ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The year 1905 was an exciting time on the lakes and rivers of Klamath County, for it was during that year that two of the largest and best known steamboats to cruise the waters of the Klamath lakes and rivers were launched. In January the steamer Winema made her debut on Upper Klamath Lakes and the following August the Klamath came down the ways on Lake Ewauna. In the coming years each of these vessels was destined to play an important role in Klamath County’s colorful transportation history.

Before the arrival of the railroad and the proliferation of the automobile changed things forever, a large part of the travelers and freight moving in and around the Klamath Basin did so by boat. Nor was this confined to local traffic. Most of the people and a large portion of the freight moving in and out of the basin either began or ended their journey on the water.

In April, John Fortune, president of the Klamath County Historical Society gave an informative presentation to the society’s members at the Klamath County Museum, on subject of early local water transportation. If you missed out on it you are in luck. John has given us permission to reprint his paper in its entirety in this issue of the Trumpeter. Read on.
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.

2005
Meetings
June 5 – Tour of White Lake City & Laird's Landing
July 28 – 6 pm Potluck at Fortune's, 1145 Tamera
August – No Meeting
Sept 22 – 7 pm
Oct 27 – 7 pm
Nov – Elections
Dec – No Meeting

History Notes
“In January 1905, a six mill levy was voted” and the Klamath County High School, at one time located on Fifth, between High and Washington, was “constructed at a cost of $29,500. It was dedicated & occupied January 1906.”

Membership Information
Individual Member: $3.00
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

Board Members
John Fortune, President
Judith Hassen, Vice President
Susan Rambo, Secretary
Avis Kielsmeier, Treasurer
Bob Baker, Carol Mattos, Doris Peters
The steamer Klamath near Lairds Landing

Early Transportation in Klamath Country
The Waterways
By John Fortune

Starting with our Native Americans, the Klamath and Modoc Indians used dugout canoes extensively in moving about on the lakes to gather foods such as the seeds of Wocus, the yellow pond lily, and bird's eggs. Passing around Tule Lake in 1846, members of the Applegate party noted many canoes being used by the Modocs. Here at the head of Link River in 1857, Martin Frain and his supplies were ferried across by Klamaths in dugouts and tule-reed boats with holes in the bottom where the Indian women stuck their legs through and paddled with their feet. Trails and roads into the Klamath Basin were few in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Applegate trail passed south of the lower lake, crossing Klamath River near Keno and west toward Ashland. The Ashland Road paralleled that emigrant trail, close to what is now Highway 66 of the "Greensprings", on its way to Linkville. The Rancheria Trail ran from Jacksonville, crossing the Cascades north of Mt. McLoughlin coming down near Rocky Point; it mainly served as a supply route for Fort Klamath but it was rough and narrow.
and deep with snow in winter. In the late 1800s, the Topsy Road was built passing up the south side of Klamath River from Ager, merging with the Ashland road at Chase Station, about four miles west of Keno. There was a ferry or bridge at Keno crossing Klamath River but the road into Klamath Falls was notoriously bad with mud.

Klamath River and Lake Ewauna were navigable between Keno and Linkville. The "Straits" between Klamath River and Lower Klamath Lake were also passable giving access to the lower lake. Upper Klamath and Agency lakes were navigable but Link River with "Klamath Falls" was not. Therefore, travel on the waterways was divided, with one group of boats serving the lower basin and another plying the upper lake and tributaries.

The first recorded freight to travel by boat was in 1865 when 1300 pounds of material from Yreka was transported toward Ft. Klamath on the upper lake. Another reference shows that soldiers from the Fort rowed to Klamath Falls in a Whitehall sailboat and sailed back. The first ferry across the lower end of Link River was built by George Nurse in 1867. The first lumber building in Linkville was built in 1867 with lumber rafted down from Fort Klamath. The first wooden bridge over lower Link River was built in 1869. About that time the government adopted Upper Klamath Lake as an official thoroughfare to and from Fort Klamath. The "road" around the east side of the lake was largely a trail for pack trains.

A small sailboat began working on Upper Klamath Lake between Link River and points north in 1872. The Mary Moody was perhaps 40 feet long and 10 feet wide, a keel bottomed boat operated by Moody, a sea sailor; it ran until about 1879.

The steamer Winema in a sea of grass, on the ill fated trip up Wood River. This photo was made before the upper deck was removed.

Thatcher and Weldon built the first steamboat in 1881. The General Howard was 65 feet long by 12 feet wide and drew 4 1/2 feet; powered by a 40 hp engine and a four-foot propeller, it cost $800. The boss boat builder was reportedly the man who drew the patterns for the Merrimac of Civil War fame. The General Howard towed logs from Pelican Bay to a new sawmill on Link River.

