

Fall 2016 The Official Publication of the Lakewood Historical Society

## A decade of service to Lakewood history

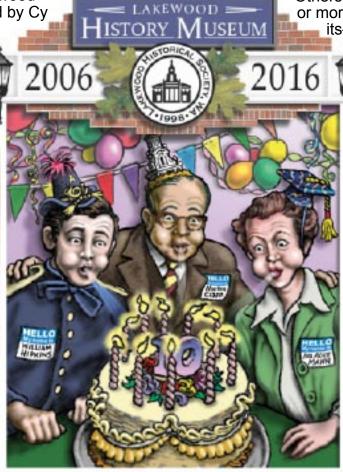
Come help us celebrate 10 years in our Colonial Center home

**2006**—the fledgling Lakewood Historical Society, founded by Cy Happy eight years earlier, leases a storefront in

historic Lakewood Colonial Center, finally acquiring enough space to exhibit a few of the treasures

donated by generous and historically-minded Lakes District residents.

Some of these are incorporated into our permanent exhibits—reproductions of an early schoolroom, pioneer cabin, post office, the 1930's newsroom of the Lakewood Log. etc.



10th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION busy 10 years at the SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22nd, 2-4pm Lakewood History Museum 6211 Mt. Tacoma Drive SW

Others have played a part in one or more of our featured exhib-

its—examinations of local history ranging from the rise and fall of local shopping centers to the impact of the military presence in our community to a look



at the sports and leisure activities engaged in by visitors to what was once Pierce County's favorite vacation spot.

In short, it's been a Colonial Center for your Society. Please join us as we toast both the past and an ever more vital

and relevant future!

This issue:	Ten Years Gone: Scenes From Grand Opening8
President's Message; Last Issue's Quiz Answers2	Financial Information, Business Members9
Visitation Villa Story, Continued3	Print Shop Withstands Winds of Tech Change10
The Legacy of Billy Frank, Jr4	A Very Timely Article11
Harry Todd Park, Home to Two College Crews5	Fall 2016 Programs & Events12



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#### PRAIRIE GAZETTE

Prairie Gazette is the official publication of the Lakewood Historical Society. The newsletter is published four times a year. Distribution is directly to members and available at the Lakewood History Museum, 6211 Mt Tacoma Drive SW, Lakewood, WA 98499 • 253-682-3480

The staff of Prairie Gazette actively encourages input from the Society's members as well as the general public regarding story ideas of any other aspects of this newsletter, and the Lakewood Historical Society.

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#### **MEETINGS**

The Lakewood Historical Society formed in 1998 to preserve and share Lakewood's rich history through programs, displays and publications. The Society offers frequent programs on topics of historical interest. Most programs are free and open to the public. Visit us on Facebook or our website for information on events and activities:

www.LakewoodHistorical.org

## President's Message

It is hard to believe but this is my last missive as President of the Lakewood Historical Society. I will continue to remain on the Board as the Past President and stay actively involved with programs and marketing.



As I have been reviewing our successes of the Society and the Museum during my tenure, I have been amazed by how much we have accomplished. The most significant is our "storefront" museum that opened in October, 2006. Be sure to attend our Museum's 10th Anniversary on October 22nd.

Your fearless leader.

Becky Huber

## Answers to last issue's swingin' quiz.















The Summer 2016 Prairie Gazette contained photos of nine Lakewood-area gates. How many did *you* correctly identify? Be sure to check out the clocks of Lakewood in this issue (pg. 11)



## **Answers:**

- 1. On the road to Holly Hedge.
- 2. On the far side of Gravelly Lake Drive, beyond Veteran's Drive.
- 3. Gates to Rhodesleigh. 4. Decorative piece on gate, Little Church on the Prairie. **5.** Antique gate at Western State Hospital. off Steilacoom Blvd. 6. Another view of Little Church on the Prairie gate. 7. Entry gates to the Veteran's Administration Hospital.
- 8. Gateway to Lakewood Towne Center. 9. Lakewold Garden's Gazebo—the historic structure provides access to many of the garden's rooms.



Kathy Spencer, former Director of Development for St. Francis Cabrini school (left).

by Nancy Covert

The Prairie Gazette's Summer Edition contained preliminary information about Visitation Villa. And now, the rest of the story...

