

STANWOOD AREA ECHOES

Newsletter of the Stanwood Area Historical Society
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Stanwood Area Echoes

Issue No. 55 : Summer, 2017

EARLY BASEBALL TEAM ON CAMANO ISLAND



2008.30.04

BASEBALL CIRCA 1905 - Baseball followed logging to Camano and this team found its mentor in Tom Esary, far left in suit and hat. To his left in back row wearing a white shirt and a smile is his nephew, Porter Garrison. Another nephew, Grover Garrison, appears in front row right side also in a white shirt.

The team competed with teams on Whidbey and the mainland. Many of the young men worked in the lumber industry and Porter did well enough that he was able to bring his parents here from Virginia.

(More on the Esarys & Garrisons on page 3)

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends:

Ironically, after my last message about the challenges and possibilities of change, two significant changes have occurred in Stanwood which could impact the interests of the Historical Society. After 74 years of operation, Twin City Foods announced it will be closing its vegetable packaging facility in town although it will retain its corporate offices. The shifting agricultural landscape of Washington plus mounting transportation costs were cited as factors in the decision. The city will also lose the services of its city manager Deborah Knight who has accepted the same position with the city of Monroe. Mayor Leonard Kelley doesn't plan to replace her until early in 2018.

This certainly is a turning point for Stanwood. From its beginnings as a center for logging, shipping and agriculture, the area, including Camano Island, is seeing increasing interest from home buyers and promoters of tourism. Voters have made their feelings known about access to the Stillaguamish River and the city has moved forward with the purchase of land for the Overnell and Hamilton Parks adjacent to the waterway. Perhaps the closure of Twin City Foods could provide a new opportunity to complete that vision of greater access and visibility of the river by residents and visitors.

So, what does this all mean for an all-volunteer organization such as the Stanwood Area Historical Society? Ms. Knight long supported and worked toward making the area—Warm Beach to Camano—a destination spot for tourists known collectively as Port Susan. There is a move afoot again to lure a motel to the area (the Stanwood Hotel and Saloon notwithstanding). We are hopeful that the city will see its future prospects as a haven for tourists and any new city manager would be vetted for their support of that plan. Tourism and historical interpretation go hand in hand. While often the first to feel a budget ax, historical museums, libraries and societies provide meaning, education and a sense of appreciation that many visitors relish and often seek out.

We wish Ms. Knight well with her new endeavors at Monroe and appreciate her reciprocal respect for the Historical Society and desire to have us at the table as part of Stanwood's future. City manag-

ers change and personalities vary but we encourage the city not to deviate from a well-considered plan for a changing Stanwood. We hope to work in concert with the next city manager and be there to provide the stories and artifacts of this community's people and places—highlighting the history of the greater Port Susan area—as a vital partner in this changing region.

Sincerely,

Richard Hanks, President

Stanwood Area Historical Society

Stanwood Area Historical Society

Effective January 1, 2017

<u>OFFICERS</u>		<u>TERM (2Yr)</u>
President	Richard Hanks	2017-2018
Vice President	Dan Lien	2016-2017
Recording Secretary	John Smistad	2017-2018
Corresponding Secretary	Margaret Utgard	2016-2017
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Janet Mayer		2017-2019
Sandy Robinson		2017-2019
Margaret Utgard		2015-2017
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PUGET SOUND BROTHERS OF BOOM

Perhaps no names are more associated with the early logging industry on Camano Island than Esary and Garrison. From Camano City to Madrona to Utsalady, the families, related through marriage, changed the Island's landscape and helped spawn a logging boom. The Esary family, in particular, became leading entrepreneurs of the Puget Sound after the Civil War.

The brothers, David, Tom, Andy and particularly James, were early adventurers in the area coming a generation after initial "boomers" in the 1850s rushed to exploit the vast resources of the untamed Northwest. David and Tom, born in the mid-1850s, were a generation older than their brothers with James being the youngest male in the family. Yet, it would be James who became the force behind extensive shipping and logging operations that brought the family influence and wealth.

Their extended family had a large presence in

Virginia's Russell and Washington counties under the surname Necessary, including their father William Jennings Necessary and mother Nancy. The change in the family name is a source of speculation among family genealogists today. Descendant Warren Dale Essary cites family lore that William's grandfather got into some sort of trouble in Pennsylvania, moved to Virginia and changed his name. Following the Civil War, he believes about a third of the family again began using the last name of Essary or Esary which clearly happened with William Necessary's family.

Russell County, Virginia is ridge and valley country sandwiched in between the Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountains in the far western toe of Virginia that slides between Tennessee and Kentucky. Its mountainous location gave the county relative isolation from the Piedmont and Tidewater regions of eastern Virginia, politically as well as

(continued on page 4)



Photo Courtesy of Cama Beach

(continued from page 3)

physically. These people most valued their independence. There were few major plantation operations although about 11% of the county owned slaves. Most residents of the area were subsistence farmers and did not own slaves—a description which seems to apply to the Necessary family. The 1850 and 1860 census records for Russell County do not show the family as holding any slaves.

