

Seaside library through the decades

BETWEEN THE COVERS

ESTHER MOBERG



This year we are celebrating the Seaside Prom Centennial of 100 years. The appealing promenade cement boardwalk that borders the ocean and offers beautiful views. I've walked, biked, rollerbladed and ran on the prom for at least 30 years of the 100. But over the last 100 years of the prom and the Seaside Public Library, a lot has changed. Libraries in general have changed quite a bit from 1921 to 2021.

The Seaside Library began eight years before the prom was built, back in 1913. The library started out in the public bathrooms (The old Dresser building where Seaside Coffee House and Tom's Fish and Chips now live) near the Seaside railroad stop where families got off for the weekends to visit Seaside from Portland. The train took most of the day and cost \$2.

Twelve different librarians have managed the Seaside library over the years including myself which averages to approximately 10-15 years per librarian!

Back in 1921 the librarian was paid \$400 a year to run the library with most of that salary paid in the summer and \$75 paid over the win-

ter. Seems that it was pretty quiet in the winter in Seaside back then. Most of the money that supported the library came from the women's club in Seaside before the library became a city and public library officially in 1935. The Oregon State Library still holds the original charter document.

One of our library patrons remembers going into the library back when it was in the building next to the old city hall, which is now the Seaside Brewing Company. All the adult books were up a very rickety staircase with a wobbly banister. She still remembers the librarian telling her the upstairs was for adults only. Her mom looked at her and said, go on upstairs, so she did. She vividly remembered the railing for the stairs were not in great shape and she was afraid she might pull it off. This was back in the 1940s or 1950s.

Up through the 1950s much of what librarians did was reader's advisory, helping library patrons find books. They also sometimes helped people use phone books or find an address. Library books were all cataloged using a card catalog with real cards.

One of my favorite pictures from the library when it was on the highway, where Cleanline Surf shop now stands, shows one of the librarians in a gopher or beaver costume reading to a small group of children in the '70s. I believe



In 1913 the Seaside library opened for business as a reading room in the Dresser building. The building now houses Tom's Fish and Chips and the Seaside Coffee Shop.

this was a summer reading program. I applaud the full commitment by that librarian. Unfortunately, the picture didn't have a name on it so if anyone remembers this program, please let me know. The old library on Roosevelt also had an event with a cage full of baby chicks in the library for story time back in the '80s.

In the '60s and '70s, Librarians did complicated searches in databases that only they could access. You had to know Boolean search keys and how to find the right records. Around that time discussion about librarianship changed from "analog — just books and

card catalogs — to information technicians. Librarians began to understand that training in how to best search and find resources and information was where the future was.

Many librarians preferred to just take care of books, magazines, and records, and that was it but they were slowly being left behind. The new librarian was the keeper of many types of information in many forms and not only new the information and resources within the library, but also outside the library on the Internet as well as community resources.

The internet of the '80s brought

in way more information that needed someone to help navigate and librarians found themselves taking up that role.

In the 1980s the library director didn't drive a car, so to collect overdue library books and fines, the librarian would be chauffeured around town in a police car. I have a feeling a lot more people paid their library fines when the police showed up at their door!

Programs and spaces where people met became areas the libraries began to focus. The Seaside Public Library has always had a strong focus on families and young children reading. Children's programs today are focused on STEM, early literacy, and brain development and ways for parents to help their children grow and succeed.

The library continues to offer programs for children and teens through Zoom. Due to COVID-19, our maker space is on hiatus, but we you can still request items be made on our 3-D printer. We offer many things in our "library of things" collection including a telescope, a waffle maker, Wi-Fi hotspots, cultural passes, and much, much more that are all checked out using your library card. The library now offers many resources and services. We still have books, we just added ebooks, audiobooks, DVDs, CDs, magazines, and more.

Esther Moberg is executive director of the Seaside Public Library.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Answers sought over school sales

The recent tempest in a teapot at Sunset Empire Parks and Recreation District is interesting. To hear these folks talk, the old Broadway Middle School property, which SEPRD recently purchased from Seaside Administrative School District #10, is a toxic dump site of asbestos and black mold!

Reading their vitriolic letters to the editor, I'm left wondering, where was their hue and cry over this issue when our children were in those buildings? Why were they silent about this threat all these years? Why is it now suddenly a big concern to them? Is the problem really that bad or is this all just hyperbole?

It also raises the question, why didn't the Seaside School Board "gift" the middle school property to SEPRD, another

taxing district serving the public, like they did the Gearhart school property? Supposedly a big part of their reasoning for selling the Gearhart property to a private concern for less than a fifth of its true base value was worries about asbestos and mold. That whole affair fails to pass the smell test. District taxpayers were robbed and the school board was wholly complicit in the theft. Especially when you consider the subsequent Broadway Middle School sale.

If either of these sites are as dangerous as they are being made out, someone needs to prove it. My children went to both these schools. I want answers. And, quite honestly, the members of both boards should have their feet put to the fire to justify their actions.

Bill Graffius
Seaside

Vicious cycle for those in need

That man from Clackamas County is right (letter, "Time to move transient RVs out of Seaside.") It's a travesty that people are living in broken-down RVs parked on the street.

And, unlike housed people and the landlords, they're using alcohol and drugs! Unlike housed people, these people don't work or contribute anything to society. Yes, they collect returnables and help keep garbage out of the landfill, maybe. But they're making a profit on that! How dare they! They could be making, like, \$50 a day hogging the returnables machine at the grocery store. That's only 500 cans and bottles. They're not poor — they just blow all that cash on drugs. And food!

