



CALLAHAN RANCH HOTEL has stood about like this since gold mining days. It is one of Siskiyou County's historic landmarks, as shown by the monument erected at left. — Photo by Peggy Walsh.



THE HOME OF A HERMIT, Herbie Young, more than 80 years of age, is practically on the freeway since Callahan-Cecilville timber access road was opened in the remote country southwest of Scott Valley in Siskiyou County, Young says. About four cars an hour pass by it now. — Photo by Peggy Walsh.

Western Siskiyou County Offers Variety Of Attractions, Without Traffic Snarls

By PEGGY WALSH

For two days or two weeks off the beaten track, western Siskiyou County offers a variety of attractions and little or no problems with traffic or other troublesome aspects of civilization.

Fishermen, hunters, rockhounds, camera enthusiasts or those interested in the sight and feel of the early West can turn off Highway 99 at Gazelle and in a few miles seemingly drop back 100 years into spectacular and unsettled country.

Camping gear is a must for the trip from Gazelle to Callahan to Cecilville to Forks of the Salmon to Somes Bar and to Happy Camp. For although these communities are on the map, a general store and a gas pump are about the maximum convenience offered the traveler.

Too, no one in a hurry or who dislikes narrow dirt roads should attempt this trip. While the grades are not bad and the roads for the most part are hard-surfaced, a large portion of the trip is over one-way road and much of this a narrow shelf carved halfway up a steep canyon wall. But turn-outs are ample and one rarely meets any traffic anyway.

A round-trip from Gazelle through western Siskiyou County to Happy Camp and back to Gazelle via Yreka is 240 miles and

can easily be driven in two days. It could be made in one day but it would be a grueling experience of winding roads with no time to view or enjoy this back country.

Turning west at Gazelle School, the surfaced road ends in three miles but the dirt road is wide and winds in easy grade to the top of Gazelle grade and down into the southern portion of Scott Valley.

As soon as one is over the summit, ranch homes that were settled in the 1860s begin to dot the landscape. The first house, 14 miles from Gazelle, is a weathered silver color and was originally a stage coach stop.

An outside staircase leads to the second story with interesting windows set in alignment with the roof slope.

A vast stretch of this cattle country is owned now by Carl McConnell of Redding and the ranch homes either are not in use or occupied by his employees. But some 100-year-old architecture is there for the picture-taker or history-gatherer.

The surfaced road resumes eight miles east of Callahan. The main street of this community could well fit into any television western, with its two old hotels, saloon and general store. It used to be an important stop for those en route to Oregon from the Sacramento Valley. The old stage route was through the Trinity Mountains, over Scott Mountain and into Scott Valley. Early day gold dredging activities also centered around Callahan. Now one old dredge sits deserted a few miles north of town.

From Callahan to Cecilville, there is a newly-opened road. It is a dirt road most of the way but hard-surfaced and with easy curves and grades. The road was built to open virgin timber lands, inaccessible before, and in doing so, has bared the wilderness to weekend travelers.

Arriving at Cecilville, 60 miles from Gazelle, one can find little to justify its name on a map. At the store one can arrange a pack trip and get supplies or gasoline. For the scattered residents, there is postal service. Here, too, a road winds over Bear Mountain to Sawyers Bar, where one can travel over the Salmon Mountains and back to civilization via Etna.

Cecilville is on the south fork of the north fork of the Salmon River. Traveling westward to Forks of the Salmon along a narrow, serpentine road, one looks down into a granite-lined gorge at the crystal clear river. The deep pools vary in color from aqua to

emerald green and one can almost count the pebbles from a distance of hundreds of feet.

Fishing must be good because one has to climb down steep embankments to reach the river and parked cars indicated a large number of fishermen have been willing to try it.

Forks of the Salmon is 79 miles from Gazelle and Somes Bar. Another 18 miles westward the Salmon River meets the Klamath—again traveling through a spectacular and colorful gorge with white water merging into deep emerald pools.

