

SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE

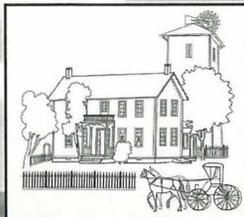
JUNE 2001 VOL. 3, NO. 6

Today

FORT KLAMATH:
ECHOES OF A
FRONTIER OUTPOST

TAKE PROPER
CARE OF THE
FAMILY QUILT

LOOKOUTS PERCH ATOP THE LOFTIEST PLACES



HISTORIC HANLEY FARM

1053 HANLEY ROAD • 773-6536 • sohs.org
BETWEEN CENTRAL POINT AND JACKSONVILLE



Visit the farm every weekend!

Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

June Events are all free with price of admission. Fridays are designed for adults and families. Saturdays and Sundays are chock-full of fun for all ages. House tours each day.

JUNE 1, 2, 3

At 2:00 p.m. June 1 only, SOU Professor Mark Teveskov will present, "Archaeology of Southwestern Oregon." Arrive early; limit of 20. Explore Native American lifeways through demonstrations, hands-on activities, and games. Shasta basket maker Mary Carpelan will demonstrate open-twined basketry; SOU intern Justine Ritchey will interpret an archaeology site.

JUNE 8, 9, 10

Nineteenth century farm life and wagon tours. June 9 and 10 the Applegate Weavers, a blacksmith, and the Southern Oregon Draft Horse Association will demonstrate spinning, blacksmithing, and using horse-drawn farm equipment.

JUNE 15, 16, 17

At 2:00 p.m., children ages 3-6 can enjoy stories about the farm and farm animals then visit the vegetable garden. Celebrate "June Is Dairy Month"

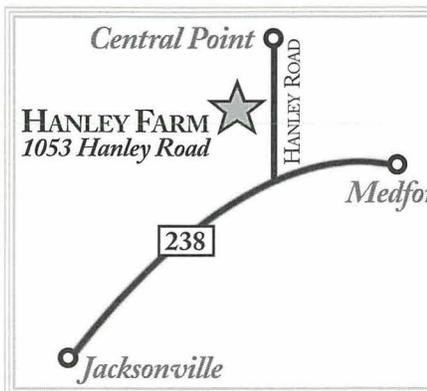
with the 4-H Applegate Dairy Goats, a cheese making demonstration, and hands-on butter making. On June 16 and 17, enjoy wagon rides and talks with Mary Elizabeth or Granny Sue, pioneers who traveled the Oregon and Applegate trails.

JUNE 22, 23, 24

At 2:00 p.m. June 22 only, see a slide program on "The Women of Hanley Farm." Arrive early; limited to 20. Then enjoy early twentieth century farm life by exploring farm chores, gardening and rug hooking through demonstrations and hands-on activities.

JUNE 29, 30, JULY 1

Late nineteenth century farm life will be explored. Members of the Embroidery Guild will demonstrate their craft and visitors will be able to create a "penny square," a small square of cloth that comes preprinted with a pattern to embroider—for the price of a penny! Gardening games, and farm chores will also be part of the fun!



ADMISSION: \$5 adults, \$3 seniors 6 and ages 6-12. Members free. Discount admission with \$30 pass; good for admissions (\$60 value).

Arrive in style!

Jacksonville-Hanley Farm

TROLLEY

tickets sold at the History Store
California & 3rd, Jacksonville

Hanley Farm, owned and operated by the Southern Oregon Historical Society, is a Century Farm and is listed on the National Register and the Jackson County Register of Historic Place

(continued from page 15)

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SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE
TODAY

Editorial Guidelines

Feature articles average 3,000 to 4,000 (pre-edited) words. Other materials range from 500 to 1,000 words. Electronic submissions are accepted on 3-1/4-inch disks and should be accompanied by a hard-copy printout. Cite all sources and construct endnotes and cutlines using the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The author is responsible for verification of cited facts. A selection of professional, unscreened photographs and/or line art should accompany submission—black-and-white or color. The Southern Oregon Historical Society reserves the right to use Society images in place of submitted material. All material should be labeled with author's name, mailing address, and telephone number. Manuscripts will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope stamped with sufficient postage. Authors should provide a brief autobiographical note at the end of manuscripts.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society secures rights to full and final editing of all manuscripts, layout design, and one-time North American serial rights. Authors will be notified of acceptance of manuscripts within ninety days of receiving materials. In most cases, payment is upon publication. *Southern Oregon Heritage Today* takes great care with all submitted material, but is not responsible for damage or loss. Only photocopies of irreplaceable original historical documents should be submitted. Facts, views, and opinions expressed in signed submissions are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints or opinions of *Southern Oregon Heritage Today* or the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE *Today*

FEATURE:

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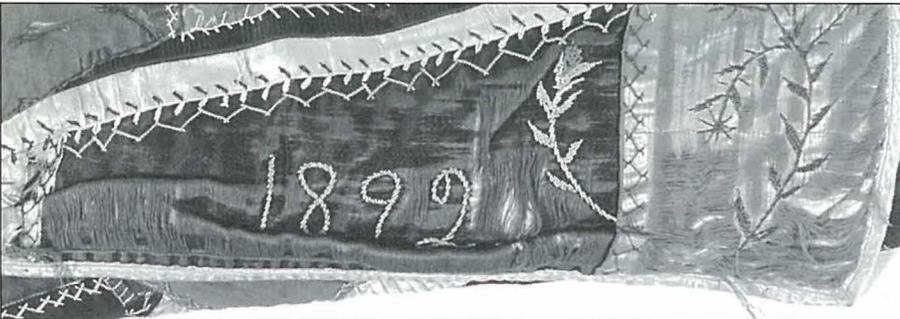
PRESERVATION PROFILE

Saving Great-grandma's Quilt

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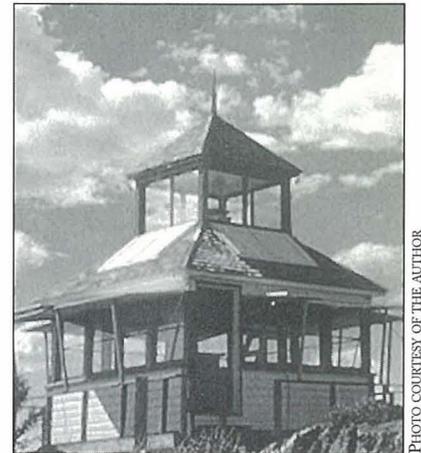


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

ON THE COVER

Dutchman Peak Lookout features the classic two-story cupola style first used in a lookout near Mount Hood in 1915.



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Historic Fort Klamath

by Doug Foster



PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

THE ROAD TO FORT KLAMATH crosses the scenic Wood River Valley, where the high Cascades loom to the west, the Crater Lake rim rises to the north and vast Upper Klamath Lake lies to the south. The valley's 40,000 acres of natural meadows are irrigated by the clear waters of numerous spring-fed streams.

In 1863, persuaded that this expanse of grass could provide ample feed for cavalry horses and mules, Major C. S. Drew chose it as the site for a new frontier fort to protect settlers. Because the regular army was engaged in the Civil War at the time, the army was forced to rely on volunteers to staff many posts in the West, including Fort Klamath. A typical recruiting poster of the period, which appeared in Jacksonville, read:

“CAVALRY! CAVALRY!
RALLY VOLUNTEERS!
To the United States Service for
Frontier Protection”

Privates, who were required to furnish their own horses, were paid \$31 a month, plus a \$100 bounty at the end of their service—which would last three years, “unless sooner discharged.”

The Oregon Cavalry Volunteers who were stationed at Fort Klamath patrolled the Applegate Trail and served as scouts and escorts; they also cleared roads for wagons, including the wagon road from Jacksonville to the fort via Butte Creek. The supply route for the fort was by ship

to Crescent City, then 200 miles by pack train over rugged terrain to Jacksonville and on to Fort Klamath. A round trip took two to three weeks when the trail was open, from July to November.

