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Klipsun is a Lummi Indian word meaning "beautiful sunset."

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Bellingham's Beginnings and a Character Called Captain Roeder

by Ann Legry

The first name in Bellingham history is Captain Henry Roeder, one of the first two white men to settle here and regarded by many as "the father of Bellingham."

Three of his great-grandchildren still live in Bellingham: Jim Bolster of the Bellingham National Bank, his sister, Phoebe Townley, and Mrs. Charlotte Roth Smith, the family historian. Her father was Victor Roth, Roeder's grandson, but it was her mother, Margerite Roth, who kept the family records and was avidly interested in its history.

"So it's just kind of been dumped on me I guess," Mrs. Smith laughed. "And I'm really not, I am NOT very good at this."

Despite her modesty, Mrs. Smith has much information to offer about her distinguished great-grandfather that can't be found in history books.

At the age of six, Roeder and his family fled from their native Germany to Ohio. The Franco-Prussian war was beginning and men were drafted into the Prussian army, which Mrs. Smith believes to be the reason for the family's escape.

By sixteen, Roeder was sailing on a cargo ship on Lake Erie. A photograph taken around this time shows Roeder to be a handsome young man, short and stocky, with black curly hair and sporting a golden earring. In the later photographs, he has a goatee and is minus the earring.

According to the Bellingham Bay Reveille and Gazetteer of Nov. 10, 1893, Roeder was given a 10-month furlough that turned into a twenty-two year furlough.

He, like thousands of others, caught gold fever in 1850 and joined a wagon train headed for California. His success at mining was a sometime thing, so he took up fishing on the Sacramento River, saved $10,000 and invested in the Sacramento Fishing Company. Here he hired a clerk, Russell Peabody, the man who later accompanied him to Bellingham.

When a fire destroyed the town and the business later that year, Roeder and Peabody traveled north to establish a similar business. But when he learned that a fire in San Francisco had sent the price of lumber soaring to $1000 per thousand feet, he began to look for a mill site instead of a place to fish. All the prime sites in Seattle and Port Townsend were already taken. In Olympia, they met Chief Chawitzit of the Lummi tribe who told them of a good mill site in the north. They landed at Bellingham Bay in December, 1852, and with the help of Lummi tribesmen, the saw
mill was built on Whatcom Falls Creek. The first year, 1853, the water level of the creek was too low to turn the water wheel. By the time rain finally came in 1854, lumber prices in San Francisco had dropped to $20 per thousand feet.

The *Reveille* differed with this story. It said a white man in Olympia offered to show Roeder the mill site for $1000. But Mrs. Smith said, “I’d heard Chawitzit told him of the site. I can’t imagine him spending a thousand dollars to come up here and look, and I don’t think he had that kind of money.”

Reflecting on Roeder’s arrival in Bellingham, Mrs. Smith laughed and said, “When they had Bellingham’s centennial celebration in 1952, the family went down to the City Hall. There were speeches and what all and they dedicated the statues of Roeder and Peabody.

“When they landed here in 1852, it was terribly cold and it snowed shortly after that. When we were celebrating the centennial, we all had fur coats on and were so cold we could hardly wait for the thing to end. Afterwards, we laughed at how we’ve certainly changed; couldn’t any of us gone out and slept on a beach, I’m sure.”

In 1854, 28-year-old Elizabeth Austin left Ohio on a wagon train to join Roeder out west. Her diary of the nine-month journey is grim. Each day, she recorded the number of graves passed on the trail. On August 24, she recorded their arrival at the scene of a massacre which had happened only the day before. A five-wagon train was attacked by Indians and out of the 19 passengers, only one young boy survived. There are few personal feelings in the diary and the only indicator of any regret in her mind is the June 3 entry, written after two and a half months of travel.

“This morning I wish that I was at home.”

“Her family thought she was crazy,” Mrs. Smith said. “I have some of their letters telling how she’s left and wondering how she could have done it. But Roeder had written her and asked her to come, so she left for Olympia.”

They married in Olympia in 1855 and had four children. Two of their sons died very young. The third, Victor, was the founder of the Bellingham National Bank. Their daughter, Mrs. Smith’s grandmother, was Lottie Roeder who married Charles Roth, a prominent attorney. “Roeder was a staunch Democrat and Lottie was a Republican. That’s the only thing she ever held against him,” she laughed.

There were also rumors of a second wife. “I had an aunt who is now long gone and it used to bother her...
no end because there were tales in the old days that all these men had Indian wives. It would just drive my aunt up a tree and she'd scream it just wasn't so. So they dug around and an old Indian said no, there was no wife. But you still couldn't mention the subject to my aunt,” she laughed.

Roeder, she said, was very fond of his children, and a strong supporter of education. He was also very fond of his wife, she said, but he was constantly traveling and was away much of the time.

“In those days,” she said, “a man could get 160 acres from the government to settle and his wife could also get 160 acres. That was another thing people used to tease Roeder about. ‘Well no wonder he was in such a hurry to get her (Elizabeth Austin) out here.’”

Roeder, Edward Eldridge and W.M. Utter were the biggest landowners in the area in the early days. They divided the town and more or less said, ‘I’ll take this part and you take that part.’

