CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

The spirit of the Coast Guard lives on in the tangible reminders of Oregon's past. While memories, stories and books abound, boats and buildings help to tell the history of the Coast Guard in Oregon. Without these physical remnants, the altruistic story is diminished and could even disappear entirely. Artifacts from the past have always been in danger of disintegrating. Public awareness has increased over the years, but so have destructive pressures from population growth, new technology, and age.

The era of consumerism has created a culture driven by consumption and replacement rather than maintenance. And without maintenance, the cause of historic preservation is crippled. Therefore, the first level of treatment to historic structures is to simply maintain and repair what is there. By their definition in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties 1992*, maintenance and repair are termed "preservation." These *Standards* are quite detailed and are presented in full in Appendix C.

"Restoration" is the term used when a property is taken back to a specific period in time. All elements added to a structure after the specified time period are removed. For example, in the realm of life-saving stations, if a group decided that a station should tell the story of the pre-motor age in life-saving, all additions made to the station in the motor age would be removed. Boathouse doorways would be returned to their original

size, signs of engine repair would be removed, and gasoline tanks would be eliminated. Materials and methods used in the restoration would be "in kind." For example, if a rotted, full-dimension, exposed cedar rafter is being replaced, then the replacement should be a full-dimension cedar rafter.

"Rehabilitation," or adaptive reuse, recognizes the fact that building's use can change over time without seriously affecting its significant features. A boathouse can turn into a full-scale interpretive display; a station house can turn into a dorm for summer school students. Rehabilitation dictates that significant historical features remain intact. For example, if there is a chair rail surrounding a room and that chair rail is a significant feature of the room, then the chair rail should not be removed, damaged, or altered in any way.

"Reconstruction" is an accepted means of assisting in the telling of a site's story. For example, if a station site has lost its boathouse and that boathouse is considered essential in describing the history of the station, the boathouse could be rebuilt. However, speculative reconstructions are not acceptable. If there are original plans, sufficient archaeological evidence, and/or photos and descriptions of the boathouse that make it clear what the boathouse once was, then the boathouse could be rebuilt. Reconstruction is, of course, the last resort. It is always easier and cheaper to maintain a building rather than repair, repair rather than restore, and restore rather than reconstruct.

There are other methods of retaining a historic structure not addressed by the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards*. Where the Coast Guard is concerned, moving a building is a viable means of saving the structure. The Coast Guard needs buildings to be

functional. If the building is not functional, the Coast Guard disposes of it. Sometimes the rescuing of a structure can involve moving it off of its original site.

"Recycling" is a final solution for a building. While recycling is not a treatment as defined by the Secretary of the Interior, structures have been recycled throughout history. Recycling, as an alternative to rehabilitation, is one step away from outright demolition. Recycling can range from incorporating a Coast Guard building into a new building to dismembering a Coast Guard building and using the parts elsewhere. Either method is preferred as a last resort to the complete destruction of the structure.

"Interpretation" is the act of telling the story of a building to the public. All historic Coast Guard sites deserve interpretation, whether its structures are standing or not. Interpretation can be done through signage, written reports, brochures, docents, and living history. Interpretation gives the opportunity to those structures no longer standing to tell their story. It is a logical option when reconstruction is not viable. The Coast Guard has had an excellent rapport with the communities in which they operate. They have always fostered their public image, from their life-saving demonstrations at expositions in the past to their community service today. Interpretation can go a long way toward enhancing and continuing that image.

The above treatment strategies are all applicable to at least some of the early Coast Guard stations along the Oregon Coast. Table 2 summarizes what treatments are applicable to which Oregon stations. The following pages take each treatment, define it further, and describe how each can be applied to the Oregon stations.

Table 2. Treatment Strategy for the Historic Structures at Each Oregon Station.