In 1867, troopers of the First Cavalry replaced the volunteers at Fort Klamath. Since these troops fought in the 1872-73 Modoc Indian War, Captain Jack and five other Modocs were tried at Fort Klamath when the war ended; four, including Captain Jack, were executed there. In 1890, when Fort Klamath was the sole remaining military fort in Oregon, it was finally closed. Where forty buildings once stood, there is now only one: a log cabin replica of the guardhouse that houses a small Klamath County museum. (It is open Thursday to Monday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., June through Labor Day.) The more than 4,000 acres of military and “hay” reserve land have passed into private ownership and are now part of a local ranch.¹

Today, Fort Klamath is a small ranching town located two miles from the site of the original fort. On most days visitors can mingle with local ranchers at the Cattle Crossing Cafe, where the menu lists the names and brands of sixty local ranchers. Go through the swinging doors in the cafe and you'll find a small tavern locals call “the fort,” where the walls are decorated with coiled lariats and photos of cowboys rodeoing and where a hand-lettered sign over the pool table reads: “Pool Table Rules: No Biting. No

This replica of the original nineteenth century guardhouse, which houses a museum, is the only structure remaining on the site of the army's once-sprawling Fort Klamath.

Gouging.” The cafe is open daily from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., April through November. 🍷

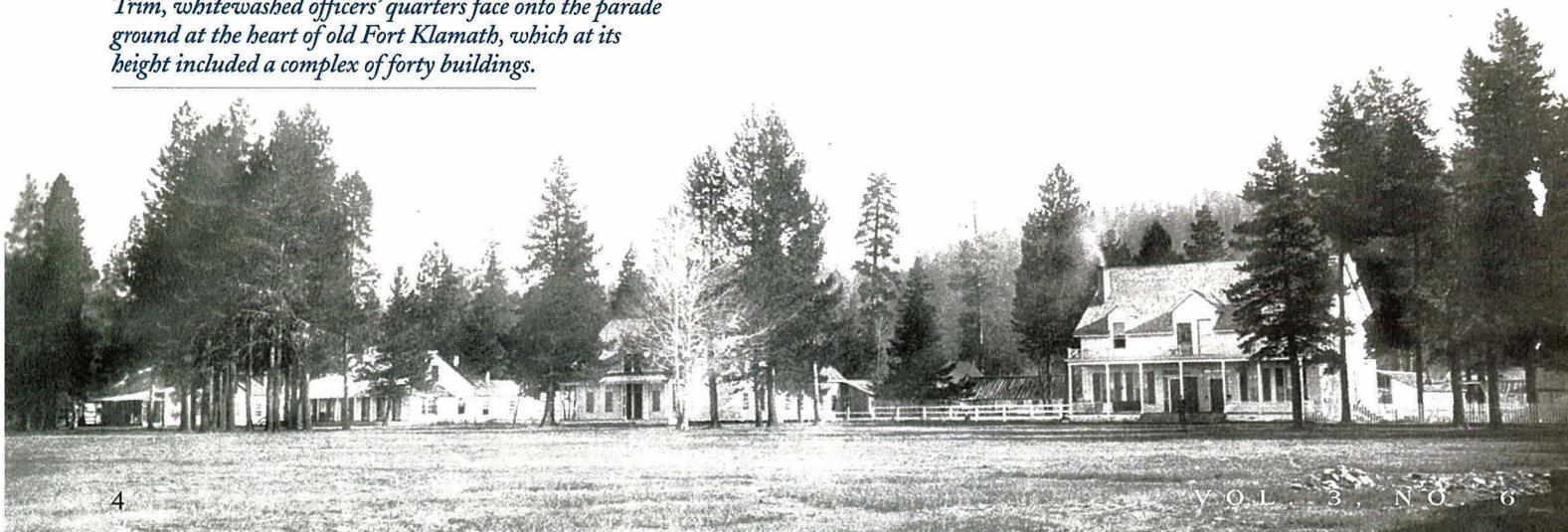
Doug Foster is a writer and historian living in Ashland.

ENDNOTE

1. Buena Cobb Stone, *Old Fort Klamath—an Oregon Frontier Post, 1863-1890* (Medford: Webb Research Group, 1990), pp. 15-17, 41.

Directions: From Highway 140, take the first marked turnoff to Fort Klamath and Rocky Point, and continue for 17 miles; when this road (Westside Road) bends sharply east at the head of Agency Lake and is renamed Seven Mile Road, continue on for another 4 miles until it dead-ends in an unmarked north-south road; then go north (turn left) for 2.5 miles to Fort Klamath Loop Road. The town of Fort Klamath starts here. To get to the Fort Klamath County Museum, turn east (right) on Fort Klamath Loop Road and continue for 2.5 miles. The Cascade Civil War Society, a historical re-enactment group, will sponsor two events at the fort this summer, a “flag-raising ceremony” marking the summer season, June 2-3, and the Fourth Annual Civil War Days and Old-fashioned Country Fair, July 28-29.

Trim, whitewashed officers' quarters face onto the parade ground at the heart of old Fort Klamath, which at its height included a complex of forty buildings.



Olive Murray - A Promising Life Lost

by Bill Miller

Medford Marshal Sam Murray and his family posed for this portrait in 1899, little realizing the tragedy that lay ahead. That's Sam, Rube, and Martha in the back row; Anne, Olive, and Myrtle in the front.



SOHS #16714

GRITTING HER TEETH AND unwilling to scream, Olive Murray jumped from her bed. Running out the front door, she barely remembered to take her coat. Down the stairs and into an icy night the frightened seventeen-year-old pressed her hands against the pain in her abdomen. Nearly two feet of snow pulled on her legs as she made a staggering dash toward the railroad tracks. Exhausted and unable to go farther, she fell to the ground in a grove of trees. Bracing her back against a sturdy oak, she cried and waited for her baby to be born. The next morning, January 21, 1901, Olive's body was found with her arms embracing her lifeless newborn baby boy.¹

That is how the Murray family remembers Olive. They say she was seduced by a handsome young stranger from Portland, who quickly left town. For years after she died, family and friends gathered to lay flowers on the grave that Olive shared with her son. A century later we wonder how much of the story is true. Family stories, particularly when they involve the pregnancy of an unwed woman, are the most difficult to verify. Documented facts, if available at all, are seldom conclusive. These are the facts, as we know them.

A snowstorm began on January 1, 1901, and soon temperatures plummeted into the mid-teens. By the middle of the month, the Murray home in Medford was surrounded by nineteen inches of snow that had accumulated on the valley floor. Olive Murray's father, Samuel, had built his house on Central Avenue near Third Street in 1897, two years before he was elected as Medford's marshal. Less than two weeks before Olive died, Samuel lost his reelection campaign. Olive was the oldest of three girls still living at home; their older brother was already on his own. According to a newspaper report of her death, Olive had been dangerously ill for the previous nine months. While recovering from the

measles, she had contracted a severe cold, which lingered, until she finally succumbed to "an acute attack of inflammatory rheumatism." The newspaper never mentioned the birth or death of a baby.²

After Olive and her child were buried in the I.O.O.F. cemetery, Samuel Murray and his wife, Mary, placed a headstone on the grave hoping it would hide the family's unspoken shame. On the back of the stone they claimed the baby as their own, inscribing it simply, "Infant son of S.H. & M. Murray." In 1910 the Murrays continued to claim the child, telling the census taker that two of their five children had died.

For the most part, Olive Murray's poignant story seems to stand up to the facts. Whether it is true in every detail can never be proven. As with all human stories we will always have questions. Why did Olive run out into the snow? Did her parents know she was pregnant? Who was the Portland stranger? It is the mystery found in unanswered questions and our search for the answers that drive our curiosity. In the process, the past lives again and we realize that we share the same hopes, dreams, and tragedies of all the people who lived before us. They are not inanimate strangers, but humans just like us. ■

Olive Murray lies buried in Medford's I.O.O.F. cemetery with her unnamed infant son, claimed on the tombstone as a child of Olive's parents.

