



WILD RIDE ON THE GOAT TRAIL by Neil Anderson

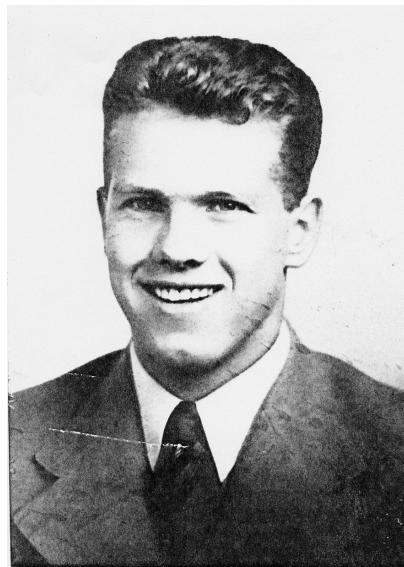
On a foggy Tuesday morning in January, I was having an enjoyable conversation with Ann Collier at the Lighthouse and looking at some 1940's era photographs of Mukilteo. We shared some stories and Ann wondered if I might share one more story in the MHS newsletter about two Mukilteo boys, Bill Anderson and his best friend, Bruce Richter; two adventure seeking boys growing up in old Mukilteo during the 1930's and early 1940's.



Bill Anderson, standing with hands on hips, in his parent's strawberry field near Nelson's Hill, in the 1940's.

No computers, laptops or cell phones, so most of the time kids played outside. Bruce and Bill fished in the bay or in some of the local creeks and streams. They played baseball and football in the yards and fields in the neighborhood. They had odd jobs around town. One summer, they got a job with the Black Ball Line, the company that operated the ferry from Mukilteo to Whidbey Island back in those days. They sanded and scraped old paint from the ferryboats as the boats were moored overnight at the dock on Whidbey. And then they repainted the decks, sides, steps, and railings of the vessels; anything above the waterline. It was a fun job.

Bill Anderson liked motors, engines, airplanes and anything mechanical. He used to skip school on occasion to walk up the hill so he could watch the construction workers build Paine Field. He tinkered with the family car alongside his father, Axel. He once made a homemade parachute which consisted of a large bed sheet and lightweight rope. Jumping off the roof of a building in his 4th and Loveland Street neighborhood, the "chute" snagged on a board or eave and he was left dangling from the building till someone came to his rescue, cutting the lines so he could fall to the ground. It may have been his father, I just don't remember now.



Bruce Richter's high school graduation photo.

When Bruce and Bill were in high school (Everett High), they acquired an old automobile engine, chassis and car body and other parts. They found wheels and tires. They were going to build some type of car; a jalopy or hot rod. They had the knowledge and they

had the time. Mind you now, my father may have stretched the following story a bit as time went on, but this is the version he told me.

It took the two Mukilteo kids several months to build and finish their mechanical creation. It didn't run great and it didn't look pretty, but it ran. The vehicle had two seats and they took turns driving the machine up and down 4th street. I don't think it was street legal. For sure, it was not licensed. But, in those days, that little matter was not a major problem. They were not going to take the machine to Everett or Seattle. However, they were going to run it up the hill on the Goat Trail Road for a little more fun.

They first had to siphon a small quantity of gasoline from the family cars. Or maybe the car of a neighbor. That story is a little unclear. They obtained a few gallons or so to fill the little gas tank. Once again, the car fired right up and off they went. The steering was a little wobbly and the car backfired quite often. No muffler, so it was a noise maker. The brakes were touchy. They made the trip up the hill. Lots of blue smoke from the tail pipe. I am sure they were laughing and smiling all the way. It must have been great fun.

Once to the top, it was time to head down the hill and back home. They lived right across the street from each other. One must remember, this piece of equipment was assembled by two teenage boys, with spare parts, the wrong parts, and no factory guarantees. It was a bucket of bolts with a lot

(cont'd on page 3)

John Collier

Message from our President

It is an honor to serve as MHS president in 2014. I have now been on the job for almost two months and I am amazed...even daunted...by all the things that MHS does. It makes me even more impressed by how much Lisa Romo did as president, and how well she did it over the past three years.

momentum, we must attract new and energetic—and dare I say it—younger members.

