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# CONFLUENCE

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**Wenatchee Valley Museum  
& Cultural Center**

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*Photo by Welcome Sauer, courtesy of the Sauer Family*

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***The Sauer Family of the  
Upper Wenatchee Valley***

Wenatchee Valley  
**M·U·S·E·U·M**  
 & Cultural Center

*"Inspiring dynamic connections to the unique heritage of the Wenatchee Valley"*

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**From the Director**

*Keni Sturgeon*

This edition of *The Confluence* highlights the Sauer family's history in the Upper Wenatchee Valley. Undoubtedly, this history was passed down over the years, and was valued and expanded by each new generation. A family's history goes beyond names, dates and locations, and the value of gathering, saving and sharing family histories is a key element in preserving our community's collective heritage. Collecting your own family's history is important for a number of reasons.



Knowing, recording, preserving and sharing family histories benefits individuals, families and communities. Family history is more than charts, family trees, census data, and birthdates; it is a powerful antidote for some of the adverse life experiences we face today, giving us a deeper understanding of who we are and motivating us to be more connected to future generations.

Forming relationships with family—past, present, and future—helps fill an innate human need, that of belonging and connection. The relationships we form with others can be incredibly durable, not only with people in our present, but with people from our past. The more we discover about our past, the greater a connection we feel to our ancestors. As we record our own history, we create an opportunity for future generations to connect with us when we are gone.

Learning the history of our family helps us gain a better understanding of the challenges they faced, and can inspire greater compassion for their flaws and mistakes. This can translate to our other relationships, helping us to better understand that we all face hardships. Remembering that, in the context of others' weaknesses, allows us to be better employees, managers, spouses, parents, children, siblings, and human beings.

Finally, family records impact generations to come. Family history keeps memories alive and gives each generation an idea of who they are and where they came from. Genealogical organizations, such as the Wenatchee Area Genealogical Society (WAGS), museum collections, like those at the Wenatchee Valley Museum, and county archives are wonderful places to begin exploring your family's history, or to continue to expand on your family's story.

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*Cover: Leonard, left, and Gary Sauer display their catch of mountain trout from somewhere in the Icicle Valley near Leavenworth. In the 1940s the individual daily limit was 20 fish.*

**Sauer Family Settles in Upper Valley**

*by Chris Rader*

Most day hikers living in or visiting the Leavenworth area are familiar with the popular three-mile trail known as Sauer's Mountain. Who were the Sauers, and what was the family's impact on the Leavenworth and Peshastin communities?

The story begins with Peter Sauer and his second wife, Mary. Peter was born to German immigrants in Keokuk County, Iowa, on April 15, 1857. He married his first wife, Augusta, also a German immigrant, in 1882. Their daughter Helen was born the following year, but Augusta died five months later. Peter married Augusta's younger sister, Mary Berg, in 1885 and they raised Helen along with the 10 children they would eventually have together.

Mary had been born in Germany, coming to the United States with her parents at age five. She only attended school through the second grade but her children eventually helped her improve her reading and writing skills. "When she was staying with us, when I was in grade school (in the 1930s), she'd be sitting there in the rocking chair reading my geography book, or any book I had," granddaughter Dolores Sauer Dahl said recently. Along with her love of learning, Mary was industrious and cheerful. Dahl described her as "warm and loving; tall, straight, healthy and a delight to be around."

Five children were born to Peter and Mary Sauer in Iowa before they moved in 1895 from Iowa to

Holdrege, Nebraska. There they grew wheat and lived in a large farmhouse. Peter was interested in real estate investments, and when he heard from an attorney friend that Everett, Washington, was an up-and-coming community with many possibilities, he decided to move his family there. With Theodore Roosevelt as U.S. President, the West had its appeal.

By this time (1905) there were eight Sauer children: Helen, George, Henry, Phillip, Leonard, Minnie, Mary and Welcome. Two other boys, Peter and Page, had died as infants in Nebraska. Sister Eva rounded out the family in 1907.

The Sauers loaded their belongings into two train cars, household goods in one and horses in another, and rode the Union Pacific through Wyoming and Idaho to Puget Sound. Peter bought land on Everett's Ebey Island. It is not clear whether he farmed this land or merely intended to sell it at a profit. The land was often inundated with water, however, and the family's horses died in a flood. Peter hadn't managed to strike it rich in Everett and wanted to find a drier climate, so he moved the family to Leavenworth in 1908. (Helen returned to Holdrege and married Sam Schrock.)

**Sauers colonize Leavenworth and Peshastin**

Leavenworth had earned a reputation as a rather wild town. Incorporated in 1892 with the completion of the Great Northern Railway line between Seattle and St.

Paul, Minn., it was the headquarters of the railroad's Cascade Division – which included the roughest part of the route, through Stevens Pass. Seven railroad tracks bisected the town (replaced by U.S. Highway 2 in the late 1920s when the tracks were rerouted up Chumstick canyon). Most of Leavenworth's early-day residents were single men, working either for the railroad or the large Lamb-Davis lumber mill. Saloons outnumbered churches; "ladies of the night" operated thriving businesses; and bar fights, some of them fatal, were common. However, the character of the town gradually mellowed as families like the Sauers moved in.

Peter bought some farmland north of town, off Railroad Avenue (now Ski Hill Drive), where he planted potatoes and apple trees. The younger



Courtesy of the Sauer Family

*Sauer family in 1906, front from left: Peter, Welcome (in white), George, Mary, young Mary. Back: Minnie, Philip, Helen, Henry, Annie Kessel, Leonard.*

children attended Leavenworth schools. Older boys George, Henry and Leonard found outside jobs and, at his insistence, gave their earnings to Peter. Welcome was the only son permitted to finish high school. As each young man turned 21, Peter gave him \$500 and sent him out on his own.



This was Leavenworth's Front Street around the time the Sauers arrived in 1908.

Courtesy of Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce

Son Phillip, who had been born with a heart malfunction, died at age 16. Leonard found work in Leavenworth's downtown drug store. He was bright, though he had never graduated from high school, and the pharmacist encouraged him to pursue a career in medicine – so he enrolled in the college of pharmacy at the University of Washington.

