

# WATERWAYS

COOS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY • WINTER 2016-17 • WWW.COOSHISTORY.ORG



**Susan Tissot**

*Photo by Steve Greif*



**George Wright & Michelle Nash**

*Photo by Eric Kohler*



**Vicki Wiese**

*Photo by Steve Greif*



**Michelle Nash**

*Photo by Steve Greif*

## Welcoming . . . and Bidding Farewell

By Anne Guerin

The Coos History Museum is now under the leadership of **Susan Tissot**, the new Executive Director, who took the helm December 5. Moving to Coos Bay from Trinidad, California, Susan brings 28+ years of experience in museum administration to her new position. During a multi-step process, the Search Committee winnowed through 54 candidates for the position, eventually naming Susan as the stand-out candidate. Along with curatorial duties, she has experience in and enthusiasm for public relations, strategic planning, financial management, and fundraising. The Board of Directors, museum employees, and volunteers enthusiastically welcome Susan Tissot and look forward to working with her in support of the museum and its place in the community.

**George Wright**, interim Executive Director, has returned to his home in Portland where he will continue his writing life after serving at the CHM helm five months.

During his short tenure, George was a quick study in museum directorship, masterfully leading the organization, with emphasis on financial stability and community relations. True to his caring and committed nature, George sent the board a message following his departure, a check-in to assure himself that “things are running smoothly”. While on the job, George made many friends and acquaintances, and endeared himself to those on the Board of Directors. We look forward to welcoming him in future visits to Coos County and the Coos History Museum.

Due to unfortunate health issues, **Vicki Wiese** has left her position at the museum and has moved out of state. Hired as the Collections Manager in the spring of 2005, Vicki was the mastermind of the collections move from the North Bend site to the new facility in Coos Bay. Like a military tactician, Vicki would appear at monthly board meetings with detailed charts of how the move would be accomplished efficiently.

She attracted many volunteers to assist in the photographing and identifying of all artifacts in Past Perfect, the museum’s software for collections. This record of all items will be important for location and research. Vicki endeared herself to all involved with the museum with her skill, enthusiasm, and commitment – and she is sorely missed.

**Michelle Nash**, Assistant Collections Manager, has recently resigned to take a curator position at the Elkhart County History Museum in Bristol, Indiana. Her move will put Michelle much closer to family. Hired at CHM in the fall of 2013, she was vital to bridging the move to the new facility and filling in during Vicki’s absences. Michelle’s Fresh Off the Pallet event provided the public an opportunity to view part of the process of moving precious artifacts with care. Michelle left with this thought: “It has been a privilege to work with you and to offer what assistance I could in opening this new chapter in the organization’s history.”

# Society Turns 125

In November 1891, the Coos County Pioneer Association was formed. It was only the second historical society formed in the state. **Esther Lockhart**, a pioneer wife and school teacher, was the group's first president. There was no museum for the group, only an annual gathering of the membership (a few dozen pioneers whose families had immigrated to Coos County by 1868 and who had paid their \$1 annual dues). **Orville Dodge**, the Association's first secretary, gathered stories from pioneers at their annual meetings and, by 1898, wrote one of the earliest histories of the South Coast.

The Coos County Historical Society celebrated their 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary on November 12, 2016 with an event held at the new Coos History Museum in Coos Bay. About 50 guests attended the free event which included cake and refreshments, a recounting of the Society's history and a slide show narrated by president **Bill Mast**, along with the viewing of two short historical videos. A new display celebrating the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary is on exhibit in the Welcoming Gallery



*Old movies entertained at the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.  
Photo by Jeanne Hart*

along with a collection of unusual artifacts found during our move last year from the North Bend museum building.

Today, membership in the organization is over 850 and is open to all who wish to support the museum's mission of "creating a better understanding of life in Coos County and Oregon's South Coast." Membership renewal information will be sent out by the end of the year. Please continue to support us financially as we gather and preserve materials and stories that connect with our region's culture, history, and heritage.