Please think about what we do, and think about other people you know who are capable and might be interested in joining us. Just think, if every member brought in one other member, our rolls would double by the end of



2014 Officers and Directors: Carolyn Morrison, John Collier, Sally Morrison, Becky Owensby, Eileen Pridmore, Lynette Stefansson, Kim Nguyen, Lisa Romo-Bremerthson, Brenda Thorsen and Christopher Summitt.

I have, however, learned one of her secrets. She surrounded herself with a number of capable, energetic, and truly enjoyable people. This is a tradition that continues this year. We have had two board meetings and two general membership ones, responded to some new issues, and begun some new initiatives—thanks to the outstanding work of the other officers, directors, and committee chairpersons. The leadership around me is very talented...and a lot of fun to work with.

So, I am confident this will be another banner year. But I wonder about the next year and the year after that. At our initial board retreat in early January, we all agreed that, to maintain our

the year!

John Collier, President ♦

New Volunteer Shirts



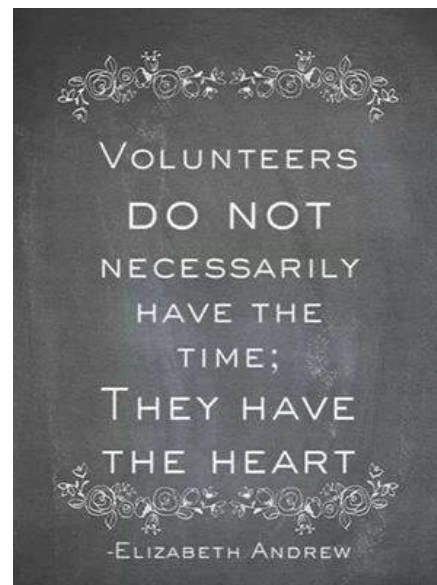
Volunteer training sessions are scheduled for Saturday March 8th at 10am and March 15th at 1pm. Training must be completed by everyone who works at the light station.

New Volunteers: This is your opportunity to join a team and learn the procedures and responsibilities needed to provide a fun, educational and safe visit to the Light Station.

Returning Volunteers: This gives you a chance to find out about the changes or updates that everyone needs to know.

Volunteers will receive a free volunteer booklet and shirt. Please plan to attend one of the sessions.

Contact Lisa Romo-Bremerthson for more information at 425-374-7968 or email LMR0522@aol.com. ♦



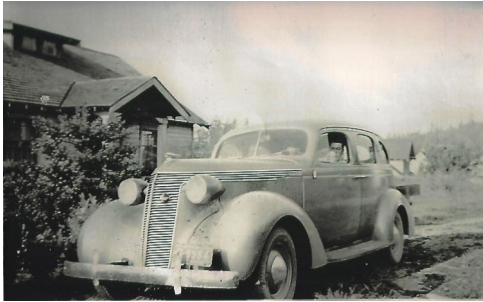
Come be a Part of Mukilteo's Rich History.....

Meet people from all over the world....make new friends....the possibilities are endless and such a rewarding way to spend a few hours here and there during our April to September season!! We have many different areas of interest for our volunteers and we're sure to find a good fit for you!!!

Contact Becky Owensby for more information at 425-308-3313 or email rowen55@comcast.net. ♦

(Wild Ride cont'd from page 1)

of leaks. They improvised on many of the "safety" features so to speak. It wasn't as if the boys were going to manufacture these things on the Mukilteo assembly line. They didn't even have a blueprint for the car. The design and specs were all in their heads.



Bill Anderson, sitting in a real car (not the jalopy) in the 1940's.

On the way down the hill, things were going well for a short time. Then they noticed the brakes were not working as they should. Not to be concerned just yet for the two seventeen year olds. They could probably use the emergency brake although the car did not have one. A very short time later, they could smell smoke. This was not a good sign. The brake pedal was now down to the floorboard and the car was not slowing or stopping on the steep downhill grade. It was time to worry now. The car held its speed for now but the smoke was getting worse.

They were starting to lose control. Steering was now becoming an additional problem. They were not sure they could stop the car and it would not be a good thing to come flying into their Mukilteo neighborhood with no brakes. They might shoot across the railroad tracks and hope to heck that a Great Northern freight train wasn't passing thru town. The town marshal might also have a problem with the brakeless speeding vehicle.

