

Around About By Justine Weatherford

From St. Patrick's Day on, during the last few days of winter and the first days of spring, in Morrow County, the weather has been blessed by the Omnipotence. It was so joyful to have many visitors come to help our community in its celebration of its patron saint's special day. We now have been assured that America's delight in its Irish heritage and in those who came themselves from the "old sod" has now been somewhat reflected in Erin itself where the day is recently being recognized as a significant holiday - so the ambassador told Dominic Monahan in a taped interview.

I certainly enjoyed March 17, 1983, in Oregon's Irish Capital from Matt Doherty's excellent pictures at 9:30 a.m. through the delightful KUMA "Coffee Hour" with Ted Smith, Bill Kilkenny and many others, including Bill Kenny whose beautiful rendition of "Galway Bay" surely moistened my eyes, then the huge, fun brunch where I became acquainted with the Vawter Parkers who were guests of the Jim Thomsons (all of whom shared a table with Mary Goheen and me), on to the dandy Irish stew meal and the delightful program at St. Patrick's Catholic Church which concluded as Bill Kenny and Ron McDonald, on the stage together with the Lindsay Family led everyone in "God Bless America."

Other memorable events on March 17 were the fine 35th anniversary party at St. Pat's promoter Jimmy Farley's establishment where his attractive daughters served as hostesses, and the 15th anniversary celebration at Cal's Arco, which I just didn't manage to attend. The Morrow County Creative Arts and Crafts group is certainly to be congratulated on the fine showing of works they arranged in the old post office location. As I walked through that temporary gallery, I was again thrilled by and proud of the truly fine artists who live and create beautiful things in this county.

Although I will probably never qualify as a gourmet, my simple gastronomic taste was pleased with the good stew and tasteful accompaniments the Altar Society and its committees offered, and along with the other 400 plus persons, I was delighted with the evening's entertainment.

The next day I drove to Portland and spent Friday night in my brother's home where on Saturday morning we were quite distressed by the statistics released in the "Oregonian" concerning the epicurean taste of the workers at the Eastern Oregon Hospital and Training Center in Pendleton.

When I returned home Saturday evening, I read the two Pendleton papers which were waiting in my paper tube. It was interesting to see that as Ireland's St. Patrick's Day celebration reflects America's—Pendleton's appreciation of the day seems to sort of reflect Heppner's. However, I hope we never give up our Irish stew for the menus that were served at the state hospital. The purchase for the 1982 staff Christmas dinner included "100 dozen oysters, 20 pounds of king crab, over 200 pounds of shrimp, 380 pounds of turkey, almost 400 pounds of ham, five cases of mincemeat, pumpkin pie, mixed nuts, cheesecake, maraschino cherries and spiced crabapples" according to auditors working with Secretary of State Norma Paulus. That holiday meal cost the Oregon taxpayers \$10,000 and with the similar dinners in '80 and '81 made the total cost of the three feasts \$26,681, according to the March 19 Portland "Oregonian."

Maybe some folks who read the last Sunday "Oregonian" (March 20) were impressed by the largest space on the front page being filled with a warning of the water shortage coming to Northeastern Oregon "where water is being pumped from 10 to 100 times faster than it is being replaced by natural recharge, producing water level declines of up to 383 feet in the past 15 years, according to measurements cited in the State Water Resources Department study." The following paragraph states, "The progressive exhaustion of the underground reserves in a 2,500-square-mile area of Morrow and Umatilla counties has produced no effective enforcement action by the Water Resources Department, headed by James Sexon. That is despite provisions of Oregon law requiring it to halt pumping to prevent declines in ground-water levels and to prevent cross-well interference, in which two or more wells rapidly decrease a local water supply."

Many have known about this situation for sometime, yet many still complain loudly about damming Willow Creek and compounding some water. There are always at least two sides to every problem. The dam built at Heppner seems to arouse a great deal of negative reaction—with some of which I can sympathize. However, it seems that the storing of water may become a mighty important matter in the future of this area. The "Forum" section of the same paper begins its major article titled "Water Resources—Management Brewing Crisis" with "We're facing a crisis far greater than the Arab oil boycott as related to our water needs" Sen. Mark Hatfield, R.—Ore. said recently. He is right. Water will be the single most important issue of this decade." Maybe this article should be studied carefully by all Oregon residents.

Now this first week of spring looks like another busy week in Morrow County. We hope all of our days are pleasing to the school persons, children and staff, who are vacationing. Among the significant activities of the week are the Blue Mountain District 10 spring meeting of the Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs at the Willows Grange Hall in Ione, which will last almost all Thursday, and the big activity at St. Patrick's Catholic Church and at the fairgrounds on Saturday night. A community potluck dinner is set there beginning at 6:30 p.m. as the scene of the crowning of this year's Fair and Rodeo Queen, Lottie Laughlin, and the honoring of her princesses Sylvia Ladd and Dawn Timms and the five pennant bearers Dyann Brosnan, Wendy Skillcorn, Bridgett Greenup, Bobette Angell and Stacy Kennedy.

The Jim Ackley Band will provide the music for the dance that begins at 9 a.m. at the fairgrounds. There should be a good attendance at the dinner and dance, which are the first big events leading to this year's fair and rodeo.

To all my friends and family
who helped out during my
35th anniversary open house
Many thanks

Jim Farley

Wright family plans 1983 Pioneer Picnic

By JUSTINE WEATHERFORD



This picture of Albert Wright and Beverly Maness Wright was taken September 19, 1950 at their wedding in Portland. This couple, now grandparents, are chairpersons of the family committee in charge of this year's pioneer picnic.

On Sunday, Mar. 20, a group of descendants of county pioneer Albert Wright met at the home of Albert and Beverly Wright for a planning session prior to the family's serving as hosts of this year's annual Morrow County Memorial Weekend Pioneer Picnic which is set for Sunday, May 29. Those who gathered at the Wright's Upper Rhea Creek home were Mr. and Mrs. Barton Clark, all from Ruggs; Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Wright of Arlington; and their daughter, Ramona Johnson of Portland.

Beverly displayed many most interesting, old family pictures, and Beth Clark also brought along a fine collection of pictures. The fourth generation Wrights have numerous copies of family letters,

and they treasure several large, pioneer-days, family Bibles.

Albert and Beverly are serving as the committee chairpersons, and it has been determined that Clayton will be the master of ceremonies at this year's picnic. His daughter, Ramona Johnson, is to arrange a display of family pictures along with a genealogical chart.

Their descendants have carefully guarded a great many mementoes of Albert and Julia (Barry) Wright's lives from just before and during the years after they settled in this area, about 110 years ago. Their family members are now into their sixth generation here, and many of them have made very significant contributions to the growth and stability of this county.

The earliest known members of the modern cat family first appeared about 13 million years ago.

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