HISTORICAL SOCIETY TOUR #1 June 27, 1993

PART 2

PUMPING PLANT, KLAMATH BASIN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE,
CCC CAMP TO GERMAN POW CAMP.

After eating our lunch at Captain Jack's Stronghold and wandering around the area, we again boarded our buses and drove towards the D. Pumping Plant and Tunnel. On our way we passed the Canby Cross Monument where Brig. Gen. Edward R.S. Canby and Dr. Elezear Thomas, a Methodist Minister, were murdered under a flag of truce by Captain Jack and Ellen's Man George on Good Friday, April 11, 1873.

Mac Epley, Managing Editor of the Herald and News wrote an article on April 10, 1948 concerning the Canby Monument and cross. Lieutenant John S. Parke of the United States army first visited the place of the massacre in 1880, seven years after the end of the Modoc War. He came by way of Gilliam's bluff and was accompanied by John A. Fairchild whose ranch was 22 miles west from the lava beds. They found the place of the massacre and an old board with an inscription almost obliterated by the weather.

In 1882, Lieutenant Parke was ordered to Fort Klamath on temporary duty and asked permission of the department commander, Gen. Miles, to go a little out of his way in order to make a second visit to the lava beds to find the exact locality of General Canby's massacre and especially the place the council tent had stood. Permission granted, he stopped at the Fairchild ranch in hopes John would be able to accompany him again. However, Fairchild was leaving for Yreka and could not accompany him. Lt.
Parke was given every assistance and Fairchilds carpenter made a
cross for the monument he was going to erect. The cross was made
of lumber about six inches square, twelve feet high, with arms of
four feet. The cross was conveyed in two pieces, on a buckboard
to the top of the bluff overlooking the lava beds. Arriving late
in the day, they gave the cross a primer coat and the next
morning took it to the base of the bluff on their shoulders.

Lt. Parke put up the cross, applied another coat of paint,
piled lava rock around it to half of its height and put the
following inscription on it: "General Canby, USA, Was Murdered
Here By The Modocs, April 11, 1873".

On Monday, March 29, 1988, the second day of the Modoc War
Symposium, we traveled by school bus from the Fairgrounds at
Tulelake, California to the lava beds. Gary Hathaway was the
Lava Beds History Interpreter.

When we arrived at Canby Cross, included in the information
given us, we were told that one of the rocks piled around the
base of the monument was the one always transported by the army
on which Gen. Canby always sat.

Because the cross was lettered after having been erected, the
letters were rather uneven.

On this present tour in 1993, we were informed that because of
vandalism the original cross is kept at the Lava Beds Headquarters
to insure its safety and another one has replaced it on the
Monument.

We passed near Gilliam's Camp and the trail coming over the
mountain from Yreka down to the camp was pointed out to us.
During the Modoc War, horses and supplies were brought in by this
trail.

As we rode along we saw willows lining the roadway and were
informed that during the time the Modocs lived around Stronghold
and during the Modoc War, these willows lined the shore of the
lake thus showing how high the water was at that time. Mortars
which had been used by the Modocs were found in the rocks near
the shore. This road upon which we were traveling had been
graveled by the CCC's in 1936.
"Fish and Wild Life Service uses water pumped from Tule Lake for about 17,000 acres of Refuge. Water was also supplied to about 20,000 acres of lease land. (* I've been told quite a portion of lease land is being returned to habitat and is no longer put up for lease.)

The D Pumping Plant and Tunnel was constructed in 1941 and '42 and placed in operational phase May 5, 1942. The pumps were 30 feet vertical shaft turbines with 450 H.P. 2,300 volt 3 phase 60 cycle motors. Discharge lines were 380 feet in length and 36 inches in diameter with 64 feet of head. (lifting height) Each pump had a capacity of 50 cfs giving the plant a total of 150 cfs. Discharge is into a tunnel excavated through these hills into Lower Klamath Lake. In 1949 the plant was enlarged to accommodate 2 more pumps. 2 more discharge lines were added and the motors on the 3 existing pumps upgraded to 750 H.P. from 450 H.P. The 2 new pumps were 30 feet vertical shaft turbines with 700 H.P. motors and this gave the plant a capacity of 280 cubic feet per second".

The Tunnel consists of a 5 ft. 9 in. diameter horseshoe-shaped tunnel 6,600 feet in length, with 100 feet plus of lined canal at the outlet end. The tunnel was excavated from both sides of the hill through volcanic tuff and diatomaceous earth and met in the middle with only four inches of misalignment which was an amazing piece of engineering and created no problem. The Volcanic tuff required no bridging support, (3,587 feet of tunnel required support and 2,913 feet was unsupported during construction.)

