

Clyde Nutting

wasn't sure how to get it on. "Someone will have to help me cause I have a bum arm." No one suspected, and they helped him into the chute.

Up in the plane at 7,000 feet the other man in the plane asked him if he'd jumped before. Nutting said "no." The man wanted to know what he was going to do. Nutting replied, "I'm gonna do just what you're going to tell me to do." Then he clears the air. "Boy I'll tell you that's something. The first time it's just like walkin' into a lion's den. I fell off backward like he said at 4,000 feet and counted one, two, five, ten and just undressed that outfit. Then it was easy, and I put that chute down right on target."

After two years in California, Nutting returned to Portland, without a trace of having been sick. He con-

tinued to work for Durant doing "crazy stuff" with their cars until 1930 when the Portland factory closed down.

He has several pictures of the Bantam Austin put out by American Austin, touted to be the world's smallest car at that time. The car was 61½ inches high with a wheel base of 75 inches. It would travel 60 miles an hour and sold for \$565. Quoted from a news clipping, "The Bantam Austin drivers are courteous people. When Claude Beairto of the Lane Auto Company and Clyde Nutting, driver for the company, drove up to the Peter Pan Cafe for a bite to eat Monday, they did not wish to take up even a few feet of space on the parking strip, so they drove right on into the cafe and parked their car there while they ate."

Nutting remembers that he was arrested for driving

across a sidewalk for that stunt. It was all a publicity gimmick for the company. The judge told Nutting he would let him go if he could drive the car up the steps of the state capitol. Nutting drove up all 170 steps.

Another time he drove the Austin 295 miles in one day around two blocks in Salem, hauling more than 900 people before the day was out. He obtained a permit to race anybody who had the guts to race. One man in a Chrysler Roadster challenged Nutting. The roadster was a good car, he recalls, but the race made junk out of it.

The stores continue about driving on two and three wheels and driving over 4,000 miles in one building in Portland. He admits he was living at quite a pace, continuing to wrestle, box and steeplejack. On top of this he went to work

for the Portland Police Department in 1928 and earned such nicknames as "Speed" and "Lucky."

During his stint as a policeman he met his wife, Ruth. He was asked to keep his "eye peeled" for her because she locked up the sweet shop she worked in at about 11 o'clock every night and took the day's money home with her to bank it in the morning.

"So I had to go look and see what to keep my eye peeled for."

He figures it was a good thing she came along because she slowed him down some and he didn't burn himself out. They were married in 1929. Asked why she married Clyde, Ruth said she wanted excitement. Asked if she got it, she said she figures there's been plenty of excitement; 45 years of it so far.

Nutting made the headlines during his year with the Portland Police. The Jan. 23, 1929 edition of the Oregon Journal reads "'Cop' Fires at Suspect, Prisoner Escapes in Bullet Shower." "A prisoner mutined late Tuesday while Special Patrolman Nutting was driving him to the East Side police station for investigation, and thrust an automatic pistol in the driver's ribs, with a threat that he would shoot."

The article continues: "Nutting grappled with his prisoner, seeking to deflect the range of the pistol and holding the man's free hand to keep him from releasing the safety. The prisoner then threw open the door of the moving automobile and leaped out, running north on East 18th Street. Nutting fired one shot at the fugitive, then took up the chase."

Nutting had some close calls. Other headlines read "Safety Catch Saves Life of Special Officer" and "Thugs Gat Jams: Cop's Life Saved."

In 1929 the Nuttings left Portland. Several Northwest towns were called home by then, and they ended up in Toppenish, Washington.

owning the Circle-S Guest Ranch. They started putting on rodeos at the ranch. Life Magazine took pictures of the ranch in 1938. Famed western artist Ed Quigley painted scenes of the ranch, including paintings of the Nuttings, which are in the book, "Ed Quigley, Western Artist," by Carl Gohs.

From 1929 until 1950 the Nuttings contracted stock and he announced to rodeos throughout the Northwest. In 1941 they furnished stock for the Heppner Rodeo.

Nutting says he is one of the

oldest Rodeo Cowboys Association members. He holds Turtle Card Number 695. Turtle was the name of the organization before it became RCA. When asked how he got into rodeoing he said "it was because we had some good horses, darned good horses."

In 1943 the Nuttings bought the Frank Holub Truck Line and moved from Pilot Rock to Heppner. Nutting was a policeman in Heppner the winter of 1947-48. They left Heppner in '49 but returned in '57. By this time he was a brand inspector covering the largest area in the state. He was brand inspector for an area covering Wheeler, Gilliam, Morrow and parts of Umatilla and Grant counties. He recalls that he traveled three to four thousand miles a month. He retired in 1963 and has remained in Heppner.

And if all this isn't enough, he can still tell how he got his neck injured when he was a city cop in Mitchell. Or he'll tell about the fight he was in in Toppenish when all that was left on him was one leg of a pair of shorts.

He did hold one "quiet" job in his life. In 1910 he was a barber's apprentice at the age of 13. In three years he had his journeyman card, and still has that card in his scrapbook.

The Nuttings have one daughter, "Corky" Norene, wife of Dr. Jim Norene of Heppner. Her comment about her father's life, "Mom and I have often thought about writing a book called something like 'Life With Father'."

At 75, Clyde Nutting figures he's still got some things to do. The field is pretty narrow by now. Still, he hasn't been to the moon yet.

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