



# THE BANDON LIGHT

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A PUBLICATION OF THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Photo Find: The Wigwam, A Hot Spot on Bandon's Beach

When Tom and Becky Pemberton visited the museum this fall to do some research on the Langlois family, they left us an unexpected treat, a photo of The Wigwam.

Dr. Wilfred Lee Pemberton was a young physician with a practice in Langlois when he married Ivy Langlois in 1913.

Not long after they married, Dr. Pemberton moved his bride and his practice to Myrtle Point. The newlywed Ivy Pemberton kept a scrapbook of the early years of her marriage. While it's possible "The Wigwam" photo she labeled in her album was taken somewhere else, the context of the accompanying photos makes a good case that it was taken in Bandon about 1914.

The Wigwam was a beachfront resort with a restaurant and dance hall.

Our record of The Wigwam is mostly captured through the local newspaper. Its opening was reported in the March 19, 1912, *Bandon Recorder*: "The Wigwam, Bandon's new beach summer resort, was opened to the public Saturday afternoon and the proprietors Mesdames Lewin and Harrington are highly pleased with their opening and with the continued prospects for business.

"The Wigwam is cozy in every particular and has plenty of room for everybody. In addition to ice cream and confectionary parlor, a dance hall 40 X 60 has been erected on the south and is now nearly completed. The opening dance will be given next Saturday night by the Seaside Gun Club.

"The Wigwam will be greatly appreciated by the public and will surely receive good patronage," reported the paper.



**"Off on our Honeymoon" is the caption on this photo from Ivy Pemberton's album. Ivy Langlois married Dr. Wilfred Pemberton in Langlois in 1913. Pemberton Collection photo**

For the next couple of years, just about every edition of the *Recorder* reported something about The Wigwam. This notice was in the March 22, 1912, *Recorder*: "Only ladies and gentlemen will be admitted at the Wigwam pavilion. No drunks or bums need appear as they will be put out at once. The pavilion will be conducted strictly for the benefit of ladies and gentlemen."

Among the groups that held special events at The Wigwam were the Commercial Club, Gun Club, Knights of Pythias, Pythian Sisters, Boy Scout Council, and Ladies Thimble Club. When the Dollar Line

# THE BANDON LIGHT

A publication of the  
**Bandon Historical Society  
Museum**

Executive Director.....Gayle Hankwitz  
Native American Consultant... Reg Pullen

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Doreen Colbert	Elaine Stohler
Donna Mason	Carolyn Russell

The Board meets the fourth Tuesday of each month,  
4:00 pm at the Museum. All members and guests  
are welcome to attend.

## Newsletter Layout Jim Proehl

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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 gen-  
erations, call us—we need you.

The Museum is OPEN Monday through Satur-  
day 10-4 and 7 days a week June through Septem-  
ber.

Volunteers are waiting to help you and answer  
your questions about Bandon's history.

Enjoy Bandon's rich, wonderful history!

Located at: 270 Fillmore Avenue, Bandon, OR

**On the corner of  
Fillmore Ave. and Highway 101**

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

Gayle Hankwitz  
Executive Director

The museum will be open through December 23,  
then will be closed to visitors until we reopen Febru-  
ary 7, 2022. We have plenty to do during our annual  
winter break.

Thanks to a grant, we are replacing the window  
systems on the two big, built-in display cases that  
house the military and vintage clothing exhibits.  
Right now, because the cases open on just the ends,  
we have to “walk the plank” so to speak to make any  
change in the exhibits. The new sliding glass panels  
will give easier access to the whole display. That will  
be a huge improvement. Then on to the Pioneer Room  
where we are using grant funds to replace display fix-  
tures in a way that will brighten up the room and open  
up more space.

We recently received grant checks from the Brae-  
mar Charitable Trust through Trust Management Ser-  
vices and from the Bandon Dunes Resort--Mr. and  
Mrs. Michael L. Keiser fund. We have been notified  
we will be receiving a grant from the Coquille Tribal  
Community Fund.

A great big thank you to all who donated in re-  
sponse to our 2021 fund-raising letter. So far, we have  
received very close to \$15,000 and are, of course,  
continuing to accept donations.

Financially, we are solvent but the income from  
our sponsorships is down. It was a win/win for the  
museum and the sponsors when we could get people  
together for a special event in the name of a business.

We hope this coming year will be a return to a  
time when gathering a crowd feels right. I hope we  
can resume our “long-timer’s” get-togethers with lo-  
cals to talk about the old times. I have learned a lot  
from these gatherings. Lately, I have enjoyed re-  
searching the history of local restaurants. We have  
lots of them, so it will be fun to learn and share more.

