



## KEEPERS OF THE PATOS LIGHT

KOPL: [www.patoslightkeepers.org](http://www.patoslightkeepers.org)

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# KOPL's Official Newsletter

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## Where's the Flagpole?

Lighthouse guests often ask us, "Where's the flagpole?" Well, we have no idea when the flag and flagpole were taken down but the best guess is that when the Coast Guard automated the lighthouse in the early "70s, the flagpole and flag might have gone with them since no one was there to raise and lower the flag each day.

Many of us think that it would be appropriate to bring the flag and flagpole back to Patos Island and steps are being taken to ensure this happens. With the help of a generous \$500 donation from Patos Bill LaVergne, which was given to us at the August birthday party, we can now start on this project.

Anyone who wants to help with this project; letter writing, donations and/or research, should contact Keepers at [patos-lightkeepers@hotmail.com](mailto:patos-lightkeepers@hotmail.com). And a BIG thank-you to Patos Bill for getting us started on this wonderful project! Continued on Page 8



**If you would like to train to be a Patos Lighthouse Docent or for more information on the Keepers of the Patos Light Volunteer**

**Programs: email: [patoslightkeepers@hotmail.com](mailto:patoslightkeepers@hotmail.com),**

**write: KOPL, PO Box 518, Lopez Island, WA 98261 or call: 360-468-3518**

## Work Party and Closing the Lighthouse

Well, the summer has flown by and Sept. 25th marked the final work party of the season and the closing of the lighthouse for the coming winter.

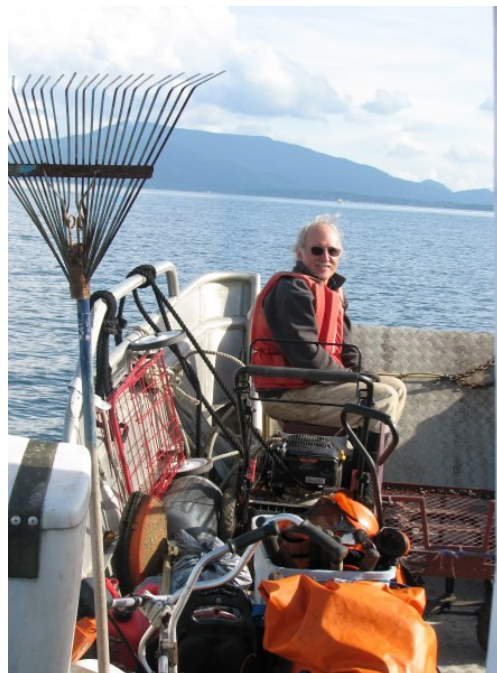
Before our group took off from Orcas in the pouring rain, we received a safety talk from Ranger, **Steve Sabine**. **Ranger Liz** skillfully transported us over to **Patos Island**. At the lighthouse, Team Leader, **Sandy**, checked us in and gave out work assignments for the day.

Miraculously, the rain had stopped (a common occurrence for volunteers on Patos Island) and as some headed off for trail maintenance and campsite cleaning, others stayed near the lighthouse for sidewalk clearing and the never-ending task of blackberry removal.

I spent the day in the lighthouse, sorting, cleaning, and packing up for the winter.

At lunchtime as we gathered to share food, stories, and amazing views from the lighthouse, Tom spotted a **Humpback Whale**, a rare sight for visitors to Patos Island.

After our day of work, we met Steve and Liz back at Minnie's Beach for the trip back to Orcas Island. But not so fast! About two-thirds of the way back, the Sea Bass's engine conked out and after futile attempts to restart her, a small State Parks boat was called over from Sucia Island to tow us in.



Tom  
Nowak  
volunteer  
from  
Marys-  
ville/  
Tulalip

### Where would we be without our Volunteers?

All's well that ends well and we were all back in time to catch our ferries to Lopez and Anacortes.

A great big thank-you to participants, **Sandy E, Patty, Mike, Tom, Duane, Rhea, Sandy B,** and as always, **Sucia State Park Rangers, Steve and Liz. (and our rescuers from Sucia!)**

Linda Hudson, President



Pictures by Linda Hudson at the 2013 Birthday Party for the Light  
**Bill LaVergne** was in the Coast Guard and stationed on Patos Island in the early fifties

## My life on Patos....By “Patos” Bill LaVergne

Have you ever made up your mind to do something and when the time came to act on that plan you look around and think to your self....What was I thinking????

That was my thoughts when the 83 foot USCG patrol boat came around the end of Patos Island and I saw the Patos Island Lighthouse and the small group of outbuildings....

This was where I had volunteered to spend my Service days in the Coast Guard???? Oh my gosh....

After disembarking and meeting the crew, I was taken on a tour of the island and taken to the house which I would call home while stationed on the island. It had been built in 1905 and was where the single crew stayed. The Chief and his wife Arlen had a smaller home next door.

