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OCOSTA-BY-THE-SEA: A BOOMTOWN IN THREE NARRATIVES

A Thesis

Presented to
the Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts

by

Katherine L. Arntzen

August 2009

Advisor: Dr. Bonnie Clark

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Advisor: Bonnie Clark
Degree Date: August 2009

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the Washington State 1890s railroad boomtown, Ocosta-by-the-Sea through place, microhistory, and narrative theories. Place theory focuses analysis on the townsite. A microhistory is created by the presentation of three narratives on Ocosta: the city-as-imagined, the city-as-built, and the city-as-remembered. The city-as-imagined narrative recounts the city that Ocosta was projected to become by its founders through analysis of historic maps, advertisements, and financial investments of the city's founders. The city-as-built uncovers information about the built environment of the site. The city-as-remembered reveals the city that has and is remembered by the local community. Site memory is explored through 1890s written accounts, 1950s radio transcripts from a local oral history program, a 2007 oral history event, and interviews with current residents in 2008. A fourth narrative is constructed by the reader while they read the text. This narrative contains the meaning of Ocosta that the reader has created for themselves while reading this text. Together, these narratives explore meanings that humans have written on the cultural landscape of Ocosta-by-the-Sea.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Places are dynamic; they range in size and definition for each individual that experiences them. Places are created once an area comes to hold meaning to an individual or group of people. Meaning can be assigned to a place by physically interacting with the site, or by experiencing it within one's imagination. In this thesis, you will travel to Ocosta in your imagination, walking through the path of time to its origins and following that path back to Ocosta as it is remembered and experienced today. Your journey is guided by three narratives: the city-as-imagined, the city-as-built, and the city-as-remembered.

Ocosta is located on the south shore of Grays Harbor; two and a half hours west of Seattle in Grays Harbor County, Washington (Figure 1). Incorporated in 1891, Ocosta boomed after the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) announced that their Pacific Ocean terminus would be in the city. The railroad boosted Ocosta's economy by connecting its lumber and fishing industries to national and international markets. Ocosta quickly busted due to an abundance of factors including railroad line washouts from inclement weather, land speculation without construction, the 1893 stock market crash, a shallow harbor, and competition from neighboring communities. Even though the initial success faded by 1895, the city struggled until 1932 when an overwhelming city debt influenced the remaining Ocostans to vote for disincorporation.

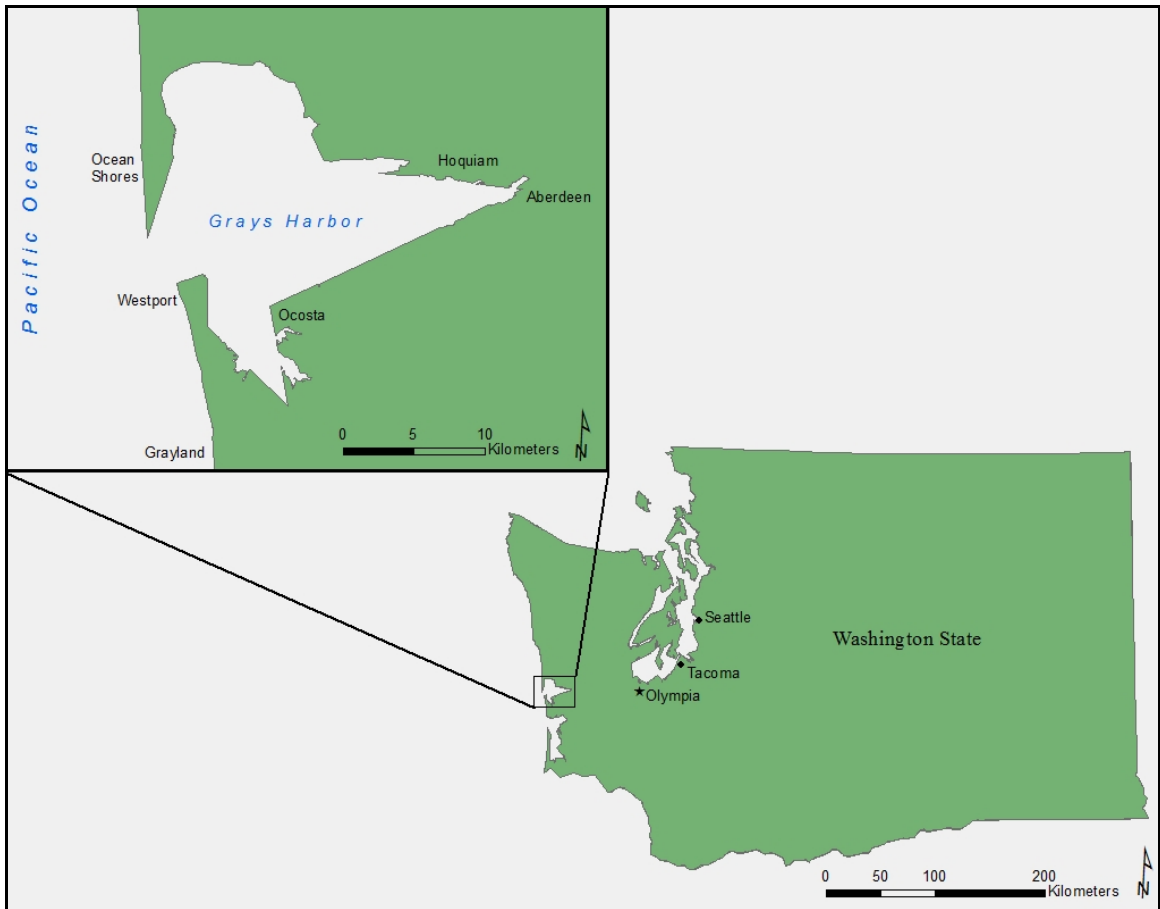


Figure 1: Washington State Map, Grays Harbor Map Inset, 2009.

Western railroad towns, like Ocosta, dot the landscape of the American West. Most of these sites were platted and developed prior to 1890; the date that Fredrick Jackson Turner proclaimed marked the end of Westward Expansion (1920). Ocosta is an exception. It is one of the last railroad boomtowns of its era to boom and bust. The townsite did not disappear immediately, but struggled along forty years after its initial success. Although Ocosta aspired to become the Boston of the West, it became a rural enclave. Mary Beaudry reminds us that stories of places that “did not ‘make it’ are as revealing and instructive as those who did” (2008:178). Although the site never became

a bustling city, it continued as a rural community and is still remembered in local lore and legend.

My Introduction to Ocosta

I became acquainted with Ocosta after I moved to Grays Harbor, Washington as an AmeriCorps VISTA in August of 2007. I was stationed at the Westport-South Beach Historical Society to work with their collections, aid in planning oral history events, and plan fundraising events. One of my first tasks with the Museum's collections was to accession the latest donation: the Record of Ocosta Ordinances and the Record of Ocosta Town Council. I accessioned the thick tomes quickly. Briefly confirming the contents, I paged through to read sections of the curvaceous script:

Ordinance No. 72

An ordinance relating to the running of large of certain stock in the town of Ocosta the regulations thereof providing for a common pound appointing the keeper thereof and proving for his compensation imposing a fine and providing for the sale of stock taken up as running large. (Town of Ocosta 1891:161)

Once recorded, I stored the volumes in a fire-proof cabinet, moving on to catalog and curate the next object in the collection. These volumes were later added to the Ocosta section of the museum's community exhibit.

I knew Ocosta was located along Highway 105 between Westport and Aberdeen, but there was no sign marking the site. Locals tried to explain where it was stating that: "Ocosta is next to Bay City" or "Ocosta is located at the elbow curve of Highway 105" and "Ocosta is in the mud flats below the Ocosta Castle," a large white Victorian home overlooking Grays Harbor's mudflats. I only conceptualized the townsite's location while driving to a genealogical society meeting with a museum volunteer, Dorothy.

While speeding along Highway 105 Dorothy pointed out the fields that were once Ocosta's city lots. She then gestured to the Ocosta Castle, proclaiming it the last standing structure from Ocosta.

I aided preparations for a *Fireside Chat* about Ocosta while planning my move to Denver, Colorado to attend graduate school at the University of Denver. *Fireside Chats* are a series of oral history events on local topics that were hosted by the Westport Maritime Museum. The Ocosta *Fireside Chat* was scheduled for October 17, 2006; two months after I started graduate school. Community members called me after the event relating what had transpired. They discussed the tales that were told, as well as questions that had been asked by the community. Their narratives of the *Fireside Chat* prompted my own questions: What did Ocosta's founders imagine the city becoming? Today it seems obvious that a city developed on mud flats would not survive. Why did they build there? What was built at the site? What remains of the city's built environment? How have others experienced the townsite? How are Ocosta memories shared in the community?

Theoretical Perspective

My analysis of Ocosta is informed by place, microhistory, and narrative theory. Place theory is the analysis of places which hold meaning to an individual or group and spaces areas which do not have meaning. Places and spaces operate on a variety of scales. Different people bestow different levels of meaning on different places. Microhistory confronts the challenges presented in place theory, focusing analysis of places on a micro scale to inform macro scale issues. This paper examines the macro

scale issue of place theory through the micro scale presentation of the Ocosta townsite through three narratives. Anthropological narrative theory stresses that the writer's agency in formulating texts should be acknowledged. In this work I frame three narratives that explore three dimensions of Ocosta: the city-as-imagined by city founders, the city-as-built by Ocosta inhabitants, and the city-as-remembered by residents and visitors to the site. Framing Ocosta data in narrative form acknowledges the agency of the researcher. It also juxtaposes the narratives, highlighting the shortcomings and benefits of each narrative.

Data presented in the Ocosta narratives was acquired through archival research, oral history collection, geophysical information system (GIS) analysis, and ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey. The city-as-imagined narrative is constructed out of data provided in Ocosta advertisements, plat maps, and financial records.

Advertisements inform how city founders projected the city's identity to potential settlers and investors. One pamphlet begins by stating that:

In writing this book it is our intention to give a fair and truthful statement of the facts, to interest parties who are westward bound to carefully investigate our merits before they decide upon any other location for a home, or to invest their hard-earned coin for certainly, if there is any new country worthy of notice, this surely is the one. (Anonymous 1970:1 [1890s])

The city founders clearly state the purpose of their following narrative. City plat maps are revealing in that they were filed, not solely by the two corporations which planned the city: the Northern Pacific Railroad Olympic Land Company and the Ocosta Land Company, but by individual entrepreneurs. Although portions of the town were planned by corporations, many sections were planned by individuals. Lastly, the financial records

of two of the founding members of the Ocosta Land Company: Robert Boyle and Frank Deckebach reveal their financial commitment to the survival of the townsite.

The city-as-built presents a narrative of Ocosta's built environment. The built environment is documented through the 1894 Ocosta Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, historic photograph analysis, city codes, and a ground-penetrating radar survey. The Ocosta Sanborn Fire Insurance Map documents the built environment of the city within twelve city blocks and three inset regions on the periphery of the city. Insets are placed in real space using GIS. The map provides spatial and written data on the built environment in 1894. Historic photographs of the site document the architectural styles of Ocosta's former built environment. GPR survey conducted in August 2008 over regions adjacent to the properties represented in the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map documents the built environment of those regions.

The city-as-remembered narrative encapsulates oral histories and published accounts of the site. The presented oral histories and published accounts include written experiences from the 1890s, 1950s radio transcripts, a 2007 oral history event on Ocosta, and open-ended interviews with current residents. Kent Lightfoot states that oral histories "articulate detailed accounts of the involvement of individual actors in family affairs, social relations within the community, and routine activities" (2008:270). The presented oral histories do just that. Early accounts illustrate the Ocosta community as observed by visitors at its founding. The 1950s radio program illuminates the occupations of Ocosta's residents and what happened to the city's structures. The 2007 *Fireside Chat* stories represent issues that current residents find relevant to their lives and

experiences with Ocosta's landscape and residents. Open-ended interviews with current residents revealed information about the city's former built environment not previously encountered by the researcher, as well as data on the memories that they found to be most compelling from their interactions at the site.

Anthropological texts are interpretations of data. Ocosta research is interpreted in three narratives: the city-as-imagined, the city-as-built, and the city-as-remembered. The city-as-imagined documents the city that was proposed to be constructed at Ocosta. The city-as-built presents data on the built environment of the townsite. The city-as-remembered humanizes the Ocosta landscape documenting memories of visitors and residents of the city. Together, the three narratives stress the importance of multiple lines of inquiry by highlighting different aspects of the site. These narratives present a microhistory of the place, Ocosta.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

Archaeological sites are situated in unique geological environments and local and regional histories (Steward 2006; Wolf 2006). Environmental and historical background of the Ocosta site enables a deeper understanding of the three Ocosta narratives, the city-as-imagined, the city-as-built, and the city-as-remembered. Ocosta was imagined because of ongoing railroad planning throughout Washington. The railroad to Grays Harbor was planned due to the success of the Northern Pacific Railroad's northern transcontinental line's success. Ocosta was built to facilitate trade by rail and sea. The town was constructed to accommodate the marshy environment in which it was constructed with raised sidewalks and planked streets. The site is remembered by individuals that have had experiences in the town.

Environment

Ocosta is located on the south shore of Grays Harbor in Grays Harbor County, Washington (see Figure 1). The platted townsite of Ocosta encompasses one thousand acres. One mile of the platted townsite is coastal property. The Ocosta coastline has an elevation between ten and twenty feet above sea level. The water table is located one meter beneath the ground surface at this elevation. Redman Slough intersects the Ocosta property at this elevation. Portions of this property have been designated as wetlands by the State of Washington. Half a mile inland the elevation increases to between twenty

and forty feet above sea level. The water table from the region of higher elevation is approximately thirty feet beneath the ground surface. This area of higher elevation is forested.

The Ocosta bedrock consists of Quaternary alluvial deposits. Alluvial and eolian sediments have formed over these geologic layers during the Holocene. Five soil types have been identified by the United States Department of Agriculture at Ocosta, the Calowah silt loam, Ocosta silty loam, Rennie silty clay loam, Yaquina loamy fine sand, and Seastrant variant muck (see USGS map in Appendix). The geologic profile of the Ocosta townsite has formed by alluvial, eolian, *in situ* deposition, and erosion of soils and sediments. The most widespread soil type is Calowah. This is also the oldest soil in the region. It consists of fluvial deposits from the glacial era. This soil only occurs in elevated regions at the site. This layer has been removed from the rest of the site by erosion caused by historic fluvial processes. The Ocosta silty clay loam and the Rennie silty clay loam form in floodplains and deltas. These soils and sediments formed in regions in which the Calowah silty clay loam had previously eroded. These sediments are distributed along the townsite waterways, explicitly the sloughs and coastline. Yaquina loamy fine sand forms from eolian processes. Wind distributed sand into depressions along the coastline. These sands may have been deposited during the formation of coastal sand dunes. The last soil and sediment, seastrant variant muck is formed by a continually decomposing O horizon over a sand layer. These soils are likely forming over historic Yaquina loamy fine sand deposits. This is an actively building soil.

Temperature and precipitation rates have not been consistently recorded for Ocosta, but temperature and precipitation rates are available from the Grayland, Washington Western Regional Climate Center (WRCC). Grayland is located eight miles to the southwest of Ocosta and is thus a good proxy for Ocosta temperature and precipitation rates (see Figure 1). Figure 2 graphically represents the average monthly temperatures and precipitation rates at Grayland from 1961 to 1990. Monthly temperatures at Grayland annually fluctuate between thirty-five and seventy degrees Fahrenheit. Precipitation in this region of Grays Harbor varies between .400 and .025 inches of precipitation per day. Annually, Grayland received 73.21 inches of precipitation per year between 1948 and 2007 (WRCC 2009).

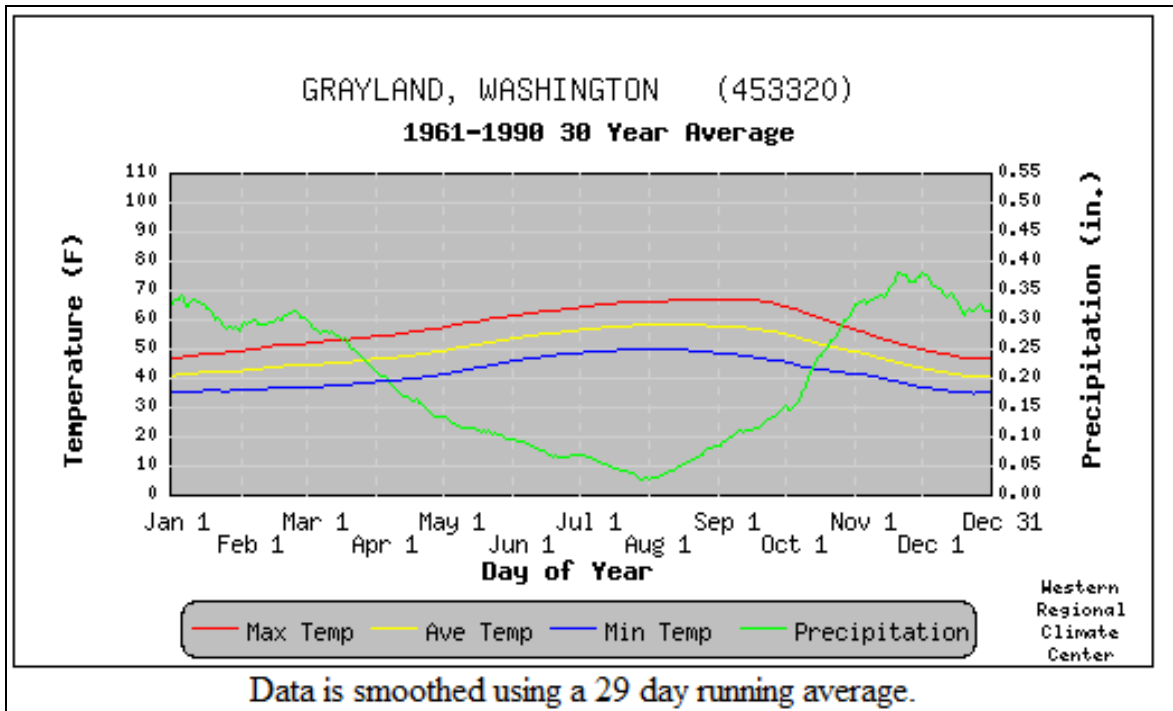


Figure 2: Grayland, Washington 1961-1990 Monthly Averages of Temperature and Precipitation. (WRCC 1990)

The landscape at Ocosta in the 1890s was different from the landscape of today (Figure 3). In the 1890s the lower coastal property in Ocosta was cleared of trees, whereas the elevated property was densely forested. Lumber has been one of the most profitable natural resources in the Pacific Northwest. Inland Ocosta was once densely forested with record breaking tall trees. In 1894, the Chicago Daily Tribune documented one Ocosta tree being 407 feet tall and seventy feet in circumference (Chicago Daily Tribune [CDT], 18 November 1894:26). The local timber industry supported three documented Ocosta factories, the Ocosta Tub Works, Ocosta Roller Mill, and Ocosta Lumber Co's Saw and Planing Mill. Figures 4 and 5 depict deforestation at Ocosta, likely caused by the lumber industry. In the 1890s Washington State's lumber industry was beginning to eclipse the lumber industry of the Great Lakes Region. Deforestation from logging accelerated erosion rates throughout the state. In Ocosta, stumps were removed from logged land for urban and agrarian development. The methods of clearing stumps altered the landscape. One local property owner recalled the use of explosives to clear stumps from grazing lands (Laurie Lowry, personal communication 2008). Explosives would have not just removed tree stumps, but also altered the surrounding soils and sediments.

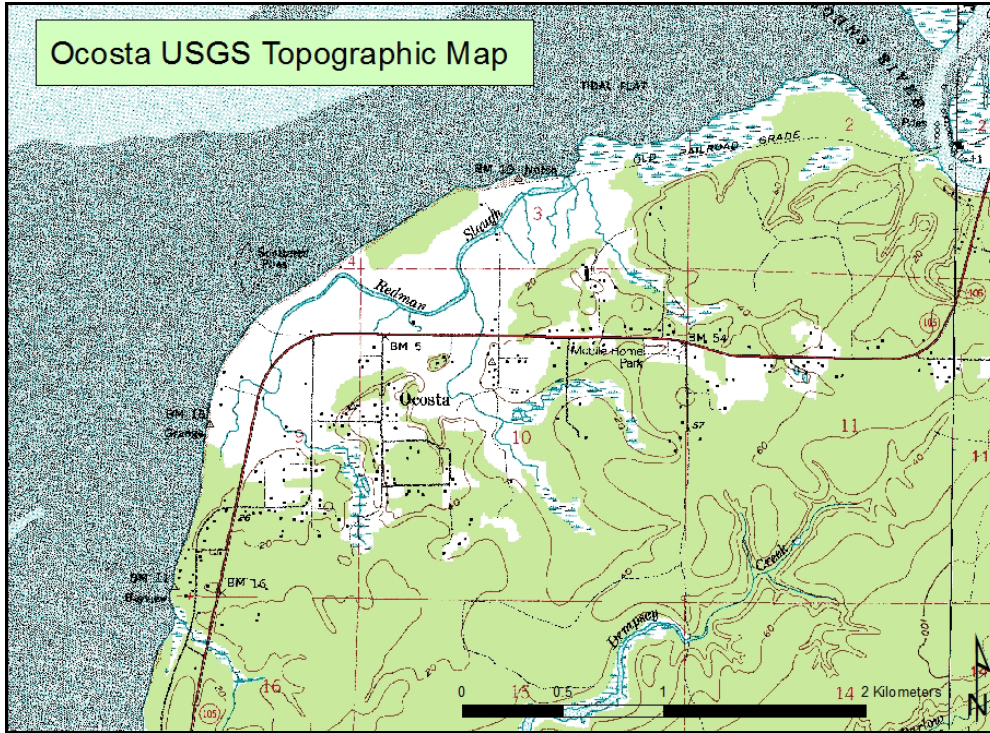


Figure 3: Ocosta USGS Topographic Map, 1956, photo-revised 1994.



Figure 4: Ocosta Deforestation, Photograph taken in the fall during the 1890s, Polson Museum Collection.



Figure 5: Donkey Engine and Crew: Ward-Sargent Lumber Company at Ocosta, 1928, University of Washington Digital Collection.

Ocosta's downtown was built in a region that is one meter above the water table. This area has been prone to tidal flooding. Eyewitness accounts and local newspapers relate that downtown Ocosta occasionally flooded (Aberdeen Herald [AH], 19 February 1891b:4; Kirk and Alexander 1990). Flooding at Ocosta was reduced after the Army Corps of Engineers constructed two jetties at the mouth of the Harbor in the early 1900s. The jetty not only reduced flooding, but altered coastal sedimentation processes. The Columbia River is the main source of alluvial sediments in Grays Harbor. Since the 1800s sediments from the Columbia River have been reduced by sixty percent (Borde, et al. 2003). Sedimentation from the Columbia River has been reduced by smaller volumes

of water and dredging. The reduction of sediments from the Columbia River, sedimentation from the denuding of Grays Harbor forests and harbor dredging has altered the natural processes of sedimentation in Grays Harbor. Despite all of these changes, Borde et al. found negligible changes in the tidal flats surrounding Ocosta (Figure 6).

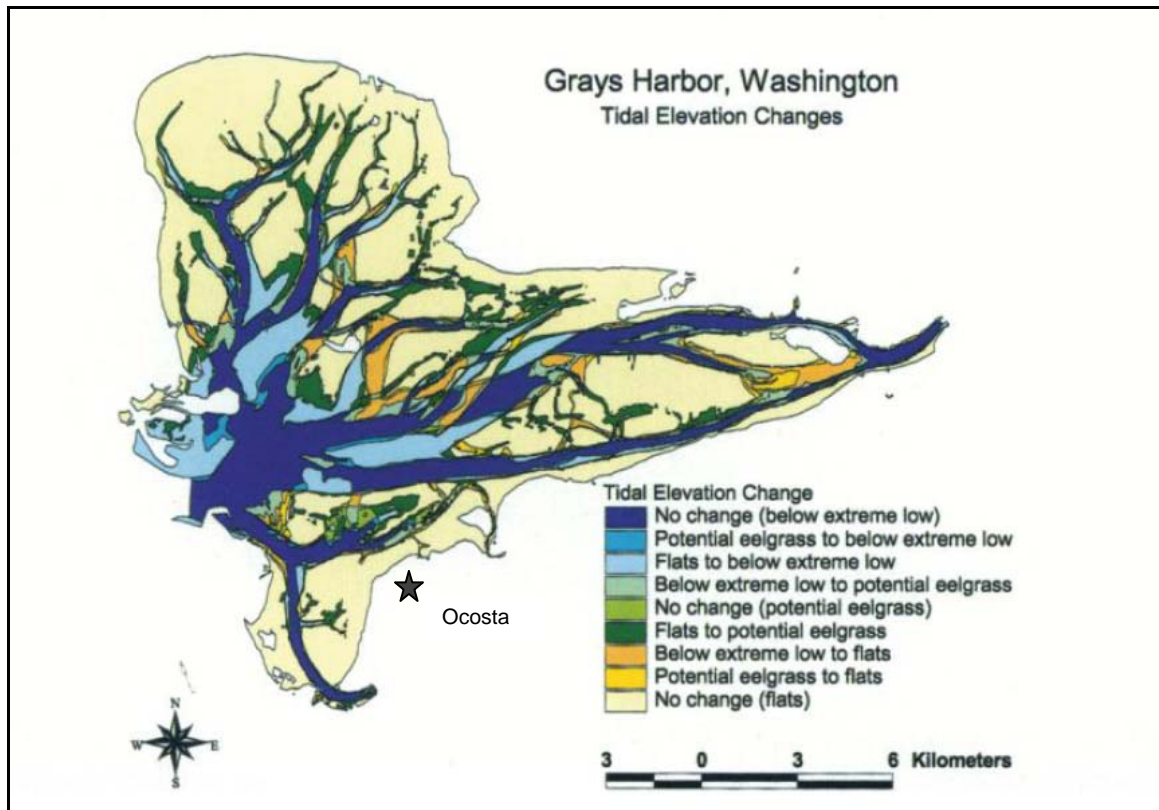


Figure 6: Grays Harbor Tidal Elevation Changes, 2003. (Borde et al. 2003)

Although Grays Harbor water systems have not been significantly altered, inland waterways have been changed at Ocosta. Changes in land use have altered how inland waterways are managed. These changes are most evident at Ocosta Third Street (Figure 7). Ocosta Third Street is prone to seasonal flooding. Residents state that flooding occurs because the adjacent slough is no longer regularly cleared. While the property in

which the slough is located was being actively farmed, the slough was regularly dredged. Currently the property is not being actively farmed or dredged. State designation of large portions of Ocosta as wetlands has also altered the management of the sloughs. In order to clear a slough a permit must be obtained. Changing maintenance of the inland waterways of Ocosta is altering the physical landscape.



Figure 7: Third Street flooding, view south from the intersection of Highway 105 and Third Street, 2008.

