



MUKILTEO FISH AND SHIPS by Neil Anderson

On the crisp autumn afternoons of September, I enjoy the drive to Mukilteo from Everett to visit the beach. It may take some time for the typical marine layer of morning clouds or fog to burn off but when the skies clear, the scenery is spectacular. People are enjoying their last days of the summer season, the winds are still, the beaches are filled with people, and the bay is calm. As my dad used to say, the water is “smooth as glass”.

In two previous stories I contributed to the MHS Newsline newsletter, I mentioned that my father was raised in Mukilteo. William “Bill” Anderson was born in Everett in 1924 but then moved to Mukilteo early in his life with his family. Most Mukilteo kids had nicknames back then and my dad was nicknamed “Weiners”. His brother Norman was nicknamed “Swede”. Dad attended Rosehill School and lived in what is now the “oldtown” section of Mukilteo, near the northwest corner of Loveland Avenue and 4th Street. The old family house still stands.

Dad had incredible stories to tell about his childhood Mukilteo days. He loved to fish for salmon. He had a boat that he kept on the beach near Losvar’s Mukilteo Boathouse next to the ferry dock. As much as he enjoyed salmon fishing, he also fished to put food on the family dinner table. These were the days of the Great Depression. Anything helped. So, he brought salmon home for his mother to bake and to help feed the family and neighbors.

One autumn morning, he was fishing



Sitting on the front porch of the house of Axel and Jorgine Anderson near the corner of 4th Street and Loveland Avenue. The house still stands. William “Bill” Anderson is on the far right. Little sister Lillian is center and brother Norman is at Left. Woman on left is their mother, Jorgine. Woman on right is the sister of Jorgine, Marie. Circa 1927

with his good friend, Bruce Richter, a short distance from the lighthouse. They were fishing for silvers and the fishing was good that particular morning. At the time, according to his story, he was about 14 years old. The year would be about 1938. His boat was just a wooden rowboat with two oars, two seat cushions and a bailing can.

As typical for Puget Sound September mornings, the fog rolled in shortly after sunrise and soon the two boys were fishing in the thick fog, not able to see much of anything. They had no life jackets or other safety devices but that was not even a worry for them. They had their fishing poles and a couple of fish already in the boat.

That was the important thing. With an incoming tide, they knew they were northeast of the ferry lanes but not out of the shipping lane for ship traffic heading to or from Everett. This wasn’t really a problem, just one of the things you had to deal with when fishing in the waters near Mukilteo.

They talked while they fished and enjoyed playing the fish they hooked on their lines. Back then, the fish were plentiful so they were busy catching fish, keeping the big ones and releasing the smaller ones.

Soon enough, they heard the foghorn of a ship. They knew the sound of the lighthouse foghorn and the horn from the Mukilteo-Whidbey ferry. This new sound was from a nearby ship. Not unusual for the boys, as many ships come and go from the nearby Port of Everett some five miles to the east. However, soon they could hear another sound, a slapping sound on the water.

In the dense fog, they could not figure out the location of the ship. They were totally disoriented by the fog. Being junior high age kids at the time, they were not really too worried. They continued to fish while they strained their eyes looking out into the fog, trying to see anything moving along the surface of the water. The foghorn of the ship became louder and seemed to be much closer. But, fog does funny things and while the sound of the horn of the ship became louder, the horn sounded like it was in front of them, then behind them and then off to the side. It was very strange.

(cont’d on page 3)

Lisa Romo

Message from our President

Our 2013 Season at the Lighthouse is now coming to a close. I do not have the total numbers yet, but there has been a steady stream of visitors this year. We received so many compliments from visitors on our efforts in keeping the lighthouse open to the public, the beautiful gardens, the condition of the light station and the genuine friendliness and helpful nature of our volunteers.....Who doesn't like to hear that!!!!???



Char Keane and Ichiro tending the light station gardens

It may seem like I gush often over our volunteers (and I DO!!!). There are many reasons a person decides to volunteer their time and skills to an organization. In order to keep a non-profit organization going strong, much of that time is spent working tirelessly, completing a large number of projects, gathering resources necessary to ensure we not only meet our mission statement goals but exceed it. It is because of our volunteers we can say that we have completed another successful year.....So gush I will!



Sheila McGillivray and Sheila Wright in the gift shop on Festival Saturday.

We get to know one another and are excited for our successes as well as honor the memories of those who have passed. This year we have had 2 long time members to the Historical Society pass: Robert Smith & Mas Odoi. Robert's steadfast portrayal of our first Lighthouse Keeper Peter Christensen was a gift to all who met him. Mas was Mukilteo's history incarnate. I know many will agree that it was an honor to know them. They will be missed.

