

## THE HISTORY OF THE ODD FELLOWS SIERRA RECREATION ASSOCIATION

A few years ago we came across a box of old minutes, papers and records written about the efforts that went into selecting, purchasing and developing our little valley. Now known as the Odd Fellow Sierra Park.

I decided to try to decipher the minutes, the best that I could, and they are pretty much verbatim as written by the secretaries at the time, with a little input by me from time to time. Then I got the idea to get as many original owners, as I could, to submit their histories of activities in the park. Hope you enjoy what I have been able to compile. Clare Smith

On November 28, 1948, a group of delegates, from several lodges of the International Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) met at the Sylvan Lodge on the Sonora-Mono State Highway. Their intent was with the idea of forming a committee to inaugurate an Odd Fellows Recreation Area, in the National Forest, of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The purpose of this meeting was to inspect and discuss the possibilities of purchasing 740 acres of land. This property embraced what was, at one time, a portion of the old Wheeler Ranch, together with adjoining property.

At this first meeting, the lodges from Calaveras, Stanislaus, San Joaquin and Tuolumne Counties were represented. They held election of officers, who were as follows:

Alvin Fay	Sonora	President
Gene Bianchi	Oakdale	Vice President
Charles P. Jones	Sonora	Secretary
Louis Florence	Tracy	Treasurer

Other Directors were:

William Ham	Ceres
Robert Nichols	Galt
Fred Cook	Tracy
Herbert Kearns	Stockton
John Davis	White Pines
Earl Edgecomb	Lodi
J. C. Munday	Ceres
George Dresback	Turlock
Loren Hosmer	Modesto

A general discussion was held to consider the proposed location for the recreational camp, as well as the means of purchasing and promoting the property. Notices were to be sent to the Lodges of the Order notifying them of a meeting on December 5, 1948

At this next meeting, held in the banquet room of the Oakdale Lodge, there were about 35 Brothers in attendance. There were many pertinent questions asked. A report was given as to the present assets of the proposed site, which was submitted in a letter from Virgil Gunther, the real estate dealer handling the sale of the property. It was decided to proceed by sending letters to all the Lodges of the Order, in Central California and the Bay Area. Notices were also sent to the newspapers asking if the Lodges or their members were willing to join in the proposed recreational area. The president and secretary were authorized at this meeting to start proceedings to incorporate the Odd Fellows Sierra Camp and at this point in time it was to be a non-profit corporation. A collection was taken up to help defray present expenses and \$31.50 was turned over to the treasurer.

On December 12, 1948, Articles of Incorporation were read, approved and ordered forwarded to the Secretary of State, at Sacramento, California, as soon as all necessary signatures were secured. The President was directed to ascertain the status of the water rights, mineral rights, etc. on the proposed site selected for the camp. A motion was made and passed that bonds will be issued on \$100.00 and \$500.00 denominations, to the amount of \$25,000, bearing interest at 4% per annum, to be retired on or before the end of ten years from date, and with interest being paid annually. Members, in installments of \$25.00 each can purchase bonds of \$100.00 denominations. Each stockholder was allowed one vote. It was voted to have the president and secretary draft a set of by-laws to be submitted for discussion by the Board of Directors at the next meeting.

Another meeting was held on December 19, 1948 at the Oakdale Lodge with a large gathering of Odd Fellows and ladies present, representing many lodges of the Central California area. Again they explained the aims and objects of the recreation association with many members asking questions and showing interest. Receipt books were issued to members for the sale of stock, or the receipt of installment payments on purchase of lots, with several large payments being made by members present. An executive board meeting was held and a copy of the proposed by-laws were read and discussed, with several proposed changes adopted. On December 28, 1948, the final copy of the proposed by-laws was approved.

After months of planning, this beautiful area, with its lush green meadow, pristine woods and Sugar Pine Creek running through it, was purchased by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, from Evelyn Hawley, a single woman for the amount of \$45,000.00. The Deed of Trust was signed and notarized on March 8, 1949.

