



Spring 2022 Prairie Gazette

Official Publication, Lakewood Historical Society



Coming this summer:

Festive fun on your Museum's door step!

Well, practically. Just walk out our front door and you're there: **Colonial Plaza**, where the City of Lakewood will host four thrilling **Saturday Street Festivals** in 2022.



A great time is guaranteed at these family-friendly events—and be sure to visit us, too. The **Lakewood History Museum** (6114 Motor Ave SW) will have special hours on festival days, open from 4 pm to 8 pm. And like the festivals themselves, admission is free.

DANCING IN THE STREETS

Saturday, May 21, 2022

4:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Footloose festivities set to some fantastic music.



CARNIVAL OF CULTURES

Saturday, June 18, 2022

4:00 to 8:30 p.m.

A celebration of Lakewood's global heritage.



JAZZ NIGHT & CAR SHOW

Saturday, August 13, 2022

4:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Sweet rides and smooth jazz.

FIESTA DE LA FAMILIA

Saturday, Sept. 17, 2022

4:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Celebrate Latin American cultures with family-friendly games, activities.

See what else is coming to Colonial Plaza on page 4...



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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, 6114 Motor Avenue 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



Sue Scott

President's Message

Welcome to our wild and wonderful spring weather: rain, hail, snow and wind! And, of course, opening day of baseball. Our Mariners are doing well in Minnesota—hope springs eternal!

We are looking forward to a couple of programs here at the History Museum. First is the talk on the Titanic by **Peter Cook** scheduled for **May 10th**. Then be sure to mark **June 21st** on your calendar for our upcoming program titled "America's Buffalo Soldiers, Fact vs Fiction".

Some long time members recently passed away. **Donna** and **Bill Cable** passed away with a few weeks of each other. Donna, a 1947 Clover Park grad, was a founding member of the Lakewood Historical Society. Then **Bob Arndt**, who was involved in Lakewood cityhood, passed away. **Jutta Bandy**, another long-time member, passed away. Our condolences to their family members.

Busy giving speaking engagements in the area on your history museum. I was pleased to present a talk to the **Widows & Widowers** group and then have them come to the museum on a tour. **Phil Raschke** gave presentations to the **Federal Way** and **Steilacoom Kiwanis** groups. If you can't come to the museum, we will come to you!

Getting that time of the year for membership renewals—look for your renewal form in the mail soon!



GO MARINERS!



WE NEED YOU! TO BE A MUSEUM DOCENT

Do you like history, people, and bringing them together? Lately, your museum has had to limit the hours and days it's open due to a severe and ongoing shortage of docents. No experience necessary, we'll show you the ropes. Call **Sue Scott, 253-588-6354**



A reminder: if you are an Amazon shopper, set up *amazonsmile* making us your charity of choice—making sure you designate **Lakewood Historical Society Washington** (there are a few other Lakewood Historical Societies!) We receive a small percentage of your purchase price at NO extra charge to you.

“RMS Titanic” Coming to Lakewood History Museum, May 10th

By Phil Raschke

110 years ago the majestic passenger ship “Titanic” sank on its maiden voyage from Southampton, England to New York City after striking an iceberg. Over 1500 people died in the tragedy including some of the richest in the world when the ship eventually slid 12,000 feet beneath the icy ocean. Today, the “Titanic” still captures the imagination of the public.



sensation will also include memorabilia and artifacts raised from the sunken Titanic.

This is a presentation you definitely won't want to miss! Free to the public, but seating is limited and on a first-come basis.

Meet the presenter starts at 6:00 pm. “Titanic” presentation begins at 6:30 pm. Light refreshments will be available.

The newly renovated Lakewood History Museum is located at 6114 Motor Avenue SW, next to the iconic 1937 Lakewood Theater and across from the Best Western motel. Parking is free, but limited.

For more information, call **253-682-3480**. Covid masks available, but not required.

Also, mark June 21 on your calendar for our next program “America’s Buffalo Soldiers, 1866 to 1945, Fact and Fiction”

Now you can learn the true story of this epic disaster from **Peter Cook**, a member of the Titanic Historical Society and the British Titanic Society. Peter’s presentation is titled “The Titanic, the Iceberg and the Rest of the Story”. Peter’s pre-



Peter Cook at Titanic Exhibit.