## Coos County Historical Society

### Staff

Executive Director: Susan Tissot  
Education Coordinator: Amy Pollicino  
Volunteer Coordinator and  
Store Manager.: Valerie Caskey  
Event Manager: Jeanne Hart  
Bookkeeper: Terri Knight  
Maintenance: Bay Area Enterprises

### Board of Trustees

President: Bill Mast  
Vice-President: Carol Ventgen  
Secretary: Anne Guerin  
Treasurer: Karen O'Donnell  
Trustees: Toni Ann Brend, Ann Collins,  
Steve Greif, Jan Hooper, Darla Lesan,  
Suzie McDaniel, Xandra McKeown,  
Toni Poole, Sally Prouty, Arlene Roblan,  
Carl Siminow, Joe Slack

### Museum

Open Tuesday thru Sunday, 10-5  
Adults = \$7, Children 5-17 = \$3  
Family Maximum = \$17  
AARP and AAA discounts  
Free to members and active-duty service  
541.756.6320, [www.cooshistory.org](http://www.cooshistory.org)



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# Rentals and Special Events

By Jeanne Hart

It's been about five months since I joined the CHM team to manage rentals and special events, and every day I am humbled and amazed by the sheer love and enthusiasm our community has for this building. We have something very special here on the waterfront, and I think I can speak for all of the CHM staff when I say that we are absolutely thrilled to see so many faces come through our doors.

Over the last few months, our rentals business has picked up steam which has kept all of us on our toes. I am so thankful for our team of volunteers for pulling together and pitching in to help because none of this would be possible without them. I am looking forward to continuing to expand our capabilities as a venue in 2017 now that all three rooms are available for events and everyone has had a full year to acclimate to the new

facility. It is my - our - hope that we will, someday soon, be abuzz with programming and activity all day, every day.

Additionally, I am happy to announce that we have extended our catering partnership with Benetti's and entered into a new partnership with Bon Appetit Catering. Both Benetti's and Bon Appetit offer delicious menus and top-tier service for events large and small. If you're planning a corporate retreat, wedding reception, baby shower, dinner or holiday party, luncheon, open house, or community gathering - these premiere, full service, local caterers can customize the perfect spread for your guests. Please visit our website - [cooshistory.org](http://cooshistory.org) - to download sample menus. Vegetarian, gluten-free, and dietary restriction options are available from both, upon request. The Museum also continues to offer the option of self-catering, pot-luck style, and if for any reason you would



Photo by Jeanne Hart

like to go with an outside caterer, we will work with you to make that happen.

We've got bookings through August already on our calendar, so if you're considering us for your event, get in touch with me, Jeanne, [rentals@cooshistory.org](mailto:rentals@cooshistory.org), to reserve your date before it's too late.

Cheers!

Jeanne



## Winter Market

The Coos History Museum is proud to host the Coos Bay Winter Market for the second year in a row.

Stop by Wednesdays from 10am to 2pm to pick up locally grown fruits and veggies, meats, eggs, cheesecakes, hummus, gluten-free breads, roasted coffee, fudge, arts and crafts, hot tamales, and so much more. The Winter Market will continue through April 26<sup>th</sup> before moving downtown for the summer.

Hope to see you!

*The Winter Farmers Market offers a covered shopping opportunity to enjoy local produce and merchandise.*

*Photos by Jeanne Hart*



# We Found It

By Valerie Caskey

A new exhibit called “We Found It” opened at the Coos History Museum on November 2nd in the Welcome Gallery.

Basically, it’s objects from our collection that were unearthed in our move that have no documentation, so we don’t know the story behind the objects, not even who donated them.

We have been inviting the public to tell us if any of the objects are familiar to them. Maybe that asbestos iron was Grandma’s, or maybe that adding machine was in the first creamery . . . and we really want to know the story behind the peg leg in the case, so please, if you know anything, do tell.

Among these undocumented objects, there are a few that have even a deeper mystery. One such object in the spotlight is called our “mystery object”. We’ve invited Museum visitors to take their best shot at guessing what it is, or if they can, proving what it is, because honestly, we just didn’t know. The back story here is that the first day the exhibit was up and running, one of our longest standing volunteers, John Engels, told us what it was and then showed us proof via a photo



and description on the web. (We, of course, didn’t think it wise to share this information with the public just yet, but rather decided we’d let folks have a bit of fun with it, and fun they had.)

