

## MISSION STATEMENT:

*We connect the future,  
through the present,  
with the past.*

Research Library  
931 West 9th Street  
Port Angeles, WA 98363  
360-452-2662

Open Tuesdays & Thursdays,  
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
or by appointment

## Current COVID-19 Safety Measures in Place at NOHC

- All visitors and researchers at the Center are required to be masked when indoors.
- All volunteers are required to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19.
- Volunteers are required to be masked when in a high-risk setting or unable to appropriately socially distance.
- Hand sanitizer, face masks and other protective materials are available for visitors.
- All NOHC Board of Directors meetings will have a Zoom option available for any who prefer to attend remotely.

Look for more on our website at  
[www.northolympichistory.org](http://www.northolympichistory.org)  
And remember to "Like Us" on our  
Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/  
northolympichistorycenter](http://www.facebook.com/northolympichistorycenter)

## Volunteer Spotlight: Eve Datisman

*by John Kendall*

"I've always loved books," said Eve Datisman. "I always have at least three going at a time."

That life-long love has influenced about 5,000 students during 40 years as a teacher and librarian. Now she is leading the History Center's effort to make its print and visual materials available to all via the Internet.

Eve grew up in Southeastern Idaho. "I lived a half-mile from the city library. Every weekday, I made the trip, by foot or bike, to the library for books to read. When I was seven, the librarian broke her rule of two books a day for children and let me take as many books as I could carry (usually six) so I wouldn't come in twice a day to return books. Before that, I'd be there when the library opened and again just before it closed; that complicated Mrs. Connolly's record keeping. By the time I was ten, she allowed me to check out any book I wanted to read. By the time I was 17, I'd read almost everything in that library. It was an idyllic childhood."

In her senior year, her family moved to a bigger town with a bigger library. Upon graduation she went to the University of Idaho, where she majored in English and English education.

After graduation, Eve taught ninth grade English at Midway Junior High School in Rigby, Idaho, for two years, got married to her college sweetheart, moved to Potlatch, Idaho, taught speech at the University of Idaho, then taught English in grades 10 to 12 at Victor High School in Montana, before moving to Forks in August 1979.

"Montana was a lovely place to live, but the pay was terrible. When I started looking for jobs, my husband, Jack, whose degree is in fisheries, noticed Forks had offered me an interview. He said, 'It's on three rivers. If they offer you a job, take it.' They did; I accepted and taught English 9, English 10, Writing Lab, Science Fiction, AP English and Humanities.

"When the high school library job came open, and I went to my administrators and asked if I could be moved into that position. I didn't have the credential, but I knew I could transform the library to make it the heart of the school. Luckily, the administrators agreed. I earned the credential and endorsement. The changes that I made increased the library use by 2,000 percent, the number of books bought and circulated by 8,000 percent, and the number of classes hosted by 1,800 percent. I was awarded the Washington Library State Media Specialist Award in 1991. By the time I left Forks High School, I had revamped the library

*(Continued on page 5)*



Photo: Eve Datisman

*Volunteer Eve Datisman*



*The North Olympic History Center is a private, non-profit corporation supported by grants, donations, and membership dues.*

The Board of Directors and volunteer staff thank you for your continued support.

The Center was recently awarded a 2021 "Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan" (SHARP) Grant to assist with operational costs. These grants are funded by the American Rescue Plan via the National Endowment for the Humanities.



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## Message from Bill Brigden *New President, NOHC Board*

It is an honor to be asked to help guide the NOHC through 2022 as we transition and move forward. While Covid has thrown many roadblocks in our path, we have quietly been building the foundation of a major re-energizing of the Center and its programs. I urge you to go online and find the article in the Sequim Gazette dated January 19, 2022 (<https://www.sequimgazette.com/life/protector-of-past-present-and-future-nohcs-brownell-helps-preserve-highlight-peninsulas-culture/>) which summarizes our past and future. We have been able to move forward due to the huge generosity of our volunteers and patrons over the years. Please learn about our new major initiative; the Cloud Project. This program will bring us into the new world of technology and allow us to share our archives with the world. Many opportunities exist within the NOHC for support of our mission. Feel free to check out how you can be an active part of our progress.



## Message from David Brownell *Executive Director, NOHC*

It is with great pleasure that I share Vol. XV, Issue No. 1 of the North Olympic History Center's Strait History Newsletter. I offer my deepest thanks and appreciation to the contributors to this edition, as well as all our volunteers and Board members who have helped me through the transitional period as I settle into the Executive Director position. Your support and advice have helped me better understand the rich history of the Center and inspired me with ideas and potential improvements to help continue the Center's growth and development.

