

# Bentley remembered for love of music

**SEEN FROM SEASIDE**

R.J. MARX



A love for the music of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones propelled the musical and artistic career of Bonnie Bentley.

“I think every creative person in the world derives their influence from their mentors,” Wyatt Tuttle, Bentley’s son, said. “For her it was the Rolling Stones and the Beatles. That was a huge light in her life.”

Bentley died in a New Year’s Day blaze at her Seventh Avenue home.

Over decades in Portland and the North Coast, she established herself as a musical talent and performer who showcased her style and personality, Tuttle recalled.

Her motto in life came from rocker Patti Smith: “I am an American artist and I have no guilt.”

Born April 27, 1951, Bentley grew up in Portland. Her father, Paul Boggs, was a tugboat operator for Tidewater Barge Lines and her mother, Larene, was an ice skater. Her first musical instrument was a recorder and her first band was named Gomper after a Rolling Stones song.

Bentley moved to Astoria in 1972 after meeting her first husband, Mark Tuttle, in a local club. Wyatt was born in 1976.

After her divorce in 1981, Bentley returned to Portland, where she continued her musical pursuit with The Twist, an all-woman band, along with The Rhythm Benders, the Bonnie Bentley Project and the Phantom Tears. She played a Fender Stratocaster, a pink Telecaster and anywhere she lived was filled with instruments, Wyatt Tuttle recalled.

Musician Pat Baum met Bentley in the early 1980s when they were both playing in rock bands in the Portland area. “I was doing sound at a club called Satyricon and she needed a drummer,” Baum said.

Bentley’s passion and dedication to music cemented their friendship, which was to last for decades. They played in The Twist and later the Tsunami Twist. “She’d been playing since she was 16,” Baum said. “She had a really good idea of who she was and what kind of sound she had.”

Baum viewed Bentley as an inspiration to women.

“She was very driven, very talented,” Baum said. “She was extremely generous with her talent. She shared it with other people and she brought other people on board. She just wanted to share her music and enthusiasm with people. She also wanted other women to pick up their instruments and play.”

Younger women were inspired as well, Tuttle added. “She was kind of a very powerful woman to other women as well as far as fronting a rock band. A lot of my friends who went to high school with me look up to her as sort of a mentor as a powerful female figure.”

A songwriter, Bentley recorded live and studio material, some of which will be released in an upcoming EP.

Seaside musician Bruce Thomas Smith appreciated Bentley’s original songwriting. “It reminded me of Fleetwood Mac, Petty, the Stones,” he said.

Longing to return to the coast, Bentley moved to Cannon Beach, where she worked at and lived above the White Bird Gallery.

She started her own business as a book-binder, Books Nouveau, making hand-crafted paper products, journals and wedding albums. She later managed the Shearwater Gallery in Seaside.

She married Cannon Beach business owner David Dasse and the two traveled extensively. The couple later divorced.

It was music that remained her lifelong pastime, however, with new groups and gigs throughout the coast.

Guitarist Chuck Baker met Bentley in Seaside. “We played gigs all over the place on the North Coast for a few years,” he recalled. “She knew so many people and had many connections.”

Baker said Bentley had “a million songs.” “She would lay out the song structure, and the vocals, and we would get the band rockin’,” he said. “We always did an occasional Stones song because she had an undying love for Keith Richards.”

