



MISSION STATEMENT

We connect the future,
through the present,
with the past.

2025 NOHC Meeting Dates

NOHC Board Meetings: Second Monday of the month at noon on Zoom and in the ASF conference room.

Membership Committee: Second Monday of the month at 2 PM on Zoom and in the ASF conference room.

Collections Committee: Last Tuesday of the month at 11 AM in the Research Library.



Online Collections Catalog

www.nohc.catalogaccess.com
New items added each month!

More on our website
www.northolympichistory.org

Research Library

933 West 9th Street, Port Angeles
360-452-2662

Open - Tuesdays & Thursdays
9 am - 2 pm or by appointment

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Strait History

VOLUME XVIII FALL 2024 NUMBER 4

Laurie Davies to Retire from NOHC Board

For twelve years, Laurie Davies dedicated her time and passion for local history to the Center as a Board Director, volunteer and advocate. She single-handedly managed our Hands on History for the last two years and kept the program active through the pandemic, by no means an easy task. She helped organize a Halloween event for local youth in our Lincoln Heights neighborhood, recruiting sponsors from local businesses and making sure the event was enjoyed by all. She served as our liaison with the Clallam County Fair, making sure we had a great location and everyone was taken care of. At the Center, Laurie was never afraid to get hands-on and dive into tasks like reorganizing our extensive collection of historic newspapers. But most importantly, her smile and approachability made a positive impact on every person at the Center. My interview for the NOHC Executive Director position was in Laurie's living room, and her kindness and

compassion made me instantly feel "at home" in the organization. Laurie's commitment to public service and her community went well beyond just the NOHC – she served nearly 20 years on the Clallam County Fair Board before being appointed to the Washington State Fairs Commission. She is involved with our local 4-H chapter and can be seen at various summer events with candidates for Clallam County Fair Royalty in tow. We will miss Laurie's presence greatly – from each and every person at NOHC, thank you Laurie for your years of service to the Center!



Laurie at work in NOHC's archive facility.

New Board of Director Members



Becky Schurmann (L)

Becky has spent the last 40 years working in museums as a carpenter, preparator, mount maker, exhibit designer and installer, and collection manager, retiring from the Jefferson County Historical Society in 2021. She managed the move of JCHS collections seven times and curated and installed over 75 exhibits in the 17 years she worked for that institution. She has been pleased to be able to work with the collections at NOHC as a volunteer, continuing work that has always challenged, intrigued and educated her.

Eve Datisman (R)

Eve spent forty years teaching high school and college students in Southeastern Idaho, Western Montana, and in Forks and Port Angeles, WA, where she spent the bulk of her career. Her areas of expertise were English, speech, humanities, writing, and library/information sciences. While not a native Washingtonian, she has an interest in the history of the area. Eve has been a regular volunteer at NOHC for 10 years, working on cataloging books and artifacts in the collection. Currently she is digitizing NOHC materials for the Washington State Library's National Newspaper Digitization Project.

From the President

NOHC Members,

A bit of nostalgia as I write my last letter to you as the NOHC Board President. A new slate of officers will be nominated at our November Board meeting, our vote will be in December, and they take the reins in January. I will be closing out three years as President but will remain active on the Board. Thank you all for the honor of serving.

My tenure roughly coincided with the addition of David Brownell as the Executive Director. What a thrill it has been to support his whirlwind of activity and improvements. Our presence in the region has boomed with new and rejuvenated programs. Connections and involvement with area government and other philanthropic organizations have blossomed with renewed cooperative interactions and events. Membership has actually improved during a time when many organizations have struggled to keep up their rolls. Meanwhile our volunteer crew and hours recorded have set new records. Much is attributable to David's efforts.

With that background, you can understand my angst when a friend told me yesterday that someone "had expressed a desire to join the History Center, but had heard that we were 'going out of business.' " Whoa! A fresh challenge for us all. Please speak out! Let your friends know that we are not all merely "holding on," but aggressively moving forward.

