

72 Colorful Years Reflected in Looking Glass

Ashland Hotel Becomes Memory Of Halcyon Days

By FAITH McCULLOUGH
Mail Tribune Correspondent
Ashland — "Going, going, gone! Sold for \$25."

The auctioneer's hammer fell sharply. A long mirror was carried to safety from the milling crowd, and the bidding on blankets, beds and tables went on.

Scenes from 72 colorful years had been reflected in the venerable looking glass of the old Ashland hotel. Invisibly stored within its frame were the images of William Jennings Bryan, of Walter Damrosch, of William Howard Taft, of Eugene Debs.

And some there were in the auction crowd who could see them again.

Trade Memories in Tribute

The few who remembered the halcyon days traded memories in tribute to the ancient hostelry's passing. Only one man had personal recollection of its beginning in 1889.

Clarence Lane, Ashland native son now 90, was one of the town's gay young blades who tripped the light fantastic toe in the gold ballroom of Hotel Oregon. He had raced, marched or ridden before its veranda grandstand on more than 70 Independence Days. He had manned a hose when the ornate cupola and turrets disappeared in flames and when the old Gaiety Opera House across the corner on Pioneer st. was destroyed by fire.

"Mister Ashland," authentic compendium of local history, whose vigorous years span a near century, is philosophical as he watches the demolition crew at work. He has seen buildings and people come and go. To him it is just the natural course of events, something to be remembered but not mourned.

Purchased by Bank

The hotel was purchased by the First National Bank of Oregon Dec. 22. A new building for the Ashland branch of the bank will be erected on the hotel site this summer. The old hotel property totals 20,000 square feet.

The new bank building will feature all modern conveniences. Wrecking should be completed by July, according to bank officials.

Still vivid in the memories of two Ashland native daughters are the gay parties held in Hotel Oregon when it was the town's social center. Miss Lydia McCall and Mrs. Mabel Wagner Kinney, cousins who are now living at Mountain View Rest Home, were among the young crowd of that period when the polka and the three-step vied in popularity with the waltz.

Building Completed

It was Jan. 25, 1889, that the imposing three-story brick building was completed, by Contractor A. W. Scott, but it was not until March 27 that the stars and stripes were run up on the turret flag pole and the doors were officially opened for guests.

On that day it is reported "the handsome bus, just arrived from San Francisco, carried the band through the city" announcing the great event.

"When twilight came the hotel was a blaze of light from office to attic. At 7 o'clock the music of the band was the signal to assemble for the celebration," according to the local paper.

400 Crowd Ballroom

Approximately 400 guests crowded into the ballroom and lobby, overflowing onto the long veranda and the new board walk. Chief feature of the evening was a beautiful \$1 banquet served in the "beautiful and spacious dining room." Toasts were made by Gen. J. C. Tolman, Dr. J. S. Walter and G. F. Billings. There were recitations and vocal music and, of course, dancing.