Ballots for officers and board members are includ-  
ed with this edition. It sometimes seems silly to vote a  
ballot with only one choice for each position. It is an  
exercise we go through because we are truly a  
“member” non-profit. We will certify the election re-  
sults at our Members Annual Meeting, 4:00 PM, Feb-  
ruary 22.

As we liked to say at school on that last day before  
Christmas vacation, “See you next year!”



## He Lived on the *Moon*

I recently read in your member newsletter an article about the tug *Moon*. The article mentioned a family of 4. I was the oldest son in that family. We lived onboard for 4 years and owned the boat from 1984 to 1995. I just wanted to let you guys know that the original wheel still exists and lives perched above my fireplace. (see attached photo-to). The other photo is one of me as a young man and



my dad with the wheel in the background. I spent some formative years living and working on that vessel. I graduated from Marshfield in 1990. I am licensed boat captain and work in Washington state. Regards,  
Jeff Hague

## *A History Minute on KBDN, 96.5 FM* “Chased by Devil Fish”

Here's a little history from the museum in Bandon.

“Chased by Devil Fish” was the headline of a story in Bandon's *Western World* in the spring of 1935.

The paper reported: “Clifford Thorn should receive a reward for his unique method of catching deep-sea fish. Clifford, his father Thomas, and a friend, Skinny



Morgan, were enjoying an outing at Cape Blanco getting specimens for Davey Jones Locker, the Thorn's traveling, roadside aquarium.

“Clifford, who was busily engaged in collecting sea urchins from a pool around a group of rocks, was considerably startled when an octopus, or devil fish, measuring six feet, one inch in length, started after him. He claims that as he ran for higher rocks the fish tried to follow him and finally hid itself among the rocks.

The three men armed with rails finally succeeded in getting the devil fish ashore. 'They brought him back alive.'”

A photo of the Thorns and their traveling aquarium is on our wall: a little bit of history captured at Bandon's Museum.

## Caught on Film: Our Newsletter Sponsors in Holiday Mode

This edition of *The Bandon Light* is sponsored by Sweet Insurance Agency and Chas Waldrop Real Estate. In her collection of *Western World* negatives, Mary Schamehorn preserved this image of Charlie Waldrop visiting Santa outside Erdman's Market in 1959.

We have an ongoing project of scanning the negatives from the *Western World*, from back in the old days when cameras used film. Just this week, Jesse Sweet popped out of the scanner in this 1990 photo of Cub Scouts collecting food for a holiday food drive, along with Jim Edson, Eric Robinson, Jeremy Nelson and Morgan Boyd. How quickly we become history.





# A Souvenir of the Last Voyage of Captain Ole Peter Ellingsen

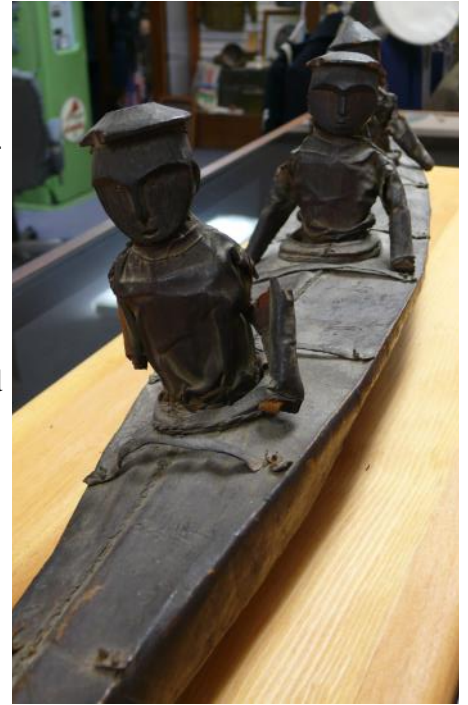
An object on display in the museum's Maritime Room is an artifact of the initial voyage of the schooner *Mizpah*, the last voyage of Captain Ole Peter Ellingsen, and a connection between the Coquille River Valley and the Alaskan Gold Rush.

The object is a model kayak, crafted by an Alaskan native, made of seal-skin, wood, wire and beads. Captain Ellingsen brought it back from his 1898 voyage aboard the *Mizpah*. It came to the museum by way of Careen Pierce, whose husband Don, longtime Bandon director of public works, was a descendent of Captain Ellingsen.

