

SignalViewpoints

Region's history provides inspiration for photo restorationist

SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



The stunning photographic renditions of the Prom from 100 years ago owe their beauty not only to the intrepid photographers of the time, but to the man who helped them find a new life.

Photo restorationist Bruce Andrews archived century-old museum negatives and photographs and restored them to a crisp and brilliant freshness.

He works from his house on S. Edgewood Street, in front of a large computer and surrounded by boxes of postcards, prints and negatives.

"I've done photo restorations for over 25 years," Andrews said. "I started out doing my own photos, and collected a goodly amount of negatives and slides that folks have either discarded, abandoned or I fished out of the garbage, dirty beyond measure. People didn't know who or what they were.

"I guess it was partly due to my feeling that as a photographer myself, the people who took these images originally took them because they meant enough to them to capture a special image that would never be able to be recaptured again."

A passion

Andrews, who grew up on a farm in Wasco and later moved to Portland, always had a passion for photography, inspired by his parents and grandparents. His mother presented him his first camera at 7.

She soon regretted it, he said, because of how fast he would burn through a roll of film and the cost of processing.

"One thing I learned real early was composition from them," Andrews said. "A lot of people just go in and take snapshots. 'My mom said, 'Get the angle that nobody sees.'"

Andrews briefly considered a career in orthopedic medicine, but joined the railroad industry instead.

"I ended up 30 years working for the railroad as a — you name it: switchman, weigh master, art office, dispatching — just about everything except drive an engine."

Through his travels, he would discover caches of historic photos, slides and negatives. Many were damaged, discolored, dirty and discarded.

"People either didn't want them anymore, didn't know anything about them or thought they were unsalvageable because of the degree of damage," Andrews said.

At a garage sale, he stumbled on a box of glass plates and film negatives. "I said, 'You guys aren't throwing that out, are you?' Long story short, they said, 'If you want to, take them.' So I did."

Absorbing lessons from others, he developed his own technique to work with glass plates and negatives.

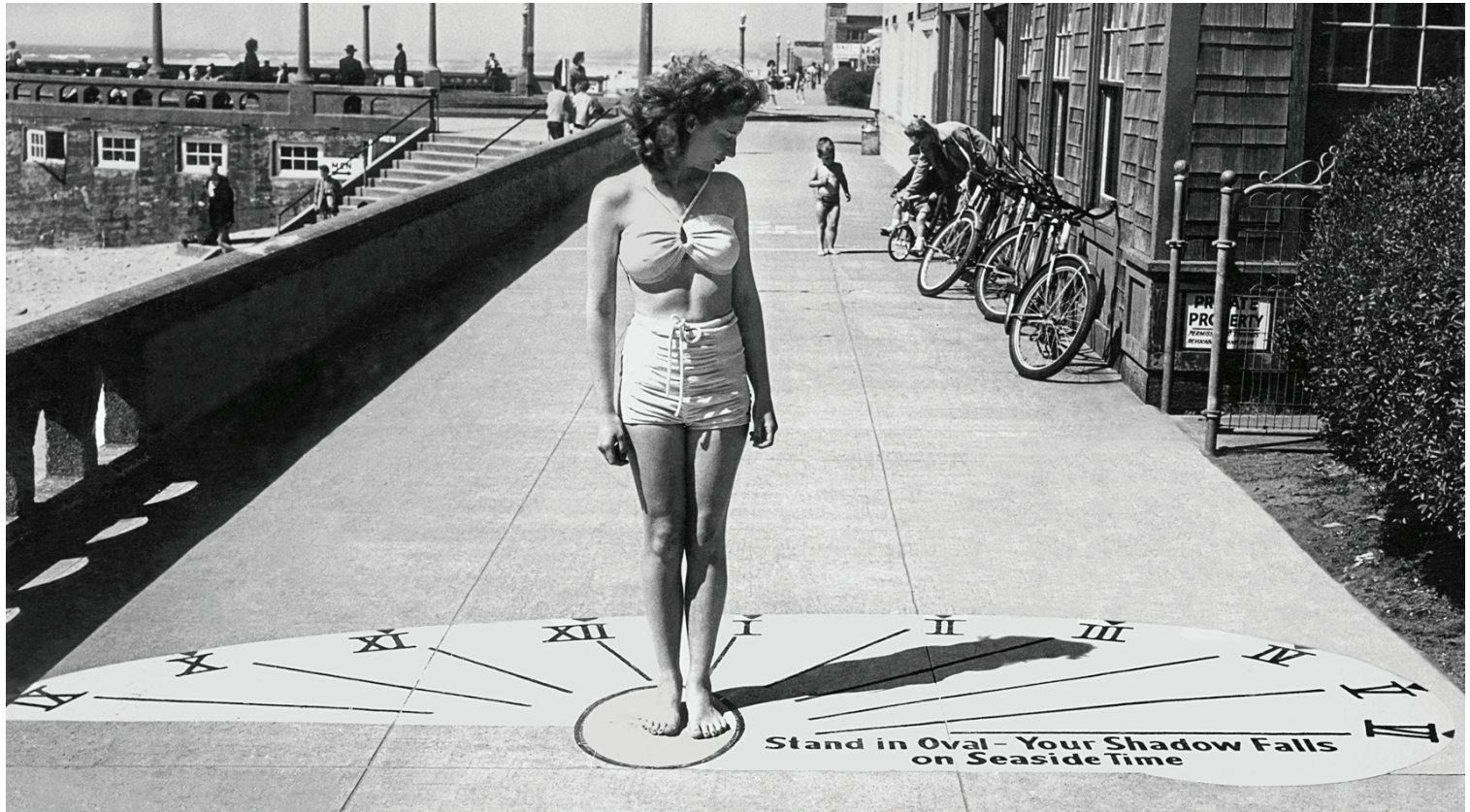
"I had some trial and error," he said. "I learned what not to do and what worked."

