

Dunkin (continued from page 3)

Former Washington State First Lady, Jean Gardner, took an interest in Historic Fort Steilacoom and encouraged the group to complete as much as possible of the restoration in time for the 1989 Washington State Centennial Celebration. Quarters 1 and 2 were completed, and Lyle received two awards as the leader of the restoration project.

An "Award for Outstanding Merit" was given for "his contribution in historic preservation." It reads:

"For his role in the restoration of the four historic officers' quarters where he has worked for five years as a volunteer, providing his own tools, enlisting new crew members and donating materials to the project."

Another award, a Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Volunteer Service benefiting the citizens of Washington State from the Washington Centennial Commission, was given to Lyle by Governor Booth Gardner on April 13, 1989.

When asked what he recalled as a personal highlight in the restoration of the fort quarters, Lyle said, "Seeing how the old craftsmen worked."

Lou said she enjoyed working with the other members in furnishing the buildings and assembling period clothing. "Playing house and

dressing up is something women enjoy all of their lives."

Working on the restoration project also served a social purpose, Lyle recalls. The bond with Chuck Collier, Jack Langston, Bob Weir, Ray Egan and others remains to this day, as they serve as the Maintenance Committee for the Association.

Continuous learning has also been an important aspect for those who have and are working on the project. Lou says that she would like to see the interpretation of the fort maximized in exhibits and in one "super money-making event where there are things for people to do."

When asked if he regretted spending so much time on this project, Lyle replied, "No regrets, but I would hate to see it fold up."

Lyle would like to see Quarters 2 completed with a research library and a diorama of the fort, while Lou added that she would like to see the center hall completed with gilt-framed mirror and upholstered chairs as it would have been when parties were held there in the mid-19th century.

Along with so much practical work, there are some sentimental aspects. Lyle said, "I feel proud to have left a construction heritage in this restoration, to leave it better than when I found it."

Though Lou and Lyle have retired from boards, councils and commissions, their interest in historic

preservation continues unabated, and Historic Fort Steilacoom certainly benefits from their continued interest and support.

Bo Cooper
December, 1993

The Lost Patrol (continued from p. 1)

connected piece of the Port Madison shoreline, and that a storm in later years washed one of the bodies loose, and his bones were carried away by curiosity seekers.

There must surely be more records somewhere, and they may surface someday. For now, all we have is the meager roster, the sketchy newspaper reports, and the names of the men who lost their lives as part of the price America paid for opening the northwest frontier.

Roster:

