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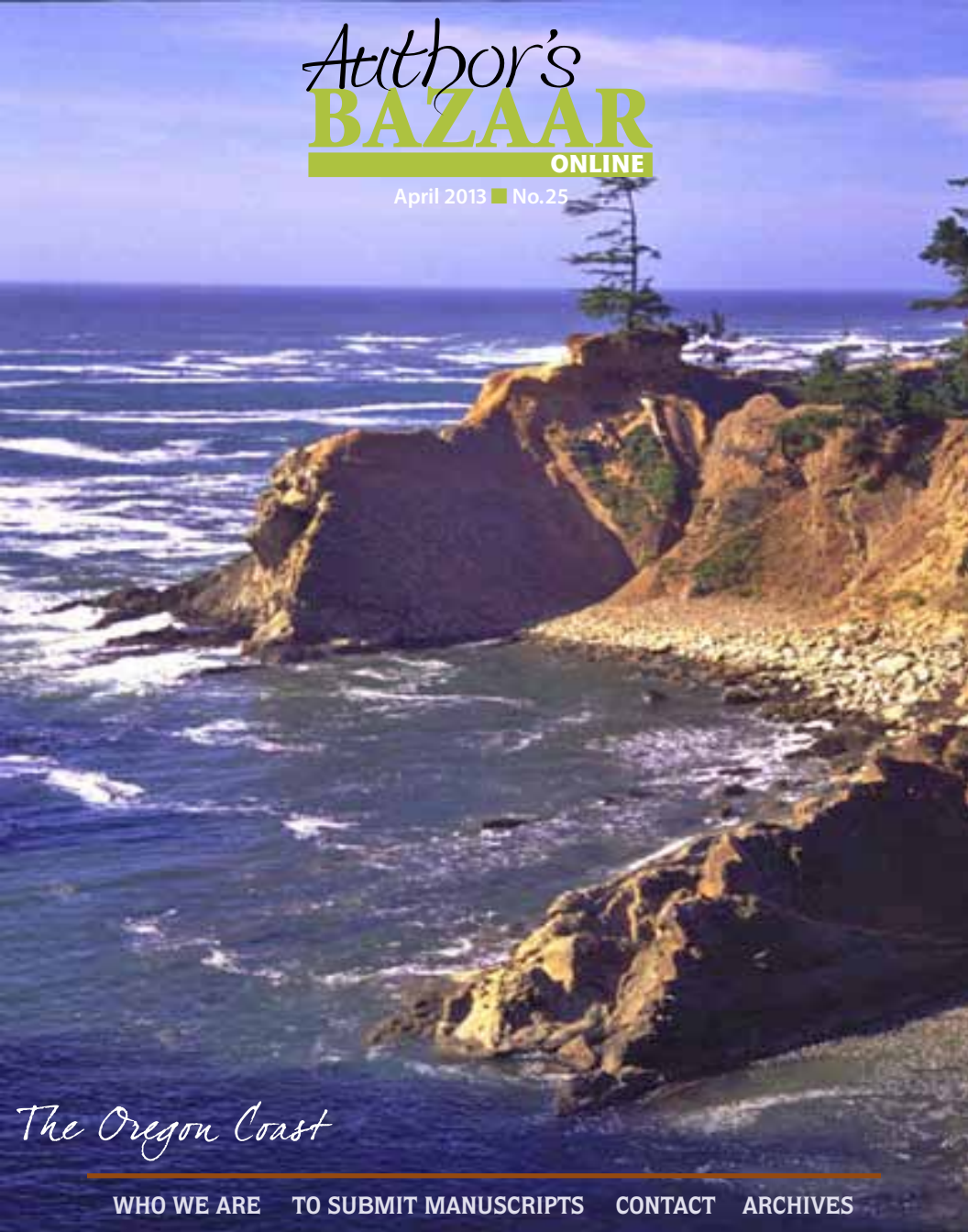
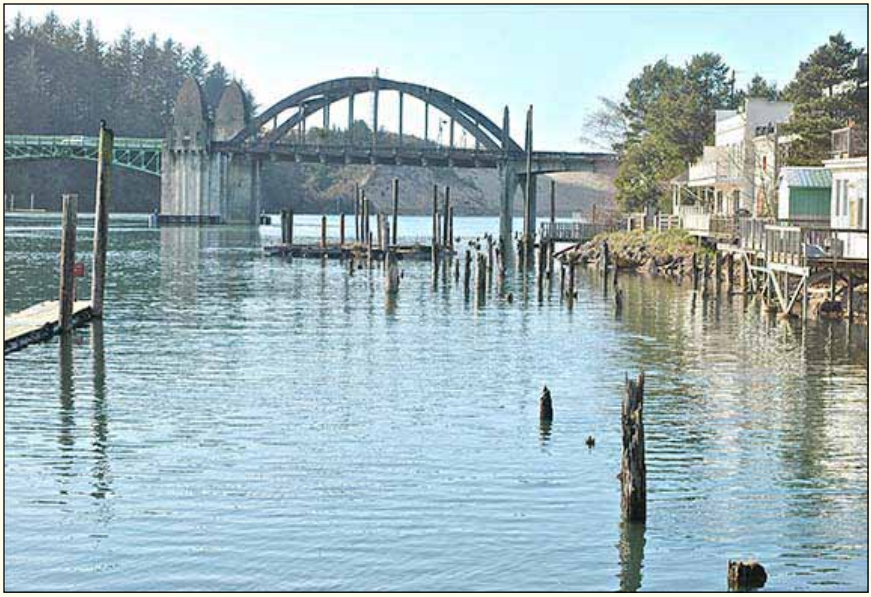