They were then ready to proceed with the development of a recreational area. Surveyors were hired to survey 250 lots and for the placement of the roads. Permission was granted by the Forest Service to reroute the roads and to cross National Forest land. The first subdivision of the lots was handled through the State of California, Secretary of State.

At the property, on April 24, 1949, the members of Bald Mountain Encampment sold coffee, sandwiches, cake, etc. The tract opened at 9:00 a.m. for inspection, by the members, of the first portion of the subdivided lots. A meeting was held and it was voted that the President, Alvin Fay be employed as the first camp manager and he was to be reimbursed for expenses he incurred while on the job.

A picnic site was selected and prepared, by the directors and other volunteers who attended a work weekend, on June 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 1949. Directors were urged to bring helpers and tools for this undertaking. Through the efforts and extremely hard work of the group, an area was readied for the *BIG DAY* -- the initial sale of the lots! By June 26, 1949, all necessary legal documents pertaining to real estate and subdivision contracts were on file in the Tuolumne County District Attorney's office. Plans were made for the first sale of lots to be held on June 26, 1949. All interested parties would be given until 1:00 p.m. to inspect the property and subdivided lots. They gathered at the newly established picnic site, at which time all "priority holders" were given the opportunity to purchase lots in priority order. After that, all other interested parties, who were eligible, could make their selections on a first come basis. Purchasers were assisted in selecting their lots from a map and marked sold on the appropriate lot. Money was collected or payments were made thereon, receipts were issued, sales contracts were completed and signed by the purchaser. The buyer was given a sold card, which they posted on their lot.

At the time of the initial sale of lots, the first Annual meeting of the membership was held at the Odd Fellows Sierra Park. The first order of business was to elect a permanent Board of Directors to carry on the business of the Association.

As of June 26, 1949 the directors elected for a three-year term were:

Herbert Kearns	Stockton
Gene Bianchi,	Oakdale
Louis Florence,	Tracy

The three directors elected for a two-year term were:

J. C Mundy	Ceres
Alvin Fay,	Sonora
Robert Nichols	Galt

The one-year term directors were:

Loren Hosmer	Modesto
James Spangle	Stockton
Joe Brick	San Mateo

Officers were elected from the new slate of directors with Herb Kearns as president, and J. C. Mundy as Vice President. It was moved and carried that a Secretary and Treasurer be elected at the next regular meeting of the Board.

A meeting was held on June 28, 1949 in the Odd Fellows Hall in Stockton. At a general round table discussion Brother Kearns stated his policies and gave a pep talk to his fellow directors. He spoke as being in favor of keeping expenses at a minimum. Each member was called upon to assist in the sale of lots.

Nominations were opened for Secretary and it was moved and seconded that the Secretary would serve without salary until such time as the association was in better financial condition. Brother Loren Hosmer was elected to this position. And Brother L. E Florence was elected to the position of Treasurer.

They handled such business as correspondence from Sonora Pass Ski Slopes stating that they have a water tank for sale. A letter from Toomes Insurance Agency inquiring about the insurance renewal on a house and cabins on the property.

When the property was purchased, there was a house and three cabins on it. Roy Parks, owner of the sawmill adjoining the property, agreed to rent the house at \$40.00 per month, the first cabin at \$25.00 and the other two at \$20.00 each per month. He will collect the rent, along with electric and water charges and agreed to vacate the property within 30 days in the event of sale of it. It was voted on to rent the property to Mr. Parks.

The board began looking into the water and pumping equipment and the value of the water being sold to the Sylvan Lodge and other property owners. They entertained the idea of selling the water and pumping equipment but County Officials recommended that the park not sell but set up a water district and incorporate the present water users within the district. The Association decided to purchase a 220-gallon tank at a price of \$50.00. Said tank is guaranteed to withstand 250 pounds pressure. The tank was to be delivered to recreation site by the seller.

President Fay was authorized to employ Bob Lawrence, as watchman of the property, at not more than \$1.00 per day.

Brother Fay reported a balance due of \$375.00 for road grading. He also presented timber cruising sheets, which indicate approximately 400,000 board feet of timber that can be cut. The timber cruiser McCready was paid \$48.00 for his report.

