

Blue Mountain Eagle

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LONGTIME RANCHES RECOGNIZED LEMONS AWARDED FOR SESQUICENTENNIAL RANCH

‘Our ranch is the oldest in Grant County’

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Kim Lemons and his wife, Carla, received a Sesquicentennial Award as owners of Ingle Butte Ranches in Mt. Vernon. The award was presented by the Oregon Century Farm & Ranch Program.

“Our ranch is the oldest in Grant County,” Kim said. “We’re pretty tickled about the award.”

The Lemons’ ranch was originally founded by Kim’s great-great-grandfather William Dana “W.D.” Ingle.

Ingle’s daughter, Laura (Ingle) Lemons, and her husband, John Wesley Lemons, took ownership of the property. John Wesley arrived in



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Kim Lemons, left, and his wife, Carla, stand together, Sept. 12 in front of a barn that was built in 1900 or earlier on their Ingle Butte Ranches property in Mt. Vernon, which received a Sesquicentennial Ranch award from the Oregon Century Farm & Ranch Program.

Oregon in 1857, traveling by wagon train.

The ranch was passed down to their son Brice

Lemons and his wife, Inez, then to Dennis Lemons and his wife, Margaret, Kim’s parents.



Contributed photo

Brice Lemons sits at a cabin he built in the Murderers Creek area. Brice Lemons was grandfather to Kim Lemons, Susan Wilson and Sandra Johnson.

After Dennis Lemons opened a hardware store around 1973, he handed the ranch operation over to his son, Kim.

Kim said he and his wife, Carla, were both age 19 and newly married when they

took on the responsibility of the ranch.

As in the early days, they grow hay and have a cow and calf operation, raising Charolais, Angus and Hereford cross cattle.

Certain improvements

over the years have made many tasks easier.

“Dad used to talk about harnessing horses at 4 or 5 in the morning, feeding the horses before breakfast, then coming back out and feeding cattle,” Kim said, adding, “Now it’s as easy as starting up the pickup.”

Having four or five men irrigate sections of the ranch has been replaced with pivots.

“It makes life a heck of a lot easier than it used to be,” Kim said.

But cattle don’t wait to be fed, and there are still duties such as pulling calves in the middle of the night in bitter cold weather.

“You have a job 365 days of the year,” Carla said.

Kim recalled the ‘70s were especially rough years.

“My dad and I started

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EDIGERS RECEIVE CENTURY RANCH AWARD

While picking up marriage license on first day here, ancestor witnessed shooting on Main Street

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Roger and Meredith Ediger received an Oregon Century Farm & Ranch Award, presented by the Oregon Farm Bureau, at the Aug. 24 State Fair in Salem.

The Edigers said they feel a great responsibility to care for their land, the Box T Ranch, which has been in the family since 1915.

“You’re entrusted with whatever piece of ground you have to leave it in better shape than when you acquired it,” Roger said.

His grandparents John and Margaret Masson, originally from Scotland, bought the piece of land where the house still stands today at the mouth of McClellan Creek, 3 miles west of Mt. Vernon, and acquired more land as it became available.

“It had kind of a shaky start,” Roger said. “They had 3,000 sheep in the late teens to early ‘20s when the wool market collapsed.”

John Masson was friends with James Cant, both from “the old country.” Cant was a well-known sheep rancher at the famed “Cant Ranch,” which is located in what is now called the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument south of Kimberly.

John, from a hamlet called Glen Fernes, came to America in 1900 and was in Dayville for the Fourth of July celebration.

In 1911, he sent for his longtime sweetheart, Margaret, who was from Ardchlok-Nairn, Scotland.

She arrived in the U.S. with her brother William, as it was considered improper for a young lady to travel unescorted.



Eagle file photo

Roger Ediger’s cows are shown on his Eastern Oregon ranch.

Roger’s grandfather took his horse and wagon from Dayville through John Day to Prairie City, where he left the horses at the livery and rode the Sumpter Valley train to Baker City to pick up Margaret and William.

