



# Seldovia Gazette

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37 °F / 3 °C

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### Helen Josefsen, One of Seldovia's Golden Nuggets!

by Tamera Blodgett



Helen Josefsen has an illustrious and a rich Seldovia past that has followed her to the present. She has tirelessly been involved and worked on important projects since early adulthood, having moved to Seldovia in 1945. Here she made Seldovia her home and lived with mother and father (Hetty and Leroy Crawford), sister Diane, and brother John Crawford. (Darlene and John Crawford live in Seldovia today.) She can still remember her exciting first flight to Seldovia as a child and her surprise at the saltiness of the water, having been accustomed to fresh water while living in the interior. She remembers with great fondness all the fun times at Outside Beach, swimming in the local lakes and ice skating on Lake Susan. She attended the local school and graduated from the Seldovia High School which was located near the shop building belonging to the school today. Upon graduation Helen worked in the canneries during the summer months.

Later, Helen was married to Louie in the fall of '54 in the Russian Church and they had four children: Sluggo, Marilyn, Lorne and Trinket. Sluggo and Marilyn were born in Seldovia as a doctor lived in the community then. Later her younger two children, Lorne and Trinket, were born in Anchorage as there

and was an integral part of the "new" Susan B. English School when it was built in the early seventies. Her hobbies are vast with "fancy work," painting, and arts & crafts the tip of the "artsy" iceberg.

However, her most defining work may be the restoration of our historic Russian Orthodox Church, St. Nicholas Chapel that stands vigil on the hill above Main Street overlooking the bay. This restoration was headed up by Helen and was begun in a decade just awakening to the need to preserve historic architecture. Helen realized the importance of saving this historic structure and helped secure grant funding for the project. This church is now on the National Register of Historic Places since 1980. This organization has stringent standards of adherence for restoring a building to its original state. Of great importance was updating the building and weatherizing it after years of neglect. Everything of historical significance was carefully restored with special attention given to the bell towers, foundation, painting the interior/exterior and religious icons. As much as possible, the inside was given special attention as to not take away from the historical elements while years of grime and old paint were removed. The original colors can now be seen with careful attention paid to the preservation of the

was no doctor in Seldovia at that time. Always adventuresome, Helen and Louie took their small children out of school for one year and went on a trip to Mexico. This was a learning experience for the children. Seldovia has always been Helen's home.

During her lifetime Helen has donned many hats, with some of the positions being quite divergent from one another. Helen started the Seldovia Museum, helped form what is now the Seldovia Native Association, was a hairdresser, cook, waitress, taught wood classes, was on the Election, Hospital Guild and EMS Boards, Planning and Zoning, Booster Club

religious icons through cleaning and applying a protective coating for sustainability. A great debt of service was given to us by an "Old Seldovian" who leaves behind a lasting legacy.

*(Editor's Note: Seldovia's Golden Nuggets are persons who have lived in Seldovia for a long time and have made substantial contributions to the community.)*





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