In July 1949, various topics were up for discussion, such as scheduling another potluck for the purpose of the membership bringing their friends to show them the park and the subdivision. They diligently worked on selling the lots. They looked into the cost of piping water to the campsite, which was developed for use while members built their cabins. A bill was paid for \$33.00 for watering of the roads and \$9.50 for rental of a typewriter.

The Board of Directors held monthly meetings, as they took care of varied and sundry problems.

Apparently, it was during this time a cloud developed on the title to the property and legal council was sought. (Explanation given by Louis Florence in his letter) At their July 7, 1949 Board of Directors meeting, Bush and Ackley, Attorney at law, in Oakdale, were employed to act as our legal advisors. They worked with Mr. Vilas, District Attorney of Tuolumne County. Members became uneasy about the lawsuit, consequently

a special meeting was called on December 11, 1949, with about 50 in attendance. The Attorneys George Ackley was present and gave the members an outline on the history and developments of the lawsuit, which had delayed the progress of the development of Sierra Park Brother Bianchi gave the members a talk on the faith that they have shown in the project and their Board of Directors and reminded them of the importance of this continued faith.

It was decided to prepare a petition and circulate it among the members in preparation for application to the Pacific Gas & Electric Company, for electrical power in the subdivision, in October 1949.

In late summer or early fall of 1950 as the Hull's Meadow forest fire burned into our area and damaged several acres of our land. Egger Lumber Company of Confidence contracted to purchase, cut and remove all fire damaged trees and timber measuring 14 inches or more in diameter, 4 feet above ground level. The contractor agreed to pay the Park for the trees and timber to be logged, at a rate of \$2.50 per thousand board feet, on all species of timber. It was estimated that the amount of timber to be logged is 100,000 board feet.

Summary of trips to Sierra Odd Fellows Park Recreation area, January 1960, apparently by Caretaker.

- Jan.3<sup>rd</sup>            Checking of water lines  
                      Checking of International truck for trip to Stockton for an overhaul.
- Jan.10<sup>th</sup>            6 inches of snow – walked into Park from Highway  
                      Checking water lines and general checking of area  
                      Checked Hall and dump fire in meadow
- Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>            Checked water in tank and pump  
                      22 inches of snow, walked in from highway  
                      Repaired break in line at Holmes and Huff outlets  
                      Checked dump fire and pushed in more rubbish to burn
- Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>            Checked water at tank; too much rain to go further, could do nothing more  
                      than walk back to highway and home.  
                      Checked Recreation Hall
- Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>            Open road into Park  
                      Checked water lines  
                      Started fire over in meadow, cleaned up some rubbish piles  
                      Showed two sites to visitors

THE FOLLOWING ARE COPIES OF LETTERS WRITTEN TO ME BY SOME OF THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS WHO PURCHASED LOTS IN THE PARK; THEIR FEELINGS AND EXPERIENCES:

### THE RHEIN – MANNING STORY

“My Dad first bought our lot after Ralph and I had taken a dirt road (Wheeler) and ended up down in the meadow where Herb Kearns was standing by his car. We asked what this was, as we looked at debris on the ground and he told us it was the site of an old sawmill. He proceeded to tell us that the I.O.O.F had purchased about 600 acres; I believe it was, with plans to subdivide around the meadow. There was no lake at that time but it was in the planning stage. There were plans to construct a lodge, below David, facing the top of the road that heads down to the Jordan Way East side. They changed to the present site and sold lots in the area that had been originally set aside for the lodge. We brought my Dad up to see the property and had hardly arrived when he told Mother and me to go find a lot. Loren Hosmer took us around and we loved the south side of the meadow.

We were there cleaning the lot in September of 1950 when a fire erupted in the backcountry, away from the park. (Editor’s note: Fire actually started in the Hulls Meadow and burned down our way.) We quickly packed up and headed for home. When we got up on the highway we could see the smoke and flames across the ridge and burning down into the canyon. The next week we saw Loren and he told us they’d saved most of the park with just some of the back area down into the canyon burned.