Finally, he came up with his own solutions for bringing old photos back to life.

"I call it my own Colonel Sanders' recipe. The goal is as clean a negative or slide as I could get. I wanted antique images, not antique dirt."

Andrews and his wife, Debbie, moved to Seaside in 2010, giving up a 5-acre farm in the Willamette Valley for a place by the ocean.

"My wife and I came down here every year of our married life for 47 years," he



Seaside Museum/Bruce Andrews Restoration

This restoration of a photo by John Boyer shows a young woman posing in the sundial on the South Promenade at Seaside, Oregon circa 1947. The building to the right was Gordon Shaw's South Prom Bike Shop.



Seaside Museum/Bruce Andrews Restoration

This restored glass plate negative from the Seaside Historical Museum shows a candy wagon and the Dixie Restaurant near the present-day Turnaround on the Seaside Promenade at Seaside, Oregon circa 1918-1925. The boardwalk was replaced by the current Promenade in 1920.



Bruce Andrews' restoration of a 1954 image of the Peter Iredale.



Bruce Andrews in front of his Seaside home.



R.J. Marx

Bruce Andrews in his office, pointing to one of his nautical restorations. This is the S.S. Corona, which sank at Humboldt Bay in 1907.

said. "We loved coming here, but never managed to find a place. We just happened to be walking down the street one day and we saw a 'for sale' sign on this place."

History buff

A history buff, he made contact with Steve Wright, a city councilor and president of the board for the Seaside Museum and Historical Society. He volunteered to go through their collections.

"Steve found out what I do," Andrews said. "He mentioned that they had no one managing the photo archive at the museum and he allowed me to have a look at the photo room, which was a royal disaster, and also the Montag plates that they had."

Andrews is referring to William J. Montag, a photographer whose work remains a basis for a lot of the museum's images.

Montag started as a barber at the Seaside House on the golf course in the 1890s

before opening the city's premier photo business on the Prom.

Andrews suggested a few things that should be changed to help the museum better protect the deteriorating negatives.

"Long story short, before I knew it, sweet-talking Steve had me as the guy in charge of the museum's photo archive," he said.

Andrews' photo restorations aim to educate as well as visually entertain.

"One of the things that makes me different than a lot of other people is the fact that I will go in and I want to research," he said. "I want to know the history. If you've seen my stuff up there, you know, I write a pretty good caption.

"That's because I want to flesh out that particular image. I want people to know what that image was and why it was great. To make sure it's not totally lost in history, that it's going to stay here."

GUEST COLUMN

A shot in the arm for small business advertising

GUEST COLUMN

BRETT WESNER

A little-noticed initiative by Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-WA, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-OR and five other senators would boost local jobs, accelerate sales and improve economies. The Local Journalism Sustainability Act, S. 2434, is designed to help local news media support their newsgathering missions.

One provision goes far beyond offering aid to community newspapers, local news websites and other newsgatherers. It would help small businesses to dig out of the economic doldrums by supporting their advertising costs in local news outlets, which in turn will help publishers and broadcasters to hire journalists.

This provision would permit small businesses to claim a tax credit for a portion of their advertising purchases up to \$5,000 a year. Credits would remain, but in declining amounts, for five years.

The legislation, originally introduced in similar form by Reps. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-AZ, and Dan Newhouse, R-WA, would also help subscribers by providing them with a refundable tax credit up to \$250 a year. It provides financial support for hiring as well, assisting news organizations with journalists' salaries.

It is the advertising tax credit that is the unsung hero of this legislation. Like a pebble tossed into the pond of local economies, it will show the ripple effect of benefits in local jobs, enhanced spending, revenues to run local governments and a boost to get American small businesses back in the

game after a very tough couple of years.

Every dollar of advertising spending generates \$8.77 in sales, according to a 2010 study by IHS Global Insight, a firm that periodically measures advertising's impact on economies. Advertising is directly responsible for about 20 percent of the American economy by directly generating jobs in media sales, creation of materials and collateral work but it does far more by juicing activity in other businesses.

No surprise to anyone on Main Street: after the 2008 recession small businesses cut way back on their advertising campaigns, dropping from their normal 3-5% annual increases to a stunning 6 percent cut in 2009. It is too soon to know what the COVID-19 pandemic has done to this spending, but it would be no great revelation to learn that the cuts equaled or

exceeded those following the Great Recession. Expense cuts are what businesses do to stay afloat.

But when they are ready to climb back into the cockpit for a new takeoff, the spending needs to accelerate rapidly. Cash-strapped businesses may be in no position to fuel their journey though. That is why a little boost in the form of the Cantwell tax credit would be so timely. If the economy behaves as it usually does after economic retraction, the new spending will generate more sales and the public coffers will refill. The bill's benefits end after five years but the growth it generates will pay off for decades.

Brett Wesner is chair of the National Newspaper Association, a community newspaper organization and president of Wesner Publications, Cordell, Oklahoma.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 7

Seaside Community Center Commission, 10 a.m., 1225 Avenue A.

Seaside Library Board of Directors, 4:30 p.m., 1131 Broadway St.

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway, cityofseaside.us.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 9

Seaside Civic and Convention Center Commission, 5 p.m., 415 First Ave.

Seaside Parks Advisory Committee, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

Gearhart Parks and Recreation Master Plan, public hearing, 6 p.m., www.cityofgearhart.com.

MONDAY, SEPT. 13

Seaside Tree Board, 4 p.m., 989 Broadway.

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

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 15

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

Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 21

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



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