June, 2024

The Bandon Light

Sponsored by: **Delores McLeod Barkley And Family**

A PUBLICATION OF THE BANDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

What Ever Happened to Blacklock Point?

What follows is an excerpt from an article in the *Port Orford News*, Thursday, April 27, 1972. Little has changed since the article was written. Blacklock Point is still a minimally developed state park and can only be reached by trail.

By Neonta Hall

Before the year 1900, a total of 18 public buildings were built in San Francisco of sandstone. Some of these include the Hall of Justice, Union Ferry Building, Grant Building, James Flood Building, Chronicle Building, Mutual Savings Bank, the Hamilton and Alexander hotels, all of which withstood the earthquake of 1906, suffering only minor structural damage.

It is quite safe to say that much of the sandstone for these buildings came from the Blacklock Sandstone Mines which started operations here in 1886 and were located north of the Sixes River and border part of Floras Lake in northern Curry County.

The name "Blacklock" is well known. The first of two brothers, William John Blacklock, arrived in San Francisco from New Zealand about 1872 and became interested in southern Oregon upon meeting a pioneer settler, Robert McKenzie, who was visiting at the time in San Francisco. John's brother, James Blacklock, who was associated with Calder, Blacklock Company, an importing firm of New Zealand and Australia, arrived a couple of years later and because of failing health gave up his position with the company to settle in Port Orford. James Blacklock went into business, but due to poor health passed away in 1874 at the age of 45 years.

In 1865 John Blacklock and associates of San Francisco formed the Blacklock Sandstone Mining Company. With Henry Newburg as secretary of the company, they acquired 1,400 acres unit by unit, the state of Oregon selling the company tide lands amounting to 18 acres. This gave them two and a quarter miles of ocean frontage on Floras Lake. The purchase was completed by 1886.

Several buildings were erected on the property at Blacklock Point, including a sawmill. Tram cars with rails (which until recently were still visible) were used between the mine pits to the near-shore rocks where the sandstone had to be lightered to

Continued on Page 7.

Milestone: The Day Bandon became "Bandon"

When, precisely, did Bandon become "Bandon"? That question was the subject of a talk by local attorney Robin Miller to a capacity audience at the museum May 18.

While it is general knowledge that our community shares its name with Bandon, Ireland, and that George "Lord" Bennett had something to do with it, Miller decided to track down exactly when and how this place acquired that name. Miller's research sources included the manuscript of Bennett's unfinished history of Bandon, Oregon; the Historic Oregon Newspaper's website; and the records in the Coos County Courthouse.

The city of Bandon was incorporated February 18, 1891. The community celebrated Bandon's centennial in 1991. However, Miller concluded that April 9, 1874, was the date "Bandon" was officially recognized as a place name in Coos County records, which means 2024 is the 150th anniversary of "When Bandon became 'Bandon.'" Miller invited a few friends to Foley's Irish Pub to celebrate April 9 and suggested "a wee nip" on that date would be a fitting way to celebrate "Bandon Day" going forward.

Attorney Robin Miller found the key piece of evidence in the Coos County Courthouse and made his case to an audience at the museum in May.

The Bandon Light

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 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!

On the corner of
Fillmore Ave. and Highway 101

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From the Desk of the Director

Gayle Hankwitz
Executive Director

This is my favorite time of year at the museum.

We have been getting our summer activities scheduled. We have some fun kids things planned for our Free Summer Sundays which began Memorial Day Weekend and run through the Cranberry Festival.

June 9 is designated History Detective Sunday, a day when even the kids who think they have done all the booklets will find some new challenges. June 16 is Build-a-Cupcake Sunday with Sharon Haga and Cindy Gant. June 23 is our Free Ice Cream Sundae on a Free Summer Sunday.

Of course, adults are welcome to stop by for cupcakes and ice cream too. Check our Facebook page, our website or the Chamber of Commerce website calendar for more details and more summer events.

We learned recently that the estate of Don Lynam is ready to close. Don left the bulk of his estate to the museum with the condition it be used to add an auditorium to the museum. Closing the estate is an important step toward building the Joan and Don Lynam Center, and we are excited to be moving forward.

