

HISTORICAL MARKERS INSCRIPTIONS

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Bonney Lake Town Hall

On February 28, 1949, the Town of Bonney Lake was incorporated by a total of 47 voting against incorporation and 62 voting in favor of the measure. It was the only way, at the time, for citizens to be able to approve a revenue bond for the purpose of installing a public water system. The driving force behind incorporation was Kenneth H. Simmons, State Legislator, who was elected Mayor of the new town. The first city council was composed of Robert Wheeler, Thurlow Maddox, Alva Simmitt, E.M. Hiles, and Clarence Roberts, with Chet Roberts elected as city treasurer.

Within a year, Washington's newest town had its own water system, new roads, expanded the electric lines and telephone service, and provided refuse disposal. The infrastructure was in place for future growth, but it would be several decades before the Town of Bonney Lake would change from a rural, recreation community to a vibrant urban City of Bonney Lake.



This Historic Marker was funded by a grant from Pierce County, with matching funds provided by the City of Bonney Lake.

Figure A-1: Bonney Lake Town Hall



Church of the Nazarene

For many years the settlers on the plateau had to travel to Sumner or to Buckley to attend church services. When Oscar "Doc" Bowen arrived with his family from Colorado, he saw the need for a church to be located nearby. Oscar and his wife Goldia held church services in their newly constructed home, and when the congregation outgrew that space, they built a brush arbor in the adjacent woods for their services. In 1935 Oscar Bowen donated the land and much of the material which was supposed to have been used to complete the Bowen home and used it, instead, to help build a much needed church.

Originally located across Meyers Road from the present church, the Church of the Nazarene on Elhi Hill was officially organized by Superintendent E.E. Martin on May 30, 1936, with Warren L. Tanner as the first pastor. Other early congregation members were the Meyers, Wedgewood, Filkens, and Bushness families.



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Figure A-2: Church of the Nazarene



Kelley Farm

The Kelley Farm sits on the site of one of the earliest Donation Land Claims in eastern Pierce County. In 1853, one hundred sixty acres were granted to Reuben Ashford Finnell. By 1856 Finnell abandoned his claim after his cabin and barn had been burned during the Puget Sound Indian War. In 1864 William Barton Kelley and his wife Mary arrived by ox drawn wagon from Illinois, accompanied by William's parents, Nathan and Elizabeth, and his many siblings. Kelley purchased the former Finnell claim, along with an additional 40 acres. Kelley served two terms in the Washington Territorial Legislature, and went on to hold the post of Pierce County Auditor for a period of six years.

In 1889 Kelley donated one acre on the northeast corner of his property, and he and his sons built the one room schoolhouse known as Kelley Lake School. About that same year, Kelley built an ice house near his home, which still stands today, and is the oldest known structure in the Bonney Lake area.

Over the decades the farm and its orchard provided sustenance for the family. Not only did it produce food, but it also provided an income from logging, hop growing, dairy farming, and by the 1990's was leased to the Cartwright family who operated Bonney Lake's first microbrewery.



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Figure A-3: Kelley Farm



Ken Simmons Resort at Lake Bonney

Whether you consider him a rascal or a hero, Kenneth Simmons was the driving force behind the development of Bonney Lake. After purchasing a large parcel of property about 1946, which encompassed Lake Bonney, he began to clear the fallen logs and debris from the lake. He created a recreational destination by building a clubhouse, boardwalk, high diving board and swimming area. Dances at the clubhouse and picnics on the beach provided a great summer attraction not only for plateau residents, but also enticed visitors seeking relief from the warm valley towns. The resort proved to be a great marketing tool when he began selling lots in the new city of Bonney Lake.



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Figure A-4: Ken Simmons Resort at Lake Bonney



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Lake Tapps

In response to the ever increasing demand for electrical power in the region during the early 20th century, a plan was proposed by Pacific Coast Power Company (later Puget Sound Traction Light & Power), and in 1910 the “White River Power Project” was begun. This project created a large reservoir by the flooding of 4 existing lakes known as Kirtley Lake, Crawford Lake, Church Lake (formerly Kelley Lake), and Lake Tapps. The flooding was accomplished by building approximately 2.5 miles of earthen dikes which raised the water level by 35 feet, thereby joining the lakes together. The resulting 14 mile long lake required some 20 million board feet of lumber to complete the necessary miles of flumes, canal linings, and rail trestles.

The water level was maintained by diverting water from the White River near Buckley by a diversion dam and then to the lake via an open top wooden flume box. The water traveled north through the lake to a penstock tunnel, where it exited to the White River Power Station at Dieringer, along the East Valley Highway north of Sumner. The water then rejoined the stream from which it was taken and continued into the Puyallup River. The power station has since been closed, but picturesque 2,566 acre Lake Tapps remains. Its 45 miles of shoreline continues to provide a haven for residents, recreation and a source of fresh water.



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Figure A-5: Lake Tapps

Naches Trail



Map created by Al Catanzaro, City of Bonney Lake GIS Analyst, 2009

For centuries before the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company fur traders or the migrating settlers, the Native American Indians of the Puget Sound and the eastern reaches of the Columbia Plateau used the Naches Trail. It provided access for trading, hunting, fishing and gathering of roots, nuts and berries.

