Whidbey Island's Own Magazine

25°

## Spindrift Two Number 2

Fall-Winter 1979 ANDWIFE SARKLUM . COUPEVILLE.WASH.

### Cover Picture is a Love Story

Charlie Snakelum and Katie had been sweethearts when they were young, but each married others. Charlie married "Mary" and Katie married Chief Billy Barlow. Charlie never forgot his first love.

When Billy died, Charlie wanted to bring Katie to live with him and Mary, but Mary would have none of it. Mary died in the early 1920s and old Charlie promptly married Katie, and they lived together for a few years, a love story fulfilled.

Susie Kettle, the daughter of old Squinty was the last old-time Indian left in Coupeville, the mother of Charles Aleck. Her husband was Alec Kettle, born in Olympia in 1860, the son of Chow-keetsch, a chief of the Duwamish tribe. He steered many Puget Sound boats for the pioneers, was second cousin to Leschi, the Nisqually chief after whom the park in Seattle was named.

In the Indian war of 1866-67 Aleck's father carried the mail from Olympia to Steilacoom as white men were afraid to take it in their boats. It was dangerous even for him to undertake the task as the warlike Indians had tried to persuade him to join them in war and he refused. He was a friend of the white man.

A photographer once asked Aleck to pose for his picture, and he replied that he did not want to leave his face behind when he died. Then the man passed the hat and took up a collection of nearly forty dollars in exchange for the picture.

"So my father stand still and let him take it, I see it once in a book," said Aleck. His father died in 1870 and Aleck came to Whidbey, and took a Skagit wife.

### Recipe for a Happy Friendship

One cup of morning sunshine, stays with you all day long, A dab of smiles from those you love, A heart that's filled with song.

Sift in some time to be yourself. Some moments ripe with fun, Blend carefully with special joys And plans you've just begun.

Then stir in lots of heart content A tablespoon of love, A spice of specially warm "Hellos" From friends you're fondest of!

Top off with things like rainbows (But without a drop of rain), And a dash of warm rembrance From a walk down Memory Lane.

Then warm with happy feelings That confirm, without a doubt, Your friendship has the flavor That love has dreamed about.

P.S. Just one more note: this recipe Has proven tried and true, For everlasting friendship, joy For special friends like you!

by Toni Thomson







Students pictured in front of the San De Fuca School, early part of the 1900s, came from many pioneer families still prominent on Whidbey Island. The school is still standing, has been used as a church, is now privately owned.





### Chinese Pheasants

The first Chinese pheasants on Whidbey Island came from China itself, brought to the North Whidbey area by a mannamed A. W. Bash.

Bash was an Oak Harbor "middle pioneer" of the 1890s. He and his wife built a big square two-story house where the Seaplane Base gate is now located.

Bash was an important man. He was a civil engineer and had many friends in high government circles, including President Grant himself. His choice of a home in Oak Harbor added importance to the bayside village. Bash was collector of customs at Port Townsend at that time, and the Island County Times told of the building of the "Bash mansion."

The Bashes did not spend the rest of their days in Oak Harbor as they had originally planned, for General Grant directed him to go to China to help build a railroad for that country after the Japanese-Chinese war. Bash was acquainted with the former secretary of the Treasury John W. Foster, who in turn was a friend of Li Hung Chang, the great Chinese statesman.

Li Hung Chang always thought that America had but one statesman, President Grant, who had been entertained by the



Chinese. Chang was much impressed with Grant's whiskers, and he found that A. W. Bash grew his whiskers in the same style as the president!

Bash dined several times with the great Chinese and they became fast friends. Chang had Bash sit in the seat occupied by President Grant when he was a guest in Chang's home.

Chang furthered Bash's ambitions for building railroads in China, and an article in the Seattle Times prophesized that Bash would soon "be a millionaire," a notable achievement in those days. So the couple went to live in China.

It was on one of Bash's visits home from China that he brought the native Chinese pheasants and turned them loose as game birds on Whidbey Island.



Farmers were unhappy with this turn of events, since the entire Island was well-stocked with game birds, to the extent that it was usual for Islanders to live "off the land" where game and fish were for the taking.

The Chinese pheasants ate voraciously in the grain fields and were considered added nuisances. As late as the 1920s it was a common sight to see Chinese pheasants in the fields or crossing country roads. All due to a Chinese import of the nineties!

