Discover Historic Friday Harbor
Then and Now
1909-2009 Centennial
San Juan Island, Washington

The Pig War
In 1853, the Hudson’s Bay Company established Belle Vue Sheep Farm. Americans began to arrive as settlers. In 1859 American Lyman Cutler shot an English pig, igniting the Pig War. Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany determined in 1872 that the islands belonged to the United States, not Great Britain.

A Town is Created
In 1872, Friday Harbor was named the county seat of San Juan County. Waterfront parcels sold for $20 and inland parcels for $10. Businesses and residences began to appear. In 1909, the Town of Friday Harbor was incorporated.

The first newspaper, The San Juan Islander, published this description in 1903:
“The sprightly village of Friday Harbor is beautifully located upon one of the prettiest and best sheltered harbors of the San Juan archipelago...The town has five large general stores, a good bank, a United States custom house and launch station, a well equipped printing office and stationary store, a weekly newspaper, drugstore, jewelry store and bicycle and general repair shop, a meat market, a milliner, a blacksmith, barber, two hotels, three saloons, a graded school, two churches, a large Odd Fellows’ Hall, several beneficiary lodges, a fire club, a saw mill, a creamery, four substantial wharves...a large salmon cannery and many pretty homes.”

Farms and Fish
Most islanders lived on farms where they raised cattle and sheep, planted hay and peas, orchards and vegetable gardens. In early to mid-1900s, Friday Harbor was a busy port shipping apples, pears and cherries, plus salmon and “Spatula” pears from the canneries. By the end of the century, however, the canneries were closed. The pea harvest was the primary cause of the demise of peas as a profitable crop. There had been plentiful salmon, with some record runs, but by the 1990s, the salmon runs were seriously depleted.

Changing Times
During the 1930s Great Depression, islanders fared reasonably well for they were largely self-sufficient and bartered with and helped each other. Stores offered credit for coffee and tea. Life moved at a slow pace until the late 1960s, when national economic prosperity enabled people to build second homes or retire to the island. Construction, arts, and tourism began to flourish and the town grew.

Now Friday Harbor has lost its millinery, the creamery and its canneries, but it has gained internet, espresso and art galleries, and become a destination for visitors from near and far. The Farmer’s Market thrives and island-grown produce is again on local menus. The three-masted sailing ships and steamers no longer enter the harbor, and most of the gillnetters and purse seiners have been replaced by pleasure boats. Early travel to the islands was by canoe, later by the Mosquito Fleet and now by the Washington State Ferries, planes, and private boats.

Human values, however, have endured through the years.

This Centennial year we honor the sense of community in Friday Harbor which continues to enable residents to laugh, to argue, to love, and to share the warmth of a small group of individuals in one great family, on a little island, who care about each other and their town.
FOCUS OF THIS MAP
This map features historical buildings in use today by business, government and organizations, and historic parks and trees, with a glimpse of each one's past.

KEY TO MAP: The number in front of each building (e.g. 5) is the block where it is located.

PLACES TO SEE
5 Vinny’s Ristorante 1916 (D-R)
   Built by A. J. Paxin for his Overland & Studebaker showroom and garage, later converted for Ford dealership.
5 Dos Diablos c1910 (L-D)
   Built by Joseph Sweeney, an early speculator. House was a bar and pool hall.
5 Hart Tavern 1895 (L-D)
   A general store with various names until 1936, when it became a tavern, which has also had several names.
5 The Doctor’s Office (L-D)
   Home of manager of Friday Harbor Packing Company.
5 Blue Water Bar & Grill c1870s (B-D-L)
   Became a mercantile and later Saloon Bar & Pool Hall. In the 1930s, became the Moosie Lodge. Was the home of “Fatty” the whale when it was in.
5 Mait’s c1895 (L-D)
   Residence for agent of Friday Harbor Packing Co.
5 Cafe Dometor/Bakery c1920 (T)
   Typical of 1920s and 1930s Nichols Street cottages.
10 Coho c1929 (0-V)
   Craftsman-style cottage typical of early Nichols Street.
17 Garden Path Cottage
   Home of entrepreneur Cornelius Lycurgyrs “Kingy” Carter and his wife, Mary, of the pioneer Digma family.
17 Vic’s c1958 (L-D-D)
   Vic and Margaret Reynolds opened this mom-and-pop drive-in, the only one of its kind in 1957 by Adirondack.
18 Bistro Garden 1949 (D-L)
   Original building on Blue Fox Lane in Stone Street. Clyde Spanjier cut it in half and moved both halves to Web Street; half is the Bistro, half the adjacent house.