Historical Background

Regional History

The site that would become Ocosta was originally home to the Kwaiailk or Chehalis people. The largest settlement of the Chehalis, Point Chehalis was located on

the site of today's Westport, seven miles from Ocosta (see Figure 1). Chehalis fishing and camping sites dotted the coast of the Harbor. Archaeologically these fishing and camping sites have been identified by the presence of shell middens and fishing weirs. A 1947 University of Washington coastal survey by Richard Daugherty documented a shell midden at the mouth of an Ocosta slough, as well as, the Minard site on the North Bay of Grays Harbor (Daugherty 1947). The Minard site was later excavated by University of Washington and WSU archaeologists. Both sites have extensive middens. Lower levels of the Minard midden were deposited more than 1,000 years BP. The site was occupied until the arrival of Euro-American traders (Kirk and Daugherty 2007:82). In 1999, cedar stakes (the remains of fish weirs) were observed in tidal flats a few miles from the Minard site.

Grays Harbor County was officially "discovered" by Captain Robert Gray on May 7, 1792. Gray named the harbor, Bulfinch Harbor, after one of the ship's owners Charles Bulfinch. Unfortunately for Bulfinch, Gray's charts were never published. The charts of Captain Vancouver were published though. He met up with Captain Gray after Gray had "discovered" Grays Harbor, recording it in his charts as Grays Harbor. Afterwards, Captain Robert Gray sailed on to "discover" the mouth of the Columbia River.

Gray was followed by a series of scientific research groups and explorers. Euro-American settlers began to arrive in Grays Harbor during the 1850s, after the passage of the 1850 and 1853 Donation Acts, and the 1862 Homestead Act. These acts stipulated that if a settler surveyed a homestead claim and lived on it, for two to four years,

depending on the act they would receive the land for a sum stipulated by the respective law. Early settlers on the Harbor ranched, farmed, fished, and began lumber businesses. Even though the Chehalis were friendly, the settlers still feared them. Edwin van Sykle recounts that a Grays Harbor settler, Martha Medcalf, remained with her children on the back hill of her property due to fear of an attack (1982:95). This fear and incidents east of the Cascades prompted the creation of Fort Chehalis by Company A of the 4th Infantry at Chehalis Point (the site of Westport) from February 9, 1860 to June 19, 1861 (see Figure 1). Fort Chehalis is also known as Port Chehalis. Federal troops were removed from Fort Chehalis after the start of the Civil War. On August 3, 1861 Fort Chehalis buildings were sold. Several of the buildings are still in use in the neighboring community of Hoquiam.

In 1853 an epidemic devastated Point Chehalis, virtually depopulating the region. The Chehalis refer to the epidemic as the “Big Sick.” There were so many deaths and so few survivors that many of the dead were buried in shallow graves rather than the traditional tree burials (Syckle 1982). Edwin van Sykle writes that excavation for a Bay City parking garage revealed one of these shallow burials in 1930 (1982:52).

Washington Territory was created by on March 2, 1853. Olympia, Washington was the capitol of the territory. Chehalis County was created on April 14, 1854. Washington State was admitted to the Union on November 11, 1899. In 1915, Chehalis County was renamed Grays Harbor after Captain Robert Gray, the “discoverer” of the Harbor.

In the 1870s, the Union Pacific and NP Railroads were competing for control of railroad traffic in Washington State. The NP emerged victorious, controlling a majority of Washington State railroad lines. The company completed a railroad line from Minnesota to Tacoma, Washington in 1888. Railroads brought economic prosperity to communities by connecting them to regional and national markets. In 1874, Seattle and Olympia constructed their own spurs to the NPRR to reap the benefits of railroad transportation. The Tacoma, Olympia & Pacific Railroad Company began speculating a railroad line from Tacoma to Grays Harbor in 1889.

Communities around the harbor were just beginning to incorporate at the time. Aberdeen was the first to incorporate on Grays Harbor, on March 20, 1888. Aberdeen was followed by Hoquiam's incorporation on May 21, 1890 (see Figure 1). Westport incorporated in 1894 after Frank Peterson filed the, "Westport Beach" plat in 1891.

History of Ocosta-by-the-Sea

The future site of Ocosta was first settled in July of 1858 by Reuban Redman and his family to the east of Redman Slough. Redman did not remain, but the Ocosta slough has retained his name (Syckle 1982:279). In 1859, Francis Talbert settled on the west fork of Redman Slough. Talbert planned a small nursery on the site, but abandoned the property to mine gold in British Columbia's Salmon River. The Redman Creek property was taken up by John Fry in 1869. Fry ranched cattle on the property. In 1876, John Fry moved south of Ocosta to Oysterville (Figure 8-9).

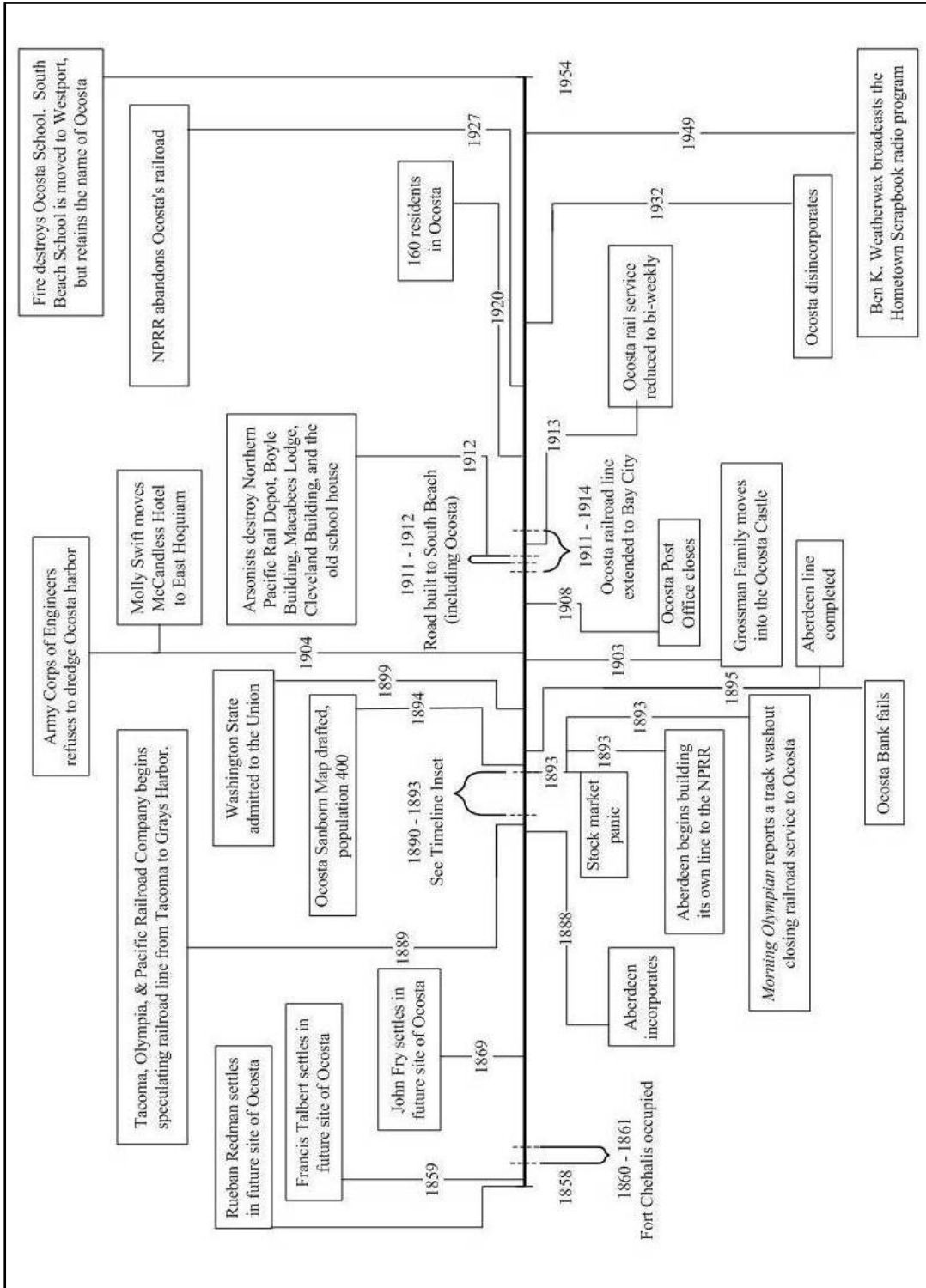


Figure 8: Ocoosta Timeline, 1858 to 1954.

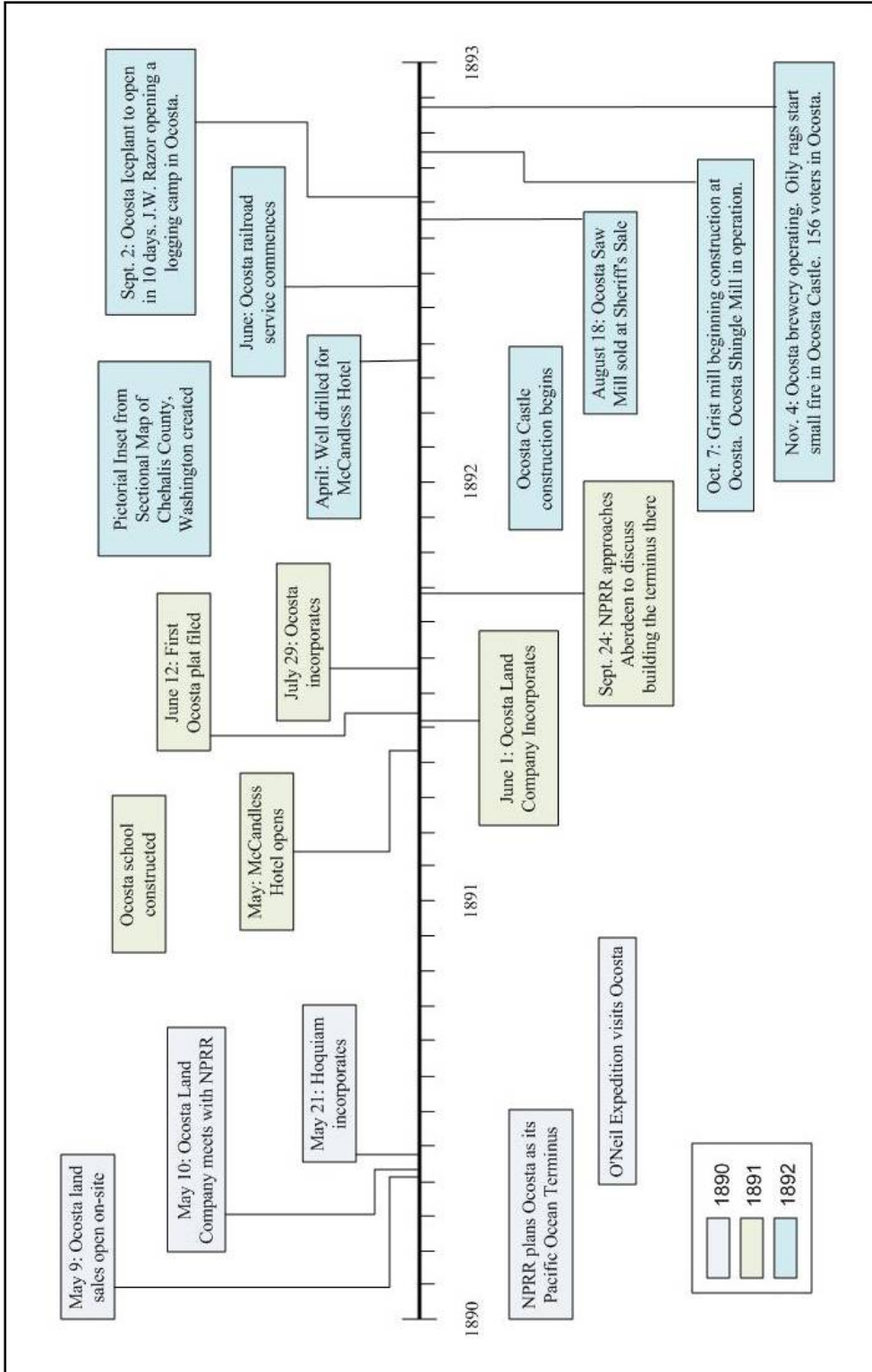


Figure 9: Ocoosta Timeline Inset, 1890 to 1893.

Property ownership of the future townsite is unclear prior to mass advertising of the site as the NPRR's Pacific Ocean Terminus in the early 1890s. Land sales opened at Ocosta on May 9, 1890. People came from across the country to purchase lots. At first glance Ocosta was a promising site. Construction had already produced planked broadways lined by fir and cedar trees. However, close inspection revealed that the "trees had been firmly spiked to the wooden stringers of the sidewalks at graceful intervals of about sixteen feet" (Macdonald 1929). Many failed to notice the staged setting. On the first day of sale, over 300 lots were sold for a profit exceeding \$90,000 (Holbrook 1952; Syckle 1982).

The Ocosta Land Company, a group of developers from Washington State including Royal L. Austin, Frank G. Deckebach, and Robert L. Boyle courted the NPRR to select Ocosta as their Grays Harbor terminus. First, the Ocosta Land Company purchased property at the future site of Ocosta. Then they deeded half of the property to the NPRR in exchange for the NPRR selecting Ocosta as the site of its Grays Harbor terminus. The NPRR sold their property through the Olympic Land and Investment Company (Syckle 1982:208). A.W. Jones is listed in the 1891-1892 R. L. Polk City Directory as the manager of both the Ocosta Land Company and the Olympic Land and Investment Company, suggesting that the two organizations remained closely linked throughout development of the townsite (1891).

Development of the townsite was driven by speculation that the NPRR would keep Ocosta as its sole Pacific Ocean terminus on Grays Harbor. The NPRR began to plan a railroad line running from Tacoma to Grays Harbor in 1890 rather than selecting

one of the established towns on the east and north shores of Grays Harbor. Newspaper advertisements announced “Ocosta [a]s the only terminus on the Pacific Ocean recognized by the Northern Pacific Railway” in 1891 (O 4 April 1891:3).

The first Ocosta plat was registered with the Montesano courthouse on June 21, 1891. The city was incorporated on July 29, 1891. Frank G. Dechebach was elected the town’s first mayor with ninety-eight votes. In 1891, the *Aberdeen Herald* Newspaper announced that the Ocosta Land Company had given a lot of land to the school district to build a school for no less than five thousand dollars (AH, 4 November 1891a:4). The school was completed in time for summer school (Figure 10). It was located on the tidal flats of downtown Ocosta.

During the first few years, newspapers from the Pacific Northwest were riddled with announcements of Ocosta business openings. For example, the Montesano Vidette publicized that the Ocosta Ice Plant would be complete in seven to ten days and that J.W. Razor would be starting a logging camp in the vicinity of the townsite on September 2, 1892 (MV). On October 7, 1892 the Montesano Vidette stated that V. Wattier was opening a grist mill in Ocosta and that the Ocosta Shingle Mill was now in full operation (MV). The paper later announced that the Ocosta brewery was in full operation and that the Polson logging company would be opening a logging camp near the townsite (MV, 4 November, 1892).



Figure 10: Ocosta School, 1891-1912, Polson Museum Collection.

Only a year after it had started constructing the line, the NPRR began to question its investment in Ocosta. On September 24, 1891 the NPRR approached Aberdeen to discuss building the railroad terminus to their city instead of Ocosta. The NPRR requested right-of-way rights to city streets and public property, as well as a donation of a \$2,500 railroad depot and property. Aberdeen city officials turned down the proposal. After a series of construction delays, railroad service to Ocosta commenced in June of 1892 (Figure 11).



Figure 11: Ocosta Railroad Depot, 1890-1912, Polson Museum Collection.

Despite grand expectations, Ocosta was quickly beset with several challenges. First, Ocosta businesses struggled economically. For instance, the *Aberdeen Herald* announced that the Ocosta saw mill was sold by sheriff's sale on August 18, 1892 (AH, 22 September 1892b:3). The mill was purchased by Frank G. Deckebach, owner of the Bank of Ocosta and mayor of Ocosta. Second, the stock market panic of 1893 further destabilized Ocosta's investors. Thirdly, railroad service to Ocosta was unreliable. A NPRR labor strike coincided with the 1893 stock market crash threatening railroad service to the town. Adverse weather also frequently damaged the Ocosta tracks (O, 9 February 1893). A local paper reported that a track wash out meant that "business of all

kind stopped... and everything wears a holiday appearance” (O, 9 February 1893).

Lastly, Aberdeen decided to build its own railroad spur to the NPRR line in 1893.

Aberdeen city founder, Samuel Benn, donated city lots to citizens that worked on completing the spur. Wood and salvaged railroad rails were also donated to the cause.

The Aberdeen line was completed on April 1, 1895.

By 1894, Ocosta had 400 residents, but the mayor had moved to Tacoma and the Town Bank was floundering. The bank received letters from creditors from throughout the nation. On September 22, 1894 the Citizen’s Bank of Tacoma wrote to the Bank of Ocosta manager, Frank G. Deckebach to “hold back [payments] all you can till the Oct. payment so as to help us all you can” (Citizen's National Bank 1894). On February 2, 1895 the Second National Bank of Cincinnati wrote to Deckebach re-requesting funds requested in January of 1894. The bank stated that Deckebach’s brother and mother were currently covering the debt and that they were eager to hear from him (Cox 1895). Prior to 1917, there were no banking regulations in Washington state guarantying bank deposits. Individuals that placed their savings with the Bank of Ocosta lost most of their savings when the bank failed in 1895 (CDT, 12 June 1895).

To add to their troubles, anticipated seafaring traffic did not come to Ocosta. The completion of the Westport Jetty caused increased sedimentation in Grays Harbor’s South Bay. In order to maintain their sea access the Ocosta Harbor needed to be dredged. The Army Corps of Engineers refused to dredge the South Bay of Grays Harbor in 1904 causing seafaring traffic to come to a halt. Instead of dredging Ocosta, the Army Corps

of Engineers opted to maintain the Aberdeen and Hoquiam harbors. Shipping routes kept to Aberdeen and Hoquiam ports rather than risk running aground at Ocosta.

The 1903-1904 R. L. Polk & Co.'s City Directory, a Grays Harbor business directory lists 72 people living in Ocosta (1903). This population count only includes taxpayers and children. This represents a substantial decrease in population from the 400 recorded by the 1894 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

The Ocosta railroad line was extended to the whaling plant in Bay City from 1911 to 1914 (Cheever 1948:158). By 1913 the NPRR reduced Ocosta rail service from daily to bi-weekly (O, 20 September 1913). In 1927, the NPRR abandoned the railroad track between Markham and Bay City, including Ocosta (Cheever 1948:159).

Ocosta faded because of an un-navigable port, unreliable railroad service, and the neighboring competition of Aberdeen. In 1908, the Ocosta Post Office closed its doors. Ocosta residents then received their mail by a boat launch from Hoquiam (Grays Harbor Post [GHP], 2 May 1908). By 1913, a nostalgic newspaper reporter described Ocosta as having once

bade fair to lead the Northwest... [growing] with a rapidity not equaled by any town in this state since. Elaborate business blocks and hotels sprung up. Men invested their earnings in beautiful homes. Then the bubble burst. Train service soon dwindled to one train each week. Sometimes it did not run. Buildings rotted and tottered to the ground. Rats were the guests of hotels and of residences never occupied. (Monfort 1913)

Not all of the structures built in Ocosta "rotted and tottered to the ground" some burned, others were dismantled, several were barged across the Harbor, and one, the Ocosta

Castle, still overlooks the former town. The Northern Pacific Depot, Boyle Building, Maccabees Lodge, Cleveland Building, and the old school house were all destroyed by an arsonist in 1912 (AH, 21 November 1912:1). Arson was proved by the presence of oil soaked kindling in one of the structures. The owner of the Boyle Building, Mrs. Helker stated that she had been planning on disassembling the building to reuse the materials (AH, 21 November 1912:1). Several structures were barged across Grays Harbor to the economically successful town of Hoquiam. Lila Mitchell has documented that Hoquiam's Ace Tavern is a former Ocosta structure that had been barged across the harbor (Scafturon 1980s). Today the Ace Tavern is located in East Hoquiam at the intersection of Ontario Street and Simpson Avenue (Figure 12). The Ocosta Castle is the last *in situ* structure from Ocosta's 1890s heyday (Figure 13).



Figure 12: Ace Tavern, originally located in Ocosta relocated to East Hoquiam, 2008.



Figure 13: Ocosta Castle, View southeast from Highway 105, August 2008.

A road was constructed from Aberdeen to Grays Harbor's South Beach coastal communities from 1911 to 1912. This road provided a new mode of transportation to the

town, which would eventually replace railroad and seafaring traffic to the site. The 1913 topographic map featured in Figure 14 shows the roadway. This topographic map also demarcates Ocosta structures present in 1913.

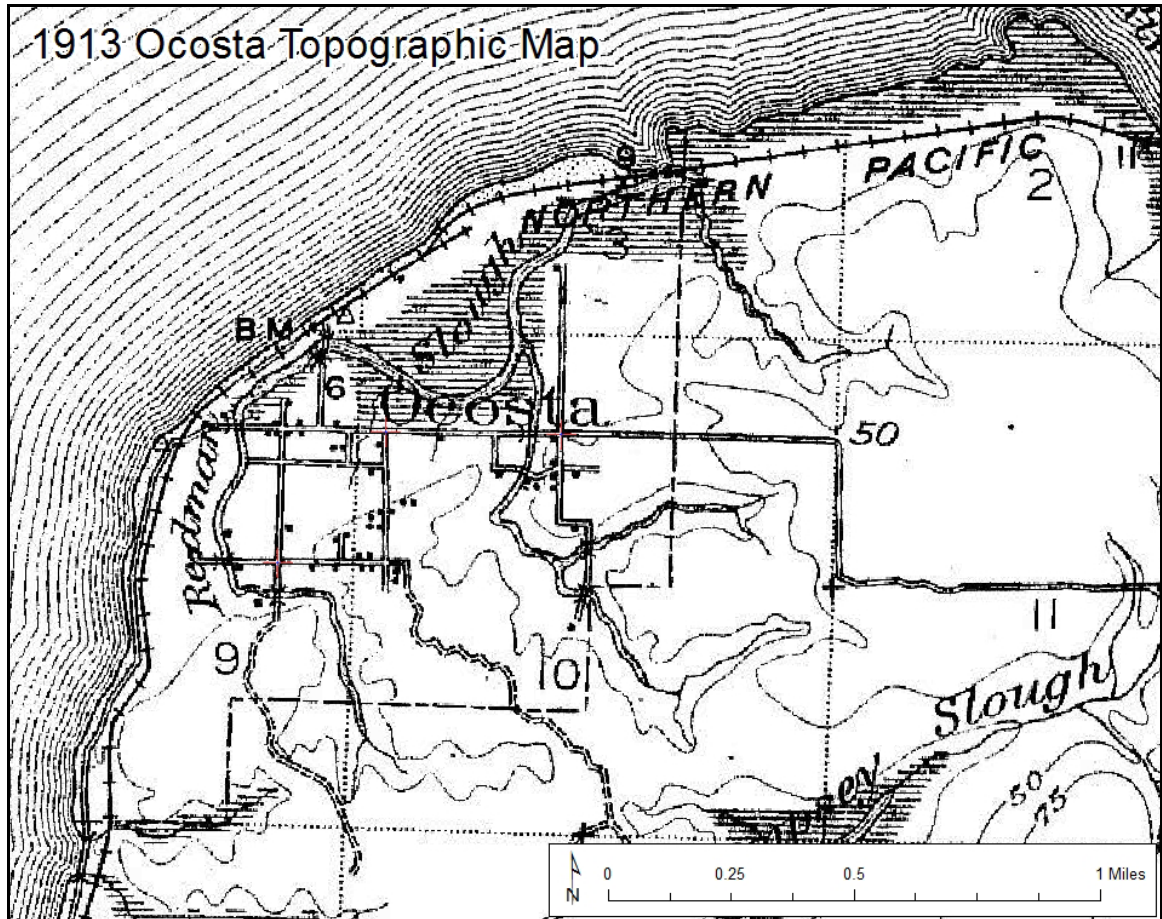


Figure 14: New road from Aberdeen to the South Beach communities can be seen on this 1913 Topographic Map of Ocosta, Westport South Beach Historical Society Collection.

A new school house was constructed on the corner of Wright Avenue and Ocosta Sixth Street sometime before 1912. The former Ocosta School Building was abandoned on the tidal flats in favor of the new school (Figure 15). The neighboring community of Markham's school consolidated with Ocosta in 1914. South Beach Schools continued to consolidate at Ocosta, because with a population of 160 in 1920, Ocosta was the

population center of the South Beach (Town of Ocosta, Ocosta, Washington 1920: Annual Report of the Financial Transactions to the Bureau of Inspection and Supervision of Public Offices: 2). Several other South Beach schools consolidated at Ocosta in 1922.



Figure 15: Ocosta School at corner of Ocosta 6th and Wright Ave, 1920s-1954, Polson Museum Collection.

Ocosta officially disincorporated in 1932. Sixty-two out of the eighty registered voters voted to disincorporate. Disincorporation was celebrated with a community dinner and a dance (Montesano Vidette [MV], 8 December 1932). Ocosta's city debts were the main reason for disincorporation. In 1932, the City of Ocosta owed \$3,000 (MV, 1 December 1932).

Ocosta Today

Today, there are two neighboring cities to the townsite, Westport and Aberdeen. The town of Westport is located seven miles to the west of Ocosta and Aberdeen fourteen miles to the east (see Figure 1). Westport was first imagined as the beach get-a-way of Ocosta, yet today Westport is the largest city on the south beach. Aberdeen had been Ocosta's main competitor on the Harbor. While Ocosta faded into local lore and

memory, Aberdeen blossomed into one of the harbor's metropolis. Commuters travelling between Westport and Aberdeen on Highway 105 bisect Ocosta. The Highway was constructed over Ocosta's Ocean Ave. Unlike Ocean Avenue which ran west to east, right into the harbor, Highway 105 makes an elbow turn to follow the coastline (Figure 16).