Below are some of our favorite answers.

- Oxen holder, Doug.
- Clamp for leg amputating, Peggy Christiansen
- Tweezers for ingrown elephant whiskers, anonymous
- A yoke for a goat, Dana
- A fish vise, anonymous
- Starship Voyager computer lock, Karen Sarowski
- Boot stretcher
- Log tweezers
- 1930’s Scotland, used in the church
- bow and arrow loading brace

We had many guesses that our mystery object is a vise or clamp used in boat building and sail making or repairing.

What is it really?

As our volunteer John Engels knew, as well as a guest by the name of John Hogue, who included a picture and description from an ad on e-bay, the mystery object is a vintage wooden harness maker’s vise.

So there you have it, mystery revealed.

Thanks so much to everyone for your great guesses and ideas; plus, keep your eyes and ears open for what’s coming next in the Welcome Gallery.

# Landscape Upgrade

High school students from Marshfield’s Destinations Academy, part of the Harding Learning Center in Coos Bay, have regularly volunteered to do some landscaping maintenance on the grounds of the Coos History Museum. Ten of them, in mid-November, pulled a truckload of weeds and repaired the “dunes islands” in the parking lot. They also planted dozens of dogwood shrubs in the parking lot bio-swale – an area designed to filter rain runoff. The students were led by



*Destinations students and their advisors at a “dune island” they created for the CHM.*

**Alexa Carlton**, Outreach Coordinator of the Coos Watershed Association;  
**Gary Martin**, Environmental Science Teacher at Harding/Destinations;  
AmeriCorps member **Clea Harrelson**,

Salmon and Education Associate at Coos Watershed Association; and Coos History Museum volunteers and staff members **Anne Guerin**, **Steve** and **Joan Greif**, and **Amy Pollicino**.

# Coos History Fund Ballot Measure Update

By Joe Slack, Carol Ventgen,  
and Steve Greif

Since February 2014 a small group of museum leaders in our region started pursuing the idea of creating a county-wide funding mechanism using a state statute that describes the creation and organizational requirements for a county historical fund. This group went to all eight history museums throughout the county to gain board support. The "Friends of History Museums in Coos County" was eventually formed and started to work through details of creating a local ballot measure. After several meetings with the Coos County Board of Commissioners, individually and collectively, the board authorized a proposal be placed on the ballot.

The November election resulted in a disappointing result for our eight history museums in Coos County when local ballot measure 6-153 was defeated. A "yes" vote would have created a Coos County Historical Fund that could have provided solid annual sustainable funding - helping with staffing costs for regular hours, office and preservation supplies, utilities and fixed costs for museums in Powers, Myrtle Point, Coquille, Bandon, and Coos Bay. While disappointed with the

election results, we hope our museum leaders continue to look for suggestions for a future successful campaign.

The campaign was led by the following individuals: **Joe Slack, Carol Ventgen, Bill Mast, Darla Lesan, Toni Poole, and Steve Greif** of the Coos History Museum; **Dick Jamsgard** of the Oregon Coast Historical Railway Museum; **Richard Bushnell** of the Coos County Logging Museum in Myrtle Point; **Jim Proehl** of the Bandon Historical Society; **Terrie Craggs, Patti Strain, Mary Barton, Leland Simpson, and Cathy Vitale** of the Coquille Valley Historical Society; **Steve Means** of the County Fairgrounds Museum; **Elizabeth Hamlett** of the Wagner Pioneer Cabin and Rail Depot in Powers; and **George Tinker, Don Blom, Lionel Youst and Ralph Mohr** of the Marshfield Sun Printing Museum. Retired attorney **Jerry Lesan** provided initial research into state statutes for determining the vehicle of the measure. **Arthur Poole** was the political action committee treasurer. A special thank you goes out to **Jay and Linda Farr** of Farr's Hardware for their support.

