

Andrea - Deputy Clerk

From: Scott Thomas <administrator@townoflaconner.org>
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2023 9:45 AM
To: Andrea Moore
Subject: FW: Change the Name of the Town

Another one to post

From: Jacquelyne Bettencort <k9walkerwa113@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2023 9:16 AM
To: administrator@townoflaconner.org
Cc: council_1@townoflaconner.org; council_2@townoflaconner.org; council_3@townoflaconner.org; council_4@townoflaconner.org; council_5@townoflaconner.org; Michael Davolio <planner@townoflaconner.org>; Editor <editor@laconnernews.com>
Subject: Change the Name of the Town

Dear Town Council Members:

If administrative decisions concerning the Town of La Conner are no longer going to reflect the history of the people honored by this monument (below), then please rename the town so that visitors have an accurate expectation of what they will get when they arrive.

If you want to name it after the three people who have assured the recent derogatory changes were successful then The Town of Ha ThoVolio (Hayes/Thomas/Davolio) seems like a good name change. Or perhaps the Town of Money Talks. Another could be the Town of Residents Don't Matter. Or Town of History No Longer Matters.

Then people who come here will not expect history or solitude. Instead, they will know to expect homes built on a kids' baseball field, a behemoth apartment building too big for its location, (which is encroaching on people's historical homes and businesses, and which the residents do not want), and modern monstrosities built on a hill and towering over the historic homes of an 80 year-old woman and others.

Many of your predecessors have spent years marketing La Conner as the charming, sweet town I have come to know and love. The "word of mouth" because of this charming and sweet atmosphere has been a very powerful tool for attracting new and repeat tourists. However, this marketing strategy can no longer be honored because what you are selling no longer exists.

Please ensure you are correctly informing past and future tourists of the Town's current and future state of development by whatever means necessary. I anticipate that the Atkinsons expect to piggy-back on this long-standing tradition in order to draw tenants for their building. Because they are part of the future destruction of this charming and sweet atmosphere, they should not be allowed to profit from its past marketing prowess.

Please make the proposed changes (below) to the "Town History" on the town's website as it is no longer accurate and you are falsely misrepresenting the current state of the Town and what people can expect when they arrive.

This email (as is all of my other correspondence to the Town) is intentionally addressed to the Town Council Members so that it is posted accordingly on the Town's website.

You all take care.

Multiple choice - Planner, Mr. Davolio:

1. Does not know where this monument is located;
2. Has never visited the monument to show respect to the people it honors and for whom his employer is named;
3. Has learned little or nothing about the Conners;
4. All of the above.

Just a thought I had yesterday while I was sitting next to the Conner monument.





Obituary of Louisa Ann Conner, undated 1932

(She died Mar 11 1932 aged 89 years)

[Text missing] Here, In 1862, she met John S. Conner. The young people were immediately attracted to each other, and a few months later, in 1863, they were married. After three years' residence at Lexington, they sold their holdings and again took the westward trail, locating this time in Central City, Colorado, where Mr. Conner soon made a place for himself among the community's leading citizens, operating a hotel and general merchandise establishments, as well as handling contracting work on the then building

Union Pacific railway. But in 1867 disaster overtook them, when their holdings in Central City were wiped out by a fire.

With a covered wagon equipped with a trailer — the first "six-wheeled" vehicle known to the Oregon trail — drawn by a team of oxen and four cows, and With half a sack of flour and no money for another, they started for the Pacific Northwest. Arriving in Olympia in 1868, Mrs. Conner immediately established that city's first millinery store, which she operated for a short time, while Mr. Conner sought for a location on Puget Sound. In 1868 he found the location he wanted and on, New Year's day, 1870, they came to the little trading post [near] the mouth of the Skagit river.

