



## You are invited! Magnolia Historical Society Annual Event



## Lake Washington Ship Canal and the Seattle Locks A Century of Change

Guest Speaker

**David Williams**

Naturalist, Author and Educator

**Thursday, May 25, 2017**

**7:00-9:00pm**

**Magnolia Lutheran Church  
2414-31st Avenue W.**

On July 4, 1917, amidst much fan fair and over 60 years of planning, the Lake Washington Ship Canal opened to the public. Join us and David Williams, co-author of *Waterway: The Story of Seattle's Locks and Ship Canal* as he shares some of the stories about the decades of false starts, the political shenanigans, and far-reaching social, economic and environmental impacts of the canal's construction and operation.

Meet the MHS 2017-2018 Board  
Refreshments provided



## Snapshot in Time: Celebrating the Locks - 100 Years

by Monica Wooton

On July 4, 1917, the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks were dedicated. This year marks the 100th anniversary year of operation.

**Then** - Native American's were the first to have realized that getting from the contained fresh water of Lake Washington to the open salty waters of the Puget Sound was necessary. There is no direct evidence of how this was done; but, speculation is that by walking and using small boats they did just that. They came by water down the Sammamish River into the Lake, then overland to cross Lake Union, then to Salmon Bay (off of Magnolia) and into the Puget Sound. The Duwamish, Snoqualmie and Squamish tribes lived around the region. It is thought they somehow transversed the land to use these bodies of water to obtain food and clothing.

Early pioneer and non-native, Thomas Mercer was the first to give voice to the need for and commercial opportunities of formally creating a route that would be a waterway connection. It is said by David Williams, in his

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## Snapshot in Time: Celebrating the Locks - 100 Years (continued from page 1)

HistoryLink article on the subject of the Locks, that on July 4th, 1854, at a picnic, Mercer publically made this idea known. The idea was intriguing - the challenge was land in between the bodies of water, the different heights of the bodies of water involved and the ecology of the fresh-water verses the salt-water.



While others began to seriously consider the idea over the next 10 years, Henry Pike acquired the land between Lake Washington and Lake Union, drew up a plan for a two hundred foot canal, and formed the Lake Washington Canal Company. Sometime between 1861-1864, he single-handedly took pick and shovel to his land and began to dig. His effort did not result in much but a large ditch. But, discussion of a canal had begun. The Army around the same time began discussing differing ideas of where this canal route would be and how/ where it could reinforce military presence in the region. This also did not result in much more being done for the next ten years.

This was only the beginning of a long and interesting history, according to David Williams: "The history of the canal involves dreamers and schemers who combined self-promotion, subterfuge, and politics to achieve their goals. Contending forces ranged from one man with a shovel to the United States Navy, who initially desired a safe place to dock their ships, to local citizens, who stood to benefit financially from the canal. Despite their differences, they all shared a common belief that nothing less was at stake than the future direction of Seattle. And yet, nearly 150 years after the canal idea was first proposed, the modern day canal serves few of the purposes for which these forces battled." (<http://makingthecut100.org/lake-washington-ship-canal-history/>)

The history includes arguments between Seattle Pioneers and its business elite. Five different routes and arguments for and against. It includes the refusal to use Chinese laborers; and, then the rebellion against them when they were finally brought in to do the work. It is about the military forces, their theories and their ideas and the military men who eventually got the Canal built – Hiram M. Chittenden amongst them. There were many legal battles over financing and money for the project. And, even claims that Chittenden was a racist and the Native Americans were hurt by its construction as their sacred Black River was drained as a result of the project.

In the end, despite all the reasons people came up with for building these locks with the resultant politics and history, the convoluted financing and bickering - the engineering feat of the Locks had to accomplish three things according to Government sources: "The locks and associated facilities serve three purposes: To maintain the water level of the fresh water Lake Washington and Lake Union at 20–22 feet (6.1–6.7 m) above sea level, or more specifically, 20.6 ft (6.3 m) above Puget Sound's mean low tide, prevent the mixing of sea water from Puget Sound with the fresh water of the lakes (saltwater intrusion), and move boats from the water level of the lakes to the water level of Puget Sound, and vice versa."

**Now** - One hundred years later, this July 4th, we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the opening of this waterway marvel. An engineering wonder and a free passage way for boats and ships allowing them to come inland to Lake Washington or move out from there to the open sea thorough Lake Union, Salmon Bay and Puget Sound. The beautiful Carl S. England Botanical Garden (a rich history on its own) and the Fish Ladder have been added to the locks as well as Commodore Park on the Magnolia side. It is the home of a large blue heron rookery. There are free tours of this nationally landmarked historic site as well as its free summer concert series.

Currently, the Locks needs your support as they try to raise funds to make repairs to "dire conditions" at the Visitor's Center, the Fish Ladder and the Gardens.

