Dedication

This special issue is published in recognition of the community of Scandinavians and other settlers who made their home on Eklund Park and who contributed so much to the South Bend area. It is also dedicated to the memory of Arne and Lester Johnsen by their friends John Reischman, Carl Fykerude, Emmett Oliver and others.

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Many of the photographs in this issue are reproduced from original glass plates given to the Pacific County Museum by Fred N. Rye, Sr. Others were contributed by Mary Lee Rose.

Our Cover

Norwegian fishermen from Eklund Park on a sailing ship bound for Bristol Bay, Alaska. This was reportedly a bad voyage – they found no silver salmon, only pinks, and made no money. C. 1917.

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The Norwegians on Eklund Park

by Mary Lee Rose

Editor's Note: Mary Lee Rose grew up on Eklund Park where her grandparents, George T. and Mary Frances Bale, and her father, Robert Bale, moved early in the century. Mrs. Rose now resides in Olympia.

Whether you call it Eklund Park, Snoose Hill or Snoose Peak, it was a wonderful place to grow up. I never wanted to live anywhere else.

This little bit of heaven is located northeast of South Bend straddling the South Bend city limits. From the early 1900s it was populated in a large part by Norwegian immigrants and their families. By 1920 there were about thirty Norwegian households on the hill.

Looking for a better life, with more opportunities, they began arriving in South Bend in the 1890s. Most were single young adults, both men and women. It was a typical chain migration - after the first arrivals, nearly everyone who came was either related to or knew someone already here. Often, prepaid tickets were sent to family members in the "old country".

The majority of these Norwegian immigrants were from the area north of Bodo, above the Arctic Circle near the Lofoten Islands where fishing for cod was the principal occupation. That made Eklund Park, with its location on the Willapa River, a logical location for their transplanted settlement.

Life far above the Arctic Circle was difficult for these people. Many of their homes were built of logs and were usually small. The families were large. They made a meager living by a combination of fishing and farming. Many of the men fished for cod in the Lofoten Islands. On their farms they usually had a cow, some sheep and sometimes a pig. Because of the climate and poor soil conditions, hay, potatoes and carrots were among the few crops they could produce. Often, after confirmation, the daughters of the families were employed by larger farms in the area as mothers' helpers or houseworkers. The future was limited for young men and women.

In this part of Norway the Lutheran Church, the State Church of Norway, was in a central location near the main farm, Hovedgard. This was the larg-
est farm in the area and supplied provisions for the nearby fishing fleet and the neighboring villages. Many who met and married in South Bend had attended the same church in Norway and recalled seeing each other there but had never met until they came to South Bend.

Several families came from other locations in Norway and were attracted by the lumber industry. Many of these people had been in Wisconsin settlements before coming to Washington.

In the 1880s the numbers of persons emigrating from the European countries was increasing rapidly. Representatives of U. S. railroads and steamship lines were traveling and advertising throughout Europe telling of the opportunities in the New World.

Some of the Norwegians left for the U. S. from Norwegian ports but many traveled to England and sailed from the port of Liverpool. Those entering the U. S. in New York came through Ellis Island. If the ship's destination was Canada, as happened frequently, they usually entered Canada at Halifax, Nova Scotia. From that port of entry they traveled by train to a U. S. port of entry. Among the ports of entry mentioned in the naturalization papers were Astoria and Portland in Oregon, Port Huron and Sault Ste Marie in Michigan, San Francisco, California and Sumas, Washington. In 1909 Håbart Johnsen paid $93.00 for transportation from Kjerringoy, Norway to Portland, Oregon.

Usually the first employment for the men was in the lumber mills. They also had connections to the fishing industry in Alaska and many left South Bend for several months every summer to fish for salmon in Bristol Bay. They would return to their jobs at the mills on their return. Some of them later bought or built commercial fishing boats and in the off-Alaska months they fished for


-courtesy Mary Lee Rose

H.B. Johnson, his wife Anna, and Aminda Stromsness with children.

PCHS 96.46.98
salmon or crab in the Willapa River, in Willapa Bay or off the coast in the ocean.

The major employer of Eklund Park men in the first quarter of the century was the Columbia Box and Lumber Company, located on the east and north sides of Eklund Park. It was originally built by William and Jacob Siler in 1893 on the Northern Pacific Terminal property near the present day Bendiksen's East Point.
Oyster Company. After several fires, changes in ownership, location and name, it was rebuilt in 1905 at the mouth of Skidmore Slough near Eklund Park and operated as Columbia Box and Lumber Company. W. G. Hyman and S. L. Hyman owned the mill at that time. It was a large plant providing dormitories for single workers and, for a time, a company store run by Bill and Albert Leber. Hyman closed the store in August 1913 and Bill and Albert Leber, with their brother, Ernest, opened their own grocery store.

The mill closed about 1927. At the time of closure it was owned by Charles L. Lewis and was sold to Willapa Harbor Pulp and Paper Mills who planned to build a pulp mill on the site. Stock in the new company was sold but they were not successful in their pursuit and in the early 1930s the buildings and equipment were demolished.

In November of 1934 the Raymond Lumber Company, a Lewis family corporation, announced plans to build a mill on the Willapa River on the west side of the "foot" of the hill. Charles Lewis, who died October 22, 1936, lived to see the test run of the new mill in the fall of 1936. The mill opened soon after and among the approximately 100 workers employed were Norwegian men from Eklund Park. After several shut-downs due to market conditions, the mill re-opened in 1938 on a semi-cooperative basis.

In the fall of 1953 the mill closed "indefinitely" but did not reopen. It was sold in early 1954.

The young, single women found employment as domestics or in restaurants, hospitals or canneries. Their reputation for cleanliness and hard work made their labors much in demand. In their marriages they were known to be good mothers and homemakers. Few worked outside the home after marriage.

In their church and social lives these young Norwegian men and women met, married and established homes on Eklund Park.

There were two Norwegian churches in South Bend; the First Lutheran Church
and the Norwegian Methodist Church. There was also a Scandinavian Baptist Church.

The First Lutheran Church was organized on January 12, 1907 and in June of 1907 the membership decided to affiliate with the United Lutheran Church. Among the charter members were Eklund Park residents Hilda Christopherson Boyer, Andrew Fykerud, Amandus Hansen, I. A. Johnsen, Martin Kristofferson, Mrs. M. Laugalles, Christ Nelsen and Krist Stromsness. Eklund Park resident John Mikkelsen contracted to build the church for $290.00 labor.

