



North Bay Historical Society

MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PO BOX 1313
ALLYN, WASHINGTON 98524
(360) 275-9859

October 5, 2012

Phil Anderson, Director
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
600 Capitol Way N.
Olympia, WA 98501-1091

RE: Case Inlet Shoreline Enhancement Project known as Sargent Oyster Company
Property Parcel 12217-14-00020 on North Bay of Case Inlet in North Mason County.

Dear Mr. Anderson;

The North Mason Historical Society would like to go on record as protesting the destruction and removal of the oyster processing facility that is on the above referenced property. I tried to find the JARPA and SEPA on your website but could not locate them or I would have responded directly to that.

There is great historical value in keeping this property intact as evidenced by the response we received from State Architectural Historian, Michael Houser of the Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation. I have attached a copy of his letter stating that it is eligible for listing to the National Register of Historic Places and we are pursuing that.

We have documentation that the house was built in 1928 shortly after he established his oyster business there, and the current oyster processing facility was built in 1948. There was a book written, *Little Man and the Little Oyster* chronicling the activities of Humphrey Nelson who started the business (which was later sold to the Sargents), the impact he had on establishing the oyster growing industry in North Bay and his groundbreaking work on preservation of oysters for sale. In this book there is an early picture of the house and it has changed very little since that time. There was also a magazine article written about him and the impact he had on the oyster industry as a whole. I've included other information pertaining to the structure and history of Allyn.

We understand the need for protecting our shorelines and would work with your department to improve the shoreline while preserving what may be the last structure of its kind on Puget Sound.

Respectfully,

Michael O'Sullivan



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1063 S. Capitol Way, Suite 106 • Olympia, Washington 98501
Mailing address: PO Box 48343 • Olympia, Washington 98504-8343
(360) 586-3065 • Fax Number (360) 586-3067 • Website: www.dahp.wa.gov

September 29, 2011

Mr. Michael O'Sullivan
North Bay Historical Society
PO Box 1313
Allyn, WA 98524

In future correspondence please refer to:

Log: 022311-39-RCFB
Property: Case Inlet Shoreline Enhancement Project
Re: Eligibility of Sargent Oyster Company site

Dear Mr. O'Sullivan:

Thank you for contacting our office. I have reviewed the images you provided to our office and based on what you have sent, in my professional opinion the Sargent Oyster Company property is eligible for listing to the National Register of Historic Places. Such resources are rare in Washington State and are becoming more so as shoreline enhancement projects move forward throughout the Puget Sound. We would encourage your organization to work closely with the projects proponents to save this historic property for future generations to enjoy and to learn from.

We would be more than happy to assist you in this effort to the best of our capabilities. Unfortunately our office at this time does not have any grant funding available, but I will direct you to our website to view a list of organizations that may have grant money available to assist you. (see: <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/financial-assistance>).

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael Houser
State Architectural Historian
(360) 586-3076
michael.houser@dahp.wa.gov



North Bay Historical Society

MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PO BOX 1313
ALLYN, WASHINGTON 98524
(360) 275-9859

September 16, 2011

Gregory Griffith
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
PO Box 48343
Olympia, WA 98504-8343

RE: 022311-39-RCFB
Property: Sargent Oyster Company Site, Allyn Vicinity
RE: Case Inlet Shoreline Enhancement Project

Dear Mr. Griffith:

Thank you for your letter outlining what we need to do to preserve this historic property. I've enclosed a couple more pictures of the oyster shed and will try to get current pictures of the house. We are getting estimates of the cost to restore the building and have a couple ideas for short and long range use of the property. We understand that ultimately the project must be financially feasible. We do have a fairly active historic community and we believe we could man the site at least on most weekends and probably more hours during summer months.

We are continuing to gather information on the property and will contact the parties you mentioned. We have made initial contact with a couple of the major shellfish growers in the area and they have expressed interest. If we can get enough people on board I think the shellfish organizations would also participate in the project. The big question is whether Fish & Wildlife would be willing to agree to any plan we come up with. We have someone in our group that has agreed to meet with their representative as soon as we have a proposal for them to look at.

