

FogHorn

Westport-South Beach Historical Society Newsletter
June 2019



#Wildfloats Wildly Successful

The Maritime Museum, with support from the City of Westport's lodging tax fund, added a little excitement for our South Beach visitors this year. Starting March 29th, 2019, several hundred authentic Japanese fishing floats were released along the Washington Coast with the goal of tidal landings during this year's Spring Break and ending with the 57th Annual Driftwood show in Grayland on April 6th and 7th.

The Maritime Museum used real floats from Tsunami clean up in Japan imported back to the USA.

At the Maritime Museum we see so many visitors and families that engage in the beachcombing and the tradition of finding a real float and the nostalgia of classic beachcombing memories. We worked with local experts on strategies of how and where to get the bulk of the floats to land across a short window on the South Beach. We adjusted to weather and tides. The floats had small diamond engraved numbers on them. Finders were advised that they should report to the Museum with the float so that the number could be recorded and a certificate of beginning location could be issued. Visitors were able to keep the floats. Many Pacific Coast beach communities have a float event but

Continued on page 4

WESTPORT-SOUTH BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2019 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President

Pete Eberle
Term Jan 2019 - Dec 2021

Vice President

Evelyn Robinson
Term Jan 2019 – Dec 2021

Secretary

Bobbi Willard
Term Jan 2017 – Dec 2019

Treasurer

Sherrie Williams
Term Jan 2018 – Dec 2020

Board Position I

Winnie Cragg
Term Jan 2017 – Dec 2019

Board Position II

~~~ OPEN ~~~  
Term Jan 2019 – Dec 2021

### Board Position III

~~~ OPEN ~~~  
Term Jan 2017 – Dec 2019

Board Position IV

Nicki Kollar
Term Jan 2018 - Dec 2020

Board Position V

Kimmi Kerns
Term Jan 2018 – Dec 2020

Executive Director

John Shaw
johnshaw98520@gmail.com

Education/Operations Manager

Julie Smith
Julie.Smith.wsbhs@gmail.com

*The FogHorn is a publication
of the Westport-South Beach
Historical Society*

Editor: Kimmi Kerns

(360) 268-0078

www.wsbhs.org

Message from your President – Pete Eberle



As we roll into our busy tourist season our Board, Employees and Volunteers have been very busy getting ready to provide the best service possible to our visitors and Members. We have instituted some changes to try and be more efficient with our time. In order to spend more time improving the visitor experience we have decided to cut back on board meetings and even a quarterly membership meeting. With a shrinking membership and lack of available volunteers these decisions have not come about lightly. Coming up is our annual Old Fashioned Fourth of July public event. It is one of our biggest fund raisers of the year and we still need to fill volunteer positions. Contact us at the museum if you are able to help us.

Due to lack of participation by local residents our board of directors has shrunk to seven active members with two vacancies. When I approached two community members, who I thought were members in good standing, to join us on the board I found that they were ineligible to join the board. They had allowed their memberships to lapse. This turns out to be fairly common these days. We are considering changing our bylaws once again to reduce the number of board members to a sustainable amount. Our board members should not be the group to that does the bulk of volunteering but should concentrate on policies for the organization. Since I have been active with the organization I have seen our membership base drop from over 350 to less than 100 currently. This is something that everyone needs to help us with in the community. One of our former board members has stepped up and is working to bring back 31 different local businesses to our membership. I thank her for her efforts and hope that these businesses will see the value that we provide.

Currently our organization is run and maintained by employees and volunteers who are dedicated to the cause and work hard, yet all are transplants to the community. I want to thank John and Julie in particular for all they do for the organization. They have done a great job of recruiting work campers from all around the country to assist us. Despite the loss of hands on support of community members we have been able to increase operating hours and have increased the public support as reflected on our IRS 990 form over the past several years. This includes admission fees and support we receive from LTAC funds which are the biggest part of our budgets. The City of Westport sees the value that we provide to the visiting public and the community at large and have upped its support. Without this support we would have closed our doors long ago and we are thankful for that.