A Ladies Aid Society had been organized in 1904. Sunday School classes were started at about that time and in 1908 were formally established as a work of the congregation.

Services, in the Norwegian language, were held only once a month as Pastor Slettedahl's main church and home were in Tacoma. It was 1919 before there was a resident pastor, N. M. Leque. After 1928, when A J. Towe was called as pastor, most services were in English. As late as the 1930s some special services were held in Norwegian for those who preferred to worship in their native tongue.

In 1920 the church building was moved from the original site on Kendrick Street to its present location at Water and Adams. In 1951 First Lutheran Church purchased the Swedish Lutheran Church building, moved it to the Water and Adams site and attached it to the First Lutheran Church building where it became a large Sunday School room and kitchen.

At present First Lutheran Church has an active congregation and shares a pastor with Our Savior's Lutheran Church of Willapa Harbor in Raymond.

The First Norwegian Methodist Church (known as the Larson Church) was organized about 1910 when Frank Larson and his wife, Anna, came to South Bend from San Francisco. Frank Larson, Henry Christopherson (who had known the Larsons in San Francisco) and other able volunteers built the church on Quincy Street near Eklund Park. At one time the congregation numbered more than 100 people.

Mrs. Larson played the organ and led the singing. Services were held in the Norwegian language and were conducted by the Rev. Frank Larson, church members or traveling evangelists who held Revival Meetings. Margaret (Christopherson) Ahern recalls that the traveling ministers often stayed in their home.

There was a Ladies Aid Society which met weekly in the homes of members.
Among the social activities of the church were picnics in the Christophersons' orchard and, on one occasion, a trip on the ferry to Tokeland.

Because the First Lutheran Church did not have a resident pastor, funerals for their Norwegian members were usually held in the First Lutheran Church with Pastor Larson from the Norwegian Methodist Church conducting the service in Norwegian. The Rev. K. E. Bylen often brought the choir from the Scandinavian Baptist Church to provide the music.

When Pastor Larson was no longer able to serve the Norwegian Methodist Church, Pastor Borseth led the congregation. After the church closed, most attended the First Lutheran Church.

On arrival in the U. S. or when filing citizenship papers, some of the immigrants made changes in their surnames. These changes are sometimes noted in their citizenship applications.

The predominant type of surname in Norway is patronymic, in other words, based on the father's given name. An example of the patronymic naming system would be Jorgen and Laura Johnsen. Jorgen’s father was Johan (John) Abelsen so Jorgen, his brother Hagbart and sister Aminda took the name Johnsen. Laura Johnsen’s father was Johan (John) Tverbak. Laura and her brothers Arktander (Art) and Sigurd took the name Johnsen.

Occasionally the children in a family would choose different surnames. Anders Fykerud’s son, Herman, chose
to be Herman Anderson
but his brothers chose to
keep the Fykerud name.
Later, William Fykerud
added an "e" (Fykerude)
to his name to avoid con-
fusion with his brother
Carl's family.

Another source of sur-
names in Norway was
geographical. Fred
Jacobsen chose the sur-
name Rye because Rye
was the area where he had
lived in Norway Krist
Mikaelson adopted the
name Stromness, an an-
glicized spelling of his
home town in Norway.
The Gunderson family
name in Norway was

Kamsvog - for the "home place" (farm).
The father, Gunder Olson Kamsvog,
and his children John, Nils, Ole and Ella
all assumed the name Gunderson in the
United States.

Although the men usually learned to
speak English in their places of employ-
ment, the Norwegian language was spo-
kem in most of the homes until the chil-
dren started to school Because of this,
most of their children can speak, read
and understand some of the Norwegian
language.

Nearly all of the men applied for and
received their U.S. citizenship. Some
became active in civic affairs. Elbert
Pederson served as Pacific County
Treasurer and Pacific County Assessor.
I. A. Johnson held the position of Pa-
cific County Road Supervisor. Both I.
A. Johnson and Fred Rye served on the
election board in the Eklund Park pre-
cinct.
As the Norwegian population in South Bend increased, the men became interested in establishing a chapter of the Sons of Norway Lodge. Fred Rye and Krist Stromsness went to Olympia to get the necessary papers and on February 12, 1911 Nordkap # 18 was founded with 27 members. The following officers were elected: President - Richard Kjos, Vice-President - Halfdan Thompson, Counselor - Carl Fykerud, Secretary - John Bruce, Financial Secretary - Fred Rye, Treasurer - Krist Stromsness, Regent - Peder Loberg, Marshall - John Olson, Inner Guard - Arthur Johnson, Representatives (trustees) John Mikkelsen for three years, Christ Nelson for two years and Louis Hogenson for one year.

Tyra Lodge #16 Daughters of Norway was chartered January 1913 with 18 members.

According to History of Sons of Norway by Carl Hansen, the Sons of Norway Lodge Building was dedicated on February 12, 1916. It had been built, on Quincy Street near the Norwegian Methodist Church, by volunteer labor of the members with donated money and materials. In addition to serving as a meeting and social hall for the Sons and Daughters of Norway, the size and amenities made it suitable for many other activities in the community.

Nordkap #18 did not meet during World War II and there was not enough interest after the war to resume meetings. In 1962 Fred Rye, Jr. sent the charter to the Supreme Lodge of Sons of Norway in Minneapolis, MN. Some of the younger members of Nordkap #18 transferred their membership to Grays Harbor Lodge #4. Among them was Fred Rye, Jr. (now Sr.) who served as president of Grays Harbor Lodge #4 two years. The Sons of Norway Hall is now owned by the Eagles Lodge.

The Norwegian women kept their homes immaculate. The washing was on the lines early Monday mornings. To be first was the goal and to have the whitest whites was also part of the competition.

They kept their traditional Norwegian diet. Fish had been important in their diet in Norway and continued to be so in their new homes. Salmon was
often canned and many of the homes had a fish barrel in the basement which held salmon preserved in a salt brine. Alice (Johnsen) Rise recalls the fish barrels and that “This fish was prepared by boiling and, for some reason, a small amount of vinegar was added to the water”. Referring to the famous lutefisk, she says "Lutefisk was always prepared at home. It was purchased in the dried form - as dry as straw. It was soaked in a lye solution until it softened, and then rinsed in many rinses of cold water until the lye was washed out. It was cooked very quickly (if cooked too long it would literally melt away) and the Norwegians served it with boiled potatoes and drawn butter. Lots of butter!!!! The Swedish people usually served it with a cream sauce flavored with allspice". The descendants still have lutefisk, often on Christmas Eve. A rice mush made with milk and served with drawn butter, cinnamon and sugar is also served with Christmas Eve supper.

