

the
QUARTERDECK

Spring 2017



COLUMBIA RIVER MARITIME MUSEUM

From the Wheelhouse

“The rain continued as usual” - Journal of Sergeant John Ordway, member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

In 1805, Sergeant Ordway, wrote in his journal while at Fort Clatsop, that “the rain continued as usual” and that “we are all wet and disagreeable.” I, like most of us along the coast, certainly understand Sergeant Ordway’s feelings: 168 days out of 184 since October is wet enough for most of us.

Although Oscar Wilde has said that “conversation about the weather is the last refuge for the unimaginative”, the weather inserts itself every day into our lives and cannot be easily ignored. It certainly affects shipping, fishing, tourism, and the general economics of the entire Columbia River Basin and beyond. And although on the coast we generally speak of weather in terms of rain or no rain, our language has a wealth of terms that describe rain and the storms that bring it: deluge, mist, Scotch mist (a mix of mist and light rain), squall, tempest, cyclone, sun shower, and, one of my favorites, virga, which are streaks of rain that evaporate before they reach the ground (not often seen along the shore however).

The origins of the weather of the Pacific Northwest are the focus of an exciting new exhibit at the Museum: The Science of Storms. This powerful exhibit revolves around breathtaking satellite images of the globe showing ocean sea surface temperatures, wind and current patterns, and other aspects of the earth’s chemistry and geophysics that contribute to our weather. This exhibit underlines the fact that the globe is one single entity and that every place on it is to a greater or lesser extent connected to and influenced by every other place. The process starts in tropical latitudes with the warming of the sea surface.

Air, heated by the sea surface rises and produces strong winds, which in turn drive both surface and deep ocean currents—it is all one big, glorious heat engine. The turning of the earth and the Coriolis Effect, the topography and geography of the ocean basins and the continents then form the complex systems of interconnecting winds and currents that create the weather and distribute the waters around the globe.

The exhibit is, to make a bad pun, only the tip of the iceberg. Nate Sandel, our Education Director, is incorporating the study of maritime weather into the Museum’s education programs in a number of different ways. These include creating class materials that are used in the Museum’s outreach to schools in Oregon and Washington and in the Museum’s in-house programs that teach about science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM). One exciting program that we hope to begin next year involves the construction of wood and fiberglass boats that, with a GPS and instrument package, can be set adrift in the ocean and tracked on personal computers. We hope to have at least one of these built by every middle school in Clatsop County, perhaps in conjunction with sister schools in Japan to track ocean conditions in the waters of the North Pacific.

The new technologies the Museum is using to educate and tell the maritime story of the region will enable the Museum to greatly extend its ability to serve members and the general public. Exciting times!



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On the Cover: A still image captured from the new 3D Film *Hurricane* now showing at the Museum. Filmed over the course of five years, the film features some stunning ocean and storm footage.