Lakewood History Museum and Ivan Visit Federal Way and Steilacoom

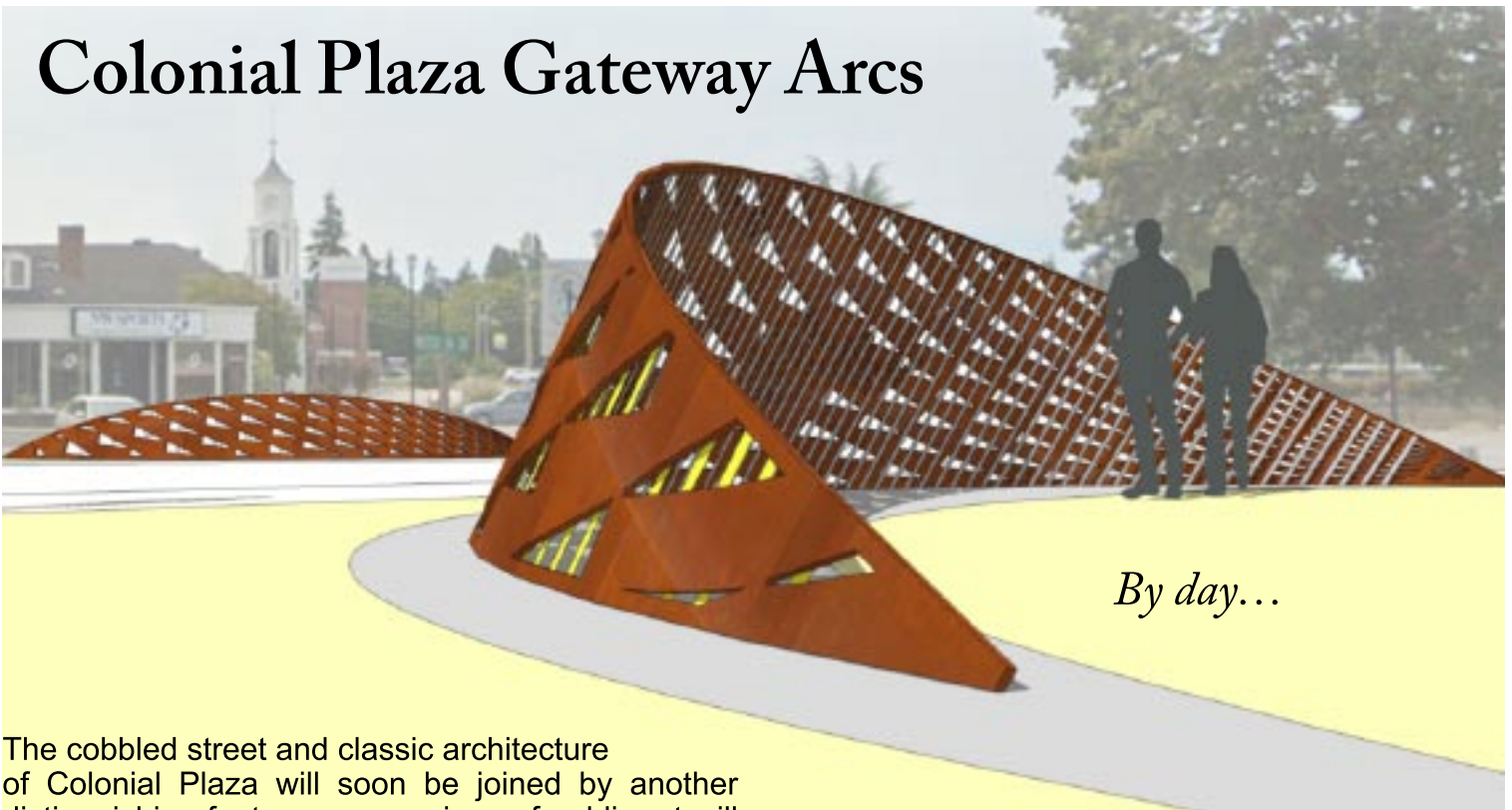
The Lakewood History Museum was delighted to receive a speaking invitation by the **Federal Way Kiwanis**. At their 6 April meeting the museum presented a PowerPoint presentation on the recent relocation and upgrades to the museum plus details on the museum’s new Ivan exhibit. 31 members attended the presentation made by Board member **Phil Raschke**.

