

Ivan L. Jones, formerly of the Inspection Division of Benicia Arsenal, Benicia, Cal., visited here Thursday, March 16.

Herbert Shesley who has been with the Inspection Division for over two years transferred to the New York Port of Embarkation. He left March 18 to take up duties at New York. Mr. Shesley is well known here and a host of friends wish him success in his new position.

Julia Krekales and granddaughter spent several days in Pendleton last week on business.

Helen Boxleitner returned to work after several days illness.

Lenabelle Lenz underwent an appendectomy at the post hospital Thursday, March 18.

The highly cooperative spirit of the U.O.D. employees was demonstrated last week when everyone "pitched in" to help those in the Magazine Area who had to get out a dead line shipment. Special thanks should go to the Guards who helped 100 per cent in this 'knotty' problem.

May Nusser, of Inspection, is on the sick list this week.

Mrs. Glenn McGarry spent last week visiting her sister, Mrs. Ed. Stevens, in Spokane, Wn.

Lillian Rutledge took two days off last week to be with her son Bill who left March 17 to enter the "armed forces."

Mrs. Turner from the West Area is wearing two beautiful "shiners" this week. We don't know what brand it was, but it had an odd name, something like "Railroad Track flies" and hits you in the face.

Now don't get excited or don't be misled if you see two women searching a potato bin. There is nothing wrong; they are simply looking for a flat potato to cure a "crick" in one of their husbands' knees caused by bowling. They heard that a flat potato carried in the pocket is a sure cure. Did it work, Harry?

The Electric Shop has an Auxiliary Fire Fighting Team. One very, very windy day last week they answered their first call. Their account of the experience follows: It was a pleasant day for an outing. It felt like the wind and a good part of the country side was blowing straight into our faces as we rolled along. We clung desperately to the rails with our hands while the rest of our 'beings' floated in mid-air like so many ribbons. After an incredibly long-short time we blew into the West Area. When we returned to the Shop we looked and felt like full fledged firefighters all covered with mud and water from head to toe.

Two of the boys from the box factory say there just ain't any justice. They were going to the Garage one morning and stopped in the Cafeteria long enough to purchase one package of gum and then proceeded on their way. It just happened that the Guards were checking the Cafeteria for loiterers at that time and they were counted.

In February the following employees received \$5.00 cash awards for adopted suggestions through the Employees Suggestion program: Fred Berry, Meridith A. Ford, F. Lighte, Wm. Hunsinger, Wm. Wilson, Emery C. Bedwell, Dancel C. Hill and Wm. J. Swaney. More suggestions are needed to speed up winning the war. You can contribute to this program by putting your suggestion into the "Ideas for Victory" boxes which are conveniently located throughout the Depot. Will you help?

The U. O. D. Employees Association held their regular meeting March 9th. The sale of U. O. D. Employees Association membership cards will start some time this week. It is hoped that the pictures of all the departments will soon be finished and for sale.

St. Patrick's Day Dance, sponsored by the Employees Association at the U. S. O. last Friday evening, was well attended and a very gala affair. Suitable favors for the occasion were given to everyone during the evening.

Mary Ellen Hancock, Fiscal, is ill this week.

Oscar Olsen returned from a week's vacation at Seaside Sunday night. While en route he visited his daughter in Oregon City.

Walter Carlson, Fiscal, took a two day vacation this week.

Col. W. J. Hoffmann left this week by plane for Chicago, Ill., where he will attend a stock control conference.

The Roving Reporter—When the alarm goes off these mornings and you want to throw the thing, and have just 40 more winks and of course those 40 lead to 40 more, and son on, until you think of the soldier far away who doesn't get any 40 winks extra—get up and help keep the ball rollin'.

Plant Property reports those on sick list as Thelma Henderson, Tommy Lloyd and Evelyn Ford.

Virginia Herd, Plant Property, spent last week end in The Dalles.

Mrs. Joe Berdan recently visited in Benton, Illinois. Joe met his wife at Pasco last week when she returned.

