

The RECORDER

The Newsletter for the Greater Kent Historical Society



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Happy Harvest

Don't miss our exciting Fall Programs! See page 11 for details.



From our President:



The dinner auction was an amazing success! As always the food was delicious and Golden Steer outdid any expectations we had—Thanks to Susan and Jim Barrios. The auction items were fun and went well, the surprising star of the show was the stage decorations. Debbie Edwards and Stephen Chandler thought out-of-the-box and worked tirelessly, they created a beautiful display with items from the museum (see pages 8 & 9 for photos).

The fund-an-item was well received with over \$5000 contributed. This money will ensure the continuation of such favorites as Little Explorers, Kent Chronicles, and other educational programs.

Many thanks to Fred Satterstrom, Jan Mayes, Carla Loux and the rest of the auction committee. Thanks to all—the Key Club and all those who worked hard to make the auction a success.

We have only two more meetings this year (no December) so we are tidying up for the new people and planning ahead for all of us - more details soon.

Have a great Halloween!

Charlene Shaw
President
Greater Kent Historical Society

The purpose of the Greater Kent Historical Society (GKHS) is to promote the discovery, preservation and dissemination of knowledge about the history of the greater Kent area. GKHS operates the Kent Historical Museum.

KentHistoricalMuseum.org

2011 GKHS Board Officers:

- PresidentCharlene Shaw
- Vice PresidentJim Osness
- SecretarySesira Maganty
- TreasurerDave Foltz
- Past PresidentJack Becvar

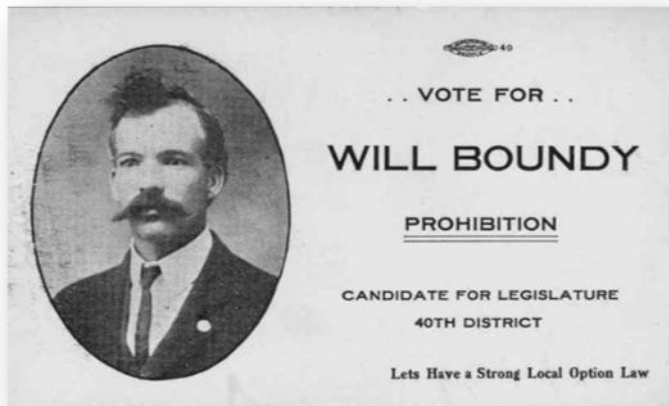
Museum Staff:

- Executive Director & CuratorAllison Jurgens
- ManagerStephen Chandler
- Media & Community Relations
Coordinator.....Rhonda Watts



Want to receive GKHS updates? Find us on Facebook: Greater Kent Historical Society and Museum, and follow us on Twitter: twitter.com/kentmuseum.

Curator's Corner: Votes for a Noble Experiment



This October, PBS aired a new documentary by filmmaker Ken Burns on Prohibition, America's "Noble Experiment," an era that spanned the entire decade of the 1920s. We also began a series on this era at Kent Chronicles, our monthly history discussion group, where the card at left was among the artifacts we examined.

This is a political campaign card from about 1918-1919 for state legislature candidate Will Boundy in Washington's 40th District, which represents San Juan, eastern and northwestern Skagit and southwestern Whatcom counties. Boundy, we can see from this card, supported Prohibition legislation and ran his campaign on this issue.

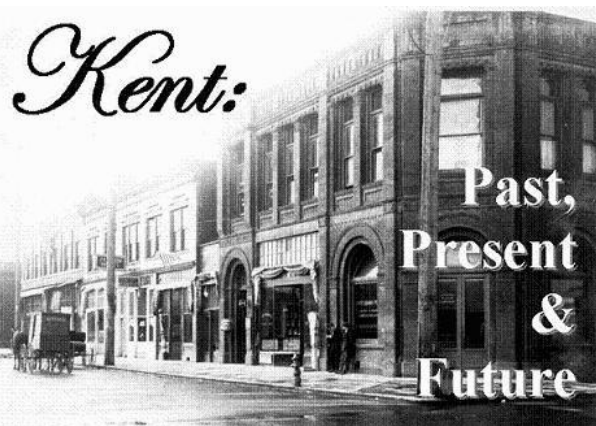
For more on this era, come to Kent Chronicles in November and December and watch PBS's documentary *Prohibition*.

