

MHS Newsline

REBIRTH OF AN OLD SIGN

By Peter Anderson



Refurbished old sign at Rosehill

Visitors to the Rosehill Community Center are now greeted by a beautiful hand-carved wood sign on the outside wall near the west entrance. Although just recently placed, this colorful sign has some prior connections to MHS.

MHS commissioned carving the sign in the 1970s when the Rosehill Community Center was housed in the second Rosehill School building, built in 1928. That building was demolished in 2010 to make way for the new Community Center. A thoughtful Mukilteo resident rescued the old sign from a debris pile and stored it in a building that Tom Harmon purchased in 2016. Although broken into four large pieces, Tom recognized the potential historical value of keeping the sign and put the pieces in his garage for safe keeping.

Jeff Price alerted MHS that Tom had the old Rosehill sign and was interested in donating it to us. MHS members Mitch Owensby and Peter An-

derson picked up the sign pieces from Tom's garage in November 2017, and stored them temporarily in the basement of Quarters A. At an MHS general meeting, the late Ann Brice mentioned that Nick Carlson, custodian at Rosehill, was interested in looking at the old sign. Nick came to Quarters A and took pictures of the sign. City personnel subsequently retrieved the pieces, and Nick Carlson, Jamieson McDaniels and Bryce Minnich worked to get the sign refurbished and installed in its new location.



Closeup of refurbished sign

After being hidden from public sight for over a decade, the refurbished sign now looks great, beautifully adorning the entrance to our Rosehill Community Center!



*Rosehill signs at prior Community Centers
(matching brown or gray building color scheme)*



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MUKILTEO HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

304 LINCOLN AVENUE, STE. 101
MUKILTEO, WA 98275

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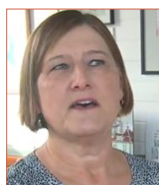
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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Happy Summer! The slow 2021 lighthouse opening continues with one wedding so far this season and more scheduled in August. The lighthouse tower opened for the July 4th weekend, since Governor Inslee lifted the restrictions in the State, and was aligned with the Board's plan. It was last opened in September 2019. Two evening openings coincided with Music in the Park and the next one will be Saturday, August 14th from 4-7pm. The last opening of the summer will be during Lighthouse Festival on Friday and Saturday, September 10th, and 11th from 12-3pm. Volunteers staffing these openings are wearing masks in effort to remain healthy. The mask requirement has been dropped for visitors. These openings are an opportunity to increase revenue through gift shop sales and create goodwill in the Mukilteo community. MHS memberships are on the rise, new members are touring buildings and learning about MHS roles. New processes are developing from the changes brought about from the pandemic. As with all businesses, non-profits find staffing a challenge too. Look for an email soon about interest in volunteer opportunities.

The Board continues to work long hours and attends full meetings each month to resolve issues. The Board will continue to meet virtually for the remainder of the year. Revisions to the Clover system allow the Board to receive detailed reports on gift shop sales. Mitch Owensby took a large truckload of items for donation. He also resolved storage issues and secured the new boat shelf in the gift shop. Gardening volunteers continue to weed. Mulch was added to the flower beds just prior to the heat wave which saved the geraniums. This is the third year these plants have wintered over, which is a record. The Public Works crew at the City of Mukilteo keep the grounds maintained and are doing a great job.

Jerry Arnold is collecting humidity and temperature data in the lighthouse. Stolen property from the spring vandalism has been recovered. The cupola roof over the lens was repaired with MHS funding. The City of Mukilteo will paint the interior of the lighthouse in September. Plans are being made for the City to repair the picket fence and MHS will schedule painting prior to the Lighthouse Festival. Mark Sutherland repaired all the window trim, then sanded and painted in preparation for new shutters upstairs in Quarters B and downstairs in Quarters A. Sharon Sutherland scheduled and planned the installation and along with Mark washed windows and replaced screens. This change shows off the beautiful views in each room. During this work, water damage was found in Quarters A so the City is repairing one wall.

The August general meeting will look at the Lighthouse Festival tradition over the years. A Pioneer of the Year was not selected for 2021 because of pandemic restrictions.

A tour of the lighthouse for MHS members is planned for Saturday, July 31st at 11am. Patrick Housey is offering a tour of Admiralty Head on August 28th at 10am. Contact me if you would like to attend.

Thank you all for supporting MHS with your hard work and involvement. I have learned a lot this year and look forward to seeing you soon!

~JOANNE MULLOY



5/22/21 Cemetery Cleaning

THE FERRY IMPORTANT HISTORY OF MUKILTEO

By C.J. Kisky



Note from the editor: The Ferry Important History of Mukilteo by C.J. Kisky of Mukilteo was the winning entry for the Society's annual, one-year \$1,500 college or trade school scholarship in 2021.

