

The subject of your search appears in the following page(s) of a study of guest books that survived Crown Point Chalet, a roadhouse that once existed above the Columbia River near
Portland, Oregon.

Simply scroll down to view the relevant pages.

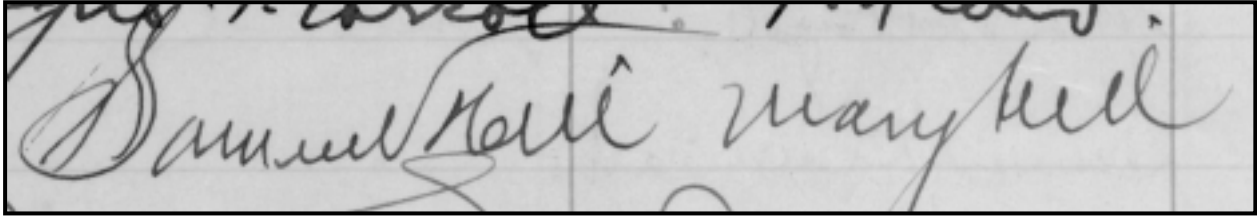
For more information about this study or to contact the author directly:

[Click here to visit the CrownPointChalet.Com Website](#)

SAMUEL HILL

R15-11

Signed Guestbook: July 17, 1915



Samuel Hill and Harry S. Graves party

The scanner view shown above isolates the signature of Samuel Hill from the signatures of 39 other guests that composed a party gathered to honor the visitation to Oregon of Harry S. Graves, the Chief Forester of the United States. H.S. Graves had been Chief Forester since January, 1910, when he was appointed to the position after President William H. Taft had fired Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief Forester of the nation.

This was the first time that the signature of Samuel Hill appears in the Guestbook, and it is for this reason that this particular entry is presented here. At this date (March/2000), Samuel Hill's signature has appeared 11 times: (9 times in 1915, once in 1916 and once in 1919). In all instances, he indicated his residence as Maryhill, Washington. A more detailed analysis of the Grave's party will not be attempted here. For a complete list of those who attended the Grave's party, refer to **Other** at the conclusion of the following detailed study.

Samuel Hill Vitae:

Profession: Lawyer, railroad executive, road builder

Born: May 13, 1857/Deep River, North Carolina
Died: February 26, 1931/Portland, Oregon (Age 73)
(Intestinal hemorrhage)

Age at Chalet: 58 years



Courtesy Oregon Historical Society
Sam Hill



Courtesy Maryhill Museum of Art
Sam's "Castle"

**DETAILED STUDY OF HILL ENTRY.....>>
FOLLOWING PAGES**

DETAILS / SAMUEL HILL ENTRY

The Quaker

Samuel Hill was born to a Quaker family in North Carolina, and they moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1865. Sam would find employment in the law office of James J. Hill, the legendary father of the Great Northern Railroad, and two years later he would marry one of the boss's daughters, Mary Frances Hill. Sam would move west to Seattle, Washington, and become interested in road building. In his new setting, Sam observed that the region lacked roads and the ones that existed were in poor condition without hard surface. At the same time Henry Ford's "Tin Lizzies" and their like were reproducing in large numbers, resulting in a backlog of automobilists eager to explore the scenic wonders of the west. Sam would become a charismatic leader in the movement to build good roads, and it was while spreading his gospel that he met Mrs. Henderson and came to dine at her Chalet.

Sam Hill was a worldly man with wide ranging interests, and the brevity required in this study allows little space to properly communicate his proportion. A proper accounting requires a book. Reference is made to a good one shortly.

Misconceptions

Sam Hill's relationship to railroader, James J. Hill, remains a source of confusion for many: Sam was the "son-in-law" of the infamous J. J. Hill, not his son or brother! Certainly the major factor that perpetuates this error results from sheer coincidence: both Sam Hill and his father-in-law bore the same surname. It seems essential to clarify this lineage issue if one is to properly understand Sam Hill. It probably goes without saying that a father would tend to have less fidelity to a son-in-law than his own offspring.