Between 1923-1956, the Catholic Girl's Day School was located on the site of presentday Lakewood Towne Center.

Your curious historian/writer gleaned more information about the school after visiting with Kathy **Spencer**, a Steilacoom resident, who recently retired as Director of Development for St. Francis Cabrini School. The school and church were built on property that once was part of Visitation Villa. Mrs. Spencer shared copies of some of the school's history.

> We greet you, lovely Lakewood land! We love your splendors all to view. Our tow'ring firs and oak trees grand, Encircling lakes of blue. Your brilliant coat of emerald green, Your flower-bejeweled meadows, too, Combine to make a charming scene.

Oh Lakewood, we love you!

(A verse from a song composed by one of the early Visitation Sisters, published in the 1954 V.V. Diamond Jubilee commemorative booklet).

#### The Visitation Order

From Europe to the United States, from Tacoma to Federal Way...

Our community traces its origins to the first and only foundation established in the United States by Visitandines from a European House of our Order, that of Montiuel, France.

After three appeals to the Order, a group consisting of a Mother Superior and four spiritual daughters undertook the difficult mission to relocate to

"far away" America. Thirty years later, a group was sent to the far west.

In 1891 the doors of the first Visitation Convent west of the Rockies was opened to the Community on Sept. 4, 1891. Eventually the unpretentious structure built in Tacoma would prove wholly inadequate to accommodate the large number of girls who enrolled in the school.

The commemorative booklet notes that in 1909 the Visitation Academy was awarded a Gold Medal and Certificate for high-grade school work, needle craft and painting, displayed in the Educational Building at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exhibit held in Seattle (on the site of what became the campus for the University of Washington).

Eventually the Visitation Academy in Tacoma was outgrown, and because the Sisters do not engage in parochial projects, it was deemed advisable to transfer the primary and grammar grades to St. Leo Parochial School.

After 30 years on 18th and Yakima Avenue, the Community found that the site had become unsuitable for a resident school. Seattle's **Bishop** Edward J. O'Dea, accompanied by the Very Reverend Daniel Hanly, V.G., visited a site in the Lakes District, called "Richmore," as the Richardson property was then known, and that land —200 acres—was deeded over to the community on May 24, 1918. The Sisters' original Tacoma property was sold to the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul for \$29,255.28; they then purchased the Richardson property for \$35,000. The Vincentians used the old convent to establish a Home for the Aged.

During the next three decades sections of the Lakewood property were sold off to pay the outstanding debt, until the original 200 acres had decreased to 100 acres.

## The legacy of Billy Frank Jr.

by Chuck Mathias

In the long, sad history of confrontation between the US government and our native tribes, there are few instances in which the Indians emerged the clear winners.

Custer's Last Stand was one such instance. Another, less famous, less violent—but with much greater significance in the long run—played out on the banks of the Nisqually River over 40 years ago.

It was the climactic outcome of a drama that had begun more than a century earlier—but scarcely a mile away—on the banks of what was then known as Medicine (now McAllister) Creek in the Nisqually Delta. There, in December 1854, Washington **Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens** signed a treaty with representatives of several tribes. In return for ceding two and a quarter million acres of land, the Indians were "guaranteed" in perpetuity their "traditional hunting and fishing rights".

Had Stevens and the government kept their side of the bargain it would have entailed, among other things, ensuring the Indians "a fair and equitable share" of the fish harvest. But it didn't take long before those "guarantees" were eroded, wasting away at an ever accelerating pace as the number of commercial and sports fishermen grew along with the general population. One particularly blatant example: the "acquiring" of all tribal lands east of the Nisqually River—without any

consultation with the tribe—by Pierce County; land which was then given to the US government for construction of Camp Lewis (predecessor of today's Joint Base Lewis McChord) in 1917. So much for respecting "traditional fishing grounds".

By the mid-20th century, the Indian harvest was but a tiny fraction of what it should have been under the terms of the treaty.



Billy Frank, Jr. 1931-2014

As winds of change swept the nation in the late sixties, many minorities began to question their treatment by the white maiority, and the Nisqually Indians, with a grievance particularly well-defined and correctible through court action, were no exception. All they needed was a leader to channel anger into meaningful action. In Billy Frank, Jr. they found their man.