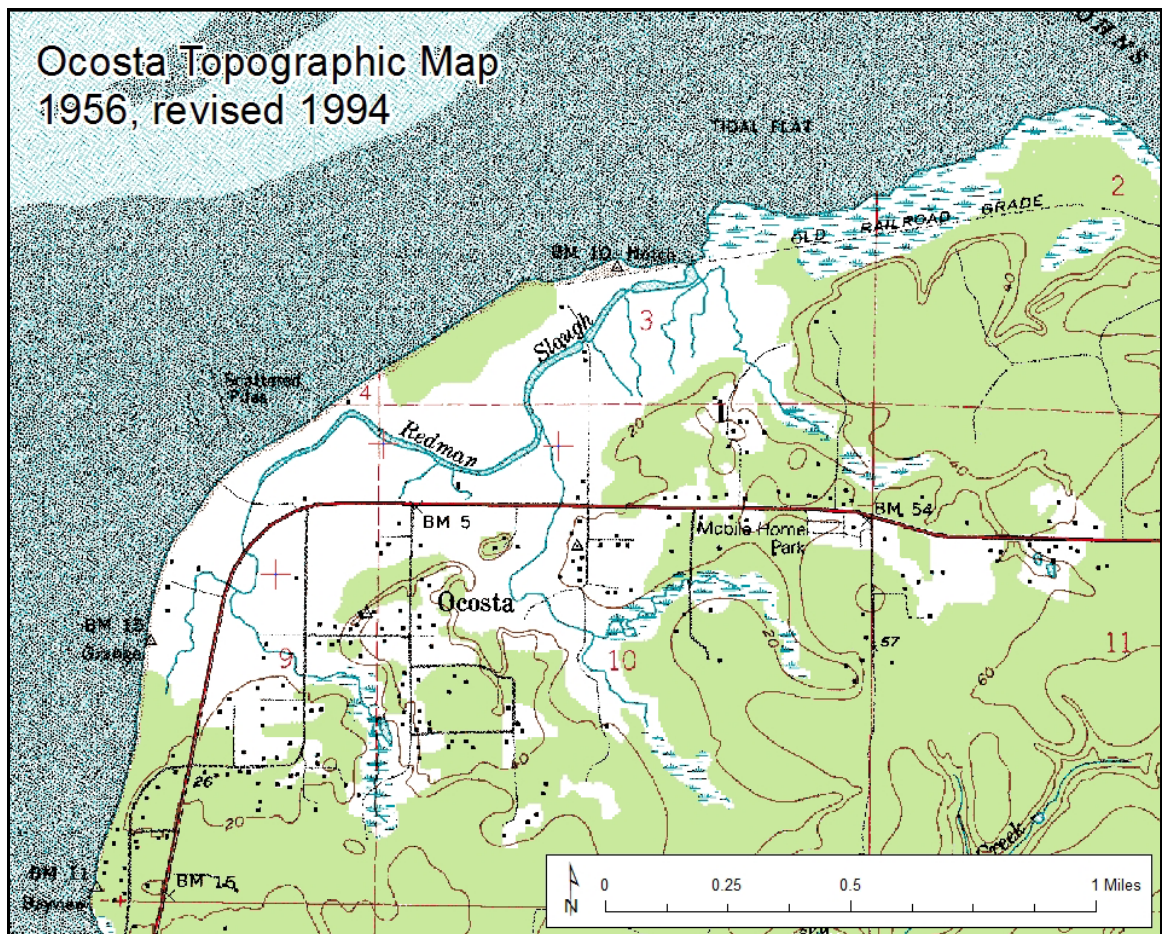


Figure 16: Hwy 105 can be seen cutting through the Ocosta townsite. The main thoroughfare has changed course from that depicted in the 1913 Topographic Map in Figure 14, USGS.

The Ocosta School remained the main school for the South Beach until 1954 when a fire destroyed the school house. Local residents state that a tragedy was avoided

because the fire began while all of the students were centrally located in the auditorium. Flames from the boiler room, the source of the conflagration, quickly lit the auditorium's stage curtains. Since the students were centrally located it was possible to quickly evacuate them from the room. The local community decided to rebuild the school in Westport, the population center of the South Beach at that time. Despite being relocated to Westport, the school retained the name of Ocosta.

In 2008, construction began for Bottle Beach State park. The park encompasses seventy-six acres along Grays Harbor's South Beach. The park was named after the local place name for the Ocosta Beach. Locals call it Bottle Beach because of historic bottles that were deposited there during occupation of the Ocosta townsite. As a state park, the archaeological resources of the townsite are protected. Bottle Beach State Park has been designated as a conditional park. The state defines conditional parks as those "that have a high probability of containing archaeological resources or that contain properties listed or potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the Washington Heritage Register, or that have been determined eligible for listing in either register by the State Historic Preservation Officer" (Johnson 2005). In this conditional phase, the public is only permitted to metal detect in areas that have been surveyed by an archaeologist and designated as insignificant or areas which have already been disturbed by a capital development project or park maintenance. Although local residents had actively bottle hunted the Ocosta townsite, it is no longer permitted on state owned regions of the townsite.

Ocosta's environmental and historical background provides the framework for understanding the following microhistory of the site as presented in three narratives. The following chapter discusses the theoretical background which anchors Ocosta analysis.

CHAPTER 3: THEORY

My analysis of Ocosta-by-the-Sea is anchored by place theory. Cohesion of the narratives forms a microhistory of the Ocosta townsite. Presentation of data in narrative emphasizes the interpretive role of the analyst. Use of three narratives permits the inclusion of a wider array of data than any one narrative could present. Place and narrative theories that informed analysis of the Ocosta townsite are discussed in this chapter.

Place Theory

Anthropological place theory integrates theoretical perspectives from several disciplines in order to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the past (Ashmore, et al. 2004:255). Barbara Bender eloquently voices that these

studies are so interesting, variable, and often cutting-edge is that, invoking both time and place, past and present, being always in process and tension, they make a mockery of the oppositions that we create between time (history) and space (geography), or between nature (science) and culture (anthropology). (Bender, et al. 2006:304)

Place theory anchors each discipline creating room to focus work into delving deeper into the past (Blake, et al. 2004:235).

Place theory's cohesion of diverse disciplines has produced a plethora of definitions for place, space, and landscape. Most scholars agree that places are areas that hold meaning to humans, whereas space is that which holds little or no meaning (Bender,

et al. 2006:303; Preucel and Meskell 2004:216; Tuan 1973:152). Pierce Lewis defines landscape as “a historic document that tells a story—actually multiple stories—about the people who created the landscape and the cultural context in which that landscape is embedded” (2003:86). Landscape is the cultural meaning that humans have placed on their environment and the context in which that meaning has been formed. However, these terms are simultaneously used to define other ideas. For instance, landscape is also used to connote archaeology of gardens, or space has been used by authors to indicate “the general idea of ‘surroundings’ (Pauls, et al. 2006:66).

Place Theory and Historical Archaeology in the American West

Margaret Purser and Noelle Shaver use place theory in their analysis of 19th century speculation townsites on the Sacramento River (2008). Their use of place theory informs my construction of the city-as-imagined and the city-as-built narratives. From 1995 to 2001 Purser and Shaver conducted fieldwork and research in the Sacramento River Delta as part of the Delta Waterways Project. The goal of the project was to record historical maritime sites in the Sacramento River Delta dating from the 1849 Gold Rush to the decade after World War I. During this period, the river was the main transportation route for the region. The decade after World War I, expanding networks of railways and roads eclipsed the river’s use as the main route of transportation in the region.

In “Plats and Place: The Transformation of the 19th Century Speculation Townsites on the Sacramento River,” Purser and Shaver analyze two of the townsites researched during the Delta Waterways Project, Rio Vista and Bird’s Landing. These

townsites provide a case study for the influences of local and regional interactions in Western townsite development. Place theory frames their discussions of local and regional spatial interactions between the two sites.

Early speculation of the Sacramento waterways was recorded in the navigational charts of Admiral Cadwallader Ringgold of the U.S. Navy in 1850. Motivation to create the charts was based on the influx of miners during the Gold Rush. The charts were commissioned by San Francisco land speculators, potential investors in the region. It was not a publication for the common man, but the capitalist investor. Ringgold named different landscape features, such as islands, in honor of his patrons. Interestingly, Purser and Shaver found that almost none of these names were still in use only a decade later. They describe the charts as “a fascinating mix of very reliable navigational data and pure speculative fantasy” (2008:31). Ringgold charted several fully platted towns along the river front that were either relocated or were never built.

Purser and Shaver explore the complexities of the regional interactions that shaped California’s development in the 19th century by anchoring their study in one of Ringgold’s charted townsites, Rio Vista. Speculation of the townsite began with the Mexican governor of California awarding the Los Ulpinos land grant to John Bidwell (Purser and Shaver 2008:32). Immediately, Bidwell attempted a townsite on the property. The first winter at the site proved difficult, and so the site was largely abandoned in the spring of 1847. Bidwell was eager to profit from the land. He was unable to sell it outright, since the Mexican Californian government did not permit the sale or partitioning of land grants. Therefore Bidwell sold shares of the land to

investors. The U.S. takeover of California in 1848 finally permitted the direct sale of the land. Unfortunately title to the land was too complicated by this point and the state opted to auction the land and pacify Bidwell's investors with the proceeds (2008:32). Bidwell's attorney, Nathan Davis purchased several of the lots, including the former site of the small 1847 settlement.

Davis' Rio Vista townsite presents an interesting example of the complexities of plat maps. The first occupation in 1847 was never officially platted (Purser and Shaver 2008:33). Official platting of Davis' townsite in 1857 did not take place until several buildings were already constructed. In order to align these existing structures within the property of the speculator, partial lots were created at the western property boundary. Strategically placed at the entrance of Steamboat slough, the townsite flourished. Success of the townsite led neighboring property owner, Mr. Torade to create an addition to the town, completing the existing partial lots on the western boundary of the site in 1859. Most of the originally platted townsite fell into disuse after a flood in 1861, however, several of the property lines and roads recorded in the Torade addition are still in use today.

The continued use of portions of the Torade addition enabled archaeologists to resurvey the original townsite (Purser and Shaver 2008:34). Spatial alignment of scanned images of the current accessor's parcel maps, aerial photographs, USGS topographical quadrant, and the original plats aided researchers in matching an existing property corner to the original plat map. Working from that point of reference, the southern half of the townsite was resurveyed, including submerged portions of the site.

Shaver and Purser argue that while Rio Vista embodies the stereotypical regionally based, capital driven townsite, Bird's Landing is its antithesis. They state that Bird's Landing is a "longer term, smaller scale development by individuals who tended more commonly to be residents in their project townsite and who developed more situational strategies over time in response to changing local conditions" (2008:30). Bird's Landing is named after its founder, John Bird. The townsite was situated at the crossroads of two elevated roads leading between farms and ranches to the river wharves. No plat was ever filed for the townsite. Rather than invest solely in the townsite, Bird spread his investments throughout the region. Bird financed the creation of Bird's Landing with the Dinkelspiel family. Like Bird, the Dinkelspiels invested widely in the region through enterprises such as wharves, warehouses, stores, and shipping schooners. They believed that a strong local economy would bring new residents to the townsite. Investing widely and locally they sought to achieve a strong local economy.

Three methods of analysis were used in Bird's Landing research: architectural recording, oral history, and historic photograph analysis. Each method aided to the reconstruction of the town settlement plan. The addition of the Bird Store building to the National Register of Historic Places in 2000 marked the culmination of the project. The building was not recognized solely for its architectural significance, but for its representation of "the entire system of settlement, speculation, and long-term capital investment- an example of a regional process of town building that had played a critical role in the development of inland maritime California" (Purser and Shaver 2008:41).

Place theory facilitated the incorporation of three distinct research methods to identify these regional processes embodied in the settlement of Bird's Landing.

The driving question behind Shaver and Purser's discourse of regional and local forces in 19th century speculation townsites is of the regional development of the West. They ask how development of Western townsites differed from that of Eastern towns and cities. Through their study, they argue that Western townsites developed as nodes of far-flung transportation networks, often appearing rural, but functioning as urban centers (Purser and Shaver 2008:27). They highlight that the ultimate representation of the urban nature of Western townsites is the plat map itself. Rather than organically developing, Western townsites were platted. Speculation townsites present a challenge to using plat maps as authoritative primary sources. Plat maps are projections of what the successful city would look like, not the busted or struggling community. Shaver and Purser contend that these ambiguous townsites that did not flourish are the very ones that hold the greatest potential for understanding what is "urban" in the West (Purser and Shaver 2008:27).

By anchoring their research in early speculation townsites, Purser and Shaver's research can delve deeper into underlying local and regional forces. Their use of place theory at Rio Vista and Bird's Landing guides my overarching research questions: A) what did founders imagine Ocosta becoming? B) why did they build there? C) what was actually built at Ocosta? D) what is and has been remembered about the townsite? Initial Ocosta development was on a regional scale, closely following that of Rio Vista. Ignoring existing townsites, the NPRR spurred development of Ocosta by announcing it

as their Pacific Ocean terminus. Focusing my study in the Ocosta-by-the-Sea townsite, I hope to obtain an understanding not only of the 1890s occupation of the townsite, but the continued importance of the townsite to current residents. While the Ocosta townsite failed to become a booming metropolis, it has become an example of the interesting speculation townsites which Purser and Shaver describe as ideal to explore urban development in the West. Inclusion of Ocosta-by-the-Sea research will complement the growing body of studies on place by exploring the transition of townsites from urban to rural.

Place Memory Theory

An integral aspect of place theory is how and why humans infuse meaning in a given place. Dolores Hayden explores this aspect of place theory in her seminal work, *The Power of Place* (1995). Hayden uses place theory to explore the frequently overlooked urban landscapes of women, immigrant populations, and minorities in Los Angeles. Historically these populations were not deemed important enough to formally be highlighted in major historiographical works. Hayden has developed her own twist to place theory, place memory theory, in order to write a more inclusive public history.

Building from place theory, Hayden states that place memory theory “is the key to the power of historic places to help citizens define their public pasts: places trigger memories for insiders, who have shared a common past” (1995:46). Hayden’s place memory theory is developed from Maurice Halbwachs theory of collective memory. Halbwachs introduced the concept of collective memory in 1925 (1992). He argued that memory was a social creation, and as such it could be edited and molded to suit the

needs of society (Halbwachs 1992:51). Furthermore, Halbwachs believed that memories were inherently tied to the social group that an individual was associated with when they developed the memory. In order to recall a certain memory, the individual would need to situate the event in the context of the group they were a part of at that time (Halbwachs 1992:56). In Hayden's place memory theory, the group that evokes memory is constituted by the individuals that interacted within a specific place at a specific time and individuals that can directly relate to these recounted memories. Therefore, memories are recalled based on place.

Incorporation of place memory theory permits study of Ocosta-by-the-Sea to extend beyond the lens of the city-as-imagined by townsite planners. Christopher DeCorse states that "oral traditions are not frozen messages of past events but are open to interpretation within sociocultural contexts in which they are produced and in which they are embedded" (2008:82-83). Place memory theory highlights how, what, and why places are remembered throughout their history. Ocosta-by-the-Sea is a prime case study for place memory theory. Unlike countless townsites that have dropped out of oral tradition and local memory, Ocosta-by-the-Sea is vibrantly remembered by local citizens. Not only is Ocosta remembered, these memories are shared. Throughout the past century memories of the townsite have been recorded in local museums, radio programs, oral history events, and newspaper articles. Analysis of what is being remembered and forgotten within the community can lead to answering larger questions about why places are remembered and commemorated.

While researching post Cold War Berlin, Jennifer A. Jordan found that four factors contribute to the construction and maintenance of place memory: an advocate, resonance of the advocate's message to a broader public, public land use, and public land ownership (2006). In order to be remembered, someone needs to actively disseminate information about the place. The advocate's story of the place must resonate with either the local, national, and/or international public. Places are remembered where land use and ownership facilitates commemoration, such as collective spaces of the public.

Both Ocosta residents and local museums advocate for the preservation of collective memory of the townsite. The story of Ocosta-by-the-Sea resonates with local residents that have been to the site or who know people that lived at the site. Ocosta's story also resonates with a larger audience of tourists that may not be familiar with Ocosta's landscape and community, but that are familiar with failed Western boomtowns. Ocosta has always been along a major transportation route. These routes have kept it in sight of local residents and tourists. Although the townsite's land use transitioned from urban to rural space, constant use of land as a transportation route and the survival of the 1890s Ocosta Castle facilitated continual remembrance of the site. The creation of Bottle Beach State Park at Ocosta has firmly entrenched site remembrance. There is now an informational text panel on the Ocosta townsite in the park. Now that landownership is public, the general public will be able to experience more than just the site's public roadways.

Place as Narrative

The concept of viewing an individual place through several different interpretive narratives has been espoused by urban historical archaeologists Tadhg O’Keefe and Rebecca Yamin. They state the importance of examining multiple lines of evidence when examining a city. Moving away from traditional archaeological foci of style structure, form, sequence, and function they emphasize the examination of the city as a complex story, such as the city-as-imagined space or city-as-ruin (O’Keefe, et al. 2006). Place as narrative has also been discussed by Margaret Rodman. Rodman states that place analysis forms a narrative synthesis by uniting objective and subjective views (1992). Barbara Bender also advocates multiple narratives of a single place. She states that these narratives “could lie alongside each other so that a given landscape might be regarded first through one prism, then another, and another” (Bender, et al. 2006:311). Although several anthropological place theorists call for the examination of sites in different narratives or through multiple prisms of interpretation, the studies of place that I have encountered often fail to incorporate more than one narrative or interpretation. Those that use multiple research methods, such as Purser and Shaver, meld them into a single narrative, thus erasing the complexities between the narratives. By separating each narrative, the tensions between them can be explored.

I propose a variation to traditional organizations of information in studies of place through the case study of Ocosta-by-the-Sea. This study separates analysis into three narratives: the city-as-built, the city-as-imagined, and the city-as-remembered.

Division of these narratives will facilitate not only greater comprehension of a particular place, Ocosta-by-the-Sea, but also the necessity of exploring multiple narratives to form a greater understanding of any one place. Each of the narratives presents a different perspective on the place, Ocosta-by-the-Sea. The city-as-built focuses on the built environment of the townsite through the analysis of historic maps, historic photographs, and an archaeological ground-penetrating radar survey. Investigating the built environment, this narrative focuses on the material remnants of Ocosta-by-the-Sea. The city-as-imagined narrative records the city as it was projected to become by townsite planners, investors, and settlers. The city-as-remembered highlights the collective place memory of residents and visitors to Ocosta-by-the-Sea. Separation into three narratives highlights the unique contribution that each brings to the study, as well as, what would be misconstrued by the exclusion of any one narrative.

Narrative

Narrative is the retelling of an act, occurrence, or course of events.

Anthropological texts are narrative interpretations of data compiled and analyzed by a researcher for an audience. Critical analysis of anthropological texts erupted after the publication of James Clifford and George Marcus's *Writing Culture* (1986). Feminist anthropologists were also engaged in an exploration of writing, culture, and authority (Joyce 2002; Wolf 1992). For example, in *A Thrice Told Tale*, Margery Wolf presents three versions of a cultural event witnessed during ethnographic field research in Taiwan. First, she presents a fictional story of a cultural event, melding the various voices of her

informants into a single coherent narrative. Wolf then relates her field notes from the event. She concludes with a published anthropological journal article on the event. Each mode of disseminating data has drawbacks and benefits. The fictional story is easy to read, but presents the interweaving of data from multiple informants. The field notes are devoid of analysis, but rich in data. The journal article presents anthropological analysis of the cultural event, but lacks the multivocality of the field notes. Juxtaposed, these three narratives present an interesting statement on the anthropological narrative.

Rosemary Joyce presents a more postmodern critique of anthropological texts in *The Languages of Archaeology* (2002). Joyce's archaeological text is informed by the theoretical perspectives of Mikhail Bakhtin and Roland Barthes. Joyce states that archaeologists write in chronotypes, which Bakhtin defines as genres of writing received from a discipline's forefathers. Choosing a chronotype to write in is important, because it is a "form-shaping ideology" (Joyce 2002:34). My analysis of Ocosta is informed by place theory and critical analysis of archaeological narratives. It enters the chronotype of experimental archaeology by presenting three narratives of a single place, in a way that I have not previously encountered. Joyce states that "text is closed only as a physical object held in your [the reader's] hands. The voices it contains will continue to engage in dialogues with other voices, including yours, in the open-ended, unfinalizable production of meaning" (2002:3). Ocosta narratives will integrate three perspectives of the past, as well as your own inner dialogue to form deeper meaning of the city that was Ocosta.

Contributions

Place theory refuses to conform. It combines qualitative and quantitative techniques traditionally beyond the scope of any one study. Lowenthal states that “each route to the past- memory, history, relics- is a domain claimed by specialist disciplines, explicitly psychology, history, and archaeology. But knowing the past embraces wider perspectives than these disciplines normally treat” (1985:187).

Knowing the past is beyond any one discipline; however, a collaboration of disciplines facilitated by place theory can create a more vibrant vision of the past. As an interdisciplinary union, place theory in practice presents an epistemological challenge. Study at Ocosta-by-the-Sea contributes to the discipline by structuring information into three narratives in a way that I have not encountered in the literature. Moreover, the uniqueness of the site itself contributes to the growing depth of sites that have been studied with place theory. Place theory has informed the methodologies used in my analysis. The following chapter discusses methods used to collect data and interpret Ocosta.

CHAPTER 4: METHODS

I used four research methods in this study: archival research, oral history collection, geospatial information systems (GIS) analysis, and ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey. Each method uniquely contributed to analysis of the townsite. Archival data informed my analysis of the city-as-imagined and city-as-remembered narratives, as well as grid site selection for the GPR survey. Oral history data provided a unique link to the population that currently uses the landscape. GIS facilitated spatial analysis of the archival data. Lastly, the subsurface of the site was mapped using GPR.

Archives

Researchers have documented that archives and archival documents contain hidden biases (Barber 1994; Patricia Galloway, et al. 2006:47). In order to unravel and account for these biases, each document should be examined in two ways. First, who created the document and why? Secondly, how and why was that document preserved? Historian Russell J. Barber has broken analysis to who created a document and why into two steps which he defines as external and internal analysis (1994:8). External analysis determines whether or not the claimed author created the document. Internal analysis delineates the credibility of the author as a source. The historical context must be understood in order to determine the author's credibility on a given topic. The answer to how and why a specific document was preserved will shed light on what was not preserved. For instance, more advertisements than personal documents were uncovered

in Ocosta archives. This is because advertisements were mass produced, whereas personal documents were not mass produced.

I visited seven archives during two research trips, one in March and one in August of 2008. I visited the following archives: Westport South Beach Historical Society, Aberdeen Museum, Polson Museum, Timberland Library, Grays Harbor County Courthouse, University of Washington Library, and the Washington State Archives. Archival research focused on maps, photographs, advertisements, legal documents, correspondence, and oral histories relating to Ocosta. I noted titles and accession numbers for all materials perused. Data was kept on all of the materials that I scrutinized to prevent investigating the same resource multiple times. I also compiled a brief summary of the resource including whether or not it was relevant to the research goals. I took photocopies, digital photographs, or extensive notes when permitted by the archive.

Oral Histories

Oral histories provide data on historic events and the built environment, but most importantly they humanize the landscape. Oral histories from the Ocosta townsite were incorporated from a 1950s radio program, a 2007 oral history event, and interviews. Madeline Buckendorf and Margot H. Knight advocate oral history collection in Washington State. They argue that oral histories are excellent resources for much of Washington due to the state's relatively young age and because

land, aside from being passed down from generation to generation through families, has not changed hands much. The population of these areas usually lives in isolated pockets and is largely homogeneous. The makeup of the towns and rural areas has remained quite unchanged; as a result, there may be many living

primary sources of information familiar with the history of each locale.
(Buckendorf and Knight 1981:110)

However, Buckendorf and Knight claim that frequently changing demographics make coastal Washington a difficult region in which to collect oral histories. Grays Harbor has been the exception to these demographic fluctuations. The population percent change between 2000 and 2006 for Grays Harbor County was 6.5%, a two points lower than the state average. Although the area has historically had fewer population fluctuations than other areas of the state, generational families are beginning to leave the area. In the last decade, large scale coastal development has begun in the neighboring community of Westport. Ocosta has remained relatively untouched by this development. However, rising property taxes caused by the endless market for coastal property has begun to push generational families from their homes. Examining the townsite's current oral history presents the opportunity to document both the stories of generational families and the ways in which newcomers integrate the Ocosta townsite into their conception of Grays Harbor and their identity as Grays Harbor residents.

Oral history informants were either participants in the 2007 *Fireside Chat* oral history event or suggested by the participants of the event. Prior to the interview I explained project goals to informants. I took notes and/or digitally recorded interviews. First, I asked general questions to elude episodic narratives about what the individual remembered about the townsite. After the informant completed a story about Ocosta, I asked questions to elicit details about the narrative. I then synthesized and incorporated these narratives into the city-as-remembered narrative of Ocosta-by-the-Sea.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Geographic information systems (GIS) are networks of people, hardware, software, and procedures to collect, store, retrieve, manipulate, analyze, and display spatial data. GIS stores spatial data in two ways: vector and raster. Vector data is data that is recorded as individual points, lines, and polygons. Additional information, attribute data, can be recorded and stored for vector data, thus facilitating queries. Raster data stores data of images in pixels. It is desirable because it maps entire regions, whereas vector data maps specific points, lines, and polygons.

I projected spatial data from the Ocosta townsite into the North American Datum 1983 Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) zone 10 North in ArcMap. Conversion of spatial data of the earth, a geoid to flat Cartesian map necessitates projecting real world dimensions into a map readable system. UTM is the typical geophysical projection system used in archaeology.

A USGS topographic map and National Agriculture Imaging Program (NAIP) aerial images were downloaded as base maps for my spatial analysis of historic maps at the Ocosta townsite. The USGS topographic map was last revised in 1994. It documents structures, roadways, waterways, benchmarks and vegetation for the region. These images provide raster data background images of the visible environment of Ocosta.

Scanned plat and historic maps were georeferenced to these base maps within ArcMap. The scanned plat and historic maps did not have any geographic referencing data. In order for these maps to be accurately aligned with current USGS topographic

maps and NAIP images three points had to be selected which could be identified in both the referenced and the unreferenced map (Patricia Galloway 2006:169). Road intersections were selected as reference points. I used the georeferencing tool to spatially link these three points between the referenced base map and the unreferenced maps. ArcMap oriented the unreferenced map to the three georeferenced points. This process is called georeferencing because the image of the unreferenced map is geospatially oriented to fit within the designated reference points. Points were chosen which were relatively equally spaced. I also selected points from the outer edges of the historic maps to reduce distortion caused by the georeferencing. Once aligned, the previously unreferenced map was rendered transparent over the base map to visually analyze the accuracy of georeferencing. The process was repeated until the maps were aligned to the satisfaction of the researcher.

There is a potential for error when georeferencing maps. The reference points must be accurate in order to achieve accurate georeferencing. Secondly, historic maps may have spatial errors. The map could incorrectly map the landscape or it may have become distorted by the ravages of time. Taking this in to consideration, it is unlikely that the georeferenced maps provide absolute accuracy of the former built environment of Ocosta. Yet, they provide insight to the spatial distribution of structures at the townsite.

Once the historic maps were georeferenced certain attributes were entered to facilitate queries within ArcMap. All of the scanned maps and images were raster data, although raster data includes data for an entire region, it cannot be queried. In order to digitize an image, a new shapefile must be created. After creating a shapefile, the file is

placed in edit mode and a pencil tool is selected. The operator outlines the desired digitized features recording relevant data in an attribute table. For example, buildings from the 1894 Ocosta Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map were digitized. Each building was digitized as a polygon. Supplemental data on the structures: use, height, and roof material was recorded in an attribute table. Once digitization was completed, the structures were color coded by designated use.

Insets of the Sanborn map were not georeferenced at the time the map was produced. The locations of these insets were queried in ArcMap. First, criteria were established that had to be fulfilled to georeference each inset. Secondly, relevant geographical features were digitized so that they could be queried, such as the railroad grade. Thirdly, buffers were created around the relevant geographical features. A buffer is a shapefile of the area surrounding a digitized feature, for instance a ten mile circle around the digitized Ocosta Post Office. Lastly, the ArcMap intersect tool was used to pinpoint the locations in which criteria determined buffers intersected.

