

'The City Is Like An Unfinished Jewel'

Gold Hill's Civic Leaders Say: 'Let's Get City Moving Again'

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Gold Hill Correspondent and Mail Tribune Staff Writer

Gold Hill — "What's wrong with Gold Hill?" Mayor Milton Steinmetz asked 30 business leaders, councilmen and planning committee members Monday night. "Everywhere I go people are asking me this question," Steinmetz continued.

H. D. (Bud) Force says, "Gold Hill has been standing still for some time. If we stand still much longer our progress is going to be backward instead of forward." Force is chairman of the city planning committee.

Is something wrong with Gold Hill? Is the city progressing in the wrong direction? Apparently some city officials and business leaders think so.

The crowd of 30 attending the special Monday session called by Steinmetz to consider city problems was one of the largest to attend such a meeting in many years, officials indicated. The spirit of the meeting paralleled John Kennedy's election slogan — "Let's get this city moving again."

Lead to story of City

Many of the problems considered lead to a story of the city itself.

Steinmetz states the city has experienced a population decline in the last half-century that is a matter for concern. The 1960 census showed 608 residents, compared to 619 in 1950. Fifty years ago the population in the area was close to 1,200, the mayor said.

In 1910 gold mining was the major industry in the city, according to Steinmetz. Little lumbering was done in the immediate area. Today the picture has changed. Heavy and light industry, area fruit growing companies and the lumber mills keep the town alive.

Another problem, some officials say, the town is facing centers around the area's main industry — The Ideal Cement company. The cement plant came to the Gold Hill area in 1913. It was founded originally as the Beaver Portland Cement company. It underwent a series of ownership changes until taken over by Ideal.

Two types of cement are manufactured by 100 hourly and 15 salaried employees. Most of the cement is used in the central and southern Oregon areas. The plant ordinarily operates 12 months of the year, according to Frank Sutcliffe, manager.

One of Smallest

The Gold Hill operation is one of Ideal's smallest. The company has 16 plants and four terminals in the U.S. The company is happy in its Gold Hill location, Sutcliffe says.

Unfortunately, many claim the plant is creating problems. Possible air pollution is blamed on alleged cement dust coming from the plant during operating hours. That air pollution exists hasn't been scientifically determined. However, the company has agreed to have the state sanitary department conduct scientific tests in various locations to determine if cement dust is a factor in the possible air pollution.

Ideal has one of the latest dust filtration systems available, according to Sutcliffe. An electrical precipitator magnetizes dust particles which are collected on a magnetic rod. The system was installed about 10 years ago.

Whether alleged air pollution is actually due to cement dust will have to wait several months for determination. The sanitary department tests take an extended period of time.

Water Filtration System

Another problem is the

need for a water filtration system, according to Steinmetz. Presently the cement company pumps the city water supply from the Rogue river at little cost to the city.

The water is pumped to two reservoirs, and then chemically treated with chlorine. Many times the water contains an unbalanced proportion of chlorine, making it objectionable, the mayor implied. A water filtration system would eliminate use of the chemical, he said.

Preliminary examination of a filtration system indicates it would cost a little over \$100,000, Steinmetz said. One possible means of financing the project would be by a combination revenue and general obligation bond, he indicated. Gold Hill residents would vote on the project if a bond issue was proposed. However, this is still in the talking stages and an engineer will have to be consulted on exact costs if the project is pursued.

More Businesses

City officials are also desirous of interesting more businesses and industries to establish plants in Gold Hill. This would encourage people to build and buy homes in the area, they feel. More small industries such as Jeddell Brothers Sued Mill are desired.

The company was established in Gold Hill in 1955. It produces modern machinery used in production of plywood. Five or six men were employed at the start, and this figure has risen to about 60 full-time employees today. Fred Jeddell, co-owner, says. The terrific growth the company has experienced has meant an increase in physical facilities. From 6,000 square feet of production floor space in 1955 the company has expanded to 16,000 today. Plans are being considered for addition of another 8,000 square feet, Jeddell says.

City's Location

He says the plant is located in Gold Hill because skilled laborers were needed and the city's location between Medford and Grants Pass provided a convenient skilled labor market from which to draw. About 30 per cent of the employees come from Grants Pass and about 30 per cent from Medford. The remaining 40 per cent are situated in the Gold Hill area.

