

# The Lopez Island Historical Society & Museum

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Newsletter

Fall 2007

Around 1997 my grandmother, Bernice Tess, told me over lunch in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, that she disliked salmon. Why? Her mother and aunts had been raised on Lopez Island, Washington. As a child Bernice visited relatives on Lopez, and they always ate salmon.

Time passed. I inherited boxes of family pictures and letters. I began trying to sort out relationships on a computer program, and identify people in photos. I wished Grandma could answer my questions, but I was on my own. I started by signing my husband and I up for an Elderhostel trip to the San Juans. Perhaps answers were there.

I began Googling family names. Great grandma was Nellie Hodgson; her parents were William James Hodgson and Emily Bates. They lived in Ontario, moved to Iowa, and Emily died there. I knew they continued west and settled with relatives on Lopez, and that Aunt Jennie had married islander James Buchanan. I knew from a 1940s snapshot that Nellie visited Pearson Hodgson. That was all.

I struck gold twice. First I found Holly and Steve Lovejoy's "Papa George" web site, with family history section and I recognized names. Norman P. Hodgson was somehow related to my great grandmother. Then I found the Lopez Island Historical Society. I emailed, and was delighted to

receive a swift reply. Yes, they had files on the Hodgsons and Buchanans. Mark offered to help me connect with some descendants if I came to visit. Well, actually I was coming to visit in September.



*Nellie Hodgson with friend, date unknown.*

September 25th arrived. I took a ferry to Lopez, where Holly and Clark Lovejoy met me. I reckon that Clark is a third cousin, once removed, but he greeted me like a daughter. He and Holly gave me a tour of Lopez, particularly places connected to the Hodgson family (Clark's mother Gertrude was a Hodgson). They treated me to lunch and let me comb through old family albums. I got out my mystery pictures and we managed to identify people. We ended up at the LIHS museum, where I met Mark, and had my chance to read the family files. Mark also connected me to another genealogy web site that has proved useful.

I came to Lopez to get answers to questions, and I found some. But more than that, I connected with a beautiful place that figures importantly in my personal history, and I met family I never knew I had. It was magic.

*By Sherry Thurner*



*Pre-1912 view of Richardson. Buildings in distance include: barn for Rita and Gertrude Hodgson's horse, Prince. Next, Hodgson's house, the Hodgson-Graham store and slaughterhouse.*

# Message from the Board

by Mike Ellis, President

This is my last note to you all as President of the board of the LIHS. You elect the Board and the Board will select a new President for 2008 when they meet in January. The by-laws require that the leadership change on a regular basis in order to foster innovation and new leadership. I will stay on the Board until the end of my term in another two years.

I've been associated with the Society for five years and enjoyed the opportunity to participate with some first class Trustees and volunteers during an exciting time of change. We were lucky to recruit the highly energetic and talented Executive Director, Mark Thompson-Klein, under whose leadership we have reformed the Museum and its operations. Perhaps the most important initiatives were the redesign and refurbishment of the museum itself, the creation of a new standing exhibit and a series of different exhibits and lectures each year. The number of visitors has grown as a result. We completed restoration of the Port Stanley School thus creating another wonderful meeting place for Lopez. Behind the scenes we made very substantial progress stabilizing items in our collections

that were rapidly deteriorating. I hope we did a good job of serving you, the members, and the many visitors who visited throughout the year to research the history of their families or lands. Finally, we balanced our budget each year because of Lopezians' characteristic support for island organizations, and we replenished a prudent financial reserve that had been expended restoring Port Stanley School.

So, in retrospect these five years with the Society have been productive and exciting. However, they are merely precursors to the next phase of our development that will begin under new leadership in January. We already know that next year the theme for the rotating exhibit and the lecture series is going to be "Schools and Communities." We will be hard at work over the winter putting these efforts in place. The History Forums will be advertised in *The Islands Weekly*, and the museum itself will open with a preview reception for the Society's members in early May 2008. See you there!

## LIHS News

Carried by *Canoe, a Native History of Lopez Island*, our feature exhibit this summer, drew visitors from far and wide. More people visited us this summer than ever before, and more than 70% of those who signed our guest book hailed from a place greater than 50 miles from Lopez. We were also honored by a visit from more than 40 members of the Samish Nation on September 29 as part of their Culture Day activities.

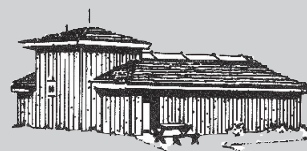
We enjoyed working with two student interns this summer. Taylor Halperin and Madeleine Dunwoody each worked a couple of days a week for six weeks—interpreting exhibits for visitors, researching next year's exhibit, and cheerfully taking on any challenge we sent their way. They each learned a lot about Lopez Island, and also received credit towards their school's community service requirement.