Brian Combs, SPSSEG seemed open to some compromise so I guess the big question is what they would see as reasonable. Now that the grant for the property adjoining this property has been settled maybe things will be a little less complicated.

Gregory Griffiths
September 16, 2011
Page 2

We look forward to having a site visit from you or someone in your agency. Please let us know when you might be available and we will arrange it.

Sincerely,


Michael O'Sullivan

Enclosures



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1063 S. Capitol Way, Suite 106 • Olympia, Washington 98501
Mailing address: PO Box 48343 • Olympia, Washington 98504-8343
(360) 586-3065 • Fax Number (360) 586-3067 • Website: www.dahp.wa.gov

June 8, 2011

Mr. Michael O'Sullivan, Executive Director
North Bay Historical Society
P.O. Box 1313
Allyn, Washington 98524

In future correspondence please refer to:
Log: 022311-39-RCFB
Property: Sargent Oyster Company Site, Allyn Vicinity
Re: Case Inlet Shoreline Enhancement Project

Dear Mr. O'Sullivan:

Thank you for your letter of May 16, 2011 to Washington State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) Allyson Brooks regarding the former Sargent Oyster Company property near Allyn. Also, thank you for the copy of *The Little Man and the Little Oyster* plus follow-up historic photographs of the property that we received on June 7.

On behalf of Allyson and in follow-up to our telephone conversation in May, I have now gained greater insight into the Sargent Oyster Company property. I have also obtained information regarding the above referenced Shoreline Enhancement proposal that is targeted to occur at this site.

To respond to questions raised by your letter, the Sargent Oyster Company site is definitely a property of historic interest to the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). With additional information, it may prove to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or the Washington Heritage Register. With that said, the North Bay Historical Society should be aware that a listing of the property in the National Register or the Washington Heritage Register does not guarantee its protection and/or project funding. Rather, a designation in either register is an *honorary* recognition that serves to heighten public awareness and appreciation for listed properties as important to our past.

While stressing that a National Register designation is an honorary recognition, a listing in the National Register, or even a determination of eligibility for listing in the Register, does afford the property a degree of protection. This protection mechanism is often referred to as the Section 106 process that was put into law as a result of passage by Congress of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966. Briefly, the 106 process requires federal agencies to consider the affect of their actions (i.e. funding, permit issuance, or license) on properties that are listed in, or determined eligible to be listed in, the National Register. The 106 process also requires that federal agencies seek comments about the project from the SHPO, affected/interested Tribes, and other interested members of the public. In regard to the Case Inlet



Shoreline Enhancement project, there appears to be a general understanding that the work will require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), thereby invoking the 106 consultation process. Again, this process involves consulting with the SHPO, Tribes, and other interested parties.

With this background, I want to recommend to you the following actions for the Historical Society to consider taking toward preservation of the oyster company structures:

1. While the Section 106 process will eventually address the National Register eligibility question about the property, I think it would be useful for DAHP to get a firmer grasp of the eligibility question in a shorter timeframe since it may be several months before the permit is applied for and the 106 process gets underway. To this end, I would request additional (especially current) photographs of the property and/or a site visit by DAHP staff members. Feel free to contact myself or Michael Houser, National Register Programs Coordinator, at 360-586-3076 or Michael.houser@dahp.wa.gov to discuss this step.
2. I recommend that the Historical Society craft a vision for what it would like to see happen at the site and how the historic resources there would be managed, in the short-term and long-term.
3. I recommend contacting and working with the various parties involved with the property and proposed project. This contact should involve the property owner (Department of Fish and Wildlife), the Salmon Enhancement Group, and the Recreation and Conservation Office. Other interested parties would be the Squaxin Island Tribe, the Mason County Historical Society, and the Mason County Historic Preservation Commission. At some point, a meeting amongst all of these groups might be useful to discuss issues and identify options.
4. Finally, I recommend the Historical Society begin researching funding opportunities to help realize its preservation goals at the site. While DAHP can provide you with some ideas, in these tight economic times with public grant funding drying up, identifying sources of money to do preservation work will require considerable time and effort.

