

Heppner Visited By Half Million Dollar Fire Monday

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Shortly After The Fire Got Underway



As is usual when something out of the ordinary is going on, Photographer Louis Lyons was right on the job. Arriving shortly after the fire siren blew the first call, he was able to catch this

Full-Time Crew Readies Grounds For Fair, Rodeo

A second full-time man has been employed to help ready the fair and rodeo grounds for the coming September show. The grounds are now in an advanced state of preparation as compared to the same time last year. Contractor Dick Meador has leveled and graded the rodeo field so that it will drain into a sump hole near the bandstand. Several trees have been removed from Hilton creek channel, and a great deal of digging has been done to prevent a re-occurrence of the damage done by floods last spring.

The old bucking and saddle horse barns that had stood for over 20 years were torn down several months ago. A new fence has been put in between the bandstand and the bucking horse chutes, and four new chutes are to be constructed within the next few weeks.

The Wranglers' club has removed partitions from the old shop on the CCC grounds and 16 single stalls and 5 double box stalls are being put in. The stalls will be used by the Wranglers and will also serve as an exhibition barn for the saddle horse class.

Harold Erwin, rodeo committee man, said yesterday that a number of farmers have promised to help prepare the grounds when the harvest is finished. Their help, he said, would make it possible to complete the work in short order.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanton Lapham of Chico, Calif., were week-end guests of Mr. and Mrs. Clive Huston. The Laphams are en route to Canada on a fishing trip. Mrs. Lapham is the former Alverda Winnard.

Mrs. W. E. Davis and young son Bill returned home from Portland Friday night where they had gone expecting to have to undergo surgery for the little boy. Upon careful examination it was found to be unnecessary so they returned home amid much rejoicing.

Mr. and Mrs. Lamer Sayrs of Moro were week-end guests of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Ruggles. The two families enjoyed a picnic in the mountains Sunday afternoon and when the visitors returned home they were accompanied by Constance Ruggles who will assist Mrs. Sayrs with the cooking during harvest.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen Case motored to Seattle Sunday where they will spend the week at buyers' market.

Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Easter and family have returned from a month's visit to Virginia.

Elevator Properties Destroyed

Damage by the fire that wiped out Heppner's grain elevators Monday evening is now estimated to be more than \$500,000, most of which was covered by insurance. All grain in the buildings of each company was fully insured, and no farmer will suffer any loss. No essential records were destroyed.

Ted Smith, manager of the Morrow County Grain Growers' cooperative, said Wednesday that the directors of the cooperative have decided to rebuild, but that the type of structure and its location have not yet been determined. Cornett Green, manager of Interior Warehouse, has not learned whether the owners of Interior will rebuild. He said Wednesday that he doubted that construction would begin in the near future even if Balfour-Guthrie Company Limited, the parent concern, does decide to replace the warehouse.

Both concerns have made arrangements to handle grain that is now pouring in from fields in the Heppner area. Daily train service has been arranged. Interior will ship from its remaining Heppner warehouse, which has a capacity of 50,000 bushels and has not yet been filled. Cornett Green said he believed sufficient box cars are available to take care of Interior's needs. He also said there is ample storage space in Portland to handle any overflow. Farmers hauling to cooperative bins will truck their grain to the Lexington elevator, which is now operating day and night.

The cooperative has set up temporary headquarters in the Ferra building, and may be contacted by calling the old phone number, 302. The old box factory has been converted to temporary use as a feed store, and the cooperative expected to be able to take care of normal demand beginning this morning. Interior is now selling feed from the old warehouse. Both Green and Smith said they would do their utmost to take care of all of the area's needs.

No unemployment is expected to result from the fire. At Interior, Marshall Beamer and the bookkeeper will continue as assistants to Cornett Green. At the cooperative, Les Wyman, who was in charge of the elevators, Jack Healy, bookkeeper, Jim Sumner, and Hugh McLaughlin will be part of the day-and-night crew that operate the Lexington elevator.

Every building in the Heppner branch of the Morrow County Grain Growers' cooperative was destroyed by the blaze. The walls of one gutted concrete building stand alone at the east end of the cooperative's burned-out area. Total loss for the cooperative is estimated at \$350,000, which includes about 123,000 bushels of wheat, the plant, and several thousand dollars worth of processed feeds, salt, and the like. Most of the wheat belonged to the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Interior Warehouse lost every building that adjoined the cooperative. Interior's old warehouse, which lies beside the highway near the Union Pacific depot, was not touched by the fire. The estimated total loss for Interior is

Random Shots....