Bill Miller is a library assistant with the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

ENDNOTES

1. Southern Oregon Historical Society Library, "Murray" vertical file.
2. Emil Britt, Meteorological Record Book, S.O.H.S Manuscript 170; *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 10 January 1901; *Medford Mail*, 25 January 1901.

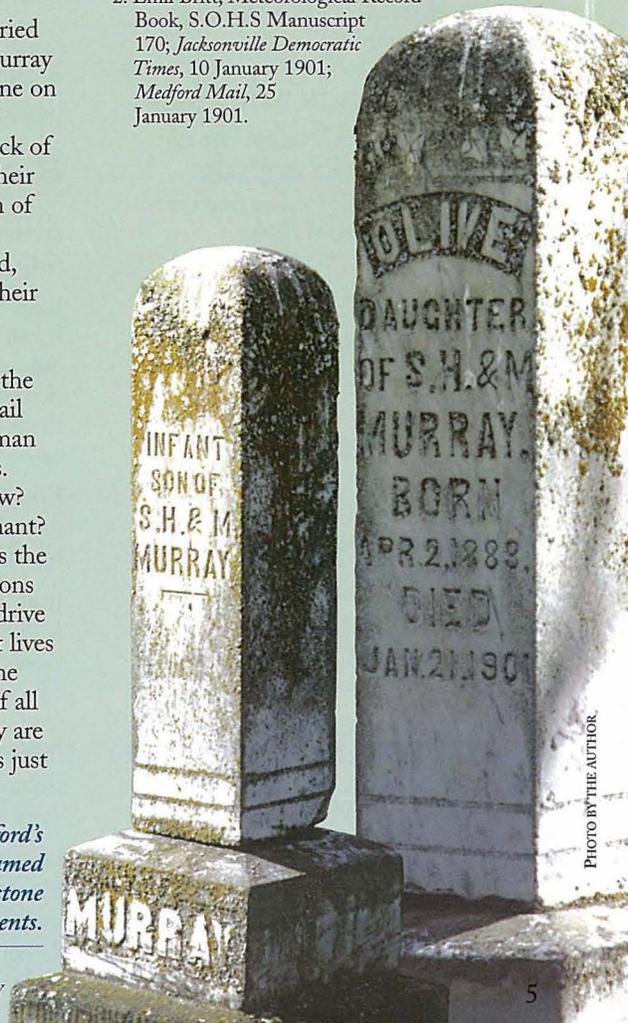


PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Things To Do in June

PROGRAMS : (see listings below for complete descriptions)

	<u>DATE & TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
June Craft of the Month	Museum hours	CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	Handkerchief Dolls; families; 50¢
Summer Sundays in the Park	2 - 3 p.m., June 3, 10, 17	LITHIA PARK BAND SHELL	History Through Music; free
Jr. Docent Training	Mon., June 11, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	Participate in variety of projects; free
Living History Program	Wed. - Sun., 1 - 5 p.m.	BEEKMAN HOUSE	Enter the year 1911; adults, \$3; ages 6-12 & seniors 65+, \$2; members free
Jacksonville-Hanley Farm Trolley	Fri., Sat., Sun., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.	3RD & CALIFORNIA STREETS	Guided tour; adults, \$4; ages 6-12, \$2; 5 & under free
Hanley Farm	Fri., Sat., Sun., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.	1053 HANLEY ROAD, Central Point	Activities, programs; adults, \$5; ages 6-12 & seniors 65+, \$3; ages 5 & under and members free

PROGRAM DETAILS

FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS, SEE SCHEDULE ABOVE.

JUNE CRAFT OF THE MONTH

Handkerchief Dolls, admission fee

Create an old-fashioned "quiet" toy to keep you occupied all summer.

SUMMER SUNDAYS IN THE PARK

Performances by the Marston Family

JUNE 3: SONGS OF WAR & PEACE

Honor those who fought for our freedom.

JUNE 10: LET FREEDOM SING

Chronicles the nation's struggles and joys from pilgrims to present day.

JUNE 17: WOODY GUTHRIE

A tribute to Woodrow Wilson "Woody" Guthrie (1912-1967).

JR. DOCENT TRAINING

(AGES 8-13)

Looking for something fun and exciting to do? Become a jr. docent and participate in a variety of projects at the Children's Museum and libraries throughout Jackson County. Bring a sack lunch and join the annual training session. Preregistration required by Friday, June 8. Call 773-6536 to register.

BEEKMAN HOUSE LIVING HISTORY

Step back in time to the year 1911 and enjoy a visit with costumed interpreters portraying Cornelius C. Beekman (Jacksonville's first banker) and his family members. Admission: \$3 for adults; \$2 children and seniors; ages five and under free; Society members, free.

JACKSONVILLE-HANLEY FARM TROLLEY RIDES

The trolley will tour hourly—11 a.m.-4 p.m.—between Jacksonville and Hanley Farm on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through September 30. Tickets: adults, \$4; children six-twelve, \$2; ages five and under, free. Purchase of trolley ticket at History Store provides \$1 off Hanley Farm admission.

HISTORIC HANLEY FARM EVENTS

Visit Hanley Farm by way of the trolley and receive \$1 off admission. All events are free with price of admission.

June 1, 2, 3—Native American lifeways; hands-on activities, basket making; Friday only at 2:00 p.m., "Archaeology of Southwestern Oregon," program presented by SOU Instructor Mark Tveskov—arrive early, limit of 20.

June 8, 9, 10—19th century farm life; wagon tours; demonstrations by Applegate Spinners, a blacksmith, and horse-drawn farm equipment.

June 15, 16, 17—Celebrate "June Is Dairy Month" by visiting 4-H Applegate Dairy Goats, a cheesemaking demonstration and talks with Mary Elizabeth or Granny Sue, pioneers who traveled the Oregon and Applegate trails. Friday only at 2:00 p.m., children three-six will enjoy stories about dairy animals and the farm.

June 22, 23, 24—Activities focus on early 20th century farm life through exploration of farm chores, gardening, and rug hooking demonstrations and hands-on activities.

Friday only at 2:00 p.m., slide show on "The Hanley Women".

June 29, 30, July 1—19th century farm life. Members of the Embroidery Guild will demonstrate their craft and visitors will be able to create a "penny square," a small square of cloth that comes preprinted with a pattern to embroider—for the price of a penny! Farm chores, gardening, and games will be part of the fun.

LAKE CREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS THIRD ANNUAL CIVIL WAR REENACTMENT JUNE 9 AND 10

Free to the public. Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information call Lake Creek Historical Society, 541-826-1513 or 826-8309. Directions: Hwy. 140 to 12-mile signpost; take right to Lake Creek.

McKEE BRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL CELEBRATION FATHER'S DAY, JUNE 17

Celebrations begin at 10 a.m. Enjoy horseshoes, bar-B-Q, cribbage tournament, games for the children, and a teen-age contest. For more information call 899-2222. Directions: 9 miles on Upper Applegate Road from Hwy. 238.

WATCH FOR START OF WEEKLY ADULT LECTURES AND STORYTELLING FOR YOUNGSTERS BEGINNING IN JULY AT HANLEY FARM.

EXHIBITS : *(see listings below for complete descriptions)*

	LOCATION	MUSEUM HOURS
"What's Cookin'?" Century of Photography: 1856-1956 The History of Southern Oregon from A to Z	HISTORY CENTER	Mon. - Fri., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Miner, Baker, Furniture Maker Politics of Culture: Collecting the Native American Experience Camp White Military Uniforms Pioneer Potters on the Rogue Hall of Justice	JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM	Wed. - Sat., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday, noon - 5 p.m.
Ongoing 'hands on history' exhibits	CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	Wed. - Sat., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday, noon - 5 p.m.
Weaving Demonstrations/Sales	3RD STREET ARTISANS' STUDIO	Sat., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

EXHIBIT DETAILS

FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS, SEE SCHEDULE ABOVE.

"WHAT'S COOKIN'?"