The land on which they located, much of which is still in possession of the family, is to classed by the Department of Agriculture as "the most fertile in the United States, if not in world." On this land Mr. Conner began raising oats, being among the first of the settlers to dike land to hold back the tide waters of the Sound. In 1875 family moved to Seattle to begin the education of their children. [James] D. Lowman, later a member the firm of Lowman & Hanford stationers and printers, being employed as tutor. Continued successfully in oat-raising, together with the rapid advance in realty values in Seattle and on the LaConner Flats brought quick prosperity and the beginnings of fortune.

The Town of LaConner was platted in 1871, the name been made by taking Mrs. Conner's initials, "L.A." as a prefix with the family name of Conner [post office established under that name March 29, 1870]. The Conner estate still owns many buildings and building lots in the city. Mr. Conner died in 1885 while temporarily residing with his family at Oakland, California. In 1886 Mrs. Conner returned to LaConner and built the beautiful home place which was known for many years as "Clover Law," one of Skagit County's showplaces. This was on the tract purchased a short time ago by Edward Wells, the house standing in a grove of trees on the edge of which the new Wells cottage now stands, about a mile from LaConner. The home burned in 19[illegible] since which time Mrs. Conner made her home in Seattle, at 21st Avenue North.

Mrs. Conner is survived by her children: Mrs. Ida Talbott, Herbert S. Conner, Mrs. Lillian Kendall, Frank J.S. Conner, G.W. Conner and W.W. Conner. Three children, Martin, Louis and Mary Viola, preceded her in death.

Funeral services were held Monday morning at St. Joseph's Church in Seattle, mass being said at the morning service. At two o'clock services were held in Sacred Heart Church in LaConner, the rite of Final Absolution being conducted. Rev. Father Durgin of Seattle was in charge of the services and was assisted by Rev. Fr. Barry of Sacred Heart Church. The funeral was directed by the Bonney-Watson Company of Seattle, assisted by Coy R. Kern of the Kern Funeral Home. Interment was made in the family plot at Pleasant Ridge Cemetery.

TOWN HISTORY

Our Founding

Situated on the delta near the mouth of the Skagit River, La Conner was founded in the early 1860's and is Skagit County's oldest community. First settled by non-natives just after the Civil War, our early settlers included many with names recognizable today such as Alexander Underwood, Michael Sullivan, Sam Calhoun and A.G. Tillinghast. In 1869, John Conner purchased the trading post built by John Hayes, another early settler, on the west side of the Swinomish Slough, and established a post office. In 1869, all the Town plus 70 acres was deeded to John Conner for \$500! To honor his wife, Louisa A. Conner, the Town's original name of Swinomish was changed to La Conner in 1870. La Conner was briefly the county seat before Mount Vernon.

Settlement

The early settlers diked hundreds of acres of land, creating farmland which would surpass per-acre yields around the globe. La Conner soon became a popular farm community and a hub for steamers carrying passengers and freight from Seattle. By the turn of the century, La Conner's population had reached 1,000. La Conner was a thriving community due in large measure to its proximity to the water. Logging and fishing prospered until the Great Depression. Artists settled in the area in the 1940's, enjoying the unique light and inspiration from nature. Renowned artists include Morris Graves, Guy Anderson, Richard Gilkey and Clayton James. Some artists were leaders of the Northwest School of Art. In the 1970's, tourists discovered the area along with folks seeking the peace and quiet of an old fashioned town.

Present

Today, La Conner is a balance of people who work and live here, including the Swinomish Tribal Community, Shelter Bay residents from across the channel, fishermen, farmers, artists, and carpenters - a diverse mix of cultures and educational backgrounds. **If you need a place to relax** and browse through interesting shops and art galleries, if you want to watch the waterfront or enjoy fine restaurants, inns and bed & breakfasts, then come to La Conner. You can also enjoy natural beauty and wildlife such as bird watching. La Conner is wintering grounds for swans and Canada geese. The fertile farmlands continue to produce food and seed crops and, of course, our annual Tulip festival is celebrated around the world.

La Conner's **waterfront** is on the National Registry of Historic places. The Civic Garden Club was the first courthouse north of Seattle. **We value our history and heritage.** We are an exciting place to live and to visit. [emphasis added.]