

Josephine DeVries 1/11/09 – at her home on Arnold Road (Jo is 100 years old.) Her daughter, Dellann lives with her.

Indexed
Edited

Were you born and raised here?

I was born at Fort Casey and raised in Coupeville and I love Coupeville. I went to school in Coupeville.

I understand you are Mickey Clark's sister.

Yes, I am one of 5 children. Tommy was the oldest, then me, Mickey, Kay, and Shy.

Tell me what you remember about Clark's grocery (now Toby's).

Mr. Hallack owned it and he lived at the top of the hill and went home for lunch every day. He sold it to my dad – Thomas C. Clark – they were pioneers. I worked at it. I remember a glass case with candy and a glassed in case for cookies. There was a pot bellied stove – a great big one. The doctor came and sat by the hour and the old timers used to sit around the pot bellied stove. The stove was located in the center back of the store.

He got the goods he sold from the (boat) Atlanta – it came every day. It came through San de Fuca, picked up passengers and then went on to Seattle.

What else do you remember about Front Street?

Mrs. Trott was the librarian. She lived in a log house near the bank.

I remember Puget Race Drug Store. (Now Aqua Gifts) Puget Race and Hattie Race – they bought kerosene from me for their lamps. They didn't like the (Circuit) theater (across the street from their store.) They didn't like things different. The Race's were well known in Seattle. They were members of the Swift family.

Mary Fullington was Hattie's niece. Maude Fullington (Mary's mother) was Hattie's sister. They lived at the park there. Mary was an odd duck. She wasn't very cordial - she didn't mix. She lived in Seattle most of the time. Maude was odd too. They were both odd.

Did you know the Indians?

I knew Squinty – she was an old, old lady. And I knew Charlie and Katie (Snakelum.) They were funny. They lived at Snakelum Point and they came into town with a gunny sack, walking along a trail through the woods and then they took the groceries home. They were funny characters. Charlies used to come to town at lunch time. I ran the (grocery) store and I gave him vanilla. He drank it. He got his bottle of vanilla from me. I didn't know he was drinking it. He got drunk as a loon – hollerin' and yellin' down Front Street. I thought she (Katie) was baking something (with the vanilla.) They were good and nice to me. They had a long house and Charlie brought salmon (to town) for me.

I worked at the Central Hotel too and hauled dishes. Maude Jenny was the owner of the Central Hotel. It was a pretty big and good hotel.

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Sam Benson owned the Confectionary. He would come up to our store and talk to Dad. He was getting pretty fat. He asked if I could go with him in the boat to fish. He was getting too fat to take the boat out - his kids wouldn't let him - and he couldn't go by himself so I'd fish with him. I liked to fish but I didn't like to clean them. Nellie was his wife.

Clark's grocery was next to Capaan's butcher shop. In the basement there was the Coupeville Electric Supply.

Next to that was Nells Sills store, a good department store. Claudine Sill was always there and they had their boyfriends there.

In the lean-to by Clarks, they stored feed by the 100 pound sack. The cheese was caged in the room so bugs couldn't get to it. They didn't need refrigeration. They didn't have ice cream.

I think there were two gas pumps (in front of the grocery store - now Toby's Tavern.) Everybody in town got gas there.

Tom Howell had a barbershop across the street

Jack Rosenfield built that house. He was a carpenter and a good one. Emma Clark was married to Ed Clark. Jack Rosenfield was married to Mertle, my aunt.

Mr. Howard had the local paper. Marvel Howard, Mr. Howard's daughter worked there. We both set type at the newspaper. After school we'd walk home together, and we'd set type. Marvel married Captain Melling, Captain of Klickitat. Bernice Miller was a Howard. Mr. Howard was Barry Brown's grandfather.

I also worked in the library on Front Street.

Mr. Cushon owned the Ford garage. Hi son, Bob Cushon, built the first laundromat.

My Aunt Edith worked at the post office.

What do you remember about the Circuit Theater?

They played cowboy movies. Luella Zylstra (Jim's daughter) used to play the piano. I had a boyfriend, but I stayed outside so they couldn't catch us. We weren't doing anything. We didn't celebrate like the kids do today. We'd have been tarred and feathered.

Puget Race was a nice old fellow. He walked with a gimp.

Was his store more than a pharmacy?

He sold handkerchiefs and things like that. For Christmas he'd have some stuff we could give to somebody. We didn't get off the island much to get things. We had poor picking.

I read that Sibby Fisher's husband had the Glenwood Hotel built for her as a wedding present.

The Gillespies Livery had horses in there. They used to run sleighs when it snowed. They took you for a joy ride or home – whatever you could afford. Jim Gillespie had horses with white hair on their legs. Ruebel's had horses. They had a sleigh with bells on it.

I was a student nurse for 2 years. I did alright.

What do you remember about the telephone office (between Town Hall and Race's Drug Store)?

The Pennington girls – Dora and... I don't remember her name.... were telephone operators, but one at a time. I relieved them sometimes for fun. We had party lines and people listened in. It (the office) wasn't very big. It had a toilet that dumped onto the beach. That's why I didn't ever eat a mussel. We had a big rock behind the store. People would pick them and eat them. I about threw up. I knew what was there.

I had a good life on the island – had a lot of nice friends. I wouldn't trade my life on Whidbey Island for anything. I lived in Seattle for a few years. I was a nurse without credentials. I worked for good doctors. I took care of people. I lived in San Francisco and did better. I worked for doctors. I also worked in Juneau, Alaska.

I delivered most of the Indians kids in Coupeville. All the Alex kids... with a doctor. Before Doctor Bishop. We had doctors from Vancouver. I delivered in their home. I was 18.

Old man Alex (Kettle) lived in Coupeville. I took care of the Alex kids when they were sick.

We had a cubby-hole in the side of our store. People from Port Townsend would bring over trunks of clothes and set up to sell them.

The building where Collections is now was a meat market.

Aunt Emma lived on Front Street ... used to be next to the post office

Dellann – Thomas Clark was the county engineer after the grocery store. I used to walk into town. We lived across from what is now Rosehip Farm and Garden. I walked to town so I could go to candy store. Puget Race's drug store sold candy and chocolates from glass square dishes.

I remember riding into town with Patrick, Uncle Tommy's son. Pat and I would go to Lawrence's (Reubel's) house after work in the summer time. We would ride horses into town. The sheriff was Jo's brother Tommy. Reubels' also had normal size horses.

Because Tommy Clark was the Sheriff, the boys in our family would sleep in the jail if there weren't enough beds in the house when everyone came home for Christmas.

My brother, Mickey Clark, was the mailman. He delivered to the lane.

Thomas Clark, my grandfather, was a soldier. His son, Tom, was born on Alcatraz when it was military base.

My mother, Annie Clark, sold flowers she brought from Port Townsend at our house for funerals.

What do you remember about the Indian canoe races?

Whoopin' and hollerin' and stuff we weren't used to. They were wild Indians.