



Highline Historical Society News

Volume 60

October 2011

Gottlieb Burian

The Mission of the Highline Historical Society is to collect, preserve, and tell the stories of the Highline region and its people to everyone.

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This photo, taken @ 1893, shows Gottlieb and Emma Burian amidst other prosperous neighbors on the steps of Sunnysdale School. Learn about the man the City of Burien was named for inside on page 4.

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From the President

It seems like we are fundraising all the time! But then, that seems to be the fate of many non-profits in this economy. The latest funding opportunity for our community members is to become a Charter Member of the Highline Heritage Museum. We are changing our memberships from the Highline Historical Society to the Highline Heritage Museum. Over the next year we will slowly begin changing other things; our letterhead, our printed materials, our website and FaceBook page, our legal registrations and our IRS filings to reflect that we are soon going to be a museum, not just a Society. We hope all of you will consider remaining members, and perhaps even upping your memberships to a higher level. Your dollars will be put to good use providing salaries and collections care so we can tell everyone's stories!



Watch, too, for our Annual Fund appeal. Your response to this mailing provides much needed administrative support and annual operating dollars. We are truly appreciative of your continued support.

Terry Jarvis Anderson

What's Going On...



Left: Hi-Liners perform at Volunteer picnic in August

Below: Volunteers John Ostergard and Lynn Castillo scanning and cataloging museum collections



Volunteers Beth Williams (front) and Linda Gowan Nieman work on the collections



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Comments or information for publication may be sent to Editor at the Society address, or email at editor@highlinehistory.org

Note: The Highline Historical Society respects our donors' and friends' confidentiality. We do not make our mailing lists available to other organizations.



The Society is a proud member of Discover Burien, the Assn. of King County Historical Societies, the South King County Cultural Coalition, Washington Museums Assn. and the American Association of State and Local History.



Programs, Events & Exhibits

**SeaTac Exhibit
“Then and Now - A
Teaching Retrospective”**

**2011
Salute to Pioneers
Annual Meeting
November 20
SeaTac City Hall
2 PM**

**Joan Wolfberg as
Golda Meir
Jan 22, 2012
Burien Little Theater
2 PM**

Then and Now - Changes in Teaching!-
Check out this retrospective of teaching!. Utilizing items from the Society’s schools collections, our UW interns have designed and installed this exhibit that points out some of the many changes in education through the years. This exhibit will be up through the end of the year at SeaTac City Hall. The building, located at 4800 S 188th Street is open from 9 AM - 5 PM weekdays.

Sports in Highline - Join us to visit the role of sports in Highline through the years. Talk with long time coaches about church league basketball, little league sports of every kind, high school sports, and the rise of women’s participation in sports. Your memories and thoughts on these subjects are solicited. Bring your memorabilia and photos to share with the audience.



SeaTac Exhibit

**Golda Meir: From Pogrom To Prime Minister
Sunday, January 22, 2012, Burien Little Theater
Program \$5.00 - Free with Museum Membership Card**



As a child, Golda Meir, knowing the fear of pogroms in Russia, dreamed of a homeland for her people in Palestine. Golda’s continued commitment to her land and to her people was the paragon of human dedication. Her complete involvement, tempered with love, fired by fierce devotion, and a wonderful sense of humor, caused the world to know that she was a true mover of mountains. Joan Wolfberg, as Golda, takes you from the pogroms of Russia, to Milwaukee, to Denver, to Palestine...and finally to “life in state of our own”...Israel...as Prime Minister. Chatauqua actress Joan Wolfberg stays in character and answers questions posed to her about Golda and her life.

**PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR
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Now more than ever.

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The Society thanks Earl F. Charvet, a former Burien native that now resides in Kansas City, for donating the documents about Gottlieb Burian and his family history. This research covers Burian's family history from Hussinetz, Silesia to Sunnydale, Washington. The paper was written by Earl Charvet from research by Charles L. Thiesenhusen. The paper is completely footnoted and all of the sources can be found on the Society's website under Monographs. - Ed.

Gottlieb Burian and his Family History: From Hussinetz, Silesia to Sunnydale, Washington by Earl F. Charvet

Gottlieb Burian¹ (variously recorded as Burien,² Burrian,³ Von Boorien,⁴ and Von Boorian⁵) (1837-1902), was an early settler in the Washington Territory from Lower Silesia, Prussia, now in Poland. He became a popular businessman who owned saloons in downtown and the Skid Road district of Seattle, and was active in the city's German community. The city of Burien, in King County, Washington, and Lake Burien are named for him.⁶ (Note: Both places are spelled with a corruption of his name: "Burien," with an "e".)

