



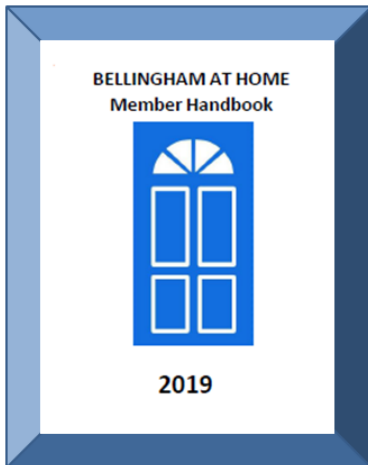
Bellingham
At Home

Your Village Voice – May 2019

Give me a user manual, and I'm happy for hours. – Lennon Parham

It's ready: ***Get Your New Member Handbook!***

Our Membership Committee has been hard at work rewriting and assembling a new edition of the Bellingham At Home Member Handbook. They've done a great job; it's colorful, well organized, and complete, with photos and related materials. We encourage you to read through it.



When BAH was starting up, according to Elaine Cress, “the first book was constructed from ideas from other villages and our hopes and dreams of what we wanted our village to look like. This edition is reworked based on the Bellingham At Home experience. I wouldn't say it is a drastic change but it is more ‘us.’” In the new edition, the emphasis is on offering *assistance* to members rather than on members paying *a fee for service*.

The 42-page document is ready now for distribution to members. Those who attended the member meet-up at Wander Brewing were the first to get theirs, and they took along copies for a few members who live in their neighborhoods. You can pick up yours at the Annual Member Meeting on May 29 or at the office. Mailing would be expensive, so we'd like avoid that. The new handbook will soon be on our website, accessible from the Membership menu after you log in.

Third Annual Member Meeting Coming up

Here's what we know about BAH's Third Annual Meeting, which is from 11 am -1 pm at the Squalicum Harbor Boathouse on May 29: Our new BAH promotional video will be shown; there will be yummy finger food that will accommodate both vegetarian and gluten-free needs; and there will be acoustic guitar music by George Chue—whom you may know from the Senior Center, where he worked (he retired in February) as members arrive, help themselves to refreshments, and find their seats.

Oh, and one other thing: This is your opportunity to hear about what BAH has done, is doing, and plans to do—and why. Please join us to celebrate our organization as we head into our fourth year.

PLEASE NOTE: It has been brought to our attention that when you get a call from the BAH office, the caller ID shows WCOA, not Bellingham At Home! Please don't hesitate to answer a call from WCOA; it's not a robocall.

Climb on the Slow-Motion Brewery Crawl

By Lorraine Barnes and Elaine Cress



The gathering at Wander Brewery April 8th was so much fun that many who attended are keen to meet monthly. And who are we to deny them?

As Monday seems to be a quiet time for drinking establishments, we've decided to go on as we started on the second Monday of the month, from 4-6 pm. Next up, Stone's Throw Brewery on May 13, at 1009 Larrabee in Fairhaven.

More than a dozen people showed up in April and not all of them were drinking beer, so don't let it stop you if you prefer root beer or cider. And, as always, if you need a ride, please call the BAH office.

We hope you'll join us to explore some of Bellingham's fabulous micro breweries and enjoy the camaraderie of other members. We'll be building community, one beer at a time!

Left: Elaine's husband, Carl McGrath, wasn't able to make it, so he sent a substitute.



We're Doing It—Creating Community!

By Angela Mercy

Members in the Northshore-Barkley-Geneva metro area had their first self-initiated neighborhood potluck on March 19th, following the one organized by Cluster Committee Lorraine Barnes last year. Jan Claussen and I got things underway and she graciously volunteered to host the group in her home. I can't speak from first-hand experience, because I was one of four people unable to attend at the last minute (life happens!), but I've heard from reliable sources that the food was delicious (it looks wonderful, doesn't it?) and the conversation meaningful. We look forward to our next potluck in June, where we can continue to get to know each other better.



From left to right, Jan Claussen, Mary Carlson, Elka Fink, Joanne Kurtz. Photo by Nick Waslenko



Four Leadership Council Members Exit Right

By Lauren Phillips



Elaine Cress



Steve Morris



Linda Knudsen McAusland



Barb Evans

Before we let Barb Evans, Steve Morris, Elaine Cress—all foundational members of Bellingham At Home—and Linda Knudsen McAusland leave the LC this Spring, we asked them to share their thoughts on their experience, their plans, and what they see in the future for BAH. Happily, all of them expect to stay involved in the organization. We're so grateful to all of them for their generous contributions to BAH's success.

