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Seldovian, Fisherman-Pilot: Bill Roley

by Mary Glover



Bill Roley

It never ceases to amaze me...there are the most interesting and wonderful people who claim their residency in Seldovia! **Bill Roley** is one of these persons. It would be an amusing statistic to learn the ratio of pilots per capita who live here. Maybe Seldovia is an attraction to pilots because one cannot get here except by boat or air.*

Bill has been coming to his log cabin since '81 and has lived here (most of the time) for the past 15 years! He has seen many changes during this period. He said it was more of a "fishing culture....I'm glad

In 1954 Bill entered college at Oregon Sate University and graduated in 1958 with a degree in Agricultural Engineering. Upon graduation he entered the U.S. Air Force and flew the skies for eight years. After getting out of the Air Force, he returned to Oregon and operated his family's meat plant for a couple of years and then he came to Alaska when the big oil strike happened in '69.

Bill flew air taxi on the slope for a number of years until he got a career job with Atlantic Richfield. After he took an early retirement, he moved to Seldovia part-time. Bill told me that his beloved wife of 31 years

to see tourism, but I relate more to the fishing, even though I never commercial fished...I relate more 'traditional' Seldovia where it was more of a fishing community."

Bill was the only child born to Roy and Grace Roley in Bakersfield, California. His father was a Cherokee Indian from Oklahoma and his mother was from West Plains, Missouri. They met and married in Bakersfield. In 1943 they moved to Oregon, the state where Bill grew up. "It was not crowded; great hunting and fishing...my life's been mostly about hunting and fishing."

* Now, after the City Council meeting of 12/14/05 having an airplane registered in Seldovia means that the fees are going to actually be less for the smaller planes. See this week's City Council's article.

passed in 2000 and after that, Bill moved to Seldovia full-time. Bill has children and grandchildren.

Bill's most favorite things in life are "fishing, that is all there is for me, and of course, flying." Now he doesn't fly commercial. When asked what his favorite time of the year was, he said, "early spring and late fall, I like them better than summer, I wouldn't want to make a distinction. " He said the winter Kings are in the bay now.

So, where can you find Bill Roley? In Seldovia, fishing, of course!