Another prevalent misconception regarding our Sam Hill is that he was the fellow immortalized in the expression, "What the Sam Hill?" Most likely he was not! If you are looking for a thorough rationale for this conclusion, you are referred to *Sam Hill - The Prince of Castle Nowhere*, a most enjoyable and well written biography by Portland native John E. Tuhy. On pages 269-70, Tuhy discusses the results of his research on the subject. He finds that the origin of the fallacy remains obscure, but states that the consensus among experts, including H. L. Mencken, seems to be that "Hill" is an euphemism for "hell", possibly arising from a puritanical reluctance to use the "devil" word.

Samuel Hill - Western Icon

On a global basis, one would hardly expect the mention of the name of Sam Hill to light any fires of recognition, except possibly when applied in error. Refer to the previous discussion regarding misconceptions! Unlike other celebrities profiled in this study, Sam Hill is more of regional interest - in this case the Pacific Northwest. Such parochialism is of course logical as the northwest was Sam's preferred environment and the stage where he most often performed.

Sam's Creations

One of the reasons that the name of Sam Hill persists in the northwest is that a number of landmarks bear his name. The following five sites are still viable and attract considerable attention each year:

1. The Columbia River Highway

Sam Hill was a dynamic leader in the promotion of what is now designated as the Historic Columbia River Highway, a magnificent engineering achievement that is

now a feature of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic area. In 1983, the surviving sections of this scenic highway, still negotiable by auto, were added to the National Register of Historic Places. Just west of the Chalet at Chanticleer Point, you will find a huge granite boulder that bears a tribute to Sam's highway building efforts. Julius Meier, then Governor of Oregon, wrote the following words, which are found on a plaque embedded in the stone:

"He lifted Oregon out of the mud, put an end to the isolation of our communities, and changed the whole mode of life our people."

Whether the proliferation of roads and automobiles has changed our present mode of living for the best is arguable, but the introduction of these new roads most certainly changed Mrs. Henderson's circumstances for the better. The debt of gratitude Mrs. Henderson owed Sam Hill was profound: The Columbia River Highway that Sam catalyzed eliminated the early mud road that led just below her establishment. Hungry tourists were now able to drive their beloved machines directly into the world-class scenery of the Columbia River Gorge and traffic began to flow by her business like a trail of ants. It is hardly coincidence that the highway from Portland to Hood River officially opened on July 6, 1915, and the first signatures in her Guestbook appear three days later, on July 9th. As the highway flourished, Mrs. Henderson flourished, and she found herself perched on one of the most enviable pieces of commercial real estate in the country. Mrs. Henderson, it should be noted, was far from a benign spectator in the highway project, as a letter from Sam to Mrs. Henderson will attest. That original letter, as well as a transcription, is reproduced at the end of this profile.

2. Maryhill

Sam had the financial resources to fund his dreams, albeit his funding was at times inconsistent. Perhaps his most expensive dream involved the purchase of 7,000 acres of ranch land on the Washington side of the Columbia River that he wanted to develop into a self sustaining Quaker Colony. This development he named Maryhill, as well as his "castle" located nearby. The location of his project was some 85 miles up the Columbia River (East) from the Crown Point Chalet and to Sam's consternation, no highway serviced his area.

Sam's dream of colonizing a remote region was based on sorrowful misjudgment: he had viewed the area as an overlooked "Garden of Eden", that if managed smartly, was capable of producing fruit and assorted crops that would rival, if not excel, the productivity he observed across the river in the Hood River Valley and other nearby areas. At first he tried to attract fellow Quakers to share in his vision, but they came, saw, and departed without turning a spade. He opened the site up to others, who attempted a make a go of it, but most soon dwindled away. The major problem Sam faced in that area was a climate more hostile than his calculations: the amount of rainfall was not sufficient for proper plant growth and his attempts at developing a viable water distribution system were unsuccessful. Added to that, the cold east wind blew down the gorge in the winter, and the local grasshoppers occasionally took a liking to the crops. After Sam quit pouring money into his fading community, it was not long until most of it had returned to nature. Author John Tuhy adds torture to the story of Maryhill's failure as an agricultural Shangrila when he suggests that the remaining land was in worse shape than when he found it!

