

March 1, 2022

The Westport Wave

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Westport Pioneers: "Suh" Jim Colclough

Julie Brazill

(Editor's Note: When I first moved to Westport in 2009, I immediately noticed a big, boxy abandoned house near the Church corner of Abalone and Hillcrest. It obviously hadn't been lived in for some time. What fascinated me was a blooming wild fuchsia plant that peered out from the second story of the house, having grown inside from the ground floor up. Today, the house is still standing, but still looks ready to collapse at any moment. Who had lived here, and how long ago? Thanks to Julie Brazill, you're about to find out!)

Julie: It was 1980 when I walked up the hill to knock on the door of the tall box of a house where Suh Jim Colclough lived opposite the Morgan and Lancaster places on the corner of Hillcrest Terrace and Abalone Street. His hair is wispy white, and he has a smiling, smooth face, with laugh lines that frame his twinkling eyes, and at the age of 80, he is getting a reputation nationally as a "primitive artist". He carves wood in the basement of his house into figments of his imagination and I have come to hear his story.



"Suh" Jim Colclough, in his Westport home, 1980. (photo by Ron Klein)

Born in Fort Smith, Arkansas, his early life was in his father's blacksmith shop but not wanting that life at 16, he and his dad bought a Dort car and Jim learned to drive. As time went by after operating an auto dealership with his dad for 20 years Jim joined the carnival which inspired the wood carvings that he was doing in Westport. His most recent efforts were a 32 foot long hoop snake and a colorful carving of triplets being born.

What follows is an excerpt of the interview that I recorded. In Jim's words:

"After WWII, my wife and I wanted to buy some property. We were living by Hearst Castle at the time but as it turned out, we had to move from there so we drove 5,000 miles in a month looking for a place to

move to. We could buy property cheaper here (Westport) than we could any place else so we rented a house and everybody in town began to try to sell us their houses.

I bought this house because it already had the basement in it that was a shop for carving. I had already made up my mind that I wanted to carve a half-man half-woman. I had known several half-man and half-women when I was working on the carnival. Actually, I started carving because I always wanted a cigar store Indian, ever since I was 5 or 6 years old. So, I finally carved one. The first one I carved was used in the movie "The Russians Are Coming". It set down here in front of the antique store. It had never been painted. I showed it to one of the movie company employees and he went and got the art director. He looked at it and said, 'Well it's not painted, I'll have our artists paint it.' So, just like that they took it, painted it and used it in the movie.

When I first began carving, Mr. Stanley (possibly Lyle) told me about a family that lived in the downstairs apartment. He said that they were really filthy. These people had goats and a dog and they were letting the goats eat with the kids, eating right off the kids' plates standing right around the table. I heard that story from other people too. I decided to do a hillbilly type thing about it. So, I carved a little table and I made a great big tall man sitting down at one end, a little bitty, short fat woman sitting on a box down at the other end. To the left of the man there was a goat standing with his feet up on the table. Next to this goat was a boy standing up to the table. And next to the boy there was a pig with his feet up on the table. Then there was a dog but he had his head laying on the table and next was a tall, skinny, naked girl and there was a baby sitting on the floor under the table. And up on the table there was a goat that they had been milking and a little bucket was sitting under it.

In this folk art and carving you can't do everything, you've kind of got to fake a lot."

Suh Jim happily shared his colorful stories and was a good friend in the community from the late '60s through much of the '80's. For a time, he gave each newborn Westport child a personal sculpted representation of their birth sign. Our son, an Aquarius received "The Water Bearer". Maybe there are others who have memories to share!



Pub Re-Opens March 18th!