"The friendly attitude of Gold Hill people also influenced our decision to settle in this area," Jeddell comments.

"We emphasize continual development of new products in order to insure the security of our company," he says. "The plywood industry at the present time has a great demand for labor — saving devices."

Other businesses in the area include fruit orchards, lumber mills and a farm and dairy. The Del Rio orchard, located about a mile north of the city limits, is one of the area's oldest industries.

Expanding Facilities

It was founded in 1906, and has been expanding facilities at a continual rate ever since. In 1959 a modern cold storage building was constructed at a cost of about \$75,000. During the 1960 harvest season 72 people were employed in the orchards.

H. S. Deuel is manager of the business. Deuel says that about 75,000 lugs of pears are harvested each year. They are shipped to all parts of the country, and even reach Finland, Sweden and Canada. Apples are also grown.

A new business in the area is the Three Jay's Guernsey Farm and Dairy, located about a mile north of town on

Highway 99. The dairy is presently supplying milk on a wholesale basis to 25 markets in the Rogue valley area. The dairy herd has grown from one cow in 1954 to 100 today. Mr. and Mrs. John Jaksch operate the dairy.

Although the city faces problems, officials point out that it has much to offer potential residents. The sewage disposal system is termed "equal to any in the state" by Mayor Steinmetz. It was completely overhauled in 1952 and now is considered adequate for a population of 5,000 people.

The city is rare in its small amount of indebtedness. Current indebtedness is only \$1,500 remaining on a bond issue that financed a new fire truck.

Of the 4.7 miles of city owned streets, 3.5 miles are paved. These figures don't include more than a mile of paved streets owned by the state.

Assessed valuation of city property was \$534,217.56 in 1960, compared to \$522,376 in 1955.

Building permits issued in 1960 totaled 23 with a valuation of \$151,071. These included two residential homes, seven residential home additions, a \$122,031 addition to the Patrick Elementary school, a new post office and other miscellaneous projects. The post office was dedicated in August and contains 1,238 feet of floor space. Construction cost was about \$8,500.

The school system has improved facilities at a rapid rate since 1955. The Patrick Elementary school was completed in 1956 at a cost of \$77,334. It is situated on eight acres near the northern city limits. Four classrooms were included in the initial construction. In 1960 four additional

Preparations for Annual Kiwanian Show Get Started

Preparations for the 13th annual Medford Kiwanis Kapers come out from behind the scenes this week with the kickoff of the program advertising campaign.

Members of the service club will begin contacting business and professional men of the community Wednesday, Jan. 18, and the drive will continue through March 1.

The Kapers production, "Off the Hook," will be presented March 8, 9, 10 and 11 at the senior high school auditorium. Proceeds from the musical variety show will go toward Kiwanis philanthropic projects, among them the countywide dental clinic for youngsters who cannot otherwise afford such care.

General chairman of the Kapers this year is Herb Partidge. His division heads are Doug Phillips, program and advertising; Fred Gatter, tickets; Ken Baker, publicity; Bob Balk, show; Dr. Abner Clark, talent; and Glen Allen, finance.

Phillips has called an organizational luncheon meeting of advertising division team captains and special chairmen for Tuesday noon at the Jackson hotel.

His organization includes Bill Cobb, assistant division chairman; Bob Collins, Fred Sears, Hugh Engstrom, Jennings Pierce and Leo Radke, team captains; and the following special committeemen: Dr. Billy Blackstone, dentists; Ken Wright, attorneys; Gordon Mackenzie, insurance men; Jerry Lausmann, wholesale lumber firms; Dick Payne, fruit growers; Dr. Buonocone, doctors; Jack Burpee, auto dealers; Russ Brown, retail gasoline dealers; Dwight Houghton, banks and savings and loan firms; Max Millhollin and Paul Mitchell, retail grocers; Jack Edson, retail lumber firms; Jack Moreland, electrical appliance dealers; and Vic Milnes, program layout.

The Kapers have been staged each year by Kiwanians since 1949.

Eugene Man Turns Back; 'It Was Cold'

Eugene — E. F. Harry Johnson figured it wasn't worth it Friday.

Johnson, who set out on foot Thursday from Florence to get to Saudi Arabia, turned back near here after making about 950 miles.