During that time Herb Kearns was active in the association and Bob Hodson was a caretaker of sorts. He did most of the bulldozing and that type of thing. It seems to me that the old bulldozer went on forever. Everyone volunteered for everything.

We started our cabin the following 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend with setting piers. We carried water from the creek in 2 ½ gallon water cans. We had the lumber delivered and my husband and father sawed every board by hand, as P.G.& E. had not brought the electricity across the meadow. We closed in the cabin the first year coming to the mountains every weekend.

Bob Hodson had dug out the area to be the lake and it had started filling. At that time they were using the whole creek to fill the lake. Several years later the Government Agency made us split the creek so only a percentage was going through the lake. Originally, when it was all going through the lake, there was an overflow, which we used for late night showers, after a long day of working. It was COLD! But at least we felt cleaner!

I think it was the second year when we brought up an electric stove and electric water heater (which we never hooked up). With these two appliances and since Cakebreads also had some electrical appliances, P.G. & E. finally brought electrical service to our side of the park.

It was a fine time. We used to go to the back area to the spring and after a few years had a landfill type garbage dump in the back area. I think it was there for several years. Eventually the environmentalists stopped that. We hauled garbage home for years! After about the third year, my parents came up on Memorial Day and stayed until Labor Day. Bob Nichols and Dad used to sit on either ones porch and solve the cares of the world. Dad designed and helped install the first water system (that old black pipe).

When the association was first formed they met in the Valley at one of the I.O.O.F. Halls (Stockton, Manteca and Oakdale, etc.) In February, around 22 or 23 members turned out and they had a pretty good attendance at the time. They also had a proxy system at that time.

I don't remember when, but Dad served as Secretary of the Association and did so for many years. After they built the lodge, they started to meet in the park on Memorial Weekend and this practice still continues today.

It was many years before we had anything but dirt roads and we always drove through the creek to get to this side of the meadow. The bridge was a welcome treat!"

### **EVERETT S. AKERS**

"After reading your section in our last new article, I dug out a Deed for Lot #75, Block 12, in this subdivision, dated June 26, 1950. I am enclosing a copy for your records. This was the result of a visit at that time by myself and wife, Gertrude, my Mother and Father, Ruth and Roy Akers and, my Sister Erma Rose. We were so taken with the area that we decided to buy and were told that we were the first buyers. The other owners were the ones involved in buying the entire acreage for sale to others.

The road around the park being nothing but dirt, were very dusty. We started right away to prepare our lot for our use. We cleared it and set out areas for kitchen use and three bedrooms. There was no water so we brought this into the area in two five-gallon milk cans. There had been a huge sawmill in the meadow, which was no longer there, however it created a gigantic pile of sawdust. Using my pick-up, we hauled loads of it to put down in the area we had laid out for living and the road surrounding us. This really helped to hold the dust down.

There wasn't any lake then, just a beautiful creek flowing through the meadow. We used it for bathing. Cold, but refreshing! We all enjoyed fishing in it and were most often successful. Our children loved to roam through the meadow and pal y in the

sawdust looking for hand made nails. There was nothing to harm them and a shrill whistle from me brought them running back home.

We came into the park in winter also. We parked at the top and walked in with a 6-foot sled to carry our water and food and supplies. We had a great time.

As I recall, the park first ran water lines to the lots, then came the roads. I remember building a shower by tacking canvas to four trees. We would fill the hose with water and leave it in the sun to get warm. (For the first person, at least!) We thoroughly enjoyed the park and the few people that were around.

We did not build the first part of our house until the third year and it was the bathroom! The coyotes were all around us and they did put up a howl at night. People put their cattle to graze in the mountains in summer. They would find their way down to the meadow, bringing the flies with them. This went on for many years.

We learned that the stagecoach used to use the road on West Jordan Way into Long Barn. There was a big Long Barn there where they changed horses. This is how Long Barn got its' name. No highway at this time.

I have helped on every major project in the park. I worked on the roads, water system, the lake and Al Dean and I, built the bridge over East Jordan Way. I served on our Board for several years.