Courtesy: Ourgan Films, Orange Films, Climax Films, Saint Thomas Productions

Science of Storms

The Extraordinary Weather of the Pacific Northwest

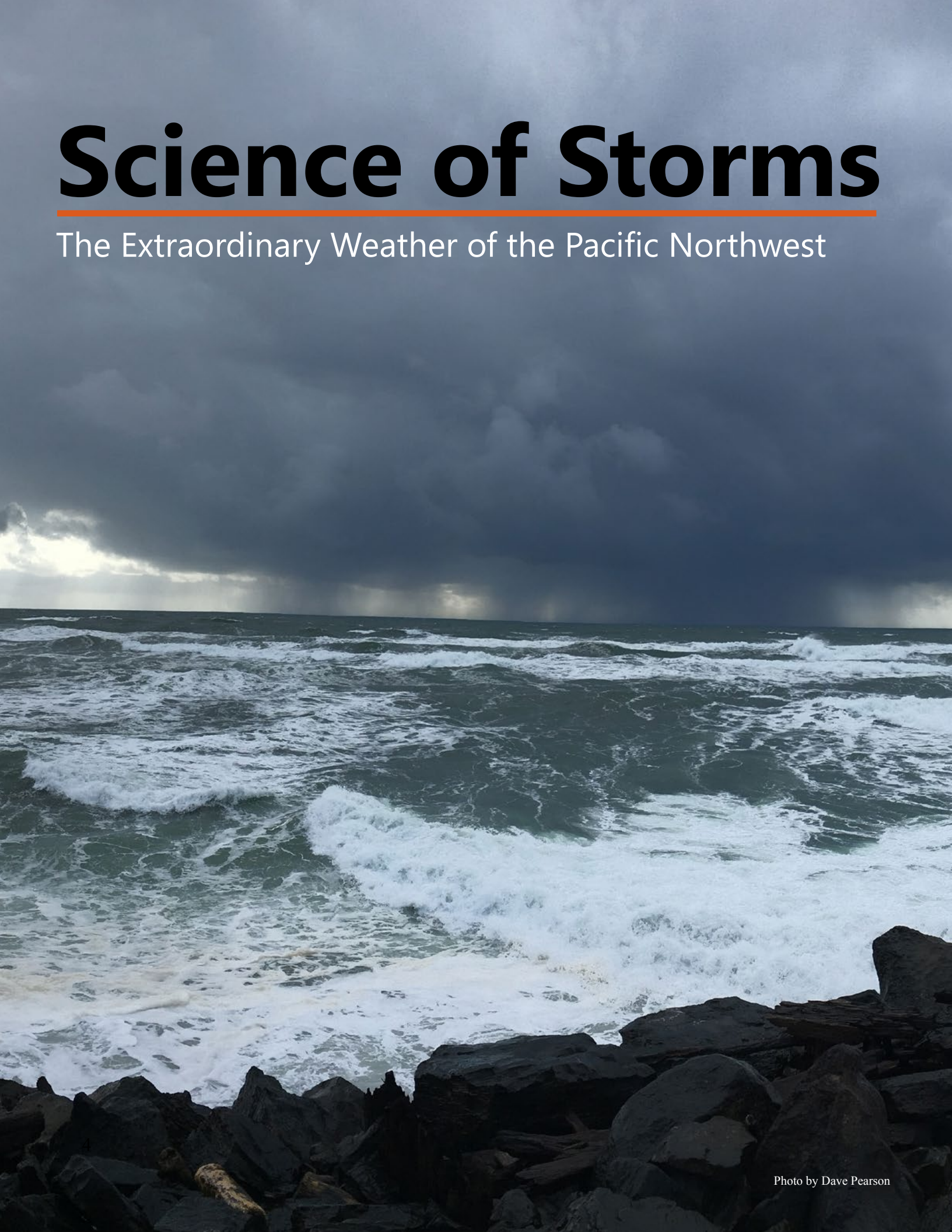


Photo by Dave Pearson



Join us this summer to see the new exhibit and NOAA weather wall

Here in the Pacific Northwest we experience extraordinary weather, and mariners have always had a vested interest in accurately recording and predicting the weather. Often their lives and livelihoods depended on it. This exhibit looks at our extraordinary weather and the ways that science and technology have addressed the challenges of predicting the weather.

Visitors can try their hand at giving a weather forecast, see themselves as rescuers would using infrared vision technology, view the earth from space and see storms over the vast Pacific, and experience hurricane force winds in a hurricane wind simulator. In addition our 3-D theater will be featuring Hurricane 3D.

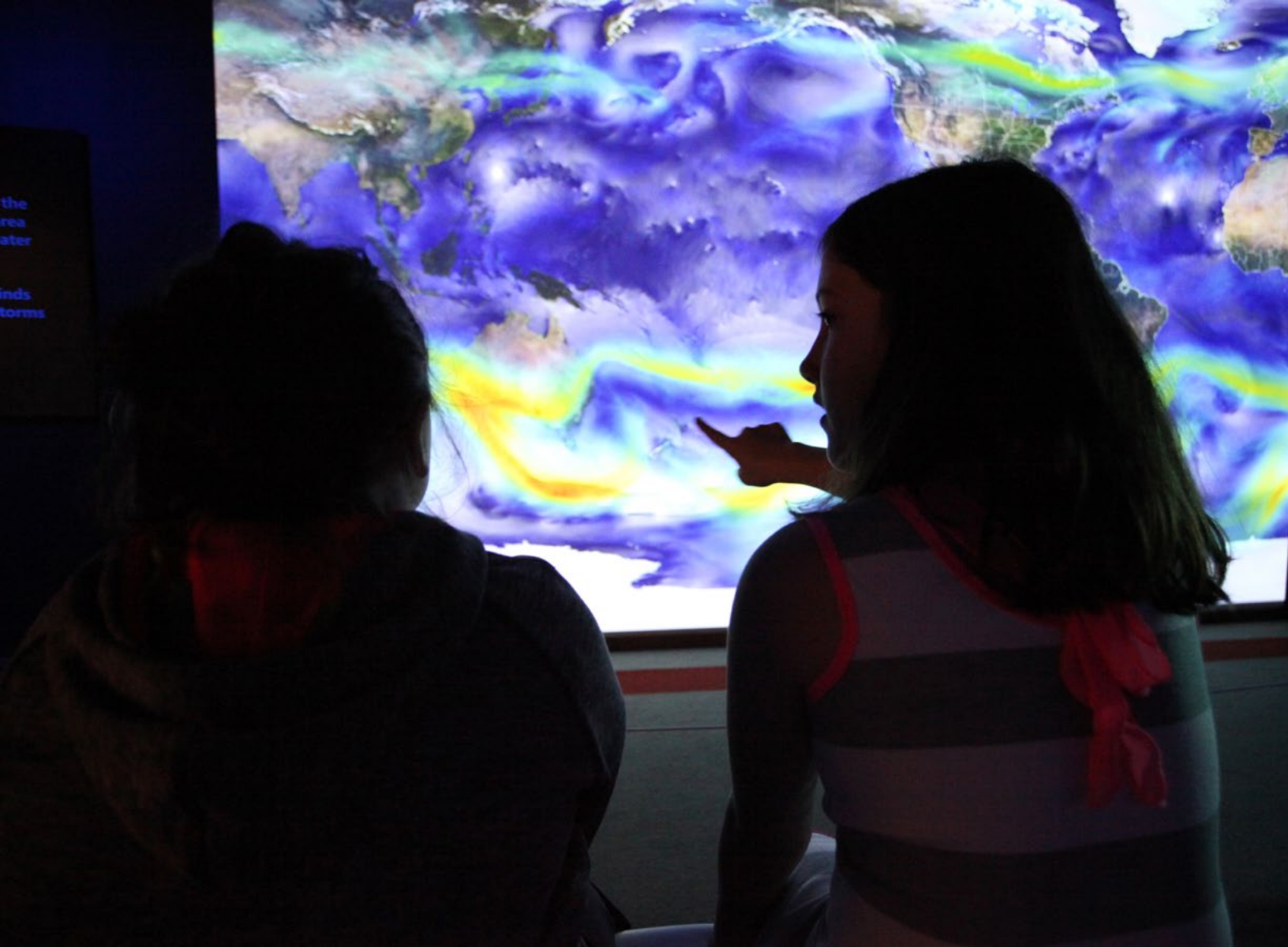
Don't miss the new Survival Store, an amazing new addition to the Museum store!