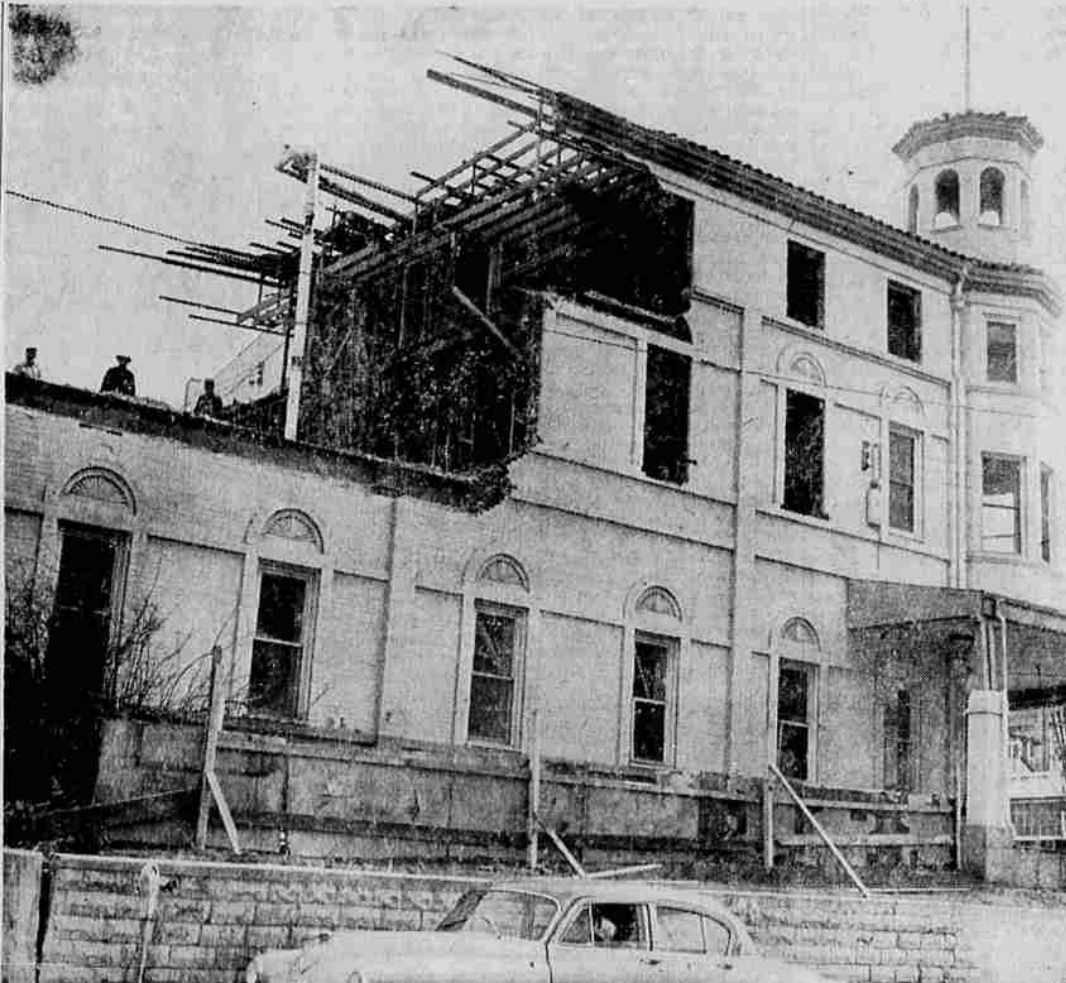
Guests thronged the corridors and inspected the chambers, marveling at the swinging light bulbs and the electric "annunciator" which connected the clerk's office to every room.

Electric lights had arrived in Ashland only a month before the hotel's completion and were an awesome revelation to the townspeople. An electric fire alarm system was another of the building's modern conveniences, while "hot and cold water" was proclaimed loudly at the Southern Pacific depot by the hotel hack driver.

Neglects To Mention

He neglected to mention where the lodgers would find hot and cold water, nor did he give any details about other plumbing facilities or their (its) location.

Old timers recall that the elegant new hotel was described in glowing terms as "the finest in Oregon, — outside of Portland," and that its



RAZING PROGRESSING — Razing of the Ashland hotel is progressing rapidly. This view shows the rear of the top two floors chewed away by wreckers. The hotel has been a city landmark for 72 colorful years. The three-story building was completed in January, 1889. Approximately 400

guests crowded into the ballroom and lobby at the hotel's opening celebration. One of the unusual features of the hotel in 1889 was electric lighting and an electric fire alarm system.

accommodations and cuisine attracted visitors from all parts of the nation, most of them arriving by train.

Hotel Oregon, as it was known for many years, was built by a stock company composed of Ashland business men "to whom a bonus of \$2,500 was given by other citizens."

The bold venture came at the close of that flourishing decade, the exciting 80's, when around the Plaza there arose a half dozen brick buildings and along the nearby streets new and imposing mansions were erected. The completion of the California-Oregon railroad triggered Ashland's boom years.

Lease Hotel

Drs. A. C. Helm and Charles E. Beebe were first to lease the hotel and H. B. Carter served as president of the Ashland Hotel company. Helm was vice president and W. H. Atkinson was secretary-treasurer. On the board of directors were Gwinn S. Butler, D. R. Mills, and Gen. J. C. Tolman.

In addition to the hotel, there were a barber shop, a bar and a real estate office and in the rear a wash house and a stable. Helm and Beebe traveled to San Francisco and as far east as Chicago to purchase the furnishings which filled more than three freight cars. Included were "solid oak bedroom suites, handsome flowered Brussels carpets and tapestries, marble wash stands and crockery, and a fine Mathushek piano."