How do you see the future of BAH?

Barb:

I think right now we have a couple of fundamental issues that need to be resolved: fundraising and leadership, which are common challenges for nonprofits, especially start-ups. We have people with good ideas and it's just a matter of pursuing those. Otherwise, I think the future of BAH is very positive; I think it's answering a need in the community.

Steve:

I've seen it evolve from BAH 1.0 (*idea into reality*) to 2.0 (*oh, it's working, how do we organize it, get others involved, and ensure our management and systems are professional?*) and now we're moving into 3.0: How do we sustain it and maybe use it as a hub to nurture other communities, like Sudden Valley, as spokes. We could sponsor and support them and share some costs, which would help defray some of our managerial overhead. It's all about pooling our resources as a community—businesses, nonprofits, churches, neighbors—to see how we can create a spectrum of support.

Elaine:

I see BAH as a part of the solution for Bellingham to become an age-friendly city, working on housing and health issues among other things. I definitely feel we've planted a seed in a very timely fashion, if you look around at all the baby boomers who are aging into a low-income status. What we need to do now is elevate our status so we can join with other powers such as local government and the Opportunity Council in strategic partnerships that will actually anchor our long-term viability. And we need to find and foster the second and third generation of BAH leaders.

Linda:

The organization is at an interesting, potentially critical point: Founding leadership is stepping down and charter membership is expiring. BAH's future depends on its members staying actively involved and providing direction for our next steps. Future leadership must step forward and charter members, whose status expires in July, must recommit.

What experiences have you had on the LC that are especially memorable?

Barb:

From the very first, I was impressed by the great people that I was working with. It was a particularly cohesive group, very excited about the idea of helping people age in place in their homes, and willing to do almost anything that was needed, spend any amount of time and effort, to see that actually came to fruition. And I've been so impressed by the dedication of the volunteers we have working with us, not only the service volunteers, but the office volunteers and how they were able to keep us functioning, especially before we had paid staff.

Steve:

I remember last year wearing four hats as the treasurer, the secretary, the vice president, and the acting president at a time when some of my colleagues were having some personal challenges or were away on extended vacation and it was like Help! It was very challenging because I had to keep switching hats. It was nothing special about me, we all covered for each other; when someone's not 100% other people step up. It was just my turn.

Elaine:

It was the whole process of coming together with people I didn't know and stepping into the unknown, really. Working with dedicated, creative people that were willing to work as a team, able to be light on their feet as the vision unfolded, and also able to roll up their sleeves and hang in when there wasn't a clear path—it was just an absolutely delightful experience.

Linda:

There's not an isolated incident. It's an overall feeling: I just found the nature of the commitment and passion of the founders to be inspiring. That's what kept me involved when there were frustrating times. You could just see how everybody was driving towards the same goal—and they weren't going to give up. Being a part of all that was very rewarding. Anybody who is thinking about being on the LC, that's the environment you're stepping into.

What plans do you have for the extra time you'll have now?

Barb:

I want to continue to work with BAH. At some point, I hope soon, I'd like to work in the office and perhaps on fundraising, because that's a big need, and I will stay on the volunteer committee. But I'm also hoping to become more active again in other organizations I'm a part of and really enjoy, including ALL and the WWU Retirement Association, for which I'm the membership chair. I think one of the best things in life is to stay busy.

Steve:

We're new grandparents, so some of my time has already been soaked up there, and we've just moved my 94-year-old mother-in-law here from Virginia. So it's been focus on family time for a while. And, of course, I own and operate Right at Home, an inhome care business with 100 clients and more than 100 caregivers--which is how I got involved with WCOA and the village concept in the first place.

Elaine:

I'll continue for now in my half-time health and wellness coordinator position for the Senior Center and I'll stay on the Chuckanut Foundation's Aging Well Committee, where I represent WCOA. I'm also on their housing subcommittee, looking into shared housing—and I think BAH can be a part of that happening on a larger scale. But my whole work life I've been driven, task-oriented, get-it-done-and-be-responsible, and maybe part of retirement is not being so damned responsible—maybe taking a nap in the afternoon at 3 pm when the LC meeting is taking place!

