

The Island is slipping away in pieces, with one-fourth of it gone to developers and more threatened. We are applying for a rezoning. It's "general use" now, which is nothing. We don't want condominiums and junk. Alan Billett, the Tacoma attorney, is working on this, with a personal motive. He's bought a home and commutes.

I'm trying to do a book, with a historical slant, about my parents' lives in the Cherokee Nation (Indian Territory) and southeast Kansas. I'm finding it difficult, perhaps for personal reasons, but I'll keep at it.

We're fine. Earle and I both had bouts with something like flu, but we're mostly ok again.

I'll send a self-addressed envelope. There's no hurry about a reply. Just mull it over and let me know some time and if you do want to come, give us some possible dates. I know this is a big thing to ask of you. But you would be treated well, and it would be nice to see you.

Love and wishes,

*Hazel*

About the Tribune piece, in case you saw it. I didn't write it. I wrote a careful feature that I thought was pretty good. Some nitwit down there rewrote and chopped to fit space. I told Don Duncan I ought to sue the Trib for signing my name to it. I also asked him to please ask his boys not to edit my next offering to the Trib, which would be my obituary. They wrote one of those for Nancy Schutte, saying she had served as president of "Riders Club" and taken many awards for her horseback riding. Should have been "writers" of course. She would have found it hilarious.

H

Hazel Heckman  
Anderson Island, Washington 98303

Feb. 26, '76

1976

Dear Murray and Rosa:

How are things on Trout Lake?

I am pleased to see Lane's name on the staff of Argus. And I liked her review of "Raisin..." in a recent issue. I still am on a complimentary list because of the Island article; but will probably have to pay cash now that Dave Brewster has gone. What is he up to?

I am writing, humbly, at the request of the newly-formed Anderson Island Historical Society, to see whether you, Murray, would like to speak to us some time. You may have seen the pedestrian article in the Bugle, under my byline, about the gift of a house and six acres to the society, to turn into an Island museum. Actually, the six acres groan under the load, also, of a water tower, a big barn, and 14 chicken houses and outsheds. But it was a nice gift, from Rudy Johnson's only heir, a deaf-mute niece, Alma Ruth Laing, of Tacoma, and we are grateful. The contents of house, barn, outsheds etc also went with. It's pretty stark stuff, but historical. Rudy and his bachelor brother were Finns and lived very sparsely, selling milk and eggs, mostly to Islanders.

The Historical Society (and I do think it's worth while) was formed quickly last fall to receive the gift. Rick Anderson of the pre-stressed concrete Andersons is president, and we have some other getters who are proving useful. The house is to be restored, keeping it spare, as a museum for the many Island artifacts, including Bessie Gammon's log cabin birthplace, to be moved up there, an old horse drawn threshing separator and hay baler, a huckleberry cleaner, etc. These latter will go into the barn, I hasten to say, and into the chicken houses. Everything has to be reroofed, painted, mended. There is to be a restored orchard, flower beds, a garden, to make the place a Scandinavian farmstead.

Now about speakers...this is a plan for whipping up interest. Norman Anderson is coming this coming Saturday and bringing slides and projector, to talk about the geological history of the Island. Gordon Alcorn has promised to come some time later. We are having a panel of old time Islanders (they're going fast). We have one tow-boat captain left. Would you? Could you? Anything about NW history would be great. We can arrange for a Saturday afternoon gathering, or I could keep you kids overnight. Islanders always have a pot-luck, at the clubhouse-library combination. Even a Sunday would work.

We're hard up and can't pay a fee, but we would ferry you and feed you well, and you'd meet some interesting people. You could name your time, any date at all. Don't hesitate to say "no" if you don't want to do this. Oh, yes, we'd make you an Honorary Member.