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*Second in a series*

## Arts & Crafts Style Homes

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The screech of sawmills was deafening during the 19th century around Puget Sound. In what was to become Kitsap County, Port Gamble (Teekalet), Port Blakely, Port Madison, Charleston, Decatur, Sydney, and Port Orchard were all founded when a sawmill was established to process the forest that covered the Puget Sound lowlands. Lumbermen in the mid-1800s thought of the trees as an inexhaustible supply and by 1890 the easily harvestable areas close to waterways were denuded. The crews that worked at the mills often lived in lumber camps of tents, or rarely, rough-built cabins until the 1900s, because the lumber was being shipped elsewhere for a profit.

The history of Kitsap Peninsula (or the Great Peninsula as it was called originally) is similar to that of other parts of Western Washington, whose economy was driven by the lumber industry. Fortunately for Washington, at a time that mid-West lumber companies were struggling because of over-harvesting, the forests in Puget Sound were just being discovered by entrepreneurial lumbermen. The lumber industry in Washington fed the construction demands of the Gold Rushes in California and Alaska. As the gold played out in the mines, so went the lumber industry, allowing larger lumber companies from the mid-West to purchase Northwest ►

The timelessness of the design and philosophy of the Arts & Crafts Movement is a sharp contrast to the 'Wild West' atmosphere of parts of the Puget Sound area in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In the first part of this series, the history and philosophy of the Arts & Crafts Movement was explored. In this segment, Arts & Crafts style building in Kitsap by local architects and builders are put into perspective of the history of the region. Within the context of the history of the region, the Arts & Crafts Movement influenced little more than building styles and was a political postscript, although several group communities (labeled as socialists and anarchists by the press of their day) were established at Burley (in Kitsap), Equality (on Samish Bay), Freeland (on Whidbey Island), and Home (on Van Geldern Cove).



sawmills and tracts of lands outright while some local mills went out of business. Some people came to the region to homestead the land. Without the mills, many of those who came to Kitsap County became subsistence or market farmers, or worked in Seattle and Tacoma businesses until the mid-1890s when a new economic player came to town.

The economy of Kitsap changed irrevocably in 1891, when the first dry dock at Puget Sound Naval Yard (PSNY) was established on Sinclair Inlet between Charleston and land owned and platted that same year by William Bremer. PSNY brought many more people to the area and there were no houses for them. Tents were the only housing available for many until 1910. Seeing opportunity, Bremer sold his plats for \$50 (residential) and \$150 (commercial) and established Bremerton, which was incorporated as a city in 1900. Others platted additional developments around the Bremer plat: Samuel Goldworthy, A. G. Benbennick, Frank Coder, Harry Walkinton, T. O. Buffington, G. Benjamin, Mr. Poindexter, Mr. Schmid,

to meet the demand for housing and businesses that served the new shipyard.

Among those who worked at the shipyard were architects and carpenters who built many of the first houses in Bremerton with day labor, some of whom were also shipyard workers. Architects and designers, such as F.C. Woolsey, Arthur Holden, J. C. Foley, C. M. Simmers, Albert F. Reeves, and Michael Francis McGowan, designed many of the public buildings and residences between 1890 and 1915. Harlan Thomas, James d'Orma (Dorm) Braman, and Perley Brainard Hale designed and built later construction that occurred during the economic boom fueled by World War I. Although historically undocumented, it is probable that some of these architects were familiar with the Arts & Crafts style through these publications, if not through formal training. The historical record focuses on the architecture of public buildings and rarely mentions residential achievements except as noted for a few well-known Seattle architects.

With the ready availability of building supplies and house plans through Sears, Roebuck & Co. (from 1895 to the 1950s), Aladdin Read-Cut Homes (1906 to 1981), Montgomery Ward, Harris Brothers, Sterling Homes/International Mill and Timber, and Lewis Homes/Liberty Homes, and a ready labor pool at the shipyard, it is likely that many of the Arts & Crafts homes

Carpenters involved in early Bremerton construction included A. P. Stires, Albert Bonapart Williams, Emil Johnson, Peter Knudsen, J. L. Huble, Joseph B. Wood, O.I. 'Ollie' Olsen, Frank Coder, William A. Parker, Michael Benbennick, Floyd E. Smith, Edward F. Betz, Jim Boe, Alfred Blaney. Many of those involved in the early construction of Bremerton were also active in the governing of Bremerton, other Kitsap towns and Kitsap County.

that survive today were a fortunate conjunction of the two. It is no surprise that three of these (Aladdin Homes, Lewis Homes and Sterling Homes) all hailed from Bay City, Michigan, which was also the headquarters for several large lumber companies and sawmills. The Northern Pacific Railroad not only allowed the export of agricultural products from Eastern Washington to Puget Sound, it facilitated shipment of hard goods such as the pre-cut home materials and other furnishings manufactured in the Mid-West and East Coast.