Among the students he was “popular and highly thought of.”<sup>1</sup> In February 1913 Leonard became ill and, as the illness progressed, word was sent to his parents in Leavenworth. By the time Peter and Mary reached Seattle by train, their son had contracted spinal meningitis and died. He was 21.

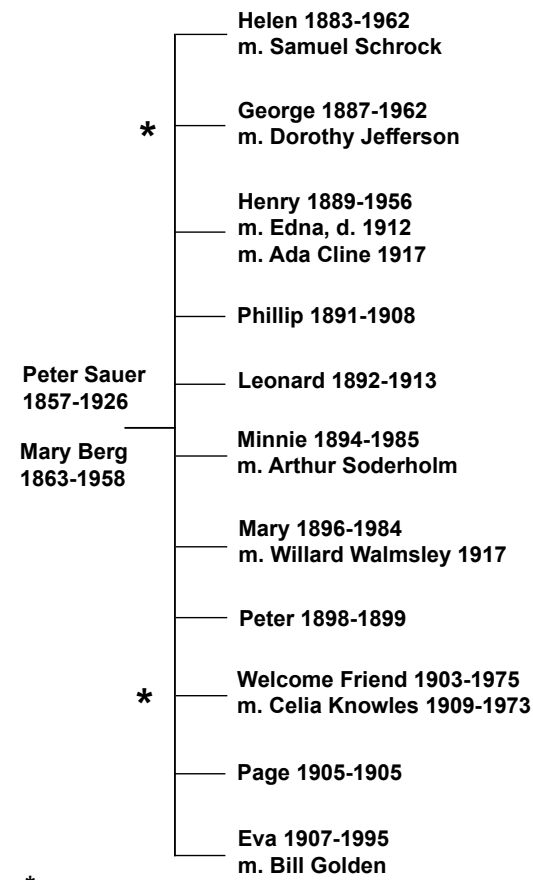
In 1913 George Sauer married Dorothy Jefferson, another Iowa girl whose parents had recently moved to Leavenworth. She was proud to say that she was a direct descendant of Thomas Jefferson. The couple lived for three years in British Columbia before settling in Peshastin, just a few miles from their two families. (See story, page 13.) George and his brother Henry planted a 20-acre apple orchard east of town, and George opened the Peshastin Garage.

Henry had married Edna Maston in 1912. They lived in Peshastin for about a year until she, eight months pregnant, became ill and moved back to her parents' home in Leavenworth to be nearer a doctor. Her baby, Edna, was born Dec. 21 but mother Edna died four days later. Henry continued to care for his young daughter but managed to find some time to attend parties with other young people and to hunt for game. *The Leavenworth Echo* noted:

J.I. Brownlow, W.A. Brownlow, Henry Sauer and W. Wamsley left for Eagle Creek the first of the week where they will spend several days hunting. The hunters informed several of their friends that they would not return without several of the most ferocious animals. However, we trust they will not bring them in alive.<sup>2</sup>

Henry married Ada Cline, daughter of Great Northern engineer W.A. Cline, February 1917. The couple raised three daughters, including Edna. They moved to Omak in 1922 and Henry went to work for the Biles & Coleman Lumber Company. He became superintendent, overseeing several hundred employees who respected him greatly. He remained at the mill for 32 years before retiring and moving with Ada to their summer home on Lake Osoyoos, in Oroville. He died in 1956.

#### The Sauer Family of the Upper Wenatchee Valley



\* see separate story

All of Peter and Mary Sauer's children were born before the family moved to Leavenworth in 1908.

#### Sauer daughters were sociable

Peter and Mary Sauer lived with their younger children in a small house on Cascade Street, a short walk from the apple ranch. Granddaughter Dolores Dahl noted that it must have been a comedown from the large farmhouse they'd had in Nebraska. Peter's orchard did not do well and potatoes (tended by hand) were not a lucrative cash crop. After giving up ranching he invested in a few land speculations but none was successful.

Daughters Minnie Mae and Mary made friends with other Leavenworth young people. They attended parties, went on hayrides and sleigh rides, rode horses, and explored mountain trails like most Upper Valley teens and youth of that era. Sometimes they were included in outings with their older brother Henry.

One of Henry's friends, Willard Wamsley, was a fine carpenter. He built some homes in the Leavenworth area and worked on a large building project in Okanogan around 1915. Young Mary Sauer, who graduated from Leavenworth High School in 1915 or 1916, caught his eye. *The Leavenworth Echo* noted on Nov. 3, 1916, that he was “putting the finishing touches on a snug five-room residence with all the conveniences” on Poplar Street, off today's Ski Hill Drive. “Wedding bells will ring in December,” the reporter predicted. Willard and Mary actually married in June 1917, a few months after Henry's second wedding. They moved to Edmonds, Wash., in 1928 and sold their Leavenworth home to Welcome Sauer. The Wamsleys raised five children in a large, two-story house with two staircases.

Minnie, born in 1894 and two years older than Mary, did not finish high school with her Leavenworth class. The 1910 census shows her living with her stepsister's family in Nebraska, but she must have come back to Leavenworth the following year for a short time. Her younger brother, Welcome, persuaded her to join him in his senior year. They graduated together in 1921. Minnie returned to Holdrege and married Arthur Soderholm. The couple farmed and raised five children. Minnie died in 1985 at 100 years old – alert, singing hymns and quoting Scripture with all of her children around her (according to her niece Dolores Dahl).

Welcome Friend Sauer, born in 1903, was five years old when the family moved to Leavenworth. In his teen years he worked with his father on the potato farm and orchard, missing school in the fall to help with harvest but still graduating third in his class. His story is a fascinating one that begins on page 6.

The youngest Sauer, Eva, was born in 1907. After graduating from Leavenworth High School she married William Golden on Dec. 11, 1931. He became a construction inspector for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, working with crews building the

Leavenworth and Winthrop national fish hatcheries. He was then sent to Hoover Dam in Nevada and Grand Coulee Dam, finishing his career in Quincy with the Columbia Basin (irrigation) Project. William and Eva had one son, Glen, born in 1934. In 1971, after William died, Eva lived in a retirement community in Sequim, then an apartment in Cashmere. She moved to East Wenatchee to live with Glen and his wife Barbara for several years before entering a convalescent center where she died in 1995. Glen worked as a Foremost milkman and at the Alcoa aluminum plant in Malaga; he and Barb also had a cherry orchard.

