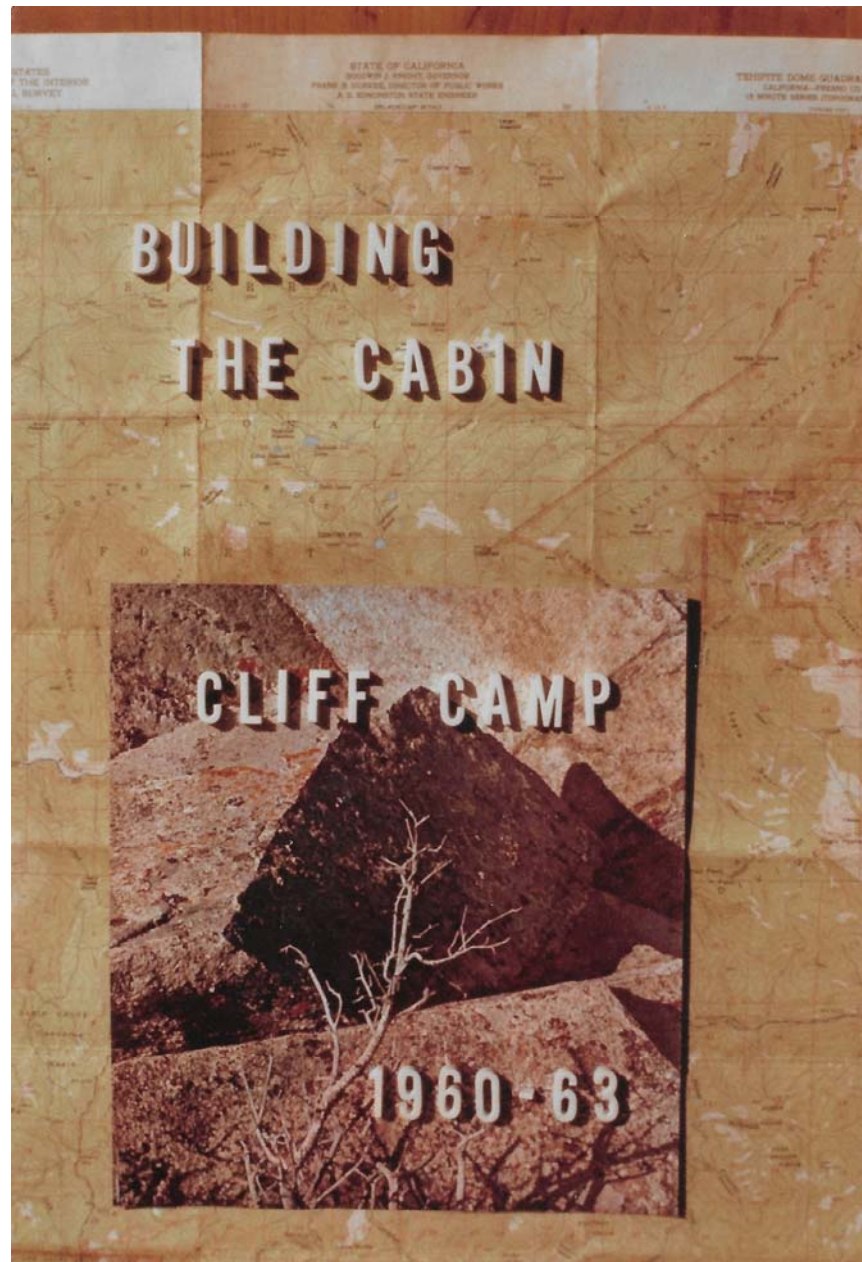


# Building the Cabin

Cliff Camp

1960 – 1963



## **Construction Begins:**

- 1 Introduction to contents of the photographs.
- 2 Concrete form shows the building of the dam to help control the flow of water for camp use.
- 3 Site was chosen for dryness in the area with quick run off when needed. The site to be nearest to the source of water.
- 4 John was sawing 20 ft. and 40 ft. lengths. In all, 44 trees were felled.
- 5 Camp Ducey Pack Station worker was hired to drag logs out of the meadow to higher ground to help dry out the logs.

- 6 Henry Smith, an Indian from Auberry, helped handle the horses which created an ordeal and progress was very slow. By noon the contract was canceled. Late fall, Glen Burns with two sturdy mules made the task easy.
- 7 Stella was gathering large rocks for replacement of space in construction of the foundation.
- 8 Blank.
- 9 Roy Hudson was debranching the logs and readied them for dragging.
- 10 In the middle of the meadow there is one trimmed log ready for dragging.