A likely source of such negative mental images is our long term struggle to definitively deal with the Lincoln School Building. This 100 year old, unreinforced brick building is economically unrefurbishable in my studied opinion. If I had the estimated \$12 million required to rejuvenate and repurpose the building, I could be more positive in saving this landmark. At present, it is the target of vandalism and likely to tumble in the case of even a mild seismic event. It has become a significant drag on our personnel and financial resources. In the end, please be assured that I and the rest of the Board feel a primary responsibility to the membership and will do our best to act in YOUR best interest. I am quite sure that David or any of the Board would be receptive to your questions on this issue. Please do not stew with any concerns. It is your right, privilege, and responsibility to raise any concerns you may have. Hasta luego!

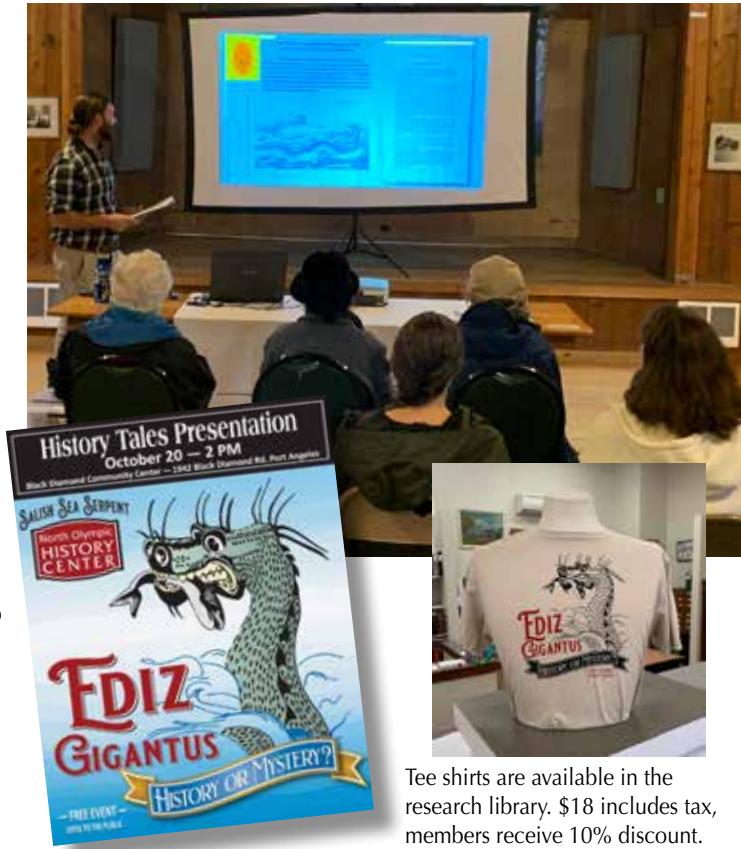


Ediz Gigantus History or Mystery?

Our local sea serpent Ediz Gigantus aka "Eddie" has been making waves around town – Eddie has been the focus of presentations at the NOAA West End Maritime Symposium and our final History Tales presentation of 2024 at the Black Diamond Community Center. For over a century sailors, fishermen, and keen-eyed citizens have documented their encounters with mysterious sea creatures swimming in the Strait. While many of the accounts share familiar aspects with each other than indicate some sort of a "sea-serpent" like animal, some accounts contain distinctly non-serpent features (like a barrel shaped body), and others veer into the realm of the incredible with "mothership whales" releasing "flying fish scouts" to chase salmon towards a sea serpent that then swims into the whale via a "ramp-like tongue."

Despite the comical nature of some of the accounts (likely embellished for the 'Ananias' story-telling competition at the annual Salmon Derby), other accounts document sightings by multiple witnesses. Some of these witnesses captured these events in paintings now curated by the NOHC, including one by Dorothy Rudder showing "Aggie," named after Agate Bay where her family spotted the serpent around 1934. Some accounts seem to match a general description of an oar fish, a deep-water fish that can grow over 20 feet in length, but others are not as simple to understand.

Whether Eddie is history or mystery – why not both?! Fans of Eddie can purchase our new NOHC-designed tee shirts, just in time for the holiday season. Shirts come in Small, Medium, Large and Extra Large sizes and cost \$18 each, plus tax. All proceeds support the NOHC!



Tee shirts are available in the research library. \$18 includes tax, members receive 10% discount.

