

Port Townsend

People and Place

Location

Port Townsend is on the Olympic Peninsula and marks the passage between the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound. Situated in Jefferson County, the city encompasses 7 square miles of land and 2.5 square miles of water. The nearest major U.S. city is Seattle, a 60-mile ferry ride and drive southeast. Port Townsend's geographic coordinates are lat 48°07'46"N, long 122°45'43"W.

Demographic Profile

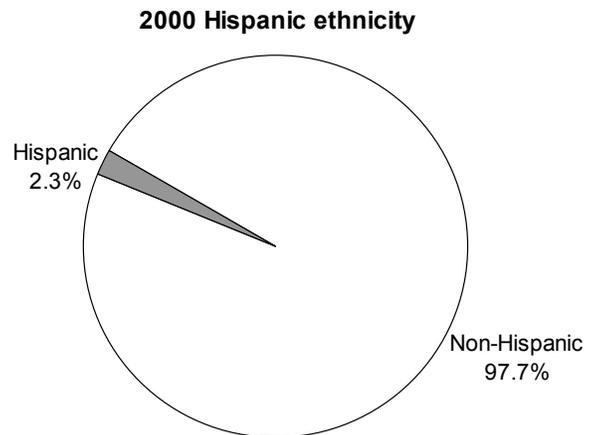
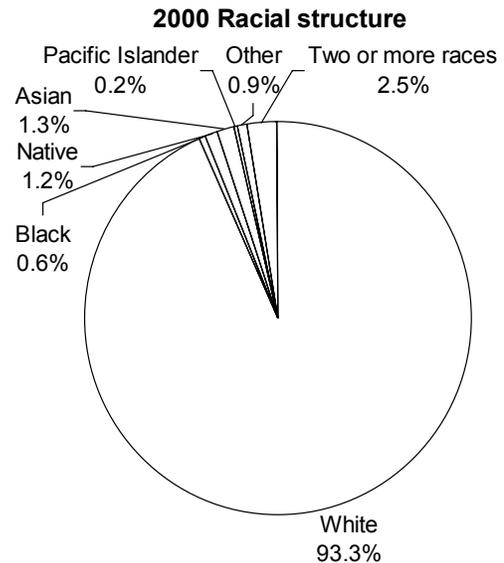
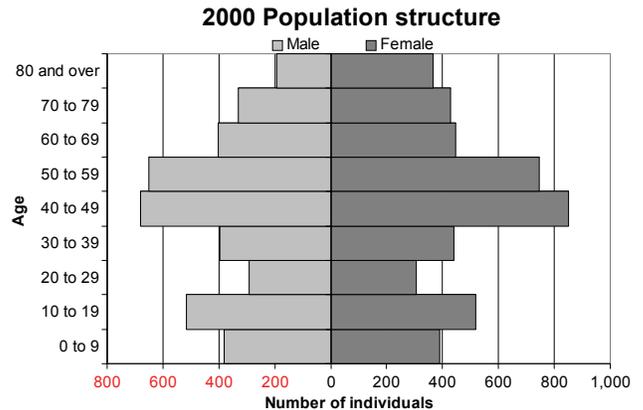
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Port Townsend's population was 8,334, an increase of 1,333 from 1990. The gender composition was 53.9% female and 46.1% male. The median age of 46.6 was considerably higher than the national average of 35.3. The age structure of Port Townsend demonstrated usual population trends for a community without a major tertiary education provider and a large retiree community. Of Port Townsend's population 18 years of age and older in 2000, 90.6% had a high school education (including equivalency) or higher, 31.2% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher, and 11.7% had attained a graduate or professional degree, compared to the national averages of 79.7%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively. For 22.8% a high school degree or equivalency was the highest level of educational attainment.