The Oregon Coast



Editor's Note

by DEAN REA

We called on writers who are familiar with the Oregon Coast to contribute material for this issue of *Author's Bazaar*, an online hobby publication.

The coast stretches 363 miles north-south between Washington and California and is so rugged that travel was limited to boats and beaches during low tide until the

1930s. In 1914 Gov. Oswald West declared the beaches as pubic highways, thus preserving access for the public.

The Pacific Ocean current that flows from Alaska ensures that swimmers usually wear wet suits if they wish to play in the water. Rugged coastal mountains rise out of the ocean and winds, tides and storms make the Columbia River entrance one of the most treacherous in the world. Ron Hylton describes a shipwreck that occurred on the northern side of the river. Also note the sketches that Ann Rosé drew to illustrate her story.

This issue of *Author's Bazaar* is not a travelogue. You can find those online. You will, however, enjoy reading how the coast has influenced several writers and photographers.

My story always starts at Mo's, a café perched on the bank of the Siuslaw River in Florence, Oregon. I enjoy viewing the bridge that spans the river (photo above) as I dine on clam chowder.

New Oregon Park

Sisters Rocks, one of Oregon's newest and least known state parks, looking south across the site of Frankport toward Gold Beach on the southern Oregon Coast. Photo by William L. Sullivan, author of 17 books. His latest guide, the 4th edition of "100 Hikes in NW Oregon," features a dozen new trails in the Portland/Columbia Gorge /Mt. Hood/Mt. St. Helens area. It's available at www.oregonhiking.com.

Tsunami

by Lee Kirk

Tsunamis have become such a frequent visitor to our news and our seacoasts that most people can pronounce the word now. That wasn't true in 1986 when I experienced my first tsunami while living alone at Roads End on the Central Oregon Coast. Then, I wrote a short report about

the experience. I'm not sure if I would have any different reaction today were I threatened by one again.

……..

I stood in the middle of my living room, momentarily paralyzed by my task. I had half an hour to evacuate.

"Save your manuscripts," my friend had advised. But as my gaze swept over the file cabinets, vertical files, notebooks and cartons, I felt overwhelmed.

It was May 7, 1986. Earlier that afternoon a 7.7 earthquake had rattled the Aleutian Islands. By 6 p.m., the word was on everyone's lips: stanimi. Tsanari. Snomi. Tsunami. No matter how it was pronounced, it meant one thing – a tidal wave was headed for the Central Oregon Coast.

I was on the evening shift at the bookstore in Lincoln City. I kept the radio on. Customers clustered under the wall-mounted speaker, listening intently. The station switched to "emergency broadcast." The governor announced evacuation for the low-lying areas.