A mutton (or lamb) and cabbage stew called Farekail was served in Eklund Park homes and I found a recipe for this dish in The Frugal Gourmet On Our Immigrant Ancestors by Jeff Smith. Fruit Soups, made with dried prunes, raisins and red sago
Eklund Park dock, where fishermen kept trolling, gillnetting and crabbing boats, and the children swam.

(or tapioca) was enjoyed in many of the homes as was lefse which many have described as similar to a soft flour tortilla and which was spread with butter and sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon. Mouthwatering pastries, sweet breads and many kinds of buttery cookies - fatigmond, krumkake, berlinekranser, smor kranse and others made the women famous and their recipes were shared with cooks all over South Bend. Anise and cardamom were spices used frequently in their recipes.

In addition to their Ladies Aid Societies and Daughters of Norway, many belonged to the Eklund Park Garden Club which met monthly to work on garden and craft projects.

In the summer of 1934 a Longshoremen's strike caught a Norwegian ship, the Ch. Knutsen in port at the mill located at the west end of South Bend. The Norwegian families took the young sailors into their homes and church. Several of the daughters dated the young men during that summer and corresponded with them for several years.

While the ship was in port, one of the young men was struck by a car and fatally injured. The First Lutheran Church held a funeral service for him and, in appreciation, the ship's crew appeared several days later at the church with paint, ladders, ropes and scaffolding to give the church a fresh coat of paint. Before the Ch. Knutsen left South Bend, the Norwegian community gave a dinner and dance at the Sons of Norway Hall to thank the crew for their generous act and to say "good-bye".

The river was not only a "living" for many of the Eklund Park residents, it was also a joy to their children. In the summer it came alive with swimmers and boaters. Everyone had their favorite "swimming hole".

Most of us learned to swim at the Inner Landing located in the narrows of the
Willapa River. The gentle slope of the rocky river bottom made it ideal for wading, paddling and learning to swim. A group of fathers built a bath house for changing in and out of bathing suits. Located adjacent to the bath house were several buildings the fishermen used for storage. On the north side of one of the buildings, out of the hot afternoon sun, they built a bench. This was a daily afternoon gathering place for the mothers of bathers. They brought their knitting, darning or other handwork and all the latest news.

The Pacific County Eklund Park Dock was popular with more advanced swimmers. We climbed on and dove from the fish boats moored there, sunbathed on the floats where the fishermen dried and mended their nets and rowed up, down and across the river. The patient Norwegian fishermen put up with all of our nonsense and trespassing and never asked us to leave their boats or floats.

After the Columbia Box and Lumber Company closed, the dock there became a popular swimming place, especially among the boys.

We were always welcome in the homes of our Norwegian friends. A highlight for me was to be at Mrs. Jorgen Johnsen’s home on bread baking day when the fragrant loaves came out of the oven. Slices of warm bread, spread with butter and sprinkled with sugar were offered to all of us. If you were in a Norwegian home when lefse was being made, it was given the butter and sugar treatment, sometimes with cinnamon added, and given to all present. They did not use fancy griddles for making lefse. I remember Sophie Alvnes oiling the top of her wood-burning kitchen range by rubbing it with waxed paper and cooking the lefse on that shining surface.

The Ben Bendiksen and Stromsness homes had large playrooms where we were always welcome on rainy days.

Henry Christopherson’s orchard was open to everyone for baseball and other activities. Every summer we picked blackberries there and our mothers made jams and jellies and filled the shelves with quarts of blackberry juice.

South Bend has a moderate climate and heavy snowfalls are rare. They do, however, happen occasionally and I recall a snow storm in the early 1930s when Summit Avenue on Eklund Park had compact snow and ice and automobile travel was impossible for several days. The road was closed and we were astonished to see our friends’ fathers skiing down the steep road. Those from northern Norway had skied in the “old country” and were delighted to have this opportunity to ski again. Sleds came out of attics and basements and a good time was had by all. A huge bonfire burned on the vacant area above the Jorgen Johnsen house and those with cold hands and feet found warmth and friendly conversation around the fire.

When Sonja Henie, of Norway, won the gold medal in figure skating at the 1928,1932 and 1936 Winter Olympics, there wasn’t a Norwegian girl on Eklund Park who didn’t share the thrill. If only they had ice, they would do the same. They “ice-skated” on playroom floors, cut out newspaper and movie magazine articles for scrapbooks and collected any Sonja Henie memorabilia available. There was a strong feeling of pride that this beautiful young lady from their parents’ homeland had achieved such heights in the worlds of sports and film.

I have so many memories of growing up among these special friends and neighbors. All of the original settlers are gone now. Most of their children are living
elsewhere. A few children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren are still Snoose Peak residents. Some of us think about living there again. Maybe some will. As I said in the beginning, when I was growing up on Eklund Park I never wanted to live anywhere else.

On August 26, 1995 the children of these early Eklund Park Norwegian settlers held a reunion. As they recalled their experiences growing up on Eklund Park and repeated stories their parents had told, they realized that the history of this special group needed to be told. Without a drop of Norwegian blood but with a deep appreciation of my former neighbors’ I volunteered to work on the project,

Materials collected during my research will be placed on file in the Pacific County Historical Society Museum, South Bend.

Snouse Hill Memories
Submitted by Carl Fykerude

Editor’s note: Carl Fykerude at 84 is one of the older first generation Norwegians on Eklund Park. According to Mary Lee Rose who talked with him of his family history, his was a “very Norwegian home, a large family and a large extended family. His father was Chief Engineer at the Columbia Box and Lumber Company and Carl spent much of his youth in and around the mill.” His reminiscences follow.

My parents, William and Mary (Nelson) Fykerude both immigrated from Norway and settled in Wisconsin where they met and married. My older brothers and sisters - Margaret, Eda, Wilford, Torfinn and Helen were born there. The lure of the west brought them to South Bend, Washington in 1907.

Searching for a place to put down roots, they found this Shangri-la called Eklund Park. It was a wooded hill shaped somewhat like a cone, sloped on all sides but
The lath mill, part of Columbia Box Mill, let out on contract to Myron Smith who worked there with his sons.

The head rig, Columbia Box Mill. It was used to cut slabs from fir logs. C. 1910.

PCHS 96.44.2

PCHS 96.44.1
An early aerial photo (probably 1920s) of the Eklund Park peninsula. Columbia Box Mill is at bottom Narrows to the right ("Where we swam" - M.L. Rose) Alta Vista can be seen at left rear; South Bend rounded on top. The Willapa River bordered it on the north and west, railroad tracks on the east and an area called "the flats" on the south.