The big square house at the base of the hill east of Oak Harbor (Navy housing is located



### Imported in 1890s

JAN DE

there now) was sold in the late 1890s to another ''middle-pioneer'' R. Eerkes, one of the first Hollanders to settle at Oak Harbor. Eerkes farmed the 300-acre tract which became known as ''Eerkes Hill.'' On his retirement his sons Herman and John farmed the place, selling in 1941 to the U.S. Government where the property became part of the Seaplane Base of 1941, the beginning of World War II.

The Eerkes brothers had torn down the old Bash house and built a new modern home in its place.

The Navy moved this structure to Maylor's Point where it became

the residence of the Naval Air Station admiral.

The "Eerkes Hill" area figures prominently in history of Oak Harbor. On the east side of the hill toward Crescent Harbor is the site of the landing of Oak Harbor's first three settlers, Martin Taftson, C. W. Sumner and Ulrich Freund. The three climbed to the top of the bluff and then took the three Donation Claim sites which comprise today's Oak Harbor.

The first Navy housing on the Naval Air Station was built on the hill, a little circle of duplex homes that housed the first Navy officers and their families. Below, on the neck of land between the hill and Maylor's Point the U.S. Navy made history building the Seaplane Base at the beginning of World War II. Here the great "flying boxcars" of PBY designation landed and practiced bombing runs around the Point. From Whidbey the flying boats went to the Aleutian chain of islands and to the South Pacific. The PBY's were amphibians with incredible cruising and carrying capacity, a distinct aid to the prosecution of the western war.



Navy officers' wives, new to "the rock" found wild berries and fruits in abundance to make into jellies and jams to send "home" at Christmas time. Just as pioneer women found 90 years before "Eerkes Hill" became the site of Navy housing.



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### Crockett Barn-warming Social Event of 1895 on posts set into the ground about

The Sept. 20, 1895 Island County Times, Coupeville, reported the following:

"The foundation and basement walls of Walter Crockett's new barn were completed this week, and Lovejoy Bros. will begin the construction of the super structure next Monday. The barn will be one of the finest on the Sound. The main part is 50x75 feet with a wing 15x75 all on a solid stone foundation. There will be a high and well lighted horse barn with a concrete floor. The old barn is a venerable pioneer landmark. It was built of shakes

42 years ago." (1853)

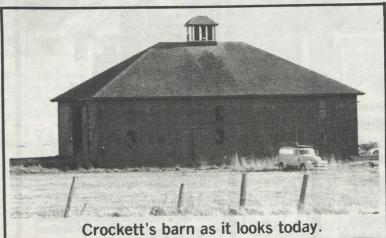
On November 29 the Times reported:

"The "barn warming" given last Friday night by the Hon. Walter Crockett at his new and commodious barn was an elegant social event. One hundred persons, 30 of whom came from Port Townsend on the Steamer Wildwood, bringing the music, chaperoned by that prince of genial fellows, Capt. T. B. Libbey, were present. The grand march started at 9 p.m. and the dancing continued until 12, and stopped only long enough for lunch with hot coffee and trimmings supplied by Mr. Crockett.

"Mr. Crockett also supplied fresh cider, crackers and celery, etc. and opened up his residence for the pleasure of his guests and exerted his utmost efforts to have all enjoy themselves. At 2 a.m. the party broke up and farewells to the host were said. It was the unanimous opinion of all that this was one of the pleasantest social dances on the Island in a long time."

In 1966 the Editor visited the Crockett farm where Mrs. Fred Armstrong, the well-known Whidbey Island artist was living at the time. The barn was in good shape, and the house built by Crockett some years before the barn was strong and sturdy and was said to be the oldest farm home on Whidbey Island.

The Crockett Blockhouse (one of the two original blockhouses built on the farm in the 1860s) has been moved and renovated near the county road to Fort Casey, and attracts many tourists.









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### Pioneer Dr. Named O.H.

Dr. R. H. Lansdale, credited with naming Oak Harbor for its stand of Garry Oaks, died in Olympia April 19, 1898.

Lansdale crossed the plains in 1849 to San Francisco and came north to Vancouver, Washington where he was appointed Postmaster, the first north of the Columbia River. He was first Auditor of Clark County and also first Auditor of Island County.