In 1853, the residents and businessmen of Olympia were tired of waiting for the government to build a road, and they began improving and expanding on the old Indian path of the Naches Trail. This was to become the first wagon road to cross the Cascade Mountains in Washington Territory. It branched off the Oregon Trail and extended from Fort Walla Walla to its terminus at Fort Steilacoom. Even before its completion, the first wagon train to make the historic crossing in September 1853 carried some of the founding families of various Puget Sound communities. The names of Longmire, Biles, Kincaid, and Van Ogle are well known in early territorial settlement.

By late 1855, the Naches Wagon road was the scene of increased military activity during the Indian Wars of 1855-56. With the skirmishes and battles fought by the U.S. Army, the Territorial Volunteer Militia, and the Native Indian Tribes, the trail evolved once again into a military road. During the 1880's it became a regular cattle drive route from the Yakima region to the more populated markets of Puget Sound.

By the mid twentieth century, the original track of the Naches Trail had deteriorated from extensive off road vehicle use and logging of adjacent lands. The 1970's saw the beginning of efforts by various groups to rehabilitate sections of this historic Naches Trail.

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Figure A-6: Naches Trail



Courtesy of the Tacoma Public Library, Richards Studio Collection, Series D10193

Perfield Hop Farm

Following the American Civil War, the first hops to be grown in this area were imported from England by Charles Wood of Olympia. Some of the hop plants were obtained by Jacob Meeker, who began production in the Puyallup Valley. The plants thrived, the venture was very successful, and by 1884 the hop business was booming in the area. The fields were yielding as much as 3,000 pounds per acre, and the quality was outstanding. They became famous and desired by brewers as far away as Europe. The hop boom in the area ended in 1891 with a combination of “hop lice” infestation, down mold from Canada, fluctuating markets and bad weather. Production continued however, on a much smaller scale and by 1940 the Nick Perfield farm near this location was among the last in western Washington. By 1956 only 3 farms remained in the Valley. Some of the distinctive hop drying barns can still be seen as of today. Primary hop production in Washington State has now moved to the dryer climate of the Yakima Valley.



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Figure A-7: Perfield Hop Farm

Sky Stone

Thousands of years ago, this large rock, known as a glacial erratic, was deposited by a retreating glacier during the last ice age. Its unusual size and unique location, which once commanded expansive views of a glacier carved valley, an immense inland lake, and towering mountains, may have influenced the early Native Americans to utilize it.

The stone has been examined by astronomers, geologists, archaeologists, and Salish medicine men. It may have provided a map of the constellations, determined direction, or indicated seasonal changes. Thought and opinions may vary as to its original use, but the general conclusion is that the mysterious Sky Stone served as both a calendar and an astronomical observatory, with possible educational and religious purposes for the Native Salish Society centuries before the coming of the non-Native pioneers. Even after the arrival of these Euro-American settlers, the subsequent owners of this property continued to allow Native American access to this site because of its cultural importance.



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Figure A-8: Sky Stone

Swiss Sportsmen's Club

The Swiss Park was established in 1947 with the purchase of 10 acres, at less than \$85 per acre, by members of the Swiss Rifle Club of Tacoma, which was organized in 1913. Subsequent parcels were purchased over the years, and the park is now comprised of 40 acres. The site was chosen due to its location in a sparsely populated area of Pierce County where members could practice their marksmanship and participate in tournaments. During the 1920's and 1930's, ammunition was issued each year by the U.S. Government for target practice.

Purchase of the property also provided a permanent home for the Tacoma Schwinger Club (Swiss style wrestling). The club was organized in 1928 and, following a thousand year old tradition, held Schwingfests (tournaments). These competitions were conducted at locations in the Renton and South Seattle area.

By 1958 there was a merger between the Schutzen (shooting) Club and the Schwingen (wrestling) Club to form the Swiss Sportsmen's Club of Tacoma. The Swiss Park is also home to:

Tacoma Swiss Society, est. 1889
Swiss Relief Society, est. 1924
Enzian Swiss Ladies Choir, est. 1988

Swiss Ladies Society Helvetia", est. 1908
Swiss Sportsmen's Club, est. 1958
Mannerchor Edelweiss (men's choir),
est. 1910



Swiss Sportsmen's Club, ca 1949



Swiss Sportsmen's Club 2009



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Figure A-9: Swiss Sportsman's Club



Native Americans often provided the labor for the area trap farms. Frequently gathering in traditional tribal or family groups. Photo #2006.33.11 provided courtesy of the Mukleshoot Indian Tribe.

Native Gathering Place

This area once lay along the Naches Trail which served as a major East-West route for Native Americans between Puget Sound and eastern Washington. It was on the edge of a prairie that provided enough space for large numbers of people to meet, have forage for their horses, hunt, fish, gather berries and roots, and to indulge in visiting, trading, and probably some gaming.

In a letter written to the Hon C.J. Faulkner of Virginia in July 17, 1856, early settler, Reuben Ashford Finnell wrote, *"The principal throughfare of these Indians in trading to the sound country was by my house and the neighborhood where I lived was the great trading ground. There they met in [July and August] summer by hundreds and whilst they carried on their rude and savage commerce, they could feed upon the abundance of wild berries and Salmon which that vicinity afforded. In this way I became intimately acquainted with the Indians on the Sound and on both sides of the Cascade Mountains."*



Photo provided by the Dennis Moriarty Family

In 1918 Charles H. Moriarty was plowing the hop field on this site with a horse drawn plow. He caught the sun glinting off something in one of the furrowed rows. He had uncovered remnants from another culture, a number of projectile points and an axe head, which still bears the scar from the plow.



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Figure A-10: Native Gathering Place