

# Stanwood Area ECHOES

Newsletter of the Stanwood Area Historical Society  
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*Stanwood Area Echoes*

Issue No. 59 : Summer, 2018

## UTSALADY MILL, CAMANO ISLAND C. 1880s



The Utsalady Mill was built on the east side of Utsaladdy Point in February of 1858 and a new era began when the Puget Mill Company purchased it for \$32,000 in March 1876. For the next 15 years, Cyrus Walker managed and modernized the mill, and it was capable of cutting logs up to six feet in diameter and up to 75 feet long. The mill had a capacity of 75,000 feet per day and employed about 45 men. One of the factors that led to its closure in 1891 was the fact that the railroad went east of Stanwood to Mt. Vernon when it was deemed that Utsalady was not a convenient port from the perspective of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and international trade and this began to change the transportation patterns of the area.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends:

The third lecture in our History and Hors d'oeuvres spring series took place May 20th. It featured Jeff Wheeler, the chief supervising park ranger for Cama Beach State Park as well as numerous other parks in the region. Jeff is an entertaining speaker and his topic of "The Four Histories of Cama" was informative, covering the extensive history of that beautiful part of Camano Island from Native domain to today.

We were awed by the turnout for the dedication of our Community Veterans Memorial on Memorial Day, May 28th. The 250 plus people who attended filled the Floyd Cultural Center flowing out both entrances of the building. All branches of the military were honored with the posting of the respective service flags accompanied by the appropriate military service theme of each branch. The music was splendidly supplied by the Stanwood Middle School band under the able direction of Michelle Rockwood. These talented young people clearly had put in the practice time and it showed with a truly wonderful performance. When it came time in the ceremony for Taps, our scheduled musician was absent. However, a young trumpeter from the band, Samuel Stanton, immediately volunteered and amazed the gathering with a virtuoso rendering of the solemn bugle call. The room was incredibly impressed with his poise and talent.

Keynote speaker Mike Ballard, a decorated Vietnam veteran, spoke poignantly to the audience about the special brotherhood of veterans as well as the challenges for many who returned to civilian life from combat zones. Our Memorial is dedicated to those who did not return--their wounds swift and fatal. But, many who came home also bear wounds, not always visible, or casually overcome. Mike's candid sharing of his own story put light on war's lasting effects. Soldiers are changed by war and so is their future.

Our Memorial bears the names of 50 fallen heroes, etched in black marble, whose future was erased; the hope and promise of a full life terminated. Their names were read aloud to the attentive crowd with

each name followed by a single toll of a bell. When we send people to war, the first casualty is their youth. They remain young, however, in the memories of their families.

Our thanks to all who attended and for the multitude of area residents who worked, contributed or donated to make this Memorial a reality.

*Sincerely,*

*Richard Hanks, President*

*Stanwood Area Historical Society*

## Stanwood Area Historical Society Effective January 1, 2018

### OFFICERS TERM (2Yr)

<b>President</b> , Richard Hanks	2017-2018
<b>Vice President</b> , Dan Lien	2018-2019
<b>Recording Secretary</b> , John Smistad	2017-2018
<b>Corr. Secretary</b> , Margaret Utgard	2017-2018
<b>Treasurer</b> , Dave Eldridge	2018-2019
<b>Past President</b> , Gail Ryer	

### TRUSTEES TERM (3Yr)

Penny Buse	2016-2018
Louis Stangeland	2016-2018
Janet Mayer	2017-2019
Sandy Robinson	2017-2019
Margaret Utgard	2017-2019
Ramona Snowden	2018-2020
Clifford Larson	2018-2020
Mary Margaret Haugen	2018-2020
Alex Gedstad	Honorary Trustee
Pat Bronson	Honorary Trustee

Newsletter Editors

Richard and Robin Hanks

## SEARCHING FOR THE AMERICAN EDEN

It is certainly no surprise that the tranquility and beauty of Camano Island is today known as a haven for artists and the imaginative. Organizations such as the Camano Arts Association, the Stanwood Camano Art Guild and other unaffiliated writers, illustrators, painters and performers have put their stamp on the 17 mile expanse of land that bridges the Stillaguamish River at Stanwood. The CAA's Camano Island Studio Tour, dubbed the Mother's Day Tour, attracts roughly 5,000 people to the Island over its two weekends in May.

