



photo by Eric Kohler

Steel in the Sky

On December 10, the City of Coos Bay planning commission approved a 2,500-square-foot second-story addition to the Coos Historical & Maritime Center building currently rising on Coos Bay's downtown waterfront. The addition, which the museum board sought, actually brings the building closer to a design proposed nearly ten years ago and then scaled back in recent configurations.

"I think the board decided wisely that building for the present *and* the future was the wisest course of action," said executive director **Frank Smoot**. "It's a big project with a long history, and the board didn't want to fall short at the goal line."

"What it means for us," Smoot continued, "is that as we expand the services we provide, we'll have the

space to do it. I know it was a difficult decision to make, but it was the right one for the future of the museum."

This second story addition rises on the east (waterfront) side of the building. It will have a simple gabled roof, a modest change from earlier versions of the building plan. Earlier plans called for a "monitor roof," which the main building still has. (A monitor roof has what looks like a second small roof at the peak of the main roof. You'll most often see a monitor roof on an agricultural or industrial building.) Colors for the new addition will be particular shades of green, gray, navy, and black, to match the rest of the building.

The building, expected to be completed in August 2014, will offer about 11,000 square feet of usable space. This will allow not only bigger and better exhibits and important

preservation work: the open spaces within – and the surrounding landscaping – will be an inviting venue for all kinds of events and activities. And, as a hub of activity, the new facility should prove to be a catalyst for further development along that section of Coos Bay's waterfront.

From the day it opens, the center will serve two vital, interrelated functions. For local residents, the Center connects our region's long human history with present-day concerns. It's a gathering place for earnest discussion, memorable stories, research and discovery, celebration and fun. For visitors from out of town, the Center is a point of departure, an insider's guide to the region's surprisingly rich and largely hidden history.

With both of these audiences in mind, the Center is a dynamic institution, with continually updated and refreshed exhibits that reward frequent visits.

Tremendous progress, but we aren't there yet

We hope all is well and you shared a holiday season with open arms and thankfulness. The Coos County Historical Society has much to be thankful for as we jump feet first into next year. We have many projects in place that we weaved and bobbed through during the holidays, in an effort to not lose a step and keep ramped up and gain speed after January 1, 2014!

From the President

Our last official board meeting of 2013 was held in November, as we traditionally do not schedule a meeting in December. However, rest assured there are several committees that indeed met the last month of the year, and some met more than once. Most all board members attended this board meeting, and we welcomed our new Executive Director – Frank Smoot.

At the time of writing this letter, he has been on the job for just a few weeks, made the rounds to a couple of service organizations, poured thru museum business, policies, campaigns, all to get caught up with current operations – a large task indeed. Welcome Frank, we are pleased to have you on board.

The Building Committee meets regularly twice a month to review the construction progress of the new building and discuss new and on-going construction issues with the contractor and architect. This group has been meeting since the project started last summer and will continue on thru the coming year, until project completion.

The group consists of five board members: myself as chair, **Steve Greif**, **Lucinda Dinovo**, **Ann Collins**, and **Barb Taylor**, plus former board member and long time steering committee member **Teri Whitty**, and to assure continuity, former director **Annie Donnelly**. We also have Mike Crow-Owner's Representative, **Scott Partney** of Partney Construction, and **Mark Johnson** of Miller/Hull Architects. It is a full and diverse group and rest assured we have the Board, museum members and all the donors and grantees in mind in all our actions. By the time you receive this newsletter, the construction progress should be getting "vertical," as a very intense and concentrated pile supported foundation and floor is close to completion.

In October of this year, the Board authorized Miller/Hull to finalize the design and prepare working drawings for completing the second floor. The foundation and first floor was designed for such additional square footage, but funding allowed for only a portion of the second floor to be constructed at this time.

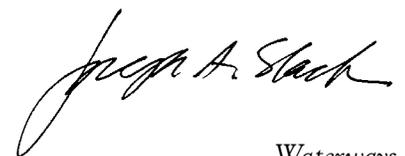
Through the Board and tenacious efforts by Annie, we received New Market Tax Credit funding (NMTC) and the deal was closed and funds received in September. This allowed for authorizing finishing the interior of the entire building plus adds this additional second floor space. The additional square footage provides "back office" space – workrooms, storage, archive space, offices and staff restroom.

This has been a tremendous plug for the project and, while we will still

be fund raising for exhibits, plaza and fixtures/furniture/equipment (FFE), this puts us in a better position. If the estimates hold true for this additional work, the construction of such will be authorized in January. Partney has indicated a late August completion date for the entire building.

