

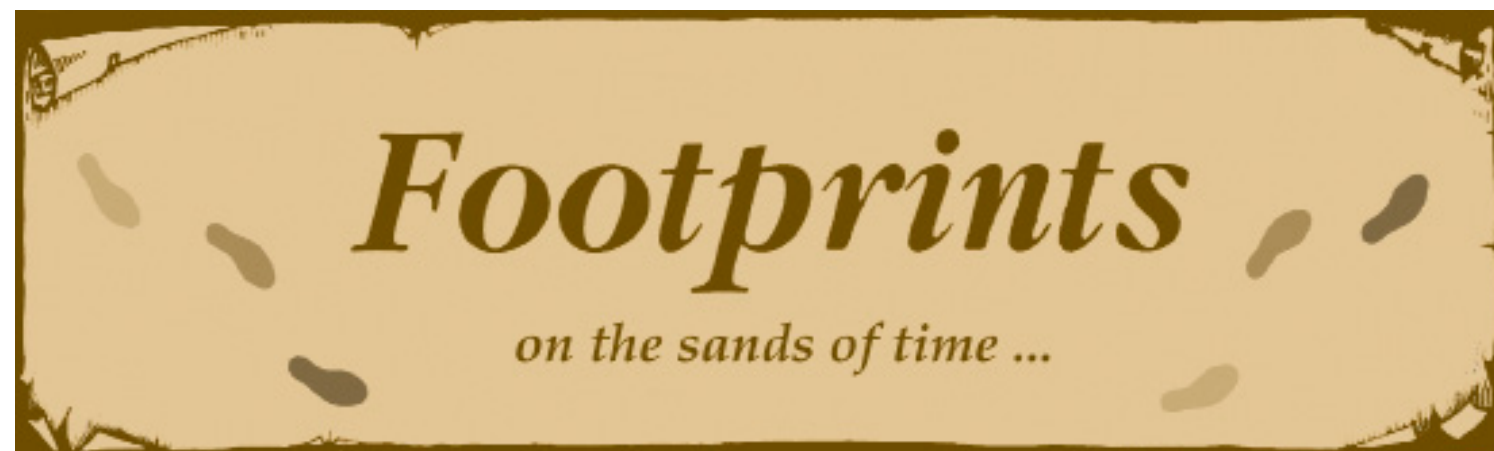


**SOUTHWEST
SEATTLE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

c/o Log House Museum
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Seattle, WA 98116

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ISSUE CV

SOUTHWEST SEATTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY • LOGHOUSEMUSEUM.ORG

SPRING 2019



**SOUTHWEST
SEATTLE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

Mission: "To promote local heritage through education, preservation and advocacy"

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The Alki Homestead two months out from completed renovations before opening, Image by Sarah Miller

The Alki Homestead gets a Facelift and Local Restauranteurs

by Sarah E. Miller, Operations Coordinator

When West Seattleites come into the Log House Museum, they have one thing on their mind: "What's happening with the Homestead?" For years this striking log building down the street from the Alki Statue of Liberty has been pretty quiet. Within the past few months however, there have been noticeable changes. Observers can see clear signs of indoor and outdoor construction, landscaping and a new wheelchair access ramp.

For the unfamiliar, the Log House Museum was originally the carriage house of the Homestead (formally known as the Fir Lodge

due to the Douglas Fir logs used) in 1904. Since then, the carriage house has been moved to pave the way for streets, while the Fir Lodge has gone through many transformations of its own.

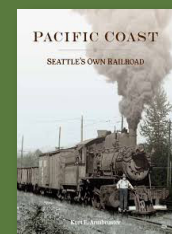
From an early 1900's summer retreat to an auto club, the Fir Lodge has always been a prominent building in the Alki neighborhood. When Doris Nelson purchased it in the 1960s, the Fir Lodge became the iconic restaurant known as the Alki Homestead. The Homestead was famous for their fried chicken dinners and was usually booked solid year around.

continued on page 4

EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS

MARCH

March 17th, 2-4PM, Southwest Stories present: Preservation 101: Tools and Tips for Preserving Historic Buildings.

