EDITORS PAGE

The feature article in this issue of the trumpeter, concerning Section 37 is intriguing. As far as we know, our’s is the only county in the nation to have a township with more than 36 sections. Edith Ruttenic McLeod, writing in the February 24, 1949 issue of the Herald & News, has told the story so well that we have chosen to reprint it, in its entirety. She has told us the what, where and when, but has omitted the why, undoubtedly because she, like the rest of didn’t know why. There are time honored rules and guidelines to handle such situations, but for some reason, in this case they seem to have chosen to ignore them. They added 2 and 2 and came up with 5.

Speaking of section 37, there are still some of us around who are old enough to remember the old overlook near the west end of section 37 at Algoma. Until it was rerouted, sometime around 1950, the highway climbed high above the lake on the point of the rocky bluff overlooking the lake. One could always count a spectacular view of the lake from this location. There was plenty of room to pull off the road, and get out of your car to stretch your legs and enjoy the view. The area was protected by a beautiful, arched stone wall. Although that old stone wall is still there, the highway now passes far below, bypassing what was once a pleasant interlude of your trip north.

CRATER LAKE EXPERIENCES

Earlier this year many of you shared your personal experiences at the Lava Beds National Monument. These interesting stories were later featured in a memorable issue of The Trumpeter, and read aloud at one of the meetings, for the enjoyment of all. We are going to do it again! Our theme this time will be Crater Lake. Won’t you take time to share a few memories. Here are a few questions you might ask yourself to help you start thinking about your experiences. 1.) When did you first visit Crater Lake National Park? 2.) Did you like it? 3.) What did you like best? 4.) Did you go around the rim? 5.) Were you alone or with family or a school or social group? 6.) Did you go into the lodge? 7.) Did you take a boat ride on the lake? 8.) When was the last time you visited there? 9.) What were the circumstances of this visit? 10.) How have things changed since your first visit? Was there a real wizard on Wizard Island? Please submit your stories by the end of January 2002.

January Meeting

Craig W. Dorman, Superintendent at the Lava Beds National Monument will be the guest speaker at the January meeting, at 2:00 p.m., January 24, 2002. Mr. Dorman will tell about plans for the Lava Beds, including the new visitor’s center. Hope to see you there.....
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WANTED

A copy of the 1984 Klamath History book.

Call Dode Collier at 541-882-4869 if you have a copy you would be willing to part with.

KLAMATH COUNTY MUSEUM LECTURE SERIES IN 2002

January 17, 2002: The Theodore Roosevelt Controversy: Did he or didn't he come to Klamath Falls and stay at the Baldwin Hotel? Our special Guest Speaker, Theodore Roosevelt, will finally give a definitive answer to this question.

February 21, 2002: "Scenery and History of Crater Lake" and Crater Lake National Park. Historian, Steve Mark, will offer insights into how we look at national parks.

March 21, 2002: Dr. Dee Southard, Oregon Chautauqua Lecture Series presents the story of Highway Route 97: A Passage Through Histories, Cultures and Landscapes: Highway 97, was previously known as The Dalles California Highway.

Other lectures:

April 18, 2002
May 16, 2002
June 20, 2002
July 18, 2002
August 15, 2002
September 19, 2002
October 17, 2002
November 21, 2002
December 19, 2002.

These lectures will cover geology, botany, trails, architectures, mapping, murder and more......
notable items lost in the blaze were pieces of antique furniture, a large model of the old fort, large scale models of some of the buildings, display cases and wall and corner exhibits. Fortunately, the contents of the cases had been removed and taken to the main museum in Klamath Falls for winter storage.

The building and park were dedicated on August 19, 1973. The Klamath County Historical Society played a large part in the development of the park and the creation of the museum building. For more than 28 years, tourists and locals alike have enjoyed the beauty of this spot while at the same time gaining new insights into the regions history.

The Chiloquin fire marshal had determined that the fire was an accident, probably of electrical origin.

Among the contents which burned with the building was the chair in which Captain Jack sat prior to his death and an old-fashioned, caned wheelchair, which had been donated by the CI Club of Fort Klamath. Other
This splendid 1940 photograph provides a graphic view of Section 37 from the air. The Algoma mill, near the center of the photo, marks the approximate location of the northern boundary of section while the freight train in the foreground is near its western limit. At the right, US Highway 97 can be seen winding through the middle the section, and exiting at the site of the Algoma overlook.
This article is reprinted in its entirety from the February 24, 1949 Herald and News:

No Section 37? Sure There Is, Look At Official Records Covering Area Of Algoma Point On Upper Klamath Lake
by Mrs. Edith Rutencic McLeod

Section 37 does not exist—but it does in Klamath county, Oregon.

In Klamath county there is a section 37—in all probability the only section 37 in the United States. Few people know of this oddity; even the clerk in the Klamath county courthouse was puzzled when the inquirer asked for some data on section 37. He started briskly off across the room, then stopped and looked back in puzzled hesitation as it occurred to him, "Section 37? Hmm—there is no section 37." Being assured that the inquiry was correct he produced the desired data!

Section 37 is located on U. S. Highway 97 at Algoma viewpoint, overlooking Upper Klamath lake (one of the largest bodies of fresh water west of the Mississippi river), Klamath county, Oregon. It is about 12 miles north of the city of Klamath Falls.