Now for my ask to those who are reading this. Please help us by promoting our organization to your neighbors and visitors. We always need volunteers to help man the Museum and Lighthouse and help out with special projects. Encourage them to join us by becoming a member and or volunteering. And for those of you reading this consider volunteering even just a few hours a month to help us out. We appreciate all the help we can get to help build up Westport South Beach Historical Society and bring some excitement to the community for our cause. As you know we are working all avenues to build support in order to fund the big projects of restoring the Lighthouse and the City owned Museum buildings. In the case of the Museum, the City needs to know that its citizens support it maintaining this glorious Historic structure. The more local personal support we get the easier it is for us to land the funds needed to move ahead. Don't let this organization be silenced and loose our community's largest assets.



Old Fashioned 4th of July

The Westport South Beach Historical Society's annual Old Fashioned Fourth of July celebration will be held on Thursday, July 4th. The event runs from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and access to the grounds is free.

Our old fashioned family celebration starts with the US Coast Guard, American Legion, and VFW posting of the colors. The National Anthem will be sung at 11:00 AM.

We'll have plenty of fun with activities including children's games with prizes, cakewalk, bake sale, vendors, food including strawberry shortcake and root beer floats, live music, raffles, and silent auction.

The Museum will be open with regular admission, make sure you stop in to see our beautiful Destruction Island Lens and tour the exhibits at the museum.

We still need volunteers to put on this event, so if you are able to help, please contact Julie at the Museum (360) 268-0078.

Westport South Beach Historical Society 2019 SUMMER Calendar of Events

June:

- Tall Ship ***Lady Washington*** at the Westport Marina
 - 17th Annual Rusty Scupper's Pirate Daze
- Thursday-Sunday, June 27-30
Friday-Sunday, June 28-30

July:

- Old Fashioned 4th of July Celebration**
 - Booming Bay Fireworks at the Westport Marina
 - Run Like the Wind Fun Run
 - Volunteer Appreciation/Member BBQ**
 - Eastside Street Rods Show & Shine
- Thursday, July 4th**
Thursday, July 4th
Sunday, July 7th
Saturday, July 13th
Saturday, July 20th

August

- National Coast Guard Day**
 - GH Light Station Lighting (National LH day)**
 - 11th Annual Washington Tuna Classic
 - 22nd Annual Westport Art Festival
 - 73rd Annual Seafood Festival & Corvettes at the Marina
- Sunday, August 4th**
Wednesday, August 7th
Saturday, August 10th
Saturday-Sunday, August 17-18
Saturday, August 31st

September:

- 22nd Annual 30 miles of Junque
 - Tall Ship ***Hawaiian Chieftain*** at the Westport Marina
- Friday-Sunday, Sept. 20-22
Friday-Monday, Sept. 20-23

#Wildfloats (Executive Director's Corner - by John Shaw) (continued from front)

our goal was, Westport as Washington's "Original Beach Town", to have the first and only "real float" event that gets people onto the beaches, like the old days, and take home a real float.



The excitement started right off with early birds to the beaches finding and reporting floats to the Maritime Museum. With visiting families as well as locals finding floats, it created the buzz to hit the beach that was hoped. Of approximately 430 floats released, the Maritime Museum recorded 270 finds. We heard stories of some making their way North to Ocean Shores. We expected some lost and some we know were picked up en masse as the tide would aggregate them to a mass landing. Some of those landings were shared to visitors at the beach approaches and not reported.

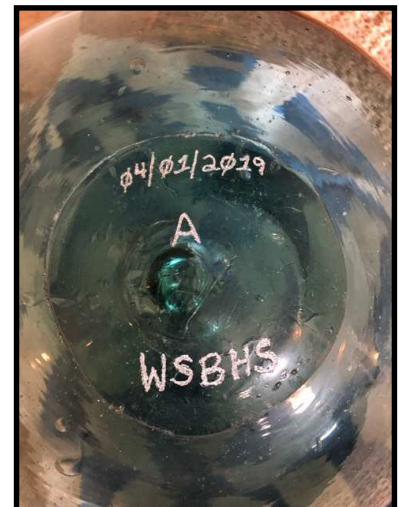


Winners of our Large Float Drawing

Daniel and Paula Lowe

We have learned some lessons from this year and hope to be able to improve our float wrangling skills next season across a longer period of time, encouraging visitors across our off, and shoulder seasons.

