



“Cruisin” Mukilteo

by Tom Nielsen

London has its Abbey Road, Paris has the Champs Elysees, New York has Fifth Avenue and, on a smaller scale, but none the less grand, Mukilteo has Front Street. Now that the waterfront of Mukilteo is changing with plans for the “tank farm” transformation, I want to share my memories of what Front Street was like around 1957.

Growing up in Edgewater, just across the bridge from Mukilteo, there were always plenty of things for a young person to do. We had a big playfield, a public beach area, and lots of surrounding woods to play in. However, there were times when a thirteen year old boy had a yearning to see the sights of the city. So, I would hop on my trusty “English” bike and head for “Mukilteo”!

Getting to the heart of Mukilteo was an easy downhill journey by taking the “old road”, now known as Mukilteo Lane. Then I would cross the tracks and follow the fence by the oil tanks to my destination, Front Street!

I always began with a stop at the city beach. This was located where the divers now congregate at the end of the Silver Cloud Inn. This was a good swimming beach and much sandier than our home beach at Edgewater. On a nice summer day you would always find Mukilteo families enjoying the water and beach. I often times would find a classmate from Rosehill here that I could visit with.

I couldn’t stay too long, though, because I needed to move on to McConnell’s Boathouse, which was my second stop. What I remember



Front Street in 1952, Losvar's Mukilteo Boat House on the left, Taylor's Ferry Lunch and McConnell's Boat House toward the right.

most about this busy fisherman’s destination was the wonderful aroma inside. It was a combination of the small boats, salt water, big timber beams, and the unique musty smell of the thick concrete walls. I know it doesn’t sound too enticing, but it was a special boathouse scent! The building was also unique in that it had exposed concrete walls with dark green wood framed windows, which gave it a nice classy look, for a boathouse.

There were usually some sports fishermen here either going out or bringing in their day’s catch. George McConnell had a bunch of small boats that he rented out so that you could get out into the bay and fish.

Back on my bike I headed down Front Street to the Ferry Lunch, owned by the Taylor family. Once inside I would gaze at all of the fishing tackle and gear displayed around the restaurant. Along the wall closest to the ferry dock was a long inviting lunch counter and there were booths on the other wall. You could also buy lots of what today we would call convenience items. I am sure many fisherman stopped here for a few supplies and

live bait before going out fishing for the day.

What I really liked, though, were the hamburgers, which Dick and Ed Taylor had reasonably priced at five for a buck! They gave you a bag of burgers with a special relish for one dollar that you could take over to the state park or out on the fishing dock for a grand picnic lunch.



The Ferry Lunch was centrally located on Front Street, where Ivars is today. The restaurant was a gathering spot for many of the locals.

There was not much traffic on Front Street in the late fifties. The ferry didn’t run as often back then and there were just a handful of cars crossing on (cont’d on page 3)

Lisa Romo

Message from our President

Welcome to the Spring Edition of the Mukilteo Historical Society Newsletter.

As we've seen the daffodils and tulips blossom, we know that spring is in the air and a new season is upon us.

Your Board has been busy preparing for our upcoming events and meetings. Two recent events deserve recognition and appreciation: a grant that will assist the Garden Committee this June and our opening day ceremony held April 7th.

With the assistance from two Board Members and the Garden Committee, the Historical Society applied for a Community Support Grant offered by the City of Mukilteo and in March we received the terrific news: Yes and Yes! The first yes was that we were one of the six community projects awarded and the other was that the grant would be for the requested amount. With these funds we can move forward with the Mass Planting at the light station.

Our Garden Committee is working hard to be ready for the Mass Planting scheduled for June 2nd (with a rain date of June 9th). As many light station volunteers can tell you – the gardens are greatly appreciated by those who visit us each season. Whether it's a photographer capturing that perfect shot of the lighthouse, a family out on a sunny day walking the grounds or a tourist coming to the light station for the first time...our gardens add a touch of beauty to our historic lighthouse.

The 2nd event deserving our appreciation is our 2012 Opening Day Ceremony at the light station. Many worked in planning and executing

the ceremony held on April 7th and even though we had a few hiccups along the way (and what event doesn't...LOL) it was well worth it. There is a wonderful recap of the event in this newsletter.

So we are officially open for another year at the light station. Thanks again to Nancy, Ellen, Eileen and the rest of the team who held the volunteer trainings in March: we are staffed and ready for visitors.

This, our 20th year of lighthouse tours, we are both honored and humbled. Mim Loree and Bev Schreiber, who were recently honored at the Opening Day Ceremony, can tell you what it was like back then. Both of these ladies have been here from the beginning and are still active volunteers 20 years later!