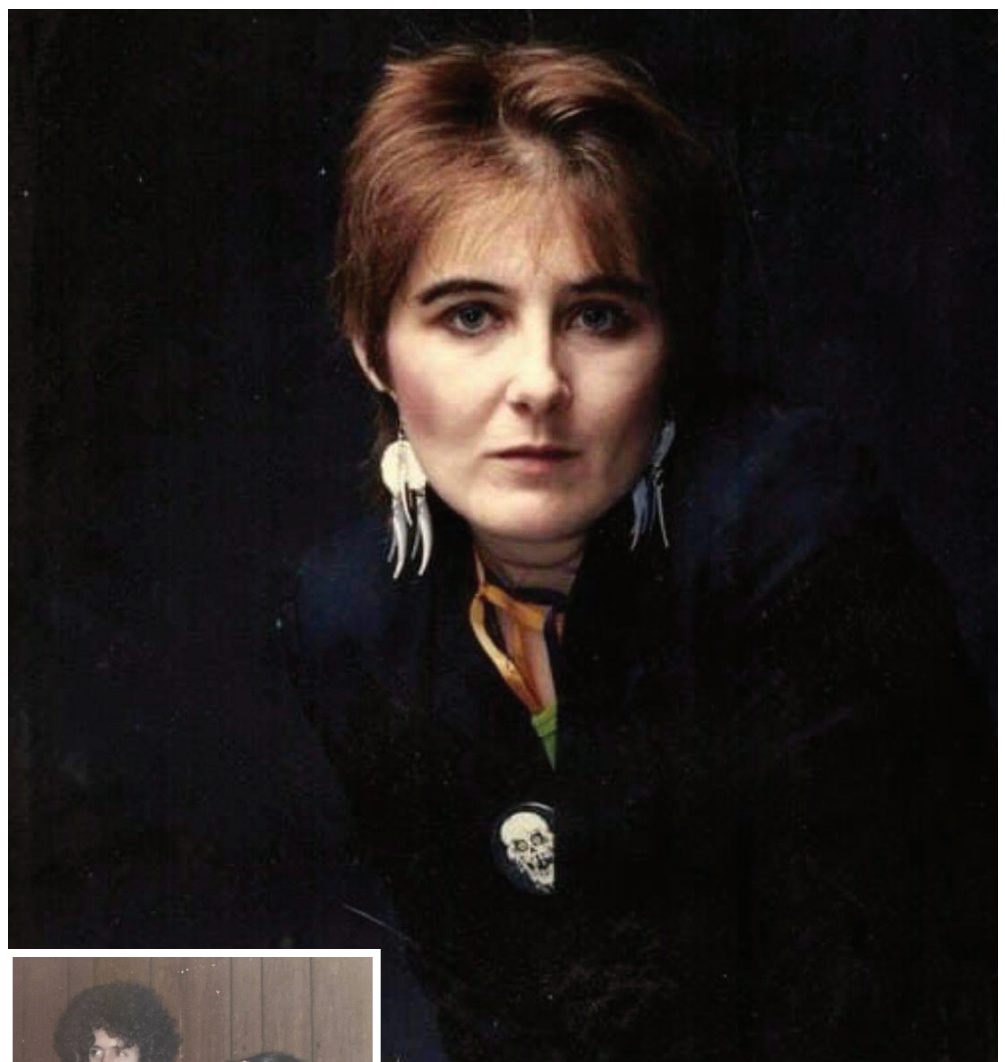
Baum said she and Bentley remained in touch over social media for many years. When Baum returned to Portland after many years in Mexico, the two continued collaborating. “We have a song called ‘Terrible, Terrible, Terrible,’ about how we’re going to live with what we’ve got.”

She and Bentley envisioned creating a rock ‘n’ roll camp for girls, with online lessons.

Bentley is survived by her son, Wyatt Tuttle; her grandchild, Allie; a sister, Peggy Senn, in Longview, Washington; and a brother, Richard Boggs.

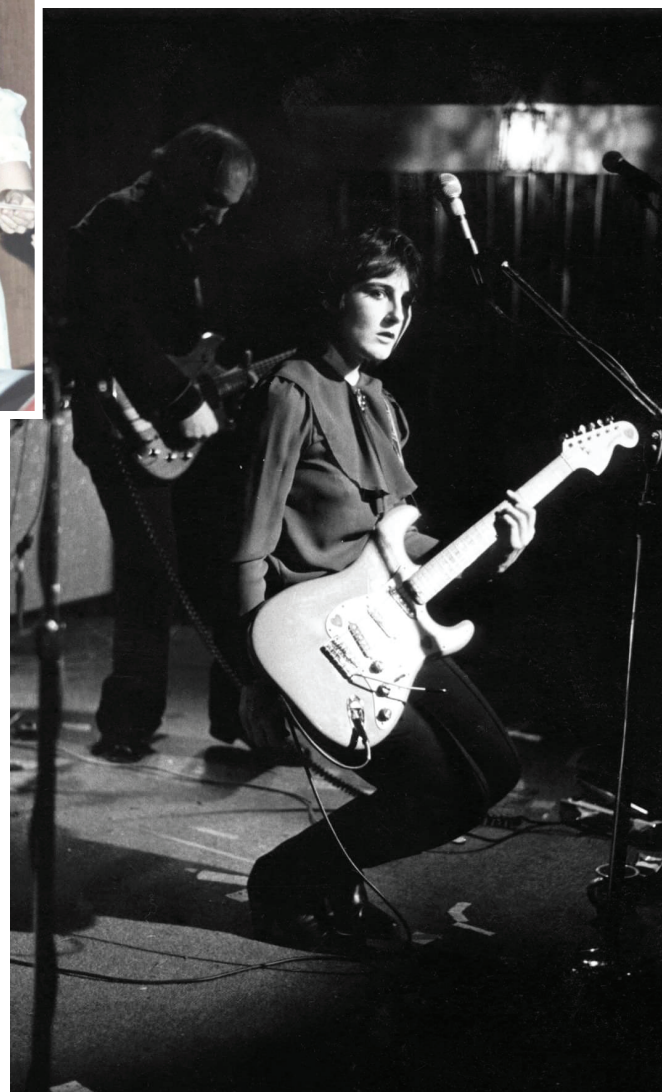
Wyatt Tuttle hopes to raise money via GoFundMe — Bonnie Bentley’s Final Requests and Wish Fund — to pay for his mother’s final services and remembrance.

