

THE BANDON LIGHT

A P U B L I C A T I O N O F T H E B A N D O N H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WRECK OF THE FIFIELD

“**T**he twin screw steam schooner *Fifield* was wrecked off the Bandon bar at the mouth of the Coquille River at 7:20 this morning, the odd day of the leap year, February 29,” reported *The Bandon Recorder* for February 29, 1916.

This year marks the 100th anniversary, or 25th anniversary, to those literal about counting leap days, of the wreck of the *Fifield*.

The Bandon Historical Society Museum is observing the 100-year anniversary with a special exhibit.

The ship was unlucky from the start. The original keel of the *Fifield* was laid in the Bandon shipyards of J H Price, but a fire in 1907 destroyed the shipyard and the ship when she was nearly completed.

The second version, 173 feet long, 39 wide and 12 feet in depth, was launched from the Kruse and Banks shipyards in North Bend in 1908.

Owned by the Fife-Wilson Lumber Company, the *Fifield* made scheduled runs between Bandon and San Francisco, carrying rough-cut lumber and passengers.

The eight-year-old *Fifield* was returning from San Francisco in miserable February weather. She arrived the night before she went aground and was waiting outside the bar for the tide to rise.

The steam schooner *Brooklyn* was also lying off the mouth of the Coquille. The *Brooklyn* crossed the bar about 6:15 am and the *Fifield* followed 15 minutes later. “When she got in the course of the current from the north, she was not far enough over and her stern was born steadily down on the rocks of the jetty. The current lifted her off and pushed her to the south and then the breakers sent the doomed boat back on the rocks,” reported *The Recorder*.

The boat drifted, foundered in the surf and came to rest just south of the south jetty.

“In the mean time, her four sharp blasts of appeal for help had roused more than one Bandonite and there was a general rush for the Beach,” reported *The Recorder*.

Among those responding were the local Coast Guard crew and the Port of Bandon’s tug the *Klilyam*.

“One by one the passengers were carried over in the breeches buoy and the antics of some of the passengers aloft over the seething water was one of the diversions of the proceeding for the spectators who had gathered in numbers along the beach walk and on the sand.

“The only man injured in the wreck was W. M. Kay of this city, an elderly gentleman of 64 who was among the spectators. An over balanced log rolled on his leg breaking that member while he was seeking for a vantage place from which to see the sights,” reported *The Recorder*.

The *Fifield*’s cargo on this return trip from San Francisco was “30 or 40 tons of hay.” Four passengers and 22 crew members were aboard.

“The prospects are good for a speedy attempt to get the wrecked *Fifield* off the beach and back on the run again,” reported *The Recorder* a week after the wreck.

The article summarized plans to rescue the boat.

The article also reported, “There has been no attempt at looting.” A few months earlier, extensive looting followed the wreck of the *Santa Clara* off Coos Bay, a circumstance that made coastal residents uneasy especially because 14 people died in the wreck.

The *Fifield* was closely guarded.



The newspaper reported the progress of the work to repair and refloat the ship over the next several weeks.

Two donkey engines, one from Moore Mill and another from the Seeley and Anderson logging camp, were moved onto the beach. “Looking on, the *Fifield* seemed like some huge leviathan of the deep, and how helpless it did look on land.”

The next week’s paper reported the ship had been moved 60 feet higher onto the beach. Crews filled the holds with empty oil drums, emptied her fuel tanks and cleaned the sand out of her holds.

The *Iagua*, a salvage schooner sent up from San Francisco, dropped an anchor offshore, ran a cable to the *Fifield*, and pulled. The *Fifield* moved approximately 100 feet when a violent storm came up, making it necessary for the *Iagua* to drop her two lines and head for deeper water.