Speaking of money, I would like to recognize the Lowry family again for a generous donation to the museum's general fund back in 2011. Elmer and Elva Lowry named the museum as beneficiaries of their investment fund. That donation has helped us stay on firm financial ground for many years.

Who knew our "History Minutes" that play on local radio would be such a great success. We frequently have visitors come in from out of town and say "We hear your history spots on the radio so thought we should come check out your museum." We get lots of very positive comments.

We would like to thank Bob and Susan Coraor, who are buying the air time for the History Minutes this year.

On a sad note, we lost Mary Stewart who passed away April 3, 2024. She was a board member and front desk volunteer and did our computer accession entries on the Past Perfect program. Mary will be missed.

Stop by the museum this summer and bring the kids or grandkids.

A Reader Responds: "Probably Had a Guilty Conscience"

A long time volunteer and former museum board member offered us some feedback on our last* Bandon Light *edition.

Hi Jim and Gayle, I was just reading the newsletter about the wandering headstones. You said, "... someone with a '57 Chevy and a guilty conscience dumping them on a rainy Bandon night."

It reminded me of several years back when I was sitting at the front desk and a guy came in with a wooden sign that said "Bandon High School" as I remember. He said he wanted to leave it at the museum

so I asked his name and wanted to give him a receipt and fill out a donor form. He said no and he just wanted to leave it. And he made a quick exit.

When Judy and Ron (Knox) saw the sign, they immediately knew the story. It had been hanging at the high school and was stolen as a prank by someone many years before.

The guy who left it with me probably knew that the museum wasn't busy that day and that I was a newcomer to Bandon so I wouldn't recognize him. And yes, he probably had a guilty conscience as well.

So your guess about the wandering headstones is probably accurate.

Andy Christensen

Naumes Grant Keeps Us Looking Good and Running Smoothly

The museum was pleased to receive a grant from the Naumes Family Foundation. With headquarters in Medford, Naumes is one of the largest family-owned growers of pears in the United States. Lori Osborne provided the museum's connection to the Naumes Foundation, which Joe and Francis Naumes founded in 1994.

The museum will use the Naumes grant funds to purchase advertising, keep the exterior of our building looking good and pay for IT support.

Do You Want to be a Sponsor?

We thank Delores McLeod Barkley and family for sponsoring this edition of The Bandon Light newsletter and Carolyn Russell and family for the previous one. Bob and Susan Coraor sponsor our "History Minutes" on local radio. The Remy family sponsored our February program about the fire that destroyed Bandon High and Chas Waldrop Real Estate will sponsor our June program. The Human Bean sponsors our "History Detectives" program and First Interstate Bank and the Inn at Face Rock sponsor Free Summer Sundays.

We hope the pattern is clear; sponsorship is a donation by another name.

Being a sponsor gives a business, family or individual a chance to direct a donation at a particular event or project.

Would you like to be a sponsor? Contact director Gayle to talk about sponsorship opportunities.

Milestone: Bandon Dunes Celebrates 25 Years

"The long-term vision and major economic investment of Chicago golf nut Mike Keiser comes to fruition this Sunday at 7:30 am when Bandon's Mick Peters tees off on the first 18 hole golf course at Bandon Dunes Resort," reported the ***Bandon Western World***, April 28, 1999.

Bandon Dunes Golf Resort celebrated its 25th anniversary this spring with activities May 2-4.

It is unlikely a local journalist today would characterize Mike Keiser as a "golf nut."

A high school golf tournament was held at Bandon Dunes April 14, 1999, before the course officially opened. Bandon High School's Cody Blackard was the tournament medalist. Western World collection photo

Negatives Donated by a Coquille Family Yield Interesting Images

A generous act of sharing by the Coquille Valley Historical Society and by Mary Barton and her family has added a trove of photo images to the museum's collection.

The Coquille Museum gave a collection of 77 large format photo negatives to the Bandon Museum. Most of the images are of houses and buildings in Bandon pre and post World War 2.