Two Centuries of American Foodways

People express many aspects of their culture through the foods they eat, as well as how they prepare and serve foods. Portions of "What's Cookin'?" explore such topics as the impact of immigration on food history, how technology has changed the availability of food, food preparation at home, the increase in dining out, and changing images of what constitutes healthy eating. This exhibit was produced by the Rogers Historical Museum, Rogers, Arkansas, and supported in part by a grant from the Historical Resources and Museums Services section of Arkansas State Parks in the Department of Parks and Tourism.

CENTURY OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 1856-1956

Highlights the work of two area photographers, Peter Britt and James Verne Shangle, with cameras from the Society's collection.

THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN OREGON FROM A TO Z

Do you know your ABC's of Southern Oregon history? Even local oldtimers might learn a thing or two from the History Center windows along Sixth and Central as each letter of the alphabet tells a different story about the people, places, and events that have shaped the region we live in.

MINER, BAKER, FURNITURE MAKER

Explores the development of the Rogue Valley and the impact the industrial revolution had on the settlement of Oregon.

POLITICS OF CULTURE: *Collecting the Native American Experience*

Cultural history of local tribes and discussion of contemporary collecting issues.

PIONEER POTTERS ON THE ROGUE

Examples of pottery made over four decades ago by the Hannah family.

HALL OF JUSTICE

History of the former Jackson County Courthouse.

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Everyone enjoys exploring the home and work settings from the 1850s to the 1930s through "hands-on-history."

THIRD STREET ARTISANS' STUDIO

Rogue Valley Handweavers, Far Out Fibers and the Saturday Handweavers Guild will present an exhibit of handwoven Linens for the Home at the Third St. Artisans' Studio in Jacksonville. Coverlets, table runners, breadcloths and handtowels will be some of the items displayed. There will also be members demonstrating the traditional art forms of spinning and weaving. The exhibit runs through June 30.

SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY SITES

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unless listed otherwise

FAX: (541) 776-7994
E-MAIL: info@sohs.org
WEBSITE: sohs.org

HISTORY CENTER
106 N. Central, Medford
Mon. - Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

RESEARCH LIBRARY
106 N. Central, Medford
Tues. - Fri., 1 to 5 p.m.

JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM & CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
5th and C, Jacksonville
Wed. - Sat., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sun., noon to 5 p.m.

HANLEY FARM
1053 Hanley Road
Fri., Sat., & Sun., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
(541) 773-2675

C.C. BEEKMAN HOUSE
California & Laurelwood, Jacksonville
Wed. - Sun., 1 to 5 p.m.

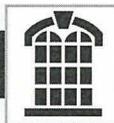
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3rd and California, Jacksonville
Wed. - Sun., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

THIRD STREET ARTISANS' STUDIO
3rd and California, Jacksonville
Sat., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

U.S. HOTEL
3rd and California, Jacksonville
Upstairs room available for rent.

CATHOLIC RECTORY
4th and C streets, Jacksonville



We invite YOU to become a member!

Join now! Our goal is 2,000 members by June 30, 2001.

Member support is more important than ever due to the 14.5% budget cut by the county this past June.

Your membership will support: preservation of Southern Oregon's rich heritage; Society exhibits and educational events; outreach to schools; workshops for adults and children; living history programs; and tours and demonstrations at historic Hanley Farm.

Members receive *Southern Oregon Heritage Today*, the Society's monthly magazine with newsletter, providing a view into the past and keeping you up-to-date on services provided by the Society.

For membership information, call Susan Smith at 773-6536.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Friend	\$20	Curator or Business	\$120-\$200
Family	\$30	Director	\$250-\$500
Patron	\$60-\$90	Lifetime	\$1,000

Forest Fire Lookouts: Glorious Past, Doubtful Future

by Nancy J. Bringham

“IN A FEW MINUTES I HAVE TO GO TO WORK” THE FIRE LOOKOUT ON Soda Mountain warned his guests. At exactly 4:00 p.m. they heard the call from the radio dispatcher: “Medford to all lookouts.”

“Well, I gotta go to work now. *Soda Mountain*,” he answered and then turning back to his visitors said, “Now, where were we?”

The truth is that Ken Struck had never stopped working; his eyes had never ceased to roam his district. Struck and his wife, Colleen, have been manning Soda Mountain southeast of Ashland for fourteen years and do not expect to quit in the near future.

What sort of people are these who are content with their own company, or with only their spouse, atop a mountain for three to five months, seeing no one else for weeks at a time? Many imagine life in the wilderness as idyllic—a perfect place for contemplation and reflection, a place to write a book; but faced with the stark reality of solitude, they soon call for a replacement.

Some doggedly stick it out. After spending a season as a lookout on Desolation Peak in what is now the North Cascades National Park, Jack Kerouac said, "Enough! Enough of rocks and trees and yallopings y-birds! I want to go where there's lamps and telephones and rumbled couches with women on them."¹

Others such as Nancy Hood, a fire watcher for forty-two years, love their time alone on a mountaintop. "I was born a hermit," she says, "and this is the perfect job for me."²

The solitude can even present a threat to relationships. According to Edward Abbey, who worked as a lookout for fifteen years: "Many a good marriage has been shattered on the rock of isolation."³

Dan Wessler and his wife, Jen, proved the opposite in their experience at Scar Mountain in the Santiam country of the Willamette National Forest. It was 1947; they were law students at the time and in need of summer jobs. "We weren't exactly psychologically tested," Jen says, "but they interviewed us to see if we could survive alone in a fourteen- by-fourteen cabin with only a telephone to headquarters and other lookouts.

"We assembled a 2 1/2-month supply of canned and dried fruits and vegetables, flour, a side of ham and bacon, vinegar to remove the mold, and other non-perishables for the Forest Service to take up on their pack mules. We were left to carry our personal gear, like books, fishing rods, and note paper. We climbed all day, switchback after switchback, and arrived late and so exhausted we hardly had the energy to lift the cabin's heavy wooden shutters. We raised the flag to announce our presence and fell into bed—a single bed with braided ropes for springs and a straw tick mattress. We had to turn in concert."⁴

The Wesslers got little sleep that first night or thereafter until they defeated the pack rats that came down from the attic and along the window sill beside the bed. "They sounded like someone pulling a chain back and forth above the ceiling," Dan said. "We cleaned out a mass of nests and lined the floor of the attic and window sill with chloride of lime. The scampering was intense for a while and then we had quiet. They'll have sore feet for generations."

Each morning, the Wesslers hiked a mile down to a spring for water and carried it back in a five-gallon tin strapped to a packboard. On wash day, they lugged a galvanized tub to the spring and built a fire to heat water for washing themselves and their

Dutchman Peak Lookout, facing page, clings to the top of the 7,418-foot mountain southwest of Ashland and just north of the California border. Built in 1927, it is the last of the D-6 cupola-style cabins still in active service. Above, the evening summer skies over the lookout bring change of a weather—with the risk of lightning—to Southern Oregon.

clothes. Besides watching for fires and doing general housekeeping, they were required to blaze overgrown trails, prepare wood for the following season, and when storms had taken down telephone

wires, Dan joined the trail crews to repair the lines and cut up downed timber. Meanwhile, Jen baked bread in an oven with a door on each side, and occasionally, when Jen pushed too hard, the bread fell out the back door.

Every three weeks, they hiked five miles down to a half shelter where a packer picked up and delivered their mail. "He'd leave us a few oranges," Jen says, "and once he left an aged, blue, iridescent beef roast. We almost didn't eat it, but it turned out to be the most delicious roast we've ever had."

On their single-wire telephone they cranked a combination of short and long rings to encourage a sad, homesick lookout on a neighboring mountain throughout the summer, but failed to convince another lookout couple to remain. The marmots became their companions, and a pair of eagles entertained them, until one disappeared and the cries of the one left behind haunted them.

