

Destination: Cannon Beach

Thank you for welcoming me into your community. I'm the new editor at the Cannon Beach Gazette and I've come a long way — 3,011 miles to be more precise.

What is remarkable about communities is they can be very far apart and yet very, close. What constitutes the news in one small town will parallel that of another: a heroic rescue, a fiercely contested election, the fight for preservation of a historic building, or the triumph of a spelling bee contestant. Community news comes from the heart and soul of a town, and I have made that my

mission on the East Coast for the past 18 years. During that time, we were able to focus on tough issues: a changing demographic, the lack of affordable housing and diversity, and the erosion of our natural resources. At the same time, we boasted an involved community that supported sustainable energy initiatives, cultural and artistic endeavors, and a cosmopolitan population who valued the natural beauty and the historic character of the region.

I anticipate these values will easily translate to the Cannon Beach scene. From my early wanderings, my eyes have been

CANNON SHOTS



By
R.J.
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wide with the breathtaking beauty from every angle. The beaches are as wide and clean

as any strip from here to Mexico. The natural rock formations not only serve as a remarkable gift from nature, but also provide a restful and healing calm that inspires the thousands of visitors drawn here. The thriving downtown community and shops offers essentials to local residents and lures visitors, whether for the first time or for generations. Cannon Beach is both romantic and down to earth. And one sunset is worth the price of admission.

I look forward to meeting the artists, the business owners, the students and teachers, the civic leaders and founding families.

If in my early apprenticeship I make some rookie mistakes — and I will — please forgive me. I am fortunate to have the talents of an experienced Cannon Beach reporter, Erick Bengel, to guide me, as well as interim editor Dave Fisher and my predecessor, Nancy McCarthy, who will serve both as a resource and remain a fixture in the Cannon Beach scene. We will be steered by Publisher and Editor Steve Forrester and Managing Editor Laura Sellers, the staff of The Daily Astorian, and are excited by the many print, digital and social media opportunities ahead.

Reflections ELAINE TRUCKE

Reflections on the Past: Adventurer Mary Gerritse

Last week, I was going through some old notes and happened upon information on a local woman named Mary Gerritse. I've written about her before, although it was about three years ago. As I was reading about Mary, I started thinking about another woman from history that I think was pretty amazing, Gertrude Bell. For those who have not heard of Gertrude Bell, she was a traveler, explorer, and mapmaker, and at times an accidental policy maker. She was also a woman history books often forget. According to Georgina Howell, who wrote "Gertrude Bell: Queen of the Desert, Shaper of Nations," Bell was acquainted with Lawrence of Arabia (T.E. Lawrence), and did or helped do many of the things that he is thought to be responsible for. I will never forget one of the beginning scenes of "The English Patient" where the soldiers desperately peer over a large map. They are desperate for escape so another soldier pulls out the Bell maps, he points to a pass marked on this map that is unfamiliar to him and the other soldier says, "Let's hope he was right." HE!

Mary Gerritse, to me, was Oregon's very own Gertrude Bell. Mary would not have thought of herself as an intrepid or courageous woman. She was a woman who did what needed to be done. She did, however, have a lot in common with Bell, they were both fond of traveling, both were fond of going where most women were not expected or even allowed to go, and they both ruffled a few feathers along the way. Mary enjoyed quiet moments to myself with the wind rustling her hair with her horse, Prince, by her side.

Not unlike Gertrude Bell who ventured into the Saudi

Arabian desert by camelback. Mary plunged through the wilds of the Oregon rainforest, braving northwestern squalls, changing tides, and narrow cliff hugging trails to deliver the mail from 1897 until 1902. Mary was fearless. Once while delivering the mail she came upon several men on the trail she frequented. They waved at her not to come. The trail was rather narrow and they were afraid that she would not be able to pass. Without hesitation she plunged onward. As one man became so afraid he clambered up the opposite Cliffside clinging to grass while she rode past, she commented in her journal: "I felt sorry for him. The other side of the trail went down 400 feet to the ocean. I did not know how to be afraid."

