

The way it was around the new State

One hundred and fourteen years makes quite a difference in a lot of things, and items in the news tell the tale:

In 1889, Whatcom County reported a carrot 21 inches in circumference and weighing 5 pounds 14 ounces on exhibit, and the town of Snohomish was reporting great developments, 10 new buildings built in ten days, two new bridges nearly finished and a circulating library planned.

Superintendent of Seattle Schools Julia Kennedy reported that the city's teachers were overworked; there should be six more teachers. There were 34 teachers at that time.

In 1888, Mrs. Thomas Coupe, for whose husband Coupeville was named, died.

A Los Angeles newspaper objected to using the name "Washington" for the new state because there were so many towns and counties named so. The newspaper preferred "Tacoma" for the state name.

Over on the Peninsula, Puget Sound's "most daring jailbreak" happened in Port Townsend. When a jailer entered a cell with five prisoners, three overpowered and gagged him and took his keys. They were unsuccessfully chased by a posse.

Real estate in Anacortes was booming. So many visitors had come to town that they had to camp on the beach until steamers arrived.

A military board reported that the Washington National Guard was in good condition but needed raincoats. The board decided to advertise for bids.

There were 14 daily newspapers in Washington in January 1889 and nine in Oregon.

A Minnesota editor wrote the Walla Walla Union saying that Washington was the worst possible name for a state. "It will drive the Postal authorities frantic, for it will be hard to break people of the habit of writing simply the word Washington whether they mean city or state." (How true!)

In February of 1889 the first mail shipped by train arrived in Snohomish; and a Seattle newspaper editorialized that the time had arrived for a permanent plan for dealing with the city's garbage. The best plan it said was to "deposit it in the middle of Puget Sound."

In Tacoma, 300 pounds of opium were seized in sauerkraut barrels shipped from Ellensburg by rail. The route was traced from British Columbia to Ellensburg.

At Buckley in South Puget Sound a bride's father chased two newlyweds with his rifle, they ran through the woods, eluded him on a train to Seattle and caught a boat to Victoria with but four minutes to spare!

An ad for a preacher in a Kalama newspaper: "Wanted, a first class preacher, hard or soft shell Baptist, a man with a trade preferred; with a little knowledge of the art of wood chopping, typesetting, fishing, etc., the robuster the better; one who dislikes luxuries and would be satisfied with the fee derived from officiating at weddings and funerals."



A Tacoma newspaper predicted that before the nation reached its Bicentennial there would be a city as great as New York on the shores of Puget Sound and that railroads would link Washington to St. Petersburg, Russia, and other European capitals!

In June of 1889 an Alabama senator, visiting on Lake Washington ate a strawberry the size of a hen's egg and told a reporter that he had never seen anything like the State of Washington. "You may write anything you choose about this land and I'll sign it," he said.

On June 6, 1889 the Great Seattle Fire began at 2:30 p.m. when a pot of glue in a paint shop was put on a stove. A drought had depleted water supplies, and over 100 acres of wooden buildings, including most of the business district burned to the ground. Other cities sent aid and rebuilding began at once.

After the Seattle fire, Portland cancelled its Fourth of July festival and sent \$10,000 for fire relief victims. A railroad car of food, blankets and tents was sent. After the fire, steamers between Seattle and Tacoma were filled with sightseers heading north and survivors coming south. ➤

of Washington in the year 1889

The day after the Seattle fire, rebuilding began; barbers were cutting hair outdoors, merchants were using boxes for desks, and "tramps" were arriving from Portland looking for work.

In Ellensburg in June of 1889 flour was \$3.75 per barrel; butter \$50 a 2-pound roll; eggs \$25 a dozen.

In Spokane a newspaper demanded that a paid fire department, more equipment and an adequate water supply be furnished. Nothing was done and in less than two months a fire destroyed most of downtown Spokane.

North of us in Bellingham, the road connecting Sehome and Bellingham was completed and businessmen in Fairhaven and Bellingham began organizing an association.

Delegates meeting at the Constitutional Convention in Olympia in 1889 to write a state constitution included 45 Republicans, 28 Democrats and 2 Labor party men. There were 22 lawyers, 13 farmers, 6 physicians, 5 bankers, 5 merchants, 4 stockmen, 3 teachers, 3 miners, 3 real estate dealers, 2 editors, 2 hop growers, 2 milkmen, 1 lumberman, 1 logger, 1 mining engineer, 1 surveyor, 1 fisherman and 1 preacher.

When members of the Convention heard that a great fire had destroyed downtown Ellensburg, they passed the hat and collected \$300 for relief. The hundred tents used after the Seattle fire were sent to Ellensburg to shelter people burned out of their homes.

Coupeville in 1889 had 250 people, an Academy with 5 teachers, 2 general stores, 2 shoemakers, 2 real estate firms, a drugstore, a blacksmith shop, a lawyer, a sawmill and a logging camp near town.