(Continued on Page 5)

RED CROSS CAMPAIGN TOTAL REACHES \$2000 IN HERMISTON AREA

LEE WEBER TELLS WORK OVERSEAS

Hermiston and surrounding territory has again gone over the top in a Red Cross campaign. This year's drive, known as the Red Cross War Campaign, netted over \$2000 in this area, according to Mrs. Roy Tiller, chairman. The quota, which was \$1500, was exceeded last week and later donations have raised the sum to over \$2000.00.

An interesting sidelight to the recent Red Cross drive is added by Lee Weber, who returned this week with a year's credit in the service of the Red Cross organization. Mr. Weber stated upon his return, "Anyone who contributed to the Red Cross campaign can rest assured that his money will be well spent and greatly appreciated by the boys in the service. The women in Red Cross service are of the highest type and the work they are doing on the battle front is wonderful."

Mr. Weber enlisted with the Red Cross last summer following two years of coaching at Hermiston high school. He reported directly to Washington, D. C., where he received school training and later was sent to Camp Upton, Long Island, for field training. Following completion of the course he was assigned to a regiment and sent to Sam Houston, Texas, where he was stationed for two months.

Mr. Weber's job at Sam Houston was to aid boys in obtaining furloughs prior to shipment overseas and financially aiding those without sufficient funds. His good deeds somewhat backfired, however, when he failed to receive a furlough himself and was sent overseas without a trip to Hermiston. During his stay at Sam Houston, Mr. Weber stated that the Red Cross loaned a total of \$60,000 to boys in the service. A checkup six months later revealed that the boys had paid back all but 2 per cent of this amount. Voluntary donations by the boys to the Red Cross more than make up the loss of the 2 per cent.

From Sam Houston Mr. Weber accompanied his regiment to the Port of Embarkation and later arrived in North Africa. Here he underwent six weeks of mountain training known among the soldiers as "night problems." Although quite strenuous, Mr. Weber stated that most of the boys came through with flying colors.

Mr. Weber's duties were mostly with recreation. However, when the boys actually entered the combat zone this work stops and he was assigned to various other Red Cross duties. He spent two weeks with colored troops and found them very cooperative in all matters. The Red Cross furnishes many forms of recreation and necessary items for relaxation as well as blood plasma and all the other vital items in the battle area.

Following his return to North Africa he was released from further duties and returned home via Casablanca to New York. He states that the Red Cross is playing a very important part in the present conflict and deserves all the financial help loyal American citizens are able to give.

ALTAR SOCIETY TO HAVE BAZAAR

Members of the Altar Society, Hermiston Catholic church, will sponsor a bazaar and cooked food sale Saturday, April 1, in the show room at the Rohrman Motor Co. The room will open at 9:00 a. m. and will be open for the remainder of the day. Many practical articles will be on sale, including aprons, pillow cases, linens, etc.

A cooked food sale will also be held, including salads, beans, cakes, pies and possibly dressed chickens. A highlight will be a fish pond containing various items. The ladies report that every article will be worth the price asked or more. The public is cordially invited to participate.

INCOME TAX MAN COMING MARCH 28

The State Tax Commission has notified The Herald that an income tax auditor will be in Hermiston March 28 to assist local residents in making their returns for the past year. State income taxes are due April 15. There will be no charge for this service.

ORDNANCE DEPOT OPENS OWN HALL FOR HIRING HELP

Since the removal of the United States Employment Office in Hermiston by the War Manpower Commission, an office has been set up for the referral of employees to the Ordnance Depot. The new office, located in the Rohrman building across from the Rohrman Motor Co., has been newly decorated and equipped with furniture and file cases. The room is being furnished through the cooperation of the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce.

Authorities of the Ordnance Depot have requested that all merchants and businessmen in this community refer all possible employees either to this office or directly to the Commanding Officer of the Umatilla Ordnance Depot.

