



# Trolley Times

North Slope Historic District Inc. 501(c)(3) Organization August 2016 Volume 79

## AUGUST 18th PROGRAM: SAFETY IN NSHD

Safety in our neighborhood will be the theme of the NSHD Program meeting on Aug. 18<sup>th</sup>. Featured presenter will be our City Council Member, Robert Thoms, who will discuss:

- The Property Crime Task Force Recommendations and what NSHD residents can do to utilize the suggestions for neighborhood safety; a Tacoma police officer will also be there.
- The 21st St. Power Line changes that will impact North I St., as well as needed pedestrian safety measures on North I.
- Effects of increased development in Tacoma and adjacent to NSHD.

*Join us with your questions, suggestions and ideas for how we can improve safety in our homes and neighborhood.*

**August 18, 7pm, Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 901 N. J.  
Enter on North 9<sup>th</sup>. Coffee time at 6:30, meeting starts at 7:00**

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## FREE NSHD CLEAN-UP: SATURDAY AUGUST 13<sup>TH</sup>

The NSHD, Inc., with Tacoma Neighborhood and Community Based Services, will be cleaning-up the neighborhood again this year. In the past 5 years, we've disposed of 68 tons of garbage during this event. This is a chance for NSHD residential solid-waste customers, who own or rent a single-family home or duplex in the NSHD, to dispose of items that don't fit in garbage or recycle bins, **for free**.

**To volunteer, or request help** transporting items, contact **Geoff Corso at (206) 334-5202** or at [corso1965@live.com](mailto:corso1965@live.com). We especially need volunteers with pick-up trucks to help transport items from the neighborhood to the dumpsters.

Questions? Contact Cindy DeGrosse at [cindy.degrosse@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:cindy.degrosse@cityoftacoma.org) or (253) 591-5026.

Bring electronics, lawn equipment (empty fluids first), tires, carpet, furniture, exercise equipment, metals barbecues (no ash or propane tanks), strollers etc.

Do NOT bring items that fit in your trash, recycle, or yard/food waste bins; materials from a business, apartment building, or construction site; vehicles, including motorcycles, RV's, campers, truck canopies, boats, trailers, riding mowers; animal carcasses; hazardous materials; liquids; dirt or sod.

Goodwill or St. Vincent de Paul will likely be onsite to accept items for resale.

**FREE NSHD CLEAN UP**  
**SATURDAY AUG. 13 10am-1:45pm**  
**Jason Lee Middle School parking lot,**  
**602 N. Sprague Ave.**  
**ID required: bring driver's license or recent**  
**TPU bill**

# TROLLEY TALES

## Folklore from Tacoma's North Slope

By Karen May



### There's a Doctor in the House

The house at 704 N. Cushman Ave. was built in 1893. Dr. Peleg Wing lived there from 1899-1917. Following are excerpts from his life and career.

In 1889, after their mother's death, three brothers traveled from Maine to Tacoma, Washington. Two were doctors and one was a storekeeper. The doctors had come to join the staff at the Fannie Paddock Hospital which had just relocated from its original home on Starr Street to "a new and commodious building...in the most healthful part of the city." The new 4-story, 100-patient facility was built on J Street between South 3rd and 4th.

Peleg and Ellery were already well-traveled and highly-educated young men. Both had graduated from Bowdoin Medical College. Peleg had also earned a degree from the New York Post-Graduate School of Medicine (now part of New York University

School of Medicine). He was a specialist in diseases of the ear, eye, nose, and throat and later became a renowned Fellow of the College of Surgeons, having studied at the University of Vienna. He eventually traveled throughout Europe – Edinburg, London, Paris, and Berlin — visiting hospitals and consulting with the world's leading surgeons.

Ellery left after 5 years and returned to Maine where he became a leading physician, holding a prestigious office in the State Medical Society. Peleg – and Lory as a mercantile man – prospered as well. In 1911, Lory built a substantial craftsman bungalow-style house on 920 North Grant Avenue that still stands and is on the National Historic Register.

In 1917, Peleg was 58, and in failing health. He had become eye surgeon for the railroad lines. Washington's Industrial Insurance Commission and the US Pension Board often called him as an expert witness regarding claims. He decided to retire from practice to rejuvenate. He moved to California, and when his health improved, lived until 1932 in San Diego, survived by his wife Anna, son Paul, daughter Pauline Lucretia and other family members.



