



## Mukilteo's Pioneer of the Year: Celia Cleator Nicholson

Celia Cleator (pronounced "clay'-tor") Nicholson, Mukilteo's Pioneer of the Year for 2014, has exceptionally deep roots in the history of Mukilteo. Celia's great-grandparents, Daniel and Laurie Danforth, came to Mukilteo in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, travelling part of the way by covered wagon.



Celia Cleator Nicholson

Their daughter, Leatha May Danforth, met and married Philip John Cleator, who worked for the Crown Lumber Company in Mukilteo. Philip came to the Northwest from Minnesota, where he had been a school teacher. Philip liked Mukilteo so much that he convinced his brother to bring his family to Mukilteo from Minnesota, and sent money back for his mother to come out, as well.

Celia's grandfather, Philip, was renowned for his excellent metal work. Beverly (Bevo) Dudder Ellis tells the story of how Philip Cleator made cookie sheets for her father, Walter Dudder, who was the baker in Mukilteo. Celia says that her grandfather was "a real sweet grandpa," giving the grandchildren salt bags with pennies to spend at the candy store. Fred Allen owned the store, which had been the original N.J. Smith Store at the corner of Second and Park.

One of Celia's favorite stories is that of her grandmother, Leatha May, walking all the way to Everett along the railroad tracks to get fabric for her wedding dress. Leatha May and Philip had three children: Phyllis, Evelyn, and John (called Jack), who was Celia's father. The family lived on Second Street near a former bridge over the ravine. Unfortunately, Leatha May went blind more than 30 years prior to her death in Mukilteo.

Jack Cleator, born in 1913 and raised in Mukilteo, attended Rosehill School in the first Rosehill building, and then went to high school in Bothell to play sports. He met and married Evelyn Minor, who was raised in Saskatchewan before her family moved to Seattle. Jack and Evelyn settled down on Second Street in Mukilteo.



Growing up in Mukilteo. Tudy Scheller on left with doll. Celia's siblings Danny, Scott, and Carol in wagon. Celia on scooter at right.

Born in 1937, Celia was the first of eight children. As the oldest, Celia had many opportunities to develop her aptitude for loving and caring for younger children. Jack Cleator worked for 40 years for Soundview Paper Company in Everett, which later became the Scott Paper Company.

Celia began her education in the second Rosehill School building, and then attended Everett High School, graduating in 1955 within a graduating class of 515. Celia met Everett (Nick) Nicholson at the Nazarene Church in Mukilteo, and they were married there in 1955.



Celia and Nick's wedding in 1955.

Three years older, Nick was from Exeter, CA. Nick was in the Air Force (although he wore a Navy uniform), and prior to the marriage he was living in the barracks at Front Street and Park Avenue. Nick kept the engines running on the Crash Rescue Boat which was there to rescue pilots and planes that went down in Puget Sound.



Nick Nicholson maintained the USAF Crash Boat in Mukilteo in 1954.

(Continued on page 3...)

*John Collier*

## Message from our President

Our Mukilteo Lighthouse Festival is rapidly approaching and many members of MHS are looking forward to meeting, greeting, and welcoming the many hundreds of people who will visit the light station during September 5, 6, and 7. Once again, MHS is playing a key role in the success of our community's annual showcase event.

But did you know that it was MHS that actually started the Lighthouse Festival? Early in 1966 some members of the newly incorporated Historical Society were looking for ways to increase awareness of the history of Mukilteo and raise money at the same time (sound familiar?). It was recalled that clambakes on the beach in the early 1900s had been very popular among the pioneering residents of our tiny mill town. Why not revive the idea with a Mukilteo Pioneer Festival?

The first festival took place on September 10, 1966, and it exceeded expectations in every way—except financially. Men grew beards to win prizes, old bathing suits were taken out of moth balls for a swim suit contest, prizes were awarded for the best period costume, and a host of “old time games” were played by children and adults.

The Historical Society organized the next two pioneer festivals, but by 1969 MHS reluctantly reported that it was unable to continue as the prime organizer. In 1971, the event was cancelled, but this decision was not communicated to the Everett Eagles Band which suddenly showed up, resulting in a scrambling for chairs and an impromptu concert near the ferry dock!

Eventually a pattern emerged in which a private, non-profit organization was created with a paid director to organize the festival. The city, businesses, organizations (always including MHS), and individual volunteers pitched in with whatever support they could give.

The spirit of the festival has remained robust through the years, even as the name changed to the current Mukilteo Lighthouse Festival; the timing fluctuated between August and September and from one day to three; and many of the selected sites, parade routes, and various arts, crafts, entertainment, and other activities, have appeared, disappeared, and reappeared over time.

So politicians, parade marshals, and princesses have come and gone over the years, but the spirit of families, friends, and neighbors coming together for a good time persists, and it remarkably resembles that of those Mukilteo clambakes of a century ago. Many, many thanks to all of you who are already scheduled to help this year with festival events—parade, ceremonies (Pioneer of the Year), and light station duties. To all the rest of you, we hope you will join in the festivities to make this festival the best one yet!

