

Welcome to Olympia in 1841, 1856, 1874, 1899, 1933, 1950, 1972 and 2001!

"Sylvester's Window" is a nonprofit, educational project which teaches local history through a series of eight cityscapes, all drawn from the same perspective: the tower window of Edmund Sylvester's home. Edmund came to Puget Sound in 1846 and founded Olympia in 1850. His landmark home stood just south of Sylvester Park for over 100 years.

The first scene shows life in 1841 when Olympia was known as Cheetwoot. The last scene recreates Arts Walk and the Procession of the Species in 2001.

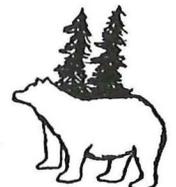
Sylvester's Window blends history, urban planning, architecture, art, geography, and citizenship. Through the corresponding narratives and biographies, students gain an understanding of what it takes to create, maintain and revitalize a downtown core, and how local citizens have dealt with challenges in different eras.

After studying cityscapes, people walking through town look up more. They notice store fronts, historic features, and architectural styles. They gain a better understanding of how the built environment fits with the natural environment that hosts it.

As the Chinese proverb says, *"One picture is worth ten thousand words."* Pictures are inviting, not intimidating, and they are a good starting place for students. The cityscapes can act as a springboard to many outstanding local history books that are now available. They can also make field trips more interesting, since students will arrive downtown with mental images of when different buildings came on the scene, and what activities were going on at the time.

We hope that "Sylvester's Window" will encourage students to think about Olympia's past and plan for its future, since they are the ones stepping into the very next cityscape.

Lynn Erickson



## Sylvester's Window Questions



Q1) Who is the program designed for?

A1) The program is designed for grade school students, but can be adapted to other ages.

Q2) What did you hope to accomplish with this program?

A2) I hoped to provide a simple but engaging starting place for the study of local history. The idea is for students to feel that they are walking into town every few decades. They immediately have their bearings because it is always the exact same perspective.

Q3) Are the paintings completely accurate?

A3) No. Only a photograph is completely accurate. The goal from the beginning was to create a "ballpark" feeling of each time frame with the main buildings in place. (Trees are not dealt with since they would cover up many of the building fronts. Also the end of the peninsula changes very little in the paintings even after the Carlyon Fill. If we had tried to extend it we would have lost the distant water altogether in the later paintings. However, the east-west fill is easy to see.)

Q4) What is included with the cityscapes?

A4) Each cityscape has a 5-page narrative, a set of one-page biographies, a timeline, a page of starter questions, and two diagrams: one showing the people in the biographies, and the other showing additions to the town since the previous cityscape. There are often a few additional pages of pertinent maps and information.

Q5) How did you choose people and dates for each cityscape?

A5) The advisory group of local historians suggested an initial list and other names and dates were added over time. The vote had to be unanimous for each biography. Of course, it is only a beginning. Students and teachers will hopefully add to the list.

Q6) Why is there a bear in every picture?

A6) There is a bear in every scene to remind students that Olympia was first called "Cheetwoot," meaning "place of the bear."

Q7) Where are the original paintings?

A7) The original paintings were donated to the Olympia Historical Society and put on permanent display at the Olympia Timberland Library.

Q8) Where can you purchase Sylvester's Window?

A8) You can order the nonprofit project for classroom use by calling (360)

entire Northwest! Looking down 4th Avenue will be different for them now that they can imagine the 15 foot high stockade that stretched the length of the street on both sides. They could also take pictures of architectural details and later make a folder. At the end, students could design the cityscape they envision for the future, either individually or as a group.

For primary students, the posters may be enough. It works well if children are allowed to discover changes and share their impressions before anything is read to them. Then they can come together and have a discussion. In the days ahead the teacher can read parts of the narrative.

Older students can choose a biography they like and try to portray that person for the day. They should be able to explain why their person's contribution to the community or region is so important. The cityscapes can be studied by themes such as transportation, styles, architecture etc. The program will be expanded according to the imagination and inventiveness of each teacher.

Q15) How do I explain about all these important people being in Sylvester Park at once?

A15) Explain that all the people in the diagram were alive during that time, and most were actively involved in the community or region. They were placed in the park so younger students could more easily envision their involvement. A first grader can understand Emma Page more clearly by seeing her patting a dog, and it is fun for children to think that Governor John Rogers could have stood on the spot where his statue was later erected. For people like Rebecca Howard who have no existing picture, a simple form in the town square gives students something to relate to and helps make the individual "come alive" for younger children.

Q16) How can Sylvester's Window materials be used?