The vast majority of the Port Townsend's racial structure recorded by the 2000 U.S. Census was white (93.3%), followed by people who identified with two or more races (2.5%), Asian (1.3%), American Indian and Alaska Native (1.2%), people who identified with another race (0.9%), black (0.6%), and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (0.2%). Ethnicity data indicate 2.3% identified as Hispanic. In 2000 3.9% were foreign-born, with the majority from Asia, followed by people from the Americas outside of the United States. The highest numbers reporting ancestry were German or English.

In 2000 98.5% lived in family households.

History

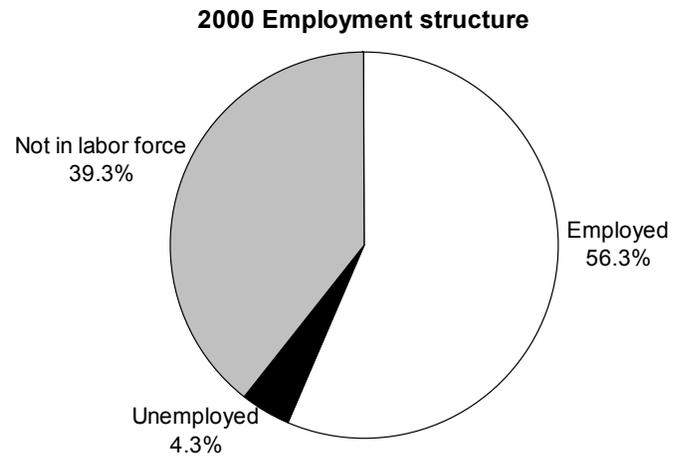
For centuries before the arrival of European Americans, several Indian tribes were located near Kahl-tai, present-day Port Townsend, including the Chemakum (or Chimaquam), Klallam, and Twana (the Kilcid band, now referred to as Quilcene). Since the



headland had little running water, it is unlikely that any tribe used the area as a permanent village. Instead the Indians used Kah-Tai, meaning “to carry” or “pass through,” to haul their canoes from the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Port Townsend Bay, avoiding the rip tides off Point Wilson. The Klallams were the largest of the three tribes, their land extending from the Hoko River eastward 100 miles to Port Townsend. The Chemakums lived on land from Discovery Bay to the mouth of Hood Canal. The Twanas, or S’Kokomish, occupied both sides of Hood Canal.¹ During the winter these Salish-speaking people lived in permanent villages of plank and pole houses and participated in ceremonial and religious activities; during summer months they traveled to traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering sites, using rush mats and notched cedar poles for temporary shelter.²

In 1855 when the Point No Point Treaty was signed by the S’Klallam, Skokomish (Twanas), and Chemakum tribes, the S’Klallams were sharing territory at Port Townsend with the Chemakums. The treaty ceded approximately 750,000 acres of land to the federal government but reserved their aboriginal right to fish, hunt, and gather in the area. In 1853 lumber mill owners asked the S’Klallam Tribe at Port Gamble Bay to relocate across the bay to the spit at Point Julia. They called their community at Point Julia “Little Boston.”³ “Boston” was the Indian name for an American.⁴ At the time of the treaty the Skokomish reserved a small tract of land at the bend of Hood Canal and the S’Klallams were forcibly moved to the Skokomish reservation, which was small and far removed from their traditional fishing grounds. Consequently many S’Klallam purchased land around Point Julia. Unfortunately most of the land was lost to county tax foreclosures in the 1930s.⁵

In 1792 Captain George Vancouver sailed down the Strait of Juan de Fuca and named the area Port Townshend for his friend, the Marquis of Townshend. State records note that Port Townsend filed for city status in 1851, six months before Seattle and second after Olympia. When filing the “h” in Townsend was dropped. During the first half of the nineteenth century, fur traders occupied the area trading fur for iron tools, fabric, and ornaments.⁶ The years between 1880 and 1890 were a period of rapid growth for the city; the population of Washington Territory increased almost 500%, from 75,000 in 1880 to 375,000 in 1890. It was during this time period that many of the town’s Victorian homes and buildings were constructed. Port Townsend served as port of entry for the entire Puget Sound region from 1854 to 1913. However changes in marine technology, specifically the emergence of steam powered vessels, caused Port Townsend’s importance as a



maritime destination to decline, as ships were able to bypass the city when entering and leaving Puget Sound.⁷

