

June, 2021

THE BANDON LIGHT

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A PUBLICATION OF THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Clara Burd Illustrations Add Color to Our Local School History

A group of five, seven-inch by nine-inch, color prints brighten up a corner of the museum and also add a little more depth to our picture of what schooling in earlier times was like along the Coquille River.

The prints, donated by Careen Pierce, were given to her by her mother-in-law Dena Pierce. Both spent their



“What Can’t Be Cured Must Be Endured”

teaching careers in Coos County schools and used the prints in their classrooms. Each print presents a childhood scene to illustrate a proverb, always with a sly touch of humor.

The prints are the work of Clara M. Burd (1873-1933), a popular and prolific artist and illustrator. Burd designed stained glass for Tiffany and Co. and illustrated books including *Heidi*, *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates*, and several titles by Louisa May Alcott. Her work was especially popular in the early decades of the 1900s.

The “Proverbs” series displayed in the museum was one among several sets of “The Famous Clara Burd Pictures” marketed to educators through North Western School Supply of Minneapolis. Articles in teachers’ magazines in the 1920s explained how teachers could use the prints to teach vocabulary, art, reading and storytelling and to brighten up a country classroom.

A set of six prints cost thirty cents.

Careen’s mother-in-law used the prints to decorate her classrooms in Coos County schools that included Fat Elk, Leneve, and Fairview, and Washington School in Coquille.

In the Bill Lansing’s book *Remember When*, Gladys Wilma Roth Greer shared this memory from Fat Elk School: “Dena Ellingsen was my first-grade school teacher, she was right out of school. It seemed like we had a lot of exercise classes. During noon hour, she had her (future) husband show us how she could hold a cigarette and he could shoot the ashes off it.

“Miss Ellingsen went back to school and later became Dena Pierce. She went to work in the

Coquille School District and was a very good teacher for many years. She never forgot any of her students’ names.”

Dena Pierce passed the prints along to her daughter-in-law.

“I used them more to show what artwork for children was like in an earlier time. I shared them with my classes as pieces of history,” said Careen, who taught at Riverton, Bandon Heights, and Ocean Crest schools.

The original set of prints had six cards, but it’s understandable that one would have disappeared during several decades of classroom use. Look for the prints in the section of the museum that exhibits toys, dolls, and other childhood objects.

THE BANDON LIGHT

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

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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 gen-
erations, call us—we need you.

The Museum is OPEN Monday through Satur-
day 10-4 and 7 days a week Memorial Day through
the Cranberry Festival weekend in September.

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

Enjoy Bandon's rich, wonderful history!

Located at: 270 Fillmore Avenue, Bandon, OR

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

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FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

Gayle Nix
Executive Director

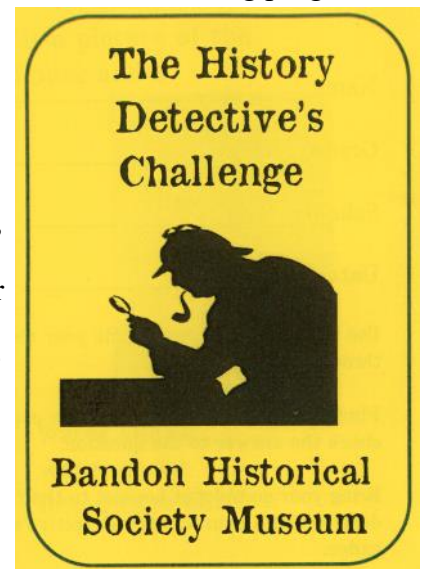
Memorial Day weekend we started our Free Summer Sundays that will run through the Cranberry Festival Weekend. The free Sunday admission is sponsored by a grant from the First Interstate Bank Foundation and a donation of framed pictures by the Best Western, Inn at Face Rock. The pictures, for sale for \$30 each in our gift shop, are large, beautifully framed, matted images of the Bandon, Cape Arago and Cape Foulweather lighthouses.

We received a COVID-19 relief grant from the Coquille Tribal Community Fund in the amount of \$2,610, which will be devoted to preserving and protecting our collection despite our revenue being reduced by decreased attendance. The Coquille Tribe has been a reliable grant partner for many years, as has been the City of Bandon Revenue Sharing program which has awarded us \$2,500 that will be devoted to keeping our building looking sharp inside and out.

As the rules change for gatherings, we are thinking that some outdoor summer events could pave our pathway back to gathering as we used to. We're brainstorming ways we can share some history in the parking lot and host some outdoor kids' events. We would especially like to revive our gold-panning event for kids. We'd love to find more gold-panning volunteers.

