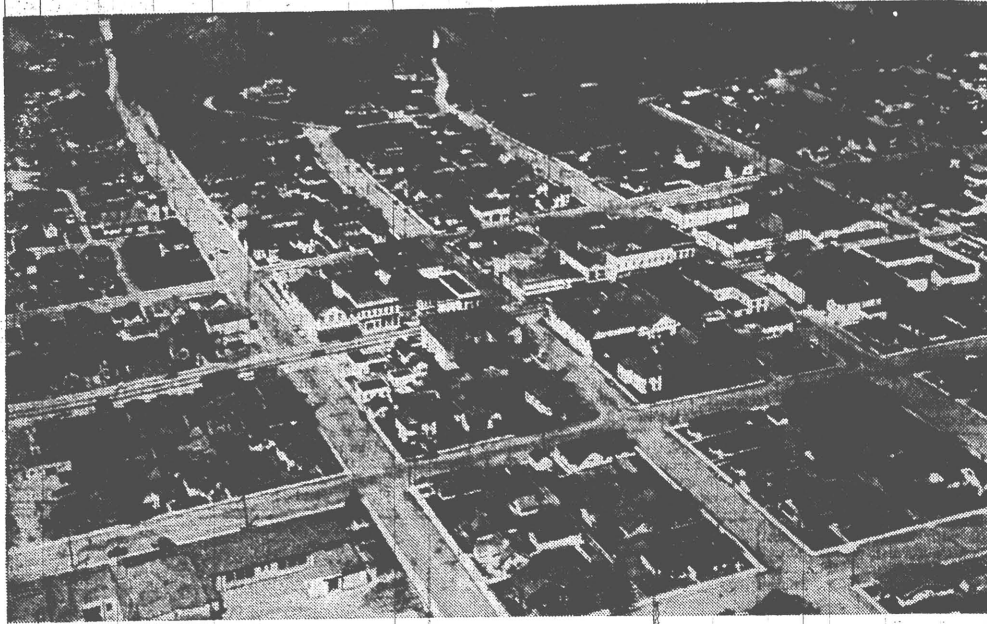


# Fortuna --- Humboldt's 'Friendly City'



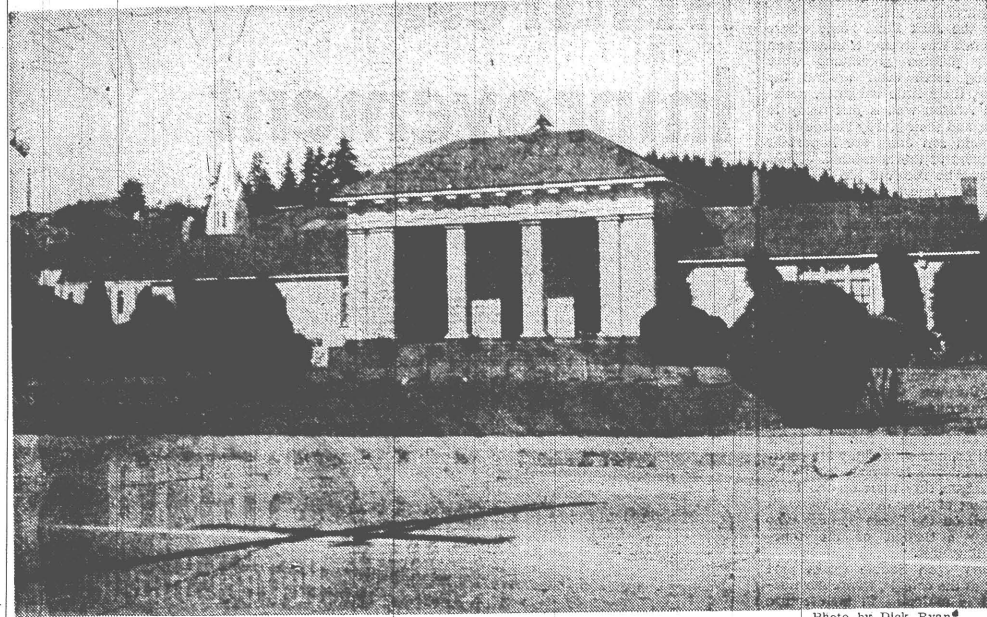
Seen from the air, Fortuna is a city of wide, pleasant streets.

