



FREEMASONS

in the Sequim-Dungeness Area

— 1915-2015 —

of Sequim Lodge No. 213



ON DECEMBER 13, 2015, Sequim Masonic Lodge No. 213, Free & Accepted Masons of Washington, will celebrate its 100th anniversary. To commemorate this historical milestone, this historical review of Freemasons in Clallam County's Sequim-Dungeness area of Washington State's North Olympic Peninsula is being published. It is respectfully dedicated to the almost 700 members of the Lodge in the last century as well as their families and friends who are members of other Masonic groups such as the Order of the Eastern Star, DeMolay Boys, Rainbow Girls, York Rite, Scottish Rite, and Shriners. Incidentally, the *Shriners'* official name is: *Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine* or, A.A.O.N.M.S.—an acronym the letters of which, if rearranged, spells "A MASON"!

SEQUIM MASONIC LODGE is exceedingly grateful to Sequim Museum & Arts for their unwavering support and assistance in the research of this publication, especially: Katherine Vollenweider, former museum director whose father is a Freemason; Judy and Bob Stipe; Beverly Majors; and other volunteers such as Robert J. Clark, who co-founded Sequim Museum & Arts in 1976. A very special thanks is extended to Donald C. Williams and Paul J. Martin.

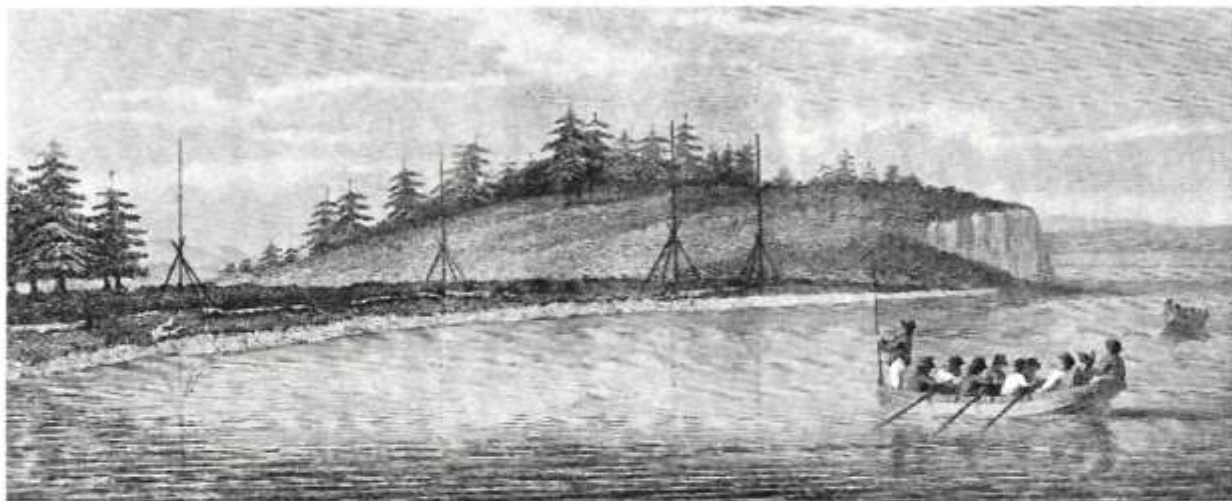


Captain George Vancouver, the first English Freemason to set foot in the Dungeness Valley at "New Dungeness" in 1792. (Painting by Lemuel F. Abbott, National Portrait Gallery, London, published in Edmond S. Meany's *Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound*.)

THIS PUBLICATION is not about "Freemasonry," but rather a brief overview of Freemasons in the Sequim-Dungeness area who have contributed substantially to making the Sequim-Dungeness area such a wonderful place to reside. So, let us begin our historical and sometimes cryptic sojourn where all *Masonic* journeys do start: *In the beginning...*

THE HISTORY of Sequim Lodge No. 213 begins in 1915. But the history of Freemasons in the Sequim-Dungeness area of the North Olympic Peninsula in Clallam County starts in 1792! That's when the famous English explorer, navigator, map maker, and *Freemason*, Captain George Vancouver, sailed two ships into the Strait of Juan de Fuca and for two months explored, named, and charted various mountains, bays, inlets, harbors, islands, waterways, and places such as: New Dungeness; Cape Dungeness; Discovery Bay; Vancouver, Whidbey & Vashon Islands; Mounts Baker & Rainier; Admiralty Inlet; Port Orchard; Deception Pass; Bellingham Bay; "Hood's Canal"; and "Puget's Sound."

Although previously discovered by the Spanish explorer Ensign Manuel Quimper in 1790, the first harbor Capt. Vancouver named and mapped during his exploration of Puget



Mysterious poles at New Dungeness and Port Townsend drawn by John Sykes on May 8, 1792, as published in Vancouver's 1798 narrative.

