

WAGON WHEEL

January 2015

Duvall Historical Society · PO Box 385, Duvall, WA 98019 · www.duvallhistoricalsociety.org

Happy New Year from the Duvall Historical Society!

Events

January 5th

Historical Society Annual Business Meeting

Members meet to discuss beginning-of-the-year business and to elect officers. 7pm at the Dougherty House.

March 2nd

“The Mystery at Crescent Lake”

Join guest presenter Mike Chapman and the Duvall Historical Society as Mr. Chapman explores a mystery involving Washington State’s own Crescent Lake. 7:30pm at the Duvall Visitor Center.

April 6th

“Railroad Disasters”

Local historian Allen Miller will narrate the history of railroad disasters. Stay tuned for details.



We are grateful to 4culture, the King County Cultural Services Agency, for their support in the preservation of our heritage.

Memories of Floods from Yesteryear

As of January 5, 2015, Duvall’s social media is flooded (pardon the pun) with questions, comments, and concerns about local flooding and its impact on our community. In this month’s Wagon Wheel, we’d like to give you a glimpse of a previous Duvall flood that had a profound impact on the farms that inhabit our valley’s floor, as told by former valley resident and Duvall Historical Society member, Bob Kusters. Please note that some names have been omitted in this reprinting for the sake of anonymity. (First printed in January 1991, and later published in the Wagon Wheel: Vignettes of Duvall’s Historical Past – First Volume)

SPECIAL EDITION

THE FLOOD OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1990

By Bob Kusters



River Road, Duvall Feb. 10, 1951 (Photo courtesy of Jeanette Owen Dickinson)

Usually we write about the distant past, but since the recent flood was by far the biggest in the recorded history of the Kusters’ family farm, we have decided to record our recent experience.

The river had been bank full all day Friday, Nov. 23, 1990. We expected a little more rise and the news reports at 11 p.m. seemed to support this. By Saturday morning, the water was rising some, but the reports were getting worse, and the water rose faster and faster.

It seemed the Skykomish River had risen very high and was backing water into the Snoqualmie Valley, which was quite obvious from where we lived only a quarter of a mile from the Snohomish County line. The water continued to rise with no current except a slow movement upstream, and some things that floated away were later found upstream.

About 9:38 p.m., we had four inches in our house and took the boat across the driveway to our son's house. Our son's house had originally been built on pilings and the big flood of 1921 had gotten into the oven of the old cook stove. Their house was raised above the 1921 flood level sometime later and an above ground basement put under it. The big flood of December, 1921, is the flood to which we have always compared subsequent floods.

After we got to our son's house, we figured everything was all okay now that we were above the 1921 flood level. It was not to be, however, and about two hours later, furniture and rugs were being raised as water was lapping at the door. Now we were forced to go upstairs. My family and I now found refuge in the same small area that had sheltered my wife's parents and their family in the 1921 flood.

Before the 1990 flood had reached its peak, Douwe and Duane Van Ess came in with their boat and Steve Barnhart brought his boat. Then, we saved some of the cattle by towing them to the old barn, which also had water in it for the first time since it was built in 1916. Around four or five a.m., the flood peaked. The crew, by this time, was soaked and numb with cold. Douwe, Duane, and Steve took the boats back across the valley and the rest went upstairs to get some sleep. They had saved about 25 head. Cows and even day old calves are strong swimmers, but like other animals, they fight to stay in familiar surroundings when rescue is attempted. Steve Barnhart got dried out and went to Redmond for some bags of fried chicken, etc. and boated back in. It was light by now, and they once again took boats back to the barn and saved a few more of the cattle that would cooperate. Some calves had been pulled into the hay mow, but about 35 larger heifers that had been put in the barn earlier, and the cattle that were rescued, stood in about 16" of water until the water left the barn Sunday evening. They remained up there until the river receded enough so a spot could be cleaned up for them. A few cows saved themselves in the loafing shed by standing on their dead herd mates. One cow had saved itself, but was trapped, so Steve took the boat back to Duvall, got his truck ready, and while the water still covered the road, came in with Richard Brill. Now, with a winch truck plus a chain saw, they began to cut through walls and stalls to the trapped cow. They tried to winch her to a clear spot. The cow's head was stretched from here to there, but at last slid into an open spot. As we watched, we felt she had lived through the big flood, but would die from the rescue. The boys gave her some medicine and in an hour or two, she got up and started eating hay.