Often the mountains echoed with thunder, and lightning streaked across the sky in fury. "During the night," Jen says, "we'd put a pencil mark on the Osborne firefinder every time there was a strike. By morning, the whole thing would be filled with marks." One

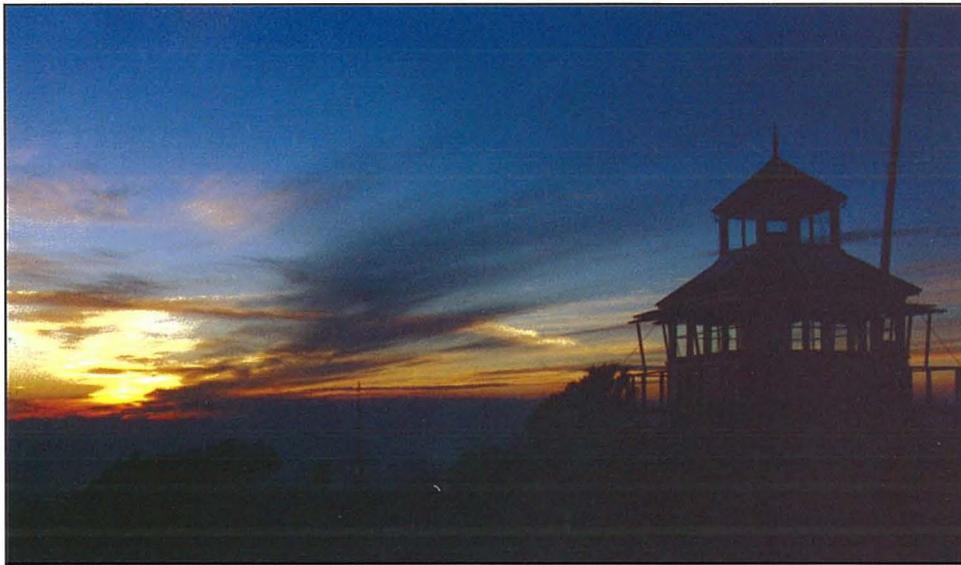
small stool with glass insulator cups was all that stood between them and a million volts of electricity. Dan remembers one night especially. "The storm was right over us. We couldn't both fit on that little stool, so we decided we'd rather go together. We just held hands and sat on the floor."

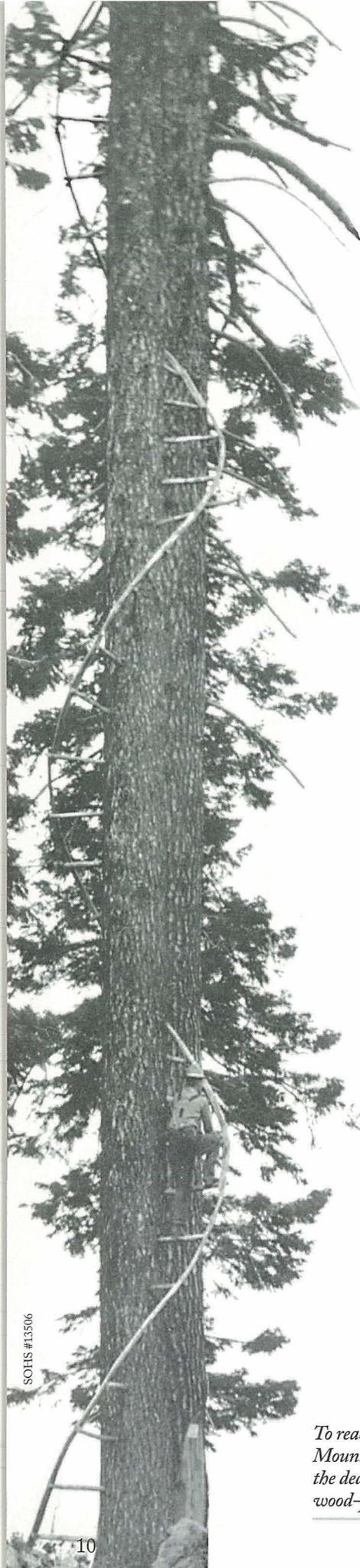
Two lost fishermen and one ranger were their only visitors that summer, yet when it was time to come

down, they begged to stay two more weeks to finish projects. Dan says, "They laughed and said they'd never had that request before, but we could stay. We hated to leave. Scar Mountain lies in fantasy land far above the clouds. It lies in a land where you look up to the northeast and there's Mount Jefferson. Early in the morning, all around are these islands of hills protruding through the fog. It is a mysterious, unspoiled land."

The Wesslers lived in a Hilton compared to the first lookouts' accommodations ... a one-man pup tent and a handy tree to climb. The onus was on the lookout to put out the fires he spotted, though with luck another vigilant smokechaser might come down from his "crow's nest" to help.

In 1924, the need to protect forest lands from wildfires spurred Congress to pass the Clarke-McNary Act, which established cooperation in forestry and fire control between the federal government and the states and private individuals.⁵ The Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and other state agencies designed and built many lookouts during the twenties. According to Ray Kresek, author of *Fire Lookouts of the Northwest*, in the 1930s, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) carpenters "were turned loose in the woods and before long fire towers with their little glass cubicles began sprouting out of the hillsides like toadstools. At the zenith of the lookout era, there were more than 8,000 across America."⁶





SOHS #13506

Oregon had 849;⁷ Idaho had the most with 989; Kansas is the only state that has never had a lookout.⁸

Lookouts varied from as small as six-by-six feet to fourteen-by-fourteen-foot cabins. Roof styles varied from gabled to hip to flat roofs, and some were “too steep for even a buzzard to roost.” In 1929, a fourteen-by-fourteen frame “cab” could be bought for \$500, bundled in kit form, hauled up the mountain by mule train, and assembled on site. Today, Kressek says, “there is the R-6 flat with window frames that offer the poorest ventilation and more blind spots than any observatory ever designed—at a cost to the government of \$28,000.”⁹

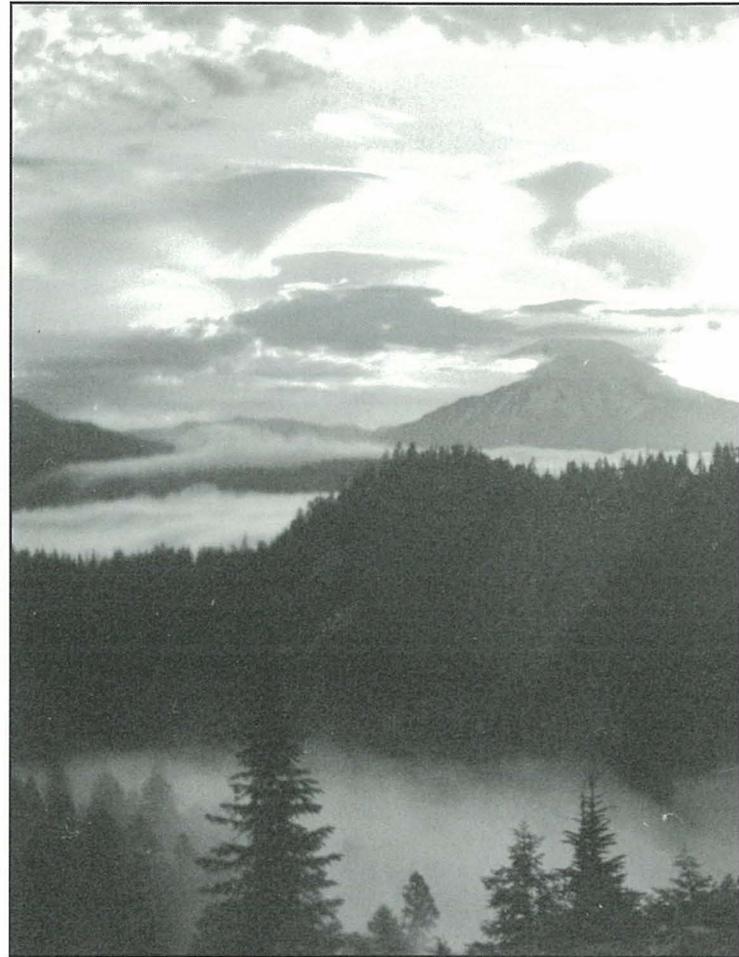
In the first half of the century, pack-laden mule trains teetered on precipitous, unstable trails winding their way up the mountain, and men hauled glass and lumber on their backs, sometimes as much as fifteen miles, through torrential rains and blistering heat to provide materials for lookouts. Indeed, fire suppression had come a long way from the days when fires were put out by a few cowboys and loggers and perhaps a stray visitor, who were handed axes and shovels and pointed in the right direction. There were no roads, radios, bulldozers, tank trucks, airplanes, or chainsaws to fight fires.