But, we need exhibits! Right? Ok, so the Board has regrouped the Exhibits Committee and given them the charge of full steam ahead. Fortuitously, our new director has great strengths in this area of museum management. Frank is putting together the request for proposals (RFP) for the design and construction of what we expect to be a tremendous, memorable and inspiring historical and maritime series of exhibits. And it will be flexible enough to provide us "locals" with various areas within that can be changed/remodeled and modified so we can be assured it will be ever changing and "new." The committee consists of Frank as chair, **Jon Littlefield**, **Darla Lesan**, **Carol Ventgen**, **Steve Greif**, **Lucinda DiNovo**, and **Vicki Wiese** from the museum staff. In the next newsletter, I will report with a more detailed timeline of events.

The Board continues to upgrade and improve our operating bylaws, policies and programs as we prepare for the big move. Staff works hard daily to take care of the immediate business at hand regarding operations, our store and finances and we are making the move to slowly consolidate into what will soon be our new home. I am thankful to be a part of this organization and such a terrific group of individuals – truly a pleasure to serve.



Waterways

Meet the new crew



left to right: Michelle Nash, Tabetha Myatt, and Terri Knight.

CCHS sends good wishes and thanks to **Hannah Cooney**, our research assistant for the last several years, who recently took a new job in Portland. Happily, we do have some new folks to keep the mission alive and well.

Michelle Nash, assistant collection manager, came to Coos Bay from Haines, Alaska, where she interned at the Hammer Museum. She works Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday each week. Her tasks will mainly center around helping **Vicki Wiese** organize for the move to the Coos Historical & Maritime Center. Michelle will also assist on some research requests. She earned a Master of Arts in Public History and Museum Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2012. She has interned at three different museums since graduation, working on inventory, cataloging archives, and exhibit preparation. Michelle has previously worked with our inventory software, PastPerfect.

Tabetha Myatt accepted the position of front desk assistant and works Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at least through this winter. Her hours may be adjusted in 2014. Tabetha will answer the phone, greet guests, work the cash register, help with gift store inventory, do some secretarial work, and handle some research requests.

Tabetha has been a volunteer with the museum this past year in data entry. She received a Bachelors of Science at the University of Idaho. She previously worked in various school settings in Colorado and is proficient with computer technology.

Both have been working since October and proving themselves to be wonderful hires. Interestingly, like **Frank Smoot** our new executive director, both Michelle and Tabetha also lived in Wisconsin at various times in their lives!

Terri Knight, the museum's new bookkeeper and office manager, came most recently from Heritage Place Community, a tribal-owned assisted living and memory care center in Bandon. There, as well as taking care of such things as accounting, payroll, and vendor approval, she freely admits she kept an eye out for the residents, which wasn't necessarily part of the job: *he* would like a second helping, *she* needs a helping hand.

Terri's always spoken her mind, and stepped in to help. When she was assisting her husband prepare a catered meal for a particular civic club, she asked, Why can't everyone here donate a turkey? When the motorcycle club she belonged to in Jackson county needed leadership, she became

the first woman to take such a role in the club. (She says as Honda motorcycle owners, she and her husband were constantly having to defend themselves to Harley owners.)

She and her husband came to the coast from the Medford-Ashland area, where she'd been office manager and bookkeeper for an equipment and party-rental company. She brings a wide experience to the museum, including accounting, auditing, and accrual.

They used to go camping at Bullards Beach and just loved the area. And she has a special connection with the museum's present North Bend facility. She and her husband were married in Simpson Park. "Yep, right over there," she says.

Coos County Historical Society

Staff

Executive Director: Frank Smoot
Collections Manager: Vicki Wiese
Assistant Collections Manager:
Michelle Nash
Education Coordinator: Amber
Cannon-Dornath
Bookkeeper: Terri Knight
Front Desk Assistant: Tabetha Myatt

Board of Trustees

President: Joe Slack
Vice-President: Bill Mast
Secretary: Anne Guerin
Treasurer: Karen O'Donnell
Trustees: Alexis Barry, Toni Ann
Brend, Ann Collins, Lucinda
DiNovo, Steve Greif, Darla Lesan, Jon
Littlefield, Jerry Phillips, Toni Poole,
Sally Prouty, Carl Siminow, Cory
Smith, Barbara Taylor, Carol Ventgen

Driving to Mingus Park

A century after a handful of lumber barons and untold scores of families and wiry, single young loggers left Wisconsin for the Oregon coast, **Frank Smoot** followed suit. As the new CCHS executive director, he'll help tell some of their stories, as well as hundreds of others important to the history of the southern coast.