After patriarch Peter Sauer died, in 1926, his wife Mary stayed in Leavenworth for a few more years until after Eva's wedding. Mary then moved to Edmonds to live with her daughter Mary and husband Willard Wamsley, renting her Leavenworth house to the Leavenworth High School principal. He would hand-deliver his monthly rent check of \$12 to Welcome Sauer, who mailed it to the Wamsleys to help with Grandma Mary's care. The older Mary died in 1958 and her daughter Mary died in 1984.

The Welcome Sauers in Leavenworth and George Sauers in Peshastin became well integrated within their communities. Read on for more about these second-generation pioneer families!

#### ENDNOTES

1. *Wenatchee Daily World*, March 7, 1913.
2. *Leavenworth Echo*, Nov. 10, 1916.

#### SOURCES

Wenatchee Area Genealogical Society library: Obituaries *Leavenworth Echo*, Feb. 23, 1917; Aug. 23, 1918. *Wenatchee World*, March 16, 1971.

Wesley Sauer  
Dolores Sauer Dahl  
Barbara Golden



Minnie and Welcome Sauer graduated from Leavenworth High School together in 1921.

Courtesy of the Sauer Family

## Welcome and Celia Were Mountain People

by Chris Rader

According to Sauer family lore, parents Peter and Mary didn't get around to naming their ninth child right away. The Holdrege, Nebraska, couple had already come up with six boys' names, including namesake Peter, by the time their seventh son was born on Jan. 25, 1903, so they just called him "Pet." Later that year, during harvest time, a man (whose name may have been Mr. Welcome or Mr. Friend) came to the Sauers' farm in search of work. He was hired for the rest of the season. After he had left, Peter remarked, "That man was a welcome friend!" The family liked the sound of that phrase and Welcome Friend Sauer got his permanent name.

Welcome's brother Peter had died a few years earlier. His nearest brother, Leonard, was 10 years older, but Welcome's sisters Minnie and Mary (and Eva, born in 1907) were closer to his age and played with him. The family moved to Everett, Wash., in 1905 and then to Leavenworth in 1908 when Welcome was five.

As a boy, and throughout his life, Welcome loved the mountains. His family arrived in Leavenworth the year the Wenatchee National Forest was established. Headquartered in Leavenworth and extending from the Columbia River at Wenatchee westward to the summit of Stevens Pass, and from Naches north to Chelan, the diverse forest included high, glaciated alpine peaks; lush valleys of old-growth forest; dry shrub-steppe foothills; and thousands of lakes. This country was paradise for anyone who enjoyed fishing, hunting, mountain climbing and camping – like Welcome Friend Sauer.

Welcome accompanied his older brothers on fishing and hunting trips and became hooked on mountain adventures. With friends or on his own he explored Tumwater Ridge, just behind his family's home, and Icicle Ridge a short distance away (south of the railroad tracks that bisected the town). Between that granite ridge and the tall Stuart Range was the beautiful Icicle Creek (also known as Icicle River), fed by snowmelt and hundreds of high lakes north and south of the creek. This drainage became Welcome's lifelong playground.

Though he preferred being outdoors, Welcome was a good student. He graduated third in his Leavenworth High School class in 1921, despite missing some school each fall to help harvest his family's apples, potatoes and other crops. Starting at age 15, he worked during summer vacations at the Great Northern (formerly Lamb-Davis) Lumber Company in Leavenworth for 40 cents an hour. He continued at the mill full-time after high school and was promoted to assistant sales manager at age 21. He worked six days a week and was

paid \$90 a month.

In June of 1925 he took a job as a fire lookout with the Forest Service. He was assigned to Tumwater Mountain, high above Leavenworth; this was the last year that lookout was staffed, being replaced by a higher one on Icicle Ridge the following year. On quiet days when not reporting on a forest fire, he

must have enjoyed seeing wildlife such as eagles, deer, coyotes, bears, cougars and mountain goats.

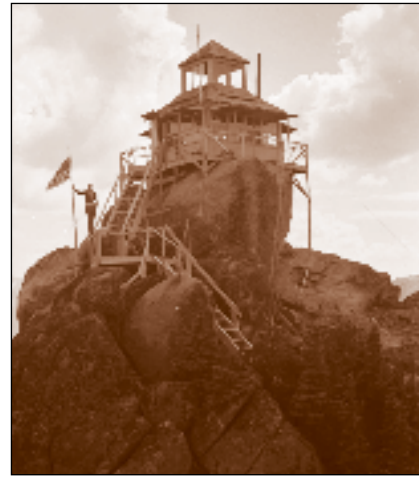
### First rural mail carrier

On one of his days off from the lookout, Welcome took the civil service exam for a new mail route that was being established to serve the rural areas of Leavenworth and Peshastin. He passed the exam and was appointed to the carrier position in December 1925. He only had to work three days a week and was paid \$78 a month, considered a handsome wage at the time. Best of all, the delivery schedule for Route #1 gave him plenty of time to fish and hunt.

Welcome had to purchase a car, a used Model T Ford, and learn to drive. On his first day at work the Leavenworth postmaster and assistant stood on the sidewalk laughing as the young man coaxed his vehicle into action. Welcome's work day started at 7 a.m. after the mail train had dropped off the Leavenworth mail bags. He helped sort, and then loaded his car with the mail for residents of Cascade Orchards (as Icicle Valley was called) and East Leavenworth Road, both areas south of town and the Wenatchee River.

Having started in December, Welcome probably encountered snow and plenty of mud right away as he eased into his new job. He had a Ruckstell axle installed on his open touring car to facilitate deep-snow driving. This added two gears and allowed him to drive in compound low; often, in winter, his entire route was driven in low gear.

There was no bridge across Icicle Creek at the time. In fact, the new rural route job description read, "Go



Welcome Sauer worked the Tumwater Lookout in 1925. His son Gary was the lookout on Icicle Ridge (above) 35 years later.