Station and Structures	Treatment				Interpret
	Preserve	Restore	Rehab	Reconst	
Cape Arago LSS at Lighthouse Island					✔
Cape Arago LSS at North Spit					
Coos Bay LBS at Charleston:					
Boathouse, Crew's Dwelling	✔				✔
Keeper's Dwelling					✔
Equipment Building	✔				
Point Adams LSS:					
Boathouse	✔	✔			✔
Point Adams LBS:					
Station House, Shop Bldg, Equipment Bldg	✔		✔		✔
Boardwalk, Signal Tower	✔				
Coquille River LSS:					
Lookout				✔	✔
Coquille River LBS	✔		✔		✔
Umpqua River LSS					
Umpqua River LBS:					
Station House, Equipment Bldg	✔		✔		✔
Yaquina Bay LSS at South Beach					✔
Yaquina Bay LSS at Yaquina Bay Lighthouse	✔		✔		✔
Yaquina Bay LBS:					
Station House, Keeper's Dwelling	✔				✔
Tillamook LSS at Barview	✔	✔	✔		✔
Tillamook LBS at Garibaldi	✔				✔
Siuslaw River LBS:					
Equipment Building	✔				✔
Port Orford LBS:					
Crew's Quarters	✔	✔	✔		✔
Keeper's House, Pump House, Stairway	✔	✔			
Lookout Tower, Boathouse				✔	✔

Maintenance

The most important aspect of preservation is proper maintenance. And to their credit, the Coast Guard has had a long tradition of maintaining their equipment and facilities to the nth degree (Figure 182). In their *Instructions for Coast Guard Stations 1916,* the manual details 50 points to the "Care and Preservation of Property" even before describing the maintenance of the boats themselves.[261] These "maintenance commandments" are listed in Appendix D and are as valuable today as they were in 1916.

In the *Instructions,* there is a reason why 60% of the text in the "Care and Preservation of Property" section is devoted to paint. Painting is one of the simplest and most cost effective means of preserving a structure (Figure 183). These stations were made of wood and subjected to some of most abusive weather imaginable in the United States. The Oregon Coast does not have the ice problems that the Great Lakes and East Coast have, but Oregon does have a particularly harsh climate for wooden structures. The constant moisture and driving rains play havoc with unmaintained buildings. Other simple remedies, such as cleaning out gutters, adequate ventilation, and keeping plantings away from buildings, go a long way toward preserving a structure.

The two most important aspects to preservation are to retain as much of the original material as possible and to use the gentlest means possible when doing work on a

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[261]U.S. Coast Guard, *Instructions for United States Coast Guard Stations* (Washington: GPO, 1917), pp. 16-23.

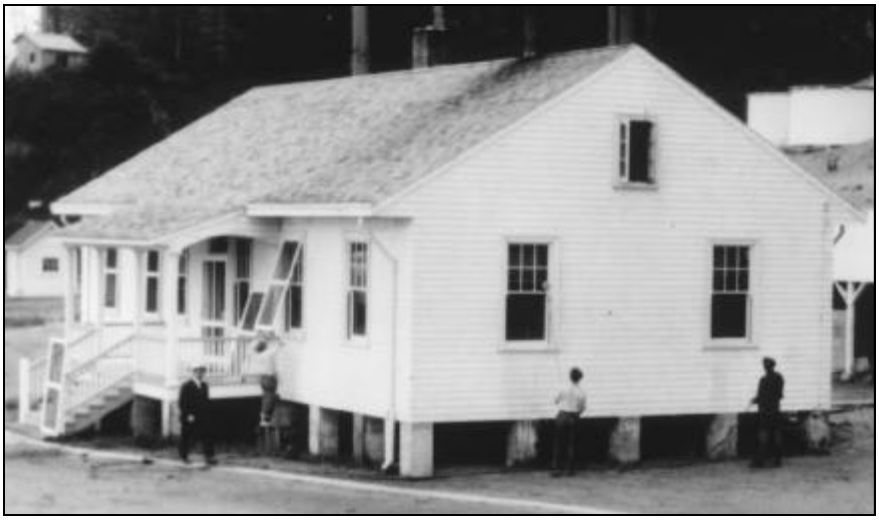

Figure 182. Removing Screens and Washing Windows, Coos Bay Lifeboat Station, 1923. Source: U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters (Coos Bay File).

