

WATERWAYS

COOS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY • SUMMER 2015 • WWW.COOSHISTORY.ORG

Our New Home

The Coos County Historical Society – a non-profit organization founded in 1891 – moved into its Simpson Park location in 1958. Built with volunteer labor on land owned by the City of North Bend, CCHS told stories and managed collections there for the next 58 years. Finally, after nearly six decades, the Society has moved (four miles south) to a new home on the Coos Bay waterfront.

Our address at 1210 North Front Street in Coos Bay puts us at an historic location once the main street of Marshfield in the days when rivers were the roads of Coos County.

The new Coos History Museum sits on four acres of land at the site of old Central Dock – one of the world's busiest lumber exporting facilities from WWII to the late 1970s.

Mark Johnson of the Seattle architectural firm **Miller-Hull** was the building's designer. **Mike Crow** of Crow-Clay Architects in Coos Bay represented the museum's interests during construction. **Scott Partney Construction** of North Bend served as general contractor. Partney, who grew up in the Bay Area, has over 35 years of experience. Construction projects include the Bandon Community Center, Heritage Hall at Marshfield High, and the new hotel tower at the Mill Casino-Hotel.

CCHS broke ground for the Coos History Museum in July of 2013, and completed construction May 21, 2015, when the City of Coos Bay issued its Certificate of Occupancy. The museum



opened to the public about seven weeks later on July 3.

Almost all the funds raised for the 11,000-square-foot facility came from local citizens. More than 550 families, businesses, and organizations donated more than \$7 million to the project. Most of the project's sub-contractors and suppliers were Coos County or western Oregon businesses. Suppliers and sub-contractors include...

A Game Courts, Acacia II Painting, Ace Hardware, Art Signs, B & B Janitorial Company, Bayshore Paints, Billeter Marine, By-the-Sea-Gardens, Carson/Davis Oil, Clean Cut Landscape, Coastal Paper & Supply, Coos Head Builders, Culver Glass, Express Blinds & Beyond, Falls Insulation, Farr's True Value, Fashion Floors, Haas Contracting & Drywall, Industrial Steel & Supply, Jet Fire Protection, Knife River Materials & Concrete, Laskey-Clifton Corp, Medford Fabrication, Nasburg Huggins Insurance, C.J. O'Neil & Company, O'Neill's Overhead Doors, Otis Elevator Company, WG Peterson, Pro-Build Lumber, Reese Electric, Rich Rayburn Roofing, Rose Construction, Roto Rooter, Smith Sheetmetal,

South Coast Office Supply, Southport Forest Products, Staples, Stuntzner Engineering, Tri County Plumbing, U-Haul of Coos Bay, Umpqua Sheetmetal, United Rentals, Mike Vaughn Landscape Design, Wayne's Color Centre, and Willamette Graystone.

Dedication!

Governor Brown to appear at the museum

The Coos History Museum will hold an opening commemoration on Wednesday, September 9, 2015. Public events will run from 11 am to 6 pm. Admission will be free throughout the day.

Oregon's **Governor Kate Brown** is scheduled to appear at the museum from 1 to 2 pm.

The museum will celebrate with music and contests all day. After school hours, the museum has kids' activities scheduled inside the building and outside on the site.

Rooms with a View

The Coos History Museum offers a beautiful and lively place on the waterfront for holiday parties, weddings, receptions, depositions, board retreats, workshops, classes, or business/club meetings.



*Brandi Jaques,
Rental
Coordinator*

Local groups may rent the 1,100 sq. ft. Sprague Gallery with its catering kitchen and access to the lobby and outdoor plaza; the 930 sq. ft. Lansing Research Room upstairs with room for 50; or the small 230 sq. ft. conference room which holds up to 12 people in the northeast corner upstairs.

The museum has microphones, a computer/projector/screen system, internet service, tables, chairs, and plenty of parking. Guided tours of our exhibit hall may also be scheduled.

Cheryl Brown, South Coast Area Manager of SMART (Start Making A Reader Today), said, "The museum was the perfect venue for SMART's annual dinner and fundraiser. The Museum and views of the bay are spectacular and the space creates the ambiance we wanted for our guests. The amenities, from the electronic systems to the window coverings, are excellent and clearly well planned. Truly, the evening was wonderful, and SMART will be back in 2016."

