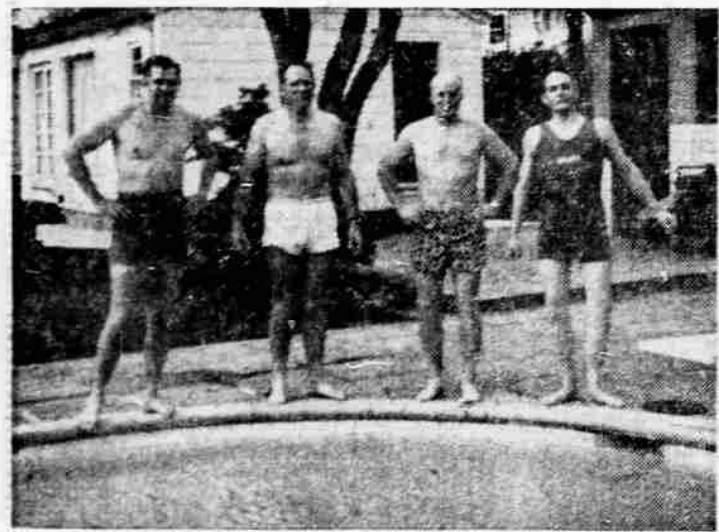


Discovery Recalls One of War's Best Secrets



FUTURE POLAR BEARS—Local residents interested in forming a Polar Bear club in the valley met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. B. D. Mitchell on Black Oak dr. New Year's day. Shown above, on the edge of the Mitchell pool, are, left to right, Bob Dickey, Mitchell, Jerry Olsen, and Bert Thieroff. Others at the all-day party were, besides the Mitchells, Ellis Chartier, Dr. and Mrs. Hibbs, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Hearin, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Dave Holmes, Mr. and Mrs. Thieroff, Mr. and Mrs. Olsen, Mr. and Mrs. Dickey, Mr. and Mrs. Emil Mohrs, Mr. and Mrs. Berwick Wood, Mr. and Mrs. Doug McCann, Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Bush Jr., Mr. and Mrs. John Raap, Mr. and Mrs. George Rasmussen, and Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Mayfield.

ROGUE RIVER Anniversary Celebrated

By MRS. MYRTLE WHIPPLE
Rogue River — Mr. and Mrs. Carl Christenson celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Dec. 22, with a reception at Fellowship hall of the Presbyterian church.

Mr. and Mrs. Christenson were married Dec. 20, 1907, in Colorado Springs, Colo., and have been residents of this area since 1940. They have made many friends here, who greeted them at the hall between 2 and 4 p.m. The couple received their guests under an archway of golden streamers and bells. The hall was decorated with baskets of colorful flowers and bells, done by Mrs. Esther Shock. Mrs. Robert Brown had charge of the guest book.

At the refreshment tables Mrs. Christenson's sister, Mrs. Betty Smith served the cake, assisted by her granddaughter, Sharon Smith. Misses Ann and Patricia Christenson served the punch and Mrs. Rollin Stiehl and Mrs. Dorothy Ricks served the coffee.

A small Christmas tree was on the gift table, and to this was clipped dollar bills as gifts to the Christensons, who received many other gifts. This table was presided over by Mrs. Christenson's niece, Mrs. Hubert Smith.

Out of town guests were the Christensons' son, Carl, M. Christenson and family, who arrived by plane from Denver, Colo. They stayed until after Christmas. Other guests were Mr. and Mrs. Ed Ricks of Jefferson, Ore.

The Christenson's daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Orlan Hammett planned the celebration.

Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Wood and daughters of Redway, Calif., spent Christmas with Mrs. Wood's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Magerle. A family dinner was held at the home

of Mr. and Mrs. Virgil Oatney. Those attending were the Magerles' daughter, Mrs. Charles Perrin and family, Mrs. Bessie Clyde and family, their son George and family and daughter, Mrs. Wood and family. Out of town guests were Mr. and Mrs. Thexon, parents of Mrs. George Magerle, from Sacramento, Calif.

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Deal of Susanville, Calif., called New Year's eve at the home of Clyde's uncle, Tom Wilson, and cousin, Mrs. Ambre Blayden.

Mrs. Blanch Schar left for her home in Portland after spending two weeks as guest of the John Breedings.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Maulding of Tillamook, Ore., were callers New Year's day at the Tom Wilson home. They were returning home after attending Mr. Maulding's mother's funeral at Medford.