Figure 183. Surfmen Painting the Boathouse Roof, Coquille River Life-Saving Station, Circa 1900. Source: Bandon Historical Society.

building. For example, if a wooden window sill is cracked, simply repair the sill with a fastener and marine glue. If the crack is severe, perhaps move up to an epoxy. The last step would be to restore the sill by splicing in an "in-kind" piece of wood. The rule is to work from the least invasive method toward stronger means. Another example would be cleaning a building. Using water and a brush would be the gentlest means possible. If that was not enough, then add an appropriate cleaner to the water. The most invasive method would be cleaning with a power washer, acceptable on a low setting, held well-away from the building, and at a downward angle to the siding.

All of the surviving pre-1950 Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard structures deserve some level of preservation. It is a simple case to make that maintaining a structure is less expensive than repairing a structure, and repairing is cheaper than rebuilding. With the notable exception of the Tillamook Bay Life-Saving Service station buildings, all of the existing Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard structures in Oregon are being used in some capacity, proving their worth every day. The literature available on preservation technology is growing annually. Currently, the most applicable resource is the *Historic Lighthouse Preservation Handbook* produced in 1997 by the National Park Service, U.S. Coast Guard, and Department of Defense. The handbook is written specifically for lighthouse preservation; however, the document is very applicable to life-saving and lifeboat stations, particularly the chapter on wood. There is currently discussion within the National Park Service toward producing a handbook for the preservation of life-saving and lifeboat stations.

The National Park Service produces a series entitled *Preservation Briefs,* each brief tackling a preservation technology issue. These briefs cover in detail such topics as shingle roofs, wood windows, and accessibility issues. Proper execution of the work is as important as using the best available materials. These documents can guide someone doing restoration work or developing a preservation plan for a structure. Hiring a preservation consultant to develop a preservation plan for the station is a good first step toward preserving a station.

Restoration

Once a historic element has disappeared from a structure, it is gone forever. Fortunately, the element can be replaced, though restoration is never preferred over simple maintenance and repair of a feature. For example, replacing a "witch's hat" ventilator on a Fort Point-type boathouse is a fairly expensive procedure, whereas maintaining that ventilator is relatively inexpensive. Of course, removing the ventilator entirely and shingling over the hole is easier than maintaining, repairing, or restoring; however, the boathouse will have lost a distinctive feature that defines the boathouse. Everyone would agree that the building is much more extraordinary with the ventilator; however, a ventilator is more than just aesthetics, it serves the purpose of ventilating moisture out of the boathouse. Damp equipment takes much longer to dry and is susceptible to rot without proper ventilation. Many lighthouses have experienced significant moisture problems due to removal of elements that once ventilated the structure.

Figure 184. Splicing Floor Joists at Block Island Life-Saving Station, Rhode Island, 1970. Source: Mystic Seaport (#70-8-364).

The most important part of a restoration is not to remove more original material than is absolutely necessary. If a floor joist is rotten only at the sill, do not replace the entire floor joist. Instead, splice on a new end with an in-kind material and save as much of the original fabric as possible (Figure 184).

Often restorations are not performed completely. A partial restoration can be performed because of time and/or cost issues. Another reason for a partial restoration is that a full restoration might remove an element that tells a significant story even if the story is one of a later time period. Often restorations are compromises. As long as the reasons are carefully considered and weighed, there is legitimacy in compromise. The overriding principal, however, is that whatever work is performed should be done well

Figure 185. Marking New Material, Block Island Life-Saving Station, Rhode Island, 1970. Source: Mystic Seaport (#70-9-213).

and should be well-documented. The mind-set should be that whatever is removed will be lost forever and that there is no time like the present to record what is being done. Newly installed material should also be recorded with equal care so that later researchers can understand what was done. Any new construction material should be date stamped (Figure 185), and a written and visual record made.