Plantings of evergreens and palms gave visitors the impression that Ashland enjoyed a banana belt climate where the pine and palm meet. For 72 years the covered veranda, lined with rocking chairs and swings, has been the town's vantage point for viewing parades and passing traffic.

No Record Available

No consecutive record of ownership is available and even the best memories have failed to recall more than a few of the men and women who were hosts. Among them were D. Peruzzi and George Owens. The final owners from 1947 to 1961 were Mr. and Mrs. O. W. Green.

Manager of the hotel for 10 years at the turn of the century was H. S. Sanford, whose son, Torbert, and daughters, Mrs. Ethelnde Whitney and Mrs. Gladys Rose, still live in Ashland. They have many happy recollections of their youthful experiences while the family lived in the hotel.

Mrs. Whitney recalls the three-course dinners served for 50 cents by Chinese Jim, saying that traveling men would arrange their schedules so that they might eat as many meals as possible at the Ashland hotel.

Wonderful Pastries

"Those pastries were wonderful," declared Mrs. Whitney. "And his custard pie was something very special."

Her brother added that townspeople made a practice of eating their Sunday dinners at the hotel. He recalled that the Thomas Simpson family were "regulars." After the Chinese cook returned to his homeland he wrote frequent letters and sent interesting gifts to the Sanford family.



MANY MEMORIES — Clarence Lane, 90, of Ashland, looks on as wrecking crews busy about demolishing the Ashland hotel. The 72-year-old hotel holds many memories for Lane. He has raced, marched

or ridden before its veranda grandstand on more than 70 Independence days. He manned a hose when the hotel was blistered by flames many years ago. And he danced in the gold ballroom many times.

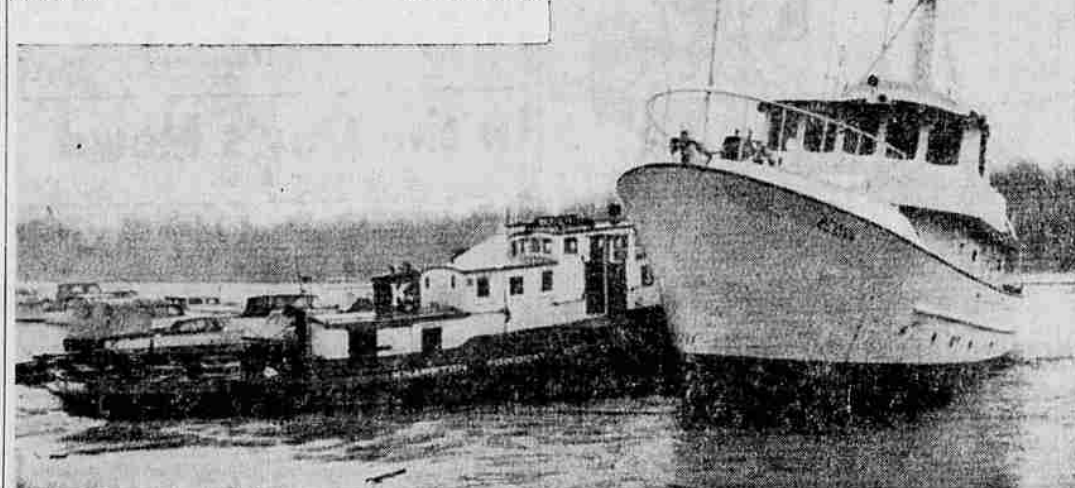


HOTEL OREGON — When the Ashland hotel was built in 1889 it was known as the Hotel Oregon. It was built by a stock company composed of Ashland business men. Furnishings were brought from places as far away as San Francisco and Chicago. In

nearby three-quarters of a century, Ashland's oldest hotel has served as a home to railroad crews, senators, Shakespearean actors, salesmen and overnight tourists.

Today only a front facade remains as final reminder of an era past. To the sound of falling timbers and rip of the wrecking bar Ashland moves on with its business of progress.

COLLEGE'S NAVY — This is Oregon State college's oceanography research ship "Acona" after launching last week in Portland. One of the vessel's special features is an underwater port with lights so scientists can observe marine life as the ship sails. (UPI Telephoto)



'Acona' Launched for Research Projects

Portland — The vessel that will unlock the secrets of the ocean off Oregon was launched in Portland last week.

