Clear Creek Trail

In 1841, Captain Wilkes sailed through a narrow channel from Puget Sound into a large bay roughly dividing the geographical area eventually to be Kitsap County in half. He named the bay Dyes Inlet, after his ship taxidermist. But, long before Capt. Wilkes and Mr. Dyes, the Suquamish Indians named the bay Sa'qad (tsock-od).

The name Sa'qad was the native Suquamish word, meaning 'to spear it,' used to refer to the mouth of the creek, the estuary, and the very north end of Dyes Inlet.

Kitsap Historical Society. Bucklin Hill Road 1921

In 1886, legend has it that shortly after moving to this area, Mrs. Hannah Schold, one of the first non-natives to settle in Clear Creek area, looked at the stream outside her home after a nasty storm and remarked with surprise how clear the stream was. Hannah named the stream running through the fertile valley Clear Creek.

In 1950, Kirk Best built a barn at the mouth of Clear Creek, using surplus materials from nearby army barracks and barn boards and poles from an even older barn. The barn, named Tides End by the Best family, sat sentinel on the estuary while Harriet and Kirk Best raised their family. They sold their farm to Carlton and Betty Smith in 1960.

The Smith family lived there, raising their family, for 30 years before donating the barn and surrounding property to the Kitsap Land Trust now the Great Peninsula Conservancy, thus providing the impetus to the start of the Clear Creek Trail System.

In 1995, after years of neglect, the Clear Creek Task Force began the long process and tremendous task of restoring and renovating the old barn into a small environmental, historical interpretive center.

With donations of in-kind materials, professional services and labor, after seven years, the Clear Creek Sa'qad Interpretive Center is an iconic part of the Clear Creek Trail System.

https://www.clearcreektrail.org/history