First Survey
The error—for an error in surveying it was—came about this way. In 1858 the first survey of this region was made by E. T. T. Fisher. At that time sections 13 and 24 could not have been under water with the exception of the strip along the edge of the lake.

In 1917 another survey was made by Fred Mensch and the plat of this survey shows land in sections 24, 25, 26, 35 and 36. These had undoubtedly heretofore been under water as they are swamplands, with the exception of section 24—the mountain side, which had previously been ignored in the surveys for some unknown reason. At this time, in joining the two surveys, a strip of land

Houses and other structures built in Section 37 at Algoma
our present section 37) between sections 13 and 24 was left unsurveyed. Another error evidently.

Unsurveyed Strip

A couple of years later, in 1919, two men, August Kruger and Paul Herzog, in studying a map of this region, noticed this apparently unsurveyed strip and filed homestead applications on land adjoining what is not section 37 and asked that they be allowed to apply for some of the un-surveyed land and requested a survey on it. It later developed that both Mr. Kruger and Mr. Herzog had placed their homes on the un-surveyed strip, thinking that it was on the land in section 24.

Section marker at a corner of Section 37

Not long afterwards a dispute arose between the Algoma Lumber company and Mr. Kruger as to the ownership of the unsurveyed strip. Algoma Lumber company claimed the unsurveyed strip as part of section 13 adjoining it on the north, which they had bought. As a result of this dispute, and others, the general land office ordered the surveyor general
to make a survey of this strip. The survey was completed in July, 1926, and there seemed to be nothing else to do but call it section 37, though section 37s do not exist in the United States survey system, there being only 36 sections to a township, and as section 37 it now remains on the maps.

A coincidence is that section 37 is in Township 37. As shown on the accompanying map, U.S. Highway 97 runs through the length of the section from Algoma viewpoint, east, then it again turns north.

Among the surveyors and foresters of the United States, it has long been a standard joke to send a greenhorn student surveyor or young forester out to work in section 37. Obviously he never finds section 37.

The writer is indebted to Hal Ogle, district fire warden for the state of Oregon, and secretary-manager of Klamath Protective association for calling attention to this section, and to Robert B. Officer of the general land office, U.S.
Department of the interior, at Lakeview, Ore., who kindly supplied the data about the early surveys.

Views looking north (Top) and south at the Algoma Overlook.

Another theory concerning section 37s is given in the following account, the authenticity of which will be left to the reader’s judgment. Present day surveyors will tell you that there are only 36 sections in a township, but old timers will scoff at this because they know that when Paul Bunyan, that legendary character of early western logging days, was logging off Eastern Oregon country, his surveyor always made a township with 37 sections. There was a very definite reason for this, they say, because of the way Paul logged the area. Instead of going out into the woods and chopping trees down, as he had done in the east, he devised the scheme of going into the country with Babe, the blue ox, and hooking into a section and dragging it into the mill where his boys could easily handle the timber. After taking the trees off the section, Paul would drag the stripped section back to where he got it, and bring in a new one. Well, Paul could only drag 37 sections a day into the mill and section 37 was the last one. In those days Paul started out before dawn and it was too troublesome to haul 37 out in the dark so he just dumped it in the slash pile—that is the reason, they say, section 37s are not to be found today. But they point to the Cascades as being the result of Paul’s dumping section 37s.

The development of the western part of the United States called for a good system of land division. Congress passed legislation establishing a rectangular system of surveys so that land could be systematically partitioned and transferred. The public lands were divided by true meridianal lines and by parallels of latitude to form land townships of approximately 6 miles square. Each township was subdivided into one mile square, containing approximately 640 acres. All 36 sections were numbered uniformly: “The rectangular system,” known as Jefferson’s
System of Public Land Surveys, was originally reported to Congress on May 7, 1784 as being divided into hundreds (being 10 squares by 10 squares), but on May 3, 1785, this was amended so that the size of the township would be six miles square instead of ten. This became a given.

The Klamath County Museum has a book in its collection, *Public Land Surveys of the United States*, based upon public statutes and documents and on the report submitted to Congress in the year 1784 by Thomas Jefferson, written in 1894, that says: “The system of counting as adopted at present in the public land system is simple, and should be well fixed in the mind.

a. Every whole township has thirty-six sections.
b. To number them, begin at the northeast corner section and number it 1.
c. Proceed west to number 6 at the northwest corner.
d. Dropping south one section, proceed east and west alternately to number 36 in the southeast corner of the township.
e. In fractional townships, the sections most take the same numbers that they would bear were the township full.” (from pages 10 and 11).

There is no section 37 in this system and certainly not between sections 24 and 13.

The General Land Office and the Surveyor General under its command made a decision in establishing Section 37 that is like putting new numbers in our numbering system. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

What sort of pressure would cause the General Land Office to break its own rules?

By Judith Hassen
KLAMATH COUNTY MUSEUM

PLEASE COME
TO A SPECIAL OPENING
OF THE EXHIBIT,
"THE KLAMATH BASIN'S
CONTRIBUTIONS
TO
WORLD WAR II"
DECEMBER 9, 2001
2:00 P.M.
KLAMATH COUNTY MUSEUM
1451 MAIN STREET
KLAMATH FALLS, OR

SHOW DATES:
DEC. 7, 2001—MARCH 9, 2002

The view from Algoma overlook.