

Christmas at Fort Steilacoom, 1995 to present: The first planning sessions were led by Ken Morgan, who proposed the event. Tom Melberg headed the planning in other years.

Christmas at the Fort became a candlelight reenactment. Reenactors from Fort Nisqually, the 4th Infantry, the 20th Maine and others took part.

In the Interpretive Center those waiting for tour guides learned some history of the fort, shopped in the gift store, were greeted by Father Christmas, and children made craft objects or cornucopias under the direction of Christine Finnigan (Colyar).

Inquiring Mind, 1995-2002: A series of talks, partially funded by the Washington Commission for the Humanities, was presented at Fort Steilacoom over a period of 7 years.

Fort Steilacoom talks have been a monthly feature for many years. A number of these presentations have been video taped and are available from the fort's research library.

Fort Steilacoom Sesquicentennial, 1999: On August 24, 1849, Capt. Bennet Hill and Company M of the 1st U.S. Artillery selected the former Heath farm as the site for Fort Steilacoom. That event was celebrated 150 years later by Historic Fort Steilacoom and members of the community on the same ground. Tents were erected by men in blue and tours of the fort were given by women in hoop skirts.

Among those present were Allison Douthitt and her daughter, descendants of both Silas Casey and Lewis Cass Hunt.

Upon the roll of drums a color guard from Fort Lewis presented the colors and Association President Walter Neary, in the guise of pioneer newspaper man Prosch, approached the outdoor podium to introduce Lakewood Mayor William Harrison who presented the dedication address. Precisely on cue, a cannon fired and reenactors representing Company M unveiled a monument commemorating Capt. Hill's founding of Fort Steilacoom

Steilacoom Sesquicentennial, 2004: As Fort Steilacoom's contribution to the town of Steilacoom's 150th anniversary, Carol Neufeld organized a series of nine talks which were presented in the Town Hall from April to December.

Tea with Mrs. Casey and her Daughters, 2005 to present: Preparations for the tea were made by Nancy Keller-Scholz and Carol Neufeld Stout with the aid of Nancy Covert (who originated the idea).

Talented reenactors take on the persona of women of the Washington Territory. Guests are entertained with song, musical instruments and stories as they sip tea and are served assorted cakes and desserts by young girls in period dress.

A "Fancy Fair" allows silent bidding on an assortment of goods. And the women can view demonstrations such as spinning on old fashioned wheels and quilting. Col. Casey and other officers or soldiers are often present to escort the ladies into the building.

Living History Day, 2007 to present: Reenactors interact with visitors as they demonstrate life of a soldier, women and camp followers of the period represented by Fort Steilacoom. The buildings, Interpretive Center and Gift Shop are open.

Military Swap Meet and Display, 2007 to present: Original and reproduction military and other goods from multiple time periods are on display and for sale.

Reenacting groups

A number of reenacting groups have participated in Fort Steilacoom events over the years.

Company M, 1st Artillery: An entity loosely affiliated with Historic Fort Steilacoom in the beginning, the group eventually merged, but kept a separate accounting of its funds. The original Company M came with Capt. Bennett Hill to establish the fort in 1849.

Ninth Infantry group: Organized by Alan Archambault, the Ninth Infantry took part in some of the early activities and events of Historic Fort Steilacoom. The real 9th Infantry was stationed at Fort Steilacoom during the Indian War of 1855-1856. Col. Silas Casey was assigned to this group at that time.

Fourth Infantry: Jack Langston began recruiting reenactors for this unit in 1991 as a group attached to Historic Fort Steilacoom. Though still participating in fort events, the group detached from the fort, but uses the facilities for meetings and training exercises. The original 4th Infantry was present at Fort Steilacoom during the Indian War.

20th Maine: An independent group of military reenactors who participate in fort activities and hold meetings and drilling exercises there. The actual military group was never really at Fort Steilacoom.

Fort Nisqually reenactors: Though attached to Fort Nisqually at Point Defiance Park, many of these reenactors take part in Fort Steilacoom events including Christmas at the Fort, Living History Day, and Tea with Mrs. Casey.

Fort Steilacoom Living History Detachment: Led by Lawrence Bateman and John McPherson, the group reenacts at events at Fort Nisqually and elsewhere, representing Fort Steilacoom.

Building maintenance

The museum buildings are the primary exhibit and need to be properly maintained. The reconstruction of the buildings was completed in 1990—over 22 years ago. Since then they have weathered and suffered damage from an earthquake, rot and decay, insects, animals and the general wear and tear of usage.