Mrs. Smith explained, “Roeder’s property was near Roeder school, came down to about Lottie Street near the court house and then went out to the Guide Meridian. Mr. Eldridge, who I think was a lot smarter, took the waterfront near Eldridge Avenue.”

In 1873, Roeder’s mill burned down and he turned back to the sea ending his 22-year furlough. He operated two cargo ships between this area and San Francisco, which was for many years the only means of water transport in Puget Sound. He also became co-owner of the Chuckanut Stone quarry.

He used part of his growing fortune to build the Roeder mansion at Elm and Monroe Streets. Three stories tall, it harbored a library, ballroom, five fireplaces, a turret, and beautiful ceilings painted by a German artist.

“The house was a beautiful house,” said Mrs. Smith who lived there several years. “It’s just criminal that it was torn down. All the wood and everything else went to someone in Seattle who bought it.”

Mrs. Smith’s father and his sister were co-owners of the house and couldn’t agree on what to do with it when they decided to sell it. Today, at the corner of Elm and Monroe is only a vacant lot.

“One story they told about Captain Roeder was about when he was in his seventies or eighties (and my father said he was a very grumpy old man) and he owned all the land around that area. One day he saw something going on outside the window and thought it was a burglar, so he shot right through the window.”

He may have used the pistol Mrs. Smith inherited. He certainly didn’t use the elephant gun he purchased on one of his trips to San Francisco. In San Francisco, Roeder also picked up a telescope that once belonged to Santa Anna. Mrs. Smith and her mother once visited in California and ran across several identical telescopes, all said to have belonged to Santa Anna.

Roeder went into politics and served as state senator, county commissioner, and state representative. He was urged, according to a letter, by about five ladies who lived in the Park district near Lake Whatcom to vote against woman’s suffrage. They felt what was good enough for their husbands to vote for was what they would vote for, so suffrage wasn’t needed. Besides, they wrote, the woman’s place was in the home. Roeder voted for women’s suffrage.

About her name and heritage, Mrs. Smith doesn’t feel it gives her any special standing or privileges in the community.

“The world’s changed,” she said. “The only thing is I do get mad every once in a while when I hear people say they don’t want more people coming to Bellingham, that they want to preserve it. I keep thinking, my God, everyone in my family worked so hard and so long to get it started and now they want to squash it.”

Mrs. Charlotte Roth Smith, who is a great granddaughter of Captain Roeder contributed much of the information in this article. Mrs. Smith is the family historian and has kept many of the letters and diaries of the Roeder and Roth families. Presently, Mrs. Smith lives with her husband on Fort Bellingham Road and she works part-time in her husband’s downtown real estate office.
There Are No Strangers

Much of the background for this article was taken from "The Persistence of Aboriginal Beliefs and Practices Among the Nooksack Coast Salish" — a doctoral dissertation by Pamela T. Amoss, 1971.

Story and photos by Jim Harrison

As the native language class lets out at the new Nooksack Indian Tribal Center on a misty fall afternoon, the old people move slowly out of the conference room, making their way to the cars and pick-ups that will take them back home. They are smiling and chatting the way people do when they are leaving a social gathering. One elderly lady stops to peer into an office window and wave good-bye to her friend — a bearded young white sitting at a desk. Another group waits patiently for a little grandmother who is still getting used to walking with her new cane. There is an enviable sense of community in the gestures and conversations. There are no strangers.

Like many small Northwest tribes, the Nooksacks have only recently been able to generate the tribal strength and organization that has helped them develop the new Tribal Center and programs like the

native language class. Like most tribes, they have spent the past 100 years recovering from the initial shock of white settlement.

One reason that some tribes have been slow to form strong organizations may be the spirit of individualism that is especially apparent among the Indians of the Pacific Northwest. Ramona Bennett, tribal chairwoman of the publicly active Puyallup tribe near Tacoma, recently told a newspaper reporter, "There are no Indian leaders because there are no Indian followers. If there had been Indian followers, there would be no Indians left now. Indians would have been wiped out. We are individuals, acting through our hearts and thoughts."

The individualism that has permitted the Indians' quiet survival is particularly evident in the history of the Nooksacks, who live primarily in the areas surrounding the little towns of Everson, Nooksack and Deming. The tribe is not large; it has about 560 members at present, though the figure has been down to less than 300 in the past. They do not have
reservation land. Many live on property that has been in their families for generations. Others find housing wherever they can.

In the beginning, when the Nooksacks began to lose their land to white homesteaders, they turned to a friend for advice. Jim Bertrand, a white settler married to a Nooksack, advised his wife's people to file individual claims on their property as the settlers were doing, and in that manner they might retain possession of their homelands. Nearly all of the scattered holdings of Nooksacks today have been handed down through generations from the original claims of their ancestors.

While this historical circumstance may have helped the Nooksacks adapt quietly to the drastic changes in their environment, it has also prevented the kind of unity that can be generated on communal land. Many of the individual holdings are hopelessly tied up in a tangle of claims by multiple heirs, making it difficult or impossible to obtain loans for improvement, or to sell any of the property.