Rental and Events Coordinator **Brandi Jaques** has been in charge of the effort since mid-spring. Those interested in hosting an event may contact her at rentals@coohistory.org, call the museum at 541.756.6320, or drop by the museum for a rental brochure with pricing and details.

Desk of the President

Hello. I'm **Bill Mast**, the new president of the Coos County Historical Society for 2015-2016.



I'm a lifelong resident of Coos County and have spent my adult life working on the family farm in Lee Valley which was established in 1873 by my great-grandfather. I graduated from Myrtle Point High School and

Oregon State University and began serving on the Historical Society Board of Trustees in 2006.

I am excited to begin my term as the new museum opens its doors and appreciate the hard work done by my predecessors on the board, and staff, to make it all possible. I'm looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the next year.

Joining me as Board officers will be **Jon Littlefield**, Vice President; **Anne Guerin**, Secretary; and **Karen O'Donnell**, Treasurer.

Meet the Education Director

Amy Pollicino joined the museum this spring to lead the museum's award-winning education program. Amy was born and raised in Long Island, New York, and was brought up to have a healthy curiosity for other people and places. She graduated from



*Amy Pollicino,
CHM Education
Director*

College of Saint Rose with a BFA and an Art Education K-12 certificate.

After travels in Europe and Latin America, her natural thirst for travel and new experiences landed her on the Oregon Coast. Being raised in a large family, with encouraging and nurturing parents, Amy loves engaging and learning with people of all ages and backgrounds.

"Amy jumped right into the spring program as if she'd been doing it for years," said CHM director **Frank Smoot**. "I think we hired her on a Friday and by Tuesday she was in the classroom teaching fifth graders about settlement and town building on the South Coast."

Amy is excited to connect her knowledge of East Coast history with

the history of the West. She brings a multi-disciplinary approach to the museum's education program. "I like to see the ways that art, education, nature, and history all combine," she said.

She's also revamping the museum's programming effort, which brings the museum's mission to life for visitors and learners of all ages.

Coos County Historical Society

Staff

Executive Director: Frank Smoot

Collections Manager: Vicki Wiese

Assistant Collections Manager:

Michelle Nash

Museum Assistant: Tabetha Myatt

Education Coordinator: Amy Pollicino

Rental Coordinator: Brandi Jaques

Bookkeeper: Terri Knight

Maintenance: Scott Mayfield

Board of Trustees

President: Bill Mast

Vice-President: Jon Littlefield

Secretary: Anne Guerin

Treasurer: Karen O'Donnell

Trustees: Toni Ann Brend, Ann Collins,

Steve Greif, Jan Hooper, Darla Lesan,

Jon Littlefield, Jerry Phillips, Toni Poole,

Sally Prouty, Arlene Roblan, Carl

Siminow, Joe Slack, Barbara Taylor,

Carol Ventgen, Paul Walton

Launching the Mission

The mission of the Coos History Museum is to create a better understanding of life in Coos County and Oregon's South Coast, past and present, and our place in that life. We do this by collecting and preserving stories, artifacts, photographs and documents, and by helping create opportunities for people to interpret them in meaningful, thought-provoking, and engaging ways.

Our museum aspires to be a welcoming community gathering place and a valued regional resource. We strive to share intriguing human stories about our region and we will help diverse audiences connect with each other and with our region's culture, histories, and heritage.

Though exhibit displays did not open until the summer of 2015, the museum has already made great strides in accomplishing our mission by hosting a number of events this past winter and spring. Organizations that have used the new museum facilities include...

American Legion, Board of Maritime Pilots, Business Oregon, Coquille City Council, Connect the Boardwalks, Consular Office of Japan, Coos Bay / North Bend Rotary, Coos County Cultural Coalition, National Indian Timber Symposium, New Community Coalition, Oregon Heritage Conference, Oregon Main Street Network, PEO, Road Scholars, SMART: Start Making a Reader Today, Southwestern Oregon Museums Association, and Travel Oregon.

In addition, State Rep. **Caddy McKeown**, State Sen. **Arnie Roblan**, and U.S. Rep. **Peter DeFazio** have held Town Hall Meetings at the museum. During winter term, 75 people attended a weekly class — Oregon South Coast History — the largest community education class ever scheduled by Southwestern Oregon Community College. This spring volunteer teachers, under the guidance of our education director

Amy Pollicino, hosted hundreds of fifth graders in our annual local history education programs. **Lionel Youst** gave a talk about labor advocates Harry and Agnes Bridges in April. In June, **Ralph Mohr** presented a program about wooden boat construction called "A Tale of Two Boats." On Independence Day the museum hosted children's events.