Those of you who have been able to visit our campus these past few months may have noticed some changes around the buildings and facilities as we continue our work to secure the NOHC campus and make it a safe and comfortable space for visitors and volunteers alike. We have installed additional security cameras, replaced locks, and enhanced lighting to discourage trespassers and vandalism. We received a generous donation of furniture from the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe which has allowed us to refurbish the Research Library and provided additional storage cabinets for our artifact collections. The newspaper/periodicals research area has also been revamped with larger tables for easier use.

We also continue to make progress building partnerships with local agencies, tribes, and organizations across the North Olympic Peninsula; we hope these partnerships will lead to collaborations in communities across the Peninsula including exhibits, programming, and more. This is an exciting period of growth in Port Angeles, and across the Peninsula, and it is important that the Center has an active role in supporting this growth while keeping our communities in touch with our shared history.

We continue to work through the COVID-19 pandemic, trying to find ways to provide programming and outreach to our membership and the public in a safe and healthy manner. This includes using Zoom and other virtual meeting formats for presentations and programs and keeping in-person events to small groups. The pandemic has seriously impacted the Center by forcing us to cancel our vintage sales and live events. As a result, we are developing an Ebay storefront to allow NOHC to continue selling vintage items online to support our operational costs. A special thanks to volunteers Pam Todd and daughter Emily Coles for their time and dedication to our online sales this year!

# 2022 Programs and Events

## **NOHC Board of Directors Meetings (open to NOHC members)**

2nd Tuesday of the month, 12-1 pm. Zoom link available for those unable to attend in person.

## **NOHC Annual Membership Meeting**

The 2022 Membership Meeting will be held via Zoom on Sunday, March 6 at 2 p.m. Please join us online to hear updates on current events and new programs at the Center, receive a “sneak peek” at our Cloud project, and even win a prize! Members will receive the Zoom link via email, and it will be posted on our website.

## **NOHC Fundraising Auction**

The Center will be hosting our first ever online fundraising auction the week of April 4 - 9 featuring vintage items, fun activities and more. If you are interested in donating an item for the auction or volunteering your time to help with this exciting new event, please contact us today! The link to the auction page will be available on our website and Facebook page.

## **“Learning Our Landscape” Presentation Series**

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe and North Olympic History Center have partnered to bring you this series exploring the rich history, culture, and environment of the North Olympic Peninsula. Join us on the second Thursday of the month at 3 p.m. on Zoom as we use the tools of modern science, tribal ecological knowledge, and history to gain a better understanding and appreciation of this

remarkable and resilient landscape. The February presentation has been moved to 2/17 due to scheduling conflicts. Please visit [www.northolympichistory.org](http://www.northolympichistory.org) for Zoom link.

## **“Preserving Your Family Treasures” Document Preservation Workshops**

March 30, 2022 & September 14, 2022

This workshop will focus on “best-standards” of care and preservation of old photos and documents. Attendees will receive a “document preservation toolbox” to help them get started preserving their family’s history. Attendees are encouraged to bring personal items they wish to preserve. Space is limited; registration opens January 2022. Cost: NOHC Members: \$30; non-members: \$60. Call (360) 452-2662 or email [artifact@olympen.com](mailto:artifact@olympen.com) to register.

## **History Hikes Outdoor Learning Program**

In partnership with the Jefferson County Historical Society, NOHC is excited to announce our first series of “History Hikes”, an outdoor learning program that will take attendees on guided tours of local sites of historic significance. Program cost is \$75 for members, \$100 for non-members. Participants will be responsible for their own transportation to and from the site. Program registration will be announced on our website.

**May 21:** qatáy Prairie and Lagoon, Port Townsend

**June 18:** Fort Flagler, Marrowstone Island

**September 24:** Chimakum Creek, Irondale Beach

**October 22:** Indian Island

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## “Cloud” Project Kickoff and Important Dates

Supported by a 2021 Clallam County Heritage Advisory Board grant, the North Olympic History Center has been busy preparing our collections for conversion to PastPerfect Museum Software’s web edition. For more insights into this laborious process, see the great summary by volunteer Eve Datisman in this edition of *Strait History*. We are very excited to share this project with our members and the public in Spring of 2022. Please keep an eye out for the following opportunities to participate. See the NOHC website for more information on the Cloud project: [northolympichistory.org](http://northolympichistory.org)

**May 4th, 3 pm:** Cloud Project Webinar (Zoom virtual meeting)

**June 2, 12:30 pm:** Peninsula College Studium Generale – Cloud Project Information Session

## Membership Fees Increase in 2022

To help cover the rising costs of operating the North Olympic History Center, we will be increasing membership fees this year. We have also adjusted the membership levels to increase membership and sponsorship opportunities, as seen in the table below.

Membership Levels	Annual Dues
Senior Citizen, Student, Military	\$ 30.00
Individual	\$ 40.00
Family	\$ 50.00
Sponsor	\$150.00



# The Strange Case of David Fred Hagler *by John McNutt*

This article was originally published in the Peninsula Daily News on January 2, 2022.

