

FOREST LOOKOUTS

OREGON

BAKER COUNTY

BENTON COUNTY

CLACKAMAS COUNTY

CLATSOP COUNTY

MORE...



LINN COUNTY

COFFIN MOUNTAIN

Willamette National Forest
11S-6E-14

Play





c.1905: A crude pole structure was erected.

August 9, 1912: "Telephones are located on the summits of Battleax and Coffin mountains from which the lookouts can talk to Albany or Portland." (**Albany Democrat**)

August 7, 1920: "Heavy rains in Albany and throughout the Santiam forest are believed to have ended all immediate danger from serious fires. Detroit reported .25 inch of rain Thursday morning, when also the Coffin mountain lookout at an elevation of only 6000 feet reported snow, hail and sleet." (**Capital Journal**)

July 5, 1921: "Tom Humphreys, former city mail carrier, is high up among the snow drifts, according to a letter received today by Postmaster C.H. Stewart. Saturday five inches of snow fell during the morning at the Santiam Forest Reserve lookout station on Coffin Mountain, the letter states.

Mr. Humphreys recently left the local postoffice to accept a position with the forest service as a lookout on Coffin Mountain. He says that the snow storm was the heaviest he had ever seen. There is snow 25 feet deep within thirty yards of the lookout station, he writes.

A few days ago one of the rangers shot a fat young bear and the crew at the Coffin Mountain station has been feasting on bear meat as a result." (**Albany Evening Herald**)

July 7, 1921: "A five-inch snowfall was the unusual July 2 scene witnessed by T.M. Humphreys of this city, who is now a lookout in the Santiam national forest. This snowfall occurred last Saturday at the lookout station on Coffin mountain, southeast of Detroit. 'There is snow 25 feet deep yet,' he said, 'In drifts within 30 yards of the lookout station. (**The Morning Oregonian**)

c. 1921: A cupola style building was constructed to house the lookout.

July 2, 1925: "Word was received at the forest office here today that thus far the Santiam forest has not been hit by fire, though it was rapidly drying out. The lookout on Coffin Mountain reported a fire in privately owned land near the Calapooia river." (**Albany Democrat**)

July 11, 1927: "Albein Nothinger has already manned Coffin Mountain to watch for forest fires." (**Albany Democrat-Herald**)

August 1929: "Guards Brock and Newton have solved one problem which will make the handling of mail for the short-term men in the field much easier, and that is to read their letters to them over the telephone. It was successfully tried out recently when Schultz, Coffin Mountain Lookout, having received more mail than we had mules for, had Phil Newton read his letters to him over the wire. The only objection to this method came from Schultz who wanted to know just how many were listening in at the Ranger Station." (**Six Twenty-Six**)

May 18, 1931: "A lookout took his station on top of Coffin mountain yesterday after a forest crew had cleared the trail leading to it. This is the second fire observer that has taken the field this season, the other one having taken his place on top of Dome Rock several days ago." (**Albany Democrat-Herald**)

July 9, 1931: "Major Baughn and Gordon Brown walked to Coffin mountain last week and visited Lester White who is the forest service lookout stationed at that mountain." (**Mill City Logue**)

July 7, 1932: "Three more lookout stations in the Santiam national forest were manned Saturday, as the forest officials prepared to combat

the increasing dryness in the forest and the mounting danger of fire. Lookouts manned Saturday were Battle Axe Mountain, Dome Rock and Crescent Mountain. Within the next week or ten days it is probable that all stations will be filled. The lookout station on Coffin Mountain was manned about ten days ago." (**Mill City Logue**)

August 4, 1932: "F. Steenhout, Mr. and Mrs. Emmet Dorothy and Enid Brown, recently hiked to Coffin mountain, where they visited the government lookouts L.A. White and Earl Stahlman." (**Mill City Logue**)

October 10, 1935: "New, glass-enclosed lookout stations will be constructed in the Willamette national forest this fall, according to Roy Elliott, assistant supervisor. Two of the stations will be located in the Detroit district, at Rocky Top and Coffin Mountain." (**The Eugene Register-Guard**)

1936: A 14x14 L-4 Model 1936 ground cabin was built.

July 18, 1958: "Mr. and Mrs. Robert Keys are spending the summer on Coffin Mountain Lookout. They are both students at Reed college in Portland and were married in June. Keyes is a former Mill City resident." (**Albany Democrat-Herald**)

September 1, 1967: "The 1,000 acre blaze burned near Buck Mountain in the Detroit Ranger District area and was raging out of control. Two lookouts, Owen Chamberlain, Eugene, and Earl Cooper of Gates, were evacuated Thursday when fire burned to several hundred yards of their building." (**Herald and News**)

July 31, 1984: "Melissa Carlson, a staff member of the Detroit ranger station, said Phil Willet, the U.S. Forest Service's lead carpenter, expects the work to be completed by mid-August so the new lookout will be in service during most of the high risk fire season.

Lookout Mike Rountree is using a temporary canopy shelter to protect the Osborne fire-finder sighting instrument and map which used to locate smoke spotted in the forest.

A pack train from the Forest Service's Fish Lake Guard Station took in additional supplies Monday, Carlson said.

The new structure will replace one that has been atop the mountain for about 50 years. The existing lookout was built in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Continued exposure to harsh weather at the 5,771-foot elevation has caused extensive deterioration. For awhile, the lookout was abandoned, and its windows were removed. It was remodeled during the late 1970's and early 1980's, but its condition is not satisfactory for use, Carlson said.

The new structure will be a typical square building with a catwalk around the outside and large windows on all four sides.

Some type of lookout has been atop Coffin Mountain since the first decade of this century, Carlson said. The earliest was a pole construction and was built between 1905 and 1910, when the only transportation was by pack animals. Now there is a road to within a mile and a half of the summit. Some supplies still are taken up each year by mule train, but most of the construction materials for the new lookout were airlifted by helicopter in mid-June, Carlson said." (**The Register-Guard**)

1984: The R-6 flat roofed lookout house was completed.



REX'S FIRE LOOKOUT PAGE



MEMBER: FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION