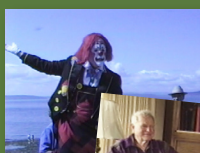
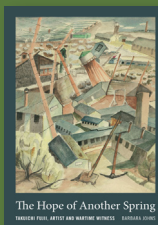


APRIL

April 11th 6-7:30PM, Words, Writers and West Seattle present: Kurt Armbruster's new book, "Pacific Coast, Seattle's Own Railroad"

MAY

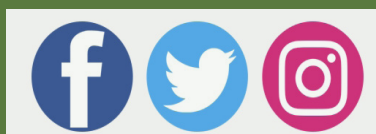
May 9th 6-7:30PM, Words, Writers and West Seattle present: Barbara Johns, PhD and her book, "The Hope of Another Spring"



May 12th, 5-6:30pm Moving History showcasing some film archives of the SWSHS digitized VHS tapes at Northwest Film Forum

JUNE

June 13th, 6-7:30PM, Words, Writers and West Seattle present: David M. Buerge and his book, "Chief Seattle and the Town That Took His Name"



Follow us @loghousemuseum for historical happenings, events and news updates!

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MUSEUM HOURS

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Sat: noon to 4 pm
Sun: noon to 4 pm

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Upholding our Mission at the 2019 Winter Board Retreat

By Sarah E. Miller, Operations Coordinator

The 2019 Board Retreat was filled with new ideas on how to nurture our educational and fundraising programs. Over the course of two Saturdays, our mission, "To promote local heritage through education, preservation and advocacy," was an anchor in helping to showcase the significance of Duwamish peninsula. Lissa Kramer, Board of Trustees member, introduced us to non-profit teaching tools which help show the crossover of cost versus our mission. Using this technique and with lively discussion, we evaluated each of our activities. As a result, we are looking forward to wonderful and revitalized programs for the coming year and beyond!

"The Southwest Seattle Historical Society is the Heart and Soul of our Peninsula"

By Kathy Blackwell, President of Board of Trustees

As the new President of the Board of Trustees, I am happy to have the opportunity to share with you my interest and fondness for this organization. I have frequently said that the Southwest Seattle Historical Society is the heart and soul of our peninsula, because we are telling the stories and promoting the value of our unique heritage in the midst of development. We hope that you will enjoy this issue of Footprints which describes some of the activities going on in the museum now and in the future as well as highlighting a very special building that we were instrumental in preserving - the Alki Homestead, soon to re-open as Il Nido.

Our efforts to promote and preserve this community is of utmost importance.



Last year our Champagne Gala theme was 'History is Happening Now!', and the year before, the theme was the 'Power of Community!' These themes are so relevant right now. It will take powerful support of our citizens to galvanize our community voice in appreciating, preserving and promoting that special Duwamish Peninsula / West Seattle / White Center/ South Park heritage. We encourage you to become a member of SWSHS, attend our events and be part of the SWSHS family. We also invite you to support our programs and community involvement

through consideration of a financial donation. We look forward to your involvement in this wonderful organization and community!

Washington State Poet Laureate Claudia Castro Luna Captivates at Words, Writers & West Seattle

By Dora-Faye Hendricks, Chair, WW&WS Organizer and Board Member of SWSHS

Telling her personal story of fleeing war-torn El Salvador for the United States, Claudia Castro Luna captivated the audience of "Words, Writers & West Seattle" on January 10th at the Southwest Branch of the Seattle Public Library.

Effervescent and soft spoken, Castro Luna is the first immigrant and woman of color to assume the role of Washington State Poet Laureate. When arriving in the US with her family at age 14, she spoke no English. As a result of Castro Luna's father, a scholar, she learned to appreciate the values of reading as he insisted on bringing along a cumbersome box of books—including works in mathematics, social science, and language arts. These books resulted in the first source of her education.