"There's no need for panic," the announcer cautioned. Still, Highway 101, the single major road through town, was jammed – not with evacuees but with people rushing from the Willamette Valley to get a ringside seat.

The store manager, Eliza, popped in about 7:30, offering to take over so I could go home for my things. By then

the wave had been measured at 12 feet. A ship radioed in a report of a 40-foot swell. My mother called.

"Find out if the house insurance covers tidal waves," she demanded.

Finally, the radio broadcast specified evacuation areas. My place at Roads End was included.

I rushed to the house, ready to pack and flee, and experienced that peculiar paralysis. I reviewed the manuscript problem. Leave them, I told myself. This is an emergency.

"Emergency" keyed something in my brain. Rain slicker, rubber Pac boots, first-aid kit, flashlight, battery-operated radio and binoculars all went into the car.

My daughter had left her guitar with me with admonition to protect it with my life. Into the car it went.

I packed a suitcase. My selection was carefully Spartan: a pair of jeans and a work shirt in case I had to grub out a mud-filled house; a pair of slacks, a blouse, and shoes so I could go to work. Then I hit one of those glitches produced excess adrenalin and mild hysteria and filled the suitcase with dry socks and enough clean underwear to last for weeks.

Back at the bookstore, the time for the wave was near. The radio announcer's voice was tight with expectation. We locked the store and stood on the back porch overlook-

ing the ocean.

RV's, cars and pickups crammed the parking lot below. Small children nursing candy bars and cans of pop perched on the tops of truck cabs. The RVs seemed to be set up for the half-time partying at a football game.

The estimated time of the wave came. And went. As we watched, the sea turned from silver taffeta to dark gray watered silk. At last it merged with the sky in velvet blackness.

Fishing boats had been ordered out to sea so the wouldn't be smashed against their docks, and how the string of brilliant yellow boat lights was your only reference to the horizon. We watched the lights, expecting them to zoom suddenly upward.

Nothing happened. The radio announcer had set up on the wayside above Eagle Crest with a crowd of diners toting drinks and bottles of champagne. The crowd disappeared. But "it could still happen!" the announcer whined, his tone somewhat angry. Gone was his chance for the "big story." Cars pulled out of the parking lot. We headed for the local pub.

In Eliza's car, I was greeted by Amica, a large, animated ball of steel wool with a lavishly friendly tongue. There was more danger of drowning from doggie kisses than from a tidal wave, I decided.

At The Coaster, more Roads End refugees waved us over. We ate, drank coffee and told pig stories. Around 11, I asked for news on the tidal wave.

"I ain't heard nothin'," the waitress muttered.

We went home.

I drove into Roads End, watching carefully for seaweed and wrack. The pavement was clear.

The big one hit about the time I went to bed. Even those still watching missed it. It came in at 6 inches.

People sheepishly admitted their reactions the next day. Some had rushed to the store for food. One couple filled all the bottles they could find with tap water. My friends from Roads End had packed carefully – food, clothes, sleeping bags, some games and books "and a lot of champagne."

I had my own priorities to report, but at least I knew what I would do in any emergency. I'll always have clean underwear.

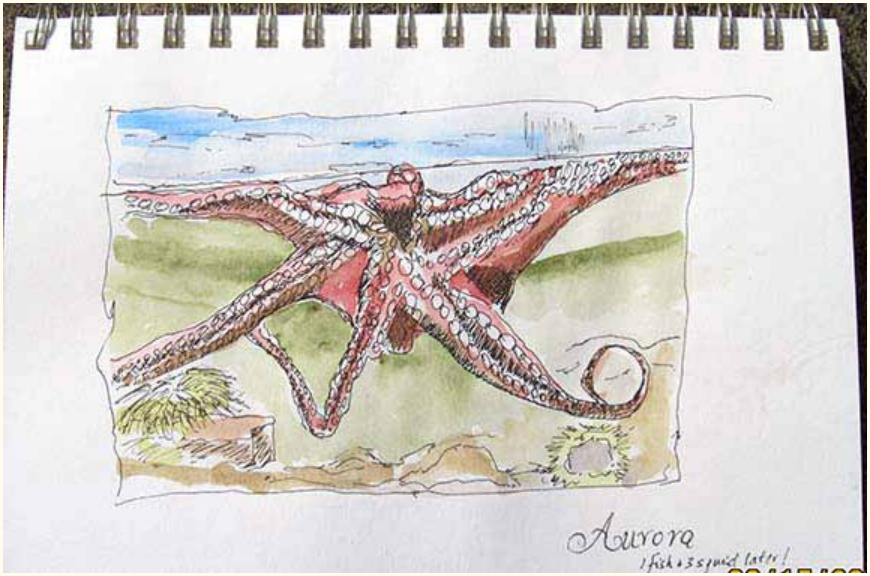
Mother would be pleased.