Linda:

I am stepping down from the LC primarily because I have increased my participation in a project close to my heart—my mentorship of young women leaders in Ukraine, particularly in a project called The Jam Factory. That said, I will remain active in my community and involved with BAH. I recently finished FEMA's basic Community Emergency Response Team program and plan to take further training, with the intention of organizing my immediate neighborhood around emergency preparation. Additionally, I hope to become a Land Steward for the Whatcom Land Trust and begin language tutoring with the Whatcom Literacy Council.

*Thank
You*

Dispatches from the Volunteer Front

First, we're delighted to report that volunteer Sue Moyer, who took notes at early LC meetings, is picking up her pen again and stepping back into the role of LC Scribe—and boy, has she been missed. Welcome back, Sue!

Now, here are the volunteer gigs looking for takers. Please consider stepping up!

We need volunteers for

- The Membership Committee
- Set-up and clean-up at the Annual Meeting
- Support of our outreach effort, including lining up groups for presentations. This is something you could do at home!

Also, we are still looking for volunteers willing to consider being on the LC.

Please call the office if you are interested in helping.

Calling All Commercial Service Provider Customers

It's that time of year. People are getting their windows washed. Do you have a good window washer to recommend? If so, please call the BAH office and let us know; if not, please call the BAH office and ask for our list of member-recommended window washers. (See how that works?) Ditto landscapers, ditto house painters, ditto contractors, ditto acupuncturists, ditto tailors, ditto caterers, ditto computer techs...

Something New at Writers' Group

By Sandra Stanton



To add a little spice to our writing efforts, BAH's Writers' Group organizer Jane Pryce recently introduced an idea that she had learned about: telling a story in exactly 440 words—not 439 or 441, but precisely 440. To tell the truth, it's easier than it sounds and fun to try. Our first effort was about colors; without knowing in advance, we each chose a different color to write about at home!

I chose white, a color that comes in many hues. I wrote short paragraphs about the sparkling white sand of a Florida beach; the first snow I saw (in Tennessee); the sadness of hospital white, when my brother was very ill in Maryland; and the pure white flower-embossed fabric and delicate lace I found to make my wedding dress in California. Another member chose yellow and wrote about J.M.W. Turner's favorite hue, chrome yellow, and Van Gogh's vivid yellow—a happy color for one so sad.

Source: Sherwin-Williams

The aim of 440 words is two-fold: the discipline of economy of words, and the fun of seeing how different our stories can be, even though we're writing on the same theme.

We also still like writing what we call Scribbings, as we sit together around the table. Given a prompt of perhaps a few words, though it can be something else, we have 5 minutes to write a story that includes all (or almost all) the prompts. Our primary writings, which we write at home and share at meetings, are more substantial. Some of us are working on

memoirs, but all of us like to write about other things as well, drawing on everyday life, a recent event or experience, or just our imagination.

While we met at Jane's house throughout the winter, we're now branching out to other members' homes. We all seem to like entertaining, although Jane's lovely and unique garden will probably draw us back this summer. If the Writers' Group sounds like something you might like to try, please call the BAH office. They'll ask Jane to get in touch with you.

BAH People On The Go

Don Phillips Takes the Swing Connection Big Band to the Majestic

If you catch the Swing Connection big band at the Dance USA dance May 17 from 8-10 pm at the Majestic Ballroom—and if you like to dance, that's the place to be!—look for your fellow BAH member Don Phillips, the leader of the band.

People always ask Don what he plays and he usually says “around”—and then acknowledges that he used to play the upright bass back in his Ohio State days when he organized his first swing band, The Statesmen. He hasn't played bass in a long, long time but he's had a lot of bands since then, including Endangered Species in Chicago (where he was on the board of the Chicago Jazz Institute for many years), and is currently president and program director of the 18-piece Swing Connection, which performs popular dance and concert music from the big band swing era—and do they swing!

Don made his living as a medical science writer and after moving to Bellingham in 2001, he served as the community's representative on St. Joseph Hospital's Ethics Committee until it disbanded last year. But his heart has always belonged to minerals and music. Starting in high school, he collected his way to one of the largest private collections of minerals in the country; he sold it in 2008 but still runs the awesome fluorescent mineral display at the Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club' show and sale at Bloedel Donovan park every spring.

