

2022April2HistoryNotes

Kitsap County is located on the Kitsap Peninsula in Washington State. It is **bordered** on the west by the Hood Canal, the north by Puget Sound, across the Puget Sound on the east by King County and the south by Mason County. Kitsap County is one of the smallest counties in the state in terms of land area; however, it ranks third in the state in terms of its population density.

The long history of what is now called Kitsap County in Washington State can be counted as far back as the last Ice Age. At that time, the entire Kitsap Peninsula, and all of British Columbia, all the way up to Alaska and beyond were under an enormous glacier that towered up to 2 miles high and lasted 45,000 years. Kitsap waterways and edges of Kitsap peninsula was scoured by the glacier as it slowly melted away.

The first humans who made Kitsap home are a Tribe of Suquamish People whose current main governing body in Kitsap are located at The Port Madison Indian Reservation in North Kitsap. They were a part of the Suquamish Nation on Vancouver Island in what is now called British Columbia, Canada.

The Suquamish and their ancestors have inhabited the Puget Sound area for thousands of years. Before European contact, the region was one of the most populated centers north of what is now Mexico City. Unlike the larger tribes of British Columbia, Alaska, the Plains and the Southwest, the Indians of the Puget Sound lived in relatively small, autonomous villages. Many tribes were affiliated through intermarriage, political agreement, trade, material culture and language.

[American Indian Records in the National Archives.](#)

In 1792, 16 years after the American Revolutionary War, the Suquamish People heard rumors of strangers in odd sailing craft had been arriving for ten years from Indians further north and west toward the Pacific. Captain George Vancouver and the men of the ship *Discovery* had come to map the waterways and areas in preparation to claim ownership. Over a two-week period, lieutenant Peter Puget and his small crew charted and recorded, the inlets and evidence of habitation from Whidbey Island south to what is now Olympia, WA. Vancouver named Puget Sound after the lieutenant. The various groups of Indians on Puget Sound treated

the strangers in equal manner, trading them fresh venison, fish, native berries and roots for beads, cloth and iron.

European Contact

Profound cultural changes followed contact with Europeans. Disease, such as smallpox, for which Native Americans had no immunity, devastated the population and social fabric of the indigenous people. Estimates of mortality among the Pacific Northwest Indians, resulting from European-born disease, range as high as 90 percent. Hudson's Bay Company records suggest there were approximately 1,500 S'Klallams in 1845. By 1853, when the Washington Territory was created, government records indicated that S'Klallam numbers had dwindled to only about 400.

Actions are underway across Washington to rectify the history of stolen lands, broken treaties and the violence of colonization. Deals are taking every shape and size, such as returning the 2-acre cemetery of the S'Klallams to a sweeping so-called Land Back transaction spearheaded by Conservation Northwest.

The Kitsap Peninsula and Kitsap County are named in honor of Chief Kitsap. A great and legendary leader of the indigenous people of the Salish Sea. He led a vast intertribal coalition and built the biggest longhouse call Old Man House in Suquamish, near Agate Pass. The Suquamish had two great nineteenth-century leaders whose names live on today. The other great leader was Seattle (178?-1866), a nephew of Kitsap who was chief of both the Suquamish and Duwamish tribes when the Denny Party arrive at Alki Point in 1853. Chief Seattle was considered a friend of the white settlers. The urging of David "Doc" Maynard (1808-1873) the village of Duwamps on Elliott Bay was renamed after Chief Seattle in 1853.

The Kitsap Peninsula is home to two Native American tribes, [the Suquamish Tribe](#) and [the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe](#). The Suquamish Tribe hosts [Chief Seattle Days in August](#) to commemorate Chief Seattle and celebrate tribal traditions.

On Nov. 8 1824, John Work of the [Hudson's Bay Company](#), while looking for potential sites for a trading post, recorded it as Soquamis Bay - a variation on the name of the [Suquamish](#) tribe which made its home on the western shore. The [Wilkes Expedition](#) surveyed the bay on May 10, 1841 and named it for [James Madison](#), the 4th president of the United States.

