

**Boatman** (continued from page 1)

After the war, perhaps during, the Boatmans reestablished near Gravelly Lake where they preempted 160 acres adjoining today's 112th Street of the Lakewood area and began raising sheep. Willis built a home that still stands on this land and is known on the National Register as the Boatman-Answorth house, owned today by the Dr. Craig Gunter family.

By Weldon Willis Rau

**Prominent Military Leaders Who Served at Ft. Steilacoom**

**Col. Silas Casey:** Commanded Fort Steilacoom from 1856 to 1861. He rose to the rank of Major General and became Inspector General of the U. S. Army.

**Capt. George Pickett:** Commanded Company D from Fort Steilacoom during the "Pig War" boundary dispute in the San Juan Islands. He joined the Army of the Confederacy during the Civil War, rising to the rank of general.

**Capt. George McClellan:** Led the western division of the northern railroad survey in 1853. He rose to the rank of General, commanding the Army of the Potomac during the Civil War and ran for President of the United States against Lincoln in 1864.

**Bits of History...**

●Lt. August V. Kautz erected twenty-five new buildings at Fort Steilacoom in 1857-58, including officers quarters, quartermaster's office and commissary store, clothing store, barracks, and chaplain's quarters. Only four of these buildings remain today.

●Military units that served at Fort Steilacoom included the 1st Field Artillery, 2nd Field Artillery, 4th Infantry, and 9th Infantry.

●Fort Steilacoom was the center for military road construction in Washington Territory. Roads were built to Fort Bellingham in the north, Fort Walla Walla in the east, by way of Fort Nisqually and Naches Pass, and to Fort Vancouver in the south.

●Fort Steilacoom became a central location for legal, social, and economic development of Western Washington. Many of the soldiers stayed on as settlers after their discharge.

●Because Fort Steilacoom was the largest military post on the Puget Sound, it remained in operation during the Civil War with local volunteers serving to control general lawlessness.

●Fort Steilacoom was officially abandoned on August 22, 1868. The last unit to be stationed there was E Battery, 2nd Field Artillery, with five officers and 124 men, Captain Charles H. Pierce, commanding.

**LOOK AT YOUR MAILING LABEL!**

Does 1990 appear after your name on the mailing label? If so, you have paid your membership dues for this year. If 1990 does not appear after your name, won't you please take a moment to renew your membership in Historic Fort Steilacoom Association now?

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**Naches Pass Wagon Train Descendants Picnic**

Descendants of the 1853 Naches Pass wagon train will hold their ninth reunion picnic on Sunday, August 5, 1990, at noon at Federation Forest State Park on Highway 410, seventeen miles east of Enumclaw. Tape recordings of interesting family stories will be made and family histories and pictures will be shared. For additional information call Charles Byers in Longview (206) 425-7246 or Claire Raam in Redmond (206) 883-7924.

**HISTORIC FORT STEILACOOM NEWSLETTER**

Vol. VII, No. 2

Fort Steilacoom, Washington

July, 1990

**WILLIS AND MARY ANN BOATMAN Pioneer Settlers**

*Pioneer families, such as the Boatmans, interacted with Fort Steilacoom in the 1850' and 60's. The fort established an American presence which encouraged settlement, provided security, and contributed to economic development. Willis Boatman, the great grandfather of Weldon Willis Rau, helped construct army posts in the area, including the buildings at Fort Steilacoom.*

Willis and Mary Ann Boatman traveled overland from Illinois in the summer of 1852, arriving in Portland in October of that year. Their first child, George, was born in December 31, 1852, in Portland.

In February of 1853, Willis came north to Steilacoom to work for Lafayette Balch in a timber camp on Henderson Bay. A few months later he brought his wife and son to the camp where Mary Ann became the cook. After working in the camp for about

three months, they moved back to Steilacoom and built a boarding house. After they operated it for about eight months, they sold the boarding house and homesteaded in the Puyallup Valley in the early spring of 1854. A second son, John, was born in July, 1854, the first white child to be born in the Puyallup valley.

In the fall of 1855 they were forced to flee to Fort Steilacoom because of the Indian uprising. During the war, and for some time afterward, Willis worked as a civilian for the Quartermasters Corps of the regular army. He first helped on the construction of Fort Maloney in the Puyallup valley, then other blockhouses and barracks, including the barracks and other buildings on Muckleshoot Prairie. After the war he continued his employment with the army in helping construct the new Fort Steilacoom.

(continued on page 4)



Weldon Willis Rau explores Quarters 1 on the June 10 opening of the fort to the public. His great grandfather, Willis Boatman, helped construct buildings at the fort in the 1850's.

**Anderson to Spearhead Museum Development**

Steven A. Anderson has been hired as a consultant to spearhead the development of the Fort Steilacoom living museum complex. Under a contract with the Heritage Resource Center in Olympia, Mr. Anderson will provide 160 hours of service to the fort over the next few months. His responsibilities will include seeking funding to furnish the buildings to museum standards and acquire equipment, developing exhibits and displays, and working with volunteer staff to prepare interpretive and educational programs and events for the public.

