

Old Postcard View from Inspiration Point

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS
AT
WOODSTOCK FARM**

**A Progress Report For
2006 – 2007**

**Steve Paus, President, Woodstock Farm Conservancy
Tim Wahl, Bellingham Parks and Recreation**

January 2008

Dear Friends of Woodstock Farm,

This is a report about what has been happening at Woodstock Farm this past year. The last report was made in February of 2006. A lot has happened since then, with the support of many. Here is a partial summary, with apologies for accidental omissions.

Accomplishments supported by the City of Bellingham

We saw the departure of **Volunteer Coordinator Tricia Hildebrandt**, replaced until just recently by **Joe Gallagher**. Joe, leader of energetic WWU students and others, we will miss you. Good luck in Anchorage! Joe is replaced by **Sean Sweeney, farm caretaker and the new Americorps Volunteer Coordinator**. Welcome, Sean!

Sue Madsen's Washington Conservation Corps crews (provided through the City's Public Works Department) made big inroads into the Boathouse Point and the Studio Ravine ivy patches. They were champs at installing fence posts and clearing the old wagon road, now a part of the shoreline section of the Kopperdahl Trail, from Woodstock Creek to the east. Now we need some gravel and drainage to dry out the rest of the trail!

The Greenway Endowment Fund and numerous volunteers (including **Allison Roberts' Girl Scouts**) maintained a steady attack on the ivy bed just south of the Gates-Lee House. A series of work parties began freeing the rock knoll north of the Woodstock Driveway. The City of Bellingham Greenway Endowment Fund provides support for basic land stewardship and maintenance on properties purchased with Greenway Levy Funds.

Volunteer intern **Dominic Metropolis-Palo** (assisted by **Tim and Tobie Wahl** who created the line art and labeling) excelled at assembling a new Woodstock walking map (see map attached). Dominic also prepared a regional survey of similar historic sites, something that will prove useful in preparing for the Farm's future. This survey has been adapted for public use and as a visitation guide.

Larry Steele and Associates is now completing a major topographic mapping effort of the Farm, and its trail corridor connections with Chuckanut Village and the North Chuckanut Mountain Trailhead at California Street. This map will be invaluable for planning the adaptation of the Farm for public use, and future construction of the foot trail linking the Farm with the North Chuckanut Mt. Trailhead.

Jonathan Schilk and Tim Wahl mapped the preliminary route of a foot trail to California Street, where a new crosswalk would cross Chuckanut Drive to reach the trailhead parking lot. Jonathan began work on the Inspiration Point Overlook and Farm Access project and convened its first advisory committee meeting. The project includes construction funds for the adaptation of the scenic overlook at the historic Inspiration Point site, including a van pick-up and drop-off area, an

ADA-standard parking stall, selective view opening through the trees, and a new gateway into the Farm from Inspiration Point. Another important element of the project will be preparation of preliminary designs for adapting the Woodstock driveway for safer vehicular access, and to define on-site parking and transportation access management opportunities. The plan will likely involve 30-some vehicle spaces, provisions for shuttle vans and ridesharing, trail improvements, and "spot" improvements for bicycles on a section of Chuckanut Drive.

The Woodstock Caretakers: Dave and Megan Rogers, Doug and Shirley Erickson, Gordon Scott, Sheila Harrington and Denis and Georgie Bailey. These people, and their Americorps colleagues, keep the site open for all of us and put up with a unique blend of public service and, theoretically, residential bliss on a real City frontier. The City will continue this interim caretaker program, whereby caretakers contribute cash and in-kind labor "to keep the lights on and the grass mowed", until it provides or contracts with a site-based operator. The caretaker leases are gradually being reduced in length. These are set up for transfer to, and oversight by, a party who would promote the Farm's building compound for community-oriented use and who is committed to the protection of the site's cultural resources.

Accomplishments led and substantially supported by the Farm's devoted private patrons and energetic citizen-workers:

Woodstock received a generous and substantial donation from former Woodstock resident **Roger Lee, the son of the Farm's previous owners, Gladys and Raymond Lee.** Roger's gift was to the Woodstock Farm Conservancy, a portion of which was used to carry out the Farm's sheep shed relocation project, carried out by the **Home Port Learning Center**.

Relocating the sheep pen is part of a volunteer and caretaker implemented effort to open the lower part of the Woodstock site to public access with view, shoreline and meadow opportunities. (Look for another change in its location as site planning progresses).