John Collier, President ♦



### Gift Shop News

Another season is coming to a close. Thank you to all the volunteers who worked in the gift shop. Your willingness to volunteer is worth more than you can imagine.

This year saw a few changes. Long-time buyer Chris Wilson moved with her husband, Ron, to be closer to family. Regardless of this move, Chris remained an email away when there was a need for guidance on gift shop issues. We also lost long-time buyer Bev Schreiber. Bev may be gone from the light station and our lives, but not from our hearts and thoughts.

Throughout this year many of you have assisted by helping select merchandise, transport that merchandise to Quarters B and then carry the large heavy boxes up the back stairs. You have helped unpack those mountains of boxes, establish prices, and ticket hundreds of mini glass figures. You have then promoted and sold this merchandise.

And you all kept coming back for more. Garden folks even stopped tending to their garden plots when asked to help. Thank you all for not backing away from the many requests.

Next year maybe we can find a supplier for the elusive Mukilteo lighthouse flags, socks with our lighthouse on them, and other items for which we receive regular inquiries. I am looking forward to another year of supporting the historical society and light station with the best group of volunteers any organization could hope for.

Thank you - Nancy Joao ♦

*(Pioneer—continued from page 1)*

After they married, Nick and Celia lived in a basement apartment in the Goat Trail area. They moved to California for a short time before returning to the Mukilteo area for good.

When Celia's mother, Evelyn, died at the age of 43, Celia and Nick and their two children moved in with Celia's father to care for Celia's four youngest siblings. When Jack remarried, they were able to return to a home of their own.

Celia and Nick had three children: Diana, born in 1956; Kirk, born in 1959; and Eric, born in 1966. Nick worked for Boeing for 36 years, commuting to the south every day until he retired. Nick died in 2005.



The Nicholson family was baptized at Mukilteo Presbyterian Church in 1971. Rev. Laurie in rear. From L: Diana, Celia, Eric, Nick; Kirk in front.

Celia and her family started attending Mukilteo Presbyterian Church when they came back from California in the late 1950s. All five of them were baptized by Rev. Phillip Laurie in 1971. Celia and Nick were very active in the church—Celia taught Sunday School and served as one of the Elders on the Session (the church's governing body).

Celia has been providing in-home day care for over fifty years. She says caring for children and living in the Mukilteo area was the "best life I could have had."

On Saturday, September 6, Celia will ride in a Model T Ford in the Lighthouse

Festival Parade and will be honored that afternoon at a reception for the Pioneer of the Year and the Citizens of the Year at 3:00 p.m. in front of Quarters A at the Lighthouse. ♦



### **Lighthouse Festival Parade Plans**

MHS members will be walking in the Lighthouse Festival Parade on Saturday, September 6, accompanying Pioneer of the Year, Celia Cleator Nicholson, as she rides in a Model T Ford Touring car driven by Larry Mann.

We will meet near the corner of Harbour Pointe Boulevard and Chennault Beach Drive, near the Mormon Church, at about 10:00 a.m. The Grand Parade, which is the one we walk in, immediately follows the Children's Parade, which starts at 10:30 a.m.

We won't know MHS's exact position in the parade until a few days before, so call Ann Collier at 425-315-0823 or e-mail [C92176@aol.com](mailto:C92176@aol.com)—or just come looking for the MHS contingent! ♦



### **In Memoriam: Lisa Garcia**

We are saddened to hear of the death of Lisa Garcia on July 23 in California, where she lived with her husband Mario. Lisa was recently diagnosed with Leukemia and was undergoing treatment.

Lisa and Mario were active in MHS for several years, prior to moving back to California to be with family. Lisa served as MHS secretary in 2008 and part of 2009, and worked as Gift Shop Manager as well.

Lisa described their becoming a part of MHS this way: "We were attracted to the lighthouse one day because of our son being in the U. S. Coast Guard. So we started checking out lighthouses. The day we came to the Mukilteo Lighthouse we saw four women trying to remove the Christmas lights. They invited us to help, and we knew the Mukilteo Lighthouse was our calling."

Our condolences go out to Mario and all the family. ♦

### **Special Silent Auction at MHS Season-Ending Party, Sept. 28**

Darlene Cook and family generously donated several attractive items to MHS. MHS members will have an opportunity to purchase these exceptional treasures through a silent auction at the End-of-the-Season potluck party, 5:30—7:30 p.m., on Sunday, September 28, in the Christiansen Room of Rosehill Community Center.

Our end-of-the-season finales are always fun, but this one will be extra special. Listed below are the donated items. All proceeds go to support the mission and work of MHS. Hope to see you there!