A big "Thank You" also to the many other volunteers who spoke for the measure, put up lawn signs, and contributed to the measure's

political action committee, Friends of History Museums of Coos County. These volunteers worked hard for the measure's passage by speaking to civic groups, writing letters to newspapers, creating TV and radio stories, sending personal postcards to voters, and knocking on doors. Even in defeat, volunteers felt the effort was worth it as thousands of voters were made more aware of the work done by the non-profit heritage centers in their communities. In addition, the staffs of the eight history museums formed a more cooperative bond that will help in the future as they work together to preserve our South Coast heritage and market our museums to tourists to help our local economy.

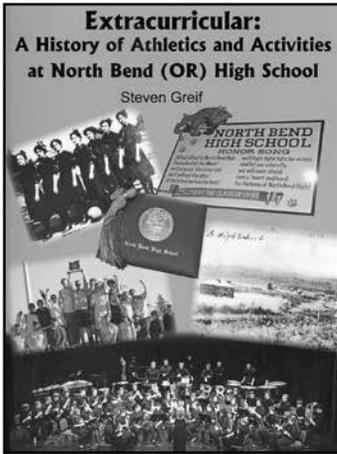
To the more than 10,000 voters who said "yes" to the measure - thank you for weighing in on support for these important county resources. Hopefully, you, and all other Coos County residents, will help in your own ways by visiting a museum near you - any museum - to see for yourselves how their exhibits and programs contribute to the quality of life in our communities. If you don't already, volunteer your time in one of the museums to further museum services. And if you can, contribute monetarily. They are your museums.

## John Whitty Award Ceremony



The Bay Area Hospital's annual John Whitty Award ceremony, given to recognize individuals dedicated to improving the health and well-being of our community, was held at the CHM this past fall in the Sprague Gallery and in a special tent area on the museum's plaza. This year BAH honored CHM members Tom and Joan Stamper.

*Photo by Jeanne Hart*



# New NBHS Book is Fundraiser

CHM board member **Steven Greif** has authored a new book on the history of North Bend High School and is donating most of the profits to the museum as a fundraiser. Greif is a recently retired social studies teacher and multi-sport coach at NBHS. The book was edited by CHM members **Joan Greif** and **Dick and Judy Wagner**.

The book describes the growth of an Oregon coastal school and the importance of athletics and activities in a small town community. Although mainly focusing on NBHS, the book also has stories about sports teams and athletic facilities throughout Coos County including a complete list of champions from the oldest continuously

held annual track meet in Oregon - the Coos County Track & Field Meet. The book has over 500 photographs, 340 pages of local history, and an appendix that includes a complete list of drama productions, debate topics, and sports records.

Greif recently held an author talk and book signing event at the museum with about 40 guests in attendance. The book continues to be on sale now at the Museum Store for only \$25. For those interested in the book who live out of town, call the museum at 541.756.6320 and our front desk volunteers can arrange for payment over the phone and have the book signed by the author and mailed to you.

## Membership Roll Call

Sept. through Nov. 2016

### Renewing Business

Koontz Machine & Welding

### Renewing Family

Cross, Pat & Nancy  
Forrester, David & Lois  
Gould, David & Donna  
Greif, Michael & Marti  
Hargens, Randy  
Melton, Pat & RuthEllen  
Rueger, Gregory & Barbara  
Steen, Rodger & Leslie  
Tofflemire, James & Pam  
Vernon, Roger & Maren

### New Family

Bennett, Bruce & Kathy  
Benz, Thomas  
Brown, Cheryl  
Buford, Linda  
Cousens, Grant & Rae Len  
Culley, Ron & Cathy  
Galli-Noble, Thomas & Elizabeth  
Hemsley, Richard & Amy  
Hitchcock, Dennis  
Jacobson, Tom & Rose  
Jacobson, William  
Manders, Ernie & Sandra  
Merrill, Vicki  
Snyder, Pat & Gail

