



# THE BANDON LIGHT

Sponsored by Chas Waldrop, Real Estate

A PUBLICATION OF THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Tanglewood: Historic Bradley Lake Property Begins New Chapter

A historic piece of property changed hands in July of 2021, when Mike Keiser's Bandon Dunes Golf Resort completed the purchase of the Camp Bradley, a property which was once the home of the Millard School. For many Bandon long timers, the richest memories are of the decade when the property, on the shores of Bradley Lake, was known as Tanglewood.

References to Tanglewood started appearing in the *Western World* in 1949 with news that Leona Koff was developing Tanglewood Resort on Bradley Lake and was exploring the



*A tightly packed audience at Tanglewood in May of 1957. Schamehorn coll. photo*

**Coming To Tanglewood**



**DUKE ELLINGTON**

Duke Ellington's orchestra will play at the Homecoming dance at the University of Oregon November 19, and the following night, November 20, will play at Tanglewood, Bandon's mammoth pavilion.

*Western World, February 10, 1955*

possibility of building a swimming pool.

The pool project never materialized but the *Western World* reported big news about Valentine's Day at Tanglewood in 1950. "Over 400 members and out of town guests of the newly-organized Surf Club enthusiastically inaugurated a huge new dance hall/skating rink four miles south of Bandon Saturday evening in one of the most impressive social events held in the community in many years.

"Expressions of pleased amazement registered on many faces as people stepped into what is believed to be the largest ballroom in Coos county. The 145 X 80-foot room was graced by Valentine decorations, with a floral "island" in the center of the dance floor.

"The skating rink/dance hall is the latest portion of Tanglewood Resort to take shape under the able and close supervision of Mrs. Koff, owner and developer of the new resort at Bradley Lake, a half mile west of the Beach Loop-Highway 101 junction 3 ½ miles south of Bandon.

"The building is not yet completed. With a maple floor still to be laid, the dance was held on the sub-floor. The interior is being finished with knotty cedar and acoustical tile. The roof is of the self-supporting truss type, leaving the spacious dance floor free of obstructing pillars.

"The main floor of the building also accommodates rest rooms, stage,

**Continued on Page 4.**

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

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Native American Consultant... Reg Pullen

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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

I'll start with a personal note. I had right knee replacement in March and Dave and I got married in April. I'm happy to report both operations are going well.

We have had a great summer so far with lots of visitors and our gift shop has done extremely well. We have added lots of books and boy, have they been selling!

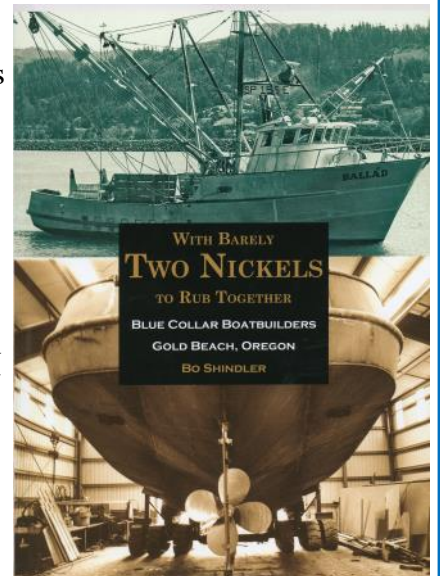
Speaking of books, we have three new books by authors with South Coast roots. First, Kay Jennings, who grew up in Coquille, has released her third mystery novel set in Port Stirling (aka, Bandon). *Shallow Waters*, *Midnight Beach*, and *CODE: Tsunami* are all in stock in our gift shop. I recently read the third book in the series, *CODE: Tsunami*. It was excellent! I enjoyed it, as I have all three of her books.

We also have *With Barely Two Nickels to Rub Together* by Bandon High School alumnus Bo Shindler. It is a beautiful nonfiction book that tells the story of Blue Collar Boatbuilders—Ed and Dugie Freeman from Gold Beach.

Also just released is *Lost in the Surf* by Harry Slack, an attorney who grew up in Coquille and retired in Bandon. The book is set firmly in Bandon during

World War II and is a fictional adventure that features a group of Bandon boys defending the beaches from Japanese invasion.