September is the last month for the season, but the beginning of the month as you know, is marked by the City's annual Lighthouse Festival. The Historical Society's work doesn't slow down with the last month of the season – quite the opposite. Ann Collier and her team put in many hours preparing for the Pioneer of the Year presentation, parade and ceremony. We also had a terrific group of volunteers who walked in this year's parade thanks to Ann's direction.



Ann Collier and Pioneer of the Year, Madeline LaBeau Kuykendall.

What a stellar group of individuals – One and All!

Our end of season potluck will be held before our October Membership meeting, so if you volunteered on any of our committees, worked at the lighthouse (or even walked in the parade), be sure to mark your calendars for October 12th and arrive at 6:00 p.m., bring a pot luck item (finger food style) and celebrate with your fellow volunteers!!

Have you been receiving our emails regarding the monthly meetings, special events or announcements? Did you know you could receive this newsletter electronically? Well if you have changed your email address or didn't have an email address when you became a member, we would love for you to send Nancy Joao (Distribution Lists/Newsletter) and/or Eileen Pridmore (Membership) an email so they can update our records. [Nancy: njoao@frontier.com / Eileen: epridmore@msn.com]

Even though the season has come to a close, the work continues as many of you know. We have 2 more membership meetings, new Officers & Directors will be voted to the Board in the near future, Christmas shopping at the Gift Shop (plus a special visit from the man in the red suit) in December, and our annual Christmas party are all on the calendar. It has been a pleasure serving as your president these last 3 years. I have been supported by terrific Board Members and feel grateful to be a part of such a wonderful organization.

Best Regards,

Lisa Romo, President ♦



Strawberry harvest on the five acres along the Mukilteo Speedway where Axel and Jorgine Anderson raised strawberries. William "Bill" Anderson is standing with hands on hips. The property is now occupied by the Marriott Town Place Suites Hotel. Circa 1940

(Fish and Ships cont'd from page 1)

The slapping sound got louder. It seemed like someone was hitting the water with an oar just a few feet away from their boat. The one thing they did know was that this was a ship heading toward the Everett docks to pick up a cargo of lumber. The ship was empty and riding high in the water. The slapping sound was made by the top of the propeller blades hitting the surface of the water. If the ship was fully loaded, after loading the ship with cargo from Everett, the propeller and rudder would be totally submerged as the ship headed out of the Everett harbor.



View from the bluff looking north as a cargo ship heads to Everett along the Mukilteo shoreline on a hazy day.

They continued to look for the ship and there seemed to be all sorts of mysterious shapes looming in and out of the fog. Slowly, the area in front

of their little rowboat seemed to grow darker. Were their eyes playing tricks on them? They peered into the fog. Sure enough, there was something out there. It appeared to be a wall of some sort. But the wall appeared to be moving. Did they drift back into the shore and were they now next to the ferry dock pilings? Then, through the misty fog, they could now clearly identify that the dark wall was the huge black hull of a large cargo ship moving in a right to left direction, directly in front of rowboat. The hull towered at least 25 feet above them as it slowly glided past. Not a word was spoken. Was the ship going to collide with them? The vessel was right on top of them. They could see the railings and portholes. The two Mukilteo kids were frozen.

Dad said they could have reached out and touched the side of the passing ship. In a matter of seconds, they could now see the tops of the propeller blades slowing rotating around and around at the stern of ship, pushing the ship eastward thru the water. The soft slapping sounds of the propeller blades and a gentle swishing sound of the hull moving through the water were the only sounds they could hear as the freighter began to finally move away from them. There was now

some relief as Dad and Bruce knew the ship was not going to hit their boat. As quick as the ship appeared, it then disappeared back into the fog on its way to the Everett Harbor. The ship was so close that they were able to read the name of the ship that was painted on the stern of the vessel. Then it was gone and things got quiet again.

Dad and Bruce looked at each other and at the same time, they both said to each other, "that was close". Teenage boys being boys, they wondered what to do next. Find their way back to shore? Tell the folks and friends about the encounter? The fishing, however, was good that morning so they checked their lines and tossed the hooks baited with herring back into the water. Still in the middle of the pea soup thick fog, the two boys waited for another fish to bite and calmly waited for the morning fog to burn off. Soon it would be another nice sunny day. ♦



MHS Calendar

October 10th, 6pm - Lighthouse Volunteer Celebration, prior to the Membership meeting

October 10th - Presentation of Nominations for the 2014 MHS Officers and Directors

November 14th - Election of 2014 MHS Officers and Directors ♦

If These Walls Could Talk . . . Newspapers from the Byers Family Home

The City of Mukilteo has given MHS some newspapers from inside the walls of the Byers house. These newspapers were found as the house was being demolished to transform the property at the Speedway and 4th Street into a city park. Joe Hannan, Mukilteo City Administrator, speaking at the MHS meeting on September 12, presented the newspapers to MHS and said there are more newspapers to follow.