In the excitement of the Klondike Gold Rush, The Coquille River and Alaska Mining Company formed to underwrite a prospecting trip to Alaska. It had a board of stockholders whose meetings were sometimes reported in the Coquille *Herald*. The company hired Stian (also spelled Stein) Danielson to build a two-masted schooner at his shipyard in Prosper for the journey. It was named the *Mizpah*, a term from the Bible that miners often used as a good luck omen.

Ole Peter Ellingsen was hired to be the Captain for the *Mizpah*'s sail-powered Alaskan adventure.

Captain Ellingsen, a native of Norway, began his career as a mariner in the Norwegian Navy. "Ellingsen spent the greater part of his life on the high seas, and for many years was captain on sailing schooners that plied



Continued on Page 5



*Passengers and crew aboard the Mizpah in Bandon's Harbor at the start of their 1898 expedition to the gold fields of Alaska. Captain Ellingsen, with long whiskers and a cap, stands just left of the mast.*



# “The Little Schooner *Mizpah* was sighted offshore just before dark.”

“Last Voyage of Captain Ellingsen” continued from Page 4.

all parts of the world,” read his *Western World* obituary, when he died in 1922. Ole and his wife Caroline came to the Coquille Valley in 1872. He captained ships while she maintained the homestead on Lowe Creek and raised their eleven children.

The voyage of the *Mizpah* was Captain Ellingsen’s last voyage, which he guided to a successful conclusion, except for the gold-finding part.

“THE MIZPAH RETURNS” was a headline in the Coquille City *Herald*, Tuesday, November 25, 1898.

“Last Sunday afternoon the little schooner *Mizpah*, which left here on the second day of last May in charge of Captain Ellingsen, bound for Kotzebue Sound,



**Stian Danielson built the two masted sailing schooner *Mizpah* at his shipyard in Prosper.**

Alaska, was sighted off shore and just before dark she entered the river and anchored in the stream. Of the twenty-three adventurous fortune-seekers who sailed on the *Mizpah*, fifteen returned, no better off financially, but wiser and well-satisfied with the trip.” (The ones who didn’t return chose to stay in Alaska and were reported to be well off and well provided for. None struck it rich.)

“Those who returned are all fat, slick and healthy, and all consider that the voyage did them good in more ways than one. Each has some interesting incident to relate, **and all secured relics from the natives which hereafter will oft revive the memory of their trip to the frozen north.**”



**Ole and Caroline Ellingsen raised eleven children on Lowe Creek.**

In 1899 the *Mizpah* made runs carrying lumber to San Francisco and copper ore to Portland via stops at the Rogue River, and returned with cargo from the cities. The *Mizpah* seems to have gone to Costa Rica and Honduras in 1900.

The Coquille River and Alaska Mining Company never mounted another gold mining expedition but the *Mizpah* still made it back to Alaska. “The stockholders of the little schooner *Mizpah* have succeeded in sell-

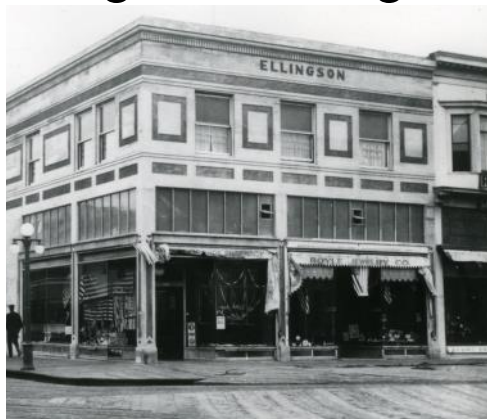
ing the vessel to the North Alaska Salmon Co,” reported the *Herald* in 1902. The *Mizpah* was fitted with an auxiliary engine. She exploded and was destroyed in Kvichak, Alaska on May 25, 1910.

Captain Ellingsen “retired” to his farm on Lowe Creek.

Perhaps the model kayak revived the memory of *his* trip to the frozen north.

He kept it; it was passed along by family members, and now is on display in our museum.

## Ellingsen or Ellingson?



The Ellingson Building, a prominent feature of downtown Bandon before the 1936 fire, was built by Arthur, oldest son of Ole and Caroline Ellingsen. Arthur chose the “on” spelling for his businesses, but other descendants of the family kept the “en” spelling.

There are still Ellingson buildings standing in Coquille.