We hoped that COVID would be history by now but have to continue to adjust and adapt. The bad news is that we continue to have to postpone group gatherings and programs. We lost some sponsorship opportunities tied to group programs. The good news is that we are learning to stretch in new directions and share Bandon's story in different ways and that opens up some exciting new possibilities for sponsors.



# Bandon in World War II is the Setting of Harry Slack's Novel

By Jim Proehl

*Lost in the Surf*, a work of historic fiction by Harry Slack, was released this summer and adds another great choice among books with south coast settings by local authors. Slack kicked off the release with a book-signing at Foley's Irish Pub in August.

An engrossing adventure story, *Lost in the Surf* is set in Bandon during World War II.

While some writers place historic events in a fictionalized setting (for examples, Kay Jennings's Port Sterling mysteries) Slack's book is centered in a historically specific Bandon.

The plot is fiction—in hindsight we know what did and didn't happen here during World War II—but follows a plausible “what if” scenario about Coos County during the war. Whether he is describing the location of the hospital in Bandon or the appearance of the underside of the Highway 101 bridge in Coquille, Slack's period details are spot on. Characters include millworkers, Coastguardsmen and eighth grade boys, talking when no adults are around, so some of the dialogue is realistically salty. The story shifts its point of view among a group of Bandon boys, a Japanese sailor, and a reporter for the *Coos Bay Times*.

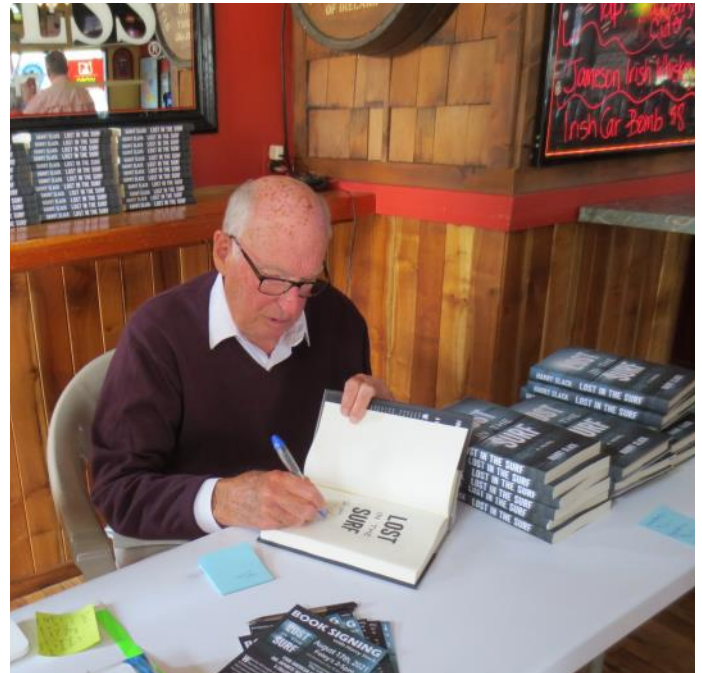
A reader with local knowledge will enjoy the way the story moves through familiar places and the way Slack weaves information about things like glass floats, battery separator plants and logging camps into the storyline.

The “about the author” note in the book says, “Harry Slack is a retired lawyer with a degree in political science from the University of Oregon and a law degree from Willamette University College of Law. He owned a commercial-fishing enterprise in Alaska for twenty-five years and served on the board of directors of a community bank for twenty-five years. He now lives in Bandon, Oregon (Mr. Slack built a home on the head of Randolph Island).

“Harry grew up in Coquille, Oregon, and was a teenager during World War II. During his school years he worked each summer in a sawmill or lived in a logging camp and worked as a logger. He hunted

and fished along the Oregon coast. During the war, he and his childhood friends often speculated about what they might do if the Japanese attacked their shores, but thankfully no plan ever needed to be put to the test.”

The book is available through Amazon but we recommend you pick up your copy of *Lost in the Surf* from the museum's gift shop. It's a great read.



Harry Slack signed copies of *Lost in the Surf* at Foley's Irish Pub.

Photo Find

## Riverton Ferry About 1941



Shirley Smith Rhodes recently shared this image so we could scan, preserve and share it with others.

### Program Note

Due to the changing public health situation related to Covid-19, we will not hold a public program this year to commemorate the 1936 Fire. Watch for a Fire Extra Edition of our newsletter.



