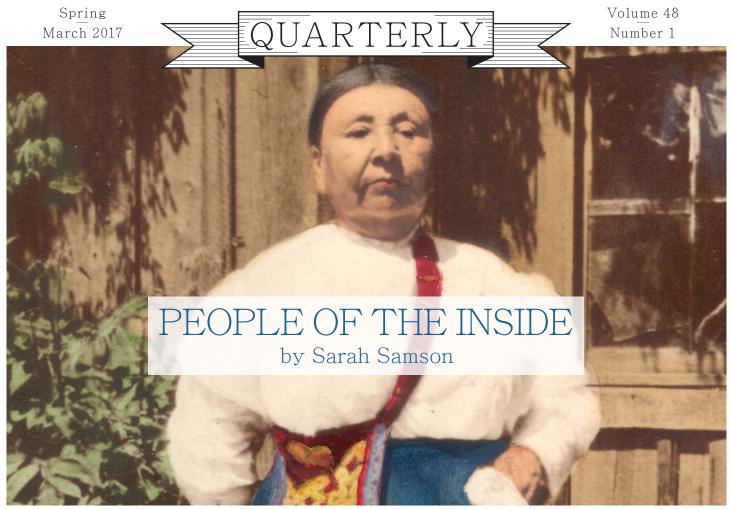
RENTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

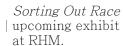


Midway through 2016, the Museum received a grant from 4Culture to update our permanent exhibit on the Duwamish people. The following article is the result of the research conducted for this exhibit. We spend hours researching our exhibits and much of the information we uncover gets left on the cutting room floor due to the space constraints of our gallery. Thankfully, our newsletter allows us another avenue for sharing the stories of Renton's rich history.

housands of years before White settlers made their way to the Pacific Northwest, the Duwamish people called this area home. The word "Duwamish" translates as "people of the inside," in contrast with other Coast Salish peoples who lived and traded in the open water of Puget Sound. The Duwamish lived along Elliott Bay and the Black, Cedar, and Duwamish Rivers and moved across the environment following Continued on page 5

Also In This Issue...







Museum Report | by Elizabeth P. | Stewart, Director.



President's Report
| by Alexis Madison,
| Board President.



Programming Report, by Kim Owens, Public Engagement Coord.



SORTING OUT RACE

In March 2017 the Renton History Museum will host the Kauffman Museum traveling exhibit Sorting Out Race: Examining Racial Identity & Stereotypes in Thrift Store Donations. We are excited to share Sorting Out Race and provide an array of programs (see page 8) that will encourage Rentonites to come together, share experiences, and learn about more about our diverse community. As described on the Kauffman website, "Sorting Out Race arose out of a desire to divert artifacts with racial content from thrift stores to an exhibit that would generate a healthy community conversation about racial stereotypes past and present in order to heighten awareness of our continuing struggles with race." Grand opening event is March 30th at 5:30 pm.

From MARCH 30 to MAY 17

VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON

On February 13th we hosted our annual Valentine's Volunteer Luncheon to say thank you to our excellent volunteers. Last year our 45 volunteers gave us 1,094 hours of their time, enthusiasm, and expertise. This lunch is our little way of trying to repay their loyalty and generosity. We always try to provide a little enrichment during the lunch and this year we invited Benita Horn, the City of Renton's Diversity and Inclusion

Consultant, to speak to us about "How to dialogue with people from different perspectives." She provided wonderful insight and will also be leading further volunteer trainings as we prepare for our next exhibit Sorting Out Race.



HOMER VENISHNICK 1926-2017

We are sad to pass along the news that lifelong Renton resident and Renton Historical Society volunteer, Homer Venishnick, passed away in January. His family had a deep history in Renton, reaching back into the 1890s when his grandfather, Ferry F. Burrows, owned and operated Burrows' Pleasure Resort on the now-disappeared Black River. Homer served as a paratrooper during WWII and worked at Stoneway for 30 years. Homer

inherited a love of fishing and the outdoor life from his grandfather, and never hesitated to share stories about the Cedar River and his fishing exploits, as a volunteer at the Museum or with his friends at the Thriftway coffee shop.