However, the island in 1910 was very different. The logging, which began in the mid-1850s at Utsalady, had spread throughout Camano and was changing the island. Loggers were slowly giving way to new residents, many of them stump or dairy farmers. Art Kimball and John Dean write that the *Stanwood Tidings* newspaper touted the confidence of a real estate salesman named Becker. There was a "boom in Camano Island lands," he said in 1910 and thousands of acres were being purchased. Not just farmers but inventive idealists found on Camano an appealing return to a less corrupted lifestyle surrounded by their own artistic creations. For one group of artists and writers from Seattle, Camano Island offered the perfect setting for a colony of the creative.

This "New Arcadia" as one newspaper christened it, was the brain child of mercurial poet, journalist and novelist Charles Eugene Banks. Born in Iowa in 1852 he worked or managed a handful of newspapers in the Midwest before migrating to Seattle in 1907 where he became an editor and drama critic for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. His books, poems and stage plays made him a central figure in the literary and theater circles of the city. Around 1910 he purchased roughly 200 acres "on the southern extremity" of Camano island for his colony. It was "romantically placed," according to one writer and "simply endowed with all that nature can do in behalf of man's 'living.'"

Friends called the colony "The Little Kingdom," but it was organized under its corporate name of Waupello, taken from the main character of Banks' novel *A Child of the Sun* about a mythic tribe of American Indians. The young "avatar" Waupello delivers the tribe from the threat of a "bird-



CHARLES EUGENE BANKS.

monster," Piasau. The book's "Indian atmosphere" was reportedly responsible for Banks being adopted by the Tuscarora tribe. The colony was indeed "significantly Indian; ... a tribal family" as described by *Chicago Tribune* writer Effa Webster. Members adopted animal totems with the intent

to focus on the protection of the natural world and the animals that lived there. All art and literature produced by the colony would bear a peace pipe symbol and members were to sell their inspirations around the world while acting as ambassadors for Waupello. The Peace Pipe—a "miniature magazine"—was also the name of the colony's publication with future plans for the Press to be moved to Camano from Seattle.

Banks and his cohorts sought innovators of all talents: "musicians, authors, workers in gold and silver... Jewelers, pottery makers, embroiderers, weavers of lace.... All we ask," said Banks, "is that the individual work out his or her ideas skillfully." In June 1910 it was reported that many house tents had already been built on the Camano property while permanent cabins were under construction. Plans for a central meeting hall were also in the works. Tillers of the soil would produce flora and foodstuffs for the colony and since roads were nonexistent they would build an "artistic" motor boat to reach the mainland. "We are to do everything," said Banks, "from making butter to painting pictures."

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Such artistic colonies were popular beginning in the late 19th century. Names such as William Morris, John Ruskin, and Gustav Stickley became well-known as architects of the European Arts and Crafts movement. Elbert Hubbard and his Roycroft Society of East Aurora, New York embodied the movement in the U.S. Indeed, one reporter wrote that the idea of Waupello was “to go Elbertus Hubbard...one better.” Waupello, however, stopped short of the radical non-conformists who built the industrial cooperative in Home, Washington or the socialists of Skagit County’s Equality Colony who embraced more extreme utopian sexual ideals such as free love. The Arts and Crafts movement matured later in the Pacific Northwest and lingered longer according to Lawrence Kreisman and Glenn Mason. Webster wrote that such communities had an average life of two years. An idea such as Waupello, wrote Kreisman and Mason, “was in reality a short-lived unattainable goal.” In 1910, however, Charles Banks did not see it that way. Art not ideology was to be their northern star.

Other kindred spirits easily joined Banks’ passion for such an organic settlement of independent artists. University of Washington Professor Edmund Meany and good friend and famed photographic chronicler of the American Indian, Edward S. Curtis, are noted in newspaper accounts as supporting the project. So was another enthusiast of Native American culture, Walter Shelley Phillips, whom writer Lucile McDonald described as part of “Seattle’s sparse colony of creative writers and artists before the turn of century.”



