

MUSEUM MUSINGS FOR DECEMBER 07

For some months now we have been promising to replace the display in the Seniors Centre and we are glad to report that it has now been done.

We are reverting to our original theme which was to honour our pioneers.

This display centres on the Staaf family, a true Texada pioneer family.

Peter and Hilda Staaf came to Texada in 1907 and Peter worked in the developing limestone industry in Blubber Bay. His real passion was farming and they soon moved to the area now known as the High Road or Central road where they pre-empted land. Fruit orchards were developed and by the early 1920's the family was selling fruit by the box in Powell River. Our photo today shows Elmer Staaf, their oldest son born in 1907, with a truck load of boxed apples.

To avoid shipping apple boxes from Vancouver, Peter designed and built his own box factory which still exists today lovingly cared for by his grandson Herbie who maintains the old homestead. Our display features one of these boxes and the original copper stencil used to imprint the Staaf name on the box.

At one time Peter Staaf was the island Justice of the Peace, and his legal seal forms part of the display.

Peter was a great builder. Go down to Shelter Point and look westward from the main launching ramp. You will see a number of pilings standing out of the water that are all that remain of a 600 foot wharf built by Peter in 1912. The pilings were of African gum wood which perhaps explains their continued existence. The story is that the wharf burned in 1916 having had only 2 boats' tie up to it.

Peter was also an accomplished surveyor using only a hand held compass. When government surveyors came to map pre-empted property already surveyed by Peter they found that his records were very accurate and could be relied on.

Peter and Hilda had four children and some of their descendants still live here on Texada.

Until next time take care of each other and remember to think green. Have a very happy Christmas.

Norm MacLean