Aurora puts on a show

By Ann Rosé

As soon as we had our RV parked at the Newport Marina RV Park in Newport, Oregon, the host told us about the octopus feeding scheduled at 1 p.m. every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at the Hatfield Marine Science Center. It is across the street from the RV park and close to the Oregon Coast Aquarium under the bridge just south of Newport.

Aurora swam across the tank as we entered the HMSC. A crowd had gathered around the 6 foot x 6 foot x 4 foot tank in the lobby with the attention focused on the Giant



Pacific octopus, *Enteroctopus dolfeini.* The tan color of her rough-textured skin hid her well among the rocks in the tank. She hovered with her legs swaying in the water and then shot to the corner of the tank. Her suckers grabbed the side of the tank and spread her tentacles two feet on either side of her body, which was nestled in the corner. Her white suckers, rimmed with rosy pink, moved in waves as she edged along the front wall of the tank toward her lunch.

The Center volunteer explained that Aurora was brought in by a local fisherman. The fishermen often find these common residents of the North Pacific clinging to their crab pots. The Center keeps an octopus for 6-12 months

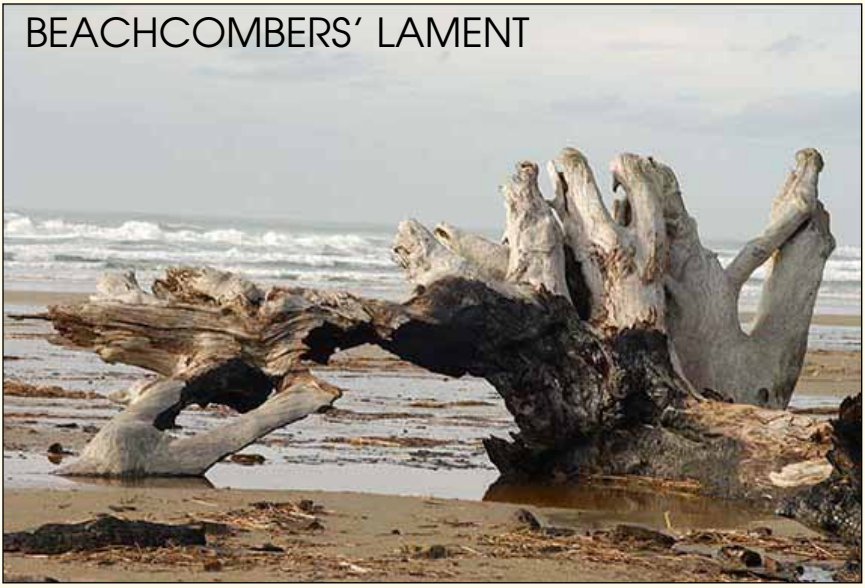
and then releases it back to the ocean when it begins to show signs of aging, which gives the octopus a chance to mate before it dies. Aurora occupied the lobby tank from June 2012 until her release in February 2013. We saw one of her last appearances.

Her lunch that day was three squid and one fish. The volunteer handed Aurora a squid which she grasped with her tentacle and carried to her mouth, which is located on her under-side. The other morsels quickly disappeared too. Although octopuses are notoriously shy, Aurora hung out in her tank so we could get an even closer look at her after her lunch.

We rate this experience as one of the most riveting along the Oregon Coast.