Another historical complication that has retarded the tribe's political evolution is the failure of their ancestors to sign the Treaty of Point Elliot. It has been speculated that ice jams on the river may have prevented the old Nooksacks from attending the treaty signing, but whatever the cause, the result was that they were never placed on a reservation, and the government refused to recognize them as a tribe. They were later offered a place on the reservations of other tribes, but they did not want to leave their home territory.

Finally, in the 1950s, the tribe attempted through legal action to retrieve some of what it had lost in the past century. In response to their efforts, the government offered them $43,000 for lost territories. One Nooksack tells how each member of the tribe received a check for $99. Insulted and disappointed, they returned the government's money.

Then in 1972, as a result of the efforts of those active in tribal affairs, the federal government officially recognized the Nooksacks, opening the way to new resources and generating hope for the future. In the past four years, they have begun to receive federal funding, and tribal programs multiply slowly as the money comes trickling in.

There is tribal land now, and though it was purchased with their own money, they plan to use federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) financing to construct 36 houses on the site. The housing project will be overseen by the Nooksack Indian Housing Authority — a tribal organization set up to deal with the long-standing problem of inadequate Indian housing. Nooksack HUD director James Fidele says the 20-acre tract is the first of several land purchases the tribe hopes to make as it develops such additional programs as fisheries and recreation.

Along with these positive signs of growth have come some problems. The new tribal government is not without its conflicts and disagreements: last year ended with a federally mediated scuffle involving the recall of seven out of eight tribal council members. Some observers have suggested that it is mostly a personal disagreement among a few individuals, and it doesn't seem to have overtly disrupted tribal affairs.

In addition to the material improvements in the community, there has been an increase in outside help with research and organization. Two Western students recently helped prepare environmental impact studies for the proposed housing project, and four or five other non-Indians work for the tribe full- or part-time, in addition to its 30-plus Indian employees.

Some Nooksacks are also learning, or re-learning, their native language, in classes taught at the tribal center, and a class in Nooksack history and culture may soon be taught by Allen Richardson, a Whatcom Community College anthropologist. Richardson has worked for the tribe on a number of research projects in the last few years, the results of which included a report on homesteading, and studies defining traditional Nooksack fishing locations. His work was
also used in studies that led to U.S. District Judge George Boldt’s decision on Indian fishing rights.

Perhaps the most conspicuous result of the tribe’s long-awaited government recognition is the handsome new Tribal Center and Smokeshop on the site of the old Department of Natural Resources fire hall in Deming.

Outside, its shingle and log-support construction make it esthetically adapted to its setting and something of a compromise between the old split-cedar smokehouse and modern architectural forms.

On the inside, the Smokeshop is the only thing that differentiates it from an office of a modern lumber company. There is a receptionist’s desk with telephone and guest book, rough-cut cedar paneling hung with Indian carvings and old photographs of Nooksacks, and a staircase and hallways leading to offices and meeting rooms. In the rear are a little courtyard and rooms where the pre-school classes will be held.

Lois Cline, director of the Nooksack Indian Pre-school Project, says the project is in its second year and has 27 children, ranging in age from two-and-a-half to six years. Usual pre-school activities are combined with elements of Indian culture. The program is partly designed to give the children strong identities, to help them deal with the problems they will face as members of a minority group.

“I think our Indian kids have to be twice as smart,” said Mrs. Cline. She pointed out that they have two sets of cultural traditions to absorb. The children attend class for a full eight-to-five day, December through June, and in this way the project is also a day-care service for working parents.

There is hope that the pre-school project will bring about a change in the public school experiences of Indian children. In 1971, an anthropologist wrote: “Nooksack children love school for the first two or three years, but in the third of fourth grade they begin to lose their enthusiasm and most of them drop out of high school as soon as they can. They often complain that the teachers will not help them because they are Indians. It is common for both the children and their parents to perceive the teachers and school administration as unfriendly.”

In the two school districts where the majority of Nooksack families live, there is now a full-time Indian counselor-aide who does tutoring and home visitations as well as counseling at all grade levels. Sandy Kapuni, a pretty, round-faced Nooksack who worked for five years as a beautician after graduating from high school, is the Indian counselor for the Nooksack Valley School District.

She agreed, as did Lois Cline, that the situation described by the anthropologist has not changed much in the last six years, although the number of Indian graduates has apparently risen slightly. Most of her time is spent tutoring the elementary children in reading, and dealing with routine attendance problems. Shyness is sometimes a problem for the girls in the upper grades, she said. Some of them have trouble in class because they are “too scared to ask questions.”

Problems with education, jobs, substandard living conditions, and racial prejudice are a congenital fact of the Indian’s relationship with the white majority. They are not likely to disappear through the efforts of the minority alone. As Mrs. Cline points out, the whites need to be educated about the Indians. They need to understand their closeness to the natural environment — not as a romantic ideal, but as a fact of life for people who also drink coffee, read the paper, and watch television like everyone else.

