

Variety of Hobbies Keep Crater Lake Residents Busy

17 Families Live at Park Throughout Year

by EARL H. ADAMS
Mail Tribune City Editor

Visitors at Crater Lake National park during winter months—late September to early June—often ask rangers and park service employees the question: "What do you do up here in the winter?"

The 17 families living at the park all winter are often isolated during heavy storms, as in late October when more than 50 inches of snow accumulated and all highways into the park were closed for almost a week.

There is always routine work to do—clearing roads after storms, servicing and repairing equipment, maintaining heating, water and sewer facilities, and keeping buildings in condition.

After the day's work is done there is hardly enough time during the evening for residents to travel to either Medford or Klamath Falls and return within a reasonable hour. Many times, residents do not leave the village for two or three weeks, and it is possible to live there all winter without venturing into the city.

Outdoor Sports

There are always outdoor sports, such as skiing, snowshoeing, tobogganing, in which residents participate on days off that are not stormy.

But for the long evening hours during the eight-month winter, residents have a variety of hobbies ranging from a community project of remodeling a hall for recreational purposes to individual hobbies of photography, making cloths, rugs, jewelry, fishing gear, model trains, toys, refinishing furniture, cabinet making and ham radio. Many of the hobbies were developed purposely to break the monotony and occupy spare time.

Perhaps the activity which has attracted the most attention recently is the community project of remodeling storage space above the old machine shop for a recreation hall.

The work is being done by park personnel under the direction of Paul Turner, ranger, and Harley Jones, equipment operator, both of whom have a knowledge of carpentry. Although the hall is not yet completed, surplus paint and other material have made the main room an attractive two-tone cream and pastel green hall.

Kitchen facilities will be improved and will include a refrigerator and new stove. The main hall will be used for square dances, modern dances and other social activities, including facilities to show slides and motion pictures, and to hold parties for children.

When the remodeling project started, Park Superintendent Thomas Williams suggested painting be done in colors which would provide a light setting, and, as he commented, to "put some life into the place."

Response at Hall
Response in remodeling the hall has been enthusiastic. In one week recently, 10 volunteers turned out three nights to work.

principally because the residents believe some type of recreation hall was one of the most important facilities lacking at the village. Present homes are too small for large social gatherings, and other buildings where room was available could not be heated efficiently or were not centrally located.

Among the more interesting hobbies at the village is a family affair. Paul Turner, his wife, and their 10-year-old daughter, Dee, make finished jewelry from precious and semi-precious stones and just plain rocks. The Turner family takes pride in the fact they are members of the fastest growing hobby in the country—Rock Hounds and Pebble Pups.

They collect beach pebbles and small rocks, grind, polish, cut and mount them on tie pins, cuff links, earrings, necklaces, rings and pins. Turner even decorated cigarette lighters, and designed a lamp from polished stone, through which light beautifies the grain of the rock.

Majority of Rocks

Although the majority of rocks they use come from Oregon, some stones which Turner cuts come from as far away as South Africa and South America. "Within a 50-mile radius of Bend," Turner said, "is the largest area containing the most valuable semi-precious rocks in Oregon." Many of the stones come from that area.

In determining what type beach pebbles or small stones will make desired jewelry, they are polished. Polishing is done in a piece of equipment made from two automobile tires, the rubber tire tumbler. The process involves rough grinding, then polishing in a solution of sugar and water, and finally in a detergent solution, all of which is done in the tumbler.

Not all stones and rocks are polished before cutting, however. Many of the larger rocks are cut in half and one surface polished to see what may be made from the design in the stone. The majority of the time, the Turners never know what the rock may be since they do not cut or break rocks in the field.

Rocks Purchased

Some rocks and stones are purchased because they are not available in this country. Turner

obtains tiger-eye, a lustrous yellowish-brown stone from South Africa for tie pins, cuff links, earrings and necklaces. From South America, he obtains crystals, which, when cut and polished, have the appearance of diamonds. Another unusual rock Turner uses is a soft, rare stone known as chrysocolla, an expensive material found in the desert southwest. He makes rings and necklaces from the dark green stone.

Turner does not stop at just preparing rocks for jewelry—he makes most of the mountings himself from material purchased from a hobby warehouse. He makes mountings for rings, including the ring mount, and various pins.

Turner has been cutting rocks about four years, and making mountings about three years. He became interested in jewelry making from another family who lived at the park. He visited them once just to watch the cutting process a few minutes before dinner, and returned home several hours later determined to cut rocks himself.

A handy-man in a village like Crater Lake is an asset. And when anyone needs advice on almost anything from fishing and hunting to sewing buckskin and making toys, they contact Harley Jones, an equipment operator.