Auction Report

The auction was a stunning success! Over 150 guests from GKHS, the City of Kent and the community came to support our local heritage! We also exceeded our fundraising goal of \$15,000. Our sponsorship and in-kind donations totals were also exceeded, and the fund-a-cause for education raised over \$5000.

The GKHS board would like to extend a huge **Thank You** to our wonderful servers—City of Kent Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Watling, City Councilperson Elizabeth Albertson, City Councilperson Deborah Ranniger, City Councilperson Ron Harmon, KDP Executive Director Barbara Smith and KDP Administrative Assistant Charlotte Turpin. We also would like to thank our speaker, Dr. Vargas, who gave a wonderful presentation on education, our auctioneer, Fergus Prestbye, and Brad Bell, our master of ceremonies.

But the ones who made it all happen were our guests, who bought tickets and sponsored tables, bid on auction items and made this a wonderful evening. This event has helped ensure the future of Kent's history, and we could not have done it without the support of the Historical Society and the community—hats off to you!



Local Roots: Discovering Kent's Genealogy

One of my goals has been to research and write about Dr. Owen Taylor. I have been collecting material about him for the past several years and would like to start sharing what I have learned about him.



Owen Taylor was born in Toddville, Linn County, Iowa on 31 December 1866 to parents John and Nancy. In July of 1870 he lived with his family in Otter Creek, Linn County, Iowa. Owen's father John was 34 years old and worked as a farmer. Owen's mother Nancy was 28 years old and was a housekeeper. Owen's siblings were Milton, aged eight years; Esther, aged six years; and Alice, aged two years.

The 1880 census enumerated the Taylor family in Monroe, Linn County, Iowa. Owen's family grew considerably in the intervening ten years. Along with Milton, Esther and Alice, John and Nancy had six more children. They were Frank, aged nine years; Olive, aged seven years; Grace, aged five years; Fred, aged four years; Mary, aged three years; and Maud, aged one year. All of the children were born in Iowa.

At the age of 25, Owen lived in Seattle, King County, Washington in 1892 and indicated his occupation as 'Medical Studies.' The *White River Journal* dated 4 April 1896 on page five, column one, published a nice article about him:

Dr. Owen Taylor was born on a farm near Cedar Rapids, Iowa, December 31st, 1866, and followed farming as an occupation until maturity. Finding it not congenial to his taste, he severed the ties which bound him to an honorable occupation. He came to the Pacific coast and entered the University of Washington in 1889, to prepare for a course

in medicine. In 1892 he entered the Bellevue Hospital Medical College, of New York City, from which he graduated in the class of 1895. After graduating he returned to Washington. In August, 1895 he decided to cast his lot among the people of Kent, at which place he is now practicing his profession. Dr.

Taylor is also manager of Charles Feek's drug store on Front street. The doctor is a staunch Republican and hopes to see Iowa's favorite son, Senator William B. Allison, occupy the presidential chair. He is one of the rising young men of his profession. He belongs to the A.O.U.W., W. of W., and is a Prince.

Included with this article was a small photograph of Dr. Owen Taylor; a young and handsome man.



To be continued...

Submitted by Karen Bouton, South King County Genealogical Society

Taste of History

Since tea was first imported from Asia to the rest of the world in the 1600s, we can't seem to get enough of it.

After all, what's more delightful on a cold fall day than a cup of hot tea?

Kent even had its own tea room in the early 1930s (*photo*). It was on the second floor of the Guiberson building, on the corner of First Avenue and Titus Street, and run by Nell Guiberson.

In honor of Nell, here are instructions for brewing the "perfect pot of tea." Curl up in a cozy chair and enjoy!



Tea Time



- ◆ Begin with fresh, cold water in your tea kettle. As the water begins to boil, remove kettle from heat.
- ◆ Heat your teapot while your water is boiling by filling it with warm water. Pour the warming water out before adding your tea water.
- ◆ Add tea to your pot . If you're using tea bags, add four bags for every six cups of water. If you're using leaves, it's best to gently pack leaves into a tea ball.
- ◆ Pour the water from your kettle into the pot and brew 3-5 minutes.
- ◆ Remove tea bags and balls. If you use tea leaves, use a strainer to pour your tea into a cup.
- ◆ Enjoy your cup of tea with milk, cream, sugar, or any way you like it!

Stories from the Past:

Oldest Store was Founded in 1890



This article from the Seattle Public Library's archives and written in the early 1920s details the history of Berlin Brothers, Kent's earliest store. The store was located at the corner of Meeker Street and Railroad Avenue. The photo at left pictures the Berlin storefront in the 1890s.

