The rugged Oregon coast is one of the most beautiful and dangerous coastlines in the world. Among mariners, it has the reputation of being treacherous and difficult to navigate. Several hundred vessels have been lost along the coastline and around the many rivers through the years.

Although Spanish and British sea explorers visited the South Coast in the 1500s and 1600s, Euro-American settlement of the area did not begin until the 1850s. Like the Native-Americans who had long inhabited the region, most pioneer communities were also located along waterways which provided people with access to transportation and natural resources.

The southern Oregon coastline held many potential hazards for early mariners including heavy seas, hidden reefs, violent storms, and varying water depths. Another potential problem: the coastal weather can change rapidly. The area often experiences thick fog (which can drop the temperature twenty degrees or more), and it is known for its impressive winter storms that can produce wind gusts of fifty miles per hour and higher. Ships caught in storms often found both the wind and waves working against them. Together, these two forces could break a ship apart. Tragically, passengers and crew that survived the actual shipwreck often died of exposure while waiting to be rescued due to ocean temperatures that average 50°F.

Not all shipwrecks are caused by the forces of nature. Accidents can be caused by human error as well. During the peak era of sailing ships, many vessels lost their bearings and inadvertently traveled too close to the rugged coast where the winds and currents forced them onto rocks. In other cases, shipwrecks were blamed on a captain’s poor knowledge of the Oregon coast’s dangers, incomplete charts, or the captain’s underestimation of Oregon weather. Once in trouble, the remote region (with few places to find refuge) played a role in many shipwrecks.

Over the years, numerous improvements have been made in order to reduce the dangers. Around the turn of the century, early settlers began planting Holland grass on the dunes in order to reduce the movement of the sand. Stone jetties were constructed at the mouth of rivers. They extended out into the sea in order to provide a safe channel for ships to travel. The rivers are frequently dredged in order to maintain the channel depth. All of these efforts combine to make the southern Oregon ports safer and much more reliable; however, accidents still occur.

One of the most popular local shipwrecks is also one of the most easily accessible. The remains of the Sujameco are located in the sand near Horsfall Beach. On March 1, 1929, the Sujameco grounded on the North Spit. The vessel missed the entrance to the Coos Bay, turned around, and was engulfed in thick fog which caused it to run aground. Several attempts were made to free the vessel, but it refused to budge. The Sujameco was eventually stripped of anything valuable and abandoned.

The Sujameco remained intact on the North Spit for many years. During World War II, the rusting hull was harvested for scrap metal. However, the bottom portion of the ship was buried in the sand and inaccessible. Year after year, the shifting sand reburies the remains of the Sujameco. Then, when the winter storms arrive, the ship is once again revealed. On a good day, the entire length of the ship may be exposed— from bow to rudder— with the ship still pointing south toward the entrance to the Coos Bay.

The Coos History Museum is in possession of a large collection (continued on page 4)
Greetings from the CCHS board! We had an eventful summer here at the museum, including Native American Basketry classes, a Summer Day Camp, and our continuing series of First Tuesday Lectures. We also conducted a successful tour of Langlois Mountain and vicinity, along with our first annual fundraiser, the Drunken Botanist, which netted over $33,701 for the museum. Our admissions for the year include visitors from 50 states, Washington D.C., and 22 foreign countries.

Now that summer’s gone and all the roses dying, it’s time to look ahead. The First Tuesday Lecture Series continues, as will Second Sunday free admission. Our third annual Oregon Author Day is scheduled for October 7th. We plan changes in exhibits over the next few months and will install the last of the survey markers in the concrete benches near the entrance. The Museum Store remains open for those of you shopping for birthdays, anniversaries, or the upcoming holidays.

I can’t let a newsletter go by without a plea for donations. Although the board, staff, membership, and volunteers can feel justifiably proud of the $33,701 we raised at the Drunken Botanist, that will operate the museum for only a month. Once again, think of the museum when you plan your year-end giving. If it’s not possible to help out financially, we can always use volunteers. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Valerie Caskey if you want to give the gift of your time.

In conclusion, I’d like to thank all who helped make this past summer a success, from the volunteers, to the staff and board members who worked so hard to develop and implement our programs. Those who planned our annual fundraiser are already discussing how to make next year’s event better. Finally, a big thank-you to the membership. It’s your financial support and attendance at our events that make the Coos County Historical Society and our museum viable.

