

April 22, 2002

Hi to the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Congratulations on your Heritage Project. It's nice to see students interested in the "old things".

Here's some of the autobiographical information you asked for, although I didn't grow up in South Tillamook County, I did go my last 2 years in High School at Nestucca:

1. My full name is Patricia Jo (Balmer) Lynk.
2. I was born May 30, 1935 in Tillamook General Hospital in Tillamook, OR. My Mom and Dad tell me I was born at noon and there was a parade going by at the time. Back then Memorial Day was always celebrated on May 30.
3. My parents are William Howard and Josephine (Barber) Balmer.. My parents were both born in Oregon; my father near Garibaldi and my mother in Wheeler.

My father's father was John Gill Balmer and his mother was Blanche Ripley Balmer. I am enclosing a copy of a Journal of the Ripley family kept during the 1889 covered wagon crossing from Missouri to Oregon, which you might find of interest. My grandmother, Blanche Ripley, was 1 year old at that time. I don't have any information about how my Grandfather Balmer came to Oregon. Both the Balmer and the Ripley families were originally from England.

My Mother's Mother, Josie Kodad came to Oregon from what is now Czechoslovakia when she was young. I have no information about my Mother's Father.

4. When I was born, we lived in Garibaldi, Oregon. My father was a logger. In early 1942 when the Second World War was declared, we moved to Sherwood, Oregon, where my father worked in the shipyard. After the war, on Labor Day in 1951 we moved to Hebo, where my parents still live.

5. In September 1951, I was beginning my Junior year at Nestucca Union High School, and was not very happy about moving from all my friends in Sherwood. It turned out that everyone was very nice and made the transition easier than I had expected. Moving was probably the most significant event in my life at that time. I graduated in 1953, so I really didn't spend very much time in the South Tillamook County School System. I then went to Business College in Portland and became a secretary.

I did the usual High School things of that time; singing in any and all groups available; was a member of girls league, student council, acted in plays, attended all sports events, was on the Rally Squad, played volleyball. There weren't very many things girls could do as far as sports were concerned in those days. The only teams we had were intra-mural or just within the gym class. I recall girls could play basketball only half-court. No girls track or tennis teams. Few of us even knew what golf was. I loved school and had lots of fun and friends.

As far as significant events in my life, it has been very eventful and exciting, but other than being President of a few social organizations, being known for my singing in my local area, owning a gift shop, living in several states, traveling, raising three wonderful children and all that entails, there are no earth-shaking events.

6. I have 2 sisters, Susan Balmer Lewers, Judy Balmer Hurliman and 1 brother, Bill Balmer, Jr., all of whom spent more time in the South County Schools than I did since I'm the eldest. My Dad was on the School Board for a while, but it was after I was gone.

7. My occupation was being a Mom until the children were older. Then I was a Secretary for a number of years and owned my own gift shop for 11 years.

8. Special skills and interests include singing and music, sewing, downhill and cross country skiing, golf, bicycling, reading, gardening and enjoying life.

9. I was once active in the Presbyterian and Methodist Church; choir, church treasurer, activities, etc., but now would say I am Spiritual in a more metaphysical way.

10. Under "Other" I guess you could say I was always active in my children's school activities, several civic organizations, community plays, Sweet Adelines, etc.

11. There are a lot of things I remember and probably a lot more that I've forgotten. I recall loving learning and school. We would ride around in cars, like the kids do today. No TV and not many phones, so we listened to the radio, went to movies and sports events and walked to each other's houses. We went to the beach a lot at Cape Kiwanda, but it was quite different from now with very few houses and only one place to park, called the turn-around. We would walk down to the cape and climb the dunes.

#### INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOLS

1. I'm not sure what is meant by what methods teachers used to teach. I don't know what titles methods might have gone under in those days. We did oral and written assignments and we had to memorize names, dates and places, as well as things like the Gettysburg Address, Bill of Rights and poetry. Tests were either oral or copied on a mimeograph machine. Physical Education was mandatory. We had mostly mandatory classes with very few electives, and we had a lot of homework. I don't remember that a foreign language was even taught.

2. Teachers disciplined by setting the rules and we complied. No gum chewing or eating in class. No talking, whispering, passing notes or speaking unless called on in most cases. They enforced discipline and most were quite stern. If I got into trouble with a teacher, I usually deserved it.

3. As to interaction between teachers and students, by and large we respected them and they respected us. There was a different feeling then—some seemed older and more unapproachable than they are now. We didn't question much in those days. Classes were smaller, but sometimes we were still separated by the teacher/student wall.