Of course, you can already bring the kids or grand-kids to the museum to take the History Detective's Challenge (or The History Detective's **Next** challenge if they've been in before). And while you are looking for challenges, grab one of our brochures and take a self-guided Healthy Historic Hike.

We have heard rumblings that when the Bandon Playhouse is ready to host audiences again, their first offering may be a new adaptation of *Bandon Burns!*, the play that was so well received when done by The Gaels readers theater group. We're excited.



New Book Tells the Story of Coos County's Pioneer Doctors

Pioneer Doctors of Coos County Oregon, another book by local author William A. (Bill) Lansing, has just come off the press and is ready for sale. Lansing's book *The Mills that Built Coos Bay, Oregon*, was published last year.

Bill's deluxe edition books are professionally produced, rich with photos and "weigh a ton" according

to museum director Gayle Nix. Lansing often uses photos from the Bandon museum's collection.

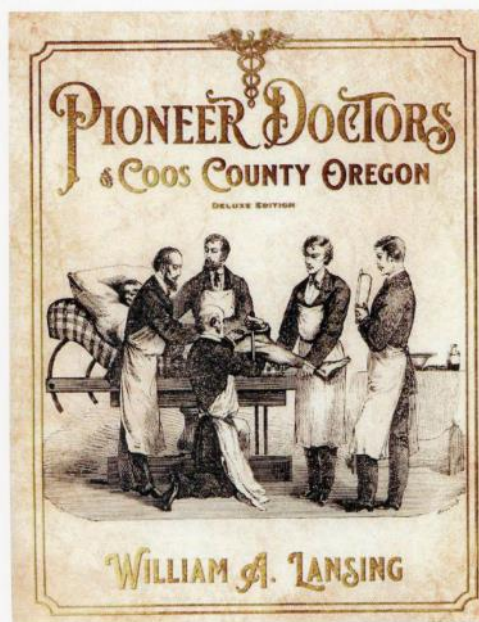
"I undertook research into the pioneer doctors of Coos County in order to capture the history of the trained medical doctors (and other 'doctors'—since some never had a medical degree) who found their way

to Coos County in the early years of the area's development," said Lansing. A few came to settle for the long term, making a career out of serving the communities of our county and retiring after decades of practicing, while others came and then, for numerous reasons, left the region after a few short years. The book further documents the history of the medical schools in Oregon, medical licensing, our local hospitals and for fun, a few stories about quackery."

The best way to purchase *Pioneer Doctors of Coos County Oregon* is to contact the author directly at bill@billlansing.com. "Or you can buy it from Amazon and pay a little more," adds Bill.

Bill Lansing is the former President and CEO of Menasha Forest Products Corporation headquartered in North Bend. He and his wife Ann have made their home in North Bend since 1969. Bill retired in 2006 and has written several books about the area. His titles include *Remember When*, a history of early Coos County schools, *Camps and Calluses*, about the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in southern Oregon, a history of Southwestern Oregon Community College, and *It Takes a River to Make a Fish*.

Several of Lansing's books can be purchased in the museum's gift shop.



Congratulations Graduate Elli Schulz



Congratulations are in order to Elli Schulz upon her graduation from Bandon High School as a member of the class of 2021. Elli worked for us as a summer student employee in 2019. It's her voice we hear on the radio sharing "A Little Bit of History from the Museum in Bandon."

Elli and her classmates have had a historic school experience

and we congratulate them all.

Elli will attend Stanford University in the fall.

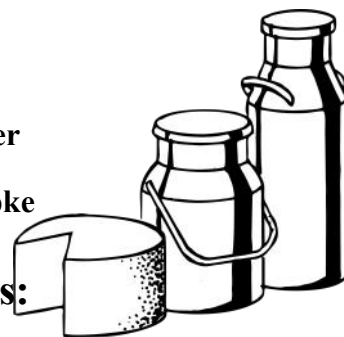
New Members

New Members:

Renee Marineau
Gary and Andrea Remy
Gene and Helen Schrader
Vera Turner and family
David and Beverly Koepke
Carl Olsen

New Life Members:

Bill and Carla Smith
Bobbi and George Neason



Bring Us Your McKay's Receipts— And Visit Us More Often

McKay's Markets continue to support local organizations by giving a return on McKay's receipts collected by organizations. The McKay's Market Advantage Sales Receipt Program has been a source of museum funding for many years. The program used to accept receipts up to a year after the purchase date but has reduced that time limit to six months.

So, continue to bundle up those McKay's receipts, bring them to the museum and use them as an excuse to drop in and see us more often.



McKay's Market manager Jim Cornish and police chief "Big Mac" MacDonald in 1974.

