

# The Lopez Island Historical Society & Museum

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Newsletter

Spring 2008

A century ago, Lopez was divided into three major communities. (1) Richardson: Lopez is the southernmost of the San Juan Islands, and is closest to the shipping lanes between Puget Sound and the Pacific. The south-end community of Richardson served these shipping, fishing and canning interests. (2) Lopez: Hiram Hutchinson, the first full-time white settler, helped develop what we call Lopez Village, on Fisherman Bay. (3) Port Stanley: A commercial port and small village began growing on the tide flats of Port Stanley because the north side also needed a port stop. The first white settlers tended to congregate around bays and deep-water ports, for easier transportation and communication with the other islands and the mainland.

Charles Brown hailed from Sweden; and James L. Davis and his wife Amelia came from Ontario, Canada. Other early Lopez settlers came from U.S. states of Connecticut, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio and Vermont, some after long stops in California or Oregon.



Settlers came to Lopez for many reasons. Some of the earliest arrivals landed on Lopez after failing to find gold in California or on the Fraser River. Local boosters advertised the islands in eastern and Midwest newspapers as a kind of heaven on earth, a place abundant with natural beauty and land for homesteading and farming—a tactic that drew many brave homesteaders. Several men who became prominent Lopezians, including Arthur Barlow and Charles Brown, arrived here after leaving the ships that brought them to Puget Sound.

Lopez Island's 1870 census listed 70 people (of whom perhaps 10 to 15 lived partly on other islands). Among those were 19 bachelors and 12 families. Nearly half were born overseas—Scotland, the Isle of Jersey, England, Denmark, Norway, the German state of Hesse, British Columbia. Arthur Barlow emigrated from Ireland;

You can see *Settling Lopez*, along with our other exhibits, Wednesday through Sunday, from noon to 4 through September. We hope to see you soon.



Richardson, c. 1932



July 4 race at Port Stanley



Village store c. 1900

Sponsors: Islanders Insurance, Spencer's Landing/Tanbark Marine, Richardson Fuel, Lopez Island Pharmacy, Lopez Village Market, Dianne Pressenda, Hayward Design & Construction, Jamie & Lauren Stephens, Karen Rousseau, Islands Marine Center, Lopez Sand & Gravel, Spud & Karen Grimes, Island Paper, Lopez Island Creamery, Duane & Audrey Bordvick, Raiti Waerness, with additional support from Humanities WA

# Message from the Board

by Holly Kent, President

The first time I stepped into the Lopez Historical Museum as an island visitor, I remember being mesmerized by Amelia Davis's fifty-year journal. When I finally looked up and around at the incredible old photographs I asked the guy (Mark Thompson-Klein) if there were any pictures of Lopez's old barns. In about two minutes I had copies of beautiful old photos that we used as inspiration to design the new "old barn" we are building on Richardson Road. My name is Holly Kent, my husband Tim and I became Lopez Island Historical Society members that day.



Center School

Today, I write to you as the Society's novice president. I feel comfortable taking on this challenge mostly because all parts of the Society are so well run. This is thanks to the generous support of the community, the professionalism of the staff and the willingness of the trustees to step up and get things done. Our former president, Mike Ellis, leaves large footprints to fill, and

fortunately a clear path to follow. His advice to me was simple: "Whatever the museum does it must be of the highest quality." If you visited the museum last season or attended our fundraisers you have first-hand knowledge of how your support has translated into top quality experiences for Lopez locals and visitors alike.

I have worked as a Bellevue Art Museum docent. A personal goal of mine is to entice more Lopezians to become museum docents. If you like talking to folks about Lopez, then you can docentize (another Mike

Ellis-ism.) We will give you all the info you need about this year's *Settling Lopez* exhibit, and you will work with an experienced docent until you become comfortable. I believe that Richardson is by far the most interesting community, but your heart may belong to Port Stanley or Lopez Village. Please call if you would like to volunteer at the Lopez Museum.

## LIHS News

Museum staff and trustees meet in February every year to evaluate the prior year and make plans for the future. Some things, like budgets, we forecast two years ahead. Other items, like exhibits, we plan five years out so that we can gather images and stories as we work on the collection



John Kilpatrick in his Port Stanley orchard

This year's *Settling Lopez* exhibit focuses on the island's unique communities and early schools. Overland travel was difficult in the early days, so each community and school developed a distinct character—qualities you can see in the many new photos displayed this year.

Future exhibits include *Farming & Orchards*, *Lopez—Then & Now*,

*Natural History*, and *Communication & Transportation*. We have benefited from generous and talented writers (John Goekler, Amy Frost, Gary Alexander) and an equally talented design and production crew (Charles

by Mark Thompson-Klein, Museum Director

Givens, Anne Dawson, Ruthie TK.) Our indispensable behind-the-scenes crew includes Collection Managers, Connie Kyser and Christi Carter, LIHS trustees, and a host of volunteers.

Our newest project stretches our education mission. Ellin Evans and Laurie Latta are developing a Lopez history curriculum that will benefit Lopez students. They are working to gather relevant material that meets state education standards. We hope to expand the curriculum to create a Lopez history book filled with great photos and accounts of all the colorful men and women who have made Lopez what it is.



Lopez Island  
Historical  
Society  
& Museum

President: Holly Kent  
Vice-president: Ellin Evans  
Treasurer: Kim Bast  
Secretary: Gary Alexander

Trustees: Mike Ellis  
Bill Evans Laurie Latta  
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Director: Mark Thompson-Klein  
Collection Managers:  
Connie Kyser Christi Carter

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# The Big Event

We host a celebration each summer to raise funds for the Historical Society. Proceeds from the event fund our preservation and education programs.