During the Civil War, many men in mountainous areas of the South either resisted serving in the Confederacy or joined Union regiments securing the enmity of their more secessionist neighbors. That may have been the case for William Jennings Necessary. He enlisted in the 48th Virginia Infantry on June 25, 1861 but never reported for duty and was recorded as absent without leave from the Confederate army over the next two years. Historian Brian McKnight wrote that “the issue of desertion hamstrung the Confederate army in the region . . .”

After the war, resources were often withheld from those who betrayed the “noble cause,” including money for roads and schools. McKnight said that following Lee’s defeat, two Russell County communities celebrated the Union victory with a barbeque which led to a brawl with their Confederate neighbors. The 1870 census of the Necessary household shows the two oldest boys, 14-year-old David and 13-year-old Thomas, working as laborers along with their father. Neither boy could read or write according to the census enumerator. William Jennings Necessary died in 1876, a year after the birth of son James.

In 1881 Tom and wife Sallie migrated to San Francisco and two years later boarded the steamer Dakota for their move to Seattle along with their mother, at least two sisters and brothers 18-year-old Andy and eight-year-old James. James’ older brothers labored in the logging industry working the greater Seattle area between Union and Green Lake and later Queen Anne’s Hill and Fremont districts of the city. Tom and Sallie homesteaded in Kitsap County for a time along with brother Andy, but moved to Bay View and Bow areas of Skagit County in 1888 where brother David would also make his home. The brothers continued logging operations in Skagit County and Camano Island and built a mill in La Conner. However, Tom’s interests appear more toward farming where he would become one of the “most active agriculturalists” of Skagit County.

While his older brothers followed logging and agriculturalist pursuits, James Esary grew to manhood in the growing urban center of Seattle where, as

a young man in the mid-1890s, he found local fame for his bicycling prowess. His numerous racing successes earned him the nickname of “Cyclone.” In 1897 he worked as a “bicycle agent.” An 1898 commercial venture, taking him to the goldfields of the Yukon, got him into Seattle papers with a first-hand account of the dispute over Canadian custom duties levied on merchants, like James, catering to the gold seekers.

In 1900 Andy Esary paid a visit home to Virginia and his sister Talitha who had married Joseph Garrison. One of their sons was restless 17-year-old Porter Garrison. The lanky youth stood over six feet tall and weighed only 102 pounds and doctors warned him to find a healthier climate if he wished to reach old age. As Uncle Andy described Camano as the, “prettiest island in all Puget Sound, I” Porter listened enthralled. “You think you got trees here,” Andy teased, his face beaming. “These are match sticks alongside some of the firs on Camano.”

Porter’s pleas to return with his uncle to this forested Eden were dismissed because of the expense and his frail physical condition. However, Porter’s entreaty that he’d do anything—even cook—caught his uncle’s ear since the company was advertising in Seattle at that time for a “good woman cook” for their Camano City camp. Advanced the money by Uncle Andy, Porter got to go west and would later bring much of his family out as well.

When Porter and Andy arrived at Camano City James Esary was there to greet them—the “Operator of the show,” Porter remembered. James had moved beyond selling bicycles to a position of business leadership around the Sound. He married May Rose Kuntz that summer. In 1903 May was appointed the first postmistress for Camano City. Over the next 20 years, James’ logging, shipping and ferry services (with Capt. H. B. Lovejoy) operated under various corporate entities such as Esary Bros., Camano Land and Lumber Company, Camano Commercial Company, Island Transportation Company and synonymously the Island Navigation Company.

The brothers did have their setbacks, both financial and personal. In 1900 their mill at LaConner burned at a substantial loss. Three years later Andy Esary died after being thrown from a recently built rail-car system used for hauling logs to Camano City. One of the logs on which he sat rolled at a curve sending 41-year-old Andy flying. The log then dropped on him crushing his skull. A year later papers talked about the “hoodoo” which still hung

their railroad and two-million feet of cedar at a value of \$50,000. A year later, James Esary sold the Camano Land and Lumber Company to Frank Van Cleve and Sons.

Long after his cycling days, James still had a need for speed. Arrested for speeding in December 1910, the "shipping magnate" called the charge "outrageous" and threatened to never drive a car in Seattle again as long as the speed limit was only 12 miles an hour. By 1915 the Island Navigation Company was known as one of "the busiest steam navigation companies on the Sound."

James Esary retired from Island Transportation Company in 1924. As united as they were in life, the brothers were not in death. Andy's body was taken to his wife's Ohio hometown for burial. David and Tom and much of their immediate families are buried at the Bay View cemetery in Skagit County near where they had lived for over 50 years. James died at his home on Camano Island in 1947. There is no gravesite listed for James and his wife May was later cremated leaving her also without a marker which may have been her husband's wish as well.