GIS is a powerful tool to analyze spatial data. I have used it within this project to query locations of insets of the 1894 Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map and to layer transparent historic maps over current USGS topographic maps and NAIP images. The layering of historic maps facilitated a greater understanding of the changing natural and cultural environment of Ocosta.

Ground-penetrating Radar (GPR)

GPR is a form of geophysical prospection. Geophysical prospection techniques are used in archaeology to quickly, noninvasively, and accurately locate buried cultural features. GPR was used to map the former built environment of the Ocosta townsite adjacent to the region mapped in the 1894 Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map. Ken Kvamme avows that GPR survey enables the “examination of interrelationships between such individual site components as houses or house clusters, the lanes between them, dumping grounds, public structures, storage and borrow pits, gardens, plazas, fortifications, and the like”(Kvamme 2003:440). GPR was selected for the Ocosta townsite because of its utility in mapping the former built environment of the urban townsite.

GPR maps the subsurface by sending pulses of electromagnetic radar waves into the ground. These waves are either reflected back to the antenna by changes in the electrical and chemical properties of the subsurface materials or are attenuated into the ground (Conyers 2004:11). Each wave that is transmitted and received by the antenna is recorded by a computer as a trace (Conyers 2004:11). A compilation of traces creates a profile, a two-dimensional image of the subsurface (Figure 17).

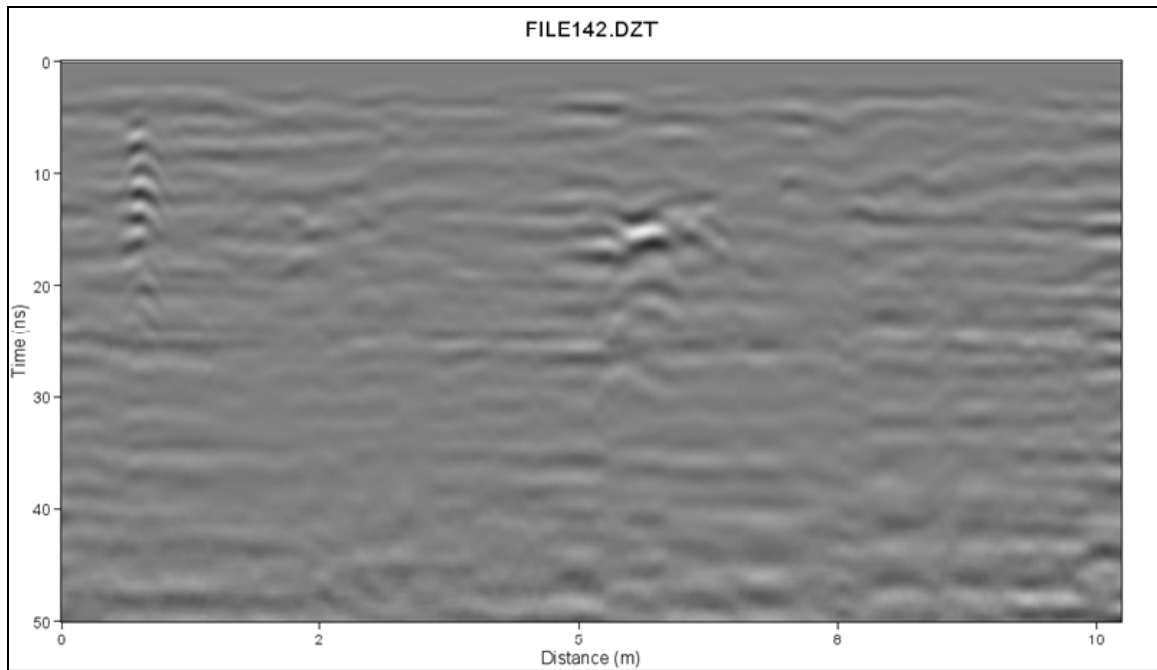


Figure 17: Ocosta profile, vertical slice of data along a transect, August 13, 2008, Grid 3.

There are several companies that manufacture GPR units. A Geophysical Survey Systems Inc. (GSSI) 3000 GPR unit with a 400 MHz antenna was used at the Ocosta townsite. There are two main components to the GSSI 3000 GPR unit, a computer interface which permits the operator to define parameters with which the antenna will send and collect radar waves and a radar antenna. Dipole radar antennas emit and record the reflected radar pulses. Selection of an appropriate radar antenna depends on the research goals of a research project. Low frequency radar antennas transmit waves which travel further in the ground surface than those of high frequency antennas. Low frequency antennas provide less precise data of the subsurface, whereas high frequency antennas provide more precise data for subsurface features. Ocosta cultural material was deposited within the last hundred years in a low depositional alluvial environment. A midrange, 400MHz antenna was selected to map structures within this environment.

Radar waves travel at the speed of light, 30 cm per nanosecond, in the air. The speed of radar waves in the subsurface depends on the material that they are traveling through. Materials containing high quantities of either water or salt will decrease radar wave velocity, thus decreasing the quality and depth of results (Conyers 2006:47). These materials have high relative dielectric permeability's (RDP). RDP is a measurement of velocity movement through a material. Geologic profiles contain matrixes of several types of soils and sediments, therefore multiple RDP's. Consequently radar wave velocity changes at the interfaces between each layer.

Velocity analysis was completed to interpret the depth of radar wave penetration. There are several methods of velocity analysis. I used hyperbola velocity analysis. The time that the radar wave was both sent and received is digitally recorded by the GSSI 3000. Point reflections, caused by items such as pipes, rocks or small voids cause hyperbola reflections of the radar waves. The geometry of the hyperbola is determined by the velocity of the radar wave through the subsurface as well as the size of the material that caused the reflection (Conyers 2004:116). *Fieldview* software was used to match model hyperbolas with known velocities to hyperbolas in the Ocosta profiles in order to calculate the average velocity of radar waves at Ocosta. Once the radar velocity was known the depth could be calculated for the materials by using the formula velocity = time/ distance.

GPR data is collected in rectilinear grids in evenly spaced linear transects. Transect spacing is determined by the anticipated size of the cultural features and the desired resolution. Transects are collected by either pushing the radar antenna in a baby

jogger or pulling it with a survey wheel attachment to mark the distance travelled. After one transect is collected the unit is turned around and another transect is collected in the opposite direction. I re-aligned transects during data processing in *GPR Process*. Ocosta grids were orientated along the magnetic north grid layout of the former townsite. One meter transects were selected in order to facilitate survey of anticipated structural features such as, buildings and roads.

Prior to collecting data in the field, parameters are set on the GPR unit. These parameters include: low and high pass filters, frequency of the radar pulses to be propagated and received by the antenna, and the time window. In order to filter out radar waves from other sources, high and low pass filters are applied to the collection parameters. Radar antenna frequencies are the mid-frequency of an antenna. I set the high and low pass filters for the 400MHz antenna at 200MHz and 800MHz respectively. The more waves that the antenna is programmed to collect the more time it takes to collect them. If the operator moves too quickly the computer will not be able to collect enough traces to create a profile. Thirty scans per unit were chosen for Ocosta data collection. Radar waves only reflect data to a certain depth in the ground surface depending on the RDP and frequency of antenna used. At a certain depth more waves attenuate into the surrounding soils and sediments than are reflected back to the antenna. The time window is set at this attenuating depth. I set the time window to forty nanoseconds after observing attenuation at this depth in the field.

Plan maps were created for each survey grid in *GPR Process* and *Surfer*. First, transect data was horizontally sliced at designated intervals using *GPR Process*. Plan

maps of each slice layer were then produced in *Surfer*. These maps facilitate analysis of changes between soils and sediments within the grid.

Three Ocosta narratives are constructed from data acquired through archival research, oral history collection, GIS analysis, and GPR survey. The city-as-imagined utilizes archival research to create a narrative of the city that Ocosta founders imagined being constructed. All four methodologies are used in the production of the city-as-built narrative. Archival research and oral history collection form the backbone of the city-as-remembered narrative.

CHAPTER 5: CITY AS IMAGINED

What did Ocosta's founders imagine the townsite becoming? City founders conceptualized Ocosta as a booming metropolis, the "Boston of the West." The envisioned metropolis is recorded in advertisements, plat maps, and investments made by the city's founders. Although the dream would never be realized, it was mass marketed to the nation. Advertising spanned the United States, attracting investors throughout the nation. The Ocosta newspaper, *The Ocosta Pioneer* proudly announced new residents arriving and purchasing land at Ocosta from places as far away as Colorado and Michigan (AH, 19 February 1891b:4). Word of Ocosta was spread via newspapers, promotional pamphlets, magazine articles, travel literature, billboards, and word of mouth. These advertisements provide data ranging from a description of Ocosta's founding to the opportunities that were foreseen in the new city. The city plat maps encapsulate the city as it was planned by the founders. Orientations of streets, public spaces, the business district, residential lots, and transit centers are all represented. The final data analyzed are the financial investments in both land and the development of municipal amenities by the city's founders. These investments indicate a vested interest in the longevity and success of the community by founders.

Advertising Ocosta

Advertisements for Ocosta spanned the nation. "Mabel McKinley Hopkins, one of Grays Harbor's faithful historians, recalls seeing a big sign board advertising Ocosta-

by-the-Sea, near Chicago while on a trip east in the early 1900s” (Weatherwax circa 1950a). Newspapers, magazine periodicals, and travel literature also heralded the new townsite. The advertisement pictured in Figure 18 was featured in several local papers.

	The Northern Pacific Railroad	
O	TERMINUS	O
	— ON THE —	
C	PACIFIC OCEAN.	C
	O COSTA is the Only Terminus on the Pacific Ocean Recognized by the Northern Pacific Railway.	
	O COSTA is the selected location for deep-water shipment. Only three miles from the Pacific Ocean.	
O	OCOSTA	O
	Here will be constructed	
S	Elevators, Coal Bunkers, Round Houses, and Machine Shops	S
	A LL necessary adjuncts for a Shipping Terminus of this Great Railroad Company.	
	THE REVISED PLAT OF	
T	OCOSTA	T
	Will Be Completed and Ready for Sale	
	APRIL 1st, 1891	
A	For further information address Ocosta Land COMPANY. Ocosta, Chehalis Co., Wash	A

Figure 18: Ocosta Advertisement, April 4, 1891, *Morning Olympian*. (Olympian 1891)

The *Morning Olympian* Newspaper from Olympia, Washington proudly announced that

R.L. Boyle, the Ocosta real estate king, has issued a folder, railway fashion, that will herald Ocosta's merits all over the United States. In its general make-up, including illustrations and plat, it is one of the best folders gotten out of Washington. (O, 4 April 1891)

Success of the pamphlet is evidenced by the uniform statements that were released about Ocosta in the travel literature of the day. *The Evergreen State Souvenir* proclaimed that "the situation of Ocosta is an ideal spot for the location of a great and beautiful city, extending five miles with a gradual rise to an elevation of thirty to forty feet above sea level..." (Hestwood 1893). *The History of Washington: The Evergreen State from Early Dawn to Daylight with portraits and Biographies* similarly states that Ocosta

seems naturally fitted for a city site, having about three hundred acres of beautiful prairie fronting the water, while in the rear rises a table land from fifteen to thirty feet high. This is comparatively level and covered with heavy timber, while the prairie below is already cleared by the hand of nature, as if to invite settlement. (Hawthorne 1893)

As demonstrated above, separately released national publications advertising Ocosta utilize the same phrases as those used in the advertising pamphlet. Although travel literature focuses on the ideal setting of the townsite, the history of Ocosta's founding is directly related in their own promotional pamphlet.

Ocosta's History as Promoted

Ocosta was founded on the prospectus of becoming the sole railroad terminus on Gray's Harbor. Discussion of a Grays Harbor railroad line had taken place years before a concrete plan was enacted. One of the promotional pamphlets states that "for the past

four years there have been several *paper* railroads built to Grays Harbor, and they have probably helped to sell lots in a few *paper towns*” (Anonymous 1970:22 [1890s]). One of which was Grays Harbor City on the North shore of Gray’s Harbor. The city was platted on April 13, 1889 by an Eastern Washington investor under the auspices of becoming a railroad terminus. Although a railroad was planned to Grays Harbor City it was never built. The Ocosta advertisement goes on to state that “the first railroad company organized to really mean business, to build from Tacoma to Gray’s Harbor, was the Tacoma, Olympia & Pacific” (Anonymous 1970:22 [1890s]). The Tacoma, Olympia & Pacific Railroad Company incorporated on July 25, 1889. Royal L. Austin, property owner of what is now Ocosta, met with the company shortly after their incorporation in Olympia. Austin promoted his property not only as the locale for the new railroad line terminus, but as the site of a new Grays Harbor city. Shortly thereafter, Austin brought Tacoma, Olympia & Pacific railroad president Colonel F.D. Heustis to the site. Heustis took soundings and sketched the site before returning to Olympia where draftsmen and engineers mapped the prospective rail line. By January of 1890 enough capital had been garnered to begin surveying for the proposed railroad grade.

The pamphlet states that the 1890 survey marked “when the fun began” for only then was the seriousness of the Tacoma, Olympia & Pacific Railroad realized by the towns along Grays Harbor and the major railroad lines: the Union and NPRR (Anonymous 1970:23 [1890s]). This realization was quickly followed by the NPRR recognizing the investment opportunity that the prospective Grays Harbor rail line proffered. The NPRR promptly sent their chief engineer Mr. Kendrick, to examine Grays Harbor and the local country. The pamphlet states that Mr. Kendrick

examined and sounded all the channels in the harbor, and found that the best location for a terminus below all shoals with an abundance of water and safe anchorage, was at a point in section nine, town sixteen north, of range eleven west, where Ocosta now stands; and so reported to his company. (Anonymous 1970:24 [1890s])

Based on Mr. Kendrick's advice, the NPRR proceeded to buy out the Tacoma, Olympia & Pacific railroad.

The promotional history states that Ocosta was founded by Royal Austin, E. Filley, Frank G. Deckebach, F.D. Arnold, A.K. Phelon, H.C. Cooper, J.C. Phelon, W.H. Cramer, Robert L. Boyle, H.H. Carter, and J.B. Ellston. These men founded the city after procuring one thousand acres at the prospective townsite. Once acquiring the land, they met with NPRR officials on May 10, 1890 (Anonymous 1970:26 [1890s]). These investors secured Ocosta's future by giving the NPRR five hundred acres in the townsite. This exchange left the Northern Pacific with ownership of half the city and thus a vested interest in its success. In order for Ocosta to succeed and the NPRR to profit from land sales, the railroad terminus had to be in Ocosta. Railroad construction went forward. The line to Ocosta was completed with full service by July 1, 1892.

Advertising did not wait for the completion of the railroad line. Land sales were announced by April 1, 1891. Ocosta was pitched far and wide as in need of settlers and investors. Both labor and finances were needed to fully take advantage of the city's amazing business opportunities. According to the ad man, men were needed to take advantage of the natural bounty surrounding the site and the development of infrastructure for the new city. The Ocosta pamphlet pitched a need for:

A million more dollars invested in sawmills; a million dollars invested in tanneries; a million in paper factories, our spruce maker the pulp; a pottery, brick,

and tile works, to use our clay; a dozen pail and tub factories to use our cedar; sash and door factories to make a fortune; ship yards to build ships for the world; foundries to make machinery for our mills; bankers with coin to develop the country; merchants of all kinds will find an opening here; capitalists to build blocks to lease; creameries to make our butter; farmers who know how to grow fruit; one thousand young and hardy yeomen to clear up our valleys, and put them into paying farms; and thousands of industrious people to come here and make their homes with us. (Anonymous 1970:32-33 [1890s])

Not only were there business opportunities galore, the community was ideal for anyone and everyone. An advertisement proclaimed that “if you are healthy come to Ocosta to make money; if you have money come here for your health; if you are young come and grow with the town; if you are old, come where you can live longer; if you are poor, come and get rich; if you are rich, come and help others get rich, and be happier” (Anonymous 1970:33 [1890s]). More specifically, Ocosta needed women. Promoters stated that “we want dozens of intelligent young ladies for our bachelor friends, for the town and woods are full of them, like the birds of the forest seeking mates” (Anonymous 1970:33 [1890s]).

The founders not only began advertising prior to the completion of the rail line, they also began land sales. Prior to railroad transit the city was accessible via boat. Hundreds of people from across the nation arrived at Ocosta by boat on May 1, 1890, the opening day of Ocosta land sales, in order to get in on the ground floor of this great investment opportunity. A profit of over ninety thousand dollars was made on the first day of sale. Revenue from land sales was immediately reinvested into the townsite. The *Pacific Illustrated Magazine* states that “vast sums of money are being expended in public and private improvements” (Ocosta-by-the-Sea 1891). A three thousand foot long

wharf was built to reach the deep harbor soundings. Miles of sidewalks were also planked throughout the town.

Plat Maps

Town plats are maps that mark out individual lots, roads, and community spaces in a city. After surveying land, plat maps are registered with a federal courthouse. Registering a plat at a city or county surveyor's office is one of the first steps to incorporate a city. Plat maps do not document the actual built environment of a community, but the environment that was planned. Plats demarcate property boundaries, numbered lots, and the names and dimensions of proposed streets (Kimerling, A. Jon, et al. 2005). The ordered space documented in the plat provides a unique insight to the perceived needs of a community by its planners. Mike Harvey has written that towns controlled in large part by railroads, such as Ocosta, tend to be concerned more with the immediate profit accrued by land sales than developing a sustainable community (1983). The Ocosta plat is of interest since the community was founded jointly by the railroad and a group of regional investors. Although, like the railroad communities that Harvey discusses, the NPRR had sole interest in immediate profits from land sales at Ocosta through the Olympic Land Company; the group of Ocosta investors with the Ocosta Land Company had more to gain by developing a community that would shop, dine, and bank with their local stores. The mixed motivations of solely selling land for a profit versus developing a successful city are evident in the Ocosta plat. The 1891 edition of the Ocosta plat is pictured in Figure 19.

preeminent in the platting of the city. Mr. Neuf, not a listed Ocosta investor submitted the first plat of Ocosta. His wife, Mrs. Neuf selected the name of the townsite based on a modification of the Spanish word for coast, “costa” (Meany 1917). The large scope of Ocosta reflects organic growth of the planned landscape stemming out from the original plat. Landowners adjacent to the burgeoning townsite, such as Mr. Neuf took advantage of their property’s vicinity to the railroad. Even the planned community of Ocosta, was subject to organic growth stemming from American entrepreneurs.

The central placement of Ocosta’s two main modes of transportation is noteworthy. As a new city on the Harbor, Ocosta needed something new to attract investors and settlers, the railroad. Harbor cities Aberdeen and Hoquiam were well established at Ocosta’s founding, the only amenity that Ocosta boasted which these established cities could not was a railroad. During the turn of the century railroads were marks of wealth and prosperity. They provided a lifeline to the rest of the nation (Harvey 1983). Travel that would have taken days, weeks, and even months was now possible within a matter of hours or days. The harbor provided the second mode of transit in Ocosta. This mode of transit was accentuated in the romanticized nickname, “Ocosta-by-the-Sea.” Town developers rushed to develop this resource, constructing a three thousand foot long wharf as one of their first public projects.

The combination of these two modes of transportation provided a major selling point of the town. The town plat, featured in Figure 19 illustrates the emphasis of these two modes of transit in the cities initial planning. The railroad outlines the Northern and Eastern town limits, following the shoreline. The wharf is positioned at the end of the

city's main street, Ocean Ave. Commercial lots are arranged all along the railroad line to ease the transit and storage of goods. The railroad could have been positioned in a more sheltered location along the south edge of the city, but the shoreline was chosen for easy access to seafaring vessels.

Accommodation of sea-faring vessels at the wharf was a key selling point. What promoters failed to state was that the harbor was too shallow to accommodate sea-faring vessels. The promotional pamphlet downplays the shallow harbor by stating that Mr. Huestis, president of the Tacoma, Olympia & Pacific railroad took soundings and that Mr. Kendrick, chief engineer of the NPRR found Ocosta to have “an abundance of water and safe anchorage”(Anonymous 1970 [1890s]). Neither claim states what the actual harbor soundings are. They solely relate that the soundings have been taken. In order to further downplay shallow harbor readings, city promoters published a Harbor map that excluded shallow harbor soundings, but featured accurate deep water soundings (Kirk and Alexander 1990). To their credit, city founders hoped that the Army Corps of Engineers would approve their request to deepen the Harbor so that the port would be navigable to sea-faring vessels. Yet, the Army Corps of Engineers denied their request. Instead they deepened the harbors of the established towns of Aberdeen and Hoquiam. *The Aberdeen Herald* of the competing community of Aberdeen punned that “Ocosta-by-the-Sea” should be known as “Ocosta-in-the-Mud” (AH, 4 November 1891a: 4) because of their shallow harbor and the tidal marsh setting of downtown.

Landscape as Advertised

Town settings are important. According to advertisements, Ocosta provided the natural setting for a booming metropolis. Travel literature produced for Ocosta promoted its ideal setting. Promoters write:

About three hundred acres of the land fronting the water is a beautiful prairie, while back of that is a fine table of land, from fifteen to thirty feet high. This table land is comparatively level, and is covered with fine timber; and while the prairie affords level, cleared land for the business portion of the city, the table land will be the residential portion. (Anonymous 1970:29-30 [1890s])

The lower prairie was naturally cleared of trees, as though Mother Nature had prepared the land herself for Ocosta's downtown. An Oregon Newspaper account from 1890 states that there was a stand of trees along the coastline of Ocosta's downtown, as though they had been placed to protect the site from adverse weather coming in from the harbor (Oregonian, 14 June 1890). In contrast, the raised table land was heavily forested. Lumber from the table land provided the necessary natural resources for Ocosta's development. Trees were the ideal resource for burgeoning saw mill industries. Ocosta's saw mill industries supplied lumber with which structures could be built.

Natural resources were not the only benefits of the landscape. The Ocosta view shed was one of the most heralded aspects of the town. Ocosta promoters describe the view from the table land stating that this

is a view fit for ye gods to behold. Far to the east across a boundless forest, looms up old Mt. Rainier, or Tacoma; while as the eye wanders to the north, one beholds the grand ole Olympic mountains, looming up with their snow-clad peaks extending for many miles in length, standing there as sentinels, defying the bold miners and engineers to discover their hidden treasures; while to the west the grand old Pacific shows up with her rolling billows as far as the eye can reach,

and thousands of miles directly before you is the beautiful bay and harbor, with dozens of vessels with their white wings spread, speeding on to their destination, while the steam whistle from the dozens of steamers of all sizes wake up the sea gulls, and awakes one from the dream of this beautiful panorama. (Anonymous 1970:29-30 [1890s])

The rear table land provides glorious views of the future townsite, harbor, and the Olympic Mountains. The property was planned as a residential development, one of the most magnificent homes built in the development was the Ocosta Castle. From these residences the occupants commanded views of everything transpiring in Ocosta. Not only was Ocosta a nexus of transportation between the NPRR and the Pacific Ocean, it was “arranged by nature for a city” (Anonymous 1970:29 [1890s]). The ideal natural layout of the city is related to its elevation, natural resources, and view shed.

This idealized landscape is depicted in *View of Ocosta NPRR Terminus* a pictorial inset to an 1892 Map of Chehalis County (Figure 20). The image is taken looking northwest from the rear rise of Ocosta. The view overlooks downtown Ocosta, Grays Harbor, and the Olympic Mountains. Trees are only depicted on the rear rise, not within downtown Ocosta. Downtown is intersected by orderly streets which demarcate the platted lots of the townsite. Structures dot the landscape. A concentration of structures is depicted along the western coast of the townsite; dispersing as they get closer to the southern hillside. Ships navigate Grays Harbor to dock at Ocosta. A train is featured racing into Ocosta on the completed railroad in the lower right hand corner. The ships and railroad imply Ocosta’s status as a nexus between modes of transportation.



Figure 20: Pictorial Inset from Sectional Map of Chehalis County Washington, 1892, University of Washington Libraries Manuscripts.

View of Ocosta NPRR Terminus presents an idealized image of the Ocosta landscape. It depicts a bird's eye view of the townsite in 1892 from the fifteen to thirty foot table land. The artist has used artistic license in order to incorporate the entire platted Ocosta tidal flat in the image. Figure 21 is a topographic map of the Olympic Peninsula with an inset of Ocosta. The map graphically represents the elevations and perspectives featured in *View of Ocosta NPRR Terminus*. The artist's rendering of Ocosta is inaccurate. The artist denotes a more extreme rise than would have been possible. The Olympic Mountain Range majestically sprouts from the horizon. The

topographic map in Figure 21 documents the distance between Ocosta and the Olympic Mountains. The mountains are visible from the site on clear days, but at less than half the scale that they are represented in the image.

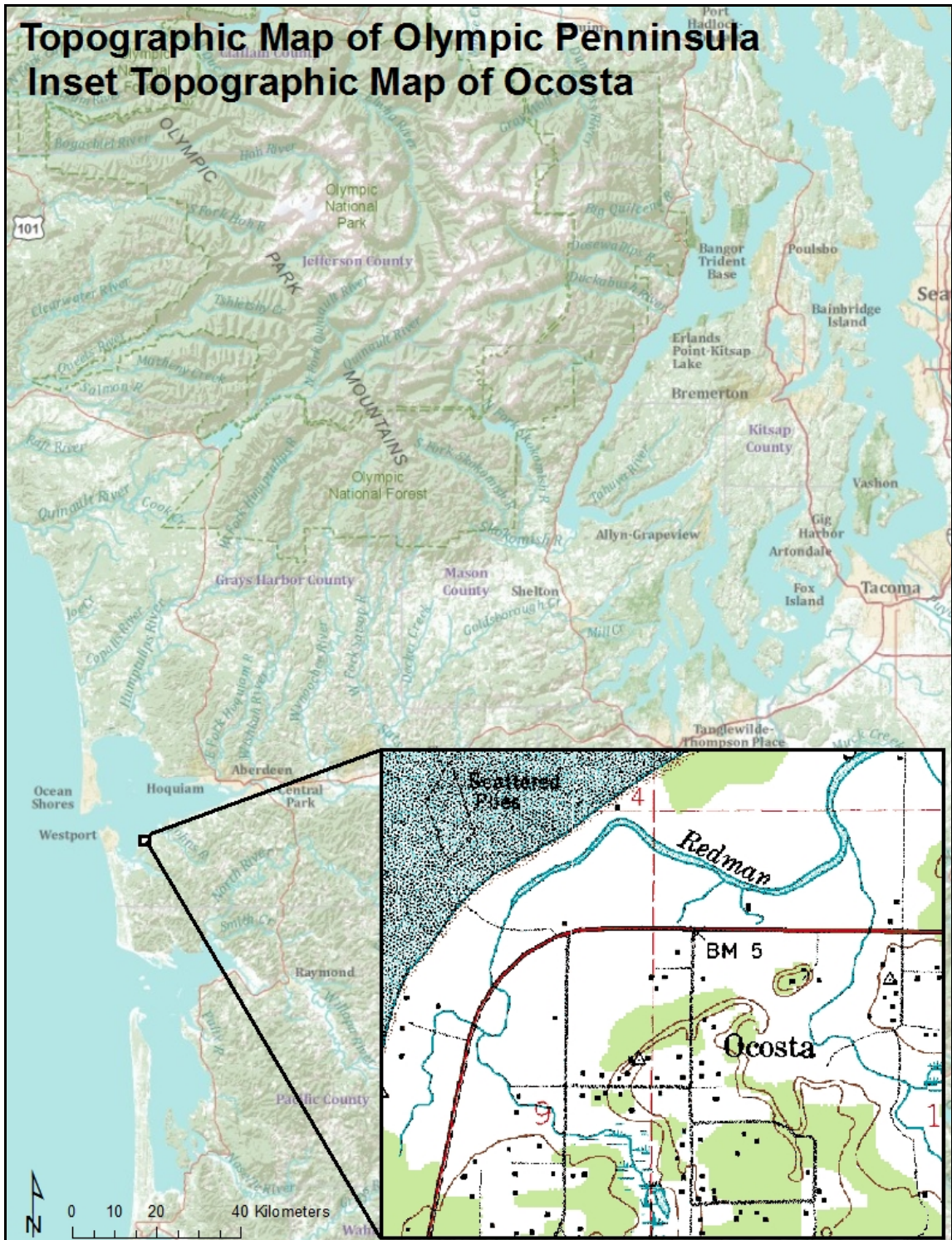


Figure 21: This topographic map of Washington State’s Olympic Peninsula and inset of Ocosta documents the distance between the Olympic Mountain Range and Ocosta. The artist is exaggerating the visibility of the Olympic Mountains in Figure 20.

