

HOLD YOUR FIRE

Tuesday is the 74th anniversary of the shelling of Fort Stevens by a Japanese submarine during World War II. According to "Life on the Homefront" (<http://tinyurl.com/bombsteve>), on June 21, 1942, Cmdr. Meiji Tagami slipped his I-25 submarine into the mouth of the Columbia River with some incoming fishing boats, surfaced, and fired 17 shells at the fort from his 5.5-inch cannon.



An in-depth video, "The Attack on Fort Stevens," at <http://tinyurl.com/shelltalk> describes the reaction at the fort.

"Everybody's running around trying to get out," Lester Madison recalled, "and I had to stop them at the head of the stairs to get them to go ... get their clothes on before they went outside. If I hadn't have, I'm sure they would have gone right outside without their clothes on."

Alden Addie was ordered not to turn on the searchlights, because it would give away the fort's position. The same logic was probably used in the decision not to return fire — along with the belief that the submarine was out of range.

Edwin Jolley recalled that when he relayed the order to Battery Russell not to shoot back, they wanted to know on whose authority. Col. Doney grabbed the phone and personally ordered the battery not to fire even one round, or he'd court-martial the whole 249th Coast Artillery. His decision was a disappointment to many.

The shells that hit caused craters on the beach, one of which is shown in a photo courtesy of the Clatsop County Historical Society. Also, a baseball backstop was damaged, a power line was nicked, then failed, and a soldier cut his head while rushing to his battle station.

The damage from the bombing may have been insignificant, but its historical value certainly wasn't: It was the first attack on American soil by a foreign power since the War of 1812.

YUP, IT'S A HOAX

Last week there was a mention in this column of the June 3 Clatsop Todo blog post about the "Creature found off Oregon coast" (<http://tinyurl.com/noyeshoax>). A photo of the beastie from the blog is shown.

Well, folks, no surprises here, it's a hoax. The photo is actually of a stinky decomposing critter that washed up in Spain in August 2013, that the Weekly World News proclaimed was El Bangalollo, "a serpent that can live in the water or on land. He has teeth like humans and is known to have come ashore to eat dogs, cats and ... horses (<http://tinyurl.com/ElBanga>)."

Quite fanciful, to be sure, but International Science Times (<http://tinyurl.com/stinkyhoax>) says it's more likely the remains of a thresher shark or oarfish.

It was a lot more fun as El Bangalollo.



BIBLICAL CRASH



How's this for a headline: "Noah's Ark crashes into Coast Guard Vessel." Bet that caught your attention, maritime history fans, and yes, it really did happen on June 10. In Oslo, Norway, as a matter of fact, according to a story in The New York Times (<http://tinyurl.com/arkgoesboom>).

While being towed into the harbor, the ark ran into the docked Coast Guard patrol vessel, and wound up with a gaping hole in its side — above the waterline, fortunately. The patrol boat only suffered a damaged crane. No one was hurt, and don't fret, there were no animals aboard the ark. Shown, a photo of the aftermath by Hkon Mosvold Larsen, NTB Scanpix/AP.

The floating wooden replica was built by Dutch carpenter Johan Huibers from 2005 to 2007, based on the biblical description — after he had a dream about his home province in the Netherlands being flooded, according to the Ark of Noah Foundation website (<http://arkofnoah.org>). It is the first, and the smaller of two arks he has built, and was sold to Aad Peters, a Dutch puppeteer, television producer and philanthropist, in 2010. The vessel was scheduled to make visits around Norway when the crash happened.

"I'm shaking now," Huibers told The New York Times. "It's a terrible situation. It's an awful dream, to have an accident with the ark of Noah ... I have to help (Peters) out. I have to go to Norway with wood, nails and a hammer to repair it."

In One Ear



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'PAINTED LIKE THE RAYS OF THE RISING SUN'



On June 11, the Maritime Archaeological Society documented the remains of the side-wheel wooden steamboat T.J. Potter, which are on the Astoria side of Youngs Bay, for the society's ongoing Coastal Survey Project, and posted some photos to their Facebook page at <http://tinyurl.com/MASociety>. One of the photos is shown, along with an inset photo of the vessel in its glory days.

According to Mr. Wikipedia (<http://tinyurl.com/tjpotter>), the Potter was launched in Portland in 1888 to make runs from Portland to Astoria for \$2.50 (about \$62 now), and to Ilwaco, Washington (\$75 now). All meals cost \$.50 (about \$12.50 now).

Known for her speed, she was sent to Puget Sound to compete with steamboats there for a while, but finally returned to resume the Portland to Astoria run. In 1901, a rebuild increased the Potter's gross tonnage by about a third, slowing her down. The wheelhouse was given a dome and flagpole, believed to be unique among Columbia River steamboats at the time.

