

More than just a direction

by Jerry Bates, South Hill Historical Society

When I attended Puyallup High School in the 1960s, I remember we called 112th Street "Airport," 128th Street was Collins Road. Many old timers living on the hill today, before my time, remember road names like Patzner, Cherry, Lundblad, Pear, Odens, among many others.

Today, few if any of those names remain; they've all been changed to numbers.

Thanks to the efforts of our own Carl Vest some of the historical street names have been resurrected and are now present on signs adjacent to the numbered sign on street corners all over the South Hill. But don't expect to find these original street names published in street maps or listed in telephone books or used as mailing addresses.

However, a few street names have over the generations somehow survived, Military Road, Meridian and the subject of our story—Shaw Road.

A road's name becomes part of our life and the geography of our everyday routine. We often never give a thought to a street's name beyond a direction or way to tell someone how to get from here to there.

But a street or road named after a local individual can have a rich history behind it. It can represent a life lived in a bygone era. In the case of Shaw Road the name represents a very interesting family.

Lets go back a hundred years or so, when travel in Puyallup meant riding or being pulled by a horse, if you were lucky perhaps a train or trolley would get you where you were going. The only commercial transit between Seattle and Tacoma was by the water of Puget Sound.

The year is 1901 and a 45 year-old carpenter, Chris Shaw, his wife Mary and six children were settling in the Puyallup valley. They had made a long hard journey from Colorado through Wyoming, Idaho and Oregon by horse drawn wagon and a buggy. Shaw a clever carpenter modified his large wagon to resemble a modern day camper and built a small wagon/buggy Mary could handle while tending her baby.

Chris Shaw was a Danish immigrant with talent and ingenuity that would benefit any community he was part of. Among his many talents he was known for his mechanical skills.

Before coming to the Puyallup Valley he attended college to become a minister. His life here was spent as a farmer, preacher and carpenter. He would become one of the most respected men in Puyallup.



The spot where he built his home, the southeast corner of today's Pioneer and Shaw road, had to be cleared by him and his two elder sons Emery and Frank. Remember, the entire

valley was originally heavily wooded. After four years of clearing his 15-acre property and building a house and barn, he had what was called then a "model home and farm," it was featured in the January 7, 1911 Puyallup Valley Tribune.

The article states: "The fruit on this place consists of one and one-half acres of Evergreen blackberries, three-fourths of acre of red raspberries and two acres of orchard, principally apples, pears and cherries.... ten acres of the farm are in pasturage and the remainder is devoted to kale, beets and other forage root crops." His crops held production records for kale and beets.

Shaw's seventh child was born in 1904, giving him and his wife three sons and four daughters. Lightning killed the oldest son Emery when he was 25 in 1912.

Their farm was considered the "oasis." The Shaw's would take in homeless people. After a good meal Chris Shaw the preacher would try to convert them, telling them of the gospel.

Shaw's Road

In 1916 what is now Shaw Road was a mere trail along which some families with small children lived. Wild animals often stalked those that traveled this path.

Since Chris Shaw's son Frank Shaw and Guy Clifford now owned property along the route they felt compelled to construct a road from the existing path. The road building became a Shaw family project. Frank Shaw was a born engineer; he along with Guy Clifford combined their efforts

(Guy Clifford would marry Frank Shaw's sister Laura).

The road was completed in 1920. The state road commissioner at the time was highly impressed calling it remarkable. The commissioner insisted that it be named Shaw Road, for it was the Shaw family and spouses that donated the equipment time and money to make it possible.

Editor Note:

For a more detailed account of the Shaw family ask Paul Hackett for a copy of the family history written by Laura Shaw Clifford.

Words from the President:

Digging up the past about South Hill is very exciting, and has been for all the four years this Society has been working.

You are being very generous with your remembrances, pictures, your willingness to be interviewed, and artifacts you have donated to the Society.