Christmas Past in Port Angeles

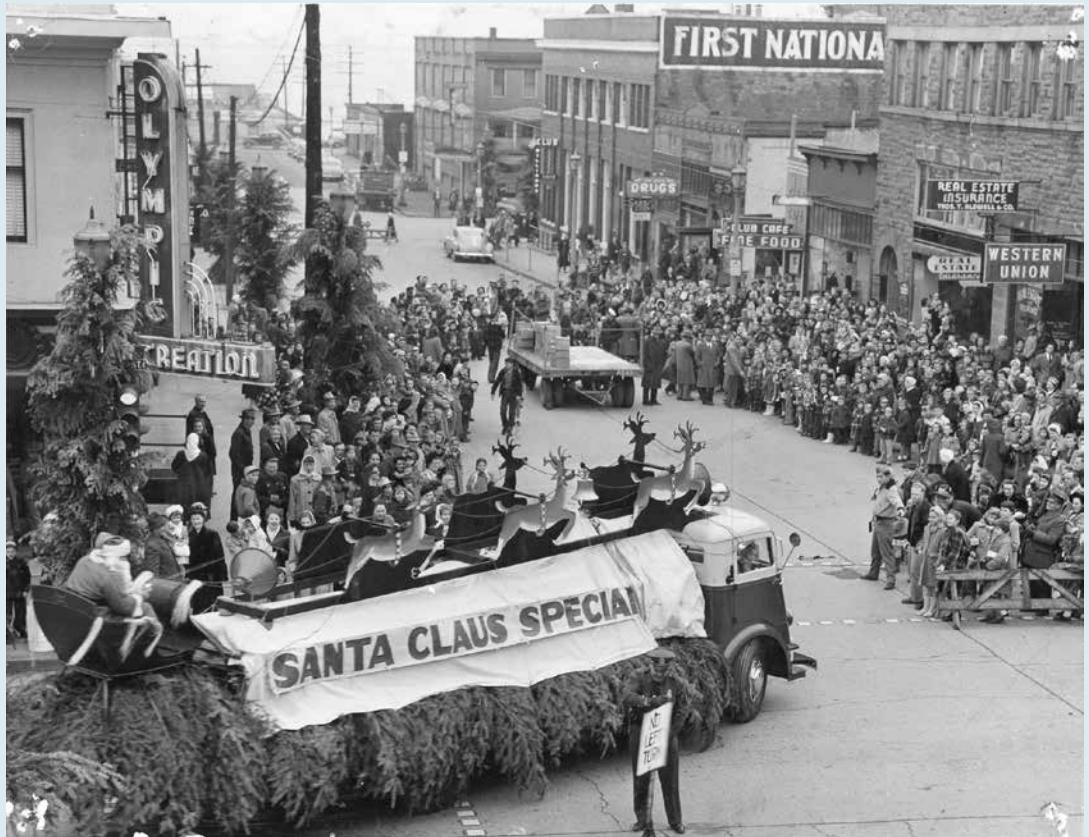


Blackmailer's Christmas Booty

Once again an "odd" photo from our archives got my attention and left me wanting to know more about the story it was telling. The photo shows Port Angeles Volunteer Firemen holding a variety of dolls with even more displayed in front of the group. So what is the story behind this photo? It involves Beacon Bill and the Christmas Lighthouse beginning in the early 1920s in downtown Port Angeles. This was the idea of William D. "Billy" Welsh. Welsh came to Port Angeles in 1913 to work as a printer. In December of 1922 Welsh began his annual "Blackmail" fundraising campaign to help the poor and feed families through the Salvation Army Christmas Dinner fund. Soon Beacon Bill had many community groups joining in including the Volunteer Firemen. Welsh's involvement continued into the early 1950s even after he had moved to California. The story, first published in the winter of 1986 Strait History newsletter, is a wonderful tale filled with the Christmas spirit of giving. If you are interested in knowing more about this and many others, they are available in our research library.

Memories Shared of Christmas Parade

This photo from our archives has been published several times in the past, most recently in the *Peninsula Daily News* December 6th 2015 "Back When" section written by Alice Alexander. The photo dates from around 1947 or 1948 showing wonderful community involvement during the holiday season. In this photo Tim Timberlake plays Santa Claus sitting on a fire truck used as his sleigh. Timberlake was just one of several men to play Santa in Port Angeles going back as far back as 1900, when Mr. Herron of Herron's Variety Store played the part. Dick Hubbard began playing Santa in the early 1950s followed by his son John in 1966. The newspaper article that accompanied this photo is filled with great detail of Dick Hubbard's quest to buy the perfect Santa Claus outfit including that the beard and wig were made of Yak hair.