Her rediscovery of that box in her attic years later prompted her to write a short story for Humanities Washington's annual fundraiser, "Bedtime Stories". The story touched upon the importance of literature in forming identity, and also included part of a memoir she is currently writing entitled Like Water to Drink.

From 2015 to 2017, Castro Luna was appointed by the mayor as Seattle's first Civic Poet. In that position, Castro Luna won acclaim for her Seattle Poetic Grid, an online interactive map that showcases poems about different locations around the city.

At the event, she shows the audience the poetry grid as well as beautiful pictures which inspired some of her own poems. Some of which include, "Farmers' Market" in El Salvador, "Noble Call" of homemade tortillas, "My Fa-

ther's Garden" and a picture of her hometown, "Cementerio", where her father lives currently.

In her book, *This City*, Castro Luna spoke about the way memory anchors us to place, how it provides us with an individual connection

to the area we inhabit, and that we "carry poetry in our bones." Castro Luna further explained that structure of poetry sometimes conflicts with one's feelings that need to flow freely. Her readings demonstrated the passion that can be elicited from poetry.

Finally, Castro Luna explained that building awareness and appreciation of poetry, including

the state's legacy of poetry, is a part of the Poet Laureate work.

Living in both English and Spanish now, Claudia writes and teaches in West Seattle where she gardens and keeps chickens (which no longer lay eggs) with her husband and their three children.



'FIELD NOTES' OF INTEREST

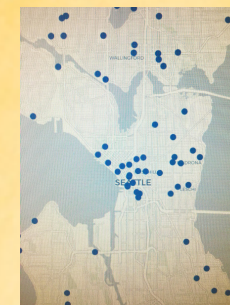


Image of the Poetry Grid from Castro Luna's project. Each dot represents a poet and poetry in that area. See more at

Seattlepoeticgrid.com

- During the course of her career, Castro Luna earned a Master of Fine Arts in Poetry and a Masters of Urban Planning, and taught music as a K-12 teacher.

- Castro Luna's non-fiction work can be read in several anthologies, among them, *This Is The Place: Women Writing About Home*.

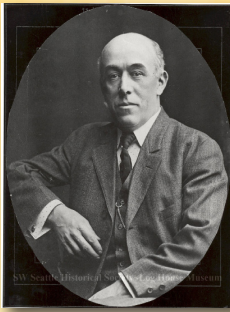
- Since 2009, she maintains a blog with reflections, writing and reviews and gives workshops in her work as Poet Laureate; she says she writes poetry constantly -- even in the hours before her presentation to WW&WS.

- Her books have been so well received she didn't have any to sell to interested attendees (but are available in the library and in most bookstores!).



The event was held at the Southwest Seattle Branch of the Seattle Public Library and is co-sponsored by the Southwest Seattle Historical Society, SPL, Humanities Washington, and the Washington State Arts Commission.

'FIELD NOTES' OF INTEREST



The original owner of the Fir Lodge, William Bernard, was known as the "Soap King of Seattle".



In the 1960s, the restaurant owner of the Homestead Doris Nelson, used to drive around town in a pink Cadillac!

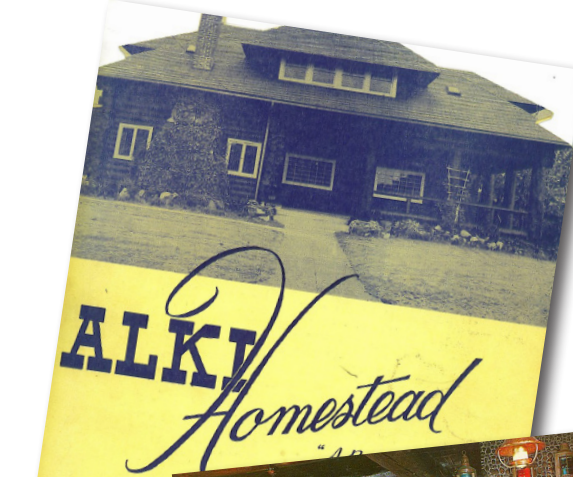


Previous to the Fir Lodge becoming a restaurant, it was an auto club.