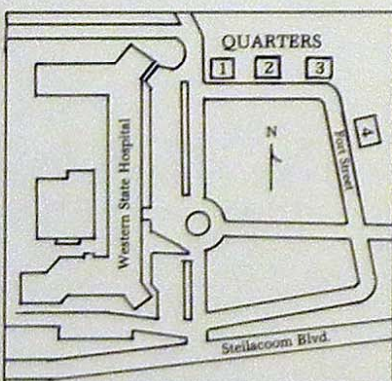
Major C. H. Lanard
Mr. John Hamilton of Steilacoom
Corporal Jirah T. Barlow
Musician John McIntyre
Musician Henry Hall
Private Lawrence Fitzpatrick
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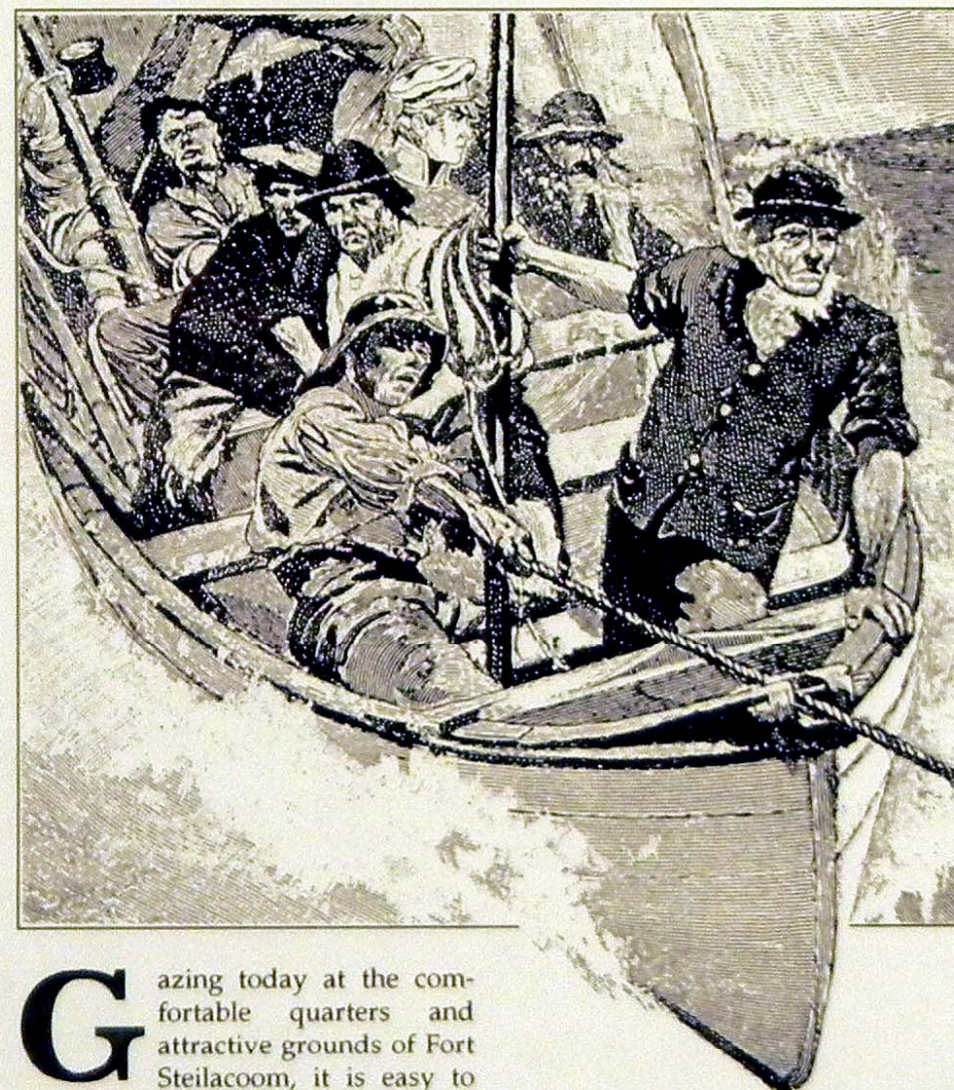
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Fort Steilacoom, Washington

December, 1993

The Lost Patrol

By Jerry Eckrom



Gazing today at the comfortable quarters and attractive grounds of Fort Steilacoom, it is easy to forget that soldiering was, and is, an inherently dangerous occupation. Death was not a stranger to this place. Lieutenant William A. Slaughter and a number of his men died violently in the Puget Sound Indian War of 1855-56. Sickness and disease took away others who might

have lived into old age if they had held to an easier life in the eastern states.

Curiously, the garrison's greatest single tragedy came neither from battle nor illness. In March, 1854, reports of Snohomish Indian depredations at Holmes Harbor on

Whidbey Island sent Major C. H. Lanard and a small force of soldiers heading northward in a surfboat that Fort Steilacoom maintained for the purpose of patrolling the Sound. A Mr. John Hamilton of Steilacoom went with them, apparently as a guide or interpreter.

From here on, the story becomes sketchy. The boat stopped briefly at Seattle and proceeded on to Whidbey Island. They apparently dealt with the problem there and turned back toward home. They had reached the vicinity of Port Madison, opposite the northern shore of Bainbridge Island, when a squall overturned their boat. Under the heading "Melancholy Occurrences" the *Olympia Pioneer and Democrat* for April 1st, 1854, told virtually all that is currently known of their fate:

"It seems that the vessel was under the direction of Mr. John Hamilton of Steilacoom and was capsized in a squall...in consequence of which all perished, including Major L., except two of the command, who fastened themselves to the boat after it turned over and drifted into a cove ten miles north of Seattle on the west side of Admiralty Inlet. The disaster occurred on Monday last, 27th ult., and Lieutenant Jones with a detachment left Fort Steilacoom on Thursday in search of the bodies. Major Lanard, and several others of those connected with the command, leave families behind them."

