



THE BANDON LIGHT

Sponsored by: Descendants of

Merle and Mary Moody

A PUBLICATION OF THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

When Langlois was a Pea Picking Place

In the 1940s, Langlois was the place to pick peas.

Bonnie Jensen Cox and her sister Judy Snyder were in the museum this fall helping sort the Cheever collection of Langlois photos. A picture of a row of pea plants sparked a discussion of the Arthur Grassley pea patch. Bonnie dug into the story and shared her pea picking research.

The *Coos Bay Times*, September 7, 1940, reported, "The pea harvest is on down at Langlois and if the shade of the late A. H. Thrift is observing he may wonder what goes on there, for the fertile acres upon which he established his homestead on Floras Creek are thronged with persons intent upon their task—moving up and down the green aisles of the field, gathering fat pods of edible peas. And well may he wonder, for such a crop was not envisioned when he laid down his shovel and gold pan at the Randolph mines to become one of the pioneer husbandmen of northern Curry County."

The Thrift Place, where Grassley ranched and had his pea patch, was directly west of Langlois. It adjoined the Star Ranch owned by H. H. Hansen, maker of Langlois Blue Cheese.

Art Strain (father of Anabelle Strain Haga) was one of the foremen. He monitored the pickers, each of whom was given a basket to fill. Pickers deposited the peas in a trailer and were given a ticket.



The group photo from the pea picking page in the 1944 Langlois Panther yearbook.

Two years later, the *Times* reported, "Last fresh peas for the 1942 market in the United States are on a 75-acre tract owned by Andrew Grassley, Langlois rancher. The Grassley ranch, reaching down to the Pacific Ocean beach, will use 100 pickers starting next week to rush the peas to the fresh vegetable markets. The Marshfield office of the United States employment service is rustling the pickers now and expects to have them on hand for the starting day."

Langlois peas were marketed under the Surf-Kist label.

During World War 2, when workers were in short supply, the Langlois School Board granted six days for picking peas. The 1944 Langlois *Panther* yearbook included a Pea Picking page. The senior class won the class competition to pick the most hampers per person. The freshmen came in second. "We were glad to be able to help Mr. Grassley harvest his crop, feeling it our patriotic duty to do so," opined the yearbook editors.

The *Western World* for June 15, 1944, bore the headline "Prominent Rancher of Curry County Dies" and reported that Arthur Grassley died unexpectedly at age 47.

Bertha, Arthur's widow, carried on the business for a time.

The fresh Langlois peas were shipped out of Marshfield by rail to Washington DC, Buffalo, New York City and Los Angeles.

The *Coos Bay Times*, September 8, 1944, reported, "A carload of peas was sent on its way from here to

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A publication of the
**Bandon Historical Society
Museum**

Executive Director.....Gayle Hankwitz
Native American Consultant... Reg Pullen

Board of Directors

President.....Donna Mason
Vice President..... Mary Schamehorn
Secretary.....Faye Albertson
Treasurer.....Jim Proehl

Board Members

Kathy Dornath	Rick Hinojosa
Mary Stewart	Nancy Murphy
Reg Pullen	Brian Vick
Elaine Stohler	

The Board meets the fourth Tuesday of each month,
4:00 pm at the Museum. All members and guests
are welcome to attend.

Newsletter Layout

Jim Proehl

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a 501(c)(3) organization

If you are interested in Bandon's history and
would like to help preserve our past for future gener-
ations, call us—we need you.

The Museum is OPEN Monday through Satur-
day 10-4 and 7 days a week June through Septem-
ber.

Volunteers are waiting to help you and answer
your questions about Bandon's history.

Enjoy Bandon's rich, wonderful history!

**On the corner of
Fillmore Ave. and Highway 101**

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FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

Gayle Hankwitz
Executive Director

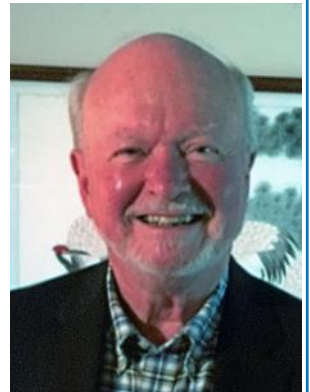
**“There is nothing permanent
except change,” Heraclitus**

The museum has received some good news
these past couple of months.

Donna Mason, one of our long-time volunteers,
was recognized at a City Council meeting as the
Greater Bandon Association Volunteer of the Month
for the month of October. Donna does so much for the
museum. She is in charge of our displays and does a
marvelous job. She also helps with anything and eve-
rything that is needed. Congratulations Donna.