704 N Cushman c. 1998

# ASK THE NORTH SLOPE HOUSE DOCTOR

- From "Trolley Times," April/May 2009 -

**Q: We just bought an old house and are anxious to fix it up. Where should we start? - Hot to Trot**

**A:** Dear Hot to Trot:

Whoa horsey! The first thing you should do is nothing. The best advice I got and am passing on to you is to try and **live in your new space for a year** without making any major changes. You need time to figure out how the space fits your lifestyle and what needs to be changed. Take that year to learn about the repair of old houses and develop a sequential plan for renovation. Chances



are, you will spend much of your renovation time undoing stupid things previous owners have done. You certainly don't want to do something that you'll have to undo or will regret later on. This is particularly true if you are removing original material. Once it's gone, it's gone.

Yes, you can rip out that smelly, stained carpet; just don't plan on refinishing the floor underneath any time soon. I know it's tempting to work on the pretty stuff first but there is a logical order to renovation and the first part isn't the glamorous bit. If your home needs foundation or roofing work, do that first. Then look at mechanical systems like heating, plumbing, and wiring. You don't want to be cutting into a wall to replace a pipe after you've installed that pricey art glass tile. Insulation of attic, walls, and crawlspace follows. Once the "boring" tasks are finished you can start work on cosmetic jobs: fixing walls, windows, stripping and refinishing woodwork, painting walls and exterior work. Repairing and refinishing floors should be the last job you do. Some other things to consider:

- **Repair rather than replace** whenever possible. Your lath and plaster has lasted 100 years. There's a reason for that. Take the time to find out why; don't just assume that drywall is better. For example, vinyl windows last a fraction

of the time of repaired wood windows. You might change your mind about replacing something when you understand more about building materials.

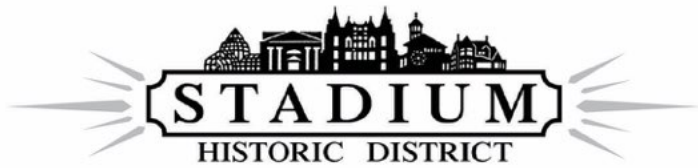
- Many people you call for bids or hire to work on your house will have **limited experience** working on historic homes. If someone suggests it's impossible to do a job without destroying original material, get another opinion. The first gutter replacement company that gave me a bid said they couldn't replace my gutters without sawing the ends off my decorative eave brackets. The second company had no problems replacing my gutters without damaging the brackets.

- **Honor the age of your home** with appropriate alterations and materials. If you can't afford to have all your original wood windows repaired, have the worst ones repaired and wait until you can afford to do the rest. Old homes have quirks – that's part of their charm. If you need perfection, maybe old home living isn't for you.

- **It will cost more to live in an old home;** that's just the way it is. Older homes need more maintenance and are often more expensive to heat. Do what you can to reduce costs but accept that you are paying for the privilege of owning a historic home. Don't try to vinylize those costs away. Use appropriate materials even if they cost a little more up front. In the long run, your home will be worth more than one with shoddy materials and workmanship. Recent studies have demonstrated that property values of homes in historic districts rise faster than homes elsewhere.

- As renovations drag on, look at the "before" pictures you've taken (you are taking pictures through all this, right?) Your progress will help you stay motivated. Above all, **enjoy the process**. In the end, you'll have the satisfaction and pride of doing a good job. You'll have helped to save an older structure and contributed to the overall quality of the neighborhood. And isn't that why you bought an older home in the first place?

**Send your questions to the North Slope House Doctor at [news@tacomanorthslope.org](mailto:news@tacomanorthslope.org)**



## Volunteer in Your District!

Meet great people, have fun, and help us bring exciting new things to Stadium. Contact Valerie at 253.988.8049

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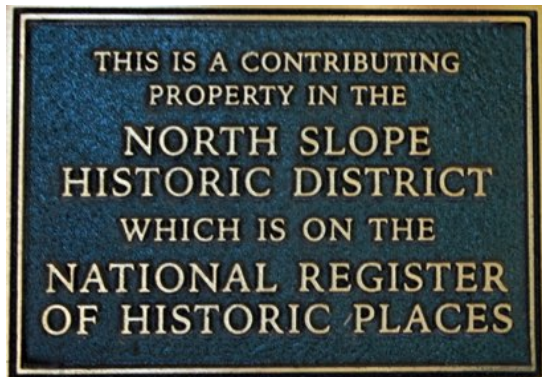
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# THE PLAQUE SAYS - “CONTRIBUTING” What does that mean?

