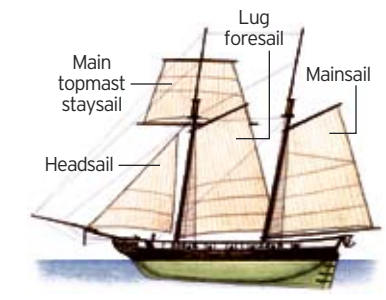
CANNONS GAVE NAME TO BEACH AND TOWN, AND KEEP COMING BACK

After the Shark ran aground and broke apart on the Columbia Bar in September 1846, the sea carried a portion of the deck containing three carronades and the capstan 30 miles south. Soon afterward, crewmen attempted to recover them from the surf south of what is now known as Cannon Beach, but the sea quickly reclaimed them. It wasn't until 1898 that one of the carronades was brought ashore. This photo (right) shows that carronade, which is on display at the Cannon Beach History Center. The town changed its name from Ecola to Cannon Beach in 1922.

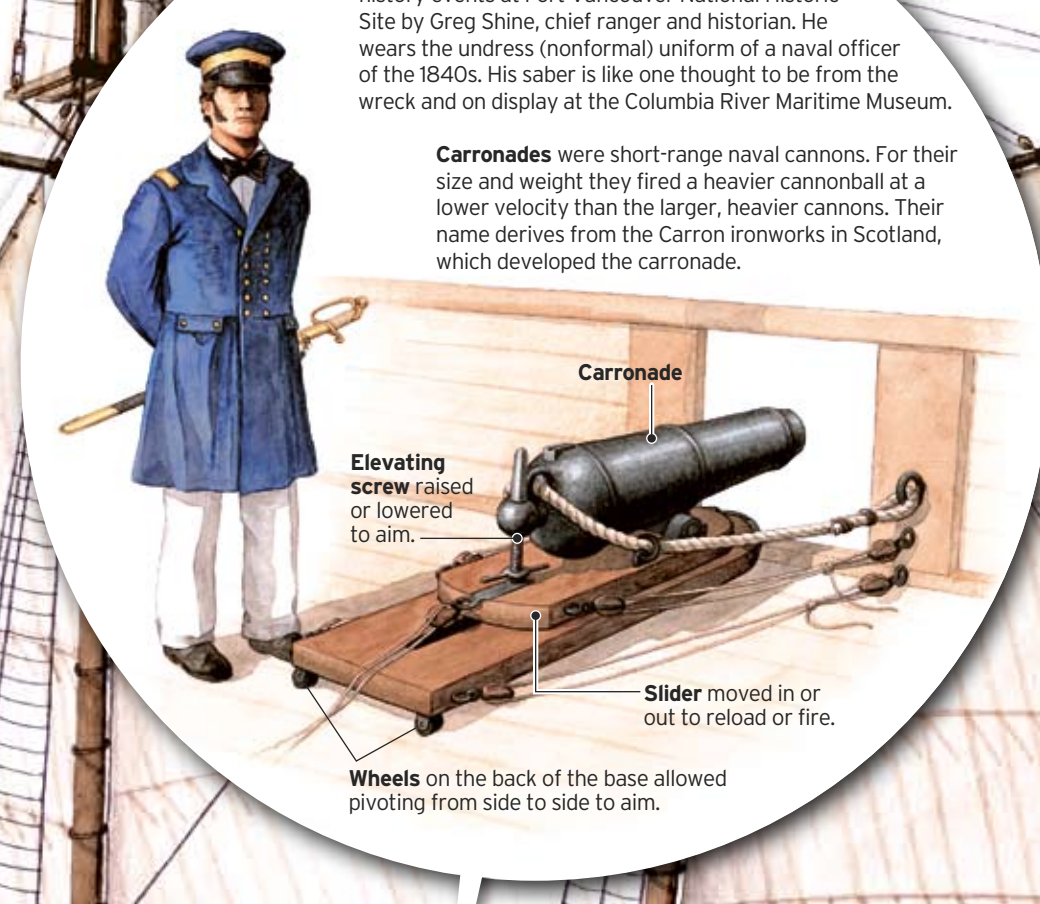
After fierce storms last winter scoured the same beach, beachcombers in February spotted two carronades – thought to be the remaining two. This photo (left) shows one of the carronades in the sand. The carronades look like giant lumps of tar because of the mineral mass surrounding them – a result of the iron's reaction to the ocean environment, which has helped preserve them. The carronades are currently held in tanks of fresh water at Nehalem Bay State Park as the first step along the road to restoration. Although they are still Navy property, they will likely go on display when restoration is complete in several years.

USS Shark

Type: Topsail schooner
Launched: 1821
Length: 86 feet
Beam: 24 feet
Weight: 198 tons
Crew: 70



Sail arrangement gave the Shark great speed but required a large crew to man sails. The four commonly used sails are shown.



Lt. Neil Howison is portrayed during living history events at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site by Greg Shine, chief ranger and historian. He wears the undress (nonformal) uniform of a naval officer of the 1840s. His saber is like one thought to be from the wreck and on display at the Columbia River Maritime Museum.

Carronades were short-range naval cannons. For their size and weight they fired a heavier cannonball at a lower velocity than the larger, heavier cannons. Their name derives from the Carron ironworks in Scotland, which developed the carronade.

Carronade

Elevating screw raised or lowered to aim.

Slider moved in or out to reload or fire.

Wheels on the back of the base allowed pivoting from side to side to aim.

Bowsprit

Ratlines allowed crewmen to climb into the rigging to raise, lower or adjust sails.

Carronades provided short-range firepower. The Shark carried 10.

Capstan worked like a winch to raise anchors or sails.

"Long-Tom" cannons were used for longer range. The Shark carried two.

Tiller was manned by a crewman overseen by an officer who kept the ship on course.

Hatch

Anchor

Galley chimney passed through the deck from a small firebrick hearth. Crewmen ate where they could below deck; officers dined on china in their quarters.

Crew quarters were cramped and only five feet high. Crewmen slept in hammocks or passed time below when off duty, keeping decks clear for those running the ship.

Hold contained provisions for months at sea – from barrels of fresh water and salt pork, cannon balls and powder, to extra sails and rigging.

Officers' quarters were separate from the crew. Here officers slept in bunks, were served meals and passed time off duty.

Captain's quarters were in the aft of the ship, behind the officers' quarters. The captain was the only one to have his own quarters.

Copper sheathing was applied to hulls of ships of this era to help prevent marine worms from boring holes through the wooden planking. The copper quickly turned green in the marine environment.

Rudder

Ship's boat was used to carry crew ashore when the ship could not dock. Several boats were sometimes carried, often stored on deck.

Sources: Fort Vancouver National Historic Site; Columbia River Maritime Museum; Cannon Beach Historical Society; Naval Historical Center; The History of the American Sailing Navy Photos: Cannon Beach Historical Society, Doug Beghtel/The Oregonian