And the good news is: we have some remaining money from our City LTAC Committee funds and we are going to experiment with some releases across the summer vacation season to keep the buzz going and build the interest for off season visits to beachcomb. People asked us constantly during the #wildfloats event, "Where are they?" And we all respond, "**On the beach.**"



**PLEASE support the following businesses
who support US by their membership and/or donations:**

American Sunset RV
Basket House Gift Shop
Brumfield Construction
Blackbeard's Brewery
Chateau Westport
El Rancho Restaurant
Englund Marine Supply
First Interstate Bank
Glenacres Historic Inn

Gold Rush Charters
Grayland Hardware
Harbor Marine Supply
Havenwyld Ceramics
Hungry Whale
Lost River Photography
Merino's Seafood
Merrill Photography
Seabird Gift & Candy Shop

Security State Bank
Shoalwater Bay Casino
Shop N Kart
Washington Coast Real Estate
WEfish
Westport, LLC
Westport LH Writers Retreat
Westport Marina Cottages
Windermere-Westport

Take a Walk on the Beach with Marcy Merrill's "200 Things" -by Joni Rodgers



Lunch with photographer Marcy Merrill is like a mudlarking adventure. You never know what's going to come up in the conversation, but whatever it is, you know Marcy has a special way of looking at it. Marcy has been walking the beach from North Cove to Tokeland for almost 30 years, sometimes with grandchildren, usually with dogs, frequently with friends, and always with a camera. Her quirky, colorful books are filled with images of driftwood, sea creatures living and dead, toys, toothbrushes, shoes, rusty this and that, fishing midden, and a thousand things that could be called flotsam and jetsam. Somehow, through Marcy's lens, these random objects become both art and artifact: weirdly beautiful and worth archiving. The images come together to tell a story about our complex relationship with the sea.

We sat down at the Blue Buoy to chat with Marcy, a long time Museum supporter, about her fascinating book, *200 Things*, which is available now at the Westport Maritime Museum.

What makes you stop and take a picture of something?

They're just mundane, everyday things, but when I first see it, I'm thinking, "What is that?" I see it evolving like a computer animation from different angles, and then getting up close - either you know what it is or you don't.

Which is better?

Both! I love looking it up to figure out what it is. Like pyrosomes. They're colonial creatures also called sea pickles. If you see one, you see a thousand. They float around in the water, spinning, and they glow. Or the zombie sea lion. The birds weren't touching him. His eyes were still there. He just kept bloating bigger and bigger and then disappeared.

Picture at right is a US Navy sonobuoy case found at North Cove, Marcy's dog, Hawkeye, for scale. Sonobuoys are used to track submarine activity.



(continued on page 8)

From the Archives of the Westport South Beach Historical Society

This story is from work attributable to Richard J Goodrich, if anyone knew or knows him please let us know.

Bay City Whaling Station



It has been more than twenty years since the United States outlawed commercial whaling in its waters and nearly seventy years since commercial whaling was done in Grays Harbor. But for a time the harbor housed a thriving whaling business. There's nothing left there today but rotting pilings, but the shores of Bay City once housed a thriving whaling station - a factory used to process whales for the oil stored in their thick blubber.

The station was built shortly after the turn of the century. It was the progeny of a man from Newfoundland named Victor Street. Street was in the business of building whale processing stations for the

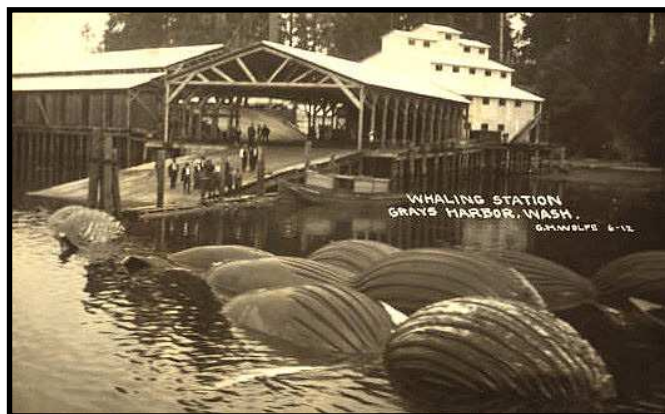
firm of Harvey and Ultabridge. He'd built several stations on the east coast and was managing the station he'd constructed on Baronoff Island, Alaska when his company sent him to Grays Harbor in 1910 to search out a site for a new whaling station.

