

P.O.Box 299,
 De Witt Post Office,
 Auburn, Placer Co., Calif.
 Zip Code 95603

To: : Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson

From: : VOSB, Geo. H., student, Sierra Junior College, Rocklin, Calif.

Subject: : Roadside beautification; lasting monument to science proposed.

References: : (1) Physical Geography/ Arthur Strahler; John Wiley & Sons,
 Inc., New York, London, Copyright 1960, Library of Congress
 Card Number 60-10327, p.63

(2) U.S.Coast & Geodetic Survey publication 10-2, p.28,
 (for source of picture of "Bilby Tower", named after
 J.S.Bilby, engineer, U.S.C. & G.S.)

Enclosures: : (1) Picture of "monument" as it appears November 1965.

(2) Bilby triangulation tower, which could be used as a
 schematic basis for the proposed monument, thereby
 making a lasting tribute to one who did a lot for the
 U.S.Coast & Geodetic Survey.

(3) Photostat taken at random from a textbook, to show
 this would not effect National Security, as foreign
 powers have no doubt already ample knowledge of our
 radio beacons, maps, etc. This enclosure even shows
 the proper radio emission guide for Walker Air Force
 Base and/or Roswell, N.M.

Dear Ladybird:-

The United States is known internationally as the country which first conceived having a monument by which all the U.S. could be triangulated. In 1949 this was revolutionary in its concept. Canada and Mexico then adopted this. The same year "Mexico and Guatemala planned to connect their triangulation networks in the vicinity of Tapachula and San Benito on the Pacific Coast. It would then be possible to base the Central American surveys on Meades Ranch as the initial survey Point".⁽¹⁾

Europe, through the efforts of the Section of Geodesy, of the International Geodetic and Geophysical Union, is contemplating having one in Europe. One any other place on the globe would then give fantastic accuracy, through the use of three-dimensional satellite triangulation, using the "Echo" type satellite for some simultaneous photographs.⁽²⁾ Plans are already underway to do this in lower United States, Alaska and Canada. Observations have already been made at Bermuda and Antigua at the request of the U.S. Air Force to connect these points to the North American Datum of 1927. And this brings us to the focal point of this letter:

Working on a special term paper at Sierra College, Rocklin, Calif., I went to find this famous "monument" and found it covered with "buffalo chip"

1. From an article by Frank L. Culley, Senior mathematician (1949), U.S.C. & G.S., Meades Ranch Triangulation Station, in the Military Engineer, March-April, 1949, pp.98-99.
2. The U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey, Its Products & Services, publication 10-2, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1965, p.29.

--fortunately it was buffalo chip (singular)--which same appears in the accompanying snapshot as a dark shadow on the ground, near my hand, where I "relocated" it.

With all the scientific world of exploration, recording, and plotting of areas all over the world respecting us for this great achievement, it seems a pity that this great spot is allowed to "go to pot", with only sporadic checks made to keep it (hopefully) in place.

Not only this, but if the owner, or a subsequent owner, decided to build a house (or pig pen) right there where the marker is, under our present system the results could easily give us international embarrassment and loss of prestige, and I quote: "The Government makes no claim to the land on which the station is located and permission is always given a property owner to destroy a station if necessary in the improvement of his property". (3)

Under the above, if someone bought this lovely high hill-top--and in Kansas they're scarce--and put a home on it, it would cause us great loss of prestige when foreign scientific people came here in the future years to see this inspiring sight--and find no "sight" at all.

I think a high tower, perhaps with elevator, a platform for astronomical observations and special events, and electronic emissions of shoran, loran, L.P.I. (Electronic Position Indicator), and the new and fantastic "laser beam", would create more international good will than the millions we pour into foreign

3. Horizontal Control Data, Special Publication # 227, U.S. Govt. Dept. of Commerce, Coast & Geodetic Survey, revised 1957, p.22.

lands (other than the war effort) and never see a return on our investment.

Being a Republican, I will not mention the political potential value of this opportunity, but with a little publicity, the world value of this would create a national feeling of pride in both Democrat AND Republican, alike.

