

UPCOMING
EVENTS

- Thurston County
Through the Decades,
Saturday, May 9, 10-4
Huntamer Park, Lacey
- Lacey Historian of the
Year applications due
May 10
- June is Lacey History
Month!
- City Council Meeting
featuring Lacey History
Month Celebration,
June 11
- June, Historic Walking
Tour, Lacey Historic
Neighborhood

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:Meet Amber 2
GrangerWalking Tour 2
BrochureWhy Original 2
Photos?

Fun Facts 3

New Rack 3
Cards

Seeking... 3

Do You 4
Know Them?

Museum Musings

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

WINTER 2015

Uncertain Future for American Icon

By Erich Ebel

In December 1966, the City of Lacey was celebrating its incorporation. But just a few months earlier that year, Lacey residents got a chance to attend another celebration, as one of the Northwest's first modern indoor shopping malls opened for business at South Sound Center.

When it opened, anchor tenants included Nordstrom Place Two, Peoples, Sears, and Woolworth. However, as Lacey residents know, Sears is the only remaining original tenant of South Sound Center. One need only place a hand upon Sears' main entrance doors to realize the artistic styling of a bygone era. Seattle's Northgate Mall was the first of its kind in Washington as well as one of the first post-war, suburban mall-type shopping centers in the United States when it opened in 1950. In fact, it was the first regional shopping center in the United

States to be described as a mall and featured something no other shopping center had...public restrooms. Fifteen years later, Tacoma Mall opened its doors for business. In 1968, Governor Dan Evans cut the ribbon at the grand opening of Southcenter Mall in Tukwila. Olympia's Capital Mall opened nearly a decade later in 1977. Lacey's place in American consumerist history was secure, but the passing of each year brought the inevitable change. Peoples at South Sound Center closed in 1983 and reopened as Mervyns a year later (and closed again in 2006). Nordstrom Place Two closed in 1994. Woolworth shuttered all of its Washington State stores in 1997, leaving what was once billed as the fourth regional shopping center in Washington to an uncertain future. In 2001, the final remnants of

what made South Sound Center so unique - namely its indoor shopping area - was torn down to make way for a new anchor tenant, Target. When Kohl's opened in the old Mervyns space, it completed the mall's reinvention as the outdoor shopping center we all patronize today.

As a national brand and (arguably) an American icon, Sears' future is also uncertain. Rumors of the company's demise have been circulating for years.

However in 2016, the Sears building at South Sound Center will reach its 50th anniversary and become eligible for placement on the city's register of historic buildings. As we welcome the new year, we can only wonder if Lacey's mid-century marvel will make it.

You can find more of Erich's writing about our state on his blog at washingtonourhome.com.



Meet Youth Commissioner, Amber Granger



"I hope to inspire [other students] to be a part of their community when they are my age."

*"We want to build on the energy of last year's successful historic walking tour."
-Curator Erin Quinn Valcho*

Amber Granger, a junior at North Thurston High School, was appointed Youth Historical Commissioner for the 2014-2015 school year. Amber is proud to be a part of her school's Drama, Orchestra, and Write Club programs. Amber tells us she joined the Historical Commission on a whim. "I was browsing the City of Lacey website for something that I can't remember now. I came across something that said youth representative and thought 'I

could do that. Who could it hurt if I applied?" Amber is very happy that she applied and was appointed to the Commission on this whim. She adores everyone she works with, as they are all very knowledgeable and very kind. Amber's main duty as youth commissioner is to give presentations on the history of Lacey to students in the North Thurston Public Schools. She is excited to be learning about the history of Lacey, because she didn't

know that such a rich past existed right here in the place she lives. She is also delighted to be learning what it means to be an active member of her community from this experience. Amber says, "I cannot wait to begin giving Lacey history presentations to elementary school students. I'm striving to teach them what I have learned and hope to inspire them to be a part of the community when they are my age."

Historic Walking Tour Brochure Coming Soon

The Lacey Museum is pleased to announce that it has received a \$4,000 grant from the Thurston County Heritage Grant program to redesign its historic walking tour brochure. Historical Commissioner Erich Ebel will be designing the brochure and a research specialist will be hired to complete the

needed historical content for the brochure.

"The 2014 walking tour was such a success that we want to build on that energy," said Museum Curator, Erin Quinn Valcho. She will be leading the walking tour that will take place this summer as well as overseeing the grant-funded

project. "We will be choosing a theme for the walking tour each year so that it will be a little different, giving folks a reason to return." Valcho said.

The last phase of the project will culminate in an interactive online map of the historical structures in the Lacey Historical neighborhood.

Why Does the Museum Prefer Original Photos?

Q: *I recently called the museum to donate a photograph that I had scanned at 200 dpi on my home scanner, but they declined to accept it. Why?*

A: There are several reasons why the museum prefers to acquire original photographs instead of your home scanned copies.