Several forts were constructed in the late nineteenth century to defend Puget Sound cities and the naval shipyard at Bremerton from attacks by foreign vessels. In 1908 Fort Worden was designated the headquarters for the Harbor Defenses of Puget Sound. The Navy gave up use of the beach and dock areas in 1965 but retained use of the upper hills until the mid-1970s. Fort Worden is now on the National Register of Historic Places, as an Historic District. Centrum, a center for arts and creative education, also is located at the fort.⁸

The history of Jefferson County and Port Townsend is largely shaped by its location at the northwest end of Puget Sound. Port Townsend lies on a large, protected natural harbor, and is therefore a popular destination for commercial and recreational marine traffic. The combination of climate and terrain—nearly all of the 1,815 square miles of the county is hilly to mountainous—made logs and lumber the principal cash crop of the area.⁹ Today many of the city’s industries are still based in maritime trades, manufacturing, tourism, and timber. Although today Port Townsend is dominated by small and midsize businesses, Port Townsend Paper remains the largest employer in the area. The combination of the area’s history, natural beauty, and varied economy make Port Townsend a unique place to live and visit.¹⁰

Infrastructure

Current Economy

At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census, 56.3% of Port Townsend’s potential labor force 16 years of age and older were employed, 4.3% were unemployed, and the unemployment rate was 7.2% (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). In addition,

39.3% were not in the labor force, compared to the national average of 36.1%. The major employment sectors were management, professional, and related occupations (37.8%), sales (22.3%), service (19.5%), and local, state, and federal governments (17.5%). Natural resource jobs including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting employed 0.4%, but this percentage may be artificially low given that many fishermen are self-employed and are underrepresented in these data. The economy of Port Townsend relies heavily on small businesses. Several hundred small businesses involved in service, retail, and manufacturing have been started in the Jefferson County; today approximately 2,300 businesses exist in the county. Additionally there are three major industrial parks: the Port of Port Townsend's Marine Industrial Park, the private Port Townsend Business Park, and Glen Cove Industrial Area.

The per capita income in 1999 was \$22,395 and the median household income was \$34,536. In 1999 14% lived below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 4,250 housing units in Port Townsend, with 65.2% owner occupied and 34.8% renter occupied. The vacant housing unit rate was 7.8%, with 38.4% vacant due to seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

Governance

Founded in 1851 Port Townsend is the largest and only incorporated community in Jefferson County. Port Townsend is the county seat and serves as the major commercial center. The city has a council-manager form of government. The city council consists of the mayor, deputy mayor, and five council members. Jefferson County levies an 8.4% sales and use tax and a 2% lodging tax. See the Governance subsection (page 43) in the Overview section for a more detailed discussion of taxes affecting fisherman and processors in Washington.

The nearest National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Office and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office are in Seattle. Meetings of the Pacific Fishery Management and North Pacific Fishery Management councils are routinely held in the Seattle-Tacoma area. The nearest Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Regional Office is 110 miles south in Montesano. The nearest U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Group/Air Station is in Port Angeles, 47 miles northwest. The station is home to several USCG cutters and a Dolphin Helicopter. The station is responsible for marine safety westward to Pillar Point on the Strait of Juan de Fuca, north to the Canada border, east to the western shore of Whidbey Island, and south through Admiralty Inlet to Olele Point. Port Townsend is home to some USCG services including the USCG Cutter *Osprey*, one smaller vessel, and shoreside facilities.