History Tales Presentation - Elwha Dam



Executive Director, David Brownell, being introduced by Stacey Rekkedahl, Gallery and Programs Director, Port Angeles Art Center.

110 years ago, work began on one of the largest (and most controversial) projects in North Olympic Peninsula history – the construction of the Elwha Dam. This project, and the resulting impacts, continues to drive debate and discussion both on the Peninsula and around the nation as dam removal projects become increasingly common. This fall NOHC collaborated with the Port Angeles Fine Arts Center to display some of our dam artifacts as part of the PAFAC's "Beauty and Resilience – From Dismantling to Ecosystem Recovery" exhibit recognizing the 10-year anniversary of the removal of the dams.

The Elwha Dam, and the Glines Canyon Dam that was constructed a decade later, resulted in disastrous impacts on the Elwha River ecosystem and the anadromous fish species that inhabit the river. Over 40 years of effort beginning in the late 1960s resulted in the delicensing and eventual removal of the dams in 2014. Though the Elwha River has begun to recover, the impacts of 100 years of damming will take decades to completely disappear.

The story of the removal of the dams has gained increasing attention, as efforts around the United States to remove dams has gained traction – in fact, photos and research around the dams and their removal are one of the NOHC's common research requests. The NOHC curates artifacts, photos, maps, diagrams, and many more materials documenting the construction, operation, and removal of the dams.

To this end, the focus of our September History Tales presentation focused not on the removal of the dams, or their construction, but rather the value of historic preservation of these stories and objects as critical tools to understanding the history of the North Olympic Peninsula.

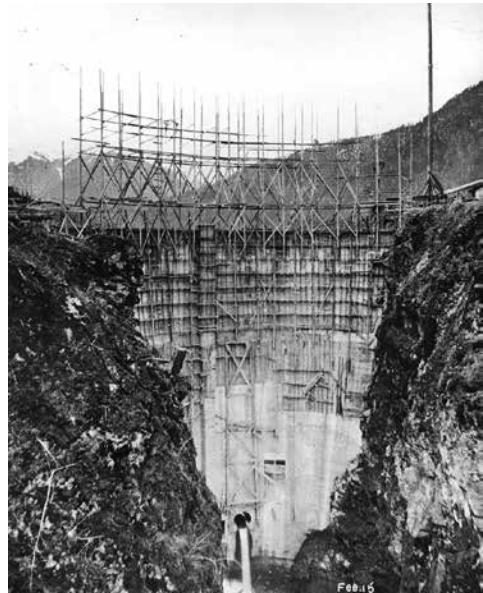
While there is no doubt that the dam's caused a great deal of environmental harm, especially regarding impacts on salmonid species and the fisheries of the Lower Elwha Klallam



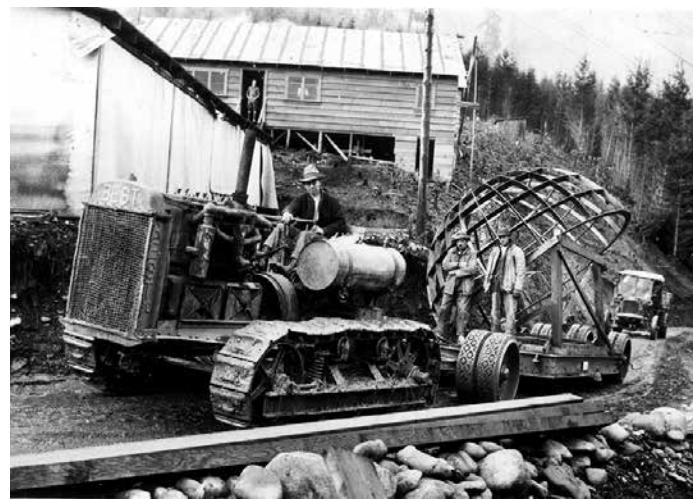
The program was well attended. Artwork from the Art Centers "Beauty and Resilience" exhibit can be seen on the walls and hanging from the ceiling.