“The source of good merchandise” as it has often been referred to, started in business in Kent in 1890 and was known at that time as Berlin Bros. This little store which occupied a very small place on the exact location on which the beautiful new building was later erected, did a flourishing business and in 1900 they were incorporated under the laws of Washington and known as Berlin Brothers Company Inc. At this time they opened up two new stores, one at Auburn and one at Sumner. J. B. Berlin operated the Kent store, T. N. Berlin operated the Auburn store and A. H. Berlin took over the management of the Sumner store.

In 1904 J. B. Berlin was taken sick and so the Sumner store was sold and A. N. Berlin recalled to Kent to take over the management of the home store and Kent's

largest and best trading place. In 1908 J. B. Berlin moved to California for his health. In 1910 T. N. Berlin sold the Auburn store and retired from active management of the store business.

The Berlin store continued to grow and by 1915 A. N. Berlin bought his two brothers' interest in the firm of Berlin Brothers, retiring the other members of the family. The same year the business was unincorporated and has been known as A. N. Berlin since.

Mr. Berlin has enjoyed a wonderful business in Kent and in turn he has shown his appreciation and faith in Kent which few others, if any, have ever equaled in the up-building of the city. His buildings are of the permanent type and a credit to any city. His home is always attractive and a spot to show visitors in our fair city.

The store of A. N. Berlin is one of the institutions in Kent which is known all over the state for its standing among the merchandising fraternity. Its help to the community is outstanding with a payroll exceeding \$25,000 each year. It serves its purpose in the community and serves it well.

The A. N. Berlin staff is as follows: A. N. Berlin, L. D. Berlin, J. K. Berlin, U.

L. Robertson, F. O. Arney, George Shellhorn, George Anderson, Milton Schroeder, Miss Josephine Thompson, Miss Maud Taylor, Mrs. W. C. Whitney, Mrs. Mamie Bouldron.

**Submitted by Jack Becvar,
Kent City Historian**



Above: Berlin employees inside the Kent store, c. 1920s. Left: Berlin employees outside the "new" building, c. 1920s

Business Member Spotlight:

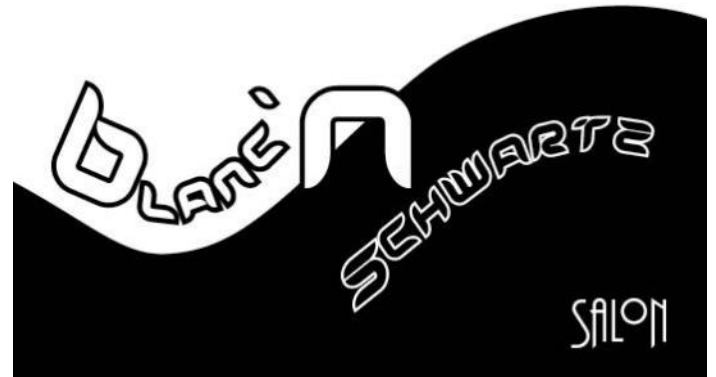
Blanc 'n' Schwartz Salon

Blanc 'n' Schwartz Salon is a new business member of GKHS, having joined this past August.

The salon is located at 207 East Meeker Street, and in their own words, they offer “haircuts, color, styling, waxing, hair products, nail polish and more! You'll love our hip decor and our friendly stylists. Blanc 'n' Schwartz—putting color into your life!”

We appreciate Blanc 'n' Schwartz's support of GKHS!

Visit blancschwartzsalon.com to learn more.



Guests at our annual dinner auction fundraiser, “Kent: Past, Present & Future,” got the chance to “walk through time,” viewing historical vignettes featuring artifacts from the museum.

Membership

Welcome to our new Business Member—Blanc and Swartz Salon in downtown Kent. In 2011, we had 15 new individual or family memberships. For the remainder of 2011, any new members joining will receive membership through 2012. So it isn't too late to become a member and reap the benefits! You can find a membership form on our website.

Cheri Sayer
Membership Committee Chair

Looking for a unique venue for your next party or get-together?



Hold Your Event at the Museum!

- **Weddings & Receptions**
- **Teas**
- **Garden Parties**
- **Baby & Bridal Showers**
- **Birthday Parties**
- **Company Events**
- **and more...**

Call the Museum for more information or visit kenthistoricalmuseum.org/get-involved/events.

