

MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

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Flight of Time: Medford and Jackson County History from the files of The Mail Tribune 10, 20, 30 and 40 years ago.

10 YEARS AGO: Oct. 5, 1945. (It was Friday) Miss Lydia McCall of Ashland succeeds Mrs. Hattie Reames White of Medford as president of the Jackson County Pioneer association at Jacksonville meeting.

From Arthur Perry's Ye Smudge Pot column: Plans for control of next year's weed are now being mapped. The noxious growths will be sprayed with chemicals and exterminated, it is hoped.

30 YEARS AGO: Oct. 5, 1915. (It was Saturday) Forest service reports almost ideal conditions for deer hunting in Rogue River National forest.

Mrs. Augusta McCormick of Ashland elected president of WCTU at bi-county institute at Ashland.

30 YEARS AGO: Oct. 5, 1925. (It was Monday) Jackson County Bar association, Rawles Moore, president, advocates changing county seat from Jacksonville to Medford, the business center.

Members of Ashland Ministerial association confer with Billy Sunday in Portland on possibilities of evangelistic campaign in Ashland.

40 YEARS AGO: Oct. 5, 1915. (It was Tuesday) Jackson county pears in Pan-American exposition recognized as some of best in exhibit.

From Local and Personal column: The Misses Myrtle Vincent, Vera Hutchins, and Freda Davis went to Phoenix Sunday by the unique and novel method of roller skates.

What's the Answer?

Can You Get 4 of the 7? Copr. 1955, Editorial Research Report. 1. The Federal Reserve Board does or doesn't have power now to restrict auto credit terms directly? 2. First inauguration of a U.S. President was in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, or Annapolis, Md.?

Speed For Fires

Barring a long, warm, dry spell, it would be safe to say that the danger of major forest fires is over for this season. So this might be a good time to review the season a bit, for it was a "bad" forest fire year in southern Oregon.

It was not the worst, however. During several other seasons larger areas of forest, range and brush land went up in smoke. But the potential during those anxious days in early September was as explosive as anything experienced here for a long time.

STATEWIDE, 1955 was far from the worst season, although here again the potential danger was extremely high for several weeks. In 1955, a total of about 20,946 state-protected acres was burned over, according to State Forester Dwight Phipps, compared to 132,000 acres in 1951.

The really "big burns" were even earlier. We recall particularly the years 1933, 1936, and 1939, when hundreds of thousands of acres went up in smoke. The Tillamook burn flared in those years, as did the famed Bandon fire.

Each year the threat of fire, here and now, makes the past blazes fade into seeming unimportance, and we are apt to forget how bad they were. Actually, Oregon's fire record is improving. This may be due in part to a greater awareness of the fire danger on the part of the woods-using public, and it may be due in part to better protection services—lookouts, radio communications, trained firefighters, better equipment better deployed, and more roads, which mean better access to isolated blazes.

ONE of the things which gave added drama to the 1955 fires in Jackson county, which started Labor day week end, was the suddenness with which the situation developed. We are indebted to the state department of forestry for a run-down on how fast it happened. Condensed excerpts from the report follow:

On Sept. 5 at approximately 3 p.m. high winds twisted a treetop loose, blowing it into a power line near Church of the Pines on the west side of Blackwell hill. This fire was reported at about 3:04, and a pumper crew from Medford reached the scene at 3:27 p.m. A few minutes after this, the same high winds again hit and the warden in charge requested an additional crew. At about 3:40 gale force winds caused the fire to spot across the old highway. Four pumps and about 40 men were trying to hold it, but were unable to do so, and it crossed in so many places it seemed to have a solid front.

At about 3:45 p.m. the crew on the Nugget Butte fire (near Gold Hill, controlled two days earlier) reported that fire coming to life at several points and spreading. They asked for help.

At about 3:48 p.m., smoke was seen west of Jacksonville, and at 4 p.m. was reported to the forest patrol. Two wardens were dispatched within the next six minutes. At 4:20 p.m. Medford requested a crew from Grants Pass for the fire. It left within a few minutes. At 4:55 the size was estimated at 100 acres.