In Tacoma a city official fell over a coal bucket into which he was spitting and the city agreed to buy four cuspidors into which the city fathers could spit safely.

The State Constitutional Convention preliminarily adopted the state seal and one delegate recommended the motto, "First in Peace, First in War, and First in the Hearts of Real Estate Agents."

The Convention defeated 43 to 18 a measure to let women vote. It defeated a proposal to let women vote in city elections, 32 to 22.

It also rejected a plan to let women serve as school superintendents or on school boards. But it did permit women to vote in school elections. Nice guys.

Battling for the State Capitol's site, were three leading contenders, Olympia, Ellensburg and North Yakima.

Residents of North Yakima, however, were so certain their town would be selected as the Capitol that "there has been a steady increase in the demand for real estate."

A cable car system over two miles long opened in Spokane.

An Ellensburg newspaper complained that "the veriest drunken loafer and vagabond in the land could vote, but respectable women could not."

In the October 1889 election voters rejected 16,613 to 35,577 a proposal to restore women's right to vote. Women had voted in Washington Territory from 1833 to 1888 when courts ruled that the Territorial Legislature had no right to let them do so. In Walla Walla women voted in segregated ballot boxes. Of the total of 1,461 votes, only 90 were cast by women.

In La Conner wild game was so numerous that wild ducks cost \$1.25 a dozen on the streets. On a train near Chehalis a woman gave birth to a baby in a women's dressing room. The mother fell unconscious and the baby fell through a pipe on to the tracks where it was discovered. Mother and child were reunited with no injuries.

Near Ellensburg, a state senator thought while going down a mountain that the horses were running away. He took action, jumped out and badly fractured one leg.

In November of 1889 a mistake by the Territorial Governor threatened Washington's admission to the union. He had forgotten to sign a certificate certifying that the Constitution was a true copy of the original. President Harrison refused to sign the proclamation until the governor remedied his fault. The certificate was sent by "fast" mail on Nov. 4, and was expected to reach D.C. by Nov. 9! President Benjamin Harrison finally proclaimed Washington's admission to the union, and the state's population was estimated at 349,390.

Casey helped Coupeville become a town

Coupeville incorporated in 1910, five years before Oak Harbor did in 1915.

The presence of Fort Casey and the sudden increase in a county population which brought more business to Coupeville, led to the incorporation of that town in 1910.

On April 26 of that year the first Coupeville Town Council met, with Mayor Charles H. Lyon presiding. Council members were J.S. Straub, Arthur Hallock, A.R. Kineth, J.B. Libbey and E.D. Lovejoy. The Kineth, Libbey and Lovejoy families were among the earliest settlers of the Coupeville area.

The post of town Attorney was filled by W.N. Corbin, who offered to serve for \$25 per month, the low bid against W.D. Craddock's \$40 per month.

World War I saw continued activity at Fort Casey. Roads were improved, and automobiles became familiar sights on country lanes. Following the Armistice of 1918, the fort gradually decreased in importance, although a military complement remained through the 1920s and into the early Depression years.

By 1935, when the Deception

Pass Bridge was built, Sgt. William Nelson was in charge of the old fort, he and his family living in one of the old officers' quarters overlooking the parade ground.

After Pearl Harbor, Fort Casey was activated and served as home to the U.S. Army until 1950, when it returned to caretaker status.

The age of coastal guns for defense of the Straits was over. The fort's guns, big and little, were sold for scrap or moved during World War II. The fort was used to train amphibious forces.

Today's Fort Casey is devoted to more peaceful pursuits. Seattle Pacific University holds most of the fort areas of barracks and parade ground, and Washington State Parks administers the recreation areas of picnic and camping grounds.

The lighthouse is a museum. Some guns are back, returned from the Philippines by the hard work of the Coupeville Lions Club. They and the concrete bunkers let adults and children get a taste of what it must have been like for the soldiers there.

As you stroll through the



great concrete bunkers, you envision the activity of yesterday when the fort was young, and the British were the enemies.

Young soldiers, far from home for the first time, were encamped in a vast wooded section of an Island with only an occasional military boat to take them to the nearest town, Port Townsend, itself hardly a metropolitan area.

Pictures of that era show military officers sitting rigidly in a Model T touring car; soldiers manning the big guns; and young men strolling with their ladies on a Sunday afternoon.

Mules and construction crews were everyday scenes in the military area, which held one of the highest records for desertion in the Army because of its remote site.

The Fort Casey Lighthouse, now an Interpretive Center, is built close to the site of the first Admiralty Head Lighthouse where Flora Pearson Engle, the "lady lighthouse keeper," changed the spelling of the name Whidbey to Whidby, a spelling that still appears on old records.

The "e" remained lost until the Navy came to build its "flying fort" at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station. The Navy insisted the "e" be restored to coincide with the name of the island on their charts.



