



THE BANDON LIGHT

A PUBLICATION OF THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A Tale from the Averill Cemetery

By Jim Proehl

We were just about to put on a museum program called “Tales from the Cemetery: Amazing Stories from the Averill Cemetery,” when the



Bernard Bretherton, left, was part of the first party to climb Washington's Mt. Olympus.

COVID situation forced us to postpone. I've done “Tales from the Cemeteries” programs about the Bullards Cemetery and the GAR Cemetery, but my longest association is with the Averill Cemetery.

Before I became involved with the museum, I got involved with mowing the Averill Cemetery, just down Division Street from my house. Recruited to help by Paul Shelton, I did not suspect he was an “agent” of the Historical Society. Each trip to the cemetery made me more curious about the people buried there.

One headstone that captured my interest was a flat marker, just a few yards south of Lord Bennett's more impressive monument. The marker had the name Bernard J. Bretherton and the epitaph “Olympic Explorer & Naturalist.”

Every time I mowed over Bretherton's headstone, I wondered what that meant. Did the Olympics once have an exploring competition? Did he travel to Greece? Was

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We're Looking for “A Little Help”

“Frankly, we are not going to dry up and blow away without this grant. We are looking for ‘a little help’ to continue to honor our mission,” read the text of a COVID relief-grant application the museum submitted to the Oregon Community Foundation. Applying for relief-grants is one strategy to keep the museum financially stable in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

The museum's mission is to collect, preserve and share local history. The “collect and preserve” portions of the mission go on, even when our opportunities to “share” are limited.

We closed our doors to the public in mid-March. The museum averages \$25.00/day in admission fees, which cover about a quarter of each day's cost of operation. (The balance comes from grants, sponsorships, membership, gift shop sales and donations.) The museum does not save much money by not being open.

The checking account is in the black for now.

We are fortunate that past museum patrons established and built a “Sustainability Fund,” a reserve fund invested in the market. We can draw upon the Sustainability Fund if necessary, though hope not to.

We're not a big player in our community's economy, but we take pride in shopping locally, paying our bills on time and staying in touch through our website, newsletters and local advertising.

To anyone who would like to help the museum get through the closure, we suggest a \$25 donation—the equivalent of a lost day of admission.

A donor could get double duty from that amount by giving someone else a gift membership or designating it as a memorial.

We'll survive, but would welcome “a little help.”

A publication of the
Bandon Historical Society

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

Jim Proehl

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a 501(c)(3) organization

270 Fillmore Ave. & Hwy 101

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Gayle Nix

From the Desk of the Director

Gayle Nix
Executive Director

We barely had time to show off our new floors after we opened in February before we had to close again because of COVID 19.

We had some great programs planned. Jim Proehl would have shared “Tales of the Averill Cemetery” in March sponsored by the Farm and Sea Market. For April, Chas Waldrop Real Estate sponsored “Bandon in the roaring 20’s” to include Bob Shaffar and Friends playing music from that era.

Coastal Mist was scheduled to do a program, with samples, on the “History of Chocolate.” Rick Hinojosa was coordinating with the Coast Guard to do a program. We had some Free Summer Sundays programs in the works, including a couple of gold panning days. We’ve postponed our June car klatch.

We've put our long-timer gatherings on hold. I miss those gatherings because I learn so much from them.

It's doubtful we will have any large-group, indoor gatherings this year. Perhaps our first events can be outdoors. I'd appreciate some creative suggestions

We have definitely been busy behind the scenes. I have been updating and sorting through some old, old paperwork. Volunteers have been refreshing some displays and have a brand new one: "Gold, Wind and Golf" on the history of Whiskey Run. It's very interesting.

We don't know when our exhibit space will reopen. When we reopen, Summer Sundays will definitely be free. We are going to put our cranberry dresses on display from the middle of August until mid-September.

I look forward to opening again, I miss the volunteers who sit at the front desk and I miss the visitors.

It's been an interesting few months that I hope to never experience again.

When you can, make sure to come support and visit the museum and check out the changes we have made. I look forward to seeing you again.

A big “Thank You” to Bob Coraor who has done the “Newsletter Layout” for *The Bandon Light* from May of 2016 through March of 2020. Bob sometimes laid-out the newsletter from his and his wife Susan’s other home in Pennsylvania if the production time did not happen to be when they were in Bandon. Bob and Susan continue to volunteer. Bob maintains our museum Website and he and Susan are building an online archive of Bandon obituaries.