By Jay Turner

The plaques that are attached to many of our homes say, *“THIS IS A CONTRIBUTING PROPERTY IN THE NORTH SLOPE HISTORIC DISTRICT . . .”*



There is a small error in the plaque because it should have said, “HISTORIC CONTRIBUTING” as the two words go together in the National Register. Often, the word “historic” is unwritten, like it is on this plaque.

Historic, in the NSHD, means that the house was built between 1881 and 1953. Now the question becomes, **what is an historic contributing property?** The definition of “historic contributing”, comes from the National Park Service (NPS): *“Properties may be eligible for the National Register if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.”*

In simple terms it comes down to this - - Does your house retain the characteristics that existed when it was built?

The NPS requires all properties in a residential historic district, like the NSHD, to be classified in one of 4 possible ways: Historic Contributing, Historic Non-contributing, Non-Historic and Vacant.

Non-Historic is just the opposite of Historic, meaning all houses in the NSHD that were built outside the period of significance, 1881-1953.

There are a number of “Historic Non-Contributing” properties in the NSHD. These houses have been altered such that original architecture is no longer visible - wrong dormers, inappropriate additions or alterations. They no longer have the “feel” of yesteryear.

Most important are the houses in The North Slope Historic District that are are “Historic Contributing”. The NSHD is an amazing residential historic district because 73% of the historic homes are HISTORIC CONTRIBUTING; they still have the “as built” characteristics and feel of what they were when they were built.

*OUR HISTORIC CONTRIBUTING HOUSES MAKE NSHD SPECIAL. WE CAN KEEP IT SPECIAL BY HANDLING THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE HOUSES WITH CARE.*

## DISCLAIMER

Properties within the National Register Historic District are listed variously as “Historic Contributing,” “Historic Non-Contributing,” “Non-Historic” and “Vacant.” These are classifications used by the National Park Service for the National Register **only**.

The North Slope Historic District is also listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places. The District was formed, beginning in 1994, and expanded in 1996 and 1999. **The boundaries and inventory of the “Tacoma Register” North Slope District designation differs from the “National Register” designation.**

Properties on The Tacoma Register North Slope Historic District are subject to Tacoma Municipal Code 13.07 and the historic district inventory adopted by the Tacoma Landmarks Preservation Commission. A complete list of properties, and City classification can be found on the NSHD web page [tacomanorthslope.org](http://tacomanorthslope.org) in the “NSHD LIBRARY” in Chap. 2.

Please call Tacoma’s Historic Preservation Officer Reuben McKnight, 253-591-5220, with any questions about City historic district requirements.

# NEWS AROUND THE NSHD

## FROM HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

The City of Tacoma Historic Preservation Office will now be **providing notification to adjacent property owners** when new construction, except for garages built off alleys, is proposed for the North Slope and Wedge Historic Districts. This will include notification for alterations that affect roofline, form, or foundation. Adjacent property owners, including those directly across streets and/or alleys, will receive a copy of the Landmarks Preservation Commission meeting agenda when qualifying projects are proposed.

This change comes out of an effort to provide early and clear communication to homeowners about projects that may affect their neighborhood. For questions, please contact [landmarks@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:landmarks@cityoftacoma.org)

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR 2016

You may recall the effort NSHD made last summer to defend our zoning category, HMR-SRD, from proposed amendments to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. We were successful in negotiating with Planning Staff changes that the NSHD, Inc. Board felt were advantageous – most importantly, the protection of our remaining contributing homes (approx. 724) from any conversion to duplexes. **This year there are no proposals that require our attention.**

*We still will face the Pilot Project proposals, such as adding Detached Accessory Dwelling Units, in the future. Constant vigilance will need to be our mantra for protecting HMR-SRD.*



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# From the Editor...

## **NEW WEBMASTER TAKES OVER**

NSHD resident Bernie Bates, our new webmaster, has taken on the task of implementing Board-requested changes to the website. He is making a few changes now, and other changes asked for by the Board will be gradual. He will serve as a member of the Communications Committee. If you have insight for Mr. Bates, write to: [news@tacomanorthslope.org](mailto:news@tacomanorthslope.org)

## **NEIGHBORHOOD TREE PLANTING PROJECT**

Susan Ryan, of North End Neighborhood Council, has informed NSHD that the City will be working with neighborhood groups to provide free trees for parking strips. If enough people show interest, the City will provide the trees, Tagro for planting, and instruction on planting.

