

Robin Risley’s pioneering spirit

Robin proudly and passionately served on the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Commission from 2008 to 2017. During her tenure, she welcomed several new state parks into the system, Chrissy Field, Iwetemlaykin, Bates, Beaver Creek and Cottonwood Canyon. Robin encouraged the department

to pursue insecure the acquisition of the Sitka Sedge State Park, which will be opening for the late fall season. Risley could continually be counted on for her reliability, dedication and involvement. She went above and beyond donating her own time attending public meetings all around the state regarding various rule changes

and policy impacts to communities and park visitors. She was a great commissioner always listening and advocating for what she believed the public wants it. Her service was top-notch and will be deeply missed.”

— Lisa Sumption, Oregon Recreation and Parks Department Commission

Q: When you were a member of the state’s parks and recreation department commission, did you find a conflict with industry and parkland preservation?

We’ve had some issues in eastern Oregon, with so much of the land owned by the government. Some people can be a little bit upset to hear that maybe a property that they hold dear would be public when they would rather stay private land. We have gone to meetings that start out fairly contentious. But as we go along through the process, we just don’t have one meeting. We have many meetings, to get an idea of the temperature of the community.

Q: Do you anticipate federal policy changes will change the way land is managed in our state?
That remains to be seen.

Q: Tell me about your background.
I grew up in Milwaukie, Oregon, and my family were pioneers. They came over the Oregon Trail the Mount Hood way. They got two donation land claims. The family settled in 1843. There is a Risley Park and the Risley Landing Gardens today.
I graduated from Oregon State University with a degree in scientific illustration. Then I went to work for Myron Frank as an illustrator.

Q: How did you land on the coast?
I married a fellow whose family owned the Crab Broiler restaurant. It seated 292

CANNON SHOTS
R.J. MARX



people and people would have to wait two hours to get a table. They would check in and come back. It was wonderful,

Q: The restaurant had quite a reputation.
It was named “Outstanding Roadside Restaurant” by Life magazine. We had 100 employees. Behind Crown Zellerbach, we were the largest employer in Clatsop County.

Q: What happened to the Crab Broiler?
The family closed it. They sold it three times and the last one stuck. It’s been 25 years maybe since.

Q: What was your next move?
I left and went to Lake Oswego for a little while then came back and I’ve been here ever since. I came into Realty in 1989.

Q: Do you have a particular focus?
I’ve always worked in Gearhart, Seaside, Cannon Beach and Arch Cape. I’m with Sotheby’s now. I don’t usually work in Astoria, just because I think it’s a different animal.

Q: When did you become interested in civic affairs?
I’ve always been involved one way or another supporting different candidates for offices. I’ve always been involved in decision-making to a degree or helping to do that. I am on the Planning Commission for the county and also for Cannon Beach.

Q: How did you get involved with the Parks and Recreation Department?
I got a call from a friend and they said there was a vacancy if I was interested. And I have to thank Debbie Boone, our house representative, and (state Sen.) Betsy (Johnson) because they encouraged me. I joined in 2008. I served under three governors: (Ted) Kulongoski, (John) Kitzhaber and (Kate) Brown.

Q: From your perspective as a Realtor, what are people looking for in Cannon Beach?
People always want to be by the ocean and they always want to have a walk. Ever since the tsunami concerns sometimes people request that they request to be higher up.

Q: How do you address the tsunami threat?
You need to be upfront with every concern people might have.

Q: As a real estate agent, do you see a celebrity culture here?



Robin Risley

It goes back to “Kindergarten Cop” and Arnold Schwarzenegger. I used to be a stringer for the film and video department. We did “Kindergarten Cop,” we did “Goonies” and we did “Point Break.”

I’m on the Arts Council for Clatsop County. We finished doing a survey of the different events throughout the county. In the next month we’re going to come up with the value that we think the arts provide in our community.

Q: What can we look forward to at the state Parks and Recreation Department?
Doug Deur is going to take my place — woo hoo! I am so excited!
He’s going to bring a whole dimension to parks that I think they need, because a lot of our areas are very precious. And we need to honor them.

View of estuary at Sitka Sedge Natural Area



From the Ice Age to today: How the Rock was formed

It is impossible to visit Cannon Beach without automatically gravitating to the huge monolith that is Haystack Rock. Not only is the rock a designated marine garden and wildlife refuge, but the 235-foot-tall basalt beauty also plays host to over 200,000 visitors each year. For Cannon Beach, the Rock has become an icon, but do we really understand how this geological wonder came to be?
“The journey of Haystack Rock began 15 million years ago with a series of active volcanic lava flows, which sent a finger of 50,000 cubic miles of lava westward along the route of the Columbia River,” explains the permanent interpretive exhibit at the Cannon Beach History Center. “When the lava reached the ocean, it found weak marine sediments. There it descended into the earth and flowed along subterranean channels forged by its own heat.”
A series of volcanic eruptions produced this large quantity of lava, believed to be one of the largest

REFLECTIONS
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flows in the history of the earth, and the finger spread out into a fan into the ocean of the North Coast.
This lava fan flowed under the earth because of the tremendous pressure it exerted on the soft marine sediments (sand). The lava would occasionally pool and push to the surface, where it would slowly cool, transforming over time into basalt rock.
“The lava intrusions took many forms: huge fingers, sheets, and knobs,” says the Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce on their Web site. “They cooled and solidified into hard basalt rock and remained buried under the uplifted marine sediments for eons. The largest formed the major headlands, as the land gradually lifted and softer

sediments eroded away.”
After this lava flow, the Ice Age began and glaciated parts of the earth, reducing the level of the ocean by several hundred feet. This reduction in ocean levels combined with shifts in the earth’s crust gave Oregon a greater landmass, and the land continued rising (a process known as uplifting).
During the last 11,000 to 18,000 years, continued uplift and erosion have removed approximately 30 miles of sediments and volcanic rocks along the northwestern coastline, the History Center’s exhibit explains.
This uplift caused by the shifting of the earth’s crust and the accompanying erosion due to the Ice Age and its eventual end caused many of the formations that were made during the lava flow to become exposed.
Thousands of years of beating from the wind, rain, and tides shaped Haystack Rock into what we see today. Softer land mass eroded away from the basalt rock that formed from



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Children near Haystack Rock in an undated photo.

the lava, and Haystack Rock and the Needles, along with the offshore rocks in Ecola State Park, became more pronounced.
The erosion that formed Haystack Rock also helped to form the tide pools that thousands of visitors enjoy each year. The rocky shallows of the Oregon Coast allow for water to be

captured in pools during high and low tide, creating a habitat for an abundance of creatures to live.
The Cannon Beach History Center and Museum is home to a permanent tide pool exhibit. The museum is open seven days a week from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. For more information about the exhibit, call 503-436-9301.