Worthwhile things, such as the Collier Memorial State Park Logging Museum don't come about by accident. They nearly always come as a result of someone with a vision, and a willingness to do whatever it takes, to make that thing come true. In 1945 Alfred (Cap) and Andrew Collier donated a 140 acre tract of land at the confluence of Spring Creek and the Williamson River, five miles northwest of Chiloquin, to the state of Oregon as a memorial to their parents, Charles and Janet Collier. The logging museum had its inception two years later, when Alfred and Andrew donated their large collection of antique logging equipment to the park. And there were many others who gave of themselves to make the project a success. Lowell Jones, for one. He organized the museum's support group, Friends of the Collier Park and served as its president for many years. He was a moving force in the museum and was instrumental in adding several of the museum's largest displays, including logging arches, the large steam engine from the Weed, California saw mill, the battery powered electric engine from the Kesterson sawmill, to name just a few.

In 1996 the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department awarded Jones the prestigious Stewart Volunteer Award for his 48 years of dedicated participation in the development of Collier Memorial State Park and its logging museum. Jones gives credit to those who helped him, naming Elmer Zimmerman, and his assistant Mike Balcom, the Putman Brothers, Leonard and Ned, Bill Raymond, Grant March, Bob Kennedy and Bob Wampler. We owe each of these gentlemen a vote of thanks.

The focus of this issue of the Trumpeter is on the Collier State Park Logging Museum. Although most of our readers will probably be familiar with this subject, there will undoubtedly be some who are not. Even those who have stopped and gone through the museum in the past may be in need of a refresher course on the history of logging in Klamath County.

—Jack Bowden
Preparing the former Big Lakes Box Co. McGiffert for shipment over the highway. Note that loader has been cut in two.

Even after being halved the old machine made an excessive dimension load for movement to Collier Park.
COLLIER MEMORIAL STATE PARK

For anyone seriously interested in Klamath County history a visit to Collier Memorial State Park, Logging Museum is a must. The museum is located on Highway 97, thirty miles north of Klamath Falls at the confluence of Spring Creek and Williamson River. One would be hard pressed to find a more pleasing location. The setting is superb. It would be worth a trip to the park even without the museum. The park is open year around, however it is an outside museum and it can be difficult to gain access to some of the exhibits when the snow is on the ground.

For over a half century the lumber and wooden box industry was the mainstay of Klamath County and the driving force in the local economy. At one time, during the 1920s there were more than 30 saw mills, some quite large, operating within the area, and Klamath Falls, could boast that it had the largest pine mill and the largest box factory in the nation. Needless to say, it took a lot of logs to keep all those saws turning. Logs were big and heavy, and equipment was small. The only practical ways to move the logs was by water or by rail. Lumbermen utilized water transport whenever it was convenient, but most of the larger mills relied on railroads to deliver their logs. Over the years literally hundreds of miles of logging railroad were laid down in the area and then just as quickly taken up when the logs had been hauled out, and moved to some new location to be spiked down and used again. One might say they recycled their track. Most of the work was done by hand, horses or steam powered engines.

The park and museum were named in honor of Charles Morse Collier, an early lumberman in the area and his wife, Janet McCormack Collier. In 1945 Collier’s two sons, Alfred (Cap) and Andrew donated the 140 acre park site to the State of Oregon for use as a state park. Two years later, the two brothers donated their collection of antique logging equipment that formed the nucleus of today’s museum. Since that time numerous other artifacts have been added, and the area within the park boundaries has increased to 665 acres. One of things that make the
location of the museum so appropriate is the fact that it is located in the heart of the area where much of the logging activity took place. In the 1920s a nearby lumber company operated a narrow gauge logging railroad within what has since become the park.

On display at Collier Park are many of the machines, tools and equipment used to fell the trees and transport the logs from the woods to the mills. This is reputed to be one of the largest collections of logging equipment in the nation. There are far too many pieces to consider in this short paper, but it might be well to touch on a few of the more interesting artifacts.

Most of the McGiffert log loaders once so prevalent throughout the pine forests of our western states have long since been cut up for scrap. Only three McGifferts are known to have survived and we are fortunate indeed to have two of them right here in Klamath County at Collier Park. One, a small, “stiff boom” model and the other, a larger, “quarter swing” machine. Both McGifferts were made by the Clyde Iron Works, of Duluth, Minnesota. The smaller one was built for the McCloud River Lumber Co. in 1906. In 1926 it was sold to the Kesterson Lumber Co. for use on their logging line out of Dorris, California. In 1929 Kesterson sold it to Weyerhaeuser Timber Co. The larger, a quarterswing McGiffert was also built by Clyde in 1926, for Big Lakes Box Co. of Klamath Falls. In 1947 it was acquired by the Palmerton Lumber Co. who subsequently sold it to Weyerhaeuser. When it was moved to Collier Park in 1963, it was so large that in order to move it over the highway, it had to be cut in two and each half moved on a separate truck. Even then the two trucks were both over sized loads. When they got both parts to the museum they were welded back together. If only these machines could talk, what stories they might tell. Such as the day a Pelican Bay Lumber Co. loading crew using a McGiffert, very similar to this one set a record by loading 63 rail cars with short logs in a seven hour, thirty-four minute period. What a wonder.