A16) This packet contains materials protected by other copyrights as well as our own. You are welcome to use the project and distribute it within the classroom only. It is being sold at cost so teachers can afford it.

Q17) What was the inspiration for this project?

A17) Sylvester's Window indirectly started with a children's book called The Little House by Virginia Lee Burton, published in 1942. The Little House was part of the inspiration for Ronald Fleming's 1990 project titled "A Changing American Cityscape," and that project was the inspiration for Sylvester's Window.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### Sylvester's Window Artist

Robert Chamberlain was born in 1930. He was raised on a stump ranch at Plumb Station near the tracks of the old Olympia Tenino Railroad.

His paintings have been exhibited at galleries in Washington, Oregon, Arizona and Maine, and are in numerous private collections. Today, all eight of his paintings for "Sylvester's Window" are on display at the Olympia Timberland Library.

Robert lives with his wife Margaret on Wildcat Cove in rural Mason County.

### Sylvester's Window Creator

Lynn Erickson grew up on Lake Washington in the 50s and 60s. She moved with her husband Mark to Olympia in 1976. They have three grown children: Matt, Dan and Hayley.

Lynn taught second and third grade at Lacey Elementary. She has volunteered in schools for many years. She invented the Passport Club, runs nonprofit stamp shows for children, and started a recess running program at Centennial Elementary called The 100 Mile Club.

### Inspiration for the project

Inspiration for Sylvester's Window came from "A Changing American Cityscape" created by the Townscape Institute in Cambridge Massachusetts, and from Shanna Stevenson's book "Olympia, Tumwater, and Lacey, a pictorial history."

### Sylvester's Window Advisory Group

These dedicated local historians made the project possible. They shared volumes of research, answered questions (even evenings and weekends), voted on biography choices, studied preliminary drawings and final paintings, and gave constant feedback. Drew Crooks volunteered to proof-read almost all the material. The group could have guarded all the hard-earned knowledge they have gained, but instead they chose to share it. The South Sound Region is richer for these people.

Shanna Stevenson

Ed Echtle

Drew Crooks

Susan Goff

Roger Easton

Derek Valley

Annamary Fitzgerald

### Community Support

Others who generously and frequently helped: Linda Oestreich, Patti Moore, Susan Parish, Mary Thompson, Eldon Marshall, Lanny Weaver, Jerry Handfield, Terry Badger, Mary Hammer, Cecelia Carpenter, Dale Hume and everyone at Olympia Copy & Printing who gave countless hours helping me design and print the project.

Also thanks to Orca Books, Browsers' Books and Fireside Books for agreeing to handle distribution of the project downtown.

Special "support awards" go to two terrific people, Mark Erickson and Maggie Chamberlain.

### Sylvester's Window Sponsors

With deepest gratitude we acknowledge the financial support of the following sponsors (in alphabetical order):

American Institute of Architects Washington Council, The Community Foundation, The Evergreen State College, Friends of the Olympia Timberland Library, Susan Goff, Fred Goldberg, Key Bank, The Lassen Foundation, Becky Liebman, Miller Brewing Company, The Nisqually Tribe, North Thurston Public Schools, Olympia Copy and Printing, Olympia Downtown Association, Olympia Education Association, Olympia Education Foundation, Olympia Federal Savings, Olympia School District, Olympia Supply Company, The Olympian, Tumwater School District, Twin County Credit Union, Washington State Archives. "In kind" donations: Art House Designs, Lew Rents, Squaxin Island Museum and Library.

## EIGHT CITYSCAPES AS SEEN FROM "SYLVESTER'S WINDOW"



1841

### CHEETWOOT

The scene shows the Native American landscape on the peninsula known as "Cheetwoot." Members of the Wilkes Expedition have set out to explore the Mima Mounds to the south. A Hudson's Bay Company employee from Fort Nisqually has joined the explorers. A trade is going on between Leschi, Quiemuth and Thomas Otchin. *Time of year- Friday, July 9, morning*

1856

### THE INDIAN WAR

The scene shows the young town of Olympia near the end of the Indian War. There is a blockhouse in the town square, and Fourth Avenue has a fifteen foot high stockade from shore to shore. Governor Isaac Stevens is officially disbanding the volunteer army. Muddy, stump-filled streets lead down to Giddings Wharf at the foot of Main. The Bigelow house is being built on the eastside. *Time of year- Thursday, Oct 30, afternoon*

1874

### BUILDING A RAILROAD

Citizens are gathering in the town square to begin work on fifteen miles of track that will connect Olympia with the Northern Pacific Railroad in Tenino. There are now wooden sidewalks, telegraph poles, and a bridge to the westside. Columbia Hall stands on 4th, and Olympia has its first brick building, the Barnes bank. *Time of year- Tuesday, April 7, 8:00 AM*