Karen Carpenter, Bev Schreiber,
Mim Loree and Lilo Lamerdin

We've got much more planned for the rest of the year. So as the days roll from Spring into Summer, I'm sure we'll see each other at a meeting, planting flowers in June or perhaps as a new volunteer in one of our committees.

Thanks for allowing me to be of service and Happy Spring!!!

Lisa Romo ♦

2012 Program Schedule

The following are the programs planned for the balance of this year at our MHS monthly membership meetings.

May 10th - "Utopias on Puget Sound", Charles Lewarne

June 14th - "Gray Whales in Saratoga Passage", Howard Garrett

July 12th - "Pioneer Cemetery Virtual Tour", Margaret Summitt

August 9th - "Pioneer of the Year", Ann Collier

September 13th - "What's happening in Mukilteo", Mayor Joe Marine

October 11th - "Bears & Barnacles - Critters in our backyard", Joe Gaydos (Tentative until confirmed)

November 8th - "Year in Review", Lisa Romo and Nancy Joao

Meetings start at 7:15pm. ♦

Want To Go Paperless?

This MHS Newline is uploaded in color, each quarter within a few days of its completion, to our website and can be viewed and/or printed there.

Website:

www.mukilteohistorical.org

If you are interested in no longer receiving a paper copy in the mail, please let us know. The society will then be on the road to saving both printing and mailing costs.

Email Nancy Joao to make this change to a paperless, color copy, njoao@frontier.com.

Thank you. ♦

(cont'd from page 1)

a weekday. So it was easy to cruise around the street on my bike without having to dodge oncoming traffic. The only time I can remember the ferry traffic in a long line up the hill was on the Fourth of July.

There was a public dock by the ferry landing similar to the one that is still there today. There were always people fishing and in the summer sometimes a few teenagers would be swimming off the dock.

I made my next stop at the other boat-



house in town, which was run by the Losvar family. This was located where the Losvar condominiums stand today.

Losvar's Mukilteo Boathouse was a relatively big facility with a showroom, boat storage, rental boats, and a large launching area. They would lift your boat off the trailer, set it on their trolley, and then send you down the tracks into Puget Sound. This was much easier than fighting the strong current and sometimes rough water at the self launch in the state park.

I liked to go into the showroom next to the ferry landing and admire the new Bryant outboard cruisers on sale. Losvar was also an Evinrude dealer and there were outboard motors on display ranging from three horsepower up to the top of the line fifty-horse model.

When the fish were running there would be a ton of activity at Losvar's. In the summer, on a nice day there

would always be a few families from the Mukilteo area putting their boats into the water for a day of "boating fun". Hat Island was a popular destination for local boaters. I learned to water ski at Hat Island in the late fifties behind a small outboard boat that my dad built from a set of plans. We always launched our family boats at Losvar's.

The historic lighthouse at the South end of Front Street was a sight that I knew well. In my six years of elementary school at Rosehill, I think that we took a field trip to the lighthouse each year! Even though it was familiar turf, I would almost always stop to enjoy the views from this great looking piece of local history. Throughout all my years in Mukilteo, the lighthouse has always been a source of pride for the community. And, of course, it still is today!

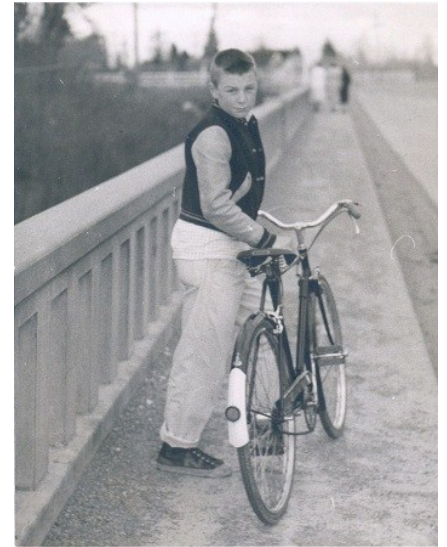
After riding by the lighthouse, I would usually make a loop through the State Park. The parking lot was smaller then and there was a "little league" baseball field as you entered the park, set back by the railroad tracks.

The thing that was always fun to watch at the park were the antics of novice boaters getting their boats back on the trailers. When the wind started coming up in the afternoon it could be difficult to get your boat on the trailer. My dad and I had watched this entertaining show many times on busy weekends.

Heading back on the other side of Front Street I would stop at the building which now houses the Diamond Knot. This is where the Mukilteo-Everett Stage bus line and the Mukilteo school buses were stored. It was also the terminal for the Mukilteo end of the bus run to Everett. The bus line was owned by a very friendly man named Russ Edgerton and the only driver for the two buses was a man named John.

