

THE HOLLERING PLACE

NATIVE HERITAGE

For thousands of years, this special place has been a center of commerce, transportation, and communication. Native Hanis Coos people established a village near here on the east shore of the bay called Hanisitc or Kie-mis-tic.

Another village named El-ka-titc (Hollering Place) was directly across the bay on the North Spit. Since the narrowest part of the lower Coos Bay (about 600 yards) is between these two villages, people traveling along the Pacific Ocean beach route would yell for someone to paddle over and provide passage. Euro-American settlers later adopted this same practice and the location became generally known as the "Hollering Place".

EURO-AMERICAN CONTACT

In 1826 early U.S. explorer and fur trader Jedediah Smith, travelling overland from California, camped fish and berries for sale" before crossing over the bay on his way north. In 1852, the *Captain Lincoln*, a military schooner, ran aground directly west of here on the ocean side of the spit. Natives helped to rescue the crew then "were much disposed to barter" with the soldiers during their four-month encampment of Camp Castaway (see related monument nearby).

In 1853, the first Euro-American settlement on the bay, Empire City, was established here. Its location has all to do with geography. Once over the Coos Bay bar, this is the first site along the lower channel's shoreline to provide a water depth (23'-26') adequate for anchorage of ships. Elsewhere on the bay extensive tidal mudflats are exposed at low tide making ship anchorage near shore impossible.

COMMERCE and TRANSPORTATION

Empire City became the seat of Coos County and remained so until 1896 when voters changed the location to Coquille. Nearby docks exported lumber, coal, and agricultural products and off-loaded fish. The original courthouse stood on the lot directly north of here. Prior to the 1920s, this was the entrance/exit point for many ship-bound passengers.

HISTORIC SITES REMAIN

A lifesaving station to safeguard passage, and later a World War II military facility to guard against a beach invasion, were once established directly west on the North Spit. A few relics remain. Capt. James Magee, a master Coos Bay bar pilot, built his home in 1873 on the waterfront just below this wayside. One of the oldest homes in Coos County, it still stands today.

The Major Morton Tower House (1869), located one block northeast, which used the parlor as the area's first customhouse, and the Charles Tower House (1872), behind you on the north side of Newmark, are two of the oldest homes left in the county.

All of these historic sites can be visited by walking the "Sawmill & Tribal Trail" which begins here. That east-west urban route honors the paths developed by Coos tribal ancestors that connected their bayside villages as well as the lumbermen and shipbuilders who walked between sawmills between here and old-town North Bend. Today, hikers along the 400 mile north-south "Oregon Coast Trail" also pass by this point.