Fashionable from 1890s to 1930s, the Arts & Crafts architectural style was popularized by magazines published by the movement founders and Sears, Roebuck & Co.'s "Book of Modern Homes." Internet sources have pictures of many of the plans available during the Arts & Crafts heyday, and after a comparison of those to homes in older neighborhoods it becomes evident that many of the pioneering citizens in the area built homes from purchased plans and kits.

These "modern" homes included wide front porches from which to observe and converse with neighbors; many windows to allow light and nature to penetrate interiors; fire places of local brick or stone for heating; as well as bedrooms (or "chambers"), living rooms, dining rooms and kitchens. Some had sleeping porches, indoor bathrooms and pergolas attached to the room line that eased the transition for inside to outside.

In addition to the building of these homes, supportive industry for pottery, tile, brick, lighting and furniture were established in local communities to equip the interiors. There were brick kilns in Sidney (now Port Orchard), ►

#### Periodical Publications of the Arts & Crafts Movement

Architectural Record	1891-1948	New York, NY
Arroyo Craftsman	1909	Pasadena, CA
Art and Progress	1900-1953	Washington, DC
Arts & Architecture	1911-1944	
Brush & Pencil	1897 - 1907	Chicago, IL
Bulletin of Arts & Crafts	1911-1912	New York, NY
Bungalow Magazine	1909 - 1918	Los Angeles, CA & Seattle, WA
Clay Worker	1884 - 1933	Indianapolis ID
Craftsman (The)	1901 - 1916	Eastwood, NY
Fine Arts Journal	1899 - 1918	Chicago, IL
Fra (The)	1908 - 1917	East Aurora, NY
Good Housekeeping	1885 - present	New York, NY
Handicraft	1902 - 1912	Boston, MA
House & Garden	1896 - present	Chicago, IL
Impressions Quarterly	1900 - 1905	San Francisco, CA
Keramic Studio	1899- 1924	Syracuse, NY
Knight Errant (The)	1891 - 1892	Boston, MA
Ladies Home Journal	1883 - present	Philadelphia, PA
Le Dernier Cri	1916 - 1917	Grand Rapids, MI
Out West (various titles)	1894 - 1902	
Pacific Coast Architect & Builder	1902 to present	Seattle, WA
Philistine (The)	1895 - 1915	East Aurora, NY
Potter (The)	1916 - 1917	Santa Barbara, CA
Pottery and Glass	1908 - 1915	New York, NY
Sketch Book (The)	1902 - 1907	Chicago, IL
Southwest Builder and Contractor	1893 - present	Los Angeles, CA
Temple Artisan	1900	Halcyon, CA
West Coast	1906 - 1914	Los Angeles, CA

Chico and Tacoma that vied for PSNY business and likely supplied the residential construction trade as well. Traveling down Bremerton streets today, it is hard to imagine that the area at Pacific Avenue and 5th Street was considered "in the country" and Park Avenue (formerly Dock Street) and 4th Street was a swamp in 1899. The first platted residential development occurred in Bremerton on Washington, Highland and Pleasant Avenues, all part of the first Bremer plat. Other early residences in Bremerton were built close to PSNY on Gregory Way and Burwell Street (formerly 3rd).

