



THE GREEN LAKE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

THE GREEN LAKE
FOUNDATION

“God save the foundation!” (Shakespeare)

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THE FIRST GREEN LAKE CHURCH

In 1900, Seattle was booming. Flush from the Klondike Gold Rush in the late 1890s, Seattle was the supply post for Alaska, and the population was exploding. Seattle newspapers were full of ads for Green Lake properties because Green Lake was the growing north edge of Seattle.

A new trolley line went north from Fremont along the eastern shore of the lake to the northern end, with a stop at the Green Lake Station where businesses clustered. Henry Ford’s Model T would not be produced until 1908 so people commuted by trolley.

Seattle’s first Adventist congregation, a tiny but enthusiastic flock, was founded in 1886 in downtown Seattle. It had 25 members by 1900. Future growth was in the fast-growing suburbs.

By 1903, plans for a church in the thriving suburb of Green Lake were announced. Property was purchased near the Green Lake Station trolley. Services began that year with 38 charter members. The address was 502 East 72nd Street, a short walk up the street from the trolley stop.



Here, with his back to Green Lake, Mr. Oaks recorded this view up Northeast 72nd Street about 1909. Baptist church (with steeple) in center at end of street.

The Green Lake SDA Church building was across the street from the Green Lake Baptist Church, shown in the accompanying photograph (the Baptist church has the steeple; the Green Lake SDA Church is not visible).

A church school started one year later. By 1905, the church had nearly 80 members and the building was formally dedicated, which likely meant the new church building was debt-free in two years. A 1905 summer camp meeting, held on the shores of Green Lake, concluded with a lake baptism of 31 souls.

In 1915, the interior of the church was papered and painted. More pews were purchased to increase seating. Visiting conference pastors noted that the church was “enthusiastic,” “cooperative,” met its yearly Ingathering goal, and was “active” in home missionary work.

The term “Roaring Twenties” applied to Seattle in the 1920s, and the little Green Lake SDA Church was no exception. By 1924, the church had outgrown the Green Lake facility.

They sought a larger facility and found a bargain—purchasing a former telephone exchange building in Wallingford and renaming it the Seattle North Church. It served the congregation for more than 20 years until after World War II, when the current Green Lake Church of Seventh-day Adventists was built in 1947. ✧



ROSARIO!!!!

By John McLarty

Brought to you by the Green Lake Foundation

Green Lake Church gathered at Walla Walla University Marine Laboratory at Rosario Beach the weekend of October 7 for worship, hiking, eating, conversation, and swimming. (Yes! Swimming!!! More on that later.) The weather, which had been threatening, cooperated, giving us sunshine for Sabbath afternoon and a beautiful sunset as the sun melted into the western horizon.

A weekend at Rosario is not cheap. It costs \$5,000 to rent the facility for the weekend. Who paid for the weekend? And what did we get for those dollars?

Who Paid?

As reported by Alvin Kwiram, chair of the Green Lake Foundation Board, “The Green Lake Foundation Board, acting on a suggestion by Board member Don Mehrer, felt that with growing number of new members, including young families with children, it was important to provide an occasion where members of the congregation could spend quality time together. This was a beautiful setting without the usual distractions and allowed participants to get to know each other and deepen their



Photo | Alvin Kwiram

connections with one another and with their Creator. The Foundation Board also wanted to thank the congregation for their generosity in supporting the Shaping the Future Campaign.”

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Photo | Alvin Kwiram

Children's program
Sabbath morning.



Photo | Alvin Kwiram



Photo © Gummi Ibsen

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What Did We Get?

“A greater sense of community. A special time to share our joys and challenges as a congregation. To use the Sabbath rest as an unhurried time to strengthen our ties to one another. The Foundation Board did not want anyone to feel they could not participate because of the housing costs,” said Alvin Kwiram.