The body of Major Lanard was recovered by Lieutenant Jones and carried back to Fort Steilacoom for burial. A history of Kitsap County indicates that some of the other soldiers were buried on a loosely

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HISTORIC FORT STEILACOOM ASSOCIATION

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President's Message

It is difficult to acknowledge the contributions of 1993's officers, particularly President Lyle Dunkin, without gushing or indulging in clichés. Such frequently used words as perseverance, dedication and commitment come to mind—yet no others seem to fit so aptly.

And how does one adequately say thanks to the many others? Thanks for restoring and preserving the first permanent army post on Puget Sound so that future generations of school children, and their parents, can literally walk inside a major artifact of Washington State's history. Thanks for recreating the Fort Steilacoom of 1858.

One way of thanking them is to make sure that the fort is well used. To that end, one of our goals for 1994 is to expand the docent program that Mary Metzler, Shea Munroe and Vikki Nelson have already begun. We can have the most authentic exhibits and the most informative interpretive center, but the biggest memory that visitors are likely to carry away is how the docents made it all come alive.

Obviously, we need people coming to the fort. A second goal is to dramatically increase public awareness—particularly among schools and clubs—of the fort's importance

and its many attractions. Not only do we want them to tour, but we want them holding their meetings here.

To breathe even more life into the fort, we want to have reenactment organizations recreating the 1850s and 60s. The Washington Civil War Association has already expressed an interest in using the fort as its headquarters—and we welcome them. We and the public have much to gain from relationships like this. The more often the public gets to see reenactors in their authentic period dress and uniforms, the more they will get from their visits. And, of course, the reenactors benefit by their relationship with an authentic fort of the period. I know that some may question the authenticity of having Johnny Rebs on fort grounds—after all there weren't any rebel soldiers stationed here. But some of our soldiers did leave the fort to serve with the South. And, in any case, if their uniforms and presence attract more visitors and interest in the fort, so much the better.

I have yet to settle into my role as a grant writer. I shall be devoting much more time after the first of the year to raising money. The list of needs is lengthy, but at the top is our interpretive center. I shall pursue funds for it and the other projects diligently, but raising funds and donations is a drawn-out process.

In the meantime, we shall press on with the job of building community interest; particularly in Lakewood and the rest of Pierce County.

On a note of sadness: Arvilla Hewes Stout, the mother of our hardworking, multi-talented secretary, Orville Stout, died in December. Requiescat in pace. Our condolences to Orville and his family; we share the loss. The Board is placing a book in our library in her name.

My home phone number is 584-1528. My office number at Pierce College is 964-6689. I encourage all members to call me if they have questions, and to volunteer information or anything else, or want forms to enroll new members. And

speaking of members, we have several on our mailing list who have not been paying dues. We shall be contacting them by telephone in January to encourage them to become fully eligible (read that "paid-up") members.

May all our members enjoy good health and joy in 1994.

Raymond J. Egan

Thank You

Thank you to Penney's Southcenter department store which donated five mannequins—a female, two males, a boy and a girl. Dolores Shines, an honor graduate of Pierce College and a Penney employee, made the initial contacts for us. Mr. Larry Kling, Display Manager, approved the donation, and Mr. Richard Nordstrom, also from Penney, graciously delivered them to us—in a driving rain—using his own truck.

Geography of the Fort Steilacoom Area

Between the rolling upland hills of the Puget glacial plain is the Lakewood glacial outwash prairie, which surrounds Fort Steilacoom. One can easily see the termination of the glacial plains, as they end abruptly 200 feet above Puget Sound's sea level. One sees the structure of the giant fossil delta, which is evidence that the prairie was made by a wide and vigorous river which ended in glacial Lake Russell. These plains, because of the gravel floor left by the great glacial flows, grew grasses, not trees. They became grazing land. As exploration began, the ease with which they could be traversed led to their settlement before other areas in Western Washington.

Waughop Lake, which comprises some 22 acres, was a kettle in glacial River Edison. A kettle is a bowl where the last ice blocks melted. Streams and underground springs remained after the disappearance of the glacial rivers and lakes.

The Leadership of Lyle and Lou Dunkin In the Restoration of Historic Fort Steilacoom



Builders, designers, developers, restorers, collectors, historic preservation, antiques, history, travel, genealogical research and dedication to the Town of Steilacoom are hallmarks in the lives of Lyle and Lou Dunkin.

Lou relates that they were "born interested in the past," that from the time of their marriage, when they bought old walnut furniture from the sidewalks in front of the second-hand store in "Hutch," Kansas, they restored and built.

It was said of Lyle that he grew up with a tool from his dad's toolbox in his hand. From a cabinet-maker internship, to working for 37.5¢ an hour for Swift and Company, to the town fire department at \$90 per month, Lyle took some Civil Service exams to try to attain some financial security after the insecurity of the Depression years.

Positions in the Border Patrol, Soil Conservation, and Bureau of Prisons were offered as a result of the exams. Lyle chose the Bureau of Prisons and went to work in the carpenter shop

at Leavenworth, Kansas, as a cabinet maker. This brought an income of \$1,800 a year.

On April 4, 1944, Lyle was called into the Navy where he was given the "Eddy" test. The result was going into Radar study, a new, secret field at the time, in Chicago. Later he was trained at Oklahoma A & M in electrical engineering. Navy duty in the South Pacific, including Okinawa, kept him busy until the end of W. W. II.

Back in the Federal Prison system, Lyle was given duties at Leavenworth then was sent to Seagoville, Texas, before moving to Steilacoom and duty at McNeil Island in 1949.

By this time Lou and Lyle had combined their creative talents, beginning with their interest in antiques and later remodeling and building their own home from scratch. In 1956 Lyle was transferred to Terminal Island, California, as Superintendent of Federal Prison Industries and two years later was transferred to the Bureau of Prisons headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he was an Industrial Specialist.

While in Washington, D.C., the Dunkins bought and built a "package house" in Maryland, and Lou worked in interior and furniture design.

When anticipating retirement, the Dunkins returned to Steilacoom. Lyle retired from the Prison system in 1970. Throughout their years in Steilacoom, the Dunkins built six houses and developed three small plats, always with an eye toward the best use of the land.

Lyle "was in and out of town politics" for a total of eighteen years, serving on the Town Council and two terms as mayor. During this time he proposed and got through the Steilacoom Historical District designation on the National Register

of Historic Places and, with others, restored the Bair Drug and Hardware Store.

From 1983, another of Lyle's "post-retirement careers" surfaced in the decade-long project of restoring the four officers' quarters at Historic Fort Steilacoom. Restoration is complete now, but maintaining, furnishing and interpreting the site continues.

This story is written to highlight the contributions of Lyle and Lou Dunkin to Historic Fort Steilacoom. Much of the history of the establishment of the non-profit foundation, securing grants and funds, and leading others in the restoration project surfaces as Lyle and Lou reminisce.

They recount that Cy and Rita Happy were instrumental in placing the structures in the National Register, that Caroline Gallacci, Pierce County Historic Preservation Officer, was instrumental in the formation of Historic Fort Steilacoom, and how a County Juvenile Offender Work Program helped in the initial cleaning out of the old, disused buildings. Along the way a number of Scouts, working on their Eagle badges, took on various projects.

Solicitation of funds from Boise Cascade and the Cheney Foundation, totaling over \$10,000, is a part of the effort Lyle expended on behalf of Historic Fort Steilacoom. There are a lot of stories yet to be recorded of those who undertook various tasks and secured various funds and grants.

Lou, through the years, served on the Tacoma-Pierce County Arts Commission and later on the Pierce County Landmarks / Centennial Commission as its chairman. Later, she was a board member of the State Trust for Historic Preservation. She also helped organize and is the Vice President of the Heritage League of Pierce County. This has given her an extensive background and network in the preservation field.