In late October, he and his wife **Valerie Caskey** packed up their cats, dog, and belongings, and took the

2,000-mile trip in a 1999 Chevy Express one-ton cargo van with their Jeep Cherokee tagging along behind. Through Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, and Oregon's Great Basin, they made their way west; through those same days, CCHS board member Ann Collins and her real estate partner Diane Crawford were helping them close on a house in the Telegraph Hill / Mingus Park neighborhood.

"When we woke up in our hotel at the Oregon border, ten hours from Coos Bay, our house still hadn't closed," said Frank. "Ticor Title closed it at 3 p.m., the former owner moved out between 4 and 10, and we pulled off the south end of the McCollough bridge at 10:20. When we got to the house, the lights were still on and the door was still open. A photo-finish to our trip for sure."

Frank spent the previous 14 years at the Chippewa Valley Museum, an accredited regional history museum in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, a city of 65,000 about 90 miles due east of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul.

As editor at that museum, Frank researched, helped design, and wrote the interpretive text for two long-term exhibits, a 6,000-square-foot exhibit on agricultural life and a 4,500-square-foot exhibit on the intersection of cultures over the past 200 years — as well as numerous smaller exhibits. He also wrote grants as part of a team, and wrote, edited, or copy-edited a half-dozen books for that museum's active publication program.



Frank Smoot

He spent each of the last six summers helping lead public school social studies teachers on study-travel to Illinois, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and New Mexico. When off the road, he gave frequent talks on the foundational history of the region.

Frank, having spent most of his life in Eau Claire since moving there with his family in 1966, conceded he's a bit anxious but mostly excited about running the new multi-million-dollar Coos Historical & Maritime Center.

As for the new waterfront facility,

he has many plans for exhibits, programs, and operations, but one overall goal he's stressed, non-stop, to anyone who will listen: "It's important to me not only to have a place for Highway 101 tourists, but to make a place for residents to feel welcome again and again," he said.

"A place where they find themselves represented, where they see stories like their own."

This dovetails with Frank's approach to history, which emphasizes the importance of everyday people in understanding who we are and how we got to be like this. It's an approach underrepresented in textbooks and in people's impressions of history.

Frank's wife, Valerie Caskey, is a soap maker. They met near the 14th Street Pier of the Virginia Beach Boardwalk and got married on Fremont Street in Las Vegas. She has family in Talent, Corvallis, and Portland.

"I'm not sure yet that every local would always agree, but Coos Bay seems like paradise to us," Frank said, "and it's a fascinating area."

News from the digital frontier

Tech guru **David Wemhaner** has given CCHS wide-ranging help this past year. Just a few of the ways:

Website: In conjunction with museum staff and using Wild Apricot templates, he designed a new version of the CCHS website.

Email: Enrolled the museum in Google Apps for Education, a free version for non-profits of their Google Apps for Business. Among other services, this includes email. All staff now have cooshistory.org email addresses.

Membership Database: He set up a membership database and converted all the members in Past Perfect to the Wild Apricot system, which is password protected. Current members are active; past members are archived.

Electronic Payments: Members can apply for or renew membership online, receive an email invoice, then call in or mail payment, which can then be registered on the website and membership activated.

Welcome!

New Museum Members

Melanie M. Bloom
Karen and Jim Brown
David Elst
Steven and Debra Graham
Thomas and Barbara Griffin
JMT Management LLC
Cindy and Lawrence Johnson
James Montalbano
Raymond Nelson
Charlotte Palmateer
Peter Pike
George Reese
Bob and Nanette Ross
Bob Sanders
Frank Smoot and Valerie Caskey
Roger Straus
George Tinker
Doug Veysey
Maxine Wegner
Capt. Gene and Reni Woods