We continue to catalog our collection and take steps to preserve the most at-risk items. Connie Kyser and Christi Carter lead the collection management project, and we welcome volunteers from the community to help. We have accomplished much in the past few years, but still have several years work ahead before we will have everything in the collection properly labeled, cataloged and stored.

Next year's exhibit will focus on communities and schools—a close look at the primary villages on Lopez in the early days: Port Stanley, Lopez and Richardson, and the original four island schools. There will also be displays on a couple of Lopez Island's other unique communities.

by Mark Thompson-Klein, Museum Director

We are sad to say good-bye to our most senior Trustee. Charles Givens has reached the end of his second term, and is not eligible to serve longer because of our term limits policy. In addition to producing the top-quality graphics you see in our exhibits, Charles led the way in LIHS's efforts to organize and catalog our collection. He and his wife, Nancy, provided the funding to build our first dedicated storage space, and also have funded our Collection Manager position for the past three years. We'll miss you Charles—your leadership and hands-on participation have made many good things happen.



The Lopez Island  
Historical  
Society  
& Museum

President:	Mike Ellis
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# Research at the Lopez Island Historical Museum

*W*e receive around ten

research requests each month. Usually, people are looking for family information: a grandparent lived on Lopez around 1900—do we have any information? Sometimes, we have reams of information—family photos, personal letters, news clippings, report cards. Other times, we may only be able to confirm that the relative's name appeared on a census. People also come in looking for information about their land—who owned it before; how was the land used, who were the neighbors.



*Anna Ellen Fargie Gallenger*

In the past few months, we have had inquiries from descendants of the following families: McNallie, Reed, Gallanger (several), Spencer, Davis, Orcutt, Dwight, Hodgson, Eads, Fagerholm, Wood, Frankland/Kindleyside, Nielson, Schruder, McCauley, Gaddis, Biggs, Graham

(several), Weeks, and Goodrow. We also answered questions about Salish-style canoes, Mud Bay, Lopez Hill, the Union Cemetery, and Center Church.

Our database of cataloged photos has grown to nearly 2,000 images. We can search for people or places by name, and can also search for things like barns, horses, dogs, hats, etc. Along with the computerized database, we have organized



*Lizzie McNallie with Lavinia & Nora McCauley, Llewellyn & Myrtle McCauley*

photocopies of each image in binders, so that you can page through all the photos we have of Richardson, or fishing, or a particular family. The catalog records include everything we know about the photo.

Our family files are organized by surname, and may contain fascinating personal letters, property deeds, news clippings (going back to before 1900), marriage, birth, school, professional, and death records, along with many

surprises. We discovered a lock of hair in one diary that was from a woman who lived on Lopez before 1900—her gr-gr-gr-grandson was touched by that find.

LIHS also maintains topic files that contain news clippings, organization publications, and other public and personal records. We have begun to develop a searchable database that cross-references topics and family names.

Please call or drop in if you have any questions about Lopez Island history. We are currently working on next year's exhibit, but are available by phone year-round, and we are happy to make an appointment for you to come in to have a look in the archives.



*Neils Nielsen & family*



*Lopez Hill, 1897*

## Some Internet resources

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hollow/8143/genealogy/hodgson.txt>

<http://freepages.history.rootsweb.com/~lopezislandhistory/>

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hollow/8143/genealogy/graham.txt>

<http://search.tpl.lib.wa.us/wanames/>

# Please support the Lopez Island Historical Society

*to help collect, preserve, interpret, and share local history.*

Memberships and donations are fully tax deductible. Thank you for your support.

- Individual \$15 +    Family \$25 +    Business \$50 +  
 Sponsor \$100 +    Benefactor \$1,000 +

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*The Lopez Island Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your gift is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.*

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**...and consider giving your children, grandchildren, favorite uncle or aunt a gift membership to LIHS.**

**A great way to keep your loved ones in touch with Lopez.**

**Please enclose \$25 for each (tax-deductible) Gift Membership**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



*Barlow Bay 1*



*Richardson Fishing Season*



*Barlow Bay 2*



*Winter in Lopez Village*

*You may order Historic Lopez notecards by calling the museum.*

*Prices are \$7.50 for a 4-pack;  
\$18.50 for a 10-pack.*

*We have a great selection of photos to choose from.*



*Lopez Ferry Landing c. 1925*