MUSEUM REPORT

by Elizabeth P. Stewart, Museum Director

Preparations are well underway for our upcoming exhibit, Sorting Out Race: Examining Racial Identity & Stereotypes in Thrift Store Donations, a traveling exhibit organized by the Kauffman Museum in Bethel, Kansas. Our Public Engagement Coordinator, Kim Owens, has put together our largest calendar of events ever for a single exhibit, with opportunities to learn about many of the diverse communities that make up the city of Renton. We have been working with our Community Advisory Group to develop opportunities for dialogue, learning, and enjoying cultural expression. We'll be hosting students from CryOut!, city staff and volunteers actively engaged in "Undoing Racism," as well as speakers from Humanities Washington and Living Voices. Check out the list of programs for kids and adults on page 8 of this newsletter.

Sorting Out Race is an extraordinary exhibit that has already travelled to The Prairie Museum in Colby, KS and the Henry Madden Library of Fresno State University. The Kauffman Museum organized this exhibit in response to questions from thrift shop and antique store operators in their community who were concerned about putting harmful stereotypes on the shelves of their stores. The exhibit uses these thrift store donations with derogatory racial and ethnic imagery to open a conversation about identity. Are these items harmless reminders of past attitudes, or do they perpetuate harmful stereotypes? Should they be "sorted out" of American life permanently?

This exhibit will undoubtedly raise many memories—positive and negative—for you, and may provoke many questions, to which there are no easy answers. At a moment when the world seems more polarized than ever, these objects and images will make us all uncomfortable, but that is not a reason to look away. Throughout its history Renton has grappled with finding ways for a very ethnically and racially diverse community to move forward together. Your hometown museum has a role to play in that: opening conversations about sometimes controversial issues, serving as a space for dialogue and discussion, and providing facts that inform those discussions.

We hope you'll take advantage of this chance to think about race, ethnicity, and how we treat people who are different from us. And we hope you'll share with us your thoughts about this exhibit and the programs that surround it—in person, in an email, in a Facebook or Twitter post, or on the phone. We are committed to continuing these healthy conversations, because we believe the Renton History Museum is, and will continue to be in the future, an important community institution.



Elizabeth P. Stewart

—
Director



What do you think of when you read this t-shirt?



How does the back change your mind about the front? Or does it?

QUARTERLY Spring 2017

RENTON HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Sarah Samson Graphic Design & Layout Karl Hurst City of Renton Print & Mail Services

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MUSEUM STAFF

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RENTON HISTORY MUSEUM 235 MILL AVENUE S RENTON, WA 98057

P (425) 255-2330 F (425) 255-1570

HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday 10:00am - 4:00pm

ADMISSION: \$5 (Adult) \$2 (Child)



UPCOMING EVENTS



CRYOUT! POETRY SLAM, SONG & DANCE April 6

April 6 5:30 pm-6:30 pm

CryOut! uses music, dance, arts, and workshops to empower the youth, developing them to be leaders who pursue justice for themselves and others in their communities.



WITHIN THE SILENCE April 8 11:00 am-12:00 pm

In 1942 Roosevelt's
Executive order 9066
imprisoned thousands of
loyal American families.
Share one Japanese American
family's fight to sustain faith
in the country they love.



NOT JUST FOR KIDS: HOW CHILDREN'S LITERATURE INSPIRES BOLD CONVERSATIONS April 13 6:00-7:00 pm

Join UW Senior Lecturer Anu Taranath to learn how kids and adults—can use children's books from around the globe to navigate our complicated world.



STORYTELLING WITH ROGER FERNANDES April 22

11:00 am -12:00 pm

Roger uses song and dance while telling traditional Native American stories. He believes that all stories speak the same human language and teach the same lessons.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Alexis Madison, President

s I think about the beginning of 2017 I reflect that we are going through tumultuous times. This makes me think about the following quote: "Be the change you want to see in the world." I take this mantra to heart as the President of the Renton Historical Society. I know as a trustee that I am making a difference to the Museum and to the community.

