

Adventures in McCloudland

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Chapter 8

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Saturday; the beginning of Heritage Days, a two-day celebration of McCloud's history. The Spitsens walk with us to Main Street where, during the early morning, booths had been erected in the middle of the street from one end to the other.

Homemade crafts of all sorts are offered for sale while music performances fill the area from both ends of the street. Vintage costumed McCloudites visit the booths and enjoy conversation with the visitors. We're introduced to far too many people to begin to remember their names. The day feels like magic; a step back in time to a friendlier, more hospitable place. McCloudland was pretty good feeling

People are generally glad to meet us and interested in what we are going to do with their hotel. The most frequent comment, however, was, "So you're the new ones who are going to try to do something with that place." I begin to feel like we are to be the next in a long line of failures. I thought this was highly unfair, as we hadn't done anything yet. But we begin to realize that the town has seen several false starts on this place, and they are very much in a "show me" kind of mood. I can't say as I blame them.

Heritage Days is like everyone's vision of a small town fair. Lots of people who know each other, greeting one another and catching up on the news. Booths offering pancake breakfasts, homemade ice cream, local talent, and gay costumes charm us and bid us stay for the wildly funny original melodrama. We just sort of immerse ourselves in the mood and spirit of the town and consider ourselves very lucky indeed.

Sunday morning we wander down to Main Street with the Spitsens. Chairs had been set up on the north east corner of Main Street in a grassy lot with trees around the edge. A stage had been erected in the north east corner and readied for an all church service. Music and messages fill the air. With tree-covered hillsides sloping skyward finally to Mount Shasta rising over the preacher's head, I marveled at the outrageous beauty. It's like God had created this special place and said, "Watch this... You're not going to believe it."