South Coast Biography: Local History from Lives of the Past

Steve Greif will again teach a local SWOCC community education class about local history at the Coos History Museum during winter term. Each night will feature the biographies of two to three local people from the past who illustrate a theme. Greif is a retired high school history teacher and long-time CHM board member, interested in sharing local facts and lore with his students. A fundraiser, the $60 fee for the class will be donated to the museum.

The classes will run from January 10-March 21, on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-7:30. Register at SWOCC beginning in December. More information will later be posted on the CHM website.

Interested in historical images?

Most images from the museum’s collection are available for purchase.

Check our website, www.cooshistory.org, for information regarding user and licensing fees.
Change is upon us. Fall has arrived and along with it comes a great deal of change. The days are starting to get shorter and the foliage is beginning to transition into the fall color scheme. I always dread the end of summer but am greatly enjoying the vistas on the bay from the many viewpoints inside the museum. Particularly the tug boats, wildlife and sport fishing activity on the bay. The Coos Bay waterfront is one of the last working waterfronts. If you have not had a chance to enjoy the scenery and activity from our location, I encourage you to stop by. We make regular posts of the bay front on the museum’s Facebook page. You can also take advantage of the webcam on the museum’s rooftop which provides a great view of the bay from anywhere internet service is available. Check out the Bay Watch post on our website.

Retired Educator George Tinker and his associates are responsible for providing the opportunity. Funding was provided by the Chamber and Coos Bay/North Bend Rotary. We have had quite a bit of change at the museum. This past spring Debra Semrau joined our staff as our Collections Manager. She and her team of amazing volunteers have been hard at work getting the museum collection organized and accessible. As in all museums, there is a lot of work to be done, but Debra and her team are making a big difference. Organization is key when you house a collection that spans generations. One of our goals is to provide online access to our vast image collection. Keep an eye out on our website and social media sites for updates about our progress. We plan to start by getting 10,000 of our images online. This will provide students, educators, researchers and community members an opportunity to view historic images at their convenience.

Our public program schedule is full of numerous options this fall (see calendar on page 6). We now provide weekly updates via our Visitor Services Assistant, Becca Hill’s Thursday eblasts (electronic newsletter) which feature program information and a timely historic image from the museum’s collection. If you are not receiving these eblasts, you are missing out! If we do not have your email address, we can’t include you. Please let us know if you would like to be added to our subscribers by forwarding your email address to membership@cooshistory.org. This list is confidential; we do not share your information.

A big heartfelt thank you goes to all the individuals and businesses that donated items, time, and services to our Drunken Botanist auction. A complete list is shown on our website, www.cooshistory.org.

Scenes from the Drunken Botanist fundraiser in August.

*Photos by Anne Guerin*

New York Times best-selling author Amy Stewart, above, autographed her book, and was the main speaker, at the CHM fundraiser on August 19, 2017.
...Shipwrecks (continued from page 1)

of historical photographs. Among them are several amazing images of the wreck of the Advent. The three-masted schooner was built locally by K.V. Kruse at North Bend in 1901. It was owned by Captain Asa Meade Simpson. As a sailing vessel, the Advent was forced to rely on the wind to transport it safely from port to port. Unfortunately, the wind abated while it was sailing into the Coos Bay on February 18, 1913. The ship drifted ashore near Coos Head and began to break apart. Fortunately, the crew was rescued by the U. S. Life Saving crew. The shattered remains of the wooden hulled Advent were scattered at the base of the rocky cliffs south of the Coos Bay bar.

Over the years, many people have visited the remains of the Mary D. Hume, which continues to rot away at a dock near the mouth of the Rogue River. The Mary D. Hume held the record for the longest time spent in active commercial sea service on the Pacific Coast. Its career spanned 97 years. The ship was built at Ellensburg (now Gold Beach) in 1881. During its long career, it was converted several times. It began as a two-masted auxiliary steam schooner before being converted into an Arctic whaler and later a tug boat.