As board members of the Renton Historical Society we all work tirelessly to support the museum, by attending events, fundraising, networking, and participating in committees that aid the Museum's activities. We do it because we believe in the Museum's mission of bringing people together through a shared understanding of our community's history. Our mission brings this amazing, collaborative, innovative group of people together into a cohesive team. Each trustee gives up some of his or her free time each month to make an impact at the Museum and in the community, and by doing that they begin to make positive change.

My team needs more board members. Have you ever thought about volunteering on a Board of Trustees? Board service entails attending board meetings on the last Tuesday of each month, coming to exhibit openings and museum programs, helping with our annual fundraiser, and supporting the museum and community. Among our special activities coming up in 2017 are: participating in the visioning of Downtown Renton's Civic Core; revising the Renton Historical Society's strategic plan; helping publicize the Sorting Out Race exhibit; and organizing our October Makers & Doers fundraiser. Can you see yourself contributing to these initiatives?

In particular we are actively seeking a new Treasurer who will help our bookkeeper with quarterly financial statements, month-end reports, and some year-end tax returns. This Treasurer will need to love numbers and be able to communicate the financial status of the museum to the trustees at each board meeting. If you have accounting or bookkeeping experience, this position is your chance to use your talents to shape budgeting, financial planning, and endowment investments for the long-term future of our organization. If that sounds like you, please email estewart@rentonwa.gov for an application.

Serving on the Board of Trustees of the Renton Historical Society offers many chances to "be the change"—we hope you'll join us!



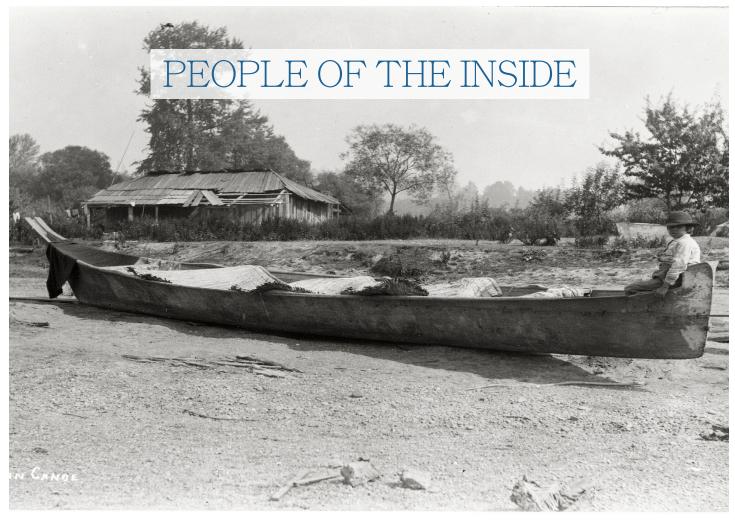
Alexis Madison
—
President



Perks of Board service: new friendships, and...



History behind-the-scenes!



Duwamish longhouse with canoe in the foreground on the bank of the Cedar River, 1893. Several extended families usually lived inside the longhouse together. A very large longhouse was excavated at the historic village site of Sba'badid along the Black River in Renton in the late 1970s. (Duwamish Indian Canoe, Clarence Leroy Andrews Photographs, PH001_1418, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, Oregon.)

Continued from page 1

the flow of resources. They had summer and winter camps with at least four habitation sites in Renton. Here the Duwamish built homes called longhouses. Made from wood planks, the houses were often big enough for a few families to live together.

