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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

REMAINS OF THE DAY



From April 1, 2011: Ernie Nordahl told the Ear he was doing some work in the basement of the northwest corner of the Sanborn Block building on 10th Street for his boss Ron Hoxie, when an old, charred beam was found, pictured top, probably from the Astoria Fire of Dec. 8, 1922.

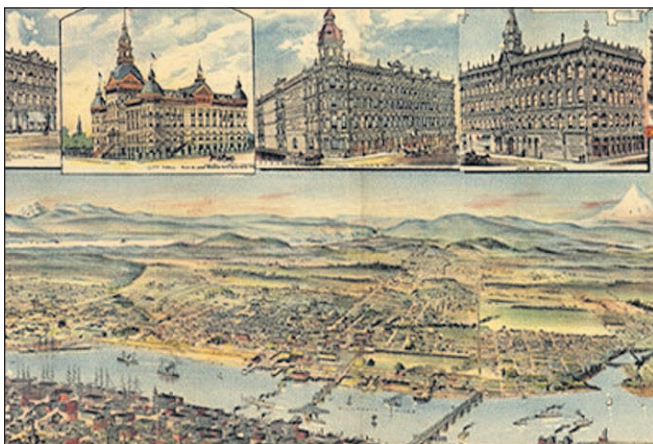
There is also brick and mortar rubble, also probably from the fire. Pictured, bottom, a photo of the Weinhard Hotel and Astoria National Bank after the fire.

The Nevada State Journal of Reno, Nev., Dec. 9, 1922, said: "... Hundreds of persons are homeless and property loss estimated at around \$15 million ... Norris Staples, automobile man and president of the Bank of Commerce, dropped dead of heart failure while the fire was at its height. The body of C. J. Smith, a transient, was found hanging under the sidewalk, but whether he had ended his life because of the fire or for other reasons the police were unable to learn.

"Thirty blocks were wiped out by flames ... The Budget, afternoon paper, which attempted to get out an edition today on the press of the paper at Seaside, found this impracticable, and instead issued mimeographed sheets.

"J. S. Dellinger, publisher of the Astoria morning paper, announced that he would probably get out tomorrow morning's edition on the press of the local Finnish daily, The Toverit."

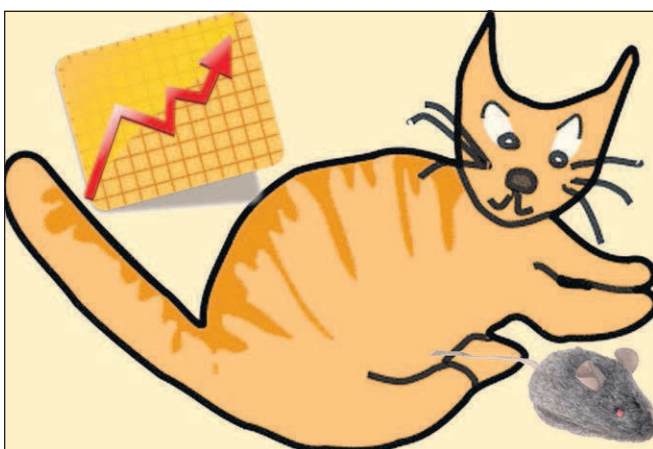
HISTORY IS MAPPED OUT



From Jan. 27, 2012: For one reason or another, North Coast-ers seem to wind up going to Portland quite often, and finding one's way around can be a bit daunting. This probably won't help much, aside from giving a basic lay of the land, but there's a bird's-eye "Wood's Map Of Portland, Oregon, (1890)" on BigMapBlog.com that's sure to please history buffs at tinyurl.com/1890port.

You can zoom in, make it full screen, move around, and generally get lost in the details. Click on the "Browse All Maps" button for specialty maps, such as "Map of the battle field of Gettysburg, July 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 1863," "Wright's Celestial Map of the Universe (1742)," and a true mind-boggler, "Stream Of Time, Chart Of Universal History (1842)." Enjoy!

BET ON THE CAT



From Feb. 8, 2013: Local cat lovers will appreciate this (investment brokers, not so much): According to the Mother Nature Network (tinyurl.com/smartycat), a cat named Orlando made more profits on the stock market during the course of a year with his random picks than investment managers did.

"In 2012, a British newspaper ran a year-long experiment to see who could pick the most profitable stocks: professional investment managers, students or an orange tabby cat," the article says. Orlando amassed 5,542 British pounds; the investors, 5,176 pounds; and the students, 4,480 pounds.

The canny feline made his stock selections by "throwing a toy mouse onto a grid of numbers representing different companies." Maybe this is worth a try.

COLUMBIAN NEWSY NOTES



From Oct. 11, 2013: On a visit to Colleen Siegfried at her shop, Curio, on 203 12th St., Colleen gave the Ear a copy of the now-defunct weekly newspaper, The Columbia Press, dated Thursday, March 24, 1977 — which, by the way, was published in the basement under the shop.

