The Hugh Wallace Memorial Swimming Pool came to us in this fashion. I was once asked to give a speech to a Boy Scout group out in the Wollochet Bay area. It was a cold, rainy night, and I lost my way several times getting to the Boy Scout meeting. When I got there, they were just finishing the meal. They played games for awhile and then the man blew a whistle, they put big logs on the fire in a huge fireplace, and then he settled them down for a speech. I was afraid the boys were not too eager for a speech when they had been playing various games.

They sat in a circle in front of the fireplace, and I was put between them and the fireplace. When I would back up where I could be away from them a little bit, the fire was so hot I would have to move forward, and in the course of the speech I moved back and forth three or four times. Once, when I was looking back over my shoulder to see how close I was to the fire, I noticed a plaque on the front of the fireplace with the inscription, "This cabin was donated by the Hugh Wallace Memorial Foundation."

Driving back from the speech, I wondered who the Hugh Wallace Foundation was, and I asked Mr. Kilworth, who was then Chairman of the Board of Trustees, about the Hugh Wallace Foundation. He said Mr. Wallace had been Ambassador to France at one time and that he had left a sum of money in trust to the Puget Sound National Bank to do outstandingly fine things for the community. Upon inquiry, I learned that the trustees were Mr. Reno Odlin, President of the Bank, Dr. Harold Long, Pastor of Immanuel Presbyterian Church, and Fred Haskell, former President of the Puget Sound National Bank.
Inasmuch as Dr. Long was on my Board of Trustees, I called him to ask him about the Hugh Wallace Foundation. He said that there was a limited amount of money in the Foundation, that they had been in the habit of doing things in a certain way, usually a small project totally completed in one gift. I asked him if they could contribute $50,000 for the new Music Building, which was then under construction. He said no that was much larger than they could ever give and they were in the habit of giving smaller things. Then I asked him if it were possible for them to buy a Steinway grand piano for the music auditorium in the Music Building. They told me to get figures for it, and I found that we could get a grand piano for about $8,000. By the time we had the University discount, it would be down to about $7,000.

Mr. Odlin, rather kiddingly, told me that he thought they could allocate $6,100 for the grand piano, if we could get the piano at that price. Finally, we were able to maneuver to the place where we were able to get the piano at that price. The Hugh Wallace Foundation gave it to us; and, of course, it is a splendid instrument which grows more beautiful with the years.

About a year later, I was dictating a "knotty" letter in my office and walking in the oriel window as I thought about it. All of a sudden, I looked up and saw the three trustees of the Wallace Foundation cutting across the campus. I asked my secretary if they had an appointment and she said they didn't and that we didn't know anything about their visit. It dawned on me that they were going over to look at their piano! I intercepted them on the campus green, between Jones Hall and the Music Building, secretly hoping and praying that all was well with the piano. When we got in the Music Building, we went in the Recital Hall at the back and waited for just a moment and discovered that Miss Hungerford, who was a very able piano student,
was practicing on the Steinway grand which the Wallace Foundation had given to us. The setting was so perfect and her playing was so beautiful that the trustees of the Hugh Wallace Foundation stood there silently for a considerable length of time.

Finally, Miss Hungerford looked up and recognizing Mr. Odlin said, "Oh, Mr. Odlin, this is a beautiful instrument. Come on up." So all of us went up to the platform; and in typical student fashion, she said, "I believe you play the piano; come and we will play together." They sat down and had various renditions of chopsticks and other fun compositions!

The piano was perfect in every way. There was no dust, no finger marks, and it showed the very wonderful care given to it by Dr. Rodgers and his staff.

A few weeks later, I was appointed Vice Chairman of the United Neighbors Campaign for that year and Mr. Odlin was Chairman. In a meeting at which we were all to report, I went to him early and said, "Reno, I have another important appointment which I must keep. Could I report early and be excused?" He said, "I think that would be fine, Frank," but just as the meeting started, with kind of a twinkle in his eye, he said, "Frank, I do hope you will wait till the end of the meeting, for I have something I must discuss with you."

Actually, I stayed until the end of the meeting and when it was over, he said, "We have been doing a lot of thinking in the Hugh Wallace Foundation. How would you like an Olympic-size swimming pool? I know that you can never get one unless it is given to you outright by an organization. I think it is a thing which you could use and which you need very much, and I think the appreciation of the stocks which we have had through the years would be such that we could make one major gift. I have a feeling that we could give about $48,000 for an Olympic-size swimming pool, if that is what you need."
We immediately got bids on a swimming pool and were exceedingly thrilled to have the gift of $48,000 for the Hugh Wallace Swimming Pool.

This made it necessary for us to do considerable renovation of the girls' gymnasium costing some $60,000. The building over the pool cost us approximately $200,000; and all this would never have happened had it not been for the initial gift of the Hugh Wallace Foundation through Mr. Odlin, Dr. Long, and Mr. Haskell.