In 1977, we sold the first house and built one at 25200 Esther. As my wife and I both retired in that year, we lived there permanently for twelve years until she passed away in 1989. We now use it as a vacation home. We believe in the park and hope it goes on forever.

Hope you find some of the facts of interest to you.”

## **DON MOODY HISTORY**

“When we first heard about the Odd Fellows Sierra Recreation Association, my wife, along with our daughter and son, decided to take a look.

We met Mr. Rhein, who took us on a tour of the park in a jeep. Of course, at that time the roads were dirt and it was a very dusty jaunt around the park. I thought, at that time that the dirt roads were good, as it would help keep outsiders out.

Starting in the summer of 1957, we camped in the park in the area just below the BBQ area. From time to time several of us from the Sunnyvale Lodge would travel to the



park to spend weekends. Of course, at that time we all had tents. In due time members of the Sunnyvale Lodge built the present “rest rooms”, which are in this area.

On September 16, 1958, we purchased our property from Oscar and Anna Bridgeman of Modesto, for the sum of \$450.00; we paid \$50.00 down and \$25.00 per month. In 1968 we contacted Diamond National Company about their pre-cut Shel-lets. They had three different models. We were informed that they had models on display in Roseville, so we drove there to look over the models. We settled on the “A” model, which cost us about \$1,800.00.

In 1971, my son and I were at our lot to receive the lumber. That day it rained as hard as I’ve ever seen it rain. The truck driver had left Roseville, in the morning, in the sunshine. He wore a “T” shirt, etc. We were fortunate to be dressed for the rain, but he looked like a drowned rat before he left. Due to the heavy rain, my son and I stored as much of the supplies in Conrad Baker’s basement. His place is just up the hill from ours. The rest of the supplies, we covered as well as we could, with tarps.

We started the actual building in August 1971. By winter the basic cabin was just a shell with roof and walls. The weekend we put on the roof, I’ll never forget, it was 107 to 108 degrees.

Taxes on the property prior, to building the cabin, in 1958 were \$5.76 per year.

I had quite a bit of help in building the cabin, thanks to fellow Lodge members and friends. I had never taken on such a project of that type and it really was a lot of hard work and fun, and I certainly learned a lot. One of the things I’ll never forget is when I installed the ceiling lights in the kitchen. I figured that since the light switch was in the off position, there would be no problem. Well, after being knocked to the floor from the ladder, I found that this was not the case. A lesson learned the hard way; turn off the electricity at the main switch.

We used the cabin mainly on weekends. Of course, we finally finished the cabin. When my wife passed away in December of 1990, I just couldn’t use the cabin for a while. When I finally did go up to the park, probably a year and half later, I went with friends, which helped soften the blow.

I really enjoy the mountains. When I was quite young, my family would use an old woodcutters cabin near Phoenix Lake. I can well remember that there was nothing between Twain Harte and Long Barn, except the bar at Confidence. A cousin had a place at Twain Harte. That was long before they put a fence around the lake. On the fourth of July they held Rodeo’s where the golf course is now, behind what was the Twain Harte Lodge.”

## **LOUIS FLORENCE REFLECTS ON PARK**

I was pleased when I received “a bit of history” from Louis Florence. On November 28, 1948, when the first group of people met to discuss the possibilities to establish our park, he was elected as secretary/treasurer. On June 26, 1949 he was subsequently elected to the first board of directors for a three-year term. Needless to say he played a commanding role in the development of our wonderful area. His letter is quoted as follows:

“Sorry! I do not remember the names of all the people who played a very important role in establishing the Odd Fellows Sierra Recreation Association.

A group of Odd Fellows got the idea of establishing a recreation park in the Sierras for use of members and their families, as early as 1947. A steering committee headed by Alvin Faye (Sonora) was established to search for, and recommend suitable property for the project. Alvin lived in the Sonora area. He owned a business on Highway 108, just above Sonora. His knowledge of the area was extremely valuable in contracting local Real Estate Agents and Attorneys. Herb Kearns (Stockton) was a key member of this committee. Loren Hosmer (Modesto) and a Mr. Monday (also Modesto) and I (Tracy) and others were on this steering committee. Some time early in the program, Gene Bianchi (Oakdale) who was Past Grand Master, came on the committee. He later became President of the Association and he was primarily responsible for getting approval of the California Grand Lodge to use the “Odd Fellows” name in our Association Title. I was selected to serve as Secretary/Treasurer temporarily. We later split the functions into two jobs. Loren Hosmer (Modesto) was selected as Secretary. I continued as Treasurer until I left the area in early 1951.

