



# THE BANDON LIGHT

A PUBLICATION OF THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## From France to Bandon: A Unique Piece of Military History

by Gail D. Love and Jeff Longshaw

*From the battlefields of Europe to Bandon Historical Museum comes a 19<sup>th</sup> century French cannon carrying the coat of arms of Napoleon III. Come and see this unique military artifact that came to be part of Bandon's history.*

We have all experienced it—a remodeling project that unexpectedly brings forth something that had quietly moved around until it was out of sight and out of mind. That happened recently at Bandon Historical Museum when moving contents to accommodate the latest renovation brought forth a large bronze cannon sitting behind the front door.

And what a cannon! Your first response is to its size (it weighs over 700 pounds) and how powerful it looks. Your next surprise comes when you see the inscription on its barrel—a Napoleonic coat of arms! What is this and how did it find its way to Bandon, and eventually to the Bandon Historical Museum?

Research reveals this handsome French cannon was cast of bronze at the French National Foundry in 1859 for the French army which was the most powerful in Europe at the time. Called the “canon de campagne de la Hitte,” its revolutionary design by Colonel Treuille de Beaulieu was introduced into the French army's artillery unit by French general Count de la Hitte. This type of cannon saw action in both the Franco-Austrian war of 1859 and was probably captured in Italy during the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian War. That means it was probably captured from Emperor Napoleon III's army when the Germans defeated the French (hence the Napoleonic coat of arms).

This unique French cannon brings with it a powerful pedigree. The design was the first rifled artillery piece in the world, which means its barrel was designed to fire a shell rather than a cannon ball. Because the shell had such a powerful trajectory, the range of the weapon increased significantly, making it a revolutionary improvement in artillery weaponry. Of significant interest to military historians is the evolutionary role of our cannon: cast in 1859 it represented a technological development that saw a move from firing cannon balls to firing shells. By 1870 our cannon design became obsolete, replaced by the breech-loading cannon, a design that is still in use today some 150 years later.

So now we must continue investigating the cannon's journey from the battlefields of Europe to Bandon. We know our cannon was in France during the 1890s, as there is a partial inscription on the right trunnion that indicates the gun was probably gifted to a French general. After that, however, there are no more clues until we learn that Col. Homer Millard, a graduate of West Point class of 1924, saw and greatly admired the cannon while in Germany to participate in the Nuremberg war crimes trials following World War II.



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Bandon Historical Society

### Bandon Historical Society Museum

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Native American Consultant... Reg Pullen

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Doreen Colbert	Kathy Dornath
Donna Mason	Elaine Stohler

The Board meets the 4th Tuesday of each month, 4 pm at the Museum. All members and guests are welcome to attend.

#### Newsletter Layout

Bob Coraor



Bandon Historical Society

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a 501(c)(3) organization

If you are interested in Bandon's history and would like to help preserve our past for future generations, call us—we need you. The Museum is OPEN Monday through Saturday 10-4 and 7 days a week June through September. Volunteers are waiting to help you and answer your questions about Bandon's history. Enjoy Bandon's rich, wonderful history! Located on the corner of:

270 Fillmore Ave. & Hwy 101

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Gayle Nix

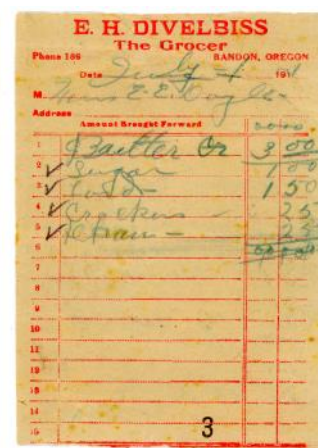
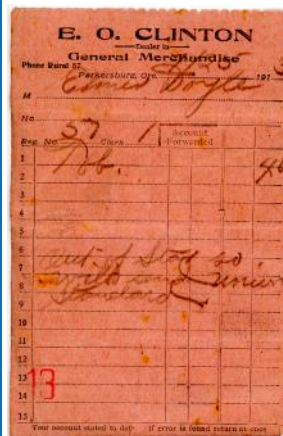
## From the Desk of the Director

One of the most interesting and fun parts of my job is that you never know what historic item might come through the doors.