The image clearly portrays all of Ocosta's platted streets. Figure 22, a photograph from the 1890s shows planked sidewalks intersecting Ocosta. The sidewalks do not span the extent of the featured region of the townsite, rather the sidewalk turns abruptly in the tidal marsh without an apparent destination. A 2008 GPR survey also revealed no evidence of the city streets depicted in the image. The railroad line was completed in June of 1892, therefore, if the image portrays the railroad rather than the right-of-way, it must have been completed between June and December of 1892.



Figure 22: Ocosta townsite view from southeast Ocosta looking northwest at downtown Ocosta. The coast is along the horizon. Circa 1890s, Aberdeen Museum Collection.

Financial Records

The original plat of Ocosta is clearly designed to produce a profit, selling land based on its vicinity to two main transportation routes. Amendments to the original plat illustrate that Ocosta was planned as a sustainable community by city founders. Financial

investments of Ocosta founders provide evidence of their investment in the city's success. Instead of reaping the rewards of their investments after the initial boom of land sales, the city founders reinvested their finances in several public works projects at Ocosta. These public works projects created infrastructure that would be unnecessary in a true *paper* city. Revenue was reinvested in the townsite to construct a three thousand foot long wharf, elevated sidewalks, a school house, and a building to house the Oddfellows. The Oddfellows were a philanthropic organization, striving to better the local community through good works.

Two of the cities developers, Frank G. Deckebach and Robert L. Boyle, invested substantially in the townsite. Deckebach came to Ocosta from Cincinnati, Ohio to establish the Bank of Ocosta and was elected as the city's first mayor. In the 1890s, financial institutions were not insured by the federal government. The finances in the bank could be completely lost. One of the safe guards to banking was to bank with an establishment that was supported by a known financial institution. On June 11, 1895, Deckebach's Bank of Ocosta closed. On closing the bank owed \$4,000, held \$7,000 shaky assets and had twenty-two cents in cash (Syckle 1982:212). Letters from an associated financial institution in Cincinnati called for the repayment of monies borrowed. Deckebach's family in Cincinnati was solicited by his creditors when he failed to make good on his debts accrued from his Ocosta investments. His mother and brother pooled together money for his debts, yet it was not enough. Deckebach's failed investment in Ocosta estranged him from his former business associates, ruining his professional reputation (Cox 1895).

Robert L. Boyle, a real estate developer also invested greatly in the new city. He developed a boarding house, restaurant, real estate and insurance office, as well as an entire business block. The Boyle buildings are pictured in Figure 23. At the date of construction, Boyle invested \$12,000 in constructing the Boyle business block alone (AH, 21 November 1912:1). Boyle further invested in the townsite by constructing a residence for himself on the platted high table land which afforded a grand view of the Harbor and business section of town. Construction of the home began in 1892. The *Montesano Vidette* heralded the home as “one of the finest in Chehalis County” (MV, 4 November 1892). Construction was delayed by a small fire in the home, caused by oily rags left by the house painters. Boyle never occupied the residence, nicknamed “The Ocosta Castle.” The bubble burst on Ocosta before he could move in. Like many Ocosta structures, the home sat empty for the next decade. Both of these developers had acute interests in the success of Ocosta. Their financial investments in the city’s infrastructure, banking, and real estate evidence their interest in Ocosta’s success.

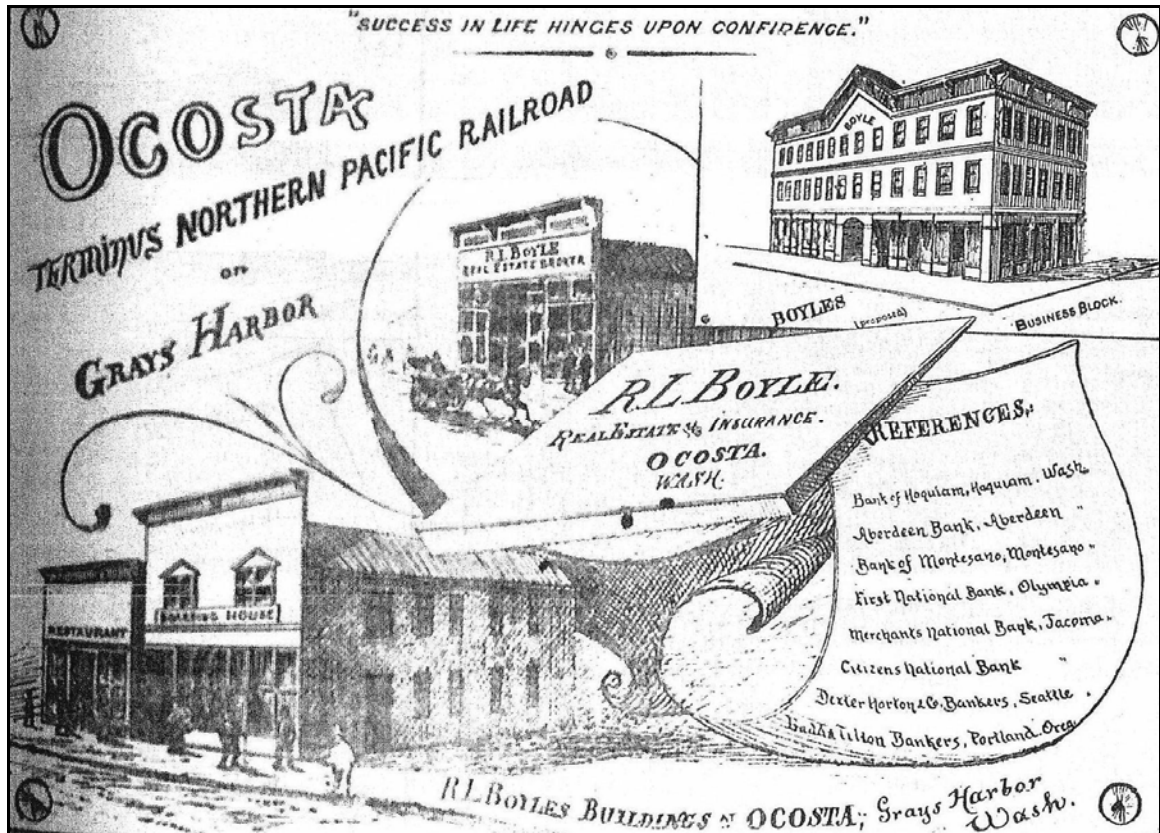


Figure 23: Ocosta Boyle Buildings Advertisement, August 1890, Pacific Illustrated Magazine.

Ocosta was imagined as a bustling metropolis. Plat maps, advertisements, and investments reveal the city's founder's belief in the success of the site because of the incoming railroad. Plat maps document the centrality of transportation routes to the city's design. Advertisements conjured Ocosta as the ideal community for settlers and investors to invest their time and resources. Ocosta's infrastructure was supported by the Ocosta Land Company and individual entrepreneurs. Ocosta was an opportunity. Yet, how much of the perspective townsite was constructed? The physical changes that people have made to Ocosta's landscape are discussed in the following narrative, the city-as-built.

CHAPTER 7: CITY AS BUILT

Ocosta's built environment is documented in historic maps, photographs, city codes, and a 2008 ground-penetrating radar survey (GPR). Analysis of the 1894 Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map presents a detailed snapshot of the built environment of sections of the city in 1894. Historic photograph analysis reveals both spatial layout and architectural styles of Ocosta structures. City codes present data on Ocosta's building standards for city streets and sidewalks. GPR survey provides data on site regions not mapped in the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map. Together these diverse sources of data can be used to form a narrative of the former built environment of the Ocosta townsite.

Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map Analysis

Fire insurance maps document the built environment of a specific place. Insurance agents, such as Ocosta's Columbia Fire & Marine Insurance Company Insurance Agent R.L. Boyle, used the maps throughout the United States to assess the risk of fire prior to insuring a property. Fire insurance maps are available throughout the United States for urban and industrial centers. Building materials, structure height, the quantity and location of windows and doors, structural ornamentation, and the structure's primary use are recorded in fire insurance maps. Building materials are notated by color coding. In 1894, a Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map was created of Ocosta (Figure 24).

Four hundred people lived in the town when the map was produced. A scanned microfiche image of the map is on file at the Washington State Archives. The map was not color coded, thus it does not indicate the building materials of the structures. Historic photographs of Ocosta and the local lumber industry indicate that the structures were mainly constructed out of wood. Map notations do indicate that all of the structures had shingle rather than slate roofs. The Ocosta structures on the map are either one, one and a half, or two stories tall. The quantity and placement of windows and doors, as well as the presence of building ornamentation, was not recorded by the cartographer. Lastly, the primary uses of structures are recorded on the map.

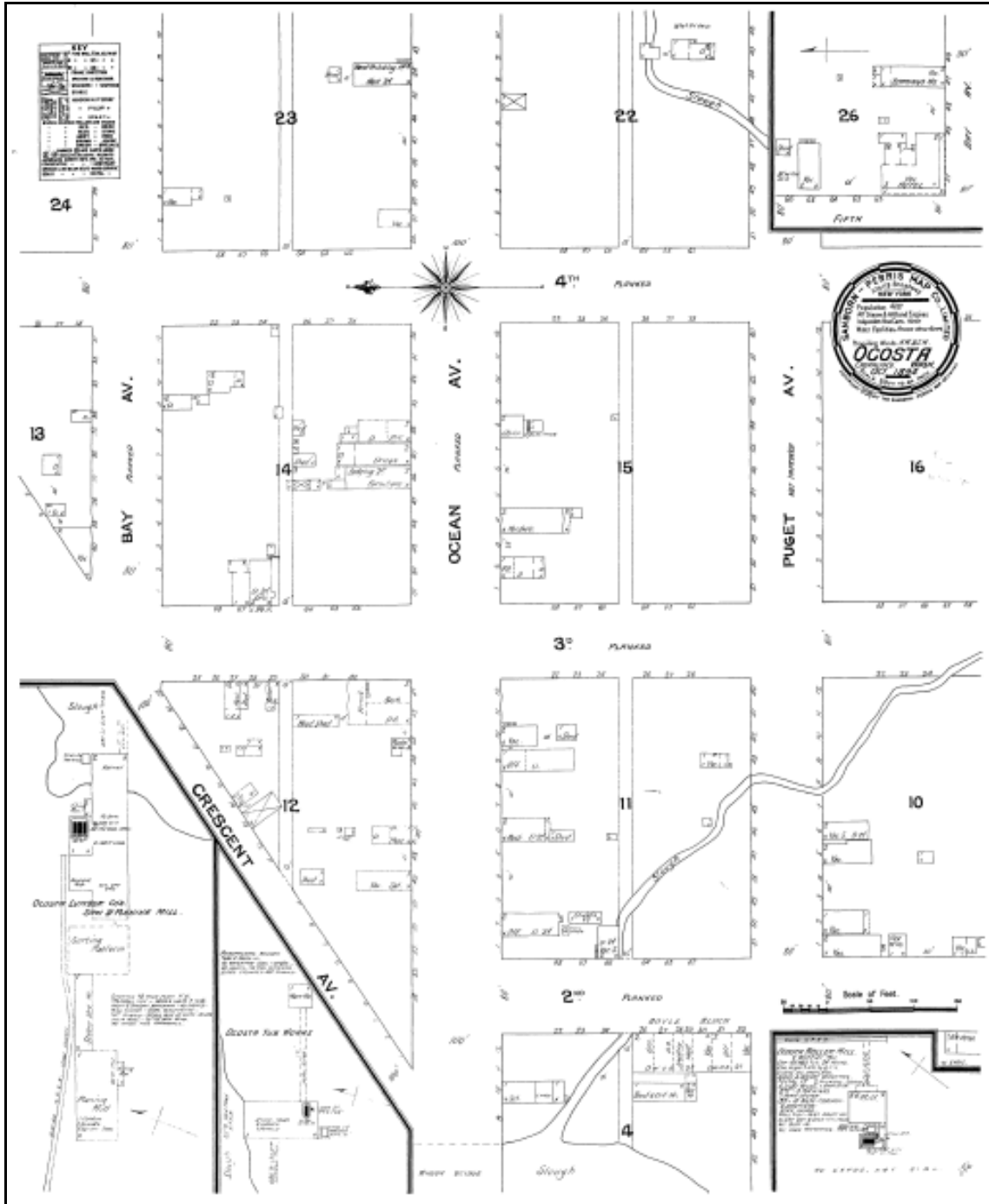


Figure 24: Ocosta Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map, 1894, Washington State Archives.

The main section of the Ocosta Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map depicts downtown Ocosta. There are also four discontinuous inset maps of the townsite. I

georeferenced both the primary map and one of the insets by of the Sanborn to a current Ocosta plat map by using city block numbers recorded on the Sanborn. Structures illustrated in these sections of the Sanborn were then digitized in ArcGIS. I used a current aerial NAIP image of Ocosta as the background for the digitized structure shapefile. I recorded the primary function of the structure within the attribute table of the digitized shapefile. I divided structure use into six categories: unknown, shed, business, residential, vacant, and stable. Each category is color coded in Figure 25. These categories enable spatial analysis of public and private space within the townsite, as well as, those properties that were not occupied in 1894. Where possible, businesses are labeled by function.

The 1894 Sanborn Map reveals a diverse community. Not only are there businesses, but there is a wide array of establishments. No block represented on the plat is completely developed. Although some structures appear to be constructed in an urban style with adjoining walls, most of the structures are built without adjoining structures. Businesses appear to be centered along Ocean Avenue, 2nd, and 3rd Street.

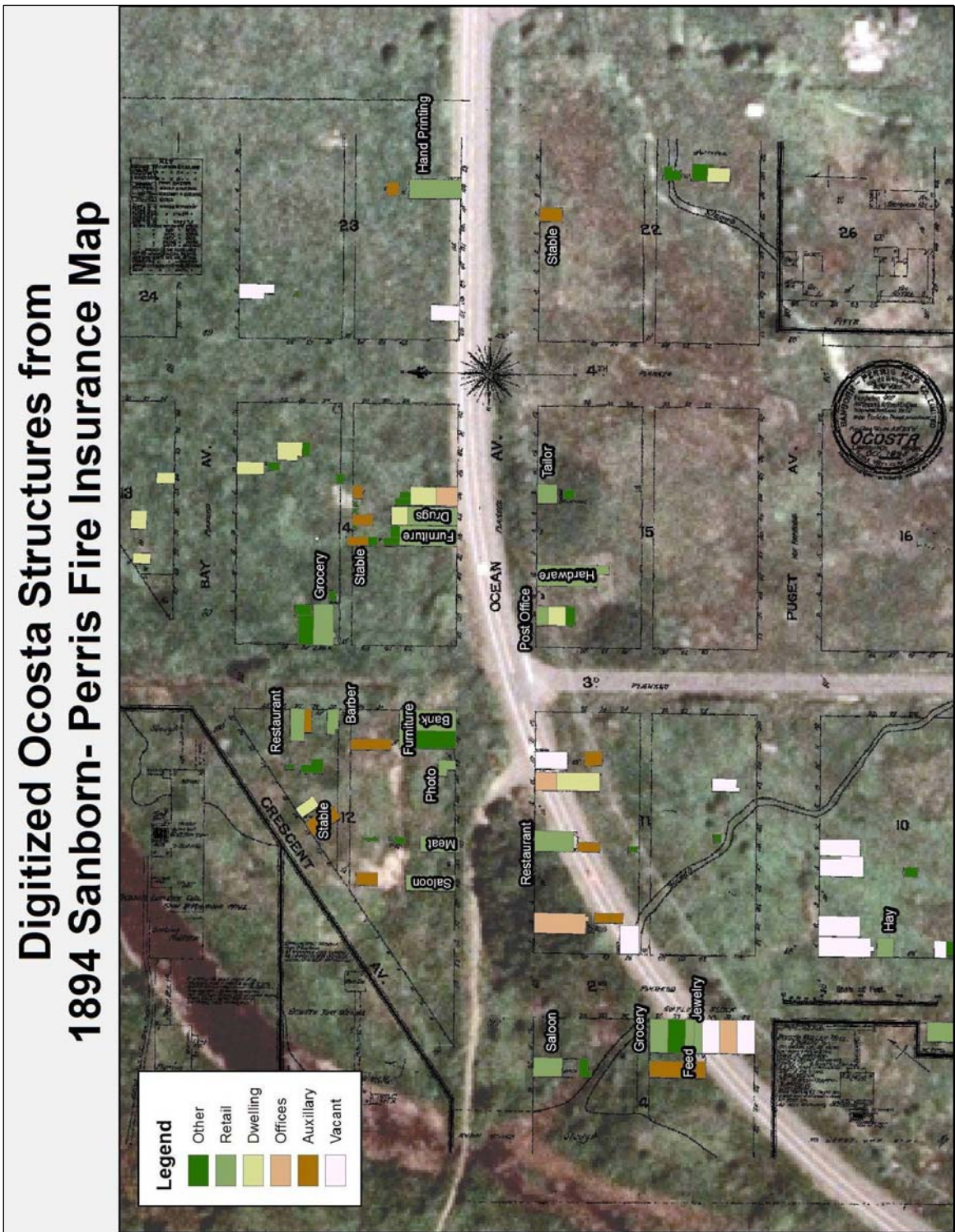


Figure 25: Digitized Structures of 1894 Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map overlaid on NAIP aerial image, 2008.

One of the map insets features city block 26. The aforementioned McCandless Hotel was located on Lot 12 of Block 26. The hotel is listed as vacant in the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map. The hotel, one of the most widely advertised amenities of the townsite after its construction in 1891, was left vacant just three years later. Molly Swift later purchased the property and moved it to East Hoquiam in 1904. Figure 26 illustrates the McCandless Hotel and its adjacent structures in 1890.



Figure 26: View of Downtown Ocosta taken southeast of the city center Oct. 12th circa 1890, Polson Museum Collection.

The three other Sanborn map insets are of Ocosta's industrial centers: Ocosta Lumber Co's Saw and Planing Mill, Ocosta Tub Works, and the Ocosta Roller Mill. These insets are not spatially referenced by city block numbers. The approximate location of the Ocosta Tub Works, Ocosta Lumber Co's Saw and Planning were deduced by spatially analyzing the information on the map within GIS. The map has insufficient data to precisely georeference the Ocosta Roller Mill. The sole geographical data was that it was adjacent to the Northern Pacific Railroad Line. In order to facilitate the transportation of each industrial center's product, all of Ocosta's factories were located near the Northern Pacific Railroad.

Three geographic references were made for the Ocosta Lumber Co's Saw and Planing Mill in the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map, A) it was three fourths of a mile away from the Ocosta Post Office, B) it was next to the NPRR, and C) the Lumber Mill was also next to a slough. First, NAIP USGS data, scanned current plat maps, a scanned 1913 USGS map, scanned 1894 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map were collected and entered into ArcGIS. Scanned maps or digital raster graphics (DRG) were georeferenced by creating control points between the map and the USGS aerial NAIP layer using the georeferencing toolbar. Once the 1894 Sanborn Fire Insurance map was georeferenced, a new polygon shapefile "Post Office" was created. The post office was digitized in this new shapefile and labeled Post Office. A $\frac{3}{4}$ mile buffer was placed around the Post Office shapefile to satisfy the first criterion. The second criterion was satisfied by digitizing the Ocosta railroad from the 1913 USGS DRG. The intersection of the railroad and buffer was visually analyzed. The buffer edge intersected the railroad line in two locales, only one of which was near a slough. The lumber mill was approximately located at the point shown in Figure 27.

Ocosta-by-the-Sea Lumber Mill



1894 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Inset of the Ocosta Lumber Mill

Cartographer: Katie Arntzen
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 10N
 Source: USGS &
 1894 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map
 November 17, 2008

Figure 27: Ocosta-by-the-Sea Lumber Mill location over a 1913 Topographic map. There are two insets, one of the Lumber Mill location over a NAIP Aerial Image. The second is the 1894 Sanborn Map inset for the Ocosta-by-the-Sea Lumber Mill, 2008.

Two potential locations of the Ocosta Tub Works were deduced by satisfying two criteria in ArcGIS: A) it was located 680 feet from the Ocosta Lumber Co's Saw and

Planing Mill; B) it was 200 feet from the main track of the Northern Pacific Railroad. A 680 foot buffer was placed around the Ocosta Lumber Co's shapefile to satisfy the first criterion. The second criterion was satisfied by placing a 200 foot buffer around the railroad line shapefile. The buffer edge of the Ocosta Lumber Co intersected the railroad line buffer in four locales, two of which were within the Harbor. The Ocosta Tub Works was located at one of the locations demarcated on the following map in Figure 28.

Large portions of Ocosta are not documented on the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map. Ideally Fire Insurance maps document the entire built insurable environment of a townsite. Yet, by 1894 newspaper articles had already heralded the completion of the Ocosta Brewery and School House. Ocosta residents have stated that some of the claimed developments of Ocosta were only paper dreams, but the brewery and school house were constructed. They must not have been included in the map. Were these structures that were not being insured and thus of no interest to the Sanborn cartographer?

Two other cities on Grays Harbor were mapped by the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Company, Hoquiam and Aberdeen (Table 1). Both cities were mapped in 1889, 1890, and 1891. In 1894, only Hoquiam and Ocosta were mapped. This was the first and last time Ocosta would be mapped by the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Company. Hoquiam and Aberdeen would continue to be mapped until the early 1910s. The company probably stopped mapping Ocosta not because there were no longer structures at the townsite, but because residents were no longer likely to insure their properties. The map was created as an insurance agent's tool; if no one is insuring their buildings than there is no reason to update the existing insurance maps. It appears that Ocosta property values dropped so low that they were no longer deemed worthy of insuring. For example, in 1891, one city lot sold for \$1,500. The same lot sold for \$29 in 1907.

Table 1: Dates of Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map Revisions for Ocosta, Hoquiam, and Aberdeen.

Ocosta	Hoquiam	Aberdeen
-	1889	1889
-	1890	1890
-	1891	1891
1894	1894	1901
-	1902	1906
-	1907	1914
-	1916	-

Historic Photograph Analysis

Historic photographs of Ocosta are located at the University of Washington Digital Archives, Polson Museum, Aberdeen Museum, Westport-South Beach Historical Society, and in private collections. Most of the photographs are not dated. When dates are provided they include either the year or the month and day. Photographs were taken of Ocosta citizens, structures, and landscape scenes. Photographs of Ocosta structures and landscapes are of primary interest in understanding the built environment.

Four types of structures were identified by the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance map: industrial production centers, businesses, residences, and auxiliary structures. I defined auxiliary structures as sheds, stables, or outhouses. There are no images of Ocosta's

industrial centers. But there are several photographs of Ocosta businesses. Interestingly, the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map documents that a photography studio was located on Ocean Avenue. The photographer of this studio may have taken some of the following images of Ocosta in 1894.

Photographed Ocosta businesses follow commercial building trends of the 1890s. Ocosta businesses are one to two story structures with false front facades (Figures 29-31). “The high parapet of the typical false front building blocked from view the rather simple structure behind it, and gave what otherwise was a modest building an urbane sense of size and style” (Staff of Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation 1989). The structures are either meters away from each other or they share walls. Shared wall construction is indicative of urban architecture.



Figure 29: High false front parapet disguises the simpler structure behind this Ocosta Store, 1890-1920, Polson Museum Collection.

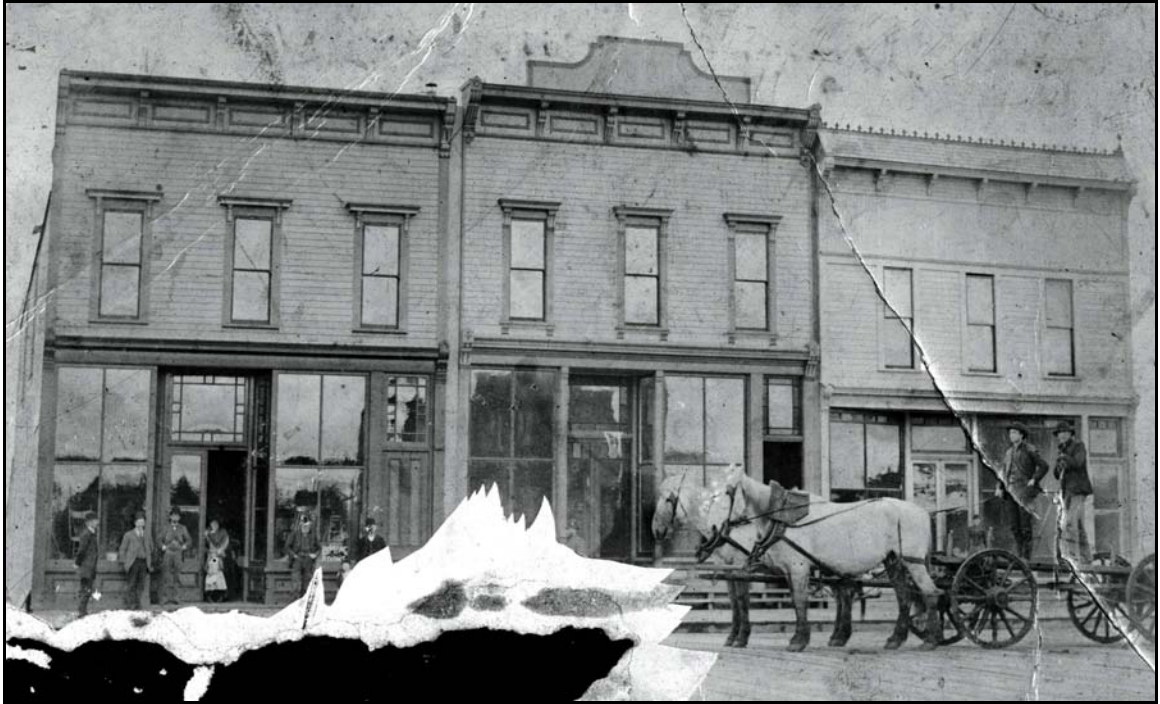


Figure 30: From this perspective the structures appear to be urban, but likely have false fronts. Ocosta Boarding House, circa 1980, Polson Museum Collection



Figure 31: Magnified "Lodging Rooms" sign in Ocosta Boarding House, Polson Museum Collection

Landscape photographs of the townsite feature a spread out community (see Figure 26). Businesses are concentrated near the railroad and harbor with residences radiating from the intersection of these modes of transit. Planked walkways link built regions of the town. City ordinances twenty-two and thirty-five prescribe parameters for the construction of planked roads and sidewalks in Ocosta (City Ordinance, WSBHS 2006.04.01). Planked roadways were constructed between public centers, such as downtown businesses and the school house.

Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR) Survey

GPR survey at the Ocosta townsite was completed in August of 2008. Survey sites were selected based on three conditions. First, survey regions were selected that were within the platted landscape. Evidence of the former built environment within the platted landscape informs research questions on the spatial relationships of structures within the planned plat of the city. Secondly, sites were selected outside of the mapped 1894 Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map region to complement data provided in the map. Lastly, sites were logistically confined to regions with which I had landowner permission to access. Prior to fieldwork, an introductory letter was sent to Ocosta landowners. Site locations focused on areas with negligible ground cover that were not swampy. A total of twelve grids were laid out at the townsite (Figure 32-33). Together they represent a survey of 18,620 square meters (4.6 acres) of the townsite. The grids are color coded by survey date and labeled with the grid number.

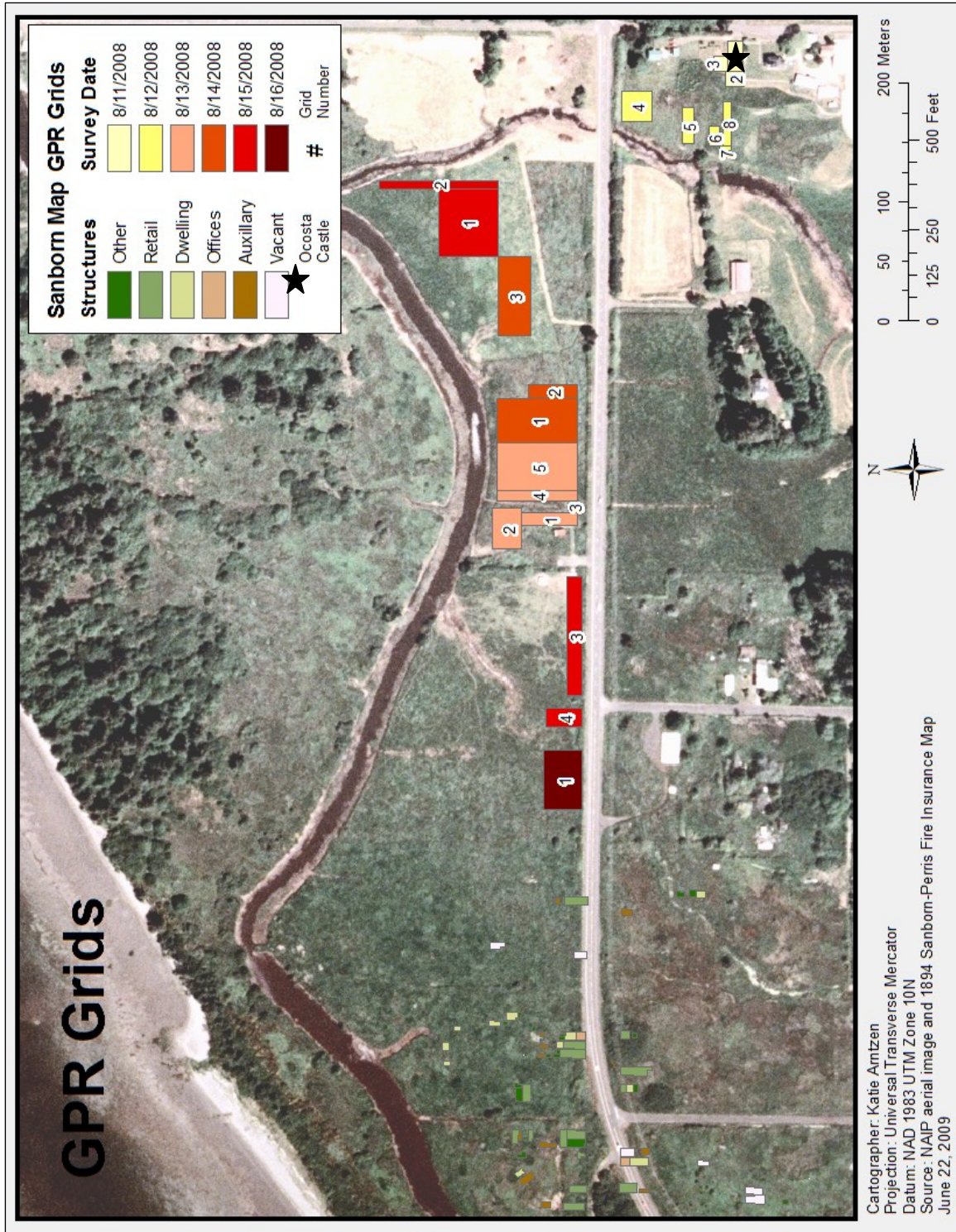


Figure 32: Ocosta GPR Grid Locations and Digitized Sanborn Map Structures over a NAIP aerial image, 2009.

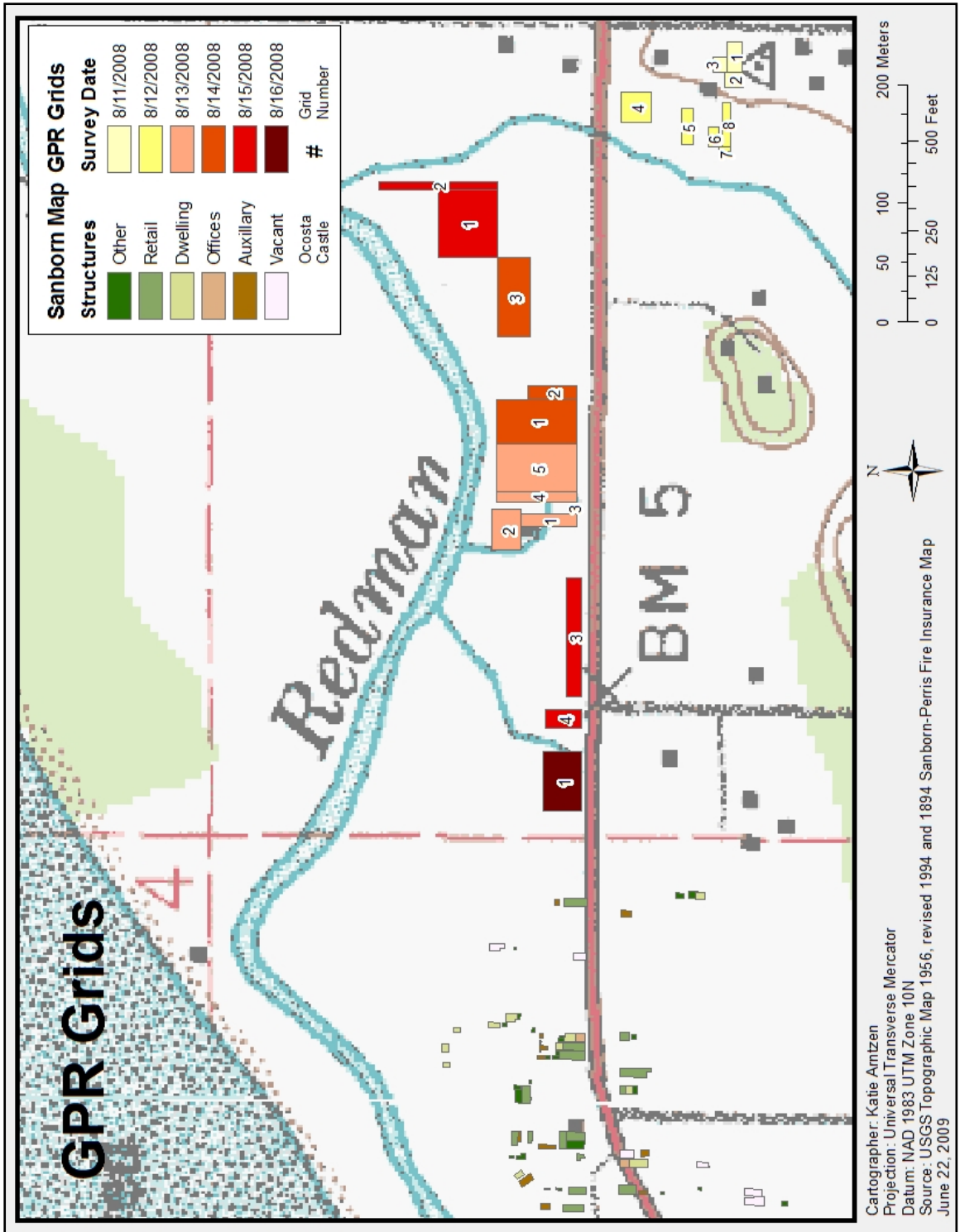


Figure 33: Ocosta GPR Grid Locations and Digitized Sanborn Map Structures over a topographic map, 2009.

Ground-penetrating radar data revealed few reflections indicative of buildings. These results suggest that structures were not constructed in the areas surveyed. It is possible that the position of the grids and moisture levels of the soils and sediments obscured observation of the former built environment in the GPR profile and plan images. Grids were positioned within modern hay fields along the former main street of Ocosta, Ocean Avenue. Grids did not extend all the way to the historic roadway because of Highway 105- Ocean Avenue's successor- and the ditches that surround the modern roadway. Historic photographs depict structures along the edges of Ocean Avenue (Figure 34). It is possible that survey did not include structures that closely bordered the historic roadway, because of construction of Highway 105.

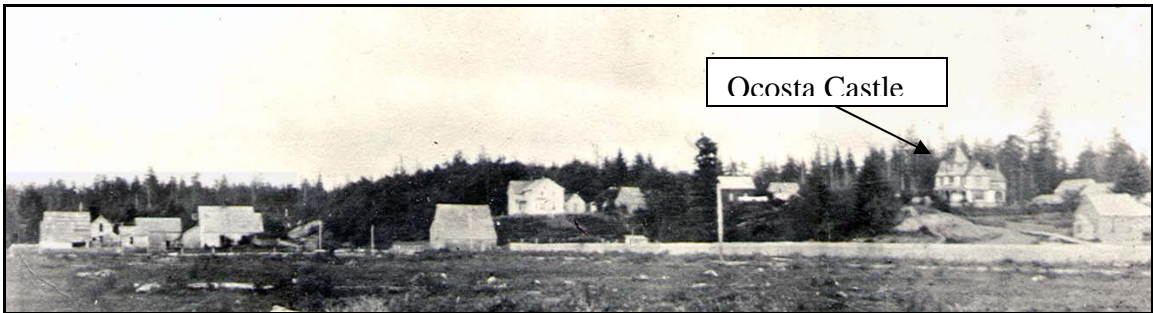


Figure 34: Southeast View of Ocosta, post 1890, Westport South Beach Historical Society Collection.

The level of water saturation in Ocosta soils and sediments when the site was surveyed may have also impacted the results. In 2004, Lawrence Conyers reported on test surveys conducted at two archaeological sites. The sites were first surveyed when the soils and sediments were dry, then they were surveyed after they were saturated with water (2004). Conyers found that water saturation enhanced the visibility of some archaeological features, such as those constructed of wood. The Ocosta GPR survey was

conducted in August, the driest month of the year at Ocosta (see Figure 2). It is possible that wood in the survey region would reflect stronger waves during a wetter month of the year.

Although 1890s structures were not visible in the grids, recent cultural disturbances were identifiable. Recent oyster shell lined pathways were observed in GPR profiles of the grids adjacent to the Ocosta Castle. Figure 35 shows an oyster shell floor from Grid 2 collected on August 11, 2008. This is likely a remnant of a trail used by the current or former residents of the Ocosta Castle (Figure 36). Current residents raise horses, they line their horse trails with oyster shells.

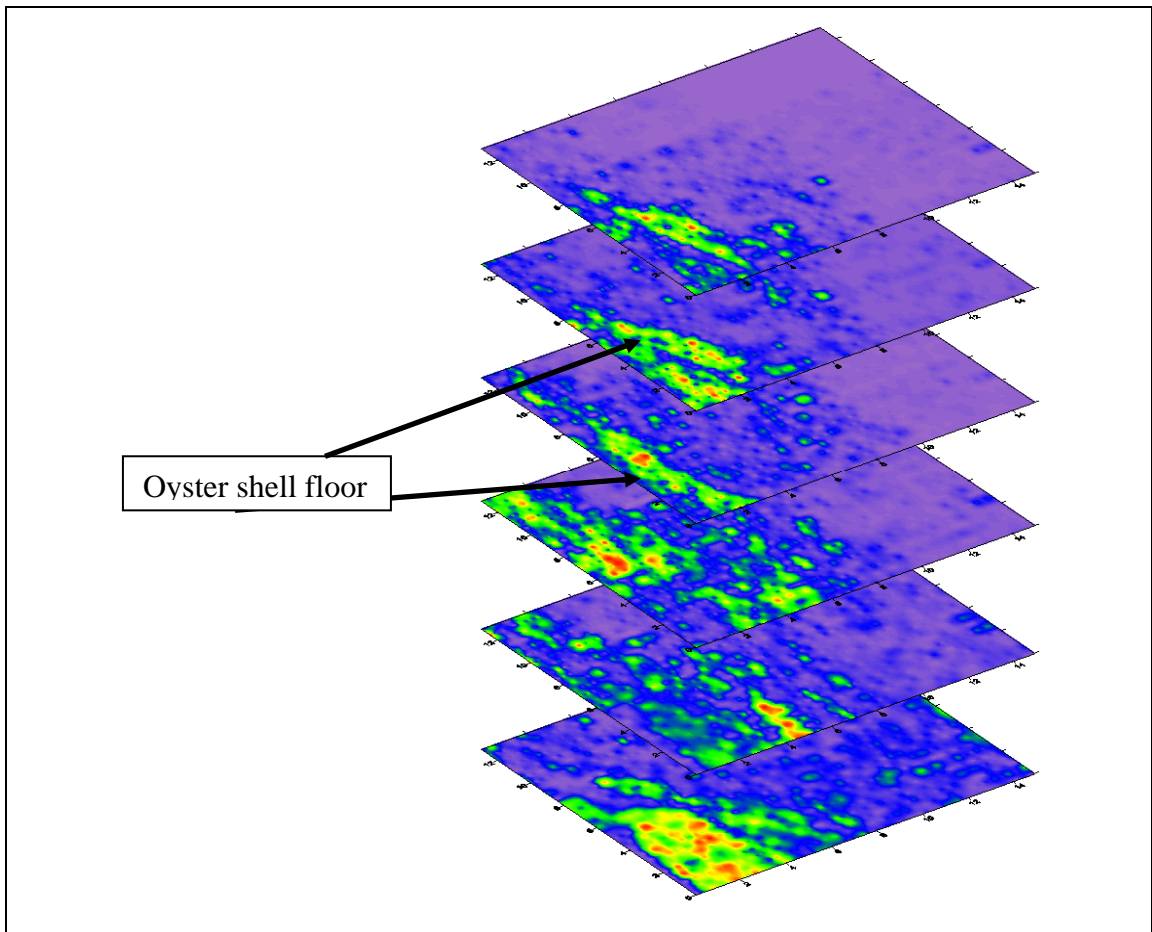


Figure 35: Plan View Slices, August 11, 2008, Grid 2.

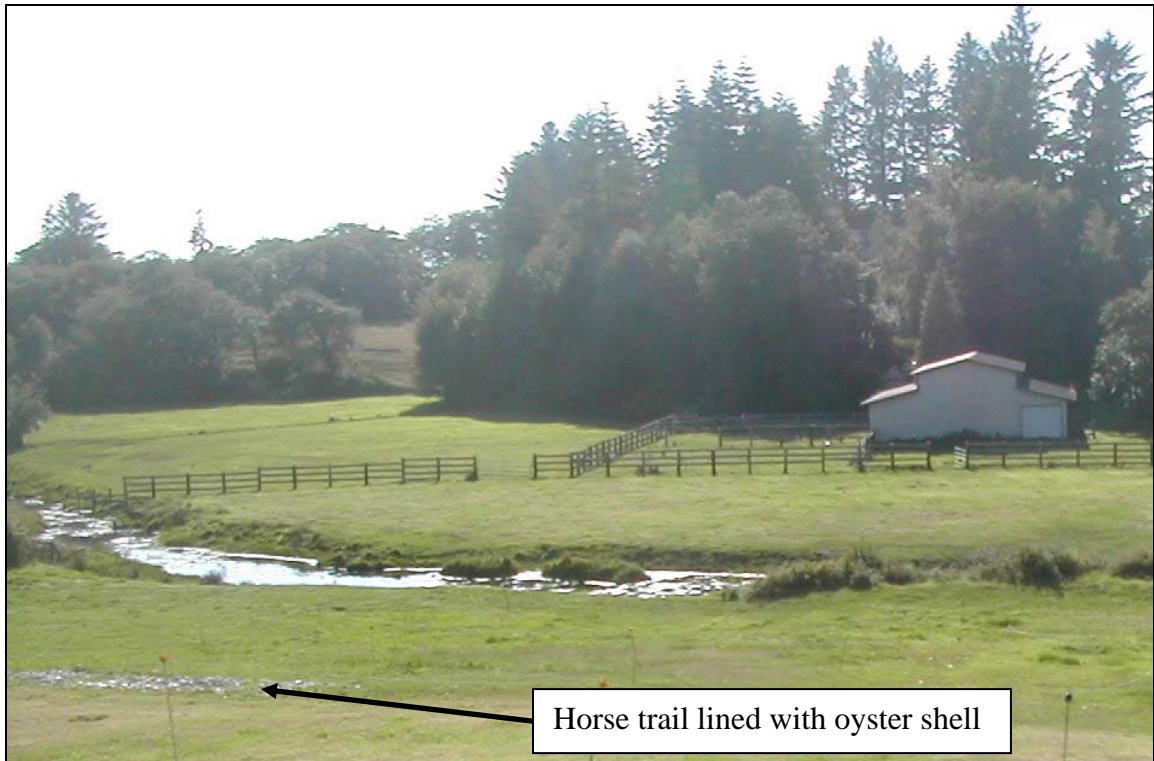


Figure 36: Trail lined with oyster shells, view west of Ocosta Castle, August 2008.

Ocosta's former built environment presents a unique challenge-- it is currently a rural site, but the area had been planned as a bustling urban community. By 1900, the city council adopted town ordinance number seventy-two. This ordinance states that residents within city limits are only permitted two horses and three cows, large herding animals over this amount would no longer be tolerated to wander through the city (Town of Ocosta 1891-1932). The city was becoming a rural enclave with animals roaming through the city. The longevity of the Ocosta Grange also evidences the agrarian community that Ocosta has become.

Diverse strands of information have been presented to facilitate understanding the spatial layout and appearance of the former built environment. Analysis of the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map provides detailed data on the 1894 insurable portions of the city. The city was not heavily developed. Several of Ocosta's city blocks housed structures; but there is no block in which a majority of the lots are developed. Instead, Ocosta structures were spread out along the landscape. Empty lots may not solely represent unsold lots. The Sanborn map was also far from all-inclusive, the Ocosta Brewery and School House were not included in the map. Historic photographs inform the spatial layout and architectural styles of the community. Structures represented in Figures 29 and 30 were built with commercial false fronts, an "urban" architectural style. However, the structure in Figure 29 has a bay window, typical of domestic structures. The location of the bay window also indicates that building owners did not anticipate a neighboring structure in the near future. Figure 30, appears exceedingly urban. It depicts a string of three commercial structures, yet there is space on either side of the buildings. The Sanborn map and landscape photographs demonstrate that the "urban" style of linked buildings represented in Figure 30 is rare in Ocosta architecture.

City codes provide dimensions for planked roads and sidewalks constructed in the city. GPR survey data suggests that significant areas of the platted townsite were never developed. Both GPR and historic photograph data indicate that the commercial built environment of the city was centered in the region mapped in the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map. Outlying platted land was likely used for individual homes and farmsteads. The city that was built at Ocosta was not the urban metropolis founders

projected it would become. How have people remembered the townsite in written accounts and oral history?

CHAPTER 6: CITY AS REMEMBERED

Memories of Ocosta reflect an individual's or group's unique experience at the townsite. These observations are of particular interest because they are from an assortment of individuals that visited or have lived in Ocosta. The recorded memories cover a time period spanning from the 1890s to 2008. They include written experiences from the 1890s, radio program transcripts on local lore and history from the 1950s, a 2007 oral history event on Ocosta, and open-ended interviews with current residents. Kent Ryden states that "It is the stories- narratives formal or informal, elaborate and detailed or offhand and telegraphic- of what happened in a place, of what they have done with the things that they found there, that best reveal the 'real' geography: geography that is experienced and understood as place" (1993:46). Incorporation of experiences and impressions from individuals throughout the history of the site broadens our understanding of the town with a plurality of data sources.

Early Memoires

There are two written memoirs from early visitors to Ocosta. Both were composed by individuals passing through the townsite. The first was transcribed by a member of the O'Neill Expedition in 1890. The O'Neill Expedition was charged with the task of crossing and charting the Olympic Peninsula by the United States Army. They began the journey on the Northeast coast of the Olympic Peninsula and traversed to the

Western coast, completing the journey just south of Ocosta. During the return trip members of the O'Neill Expedition spent a day in Ocosta. They state that: "we remained here [Ocosta] all day and night and had ample opportunity to talk the few inhabitants all to sleep..." (Kirk and Alexander 1990:462). Two observations made by the Expedition are worthy of note. They state that "there were ten houses, nine real estate offices, and one drug store" (Kirk and Alexander 1990). If the agents did not live above their place of business, this suggests that all but one of the homes were occupied by the real estate agents. Even if the agents lived and resided above or in back of their place of business, they still comprise half of the town population. Perhaps Ocosta did not succeed because no one lived there other than the developers. Secondly, Expedition members state that "Ocosta is scarcely above the tide and a salt marsh." This statement confirms that Ocosta's problematic location on the tidal flats was apparent from the start of its development in the 1890s.

George Everett Hussey Macdonald, editor of *The Eye*, a Seattle newspaper received an invitation for an all expense paid trip to Ocosta. Unfortunately for MacDonald and the Ocosta promoters, the invitation was never meant to be sent to members of the Seattle press. Ocosta promoters had only intended to send the offer to fifty members of the press in Olympia, but six hundred arrived. MacDonald relates the Washington State press' first impression of Ocosta. He states:

Ocosta, when reached, we observed to be a marsh, with raised wooden walks, to which the appearance of being lined with trees had been given by spiking evergreens, or small saplings, to the string pieces of the walks every ten or fifteen feet. The editors stopped, looked, and gave judgment. Said Mr. Sanger: "We have walked into the jaws of a big fake." (Macdonald 1929:29)

Ocosta promoters had set the scene at Ocosta creating the illusion of trees growing on the tidal marshes. The illusion of a habitable downtown did not fool the press. MacDonald later writes that he never returned to the town because of what he wrote about it in *The Eye* (Macdonald 1929:30). While some members of the party were being entertained with horse rides along the beach, MacDonald made acquaintance with the young wife of a Seattle Senator. On meeting she asked:

‘Do you know anything about this dreadful place?’

I [MacDonald] denied knowledge of it saying, “Who would be here if he did?”

“That,” she replied, “is what I think’ (Macdonald 1929:29)

Neither believed that Ocosta was the haven it had been purported as in advertisements. Ocosta had been depicted as a developed locale, not the marsh land that confronted them. Both Seattle residents, they were likely unused to life without accustomed amenities on the western frontier. Perhaps of more significance, the young woman states that she does not feel completely welcome in Ocosta. She states: “This is the first place I have been with my husband where we have been regarded as outsiders” (Macdonald 1929:30). Perhaps potential settlers did not feel welcomed by the local residents, and were thus discouraged from settling in the burgeoning town.

Hometown Scrapbook

Beginning in 1949, radio announcer and local historian Ben K. Weatherwax broadcast the Hometown Scrapbook series in Aberdeen, Washington. The series focuses on Grays Harbor lore and legend that Weatherwax gathered from local residents. These

tales provide snapshots of how Grays Harbor residents of the late 1940s and early 1950s remember Ocosta, fifty years after its prime.

Composed for an evening radio program, Hometown Scrapbook tales are theatrically written. The Hometown Scrapbook recordings themselves do not survive in the archival record. However, the transcripts of the radio program were saved by Ben K. Weatherwax and his wife. The preserved transcripts are Weatherwax's notes for the program, not a record of the actually spoken words. Mrs. Weatherwax donated the transcripts to the local Aberdeen Library. Unfortunately, several of the stories are missing from the library collection. Prior to donating the collection, transcripts were lent to local students. Not all of the lent transcripts were returned. The Grays Harbor Journal, a private company, is currently working to locate all of the missing transcripts. The transcripts that they have accessed are being edited and compiled on the website, benkweatherwax.com. Since the transcripts are actually Ben Weatherwax's typed notes, there are grammar and syntax issues in the text. Some of the language used by Weatherwax in the 1950s, is unfamiliar today. Grays Harbor Journal editors are editing the grammar and 1950s language to terms that are easily understood today. Two of the stories in the series: The Clam Wars and The McCandless Hotel take place in Ocosta-by-the-Sea (Appendices 2-3).

The Clam Wars is an elaborate tale documenting a gruesome battle at Ocosta. Weatherwax prefaces the tale with a brief history of the townsite. He relates that the site of Ocosta was originally named Mu-shitst-ska by its Native American inhabitants. Contrary to other sources that cite Mrs. Neuf creating the name Ocosta, Weatherwax

credits both Mrs. George E. Filley, wife of a Ocosta Land Company trustee and William H. Calkins of Tacoma with the creation of the name.

Weatherwax proceeds to tell of Ocosta's early development as a railroad city. He focuses on the impact of the railroad and the advertising campaign in starting the town. Weatherwax describes Ocosta, focusing on prominent business owners of whom harbor residents may still be aware of in the 1950s.

A.W. Barkley was operating a men's furnishing store with stock that would have looked good in Seattle or San Francisco. Adolph Ponshiel, of Hoquiam had a tailor shop there with his brother. Alfred Beaulieu, long time resident of Ocosta had a general store. (Weatherwax circa 1950a)

By the 1950s most of the former glory of Ocosta's built environment had been relocated, burnt, or was actively rotting *in situ*. Weatherwax describes the townsite in detail to prepare an audience for a tale in a city that they may have never seen.