There is an interesting incident that happened with the opening of the Wallace Memorial Pool. The pool was finally completed but it was not properly cleaned by the contractor and the filters were not working properly, so we had the pool full of water but we did not have it clean enough for public inspection and public health approval. Mrs. "T." and I would drive around the campus each night in what we called "The Campus Tuck-in." It dawned on me, one time, that some of the students were getting in late at night and swimming in the pool even though it had not been opened nor had it been approved. On several occasions, I went to the pool about midnight and watched through the doors and windows to see a group of young men swimming in the pool in their "altogether". They were having a good time; they were good swimmers, and there was no basic danger, so I didn't ever say anything to them about it, although I knew it was happening.

When we officially opened the pool, I announced that this was the first time it was being used and three of them came to me, Bob Kinch, Tom Martin and one other, and said, "No, Dr. Thompson, this is not the first time it's been used. We have been swimming in it late at night for quite awhile." I said, "Yes, I knew that. Mrs. "T." and I have been watching you each evening for a long time!"
HUGH WALLACE SWIMMING POOL
The story back of the Hugh Wallace Memorial Swimming Pool

One time in April I received a telephone call asking me to give a speech to the Boy Scouts out at Horsehead Bay on the 21st of October. I tried to dissuade the man and told him that he really didn't want me but he kept saying that they specifically wanted me to come.

When October 21st arrived, it was a cold, rainy, foggy night and I tried to find my way to the Scout cabin. I lost my way several times and finally arrived. The boys were playing games and having a good time, and I could sense that there was really no need for a speech and that they were not particularly "speech minded" that evening. At a late hour, they put four large logs into the very large fireplace and when they started to blaze and crackle, they blew the whistle for the boys to assemble in front of the fireplace. I stood with my back to the fireplace and faced the circle of boys. The fire grew hotter and hotter and I moved from the fireplace out into the circle of boys and when I cooled off, I would move back toward the fireplace. On my third time back, I glanced over my shoulder to find out how far I was from the fire and noticed the plaque which read, "This fireplace was constructed by the Hugh Wallace Foundation."

After the speech was finished and I started to find my way back to town, it suddenly dawned on me that I should ask who Hugh Wallace was. I asked Mr. Kilworth, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at that time, who Mr. Wallace was and he told me he had lived in Tacoma and had once been
a French ambassador and that he had created the Hugh Wallace Foundation
for the purpose of doing outstanding things for the community. He also
told me that the trustees of the foundation were Mr. Reno Odlin, Dr. Harold
Long and the former president of the Puget Sound National Bank.

When I inquired whether or not the Wallace Foundation could make a
contribution to the University for the Music Building, the trustees told me
that whatever they did was one complete project at a time. Then I asked if
they could buy a nine-foot Steinway grand piano for us. They asked what
one would cost and I told them in the neighborhood of $8,000. They said
they could not contribute that much at one time, but they thought if the Uni-
versity could get an educational discount for the Steinway they might be
able to do it.

After considerable negotiation, we were able to get the Steinway for
$6,100.00, so the Hugh Wallace Foundation purchased it for us and it is
still in wonderful use.

About a year and a half later I was dictating a difficult letter and I
was standing in the oriel window of my office when I saw the trustees of
the Hugh Wallace Foundation walking across the Sutton Quadrangle. Upon
inquiry, I learned that they had not been invited but were just coming on
their own accord to see how the piano was being used. I intercepted them
in the inner quadrangle and walked over with them, wondering to myself
in what condition we might find the piano and if it would be dusted off
and properly cared for.

When we went into the little recital hall in the music building, Miss Hungerford was playing the piano. She was a very able student of the piano and was preparing for her recital. Without saying a word, the men listened and it was a most beautiful situation, indeed. After awhile, she looked up and recognized Mr. Odlin and asked him to come on up and as I recall, she slid over and Reno sat down and they played chopsticks together and one or two other selections for fun. Then Mr. Odlin played the piano a little bit and said, "Frank, we like this very much. This is wonderful and we certainly are happy to have made this possible."

That year I was one of the officers of the United Good Neighbors when Mr. Odlin was Chairman. At a meeting two or three months later where we were to report, I asked him if I could leave early because I had to attend another meeting. However, after the meeting began, Mr. Odlin said to me, "Frank, if you could stay longer, I could talk with you." I knew that there must be something serious on his mind to ask me to change my plans.

After everyone had left, he said, "The Hugh Wallace Foundation has had a great appreciation of assets in the stocks which it has held and we think we might be able to make a major contribution to the University of Puget Sound. How would you like the gift of an Olympic-size swimming pool?" Naturally, I was very much pleased and we worked out the details and the plans of joining the swimming pool to the present girls gymnasium.
As I recall, the gift was in the neighborhood of $49,000. The University raised the money for the building and for the revamping of the showers and sanitary facilities in the women's gym so that ultimately we had about $250,000 invested in the total project, including the gift from the Hugh Wallace Foundation.

We are deeply grateful to the Hugh Wallace Foundation and to the trustees, Reno Odland, Harold Long and the former president of the Puget Sound National Bank, for this gift.

R. Franklin Thompson

circa 1970