About a month ago, a women named Rose called from Tillamook. She said she had an old steamer trunk full of papers that we might like to have. The first thing I always have to ask is, "Does it have a connection to Bandon?" She said, "Yes it's from a descendent of the **Ron Haga** family." So that definitely qualifies! A couple days later, Rose was in town and delivered the trunk for her cousin Lolland who lives in Astoria.



Rose told us that the trunk had "made many trips back and forth to San Francisco on the schooner Elizabeth." The trunk was both beautiful and historic, but all the old receipts, letters and other papers that dated back to 1907 are also wonderful to have in our possession. There are some old business names that we had never heard of.



We also have visitors that come in knowing that they have family roots from Bandon. When we can find some pictures or bits of information for them, it makes their day as well as ours.

(Trunk—Continued on page 7)



## Photo Find



A small box of 35mm slides, found by **Margaret Pounder** of the Bandon Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center, recently made its way to the museum. All the slides are stamped with a 1958 or 1959 date. Some are parade pictures from the 1958 Cranberry Festival parade. The 1959 slides document Oregon Centennial Celebrations in Bandon and Port Orford.

Communities celebrated Oregon's Centennial throughout 1959. Men grew beards. Women recreated pioneer clothing. On June 6, 1959, Bandon held a street dance in old town. It was the highlight among many local centennial events.

The museum's capacity for turning slides into digital images makes a find like this a valuable addition to the archives.

## "Where is Randolph?"

That's a question volunteers pondered as they rebuilt a display about mining and Whiskey Run.

According to *Oregon Geographic Place Names*, the black-sand miners living on the bluff above the ocean at Whiskey Run Creek named their town Randolph after John Randolph of Roanoke, Virginia. Google maps locates Randolph on the Coquille River, about where Randolph Road meets North Bank Road.

So where is Randolph?



Removing flood debris from North Bank Road at Randolph in 1964.



Randolph School 1908.

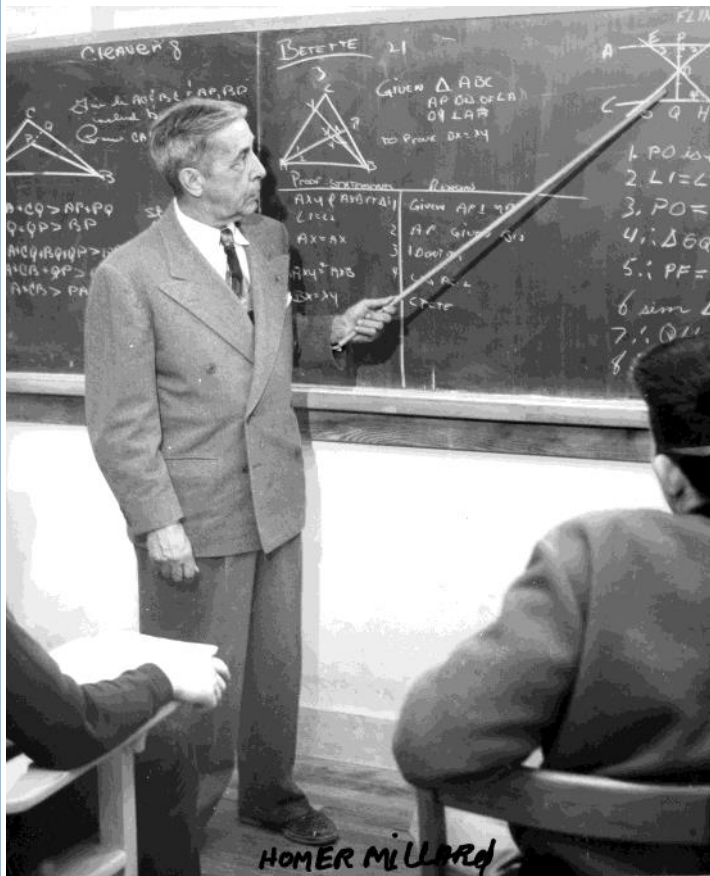
In the territorial period, anyone in this area who needed to provide a place name—for example, to vote or file a land claim—would have used Randolph.

In 1877, Lord Bennett gathered his neighbors, took a vote, and chose Bandon as the name for a new postal precinct. For a time, south of the Coquille River was Bandon and north was Randolph.

The Randolph Post Office was wherever the postmaster lived. A Randolph School was built at several different locations.

(Randolph—Continued on page 6)

## Memories of the First Class at Millard



Homer Millard teaching math at Millard School.