Around 4 a.m. Sunday morning, the water leveled off with about 16 inches in my son's house, 18 inches above the 1921 flood. The water was three feet above the 1975 flood which had been the largest I had witnessed in my 51 years in the valley. It was also the largest flood my wife had seen, although she was born only three months after the 1921 flood. The water had just begun to drop when I turned on an old black and white television and saw the I-90 floating bridge go down!

The water left my son's house a little after noon on Sunday and the cleanup began. The water continued to drop and by 8 p.m. on Sunday, the 30" of water left our house. By Monday noon, we could walk on the road in knee boots and by Monday evening, had a supply of oil and filters and had the loader tractor operating after a fashion. By Tuesday morning, help was streaming down the road for all the different farms. Douwe and Duane Van Ess came with a loader rig and a load of shavings for livestock bedding, John Coy also came with his loader and they all worked to get the dead cattle put on a pile for removal.

My son's father-in-law came up from Grayland and with daughter, worked for several days getting cars and tractors running. Riverview high school students were excused from classes and worked up and down the road, helping in houses and barns, under some cold, rainy conditions. Grandson's Ag class from Oregon took a vote to come up here with their leader and help for a few days. The group came up with a camper rig and stayed with the Tom Todds of Fall City at night. The Duvall businessmen, the firemen, and many others brought down equipment to help. The town of Duvall also brought tractors down to remove the wet hay. Many tons of dry hay were first taken from the top, then tons of wet hay were taken out and at last the dry hay put back.

Mayor Irv Harder was instrumental in cutting red tape and contacting the right people in getting the 600 or more deceased cattle removed. After a week, each house had a huge pile of ruined furniture and garbage piled up. I'm not sure who arranged it, but Saturday morning, garbage trucks and loaders came down the road and hauled it all away.

The fire department's boat was down several times, while the farms were flooded, and took people out or brought supplies in. They even took my daughter-in-law in to Ted Ritter. Talk about service – a boat trip to Duvall and a car to Ritter's office. Food, such as coffee, sandwiches, donuts, and rolls and as much fresh water as needed were brought down each day in a food wagon furnished by the workers at the fire department and National Guard, I believe. They went into each house and asked the workers if they wanted hot coffee or rolls. Many people brought hot dishes or meals from this area and also from Seattle, Bothell, etc. I don't know how many took drawers full of wet clothes, pictures, bedding etc home to

clean and dry, but the list would be long. Only mention the need for a temporary refrigerator, bed, shop heater, or kerosene to put in it, and in no time it would be there. Dairy Federation Wives brought a present to each youngster on River Road and plants for the family. Please do not accept this as a complete list of those that helped, but only a short list of some of the organizations that I knew of. The many people that helped in our house, some I knew, some I didn't know, and the many more that helped in houses and barns up and down the road, cannot be named as it would take up too much space, and would miss many names...

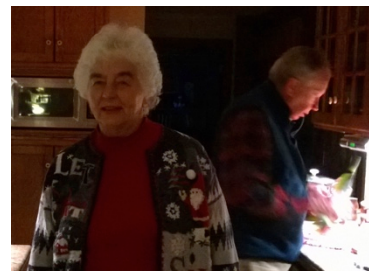
...Of the big floods that I have seen in 1951, 1959, 1975, and 1986, this flood was higher by three feet, but yet the temperature was cooler by 5 degrees than the other floods. I guess if we have learned anything from this flood it is that if the area continues to develop there will no longer be a place for the farmers. Always bear in mind when we write of flood levels that this applies only to this area.

The author of this story was one of Duvall's hardiest – his farm was located on the valley floor, the area of Duvall prone to flooding. To read more of Duvall's true stories, check out the Historical Society's publications at Duvall's King County Library, or purchase a publication by contacting the Historical Society at webmaster@duvallhistoricalsociety.org.

Duvall Residents and Historical Society Members Said Goodbye to 2014 - in Style

The 2014 Duvall Historical Society Holiday Party

On Sunday, December 7th, Historical Society members and friends gathered at the home of Dennis and Mary Lampson for holiday festivities. Stories were shared and good food was had, as we warmed ourselves by the fire. *Photos courtesy of Kimberly Engelkes*



The 2014 Duvall Tree Lighting Ceremony

On Friday, December 5th, the city of Duvall once again hosted its annual tree lighting ceremony. Many residents turned out for games, treats, and Santa, while others attended to share 100th birthday greetings with Duvall's longtime resident Velma Pearl Hix Hill.