As a boy in Nebraska, Phillips—who called himself El Comancho—spent much of his formative years in the company of local Otoe Indians learning from them survival skills and honing his appreciation of Native life. Self-educated and trained, and a lover of nature, he traveled the country fulfilling a wanderlust and often engaging different Indian tribes before beginning a career as an outdoors magazine and newspaper writer and syndicated columnist.

Sadly, Waupello did not thrive for reasons left unanswered if not easily imagined: personal disagreements, logistical problems of supplying the isolated colony to name two. Finances do not seem the key factor since a year later Banks is trying to create a new colony on 40 acres near the shores of Lake Quinalt in Mason County, Washington. The same basic elements as those proposed for Camano are present: the American Indian theme was maintained for a “Peace Pipe Village” including using the Indian trade jargon of Chinook for their official language and emphasizing the Native American culture through crafts and works of art. “Tribal” members would once a year stage an “Indian Passion Play” recreating the story of Waupello.

His partners had also changed from Camano, with Phillips no longer mentioned. In his stead is Harry S. Stuff, a Seattle designer and printer and Charles Scarff, a wealthy lumberman and poet and the village business manager. This plan had advantages over Camano. Scarff owned much of the timberland around the lake to be used for homes and a planned sawmill. The town of Shelton was only nine miles away and there were plans for the Chicago, Milwaukee & Puget Sound Railway (the so-called Milwaukee Road) to build a line nearby. As with Camano, the efforts seem short-lived with only rare mention of



Mr. and Mrs. Charles Eugene Banks  
Cabin in Process of Construction  
Waupello Colony, Camano Island,  
Puget Sound.

its existence and no evidence that it became the "great Arts and Crafts colony" desired by Banks.

The death of Elbert Hubbard in 1915, while a passenger on the *Lusitania*, is marked by some as the death knell for the Arts and Crafts movement in America. In the 1920s, the spirit of the movement "became watered down to a mere decorating style..." wrote Kreisman and Mason. Charles Banks continued his work for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, promoted his Peace Pipe clubs across the country and continued publishing his miniature magazine, *The Peace Pipe*. In 1919 Banks moved to Hawaii where he continued his newspaper career as an editor for the *Hilo Tribune-Herald* and *Honolulu Advertiser*. He died after suffering a stroke outside his home in 1932 at the age of 80. *The Post-Intelligencer* wrote that Banks was "a gentle soul whose main quest in life is that of seeing only that which is beautiful and passing it on to others in his writings." Banks' quest had led him to Camano Island but it would be left up to another generation to make his dream of a community of artists come true on the tranquil isle.

by Richard Hanks

Sources: *Effa Webster, Chicago Tribune, July 10, 1910; Daily Register Gazette (IL), July 11, 1910; The Daily Gate City (IA), August 30, 1910; Wenatchee Daily World, March 25, 1910; Oregonian, May 7, 1911; Arkansas Democrat, August 30, 1915; Fresno Bee, April 30, 1932; Lucile McDonald, Seattle Times Sunday, May 9, 1965; Seattle Daily Times, May 21, 1911; The Washington Newspaper, V. 4, #8, May 1919; Art Kimball and John Dean, Camano island: Life and Times in Island Paradise; Lawrence Kreisman and Glenn Mason, The Arts and Crafts Movement in the Pacific Northwest, 2007; Clarence Bagley, History of Seattle from the Earliest Settlement... V. 3, 1916; Peter Blecha, HistoryLink.org, 2016; archiveswest.orgiscascade.org.*

**SAHS Board & Member Meetings -  
Please join us every month on the  
Second Tuesday at 4:00 pm on the  
second floor of the Eldridge Center.  
Everyone is welcome!**



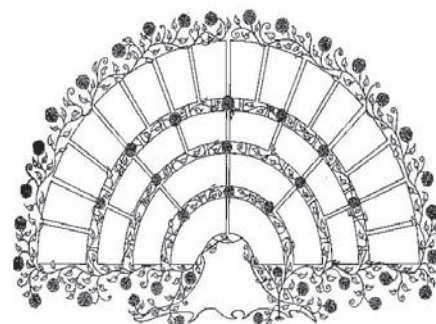
## The Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center, The Pearson House & The Eldridge Center

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Historical Society  
360-629-6110**

**Research Wednesdays  
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## Family History Researchers!



Camwood Genealogy Workshop meets the FIRST Monday of each month at 1 p.m. on the 2nd floor of the Eldridge Center unless there is snow.