(The HMSC has an Octocam trained on the tank and you can access it on the web at http://hmsc.oregonstate.edu/visitor/octocam to view the current resident and scheduled feedings.)

BEACHCOMBERS' LAMENT



By Paul King

While strolling on the ocean shore,
we sought agates, flotsam and more.
My best girl betimes walked with me
as we searched for gems from the sea.

We trod the strand in certitude
we'd be immune from decrepitude.
Hand in hand we'd always be free
some stark, unpeopled beach to see.

Shells, glass, wooden and cork floats
galore. Prize jetsam from distant boats
is found at late high tide line there
along with seaweed and fishing gear.

Continued

Glass floats, red, blue and green
among the driftwood oft' lay unseen
'til beachcombers scrape kelp away
to expose rare gems to light of day.

Prized beach finds follow winter gales
when icy winds no longer fill sails.
Yet torn from boat or human hands,
storm borne booty comes from far lands.

Crepuscular rays of morning light
are a dedicated comber's delight
to deny late risers' greedy eyes
prime claim to Neptune's surprise.

Beachcombers watch the years fly by.
They too soon lose the zeal to try,
as their strength and spryness wane,
to cross driftwood piles on a cane.

No more strolls on the beach.
No more gems at high tide reach.
No more rolling out at dawn.
No more hued orbs on our lawn.

Was our youthful note in a jar
ever really seen on shores afar?
In our teens we ne'er quite knew.
Did it meet dark eyes on Oahu?

BEACHCOMBING

By Ivan Snyder

A group of volunteers turned out to clean up an Oregon beach near Astoria, Oregon, last year on a beautiful September morning.

The event was sponsored by SOLV, the acronym for Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism.

The main idea was to clean up litter along the beach. An organization known as SOLV, which has evolved from the acronym SOLV (Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism), organizes volunteers to roam over beach areas to pick up trash. Friend and AAPA colleague Carye Bye and I decided help clean up a beach before attending the Northwest Writers' and Printers' Conference in Astoria, Oregon, and Chinook, Washington, on Sept. 22-23, 2012.

Carye and I arrived at the beach in the Fort Stevens Park area at around 10:30 a.m. Saturday, expecting to be assigned an area to clean up. The organizing was not very tight; we were given sacks and gloves and were instructed to walk along the beach and to pick up litter. Because others already were doing that, we did not find much litter. So, we walked down the beach a considerable dis-

The skeleton of an old ship was not among the litter we cleared off the beach.

tance where fewer people were and were able to find a few items to drop into our bags. Perhaps the paucity of junk is an indication of the success of efforts like this. In spite of the questionability of the benefit of our heroic cleanup efforts, the walk on the beach in the beautiful weather (rare in that area) was enjoyable, and we were able to visit a few other attractions before heading back to Astoria to visit the Columbia River Maritime Museum.

Whale Dreaming Deep

By Lee Kirk

Remember the evening we spread
the old brown sleeping bag
on the beach near Lynn's house?
We built a fire, ate roast chicken
in our hands, licked greasy fingers
and burned the crackling bones.

Earlier explorers had set on end
worn and weathered driftwood,
a knobby-fingered hand
raised against the wind. Behind
this barricade we sipped champagne,
seeing sundown through flimsy plastic cups.

You left to walk the tideline;
drowsy, I curled around a shadow,
watching light fail
behind the twisted pickets of the boards.
Briefly they were ship's ribs, a vessel
incomplete, or vestiges of wreck.

I became a tiny Jonah, seeing beyond
the red-reflecting flames
the bones of my leviathan.
The beat of sea beneath my ear
was pounding heart; and then — becoming whale —
I sounded into sleep.

I woke to find you pacing,
some wild and circling beast.
"How can you sleep when it's so cold?"
you asked. Rising from that murky deep,
"It's easy," I replied. "You simply
close your eyes, and dream you are a whale."

Keepers

By Dean Rea

The pounding surf roars constantly, much in the tempo of traffic noise only magnified and without honking horns and wailing sirens.

Seagulls prowl overhead in search of scavenger's fare.