Home Port Center Students and teacher are building the fence and gate for the sheep. Photo by Tim Wahl

This overall effort includes opening the Kopperdahl Trail walking loop and shoreline access within the Farm (see map attached), and periodic public access to the Lower Bluff Pasture through a new gate below the Gates-Lee House.

These initial "shoestring" efforts are important and very useful, but as with other public greenway sites, City assistance with construction of this and other off-site trail links, like the "California Street Trail", will be critical for getting people to and from the Farm.

In memory of her late husband, Woodstock resident and marine biologist **Richard Fettis, Chris Veseth and supporters** initiated a Woodstock Farm Conservancy Gift Fund for landscape improvements, notably a memorial bench program to raise funds for Woodstock amenities and to provide comfort to its visitors. Efforts to establish the bench program are also being supported by **Garry and Loretta Orr, owners of Pacific Concrete Industries Inc.**

Home Port Learning Center and the families and friends of **Jeff Caraco and partner Chelsea** spearheaded the transformation of the Gates grass tennis court back to an open, beautiful space by demolishing the Lee-era sheepfold. The efforts of Team Caraco remain Woodstock's most sustained private work party accomplishment to date. The tennis court is clear and includes a new fire pit. Meanwhile, we have the new, relocated sheep shed under construction, financed by the **Woodstock Farm Conservancy** with materials and fencing provided by **the Home Port Learning Center**.

Speaking of sheep, Happy Valley weaver and shepherd, **Bobbie Vollendorf**, continues to loan the City **Alice and Cooper**, companions to City sheep **Lumpy**. Bobbie continues to support the improvement and care of the Farm's sheep and is interested in having the Farm be a show and story place for rare breeds and the sheep culture (and environmental history) of Cyrus Gates' and Charles Perkins Marsh's namesake Vermont landscape.

On the heels of the **Caraco Characters** tennis court work, the **Bellingham Bay Rotary Club** arrived to spread and level top soil on the liberated, island-oriented terrace. (Parks Department arborists **Jame Luce and Dan Thomas** carefully pruned the court's American elms for a cathedral effect).

MADD about Woodstock: Volunteers flocked to Woodstock on October **Make Difference Days in 2006 and 2007**, through the community-wide efforts of the **Whatcom Volunteer Center**. A lot of fence posts and camas bulbs were planted and invasive species unplanted in 2006. Make a Difference Day 2007 was particularly energized by the efforts of **Steve Heaton (Kelly Moore Paints), Steve Paus and Christine Turnbaugh**, who led and fed chowder to the Rotarians and other volunteers including **Larry Williams**, leaf-blower extraordinaire and **Joan Tezak and Steve Paus**, garage painters emeritus.



MADD Painters Stephanie Bowers and John Turnbaugh Photo by Tim Wahl

Thanks to the **MADD** painting efforts the Gates-Lee basement office (for volunteers and caretakers) and the garage are now vastly lighter and more pleasant. The garage transformation comes to us mostly through the hard summer work of **Rob Buchholz**, who cleaned, prepped, sanded and more. All through the garage project **Steve Heaton** provided expertise and support.

Rob Buchholz returned, really never left, to build **3 new outdoor benches** with recycled materials, patterned after a design used at the site by the Gates family. The design is “guaranteed to” keep sitters awake and alert during events like the most interesting **lecture given by Todd Koetje and Sarah Campbell** at the culmination of June and July’s second **WWU Anthropology Department Archaeology Field School**.

WWU continues to store and study the City's Woodstock artifact collection and provides baseline and interpretive information about the Farm's prehistoric history. Cultural features at the Farm date to 2,500 to 3,000 years before present and include remains of an interior style pit house. About 70 people attended an evening lecture made possible with the assistance of Bellingham Parks and Recreation.



Woodstock Farm Today Photo by Tim Wahl

Savannah School of Art and Design graduate student Tarin Erickson prepared a template and processed historic photo images for an interpretive then-and-now brochure of Woodstock, including both its built and planted features. Tarin is now embarking on Master's Thesis about the history of **Inspiration Points in North America**, a project born here at Woodstock; it will include many of the nation's premier national parks and scenic highways.

Retired Smithsonian archivist Carol Kelm has worked on cataloguing historic photos and artifacts donated to the Woodstock Farm Conservancy by **Bobbie Morris** and others.