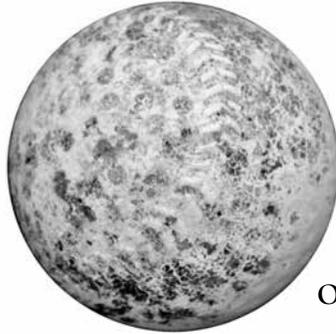
Renewals at Upper Levels

Cedar Electric & Construction
Ann Collins
Ray and Rosella Duskin
Honda World
Blair Holman and Ginny Tabor
Huggins Insurance
Donald Ivy and Lucinda DiNovo
Paul and Patty Janke
Wilbur and Judy Jensen
Jerry and Darla Lesan
Lone Rock Timber
Arthur and Antoinette Poole
Tom and Joan Stamper
R. Geoga Taylor
Ted Terry
Whitty McDaniel Bodkin
& Combs LLP

September–December 2013

New Acquisitions

Baseball and Baseball Bat from Japanese Tsunami – Dave Crane



Pennant, DVD – Steve & Joan Greif

Manuscript – Louis Hough

Household items belonging
to the Crabtree Family

– Lois Ellen & Thomas Humphrey

Deeds of Gift relating to the
Oregon Southern Improvement Company
– International Port of Coos Bay

Digital Photograph

– Eric & Mary Kohler

Programs – M.J. Koreiva

Video Interviews related to
Columbus Day Storm – Judith McDonald

Scrapbooks, letterman's letters, books, and photographs
– George Montgomery

Photographs – Louise Muir

Books, newspaper clippings, photographs, and dresses
– Ruth Reppeto



Monster Bash

CCHS held its 2013 Monster Bash Friday, October 25, in the Mill Casino's Salmon Room West.

St. John Entertainment kicked it up a notch, and guests danced, laughed, did the grapevine, and competed for cash prizes given out for the night's best costumes. The fundraiser supported the museum.

Many thanks to all who came, and to those who donated some great prizes for the event: Cougar Eye Care, the Mill Casino-Hotel, Ciccarelli's, Gino's Pizza, North Bend High School Athletic Department, City Subs, Glasgow Market, Toni Ann Brend, Coquille Animal Hospital, Wildlife Safari and Moe's Bike Shop. A special thanks to board member **Lucinda DiNovo** who coordinated the event.

Making a great program better

Two new grants will support an expansion of the CCHS educational program starting this next summer.

The Oregon Community Foundation provided \$18,000, and Plum Creek Foundation provided \$4,500. These monies will aid development of a summer program and planning for more and better educational efforts in the new Coos Historical and Maritime Center scheduled to open near the end of 2014. The successful applications were written by CCHS board member Carol Ventgen.

The need for a school-museum coordinated education program was originally identified in a community survey conducted twelve years ago in 2002, and adopted as a high priority by the museum's Board of Trustees in 2004. CCHS worked with curriculum directors of the largest school districts and a volunteer Education Advisory Committee including retired principals, teachers, and other education professionals. The group recommended that the museum offer grade school programs which linked local history to grade-specific state curriculum goals.

The group recognized that the museum was ideally situated to partner with other local public and private entities to build an integrated program helping school children understand the direct connection between their classroom learning, their local heritage, and their current surroundings. As a corollary, more exhibits were tied to one or more grade-specific topics. In the 2005-06 school year, the museum successfully debuted the "Kids to Museum" pilot project, initially restricted to the 4th grades of just two small school districts (Coquille and North Bend) and

emphasizing Native American culture. Content was developed in collaboration with representatives of the local tribes and school Indian Education specialists. Museum staff, committee members and volunteers (retired teachers, Indian Education specialists, tribal

elders and members of tribal councils) delivered the program. This first program was enthusiastically received by all involved, and expansion of the program to serve more districts and additional grades was encouraged. In the 2006-07 school year, it was extend-

Area authors share stories

Two local authors gave talks this fall at the Coos Historical and Maritime Museum about local history books they have recently published.

Andie Jensen has produced his third volume about the rich history of local law enforcement. On November 2, he told his audience about *Law on the Bay: Coos County Sheriff's Office, 1854-1897*. "The book chronicles events of the true frontier lawmen of Coos County," Jensen said, "the sheriffs and their deputies who served during the years Empire City reigned supreme as the county seat." The well-indexed and footnoted book is a wealth of biographical information about early citizens in Coos County that had jobs of great importance. Photos of most of the sheriffs and deputies dot the pages as well as images of documents related to law enforcement. Stories of crimes in the pioneer era of the South Coast make for interesting reading.