Though they become more visible as they are able to create better conditions for themselves, the Nooksacks have always been a part of their environment. Those who have studied the language say the word “Nooksack” probably comes from the term for bracken root — an important part of the aboriginal Nooksack diet and a plant that has grown wild in this area since prehistoric times. Like the bracken, the Nooksack Indians are as firmly rooted in the valley now as in the past.
Ken Hertz: A Man

Two attorneys face the mayor's desk, briefcases and pipes handy. For the better part of an hour they've been telling Mayor Kenneth D. Hertz — who had just submitted the 1977 budget, on which he'd been working for weeks, to the city council — the cost of paying court-appointed attorneys on a yearly contract basis, rather than by the case.

"I don't like the whole municipal court system," Hertz tells the attorneys. "I just went along with the program as we now have it, but I want to get the jail and municipal court outta here (city hall). The whole clerical system is cumbersome; it's just a fouled-up situation. I've tolerated it mainly because there hasn't been time to change it. We need a consolidated court system. It's the worst operation in city hall."

There is little comment from the attorneys, who quickly bounce back to the original subject — did Mayor Hertz realize that the claims the city had written for city attorneys are steadily increasing? An annual fee, inflation considered, is discreetly suggested.

"I could get a public defender for less. I'm cutting down with 45 people next year, and I'll be damned if I'll come up with 17 grand for indigent cases."

One of the attorneys was red in the face as he fired a final volley of federal statistics. The meeting ended, more research was needed, and they would talk again. Alone in his office, Hertz, impeccable in blue suit and tie, paces.

"These damn attorneys bug me," he tells his secretary. "There's too damn many attorneys in this world, each with a little bone to pick."

January marks the end of 39-year-old Hertz' first year as Bellingham's somewhat audacious mayor. His blue-eyed, blond, classic looks and flashing smile are more in line with an obliging public relations man, rather than the man who in fact describes the ribbon-cutting aspect of being a mayor as "thrillin' as hell."

Hertz's confidence in his ability stems from a master's degree in public administration, received from the University of Oregon in 1964, and some executive development sessions at the University of Indiana. He was assistant director of parks in Eugene, Ore., and Mountlake Terrace.

He received local acclaim during his ten years as Whatcom County Parks Director prior to his election in November, 1975. It was Hertz's zeal and knack for obtaining federal funds which gave us our present exceptionally fine park system.

The key to Hertz's management plan is centralization of the civic government. Everything must be considered in a planned way, Hertz emphasizes; implementation, and the aesthetic effect of change.

"This was not being done before. Things were being done by individual department heads with no central control and no thoughts as to the design elements." The result of this, Hertz said, "is helter-skelter growth. More growth is needed for a better economic base, but it must be a very controlled, planned growth."

Hertz works closely with all department heads. "We have excellent people, which is the basis of any good administration. I have a policy that any decision which affects the city be discussed in a meeting. I don't bother with day to day decisions."

A comprehensive plan for Bellingham's development in the next 20 years is being worked on, and is due early this year. One phase includes bringing Western down off the hill and into the hearts and homes of the community. In a meeting with Continuing Studies personnel who were offering public relations courses to city employees last fall, Hertz was enthusiastic about plans for the "town and gown" to join forces.

"I think to bring the college into the community, you have to bring it in physically. You have the nice brick walkways, and until the community can relate physically, well, until that, I see the animosity continuing. You know, every time I tack a faculty member onto one of our boards I get heat. Another thing that makes for a problem is that Western is actually geographically elevated. I'm trying to get the college to locate some of its new proposed facilities in the community."

"I get along well with Olscamp (Western President Paul Olscamp). I think he's excited working with the community. We're going to take in utilities, land-use, housing, and how the college can help the city."

The week is a montage of such meetings; civic groups, commissioners, councilmen, representatives, police and firemen. Most committees are volunteer, consisting of concerned citizens donating their time for Bellingham. And all, whether dealing
With A Plan

with pollution from the cement plant, or whether flowers could be planted along the Parkade, vie for his attention and demand his input. The result is a sort of super-coordinator who reads on the run between meetings in order to be cognizant by the time he sits down.

Flashing smile aside, he is a thorough businessman and he rarely lets the discussion wander from his control. When the meeting is over, he is first to announce it. Yet when talk turns to art or traveling, he is warm, and his interest isn't forced.

In a meeting with Ruth Kelsey, retired Western professor and member of Bellingham's art commission, Hertz was ebullient as they discussed a possible art and photo display in city hall. As they talked, he jotted down figures. "I'll find a department that's got a little money, that's your contribution," he told her.

They settled on having rotating bi-monthly displays by local artists. "I'm thinking politically now," he laughed. "We'll call it the Mayor's Invitational Art Display, and give them a certificate. Fantastic!"

Hertz is described by his secretary, Donna Roper, as "an antique nut." Several throne-like chairs from the Empire period (circa 1900) on loan from the Whatcom County Museum, grace his office. He has also traveled extensively with his wife, Alice ("She was my high school sweetheart. I've courted her since the ninth grade.") in South and Central America and Mexico. He is hoping to go to Japan this year to visit Bellingham's sister city.