On the tax rolls the hill is officially Eklund Park. However, "Snoose Hill" came to be synonymous with the habits of the men who made up a large part of the populous. Being fishermen, while working with their gear, whether foul weather or fair, they could not be hindered by pipes or cigarettes. Hence, snoose is the logical alternative. Mill workers were not allowed to smoke and they were users as well. Being a user myself, I can attest to its wonderful therapeutic value. That lump under one's lip gives a sense of well-being and physical comfort. Euphoria to the extreme. It
I ease depression and calms your worries. It won’t pay your bills but will help you ignore them. I won’t leave home without it. Snoose Hill it was then and so it is today.

My grandparents, Andrew and Sarah Fykerud and my parents built two identical houses on the same lot. They were simple box-like structures with a large kitchen, small sitting room (for when the preacher came) and the master bedroom downstairs. The upstairs was an open area divided by a curtain; boys on one side and girls on the other. It was adequate for the family when it was built but then my brother Norman was born, then I arrived, followed by my sister Gretchen. At that point there were ten people living in that small house. Water came from a well and there was an outhouse facing west to take advantage of the sunsets.

My father found work in a saw mill built on the east side of the hill on the Willapa River. This mill was the Columbia Box and Lumber Co. He worked his way through many jobs until he became assistant engineer. When Mr. Hansen died he was promoted to chief. Accompanied by my dog, Dugan, I would bring my dad lunch. He would let me fill oil cups and sweep the floor and for my efforts I would get to blow the whistle.

This was a unique mill. It had no smoke stack. Stacks provide draft for the boilers as well as an escape for the smoke. Draft was supplied by a huge fan driven by a steam engine and the smoke was recirculated and burned similar to today’s efficient wood burning heaters. This plant was ninety years ahead of the times!

Main power for the mill was a two-cylinder Corliss steam engine. The fly-wheel was about ten feet in diameter and grooved as the drive for the line shaft that ran through the mill was composed of ropes. There were about twenty of these ropes. They would stretch so they had to be shortened and re-spliced. My dad got very good at making a running splice.

My uncle was “head boom man”. Logs for the mill were stored in “booms” on
the river. Tugs would bring in rafts of these beautiful old growth fir logs, nothing under two or three feet in diameter. Hemlock was not even logged. Some spruce was sawn and I will expand on that later.

As these beautiful logs were sawn into huge slabs, they were cut into widths by the edger, then they went to the trimmer where they were cut to length and from there to the green chain where they were loaded on two wheel carts or trucks. These trucks were drawn by horses and moved to the planing mill for surfacing or to the docks where the lumber was piled to be shipped by water.

The horses were housed in a large barn, somewhat removed from the mill proper. They were well cared for. The “barn boss” was a fellow named Spence Bain. He tolerated us kids who hung around the place but when we goofed up, he took care of us in his way. He was a sharp-shooter with a leather strap about ten feet long, raising a welt on your behind that sent a message. Spence had a daughter, Thelma, who hung around her dad. She was a nice kid.

The horses were eventually replaced by small gas, hard-tired jitneys. They were faster and required less maintenance. P.G. Frazier drove the first one and would sometimes let us ride along.

I hated to see the horses replaced. Each one had a name and was intelligent and friendly. They knew when the whistle was to blow and where the loaded carts were to go. Their I.Q.s were probably higher than some of the drivers.

Ira Sherman was the “yard boss” and he lived in a company house on the mill property. He rode a bicycle on his rounds. His niece, Kathleen, would visit in the summer and swim at the dock every day. After the Columbia Box closed, Mr. Sherman, with a partner, opened a drugstore in South Bend. It did business for many years.

When we kids needed materials for our shack building projects we went to George Sampson, the “sawmill boss”. He would give us reject lumber. By today’s standards it was saleable. George was privileged to moor his boats at the company dock. He had two that come to mind, the U & I and the Sara Broadass - honest.

He would often take kids to North River where he had a comfortable place on the river. Trout fishing was great and Mrs. Sampson fed us “first class”. They had a couple of girls who usually went, making the trip very pleasant.

Mr. Sampson sold the U & I to Tony Lewis who rigged it for salmon and crab fishing. Emmett Oliver got lucky and worked for Tony fishing crab. I recall making a trip with them out of Westport. The weather was somewhat rough and I got so sick that I prayed to die. The more I suffered, the sicker I got until there was just nothing left to feed the fish. Unparalleled misery to say the least. After that experience I was never sick again. The good Lord must have felt that I had suffered enough.

As I mentioned earlier, some spruce logs were sawn at the Columbia Box mill. Spruce is not a good construction lumber but it did have a purpose. During World War One, spruce was used in the manufacture of airplanes. It is a light, tough, long-fibered wood, ideal for the building of wooden planes.

There was a unit of the U.S. Army called the Spruce Division and some of the G.I.s worked in the mill making this product. They were housed in the company boarding house along with a number of single men. In the evenings and weekends
they would go through their drills on the mill dock. There was usually a small gathering to watch these maneuvers, mostly girls.

We kids would gather foil and save walnut shells. It seems the military needed these things. I have no idea for what purpose. My older brothers and sisters would take me down to the boarding house with the stuff and we were rewarded with pastry and fruit for our efforts.

I believe it was in the late 1920s that the mill was closed. Obsolete and in need of repairs, it could not compete with more modern plants. It was a sad day for many Snoose Hill families. One could and did walk to work at the Columbia Box and this closure meant seeking other work and travel was not that easy. Cars were a rarity on Snoose Hill and the street cars were the main means of transportation.

Closing the mill devastated my dad. They junked the machinery, including his beloved Corless steam engine. He salvaged his bench vise and I have it now. It is a real treasure and I use it almost daily.

There were plans to build a pulp mill on the site. An attempt was made to sell stock and no doubt some was sold but things moved slowly. Pilings were driven and for a time things looked promising but it was eventually abandoned. Money just ran out.

As in any community, the people are the most important ingredient. The Norse men came from their homeland by singles and couples and as families. Relatives sent for relatives and friends for friends until there was a community of fine stable people. Snoose Hill was the place to be. They built their homes and raised their kids. Snoose Hill became a community of strong, caring families.

Came the Sabbath, there was a pilgrimage from the hill - largely Lutheran and
Some Norwegian fishermen going to Bering Sea aboard a sailing ship.