The tunnel is concrete lined throughout its entire length. The lining is 3 inches thick in the volcanic tuff section and 7 inches thick in the remainder. 496 feet of re-usable forms were built for the lining work. Placement of concrete behind the 496 foot of forms took anywhere from 44 hours to 238 hours. The tunnel and outlet works were completed in October 1941 at a contract cost of $181,514.05.

Material costs 1940:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cement</td>
<td>$2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redwood lumber</td>
<td>$55.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fir select</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebar</td>
<td>$0.03 a lb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fir</td>
<td>$22.00 mbf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasoline</td>
<td>$0.14 gal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diesel $0.07 gal.  Dynamite 40% $0.08 lb.

Our next stop was the Tule Lake National Wild Life Refuge. We toured the inside of the building enjoying all their displays. They also have a gift shop where one may purchase books, maps and other things.

As we rested in the shade we noticed the rock work and the bell. We were told Amos A. Greer of Jamestown, Tennessee had done the rock work and it was he who rang the bell for the beginning of the CCC Reunion. The bell had originally been used at the CCC camp. Mr. Greer also did the rock work on the small observation lookout on the hill on the left side of the Refuge building. There is only a trail for walking up to the observation tower which was used while the German POWs were being held and later used to observe wildlife. Mr. Greer died April 1993.

The former CCC Camp and later the German POW camp is well fenced and padlocked, Dave Menke and his assistant took the lead from the Tule Lake Wild Life Refuge compound to the old camp.

This camp is not to be confused with the Japanese Relocation camp at Newell, California. This camp is actually on the Tule Lake Wildlife Refuge. It was built in 1935 to house Civilian Conservation Corps. enrollees. The original camp consisted of 23 buildings and a few other structures. All the buildings were wood frame with vertical board and batten siding. Most were set on a simple post and beam foundation except for a few service buildings which had concrete block foundations. All had gabled roofs. It was used almost continuously until late 1941 when the CCC disbanded.

The Civilian Conservation Corps was formed to give young men between the ages of 18 and 25 years work during the depression years when work was almost impossible to find. The group who came to Camp Tule Lake came from Texas. They worked on many things which included making dikes, masonry work, stone walls, on biological surveys, road construction and graveling. One young man, Brady Johnson learned to use a bulldozer before going into the military service. They earned $30. per month, $25. of which was sent home to their families. Many of these young CCC boys did not know how to read or write. We were told that 34,000
were taught these skills. One young man became a pilot and later a very successful business man.

Paul Fitz Hugh told us: "the CCC enrollees were used on Bureau of Reclamation projects in the Modoc Unit. Enrollees from Camp BR 41 and BR 20 were used building roads, bridges and structures. Most work was hand labor, shovel and wheelbarrow type.

BR 20 was transferred to Geological Survey about 1939, then in 1940 it became a Fish and Wildlife camp. It was after the CCC's were disbanded in 1941, the camp was used as a German Prisoner of war camp."

From the time the CCC disbanded until 1944 the camp remained mostly unused. Then as the World War II continued to deplete the availability of farm labor in the Basin the Tulelake Growers Association led an effort to obtain prisoners of war to work in the fields. The War Department applied for a permit to use the camp to house prisoners of war for this purpose. Italian prisoners of war arrived from Camp White near Medford, Oregon on May 13, 1944, about 150 of them, to refurbish the camp as living quarters for German prisoners of war. They were housed in tents within a fenced area in the town of Tulelake, California. The U.S. military personnel were housed in the high school gymnasium. These young men were friendly and enjoyed having the school children wave and smile at them on their way to classes. In June after the camp had been readied the Italian prisoners were shipped out.

About 250 German POWs were transferred from Camp White to Camp Tule Lake. By October they numbered around 800 to assist the local farmers with harvest work. The POWs were governed under the rules of the 1864 and 1929 Geneva Conventions. Under those accords, prisoners were considered prisoners but not criminals. As such, they could not be incarcerated in prisons, nor could they be subjected to "acts of violence, insults or public curiosity". In addition, they were not to be asked to contribute directly to the war effort or be forced to do "menial or degrading " work. They could do farm work and were so used in agriculture in the 48 states. They also worked on roads, did carpentry, cooking, baking, laundering, shoe and clothing repair
and work on repair of noncombative vehicles. By the end of the war, there were 450 POW camps in the United States. In the Klamath basin they worked mostly in the grain and potatoes but they also worked on government projects left unfinished when the CCC was disbanded. At Camp Tule Lake, an agreement was made in which farmers paid the government 70¢ an hour for each worker and 1¢ a mile for transportation.