After the rebuild, the Potter started doing the Portland to Ilwaco run, continuing even after being refurbished in 1910. In 1916, the Potter was condemned for passenger use, but used as a barracks boat for construction crews until 1920, when her license was revoked. Abandoned on Youngs Bay, she was burned and salvaged for her metal.

Professor Frederick Bracher described riding on the Potter as a child 1915: "The T.J. Potter was ... ponderously slow, even when going downstream ... The monumental semi-circular paddle boxes, painted like the rays of the rising sun, arched up as high as the boat deck; the paddle wheels produced a prodigious wake to port and starboard, as well as astern.

"On the main deck were staterooms for the elderly, the rich, or the newly married; and a continuous seat ran all the way around the stern. If the weather was good, there would be deck chairs on the open afterdeck, and the glass-enclosed lounge cabins were comfortable on cold or rainy days."

It's comforting to envision the Potter's former glory, after seeing what little is left on the shore of Youngs Bay.

THE RETURN OF ONE-EYED WILLIE?



Here we go again ... more rumblings about a sequel to "The Goonies." This time the quote comes from "Mikey" himself, Sean Astin at the Phoenix ComiCon earlier in June, according to Uproxx.com (<http://tinyurl.com/goonagain>). A still from the original Goonies movie is shown.

During a panel discussion at the event, Astin said, "In the original Goonies, it's not the only time that Mikey would come face to face with One-Eyed Willie. That's the best I can do."

Hmmm. Does that mean they will meet again in the sequel? Actors are careful about what they say about upcoming projects, and this sounded like a deliberate hint that things are moving along with the sequel. Will we be hearing something official soon?

The Ear checked out Astin's Facebook page, to see if there was a smidgen of a leak there. Nothing posted by Astin himself, but several media outlets picked up on his quip at ComiCon and posted to his page. The sequel speculation frenzy has been whipped up yet again. Stay tuned.

YOU'VE BEEN FLOCKED



On Monday morning, Debby Bloom noted a strange sight on Jim and Theresa Gannaway's front lawn in Warrenton: a flamboyance of pink flamingos. Yes, that's the word for a bunch of them, honest. A photo, sent in by the Gannaways, is shown.

So what's the deal? It's a clever fundraising prank by Young Life North Coast to raise money to send needy teenagers to summer camp. Want to flock someone, or have your own flock forwarded to a friend? Pony up \$50 to Shane Spell at 503-739-0212 or shane@thenorthcoast.younglife.org. Want flamingo insurance, so no one can send you flamingos for a month? It's \$25.

"Looks like I am going to have to buy some of their 'flamingo insurance,'" Jim said.

FOLLOW THE LEADER



The Daily World of Aberdeen, Washington, reports that the Ocosta Elementary School, a combined educational facility and tsunami shelter in Westport, Washington, is at last a reality, and was dedicated June 11 (<http://tinyurl.com/go-ocosta>). An illustration of the building is shown, courtesy of TCF Architecture.

A four-year project completed at a cost of \$16 million, the 37,590 square-foot building's main attraction is a new multipurpose room/cafe/terrace/gym wing that is topped with an evacuation deck that can hold up to 2,000 people and storage for emergency provisions.

Anchored by 169 24-foot diameter piles sunk up to 50 feet deep, and fortified with steel beams and rebar, the gym is engineered to withstand a magnitude-9 Cascadia Subduction Zone megquake, and a 40-foot tsunami — the roof deck is 53 feet above sea level. The Daily World notes that the new wing makes the school "North America's first vertical evacuation, tsunami engineered Safe Haven building."

Westport managed to do it. Why aren't North Coast communities following suit?

CHOWZER: STILL MISSING



OK, folks, Chowzer the Schnauzer, who is pictured, is still missing. He was last seen by his "parents" Sean and Shawna Lundry on April 30. Chowzer is 2 1/2 years old, weighs about 15 pounds, and stands about 12 inches tall and about 18 inches long.

Clatsop Animal Assistance reports that he's been seen twice recently with a young couple in Seaside — once on Necanicum (between Eighth and Ninth) and another time on Broadway.

"I guess what I'd like to stress is that we want people to be civil and non-confrontational if they think they see someone with Chowzer," a CAA representative said. "Chances are anyone who has him thinks they're doing a good thing (by taking care of a scraggly stray)."

"We want them to know how grateful we are for taking care of him," she added, "that there's a reward for his return — no questions asked — and that his family misses him more than they can say."

If you see Chowzer, please note the time and location, and call Sean or Shawna immediately at 541-965-3735 or 541-980-2549. It might not be a bad idea to put those numbers in your phone now, so you'll be ready if you see him.



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