Gottlieb Burian was born on 26 March 1837 in Hussinetz⁷ (now Gęsiniec, Poland⁸), an ethnic Czech community 25 miles southwest of Breslau (now Wrocław), at that time in province of Lower Silesia, Prussia. He was the tenth child of Johann Burian (b. 1798, Hussinetz-d. 1853, Hussinetz) and Anna Maria Laschtowitschka (b. 1800, Nieder Podiebrad (now Pödebrady, Czech Republic) – d. 1869, Hussinetz).⁹ His great-grandfather, Mikulas Burian (1730-1786), was a member of the Hussite religious sect that founded the town of his birth in 1750.¹⁰ (The Hussenites based their faith on the writings of the Czech philosopher and priest Jan Hus who was burnt at the stake in 1415 for heresy.)

When he was about 24 years old, Gottlieb Burian married Emma Wurm,¹¹ ¹² probably in Kolberg,¹³ Pomerania, Prussia (now Kolobrzeg, Poland) on the Baltic Sea coast. Seeking a life in the New World, the couple traveled west to the port city of Hamburg to emigrate. They purchased tickets and boarded the barque "Liriope" to sail to America on 15 July 1862.¹⁴ ¹⁵ The wooden, three-masted vessel was designed to haul cargo, but deck space permitted 90 passengers to board in steerage with some personal belongings on this voyage. The barque spent eight arduous weeks crossing the Atlantic Ocean, and four people died during passage. It arrived in New York Harbor and anchored at Castle Garden emigrant landing depot on 15 September 1862.¹⁶

From New York, the Burians traveled overland to Minnesota, settling in the 4th Ward of the capital city St. Paul where Gottlieb worked as a shoemaker.¹⁷ Five years later, on 15 August 1867, Gottlieb went to Ramsey County District Court and filed a Letter

of Intent, the first step to become a U.S. citizen.¹⁸ The couple's first two children Martha ("Mattie") and Franz ("Frankie") were born in St. Paul in 1867 and 1869.¹⁹

Before 1874, the Burian family moved again, this time more than 1,600 miles (2,600 km) over the Rocky Mountains and Cascade Range to the Pacific Northwest. Gottlieb, still working as a shoemaker, with Emma, and their children Mattie, Frankie, and baby Oscar (born in Washington) are recorded on the 1875 Washington Territorial Census living in Thurston County²⁰ south of Puget Sound. Tragically, all three children died of an illness in Seattle just one year later, in November 1876.²¹

Gottlieb and Emma started their family anew, soon having three more children: Martha in 1878, Frank in 1880, and Emma Clara in 1881. They joined the German Free Church at Seventh Avenue and Olive Way where they were active members for many years.²² The family made their home in the heart of Seattle on Sixth Avenue in the city's Second Ward.²³ The house was not far from where Gottlieb began a new career as saloon keeper.²⁴ ²⁵ By 1887, he was the successful proprietor of two taverns in Seattle: the Saengerhalle Saloon at Seventh Avenue and Terrace Street, where Harbor View Medical Center stands today, and a second saloon at 134 West Yesler Street on Pioneer Square near the end of Skid Road.²⁶

Gottlieb joined German lodges that met at Germania Hall, and he became active in the Sons of Hermann, an insurance and mutual aid society that launched regular events for Seattle's immigrant German community. When the Seattle Turnverein, a German culture and athletic club, was founded in 1885, he became a charter member.²⁷ Twenty-two years after his arrival in America, Gottlieb officially became a U.S. citizen, swearing his Oath of Allegiance and signing his final naturalization papers on 11 April 1884 at the Third Judicial District Court in Seattle.²⁸

In the 1880s, the area ten miles south of Seattle called Sunnydale (now Burien) was densely forested by tall Douglas firs and hemlocks, and mostly unsettled. Land patents for homestead sites were still available for purchase directly from the Federal

government. The first record of the Burians residing in Sunnydale appears in March 1885,²⁹ which confirms family accounts stating they arrived in Sunnydale in “about 1884.”³⁰ However, Gottlieb Burian did not purchase his 120 acre homestead in Sunnydale from the Federal land office until about five years later, on 31 August 1889.³¹ This parcel of land (in Township 23 North, Range 4 East, Section 19; around today’s 12th Avenue SW and SW 156th Street) was handsomely sited on the southeast corner of a lake, later named Lake Burien in his honor.