Methodist, plus three Catholic families and three Pentecostal families. Preacher Larsen, from the Norwegian Methodist Church, lived next door to our family so we were obliged to go to Sunday School every Sunday. The Norwegian Methodist Church was a short walk, but the Lutheran Church was about a mile and a half.

The Lutheran and Methodist buildings are still there although the Norwegian Methodist Church has been sold to another denomination. Due to disrepair and lack of funds the Catholic Church has been demolished. It had been a fine brick structure.

The river was the focal point of much of the activity. Below the bluff in front of the Oliver house was the Snoose Dock. All kinds of boats were moored there: trolls, crabbers, gill netters, skiffs and scows. Repairs were made to boats and gear was tended to make ready for the next catch. Up river about a half mile was the Inner Landing. There was no dock but it had a sloping beach where a boat could be beached for repairs or painting. Inshore was a row of boat houses where major repairs were made or boats stored in the off season. The river at this point was called “The Narrows” as it was the narrowest part on the entire river. Many people swam at the Inner Landing.

Wood logs were plentiful then. They would be beached at high water and sawed when the tide was out. My dad and older brothers would cut and split wood and we kids would pile it in rows to dry for the winter. One could leave the tools at the site and they would be there when you returned. People showed respect and trust in that time.

Driven fish traps were legal in that day. A row of pilings were driven out into the
river and hung with a web. Fish approaching this would follow it into a pocket or purse where they would be trapped. A tender and crew would then lift this pocket and brail the fish aboard and take them to the cannery. There were several of these traps along the river and bay. They were eventually determined to be illegal as were set nets. Drift nets are still used in the Willapa River. I believe Sam Oliver had the best site on the river at a place called “The Point”, across the river from Snoose Dock. He maintained it year after year.

Just behind the point was a small cove where Indians camped long years ago. We kids, while eating Farmer Camenzind’s fruit, would scour the cove for arrowheads and other artifacts. I had some fine arrowheads but they have been misplaced or lost, more is the shame.

About the middle of May, Snoose Hill fishermen would leave for Bristol Bay in Alaska for the gill netting season. The season lasted about six weeks, then they would return and catch the season at home.

Gill netting in Bristol Bay was for only the most rugged and toughest of men. They were outfitted with company-owned boats and nets. The boat was a 28-foot open affair with a small tent forward and a sail. They had no power. With 60 fathom of web loaded with fish it was back-breaking work to haul in your catch. The elements were your enemy: high winds, tides and fog. To cope with these conditions it took guts and know-how. These fearless, tough men earned every dollar they made usually a substantial amount.

In 1947 I hired on as deck hand on the 80-foot tug Bristol. She was skippered by Ben Bendiksen, formerly of Snoose Hill. He was very capable and very demanding. Our main function was towing barges of fish to the cannery from the tall scows anchored near the mouth of the Nushagak River. It was about a 12-mile tow sometimes alongside and sometimes astern, depending on the weather.
Numerous times we rescued fishermen in trouble and floundering because of rough water or grounding on mudflats. On an incoming tide and high wind they would inevitably be swamped. We pulled many of them to safety. Remember, they had no power, just a sail. In 1950 the boats were converted to power.

Just before the start of the season we were sent to Naknek to pick up the fishermen’s gear. It was about a 60-mile coastwise run. The weather was beautiful, winds and sea almost calm. We picked up the gear from the steamer anchored in the river, stowed it below and started back.

About an hour out we were hit by a terrific storm. Hurricane winds and mountainous seas. For ten hours we could only maintain power for steerage. We lost radio contact and the galley was a disaster with food and dishes everywhere. Fighting the wheel was exhausting and my ankles swelled to the size of softballs. After it moderated, we limped into the cannery where we learned that 12 men from the area had been lost in the storm. We were very lucky to have made it through. I relate this experience to show just how much these fishermen endured.

Traffic on the Willapa River was very diverse. Two vessels that come to mind are the Reliable and the Shamrock. They were passenger, freight and mail carriers. They ran between Nahcotta on the Long Beach peninsula and Raymond, with stops between.

Sailing ships called periodically. Tugs would pick them up at “the bar” and tow them to wherever they were to be berthed. One I fondly remember was the Lottie Bennett moored at the Columbia Box Mill. We would get handouts from the cook and wondered at the crew, made up of many nationalities: Chinese, Filipinos, blacks, Indians with turbans, whites and no doubt others.

Ray Walthers, a young friend who lived near Snoose Hill, signed on the Lottie Bennett with a cargo of lumber bound for Australia. What an adventure! He was gone a year.

Small wooden tugs were frequently seen working the river, towing rafts of logs from the Palix River, North River and Cedar River country. Large steel vessels required their help in negotiating the several sharp turns in the river. In the 1930s a canal was cut across a tide flat to eliminate one curve. The Peter Kerr was the largest ship to put into Willapa Harbor. Their cargo was primarily for the east coast market.
Some Japanese ships also took on cargo at the mills. Their load was what we called “Jap Squares”. They were large timbers, twelve inches and up to be re-sawn in Japan.

Small wooden steamers were frequent callers for the California market. Some were built at Hoquiam in Gray’s Harbor. Some of the names I recall are: Carmel, Salano, Catherine Donovan and Willapa. Arne Johnsen was only sixteen when he shipped out on one of them. I believe it was the Carmel. I envied him that adventure.

The cooks on these frequent callers knew us kids and would give us fresh fruit and pastry. We were always eager for a hand-out.

Longshoring was done the hard way. A slingload of lumber would be brought aboard and stored one board at a time. This work was done mainly by the Finnish community from Raymond.

Ships no longer call in Willapa Bay. Erosion has made the bar and river too shallow for ship traffic. All lumber is hauled by truck.

The small tugs that worked our river were the Daring, Transit (she was black), Sunset, Robbie Dee, John Cudahy, Fearless, Rustler and probably others. The Sunset is now owned by someone in Thurston County and takes part in the annual tug races in Budd Inlet.

Many non-Norskie families lived on the hill. Our closest neighbors were the Brunners. They were a Swiss family that had immigrated about the same time as my folks. There were three children: Frank, Albert and Lucy. My earliest memory is when Frank and Albert came home from World War One, uniforms and all. I was six years old then. Frank and his son, Bob, lived in the same house for about seventy years until Frank’s recent death. Bob continues to live there.

When I was about eight, we moved from the low road to the high road. An Alaska fisherman had framed a house on a nice lot but he lost his life while fishing in Alaska. My folks bought the place and finished it. We had electric lights and indoor plumbing with a bathtub and toilet. Pa said “No way are we going to use that toilet in this house. It’s got to go”. Ma won out!