Money was raised by the Association to paint Quarters 2 this past year, and the group is now soliciting funds to paint another this summer.

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Historic Fort Steilacoom Association History of the Organization

by Orville H. Stout

Part 3: Development of Museum Complex and Programs

As the restoration of the fort buildings approached its conclusion in 1989, the Board of Directors, under the leadership of successive presidents Marion Ball, Lyle Dunkin, Vikki Nelson and Raymond Egan, began planning for the new focus of the organization: the development of a museum complex with displays and education programs. A Docent Committee was organized to set up a docent training program, guide tours in the quarters, and plan a school education outreach program.

A committee was then tasked with developing a "Stragic Plan" for Historic Fort Steilacoom Association. The mission statement was revised to reflect the transition from the renovation phase to the museum stage. Current and long term goals were set and an immediate plan of action was proposed. The plan has since been reviewed and revised periodically over the years to reflect the current stage of development of the museum.

Consultants hired

Steven A. Anderson was hired in 1990 under a contract with the Heritage Resource Center in Olympia as a consultant to spearhead the development of the Fort Steilacoom "living history" complex. His contract was extended in 1991 with funds from Historic Fort Steilacoom Association's general, unrestricted fund. And



After the reconstruction was completed, the task changed to making it into a museum complex with an Interpretive Center and living history displays.

Steve's brother, a graphic designer, produced an official logo for the fort.

Steve's responsibilities included seeking funding to furnish the buildings to museum standards, developing exhibits and setting up displays. He also was to revise the collections policy, set up a system to accession and catalog artifacts, display items and furnishings. Then he was to work with volunteer staff to prepare educational programs and events for the public.

In preparation for applying for grants, Steve produced a tentative storyline, exhibit drawings and a museum display development timeline. He also did a cost analysis of various exhibits and established contact with exhibit designers.

Grants to develop the Interpretive Center were received from the Gottfried and Mary Fuchs Foundation, the Forest Foundation, the

Burlington Northern Foundation, First Interstate Bank of Washington, the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, and the Washington Commission for the Humanities. Additionally, Orville Stout wrote a grant for the purchase of audiovisual equipment to round out donations of surplus equipment and office furniture Steve had garnered from the Boeing Aircraft Company.

Local historians, as part of the Washington Commission for the Humanities grant, were contracted to research and write documentation for the exhibit storyline. Alan Archambault, Curator of the Fort Lewis Military Museum, wrote the histories of the 4th and 9th U.S. infantries. Gary F. Reese, Chief Librarian of the Tacoma Public Library's Northwest Room, wrote about the social aspects of the fort

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HISTORIC FORT STEILACOOM ASSOCIATION

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President's Message



Here we are again. Since our last time, we have had a couple of items that have had to be taken care of. The furnaces in both

Qtrs. 1 and 2 went out. We replaced the furnace in Qtrs. 1 in the fall, and then we lost heat in Qtrs. 2 the week of the Candlelight Tour, leaving the building in the cold for the event. There was much dancing in the quarters to keep everyone warm enough for the evening. The furnace was then replaced shortly thereafter.

The Christmas Candlelight Tour ended 2012 with a bang. We had a large turnout of guests, and we were kept quite busy in our scenarios. Misses Caseys' Valentine Tea and Fancy Fair was once again a great event in February. Thanks goes out to all who planned, hosted, and supported the event. Including Living Historians and guests, there were 48 in attendance.

Also in February, Bernie Bateman, John Roten and myself did more work in Qtrs. 2. This time was to replace and repair ducting for the furnace. After over 30 years of critters tearing at the ducting, we



The Valentine Tea, hosted by Abigail and Elizabeth Casey and re-enactors in period dress, was a grand success. Features of the event included a hat display and a "Fancy Fair" silent auction, along with conversation and entertainment.



This young boy proudly displays his CAR award.

were not heating the inside of the building, but instead the raccoons at home under the building. With those repairs done, we now have heat inside where it belongs. Bernie also installed covers over all of the thermostats.

On March 2nd, Qtrs. 2 was being used by CAR (Children of the American Revolution). They were holding their annual state meeting, luncheon and elections. John Roten, Tom Allen, John McPherson and myself were on hand to give tours of the fort. Carol Neufeld Stout attended later in the morning and stayed with the CAR group for the afternoon. This group was very thankful for the use of the building and tours of the fort.



Some guests wore self-decorated hats to the tea.

There are also other tours conducted on weekdays. They are led by the retired folks on the Board—and a motivated bunch they are! I would like to thank them all for the great job they are doing.