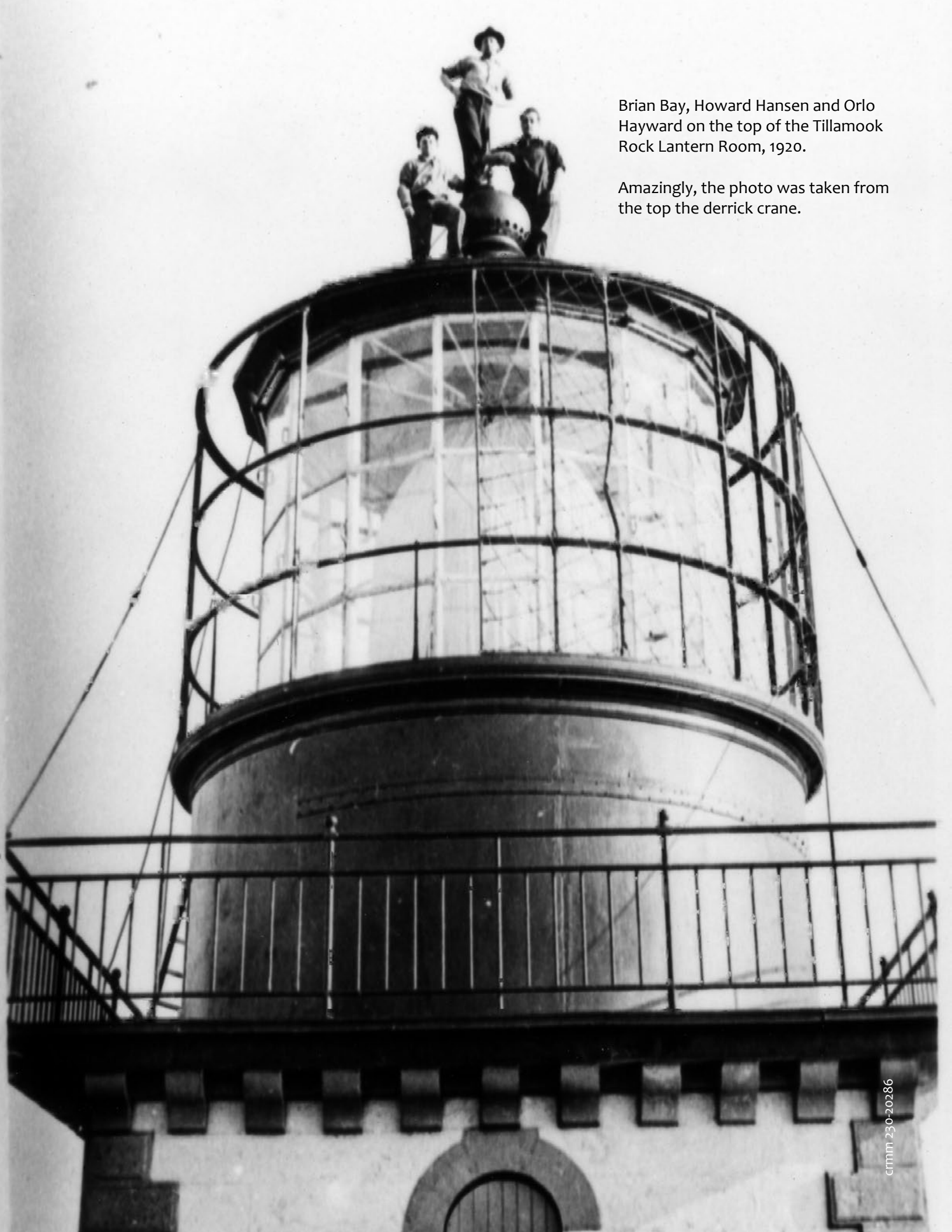


Cargo of the Columbia Festival

Every 4th grader in Astoria, Gearhart, and Seaside attended our 1st annual Cargo of the Columbia Festival April 20 and 21. Students were treated to six different activities related to the Columbia River's #1 export, Grain. Activities included a baking class, bulk carrier ship model building, recovering submerged barrels of grain from a shipwreck using student made ROVs, engineering working solar powered buoys, rope making, a lecture on the transportation of grain on the Columbia River, and a signal flag scavenger hunt on the lightship Columbia. The museum provided a hot dog lunch for every students, teacher, and chaperone (cooked by the Astoria Lions Club) and a cool CRMM water bottle. We had over four hundred visitors on campus over two days...the impressive thing is they arrived at 8:30 AM and didn't leave until 1:45 PM each day. Students baked and donated over 300 loaves of bread to help feed hungry residents of Astoria.

Special thanks to thirteen of our most special volunteers for spending the entire day with 4th graders from Clatsop County, we couldn't have done it with out you!





Brian Bay, Howard Hansen and Orlo Hayward on the top of the Tillamook Rock Lantern Room, 1920.

Amazingly, the photo was taken from the top the derrick crane.

The Halcyon Days Of Oregon's Tillamook Rock Lighthouse

By Debra Baldwin

The following article is reprinted with permission from our friends at Lighthouse Digest Magazine. Author/historian Debra Baldwin had an article about the keepers at Tillamook Rock featured in recent issues of the magazine and publisher Timothy Harrison has graciously given permission for us to reprint the first installment here for our members to enjoy. Debra visited the museum library doing research when she discovered we had another set of the images mentioned in her story. She was kind enough to help us identify each and has in the process, brought history back from obscurity and made it possible for us to share. Thank you Debra and Tim!

— Jeffrey H. Smith, Curator

Yes, believe it or not! This is the same “Terrible Tilly” of legendary lighthouse fame, the “most God-forsaken, nastiest chunk of rubble anywhere... a pint-sized Alcatraz that took on the aspects of an insane asylum where its inmates had been exiled forever” according to historian and former keeper Jim Gibbs in his reminiscence of when he was first stationed there.

In fact, in 1890, keeper Louis C. Sauer was indeed hauled off to spend his remaining days in an insane asylum after rushing toward his fellow keepers like a raving maniac, threatening to kill them. A 1900 newspaper declared that a man “not only risks his life in accepting the position, but his reason as well.” Ten of the first eleven head keepers decided not to take the chance and resigned instead.

Yes, this is the same Terrible Tilly that earned its moniker from the unleashing furies of the fiercest of storms with waves that regularly broke over the 134-foot height at the top of the lantern room. Hur-

ricane force winds that exceeded 100 mph would sheer off chunks of the basalt rock that were thrown upward by the eruption of a geyser formed out of the adjoining crevice on the south side. The hurtling missiles shattered panes of glass and prisms of the first order Fresnel lens while letting in the sea which would cascade down the stairs to flood the rooms below, carrying seaweed, fish, dead seabirds, and debris. The fog signal trumpets would be full of rocks, and original ventilators were flattened by the onslaught.

A storm in 1913 threw up so many rocks into the lighthouse that, according to Gibbs, “a gunboat firing a full broadside could not have done more damage.” The keepers thought they would surely be swept into the sea during the 15 hours that it lasted.

