Signs for Bull Durham Tobacco once covered walls all over the country.

# A survey of Port Townsend's GHOST SIGNS & MURALS\*

\*A ghost sign is a faded, painted sign, at least 50 years old, on an exterior building wall heralding an obsolete product, an outdated trademark or a clue to the history of the building's occupancy. They are "ghosts" because they often reappear after a rainstorm or following the demolition of a neighboring building.

## Table of Contents

| Ghost Murals Downtown        |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Waterman & Katz Building     | 3  |
| N.D. Hill Building           | 6  |
| Bishop Building              | 9  |
| Eisenbeis Building           | 11 |
| First National Bank Building | 13 |
| Fowler-Caines Building       | 16 |
| C. F. Clapp Building         | 19 |
| Miller Burkett Building      | 21 |
| Terry Building               | 23 |
| James & Hastings Building    | 25 |
| Ghost Murals Uptown          |    |

Preserving Historic Murals New Signs and Histaoric Buildings Recent murals downtown Lost Buildings, Lost Murals MAP of Murals

## Downtown Murals

# Waterman & Katz Building 701 Water Street



The mural on the Waterman Katz building. From Union Wharf in November of 2010.

photograph by Brian Moratti.

**Signs speak of the people who run the businesses, shops, and firms**. They project an image, they set a mood and define a place. Signs are signatures. They reflect the owner's taste and personality. They often reflect the ethnic makeup of a neighborhood and its character, as well as the social and business activities carried out there. By giving concrete details about daily life in a former era, historic signs allow the past to speak to the present in ways that buildings by themselves do not.

National Park Service Preservation Brief #25, The Preservation of Historic Signs

#### Waterman & Katz Building, Page 2



The original wooden building is on the right, with the newer brick building, apparently just after construction c1885), on the left. Owners were Sigmund Waterman and William and Israel Katz. JCHS 10.850

**Built by Sigmund Waterman and William and Israel Katz** for \$20,000, the three-story, brick building housed their long-running mercantile establishment until 1917. The business had been previously operating in a wood-frame building next door. A saloon was operated from the basement for many years. In 1887 a large warehouse was built at the rear of the building. Sigmund Waterman and William Katz both died in 1888. The business was operated by Israel Katz until his mysterious disappearance in 1917.

The building was vacant for many years. Portions of the property were owned by A. Clements Grady, Jack Carroll, Harry Case, Claude and Evelyn Stevens over the years. The 1945 fire map shows that the building was used as automobile storage. James Weir purchased the old building from the Stevens family in 1959 and owned it until his death in 1995. His father, Roderick Weir published the *Jefferson County Herald* in the building from 1952-1959 and James published the *Port Townsend Tradesman* into the 1960s. Weir kept the building empty since 1971, but built partial walls in many configurations, took them down again, and finally boarded up the large front windows.

In 1997 Ballenas Project Management bought the property from the Weir estate and completed a restoration. Offices upstairs were occupied by Peninsula College and the City of Port Townsend. Ancestral Spirits Gallery is located in the remodeled store front on Water Street. In 2006 the upper floors were converted into condominiums after the city offices moved into the new City Hall building. Two small windows were cut into the murals to provide emergency exits for the residences.

## Waterman & Katz Building, Page 3



Waterman Katz Building November 2010.

N.D. Hill Building 633-639 Water Street





N. D. Hill Building murals November 2010.

## N.D. Hill Building Page 2





N.D. Hill Building from opposite direction on Water Street, c1900. detail JCHS 10.1026

N.D. Hill Building, c1930. detail JCHS 10.1024

**This three-story brick building was built in 1889** at a cost of \$25,000. Elmer H. Fisher was the architect; woodwork was by Cummings and Saunders; brick and stonework was completed by Davis and Wakeman. The upper floors were offices and furnished rooms. In 1890 drugs and cigars, china and glassware goods were sold, in addition to drugs. The mural advertises "Kodaks, Photo Materials." By 1928 the ground floor was vacant.