We plan on tackling another one of the buildings this spring with a new paint job. We are still accepting donations. Once again the Nisqually Tribe has given us a fine donation of \$10,000 to help with that.

Speaking of finances, at our annual meeting we voted for new Board members, but did not fill the position of Treasurer. Joe Lewis, the Board Secretary, took this on as a temporary duty. We have yet to find someone to do this as a replacement Treasurer. Recently I wrote to friends

The library contains mainly donated books, including some very valuable sets such as the Bancroft collection and Bonney's *History of Pierce County*. A vertical file, organized by Carol Neufeld and Cecelia Carpenter, contains documents and papers of historical value. There are also videos of some of the fort lecture series and other events filmed by Orville Stout, as well as archival footage video taped by Lou Dunkin during the renovation and reconstruction of the buildings in the 1980s.

The Library Committee discontinued its work after Bo Cooper left the Board. The work was resumed in recent years by Gideon Pete who culled the collection and made a list of new acquisitions. No one is currently managing the library.

Utility space: The toilet and kitchen are for current day use and do not represent the period of the fort. The refrigerator was purchased by the Association through the efforts of President Marion Ball in about 1989. The electric range was donated by Ken Morgan's daughter in a recent year.

Furnishings and displays: The melodian in Quarters 2 was donated by Beth Julian, who also paid for its restoration to working order. Other furniture, including the wooden benches and chairs, have been donated to the fort, except for a leather-topped table and set of chairs on loan from Carol Neufeld Stout.

The wicker furniture in this building, and in some of the other buildings, belongs to Western State Hospital and was made by hospital patients, probably in the 1920s and 1930s. The furniture is listed on the hospital lease as an inventory responsibility of Historic Fort Steilacoom Association. The cushions on the wicker chairs were made by Bo Cooper and her friend and donated to the museum. They also made the cushions for the fort's folding metal chairs.

Charles Collier built a model of the Hudson Bay ship *Beaver* and arranged a display for it in the parlor. He paid

\$600 for the plans, which are part of the display. The Association Directors previously decided not to purchase the plans. The display has been on loan to the fort and has since been relocated to the Interpretive Center.

A framed photograph of an Indian War blockhouse was donated by Beth Julian, and the historical prints in the meeting room were donated by Robert Demorest and framed from funds provided by the Association.

Quarters 3 is designated as a bachelor officers' quarters. One room is currently furnished as an officer's billet. The replicated furniture was crafted by Lyle Dunkin. The leather traveling trunk, once belonging to the son of the Governor of Michigan, was a donation acquired by Steve Anderson. Other furnishings are on loan from Gideon Pete.

A back room, not part of the original construction, houses a billiard table reputedly once used by officers at the fort. It is on loan from the Washington Historical Museum in Tacoma. Currently this room is used by volunteer staff. Two officers' rooms upstairs are not open to the public at this time.

Sutler's Store: Lawrence Bateman constructed and stocked a period sutler's store in the east downstairs room in 2006. It is an authentic representation of a privately operated store on post where soldiers could purchase sundry items on credit. The museum has a copy of the actual sutler records of James M. Bachelder from the 1850s. They were obtained from the Archives collection at the University of Washington.

Major public events

In addition to weekly tours between May and September and monthly tours during the rest of the year, Historic Fort Steilacoom has sponsored and featured a number of special events over the years, including lectures, programs, workshops, "living history" days and reenactments. Some of the more notable ones are listed below.

Founders' Day Picnic: Association members and their families are invited to attend a pot-luck picnic at the fort in honor of the founding of Fort Steilacoom in August. This is a yearly event.

Washington Centennial Talks, 1989: To honor the 100th anniversary of Washington's statehood, a series of five talks were given at Fort Steilacoom. Speakers included Delbert McBride, "Indians of the Steilacoom-Nisqually Area"; Rita Happy gave an illustrated talk about women pioneers, their accomplishments and hard life; Alan Archambault, in period uniform, spoke in the persona of an army captain stationed at Fort Steilacoom circa 1860; Gary Reese spoke about area pioneers, the town of Steilacoom and Fort Steilacoom; and Mary Fries gave an illustrated talk about Indian and pioneer use of plants and herbs as folk medicines.

Fourth of July, 1991 to present: Fort Steilacoom sets up a booth in the Town of Steilacoom Street Fair and often participates in the parade. The mountain howitzer was the centerpiece of the fort's decorated float in 1991. Soldiers from the 4th Infantry and Company M 1st Artillery reenactment groups march in the Steilacoom and DuPont parades, representing the fort.