Facilities

Port Townsend is accessible by ground, sea, and air. The city serves as a base for people exploring the Olympic National Park and as a port for the Washington State Ferries. Port Townsend is easily reached via Washington Highway 20, connecting to U.S. Highway 101 about 13 miles south of the city. Jefferson Transit provides regularly scheduled bus service throughout Port Townsend and the county. Links to public transit in Clallam and Kitsap counties provide service to Seattle and Port Angeles. Washington State Ferries provides service between Port Townsend and Keystone and Whidbey Island. The Jefferson County International Airport, open for public use, is 4 miles southeast of Port Townsend. The nearest airport certified for carrier operations is in Port Angeles. The Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is the closest major facility.

The Port Townsend School District has two elementary schools, one middle school, and one public high school. There are also three private schools, a parental-involvement program, and an active home-school program. Peninsula College in Port Angeles has an extension site in Port Townsend.

Port Townsend's Public Works Department administers electricity, water, wastewater, and solid waste services. The Port Townsend Police and Fire departments administer public safety. Jefferson General Hospital is in Port Townsend along with several smaller health-care clinics. The tourism industry in Port Townsend is fairly developed with more than 20 Victorian hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts in the city. There are several community businesses including the Port Townsend Chamber of Commerce, rotary clubs, and several places of worship.

A number of nonprofit organizations working in Port Townsend focus on fishery-related issues, including the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative through which a local marine resource committee (MRC) was created to bring a scientific and grassroots approach to protecting and restoring marine resources in the area. Serving on the MRC are representatives from the scientific community, local and tribal governments, and economic, recreational, and conservation interests. Current MRC projects include: Discovery Bay Olympia Oyster Seeding, Tarboo/Dabob Bay Fish Assessment, and Anchor-free Eelgrass Protection; meetings are open to the public and held nearby in Port Hadlock. Additional water-related organizations include Adventuress (sea education), the Dungeness River Management Team and Natural History Center, the Menzies Project (boat tours), the Northwest Maritime Center, the Wooden Boat Foundation (history,

preservation, and boating education), and the Port Townsend Marine Science Center.

The Port of Port Townsend owns and operates several marine facilities including the Port Townsend Boat Haven, five boat launches, three marinas (Boat Haven, Point Hudson, and Quilcene), a shipyard, and the Jefferson County International Airport. The Boat Haven is a full-service marina that is home to 475 commercial and recreational vessels and 60 marine trade businesses. The Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding is located nearby in Port Hadlock. Point Hudson Marina and Resort, located at the northeast corner of the city's commercial district, has 45 slips, 800 feet of linear dock, a recreational vehicle park, and several marine businesses. The Quilcene Marina is on the west side of Quilcene Bay, opening to the Hood Canal south of Port Townsend. The marina offers 50 slips and takes reservations for transient moorage. Services include fuel, ice, showers, restrooms, and a pump-out station. Completed in 1997, the Port of Port Townsend Shipyard features a heavy boat haul-out facility, capable of lifting vessels up to 150-foot long and weighing 330 tons. The shipyard also offers numerous repair facilities, upland storage, and do-it-yourself space.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

A total of 349 unique vessels delivered landings to Port Townsend in 2000 including 275 tribal commercial vessels, 63 commercial vessels, and 10 personal use vessels. The remaining vessel types are confidential. In 2000 there was at least one seafood processor operating in Port Townsend, New Day Fisheries Inc.

In 2000 landings in the community were in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represent landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): coastal pelagic confidential/confidential/1; crab 67 t/\$318,825/31; groundfish confidential/confidential/3; highly migratory species confidential/confidential/3; salmon 116 t/\$172,223/53; shellfish 71 t/\$713,777/183; shrimp 319 t/\$331,823/8; and other species 89 t/\$208,118/24.