I would like to wish Carreen Pierce a very happy 90th birthday June 9th. She is one of the front desk volunteers and we really appreciate her, all of her local history knowledge, and her wonderful sense of humor!

New Exhibit Explores “The Outdoor Life”

A gun case built by Bill Phillips is the centerpiece of a new display built at the museum during the COVID 19 closure. The case showcases four rifles, three that have been in the museum’s collection for some time and one on temporary loan.



A Sharps Rifle is the signature piece in the case. For several years, the rifle hung on a rack over a doorway. It was hard to see and not well labeled, but the fact that some visitors aggressively offered to buy the rifle was a clue to its value.

Volunteer Jeff Longshaw’s offer to help document and interpret the significance of the Sharp’s Rifle was the impetus to display it better. Longshaw also loaned a rifle from his collection to display as a companion piece.

In the course of the discussion as to how better to display the rifles, Kathy Phillips “volunteered” her husband Bill to build a display case. Bill has done other cabinet and carpentry work for the museum.

When new flooring was installed in our “Industry” room during January, it made sense to refresh and upgrade some exhibits. The COVID closure extended the time available to work without disturbing visitors.

The display around the new rifle case focusses on

outdoor life. Volunteer Donna Mason found artifacts spread among other exhibits and pulled them together to tell the story of how hunting and camping moved from a means of survival to a form of recreation. Jim Proehl helped reprint and label photographs.

A grant from the Keiser Family Foundation financed the exhibit upgrade work.

“The Sharps Carbine on display was a cavalry weapon developed for the North during the Civil War and later copied by the Confederates in limited numbers. During the Civil War, special Northern units were armed with the Sharps rifle and functioned as do today’s snipers. The term “Sharpshooter” came from these units as they provided deadly accurate fire on Confederate officers.

“After the war, some units of cavalry were outfitted with Sharps that had been modified to .50 caliber rather than the original .45 caliber to better hunt buffalo. Surplus carbines were made available to the general public after the war.

“Sharps started making rifles in 1848 that had three great advantages: breach loading, various load options and incredible accuracy. The rifle was the favorite for long-range competition and after one international competition the beaten English team all bought Sharps rifles to take home,” writes Jeff Longshaw

Also, on display is a firearm from Jeff Longshaw’s personal collection. The 30-30 Winchester saddle gun was shipped to Mexico Revolutionary Pancho Villa about 1910. Letters “MX” stamped on bottom of rifle receiver authenticate it as part of a shipment from Winchester Arms to the Mexican Revolutionary in his fight against the dictatorial pres-

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Pictures of ladies preparing a camp meal are among the images displayed on a new exhibit about hunting, camping and outdoor life. A note on the back of one photo reads “Elsie and I when we were camping on Sixes River” and points out they are using their “Miller Grub Box.” Notice the tent fitted to the car. The plates on the vehicle carry a 1921 date. The photos are from the Goddard family collection.

Photo Find:

The Racket Store

Longtime volunteer and former museum board member Andy Christensen recently rediscovered this photograph among his files and brought it to the attention of other volunteers. Careful observation coupled with a little research reveals a trove of information.



The photo is in the format of a post card. A note on the back reads, "Our friends, who nearly all drown on July 4th on Coquille river in their own boat near Bandon, Ore," but the card does not appear to have been mailed.



"LET 'ER RIP," the theme of the White Cedar Festival, was meant to suggest the sound of a saw. It is similar to, "LET 'ER BUCK," the theme of the Pendleton Round-Up, which the Festival Committee was using as a model.

The photo confirms that Bandon had a hospital in 1913 and shows its location. Items in the "More or Less Personal" columns of the *Bandon Recorder* often mention someone who was recovering from an operation or amputation at Emergency Hospital.

The store is decorated for the White Cedar Festival August 25—30, 1913. The festival featured parades, a queen's court, car races, a regatta, balloon ascensions, a carnival and a Wild West Show. Though the festival was a huge undertaking and was intended to become Bandon's signature annual event, it was not repeated.



The Racket was in the Oakes building, which stood on the west side of Alabama Avenue at the corner of Second Street. Wall Street ran at an angle behind the store. The space is currently occupied by a parking lot.

