

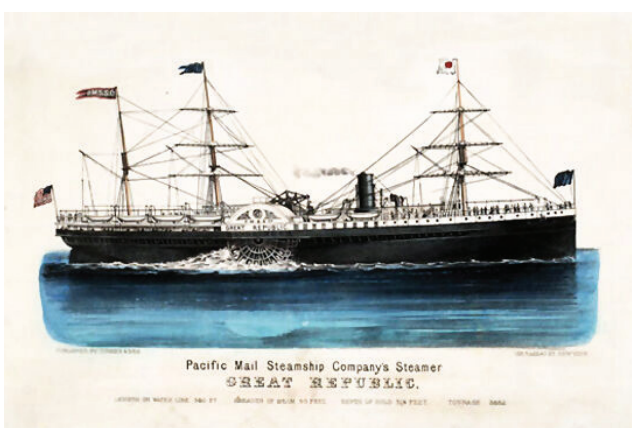
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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

PORT YOUR HELM!



The steamer **Great Republic**, with more than 1,000 passengers and crew aboard, **ran hard aground on Sand Island** off Ilwaco, Washington, while en route from Portland to San Francisco on **April 19, 1879**.

The three-masted ship, launched in 1866, was a side-wheel steamship with three decks. She was 380 feet long, 50 feet wide and was a well-made vessel built of wood and braced with iron. At the time, she was the largest passenger vessel on the West Coast.

Since it was a clear night when the grounding happened, there was an inquiry. **Capt. James Carroll** accused the pilot of ignoring his order to “Port your helm and put it hard over, as I think you are getting too near the island.”

Be that as it may, it was low tide, they were stuck fast, and a storm was coming in. The 896 passengers safely disembarked but the crew stayed aboard, hoping they could refloat the ship at high tide.

But when the storm arrived, the pounding waves quickly began breaking up the vessel, so there was no choice but to abandon ship the next day. It was as the last boat left that disaster struck; a steering oar broke, making the boat overturn, and 11 died. The vessel’s cargo, contents and the passengers’ possessions began washing away, and the ship fell apart, a total loss.

A diver trying to un snag a fishing net in 1986 rediscovered a massive wreck, originally thought to be the **Isabella**, wrecked in 1830. It is now believed to have been the remains of the **Great Republic**. (bit.ly/GrtRepub01, bit.ly/GrtRepub02)

FISHY UPDATE



In 2015, a large chunk of **fiberglass boat** arrived on the beach in **Waldport**, covered with barnacles and containing several live fish swimming about, Q13 Fox News reported. Belated **tsunami debris**?

Oregon Coast Aquarium and Hatfield Marine Science Center biologists arrived, and noted that there were “several live specimens of a variety of **yellowtail jack** fish found in the coastal waters of Japan.” The fish were sent to the aquarium.

So, how are they? Good news: “... They have been doing well!” an aquarium representative replied. “Our curator of fish and invertebrates reports that the two **banded knifejaws/beakfish** (one is pictured, courtesy of the aquarium) are still in our coastal waters gallery, and the yellowtail jacks are still in our open sea habitat, and can be identified as the larger jacks of the school.”

DO YOU FIT?



Here’s an unusual casting call from **Weeble Mountain Casting** in Portland: “We need people who fit sample size shoes for a photo shoot for **CAT Footwear**. Pay is **\$1,200 a day** for one day of work in Portland between May 12-16 ... All identities welcome.”

Sample sizes are footwear prototypes made before the production of a full line. So, they want people age 18 and older: Men who comfortably fit men’s size 9 (wears size 8 to 10); and women’s size 7 (wears size 6-8), which are the only sizes available.

All of the details, and how to sign up, are at bit.ly/WeebleCAT. If you’re interested, you’d better hustle, since the deadline to apply is 11:59 p.m. Saturday.

SQUANDERED ELEGANCE



The wreck of the **Great Republic** had quite an impact on Astoria, as mentioned in **The Daily Astorian** on **April 29, 1879**, 10 days after the ship ran aground on Sand Island (pictured).

With a wreck that size, salvagers were swarming the ship, and working hard to save and sell off everything possible.

“Throwing the wrecked goods from the lost steamer upon the market now has a very depressing effect on trade,” the newspaper noted.

As an example: “Our friend Hanson is getting ready to go into the drug business. He purchased at the sale yesterday four dozen bottles of Jamaica ginger; half a barrel of paregoric (tincture of opium) and a dozen spades ... Prices ranged from about 5 to 50%.”

However, the wreck was good business for local steamers, many of which made special trips to Sand Island just so “excursionists” could see the wreck.

“Everybody who goes to the wreck brings home some relic,” the Astorian reported. “The wonder is how the ship ever held so much.”

Even a little steamer from Portland, with about 100 aboard, came downriver for a look.

“Sand Island, with the wrecked steamship for an attraction, will become a popular summer resort, ‘before we know it,’” the Astorian opined. Wishful thinking.