First and foremost, in any media, the best preservation is done from the source materials rather than copies. As technology changes, our ability to make

copies and preserve artifacts improves over time.

Secondly, digital media changes quickly. If you were to find a 5 1/4" floppy disk today what would you do with it? How would you retrieve what is on it? We cannot know what will be the "floppy" of the future, but we want to be prepared when we get there. When the time comes, it will be costly and time intensive to migrate everything to new formats. It's much easier to work with the original print over time.

Have you ever gone to a file on

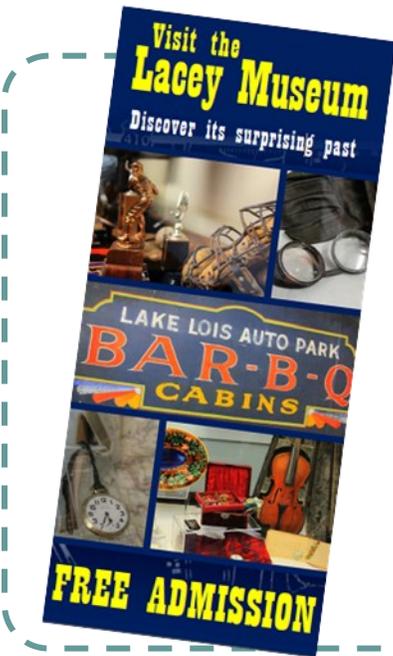
your computer only to find it corrupted? That can happen to image files, too, and without a back-up that isn't also corrupted, it will be lost forever. Lastly, as great as technology is, most photographic prints are very stable and, if properly taken care of, will last a very long time.

Lastly, museum archival scans are done at a very high resolution in a non-compressible file format (TIFF) that varies by original size. This means that most scans don't meet archival standards since they are often done in a lower resolution jpeg format.

2014 Lacey Museum Fun Facts

- 580 people visited the Lacey Museum
- 23 volunteers gave 830 hours of service to the museum (Wow!)
- 56 customers were assisted with filling their research requests or photo orders
- Over 700 people were reached through museum outreach programs
- 4,243 artifacts inventoried
- 671 accession records (donor records) were entered into the new database

Staff will present the museum's 2014 annual report at the February 26th City Council meeting



New Marketing Materials

We are pleased to share that the Lacey Museum has a new beautiful new rack card! These will be available at the Lacey Chamber, the Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater Visitor Center, and at City of Lacey locations. If you would like to get some for distribution, contact the museum curator, Erin Quinn Valcho at (360) 413-3557 or equinnva@ci.lacey.wa.us.

Thanks go out to Historical Commissioner Erich Ebel for donating his time to design the rack card.

Seeking Nominations

Do you know anyone who has done something special to contribute to Lacey's history? Nominations will be accepted through May 10th for the 2015 Lacey Historian of the Year. Former recipients include Richard Jones (2014), Susan Goff (2013), Diane Dean (2012), and Matthew Conner (2011). Applications can be obtained by contacting the Museum Curator.

Seeking Historic Treasures

The Lacey Museum continues to seek out documents, photographs and artifacts related to Lacey's history. Some topics that are of interest include:

- Photographs, artifacts and documents related to agriculture: mushroom farming, lavender farming, chicken farming, timber
- Any information or photographs that will help identify when the Lacey Train Depot was torn down
- Photographs of Lacey people, events, families, businesses and places. Historic or contemporary
- Photographs or artifacts related to the Lacey Drive-In movie theater

Lacey Museum

829 Lacey Street SE
Lacey, WA 98503

Open Thursday & Friday 11 am - 3 pm
Saturday 10 am - 4 pm
FREE Admission

Phone: 360-438-0209
E-mail: museum@ci.lacey.wa.us
www.ci.lacey.wa.us



Preserving the past for the future

The Lacey Museum's mission is to collect, interpret, and display historical materials that illustrate the history of the Lacey area in all periods of its development.

Museum Staff Contact

Erin Quinn Valcho, Museum Curator
Phone: 360-413-3557
E-mail: equinnva@ci.lacey.wa.us

Lacey Historical Commissioners

Kimberley Bauman, Chair	Fernnell Dowell III
Erich Ebel, Vice Chair	Kristina Trebil
Yasemin Alptekin	Amber Granger, Youth Commissioner
Shirley Binkley	

Can You Identify This Photo?

The Lacey Museum received this great Nisqually School class photo in 2014 from Gary Feldtman. Unfortunately, it is not dated and none of the children are identified. The teachers are only identified as Mr. Rule and Miss Kieffer. Do you recognize any of these people or know when it might have been taken? Please send any information to Erin Quinn Valcho, Museum Curator at the contact information above.



Lacey Museum Photograph Collection, 2014-009-0001