

DID YOU KNOW?

Historical notes from Big Butte Historical Society
Abstracted by Charleen Brown

Even though ground breaking for the railroad had taken place on April 4, 1907, it took 6 ½ years for the construction to be completed. The first train arrived in Butte Falls on November 15, 1910 but it wasn't until April 4, 1911 that the first excursion train arrived and the age of passenger and freight service began.

Expecting Butte Falls to become a resort town, local businesses flourished. Two luxury hotels were built and according to oral history interviews with Bill and Zelda Edmondson, recorded by Anne Chambers in 1989, these hotels were located on Oak Avenue. One occupied the Edmondson property and the other was directly across the street. Later, both hotels burned down under somewhat suspicious circumstances.

Butte Falls was advertised in valley newspapers as a week-end retreat for tourists. Visitors from the valley brought picnic lunches and played ball games while enjoying the cooler mountain air. A bandstand was built in the park and bands came up from Medford to provide musical concerts. The population of Butte Falls doubled when the excursion trains arrived.

After the first phone was established in Wheeler and Claspill's store, it wasn't long before the Jackson County phone directory listed twenty business phones and gave the following description of Butte Falls... "a village on Big Butte River and the P & E RR terminus, 30 miles northeast of Medford. Daily stage to Eagle Point. Mail daily." The Medford to Butte Falls train schedule is shown below.

Road Down			MEDFORD—BUTTE FALLS				Road Up		
1	3	1	Miles	PACIFIC AND EASTERN RAILROAD	2	3	4		
Mon. Wed. Fri.	Mon. Wed. Fri.	Tue. Thur. Sat.			Tue. Thur. Sat.	Mon. Wed. Fri.	Mon. Wed. Fri.		
.....	.....	12 45	0.0	Lv.....Butte Falls.....Ar	11 15	.....	.....
.....	.....	1 30	9.2	.....Derby.....	10 30	.....	.....
.....	.....	2 05	16.8	.....School House Gap.....	9 55	.....	.....
5 00	10 30	2 25	20.0	.....Eagle Point.....	9 45	9 45	4 55	
5 12	10 42	2 40	23.2	.....Table Rock.....	9 29	9 29	4 40	
5 17	10 47	2 45	24.7	.....Agate.....	9 24	9 24	4 35	
6 40	11 15	3 15	31.7	Ar.....Medford.....Lv	9 00	9 00	4 10		

Starting at the bottom of column #2 and reading up, one will note that the train left Medford at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Continuing to read up the column, the train went through Agate, Table Rock, Eagle Point, School House Gap, Derby and finally arrived in Butte Falls at 11:15 a.m. Then, reading down column #1, the trip is reversed with the train leaving Butte Falls at 12:45 p.m. and arriving in Medford at 3:15 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP FORM - \$5.00 per household

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Send to: **BIG BUTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
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