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The Bandon Light
A publication of the
Bandon Historical Society

Design and Layout
Trish Conyers

Bandon Historical Society Museum

Executive Director.....Judy Knox
Staff.....Eileen Scott
Native American Consultant.....Reg Pullen

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President.....Jim Proehl
Vice President.....Mary Schamehorn
Secretary.....Faye Albertson
Treasurer.....Nancy Murphy

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| | |
|--------------|---------------|
| Dean Conyers | Kathy Dornath |
| Betty Hiley | Donna Mason |
| Reg Pullen | Brian Vick |

Nominating Committee

Doreen Colbert, Donna Mason, Jim Proehl

The Board members meet the 4th Tuesday of each month at 4 pm at the Museum. All members and guests are welcome to attend.

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www.bandonhistoricalmuseum.org

If you have an interest in Bandon's history and would like to help preserve our past for future generations, call us - we need you. The Museum is OPEN Monday through Saturday 10-4 pm. June through September we are open 7 days a week. The Museum closes for the month of January. Our volunteers are waiting to help you and answer your questions about Bandon's history.

Enjoy Bandon's rich and wonderful history
270 Fillmore & Hwy 101
(at the only stop light downtown)



Judy Schultz Knox

F r o m t h e D e s k o f
t h e D i r e c t o r

2016...can you believe it...time does go by way too fast. I still have trouble remembering to write the new year. 2015 was one of those years I won't ever forget. I hope it was a good year for you and that you will have a happy and healthy 2016.

Bandon weather has returned in full force: lots of rain, bad wind storms, massive waves, floods, slides on our highways, and destruction. Even with all this we should be grateful we are not living on the east coast or in the Midwest.

The museum visitor count for 2014 was 4040 and for 2015 it was 3875. If you were not able to visit recently, please try this year. We will be happy to see you.

We always hope each year will be better than the last. We strive to improve the museum daily and we all work hard on exhibits, displays, gift shop sales, scanning old photographs, volunteering, manning the reception desk, putting together the museum's newsletter, writing grants for special displays or needs in the museum, and so many other projects that help keep our doors open 6 and 7 days a week. Bandon's history is depicted in the pride we try to show all of Bandon as well as our visitors. We are proud of what we have accomplished with your help.

Special thanks to our financial contributors and donors. This of course, is another big reason we are where we are today. Memberships, memorials, gift shop sales, grocery receipts from Price 'n Pride and Ray's Food Place, are all vital to our existence. We will always need you and the support you have given us.

I especially want to thank Dean Conyers for his leadership as president in 2015. The museum is indebted to members of the community who, like Dean, are very involved in activities in the area, but still manage to find time to give to the museum.

Jim Proehl is now the museum president, and we welcome Reg Pullen as the newest member of the board of directors. The hard work of our board of directors, present and past, the staff, and our volunteers are why this museum is a success. Enjoying what we do has paid off. We are on the map and an asset to the community and Coos County.

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RADIOLA 60 RESTORATION

A historical object in the Bandon Museum has taken on new life thanks to the work of museum volunteer Bob Coraor, who has restored the museum's Radiola 60 radio.

Bob donated his time and the materials for the restoration. The objective was to restore the electronics to working order for on-going play during museum hours and to modify the radio cabinet and speaker's appearance to more closely resemble the radio when it was new.

The radio came to the museum via the Coos History Museum, which had a surplus of older radios. The radio has no specific connection to Bandon.

"The museum took the radio's history into consideration in agreeing to have it restored," said President Jim Proehl. "For example, we would not clean up an object that survived a fire or shipwreck. But this piece is more interesting as a working object. No one's going to miss the coffee stains on the cabinet."

Bob shared his research on the radio and his notes on its restoration:

"The RCA Radiola 60 was released in August 1928 and discontinued in September 1930. Marketed by RCA as its first 'socket powered' superheterodyne radio, the set was designed and manufactured by General Electric and Westinghouse who were in a business relationship with RCA. The radio sold for \$210 (roughly \$2850 in 2015 dollars) and there were approximately 135,000 sets made.