The Duvall Historical Society stayed warm in the Historic Depot, where we sold ornaments and other goods, and we clapped loudly when Mayor Ibershoff read a 100th birthday proclamation to lifelong Duvall resident Velma Pearl Hix Hill. Velma turned 100 years old on Wednesday, December 3, 2014. Read the proclamation below, and revisit her story in the December, 2014, *Wagon Wheel*, found on the Duvall Historical Society website.

**A PROCLAMATION
OF THE CITY OF DUVALL**



WHEREAS, 100 years ago on December 3rd 1914, Velma Hill was born to Arthur and Pauline Hix, Duvall pioneers in the same house where she still lives; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hill graduated as valedictorian of the Duvall Class of 1932; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hill worked full-time at her father's store, Hix Market, on Main Street in Duvall; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 27, Mrs. Hill became the Postmaster of Duvall, and the Post Office was moved into Hix's Market; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hill married Cliff Hill in 1947 and had a daughter, Paula Pearl; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hill and her husband built some of the first rental housing in Duvall; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hill was an accomplished pianist and organist and played in the Duvall Methodist Church, the Cherry Valley Grange, and Holy Innocents Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hill had a fine alto voice and sang in the Women's Choral Society which gave concerts in Seattle and Everett; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hill's lifetime of contributions to Duvall have had a great influence on the City we know today; and

WHEREAS, The City of Duvall recognizes that Velma Hill turned 100 years old on December 3rd 2014;

NOW THEREFORE, this proclamation is to honor lifetime Duvall resident, Velma Hill. The City extends its congratulations and best wishes to Velma Hill.

Signed this 5th day of December 2014

Mayor Will Ibershof

Duvall Historical Society Business

Dues are Due

Duvall Historical Society membership dues are due now. General membership dues are \$15, Students 18 and under are \$5, and those who would like to donate larger amounts may do so with a \$250 Friends of DHS donation. Please refer to the membership form at the end of this newsletter, and submit it with your dues during the month of January.

Thank You for Your Support!

The Duvall Historical Society would like to thank Susan Z. Buckley for her generous Friends of DHS donation, as well as Microsoft, who matched the generous number of volunteer hours given by our own Kimberly Engelkes. Thank you donors for your continuous support!

The 2015 Duvall Historical Society Officers are... President Kimberly Engelkes, Vice President Mary Lampson, Secretary Alana McCoy, and Treasurer Connie Zimmerman. They were voted in at the January 5th Duvall Historical Society membership meeting.

Be Part of Historic Preservation, Volunteer!

The Duvall Historical Society is continuously looking for volunteers to help in its mission of recording and preserving culture. If you'd like to help with one of the opportunities below, or have an idea of your own, please contact us at webmaster@duvallhistoricalsociety.org.

- Dougherty House docent
- Website design
- Education and outreach
- Book publication
- Maintenance of buildings and gardens
- Cataloging of artifacts, books, and ephemera
- Promotion of Historical Society membership
- Planning of speakers and programs
- Research

Current Officers

Kimberly Engelkes, President
Mary Lampson, Vice President
Alana McCoy, Secretary
Connie Zimmerman, Treasurer

At-large Board Members

Ward Roney
Ruth Bellamy
Connie Zimmerman
Tom Norenberg

The **Duvall Historical Society** is located at the Dougherty House at 26526 NE Cherry Valley Road, Duvall, WA 98019
Contact us at webmaster@duvallhistoricalsociety.org

The *Wagon Wheel* is a monthly publication of the Duvall Historical Society

Editor: Beth Lepkowski

If you would like to receive a copy, be interviewed for a future edition, have something to share, or would like to be added to or removed from our emailing list, please email

wagonwheeldhs@gmail.com

Become a Member!

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone(s): _____ Email: _____

Amount Enclosed/Yearly Membership Dues (check one):

\$15 Individual Memberships \$5 Students 18 & Under \$250 Friends of DHS

Would you like to receive information about volunteer opportunities? Yes No

Thank you for your support! Please detach and mail this form to PO Box 385, Duvall, WA 98019