One Chapter in the Swimming Pool Saga: Digging the Hole, 1955

The story of the effort to build a community swimming pool in Bandon is a saga with many chapters and, to date, no conclusion. One rich chapter took place in 1955 when the project backers got so far as to bulldoze the hole for the pool. It's not hard to track the beginning of a project and easy to follow it in full throttle. It's not so easy to document when and why a project runs out of gas.



A close look at the photo above helps locate the spot where a hole was dug for the community pool in 1955. To the right is the corner of the Bandon High School building that burned in 1974. In the distance is Ocean Crest School. That location is now occupied by Harbor Lights Middle School.

“Let’s Build That Swimming Pool”

The first mention of a pool project in 1955 is a February *Western World* article that reported the Lions Club had tentative plans to build a community pool, but the Lions made clear it would need to be a community-wide project and called a meeting of representatives from every interested group in town to support and organize the project. A pool committee separate from but under the auspices of the Lions Club formed. The consensus was that the pool would be open by July.

Fundraising went into full swing, with just about every major business and civic organization in town pitching in. The annual Auto Show at Tanglewood became a particular focus for fundraising. The big event became the annual Talent Show put on by the Bandon Women’s Civic Club, which for 1955, became a benefit for the pool project.

In the early stages of planning, the Coquille Community Pool was the model for the Bandon

Curry Boat Club Helps Swim Pool

Alden Boice of Langlois was in Bandon Tuesday and presented a check for \$50 to Raleigh Greene from the North Curry Boat club, the money to go into the Swimming Pool fund. The boat club is a non-profit organization that holds races on Floras lake. All the profits go for civic projects.

As soon as weather permits the club will have a bulldozer at work on lots at Floras Lake where they plan to install camping facilities for the Boy Scouts.

The club now is planning a dance to be held at Tanglewood Saturday, June 11, the proceeds from which will be divided with the Bandon Swimming Pool fund.

In the spring of 1955, stories about the swimming pool project peppered the pages of the Western World. With the passing of summer, pool stories faded away.

their great-grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Bailey

HELP GET THAT SWIMMING POOL

Come to the BENEFIT DANCE SAT. TANGLEWOOD APRIL 2
10:00 to 1:00

LUCKY BAILEY AND HIS WESTERN SWING BAND

Admission \$1.00 per person

Sponsored by Bandon Lions Club

PROCEEDS FOR BANDON SWIMMING POOL



Versions of this add with different dates, programs and locations ran in the Western World throughout 1955.

Continued on Page 5.

Swim Pool Excavation Completed

Excavation Completed for Bandon Community Swimming Pool



Bandon's swimming pool project, spearheaded by the Bandon Lions club but in which all organizations and individuals of the community are asked to participate, is now well under way with the final excavation for the pool completed last Sunday.

The Lions club committee composed of Ernest Wehner, Raleigh Greene and Howard Tucker, has announced that through the co-operation of School District No. 54C and Superintendent George Lienkaemper, the site chosen for the pool is at the rear of the high school building, which at a future date will be incorporated along side a proposed new gymnasium.

Surplus soil from the excavation is to be pushed into the adjacent gully after drainage pipe is laid and what is now worthless ground in a sheltered area will become a future site for a tennis court.

Plans for the pool, submitted by the State Board of Health, have been accepted by the committee. After a few minor alterations in regard to dressing rooms, the plans will be sent back to the state for final approval.

Size of the pool will be 40x60 feet. Total cost for the open pool, similar to the one at Coquille, is estimated by a reliable contractor at present price levels at not to exceed \$12,000. This includes

Other Needs Captured the Energy of the Community as 1955 Drew On

Continued from Page 4.

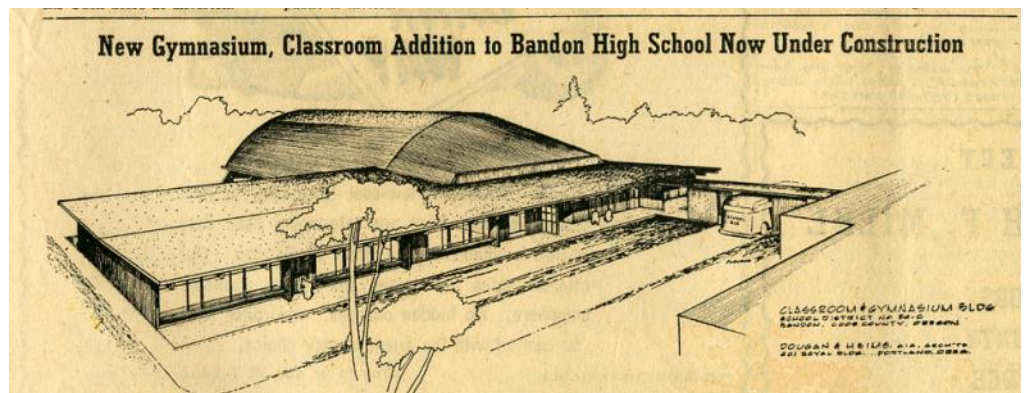
project. As the project progressed, consensus grew that the Bandon pool needed to be bigger than Coquille's. The plans grew in size and complexity.