Visitors to Soda Mountain, thirteen miles southeast of Ashland, will find one of the last remaining 1933, CCC-built cabins. Well, not exactly. In 1962, it was remodeled and is now a ten-foot-wide, live-in tower.¹⁰ In 1946, when Thelma Sims reluctantly took the job as lookout on Soda Mountain, what she saw was only a six-foot enclosed cab. She says, “If anyone had said to me that day, ‘Cheer up, you will spend twenty-two years up here,’ I surely would have believed them insane.” But stay she did, and not until 1959 did she get the amenities the Strucks now enjoy. A relay station for KTVM was built next door, which meant electricity for a radio, television,

and, best of all, electric lights and a refrigerator.¹¹

The number of visitors to a lookout varies with the location. Because of the publicity surrounding the designation of the Soda Mountain National Monument, the Strucks had twice as many visitors during the summer of 2000 as in previous years. “We average two a day” Colleen says. Lookouts agree the most frequent question asked is, “Don’t you ever get lonely?” When one visitor asked if they had running water, Ken Struck said, “Of course, we do. I grab my five-gallon bucket of water and run with it.”

When a young woman asked about food



supplies, Ken showed her his sourdough starter. “She took a whiff,” he said, “decided it smelled like dirty socks, and whispered to her boyfriend, ‘We should have brought him a hamburger or something.’” When the wind is right in the evening, I set a pan in the window to catch the wild, elusive yeast spore. In the morning I add cream soda and we have delicious sourdough pancakes.”

In 1988, when Ray Kressek was manning Heavens Gate Lookout near Riggins, Idaho, he had a total of 1,600 visitors from forty-nine states and twenty-three nations. Obviously, better roads, four-wheel drive vehicles, and instant communication have made the solitude

To reach the viewing platform high in a tree at Brush Mountain Lookout on the Ashland Ranger District, the dedicated fire spotter in 1913 had to climb this wood-peg spiral ladder.

the Wesslers enjoyed almost impossible today.¹²

Some lookouts have been very jealous of their privacy. For twenty-five years, Carl DeMoy never left his post on Black Butte, north of Mount Vernon in the Malheur National Forest. All he wanted was to be left alone, but nothing could dissuade his uninvited visitors from coming up his eighty-two-foot-tall wooden tower. He sat on the trapdoor; they

Dan and Jen Wessler spent the summer of 1947 at Scar Mountain Lookout near the headwaters of the Santiam River east of Albany, where the peaks of the surrounding Cascades floated in a sea of fog, "a mysterious, unspoiled land."



shoved. He showered rocks on them; they dodged and ignored them. He finally poured a "yellowish liquid" on a prominent politician's determined wife. She reported this insult to the authorities and no more yellowish liquid was forthcoming.¹³

Nancy Hood admits that as much as she loves her privacy, she is happy to have someone to talk with occasionally. "Be prepared for a gabby lookout," she warns, "because we don't see anyone to talk with except the Forest Service for sometimes two to six weeks." To reach Hood's Lake Mountain Lookout, northeast of Happy Camp in the Klamath National Forest, one has to drive seventeen

miles on a rocky dirt road up to 6,903 feet. Arriving there without a flat tire is an accomplishment. This lookout, built in 1911-1912, is the oldest remaining manned lookout in California. Hood has seen many changes since she began her career in 1959. Today she has a solar shower, butane gas for cooking, solar power for radio and television, a cell phone, and 300 gallons of water delivered to her door once a month. Access by car allows her to go home two days a week to replenish food and drinking water.

Hood was hired just when hiring women was becoming more readily accepted. Actually, the first lookout in the nation was "manned" by

a woman named Mabel Gray in 1902. Twice a day, Gray left her kitchen job in a timber camp in Idaho and walked to the top of Bertha Hill to look for smoke.¹⁴

In 1912, Hallie Daggett daringly applied for a lookout position. The ranger who forwarded her application noted that she "was not afraid of anything that walks, creeps, or flies ... and is a perfect lady." She was hired for \$840 a year, and thus began a fifteen-year lookout career at Eddy Gulch Lookout in Siskiyou County, southwest of Etna near Sawyer's Bar.¹⁵

The first woman to "man" a lookout in Oregon was Shasta Hoover. It was the early 1920s, and for several summers she never left Bachelor Butte, the 9,065-foot high volcano west of Bend, except to get water a mile away.¹⁶

"I think women make the best lookouts," Hood says. "We can sit and do things with our hands. I read light books, play cards, do puzzles and embroidery—things that allow me to look up often and I can drop them quickly when I need to. I was going to college when I first started doing this, but I couldn't concentrate. Put me in a room with no windows and I'd still be looking up every few minutes."

Lookouts in the early forties had more to watch for than fires. With World War II

This classic early "crow's nest" lookout reached by tree-trunk ladder gave a panoramic view to the courageous fire spotter manning the Huckleberry Mountain Lookout near Union Creek, circa 1915.

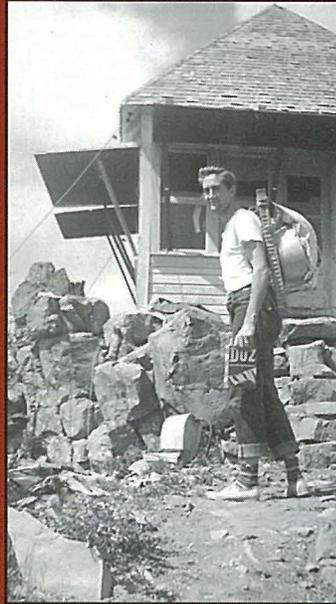


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Above, Dan Wessler raises Old Glory on the flagpole at Scar Mountain Lookout in the Willamette National Forest in the summer of 1947. At right, Wessler is loaded with a tub and laundry for wash day.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

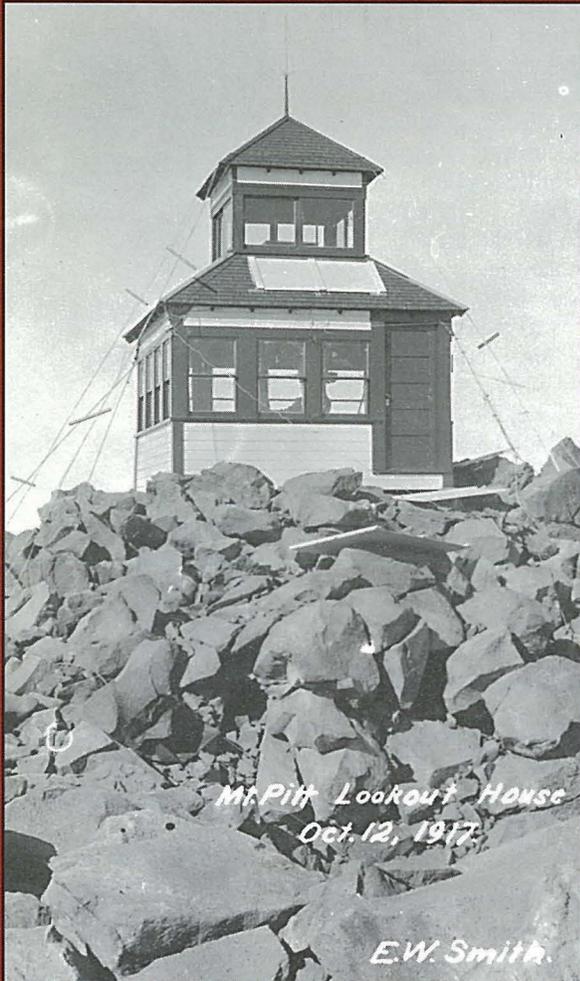


SOHS #13504



Devils Peak Lookout Station.