What was the news of the week? A 39-unit addition to the Thunderbird Motel at the Port of Astoria received its "finishing touches." At the county commissioners' meeting, a proposal was made to stop all building on Clatsop Plains because of sub-surface water pollution. Commissioner Don Corkill brought up Fort Stevens State Park's septic tanks. "They ought to clean up their own house first," he snarked.

The topper was the serialized story, "Love Doesn't Divide: A Mystery Romance of the Oregon Coast," by associate editor Muriel Jensen, pictured inset, now well known for writing a plethora of Harlequin romance novels.

"Also discussed (by the Clatsop County Historical Advisory Committee) was the placing at Ninth and Astor streets of a monument to mark the site of Shark House, a two-room log structure built in 1846 by survivors of the wrecked sloop-of-war Shark ... a vessel which came to grief on the Columbia River bar."

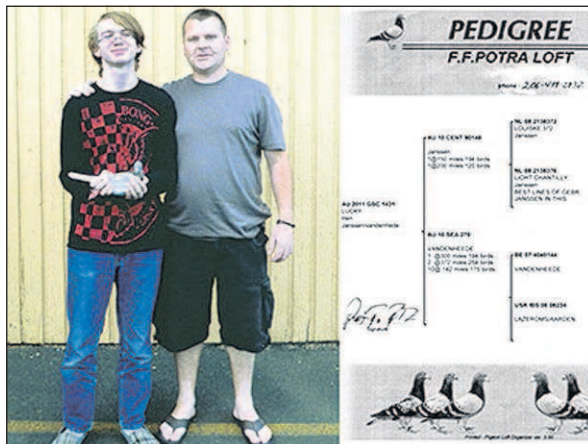
One of the Shark crew members, Burr Osborn, also pictured, wrote several letters detailing his misadventure and experiences on the North Coast (tinyurl.com/osbornshark).

The crew was stranded before being rescued, and the first fire they made was from pieces of the wreck of the Peacock. Once they were finally transported to Astoria, the exhausted men found that the existing four structures were all taken.

"We sailors were soon detailed down the river about one mile to a place called George's Point (near present day Pier 3 at the Port)," Osborn wrote, "where we cut and hauled the logs by hand about a half mile and built a double log house ... we built a small frame house near the log house. Us sailors named the place 'Sharkville.'"

Since the old Chinese Park is no longer the Chinese Park, why can't it become a monument to Shark House, as was suggested in 1977? Just a thought.

'A MIRACLE BIRD'



From Oct. 7, 2011: Alderbrook resident Grace Taylor told her neighbor, Stacey McKenney, that she had a pigeon on her porch. Stacey's daughter, Rhiannon McKenney, came over and trapped the bird, which wasn't just any old pigeon.

It was a homing pigeon, and the bird had an identification band on it, plus a band with a clocking number. For reasons no one can figure out, someone had clipped the bird's wings, which is why it was stuck in Alderbrook.

Stacey called Tina Delay in 4-H at the Oregon State University Extension office, who went through the roster of pigeon owners and referred Stacey to a 4-H mom, Lisa Wittich of Seaside.

Sadly, Lisa's son, Ashton, who is a member of the Fur & Feathers 4-H Club, just lost a homing pigeon at the last state fair. Lisa and her mother, Luana Jatton, drove up to Astoria, picked up the bird and brought it to Ashton to take care of until the owner could be found.

Fortunately, Lisa was able to track down the bird's owner, Florin Potra of Kent, Washington, who breeds and races homing pigeons, through a racing pigeon association. The bird, which had been flying on a mission to Seattle before getting sidetracked in Alderbrook, has a pedigree "a mile long" and comes from a line of champions.

Florin generously offered to give the bird to Ashton to replace the one he lost at the fair, and brought the pigeon's pedigree to Ashton last Thursday.

Did the Ear mention the bird's name is Lucky? "How lucky could she be to find someone who knows about birds?" Lisa asked. The name certainly fits. Pictured, from left, Ashton and Florin with Lucky; pictured right, the bird's pedigree. "My son is thrilled," Lisa added. "It's a beautiful homer. A miracle bird has walked into our house."

WANDERING WHALE



From May 3, 2013: A wayward whale lost its way this week, and the Seaside Aquarium's Facebook page has the straight-from-the-scoop scoop: "(It) took a wrong turn when it headed into the shallow waters of the Nehalem Bay on Sunday afternoon. The whale was headed for a sand bar.

Keith Chandler, co-coordinator of the Northern Oregon Marine Mammal Stranding Network and general manager of the Seaside Aquarium, headed out with Kelly Laviolette, owner of Kelly's Brighton Marina, to ensure that the whale did not get caught up on the sand bar."

You can watch the action in a video by Dave Pastor here: tinyurl.com/whalebay. Keith is pictured, left, in a screen shot from the video; Kelly, is pictured, right. "Towards the end of video," Dave noted, "he or she was coming right up to the boat."

Kelly estimated the 25-foot long cetacean and did not appear to be injured, and that once or twice a year one meanders into the bay to check things out. A migration side trip, perhaps?

After a good deal of spouting and scouting around the bay, the wandering whale finally turned around and lumbered happily (and safely) back out to sea.