Gudmundur (Gummi) Ibsen led out in the worship music Sabbath morning. His wife, Nancy, was at the keyboard. Gummi wrote about the weekend:

Rosario is a place where you get to connect and build a richer church . . . A place where you can leave the necktie at home . . . Where nature comes to you with a beautiful sunset and waves bring a whisper from the Far East. A place where kids play, connect, explore, and swing on the playground like never before. Rosario has been for me a place of worship and music where I can lift my hands in praise, “Hosanna,” a place that brings people closer to each other and Christ.

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Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen

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It was Whitney Seiberlich's first weekend at Rosario. He played with the worship team. When I asked him about the highlights of the weekend, he mentioned getting acquainted with the other musicians and an early-morning walk with Anna, his daughter.

Marissa Rebadulla-Ramos was there with her husband, Mario, and their girls, Victoria and Cassandra. She wrote,

The Rosario retreat was a good bonding experience with the GLC family, for both children and adults. The setting is wonderful as it reminds one of how beautiful God's creation is. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this awesome experience!

While many people know of Rosario's reputation as a beautiful place, the cost of lodging there has been a barrier for some people. So, the Green Lake Foundation offered to fund the entire cost. The response was fantastic. According to a number of people, this was the highest attendance Green Lake Church has ever had at a Rosario event. Every cabin was occupied. Some who came for the weekend had to stay off campus. In addition, many people came for just the day.

Elyse Lambeth and Bryan Carli led out a great children's program on Sabbath morning.

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After lunch, people headed off in all directions, exploring trails and vistas and the beach.

After a vesper program at sunset, Ken Fairchild emceed a great program Saturday night.

Then came the grand climax. Many of the campers headed over the dock to check out the bioluminescence and the spectacle of jumping humans. (I don't think the members of the Foundation Board had any idea of the level of exuberance their generosity would inspire.)

Six guys jumped into the frigid waters of the Sound. Whitney, whom I mentioned above in connection with the music,

declared that another highlight of the Rosario weekend was seeing “a freezing cold Jonathan Schreven coming back to our cabin after he jumped into the water.” Other polar bears were Bryan Carli, Martin Pincheira, Ken Fairchild, and Sam Mesfin. Sam jumped in twice!



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Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo | John McLarty

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I hope this demonstration of devotion and appreciation impresses the Foundation to offer generous support again next year for our retreat at Rosario.

The church has reserved the weekend of October 6, 2018, for our next visit to Rosario. Put it on your calendar. Join us and make more memories. You don't have to jump into the water; just be there for the fellowship, sunsets, hikes, worship, and good food. You are unlikely to forget it. ✧



Photo © Gummi Ibsen



Photo © Gummi Ibsen

A Conversation with Victor Smiley

Ken Walters and Alvin Kwiram interviewed Victor Smiley, a member of Green Lake Church since 1957. Edited for length and clarity.

We're exploring Green Lake's history, starting with the early days. You are an important part of that history.

I played the organ for the Adventist churches at Green Lake, Edmonds, Seattle Central Church, and Volunteer Park.

When and where were you born?

March 7, 1919, in Mount Vernon. I was adopted when I was three months old.

Who were your adoptive parents?

My father was captain of the VIRGINIA V (or VIRGINIA 5), now a National Historic Landmark and a treasure of Seattle maritime history. My mother and her parents were very, very religious, with morning and evening worship. My adoptive father was Baptist.

What is your first musical memory?

My grandparents would pump the organ, and I'd play the melody. I learned the melody note to many hymns.

When did you start music lessons?

When I was four or five. My first piano teacher was Mrs. Muck. I studied with her about five or six years in Mount Vernon.

As a child in Mount Vernon, did your grandparents take you to church?

Yes, I sang "Jesus Loves Me" as a soloist when I was about four or five years.

You started performing at what age?

I performed with a violinist, Richard Linder, when we were kids, maybe seven or eight years old. He later became Musical Director of the Portland Symphony.

When did your family move to Everett?

During the depression. I went to high school in Everett. Herbert Malloy became my piano teacher. He was a graduate of Juilliard, a good teacher. I went to the Orient with an Everett High School band in 1935, when I was 16—to China, Japan, the Philippines. Our band played concerts every day on the ship and in ports. We were very good. We performed morning, noon, and night on the boat. Then when we got to Hong Kong, Singapore, or Kobe, we performed on shore. Classics.