Our annual fund-raising letter campaign is coming
along nicely. We are at \$13,500 raised and hopefully
more to come. Donations are what we get most of our
operating money from. We are
very grateful and appreciate
our members and community.

We were shocked and elat-
ed at the same time when we
heard Don Lynam willed his
estate to the museum. The
funds are to be dedicated to
construction of a space to hold
programs and events. The
space will be named after Don
and Joan Lynam. Don had
been to many of our events in
the past and must have no-
ticed we were lacking room. What a wonderful, gen-
erous gift. To say we are thrilled is a huge understatement.
A lot of steps need to be taken before building
begins, but we are on our way. To have an event
space has been a dream. Thanks to Don, this dream
will become a reality.



Don Lynam

The not so good news: Kathy Dornath, our longest
serving volunteer and volunteer coordinator, has been
ill for a couple of months. She was in the hospital for
two weeks and is now recuperating at her daughter's
home. We expect her to be back after our winter
break. We have missed her.

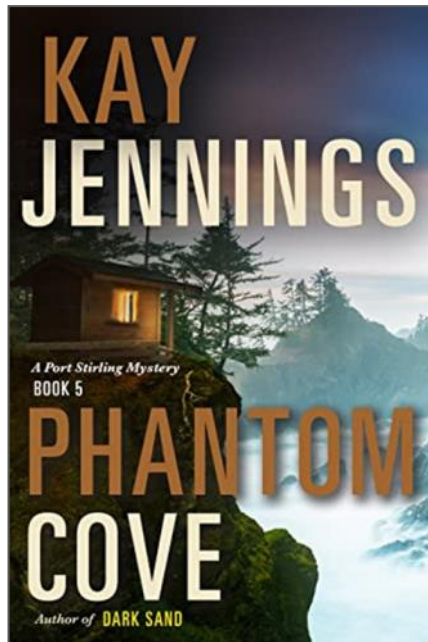
I hope everyone has a great holiday season. The
museum will take a winter break that begins at Christ-
mas time and runs through January. We look forward
to opening for the coming year on February 6. We are
inviting our members to attend our annual business
meeting on February 7, 2023, at 5:00 pm.

Phantom Cove, A Port Stirling Mystery, Now in Our Gift Shop

"The honeymoon is over for Police Chief Matt Horning...in more ways than one. Secrets from the past return, hiding a killer. Winter on the Oregon coast – it doesn't get any darker." That's the Amazon promo for *Phantom Cove*, the fifth book in the series of Port Stirling mystery novels by Kay Jennings.

Any local reader will recognize Port Stirling as a stand in for Bandon, albeit a Bandon rebuilding after being hit by a tsunami.

Book 5 in the series, *Phantom Cove*, will be available in the museum's bookstore in early December, along with the other 4 books in the series.



Kay Jennings is a member of Mystery Writers of America, Sisters In Crime, Willamette Writers, IBPA, and Oregon Writers Colony. She writes, "With my debut novel, *Shallow Waters*, I introduced a thrilling new mystery series set in my native state of Oregon, alongside our rugged Pacific coast. The second installment, *Midnight Beach*, continued the excitement with a story based on a real-life crime. *Code: Tsunami*, the third book in the series, is - I desperately hope - NOT based on a real-life future event. *Dark*

Bandon Museum Hosts SWOMA

Our museum organized and hosted a meeting of SWOMA, an informal organization of the history museums of southwestern Oregon. SWOMA member museums range from Florence to Brookings. The November 7 session included time for representatives to tour Bandon's Museum. Board President Donna Mason fielded a lot of compliments.

Museums represented included the Oregon Historical Railway Museum, Curry County Historical Society, Coquille Valley Museum, Coos County Fairgrounds Museum, Coos History Museum, Coos County Logging Museum, Chetco Valley Museum and the Cape Blanco Heritage Society.

The only order of business was for members to get reacquainted and for each museum present to update its status. The last SWOMA meeting was in 2018.

The group consensus was to meet again in the spring and the Gold Beach contingent offered to host.

Sand, the fourth installment, picks up the action one year after the earthquake and tsunami.

"Born in the southwest corner of Oregon in a small town not unlike my fictional Port Stirling, I now live in Estacada, Oregon, with my charming husband, Steve, a technology entrepreneur."

A Kindle version of *Phantom Cove* is currently available but we hope everyone will buy their copies in the museum gift shop. And we're throwing out the teaser that a "meet the author" event could be on the horizon in the new year.

One reviewer left this post on Amazon.

5.0 out of 5 stars Another Port Stirling winner!

Reviewed in the United States on November 20, 2022.