Photo courtesy of University of Texas at Arlington Library



David Fred Hagler

Someone has been in trouble with the law. Rather than face the music he moves far away and change their name. This has all the makings of a movie plot line. Like a tiger, the lead character cannot change his stripes. He cannot change his essential nature. Such is the story of David Fred Hagler.

The story starts with a man named David Lee Douglas coming to the Olympic Peninsula around 1967 when he took over a restaurant in

Port Ludlow. He chose to live in Gardiner and establish a new life. David was charming and charismatic. In 1969 he married Donna Erickson. Their marriage did not survive. In 1971 they were divorced due to "Personal Indignities."

David moved to Port Angeles and lived on West 15th Street. David met Leif Erik Ellington when David was hired to do some work.

In early 1975 Leif showed David a newspaper article on the benefits of churches. In simple terms, Leif did not like paying taxes. The fact that the churches in the article did not pay taxes piqued their interest. Together they hatched a scheme to become a church and place Ellington's money and property into their church. David purchased a mail-order ordination, and the Science of Life Church of Joyce was incorporated in the summer of 1975. It was estimated that Ellington put \$50,000 of assets in the church.

The church's only purpose was to provide a variety of tax benefits. Ellington, Douglas, and other like-minded people could donate assets to the church and receive a tax deduction. In the mix was a shingle mill and timber operation. Of course, the pastor and Board of Directors could receive a salary for their work. When he was asked what work he was doing, Douglas replied, "It is hard work to think. When I read the Bible and impress something on my mind, that is work."

They thought they had a way to beat the system. What could go wrong? Tragedy struck in the late afternoon of January 8, 1976. Leif was found shot to death in his trailer house on Valley Street. He had been shot three times.

A .32 caliber pistol was in Leif's hand when he was found. Was it suicide? No! Leif's wounds came from .38 caliber bullets. The scene may have been staged. A murder investigation begins.

When the police examined Leif's close associates, they found something interesting. The man known as David Lee Douglas was really David Fred Hagler. You cannot hide from fingerprints. Hagler became the focus of the investigation.

Soon the Clallam County Sheriff's Office had probable cause to arrest Hagler on a charge of second-degree murder. His bail was set at \$750,000, which was high for 1976.

Who was David Fred Hagler? Like a noir movie, this is the point where we fade into the backstory.

Hagler was born in 1917 in Fort Worth, Texas. He attended university and served in the army in World War Two. After the war he became a salesman.

As it turned out, David Fred Hagler had quite the past. he was twenty, Hagler and two friends were accused of stealing an adding machine from a car. For the next 40 years Hagler was accused of numerous crimes.

Hagler gained notoriety in 1954 when he was murdered (or so they thought). A car with a body in it was set ablaze and pushed over an embankment. Foul play was suspected. The man's identity was assumed to be Hagler. Even though the body was burned beyond recognition, the dental work was not Hagler's. Hagler was accused of killing the unidentified man in a fraud scheme to collect his own life insurance.

Later in 1954 a key witness named Frank St. Claire admitted the two of them had plotted such an insurance scam. Strangely, St. Claire committed suicide before he could testify. (Was it really a suicide?) A jury acquitted Hagler of murder. Hagler could tell a convincing story.

Hagler was skilled at manipulating women. Another case involved an \$800 diamond ring in the possession of Hagler's fiancée. While free on bond Hagler and his fiancé married. Texas law did not allow a wife to testify against her husband.

In 1956, in his only conviction to date, he was sentenced to six months in prison for lying to get a federal loan.

The best way to describe Hagler is a wannabe mobster. He was identified in a federal report as an associate of Jack Ruby. He was also associated with the mobsters of Jacksboro Highway.

Hagler tried the same insurance scam on March 11, 1964. This time he used a small airplane he rented. Hagler set the Cessna 210 down in Matagorda Bay, Texas. Hagler and a woman passenger escaped from the plane as it began to sink. Hagler just happened to have an inflatable raft with him.

# Meet Eve Datisman

*(Continued from page 1)*

program, provided an up-to-date collection that was not only tied to the curriculum, but also attuned to the interests of the students, including instruction in research and research-paper writing, educational technology and tailored resources for students and staff. I worked with our technology department and became the school district's Helpdesk, made connections with the Forks branch of the North Olympic Library System in the early days of dial-up (1992-96) to provide our students a link to the web. Our grant was so successful that I got to go to Washington, D. C. to talk about what we did, how we did it, and why it was necessary. I also taught English 90, 110, 112 and poetry at Peninsula College for several years.