Not long after volunteers excavated the hole for the pool, another story received heavy coverage in the local paper: Bandon would be without a hospital unless a hospital district was formed. (The Leep Hospital, which had served the community for years, could not be recertified by the state). Many of the names associated with the pool project became significant players in the complex process of forming a hospital district, then in the campaign to pass a hospital bond.

It was announced in July that swimming lessons would be held at the Coquille pool because the Bandon pool project was behind schedule. Fundraising efforts continued in the summer, but not with the frequency of the spring. By fall, stories about the pool disappeared from the pages of the *Western World*.

Another growing issue was the need to meet the expanding school population. Civic leaders were tapped to guide a building strategy and campaign for a school bond election.

The pool doesn't show up in the paper again until October of 1956, when the pool committee provided a financial accounting and reminded donors they could request a refund, as the Women's Civic Club had already done. The group reaffirmed their support of the pool and set the date for a meeting to reorganize. There is no follow-up news from that meeting.



The hole for the swimming pool was filled in when construction began on classrooms for junior high students and a new high school gym. The building is now a wing of Harbor Lights Middle School.

Readers Help Solve: “The Case of the Captain’s Wife”

In our March issue, we presented “The Case of the Captain’s Wife,” the challenge of finding the full names of women who are often identified, as was the woman in our family photo, as “Captain Olsen’s wife” or as “Mrs. J. Olsen” in newspaper articles.

Several readers took up the research challenge and provided her with a first and middle name: Anna Catherine, aka “Annie.” In the process, we learned a lot more about the Olsen family.

The Olsens in the photo are a “blended” family. Three of the children, Willie, John and Ida, are from Captain Olsen’s previous marriage. Annie brought Mary into the family. Each adult is pictured paired with a step-daughter: Mary with John and Annie with Ida.

Captain Olsen, born in Sweden, married Eleanor “Nellie” McGrath in 1896. Their first child, John Charles, died in infancy. Children William, Ida, and John Patrick followed. Nellie died of childbirth complications after the birth of John Patrick in 1903, leaving Captain Olsen a widower. He married Annie in 1909.

Anna Catherine Phile was born in Washington DC. After Captain Olsen’s death in 1929, census records show her living in her step-son John’s household and later her step-grandson’s household. She died in 1955 at the age of 82.



The Olsen family: Mary, Captain John, Willie, John Patrick, (seated), Annie, Ida



In one sense, the Olsens are not a Bandon family: their residence was San Francisco; the children did not go to school here. But John Olsen, as captain of “The Elizabeth: The Ship that Built Bandon,” was a figure of local importance. The Olsen family made frequent trips to Bandon aboard The Elizabeth.

Both of Captain Olsen’s sons followed him into seafaring trades, as did generations of male descendants. A 1920 census reports 17-year-old Ida working as a shopkeeper.

We discovered the least about Mary, another female in the photo. She may have been Annie’s daughter from a previous relationship but she also may have been a ward Annie was responsible for. In the 1910 census, she is identified as Mary Olsen, a step-daughter, in Capt. Olsen’s household, but she is not included in the Olsen household in the 1920 report.

Carl Olsen, a descendent through John, Captain Olsen’s youngest son, contacted us to thank the museum for helping keep his family’s story alive.

We often think “modern families” are more complex than they were in the simpler days of the past. The “Case of the Captain’s Wife” reminds us that families have always been complicated.

—Memorial Donations—

A memorial donation was made in memory of:

**Bill Vincent
Jack McMahon
Glenda Hawkins
David Boice**



Memorial donations were made by:

**Ann Remy
Robert and Susan Winnop
Lawrence and Jodi McDuff
Patti Strain**

The Aviation Age Came to Bandon with Beach Landing in 1920

By Mary Schamehorn

The story I am sharing has to do with the headline "First Plane Alights Here," which topped the *Western World* in July of 1920.

"The first airplane to alight in Bandon made its appearance at 10:30 this morning, landing on the beach near the old Bennett place. It was a Canadian-Curtis plane, owned by the Oregon, Washington and Idaho Airplane company of Portland, with L.M. Briggs as pilot and Dr. L.G. Johnson of Marshfield as passenger.