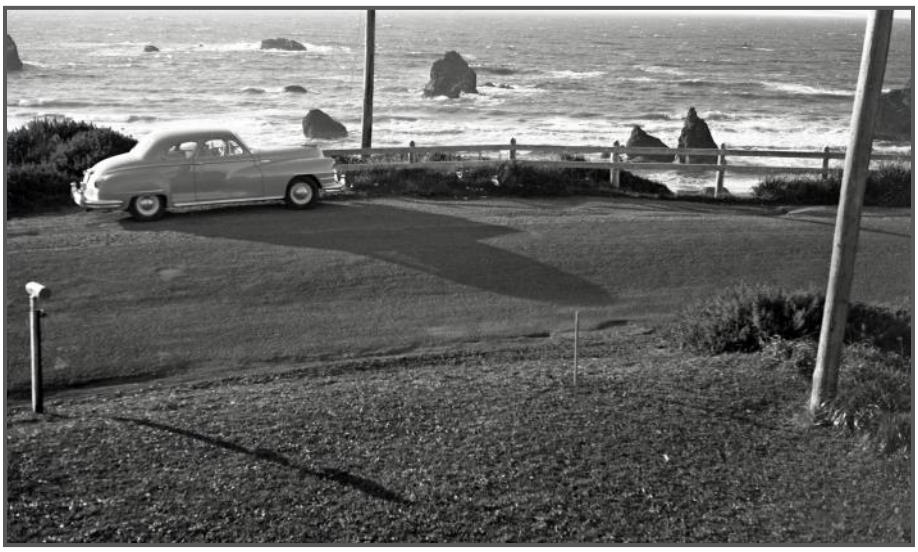
The negatives came from the family of Jess and Florence Barton, who owned and operated an abstract/title office in Coquille for many years. Many of the photos were taken to document buildings on Bandon area properties.

Mary Barton, a former Coos County Treasurer, is treasurer of the Coquille Museum's board of directors.

In a letter that accompanied the donation, Coquille Valley Historical Society Vice-President David Krapes explained these negatives more closely fit the mission of the Bandon Museum than theirs. Before sending them to us, the Coquille museum scanned the negatives so the images are backed up in their computer system.

Now the negatives are a part of our collection and help fill a sparsely documented era of Bandon's history.

The Ocean Park Grocery on 11th Street at Coquille Point was both a business and home. The photo was likely taken by the Bartons to document a Veterans Administration loan. The building is no longer there, but some may remember it as housing the Three Gables restaurant.



This picture seems to be capturing the view from a house on Beach Loop Road, perhaps to illustrate how the view contributed to the home's value. The Barton family worked in the real estate business.

The Pacific Petroleum Corporation was drilling for oil at a site on Bear Creek about 1941. An image from the Barton collection.

Memorial Donations

Memorial donations have been made in the name of:

Mary Stewart **Fran Jones**

Memorial donations have been made by:

Jane and Robert Gibbs **Jim Proehl**

History Minute: Babies Really Were Left on Doorsteps!

Here's a story from the museum in Bandon.

"With selling gas, oil, and tires and taking care of the new baby that was left on her doorstep Sunday morning, Mrs. Morgan is a busy woman," reported the Bandon *Western World*.

A newborn infant was left at the door of the Geo. B. Morgan service station east of town at an early hour Sunday morning. Mrs. Morgan was awakened about four o'clock by a car entering the driveway. There was a knock at the door, a man stepped swiftly, laying a bundle against it, and an instant later the car was speeding on its way. When the astonished Mrs. Morgan recovered sufficiently to examine the bundle, she found a dark-haired, blue-eyed baby girl, wrapped in a piece of an old blanket.

Mrs. Morgan has decided to keep the little stranger, who has already won her affection."

A baby left on a doorstep seems like a cliche from an old movie.

But it happened in Bandon in 1927, and that's a little history from Bandon's Museum.

A baby was left on the doorstep of the Morgan gas station on the east side of Bandon. Laura Morgan's rock garden is still present. An image from the Barton family collection of negatives.

Bandon "History Minutes" play on station 96.5FM and other Bicoastal Media stations.