The Committee considered several locations and decided to purchase the 740 acres near Long Barn. I think the price was \$76,000.00. We had no money at that time. Members of the committee went to several lodges in Topcon, Lodi, Modesto, Oakdale, Tracy, Sonora and Manteca. We presented our plans to the members of those lodges and were able to “borrow” money on sheer faith. We were able to purchase the property with a \$10,000.00 down payment and the balance in installments.

We then hired an Attorney to draw up Articles of Incorporation and filed with the State of California as a Non-Profit Recreation Association.

As soon as we got incorporated, we elected a Board of Directors and Officers of the Association. We hired a Civil Engineer to survey the property and draw up subdivision plans. We filed our subdivision plans with the County. We also sold some timber on the property to help defray our expenses.

We had a temporary setback about that time. The previous owner had died; consequently, the property had become part of an estate. We had purchased it from the apparent heirs. However, other parties had different ideas and claimed to be the legal heirs. They filed a lawsuit against the sellers and named the Odd Fellows Association as co-defendants. This stopped our progress temporarily. We hired an attorney and filed a

counter suit. The Court ruled in our favor, i.e.: that we (The Odd Fellows) had bought in good faith. We were released from the litigation and permitted to proceed with the provision that our installments be paid and held in escrow pending final outcome of the lawsuit. Note: We had to pay the cost of our legal battle. At the time we purchased the property, we were not able to obtain Title Insurance, due to some clouds caused by Old Spanish Land Grants.

We then proceeded with our subdivision plans. We notified all lodges in Northern California of our existence and invited members to come up and see the property.

During the development period, the Officers and Board Members served as volunteer sales representatives to show the property to prospective buyers. Some of the early buyers also volunteered to serve as escorts to show lots to other members. Some of the board members and volunteers were on site every weekend to assist prospective buyers.

The Association bought a surplus Army squad tent and put it up on the property for overnight and weekend use by volunteers and other members. There were many very enjoyable times spent by members in that tent during the formative months. I will always have very fond memories of the times spent there. Especially when the Bob & Mable Morris's family and the Florence family spent weekends there. We had to hide our food from the bears. There was an apple tree on the meadow that produced excellent apples for pies and apple strudel. (The bears also liked the apples.)

In due time the Association got a water supply developed. The County and the Association graded roads into and within the park. Members were able to build their summer (or recreation) homes.

All the efforts of establishing and developing the Park has paid off in the enjoyment and pleasure of its members and residents.

I hope this gives you a little of the background and process that went into developing this wonderful park.”

Sincerely,

Louis Florence

**BOB & MABLE MORRIS, BY DAUGHTER CAROL MORRIS REUB**

I have been thinking of my own experiences in Odd Fellows Sierra Park. I remember our family camping in a huge Army squad tent, along with other lodge members and their families; everyone was like one big happy family. The nights were pitch black, no lights anywhere. Then later we camped on our own lot behind the present firehouse. My folks paid \$200.00 for our lot. We built a fence across the front with an entrance arch in the middle. This fence and arch are still standing. We cleaned out our lot, which was knee deep in pine needles and branches, and we also helped Fred Watkins of Tracy clean his lot, which was right next to our lot. We eventually purchased his lot, when he moved away.

We would haul drinking water from Tracy and carry buckets of water from the creek up the hill to camp for dishes and bathing. We had a campfire every night. We made hot chocolate over the campfire, in the pouring rain. Some nights the bears would come down the hill into camp looking for anything they could find to eat. If you didn't bury your garbage, they would scatter it all over the place. My Dad, Bob Morris, would say "Soosh, be very quiet now". Believe me; we would all hold our breath until we heard the bears tromp off through the trees. Dad always had a weapon by his side in case he needed it. We always took the garbage home with us when we went home after our stay in the park.