Cannon Day, 1991-1994: Organized by Jack Langston and held at Fort Steilacoom Park in August, the event featured the firing of Civil War style cannons, surgeon's display and demonstration, tent camps with soldiers, women and children in period dress, booths selling souvenir items and snack food and sometimes a food concession. Tours and children's activities were also offered at the Fort Steilacoom Museum.

Civil War Reenactment, 1994-1997, 2004: Though proposed earlier by Jack Langston and Bill Warther, Fort Steilacoom did not become a co-sponsor of the event with the Washington Civil War Association at Fort Steilacoom Park until 1994 when Ken Morgan led the charge.

on Facebook to help find a qualified person to take this on.

We have a great historic site at Fort Steilacoom and have done a lot to get the story out to the public. Without a treasurer, we will have a hard time getting grants to keep up with painting, get new items for exhibits, or do just plain maintenance. Once again I ask that someone step up to the plate. You can contact us at our e-mail website info@historicfortsteilacoom.org, or drop me a line at sgt504pir@comcast.net.

Keep checking the website for updates on events for 2013. Hope to see you all at the Fort.

Lawrence Bateman

Museum Complex and Programs

(from page 1)

and its relationship with the town of Steilacoom. Delbert McBride, Curator Emeritus of the Washington State Capitol Museum, described the Native American contribution and use of the Fort Steilacoom site prior to Euro-American occupation and the Indian relationship with army personnel. George Dickey, Forester, U.S. Army at Fort Lewis, gave the background of Company "M" First Artillery and notable individuals at the fort. George Larry Wilkinson, Manager of Survey and Mapping, Pierce County Public Works Department, laid out the early surveying of roads done by army personnel stationed at Fort Steilacoom. Dr. Bill Woodward, Professor of History, Seattle Pacific University, researched groups and personnel who occupied Fort Steilacoom during and after the Civil War. Steve A. Anderson, Consultant and Site Administrator at Fort Nisqually (Tacoma Parks) produced "Steilacoom Farm—The British Colonization of Puget Sound."

In the meantime, Orville Stout wrote a grant and received funds to write and produce an introductory video of fort history. He also created a photo display as a temporary "traveling exhibit." Lyle and Lou Dunkin, together with the assistance

of Charles Collier and others, set up period exhibits in Quarters 1 and 3.

Steve Anderson, Lyle Hegsted and Jack Langston negotiated a 25-year renewable loan of two Civil War Napoleon cannons from the City of Olympia. An 1860s mountain howitzer reproduction was donated by Russell Austin, Jr., through arrangements made by Jack Langston. Carriages for the three cannons were built by Jeff Stafford Wheel and Carriage Company in Coatsville, Pennsylvania. They arrived on December 23, 1991. A cannon shelter for the two Napoleons was then constructed under the direction of Lyle Dunkin. It is located near where the original fort magazine once stood.

Steve's next task was to revise the collections policy and set up an accession system. He developed the necessary forms for receiving gifts and cataloging the collection. With his help, Mary Metzler began some initial cataloging. Marta Firman was then recruited to inventory and catalog furnishings, artifacts, gifts and display items—quite a major undertaking, completed admirably.

After a considerable lapse in time, Gideon Pete resumed the accessioning of the collection. A computer and museum software were purchased so that cataloging information could be more easily recorded. Presently, the software is being used to keep track of the membership, but no one has come forth to enter the collection records into the computer system.

Christine C. Brewster-Wray, PhD, was contracted in June 1992 to complete the Washington Commission for the Humanities grant for Interpretive Center display planning. She completed the report a year later, June 1993. The report contains a layout of potential exhibits, lists of items for the exhibits along with projected costs for the items and construction of the exhibits. Using this as a basic guide, the first exhibits for the Interpretive Center were constructed. The development of following exhibits seemed to vary from those suggested by the consultant.

Dr. Brewster-Wray's contract ran out before she could seek additional grant funds to construct displays. Ray Egan, assisted by Orville Stout, was then asked to spearhead a new round of grant writing for the construction of displays.

Shey Munroe was hired in 1994 as a consulting assistant on a six month contract to organize "certain aspects and activities" and seek grant funds. She was assisted by Anna Fitzgerald. They obtained grant funds to pay limited salaries for themselves.

A Docent Committee had previously been organized in 1989 and had an active school visitation program in 1991. Shea and Anna built upon this program. Shea received a grant for docent development from Grant-makers. She and Carol Starr developed a docent training packet and scheduled docent training sessions.

