

Washington State historian seeks information on WW II insulators

7/23/15



Historian Gerald Elfendahl is collecting resources for a history of a popular public park on Bainbridge Island, WA. He has written seeking information from alumni, former faculty, or friends who may have knowledge of the park, which was a U.S. Navy Radio Transmitter Station during World War II.

In particular, Elfendahl is seeking information on an insulator made by LAPP Insulators, which carried the weight of an 800-foot steel transmitter tower.

“We are working with the National Archives, LAPP Insulators company, several local historical museums, veterans& groups, park district officials, and interested parties to tell the history of this station and also to focus on one of the most remarkable artifacts from that station - the insulator that withstood the enormous weight of the tower . . . and pressure of the times,” writes Elfendahl.

Here are his questions:

Who might be the best historians to talk to or read about this?

Can you recommend any books or publications about radio transmission tower insulator development at Alfred and LAPP during the pre-war and early WW II period?

Did anyone survive who were ceramic engineers, material scientists, or former employees who may have helped create this insulator or otherwise be familiar with its design considerations, descriptions, qualities, features, and how it was made?

What was AU&s relationship with LAPP?

Were there any drawings or photos of where and how this was made?

Is there any historic or general manufacturing information, especially in lay terms?

Do you have any human stories of the lives of the folks who made it?

What is the historical context against which this insulator was made?

How does it compare to earlier insulators, later ones and insulators today?

“Likely this will end up in some form of publication for local museums, park districts, teachers, schools, or libraries to share along with other local history stories ...” writes Elfendahl.

To reach him with any information and/or materials please use the following:

Gerald Elfendahl

7823 Westerly Lane NE

Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

206.842.4164

Email: gelfenda@earthlink.net