

History of the Hippies of Takilma

By
Kindi Fahrnkopf
IVN Contributing Writer

Part 6-The Old Cook Ranch

Doug and Alyce K. of Doo-Dah, spoke of how they came to Takilma. “My brother John and his wife Della had just moved here, a few months prior, with a group of their friends from Santa Barbara, and so we came up just to visit them, recalled Alyce, “It was a time in our lives when we were looking for what was next.” “And awhile became 40 years,” chuckled Doug with a twinkle in his eyes. Alyce added, “The group from Santa Barbara had planned and talked about the Back to the Earth movement, but no, that really wasn’t our motivation at the time. But, when we got here, yeah, then it definitely fit all of our beliefs and what we wanted to do at that point. It just kind of evolved that way.”

Doug had graduated with a Master’s Degree from the Rhode Island School of Design, and Alyce was teaching. As Doug recalled, “Lou and Delia found this 40 acres and we just happened in on our grand tour. We rented the Cook ranch house and lived in that for the first year, until we got our house built.” Meanwhile they and their land partners were building a geodesic Dome on Doo-Dah. This Dome, was built from plans found in the Dome Book II, published by Whole Earth Catalog. It was a hippie dream which took many hands to build.

When more money was needed Doug worked on the Green Side Up crew and Alyce along with Della, Suedah, Shelley and Janie R. were among the first women hired on to work planting trees. These women actually had a lawyer from the ACLU on the line to defend their rights in case they weren’t hired on to the crew. They were hired and given the most challenging jobs, to test their resolve.

When that dried up, Alyce, who said, “I had experienced that I could find work teaching in most places,” took a job as a substitute teacher at Evergreen Elementary.” Doug, never comfortable with the label, “hippie”,

preferred that people use the term “long hair” instead, as he worked to integrate with the larger community. Doug reflected, “You need to wear several hats to survive. Having the Master’s Degree, I was able to find a job teaching part-time at Rogue Community College in 1973. I also did a fair amount of wood crafts early on. In 1978, I finally started my house design drafting business and have been doing plans ever since.”

The first residents of Doo-Dah, had purchased the land as four consecutive parcels of the old Cook Ranch. As Doug recalled, “Bill F. was a local lawyer who bought the 200 acre Cook Ranch, sub-divided it into small parcels and really made a killing in the process.” Doug added, “He often asked me to help him show the lots in exchange for a break on the rent for the Cook ranch house.” Later Bill and Cathy D. purchased that house and others from Santa Barbara came up and bought neighboring parcels. Doug’s brother Dave was able to buy some of those lots too.

The next spring the families of the Doo-Dah commune, were building their own “bedroom” cabins on nearby hillsides, while still cooking meals in the Dome and living communally. Those were years of bonding and closeness between the four young families that shared the land and gardened and worked together. Said Alyce, “For all the years that I taught; I went to work and Doug was the house husband.” She added, “There was a whole lot of male/female equity in the building of the Doo-Dah Dome. Things were open to anyone who wanted to try it. The women also felt, that being liberated meant, hey if he’s really good at it, and he’s better trained at it, then let him do it!”

Doug’s young family grew with the birth of two daughters and Alyce, along with Helen, Judith Ann and Jake M. were instrumental in starting the fledgling school in the Dome. Some friends came to help. Donalee said, “Pook and I went up there and told them, ‘Well you have enough kids up here already, so just start a school in the Dome.’ So we brought our kids up there every day and we

all taught them together. That was the birth of the Dome School in 1975.”

The need for education and health care were needs that were shared by many of the women with young babies growing up. And there were a lot of babies being born. The growth of the fledgling Takilma People’s Clinic; was “started by a need to help people have their kids.”, as Doug recalled, “Necessity was the mother of invention.” As Alyce recalled, “A lot of the people that came in the 70’s were educated in several skills, they were really do-ers and they had directions and desires. Three of the original teachers at the Dome School were certified teachers, and wanted to be of service.” To sum it all up, Doug concluded, “It was really unique here, and organizing gave us clout. From the beginning we formed unusual alliances with the people around here.”