The horrendous storm of 1934 was so intense that it entirely decimated the lens which had to be replaced afterwards with an aero-marine revolving beacon. Fragments of rock weighing more than 60 pounds tore through the iron roof of the foghorn house and dwelling. Iron railings were flattened by the boulders and the three foot deeply anchored iron bolts of the huge derrick and boom-lifting apparatus were unearthed from solid rock, and all was swept away into the raging waves. During this particular storm, the western rock overhang, weighing an estimated 25 tons, split off and collapsed into the sea. Yet the lighthouse still stood and its keepers were undaunted in the performance of their duties, for which they all received commendations.

The newspapers accurately stated that, because of its perilous situation, it was the most avoided lighthouse on the government list, and that only through a long and careful search could men be found who

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Making Donuts in the Kitchen on Tillamook Rock Lighthouse, 1920.

crmm 230-20301

were willing to go there as keepers. It took a special type of man to be able to withstand such horrendous conditions, but amazingly enough, many were found who were willing to endure the wrath of Tilly for decades – and some even relished it!

Charley Bearman, who later served as a head keeper at Smith Island Lighthouse, was one such man. He recalled with fondness his days at Tillamook right before the Great War. In a recording he made shortly before his death, he stated “that he enjoyed every minute of the five years he spent on the Rock, and they were among the very happiest of his life – tending the light; making furniture from the hard wood crates in which their supplies were lowered on the rock from cranes on the tender; experimenting with cooking for the crew of four always on the rock while the fifth was on shore leave; playing cribbage and pinochle with the men; and precious time to read.”

In 1919, Robert Warrick, superinten-

dent of the 17th lighthouse district, reported that “Tillamook Lighthouse is regarded as a desirable post and applications have come from distant points, some of them in Europe for assignment to work there.”

Perhaps the most famous keeper who was known for his love of Tillamook was Robert Gerlof. He faithfully served at Tilly for 25 years from 1903 until 1928, at which point he was forced to retire, nearing 70 years old. In a newspaper interview, he remarked, “I do not want to leave my rock. I have no family. The sea is my friend. I do not want to go ashore.” In fact, Gerlof did not like to take shore leave if he could help it. The rock was truly his home.

Gerlof was born in Germany in 1860 and immigrated to America some time prior to 1899 when he is listed as serving on the Columbia River Light-Vessel 50. He then transferred to the lighthouse tender Columbine in 1901 before going out to Tillamook Rock in 1903 where he moved up through the ranks from fourth assistant until becoming head keeper in 1919. But it was during the year 1920 that Gerlof had the highlight

An unknown man poses with Walter Lawrence and Howard Hansen on the top deck at Tillamook Rock Lighthouse, 1920.



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of his career on the Rock and enjoyed his time there the most.

It was due to serving that year with four young men who made life thoroughly pleasant and entertaining, even in the midst of the most trying circumstances on Terrible Tilly. There were still the fearsome storms and isolation of its position, but first assistant Howard L. Hansen, age 19, second assistant Walter T. Lawrence 23; third assistant Orlo E. Hayward, age 18; and assistant Raymond Bay, age 18, truly made it a hallmark year in the history of Tillamook Rock.

Perhaps it was so much more enjoyable because they were friends and family before they ever served together on the Rock. Lawrence and Bay were half-brothers. Bay and Hansen had been raised together in part at Heceta Head Light as their fathers served there together along with Hayward's father at the same time. Orlo Hayward even lied about his age to get onto the Rock with the other three. A keeper had to be 18 to serve, and at the time of his enlistment, he was only 17, but he clearly

didn't want to be left behind.

Having been around lighthouse life and raised as lighthouse kids, they all seemed indifferent to the negative aspects of the confinement and isolation at Tillamook. Hayward served for a full year before he received his first shore leave. And when they did get off the Rock, they visited their families at Heceta Head and did activities with them, so they were very much still involved in lighthouse life.

While on Tilly, the four found plenty of diversions to keep them occupied outside of the normal and expected light-tending routine, chief of which was their interest in photography. They set up a developing room inside the lighthouse, purchased good quality cameras, and spent a lot of time experimenting with both the photographic aesthetics and developing techniques of 1920-era print photography. The Terrible Tilly Photo Studio was in high production mode that year! Any keeper who had shore leave was to purchase and shoot as many rolls of film as he could, and then bring them back to