Tabby Korhummel, General Manager,
Westport Hotel and Old Abalone Pub

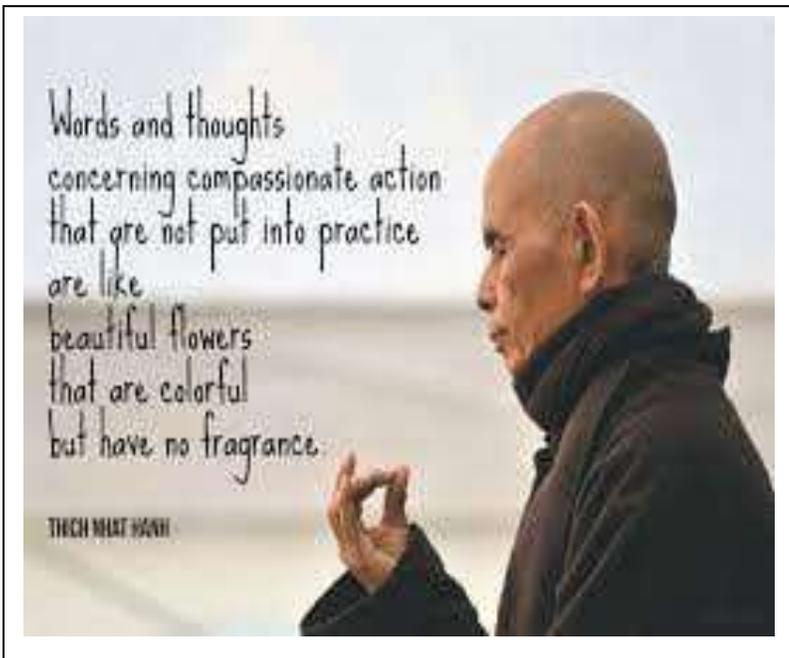
The Old Abalone Pub will open beginning March 18th for Friday and Saturday night dinner, served 5:00pm to 8:30pm. Call 707-964-3688 to reserve a table or order take-out.

We will be serving our classic pub menu with old favorites like Ceviche, Yam Fries and Cauliflower Bites, Fish & Chips, Steak, and a weekly Seafood special! Of course we will also have Dorine's Famous Cheesecake and occasional specialty cakes made by Kayla.

Come show us some love! We will be offering a new frequent visitor card so you can receive a big discount on every 10th visit. We also just received a new batch of Abalone Pub T-Shirts featuring a super-far-out iridescent foil print.

And don't miss our Saint Patrick's Day fundraiser for the WVFD on March 17th – see flyer on page 6 for details!

We hope to see you soon at the Westport Hotel and Old Abalone Pub!



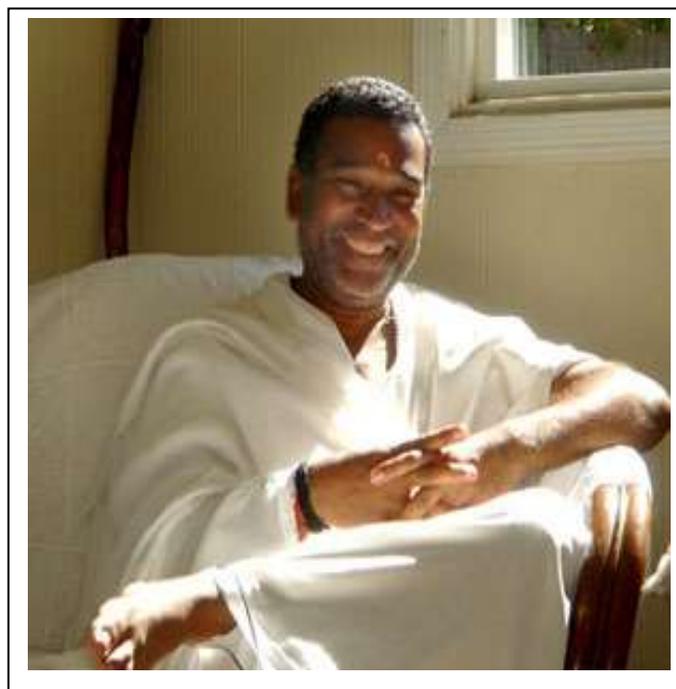
The Westport Church

Thich Nhat Hahn Discussion Group – Sunday, March 13th, 10:00AM

Baile Oakes

This **Westport Community Church** discussion group is focused upon **Thich Nhat Hahn’s Book: “Living Buddha, Living Christ”**. No need to have the book. We will share passages from the book and discuss how they might or might not influence how we show up for our selves and all Creation.

