



July 2023 Annie McElroy photo

Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association Summer 2023

Transitions at Meadowbrook! A number of changes are happening at Meadowbrook, beginning with the May expiration of the maintenance and operations agreement between the two owner-cities and the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association. For the past 25 years, the MFPA non-profit group has mowed and maintained Meadowbrook's open meadows and trails, funded, built and maintained the Interpretive Center building, and in partnership with Si View Parks, managed rentals of the building and fields to help fund the park property's maintenance.

New interlocal agreements are planned and in process. When the park property was purchased in 1996, the Snoqualmie Tribe was not a federally recognized Tribe, and the Si View Parks District did not exist. Now, Snoqualmie, North Bend and the Snoqualmie Tribe will jointly form the **Governing Body** for the park—a sacred site for the Snoqualmies Tribe—, advised by an **Advisory Body** of key stakeholders, including the MFPA, MTS Greenway, King County, the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum and others. Si View Parks will be contracted to perform day-to-day management operations, and the MFPA will focus on education, interpretation, and special projects. Watch for the formalization of these new agreements in the coming months!



July 15, 2023 photos courtesy of Si View

Outdoor Kid's Jamboree!

Returning to Meadowbrook for the first time since the covid years, this summer's Outdoor Kid's Jamboree was enjoyed July 15 by approximately 100 valley children. Organized by Si View Park's Jill Rittenhouse and Zach Todd, the free activities entertained families with hands-on activities, helpful information, and happily, a visit from everyone's favorite cool-treat food truck, **Snoqualmie Snow!**

Originally conceived by North Bend planner and MFPA board member Mike McCarty, as a showcase of outdoor summer opportunities for children, this year's successful-but-small event has generated enthusiasm for a larger event next year. Organizers anticipate broader participation by outdoor-oriented organizations, and hopefully, youth-led activities such as hands-on Scout projects. Suggestions welcome for next year's fun free-to-the-public event!

Give Volunteers visit Meadowbrook!



A. McElroy photo

Growth International Volunteer Excursions (GIVE) is a Seattle-based international travel organization for young people interested in meaningful travel including locally significant volunteer projects. This year, GIVE's Pacific Northwest trip included a visit to Meadowbrook, exploring the cultural significance and responsibilities of an important sacred site for the Snoqualmie Tribe also being a well-loved beautiful open space public park.

The thoughtful and energetic international group of young people hiked Meadowbrook's meadows and forests, and enjoyed lunch with a Mount Si view. They spent a day removing blackberries from a Tribal riparian buffer project on the Snoqualmie River in the lower valley, as well as tubing the river. We hope to work further with GIVE in the future!



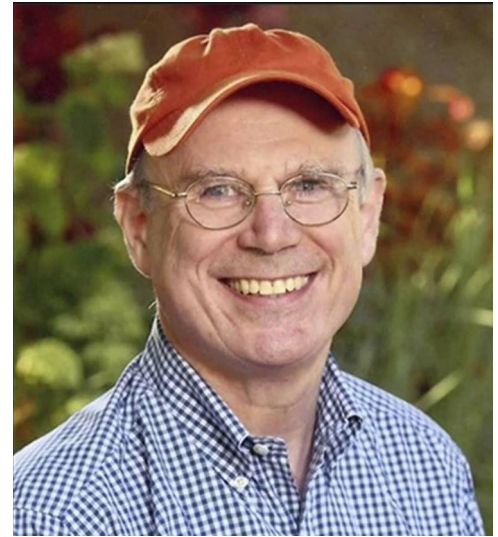
A. McElroy photo

Remembering Gardiner Vinnedge

February 12, 1951—July 6, 2023

The Snoqualmie Valley will greatly miss North Bend's Gardiner Vinnedge. It's difficult to think of any history-related or civic project in the valley that Gardiner was not involved with, using his characteristic energy and enthusiasm to make it a success.

Gardiner grew up in North Bend, in a family with long-time North Bend roots. He graduated from Colorado College, and UC Santa Barbara with degrees in history, and had a long career teaching history at Bush School in Seattle. His passion for telling the stories of history must have inspired every student.



