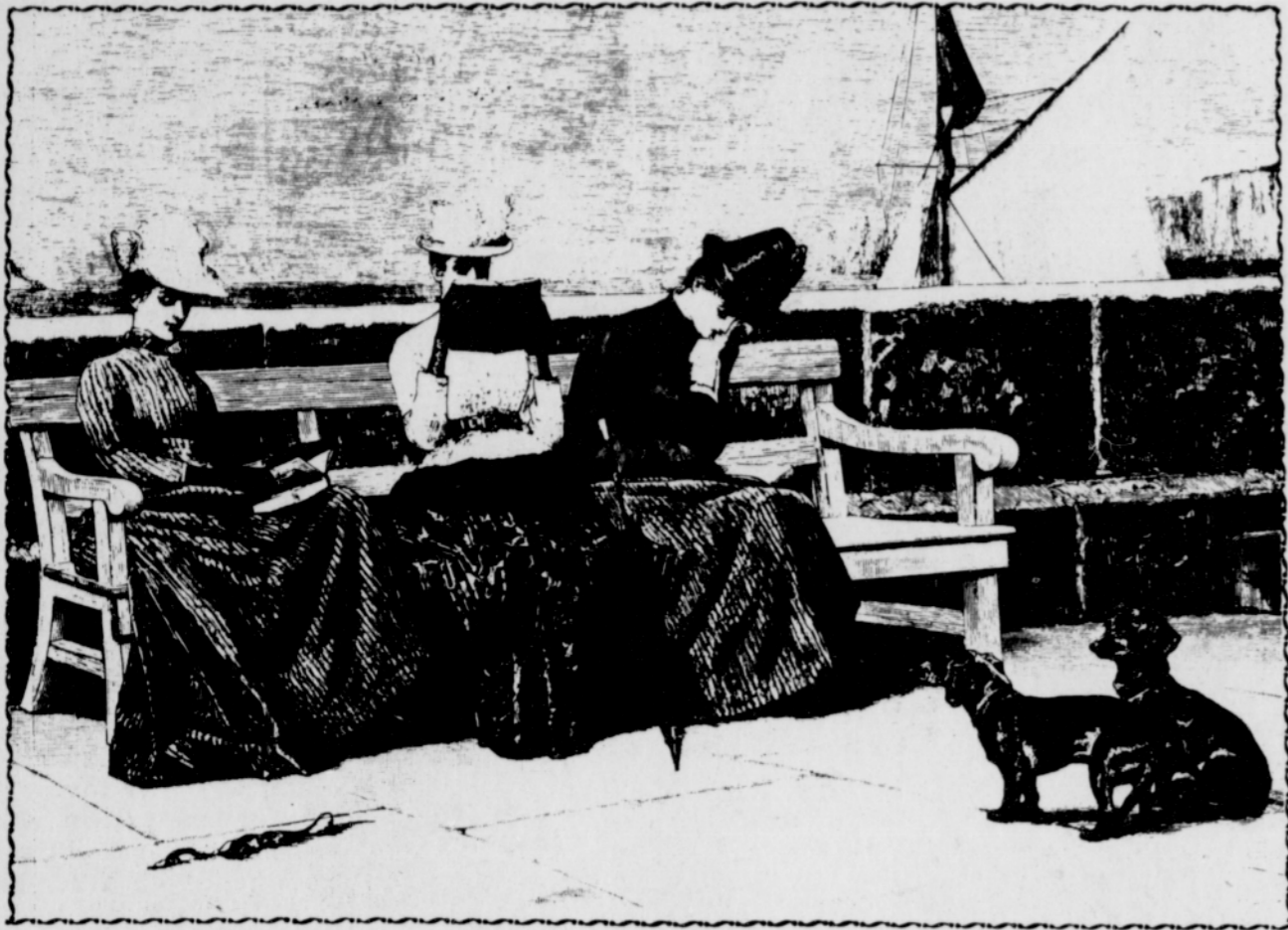


AMERICAN



GRAF FITTI



Is There a Difference?

by Lindi Reid

After what seemed a lengthy and often frustrating visit, the town of Cannon Beach can now reflect upon Hollywood at its doorstep. The visitors manifested so very much more than the usual tourists. We were able to see boosted egos, shattered egos, disillusionment, short tempers, power games, warm and friendly movie stars, insecure and in-need-of-special-treatment-movie stars, less business, more business, delighted local extras (at least during the ten minutes of actual filming), and an entire brigade of walkie-talkin' traffic controllers.