As Site Administrator at Fort Nisqually, Steve brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this new phase in preparing Fort Steilacoom as an important and viable community history resource. The reconstruction of the four remaining fort buildings was completed this spring. Quarters 1 has been partially furnished as a officer's family home, and planning is under-



Steven A. Anderson will be working with volunteers to get the Fort Steilacoom living museum program up and running this summer.

way to complete the furnishing of the complex and develop displays which will bring the history of the fort to life.

**Boatman Reminiscences to be Published**

Weldon Willis Rau is preparing to publish a manuscript entitled *Pioneering the Washington Territory — Reminiscences of Willis and Mary Ann Boatman*. Mr. Rau, a retired research geologist having had a career with both the U.S. Geological Survey and the State of Washington, has written for various scientific publications including several semi-popular books on Washington geology. The Boatman story is his first attempt at writing history.

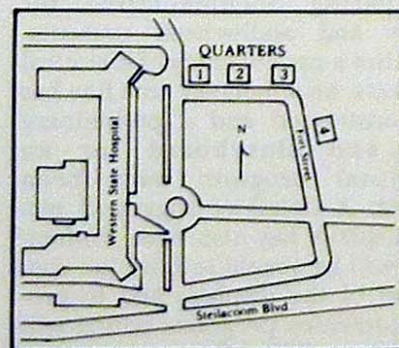
Rau was raised in Puyallup not far from the Boatman homestead and graduated from Puyallup High School in 1939. He received a B.S. degree from the University of Puget Sound in 1943, and M.S. and PhD degrees from the University of Iowa. He and his wife, Jane, have lived in Olympia for the past thirty years. Their son, Greg, is a scientist in California.

**Historic Fort Steilacoom Association**

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## HISTORIC FORT STEILACOOM ASSOCIATION

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### President's Message

While the restoration work is basically finished, the restoration crew is keeping busy getting the buildings ready for the official opening. A new counter was built for the store, display cases were rebuilt, and several pieces of furniture were repaired and refinished.

We have accumulated, through various donors, some old rawhide laced seat chairs. Naturally, chairs of that vintage were in various stages of disrepair, but with the help of Ann Murnough who refinished four of the chairs and Howard Burns who rebuilt one, even turning a new leg, and our crew lacing the rawhide strips, we have been able to get the chairs in good condition again.

Our restoration crew has become proficient in several skills—primarily out of necessity. We have done carpenter work, plastering, plumbing, electrical, painting, hanging and finishing sheetrock, cabinet work, window glazing, and now furniture refinishing.

Planning for use of the buildings seems to be an on-going process, but we seem to be firming up our general plan. I'm sure as we open and gain experience the plans will change. We have come up with a rental policy. We will need to generate some revenue for maintenance and operation, so we plan to rent out some of the space in building 2 and possibly building 4. This rental will be primarily for meetings.

It seems as we get better known, people come forward with additional information on the fort. George Martin told us his great grandfather was an enlisted man at Fort Steilacoom. His discharge papers were signed by Lt. Slaughter. This means he was at the fort before the Indian Wars of 1855-56 because Slaughter was killed during the wars. Weldon Rau, who was at our

open house on June 10, said his great grandfather helped build the fort. We certainly like to hear from anyone who has information on Fort Steilacoom, as it helps us develop a history of the fort.

Now that the buildings are ready for viewing, we are planning a big event on September 22 to honor all of the donors. This will include everyone we can think of who has contributed work, materials, or money, including the large foundations. A tentative list includes nearly 200 individuals, so we should have a large turnout. We hope also that all of our members will be able to come out and help us celebrate. We have had around \$100,000 in money and material donated to the project plus thousands of hours of work, so come out on September 22 and see where it all went.

Lyle Dunkin

### Around the Fort...

**Gift Books.** Gary Reese presented the Association with a collection of Dr. George Loring books.

**Chinook Dictionary.** A reprint of *Gill's Chinook Dictionary*, originally published in 1909 by the J. K. Gill Company in Portland, Oregon, has been purchased from the White River Valley Historical Society in Auburn.

**Indian games.** Arnold Stern has constructed Indian games typical of those used in the 1850's and 1860's from animal bone, sinew and leather, and wood. The games will be demonstrated as part of the docent school visitation program and also sold in the Suttler's Store at the fort.

**Fort Nisqually Video.** The Association has purchased a twelve minute video tape, produced by Louis and Ruth Kirk, of the Fort Nisqually dig.

**Teachers Tour.** Marion Ball guided Tacoma teachers on a tour of the fort on March 16.

**Curtains up.** Pat Collier made curtains for Quarters 3.

**Plan Adopted.** Lou Dunkin headed a committee to develop a "Strategic Plan" for Historic Fort Steilacoom Association. The plan includes a revised mission statement, goals for 1990 and 1991, long term goals, and an immediate action plan. Thanks is given to Gary Reese for developing the working document for the committee.