Up to this time all crews and equipment from Medford, Applegate, Rogue River and Wimer, and one of two crews from Grants Pass were dispatched to the three going fires. Some time between 3:30 and 4 p.m. a similar wind resulted in a tree falling across a power line at the mouth of Sykes Creek, setting fire to a pile of slab and edgings. The same accident caused a telephone failure, so it could not be reported at first. Visibility during the day was from one to two miles, and lookouts in the area could not see any smoke. At about 4:20 p.m., a woman reported a "fire in Evans creek" to the Grants Pass office with no other particulars given. Attempts to check the report were unsuccessful, but at 4:25 p.m. the last Grants Pass crew was dispatched. About 4:30 p.m. high winds started to clear the air and at 4:35 p.m. the Wimer guard station reported smoke to a lookout, which still could not see it. It was finally spotted and reported to Medford by the lookout at 4:50 p.m. The Grants Pass crew, hearing the radioed report, asked for directions. The crew arrived about 5 p.m. and found a number of local people trying to fight the blaze. However, high winds, along with intense heat from the edging pile, caused it to spot north of the road.

At 5:08 p.m. the crew estimated the size at 20 acres; by 5:25 it was reported growing rapidly and had roared over the ridge.

Right after the first official word came from the Sykes Creek fire, overhead (supervisory personnel) and a 20-man crew were requested from Salem, plus a 500-man tool supply. They started arriving in Medford by air at 9 p.m.

IT CAN be seen from this that the whole situation, caused mainly by gale-force winds, combined with tinder-dry conditions, "blew up" in only about three hours—stretching the firefighting equipment and personnel to the utmost.

Generally the same sort of thing happened elsewhere, too, requiring fast action on the part of suppression men. One of the most spectacular aspects is the use of "smokejumpers." Catherine Worth, of the Grants Pass Courier staff, recently wrote an interesting article about these men, stationed at Cave Junction, who parachute in to put out remote fires.

Jumps are made from 1,000 feet or less, she says, and must be made to terrain visible from the air. Most of the fires are spot blazes which ground crews would take hours or days to reach. Two men ordinarily go in and spend an average of a day and a night to get the fire out, and then hike out as best they can.

Most of them are college students. Between jumps they get one night's sleep before taking off again. Parachute riggers trained by the CAA do all the "chute packing. Equipment carried on a jump is food, fire tools, first aid equipment, and sometimes radios, as well as heavy protective clothing and other gear. Men getting ready for a jump pick their own food from canned and packaged goods.

VERY largely, it is speed which pays off in fire fighting in the woods. It's easier to control a one-acre fire than one of 100 acres. But regardless of equipment, it's still men who have to do most of the back-breaking job of putting them out, and trained men will always be needed. —E.A.

Korean Slowaways On Way Back Home: Portland—(U.P.)—Three slowaways on their way back to their home port of Inchon today after being discovered on the U. S. ship Young America en route to Portland. About all they got for their trouble was a smallpox vaccination from the Public Health Service.

In the Day's News

By FRANK JENKINS

In these recent days, when agriculture is going through the period of readjustment to the basic law of supply and demand that ALWAYS FOLLOWS WARS, it is popular—especially in the East—to plan irrigation development.

At the present moment, loud outcries are going up in the area east of the Mississippi against spending so much money for reclamation in the 17 Western states.

Why spend money to put water on more arid and semi-arid land when the consuming markets won't absorb the crops grown on the land already in production?

Let's CUT IT OUT—and spend the money on something else! And so on.

BEFORE going off the deep end in support of the arguments of those who would LIMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WEST, let's take a look at some figures.

The federal reclamation bureau points out in a recent statement that once-arid Western lands have flourished to such an extent that they have paid more than four billion dollars in U.S. income taxes since 1916.

With the magic touch of water, the statement adds, these reclaimed lands now produce crops worth \$800,000,000 per year—some 25,000,000 tons annually of prime fruit, vegetables, meat, grains, dairy products, etc.

THAT isn't hay—in any sense of the word.

And—

It should be added—

With all this production from lands that once were desert and would be desert still but for the magic of irrigation, the West—sparked by the development that has followed the reclamation of its arid lands—has grown so rapidly that it still CAN'T FEED ITSELF FROM ITS OWN PRODUCTION.