Cannon Beach became "The Set." For a week downtown was made drab and rotting away. The movie was to be a spoof of horror films; and low humor must have been the intent. Local citizens were hired as extras for thirty dollars a day and a meal. We who were among the chosen — chosen I'm sure because we appeared more slovenly than the unchosen — were made into caricatures of ourselves as hicks in the hustings, which was reflected in our low pay scale (extras receive fifty dollars a day in more sophisticated locales, perhaps a reason the Oregon coast was chosen).

We changed into what Hollywood people must always go through on location. On the set they flattered us endlessly, held their tempers (most of the time) when we blew a scene: — And carefully ignored the circus that gathered from miles around. Most of the folks simply lined the streets each day of filming, but a few tried to be "seen" and made famous with whatever homegrown talent the world had been waiting for.

The movie folks are gone. So is the circus, which also includes the giant ferris wheel that was set among the trees. Cannon Beach has quieted — so ends our roles as hosts to a foreign group that never quite understood how wonderful thirty dollars a day can be.

We are left with a personal gain beyond the little extra to cover next month's rent, even beyond the momentary fantasies of being "discovered" from a few seconds of mugging at cameras. We were given the opportunity to see people practicing a craft. As was often pointed out, that craft is called "show business," not show artistry. Complicated and detailed as it was — and a great amount of work and detail must go into creating fantasy — these people were doing their business: it's a dog-

eat-dog business with terrible hours but a lot of money, most of them said when asked.

Now that they are gone, I wonder if the Hollywood people saw the great array of artistic talent that populates Cannon Beach. I think not. But in their defense, our visitors were busy climbing an endless ladder, which, one soon learns, has no permanent top. Cannon Beach, on the other hand, represents a height for the artists. Their gains are modest — certainly none have a six million dollar budget which for movie people is pretty cheap — and their talents often go unappreciated. Yet for a wonderful moment the artistry within the locals and the high-salaried, high-pressured visitors combined, and though the end product might not be quite what we would brag about, we shared a bond that was deeply felt.

I learned something else from that experience. I learned that the best is here, and I thank Hollywood for showing me.

Lindi Reid is a Cannon Beach writer who will be seen for a few seconds in an upcoming movie.

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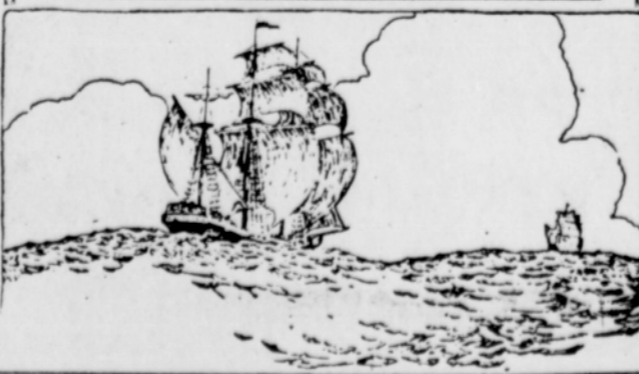
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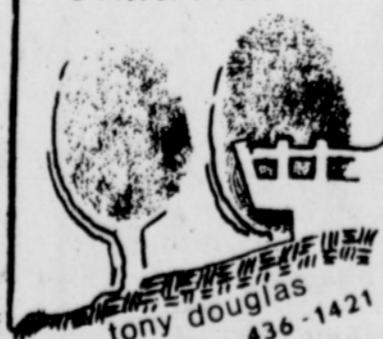


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