For more information, call Bill Blandin,  
360-387-3375

# OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE THE BEST! JOIN US.

Our core of active volunteers have provided the community with many very successful events this year, starting with musical performances by the South End String Band and Spiritus Winds, followed by a Historic Sites weekend, and a Spring Tea that seats 175 people. We intersperced these events with three History & Hors d'oeuvres lectures and/or documentaries that included Mary Pilkington, Jack Gunther and Jeff Wheeler. New this year was a dedication of our Community Veterans Memorial on Memorial Day which attracted 250 people. We started the second half of the year with a wildly successful 4th of July Parade & Ice Cream Social.

We will do three more History & Hors d'oeuvres events in the fall, along with a Veterans Day event and a Jeffrey Cohan Christmas Concert. We also have our most popular event, which is an Old Fashioned Christmas at The Floyd, where over a thousand children and their parents come to have a professional photo taken with Santa free of charge, receive a gift bag and do crafts.

In addition to our events we host regular tours and try to keep the complex open two afternoons a week. We would not be able to do any of this without our volunteers, our sponsors and donations to the Stanwood Area Historical Society. Please consider joining our volunteers -- we can always use your help!



One of our sponsors, AAA Camano Heated Storage, provided hundreds of ice cream sandwiches to people at the parade.



Following the parade in Historic Downtown Stanwood, these Independence Day revelers came to The Floyd for an Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social.

## SAHS Memorials

*In Memory Of:*

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Celia Whidden</b>              | Carl & Nancy Garlow<br>Elmer & Gladys Norgaard Trust<br>Shirley Danielson & Family |
| <b>Floyd Jones</b>                | Dennis & Shirley Anderson<br>Jerry & Rose King                                     |
| <b>Marilyn Borseth</b>            | Elmer & Gladys Norgaard Trust  |
| <b>Dan Logan</b>                  | Jerry & Rose King  |
| <b>Duane Sedy</b>                 | Jerry & Rose King  |
| <b>Jean Logan Kallock</b>         | Barbara Logen  |
| <b>Olive Lindberg Torset</b>      | Margaret Utgard  |
| <b>Mary Elyne Ericksson Moore</b> | Margaret Utgard  |

## SAHS Donations

- Linda Demetre  
Kathy Uroff

## Pearson House Restoration

- Dave & Bobbie Eldridge  
Janet Mayer  
SCAF Community Grant

## EVENTS @ THE FLOYD

August 18th-19th • 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

*A Fine Art Craft Exhibition*

September 16th • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

*History and Hors d'oeuvres  
The Story of the Hero Quilters*

October 21st • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

*History and Hors d'oeuvres  
Musical Performance by  
Graham Logan*

November 18th • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

*History and Hors d'oeuvres  
Colonel Tracy Meck & Her Journey*



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# RENT THE FLOYD



The Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center Public Hall is available for the arts, music, theater, cultural events as well as a banquet hall for family events, weddings, reunions, birthdays, & business meetings.

Proceeds from rentals and events benefit the continuing preservation and rehabilitation of the Public Hall and SAHS educational and historical projects and programs.

Call 360-629-3352 or 360-629-6110  
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# GET INVOLVED...STAY IN TOUCH

The Stanwood Area Historical Society is a special place. It collects and conserves the wondrous treasures of history that define our community. Your participation would not only assist in this crucial protection of our past, but would make you part of our important work. You can make a difference. Join SAHS today!

*Memberships are due annually in January. This is a significant means of support for the Society and includes a subscription to the newsletter. SAHS is a tax-exempt non-profit organization and depends on gifts, bequests from individuals and groups, fundraising activities and membership dues for its financial support. Your contributions are tax deductible and will be used only for the preservation of the history of our area.*

Individual Membership: **\$20.00**

Student (Under 15) Membership: **\$5.00**

Family Membership: **\$25.00**

Lifetime Individual Membership (+65 yrs of age): **\$100.00**

Name [Please print] \_\_\_\_\_

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P. O. Box 69 ~~~ 27112 102nd Ave. N. W., Stanwood, Washington ~~~ www.sahs-fncc.org Photographer: G. D. Horton, circa 1886, Stanwood Stillaguamish River Waterfront

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