Tribe, there are many other stories that must be preserved and shared. The construction of the Elwha Dam, and the subsequent electricity it provided (termed "Elwha Juice" by contemporary news media) spurred the growth of Port Angeles and many of the smaller communities along the north coast of the Peninsula. The dams even provided critical power to the growing Bremerton Naval Shipyard as the United States entered the first and second World Wars.

In addition to the artifacts from the Elwha and Glines Canyon Dams on display at PAFAC, our presentation featured several recently donated photographs from the Orville Campbell Collection. Mr. Campbell was a longtime employee of Crown Zellerbach Corporation, where he worked with the state and federal representatives on the Elwha Act and continued to work in the '90s that ultimately led to the removal of the Elwha River dams. Following retirement in about 1994, Campbell served on the Port Angeles Planning Commission, Port Angeles City Council and was deputy mayor from 2002-2003. Over 100 photos documenting the construction and operation of the dams can be found on our catalog access site under the accession number 2024.6.



Photos from the Orville Campbell Collection. (Left) Construction of the Elwha Dam. (Above) Glines Canyon Dam.

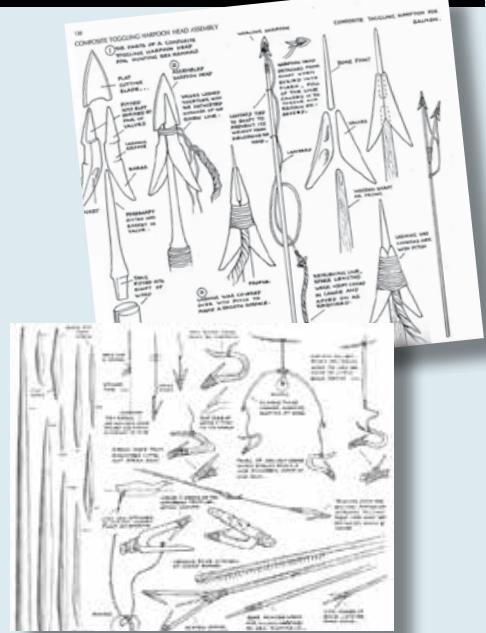


Archaeology Month at the Center

Did you know October is archaeology month? October's programs followed that theme with a Learning Our Landscape presentation on the archaeology of the Sequim prairie, an archaeology chat with Todd Ortloff on KONP radio, and a free online course: An Introduction to the Archaeology of the Northwest Coast from the perspective of Western Washington with Gary Wessen, PhD. Local archaeologist Gary Wessen kindly donated his time and expertise by teaching 8 online classes covering the archaeological history of western Washington and the Olympic Peninsula beginning at the time of the last ice age and working our way up to the present. The class was well-attended by NOHC members and local history enthusiasts, and we all learned something (or many things) new regarding the fascinating history of the place we call home. A huge thanks to Gary for his generosity! The course was recorded and we hope to have the videos up online soon for all to enjoy.



Gary Wessen sharing his thoughts on zoom.



New Collection Addition - James Miller, Artist

This American Folk Art painting, titled "Pay As You Go", was donated to our collection this past October. It came with the following story:

James Miller, the artist, was discovered in the mid-1960s by a woman in downtown Tacoma who owned an art supply store in a remodeled train station.