A tavern occupied the corner storefront from approximately 1933 to 2010, with the top floors functioning as a hotel and long-term apartments. In 1928 the then newly-renovated hotel was called the Deville and rooms rented for 75 cents to \$1.25 a night. The IT tavern opened down-stairs in 1933; the Town Tavern began soon after and operated in the location until 2001. The Town was the scene of the bar fight in the movie *An Officer and a Gentleman*.

According to Nathaniel Davis Hill's granddaughter, Sally Hill, the building turned out to be a grave financial mistake. At the time of its completion in 1891 an economic depression had struck. As was the fate of owners of other large, new buildings in Port Townsend, the structure was placed on the delinquent tax roles in I9I6 valued at \$6,000. The building has had internal renovation and external upkeep over the years. In July of 1982 there was a major fire that destroyed much of the interior.

#### N.D. Hill Building, Page 3



# Bishop Building 720 Washington Street



Mural on the Bishop Building November 2010.

Signs often become so important to a community that they are valued long after their role as commercial markers has ceased. They become landmarks, loved because they have been visible at certain street corners--or from many vantage points across the city--for a long time. Such signs are valued for their familiarity, their beauty, their humor, their size, or even their gro-tesqueness. In these cases, signs transcend their conventional role as vehicles of information, as identifiers of something else. When signs reach this stage, they accumulate rich layers of meaning. They no longer merely advertise, but are valued in and of themselves. They become icons. National Park Service Preservation Brief #25, *The Preservation of Historic Signs* 

# Bishop Building, Page 2



The Bishop Building. Photo by Peter Simpson. JCHS 10.287

**Built in 1890, the Bishop Block was financed and built by William Bishop Sr. an English** seaman who jumped ship in the 1860s. Bishop operated the building for a number of years, renting out the street-level spaces. His original intent was to have offices on the upper floors, but the economic decline of the 1890s took away the demand. The original street-level occupants were I.D. O'Neill and Co. (insurance) and attorney Oliver Wood. Bishop later sold the building to the Owl Cigar Company which continued to rent out the street level offices and used the upper levels as a tobacco storage and distribution facility. Later, the upstairs became rented rooms.

The Port Townsend Soda Works (bottlers), operated by Tanner and Swan, were long-time ground floor renters during the teens and twenties. In later years the space was occupied by furniture stores. Ed Sims and Jack Carroll were the building's owners during part of this period.

In 1940 the U.S. Navy converted it into a rooming house. Mr. and Mrs. John Pickett (Community Investments) purchased the building c1980, renovated it and opened the Bishop Victorian Guest Suites.

# Eisenbeis Building 824-830 Water Street



Murals on the Eisenbeis Building, November 2010. The Hasting Building is in the background.

photo by Brian Moratti



*Eisenbeis Building murals, 1960s. In the photo above, a metal "Woolsey" sign has been added over the top of the round tobacco mural. detail JCHS 10.131* 

# Eisenbeis Building, Page 2



Water Street, c1938. The bay windows are still on the Eisenbeis Building, center. The mural on the neighboring First National Bank building (right) is visible here. JCHS 13.59

**Charles Eisenbeis, a master baker from Prussia, arrived in Port Townsend in 1858** and opened a shop to manufacture crackers and ship's bread. Mr. Eisenbeis platted real estate tracts and erected business blocks, including the first stone building on Water Street in 1873. This one-story building became the first floor of the Eisenbeis Block. In 1889 he built two additional brick stories and an expansion to the rear of the building. The addition was designed by Whitway & Schroder, architects and gave the building a high style Victorian façade with projecting bay windows on the upper floors. The expansion cost \$16,000.

The original ground floor tenant was a grocery store (1890-91). Later, the original Rose Theater was located in one half of the ground floor of this building until December of 1908 when it moved to its current location on Taylor Street. Various attempts were made to continue theater use at the Eisenbeis Block, but these were abandoned and the theater space became a storage room until 1913, when the space was remodeled as a store front. One tenant of this space was the Mint Saloon.

In 1911, the other half of the ground floor was a furniture store. Around 1901 S.P. Maynard leased the building in order to create a hotel on the upper floors. In the 1940s the second floor was an annex to the Delmonico Hotel, and the third floor was private apartments. The ground floor was remodeled for the Olympic Hardware and Furniture store in 1937, at which time large plate glass windows were installed obliterating the last vestige of the 1873 façade. A fire damaged the building in 1942.

