

Around About By Justine Weatherford

Wasn't the lightning and thunder exciting early last Saturday evening and again on Sunday night? Because I was driving home with Grandson Scott after meeting him at Arlington on Saturday, I accused him of again bringing more Seattle, Wash. area rain here just when our summer seemed to be ready to begin. He is making a surprising return visit to Heppner, which he really enjoys. I feel certain this second visit isn't because of this grandma's cookery. I strongly suspect it has something to do with a female here about 50 years younger than Scott's grandmother.

Several readers have told me they enjoy travel stories. Now I have a good one to share. It came about because Mary Beamer Gohsen, a Heppner native who is now one of its most widely traveled citizens, remarked that she had never been to Monument. Because she leaves this week for the Soroptimist International Convention in Istanbul, Turkey, which she will follow with a special tour of the Greek Isles and because she has a trans-Siberian tour all set for this winter—it seemed to me she really needed to get to Monument before she flew away to such far places.

So a date was set (Thursday, July 14), and I invited Eleanor Gonty and Irene Swanson to join our sightseeing in Morrow Co., a sliver of Wheeler and larger parts of Grant and Umatilla counties. Although world travelers like Mary see many marvelous sights, many of those sights are man-made—and I contend that not too many of the natural beauties around the globe are greater than Oregon contains. We had a great day of looking, each of us saw things she had not viewed before. Our almost 10-hour, about 300 miles of traveling, was really interesting and a bit exhausting, too. Now I will take you along as you read in your comfortable armchair.

We left Heppner about 9:30 a.m. Our first stop was at Hardman where we looked about the recently opened Hardman Antique Shop on the south side of the ghost town's Main Street (actually Hwy. 207). Then we proceeded south along Rock Creek, past Anson Wright Park and up into the lovely Blue Mountains and into Bull Prairie Lake, a beauty spot of Wheeler County. From there we drove south to the junction with Hwy. 19 in the vast and spectacular John Day Valley. Turning eastward we skirted the river to Kimberly where we took a brief look about the store there before going east a few miles to where we stopped at the great Thomas Orchards for a bit of fruit shopping...bing cherries and peaches.

Because we had pre-determined to have our noon meal at Monument at Sylvia's Mexican Restaurant which we had heard about, we continued along eastward, then wove about Monument's several streets until we located Sylvia's place just about noon. What an attractive, clean eatery the friendly, attractive lady from south-of-the-border operates! Her extensive menu offers diners a wide choice of familiar and less familiar Mexican dishes. Mary, a lover of chocolate milkshakes, noted that the shake she watched being made looked good, so we all decided to have our spicy Mexican food cooled with thick chocolate milkshakes.

From Monument we continued easterly on an unnumbered but good highway through more tremendous scenery, pausing at the Sunken Mountain Viewpoint. There we had the big disappointment of the day because the geologic marker along the right of the highway had been removed from its huge rock base, and we could not read about the unusual coral-red sight we viewed, which was caused when about one-fourth square mile of a mountain dropped straight down leaving red cliffs on all sides.

The Sunken Mountain is not far from Hamilton, where some of my Weatherford in-laws had operated a sheep ranch when my late husband was a young lad. Now it had one empty decrepit stor eand two ancient, deserted houses along the roadside. Hamilton hardly qualifies as a hamlet anymore.

Next we drove up out of the valley to Long Creek where we cruised around the community and paused to ask the way to Walton's Mountain.

Driving north on Hwy. 395 we crossed the Middle Fork of the John Day when I noted the road to Ritter. Because I had never been there, I clamored to go. We drove south along the fork for what seemed a great many miles and finally turned down to the famed Ritter Hot Springs resort.

My neighbor, Ruby Thornburg Becket, has often mentioned Ritter, saying what a lovely place it was and that she attended the Three-Mile School about eight miles southwest of Ritter. The Thornburg Ranch mail came through the Ritter Post Office. Ruby's family came about 47 miles over the mountains to shop for supplies in Heppner. She said she often traveled the mountain route in a wagon or on horseback.

We spent some time looking about the resort which is in pretty sad shape now. Mary and I boined across the little suspension bridge to the hillside where the mud baths were once quite popular. They are in ruins now. The swimming pool was being enjoyed by some children from Portland. It is in good shape, but is no longer covered. We took snapshots of the old store building. Its big sign indicates that it had been a stage stop in 1894.

