

ca 1994

To The Committee:

Of all the books I have read about the Pacific Northwest Hazel Heckman's Island in the Sound is the one I love most. Deeply informed, full of surprising information, it glows with life. She reflects the spirit of a friend who invariably raised his glass to toast "Here's kindness."

All of Hazel's books -- those she has written and those she has quietly helped others to write -- are infused with that spirit. So are her short stories, which have appeared in national magazines such as the Saturday Evening Post, Harper's, Collier's and Woman's Day, as well as in quarterlies. Several have found their place in anthologies.

Hazel is a wonderful observer, with a knack for capturing the distinguishing moment in a process, whether it be shoeing a horse, picking huckleberries or following the migration of frogs. There is a blessed absence of Pollyanna or of gratuitous violence. No one has matched the loving accuracy with which she evokes the essence of life on a small island in Puget Sound.

Hazel is in her 90s now, still wheels about her island in her elderly sedan, still taps out chapters on a museum-piece manual typewriter. Hers has been a richly reward writing life -- not so much for her as for the rest of us.

Hazel Heckman's accomplishments should be widely recognized.