**Go to <http://www.ballardlocks.org/> to find out more.**

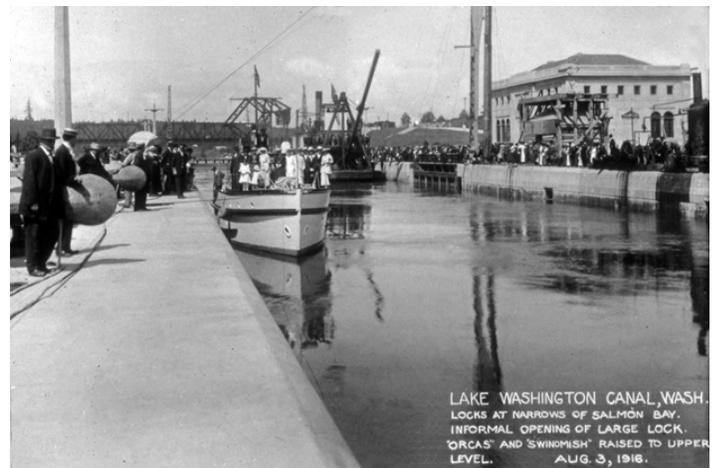


Photo Courtesy of Paul Dorpat





## MHS Board for 2017-2018



**Linda O'Neal**, will serve as President, has lived in Magnolia for over 20 years. Her interests include genealogy and writing her memoirs. Linda would like to draw people from the community who are interested in personal history as well as our community as a whole.

**Kathy Cunningham** is a long time Magnolia resident with a love of history. Retired from the Federal Government, her son, Jeffrey Cunningham—ex-MHS President got her interested in volunteering for MHS. She has been serving as Secretary and will continue that role.



**Dee St. George**, a Magnolia resident for 40 years, joined MHS in 2006 as Grant Bookkeeper for *Magnolia: Making More Memories*. She will continue work on events, Newsletter and to serve as Treasurer.



**Greg Shaw**, raised in Magnolia, attended Magnolia Elementary, Catherine Blaine, QA High School and UW in Marketing. He has worked as a Managing Broker for Windermere in Magnolia for 16 years. He will continue to serve as Book Sales Coordinator and publicity.

**Bruce Jones** retired from IBM and has served as our Webmaster since Smith Design Works created our website.  
[www.magnoliahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.magnoliahistoricalsociety.org)

**Jeff Cunningham** serves as MHS Facebook Administrator in charge of designs and updates which can be seen at  
[www.facebook.com/magnoliahistoricalsociety](http://www.facebook.com/magnoliahistoricalsociety)



### MHS Seeking Members to continue doing what we do to make more Magnolia memories

Join our organization which enjoys our mission of collecting, presenting, preserving the neighborhood history

- > Interest in Magnolia's past and present
- > Creative ideas encouraged
- > Meet monthly (but not in the summer)
- > No experience needed

**Questions or to Volunteer - Call (206) 380-4984**



### Magnolia: Memories & Milestones and Magnolia: Making More Memories

We are willing to work with any group in using our books as a fundraiser  
For details call Greg - (206) 579-5475

## Snapshot in Time: Magnolia School - A Historic Landmark's Renovation and Reopening

by Lisa Meoli, MHS Board Member & Environmental Historian, Floyd|Snider

### Then...

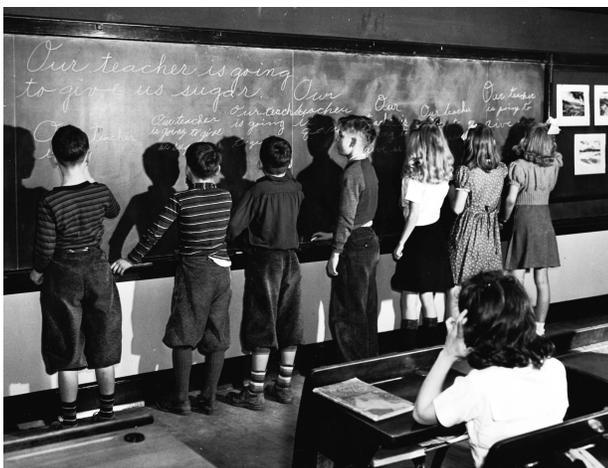
Magnolia School, the former elementary school given historic landmark status located on 28th Avenue West, opened in 1927. At that time, Magnolia School was a nine-room, brick building with marbles steps in the front leading up to a grand entrance. The school was designed by Floyd A. Naramore, a Seattle schools architect, who designed more than thirty schools in the Seattle area in the 1920s and '30s, in his signature Georgian Colonial Revival style.

Magnolia School was built for teaching grades 1-6. The school was later expanded to include grades 7 and 8. By 1929, 235 students were enrolled, and it was determined that additional space was needed. The school underwent a series of buildouts to accommodate a growing population in 1931, 1939, 1941, and again in 1969, by the Seattle School District. By 1947, the school became overcrowded, prompting construction of Catherine Blaine Junior High School in 1952. Catherine Blaine is now one of two elementary schools in Magnolia.

