

JUNE'S GARDEN

VILLAGE OF FLOWERS
History of Cannon Beach Parks (continued)

Councilman and Parks Commissioner Will Osburn, during a Council meeting dated January 16, 1979, commended the present members of the Parks Board on their active participation in composing a comprehensive plan for community parks. At the same meeting the Council made the decision to add more members to the Parks Board. Notices were published and they received many volunteer applicants who were appointed by the Council at their February 1979 meeting. The main function of this board was to study concerns of the community and development and care of city parks, and to advise the Council of these concerns. The Parks Board became known as the Parks and Community Service Board.

During the 1980s many changes occurred. Mark Lindberg was hired to be the first City Manager in 1985, followed by Del Beaver in 1987, then John Williams in 1988. These City Managers, working with the Parks and Community Service Board, the Council, and the Mayor, developed many more passive city parks. Elk Run, Les Shirley and Haney property, James Madison, Ecola Creek, which was sited but left natural until the 1990s, and the Tolovana Club building and large piece of landscaped property, were turned over to the City. Before the 1980s the few City restrooms and parking lots seemed adequate, but this drastically changed as at times tourists swelled the population of the town. More restrooms and parking lots were developed. Also during the 1980s many more recreation facilities were added to City Park.

On March 10, 1986 City Manager Mark Lindberg received a letter from the U.S. Department of the Interior National Parks Service that Les Shirley Park was certified to be a part of the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail. This was the site where the expedition came to see the beached whale and purchased blubber and oil from the natives. Linda Newberry was chosen to design several markers to tell of this early history and to explain with drawings and descriptions the existing wildlife.

In August 1986 members of the Lewis & Clark Expedition National Foundation visited the Park as part of a celebration of the 212th anniversary of Meriwether Lewis' birthday, August 18, 1774.

Les Shirley Park is a passive park north of Ecola Creek, a place to visit, to explore the Creek, observe the wildlife that still exists there, to read the markers, and to realize its history. The Park is named in honor of a caring man who volunteered for years daily patrolling the town, picking up and disposing of litter left by thoughtless people.

James Madison Park was dedicated during the time when Everett Browning was Mayor. It was designed with mounded flower beds that divide the Park from the bordering streets, Spruce and Madison. These beds are planted with rhododendrons, various flowering and evergreen trees, shrubs and perennial flowers. From early spring and into fall many of these plants are in full bloom.

Both Madison and Les Shirley Park have provided picnic tables and benches.

Elk Run Park was so named because someone once saw an elk there, or possibly a herd, as the elk that live in the nearby forest enjoy the most tender plants that we humans try and plant throughout the city parks and residential areas. This park on Spruce Street is bordered on the west side by wetlands. A few trees and shrubs are planted in raised beds and a small parking area is provided.

Ecola Creek Park, bordering the creek southeast of the bridge, had been left natural until 1993. On Arbor Day of that year, Jan Ayles, Cannon Beach gradeschool teacher, and her fifth grade planted trees there. The children also later helped build and install two picnic tables and benches. The anchor that is placed there had been part of the exterior decor of the Whaler Restaurant, owned for many years by Sandy and Doug Larson, on the corner of 2nd and Hemlock Street. Gene Cope, who bought this property, donated the anchor when he remodeled the building to include other types of businesses.

The majority of the vegetation of this park has been left natural as it should be, not to disturb the environment along the creek.

The Tolovana Club property now includes the Day Care Center. The club house is used for many purposes. The Center provides their own landscaping; the City's responsibility is the grounds around the club house and the plantings south of the extended parking lot.

Activities and recreation facilities that were added to City Park during the 1980s were: a second tennis court, a paved area for handball and basketball, a skateboard ramp, an organized summer program for children, and until 1996 a portable bandstand.

The history of having music to celebrate the 4th of July and the bandstand were prompted by the wish of Will Osburn.