Street chose Bay City for his new 4 station, right on the finest bathing beach on Grays Harbor. Swimmers lamented the loss of their beach, but area businessmen were exultant. They figured that the whaling industry was just the push needed to start the Grays Harbor economy rolling. Even then boom times were just around the bend. People predicted that Grays Harbor would be the next New Bedford, a reference to New Bedford, Massachusetts, one of the largest whaling towns on the eastern seaboard.

Construction began on the whaling station during the early months of 1911. It didn't take Victor Street long to build his station. By June the station was completed and the first whale was pulled out of the water for flensing. One ship, the I steamer Patterson, supplied the station with whales during the first year. Two years later the steamers Moran, Aberdeen, and Westport joined the whaling fleet. The steamers ranged up and down the coast, from Oregon to Vancouver Island, in search of whales. During the height of the whaling years, the four steamers caught as many as 300 whales each season.

The whalers would harpoon a whale, pump the carcass full of air to keep it floating, then attach a red flag to the body for recovery later in the day. Once the day's whaling was done, the ship would recover the floating carcasses and tow them back to the whaling station. This procedure was not always successful dead whales would occasionally be missed. These floating bodies formed a considerable hazard to navigation. A small ship could be severely damaged by striking one of the floating whales.

Part of the smell came from the boiling down of the whale blubber. Slices of blubber were placed in great iron pots

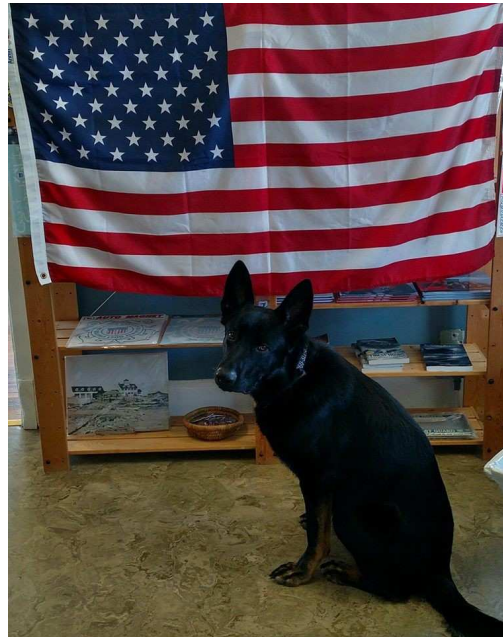


Continued on Page 9

**The LightHouse is now open 7 days per week thru Labor Day.
Hours are 11:00 to 5:00. Grab a friend and visit us !**

Kids Corner*-by Julie Smith***Chief's Club Word Search**

Chief loves the summer, being outside and playing with his sister in the sun !!
 Finish this word search and bring it into the museum for a special treat from Chief.



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | R | T | D | S | H | I | R | L | U | U | Y | F | R | W |
| H | C | T | D | R | R | E | A | E | N | Z | V | K | A | C |
| I | A | U | B | S | A | S | L | D | M | S | E | T | S | A |
| E | P | B | I | O | M | U | E | I | W | M | C | J | L | N |
| F | T | E | E | B | A | R | G | R | C | H | I | J | W | I |
| K | A | L | V | L | W | T | E | T | S | O | L | W | R | N |
| W | I | T | E | A | L | S | S | T | S | S | P | O | S | E |
| A | N | T | Y | J | C | N | A | W | U | A | H | T | F | N |
| H | K | U | O | U | I | N | S | R | A | C | O | I | E | V |
| Y | N | C | E | H | D | E | F | T | N | I | C | C | B | R |
| A | O | S | P | E | A | B | H | A | W | O | N | F | C | Y |
| J | T | L | R | B | O | B | N | O | I | T | A | T | S | K |
| Y | O | X | A | A | H | W | R | K | C | A | V | Q | O | C |
| D | G | G | T | N | P | Y | M | R | S | A | K | V | V | I |
| E | O | X | L | D | N | N | H | C | R | A | E | S | Y | R |