- 11 To make the hauling easier to facilitate mixing and spreading or cement, three people were needed for every load.
- 12 Wes Lowman gathering a rock too big to carry.
- 13 Henry Smith and Roy Hudson, both from the Auberry Rancheria, hauled precut lumber from the dam site. That is where the truck parked. To handle 2 x 6 x 16 lumber and pilot the load to dodge the rocks and trees, while following a narrow and rough trail, required great care.

- 14 Dick Cummings, Wes, and John mixing and pouring cement for the foundation.
- 15 This illustrates how John and Wes handled the placing of rocks and pouring of cement.
- 16 Stella, John, and Wes examining accomplishments.

- 17 John is preparing the middle strip, while Wes searches for more rocks.
- 18 Betty was pondering that the floor joist needed strengthening.
- 19 Phil Sr. visited with the family and everyone kept busy.

- 20 Bell, the horse, always carried the heaviest and most cumbersome items. In order to protect her hide, mattresses and blankets were used.
- 21 Steve Kliwer, Mike Kliwer, and Bruce Stancoff are leading loaded horses across the dam with pre-cut lumber.
- 22 Goldie Kliwer is packing a horse for carrying more lumber which came in all sizes and shapes.

- 23 Bruce Stancoff and Mike Kliwer were leading the pinto, Dixie, loaded with 4' x 8' sheets of plywood for flooring. We discovered that Dixie had a mind of her own. It was impossible to move her an inch further once she was at the Old Cabin. Her trip down the Cliff Camp trail had been so scary for her as her load wedged repeatedly on rocks. We had to take the rest of the load back to Fresno and cut them down to 2' x 8' panels which we could hand carry.
- 24 Roy Fronk sorting out logs to sizes 20' or 40' (sides or ends).
- 25 While Phil Sr. was watching Phil Jr., Roy and John were rolling the first log off the platform.



## **The Alaskan Mill Rig**

- 26 With Phil Sr. watching, John and Roy were placing the first long log on the North side. Accurate placement was necessary.
- 27 Illustration of 2' spacing and cleating before slabbing was done, but it proved to be tedious and difficult.
- 28 John sawing with what was known as an "Alaskan Rig" proved the procedure cumbersome and uneven.

- 29 Betty helping with Roy on the horse sorting same length logs to each side as needed. Third person in the background is unidentified.
- 30 The day Phil Sr. visited, was the time when everyone participated removing sawdust, placing floor boards and other duties needed at the time. Those present were Phil Jr., Betty, Linda, Mardy, and John.
- 31 Betty was trying another method of cleating logs before slabbing. It was tedious and difficult.

- 32 Betty, John, Richard Fronk, and several others discussed the possibility of revising the whole procedure of slabbing logs faster and better. Betty went to fix lunch and they soon followed with a solution. Overwhelmed with a new plan the men rushed to Fresno and dismantled Betty's lawnmower for the four wheels, cut up a metal cot for four posts, and bought several sets of guide wheels. They returned about 10 pm.
- 33 Attaching the Alaskan Rig another way to the chain saw enhanced efficiency tenfold, we thought. The machine would maintain accuracy at 8" diameter. Less help was needed to operate, and we finished the slabbing in two days.
- 34 Gauging the machine to 8" diameter was still not as easy as we hoped.

- 35 Phil Jr. and John were testing the cutting gauge.
- 36 John and Phil Jr. adjusting the performance of the machine.
- 37 Phil Sr. assisting John for a final test.

- 38 The automatic oiler blinked out and Linda volunteered to hand oil the machine. Phil Jr. helped John keep the machine aligned evenly.
- 39 Dick, John, and Phil Jr. are finishing the floor.
- 40 Roy Hudson and Henry Smith from Auberry hauled precut lumber from the dam to the cabin site.

## **The Walls Go Up:**

- 41 Roy and Betty were cleaning debris and sawdust from under the flooring.
- 42 John and Roy removed the slabbed log from the platform. Mardy was watching.
- 43 John, Roy, and Betty showing ingenuity to find a better way to roll slabbed logs. This meant we had to brace two logs against the wall and then roll the one up the incline to start the wall.
- 44 Phil Jr. and Roy were driving spikes (16") to keep the logs from slipping.
- 45 John with Roy and Phil Jr. helping notch the ends to fit the corners.