They drove straightaway to the courthouse in Canyon City to pick up a marriage license.

That day, George Anderson and George Barns were

feuding in Main Street of Canyon City when Anderson, who was said to have felt bullied by Barns, shot Barns dead in the road.

“What a welcome to Grant County, Eastern Oregon rural America!” Roger said.

The betrothed were married at a ceremony held at the home of Tom Masson,

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The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Roger and Meredith Ediger show their Oregon Century Farm & Ranch Program Award for their Box T Ranch in Mt. Vernon, founded in 1915 by Roger Ediger’s grandparents John and Margaret Masson.

Summer hot spot promised ‘cool’ respite

Joaquin Miller Resort featured swimming, picnics, dances, rodeos

By Cheryl Hoefler
For the Blue Mountain Eagle

Who says Grant County closes down at sunset?

In its heyday at the Joaquin Miller Resort, the fun was barely getting started at that hour.

From the 1930s-1950s, the recreational site 10 miles south of John Day was a popular summer playground for both locals and visitors of all ages.

The resort offered regular, daily activities such as hot springs swimming, horseback riding, camping and picnicking. Over the years, special events — usually during the Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day holidays — included rodeos, acrobats, ballgames, log sawing and swimming competitions, foot races, boxing matches, at least one carnival and dances — lots of dances.

The most common special event held at the resort were dances. Traditionally, the season was heralded in spring with an “opening dance,” and concluded with a “hunters ball” in autumn.



Contributed photo/Grant County Historical Museum

Canyon Creek Lodge, also known as the Joaquin Miller Resort, circa 1930s.

These were not light evening affairs for the early-to-bed crowd either. Hoofers at the Joaquin Miller Resort truly danced the night away — long before Van Halen’s time — until the wee morning hours, with supper served at midnight.

Over the years, music was provided by a rotation

of singers and musicians including The Modernaires, the Melodians, Jimmy Whetmore, Scotty and the Kids and orchestras led by Dick Reed, Bob Wright, Ron Southworth and Hap Hougan. When they weren’t headlining at the resort, most kept busy all year long, providing weekly danc-

ing entertainment in legion halls and community centers throughout the county.

On occasion, resort partygoers were treated to nationally billed stars. In September 1951, country-western singer Hank Thompson and his group The Brazo Valley Boys entertained the packed house.

Throughout the summer, most issues of the Blue Mountain Eagle boasted ads inviting visitors to the resort. One ad in the June 28, 1940, Eagle issue lured the hot-weather-weary masses to “picnic in the cool of the pines” during the upcoming Fourth of July holiday, while taking in “two big days” of dances, rodeos and swimming contests. Another in 1935 promised attendees the chance to “mingle with dancers from five counties.” These and similar events offered a vital social venue in a time before telephones and smoother roads shortened the miles in our rural areas.

In July 2012, the late Carolyn Trujillo, Monument senior columnist for the Eagle, reminisced about childhood trips to the resort. During her first visit at age 3, Trujillo was unsuccessful in convincing her mother to let her go swimming in her clothes. Upon her next trip with friends at age 12, her swimming attempts were again thwarted when none of her pals remembered to bring suits along. She was finally appeased when her

father suggested renting a couple of horses instead. “I liked horses better than I did swimming,” Trujillo said.

According to Trujillo, the long trip home was alleviated by a stop in Mt. Vernon for soft drinks and bubblegum, “the first we’d seen since the war was over.”

“Smokers,” or exhibition boxing matches, were popular at the resort in the 1930s, with main event cards drawing fighters from Seattle and Portland. Locals also competed. Those at the 1938 Fourth of July smoker included Dave Tripp of Bates, Dick Wade of Long Creek, Wiley Howell, “the fightin’ kid from Prairie City,” George Osborne of John Day, Ken Asherman of Canyon City and Clanena Gardner of Seneca.

During Labor Day that same year, Rogantino’s Carnival was on the bill, in addition to a rodeo and barbecue — and another smoker.

The resort provided community services from time to time. Benefit dances were held over the years for a variety of causes: school

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