

# History Nook

## Mail Schemes and Dreams

### Part 2

By: TOM WELCH



*Dolphin Bay Post office and Store after it had closed. Orcas Island Historical Museums Collection.*

The second Waldron Island Postmaster, Sinclair A. MacDonald (originally from Gainesville, Ga.), discovered an even more rewarding addition to his postal duties. Someone, possibly him, sent pleading, soulful letters to churches back east purporting to come from Lucy Bean, Missionary. The letters were heartfelt appeals for help in seeking clothing for the poor, naked local savages her 'mission' was serving. Large boxes of apparel, organized by various churches back east, soon began arriving at the Waldron Post Office. Postmaster MacDonald entered into a lucrative trade selling the clothing to the local Indians who frequented his place.

Things went swimmingly until the day a committee arrived from the east to meet Lucy Bean, Missionary, and investigate things for the eastern churches. When the committee discovered there was no Lucy Bean, and no sign of her flourishing mission on Waldron Island to be found, they soon departed. The hitherto-lucrative

clothing shipments stopped, and thus the first attempt at private enterprise on Waldron Island ended.

At the Orcas Island Post Office in Dolphin Bay, yet another drama was played out when the Postmaster, tiring of Saturday work, wrote the Postal authorities and requested that he be allowed to close the post office that day. Smelling something other than the glue on the stamps, the authorities looked into Dolphin Bay's mail...and discovered that it was all going to one man: the Postmaster. Under that time-honored saying 'be careful what you ask for,' the Postmaster was successful in his request, and the office was closed on Saturdays. Unfortunately for him, it was closed every other day, too, when the Postal authorities decided to permanently close the Dolphin Bay office.

*Tom Welch  
For the Orcas Island  
Historical Museums*

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