



# The Heritage

Heritage Chapter Bluebills  
Boeing Retiree Volunteer Newsletter

October 2023

WWW.BLUEBILLS.ORG

VOLUME 29 ISSUE 10

## Chairman's Comments



*By Richard Vaughn*

September has been a busy month for the Bluebill's/Heritage Chapter office. Boeing contacted us to let us know that they need the space the Bluebills Everett Chapter had occupied at the Everett Activity Center and they would like for us to remove the items stored there. We contacted Rose Johnson, a former member of that chapter, and she volunteered to see that this was done. Rose immediately set to work on this huge job and with the help of Boeing employees they completed the work in several days. Some of their records are to go to the Boeing Archives and some boxes of items came to our office where we are in the process of sorting them and determining what will be done with the pictures, etc. Cory Ertel, Bluebill's Boeing Representative, picked up some items in Everett that were too large to ship and delivered them to our office. Thank you, Cory.

We now have Volunteer tee shirts of bright colors and various sizes. If anyone would like to have one let me know.

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Friday, September 29, 2023, was scheduled to be the September Heritage Chapter Monthly Meeting at the VFW in Renton at 10:00 a.m. social time and the meeting to commence at 10:30 a.m. as usual.

Preparations for the meeting started at 9:00 a.m. that morning when Jim unlocked the door for us to come in and prepare the coffee and set up for the meeting. Don started the coffee prep., Norma set up the sign-in table and Richard made sure everything was ready for the members we thought would be there. In a short while Mary brought in the door prizes and Oscar delivered a bag of aluminum cans. Mike was the last to arrive. 10:15 came and went, 10:30 came and went and so on until it was 11:30 and no one else had come through the door for the meeting.

**WHERE WERE YOU?**





## September Meeting Summary

By: Mary Ulibarri

Well, this month's meeting was certainly a change from our usual monthly gathering. There was a total of seven members present. But the fun part -- two of them were celebrating their birthdays this month: Norma Vaughn and Don Hilt. Two others on my list are Lisa Nyreen and Marcia Phelps.

Actually, the lack of attendance was not a big surprise since there was no speaker. After about 30 minutes of visiting and sharing donuts, we packed up the supplies, dumped the coffee and headed off in various directions.

See you in October!

Reminder to turn in volunteer hours to [marybarri20@gmail.com](mailto:marybarri20@gmail.com) or Dick Beham at [bbbeditor@live.com](mailto:bbbeditor@live.com).

## The Importance of a Horse's Ass

Submitted by Lonnie Heinz

### *An Internet Short-Story:*



The US standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number.

Why was that gauge used?

Because that's the way they built them in England and English expatriates designed the US railroads.

Why did the English build them like that?

Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways and that's the gauge they used.

Why did 'they' use that gauge then?

Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they had used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing?

Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So who built those old rutted roads?

Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe



(including England ) for their legions. Those roads have been used ever since.

And the ruts in the roads?



Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels.

Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. Therefore the United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot. Bureaucracies live forever.

The next time you are handed a specification/procedure/process and wonder 'What horse's ass came up with this?', you may be exactly right. Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the rear ends of two war horses. (Two horses' butts.)



Now - the twist to the story:



A Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad has two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at a factory in Utah. Engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains, and the SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, *as you now know*, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.



So, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system, was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's ass.

*And you thought being a horse's ass wasn't important!*

Happy Halloween!



## EASTSIDE HERITAGE CENTER



*Connections for yesterday, today, and tomorrow.*

## East Side Stories

### Bellevue's Own Stucco Lustrro

*By Margaret Laliberte, Eastside Heritage Center Volunteer*

It's something of a mystery, hiding in plain view. Tucked between the Bellevue Library's second floor Pacific Northwest Collection and the reference desk, a large fresco—7 feet by 10 feet—is easily overlooked by passersby. Those who stop to look, though, will be taken by the glowing colors, still vibrant as they were 54 years ago, when the mural was created.

This is a stucco lustrro fresco, the only one of its kind in North America when it was created by Austrian artist Sepp Mayrhuber---and is probably unique even today. Mayrhuber created the piece in 1968 and '69 to honor his mother-in-law Marguerite Groves, who was among the first volunteers in the Bellevue Women's Club to gather a stash of discarded books to form the community's first library back in 1925. (When the library became part of the King County Library System in 1944, Groves became its first paid librarian.) The fresco was created when the Bellevue Library was located on 116th Avenue N.S., near Main Street, near where a Lexus car dealership stands today. It was moved to its present location when the current library building opened in 1993.



*Stucco Lustrro Fresco by Sepp Mayrhuber,  
Bellevue Library*

The fresco portrays Wisdom dressed in white passing the Book of Knowledge on to Youth. On the left are various symbols of civilization's past, including cave paintings and medieval manuscripts. On the right are set out symbols of today's science and technology. (An astronaut looks a bit like a medieval knight.)