The brothers from the hills of Virginia had done as many did after the Civil War—followed a western migration seeking better opportunities in the emerging West. The U.S. Census Bureau officially closed the American frontier in 1890. The brothers of boom got in just under the wire.

by Richard A. Hanks

Sources: *Seattle Daily Times*, 1900, 1905, 1937, 1947, 1967; *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 1895, 1896, 1898, 1900; *Morning Olympian*, 1907; *Seattle Star*, 1904, 1910; *Bellingham Herald*, 1932, 1939; *Camano Islander*, 1956; Dale Essary, *Rootsweb.ancestry.com*; Cratis Williams, "The Appalachian Experience," *Rootsweb.ancestry.com*; Brian McKnight, *Contested Borderland: The Civil War in Appalachian Kentucky and Virginia*; *Lumber World magazine*, 1908; *townofcoupeville.org*; Art Kimball and John Dean *Camano Island: Life and Times in Island Paradise*; *Seattle city directories 1891-1916*; *Cama Beach Archives*; *Federal census records and family data, Ancestry.com* • All photographs courtesy of Amy Whitmarsh.

**ATTENTION! THERE WILL BE NO BOARD
& MEMBER MEETING IN AUGUST 2017**

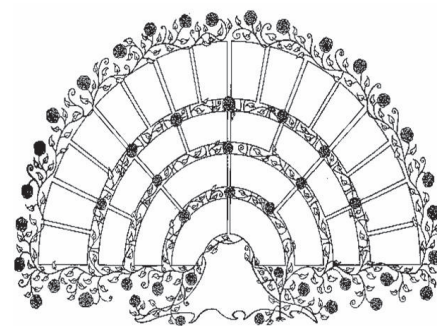
**Regular meetings will resume in September
on the Second Tuesday of each month at
4:00 pm on the second floor of the museum.
Everyone is welcome!**



Stanwood Area History Museum & Research Library, Pearson House & Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center

Operated By
Stanwood Area Historical Society
360-629-6110

Open Wednesdays
1:00-4:00 pm
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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 Stanwood Area History
Museum & Research Library.

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

WINDOWS BEING REPAIRED AT THE D. O. PEARSON HOUSE



Photo and article by Karen Prasse

If you've driven by the D. O. Pearson House recently you might have noticed some of the windows boarded up. Thanks to our generous local community who got this project started during the Stanwood Camano Giving Tuesday in 2016 and a Snohomish County Community Heritage Grant this year, we are able to repair or "refurbish" the leaking old Pearson House windows to avoid costly replacement. This helps us retain the character of the historic building which has now survived over a century.

The twelve windows were made of cedar and they have withstood a century of weather and not rotted. But old putty was replaced where necessary to seal them and they have been repainted. To do the job correctly, they must be removed, repaired off-site and re-installed.

They return secure and cleaner brightening up the rooms with light. And once again they can slide up and down to open. They can be held open with pins in hot weather. They slide much better now even without pulleys, ropes and sash weights that provide a smooth sliding counter balance in later double hung windows. Some of them also have unusual interesting decorative locks and catches.

Repairing wood windows can be cost effective and energy efficient so if you are considering replacing old wood windows, consider repairing them. For more information on how to proceed, the website <https://www.preservationsociety.org> has the "Top Ten Reasons to Restore or Repair Wood Windows."

These windows are original to the house. We are lucky to find someone with the special skills and patience to work with the windows so we didn't have to replace them. The Window King company, specifically, Jeff Zoloth, has 20+ years of experience refurbishing historic windows currently including the Macy's building in Seattle. See his website at <http://windowkingseattle.com> for more examples of historic preservation projects he has worked on throughout Western Washington.

And while our grant and existing donations cover a large portion of the cost of this project, we have more work to do to protect this house. We would be happy to accept donations for this worthy cause mailed to: Stanwood Area Historical Society, P.O. Box 69, Stanwood, WA 98292.



Window King
Historic Wood Window
Restoration and Repair



AT THE FLOYD

September 17th • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

History and Hors d'oeuvres

The Peter Henning Story

October 15th • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

History and Hors d'oeuvres

The Life & Legacy of

Fanny Y. Cory

November 19th • 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

History and Hors d'oeuvres

Tulalip Tribal History

Tessa Campbell, Senior Curator

Hibulb Cultural Center

RENT THE FLOYD



The Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center Public Hall is available for 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 360-629-6110 or visit www.sahs-fncc.org

The Following Memorial Donations Were Received In Memory of:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Virginia Seabury Peterson | - Susan Bradley |
| Durlene Hamilton | - Elayne Bowen |
| Trygve (Pete) Rekdal - WWII | - Elayne Bowen |
| Dan Logen | - Margaret Utgard |
| | - Carl & Nancy Garlow |
| Connie Scafturon | - Margaret Utgard |
| Eric Lindahl | - Stanwood Class of '64 |
| | - Clifford & Janet Larson |
| Larry Kappel | - Larry Norgaard |
| | - Nancy Garlow |

SAHS Donations

- Tom & Laura Byers
- United Way of King County
- Tracy Hunsaker Gilroy
- Nancy Hutchinson

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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 now includes a subscription to the newsletter and 10% off all publications, rental of The Floyd and special events for most memberships. 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***

(*Newsletter Only)

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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