That the land, after it is purchased, could have an easy access road built, is evidenced by the fact that that is my car in the background of the snapshot.

"It is of political importance because of the markings of political boundaries defined by meridians, parallels, and rhumb lines. It is of financial importance because of property lines defined by coordinates determined by the triangulation network over the continent. It is important to commerce, transportation and communication, and all users of maps and charts, since all maps must fit together as parts of the whole map of the continent. It is possible to fit together all of these parts because they are controlled by a single triangulation network on a single datum. Triangulation Station "Meades Ranch" should be marked with an impressive monument in keeping with its importance and dignity". So wrote Frank L. Culley, Senior Mathematician, U.S.C. & G.S., and he should know. The trouble is, he wrote it in 1949, and nobody has done anything about it yet.

I submit this request for your personal consideration because of the fine job you are doing to beautify the countryside.

Respectfully,

Geo. H. Vese
Geo. H. Vese

FOOTNOTED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Four.

Mrs. Johnson, as I went through the Mojave Desert on this special Field Trip for this term paper, I noticed that there seemed to be considerably less signs than when I went through there before your roadside clean-up campaign, so I wrote this little poem to keep me alert as I drove along. I hope it brings a little smile; you are so busy, a little "smile-break" might be good relaxation.

If Johnson's lovely "Ladybird"
came out West for awhile,
I doubt that she'd be happy
or that she would even smile;
For in all this long, wide desert
where wild flowers strive to bloom
There's not a single sign that's left
to indicate
A Ladies' Powder Room.

---ghv

--maybe it was the Desert heat!

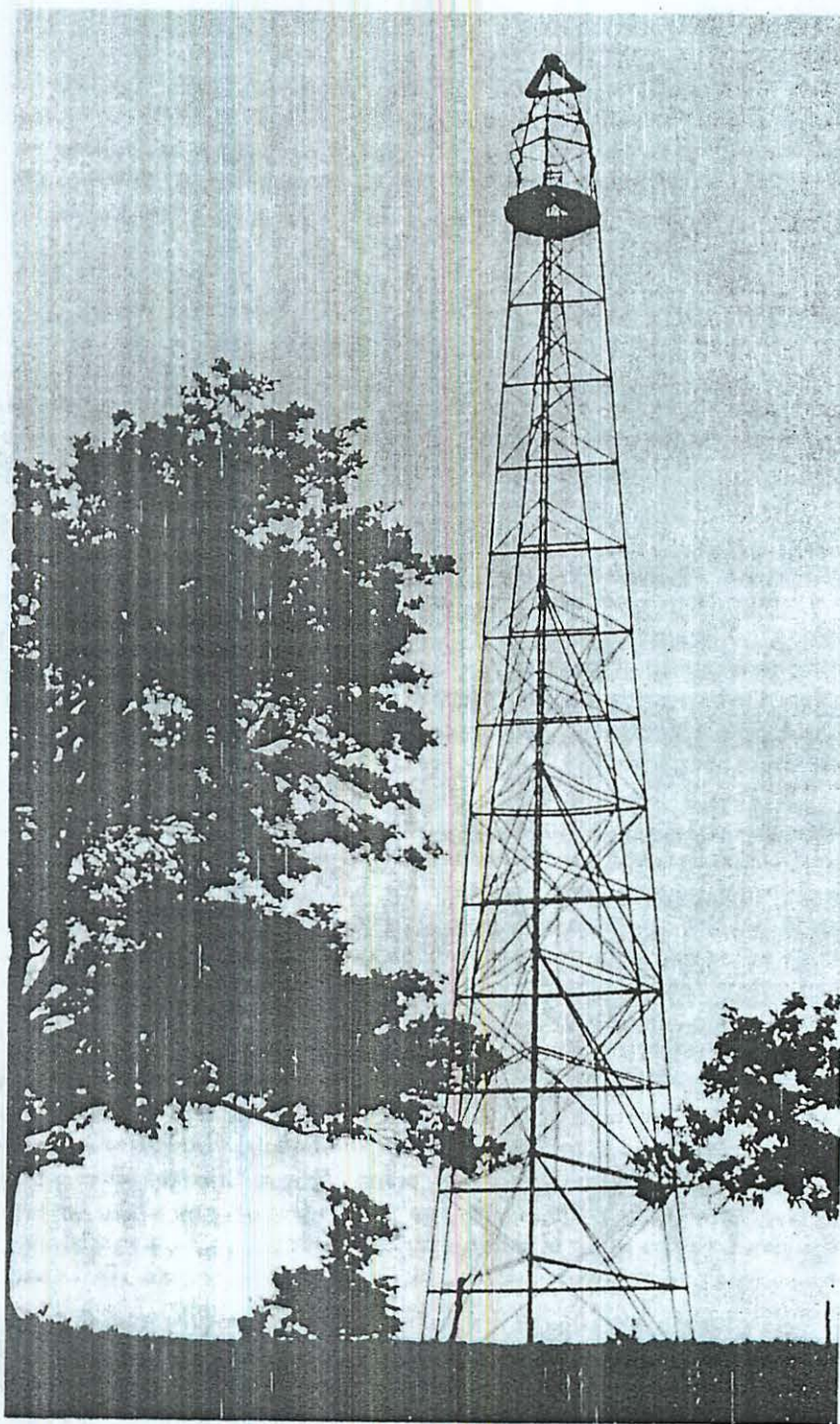
Letter of transmittal.