"This chassis was serial number 249674 ED. Based on a Reno Radio label found on the 80 rectifier, this radio spent part of its life in July 1935 in Detroit, Michigan. I was able to locate the Reno Radio shop location from an advertisement in a November 1952 *Popular Mechanics*.

"The radio's cabinet was in relatively good condition although the lacquer was cracking, there were water and paint stains on the lid, the color on the front was faded and a small piece of veneer was missing on the top. In addition, someone in the past had drilled 3 holes in the back of the cabinet to provide access to the compensation capacitors on the chassis. I elected not to attempt to fill these holes.

"The escutcheons were removed; the cabinet was disassembled and stripped of the original finish. A small piece of veneer on the top of the cabinet was replaced.

After grain filling, Mohawk medium brown walnut Ultra-Classic® toner was used to tone the cabinet and Van Dyke Brown toner was used for the trim.

"Multiple coats of Deft gloss spray lacquer were the final clear coat followed by rub out with 4F pumice, rottenstone and paste wax finish.

"The speaker's grill cloth was extremely fragile and was torn in the circle around the edge of the speaker cone. Since the objective was to play the radio on a regular basis, this cloth would not hold up over the long term and a reproduction replacement was purchased and installed.

"The frame of the speaker was made with a material that was called repwood which was a mixture of sawdust and glue that was molded into the desired shape. The frame was cleaned with damp cotton swabs and a light clear lacquer coating was applied.

"The original silk bonnet that was used to keep dust out of the back of the speaker was missing, except for a small piece, thus a replacement was obtained and installed. The wires that connect the speaker to the radio were badly frayed and also replaced.

"The main restoration of the units was a general cleaning followed by the replacement of the paper capacitors housed in the capacitor can on the power supply. This required dismounting the can, removing the old paper capacitors and replacing them with Solen metalized polypropylene capacitors rated for 630 volts."

At the time the radio was built, all radio signals were broadcast on the AM band. KWRO in Coquille is the only strong AM station left in the area.

Bob also provided the museum with a low power AM transmitter that will allow the radio to pick up an in-house transmission. The transmitter will allow the museum to broadcast programming from the era it was made that can be tuned in by the radio.

"This frequency can be heard on the Radiola 60 by tuning the dial to a setting of '20'. The Radiola 60 tuning dial is not marked in frequencies or channels; it is simply a set of numbers from 0 to 100 and the listener has to note the number on the dial for their favorite stations," wrote Bob.

Bob returned the now working Radiola 60 in early September, to its stand in the museum. It takes a few minutes to warm up, but its tubes glow and it plays just as it did when it was made in 1929.

BICYCLE SCULPTURES

A collaborative effort among several groups, including the Port of Bandon, Scout Troop 313 and the Bandon Historical Society, has brightened up a corner of Ocean Crest School.

The latest addition has been a group of sculpture pieces made of old bicycles and rebar constructed by Shutter Creek inmates working with the Port of Bandon. The pieces were recently installed in a courtyard behind the school.

Inmates built the pieces at the Port of Bandon's shop facility in the Old Coast Guard Building under the supervision of Harbor Master Bob Shamnot.

The idea to turn old bikes into pieces of art took shape as the Port of Bandon, working with the Greater Bandon Association and the City, were developing the cycle stop at the corner of Elmira and First Streets.

The Port acquired a batch of scrapped bicycles with the idea of incorporating them into a fence. When the fence idea did not work out, the inmate crew repurposed the bikes as pieces of sculpture.

A group of fourth grade "History Detectives" submitted design ideas to the Port and the crew turned the ideas into sculptures made of bicycles, scrap metal and rebar.

The "History Detectives" meet with museum volunteer Jim Proehl as part of an enrichment program suggested by Ocean Crest Principal MaryRae Anderson.

The Port crew left the sculptures unpainted so the grade school participants could finish the pieces themselves.

