

# WIND MOUNTAIN HISTORY



Girl Scout Camp Wind Mountain Lodge.

COMPILATIONS OF NOTES  
AND  
REMEMBRANCES OF THE  
WIND MT. AREA OF  
SKAMANIA COUNTY

## GIRL SCOUT CAMP

*(This type-written account was found behind a drawer [on the property]. It tells of the history of the Girl Scout Camp and Wind Mountain located in the east part of Skamania County.*

Camp Wind Mt. has 1320 acres. The property was purchased from a Mr. McClain. He was a wealthy man who had built up the area as a type of game reserve. It has been said that he put \$150,000 into the land. When he decided to sell, it was his desire that the land be sold to a group, not bought by single land owners.

The Portland Area Girl Scouts Council was given the opportunity to purchase the land for \$30,000. They paid \$10,000 down (money gotten from selling Camp Wildwood) and then agreed to pay \$2,000 a year until the balance was paid (\$2,000 to come from cookie sales). Mr. McClain accepted the checks each year, but he also gave money to the Scouts each year. The mortgage was soon paid off, and it was found that the Scouts had paid \$13,000 for their land. Several years later when Mr. McClain passed away it was found that according to his will if he died before the Scouts had finished paying for the land that it was to be given to them.

1. **Anderson Homestead:** located in the area of Pioneer Meadow. There are several old buildings there: a barn, cellar, and some apple trees, also a spring (graves). The buildings are thought to have been built around 1890. Mr. Anderson still lives in this area (over on Berge Road).

2. **Teepee Trappers Cabin:** built by Mr. Berge. He lived there one winter

about 1929. The Scouts acquired this land (traded 80 acres) one year after we had organized camping here.

3. **Burial Grounds:** There are thought to be several graves of early settlers in the area of the chapel and corn crib.

4. **Fish Hatchery:** During the time that Mr. McClain owned the property he maintained a fish hatchery in the area of Bick-up Meadow.

5. **Collins Pipe Line:** During the time of the Collins Hot Springs and Hotel they received their water (drinking) from North Lake. The pipe line ran from N. Lake to a reservoir near Sleepy Hollow, and then on to Collins Hot Springs. Remains of the pipe line can be seen near Sleep Hollow.

6. **Duck Lake Trapper's Cabin:** This was a cabin maintained Mr. McClain when he owned the land. He and many friends would come here to stay when they fished and hunted ducks.

7. **Home Lake:** Also known as Mill Lake or McKeinghin Lake. Since the earthquake several tons of cement have been poured into the lake to fill the crack so that the water will not run through.

8. **Isodone St. Martin Homestead:** This is the homestead behind Romany and Beaver Lake. The lot cabin and a shed remain standing. Nails that were made by hand can be found. There are quite a number of apple trees behind the buildings. Trees can be found branching directly out of the ground in this area. (Signs that this land was once farmed?) This is thought to have been built before 1890.