After introducing the townsite, Weatherwax presents the main protagonist of The Clam Wars, Bob Forbes. Bob Forbes was a Texan seafood canner. He had heard of Ocosta's potential for a deep-sea white fish business while operating a cannery in Texas. Bob "blew into town [Ocosta] before the railroad, and by the time the steel had reached down to Ocosta, Bob had a cannery up" (Weatherwax circa 1950a). Bob canned salmon, crab and clam meat. Ocosta beaches are home to several clam varieties. Typically razor clams are harvested and canned on Grays Harbor. Bob decided to experiment with a different type of clam, the mud clam. The mud clam was available in spring during the crab, salmon, and razor clam off seasons. Bob hired clam diggers to hunt the mud clams and proceeded to test canning them. All appeared well when Bob stored the canned mud

clams in early spring. Since he was the first on the Harbor to can the clams, Bob wanted to test the batch throughout the summer prior to selling them.

Weatherwax moves the listener forward to a late summer afternoon at Ocosta. As residents settled on their porches listening to night birds and river boat whistles their ears were accosted by gunshots coming from the docks. Women and children were rushed inside homes as the men gathered into a posse to face the suspected invasion. On approaching the docks it quickly became evident that the noises were coming from the warehouse next to Bob Forbes cannery. A few brave men peeked inside only to be sent staggering back by both flying mud clams and a noxious odor. After surveying the scene, Bob Forbes announced that the mud clams were not canned properly and that the recent heat had caused them to ferment and explode. Weatherwax concludes the tale with two messages. First, that the battle of the clams, as it was later dubbed by Harbor residents, provided great publicity for Bob Forbes' cannery. Secondly, the mud clam won, never to again be disturbed by clam diggers.

The second Hometown Scrapbook tale tells of the epic journey of the McCandless Hotel from Ocosta to East Hoquiam. Weatherwax begins the tale by relating the fate of boomtowns that did not outlive their initial growth spurt. He states that:

When one doomed townsite would blow up, and the boom settlers would move out, leaving behind empty buildings and silent industry, the owners of the structures would try to recover on their property. That was only natural. They would seek some method of converting what they had to some other use.
(Weatherwax circa 1950b)

Owners abandoned their buildings, moved the entire structures to another location, or disassembled them to reuse the building materials elsewhere. If the structure was not

abandoned or disassembled, structures were often relocated in the Pacific Northwest by barging them to new locations. By using waterways, structures were relatively easily relocated to a more profitable business site or habitable site. Weatherwax states that “it was not uncommon during the days after the Harbor had finally settled down to see buildings moving from one side of the Harbor to the other” (Weatherwax circa 1950b). The McCandless Hotel was transported across the Harbor by barge from Ocosta to East Hoquiam (Figures 38-39).



Figure 37: McCandless Hotel at Ocosta, 1891-1904, University of Washington Digital Archives.

The McCandless Hotel was built by the McCandless family. It was one of the first structures to be completed at the townsite. The hotel had fifty-four rooms and was three stories tall. Progress of the hotel was announced as far as Chicago. The Chicago

Daily Inter Ocean Newspaper announced that Ocosta was constructing a \$25,000 hotel (Daily Inter Ocean [DIO], 2 February 1891). The hotel opened in May of 1891, hosting a grand ball for the community in celebration (AH, 4 November 1891a:4). The hotel infrastructure was later completed by drilling a well in April of 1892 (AH, 7 April 1892a:8).



Figure 38: Woodcut of McCandless Hotel in Ocosta, 1890s, Hollingsworth Family Scrapbook.

Early on, the hotel was sold to Ms. Molly Swift. Weatherwax states that Molly ran her hotel for “a number of years” before the dwindling clientele forced her to reassess her business. Weatherwax states that

Ocosta had dropped and wilted. Oh, Charlie Coughlin still had his barbershop on Ocean Ave, and Beaulieu and Anderson operated their general merchandise store and Post Office (Figure 40). F.G. Deming managed to keep his general merchandise establishment open and Chris Flowers still shoved drinks across the bar of his saloon. (circa 1950a)

Weatherwax is positioning his reader in a community that they may have never visited by discussing people and their businesses that they may know.



Figure 39: Ocosta Post Office, 1890-1908, Aberdeen Museum Collection.

After discussing her options with hotel clerk, August Hilker, Molly decided to barge the hotel to East Hoquiam. She purchased a lot on the northwest corner of Ontario and Pacific Avenue and scheduled a barge to move the hotel. The move took place in January of 1904. The hotel was cut in half in order for it to fit on the barge, with the open sides boarded up for the journey across the Harbor. All of the furnishings were

transported within the hotel. Molly Swift spent the night before the move across the Harbor in the boarded up hotel.

The first portion of the hotel was successfully transported across the Harbor by barge. The moving crew then loaded the second half of the hotel onto the barge. It was so late in the evening at this point that the crew decided to remain at the Ocosta dock for the evening and barge the hotel across the Harbor in the morning.

During the night a fierce storm came up, separating the hotel from the tugboat and dock. The crew of the barge lived on board. They quickly realized their predicament and the danger of floating into the Harbor during a storm. Luckily for the hotel and crew the barge never made it to sea. The hotel came to shore west of East Hoquiam. It took the better portion of the day for rescuers to find the hotel. By that point the crew had already begun the long walk into Hoquiam. Their safe journey was not known until dusk that day.

The hotel was relocated successfully to East Hoquiam where it became a local landmark until its demolition in the late 1930s. When it was disassembled, the work crew marveled over the “old square nails that had been used in its construction, the fine, long, flawless timbers that had gone into it, and the care with which it had been constructed” (Weatherwax circa 1950a).

Fireside Chat

The Westport-South Beach Historical Society began biannually presenting *Fireside Chats* in 2006. *Fireside Chats* are oral history events in which local specialists

sit in front of an electrical fireplace to relate their memories on the given topic. Specialists not only bring their experiential knowledge, but photos, newspaper clippings, and other memorabilia that they want to share about the topic. Each local specialist is given their “five minutes of fame” to recount their favorite story to the audience. The audience is invited to comment and ask questions at the conclusion of each story. The program transforms the Historical Society’s McCausland hall into a forum within which the community discusses local lore, building and disseminating local oral history. Each chat focuses on a different topic; the October 2007 *Fireside Chat* focused on Ocosta. Lila Biggs (Scafturon) Mitchell, Catherine Nelson, Irene Hollingsbrook, and Carol Saul were a few of the representative Ocosta experts at the chat. Each of the women grew up in Ocosta; together they represent seventy years of collective memory of the place. I also had the opportunity to independently research the tales and interview the women after the *Fireside Chat*.

Lila Biggs (Scafturon) Mitchell

Lila Biggs (Scafturon) Mitchell grew up in Ocosta in the 1950s and 1960s. She was the first presenter at the *Fireside Chat*. While in college in Seattle, Lila wrote a research paper on Ocosta. She presented her research in a PowerPoint presentation during the chat. Lila obtained her data by exploring the University of Washington’s archives and interviewing her Ocosta neighbors. She began the presentation with a grand overview of Ocosta’s history based on her academic research. At the end of the presentation Lila focused on her own experiences in Ocosta. As a child, Lila snuck into the abandoned Ocosta Grange Hall, where she said,

the focus was set on the attic where, even as a child, an eerie feeling of desolation was found. It was as though a party was in full swing and for some unknown reason the people disappeared. Streamers weighted by cobwebs still hung across the ceiling with a jukebox standing ready in the corner. (Scafturon 1980s:20)

The Ocosta Grange Hall was the last standing structure from downtown Ocosta to loom on the landscape (Figure 41). The ruin of the stalwart Grange Hall is a recurring memory in the community. The National Grange of the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry (Grange) is a fraternal organization of agriculturists first organized in 1867. The Grange reached the height of its popularity during Ocosta's formative years, the 1890s.

Traditionally the Grange operated as an advocacy group for farming communities against corporations such as the railroad (Martin 1873). The Ocosta Grange is the sole surviving fraternal organization from Ocosta. The perseverance of the Grange today demonstrates that Ocosta has continued to be a strong farming community, not the urban oasis it was presented as by developers.

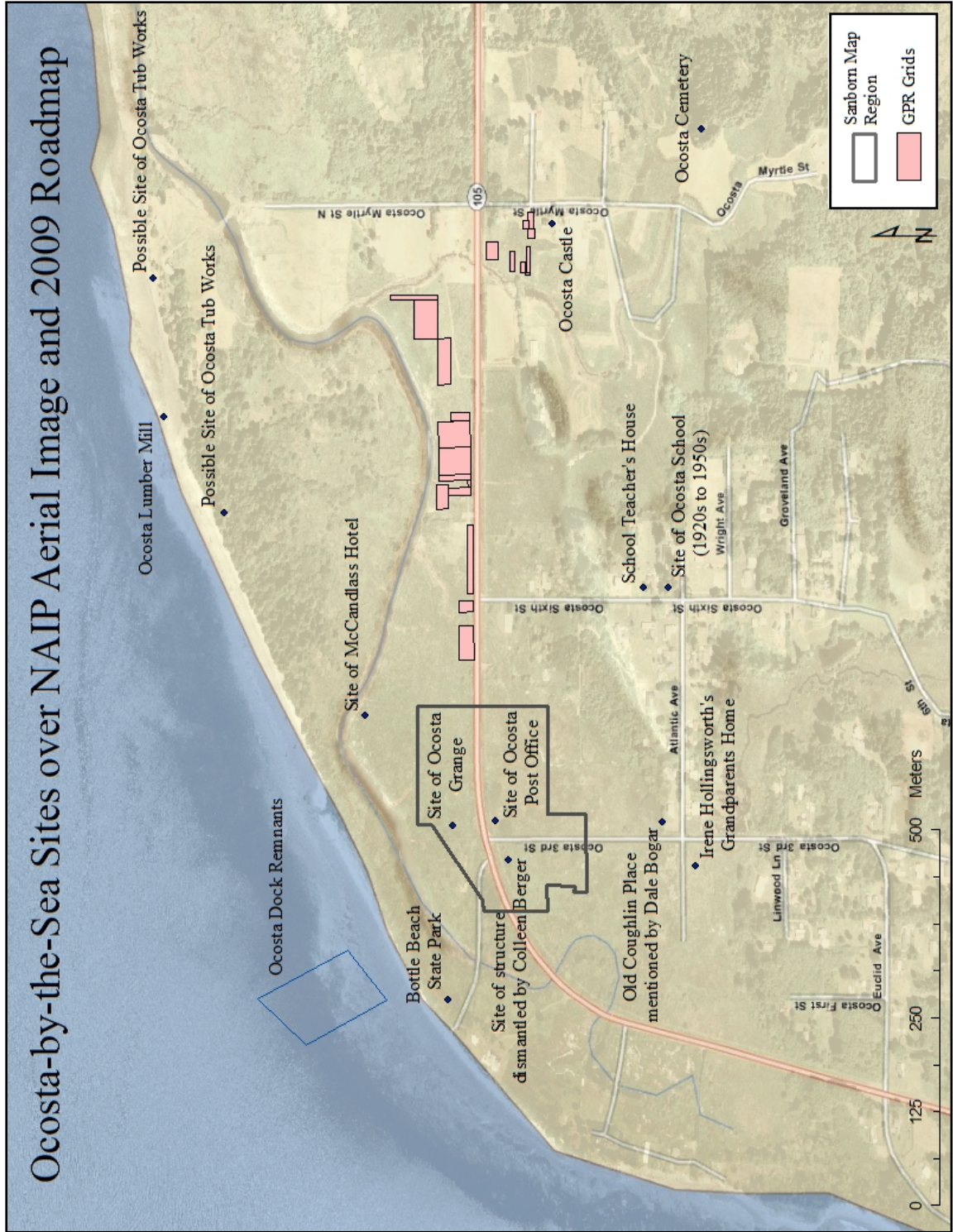


Figure 40: This map features sites described in the city-as-imagined, city-as-built, and city-as-remembered narratives, 2009.

Lila concludes her five minutes of fame stating: “Selfishly speaking, I feel fortunate Ocosta’s expected destiny was as unreal as its promotion offered. Had it flourished into a Seattle or Tacoma my cherished memories as a child would not be as they are today” (21). Lila’s statement was warmly received with applause by the *Fireside Chat* audience. It seems that everyone concurred that they preferred living in an uncrowded beach community rather than an urban metropolis.

Irene Graham Hollingsbrook

Irene Graham Hollingsworth’s family was among the first residents of Ocosta. Her grandparents, Richard and Rebecca Graham owned a home on the bay side of Third Street on the raised table land overlooking Ocosta’s former downtown (Figure 42). Irene recalls digging for Ocosta Brewery beer bottles on her grandparents’ property. Her grandparents kept their collection of ceramic beer bottles on the mantelpiece. Irene and other local residents state that the Ocosta Brewery had formerly been adjacent or on her grandparents’ property.



Figure 41: Richard and Rebecca Graham's Ocosta Third Street home, 1890-1950, Hollingsworth Family Scrapbook.

Irene fondly remembers spending entire summers on the Ocosta Beach as a child. Three tent-fulls of kids spent the summer on the beach. Evenings were spent sitting in front of bonfires and digging for clams. They drank fresh water from an old Ocosta townsite artesian well (possibly the well drilled for the McCandless Hotel) and came home when they were hungry.

Saul Family

Carol Grossman Saul discussed her family's legacy at Ocosta during the *Fireside Chat*. I have supplemented her tale with a newspaper interview conducted with her father, John Grossman before he died in 1984. The Grossman family has lived in Ocosta since 1903 when they purchased the three story Victorian mansion of Ocosta real estate promoter Robert Boyle (Figure 43). Local lore and legend has renamed the Boyle or Grossman home, the Ocosta Castle. Carol recounted some speculations on the history of

the Ocosta Castle. One legend holds that the home is a haunted castle, another that it is a former church. A different tale states that it is the former residence of a sea captain because of its prominent of the Harbor (see Figure 41).



Figure 42: Ocosta Castle, Grossman Home, 2008.

The structure sits on a thirty foot rise over the former townsite, providing a view shed of the Olympic Mountains, Grays Harbor, the Pacific Ocean, and Ocosta's downtown. A "B" for Boyle still presides on the structure's weathervane. Robert Boyle built the residence in 1892, but never resided there. The Grossmans were the first owners to reside in the home. John stated that by 1903 the fireplaces were unsafe and that "the foundation posts had rotted, and Dad put in a new concrete block foundation under it and leveled it... The concrete blocks came in on the train" (Butler 1976). Grossman's Poultry and Dairy Farm operated on the property until the mid-1940s. Today, Carol operates her own accounting firm from the residence.

Like the Boyle home, the structures of Ocosta were steadily falling into disrepair when the Grossman's moved to Ocosta in 1903. During a 1976 interview, John Grossman recalled that Ocosta's plank streets, NPRR, railroad freight and passenger depots, McCandless Hotel, brewery, several lumber mills, and a brick factory were still standing in 1903 (Butler 1976). While tearing down a barn, originally constructed as the Ocosta Baptist Church, John Grossman discovered a circa 1900 railroad promotional pamphlet. He believes that many of the structures purported to be constructed in Ocosta by the promotional pamphlet were never actually built (Butler 1976).

John was an avid Ocosta historian, collecting photographs and primary documents from the townsite. Carol Saul brought several of the primary documents to the *Fireside Chat* including the Ocosta Oddfellows Meeting Minutes and her father's business records from the dairy.

Audience

The audience of the *Fireside Chat* discussed the Ocosta docks and roundhouse at length. Remnants of the Ocosta docks mark the tidal zone of the Ocosta Beach (Figures 44-46). Prior to the railroad's arrival in 1892 the docks were the city's primary mode of transportation. They mark both the boom and bust of the town. Thousands of people arrived on May 1, 1890 to purchase city lots in Ocosta via the docks. However, construction of the docks put the city \$10,000 in debt. The city also accrued debts through the construction of planked sidewalks and roads. In 1908, contractor M.C. Soule took the Town of Ocosta to the Washington Supreme Court to receive payment for completing a Town of Ocosta contract to plank roadways and sidewalks (Washington Supreme Court 1908). These debts contributed to the overwhelming debt that influenced the Ocostan's decision to disincorporate in 1932.



Figure 43: Portion of State of Washington Harbor Line Commission Map of Ocosta Harbor, 1897, Washington State Archives.



Figure 44: Ocosta Docks, post 1890, Westport South Beach Historical Society Collection.



Figure 45: Ocosta Docks, August 2008.

Interviews

Dale Bogar

Dale Bogar studied Ocosta in the 1960s. He became fascinated with the languishing ruins of Ocosta's built environment while visiting his in-laws, the Grahams, at Ocosta. Bogar researched the townsite and composed a journal article on the history of the townsite for the *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (1963). In his article Dale concisely discusses the creation and demise of Ocosta-by-the-Sea, centering his description on the railroad.

During an interview in March 2008, Dale related additional information on Ocosta. He stated that the Ocosta Castle was not the only Victorian home on the hillside. There had been a home due west of the Ocosta Castle on a neighboring hillock. That home had been the residence of Mr. Coughlin, editor of the *Ocosta Pioneer*, Ocosta's quarterly newspaper. Coughlin had kept an edition of each publication of the paper in his home. The home burned down before Bogar was able to peruse the newspapers. Other local oral historians also recall the Coughlin home.

Colleen Berger

Colleen Berger is a lifelong Westport resident. Colleen recalls assisting in the demolition of a two-story building in Ocosta in the early 1950s. The structure was located on the Southwest corner of Highway 105 and Third Street. She believes that the structure had been a grocery store. Colleen and her former husband salvaged the lumber to construct a shop in Westport. Her job was to pull out the square nails from the lumber. The lumber was of high quality, without any knots. Prior to tearing down the structure

Colleen found a stack of glass plate negatives, she planned on keeping the negatives, but they were destroyed by vandals.

Colleen also recalled visiting the Ocosta Cemetery. The cemetery is located on private property. The cemetery is not demarcated on Ocosta city plats. It was initially cared for by the Ladies Club of Ocosta. The club then gifted the cemetery to the city of Ocosta. Today, the cemetery is tended by the property owners. It is located on a slight rise, approximately fifteen to thirty feet above the surrounding land (see Figure 41). The hill is heavily forested (Figures 47-48).



Figure 46: Ocosta Cemetery, August 2008.

I surveyed the cemetery on August 11, 2008. Four labeled and one unmarked tombstones are at the cemetery. Only one stone commemorates multiple internments. The stones record that Sarah Hunter, Rebecca Jane Graham, Willie Graham, Richard Graham, twin baby girls, and Mary Flowers are interred in the cemetery. Heavy storms during the winter of 2008 uprooted several trees, one of which covered one of the headstones during my survey. Colleen recalls wooden grave markers at the cemetery during the 1930s. There was no evidence of wooden grave markers in 2008. The markers could have rotted or been disturbed. A document at Westport Maritime Museum lists individuals known to be interred at the cemetery. It lists: Richard Graham, Becky Graham, Hiner, Mr. and Mrs. Paul, Mr. and Mrs. Hunter, Mrs. Ed. Yock and Douglas Coughland. The document states that there are others interred in the cemetery whose names have been lost.



Figure 47: Grave in Ocosta Cemetery August 2008.

Irene Fisher

Irene Fisher's mother Mae Belle Flowers travelled from Bozeman, Montana to Ocosta, Washington by train. Mae Belle Flower's father preceded the family to Ocosta. Once settled he sent for Mary, her mother, and sister. Irene couldn't recall why her mother's family had travelled to Ocosta, just that her mother frequently recounted the exciting cross-country train ride to arrive there.

Louie Clerke

Louie worked in a Garage in Ocosta. The shop had been on Sixth Street in Ocosta, adjacent to the Recreation Hall. Louie said that the shop was in a "bad location,

off the beaten path.” Ocosta did not become the center it was intended to become; instead it was just a stop on the path between Westport and Aberdeen.

Lenny Reed

Lenny Reed lives in the former school teacher’s home in Ocosta (see Figure 41). He came across a commemorative token from the 1890s occupation while working in his backyard. The token commemorates Chester A. Arthur’s Presidency from 1881 to 1885 (Figure 49). The Ocosta token was modified, with a hole punched above Chester A. Arthur’s profile. The hole could have been used to hang the token, or it may have been used as a pendant. The token symbolizes the townsite’s national connections. The railroad connected Ocosta to the region and the nation by facilitating travel at speeds and distances previously unheard of in the region.



Figure 48: Chester A. Arthur Commemorative Token, post 1885, Lenny Reed Collection

Ocosta has been remembered by residents and visitors throughout its lifespan. Today, development of the site's collective memory has been facilitated by the 2007 Ocosta *Fireside Chat*. Attendance at the chat and questions asked by the audience reveal the significance of Ocosta to the local community. The chat was attended by generational families, local residents who had recently moved to the area and were interested in learning more about the region, and tourists. Reminiscences from generational families revolve around personal experiences and oral traditions. In contrast, memories from people who recently moved to the region highlight their own nostalgic explorations of the site. Both generational families and newcomers came together during the chat to build their collective memory of the site, something we would

expect based on place memory theory (Hayden 1995). Yamin and Metheny observe that “studies of the historical landscape are also used to build and reaffirm modern self-images and cultural identities” (1996:xxv). The construction of collective memory during the Ocosta *Fireside Chat* not only contributed to the development of local oral history, but the construction of local identity.

Recorded interactions spanning from the 1890s to today have been examined, relating what residents and visitors find important at the site. These written accounts and oral histories represent a fragment of the cultural meaning that people have and continue to associate with Ocosta as a place.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Places are complex; by definition, places are areas that hold meaning to an individual or group. Spaces are areas that hold no meaning. Landscape archaeology works to interpret the activities that occurred and the meaning that people past and present have invested in the landscape. Places hold different levels of significance for different people. Meaning is constructed through knowing a place by experiencing it either physically or mentally. The narratives presented in this thesis have sought to combat the “modern detached cartographic imagination” (Ryden 1993:43) by infusing you with local nuances of the imagined, built, and remembered place of Ocosta-by-the-Sea. In reading these three narratives, you have mentally traversed Ocosta through the ages of its existence, coming to know it as an imagined place. The narrative that you constructed while reading, is the narrative of what Ocosta has come to mean to you. Once a space in Washington State, Ocosta is now a place filled with meaning.

You have constructed a narrative of the place, Ocosta, while reading the city-as-imagined, the city-as-built, and the city-as-remembered narratives. I interwove archival data including advertisements, plat maps, and financial records from Ocosta’s founders in the city-as-imagined. These advertisements facilitated both your and Ocosta’s settlers and investors’ conceptualization of the city prior to viewing the actual site. Plat maps informed you how the city’s founders—regional investors and the NPRR—planned the

city's development. Like the founders of other railroad towns, they placed the city center next to transportation routes. Financial records from two of Ocosta's founding fathers document their vested interest in the site.

I constructed the city-as-built narrative from both archival and GPR data in order to further understanding of the evolution of the site's built environment. The Ocosta plat maps are the blueprints for a city that was not completed. In contrast, the 1894 Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance map presents a snapshot of the completed built environment for segments of the townsite in 1894. The city was never remapped because the site was likely no longer insurable. Mapped regions of the site reveal a patchwork of development. Historic photographs echo the Sanborn map. They evidence that even though false front urban construction styles of the 1890s were used for Ocosta businesses. Structures were typically constructed with large spaces between the buildings, which was atypical of 1890s urban architecture. Fields adjacent to those documented in the Sanborn map were surveyed with GPR, revealing no evidence of structures. Water levels and construction of Highway 105 may have obscured evidence of potential structures in the region. Oyster shell lined pathways were observed in GPR data collected near the Ocosta Castle. These pathways likely represent recent landscape alterations after the Ocosta boom, since the home was not occupied until 1903.

I shared Ocosta memories with you from both tourists and residents in the city-as-remembered narrative. These memories span the history of Ocosta from its founding to the ruins of today. Early visitors to Ocosta quickly assessed that the site was not destined to become the "Boston of the West." The O'Neill Expedition found the site to be

completely if not solely inhabited by real estate brokers. George Everett Hussey Macdonald wrote of the city being a giant unwelcoming hoax. In contrast, Weatherwax's 1950s radio program humorously relates Ocosta oral traditions with the *Clam Wars* and the *Journey of an Ocosta Hotel*. He relates information on the Ocosta canning industry and evolution of the townsite by explaining how and why structures were removed from Ocosta. These tales highlight the role of human agency in altering the built environment. The 2007 *Fireside Chat* presents narratives from current residents about why Ocosta holds meaning to them. Stories vary from personal exploration among the Ocosta ruins to familial ties with former citizens of the site. Interviews that I conducted in 2008 span a range of topics, yet all highlight how Ocosta has come to hold meaning to different members of the community. Rebecca Yamin and Karen Metheny describe landscapes as autobiographical, representing the history of not only a place, but the people that interact with that place (1996:xvi). The city-as-remembered narrative reveals the autobiographical connections of people to the Ocosta townsite.

This microhistory of Ocosta informs our understanding of the place, Ocosta, as a potential townsite, city, and ruin. I melded multiple lines of data: archive, oral history, and survey to create three narratives. These narratives relate perspectives from Ocosta's founders, tourists, residents, as well as myself, the historical archaeologist, towards the townsite. The fourth narrative that you have created presents a holistic interpretation of all the data from the site.

This thesis research began with a set of questions about Ocosta. What did Ocosta's founders imagine the city becoming? Why did they build there? How have

people experienced the town site? How are these experiences shared in the community?
What was built at the site? What remains of the city's built environment?

Ocosta boomed because of the resonance of its advertising with settlers and investors. Ads announced that Ocosta was a railroad town with a sea port set amongst vast natural resources. Secondly, advertisements stressed the natural beauty of the site nestled within view of the Olympic Mountains and along Grays Harbor.

The city busted under the stress of inclement weather, competition from the neighboring community of Aberdeen, the 1893 stock market crash, a shallow harbor, and quickly accumulating debt. Unlike the majority of railroad towns, Ocosta was jointly founded by a group of regional investors. These investors were interested in the success of the townsite. When Ocosta failed, so did the business efforts of two of Ocosta's investors: Frank Dechebach and Robert Boyle. The railroad could and did transfer business to another town, Aberdeen. Regional investors did not have such luxuries. Although keen business owners, like Molly Swift, recovered portions of their expenses, others like Frank Dechebach, were ruined both financially and by reputation.

Although the flow of capital to Ocosta collapsed quickly, the built environment of the city dissolved slowly. The city center migrated from the tidal flats to the higher table land of the site as transportation routes changed from the railroad and seafaring traffic to roadways. Owners disassembled Ocosta structures to reuse materials or transported edifices in their entirety to more prosperous locations on the harbor. Other buildings were left to rot *in situ*. Some of these buildings were aided in their demise by an arsonist

in 1912. Others lingered on to be explored by local residents and boomtown tourists.

The importance of the place is revealed in their memories and their willingness to share reflections of the site with one another in public forums, such as the *Fireside Chat* and with researchers like myself.