Sound was New Dungeness—so named because of “its great resemblance to Dungeness in the British channel”—a sandy, dune-like cape or sand spit. (Dungeness Spit is the longest spit in the world and has been growing about 14 feet per year according to the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.) Vancouver anchored HMS *Discovery*, a sloop, and HMS *Chatham*, an armed tender, in Dungeness Bay on April 30, 1792, and for two days explored the Dungeness area, which he described as “a landscape, almost as enchantingly beautiful as the most elegantly finished pleasure grounds in Europe.” On May 2, he began exploring, naming, and mapping “Port Discovery” and “Discovery Bay” in the *Discovery's* long boat (a cutter), and the *Chatham's* long boat (a yawl).



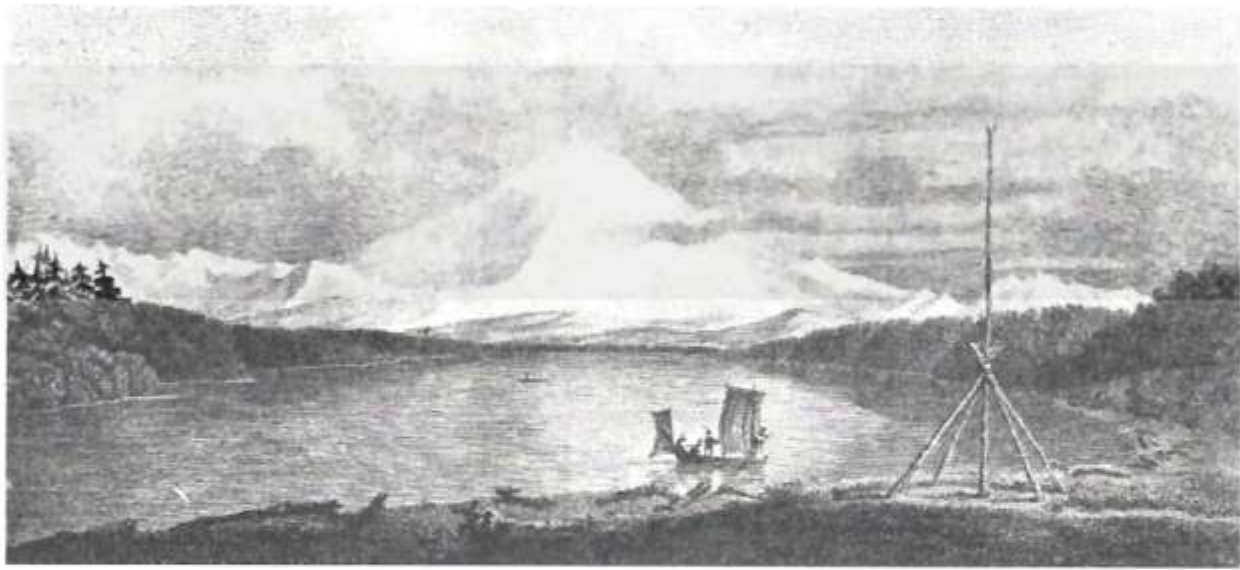
H.M.S. *Discovery*



H.M.S. *Chatham*

CURIOSLY, Vancouver records seeing, “On the low land of New Dungeness...a number of very tall straight poles, like flag staves or beacons, supported from the ground by spurs.” These poles were from ten to 100 feet high and also seen in other places such as Port Townsend. Vancouver states that: “They were, undoubtedly, intended to answer some particular purpose; but whether of a religious, civil, or military nature, must be left to some future investigation.” These mysterious poles that perplexed Vancouver and armchair explorers and historians for over a century were proven in 1905 to be vertical supports to stretch “bird nets” woven of willow twigs by the Indians to catch ducks and geese.

THE *ORIGINS* of Sequim Masonic Lodge No. 213, however, stem back one year after the “Dungeness Poles Mystery” was solved to November 27, 1906 when ten Masons from the east end of Clallam County, headed by Charles F. Seal, met with Port Angeles Lodge No. 69 and requested assistance in procuring a dispensation to form a Masonic Lodge at DUNGENESS. Nothing in the records shows any further action on this effort, but nine years later on November 9, 1915, twenty Freemasons ages 29 to 73 from Sequim, Dungeness, and Port Angeles requested and received permission to apply for Dispensation to form a Lodge at Sequim.



First picture of Mount Rainier with one of the perplexing poles drawn by John Sykes on May 26, 1792, as published in Vancouver's 1798 narrative. Probably at the northwest end of Marrowstone Island and Point Defiance in Admiralty Inlet.

CONSEQUENTLY, on December 13, 1915, "official" Dispensation was issued by Most Worshipful Brother Robert L. Sebastian, Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Washington, for the creation of Sequim Masonic Lodge in Clallam County. On December 29, 1915, said Lodge was "opened and organized" with Brother Charles F. Seal as *Worshipful Master*, Brother Herbert E. Godfrey as *Senior Warden*, Frank D. Babcock as *Junior Warden*. The other officers were: James M. Telfer, *Treasurer*; Jens S. Bugge, *Secretary*; Paul Jones, *Chaplain*; Fred Schott, *Marshall*; James H. McCourt, *Senior Deacon*; Walter M. Graham, *Junior Deacon*; Omar W. Noble, *Senior Steward*; Clyde A. Rhodefer, *Junior Steward*; and Philo W. Gallup, *Tyler*.