I am happy to acknowledge my family's rather new connection to the town that serves as the model for Port Stirling! And, it was the ladies at the museum there who put us onto Kay Jennings. We were hooked by Book One in the series. The characters, plot lines, dialog - so easy to connect with; it's been amusing trying to match up the locales. This book was especially satisfying, but since our author has promised a Book 6, I must, as they say, STAY TUNED!

The museum is open regular hours through Friday, December 23.

Closed December 24 through February 5.

We reopen Monday, February 6, 2023.

All members are invited to our Annual Meeting, Tuesday, February 7, at 5:00 PM.

When Langlois was a Pea Picking Place

Continued from Page 1.

New York yesterday, the fifth carload of the season to be shipped from Marshfield, all produced on the 114-acre planting started near Langlois by Andrew Grassley in 1940 and now carried on by his widow Mrs. Bertha Grassley.

"These are the finest peas I've ever seen," said E R Ivie, (vegetable marketer) who was helping load and ice the car at the Chas. Feller fish market. "The people here don't realize what we have. There is a fog there every morning causing the vines to become completely wet. In the ground the moisture is never less than three inches from the surface and besides all that the place never gets warm—the peas are picked cold," Ivie said. "They all receive the very highest government grade."

Not long after the war, the patch was allowed to go to seed. But for a time, Langlois was the place for peas.

Member Annual Meeting and Board Election to be in February

The Bandon Historical Society will hold an annual membership meeting and annual board member and board officers' election with a gathering at the museum Tuesday, February 7, at 5:00 pm. The meeting will give members a chance to hear a review of the past year, a preview of the coming year and an annual financial report. It will also be an opportunity for members to see the what's new on the exhibit floor after the museum's January closed period. Refreshments will be served.

A vote of members will be taken to affirm the slate of officers for the coming year and the election of four board members to a three-year term. At the October board meeting, the board recommended as a slate of officers for the coming year: President, Donna Mason; Vice-President, Mary Schamehorn; Secretary, Faye Albertson; and Treasurer, Jim Proehl.

Board members are elected to serve three-year terms and board positions are staggered so that four positions are elected each year. The board recommended reelecting Rick Hinojosa, Brian Vick and Mary Schamehorn to three-year board positions and electing Berta Dargen to fill the board position formerly held by Doreen Colbert.

At the October meeting, the board also voted to reinstate Elaine Stohler to her board position. Elaine resigned from the board earlier in the year when she planned to move away from the community. She has since changed her plans.

Berta Dargen is the board's recommendation for its one open position. For 31 years, Berta was a college administrator in Arkansas, Missouri and Oregon, most recently serving as Vice President of Instruction at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg. She then served as administrator at a senior independent living facility for nine years. Berta has served on numerous boards throughout her life. In 2018 she bought a house in Bandon, moving here full-time in 2020. She's enjoyed learning more about Bandon as she volunteers in the museum, scanning and cataloging old photos, covering at the front desk, or assisting whenever school children visit.

For the past several years, the Historical Society has sent out ballots for members to return. The bylaws also provide for the election to be by vote of the members at the annual meeting. The board chose that option for this year.

Board officer Jim Proehl said, "It seems kind of silly to hold elections with only one candidate for each office, but that's not uncommon for non-profit boards, where the challenge more often is finding someone willing to serve rather than deciding among competing candidates. The annual election process maintains an avenue for the membership to correct the direction of an organization that gets off course."

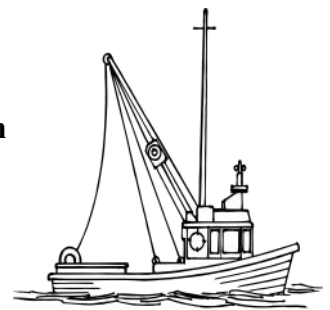


Volunteer Berta Dargen helps fourth graders complete the "Cheesy Challenge." Berta has been nominated to fill an open seat on the museum board. Three fourth-grade classes from Ocean Crest School visited the museum November 21.

New Members:

Individual and Family Members:

**Harv Schubothe
Theresa Snyder
Royce and Laura Brownfield
Richard Herr
Sally J. Jurkowski
Lynne Santos
Steven Coraor
Linda Crew Zachrisson
Susan Gray
Gene Quilhaugh
George Shaw
David and Lisa Pogue**



New Life Members

**Mitch Moody
Heather Tenbrock
Dave and Penny Wright
Bruce Held and family**

Ten Thousand Scans Later, Digitization Project is Complete

A project that involved scanning over ten thousand documents and dealing with more than 17,000 names came to a successful conclusion in October. Bob and Susan Coraor completed the process of creating a digital, online database from the files of the museum's obituary collection.