Of great concern when performing a restoration on a historic building is the presence of hazardous materials. At the time when these pre-WWII structures were built, asbestos and lead were not considered especially dangerous. Today, special measures must be taken when dealing with such hazards. Asbestos insulation was often used around boilers and hot water pipes. Encapsulation of the asbestos is the best course of

action as the material is historic and removal is costly. The same applies to lead paint. Encapsulation of lead paint with a new coating is the most economical and least damaging treatment. Often, however, the asbestos or lead paint is in too poor of a condition for encapsulation and removal will be required. There are documents available describing hazardous material abatement in historic structures, such as *Preservation Brief 37*, and there are many specialists in the field available for consultation.

A full restoration involves taking an entire property back to a certain period of time. In Oregon, an exceptionally deserving candidate for a full restoration is the Tillamook Bay Life-Saving Station. All three of its buildings stand intact in their original configuration, though their condition has deteriorated. Considering that this station represents three-fifths of the surviving Life-Saving Service structures in Oregon, it is vital that these buildings are restored and not allowed to deteriorate further. The original plans still exist, and there are many historic photos of the buildings.

On a smaller scale, though still challenging, the 1889 boathouse at Point Adams is very deserving of a full restoration. The plans still exist for the boathouse, and there are several historic photographs of the building. There is a restored example at the Fort Point Life-Saving Station on San Francisco Bay within the Golden Gate Recreation Area to examine for details, and there is a similar boathouse at the Tillamook Bay Life-Saving Station to peruse. The boatroom doors would have to be reconstructed, appropriate wooden windows would need to be fabricated, current fenestration would have to be removed, openings would have to be covered with appropriate siding, and the ventilator would have to be reconstructed. After the restoration, the boathouse could continue to

store equipment for the National Marine Fisheries Service. The restoration would go a long way toward preserving the history of the Life-Saving Service in Oregon.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is the treatment method of reusing a building for a new purpose while retaining its historic elements. Many buildings outlive their original purpose, such as a one-room schoolhouse or a life-saving station. Rehabilitation gives a historic building a new lease on life (Figure 186). Foremost, the new use should be compatible with the historic structure so that finishes, spaces, and historic features are impacted minimally. Unlike a restoration, significant features that have become historic over time, such as a radio room added onto a life-saving station, should be retained. New elements that need to be added as part of the rehabilitation, such as bathrooms, should be carried out in a compatible manner but not to the point where they are mistaken for original. The new work should be differentiated so that the historic integrity of the building is maintained. Additions should also be made as reversible as possible so that future preservationists can undo the work if needed.

One of the great difficulties in rehabilitating Coast Guard stations is conforming to the American Disabilities Act of 1990. The Umpqua River Lifeboat Station and Yaquina Bay Lighthouse have both had to wrestle with this issue. At Port Orford, a mechanical lift is being considered at the rear entrance since the first floor of the building is over five feet off the ground. The rear was chosen over the front since the unbroken symmetry of the front facade is a key character-defining feature. There will be no access

Figure 186. Pamet River Lifeboat Station Adaptively Reused as a Youth Hostel, 1997. Source: Author.

provided to the second floor, as access is not possible without destruction of historic fabric. As a compromise, interpretive information will be provided on the first floor and outside the building to educate the public about the history of the station. When physical constraints and character-defining features are in jeopardy, the federal government allows education and interpretation as alternatives to direct access.

All of the Oregon stations in non-Coast Guard hands have undergone some form of adaptive reuse, some more successfully than others. The Tillamook Bay, Siuslaw River, and Yaquina Bay Lifeboat Stations are still in use by the Coast Guard for their original purpose. The Coos Bay Lifeboat Station has had its boathouse adaptively reused by the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology. The Tillamook Bay Life-Saving Station was adapted into a home early in its history and is described in the previous section. The

Yaquina Bay Lighthouse has been adapted principally into a lighthouse museum. The four station sites that have been rehabilitated are the Point Adams, Umpqua River, Coquille River, and Port Orford Lifeboat Stations.