We are still in the first phase of our work. That phase is digging deeper into the history of the area from Canyon to the Ridge (over Orting), from the Fairgrounds south to 204th.

We have some large gaps in our knowledge.

We ask you to help us:

First, we have important, but only limited knowledge of early pioneers from 78th Avenue to Canyon. (We are excited about the restored 1905 home owned by Ralph and Yvonne Thorp, at 12702 66th Av Ct E. Please let us know of others.

Second, we are looking for any descendants of the Ball-Wood families, for which Meridian was named. Mitchell-Gould (present day 152nd St.) James B. Collins (for whom Collins Road was named. (128th St E.) Charles Berger (Muehler-Berger Road (160th St E) 1889 George Odens (Odens Road) (present day 94th Av E)

Also we are looking for early descendants who settled along the Naches Trail in the area near the present-day McMillan Reservoir, and east of the present Pierce County Airport. Here are the last names, J. C. Leonard (1877), F.O. Hunger ('83), James C. Hall ('76), James Geiger ('72), A.C. McNeeks (Sp?0 ('87), C.A.B. Berger ('88), Peter Klee ('88), John Lackey ('84), Carl Muehler ('71 and '84), Antone Ranch ('86). Further to the west, around present 86th Av E, west of Meridian Frank J. Hartman ('88), G. Gabrielson, W. A. Pettys Jacob S. Lord ('88), Addison Pease, ('85).

Did these early landowners quickly sell out to timber companies? Did they give up trying to cut down trees to farm and went back east? Did they move into thriving Tacoma?

We would like to hear from you.

Paul Hackett

More About Aviation on South Hill

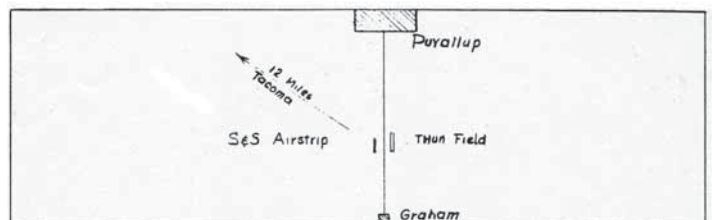
by Carl Vest,
South Hill
Historical Society

In a previous edition of our newsletter a request was made for information about an early airstrip on South Hill. A facility developed and operated by a Mr. Sagmiller. I am pleased to report that several people have responded to that request. Thanks to all of you. Due to the number of responses it will take a bit of time to get around to everybody. But please rest assured, we will be in touch if you have left a phone number or address with a Society member.

I would like to thank Bruce Thun for directing our attention to a sketch of the airstrip, which appeared in the 1963 edition of a Washington State pilot's guide. This sketch shows the airstrip, known as the S&S Airport (or S&S Airstrip, it's listed both ways), being just to the west of Meridian and located directly across the road from Thun Field. It was gravel surfaced airstrip, some 2000 feet long and 60 feet wide. There were trees at both ends of the runway and pilots were warned to "WATCH for Helicopter traffic." It was noted that this was a private airport.

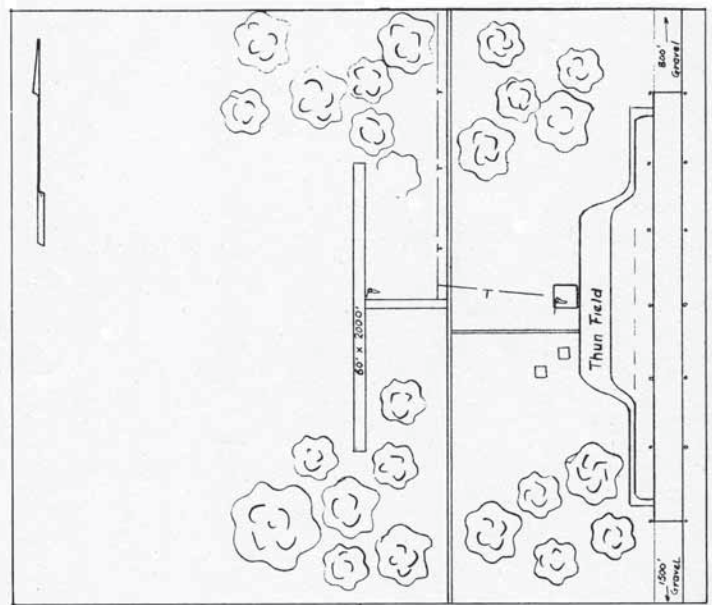
The listing for this airport does not, of course, give any background or history of the facility. And that is what the Society is trying to develop. So we will be contacting everyone who has responded to our requests for information. It's just that it will take a bit of time.