An "unveiling" of the statues took place April 23. History Detectives Daniel Cabrera and Hallie Minkler gave short speeches and Falcon Elsworth and Jon Trisdale revealed the covered pieces at the command of "Let the statues be unveiled." Two fourth grade classes attended the unveiling, then traveled to Southern Coos Hospital to view the *Flora and Fauna* art exhibit.

The courtyard statues are placed to be seen to best advantage through hallway windows.

Several groups have worked to spruce up the Ocean Crest courtyard.

Scouts from Troop 313 looking for Eagle Scout service projects identified the Ocean Crest landscape

as an area that could use a little TLC. Eagle Scout Quentin Coomer refurbished the landscape along the front of the school.

Eagle Scout candidate Trenten Gagnon built a tool shed for the courtyard as his Eagle Scout service project. Gagnon finished the area around his shed with a layer of river rock.

Another group of scouts, Alexander Schultz, Skyler Hammons and Jared Duval, fulfilled a Citizenship in the Community merit badge requirement by cleaning out flowerbeds and spreading bark mulch.

Bandon Concrete donated rock and Oregon Overseas Timber donated bark mulch.

Fourth graders from Lynne Massey's classroom gave up afternoon recesses to assemble picnic tables.

"As the courtyard took shape, we could see that a few pieces of outdoor sculpture would nicely fill in some places where plants were impractical," said Proehl, a museum volunteer who helps with both Scouts and school. "When the bike sculptures started showing up on Port of Bandon property, we saw just what we were looking for."

NEW EXHIBITS AT MUSEUM

The Bandon Historical Society Museum reopened in February after being closed during the month of January to rebuild and refurbish exhibits. A large crew of volunteers worked to get the museum ready for the coming year.

Several exhibits were rebuilt, created or refurbished.

Tom Hultin, Will Turner and Craig Tresidder did a lot of the "heavy lifting," moving and remounting some of the museum's larger objects in advance of rearranging some exhibit space.

Ray Murphy and Jim Cowan borrowed a truck from Goddard Energy and retrieved two large display cases from the Coos History Museum's former building. The Coos Bay museum has been sharing with neighboring historical societies furnishings that don't fit the décor of its new museum.

Donna Mason and Nancy Murphy have led the job of rebuilding exhibits. Kathy Cowan, Kathy Phillips and Jim Proehl produced and mounted photographs and exhibit labels. The project is financed by a grant from Trust Management Services.

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From the Director

2016 will be my 20th year as Executive Director of Bandon's museum. I have always been proud of this title and my love for Bandon, making it hard to call this a job. We moved into this "Old City Hall" in 1996 with the help of the City of Bandon and Urban Renewal. We have a lot to be thankful for and we will always need and want your support.

Judy Schultz Knox
Executive Director

MUD, MURDER, AND MYSTERY

"Mud, Murder, and Mystery—Langlois History" was the title of a well-received presentation made by museum member and volunteer Tom Medlin, to an appreciative audience at the Langlois Library in January.

Tom and his wife own Raincoast Arts in Langlois. He shared how his research into the history of his building, a former Woodsman of the World hall, has led him deeper into the history of Langlois.

Among the stories he shared was the "rumor" that wives attempting to burn out a brothel started the 1910 fire that burned half the town, and an account of a fatal shooting at a dance for homecoming Great War veterans in 1919.

Tom's program was generously illustrated with pictures, many from the museum's digital collection. He continues to work with the museum to identify and add information to the museum's Langlois pictures.

Speaking at the Langlois Library on Monday, February 22, at 7:00 pm is Margaret Grundstein, whose book, *Naked in the Woods, My Unexpected Years in a Hippie Commune*, includes her experiences at a commune on Floras Creek in the early 1970s.

"An evening with Shannon Applegate" is the program for Saturday, March 5, at 7:00 pm at the Langlois Cheese Factory. Applegate is a well-known Oregon historian and a founding member of the Bandon Historical Society.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We tend to like round numbers.

