

The Miller Bay Guardian

Vol. 17 No. 1

Fall 2017

Words from the President

The Friends of Miller Bay Are Your Friends Too

by Paul Dorn

We live in a very special part of Kitsap County, a place of forests, streams, and marine beaches alive with a rich assortment of native species. The challenge for many of these species is to find a place to live and raise their young, just as we humans do. The Friends of Miller Bay (FOMB) believes that conserving Miller Bay's natural habitats benefits all the creatures that live here, including, most especially, us humans.

Your financial support helped the FOMB to participate in many notable 2017 activities:

- We contributed funds to the Great Peninsula Conservancy's successful effort to acquire additional habitat in the Grovers Creek watershed,
- We planted 450 hemlock and cedar trees in the Cowling Creek Canyon.
- We supported the salmon reintroduction to Cowling Creek, working closely with Trout Unlimited, the Suquamish Tribe, and local schools,
- We assisted the field engineering studies to replace the Cowling Creek culverts with a bridge.
- We got our hands wet participating with the Tribe and Trout Unlimited in the Grovers Creek outmigration study, identifying and counting the native fish migrating from Grovers Creek into Miller Bay,
- We continue to work with the Puget Sound Restoration Fund and the Tribe for grants to reintroduce native Olympia oysters into Miller Bay,
- We revived the Miller Bay bird count.
- We expanded the educational trails of the Cowling Creek Forest Preserve and will be putting up signage near native flora to call out their significance,
- And we host an annual meeting on November 8 that highlights the rich diversity and abundance of Miller Bay's many watersheds.

Please consider joining FOMB. Your support, financial or muscle, helps insure a future for all the species that call this place home. Thank you from the FOMB Board.

Duane Pasco Presentation

FOMB Annual Meeting

Please join us for a special presentation at the House of Awakened Culture in Suquamish. Our speaker will be world renowned artist, Duane Pasco, who lives and works in the Miller Bay watershed. Duane's lecture, "The Nature of Art", will feature his artwork and his perspectives on how the natural environment has driven his creativity. We will have his autobiographical book, *Life as Art*, available for sale after the presentation.

Invite your family and friends for a memorable evening Wednesday, November 8 at 7:00 PM. Everyone is invited. You are also invited to attend the FOMB annual meeting at 6:00 PM.



Memorial carving by Duane Pasco

FRIENDS OF MILLER BAY OFFICERS

President, Paul Dorn
Vice President, Mike Kroeger
Secretary, Nancy D'Archangel
Treasurer, Sharon Nichols

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dick D'Archangel Carol Haskins
Janine Moss Stafford Smith

COWLING CREEK CENTER

RESIDENT DOCENT

Brian Kenward

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Dick and Nancy D'Archangel



Members of Kingston High School InterAct Club with their advisor, Mark Baze.

More than I bargained for?

New Trees for Cowling Creek

by Dick D'Archangel

It's amazing how many times raising my hand and volunteering for something has led to a memorable and rewarding experience. Clearing thickets of salm-onberry for tree planting sites in a rugged canyon strewn with fallen logs and pockets of boot-sucking mud could be considered memorable, but how was it rewarding; let me count the ways.

The project was inspired by the Forest Management Plan for the Cowling Creek Forest Preserve. Great Peninsula was awarded a grant to plant 350 cedar and hemlock seedlings in a riparian area on the reserve. It was a three phase effort of first clearing planting sites, then planting trees, and finally putting protective sleeves on each tree. Each phase was inspected and approved by a forester.

Friends of Miller Bay members and around 10 students from the Kingston High School Interact Club put in 140 hours of their time to complete the project. Being overachievers we actually planted 450 trees.

Now the good part. Site clearing was done in late November and December. Chum salmon had already completed their spawning cycle and were no longer to be seen finning up the stream. When I climbed the creek bank to a level shelf I was surprised to find a big cache of salmon bones, and as I climbed to the next few level spots more and more bones were strewn

about. And, between the areas and up and down the bank were the raw trails of black bears.

Now I have heard and read about this nutrient escalator moving salmon remains across the forests of the northwest, but this example was so visceral; here I was in the middle of this amazing natural phenomena. It was a "wow" moment and it would not have happened without Paul Dorn's efforts to reintroduce wild salmon to Cowling Creek (which you can read about on page 4-A *Hero Among Us*).