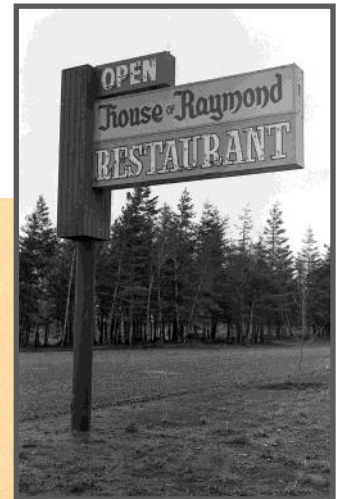
# From The Whistlepunk Inn to Sweet Billy Smoothboars

A conversation over dinner with Dan and Lynn Barnett, owners of Billy Smoothboars restaurant, sent us on a search of our newspaper and photo archives to see what information we had about the history of their building at the corner of Highway 101 and Seabird Drive.

Director Gayle had an inkling that the origin of the building was some time about 1970, and indeed found the start of the story in the bound volumes of the *Western World*. An article in March 1969 covered the announcement that Francis Cavoretto was developing property to build a truck stop restaurant south of town. Other articles covered the progress of the building until the paper reported the opening of the Whistlepunk Inn in September 1969.

Board Member Mary Schamehorn looked through her collection of *Western World* negatives

to chart changes to the property. By 1971, the restaurant had changed hands and become the House of Raymond. Other iterations included



Dalonna's Kitchens of the World and House of Stewart.

Scott and Edith Vierck expanded the operation and turned it into Billy Smoothboars in 2000. The Bartnetts took it over



in late 2008 and kept the name.

Rick Halliburton takes credit for coming up with the name Billy Smoothboars during a brainstorming session with Scott.

We wonder if they ever considered naming it the Whistlepunk.



## Memorial Donations

A memorial donation has been made in the name of:

Marilyn O'Brien

James T. Reilly

A memorial donation has been made by:

Jim and Paula Smith

Brenden Reilly



A little snow in Bandon aways brings out the cameras. This image, from the Mary Schamehorn collection, was taken in December of 1956. Marge Cook is sweeping the street in front of her home in Old Town.



## What is a Whistle Punk?

When steam engines were introduced to logging operations to yard logs out of the woods, the *whistle punk* was the crew member who used the steam whistle on the engine to communicate between the donkey puncher, who operated the engine, and the choker setters, who attached the cables to the logs. They communicated with a coded series of whistles.

Visitors to a modern logging operation can still hear the whistle punk's signals.



## Bring Us Your McKay's Receipts— And Visit Us More Often

McKay's Markets continue to support local organizations by giving a return on McKay's receipts collected by organizations. The McKay's Market Advantage Sales Receipt Program has been a source of museum funding for many years. The program used to accept receipts up to a year after the purchase date but has reduced that time limit to six months.

So, continue to bundle up those McKay's receipts, bring them to the museum and use them as an excuse to drop in and see us more often.



*Manager Jim Cornish and McKay's donate cake mixes to support a bake sale in the mid 1970s.*

## "FLAMES TAKE THE WIGWAM"

"The Wigwam," continued from Page 1.

brought its first steamship into Bandon, its crew was treated to a trip to The Wigwam.

The Wigwam expanded its kitchen over time, specializing in pies and chicken dinners customers could enjoy on the beach.

But then, in June 1914, came the headline "FLAMES TAKE THE WIGWAM."

"The Wigwam, belonging to E. Lewin, and one of Bandon's popular resorts, was totally destroyed by fire early Sunday morning," reported the *Recorder*.

The fact that there was no fire hydrant near the beach-front property contributed to the total destruction.

The fire that destroyed The Wigwam came on the heels of the fire that destroyed three blocks of downtown Bandon June 11, 1914.

"It seems that the old adage of never one fire, but we must have three, has held good in Bandon, as it has been only a little over two weeks since the big fire, and then a small house burned in the east end of town a few days later, and now comes The Wigwam. It is certainly to be hoped that the proverbial three will suffice and that it will be a long time before Bandon is visited with another conflagration." The *Recorder* editor couldn't know that "the big fire" of 1914 would be supplanted by the much worse fire of 1936.

We were able to help the Pembertons fill in some family history on the Langlois side, and the museum gained access to some great photos from Ivy's album, including our only picture of The Wigwam. Perhaps there are more images of it (or The Silver Spray Gardens, the Wecoma Baths, the skating rink at Tanglewood) preserved in family albums. We can only hope.

## New Members:



### Individual and Family Members:

Graydon Stinnett	Berta Dargen
Dennis Lindahl	Laura Kelleher
Diane Swafford	The May Montana Family

### New Life Members:

Darrin Quillen	John M. Evans
Bob and Dee Nelson	

### New Patron Level Members:

Paul Michaels and Benjamin Vouk

## 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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