Plus they're lazy. I don't know how they manage to find 500 cans and bottles every day seeing as how

they're stoned and asleep most of the time. Or they're just looking for trouble. Or scaring the children with their schizophrenia or whatever. Really, they should be encouraged to live in RV parks. But they'd need new RVs, because the RV parks won't let those POS campers in. Which means they'd need a lot more than 500 cans and bottles a day. They should have jobs!

Why don't they have jobs? They should be forced to have jobs — not my job, mind you, but some other job. Maybe they could collect garbage or something. They should be doing something productive that makes a profit for someone else, not living off the detritus of the consumer economy.

They should help someone else make a profit, and then they should take their stagnant wages and give that money to a bank, so the bank can make a profit by giving them a mortgage

and allowing them to live in a house for \$50 a day. Then we wouldn't have to see them and their naked frailty. I don't want to see them because there but for the grace of God go I. We should not allow people to be homeless.

People should not have to resort to living on the street and relying on the trash of others to keep them warm. We have plenty of houses, and we have plenty of materials to build more houses if we need them. But as long as houses are used to make profits for the well-off and the wealthy, the man from Clackamas is right. We will continue to see increasing numbers of ugly broken RVs on the street, then the tents, then the impotent anger, the graffiti, the crime, the desperation, and then the burning. Perhaps we should round up all the undesirables, chain them together and drown them in the Pacific. Then we can dis-

mantle their RVs and get them recycled.

Pamela Cromwell
Seaside

Thank you to DMV

Over the past 14 months, I have found it necessary to visit the Astoria DMV on three different occasions and on each of those occasions, I found the representatives there to be professional, knowledgeable, helpful and friendly.

Each time I received guidance from one of them, I found their body of knowledge impressive, not to mention accurate and appropriate to my situation. I was also taken by how organized they were and the manner in which they "kept the line moving!"

Many thanks to those who helped me navigate my way through the paperwork I needed to complete.

Marti Waje
Seaside

NOTES



Tiffany Boothe/Seaside Aquarium

Sea otter on the south end of Manzanita beach.

Live sea otter recovered off Manzanita beach

A live, stranded sea otter was reported at the south end of Manzanita Beach on April 5. This is the first live sea otter the Seaside Aquarium has ever responded to, Tiffany Boothe of the Seaside Aquarium said.

The otter was lethargic and showed signs of possible neurological issues, she said. The otter was trans-

ferred to the aquarium and then to a rehab center up in Washington, but failed to survive. While a necropsy is yet to be performed, it is thought that the animal was suffering from a protozoal infection.

Sea otters were once quite common off the Oregon Coast but as a result of intense hunting from the fur trade, they were wiped out and pronounced extinct in the early 1900s, Boothe said. Previous efforts to

reintroduce sea otters on the Oregon Coast have failed but there is a group currently working on a plan to once again reintroduce sea otters to Oregon. Sea otters reside in Alaska, California and Washington state.

Day of Caring at the Railroad Community Garden

The Clatsop County United Way is partnering

with the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District to renovate the Railroad Community Garden to increase accessibility for patrons, beautify the garden, and help the planet. The 2021 Day of Caring is scheduled for Saturday, April 17 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Materials for the project have been donated by the Home Depot Foundation, Trails End Recovery, and Warrenton Fiber.

The park district serves a variety of patrons through the community gardens program, among them, veterans, seniors, youth, working families, and other members of this small, rural community. Food shortages are a major concern in Clatsop County, with increasing numbers of citizens relying on programs like the Meals on Wheels Program, the South Clatsop County Food Bank, and the CCA Regional Food Bank, with additional eco-

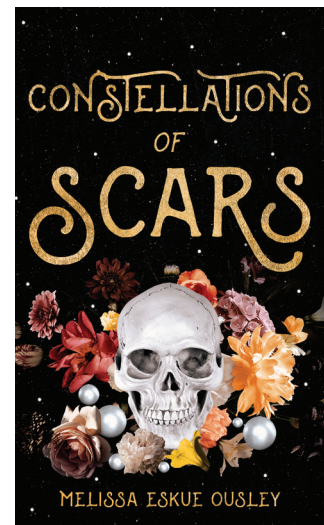
nom ic impact resulting from COVID-19.

Interested volunteers can sign up through the Clatsop County United Way at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080c-4ca8af28a1fc1-2021>.

Author debuts novel set in Seaside

The Hoffman Center for the Arts hosts a book release and publishing workshop with local award-winning author, Melissa Eskue Ousley on Friday, June 11, at 4 p.m. on Zoom. The \$25 registration fee includes a copy of the author's newest book, "Constellations of Scars," a novel set in Seaside. Alternatively, there is a \$10 fee for just the event.

Eskue Ousley will read from the book and discuss her publishing journey with Elle Beaumont of Midnight Tide Publishing, an author collective



"Constellations of Scars"

and independent press that seeks to give authors creative freedom while offering support and collaborative opportunities.

"Constellations of Scars" received a starred review from Kirkus Reviews, who called it, "An indelible story of loving yourself in a world of dreadful realities."

To register, visit hoffmanarts.org.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

MONDAY, APRIL 19

Seaside Budget Committee,

6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

TUESDAY, APRIL 20

Seaside Planning Commission, work session, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

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

Gearhart Small Business Committee, 6 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21

Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., 989 Broadway.

Gearhart Parks Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee,

5:30 p.m., work session, cityofgearhart.com.

MONDAY, APRIL 26

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., 989 Broadway, cityofseaside.us.

TUESDAY, APRIL 27

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A.

SEASIDE Signal

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