## *“Harry James and his orchestra is coming to Tanglewood tonight.”*

“Tanglewood,” continued from Page 1.

check room and lobby. A novel feature is a request booth alongside the stage, so that dancers may pass along requests for special numbers to orchestra members without stepping in front of the stage.

“There is an apartment upstairs. A bowling alley with six lanes and a small restaurant are also planned for the building,” reported the *Western World*.

The bowling lanes were never built but a restaurant and later a bar/lounge with views of the lake were. The skating rink floor was ready for the 1950 Fourth of July.



Through the 1950s, Tanglewood was Bandon, and Coos and Curry County's, entertainment center. Dances, dining and roller skating were regular features. Car and boat shows, Cranberry Festival events, talent shows, fundraisers and social functions were held there.

Nationally known entertainers made stops at Tanglewood.

In the June 19, 1952 *Western World*, editor Felsheim wrote, “Harry James and his orchestra is coming to Tanglewood tonight. In a big city this announcement would perhaps arouse little interest because the people are accustomed to hearing celebrities, and one more or less doesn't matter. But, to have Harry James, and his trumpet and

*Talent show contestants await the decision of the applause meter.*

his orchestra, appear within the midst of this remote community is quite another thing: it's a sensation.

“The attraction at Tanglewood tonight is sponsored by the Bandon Volunteer Fire Department, consequently there is some local interest on the part of those who would attend, whether they enjoy world-famous music or not.

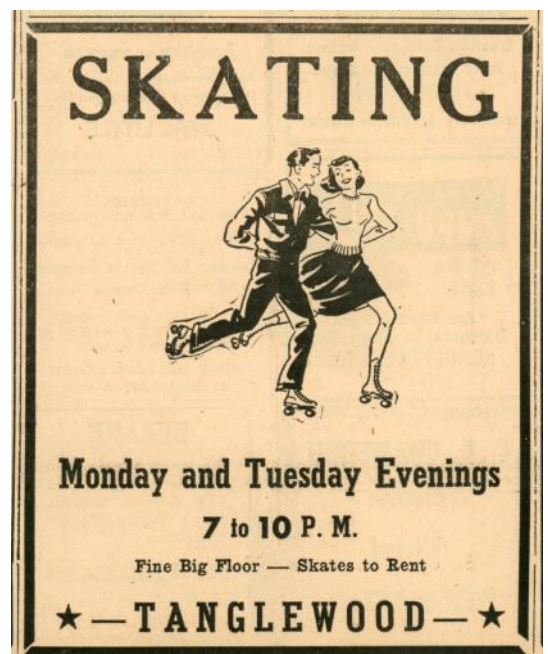
“Bandon has become a natural stopping place for ‘name bands’ traveling between San Francisco and Portland. For several years they had made the Coquille Community building their over-night stand, but since that build has been destroyed by fire, Tanglewood is the logical place.

“The appearance of the nationwide famous band in Bandon is definitely an asset to the tourist and recreational business of the community,” wrote Felsheim.

Buildings for Tanglewood Manor, a retirement home, were constructed and then expanded upon to the east of the dance hall. Manor residences included two room apartments and dormitory style



*A Millard School dormitory and classroom building in 1962*



*“The men blended masterfully in their tailored suits and black ties.”*

“Tanglewood,” continued from Page 4.

bedrooms.

In 1962, Homer and Esther Millard bought the property for their Millard School, which had outgrown its quarters on Langlois Mountain. Homer Millard died shortly after the school moved to Bradley Lake. Esther ran the military prep school until the school closed in 1981.

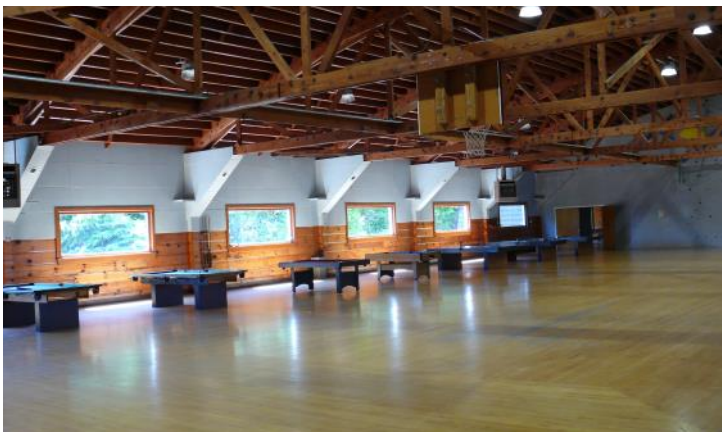
After the Millard school closed, the property passed through a series of owners. The buildings and grounds were in poor condition in 1997 when the Applegate Christian Fellowship, a church in the Medford area, bought and developed it as Camp Bradley, a place for retreats and summer camps.