Photo by Welcome Sauer, courtesy of the Sauer Family

to the Icicle and ford it."<sup>1</sup> This was more difficult to do in a touring car than on a horse, so Welcome made his deliveries in two segments: up East Leavenworth Road to Icicle Creek, then back to town and up the west side of the creek to the end of the Icicle Road (just four miles, at that time). A wooden bridge was built in 1927 and his job became easier.

"I will never forget that first day of trying to learn to drive a car for the first time, and also the routine of a new job," he later told neighbor Dorothy Stemm. "No driver's license was necessary at that time. Much of the mail in the other areas of the county was still being delivered by horse and buggy."<sup>2</sup> Once, on a snowy day in 1927, his Model T just wasn't up to the task of delivering the mail. "The car wouldn't budge in the two-feet-deep snow, so I slung the mail bag on my shoulders and hiked the nine-mile Icicle Loop route on foot," Sauer told Stemm.

He recalled another winter incident. "Most families came into town with their horse-drawn cutters. The roads were so narrow that the Model T couldn't get by the sleigh unless a turnout was shoveled in the snowbank. I rammed my car into the tall snowbank to let the cutter pass. The driver waved merrily and drove into town, leaving me to shovel out my own car from the snow."

Welcome had to learn where each postal patron lived. Some people painted their names on their mailboxes; others preferred anonymity and just painted their boxes different colors. Like his German-born mother, Welcome had a pleasant, outgoing personality and the ability to make lifelong friends. He often engaged in cheerful conversation with his postal customers. At some point his hours were increased, and Peshastin Creek and the Peshastin North Road were added to his postal loop. He carried mail for nearly 50 years and was known to virtually everyone in Leavenworth and Peshastin.

### Falls for Celia

One day in 1927 Welcome was shopping at the Wheeler Drug Store in downtown Leavenworth when he spied an attractive young sales clerk. He didn't introduce himself, but told his older brother George he was going to marry her.

The girl's name was Celia Knowles. She had left home at 13 and supported herself by housekeeping and cooking for a family in Eugene, Oregon. She attended high school there through her junior year, then moved to Leavenworth to live with her older sister, Hazel. The sister's husband, Howard Halstead, managed the drug store and they lived in an apartment above it. Celia took care of their children and occasionally worked at the store.

Welcome eventually spoke to her and a romance blossomed. He was thrilled to learn that she loved the mountains as much as he did, and was handy with a fishing pole. They were married on March 3, 1928.

Welcome and Celia purchased a home on Poplar Street that had been built by Willard Wamsley, husband of Welcome's sister Mary. The newlyweds furnished it before leaving by train for a honeymoon in Everett. When they returned, they prepared to move into the house but found that someone – a well-meaning relative, no doubt, never to be discovered – had gone into the house and changed all the furniture around. Celia was disturbed by this but took it in stride.

Welcome and Celia's niece, the late Ione Sauer Springer, said the couple had a very happy marriage and were seldom apart "She did anything and everything for Uncle Welcome. She may not have been a spotless housekeeper; it wasn't dirty or filthy or anything, but she would be outside with the garden.... She'd rather help Uncle Welcome make a fence, plant a garden, weed a garden" than stay indoors cleaning or cooking. Ione said Celia was a good cook; she didn't need recipes and had a knack for putting together a meal using the ingredients on hand, rather than make a trip to the grocery store.<sup>3</sup>

### Plenty of fish and game

Welcome and Celia spent much of their free time in the Icicle Valley. Sometimes, early in the morning before he started his postal route, they would drive to the end of Icicle Road (where Dude Brown kept horses and ran a guided packing service for Puget Sound mountaineers; this area is now called Icicle Island). Welcome would drop Celia off



Welcome and Celia embark on their honeymoon. Welcome would drop Celia off

Courtesy of the Sauer Family



Celia Sauer, with two fishing rods, poses by "Beany's Cabin" on the Snow Lakes trail leading to the Enchantment Mountains.

with their gear, and then run his route. She would haul their tent, sleeping bag, cookware and fishing tackle to a camping spot. After finishing work, Welcome would join Celia for a pleasant afternoon and evening (or weekend) of fishing, huckleberry picking and camping.

The couple made a long backpacking trip up the Icicle that historian Edson Dow later described in an undated Seattle newspaper column:

Welcome and Celia, shortly after they were married, backpacked into the Icicle from Dude Brown's camp, past the Chatter Creek Guard Station, up Frosty Creek to lakes Mary and Margaret, and back down. They then swung up Doughgod Creek to Doelle Lakes. Doelle Lakes drain into the Icicle but lie near the headwaters of White Pine Creek.

The next day they went over the hog's back to Chain Lakes, then down the switchback trail to the meadow lake called Grass Lake. From Grass Lake they swung back and went over to Square Lake, and then from Square to Leland Lake.

At that time Leland Lake had no campgrounds and all the fish in the lake were over a foot in size. They caught their limit – which in those days was 25 – backpacked to the Chatter Creek Guard Station, and on out to home.<sup>4</sup>

By the time the Great Depression was felt in the Wenatchee Valley, Welcome and Celia had two children. Dolores was born April 20, 1929, and Leonard came along on Nov. 25, 1930. The family never felt poor, however, since Welcome had a steady job with the post office and they always had plenty to eat. They raised chickens, sometimes selling eggs to a Leavenworth bakery or trading them for credit at Koontz's grocery. They canned their homegrown fruits and vegetables, caught lots of mountain trout, and had venison to sustain

them through the winter. "Only once in 40 years has Welcome Sauer missed bagging his deer on Icicle Ridge," Dorothy Stemm wrote in 1960.<sup>5</sup>

Not to be left behind, Celia learned to use a rifle as well. "She loved to be in the mountains," her daughter Dolores recently reminisced. "She'd hike up the Icicle, shoot and dress a deer, hike back home and get Welcome to go get it."

"I admire Celia for her creativity, ingenuity, strength, determination and generosity," observed her grandson Wes Sauer. "How many women were fishing and hunting in the back country in the 1930s and '40s? We have records of the places where she shot deer. The list includes lots of locations around Leavenworth over several decades."