# First National Bank Building 810-814 Water Street





First National Bank Building mural with Eisenbeis Building murals above, November 2010. photo by Brian Moratti



Detail, JCHS 13.59, c1938.

November 2010.

# First National Bank Building, Page 2



First National Bank opening day c1882. U of W Collection

First National Bank c1916 JCHS 2003.134.484

Building (and mural) in the 1950s. detail JCHS 10.131

Henry Landes deeded the property to the First National Bank, of which he was president. When the bank opened for business in 1883-4, there was a saloon on the lower, street level entry while the Bank entrance was up a short series of stairs. The top floor was lodging. The building was remodeled in 1902 and 1818 as Water Street was raised and graded.

The bank was still at this location in 1917, but by 1928 the building was used as a grocery store. John Siebenbaum purchased the building for \$5,000 at a tax sale. It had been vacant for some time and the back stairway had rotted away. At that point, the only access to the second floor was through a door from the Siebenbaum Building, next door. This door had been cut through a number of years earlier.

A long time street level tenant was the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, from 1945 to 1964. In 1975 the building was sold by the Siebenbaum Estate Company to Alfred and Rosemary Reirson. From 1987 to 1996, Gail and Kevin Burgler owned the building and began renovation to the main store front. They sold to Jeff Soden and Scott Marsh who proceeded to renovate the upper floor. Various occupants over the years were an auto and marine supply company, real estate office and grocery.

# First National Bank Building, Page 3



Prior to the construction of the Eisenbeis Building's upper two floors, First National Bank murals were visible on both sides of the bank building. 1889. detail JCHS 13.77



Sign on the back of the building, November 2010.

#### Fowler-Caines Building Also known as Fred Lewis Building, Clarendon Hotel 628-630 Water Street



Fowler Caines Building, November 2010.



Fowler Caines Building, c1980s. JCHS 10.503.

#### Fowler-Caines Building Page 2



Fowler-Caines Building 1978. JCHS 34.64

Built by Mary Caines Fowler (widow of Enoch S. Fowler) and her son Robert M. Caines as the Claredon Hotel in 1889. David McFee did the construction and Whiteway and Schroeder acted as Architects for the project. After the Hotel, the second and third floors became furnished rooms for rent. Henry Landes is listed as owner in 1894. By 1907 the ground floor was occupied by government offices such as U. S. Department of Commerce and Labor, U. S. Detention Station, U. S. Immigration Service and Chinese Inspector. In 1931 Fred Lewis purchased the building from the Landes Estate Company, Alaska Rooms, lodging are listed in the 1932 city directory. Mr. Lewis operated Lewis Emporium, new and used furniture, until his death in 1966. The upstairs was used mostly for storage during his occupancy. His estate sold to Harry and Mary Johnson who did considerable renovations to the building at the time. They installed the three sets of double doors on the ground floor. In 1971 Robert E. Haggard purchased the building and put in an apartment upstairs for his own use. A serious fire in 1976 destroyed the roof and part of the third floor with considerable water damage to the rest of the building. Currently the upper floors are in disrepair while the store fronts house thriving businesses. The current building owners are Jeffrey and Karen White.

Fowler-Caines Building Page 3



Murals on Fowler Caines Building, October, 1949. Life Magazine







Detail of Bull Durham mural, November 2010.

#### C.F. Clapp Building Also known as April Fool's, Port Townsend Art Gallery 725 Water Street



Clapp Building murals, November of 2010.

photo by Brian Moratti



Water Street; the C.F. Clapp Building on the left with the mural that says 'MIKI DALEO, WINES, LIQUORS & CIGARS. JCHS 13.80.

# C.F. Clapp Building, Page 2



C. F. Clapp building in 1885. JCHS 10.15

Cyrus F. Clapp arrived in Port Townsend in 1870 with few resources. By 1885 he was a prominent business man and built this substantial two-story building—four bricks thick for a cost of \$13,000. The soft brick is thought to have come from Hadlock while the cast iron facade applied on the brick face was cast by Washington Iron Works in Seattle.