Since its earliest history on the shore of Puget Sound, Mukilteo has had a rich and fascinating history. A new chapter in this history was written on December 30, 2020, when Mukilteo welcomed a brand-new, state-of-the-art ferry terminal, the first significant update to the city's terminal in four decades. While it is understandable to marvel at the modern facility, locals should not forget the historically significant beginnings of ferry service between Mukilteo and Whidbey Island.

Undoubtedly, the first human water passages between what is now Mukilteo, named after a Lushootseed word that roughly translates to "good camping place," and Whidbey Island, known as Tscha-kole-chy by the Salish nation, were the activities of Indigenous people.¹ Carrying people and provisions, they paddled handmade vessels across Puget Sound, or Whulge, as several Native American nations called the body of water.² Native Americans frequently ferried themselves between Mukilteo and Tscha-kole-chy due to seasonal shifts in weather and resources. It was a 2.25- to 4-mile paddle, depending on the route they took. According to Tulalip News, "the [new Mukilteo ferry] terminal is located at a historic site, a location special to the tribes who frequented the Salish Sea long before the invention of [modern] ferries. People who called present day Mukilteo home since the beginning of time, harvested salmon and shellfish from its shores generation upon generation."³

White colonists, including British captain and explorer George Vancouver, appeared in Mukilteo in the late eighteenth century. However, it would take over a century for settlers to start a formal ferry operation in the area. Mukilteo-Clinton passenger ferry service began in 1911.⁴ This early passenger service was operated by the Island Transportation Company. Documentation about the 1910s foot-traffic-only incarnation of the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry is, unfortunately, sparse. Eight years later, a pioneering car ferry service would be established in the same area. The Whidbey I and the Central I were the first automobile ferries to serve Mukilteo and Clinton.⁵

For much of the twentieth century, Mukilteo's ferry terminal was regularly served by Nisqually, a ferry that could hold eighty cars. Nisqually was built in 1927, and was named after the Pacific Northwest Native American nation of the same name.⁶ While she fell out of regular use

in 1967, Nisqually was in service in some capacity all the way until 2007, eighty impressive years. While the Nisqually ferry was obviously outdated and sorely lacking in capacity (today's largest Washington State Ferries can carry over 200 cars), it was clearly an influence on later ferries in the area.⁷ Newer ferries borrowed from Nisqually's design, and often took names from local Native American nations.

On the first day of June, in 1951, Washington State Ferries (WSF) formally began operations at the Mukilteo Terminal. According to HistoryLink.org, "The first day under Washington State Ferries operations was held with little fanfare. A small delegation representing most of the ports served by the ferries traveled throughout the day to a variety of small ceremonies in various cities, and at the grave of Chief Seattle ... in Suquamish."⁸

On May 27, 1951, just a few days before the formal transfer of power, the Seattle Times ran an article about the ferry's shift in management. Associate editor Ross Cunningham wrote, "As the brightness of morning grows, and the ferryboat system throughout the sound comes to life for the day, crews will begin painting over the orange-colored stacks of the vessels with green."⁹

According to Peter Anderson, a director of the Mukilteo Historical Society, "Financial difficulties led the Puget Sound Navigation Company (PSNC)/Black Ball Line to sell its domestic operations assets to the state of Washington's Department of Transportation for the sum of \$4.9 million in early 1951. This created the Washington State Ferries (WSF) in May of that year."⁴ More than anything else, this represented a change of management. The ferries that served the city of Mukilteo in the decades prior had been run and operated by PSNC. Interestingly enough, the ferry office even kept its original phone number. The most significant change during the shift in ferry management was apparently "that the president's office, which had been the domain of Captain Alexander Peabody (1895-1980), was now the office of WSF General Manager Floyd McDowell."⁸

While most trips are uneventful or enjoyable, unfortunately, it hasn't always been smooth sailing when it comes to ferry service to and from Mukilteo. In December of 1932, the City of Mukilteo, a steam ferry named after the city it served, burned down, thus rendering the ferry unsuitable to carry passengers or even cargo. The City of Mukilteo had been built in 1927 by the Marine Construction Company of Seattle for use by the Puget Sound Navigation Company.¹⁰ The burned out hulk sat untouched

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GIFT SHOP NEWS



This has certainly been an exciting and very different spring/summer for the gift shop. The team has been busy rearranging and reorganizing the gift shop. The Abalone jewelry is now on display in the case where the glass items formerly resided and Joanne had the good fortune to have a rowboat shelf donated which now holds MHS logo items. The changes are still a work in progress and we would love to have our volunteers and their guests visit.

The May Day Garden Sale was a success. Tables were set up outside under tents, sales items were on display on the front porch, and shoppers were allowed inside with masks on and in limited numbers at a time. There was a good turnout on this cool and windy day since people were anxious to be able to get outside after a long year of isolation. Great weather for selling sweat-shirts and windchimes which were hanging outside!