*“Walk
Through
Time”*



About the Cover Photo:

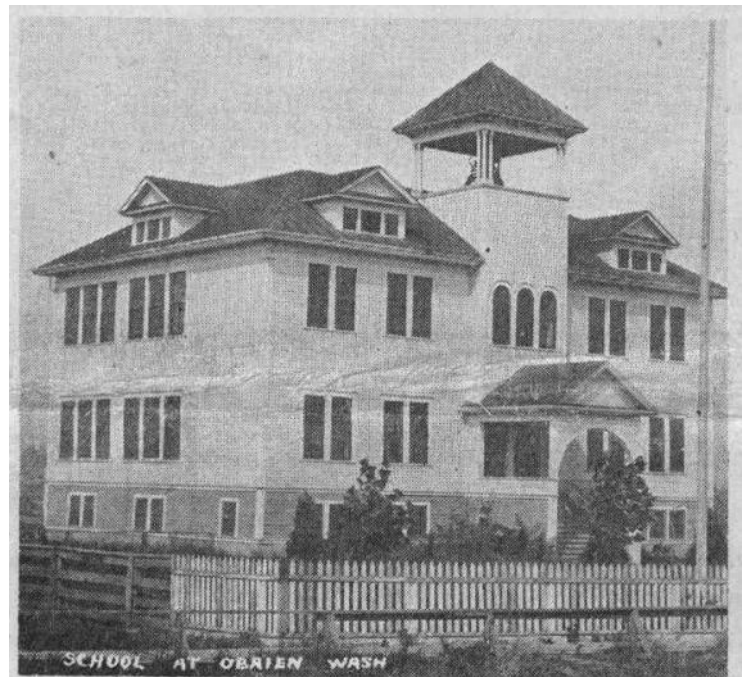
O'Brien School Days



This photo of the O'Brien School bus was taken in the 1930s. Today, the O'Brien School name is still around, as Neely-O'Brien Elementary. Below, a 1969 article excerpt from the Kent News Journal recounts the story of the O'Brien School:

O'Brien was settled in 1868—101 years ago, by brothers Terrence and Morgan O'Brien.

In 1905, three of the area's pioneer schools, named the Taylor, Willis and White River schools, combined to form the O'Brien School, and a large, square old school was built at South 212th Street. In 1944, O'Brien became part of the Kent School district and in 1956 the present school was built and dedicated.



First O'Brien School

After the old White River, Taylor and Willis schools of early Kent were combined in 1909, this fine big school was built at O'Brien and in 1910, the roadway in front was treated with "Bitucrete," according to sign in foreground. Now South 212th Street is under construction as a four lane highway, and the present O'Brien school is in the center of a burgeoning industrial area.