Racket Store Busy.

The Racket store of Carpenter and Son has increased the variety of the stock carried until it now probably includes a larger varieties of articles than any other store in Bandon. At the Racket store is to be found anything for the baby from a rattle to a go cart. Children run there for their toys. Traveling men say the Racket store at Bandon carries the largest line of china of any store in Coos county. Ladies ready to wear goods and mens underwear etc. are included in the diversified stock of the Racket store.

Newspapers in this era often treated advertising as news. This item ran in the *Semi-Weekly Bandon Recorder*, October 28, 1913.

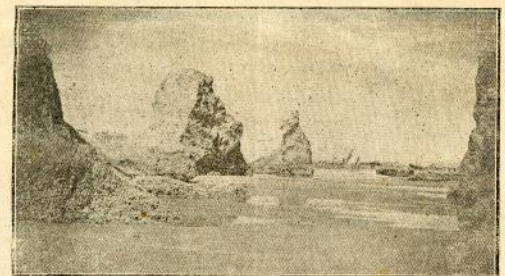
The Racket was owned and run by D W Carpenter and son, who later moved to the Pistol River and founded the community of Carpenterville in Curry County. The son, Chauncey Carpenter, survived two shipwrecks that took the lives of others. He was a strong swimmer.

BANDON

The Growing Town of Coos County

The Manufacturing Town.

The Coming Summer Resort of the Oregon Coast.



Bandon is growing faster than any town in Oregon.

Its advancement is real, not on paper.

Manufacturing plants all running and several more big industries coming.

Shipped more lumber since Jan. 1st than any port in Oregon except the Columbia.

The Coquille valley is the garden spot of the Coast country and we have the timber and coal industries

Fine openings for workers and hustlers, but grafters and hot-air artists are not wanted.

From The *Bandon Recorder*, April 5, 1906

(Continued from page 1)

he an avid reader of *The Odyssey*?

It all clicked on a visit to my brother in Tacoma. On my way home, I took a hike. Towering over Lena Lake, according to the map, was Mt. Bretherton, in the Olympic National Park on the Olympic Peninsula. Could this peak really be connected to the plot in the cemetery down the street?



Mt. Bretherton reflected in Upper Lena Lake.

It was the new millennium and I took my first journey into uncharted territory; the Internet. I don't know if Google was around yet, but my first serious internet search was to see if there was a connection between Mt. Bretherton and Bernard Bretherton.

I struck gold—or rather I found an online Bretherton family archive.

Bernard Bretherton, born in Birkenhead, Cheshire, England in 1861 was the youngest of eleven children of a British lawyer. About 1865, Bernard emigrated to the United States to join his more accomplished older brother who was living in Portland. He first worked for the railroad but gained a reputation as a taxidermist and developed a business as a “collector and preparator of zoological specimens.” His employers came to include the British Museum and the Smithsonian Institution.

It was on a three-year collecting trip to Alaska that Bernard met and married Mabel Edna Hatch in Sitka on April 30, 1891. The couple eventually had three children.

After he returned to Portland, Bernard joined a party made up of soldiers from Fort Vancouver and members of the Alpine Club of Oregon sent to visit a largely unexplored corner of northwest Washington. Bretherton was one of a party of three to plant a flag atop Washington's Mt. Olympus, September 20, 1890, the first “official” ascent of the mountain. (Exploring expeditions tended to assume Indians did not climb mountains.)

Mt. Bretherton lies along the route the exploring party followed to reach Mt. Olympus, the centerpiece of Olympic National Park.

A trip to collect specimens for both the Oregon Agricultural College (presently Oregon State University) and the British Museum took Bretherton to Newport, where

he found a job as assistant keeper of the Yaquina Lighthouse. Perhaps a government job as a lighthouse keeper, which included family living quarters, appealed to a man with a growing family. Perhaps his health was failing.

The Lighthouse Service transferred him to the Coquille River in 1901. He, Mabel and the children took up residence in the two-family keeper's house that served the Coquille River Light. February 10, 1903, Bernard died of tuberculosis, a global pandemic of his day. He was 42 years old.

The best view of the lighthouse from the Averill Cemetery is from Bretherton's headstone.

Though he didn't live long in Bandon, Bretherton lived an amazing story, and he was buried just down the street from my house. I was hooked on learning more Bandon history.