## **The Roof Goes On:**

- 46 Mike Kliewer, then 6, sitting on the rafter, wanting to be helpful, but also not in the right spot. The men were calling for a pencil. Mike ran all the way to and from the old cabin and resumed his perch in the same spot. We were all thankful that no one was hurt on the building project.
- 47 Three sets of relatives were transporting panels for the roof. Four or five panels to each load was average. The last load was the heaviest with six panels instead of five. Goldie and Betty frequently stopped to rest or change sides. The latigo straps helped hold the pack comfortably. The last load Goldie and Betty had secretly taken 5 sheets thinking they left Phil Jr. and John with only 5. They were shocked to find that John and Phil carried the same number of sheets. It was all in fun. We had enough for the roof.
- 48 John was caught using a hand brace and too little strength in the rafters.
- 49 Goldie and John were discussing what needed further strengthening.
- 50 The cabin was structured to hold forever, we thought.

- 51 John nailing aluminum sheets. Picture at an angle.
- 52 Goldie was nailing fiberglass sheeting to close the gable. It was a great asset for warmth and sunlight.
- 53 John was back to nailing aluminum panels to the roof of the cabin.
- 54 Betty proudly appears at the West end of the cabin. The back door is about 35' from the drop-off edge to the meadow.
- 55 Mike and Betty were caulking oakum between the logs and at the ends of the logs.



- 56 The back door was cut out for a door way and the fiberglass was cut to size to form the gable. Mike was helping.
- 57 The back door was cut with precision. Fiberglass panels were cut to finish the gable. Mike, Goldie, and Betty are checking the procedure.
- 58 John with Stella Qualls Bradley holding the last square piece of flooring. It had to be cut accurately to fit closely. That finishes the flooring in the cabin.
- 59 Kay Jackson demonstrated the easiest way to carry a bench from the dam.
- 60 Stella was applying sealer to the door.

### **Finishing Up:**

- 61 Phil Jr. was the most agile helper. He was being watched for a beck-and-call if anything was needed. Goldie's head showing at bottom of picture.
- 62 Stella and John carrying a large table to camp from Wishon Dam. The person in the rear could not see where to step when helping. The table would seat between 8 to 10 people.
- 63 John carrying the table alone since two people didn't fit in narrow rocky places.

- 64 Stella and Barbara Lynn Jackson carrying a wood panel (backpanel of cupboard).
- 65 Betty and John carrying 2' x 8' plywood flooring. Dixie (the horse) refused to budge after reaching the old cabin (see #33). Therefore, all the 4' x 8' sheets were cut down to 2' x 8'.
- 66 Barbara Lynn and Kay carried the bench the easy way.

- 67 Cabinet fixtures are almost completed. Stella was making part of the first dinner.
- 68 John was carrying that famous and essential table on his back. It's a miracle that he could balance it and see where he was going.
- 69 John was carrying a cabinet box for the kitchen. How could he see where he was going?
- 70 Barbara Lynn was trying to avoid Alfred with his camera. He had to sneak up on her with surprise.

- 71 No stove in the kitchen as yet. Cooking and washing dishes were done outside.
- 72 A homemade incinerator was very effective in burning papers and cans to eliminate odors of food.
- 73 Painting the roof green.
- 74 John together with Glen Hardy were assembling the storehouse door.

- 75 Kay riding on horse and leading pinto to bring load back from old cabin.
- 76 Kay was cleaning an abandoned stove later to become an incinerator. The original stove remained at the old cabin. A new stove was brought in at a later date. It was tied to a flat trimmed platform on a wheelbarrow frame. John, Richard, Steve, and Mike managed to bring it down the trail from the new road.
- 77 Our first meal at the new cabin was enjoyed by six of us. From left to right: John Kliewer (the architect), Barbara Lynn Jackson, Kay Jackson, Betty Collins, and Stella Qualls Bradley. The sixth place (tea towel) was reserved for the photographer, Alfred Collins.

- 78 It is the first time for washing dishes. No disposal, no stove, and no cupboard shelves; but the party was hilarious.
- 79 Phil Sr. having a drink from the water pipe. Phil Jr. and John view the construction area. The water system had been established before construction of the cabin began. It took 1000 ft of plastic pipe dropped over cliffs and gullies, dropping about 500 ft of elevation.
- 80 Betty and Stella packing in.

## **Building the Storehouse:**

- 81 George Fronk, John, & Richard started the construction of the storehouse. At this point, the concrete floor had been poured with bolts embedded and held in place by 2x4x12s.
- 82 Glen Hardy, a special friend of the family, arrived very early to help.
- 83 John, Richard, and George worked to assemble each panel before anchoring to the embedded bolts.
- 84 Richard, John, and George finished and raised all four panels in one day.
- 85 This unremovable rock served as a stand to hold nails and such. Later with a bed next to the building it served us well holding personal belongings.