Alki used to be a summer get away for Seattleites. Here's a horse drawn omnibus marked "Seattle Transfer Co." and is full of female passengers. Image from Brad Chrisman

All images are used with permission or are from the SWSHS Historical Archives



Sadly, in January of 2009, the Homestead had a fire that caused a lot of damage, only furthered by years of deterioration and an earthquake.

Since 2015, the Homestead has been finally getting a much-needed facelift. Current owner Dennis Schilling and his son Matt Schilling, the project manager, have been working on the structure for years. Due to preserving the historical accuracy, it's proven to be quite the undertaking. The Schilling team have gone to great lengths to restore the original structures found on site, work with historical and building codes, as well as bring in thoughtful materials to replace items that could not be restored.

Walking through the building, Matt discusses the finer details of restoring such unique landmark.

Natural Damage

"We're trying our best," he says, in regard to keeping historical details intact. Considering the unusual building, Schilling notes how difficult it's been to find appropriate materials. He points to the logs at the front of the house, "Most of those logs had to be replaced due to years of damage. We used a beam system, lifting up the corners of the walls without a crane." The new logs are Douglas Fir from Oregon.



We move to the fireplace which is the large focal point of the front room. The original fireplace was covered in river rocks from the local area, but was heavily destroyed by an earthquake a few years later. The Schillings had to completely rebuild of the fireplace with a careful attempt to perfectly recreate the original. They used the same small river rock design aesthetic that is fairly specific to the west coast area. Patrons can enjoy its historically-striking features as one of the main centerpieces of the building.



Across the way is another fireplace, the smaller of the two, and made with brick.

"This is all original," Schilling points to the structure, "We had to use graffiti remover to remove all of the cinder and ash that was on top of the bricks."

'FIELD NOTES' OF INTEREST



The SWSHS helped raise funds for the Alki Homestead Neon sign to get renovated back in 2016.

The Schillings used seismic metal to reinforce the building to be earthquake safe.



Matt Schilling used YouTube as a resource to rebuild some of the log house, "You can find anything on there."



Nearly all the windows are original to the Homestead, including the upstairs loft apartments.



The Schillings actually made the Homestead square footage smaller, "It's virtually unheard of in development."



Above: the view from a skylight inside one of the upstairs apartments, left: modern fixtures added to the Homestead

Glancing up, you can see the renovated neon Alki Homestead sign directly outside the window.

Changes, Inside and Out

Outside in the back, Schilling leads us up a wooden staircase overlooking the restaurant's outdoor courtyard. The upstairs space is fully renovated and utilized as three private apartment units.

"A lot of materials we've used aren't conventional. We got many of them from Second Use," Schilling explains. Second Use is a Seattle company that utilizes salvaged materials and repurposes them for other houses and buildings. The courtyard boasts a seating area perfect for summer and a circular concrete planter, fit for landscaping.

Walking inside one of the empty apartments, one can't help but notice the windows which light up the main room. All the windows are original, and the apartment has stairs connected to a loft space for a bedroom. The room is light, partially due to the skylights on the ceiling.

New Tenants

After the tour, we discuss the future of the Homestead. "It's been a long time in the making," Schilling says, outside on the upper deck overlooking the water. "But we're almost done."

The Schillings plan on handing over the keys in February to their restaurant tenants, West Seattleites Mike and Victoria Easton. For the unfamiliar, the Eastons own Il Corvo, a lunch-only Italian restaurant in downtown Seattle. Il Corvo means "crow" in Italian, and the new restaurant will be named Il Nido, which fittingly means "nest".

From the West Seattle Blog, "It's going to be sort of our permanent, home-base restaurant," says Easton. "The nest just seemed to make perfect sense."

Though Il Nido won't be serving the iconic fried chicken dinner, they will be serving their famous handmade pasta. Unlike their downtown lunch location however, Il Nido will be dinner-only. They will be featuring seasonally fresh produce, a rotating menu, and a lively modern atmosphere to balance out the rustic feel of the log cabin. If all goes to plan, Il Nido is slated to be open in April of this year.

