

YOU’VE GOT MAIL



The Astoria Post Office’s 169th birthday is Wednesday. If you don’t already know it, Astoria’s is the oldest post office west of the Rocky Mountains. You can thank **John M. Shively** (1804-1893) for that, according to OregonEncyclopedia.org (<http://tinyurl.com/ShivelyPO>), which also provided the images shown of Shively himself, inset, and the original post office building.

In 1844 Shively settled on a land claim in Astoria, and mapped out the town. The Hudson’s Bay Company disagreed with his plan rather vehemently, and Shively found it beneficial to move on. He wound up in Washington, D.C., for a while, and used the time wisely, lobbying for a mail service to Oregon. Soon he was appointed postmaster, and upon returning to Astoria, opened the post office March 9, 1847. However, he left his post to dash to the 1849 California gold rush.

According to the “Social and Economic History of Astoria” (<http://tinyurl.com/SocEcAstoria>), Shively put his deputy, **David Ingalls**, in charge, and Ingalls moved the post office to his store on the southwest corner of Tenth and Duane streets.

Uppertown part owner and resident, **T. P. Powers**, succeeded Shively as postmaster, and moved the post office near the custom house in Uppertown, which was then a considered a separate entity from Astoria’s Lowertown. When Abraham Lincoln’s administration took over in 1861, new officers who were “friendly to the lower town” were appointed, and the post office was moved back to “lower town.” In 1878 the roadway to Uppertown was completed, finally uniting the city.

When the U.S. Post Office and Custom House on the corner of Eighth and Commercial streets opened for business Aug. 21, 1933, Astoria’s mail finally found its forever home. Shively would no doubt be pleased.

JACK-IN-THE-BOX



Pictured, a photo of a **wrecked car** on the beach near the South Jetty viewing tower, taken by **Linda Fenton-Mendenhall**, that was featured last week. She named it the Peter Cardale.

Her husband, who works in the automotive industry, guessed it was a smaller truck or car chassis from the 1960s. But neither had any idea how it got there. Tsunami debris, perhaps?

Not so, said caller **Jeff**, who left a message saying, “That’s been there for many, many years.” The last time he remembers seeing it, though, was 10 years ago. So obviously, it’s just popped up again.

But the question remains: Is anyone still missing a car?

FEELING SHEEPISH



When the **North Coast Land Conservancy** (<http://nclctrust.org>) bought the **Reed Ranch** near Cullaby Lake in 2008, the 117-acre property was covered with invasive **Scotch broom** (pictured inset — all images are courtesy of the NCLC).

It took several years, but most of the weed was removed — except about 15 acres, which was on two steep dune ridges. The location of the 14-foot tall plants made them impossible to hand-cut, weed-whack or mow.

In November, NCLC hired **Bigby’s Tree Service** in Astoria to use a forestry mulcher (a giant tractor with teeth) on those pesky dunes. The mulcher, pictured, was a marvel, and wiped out the Scotch broom and blackberry thickets, but left native plants intact.

But how to keep the Scotch broom at bay? Its seeds can live up to 30 years in the soil. Helpful neighbor **Bill Reed** had the answer: Sheep. They enjoy munching on Scotch broom seedlings, so he brought some sheep over to graze (pictured) and keep things tidy.

In the spring, NCLC’s **Melissa Reich** will plant grass and native wildflower species on the dunes. “We’re kind of putting our all into this and hoping for the best,” she said. “Whatever happens will be better than it was.”

In One Ear



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REMEMBER ‘MOVIN’ ON’?



Remember the NBC TV show “**Movin’ On**”? It aired from 1974-1976, and was about two truckers, played by **Claude Akins** (right) and **Frank Converse** (left), who traveled around the country in a big rig meeting people and having adventures. The actors are pictured in a screen shot from the show.

One episode, “The Time of His Life,” was filmed on the North Coast in 1974. It’s about a young man, played by **Michael J. Pollard**, who has terminal cancer. The episode starts with the pair driving across the Astoria Bridge, but most of it was filmed in Seaside and Gearhart (including the bowling alley scene).

Bill Bazen, a “lifelong fan of the series” and the show’s historian, is working with the show’s executive producers, **Phil D’Antoni** and **Barry Weitz** on a book that will feature many of the filming locations, including those on the North Coast.

Bill would appreciate it if anyone who remembers any details of the filming here, or who has any stories and photos from that time, would please contact him by email at movinonfan@outlook.com, or by mail at 14917 Creedmoor Road, Wake Forest, N.C. 27587. You can also join his “Movin’ On” Facebook group at <http://tinyurl.com/movinFB>

If your memory needs a little jolt, you can watch the episode on Hulu.com at <http://tinyurl.com/movin1974>. Actually, all 44 of the episodes are there, if you want to fall into a “show hole.” Enjoy!