Location of the S&S Airport on South Hill



A sketch of the relative location of the S&S Airport to Graham, Puyallup and Tacoma, as it appeared in a 1963 Pilot's Guide, published by the State of Washington.

Relative Position of S&S Airport to Thun Field



A more detailed sketch of the S&S Airport relative to Thun Field. The focus of this sketch in the SSS Airport, a more accurate view of Thun field, relative to its alignment to Meridian, is on another page of the 1963 Pilot's Guide.

Missed Opportunity!

A note from member Vern Rockstad

“Early December in 1943 and 1944 John Thun, and my dad, Pete Rockstad, and me, Vern Rockstad got permission to cut Christmas trees on about 80 acres of Pope and Talbott Timber Company property.

John Thun and his wife, Babe, lived on a poultry farm, two farms south of ours on the corner of 144th St E and 126th Av E, with their small children that I occasionally baby-sat (one child, now a father/truck driver Tad Thun). John Thun liked that tree property so much that he suggested to Pete, my dad, that the two of them buy this property, then \$30 an acre, but dad thought it was just too much money; so the Thuns bought the property, and the rest is history!”

If you see John today on his Graham property, he will want to use his German language.

Vern Rockstad, 2001
(Vern has given the South Hill Historical Society a history of 4-H Club work on South Hill)

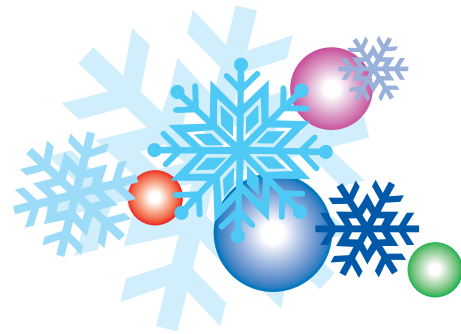
Response from Don Otto, early pioneer
 “Before the Rockstad’s got that permission, I leased that land (which now includes the Lipoma Estates) from Pope and Talbott and grew Christmas trees on the property. I sold them to a man who shipped them to the San Francisco market. The price I got was small compared to the price the shippers got from consumers in California.”

We host a visitor from the past for our January 2005 Meeting

Arlen Davison, former Administrator of the Wash. Research Center will impersonate “John Coulter” who took part in the Lewis and Clark expedition.

All the clothes he wears he has made himself.

This presentation has been given to hundreds at Northwest Trek where he volunteers. Also, he has given this demonstration/talk at several dozen groups in Puyallup.