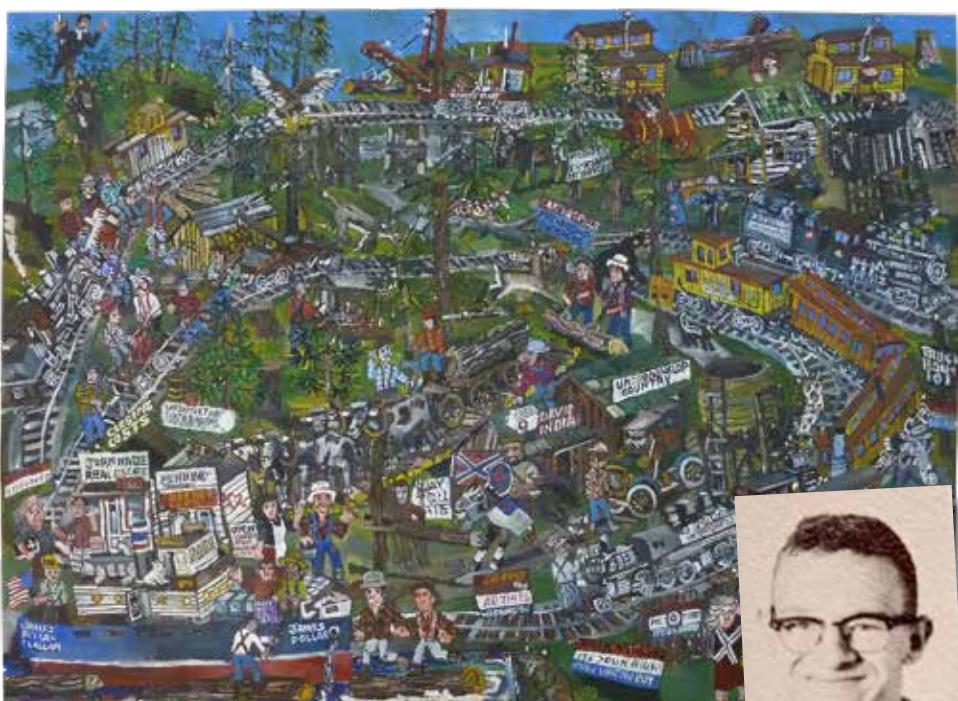
Miller sought refuge in her store on a cold winter morning (as the story goes). She set him up in a backroom where he began working on a painting that turned out to be a well-done example of "American Primitive" style, whose best-known artist in American folk artist Grandma Moses (1860-1961).

The details of Miller's life are not well known. He was born in Port Angeles, WA to parents who couldn't or wouldn't care for him. A local physician, Dr. Kintner, occasionally gave him care and said "He has been in so many foster placements over the years, maybe 30, I wonder how he survives."

He was essentially homeless, an unsupervised street kid. He was usually quite dirty and would often be seen walking along Highway 101, west of town, collecting bottles to turn in for cash.

He was a member of the Port Angeles High School Class of 1963. As was often done then, he was passed from year to year, without a serious academic plan. He was not listed among the 262 student graduates in the program commencement ceremony on June 5, 1963.

Still, everyone in the class knew James, or Jimmy as he was called. Many would stop him and help him with his clothes, especially tie his shoes. Coaches who had him in PE classes sometimes would ask us to take Jimmy into the shower and clean him up.

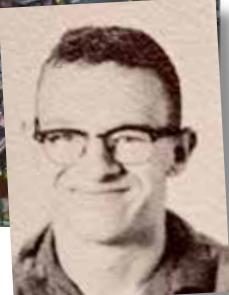


He was a happy kid despite his circumstances, always cheerful and friendly. He would write stories about WWII along with drawings of airplanes and other war machines like tanks and ships.

No one knew about his artistic talent, so when he was discovered, it came as a complete surprise. It was as if Rain Man had been in the class.

This painting was purchased in the Tacoma area by a classmate, Nadine Taper Kelly, from a private party several years ago for \$500.

His work has been displayed in major exhibitions of folk art in this country and in Europe, sometimes commanding much higher prices.



James, 1962 high school photo.

It also helped pay for his care in some kind of supervised group home near Tacoma. He died perhaps 20 years ago or more.

Perhaps there are others who can fill in some of his story when they see this painting, giving him the attention his talent deserves.

Folk art is art that has been created by self-trained artists. This art is usually made out of found materials and has subjects that are significant regionally or to the artist.

Restore the 4 Update



We're excited to share the progress of the project to Restore the 4!