What to do. What to do. Their questions were answered when they noticed the vehicle had a small but pesky fire in the lower part of the engine area. Something was burning but they did not know what. The brakes were now all gone, visibility was nil

due to the smoke and it was time to bail out of the car. Putting the car into the adjoining ravine seemed like the smart thing to do. They decided they could make one last corner and steer the car into the tree filled ravine. They could feel heat from the fire so there was little time left.

They made the corner and that was it. Another twenty feet and the car would be off the road. Luckily the car had no doors so it was real easy to exit the moving car. Bill and Bruce landed in the middle of the narrow road. They both could see the car disappear over the ledge. Miraculously, no one was hurt and they hurried over to the road edge to watch the car tumble to the bottom. The car was upside down and the fire burned itself out after a few minutes. No way could the car be recovered. It was now junk.

So, they dusted off the dirt and checked out the few bumps and scrapes from the tumble out of the car, and they walked home. Probably time for dinner. Just another day in Mukilteo.

Some thirty years later, my brother and I would accompany our father on a drive up the Goat Trail Road to the site of his ride with Bruce Richter. The wreckage of the car at the bottom of the ravine was still there but mostly hidden by bushes and trees. In the autumn of 2013, Tude Richter took me to the spot. We looked over the edge but the trees and thick vegetation obscured our view and the rusted wreck was no longer visible. We were not even sure if it was still down there. By now, we think the rusted hulk had been removed. Unfortunately, there were no photographs of the automotive creation of Bruce and Bill.

Thank you Neil for sharing another fun Mukilteo story and helping to keep our history alive. - MHS Editor.

◆



MHS Calendar

March 8th, 10am - Docent Volunteer training at the Light Station

March 13th, 7:15pm - Monthly Membership meeting - **Speaker, Bill Haroldson, author of "The Resorts of South Whidbey Island"**

March 15th, 1pm - Docent Volunteer training at the Light Station

March 22nd, 10am - Keyholder meeting at Qtrs. B

March 29th, 10am - Cleaning of the Light Station

April 5th, Noon - Opening Day at the Light Station for the 2014 season

April 10th, 7:15pm - Monthly Membership meeting - **Program, Panel of past Mukilteo Police Chiefs, "Policing Mukilteo through the Years"**

May 8th, 7:15pm - Monthly Membership meeting - **Speaker, Thomas Murphy, "Wildlife in Mukilteo"**

May 17th, 10am - Pioneer Cemetery Cleaning at Mukilteo's Pioneer Cemetery, 513 Webster Street

May 26th, 11am - Memorial at the Pioneer Cemetery

June 7th, 10am - Mass Flower Planting at the Light Station (rain date - June 14th)

June 12th, 7:15pm - Monthly Membership meeting - **Speaker, Chad Kaiser from Point No Point Lighthouse** ◆

Would You Like to Work On A Special MHS Project?



Road Names Project

Many road names in Mukilteo used to reflect the history of the street, but now have been changed to numbers to make it easier for emergency vehicles. For instance, 88th Street used to be called Babbitt Road. You could spearhead an effort to obtain brown historical signs to be attached to street signposts to show the historical names. Some of the research has been done; we need a volunteer to do further research, and to work with others to write a grant to obtain funds for the signs.

Scale Model of Old Mukilteo

It would be fun to have a scale model of Mukilteo in the 1920s, complete with miniature buildings like the old Rosehill school. If you enjoy building model railroads or know someone who does, this project might appeal to you. There is an interesting scale model of old Edmonds, done by a high school student, in the Edmonds Historical Museum.

Now and Then Photos

Would you like to take photos of Mukilteo as it is now from the same spots where historical photos were taken? It would be fun to have a display of Now and Then Photos as part of one of our exhibits.

Oral History Project

A volunteer team, including a person who is comfortable with operating a digital video camera (MHS owns one) and editing, and a person who would like to do the actual interviewing, is needed to keep making videos of long-time Mukilteo residents for our Oral History collection.

If any of these special MHS projects sound like something you would like

to pursue, please contact Ann Collier for more information:
c92176@aol.com or 425-315-0823. ♦

Santa at the Lighthouse



Bev Schreiber and Kim Nguyen with Santa in the gift shop.

Santa, aka Christopher Summitt, made his annual visit to the Mukilteo Lighthouse on Saturday, December 14th.

Children visited Santa in the lighthouse and shared what they hoped to find under their tree on Christmas morning. Santa asked them if they thought they had done a good job at obeying their parents all year long. He also mentioned how important it is for them to do well in school.