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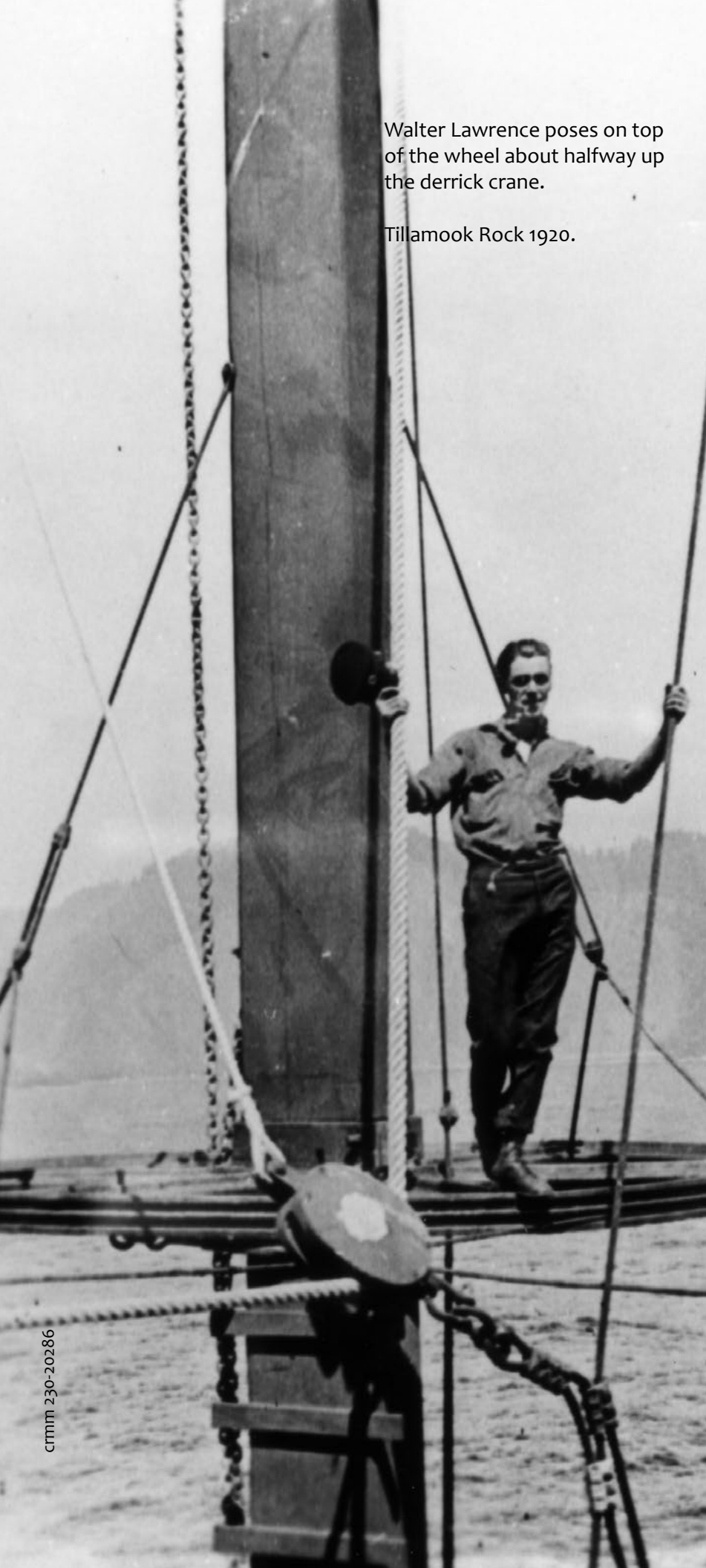
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Walter Lawrence poses on top of the wheel about halfway up the derrick crane.

Tillamook Rock 1920.



the lighthouse to develop. A good hundred photos of life on “Tillamook Rock” were also captured in the best tradition of vernacular photography.

While it appears that Lawrence was the most prolific of the four in taking photos and experimenting with developing processes, both Hayward and Hansen did their fair share of capturing the moment. Albums have been left behind that tell the tales of Tillamook’s halcyon days – full of sunshine, hijinks, and adventure.

Visually recorded activities included fishing, fog siren sitting, dancing on the most unlikely places, playing instruments, horseplay, painting and lighthouse chores, visits from tenders, kitchen time, pretend “race car” driving with the supplies cart, overnight camping out on the deck, drinking soda, smoking, derrick sitting and standing, as well as crevice climbing. The latter two “photo opportunity” spots were attempted most likely when Head Keeper Gerlof was not around as they looked to be dangerous in the extreme as one misstep could mean the demise of the photographic subject. In fact, the only death recorded of a keeper on the Rock was in 1911 when Thomas Jones fell 35 feet onto the rocks below while painting the derrick. That did not stop the intrepid Terrible Tilly Photo Studio crew from climbing to their lofty perches for the sake of a good shot.

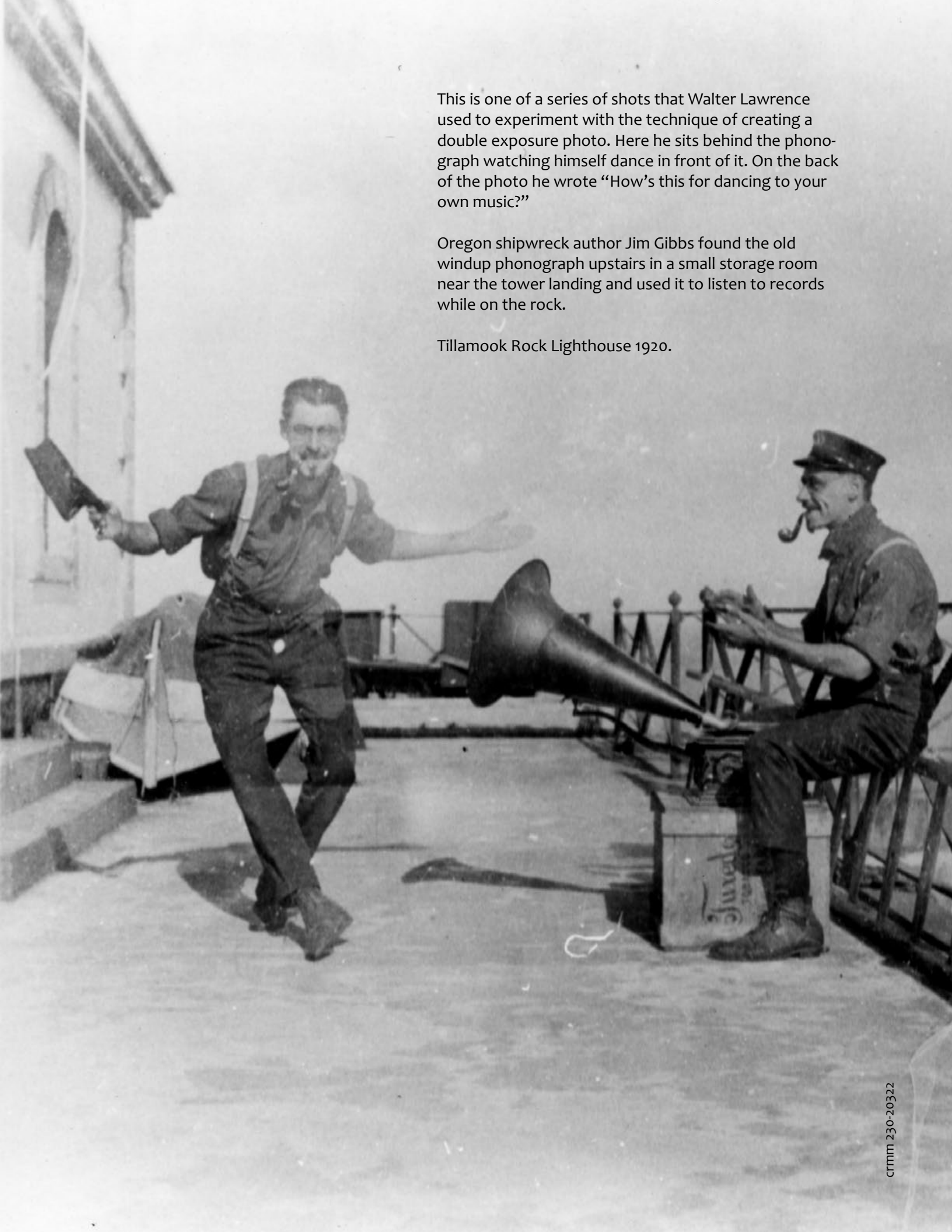
By way of aesthetic studies, Lawrence took many views of the Rock and the environment around it: sunsets, moonlit ocean reflections, perspective views, light value studies of rock texture and the wave eruption action of the crevice and surf. He tried his hand at double exposures which yielded the famous “dancing keeper” photo. He also enjoyed calligraphy, so his albums were works of art with photos mounted on black paper with silver pen scripted captions under them.