Well, Heppner's \$600,000 fire (our guess is as good as other newsmen, we opine) might be termed a six-alarm affair. The siren was turned on six times before the general public became aroused to the fact that something serious was happening. In the course of about eight hours Monday evening to Tuesday morning the siren blew eight times, which is just about a record for this bustling little city. Let us hope nothing of this kind will happen again soon—at least until the blisters on the telephone girls' fingers heal up.

And speaking of the telephone girls, they don't recognize time when their services are needed at the switchboard. An extra shift is considered a privilege in times of disaster and the young women who operate the Heppner exchange are no exception to the rule. Monday evening when all the rest of the community was in the lower end of town watching the biggest fire in these parts in many a day, the entire staff of the telephone office remained at the switchboard straight through for 12 hours; the next day they were on the job 10 hours, none of them taking their day off, which is part of the regular working schedule. They would have been there hours longer had it been necessary. The Heppner office is proud of the fact that a long distance circuit was reestablished by 8:57 p. m. Monday evening. All outside communication by telephone was completely shut off by the fire but the local repairman did his job well and a partial outside service was set up in short order.

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Outside newspapers are not to be checked upon their first statements relative to fire damage here Monday evening. Many local people thought the damage would reach from three quarters of a million dollars to a million or more. It is only natural that under the excitement of one of the biggest fires in these parts for many a day one would gain the impression that heavier damages were being incurred than actual facts would sustain. As near as the losers can estimate, the damage is in the neighborhood of \$360,000—which in itself is no mean item. The daily papers, anxious to get a scoop on the story, could not wait for the fire to die down and give the interested parties an opportunity to do some figuring. To restore the buildings and contents at current prices no doubt would require the \$500,000 or so dollars quoted in the news dispatches.

Red Demon Really Going To Town

The photographer got around to taking this picture shortly before the whole side of the plant was enveloped in flames. It can be seen that the "Red Demon" was really rolling and it was no

Queen Shirley And Her Royal Attendants

As the picture indicates, this year's princesses of the Morrow county fair and rodeo are as lively and lovely a group of young ladies as ever graced any queen's court. In full riding regalia, the princesses and Queen Shirley will be the center of attention when they demonstrate their abilities as riders at the coming September show.

Princess Faye Cutsforth, representing Lexington grange, has been riding since she was five years old. She was an active 4-H clubber for seven years, and while in school enjoyed playing volleyball and baseball. She was a member of the school band, and she sang in the glee club for three and a half years. She was

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Farmers interested in knowing their approximate acreage under the allotment can secure that information from the Morrow County ACA office. The official allotment for the county has not been received as yet but a preliminary allotment has been determined and from that an approximate estimate can be determined for each farm. In general, the reduction is approximately 19 per cent of the 1950 usual acreage. The 1950 usual is what you would normally have planted in 1950 corrected for what wheat history credit you have.

This information was obtained to enable farmers to determine the approximate amount of seed wheat that will be needed, the local office reports.

Chairman R. S. Thomson, went on to announce that the government price support on the 1949 crop of wheat will be \$1.9 a bushel to farmers in Morrow county. Loans will be available through the commodity credit corporation through January 1950 and will mature on April 30, 1950 or earlier on demand. The Portland terminal market rate is \$2.16 per bushel.

Thompson also advised that farmers can still make applications for assistance on ACP practices throughout the year. Any farmers desiring aid should call at the local office for any assistance or information they desire.

Guests at the F. S. Parker home this week are Mary Ann and Tony Parker, children of Mr. and Mrs. John G. Parker of Pendleton. Old Gyp, the family pony, is being given a workout by the little visitors and it is a safe guess that Granddad Parker is getting a little extra exercise himself.

Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Chaffee have returned from Wallowa Lake where they spent a brief vacation.

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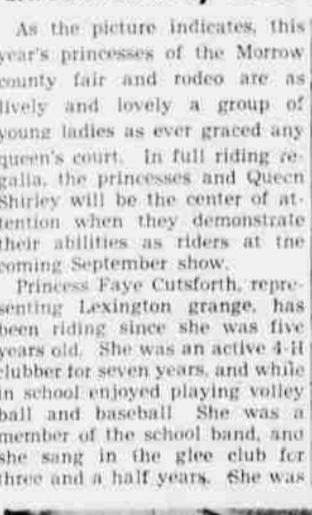
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Ingrid Hermann, Dorothy Wiglesworth, Shirley Wilkinson, Betty Walker, Faye Cutsforth.