Photo# 57907

"If I hadn't gone to Millard, I don't know where I would be today," said **John Seely**, Kaneohe, Hawaii, on an extended west coast tour with his wife Marilyn. Their tour included a stop at Langlois Mountain and a visit to the Bandon Historical Museum as a way for John to reconnect with his Millard School experience, a time he credits with shaping his career and his life.

A member of the first class at the Millard School, Seely attended the school from August 1954 to March of 1955. There were four members in that first class. Later classes reached as high as fifty. A class stayed at the Millard School for about half a year.

The school had a single mission, to prepare students for admission to the nation's military academies.

"A lesson I never forgot; he taught us how to take an exam," Seely said of **Colonel Homer Millard**. "We called him Sir to his face but referred to him as "The Old Man," the rest of the time."

Seely still refers to the colonel as "The Old Man."

The Millard School curriculum was simple. Three hours of math in the morning. Three hours of English in the afternoon.

"When I came out of the admission's test for the academy, another candidate asked me if I thought I passed. I said I knew I had passed. I had already encountered every possible question and knew the answer," said Seely.

Seely was admitted to WestPoint, earned his commission, had a 26-year military career followed by a second career at Hawaii Pacific University.

When Seely attended Millard, it was still a working sheep ranch. The four students were expected to help operate the ranch. He remembers lambing time as especially busy.

One of Seely's memories was of "qualifying," doing 75 push-ups and 75 sit-ups to "qualify" for dessert. One of the four students was the son of a Panamanian politician. "Pablo never got dessert. Sometimes I'd sneak him some of mine," said Seely, who remembers cranberries were a part of every meal.

The Langlois Mountain site of the Millard Academy is currently Highland Woods Group Getaway. The look and feel of the Millard School has been carefully incorporated into the property.

"Bandon can be very proud of being the home of the school," said Seely, a member of its first class.

### OOOPS...Correction

We made an error in our last *Bandon Light* issue. In the article "Hamblock Family Letters Donated" we incorrectly identified Christopher Evans as the individual who had donated the original land deed, signed by Abraham Lincoln, that formalized the Hamblock claim. It was actually **John Evans** who made the donation. Our apologies for the error and thank John for bringing it to our attention.

## Two Grants Help To Educate and Preserve

The **Coos County Cultural Coalition** awarded the museum \$1,075 to develop "Healthy, Historic, Hikes." The project will develop a series of family-friendly, self-guided walks that will take hikers to historic sites around town. The funds will be used to print brochures, supply tokens for completing the hikes and promote the program.

The **Coquille Tribal Community Fund** granted \$2,750 for storage and preservation. The museum will use the money to purchase storage material that meets the best practices for archival storage, such as acid-free boxes and polypropylene sleeves for storing photographs and negatives.

Thank You!





The story goes, according to the colonel's widow, the cannon mysteriously “showed up” one day after the colonel returned home to Washington, D.C. There was no information as to who sent it or how it was obtained, and the colonel proudly displayed it at his Millard Military School in Washington, D.C. When the school was relocated to Langlois Mountain in 1953, the cannon was displayed in front of the dorm. In 1962 after the school outgrew the Langlois location, the Millards moved it to a location adjacent to Bradley Lake where the cannon continued to be prominently displayed. Sadly 1962 was the year the colonel died, however Mrs. Millard continued to operate the school, where she also taught, until its closing in 1981.

After the colonel's death the cannon remained at Mrs. Millard's home. After several attempts were made to steal it, Mrs. Millard decided to donate the cannon to the Bandon Historical Society in 2006.

“This cannon is not only a unique piece of military history, it also brings a close connection to the community through its association with the Millard School. What an interesting 160-year journey it took to bring this rare artifact to all of us,” said Executive Director Gayle Nix.

What a story. What a cannon. What an amazing journey of over 160 years for this significant military artifact to come to rest in Bandon. Come and see it and hundreds of other equally fascinating pieces of history at your Bandon Historical Museum.