4. Several teachers inspired me. I remember Mrs. Sheythe made Shakespeare clearer to me. You could tell she loved to teach. The good teachers made classes fun along with teaching you something.

5. We had only 8 or 9 teachers in all.

6. Junior year 51/52: John Sheythe was Principal; George Cochran, Music; Mary Morrison, Home Economics; Ernest Davenport, Coach; Dorothy Sheythe, English; Charles Beckley, Agriculture, Laura Orser, Commercial; and Pauline Dougherty, Science.

Senior year 52/53: Principal Lee Roy Hanson; Bill Osterhout, Science; Ernest Davenport, Coach, Social Science; Dorothy Sheythe, English, Librarian, Patricia Mullins, English, World Geography; Louellen Lee, Home Ec, Girls P.E.; Stella Cunningham, Commercial; Ben Wright, Ag; and George Cochran, Music.

7. Mrs. Sheythe was my favorite teacher because she made it fun to learn. I always liked the music teachers, too, because I loved to sing.

8. The clothing typically worn by students was pretty formal compared to these days. Girls always wore skirts and sweaters or blouses, sometimes dresses. We wore little silk scarves tied around the neck, or necklaces and pins. Or if you were "going steady" you wore the boy's class ring wrapped in adhesive tape to fit your finger, or around your neck. And sometimes you wore their letterman sweater. Guys wore cords or jeans with sweaters and shirts, and of course letterman sweaters.

9. I don't recall how many were in a class, probably between 15 and 20. Nestucca was a small school then. There were only 35 in our graduating class.

10. About 150 students in the entire school.

11. The school probably hasn't changed much since I was there. It looks nearly the same from the outside except I believe a gym and cafeteria has been added. It was clean and neat with lots of windows.

12. There were 4 grades in the High School.

13. The grounds were very simple, with the football field and tennis courts.

14. I think the school hours were 9 to 3 and we went from the day after Labor Day until the end of May.

15. We had very few vacations and holidays. If I remember right, the main ones we had were Thanksgiving and the Friday after. And it depended on what day of the week Christmas was on when we got out. Usually we got out early on Christmas Eve or the day before and then went

back the day after New Years. Easter we got out a half day for Good Friday. We may have gotten out for Veterans day also. We didn't have spring breaks or teacher inservice days.

16. The rules for behavior that I remember were no running in the halls and we had to not be too loud. You could hold your boyfriend's hand, but that was about all. The teachers had us pretty well in hand.

17. We packed our lunches in. There weren't too many places to go to eat in Cloverdale, and none of us had that much spending money either. We also had to walk everywhere and there wasn't a lot of time for lunch...I think only ½ hr or so.

18. In High School we didn't play games or have recess.

19. We didn't have many activities during lunch break. We would sometimes practice music or some other activity we were interested in. I do remember that sometimes on Fridays the whole school would see a movie in the gym. Or we would have traveling shows or lectures sometimes.

20. We didn't have many clubs either that I can recall. You could be on the Paper Staff or the Annual Staff, or in Rally Squad.

21. We had basic subjects, just 4 years of English and no choices of what kind of English, just whatever the teacher was teaching. The Science classes were required for at least Freshman and Sophomores, as was Math. We weren't required to take Chemistry or anything past Algebra in Math. Home Ec. was sometimes required for girls, but not after Junior year. Most girls took Commercial classes.....typing, shorthand and bookkeeping. Boys mostly took Agriculture. We had to take Social Studies, PE and Geography. Music was elective.

22. I don't recall if there was any parent organization for the high school. Most parents attended our plays, musicals and sports events and chaperoned dances, but we didn't have many of those.

23. We participated with other schools in the sports of boys football and boys basketball. I don't think they had baseball or track.

24. We played mostly Tillamook County teams. Amity, Bay City, Knappa, Academy, Star of the Sea, Seaside, Jewell, Garibaldi, Nehalem, Wheeler.

25. The differences between girls and boys sports were that there were no girls sports, at least playing other schools, as I mentioned above.

26. The school mascot was the Bobcat.

27. I don't recall any specific sports events, just that I attended them all and had lots of fun.

28. We either rode the bus or at times rode in private cars with friends.

I don't have any other stories, but I'm sure you could contact my Dad about logging, etc.

If I can be of any further help, my address is: [REDACTED]  
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Sincerely,

Pat Balmer Lynk