1899

### THE CENTURY'S LAST FOURTH OF JULY

The scene shows a landscaped Sylvester Park, complete with gazebo, fish pond and oyster shell walkways. Citizens in patriotic costumes participate in a 4th of July bicycle parade. Olympia now has streetcars and a grand new Opera House. A clocktower rises above the sandstone Thurston County Courthouse, and business blocks are starting to replace private homes. *Time of year- Tuesday, July 4, 10:00 AM*

1933

### THE HUNGER MARCH

The scene shows Depression Era citizens marching up Capitol Way from Sylvester Park to demand jobs. "Little Hollywood" shacks are in view, and smokestacks from the plywood plants dot the waterfront. Cars are now the dominant mode of transportation. A sign reads "Dig The Canal." *Time of year- Tuesday, Jan 17, 9:00 AM*

1950

### GRAND CENTENNIAL PARADE OF PROGRESS

Citizens celebrate Olympia's 100th birthday. There is a replica log cabin in Sylvester Park and a parade down Capitol Way. Traffic is heavy since Olympia is at the intersection of the Olympic and Pacific Highways. Construction is near completion on the control house & dam between Budd Inlet and the Deschutes Waterway, creating Capitol Lake. *Time of year- Saturday, May 6, 11:30 AM*

1972

### THE BIG SNOW

The scene shows the downtown lights in the evening following Olympia's biggest one-day snowfall of the century. The new Intercity Transit buses are operating, while students from the newly-opened Evergreen State College create a snow sculpture. A skyscraper now stands on the isthmus. *Time of year- Wednesday, Jan 26, 5:00 PM*

2001

### ARTS WALK AND THE PROCESSION OF THE SPECIES

The scene shows two original Olympia events: The Procession and Arts Walk. A new performing arts center, community center and farmer's market now exist. Downtown is still recovering from the Nisqually earthquake. Citizens stroll along the Percival Landing boardwalk and children play in the interactive fountain nearby. *Time of year- Saturday, April 21, twilight*



## MEET THE NEIGHBORS

<u>2001-</u> (12 total- 7 men & 5 women)	Art Zabel Shanna Stevenson Daniel Sylvester Bigelow Mary Ann Campbell Bigelow Ralph Munro Jan Putnam Jim Brown Barb O'Neill Gary Locke Holly Gadbow Steve Charak Gerry Alexander	<u>1972-</u> (11 total- 8 men & 3 women)	Esther Knox Joyce Cheeka Dick Pust G. Eldon Marshall Tom Huntamer Daniel Evans Billy Frank Jr. Dee Hooper Dixy Lee Ray Carl Reder Irving Lassen
<u>1950-</u> (9 total- 6 men & 3 women)	Amanda Smith Margaret McKenny Winnifred Olsen G. Noyes Talcott Jr. Ralph Stormans Peter G. Schmidt George Funk Gordon Newell Leonard Huber	<u>1933-</u> (13 total- 7 men & 6 women)	Josephine Corliss Preston Belle Reeves Frances Knox Gladys Buroker Elizabeth Ayer Julia Waldrip Ker Earl Bean Gwin Hicks George Mottman Frank Iyall Vibert Jeffers Bill Gustafson Joseph Wohleb
<u>1899-</u> (13 total- 8 men & 5 women)	Emma Page Pamela Hale Bertha Eugley Janet Moore Mother Joseph P.H. (Doc) Carlyon John C. Percival Sam Fun Locke John Rogers JR Chaplin Edward Lange Charles Patnude Elias J. Payn	<u>1874-</u> (11 total- 6 men & 5 women)	John Miller Murphy George Barnes Hazard Stevens Chief Kettel Elisha P. Ferry Ike Ellis Abbie Stuart Rebecca Howard Annie Hartsuck Mary Olney Brown Annie Pixley
<u>1856-</u> (13 total- 8 men & 5 women)	George and Isabella Bush Daniel and Ann Elizabeth Bigelow Edmund and Clara Sylvester M.T. and Elizabeth Simmons Isaac and Margaret Stevens William Fraser Tolmie John Swan Stephen Ruddell	<u>1841-</u> (9 total- 8 men & 1 woman)	Leschi Quiemuth Lt. Charles Wilkes Lt. Thomas Budd P. Midshipman Henry Eld Alexander Anderson Thomas Otchin Kai-Kai-Sum-Lute ("Queen") Sno-Ho-Dum-Set
Total: 91		Men: 58                      Women: 33	