First occupied by Peyser Brother Dry Goods, the main floor store front quickly became the Merchants Bank, operated by J. H. Feuerbach & C. F. Clapp. The bank operated in this location for a very short time before being sold and moved. Over the years, whether it was early basement saloons or the later main floor taverns, the building is well known for a long history of alcohol related uses. In 1890 a saloon was in full swing, operated by James Donofrio and just two years later the Merchant Saloon, owned by Clapp and leased by Otto Bauer, was operating here.

By 1901 Michl DeLeo moved his Roma Saloon to the Clapp building after a fire destroyed its original spot on Washington Street. During Prohibition the saloon closed down, DeLeo operated the storefront as a grocery and general store. During this same time period the second floor was being used for the Maritime Sailor and the West Coast Marine Union Branch Office.

By 1934 Michl's son Frank, opened the Nappeo Athletic Club. Wrestling and boxing matches were held in the rear of the club where a special ring was constructed. Three years later the club was remodeled to include a dance floor and renamed the Club DeLeo; a sign from the 1940s stated that there would be "Dancing On Mill Pay Days Only." There was a card room on the Mezzanine. There were also four (tiny) apartments and four sleeping rooms on the second floor; this upper floor was known to be a very active brothel.

In the early 1960s Harry and Mary Johnson purchased the building and began restoration. The front doors were salvaged from a Seattle Presbyterian Church. The Johnson's bricked up the basement door that once led to the "Fro Street" area where liquor deliveries were made by boat and sailors were said to have been cargo on outgoing trips. A large trap door from basement to main floor was sealed.

In 1968 Frank and Edna Smith purchased the building and continued on with the long process of renovating the entire building, with the help of son and daughter-in-law, Frank Jr. and Judy Kay. When they began the process, the card room was still in evidence on the Mezzanine; speaking tubes were uncovered from the upstairs to downstairs spaces. It has since operated as an art gallery and a gift shop with living quarters upstairs.

### Miller Burkett Building Also known as elk's building, silverwater cafe 237 Taylor Street



*Miller Burkett Building's faded murals and a* recently added mural for the Rose Theatre, November, 2010.



The mural for F.W. Eisenbeis Fancy Groceries is still visible here. detail JCHS 10.325

## Miller Burkett Building, Page 2



Neither of the grocery murals on the Washington Street side of the building still exist. detail JCHS 2003.134.650, JCHS 13.136

**B.S Miller and Herbert L. Burkett had this grand building constructed on leased land in 1889** at a cost of \$18,000. Creditors took it over soon after the building was constructed. The Key City Amusement Club occupied a portion of the building from 1889-1892. The Yacht Club had an office there in 1892-93. The Union League Club was there around 1894. By 1901 the ground floor and basement were occupied by O. A. Schanz Grocery. In December of 1902 Fred W. Eisenbeis bought out Schanz and carried on the grocery business that had been operating at the location.

It was not until 1905 that Elks Lodge Number 317 purchased the building and established their long running occupancy. The Elks used the upper floors for their organization. The Jefferson Grocery was operating from the ground floor c1911-1915. The E. M. Marr Drug store was doing business on the ground floor in 1932. Lussier Jewelry operated at the site until early 1950. The Elks boarded up the ground floor windows and began occupying the entire building after the jewelry store left the spot. It was rented out for special events but largely used for Elk events over the years. In 1993 the organization sold the building to Richard Miller who, along with David Hero, restored the old building to its original splendor.

# Terry Building 921 Washington Street



Mural on the Terry Building, November 2010.



Terry Building,, 1985. JCHS 10.482

#### Terry Building, Page 2

In 1890 the Terry Building was constructed at a cost of \$8,000. Built on a hill, the building is brick with two levels and a large basement, which has an outside entrance on the west side. The building is narrow and has two bays and three recessed doorways. The doorway on the west side leads to a staircase and the second level.

When completed, six liens had been filed by Quimper Manufacturing Company, Tacoma Lumber, Tacoma Cornice Works, George W. Downs (for lumber), Kreher and Desmond (painters), and L.B. Hastings and Co., suppliers of hardware, stoves, plumbing and gas fittings.