Evidence from city directories and census records prove that the Burian family maintained two primary residences. The house on the lake served as a home where they raised their children and was a comfortable retreat from city life.^{32 33} A photo taken about 1893 shows Gottlieb and Emma dressed simply in black on the steps of Sunnydale School, clearly in a place of honor, surrounded by school girls in white dresses with women

wearing their finest hats and men in starched collars and ties.³⁴ The occasion is unknown, but it is obvious they were highly respected citizens in the community. Their city home at 1716 Spring Place on Capitol Hill, one block away from Minor Park, was not far from the center of Seattle’s commercial hub, its social events, and Gottlieb’s places of business.³⁵ A few years before Gottlieb’s death, they sold this house and moved seven blocks west to another home at 1020 Spring Place, where Virginia Mason Hospital stands today.³⁶

Gottlieb Burian is sometimes mistakenly thought of as the first settler in the city of Burien area. However, this honor belongs to George Ouellet (variously spelled as Oullet, Ouellette, Oulett, Oulet, etc.), a French-Canadian immigrant born in Sainte-Marie de Beauce, south of Quebec City in 1837.³⁷ Ouellet purchased the first of his several Federal land patents in the area in 1864, fully twenty-five years before Burian bought any land.^{38 39} Late in life, Gottlieb and Emma retired at their downtown Seattle home. When a census taker arrived in June 1900 and interviewed Gottlieb at age 63, he amusingly gave his profession as “shoemaker.”⁴⁰

In November 1900, Gottlieb was struck by a street railway car when he changed direction while crossing Third Avenue at Madison Street, and was badly injured. Claims of negligence were disputed by the Seattle Electric street car company and fractious legal battles ensued. The personal injury case went all the way to the Supreme Court of Washington on appeals (*Burian v. Seattle Electric Co.*, 14 December 1901). In the final decision, a Superior Court ruling was overturned and judgment was served in Gottlieb’s favor, however, the verdict did not come until after his death. The \$3,000 award was assigned to his widow, Emma Burian, and their daughter, who were substituted as plaintiffs.⁴¹ The case law is widely cited.^{42 43}



Burian gravestone at Lake View Cemetery in Seattle

Gottlieb Burian died at his home at 1020 Spring Place in Seattle at age 64, on 21 February 1902, due to cirrhosis and hepatitis of the liver.^{44 45} Three days later, an obituary with his photo appeared in the *Seattle Daily News* that described German residents in large numbers paying their final respects. The Sons of Hermann, the Turnverein, and German lodges in Seattle coordinated services at Butterworth’s funeral parlor and at Germania Hall, where they later drank toasts to his memory. A funeral procession from the hall to Lake View Cemetery⁴⁶ was led by Lueben’s Band, followed by a horse-drawn hearse and his friends. The floral offerings were so numerous, it was reported, that a wagon was filled with them.⁴⁷

Gottlieb’s widow Emma died of “dropsy” (congestive heart failure) three years later, in 1905, at age 66, at her home on Spring Place.⁴⁸ Daughter Martha died fifteen years earlier 1890, at age 12. Son Frank M. Burian worked as brewer in 1901, then, as a bartender at a transient hotel on King Street in 1910. He married Floy Z. Richards, née Pritchard, in Seattle in 1912,⁴⁹ and moved to southern California where he was employed as a driller at a shipyard.⁵⁰ He died in Los Angeles in 1923, at age 43,⁵¹ with no children that survived him. Daughter Emma Clara Burian was married in 1904 to Gottlieb Henry Pfeiffer, a stationary engineer, and raised one son, Henry Frank Pfeiffer (1910-1987). She died in Kirkland, Washington at age 74, in 1956.⁵² Gottlieb Burian, his wife, and all six of their children are buried at Lake View Cemetery, near Interlaken Park in Seattle.⁵³

After Gottlieb and Emma’s deaths, the land around Lake Burien was purchased by Fred Dashley, Bill Dashley, and Charles Schoening, miners who had struck it rich in the Alaskan Klondike gold rush. Fred Dashley bought most of “Old Burian land,” part of the northeast portion of the lake, as well as land extending north and east from the lake.^{54 55}

continued from previous page

There is no evidence that Gottlieb Burian descended from a noble Prussian family or that family members spelled their name in any way other than “Burian.” Naturalization papers, state legal records, contemporary newspaper accounts, city directories, marriage records of his children, and the family’s grave markers at Lake View Cemetery all show the name spelled “Burian.” If Gottlieb was referred to as “Von Boorian” during his life, it may have been a self applied honorific or a tribute by his friends at the Turnverein and the Sons of Hermann Lodge. Another possible explanation for the Von Boorian myth may be that it arose from the notoriety of Austro-Hungarian foreign minister Stephan Burian von Rajecz, called “Baron von Burian” in newspaper headlines during the early years of World War I.⁵⁶

Advertising in The Seattle Times for waterfront property on Puget Sound and Lake Burien show the spelling “Burian” with an “a” was preferred at least to 1907. The adoption of “Burien” with an “e” cannot be readily explained, although this variation appears on a few Washington Territorial censuses during the family’s lifetime.