Fog, rain and wind often abide there, giving way on occasion to an idyllic sun-drenched environment.

It is there that I look for rocks as small as a dime and as large as a dollar, adding to a collection formed during a half-century of Oregon beachcombing.

A trek along the smooth, hard-packed sand creates a sense of wellbeing unlike that experienced in other byways of life: a string of whitecaps tumbling over one another toward the shore, an endless stretch of sand, a wall of sound — and rocks beckoning to be gathered for harvest.

The quest requires concentration, an eye for variations of tone and color and much bending and picking. Each candidate must be appraised, weighed and compared with other "keepers." Some make the grade. Others are discarded.

Only in the eye of the beholder is a rock or a pebble a "keeper." Only a bender and picker can truly appreciate such an obsession.

A replica of a British sailing ship was etched on stone.

Graveyard of the Pacific

By Ron Hylton

The Long Beach Peninsula, located just to the north of the mouth of the Columbia River, has long been referred to as the "graveyard of the Pacific" due to the numerous shipwrecks there.

Modern navigation and better ships have for the most

part negated such incidents. Still, the memory of these past events lingers. This is particularly the case of Ilwaco Cemetery where some of the victims of these events rest.

On November 3, 1891, the three-mast British vessel "Strathblane" came to grief on these shores. Owned by the Allan Line of Glasgow, Scotland, the ship was in command of Capt. John Cuthell. He and six fellow seamen drowned, and 16 were rescued by locals. Capt. Cuthell and "the six" were buried at Ilwaco Cemetery where this writer is a member of the cemetery board. For years the graves where marked by a single upright stone for the captain (rank has privilege even in death) and six simple white crosses for the unknown seamen.

In 2005 I got the idea to permanently mark the graves as the wooden crosses often succumbed to the ravages of coastal weather. I located a photo taken at the time of the incident, the Strathblane parallel to the surf, its sails in tatters and the waves pounding her into sure submission. A monument supplier in Tacoma did a superb job of etching the photo into the back of the gray granite and the front was as the photo shows. On the 115th anniversary of the event in 2006 I arranged for the local vicar of the Episcopal Church to officiate at a short ceremony and from this event came the "rest of the story."

The gravestone honors seamen who died during 1891 storm.

Attending the ceremony were members of the local Masonic lodge. They presented me with a document concerning the "Kiewinning Historic Gavel — proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Washington — 1897." Herein some details:

Captain Cuthell of the Strathblane and a survivor known to history as "Murray" were both Master Masons. Murray remained in Ilwaco, married a widow, was instrumental in the granting of a dispensation for the founding of Occident Lodge #99 in Ilwaco, and later with wife in tow returned to

visit his native Scotland. In relating the details of his rescue to fellow members of his native Masonic lodge, it was decided by same brethren to provide a gavel honoring the heroic efforts of the locals.

This was to be no special gavel, however. Though "resembling a stone cutters mallet" the wood came from the remnants of the Old Mother Lodge in Kilwinning, Scotland, which was built in 1799. This wood was "solid oak, taken from one of the ships of the Spanish Armada, wrecked on the (Scottish) coast in 1588."

Upon his return to America this gavel was presented to the Grand Lodge as mentioned above and is in the possession of Occident Lodge in Ilwaco. End of story? Not quite.

Five years after the stranding of the Strathblane, another sister ship from the Allan line, the "Glenmorag," went ashore not far from the Strathblane with the loss of two lives. These men also were buried in Ilwaco Cemetery in the row adjacent to the Strathblane 7. These two shipwrecks provided the only known dead from the various shipwrecks buried at the historic cemetery. What happened to the countless others is pure conjecture.

On occasion graves are still dug in locations thought to be "not occupied" only to find square-headed, hand forged nails, remnants of wooded planks, and a few, well, use your

White crosses marked graves of six seamen who were later identified.

imagination. In the days before death certificates, accurate record-keeping and modern forensic science, the dead who were given up by the sea returned to mother earth only to be disturbed because no records of their burial site were available.

One final outcome of the matter: After the ceremony, after the stone was made, local historians located the previously unknown names of the "six" from the Strathblane. Better late than never.