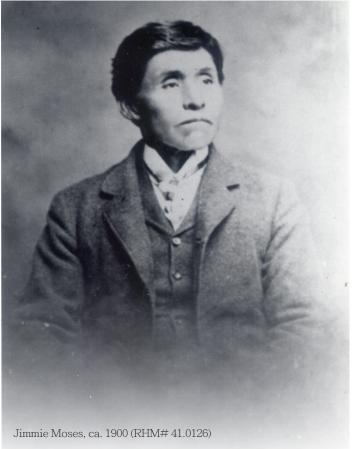
Salmon was a chief resource. The Duwamish built fishing weirs across the rivers to collect the spawning fish. Cedar was also central to their culture. Cedar was used to make canoes, paddles, and boxes. Expert weavers also made cedar hats, clothing, mats, and many types of specialized baskets.

NEW ARRIVALS

Life changed quickly for the Duwamish after the Denny Party's arrival in 1851. The steady stream of White settlers displacing all Pacific Northwest tribes led to the Treaty of Point Elliott which created Washington's reservations system. (The treaty was signed in 1855 but was not ratified by Congress until 1859.)¹ The Duwamish were among the tribes that did not receive their own reservation. Given White encroachment, some Duwamish were pushed to move to the Port Madison (Suquamish), Muckleshoot, or other reservations, all far from their ancestral homeland; others refused to leave. In the 1860s a brief push to get the Duwamish their own reservation was quickly quashed when a number of White settlers (including prominent Seattleites)

Cover photo: Jennie Moses, ca. 1907 (RHM# 1966.100.0128)





signed a petition against it.2

Henry Tobin, the first settler in what would later become Renton, arrived in 1852 and quickly set about improving his claim. He partnered with two other men to build a sawmill on the Black River.³ Unsurprisingly, the Native Americans and White settlers clashed. That friction came to a head in 1855-56 during the "Indian Wars." Tobin's sawmill was destroyed in a fire set by Native Americans from south of Renton.⁴ Tobin died soon after in 1856, leaving behind his widow Diana and young son Charles. In 1857 Diana married neighbor Erasmus Smithers. Smithers turned his land into a farm and often employed several Duwamish. A Duwamish village remained on their property as late as 1865.

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Stoda, also known as Chief William, was the son of Kwash chin (also sometimes referred to as kwi-AHK-tid), the Duwamish chief when the Denny Party arrived. (Arthur Denny gave all of Kwash chin's sons White names, including William.5) William's brother, Tecumseh, succeeded their father as chief of the Black River Duwamish, but in 1854 Governor Isaac Stevens overruled the Duwamish leadership preference by naming Sealth Chief of the Duwamish and Suquamish. Tecumseh's brother Keokuk was named sub-chief of the Black River Duwamish, and Tecumseh was overlooked. This was a time of great uncertainty for the Duwamish; the Indian Wars forced them off their land into Seattle and then briefly to Bainbridge Island.

In late 1856, however, a group of around 200 Duwamish returned to the Black River without government





permission. As punishment for this move, the government again overturned tribal leadership by naming William chief over his brother Keokuk.⁷ Almost immediately the Duwamish were pressured to leave. William would have none of it; he told the government "this land on Black River belongs to us—our fathers died here. Their bones are buried here, and we also will die here. We do not wish to fight the whites; if they come to drive us from this place we will not resist, but we will lie down and be shot like dogs rather than leave."8 Chief William succeeded in keeping the Duwamish on the Black River during his lifetime. He died in 1896 and was buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Duwamish healer Dr. Jack lived along the north bank of the Cedar River. He was an important figure in keeping Duwamish culture and traditions alive in the Renton area. The splintering of the community when the reservations were created made it difficult for the Duwamish to continue their traditions. In 1894 an important cultural event, the sing-gamble, was held at Dr. Jack's home. It was the first sing-gamble in 30 years. About 200 Puyallup tribal members traveled to Renton to participate in the ritual, with the combined Black and Cedar River Duwamish groups numbering about 100.9

The event featured a non-stop game of chance in which each tribe rotated "dealers" until one side took all. Johnny Wrinkles of the Puyallup and Dr. Jack of the Duwamish dealt first, with over \$3500 of goods at stake, including horses, wagons, saddles, blankets, rifles, jewelry, and more. Fortunes swung back and forth, with a draw ultimately called after five days. 10 In the language of his day, early Renton resident Thomas