A similar presentation was made on 7 April to the **Steilacoom Kiwanis** which had 35 members in attendance plus seven on Zoom. At the Steilacoom meeting Raschke was joined by Board President **Sue Scott** and Board members **Kris Kauffman** and **Earl Borgert**. Special guest at the meeting was **Ron Irwin**, former co-owner of Ivan and the Lakewood B & I store.



Photo features Federal Way Kiwanis member **Don Hagan** holding a copy of the *Prairie Gazette* and presenting Raschke with a special “Iron Wood” pen. This unique wood comes from slow growing trees that produce very dense, very hard wood. Because of its popularity, the wood is becoming scarce.

Colonial Plaza Gateway Arcs



The cobbled street and classic architecture of Colonial Plaza will soon be joined by another distinguishing feature: a new piece of public art will be installed. Metallic “**Gateway Arcs**” will welcome from afar and amaze from up close with a collection of community voices.

Two sweeping steel arcs designed by artist **John Fleming** will be positioned along the Gravelly Lake Drive entrance to Motor Avenue, beckoning visitors to one of Lakewood’s community gathering places.

Made from inch-thick curved steel plates, the arcs will form a gateway: the larger will stretch 50 feet wide and the smaller 34 feet. Both will rise about 4 feet from the ground.

One hundred and twelve aluminum “story strips” will be installed within the arc, each etched with quotes and memories gathered from the community. The City will gather phrases, quotes, and stories about life in Lakewood to include in the piece.

From the park side, visitors can enjoy these stories and memories from up close. From the street, the aluminum strips will reflect a luminous glow through triangular cutouts.

Article adapted from City of Lakewood web site.





July 23, 2022 • Dawn to Dusk at
Fort Steilacoom Park



Come see us under the LHS tent when Lakewood's favorite summer festival returns at last! As always, there'll be vendors and food trucks galore, a car show, competitive events and tons of other fun, family-friendly activities.



LAKWOOD FARMERS MARKET

**Summer Tuesdays at
Fort Steilacoom Park, 2 to 7 pm**

8714 87th Ave SW, Lakewood, WA 98498

Begins June 7, ends August 30



STAY FOR A PICNIC • 20+ FOOD VENDORS
**FREE PARKING • FREE TOTES • FAIR FOOD
BALLOON MAKING • DOG & KID FRIENDLY •
KIDS GET \$2 "HEALTHY BUCKS" FOR FREE
FRUITS OR VEGGIES!**



Prairie Gazette gets a thumbs-up!

Story and Photo by Phil Raschke

Looking for winter fun, folks from far-away places took a trip to sunny Mazatlan, Mexico. Their visit was made even better when they were given a copy of our very own *Prairie Gazette* newsletter to read over lunch or at the pool. Left to right: Ray Miller from Alberta, Canada, Gary and Linda Sigler from Owatonna, MN, Jeanie Kotrba from Spanaway, WA, Leal, an El Cid staff member and Doug Kotrba from Spanaway.

The group became friends during previous winter visits to the beautiful El Cid Marina resort and were delighted to pose with the *Prairie Gazette*. After reading, they all agreed the *Prairie Gazette* was a "Thumbs Up" publication. Hope you think so too!

Recent Donors:

Mary and Wes Bowlby

Karen Colleran

Karen Colleran:

In memory of Beth Julian

Shirley Seeley

Diane Sigel and Shirley Kapala:

In memory of Donna and Bill Cable

Sheri Van Dusen

New Members:

Patricia S. Foran

Gloria Scarpelli-Norman

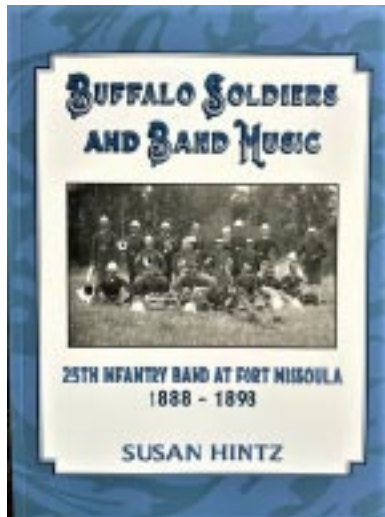
New Book, “Buffalo Soldiers and Band Music”

The **Tacoma Buffalo Soldiers Museum** and the **Lakewood History Museum** are delighted to announce the release of the new book “Buffalo Soldiers and Band Music” written by **Susan Hintz** of Lolo, Montana.