One 4th of July, Will hired a band to play in a small grassy area north of El Mundo for Women adjacent to Beth Holland's first flower shop. This started a yearly event. Will loved all styles of music. The porch of Will's grocery store was a favorite place for musicians to gather. At times he and his friend Jim Smith played their trumpets and

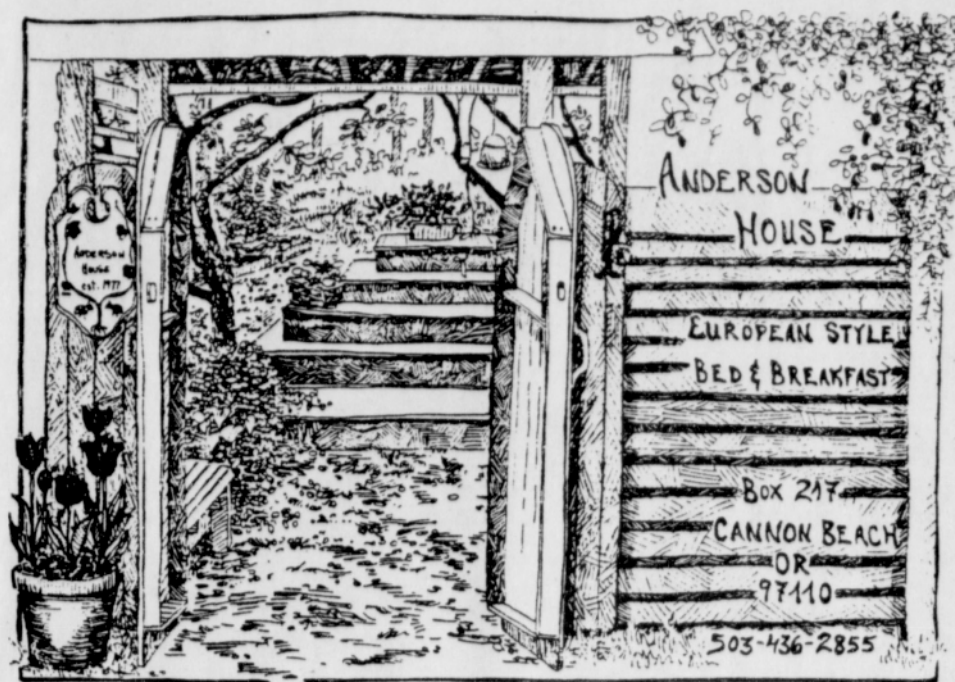
entertained others with Christmas carols regardless of the season.


Will died in 1985, and to carry on the tradition and in memory of Will on July 4th 1986, the North Coast Symphonic Band, Jim Smith conducting, played the first concert in City Park. The bandstand was borrowed pallets covered with sheets of plywood that were donated from the Cannon Beach Lumber Yard. Laurel Hood Smith reminisced that they strung up a madras style bedspread for a backdrop.

In 1987 the Osburn family rented a bandstand from Portland which was placed in the park the last of June and taken down and stored in September. That summer was the beginning of the concert series performed each Sunday afternoon throughout the summer. The City eventually bought this portable bandstand which was used until the permanent one was built in 1996.

The new bandstand was designed by Jay Raskin and constructed by Sam Absher. Mike Riley, Gearhart Landscape contractor, used Columbia River basalt stone from Longview Quarry to incorporate in the foundation of the bandstand. The bronze crow mounted on the peak of the building was designed and made by Frank Boyden. Starting the concert series each 4th of July, it has become a tradition for Jim Smith to conduct the Symphonic Band, dedicating it to Will, starting the program playing 'The Star Spangled Banner,' followed by John Phillip Sousa marches, swing music, and songs from musicals. Selections of a variety of styles of music make up the summer series that closes on Labor Day.

Developing the many new parks and other landscaped areas the City owns became a problem for continued care, as in 1988 the only City maintenance worker, Nick Murry, left.
(to be continued)





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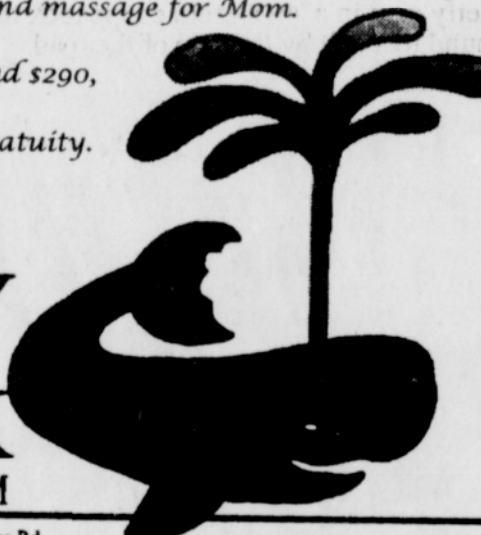
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