The boathouse at the Coos Bay Lifeboat Station (1915) underwent a rehabilitation in 1975. To make the structure useful to the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, it was converted into a lecture hall. While the structure was saved, it is far from a perfect adaptive reuse. The boatroom has kept its volume, the launchway was retained, and the side elevations remained unaltered; unfortunately, several other adaptations were handled insensitively. The boatroom doors were removed and substituted with glazing. Inexplicably, the east bay was sealed with a three-sided bay window. This glazing could have been inserted on the interior and the boatroom doors retained. There is no excuse for the bay window. The projection room should not have been built as its usefulness is precluded by its invasion into the boatroom space. A wing was added to the approach of the building to provide for bathrooms and a foyer. The wing displaces the boathouse's symmetry and integrates into the building to the point where it could be mistaken for original fabric; therefore, the wing violates two "laws" of rehabilitation. However, it should be remembered that the rehabilitation of the boathouse occurred early in the history of Oregon's preservation movement. While the rehabilitation could have been carried out better, at least the building was saved and reused.

The Yaquina Bay Lighthouse (1871) has been adaptively reused as a lighthouse museum. Oregon State Parks owns and maintains the structure and led the initial work in its rehabilitation in the 1970s. The ell on the rear was reconstructed from original plans,

photos, and archaeological evidence to house the modern restrooms. Shutters were reconstructed and the front porch restored. Recently, the lighthouse lantern room was restored. Other than under-representation in the interpretation of the Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard rescue history at the lighthouse, the Yaquina Bay Lighthouse is a good example of a rehabilitation.

The Point Adams Lifeboat Station (1938) has already been adaptively reused by the National Marine Fisheries Service. They use the station house for offices and keep marine equipment in the equipment building, shop building, and 1889 boathouse. Their nautical mission meshes well with the former function of the lifeboat station. The National Marine Fisheries Service is having little negative impact on the structures and is trying to keep them well-maintained. Recently, new cedar shingle roofs were installed on all of the buildings. However, it is vital that funding continues for the maintenance of the structures. Once maintenance slips, costs for repairs will only increase the final bill. The station is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, though the National Marine Fisheries Service would like to pursue a nomination.

The Umpqua River Lifeboat Station (1939) was adapted into a local history museum starting in 1976. The rehabilitation process provided the building with bathrooms and exterior access ramps in a sensitive manner. They also took the opportunity to restore portions of the exterior. Douglas County has been doing a good job maintaining the structure.

The Coquille River Lifeboat Station was rehabilitated into office space and a museum in 1991. The museum moved out in 1995, and there are only a few offices in it

today. The usage as a museum and offices is very compatible with the original station. The original station plan divided up the floor plan into a honeycomb of rooms on the first and second floors coupled with large spaces. The museum and offices have had little impact on the historic finishes and features. The Port of Bandon continues to maintain the building well.

The Port Orford Lifeboat Station is just finishing up its first phase of rehabilitation into a Coast Guard museum with a grand opening on 3 June 2000. Port Orford has the most compatible adaptive reuse of a Coast Guard station in Oregon. The transformation of the station house into a museum devoted to the Coast Guard is highly compatible and appropriate. One of its original 36' motor lifeboats was even acquired and moved back to the station for restoration.