FIND THESE WORDS:

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| ANCHOR | KNOT |
| BOATSWAIN | RESCUE |
| CANINE | RICKY |
| CAPTAIN | SCUTTLEBUTT |
| CHIEF | SEABAG |
| COASTGUARD | SEARCH |
| DOLPHIN | STATION |
| EVY | SURFBOAT |
| FICO | SWIMMER |
| HELICOPTER | UNDERWAY |
| JAYHAWK | WATCHSTANDER |

Marcy Merrill's "200 Things"

*(continued from page 5)***When you find manmade objects, what makes the difference between trash and treasure?**

A garbage bag busting open - that's trash. Tires can be interesting if they wash up - like the tire in the book covered with goose barnacles - but not a tire someone threw out of a truck. I was walking with my grandson, and we saw something coming out of the dune, and I said, "Oh, that's something old." It was an old boat keel.

So anything old - it might not be treasure exactly, but it's worth archiving with a photo?

Exactly. I can't resist picking up something that looks antique. I think about the journey of that object. Like the penny dolls and Frozen Charlotte dolls [from the 1930s] or these blue Russian trading beads [from the 1800s]. Reading up on the history of these objects and then walking the beach and the river, I know - hey, that's where that guy put his canoe in. You get this picture of what the world was like when it was cut up with rivers instead of roads.



Beach Debris photographs courtesy Marcy Merrill

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BBQ - SATURDAY, JULY 13th

Instead of the regular June potluck member meeting, the Board of Trustees decided to host a Volunteer Appreciation BBQ on Saturday, July 13th from 5:00 to 8:00 pm at McCausland Hall to show its appreciation for all the many volunteers who make our organization so special.

This event is not a potluck...you don't need to bring anything...just come and enjoy the good food that will be provided and spend some time getting to know your fellow volunteers.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO OUR COMMUNITY !!

Bay City Whaling Station*(continued from page 6)*

and cooked to separate the precious oil from the tissue. This oil was strained, put in barrels, and shipped by railroad. The plant produced about 5,000 barrels of whale oil annually.

Another factor contributing to the terrible smell was the whales themselves. The bellies of the dead whales contained up to two tons of plankton. As the whales floated in the bay, waiting to be processed at the station, this microscopic food would rot in the whale's stomach. When the men cut into the whale's belly, the smell was said to make the strong faint.

But much can be overlooked when an industry is making money. For a few years the Bay City Whaling Station made a good profit. Its revenues were padded for a time by the outbreak of World War I. The war machine drained the available supply of petroleum-based lubricants, making whale oil a valuable commodity.



Some Harbor residents may still remember what happened when the war made another commodity, meat, scarce. Aberdeen stores began selling whale meat steaks to replace scarce supplies of beef and pork. Folks said that the meat tasted just like beef, and the meat of the young calves was supposed to resemble veal.

Whale meat never really caught on in the Harbor. Beef and pork resumed their rightful positions after the war ended.

The end of the war also spelled the end of the Bay City Whaling Station. The demand for whale oil slowly died out. Whales were becoming harder to find along the Washington coast. The station didn't operate at all during the 1921 season and it closed its doors to whales in 1925. The four whaling steamers were transferred to a station in Alaska.

The Bay City Whaling Station was used intermittently in the years that followed, processing various types of fish. In 1935 a fire swept through the station, destroying the structure and closing the book on the short history of whaling in Grays Harbor.

Number of Whales Processed by the Bay City Whaling Station:

1,933 Humpback Whales
602 Fin Whales
120 Sperm Whales
21 Sei Whales
13 Blue Whales
8 Bottlenose Whales
1 Gray Whale



HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY RUTH MC CAUSLAND

Founding society member and generous supporter, Ruth McCausland, becomes 100 years young on June 25, 2019.

CONGRATULATIONS and THANK YOU for all you have done for the Society.

Westport-South Beach Historical Society
Newsletter

PO Box 1074
2201 Westhaven Dr.
Westport, WA 98595

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Put a stamp
here or it
won't get
mailed !!

Mailing Label Here

Beach Moon? See Inside on Page 5



Photo by Marcy Merrill