Welcome Sauer was a good writer; his many letters are considered literary masterpieces by family members. He chronicled many happy days spent alone or with family in the high country around Leavenworth. One entry from 1941 described a solo trip to try and find a



Welcome Sauer balances his two-year-old daughter, Dolores, on his hand.

lake someone had told him about, high above Indian Creek and the Napeequa River in the Lake Wenatchee watershed:

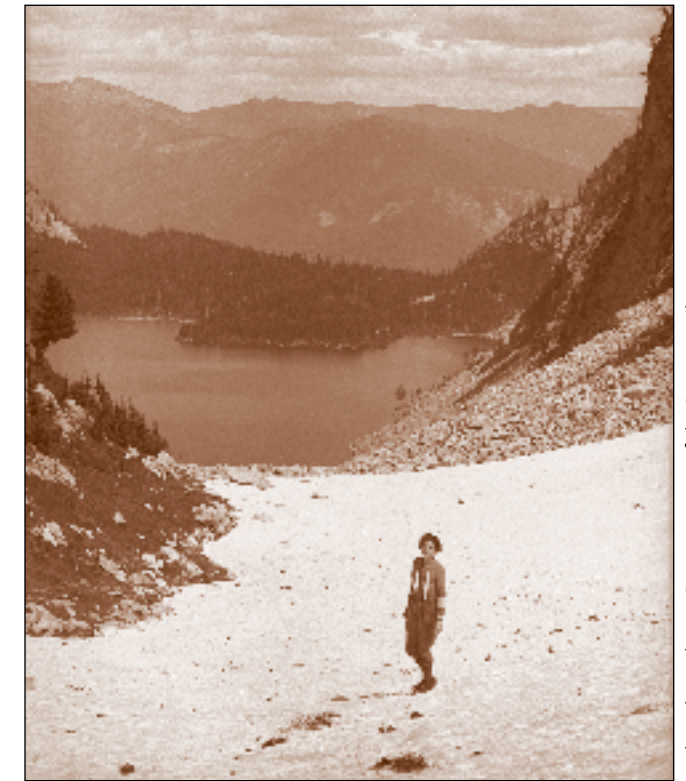
I found that the lake drained into the North Fork of the White River, a rough turbulent stream lying in a narrow precipitous gorge through which as yet the Forest Service had not built a trail ... I was greatly shocked to note the morning sun just rising over the highest peak on the range, a spire reaching into the sky about 7,500 feet. Nothing much to do but head for this peak. The first mile was covered with mountain laurel and, as the bush grows on a downhill slant, it is almost impossible to make your way through it. Then as you gain elevation the terrain suddenly changes and you come onto numerous high rock cliffs, many of which are absolutely impassible, and you have to detour around them....

Here I stop to rest and, looking far below, I can see the White River winding its way on down to Lake Wenatchee. It is truly a White River as the water, coming down from its source from the melting glaciers and running over the glacial silt deposited thousands of years ago, is almost the color of milk... On reaching the summit I sat down for one last look and to take a picture of this beautiful mountain gem, which lies there for the most part unseen by human eyes, cradled by the spires of God's majestic mountain tops....

Welcome was one of several intrepid Leavenworth men who occasionally accompanied employees of the state fishery agency on treks to stock some of the pristine high lakes with trout. They carried five-gallon metal cans filled with water and about a thousand one-inch fish, approximately a 50-pound weight, to these lakes – uphill, scaling cliffs, often with no established trails to follow. A few years later, after the fish had had a chance to grow and reproduce, Welcome and his family would return and easily catch their limits of foot-long cutthroats, brookies or rainbows.



Leonard, 10, displays the antlers of a buck he shot on Icicle Ridge as his dad looks on.



Celia stands in a snow field above Schaefer Lake, in the Chiwawa drainage. She and her family often used snow to keep their fish fresh on the way home.

### Sauer children also loved the outdoors

Welcome and Celia passed their love of the mountains along to their children. The family of four (later five) spent a lot of time fishing, hiking and camping together. Leonard learned to hunt before he was 10 years old. He made his parents proud during deer season 1941, as *The Leavenworth Echo* reported:

The Welcome Sauer family is about the "huntinest" family in this community. Welcome and Mrs. Sauer have been getting their bucks regularly for the past several years and Saturday their 10-year-old son, Leonard, showed both mother and dad up by killing a big buck in the snow high on Icicle ridge. The buck was a giant 5-pointer, with a magnificent spread, and weighed 275 pounds dressed. It is the biggest buck killed by the Sauer family and naturally young Leonard is a tickled kid to hold the family record for size. He was accompanied by his dad and mother on the hunt and he admits that he suffered a slight



Dolores, Gary and Leonard Sauer pose in their Easter best c. 1944.

attack of buck fever, missing several times before he hit a vital spot. The head, a beauty, will be mounted as a lasting memento of Leonard's hunting prowess.<sup>6</sup>

Celia was born with a bad heart valve, and as she got older her doctor told her to limit her activities. She really wanted a third child, and was happy when she became pregnant again in 1941. Her doctor recommended she stay in bed toward the end of her pregnancy. Welcome hired a housekeeper and took good care of Celia. Their son Gary was born healthy on April 23, 1942.

Celia didn't give up on her mountain trips, despite her weakening heart. The family obtained two horses, Fleeta and Pharaoh, so she could ride instead of hike long distances. In late summer 1945 she and Dolores, who was 16, took a five-day horse camping trip together. With gear packed behind their saddles they rode the horses up Highway 2 toward Stevens Pass. Before the summit they turned left (south) and followed trails over Icicle Ridge into the Icicle drainage, camping and fishing in a few lakes along the way.

In those days, large flocks of sheep grazed in the mountains all summer before being herded down to

Leavenworth to be shipped by rail to winter pastures or slaughterhouses. Dolores spotted a nearby shepherd with his flock and became nervous. "You don't have to worry about him!" Celia told her. The shepherd came over to them, carrying a shortwave radio. He told the Sauers the good news that the war in Japan – the finale of World War II – was over.

