

New Hugo Home, School, & Electricity

Carrol Brown, Storyteller

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society
2000

I, Carrol E. Brown, was born January 7, 1916 in Montrose, Colorado to Lawrence E. and Ellen (Markley) Brown.

My family moved from Compton, California to Oakland, California in the fall of 1925 prior to its move to Hugo, Oregon. My folks had obtained an unreliable Cole-8. The car lost a front wheel out into a prune orchard just before the family reached Oakland. So, it was traded for a Model T Ford in which my folks and us kids LeNora, Edwin, Maxine, and me continued on to Hugo in May 1926.

The old U.S. 99 was constructed around 1922 - 1923 just before the Browns moved to Hugo. Elmer Ward used to tell stories about building it with horses. Elmer used to carry water up there for the guys that were building the road.

My folks had land in Hugo, which was acquired in a trade for their home in Compton, California, was 20 acres in one piece and seven acres down the road. About four acres were cleared and had a small peach orchard. The rest was in trees with a small creek, Bummer Creek, running through it. This creek was our water supply. Buckets were carried from it for all house hold needs and also to water the gardens. We also had a path into the woods where the "out-house" was set up.

We set up a tent near the creek, planted a garden, brought chickens, and a pig and later a cow when a barn was built. First they had to cut enough logs, with a neighbor's help to build a house. From May to October enough logs were cut from their woods and gathered to build a 34' by 40' two-room, two-story log home. On October 1926 neighbors came from all around to the Brown's "House Raising." They got us in and roofed before November.

**Brown Home: 1930s
Hugo, Oregon**



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Photo 1. Brown's Hugo Home: 1930s

Courtesy of Carrol Brown

Our old log house had a lot of cedar in it (Photo 1). Wayne McKy's dad, Glenn McKy, used his Fordson tractor to pull the logs from down in the woods on the Brown's property. Cranking that old tractor to start its engine was terrible. Wayne has that Fordson tractor sitting on his property today. That was the Hugo they found in 1926 - great, helpful neighbors and a supportive community. It was a really great place to live and grow up.

The “town” had one general store, one church, a two-room elementary and high school, (grades 1 - 8 and 9 - 12), and an unused Grange Hall which was renovated into a community center. Here, once or twice a month, square dances, pot lucks, and parties were held.

I started school in the 6th grade in 1926 about a month after the family arrived in Hugo (Photo 2). Mrs. Bernice Johns taught 1st - 8th grades; Mrs. James was the high school teacher.



Photo 2. Hugo School: 1926
Courtesy of Carrol Brown

At the school the students made a tennis and volley ball court. Their volley ball team played other small schools in the area. When the school’s well went dry my dad bargained for a well drill and paid for it with hard wood cut from the trees on their land.

In 1927 - 1928 my father, Uncle Ralph, and other adults in the community made a deal with the power company to put in a line from above the Pirzer place (on old stage road). The power

pole were 15 - 20 feet high. I still has the old spikes that they used to climb the poles with. My Uncle Ralph had been a lineman. They salvaged all the cross irons, copper wire, and other material from an old power line that went south from Grave Creek on the east side of Mt. Sexton to Grants Pass. The Placer Divide line that came down Jack Creek to Winona. They got it and moved by horse and wagon to the Hugo side and that was what they used to develop the new line.

Walker, Mike. August 7, 2006. *Carrol E. Brown’s Hugo Memories: 1916 - 2000*. Secretary for Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. Hugo, OR.