"He's a very dynamic person," Roper said. "One of the things I'm most impressed with is his respect for my job. He's the best boss I ever had. He keeps me informed as to his whereabouts so I don't look like a dummy. There's never a dull moment. I enjoy getting up and coming to work. Ken is definitely not boring."

Roper met Hertz in 1968 when she worked as a secretary in the office next door to the County Parks office on the fifth floor of the courthouse. At that time the floor was still under construction, and the offices were divided by only a partition. She and Hertz became friends, and she later did bookkeeping for him. When he ran for mayor she helped in his campaign, and was pleased and surprised when he selected her to be his secretary.

Because of the multitude of night meetings, his appointment book is left blank for a couple afternoons a week. An advocate of physical fitness, he uses these to work out at a spa. He also jogs, bowls, plays tennis, skis, and goes duck hunting. Very much a family man, he spends as much time as possible with his three children, Troy, 15, Sonya, 11, and Trevor, 7.

It's the end of the first year, but it's just the beginning of his plans for Bellingham. Most of this first year was spent establishing policies and procedures: "A lot of things I've had to do, that weren't done by the former administration. We've been delayed by the little things that had to be done.

"Someone once told me that Bellingham was controlled by seven people, but now it's a completely new make-up. Bellingham is very citizen-oriented. You're not going to buy your w'v into an office today." The smile flashed.

"Of course, if that were the case, I wouldn't be here."
Laura Bremner
Brian Duke

Klipsun

Gallery
Intalco: The price of progress

Story and photos by Bob Slone

Since 1966, when Intalco opened its aluminum plant near Ferndale, the company has struggled to maintain environmental quality along with efficient production. Cleaning up waste products from the smelting process is only a part of the ongoing process. As energy becomes more scarce, Intalco is faced with finding new sources of power for their plant in a society where oil is getting harder to find, coal is frowned on and nuclear energy is yet to be fully developed.

At the time Intalco began full scale production, the University of Washington was contracted to monitor areas of possible pollution. The most obvious area was the runoff water from the plant being channeled into the bay.

University scientists found the water contained inert alumina and carbon, as well as active fluoride, picked up during the cycling around the machinery and plant for cooling purposes. Manganese, normally found in seawater, neutralized the fluoride enough to make it negligible as a pollutant.

Another concern, "thermal pollution," was also shown to be minor. Water around the runoff in the bay was a maximum of 4 degrees centigrade warmer than the bay water. Animals and marine life seem to be attracted to the warmer area, however, and began to thrive in great numbers.

At the same time gaseous fluoride was getting into the air around the plant and settling on nearby...
pastures. Cattle, grazing in the pastures, eventually began showing signs of fluoride poisoning. Abnormal growth occurred on their hooves, giving them long "toes" and tooth decay caused them to eat and drink less. Owners concerned about loss of production complained or filed suits.

Since then, Intalco has paid several thousand dollars to compensate the owners for losses. One settlement involved as much as $130,000 to several owners. Intalco then began to buy and now owns most of the land around the plant and maintains a test herd of their own.

The fluoride is now being taken out of the exhaust with a system of wet and dry "scrubbers," installed at a total cost of $25 million. The wet scrubbers spray the exhaust and trap the fluoride which is then settled out and processed into Kryolite, an element of the aluminum process. Dry scrubbers cycle the exhaust over aluminum ore which attracts the fluoride particles cycling them back into the process with the ore. The systems together trap almost 99 per cent of the fluoride fallout.

Overcoming the waste problem, Intalco has run head-on into another, more serious, problem. Their plant uses around 425 megawatts of electricity a day; Seattle uses around 800 megawatts in the same period.

When Intalco's contract with the Bonneville Power Administration expires in October of 1984, they will be faced with the problem of finding new sources of energy to continue production. Putting $5,000 into the campaign to defeat Initiative 325, the company has pitted themselves against environmentalists once again.

An Intalco spokesman, Gerry McRorie, maintains that the company needs nuclear energy until an alternative is found. According to McRorie, the company is actively seeking projects dealing with tidal power and solar power. A new chemical being developed for aluminum processing may ease the situation by lowering the power needed to process the aluminum.

Until alternatives are available, however, and at a reasonable cost, nuclear energy is the hope for companies like Intalco, even though environmentalists feel they have not established safety regulations needed for safe operation.
The shop was stuffy and warm. A man in a backroom looked around quickly to see why the front door had slammed shut with a bang.

His name is Lou Brozovich — known to many as "Lou" the locksmith. Dressed in black denim pants and a heavy, plain flannel shirt, a feeling of his gentleness filled the room. He had just turned on the stove, he said.

Brozovich, a heavy-set, tall man with a fistful of gray-hair mixed in with black, said for ten years he has had this locksmith shop on North State Street.

On one long wall hundreds of shiny, golden keys dangled in motion from small hooks mounted on a wood board. Locks of all sizes, shapes, brand names, some in boxes, some on display in a glass case, lay scattered through the tiny, cozy room.

A motored cutting wheel used for cutting nicks and dents into keys was set to one side of a built-in cabinet. It was covered with keys, tools and dirty rags.

Beyond the main shop room, papers, letters and a coffee pot decorated a small, standing-room-only office.