We seem to give special place to anniversaries that end in zero.

Of course, we also seem to have a soft spot for 25, but I suspect that's because it divides so nicely into 50 and 100.

We initiate our local history program at school with a lesson for second graders called "About a hundred years ago."

We're celebrating with the Presbyterian Church as it marks its one hundred, twenty-fifth anniversary.

We're featuring a story about the *Fifield*, a ship that wrecked on the south jetty 100 years ago.

In 2016 we will celebrate the eightieth anniversary of the 1936 fire. Every fire anniversary is important, but that number makes this one seem even more so.

Formed in 1976, inspired by the nation's two-hundredth birthday celebration, the Bandon Historical Society turns 40 this year.

This is the twentieth year the museum has been housed in our 80-year-old building, a building constructed to be a "temporary" City Hall after the '36 fire.

And this year we celebrate Judy Knox's 20 years of employment as the Executive Director of the Bandon Historical Society. For twenty years, Judy has taken care of the collection, guided the organization, and held together the community that *is* the Bandon Historical Society.

Please plan to join us at the museum for a reception to celebrate Judy's twenty years of dedication on Saturday, April 23, between 1:00 and 4:00 pm.

Put the date on your calendar and help us celebrate this very special round number.



BANDON'S FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CELEBRATES 125TH ANNIVERSARY

Bandon's First Presbyterian Church celebrated its one-hundred-twenty-first anniversary the weekend of February 6 and 7.

Long time museum helper Donna Young has been the unofficial historian for the church.

Museum volunteers, Jim Proehl and Mary Schamehorn, added some additional research about the fire that destroyed the church building in 1911.

The museum is using the anniversary as an opportunity to gather more information about the Presbyterian Church and would welcome related photographs and memorabilia.

Continued From Page 1 Wreck of *Fifield*

"Breakers Smash *Fifield* to Bits" was the *Recorder* headline on April 25.

"The steam schooner *Fifield*, which was wrecked on the submerged end of the south jetty at the mouth of the river February 29, has gone to the 'boneyard' on the beach where she drifted after striking the rocks despite attempts that have been made to float her.

"During the high tide about 5 o'clock Monday morning the *Fifield* gave up the ghost and fell to pieces, splitting apart from stem to stern and casting her engines into the surf. Today she is the most completely wrecked vessel that has ever been seen along the coast here," reported *The Recorder*.

Beachcombers picked over the bones of the *Fifield* for decades.

The Bandon Historical Society Museum reopened in February after using the month of January to rebuild and refurbish exhibits, including a rebuilt exhibit on the *Fifield* wreck.

Wreckage can still be seen today at low tide south of South Jetty



MEMORIALS

In Memory:

Pat Settle, Connie Settle, Nadine Borgard,
Trudy Fraser, Joe Whitsett, Ernie Neal,
Dean Wooley, Otto and Geneva Shindler,
and Ron Knox.

Donors:

Carol Vedder, Jim and Alyce Cawdrey,
Tom and Jan Gookin, C.C. Bechtal,
Harvey and Betty Hiley, Elsie Jarvis,
Keith and Donna Young, Barbara Dodrill,
Barbara Scherer and Mary Capps.



Proclamation

First Presbyterian Church

On behalf of the Common Council of the City of Bandon, I, Mayor Mary Schamehorn, extend the most cordial civic greetings and good wishes on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the founding of the First Presbyterian Church of Bandon.



On the 6th day of February in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety-one, the First Presbyterian Church of Bandon was organized by Reverend Eneas McLean. In April of the same year it was formally received by the Presbytery of South Oregon now known as the Presbytery of the Cascades and was incorporated on May 27, 1891.

The history of the First Presbyterian Church is closely linked with the City's history, being founded in the same month and year as Bandon was incorporated. It was the first Protestant Church in Bandon. Construction of the church began in 1891. On April 17, 1911, the church and manse were destroyed by a fire but three years later a second church was completed. A second fire devastated the City on September 26, 1936, and again the church and City were rebuilt. Its pastors and members have had leading roles in the community as appointed and elected officials and as vital participants in the life of the City.