LASSIE CAME HOME



A story in the Seattle Times reported that a **seafloor pressure sensor**, initially sent to Japan after being made in Redmond, Washington, and deployed off the coast of Hokkaido, Japan, in 2010, has had quite an interesting journey (<http://tinyurl.com/lassiesensor>).

The sensor was monitoring a subduction zone, but not the one that caused the devastating 2011 Japanese earthquake and tsunami. It was hoped the sensor had recorded the tsunami passing by, but when geophysicist Ryota Hino and a team went out to retrieve it, the sensor was missing. Hino speculated that perhaps it got caught in a mudslide from the earthquake.

Whatever happened, the sensor eventually it worked itself loose, and with its glass sphere acting as a buoy, floated to the surface and started drifting east along with the tsunami debris. Around Christmas 2014, beachcomber and oyster farm manager **Phil Stamp** found it washed ashore in **Wilapa Bay**. He could see it was some sort of scientific instrument, so he took it home.

A fellow beachcomber helped him send out emails to find the owner, but the message didn’t get to Hino until last summer. Since the sensor probably contained valuable information about the tsunami, not to mention being worth around \$30,000, the geophysicist decided a trip to Washington to retrieve it was in order — and brought an NHK documentary film crew with him. The sensor is shown, courtesy of NHK.

“When I pulled back the tarp, the professor’s eyes were like a little kid on Christmas,” Stamp said of Hino’s reunion with the sensor in January.

Hino took the sensor back to its manufacturer, Jerry Paros, in Redmond for a checkup. Other than having a dead battery, it was fine, and the data was intact. “It was an amazing moment,” said Paros. “It’s like Lassie came home.”

Lassie didn’t stay home, however, and went back to Japan again — eventually to resume duty on the seafloor.

SITTING PRETTY



It’s that time of year again, and the **Decorah, Iowa, eagles** are nesting. There are **three eggs**, the same-sized clutch as last year. Mom and pop are taking turns keeping them warm until the hatch date, which is 35-37 days after they are laid. No. 3 was laid on Feb. 25, so it’s probably sometime in late March.

Thanks to the Raptor Research Project, there is an eagle cam right near the nest, so you literally have a real time bird’s eye view of the proceedings at <http://www.ustream.tv/decoraheagles>. A screen shot is shown. The website also has a chat room, lots of videos, and an informative blog. This annual bird-watching event has become so popular that it has 106,500-plus followers.

The latest news is that the team has discovered yet another large eagle’s nest they’re calling Decorah North. There are no webcams set up yet, but perhaps next year we’ll have two nests to watch.

GHOST YACHT



About 60 miles off the coast of the Philippines, some fishermen happened upon a **white yacht**, the Sajo, that was just drifting along, mast broken, sail trailing in the water, News.com.au reports (<http://tinyurl.com/sajo-drift>). The vessel is pictured in a photo courtesy of the Barobo Police Station.

Curious, they boarded the boat to see if anyone was aboard. They were shocked to find that the yacht’s only occupant was the **mummified remains** of a man who apparently died while sitting at a desk. Not knowing what else to do, the fishermen decided to drag the yacht to the municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur in the Philippines, which took them almost 24 hours.

It has since been determined that the man was **Manfred Fritz Bajorat**, a German explorer, who hasn’t been seen since 2009. There appears to be no evidence of foul play, and it is thought he died unexpectedly of natural causes, perhaps of a heart attack. No one knows how long he has been dead, or how long his yacht has been meandering around the Pacific Ocean on its own. It’s a true nautical mystery.

CLEANING UP



Aussies **Pete Ceglinski** (pictured left) and **Andrew Turton** (pictured right) and want to start cleaning up the ocean with their **Seabin Project** (www.seabinproject.com). “We have designed and made an automated rubbish bin that catches floating rubbish, oil, fuel and detergents,” the website says. “It’s designed for floating docks in the water of marinas, private pontoons, inland waterways, residential lakes, harbours, water ways, ports and yacht clubs.”

How does it work? The Seabin sits on the surface of the water, and is plumbed into an onshore water pump. As the surrounding water gets sucked into the Seabin, all the debris and pollutants go in, too, and are collected in a “catch bag.” The water flows out the bottom of the Seabin, leaving all of the debris behind in the bag, which is replaceable. There’s also an option to install a oil/water separator. The beauty of Seabin, aside from cleaning up the water, is that it can run 24/7.

The pair are off to a good start — they raised enough money on Indiegogo to start production, and the Mallorca, Menorca and Ibiza commercial port authorities are going give Seabins a trial run. Perhaps American ports should be thinking about this technology, too.

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