Above, a fire spotter sits with his Osborne Firefinder and single-wire telephone at the Devils Peak Lookout overlooking the Seven Lakes Basin in what is now Sky Lakes Wilderness, 1915.

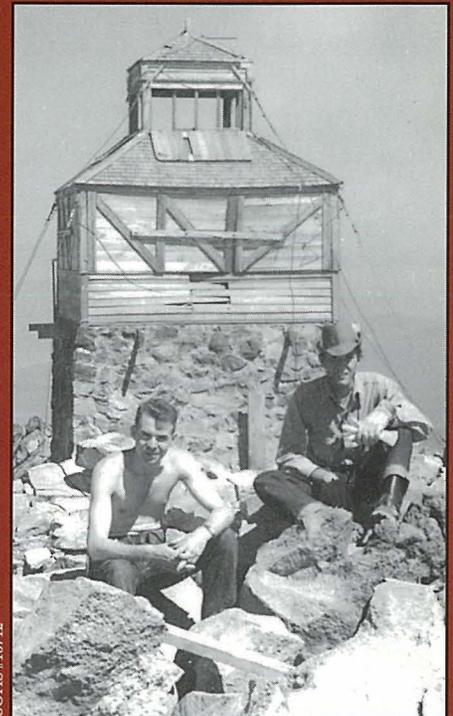


*Mt. Pitt Lookout House
Oct. 12, 1917.*

E.W. Smith.

At left, guy wires bolted to the rocks help keep this cupola-style lookout from being blown off the top of Mount McLoughlin, also called Mount Pitt Lookout, in this 1917 photograph. At right, another battered cupola-style lookout, possibly atop Mount McLoughlin, shows the terrific toll taken by wind and snow at high elevations.

SOHS #16712



SOHS #15333

enemies threatening our coasts, lookouts were required to watch for and find Japanese incendiary balloons and to keep a log of the type, course, and altitude of airplanes flying over their districts. In 1942, a ranger from Gold Beach and the Bear Wallow Lookout were dispatched to put out a fire. They discovered pieces of a metal casing from a bomb and fifty pounds of metal fragments, including a tail fin, that had been dropped from a Japanese airplane. For the next thirty years, dozens of deadly Japanese balloon bombs were found in the Northwest woods.¹⁷

Jim Doerter, a retired Southern Oregon University professor, and his wife, Martha, spent 1951 and 1952 as lookouts on Bedford Point on the Mount Hood National Forest near Estacada. From 1957 to 1959, they were lookouts on Flat Top Mountain in Washington's Gifford Pinchot National Forest near Trout Lake. Doerter found that planes and balloon bombs weren't the only odd objects flying around in our skies. It was 11:00 p.m., toward the end of the summer of 1959; Doerter was tightening bolts on their shutters. Looking toward Mount Hood, he saw an unusual light coming toward them. "It slid right past the tower," Doerter said. "It was about 300 feet across. Really frightening!" This was the second peculiar light the Doerters had witnessed. He began asking other lookouts about their experiences, and eventually amassed reports of more than eighty sightings. When Doerter shares his findings with groups and asks for additional stories, the reaction is always the same. "No hands are raised; no one has seen anything but, after every meeting, several people approach me, ask not to be identified, and then tell me about the UFOs they've seen."¹⁸

One veteran lookout's experience was so real that she is not the least reluctant to share her story. Mary Badley has been a lookout on six different sites beginning in 1979, and is still manning Dutchman Peak south of Ashland each summer. She has received many merit awards for her work as a lookout, though no special recognition for bravery the night she felt her tower vibrating. "It was bedtime," she says, "the sun was just setting. My cat sleeps on my bed every night, and she'd already settled in. Suddenly, I felt a strong vibration on the Lake O' Woods tower. I thought it must be the wind. Then I saw a cigar-shaped shadow from the roof. My cat looked at me with large eyes, darted off the bed and under the bench, where she refused to come out until morning. Then it was quiet. I scanned the horizon with binoculars and was suddenly blinded by a huge strobe light to the southwest, just level with the tower. Once my vision returned, I put the firefinder on the exact location. My heart was racing, but I wasn't about to go out on the catwalk to look around. I put my gun and camera under my pillow and climbed in bed. I was so scared I knew I couldn't sleep, yet the next thing I knew the sun was in my eyes, it was 7:00 a.m., and I felt like I was in a trance.

"I'm always awake by sunup, so this was unusual. But it was the dream I'd had that was the most disturbing: *I saw a flying object come toward me and then strange looking creatures entered the lookout and carried me off to their ship.* I jumped out of bed, turned on my radio, and the first thing I heard was that UFOs had been sighted from the Oregon coast to the Great Lakes region.

"I had further affirmation when I pinpointed the location of the strobe light to a friend. He drove to the spot and signaled with a mirror for agreement. He found a large area of grass scorched in a circle exactly where I'd seen the light."¹⁹

Badley had a more pleasant surprise in 1981. While she sat

perched on the railing of the catwalk at Dutchman Peak, voices behind her made her jump. Most people drove up to the lookout and she could see them coming, but these two men, one an avid alpine hiker from Switzerland, the other his cousin living in the Applegate, had left their car far below. The Swiss gentleman had already taken a picture of Badley. After his return to Europe, he sent her a copy along with an invitation to come to Switzerland. She accepted. At his insistence, she extended her visit, and for a year and a half lived and traveled throughout Europe. Eventually, she grew tired of living out of suitcases and longed to be back on the lookout. Sadly, by then, Badley had lost her position on Dutchman Peak to another woman. It took sixteen years before she got the chance to return to her favorite lookout. This lookout, built in 1927 and listed on the National Historic Register, is the only working survivor of the D-6 cupola cabin era. The D-6 cabin was the first U.S. Forest Service standard; its prototype was placed on Mount Hood in 1915. It is a twelve-by-twelve-foot frame house with windows all around, and a smaller, glassed-in second story for the observatory.²⁰

Another example of the D-6 cupola cabin may be found atop Hershberger Mountain, just west of the Rabbit Ears and north of Union Creek on the Rogue-Umpqua Divide. No longer an active post, Hershberger Lookout, built in 1924, is undergoing renovation, and is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Though the life of a lookout has become safer, more convenient, and more comfortable with the amenities that technology has brought, one thing has never been improved upon: William B. Osborne's 1934 firefinder, capable of pinpointing a fire's exact location on a map. According to Kresek, it is "a precision instrument of remarkable accuracy down to an azimuth of one-sixteenth of a degree."²¹ Moreover, it is fairly easy to operate. Unfortunately, many of these firefinders have been stolen through the years as abandoned lookouts became targets for vandals.

Where once there were 8,000 lookouts across the United States, now only a little more than 2,000 remain. Only 800 are in active service and almost every week another one comes down.²² Many fear that fire

lookouts will soon become an obsolete method of fire detection as air patrols and satellites take over. Everyone agrees that air patrols spot fires in topographical crannies that lookouts cannot see, but planes cannot be everywhere at once.

"People are more reliable than machines," says Hood. "They'd need a plane coming by here every half hour to see what I see. How many planes would they need crisscrossing each other to do this? And it's expensive. Their hourly pay is more than we make in a day. The satellite is costly, too, and they still need lookouts to confirm what it sees."

In the 1980s, lookout devotees like Kresek began a movement to rescue historic, fixed-station fire lookouts. The National Historic Lookout Register was formally organized in 1987, and three years later the Forest Fire Lookout Association was founded.²³ Thus, many individuals, organizations, and agencies are now involved in the restoration and preservation of these structures.