The town-wide Yard Sale was also well attended. We had a table on the street side of the Gift Shop

(Quarters B) filled with items that had been cleared out of the basement as well as some things found in Quarters A. In the front of Quarters B there were tables set up with lighthouse replicas that had been in the basement for years. The gift shop was also open for shoppers. We were blessed with good weather again.

The gift shop and lighthouse were open for the 4th of July weekend as well as during the outdoor festivals at Lighthouse Park (hours for the concerts are 4:00-7:00 pm). During the times the gift shop has been open, people frequently told us that they have lived in the area for years and had never been there before. Music to our ears and hopefully a new following of guests.

Many, many thanks to Gift Shop Support Group who have contributed new visions and ideas: Inge, Joanne, Mary, Ramona, Sandy, and Tina.

~SUE ANDERSON

In Memoriam

MHS is saddened to learn that Rosemary Nellist died in her sleep at the age of 97 on June 29, 2021. Rosemary was very active with the A Team, sorting papers and organizing files, a service for which she was particularly well suited after her many years of employment as a secretary. Rosemary was also part of the MHS gardening group and she served on the MHS Board of Directors, as well as volunteering as a tour guide in the lighthouse.

It is always fun to hear a little-known fact about someone. Rosemary, for example, accompanied her husband on wild game hunting expeditions in Africa, and she shared with her fellow workers in Quarters A many amazing stories about their adventures. A valued member of MHS, Rosemary was always willing to pitch in on any job that needed to be done around the lighthouse. She is missed.



Letter of Thanks from Washington State Ferries

WSF used the Mukilteo Lighthouse to monitor marine life during the construction of the new terminal and demolition of the old one. Below is the letter of thanks.

“On behalf of all the monitors who were lucky enough to be assigned to the monitoring station at the Mukilteo Lighthouse, we can’t thank you enough for this once in a life time opportunity!. We all realize and respect how much trust you put into us to be careful during our work day and we’re happy we may have only accidentally set off the alarm twice over the years!

As for the Terminal Project Monitoring as a whole, the visibility from the Lighthouse was incredible and there was nowhere else around that would have allowed us to so fully and carefully observe the areas we needed to see. Fins and flippers really didn’t have much of a chance to go by unnoticed!

As you all know, it’s so very peaceful up in the lamp room and being up there day after day gives a person lots of time to reflect. One of my deepest reflections was thinking about all the mariners who, for well over a century, have been protected by the Lighthouse. How wonderful in her advanced years she’s had yet another job, helping to protect those other mariners in the same waters who may not see the light, but are protected by the vision that comes from her.”

~SUE EHLER

ARCHIVE TEAM REPORT

The MHS A-Team is blessed to have the continuing dedication of volunteer members working to preserve our local history. Current team members include Peter Anderson, Ann Collier, Tina & Bill Dickson, Marilyn Droz, Craig Fisher, John Murray and Sherry Steele. You can usually find us in Quarters A hard at work from 10:00 to 12:00 on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. So far this year (as of July 20), we have cataloged 394 more archive items, 179 more photos, 27 more objects and 3 more library items. These and other “new” items will be added to the MHS online catalog later this year.

As we sort through and catalog donated items, we sometimes find something of unusual interest such as an award-winning poem “Mukilteo By The Sea” written by Frances Walters of Everett. We thought we should share it with our newsletter readers. Please see the clipping below.

~PETER ANDERSON

Mukilteo By The Sea 2021.001.128-A

Mukilteo is a little town, as charming as can be
And if you never see it, what a pity that will be
It is in the State of Washington on the shores of Puget Sound
It truly is a lovely spot where great beauty does abound.
Some Indians lived there long ago and we know they were very wise.
Many Tribes came to visit them, so they could socialize.
The white men liked it also and a great Pow Wow was held
Between the Chiefs and a Governor and a Treaty was upheld.
From Mukilteo you can see across the Sound so wide
A forty-mile-long Island where early settlers did abide.
If you like to dine near water and watch sunsets of grandeur.
The restaurants offering cuisine, no better anywhere.
A Lighthouse twinkles in the night to guide ships that pass her shore
And Ferries shuttle to and fro to the Island you may want to explore.
God made the world so beautiful, no artist with his brush can compare,
And Mukilteo is just one of His spots that can only be seen when you're there.
Frances I. Walters
Everett, Wa.

Received an Award of Merit for Honorable Mention in a Poetry contest, sponsored by
World of Poetry in Sacramento, California, March 15, 1989.



What's
Next?

