Valley with Howard Lev, founder, then-CEO and chief bottle washer, of Mama Lil’s Peppers. Howard was searching for farms willing and able to grow goathorn peppers to his demanding specifications.

As we approached Ellensburg, weighed down by a shared sense of national grief and displacement, Howard suggested we detour along the Yakima River Canyon Road, State Highway 821, which, he promised, contained some lovely, perhaps even soothing, vistas. And he was right. My first trip through the canyon was indeed a balm and a respite.

The 23-mile drive, following the winding, occasionally ox-bowing Yakima River, offers a unique collision of wilderness and cultivation, an ever-changing palette of seasonal pastels, while providing all the force and spectacle of a John Ford western, but distilled and concentrated in a single stunning corridor. Unlike most river canyons - the Columbia Basin, the Grand Canyon, Hell’s Canyon in Idaho - carved into bedrock by eons of rushing water, the Yakima River is older than the cliffs through which it twists and turns. These great tawny-shouldered hills and basalt ridges, many over a thousand feet high, rose up from the landscape as a result of millions of years of geologic compression beginning in Northern California, squeezing through eastern Oregon until emerging most dramatically between what is now Ellensburg and Yakima. And a train runs through it!
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—Woodrow Wilson

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