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Lighthouse observes 100th birthday

One of the outstanding features of the Fort Casey State Park is the restored 100-year-old lighthouse where the interpretive center has been installed.

In 1858, Admiralty Head was purchased from John Coe and Caroline P. Kellogg, after the U. S. Government published the results of a marine survey recommending that two lighthouses be built, one at Admiralty Head and one across the Straits on Point Wilson.

The site purchased included ten acres and the first lighthouse erected in 1861, a frame building in which the lighthouse keeper and his family were to live.

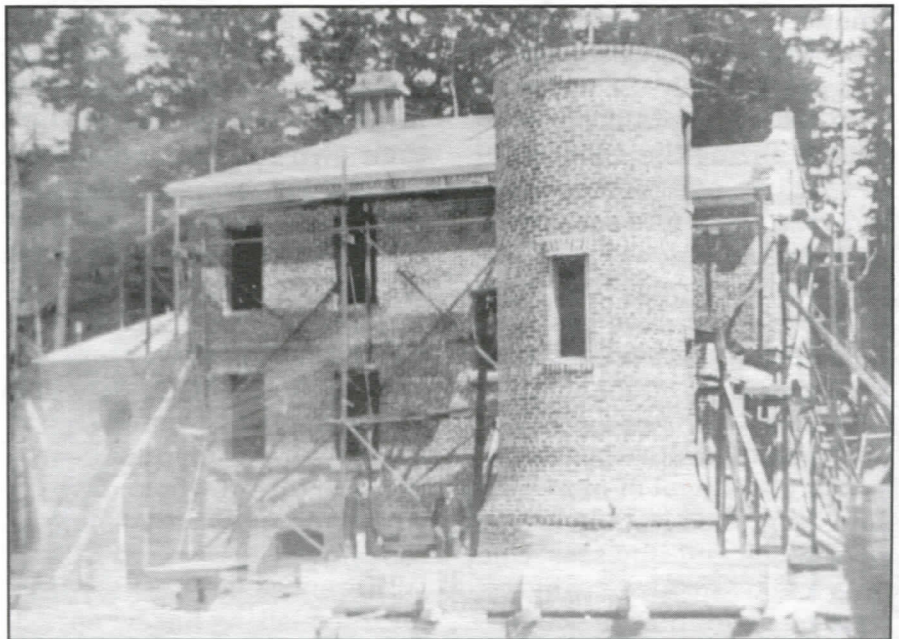
This arrangement continued until 1897 when the frame building was demolished to make room for fortifications. The lighthouse reserve was transferred to the U. S. Army in 1899.

The present lighthouse structure was built at the turn of the century and first used in 1903. It was built of brick and cemented over in Spanish style, and was described as "elaborate" at the time.

The first lighthouse was designated a "fourth order lighthouse." It was built on Red Bluff, or Kellogg's Point at Admiralty Head, a solid frame structure with a square tower. Its light guided ships past the long spit at Point Partridge, Point Wilson and Marrowstone Point as well as Point No Point. Its first keeper was a "grizzled sea-dog" by the name of Captain William Robertson.



Above is the Fort Casey lighthouse much as it looked when it was built in 1903. At right is the lighthouse in the 1950s after sitting empty and being vandalized. The photo below shows it under construction. Local volunteers pitched in and helped renovate the building back into its original glory.



H.T. Hill was one of Oak Harbor's fathers

Harvey T. Hill was an early Oak Harbor businessman.

He came to Oak Harbor in the 1880s as a young man whose Uncle Emmett had settled on what is today Swantown Road. Oak Harbor itself had only about 20 people living in the area around the waterfront, and there were few stores.

L P. Byrne had been instrumental in building up Oak Harbor's downtown, on what is today East Pioneer Way. There was a dock and warehouse, a store and hotel, a blacksmith shop and a creamery. Oak Harbor's first high school classes were held in the warehouse upper floor, where any public gathering such as a dance or program was also held.

H. T. Hill was an entrepreneur of that day, building a grocery store on Pioneer Way (then Barrington Avenue) and later a variety-type store across the street on the slough, later the location of Masten's Variety. The old wooden building was well built, on piling above the slough where boats anchored



Hill's store was popular on Oak Harbor's main street

to unload merchandise.

Hill married the daughter of the pioneer Stroops family, and built their home just above the Methodist church on Ireland St. (still there, surrounded by apartments).

Hill was not only a grocery store owner, he was a gardener, and his rose garden was the delight of the town. He also built a playhouse for his young daughter, the envy of all the neighborhood kids.

Harvey Hill was a small-boned man, a lively, eye-twinkling individual, who was responsible for much of the progress of the little

town, a bank and incorporation and other improvements.

One of the "fathers" of Oak Harbor.



H.T. Hill as an old man.

De Ja Views

Historical Pictorial of Whidbey Island



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