As Nancy and I hiked the planted area a couple of weeks ago, we were delighted to see so many of the seedlings still green and healthy in their white mesh socks. We hope some of the student volunteers revisit this site and see the results of their work, and that their conservation ethic is nourished.



One of the many piles of salmon bones discovered along remote stretches of Cowling Creek last December where bears had been feasting .

Memories of Helen Eisenhardt

The Early Days

Sitting at her kitchen table, gazing out the window at the quiet peaceful scene of Miller's Bay, Helen Eisenhardt was writing down what she knew of the bay's early history. The year was 1952 and the bay was still called Miller's. (Sometime, somehow the apostrophe "s" was dropped, but if you talk with an old time resident it is always referred to as Miller's.) Helen drew on the stories told to her by her neighbor, Henry Willemott who had settled in the bay in 1894 with his wife. Then there was Amos Pickrell, who operated the Indiana store and post office in the early days. Another treasured friend and source of information was Julia Jacobs, who lived across the bay and was the adopted daughter of the Suquamish chief, Jacob Wahalchu. Julia's birth parents had come to Bainbridge Island in the 1870's on a Portuguese lumber transport ship. Her mother died giving birth to her, and her father, unable to care for a newborn aboard ship, left her with Chief Wahalchu and his wife Mary. According to Julia, this beautiful bay had always been

called Tsquaib Bay by the Suquamish people, and was named after a root that grew there. It wasn't until the middle of the 19th century that a man named Miller came to Tsquaib Bay. He built a store and traded with the Suquamish people and also did some logging. And so eventually the name of the bay was changed to Miller's Bay.

Helen described the bay as:

"being surrounded by lovely homes except for the south eastern portion: here is a sand spit close to a mile long. There is a smaller sand spit beyond the large one and between these two spits is a channel which affords the only water entrance to the bay. At low tide only very small craft can enter the Bay but at high tide large yachts can enter and also tugs with booms of logs. And at low tide a person can walk from one side of the bay to the other: it is a wonderful place for children because there are no drop offs."

Helen's grandchildren and great grandchildren still live at their home on Miller Bay off Eisenhardt road and I think they would all agree that it's still beautiful and a wonderful place for children.



*"Miller's Bay" about 1950 (looking towards where the marina is today).
Photo courtesy of the Suquamish Tribal Archives.*

Recreational Shellfish Biotoxin Program In Miller Bay

by Dayna Katula
Environmental Health Specialist
Kitsap Public Health District

Greetings Friends of Miller Bay,

It is my pleasure to write to your group to discuss the vital recreational shellfish work that the Kitsap Public Health District (KPHD) performs in Miller Bay. Since April 26, 1996, KPHD has been collecting mussel samples in the bay. The mussels are currently tested for their levels of three different biotoxins- paralytic shellfish poison (PSP), diarrhetic shellfish poison (DSP), and amnesic shellfish poison (ASP); the three toxins together make up what is more commonly known as “red tide.” Mussels are used as the indicator species of toxin levels because they pick-up and release the poisons in their tissues faster than any other species of shellfish. Miller Bay mussels are tested mid-May through mid-November every other week; we start to test weekly if any level of toxin is detected in the samples.

Each of the biotoxins has a threshold which we use as criteria to open and close waterbodies. If the threshold for any of the toxins is exceeded, we call it a “hot” sample. After we close a waterbody, we must have at least two consecutive “clean” samples to reopen it. A clean sample means one in which the level of toxin was under the threshold. KPHD relies on volunteers in the bay to obtain the mussels.

I would be remiss if I did not express how deeply appreciative KPHD is of the Miller Bay volunteers. The sampling effort would not be possible without the tremendous work that our resident volunteers have tirelessly performed. We are volunteer-dependent in the bay because there are not public access sites which we would be able to use to collect samples. Currently, Bob and Sharon Nichols are collecting the samples, and Nancy and Dick D’Archangel volunteered for the two decades before them. Without a doubt, Miller Bay has dedicated folks to making sure its residents stay safe.

I would like to invite you to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. My email address is dayna.katula@kitsapublichealth.org and my phone number is 360-728-2301.

Note:

The Sun has a very good article about shellfish monitoring. Check out the website below!

