



# HOOD RIVER'S HISTORY TOLD BY YOGA

## Local lawyer uses exercise to teach about Hood River's past

Story by TIMOTHY MB FARRELL  
Photos by JIM DRAKE

This past April, my parents invited my brother and I on a cruise through the Galapagos Islands aboard the National Geographic Endeavor. On the second night we anchored off of Isla Espanola, also known as Hood Island. The island is famous as an albatross breeding ground. As a maritime attorney and local Hood River history buff, the island was significant to me.

After a yoga class I tried to explain to our health and wellness crewmember that Hood Island was named after the same man that Mount Hood was named after.

She was from Ecuador and her English was not very good, so I tried explaining it to her with yoga, using the Sanskrit terms I had learned from my swami (instructor). I wanted her to understand where the name came from and the history of Hood River.

The first thing I said was “tadasana,” or mountain pose, with my feet together and hands at my side, and told her that Mt. Hood was 11,250 feet above sea level.

Next, I said “urdhva hastasana,” or upward salute, putting both hands together and above my head to indicate that Mt. Adams, which is 1,030 feet taller than Hood, is just to the North.

Next I moved into the warrior pose, or “virabhadrasana,” with my arms out stretched and one leg bent. I told her that Mt. Hood was named after Admiral Hood, who later became a parliamentarian and supporter of the explorers and traders who lived in Fort Vancouver.

Then I got down into the plank pose, or upright push up pose, to explain that Admiral Hood developed a naval military strategy called “crossing the line.”



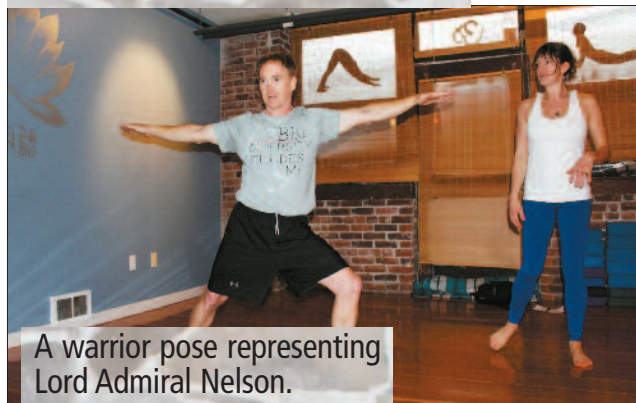
The mountain pose representing Mount Hood.



The upward salute indicating Mount Adams.



A seated pose representing the boats used in the British fleet.



A warrior pose representing Lord Admiral Nelson.



TIM FARRELL, above, gets assistance from yoga instructor Laura Munn for the triangle pose, “invoking the image of the triangular sails on the sailing ships of the era.”

I stood up sideways to her and got into the archer pose (akarna dhanurasana), with one hand pointed forward and the other pulled back behind my ear as if holding a bow and arrow, then bending my front leg and keeping my back leg straight to explain that instead of lining up across from one another and firing broadsides, Hood's theory was to cross the enemy's line and fire his broadsides at the defenseless bows and sterns of the enemy.

I then moved to triangle, or “utthita trikonasana” pose, by straightening my legs and spreading my arms while bending to one side, invoking the image of the triangular sails on the sailing ships of the era.

From there I moved to hero, or “virasana” pose,

kneeling on the floor and sitting on my feet. I told her that at the battle of Trafalgar, Lord Admiral Nelson, with his British fleet's superior sail handling skills, successfully crossed the Spanish line and defeated the armada using Hood's strategy, making Great Britain the most powerful navy in the world for hundreds of years.

Ecuador also calls its navy the armada. Knowing something of Spanish history, my wellness instructor understood the significance of the battle of Trafalgar. With the help of Sanskrit and yoga, she now also understood the importance of Admiral Hood and why the British would name an island after him.

Currently, I am working with Flow Yoga Studio in downtown Hood River to develop these poses into a routine for the Hood River History Museum's winter program.

The Hood River History Museum has expressed interest in using it to host classes in their newly expanded building.

It is a healthy way to start the day and a great way for people to learn about the history of our state, just as I taught the yoga instructor aboard the Endeavor while anchored off Hood Island.

Perhaps you have a story about Oregon history that can be expressed in Sanskrit with yoga. It's a great way to learn about history while staying fit.



Submitted photo

TIM FARRELL, right, in the Galapagos Islands last April.

### Other poses tell a story

A pigeon pose, or eka pada rajakapotasana: I leaned forward on one bent knee with the other leg behind me stretching my hip and explained that about 30 miles north of the mountain, as the pigeon flies, is a town along a river once known as the Dog River, that flows into the Columbia.

A tree pose, or vrikshasana: Standing on one leg, the other leg on my thigh, I told her that Hood River County was once mostly tall pine and massive oak trees.

After standing on the other leg and making sure she understood, I sat down and rolled my feet over my head into a half plow and told her how Mrs. Coe cored an apple and planted the seeds that became Hood River's orchards.

### Cemetery management sparks interest in HR history

In addition to being an attorney, I am also the manager of the historic Mountain View Memorial Cemetery in Hood River.

Buried at the cemetery is the county's founder, Nathaniel Coe.

Mr. Coe was from a prominent New Jersey family and studied law. He became a successful merchant and put his law degree to use in the New York state legislature where he served for many terms.

Eventually, he was elected state auditor (treasurer) and came to know all of the most famous politicians of his day. President Filmore took notice and offered him the position of special postmaster in Oregon. When his appointment expired, he got a land grant for property along the Columbia River.

After he died, he was buried in the cemetery that I manage, hence my interest in Hood River history.

#### Before you try yoga:

- Most sources advise starting with a teacher to guide you on basic positions. Books or videos can help you get started.
- Consult a health professional before starting yoga, especially if you have certain medical conditions.
- Avoid potential injury by knowing your body limits.
- Expect to spend 30 minutes a day on yoga poses.



Another warrior pose representing Admiral Hood.