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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

EIGHT WAVES



The story “Eight of the Biggest Tsunamis in History” was an eye-catcher, especially because of the Oregon Coast’s proximity to the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

The 2017 Karrat Fjord, Greenland, tsunami reached a height of 295 feet, and was caused by a landslide. It wiped out a remote, tiny fishing village. Next in line is a tsunami that hit Ambon Island, Indonesia, that was 328 feet high. Caused by an earthquake on Feb. 17, 1674, it killed over 2,000 people.

A Lituya Bay, Alaska, megatsunami in 1853 or 1854, probably caused by a landslide, was 394 feet high; another in Lituya Bay on Oct. 27, 1936, rose to 490 feet, probably caused by an underwater rock slide. Icy Bay, Alaska, also has landslide issues, and one caused a 633-foot wave on Oct. 17, 2015.

A megatsunami after the Vajont Dam in Italy crumbled created a wave 771 feet high on Oct. 9, 1963, and killed over 2,000 people. This time, the catastrophe was caused by a poorly built dam.

The earthquake that caused Mount St. Helens in Washington to erupt on May 18, 1980, also caused an 820-foot high wave when the north side of the volcano fell into Spirit Lake.

And, the biggest, baddest wave, in Lituya Bay (again), hit a whopping 1,720 feet on July 9, 1958. Again, an earthquake and landslide were the culprits. Conclusion: stay away from Lituya Bay.

IMPROMPTU SHARK



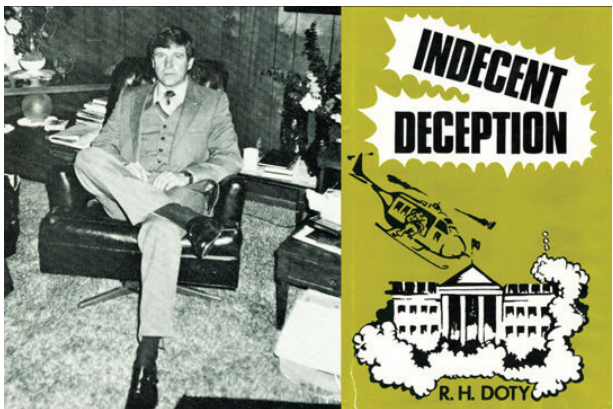
Staff from the Seaside Aquarium participated in an impromptu dissection of a nearly 12-foot female thresher shark yesterday,” the aquarium posted Aug. 19 on Facebook. It was near the Cranberry Beach approach in Long Beach.

“The female shark measured 11.8 feet, and weighed nearly 200 pounds ... By the time staff arrived, someone had cut off the dorsal fin and removed the jaws, which is not illegal, but does (compromise) scientific data. The shark was too big to freeze, so the decision was made to dissect the shark that day.” When asked if the marks on the shark were caused by a ship’s propeller, the answer was “no,” the cuts were made after the shark washed up.

“It was a great learning opportunity for staff and people passing by,” the post concluded. “We had a few young kids put on gloves and get their hands dirty. Staff took various external and internal measurements, along with tissue and organ samples, which will be sent off to Taylor Chapple at Oregon State University. He is currently studying sharks off of the Oregon Coast, among other things.

Want to know more about sharks off of the Oregon Coast? Go to bit.ly/OSUbigfish (Photo: Seaside Aquarium)

GUNS TO BUTTER



Bookworm rerun: Seaside resident Robert Kroning sells used books online; one was a first edition of “Indecent Deception,” by R.H. Doty, published in 1984.

When Robert put the book up for sale, he tucked a copy of a July 9, 1987, Seaside Signal article about Doty, who lived Seaside at the time, which said that Doty (pictured), a 10-year Green Beret Vietnam veteran, managed the Portland Fudge Company in Seaside, but also autographed copies of his book nearby at Columbia Books.

The author and his wife came to the North Coast via Utah, planning to stay “a long time,” as he liked the “change from guns to butter.” Even so, the couple moved away.

Who bought Robert’s book? R.H. Doty, of course, now living in Gautier, Mississippi. Why? “He must have run out of copies,” Robert guessed. (In One Ear, 9/27/2013)

WE ARE CARETAKERS



“If you saw balloons above the front door last week, it was commemorating a big birthday party with cake and champagne,” LaRee Johnson wrote of her Astoria home’s 100th birthday celebration.

The house, which is on Harrison Avenue, was built for Dr. Leonard Andrews and his wife, Asta, in 1922 for \$5,000 (about \$88,000 now). The house’s footprint remained essentially the same until 1950, when it was bought by Harry and Nancy Flanagan, who added the back guestroom and bathroom, an upstairs master bedroom above and the back deck.

LaRee and her husband, photographer Andrew Cier, bought the house in 1993; the couple have done some renovating, adding a pergola, balcony and fence. “I loved the idea that throughout the history of homeowners,” LaRee noted, “all of them kept the architectural aspects of this home intact, and we are so grateful.”