Carol Kelm, Linda Carr and Robert Maxwell are committed to building a flexible docent program to enrich public use and special events and to inform the many efforts to adapt and preserve the Farm and its history.

Bobbie Morris, a descendant of the Bellingham's Huntoon family (whose clan included Mrs. Mable Huntoon Gates, Cyrus' wife, of Woodstock), continued her donation of materials to the Woodstock Farm Conservancy. Her recent gifts include silver items belonging to Mabel Gates, more old photographs, a Gates tapestry from Woodstock, an Indian basket featured in an early Gates photograph and many other items.

Vanessa and William Randall donated a wonderful 1930 American National Bank (of Fairhaven) wall calendar featuring a Burt Huntoon picture of Chuckanut Island. (Cyrus Gates was both President of the ANB and the owner of the Island; his heirs have donated Chuckanut Island to the Nature Conservancy in his name.)

Paul Woodcock continued to enlarge the Farm's bird species list and led the second annual **NE Chuckanut Bay Breeding Bird Survey** in June. **Lee Kincaid** provided sublime boat services for the 2006 event. It is hoped that he can do it again in 2008. **Fred Rhoades** continued to enlarge the lichen list and **Binda Colebrook and John Wesselink** assisted Tim Wahl and intern **Tarin Erickson** with mapping of the Farm's heritage trees, both surviving ornamentals and selected, unique natives. These efforts are critical to establishing baseline information that will guide learning and interpretive programs and inform development and management actions.

Denis and Georgie Bailey identified the Gates and Lee fruit trees for inclusion on the Farm's new base map. Most of these trees are apart of the original farm orchard and are as old as anything at Woodstock. The Baileys have worked diligently over the years to protect the trees and preserve their pedigrees. Woodstock Farm Conservancy board members have met twice with Mr and Mrs. Bailey to discuss a \$200,000. fund they have established to help protect the Woodstock buildings. The Bellingham Herald reported the creation of the Bailey's fund at the time the Woodstock Farm Property was purchased from the Lee Family by the City of Bellingham. Roof maintenance is just one of the items to be considered for the use of the funds the Bailey's have made available. They continue to work closely with the Woodstock Farm Conservancy Board toward their intended preservation of this site.

Inside The Gates-Lee House:

Ed Wahl donated 3 framed Craftsman style prints for display and Chuckanut artist **Bob Todd** donated a painting he made in Woodstock, Vermont showing the manse on the historic George Perkins Marsh/Frederick Billings property. **Steve Chastain** donated the rights to use a very special set of historic photographs by Bellingham's **Henry C. Engberg**, which were scanned by Tim Wahl. One of these was the earliest known shot of Chuckanut Bay from the Farm's Upper Bluff. Tim Wahl digitally cleaned and printed a wall-size image and **Stuart Zemel** donated cash for the framing, which was matched by the **Chuckanut Bay Art and Sculpture Gallery**.

Don and Carol Salisbury of the Chuckanut Bay Art and Sculpture Gallery sponsored the **Chuckanut Sanctuaries** event in April 2007 which brought about three hundred visitors and experts in wildlife landscaping to the Farm one Sunday and generated a donation to the Woodstock Farm Conservancy from Gallery sales. We were all surprised how many people skipped the Gallery that day and went straight to the Farm, thanks largely to Gallery promotional efforts. Tim and **Phoebe Wahl** designed and printed a series of **linoleum-cut note cards** for the

event featuring the more iconic Chuckanut bird species. **The cards are being sold to benefit the Conservancy at the Gallery.**

Wayne Gerner of Chuckanut Village donated a set of prehistoric artifacts and wondrous “near artifacts” to the Conservancy. Included was a very interesting stone adze blank found near the Fairhaven Street Marsh, placed with the City collection under the care of WWU. While helping to assess the Boat House Midden, **John Elliot** found a finished adze on the beach, now also at WWU.