STAR POWER



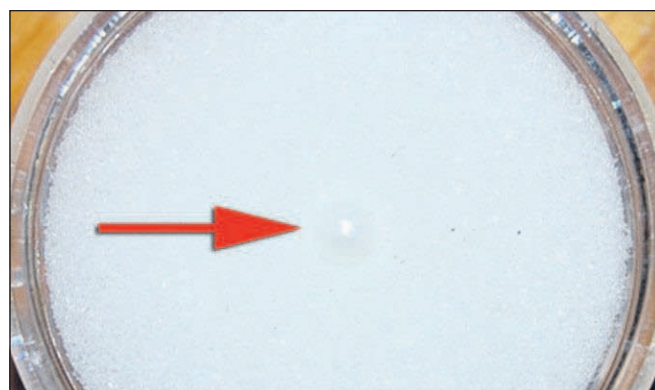
From Feb. 28, 2014: Have you ever wondered about the seven-pointed white star emblazoned on every Maersk Group shipping line vessel's funnel as they cruise past Astoria? (Incidentally, the star is on their jets, too.) gCaptain.com provided the answer (tinyurl.com/funnelstar).

According to the story, Anna Møller was with her husband, Capt. Peter Maersk Møller, on an ocean voyage when she became deathly ill. The captain went on deck one night, and while looking up at the cloud-filled sky, prayed for his wife's recovery. A single star shone through a break in the clouds, giving him hope that his prayer would be answered — which it was. His wife eventually recovered.

So there you have it. Capt. Møller was so inspired by the "star of hope," he made it part of the Maersk logo. The star appeared on the funnel of the first steamship, the SS Laura, in 1886.

"The little star on the funnel is a reminder of the evening I prayed for you so dejectedly and anxiously," he later wrote to his wife, "asking for the sign that I might see in the grey, overcast sky, a reminder that the Lord hears our prayers."

PERFECTLY PEARL



From June 10, 2011: "Sunday I had some friends down from Hillsboro," Todd Homi of Warrenton wrote. "I went to Oysterville the day before to purchase a bushel of oysters. I have been eating oysters for over 25 years, and to my surprise I found a pearl." The pearl is pictured.

Strangely enough, the Ear grew up in an oystering village in New England, and never saw a pearl once. The website eHow (tinyurl.com/howpearl) says pearls are created in an oyster's stomach when a grain of sand, or some other irritant, gets in. The oyster secretes layers of nacre over the irritant, creating a pearl, which takes about three years to reach its full size. Nacre is the same substance oysters use to make their shells, by the way.

"My friend from Hillsboro is having her birthday," he added, "and pearl is her birthstone, so I put it in a gem case and gave it to her as an early birthday present."

COMMUNITY NOTES

SATURDAY

Seniors Breakfast — 9 a.m. to noon, Astoria Moose Lodge, 420 17th St. Cooked to order from menu, includes coffee. Cost is \$5 for seniors 62 and older, \$7.50 for those younger than 62. Breakfasts are open to the public. Proceeds, after expenses, help support local and other charities.

other needlework projects to this community stitching time. All skill levels welcome.

Columbia Northwestern Model Railroad Club — 1 p.m., in Hammond. Group runs trains on HO-scale layout. For information, call Don Carter at 503-325-0757.

Spinning Circle — 1 to 3 p.m., Astoria Fiber Arts Academy, 1296 Duane St. Bring a spinning wheel. For information, call 503-325-5598

SUNDAY

Seniors Breakfast — 9 a.m. to noon, Astoria Moose Lodge, 420 17th St. Cooked to order from menu, includes coffee. Cost is \$5 for seniors 62 and older, \$7.50 for those younger than 62. Breakfasts are open to the public. Proceeds after expenses help support local and other charities.

Line Dancing — 5:30 to 8 p.m.,

Seaside American Legion, 1315 Broadway. For information, call 503-738-5111. No cost; suggested \$5 tip to the instructor.

MONDAY

Chair Exercises for Seniors — 9 to 9:45 a.m., Astoria Senior Center, 1111 Exchange St. For information, call 503-325-3231.

Scandinavian Workshop — 10 a.m., First Lutheran Church, 725 33rd St. Needlework, hardanger,

knitting, crocheting, embroidery and quilting. All are welcome. For information, call 503-325-1364 or 503-325-7960.

Grace and Encouragement for Moms — 10 to 11:30 a.m., Crossroads Community Church, 40618 Old Highway 30, Svensen. GEMS group is a time for moms to relax and enjoy each others' company. Free childcare is provided. For information, call Rachael Biddlecome at 503-458-6103.

Senior Lunch — 11:30 a.m., Bob Chisholm Senior Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside. Suggested donation \$3 for those older than 60; \$6.75 for those younger than 60. For information, call Michelle Lewis at 503-861-4200.

Columbia Senior Dinners — 11:30 a.m., 1111 Exchange St. Cost is \$6. For information, or to have a meal delivered, call 503-325-9693.

See NOTES, Page 4B