Gary Sauer's early years were also filled with adventures in the Icicle Valley and the high lakes, including numerous hiking, fishing and hunting trips with his family. "We'd leave the car, still pitch black dark," he told his son Wes c. 2012. "Dad would drive up the Icicle Road and leave me and Mom out on the road; we'd have a flashlight. Dad would go back down to the post office and do his route. Mom and I, we'd go up the mountain. She'd shoot a deer and take Dad up the next day to pack it out." These mountain experiences shaped his later life as well. Gary, too, worked as a Forest Service fire lookout (on Icicle Ridge) and became a hobbyist nature photographer, sailplane pilot, and lifelong hunter and fisherman.

### Children become fine citizens

Welcome and Celia appreciated education and encouraged their three children to succeed in school. They all did well. Like her father, Dolores showed an aptitude with words. One piece she wrote, called "Mountain Poem," describes walking across a log, observing ants working their way to a nest, and climbing a steep trail up a mountain.

Onward, upward, finally breaking out into the open.

The snow-covered side of a steep peak, at its base a clear blue lake.

Icy stream flowing out back in the evergreen trees, the perfect spot to put our tent.

The remains of a stone fire pit.

Breathing deeply of the fresh, sharp, cool, clean air...

The deafening silence, broken only by the trickle of the stream

flowing across the meadow and downward to cross the river we so carefully crossed.

In addition to enjoying learning and being smart in school, Dolores was popular. She participated in many school activities, including acting in class plays. She was chosen as the princess to represent Leavenworth in the 1946 Apple Blossom Festival. There were 28 graduates in her 1946 class and she was one of three girls who went on to college. She met Wesley "Bing" Dahl, a WWII veteran, at Washington State University and they were married in 1948. She kept her promise to her father and did graduate. Bing spent 37 years as a high school counselor and basketball coach. Dolores opted to concentrate on homemaking and caring for their four children, Eric, Ellen, LeAnn and Chris, all of whom



Leonard Sauer posts a sign honoring his father on a tree along the route of the Sauer's Mountain trail outside of Peshastin in 1995.

became university graduates (Eric a Rhodes Scholar). Dolores later became a part-time teacher.

Leonard Sauer graduated from Leavenworth High School in 1949. During the 1950s, when attending college, he worked summers building trails for the Forest Service in his beloved Cascade Mountains near home. He worked on the Boulder Pass trail leading from the White River into the Napeequa Valley, "the steep part" of the Stuart Lake trail past the Colchuck-Stuart junction, and the Fourth of July trail leading from Icicle Canyon to Icicle Ridge.<sup>7</sup>

After college he married and taught high school industrial arts, primarily wood shop and mechanical drawing, in Richland for 20 years. He also worked as a mail carrier before returning to the Wenatchee Valley. He and his first wife, Judy, had three children: Heidi, Joe and Welcome. He married again (Sue) and had two more children, Steve and Debbie, and helped raise stepsons Dave, Gregg and Robert. In the 1980s he bought property adjacent to national forest land in Anderson Canyon, outside Peshastin, where he lived with his third wife, Jean, and raised a small orchard. Leonard and Jean very much enjoyed his retirement years,



Celia and young Gary Sauer ride horses at Frosty Pass to camp and fish in lakes Mary and Margaret.

fishing and camping and traveling, before her death in 2014.

With his trail-building experience, Leonard improved an animal trail and old logging road through the woods to the ridge above his property. This new three-mile trail, starting from the road, traversed Sauer property before entering national forest land and terminating at a point with a beautiful view of the Cascades, including Glacier Peak and other high mountains above the Lake Wenatchee and Icicle drainages. He contacted Forest Service personnel in 1994 to invite the public to come park along the road, enter his property and walk the trail to what he called Sauer's Mountain. This has become a popular hiking trail, especially early in the season before higher-elevation trails are clear of snow.

From his early youth, Gary Sauer loved animals. He cared for the family rabbits and

chickens and was active in the local 4-H Club from age eight to 18. He received numerous awards for raising and judging livestock, including calves and pigs. As a sophomore at Leavenworth High School he won the state 4-H community relations contest; the following year he won a trip to the national 4-H Club Congress in Chicago, where he was honored for "telling the 4-H story."

Gary graduated in 1960. He moved to Richland and was hired as a mail carrier. (A letter from his father, Leavenworth mail carrier Welcome Sauer, may have helped him get the job.) Gary then carried mail in Wenatchee for more than 25 years. He also ran a very



Gary Sauer displays two ribbons he won for showing his 4-H pigs.

successful business as a beekeeper, supplying beehives for pollination to orchardists throughout Chelan and Douglas counties. After retiring from the post office he designed and built outdoor fish ponds. Gary and his first wife, Betty McGregor, had three children: Wesley, Scott and Charlene.

Gary learned to fly gliders at Fancher Field in East Wenatchee, “exploring the topography of familiar high lakes and trails from the perspective of a soaring eagle.”<sup>8</sup> Once he flew his sailplane, carrying oxygen, to the dizzying height of 19,200 feet; this earned him an amateur glider pilot achievement award in the 1979 Northwest Regional Soaring Championships. He also took up paragliding, climbing to high Cascade cliffs and then floating gently over the valley before descending to the base of the mountain. On one of these trips he fulfilled a childhood dream of flying home from a mountain lake with a backpack full of fish.

Gary was well known in the local square dancing community, active in the Buds and Blossoms club and attending state square dance festivals. He died of complications related to Parkinson’s disease on July 1, 2014. His obituary noted, “We celebrate Gary for his loving sweetness, generosity, fun-loving and adventuresome nature, and the stories he told us throughout his life.”<sup>9</sup>

Celia Sauer died Feb. 19, 1973, and Welcome two years later on Aug. 20, 1975. The couple had been members of Leavenworth’s Community United Methodist Church and cherished their Christian faith. In his eulogy at Welcome’s funeral, Pastor Richard Sprague noted: “He loved life religiously, thankfully and appreciatively. In his broad smile could be read an appreciation of the entire universe, reflected in the beauty of some new growth or some little natural phenomenon.”