Gardiner was an important part of preserving the history of the Snoqualmie/North Bend areas. He was a long-time board member and officer of the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Society, worked on the valley commemoration celebrations of the State Centennial in 1989, and was on the King County Landmarks Commission. He developed a historic walking tour of North Bend, fascinating the crowds with his enthusiastic storytelling. He helped create the Si View Parks District to save the Si View pool and park, and was on the first Si View board of commissioners. He served on the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association board for six years, and brought Bush School students to Meadowbrook for work parties and mentoring with Snoqualmie younger students. He was co-chair of the bond issue to purchase Tollgate Farm into public ownership. At the Snoqualmie Valley Museum, he helped develop the Snoqualmie 101, North Bend 101, and other programs available from the Museum. Gardiner was North Bend's Citizen of the Year in 2013.

After retiring from Bush School in 2017, Gardiner had time to garden, participated in North Bend's park planning, and became a regular weekend docent for the Snoqualmie Valley Museum. His positive energy and enthusiasm found something to interest every visitor. We will greatly miss his thoughtful advocacy and spirited stories.

Gardiner's family requests friends consider a donation in his memory to the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum, PO box 179, North Bend, WA 98045



Bush School students' work party on Meadowbrook, laying out the trail to the Camas Meadow/Prairie Loop in bark. 2008. Battey photo

Whitaker Foundation Grant!

The Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association recently received a \$2,000 grant from Snoqualmie's Whitaker Foundation, towards education and interpretation of the public open space park! The gift is especially appreciated during this time of transition for the MFPA.



Dr. John Whitaker had a medical practice for more than 50 years in Snoqualmie.



Mary Whitaker supported valley education.

The Whitaker Foundation was established by the Whitaker family in memory of Dr. John and Mary Whitaker, to continue the Whitaker legacy of support for educational and community causes. Whitaker Park in the Snoqualmie Ridge neighborhood also commemorates the long valley career of Dr. Whitaker, and the family's many public contributions. Thank you, Whitaker Foundation!

Meadowbrook-the-Town platted in 1923!



The Meadowbrook neighborhood of Snoqualmie will celebrate its 100th Birthday August 25, 2023, with a potluck picnic, children's activities, birthday cake and special program! More information next page! Join us! Photo courtesy of Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum.



Fall Classes and Events (mostly) at the Meadowbrook Interpretive Center

Happy Birthday, Meadowbrook-the-Town! Friday August 25, 5:30 pm Walnut St in Snoqualmie's Meadowbrook neighborhood. Join us to celebrate the 100th birthday of the Meadowbrook neighborhood of Snoqualmie, platted in 1923. Celebrate with a potluck picnic, then enjoy a special program. The Snoqualmie Museum's Cristy Lake will give an illustrated history of the land and the town, with many early photos from the Museum collection. Plan to bring your food, chair and your favorite Meadowbrook dessert or snack to share; annotated historic recipes from Meadowbrook-the-town especially encouraged. Meet your Meadowbrook neighbors; children's activities; families especially welcome!

Snoqualmie Prairie Restoration Friday, September 8, 7 pm Free. Meadowbrook Interpretive Center
The Snoqualmie Valley floor was once a vast open prairie, maintained by ancestors of the Snoqualmie Tribe for thousands of years for food, medicinal plants and hunting. But the beautiful open space meadows that remain (Meadowbrook, Tollgate, Three Forks) are no longer native prairie. Join Snoqualmie Tribe biologist Ryan Lewis to learn about the exciting prairie restoration plans, the plants involved, and what to watch for at the planned restoration sites.

Meadowbrook Birds in Fall . Saturday, September 9, 9 am Free Meet at Meadowbrook Interpretive Center. What birds live on Meadowbrook in the fall? Have summer residents left for the winter, or will some of them stay here? Walk with wildlife biologist Harold Erland through Meadowbrook's woodlands and meadows to learn more about our bird population, recognize birds by their calls, and try helpful birding phone apps. Dress for the weather and possible mud; approximately 2 mile stop/look/listen walk.