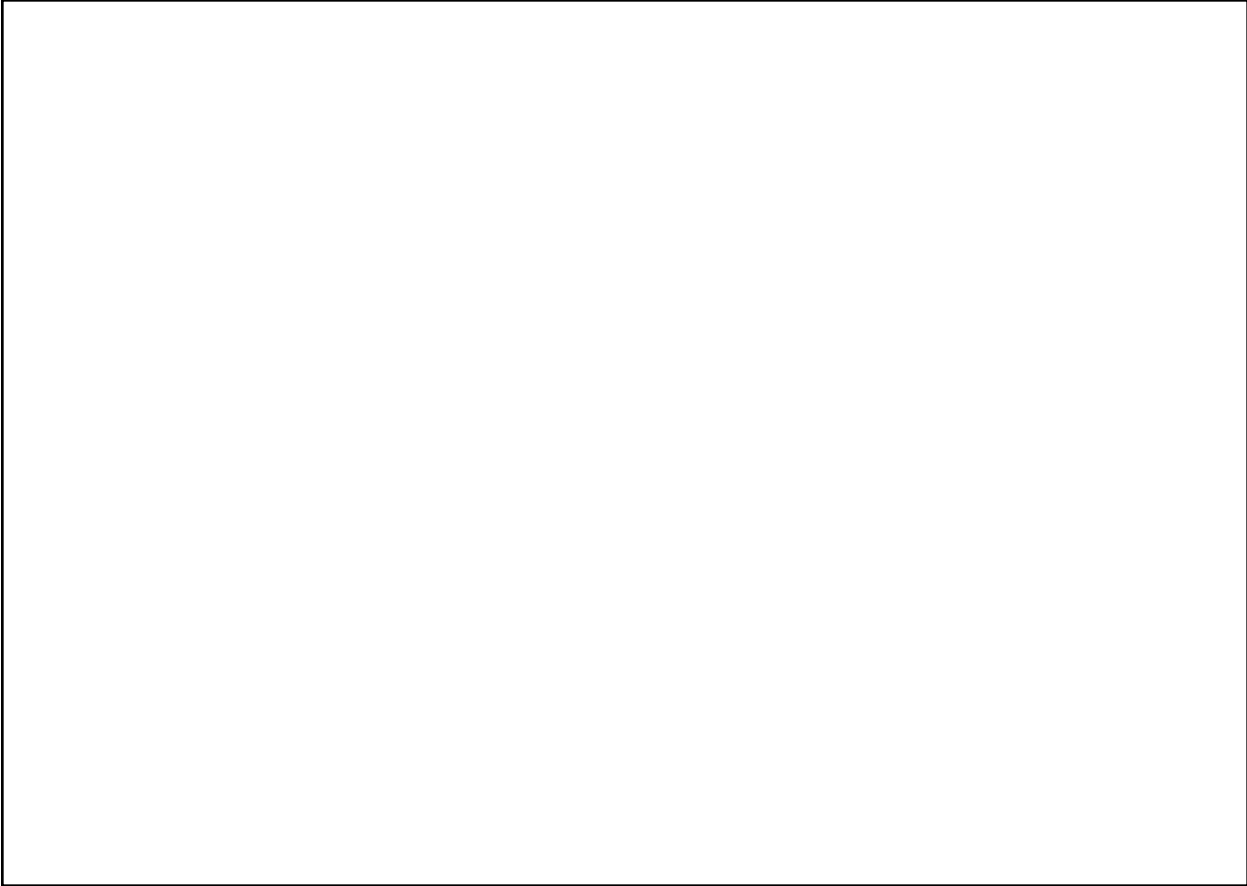
9. **Collins School:** The basement hole remains where the Collins School one stood (torn down in the late 1920s). The basement hold can be found on the

corner of their property line back from Isodine St. Martin Homestead (where the property joins the Allen property).

10. **New St. Martin Homestead:** This homestead is not on the Scout property, but hikes and sack lunches to this area have been permissible. You will find a frame 2-story house, a marshy lake, a creek, and many berry bushes. The house was built around 1900. It has

been 20-25 years since anyone has lived there.

11. **John Homestead:** It is supposedly located somewhere between East Lake and the Power Line Road. The buildings on the homestead were of shake. There is said to be a redwood tree on the homestead. (There was a fire that came down off of Dog Mt. about 1930, but left the redwood unharmed.)



**Wind Mountain in Home Valley.**

# INTERVIEW WITH MR. LOUIS LARSON

July 1, 1985

Mr. Larson was born 1899 in the Carson-Home Valley Area.

## **SUBJECT: THE WIND MOUNTAIN DOCK AT COLLINS LANDING**

Mr. Larson believes that the builders of the Dock were the people who built the Collins, Washington, Hot Springs Hotel & Spa, 1901-02. He thinks the Dock was about 150' long. The construction of the RR (railroad) in 1907-08 did not alter the Dock construction or structure because the Dock was sited lower than the RR route or grade. The RR supplemented the steamboats and the steamboat era soon passed and died in the early 1900s. The Collins Hotel & Spa soon became less popular and was torn down before 1920 and some of the lumber was used to build a house at Cooks, Wa.

Mr. Larson believes that high swift water washed the dock away. I do not know whether this agrees with Esson Smith's observations and those of Fred Duvine (diver) or not. Nor do I know whether the 1907 "Highway" up the Washington shore passed south of Wind Mountain and my interview with George Grenia who told me about the 1907 road. This interview material is now in Pullman, Wa., being examined by Dr. John Jameson of the WSU History Dept.

Mrs. Anna Cheney, octogenarian at Home Valley, has written to Mrs. Berge, age 90, in Portland for more information. Mrs. Zurcher of Carson will have additional information. Dewey Anderson, 86, at Carson, will also contribute when I can reach him.