"The plane came over from Marshfield for the purpose of selecting a good landing place on the beach. Tomorrow it will return at about 9 o'clock and spend the time during low tide here taking up passengers. The landing place will be on

the beach just south of the Queen Anne cottages. The flights will be between 10 and 12 minutes in length, including a trip over the town and surrounding country. The charge will be \$10 a trip."

That morning, the machine landed on the beach near the Sphinx rock (what we now call Face Rock).

H.J. McDiarmid was the first passenger to fly over Bandon.

"It circled over Bird rocks, the Coast Guard Lookout station and over the residence and business section, thence over the woodlands to Fish rock and landing again on the beach." he said. "It was the greatest ride I ever took. It was wonderful. I don't have words to express my feelings, but I know one thing, I am a confirmed airplane booster from now on. I would like to go for a real ride, say to Portland, or some point in the valley."

The next passenger was James H. Howe, then Miss Elizabeth Croxall, L.S. Houghton, Joe Stankavich, S.G. Whitsett and Wilbur Jurgenson.

"I'm ruined, completely ruined," exclaimed S.G. Whitsett when he climbed from the machine. I'm ruined, I tell you ... and when questioned as to why or how he was ruined, he elucidated: "Why, how can a man continue to operate

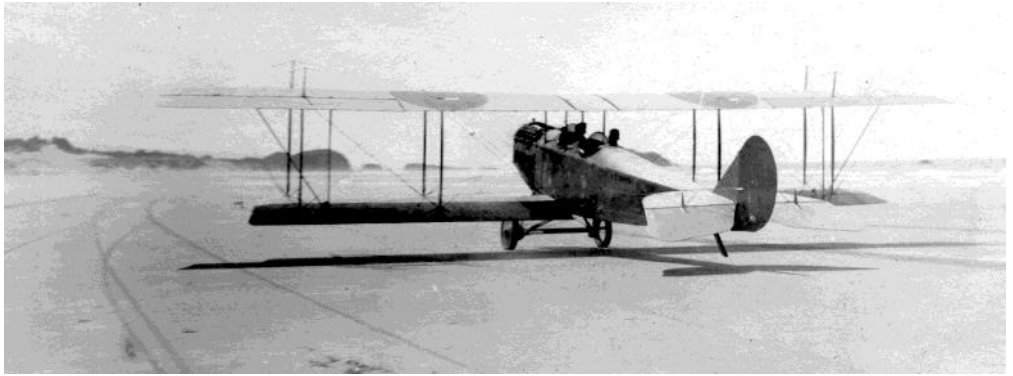
The First Bandon Lady in the Air

"Miss (Elizabeth) Croxall was a courageous and enthusiastic passenger and upon alighting almost persuaded her father it was immediately time for him to break into aviation," reported the July 29, 1920 *Western World*.

"Why, Dad, it was just scrumptious. I looked down and saw our home, I read the sign on the Standard Oil Station, I looked at main street and saw the people there. It was the greatest ride I ever took," the first Bandon woman to ride in an airplane over the city stated. "No, I wasn't the least bit frightened; it was too interesting for that."



Elizabeth Croxall, Class of '23



AIRPLANE BRINGS PHYSICIAN

Dr. Mingus of Marshfield Flies Here For Consultation

Tuesday morning Lieutenant Briggs came over from Marshfield in his plane with Dr. E. Mingus as passenger. The doctor was called here in consultation with Dr. H. L. Houston regarding the condition of Mrs. Frank McNeil who has been dangerously ill. The trip over via North Bend was made in 22 minutes.

While the physicians were busy Lieutenant Briggs took L. D. Fels-helm of Western World out for a joy ride. They made several circuits over the city, went north as far as Parkersburg and south to the Two and Four Mile country.

The landings Tuesday were made on the beach between the Lookout station and the south jetty. While there is not as much running distance at this place as at the points farther south it afforded ample room as a safe landing.

Bandon Western World, July 29, 1920

such a tame affair as a mere automobile after riding in an airplane, I'd like to know? It has taken all the joy out of riding in a car."

The flights took place again the following Sunday and in addition to the airplane attraction, "many took occasion to enjoy a dip in the surf. Surf bathing was fine. One supposes, and those having never tried it perhaps abstain in fear of the idea, that is the water is icy cold. Such is not the case. While the water is not to be compared to that of the 'ole swimmin' hole' back in the inland rivers, yet it is far from being unbearable."

The pilot told *Western World* that "Bandon beach is one of the finest places I ever landed on or took an airplane off the ground from. Its only drawback is the fact that you must depend upon the tides to give you landing field."

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)

\$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

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