The museum's schedule is filling with rentals, including the Bay Area Hospital John Whitty Award Ceremony, Bay Area Radiology, First Community Credit Union, Leadership Coos orientation, Marshfield High School Class of 1952 Reunion, "Show and Tell at the Museum" (October 1st), and the South Coast Folk Festival. Also look for another round of **Steve Greif's** South Coast History SWOCC community education class coming this winter term on Tuesday nights. As a CHM member, we'll keep you up to date about events and programs!



Four Stars



The Coos County Historical Society would like to thank four people who made tremendous contributions to the organization through their volunteer work.

Cory Smith served as a Board Trustee for several years and helped with many museum events. She has retired from the Board but continues to volunteer weekly. She has done inventory work on the map collection, organized the museum's vertical files, processes the museum's scrapbooks, and has assisted greatly in the move from Simpson Park to Front Street. She has been a steady assistant to our collections staff.

Another retiring Board Trustee is **Lucinda DiNovo**. Lucinda served

on our building committee and governance committee. Working with her employer, the Coquille Indian Tribe, Lucinda often made generous arrangements for the CCHS to hold workshops or fundraising events at the Mill Casino-Hotel. Her expertise in the world of business and event planning has been invaluable.

Taylor Underwood, a former North Bend High student now studying at Utah State University, has been an intern this summer at the old museum. His main job was processing small collection items. He would take an unprocessed box of artifacts, make sure all the items in that box had their correct accession numbers and descriptions, and take artifact photos

for our records. Over the summer, Taylor volunteered more than twice the hours to meet his requirement (some 200-plus altogether) and processed over 55 boxes. He also helped in many other areas connected with the move of artifacts from the old museum to the new.

Another summer intern, **Christina Gwartney**, volunteered at the new museum as part of her business administration program at SWOCC. Christina helped organize many operations that allowed the new Coos History Museum to open to the public, including coordinating the schedule of 40-plus volunteers who have signed up to work behind our front desk.

Exhibits on Display

Start your visit in the Welcoming Gallery – an open room lined with white cedar and red cedar planks donated by the Coquille Indian Tribe (CIT), split and planed by **Don Ivy** and the CIT Education Department Youth Corps to invoke the look of a Pacific Northwest plankhouse. Look to one side and see a line of living spirits – Coos and Coquille baskets. Look to the other to see two cases outfitted with interactive touchscreens that help visitors start on their journey.

The word most often heard as patrons enter the main exhibit hall is “Wow!” A 13-foot tall band saw rotates, a Charleston fishing boat bursts out of a wall, and driftwood fort sculpture stands ready to be explored. Eyes are also lifted by four tall planks of local woods – fir, maple, myrtlewood, and cedar – that help set three themes in the hall. Three vibrant colors also guide visitors on their tour.

In the blue *Seashore* gallery on the west side of the hall, sponsored by the **Al Peirce Co.**, explore South Coast natural history, skirt a cedar dugout canoe to study Native-American encounters with Euro-Americans, learn about shipwrecks, and end up at an exhibit section highlighting the first coastal community to be featured in the hall – Bandon.

The green *Tidewater* gallery lane in the center of the hall, sponsored by **Dennis and Janet Beetham**, represents that slice of Coos County where most people have lived for thousands of years. Lively quotations and large photos tell tales of shipbuilding, bounty from the



Large objects and tall planks of local wood greet visitors upon the entrance to the exhibit hall.

waters, and rivers as roads. Featured here is the oldest hand-crafted boat remaining in the county – the century-old Millicoma Family Boat donated by **Jerry Alvey** – and the large steering wheel of the Roosevelt Ferry.

The brown *Uplands* gallery is sponsored by **Tad Shepard** and the **Menasha Corp.** This gallery threads the east side of the room as the Coast Range in Coos County. Exhibit sections here illuminate overland

travel, mining, and lumbering. It also features the tiny Coos Bay Wagon Road community of Dora.

The society’s exhibit committee worked with **David Jensen & Associates**, an award-winning design firm from Vancouver, B.C. Committee members were **Frank Smoot, Jon Littlefield, Darla Lesan, Vicki Wiese, Steve Greif, and Carol Ventgen**. Photos, surprising quotations, short text, and artifacts tell the stories of South Coast life.

The clever exhibit cases allow museum staff to regularly change exhibits. Text and photos were printed in-house. Inmates at Shutter Creek mounted and trimmed exhibit panels.

Walk up stairs on treads recycled from a local Georgia-Pacific dock to reach the mezzanine level. Featured here is the story of agriculture on the South Coast. Museum volunteer **Joan Greif** designed the installations in the vitrines (a fancy word for Plexiglas cases). The text relies on research by local dairyman **Bill Mast** of Lee Valley. The museum gained the sturdy oak casework from a recently retired national travelling exhibit called “Farm Life.”

Learn about berry production, dairies, ranches, poultry, and farm economics. Compare and contrast local agriculture with farm life in America’s Dairyland, Wisconsin. Intriguing artifacts punctuate the exhibit, including a rare foot-pedaled milking machine and the oldest cattle brand still in use in Oregon. Children can “feed and groom a calf”



Cases in the exhibit hall are new and flexible. Artifacts shine with overhead lighting.

in the county fair display.

Finally, a small room on the way to the exit elevator – the **James Rippey Gallery** – explores one of the South Coast’s chief charms – the Great Outdoors: Fur, Fins, Feathers, Sand and Sail.

In the lobby, be sure to stride like a Goliath over all of Coos County and beyond, laid out in a 13’x10’ foot

floor map near the south entrance. The map made with wood, metal, glass, and wire was created by local artists and volunteers **Michael Avery, Sherri Carpenter, Steve and Joan Greif, Karen Hammer, Tom Hull, Trae Johnson, Todd Krost, Randy Libner, Juan Ramos, Lee Valet, and Robin Ziuchkovski.**

A huge sea anemone sculpture by **Amy Pollicino** will soon hang overhead in the lobby entrance and a weather station will let visitors know of current conditions. Find a regional keepsake or gift in the **Stamper Family Museum Store** that offers hundreds of items for sale selected and displayed by volunteer store manager **Valerie Caskey.** The store continues the museum’s mission to educate patrons about the South Coast. Most items are Oregon-made products; local arts, crafts, and foods; and books about regional history and life.

Public hours are 10 am to 6 pm everyday except Mondays and major holidays. Museum members have free admission year-round. There are admission discounts for families, AAA, AARP, and active-duty service members.

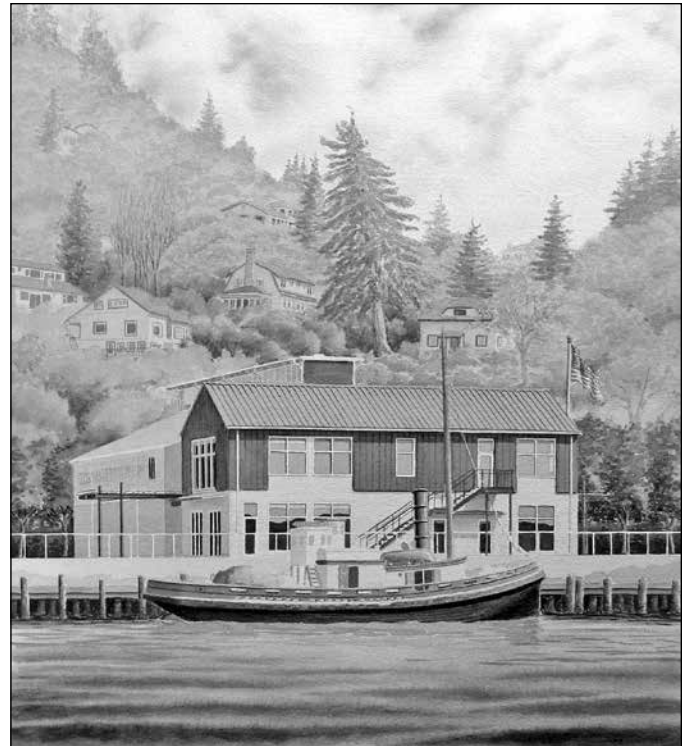


“Farm Life” is the theme of exhibits on the mezzanine.

New Views



Charleston resident and CHM donor Martha Butler posing with director Frank Smoot at the front door.



Watercolor by Dutch Mostert, available (in color!) as a limited-edition commemorative print from CHM.



A view from the Lansing Research Room.