Reconstruction

To serve interpretive purposes, reconstruction is acceptable to the Secretary of the Interior. However, speculative reconstructions are not allowed. Only where there is good documentary evidence should a reconstruction be undertaken. Life-saving and lifeboat stations can benefit greatly through reconstructions, as station sites were a complex of buildings in which all structures are needed to tell the entire story of the station. Most stations consist primarily of a station house, boathouse, equipment building, and lookout. Station buildings were connected by walkways, lined with fences, and usually had a bell stand from which to summon crewmen. Most had a signal flag tower and a flag pole. Many stations had auxiliary boathouses located far from the

Figure 187. Nantucket Life Saving Museum, Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, 1997. Source: Author.

station in case they could not get a boat out of their primary boathouse. All of the buildings and structures are important in telling the complete story of a station. Viewing all of the structures allows a visitor to completely immerse themselves in the story.

Several Oregon station sites would receive interpretive benefits from reconstructions, such as the lookout tower at Port Orford, the old lookout at Coquille Point, and the boathouse at Port Orford, just to name a few. It would be spectacular to see the old Cape Arago Life-Saving Station rebuilt on Lighthouse Island. However, reconstructions are expensive and take a lot of desire on the part of the supporters. There have been several reconstructions on the East Coast. The Nantucket Island Life-Saving Museum is in a recreation of a 1874-type station with "later" additions (Figure 187).

Moving

One method of preservation used quite often during the history of the Coast Guard was the moving of a structure to a new site. Coast Guard buildings are built to specifications much greater than standard housing. Walls made with full-dimension 2" by 6" studs and solid, diagonal 1" by 6" sub-sheathing are standard. In fact, early life-saving stations were built to be moved as the sand shifted the distances from the station to the water. There are instances on record where stations have been carried inland by storm surges, in one case half a mile, without sustaining serious damage.[262]

In recent decades, stations have been moved in an effort to preserve them (Figure 188). Once a station is considered surplus by the Coast Guard, it is either moth-balled, demolished, sold, given to other government agencies, or donated to nonprofit groups. Often the Coast Guard simply wants the land on which the old station rests for a new purpose. This is a legitimate need and nonprofit groups should take advantage of it.

Loss of context is a serious issue to a moved structure (Figure 189). With early life-saving stations, context is less of an issue since they were built to move. As long as the station is near a beach with appropriate water access on a properly sized plot of land, the life-saving station will “feel” appropriate. Even life-saving stations not meant to move can be moved without too much turmoil. For example, the Old Harbor Life-Saving Station was barged from one end of Cape Cod to the other without much loss in site character (Figure 190).

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[262]Sumner I. Kimball, *Organization and Methods of the United States Life-Saving Service* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1912), p. 10.

Figure 188. Marine Helicopter Moving Halfway House at Mystic Seaport in 1968. Source: Curtis, *Moving Historic Buildings.*

Figure 189. Pointe Aux Barques Life-Saving Station (1875-76) in New Context at Huron City Museum, Huron City, Michigan, 1997. Source: Author.

Figure 190. Old Harbor Life-Saving Station (1898) in New Context at Race Point, Massachusetts, 1997. Source: Author.

With lifeboat stations, however, context is very important. The lifeboat station's boathouse is a littoral structure and its orientation to the water is vital. The station houses, on the other hand, should be sited near the boathouse but can stand to be moved to some degree as long as there still is a visible relationship between the boathouse and the station buildings. Along the Oregon Coast, many of the station buildings are quite a distance from their boathouses. The Umpqua River Lifeboat Station had its station buildings nine-tenths of a mile away from its boathouse. The Port Orford Station's boathouse was 280' below the station house.

The only station on the Oregon Coast that might receive some benefit from relocation is the former Tillamook Bay Life-Saving Station at Barview. The station buildings are currently owned by Gary Newkirk of Portland. This is the only privately held station on the Oregon Coast. The station house, boathouse, and workshop are all in their original locations. Unfortunately, an undersized sewer line for the town of Barview was installed through the property, and the line occasionally backs up onto the property and into the station buildings. As a consequence, the buildings are condemned for human habitation. The owner has been in a legal entanglement with the sewer district over the issue for a decade.