[George A. Meigs](#) built a lumber mill on the Bainbridge Island shore of the bay in 1854, and Port Madison was soon a booming mill town. The town of Port Madison became [Kitsap County](#)'s first [county seat](#), but after the economic depression of the 1890s closed the mill, the seat was relocated to what was then called Slaughter.

During the 1857 session of the Territorial Legislature in Olympia, the mill owners applied for their own county and the measure passed on January 17, 1857. The county encompassed the Kitsap Peninsula from Hood Canal to Puget Sound, including Bainbridge Island and south to Sawamish (Mason) County.

On July 13, 1857, the recently organized Slaughter County was renamed Kitsap County to honor Chief Kitsap, a Suquamish military leader. The county seat is at Port Madison and remained there until 1893, when it moved move to Port Orchard.

The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe: Killer whales are carved atop a headstone on the grave of Chief Joseph Anderson, born in 1895. By the time of his death in 1937, and was buried in the family cemetery near Hansville, Kitsap County, Chief Joseph Anderson would see the families of S'Klallam people removed from the place that was always their home on the clear salt waters of Port Gamble Bay — and adapting new ways in order to survive.

Currently, the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe shape the future of the former Pope & Talbot mill site where many tribal members worked and where they had also lived for generations before the mill was built. Which is the area where Hood Canal meets Port Gamble Bay. The former mill site was an ancient village of great significance to the tribe

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The tribe intends to manage a portion of the site as a park, protected under a conservation easement. The 142-year-old mill closed in 1995. (Alan Berner / The Seattle Times

Ancestors of the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe were displaced from their village site when the mill was built by Pope & Talbot in 1853. The former mill site is being cleaned up and development rights for a portion of the site have been purchased by the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, which intends to conserve the land as a park.

*Lynda V. Mapes: Seattle Times environmental reporter

On September 15, 1890, Sidney becomes the first city in Kitsap County to incorporate. It is classified as a town of the fourth class. Immediately following the incorporation, the new Sidney mayor and council collect a poll tax and announce that Sidney saloons must now pay an annual licensing fee. The money is spent on city improvements such as hill grading and bridges. In the first years after incorporation, Sidney will help bring the Puget Sound Naval Station to Sinclair Inlet, will become the county seat, and will rename itself Port Orchard. These events will ensure the continued growth of the new town. [History Link.org](#)

In 1889, Thomas Cline, built the town's first wharf, which further increased the growth of the town's population. The wharf met the needs of the growing "Mosquito Fleet," private steamers that served Puget Sound. The boats were so numerous that they were said to resemble a swarm of mosquitoes. In the 1890s, these ferries were scheduled to depart Sidney for Seattle up to five times a day. [Building Streets and Courting the Navy.](#)

Three years after its incorporation, Sidney became the new Kitsap County seat. However, the town of Charleston (now part of Bremerton) had submitted an earlier petition to the legislature to make its name Port Orchard, so Sidney's request to change its name was denied. However, the Post Office Department granted a post office name change from Sidney Post Office to Port Orchard Post Office. This may have been the result of a mistake over where to send the U.S. Navy's mail in Puget Sound. The Post Office Department received a request to rout any Navy mail through "Port Orchard," which someone understood to mean Sidney rather than the much closer Charleston.

By the turn of the century, it became clear that Sidney, not Charleston, had become Port Orchard.

Lulu Haddon (1881-1964) served in the Washington State House of Representatives during the 1933 and 1935 sessions representing the 23rd

Legislative District of Kitsap County. She was elected to the Washington State Senate in 1936, and served there until her resignation in 1942. She was instrumental in the creation of Rainier School in Buckley (Pierce County) and Olympic College in Bremerton in 1946, after WWII. She sponsored legislation that allowed WA State to purchase the Manette Bridge and discontinue the toll in 1939. Haddon Hall at Rainier School, Lulu D. Haddon Elementary School and Lulu D. Haddon Park -- both in Bremerton -- were named in her honor. Haddon's daughter, Frances Haddon Morgan (1909-1993), was later elected to her mother's seats in both the house and the senate.

