

BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1969

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 1969 SESSION
OF THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

As required by law, the Washington State Historical Society is happy to submit its biennial report to the State Legislature. In this report will be found a record of progress during the past two years; it also emphasizes the importance of giving increased attention to the preservation of the state's historical heritage.

The management of the affairs of the Society is under the direction of officers and a Board of Curators selected from all parts of Washington.

Officers and Curators are as follows:

Officers:

President: Reno Odlin
Vice Pres.: H. J. Deutsch
Vice Pres.: Roe E. Shaub
Treasurer: Robert B. Gordon
Asst. Treas.: Dutton Hayward
Director: Bruce Le Roy

Ex-Officio:

Governor Daniel J. Evans
State Treasurer, Robert S. O'Brien
Secretary of State, A. L. Kramer

Board of Curators:

Mr. Edward W. Allen, Seattle
Mrs. Eva Anderson, Wenatchee
Dr. Robert E. Burke, Seattle
Mr. Howard Burnham, Vancouver
Dr. Vernon Carstensen, Seattle
Rev. W. L. Davis, Spokane
Mr. L. E. Dawley, Tumwater
Mrs. Della Gould Emmons, Tacoma
Mr. Joshua Green, Sr., Seattle
Mr. Minos Hastings, Ferndale
Mr. Matthew W. Hill, Olympia
Mr. Robert Hitchman, Seattle
Mr. Nard Jones, Bellevue
Mr. George S. Long, Jr., Tacoma
Mr. John M. McClelland, Jr., Longview
Dr. Robert Mortvedt, Parkland
Mr. E. K. Murray, Tacoma
Dr. Keith A. Murray, Bellingham
Mr. Click Relander, Yakima
Mrs. Byron D. Scott, Tacoma
Mr. Cameron Sherwood, Walla Walla
Dr. R. Franklin Thompson, Tacoma
Mrs. Pearl A. Wanamaker, Seattle
Mrs. J. P. Weyerhaeuser, Jr., Tacoma
Dr. Robert L. Whitner, Walla Walla

The Board of Curators of the Washington State Historical Society is composed of members representing all parts of the state. Each Curator has taken an active part in the preservation and dissemination of Washington history.

The Washington State Historical Society was organized in 1891, incorporated a few years later, and in 1903 was created a trustee of the State for certain purposes, by the adoption of S. B. 125, Chapter 177.

STATE LAW CREATING THE SOCIETY A TRUSTEE FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES.

An Act relating to the Washington State Historical Society; creating it a Trustee of the State for certain purposes.

Be it Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

SECTION 1. That the Washington State Historical Society, a corporation existing under the laws of the State of Washington, be and the same is hereby created Trustee of the State for the intent and purposes hereinafter mentioned, viz:

1. That it shall be the duty of the said Society to collect books, maps, charts, papers and materials illustrative of the history of this State, and of its progress and development.

2. To procure from pioneers authentic narrative of their experiences and of incidents relating to the early settlement of this State.

3. To gather data and information concerning the origin, history, language and customs of our Indian tribes.

4. To procure and purchase books, papers and pamphlets for the several departments of its collections, climatic, health and mortuary statistics, and such other books, maps, charts, papers and materials as will facilitate the investigation of the historical, scientific and literary subjects.

5. To bind, shelf, store and safely keep the unbound books, documents, manuscripts, pamphlets and newspaper files now or hereafter to come into its possession.

6. To catalogue the collections of said Society for the convenient reference of persons having occasion to consult same.

7. To prepare biennially for publication a report of its collections and such other matters relating to the work of the Society as may be useful to the State and the people thereof.

8. To keep its rooms open at all reasonable hours of business days for the reception of citizens and visitors without charge.

SECTION 2. That the books, maps, charts, relics, memorials, collections and all other property of the Society now owned or hereafter acquired, shall be held by the said Society perpetually in trust for the use of and benefit of the people of the State of Washington.

SECTION 3. That the Governor, Secretary of State and State Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of the Board of Curators of the said Washington State Historical Society, authorized and empowered to vote upon all questions coming before the said Board for its action.

The Washington State Historical Society was organized in 1891. It was chartered by the State as a trustee for the State and is now one of the oldest state historical societies in the West. The Society headquarters are located in Tacoma. A five story historical museum serves to present the story of Washington history to the citizens of the state. This building was erected in 1911 and was financed almost entirely by local citizens of Tacoma. A drive to raise matching funds for a State appropriation (S.B. 41) has been successfully completed for a new wing adjoining the museum, which will be constructed during 1969.

