

#### Year-round camping nearby:

Cape Blanco State Park, 9 miles north of Port Orford, has 52 campsites with electrical and water hookups and four cabins (cabins reservable by calling 1-800-452-5687).

Humbug Mountain State park, 6 miles south of Port Orford, has 39 electrical and 56 tent sites (reservable).



Port Orford Lifeboat Station Museum and Interpretive Center, Port Orford Heads State Park

**Open** April-October Wednesday-Monday, 10 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.

The Port Orford Lifeboat Station Museum is operated through a cooperative agreement between the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and the Cape Blanco Heritage Society

> For more information, visit: www.capeblancoheritagesociety.com or www.oregonstateparks.org

> > Phone: 541-332-0521



All information or fees subject to change without notice This brochure is available in alternative formats upon request Call 1-800-551-6949. Oregon Relay for the hearing impaired; dial 711.

63400-8098 (10/14)



# **Port Orford Heads State Park**

#### and Lifeboat Station



# So beautiful to view...

Some of the most dramatically pleasing sights on the Oregon coast are visible from the trails at Port Orford Heads State Park. Here you can see the Pacific Ocean splashing against miles of southern Oregon coastline. Vistas extend north toward the Cape Blanco Lighthouse and south to Port Orford and Humbug Mountain, and beyond.



## ... so perilous to navigate

On a stormy day, when ocean waves are battering the shoreline, it is easy to see why Port Orford Heads was the site of one of the first lifeboat stations on the Oregon coast. From 1934 to 1970, U.S. Coast Guard surfmen, as they were called, kept watch over a 40-mile stretch of coastline between Cape Blanco and Cape Sebastian. Stationed atop a 37-foot-high lookout tower perched near the westernmost tip of the head, they watched for distress signals from out at sea, ever ready to launch search and rescue missions from their boathouse in Nellies Cove, 280 feet below.





## The Port Orford Lifeboat Station: past and present

Frequent shipwrecks on the south Oregon coast in the late 1800s and early 1900s prompted the U.S. Coast Guard to select Port Orford Heads as the site of a lifesaving station. Besides the observation tower and boathouse, the compound included an Officer-in-Charge residence and a two-story building housing an office and quarters for the crew. A steep stairway with more than 500 steps connected the Crew Quarters with a boathouse.

Today, the Crew Quarters building is a museum. It is one of five surviving neocolonial buildings that comprise the historic Port Orford Lifesaving Station. The other structures are a storage building, a pump house, a garage and the Officer-in-Charge quarters, which now serves as a residence for park staff. The compound is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

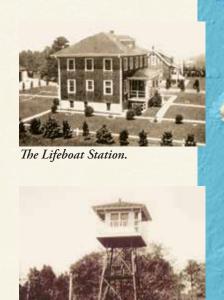
Take time to inspect the station's legendary, unsinkable 36-foot motor lifeboat. Inside the museum, you can see historical artifacts and interpretive accounts of the station's history that help make the past come alive.



Officer-in-Charge quarters.

### Remnants seen from the trails

The park's main trails-the Cove, Tower and Headland trails- begin at the museum. From a viewpoint on the Cove Trail, watch for remnants of the stairway to Nellies Cove. The boathouse, which sheltered two 36foot motor lifeboats, burned down in the late 1970s. You can still see its pilings and breakwater structures as well as portions of a rail-mounted carriage used to launch the boats into the cove.





1934-1970.



Aerial view of boathouse in Nellies Cove.



View north from headland trail viewpoint to Cape Blanco.

#### 350 Feet 175

#### Legend

Unpaved Trail Roads, Parking & Walkways Trail Intersections & Distances Ρ Parking Viewpoint Ŕ Hiking



### Wartime watch

During World War II, lookouts in the Port Orford Lifeboat Station tower did more than watch for emergency signals from foundering ships. The station's complement grew from 13 to more than 100 Coast Guardsmen who stayed alert around the clock watching for enemy aircraft, ships and submarines. Wartime additions to the compound included a guardhouse, sentries, guard dogs, machine gun pits and foxholes. In the museum, read about the 1942 Japanese submarine

The Tower Trail leads to the historical location of the observation tower, which was removed when the station was decommissioned in 1970.



Nellies Cove trail viewpoint.

attacks off the south Oregon coast. You can also have an authentic GI 'dog tag' made on a vintage machine.