The children all left with a candy cane in their hand and a smile on their face, so all looked happy and ready for the holiday. ♦

Lens and Lights

A new small exhibit "Lenses & Lighthouses" will be ready for viewing when the light station opens for our 22nd season of giving tours of the Mukilteo Light Station on April 5, 2014. This new exhibit is located in Qtrs. B.

An old display case from the McConnell's Boat House has been

refurbished with a secure lock and a new beveled glass top. An LED light has been installed and the wood given a coat of Old English polish. The case looks pretty good for being seventy odd years old.

Bev Schreiber, early member of the Mukilteo Historical Society, local artist and lighthouse enthusiast, has contributed many items from her extensive collection, including miniature replicas of Fresnel lenses, lighthouse replicas, as well as a wealth of information.



New Lens Exhibit in Qtrs. B

A new vertical display case added to this exhibit contains items rarely seen by tourists. These items include a large 17 inch light bulb from Ireland, a 19 inch mirrored refractor and other items of interest.

There are captions identifying the items displayed, an informational book and a brochure, all of which were designed to enable the viewer to enjoy, learn and appreciate lighthouses everywhere. We would like to thank Ellen Koch and Andy Hurd for all their hard work in putting this exhibit together. We especially thank Bev Schreiber who made it all possible through her knowledge and generosity. ♦



One of the lens replicas on display.

In Memoriam

In the past few months, the Mukilteo Historical Society has lost three faithful members.

Art Bridge died on November 14, 2013. Art, along with his wife Margaret, had been an MHS member for many years. Art, dressed as a lighthouse keeper, can be seen in the video about the history of the Mukilteo lighthouse, produced in 2007, which we show in the Interpretive Center. Art loved to give tours of the lighthouse, especially enjoying time in the tower. Art taught music at Rosehill as a traveling elementary music teacher for the Mukilteo School District. Later, he was a math/ music/band teacher at Olympic View Junior High School, 1962-1988. Art and Margaret owned a hot air balloon, with Art piloting the balloon and Margaret driving the chase car. Margaret has long been part of the MHS A-Team, using her librarian skills to help catalog the MHS collection. Margaret also has been part of the MHS Gardening team, and she would often bring Art along to help with the gardening at the lighthouse.

Opal McConnell, historian and author of "Mukilteo Pictures and Memories," passed away on December 1, 2013 at 88. Opal and her husband George came to Mukilteo in 1947 and ran the McConnell Boathouse for 47 years. Opal was very active in MHS and wrote a column on Mukilteo History for the Rosehill News for many years. Opal served on Mukilteo's Historical Commission and on other boards and organizations in Mukilteo. She was chosen as Mukilteo's Citizen of the Year in 1990, and, in 2007, Opal and her husband George McConnell were honored by MHS as Pioneers of the Year. Opal's service to Mukilteo and the Mukilteo Historical Society will long be remembered.

Joanne Rogers passed away on September 10, 2013. Joanne was a true lighthouse aficionado and drove great distances from Bremerton and other homes on the Olympic peninsula to

work in the Mukilteo Lighthouse gift shop. Joanne enjoyed visiting other lighthouses and even participated in the "Run for the Light" at the Grays Harbor lighthouse.

We will miss these members who contributed so much to MHS. ♦

2013 Visitor Count

In 2013 the Mukilteo Lighthouse had visitors from 48 states, 3 territories, 70 countries and 8 provinces, for a total of 5991 visitors. The only two states in the US without representation were Delaware and New Hampshire. The country with the most visitors, other than the US and Canada, was Germany, with 44 guests visiting our station. ♦

Gift from Alice Marie Andersen

Last year, Alice Marie Andersen, Pioneer of the Year a few years ago, gave MHS a generous contribution in memory of her mother, Jacobe M. Andersen; her father, Anton M. Andersen; her uncle, Louis S. Andersen; and her friend, Lois Smollet Blackburn. We have decided to use the money to buy a new copier for Quarters A.

Thank you for your generous gift, Alice Marie, to help us preserve and promote Mukilteo's history. ♦

Mukilteo Trivia



Mrs. Louisa Fowler Sinclair once asked her father, Mukilteo's founder Jacob Fowler, where he kept the county records when Mukilteo was the first county seat of Snohomish County. She received the reply, "Oh, in a cigar box." ♦



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2014

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