Our next door neighbors were the Mohns. A fine German family, very hard working with huge gardens. They raised chickens as well. There were three children: Norman, Agnes and Mary Ida. The older ones are gone but Mary Ida still lives close by in a smaller house she and her husband, Carl Greenman, built. Carl died in 1973. Mary is a great friend. She is about 85 now.

The T. D. Lewis family is another that is not easily forgotten. Mr. Lewis was superintendent of the Columbia Box Mill. He and his wife were very generous to us kids. “Teed” loved baseball and played with us when he could. He gave us balls and mitts and taught us how to hit and pitch. They had three kids of their own: Charles, Tom and Kathryn. Tom had perfect attendance for his twelve years of school. Charles had a Model T coupe so he was a big man on campus. Kathryn married Sam Bunker of the Bunker Logging Company. She resides in Long Beach, WA. now. We called Mr. Lewis “Teed”, short for T.D.

Andrew Swalley, a single parent, was a carpenter and guitar player. He had three children: Eldred, Ethel and Alta. He removed everything from his car but the cab
and built a wooden house on the back with a shingled roof and sides. He installed windows, a small wood stove, bunks and fold-away steps to gain entrance. They named it "The Nest", loaded it with food, etc. and took off. This was seventy years ago, the forerunner of today's camper.

At the foot of Snoose Hill were the Northern Pacific Railroad Company facilities where locomotives were brought for maintenance and to take on water and coal. There was a hand operated turntable to turn the engines around for their run to Chehalis. I presume that is why it was called "the round house". It was the duty of Joe Doubek, a Snoose Hill resident, to fill the boilers with water and the engine tender with coal. He shoveled coal, by hand, from a gondola for two engines a day. We kids would sometimes help Joe push the turntable around, not an easy chore. I don't know why they didn't use a horse.

Danny Shaw was engineer on the passenger train, Joe Wallace was the conductor and Mr. Hallick took care of the mail and freight. They all lived near their job but not on Snoose Hill. We were befriended by these men as we used the railroad yard for a short-cut to and from school. Walking was our mode of travel then. There were no school buses.

We never learned to roller skate nor did any of the other kids. There was not ten feet of surface that was suitable for skating. For recreation we made our own kites, bows and arrows and sling-shots. We played mumbly peg, marbles, baseball, horse-shoes and swam.

One small area we called "the orchard" was used frequently for baseball. It had large patches of evergreen blackberries and stumps. If we hit a ball into the berry patch, we looked until we found it as it was the only one we had. We exchanged mitts and we all used the same bat. We made do!

Below the hill and across the railroad and streetcar tracks was an area, between two sloughs, that we often used for baseball. I have no idea who owned it but we were never bothered. Not having enough kids for two teams, we played what we called "work-up". Each time an out was made you moved up a position until you had your turn at bat. When you were put out, you started over. We made our own rules.

We swam at the Snoose Dock, Inner Landing and the Columbia Box dock. We learned young and were all fine swimmers. Mailboat Slough, across the river, was a great place to swim. Plenty of mud clams for roasting, warm water and we were not encumbered by suits. One fellow I might mention, although he was not a close friend, is Marc Halvorson. He was the finest swimmer I have ever seen. So strong, smooth and fast! Everytime I see a seal, Marc comes to mind. He could have been a great one.

Marbles was played a lot. Several variations were played. My favorite was "big ring". We were all pretty good but one kid was, without question, the best. Cobb Olsen had no equal. When he was in the game you knew you were going to lose. Like a gambler, he was serious and intense. We all had a favorite "taw" or shooter. Mine was an "immie". For lagging one used a "steelie", a ball bearing. In that day, salt came in a five-pound cloth bag. Cobb had several filled with other kids' marbles. Surely dozens of them were mine.
On Halloween we did all the devilish things we could think of: woodpiles dumped, outhouses moved, gates swiped. One popular trick was to catch the rear cow-catcher on the street car and pull the trolley off the wire. This drove the conductor nuts. This happened every Halloween.

One of the families that I have the fondest and most vivid memories of were the Olivers, an Indian family with five children: Jim, Charles, Emmett, Jennie and “Toots” (Frances). Their home was on a bluff above the Snoose Dock with a view of the river, the town and the bay beyond. Sam, the father, was a gill net fisherman. I did not know Mr. Oliver very well. He was a very private man, not one for conversation. Mrs. Oliver, Cecelia, was a gem. She was a slender, rather frail lady with fine features. We kids loved hanging out at the Olivers’ house. We were always welcome. She made you feel comfortable with her warm smile. She could, and did, discuss many subjects with great intelligence. She stressed how important education was to one’s future and most, if not all of her children finished high school.

It should be noted that Snoose Hill contributed much to the athletic program at South Bend High School. Emmett Oliver participated in football and track. Arne and Lester Johnsen were outstanding in track. Lester held the state record in the low hurdles for many years. Arne and Lester both earned athletic scholarships - Lester to Stanford University and Arne to Western Washington State College. They both excelled in sports in college. Emmett defected after his junior year and did well at junior college and Redlands University in California.

Other athletic stars were Bob Bale, Hjalmar Olsen, Doc Pedersen, Sverre Rye, Rolf Hansen, Trygve and Bill Lee and Harold Kringlebotten. I played three years of football.

So it was growing up on Snoose Hill. Life was simple, uncluttered and safe. Our wants were few, our needs were few.

Gone are Arne, Lester, Sverre, Trygve, Rolf and more. The place has only five survivors of the original residents living on the hill; Aagot Erickson, Mary Ida Greenman, Bob Brunner, Lawrence Johnsen and George Michaelson. Others have left and returned but these five will never leave until Valhalla calls.

I am now in my eighty-fourth year and married to Gertrude Basil who I met on her nineteenth birthday. She is a fine, generous, caring lady and a fortress in our marriage.

Was all this sixty-five - seventy-five years ago? To me it was yesterday.

Eklund Park

by Arne Salonen

Editor’s note: When the forests of Finland were being depleted, young Victor Salonen came to the United States to work in the copper mines of Michigan. He later went back to Finland to attend an agricultural college. Before returning to the United States, he was married to Katri Groundstroem, a Swedish schoolteacher from Vyborg, which at the time was located in Finland on the southern border of Russia. Instead of returning to Michigan, the Salonens moved to South Bend in the state of Washington in order to
I was born in 1915 in a two-room house on the east side of the Eklund Park hill, a stone's throw from the Columbia Box mill. I was the second child of Katri and Victor Salonen, my sister, Aino, being two years older. Dad worked in the mill, as did a lot of other new residents and immigrants. There were mostly Norwegians, some Germans, a few English, Swiss, Swedes. And maybe some others I can't remember. There were many kids to play with, the families were all young.