Port Townsend residents owned 24 vessels in 2000, including 10 vessels that participated in the federally managed groundfish fishery. The number of vessels owned by Port Townsend residents that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic 1/0/0, crab 5/0/0, groundfish 7/0/NA, highly migratory species NA/0/NA, salmon 9/0/0, shellfish NA/0/NA, shrimp NA/0/0, and other species 14/0/0.¹¹

In 2000 recorded data indicate that the number of Port Townsend residents holding permits in each said

fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab 0/3/1, groundfish 2/0/0, highly migratory species NA/0/0, salmon 13/3/1, shellfish 0/0/NA, shrimp 2/0/0, and other species 11/0/0.¹²

Port Townsend residents held 53 state permits in 2000. The number of permits held by these community members in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic 0/0/2, crab 5/0/0, groundfish 8/0/0, highly migratory species NA/0/0, salmon 16/3/0, shellfish 0/0/NA, shrimp 4/0/2, and other species 13/0/0.¹³

Sportfishing

Sport fishermen in Port Townsend are involved in the West Coast and Alaskan fisheries. No salmonid charter fishing operators were based in Port Townsend. In 2003 at least one nonsalmonid charter fishing operator was based out of Port Townsend.

There is one licensed agent selling fishing permits in Port Townsend. In 2003 there were 6,352 sportfishing license transactions valued at \$96,496 in the community. In Catch Record Card Area 9 (Admiralty Inlet), the 2000 sport catch, based on sports catch cards, was 12,608 fish including 4,351 Chinook salmon, 8,253 coho salmon, and 4 chum salmon. Marine anglers made an estimated 43,629 trips in Area 9. In 2000 the bottomfish catch for Area 9 was 1,745. The recreational harvest of clams (pounds) and oysters (number) for the same area in 2000 was estimated to be 84,233 and 6,091 respectively; harvest occurred over an estimated 13,151 user trips.

Subsistence

Subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering activities are fundamental to the way of life of some coastal community members. Tribal and nontribal individuals participate in subsistence fishing. Subsistence fishing is not discussed in detail in this community profile due to the lack of available data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Port Townsend residents owned 42 vessels that were involved in North Pacific fisheries in 2000. Community members landed fish in the following North Pacific fisheries (data shown represent landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): Bering Sea Aleutian Island (BSAI) groundfish confidential/confidential/1, other finfish 5 t/\$1,700/6, Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish 2,144 t/\$1,295,170/7, halibut 229 t/\$1,282,100/9, and salmon 1,496 t/\$1,249,970/25.

In 2000 Port Townsend residents held 96 state and federal permits, including 42 individuals who held

registered state permits and 54 who held registered federal permits (note: it is possible for individuals to hold more than one permit at a time). Community members held 15 groundfish License Limitation Program permits and 3 GOA, 14 BSAI groundfish, 15 halibut, 4 herring, and 30 salmon Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission permits. Community members held 4,603,280 halibut and 3,421,955 sablefish individual fishing quota shares.

Port Townsend residents held 60 crew member licenses for North Pacific fisheries.

Sportfishing

Port Townsend residents purchased 110 Alaskan sportfishing licenses in 2000. At least two sportfishing businesses in Port Townsend participated in Alaskan fisheries.

Notes

1. Fort Worden. No date. Fort Worden history. Online at <http://www.fortworden.org/history.html> [accessed 31 January 2007].
2. The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe. 2005. Culture and history. Online at http://www.pgst.nsn.us/content/culture_history/pride_heritage.htm [accessed 31 January 2007].
3. See note 2.
4. See note 2.
5. See note 2.
6. See note 1.
7. Port Townsend Film Festival. 2004. Port Townsend as a movie backdrop. Online at <http://www.fortworden.org/history.html> [accessed 31 January 2007].
8. See note 1.
9. Washington State USGenWEB Project. 2005. Jefferson County history. Online at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~wajeffe/history.html> [accessed 31 January 2007].
10. Port Townsend Guide. 2005. Port Townsend community. Online at <http://www.ptguide.com/community/index.htm> [accessed 31 January 2007].
11. NA refers to data that were not available, for example, due to few or no recorded permit numbers, or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.
12. See note 11.
13. See note 11.