But, interestingly enough, of the 100 or so photos in the Lawrence and Hayward albums of Tillamook life, there is not one picture of Robert Gerlof to be found. It isn’t known exactly why. Either he was camera shy or not around when the others were in the photo-essay mode. All four of the young men appear in multiple shots, so it is supposed Gerlof was on his rare shore leave

This is one of a series of shots that Walter Lawrence used to experiment with the technique of creating a double exposure photo. Here he sits behind the phonograph watching himself dance in front of it. On the back of the photo he wrote "How's this for dancing to your own music?"

Oregon shipwreck author Jim Gibbs found the old windup phonograph upstairs in a small storage room near the tower landing and used it to listen to records while on the rock.

Tillamook Rock Lighthouse 1920.



when these photos at Tilly were taken, as the fifth man would necessarily be absent due to normal duty and break rotation.

We know, however, that Gerlof did have a good relationship with his four assistants. In a letter written to Orlo Hayward in 1927 from Tillamook, Gerlof states, "You know how it is out here, no excitement, only every month getting stirred up when the tender comes around and so there is not much to write about anything. When you four young men were on this station, this was about my best time I had on the Rock. You remember riding on the car up and down Broadway on Tillamook Rock or cooking donuts in the kitchen... Recollect that I am out here on the Lonesome Rock and you are on shore station, so your letters are worth the most." Gerlof sent \$20 upon the birth of Orlo's son Joe for his future savings. He was fondly remembered by the Haywards.

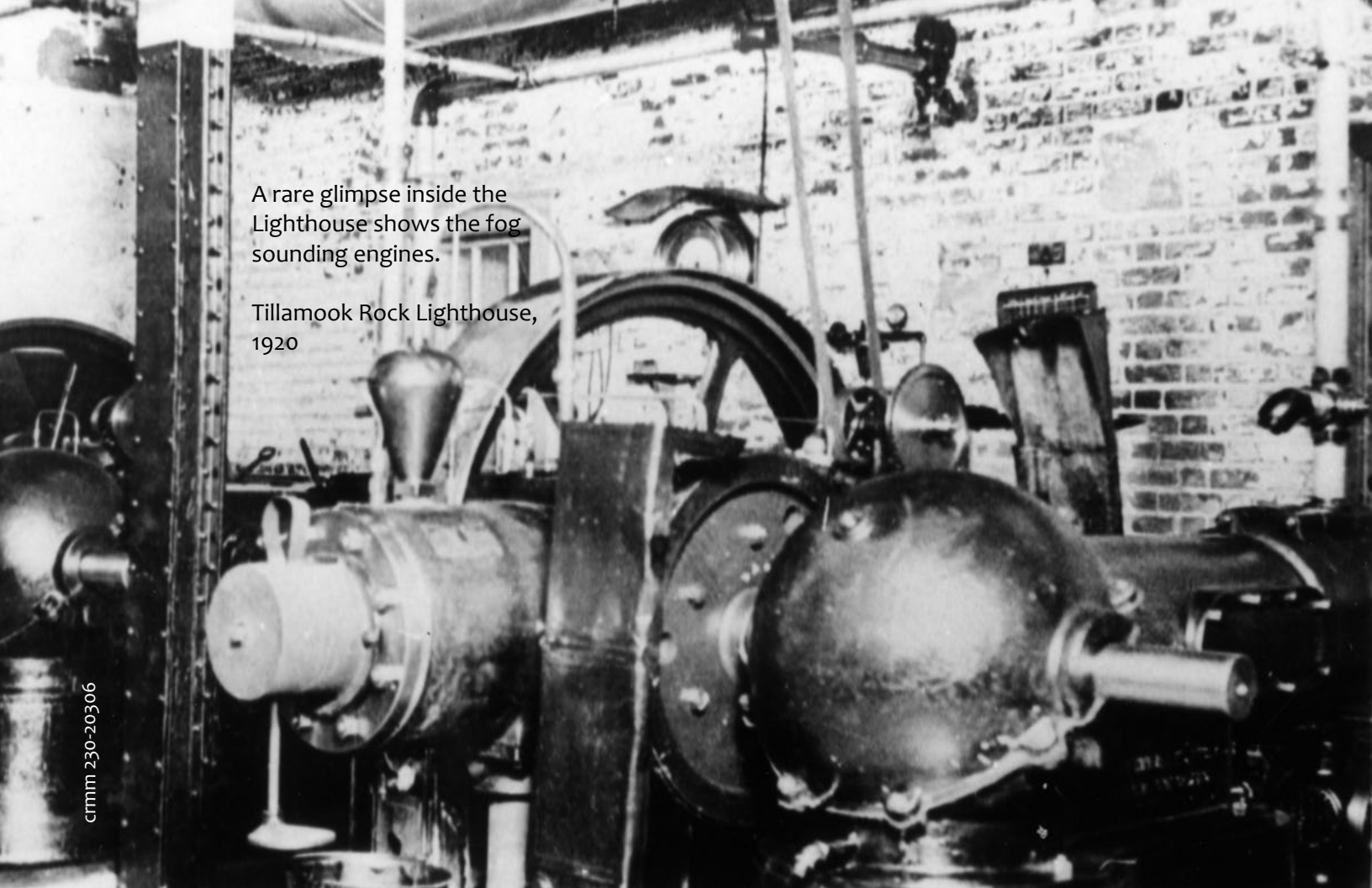
Gerlof stayed on the rock for another year, retiring in 1928 and moving to shore within sight of the light where he could see that it was lit every night before he slept. He died in 1930 at age 70. Orlo Hayward went on to serve a total of 25 years at another eight lighthouses up and down the Pacific Coast. Howard Hansen appears not to have remained in lighthouse service after his stint at Tilly. He was working as an Empire fisherman in 1936 when his boat overturned off the Bandon coast and he was ironically, tragically drowned. Raymond Bay was transferred to serve at Cape Blanco Lighthouse for a few years after Tillamook, and Walter Lawrence went on to Umpqua River Lighthouse for the next several years. He was able to turn his photographic skills into an occupation in part as one of his albums is entitled "work for others" and contains photos of people and places up through the early 1940's in Portland where he worked as a guard at the navy shipyard. He also continued with his musical pursuits, playing harmonica for a regular variety radio program in Portland.