An informal group, the **Surfriders**, (mostly young professionals in the environmental sciences) held a series of meetings and appears poised to assist with design and plant procurement for the **new planting bed on Flag Pole Hill** just north of the Gates-Lee House parking area. We hope they will help us with this. Caretakers and other volunteers removed the juniper bed and loose rock walls there in preparation for a low cost, initial (pre-site plan) planting based on matching sites on Chuckanut Mt. **Lisa Botcher-Law** assisted with the layout and volunteer planting in the fall. We hope she will continue working with the public at sites like Woodstock. Lisa’s husband **Andy Law of, and with the support of, Wilson Engineering**, is taking on preliminary design and feasibility assessment work for the repair, and perhaps day-lighting, of the culvert reach of Woodstock Creek along the base of the Flag Pole planting area. Parks Landscape Architect Jonathan Schilk and others are very interested in options for bringing the Creek back to the surface here, as a design and sound feature complementing the parking area, and the culvert under the driveway needs some work as well. **Jonathan Schilk is Project Manager** for the associated driveway and parking feasibility study with **Reichardt and Ebbe**, a local civil engineering firm.



View Over Lower Bluff by Joyce Prigot

Trish Harding and other plein-air artists have been and continue to visit the Farm. They have offered use of their images for Woodstock promotional efforts and to enrich the experience of Farm visitors. With considerable works on hand, they have offered to assist with a Woodstock fundraising effort in 2008. This will include a show over a weekend in June and possibly an auction. Themes of this show could include the Chuckanut Coast, Woodstock Farm and the Art Deco styles used in national park and scenic highway promotions of the early 1900s.



Old Postcard View from Upper Bluff

Horticulture: **Tim Fry** adopted Woodstock's new Upper Bluff plantings during the dry season of 2006; his was the critical care necessary to keep many other volunteer efforts alive and thriving, including a series of Garry oaks donated by, **Cecelia Lloyd**. We lost a few of the new bluff shrubs in 2007, but under the care of Tim Fry, but most plants made it through the summer.

Tricia Otto donated sword ferns from trail maintenance efforts at the **Agate Pond Preserve** and can provide more for places like the Boat House Ravine. **Cloud Mountain Farms** donated a selection of hairy manzanita shrubs recalling the "old ledge openings" of nearby Chuckanut Mountain and Governor's Point.

WFC Forms:

The **Woodstock Farm Conservancy** created its founding Board of Directors, incorporated as a Washington State nonprofit corporation, adopted its bylaws, filed for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, and began regular monthly board meetings. This initial organization-building has been critical to the long term health and sustainability of the Conservancy. The Conservancy met with the **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board** to introduce the Conservancy and share its vision and enthusiasm for support of the site. The Advisory Board's **Adrienne Lederer** agreed to be its liaison between the Conservancy and the Parks Advisory Committee and has begun discussions with Park staff and WTA about van service to the Woodstock Farm and nearby parks and trailheads.



Charles Engberg Photo Courtesy of Steve Chastain

Looking ahead in 2008:

The Conservancy hopes to co-sponsor two community events at Woodstock with the City of Bellingham, probably with fundraising elements. The WFC also plans to co-sponsor a "site adaptation" charrette with the City to define the Farm's best role in Bellingham's system of parks, trails, and heritage and cultural sites.

The term "charrette" refers to a creative, graphically-oriented team exercise involving professional designers and planners and public site advocates. "Adaptation" refers to the changes necessary to make the old residential Farm site useable by the public, for whatever uses are determined to be compatible and desirable. In a nutshell, the Conservancy's main concerns are preservation of character, balancing "improvement" with preservation, and providing a rich and meaningful place for the public to enjoy and understand the site and its relationship to our area's history and environment, notably the history of its parkland and wildlife.

Recruiting of Board members and a part-time, volunteer Administrative Coordinator will be a part of the WFC Board's careful planning for 2008. The Conservancy is also heir to the Richard Fettis memorial project, which is focused on reestablishing the Gates family concrete benches in selected parts of the Farm. Over time, work with the City and future bench donors will be part of WFC Board's careful planning.

The City Parks Department will continue with design and construction of the van stop, site entrance and scenic highway frontage project at Inspiration Point, and with completion of the "California Street Trail" topographic survey. Included in this effort is preparation of a preliminary plan for managing auto and emergency vehicle access on the Farm premises (parking and driveways). The preparation of a conceptual access plan outlining alternatives and opportunities for facilitating non-motorized and motorized access to the Farm is apart of this effort.

The City plans to use these two access planning reports with prospective site partners, in the site adaptation design charrette, tentatively being discussed to occur in July 2008. Thereafter public presentations will lead to formal adoption of a plan which will guide the future adaptation and operation of the Woodstock Farm property.