**Grants Workshop.** Fort Steilacoom hosted the second grant workshop put on by the Heritage Resource Center on



Vikki Nelson demonstrates a replicated Indian toy made by Arnold Stern. In the background can be seen framed prints of Mount Rainier and Mount St. Helens from watercolors painted in 1845 by Henry Warre. The toys and prints are for sale at the fort's Suttler's Store.

March 10. The focus of this session was to critique sample grants written by attendees and to provide information about sources of grant funds. Orville Stout and Lou Dunkin represented the Association at the workshop.

**Rental Policy.** Pat Collier headed a committee which developed a policy for rental of fort buildings by qualified users. A packet was developed which includes room rental rules and regulations, a rental contract, and a listing of attendant responsibilities. Groups wanting to use rooms at the fort for meetings can contact Pat at (206) 582-2530.

**Consultants meet with Board.** Brent Lambert, Jerry McGaha, and Steve Anderson met with members of the Board on April 6 and provided expert advice and many suggestions for the development of Fort Steilacoom as an active historic site and living museum.

**Books Audited.** The auditor found Treasurer Fred Zeigler's accounts and records to be "perfectly maintained" with the February financial report in agreement with the check book and savings account balances, receipts and disbursements properly documented, and no questionable expenditures.

**Cemetery.** Research done by Pricilla Taylor shows that twenty-two people are buried in the pioneer cemetery on the Western State Hospital grounds.

**Fort Featured.** The Tacoma News Tribune featured Fort Steilacoom in a story written by Jill Leovy in the June 13, 1990, issue of "Neighbors."



Karen Langston and Marjorie Larsen operate the Suttler's Store, and Mary Metzler and Vikki Nelson prepare to guide visitors on tours of the fort buildings.



Vikki Nelson and Mary Metzler tell visitors about life of an officer's wife at Fort Steilacoom.

### Fort Open to Public Tour

Tours of Fort Steilacoom's recently restored military quarters began on June 10 and will be continued Sundays from 1-4 p.m. on June 24, July 8 and 24, and August 12 and 16. Docents in period dress will tell visitors about some of the original occupants as well as details of the restoration process. A Suttler's Store (gift shop) will feature monogrammed T shirts, caps, and

cedar pencils, square nails and tie tacks made from 130 year old nails salvaged from the fort, handmade reproductions of Indian children's toys, posters, and prints of Mt. Rainier and Mr. St. Helens reproduced from watercolors done by Henry Warre in 1845. The tours are free of charge, and all association members and the public are invited.

**Publicity Assistance.** Nancy Crawford has volunteered her assistance in preparing news releases, posters, and communications to promote Fort Steilacoom and inform the public of special events.

**Document Discovered.** A reproduction of a document presented to the ladies of Fort Steilacoom by the commander in honor of their assistance during the Indian War in 1855 has been framed and placed on display at the fort.

**Uniform Purchased.** An authentic reproduction of an officer's uniform relevant to the era of Fort Steilacoom has been purchased for display through the efforts of Jack Langston.

**July 4 Sale.** Pat Collier reports that the Fourth of July sale in the Town of Steilacoom was again a success, netting the Association \$328.37. A special thanks to all those who donated items for sale and to those who manned the booth.

### Grand Opening of Fort To Honor Donors

A special open house to honor all donors who contributed to Fort Steilacoom will be held after the Annual Meeting on September 22, 1990. The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. in Quarters 2 and will be followed at 1:30 p.m. with a flag raising and dedication honoring the more than 200 donors who contributed to the reconstruction and furnishing of the fort. Noted historian and author Murray Morgan will entrance the audience with reminiscences of the area's early history. The Fort Lewis military band will entertain as guests mingle with costumed infantrymen and militia, view encampments and exhibits, and tour the reconstructed military buildings with the help of docents in period dress. Bring family and friends, dress up in pioneer garb if you like, and have a great Saturday afternoon at Fort Steilacoom.

### Docents Prepare for Tours

The spring months kept the docents busy getting ready for school tours which will begin in the fall. Items from an officer's uniform, which was recently ordered from a firm which custom tailors Civil War era military clothing, will be shown to the children.

We went to the Fort Lewis Military Museum to see their exhibit on Fort Steilacoom and to get information from Allan Archambault who has been a great help to us.

We are in need of additional people who would like to become involved in the docent program. This fall we plan to have classes to teach volunteers how to give tours at the fort and get involved in the school visitation program. Being open twice a month this summer has added a whole new dimension to our efforts.

Vikki Nelson

### Planning for Interpretive Center Underway

The Interpretive Center Committee is preparing documentation for displays and audiovisual presentations. After a careful study of historical documents, an annotated time line has been constructed and a preliminary script and storyboard for an audiovisual program have been prepared. A detail of suggested pictorial displays has also been drafted. Grants will be sought to fund the construction of the displays and to produce slide/video programs which will tell the story of Fort Steilacoom.