In 1889, Loosley built a flat bottomed stern wheeled boat to navigate Wood River but couldn't get the congressional appropriations to dredge the bar and deepen the channel so gave up the idea and used Agency Landing instead.

By 1889, Keno had become a busy freight terminal receiving loads coming in on the Greenspring Road and up
Topsy Grade. It was easier and cheaper to transfer cargo and passengers to boats for the trip to Linkville, thus avoiding the bad last leg of road. Captain Dustin operated the Mayflower on Klamath River for this purpose. A stern wheeler steamboat, it was later used for hauling lumber from Keno across Lower Klamath Lake, returning with loads of hay. It sank and was replaced by the Canby for hauling lumber to Klamath Falls.

In 1893, the citizens of the growing city of Linkville decided their town was going to be bigger and more sophisticated than a "ville", so changed the name to Klamath Falls reflecting the rapids on Link River.

At the turn of the century, the steamers Oregon and Hobsen were making regular trips to Pelican Bay carrying loggers. The Oregon made all day excursion trips around the upper lake and Agency lake and return for 75 cents but you had to pack your own lunch.

In 1901, the two deck Alma was making regular trips to Budd Springs on Odessa Creek, Pelican Bay and Agency Landing. In 1902, the Alma began making Sunday excursions that were the start of an era of
excursion boats. All day leisurely trips on the upper lake were made to view the mountain scenery with stops at Eagle Ridge Tavern, Odessa, Rocky Point, and Pelican Bay with bands playing.

The advertisements in the Klamath Republican for excursions on the Alma promised good times for all: "Steamboat Excursion on upper Klamath Lake- Saturday and Sunday, June 21-22, 1902. From Klamath Falls to Odessa, the popular summer resort. Platform has been erected for dancing and the Klamath Falls orchestra will furnish the music. Tickets for the trip: Gentlemen, $1; Ladies 50 cents. Oyster supper at midnight. A. C. Griffith, Proprietor."

By 1903, the railroad had been built into Pokegama, a logging camp out west of Klamath Falls, north of Klamath River. That then was the primary terminal for passengers and freight coming into Klamath country; but stages and wagons were still required to get to Keno and Klamath Falls.

Two gasoline launches, the Tule and Ewauna, were brought in by this route to carry freight and passengers on Klamath River below Klamath Falls.

In 1905, the stern-wheeled steamer Winema was launched. Named for the Modoc woman, heroine of the Modoc Wars, the ship was 125 feet long and 22 feet at the beam with two decks and superstructure and drawing only 22 inches of water when empty. Her 14,000 pound boiler was brought to Pokegama on the railroad, then 5 days to Klamath Falls by wagon pulled by 10 to 14 horses. She was the "Queen of the Fleet". The Winema called at every accessible point on the upper lake hauling freight of all kinds and passengers and made regular Sunday excursions. She may have been a bit too tall in the big wind that blew her over in 1907 off Eagle Ridge. But she was raised and refurbished, having parts of two decks removed to reduce wind resistance, she went back into service. Excursions were reinstated in 1913 carrying 700-800 people per week. She then operated as late as 1916, finally burning at dock in 1925.

The steamer Klamath tied up at the Klamath Navigation Co. dock on Lake Ewauna.

Also in 1905 the Klamath Navigation Company was formed and built the steamer Klamath. She had a new hull design with a tunnel for the shaft and propeller to allow operation in shallow water. She was built for service between Klamath Falls and Lairds Landing on Lower Klamath Lake for the stage coach connection to the McCloud River Railroad that was building in that direction and made connection with the Southern Pacific Railroad. This system
supposedly allowed passengers to leave Klamath Falls after noon one day and arrive in San Francisco the following morning.

There were also two barges built for the Klamath’s work. Each one was 62 feet long and 20 feet wide. The sides were each of one piece 32 inches high, 62 feet long and 5 inches thick, cut with a whip saw from one huge tree.

Between 1905 and 1909 transportation was constantly changing with the building of the railroad toward Klamath Falls. Rival railroads and Stage Companies competed for freight and passengers. The steamship Klamath continued service on Klamath River and the lower lake until the railroad arrived in Klamath Falls in 1909. Ironically, the Klamath and other boats served in moving supplies for the railroad construction. Again with some irony, the Klamath was moved by rail to the upper lake where she carried passengers from Shippington to Agency Landing to meet stages for the trip to Crater Lake. (Shippington was the major landing and industrial location along the lake in northern Klamath Falls.) The Klamath also made regular trips to Eagle Ridge Tavern and Rocky Point.