On more than one occasion Mary held herself together when most would have struggled with fright. Whether it was coming face to face with a bear or a cougar she held her ground. When Prince, Mary's beloved horse was close to skittering down a cliff into the sea, she remained calm, slid down the 150 feet to where Prince teetered on the edge and soothed him back onto the trail. Despite Prince's cracked ribs, and Mary's own slide, the mail was saved!

In her journal she recalls that summer tides often forced her to rise earlier to deliver the mail. She would arise at 3:30 a.m.! On these days she would return to the location of one her old cabins, though the cabin was no longer there (perhaps lost in a fire), she would rest there and nap while Prince grazed on clovers growing nearby. Prince was the ideal horse, as much of a friend to Mary as a human being.

There were two trails that she would often take to de-



ELAINE TRUCKE

liver the mail, one was the back trail — it went over the mountains and through the woods, the other was the front trail and went along the shore in some spots. It was along the front trail on one frightful occasion when Prince was lost to a change in the tides. The loss devastated her. Mary blamed herself for the death of her favorite horse — and yet she plowed on. She rode a new horse, this one not nearly as kindhearted as Prince. The horse was so temperamental that few could control him.

Like Bell, Mary ruffled feathers. She refused to ride sidesaddle, as was customary of women at the time. She felt that she was doing man's work, so should be able to ride like a man! Mary says, "When I carried the mail, I rode astride on a saddle. I got a lot of criticism because, because it was not lady-like." Under a thin skirt she wore boots and overalls. She hoped that this would appease the naysayers and as she says, "What was the difference? I was not doing a lady's work anyway."

Mary was also accomplished at fishing, racing, and hunting. After a close encounter with a cougar, she demanded her husband teach her how to use a gun. He armed her with a 32-caliber pistol. A year or so later a bear wandered onto the Gerritse property. In order



Mary Gerritse

to protect the livestock she ran out to face the bear. "I knelt on the ground and took sight across my knee, waited until he (the bear) was about 50 feet away," Unbeknownst to Mary the pistol was not loaded. Lucky for her the bear was frightened by the sound of the gun clicking and took off.

Mary Gerritse grew up in the Manzanita Nehalem area and stayed there for most of her life, living in

one place or another. She spent many hours of every day in the deep woods alone, walking trails that many found too hazardous, and taking on work that many women would scoff at. The Gerritse mail route took her from Nehalem to Seaside and back once a day or once a week. Along muddy narrow trails she and her horse trudged on. Like Gertrude Bell, Mary did not think of herself as doing anything overly cou-

rageous. She was doing what made sense.

I love sharing Mary's story with visitors and sometimes even when I give lectures. It is easy to look at historic photos or to talk about history and lose sight of the people who were there. Knowing about these people humanizes this information and makes it more memorable for all. I hope you enjoyed this unique local history as much as I did.

Uncorked Ramblings STEVEN SINKLER

A glass of wine always tastes better with some cheese

In the three years we have owned The Wine Shack, we have worked hard to make our little wine store the very best it can be. The store is focused on excellent local wines, but also includes iconic wines from California, France and Italy. We listen to our customers and bring in the wines they ask for, invite exceptional wine makers to do their thing in the Tasting Room and try to make customers happy with each time they visit The Wine Shack. We've really tried to create an amazing local wine shop, in a tourist town, where about 90 percent of our customers are just passing through.