Photo Find: Learning to Swim in the Teacher's Pool

By Jim Proehl

We continue to digitize the thousands of rolls of film taken by photographers from the ***Western World*** newspaper over a 50 year period. A recently scanned strip of negatives from October 1972 unearthed some classic images and a gem of a story.

"'Think – Don't Sink' is the motto of a unique class being offered to second graders at Bandon Heights Grade School this year," reported the Bandon ***Western World*** in October of 1972.

Don and Careen Pierce had an outdoor swimming pool at their east Bandon home. Careen taught second grade. Bandon had no public pool.

"All second graders are being given the opportunity to learn to swim . . . and are being transported by bus three days a week to the swimming pool at the Pierce home," reported the paper.

Over 20 volunteer mothers were on hand to assist. "Two people were always on deck as life guards, with the other mothers in the pool with the students," added Mrs. Pierce.

"Each child was given a shower and a foot bath before entering the pool," said Mrs. Pierce.

Mary Schamehorn, currently Bandon's mayor and a museum board member, took the pictures and wrote the story.

The impact of the photos and the story are made richer by our memories of Careen, a volunteer at the museum until she passed away in 2022.

A Honeymoon Couple's Souvenirs Come Home to Bandon

Nancy Streets, who grew up in Bandon but currently lives in Elko, Nevada, contacted us in April with an offer. "I have a few pieces I'd like to donate to you. They were given to me by the parents of a friend when I lived in Salem. Her parents had honeymooned in Bandon in the 1920s and bought these as souvenirs."

Nancy delivered the pieces later in the month: A five piece set of serving-ware illustrated with a scene from the Bandon waterfront. Each piece is stamped with the label "From Bandon's Racket Store."

The Racket Store was located at the corner of Second Street and Alabama Avenue. It would have been the sort of place to attract a young couple.

The names of the newlyweds have been lost to time but the souvenirs of their honeymoon have found the way back to Bandon and onto our shelves.

New Members:

Life Members:

Jennifer and Randy Nidalmia

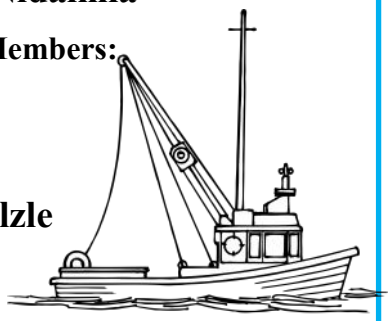
Individual and Family Members:

Nancy Streets

the Rice Family

Dawn and Chris Hoelzle

Oren Reinbolt



Bandon High Students Give the Museum a Grant

Director Gayle and Board President Elaine represented the museum at a grant presentation ceremony in May put on by Bandon High School's Leadership Class. Bandon High is one of 38 Oregon High Schools to participate in a project called Community 101.

The classroom-based program gives students an opportunity to get involved in their communities through grantmaking and volunteering. Participating classes are given $5,000 to distribute in their community. The Oregon Community Foundation provides guidelines and partners with the Bandon Rotary Club to provide the funds.

This innovative collaboration of schools, businesses and charitable organizations gives students tools to make positive changes in their communities and lends itself to instructional use in civic engagement, global literacy, critical thinking, public speaking, use of technology, civil discourse and community involvement according to the Oregon Community Foundation.

The students in the class solicit grants, evaluate applications, make site visits, and then make the hard choices about which groups get funded.

The museum received a 2024 grant to resupply children's programs at the museum. "We would have been happy to participate in this program even if they didn't fund our grant because of the experience it gives to Bandon High students," said board treasurer Jim Proehl.

"a historical marker erected for the Blacklock family."