The new hiring hall, operated separately from the union hall on Second street, will be open from 7:30 a. m. to 4:15 p. m.

LT. RUGG HOME FROM TRAINING

Second Lieutenant George E. (Gene) Rugg, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Rugg of Hermiston, arrived here last week following completion of his Aviation Cadet training. He must report back to New Orleans, La., Saturday, March 25, for further instruction.

Lt. Rugg enlisted July 27, 1942, and completed his pre-flight training in February, 1943, at Del Monte, Calif. His primary training was received at Hutchinson, Kas., where he graduated in August the same year. His advanced work was received at Pensacola, Fla., known as the "Annapolis of the Air." Most of his flying has been with S.N. V's, S.N. J's and Beachcrafts. He graduated from his advanced training January 31, 1944, receiving his commission. Second Lieutenant, U.S.M.C.R. He is the first Hermiston boy to graduate from Marine Corps Reserve training.

Since his graduation he has been receiving instruction in advance navigation at Hollywood, Fla.

BLAST FOLLOWS FLASH OF LIGHT

Mathematicians were having a field day Wednesday figuring the time it takes for light and sound to travel certain distances. That light travels faster than sound is about the only fact that they agreed upon, however. Among those who saw the flareup in the sky, estimates varied all the way from 15 seconds to over a minute that the flash preceded the concussion here.

N. W. O'Donnell, local manager of the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Co., tells one of the most unique yarns. He heard the blast and went to the phone to call the central office in Pendleton. Upon getting his call through, he heard the blast again as the sound reached Pendleton 30 miles away.

Lee Weber stated that he was coming towards Hermiston from Umatilla when he saw the flash. He stopped his car and backed up to obtain a better view of the "fire" when the concussion came. He thought he had backed into a log.

BLAST DAMAGES SETTING OF EGGS

N. J. VanSkike of the Hermiston "Vigorbilt" Hatchery was also a loser in the blast at the Ordnance Depot Tuesday evening. All his incubators and hatcher were loaded to capacity and he fears that concussion to his building will cause a heavy loss with the hatching of the eggs.

He stated that patrons who have orders in for chicks should get them now as he has a considerable quantity on hand for delivery and not to depend too much on later delivery.

LOCAL STORES COOPERATE WITH PRICE CEILING

A checkup was made in Hermiston last week by members of the Hermiston and Pendleton Price Panels and found that as a whole the local stores are adhering very closely to the price ceiling and other orders of the War Price and Rationing program. In a few cases, notably butter, a few concerns were found to be in over the ceiling, due to misunderstanding rather than carelessness.

F. C. McKenzie, chief clerk of the local War Price and Rationing office, stated that members of his force are making periodical checkups at service stations to see if motorists are complying with the law in signing all their gasoline coupons. "All coupons in the book, including A. B. C. and T. books, must be signed with the state of registration (Oregon) and the license number of the car," states Mr. McKenzie.

A new order is the one concerning R coupons. After April 1 these coupons will not be valid at service stations.

GUARDS DO FINE JOB AT DEPOT

The result of months of training and organization bore fruit Tuesday night following the disastrous explosion at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot. Panic and further disaster was avoided by prompt and orderly operation of the guard organization. A very short time after the blast occurred, guards were in complete charge of the situation and very little congestion and disorder resulted.

Members of the guard group, who were off shift, were later called to the scene, and remained on duty through the night.

LOCAL RELATIVE WINS HONORS IN SOUTH PACIFIC

Sgt. John A. Crane of Phoenix, Arizona, son of John J. (Jack) Crane of the Crane Refrigeration Co. of Hermiston, is establishing quite a record in the South Pacific war zone. He was engaged in newspaper work in Phoenix before enlistment into the service. At the present time he has more than 300 hours of flying time and more than 50 consecutive missions to his credit. His flights have taken him into the island landing fields in the South Pacific.

Sgt. Crane, according to news received here Wednesday by his father, has recently been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal and also the Oak Leaf Cluster.