"Several years ago, while discussing possible future projects at the museum, past Director Judy Knox mentioned that she used the obit files several times each workday. She felt it would be an interesting resource for everyone if the obits could be digitized and made available both within the museum computer system, and to outside visitors to the website who were seeking genealogy and local history information," reported Bob and Susan.

"And so, we began to plan the website. Our son, Steven, provided the database IT support, and together we came up with a program that would handle this type of file. It then became a 'family project.'

"The task of scanning the obituary cards continued for six years. We photographed available grave markers at the Bandon-Averill Pioneer Cemetery, G.A.R. Cemetery and Holy Trinity Cemetery. The photos have been added to the individual's obit page, if available."

The obituaries were posted as scanned, so the online collection has been growing over the past six years.

When Paul and Jewell Shelton began collecting and filing obituaries, some in the museum community thought the couple was devoting a lot of hours to doing work no one would ever use according to former museum board member Andy Christensen. They were working in the early days of personal computers. A microfilm reader was an important tool in their project. The Sheltons built the obituary file and worked with others to produce several obituary notebooks. The Sheltons have since passed away. Kathy Dornath continued to collect and file obituaries.

It was the file cabinet filled with clippings and the data base of local burials gathered by the Sheltons that Bob and Susan tackled to create the online resource.

"After 6 years of scanning the 10,000 plus file cards, we are surprised that our \$88 Brother printer-scanner has been able to survive without fail," said the Coraors.

The Coraors found some especially interesting obituaries during the scanning process. "Duffy, the Town Dog" was a 1909 obituary. It said everyone in town had a claim on him and he could "do most anything that any ordinary man could" including play ball like a professional.

"That which contributed to Bandon's growth was also a source of profound sadness. Wind and wood, fire and

water took many to early graves. The lives of lumberjacks, mariners, those who fought two devastating fires in 1914 and 1936, and others who played too close to a capricious ocean and turbulent river



are recorded in the obituaries," observed Susan and Bob.

Judy Knox was prescient in saying that the obituary collection is a tool used daily at the museum and the digitizing project done by Bob and Susan has made it faster and easier to use and accessible from beyond the museum.

Because the data base is accessible to people doing online searches, a number of people doing genealogical searches have found ancestors, and by extension have found the Bandon Museum, through the obit database. Many follow up with visits to the museum.

The most direct way to access the obituary collection is to visit the museum's web site, open the collections tab, and pull down the genealogy tab to access the search engine.

Keiser Fund Awards a Grant for the Coming Year

The museum was notified recently that the Mr. and Mrs. Michael L. Keiser Fund – Bandon Dunes Golf Resort will grant \$3,500 to use as general operating funds for the coming year.

Museum volunteers applied for the grant earlier in the fall. LeeAnn Remy McCradic, Director of Community Relations for the Bandon Dunes Resort, administers the grant program.

The Mr. and Mrs. Michael L. Keiser Fund has given grants to the museum for many years. "We are grateful for their continued generous support," said Director Gayle Nix.

Photo Find: Shipboard Photo Ties to Item in Maritime Collection

A photo in an album donated by Diane Blake Lewis adds context to an item in the museum's maritime collection. A sextant, once owned and used by Captain Karl Rosenblad, has been on display in our maritime room for many years. A recently scanned photo is likely Captain Rosenblad.

Though these photos are unlabeled and undated, the life ring in the photo of the couple aboard ship identifies the ship as the *Alvarado*. The *Alvarado* was owned and operated by Moore Mill and Lumber Company. Coastal steamers typically carried both cargo and passengers. Karl Rosenblad lived in Bandon for over 50 years and captained Moore Mill and Lumber vessels.

Though not a certainty, it's highly likely that the distinguished man at the helm is Captain Rosenblad.



A sextant used by Captain Karl Rosenblad has been in the museum's collection for many years. Recently found photos add context to the object.



The couple aboard the Alvarado is on the same album page as the photo of the man at the helm of the ship.



Veteran's Minute: Alene Kent Had A Complex Military Journey

Here's a veteran's story from the museum in Bandon.

Her first husband survived the war, but died in the woods. Alene Singleton married Roy Biescke in 1940 while she was still a senior at Bandon High. He served in the U.S. Air Corps for duration of World War II; she served her country during the war as a Rosie the Riveter.

Roy was killed falling a tree in 1951. Alene enlisted in the Air Force in 1952 and rose through the ranks to staff sergeant. She was stationed in England during the Cold War where she met and married Paul Kent, an airman from Boston.

When Paul's enlistment ended, the couple moved to Bandon, raised cranberries, and reared a son who



Alene's first husband, Roy Biescke, served in the Army Air Corps during World War 2.



