

November 1, 2001 Issue

Terrible Tilly



The transition from Daylight Saving time to Standard time went smoothly. I rather enjoy looking at the clock in the morning and think I'm getting up "earlier". I can get started painting an hour sooner. The daylight hours seem to speed from dawn to dusk. Soon it is time to lay the brushes down and work on the computer for an hour or two.

The garden rests waiting for frosty mornings, yet unwilling to give up those last blooms. Logs have been laid in the fireplace and candles and flashlights are at the ready in anticipation of November's winds which inevitably knock out the power for hours (or days). I'm ready for winter. Are you?

Next Issue: On Being a Luminist

Tillamook lighthouse is situated on a huge solid rock, over a mile off the coast of Oregon at Tillamook Head. Here the ocean beats at the rock as if to challenge the lighthouse; "Hold on if you dare!" *

I had seen the lighthouse numerous times from Cannon Beach, Oregon, and from highway 101 northbound along the coast. Its history and remote beauty intrigued me. When I acquired a camera with a powerful zoom lens, I took the opportunity to get as close as I could to the lighthouse for gathering my research material.

"The weather was wonderfully clear on a warm sunny day."

The best view is a vantage point on Tillamook Head, north of Cannon Beach through Ecola Park. The weather was wonderfully clear on a warm sunny day. Packing cameras, camera bags, tripod, sketch book and supplies, and backpacks filled with miscellaneous necessities, we started (what I thought was) a short uphill hike. Step by step, up and up, the trail wound around until at last we came out at the top of the headland and there before us in the distance was "Terrible Tilly". My husband set up the tripod and began shooting both

video and still shots.

"We stayed for hours at the park"

I made color notes and sketches in my note book, checking frequently to make sure that Ed was not getting too close to the slippery edge with a several hundred foot sheer drop. The ocean was quite calm on that day, but the waves still seemed to relentlessly pound at the rock.

We stayed for hours at the park, observing a beautiful sunset from the beach below the headland. In my studio later, I began a series of watercolors of the lighthouse and the one large oil that now appear on my website. I'll always remember the pleasant day spent researching this historical light as I travel the Oregon coast near Cannon Beach.

Carol Thompson

* Read all about Tillamook Rock Lighthouse and how it got its nickname "Terrible Tilly" in "Pacific Northwest Lighthouses" by Bruce Roberts and Ray Jones.

Featured Artwork

Evening Glow (watercolor)



"Row upon row of incoming waves catch the evening glow of the sun and rolls the bright colors back toward the luminous sky. On a large rock off the shore stands Tillamook Rock Lighthouse, gradually fading into the evening glow."

Tillamook Rock (oil)



"Tillamook Rock Lighthouse (Terrible Tilly) was one of the loneliest and most dangerous assignments a 'keeper' could be assigned to. The structure, a triumph of engineering, was completed in 1881. It was continually manned until 1957, weathering storms of such force that on one occasion walls of water swept over the light and sent a 30 pound rock crashing through the glass in the tower."

Tilly (watercolor)



"The lighthouse at Tillamook Rock has a rich and interesting history worth researching. Situated about a mile off shore at Cannon Beach, Oregon, U.S.A., 'Tilly' (as she is affectionately referred to) is now in private ownership and beautifully cared for in her well-earned 'retirement'."