In closing, thank you again for contacting the SHPO Allyson Brooks. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 360-586-3073 or greg.griffith@dahp.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Gregory Griffith
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

c: Brian Combs, SPSSEG
Tara Galuska, RCO
Billie Howard, MCHS
Michael MacSems, Mason County DCD
Penny Warren, DFW



North Bay Historical Society

MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PO BOX 1313
ALLYN, WASHINGTON 98524
(360) 275-9859

May 9, 2011

Allyson Brooks, Ph D
Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
Suite 106
1063 South Capitol Way
Olympia WA 98501

RE: Sargent Oyster Company

Dear Ms. Brooks;

The North Bay Historical Society would like your assistance with preserving structures over and near North Bay that have historic significance to this area and the shellfish industry.

We have documentation that the house that is there was built in the late 1920's and the oyster processing facility was built in 1948. There was a book written, Little Man and the Little Oyster published by the Mason County Historical Society in 1990, chronicling the activities of Humphrey Nelson who started the business, the impact he had on establishing the oyster growing industry in North Bay, and his groundbreaking work on preservation of oysters for sale. In this book there is an early picture of the house and it has been changed very little since that time. I have included the section of Mr. Humphrey's book that deals directly with North Bay for your review.

There was also a magazine article written about him and the impact he had on the oyster industry although at this time we have not yet been able to secure a copy of it.

These buildings are the second oldest in Allyn and we are asking your help in preserving these structures and the history of the oyster industry in North Bay.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Michael O'Sullivan'.

Michael O'Sullivan

North Bay Historical Society

(himself@hetc.com)





Sargents

PAVE

OPEN

SAT





celebrates 100 years of memories

By JANIS BYRD

Oysters were his life, or at least a big part of it, Humphrey "Hump" Nelson said, recounting a few of his favorite memories as he celebrated his 100th birthday July 7.

After living in Mason County for 89 of his 100 years, it would be hard to imagine anyone knowing more about the "good ol' days" of oyster farming than Hump. Years ago (approximately 1965), he wrote down his life's tale.

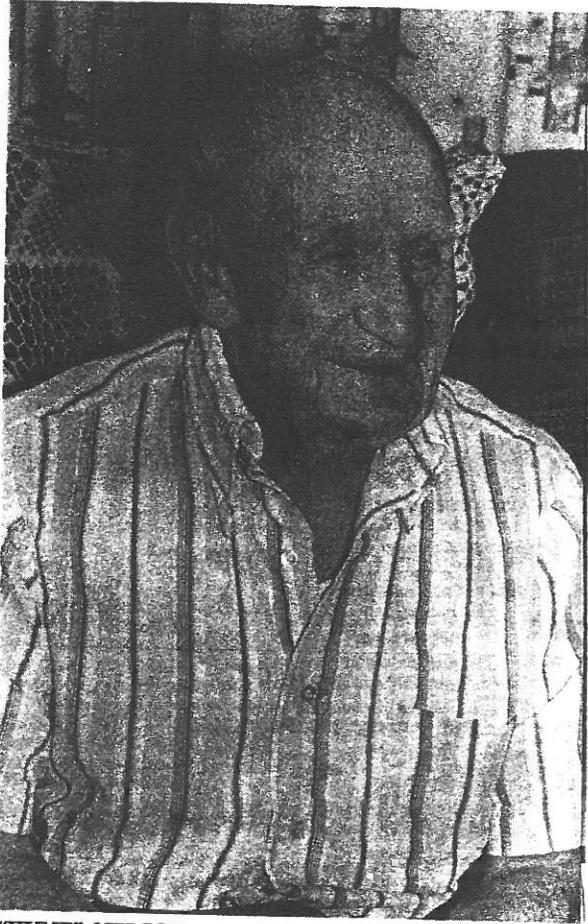
In the beginning of his chronicle, for instance, Hump wrote that New Kamilche, where he lived as a youngster, was once being considered for the county seat, but it lost out to Shelton where the Mark E. Reed logging and milling operations were headquartered. With Shelton's growth, he wrote, New Kamilche began melting away.