The photographic legacy these four left serves to temper the horrific reputation of the West Coast's most loathsome lighthouse assignment. It shows a human slice of normalcy and calmer times, along with the camaraderie and high-spiritedness of

youth in the lighthouse service. It's not that the relentless storms raged any less. Orlo Hayward told his children about the "storm of the century" where Gerlof ordered him to lay flat on his stomach under the bed and hold onto the iron bedstead legs for dear life when they thought the lighthouse would surely be washed away. They also were close to starvation at times, due to the weather preventing the tender arrival with provisions. At one point they were down to beef jerky, a can of salmon, and some crackers before receiving relief. But whatever the hardships, they still maintained an upbeat attitude during their service there.

Even Jim Gibbs came around to a more favorable view of his time on the Rock, mixed with some obvious sentimentality. He wrote at the last, "Despite my early hatred of the rock, I had gradually grown very fond of it and had learned a whole new side to life, that in being in a lonely place and yet finding fulfillment in the natural wonders of God's world. Where else could you be on a small islet with a perfect 360-degree view of the ocean in all of its varied moods, a place with a grandstand seat for the most beautiful sunrises and sunsets of any place in the world? Where else could you better see the endless string of sea birds flying south in the fall or watch the vast aquarium of mammals and fish cavorting about? I became hooked on lighthouses, and Old Tillamook, despite its scars, was the hallmark."

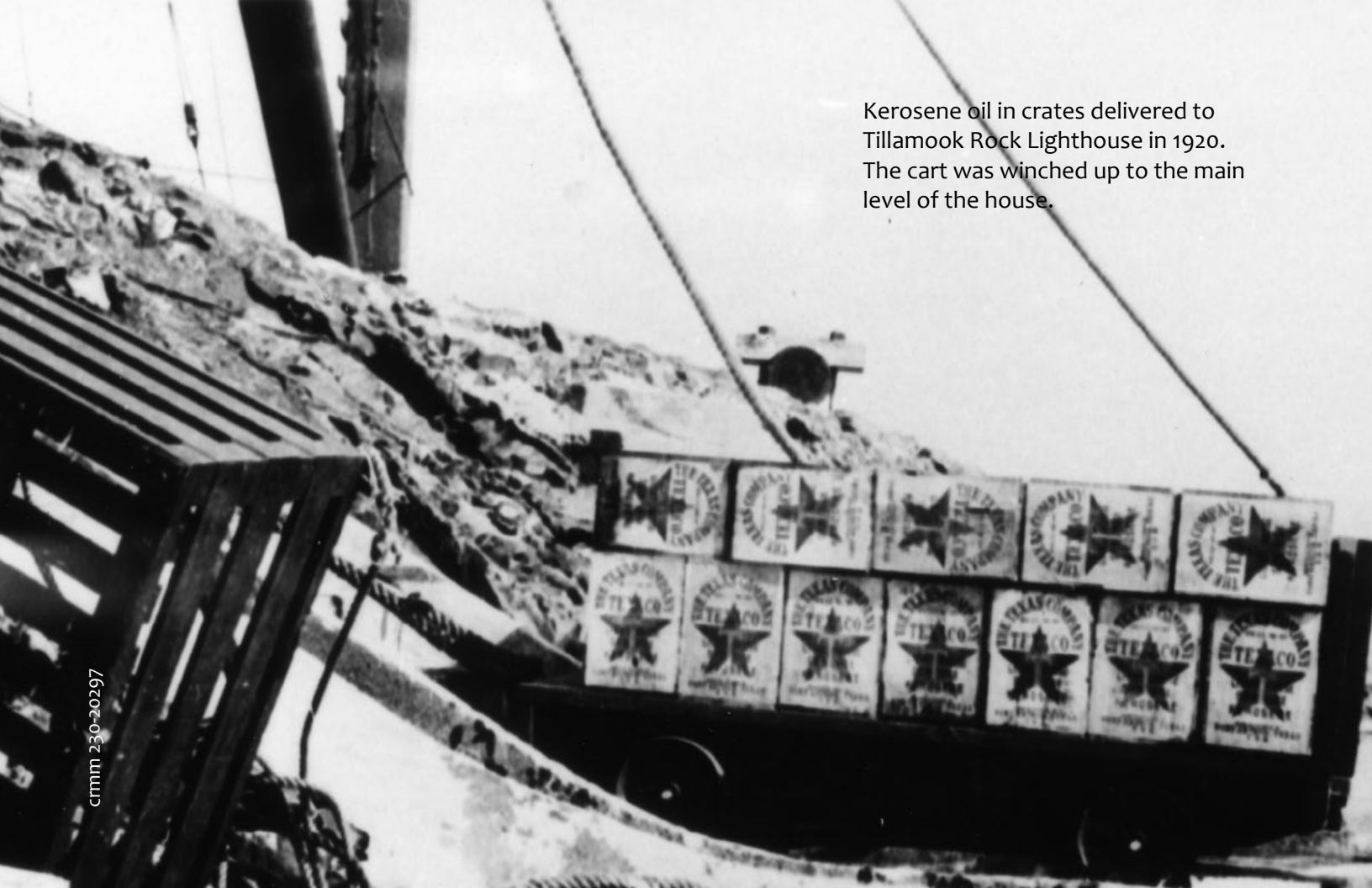
Maybe the real truth of the matter is that Terrible Tilly was not so wholly terrible after all – it just took the right person to appreciate all she had to offer.