The big wheels, some as much as 10 feet in diameter were at first towed by horses and later by crawler tractors. When larger, more powerful tractors appeared on the scene, the high-wheels were replaced by steel arches which were capable of handling much larger and heavier loads.

McVay log loader. These machines were made in Klamath Falls.

How many of our readers have ever heard of a McVay Log Loader? These log loaders were built right here in Klamath Falls, at the McVay Machine Shop. This firm built no less than 52 of these machines for use by loggers up and down the
west coast. They were usually mounted on a Mack truck chassis and were ideal for the small logger.

The little tank engine sat beside Highway 99 just south of Mt. Shasta City.

The little tank locomotive at the park has an interesting past. It was built by the Baldwin Locomotive Co. in 1884 for the California Redwood Co. at Eureka, California. From there it migrated to Scotia California and then to a construction company at Oakland, California. In 1903 it again changed hands going to a lumber company at Mt. Shasta where it was used to haul lumber and logs. It was at Mt. Shasta that the little engine got the nickname of GOP, which some said stood for, "Get Out and Push". It was said that the GOP spent as much time off the track as it did on. In the 1930s it was retired from service and for many years sat alone and neglected along side US Highway 99, just south of Mount Shasta City. In 1963 it was rescued by Cap Collier and moved to its present location at Collier State Park.

After Algoma Lumber Co. purchased the two large Yawkey timber tracts near Fort Klamath in 1936 O K Puckett was hired to float the logs from Agency Lake down through the narrows and across Upper Klamath Lake to the mill at Algoma. Puckett had this boat built and continued to move the logs until the mill closed down in 1943. In what may have been the largest single log movement on the lake on June 7, 1938 he delivered a raft containing 1.8 million board feet of timber. The trip down from Agency Lake took 36 hours. In 1965 the remains of Puckett's boat were found slowly rotting away along the shore at the south edge of the lake near Lake Shore Drive, and it was rescued and brought to Collier Park.

The park's track layer was built by Clyde Iron Works in 1923, for the Phoenix Logging Co. In 1940 Weyerhaeuser Timber Co. purchased it for use in building their Camp Six line.

A beautifully restored Dollbeer Donkey on display engine at Collier Park Logging Museum.

Steam powered tractor
One could spend hours browsing through the artifacts at the museum. There are items too numerous to mention, each with a history of its own, each with its own story to tell. If only they could speak!

An ideal time for a visit to the park would be in June on the annual “Living History Day.” Enjoy the sight of steam powered tractors, hear the sound of a steam whistle and smell the scent of newly cut pine. Watch an old fashioned shingle mill in action. Ride around the park in a horse drawn wagon or take part in the many other activities. Most of all, have fun while you learn something new about our history.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE FROM
Denney Teater

By now you’ve probably heard the Klamath County Museum Foundation is throwing a gigantic New Year’s Eve Party at Yesterday’s Plaza in Klamath Falls.
Here’s the rest of the story: We’ll need to sell hundreds of tickets in order to cover our expenses for this event and then make some profit for the museum’s endowment fund.
Won’t you please consider buying two or more tickets to help make sure this event is a success? Even if you don’t expect to actually attend, we’d appreciate your support just the same, or you could give them as Christmas presents. They would make a perfect gift. We hope this party becomes a popular annual event that will help build the endowment fund for years to come. But we’ll need your help to get it off the ground this year. Remember, this event has twin objectives: Fun and Funds. We hope it will give local residents a venue to have lots of fun with friends, and that it will also raise some serious funds for the museum.
You may purchase tickets at the Klamath County Museum Gift Shop. The cost is $35 per person for the party, or $100 per person for the party plus a gourmet dinner.
November proved to be an exciting month for the Klamath County Museums.

First we took up the task of indexing news stories in the Herald and News. Two community service workers were assigned to the museum in October and November. While many community service crews are used for menial tasks such as litter collection, we are able to find more meaningful tasks for workers with certain skills. These two people have indexed major news stories from the first five months of 1960. This effort will be continued as more workers are assigned to us or as volunteers become interested.

Our index to newspaper stories is just getting started, but what we have is available online. You can check the indexes at www.co.klamath.or.us/museum/research.htm.