A group from the museum was given a tour of the property by Katy Ann (Vierck) Gonzales, Bandon Dunes staff housing manager. At this point, it is the housing, built for Tanglewood Manor and developed further by the Millard School and Camp Bradley, that is of primary interest to the resort. The Dunes is Bandon’s largest employer. Finding affordable housing, especially for employees new to the area, has been an ongoing concern of the resort.

How the dance hall/skating rink, the star of Tanglewood in the 50s, will be used is an open question.



*A group from the museum toured Tanglewood after its sale to the Bandon Dunes this summer.*



## CLUB DANCE RECALLS SILVER SPRAY GARDENS

Members of the Surf club and their guests who attend the club dance Saturday, January 26, may imagine themselves back in the old pre-fire Silver Spray Gardens, according to Lloyd Waggoner, who with Mrs. Waggoner, are chairmen of the committee in charge of the event.

A replica is being prepared of the big revolving ball that was suspended in the center of Silver Spray and had colored lights playing on it while couples waltzed to dreamy music in semidarkness. A seven-piece orchestra, directed by Bud Baird of Coos Bay, former Bandon resident, will add realism by playing some of the same tunes played at Silver Spray years ago. Bum Gartin, maestro of the Silver Spray orchestra for a number of years, is searching his music morgue for some of the outstanding oldtimers for Saturday night's occasion.

*Western World, January 24, 1952*

## Remembering Surf Club Dances at Tanglewood

“Twice monthly the large hall situated on the shore of Bradley Lake was decorated lavishly with a different theme each time. All the ladies wore floor length formal attire and the men blended masterfully in their tailored suits, white starched shirts and black ties. Everyone brought their own bottle of spirits and the club furnished ice and mix.

“Bum Gartin’s Orchestra, consisting of all local talented musicians, played lively and lovely music until the wee hours. It was a wonderful ‘FUN’ time for almost everyone in Bandon. For us, it equaled dancing to the orchestra of Guy Lombardo of the Big Band Era.”

Edna Paulsen (1923-2016)



*Bea DeCosta wore this pink formal to Surf Club dances.*

## Found in Collection Lex Cope's Wooden Leg

We've had Lex Cope's wooden leg in the museum for years, but only speculation about how he came to need it, until Bonnie Jensen Cox (working on a third book about northern Curry County history) happened upon an item in a 1903 edition of the *Bandon Recorder*. With that information, we updated our display caption and crafted a "History Minute" for local radio. Listen for it on KBDN:

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

A wooden leg that once supported Alex is "Lex" Cope is on display at the museum.

In 1903, when he was 17, Lex and two friends were hunting ducks on the marsh near the mouth of Floras Creek. The three were crawling through some brush when a companion's shotgun discharged into Lex's right leg.

Dr. Green, of Dairyville, was called to attend the wounded boy, and he called on Dr. Kimes, of Bandon, to help amputate the leg above the knee.

Patti Strain remembers Lex, "When he went in the post office in Langlois, he'd kick the door open with his wooden leg, I think to impress us little kids."

Lex served many years as a Curry County commissioner, where he took pains to represent the interests of the northern part of the county. Boice-Cope County Park on Floras Lake is named in his memory.

There was a lot more to Lex Cope than a wooden leg.

*And that's a little history from Bandon's Museum.*



## Ed's Car Graces a Magnet

Car show organizer Rick Hinojosa and volunteer Jim Proehl were brainstorming ideas for a token of appreciation for participants in the 2021 Classic Car Klatch when desk volunteer Ed Norton's car caught their eyes. A quick photo shoot, and Ed's car became the feature of a State of Oregon-shaped dashboard magnet. For those of us without a car to

show, the magnets are on sale in the gift shop.

This summer's Classic Car Klatch was August 22. The Myrtlewood A's were the highlight of the



outdoor event. In July there was a good turn-out for our first attempt at Free Sundaes on a Free Summer Sunday. We're sure to try it again.

Reg Pullen, Jim Proehl and Mary Schamehorn led hikers on three different routes for Bandon History Hikes in collaboration with the South Coast Striders hiking group. Tom Orsi coordinated the August 8 event.

Farm & Sea Market and Sunset Oceanfront Lodging sponsor our special summer activities. We have been able to offer free admission on summer Sundays for three years thanks to First Interstate Bank and Best Western, Inn at Face Rock. The Fourth of July, which fell on a Sunday, has been our biggest attendance day of the year.

## Memorial Donations

A memorial donation has been made in memory of:

Cecil and Ann Kemp  
George Trott  
Ken Butler  
Larry Hardin  
John Drew

William and Louise Sherer  
John Sample  
Judy Manicke  
Jim Reilly

Memorial donations have been made by:

Ann Remy  
Judy Knox  
Georgia Meijer  
Mr. and Mrs. William Sherer  
Rick Toth and Ann King

Kristy Bowman  
Nancy Drew

## New Members:

Dolores Koeck  
Dan Lorenz family  
Peter Golato



Jan Moore (Life Member)

# The *Moon* Inspires Visitors and Stirs Memories

We get a surprising number of visitors who want to know if we have information about a boat named the *Moon*, which was built in the Herman Brothers' shipyard at Randolph.

***Joni Smith, who wrote a piece about the Moon as part of her Master's thesis and which subsequently won first-place in a nonfiction writing competition, left this eloquent Facebook post, August 10, 2021, after the museum posted a photo of the Moon.***

She was a sister boat to the *Star*, and *Sun*, and lived nearly 100 years, built from lumber hewn from logs that had once been massive old-growth trees along the Coquille where she was built. She (*boats are female*)



***The Moon, in a Prosper boatyard, undergoing one of several restorations.***

was first a tug boat, working for the lumbermill that had cut the lumber she was built from. She pushed log rafts, and other boats, up and down the Coquille, the same river where she was born.

The logs she helped down river became lumber that built ships, and homes, and businesses locally, and were also shipped to points in all 4-directions. Later she was a fishing boat, then a ferry on the Coos River, bringing school children, cream, and mail from one

bank to the other before the McCullough bridge was completed. She was later refitted for fishing again, went to the boneyard twice, and was resurrected as a liveaboard for a family of 4.

The *Moon* spent her last few working years for a fine captain named Thad Potter who told many stories of her great strength and tenacity. She survived a storm where she lost radio communications and steering and dragged part of her mast nearly all the way home from Tillamook. Thad operated the bilge pump day and night and into the next day while his young son focused his eyes and the wheel on the compass. Thad Potter and the *Moon* were at sea once, when Thad woke from a short nap to find smoke and fire in the engine room, and though both were a little damaged, they survived one more time. In fact, she survived nearly everything man and nature threw at her, only to finally meet her demise when her last owner left her to languish. For a sad long time, her moorage fees went unpaid, and the Port of Coos Bay chained her to the dock like a criminal and eventually towed her to the boneyard where most boats go to die.

Though her contributions to the building, and feeding, and protection of (as Phillip Lux mentioned, she and her massive Atlas engine performed many rescue missions in her lifetime) the south coast of Oregon and beyond, were historically significant, her worth was deemed less than the space fee she was dry-docked in and she was destroyed in 2019.

Thad Potter, her last fish captain, passed away three years ago; they were both fine examples of what men can do with a strong back and ingenuity.

## A Reader Follows up on the June Edition

Andy Christensen, a former museum board member and volunteer, sent us a note after he received the June issue of *The Bandon Light*.

"We've enjoyed reading the recent newsletters. Love the stories and all. I noticed this on page 7 of the latest one about the airplane rides: 'The flights will be between 10 and 12 minutes in length, including a trip over the town and surrounding country. The charge will be \$10 a trip. So I thought, \$10 back in 1920. Wasn't that a lot of money back then?'"

Andy found a website that calculated dollar amounts adjusted for inflation.

"It says that \$10 back then is equal to \$137.82 in 2021. That's a lot of money for a 10-minute ride! And Elizabeth Croxall apparently convinced her father it was worth it. And Elizabeth, class of '23, was probably 15 years old at the time. Interesting."



## 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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