My mother spoke to my sister and me in Swedish, my first language. She had been born in Rauma, Finland, across the Baltic Sea from Sweden. Her ancestors were maritimers and owned sailing ships. They were Swedish aristocrats who had come to the Finnish coast to have a good harbor with fresh forests for lumber trading, mostly with Germany.

Mother's family, with two brothers and three sisters, had Finnish girls for house servants. Mother went to college and emerged a teacher; She taught school at Viborg in southern Finland, near the Russian border. She went on voyages and learned some German, French, and Russian. She could speak Finnish but at home chose not to. My mother lived to be 96 years old.

Dad's parents were poor Finnish farmers who worked for others. During the great exodus of the late Eighteenth Century, Dad's father, my grandfather, decided to go to earn enough money to buy a farm back in Finland. Victor went to work at the Columbia Box and Lumber Company. Victor and Katri Salonen had three children, Aino, Arne, and Aili. Arne Salonen graduated in the class of 1933 from South Bend High School. He worked in the mills, and put in four years as an 8th Air Force mechanic during World War II. He now lives in Hoquiam, Washington. He says, "I was lucky to be born here and go to school in South Bend!" He recalls here his growing years.

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America. My father, Victor Salonen, and his oldest brother, John, around sixteen years old, came with him. They went to Upper Michigan, worked in the copper mines for about two years, and saved their money. Then Dad and his father returned to Finland. Grandpa bought and built a house and became a farmer who worked for himself, not others. Dad went to Agricultural College where he met my mother, who was five years older than he. After they were married, they decided to go to America to earn money, then return to Finland and settle down as farmers. Rather than returning to Michigan, his sister, Ida, who was married to Coast Guard Captain Herman Winbeck, Commander at the Lifesaving Station at North Cove from 1912 to 1941, convinced Victor to come to a land of greater opportunity, Pacific County in southwest Washington State.

Dad’s first employment was at the Columbia Box and Lumber Mill located on the side of a hill along the Willapa River where there was ample room for loading docks. Most of the workers lived on the hill which was within walking distance of the mill. Dad was a hard worker and smart enough to become a lumber grader on a moving chain directing every piece where to go. He had a small house built onto which he added another room when the third child came. I remember the night Aili was born. The doctor was there and Mom was in labor. My older sister asked me, “What’s wrong with Mom?” I answered, “She’s having a baby!”

I learned Finnish from Dad and Mother, Norwegian from the neighbor kids, and English from my parents as they worked at learning it. My dad subscribed to The Oregonian newspaper and spent his evenings sitting and reading the articles out loud, trying to pronounce and syllabizing the words. We had lots of books in Finnish, Swedish and English which my sister and I learned to read. Our conversation in the home was Swedish and Finnish, and later, English.

The whole hill was our playground and the mill dock was a part of it. The first ships were sailing ships coming to pick up a cargo of green lumber (undried) for South America, Australia, and possibly China. After working hours, lots of kids roamed on the dock. Some of the bigger boys climbed the ships’ rigging; one climber fell and broke his arm. We all grew up on the water. Eklund Park had water on three sides. The west side had a dock for the fishing boats, gillnet boats that used nets at certain times of the year, and trolling boats that fished in the ocean all summer long. In gillnet season on the river, we would buy fish from the fishermen by going down to the Eklund Park dock to pick them up. There were fish buyers down by the railroad station. The fish were iced and shipped out to other places. I don’t recall a cannery in South Bend. Astoria was a big cannery town with several, mostly women, workers in them.

The river and the mill were my playground as I grew up. I remember walking on the big old growth logs floating in the water. I followed the logs up the “log slips” and watched them roll onto the “log deck,” a temporary storage place before being rolled onto the “carriage,” the wheeled device that moved the log through the “head-rig” saw. This was a big band saw that cut the logs into flat slabs, or “cants” so they could be run through a smaller machine called an “edger.” From there to the trimmer chain table, to move to the trimmer saws to be cut into various lengths as was needed for the “order” from the customer. The green lumber was piled on
two-wheeled carts and pulled by a one-horse and driver to the dock, and unloaded in temporary storage to await the ships.

The mill was a beehive of activity with lots of workers. They were paid in cash weekly, sometimes in gold coins. I remember Dad showing us kids the shiny gold coins called "kulta-raha", in Finnish. I don't recall the Swedish translation.

The mill also had a dry-kiln to dry lumber for the planking mill and shipment by rail to California, the East Coast, and places in between. The mill had a long shipping shed where the lumber was stored, standing on end, to be kept dry while waiting before shipment across the country.

The mill yard, or environs, also had a big stable where the horses were kept, fed, and bedded down. I used to go into the stable to look at them. Another big shed was nearby where boxes were made. That is why the mill was named "The Columbia Box and Lumber Company". It was always referred to as "The Columbia Box" mill. Other mills in South Bend were the Kleeb Mill and another on the west end of town. I don't recall its name but it became a Weyerhaeuser mill later on. All the mills had docks to tie ships to while loading.

I can remember when the first "Jitney" came to the Columbia Box to pull and push the loaded lumber carts to the dock or to the dry-kilns. It was noisy with an open engine compartment, and no muffler. Probably a four-cylinder model "T" Ford engine adapted to a jitney body, it had small solid rubber tires.

What else did I do for fun and recreation? On summer evenings, we kids would play hide and seek using the whole hill. We would form two groups. The first took off leaving chalk arrow-marks in conspicuous places. The second group would follow the chalk marks and try to find us. I suppose the white chalk came from our school. The elementary school had big blackboards on those walls that did not have windows or doors.
In the summertime - June, July and August - we spent our time at "the Narrows" beach playing in the water learning how to swim. If we had rowboats, we rowed around and across the river where there was an old orchard with plums and apples. We would swim across the river at the narrows. One girl, older and a real tomboy, swam across and back and forth, five times, a real feat.

Where did we change clothes to swim suits? In the brush or vacant boat houses. Later, someone built us a "changing" shack with two doors, partition in the center.

The boys soon cut holes in the wall so they could peek into the girls' side. The girls' bathing suits had a short skirt in front only, to hide their lower body and a commonly heard caution was "Jane, pull your skirt down." The boys had plain trunks.

