

BOHEMIA



NUGGET

Devoted to the Mining, Lumbering, and Farming Interests of this Community, to Good Government, and Hustling for a Grub Stake

By Wing,



By Wheel,

A special publication of the
Cottage Grove Sentinel

By Engine of Steel



A salute to transportation at the 56th annual Bohemia Mining Days!

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"By Wing, By Wheel, By Engine of Steel" is the theme of the 56th Annual Bohemia Mining Days festival, which highlights the key role various modes of transportation had in the evolution of our community. Cottage Grove began as a tiny 1850s-era village along the banks of the Willamette's Coast Fork, where Kalapuya natives and later the Donation Land Claim families enjoyed the bounty and beauty of the Southern Willamette Valley. Located at the headwaters of Oregon's Willamette River and nestled between two of its uppermost tributaries: the Coast Fork and the Row River, Cottage Grove was in the center of a fertile valley that supported a wide variety of cultivated crops by the time it was incorporated as a city in 1887. For centuries prior to white settlement

and unconstrained by the dams of today, these rivers meandered through the wide floodplain, depositing fresh silt every spring as the snow melted in the Cascades. Large runs of Spring Chinook returning to spawn and die added vital minerals to the farmland and forests downstream. Combined with Oregon's legendary rainfall during the winter months, locals grew bumper crops surrounded by acres upon acres of old-growth timber yet they had one major problem... MUD!

From Indian trails to wagon roads

The first "roads" in South Lane County were narrow trails made by deer, the Kalapuyas and later fur trappers who traded at nearby Fort Umpqua. Whenever possible the early trails went between the foothills, avoided swampy

ground and crossed natural fords in the rivers. Portions of the trails had unavoidably steep grades that made traveling a challenge even on good days. The early settlers found much of the Willamette watershed nearly impossible to traverse during the rainy season. Wagons often bogged down to the axles in the goopy clay mud. Enterprising Cottage Grovers put the large stands of old growth Douglas fir that surrounded them to good use and laid large planks on local roads to make winter travel easier and thus earned the nickname "Slab Town." By 1860, the California and Oregon Stage Line offered the finest service of the day between Portland and Sacramento. A trip between the two stations required six or seven days. A ticket guaranteed your arrival but did not specify when. To the west, the Cartwright Road

connected the Silk Creek Valley with the Lorane Valley and the Applegate Trail. The first road east from Cottage Grove followed the Row River up into the Bohemia Mining District. Along the road boarding houses and saloons sprang up to meet the needs of travelers and miners.

Trains, planes and automobiles

The arrival of the train in 1872 transformed Cottage Grove into a bustling gold mining and lumber town in the late 19th century and early 20th century. It also created a bitter rivalry between Lematians on the east bank of the Coast Fork and Slabtowners on the west. The Feud lasted for decades until 1900, when Lemati dissolved and

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