

New owner looks to double Circle Creek RV Resort

RV park now has 44 spots

By Edward Stratton
The Daily Astorian

The Circle Creek RV Resort along U.S. Highway 101 has been sold for \$2.1 million. The new ownership hopes to double the park's size by next summer.

The RV park sits on an 11-acre peninsula bounded to the south, west and north by the Necanicum River and Highway 101 to the east. It has been owned since 2001 by Sharon Roper, 73, who is retiring to Sisters.

"I lived in Phoenix where I owned a company that made fences for horses," she told The Daily Astorian in a 2011 business feature. "After I visited this area in the 1980s I decided that if I ever had the opportunity to live here, I would take it."

In a news release about the sale, Roper said one of the highlights about running Circle Creek was getting to work with her daughter, Tina, and son, Michael, who helped manage the park, and meeting enthusiastic visitors to the coast.

Roper sold the property to JO OR Properties and Circle Creek Partners, registered to Loren Landau, a principal broker with Commonwealth Real Estate Services. The company manages manufactured and mobile home communities throughout the Pacific Northwest, including Four Winds Mobile Estates and Neawanna Mobile Home Park in Seaside. Commonwealth last year acquired Alder Creek Village, a 42-space, 55-and-older manufactured home community in Warrenton, for \$4.5 million.

The interest in Circle Creek stems from his grow-



COLIN MURPHEY/EO MEDIA GROUP

The Circle Creek RV Resort south of Seaside was recently sold after being owned by the same individual since 2001.



The new owners of the resort are planning to expand and develop the southern portion of the property.



The southern part of the resort is occupied by fire pits and picnic tables.

ing up in southwest Washington and visiting the Lower Columbia River region as a child, Landau said.

"I believe in the economics of the North Coast," he said, adding that RV parks have also become more at-

tractive as state tenant laws become more unfavorable for landlords.

The 44 spots at Circle Creek RV Park occupy the northern half of the property, with a field to the south. Circle Creek Partners plans

to invest in aesthetics and double the park's size in that southern field, hopefully starting construction in the fall after the busy season is over, Landau said. The hope is to have the additional spaces available by next summer.



R.J. MARX/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Roadway already in place at Blue Heron Pointe.

Blue Heron Pointe to bring workforce housing to Seaside

More than a decade in the making

By R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

Blue Heron Pointe cleared a hurdle as the 59-lot, single-family proposal won conditional Seaside Planning Commission approval Tuesday, Feb. 20. After a verbal decision early this month, a draft of the plan came before the commission with changes and updates. "This is putting the decision in writing," City Planner Kevin Cupples said.

The 2,000-square-foot homes will provide workforce housing, owner Max Ritchie said earlier this month, with prices in the low \$300,000 and high \$200,000 range.

Blue Heron Pointe began in the early 2000s, going so far as to win preliminary approval in 2006.

After a downturn in the economy, the project was shelved until late 2016, when the Ritchies presented a 45-unit multifamily pro-

posal. That plan stalled over a requirement for a sidewalk along Wahanna Road.

This month, the commission added 19 conditions, including a request for a hazard mitigation plan and requirement for infrastructure approvals. Emergency vehicle access, hydrants and fire flow will need inspection from the city fire marshal.

Lots along Cooper Street have been added into the project's second construction phase to limit potential conflicts with pedestrian and bike traffic.

The site plan also addresses the building of sidewalks on Avenue S and design requirements.

On Tuesday, the Planning Commission voted 4-2 to approve the plan with conditions. Chris Hoth, the commission's chairman, and commissioners Bill Carpenter, Teri Carpenter and David Posalski voted for the plan. Richard Ridout and Lou Neubecker voted against. Ray Romine was absent.

Planning Commission decisions may be appealed to the City Council.

Sailors' Grave still holds many mysteries today

Grave from Page 1A

more. When the opportunity presented itself, they shared their research showing a consistent pattern of who may reside within the walled grave at the Feb. 22 History and Hops speaker series.

Grave site

The Monteros discovered the current location of the grave is not the original 1865 gravesite. When local builder Al Hansen built his home at the Cove in 1937, he also built the walled memorial seen today.