Mayrhuber spent 12 years researching the ancient stucco lustrro technique, which had been developed in Greco-Roman times and

*(Continued on page 5)*

largely forgotten. Once he believed he had recreated the original technique, he sent samples to experts in Berlin, Munich and Rome. They eventually certified that he had indeed reproduced results identical to methods used on frescoes in ancient Pompeii. The process involves applying several layers of thin plaster containing a combination of slaked lime and marble grit. Then the artist paints the design in watercolors. The fresco's surface is literally painstakingly ironed with heat to set the colors. Finally the entire surface is waxed with beeswax and polished with linen.

Take the time, when you next visit the library, to discover this lovely and unique work of art in our midst. Although Mayrhuber created several stucco lustro murals in his native Austria, the technique he recaptured years ago has hardly become well known again. A recent search on the internet returned the site of a Swedish artist who in 2018 was offering workshops on the technique. His site had drawn just two replies.

## NEWS THEN, HISTORY NOW

*From: Historylink.org\*

### **A Trail Constructed with Heart**

Thirty years ago this week, on October 2, 1993, the **Iron Goat Trail** opened near Stevens Pass, a few miles east of **Skykomish**. This scenic hiking trail was built along the grade once used by the **Great Northern Railway**, which began transporting passengers between Washington and Minnesota in 1893. Because the transcontinental line had to cross so many mountains along its route, owner **James J. Hill** chose the sure-footed mountain goat as its corporate symbol. And with that, his "iron horses" became known as the Iron Goat.

Construction of the rail line over Stevens Pass proved to be a formidable challenge and required an intricate set of switchbacks cut into the mountainside. The Cascade Tunnel bypassed the switchbacks after it was built in 1900, but a **deadly avalanche** in 1910 led to the creation of the **Eight-Mile-Tunnel** and abandonment of the old grade. For the next 60 years, the original rail bed was overtaken by forest growth and slowly faded into the environment.

Beginning in 1989, trails advocate and **Mountaineers** member **Ruth Ittner** sought to revitalize the path as a way of merging history and nature. She **rallied countless volunteers** to her side and they cleared a way and constructed four miles of trail for the initial phase of the project. Since then, more miles of trail have been added, along with an interpretive site and historical markers. Each year, hikers of all ages enjoy this gentle walk through the Cascades and into the past. (Image courtesy The Mountaineers)

### **Off to a Capital Start**

In October 1846, Edmund Sylvester and Levi Smith staked a claim on the southern end of Puget Sound, in a settlement that Smith named Smithfield. Two years later, Smith died enroute to his first session as an **Oregon Territory** legislator, and when Sylvester assumed ownership of Smith's property he renamed the community **Olympia**.

In 1853, Territorial Governor **Isaac Stevens** chose Olympia as the **capital** of the newly creat-

ed **Washington Territory**. Besides being the region's largest settlement at the time, the fledgling community was also located on Puget Sound, allowing easy access by boat. **Rail lines** and roads came later.

By the time Washington **approached statehood** in 1889, other cities had surpassed Olympia in both population and commercial prominence. **Pasco**, **Tacoma**, and **Spokane Falls** considered themselves capital-worthy, but the big contenders were **North Yakima** and **Ellensburg**, both in the center of the state. North Yakima had tried to claim the capital by legislative action in 1887, and a prospective governor's mansion was already under construction in Ellensburg.

On October 1, 1889, voters chose **Washington's first state officials**, and although Olympia was selected as the state capital, it did not receive a majority of votes. One month later a second election was held among the top three vote-getters. Ellensburg received 7,722, North Yakima gathered 6,276, and Olympia tallied a whopping 37,413 votes, making it the **clear winner** and home to the state **Capitol Building** ever since.

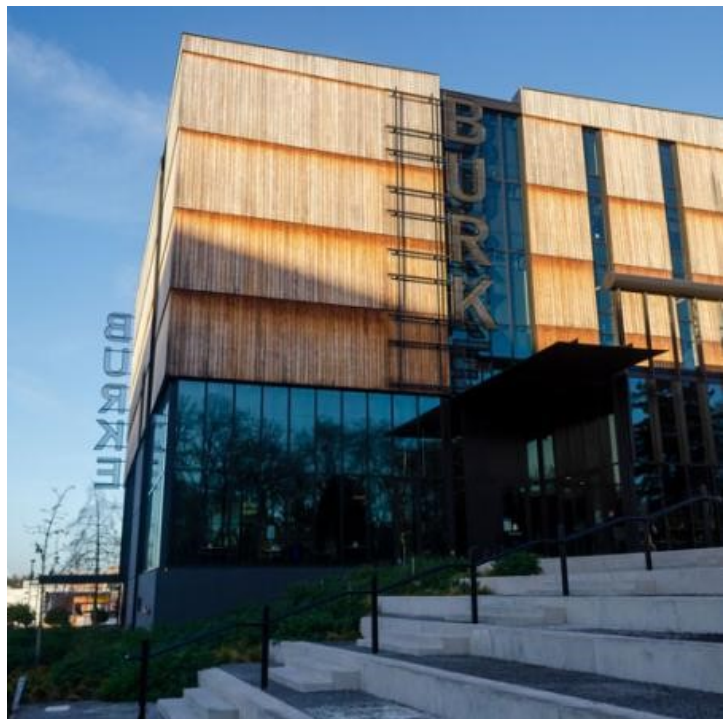


## Chapter Meeting October 27 Presentation

*By Jim Beasley*

The presenter for our October 27th Heritage Chapter gathering will be Lizann Nesdett from the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture. She will present a brief history and overview of the museum it's exhibits, programs and newer finds.