These buildings are extremely important in telling the story of the Life-Saving Service in Oregon since they comprise the last remaining life-saving station in the State. The station house is the only remaining example of a Petersons Point-type station in the nation. The loss of the station would strike a harsh blow to the tangible history of the Life-Saving Service in Oregon. If the sewer situation cannot be resolved or the buildings

continue to degrade, a last resort to the situation would be to move the structures. Considering that the current Tillamook Bay site has already been severely compromised through the north jetty installation in 1912-17, moving the buildings would not compromise their context unalterably. These three structures are just too important to lose. As long as the buildings are reinstalled in the same configuration at a location on Tillamook Bay, they could continue to tell the history of life-saving on Tillamook Bay.

Recycling

Recycling is not accepted as a preservation treatment by the Secretary's *Standards*. Recycling involves demolishing a building and reusing its parts. Old automobile restorationists have used this method for years, sacrificing one car for parts to keep another running. The same goes for Coast Guard buildings. Standardization of parts, such as interior hardware and light fixtures, allows for the recycling of elements at other Coast Guard stations. While not condoned by the preservation community, removed items would be gladly accepted by a station needing those original elements. Ideally, recycling would happen after thorough documentation of the building to Historic American Building Survey (HABS) standards.

Altering a building to the point of unrecognizability would also be considered recycling (Figure 191). The Oregon Institute of Marine Biology (OIMB) has chosen an aggressive way of reusing two of their historic Coast Guard buildings. The former keeper's dwelling has been fully incorporated into the library on the OIMB campus (Figure 192). While this does not conform to the Secretary's *Standards*, it is a way of

Figure 191. Cahoons Hollow Life-Saving Station (1894) Rehabilitation, Cahoons Hollow, Massachusetts, 1997. Source: Author.

Figure 192. Keeper's Dwelling (1915) Enveloped, Coos Bay Lifeboat Station, 1999. Source: Author.

making use of an old building. By not demolishing the building, the owners of the building have left some room for physical interpretation of the structure. The remains of the building can serve as a jumping off point from which to interpret the early Coast Guard. For example, a plaque within the new OIMB library telling viewers what purpose the building formerly served could inspire people to delve deeper into learning more about the Coast Guard's story at Coos Bay. While not condoned by any preservationist, recycling should be considered after all other options have been explored and exhausted.

Interpretation

Little meaning can be gathered from a site without interpretation. When a visitor is confronted with a historic structure and that structure's purpose is unclear to that individual, he or she will leave the site having learned nothing, or worse, leave the site with a dislike for historic structures. Take for example a wreck pole. It's simply a tall post with a platform and two arms sticking out. A viewer might think it is simply a souvenir from a shipwreck, there to mark the station site or to hang flags on. However, when coupled with a picture of it in use, or better, a video of a drill using the wreck pole, or even more ideally, a demonstration of how the wreck pole was used with live actors, the story of rescue operations can come alive (Figure 193). Several stations in America, such as Old Harbor Life-Saving Station at Race Point, Massachusetts, recreate Life-Saving Service beach apparatus drills with the wreck pole and breeches buoy. In Astoria, the Coast Guard performs a breeches buoy drill for the public once a year, though it is done through modern means rather than turn-of-the-century methods.

Figure 193. Faking Shot Line at Yaquina Bay, Circa 1910. Source: Lincoln County Historical Society (LCHS #2265).

Considered one of the best examples of interpretation of the Life-Saving Service is the Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station (1901) at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore near Empire, Michigan. The former station has been restored by the National Park Service. It is a model for the proper restoration and interpretation of a life-saving station or lifeboat station. The station is a Marquette-type similar to the four Marquette-type Life-Saving Service stations built in Oregon that are no longer standing (Figure 194). The station house is set up with non-permanent, interpretive displays on the first floor (Figure 195). Existing cabinetry is used to display life-saving items (Figure 196). The second floor is set up as a house museum to give the visitor an idea of what it was like to be a surfman (Figure 197). The Fort Point-type boathouse stands nearby (Figure 198). The station has been moved to its present location though it still

Figure 194. Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station (1901), 1997. Source: Author.

retains its original orientation and relationship with Lake Michigan. Inside the boathouse are a surfboat, lifeboat, lifecar, and beach apparatus cart just as they would have been housed 100 years earlier (Figure 199). Items are displayed in proper fashion, though not in quantities that would have originally occupied the boathouse. The displays are interpreted by trained docents rather than signage.

