



Newsletter February 2009

Calendar 2009

- February 10: Monthly Meeting with Reed Jarvis
March 6-7: AYP Conference at MOHAI
April 14: Coll Thrush to speak
May 12: Monthly Meeting

February Meeting

It is very fitting that we should ask Reed Jarvis, winner of this year's Annual Historian Award, to speak to us on February 10th on "The Role of the Public Historian."

As Bill Woodward pointed out in his banquet introduction, Reed has been a very successful developer of historic sites in the Federal system through quiet perseverance. Outside that system he might have become well-known for years of achievements of which the most recent is Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve on Whidbey Island.

Reed passes on the published words of Victoria Harden, "Federal historians, whether civil servants or contractors, do not speak or write from a personal viewpoint when acting in their official capacities on matters that have political consequences for their agencies. Their work... is subject to review and approval by agency administrators. In some cases, this situation has led to highly public controversies. Federal historians are expected to be generalists They must be diplomats when contacted by people who have a burning conviction about some issue, no matter how bizarre."

He discreetly refers to "a special obligation in presenting unbiased and well-balanced interpretation of history to which the public historian must adhere. I could use some good examples from my Park Service experience." Now retired from government service, he can bring some examples and the discussion may be more open. For example, was it true three years back that true that guides at the Grand Canyon were forbidden to mention that it was older than Adam?

Below: Ferry House at Ebey's Landing photographed in ghostly infra-red light for use in the movie "Snow Falling on Cedars."



Reed talk will be the second Tuesday in February at our usual location, the University Branch of the Seattle Public Library at the corner of NE 50th Street and Roosevelt Way at the usual time, 5:30pm.

Banquet Remembrances

We won't remember the name Jack Dootson, but those who attended the 2009 Banquet January 13th will remember Senator Slade Gorton's story about how he tried to help Dootson. Dootson, too principled to accept money for his campaign and likely to lose, still refused all funds and all suggestions. Snohomish's radical leftist legislator and the man Gorton most admired in the Washington legislature even though at the far opposite end of the political spectrum, went down in defeat. This and Gorton's other stories of politicians here and in the other Washington entertained and educated us in how representative government works for better or worse. Even by the standards of past Annual Banquets, the gathering was an unusually enjoyable event.

The evening began with an hour of complimentary drinks (thanks to a gift from Cork Hardinge) before moving on to dinner and a very brief business meeting by President Paul Spitzer. Bill Woodward gave Reed Jarvis an introduction that explained why the Guild proudly made him the recipient of this year's Annual Historian's Award. Senator Gorton, after being welcomed to the podium by former Guild President Doris Pieroth, closed out the evening.

[Annual March Conference is almost here](#)

The first weekend in March Seattle kicks off its centennial celebration of the Alaska Yukon Pacific exposition with the Historians Guild's March Conference and Reception. Members should have already received both the "Hello Bill, Meet You At The Pay Streak" color postcard in the mail and a paper registration form. Please note the return address on the form is not the Guild's post office box. A significant number of registrations have already been received.

The Conference follows the familiar pattern of earlier conferences, beginning with an evening reception Friday, March 6th. Those coming to the reception will enjoy a specially arranged tour of MOHAI's new gallery of exposition photographs along with complimentary wine and cheese. Saturday will be a full program of speakers beginning in the morning and running through the afternoon with multiple sessions and midday lunch program.

The Historians Guild thanks Program Chair Trish Hackett Nicola, Coordinator Kimberly Jacobson and Registrar Cathy Lykes for all the work done and to be done. We also appreciate the contributions of the Program Committee: JoAnne King, Lorraine McConaghy (MOHAI), Kathleen Crosman (NARA) and Susan Karren (NARA).

The Conference presentations were selected from responses to the call for papers. Readers who look over the program at our website at <http://www.pnwhistorians.org/conferences/Seattle2009.asp> will recognize that the talks mostly address interesting new subject matter. If clicking on the link is not sufficient, do a Control+Click. For registration questions, please call Cathy at 206-937-9604.

Members in Print

The Newsletter draws your attention to articles by Charles LeWarne and John Daughters in the most recent issue of WSHS' Columbia magazine.

Guild members Jackie Williams and Diana James are on Historic Seattle's program twice in March to speak and lead a tour of the city's apartment houses. Another well-known member, Richard Engeman, will do tours of downtown Portland historic buildings for the same organization in May. In fact, members might look at the website of Historic Seattle to learn about their ambitious 2009 program.

Doug Honig writes, "KUOW Puget Sound Public Radio is producing a series on the evolution of radio in Seattle. We're searching for people who recall listening during the earliest days of radio. We'll be doing informational interviews and gathering oral histories about the early station....[and] hope to find early recordings made by local collectors....Share your ideas, leads and audio. Please contact Amanda Wilde at KUOW: (206) 616-3680 or awilde@kuow.org."

Members New and Old

We wish to thank all our long-time members who have continued to support the Guild's mission to create a community of participants to write, preserve and discuss the Northwest's history. We also thank the unusually large number of new members who just joined.

This is the time of the year to send in dues. It makes it easy to know which year to assign the membership. As during the last decade, membership is still twenty dollars and all of it goes to supporting public events: lectures, mailings, banquets, conferences, mailings and the occasional ramble.

Please mail your "newal" or renewal to PNW Historians Guild, PO Box 85457, Seattle WA 98145; a membership form is on our website, <http://pnwhistorians.org/join/application.asp>

Guild Board, 2008-09

The Board is composed of four regular members and a Treasurer.

Board members and their email addresses are:

Paul Spitzer (President) bornbutonce@gmail.com

Junius Rochester boobus@speakeasy.net

Dan Peterson bdksp@comcast.net

Bridget Murphy bmu427@comcast.net

Judith Bentley (Treasurer)

Vania Mihova is our webmaster. Bridget Murphy continues as our membership coordinator.

Please use the above email addresses. DO NOT use the "Reply Button" to respond to this email Newsletter. To reach the Guild by U.S. mail, write to:

PNW Historians Guild , P.O. Box 85457 , Seattle, WA 98145