Born on the Nisqually Reservation in 1931 to Willie and Angeline Frank, by his early thirties Billy had acquainted himself thoroughly with the terms of the treaty and had taken the lead in strategizing a course of civil disobedience which quickly proved the most effective tool in the Nisquallies' fight for their

rights. By the mid-seventies, the tribe's struggles made local front pages almost daily and the wire services regularly—and protest leader Billy Frank, Jr. had been arrested for "illegal" fishing more than 50 times!

Acknowledging the importance of publicity in the growing media-centric culture of the times. various celebrities were solicited to take part in the protests most famously, actor **Marlon Brando**, who, after casting his net in troubled local waters, escaped a night in jail only because the Pierce County prosecutor refused to file charges.

Then, on June 4, 1975 all the long, grueling effort paid off spectacularly when the Ninth District Court of Appeals upheld a 1974 decision by Judge George Boldt awarding half of all future salmon harvests to the Nisqually and other tribes covered by the treaty.

Many would have been content to rest on their laurels after so overwhelming a victory, but not Billy Frank, Jr. Knowing their victory would endure only so long as the fisheries themselves endured. Billy turned his attention—and that of his tribe —to the preservation and enrichment of natural habitat. in particular the fertile stretch known as the Nisqually Delta today protected by a wildlife preserve renamed in his honor in 2016.

And the honors didn't end there.

The one-time "law-breaker" and "villain" in the eves of local sport and commercial fishermen, Billy Frank, Jr., was awarded America's highest civilian honor, the Medal of Freedom, by **President Barack** Obama. Sadly, since he died in 2014, it had to be awarded posthumously, on November 24, 2015.

## Harry Todd's lasting gift to the people of Tillicum.

by Nancy Covert

Owner Harry Bona cleaned and maintained the area behind his IGA store, land absorbed years later into what became known as Harry Todd Park—named for a Tacoma businessman who contributed three hundred feet of waterfront—and \$100,000—to Tacoma's Metro Parks District.

When Lakewood became a city in 1996, the park property was absorbed into the city. The trolley stop was near Bona's (coming up from Highway 99). Bona gave park land to Pierce County in the '60s, with the provision that it could not be sold or used for anything other than a park.

After Tillicum was designated as a City of Lakewood neighborhood, the park was transferred to the city's ownership.

The park was, according to longtime resident Jim Taylor, a swimming area for about forty years before it was renamed as Harry Todd Park. It was composed of Tillicum's swimming area and land donated by Mr. Bona. Mr. Todd paid for construction of the park pavilion. Taylor recalled going to Bill's Boathouse to fish in the '40s.

Today, Harry Todd Park is the location of the Commencement Bay Rowing Club, as well as the University of Puget Sound (UPS) and Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) rowing clubs which share the park's shell house. The shell house is where the clubs' racing shells are stored between races, in vertical berths several levels high.

In the 1960s, PLU's newly formed crew team borrowed a shell from the University of Washington the famous "Husky Clipper". After one season, it was returned The stunt resulted in the team and the famous 1936 Pocock-



crafted shell now hangs above the dining tables in the Husky Shellhouse on the edge of Lake Washington.

## The Husky Clipper on American Lake

According to Wikipedia, PLU's Crew first received national recognition in 1967, when the University of Washington requested the return of the "Husky Clipper," which the Huskies had used to win at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. (The "Clipper" is featured in the 2013 book, "The Boys in the Boat" by Daniel James Brown.) In exchange, UW arranged for the Green Lake Crew to donate a shell, the "Loyal Shoudy"\* to the PLU team.

Faced with no way of transporting the "Shoudy" from north Seattle to PLU's home course in Parkland, Team Commodore/ Captain Jim Ojala devised a plan for the team to row the shell from Lake Union, through the Ballard Locks, then down Puget Sound to the Tacoma Narrows.

After several months of endurance training, Capt. Ojala contacted the Navy and Coast Guard The Ram took them up on the and obtained a parade permit to walk the shell through North Seattle, from Green Lake to Lake Union. All details taken care of, the ten team members embarked at last on their journey.

receiving coverage from The

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, as well as in Rowing News, a national rowing magazine.

The Shoudy was named for **Dr**. Loyal Shoudy, a fanatically loyal UW alumnus, who established the tradition of the Shoudy banquet. Once when the team won a regatta. Shoudy took the rowers to New York and treated them to a show and gala dinner. Each boy found a \$10 bill at his plate, along with a purple tie. Shoudy made this generous outing the model for what became for decades an end-of-year tradition.