It is the quarter-million-dollar "Acona" of the Oregon State college department of oceanography. It will be used by the college for the first really intensive studies ever made of the Oregon ocean.

The Acona was built with a grant from the Office of Naval Research, which picked OSC two years ago as one of 10 schools in the nation to carry out a giant 10-year program of research in waters surrounding the United States. The schools are spaced up and down the East and West coasts and along the Gulf of Mexico.

The new OSC "navy" is described as an 80-foot "floating laboratory" by Dr. Wayne V. Burt, head of the college's oceanography department and the man who launched ocean research in the state when he joined the OSC staff in 1954.

Special Equipment

Special research equipment on the Acona will let the scientists study the ocean inside-out and from top to ocean floor, which is 3 miles down in some places off Oregon. One of the vessel's special features is an underwater port, with lights, so that scientists can observe marine life as the Acona moves along on its regular research cruises.

A wide range of research projects is scheduled by the various OSC ocean experts, Burt said. These will include inventories of plant and animal life; studies of currents off Oregon and how they change; bottom sediments and the ocean floor; temperature, oxygen content, and salinity of the water; pollution problems in coastal estuaries; and defense-type research on underwater factors affecting submarine operations.

Oregon has the fourth longest coastline of any state, but almost nothing had been done on research before the OSC oceanography department was organized.

Sponsor at Launching

Mrs. Burt was sponsor at the launching that sent the Acona into the waters of Willamette river. Invocation was by the Rev. Walter Frutiger of the Corvallis Federated churches.

Members of the official party that witnessed the launching included OSC President A. L. Strand, Dr. John R. Richards, chancellor of the state system of higher education, and some members of the state board of higher education.

The name Acona is an Indian word for Yaquina. Newport, on the Yaquina Bay, will be home port.

Before the Acona goes to



EXPLAINS EQUIPMENT — Electronics equipment as Naval Reserve Electronics Technician Second Class Charles Parlier, Division 13-5 honored families and friends Medford, explains to a group of interested of the civilian-sailor members Valentine's onlookers the operation of a piece of radar Day night.

Reserve Holds Valentine Party

Medford's Naval Reserve had a Valentine party Tuesday night.

It marked a special occasion honoring the families and "sweethearts" of members of Electronics Division 13-5 adjudged one on the "nation's best" during national competition last year.

After witnessing the opening ceremonies and personnel inspection, the large crowd settled back while Commanding Officer R. A. Schuchard gave a detailed explanation of the Naval Reserve training program as offered in an electronics division.

Later, the audience saw a special colored slide presentation by Radioman Seaman Alec Geren, Medford, featuring pictures of his recently completed two-week cruise to South America.

Newport, however, a good deal of outfitting still remains. The ballast, winches, and other special gear must be put into place.

Formal commissioning will come when the Acona is ready for its ocean duty. At that time, open house will be held for those who want to see the vessel and watch demonstrations of research equipment.

In addition to the funds from Office of Naval Research, OSC has received substantial grants for ocean studies from the U.S. public health service and the National Science Foundation.

Surgical Diseases of Heart Subject of Show

"Surgical Diseases of the Heart" will be discussed on "Adventures in Medicine" at 4 o'clock this afternoon over station KBST-TV.

Appearing on the medical panel will be Dr. Thomas E. Upton, anesthesiologist, Dr. James W. Quinn, chest surgeon, and Dr. William Miller, pediatrician. They will be assisted by Herbert Hunter, medical illustrator.

Normal heart functions and causes of malfunction will be described with accompanying sketches. The difference between open and closed heart surgery will be explained, and some of the more common heart conditions treated by surgery will be described.

The physicians will note also the important contributions made by anesthesia in

modern heart surgery, and explain some of the newer surgical techniques being used.

Mrs. C. Ivan Burton, director-moderator of the Tuberculosis and Health association's bi-weekly program, presented in cooperation with the Jackson County Medical society, said this is the sixth year in which a program on heart disease has been presented during National Heart Month.

She added that, although the association's first concern is the eradication of tuberculosis, many other chest conditions are found through the case-finding program — the weekly chest x-ray clinic, operated at Sacred Heart Hospital. Many of these conditions, including heart, are referred to the patient's own physician for further study.

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