WHEN HE WAS a young boy, Hump said, Little Skookum Bay was a godsend for the local people, especially the ones as poor as his family. It provided plenty of edible seafood. He also recalled the region's large Indian population, saying they too enjoyed the "paradise where everything they needed for a good living was at their fingertips."

Hump also remembered how early the natural resources started being exploited, though. "First, the timber was attacked, and then a little later, the water resources were being grabbed up for commercial purposes... The people of today, I don't think, can hardly believe that such a paradise ever existed."

When he was 15, Hump worked the mail route from New to Old Kamilche, a distance of about 4 1/4 miles that he crossed by pony. Later that same year he and a friend started digging clams for market. Their next business venture, he wrote, was woodcutting for a steamer boat. Between the wood and the clams, the pair was making between \$50 and \$60 a month.

By 1900, Hump said, he was



"HUMP" NELSON, an oysterman from way back, celebrated his 100th birthday July 7.

and healthy.

"Those Olympias are the size of a dollar and very tedious to open," he smiled, saying his daughter-in-law, Coila Nelson, was one of the best shuckers he had met in

the jar.

"I just figured it out," he smiled saying the secret was to mix two gallons of fresh water with one gallon of saltwater, bring the solution

rants sold oyster cocktails, too.

It was about 1919, according to Hump's chronicle, when about 35,000 to 40,000 bushels of the little oysters were being marketed every year. His small development back then was producing about 300 bushels and he, his wife, son Leo and mother-in-law lived on a float house, attached to their oyster room. By 1926, it seems Hump had purchased another stake of land, this time in North Bay.

Hump's writing tells the story of those fateful years when the mill waste starting killing the oysters. According to his records, under Mark Reed's leadership the mill workers agreed to a plan to earn the \$150,000 to pay off the first oyster company lawsuit. Though the mill waste stream was changed, it was too late to prevent the destruction of many oysterbeds, including Hump's Little Skookum Inlet beds.

Battle after battle seemed Hump's fate, and he wrote that the fall of 1956 or the spring of 1957 was the happiest time of the oyster growers' lives because the pulp mill was finally shut down.

THOUGH HUMP said he's an oysterman, and has been most of his life, he can tell a story or two about dredging for gold up in Alaska (about 1911), or running donkey, or commercial fishing up in the Sekiu waters.

"I used to go to Sekiu. They catch the big ones up there, all the way

from 20 to 30 pounds," he recalled, thinking about his favorite salmon. "I could sit and fish all day for one fish. I've caught everything from a minnow to a 40-pounder."

Hump and partner Ben Welch owned two freight boats, *The Dove* and *The Lark*, which ran from Oyster Bay to Olympia. Talking about the shipping business, he said everything had to be shipped by boat or railroad.

"There were no roads in them days to get to different towns. You had to go by water, 'cuz it was about the only way to get there," he smiled. Almost everything that went from Olympia to Aberdeen came first by boat to Kamilche, then it went by railroad to the coastal town, he said.

Life was a lot different then, he said, recalling that when he was young Shelton was a one-man town, owned pretty much by Sol Simpson. "Shelton was one of the muddiest towns in the county," Hump said. "There were no streets, no sidewalks and the train ran right down the middle of it."

(Hump's memories of those early days, "The Little Man and the Little Oyster," were never published. However, many local oyster growers received copies after Shelton shellfish grower Duane Fagergren discovered a copy in the office of Ron Westley at the Washington Department of Fisheries.)