The shop was originally a two-pump gas station. It is set back from the busy street, the once-smooth driveway is partly grown over with weeds and the cement has cracked. Brozovich keeps his Fiat parked in the driveway. The pumps are gone. A large white sign with plain red letters reading "Lou the Locksmith" in front of the shop stands out more than the building does.

"Care for some coffee, chocolate?" Brozovich said loudly, walking slowly into his small office.

"Please."

"Oh, no, I forgot to fill this up," he says, holding out a round plastic container with about three tablespoons of coffee grounds sprinkled on the bottom.

"Sugar?"

"No, just black."

"Sugar?" he said impatiently.

"No, just black, please."

"Sugar, saccharine?"

Before I could spill out, "No, thank-you, black, please," Brozovich handed the steaming coffee to me. And it was black.

He grabbed a tall, metal stool near him and sat behind the glass-enclosed cabinet with authority.

"You ask what a locksmith does . . . I sit and drink coffee," he said with a serious face. "Cutting keys is incidental to a locksmith," he adds.

A tool called a "clipper," is used by locksmiths to cut locks. This is how keys are duplicated. Each clip is by code . . . a jagged edge or a smooth surface.

You put the correct pin in the "tumbler," a four-inch round metal tube that slips inside a lock, so they will all line up and will allow the lock to turn once the right key is in," he said, pointing to a large, red and white plastic box with various sized metal pins sitting on top of his messy worktable.

"That's a zipf kit. It has about 84 different sizes of pins," he said, while opening the kit up.

His supplies of keys, he said, come from all over the country. He buys wherever the keys are the cheapest.

"I have a supply house in Seattle and New York. In Portland, Ore., it's Wholesale Four, where I can order any amount and they send them up United Parcel Service (UPS) paid . . . it's a small outfit. Inter-Mountain, Utah is another supplier besides a Columbus, Ohio firm, but the order has to be over $25," Brozovich said.

He added some firms have specials and Watt lines that "don't cost me anything to use." He has over 1,000 key blanks in storage, besides the two walls full of keys, he has boxes in storage.
"The price for a key has changed, along with the economy," Brozovich said.

"I can remember when each double-sided key cost 17 cents. Now they cost 57 cents each. It's more or less the standard price in town," the locksmith said.

But he was more concerned with showing off the lamp he uses for measuring clip sizes than he was describing how keys are made. He said burglars broke into the shop one day, threw around papers, ripped open letters "probably looking for money but I never keep any here over night."

"They didn't get that," Brozovich said with thankfulness, pointing to a new, gray overhead lamp with built-in high intensity light bulbs. The lamp is attached to the crowded, overflowing desk. He announced proudly the cost, adding that each round magnifying glass disk costs $20. He has two disks that slip into place over the light.

Brozovich sat down on the stool again, his eyes staring out the window back and forth, then with a fast, jerky motion grabbed a big, gold lock from the cabinet below him.

"I sold one of these to a man for his wife's golf cart," he said. "Ridiculous price for it. People usually pick out locks that are the biggest size. They won't pick the one that's got the most security, they'll pick the cheapest. It's the smaller ones that usually have more protection," he said.

He reached for another big lock, the largest one on display.

"I wouldn't give a dime for a dozen of them," Brozovich said. "They're too easy to open."

The tradesman began to demonstrate his point, like he was a young boy taking apart a new toy.

"You see this?" he said, as he holds out a lock. "I'll show you how to pick it." One quick turn and his old hands are holding a tube of picking tools.

"Don't do that," he said to the lock, pounding it hard on the counter, "do that instead." While his hands were shaking he bit down on his lower lip in concentration.

"Come on, you stay there like you're supposed to be," Brozovich said. After shifting on his stool, a quick glance outside and whistling softly an unfamiliar tune, the top loop on the lock clicks open a crack. Brozovich didn't seem surprised. He was confident he could do it... eventually.

The quick-witted, happy man explains that no lock is burglar proof.

"There's actually no protection against a guy that knows what he's doing," the locksmith said. "Locksmiths try to make locks as strong as possible, though."

Born and raised in this area, Brozovich went to a Locksmith Institute on the East Coast.

"It was a 32-week course but I completed it in 5 weeks. I could have finished in three weeks but they told me to slow down, that I wouldn't retain it all," Brozovich said, stomping his feet lightly and smiling.

He said he's had "lots of jobs." After he took the course he came back to Bellingham and drove a taxi cab. He also worked in a coal mine and did construction work in Washington, D.C., for 11 years. Then he came to the area again, doing contract work "for a couple of years until I saved up enough money to buy my own shop."

"Why I came back I'll never know. Like a fool I should have got into this business right at the start. Instead I drove cabs." He taps all his left hand fingers on top of the split, worn-down wood counter. A large, old cash register is on his left. No dollar signs are in the little glass window at the top of the register. A "Money Can't Buy Happiness But It Sure can Make Misery More Enjoyable" sign was close to the register.