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89 The storehouse was ready except for the shingles.

90 Raising the first storehouse wall.

### **Blizzard of 1969:**

- 91 In 1969, a snow blizzard practically covered the storehouse. The front gable panel was the only entrance to get the ladder, shovels, and saw that were sorely needed for the job awaiting John, and Richard. It was a very long hard day. They had had to snowshoe across the dam (peaked with a crest of snow), up the road, and down the trail before finding the cabin nearly crushed. Feeling it was unsafe to stay the night, they completed clearing the roof and snowshoed out again.
- 92 The snow load on the cabin had caused the cabin's rafters on the east end to separate approximately 3 inches.
- 93 The west end of the cabin illustrates about a 4 ½" gap.

- 94 This picture shows how much more the snow piled up on the north side than on the south side. This caused the logs to be pushed off center.
- 95 This illustrates that frozen snow was too difficult to shovel. A saw as needed. Later the roof was found to leak due to cuts inadvertently made during this operation.
- 96 Snow shoveling meant that snow had to be thrown off of the gable ends to avoid rebuilding the snow load.

- 97 The outdoor toilet was named Juniper House. It was always without a door for peace, quiet, and meditation or to watch the gray squirrels romp on the fallen pine tree.
- 98 The Forest Service requested that we paint the roof Forest Green to make it less conspicuous. Forest Green was acceptable to us and John is shown here spraying it on. However, the next winter most of it was scraped off by the snow.
- 99 Another view of the buried cabin.
- 100 John again, shoveling and sawing.
- 101 Look at what the pine marten did – and continued to do. This continued for seven years. It is a story in itself. Every spring the cabin was invaded, drawers pulled out and dumped, cupboards opened, and contents spilled on the floor. The spice cupboard remained unopened. However, gnaw marks on the hinge end were there to stay. Every spring, extensive repairing and cleaning was required.

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104 This picture shows how to spray paint. Roy was mixing and John was spraying.

## **The Shower:**

- 105 Abe Kliewer and family (Ermyl, Kim, Sharon, Tammy, and Craig) making steps down the cliff to the shower.
- 106 Ingenuity was needed to design this rough shower setup. Half-inch galvanized pipe and standard fittings were used to form a framework to support canvas screen in a sort of shower stall for protection against the cool breezes.
- 107 The penstamen flowers growing out of the sheer rock face were an attraction for all to appreciate.

108 Heating the water was a daily chore, with the sublime reward of a warm shower in the afternoon. It was made easier by filling the tank with water in the morning.

109 Two 25-gallon oil barrels were rigged with a heat exchanger made from standard one-inch galvanized pipe. Once a fire was built in the firebox, boiling water would spurt into the water tank with a great gurgling and steaming.

110 The shower stall once finished.

## **Building Trail:**

- 111 Blank.
- 112 Betty shoveling debris in order to clear a new trail from the new road above the cabin down the cliffs to the cabin.
- 113 John and Richard were moving enormous rocks for the new trail.
- 114 John, Mike, and Steve clearing another large boulder.
- 115 John and Mike clearing Manzanita to keep the trail clear.



- 116 Betty, clearing shrubbery, was showing how to do it the easy way.
- 117 Mike and John moving more rocks.
- 118 Mike and John moving more rocks.
- 119 Steve and Mike piling up quaking aspen that was cut to clear the fence line.

## **Repairing the Fence:**

- 120 John and Betty repairing the fence line. This was done each spring. Snow and falling trees meant rewiring and splicing with replacement of posts.
- 121 Tamarack was selected as the tree of choice for construction of the cabin because the bark is thin, the wood is strong and durable, the grain is twisting, and while branches are numerous, they do not create large knots. Even though the tamarack is of no value to the lumber industry, the Forest Service denied us permission to purchase two tamarack trees that we needed to complete the cabin and believed to be outside of the 40-acre property.
- 122 Dixie and Bell loaded with lumber at the Old Cabin.
- 123 Steve and Mike moving a log to clear the fence line.
- 124 Betty was a fence post carrier in an attempt to make another gate or reinforcement.

- 125 Steve Carrying another fence post to shore up a weak section of fence.
- 126 John operating the come-a-long to pull the barbed wire taut.
- 127 The cabin as it looked from the rocky point south of the new cabin.
- 128 Blank.
- 129 Blank.