Hike to the Big Cedar Saturday, Sept 30, 9 am. Free Meet at Meadowbrook Interpretive Center
Imagine a tree over 500 years old! Walk through Meadowbrook's woods and cross seasonal stream channels to see a tree that has been growing here since about 1523! See many northwest native plants, and learn how important cedar was for northwest tribes and pioneers. Dress for the weather, including boots for wet areas. Heavy rain/high winds will cancel. Families welcome, but not easy for strollers. Hike is about 1.75 miles.

Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands Movement Friday, October 20, 7 pm. Free. The Snoqualmie Tribe's Ancestral Land Movement works to increase awareness and understanding of the people who lived in the Snoqualmie Valley for thousands of years, and their ties to the land we share today. Many popular recreational sites today are significant and/or sacred sites to the Snoqualmie Tribe. Tribal member Jaime Martin will explain how people can join in stewardship by respecting, protecting and helping restore these special lands.

Snoqualmie Valley Elk Friday, October 29, 7 pm Free Meadowbrook Interpretive Center.
Join wildlife biologist Harold Erland, from the Upper Snoqualmie Valley Elk Management Group, to learn the about our local elk herd. The USVEMG works to improve habitat, maintains highway safety fencing, and monitors collared elk to learn about their lives and travels. Find out the latest information about our elk, and other interesting wildlife in the valley. Families welcome!

North Bend 101 Friday, November 10, 7 pm, free, Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center. Enjoy an evening with Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum's Cristy Lake, and learn about the fascinating history of the town of North Bend. Beginning with the last ice age, discover why the valley has been important to people for thousands of years. Special photos from the Museum's collection will give vivid glimpses into North Bend's colorful past and the personalities who lived it. Families welcome!



photo courtesy of Sarah Berger

Summer is for Wildlife Watching at Meadowbrook!

Summer is an ideal time to watch for wildlife at Meadowbrook. Elk calves are out with their mothers and easily seen. Mornings and evening twilight are times animals may be more active and visible. Plan to observe from a distance, preferably downwind. If an animal moves away, you are too close. Bring binoculars, and talk and move quietly. Leave pets at home.

Remember, wildlife at Meadowbrook are wild animals, and can be dangerous. If you are on foot when you encounter elk, stay at a safe distance. If you have a pet with you, leash and control them: do not allow them to move or chase the animals. Full grown elk are about 6 feet tall, not counting antlers, can turn very quickly and severely wound or kill roaming animals if they are perceived as a threat.

If you unexpectedly get too close to an elk, **DO NOT** turn your back to them. Move away slowly and purposefully. The elk may try to drive you away by advancing on you in an intimidating manner. If this happens, you can help protect yourself by placing a large object, such as a tree or vehicle, between you and the elk. While elk typically choose to avoid human interaction, **a bull elk during mating season (September-October), or a cow with a calf can be dangerous and unpredictable.**



Observing quietly at a distance is safest and best for wildlife, too! Tim Noonan photo

Meadowbrook Farm's Monster Blackberries by Dave Battey

In the 1870's, Luther Burbank, the honestly nicknamed "Plant Wizard" of California, received some blackberry seeds from India from "high up in the Himalayan mountains." These were part of a seed exchange program, where he would exchange seeds from his "improved" varieties for exotic varieties to use in his research. According to Burbank, "It would appear that transplantation to an altogether new soil and climate had the same stimulating effect on this blackberry that we have seen manifested in the case of the Japanese plum and sundry other plants. There appeared among seedlings of the second generation an individual that was a very marked improvement over its parents."



Time to pick and might as well enjoy! photo courtesy of WA State Noxious Weed Board

Luther Burbank's literature states that this "exceptional seedling" was cultivated and propagated, and its qualities proved so unique that it was introduced in 1885 via a special circular to nurseries, being christened the "Himalayan Giant." After a decade of probation, the Himalayan took its place as the pre-eminent blackberry on the Pacific Coast and even elsewhere in the United States and the world. For several years the blackberry could not be propagated fast enough to meet the demands of the public.

