

Microwave Relay Station Progresses On Baldy Mount

It's more than several bumps and a bounce to the top of Mount Baldy, some 11 miles southeast of Medford, where one of nine new Pacific Telephone Company microwave relay stations in Oregon is under construction.

But that's the daily diet for a half dozen local employees of Malarkey and Moore construction company, who jounce in jeep or truck to their work up steep gravelled grades of a private access road to "Old Baldy."

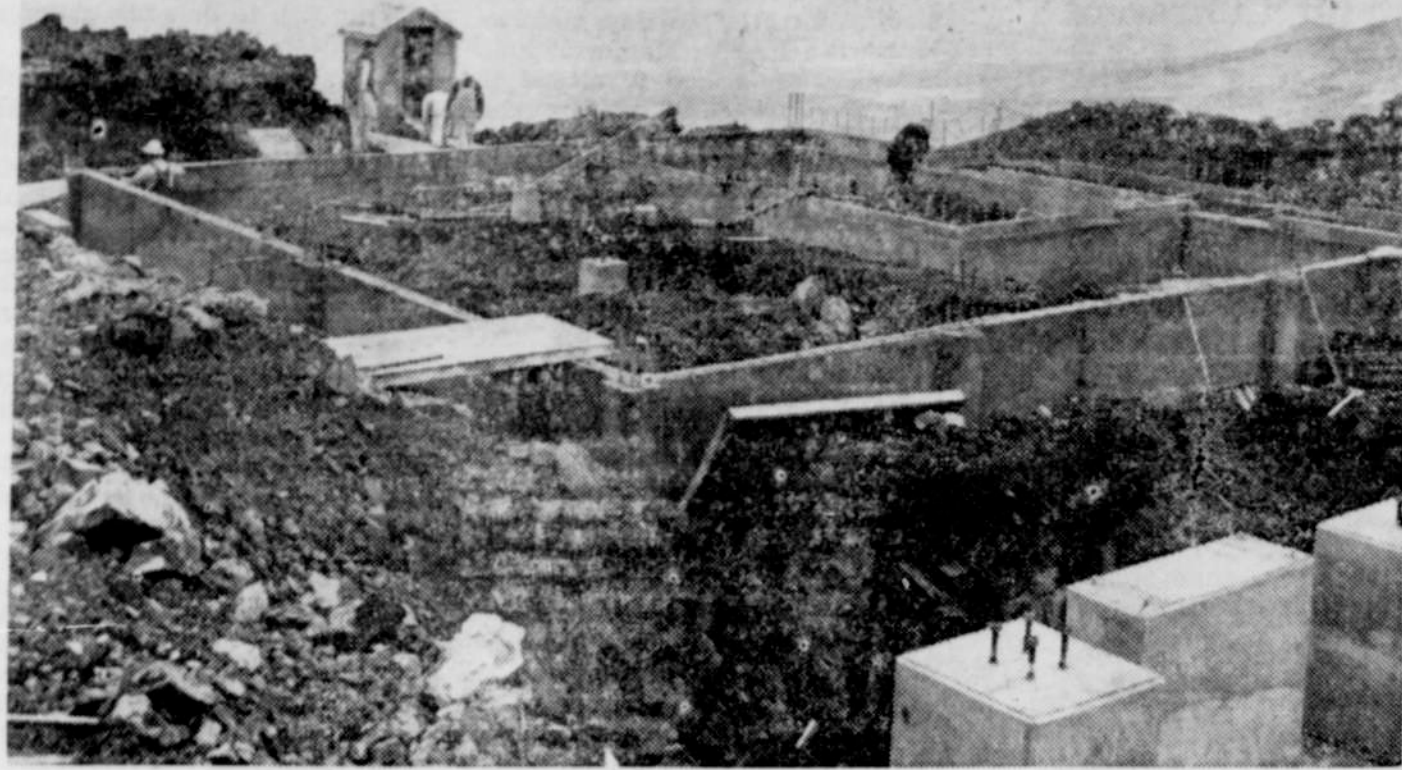
Equipment installed at Baldy will be one link in a new three network television program, plus a standby channel for emergency use. The new system will be used later to carry hundreds of telephone conversations, in addition to TV.

And when this system, which stretches from Portland to the San Francisco Bay area, is placed in service next August 1, the present coaxial cable will be used to boost existing long distance telephone facilities.

