

THE CANNON GUN

By Mark Whitman, December 2008

The gun that now sits before the Douglas United States Post Office was created by the foundry of Bailey, Pegg & Co. of London, England, sometime between 1840 and 1850.

Commonly used aboard fur trade vessels or in for bastions of the Northwest, this gun is known as a “trunnioned carronade” or a “gunade.”

Made of iron ore taken from the English West Midlands, it’s forged letters clearly state that is a 4 hundredweight, 1 quarter, 9 pounds or 485 pounds. More commonly known as a “6 Pounder” with the production number 963.

At the turn of the last century, this gun was used by the patriotic citizens of Douglas and Treadwell to celebrate the nation’s birthday with roaring national salutes.

It now sits, sealed for its own protection as a silent witness to a long history of fire, wind, rain, and celebration.

In 2008 Niels Finn Larsen and his grandsons, Trevor Larson and Kristian Ritter took on the project of repairing the stand and the appearance of the bell and cannon in front to the Douglas Post Office.

The Douglas 4th of July Committee decided to fund the restoration but soon realized that as time has passed, many people did not know the history of the bell and cannon. Mark Whitman started contacting the seniors of Douglas for information, looked into State records, and found historical sources. His research reached all the way to London to the maker of the cannon and he was able to present a history to a group gathered on November 8, 2008.



Niels Finn Larsen and Pat Peterson during the Bell and Cannon refurbishment Project.



Douglas USPS where cannon currently sits, 804 3rd St, Douglas, AK