The Mary D. Hume was retired in the summer of 1978 and returned, under its own power, to Gold Beach. In 1979, it was given to the Curry County Historical Society. They intended to convert it into a museum ship. On August 1st, it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Unfortunately, things did not go according to plan. The Curry County Historical Society constructed a cradle beside the dock where they intended to display the Mary D. Hume as a museum ship. On November 13, 1985, they attempted to place the Mary D. Hume in the support cradle but it broke, causing the ship to sink in shallow water. There were several attempts to salvage it, but they all failed. The years have not been kind to the old ship which is slowly falling apart. Regardless, it remains on the National Register of Historic Places.

People who were living on the Southern Oregon coast during World War II may remember hearing about the loss of the Larry Doheny, which was the last American ship to be sunk off of the Oregon coast during the war. The 6,805 gross ton American tanker was built at Chester, Pennsylvania, in 1921. On October 5, 1942, the tanker Larry Doheny was torpedoed by the Japanese submarine I-25 off of Cape Blanco. The torpedo struck the port side, just forward of the bridge, and the entire length of the ship became engulfed in flames. The fire burned so hot that the ship’s machine gun ammo began exploding. The crew was unable to transmit a distress call before abandoning ship. Six of the forty-six crewmen lost their lives. The survivors spent a cold night in lifeboats within sight of their burning ship. In the morning, the ship slipped beneath the surface of the water. The steamer Coos Bay rescued the crew and transported them to Port Orford. The I-25 was having a busy week. The day before it torpedoed another ship, the American tanker Camden, off the Washington coast.

The 356 foot B1 Scouting Class submarine was responsible for several other attacks. On June 21, 1942, the I-25 shelled Fort Stevens on the Northern Oregon coast. The sub was also an aircraft carrier. It transported a small reconnaissance plane in a watertight compartment on its deck. In September of 1942, the plane dropped four bombs over the forests in Curry County-- making it the only location in the contiguous United States to be attacked by the Japanese air force during World War II. The bombs were intended to start forest fires since we relied on our forests to build ships and planes for the war effort. Fortunately, they failed. Although they did start a few small fires, they were quickly extinguished. There is an excellent display at the Chetco Community Library in Brookings which includes a model of the I-25 submarine. On September 3, 1943, the USS Ellet and USS Patterson sank the I-25 near Espritu Island, 1,100 miles east of Australia.

All of the shipwrecks mentioned in this article are discussed in further detail in the books Shipwrecks of Coos County (Arcadia Publishing, 2011) and Shipwrecks of Curry County (Arcadia Publishing, 2017) which were both written by H. S. Contino. Both are available for sale in the Coos History Museum’s gift shop.

Hannah Contino is a former CHM employee turned author, shown here at a book signing.
So far, 52 hours of labor involving seven volunteers have produced a much-improved appearance of the Welcome on the museum’s south plaza. The vessel is being groomed in anticipation of its 100th birthday in 2019. A few other repairs remain to be accomplished. A big thank you to Mike Vaughan and Tom Leahy of the Coos Bay Boatbuilding Center, Trae Johnson of Bayshore Paints, and volunteers Dan Myers, Judy Wagner, Steve Greif, Richard Whitwer, and Gary Shoop.

Photos by Steve Greif
Calendar of Events

We are working hard at bringing new and relevant public programming to the community. The following is a partial list of upcoming events. Check the museum’s website for a full calendar of events, www.cooshistory.org.

**OCTOBER**

3 – **First Tuesday Talks**: 6:30-8p.m. ($7 Adults/FREE for Museum Members.) Speaker: Dr. Candice Goucher, WSU Vancouver Faculty. Sea Biscuits and Flying Fish: The Surprising History of Maritime Foods. A lecture with recipes. Sponsored by Al Peirce Co. with additional in-kind support from The Mill Casino.

7 – **3rd Annual Oregon Author Day**: 10a.m.-1:30p.m. at the Coos History Museum and 5p.m.-7p.m. at SWOCC’s Black Box Theater. Free. Local authors share their latest books, writings, and musings.

8 – **Second Sunday Family Fun Day**: 1-3p.m. Free admission plus hands-on activities for kids and the young at heart. Activities: Kiragami Globes. Sponsored by Coquille Animal Hospital.


12 – **Toddler Yoga**: 10:30-11:30a.m. ($7 Adults/FREE for Museum Members.) Parents/Grandparents welcome to bring their 0-3 toddler for 1-hour yoga session. Currently scheduled to be every Thursday.