Richard and Judith Wagner recently completed their sixth book about local history and gave an engaging talk at the museum on December 8th. *Lies, Sex and Radio: Story of M. Sayle Taylor* is a lively story

of a charismatic man who served as principal of Marshfield High School and superintendent of the North Bend School District in the 1920s. A creative con-artist who worked himself into great employment opportunities, Sayle left Coos County, amid fascinating rumors, to become a famous radio personality named "The Voice of Experience" in the 1930s. The Wagner's gave a wonderful talk about Sayle and even treated their museum audience to a sample of a video produced of Sayle's national radio program.

Both Jensen's and Wagner's books are on sale at the museum gift store and would make wonderful gifts for any relative or friend who cherishes good local history stories.

And more local history is on the way! Jensen has a book about the Beaver Hill mines that will be published next year. Also Bill Mast, Jon Littlefield, Steve Greif, Bill Lansing, and John Whitty are conducting research on local history they hope to publish in the near future. CCHS has provided assistance to all these authors and looks forward to author talks in the new Coos Historical & Maritime Center on the waterfront in late 2014.

ed to a total of 27 4th grades in seven school districts.

The program has continued to evolve with extensive community participation and support. It received the Oregon Heritage Commission's "Excellence" Award in 2008. This year, nine Coos and Curry school districts participated, reaching 1,413 4th and 5th grade students, involving 55 teachers, helped by volunteers who contributed 693 hours.

In 2013, CCHS piloted a summer project. These new grants will help fund an expanded summer program for 2014 building upon the structure and community connections put in place in 2013. It will also help fund additional staff hours and new supporting costs for a 2014 school year program, and assist with a planning process in the fall of 2014 to build an expanded program in the new facility.

Planning will explore greater parental involvement, and the addition of new partnerships, especially businesses and heritage sites located near the new Museum. A positive impact on the area's economy is expected.

Partners include the City of North Bend, Boys and Girls Club, local Scouting organizations, the OSU Extension Agent, area businesses, South Slough Estuarine Research Reserve. January through June, the 4th grade program consists of a 3-part program delivered in the classroom, in the museum, and at the Coquille Indian Tribe's plank house. Consistent with the Oregon American Indian/Alaska Native Education State Plan, the

program is designed to help students recognize the dignity and worth of individuals and groups in society, and to assure meaningful participation of American Indians in program planning and delivery.



A May 2013 education tour through the CHMM Iron Works exhibit

The school-year program is delivered in three weekly segments of approximately one hour. In the first week, there are classroom discussions and activities on the theme of "Indians Today," addressing some of the most pervasive cultural stereotypes and encouraging awareness of Native American contributions. In the second week, students visit the

museum for an examination of the EuroAmerican contact period. In the third week, the students are the guests of the Coquille Indian Tribe at its large plank house designed to replicate a traditional structure, participating in traditional activities and games.

During the same period, the 5th grade project combines visits to classrooms, class visits to the museum, and trips to relevant "real world" local sites (e.g., a shell midden, saltmarsh, waterfront). Classroom discussion focuses on topography and transportation in relationship to area economies of the past: coal mining, agri-

culture, logging, fishing, etc. In the museum, the students view photos, and handle implements used in those early activities. The culmination of the program is an "auction" on Coos Bay's boardwalk for locally mined gold, illustrating supply and demand economics. "Living history" performances on the boardwalk demonstrate community life in the 1800s.

A few hours of your time

Volunteers like you can make a difference to area kids this spring.

The CCHS 4th and 5th grade student education program reaches out to children all over the region and gives them a better understanding of our history.

The time commitment is very flexible. Both of these programs start in the spring and you can volunteer for

one, or several, morning or afternoon shifts.

You don't have to see yourself as a local history expert to join us. Lessons are quick to learn and easy to share.

Want to be part of this very exciting and rewarding experience? Contact **Amber Cannon-Dornath**, Education Coordinator: (541) 756-6320 Email: ceducation@frontier.com

Coos



Historical & Maritime Museum

1220 Sherman Ave., North Bend OR 97459
 (541) 756-6320 • www.cooshistory.org

Hours

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 Tuesday through Saturday
 closed Sunday and Monday

Admission

Museum Members: Free
 Adults: \$4
 Students and Seniors: \$2
 Children under 12: Free

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

One more thing...



Oh my gosh, I'm dyeing on stage here

A photo from the CCHS collection. Two young women apparently dyeing another's hair on stage. In the background is a crowd of young women sitting and laughing. On the back: "Frosh week / Naidine Cratilnel(?) / Carolyn Kane. Scofield Studios - Suite Hub Bldg. / Coos Bay, Oregon." If you know more about this photograph – the women, the date, the place, the event – give us a jingle.



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