A black and white photograph showing the interior of a fog sounding engine. The machine is complex, with various pipes, valves, and a large cylindrical tank. The background shows a brick wall with some text or markings.

A rare glimpse inside the Lighthouse shows the fog sounding engines.

Tillamook Rock Lighthouse,
1920

crmm 230-20306

A black and white photograph showing a wooden cart filled with crates of kerosene oil being hoisted by a crane. The cart is suspended by ropes and is being moved up a steep, rocky incline. The crates are labeled "THE TEXAS COMPANY".

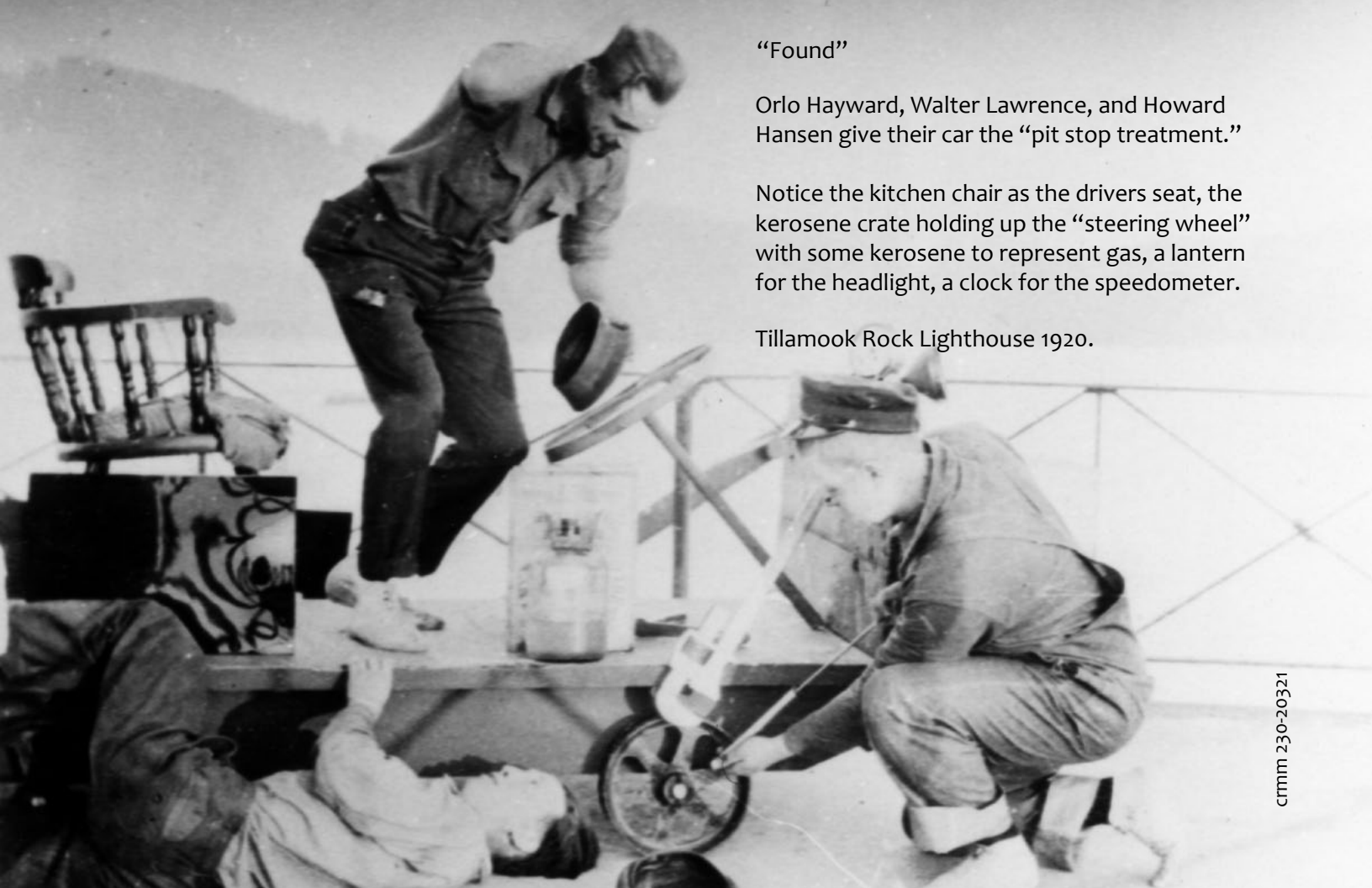
Kerosene oil in crates delivered to Tillamook Rock Lighthouse in 1920. The cart was winched up to the main level of the house.

crmm 230-20297



“Looking for Trouble”

crmm 230-20320



“Found”

Orlo Hayward, Walter Lawrence, and Howard Hansen give their car the “pit stop treatment.”

Notice the kitchen chair as the drivers seat, the kerosene crate holding up the “steering wheel” with some kerosene to represent gas, a lantern for the headlight, a clock for the speedometer.

Tillamook Rock Lighthouse 1920.

crmm 230-20321

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In Honor of

In Honor Of 9/14/2016 thru
5/2/2017

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At sea, an anchor to windward provides stability in a storm, and secures a vessel and its crew in difficult weather. Much like an anchor to windward, planned gifts such as bequests, gifts of real estate, and charitable trusts, provide security and benefits to donors and the Maritime Museum. Please consider a planned gift to the Museum.

For further information on how you can provide a lasting legacy to the Museum please contact Sam Johnson, Executive Director at 503-325-2323.

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