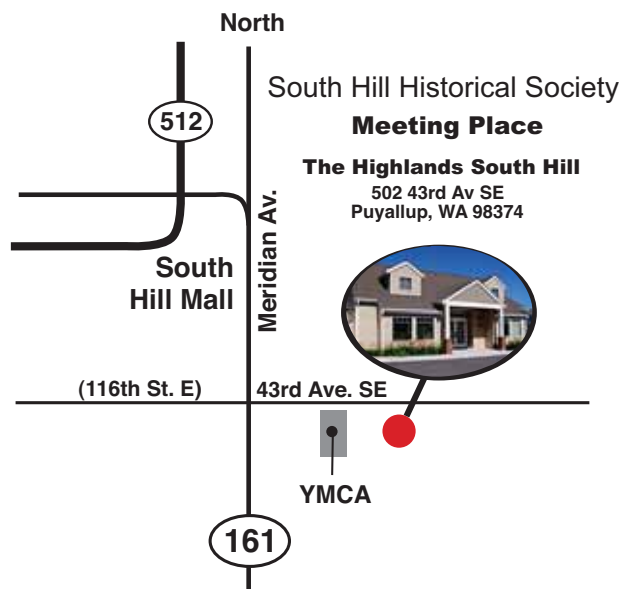
*Happy Holidays
 from the Officers
 of the South Hill Historical
 Society*

South Hill Historical Society Membership/Renewal Form		
Name		
Address	Phone	
City	State	Zip
Home E-mail Address		
Signature _____	Date _____	Renewal, check here <input type="checkbox"/>
Annual Dues: Society membership \$25.00 <i>Note Please do not send cash.</i>		Make check or M.O. payable to South Hill Historical Society and mail with this application to: SHHS Membership, 11711 92nd AV E, Puyallup, WA 98373

Where To Find Us

The South Hill Historical Society meets regularly on the **THIRD TUESDAY** of the month 11:15 AM at the Highlands in the Community Center **(no meetings July and August)**. This complex is located at 502 43rd AVE SE, adjacent to and east of the Mel Korum YMCA.

We welcome you to our monthly meetings. For more information contact our president, Paul Hackett, at **(253) 845-7691**.



South Hill Historical Society Officers

President, Paul Hackett
 Vice-President, Carl Vest
 Secretary, Carolyn Nelson
 Treasurer, Ben Peters
 Newsletter Editor, Jerry Bates



11711 92nd AV E
 Puyallup WA 98373

From The Treasurer

by Ben Peters

A warm welcome to our newest members:

Ron & Lois Pearson
 Wlynn Williams
 William & Dori Scott
 Dianna & Fred Fritz
 Stanley & Ila Soter

Members due for RENEWAL:

Betsy/Bill Stubbs - September
 Allen Zulauf - October
 James Dixon - December
 Lloyd Freudenstein - January
 Christine Wilson - January
 James Hawley - January
 Rob Ballou - February
 Art Larson - February

Our Current Members

Andy Anderson	Christopher O'Kelly
John and Ruth Anderson	Don and Helen Otto
Jim and Elizabeth Anema	Ron & Lois Pearson
Bob Ballou	Wes & Suzy Perkinson
Jerry Bates	Ben Peters
Ward F. Bradley	Ella M. Reese
James H. Dixon	Bill Riley
Mildred A. Dobbs	Bernice Fisher Rinehart
Arthur & Luverne Foxford	Roy and Sheila Rinker
Lloyd Freudenstein	Vern Rockstad
Dianna & Fred Fritz	Helen Rohlman
Don and Mary Glaser	Frank Ryser
William (Bill) Goelzer	William & Dori Scott
Hazel Whitford Miller Goheen	Stanley & Ila Soter
Calvin and Amy Goings	Bonnie Starkel
Dorothy Gould	Lori Stock
Paul Hackett	Bill Stover
James Hawley	Betsy and Bill Stubbs
Cecil and Doris Herbert	Margo L & Joe Tucci
Charles and Maybelle Hoenhous	Carl Vest
Ernest & Irene Hopp	Neil and Celia Vincent
Art Larson	Richard and Joan Vosler
Art S. and Marvella Massie	Vivian Wepfer
Olive McDonough	Pam and Don Williams
Laurienne Stewart Minnich	Wlynn Williams
John A. Mosolf	Christine Wilson
Carolyn Nelson	Kevin Wimsett
Dorothy Nelson	Marilyn Larson Winterton
Juanita Nordin	Allen and Ellen Zulauf
Mark and Dorothy Norris	

To: