

and Shaaff thought it prudent to act upon his [Hunt's] dictation ....We discussed the matter for a long time and...I formed my own opinion that the fault lay with both parties and I claimed the privilege of siding with neither....<sup>19</sup>

6<sup>th</sup> Tu. ...Hunt has asked me to detain here until his wedding, he wishes me to be present and assist in the affair....<sup>20</sup>

21<sup>st</sup> ...The invitations to the wedding were issued today. It is to transpire on the 28<sup>th</sup>...between 7 to 9 p.m.<sup>21</sup>

28<sup>th</sup> W. ...The wedding passed off very well indeed. The ceremony was not imposing. Capt. Hunt was evidently very nervous and quite feeble in his responses. Miss Casey was much more self proposed. The supper passed off pleasantly. Everybody attended except Shaaff and McKibben, the latter was invited but the former was not....<sup>22</sup>

The Caseys lived at Fort Steilacoom until about August 1861. The Colonel was then recalled from the Pacific Coast, appointed Brigadier General of

Volunteers, and served in the Civil War.

The commanding officers quarters, named after Colonel Casey, is still a place of hospitality. The board and members of Historic Fort Steilacoom welcome the public to the Inquiring Mind lectures, Christmas at the Fort and other events.

Once inside the Commanding Officer's quarters, a careful listener might hear the blaring bugle of reveille; the barked commands and tramping of soldiers marching; the clinking of dinner dishes; or evening prayers and music with soprano voices of the ladies and baritone tones of the gentlemen. A keen observer may see beautiful Bessie Casey in a flowing dress, smiling at an admirer, Mrs. Casey sitting nearby watching them, or a radiant Abby Casey Hunt glancing at Lewis, her husband.

<sup>1</sup> Gary Fuller Reese, editor, *Nothing Worthy of Note Transpired Today, The Northwest Journals of August V. Kautz* Tacoma Public Library, 1978), p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 252.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 256.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 283.

<sup>12</sup> *Casey Family History* (unpublished).

<sup>13</sup> Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U.S. Army, 1789-1903* (Government Printing Office), p. 869,

<sup>14</sup> Kautz, *op. cit.*, p. 282. (23 Dec. 1858)

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 311.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 353.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 356.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 358.

**Photos:** Courtesy of Allison H. Douthitt, descendant of Abby and Lewis Hunt.

## Annual Meeting On October 25<sup>th</sup>

Come to the Annual Meeting of Historic Fort Steilacoom Association on Sunday, October 25, 1998, and hear Alan Archambault speak and show slides about "Early Soldiers of

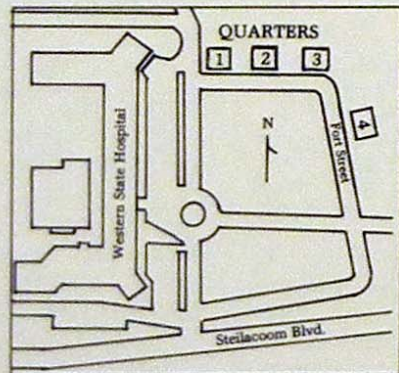
the Northwest." Alan, a knowledgeable and "in demand" speaker and illustrator, is curator of the Fort Lewis Military Museum. The talk will follow a short business meeting

for the election of officers and board members. Amendments to update the Association By-laws will also be considered.

### Historic Fort Steilacoom

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# Fort Steilacoom

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## A Place of Hospitality

by Carol Neufeld

The commanding officer's quarters at Fort Steilacoom has always been a place of hospitality. Visitors were first welcomed by Colonel and Mrs. Casey, their youngest son Edward and daughters Abby and Bessie. They entertained family friends and fort officers and their wives.

### Arrival of Casey Family

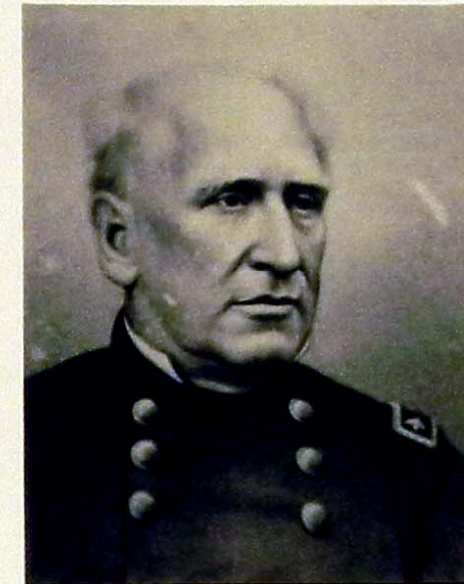
When the family arrived on December 22, 1857, the fort reconstruction was in progress. Because the commanding officer's house was not completed, the Caseys first occupied the physicians quarters.

Dr. Wirtz, the fort doctor, and Lt. August Kautz, who shared the house, moved to temporary quarters until the colonel's home was ready. Diarist Kautz, quartermaster in charge of reconstruction, reported on December 15, 1857:

...The Dr. is much annoyed at having to move out. The quarters were evidently intended for him and placed conveniently to the hospital for his...supervision of his department.<sup>1</sup>

When the Caseys arrived and met with Lt. Kautz, he noted on December 23, 1857:

...I met with them this morning. Mrs. Casey is a very fine lady, but evidently strong minded. The children all resemble their brother Tom of my class [West Point]. They are evidently very much ashamed of turning us out of our quarters, as they have apologized so often in one day and the Col. is exceedingly anxious to have the quarters well



Silas Casey

repaired so that when the Dr. takes them again they will be in good order.<sup>2</sup>

### Caseys Begin Entertainment

After getting settled in the doctor's quarters, the Caseys began entertaining when the colonel gave a little party on February 3, 1857. Lt. Kautz attended, remaining until after eleven.

During the time the Caseys and Lt. Kautz served at Fort Steilacoom, other social events were recorded. The diary entries reflect the activities and concerns of the fort officers and their families:

[March] 30<sup>th</sup> Tu. [2858] ...I called on the Caseys in the evening. There was quite a number of visitors present. Mrs. Bachelder and her husband, Capt. Maloney and Father Rossi. We passed a pleasant evening.<sup>3</sup>



Abby Perry Pearce Casey

May 1<sup>st</sup> Sa. ...I called at the Cols. and spent a pleasant evening except they asked whether I thought we could move into the new mess hall on Monday. As they all saw that the walls are not sided up, there are no doors or windows, to say nothing of either paint or closest or paper...I was strongly tempted to ask them if they thought we could move out....

I walked home with Mrs. Maloney and the Capt. and was entertained with a great deal of gossip. There is not the best of feeling among the ladies of the garrison....<sup>4</sup>

### Caseys Move Into Quarters

When the Caseys home was finally finished about May 1858, they moved into it, and Dr. Wirtz and Lt. Kautz moved back into the doctor's house. Entertaining continued at the Commanding Officer's Quarters.

(Continued on page 3)



## HISTORIC FORT STEILACOOM ASSOCIATION

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### From the President

The past year has been an exciting one for your Historic Fort Steilacoom Association. It was a year of starting new projects, completing old ones, continuing successful programs, examining board operating procedures, and assuring the ongoing success of the Association.

You have recently received a proposed revision of the Association By-laws. Several years have elapsed since their last revision. The Board's intention is to more clearly assign responsibilities for programs and activities, to clarify voting, and generally put the "on paper" operations into agreement with the actual practices of the Board. Please review the proposals, as they will be voted upon at the annual meeting.

For several years your Association has been operating without a Letter of Agreement with Western State Hospital. A new Letter has been negotiated, which became effective in July and will run for five years. The Letter is quite favorable to us although the problem of weekday parking is yet to be solved.

Former President Ray Egan developed an intensive docent training program, which produced several new docents. The lectures were video taped and will be available for future training and are also available to the membership.

Bo Cooper's touch is evident in our library. She has organized the reference materials, spruced up the décor, and made it a wonderful place for browsing. Thanks to Richard Densley, the library was open on Monday afternoons throughout the summer. Bo's work on the Inquiring Mind series has continued to show that your Association is indeed taking its place in the Puget Sound museum community.

At last we have street signs along Steilacoom Boulevard indicating that we do exist and are open to the public. Several visitors this summer have indicated they came in to visit because they saw the signs. Steve Dunkelberger worked with Lakewood to have the signs erected.

We now have a better idea of what we own. For several years there has not been a complete inventory of our artifacts, furnishings, and miscellaneous items. Marta Firman has worked very hard on the project. Additionally, Pierce College Foundation has agreed to permanently loan its historic pageant costumes to our Association. They will be useful to us for living history presentations.

In April the diorama that Bob Demorest made for us was dedicated. Lakewood Mayor Bill Harrison presided at the dedication, which was well attended by the public. The diorama has become the showcase of our interpretation of the fort to our visitors.

Your Association Board has extended an invitation to the City of Lakewood Historic Association to use Quarters 2 for meetings and temporary displays. We are looking forward to assisting the Lakewood Association in its efforts.

Once again the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association co-sponsored the Memorial Day Civil War encampment and battle demonstration. The event has become the mainstay in providing operating funds for us. Additionally, more people visit the museum during that weekend than we have the rest of the year.

Next year will be an exciting one for Fort Steilacoom, as it marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the fort. Ceremonies will be conducted in August to observe that special day. Plans include the erection of a monument, publication of a series of monographs dealing with the fort, and the issuance of a commemorative medallion designed by Bob Demorest.

Several Board members will be leaving at the completion of their terms. Their special talents and dedication to our Association and its mission will be missed. Pauline Hainse has been our treasurer for the last several years and has made lasting contributions in other areas as well. Board member Marta Firman has worked behind the scenes on many projects in addition to her wonderful job with the inventory. Thanks to both of them.

Kenneth A. Morgan  
[sylvanuswh@aol.com](mailto:sylvanuswh@aol.com)

### Inquiring Mind

Scheduling for the 1998-1999 Inquiring Mind speaker series has now been completed. The programs were arranged with the Washington Commission for the Humanities. All performances are at 2 p.m., Sunday afternoons. The Dupont presentation will be at the Dupont Town Hall and the Steilacoom Tribal program will be at the Tribal Museum and Cultural Center in Steilacoom. All other presentations will be in Quarters 2 at the Historic Fort Steilacoom Museum complex.

**Nov. 8**, "Ezra Meeker" by Ray Egan (not Inquiring Mind program) – Dupont Historical Society.

**Feb. 21**, "Raven Rising" by Barry Herem – SHMA

**March 7**, "Teachings of the First People" by Roger Fernandes – Steilacoom Tribe

**March 21**, "Theodore Roosevelt—Hunter-Naturalist" by Robert Overholser – SHMA

**April 1**, "May's Vote" by Barbara Callander & Toni Douglas – HFSA

### Place of Hospitality (from p. 1)

[July] 23<sup>rd</sup> F. ...I called on the Cols. Family this evening. They are all much pleased with the new minister, Mr. Silvan, and I think they are desirous of having him appointed Chaplain. The Col. jumped to see what I thought of it....<sup>5</sup>

July 28, 1858. W. ...I called on the Cols. Family and found the ladies quite pleasant. Mrs. Casey has not made her appearance yet. She is still sick....<sup>6</sup>

September 6<sup>th</sup>, [18]58. M. ...We called on the Caseys in the evening and had quite a pleasant visit. We had prayers and music until late.<sup>7</sup>

[September] 29<sup>th</sup> W. The Col. having invited the Bachelors to dinner today, we all attended as if we had not been kept up so the night previous. We...had a lovely time...<sup>8</sup>

### Courtship and Marriage

One of the major tasks in Mrs. Casey's life was chaperoning teenage daughters Abby and Bessie. Lt. Kautz, a family friend, assisted by watching over the girls at social events.

Bessie was courted by Lt. Edward Conner who arrived at the fort on August 31, 1858, with forty members of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry. He immediately began giving attention to Bessie at dinners, dances and horse riding excursions. Lt. Kautz reports on three events.

2<sup>nd</sup> Th. [Sept.] ...I took a ride this afternoon with the ladies Miss Davis and Miss Bessie, Capt. English and Mr. Conner. We rode to the garden and Mrs. Casey and Mrs. English and Miss Young rode in the ambulance.<sup>9</sup>

October 11<sup>th</sup> 1858. M. ...I took a ride with Miss Davis and Conner with Miss Bernice [Bessie] Casey.<sup>10</sup>

29<sup>th</sup> [Dec.] W. I rode out with Miss Davis and Conner and Miss Bernice [Bessie] to Puyallup Plain....We all met at the Cols. And had a very pleasant evening....<sup>11</sup>

In November 1860, after Lt. Conner was transferred to Chehalis, he returned to visit Fort Steilacoom,



Abby Pearce Casey Hunt

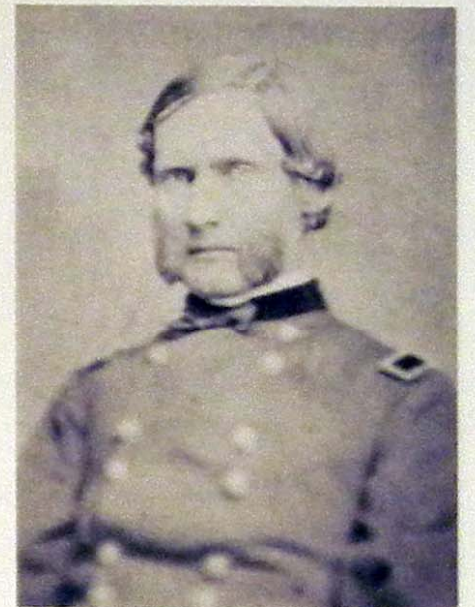
hoping to get a glimpse of "beautiful Bessie with her lovely eyes." He was rewarded when he was invited to Colonel Casey's home.

Bessie apparently didn't respond favorably to Conner, because in November, 1862, she married Maj. Robert Nicholson Scott,<sup>12</sup> a Civil War officer who was cited for gallant and meritorious service in the battle at Gaines Mill, Virginia.<sup>13</sup>

Abby was courted by two officers—Lt. Arthur Shaaff and Capt. Lewis Hunt. The two men were opposites. Lt. Shaaff was a heavy drinker who was always in the middle of controversy. Because of his interest in Abby, he attempted to change. A friend, Lt. Kautz, reported that:

...[Shaaff] has changed very much and thinks he has altered his way of life. He imagines he has quit drinking because he doesn't drink whiskey. Only this evening he was considerably under the influence of wine. The marked influence of the ladies is quite perceptible.<sup>14</sup>

Shaaff visited Abby at the Casey home and attended dinners and dances when she was present. One such event was on Christmas Eve, 1858, when everyone in the garrison took dinner and had a merry dance that lasted until two or three in the morning.<sup>15</sup>



Lewis Cass Hunt

In spite of Lt. Shaaff's attempt to change, Fred Kautz, a civilian employee at Fort Steilacoom, wrote to his brother Lt. Kautz:

Shaaff has probably been jilted as he has been on a spree for a week and has stopped his visits to the Cols.<sup>16</sup>

On March 16, 1859, Fred noted again:

Shaaff keeps very quiet in his room all the time and does not go out.<sup>17</sup>

Captain Lewis Hunt, Shaaff's rival for the affection of Abby Casey, was described as "liberal and not bound ...by narrow opinions and prejudices."<sup>18</sup>

Though the details of the courtship are unknown, Captain Hunt's proposal of marriage to Abby was accepted. This caused conflict with Lt. Shaaff, who was in Hunt's company under his command. Lt. Kautz, a friend of both men, wrote about the conflict between the two officers and the details of the Casey-Hunt wedding.

3<sup>rd</sup> [Nov. 1860] Sa. I took a long walk with Capt. Hunt....We had a long talk about the unpopularity with the younger officers....Shaaff, he says, has behaved so badly that he insisted on his leaving his company and transferring out of it