MUSEUMS
4 American Legion
   Veterans Museum
4 The Whale Museum 1892
   Odd Fellows Lodge. Today, the site of the Whale Museum, raised here against “demoralized; the town voted itself ‘dry.’”
4 San Juan Historical Museum 1894
   James King homestead of 455 acres of sheep, cattle, 350 fruit trees, 80 acres of crops.
3 Memorial Park c1890
   Honors island man who died in World War I. The two Dutch elm were planted by the Woman’s Study Club in 1922.
3 Sunken Park c1930s
   Rock wall built by WPA.
3 Cahill Park c1930s

PARKS
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EDUCATION
1 Warbirds Way Marina 1910
   University of Washington Marine Labs until 1924. The original site was Trotwood Sound Biological Station, but locals called it the “Bug Station.”
22 Friday Harbor Middle School Town Hall 1936
   Opened as the island elementary school after consolidation of town and rural schools. Became Middle School in 1968.
25 Spring Street
   International School
   Nash House 1910
   Built by E.H. Nash and later home of the Al and Priscilla Nash family until 1955 when the school opened.

BOOKS
10 Serendipity
   The Used Book Place 1892
   Presbyterian Church Manse used for visiting clergy.
11 Griffin Bay Bookstore
   Early 1900s. Originally a post office. Added in 1980s.
12 Sam R. Buck Jr. for real estate insurance office, and insurance office.

TO DO & SEE
3 Historic Friday Harbor Walking Tours
   May and October
   Sat. 10-30; reservations required: 360-379-2810
4 Portraits of Welcome
   Cedar House is a house featured in the 1800s in the forest of the Earl of Camperdown in Scit. 2000
5 53 Islands Museum of Art & Sculpture Park
   1897
   Built at Fort Bellingham and moved to American Camp during the Pig War. Later moved to town after crisis was resolved.
5 Crystal Sea Kayaking 1892 (See Herb’s)
11 Palace Theater 1895
   Fri-ber Theatre (Friday Harbor)
17 Campedown Elm Tree Late 1800s
   Created from a graft of the original elm discovered in the 1800s in the forest of the Earl of Camperdown in Scit. 2000
18 Birch Gallery c1910
   John Arends, a drawersman and farmer, and his wife, Nettie, retired here. His new work: smoking salmon for fishermen.
18 Island Bicycle 1939
   One of many a small "sack" built houses “out there.” Cost: $3,000. T.S. Co. Guard Captain McHenry’s home.

SHOPS
17 Historic Drug Store & Pharmacy c1889 and 1929
   Two historic buildings joined together form the present drug store and pharmacy, occupied by Coetzee & Salish artist Susan Point, recognize the thousands of Native American presence in the islands.
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GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESS
4 San Juan Grange 1890
   A civic-minded minister and his congregation built this church. In 1925 it became the Women’s Study Club and in 1975 was purchased by the Grange.
5 Island Group Sotheby’s Realty 1880
   One of town’s first hotels continuing as “loggin” under different names until 2006.
11 Coldwell Banker Real Estate 1907
   Housed the county’s first bank from 1907-1978.
13 Friday Harbor Hall 1936
   Built with 1930s WPA (federal) funds for a new town hall.
13 Friday Harbor Historical Society Library
   Was the home of “Fatty” the whale when it was in.
13 San Juan County Courthouse 1906
   Built for $14,000. Structural settling occurred through the years, and in 1938 it was declared unsafe, but stood until the wrecking ball by vote of the citizens for restoration.
15 Christian Science Society 1900
   Built by Seventh Day Adventists. Later used as an elementary school classroom until 1923 when it was purchased by the Society.
15 San Juan County Annex c1910
   Early home. Bought by the Landfall family in 1943 for no money, the house is currently for sale.
15 Higgison Law Offices c1900
   Associated with the pioneer Wilson family who home-lined San Juan and Lopez Islands. Heritage trees.
16 Lavendera Day Spa c1985
   Home of Captain Cash of the Mosquito Fleet passenger steamer Yankee Doodle.
17 Fit Drug Store & Pharmacy c1889 and 1929
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