The Seattle Post Intelligencer on Saturday, April 12, 1924 had some sensational headlines, but one of the more interesting items was the answer in an advice column to the question: “Is it proper for a girl to let a young man kiss her after he has taken her home if they are not engaged?” The advice was straightforward and indicative of society in 1924: “Never allow a young man to kiss you unless you are engaged.” MHS also received a Sports Section from the Seattle Daily Times for Friday, March 28, 1924.

The Byers family recently donated to the city a .36-acre parcel of land and its 1919 two story house, along with funds to develop and maintain the park. The unobstructed panoramic view of Lighthouse Park and the Mukilteo waterfront will make the future “pocket park” a popular destination for pedestrians.

Three generations of the Byers family lived on the site for more than 90 years. Janie Byers bought the vacant

lot on Fourth Street in 1919. She ordered the house out of a catalog and it was delivered by railroad car.



Jim Byers, the last owner of the house, died unexpectedly in 2010 at the age of 60. A recent Beacon article tells the story of how Jim used to mow the yard and trim back the blackberries so that visitors to the Lighthouse Festival could picnic in his yard during the fireworks show.

“Culled Items” From Archaeological Digs Given to MHS



The U.S. Air Force recently turned over to the City of Mukilteo boxes of items found in recent archaeological digs in Mukilteo. The Burke Museum had already gone through the items and removed any artifacts they wished to keep for their collection. Two boxes of culled items found in the Park Avenue dig, where the Crown Lumber Store and butcher shop were once located, have been

given to MHS. The boxes contain pieces of bottles and ceramics, as well as some leather from a shoe. At some future time it will be fun to design a display of some of the culled items, as a way of telling more of Mukilteo’s early history.

Two boxes of culled items from the archaeological dig in Japanese Gulch were given by the city to Tom Murphy for use in training students in archaeology at Edmonds Community College. ♦

Transportation To Our Membership Meetings

The Board recently received a suggestion that we would like to announce to the membership. Many members live near one another, some are no longer comfortable driving at night and some would love to car pool to the meetings at Rosehill. Well, we would like to bring these groups together. A sign-up sheet will be available for us to match Drivers & Riders and you can add your name to this list, either at a membership meeting or you could email myself (lmr0522@aol.com) or Becky Owensby (rowen55@comcast.net) to have us add you to the list. ♦



In Memoriam

MHS was saddened this summer by the passing of two faithful members, Mas Odoi and Robert Smith. At the August membership meeting, Christopher Summitt gave a touching tribute to these two men and their contributions to MHS and many other organizations.



Mas Odoi

Mas (Maseru) Odoi was born in Mukilteo's Japanese Gulch in 1921 and attended Rosehill school until his family moved away in 1931 following the closing of Crown Lumber Company. He served in the US Army in the 442nd Regiment during WWII. Mas and his wife, Frances, returned to the Puget Sound area in retirement and Mas became an advocate for Mukilteo. He served diligently on the MHS committee to create the Japanese Memorial Monument on Fifth Street which celebrates the harmonious relationship between the Japanese Gulch residents and the Mukilteo community. Mas always enjoyed telling about his idyllic childhood in Mukilteo. He was named Pioneer of the Year in 2008. Mas died on July 28, 2013, and was buried with full military honors at the Tahoma National Cemetery.

Robert Morgan Smith was born in East Hartford, CT. It was military service that brought him to the Pacific

Northwest; he graduated from the University of Washington and worked at the UW for the next 35 years. In retirement, Robert was active as a volunteer in many organizations. In Mukilteo, Robert loved to re-enact history through his portrayal of Peter Christiansen, Mukilteo's first Lighthouse Keeper. Many remember fondly how he impressed tourists and residents alike with his interesting nautical and historical observations while smartly attired in the uniform of the Lighthouse Service. Robert died on June 22, 2013.



Robert Smith

MHS will deeply miss these two men and their active support of our organization. ♦

2013 Program Schedule

The following programs have been planned for MHS monthly membership meetings:

October 10th - "Memories of Being a Lighthouse Keeper", Gail Moore

November 14th - Year in Review and Volunteer Appreciation", Lisa Romo

Meetings start at 7:15pm. ♦



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2013

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MHS Website

www.mukilteohistorical.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Return this form with your payment to:

Mukilteo Historical Society - 304 Lincoln Avenue, Suite 101, Mukilteo, WA 98275

Individual - \$15 Senior (65) - \$10 Senior Couple - \$20 Family - \$25

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