In Oregon, some small interpretive displays are presented at the Umpqua River Lifeboat Station and the Yaquina Bay Lighthouse. Interpretation used to be in place at the Coquille River Lifeboat Station, but it was removed when the Bandon Historical Museum moved to their new location. The Port Orford Lifeboat Station is the location that is providing the most interpretation of the Coast Guard in Oregon. The former Port Orford Lifeboat Station is a museum in its infancy with its opening slated for June 2000.

Figure 195. Keeper's Office Interpretation, Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station, 1997. Source: Author.

Figure 196. Kitchen Cabinet Interpretation, Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station, 1997. Source: Author.

Figure 197. Crew's Quarters Interpretation, Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station, 1997. Source: Author.

Figure 198. Boathouse (1901), Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station, 1997. Source: Author.

With time, hopefully, the Port Orford Lifeboat Station will evolve into a museum on par with Sleeping Bear Point.

With less impact, but nonetheless useful in keeping the history alive, is interpretive signage. As mentioned earlier, this could be a possibility at the overlook to the former Cape Arago Life-Saving Station and in the former keeper's dwelling at the Coos Bay Lifeboat Station. Both of these sites beg an etched metal plate with a historic image and descriptive text to give a sense of what is now lost. Other locations that still stand would also benefit from interpretive signage. The boathouse at the Coos Bay Lifeboat Station is now a lecture hall, a place visited by many people every year, yet it has no historic photos displayed. As shown in Chapter IV, there are good images of the station available from the U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters for the price of printing.

Figure 199. Boatroom Interpretation, Sleeping Bear Point Life-Saving Station, 1997. Source: Author.

Further Research

This thesis is not the final word on the pre-WWII Coast Guard in Oregon. Further research needs to be carried out on Oregon's stations. The logbooks at the National Archives in Seattle need to be sifted through more thoroughly and the U.S. Coast Guard Archives in Atlanta should be more fully explored. Oral histories should be collected before we lose all pre-WWII surfmen to age. A multiple property nomination for all the Oregon stations, similar to the one produced for Oregon's lighthouses, should be undertaken. Documentation, coupled with the preservation of existing Coast Guard structures, will help ensure that the story of the Coast Guard continues to be told.

Summary

Oregon's lifeboat stations are second to none in the United States. Point Adams, Tillamook Bay, Umpqua River, Coquille River, and Port Orford are five lifeboat stations that when taken as a group, are unsurpassed in America. In few states other than Oregon can a visitor experience a lifeboat station with most of its auxiliary features and support structures intact.[263] Having all of the buildings and structures helps to tell the complete story of a station.

All of Oregon's extant stations require at least one of the preservation treatments as defined by the Secretary's *Standards*. All of it's station sites deserve interpretation. All of Oregon's station sites are locally significant and several of those stations are

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[263]Ralph Shanks, phone interview by author, transcript, Eugene, OR 28 May 2000.

thought to be nationally significant. The lifeboat stations at Point Adams (1938), Umpqua River (1939), and Port Orford (1934) are missing only their boathouses; otherwise, each station is extremely intact. Coquille River Lifeboat Station (1939) stands completely whole. Tillamook Bay Lifeboat Station (1942) is an intact, operating Coast Guard station. Tillamook Bay Life-Saving Station (1907) is the only remaining life-saving station left in Oregon and the only one left of its kind in the United States. Within a 1-1/2 mile stretch of Tillamook Bay, the entire story of the Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard can be told in one setting. Hopefully, with appropriate preservation management, all of Oregon's stations will be able to continue to tell their individual and collective stories.