It is at Maryhill that you will find Sam's Stonehenge and his crypt overlooking the river. Just three miles to the east, you will find his "castle", which is now the Maryhill Museum of Art.

3. Stonehenge

Sam was born to a Quaker family and his anti-war sentiments were ingrained. In his life he would orchestrate the building of two monuments that would express his pacifistic philosophy. Stonehenge at Maryhill was his first.

When Sam first encountered the real life Stonehenge, in England, he was led to believe that it was built by the ancient Druids and was used for human sacrifice. Sam realized that such wastage of human life bore a parallel to warfare among peoples, where soldiers are sacrificed to the war machine. The construction of Sam's Stonehenge began in 1918, when the horrible realities of human sacrifice during WWI were still fresh in the mind of the public. Sam dedicated his Stonehenge to local soldiers and sailors from Klickitat County who had been lost in the conflict. It is now widely accepted that England's Stonehenge was not built as a sacrificial altar, and the symbolism is thus lost, but it is likely that few recognize the historical mistake and are moved to travel to the isolated setting simply because Stonehenge is a most dramatic and unusual monument!

4. Sam's "Castle"

Although Sam was not pleased that others might refer to his house as a "castle", to do so is irresistible, as it's great size, reinforced concrete walls, and dramatic ramps, gave it the appearance of some European fortification. The truth is that Sam had built such a house for his wife, Mary, who would never come to view the site. The name given to the house was a most fitting selection as Mary was the name of his wife, daughter, and mother-in-law, a gem of an idea that would cover all of the bases. As the house would never be finished and remain unlivable, we come to see that when Sam wrote Maryhill in the Guestbook as his residence, he must have been referring to his town and not to his house. He had built a small hotel at Maryhill named the Meadow Lark Inn, and he would find lodging there. In 1926, Queen Marie of Rumania would come to dedicate his "castle" as an art museum. (Refer to **other** for details)

5. The Peace Arch

Work on Sam's second memorial to the cause of Peace began in July, 1920 at Blaine, Washington - the site of a customs station for those crossing the national border to and from Canada. At this location, Sam grasped the opportunity to express his anti-war sentiments, as embodied in his Stonehenge, with the application of reverse psychology. Instead of decrying loss of life in war, the Peace Arch was designed to commemorate the saving of life due to restraint from war. It was intended as a celebration of the 3000-mile long border between two nations that had been maintained, unguarded for 100 years - without war. Such a feat had no rivals in war-torn Europe. This substantial monument, still standing, is 67 feet high and designed as an arch, with one leg in the United States and the other in Canada. Continuing Sam's penchant for the bizarre, the arch was originally positioned remote from the highway that carried traffic across the border and it was not until 1932 that Interstate 5 was positioned to pass on each side of the arch.

It was also characteristic of Sam's unorthodox style that he chose to dedicate the Peace Arch three times. The cornerstone was first dedicated on September 6, 1921 and then twice again in the company of two world celebrities: In 1922, he brought Marshal Joffre of France to the Peace Arch for dedication after the two had traveled around the world. You can find the signatures of Samuel Hill and Joffre in the Guestbook, dated April 5, 1922. In 1926, he invited Queen Marie of Rumania to the site for a third dedication, and she signed in the Guestbook November 19, 1926. Today, one might expect over 500,000 visitors to Sam's arch and a more recently

constructed International Peace Park associated with it. Again, the name of Samuel Hill is embedded in a creation that perpetuates his name.

Sam's farewell letter to a dear friend

One of Sam's virtues was his thoughtfulness to others, and he had the ability to express himself with grace and sincerity. It seems fitting that this profile of Sam might end with a letter that he sent to Mrs. Henderson, dated June 17, 1927. It would certainly be characteristic of Sam's expansive nature to embellish the truth, but the content of his letter reveals one fact that might remain in dispute if he had not penned it himself... Sam Hill and Mrs. Henderson were good friends.

That Sam and Mrs. Henderson should become close friends - even though worlds apart on a social and financial scale - might be explained by similarities in their character: Both were aggressive and socially talented people, totally wrapped up in pursuit of their dreams. Sam would have admired others dedicated to a vision...particularly his own.