Bernard and Mabel Bretherton and their three children shared the lighthouse keeper's residence with Adam and Elizabeth Hartman and their children Walter and Florence.

The story has an amazing side note. Though women lighthouse keepers were rare, the lighthouse service was loyal to its employees. Mabel Bretherton, mother of three children under 10 years-old, became assistant keeper of the Cape Blanco Lighthouse and later the North Head Light at the mouth of the Columbia River.

When we're ready to mix in public again, we'll share more “Tales from the Cemeteries.”

A Mr. Beam from down the coast came to Bandon this week, suffering with what he supposed was poison oak. He went to Dr. Leep, who took one look and said “smallpox.” The patient has been isolated in a building on Bandon avenue where he is receiving medical care. The case is said to be in mild form.

Bandon Western World, July 1, 1920

Swimmers on the Riverton Ferry

Swimmers rest aboard the Riverton Ferry in the early 1930s. The two smaller children are Careen Molthu and her younger brother Don. Careen is a museum volunteer who is celebrated in Director Gayle Nix's column on page two. The photo is from the Pierce family collection.



New Members and Donations

New Members:

Terry Westover, Michael and Jennifer Mello, Lollana Schork, Edward Amundson, Mark M Williams, Larry Nordholm, John Baldwin,

New Life Members:

Bob Amundsen and Vikki Dane

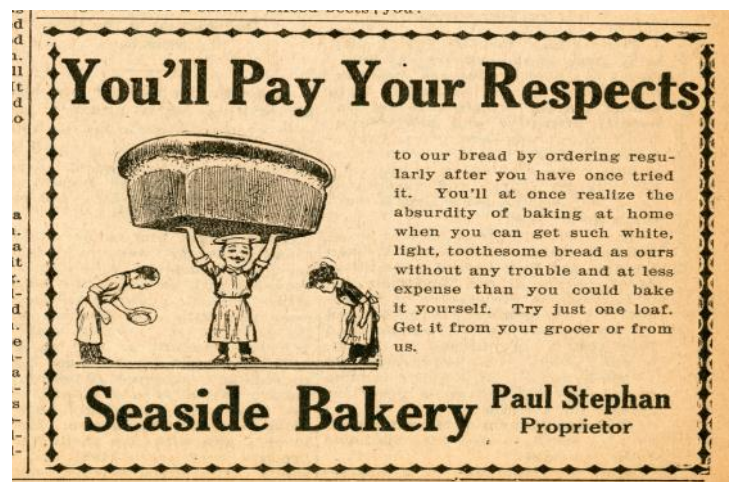
"Thank you to all who renewed your memberships."

A donation has been made in memory of:

Sonja Cram, Tom Edson, Janell Leach Elbert, Don Goddard, Harvey Hiley, Leah Jenkins, Hazel Lester, Rose Pullen, Louise Sherer, William V. Sherer Sr., Marjorie Stephenson, Darry Van Leuven

Memorial Donations have been made by

Kathy Dornath, Joan Goodbrod, Julie Johnson, Judy Knox, Midland Empire Insurance Agency, Nina McNeil, Doug and Sharon Moy, Ray and Nancy Murphy, Gayle Nix, Careen Pierce, Gary and Terry Pullen, Reg Pullen, Carolyn Russell, William and Sandra Sherer



Western World, 1923

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ident Victoriana Huerta, who was later defeated

The 10-gauge double-barrel shotgun is on display because of who owned and used it. Horace Russell was born in Douglas County in 1869 and moved with his parents to a ranch on Seven Mile Creek where he lived from 1875 until his death in 1951. He was engaged in ranching and logging during his lifetime. Horace is buried in the Russell family cemetery near Randolph.

The muzzle-loaded cap and ball rifle in the case was an advance on the earlier flintlock rifle. The percussion cap is placed over a hollow metal "nipple" at the rear end of the gun barrel. Pulling the trigger releases a hammer that strikes the percussion cap and ignites the explosive primer. The flame travels through the hollow nipple to ignite the main powder charge. Percussion caps ignited more reliably in wet weather than did the earlier firing systems.

The "flintlock" and later "cap and ball rifles" were often called Trade Guns, because they were traded with and among Indians.

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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)

\$15 Individual _____ NAME: _____
\$25 Family _____ ADDRESS: _____
\$35 Business _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
\$250 Life _____ 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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