The bus would leave for Everett on the hour and return from the Everett bus depot on the half-hour. They would

stop anywhere along the route to pick up passengers and the fare was very reasonable. A quarter as I remember it. My mom took the bus home every



Tom Nielsen on the bridge between Mukilteo and Edgewater (now in Everett).

day from her job as a nurse at Providence Hospital. It was a great little bus line.

Crossing the intersection by the ferry put me at the Seahorse restaurant. In the late fifties it was a small little café with only a lunch counter and a couple small tables. However, they had a great jukebox where you could listen to your favorite fifties songs. I remember one time my friend and I split an order of fries, listened to Elvis sing "Heartbreak Hotel", and admired a new 1957 Ford parked in the ferry lanes.

After the stop at the Seahorse I would usually be ready to return home, as I had to get home to deliver the Everett Herald on my paper route. I would go North until I got to the old Saratoga Hotel (apartments) on the corner, now the Ivar's parking lot. I would stop here and take a final glance down Front Street to see where I had been before rounding the corner and heading for home. I knew that my "uphill" ride home to Edgewater would not be easy.

But then, leaving Mukilteo is never an easy thing to do! ♦

Mukilteo Storytellers at the Mukilteo Historical Society

You see us at grand openings and at the lighthouse. We stroll through city parades and the Mukilteo Lighthouse Festival, and stand tall in the Pioneer Cemetery on Memorial Day.



Christopher Summitt with a school group

We are welcomed into the local schools to help students with their Washington State History requirements. You see us at the Mukilteo Arts building, and during the Red Cup Café open microphone nights.



Mayor Joe Marine, Diane Tinsley, John Petroff, Sheila McGillivray, Jim Brice, Robert Smith, Margaret Summitt

We dress in period clothing, with lace and fashionable hats, boots and long coats. We scrounge through the records of Mukilteo and Snohomish County, to glean character bits from old photos, letters and journals. We sort out

Mukilteo's History Mysteries. We are the Mukilteo Storytellers.

The purpose of the Storytellers is to bring the History of Mukilteo alive.



Isabella Summitt

We do this by taking on the persona of an actual person from our rich local past. The stories come from people of the First Nation, European explorers, Mukilteo founders, sawmill workers and other locals across the ages.

We wear the clothing and characterize the manners from the times we're presenting. We need volunteers to help research stories, find and make appropriate accessories for storytellers.



George Summitt, John Petroff and Penelope

We perform together, or alone at different venues around the city

dramatizing interpretive, interactive stories and situations that have occurred in the history of Mukilteo. Fires, snow storms, train wrecks, baseball games, picnics, and swimming at the beach are different scenarios we work. We believe there are many more to be uncovered.



Robert Smith

Discover the twists and turns of history that brought Mukilteo to where we are today. Help create possibilities.

In conjunction with the Mukilteo Lighthouse Festival, we are adopting the theme "Making Mukilteo History Come Alive: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly".

The Project is titled Louisa Fowler Sinclair with the code words of "MUKILTEO HISTORY MYSTERY".

We welcome anyone who is interested!

Right now we're looking for more people to join us, as several gigs are coming up over the summer! We will have a big performance in September during the fall festival.

(cont'd on page 6)

Twenty years of Light Station Tours

The Mukilteo Historical Society has been conducting tours and staffing the gift shop for twenty years.

Saturday, April 7, 2012, John Collier, acting as Master of Ceremony, opened the light station for another season.



John Collier

The opening ceremony began with local Boy Scout Troop 18 raising the light station flags.



Boy Scout Troop 18

Ellen Koch then introduced Joe Marine, the current mayor of Mukilteo, as well as two past mayors: Don Doran and Brian Sullivan. Ellen presented each of them with a Bev Schreiber designed lighthouse mug from the gift shop. Joe Marine spoke briefly to acknowledge the historical society and twenty years of sharing the light station with the

public.



Joe Marine, Brian Sullivan and Don Doran

Mim Loree and Bev Schreiber were honored for having initiated the tours and setting up the gift shop at the light station in 1992. Mim and Bev were each presented a symbolic "key" to the lighthouse.

Ellen Koch recognized numerous volunteers who have supported MHS over the years. These volunteers are too many to name here, but a big thank you goes out to all of you.



Diane Tinsley and Robert Smith

The MHS Storytellers participated in the festivities, sharing stories with visitors at the light station.



Local firemen were in attendance to highlight the addition of the historical fire department equipment which has been added to an exhibit in Qtrs. B. The firemen also brought a fire truck and ambulance for viewing.



Refreshments were served and visitors started touring the tower, making their purchases in the gift shop and viewing the updated exhibit.



Ann Collier with Fire Fighters who attended our opening day ceremony.