The future is deliciously bright for this iconic Alki building.

Page 4: Image of the cover of the Homestead menu, postcard from the Homestead, and image of the newly renovated focal point fireplace, and original fireplace. Page 5: Image of front room with modern light fixtures, Homestead neon sign being seen through upstairs apartment skylight. Special thanks to Matt Schilling for letting us interview him, take pictures and go on a tour through the Homestead!

'FIELD NOTES' OF INTEREST



Want to see these tapes in action?

The Northwest Film Forum has quarterly screenings available to the public. The next one is **May 12th**.

(Upper left) Jen Zook and video tapes that have been digitized, (upper right) video still of the West Seattle Admiral Theater re-opening, (lower right) Interview with Denny Brewster. 1996. (inside tape) Ken Tollefson, 2000



Oral History Project with Bob and Ada Hallberg, circa 1999



J.P. Patches, Weather Watch Park Dedication, 1991



Site Visit to Eva's Stone House, November, 2002



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE MUSEUM?



VHS Digitization Project Gets Major Publicity with the Seattle Channel

By Sarah E. Miller, Operations Coordinator

Since 2016, Jen Zook, a Southwest Seattle Historical Society volunteer, has been digitizing our deteriorating VHS tapes in an effort to preserve videos and imagery of Seattle history. Working with MIPoPs (Moving Image Preservation of Puget Sound), Zook has helped digitize over 100 tapes ranging from ten minutes to three hours. These tapes are now duplicated as digital files for films, research purposes and archival preservation. Once the project is completed, they'll be a part of a large catalog available to researchers and community members alike.

On February 28th, The Seattle Channel aired a segment of Zook's efforts. Zook explains the beginning of this undertaking, "We sort of knew what we had: a few oral histories, a few meetings and things like that on tapes, but then when we found all the other ones, we got really excited."

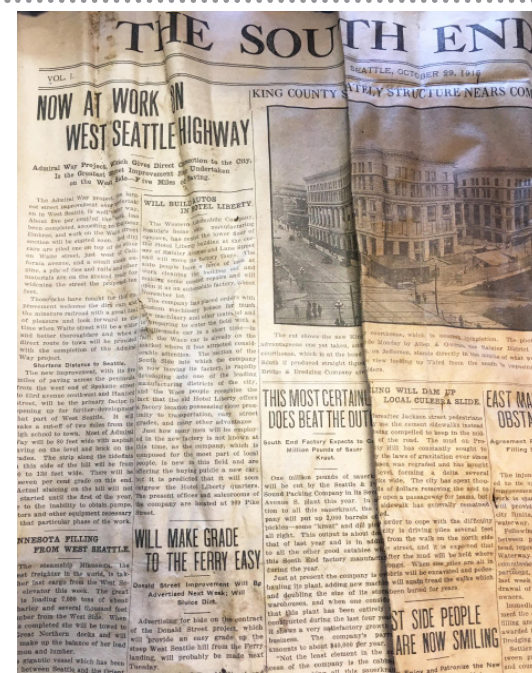
Due to the size of this digitization and preservation project, Zook surveyed all of them and took inventory. Then, with the help of MIPoPs, loaded them into their players, VCRs and other similar players, which were hooked up to computers. Digitization programs captured the images and converted the information to digital formats and are now saved on new hard drives.



Our former curator and current board member Lissa Kramer explains to the Seattle Channel what happens to VHS tapes when they start deteriorating, "The longer they sit without being processed they become demagnetized, and so you're literally having information, for lack of better word, dissolving off the tapes."

The tapes include extensive interviews with Southwest Seattle residents called "oral histories," where they describe multigenerational families growing up in the Duwamish Peninsula, discussion of the founding Seattle/Alki Denny party from direct descendants, and important periods of US history. With help from a 4Culture grant, this project has taken on a life of its own.