Society Receives Collections Grant

In August the Society was notified by 4Culture that we have been awarded a grant for \$2215 to purchase materials to re-house our collections. This funding will make it possible to purchase acid free boxes for items such as military uniforms and bridal gowns. Acid free boxes are extremely expensive. A box to appropriately house one uniform can cost as much as \$40. These grants for collections care are very competitive and we appreciate this help very much .

Recent Donations

The following items were recently donated to the Society. Special thanks to these far-sighted individuals for helping HHS preserve authentic artifacts and archival materials of the recent and not-so-recent past, as well as for both restricted and unrestricted cash donations.. For more information about donating items to HHS, please call 206-246-6354 or send an email to editor@highlinehistory.org. You are helping to tell our stories.

From **Gene Pugh**, for the archives, six photos of the Austin Company, and a book about the Austin Company where her late husband, **Warren Pugh**, was employed for 29 years.

From **Miriam Curran**, for the collections, several vintage kitchen artifacts.

From **June Mosby**, for the archives, a number of vintage photos of Sunnydale School in 1898, 1902, 1905, 1922 and the 1930’s. Also included is a photo of the Burien Library dedication from 1970.

From **Mary Carr**, 3 items for the archives and 54 items for the collections. Some of these items include pre-1950 kitchen tools, garments from the 1940’s and 1950’s, ice skates, bow ties, a cigarette dispenser, a woman’s hat collection (14) and several man’s hats.

From **Cyndi Upthegrove**, for the archives, a 1970’s Ruth Dykeman Cookbook, and early Macintosh materials.

From **Fred Ritsema**, for the archives, four photos of Tyee High School personnel.

From **Mary Stowe**, for the collections, one antique P.X. Laube clarinet, an antique music stand, an antique tambourine and one U.S. Army 1917 First Aid Training Packet.

From **Earl F. Charvet**, for the archives, research documents about Gottlieb Burian and his family history: from Hussinetz, Silesia to Sunnydale, Washington. Written by Earl F. Charvet with research by **Charles L. Thiesenehusen**. There is a blue mark by the pertinent Gottlieb Burian references on each page. The footnotes in the paper indicate very completely the sources for the facts noted.

From **Patricia Lee Brook Schroeter**, for the collections, a wooden salad bowl (WWII era), Bread Maker (1904), Ice Tongs (1938), and a level (1867).

From **Lloyd Herman** for the collections, a Jim Beam 1962 Century 21 Seattle World’s Fair Decanter.

From **Richard Wilson**, for Society operations, an HP Computer, keyboard, mouse and monitor.

HIGHLINE HERITAGE MUSEUM

CHARTER MEMBER

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**Become a Charter Member of...
the Highline Heritage Museum
A Community Gathering Place
Celebrating the People of Highline**

The stories of the people of Highline are waiting to be told. Within the Society's storage facility our curator is at work with a team of volunteers cataloging a growing collection of local history, objects and archives for exhibition and research. Currently we have over 35,000 3-dimensional objects and we've captured 175 Oral Histories of the people of Highline. Our storage is bursting at the seams and open by appointment only, Public demand for our community historical programs and exhibits is also growing.

Why we need your Charter Member support

We are striving to open the doors of the museum in 2014. Between now and opening day annual Museum Charter Members help provide the financial resources required to continue presenting our community programs and community exhibits that attract over 1,200 people annually. Your membership dollars also help us grow our staff, plan museum exhibits and move our capital campaign forward to accomplish our vision for the new museum.

The lobby of our new museum will feature an electronic Honor Roll of our annual Charter Members for all entering visitors to see and celebrate. The Honor Roll will also be featured on our website in further recognition of your fine support. Thank you!

Become a Charter Member Today!

YES! I want to become an annual Charter Member of the Highline Heritage Museum - a Community Gathering Place Celebrating the People of Highline

- \$30 Individual
- \$50 Family
- \$70 Business

Upper Level Charter Members

- \$150 Patron
- \$250 Sustaining
- \$500 Curator's Circle

History Makers

- \$1,000
- \$2,500
- \$5,000
- \$10,000

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