This year's event will be July 26 at Lopez Center. Hawk Arps and friends will provide music. Kim Bast is developing a delectable spread that will reflect the character of the island's three historic communities. We know this will be the finest meal to be had on Lopez this summer.

The evening's auction will include paintings, sculpture and folk art by Steve Hill, Christa Malay, Patie Savage, Leonard Wren, Ron Norman, Bob McCabe, Tom Collins, and others. We'll also have several non-art items, including a catered event by chef Kim Bast and event planner Janet

Baltzer, gourmet picnic baskets, truly amazing desserts, and other delightful surprises.



The dessert table at last year's event

Dick and Sharon Friel, the state's most entertaining and successful auctioneers will once again host the auction. We are grateful to the Friels and their friend Brad Bodley for their work on our behalf.

We'll also run a slide show of historic photos recently uncovered in our search for new material. These images were scanned from negatives Gertrude Boede collected, and most haven't been available as prints.

Tickets go on sale mid-June—please call or email if you would like to reserve yours now.

Sponsors: Islanders Insurance, Spencer's Landing/Tanbark Marine, Richardson Fuel, Lopez Island Pharmacy, Lopez Village Market, Hayward Design & Construction, Jamie & Lauren Stephens, Karen Rousseau, Raiti Waerness

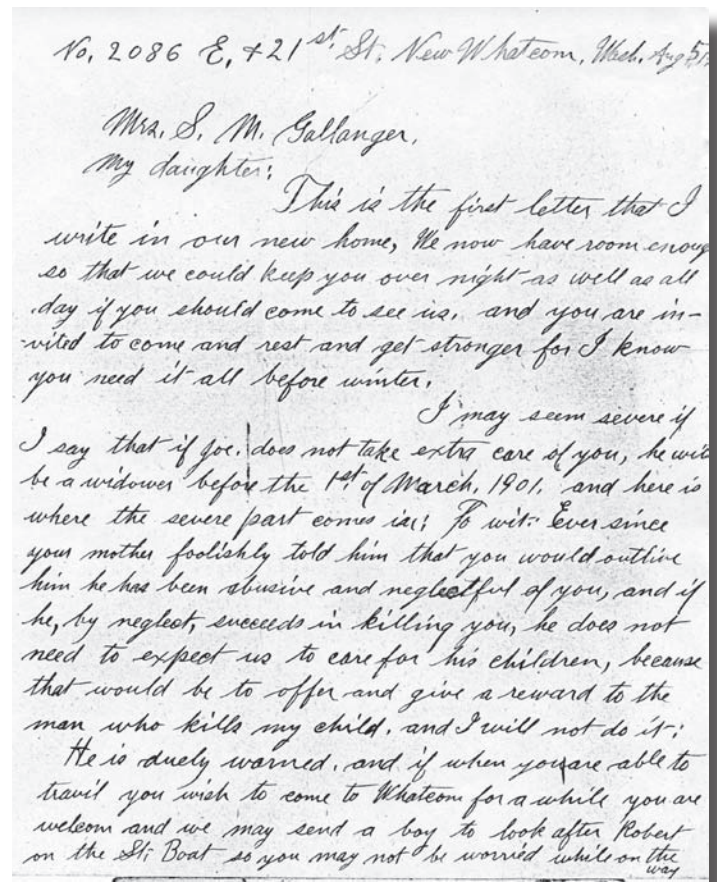
# Rural Heritage

Washington Rural Heritage (WRH) is a new initiative undertaken by the Washington State Library. WRH will establish a statewide digital repository and provide the infrastructure and training to both digitize and serve historically unique collections from small and rural communities to a widespread audience.

We have been selected (in collaboration with the Lopez Library) to participate in the WRH pilot project. A couple of the images we'll have in the state archive are shown here. We'll have more than 200 photos and several Willie Cousins diaries along with other Lopez ephemera.



Eddie Buchanan with his horses



Letter to Susie Gallanger from her mother

# Because of your support...

Your support makes good things happen. All the Historical Society's preservation and education programs exist because of you.

Chris and Helena Jones donated the Port Stanley School to LIHS to restore and manage as a community resource. The restoration project was completed in 2003 thanks to the Lopez community's generosity, and we now rent PSS to community groups and local families. We have seen everything from art shows to dance classes, to reunions and weddings at PSS. It's a warm and inviting setting—described by Lopez caterer (and LIHS trustee), Kim Bast, as "quintessential Lopez."



*Port Stanley School*

The LIHS photo catalog has expanded to include more than 2,100 images. We can search the catalog for people, places and things. We have also developed a set of photo binders that allow you to browse images by family or topic. Our

Collection Managers, Christi Carter and Connie Kyser will continue to add to the catalog throughout 2008.

We have developed new exhibits each of the past 5 years. We try to focus on a different aspect of Lopez history so that you will have a good reason to visit every year. Last year's exhibit, *Carried By Canoe*, set attendance records and brought many visitors who had never been in the museum. We were honored to work with the Burke Museum in Seattle, Bill Holm, and tribal cultural committees from the Samish, Lummi and Swinomish Nations.



*A recently discovered photo of Laura & Isobel Cousins modeling their new hats*

What's next? We have been selected to participate in the Washington Rural Heritage project. More than 200 images from our collection will be featured along with several Willie Cousins diaries, and 100-year old letters to and from Lopezians. We'll send you the website address as soon as it goes online. We are also developing a local history curriculum for Lopez School students—a project we hope will be the seed for a Lopez history book.

Nearly all our funding comes from within the Lopez community. We are grateful for your support.

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## 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.

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