

*Fall, 2012*  
*Volume 1, Issue 1*

# *Neely Mansion News*

*A Historic House Museum*



## **If These Walls Could Talk!**

The walls have been talking due to the new video of all five families who lived and worked at the Neely Mansion since 1894. First was the pioneer Neely family, next the Swiss Galli, then the Japanese Fukada and Hori, and finally the Filipino Acosta. Director Staci Bernstein of Hero Labs led a film crew over the five days of filming at the mansion. Jammed with people and equipment, the house was full and busy over the long twelve hours of shooting each day.

Ms. Bernstein and Seattle historian, Mildred Andrews, wrote scripts for each of the five families. One significant incident about each family was the focus of each script. Family life, farming, and the time period all played parts in telling the stories.

Actors were recruited from the Puget Sound area to portray the many diverse family members. Volunteers also played the parts of extras in many scenes, including the Mayor of Auburn, Pete Lewis, and Neely board members.

Funding for the video came from 4Culture grants, and a Kickstarter.com campaign. Other local film shooting sites included the Mary Olson Farm in Auburn, Mosby Farms on the Green Valley Road, and the Barker Cabin in Federal Way. Local residents provided props from vintage trucks to active chickens.

## Video Premier on Saturday, October 20

The exciting premier of our new video "If These Walls Could Talk" will be from 7-9pm on Saturday, October 20. A large screen will fill the front parlor so all can see the action! Characters from the video will be present to interact with the public. Light refreshments will be served. Please come and join the fun!



Neely Actors

## Nominating Committee

A Nomination Committee of Karen Meador, Karen Bouton, and Tamie Scholter are putting together a list of people to tap for open Board positions for 2013. The list will then be presented to the whole Board. If you are interested in a position, please call Karen Meador at 253.833.9084. Elections will be held in January at the Annual General Meeting.

## Neely Family Visitor to the Mansion



During the last day of filming our new video, Jane Neely Beckman and husband, Ron, stopped by Neely Mansion. On vacation from Omaha, Nebraska they wandered by to see the house and other nearby family property. They came upon the film crew in the front yard, working on the Acosta vignette. After hearing about the video they stayed to see some scenes filmed in a local field. While there, Jane Beckman was surprised with her own interview on video taken by Jane Kaplan, film co-director. She shared stories of her grandfather, Aaron Neely, Jr. and her father, Howard Neely. As a child, Jane visited the Neely farm and the Acosta family, who farmed the acreage. Jane and Ron were pleased to see the mansion again, and we were very happy to see them!

### Restoration News

As any older, wooden building, Neely Mansion is on a continuous cycle of restoration. Our northwest climate and moisture causes problems with exterior wooden surfaces. Our latest building repair was to the leaky roof and chimney flashings. Guardian Roofing spent three days on the steep roof applying new wood shingles to leaky areas, and new mortar and metal flashing around the two chimneys. We are now ready to face the rains when they return!

## Neely Gets a Makeover

by Karen Meador

We've discovered plants we didn't know we had and a chain-link fence we haven't seen in years!

Thanks to the gracious efforts of the Lake Holm Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Neely received a much-needed makeover on Saturday, September 15. About 100 people of all ages made repairs, painted, worked on the grounds and flower beds, cleaned and performed other long-postponed tasks.

Special thanks to Barry Stratton for the beautifully constructed ramp he and others designed and built, as

well as Ivan Phillips for the much needed address sign. Thank you, also, to Tim Hunsaker and Alan Sodenkamp, as well as Max Beers for organizing the event; Max could have planned D-Day!

A number of long-time community members have commented they have "never seen the grounds look so good." The Neely Board and a grateful community would like to express their appreciation to everyone at the Lake Holm Ward for their generous service and a job well done. We hope this will be the beginning of a long association.



New Ramp Under Construction.

## 2012 Events in a Nutshell

After another cold winter the Neely Mansion woke up to faithful volunteers mowing the lawn and sweeping out the cobwebs, which accumulate in anyone's home. Time for a tea, March 15, but this time it was different- a group of 20 to 25 senior citizens from the Seattle area had called and requested a Private Tea. With a small crew of ready maids, the bill was filled.

A few private tours were led through the house up until May, when a Neely family member with 12 others accompanying him requested a tour to see what the house looks like now. Then, with the first Saturday of June we were off to our regular schedule of Open House Tours for the summer. The house was open from June through August.

## by Lynn Gough

King County Officials have visited and toured the house this summer and all have had rave reviews for all the work that has been done over the years. We must keep it up, as the Neely Mansion is truly a Precious Gem in the crown of local museums in the county.

Now as fall approaches, you need to watch for "If These Walls Could Talk", our retrospective historical short film of the five families who lived and farmed at our historical site in the Green River Valley.

Our year will end with a Victorian Farmhouse Christmas on Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. We hope to see you soon at the Neely Mansion, the beloved home for so many who came before.

During the summer I was fortunate enough to spend some quality time on my hands and knees pulling a massive amount of weeds. It is no surprise I was unable to complete the task! Lynn Gough said she pulled some weeds that were as tall as her! Brian Gough was able to prune the roses so they will bloom beautifully next season. There are some beautiful plants surrounding the mansion; roses, lilacs, hydrangeas just to name a few. Does anyone have a photo or two of the grounds they would like to share? I would like to create a photo album showing the grounds throughout the years. I will pay for any copying costs. Also Lynn, Brian, and I would love to have you join us next spring and summer to work the grounds! Karen Bouton

*Neely Mansion  
News*

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*Interpreting the past  
for the future.*

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.neelymansion.org](http://www.neelymansion.org)

## Victorian Farmhouse Christmas, December 2

Come in from the cold to the wondrous warmth of Neely Mansion decked out in all her holiday best. Experience a Victorian Christmas with old-fashioned Christmas trees in the parlors, holiday musical selections on the piano, and a buffet table laden with delicious savories and desserts for your enjoyment. Enjoy a cup of holiday tea or apple

cider served to you in a grand manner. Please come and share this special time of year with us at the Neely Mansion on Sunday, December 2. Reservations will be accepted on November 1st for 1pm, 2pm, and 3pm visits at \$15.00 per person. Please call at (253) 850-2777.

By Hilda Meryhew

### The Neely Mansion Gift Shop

About 5 years ago I started volunteering during our teas in the gift shop which helps defray some of the never-ending expenses in maintaining our beloved vintage farm house.

Those visiting the Neely gift shop upstairs in the History room always ask, "where do you get these wonderful items?" Our items are varied and have included over time: books on the history of the mansion and the families who have lived within its walls, hand knitted, crocheted and quilted items, old lace and linens, vintage silver, porcelain and crystal, framed art, Christmas decorations,

Victorian style hat pins, etc.

The above items have been donated by Neely Mansion members, volunteers, and guests who attend our teas and open-house events. Relatives and past residents, including the Fukuda family, have made generous donations to the gift shop upon a return trip to visit their ancestral home.

It is always a pleasure to find use for someone's family heirlooms, not to mention the pleasures one receives from taking home a gift for yourself or a special someone.

By Dona McGowan



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**Thanks for all your support!**



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