It has to IMPORT staple foods—meat is a shining example—from the East and the Middle West. Marketwise, the East is better off agriculturally than it would be if the West had never been touched by the magic wand of reclamation.

INDUSTRIALLY—

Well, industrially the story is wholly one-sided.

Let's consider automobiles, which are bought and used in the West in fabulous numbers. Automobile ownership per thousand of population is higher in the West than in any other part of our country. Automobiles are MADE IN THE EAST. Their manufacture gives employment to hundreds of thousands of Eastern workers, whose payrolls feed the economies of the Eastern towns and cities in which the factories are located.

Without the Western market, which has been made possible by the reclamation and irrigation of the arid lands of the West, the market for automobiles would be far smaller than it is. And automobiles are only one item in the long list of Eastern manufactured products that find a market in the West.

When the East makes cynical cracks about Western irrigation development, it is stepping on its own feet.

Communications

Letters to the Editor must bear the name and address of the writer although under certain circumstances the use of a pen name or initials for publication is permissible. The Mail Tribune reserves the right to edit all letters with an eye to clarification and condensation. Letters submitted for publication must not exceed 400 words.

Taxing the Tree: To the Editor: The shade tree is a thing of beauty, and is generally grown for its beauty and shade.

These two qualities are both of intangible value.

Now, if the tree has no monetary value, and just the shade is taxed, why should not the shade of my neighbor's barn be taxed as it is of better quality than mine, as my oak shade has holes in it?

My crabapple tree, when in full bloom, is like one huge snowball, but it is just as beautiful on my neighbor's side as on mine, so why should he not share in its tax as he gets half of the beauty? My wife says that my logic has

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Greece in Political Turmoil After Death Of Long-Sick Premier

By CHARLES M. McCANN United Press Correspondent Field Marshall Alexander Papagos, Greece's national hero, died fighting for his job as premier yesterday.



The 72-year-old soldier-statesman had been ailing—how ailing—was long a mystery—and his enemies were saying Greece had a headless government. Papagos had been confined to his home outside of Athens for six months. There had been no cabinet meeting for three months. The cabinet was torn by internal dissensions. It was reported last week-end that King Paul I, with whom

Editorial Comment

HIGHWAY CHANGE Through traffic is now bypassing Roseburg as a result of opening of the reconstructed Highway 99 section between Winchester and Shady Point.

Many old-timers doubtless are thinking back to the uproar created by the State Highway Commission when it opened Stephens street and took the highway off Jackson and Cass streets. Merchants and property owners in the business district fought the change to the last ditch. They predicted the roof would fall on Roseburg's economy. Property on Cass and Jackson, some declared, wouldn't be worth ten cents per front foot.

But think of the mess we would be in now if highway traffic still followed Jackson and Cass streets!

Few people are worried about the highway bypass. Naturally, some persons, engaged in businesses catering to through traffic, will be adversely affected. But, just as the change to Stephens Street enlarged the city's business district, bringing many benefits to the city as a whole, with little damage to other property, the change being made today is expected to be generally beneficial.

Protect Approaches One of the principal advantages in the change will be found in the impression gained of the city of Roseburg by people passing over the new route. I doubt if any city in Oregon will have a more scenic approach than on the new highway between Shady Point and the city. Every through highway traveler, I am sure, will be thrilled by that sight. And the higher road elevation affords an excellent view into the city's residential and business districts.

The approach from the north also is impressive, though less scenic. But while the approach from the south is one of rare beauty, the approach from the north affords a view of the municipal airport, industrial activity, schools, hospitals, and a fine glimpse of the city in general. In all, no city could ask for a more favorable location for a highway as a means of attracting attention and interest on the part of the through traveler.

Should Protect Beauty Every effort should be made to protect the beauty of these approaches, to remove any unsightly spots, and to add to the scenic values.

Some localities have been greatly disturbed concerning the possible effect of highway relocation. It is possible, of course, that adverse effects will be experienced in these areas left at considerable distance from the route. Roseburg, however, with its critical traffic congestion, undoubtedly will find the change to be of much benefit. If we can keep the approaches as attractive as they now are, it should not be long until this city is one of the favored tourist stops on the highway.—Roseburg News-Review.