Thank you to all who attended and organized another wonderful opening day ceremony. ♦

(cont'd from page 4, Storytellers)

Help us preserve the history of Mukilteo



Diane Tinsley

Contact us at Diane J Tinsley, AKA Louisa Fowler Sinclair, Mukilteo Pioneer Business Woman, diane@mukilteohistorical.org ♦

Our Changing Language: Words also have a History

Do you marvel at the new terms that enter the English language almost every day? What about the strange words that are no longer widely used?



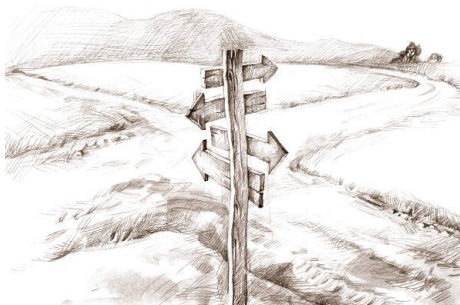
We are collecting fun and interesting names from the past that were once used in Mukilteo. Maybe they will provide inspiration for a display ...or a newsletter article.

Do you know what once was called a **widow maker**? What about a **comealong**? A **misery whip**? A **gandy dancer**?

Please add to our list by calling Ann Collier at 425-315-0823 or e-mailing C92176@aol.com with suggestions for additional interesting words used in the past in Mukilteo. ♦

Historic Corners Project

The Snohomish County Heritage Preservation Commission is working on a project that would recognize significant historic corners throughout the County. The type of recognition will be decided by the Snohomish County Arts Commission—it may be a bronze plaque or possibly an artwork of some kind. They are looking for a unique approach to this project,



and have promised to examine and appreciate any ideas.

The Mukilteo Historical Society has been asked to dig up stories and images of historic corners in Mukilteo. The only named corner about which we have much information is Nelson's Corner.

Are there other named corners in Mukilteo that we should be thinking about? We will appreciate any suggestions you have! Call Ann Collier at 425-315-0823 or e-mail C92176@aol.com. ♦

Volunteer Opportunities

Special Tour Coordinator - contact Karen Carpenter at 425-347-2719 or kjcarp1@comcast.net

Gift Shop Manager – contact Lisa Romo at 425-374-7968 or LMR0522@aol.com

Tower and Gift Shop volunteers needed for Memorial Day, May 28th and a fifth weekend, Saturday, June 30th - contact Nancy Joao at 425-334-8914 or by email at njoao@frontier.com. ♦

Who is Tom Nielsen?

Tom wrote the article on the cover of this newsletter. Here is a short biography provided by Tom.

"I grew up in Edgewater, on Mukilteo Blvd., just across the bridge leading into Mukilteo. My older sister Peggy, my older brother Larry, and I all went to Rosehill School and then to Everett High School. My class was the first to go through three years at the new Olympic View (Junior High) School.

"I worked in the Edmonds School District as an elementary teacher and librarian before retiring about ten years ago.

"In 1974 my wife, JoAnne, and I moved to the Olympus Terrace area of Mukilteo, where we still live today. I am active in the Mukilteo Kiwanis Club and enjoy doing community service. I have also been a car enthusiast for many years and have written several car related stories about the '50s and 60s era of hot rodding." ♦

Annual Mukilteo Light Station Cleaning.

The Mukilteo light station was cleaned and shined on Saturday, March 31, by Ellen Koch, Sally Morrison, John and Ann Collier, Becky and Mitch Owensby, Herb Pridmore, Doug Ramsey, Jim Wright, Mary Ollenburg, Bob Dickensheets, and Dan Tolfree.



Bob Dickensheets at work in the tower.

Thanks to all of you! ♦

A Few Mystery Items Identified



In our last newsletter, we included a couple of photos of items from the MHS collection which we could not

identify. A call from Bill Wojciechowski of the Monroe Historical Society informed us that the wooden cylindrical forms were made to screw into insulators to sit atop power poles.

In addition to identifying the insulator items, Tom Losvar also identified the small metal object as a zinc anode. This anode would have been used to protect a ship's metal components from corrosion in seawater.



Thank you, Bill and Tom! ♦

MHS Schedule



- Saturday, May 19th, 9am - Mukilteo Pioneer Cemetery cleaning.
- Monday, May 28th, 11am - Memorial @ Pioneer Cemetery.
- Saturday, June 2nd, 10am - Mass Planting at the light station grounds. (Rain date June 9th)
- Wednesday, July 4th - light station will **not** be open. ♦



Mukilteo Historical Society Inc.
304 Lincoln Avenue, Suite 101
Mukilteo, WA 98275

2012

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Christopher Summitt
Ellen Koch
Nancy Joao

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

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2012 Membership Dues were due January 1st

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