The Washington State Historical Museum is a magnet which attracts thousands of school children, teachers and special educational groups every year. Museum study tours serve as a valuable supplement to the teaching of Washington and American history in the public schools.

The Society has assisted in the organization and development of local and county historical societies in 38 communities in Washington state. County societies most recently organized are in Pasco (Franklin County) and in Davenport (Lincoln County). Several county historical societies have been nationally recognized for outstanding achievement. The Washington State Historical Society holds annual conferences and workshops to assist the local societies. The Society is always available for advice and assistance to the local and county societies.

Over the years the Washington State Historical Society has sponsored many important historical observances for the entire state. Among these were the Washington Territorial Centennial, the Lewis & Clark Centennial, the Civil War Centennial, the Lincoln Centennial, and the Boundary Survey Centennial. These programs were initiated at the request of the Washington State Legislature.

The historical library of the Society contains important collections of source material on the history and development of Washington state and the Pacific Northwest. During the past decade, the historical manuscripts collection has grown to nearly one million items; the archives boast approximately one-half million historical photographs; thousands of rare historical reference books and maps are also included.

The growth of these collections, as well as a tremendous number of new collections of historical artifacts, has created the necessity for

expanding the museum's physical structure. The Society plans to continue to raise additional funds from private sources to furnish the new wing properly, as well as to provide space for new exhibits and storage.

The publications program of the Society has been effective in disseminating the history of Washington state to all the other states. Several books published have received national recognition, including "The History of Fort Vancouver" and "H. M. Chittenden: A Western Epic". Recently published by the Society were "The Pig War" by Dr. Keith Murray, Western Washington College; and "Green Timber" by Thomas Ripley, a popular history of life on Puget Sound in the 1890's, particularly in the timber industry.

Currently in preparation is a joint project with the Smithsonian Institution, "Gustavus Sohon: Artist of the Indian Treaties", by Dr. John Ewers, Chief Ethnologist of the Smithsonian. The book draws upon the original Sohon collections in the Smithsonian and the Washington State Historical Society. James G. Swan's "Letters From Washington Territory" is being edited by Dr. W. L. Katz, Librarian of the State of New York, who is an authority on Washington territorial history. Other books and pamphlets of great historical significance are being planned at present.

IMPORTANT The Society has received an interesting collection of
RECENT
ACQUISITIONS letters written by early leaders of the Women's Suffrage
Movement in the United States. Susan B. Anthony, Amelia Bloomer and
other pioneers for women's voting rights are represented. The collection
was added to other collections of fascinating political history. Most
of the presidents of the United States are represented by original letters
and documents. Even the papers of such splinter organizations as "The
Greenback Party" are included. During the past national political campaign,

correspondence was initiated with all of the leading candidates for the presidency. Their replies, laying out their programs for the presidency if elected, have been on display since last fall. A signed copy of Governor Evans' keynote address at the Republican National Convention was also presented to the Society.

A permanent display of the early missionary history of the Pacific Northwest was augmented by the addition of a "Protestant Ladder" and "Catholic Ladder". These colorful documents were employed by the early missionaries in teaching the Indians the tenets of Christianity. Since the last report to the Legislature, a large number of important letters from such missionaries as Marcus Whitman, Jason Lee, Father Blanchet and many others, have been added to Society archives. A collection now at Washington State University was discovered and brought back to our state by one of our Board Members, the Reverend William L. Davis, S. J., and contains thousands of letters to and from Pierre-Jean De Smet. The amazing gathering in of missionary history at the Washington State Historical Society will provide source materials for generations of Washington students to come.

A collection of 80 paintings portraying the history of labor and the depression area in the Pacific Northwest was obtained in the acquisition of the Ronald Ginther Collection. These paintings, unique in the United States, will be available for exhibit and future reproduction in forthcoming books and textbooks on the labor and social history of the Pacific Northwest.

From Reno Odlin, president of the Board of Curators of the Washington State Historical Society, the museum received a very valuable collection of original early American silver. Some of the greatest names in Colonial

America are represented in pieces by such people as Paul Revere and Zachariah Brigden, Jacob Hurd, Benjamin Burt II, John Coney, and the celebrated female silversmith, Ann Tanqueray. The "Odlin Early American Silver Collection" will go on display when the new museum wing is opened to the public.