The Shoudy saw action on American Lake for several seasons, according to former PLU rowing coach Dave Peterson.

In 1970, the shell was sold to Washington State University for its growing crew program. Sadly, it was wrecked on the rocks in a river near Pullman. All that was saved was the hull, which was mounted and hung on a wall in the school's boathouse.

#### Footnote: Racing shells in the Lakewood area

Brothers Dave and Jeff Iverson lead the Ram International restaurant operation. When **Jeff** Iverson (Jeff and Dave's father) was planning the Ruston Way restaurant (the first one, in Lakewood, was opened in 1971), UPS contacted him and asked whether he wanted to purchase their wood shell since they were switching over from wood to carbon fiber.

opportunity. Since then wooden shells have been hung in Ram restaurants as far away as Chicago.

"We always hang local high school banners from the oars," said Jeff Iverson.



# **GRAND** scenes from our **OPENING**

**November 9, 2006**—the dream of a museum home for the Lakewood Historical Society comes true.

1. Among those helping Mayor Claudia Thomas cut the ribbon: current (Glen Spieth, second from left) and future (Becky Huber, second from right) presidents of LHS. 2. Mayor Thomas becomes one of the first to sign the museum's guest book. 3. Just a few weeks before opening the question is: can exhibits like the pioneer cabin (here, under construction) possibly be ready in time? 4. Answer: Yes, like this timeline of Lakewood events, the cabin and other displays were ready for visitors. 5. No event complete without a tempting table of treats.

















**6**. What a museum's all about: visitors learning an aspect of local history. 7. Becky Huber with Elizabeth Poinsett, artist, board member and daughter of Iva Alice Mann, iconic figure in the history of Lakewood education 8. Museum Director Janda **Volkmer** (center) points out items of interest to firstday visitors. 9. Long-time friends of the Society (and distinguished co-authors of books on Lakewood's history) Steve Dunkelberger (seated) and Walter Neary. 10. Mayor Thomas and LHS Board Member John Huber.



Some property went toward establishing Clover Park High School, a Lakewood Clinic, and establishing St. Francis Cabrini Parish. In 1955 the remaining land was sold to developers of the Villa Plaza shopping center.

From the Order's beginning spiritually-minded women were permitted to enter Visitation monasteries, there to spend a few days in thoughtful, prayerful reflection.

From that beginning, the custom of retreats spread, until in 1954, the Lakewood school was closed, and the Order relocated to Federal Way. From 1956-1993 it operated as a retreat center until being sold to the City of Federal Way.

Mrs. Spencer said that a young man, named **Joe M. Schiller**, tended a small garden at the Visitation Lakewood property. When the Order moved to Federal Way, he went along and continued to maintain the grounds until his death. He lived in the woods in a trailer next to their Dash Point property, and even had a root cellar that he had dug into the side of the mountain.

Today the Dumas Bay Retreat Center still operates, while Center Stage Theatre occupies the site originally used as the convent. As mentioned in the LHS summer newsletter, the school's marble altar now resides in Fife at St. Martin of Tours' church.

Further information about the Visitation Sisters is available for review at the Lakewood History Museum. There also is a small desk included in the exhibit.



First Rectory for St. Francis Cabrini Parish, painted by Sister Mary Consolata in 1952.

The Lakewood Historical Society also placed a commemorative plaque at the entryway of Lakewood Towne Center's Safeway Store showing the original school site.

The grotto originally on the site was removed, first to Oakbrook, then to its current location on Raft Island, near Gig Harbor.

The remaining Sisters dispersed to other Visitation Monasteries on the East Coast. Engraved plaques, inscribed with the Sisters' names, have been placed along the Dumas Bay walkway.

Dumas Bay Center is located at 3200 SW Dash Point Road, Federal Way, 98023. Phone 253-835-2000, or visit www.dumasbaycentre.com

## Student life at Visitation Villa

Former Steilacoom resident **Susan Small**, now living in San Antonio, Texas, shares memories of her days at Visitation Villa.

The altar is quite beautiful— the Last Supper bas relief is lovely and the marble positively glows. Thank you so much for the happy memory.