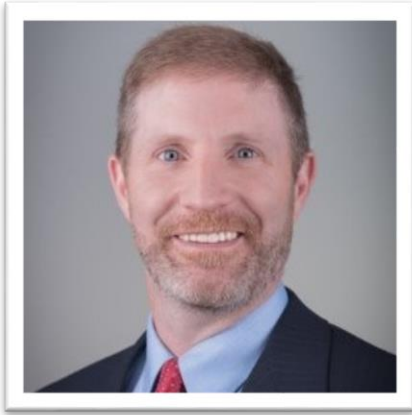
In downsizing several years ago, Don donated his huge jazz record, book, and music arrangement collections to WWU, but it hasn't shrunk his love of the music, which he pours into the Swing Connection.



Don's second from the right in the back row.



Meet the New Boss at WCOA



Executive Director Chris Orr, WCOA

If you've been paying attention to the news from BSAC, you know that Mary Carlson retired recently. The WCOA board has just hired a new leader to direct its programs, of which BAH of course is one.

Chris Orr has moved clear across the country to take up his new position as executive director of the Whatcom Council on Aging. He's also come home. A native of Anacortes and a graduate of the University of Washington, Chris and his family recently relocated from Charlotte North Carolina, where he was executive director of multiple branches of the YMCA of Greater Charlotte for 18 years. Chris is married with two teenagers and likes to bike, play the fiddle, and coach youth soccer and basketball. You can find him in his office in the lower level of BSAC or, more likely, upstairs getting to know members, volunteers, and staff. Reach Chris at corr@whatcomcoa.org.

Smiling Faces Suggest People Had a Good Time at the Volunteer Social in April



Thanks to Colleen Harper, Iris Parker, and Nick Waslenko, the social was held as planned, even though Volunteer Chair Angela Mercy was unexpectedly called out of town. Food, laughter, and stories were shared, along with the new BAH promotional video.

You can see the video by searching "Bellingham At Home" on YouTube or visiting this link: <https://youtu.be/1z5amARgTe8> --and you can join the fun by becoming a BAH volunteer!

Book Review

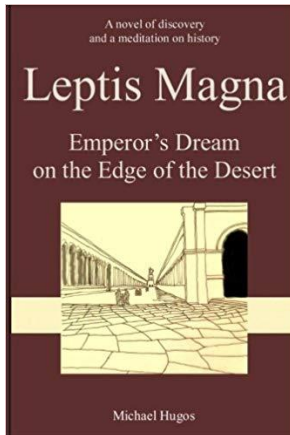
Leptis Magna: Emperor's Dream on the Edge of the Desert

By Sandra Stanton

The story of author Michael Hugos is key to understanding the creation of this fascinating historical novel. While Hugos drew on the records of Ammianus Marcellinus (c. 325-391 A.D., historian to several Roman emperors) for the historical framework of the book, it was his own personal experiences as a boy, visiting the ancient ruins of Leptis with his family while living in Libya, that led to its creation. During his first visit, as an eight-year-old, he felt a presence following him as the family wandered through the ruins. He also heard an urgent whispering voice, though he couldn't understand the

words. On subsequent visits to Leptis, Michael came to sense that the presence was a man who had lived there many centuries ago.

More than a decade later, as Hugos was walking along the shore of Lake Michigan, listening to the waves hit the beach, he felt drawn back to Leptis, and then to comprehensive research to determine the man's identity. He succeeded. The man was Septimius Lucius (b. 341 A.D.), a descendant of Emperor Septimius Severus, born to the leading family in Leptis.



Hugos saw Lucius and the ruins of Leptis as “a bridge to another time.” He felt that understanding that era might help our generation better understand the world in which we live. After ruminating for a time, he decided that Lucius should be the one to tell the story.

In 384 A.D., Lucius commences to write his autobiography. It will take time. More often than not, he awakes in the middle of the night, carries his olive oil lamp upstairs to the library, and places the manuscript on his writing table. Dipping his quill in the ink pot, he begins where he left off. It is not an easy task, for now he must relive his part, however small, in the destruction of the later Roman Empire. His writing has become a confession of guilt.

For us, Lucius's expertly penned words not only bring a long-ago world to life, but also, if we heed them well, could help save our world from a fate akin to that of Rome.

Many Happy Returns of the Day

Here's a shout-out to our members celebrating a birthday in May:

Verna Bomont

Betty Basham

Barbara Barnes Plourde

George Oliver

Caryl Hinckley

Cat McIntyre



Bellingham At Home Contact Information

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Bellingham At Home is a program of the Whatcom Council on Aging, which is a 501(c)(3) organization, and a member of the Village to Village Network.