Ivan Donaldson

# LETTER TO IVAN DONALDSON FROM TOM D. MONAGHAN

Portland  
July 6, 1985

Ivan Donaldson:

Your letter and returned pictures received OK. Thank you for the extra pictures you sent along. Regarding the dock at Collins Landing — In April 1981, I talked to Emma Berge, the last living member of the original Berge family of Home Valley. In 1981 she was 86 years old and healthy and alert. I asked her about the docks at Home Valley (Miller's Landing) and at Collins. She said that they traveled by steamboat before the coming of the railroad and that they used the dock at Miller's most of the time because it was close to home, but when the water in the Columbia was low, they went to Collins to board the boat because at Collins the dock extended further out into the river. The shore at Miller's was not very steep and the water too shallow for the boats to come close to shore.

This may account for the long row of pile bents that caught Charlie and Esson Smith's net. Your theory about the piles being cut by the crews who were clearing the flood plain in advance of flooding by the rising waters of the Bonneville pool seems to be a logical answer.

Here is another question about docks and old lumber flumes. Not long ago I talked with Mrs. Anna Cheney of Home Valley. Her maiden name was Erickson and she lives still on the old Erickson farm in the shadow of Wind Mountain overlooking the Columbia. I had asked her the name of the small creek that flows into the Columbia near the eastern edge of the Wm. Meniece Park. She said her mother called it Moore Creek after a family by that name that lived near its mouth. She also said there WAS a flume that came down the hill along the creek and carried lumber from a mill located on the creek not far south of today's BPA transmission line. She thought there must have been a dock at the end of the flume where the lumber could be loaded on boat. There was another mill and flume at Home Valley (Coulter's Mill). It was on a small creek, tributary to Little Wind River near the Berge farm. Emma Berge had a picture of the end of the flume.

I have another question — I'm enclosing a small note that was included with the pictures you sent me — maybe the note got into the envelope by mistake. In the note, Mr. Bert McQueen wants a post card size photo of the Bailey Gatzert docking at Collins. The reason I mention this, Frances Bergman, whose married name was Mrs. Andrew Zurcher, was granddaughter of Bill Bergman, an old long-time resident of Collins, had a collection of pictures taken at Collins during the building of the RR, and

she had offered them to me for inclusion in some SPS history. Included in that collection were pictures of the RR hospital, some RR construction pictures, the Gatzert pulled up to the shore at Collins. Frances died before I got around to getting the collection, and after her death no one could find the pictures. One of her relatives told me that she, Frances, had given them to someone in Camas. Could Mr. McQueen be that person? I am trying to track down old pictures and other information of SPS history for Walter Grande who intends to write the SPS history.

I have recently obtained a very good post card size picture of the Gatzert pulled up to shore at Collins, with a group of people who have evidently just left the boat and are walking up the steep bank and the gang plank is being retrieved.

Also have a good picture of the old Olmstead Hotel in Carson. It was located on the hill immediately south of the Carson Legion Hall.

Did you know that about the time of the building of the Portland and Seattle RR there were five or six hotels in Carson? Also have heard there were about eight saloons between Shipherd's Springs Hotel and the boat landing. There was a steam laundry owned by Gordon Wilson, a cigar factory owned by Carl Henzie, a blacksmith shop owned by Wm. "Sharkey" Cochran. At least two livery stables, three general stores: N. H. Nelson's, Meyer and Kelly, and Mason's. Mason's was later Wetherall's store. I almost forgot the butcher shop and the hardware store and Nick Gregorius' ice plant.

Sure am glad this typihng lesson is over.

T. D. Monaghan

# IVAN J. DONALDSON

M. P. 0.01 R. Cameron Lane  
Stevenson, Washington 98648

November 16, 1988

To Tom Monaghan:

We have long sought to learn how or from whom Aldrich Butte gained its name. Louise (Donaldson) found one map in the county offices showing the location of the Aldrich cabin located on the S.E. side of the mountain and today in perusal of the Skamania County history book, area study issue, 1959, we came on two references to a Marian G. Aldrich. Could this be the name of the person for whom the mountain is named? We would like to learn more about Mr. Aldrich: when did he come here? Occupation? Children? Personality? Wife's name? When did he leave the area?

We also seek the name of the county engineer active in history, and active in promoting and building the second blockhouse at Fort Rains. Do you remember when this new blockhouse was constructed and later torn down? It was present in 1941 when I came to Bonneville, but was gone when I returned from the Air Corps in March, 1946.