The book is a detailed history of the 25th Infantry Band at Fort Missoula, Montana from 1888 to 1898. During this period the 25th Infantry was one of four all-black regiments serving mainly on the rapidly developing western frontier. Black soldiers were relatively new to the west and were met with the same discrimination as their counterparts in the more populated north and south.

Quality entertainment, however, was also in short supply in the small towns and trail camps dotting the west. But each Buffalo Soldier regiment had its own band and these bands reached out to the local communities for parades, con-certs and other performances. Besides peacekeeping, this out-reach created a wealth of good will and respect. But who were these band members and what were their lives actually like during their service?

Author Susan Hintz has researched the lives of the members of the 25th Regimental Band and her book is filled with biographies, genealogical research and daily reports that give you a glimpse of these men, before, during and after their time in the 25th Infantry Band.



test of June, 1897. The test was to determine if combat-loaded soldiers could be moved by newly developed Spaulding bicycles faster than by horse.

Bridges plus 19 other selected soldiers joined **Lieutenant James A. Moss** on a 40 day, 1,900 mile ride from Fort Missoula, Montana to St. Louis, Missouri.

The test proved that bikes required less care and were twice as fast as horse cavalry. This coming June will mark the 125th Anniversary of this

historic ride. However, the advent of the automobile soon overtook the Army's interest in the bicycle.

Hintz's fascinating book is now available for sale at both the Tacoma Buffalo Soldiers Museum, 1940 S Wilkeson St. (253-272-4257) open Wednesday and Saturday from 11 am to 3 pm and the Lakewood History Museum located at 6114 Motor Ave SW (253-682-3480) open Friday and Saturday from noon to 4 pm.

Price for the book is \$20 with proceeds being donated to the museum. Both museums have 24/7 answering machines. Each copy is personally autographed by the author.

You may also purchase a copy direct from Susan Hintz at: sooze471@hotmail.com. Author price is \$20 plus \$4 shipping and handling.



For example, Hintz notes that while at Fort Missoula, band member **Travis Bridges** participated in the famous “Army Bicycle Corps”

Also, mark June 21 on your calendar for our next program, “America’s Buffalo Soldiers, 1866 to 1945, Fact and Fiction”. Details available soon at www.lakewoodhistorical.org

Flett Farm circa 1920



The Bradley Blockhouse & Flett House

Historical Markers of Lakewood: 14th in a Series



Marker at the northwest corner of Bridgeport Way and Custer Road.

Emigrating from the Orkney Islands to present day Lakewood in the 1840's, the **Flett family** settled by a creek—one that bears their name to this day.

Though successful farmers, the Fletts didn't discover their true calling until their ever-growing herd of dairy cows started producing more milk than the family could consume. Sharing the surplus with friends and neighbors resulted in so much demand that **Annie Flett's** husband, **George Chapman** figured he'd better apply for a dairy license—which he received in June, 1903.

For the next 91 years, **Flett Dairy** supplied milk, buttermilk, cottage cheese and ice cream to stores throughout western Washington. Growth in both population and development finally made so vast a bucolic enterprise untenable and the dairy closed its doors in 1994.



From barn to blockhouse to barn again.



The Flett House in the early 1900's.

ON THIS SITE STOOD BRADLEY BLOCKHOUSE & FLETT HOUSE

The Bradley Blockhouse stood at this site in the 1840's. It began as a log barn, but during the Indian Wars of 1855 & 1856, it was used as a blockhouse for the protection of the settlers in the area. In 1889, the Flett Family house built over the site of the old barn. In the 1950's, the house was moved about 300 feet north to another lot in order to make room for a gas station.

Marker Donated By:
The Lakewood Rotary & LHS
2002



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Historical
Society**
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Check www.lakewoodhistorical.org for notices about upcoming programs.