Mr. and Mrs. George Magerle and children and Mr. and Mrs. Thexon of Sacramento visited the Thexons' son and family at Klamath Falls last week.

Mr. and Mrs. John Breeding and Blanch Schar were dinner guests Christmas at the home of Mrs. Schar's niece and family, the Evans at Grants Pass.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Baker and children of Fortuna, Calif., spent Christmas with Mrs. Bakers' parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Smith. Other guests for Christmas dinner were Mr. and Mrs. Wes Brown and children of Grants Pass.

Mr. and Mrs. Al Goessling of Alpine, Ore., were guests Christmas of Mr. and Mrs. Dick Magerle.

Jonas Resigning As Representative

Salem—P—State Rep. Guy Jonas, Salem, announced Saturday he was resigning to give more time to his family, business and law studies.

Jonas, a Democrat, was serving his first term in the state legislature. He was a member of the tax committee at the recent special session of the legislature and served on the tax, commerce, utility and state-federal committees during the regular 1957 session.

"I find myself unable to continue the sacrifices in time and money involved in a long election campaign and ever lengthening legislative sessions and at the same time give proper attention to my personal responsibilities," Jonas said in announcing his resignation.

Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Miller, Mrs. Lois Morgan and Lloyd Smith are all out again after having a siege of the flu during the holidays.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Owen of Grants Pass, Mrs. L. A. Miller and son, Russell, were dinner guests Christmas of Jim Rhoten and family at Wimer.

New Year's dinner guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Whipple were Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Swift.

Mrs. Bill Owsley spent the holidays with her son and family at Eureka, Calif.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Perrin and sons have moved into the Shults home on Cedar street. The place was recently purchased by Mrs. Perrin's brother, George Magerle.

Mr. and Mrs. Allan McGregory, Jr., of Valdez, Alaska, were visiting with relatives and friends in Rogue River last week.

Mr. and Mrs. James Rambo of Long Island, N.Y., arrived Dec. 20 to spend the holidays with their son and family, the Dr. Cedric Rambo.

Mr. and Mrs. John Foster of Medford were overnight guests Christmas eve and spent Christmas day with Tom Wilson and Mrs. Ambre Blayden. Mrs. Foster is Mr. Wilson's sister.

Ardin Terrill had as Christmas day guests for dinner his brother Jack Terrill, and wife and Mrs. Julia Dow, all of Lake Creek, Ore.

Mr. and Mrs. Roland Jones entertained Christmas with a family dinner. Guests were Mrs. Jones and parents, Mr. and Mrs. Phil Strahan, her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Dengler, and her aunt, Mrs. Chan Stokes, and husband, and Chris and Wayne the Jones' sons.

It takes an average of one acre of land to raise feed for one horse per year.

Japanese Balloon Bomb Found by Two Klamath Fishermen

BY JIM FISHER
A discovery last July 29 by two Klamath Falls fishermen recalled for many residents of southern Oregon and elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest one of the best kept secrets of World War II. What the fishermen discovered were the remains of a Japanese balloon bomb nearly 12 years after it had landed on the north side of Pelican Butte, located approximately 25 miles northwest of Klamath Falls.

An Army ordnance bomb disposal team was sent from Ft. Lewis, Wash., to recover the bomb remains. The rice-paper balloon had rotted away, leaving only parts of the carrier intact.

Because of the absolute secrecy used by the United States in reporting the success of the Japanese balloon bombs, few people today know just what the balloon bombs were and how they worked. An even smaller proportion of the residents of the Medford area realize that a bomb from one of these balloons fell and exploded on the outskirts of Medford early in 1945.

About 5:45 p.m. Jan. 12, 1945, Oliver Tice was weighing hay with his brother near his barn on South Peach st., between Stewart ave. and the Old Stage rd. Tice, still a resident of the Rogue River valley, recalls that he and his brother heard a whistling sound coming at them from straight overhead. He thought it was an airplane trying to land in his alfalfa field, but instead the object whistled over him and fell to the ground about 500 feet from where the two men were standing. At once there was an explosion and flame "as blue as Crater Lake" shot into the air more than 30 feet. Tice's hat was blown off his head and the 125 head of cows that had been bedded down around the barn jumped to their feet.

With the explosion over, thick white smoke curled up from the area and continued to do so for two hours. Tice and his brother walked over to the area of the explosion to investigate. There was a strong, sickening smell in the air. Tice's dog ran up and snarled around the bomb hole and immediately got sick.

Force of Fall
The two men noticed that the force of the fall had pushed the object more than four feet into the hard, sticky soil. For an area four feet in diameter around the explosion, the dark soil had been turned white and would crumble like pumice.

