

## **Adventures in McCloudland**

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Chapter 37

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The year-long break has given the building department an opportunity to review drawings, make corrections and finally sign off on the building plans. We have our permit and are ready to go. We'll build 17 rooms, all with private baths. Five rooms, including one meeting ADA requirements will be on the first floor, and 12 rooms, including four spacious suites with whirlpool tubs will be on the second floor. The third floor and basement will not be developed. Not enough money.

Ironically, rebuilding begins with more demo work; this time in the basement. Once again, all the wrapped furniture is hauled to the other side of the basement so they can expose the sewer lines along the east wall and install new connections. Cone Plumbing is the first crew on board and spends a week breaking through the concrete floor and working on the lines.

Jeff joins Ray's crew as a general helper and begins lugging out large chunks of the concrete floor....all day.

We talk about the scary phenomenon of old buildings going up in flames during the restoration. Jeff and Ray decide that Jeff will do a thorough search of the property every night to look for any fire hazards.

More carpenters are hired and the crew from Mt. Shasta Electric is brought on board. They all seem to have a story about the hotel to share. Maybe their father or brother lived here or their neighbor used to manage the place. They all tell me they are glad to be here "fixing up the place."

Every morning, pickup trucks start pulling up by 8. Workers and friends greet each other and then the wonderful noise of construction starts. The building feels alive with activity.

Years later, I still get a kick out of the sound of hammers or saws. It signaled the end of a nightmarish year and the beginning of something truly wonderful.

It's snowing when the first shipment arrives. Seventeen bath tubs. It feels like Christmas when a semi rig pulls up and the driver is told to drop them in the back. By the end of the day, 17 tub enclosures are lined up in the snow near the south end. The next morning, lumber is offloaded on the north end. And everywhere in between there is activity.

Ray leads the various subs like a skilled leader. Typically, a new sub arrives on the scene and does some grumbling about wanting his space to be clean and clutter free before he can begin work. Ray lets him grumble a bit and then they have a quiet talk.

"Look," he says, "the Ogdens have an opening date for this hotel and we're going to work together to meet the schedule. Everyone will start on the second floor north and move south in the building. When one trade leaves a space the next one follows right behind. No one will hold up anyone else. You just keep moving right down the hall. If you fall behind, you work faster and later to catch up. No one will ever hold you up, nor will you ever hold up anyone else. That's the way it's going to be. We're all working together here."

The beauty of it is that it worked. Pretty soon all of the radios were on the same station and guys were singing and whistling during the day. (Except the tilers. More about them later.) The oldies station seemed to be the station of choice, and I found myself humming right along with them.

There is a pace about the day that begins with the arrival of trucks, lunch boxes, music and saws. The mid morning quiet comes with a jolt as they take their break. Lunch time finds most of them on a porch enjoying the brisk but sunny view while eating. Lunch time gives me a chance to walk around and catch up on the latest changes. The activity is wonderful and reassuring. It is progress at last.