HOLES in it like the shade of the oak. Anyway, it would give Bob Fowler something to think about. Howard Work, Wagner Creek.

Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS Ranger-Naturalist

Animals have an intricate alarm system which can spread through the forest like wildfire. At times, to send the warning they will risk their lives not only to warn of an impending enemy but to drive out the intruder if they can. An example of this mutual aid was brought to me by a letter from Barbara Bowerman of Eugene, Oregon, and it is through such observations that an understanding of the wild life



about us becomes known. (Incidentally, this True-Life Nature Adventure won for her a 30-volume set of the Encyclopedia

Americana offered weekly). "Just after noon on a warm summer day," Mrs. Bowerman relates, I stepped out the front door and was immediately aware of an unusual commotion of birds in a fir tree at the far end of our yard. I called my son, Tom. "I think there is a family of juncos out here teaching their young to fly."

"But even before he had settled himself, we had both noticed that there were other birds in the crowd including a beautiful western tanager, a couple of chipping sparrows, and a hummingbird darting in and out among the others.

"Gradually it became apparent that there was a sort of pattern to all of the birds' activities. Each was taking turns flying down, hovering over the top of a nearby rose bush, then returning to the fir while all of the dozen or so birds on the ground continued to make all the noise they possibly could.

"We walked up quietly and before we knew it we were practically on top of a chipping sparrow's nest and a bull snake was coiled around it, trying to swallow one of the baby birds.

"Now surely, all those birds had not planned to attract us humans to help. But perhaps they had instinctively banded together to bring some predator, perhaps a hawk, who would be delighted with a fat snake for his lunch!

"Still the most remarkable thing to us was the variety of birds which had gathered to aid the chipping sparrow: juncos which are ground-nesters, tanagers who build high in the tops of firs, and the gay little hummingbird whose nest is always at least shoulder high." (Released by McClure Newspaper Syndicate)

Free: By special arrangement with the editors of the Encyclopedia Americana, my panel of judges will award each week to the reader who sends me the best true-life nature adventure, the best nature observation, or the best question on nature and wildlife, a complete 30-volume set of this world-famous reference work in a handsome Sealcraft binding. Each week new submissions will be considered. Sorry, I simply can't answer your many friendly letters. Please address your letter to: IS THAT SO! c/o Medford Mail Tribune, Box 575, Sausalito, Calif.

City-Wide Strike By Unions Expected

New Castle, Ind. — (U.P.)—New Castle officials feared that every union member in the city would walk out today in protest of the firing of 35 striking employees of the Perfect Circle Corp.

Mayor Paul McCormack said leaflets have been passed out asking the 4,000 employees of a Chrysler Corp. plant to stay away from work in a sympathy demonstration.

Unions in other plants are considering similar moves, he said, and it was even possible that the walkout might spread to the neighboring Indiana cities of Muncie, Anderson, and Richmond.

He feared that every union employee in New Castle might take part in the walkout.

In Indianapolis, Gov. George Craig's office assured McCormack that state officials were on the alert in case serious trouble breaks out.

The CIO Auto Workers have been on strike against the Perfect Circle Corp. since July 25. The walkout has been frequently marked by violence and McCormack said the 35 dismissals "seemed to build a fire" under the mounting tension.

Pacific Islanders Want To Return Home

Tokyo — (U.P.)—The almost forgotten islanders of a small Pacific chain including historic Iwo Jima will ask the United States this month to "let us return to the homes of our ancestors."

Some 8,000 "displaced" natives of the Bonin islands want to "go home to our islands to live and bury the ashes of our dead."

The Japanese evacuated them to Japan more than 10 years ago during the closing days of the Pacific war.

The United States has held on to the islands for strategic reasons just as it has occupied Okinawa and other Pacific possessions captured during the bitter island-hopping Pacific fight.

TAX REDUCED

Lyons, Kan. — (U.P.)—For the second straight year, the city of Lyons has reduced its municipal tax levy. Latest cut was 1.25 mills, made possible through increased outside revenue, carry-over surplus and a hike in total property valuation.

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