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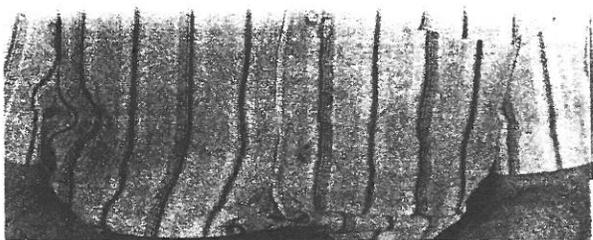
Their next business ven- wrote, was woodcutting for er boat. Between the wood s clams, the pair was mak- wren \$50 and \$60 a month. 1900, Hump said, he was g in a logging camp running ping engine, which was used o the donkeys. Staying with until he was 21, Hump was larly proud of his work as a tive engineer.

MP WENT to work in his or neighbor's oyster beds, he called Mr. Young) and st a couple of years there he ered one-third of the oyster oft. Before he was 30 he had vn tidelands for oyster

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IE LARGEST beds," accord- Hump, "were in Hammersley or Big Skookum and Totten commonly called Little Skoo- ind Oyster Bay." Hump said raw the best where the water



"HUMP" NELSON, an oysterman from way back, celebrated his 100th birthday July 7.

and healthy. "Those Olympias are the size of a dollar and very tedious to open," he smiled, saying his daughter-in-law, Coila Nelson, was one of the best shuckers he had working. She could open those oysters up with-

But Hump didn't pack oysters just like everyone else. He said he devised a water treatment to kill the germs oysters live on. And by killing those germs with a solution of salt and fresh water, those oysters could last as long as 40 days in

the jar. "I just figured it out," he smiled saying the secret was to mix two gallons of fresh water with one gallon of saltwater, bring the solution to the freezing point, add the oysters, let them sit for three hours,

"I USED TO make oyster cock-tails," he said, recalling a time he tried to get some out-of-towners to try a sample Olympia. The cock-tails sold for a dime. "We sold more oysters that way than any other way back then," he said, adding that all the local bars and restau-

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Little Oyster," were never published. However, many local oyster growers received copies after Shelton shellfish grower Duane Fagergren discovered a copy in the office of Ron Westley at the Washington Department of Fisheries.)

North Bay/Case Inlet has been in the oyster business since the early 1900's. It was famous for the Olympia Oyster grown naturally, and the pacific oyster. The cold waters of Puget Sound make for a wonderful environment for growing. In the early 1900's there were nine oyster growers in North Bay, the largest being WW Waldrip. By the mid 1900's there were two main oyster growers in our little bay, Sargent Oyster Co. and Coast Oyster Co.

the mail route from New to Old Kamilche, a distance of about 4½ miles that he crossed by pony. Later that same year he and a friend started digging clams for market. Their next business venture, he wrote, was woodcutting for a steamer boat. Between the wood and the clams, the pair was making between \$50 and \$60 a month.

By 1900, Hump said, he was working in a logging camp running a pumping engine which pumped water to the donkeys. Staying with logging until he was 21, Hump was particularly proud of his work as a locomotive engineer.

HUMP WENT to work in his next-door neighbor's oyster beds, (a man he called Mr. Young) and after just a couple of years there he was offered one-third of the oyster sale profit. Before he was 30 he had his own tidelands for oyster rearing.

"The oyster business was a pretty big thing in them days," Hump said, in a recent interview.

"I sold mussels, too. They're good eatin,' 'bout as good as the oyster. About the richest seafood there is in the world is the oyster," Hump bragged, giving his preference for the native Olympias.

In the old days, Hump wrote, "there were many natural places where they grew. The most productive of these areas are in the upper reaches of Puget Sound. There was a large area of them in Case Inlet or North Bay, a small one in South Bay, also a small one in Olympia and Mud Bay area.