### 19th Century French La Hitte Cannon Facts

- Cast in bronze at French National Foundry in 1859
- Unique transitional cannon
  - \* Last muzzle loading cannon design
  - \* First rifled cannon design
  - \* Last cannon made by casting process
  - \* First use of modern shell rather than ball
  - \* Probably captured by Germany in 1870-71
- Specifications: Rifled; muzzle-loading; caliber 86mm; length 1.43m; weight 728.2lbs, range 3000m; ammunition ball, canister or special shell with lugs to fit rifling
- Markings:
  - \* Muzzle: Rifling lands and grooves marked 1 to 6
  - \* Barrel
    - \* Breech: Douai 5 Mars 1859 (casting date)
    - \* Body: Coat of Arms—Napoleon III
    - \* Neck: Le Lauter, probably family sponsor
    - \* Muzzle: Ring-52 G 1868 (inventory marking)
    - \* Lifting handles: EM



Esther Millard left with cannon and others.

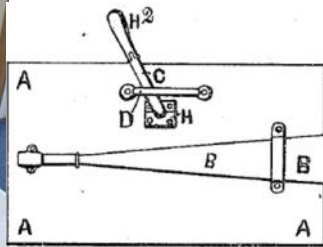
**Gail D. Love** and her husband **Jeff Longshaw** are recent retirees who moved to Bandon and joined our museum volunteers group. Gail is an Associate Professor Emeritus from the Communication Department of the California State University-Fullerton (CSUF). Jeff was a Lecturer in the College of Business and Economics also at CSUF. He also served as a docent at the Autry Museum of the American West and is a military historian.

## Bandon May Be Losing Its Continuous Fog Horn on the Jetty but....

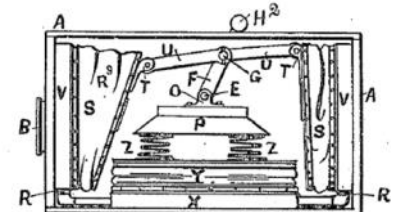
### Bandon Museum Now Has Its Own!



The Bandon Historical Society Museum recently acquired a Lothrop's Patent Fog Horn from the **Port of Bandon**. Patented by Llewellyn D. Lothrop of Gloucester, Massachusetts, in 1901, this portable fog horn was designed to be used on small ships as a safety measure in times of foggy weather. The drawing in US Patent 680,874 shows the design of a rocking handle powering two bellows pumps that feed a reservoir and flows air through a brass horn.



*Fig. 1.*



*Fig. 2.*

The unit that the Museum acquired has been previously modified by making one side panel of the box containing the fog horn a clear plastic panel so you can see the inner workings. The original look can be seen in the photo on the right (from the Skipjack Nautical Wares website).



Unfortunately, our foghorn has seen better days and the canvas material used for the bellows has rotted and needs replacing. That restoration is underway by museum volunteer **Bob Coraor**.

"Thank You!" goes to **Jeff Norris of Norris the Tailor** who kindly did the sewing on the replacement bellows! The horn should be sounding its call soon!



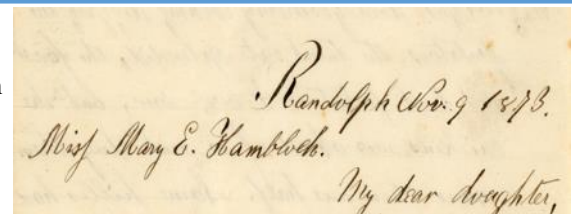
*(Randolph—Continued from page 3)*

The Randolph Club was a lively social club made up of families that lived north of the Coquille River. The Randolph Club still gathers for pot-lucks.



"Where?" is not always as easy a question to answer as it at first may seem, as how a name is used can change over time. Visit our new mining exhibit, and while you're looking, think about the question, "Why Whiskey Run?"

*Left: The Randolph Ladies Club at Fern Peterson's place in 1937.*



*John Hamblock, who lived where Bullards Beach State Park is located today, used Randolph as his return address.*



# UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday, March 14, 2020 — Tales from the Cemetery-Amazing Stories from Averill Cemetery** at 2PM. How did Bandon become "Bandon"? The answer to this and other questions will be the topic presented by **Jim Proehl**. Admission is free thanks to our sponsor **Farm & Sea**, The Fresh Seafood, Meat & Specialty Store.

**Tuesday, March 24, 2020 — Museum Board Meeting**, 4PM at the Museum. All members and guests are welcome to attend.

**Saturday, April 4, 2020 — Sights, Sounds, & Stories of Bandon in the Roaring 20s.** 2PM at the Museum. What might have Bandon been like 100 years ago? Join us for a combination of music, stories and fun. Admission is free thanks to our sponsor **Chas Waldrop Real Estate**.