The museum was established in 1885 and serves Washington state by providing hands on science and culture, education, conducting original research, preserving our heritage and caring for 18 million objects. The museum is located at 4303 Memorial Way NE, Seattle WA.



**This promises to be a very interesting and informative presentation you will not want to miss!**



### BITS & PIECES

I tried to come up with a carpentry pun that woodwork. I thought I nailed it but nobody saw it.

Doesn't "expecting the unexpected" make the unexpected expected?

If love is blind, why is lingerie so popular?

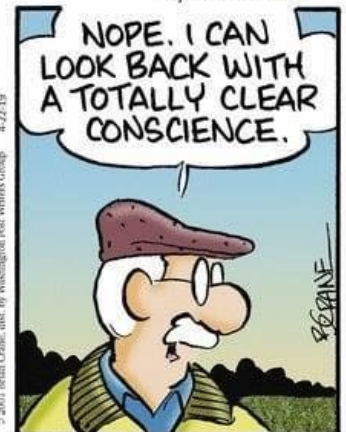
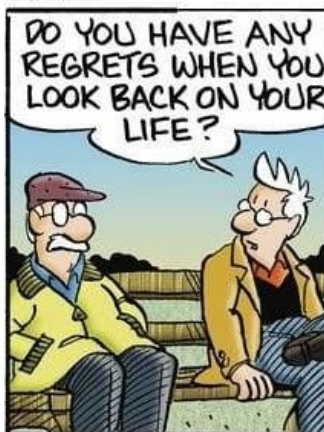
**Very Short Story** Man driving down road. Woman driving up same road. They pass each other. Woman yells out window, PIG! Man yells out window, BITCH! Man rounds next curve. Man crashes into a HUGE PIG in middle of road and dies. Thought For the Day: **If men would just listen**



**For most people when you lose your "khakis" you've lost your pants. When you're from Boston & lose your "khakis" you can't start your car.**

Pickles

By Brian Crane



## Calendar of Events 2023

### In Person Meetings

<i>Jan 27</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Feb 24</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Mar 31</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Apr 28</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>May 26</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Jun 30</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Jul 28</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Aug 25</i>	<i>Chapter In-Door Potluck</i>
<i>Sept 29</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Oct 27</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Nov 17</i>	<i>Chapter Monthly Meeting</i>
<i>Dec 15</i>	<i>Chapter Holiday Potluck</i>

### **Food Bank Schedule For 2023**

Cash donations collected at each monthly meeting to be given to a different food bank each month.

<i>January</i>		<i>Open</i>
<i>February</i>	<i>Bellevue</i>	<i>Doug Hoople</i>
<i>March</i>		<i>Open</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>Maple Valley</i>	<i>Vaughn's</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>Kent</i>	<i>Melinda Stubbs</i>
<i>June</i>	<i>Auburn</i>	<i>Martha Battles</i>
<i>July</i>	<i>Renton</i>	<i>Meri England</i>
<i>August</i>	<i>Black Diamond</i>	<i>Vaughn's</i>
<i>September</i>	<i>Federal Way</i>	<i>Don Hilt</i>
<i>October</i>	<i>White Center</i>	<i>Heinz Gehlhaar</i>
<i>November</i>		<i>Open</i>
<i>December</i>		<i>Open</i>

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| <b>(Open)</b>         | <b>School Supplies for Children</b><br><a href="mailto:bluebills@boeing.com">bluebills@boeing.com</a>                     |

**Don't Forget to  
Report Your Hours!**



# Bluebills Heritage Chapter Meeting



**October 27, 2023**

**Social 10:00AM, Meeting 10:30 - 11:30AM**

***Speaker: Lizann Nesdett, Burke Museum of Natural History***

***Subject: History and overview including newer finds***

*Come to the meeting, enjoy coffee, donuts, informative presentations and socialize with other retirees.*

*(Bring a non-perishable food item to monthly meetings to be given to a different food bank each month.)*

The Bluebills monthly meetings are held at the VFW Post 1263, 416 Burnett Ave South, Renton, WA. Parking is available in the lot immediately across the street from the VFW.

## Bluebills Monthly Volunteer Hours

**Volunteer Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Hours worked** \_\_\_\_\_ **For** \_\_\_\_\_  
(month/year) (agency name)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Hours worked** \_\_\_\_\_ **For** \_\_\_\_\_  
(month/year) (agency name)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Hours worked** \_\_\_\_\_ **For** \_\_\_\_\_  
(month/year) (agency name)

Please send completed hours form to Bluebills, PO Box 3707 1K-B02, Seattle, WA 98124  
Email to bluebills@boeing.com or bring to Bluebills monthly meeting