

1 mostly in the form of a dance.

2
3 Although no longer believing the end of the world is in sight, with
4
5 its dire consequences, this ceremonial dance is now held two or three times
6
7 a year at the Big Valley rancheria and is quite colorful, peaceful and
8
9 is enjoyed by those present whether white or Indian. It is called the
10
11 "Big Head dance." The original large dance house and adjoining camps
12
13 along Kelsey Creek have been leveled and the land farmed.

14 *Big Head dance, Indians - Religion - Dance - Big Head or Kuba*

15 -----
16
17 *By Henry Mauldin* CATHOLIC MISSION NEAR KELSEY CREEK *Story # 43* 2-14-1953

18
19 Although there were early settlers of the Catholic faith in Lake
20
21 County, apparently no priest attended to their needs until the year
22
23 1863, when the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was celebrated for the first
24
25 time in the presence of a few Irish Catholic families. This was held in
26
27 a district school house which it is believed was on the present Quercus
28
29 ranch only a couple hundred yards from the north bank of Kelsey Creek.

30
31 From that time until 1867 priests celebrated Holy Mass once or twice
32
33 a year, generally in the private home of Peter B. Clark in Big Valley.
34
35 The names of the priests serving the people during these years are not
36
37 known.

38
39 The first permanent missionary work was begun by Father Luciano Osuna,
40
41 a Spaniard, in 1867. It is not definitely known from where he came or to
42
43 what order he belonged, although he was thought to be a member of the
44
45 Franciscan Order.

46
47 On the shores of Clear Lake, three miles north of Kelseyville and
48
49 one-half mile northwest of Kelsey Creek, 160 acres of land was purchased
50
51 from Tom O'Brien, uncle of the present Big Valley resident Jim O'Brien,
52
53 and a crude structure was erected which served as both a school and
54
55 church. Thus was founded the Mission of St. Turibius, the cradle of
56
57 Catholicity in Lake County. Whether or not Father Luciano gave it this
58
59 name is not known. The name has been used since the beginning.
60

1 More property was added until it reached a total of 235 acres.
 2
 3 Soon Indians from surrounding areas, especially Big Valley, came and
 4
 5 here was established the Rancheria of St. Turibius Mission, the Catho-
 6
 7 lic Indian settlement of Lake County.

8
 9 In the course of time some twenty Indian homes were built by the
 10
 11 natives, the lumber being furnished by the Mission. Schooling was
 12
 13 furnished those who could be persuaded to attend while food and neces-
 14
 15 sities were furnished Indians, principally to the aged or sick. Eighty
 16
 17 acres were intensively cultivated and for those Indians who desired al-
 18
 19 lotment of land was made for garden or crops. While active there was
 20
 21 an average of from 60 to 100 natives living at this Mission.

22
 23 The Indian name for the main camp on the Mission was ha-gaco-bagil,
 24
 25 meaning water pond long; which name was used only in a small way, both
 26
 27 native and white usually calling it the "Mission".

28
 29 On this property was established an Indian burial ground where many
 30
 31 of them were buried for several decades. Although not now being used,
 32
 33 this cemetery is still intact and is kept separate and not farmed by
 34
 35 its present owner, Glen Keithly.

36
 37 The main Indian camp was one-quarter mile northeast of the school
 38
 39 building and here lived the natives from Big Valley. There were several
 40
 41 homes at this location including a large dance house. Francisco Posh
 42
 43 was their leader.

44
 45 A short way east from the above was another camp with only a few
 46
 47 homes. This was used by Indians from Sulphur Banks. Their leader was
 48
 49 Captain John.

50
 51 Just outside this property and to the west was a small camp whose
 52
 53 occupants used the services of the Mission. They were natives from
 54
 55 outside Lake County. Their leader was Choo-tock.

56
 57 Father Luciano Osuna extended his work into Burns Valley and past
 58
 59 Lower Lake to the east and into Mendocino County to the west, using
 60

1 St. Turibius Mission as headquarters. He baptised hundreds of Indians
2
3 in both counties. He left the Mission in 1878; no record can be found
4
5 of where he went or what happened to him.

6
7 Franciscan Fathers took over until 1881 when the Fathers of the
8
9 Holy Cross took charge. In 1883 the Society for the Propagation of the
10
11 Faith succeeded the former and remained until 1887, at which time the
12
13 Franciscan Fathers again became responsible and remained through the
14
15 abandonment of the Mission and to the present time.

16
17 In 1887 there were about 100 Indians at the Rancheria of St. Turi-
18
19 bius Mission with the necessary houses and barns. Also there were other
20
21 Catholic Indians not living at the site but who were served from this
22
23 headquarters. Lake County natives so attended, but not on the Mission,
24
25 lived at Sulphur Banks, Upper Lake, Scotts Valley, Coyote Valley and
26
27 Cache Creek.

28
29 This headquarters attended both Indians and whites not only in all
30
31 of Lake but also nearly the whole of Mendocino County. The latter was
32
33 so served until 1-20-1893.

34
35 In 1893 a new church was built, also a monastery of two stories
36
37 was erected containing about ten rooms. Through the years it became
38
39 quite an establishment. A vineyard was planted north of the monastery,
40
41 a wine cellar of double wooden walls with sawdust as an insulator was
42
43 built in conjunction with a water tank and tower. A four-room storage
44
45 or guest house was erected north of the church. A work and blacksmith
46
47 shop was set up next to the vineyard while included in this group of
48
49 buildings to the east was a granary, large barn and the school.

50
51 In 1888 the school became a contract school, partly financed by the
52
53 U. S. Government and so remained until 1900. This Indian school was
54
55 abandoned in 1905 with seventeen children in attendance.

56
57 In 1897 there were 250 Catholic Indians in Lake County, including
58
59 30 at the Mission.

60

1 During 1914 the U. S. Government established the present Big Valley
2 rancheria, which starts at the lake shore and extends south to the Soda
3 Bay Road, which is within one mile of Pinley. The Indians from St.
4 Turibius Mission moved there and each family was given an allotment of
5 land. The Mission was abandoned during that year. Headquarters for
6 the Franciscan Fathers was moved to Lakeport.
7

8 In 1915 the church at the Mission was moved to the Big Valley ran-
9 cheria, which building, in turn, was replaced by a new structure on the
10 same land in 1948. It is now called the Holy Cross Chapel.
11

12 All camp sites on the Mission have been leveled and are now a thing
13 of the past. The burial grounds, although preserved, are in a sad
14 state of neglect due to no interest being shown by surviving Indians.
15

16 The barn, school, granary and part of the tank house are all that
17 remains of Lake County's only Mission.
18

19 In 1917 John Steheli purchased 80 acres from the south portion of
20 the Mission property. Glen Keithly took ownership of the balance dur-
21 ing the 1940s and now owns all the original lands once the St. Turibius
22 Mission which served its fine purpose for 47 years.
23

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38
39 *By Henry Mauldin* FISH AND BIRD LIFE ON KELSEY CREEK *Map # 44* 3-1-1958
40

41 As Clear Lake is a large body of water and contains a great amount
42 of the proper food, it supports an abundance of fish life. Many of the
43 species, having the lake as a permanent home, use its tributaries as a
44 spawning grounds. The number of creeks running into Clear Lake are few
45 and their flow is generally small at spawning time. In years past this
46 sometimes resulted in great numbers of fish running up these tributaries
47 to the point of overcrowding and dying.
48

49 For many miles, up from its mouth, Kelsey Creek runs at a moderate
50 rate and has a fine gravelly bottom which is ideal grounds for the fish
51 to spawn.
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