THE LODGE was subsequently *Chartered* on June 14, 1916, and *Constituted* on August 31, 1916 in Sequim's "Seal Hall" during public ceremonies officiated by Washington State Grand Lodge Officers with Right Worshipful Brother George Lawer acting as Special Deputy for the Grand Master. The original Charter members of Sequim Lodge No. 213 were as follows:

Charles F. Seal.....	Merchant	Frank Lotzgesell.....	Farmer
Frank D. Babcock.....	Druggist	Omar W. Noble.....	Electrician
Herbert E. Godfrey.....	Merchant	Clyde A. Rhodefer.....	Electrician/Engineer
Ferdinand Hodes.....	Butcher	Latham D. Stewart.....	Farmer
Walter A. Hibbs.....	Physician	Nels I. Peterson.....	Logger
Jens S. Bugge.....	Merchant	Walter M. Graham.....	Farmer
Philo W. Gallup.....	Farmer	Fred Schott.....	Lumberman
James M. Telfer.....	Tailor	Angus C. Hay.....	Editor/Publisher
Joshua E. McKinney.....	Farmer	Chris Miller.....	Farmer
James H. McCourt.....	Post Master	Paul Jones.....	Minister

THE PRECEDING information was sourced from: the original "Petition for Charter" signed by Charles F. Seal, Herbert E. Godfrey, Frank D. Babcock, and Jens S. Bugge; the Grand Lodge Minutes signed by Right Worshipful Brother George Lawer; the information submitted by William Edgar Gaul on page 147 in *Jimmy Come Lately, History of Clallam County*, published by the Clallam County Historical Society and edited by Jervis Russell, 1971; and Sequim Lodge's original Lodge Membership Register.

SINCE its founding by Sequim-Dungeness Freemasons—eleven of whom were existing members of Port Angeles Lodge No. 69—Sequim Lodge No. 213 has logged in almost 700 members with a present membership of approximately 140, down from its highest membership of 186 in 2011. Then as now, its members hail from a variety of backgrounds and professions. For example, among the first 20 Freemasons who signed the *Lodge Membership Register* there were

— MASONIC MOMENT —

The first American Freemasons to visit the Pacific Northwest were Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark during their 1804-1806 exploration of the Louisiana Purchase to the mouth of the Columbia River. Both Bros. Lewis and Clark were members of St. Louis Lodge No. 111, of which Bro. Lewis was its first Master, and probably the first Royal Arch Mason of the York Rite west of the Mississippi River.



Sequim Masonic Lodge No. 213 held its first meetings in the second story of the Sequim Tire Shop/Gas Station, an early mercantile business in Sequim which was built by William Horner about 1892 for his grocery. It was located at the northeast corner of Washington Street and Sequim Avenue, where a gasoline station existed until recently. (Sequim Museum & Arts photo.)

three merchants, a butcher, a physician, a newspaper publisher, an electrician, an engineer, a minister, a railroad conductor, a tailor, a farmer, and two loggers. The first 20 Freemasons to sign the Lodge's Register, which included some of its charter members, were as follows:

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| 1.) Walter M. Graham | 11.) Joshua E. McKinney |
| 2.) Clyde A. Rhodefer | 12.) Walter A. Hibbs |
| 3.) Omar W. Noble | 13.) Charles F. Seal |
| 4.) Fred Schott | 14.) James M. Telfer |
| 5.) Herbert Godfrey | 15.) Angus C. Hay |
| 6.) Frank D. Babcock | 16.) Jens S. Bugge |
| 7.) Frank Lotzgesell | 17.) Frank D. McHugh |
| 8.) Nels I. Peterson | 18.) Chris Miller |
| 9.) James H. McComb | 19.) Latham D. Stewart |
| 10.) Philo P. Gallup | 20.) Leon Hall Cays |

MASONICALLY-SIGNIFICANT is the fact that the 20th Freemason to sign the original Lodge Register was LEON HALL CAYS, a *great-great-granduncle* of the Lodge's Centennial (2015) Worshipful Master, Michael D. Cays—whose *great-granduncle*, RAY E. CAYS, was Lodge Master in 1950.



Sequim's first Masonic Lodge was built in 1931 at the southwest corner of Sequim Avenue & Alder Street on land donated by Charles Seal, the Lodge's first Master. The Square & Compasses and emblems of the DeMolay Boys, Rainbow Girls, Eastern Star, and the stained glass window above the doorway, now grace the new Lodge located at 700 S. 5th Avenue. (Sequim Museum & Arts photo.)