On Whidbey Island his Donation Claim of 320 acres was located at the head of Penn Cove in 1850.

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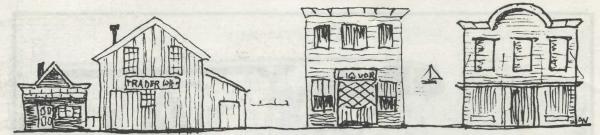
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## Indian Chiefs Buried

From the June 21, 1918 Island County Times: reprinted by Oak Harbor News.

"The white people of this and other vicinities might learn a lesson from the few Indians still here, by the way in which they take care of the graves of their departed ancestors, especially

"Below Walter Aubert's farm on Smith Prairie (south and east of Coupeville) on a low bluff overlooking the Sound, are the

graves of two Siwash chiefs lying side by side. They are nearly enclosed by a fence, the mounds are carefully and neatly kept up and there is a tombstone upon which is inscribed: 'Old Chief Snaklin, died 1849,' and below this the words, 'George Snaklin, died 1880' aged 60 years. So far as we can learn of the history of these two chiefs, "Old Chief Snaklin" was the head of all the Siwash tribes of this section and when he died his son George became chief.



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### Near Coupeville

"George was well-known to many of the old timers, Albert and John Kineth, Mrs. James Gillespie and others. (Old Chief Snaklin could have been the chief who met Joseph Whidbey in 1792 at Penn Cove.)

"The Siwashes were at war with some of the northern Indians who often captured them and kept them as slaves. Mr. Kineth said that Chief George himself had three slaves, two women and one man who did the work while George took life easy and lorded it over his subjects.

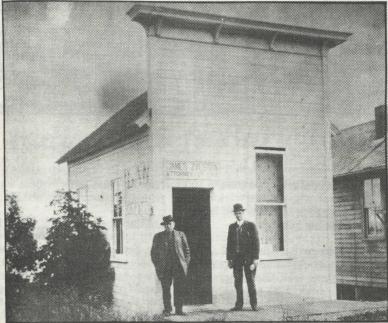
"George Snaklin has a son living at Puyallup, and Charlie Snaklin so well known here, is a

nephew of the dead chief. (Charlie Snaklin lived in Coupeville, and sheared sheep for North Whidbey farmers who held him in great esteem both as a friend and a craftsman.)

"Unlike most of the other Indian tribes of the United States, the Siwashes here have never received any government aid. They have applied for it and should have received it long ago, but papers containing valuable information were lost. Other evidence has now been secured and they are in a fair way to receive deferred payments from Uncle Sam. If they do, our Coupeville friends, Alec Kettle, Charlie Alec, Long Charlie and others will receive a nice sum of money to which they are entitled, as when the white men settled here the Indians owned all and now have nothing."







## Early day Judge Lester Still stands with attorney James Zylstra in front of their Law Office on Coupeville's Front St. The small building subsequently had a second story added and now houses "The Cove," a

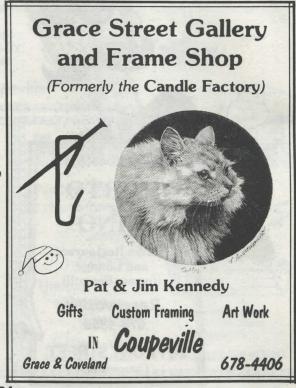
### Daniel Webster's Very Own Chowder Recipe

—from "The Cook", 1885
Four tablespoonfuls of onions fried with pork. One quart of boiled potatoes, well mashed. One and a half pounds sea-biscuit, broken. One teaspoonful of thyme, mixed with one of summer savory. Half bottle of mushroom catsup. One bottle of port or claret. Half of a nutmeg, grated. A few cloves, mace and allspice. Six pounds of fish, sea bass or cod, cut in slices. Twenty-five oysters, a little black pepper and a few slices of lemon. The Whole put in a pot and covered with an inch of water, boiled for an hour and gently stirred.





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Oak Harbor street scene, circa 1912

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In 1911 Oak Harbor school children, grades one through 12 filled this brand new modern school building. High school was held in the lower two floors, elementary classes in the third. Note mode of transportation, horse and buggy in the background.

Dorothy Neil, Editor 3102 300 W. Oak Harbor, WA 98277 PLACE STAMP HERE



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