Dale Forbus Hogle, a lifelong resident of Magnolia and former attendee of Magnolia School, remembers the school fondly, "when school opened in September after the long summer vacation, your room assignment and your teacher were yours for the entire year. That classroom became as familiar as your home. In each classroom were very tall windows with yellow shades which could be raised by some means of cords and pulleys for afternoons when the sun streamed in the west windows. Rows of individual wooden desks with seats that folded up were bolted to the floor. Each desk had an ink well on the right rear corner. The wells were filled each morning from a large bottle of liquid blue permanent ink. Ball points had not been invented yet! It was a bad day when ink spilled on your clothes. The top of the desk to reveal a compartment for your books, papers, pencils, and pens with replaceable metal points. The desk you were assigned was your own for the whole year. Wood shavings from the pencil sharpener on the wall gave off a strong smell. Students' coats and jackets produced a musty smell in the cloakroom at the back of every room. There was a kind of comfortable feeling of belonging every day in that classroom."



Kids getting on the bus from Magnolia School.  
Photo courtesy of MOHAI



Fourth-grade students at Magnolia School write, "Our teacher is going to give us sugar" on the blackboard during WWII. Photo courtesy of MOHAI

Magnolia School closed its doors in 1984 due to the development of other programs and schools opening in the region. After Magnolia School closed, the building was used as an interim site for several schools as their buildings were being renovated. Adams Elementary moved in from 1987 to 1989, and John Muir Elementary from 1989 to 1990. The African American Academy occupied the building from 1993 until their new school was completed in 2000. Franz H. Coe Elementary used the building between 2000 and 2002 during a renovation of their facility. Since 2002, Magnolia School has been vacant, although residents, community advocates, and the school board have now come up with funding to rehabilitate and reopen a new elementary school. That's about to change.

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**Snapshot in Time: Magnolia School - A Historic Landmark's Renovation and Reopening (continued from page 4)****Now...**

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has long acknowledged the overcrowding and underfunding of some schools. On February 5, 2015, members of the Washington Legislature's Seattle delegation sent a letter requesting that the State Senate Capital Budget Committee set aside \$33 million in the SPS capital budget to address safety upgrade needs and severe overcrowding. Noting projected enrollment forecasts averaging a growth of 1,000 students per annum, they pointed out that the Seattle School District could have an enrollment of "approximately 60,000 students by the year 2020." The request identified three projects for funding, including the Magnolia School. On March 27, 2015, the state announced that part of the capital budget would include plans to repair and reopen the Magnolia School.

In 2015, SPS received a Distressed Schools Grant to assist in funding the reopening of Magnolia School, but additional funding was required. In February 2016, Seattle voters approved to renew the \$758.3 million Operations Levy and the six-year \$475.3 million Buildings, Technology and Academics (BTA) IV Capital Levy, replacing the expiring BTA III Capital Levy, approved in 2009. Passage of the BTA IV capital levy will allow SPS to implement building-system improvements that meet the City of Seattle Substantial Alterations code designation (i.e., seismic and energy conservation improvements) and will fund upgrades and renovations of aging schools. The capital levy allocates \$87.8 million to renovate and open three vacant elementary schools, EC. Hughes, Webster, and Magnolia, and to build an addition increasing capacity by 500 seats at Ingraham High School. Magnolia School will receive approximately \$20 million in supplemental funding.

According to Seattle Public Schools, 40,300 square feet of the existing school will be renovated and an additional 30,800 square feet added. Magnolia Elementary School is currently being designed by Mahlum Architects to accommodate 500 students serving kindergarten to fifth grade. In addition to renovating the historic landmarked building, a new gym, library, kindergarten classrooms and support spaces will be constructed. Other improvements will include a new playground on school property and site landscaping. Ella Bailey will remain separate, and in use as a city park.



Photo courtesy of MOHAI

"Over the past several months, the design team, led by Mahlum Architects, has been working diligently to finalize design of the renovation and expansion of Magnolia Elementary School," says Jeanette Imanishi, Seattle Public Schools Project Manager. "Their activities included engaging with a school design advisory team made up of representatives from the Magnolia community and school district staff to understand priorities for the design. Together, they wrote the guiding vision statement: 'At Magnolia School, we build a joyful, caring community, fostering balance, creativity and curiosity surrounded by nature and framed by a historic modernized building.'"

Imanishi said the project will be advertised for bids beginning March 14, 2017, with Bid opening planned for April 20, 2017, and construction scheduled to begin on or around June 1, 2017. The newly renovated and expanded Magnolia Elementary School is slated to open Fall 2018. More information about the Magnolia School Masterplan can be located at [www.bta.seattleschools.org](http://www.bta.seattleschools.org)

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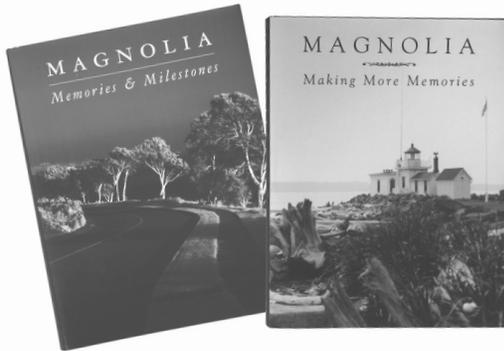
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**Public Welcome to Attend!**  
**ANNUAL EVENT**  
**Seattle Locks - A Century of Change**  
**Thursday, May 25, 7-9pm**  
see page 1 for details