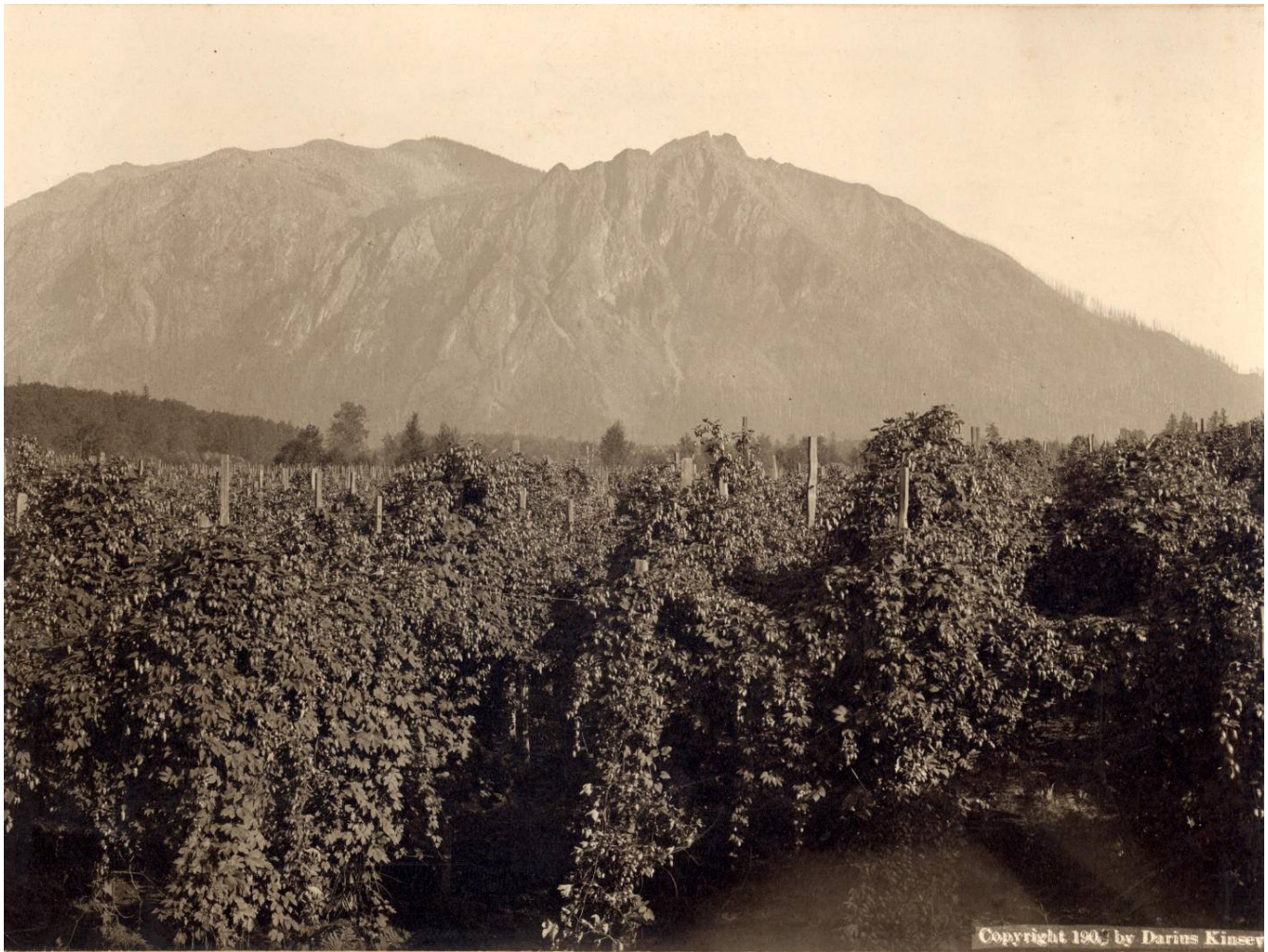
Promotional literature for the berry raptured, "A single cane may grow twenty feet — even fifty feet, in one season and obtain the base cane diameter of almost 1 1/2 inches. Aggregate cane growth of a single plant in a single season may exceed 1,000 feet — one fifth of a mile. As for fruit production, the Himalayan far surpasses any blackberry ever known. A single bush may bear 200 pounds per season. They seem to be strongly disease resistant....." And when the cane has grown for a season, the tip of the cane often roots. These vines literally march across the landscape. In a serious understatement, a California horticultural book from 1914 states that the Himalayan is "somewhat difficult to manage".