Kenny Kilburn photo



This is the main street of Fortuna, looking towards the center of town.

Photo by Dick Ryan



The Veterans' Memorial building was one of the first to be built in the county.

Photo by Dick Ryan

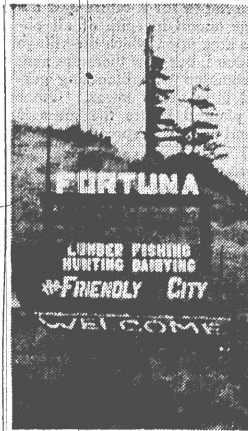


Photo by Dick Ryan

Your first glimpse of Fortuna is of the welcoming sign on U. S. Highway 101, north of town. The sign advertises fishing and hunting, as well as the lumber and dairy industries which support the town. And as the sign says, Fortuna is indeed a "Friendly City."



This is the Penny Scramble, one of the Rodeo features.

Photo by Elber Hamilton



When completed, this will be a four-lane highway.

Photo by Dick Ryan

## It's Wide-Awake And Growing Fast

By DICK RYAN

"Fortuna, the Friendly City," is a town of wide streets, pleasant homes, and wide-awake business firms. You get a feeling of a progressive, forward-looking community as you walk through the city.

Fortuna, Mayor George Head says, has always had a steady business.

"No booms, you understand," the mayor went on, "but good, steady trade."

Mayor Head is a partner in the Fortuna Furniture company; he knows what he's talking about.

Where does most of the prosperity of the community stem from? From the surrounding lumber mills, from the rich dairy country of the Eel river valley, and from a rich tourist trade.

James Loudon, president of the Fortuna Chamber of Commerce, estimates the population of Fortuna's trading area at between 12,000 and 15,000 persons.

Fortuna's official population, within the city limits, has been estimated at 1565. Just outside the city's boundaries, however, the growth has been phenomenal.

Mayor Head has an explanation for it. "We can't grow inside the city limits," he said. "We just don't have any more room. "Some day we're going to have to take in the outlying districts."

**FINANCIAL PROBLEMS**  
Jim Loudon, the chamber of commerce head, points out that it will be a little difficult to take in such areas as South Fortuna now. "The city doesn't have the money to take care of them. We'll have to put Fortuna on a firm financial foundation first," he explained.

Fortuna, you see, like many other cities in these post-war days, is finding out that it costs money to grow; more money, in many cases, than can be raised painlessly.

The city council is considering several means of getting the money for expansion. Proposed as remedies have been parking meters, increased tax rate, and sales tax.

**YOUNG MEN ENTER BUSINESS**  
One of the interesting aspects

of Fortuna's business world has been the growth of new businesses, started by younger men, or older, established concerns which have been bought by young men in the past several years.

The influx of young blood into the business and civic life of the community helps to make the outlook of the leaders of Fortuna progressive. It in part accounts for the alert bustle which a visitor can see as he walks down the main streets.