An article from December 11, 1913 told of the Klamath coming in from Pelican Bay with 80 men and a load of Christmas trees for Portland; it was slow going through four to six inches of ice. Some of the men got off and walked across the ice and overland to Klamath Falls. By 1913 she was mainly used for towing logs and breaking ice, working until 1918.

In 1908, the Hornet towed logs and hauled wood for the steam cleaners in Klamath Falls.

The steamer Klamath near Laird’s Landing.

The Mazama was a small twin-screw steamboat put in operation in 1909 on a run between Klamath Falls and the town of Fort Klamath which entailed a run up the narrow and crooked Wood River. She hauled in supplies and returned with loads of hay on round nosed barges.

Also in 1909, the steamer Eagle was built to transport sand which it pumped from the mouths of Williamson and Wood rivers and transported it to the growing city of Klamath Falls. It also hauled volcanic cinders from Coon Point on the west side of Klamath Lake for roads in the city.

This quotation from the Evening Herald of May 8, 1919 describes well the continuing role of these hard working boats on upper Klamath Lake:

"Boats Busy on Upper Lake Now - The movements of the Klamath Lake steamers today are as follows: The
Wasp is away to the upper camps with a cargo of twenty-five tons of hay, grain, a logging truck and six horses. She will call at Howards Bay and Caledona on her return. The Modoc is towing a big log raft from Ball's Bay to Lamm's Mill at Modoc Point. The Eagle is on her way down from Coon Point with one hundred and fifty tons of cinders presumably to be used on the Pelican City road. After discharging this load, she will go to Williamson River for a barge load of sand, about one hundred and fifty tons. The Klamath goes up the lake today with a long string of boom poles and a barge load of fuel oil. This boat last year transported from here to the Upper Lake 250,000 gallons of fuel oil. It is estimated that an equal amount will be used this season, and the transportation of other camp supplies will be greater now than ever. Captain Van Camp is a very busy man just now."

Another important service performed by several boats was to carry the mail to various points around the upper lakes. For example, from 1909 to 1913, the Curlow ran 90 miles a day from Agency Landing to Buena Vista via Odessa. (The Buena Vista Landing was near where Pelican Marina is now.) The Oakland was still carrying the mail from Klamath Falls to Recreation (Rocky Point) in 1922.

Some other water born tools that shouldn't be forgotten are the big dredges that worked around the basin. The Adam's Dredge was brought up in pieces from Fall River Mills in 1903 to Keno where it was rebuilt and towed to the lower lake where it dredged the channel to White Lake and Merrill Landing. It also dredged the channel to Laird's landing allowing the Klamath to bring passengers on their way south. It worked many jobs around Klamath Falls before being moved to the upper lake in 1909 where it worked on reclamation projects. Even larger dredges, the Klamath Queen and the James Grady were built by the Southern Pacific for work on the upper lake before being sold to Copco.

Of course, along the way there were many other launches and pleasure boats plying the lakes, even house boats providing for sportsmen, tourists and workers at the north end of the lake.

Boats continued to be important to passenger transportation into the early 1920's when better roads were built. They remained doing important commercial work for many years after that, hauling and towing the freight.

It seems a bit ironic that we're working here in Klamath County to attract tourists when at the turn of the last century our country was quite the draw for tourists coming up Topsy or over the Greensprings and on up the lake to Pelican Bay Resort (later Harriman Lodge), Odessa, Rocky Point, Spring Creek and Crater Lake. We still have many of these same attraction and more, including our latest working boat, the Klamath Belle providing it's services. Last June our historical society got to reenact one of the old excursions when the Belle took us on a 5-hour
trip up the west side of the lake to
the north end of Eagle Ridge
including lunch and an ice cream
social. We enjoyed the mountain
scenery, the birds and some history
along the way. The charge was
more than a dollar and ladies had
to pay the same as the men but it
was well worth it. Its not hard to
see why those early excursions
were so popular.

These are a few of the bits of information
about early Klamath water transportation
that I gleaned, mainly from the following
two publications;

Klamath Echoes #2, by the Klamath
County Historical Society.
Early Transportation on Klamath Waterways, by Harry Drew

The romantic old steamers have all gone on down the line. The remains of the once proud steamer
Klamath can be seen here, moldering away in the old Pelican Bay Lumber Company log cut on Upper
Klamath Lake where she was intentionally scuttled by her owners when her days of usefulness were over.
Although she has now completely disappeared, beneath the lake's waters her bones are still there in the
mud and sawdust.
The Klamath was loaded on two railroad flat cars and hauled to Upper Klamath Lake.

