

KASRU FLY-IN

Photos by Don Kettler — Story by Pati O'Connor

THE CENTURY RANCH'S name lost its significance when nearly 200 aviation addicts dropped from the blue on a Klamath Air Search and Rescue Unit fly-in. The ranch is located 100 auto miles from Bend, 100 from Burns and 100 from Lakeview; ergo, "Century Ranch," but the distance was reasonably reduced when travelers took to the ozone instead of the asphalt.

Pilots and potential pilots were up in the air from Klamath Falls Municipal Airport by 7:45 Sunday morning, February 28, and winged their way to the development project, located about 90 air miles north-east of Klamath Falls.

The several thousand acres under development are at the edge of the high desert country in the Silver Lake-Fort Rock district. P. H. (Phil) Pitman is operator and part owner with Louis Soukup.

"IT HAS TO BE COOKED OVERNIGHT," insists Phil Pitman (below) to C. B. Hadley — and it was! Wild horse, coyote and bobcat (beef, lamb and pork to the less imaginative) were roasted in an open pit from 10 p.m. the night before with devoted attention by Pitman. At noon the meat was pitch-forked to the wooden "platters" and carved by Hadley, left, operator of the Silver Lake Store.



DESTINATION: Century Ranch. Flight fanatics landed on a dusty air strip which leads to the few permanent structures on the ranch — a pump house outstanding in its bright white with unpainted storage houses and office rooms to the side. Two trailer houses are Home Sweet Home for the Pitmans. At present, 160 acres are under irrigation, with many more soon to be. The land that was only a desert one and a half years ago is responding to modern agriculture methods, scientific planning and the faith of Pitman in its success. The main pump has a maximum capacity of 5,000 gallons per minute; another a 3,000 gallon per minute capacity, and the wells furnish water for one of the few concrete pipe irrigation systems in the state.



HUNTING TRIPS, for coyotes, rabbits, wild horses, arrowheads or deer count and survey whetted appetites for the noonday meal. Paul Bonn (far left) and Len Matheson (second from right) of the Oregon State Game Commission were on hand to direct the deer count and survey. Mrs. Ben Burgess and Larry French are pictured with them going over maps before the trip.



AMONG THE MANY . . . George Flitcraft, left, and State Board of Aeronautics Director Earl Snyder from Salem, right.



IVAN KESTERSON, left, and Mayor Paul O. Landry, right, (above) ladling out steaming baked beans. Responsible for the food fit for a flier was Mrs. Phil Pitman (below, left) who might be giving Mrs. Art Stinson and daughter Sylvia Jean her recipe for the dozen home-made pies she whipped up for the hungry guests. Not pictured from the culinary arts department is Mrs. Florence Pitman Stout, mother of the host, whose effervescent welcome and managerial qualities greatly added to the success of the outing.



AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE — Century Ranch. In the center, part of the 25 or so planes at the fly-in, and in the foreground, a few of the guests lined up for chow — meat crisped on the outside, tender and juicy inside; salads, garlic bread, relishes, baked beans, corn, homemade cakes and pies, ice cream, and gallons of hot, strong coffee. In addition, guests collected tons (?) of Pitman's potential producing product (dirt!). As the day chilled to night, an exhausted party winged home, with anticipations of another KASRU fly-in.