I loved Visitation Villa and it was so wonderful to wander through the lands surrounding it. I vividly remember the Reynolds family who had a farm on the property. Sister Francis Xavier was my teacher, and she was the most wonderful, warm teacher I ever had—among other things, she loved to play Rover, Rover with us, jumped rope and took us up to the Reynold's farm to see the baby chicks and wandered around the farm lands with us. She was the only teacher I ever had who read from a novel to us each day —Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates.

When Visitation Villa was sold and the nuns, who had been decloistered in order to teach, all returned to the cloister—except Sister Francis, and she transferred to a teaching order. Vistation Villa was an idyllic experience. Thank you so much for asking me about it and reminding me of how very much I loved it there.

Oh, and I was going to mention the truly fascinating, slightly strange, Infant of Prague statue at the entrance to the chapel—he was dressed in elaborate velvets and brocades.

I was fascinated!

## THANK YOU, BUSINESS MEMBERS AND SPONSORS

City of Lakewood Lodging Tax Funds help support and promote the Lakewood Historical Society and Museum operations, educational programs and events, historical markers, community outreach programs and Museum display/exhibits.

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Lakewood Ford
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Lakewood Hardware & Paint
Lakeview Light and Power
Lakewood Playhouse
Lakewood Villa Realty
Lakewood Water District
LeMay Family Collection
LeMay Pierce County Refuse
Lowe's
Mandarin Gallery
Moon Rise Café

Moon Rise Café
Mountain View Funeral Home
and Memorial Park
Museum Antiques
Nisqually Indian Tribe
Northwest Properties

Lakewood Historical Society & Museum

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

8 Months YTD thru August 2016

OPENING CASH ON HAND – January 1, 2016	
Checking	\$ 6,621
Money Market	\$27,838
Total	\$34,459
INCOME	
Grants	\$28,014
Individual & Family Memberships	\$ 4,750
Business Memberships	\$ 285
Business Sponsorships	\$ 1,250
Donations–Museum Fund	\$ 7,842
Memorial Gifts	\$ 520
Bank Interest	\$ 71
Other	\$ 640
Total Income	\$43,372
EXPENSES	
Operations & Administration	\$ 4,362
Museum Lease	\$12,800
Equipment/Software/Furnishings	\$ 503
Professional Develop/Recognition	\$ 318
Contract Services & Support	\$ 1,975
Insurance	\$ 1,792
Marketing/Publications/Advertising	\$10,935
Newsletter Printing/Mailing	\$ 2,893
Graphic Design Services	\$ 4,275
Website Hosting/Maintenance	\$ 337 \$ 90
Educational Programs/Events  Museum Exhbits/Displays	\$ 2,005
Historical Markers	\$ 2,005 \$10,496
Total Expenses	\$52,782
•	<b>Φ52,162</b>
CLOSING CASH ON HAND – August 31, 2016	Ф 0.400
Checking	\$ 2,189
Money Market	\$22,861
Total Ending Cash	\$25,049

Original House of Donuts
Paktek Inc
Parkwood Property
Management
Pierce County Council
Pierce County Landmarks
Commission
Radcliffe Hardwood Floors
Raney Family Trust
Robi's Camera Center
Rolf's Import Auto Service
Ed Selden Floor Coverings
Sheri Hodson Insurance Agency

Sound Tax and Bookkeeping Inc
The Suburban Times
Tacoma Country and Golf Club
Tacoma Public Library
Tacoma Trophy
Todd (Farmers)
Insurance Agency
Travel Leaders/Travel Center
Tucci and Sons
Vogt Foundation
Water Rights, Inc
Weinand Associates

West Pierce Fire Fighters

Agency Inc South Sound Restaurant Group

## These Presses **Still Operate**

By Nancy Covert

During the past 30 years changing technology has affected many businesses, including small print shops.

At one time there were more than half a dozen printing businesses in the area.

One of them—a small print shop, at 6111 Steilacoom Boulevard, S. W., tucked into a corner of businesses (such as Lakewood Ironworks and a TV and Appliance business) just east of Burs Restaurant, has operated in the area for about



Besides the membership, extra copies are printed to distribute to interested patrons.

Jim Barber is the owner. Originally he employed 10 printers. Nowadays his staff includes **Sherry** (40 years) who handles pre-press and color copy printing, while **Dan** (14 years) does press, bindery and copy work. Born in New York, Jim and his parents moved to California—



Your friendly Print Shop crew: Jim, Sherry and Dan.