Those wishing to honor her memory are also invited to support the Jeremy Wilson Foundation for musician health and services and the Oregon Music Hall of Fame.



Photos Courtesy of Wyatt Tuttle

**ABOVE: Mark Tuttle and Bonnie Bentley at their wedding. BELOW: Bonnie Bentley playing with The New Creatures.**



# Let’s establish common ground in our community

**GUEST COLUMN**

BRIAN OWEN



I moved to Seaside in 2012. I found a community that embraced me for me, a local coffee shop who recognized that I was more than just a visitor, a local brewery whose staff always had a friendly welcome and maybe a joke or two. You see, in 1968, I was born in Gold Beach. I am a water boy, not drawn to go into the water but drawn to be near it.

At this point, I’m sure you’re asking, what is Brian talking about? Where is he going with this intro paragraph? Wait, I’ve never seen anything Brian has written! Well, maybe a nice social media post or food picture but not a full article. Perhaps some of you are asking who Brian is?

Let me introduce myself. My name is Brian Owen, and I love Seaside. I moved here in 2012 from McMinnville. When I moved here, I worked in the real estate

industry. After a few years working and becoming a part of this community, I left my corporate job and started working at the Seaside Chamber of Commerce. Personally, the most challenging move I’ve ever made. You see, I left paid health insurance, 401(k), stock options, and the ability for advancement.

So why move jobs, Brian? I made the life change because I found a community where I thrived, a community I could be me, and a community I felt I could personally grow into a better Brian, a community I wanted to make my permanent home. You see, it was the first community I felt my work didn’t define me — a place where friends and I could grow old together.

Over the past 10 months, this world has changed, everywhere from Main Street to corporate America. From family to friends to foes, all have been affected. Some have profited, some have been ruined and all of us shaken.

I sit here this, morning struggling with a bit of depression,

a bit of anxiety, and a bit of sadness. You see, I care that this current world has pushed friendships to break, families to argue, and co-workers to show their frustrations to and at one another. Our community is divided, the energy and emotion is troubling.

I sit here asking myself, how do I face those who have told me they will no longer be friends with or do business with or speak to others?

I struggle with how can I help mend fences or open opportunities to establish common ground? I struggle and wonder, do I have the energy and strength to give my community what it needs?

I wonder how many of you are asking the same questions? I wonder how you plan to meet that person who may have frustrated you in some way? Maybe they angered you in ways you’ve never felt. I wonder how our community will look in six months and two years.

With all this reflection I’ve processed today, I personally have found some answers.

I am going to interact with everyone as I always have, with

respect. I may disagree with someone’s expressed views or even the brand of car they drive. I may not understand their past or their current situation, either personally or professionally. What I can do is be true to myself. What I can be is the best version of Brian I possibly can be.

I’m going to place my energy into fulfilling the task and goals I’ve set aside over the past four to five months. I’m going to be active in helping others find what they need. I’m going to honor my marriage by being more present.

You see, just months after leaving my comfortable job and shaking up my life, I found the one person I love more than anyone else, the person who calms me with a smile, the person who knows what’s going on inside me without even a word spoken.

I have found so much in our community that I never thought was possible — so many friendships, so many growth opportunities, so many positive, enriching moments that give me hope for all of us.

Today I ask you, how are you going to move forward? How are you going to interact with someone who challenged you in any way? How are you going to meet that person who frustrates you?

I ask you to see that person as a whole. I ask that you to give grace to all. I ask that you remember we live here as neighbors. Yesterday I was reminded that “fences make good neighbors.” I was also reminded of the good neighbor fence. A good neighbor fence allows for privacy but also allows for a window into your neighbor’s world.

I ask if you must have a fence between you and a neighbor to make sure that fence is the good neighbor style. And every once in a while, look through the fence boards. Every once in a while, see if you can find that one positive gesture to help the neighborhood.

Our community is a goal in someone’s life, a place that drives their dreams. Our community is my dream! The place I belong.

*Brian Owen is the CEO of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce.*

**PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

**TUESDAY, JAN. 19**

**Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board**

**of Directors**, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A.

**Seaside School District**, 6 p.m., www.seaside.k12.or.us/meetings.

**WEDNESDAY, JAN. 20**

**Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee**, 3 p.m., Seaside Civic and Convention Center, 415 First Ave.

**Seaside Tree Board Committee**, 4 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

**THURSDAY, JAN. 21**

**Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission**, 6 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

**MONDAY, JAN. 25**

**Seaside City Council**, 7 p.m.,

cityofseaside.us.

**TUESDAY, JAN. 26**

**Seaside Airport Advisory Committee**, 6 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

**FRIDAY, JAN. 29**

**Seaside City Council**, 2-5 p.m., goal setting, cityofseaside.us.

**SATURDAY, JAN. 30**

**Seaside City Council**, 2-5 p.m., goal setting, cityofseaside.us.



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