“This house is significant as an excellent example of the Norman Farmhouse in Astoria,” John Goodenberger wrote for the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. “The house greatly contributes to the historic streetscape. Additionally, the Norman architectural detail is carried inside the house. It has one the most picturesque living and dining rooms in the city.”

“From past to present,” LaRee wrote, “neighbors and friends were invited to our centennial celebration. The idea of a birthday party for a house may seem unconventional, but we are grateful to all the previous owners over the past 100 years who kept the historic integrity, original woodwork, lighting fixtures, even the old ‘wavy’ window glass, intact.”

“We are but caretakers of our homes, that will certainly go on beyond us,” she added, “and we are pleased to take on that role.”

REFINED ENTERTAINMENT



The Merriam-Webster dictionary describes a “dog and pony show” as: “an often elaborate public relations or sales presentation.” But where did the expression come from?

The Daily Morning Astorian, in the Aug. 25, 1890 edition, provides an answer, with the “novel entertainment” of “Prof. Gentry and his wonderful company of 50 educated dogs and ponies (who) will give two of the grandest entertainments ever seen in this city ...

“... There are 40 dogs and 10 ponies in the lot, and they do everything but talk. The ponies are the finest specimens that money can buy. They go through military drill, battle scenes, build revolving pyramids and, in fact, do everything that is possible for a dumb brute to accomplish.

“Among the dogs are four white Russian dogs that cost Prof. Gentry \$500 each untrained, three of the funniest clowns in the world, Master Barney, the only dog on earth that can turn 100 back somersaults, and nine champion English greyhound leaping dogs ... This entertainment is moral, refined and instructive; a gold mine of fun for a little money. Prices, children, 25 cents (about \$8 today), adults, 50 and 75 cents.”

Teenager Henry Gentry, the “professor,” who had a knack for training farm animals, and his three brothers, started touring in 1886 with their act, Gentry’s Equine and Canine Paradox. Among the shows they developed was Prof. Gentry’s Famous Dog and Pony Show, replete with “aristocratic animal actors.” By 1910, their Gentry Bros. Circus was the largest circus on the road.

SAD LIST



The sad list of summer drownings grew larger last weekend in Seaside. The Aug. 25, 1890 edition of The Daily Morning Astorian mentioned a similar incident, also in Seaside.

The young man had been warned to be cautious in the surf and riptide, but “when he found he was being carried out, he attempted to swim back against the current, which was impossible for anyone to do,” the newspaper reported. He exhausted himself in his desperation, and disappeared from sight.

Even in 1890, informed swimmers knew what to do: “... Instead of attempting to swim back against the current, (the swimmer) lets himself be carried along with it,” the newspaper advised, “knowing that after a little, the current will lose its force and be lost in the volume of water farther from shore, then at his leisure he can swim back and regain the beach at a more favorable point.”

A gentleman from the East Coast noted that the “life saving appliances on the beach were very meager ... At all watering places where surf bathing is indulged in, it is the custom to have a raft or float anchored beyond the breakers, where bathers who desire a long swim may rest ... To it are attached life lines connected with the shore, and a case of drowning is seldom heard of.” A good idea, even now.

POOPED PARKLET



“Astoria’s parklets: People either love them or hate them,” a local little bird opined.

“Wonder how they got started? Well, you have to look back to 2015, when a pilot program was introduced to try out a parklet on 11th Street for a two-year period. And here we are, seven years later, with a parklet made out of used pallets, that has reached its life’s end, riddled with rot, and unsafe, so Jeff Daly removed it.

“Some of the local merchants next to the parklet were upset with the move, and since have put signs in their windows saying that Jeff, who built the parklet to begin with, for heaven’s sake, is no longer welcome on their premises.

“So, Jeff being the good prankster, has decided to test the waters. A group of his friends will walk into the store wearing a photograph of Jeff in the sixth grade, and another looking 90 years old, covering their faces, making the cashier wonder which one was the real or the fake Jeff.

“They’ll all be fakes,” the little bird reported. “Jeff will be watching from afar, respecting and questioning the reasoning.”

MAMMOTH MOTH



The Aug. 5 Washington State Department of Agriculture newsletter, Ag Briefs, reports that a solitary atlas moth was discovered in Bellevue, Washington. This moth, with a wingspan of almost 10 inches, is non-native, so it was filed under a “pest alert.” This is the first U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed detection of an atlas moth in the U.S.

Anyone who finds one is “encouraged to photograph, collect and report” it. They are safe to handle, but as a federally quarantined pest, it’s illegal to “obtain, harbor, rear or sell live moths” in any form without a USDA permit.

“This is a ‘gee-whiz’ type of insect because it is so large,” Sven Spichiger, Washington State Department of Agriculture managing entomologist, noted. “... This is normally a tropical moth. We are not sure it could survive here ...

“We hope residents will help us learn if this was a one-off escapee,” he added, “or whether there might, indeed, be a population in the area.” (Photo: WSDA)