FALL PROGRAMS

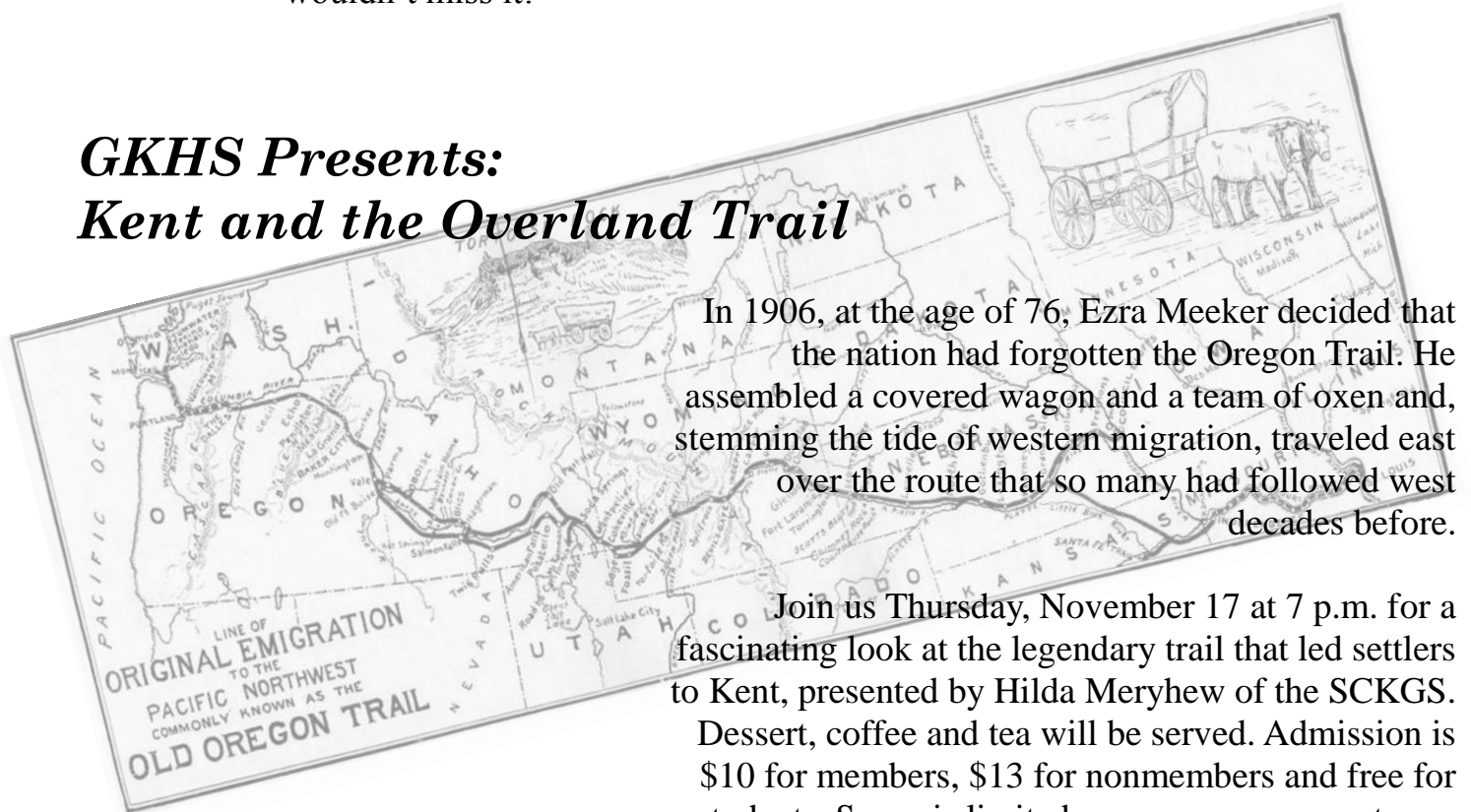
Kent Chronicles: the Jazz Age

From Prohibition to women's suffrage to the rise of flappers and jazz music, Kent saw it all in the "Roaring Twenties!" Join us Thursdays, November 3rd and December 1st at 11 a.m. for our continuing discussion of this dynamic period of Kent and world history. With film and radio clips, photos and artifacts from the museum's collection and much more, Gatsby himself wouldn't miss it!



F. Marion Imhoff, Kent Police Chief, and members of Kent Police with confiscated distillery equipment behind Kent City Hall during Prohibition

GKHS Presents: Kent and the Overland Trail



In 1906, at the age of 76, Ezra Meeker decided that the nation had forgotten the Oregon Trail. He assembled a covered wagon and a team of oxen and, stemming the tide of western migration, traveled east over the route that so many had followed west decades before.

Join us Thursday, November 17 at 7 p.m. for a fascinating look at the legendary trail that led settlers to Kent, presented by Hilda Meryhew of the SCKGS. Dessert, coffee and tea will be served. Admission is \$10 for members, \$13 for nonmembers and free for students. Space is limited, so reserve your spot now by calling the museum at (253) 854-4330 or emailing at ctyofknt@msn.com.

Autumn Programs and Events

October

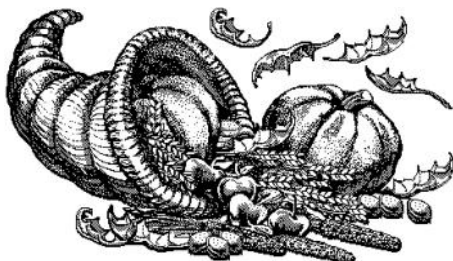
- 7: Kent Chronicles
11 a.m.
Board Meeting
7 p.m.
- 14: Little Explorers
2:30 p.m.
- 31: *Happy Halloween!*

November

- 3: Kent Chronicles
11 a.m.
Board Meeting
7 p.m.
- 9: Little Explorers
10:30 a.m. & 2:30 p.m.
- 17: GKHS Presents:
*Kent & the Overland
Trail w/Hilda Meryhew*
7 p.m.
- 24: *Happy Thanksgiving!*

December

- 1: Kent Chronicles
11 a.m.
Board Meeting
7 p.m.
- 25: *Merry Christmas!*



Greater Kent Historical Society
& Museum
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The Greater Kent Historical Society is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by IRS law.