

Loughborough Inlet a Great Stopover

...a perspective by Michael Clark



While cruising north and intent on getting to Forward Harbour for the great leap through Johnstone Strait, one can easily pass by Loughborough Inlet while travelling along Cordero Channel. *Selyna Rose* has stopped there a number of times and spent lazy days admiring the scenery, enjoying fresh caught prawns and visiting with Dane Campbell and Helen Piddington, who operate a small marina in Sidney Bay. The floats are quite basic and moorage is economical, but a small covered picnic table and a take-one leave-one library add a lot of charm and interest. Occasionally other boats arrive and add neighbours to share appies on the floats.

Loughborough Inlet has a fascinating history and at one time had a post office, school and store to serve the many logging and fishing camps that were scattered around the inlet.

Today there is only one resident family—Helen and her husband Dane—who moved there in 1975 with their young daughter Arabella and their sailboat *Native Girl*. Their son Adam was born a year later.

The young family purchased an existing log house from Crown Zellerbach and settled in to make a living, while expanding the homestead to raise chickens, ducks, and turkeys, and to grow much of their food from an expanding garden. Power was obtained by installing a small hydro-electric plant. Without a school, the two children studied through correspondence courses before moving away for new careers. Dane developed a cash income through work as a logger and fisherman, including obtaining a license to harvest fresh prawns from the abundant supply of Loughborough Inlet.



Meanwhile Helen continued her work as a well-known artist and printmaker who had also studied at the *L'Académie de la Grande Chaumière* in Paris. Her work is included in the National Gallery of Canada and many private collections. Helen is also an author and has written a fascinating history of the area and their time there—*The Inlet*.



The Campbell/Piddingtons usually come across the bay to say hello and they welcome an invitation to stay for tea, which then can result in an invitation to visit their homestead and see what a truly pioneering family can carve out of the wilderness.

If you travel that far north, perhaps on the way to the Broughtons, a stop at Loughborough Inlet is well worth a few quiet days. The local school of porpoises may pay a visit to welcome you as well.