13 – **Fermentation on Wheels Book Event**: 6-8:30p.m. ($7 Adults/FREE for Museum Members.) Taste a variety of ferments from the bus and those that are featured in the book, then learn about the cost effective and simple tools involved and go home knowing how to creatively and fearlessly ferment vegetables from this hands-on demonstration.

16 – **CHM Volunteer Social**: 2-4p.m. RSVP required. Volunteer at the Museum? This event is for you.

29 – **Knot Club**: 2-4p.m. Skill-sharing club all about how to tie different kinds of knots. Members enjoy working on various projects throughout the year. All levels welcome.

**NOVEMBER**

1 – **Winter Farmers Market**: every Wednesday, 10a.m.-2p.m. (Continues until spring.)

4 – **How do our Values Influence Environmental Policy?**: 6:30-7:30p.m. Join philosopher Monica Mueller to explore our environmental values and question how those values are reflected—or not reflected—in current local, national, and global environmental policies. This is a free event.

7 – **First Tuesday Talks**: 6:30-8p.m. ($7 Adults/FREE for Museum Members.) Speaker: Forest Panel Discussion, Forestry: A Historical Perspective and a Look Forward. Sponsored by Al Peirce Co. with additional in-kind support from The Mill Casino.

10 – **Where are Queer People Welcome?**: 6-7:30p.m. Free event. Join facilitator Jill Winsor in a discussion that explores how the complexity of the queer community intersects with the spaces and communities that surround us.

11 – **Veteran’s Day**: Free admission to all veterans from 10a.m.-5p.m.

12 – **Second Sunday Family Fun Day**: 1-3p.m. Free admission all day plus hands-on activities for kids and the young at heart. Activities: Kiragami Globes. Sponsored by Coquille Animal Hospital.

**DECEMBER**

2 – **Coos History Museum First Annual Holiday Open House**: 10a.m.-3p.m. Do your holiday shopping at our Select Artisans Market. Free children’s hands-on activities will be provided.

5 – **First Tuesday Talks**: 6:30-8p.m. ($7 Adults/FREE for Museum Members.) Speaker: John Whitty, WWII: Its Effects in Coos County. Sponsored by Al Peirce Co. with in-kind support from The Mill Casino.

10 – **Second Sunday Family Fun Day**: 1-3p.m. Free admission all day plus hands-on activities for kids and the young at heart. Activities: Kiragami Globes. Sponsored by Coquille Animal Hospital.

Facilitators Anita Yap and Traci Price will lead participants in a conversation that looks at how Oregon’s history of racism influences our present and asks, how can understanding historic and current impacts of racism in Oregon contribute to our sense of place and vision of the future? How can diversity and inclusion create thriving communities?
Green Crab Research Project

By Christina Geierman

Thanks to a Partners in Science grant from the MJ Murdock Charitable Trust, North Bend High School Science teacher Christina Geierman has spent the last two summers working with the South Slough Reserve to monitor the European green crab (carcinus maenas) population of Coos Bay. This is an invasive species that can out-compete juvenile Dungeness crabs for food and shelter. The mudflat just south of the Coos History Museum has become a hot spot for green crabs. Last year, Mrs. Geierman and her student assistants caught an average of three green crabs per trap at this site. This year, that number has increased to nearly 13 crabs per trap. Mrs. Geierman and her supervisor, Dr. Bree Yednock, have been working for the past year to get the word out about the green crab invasion. Now, the South Slough Reserve is beginning to work with community partners to begin a trapping program to reduce the numbers of this harmful invader.

Hassaan Qadir (NBHS student), Pat Huff (South Slough NERR intern from Maryland), and Christina Geierman (NBHS teacher, Murdock Fellow) were trapping for the invasive European green crab in the mudflats near the Coos History Museum on Thursday, July 27th.

Photo by Steve Greif

Langlois Mountain History Tour
July 2017

A view of the Pacific Ocean from the Langlois Mountain field trip, attracting 46 people, sponsored by CHM and organized by Bill Mast and Anne Guerin.

Langlois Mountain History Tour participants enjoy lunch at the former Millard School on Langlois Mtn. Road, now converted to a vacation spot called Highland Woods.