Even Astoria schoolchildren, along with their parents, took a special trip to Sand Island and returned “with a better idea of a wreck on the sea coast than they could learn from six months study.”

“Squandered elegance,” the Astorian observed. “... Silks and satins, horse-shoe nails, patent medicines, sewing machines, soap, sugar and socks, all tumbled together and there isn’t warehouse room enough in Astoria to string it all out, nor weather to dry it.”

“But the (shipping) company is doing its level best to make something out of nothing.”

WASHED AWAY



Located south of Grayland, Washington, in the neighborhood of what local people call **North Cove**, is a vast area of pre-dune land called **Washaway Beach**,” **Joe Granger** wrote.

“Its several miles of coastland has been washing away at the rate of 150 feet average per year since the late 1800s but the erosion occurs in fits and starts. Many attempts at trying to stop it have had limited (if any) success ...

“... My parents bought a nice single-wide mobile home on two platted lots on nearby **Seamobile Lane**. They had to sign several documents that they knew the property was likely to wash away in the near future ...

“They immediately built a large deck on its seaward side ... The only erosion occurring in their immediate vicinity was about 100 feet over the next 10 or so years, so they were lucky.

“What a view, and what a pleasure to recreate and vacation at this property! They enjoyed it nearly every weekend throughout the year. Even the winters there were fun.

“... Then, about 11 years after purchase, their mobile home was broken into and ransacked. That, plus a quick 100-foot erosion, set them to put it up for sale. Another older couple bought it, and paid what Mom and Dad had invested in it.

“Sadly, the couple who bought it ... only got to enjoy about two years of its use. Then, the erosion accelerated and took the entirety of Seamobile Lane, and all the trailers and cabins located thereon.

“Mom and Dad later bought two other properties in the area for very cheap prices so they could camp at Washaway Beach ... They, too, were eventually washed away.

“I try to visit Washaway Beach at least once a year to reminisce,” he added. “Though their places there are gone, I look out to sea, and find them both as they were.”

Note: His parents’ mobile home is now about a quarter of a mile out at sea. Read the entire story and see more of his photos (one is shown) at bit.ly/JGranger

SCOOTING SCALLOPS



From **The Daily Astorian**, **April 29, 1879**:

• We have all heard fish stories, but of all the interesting stories we ever listened to, none can compare with **Capt. Manson’s clam story of San Pedro, California**. The clams are there by the millions, and they actually walk (or hop), and swim on the water, by flapping the shell. Fact.

Note: The Ear, who was brought up in an oyster-village on the East Coast, at first thought this was a whimsical bit of nonsense. But it’s not. And those clams he saw were likely **scallops**, which are also bivalve mollusks.

Scallops actually do swim in — not on the water — and at a pretty good clip. They can propel themselves both forward (swimming) and backward (jumping) by sucking in and expelling water.

You can see a scallop in action at bit.ly/goscallop (a screenshot is shown). They rarely go more than about a yard up off the sea floor, and seldom for more than about 16 feet, but nonetheless that’s pretty impressive.

Other scallop notable features: They can have up to 200 eyes along the edges of their shells and they can produce pearls. And yes, there are scallops at San Pedro, even now.

EYES ON OSPREY



The live **osprey nest cam** in Broadway Park in Seaside, operated by the **Necanicum Watershed Council**, has been giving bird lovers an up-close-and-personal view of what’s been going on in the nest for the last few weeks.

Everyone watching has been waiting with bated breath for the first egg to arrive and, well, now they can breathe easily again. The **first egg** of the season was laid on April 25. Since osprey can lay up to four eggs per season, hopefully there will be more.

You can keep an eye on the osprey family at seasideosprey.org. Updates are on the watershed’s Facebook page at bit.ly/FBosprey. The photo shown is courtesy of the council.

Not surprisingly, the female does most of egg-incubating honors, as well as caring for the new chicks in the nest, but the male does help out quite a bit by giving her the occasional break and bringing her snacks. The eggs take 36 to 42 days to incubate, so perhaps a Memorial Day celebration chick will be forthcoming.

NEED ICE?



Fun rerun: For fans of maritime oddities — An enormous **iceberg** has parked itself in the North Atlantic off the tiny town of **Ferryland, Newfoundland** (population of 465, as of 2011), according to a story in *The Toronto Star* (tinyurl.com/bigberg). It is shown in a photo courtesy of Paul Daly of *The Canadian Press*.

It’s normal for icebergs to pass through, as that neck of the woods is called “Iceberg Alley.” But it’s totally unexpected to see one this large stop in its tracks, dwarf the town and become a tourist attraction. Hundreds of people are flocking to Ferryland to gawk at and photograph the icy marvel.

“It’s the biggest one I ever seen around here,” the town’s mayor, **Adrian Kavanagh**, said. While the monster berg is terrific for tourism, Kavanagh added, fishermen aren’t too “particular about ice and the icebergs.” (*In One Ear*, 4/21/2017)