The welcoming new Coos History Museum Store.



A Sause Bros. tug passing the museum August 18.

Welcome New and Renewing Members

March 16 through July 31, 2015

New Benefactors

Myrtle Point Rotary Club

Renewing Benefactors

Blair Holman and Ginny Tabor

New Businesses

C.J. O'Neil & Co.
Critical Thinking Co.
Kincheloe & Sons, Inc.
Stoffel, Joe

Renewing Businesses

Koontz Machine & Welding Inc.

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Adams, Allen & Paige
Betz, Fred & Krista
Boise, Ron & Linda
Braden, John "Buck"
Burnham, Alan
Chamberlain, Christy & Rob
Chase, Shawn & Lisa
Coblentz, Jerry
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Forrester, David & Lois
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Heintzelman, Conrad & Amber
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Hyatt, Dick & Susie
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Jensen, Steve & Sandra
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King, Eric & Mary
McClarren, Gregory & Elizabeth
Metzger, Barbara & Bernard
Nickson, Bruce & Lorraine
Peil, Arlene
Shelman, Randy
Slack, Harry
Slyter, Doc
Smith, Chas M
Smith, David
Smith, Jake & Lori
Solomon, Allen & Jean

Vanover, Mark
Wall, Andrea N
Whitson, Karen

Renewing Family

Beesley, Ralph & Dorothy
Bonham, Sandy & Roy
Brainard, Michael
Bridgham, David & Shirley
Chadwick/Southgate
Graybill, Mike
Katz, Daniel & Priscilla
Mahaffy, Bob
Ventgen, Carol
Wolfe, Andrew & Wagoner, Karen

New Individuals

Andrews, Janet
Baughman, Anne
Broocks, Steven
Christensen, Peggy
Doyle, Judy
Jennings, Judy
Jensen, Jo
Jensen, Marcia
Jones, Ruth
Kain, Kristine
Livingstone, George
Lynam, Don
Miles, Barbara
Oberst, Norman
Palaniuk, Kent
Peterson, Gloria
Simmons, Marjorie
Slowey, Gertrude
Soule, Judy
Wood, Penny

Renewing Individuals

Lalic, Mary B
Walthall, Joan
Young, Wave

Life Members

Coquille Indian Tribe
Ronald Barklow
Gerald Baughman
Stephen Dow & Patricia Beckham
Dennis & Janet Beetham
Suzanne Belawski
Doug Borgard
Anna Brands-Schep
Lilly M. Busick
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Guerin, Anne
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Isenhardt, John & Laura
Lesan, Darla & Jerry
Littlefield, Jon & Lee
Livingstone, George
Mast, Bill
McClarren, Greg & Elizabeth
Myrtle Point Rotary Club
Northshore Title
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Penny, Donna
Poole, Toni
Prouty, Sally
Sebesta, Richard
Slack, Joe & Claudia
Siminow, Carl
Smith, Cornelia S
Smoot, Frank & Valerie Caskey
Spring, Roger
Stephens, Chris
Stocks, Janet C.
Strine, Linda
Taylor, Barb & Steven Fowler
Taylor, Barb & Mike
Ventgen, Carol
Vaughn, Mike
VFW

Memorial Donations

The Rivermen in memory of Lucia Harter
Steve & Joan Greif in memory of Steven Kridelbaugh



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Calendar of Events

(see www.cooshistory.org for more information)

- Sept. 3 Show and Tell at the Museum, 2-3 pm, CHM – bring an artifact to share!
- Sept. 4-6 Oregon Shorebird Festival, OR Institute of Marine Biology, Charleston
- Sept. 9 Dedication Ceremonies, 11-6, Coos History Museum, With Governor Kate Brown 1-2 pm
- Sept. 16 CCHS regular board meeting, 4-6, CHM
- Sept. 19-20 Bay Area Fun Festival, downtown Coos Bay
- Sept. 20 Fun Festival events at the CHM, 10-6
- Sept. 26 Dahlia Day, Shore Acres St. Park, 11-4
- Oct. 1 Show and Tell at the Museum, 3-4 pm, CHM – bring an artifact to share!
- Oct 2-4 Octoberfish, Charleston Marina
- Oct. 21 CCHS regular board meeting, 4-6 pm, CHM

WATERWAYS

Waterways is the
quarterly publication of the
Coos County Historical Society
and sent to all members.

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Ann Collins

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