The citizens of Bandon of all faiths and creeds pay tribute to the contributions made by their fellow citizens of the Presbyterian faith to the growth and development of our City, and to the promotion and fostering of those religious and social ideals which inspire and motivate our democratic society.

On this 1st day of February 2016 I present this proclamation on behalf of the Council and citizens of Bandon to Reverend Bobbi Neason.

In witness thereof, I hereunto set my hand and cause the seal of the City of Bandon to be affixed on this 1st day of February 2016.

Mary Schamehorn, Mayor

MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

Of course we appreciate our members!

We appreciate that joining demonstrates an interest in and a commitment to preserving and sharing Bandon's history.

We appreciate that our volunteer core comes from the ranks of our membership.

We appreciate the members who live out of town and support the museum, even though they rarely get to visit.

We appreciate that our members responded to our November letter by contributing over \$11,000 to our annual donation drive. This response provides the single largest share of support for our approximately \$50,000 annual operating budget.

We appreciate the donations of historic artifacts, documents, photographs and information that make up the collection we exhibit. Members donated virtually everything in the museum.

We can't show our appreciation enough. But we can try a little.

**Please join us for Member Appreciation Day,
Friday, February 26.**

Visit the museum.

Bring your friends, (especially your non-member friends. They may come for free. Convince them to join.)

Join us after hours for the **members social** from
4:00 to 6:00 pm.

We are especially eager for you to hear and see what we have been doing recently with your encouragement, support and contributions.

Let's gather as members and appreciate what we've accomplished together.

Board of Directors
Bandon Historical Society

MUSEUM LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

The museum launched a new version of its website February 1 to coincide with our annual reopening day. The site may be found at

www.bandonhistoricalmuseum.org.

Volunteer Bob Coraor built and will maintain the site. The Coraors split the year between homes in Bandon and Pennsylvania. Bob put the finishing touches on the site during heavy east coast snow storms.

The museum's website was established and has been run for many years by Andy Christensen. Andy and Bob worked together to transfer the domain to a new manager. "We want to thank Andy for all the time and expertise he has given," said board president Jim Proehl.

The new website already has lots to explore and provides many avenues in which to grow. It will provide the museum community additional ways to share information, photographs, articles and links.

The site will continue to be a place for members to find out about events and activities.

"Working with Bob has been a good reminder that a volunteer can serve the museum without being physically on site," said Proehl. "It helps spark our imagination as to additional ways we can share the community's history. Bob is open to both suggestions and contributions."

The museum also maintains an active Facebook page.

Continued From Page 4 New Exhibits

Paula Colgrove has volunteered to manage the museum gift shop and used January to take inventory and rearrange the stock.

Doreen Colbert, Elaine Stohler and Barbara Scherer worked on a project, funded by the Coquille Tribal Community Fund, to move the museum's stored artifacts and documents into better storage systems.

"I think the public will be impressed with what we've done with the exhibits," said Executive Director Judy Knox. "I hope everyone will come in and see the work our volunteers have done to put our old objects in a new setting."

JOIN THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

YES! Please accept my membership in the Bandon Historical Society

Enclosed is my check

(please check one)

\$15 Individual NAME _____

\$25 Family ADDRESS _____

\$35 Business CITY _____ STATE ZIP _____

\$250 Life PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

\$500 Benefactor

\$1000 Patron

If you would like to contribute to the Bandon Historical Society

A check is enclosed for \$ _____

Please make check to BHS and mail to: Bandon Historical Society, PO Box 737, Bandon, OR 97411

THANK YOU!

A P U B L I C A T I O N O F T H E B A N D O N H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y

P.O. BOX 737
BANDON, OREGON 97411



BANDON HISTORICAL
SOCIETY MUSEUM