"I've always had an affinity for locks and keys," he said. His head bopped up and down, trying to peer
Brozovich looked comfortable on the stool. It was as though his days were spent sitting there in contemplation alone, tapping his fingers on the counter and watching the busy world drive by in cars. He stands up abruptly, grabs a white plastic flower key chain. “Take Time to be Happy” is printed on the front. That must be Brozovich’s code he lives by.

Without any words, he hands it to me. His thoughtfulness and kindness was overwhelming. After thanking him, a moment of silence interrupted our visit.

Besides being a locksmith by trade, Brozovich also has two other interests to keep him busy. He grows plants, African violets, Swedish ivy, all-year-round cactus, to name a few in his shop.

“Look at this one,” he said quietly, touching gently a new red bloom on the cactus, “it is really growing.” Pretty soon I’ll have to move these plants.” The plants almost overpower the front counter but add color and life to the room.

Another interest is his garden next to his home on Ellis Street. He grows tomatoes, onions, carrots, radishes and lettuce besides strawberries on the side.

“Yep, it’s about as wide as this table,” he said jokingly, spreading his arms the width of the narrow counter top.

Each time the conversation directed to his past, Brozovich would talk about an unrelated topic.

After staring out the window, he said, “But, you can put this down for your conclusion that a locksmith’s main objective is to sell security.” Excuse me while I get me a drink of water, the kind man said, after he offered me a ride home. His voice becoming raspy from talking so much.

I knew, however, that what I came to the shop for, I had found. Keys, locks and somebody who knew about them — “Lou” the Locksmith.
Surely every student has, at one point or another, thrown his books down, uttered a few obscenities to the wind and wondered why it was that he or she happened to be at a college.

It's a mind over reality problem for some. How the study of the Yanomamo, for instance, fits into a pattern of life for a business major is elusive. Yet graduates all over the country each year take a little liberal arts background with them.

The following is Klipsun's informal survey concerning value of a liberal arts education

"You don't go to school to get a job. Sounds weird but that's what people think. Hopefully liberal arts will make you a more rational thinker. I think for something like TV production, you've got to have liberal arts."
— Gary Benson, junior vicoed major

"Liberal Arts is really not going to help you very much to get a job, it's more to gain knowledge for yourself."
— Dave Peacey, freshman art major

"I think it is more of a punishment than a prize. I've taken four years of every subject and there's no place, or no place that I've seen, to use it. "I think it makes you more of your own person and teaches you how to think, but most people aren't college graduates and it's hard to interrelate, it's frustrating."
—you need both types of study but we need schools that are more job oriented."
— Ellen Burns, has a degree in political science and work in Geology. She is now attending Bellingham Technical School studying secretarial skills to "become employable."

"An education is something you always have but what having it is worth I'm not sure. I guess I'm not sure what I expect from it, it certainly doesn't guarantee you a job after school."
— Rosemary Warwick, communication major

"What's a liberal arts education worth? that's what I've been asking myself. I don't have a major yet but some of the courses I've taken... haven't related to the outside world yet. I'm seriously considering some sort of vocational school."
— Rob Dunlap, sophomore

"Pragmatically, a liberal arts education has little or no value. However, I can see some value to it. "It helps to form a broad base to ultimately propel an individual for specialization in further pursuits... but a liberal arts education as offered by a wishy-washy college is nothing but a common struggle against a common foe."

"The general requirements are sorely in need of revision (at this school) ... the program should be re-oriented towards occupational studies. And liberal arts don't have to be shoved down somebody's throat, the person who's really interested will seek it anyway."
— Richard Peil, math major who has attended UW, CWSC and two colleges in New York state.

"The best thing about college is it lets you know all the things you can't stand. I've been through three majors: business, Russian and engineering. But I think I've finally found my niche in geology."
— Irene Prekeges, from Spokane, a "third year freshman" transfer from Gonzaga U.

"It teaches people to think clearly and increases their appre-
ciation of cultural and historical origins."
— Ray McInnis, WWSC reference librarian

"It depends on where your head's at; if you like learning for learning's sake, it's great. Being on a college campus is perfect; all possible resources are easily accessible."
— Linda Myra, Fairhaven senior.

"I would call it basically life enrichment. It makes life more interesting because you understand more about more things and can use this when learning about new things."
— Richard Atneosen, WWSC astronomy and physics professor.

"I have a rather strange philosophy about what's going on at this point in my life. I figured, I could spend four years working, but in this country, where education is available to practically everyone, I thought I would spend four years partying and having a good time. When I get out of school, I plan to bum around New Zealand, fight fires, and then, who knows? Journalism just looked like a good major; I'm not in it necessarily just to get a newspaper job after school."
Bruce Dawson, junior from Wenatchee, a journalism major "at the moment."

"Although most people in the technical, engineering and science fields complain at having to take liberal arts courses as undergraduates, for the most part they are advantaged by it. I'm not really in favor of schools that go all out for technical courses and damn the consequences, like Cal-Tech. I went to Cal-Tech where the token trivial courses in liberal arts were held in contempt. I hated the courses too, but appreciate them now. I only wish a liberal arts background came earlier, like in the education system in England, where college is devoted to concentration on specific fields. Here, high school is worse than it should be, so we have to waste time learning things people should already know. But they still have to master the basics of how to write, to read, to appreciate music. . . ."
— MyrI Beck, geophysicist and professor of geology at WWSC

"Liberal arts, according to its promoters, makes you a more complete human being. Liberal arts actually gives you an extensive knowledge of trivia, enables you to make intelligent sounding cocktail conversation and gives you a 50% better chance of earning over $13,000 a year than your friends who didn't make it past high school."
— Scott Fagerstrom, senior journalism major.