The waters of the Klamath River are not nearly as pretty. They are silt-laden and a murky green, but the sweep and strength of this mighty river is impressive as it winds through this unsettled and wild country.

As one starts northward from Somes Bar, a look at a map should give pause for reflection. To the west is a roadless area that stretches to the coast and for 100 miles north and south. To the east is the Marble Mountain Wilderness Area where section surveys are still incomplete.

It is 41 miles up the Klamath River to Happy Camp and only the last 15 miles of this is two-lane paved road. We took the road south to Orleans to explore possibility of finding a motel in preference to camping out, but steel-

head were reportedly running and fishermen were practically shoulder-to-shoulder. The two motels were long since full and the forest service campground looked like Times Square.

We found a nice, isolated campground at Irving Creek, eight miles north of Somes Bar. Someone had been there ahead of us, but it took only five minutes to make the area useable again.

The vegetation is lush with many ferns and hardwoods. Blackberries were ripe and very sweet but poison oak was thick.

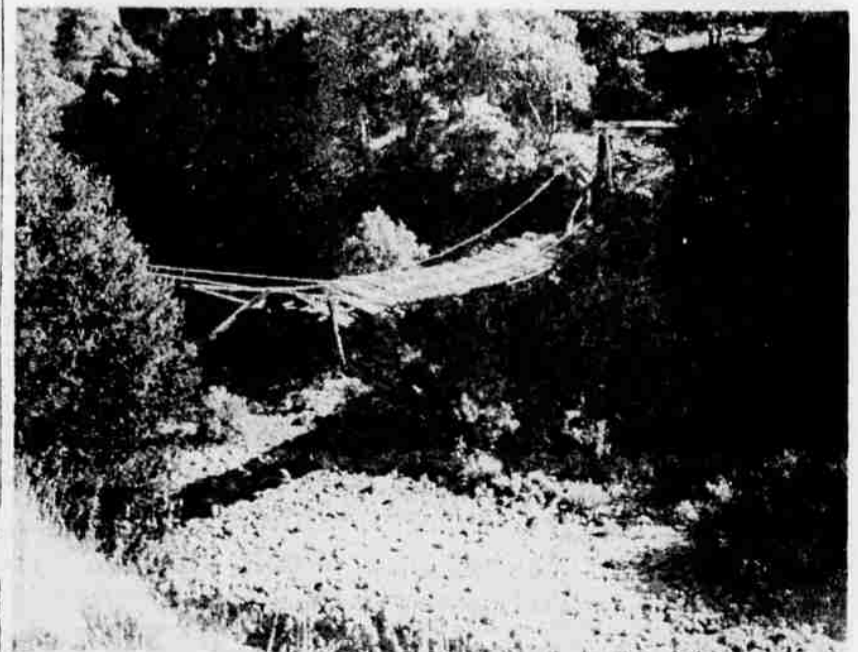
We saw no deer but did meet a curious coyote.

Happy Camp appeared to be a lively, civic-minded community, even on a Sunday morning. From there we traveled surfaced roads and felt we had returned to established paths.



"THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE" near the summit of a grade between Gazelle and Callahan, on the way to Siskiyou County's Salmon River country, once was a stage stop. Old landmarks like this abound in the area.

— Photo by Peggy Walsh.



BRAVE MOTORISTS once used this decaying old suspension bridge to cross this channel in the Salmon Mountains area of southwestern Siskiyou County. A modern bridge replaced it. — Photo by Peggy Walsh.

FAREWELL TO SENATORS

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Eisenhower said farewell Thursday night to Republican members of the Senate.

The President and Vice President Richard M. Nixon were guests of honor at a reception and buffet dinner given for Republican senators and their wives by Senate GOP Leader Everett M. Dirksen and Chairman Styles Bridges of the Senate Republican Policy Committee.

The oil in a sperm whale's head is believed to serve as a cushion to protect vital organs from the excessive pressure during its deep ocean dives.

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