### Renewing Individuals

Garner, William  
Landay, Edward, Jr.  
Koreiva, MJ

### New Individuals

Dutton, J. D.  
Lovell, Terry E.  
Tower, Barbara

## Donations

Sept. through Nov. 2016

Allen, David & Nancy  
Batdorff, James & Alfreda  
Bechtold, Paula  
Beetham, Dennis & Janet  
Bereson, Jo  
Besser, Richard  
Blom, Don  
Bodkin, Cynthia  
Booth, Barbara  
Brainard, Muriel  
Brend, Orlin & Toni Ann  
Burgher, Bill & Corliss  
Callery, Martin & Suzy  
Capehart, Fran  
Christenson, Peggy  
Collins, Ann  
Cooper, Robert & Beverly  
Coraor, Robert & Susan  
Crocker, Lucy  
Cross, Pat  
DeLeon, Adrian & Jenni  
Douthit, Nathan & Eva  
Ekern, Bill & Yvonne  
Erickson, Kathleen  
Farr, Linda & Jay  
Farr's Hardware  
Ford, David & Molly  
Forrester, John & Ruth  
Gebhardt, Dan & Bonnie  
Golder, Lee & Sharon  
Gonzales, Linda  
Gould, David & Donna  
Graybill, Mike  
Greif, Michael T.  
Greif, Nadiene

Greif, Steve & Joan  
Groth, Steve & Jennifer  
Guerin, Anne  
Hammer, Karen  
Hanson-Meekins Animal Hospital  
Heady, Rich & Franny  
Hough, MacAdam, Fisher, & Wartnick  
Hutchinson, Bill & Susi  
Irvin, Donald & Dorothy  
Ivy, Don  
Jacobson, William  
Jaeggli, Nathaniel & Sally  
Jennings, Julia  
Johnson, David & Terri  
Johnson, Roger & Ellen  
Jones, Kirk & Barbara  
Kain, Kristine  
Kearns, Paul & Jill  
Kendrick, Bill & Joan  
Lansing, Bill & Ann  
Layport, Jim & Alice  
Leberti, Louis & Kathleen  
Lesan, Jerry & Darla  
Lone Rock Timber Mgmt  
Lund, Pete & Jane  
Mace, Jane  
Mace, Trish  
Macy, Robert  
Martin, James & Georgia  
Martin, Robt & Mary Ellen  
Martin, Ruth Marie  
Mast, Dan & Lisa  
Mast, Bill  
McClarren, Greg & Elizabeth  
McMichael, Don & Sharon  
Messerle, Donald E.  
Murray, Wayne & Carol  
Nowlin, Thomas & Susan

NW Natural Gas  
O'Donnell, Ed & Karen  
Ottemiller, Dennis  
Pacziesniak, Mary  
Pedro, Robt & Shirley  
Poole, Arthur & Toni  
Price, Nance  
Prouty, Sally  
Pruhsmeier, Karen  
Quilhaugh, Gene  
Quinn, Michael & Lindi  
Rolicheck, Sally  
Rosenberger, Michael  
Sandberg, Blanche  
Sharples, Caspar & Kate  
Shimotakahara, Steven G.  
Shoji Planning  
Slack, Harry  
Stamper, Thomas & Joan  
Stephens, Chris  
Stoffel, Joseph  
Strine, Linda  
Swenson, Ed & Judy  
Taylor, Barbara  
Tofflemire, James & Pam  
Umpqua Sheet Metal  
Underwood, Bill & Barbara  
Uno, John  
Ventgen, Carol  
Vernon, Roger & Maren  
Vigue, Richard  
Wheeler, Diana  
Whiting, Ed & Fay  
Whitty, John & Teri  
Willis, Janet  
Woods, Allen  
Wright, George B.  
Yunker, Tom & Diana  
Youst, Lionel & Hilda

# Outside In

By Valerie Caskey

Cabin fever anyone?

Some amongst us are undaunted by our temperate and rainy winters and carry on with outdoorsy pursuits in good humor and high spirits.

Others among us hole up as much as life permits the week the rains set in for the winter, and make it a temporary life goal to avoid, at all cost, well, anything associated with being out of doors.

No matter where we fall in the spectrum of winter coping methods, everyone at every age is bound to have some humdrum days where 'outside' is not an option and restlessness abounds.

Is it perhaps time to try something new, interesting, fun and/or educational?

Here is just a sampling of items the Museum Store carries to help stave off any lurking cabin fever.

Let's start with the kids.

For the little aspiring artist there's the 'Design Your Own Umbrella' kit that lets kids paint their very own umbrella entirely from the imagination, or the beautiful 'Birds and Berries' sketchbook from Eeboo; the cover itself can inspire sunny days.