Fishing Gear

Jones makes his own fishing gear, from putting the pole together to making an elk hide spinner holder and fishing knives. The spinning reels, however, he purchases, and all he has are precision instruments from France.

Spinners, all sizes and shapes, are made from almost any light weight metal which will shine.

Since Jones was unable to find a holder he considered suitable for his spinners, leaders and weights, he made one himself—one which fastens to his belt with a separate compartment for leaders and weights. Most holders, he said, require the use of both hands. The one he designed was constructed so spinners are easy to remove with one hand. The separate compartment keeps leaders and sinkers from tangling with the spinners, which are hooked on both sides of the V-shaped, folding elk hide holder.

While Jones is the fishing enthusiast in the family (his oldest daughter is quickly acquiring the enthusiasm and has her own fishing equipment), Mrs. Jones is the family hunter. Each year, they hunt in eastern Oregon, and always bring back venison for the winter and buckskin to make clothes for the children.

Buckskin Booties
Jones has made one pair of buckskin booties, about the size for a year-old baby, and mittens for the children. Needing the finishing touches is a buckskin jacket for one of the children. A recently tanned deer hide is waiting to be used, and before spring, it too probably will take a jacket form.

But the spare time activities of the Joneses does not stop with hunting and fishing and their related industries. Jones also is cabinet and hobby maker. Children take pride in playing with the custom made horses.

From a piece of soft wood, he carves the shape of a horse's head, provides a miniature halter and bit, adds a piece of pine about four feet long for the body, and to that a miniature hand-carved saddle, and after a coat of black and white paint, the horse is ready to use.

Cramped Quarters

Cramped quarters in the present residences at the village have prevented Bernie Packard, supervisory park ranger, from pursuing his main hobby—making model trains to scale. But he hopes to continue it soon.

Train engines and cars come in kits modeled to scale. Patience and time are required to mass the hundreds of tiny pieces, fit them together and finally come up with a miniature railroad system which could easily turn one floor of a house into a small nation.

Packard acquired the interest in trains while in Los Angeles about four years ago, but since



SPINNER KIT—Harley Jones, equipment operator at Crater Lake National park, is shown with a spinner kit he designed, and made from elk hide. He designed the kit so

spinners, leaders and sinkers could be removed with one hand. A separate compartment in the kit holds leaders so they won't become entangled with the spinners.



REBUILDING RADIO—Harvey Cliff, head of the park's maintenance department, plans to rebuild a recently purchased ham radio set shown above. Before he became interested in radio, he repaired watches, but

he said, "That was sort of a tedious job." Several times he has tuned in on broadcasts from Jackson county and listened to ham operators, he said.

space has prevented setting up track, he has been refinishing furniture while Mrs. Packard braids rugs. Packard presently is refinishing an antique rocking chair given him by his father.

Designs Sweaters

Another supervisory park ranger, Roby R. (Slim) Mabery, designs sweaters his wife knits. Mabery is skiing instructor at the park, and a member of the Gazoski club, an exclusive skiing club of the Bay area.

One sweater he designed and she knitted has the tracks of a skier walking uphill on the front, and tracks of the person skiing downhill on the back. Another sweater is designed with the insignia of the Gazoski club.

Sweaters are not the only thing Mrs. Mabery knits, however. She knitted a stole of black angora yarn which resembles a shiny black bear skin. It has been mistaken for a bear skin, too, she said. She also knitted several dresses, and modeled a light green dress which took her almost a year to complete.

Ham Radio

Each home at Crater Lake has a radio, but Harvey Cliff, maintenance department head, was not satisfied with just listening to the average radio program, so he has taken up ham radio. His set, which he recently obtained, is not in full operation as yet, and he plans to rebuild the equipment.

Frequently he tunes in on radio broadcasts from the Jackson county area, and since he has seen mobile radio units in action, he became interested in operating his own ham set.

His interest was intensified one day when, traveling toward Medford, he approached an accident in which there were injuries. He proceeded to Prospect, the nearest available telephone, and stopped a logging truck to inquire for a telephone. The driver told him to hang on just a minute while he radioed his office, which in turn notified the ambulance.

Cliff used to repair watches in his spare time, but he said, "that was sort of a tedious job," and has turned to radio. While he is busy repairing the radio, his wife occupies her time by hooking rugs and reading.

Hooks Rugs

She is not the only one who hooks rugs, either. Mrs. William (Bill) Loftis also hooks rugs while her husband, the park engineer, is busy with photography or woodworking.

