

Washington Heritage Herald

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Volume 9 – August 2004 - #5 – Kit Zinser, Editor

Editor's Note: I am thrilled to be a small part of the Washington Historical Society once again. To say that I am impressed with all that has been accomplished over the years by the Society is an understatement. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to communicate bits and pieces of Washington's rich heritage. Clarification to membership letter: Although I teach Writing Arts and Literature, Journalism is not on my resume yet. I just completed my Master's Degree in May 2004 and Joyce's call was perfect timing. An aside: This is the ONLY Zinser trivia I will burden you with. Israel Zinser had five sons and one daughter. Roy, Harley, Elmer, Steele, Rolla and Ada. Ada is my grandmother and 'Uncle Doc Harley Zinser is one of her brothers. I am fortunate to live in the home Israel provided for his family with six generations now enjoying the ambiance and spirit of 307 E. Jefferson.

We sat in the solarium with the ceiling fan rotating quietly overhead. George, the orange feline, roamed his domain. An abundance of wild birds hurriedly found refuge in the spreading oaks as the clouds rumbled and lightning skittered across the sky. And then, Dr. David J Bailey moved into the past, intrigued and educated me for over two hours and displayed a passion for his profession that belied his 88 plus years.

Dr. Bailey has practiced dentistry for 60 years and raised his family in Washington for over half a century. Born in Bay City, Michigan, son of a coal miner, David J. Bailey headed West for his post high school education. After graduating from Pacific Union College, a denominational California school, he took the advice of a friend, made application and was accepted at the University of Illinois. Upon finishing dental school in the fall of 1942, another friend directed him to Peoria and a position as the official dentist for the local school district. The same day he arrived in Peoria, a local dentist died. After negotiations through a dental supply representative, Dr. Bailey



Hear Ye Hear Ye

August Meeting
Washington Presbyterian Church
August 23, 6:30 – 8:30

The Regular August meeting will be an “Evening of Nostalgia” fund-raiser held at the Dr. Tom Gross home at 201 S. Main Street from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Enjoy an evening full of nostalgia, including an old fashioned homemade ice cream social, the music of the Gus Gustafson Trio and a tour of the Gross Home. We encourage you to bring a lawn chair and spend the evening! Historical Society memberships and program schedules for the upcoming year will be available. Reservations **MUST** be made in advance, by calling Judy (444-2287) or Beth (444-8123). A donation of \$5.00 per person will be collected the evening of the event. Parking for the event will be available behind St. Mark’s Lutheran Church – 200 S. Main St. Washington.

Program Listing

The programs planned for the 2004-2005 year are listed on the back of this newsletter. The public is always invited on the 4th Monday evening of each month – September – April (except for December). The meetings start at 7:00 p.m. and are generally over by 9:00. They are held at the Washington Presbyterian Church at 105 South Elm. Come and share a little history with us.

The Celebration of Life In The Cemetery Walk

Once again this year, on August 14th, we will take you on a walk around our local Glendale Cemetery and allow costumed speakers to introduce you to former families. Little known facts, shared by living family or found in old newspapers, are shared by the speakers with our guests. Dean Essig will be portraying Lawson Holland and Kay Saunders will present Catherine Hornish/Dement. Both are living family of the deceased.

Tickets are \$8:00 presale or \$10.00 at the gate. Children 5-12 are \$4.00

The walk starts at 1:00 p.m. and the last group will begin the tour at 3:30. Tickets are available after July 15th at Don’s Card Shop, Homespun, 410 Studio (Colonial Beauty Shop), and at the Zinser House during regular hours. In the event of rain, the speakers will present the program at the Washington Presbyterian Church at 105 S. Elm starting at 1:00 p.m. – One performance only.

NOTE: The walk this year is in the Old Glendale Cemetery as you enter from Market Street. Parking is available.

purchased the practice. As he settled into his new practice, he treated hundreds of school children; many of whom still keep in contact with him. However, World War II spurred his loyalty, and he enlisted in the Navy commissioned as a Lieutenant J.G. Since the Marine Corps did not have its own medical contingency, they borrowed him from the Navy and sent him to Hawaii after training at Great Lakes and Camp Pendleton. The Marines were practicing for invasion of Japan when the bomb was dropped. Dr. Bailey then cared for U.S. service personnel in occupied Japan. He returned to Peoria and his family of two sons and two daughters to continue a distinguished career.

The thing that touched me first about Dr. Bailey was his enthusiasm for the field of dentistry. The next was his honorable approach to treating patients. He was not content to speak of his accomplishments; in fact, he was reluctant to talk about himself. He was more interested in educating me into the intricacies of the tooth, mouth, dental health and procedures. We visited his office one hot afternoon. There wasn't a breeze stirring. To me all dental offices smell the same - sort of a sweet-medicine smell, just as I am sure he detected fear as I walked in. He has maintained a large collection of antique dental instruments - the cowhorn (an extraction tool), models of adult and infant jaws, mortar and pestle used to mix amalgams, and hundreds of extracted teeth. As he demonstrated the use of each tool, he was steady and sure in his approach. "Just insert this into the gum and twist and plop - out it comes!"