For the young scientist, there is the lively and fun 'Smithsonian Young Explorers: Oceans'. It's a book that covers the science of ocean movement, pollution, and fascinating facts on marine life. From profiles on the Pacific to waves and tsunamis, and of course, all the cutest sea creatures. Once readers get their feet wet, they can continue their education by assembling the included 130-piece floor puzzle of colorful marine life. The puzzle and included poster give kids extra fun.

There is a mini microscope, a personal weather station and a crystal growing kit among other scientific delights for little ones.

For the little techie, to inspire imagination and learning, there's the 'Evo Oceans' book, which features a new way to learn, combining the old age textbook with the new technology of 3D Augmented Reality. After downloading the free app., kids can scan any animal in the book and interact with it. They can learn the animal's environment, their skeletal structure, the types of noises they make, and even their diet. If all of that isn't enough, they can even take a selfie with their favorite animal!

Also in the little techie department, we can't forget our little Webkinz, adorable little stuffed animals that come with a tag that allows kids (and, um, big kids too...hey, I was curious!) to go online and enter the magical Webkinz world. You register and name your pet and then need to make sure it's fed, exercised, played with, put to bed, and taken to the vet. It teaches kids the real responsibility of caring for a fur creature, and they get to play all sorts of fun games in the process.

For family fun time, the Museum Store has beautiful puzzles for all ages, card games from the colorful "Go Fish" deck to "Take A Hike" or the "Don't Get Lost Out There" and



"Don't Drown Out There" card games, both fun games that teach wilderness or water safety common sense and survival skills while you play.

Not a card fan? Try your skills at making a mini 'ship in a bottle' or play dominos with beautiful pirate dominos made of genuine horn.

If you're in a crafty mood, the Museum Store has a good selection of kids as well as adult coloring books, paper recycling kits and more.

And knots. Knot tying is a fascinating art. The store carries many books on the art of knots, from kids' beginner kits and 'how to' books to 'The Marlinspike Sailor,' a real seaperson's comprehensive guide to the art of maritime knots, as well as The Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Ropework.

If these knotty offerings spark your interest, come down to the Museum for our ongoing program \*Knot Club,\* where folks get together and share knowledge as well as work on projects both decorative and practical. Some of their work is for sale in the Museum Store, like the 'monkey fist' key chains and the paracord survival bracelets.

Above are but a few of the wonderful items in the Museum Store to keep cabin fever at bay, to delight, inform, or amuse folks of all ages, and to bring some element of the outdoors in, so if we desire, we can all stay inside warm and dry until spring makes itself known.

\* (For more info on Knot Club, check our webpage, Facebook page, or give the museum a call.)

## It's Time to Renew!

A renewal letter was mailed explaining our newest benefit called NARM. All new or renewing CHM members who upgrade or join at the \$100 Friend Level or above receive reciprocal benefits at 880 museums around the U.S.A. Call us or visit our website for more information, 541.756.6320, [www.cooshistory.org](http://www.cooshistory.org)



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## Oregon Cultural Trust

Created in 2002 by the Oregon Legislature, the Oregon Cultural Trust is a testimony to how much Oregonians value culture. No other state provides a 100 percent tax credit to inspire cultural giving. As uniquely Oregonian as public beaches and the bottle bill, the Oregon Cultural Trust was established 14 years ago by the Oregon Legislature as an ongoing funding engine for arts and culture across the state. In 2015, Oregonians gave \$4.56 million to the Cultural Trust, our all-time record.

Sixty percent of that went straight back to the field. The remaining 40 percent helped grow our permanent fund. Three grant programs fund five Statewide Partners, 45 County and Tribal Coalitions and qualified cultural nonprofits through competitive Cultural Development Grants.

The Coos County Historical Society is one of the non-profits that is eligible to receive your Cultural Trust donation. Simply donate any amount to the CCHS and then donate an equal amount to the Cultural Trust. The



CCHS donation is tax deductible and the amount donated to the Cultural Trust will come back to you, dollar-for-dollar, when you claim your cultural tax credit on your income taxes! To find out all the details, go to this website: [www.culturaltrust.org](http://www.culturaltrust.org)

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