Locomotive Restoration Progress:

The restoration specification document -- the thing we needed to be able to start the bidding on getting work done -- is complete. As I mentioned in our last update, we had been working on the document for a while. We had some questions about some things, and reached out to Brian Wise of Mt. Rainier Scenic Railroad for some help. He is the foremost expert on Willamette locomotives, having led the restoration of #4's sister, Rayonier #2 -- which Brian and team restored to operation on Mt. Rainier's rail line. His extensive knowledge of locomotive restoration and operation, along with access to Willamette blueprints (and more) makes him an invaluable resource for our project. Brian offered to write the specification document for us (rather than just answering questions), and we jumped at the chance to enlist his expertise. Unfortunately for us, Mt. Rainier has had a hugely successful summer season, and Brian had a hard time getting away to Port Angeles to survey and photograph our lokey. He was recently able to finish, and last weekend provided the finished specification document to us. In short, IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT! Beyond the list of repairs and paint types, etc, that we needed, Brian was able to provide us with a document that discusses each part of the locomotive separately, and even includes things like complete draw-

ings so that we can properly reproduce even the original windows and doors! Also, the "smokebox" on the front of the #4's boiler is welded closed, but Brian was able to provide photos inside the smokebox of #2, which will be very helpful to potential bidders. I found the document very interesting, and it gives us a clear path forward. If you're interested in reading the document, I'll share a link to it at the end of this document -- so look for it below. With this document in hand, we are beginning the process to put the work out to bid. The paperwork to get the specifications turned into a "bid package" will take some time, but at last week's team meeting, we approved starting the process. We hope to have bids awarded by the end of the year, though we will not start work until we've gotten past the worst of this winter's rainy weather.

Shelter Progress:

We committed at the very start of the project to not stop until there was a cover built over the locomotive to help keep her looking good for a long time. We have progress to report here, too! A local donor has made an offer to largely fund the shelter's construction, so last week's meeting included approval to move forward with final design work, cost determination, and permitting for the shelter. We're not totally sure

how long the planning and permitting process will take, but we have a target of having the shelter done by spring when the restoration work will kick off. When we have the design and costs locked in, we'll share more info on this step (and the donor).

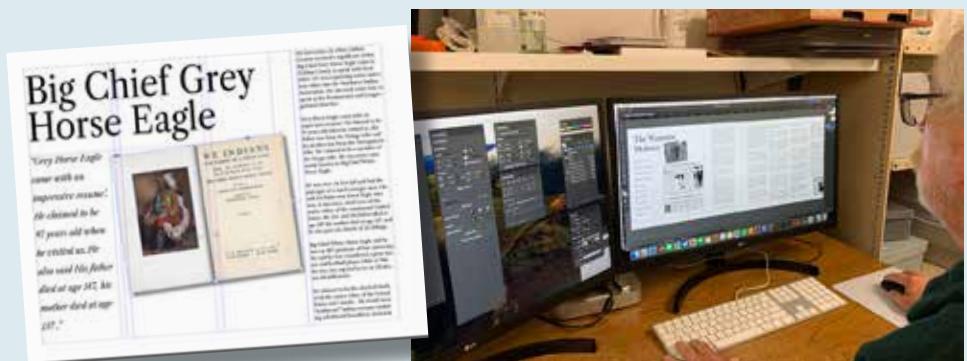
Fundraising Progress:

Funds raised from donations and grants have just crossed the \$40,000 mark, and are making steady progress toward the goal. We're far enough along to be able to start some of the much-anticipated work that is the meat of our project. We continue to seek appropriate grants to help, and on the home front, we're still selling t-shirts, hats, and the Rayonier Locomotive Video production. Rayonier continues to provide retired computers to us, which we recondition and sell on eBay. The list of donors on the website is growing ever longer, and while over half of our team members (donors) are local to Port Angeles, we have many members from around the world, including one of our newest team members, who hails from all the way in Australia! As always, we need your help with outreach to gather up more team members, so please tell your friends about our project and invite them to join the team, too!

www.restorethe4.org

John McNutt Book in the Works

Volunteers at NOHC are in the process of producing and publishing a book of some of our favorite stories written by NOHC member John McNutt. John's stories appear monthly in the Peninsula Daily News. We are currently selecting stories and photographs on a variety of subjects from humor to murder!



Clallam Bay Slip Point Lighthouse: Stormy Weather and Some Sunshine.

*"Ooh, a storm is threatening
My very life today
If I don't get some shelter
Ooh yeah, I'm gonna fade away."*

This is the first verse of the Rolling Stones' song "Gimme Shelter". Keith Richards was inspired by seeing people scurrying for shelter from a sudden London rainstorm.