I soon adjusted to life on the Island. I was assigned the 12 midnight to 8:AM watch which meant I was the only one awake on the Island

all night long. I stood the radio watch and made sure the "Light" flashed all night long and if the fog came, to turn the fog horn on and change the generators every four hours to make sure we had electricity. At first it was a very long lonely shift but I soon found it gave me time to write letters home and plan meals as we single guys did all of our own cooking. Luckily, I really enjoyed my time alone after I got use to it.

At the end of my shift I would sign out in the log and head back up to the house....lots of time as I walked up the path to the house a small harbor seal would appear along the shore line to send me a greeting. One thing that I remember about the Island is that we were so very close to nature. The daily tides....the weather...It was just us and the wild of the islands....

The Lighthouse was really my world in those days; she was the LIGHT of my LIFE....

# New Posters for the Lighthouse

KOPL, the BLM, and many more have shared the dream of joining the San Juan Islands to the ranks of National Monument status. With this comes a surge of energy and pride. Not too long before its official designation, an Interpretive Plan for Patos Island was hatched, staging the lighthouse as the central beacon for future education of the islands rich history. As we look forward to sharing its past, it is integral that the story of Patos be told with care and detail... a story fond to many hearts. The plan is to cover the natural to the cultural; the ancient to the present - be it in mobile or stationary form. The hope is to quench visitors' curiosities and wonderments of this special isle. To begin, here is a snippet covering the famed book, "Light on the Island".

**Patos Island Lighthouse**

The Light on the Island: Originally published in 1951 by Helene Glidden, The Light on the Island is Ms. Glidden's recount of growing up on Patos with her twelve brothers and sisters while her father served as the Patos Island lighthouse keeper from 1905-1913.

The original Keeper's house (left) was used for Coast Guard family quarters until 1958.

Patos Island, before 1958

Keeper's and Assistant Keeper's house, c. 1900

A pole with a light originally guided mariners. A tower was added in 1908.

**Helene Durgan** was born on June 3, 1900 at Dungeness Lighthouse (WA) to Edward and Estelle Durgan. She was the author of two books, "The Light on the Island" and "Pacific Coast Seafood Chef," as well as a variety of sea poems and short stories. She passed away on Jan. 20, 1989 in California, and was survived by her husband (Edward Noreen) and four children. Helene asked that her ashes be spread on Patos.

Helene Durgan, 3 years old

Helene Durgan Glidden Noreen

**When did Ms. Glidden write the book?**  
She wrote it when she was in her 50s, as a part of a creative writing class, and her teacher encouraged her to publish her stories.

**How much of the book is true?**  
About 90%, according to family. Variations of the family's real names were used. Also, Helene's mother was a relative of Teddy Roosevelt, so it is possible that he visited Patos.

Edward & Estelle Durgan

**Glidden/Durgan family reunion**

Helene's youngest son, Joe, and his niece, Sarah.

Stay tuned for more, as Team Patos grows and gathers fodder for all to feast on. As stewards to this "duck" shaped island, we ask you to join in on the venture to tell its historical tale... as we are all here to make one of our own!

Have a Patos story? Let's hear it!

Quack, quack!

**Erin Corra**

KOPL VP

**If you would like to volunteer to do fun yard work on one of our monthly spring & summer work parties contact Sandy Evans**

**email: [evans.sandy@frontier.com](mailto:evans.sandy@frontier.com)**

**A schedule will be mailed to interested volunteers**



**Duane Hudson** working hard on our final work day for 2013—Duane is also a Docent



**Heather, Erin, Linda and Allison** during one of their island visits to discuss the Patos Interpretive Plan



Rangers from Sucia towed us into the “ditch” on Orcas Island. A fun way to end our final work party. Thanks to the WA State Park Rangers for taking such good care of us.

### **The beautiful Traveling Library Box!**

At the birthday party, we were presented with an amazing Traveling Library Box, hand-crafted and donated by Lopez Island resident and Patos Island fan, **Ross Pomerenk**. The traveling library box, which will be on display in the lighthouse during the summer season, is a re-creation of the book boxes that used to travel from lighthouse to lighthouse in days gone by. The boxes were stocked with reference, educational and fiction books.



Funded both by a grant from Washington State Lighthouse Educational Programs and Ross's donated time and materials

**Keepers of the Patos Light**  
220 Fisherman Bay Road  
PO Box 518  
Lopez, WA 98261  
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Keepers of the Patos Light is an association of like-minded individuals who are committed to preserving the historical, environmental, and educational values of both Patos Island Lighthouse and Patos Island, located at the northwestern most point of Washington State's San Juan Islands.

[patoslightkeepers@hotmail.com](mailto:patoslightkeepers@hotmail.com)

## Nick's 2 Cents

Hi there ya dedicated Lightkeepers, Whhhheeeeeeee! What a ride this has been for this past year. I feel we met the summer with more energy and enthusiasm than ever before. Way to go KOPL!!! In our first year of being our Nation's newest National Monument we have made some great strides moving forward. As ya have probably seen and heard Patos Lighthouse has been used many times as the crown jewel of the crown jewel, standing proudly for the whole nation to see with the tremendous backdrop of Mt. Baker to capture and represent the National Monument.