MOVING THE KLAMATH TO UPPER KLAMATH LAKE

When the steamer Klamath was launched on Lake Ewauna in 1905, the future looked bright. Before long she was kept busy hauling freight and passengers between Klamath Falls and such destinations as Keno, Teeters Landing and various points on Lower Klamath Lake. Probably the longest haul was to Lairds Landing at the south end of Lower Klamath Lake, where passengers wishing to leave the basin could disembark and take a stage coach to a point on the McCloud River Railroad which would in turn take them to a connection with a main line train on the Southern Pacific Railroad near Mt. Shasta California. It was a long way around, but there was no easy way in and out of the basin in those days. But things were about to change. The railroad was coming, and as the rails advanced the Klamath had fewer passengers and less freight to haul. There still seemed to be ample work available on Upper Klamath Lake and so it was that after the arrival of the railroad at Klamath Falls in 1909, the vessel's owners made the decision to move the Klamath to the upper lake. When the time came to move this large craft, the owners decided she should go by rail.

Unfortunately the owners were still unable to make ends meet and as they fell deeper into debt they began looking around for a buyer for the steamer. She was soon sold to the Pelican Bay Lumber Company who shortened her by removing a section in the middle of the boat, after which her new owners put her to work towing log rafts down the lake from Pelican Bay to the company's mill at
The steamer Klamath, en route from the lower lakes to Upper Klamath Lake. She rests atop two flat cars and dwarfs the two attached box cars.

Klamath Falls. The lumber company must have been pleased with her performance for they continued to use her to haul their logs down the lake to their mill until they finished up logging on the lake, around 1919.

The steamer Winema at Pelican Bay.

LAIRDS LANDING

Lairds Landing was named for Charles J. and Elva Laird who purchased a ranch at this location in 1892. It was also known as Laird's Stopping Place. It sat at the most southerly point on Lower Klamath Lake, in Siskiyou County, California, approximately 25 air line miles from Klamath Falls. It was a stop on the old wagon road from Merrill to
In this old photo the steamer Klamath can be seen approaching Lairds Landing in the period 1905-09.

Shasta Valley. For a brief period of time between the launching of the steamer Klamath in 1905 and the arrival of the railroad at Ady in 1908, it was possible to take the steamer from Klamath Falls to Lairds Landing, change to a stage from that point to a station on the McCloud River Railroad, the train to Mount Shasta and there board a main line train of the Southern Pacific Railroad. Before it could be used as a boat landing it was necessary to dredge a channel from deeper water to the dock.

Lairds Landing in 1948, showing the landing, barn and hotel.
2005 Tour

Lower Lake Country

With our own Verland and Carolyn Huff as our knowledgeable guides, the KCHS 2005 convoy proceeded down Highway 39 to Lower Klamath Lake Road, west of Merrill. First stop was at the site of White Lake City, where in the early 1900's a boomtown was the great expectation for this subdivision that lay south of Lower Klamath Lake Road and bordering on White Lake. Thanks to the Klamath County Museum's collection, we had a large plat map showing the vision for the new city. Verland said a school and several businesses were established including stores and a bank. There was a pier on White Lake where boats connected the city to Klamath Falls and Keno. But the expected railroad around the south side of Lower Klamath Lake did not come to pass, so White Lake City gradually became a ghost town, though some of the original lots are still on the books including several owned by the Huffs.

The tour moved on to Stateline Road to the site on White Lake where Mr. J. Frank Adams used his big dredge to dig the Adams Cut. The cut was dug through the bulrush marsh (cut by hand) and through the natural berm to carry water to irrigate the lands around Merrill. It was later abandoned because the water was too alkaline and was replaced by diversions from Lost River.

Then we continued west on Stateline Road, turning south around Indian Tom Lake and making our way along what at one time was the south shore of Lower Klamath Lake. Brief stops were made near Oklahoma School, where the building still stands near the old Oklahoma Landing, and then on to the site of Mt. Dome School.

Moving on to Laird's Landing we were guests of Lauren Laird, a descendant of the family that developed this major stop on the lower lake. This landing allowed for the connection of boats coming south meeting stages running further south to the railroads. The Applegate Trail came over the hill to the east of Laird's; travelers stopped here to rest and enjoy the springs. We stood on the site of the landing's house and hotel with pictures showing how it looked. Lauren and Verland related their personal experiences. The Adams Dredge dug a channel from the lake and a circular turn-a-round was fashioned allowing the steamship Klamath to land with her freight and passengers, and
then turn around for the run back north through the Klamath straights. Remnants of the "turn-a-around" are still visible. It was a wonderful experience and wasn't hard to imagine the Klamath in port at this historic early-day landing.

