

Earl's Diary - Friday - July 18, 2014

Dear Loyal Readers;

Today dawned another beautiful sun shiny day! How about that? That's two days in a row!

The happenings at the Oregon Gathering today included a couple of workshops: Photography, Wheel Bearings, and Dutch Oven Cooking. I was more interested in seeing some of the country side of the Bandon Area. For several years now I have heard about the famous Bandon cranberries. But, where were these famous cranberries? You certainly can't see them from the main highway 101.

This morning I set out to see if I could find these elusive cranberry bogs but where to start? Of course, I probably could have asked someone, but who would want to do that? It was more fun just to drive around and see if I could find some. Apparently this area supplies a large percentage of the U.S. market, so it shouldn't be too hard to locate at least one bog!

A short distance out of town I turned off on a side road. Yes! There are cranberry bogs in Bandon! How can you tell they are cranberry bogs? The low dikes are apparent in the fields however, July is NOT a good month to hunt for cranberries. It seems they are just beginning their growing cycle (as seen in these photos. The water delivery system is usually located in the middle of several fields.

Contrary to some public belief, cranberries are not grown in water. The only time the fields are actually flooded is during harvest season. The water helps in the ease of the harvesting process.

Bandon is also the location of the first cranberry bogs to be wet harvested, which is done by building dikes around the bogs then flooding them.

Somewhere in this mass of greenery are some young cranberry plants.



This is what the area MIGHT look like during harvest



Cranberries have been grown in Bandon since 1885, when Charles McFarlin planted vines he brought from Massachusetts. McFarlin had originally come to pan for gold in California. He did not make his fortune, or even a living, so he turned to what he knew best. He brought vines from Cape Cod and planted them in the state's first cranberry bog.



The bridge over the Coquille River in Bandon

While I was on my drive around Bandon, I decided to stop and see what was going on in Old Town Bandon. Friday was Farmer's Market Day. It seems like everyone was in town for this big event. It was either that, or there were an over-abundance of tourists in town that day.

The thing that attracted my attention was low tide. One particular area (to me) was very photogenic with all the pilings showing. The seagulls were also enjoying a bath in shallow pools.



Bandon has a coastal Mediterranean climate. Just as is common with the coast of Oregon, rain and overcast conditions are more than common in the winter months, except for the summer when it is mostly dry.



Bandon was founded by the Irish peer George Bennett in 1873. George Bennett, his sons Joseph and George, and George Sealey came from Bandon, Ireland. The following year the town's previous name of Averille was changed to Bandon after the town of the same name in Ireland. In 1877, the post office was established. In 1880, cheese making began.



Customers "out the door" at the Chowder House.

It was a clear sunny day so the Bandon lighthouse was clearly visible across the bay.

In the evening the gathering held a "tapas party". I had been traveling all day so took the opportunity to stay in. Tomorrow will be a long day at the gathering. Thanks for coming along with me today. Bye for now - - Earl