Outreach and Future Research

The South Beach community was informed about my Ocosta research through an article in the local newspaper, *The South Beach Bulletin*, an introductory letter to Ocosta property owners, and a statement of research made at a quarterly meeting of the Westport-South Beach Historical Society. I used this thesis research to develop and curate a museum exhibit on the Ocosta townsite. The exhibit opened at the University of Denver Museum of Anthropology and has travelled to the Westport Maritime Museum, where it is now on display. Preliminary results of this work were presented at the Colorado Archaeological Society Annual Meeting, the Society for American Archaeology Annual Meeting, and the University of Denver Graduate Student Research Day.

In answering the research questions of this thesis, several questions have also been raised. First, the historical record is biased towards Ocosta's landholders. How was the site experienced by laborers for the railroad, lumber camps, and maritime industries? I was led through the site of a former Ocosta lumber camp by an Ocosta resident. During the last few decades, the site had become overgrown and a new lumber company was beginning to clear timber in the area. What traces would there be of the lumber camp? Could data at the site provide information on the daily lives of Ocosta laborers?

Ocosta research did not take place in a vacuum. How have Ocosta research and the development of an Ocosta exhibit at the Westport Maritime Museum altered site memory? How has construction of Bottle Beach State Park altered site memory? Jennifer Jordan reflected that public spaces are commemorated more frequently because the public can access them (2006). Will increased interpretation and public access increase the breadth of Ocosta's oral history?

What would further survey and excavation reveal about the former built environment? How has Ocosta platting influenced recent development at the site? The Ocosta tidal flats have been designated as wetlands by the State of Washington, therefore the property is difficult if not impossible to legally build upon. In contrast, Ocosta additions further from the former city center have and continue to be developed. Unlike the surrounding landscape, Ocosta is platted and ready for individual home construction. Are platted regions of Ocosta being developed more quickly than unplatted regions?

Several avenues for future research stem from this analysis, this thesis introduced a new method of presenting data from a specific place through multiple narratives. This "form-shaping ideology" was informed from existent place, microhistory, and narrative theories. Division of data into three narratives stressed the complexity and breadth of data from an individual place, the Ocosta townsite. For instance, the O'Neill Expedition's statement that the entire townsite was inhabited by real estate brokers is countered by the diverse range of businesses recorded on the 1894 Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map. Both resources provide valuable information on the townsite, together they represent the biases of each source. The O'Neill Expedition viewed the townsite

early in its existence. Although it began with a high amount of real-estate agents, several other businesses followed, as documented by the Sanborn Map.

Academic research is frequently presented as being complete, but this is often not the case, for studying the past is a continual process. David Lowenthal stated that the past is a foreign country for “knowing only occurs in the epistemological present” (Lowenthal 1985: 187). The past can never be completely understood because it is not occurring in the present. Researching the past can only begin to scratch the surface of what had happened in any given place. By presenting data from a place in multiple narratives more data can be presented, thus freeing the reader from one interpretation and the assumption that attaining the absolute truth is possible.

Analysis of the Ocosta townsite also builds on place memory theory. Place memory theory confronts how people remember their experiences within a specific place. Dolores Hayden specifically uses place memory theory to enhance the representation of historically underrepresented groups in historiography. Moreover it creates a continuum between the people that interacted with the landscape in the past and the people that interact with the landscape today. People in the present do not need to have experienced the same events and issues as the people of the past to feel a connection to the past, they only need to have experienced the same places and reflected on past and present uses of the landscape.

One of my first guides to the Ocosta landscape, Dorothy, is not an Ocosta native. Born in Oklahoma, Dorothy moved into the vicinity of Ocosta within the last twenty

years. Prior to assisting my research, Dorothy had not wandered through the Ocosta landscape. Yet, like many South Beach residents she was aware of the local lore of the townsite from casual conversations with her new South Beach Community. Learning oral history of a historic site is an act of place-making for the historically bent individual. Keith Basso described place-making as a “way of constructing the past... and, in the process personal and social identities” (Basso 1996:7). Learning about one’s place is a social interaction which takes time and friendship to build. Place memory theory is about more than including the historically underrepresented. It is about how the mobile people of today come to call a new place home. The city-as-remembered narrative scratches the surface of how the historically bent individual begins to make new places home by learning about their surroundings.

Like all places, Ocosta is unique; meaning varies between individuals, operates at different scales, and is layered over time at the site. The complexity and breadth of the data was communicated by dividing analysis into three narratives of the place, Ocosta. While reading these narratives you have created your own narrative of the Ocosta townsite and increased your appreciation of the places and landscapes of your own past, present, and future.

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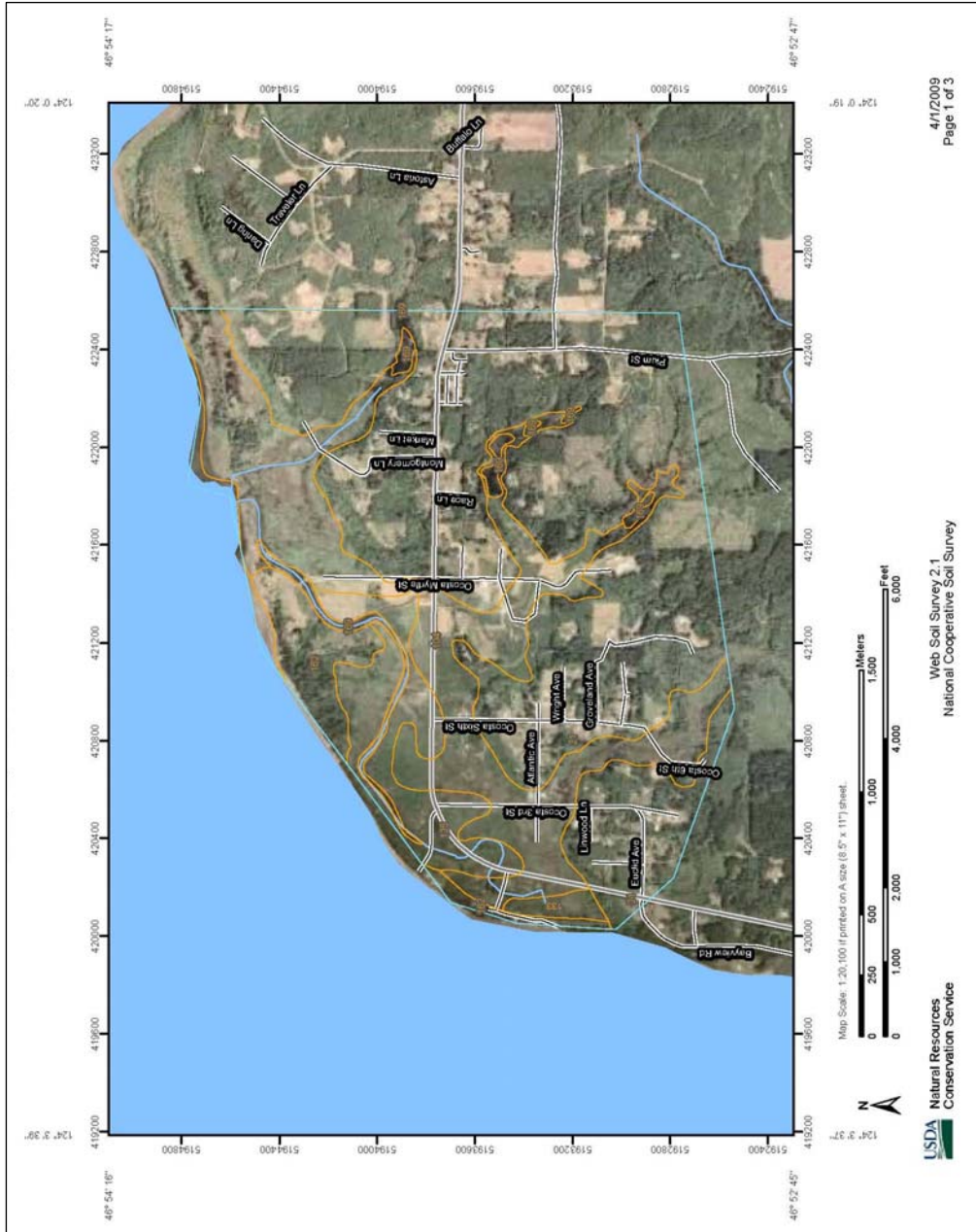
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: USGS Soil Map: Grays Harbor County Washington: Ocosta



MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)
 Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils
 Soil Map Units

Special Point Features

- Blowout
- Borrow Pit
- Clay Spot
- Closed Depression
- Gravel Pit
- Gravelly Spot
- Landfill
- Lava Flow
- Marsh or swamp
- Mine or Quarry
- Miscellaneous Water
- Perennial Water
- Rock Outcrop
- Saline Spot
- Sandy Spot
- Severely Eroded Spot
- Sinkhole
- Slide or Slip
- Sodic Spot
- Spoil Area
- Stony Spot

Special Line Features

- Gully
- Short Steep Slope
- Other

Political Features

- Cities

Water Features

- Oceans
- Streams and Canals

Transportation

- Rails
- Interstate Highways
- US Routes
- Major Roads
- Local Roads

- Very Stony Spot
- Wet Spot
- Other

MAP INFORMATION

Map Scale: 1:20,100 if printed on A size (8.5" x 11") sheet.
 The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:24,000.
 Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for accurate map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
 Web Soil Survey URL: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>
 Coordinate System: UTM Zone 10N NAD83

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Grays Harbor County Area, Pacific and Wahkiakum Counties, Washington
 Survey Area Data: Version 6, Dec 6, 2007

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: 6/24/2006

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

Map Unit Legend

Grays Harbor County Area, Pacific and Wahkiakum Counties, Washington (WA627)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
21	Calawah silt loam, cool, 1 to 8 percent slopes	617.2	58.1%
104	Ocosta silty clay loam	275.0	25.9%
125	Rennie silty clay loam	82.5	7.8%
133	Seastrand variant muck	8.7	0.8%
162	Yaquina loamy fine sand	47.6	4.5%
169	Water	19.9	1.9%
Subtotals for Soil Survey Area		1,050.8	98.9%
Totals for Area of Interest		1,062.4	100.0%

Appendix 2: The Clam Wars by Ben K. Weatherwax edited by Katherine Arntzen

Ocosta was a spot of importance to the Indians long before the white people came to live here. The redmen called it Mu-shitst-ska. The name of Ocosta is credited to Mrs. George E. Filley, wife of a trustee of the land company that obtained the site and began development of the city. William H. Calkins of Tacoma was also credited with an assist in creating the name. They took the Spanish word la costa, meaning the coast, word for euphony, prefixed the letter O.

The city planned by the Northern Pacific Railway, a group of Tacoma men, as the Grays Harbor terminal for that railway—or for what was then called the Tacoma—Olympia and Grays Harbor Railway, a subsidy of the Northern Pacific.

Ocosta was projected in the late 80's and actual work of developing the community began about 1890. It was systematically laid out and provisions were made for several industries, a business section, a railroad terminal, docks, and, in fact, all of the appearances of a city. By 1892, the steel rails of the wet-bound railroad had reached as far as Ocosta, and many residents of Grays Harbor saw the salt-water of our bay for the first time from Ocosta, to which they journeyed by train from the Sound. The community was promoted in Tacoma and Seattle, and in fact, as far east as Chicago. Mabel McKinley Hopkins, one of Grays Harbor's faithful historians, recalls seeing a big sign board advertising Ocosta-by-the-Sea, near Chicago while on a trip east in the early 1900s.

Special excursion trains were run to the harbor from Seattle and Tacoma to bring excursionists to see the ocean beaches. From Ocosta they might look out the windows

and see Puget Sound, it was quite an adventure to walk on the wind-swept sand of the ocean's edge, and investigate the sea life. There was no limit to razor clams and many a basket that came down from Seattle or Tacoma heavy with fried chicken and potato salad went back bulging with clams.

And while Aberdeen and Hoquiam were languishing in a stalemate—their progress virtually stopped with the failure of the railroads to come down this side of the harbor—Ocosta boomed. By 1894, it had retail stores of almost every kind. A.W. Barkley was operating a men's furnishing store with stock that would have looked good in Seattle or San Francisco. _olph Ponishel, of Hoquiam had a tailor shop there with his brother. Alfred Beaulieu, long time resident of Ocosta had a general store. The town had a bank with \$25,000 capital, and a weekly newspaper, the Ocosta Pioneer, established in 1890 by C. J. Coghlin.

The town boasted a lumber mill, a shingle mill, a brewery, a flour mill, and many fine homes. The newspaper, the Pioneer, boasted the town with glowing editorials. The nearest port to the Orient, the paper told the world that would listen. On the front page, it carried a table showing the relative distances from San Francisco to Yokahoma, from Portland to Yokahoma, from Tacoma to Yokahoma and from Ocosta to Yokahoma. Ocosta won by nearly 100 miles. Chicago to Hong Kong via San Francisco and via Ocosta was also measured. Again Ocosta won out. Editor Coughlin also advocated a deep-sea white-fish business for Ocosta and the Harbor... which was never realized until the years of the late war [World War II] when the demand for fish brought about heavy commerce in that line.

However, the advocacy of the white fish business led to one of the ... Gulf of Mexico, when he heard about this cannery up Blew in to town before the railroad, and by the time the steel had reached down to Ocosta, Bob had a cannery up and was doing ____.

Now, he inspected the razor clams, and decided they would make a ____k, so they were among the first seafoods that he processed. He got a salmon run early in the game, and canned some crab meat. Then, on the off season, he cast around for something else to go into his plant. And the mud clams that filled the beaches along the south caught his attention. They were big, meaty, had a good flavor, very much like the gulg clams that he had packed in Texas. So __p his equipment, hung out a sign and began buying mud clams for an ____al pack.

The diggers, who were also having an off season--- it was early in canning—were glad to get the digging. Mud clams were easy to come ____ they brought in a grand harvest of the Harbor product. Bob __ through his cannery, and stocked them in his warehouse. Since they were something new, he wanted to learn more about them before he sold them ____s label. So they were stacked in boxes to wait a few months. The processing gave the cannery a few weeks of work during the off season and Bob was pleased with his pioneering venture. He had almost ____n them as summer came around and the razor clams came in. His ____ rolled merrily along through May, June, and July with the sea-beach ____ and only very occasionally did Bob go into the warehouse where he had stored the mud clams to inspect them. Once in a while, he would open a can of

___ experiment, and have a chowder made of its contents. Everyone voiced them excellent. ..

The mercury soared and stayed there, and the weather, as it usually is, was the major topic of conversation in Ocosta.

Well, after one warm day, when the heat hung on in the late afternoon and the usual afternoon breeze had failed to turn up, the town was sitting out on its front porches and palm-leaf fans were much in evidence. A sort of sultry- dusty haze hung low over the meadows where the little wooden city was assembled. The only sound, beside the night birds coming out, was an occasional whistle from the river where a river boat headed in for landing.

Then, suddenly, there was the sharp crack of what sounded like a muffled gun shot. And then another, and another. Sometimes they went off like strings of firecrackers—then there would be moments of silence, almost like pauses between fusillades to reload. All through the town, the residents looked across the flats behind main street toward the water front—the source of the volleys. Could it be an invader? Then came another volley and the shattering of glass, and the men of the town started to the water front, leaving the women and children behind with warnings to stay close to the houses.

As the band of resolute men approached the shore of the bay, they located the sound of the explosions. It was the raks-eaved building on a piling adjoining Bob Forbes cannery. And even as they approached another volley echoed from its weather boarded

walls. Closing in on the cannery, the hastily organized tactical force could tell that it was not gunfire. There was a “pop” to the explosions that sounded like something bursting under pressure. And when the group assembled on the dock of the cannery, a couple of the bravest poked their heads in through broken windows to inspect the source. Not only were there flying mud clams in the air, the fragrance sent them staggering. And through the group, cannery owner Bob Forbes made his hurried way to unlock the door and take a quick look inside. He explained everything quickly.

The mud clams had refused to pack properly using the Texas method he had used. They had not been cooked long enough causing them to ferment. It took just such heat as they had been having to accelerate the fermentation, and now they were exploding.

Now the interior of the store room dripped with over-ripe mud clams. Bob wasn't worried about the lost canned clams. It was an experiment anyhow. But he did dread the job of cleaning up the store because that had to be hosed out several times, and still had pungency all of its own when the weather warmed up.

The mud clam really suffered the most—or perhaps it gained by its ornery reaction to being canned. Anyhow, no one, so far as I can discover, ever tried to can mud clams commercially—at least in quantities, after that, and the mud clams settled down to a more peaceful life without Bob's diggers disturbing them in their beds.

As for the Harbor, word got around and folks dubbed it the battle of the clams, and Bob Forbes got more publicity out of it than if he had canned the things perfectly and made a success of his venture.

Well, that was the story of the Clam battle of Ocosta, and here is Dick Crombie with a word from our sponsor.

Appendix 3: The Hilker Hotel by Ben K. Weatherwax edited by Grays Harbor Journal

Hello there! We have a story tonight that old timers will recall as one of the highlights of the year of 1904. It was a yarn that could only have happened here, and it used the boom towns of the 90s (1890s) as its backdrop. It's the story of the McCandless Hotel, later know as the Hilker House, and until ten years ago, a Hoquiam hostelry. It's the story of how it came to be in Hoquiam, and of the adventures that it had getting there. So, I suppose if we need a title for our yarn it might be the journey of an Ocosta Hotel.

Now, back in those boom town days, there was much promoting of new townsites. I think we've talked about all of those and left very little unsaid. However, when one doomed townsite would blow up, and the boom settlers would move out, leaving behind empty buildings and silent industry, the owners of the structures would try to recover on their property. That was only natural. They would seek some method of converting what they had to some other use.

Way back in the early days of Cosmopolis first stirrings, this was done when Charlie Stevens converted his failing grist mill into a sawmill and stopped grinding wheat to begin cutting lumber. It happened in a different way when Doctor Paul Smits picked up the old Nims mansion in Cosmopolis, loaded it onto a scow, and moved it over to Aberdeen to become his Heron Street residence. It was not at all uncommon during the days after the Harbor had finally settled down, to see buildings moving from one side of the Harbor to the other, as their owners or purchasers changed their locations. And that has something to do with the McCandless Hotel, which did more than its share of

traveling, as we will see in a moment. Now back to the boom days of Ocosta, the McCandless Hotel was the town's leading hostelry. It was in that hotel that the George , well known Hoquiam pioneers had their wedding reception. And in an early transaction, it passed from the hands of its builder, the McCandless family, to Miss Molly Swift, a courageous and industrious young woman who was determined to make her stake in this new and growing part of the Wild West. And for a number of years, Molly Swift managed her hotel with confidence, skill and determination, though with a gradually dwindling clientele. As the bright light that was Ocosta's promise, slowly faded and went out, Molly's guests became fewer and fewer and at times there would be only one drummer in the house, Elmira of Grays Harbor Eves, the perennial roomer and August Hilker, the clerk. That would have been in 1904, when the dream of a city on the Southside had faded to a night mare for those who had invested in it, and they were seeking ways to recover on their investments.

We called Molly determined. If more evidence is required than her willingness to take on the management of a full sized hotel of fifty two rooms, then her decision to move the hotel to some other city, should clinch our point. And this, she did. Ocosta had drooped and wilted. Oh, Charlie Coughlin still had his barbershop on Ocean Avenue, and Beauliu and Anderson operated their general merchandise store and Post Office. F.G. Deming managed to keep his general merchandise establishment open and Chris Flowers still shoved a few drinks across the bar of his saloon. But the hotel business was pretty thin, and what there was had to be shared with Clyde Cleveland's hotel down the

street. So, Molly held a conference of war with August Hilker. They sat down to talk it over.

The hotel could be moved, August assured her. It could be barged across to Hoquiam or Aberdeen and sat down on a street in one of those towns to begin life all over again. It wouldn't be too expensive either, and she would have the hotel, a business and some salvage out of her investment. Molly decided to investigate further.

She got prices on the moving from a local barging firm and found it not unreasonable. But then, there was the matter of where to move it. It didn't take her long to decide that there were only two towns that had much of a future on the Harbor, and that she must select between Aberdeen and Hoquiam. After pricing lots, and investigating the hotel situation in both cities, she decided on Hoquiam. To be more exact, she decided on East Hoquiam, and specifically, on the Northwest corner of Ontario Street and Pacific Avenue. She acquired a lot large enough to take her three story hotel and then began plans to move.

It was 1904, January to be exact, and the weather was not what might be called favorable, even by normal January standards. But Molly was determined. Even Elmira Eves had packed up and moved on, and the hotel had been almost tenantless for two months. August Hilker supervised most of the details, and the crews came to begin the job.

The size of the hotel and the limitations of available scows made it necessary to cut the hotel in two, which was the first job of the movers. And this they proceeded with,

starting at the top of the big wooden building and cutting through the roof, on down the walls, and down the interior partitions until Molly's hostelry was divided right in half. Then, while the hangers on in Ocosta watched with forlorn regret, they moved the sections, one at a time, down to the city's nearly abandoned waterfront. A large scow, the biggest available, was warped to the shore and a deck constructed over which the half hotel could be rolled to the barge for loading. And so, still filled with its furnishings, and appointments, from the carpets to the commodes, the first half of the McCandless Hotel was barged across to Hoquiam and started on its rollers to the new site. And the moving crew came back on the tug boat to get the rest of the galloping hostelry. Molly had lived in the hotel, right up to the moment when it began to move out from under her. The open end had been boarded up to protect it against the weather, and still furnished, it was habitable until the moment when the crews began to turn the jack screws and lift the last half of the old building for the start of its trip.

Then, Molly gave up and took the river boat to Hoquiam to take up her new life on the North side of the Harbor. But she had first made sure that part two of the hotel story was safely aboard the barge and ready to begin its waterborne trip.

Now, the moving crew, the group who had raised the house and slipped it onto the barge, and who would slide it off again when the scow touched the North bank of the Harbor, the crew lived aboard the barge, occupying rooms of the hotel for the trip across. And when the barge was loaded with its half hotel, and everything was in readiness for the trip, the day was so nearly spent that it was decided to wait until morning for the actual crossing. So, the tug stood by, and the barge remained against the bank, awaiting

daylight of the January morning. But the weatherman had a personal interest in that job, and something in the way of an adventure in mind for the McCandless Hotel.

Shortly after dark, what had been a light drizzle turned into a downpour, and then the winds of a real old So'wester began to whip across the salt marshes of Ocosta. The big three story hotel, or half hotel, rocked uneasily on the barge, and the crew, playing cards in the kitchen, spent moments between hands peering from the windows into the darkness. The rocking of their waterborne building gave them the uneasy feeling of a continuous earthquake. Suddenly, the motion changed. It couldn't be, they assured each other, but it did feel as though they were moving. And just to reassure themselves, they went out onto the deck of the barge and looked for the gangplank that had connected them with the shore. It was gone! In the driving rain and thick darkness, they could see nothing. But the lines that had warped the old barge in to the shore were dangling loosely, and the barge, sure enough, was moving through the water. It was a tense moment.

One man shouted for the tug that he knew should be somewhere about. But his voice was carried off down the wind to nowhere. A state of panic seized the movers as they realized that a movement was underway that they had no control over. Carried by the wind, the big barge was moving well out into the Harbor, riding the rough water pretty well, but twisting and wracking the half building so that windows popped, and furniture slid around in the vacant rooms. With an outgoing tide pulling at the scow, and the wind shoving it along, it became a tussle between the two forces to see which way the big structure would go. The only guide and beacon that the unwilling seafarers had was

the Westport Light, that flashed through the blackness and seemed to move, now South, now West. But the light seemed to flash closer.

Knowing that the tide was running out strong, the movers pictured themselves going to sea in the McCandless Hotel, and each knew just about how long that unseaworthy bark would last on a night like this.

The card game was forgotten. One man prayed openly and some who had never taken the time to develop a capacity for prayer, listened with new found devotion. From time to time, as the floating hotel lurched, a rumble and crash upstairs would tell of furniture scooting across the floor and thumping against the walls. In vain, the crew scanned the darkness for some sign of a light that would show them that the tug had discovered their plight and was coming to the rescue.

And now, the Westport Light was, as nearly as they could reckon it, almost due south. At anytime, they felt certain, they would be crossing over the Grays Harbor Bar and starting out to sea. But the light never seemed to swing around to the East of them, and hoping against hope, they made the rounds of the hotel to check the underpinning and bracing. If they were bound for the open sea, they wanted their ship as near seaworthy as it could be.

I was nearly daylight when they felt the first jar, a shake that rocked the old building until it groaned. It was followed by more, and then with a sigh, the traveling hotel stopped moving and settled into relative silence. The wind still whistled through

the broken windows and the rain pelted against the sides. But at least, it was not moving now. Anxiously, the crew waited for daylight.

When it came, it was leaden and overcast, but clear enough for them to see that their barge had ended up on a sand spit somewhere on the North side of Grays Harbor. And from the look of the landfall to the North, they reckoned their position as somewhere off the mouth of the Humptulips River. The tide was still running out, and within an hour after daylight, they were connected with land by a long spit of muddy sand broken here and there by small sloughs. But it was all that they needed. One by one, the workmen dropped over the side of the barge and started for the beach, slogging along through the ooze and muck of the tide flats, not even looking back to see what, if anything might be happening to their floating hotel.

Meanwhile, the crew of the tug had discovered the loss of their tow, and started out to find it. They swung along the North shore, and then started down Harbor, wondering if they would ever again see either hotel or movers. Alonzo Weiland, the Western Union Telegraph Operator had flashed a message to Aberdeen telling of the disappearance of the hotel, and the word was passed along to Molly Swift. She surveyed her half hotel as it stood on its Ontario Street site and wondered what it would cost to build a new half hotel.

But, by noon, the tug had located the hotel, high and dry on the sandbar, but without sign of life. And it was not until evening, when a tired and muddy crew walked into Hoquiam, that it was known that they had survived their ordeal.

Well, that was it, when the tide came back in, the tug lashed onto the barge load of hostelry and towed it back up the Chehalis River to Hoquiam, and in a few weeks, the two parts were back together again. And the hotel that already had an amazing history, was ready to make some more.

With the hotel safely moved to Hoquiam and refurbished, Molly Swift decided to change her name, yes and to change the name of the hotel too. The long courtship of Molly by her faithful clerk, August Hilker was crowned with their marriage, and she gave her new name to the new hotel. It became the Hilker House, and as such, it was a landmark in East Hoquiam for nearly thirty five years. And when it was torn down, in the late thirties, the sidewalk superintendants talked excitedly over the old square nails that had been used in its construction, the fine, long, flawless timbers that had gone into it, and the care with which it had been constructed. The care that probably saved the lives of its crew of movers the night they went to sea in a hotel. For had the building been any less rugged, our story would have had another ending, and citizens of the Harbor would have told about the hotel in Hoquiam that was half moved from Ocosta, and exists today only as a legend, and an important story in our Hometown Scrapbook.

Appendix 4: Token Text

Side 1:

21ST/PRESIDENT/USA/1881/1885

President Profile

CHESTER/A./ARTHUR

Side 2:

OUR/CHET/Q.M./GENERAL/IN/CIVIL/WAR/COLLECTOR/OF/NY/VP/BECAME/P
RESIDENT/UPON/DEATH/OF/JAMES/GARFIELD

...CIVIL/SERVICE/PROMOTION