

Cannon Day (continued from p. 1) but visitors could peer in through the windows and glimpse the rooms and a billiard table once used by the officers for entertainment.

Patricia Collier guided guests through temporary displays of artifacts, weapons, costumes and photographs on view in Quarters 4 which was originally the fort chapel and now serves as the Interpretive Center. Historic Fort Steilacoom Association is currently seeking funds to develop permanent displays here. This building also contains an active Sutler Store, managed by Marjorie Larsen, offering gifts and souvenir items. In earlier days the sutler sold a wide variety of goods to the soldiers.

A final cannon salute punctuated the warm, late afternoon air, and Steve Anderson lifted his bull horn to announce the raffle winners. Lee Warnick was called to receive the model, cannon. Helen Manta won the pioneer bonnet and Warren Bronoske the forage cap. Raffle manager Chuck Collier handed Bob Weir the prize shotgun which was manufactured by J.P. Clabrough & Bros. in Birmingham, England, in 1885.

Groups participating in the event began to pack up their gear and head toward Quarters 2 for an evening

meal of fried chicken served by the women of the fort. These groups had made the day a success. Hats off to the Washington Artillery commanded by Richard (Dick) and Dave Emmick; the Washington Brigade—Puget Sound Rangers represented by Bob Urie and Jerry Howard; Company "L," 3rd U.S. Memorial Artillery, with Cary Skarr; C.H.A.O.S formed by Dave Fogg; the 9th U.S. Infantry, Company "A"; 1st U.S. Cavalry, "B" Troop, represented by Jess Jensen; and Company "L," 1st U.S. Artillery commanded by Bill Warther of Silverton, Oregon.

The extremely positive public response promises to make **Cannon Day** an annual event and a significant area attraction in the years to come which will provide major support to Historic Fort Steilacoom.

Orville H. Stout

Membership (continued from p. 3) and meet at their convenience. A docent training course is planned for this fall. It will be aided by reports being researched by our scholars who are writing about Fort Steilacoom's past.

Third: Become an active member. Don't be content to just sit back and pay your dues every year (but make

sure that they are paid up!). Voice your opinion and let the Board know what you think about the site's direction. Feedback can save a site's life. Ideas about direction and content are always welcomed if given constructively with the intent to build a better site. What do you see as a long range plan for the site? What ideas do you have about its use and programs? Let the Board know, even if you don't think it's a big idea; write it down and send it to us. Please take these suggestions to heart and give the Association a shot at becoming a truly historical offering to this region's populace. Fort Steilacoom's secret is out, and soon many new things are going to be coming its way. Just be sure that you're on board to share in the excitement and fun that is anticipated.

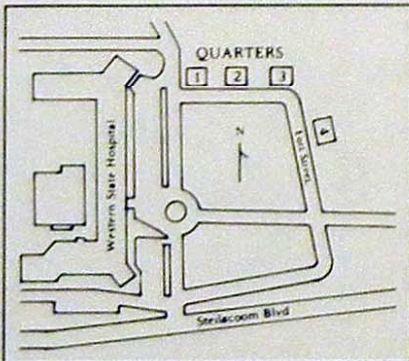
Steve Anderson, HRC Consultant

Civil War Round Table to meet

A new Pierce County area Civil War Round Table group has been started in Tacoma. The next meeting is Thursday, October 1, 7 p.m., at the Martin Luther King Library, 19th and S. Cedar. The purpose is for people of all backgrounds to get together to share a common interest in the Civil War. Questions? Call 475-3123 or 564-3568.

NOTICE: The Annual Meeting of Historic Fort Steilacoom Association will be on Sunday, September 29, 1991, at 2 p.m. in Quarters 2. After a short business meeting for the president's report and election of officers, Esther Spreen will present a very interesting program on the history of cloth.

Historic Fort Steilacoom
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Cannon Day draws crowd