And do you know about the 1,000 ft. long dock existing at one time straight south into the river from Wind Mountain. Esson Smith and his father found the sawed-off piling when they were clearing for a salmon drift net operation after Bonneville Dam forebay was raised to present level. This was not the Collins hotel dock, Esson emphatically assured me. Could it have been a dock to aid construction of Cascade Locks, or the S.P.&S. railroad?

I've lost eyesight and Louise now translates my scribbling to legibility. Hence, I've not been active and have not heard from you in several years, which is an error on my part.

Can you please tell us when H. Seymour Hall and his history buff friends built the second fort at Fort Rains, and who were these friends? When was this second fort torn down: 1943 - 1945?

I judge you have heard that Jim Attwell departed.

Good wishes,  
Ivan

Portland  
Nov. 29, 1968

Ivan:

I was pleased to get your letter of Nov. 16 and to hear that you are still working on the documenting of Skamania history.

Last week I found a copy of a small book of poems written by Margaret Pratt of Stevenson I knew Mrs. Pratt when I was in high school in the 1920s with her two sons, Ted and Norman, and a daughter, Alma.

The book is entitled, "*Skamania High*," a collection of verse by Margaret Pratt; 46 pages, published by the Fowle Publishing Co., Milwaukie. It is signed No. 74, Margaret Pratt on the fly leaf. It belonged to my mother and is in mint condition. I am debating whether to give it to the Historical Society or the Stevenson Library.

I have your letter before me and have numbered the paragraphs and enclosed a copy here in order to keep answers straight.

**No. 1** — About Aldrich Butte: when I graduated from high school in 1927 a classmate was Larena Carpenter, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Verne Carpenter, who lived just south of Aldrich Butte, on the old highway to Vancouver. This brought to mind the condition of that old highway in the 1920s. To call it a highway was using the word rather loosely. It ran from the community of Cascades west along the north side of Greenleaf Slough.

In those days very little maintenance was done on that old road. There was no bridge or culvert where it crossed Hamilton Creek. During times of heavy run-off the creek would get wild and over a width of as much as two hundred feet or more, leaving a bed of boulders and cobbles. People traveling the road would clear a path through the cobbles and find the narrow channels that carried the normal flow of the creek. A different route each day if the creek became wild again.

But I got off the subject — Larena married John Tol and they lived at North Bonneville for some time. I believe John owned some property near the Carpenters. Carpenter's property would have extended to the butte.

The Tols moved to Goldendale many years ago and I heard that Larena died. I lost track of John.

In the Goldendale section of the phone book, I found the name V. Peter Tol. Tol is not a common name and Goldendale is a small town. so I concluded that this might be a son or other relative of John Tol.

I have written to the Goldendale Tol and asked if the whereabouts of, to see if he can shed any light on the origin of the name of John Aldrich Butte or anything about the cabin. I will report any information.



PARAGRAPH NO. 3 — Mrs. Anna Cheney of Home Valley was a young girl living on the old Erickson place, jam up against the west side of Wind Mountain, when the railroad was built in 1905-1908. I talked to her about a year ago. Porter Brothers was a contractor building the RR and there was a Porter's Mill on a small creek called Moore Creek, after a family by that name living near its mouth. The mill was on the north side of Wind Mountain, and the creek ran south to the Columbia River along the top of the west slope of Wind Mt. There was a flume running down along the creek to the river carrying lumber and RR ties from the Miller's. Chene thought that the dock that the Smith's found might have been used for loading the lumber and ties on boats for transport to construction sites along the river. The railroad did use steamboats for distributing construction material. It might be of interest to mention some other flumes in use in the early days. Coulter's Mill, located at Home Valley on a small creek tributary to Little Wind River near the Berge farm, had a flume that ended near the Berge place. I think the creek was named Coulter creek. Emma Berge showed me a picture of a pile of lumber at the end of the flume.

Borthwick's Mill was located on Carson Creek at Carson where the Wind River Highway crosses Carson Creek, a short distance north of the American Legion Hall. The flume ran from there approximately along the present route of Wind River Highway down the hill to Carson Junction, then down to the Columbia River near Sprague Landing.

Youman-Simpson Lumber Co. had a flume that carried rough lumber from their mill on Smith Creek down along the creek to the planer near the mouth of the creek, where the lumber was shipped by rail from Youman's spur.

Jeff Nix had a cord wood flume ending at the mouth of Smith Creek, where the wood was loaded on scows on the river. Several years ago I described another cord wood flume ending at the mouth of Nelson Creek, in a letter to Kay Wright at the Historical Society.