Tice called the Federal Bureau of Investigation, but had to wait until nearly midnight before the local FBI man returned from another assignment in Chiliquin. By digging in the hole, Tice and the FBI man found a round metal object intact at the bottom and removed it. All other burned remains were gathered together and sent with the object to San Francisco for study. Tice and his neighbors were warned to keep quiet about the explosion. The FBI man said that other bomb explosions would probably be reported in eastern Oregon in a short time.

A strange aftermath of this story concerns what one of the investigating authorities told Tice. He was told that alfalfa would not grow in the area of the bomb explosion for some time to come, yet the next year the alfalfa grew as least a foot taller where the bomb had exploded.

First Introduced
Americans were first introduced to the balloon bombs in the fall of 1944 when several mysterious happenings over the western part of the country were reported. One of the first reports came from a housewife in Montana who saw a flaming object explode in the air. Other explosions were heard in the mountains throughout the Pacific Northwest. State and federal forest fire lighting agencies reported fires being started in isolated areas where no lightning storms had occurred.

Airplane pilots flying over Japan reported huge spheres being released. Ships in the Pacific Ocean found bits of rice paper floating in the water far from any land.

Skiffing Flying
Finally, in January, 1945, an Air Force pilot flying over

Crater Lake spotted one of the balloons in flight and through skillful flying and careful maneuvering, he was able to force the balloon down onto a hillside near Alturas, Calif. At last the American authorities had an opportunity to study this strange object that had been puzzling them.

The balloon part of the craft was composed of five layers of rice paper glued with hydrocellulose and was 33 1/2 feet in diameter. Big shroud lines hung from the center and supported the bombs and instruments. Rubber shock absorbers protected the instruments.

Test balloons had been used by the Japanese to determine the length of time it would take the balloons to reach the United States. The trip across the Pacific Ocean took an average of three days. Tiny radios relayed this information back to Japan. These test balloons had been discovered, but they were thought to be weather balloons.

Once the balloons were released from Japanese soil, they rose to an elevation of from 25,000 to 50,000 feet. Strong winds carried them at an estimated speed of 100 to 200 miles per hour. Each night the cooling gas in the balloon would cause it to descend, but a barometer would cause one of the attached 20 sand bags, weighing six pounds, each to drop and the balloon would regain its altitude. After a determined length of time, when the balloon reached a minimum altitude, one of 16 incendiary bombs would be dropped. The balloon would then climb until another barometer would cause some of the gas in the balloon to escape. This cycle would then repeat itself until all of the bombs would be dropped.

The Japanese knew that it would be wise to destroy the remaining portion of their bombing craft, so they arranged a mechanism that would explode and destroy the instruments and balloon once the 16 bombs had been dropped. Two pounds of picric acid were used to achieve this. Hydrogen permanent bombs were often included on the balloon to create larger explosions when the instruments were destroyed.

Fault of Device
Both the sand bag mechanism and the bomb mechanism had two electrical circuits for safe measure. One big fault of the bomb device was the use of a wet cell battery that often froze during the balloon's flight. Had a dry cell battery been used, more of the balloons would have functioned properly.

With the capture of the first Japanese balloon intact, American authorities were able to definitely determine that the sand in the sand bags was Japanese sand. The source of the sand was even narrowed down to a certain region of Japan where Air Force bombers were able to slow up production by heavy bombing of the factories.

Censorship was placed on all reports of balloon activity. Newspapers and radios co-operated in preventing the Japanese from learning the amount of success they had obtained in using their balloon bombs. The federal government conducted schools on the bombs with special personnel attending. All reports of strange explosions, forest fires, and balloon sightings were carefully investigated and kept quiet.

Lull in Production
In June 1945, there was a lull in balloon bomb production. American scientists feared that the balloons would soon be used in bacteria warfare to expose the American people, their crops, and livestock to new and deadly diseases. All county agents, farmers, and agricultural scientists were warned to watch for sick animals and to report strange deaths of livestock.

Closer to the end of the war, Japan threatened to send suicide pilots in balloons over the United States to direct bombing, but this was never started.

Following the end of the war in August, 1945, Americans learned that their bacteria warfare fears were unnecessary. The Japanese had known that balloons were reaching the United States, but they did not know how many had survived the long



RAILWAY EXCAVATION—Enthusiastic Rogue valley residents turned out in large number April 4, 1905, for commencement of the Medford and Crater Lake railroad, as seen in the picture above owned by C. F. Nichols, 1216 Locust st. He appears four from the left. According to Nichols, the crew is preparing to break the land as first step in the planned route. The railway did reach as far as Butte Falls and made early-day Eagle Point and Butte Falls recreational centers for valley travelers. It is now operated as a logging train by the Medford corporation.