Work at Mount Baldy is going along smoothly on a tightly knit schedule, according to telephone company officials here. Cal Webber, chief transmissionman, will be in charge of maintenance and operation of the Baldy installation, and a similar one atop Siskiyou summit, at an elevation of 5300 feet.

Webber indicated construction of a one-story concrete equipment building is about 30 per cent completed, and footings for a 37½ foot structural steel antenna tower have been finished.

No extraordinary difficulties have been met on the job to date, according to M & M Construction Foreman Leonard Patzer, outside of having to kill a few rattlesnakes and blast out several layers of rock where the building and tower footings were poured.



View of construction progress on micro-wave relay station on Baldy mountain. Station is being erected by Pacific Telephone—Cut courtesy Mail-Tribune.

Work on completing the new system for its August 1 in-service date will continue through the winter months. Installation of electronic equipment at all nine sites in Oregon is scheduled to begin about December 27.

Reaching the higher locations such as Mount Baldy and Siskiyou summit during the winter will present travel complications. To cope with anticipated snow conditions the telephone company has acquired a Tucker Sno-Cat and Dodge four wheel drive power wagon. Those vehicles, and a jeep, will be used to transport men and equipment both to Baldy and Siskiyou.

Medford is a vitally important spot in this new system. In addition to being maintenance base for the Baldy and Siskiyou installations, it will also be the alarm center for four other stations, two near Roseburg and two near Eugene.

Trouble indicators in the telephone company central office at Medford will keep constant watch on that part of the system. In case of trouble, telephone technicians in Medford will be able to switch by remote control to another channel without interruption of service as repairs are made.

Portland will be the only other alarm in Oregon. It will guard three locations.

Buildings at all nine sites in the state are to be completed so that installation of equipment can be started after Christmas. Antennae are to be placed on the

Mount Baldy tower in late February.

Getting the huge microwave guides up on top of the mountain may prove the biggest problem of the project. The parabolashaped microwave "catchers and throwers" will be shipped from back east, cased in crates 20x11x-10 feet in dimensions. Each package will weight 3200 pounds.

Special railroad flatcars and truck-trailers will be needed to transport the bulky loads. If trucks are not able to negotiate sharp curves on the roads leading to some of the relay sites, a special procedure will be followed.

A crane located at such points will lift the crate off the truck on the downhill side of the curve and place it on another truck on and uphill side of the curve.

Telephone company coordinators of the project in Portland figure this procedure may have to be followed at Mount Baldy and Siskiyou summit.

Antennae are scheduled to go up the Siskiyou site the first week of March.

Overall cost of building the system in Oregon is estimated at about \$3000,000. Cost of building the stations at Mount Baldy and Siskiyou is set at about \$250,000.

Several Medford people have been working for the Malarkey and Moore Company on the Mount Baldy site. They include Patzer, Grover LeBaron, Early Kelly, Kenneth Larson and Lloyd Miles.

Milk Price Increase Foreseen in Valley

Due to the rise in the Portland market, chances are that retail milk prices will rise slightly in southern Oregon in the near future, Richard Westerberg, manager of the Jackson county milk producers league, said last week.

If a rise comes, here, it will probably be about 1 cent a quart to the consumer, Westerberg said. Adjustments in price were made in the northern part of the state October 1.

Consumer prices in the Portland area rose as result of slight increases in the price paid to producers of Grade A milk by distributors.

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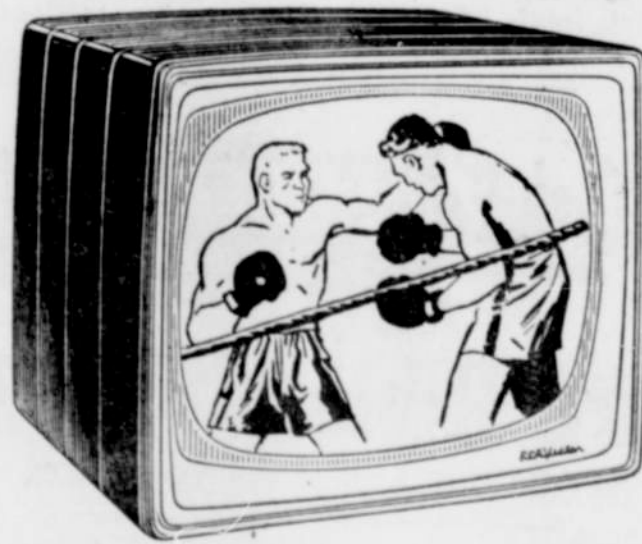
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