Sgt. Crane is with the 6th Air Force under Gen. George C. Kenney.

EXPLOSION OF ONE IGLOO TUESDAY IS FATAL TO SIX

Six persons lost their lives as a result of a terrific explosion about 9:30 Tuesday night at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot when a quantity of bombs stored in one of the igloos exploded. One woman and five men, all civilian employees, were killed in the only major disaster at the Ordnance Depot here since its construction about three years ago.

JOINT FUNERAL SERVICE PLANNED HERE FRIDAY

A joint funeral service for victims of the explosion Tuesday evening at the U. O. D. will be held Friday morning at 10:30 at the Pentecostal Tabernacle, according to the pastor, Rev. S. E. Graves. At least five families of the six casualties of the blast will participate in the services, according to Rev. Graves.

Members of the U. O. D. Employees association have notified Rev. Graves that they plan to send flowers and otherwise assist with the ceremony. Harry Nelson, secretary of the association, is in charge of this part of the arrangements.

MANY WINDOWS ARE SHATTERED

Local stores dealing in window glass were doing a right brisk business Wednesday. The blast at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot shattered many windows in this area and reports of broken windows came from at least 25 miles away. All the windows on the west side of the Henry G. Peck home east of the Ordnance Depot were broken and others suffered to a lesser degree.

On Hermiston streets several broken plate windows were noted Wednesday morning, including the Temple Cafe, Post Office, Rohrman Motor Co., L. A. Moore furniture store, Farmer's Supply furniture store, U.S.O. building and possibly others. However, other than the broken glass, little damage was done by the blast in this area.

ROTARY GROUP NAMES OFFICERS

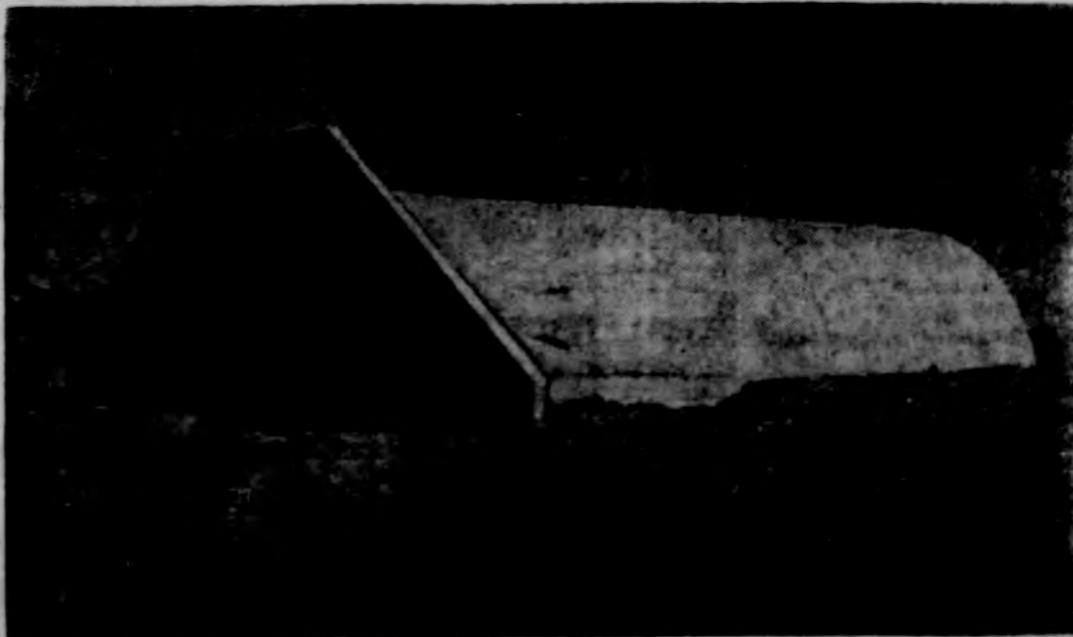
W. G. Kersbergen, superintendent of Hermiston schools, was named president of the Hermiston Rotary club at its regular luncheon Thursday noon. Other officers include: Lee Quiring, vice president; Dr. W. L. Morgan, secretary, and Walt Pearson and Glenn Ripley, board members.