PROSPECT Several Servicemen Home

By MICKIE LARSON

Prospect—Among the servicemen home for the holidays are Darwin Been, who is stationed at San Diego, Calif., and David Richie, who is stationed at Stud Air Force base in Reno, Nev.

Cpl. Raymond Dodgin, who is stationed at Lockbourne, Ohio, has also been home during the holidays and will be sent to Greenland after returning to his base, Kenneth Ellis, who has been stationed in Germany for the past three years, and who was also home for Christmas, will be stationed in France for two more years.

Mr. and Mrs. Richie Price, former coach of Prospect, was here for the holidays. He is now coaching at Fairfield, Calif.

Mr. Jerry Griffith was released from a local hospital so he could be home for Christmas. He returned the same weekend for further medical treatment.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Ellis and daughters, Donna and Diane, visited in Foothills creek at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Williams this past week.

Mr. and Mrs. Victor Chapman and sons, Clifton, Dwain and Dale, and Mrs. JoAnn McHenry, visited at the home of Mrs. Chapman's mother, Mrs. E. L. Mead, in Sanger, Calif., this past week.

Miss Sherry Downing is visiting her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John Spencer. Miss Downing will return to Portland Dec. 30.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Slack and children, Rusty, Jimmy and Ellen, spent Christmas day in Medford at the home of the children's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Slack.

Guests the past week at the John Moore home was John's brother, Carl Moore and family from Lakeview, Ore.

Visiting over Christmas at months later during the hot dry summer.

With the sudden stopping of the balloon bombs in June of 1945, followed closely by the end of the war, the Japanese ended the nine-month war that they had declared on the American homefront, a war that most Americans hadn't known to exist.

Recently, Weyerhaeuser Timber company, on whose land the tragedy occurred, constructed a memorial to the six bomb victims, the only actual war casualties of World War II on the continental United States.

During the early summer of 1945, a fire crew of young boys found a balloon hanging in a tree alongside a road near Lake of the Woods. They took it back to their headquarters with them and were trying to tear it apart when their foreman found them. This balloon also was turned over to the military authorities.

During the fall of 1944 and the spring of 1945, many balloon bombs were heard exploding in the vicinity of Mt. McLoughlin. Winds apparently carried the balloons to this area where they dropped their bombs before exploding themselves. At this time, the forest fire danger was not very high and the bombs did not offer as big a threat to the forests as they would have three

Air Station Set For Fresno Area

San Francisco—P—The Navy has received funds and authority to purchase two-thirds of the land for its new Naval Air Station at Lemoore, near Hanford, and 38 miles from Fresno, the Twelfth Naval District announced Saturday.

Capt. J. A. McHenry district public works officer, said the present order covered 19,770 acres of fee title land. Funds for an additional 11,041 acres are expected shortly.

The land will be taken from about 300 owners by court action, McHenry said. He said the condemnation proceedings will include owners who have signed agreements already to guarantee them payment at the same time as those who have resisted the action.

Lands, improvements, utilities and roads for the station will cost \$7,739,457, he said.

Chains Advised For Pendleton
Salem—P—Motorists were advised to carry chains for travel to Pendleton and Warm Springs junction today. Two inches of new snow was reported at Pendleton.

The state highway department said roads were icy in spots at Government Camp, Wilson River summit, Sunset summit, Cascade Locks, Salmon river, Siskiyou, Prospect, Sisters, Ochoco summit, Willamette pass, Chemult, Bly, Meacham, Seneca and Burns.

PRIESTS JAILED
Vienna—P—The Austrian Catholic News Service said Saturday that a group of Catholic Romanian priests had been sentenced to jail terms by a Bucharest court for alleged "illicit relations with foreign organizations."

The news service, quoting "information received from Bucharest," said the curate of Lugov, Ioannes Ploscariu, had received a 15-year term. The news service said it had no details on the alleged crimes.

of Myrtle Creek were guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Dodgin over the holidays.

The No. 1 Bridge club will meet Jan. 7 at the home of Mrs. Lillian Hexion at Wildwood.

Skiing at Union creek is reported to be quite good and a large crowd has been making use of the ski tow which operates on weekends.

Harry and Patty Dodgin

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