Snow Camp Lookout, in southwest Oregon's Coast Range, is an example of these efforts. It lay idle from 1972 to 1990, before it was renovated and reopened as a vacation rental. It was listed in the National Historic Lookout Register in 1991 as one of the few remaining lookouts in the Siskiyou National Forest. When David Calahan, a professional firefighter for twenty years, and his wife, artist Barbara Kostal, visited Snow Camp in 1993, they found a

Where once there were 8,000 lookouts across the United States, now a little more than 2,000 remain. Only 800 are in active service, and almost every week one comes down. Many fear that fire lookouts will soon become obsolete.



SOHS #16713

journal with personal accounts written by previous renters. "It was like a good novel, difficult to put down ... giving a real glimpse into people's lives," says Calahan in his book, *Snow Camp Lookout*.²⁴ They returned, each time racing to read the latest entries. Knowing others would enjoy accounts of lookout vacations offering a thirty dollar-a-night room that has "no wake-up calls, loud neighbors, bad art, ice machine, maid service or tipping," they decided to publish these entries.²⁵

A good source for information on the dozens of lookouts now available for rental is Tom Foley and Tish Steinfeld's book *How to Rent a Lookout in the Northwest* (Berkeley, Calif: Wilderness Press, 1996).

For lookout enthusiasts who would like to see a large assemblage of early fire detection equipment and completely restored and furnished lookout towers, pay a visit to the Fire Lookout Museum seven miles north of Spokane, Washington. Perhaps in the midst of such relics you will vicariously enjoy the life Kressek did as a lookout. "It was a great life," he says. "You woke up in the morning to the finest views of all. You breathed the freshest air in the world. You ate and did the chores when the spirit moved you. You had a whole mountain to call your own. And the government even paid you to be there."²⁶ ♣

Nancy Bringhurst writes lyrics, poetry, and children's books from her mountain home near Ashland.

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2. Nancy Hood, oral interviews August and September 2000.
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At left, lacking a site with an open rocky knob or outcrop, the Forest Service built lookouts atop a heavy frame to give the fire spotter a vantage point above the forest canopy. No longer standing, Blue Rock Lookout, located east of Butte Falls, was built in 1939.

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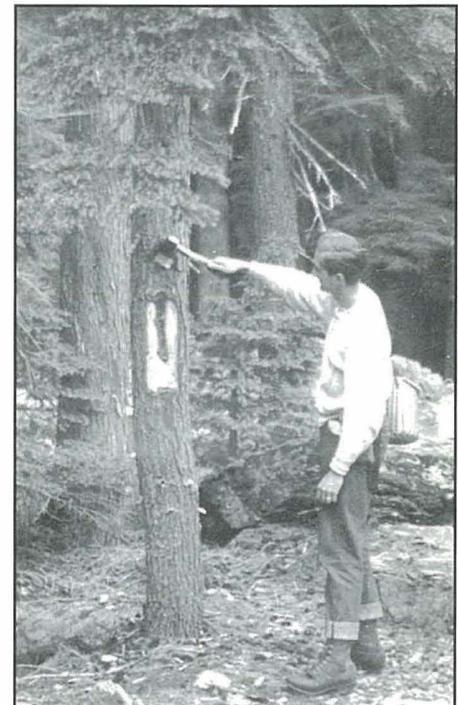


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Above, Dan Wessler blazes a trail to a nearby lake, part of his duties at Scar Mountain in 1947. Below, Jen Wessler uses a bucket to catch rainwater during a Scar Mountain storm.

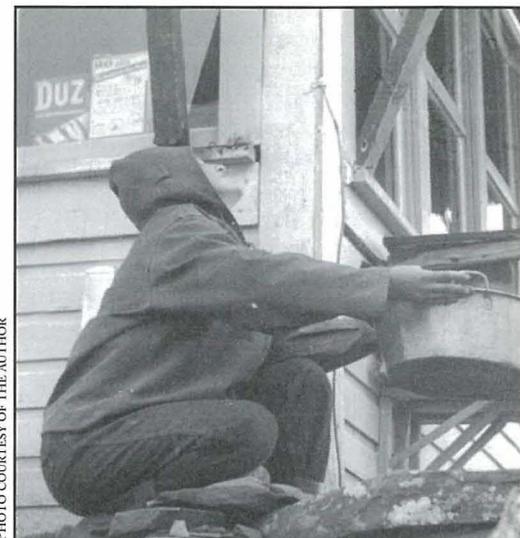


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(continued on page 2)

Saving Great-grandma's Quilt

By Janette C. Merriman

ANN HASELTINE HILL RUSSELL carefully cut up and saved pieces of silk and velvet from worn-out dresses, suits, and coat linings for a quilt she someday hoped to make. When she got word that a special guest was coming to Ashland for a visit from England, Ann, whose pioneer parents Elizabeth and Isaac Hill had settled in the Rogue Valley in 1853, decided it was time to finish her quilt. After she sewed the fabrics together, she used bright embroidery thread to outline the fabric shapes and embellish the quilt with silk and metallic leaf patterns. Finally, she embroidered the date 1892 in one corner. The quilt was put away and rarely used after the visit from the English guest.¹ One day, the great-grandson of the maker decided it was time to donate the quilt (shown here) to the Southern Oregon Historical Society for safekeeping.

WHAT ABOUT THE QUILT YOU own? Perhaps this story jogs your memory about the quilt that grandma made and you put away in the spare bedroom closet. You would like to take it out and look at it or show it to the kids during the holidays. But getting the quilt out seems like too much work, and you are worried about what you might find and what to do if there is a problem. Here are a few steps that will get you started in preserving your quilt.

STEP 1 Do you know who made the quilt and when? Is the history written down somewhere? Did you get any family history or photographs with the quilt? Do you need to contact family members and do further research, interview the maker and take her photograph? A safe deposit box would be an ideal location to keep the written information, separate from the quilt. Take a good photograph of the quilt to keep with the documents to clearly identify it, especially if you have more than one quilt.

STEP 2 Lay the entire quilt out on a bed and study it for condition of the fabrics. How do they feel and what are the colors? You want to do a good visual check

or record the information so that whenever you get the quilt out you will recognize changes that could signal deterioration or damage. Consult with a professional conservator if a problem appears.

STEP 3 The quilt may have a musty smell and it may also seem yellowed, so you would like to just toss it in the washer and make it all better. Resist the temptation: Do not clean the quilt if you can't risk losing it. Hand washing, machine washing or even dry cleaning could destroy the fragile fabrics. Remove surface dirt by placing a fiberglass window screen that has been edged with a cotton binding on the quilt. With a low-suction vacuum go over the quilt in a back and forth motion, 1/8 inch above the screening with the nozzle. The screen will prevent loose fabric from being sucked into the vacuum and allow dirt to pull through.

STEP 4 Oh it is beautiful! You are so happy you took the time to look it over. You hate the thought of storing it away again, but be cautious about how you display the quilt. Keep it away from direct sunlight, fluorescent lights, food, and pets. One display method might be to gently fold the quilt, cushioning each fold and draping

it over a rack covered with a piece of acid-free tissue. Another would be to display the quilt on an unused bed for a few months.

STEP 5 After display, remember to vacuum the quilt for surface dust as above. Fold the quilt with a white cotton or unbleached muslin sheet or with acid-free tissue, cushioning the folds and protecting the quilt from acidic storage locations such as wood shelves, trunks, or cardboard boxes. Place the quilt in an environment that is protected from extremes of temperature and humidity, not in the basement, attic, or garage.

STEP 6 Get that quilt out again in a year and check over the condition.

Keep in mind these are general guidelines for the preservation of a quilt in sound condition. No two quilts are alike in pattern, fabric, or care. Use good judgment in caring for your quilt. 🏠

Janette C. Merriman is the owner of JCM Museum Services, dedicated to the preservation of historical heirlooms.

ENDNOTE

1. Accession record, Southern Oregon Historical Society, 992.63.1.

ACC #992.63.1 DETAILS



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