Was that the trip where you met Artur Rubinstein?

Yes. He was on board the ship, concertizing in the Orient. That's the way people traveled. I was a ham when I performed. I performed the classics and made up my own "extras." One time I received a request for Liszt's *Liebestraum*. Rubinstein heard me play it and he came over and said: "Why don't you do this?" And it was a Beethoven sonata.

Rubinstein and I would take a walk early in the morning on the ship. We became good friends. I got to attend his concert in Manila. He always kidded me about my improvisations. He'd say, "Well, one of these times I want to hear you play the music the way it's written!" He was young, very enthusiastic. Every time he'd come to Seattle he'd give me a call.

You finished high school at Auburn Academy.

My parents sent me to Auburn Academy. I made a lot of friends. I was the valedictorian at Auburn, graduating in 1937. By the time I enrolled at Auburn Academy I'd been studying piano for a number of years. I already had my teaching certificate at age 16.



Photo | Simona Vuletic

Did you go to college?

I went to Walla Walla for one year. I'd play the organ for church. In fact, I did more performing there than the music faculty. I was an oddball. I played the pipe organ and the girls would gather and listen. I'd play modern music (laughs), and they loved it. My teachers at Walla Walla said, "You're desecrating the church. Don't do that!" But I've always been an entertainer.

After one year at college, I came back to Seattle and got involved in music circles here. I got some students and started to teach. I'd hitchhike up to Stanwood. I stayed at the Bartholomew home, where they gave me board and room for teaching the whole family for about two years, and I had use of a bicycle. I'd go from farmhouse to farmhouse. I was 19 or 20.

What do you remember about the Seattle Central Church?

I remember the Central Church music program. We had a good choir.

Olive White told us that you were once Malcolm's next-door neighbor—just north of the Aurora Bridge. Which church were you attending?

I did live next door to Malcolm. I attended the North Church—in the old telephone building.

Sometimes you played the organ at Seattle Central Church on Capitol Hill, too.

And we had a good choir, too. Loveland Cota was the director.

You were in military service during World War II?

I was a pharmacist's mate aboard a converted former fishing boat. When I boarded the ship, it was in Seattle. And it was called USS GREYHOUND, used for transportation during the war as a dormitory and troop ship in Alaskan waters and after the war in San Francisco. It was an old clunker though, even in the 1940s.



What was your role during the war in terms of music?

My role was basically that of a pharmacist's mate. The music was an extra. When they needed music, I furnished it. I played the ship's piano for church services. The ship chaplain was Catholic; he couldn't get anyone to come to church services, so they arranged to have the best show on Sunday evening *preceding* the church service. I played piano. Attendance improved. I played background music for dinners, dances, and church.

The State Department sent you to Europe to perform for the troops stationed there after the war?

England, Germany, France, Italy. All over Europe. We'd be at a different base every day or every week. I had red carpet treatment. I was a piano soloist, performing concerts. I played a lot of Broadway show tunes and classics, too. We'd have maybe 1,000 servicemen, and they'd be very attentive, and they loved what I played. It was a great experience. For a year at least. And then when I returned to the States, it was another year of performing. At military bases, all over the U.S. We took trains and short flights.

In the 1940s, after World War II, you performed throughout the U.S.

We performed for hospital patients. I have a real empathy for them. I was the conductor of the musical *Brigadoon* for a year. We hit all the Army and Navy hospitals. Took me a year to do all the

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military hospitals in the United States. The USO and the State Department were the sponsors. We were in military bases and hospitals performing. Army, Navy, Marines.

When did you go to New York?

I was there after the war about 8 or 10 years. Those were wonderful years. Most of my memories after the war are from New York. I was there until about the mid '50s. New York is the music capital of the world. Even at midnight there are crowds of people. Every hour there's a concert going on. It's an amazing city. It never sleeps. The club that I worked at would start at ten at night and be through at four in the morning. It was always crowded. I got a lot of the folks who played for the opera.