40 years, since 1977 at its current location.

Formerly known as Lakewood Printing, a few years ago it was renamed Print Shop of Lakewood, and it's the place where the Lakewood Historical Society newsletter is printed throughout the year.

"About 2,500 copies," according to Becky Huber, LHS president. 10

first to San Francisco, then Los Angeles, back to SF, and then back to LA where they operated a check printing business, before moving to Lakewood, where Jim became the fourth owner of the print shop.

Besides newsletters, the Print Shop produces brochures, posters, business cards, letterhead stationery, special order books, color copies...

"pretty much anything printed," Barber says."A lot of the work we once did, though, isn't done any anymore."

While the shop's output has declined during the past few years, "fall is still our busiest time" since they print school directories (largely for private schools) as well as for Clover Park Technical College and other school-related materials. They also publish materials for a medical society.

## A condensed printing history:

While many people prefer the traditional style of printing hard copies—a younger generation has switched to on-line publications. The art of printing blossomed in the 15th century in Germany when **Johannes** Gutenberg developed a moveable type printing press.

Until that time most books and documents were hand-writteni.e., manuscripts—using carved wooden blocks to print images and words.

Around 1457-1500 it was estimated that there were about 1,700 presses operating in about 300 towns, producing about 15 million volumes by that time. The word "press" acquired a new meaning after the Reformation ignited a religious controversy between Catholics and Protestants.

During the following centuries, a variety of printing styles evolved: from wood carvings to etchings, to mezzotints—each successive change taking "printing" to the present day where images produced on screen, or film—using increasingly elaborate styles—lasers, etc.—create images where the viewer may be confused about whether what he sees is "real" or not.

## Got the time?

You should—if you live in Lakewood, that is. So many prominently placed public timepieces! Pay them a visit—if vou've got (or need!) the time.





Lakewood's most iconic timepiece. the four-sided clock tower of the old Lakewood Theater.



Corner of Mt. Tacoma Drive SW & Gravelly Lake Drive SW.



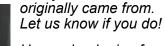
The carillon bell tower tolls the hour to all living within hearing of St. Francis School on 108th Street...



...and if you've ever wondered what keeps those bells chiming on time throughout the year, the answer lies somewhere within the mechanism pictured above.



Nobody seems to know where this beautiful old jeweler's clock, now in front of the old Kinko's location on Gravelly Lake Drive,





Have a hankering for a memorable timepiece of vour own? There are more like these three (left)—shown courtesy of designer Michael Clark—available at his shop in historic Lakewood Colonial Center.





(Return service requested)

## Fall 2016 Programs & Activities

**Sat, October 8, 12 noon-5 pm-Washington State Historical Society's 125th Anniversary**, Washington State History Museum, 1911 Pacific Ave, Tacoma, WA. Come by and visit the Lakewood Historical Society's table to enter free drawing.

Wed, October 12th, 1 pm- City of Lakewood's 20th Anniversary Celebration. As part of "Let's Enjoy History Together" at the Lakewood Senior Activity Center, 9112 Lakewood Dr SW. Free, but call 253-798-4090 to register.

**Wed, October 19th, 4:30-7 pm- Boo Bash**; Lakewood Chamber's fall event at Great American Casino, 10117 South Tacoma Way, Lakewood. Visit Society's booth, door prizes, free food, must be 21 to attend.

**Sat, October 22nd, 1-4 pm- Lakewood History Museum's 10th Anniversary Celebration**, 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr SW, raffle prize drawing, special refreshments, dedication of Colonial Center Historic Marker.

**Tues, November 22nd, 7-9 pm- Annual Meeting**, St Mary's Episcopal Church, 10630 Gravelly Lake Drive SW. Program on Honor Flights, all expenses paid trips to Washington DC for WWII veterans; year-end reports, elections of board members, recognition of achievements. Refreshments served.

**Sat, December 3rd 2-4 pm, Holiday Open House**, Lakewood History Museum, 6211 Mt Tacoma Dr SW, enjoy vintage holiday decorations and refreshments.

Find us on Facebook (Lakewood-Historical-Society-Washiington-State) or check our website for more information and current events: www.LakewoodHistorical.org