Photos by Steve Greif
At the Heart of it All – CHM Volunteers

By Valerie Caskey

In this edition, we are featuring Bonnie Hudson, who works at the front desk/museum store, second Sundays, and is a bringer of all-around cheer.

So where do you hail from and what brings you to Coos County?

I'm from Roseburg. My husband’s family is from here so I moved to North Bend in 1968.

What is your favorite thing about life here in Coos County?

Many things! Fresh air, mountains, rivers, lakes, and restaurants, of course.

Why do you volunteer at the museum?

I'm retired, so I have time to help the CHM, my 'go to' place. I've started to get more interested in the history of the area. I like volunteering at the museum for so many reasons. I like the new people I get to meet every day and the stories they tell, and the other volunteers are great. I like learning and it's a great place to learn new things. I also love the view.

What type of volunteering do you do at the museum?

I work at the front desk and museum store, help with the 'Living History' education program, and pitch in on Second Sundays to help with the kids’ crafts.

What type of work have you done in your life?

I've done all kinds of work in schools, restaurants, nursing homes and shops and also with kids.

What are your hobbies?

I like to dance plus engage in arts and crafts like crochet and knitting, creative things in general. I read a lot, and I like to watch some shows on TV.

What do you think is the most interesting thing about yourself? What would others say?

I like to try new and different things. I’m up for anything, almost! Other people would say that I am full of energy and like to talk a lot, and that I am sometimes on 'island time,' because I dance to my own beat, and people who really know me know that I am the opposite of that at times, too. I need to retreat and have quiet time to myself to re-charge.

If you could visit any place in the world tomorrow, where would you go and why?

Tahiti and other islands in the tropics. I love the tropics!

CHM hosted a community forum, Multiracial in America, one of several Oregon Humanities programs we feature at the museum.
Welcome New Board Members

The CHM Board of Directors recently added two new members, Kristi Pennington and Ryan Hogan.

Living in Charleston, Kristi Pennington is a retired attorney at law. In the application materials, she wrote, “I am impressed with the recent outreach efforts [of the museum], specifically the focus on community enhancement and enrichment. Giving back to this place of natural beauty is important to me.”

Ryan Hogan, a resident of Coquille, co-owns two small businesses and is senior project manager for Sedgwick Claims Management Services, Inc. in Memphis, Tennessee. He wrote, “I want to help preserve the history that has cultivated Coos County’s culture and community.” He can “provide new ideas and a different perspective on how to provide a better understanding of Coos County and Oregon’s South Coast history.” An active volunteer in the Coquille/Myrtle Point area, Ryan has a “great working knowledge of social media and how to bring awareness to events and missions.”

We are always looking for volunteers to help out at the museum.

Contact Valerie Caskey at volunteercoordinator@cooshistory.org or call 541-756-6320 for more information.

Is it time to purchase or renew your annual membership? Make a donation?

Annual Fee:
- Student ($15)
- Individual ($35)
- Family ($50)
- Friend ($100)
- Benefactor ($250)
- Historian ($500)
- Curator ($1,000)
- Business membership ($100 or above)
- Donation $__________

Membership has its rewards in shopping locally. Show your membership card when you shop at Tru Furniture, Truffles!, and Katrina Kathleen’s to receive 10% off regular prices.

At the Friend level and up, you can now receive an additional new benefit – membership in the North American Reciprocal Museums program with free admission to 880+ museums across the U.S. A link to the list of NARM members is posted on our website and available for review at our front desk.

Your annual membership becomes active from date of purchase.

Member Name:_____________________________ Date:_____________________________
Business Name:_____________________________
Mailing Address:__________________________________________________________________
Phone #:________________________ Email:__________________________________________
   ___ Yes, send information about events via email.
   ___ Send information about volunteering and gifting.
If your VISA/MasterCard/DiscoveryCard is by mail:  Card Type:_________________
   Card #:________________________ Exp Date:____________ 3-digit Security Code:_________

Views from the CHM windows . . .

Some very impressive and quite large vessels float by the museum on a daily basis, offering the onlooker a chance to view some interesting and traditional commercial activity on the bay.

Photos by Steve Greif
In 1947, young Hauser resident Ken Kime found a Native canoe near Saunders Lake, which was later donated to the CHM and is on display. Recently, Ken’s daughter and her husband were pleased to see it at the museum.

*Photo by Steve Greif*