As Alene Biescke, she reached the rank of staff sergeant in the Air Force.



Alene met airman Paul Kent in England. She resigned from the service when they married.

graduated from Bandon High.

Generations of Bandon students knew Mrs. Kent as a bus driver.

Paul Kent liked to introduce Alene as his war bride, but there was much more to her military experience.

That's a veteran's story from Bandon's Museum.

History Minute: Bandon Gets a Flood for Christmas

Here's a little history from the museum in Bandon.

Almost five inches of rain fell on December 25, 1940. The combination of heavy rain, high tides and strong winds gave Bandon a flood for Christmas.

Water from Ferry Creek, held up by the narrow bridge over Highway 101, formed a rushing river the full width of the highway. Rowboats took to the streets.

Water flowed into the rooms of the Bob-Otto Court and swirled around its service station gas pumps.

Floodwaters filled the auditorium of the movie theater. The musty smell lingered until the theater was torn down in 1984.



A rower navigates Highway 101 during the Christmas flood of 1940. A Christmas tree tops City Hall, the building that now houses the museum.

City crews used a cat to drain the water from the streets but ran into an obstacle when they came to the retaining walls along the river. They blasted the bulkheads with dynamite to give Ferry Creek a channel back to the Coquille River.

Just four years after the 1936 fire, the Christmas flood of 1940 was a gift nobody wanted.

That's a little history from Bandon's Museum.



A boatload of boys paddle past The Gull Café on the south side of Highway 101. The treeless hillside is a legacy of the 1936 fire.

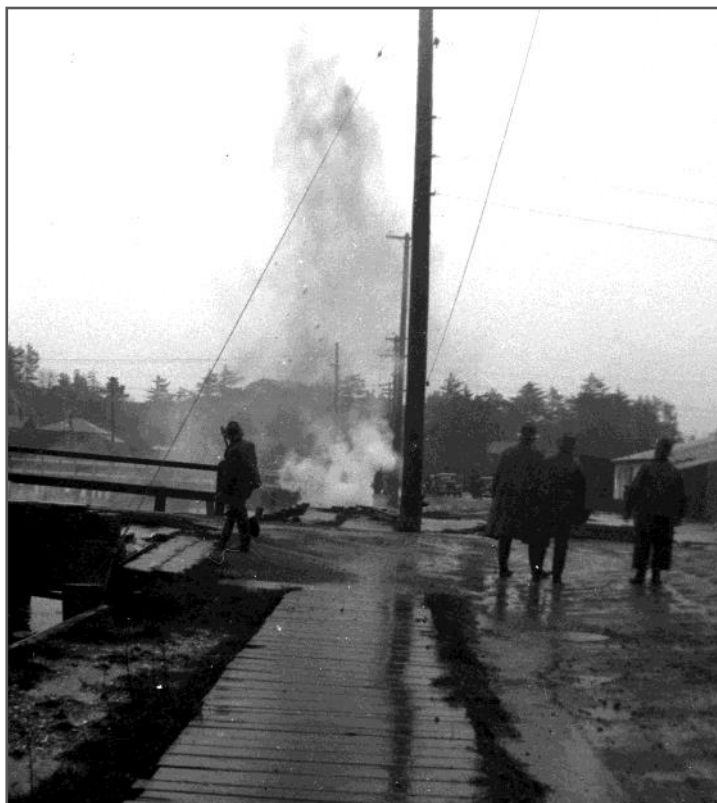
Memorial Donations

A memorial donation has been made in the name of:

Martha Crew Zwetz	Don Lynam
Sandra Norris	Lupe Converse
Henry Strain	Rose Strain
Jerry Quillen	Sheridan Quillen
Maxine Quillen	Randall George Domenighini

A memorial donation has been made by:

Kathy Dornath	Sharon and Doug Moy
Judy Knox	Jim and Alyce Cawdrey
Jeanette Todd	Peter K. C. Fong
Donna Reilly	Darrin Quillen
Rebecca Johnson	



City workers blasted a channel through the bulkheads along First Street to give Ferry Creek a channel back to the Coquille River.

JOIN THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

YES! Please accept my membership in the Bandon Historical Society

Already a member? Please consider a donation to help support your museum.

(please check one)

\$20 Individual _____ NAME: _____
\$30 Family _____ ADDRESS: _____
\$250 Life _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____
I'm a Member _____ and would like to make a tax deductible donation in the amount of \$ _____

Please make check payable to BHS and mail to:

Bandon Historical Society, PO Box 737, Bandon OR 97411

For more information on benefits of memberships go to

<http://www.bandonhistoricalmuseum.org/membership.html>

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