Did you have one particular place you liked to perform, or did you have many different clubs?

I had the top spot in New York City. I can't think of the name. Fancy, beautiful club. I've never played in a dive. 52nd Street is all I can remember. It was a well-known club on the ground floor.

I was also one of the pianists for the Metropolitan Opera Company. My teacher was the impresario at the New York Metropolitan. I accompanied rehearsals of many operas. It was a marvelous place. Marvellous job. Good pay. It was the best job I ever had.

What kind of music did you play in the club on 52nd Street?

I played Stephen Sondheim, Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Rodgers and Hammerstein, and all the rest of them. All were greats of modern music, beautiful music. When I played this club, I played a lot of classics, too. And I took work at Juilliard.

In addition to the classics, you played the music of some of the great Broadway composers of the 20th century—Jerome Kern, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Cole Porter, Gershwin. Did you meet any of these greats?

Cole Porter was one of those regulars who came to the club where I was playing. I knew him, Richard Rodgers, and his lyricist, Lorenz Hart. And Stephen Sondheim. I have broad musical tastes. I am also fond of classical organ music specifically written to be church music. Green Lake's offertories, preludes, and postludes are well taken care of.

Adventists tend to frown on night clubs and the like. Was that ever a conflict for you?

I always had a guilty conscience since I was taught that what I was doing was morally wrong. It was a problem I had for many years. I thought Adventists wouldn't approve. The only contact I had with Adventists during those times was when they'd come into my club and want money. If Adventists came in and found out I was an Adventist, they would scoot; they didn't want to be seen in a nightclub. There was an evangelist from London who came to give an evangelistic series at Carnegie Hall. He was quite a showman. He tried to talk me into giving up a really lucrative career and coming to Seattle.

He gave you the impetus to come back to Seattle?

I had a good job in New York, and yet I came back to Seattle. I got calls from people wanting to study piano with me. Back in Seattle, I gave up playing in nightclubs. And yet I did deviate somewhat. I worked at Canlis Restaurant. And the 5th Avenue Theatre. I'd get good jobs. I had a good following. But I'd take off Friday evenings, always.

Here in Seattle you had a lot of Adventist students in your studio.

I did. And I'm real proud of them. They're all over. And they still contact me. I've got a couple of students who come by, and they play the piano for me. Daniel Wassé was a very talented student, one of my top students.

How are you doing in an assisted living facility? You are a strict vegetarian.

They serve meat three times a day! It's terrible. I have a lot of vegetables, but I don't have much choice for protein except cottage cheese. Otherwise, this is an interesting place to stay. Everything is taken care of. I get sessions every other day, learning how to walk. I've lost my sense of equilibrium, and I doubt I'll ever get it back. I subscribe to the opera, the symphony, the ballet, the University Presidential Series. I give all the tickets away. I can't go. The only way I can get there is if somebody takes me. It's an imposition. I'd like to go to concerts.

I do miss Green Lake. I miss the service. Why don't they have a bus that goes and picks up the elderly people? I was an organist at the United Methodist Church, also the Congregational Church. They have a bus, they come and pick me up now so I can go to

church. As long as I am able I will take advantage of it.

I have all this music in my mind, I can visualize thousands of pieces, but my fingers won't cooperate. What causes that? I talked to my doctor and he says, "You're getting too old." That's ridiculous! So I practice technique. That's as far as it'll get. The scales and exercises. And the people here are amazing. They'll come and listen, and they think it's beautiful.



How do you feel about religious "rock" music?

This new thing called "celebration" services—it's the devil's music! It's just rhythm. They don't have melody, just rhythm. People swing and sway. That is not music.

Here you have a wall poster of Beethoven, Bach, Brahms—being guided by the Holy Spirit and the angels. The message is that music is a gift from God.

What kind of music will be in heaven? Ellen White didn't say much about the music in heaven. She said the music was beautiful, but she couldn't really describe or analyze it.

There's going to be a choir. You'll be accompanying the saints and the angels! [Vic laughs] ✧

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