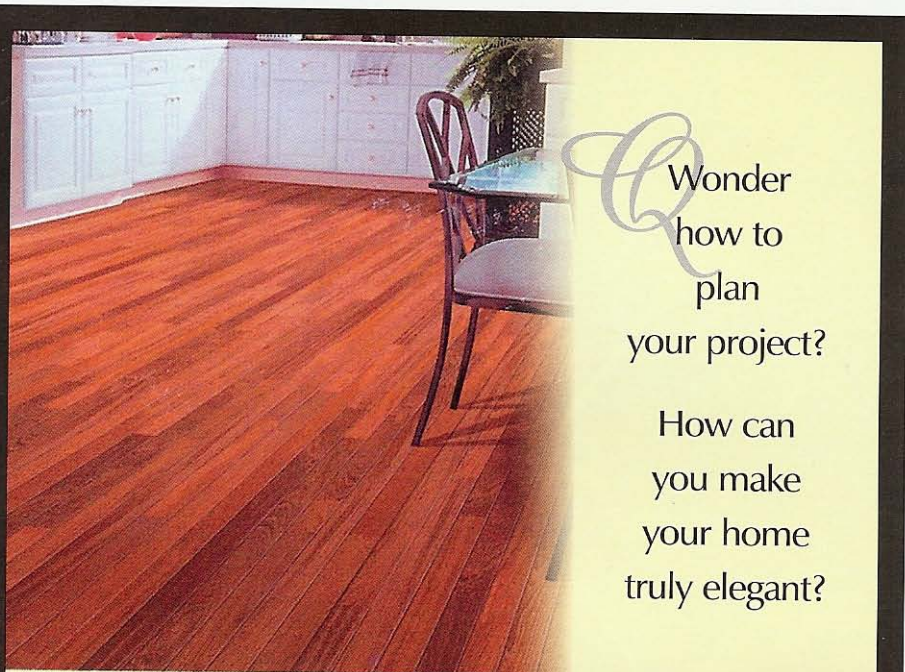
While the shipyard made the biggest economic impact on Kitsap County, the smaller communities of Poulsbo, Port Gamble, Port Orchard, Silverdale, and Chico continued to supply the local area with lumber, fish, food and recreational opportunities. The communities of Kitsap continued to transform in direct relationship to the ebb and flow of the fortunes of the shipyard until recently. All the communities on Kitsap Peninsula, but especially Poulsbo, Kingston, Bainbridge Island and Gig Harbor, are enjoying another housing boom as industries as diverse as software development, furniture and financial services move offices into the area.

Traveling the community today, we still see the timeless design of Arts & Crafts in homes new and old. New housing developments are reviving the art, craftsmanship and colors of the Arts & Crafts Movement and architecture. Some firms are updating floor plans with modern amenities, some by adding architectural details reminiscent of the style, and some by a combination of the two. Poulsbo Place and The Summit at Blakely Harbor are two examples of how the old is being transformed to meet the demands of today's homeowners. ♦

#### Resources:

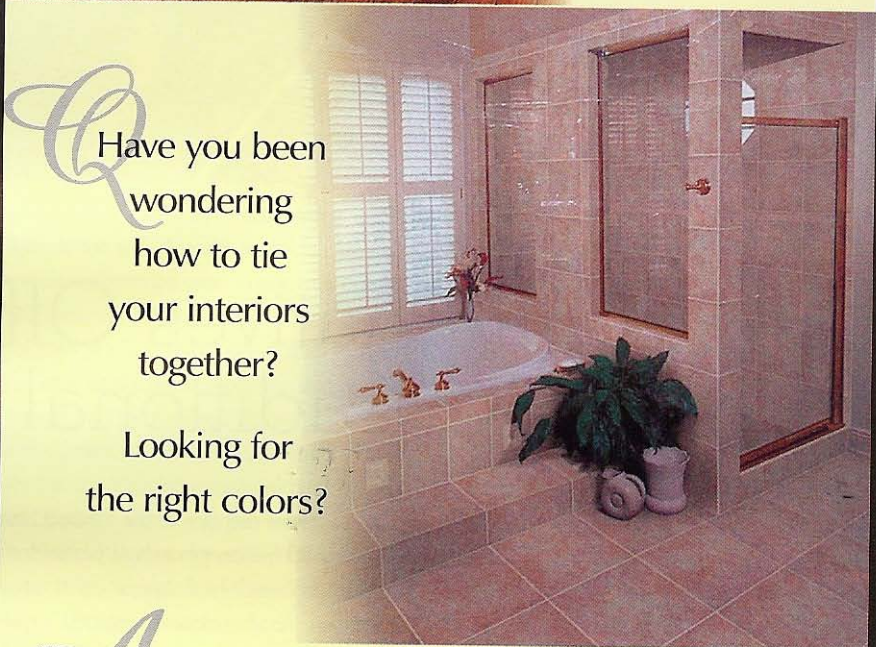
<http://www.arts-crafts.com>

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University of Washington Press,  
Seattle.



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