"In 2003, it was time for a change. I'm from the Snake River Plain and accustomed to 8 to 10 inches of rain a year. After a particularly wet 162-plus inches, I told Jack, 'This is driving me crazy, and I'm not going alone.' We made a decision to move to Port Angeles and trade 120 inches of rain a year for 30 inches. I was happy to commute, but in 2004 the Port Angeles High School library position came open and I applied. I faced a similar challenge with an old collection, a need to make connections with teachers and students to support their needs and make the library a welcoming place. During my last four years of my career at Port Angeles High School, I was also in the classroom, teaching sections of English 9 and 12.

"For the last 17 years, I have been a member of the Puget Sound Council for the Review of Children's and Young Adult Literature. As a member, I read and review over 300 books a year. Members do this in order to help teachers and librarians throughout the state to evaluate books for purchase. The reviews help libraries make the most of their budgets, which is often zero from school

districts. Over 80 percent of school libraries, especially elementary and middle schools, rely on PTAs, book fairs and donations to fund book purchases. It's important that librarians have access to a resource to quality materials.

"After retirement in June 2013, I began volunteering at Clallam County Historical Society in 2014. Because of my library work, I began by cataloging books, which meant I had to learn a different system. All my volunteer work has been interesting, and other volunteers, board members and students that I work with have mentored me, not just in software, but in the scope and service the History Center provides to the Olympic Peninsula and to anyone who accesses our website and Facebook page. Clallam County is rich in history, and its stories need to be told. In order to help the History Center offer world-wide access to those stories via the web, I volunteer two days/week for 6-7 hours each day.

"I've been part of two History Center Education Committee programs: Hands on History, directed at students of middle and high school age, and You R History, for students of elementary school age. Both initiatives are focused on the goal of students learning the significance of the history of the place where they live and how that has impacted them and their families. Both initiatives have an education component where students present their learning to the community. Both are on hiatus due to COVID, but I hope that they will be revived and revamped in the near future.

"Now at nearly 72, every day I volunteer has a problem to solve, something new to learn, and a chance to hang out with smart, funny, extremely knowledgeable people, while making a difference in a place that husband Jack and I have chosen to live."



## David Fred Hagler

*(Continued from page 4)*

The woman told police Hagler clung to the wings before sinking into the water. She later changed her story and admitted they both made it to shore.

On October 14, 1964, Hagler and a partner robbed a rare coin store of \$14,160 worth of coins. The store owner identified Hagler as one of the robbers. Hagler fled to Hawaii. He then fled to Australia.

In the fall of 1965 Hagler was found in Australia. He was extradited back to the Hawaii. While out on \$100 bond he vanished, likely to the Olympic Peninsula.

Like that noir movie, we fade back to the Ellington murder case. Hagler had formulated a way to provide himself an alibi. Around 5:00 pm on January 8th he shot Ellington three times. He then

drove to Joyce to meet with church friends. He asked them to tell police he arrived at 3:00. When Hagler crossed the one-way Elwha River Bridge, he tossed the gun over the side into the river.

In a twist of fate, the gun was found by two skindivers salvaging fishing lures. An FBI expert testified it was the gun used to kill Ellington. Hagler claimed he had lost the gun years before.

The jury did not believe Hagler's smooth talk and convicted him of second-degree murder. His luck had finally run out in Clallam County. The Clallam County Prosecutor knew high bail was the only way to keep Hagler from vanishing again. He was sentenced to 10 to 20 years in prison.

In 1982 Hagler was released from prison. In 1985 he married for the seventh time. Hagler died on June 4, 1986. It would require several books to chronicle Hagler's infamous life.



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**2022 NOHC Programs & Events**

<p><b>February</b> 2/17: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom</p> <p><b>March</b> 3/6: NOHC Annual Membership Meeting 3/10: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom 3/30: Document Preservation Workshop</p> <p><b>April</b> 4/4 - 8: NOHC Annual Fundraiser Online Auction 4/14: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom</p> <p><b>May</b> 5/4: "Cloud" project webinar</p>	<p>5/12: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom 5/21: History Hikes: gataÿ prairie and lagoon</p> <p><b>June</b> 6/2: Peninsula College Stadium Generale – Cloud project presentation 6/9: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom 6/18: History Hikes: Fort Flagler</p> <p><b>July</b> 7/14: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom</p> <p><b>August</b> 8/11: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom</p>
<p><b>September</b> 9/8: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom 9/14: Document Preservation Workshop 9/24: History Hikes: Chimakum Creek/Irondale Beach</p> <p><b>October</b> 10/13: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom 10/22: History Hikes: Indian Island</p> <p><b>November</b> 11/10: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom</p> <p><b>December</b> 12/8: LOL Presentation Series on Zoom</p>	

NORTH OLYMPIC HISTORY CENTER



**HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM NOHC!**  
 A shot of the January sun trying its hardest to melt  
 our holiday blanketing.