**For full information, or to order a tree, contact NENC Members Susan Ryan at:** [sryan@harbornet.com](mailto:sryan@harbornet.com) **or Kyle Price at:** [kyle\\_price@aw.org](mailto:kyle_price@aw.org)

Full information, and how to get a tree, is available as an extra page with the On-Line version of the *Trolley Times*. You can get your copy at: <http://tacomanorthslope.org/library/TT.pdf> If you would like to receive the On-Line version of the *Trolley Times* and other North Slope News, send a request to [news@tacomanorthslope.org](mailto:news@tacomanorthslope.org)

*Julie Turner, Editor* [juliejayturner@gmail.com](mailto:juliejayturner@gmail.com)



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# WHY DID OUR STREET NAMES CHANGE?

*From "The Wedge Nomination for Tacoma Register of Historic Places."*

**AINSWORTH AVENUE** was originally platted as "P" Street. In 1893 the street's name was changed to Ainsworth, to honor Captain John C. Ainsworth, an early Tacoma developer and West coast pioneer. Originally from Ohio, he became a Mississippi River boat captain and sailed between St. Louis and points on the upper river. The discovery of gold in California led Ainsworth west, and he arrived in Oregon by 1850. While Ainsworth spent a considerable amount of his time in Oregon, he was a major investor in Tacoma real estate and helped facilitate the Northern Pacific railroad's construction between the Columbia River and Puget Sound. Ainsworth maintained a house in Lakewood (the Boatman-Ainsworth Residence) from 1878-1889.

**CUSHMAN AVENUE**, originally platted as "O" Street, was named for Francis W. Cushman in 1915. Cushman, an Iowa native, traveled west as a youth, studying law. He became a lawyer in 1889. In 1893 he moved to Tacoma and opened a law office with his brother, Edward E. Cushman and soon became active in politics. In 1898 Francis ran for Congress as a Republican, and won. He remained a Congressman until his death in 1909. Cushman was particularly active in securing Point Defiance for a city park, and it is for this work that he was often called the "Father of Point Defiance Park."

**SHERIDAN AVENUE** was originally named "N" Street. The name was formally changed to Sheridan Avenue in 1908 to honor General Philip H. Sheridan. Sheridan grew up in Ohio and graduated from West Point. In 1855 he headed west with the army and helped survey the first railway route to Oregon. Sheridan's rise to major general was in part facilitated by his association with General Ulysses S. Grant, who transferred Sheridan from his command in the west to the Army of the Potomac during the Civil War. Sheridan's crushing use of scorched-earth tactics helped win the war for the Union.

Sheridan's later life was spent fighting Native Americans during the Great Plains Indian Wars. He continued to use his scorched-earth campaigns and advocated the wholesale slaughter of bison as a way to deprive Plains Native Americans of their primary food source. Sheridan was pivotal in the development of Yellowstone National Park, and promoted military control of the area for protection until the National Park Service took control in 1916.

## North Slope Coffee House

At

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## NEIGHBORHOOD TREE PLANTING

Susan Ryan, who is on the North End Neighborhood Council, has informed the North Slope board that they have been working on identifying neighborhood groups that might want to have a street-tree planting party this fall. This is in coordination with the City of Tacoma who will provide the free trees, the soil and the guidance on planting and maintaining the trees.

If NSHD has 10 to 15 people interested in planting trees in their parking strip, we can become part of this effort.

Residents would be responsible for maintaining the trees. The city has a nursery of trees; however, they are not able to provide the exact names of what will be available at this time. However, if we have committed individuals, Susan Ryan feels confident that we could work out something to get the selections narrowed down and or tagged.

The Tagro delivery truck will make stops and dump a load of 5 yards. From the drops residents would need to use a wheel barrel to move the soil to the designated planting hole.

- **For more information or to sign up for a tree or two, contact North End Neighborhood Council members Susan Ryan at [sryan@harbornet.com](mailto:sryan@harbornet.com) or Kyle Price at [kyle\\_price@aw.org](mailto:kyle_price@aw.org)**