We discussed the earliest dental fillings which were sometimes stone chips, turpentine resin, gum and metals. Gold leaf fillings were recommended in 1948. Dr. Bailey displayed a tube of durable 24K gold foil pellets. He showed how 20 pellets would fit in a tooth. "Tap, tap, tap and a fine filling." He spoke of the old foot-operated manually-operated drills which only ran at about 8000 RPM's. The drill was a steel burr which heated up quickly and caused pain to the patient. During his time in Japan, he had to keep a close eye on the corpsmen providing foot power for the drill. Often, they became over zealous, and the steel burr overheated very quickly. Fortunately in the world of dentistry today, high speed drills with water spray have been developed to undertake tough tooth enamel. However, some fears are difficult to overcome.

One thing Dr. Bailey said has not changed - the patient's fear of dental procedures. The first local anesthetic, cocaine, could be inserted directly into the tooth. Historically, Novocain (developed in 1905) was always offered, but many patients thought the needle was worse than the drilling or extraction pain. Dr. Bailey mentioned that his mother had all of her teeth extracted without benefit of anesthetic. 'Flossing is a must,' stated Dr. Bailey, and he mentioned that early flossing was done with silk thread easily obtained from many sewing baskets. Toothpowder (which to me tasted like ground chalk) was a staple in many homes even though Colgate and Pycopay toothpaste were popular choices. Early toothpastes used chalk and soap as additives. The substances or substitutes (Does anyone remember using salt or baking soda?) are not the key according to Dr. Bailey; brushing is. Early toothbrushes were made from pig bristles.

He has diagnosed patients with pernicious anemia and diabetes because of mouth symptoms. His daughter Kathy, a dental hygienist who worked for her father, says she is amazed at his diagnostic expertise. One patient complained of a sore tooth. Dr. Bailey investigated and asked if she was sure of the location of the pain. She was. He disagreed and extracted the tooth he determined to be the problem. He was correct and saved the woman from extra pain and expense.

As Expected, charges over the years have risen. Early in his career, Dr. Bailey charged \$3.00 per extraction and if the tooth adjacent required service, the patient would get the additional extraction for \$1.00 more.

Fifty years ago, a porcelain crown was \$20.00 and a root canal was \$15.00. Dr. Bailey would not refuse service to a patient who could not pay and would not provide service to a patient who wanted a healthy tooth ground down to accommodate a gold cap. His integrity is undisputable. Since his retirement two years ago, he is current and vigilant about dental technology.

An active practice, lab creativity and innovations left little time for leisure activities, but two avocations he pursued were flying and traveling. He piloted a Cessna for many years involving his family in his hobby. His daughter Lorena was licensed at age 16. He also noted that the first apartment he and his wife Judy lived in rented for \$45.00 a month while the hangar where he later stored his Cessna went for

\$95.00 a month with no heat and one light bulb. The family still travels to the East Coast to visit his son, David (a surgeon), and to the Southwest to visit the youngest son D.J., a middle school teacher.

As we talked of choices and changes, Dr. Bailey's enthusiasm for his career and passion for his patients never wavered. Patients (from a base of approximately 2500) continue to call and inquire about him. Dr. Bailey left a legacy of honor and commitment on five generations.

The rain fell softly now. As we walked to the door that evening, he grinned and said, "I guess you are ready for your state boards now." I looked up at the giant blue spruce next to the house and thought about how the water hanging on the silvery needles looked like teardrops. I had been edified by an honorable man who humbly enjoyed sharing his history and expertise. His patients, friends and family are indeed fortunate.



Dental Tools used through the years by Dr. Bailey

The following is a list of programs scheduled for the 2004-2005 season. We invite and encourage the public to attend these fourth-Monday-of-the-month meetings at the Washington Presbyterian Church located at 105 S. Elm. They start at 7:00 pm and usually end before 9:00 p.m. There is no cost and refreshments are served.

August 23, 2004 – 6:30-8:30 pm

An Evening of Nostalgia Fund Raiser – (See Announcement page)

September 27, 2004 – 7:00 pm

“Why bother with Historic Preservation?”
Society of McLean Co. – By Mr. Greg Shaw

October 25, 2004 – 7:00 pm

“Collection Inspection”
By Several Washington Area Collectors

November 29, 2004 – 7:00 p.m.

”How Peoria’s Medical Community Developed”
By Dr. Vicky Hineman

December 14, 2004 – 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Tour of Homes

January, 24, 2005 – 7:00 p.m.

“I’ve got a Story.”
By Washington Area Historians

February, 28, 2005 – 7:00 p.m.

“History of Holt, Best, and Early Caterpillar from 1871-1941”
By Nicole Thaxton

March, 28, 2005 – 7:00 p.m.

“Historical Moments in Time with Photo Restoration”
By Becky Dailey

April 25, 2005

”Architectural History of the Washington Square”
By Zachary Borders