In 1891 the building was occupied by a printing shop and a boarding house. A



Miller Burkett Building (left) and Terry Building on Washington Street, 1890. detail JCHS 13.53

Chinese laundry operated in the basement for some years. In 1903 the Sunset Telephone Co., was a tenant. This was the first phone company in Port Townsend, which started with 38 customers. The Citizens Electric Company was a tenant in 1907.

Pacific Telephone and Telegraph was in the building from 1909-1916. Later, a tailor, Karl Teitzel also occupied the space. Some of the old mural sign is still visible on the west side of the building: "Tailor made suits on order–Cleaning–Pressing–Repairing."

This property has had many owners over the years. There were numerous mortgages and warranty deeds. The building became vacant for some time. There was no maintenance or upkeep for years. It was used for storage and was crammed with old furniture and debris. In 1980, the building was purchased and cleared, with photos taken to show the sad condition of the interior. In 1981, the building was sold to Phillip Johnson and extensive restoration was begun. In 1985 Jefferson County Historical Society gave Phillip Johnson and Arletta Gould a Mary Johnson Award for historic preservation.

At present, the street floor is occupied by stores, and the second level with offices. A restaurant and entertainment business operates out of the large basement and part of the first floor, with an outside entrance on the west side of the building on the Water Street level.



Portion of the mural, as seen from Water Street, November 2010.

## James & Hastings Building, Page 2

In 1889 Francis W. James and Lucinda Hastings built this four story brick and stone building. The primary ground floor tenant was Smith & Ellis, with clothing and dry goods, hardware, stoves, tin wear, boots, and shoes. Offices and lodgings were on the upper floors. The L. B. Hastings Company handled hardware, steamboat supplies, logger's supplies, tableware and more. There was a tin shop, managed by George Durfner. In 1890, Smith & Ellis, City Surveyors and Civil and Mechanical Engineers, Port Townsend Gas and Fuel Company, L. B. Hastings & Company offices and other offices were operating out of the building. Rooms were for rent on the upper floors.

In 1897, J.J. Fenton, the liquor merchant, had a saloon and club rooms in the building. The Vienna Hotel and bar opened October 1, 1900. The Olympic Hotel was operating here by 1920. J. F. Canady of Portland purchased the building in 1921.



JCHS 13.97

By 1930, offices and businesses were back in the building. Victorian Square was established in 1997.

Lucinda Hastings, wife of Loren Brown Hastings, was "the only person to live through, and participate in, the entire early history of the town. Most of the early pioneers died during the 1880s, shortly before the boom period when anticipation that Port Townsend would be the great port of the Puget Sound area seemed to be materializing. She arrived in 1852, the first non-native woman in the area. She survived Indian wars and eked out a subsistence in the wilderness. She saw the town prosper with the promise of a railroad and watched the dreams fade in the depression of 1891." (from *Victorian Architecture*, Denison & Huntington).

Francis Wilcox James, a native of England, arrived in Port Townsend in 1853. In 1855 he went to La Push as an Indian Agent and Assistant Lighthouse Keeper at Cape Flattery. While at La Push he became well-liked by the Quileute Indians and, as an honoring gesture, they named James Island after him. Upon his return to Port Townsend Mr. James became a store clerk, later managed his own store, and became customs inspector. James is not often mentioned in historical accounts of early Port Townsend but it is widely known that he was a shrewd businessman who invested wisely in real estate during the boom years of the late 1880s and early 1890s. Mr. James is listed in the 1890 Port Townsend City Directory as "Capitalist."

# James & Hastings Building, Page 3



Corner sign of the James & Hastings BuildingNovember 2010.photo by Brian Moratti



The building c1900 when it housed the German Consulate on the second floor.

JCHS 10.113

# Uptown Murals





#### Preserving Historic Signs

Historic signs can contribute to the character of buildings and districts. They can also be valued in themselves, quite apart from the buildings to which they may be attached. However, any program to preserve historic signs must recognize the challenges they present. These challenges are not for the most part technical. Sign preservation is more likely to involve aesthetic concerns and to generate community debate. Added to these concerns are several community goals that often appear to conflict: retaining diverse elements from the past, encouraging artistic expression in new signs, zoning for aesthetic concerns, and reconciling business requirements with preservation.