Harries recalled of the event: "I well remember while living in Newcastle...at the given signal, the Duwamish tribe began to beat their tom toms and the women began to chant while all eyes were centered on Dr. Jack, their dealer."11

During the early months of 1900, Dr. Jack performed a spirit-canoe ceremony to heal his ailing cousin. Two other healers and one apprentice joined Dr. Jack for the two-day ceremony. An anthropologist acquired a first-hand account of the event that he claimed was already a vanished practice. The spirit canoe boards, staff, and figurines used in the ceremony were collected and shipped to the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania (today known colloquially as the Penn Museum) where they still are today. 12

MOSES FAMILY

The Moses family was unquestionably the most well-known Duwamish family in Renton. Descended from Chief William, Jimmie Moses and his family were the only Duwamish to have long-term ownership of ancestral land in Renton. The plot was located just to the west of Renton High School along the Black River. They lived there for many years but were finally given the deed to the land when Erasmus Smithers passed away in 1905.

Concrete information about the Moses family is hard to find; we mostly rely on newspaper articles, written remembrances from friends and acquaintances, and sparse state and federal records. A good example of this is Jimmie and Jennie's marriage date. Census records put their marriage around

Continued on page 10



CRYOUT! POETRY SLAM, SONG & DANCE April 6 5:30 pm-6:30 pm Performance



LIVING VOICES: WITHIN THE SILENCE April 8 11:00 am-12:00 pm Performance



NOT JUST FOR KIDS: HOW CHILDREN'S LIT. INSPIRES BOLD CONVERSATIONS April 13 6:00-7:00 pm Lecture



A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION WITH BENITA HORN April 15 TBD Facilitated dialogue



STORYTELLING WITH ROGER FERNANDES April 22 11:00 am-12:00 pm Storytelling



UNDOING RACISM IN RENTON April 27 7:00-8:30 pm Panel discussion



"THE STOLEN ONES" WITH MARCIA TATE ARUNGA May 6 11:00 am-12:00 pm Storytelling



LIVING VOICES: NATIVE VISION May 13 11:00 am-12:00 pm Performance

PROGRAMIMING REPORT

by Kim Owens, Public Engagement Coordinator



Kim Owens
—
Public Engagement
Coordinator

pring brings about a bustle of activity and it's no different at the museum. Why? Because we have 8 confirmed programs and events on the calendar and are currently working on adding more. All of these programs and events are in support of *Sorting out Race*, our next temporary installation. *Sorting Out Race* is a traveling exhibit created by the Kauffman Museum that uses thrift store finds as a catalyst to start conversations about racial

stereotypes, past and present, in order to heighten awareness of our continuing struggles with race.

Sorting Out Race is scheduled to open March 30th and we are planning to have a grand opening that night. Be sure to join us for light refreshments as we celebrate its start. This is the first time the Museum has hosted an

exhibit highlighting social justice issues and we are very excited about the support we've received from the City of Renton, the Renton Historical Society, our volunteers, and our Community Advisory Committee.

We are pleased to announce a collaboration with Renton's own CryOut!. CryOut! is a local non-profit organization that uses music, dance, arts and workshops to empower the youth, developing them to be leaders who pursue justice for themselves and others oppressed in their communities. Students from CryOut! will perform original poetry, songs, and dance around the theme "social justice."

I am also working on finalizing additional programs for adults. These programs include a facilitated dialogue, a panel discussion, and a Dungeons and Dragons (D&D) style game. The facilitated dialogue will be hosted by Benita Horn, the City of Renton's Inclusion & Equity Consultant, and will be an open discussion about the exhibit and race relations in Renton. The panel discussion asks, "What is the City of Renton Doing to 'Undo' Racism?" and will host community members and city officials.