Shey and Anna planned and developed a new school education program, coordinated by Anna who also scheduled tours of the museum. Carpet bags containing artifacts and instructional materials were sent out to classroom teachers for a two week period. Docents made classroom visits to tell about Fort Steilacoom, and tours of the fort were scheduled for school children. The fort visit also included hands-on activities. Carol Starr developed an outline and handouts of resource material for teachers. The school visitation program brought in over 200 children, parents and teachers in 1994. A \$2,500 grant helped support the school education program.

Interpretive Center

Now that the consultants had completed their tasks and a detailed reference guide had been produced, work was begun to develop the Interpretive Center in Quarters 4. Lyle Dunkin, Charles Collier and Jack Langston built two display cases for permanent fort history exhibits in 1996. Shea Munroe and Orville Stout, with advisory assistance from Alan Archambault, created a

display of Company “M” 1st Artillery in one of the showcases and of the 4th and 9th Infantry in the other. The displays were ready for the Memorial Day opening in May 1996.

Robert Demorest also began crafting a diorama of the fort (circa 1860), completing it the next year in 1997. Lyle Dunkin, Chuck Collier, Jack Langston and Loren Gilbert built the 2-part showcase for this permanent exhibit. The large size of the diorama limited the space available for other permanent exhibits, requiring a review of the proposal submitted previously by contracted consultants.

A mountain howitzer was added as another featured exhibit. Mannequins were donated to the museum and some were dressed in period uniforms for display. Changeable artifacts were arranged in two donated showcases. Re-arrangement of and additional displays in the Interpretive Center has recently resumed through the efforts of Lawrence Bateman and John Roten.

The Interpretive Center in Quarters 4 has office and accessioning spaces upstairs. The office contains the records of the association as well as a computer and laser printer. There is no internet connection for this computer, though the association maintains a web site and now has an e-mail address.

A non-historic east addition has utility space for a kitchen and toilets. It also has a “theater” to view the 8 minute introductory video of the fort’s history. The room was recently partitioned to provide additional display space. The adjacent hallway is also available for displaying photographic and flat exhibits. A wall section in the hallway has been left exposed to show the original board-on-board construction of Quarters 4, which was once the Protestant chaplain’s quarters and chapel.

The room next to the main gallery houses a gift shop, originally called the “Sutler’s Store” when it was set up in late 1989 as a source of revenue for the museum. There has been a secession of store managers and



The Interpretive Center as it looked after the primary displays were completed. The mountain howitzer is in the far right corner.

attendants who ordered, displayed and sold books and merchandise. Joe Lewis, Association Secretary, is currently operating the Gift Shop.

Living history displays

“Living history” displays were set up in quarters 1, 2 and 3 to represent life at the fort during the time of its military occupancy. Tours, reenactments and events are scheduled there. Space was set aside in Quarters 2, the Commanding Officer’s home and office, for Association and public use.

Quarters 1 represents the home of a married officer and his family. The furnishings were acquired and arranged largely through the efforts of Lou and Lyle Dunkin. The melodian is on loan from the Dunkins. A table in the family room is on loan from the Melbergs. Some furnishings and artifacts have been donated by Ellen Freckelton and her daughter Beth Julian and others. Some alternative arrangement of the upstairs bedrooms has taken place over the years. Gideon Pete has loaned some of his personal belongs and re-arranged the bedrooms from the original placement of furnishings. During the “Christmas at the Fort” event, the house becomes the home of “Col. Casey” and his family.

Quarters 2 is used for meetings, lecture programs and other fort events, including living history days, a military swap meet and the Christmas reenactment. A research library occupies what might have once been a dining room. During tours, visitors may be allowed to view the representation of a barracks, created by Ken Morgan, in an upstairs room. One room there contains Company “M” items and uniforms, dresses and wardrobe items—some donated and others made by the Sewing Committee. Other space is available for storage and temporary exhibits.

The library: A committee began planning for the research library in 1994. Committee members were Carol Neufeld, Bo Cooper, Cecelia Carpenter and Mike Allen. They discussed the types of materials needed, method of cataloging, labeling of the vertical file and the place where the library would be set up.

The library was moved from the upstairs of Quarters 4 into Quarters 2 in 1995. The Library Committee cataloged the books and set up a check-out system, though some materials can only be used in the library. Others who volunteered library materials and services included Jerry Eckrom, Gary Reese, and Christine Finnigan.