Our recent spate of atmospheric river systems have given us a lot of torrential rains, especially on the Strait. They are the source of much consternation for the Clallam Bay Slip Point Lighthouse Keepers group. Part of the Keepers' purpose is to make sure buildings on the site are secure, not just from break-in or vandalism, but also from forces of nature. The Keeper' Cottage roof had sustained damage from the high winds blowing away more roofing material and causing significant leaking.

On Oct. 30 Keepers President Sue Heiny led a tour of the facility for the members and David Brownell, Executive Director of NOHC. We all had a chance to see firsthand what the storms had done. There was water dripping down through the ceiling through the light fixture on the main floor of the West duplex. We toured all the rooms and could see where water had found entry.

After the early October storms and before our visit, Sue and fellow Keeper Sam Waters had ripped out sodden carpets, 1970s wall paneling, and insulation in the attic space on the west side of the cottage. They traced leaks and set up buckets to mitigate water travel through the floors and reduce the humidity to slow down black mold. Sue will continue to closely monitor and report on the roof, the rain buckets, and the general condition of the building. In the photo you can see where shingles are missing in the south (protected) side of the cottage.

BUT:

Consider the chorus of "After the Storm" of Kali Uchis and Bootsie Collins.

*The sun'll come out
Nothing good ever comes easy
I know times are rough
But winners don't quit, so don't you give up
The sun'll come out."*

We Have Lots of Good News Too:

Following the Keepers' mandate, **secure and maintain**, we've made some significant progress:

- The Keepers have been able to buy materials to replace three of four doors and one set of stairs on the Keepers' cottage. The remainder are in the works.
- The Keepers have contacted Don Crawford at Clallam County Park and Rec about roof replace-



Keepers' Cottage looking north shingles missing after the first storms of Oct. 2024

ment and he's contacted roofers for estimates. In the meantime, the keepers are looking into some durable tarping to protect the roof.

- Don Crawford is also looking for three webcams that will not only provide another layer of security but will also live stream what's happening out on the beach and Strait. We'll stream from our FB page and eventually website. We also want to contact a Webcam streamer so that our feed(s) will be available more easily.
- New signage coming.
- The next big project will most likely be looking at the garage roof at the site and figure out what needs to be done to rehabilitate it.
- The Keepers have been awarded \$10,000.00 by the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee. Part of the monies will help the Keepers develop a website

Saving the Best for Last:

On Dec. 2nd an introductory presentation to the Clallam County Heritage Advisory Board was given. This group advises the county commissioners on matters dealing with the cultural heritage of the county.

The Keepers have started working on a long-term strategic plan, our first meeting was Nov. 2nd at the Sekiu Community Center. We have begun work on preliminary goals and core values. This is important if we hope become a durable presence in the community and county.

Mike Doherty attended the initial strategic planning meeting. Besides giving us the wisdom of his experience working on and with non-profit organizations, he revealed that he has collected some pieces of the original lighthouse, and Jerry White says the Clallam Bay Visitors' Center has another piece. This bodes well for the replica lighthouse plans.

If you are interested what's going on or want to join this dynamic group email them at slippointlighthousekeeper@gmail.com and

Follow on Facebook and Instagram for newsletters and updates:

@ Clallam Bay Slip Point Lighthouse Keepers



Architect's rendition of the preservation and improvements on the CBSL Keepers' property notice the replica light house at the left of the property.



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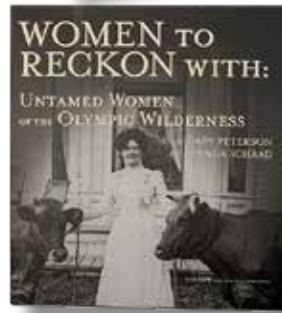
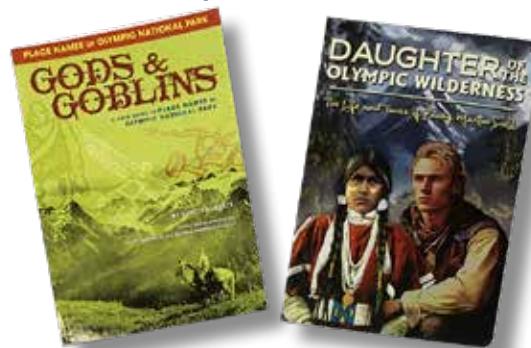
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