D&D is a fantasy roleplaying game, in which players are characters in an ongoing fantasy story. The core of D&D is storytelling. The players tell a story together, guiding their characters through quests. The Museum's D&D style game will place its characters in history, instead of fantasy and watch them navigate through obstacles set before them. Be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or our website to see what's coming up next!

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

November 16, 2016 - February 15, 2017

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COME VISIT THE NEW PEOPLE OF THE INSIDE



Continued from page 7

1885.¹³ A Washington Indian Application, however, lists their marriage date as 1876, almost 10 years earlier.¹⁴

Jimmie and Jennie lived during a complicated time, forced to exist in two different worlds: Duwamish and White. Neither remembered a time without White people on their lands; both spoke Lushootseed but usually wore clothing like that of White Americans. Jimmie often worked as a farm laborer for White settlers, including the Smithers family. Jennie gave birth to 8 or 9 children; only three sons lived to adulthood. Joseph was born in 1882; Charlie in 1894; Henry in 1900. To One of the other children, a toddler-aged girl, drowned in the Black River. Jennie bore the pain of that event through the rest of her life and shared the story with her White friends. Accounts of this event were documented by several people.

Growing up the Moses boys paddled canoes on the Black River and caught salmon that they smoked near their house. The boys attended local schools. Joe and Charlie played on at least one baseball team. Henry was the family sports star, however. He participated in track and played baseball and basketball while attending Renton High School—resulting in the "Renton Indians" team name. In 1973, when Native Americans began objecting to mascots depicting stereotypes, Henry's wife Christina lobbied for the team to keep the name. She insisted that the Renton Indians name was always a source of pride for Henry and that it meant "determination, bravery and strength." 17

Henry's friend Leonard Mitchell remembered of Henry: "He was not only friend and companion, but was also a teacher. He taught me how to ride horseback, how to spear and gaff salmon, how to start a fire with wet wood, and he also taught me the Indian way to paddle a canoe. Whenever I sit on our deck overlooking the lake, and see canoeists going by paddling three strokes on the right and three on the left, I say to myself, 'Too bad, friend, that you didn't have an Indian to teach you the correct way when you were a boy.'"18

The mid-1910s brought quick and overwhelming changes. In 1915 Jimmie Moses died of stomach cancer, and the following year the Montlake Cut lowered Lake Washington by 16 feet, causing the Black River to dry up. "That was quite a day for the white people at least." recalled Joseph Moses. "The waters just went down, down, until our landing and canoes stood dry and there was no Black River at all. There were pools, of course, and the struggling fish trapped in them. People came from miles around, laughing and hollering and stuffing the fish into gunny sacks." 19

After Jimmie's death the family was in a tenuous financial situation. Circumstances worsened further when their middle son, Charlie, died at the age of 28 in 1919. Doe was now the only source of family income until Henry quit high school. Henry attended Renton High School around 1916-1920, but we know he did not graduate. Jennie made what money she could by weaving rags into rugs that she then sold. Henry married Lummi tribal member Christina John in 1936 and she immediately moved into the Black River house to take care of the aging Jennie. Jennie passed away in 1937. She was about 75 years old.

"THE LAST CHIEF"

After Jennie's death, Henry and Christina moved to Tacoma to work in the Indian Hospital, Henry as a janitor and Christina as a nurse's aide. His eldest brother Joseph stayed at the Renton

home until his death in 1954. After that, their land was sold to the Renton School District. Henry died in 1969 and Christina in 1973. They had no children.