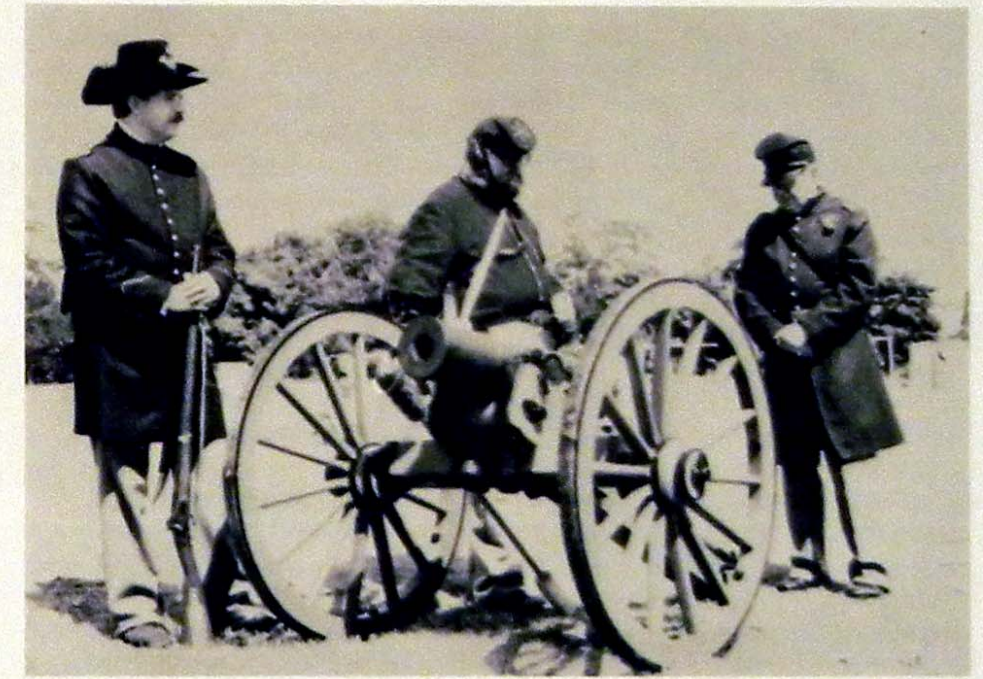
A loud *Kaboom* broke the silence of the early morning air on August 24 as the "soldiers" at Fort Steilacoom Park readied their Civil War era cannons in eager anticipation of **Cannon Day**—a celebration of Captain Bennett Hill's establishment of Fort Steilacoom on this day 142 years ago.

"Captain" Jack Langston, assisted by Richard and Dave Emmick, organized the troops in an eight cannon battery for a program which included a "School of the Piece" demonstration of how a gun crew works, a "School of the Soldier" drills, and a "School of the Piece-Battery" in which all cannons were fired in sequence.

The boom of cannons, volleys of rifle fire, and the commands of soldiers in drill grabbed the attention of over seven hundred people during the all day event at Fort Steilacoom County Park.

A row of tents marked the primitive encampments of soldiers displaying their weapons and demonstrating life of the military in the 1860s. Camp followers in frontier dress talked to visitors or went about their chores as children in pantaloons dodged about or watched a period clown juggle barbells and twist balloons into animal shapes.

The sutler's store, run by Caren Langston and Wanda Nadal, did a brisk business, offering miniature cannons, cups, hats, T-shirts, beads and even bricks removed from fort buildings. Nearby, Alicia Hogue



Fort Steilacoom's 6 pound mountain howitzer, on its new carriage, was one of eight cannons fired during Cannon Day. "Captain" Jack Langston, organizer of the event, is at the left.

pulled on the strings of a homemade button toy as it wound and unwound to the fascination of small onlookers, and Jerry Eckrom drew the attention of history buffs as he autographed copies of his book *Remembered Drums—A History of the Puget Sound Indian War*.

The Steilacoom Indians beckoned people to their display of T-shirts and gift items and enticed others with snack foods. The more hungry were drawn by the smell of grilling hamburgers to Otis' famous barbecue where beef and pork ribs and chicken could be had for a complete meal.

Cameras in hand, groups of "tourists" were assembled by Vikki Nelson to take a walking tour of Fort Steilacoom and see the recently reconstructed officers' quarters and Interpretive Center. Docents Mary Metzler and Lou Dunkin in their elegant antebellum dresses greeted visitors to Quarters 1 to show how an officer and his family would have lived a relatively comfortable life at the fort. Quarters 2, which was the commanding officer's office and home, and Quarters 3, the unmarried officers' billet, are as yet unfurnished,

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HISTORIC FORT STEILACOOM ASSOCIATION

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President's Message

September is here and I can truly say this has been a very busy and productive year for our Fort Steilacoom. We have definitely turned the corner from the reconstructive period to becoming a museum.

In the spring Mary Metzler and Carol Starr started their school tours in the Clover Park district to second, third, and fourth graders. The children were introduced to Carol who portrayed an Irish washer woman who came with her soldier husband to Fort Steilacoom. Mary portrayed a grandmother of children living at the fort and told of the daily life of the children of that era.

While watching Carol and Mary at the school, I was impressed with the genuine interest the children showed. These portrayals made our history come alive. We hope to continue going out to the schools and need more people who have time to help bring local history to our children.

Steve Anderson has been working with us for the past year helping us to get up and get going. He also negotiated the twenty-five year loan of the two Napoleon cannons. Thanks, Steve!

Starting in May we opened the gift shop and gave tours on Sundays and Tuesdays 1-4 p.m. It gave us a chance to open our Sutler's Store

where Marjorie Larsen, Caren Langston, and Wanda Nadal worked very hard to make it a success. We bought our first shipment of Fort Steilacoom cups with our new logo on them and also have a selection of miniature cannons, books, and other items for sale. Now that we have become better known, we need people to help with tours and the gift shop.

We met every Tuesday morning to prepare for the 4th of July and Cannon Day. This year on the 4th our emphasis was on the historic nature of the fort. Orville Stout built an attractive booth which was the center of our display. We sold many gift shop items, had a raffle, and author Jerry Eckrom autographed copies of his book, *Remembered Drums*. Our mountain howitzer cannon and period costumes added a historic flavor to the parade.