<https://goo.gl/Tdupf3>

A Hero Among Us

You are probably wondering how it is that after a 75 year absence chum salmon are spawning naturally in Cowling Creek. We have Paul Dorn to thank for this. For the past three years, Paul has crawled through the 36 inch culvert running under Miller Bay road in late October placing sand bag “steps” every 10 feet for 150+ feet! It’s cold, wet, dark, cramped, and creepy but Paul has persisted in this chore in order to allow the chum to negotiate the culvert.

It is undertakings such as this, done without complaint or fanfare, that is just one of the reasons the Great Peninsula Conservancy awarded Paul their Conservation Award in 2016!

Chum, Up Close and Personal!

The Cowling Creek Forest Preserve now boasts one of the premier spots to observe returning chum salmon, thanks to the hard work of Trout Unlimited volunteers and the generosity of the Poulsbo Rotary. The salmon viewing platform, in the heart of the Cowling Creek Forest Preserve, almost puts you in the stream as the fish fight their way up the creek and fish ladder.

The chum are spawning throughout most of November (watch for the big “fish” to appear by the Cowling Creek Center driveway to indicate that the chum are there). Plan to stop by anytime during daytime hours. Use the main parking lot and follow the fish signs to find the platform.



Chum salmon fighting their way up Cowling Creek in November last year.

Join Friends of Miller Bay!

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Tel. _____

FOMB Memberships (Make check to FOMB)

- I include \$25 for a one year membership.
- I include \$100 for a one year Conserving membership.
- I include a \$ _____ gift.

Put me on the email list for program notifications and work party notices. My email is: _____

*Please mail this form and your check to Friends of Miller Bay
PO Box 37, Suquamish, WA 98392*

Welcome Janine

Greetings from our New Board Member

by Janine Moss

Hi, I'm Janine Moss, the newest FOMB board member. With the aid of Cowling Creek Center caretaker Brian Kenward, I am spearheading a native plant identification project for the Cowling Creek Preserve.

Our goal is to enhance the visitor's experience of Cowling Creek by identifying the native plants and providing educational information.



Brian and I plan to install markers on one of the trail loops giving common, Latin, and Lushootseed names, some identifying characteristics, and the traditional native uses for the plants.

I grew up in King County and moved to Kitsap in 1998. As a child, my family spent our vacations traveling and

camping in a succession of VW busses. We made two entire circumnavigations around the US, always visiting national parks, historical sites, and natural wonders. I trace my love of nature and the environment (and VW vans!) to those days.

Having been an environmentalist since the eighties, I find my greatest source of peace and spiritualism in nature and am pleased to be a part of this group of dedicated people working hard to preserve and enhance Miller Bay.

Welcome Brian

New Caretaker at CCC



By Brian Kenward

Hello everyone, my name is Brian Kenward Sr.. After retiring from the electronics manufacturing industry a few years ago, I've found a way to pursue my love of nature through habitat preservation and restoration. Not that I know a lot about it, so my lack of fear of dirty hands or wet feet are my

primary assets. I do like working and always have so it was natural to volunteer my time to help in what ever way was necessary. I became the caretaker of Cowling Creek Center in hopes of getting more done. I believe in the mission and purpose of FOMB. It is both a gift and a pleasure to be here. I see my life here as a wonderful learning experience.



Protective sleeves used in reforestation project.



PO Box 37
SUQUAMISH, WA 98392

FOMB Special Presentation: *The Nature of Art* by Duane Pasco
Suquamish House of Awakened Culture

Wednesday, November 8, 2017 7:00 PM

Miller Bay Bird Survey is Back!

After a five year break, Friends of Miller Bay is again doing monthly bird counts on Miller Bay. We are interested if there will be any obvious trends, either up or down after this length of time. Michelle Amicucci will be helping, along with Don McPherson, who counted birds for the three years that it was done starting in 2010 with the dearly missed Fay Linger.

Michelle and Don are both excellent birders and are happy to share their knowledge and love of birds with others. If you are interested in joining us, email Nancy at darchangel@embarqmail.com to receive the scheduling notifications.



30 Double crested Cormorants were counted on our first day.



William D'Archangel, Michelle Amicucci, Renee Amicucci, & Bob Nichols counting birds in September 2017. Join us!