Welcome and Celia considered themselves blessed to have spent so many of their days in their beloved

Cascade Mountains. In one of his handwritten letters, Welcome called the mountains around Leavenworth “truly a country God so loved, He literally piled it up in heaps.” Welcome Lake is named after him, and Leonard Lake after his son; both alpine lakes were first planted with fish by their namesakes who inspired family and friends to cherish this beautiful landscape.

ENDNOTES

1. Pat Morris, “Along the Wenatchee,” *Leavenworth Echo*, Nov. 17, 2010.
2. Dorothy Stemm, “Welcome, ‘Welcome,’ They Say to Sauer,” *Wenatchee Daily World*, Feb. 18, 1960.
3. Wes Sauer interview of Ione Springer, 2013.
4. Edson Dow, “The Outdoor Sportsman,” date

unknown.

5. Stemm, *op. cit.*

6. *Leavenworth Echo*, Oct. 17, 1941.

7. *Cashmere Valley Record*, April 13, 1994.

8. *Wenatchee World*, Aug. 13, 2014.

9. *Ibid.*

SOURCES

Dolores Dahl, many e-mails and conversations with Wes Sauer.

Dolores Dahl, e-mails with Chris Rader, 2019.

Gary Sauer, recorded conversation with Wes Sauer, c. 2012.

“Peshastin man builds trail,” *Cashmere Valley Record*, April 13, 1994.

Wes Sauer, e-mails and conversations with Chris Rader, 2019.

*Wenatchee World*, June 3, 1999; May 19, 2008; Nov. 9, 2008; Dec. 30, 2009; May 24, 2018.



Courtesy of the Sauer Family

Welcome Sauer delivered mail in the Upper Valley for nearly 50 years.

## Peshastin Sauers Were Great Mechanics

by Chris Rader

Of the seven surviving children of Peter and Mary Sauer, who moved to Leavenworth in 1908, George was the one who settled a few miles down the road in the small village of Peshastin. George Sauer was drawn to mechanics at an early age and made his living as proprietor of the Peshastin Garage – eventually passing along his talent and the business to his son, Bud.

Born in 1887, George first started working around engines as a boy in Nebraska, where his father had a wheat farm that used a steam-powered thresher. George brought water to the horses and the threshing crew as a young lad, and then learned to operate the machine.

In 1913 George met Dorothy Jefferson, who had come to Leavenworth that year with her parents from Clinton, Iowa. She was 18 and he was 26. They married later that year and moved to Stave Falls, B.C., where he worked as a mechanic for the British Columbia Electrical Company. They returned to Washington in 1917 and settled in Peshastin. George and his brother Henry purchased a 20-acre parcel of land east of the Peshastin Bridge and planted an apple orchard. The orchard never amounted to much, so they pulled out the trees and ran cattle on the land for a few years before selling the property.

During this time, George was earning a reputation as a blacksmith and mechanic. He enrolled in a correspondence course for machinists, after responding to an advertisement on the back of a matchbook, and opened the Peshastin Garage in 1926. Bud was born a year later.

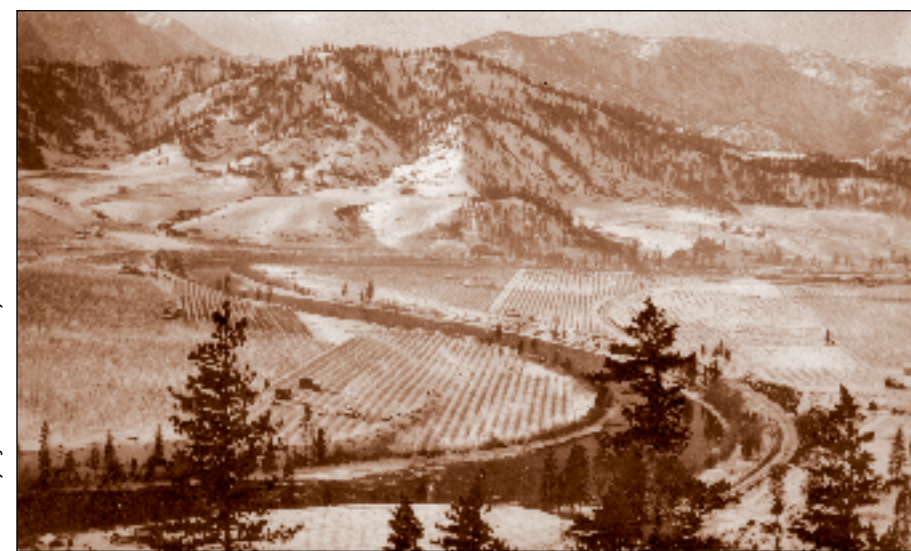
Bud (whose real name was also George) was George



Mary and Peter Sauer stand in the Peshastin orchard (also below) operated by their sons George and Henry in the late 1910s and 1920s.



Wenatchee Valley Museum #005-48-1



Courtesy of the Sauer Family

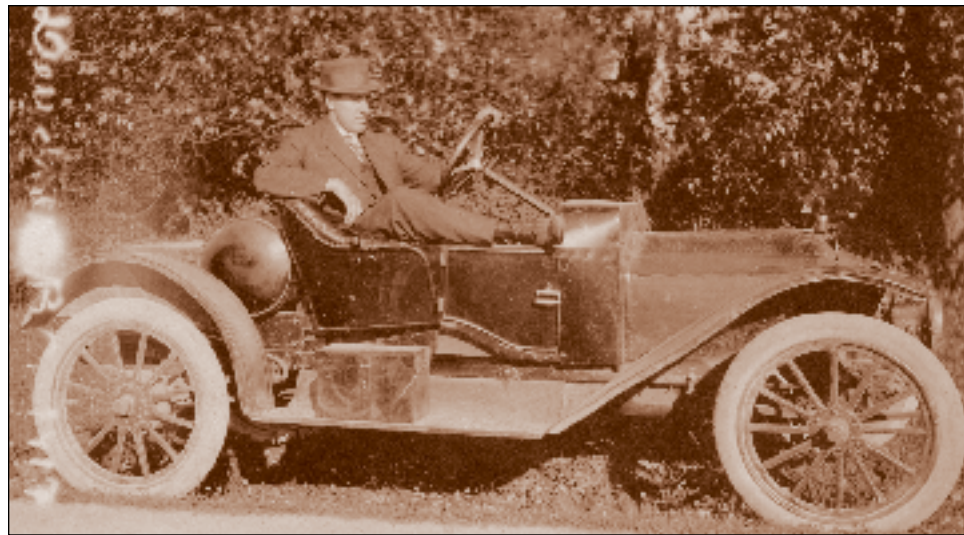
In the 1920s the Sauer ranch was located north of Saunders Road in the center of this west-looking photo, near the bend in the Wenatchee River winding past Peshastin (center right).