We request that attendees be vaccinated and we will meet according to the Church Covid precautions.



Meditation & Talk with Babaji Sunday, March 6th, 2:00PM:

Baile Oakes

Learn simple practices to cultivate inner peace through meditation.
Satsang with Babaji at the Westport Church, 1st Sunday, March 6th, 2:00PM

24/7 Westport Wave

The Westport Wave is always free to everyone at any time on the Newsletter page of our website westportvillagesociety.org – where you’ll always find our most current issue as well as over ten years of monthly back-issues, all in living color, with live links! Check it out, and tell your friends!



February 5th field trip to the Headlands just south of Dehaven Creek. (Left to right- Jenny Shattuck, Hunter Mathias, Sarah Cullar, and Baile Oakes)

Dehaven Headlands Update

Westport Village Society

Strong support from the community, our project partners, and the general public has been received for conserving the 26-acre oceanfront property west of Highway 1 at Branscomb Road. WVS knew it was a rare opportunity, but wanted to gauge local community response and level of support before tackling a project of that scope. Attendance was over twenty at both our January 26 Quarterly Board meeting and the February 5 public meeting focused on the DeHaven Creek Headlands project offering spoken comments and discussion. In addition, 9 others wrote us letters, 25 returned our questionnaires, and WVS received 12 donations totaling over \$7,000. Thank you! Your input will be carefully considered as the WVS Board chooses a path forward.

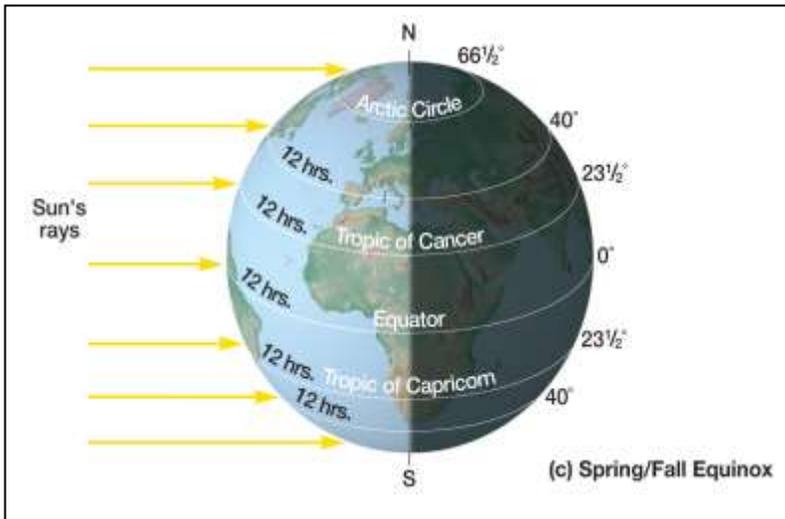
We'd like to share some of the key input we've received. Everyone supports conservation of this property and expressed various reasons why it benefits the public, our community, and local tribes. We asked for input on who should lead this conservation project and a majority thought WVS should do so, many thought WVS should partner with other organizations, and most importantly, nobody thought WVS should not participate. You also told us the key uses favored for the property were: pedestrian

access to the bluff and beach areas, habitat conservation, recreational use, traditional tribal use, viewing benches, also an off-highway parking area to allow safer access. Most want to keep improvements minimal. We also asked for input on a fundraising target to match grant funding. Many supported setting a goal of \$25,000 or less. A significant number of you also indicated a willingness to directly help WVS in all phases of the project from acquisition to planning, long term maintenance, and organizing possible future events. That enthusiasm is welcome! A detailed compilation of the questionnaire answers will be provided as soon as finished. WVS's

role is to enable the community to realize its goals.

WVS has initiated meetings with possible partners including the owner, the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), and the Mendocino Land Trust to plan a strategy for accomplishing the project. Local tribal groups have been notified of the project with the goal of having them involved when the management plan is developed and possibly earlier. The owner, Donna Medley, strongly supports a conservation outcome and introduced herself at the February 5 public meeting. Most importantly, she has given WVS time to carefully plan a path toward preserving the property. A restricted appraisal was commissioned and shared with the owner and SCC staff as a foundation for moving forward. Lisa Ames of the SCC staff indicated the "SCC staff supports the project and will recommend SCC board approval." The prospects thus appear good.