THIS SHEET IS A CONDENSATION FOR THE USE OF THE WHITE HOUSE "SCANNERS".

Succinctly, this is the factual story, in non-technical language, of how our American scientists created the background for a fine monument and then nothing was done to implement it, although it would be a road-side beautification visible for eighteen miles, and would save us some national embarrassment, because the scientific world assumes we have already done this.



Meades Ranch Triangulation Station
Note the "buffalo chip" which had
to be "relocated" for the picture.
(It lies on the ground near my
hand and looks like a shadow).--ghv



Bilby triangulation tower.

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available for consideration. We hope that the foregoing information
 L58-RE helpful to you. We regret that we cannot be more encouraging
 with regard to your suggestion.

JAN 12 1966

Sincerely yours,

Mr. George H. Vose
 P. O. Box 299
 De Witt Post Office
 Auburn, California 95603

(SGD) JACKSON E. PRICE

Acting Director

Dear Mr. Vose:

We have been asked to respond to your recent letter to Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson concerning your proposal that the Bilby Triangulation Tower be recognized and established as a national monument. We have studied your thoughtful proposal at some length and we appreciate your interesting suggestion.

Historic sites and buildings established as units of the National Park System must be judged to possess national historical significance and to meet standards of suitability and feasibility for park purposes as well. Legislation in the Congress is ordinarily required to authorize the establishment of areas administered by the National Park Service.

The determination of national historical significance is made by the Secretary of the Interior under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666). Such determinations are usually based on the recommendations of the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments, created by the Historic Sites Act to advise the Secretary on questions of national historical significance and related park matters.

In the enclosed copy of the criteria by which historic sites are judged by the Advisory Board to possess national significance, you will find an established criterion under which sites and events of significance within the last 50 years are not ordinarily regarded as

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eligible for consideration. We hope that the foregoing information will be helpful to you. We regret that we cannot be more encouraging with regard to your suggestion.

Sincerely yours,

Dear Mr. Voss:

(SGD) JACKSON E. PRICE
Acting Director

Mrs. Johnson asked me to thank you for your letter and enclosures.

We appreciate your interest in creating a lasting monument to science, and it was thoughtful of you to share with her the results of your studies. Preservation of our cc: Regional Director, Midwest, w/c of inc.
RH (2), w/c of inc.
SLR

In an effort to be helpful, we have forwarded your letter to the Department of Interior, so that they may apprise the significance of this site as a scientific landmark, and that office will reply directly to you.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Best Apple
Social Secretary

Mr. George H. Voss
P. O. Box 257
DeWitt Post Office
Auburn, California 95603

cc: Department of Interior (FYI)

CW:brac