The "James A. Wehn Collection of Historic Sculpture", whose creator was recently recognized by a national award from the American Association for State And Local History, has also been accessioned. The Wehn sculpture includes 224 pieces which portray many of the leading figures in north-western history. This collection, too, will be displayed when the new wing is ready.

The maritime history of the Pacific Northwest is highlighted in a large new display in the museum. Artifacts from the time of Captain James Cook (1778) to the early 1900's present a dramatic history of exploration and the maritime trades.

The permanent historic art collections of the Society have been increased by more than 200 paintings in the past two years (excluding the Ginther pictures). Original paintings for several special exhibits - "Historic Ports of Puget Sound", "Early Washington Communities" and "Forts and Trading Posts of the Pacific Northwest" - are now part of the Society's permanent collections. From the beautiful early art in Society collections, it was possible to place several choice examples in the Governor's Mansion.

The foregoing is representative of some of the major additions to the Washington State Historical Society collections but, for lack of space, tells only a partial story.

SPECIAL
PROGRAMS

Our Society has continued to make its contribution to the planning and coordination of state-wide programs through representation on several Governor's Councils - the Governor's Advisory Council on Historic Sites, the Governor's Council on the Lewis & Clark Trail, and the Governor's Committee on Statuary Hall. This latter council (Statuary Hall) was established by the Board of Curators of the Washington State Historical Society at the request of Governor Evans. The council has solicited nominations from citizens of the state to select a figure of an important historic Washington individual to stand next to Dr. Marcus Whitman in the National Capitol.

A Pacific Northwest History Lecture Series has been revived. Monthly programs open without charge to the general public feature authorities on various phases of Pacific Northwest history. Historians, anthropologists and authors of national renown are among the speakers scheduled for the coming year.

PACIFIC
NORTHWEST
HISTORY
CONFERENCE

The Washington State Historical Society has for 21 years served as permanent sponsor for the Pacific Northwest History Conference. Amateur and professional historians, teachers and students, meet once a year for three days of conferences and workshops in the history of the Pacific Northwest. Delegates attend from the four northwestern states, the three western Canadian provinces, and Alaska. The 1968 Conference was held in Spokane, and the 1969 Conference is scheduled for April in Boise, Idaho. Several other regional organizations hold joint meetings with the Conference, including the American Studies Association, the Pacific Northwest Labor History Council, The American Archivists and the Council on Regional Research.

FINANCIAL
SUPPORT

The State of Washington traditionally has provided minimal support for the job of historic preservation within the state. It is necessary to go to many private sources for donations to supplement the state appropriation in order to keep the Society's program progressive. Interestingly, many of the major contributions which have come in the drive for funds to build a new wing for the museum have come from all over the United States. Major contributions have been counted from Massachusetts, New York, Washington, D. C., Minnesota and California - to cite a few. The heartwarming fact is that the work of the Society is recognized for its importance far beyond the boundaries of the state. National groups and foundations have assured the Society of this interest and have made it tangible with financial support.

VOLUNTEER
SERVICES

Because our job is bigger than the present salaried staff can do alone, the Society receives much help from various individuals and groups on a voluntary basis. Exhibits have been initiated and financed by the Rock Hounds of America, the Early American Glass Clubs, and dedicated experts in fields such as military history, library science, and others. A work-training program has been launched with the cooperation of the University of Puget Sound. Students paid partially by the Society and partially by grant are working in various departments of the museum. In this way not only is the Society's program advanced, but the students receive valuable training in the educational aspects of museum work.

THANK
YOU

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to all members of the Washington State Legislature for the fine support that has been given since 1891 to the important work of the Washington State Historical Society. We extend a cordial invitation to all members of the

1969 Legislature to visit the museum in Tacoma. We think that you will be proud of the great contribution that is being made to all the citizens of the state of Washington.

Your support for the goals of the Washington State Historical Society - its mission "to gather, preserve and make available for public information and use the unique materials of Washington history" - is earnestly solicited once more. We hope that you will all be able to join us here in Tacoma on the great day when the beautiful new wing of the museum is dedicated.

Bruce Le Roy
Director
Washington State Historical Society

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