

Cappy's Trails

The heart of the Quimper Wildlife Corridor falls within a special area known to locals as "Cappy's Trails." It's a mostly undeveloped area of open space with ribbons of trails and abandoned roads frequented by hikers, dog-walkers, mountain bikers and equestrians. "Cappy's" is named for William Capriotti, a lifelong and much loved resident of Port Townsend.

Cappy was born in Blynn, Washington in 1905. In 1909 Cappy and his sister and brothers moved to Port Townsend with their parents in a horse-drawn wagon. Cappy grew-up in Port Townsend, but left in the 1930's when he worked aboard a freighter that hauled goods to Europe and again during WWII when he signed on with a Standard Oil Tanker that made trips to Alaska. But he always came back to Port Townsend and grew to appreciate the place even more after his travels abroad.

Cappy married his wife Vallie in 1950. They lived at the "Rockery" house, at the corner of 47th and Grant Streets west of the fairgrounds. The house was built by Vallie's father and is located near one of the popular gateways into Cappy's Trail. Cappy was a self-employed salvage dealer up until the day he died in 1982, at the age of 77. He collected various bought or bartered metals in his frontyard. Two or three times a week he would run to Seattle to sell scrap and then purchase and deliver new metal orders for customers back home. Cappy earned the nickname of "Dolly" as a young man. "He was one of the most handsome and best-dressed young men in Port Townsend, everybody loved him, he was one of the nicest men in town, always helping people out and always a friend to the young people" said his brother Carl of Tahuya, Washington. "During the Depression my brother Bill worked night and day, he was able to make ends meet and helped dozens of others who were less fortunate and would come by for something to eat." said brother Carl.

Cappy and Vallie were no strangers to their namesake. The area had legendary blackberry picking and Cappy would pick blackberries for Vallie who would make pies for Cappy and the inmates at the Jefferson County Jail where Vallie was a cook. Cappy once said, "... there's all kinds of berries I like to pick, but none better than those wild blackberries." Vallie also kept

horses in their field and would ride the miles of trails which began at their doorstep.

If the Capriotti's were with us today, they would probably be pleased to see that their neck of the woods has not changed significantly in the last two decades. Locals still recreate and seek solace in this special refuge known as Cappy's Trails.

Sources:

Carl Capriotti interview

Matt Capriotti interview

The PT Leader, 10/17/79