Later it was recognized that this berry was a form of the common European bramble, *Rubus procerus*, considered a native of Europe. This certainly makes some sense, since the British would be likely to take European berries with them to India. Logically, it does not do as well in its native habitat, where nature has, over the centuries, provided many plant enemies that keep it in check. Once introduced, the birds and animals took over — spreading the seed far and wide. When I first began mowing Meadowbrook for the Snoqualmie Valley Land Company in 1990, many fields on Meadowbrook Farm were covered with Himalayan blackberries, often taller than the vertical muffler on my tractor. You put it in low gear and inched forward, pulling a six-foot in diameter rotary mower. The berries were naturally replaced with grass after several years of mowing.

So, we've done it to ourselves. Look what the Himalayan has done in just 138 years. Unlike most edible plants imported from Europe, these monster berries had a famous horticulturist promoting them, and a name that gave them an exotic aura. Like many other introduced plants, without their natural predators, they quickly become pests. In fact, the Himalayan is a 'Class C' noxious weed in the State of Washington. Class C Noxious weeds are already widespread in Washington and it is not considered feasible to require eradication. So, this edible, good tasting European berry is here to stay.



Valley historian, horticulturist and MFPA board member Dave Battey



Hops fill the former prairie during the summer of 1903. Darius Kinsey photo

Raising Hops at Meadowbrook

In 1882, early settler Jeremiah Borst sold much of his property to a new company, the Hop Growers Association, and moved his family to nearby Tollgate Farm. Taking advantage of European crop failures, hops became a lucrative crop in Western Washington, involving eventually some 900 acres at Meadowbrook ("the world's largest hop farm"), with hop kilns for drying, camps and housing for workers, barns, and a three story summer hotel. Work on the hop ranch involved many people, including nearly a thousand seasonal pickers--many Native Americans from as far away as eastern Washington and Alaska. When falling prices and parasitic aphids ended the "hops craze" the land was sold and converted to growing hay, potatoes, corn and beans. In 1904, Seattle dairy farmer A.W. Pratt purchased what was then known as Meadowbrook Farm, and hired Angus Moffat as manger. Moffat built fences with the cedar hop poles, constructed dairy barns, built a creamery, and supervised dairy herds as well as crops over the next 39 years. In the early 1960's, the Snoqualmie Valley Land Company, local businessmen, bought the Meadowbrook Farm property, selling parcels for schools and businesses. The remaining parcels were purchased for public open space as Meadowbrook Farm Park in 1996.

Hops continued to grow wild, and may still be seen in the trees on and near Meadowbrook, and at the Interpretive Center building, where elk have also enjoyed them in recent years.

Marking the Seasons: Mary Louie Art Installation



The Mary Louie Art Installation is a quietly dramatic way to measure the seasons, and honor a notable Snoqualmie Tribal healer.



The Mary Louie Art, by Fall City artist Don Fels, honors Snoqualmie Tribal healer, midwife and medicine woman Mary Louie, born about 1800, near Tolt. She lived more than 100 years, traveling between Lake Samammish and the Cascades gathering botanicals for her work, and would have often visited the prairie that is now Meadowbrook Farm. Visit the art at Meadowbrook's Dike Road Field Meadow. Map and directions at meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org

Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association

PO Box 1462, Snoqualmie, WA 98065 www.meadowbrookfarmpreserve.org

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