

## In Their Footsteps: Discover Oregon's oldest-known shipwreck



Manila Galleon at sea by Roger D. Morris

ASTORIA — The next In Their Footsteps free speaker series event is “Oregon’s Oldest Known Shipwreck: A Spanish Galleon of 1693,” by Cameron La Follette, is 1 p.m. Sunday, May 19 at Fort Clatsop in the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park.

It has long been known that a large ship, probably Spanish, wrecked on Nehalem Spit centuries ago. Recently an archaeological team (the Beeswax Wreck Project) determined it was most likely

the Santo Cristo de Burgos, which left the Philippines in 1693 bound for Acapulco, and was never seen again.

La Follette and her team of independent researchers then spearheaded research into Spanish, Philippine and Mexican archival sources that revealed for the first time information about Capt. Iñiguez del Bayo, the crew, the cargo, the ship and the fabled



Cameron La Follette

Manila trade of which the Santo Cristo de Burgos was a part.

This talk will summarize these archival findings, the native traditions about the shipwreck, and the 150-year aftermath of treasure-hunting in the Neahkahnie area that the galleon wreck ignited.

La Follette was the lead author on most of the articles in the Summer 2018 issue of Oregon Historical Quarterly,

“Oregon’s Manila Galleon.” She is the director of Oregon Coast Alliance, a coastal conservation organization. She is also lead author of “Sustainability and the Rights of Nature: An Introduction.”

These programs are held in the Netul River Room of Fort Clatsop’s visitor center and are free of charge.

For more information, call the park at 503-861-2471, check out [www.nps.gov/lewi](http://www.nps.gov/lewi), or Lewis and Clark National Historical Park on Facebook.

## Wickie Weekend! A celebration of Pacific Coast lighthouse keepers

ASTORIA — Head over to the Columbia River Maritime Museum, 1792 Marine Drive, this weekend where they will shed some light on our area lighthouses and their keepers.

From noon-1 p.m. Saturday, May 18, attend “Lighthouses for Kids” (ages 5-10 accompanied by an adult).

Join the museum’s education staff in a fun presentation on why we have lighthouses. All participants will leave with a working model of Cape Disappointment Lighthouse.

From 2-3 p.m., join Debra Baldwin of Lighthouse Digest for “Lighthouses for Kids” (ages 5-10 accompanied by an adult).

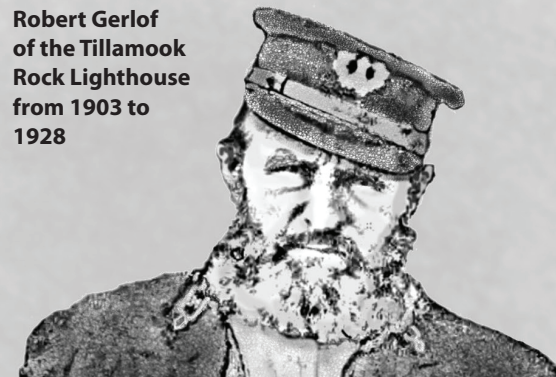
Heartache and Heroism.”

At 11 a.m. Sunday, May 19, there is a U.S. Coast Guard grave marker placement ceremony honoring Tillamook Rock Lighthouse Head Keeper Robert Gerlof at Ocean View Cemetery in Warrenton.

Since 2011, Lighthouse Digest, a Maine-based national publication,

has been sponsoring grave marker placement ceremonies across the United States to honor U.S. Lighthouse Service and U.S. Coast Guard keepers and personnel. Participants will include personnel from USCG Sector Columbia River, Aids to Navigation Team Astoria and the Marine Safety Unit Portland.

Robert Gerlof  
of the Tillamook  
Rock Lighthouse  
from 1903 to  
1928



### Lighthouse Keeper Robert Gerlof

Robert Gerlof was one of the most famous lighthouse keepers on the Pacific Coast. He served at Tillamook Rock Lighthouse, arguably the most difficult lighthouse assignment in the history of the service, for 25 years from 1903 to 1928, the last 10 of which as head keeper.

Keeper Gerlof had no family and it was often said that the lighthouse was wife and children to him. He was extremely dedicated and never wanted to leave the light, even to the point of requesting upon his death to be put in a special weighted bag “slide me off the West side of the Rock, you know, where it is the steepest as I always want to be near the Rock.”

Of the 115 known keepers that served during the 76-year history of Tillamook Rock Lighthouse, Robert Gerlof is most deserving of this honor, not only because he served there the longest, but for his unwavering commitment to duty and deep love of the rock as his only home.

Debra Baldwin of  
Lighthouse Digest