Kitsap's diverse population:

Exploration of the 1860 and 1870 Censuses revealed an interesting and underreported aspect of Kitsap County history, company town life, and early logging history. Although most settlers were immigrants to the area in the 1860s and 1870s, the diversity of birth places of the people living and working in these port towns is remarkable. Their origins include Africa, Cape de Verd Island (off the west coast of Africa), Ecuador, New Granada (northern South America), Chile, Mexico, and Costa Rica as well as other people choosing to move westward. Page 8 of the Port Gamble 1870 Census reveals a large labor crew who were born in the Sandwich Islands and China, possibly working at the Puget Mill Company which was established in 1852 at Port Gamble.

**Esther Mumford's Black Heritage Survey of Washington State 1985 from Antiquity Consulting.*

Black History of Kitsap

Bremerton's own civil rights movement was born during WWII. Before WWII Only about 100 African Americans lived in Bremerton, and around 7,400 in the whole state of WA. 4 years later there were 10,000 in Bremerton with 4,600 working for the Navy. Black and Brown skinned people were only allowed housing in Sinclair Heights, located in the West Hills near which is now Pendergast Park.

Lillian Walker, grew up "dirt poor" on a farm in rural Illinois, came to Bremerton to work during the unprecedented war effort. But what Walker, who became

Sinclair Park's first postmistress, found here wasn't just segregated housing, it included many businesses and other establishments that were closed to people of color as well.

On May 23, 1943, local activists and community members form the Bremerton branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Established in response to segregation and racial tensions in Kitsap County, the group spawned the Carver Civic Club which became the Carver Community Cultural Center.

Roosevelt Smith is a trustee on the board of the Kitsap County History Museum, a Bremerton Arts Commissioner and currently has an exhibit of Black Americana on display at the Kitsap History Museum, kitsapmuseum.org. Roosevelt Smith wrote, "Black History Month: The Early Black Pioneers of Kitsap County", for an article published in the Kitsap Sun on Feb 2, 2022. Mr. Smith's excellent article was the inspiration for much of the information this section for this history of Black people in Kitsap.

John Garrison was one of the first Black pioneers in Kitsap County, showing up on the 1857 census. He also purchased and ran an oyster farm with his wife, a Duwamish woman named Piapach (Jane). Mr. Garrison was the first non-Native American to come to Dyes Inlet; his wife was the first person to ride over the Manette Bridge, in a Ralph Daniel's touring car when the bridge opened on June 30, 1930.

Charles Austin was born a slave in South Carolina and. After being freed, migrated to Kitsap County where he operated a shoeshine stand.

Nathaniel Sargent was born on a Kentucky plantation on July 4, 1863. Later on Mr. Sargent attended the University of Illinois. Mr. Sargent migrated to Kitsap County and lived in the county for 72 years. He was a passionate artist and writer. He preferred life as a rancher, homesteading roughly 248 acres. He donated land for a school in the Seabeck-Crosby area. In 1894, he was elected Justice of the Peace in Seabeck. Nathaniel Sargent died in 1954.

Jane Ruley was born a slave in 1856 on a plantation in Virginia. She graduated in 1875 from General Armstrong School in Hampton, Virginia; and migrated to Kitsap County. Jane Ruley was the first African American teacher in Kitsap County,

in 1897, as well as in the state of Washington. After teaching, Ms. Ruley became a school board member.

Rainie Woods (Feb. 6, 1944 - Aug 15, 2003) became Bremerton Police Department's first black officer, was sworn in by former Mayor Glenn Jarstad in 1969 and retired in 1991. Woods coached kids' sports, was a member of the American Legion and the NAACP. He was given a PTSA Golden Acorn award in 1982 for his work as a juvenile detective and for helping establish a residential center for youngsters in crisis.