"There's a real need for people to get a liberal arts education, not that everybody needs to have this kind of education to make a contribution to the economy or anything else. But it's certainly important that some people have broader understanding of what's happening in the world, we don't want everybody to be technicians or craftsmen. It plays an important part but is not necessarily the thing for everyone."
— Gerry McRorie, public relations man at Intalco.

"The world is made of other things than work and I don't think education has to directly apply to work — as a means to an end. The understanding of what's around you, the past and the present, comes easier with a liberal arts education."
— Marie Evans, sophomore English major.

"I don't like the standards set at Western. They are well-rounded, but the diversity is not needed. Students should be allowed to pick an area and do that solidly. We tend to rush through too fast, it's too much of a process."
— Robert Hoof, part-time music student at WWSC and salesman at Brown Music Co.

"It would avoid pathogenic trends from setting in a society. In a strictly technical society, you are only going to be concerned with short term benefits from production. Mass production implies mass consumption. the liberal arts must guide technology."
— Ted Atwater, senior business administrator major.

"The world is made of other things than work and I don't think education has to directly apply to work — as a means to an end. The understanding of what's around you, the past and the present, comes easier with a liberal arts education."
— Marie Evans, sophomore English major.
I have a friend named Elizabeth. She is eighty years old, and lives alone in her small house on the south side of Bellingham. I see Elizabeth occasionally, and have just recently realized that I make visits to her house when I am feeling blue, and need verification that life is worth living after twenty-three.

Elizabeth is certainly capable of giving this encouragement. She never seems to think about how she is feeling, or how her mood will affect her day. She simply does, and if the doing isn't profitable, she changes directions and finds something else to keep her busy.

Elizabeth is used to living alone. Her husband was killed seven years ago in an industrial accident in Everett. She moved to Bellingham shortly after his death because she has a daughter here, and several close friends.

At one visit to Elizabeth's house I asked how she spends her evenings. It seems an elderly woman living alone in this town would have few options. But Elizabeth claims she never gets lonely or bored. She said, "Sometimes someone drops by and we have a glass of something and talk... and I have my TV, of course. But some of the shows make me uncomfortable. I suppose it's silly, sitting here alone in my own living-room and feeling uncomfortable, but then... I do."

"But I don't wish for company when it's not here. In fact, people sometimes disturb what I'm doing, and if they don't have anything worthwhile to say I wish they would go home."

"No, if I was afraid to be alone, I'd be in a fine mess. I had a friend that used to live in Denver, and after her husband died she started to lose her reasoning. She bought those big lights, floodlights, and put them all over the outside of her house. She'd turn them on at night and sit inside in the dark and worry herself sick. She died before she had to, that's for sure."

"If I was to think about being lonely, well... soon I wouldn't be able to think about anything else."

I asked Elizabeth what she does when she feels the need of company. She chose to ignore the directness of the question, and instead told another story; "Now I have another friend who dresses her dog in a little coat, puts it in a old baby carriage and takes it out for walks. People who don't know her probably look at her and think she's funny; an old woman taking her dog for a walk in a baby carriage. But my friend loves that dog. It's her child and she is its mother. It's not silly when you know her. You know we all have to get by however we can."

The last time I made my pilgrimage to the Southside was when I had an incredible amount to do and, typically, had left myself very little time in which to do it. I went to Elizabeth in search of some needed energy.

Elizabeth's secret is that she never does anything in halves. She needs no appreciation from the outside world as a stimulus for her dogged perfectionism. Even though she spends most of her time alone she dresses everyday with the greatest care. Her earrings always match her outfit, and her stockings never bag. The one concession she makes is to wear slippers, rather than her walking shoes, around the house.

She is constantly busy. Perhaps Elizabeth's favorite project is putting around her cluttered house and moving her numerous objects from cabinet to cabinet. Her house is always immaculate and she always apologizes for "the state we're in."

One beautiful day last October I caught Elizabeth in the midst of a flurry. She was moving her lawn furniture back outside from its winter storage, because "this afternoon can't be wasted." She was not just moving one chair, but the whole set of furniture.

When we had finally gotten her rather large and heavy picnic table from the basement, and on the back lawn where she wanted it, I asked Elizabeth why she makes the effort; not just with the furniture, but why she does everything so thoroughly. She looked at me and said, "Because I enjoy what I have. Everything has to be enjoyed while you have it. If you're on top of the world today, have money and friends, then enjoy it for all it's worth. Because chances are they'll all be gone tomorrow. Don't let anything escape. Grab all you can and don't let go."

Elizabeth and I talked for a short while longer. Then I hurried home to move my lawn furniture from its winter storage... not just one chair, but the whole set of furniture.
IMAGES

bill everett