What must have influenced the timing of Sam's letter, was an awareness that Mrs. Henderson was about to retire from the scene of hardship and glory they had shared. The depression had hit the Chalet hard and Mrs. Henderson's health had been failing. She was about to move to Stark Street in Portland and open *Mrs. Henderson's Dining Room*, a small venue of no scenic value, that would quickly go bankrupt - a pathetic attempt to survive financially. Less than two months after Sam sent his letter, signatures in the Guestbook end abruptly, and the blank pages that follow serve to document the end of a remarkable run. Both Sam and Mrs. Henderson departed the Oregon country within less than a year from each other: Mrs. Henderson died first on April 28, 1930 at a sanitarium in Portland and Sam died on February 26, 1931, at St. Vincent's Hospital in Portland.

Other

- The following is a complete list of those who signed the Guestbook at the banquet for Chief US Forester, Harry S. Graves.

Lewis A. McArthur, J.B. Yeon, Thomas Butler, T.H. Sherrard, C.N. McArthur, Frank B. Riley, Herbert A. Smith, J.F. Carroll, Samuel Hill, Rufus C. Holman, K. Kumasaki, H.R. Albee, Marshall N. Dana, R.E. Scott, H.L. Bowlby, Charles H. Flory, H.S. Graves, C.C. Colt, N.J. Sinnott, B.J. Finch, H.M. Covey, Homer A. Rogers, W.L. Lightner, L.W. McDowell, C.J. Buck, John A. Lee, J.C. Ainsworth, W.P. LaRoche, E.A. Sherman, George H. Cecil, H.L. Pittock, Samuel L. Lancaster, James T. Schuyler (sp?), W.A. Van Scoy, G.S. Crego, E.A. Clark, James W. VanMatre (sp?). A.S. Benson, Jacob Kanzler, Philo Holbrook, R.S. Shelley, W.L. Black (sp?)

(Special note: Herbert A. Smith-Washington DC, was an old friend of Gifford Pinchot, the US Chief Forester before Harry S. Graves).

- The Maryhill Museum of Art finally opened to the public in 1940, and now operates as a private, non-profit museum. Its unique displays include a permanent collection of Auguste Rodin sculptures and drawings, an extensive Native American collection, and a collection of Queen Marie artifacts - brought to the museum by the Queen when she came to dedicate the museum in 1926. The Maryhill townsite, Stonehenge and Sam's grave are nearby and open free to the public.

Resources:

- (1) *Sam Hill - The Prince of Castle Nowhere* by John E. Tuhy. Maryhill Museum of Art, Goldendale, Washington. (1992)
- (2) *Breaking New Ground* by Gifford Pinchot. Island Press, Washington, DC (1947) Commemorative Edition (1998)



Samuel Hill
Honorary Consul General of Belgium
for the
States of Idaho, Oregon & Washington
Seattle, Washington
June 9th 1927
To Mrs Margaret E Henderson
Coron Point Oregon

Dear Mrs Henderson.
Having recently read the long list of the names of the men who admit that they each severally and alone built the Columbia River Highway it occurred to me that even at this late day as I have not yet written anything on the subject I should like to add a name to the list of one who modestly has made no claim to being the constructor of the Highway I mean Margaret E Henderson who shared with each and every one the hardships of the pioneer work and who when the laborers returned at night slept in beds and were cheered them with excellent meals for which they slept in beds which she had provided, rose and built the fires and prepared hot and appetizing breakfasts. And may I add that without these kind attentions the road might never have been built. May I then as an old and admiring friend add this tribute.
Your friend
Samuel Hill

Dear Mrs. Henderson

Having recently read the long list of the names of the men who admit that they each severally and alone built the Columbia River Highway, it occurred to me that even at this late day as I have not yet written anything on the subject, I should like to add a name to the list, that of one who modestly has made no claim to being the constructor of the Highway. I mean Margaret E. Henderson who shared with each and every one the hardships of the pioneer work and who when the laborers returned at night slept in beds which she had provided, rose and built the fires and prepared hot and appetizing breakfasts. And may I add that without these kind attentions the road might never have been built. May I then as an old and admiring friend add this tribute.

Your Friend,
Samuel Hill