One story, as told by Sarah Gearhart Byrd, Robin Montero said, was about a man named John Hobson, who in 1865, happened to be at the south-end of Clatsop Beach when three sailors rowed ashore from an anchored ship near Tillamook Head, looking to fill their casks with fresh water. The sailors wanted to return to their ship before dark and soon headed back. When Hobson noticed the weather change and fearing for the sailor's safety, he built a bonfire on the beach to help guide the sailors back to shore. The next morning, to his dismay, Hobson saw the sailor's bodies and buried them above the high tide line, placing a marker in acknowledgment.

Another story is derived from a 19th-century interview with Judge Thomas McBride, who attended the funeral of the captain of the ship Industry. Industry set sail with 23 passengers and crew from San Francisco in February 1865. After reaching the mouth of the Columbia River in March, it anchored offshore for two weeks due to inclement weather, waiting for a pilot boat to guide the ship through the channel.

On March 15, the Industry's Capt. Lewis saw a pilot boat headed toward them. Believing it was coming to guide

the ship, Lewis raised the Industry flag and started over the bar. However, the ship drifted upon the sand. A small boat was launched with a first mate named Coppin, but the rough sea capsized the boat and Coppin drowned. During the night storm, the remaining small boats were destroyed.

'IT IS A SACRED PLACE OF RESPECT.'

Robin Montero

Two makeshift rafts with the remaining passengers and crew launched into the cold waters the next morning. The storm pounded the 300-ton Industry into pieces, and Capt. Lewis and 16 others perished. Soldiers from a nearby fort rescued only seven.

"It's noteworthy to say that burial of the dead was mainly in the Clatsop Pioneer Cemetery," Montero explained. "However, there are incidents when the area of the original sailors' grave was used instead."

According to the Monteros, the grounds above the high tide line at the Cove are the last resting place for many unnamed souls.

A Seaside resident told the story of two fishermen who drowned after their boat capsized off Tillamook Head. They were buried on the rocky rise behind the original gravesite. Legend also recalls a drowned man who was found strapped to the deck of a sloop and recovered by residents. They buried him in the high ground area of the gravesite. Another report tells of a child who died and received burial by the gravesite.

"The Cove was used as a burial ground as there were no houses in sight, the ocean was in front and lush spruce and pine trees behind," Montero said.

A 'sacred place'

Even today, she added, remains of the deceased are scattered at the Sailors' Grave in memoriam and homage to all those who perished before. "It is a sacred place of respect."

Today, the gravesite is maintained by a group of neighboring residents: the Monteros, Walt and Denise Walthour, Walter Daggett, John Parks, Jay and Jan Barber, Lynette Scribner, Marcus Lundell and Bill Basiliko.

The group is currently working on identifying more homes built by Al Hansen, and they plan to design a plaque recognizing the local builder. Ten homes have been identified including the Hansen-built homes each member lives in, Montero noted.

At a 2011 Seaside City Council meeting, Robin Montero and Gloria Linkey presented a proposal to the council for an information board to be erected at the gravesite with a narrative of the three sailors, Capt. Lewis and ocean safety information. The board was installed last summer.

Before last summer, only nautical flags were raised on the flagpole. Without continuous lighting, the American flag could not be raised without being lowered and removed at dusk every day, Montero said.

With the assistance of the city and Public Works Director Dale McDowell, the flagpole was upgraded with an LED light and the nautical flags were replaced with an American flag.

Steve Wright, president of the Seaside Historical Society and Museum, concluded the evening by putting the year 1865 into perspective. April of 1865 held momentous impact: the American Civil War ended April 9; Abraham Lincoln was shot April 14 and died April 15; and John Wilkes Booth died April 26.

Other points of historical interest include:

- Mrs. Phillip Gearhart planted the original daisies at the grave that bloom every summer.

- Ben Holladay had the flagpole installed at the Cove so passing ships would know where Seaside House was located.

- Seaside House, built by Ben Holladay, was a palatial Italian-style villa with a race-track and stable, and is the current location of the Seaside Golf Course.

- John Hobson, his father William and four siblings moved to Clatsop County from Derbyshire, England in 1843. It was William Hobson, who introduced his native plant, the Scotch Broom.

- John Hobson was a successful businessman and shipwreck salvager, which included the U.S.S. Shark that ran aground in 1846. One of the ship's canons was discovered years later, giving Cannon Beach its name.

- Two-thousand vessels and 700 lives have been lost on the Columbia Bar since 1792.



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