The planning for Cannon Day was never-ending and consumed my spring and summer. There were many rules and regulations we had to deal with regarding firing of cannons, encampments, selling food, and general setup.

Public relations was a very important part of getting ready for Cannon Day, and we had no idea what to expect for all of our hard work.

As Cannon Day approached, we got busier, and last minute cancellations or additions were popping up all over. "Canon Day--Canon Day," that's all we talked about for months, then weeks, then days. Then the cannons arrived along with some reenactment groups with their period clothing and items of that era. It was exciting, a lovely day, and people began arriving early to learn of the history and see the cannons. Many people never knew that there was a fort in this area. Orville had our new VCR showing the Civil War tapes in our new audiovisual room. The day was a success!

I want to give a special note of thanks to Board member families and friends who helped out, including Arnie Stern's house guest from Portland, Shawn Farrel; Jack and

Caren Langston's granddaughter, Alicia Hogue; my brother Brian and his wife Diane; my son Shane and my husband Pete. I also want to thank Shea Munroe and her friends from Phi Theta Kappa, David Cobble and Michael Woods.

We are already looking forward to next year's Cannon Day!

It has been a year of fun and frustration, but a year of genuine progress.

Please come and learn along with us about the lives and experiences of people who were part of historic Fort Steilacoom.

And a final thanks to all of you who helped keep the "fort on the Sound" alive!
 Vikki Nelson

Membership A matter of commitment

How long has it been since you felt excited about what's happening at Fort Steilacoom? The presence of this newsletter in your mailbox indicates that at some point in the past eight or nine years you've been excited enough to take out a membership with the organization. Are you currently a dues paying member in good standing?

You once voiced a positive opinion about the activities of the Association in its effort to restore the officers' quarters. You may also have contributed funds or personal time and energy toward this worthwhile project. While such vocal support is important to the moral of the Board and active volunteers, and while the contributions have resulted in the completion of the restoration phase of the project, the project is far from over.

A non-profit, volunteer run group like the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association is special in many ways. It fills a need that governmental bureaucracy cannot. It provides a service to the community that is unique, and it is attempting to save a portion of our community's collective past—an unfathomable task that deserves your financial and emotional commitment; that is, if you truly be-



Patricia Morrison poses with Fort Steilacoom's float and 6 pound howitzer.

lieve in the site. In the very near future a membership in the Association will mean much more than it does now, and it will provide additional benefits to those who choose to commit to the next phase of Fort Steilacoom's future—historical interpretation.

Since the Association's role for the past decade has been decidedly one of a restoration council, it is easy to understand how members could either include or exclude themselves from the activities of the site. If construction and building restoration was not your bag, all that you could pretty much contribute was your emotional or financial support. That is changing, and here are some suggestions how you can directly impact the future of the site:

First: Donate an object to the museum's collections. The collections of the site are minimal (which is o.k.). They are in need of bolstering both in terms of quantity and quality. Now you may lament by saying, "I don't have anything of that period or from the fort at my house, so how can I contribute?" Simple. We now have begun identifying objects that are available within the community, largely from dealers and other



The Fort Steilacoom booth drew a good crowd during the Steilacoom 4th of July street fair. Phyllis Harrison "talks up" the raffle on a table next the Sutler's Store.

sources. Items such as a long handled frying pan (\$125) at Abigale's Antiques (reportedly of the type used at the fort in the late 1850s); two McClelland style U.S. Army saddles (\$120 each), circa 1860, in a shop on Broadway in Tacoma; an ironstone pitcher and basin wash set (\$225) in a shop in Vancouver; and many other such small items in the general vicinity. If you always wanted to contribute an artifact (in your name) to a museum but felt unable, we will make it very easy for you—and the object will remain with the fort. The problem with antiques of the period is that they move fast, and what is available today may be gone tomorrow. Become part of the fort's future by contributing a piece of the past.

Second: Volunteer on a special committee. Volunteering at Fort Steilacoom has historically involved direct participation on the Association's board in some capacity of construction, management, or labor. This, too, has changed. Now an individual can participate in several areas, including a cannon committee. As time goes on, more committees will be forming. These smaller groups can set their own schedules

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Steilacoom 4th of July

Historic Fort Steilacoom entered a float featuring its 6 pound howitzer in the Steilacoom 4th of July celebration. The cannon was mounted on a new carriage built by Jeff Stafford in Coatsville, Pennsylvania. It is one of three carriages commissioned by the Association. The float was decorated by Patricia Morrison with red bunting festooned with Civil War era beads, paper garlands, and a banner showing the new Fort Steilacoom logo.

The Association also did a brisk business at the street fair in its Sutler's Store booth, prominently located in front of City Hall. Jerry Eckrom autographed copies of his book, and raffle tickets were sold.

Weyerhaeuser donates equipment

The Weyerhaeuser Foundation donated office equipment, supplies, and audiovisual equipment to the fort earlier this year. Included in the generous donation were desks, chairs, tables, bookshelves, filing cabinets, and an overhead and motion picture projector.