One farm on which they worked was the John Liskey farm on Lower Klamath Lake. Mrs. Liskey said of them, "They were nice boys. They worked hard and never caused any trouble". One of the workers was older than the others and had been a business man and a painter. He painted the Jack Liskey new home at the ranch and then proceeded to paint two landscapes on the wall of the entry-way. One was of Crater Lake and the other a barnyard scene reminiscent of his European home. He signed his work--S.E. Kastenholz, 1944. He corresponded with the Liskeys for several years. In an interview with the Herald and News, Mrs. Liskey said that while Kastenholz labored in America, British POWs were working for his mother in Germany.

In Today's Seniors, December 1985, Paul Deller told about an official visit on Sept. 6-7, 1944 from Maurice Perret to the camp. His report stated that there were 177 privates, 16 non-commissioned officers and three privates, members of the sanitary personnel--totaling 196 prisoners. Their spokesman was a Master Sergeant Schwarz.

"The prisoners have at their disposition the following buildings: eight sleeping barracks, each containing 20 - 25 beds and have a shower room and toilets. One administration barrack, in which there is also the canteen. One mess hall and kitchen. One building containing the chapel and a recreation room. One laundry, two latrines.

"Outside the enclosure there is an infirmary building with a permanent American doctor and two soldiers, members of the German Sanitary Personnel.

"The health is good at the time of our visit---there were no patients. The soldiers requiring dental care are returned to Camp White."
"The Catholic and Protestant chaplains of Camp White came every fortnight.

"Since the harvest must be gathered quickly, the prisoners will have to work 10-11 hours a day, but they will be paid accordingly. This measure which has been announced to the prisoners, has resulted in no opposition."

Florence Wilson, who was on the tour with us, told of her experiences with the German POWs. She married Hab Wilson in 1940. Hab was the third son of pioneer homesteaders (1908) Harry and Emma Wilson. Henry Wilson and his sons operated Wilsons Farms in the Malin area.

When Hab received his draft call, he was deferred because of his farming activity and also they had two small children, a son and a daughter.

Farm labor was hard to find during the war years and the Wilsons needed extra hands. They requested the help of four POWs from the camp to help with haying. Fifty years ago every bale had to be "bucked" on a trailer or truck by back-and-hand-power.

The Government regulations stated that these prisoners were to be brought back to camp at noon, or else the farm wife must furnish them a hot lunch. Florence took on this task. While sitting at the table eating the children watched them layer their food which they then cut with their knife and shoved onto their fork before eating it. Naturally the children tried to imitate the men to the amusement of all. The Germans were very clean. Each washed and combed his hair at the back porch tub and their table manners were neat despite the manner in which they handled their utensils.

After the noon meal the men rested under the poplar trees before returning to the fields. The potatoes had to be weeded by hand and is back-breaking work. These four POWs could work without a guard. However, the government required an armed guard to accompany more than 10 workers.

Some of the POWs liked what they saw of the United States and after the war wrote back to different farmers to inquire about sponsorship to assure steady employment so they could return.

Roger Reid told us that his father kept a diary in which he
told about living in a rented house about two miles from Camp Tule Lake in 1932. He raised pigs and came to the camp to pick up their garbage to feed the pigs.

Billie Fitzhugh remembered when she was in high school at Bonanza and after the school burned they had to be bussed to Henley for classes. In the spring of 1945 she remembered seeing POWs working on the canal above the road near Olene for about a week. There was at least a truck load of them and they were wearing a big P.O.W across the back of their shirts or jackets. There were several guards with rifles standing around.

Of the 23 original buildings, only four remain: the mess hall, barracks building, garage/shop/storage building and the former paint shop now altered into a lumber drying shed.

We were allowed to enter one building to look around and were able to walk around the outside of the barracks building. After taking pictures we again boarded the buses and headed back to Klamath Falls and the Museum near which we had parked our cars.

It had been a fun day and one filled with information.

written by Mae L. Smith

Sources of information for this Tour: Notes taken while on the tour by Janis Kaftan and me; Klamath Echoes Volumes # 1, 5, 7, 8 and #15; Stan Turner's book "Years of Harvest"; History of Malin; History of Oregon; Herald and News and Today's Seniors and special thanks to Paul and Billie Fitzhugh for a copy of Paul's research on the pumping station and to Verland Huff for contacting Mr. Tschirky after the tour and to Janis Kaftan for the use of her research material.