"**THE LARGEST** beds," according to Hump, "were in Hammersley Inlet or Big Skookum and Totten Inlet commonly called Little Skookum and Oyster Bay." Hump said they grew the best where the water was fastest because it played a large part in keeping them clean

"HUMP" NELSON, an oysterman from way back, celebrated his 100th birthday July 7.

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"Those Olympias are the size of a dollar and very tedious to open," he smiled, saying his daughter-in-law, Coila Nelson, was one of the best shuckers he had working. She could open those oysters up without cutting the meat which made them better for packing.

But Hump didn't pack oysters just like everyone else. He said he devised a water treatment to kill the germs oysters live on. And by killing those germs with a solution of salt and fresh water, those oysters could last as long as 40 days in

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Barbara Wynn & Ruby Morgan

Barbara still lives in Allyn.





*Sargents Oysters 1946 - 1987
Clem & Delores Sargent, Terry McKean, son*

SARG AND DEL Sargent are out of the oyster business after 41 years. An of house from 1 to 5 p.m. this Sunday will honor the couple. Son Terry, right, v continue on with the new owners, Take Point Oyster. The family name n remain on the product since it has become such a familiar one.

Allyn church now on historic register for state of Washington

By SARAH COUDER

It's official — it's historic.

The small white chapel along State Route 3 in Allyn has been known to locals as the historic Allyn Church for years, but it was only recently when the church officially received its historic status.

The church is now listed in the Washington Heritage Register, where it joins other significant properties which have been recognized for their unique contributions to our state's heritage. The list is put together by the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS on the Allyn Historic Church board have been working to have the church listed on the registry for over a year.

The new status of being so old, according to Allyn's Bernice Nigh, who has been credited for getting the church on the registry, has its benefits.

"This recognition means that we can now apply for grant money which will make our job of preserving and restoring the church easier," Nigh said.

HISTORICAL records show that the organization of the Allyn church began in 1906.

"It was built by local people,

some of whom had never seen a church, probably a few drunks too, but they thought they ought to have one," Elton Cleveland, a descendant of one of the pioneer families in the area was once quoted as saying.

The Congregational Church gave the Allyn community a \$400 loan in 1907 for building supplies and a minister.

The land the church was built on was donated by the Vic Raisoni family. Even then, it was located just above the dock, along the road in the heart of town.

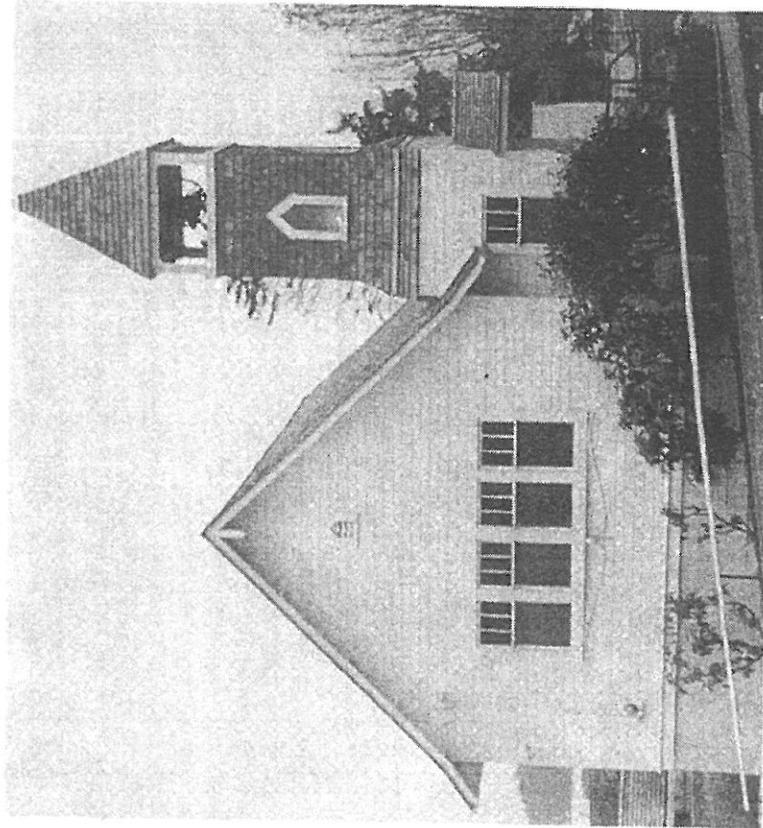
THREE MINISTERS were recorded as being involved in building the church.