**Tuesday, April 28, 2020 — Museum Board Meeting**, 4PM at the Museum. All members and guests are welcome to attend.

**Tuesday, May 26, 2020 — Museum Board Meeting**, 4PM at the Museum. All members and guests are welcome to attend.

**Tuesday, June 23, 2020 — Museum Board Meeting**, 4PM at the Museum. All members and guests are welcome to attend.

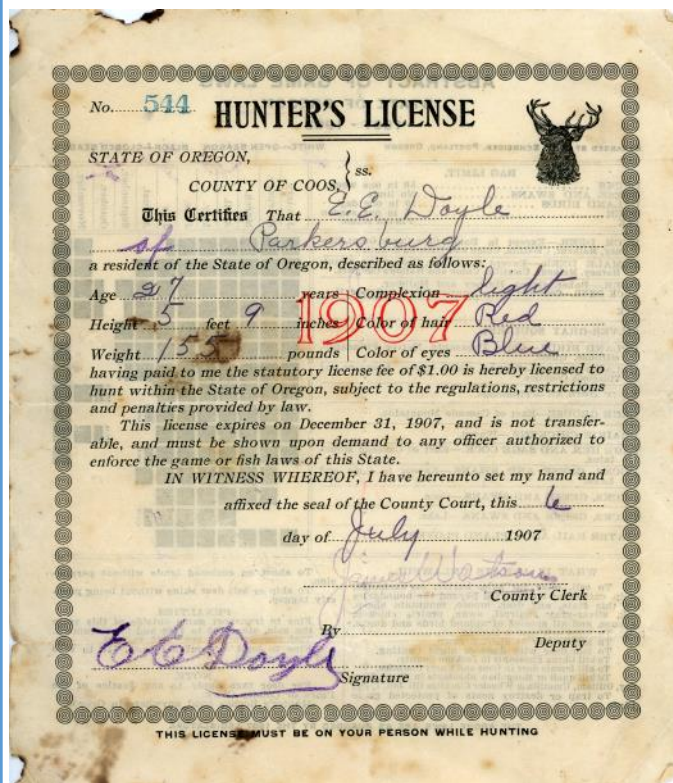
**Sunday, June 28, 2020 — Car Klatch Sunday.** Come see the classic cars and hot rods that will be parked at the Museum. Admission is free thanks to our Free Summer Sunday sponsors **First Interstate Bank** and **Best Western Inn at Face Rock**.

(Trunk—Continued from page 2)

The contents of the trunk add to that treasure trove of information.

It is always fun to see who and what comes through our doors. I love it!

Gayle Nix



## Election Results are In!

The ballots for election of officers and board members for the Bandon Historical Society have been counted and the results tabulated.



President—**Doreen Colbert**

Vice-President—**Elaine Stohler**

Secretary—**Faye Albertson**

Treasurer—**Jim Proehl**

**Board Members:** Brian Vick, Donna Mason, Mary Stewart, Mary Schamehorn, Nancy Murphy, Kathy Dornath and Rick Hinojosa

**Nominating Committee:** Kathy Dornath, Doreen Colbert, Donna Mason, Elaine Stohler \*\*Congratulations to all!\*\*

## Donations and New Members

**New Members:** David Proehl, Kristen Proehl, Josh and Clara Proehl-Hard, Ronelda Connors, Patrick and Amy Bullard, Noma Soper, Joan and Ken Lovell, and Charlotte Ramsey

**Donations were made in Memory of:** Donald Goddard, Rose Pullen, Shirley Boots, and Barney White

**Donors:** Jim and Barbara Gant, Mary Meyer, Carolyn Russell, Carol Kreutzer, Douglas Borgard, Hazel Lester, Kathy and Bill Phillips, Susan Winnop, Bob and Emily Hall, Sharon and Doug Moy, Lawrence McDuff, Barbara Dodrill and Edith Winters

## JOIN THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

YES! Please accept my membership in the Bandon Historical Society

Already a member? Please consider a donation to help support your museum.

(please check one)

\$15 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
\$25 Family \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\$35 Business \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
\$250 Life \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_  
I'm a Member \_\_\_\_\_ and would like to make a tax deductible donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to BHS and mail to:

**Bandon Historical Society, PO Box 737, Bandon OR 97411**

For more information on benefits of memberships go to

<http://www.bandonhistoricalmuseum.org/membership.html>

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