Zook furthers, "It's really exciting for them to be up and digitized. I'm excited for them to be searchable." Looking forward to the potential of these tapes, Zook is optimistic about having fascinating local history available to the public.



Collections Vault: THE SOUTH END NEWS

Rachel Regelein, Registrar

The SWSHS has a small but mighty collection of historical documents, objects, and photographs. Among collected items are Southwest Seattle newspapers, several of which exist only in our collection. One of these papers is The South End News, first published in 1915, and continued until an unknown date, possibly the 1920s. We have three issues in our collection and have been unable to locate the existence of copies in other museums and archives.

Curation Levels Project

Tasia Williams, Curator, and Cameo Kale

In December, our staff and collections volunteers wrapped up a grant-funded project to survey our collection and assign curation levels to our storage containers. The curation levels indicate the level of work needed to be accomplished so that our collections are safely and efficiently housed in archival storage. Full inventories are an ideal way to know what's in a collection and how to care for it; unfortunately, full inventories take a lot of time, money, and people power.

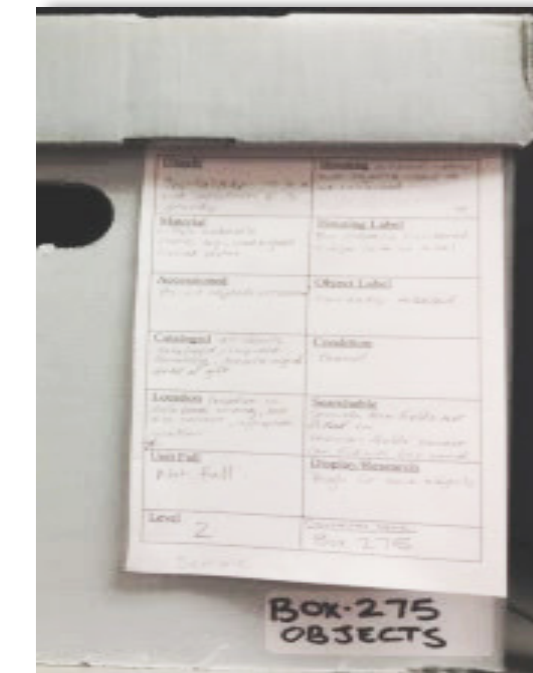
Starting with a survey like this is a great way for smaller institutions like the Southwest Seattle Historical Society to efficiently take care of the most pressing collections needs first, then systematically continue to care for the rest of the collections.

This is an example of some of the rare and rich research items in the care of SWSHS.

The South End News was edited by Robey E. Banta (1878-1934). Banta moved to Seattle from Kansas in 1907 and was employed by the Seattle Post Intelligencer before launching several small local papers, South End News, North End News, Duwamish Valley News and the Rainier Valley Citizen. He moved to West Seattle after starting the North End News in 1914 and opened an office at West Holly Street & 37th Street SW. He was an active community member involved with the city council and several local clubs. Banta was also a cemetery owner and manager of the Forest Lawn Cemetery starting in 1920. He was buried at the Forest Lawn Cemetery after his passing in 1934.

Banta listed the author for each article as "[The News Man]". The contents of the South End News are quite different from what we consider professional journalism today. They are primarily opinion pieces and uncited news reports.

These unusual articles, along with news reports of crime, events, and business advertisements make these papers an invaluable research tool for early Seattle.



'FIELD NOTES' OF INTEREST

The South End News headlines included such titles as:

"LOCAL FACTORY COULD GIRDLE THE EARTH WITH VERMICELLI: How they get the Holes in Macaroni and why the Housewife Mixes Cheese with Spaghetti"

"SOUTH END NOTED FOR PECULIAR WORLD RECORD: Cremates More Human Bodies Than Any Other Place This Side of Chaos - How Winnipeg Buries"

Should any of our readers come across a copy of the South End News, please keep the SWSHS in mind. We would love to collect more issues and make the contents available to both researchers and interested community members alike.

Thanks to 4Culture's grant support, we are able to develop a survey system that could potentially be used in collections at other similar institutions!