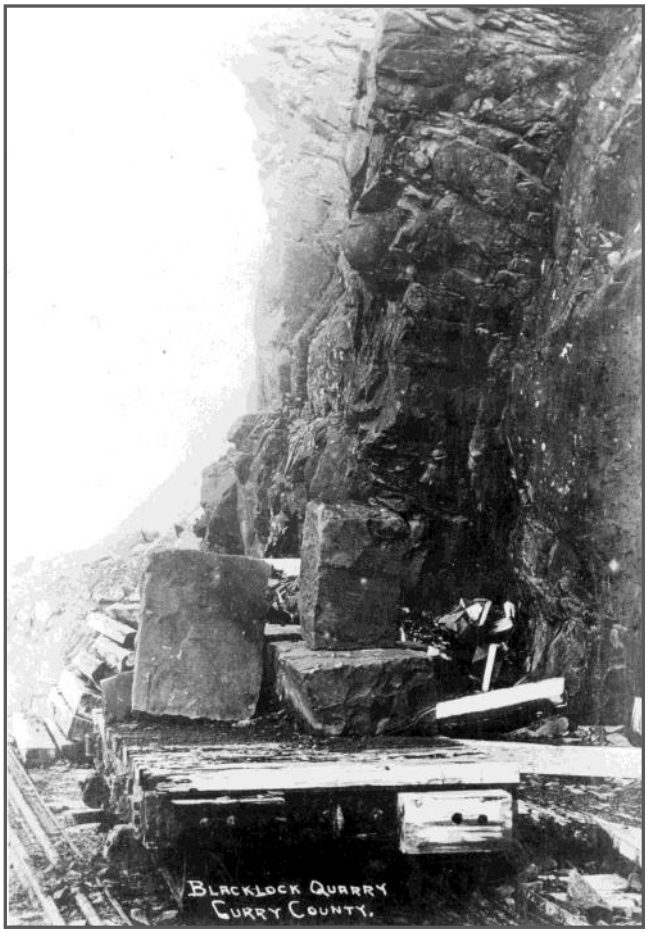
Continued from Page 1.

ships standing off shore. The impracticability of the loading and shipping facilities with the heavy sandstone doomed the project to failure after a few short years.

The Blacklock Sandstone Company property is now a state park known as The Newburg State Park.

Purchase of the park started in 1936 when the company received a letter from the State Parks Commission asking if the land was for sale. The company replied that it was for sale for $10.00 an acre.

The Park Commission took a 90-day option, but for lack of funds did not complete the deal. In 1942 the president of the company wrote the State Parks Commission that the company was about to lose the property to delinquent taxes and the property could now be purchased for the delinquent taxes and a small indebtedness totaling $3,600. Park Commissioners inspected the property and found it would cost an additional $16,000 to put a road to the property. However, the Commissioners agreed to purchase the 1,400 acres for $3,600 at a meeting held on February 18, 1943. After seven years of interest and waiting, they received the deed to the property on February 26, 1943. The next day, the U.S. Army



The cliffs on the north side of Blacklock Point are prized by photographers. Blacklock Point can only be reached by foot, from trailheads at Floras Lake or at the end of Airport Road.

Engineers, Civil Aeronautics Administration and Curry County officials appeared in Salem at the office of Mr. Sam Boardman of the State Parks Commission requesting the property be given to Curry County as the Navy wished to build an airport there.

On May 11, 1943, the Civil Aeronautics Administration of Washington, D.C., notified the state that $865,000 had been allotted for the construction of the airport. The Parks Commission refused to give or sell the property, but gave a lease to Curry County for 25 years on 700 acres upon which the airport was to be constructed. Clauses were inserted in that if the county did not fulfill its obligations, the property would be returned to the state. The road to the park which had held up the acquisition by the Highway Commission was constructed by the Navy. All this: a million-dollar airport (with a two-mile road built to the airport and the park), which left the coastline and timber intact, was for a very low figure of $3,600.

Twenty-nine years later and the property is still undeveloped, with only a few of the local citizens visiting the area during the summer months. Some road maps have marked the area "Newburg State Park," and when tourists ask local citizens where Newburg State Park is, the answer is usually, "I don't know." If anyone wishes to know where "Blacklock Point" is, they are given directions.

If the area is to be developed soon, there should be a historical marker erected for the pioneer Blacklock family who went through great hardships for the business venture of mining sandstone.

(Note: While some maps still show Newburg State Park, a more recent designation is Floras Lake State Natural Area.)

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)

$20 Individual____ NAME:_____

$30 Family ____ ADDRESS:_____

$250 Life ____ CITY:_____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

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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