Here is a snapshot of some updates to share: The new composting toilet has been a fine addition to the Island and we have received a ton of great feedback from visitors on the new unit. The 2<sup>nd</sup> composting toilet which will be built near the trail junction and near campsite #7 is still not finished. **Steve** and **Ed** along with other members of the WA State Park San Juan Marine Park team have poured the foundation. This is a huge step forward. Thanks a million to the Park Rangers. This past summer we had **Mike Laurance** as the San Juan Islands National Monument, (SJINM) Seasonal Recreation Technician. I know he was thrilled to work with ya'll and he always came back to the office with great stories of y'er hard work and praise for y'er determination to do the best job possible. Mike's season has ended and he lives back in southern Oregon. I spoke with him recently and he extends a big "Patos Hello" to ya'll.

For the SJINM this past year we have set, once again, a new record for the Spokane District (combined) for our volunteer and environmental education activities. KOPL is a very large part of this new record with all that ya do, Congratulations!! As we move forward as our Nation's newest National Monument there is a ton of work to do and KOPL will be part of the next steps all the way. This past August we were fortunate to bring on

**Marcia deChandenedes** as our Interim, 4 month, Monument Manager. Marcia's last day will be December 13<sup>th</sup>. Marcia has brought forward a tremendous amount of vision and she was thrilled to be a part of several of this past summer's KOPL events. Ya'll made a very large impact on her with y'er commitment to excellence.

Currently, as of this December we have advertised for the Monument Manager position and I can tell ya we have some of the best applicants possible from across the nation. We are hopeful to have selected the new NM manager soon so we can keep the momentum. There will be lots of opportunities for KOPL to advocate for the future of Patos Island, the lighthouse and the National Monument as a whole. Be sure to get y'erself on the mailing list and notification list for updates and happenings at: [BLM\\_OR\\_SP\\_RMP@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_OR_SP_RMP@blm.gov) and also keep a good eye on: <http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/sanjuans/>

As the winter season comes upon us and the holidays come close we just wanted to really say that the KOPL Board, Docents and Volunteers are the best! Thank you soooo very much for keeping safety a top priority and truly hosting the site for visitors who are coming to this special place I am already looking forward to next summer 2014. Stay Warm **Cheers, Nick**

**Nick Teague** is the BLM Ranger for the San Juan Islands and is our BLM Liaison and Advisor

BLM Ranger **Nick Teague** shows a map of BLM Lands in San Juan County



## Where Would We Be Without Our Volunteers?

Every year we are in awe at the hard work of our Keepers of the Patos Light volunteers. From docents who open the lighthouse, to day trippers who clear the trails and clean the beaches, (among other things), we would not be able to function without them. And let us not forget members of Keepers as well. We do all of the above in addition to producing newsletters, writing grants, newspaper articles and, yes, my Blog!

Right now, we are looking for more summer Docent volunteers and KOPL Board members. Drop us a line or give us a call if you are interested. 360-468-3518 patoslightkeepers@hotmail.com

Linda Hudson, President

Check this link for more info about Patos Island: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5423KqSvOqE>

### August 9, 2013 Birthday Party

At 12:30 we gathered outside for a photo op, a flyover arranged by Lime Kiln's Erin Corra and her friend from Teren Photography.

We held up our letter/number signs and waved like mad as he flew over and re-recorded our wonderful day for posterity.



## **\*ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES\***

**Individual - \$25—Family - \$35—Patron - \$75 —Keeper - \$100**

**Grand Keeper - \$500—Beacon \$1000**

**write: KOPL, PO Box 518, Lopez Island, WA 98261**

**or call: 360-468-3518**

**Keepers of the Patos Light wish you all a wonderful Holiday season and may 2014 be your best year ever**

**Send donations to: KOPL, PO Box 518, Lopez Island, WA 98261**

## Flagpole Fund

All money received for the Flagpole Fund will be kept separate from our general operating fund. Be sure to designate on your check if you are supporting the Flagpole.

**DONATE  
NOW**

Our Goal in 2013 and Beyond  
**\$3,500**

Help fill this void - I will continue to add this page to the newsletter until we reach our goal.



**Let's get that flag flying.** Think how beautiful our pictures will be with Mt. Baker in the background, our adorable lighthouse in the foreground and our flag waving in the breeze.

When the flag is flying, you will know that our docents are on board, ready to give tours and tell you a story.



Pass this newsletter on to anyone interested in Patos Island and the new National Monument status.

Diane and Jim Briggs contribute \$50 and challenge  
← bikers who love the San Juans to join the fun.

Denise and Daniel Wilk contribute \$100 and challenge  
← boaters in the Salish Sea that enjoy Patos and the Lighthouse.

Sandy and Dennis Evans contribute \$100 and challenge  
← kayak enthusiasts that enjoy Patos.

Linda & David Hudson contribute \$100 and challenge  
← other Lopezians who love Patos.

Patty & Jack Ware contribute \$100 and challenge  
← everyone who loves Patos Lighthouse to contribute in 2013.

"Patos" Bill Lavergne started the fund with a contribution of \$500 and challenges other Patos Coast Guard Vets & families to donate and make this happen in 2014 with a contribution by year-end 2013.  
←