Mrs. Loftis, who became interested in hooked rugs from her mother, in St. Petersburg, Fla.,

divides the base material into squares, trims each in blocks, and hooks one square at a time. That way, she said, if she doesn't have time to do very much, she has a good stopping place.

Loftis, who takes color slides as well as black and white, does some developing and printing in the park headquarters darkroom.

The darkroom is available to park personnel but material such as developer are not furnished. A majority of the people living at the village take pictures, and presently Assistant Superintendent Raymond Ruedell is working on a series of negatives which will be sent to the national park director's office in Washington, D. C.

Ask for Negatives

The service, which is collecting negatives from all national parks, has asked for 20 from Crater Lake National park by next March, and Ruedell has been taking pictures this fall and winter for possible use.

Although not employees of the park service, Mr. and Mrs. Glen Happle live at the park rim all winter. They live in the lodge and operate the warming hut after the tourist season officially ends.

Mrs. Happle, in her spare time, has been carving "warming hut" and "open" signs from soft wood to use at the new hut. She also has been painting serving trays, while Happle busies himself with repairs in the lodge and other buildings at the rim.

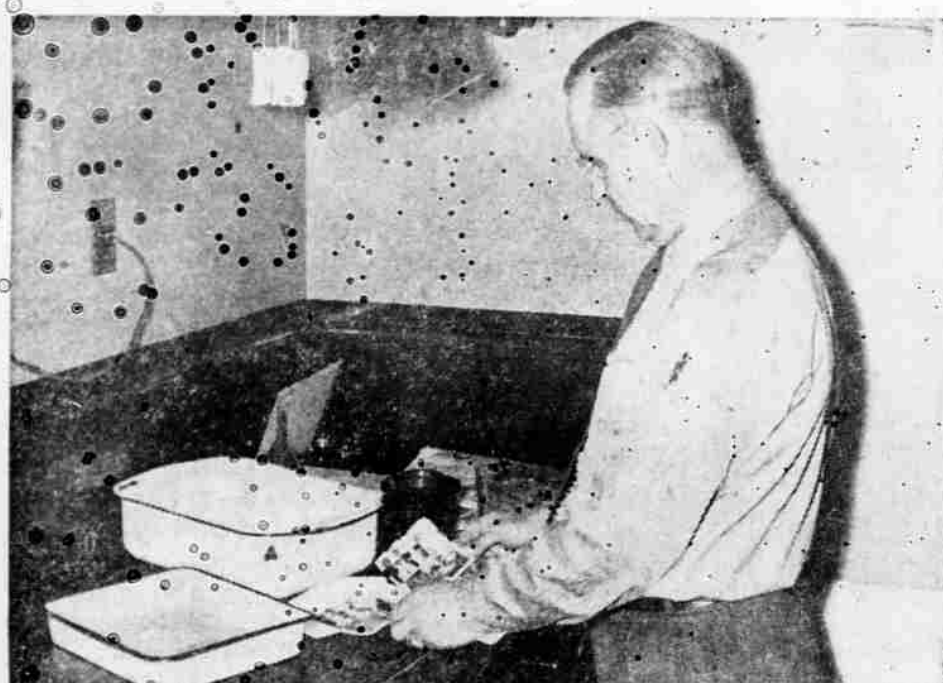


MODELS DRESS—Mrs. Roby Mabery models a green knit dress, and stole knit from black angora wool. Sweaters knit by Mrs. Mabery were designed by her husband, a supervisory park ranger and skiing instructor.



AT METAL BENCH—Paul Turner, supervisory park ranger, inspects a piece of polished rock at his "metal bench." Turner, who collects, cuts, and polishes all type stones and rocks, makes pin and ring mountings. Tools

for working with metal and for holding stones for polishing are shown at the right, and the rock cutter and polishers are in the background.



INSPECTS PICTURE—Assistant Superintendent Raymond Ruedell inspects a picture he processed in the park headquarters darkroom, which is available for use by rangers

and park service personnel. Ruedell is taking pictures for negatives to send back to the national park director's office in Washington, D.C., in his spare time.



MAKES TRAINS—This scale model train hanger Bernie Packard made from a special kit. Because of space limitations for setting up the track at the residence at Crater Lake,

Packard has not been making trains recently, but hopes to resume the hobby soon. In the meantime, he has been refinishing furniture. His wife braids rugs.



HOOKED RUG—Mr. and Mrs. William (Bill) Loftis display a hooked rug Mrs. Loftis works on in her spare time. She divides the base material in squares, edges them, and does

one square at a time, when her time permits. Loftis, who made the table in the foreground and does some photography, is the park engineer.

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