

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION

of the

**CAPE BLANCO
HERITAGE SOCIETY**



CBHS BOARD MEETINGS: Currently held at Point.B Studio at 10:00 AM on the 2nd Tuesday of every month.
PLEASE NOTE: Our meetings are open to everyone who would like to attend. We invite and encourage anyone interested in CBHS to participate!

The Hughes Family ~ The Lighthouse Years

Patrick and Jane Hughes



CBHS Archives



James



Laura



Agnes



Anna

The Hughes Family was a critical force in the construction, maintenance, and daily operations of life at Cape Blanco. Patrick and Jane Hughes were early settlers in the area, eventually establishing and running one of the largest and most successful dairy farms in the area. Patrick emigrated to the United States from County Tyrone, Ireland, in 1856 and met Jane O'Neill (*also from Tyrone*) the following year in Boston, MA. They sailed for California shortly thereafter where Patrick worked at gold mining before venturing to Curry County to begin his dairy and livestock business in 1860. It was on this ranch where they raised their family: Edward, James, Alice, Reverend John C., Mary, Thomas and Francis (*two siblings died as children*). After many years of hard work and successful business ventures, the Hughes House was constructed in 1898 by respected builder P.J. Lindberg.

The second son, James Stephen Hughes, was born in his parent's first home on the south side of the Sixes River (*behind the 1898 ranch house*) on Feb. 10, 1863, and became a keeper at the Cape Blanco Lighthouse in 1888 at the age of 25. He served for 37 years, a tenure that is only surpassed by

James Silverton Langlois having served for 42 years, the longest known tenure of any lighthouse keeper on the American West Coast. Hughes served as Second Keeper from 1888–1889, as First Assistant from 1889–1919, and as Head Keeper from 1919–1926. His tenure as assistant keeper under Langlois during the early lighthouse keeping era was a busy one and led to the need to request the U.S. Lighthouse Board to construct a second dwelling for head keeper Langlois as the original dwelling had become inadequate serving the need to home up

to three lighthouse keeper families (*the second assistant keeper's tenure was frequently short meaning seven different families were shuffling in and out during that 20-year span*). By 1910, the second dwelling was eventually constructed by P.J. Lindberg who in the same period built another home across the Sixes River from the Hughes House for James Hughes and his family which was completed in 1909 (*P.J.'s son Ed helped with the construction of this home*). The living accommodations at the lighthouse must have certainly been much more tolerable after these two improvements. The Hughes



Cape Blanco Lighthouse shown with the first lighthouse keeper dwelling (built in 1870) and the second dwelling (added in 1910).

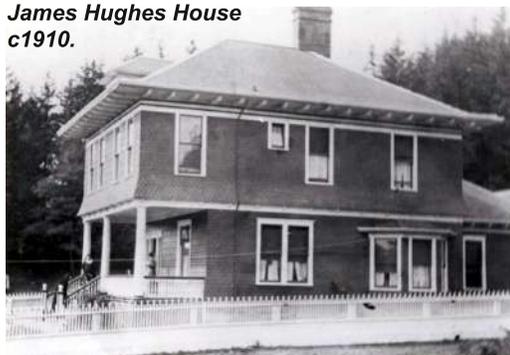
Oregon Historical Society Archives



CBHS Archives

James Hughes, James Langlois and Otto Heins.

**James Hughes House
c1910.**



State of Oregon Inventory of Historic Properties (SHPO) family were known for their gracious nature and often hosted keeper families along with the ranch hands which must have been met with gratitude during this bustling time of transition.

James lived in the first dwelling and later the James Hughes House with his wife Laura (*McMullen, married in 1889*) and two daughters, Agnes (*born 1895*) and Anna (*born 1898*). Laura's family were wealthy businesspeople from Connecticut who helped finance the construction of the Sixes River home to the north. Interestingly, Laura Hughes's uncle founded the *Seattle-Pacific Dredging Company* in San Francisco and it was with this firm that P.J. Lindberg learned the trade of bridge building.

Once settled in his new home, legend has it that James Hughes's daily commute to the lighthouse included



Masterson Collection

dutifully forging the Sixes River at low tide. He continued his service until the age of 63 when failing health forced him to retire seven years shy of the mandatory age of retirement for lighthouse keepers (*had he remained in good health his combined tenure might have surpassed that of Langlois*). He died three years later in 1929 in Connecticut while his wife and daughter, Anna, were there attempting to settle Laura's father's estate. James Hughes and his family's legacy of perseverance and resilience shine on at Cape Blanco and throughout the Sixes River valley. ✨



Masterson Collection

Grandma McMullen on the front porch.

Become a MEMBER of the CAPE BLANCO HERITAGE SOCIETY



OUR MISSION: To provide interpretative and educational services for the Cape Blanco Light Station, Historic Hughes House and Ranch and the Port Orford Lifeboat Station. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and your donation is tax-deductible.

Mail this portion of the form with your check made out to:
Cape Blanco Heritage Society. P.O. Box 1132 Port Orford, Oregon 97465.

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| PHONE: | CITIZEN HISTORIAN | \$100 |
| EMAIL: | BENEFACTOR | \$250—\$500 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> I WANT TO VOLUNTEER FOR CBHS! (<i>No Dues Necessary</i>) | TOTAL ENCLOSED: | |