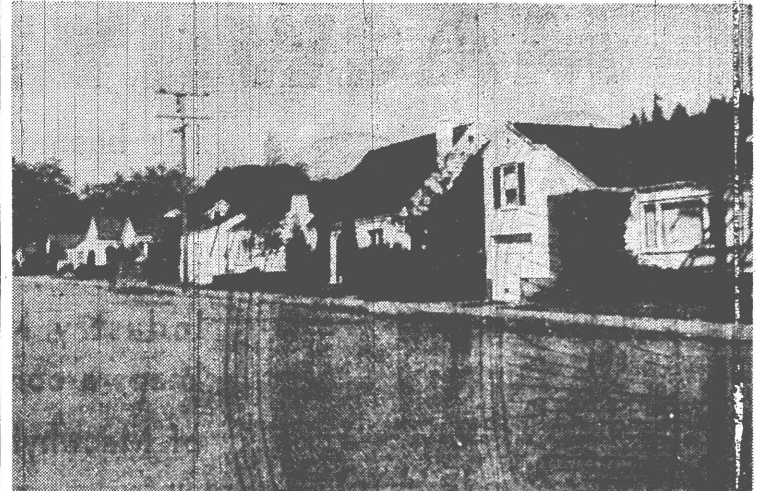
Fortuna has an active chamber of commerce, with an estimated 140 members. Officers, in addition to James Loudon, are Clyde Goble, vice president, and Eck Mosby, secretary-treasurer.

Recently several other civic organizations have sprung up in the town. Among them are a new Eel River Valley Business and Professional Women's club; a 20-30 club, and others.

**ROD AND GUN CLUB VISITS**  
The tourist trade is an important part of Fortuna's prosperity. Today, for instance, the Rod and Gun club of the Southern Pacific railway are having an annual outing on the Eel river.

Throughout the day, members of the club, and their hosts, will spend time fishing for steelhead and salmon on the Eel; tonight, they will attend a large banquet. Some 56 members of the club are expected for the occasion.

The tourist courts have been full in recent weeks, with visitors who have come to try their luck for game fish on the Eel river.



This street scene is typical of the residential sections.

Photo by Dick Ryan

The salmon fishing will last until the end of November; steelhead will be good until the end of January, or even a little later. In the spring, trout season will bring in more tourists.

**NEW FOUR-LANE HIGHWAY**  
Fortuna, too, will soon have a new four-lane highway south of town. Work has already begun, and the modern highway will be an important link in an improved Redwood Highway.

The new highway will be flanked by many new business establishments; already some of them are up, and in operation. Latest of the new businesses along the new highway is a self-service laundry and restaurant, a large, modern building, put up by Don Beaubien.

Home construction, in Fortuna, and on the outskirts of town, is booming, with new houses being contracted for every day. Business permits from July of 1947 to July, 1948, were valued at \$199,002.00, but Fortunans are quick to point out that these were only for construction work within the city limits, and estimate that an equal amount of building has been done outside.

In addition to the highway, Fortuna is served by the Northwestern Pacific railroad. Highway transportation includes service by Greyhound Bus Lines, Humboldt Motor Stages, and many trucking lines.

Like Eureka, Fortuna is putting on a campaign for a new hospital; like Eureka, the hospital will be built by the Sisters of Orange. The money subscribed by Fortuna's citizens will be matched by the Sisters, and the result will be, if the drive is successful, a \$250,000 hospital.

So far the townspeople have raised between \$40,000 and \$50,000 of the \$100,000 which they need.

### NEW AIRPORT

The pride of Fortuna is the new Fortuna airport at Rohnerville, just a short distance from town. The entire Eel river valley put on a big air show last summer when the airport was completed, and hopes are high that sometime soon Southwest Airways will include the Rohnerville field on its route.

Another cause for pride on the part of Fortuna is Rohnerville Park, one of the famous gathering-places in all of Humboldt county. Large picnics, group outings, and family gatherings keep the large park, just at the outskirts of town, in almost constant use during good weather.

And Fortunans are proud, too, of their schools. There is the elementary school, a Seventh-Day Adventist school, and a fine, modern union high school.

This year the Huskies, the football team from Fortuna High, have hopes of an excellent season. Coach Bob Damon, dean of coaches in Humboldt, is not making any predictions, but the fans are enthusiastic.

Mullie Lenor, halfback on the University of Alabama's 1920 team, still holds the Crimson Tide's individual scoring record with 144 points on 24 touchdowns.

The Rodeo is the "big event" of the summer in Fortuna

Photo by Dick Cloney