On Saturday, Nov. 12, the museum held its first ever “Second Saturday” event at the Baldwin Hotel Museum. The event’s name was designed to play off the popular Third Thursday event. A committee of volunteers formed to plan the event, and we hoped to have anywhere from a dozen to perhaps as many as 50 people turn out for the event. By the end of the day at least 120 people had come through the Baldwin! We also got front-page coverage in the Herald and News. Our volunteers were frazzled and weary by the end of the day, but everyone is looking forward to doing it again.

Another important development occurred when Jim Floyd, a retired ad salesman for the Herald and News, loaned to the museum a photo album his father had assembled many years ago. It was filled with 18 large and finely detailed aerial photos of Klamath Falls taken in 1959 and 1960. Mr. Floyd allowed the museum to scan the photos and gave us permission to use them in any way we see fit. Our current plan is to make enlargements of the images and exhibit them in the main museum’s entrance gallery.

Finally, the biggest news of the month came when the museum successfully bid in an online auction for an 1873 document that originated at Fort Klamath. As reported in another story on the front page of the Herald and News, the document is related to Captain Jack. If it proves to be authentic, I believe it will become one of the museum’s signature artifacts.

I must say it’s been heart-warming to meet so many people over the past month who love Klamath County’s public museums and are dedicated to securing their future. I’m optimistic that in coming months we’ll find ways to address the museums’ financial concerns. Keep your ears open for more news.Δ
A FAREWELL TO OUR FORMER MUSEUM MANAGER

By Susan Rambo

Judith Hassen, our museum manager for the last five years, has left to join her husband on Midway Atoll in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. She was initially hired as Curator. Later she was promoted to Manager.

Her accomplishments were many. She contributed greatly to the development of the museums. She created the World War II display of servicemen and servicewomen, honoring those brave individuals who joined the military at the armory, which now houses the main museum. This exhibit is an ongoing project.

The development and success of the Modoc Gallery is due to Judith’s efforts. In what once was a hallway full of filing cabinets, the Modoc Gallery now allows our local artists to display their creative talent.

The rotating exhibits in the Main Entrance Hall have become a focus of many who visit the facility. In the past this area was static. Judith decided this space needed change to keep the community interested and coming back.

Judith’s persistence is why the Fort Klamath museum was rebuilt. The previous building was destroyed by fire in 2001. She dedicated herself to rebuilding along the same lines and on the same footprint of the original guardhouse. Within one year of the fire, the first wall was erected. Once again this museum tells the history of the area and adds perspective to the events of 1872-73 at the Lava Beds.

Judith was instrumental in organizing the Valentine’s Dinner at the Baldwin Hotel Museum. She made it fun, festive and successful. She also promoted the idea of an auction to raise money for the staff at the Baldwin.

She held the office of Vice President in the Historical Society. This position required her to organize and schedule the programs for each meeting. Judith’s ability to go out in the community and meet people gave us a variety of excellent speakers.

Judith had more ideas than we had time, but she never gave up when she felt it was something that would benefit the museums. She had a wealth of knowledge. She could bake a mean batch of brownies, which were always present during the receptions or other events. She had more energy than most people and I always wondered when she slept. Her dedication to the museums was inexhaustible. Many evenings and her days off were spent taking care of museum matters.

We wish her well, out there on her Pacific isle, basking in the sun, scuba diving and bird watching. Aloha, Judith.△
Klamath County Historical Society

Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of the month — with some exceptions. See schedule or call 883-4208. We meet at the Klamath County Museum meeting room, 1451 Main St., Klamath Falls, Spring Street entrance. For further information call the museum or John Fortune at 882-6041.

2006 Meetings
January 26 - 2 pm
February 23 - 2 pm
March 23 - 2 pm
April 27 - 7 pm
May 25 - 7 pm
June - Annual Tour
    July - Picnic
August - No Meeting
Sept 28 - 7 pm
Oct 26 - 7 pm
Nov - Potluck
Dec - No Meeting

News from The Klamath
News — September 12, 1936
"Traffic Moves Over Weed Highway"
The Midland section of the Klamath Falls-Weed Highway was opened to regular traffic at 6 pm on Friday, Sept. 11, 1936. This section, between the Miller packing plant on Greensprings Highway and the town of Midland, is the last in Oregon to be completed by the state highway commission. It will be dedicated in October 1936. (Dedication was on Monday, October 5, 1936)

News from the Klamath Republican — March 1906
In the press bulletin, issued under the direction of the United States Geological Survey, the river connecting Upper and Lower Klamath lakes is officially designated as Link river. This is a reversal of a previous decision, which gave this stream the name Klamath.

Annual Membership Information
Due January 1st
Individual Member $5.00
Supporting Member $25.00
Life Member $100.00

Make your dues payable to:

KLAMATH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

and mail to or drop off at:
Klamath County Museum, 1451 Main Street, Klamath Falls, OR 97601

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