Across the river to the north was Baleville, a little settlement with its own grade school. The older kids of high school age went from the Baleville dock to the South Bend dock in a gasoline-powered launch. The "school boat" kids then walked up to the old high school which, I believe, was on a hill in town.

The beautiful brick-front high school, on "The Flats," (as we hill-dwellers called those that lived there) was built in 1924 and was a "state of the art" educational structure. It had four floors, or levels. The front was all glass and brick. Going to "junior high" which was on the second floor, was a big change from the smaller Broadway Grade School that the Eklund Park kids had gone to for six years, more or less. I remember coming back to school after Christmas vacation and our teacher, Mrs. Hamblin, simply called out the names of half a dozen or more upper-element students and said, "Take your stuff and go over to Junior High!"

We had never been there before and being sent on your own as a twelve-year-old was high adventure. I and Esther Christopherson, probably Harold Rossler, and the Nettletons from Alta Vista (as that residential hill was called), the kids from town and "Nob Hill" went to A Street Grade School. We had not known each other. Mostly we ended up spending six very pleasant years going through Junior High then High school. One of our teachers, a very pleasant, lovable lady named Mary Burleigh Lehman still lives in Hawaii. The others may yet be living in Seattle in a teachers' retirement manor. "Mary Burleigh," as we called her, was very attached to South Bend and I kept in touch by long-distance telephone. She is now about 92 years old.

Behind the settlement of Baleville, which later on sent its students to South Bend schools by a small bus (that was not painted yellow) was a hill that is less than 1000 feet high, but a challenge anyway. I used to row across the river, hike up the hill, cross the big signs and climb to the top. One year the Government Survey people put up a "triangulation tower." It was there for several years and visible from Eklund Park. I climbed the tower and had a view of the ocean. Living in Eklund Park made that possible.

My parents had chickens and a cow, sometimes given a calf because a cow needed to "come fresh" to give more milk. I took care of the cow, milked her, cleaned out her stall, fed her baled hay and coarse cow meal that came in 100 pound burlap sacks. Alfalfa hay came from Eastern Washington. Leber Bros. had a grocery and
feed store where Nettleton Metal Works was later located. They made two deliveries a day to Eklund Park, one was a horse and buggy for light groceries (most people did not have automobiles) the second delivery was with a four-wheel farm wagon pulled by a team of horses that brought the bales of alfalfa, 100-pound sacks of cow meal, 100-pound sacks of flour, sugar, and potatoes. I wonder if the wheel ruts are still visible in the ground where the driver took a shortcut to get down to the street by the river from Summit Street, the high road on top.

And roads or streets, what were the first streets like? They were made of full-thickness 3"x12" fir planks, 10 feet or longer as needed, laid crosswise for one lane. In the winter, a heavy frost made them slippery for car and bicycle tires. A snow would keep the cars at home and in the garage. People who could afford cars built a garage to protect them, no building permits required. Most of the people bought Fords and Chevrolets. My Dad bought a Buick touring car that advertised four-wheel brakes. Being used to drive a team and wagon, he had a tight grip on the steering wheel. We made trips to Portland, Seattle, Mount Rainier, Astoria, and often to Naselle, a Finnish settlement called "Nyysela," why, I don’t know unless it was easier to say than "Naselle". The drive down and back was all gravel road and wound through groves of giant spruce and cedar, often going around to miss a tree that grew in the roadway.

The road between Raymond and South Bend was paved thanks to the State Highway Department. Driving was a task left to the men folk. I think one woman in Eklund Park drove. I knew one woman on Nob Hill who drove the car because her husband refused to. Then the day came when the county took all the planks out and built a better, wider road using crushed rock. It was years before blacktop covered the gravel.
Was there any crime, theft, or vandalism? We lost some money to a break-in thief one time my mother, my sister and I were going to town. I forget how much it was or how he got in. On Halloween we did insignificant pranks. When a couple got married, we kids would gather around their home, or parents' home, and beat old washtubs with sticks to make a big racket until they came out and gave us treats. There were some of the boys who got sent to the reform school for writing bad checks. I don't know what others did.

Were there any high points in the year? Christmas and Christmas presents are the best remembered. One year I got a pedal car that my Dad bought me. Another year I got a fancy sled from Sears catalog. The Fourth of July was always looked forward to because Mr. Thew, the phone company manager who lived on the hill, put on a big show of fireworks that we all came out to watch. He was also the local weather observer and reporter.

We sometimes dug mud clams on the Narrows beach, boiled them and ate them right there. We picked little blackberries and sold them to a Mrs. Raymond who lived in the park. She made blackberry jam. She didn’t want the red ones. We had newspaper routes. The P.I. was the best one. We peeled cascara bark for pennies. People who kept a milk cow sold milk to neighbors and it was delivered by the family children. My sister and I did that mostly.

Eklund Park was the best place to grow up in that I can think of. One time I stowed away on a lumber ship at the Willapa Mill dock and went to Aberdeen and hitchhiked home, getting back in time to go to class in the morning. The ship was the Verman of the Calmar Line. A friend was supposed to go with me but didn’t show up so I went alone. We boys would usually go aboard the ships and talk to the crew members. Most of us went fishing as helpers when we got older. Some of the boys ended up rich, owning canneries. Our neighbor boy made the Coast Guard his career. His sister was a nurse. A younger brother started a bakery in Anchorage, Alaska.

When the depression came, Dad lost his money when the Savings and Loans
Laying water main pipes on bottom of Willapa River at the Narrows, Eklund Park. These had to be replaced frequently because of being snagged by passing boats.

failed. They had been deposited in the local bank which disappeared along with the assets of the bank after the closures in the Crash of 1929. Dad’s dreams of returning to Finland and buying a farm were shattered. Columbia Box and Lumber closed its doors. In the year 1933 the factory was dismantled for scrap and sold to Portland Machinery Company. Victor Salonen found work at the Willapa Mill and continued to work all through the depression. He never did get his farm.

Next came the winter attack by the Russians, and World War II with Germany trying to conquer Russia. Of course, the Finns fought with the Germans against Russia. I was going to go there and help my relatives in the war but it ended too soon. Many young American and Canadian Finns did go.

When I was out of high school, I worked in the mills for a time. I enlisted in the Army when the war came and spent four years in the service, two in America and two overseas. I was happy to be back home, safe and sound. Many of my friends are buried in England and Europe, and many of my relatives lie in the church yards of Finland. Now most of my Eklund friends are dead, but a few my age still survive. If you could talk to them, I’m sure they would all agree that growing up on Eklund Park was better than growing up on the Mississippi River with Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.