The apple orchard was close by and every year, in the fall, a herd of deer would walk through the apple trees, eating the apples, as they migrated to lower country for the winter. The deer seemed to know they were safe in the Park. We would also pick apples to eat and make pies. They were very small but tasty.

My Dad liked Country Western music. He made a speaker, attached it to the car radio and set it on top of the car (a 1934 DeSoto). They would play his favorite song, Ghost Riders in the Sky. The moon would be full and you could look out over the meadow and the music just floated away. There was no other sound to be heard in the Park. We spent many days walking and hiking over the Park, checking out the creek, which was lined with willows, just as it is today. There was no lake then. I understand Bob Hodgson worked on this project.

Bob Hodgson's lot was directly behind ours and they also camped every weekend. My Dad built the Hodgson cabin. It was just one room with a wood stove for heat. We witched for water with a willow branch and they dug a well and got water.

The next Thanksgiving our family, Bob, Mable, Betty and Carole, spent four days in the Hodgson's cabin. We parked the car up on Highway 108 at Sylvan Lodge. There was about 18 inches of snow on the ground. We hiked down the hill and across the upper end of the meadow to the cabin, carrying everything – food, sleeping bags, etc. The dirt roads could not be plowed and there was no caretaker. There were no other cabins in the Park at that time, except the small cabin on the five acres that was not part of the Park. The time we spent there was just beautiful, everything covered in snow, the squirrels and birds scurrying around and the quietness. To get out, we had to climb the hill to the Highway; the snow was hard and crusty by this time. We slipped back one step for every

two we advanced. We all got so tickled at each other, slipping and sliding, we got the giggles and then we started laughing so hard we thought we were never going to make it to the car.

The park would have social events such as barbecues, picnics and Fairs, as fundraisers. We would have a Fair with different game booths, like pounding a large spike into a big wooden plank with a hammer. If you could do it with three blows you won a prize. One of the Members from Tracy Lodge, Mrs. Lozano, worked in ceramics. She saved the pieces that didn't turn out perfect and we used them for a baseball booth where you threw the balls at the plates. The booths usually charged five or ten cents.

Bob Morris did a lot of work in the Park, working with Bob Hodgson, as did many other members. They helped in building the drinking fountain in the picnic area and also the barbecue pit. There was a lot of work and pride in accomplishments done in the Park.

Bob and Mable Morris sold their two lots some time in the 50's. Then in 1968 Bob purchased a lot on East Jordan and decided to build a cabin. The place he wanted the cabin located was in a big gully. They had a man come in with a big bulldozer and level the lot. Lowell and Audrey Jackson from Tracy had their cabin complete and Bob and Mable stayed part of the time with them while working on their own place. They also had a small trailer on the property where they stayed part of the time. Bob did all the work, except the fireplace and the shingles on the roof. He fastened the rafters and beams together with them laying on the frame. Then he strung a pulley from tree to tree over the center of the cabin. He attached a rope to the top of each rafter and lifted them up by pulling on the rope and setting them in place on the frame. This was quite a fete! I don't know how many sanders we wore out sanding those beams. After the cabin was enclosed that first fall, we spent Thanksgiving there, setting up sheet of plywood and sawhorses for our table and lawn chairs to sit on. It was all very rustic. The cabin was completed in 1970. Bob retired that year and moved into the cabin. It took two years to build the cabin, working weekends and all vacations.

Then in 1970 the bug bit Bob's daughter Carole and Son-in-law Gideon (Spike) and they bought a lot right across the street from the Jackson's on East Jordan. In 1972 they started their cabin. At one point they were trying to put the beams up on the frame and they were just too heavy for one person to manage, or so we thought. Along came Tom Jones, the caretaker, and we enlisted his help. He rested the beam on his shoulder and walked up the ladder and set it right where it belonged, just like it was nothing.

We have made many memories and friends over the years and have enjoyed our beautiful Park. We have traveled many places and we know there is no other place like this.