We will have more news on this exciting opportunity next month. The WVS Board will be reviewing the input and discussing how to proceed. A decision is expected before March 10th. In the interim, we welcome input and donations. Please include a memo "Dehaven Project" on any check you send for this project. Contact wvs@westportvillagesociety.org or mail them to WVS at PO Box 446, Westport CA, 95488.



Sunday, March 6th – Satsang with Babaji, 2:00PM, Westport Community Church (see page 3)

Wednesday, March 9th – Westport Volunteer Fire Department Monthly Meeting, 6:00PM (call Chief Dan Maxey at (707) 357-4353 to attend remotely)

Thursday, March 10th – Westport County Water District Monthly Board Meeting, 7:00PM (call Kayla Cooper at (707)367-1057 for information on attending by Zoom)

Sunday, March 13th – Daylight Saving Time Begins, 2:00AM (Set clocks AHEAD 1 hour)

Sunday, March 13th – Thich Nhat Han Discussion Group, 10:00AM, Westport Church (see page 3)

Thursday, March 17th – St. Patrick’s Day

Thursday, March 17th – Bookmobile, 9:00AM-9:30AM, Westport Store (masks required)

Thursday, March 17th – Saint Patrick’s Day WVFD Fundraising Dinner, 5:00PM to 8:00PM, Westport Hotel and Old Abalone Pub (see page 6)

Friday, March 18th – Full Moon, 12:17AM

Sunday, March 20th – Spring Equinox, 8:33AM

Thursday, March 31st – Bookmobile, 9:00AM-9:30AM, Westport Store (masks required)

Thursday, March 31st – Black New Moon (second new moon in one month), 11:24PM

Court-Ordered Community Service Opportunities in Westport

Gary Quinton

Do you need to serve court-ordered Community Service or serve in a Sheriff’s Department Work Release program? Why not serve it in your community? We would value your time!

There are several places and varied types of work in Westport where you can provide your hours and get credit towards the satisfaction of your court order, including work for the Westport Volunteer Fire Department, Westport-Ten Mile Cemetery District, and the Westport Village Society. Jobs include grass and weed cutting, painting, handyman work, and more. We can help you with registration paperwork and compliance/completion documents. If you are interested, please call Gary Quinton, (707) 964-7073.

March Westport Calendar

(Please note that because of COVID, meeting occurrences, dates, and modes may vary.)

Tuesday, March 1st – Mardi Gras

Tuesday, March 1st – WMAC meeting CANCELLED. Contact WMAC95488@gmail.com for details.

Wednesday, March 2nd – Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, March 2nd – New Moon, 9:34AM

Thursday, March 3rd – Bookmobile, 9:00AM-9:30AM, Westport Store (masks required)

The Westport Wave is a free monthly community newsletter published by the **Westport Village Society**, a non-profit community-benefit organization. Internet subscribers to *The Wave* receive their **COLOR** copies on or before the first day of every month by e-mail. Printed (black-and-white) copies of our current newsletter are also available for free at the Westport Community Store. Both the current *Westport Wave* and over ten years of monthly back-issues are also on the Newsletter page of our WVS website www.westportvillagesociety.org. **Contributions for our April 1st issue of *The Westport Wave* are due by March 27th**, and should be sent to Editor Steve Brigham at westportwave@gmail.com. Thanks!

*Dine out for the
W.V.F.D*

March 17th,

*AT THE WESTPORT
HOTEL AND OLD
ABALONE PUB.*



*Order a traditional St. Patrick's Day
dinner and we will donate 100% of the
profits to our local fire & rescue
volunteers for equipment and training*



*Corned Beef and Cabbage or Shepard's Pie (V)
with
Irish Soda breads
and
Whisky Ice Cream and Cake
\$25, served 5:00-8:00pm
707-964-3688*