After we got back on Highway 395, we drove until we reached the Walton Mountain Road. That road gains elevation very quickly. We made it to the topside where the Waltons live in a big white house; nearby is the small green-colored house where much-admired Father George Murphy dwells. It was disappointing to learn that Father Murphy was not at home, that he is in California for a few weeks. Dropping down again to Highway 395, we drove through lovely, wildflower-decorated forests surrounding Dale and on north along Camas Creek to Ukiah. There we missed visiting with E.V. Blevins because she had gone to Walla Walla, Wash., but we enjoyed a chat with Shirley Garret in the new store she and her husband, Lester, have built in downtown Ukiah.

From Ukiah we came west over the Western Route Road to the Ditch Creek Road where we decided to drive into Penland Lake to see the Gonty's retreat. We were all saddened by the mass of litter in the logged areas we saw as we bumped along the road to the lake. After an inspection of the Gonty property, we came on back to Heppner — reaching this city about 7 p.m.

Last Thursday was a red letter day, but Friday was special for me, too, because I got acquainted with Sonja and Jerry Smith whose delightful yard is being honored by the Heppner Garden Club and the Chamber of Commerce. At last I found out who has made the little park area between the Chase St. bridge and the city swimming pool. If anyone has a prize to give for personal city beautification project, I nominate Jerry Smith. He and Sonja have surely beautified their yard—all four sides of their home are landscaped. Their backyard and unusual patio need to be seen to be appreciated. It heppner nan many more eager landscapers like the Smiths, the city's beauty level would escalate quickly.

P.M.H. Aux., kitchen staff host nursing home picnic

Last Thursday, the Pioneer Memorial Hospital Auxiliary co-hosted the annual nursing home picnic with Evelyn Sweek and the hospital kitchen staff. Due to the cool summer day, the picnic was held indoors with balloons and banners as decorations. The residents enjoyed fried chicken, potato salad and watermelon.

The auxiliary had its monthly business meeting following the festivities. Discussion was held on finding volunteers who would give permanents and haircuts to residents as needed, reports Betty Brown, auxiliary secretary. One resident's room has been redecorated, complete with wallpaper and new paint, she reports.

The money raising project for the summer is a Barbie Doll complete with wardrobe. The doll is now on display at

Bristow's Market in Lone. Tickets are available for 25 cents each. The drawing will be held on August 27, the day of the Morrow County Fair and Rodeo Parade. The money raised will go toward the purchase of a patient lift for the downstairs bath tub.

Rene Siminoe has been appointed to meet with the hospital board and keep them informed of the auxiliary's goals and projects. Susie Ward volunteered to take charge of bingo prizes for weekly bingo games. Anyone who may have ideas or small items to donate may contact Ward at 676-9826. Also, if someone would like to donate a few hours a month to give cuts or permanents, please call Charity McElligott at the hospital. She is the new nursing home activity director and will coordinate time and need.

Sheriff Drago offers child protection tips

(Editor's note: The following article, submitted by Morrow County Sheriff Roy Drago, is the first in a series of articles which will appear periodically in the Gazette-Times.)

"School's out and children are ready for summer time fun," says Morrow County Sheriff Roy Drago. "Parents can make this summer a safer one by making sure their children are protected."

The following 10 points could avoid unpleasant situations in the future:

1. Know where your children are at all times.
2. Constantly remind them -
 - a. Never accept rides, candy, or gifts from strangers.
 - b. Always report any strangers seen loitering around schools, playgrounds or other places where children assemble.
 - c. Always try to secure the

license number of suspicious cars, write the number down on paper or even scratch it with a stick or rock on the sidewalk or road.

3. Make sure your child knows the rules of safe bicycle riding and be sure his/her bicycle is maintained in safe operating condition.

4. If you allow them to attend movies alone, make sure the theater is well supervised with respect to the conduct of both children and adults.

5. Don't allow them to play in hazardous areas - new construction, excavations, water holes, etc.

6. Always accompany your children to public restrooms.

7. Be alert for danger signals of child molestation such as: diversion to a relative, neighbor or babysitter; change in eating habits; sudden lack of interest; sudden desire for privacy, etc.

8. Always have open communication with your children.
9. Teach your children not to

10. Know your babysitters, making sure they know proper safety precautions.

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