and Dorothy’s fourth child, joining Dorothy, born in 1916; Georgene (“Jean”), born in 1921; and Ione, born in 1924. As the only boy in the family, he was proud to say that he was “severely spoiled” by his beloved older sisters.<sup>1</sup>

Upper Wenatchee Valley historian Fred Pflugrath recalled that George and Dorothy lived behind the garage. “They were among the founding fathers of Peshastin and its German Congregational Church,” he said. “Dorothy taught Sunday school and I think she played the organ.” Later, daughter Ione also taught Sunday school at that church, across the street from today’s Peshastin Library.



From left, George Sauer, Homer English and Welcome Sauer stand in front of the Willys Overland that Welcome used when delivering mail, c. 1930.



George Sauer had a lifelong interest in automobiles and machinery. Here he poses in a Model T Speedster.

Pflugrath said George Sauer was the last blacksmith in Chelan County. "He made parts for sprayers, tractors, anything mechanical. You could hear him pounding from the depot, a quarter mile away." Then George went into welding, along with automotive mechanics.

"I think George was recognized as the best mechanic and repair person for logging trucks and orchard equipment in the valley," his niece Dolores Sauer Dahl said recently. She and her cousins, boys and girls alike, enjoyed many hiking and fishing trips together in the Cascades, and had happy times at Sauer family holiday dinners laughing, playing games and eating leftovers.

Like his father, Bud had an early interest in mechanics. He hung out at the Peshastin Garage, observing and helping his dad and learning to operate machinery. George built a little red car that he taught young Bud to drive.

Around 1940, when Bud was 12 years old, his parents and sisters drove up to Lake Wenatchee by Cougar Inn for a picnic. With his dad's permission, Bud drove his little red car through Leavenworth, up Tumwater Canyon to the lake for the picnic, and then back home. In Tumwater Canyon a state trooper pulled him over. He looked and looked, and didn't believe what he was seeing. Finally he asked one question: "Who is your father?!" Bud drove on home. The next day, the trooper came by the garage where George and Bud were working, and read George the riot act. "That thing doesn't have any fenders, any lights, windshield wipers; it's not legal!" George nodded his head solemnly, because he'd taught his son to respect authority. After the state patrolman left, Bud was waiting for his punishment. All he got was a wink and a smile.<sup>2</sup>

After graduating from Peshastin High School in 1947, Bud began working fulltime at his father's machine and automotive shop. All of his sisters were married by then: Dorothy to Ernest Springer, Jean to Jack Merz, and Ione to Charlie Springer (Ernest's brother). When not working, Bud spent time with his friends hunting, fishing and bowling in Leavenworth.

In 1956 Bud and Charlie purchased the Peshastin Garage from George. George continued to tinker with mechanics as a hobby. He spent some 2,000 hours building a working model of a steam engine for a threshing machine, which he



Bud Sauer drives his little red car down a street in Peshastin.

patterned after a photograph of a Case 1920 model he clipped from a magazine. He made most of the parts by hand including levers, wheels, water tank and coal bunker. The 64-inch-long model weighed about 500 pounds and had a steam pressure of 125 pounds. George shared it at a convention of the Steam Fiends Association, of which he was a member. It is now on display at the Cashmere Museum.

Like his father, Bud was technically skilled and curious as to how things worked. He earned a reputation as "a man of character and integrity" who had many friends and was highly esteemed by all, according to his friend Warren Hills.

He was frugal but also generous. He'd be working on a car and a friend would drive up and interrupt him. "Hey, my car's got a weird knock" or whatever. Bud would listen to it, fix it if he could. "Don't worry about paying me, I'll get you twice next time" but never did. He didn't always charge people, either, like the occasional single woman with kids. He had a hard time saying no to people, including loaning his tools.<sup>3</sup>

Bud married Lovetta Willsey in 1958. They had three sons: George R. ("Skip"), Tony and Joe, all of whom helped out at the garage. Bud had been an



Bud Sauer



Ione Sauer Springer

athlete in school and remained a sports fan the rest of his life, rarely missing a Peshastin High School basketball game and sometimes taking his toolbox along in case a school bus had problems.

Ione and Charlie Springer had three sons: Charles ("Chip"), Robert and Donny. After Charlie died in 1978, Robert and Donny took over his share of the garage. Bud's son Tony took his place when Bud retired. This third generation continued the Sauer legacy at the business (though eventually renaming it Springer Brothers Garage) with auto mechanics, tractor and orchard equipment repair, and welding at the shop or on orchard sites.

ENDNOTES

1. *Wenatchee World*, March 27, 2014.
2. Sam Willsey, speaking at Bud Sauer's memorial service, April 5, 2014.
3. Warren Hills, speaking at Bud Sauer's memorial service, April 5, 2014.

SOURCES

- Dolores Sauer Dahl  
 Fred Pflugrath  
 Joe Sauer (son of Leonard)  
 Wes Sauer



After retirement, George Sauer built this model threshing machine with working steam engine. It may be seen at the Cashmere Museum.

*The Confluence* is indebted to Wes Sauer for making available the photographs contained in this issue. Welcome and Celia Sauer of Leavenworth shot many photos between 1927 and 1972, creating a visual autobiography of their lives together (including scenes of ski jumping, historic plane landings, the Alpine Lakes area and sites of interest from a 'round-the-world trip). A photo exhibit is planned in coming months, in cooperation with the Upper Valley Museum at Leavenworth. For more information, visit <http://wessauer.com>.





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