While Rentonites frequently referred to Henry Moses as the "last Duwamish Chief," that is not the case. Duwamish leadership was not always inherited from father to son (nor were tribal leaders always chosen by the Duwamish, as during the mid-1850s when federal Indian Agents were making those decisions). After Chief William died, leadership switched to one of his brother Tecumseh's sons who lived at the Port Madison (Suquamish) Reservation.²² Nevertheless, Renton's White populace believed that Jimmie, one of William's sons, was a chief. When Jimmie died, they moved the honor down to his eldest son Joe. When Joe died, Henry became the mantlecarrier. A trophy awarded to Henry in 1968 is inscribed "To Chief Moses, Renton High School's Original Renton Indian, An Outstanding Athlete, 1916 - 1920."²³

DUWAMISH TODAY

Today the Duwamish remain scattered: some are part of federally recognized tribes such as the Muckleshoot or Suquamish. The non-reservation Duwamish still struggle to gain federal recognition as a Native American tribe. In the eyes of the federal government, the lack of a Duwamish reservation created a divided community that does not meet the requirements for federal recognition. In late 2001 tribal members, led by Tribal Chair Cecile Hansen, succeeded in gaining the federal recognition only to have it invalidated as soon as the next President took over.

The Tribe opened the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center in 2009. Located near the Duwamish River south of the West Seattle Bridge, the land holds special meaning as it was once the site of a Duwamish village. There the Tribe continues its culture and the fight for federal recognition.

ENDNOTES

- 1 David M. Buerge, *Renton: Where The Water Took Wing* (Chatsworth, California: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1989), p.23.
- 2 David Wilma, "Seattle pioneers petition against a reservation on the Black River for the Duwamish tribe in 1866." Historylink Article #2955.
- 3 Buerge, *Renton: Where The Water Took Wing*, p.22.
- 4 Clarence Bagley, *History of King County*, (Seattle: S.J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1929), I: 746
- 5 David M. Buerge, "The Life and Death of the Black River." *The Weekly*, 16-22 Oct 1985, p.38.
- 6 Ibid., p.47.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid., p.49.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Tom Harries, "The Sing Gamble," Renton News Record, 19 Aug 1937, n.p.
- 12 George A. Dorsey, "The Dwamish Indian Spirit Boat and its Use," *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, vol III, p. 236. 13 1910 Federal Census.
- 14 Enrollment & Allotment Applications of Washington Indians for Jennie Moses, 28 Jul 1917.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Letter, Merle Harries to Ethel Telban, 20 Dec 1976 (Vertical file: Moses Family, Collection of the Renton History Museum).
- 17 "There Was an Original 'Indian'," Renton Record-Chronicle, 18 Nov 1973, p.22.
 18 Leonard Mitchell, "My Memories of Henry Moses," Renton Historical Society Quarterly Newsletter, Nov 1978, p.5.
- 19 Buerge, Renton: Where The Water Took Wing, p.42.
- 20 Washington State Death Records (WA State Digital Archives)
- 21 Frank Conklin Manuscript, "The Moses Family," n.d. (Vertical file: Moses Family, Collection of the Renton History Museum).
- 22 Buerge, "The Life and Death of the Black River." p.49.
- 23 This trophy is currently on display in the new Duwamish exhibit at Renton History Museum. (RHM# 1984.999.001)





SAVE THE DATE: RENTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

Toin us for hors d'oeuvres and activities as we celebrate another year of participation with the Renton Historical Society and the Renton History Museum! The meeting is open to Society members, prospective members, and museum volunteers. Introduction of new Renton Historical Society trustees, awarding of the George and Annie Lewis Custer Award for Heritage Citizenship, volunteer awards, and raffle drawing will all be a part of this exciting event. Reservations required. Please RSVP by June 3. No regrets, please.

NI ---- - -

On JUNE 6:00 PM

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Nume.
Address:
Phone:
PAYMENT INFORMATION
Visa or MC #:
Exp. date:
Signature:
Please make checks payable to the Renton Historical Society.



RENTON HISTORY MUSEUM 235 Mill Ave. S Renton, WA 98057





To complement *Sorting Out Race*, we created an exhibit exploring the background of Renton High School's mascot, the "Indian." Learn why the school chose the mascot and why they still have it to this day. Come and see artifacts and yearbook covers illustrating the way Native American imagery has been used by the school through the decades. (Band uniform, 1968-1975. RHM# 2011.030.005; Pin, n.d. RHM# 2010.029.006)