- "Mukilteo Light"-Full color unframed lithograph print by Bev Schreiber: #51 of 900
- "Mukilteo Lighthouse"-Unframed photolithograph from original oil painting by Carol Thompson: #1204 of 2050
- "Mukilteo Light Station"-Watercolor unframed print, signed and numbered by Lisa Helker: 10 of 101
- "Mukilteo Light"-Authentic hand-painted limited edition sculpture by Harbour Lights
- Framed and matted watercolor print "Mukilteo Light" by Mark Sherman: #A1468
- Wall plaque with two hooks depicting "Signals at the Lighthouse", about 10"x 18"
- Framed 18" x 24" poster by Chris Hopkins ♦



### Louisa Fowler's Seashell Art Returns to Mukilteo

Over 100 years ago, Louisa Fowler, daughter of Mukilteo co-founder Jacob Fowler and his wife, Mary Warren Fowler, painstakingly arranged hundreds of colorful shells into an intricate pattern and glued them onto a wooden frame.

That frame is now on loan to MHS by the Everett Museum of History. Neil Anderson volunteers with the Everett museum and arranged the loan of this artifact.

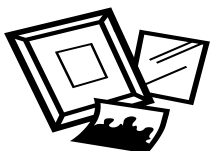


This decorated picture frame, made by Mukilteo's "First Daughter" Louisa Fowler, is over 100 years old.

Louisa, the "First Daughter" of Mukilteo, was born in 1861. If you look closely at the frame, you can see that seashells spell out "Rock of Ages" on the cross, and the date May 1, 1888 can be read along the bottom of the frame.

Look for this frame to be on display in Quarters B in the future.

If you have additional photos or artifacts that help tell Mukilteo's story, please contact Ann Collier at 425-315-0823 or email her at [C92176@aol.com](mailto:C92176@aol.com). ♦



### Congratulations to John Collier, Mukilteo Citizen of the Year

John Collier, MHS President, recently learned that he was selected as Mukilteo's Citizen of the Year for 2014 by the Mukilteo Kiwanis. John shares the honor with Jim Brice, who was awarded the honor posthumously.



John Collier accepting the loan of Louisa Fowler's seashell frame, on behalf of MHS. Holding the frame is Edward Anderson and Neil Anderson. Presenting the frame, on the right, is Gene Fosheim, President of the Board of Trustees of the Everett Museum of History.

In his nomination, John's work with MHS was cited. He has served in several roles in the past, and has done a lot of writing for MHS projects over the years—always in close collaboration with his wife, Ann. His service with the Mukilteo Food Bank, as a coordinator of food bank drivers, representative to other food distribution agencies, and as treasurer for many years, was also noted.

John has also served as Treasurer and for the last two years as President of the Board of Snohomish County Habitat for Humanity. Also mentioned was his work within the Mukilteo Presbyterian Church, as an Elder and former treasurer, and on many social service projects.

"It occurred to me over and over when I was being interviewed for an article in the Beacon, just how much this award is connected to the volunteer efforts of so many others," he observed. "It seems to me that there are numerous "citizens of the year" volunteering with MHS and they picked me because MHS does so much and they had to pick somebody."

John also said that he is honored to share the Citizen of the Year designation with Jim Brice, who drove the van for the Mukilteo Seniors, served on City Planning and Parks commissions, and volunteered in Mukilteo in other ways for many years. Ann Brice accepted the plaque for her husband, who died last year.

John and Ann Brice, on behalf of her late husband, will be honored in the Lighthouse Festival Parade on September 6 and at a reception at 3:00 p.m. that day for the Pioneer of the Year and Citizens of the Year at the Lighthouse.

Thank you, John, for all your contributions to our community! ♦



### MHS Calendar

September 5 thru 7 - **Mukilteo Lighthouse Festival.**

September 6, 10 a.m. - Assemble near Mormon Church on Harbour Point Blvd. for **Lighthouse Festival Parade.**

September 6, 3 p.m. - **Pioneer of the Year and Citizen of the Year presentations**, at the Lighthouse.

September 11, 7:15 p.m. - Monthly Membership meeting - **Speaker, Betsy Case, author of "Trailblazers: The Women of the Boeing Company".**

September 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m. - **End of Season Potluck including Silent Auction**, Rosehill Christiansen room.

October 9, 7:15 p.m. - Monthly Membership meeting - **Speaker, Julie Pigott, of Admiralty Head Lighthouse, Whidbey Island.**

November 13, 7:15 p.m. - Monthly Membership meeting - **Speaker, John Collier "Year in Review and Volunteer Appreciation".**

December 7, 2 to 5 p.m. - **MHS Christmas Party**, Rosehill Christiansen room. ♦

### Gardening Fun

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Spring planting on June 7, and thanks to all our volunteers who keep the grounds looking great throughout the summer.



Pat Clark and Bernie Foth take a break from planting to pose for a shot.



Mitch Owensby ("Auger Man") with his grandson, Liam.



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

### 2014

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