August

Thursday, **August 12**

7pm General Meeting –LH Festival History

Saturday, **August 14**

4-7pm Lighthouse and Gift Shop Open

Thursday, **August 25**

6:30pm Board Meeting

September

Thursday, **September 9**

7pm General Meeting

Friday & Saturday, **September 10-11**

12-3pm Lighthouse and Gift Shop Open

Friday-Sunday, **September 10-12**

Lighthouse Festival Weekend

Thursday, **September 30**

6:30pm Board Meeting

October

Thursday, **October 14**

7pm General Meeting

Thursday, **October 28**

6:30pm Board Meeting

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

A warm welcome to our newest members!

- ♦ Brian Allen
- ♦ Terri Huffman
- ♦ Peter Kinahan
- ♦ Kevin Laverty
- ♦ Tomoko Laverty
- ♦ Melissa Lorenc
- ♦ Eli Munoz
- ♦ Kerrie Murphy
- ♦ Thomas Murphy
- ♦ Natalie Peterson
- ♦ Rand Peterson
- ♦ Lynette Schonhoff

...continued from page 3.

for several years until it was scrapped for parts in October of 1938.¹¹ Another sad chapter in Mukilteo ferry history was written in 2007, when an errant docking of Cathlamet caused over one million dollars in damage to the ferry, to Mukilteo's terminal, injured two people, and cost the ferry captain his job.¹²

In December of 2020, WSF held the grand opening of their brand-new Mukilteo ferry terminal at 910 Front Street. The architecture of the new facility is inspired by historic Native American longhouses characteristic of the area pre-white settlement. Several local Tulalip and Suquamish artists contributed art to the new terminal. For instance, according to the Seattle Times, "Tulalip master carver Joe Gobin carved two figures on the walls: a cedar spindle whorl and a cedar canoe that hangs from the ceiling." Canoes such as those that serve as the basis for Gobin's cedar craft have a long history in the area and are arguably precursors to today's ferries.¹³ According to Tulalip News, people from several Native American nations, including Lummi, Muckleshoot, Nooksack, Samish, Sauk-Suiattle, Snoqualmie, Stillaguamish, Suquamish, Swinomish, and Tulalip, were present at the opening of the new terminal.³

Today, ferry activity is one of the most iconic features associated with the city of Mukilteo, and the new \$187,000,000 terminal is the gem of the WSF system. In 2020 alone, Nearly 3.1 million people rode the ferry between Mukilteo and Whidbey Island, carrying more passengers than any other ferry route in the state.¹⁴ Though this number is impressive, it's worth noting that in 2020 the route saw a decrease of one million riders as compared to 2019, before COVID-19 changed so many facets of our lives.

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OPENING DAY PICTURES ON 6/26/21

Photos by Rand Peterson





MUKILTEO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Keepers of the Mukilteo Light Station

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please review the membership categories below carefully. As a member you will receive a membership card, quarterly newsletter and a 10% discount in the gift shop. Your donation is tax deductible.

Membership runs from January 1st to December 31st. Return this form and your payment to:

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

Membership Type:

☐ \$15 - INDIVIDUAL

☐ \$10 - SENIOR (65 OR OVER)

☐ \$20 - SENIOR COUPLE

☐ \$25 - FAMILY

☐ \$500 – LIFE

☐ DONATION ONLY –provide name and address so we may acknowledge your donation

Corporate Applications are available at mukilteohistorical.org or by emailing memberships@mukilteohistorical.org

Applicant #1 Data*:

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail _____

Applicant #2 Data*: *Please use a second application form for more than two applicants in family memberships.*

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail _____

☐ Help us GO GREEN! Check this box to opt-in for paperless-only newsletters

For each applicant, please check the volunteer areas of interest (if any):	#1	#2
Archives/Trunk Treasures – Collect & archive all documents, photos and artifacts relating to the history of Mukilteo. Organize exhibits. Present Trunk tales throughout the community		
Garden – Join our group of gardeners or adopt a specific garden bed at the light station		
Gift Shop – Help to price, stock and maintain inventory. Operate credit card processing terminal and cash register.		
Lighthouse – Become a lighthouse tour guide.		
Maintenance – Liaison to Board about Light Station/Pioneer Cemetery issues and plans.		
Publicity – Advertising (Beacon/Herald/etc.). MHS Newsletter, Membership mailing (Sunshine)/emails/phoning		
Special Tours – Assist with docent tours, field trips & visiting groups.		
Technology – Website, internet, social media		
Weddings – Welcome guests & provide tours for wedding guests.		

How did you hear about the Mukilteo Historical Society?

☐ Lighthouse Visit

☐ Newspaper

☐ Website

☐ Friend

☐ Other _____

For office use only: Date Received _____ ☐ Added to Membership Roster ☐ Membership Card Sent

2021 Lighthouse Honor Roll

The **Mukilteo Historical Society** (Keepers of the Mukilteo Light Station) thanks the following corporate sponsors who help support its mission to preserve and exhibit items of historic value that pertain to the City of Mukilteo and its environs.



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