Preserving historic signs is not always easy. But the intrinsic merit of many signs, as well as their contribution to the overall character of a place, make the effort worth-while. Observing the guidelines given below can help preserve both business and history.

#### Retaining Historic Signs

Retain historic signs whenever possible, particularly when they are:

- associated with historic figures, events or places.
- significant as evidence of the history of the product, business or service advertised.
- significant as reflecting the history of the building or the development of the historic district. A sign may be the only indicator of a building's historic use.
- characteristic of a specific historic period, such as gold leaf on glass, neon, or stainless steel lettering.
- integral to the building's design or physical fabric, as when a sign is part of a storefront made of Carrara glass or enamel panels, or when the name of the historic firm or the date are rendered in stone, metal or tile. In such cases, removal can harm the integrity of a historic property's design, or cause significant damage to its materials.
- outstanding examples of the signmaker's art, whether because of their excellent craftsmanship, use of materials, or design.
- local landmarks, that is, signs recognized as popular focal points in a community.
- elements important in defining the character of a district, such as marquees in a theater district.

#### New Signs and Historic Buildings

Preserving old signs is one thing. Making new ones is another. Closely related to the preservation of historic signs on historic buildings is the subject of new signs for historic buildings. Determining what new signs are appropriate for historic buildings, however, involves a major paradox: Historic sign practices were not always "sympathetic" to buildings. They were often unsympathetic to the building, or frankly contemptuous of it. Repeating some historic practices, therefore, would definitely not be recommended.

Yet many efforts to control signage lead to bland sameness. For this reason the National Park Service discourages the adoption of local guidelines that are too restrictive, and that effectively dictate uniform signs within commercial districts. Instead, it encourages communities to promote diversity in signs--their sizes, types, colors, lighting, lettering and other qualities. It also encourages business owners to choose signs that reflect their own tastes, values, and personalities. At the same time, tenant sign practices can be stricter than sign ordinances. The National Park Service therefore encourages businesses to fit their sign programs to the building.

The following points should be considered when designing and constructing new signs for historic buildings:

- Signs should be viewed as part of an overall graphics system for the building. They do not have to do all the "work" by themselves. The building's form, name and outstanding features, both decorative and functional, also support the advertising function of a sign. Signs should work with the building, rather than against it.
- New signs should respect the size, scale and design of the historic building. Often features or details of the building will suggest a motif for new signs.
- Sign placement is important: new signs should not obscure significant features of the historic building. (Signs above a storefront should fit within the historic signboard, for example.)
- New signs should also respect neighboring buildings. They should not shadow or overpower adjacent structures.
- Sign materials should be compatible with those of the historic building. Materials characteristic of the building's period and style, used in contemporary designs, can form effective new signs.
- New signs should be attached to the building carefully, both to prevent damage to historic fabric, and to ensure the safety of pedestrians. Fittings should penetrate mortar joints rather than brick, for example, and sign loads should be properly calculated and distributed.

# Lost Buildings & Murals Tucker Block 234-236 Water Street



The Tucker Block, 1890s. According to a 1994 Leader article, the front of the building was painted bright red. JCHS 10.114



Mural for the Red Front Clothing Store. detail JCHS 10.114

The Tucker Block at the corner Water and Adams Street was demolished in May 1961. This demolition is the most significant loss of a Victorian-era structure in Port Townsend to date. The brick was said to be inferior but it is the same brick from which most remaining buildings were constructed. Bank of America now occupies the site.

Tucker was one of the principal founders of the Quimper Manufacturing Co. that produced house finishing products. They started manufacturing brick in 1889; the plant having an annual capacity of 1,500,000 bricks. From those bricks he built the Tucker Block building at a cost of \$25,000.

From 1894 to 1914 the First National Bank owned the building and it was occupied by The Red Front Clothing Store. In 1914 it was sold to Peter Benelle but the bank took it back in 1916. Some of the businesses that were there include The Herman Barz, Young Variety Store, and the Orthopedic Thrift Shop. The Glendale Dairy was there in the 1930s. Also of interest...



Murals on buildings on Washington Street for a furniture store and an earlier YMCA building. detail JCHS 13.124



Many murals were designed to be visible to ship traffic. detail JCHS 13.472.