Volunteer and construction activities at the site will be opportunistic, based on volunteer energy and limited staff support. This work will focus on continued control of invasive species (for which the hardest physical work has been done), and repair and installation of fences, for sheep, safety and more public access to the Lower Bluff and Beach Pastures. Drainage and surface improvements on the Kopperdahl Trail and construction of the foot trail to California Street are perhaps the most important short term projects for the Farm. Funds are presently budgeted 2 to 3 years out for this work, but none at present for grant-writing to seek matching funds.

Construction funds for amending and re-fencing the Woodstock Creek riparian zone will become available in October of 2008 through a Department of Ecology near-shore enhancement grant to the City. The idea is to remove invasive species from along the creek corridor and establish wider buffers between the creek and grazed areas. Resources for outreach and planning involving the South Neighborhood are included. These will include wild-land management issues associated with the low elevation of the Chuckanut Village-to-Woodstock trail. Re-establishment of the old "Village to Farm" route involves sensitive wildlife areas and addressing a series of neighborhood concerns.

The City will also continue to examine caretaking procedures at the site, recruit a short term caretaking coordinator (probably in-house) and, as time permits, to locate parties interested in programming the site during warm weather.

Woodstock Farm Board Members

Paul Barkley, Earl Cilley, Sue Ellen Heflin, Gwen Howat, Steve Paus, Carl Prince, Joan Tezak

For more information contact the Woodstock Farm Conservancy:

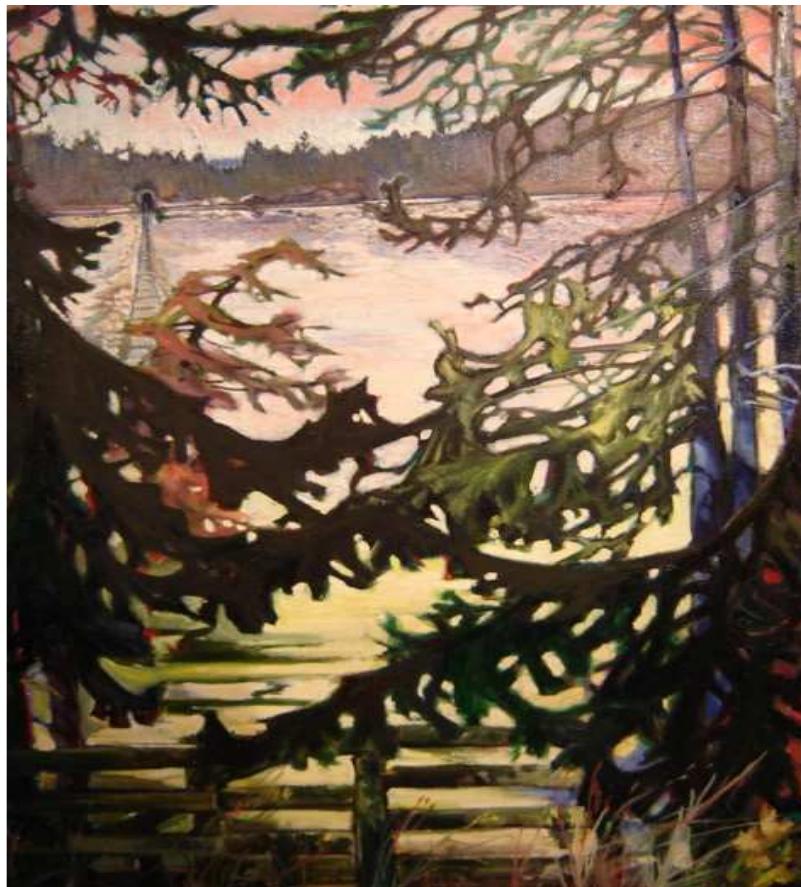
woodstockfarmconservancy@yahoo.com

For City Parks information contact:

Jonathan Schilk, LA, Project Manager for the Inspiration Point/"on-site motor vehicle options" project. jschilk@cob.org 360-676-6985

Tim Wahl, interim site issues, partnership projects, volunteer planning and assessment work, conceptual area plan for access to the Farm. twahl@cob.org 360-676-6985

Rae Edwards, volunteer work parties involving "grounds and green".
redwards@cob.org 360-676-6801



Train Trestle (Woodstock Farm) by Trish Harding

Map Attachment