Visitors at the luncheon included Lt. Bob Pierson, Lee Weber and A. W. Behrman. The former two, who have recently returned from overseas activities, told of a few of their experiences.

Good Friday Service Scheduled

The West End Ministerial Association will observe Good Friday in a "United Program" to be held at the Baptist Church from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p. m. Rev. W. A. MacArthur will bring the message of the day. All are invited to worship at this service regardless of church or denominational affiliation.

Typical Igloo at Umatilla Ordnance Depot



Pictured above is a typical igloo at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot of the type that was completely destroyed by a blast Tuesday evening about 9:30, killing six civilian employees. The

above photo was taken early in 1941 during the construction period. Attention is called to the sandy condition of the soil that observers claim has much to do with preventing the "setting off" of an igloo when a nearby igloo explodes. This theory proved correct Tuesday. The structures are mostly of cement and are of varied sizes.

The blast was so terrific that, although it did not cause any other damage of consequence, it was felt as far away as Lewiston, Idaho, and other distant points.

The victims of the explosion were: Miss Alice Wolgamott, 20, formerly of Curtis, Nebr., where her mother resides but since employed at the depot had lived here with her sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Peterson.

Kenneth L. Fraser, 40, of Irrigon, leader of the crew. He is survived by his widow and four children, two are sophomores in Irrigon high school and two are in the grade school there.

Lance A. Stultz, 40, of Hermiston, residing in Cox Addition. He is survived by his widow and one child.

Hiram Cook, 26, of Hermiston, survived by his widow and two children. They had resided with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Cook, in recent months.

William Sanders, 30, Rt. 2, Hermiston, survived by his widow and four children, all of pre-school age.

Harry Sever, 33, Ordnance, survived by his widow and two children.

Outside of the above victims, no one was injured by the worst tragedy that has ever struck this little community.

Colonel A. S. Buyers, commanding officer at the Umatilla Ordnance Depot, has officially announced various facts of information since the blast which vary greatly from some of the numerous rumors which usually follow this type of catastrophe. Among these are the following:

Only one igloo exploded and definitely only six persons were killed from the blast. No one else was injured.

Very little other damage was done about the post by the gigantic blast. Although several windows were broken in the area, no damage was done to the other igloos. (U. S. Army Engineers are receiving considerable mention for their planning and locating of the various igloos, to prevent further blasts by nearby igloos. The value of the sandy condition of the soil which tends to kill concussion has been proven.)

The igloo, which was used principally for the storage of huge bombs, such as 2000-pound "blockbusters" used in aerial bombing, contained only a partial capacity of bombs.

An investigation of the explosion is underway by U. S. army officers and pending its report no further information is available as to the exact cause of the explosion.

There is no knowledge of any sabotage connected with the explosion.

Some fear that workers might prove jittery and reluctant to go back to work was relieved when practically all employees proved "good soldiers" and today operations are back to normal.

The explosion caused considerable excitement in the surrounding territory. Windows were smashed here and there and other minor damages resulted but as a whole major damage was confined to the igloo and its contents.

Several interesting stories are being told about the blast. Workers state that as a rule each crew is composed of eight members but apparently two of the crew were cleaning up the freight car after a shipment. At least, only six men were in the igloo at the time of the explosion. Miss Wolgamott had just driven to the scene by truck.

The explosion was so terrific that the entire roof of the igloo and a portion of the floor was shattered to bits. Several theories have been advanced by workers as to the cause of the blast but none are printed as facts. Among these are that it might have been a defective bomb, some say that a bomb may have been dropped "just right," and still others say it might have been something else. However, a thorough investigation is being held and some announcement may be made later. This much is known, however, that extreme precautions have always been taken to avert such explosions and the entire area was placed under

(Continued on Last Page)