Said Johnson: "It was cold."



CITY FACING PROBLEMS—Gold Hill is a city confronted with problems, according to Mayor Milton Steinmetz. The problems center around a lack of growth in recent years. The population has been slipping slightly for some time. Situated on the banks of the Rogue river, the city has much to

offer prospective residents, city officials say. Recently the Chamber of Commerce was re-activated and preliminary plans call for the chamber to work in spreading the Gold Hill message far and wide.

classrooms, a multi-purpose room, cafeteria, stage and physical education floor were added. The addition cost \$122,000. The outdoor physical education field also is scheduled for improvement. Leveling and grading is to be done, and an application to the state for pumping rights from the Rogue river is being made. An irrigated turf field will make it possible for tackle football to be initiated, Gilbert Mack, principal says.

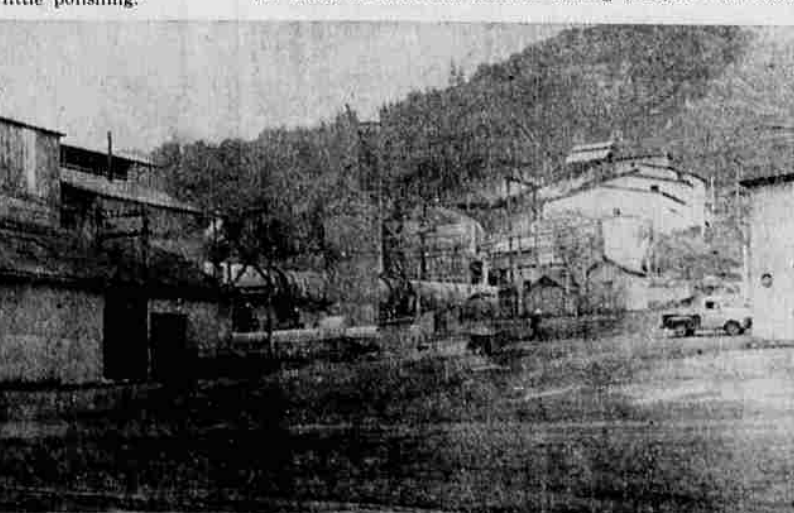
Handy Improved
Improvements have also been made to Hanby school facilities, Mack states. Cafeteria facilities have been expanded, classrooms have all been improved and the home making department enlarged. Boys and girls dressing rooms in the gymnasium have been expanded.

Another unique feature was added to the Hanby activity schedule in 1960, with formation of an amateur radio club. The Federal Communications commission granted the school a club radio call of K7LYX in April, 1960. Six students have received amateur licenses so far.

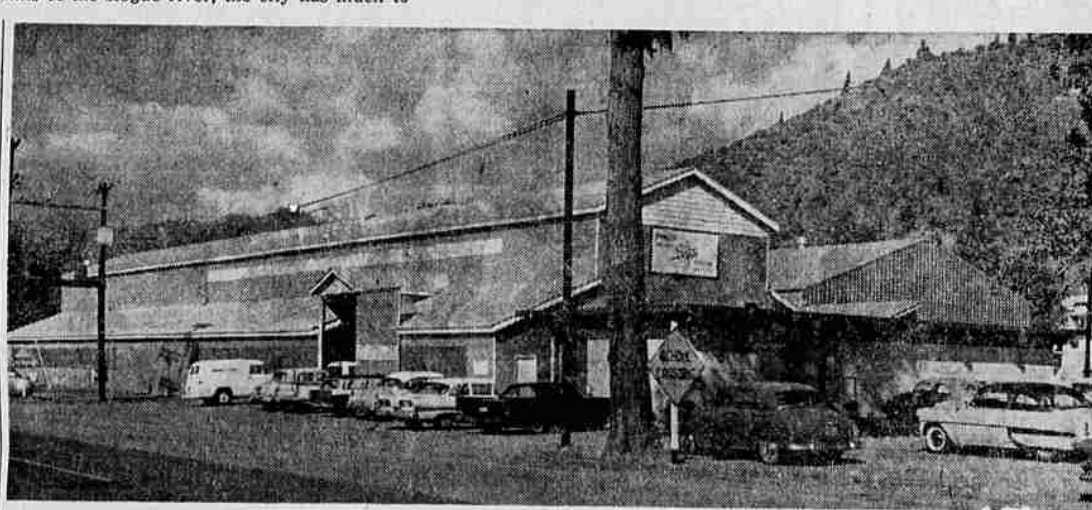
City law enforcement has also been improved. L. C. Harrison was appointed as police chief last fall and has instituted several new programs. One of these is a security check of business establishments and industries nightly. Space has also been set aside at the city hall for use by the police department.

Harrison says a needed improvement is addition of a police radio for the city. "Quick communication between law enforcement agencies is necessary," according to Harrison.

Gold Hill is facing growth problems, however, as H. D. Force, planning chairman says. "The city is like an unfinished jewel. All it needs is a little polishing."

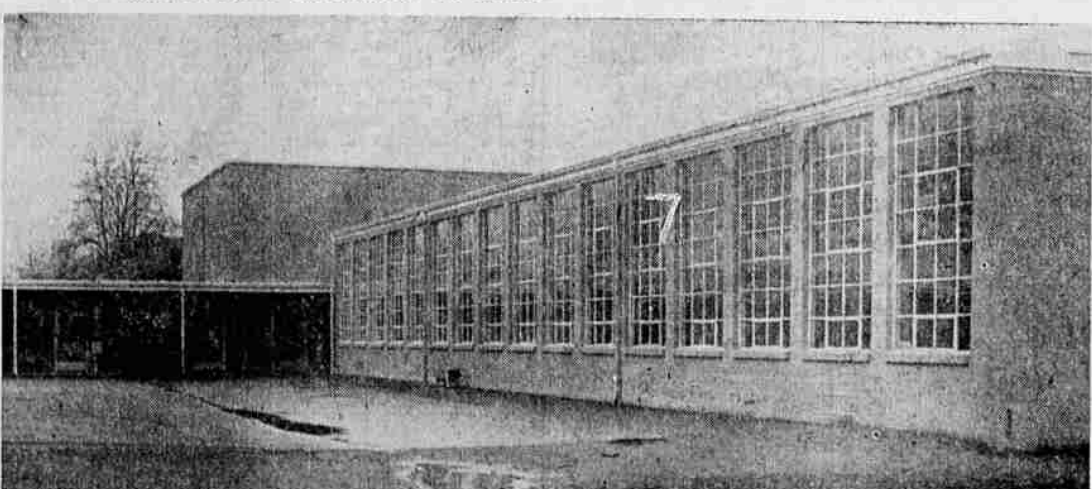


DEAL CEMENT PLANT—The Ideal Cement company plant is located just outside the northern city limits of Gold Hill. It is the principal industry in the area and employs 115 people. Two types of cement are



MACHINERY PLANT—Jeddell Brothers Sued Mill Inc. was established in Gold Hill in 1955. The plant designs and produces machinery used in plywood production. About 60 full-time employees operate the industry. The friendly

attitude of Gold Hill people influenced the company's decision to settle in the community, Fred and Otto Jeddell, co-owners, say.



SCHOOL ADDITION—The Gold Hill school system has been improving facilities at a rapid rate during the last five years. The Patrick elementary school was completed in 1956. In 1960 this addition costing \$120,000 was added.

Four additional classrooms, a multi-purpose room, cafeteria, stage and physical education floor were included in the addition.

Engineers Set Monday Meeting

J. A. McCormack, resident engineer, and A. A. Anderson, office engineer with the Medford branch of the state highway department, will be guest speakers at the year's first meeting of the Rogue Valley Engineers of Oregon, Monday, Jan. 16.

The dinner meeting will be held at Ping's Garden restaurant, Medford, beginning at 7 p.m.

Topic for the evening is to be "Interstate 5 Through the Rogue River Valley."

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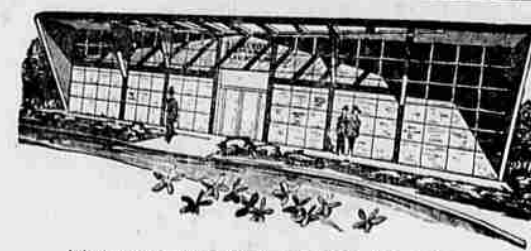
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