Leaving Laird's we made a brief stop at a California Trails monument at the old junction where the Yreka Trail branched off the Applegate Trail.

Then on south again, following Shirl and Chuck Woodson to their ranch, located on Willow Creek. The ranch was dotted with beef cattle and horses, with Mt. Dome on the southeast skyline. Here the Woodsons pointed out where the Van Brimmer cabin straddled Willow Creek (the same cabin that now stands in front of the Klamath County Museum). Shirl shared her collection of old photos of the cabin and old ranch house that was formerly on the site. Now only the big old cottonwoods mark the site adjacent to the new ranch building.

For the final stop, Verland led us down the road to a watering trough, for cattle that is, where we enjoyed lunch together at this rustic spot before returning home via Red Rock Road to Macdoel.

Many thanks to Verland and Carolyn Huff for organizing and leading this tour, and to the Museum staff for providing the old photos and documents that added so much to the experience. A special thanks is due to Shirl and Chuck Woodson and Lauren Laird for their gracious and enthusiastic hospitality.
THE MODOC GALLERY PRESENTS
“A Show To Remember”

Gina Janelli’s Photography

Reception for the Artist
Saturday, June 4, 2005
2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Refreshments served.

THE MODOC GALLERY
Klamath County Museum
1451 Main Street
Klamath Falls, OR 97601

Phone: 541-883-4208
Fax: 541-883-5170
Email: jhassen@co.klamath.or.
MAUD & MARY
A Century of Change

Opening Reception
2-4 p.m. Saturday, July 9

Klamath County Museum
1451 Main Street
541.883.4208

Please join us for the opening reception of the Maud & Mary centennial photography exhibit at the Klamath County Museum. The show juxtaposes the images taken by Maud Baldwin in the early 20th Century with contemporary photos of Klamath Falls by Mary Smothers.
2005 Summer Events at the Klamath County Museum

May 14 and 15
Fort Klamath Opens with Re-enactor’s Timeline

June
Baldwin Hotel Museum Opens for 2005 Season
Modoc Gallery Artist, Photographer Gina Janelli
“A Show To Remember”
The Entrance Gallery displays Pelican Piecemaker,
Barbara Krauss’ work as Quilting Artist of 2005.
The Pelican Piecemakers’ Quilting Faire
There will be lots of quilts and demonstrations of
many different quilting techniques.
June 26 3:00 p.m.
Drawing for the fabulous quilt that Hazel Lewis
donated to the Klamath County Museum.

July
Modoc Gallery Artist, Painter Sue Cogley,
“How the Stars Came To Be”
Reception: Friday, July 8, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Centennial Exhibit: “Maud and Mary”
The photography of Maud Baldwin is paired with the
modern photography of Mary Smothers.
Reception: Saturday, July 9, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Third Thursday, July 21
Hear Kickin’ the Brass play at the Main Museum and
see Bonnie and Clyde pulling Steve Bruce’s
Stagecoach around town. The Baldwin will have “A
Century of Wedding Fashions” display in its lobby.
July 23
Parade at 10:00 a.m.
July 23rd and 24th
The Baldwin Hotel Museum will host the Basin Blend
at 2:00 p.m. singing 4-part harmony in Ladies
Barbershop on both the 23rd and 24th. The Old Trolley
will be a portable exhibit hall at 6th and Main.

August
Modoc Gallery Artist, Lance Kent, “The Old West”
Reception: Sunday, August 7, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Centennial Exhibit: “Maud and Mary” Continued.
Third Thursday, Aug 18
Mickie McCormick demonstrates making dolls from
recycled fabric at the Main Museum. Have fun with
hands-on participation. The Baldwin will host an ice
cream social.
August 20 and 21
Cascade Civil War Society annual re-enactment
event at Fort Klamath. Musket balls, cannon balls,
and Belles of the Ball bring the 1860’s to life here
where it was a reality 1863-90.

September
Modoc Gallery Artist, Ceramist Doug Bourcy
“Medicinal Pottery”
Reception: Sept.10, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Centennial Exhibit: A Century of the American
Association of University Women.
Barbara Krauss' Quilt Show

Come to the Klamath County Museum at 1451 Main Street, Klamath Falls, OR to see the fabulous quilts of Barbara Krauss through the month of June. The opening reception will be June 12, 2005 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. On June 24, 25, and 26, the Pelican Piecemakers will host a Quilting Faire along with Barbara's Quilt Show. There will be quilts by other artists as well as demonstrations of a variety of quilting techniques.