By 1917, the Congregationalists, largely affected by war conditions, pulled out their involvement in the Allyn Church and from 1938-1955, it was used primarily as a place for community gatherings.

In 1965, several Allyn community members raised the money to pay off the church mortgage and the interest that had accrued, and the church became community owned.

Several different church groups have used the church in following years.

IN MORE RECENT years, the Historic Church Board has



THE HISTORIC CHURCH in Allyn was recently listed on the Washington Heritage Register of historic places.

made continued efforts to preserve the church building.

The building received a new shake-and-shingle roof last year and other restoration efforts have also been taken.

The Historic Church Board will

be celebrating the church's new historic status during the Allyn Days festival and salmon bake this weekend with their annual patio and bake sale, which raises money for further church restoration.

Allyn marks first

July 20, 1998

W

ouldn't it have been fun to invite them to the party?

What would John and Delilah Eberhart, George Eberhart Jr. and Judge James Wickersham and his wife Deborah have thought of the Allyn Centennial Celebration that was part of this year's Allyn Days Celebration?

These were the folks, after all, that filed the plat of the town of Allyn on September 6, 1889.

What might they have thought of hydroplanes (whether they ran or not), the music played over loudspeakers, the coffee pots plugged into electrical outlets?

How would they have liked the gazebo — newest addition to the proud Allyn Waterfront Park?

Eberhart had arrived on the scene in 1887 and completed his requirements for homesteading the following year. The Wickershams were from Tacoma.

That year of 1889 was burgeoning with activity. Not only did the town get a specific site, it got a newspaper, *The Allyn Times*, which published in November of that year.

Issues in November and December 1889 show Allyn was no slouch of a place. A grand ball was planned to take place at the Allyn House on Thanksgiving night.

There were orders at a local mill for enough material to build 12 buildings in the town and a long wharf was planned — built at the same place today's Allyn dock sits.

The Malany Brothers' new steamer, the *Detroit*, planned to run into Allyn on a daily basis coming from Tacoma and stopping first at Shelton. A Mr. Murray Baldwin planned to open a barber shop in Allyn and the newspaper clipping assured that he "will be prepared to do anything in the line in the latest style."

Still in those two final months of 1889, more was brewing. A Mr. Doyle of Tacoma and Mr. McKenzie of Shelton came to town. They proposed to put in a lumber camp on Sherwood Creek.

The county road was to be finished to within a mile of Clifton (Belfair) and a boat yard and wagon shop was to start up soon, across the bay.

And that was just for starters.

In 1890 the Allyn School was started. Those that gathered in the pouring rain last Sunday, under the safe cover of the gazebo, know all this history — after all, each year the second day of the Allyn Days Celebration is dedicated to the Allyn School Reunion.

Information states that Judge Frank Allyn of Tacoma was the source of the town's name. Records also show he made a substantial donation to the new schoolhouse in Allyn. Irene Davis of the Mason County Historical Society says the story behind naming Allyn after the judge is long and complicated.

In 1890 the main road, Sherwood Avenue was cleared of brush and stumps, according to records kept by the historical society. A wooden sidewalk was built along Gross Street.

So the start of Allyn was formidable. People didn't let grass grow under their feet — they moved ahead with plans and projects.

And if the early founders of Allyn wouldn't quite understand the modern paraphernalia of today they would probably understand well what goes on at the Allyn Community Association meetings as townspeople strive to plan for the community — dances, celebrations, salmon bakes, landscaping and preservation of the past.

100