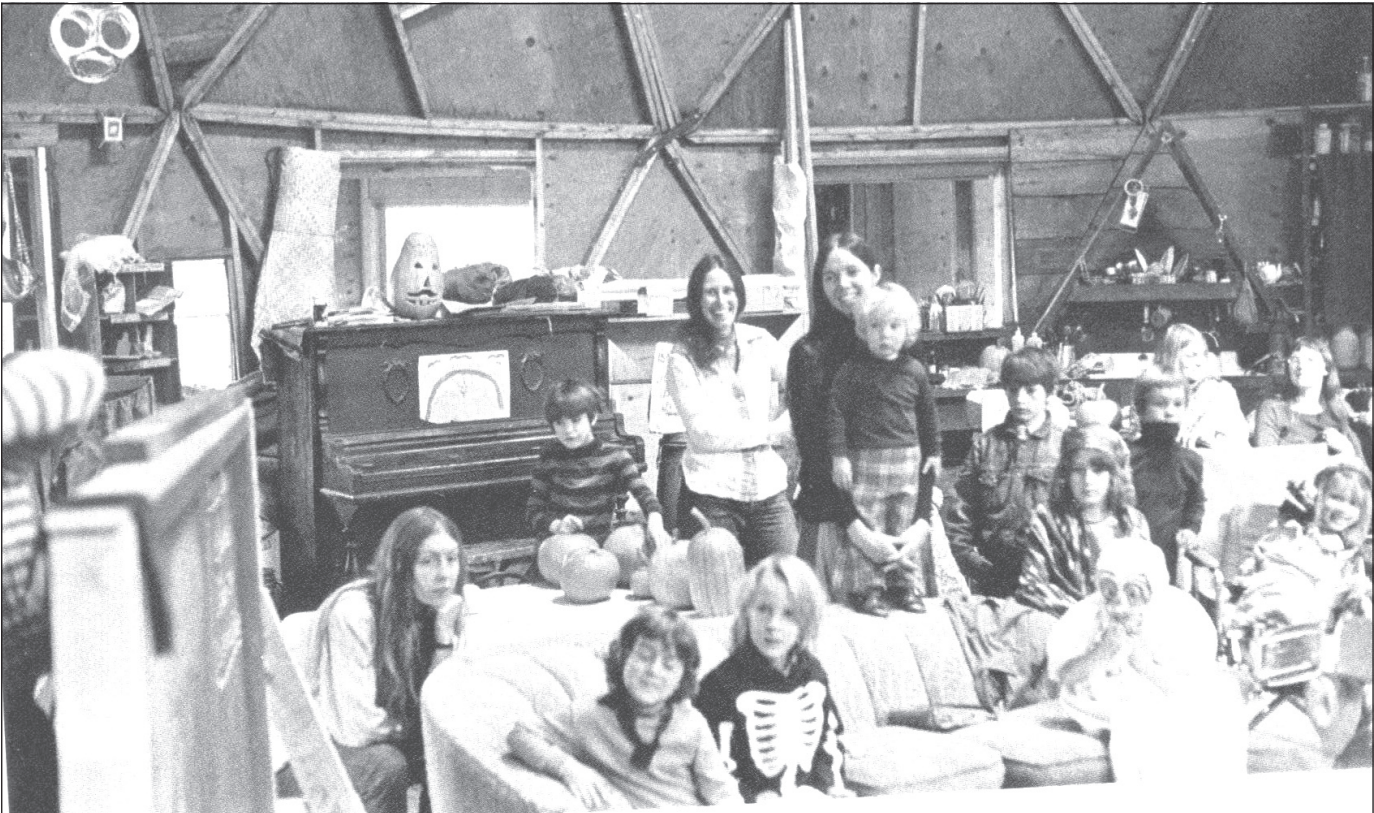
Rachel heard about Takilma from where she was staying on the Oregon coast. “We were really looking for our own space among other people. We heard this was a very interesting area, and we also heard that in Grants Pass the hippies and the cowboys were shooting each other. So we said, oh well, we’re going to the coast; at least we’ll be safe there!” She had a young son, Bear, and wanted

the best possible education for him. After visiting she realized how much Takilma offered; “Having neighbors, and the county road, having the Wonder Dome for supplies, and having the Takilma Clinic,” were the reasons she listed for her decision to stay. The new little Dome School allowed her to be closely involved in her son’s education and as a result she found many kindred souls. She also found a lot for sale, from the old Cook Ranch and bought it for a quite reasonable fee. She had found a bit of paradise by the river, where she could walk to the Dome School. As Rachel remembers the way she got by in the early days, “Learning more about gardening and focusing so we could produce food and getting trained for a career that I could get income out of. We were all thinking about self-sufficiency. We have always cared passionately about our children. A lot of us, as our children entered the school system felt that the culture just demands that they have nice shoes and stuff. Somewhere along the line I developed an interest in massage therapy and started classes at Rogue Community College.” Rachel, now the owner of her own massage business thinks that “Takilma offers just a vibrant, interesting community that’s in the mix that’s the Illinois

Valley.”

People were starting to trickle in from around the country, attracted by friends and acquaintances who recommended the sleepy little forested village of eccentric, young people. Rachel wondered what percentage of people in Takilma, were really college-educated. She recalled, “There was a big mix. Kids were coming up from LA, and dropping out of high school.” Rachel remembers how things were back then, she summarized her feelings with, “There was just a lot of wanting to let go of everything, and then you have to pick up the pieces and find out what really matters. People of similar backgrounds fell together. I remember visiting the Meadows when Bear was little and they were all carrying water and sawing wood with bow-saws.”

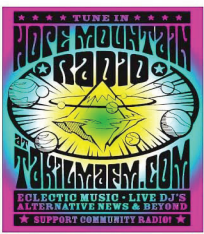
Author Kindi Fahrnkopf is a poet and flower child of the 60s who has lived in Takilma for 32 years. She moved to Cave Junction in 1979 with her husband and two little children to open the Caves Cobbler shoe repair shop.



Alyce and others at the original Doo-Dah Dome School, Halloween 1980, Photo courtesy of *Magic Forest Farm and Friends*, by Jim Shames.

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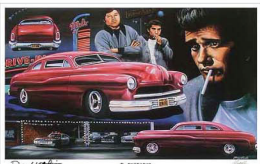
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