Last November, as things were beginning to slow down and I was looking forward to some catch-up time following our busiest time of year, I received a call from our landlord, Mike Clark. The space next to The Wine Shack would be available in 2015. Mike asked if we were interested in taking that space. Yes, we were! Maryann and I started looking at possible uses of the space ... expansion of

The Wine Shack? Or a new store to complement The Wine Shack? We thought a lot about it and asked local friends and regular customers for their input. It didn't take long to decide we would create a new store offering food products that pair nicely with wine. Concept in place, check. The to-do list grew quickly.... create a name for the new store, begin remodeling the space, get a liquor license, get a city business license, get business insurance, meet with the Department of Agriculture and Design Review Board, and build a products' list. We had to do all of this while running The Wine Shack. The quiet winter months that I looked forward to was replaced with the long to-do list as well as meetings, interviews, phone calls and emails regarding the new store.

One by one, we checked things off the list. The new store would be named "Provisions 124." I've always liked the word "provisions" and our street address is 124 N. Hemlock. The new name tells customers what



STEVEN SINKLER

we sell and where we are. Progress on other things was slow at first, but when the wall was opened up between the two spaces, everything began falling into place quickly. New fixtures and fresh flooring in both The Wine Shack and Provisions 124 really help to create a seamless appearance between the stores. We also added outdoor seating on our deck. You can now sit outside and enjoy a cheese platter with a glass (or bottle) of wine. We've wanted to offer outdoor seating since purchasing The Wine Shack, but weren't able to before now. This is already a crowd-pleaser as our deck was packed during the first two weekends.

Similar to what we did with The Wine Shack, the products in Provisions 124 are focused on small regional producers. You will find local cheeses, salami, crackers, spreads, olive oil, vinegar and chocolate. Some products have been brought in from farther away. In those cases, we identified the very best and highest quality products we could find. With the shelves stocked, we quietly opened Provisions 124 on Friday, April 17. Customer feedback has been very positive and suggestions for new products have been great — we welcome yours too!

We are most proud of the local business relation-

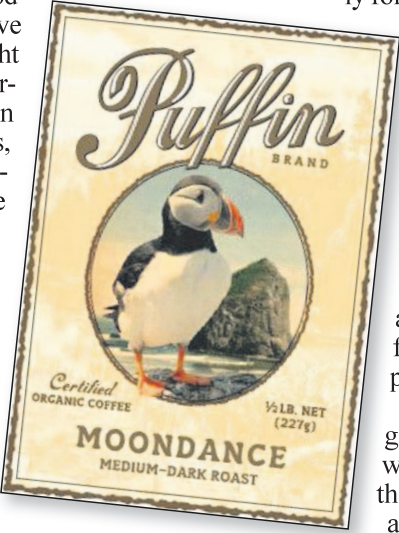
ships we've established. The newest Puffin product isn't a wine, its coffee. Puffin "Moondance" coffee is an organic, medium to dark roast blend, made by our friends at Sleepy Monk Coffee Roasters, exclusively for Provisions 124. Puffin "Moondance" coffee comes in either whole beans or ground and we offer it in half pound bags. Nothing goes better with wine than cheese and a fresh baguette. Provisions 124 is proud to carry Sea Level Bakery's demi baguettes. We pick up fresh baguettes daily and they are so fresh that they're still warm when we pick them up. We only order enough for the day, so if you want a

baguette, you need to get to our store early.

We're looking to add to our local relationships and are talking with a couple other businesses about carrying their products. Stay tuned for some fun things that are in discussion. I'll keep you updated as we move forward with those relationships.

Maryann and I would like to thank everyone who has helped us open Provisions 124, including Coaster Construction, David Kiedrowski, Jim Entler, Doug and Emmas Lindsay, Todd Rowley, Ron Jaber, Alaina, Marty and Chance Giguere, Sleepy Monk Coffee Roasters and Sea Level Bakery. We appreciate all of your work and inspiration. Also, we'd like to thank our staff, Joe Lebold, Lee Roberts and Marlene Reynolds for the additional work we've asked of you during the expansion and for your support, suggestions and the great care you take of our customers!

We hope all of you enjoy our new store, Provisions 124, and find some cheese to go with that wine!



SUBMITTED PHOTO
No, it's not a Puffin wine label, but one for coffee.