Marty Krutcher, was a captain's steward in the Navy, stationed in Bremerton in the 1950s. Black people like himself didn't get the same food as the whites, couldn't sit down to eat and weren't allowed to bring their families on board the ship. He and a fellow sailor walked out in protest, eventually taking their complaints to the captain and earning equal treatment as their white peers. Krutcher was elected the first black Bremerton City Councilman in 1986, along with the late Tuskegee airman Al Colvin.

In the late 1980s, Krutcher marched in Port Orchard with hundreds of local residents, among them Bishop Larry Robertson of the Emmanuel Apostolic Church and Robinson, protesting a burning cross pitched in the yard of a mixed-race Poulsbo couple.

Filipino-American Association of Kitsap County @thefilamkitsap

The [Filipino-American Association of Kitsap County](#) is one of the strongest cultural groups in Kitsap County celebrated 100 years of organization, honoring a long history of involvement with an eye toward what the future may hold for a changing organization. Today the organization serves 14,000 Filipino-Americans in the greater Kitsap area.

Asian Pacific Islanders in Kitsap:

In the late 1880s, Bainbridge Island, Washington, with its massive old growth forests of hemlock and cedar, was the epicenter of the timber industry. Blakeley Harbor was home to the largest lumber mill in the world. And Bainbridge Island had electricity ten years before Seattle did!

People from all over the world came to the region to make their fortunes. And many of them were Japanese immigrants who moved to Washington to escape an economic recession in Japan. They were professionals and military generals who came to start a new life but along the way started a company town, lived in tight-knit communities, and worked hard in a variety of dangerous industries.

The first settlement of Japanese workers in the 1880s was named Yama, which means hills and mountains in Japanese. There was a hotel, general store, an ice cream parlor, and a traditional bathhouse. All island children attended school together, as Washington state was one of the first to have compulsory public education.

Because their names were too difficult to pronounce by Americans, the Japanese residents were known only by their numbers. And many of these residents became prolific strawberry farmers.

December 1941

Life changed on December 7, 1941 with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and World War II. Only two days after the event, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) came to 23 cities looking for residents who were loyal to Japan, contraband, and weapons. Because of their proximity to the Naval bases, Bainbridge Island was their first stop in the United States, and residents of Japanese descent were the first in the United States to be incarcerated.

The Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, a unit of Minidoka National Historic Site, commemorates the first instance in the United States where **people of Japanese ancestry were forcibly removed from their homes** during World War II, and sent to relocation centers in remote areas of the country.

The first exclusion area designated was Bainbridge Island. On March 30, 1942, the Japanese Americans living on Bainbridge Island were gathered at the Eagledale Ferry Dock and sent to the concentration camp in Manzanar, California before being transferred to Minidoka

Hispanic Population:

The Hispanic group has been the fastest growing population in Kitsap County in the last 20 years. They comprise 8.2% of Kitsap's according to the 2020 Census. Hispanics are spread evenly across the county, with Bremerton having the biggest concentration. But it is in greater Poulsbo and the north end of the Kitsap Peninsula where the ranks of Hispanics are growing fastest.

Kitsap Immigration Assistance Center (KIAC) is an organization that assists Hispanic people in Kitsap. They offer: KIAC Family Services Center and KIAC Immigration Legal Services.

Notorious Kitsapers:

Linda Burfield Hazzard (1867-1938) ran a "sanitorium" in Olalla, South Kitsap. She catered to people seeking healing. She convinced many that fasting allowed the digestive systems to rest and so would insure good health. Consequently, many patients starved to death. In August 1911, Linda Hazzard was arrested. The jury came back with a guilty verdict of manslaughter. The sanitarium burned down in 1935. In 1997, Gregg Olsen wrote the best-selling book: "Starvation Heights: A True Story of Murder and Malice in the Woods of the Pacific Northwest" the book was based on Haddon.