

Hemlock School

by Bill Westley

Typed by Dean Bones October 2021

Note that then 6th grade student Alex Orman had emailed Bill Westley asking him to answer questions about Hemlock School if possible, and Bill kindly emailed his remembrances to Alex. There were a number of emails back and forth.

May 6, 2002

I am acknowledging your very fine questions concerning the Hemlock Grade School beginning in the first grade the fall of 1946 and graduated in the last 8th grade class in the spring of 1954. There were 4 in my class, Bill Guthrie, Marion Passwaters, Joan Doering and myself. My younger sister, Georgia Lee Westley Ligatich attended Beaver Grade School in the fall of 1954 for the eighth grade since she was one year younger than myself. My older sister Donna Joy Westley Heady 3 years my senior graduated from Hemlock and attended Nestucca Union High as did I.

In a short time I will answer your questions further in great detail since I have been writing for a period *A Chronology of an American Family*, a personal history of my family and my wife's family. There is a section on the Hemlock Grade School. I am particularly and most intrigued with your question concerning my fellow students because in face there really weren't that many perhaps approximately 4 - 8 students per grade in 1 - 8 you see. There were 4 students in the last eighth grade class of 1954 when Hemlock Grade School closed. I shall attempt to recall as many students as I can and where they specifically lived in the area. Alex, you are quite simply prompting me of more material within my own writing project.

Enough for now. I will follow up soon, and don't give up on me. You have given me several assignments:

- a) Talk in detail about the school house including the coat room, bathrooms, running water, stage, classrooms, play-shed, etc. Note that there is a section in my "chronology" where I take you on a walk through the building and the basement area and even up on the roof.
- b) Clarify the bell situation. I think I have done that.
- c) Tell where the students lived.
- d) How did we students get to school? What was the mode of transportation?
- e) Tell names of teachers I can remember.
- f) What games did we play?
- g) Tell funny and other stories about school and the students and teachers.
- h) What subjects were taught.

Do not be discouraged. Many of the items above are already in my document, but some are not. I will tell you all I can recall. You see my plan now is to take the Hemlock Grade School section and review it an update. I will send the total to you electronically so you can do as you wish. You have prompted me with new ideas to enhance that section.

Regards,
Bill Westley

May 7, 2002

Alex, here is my response to your many questions integrated into my existing document on my childhood and from *The Chronology of an American Family*, my personal history.

The Hemlock School District - 1946 - 1954

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Over the years the border of the district changed somewhat. At the northern edge the line was about 1 1/2 miles north of the school at the top of Swede Hill and just north of the Wilson Family's home. The district boundaries had extended a bit farther to take in the Bonnin family, another home next door that had two boys (I can't remember their names.), and the Pearson family at the Oar Factory at the bottom of Swede Hill on the north. Darwin Pearson lived there. This extended district must have changed in 1949-1950 or so. To the west, the district ran basically to the top of the hill on the Sand Lake Road towards the coast at Terra del mar. The Webb family lived close to the boundary there. To the south the district ended near the Guthrie Lumber Mill beyond the Royal Fox place across the river and just beyond the Guthrie and Passwater places on the Hwy 101 side of the river. To the east of the school was basically Blanchard and East Beaver Roads.

Viewing from the highway there was a board fence extending around the entire property. Across the front the fence was covered with some type of decorative wire. This was a two-room school with a large floor-to-ceiling folding and sliding doors that would open the two rooms for programs and other public gatherings. The south room was grades 1 - 4, and the north room was grades 5 - 8. The two main rooms occupied most of the building extending from the north end of the building to the hallway at the south end. On the southwest corner was the outer and inner set of double doors at the front entrance. A wide hallway extended across the southern end of the building to the southeast corner where there was another set of double doors out to a ramp leading to the school grounds. There was then a cement wide walk from the ramp to the play sheds behind. Just after coming through the double set of doors at the main entrance to the left was a door to the lower classroom. In about 1954 the school district merged into the Beaver Grade School, and the Hemlock School was vacated by the district with all students attending the Beaver School in the fall of 1954. In time the school building was occupied by the local Masonic and Eastern Star lodges. The oldest school building together with the play shed either fell down or was torn down or both.

The main hallway then extended north from the southern west-east hallway and connected with the short hallway on the north end to the rear of the building. The hallway had no lockers, but there was a long row of coat hooks for the students hats and coats. Just at about the coat hooks was a long shelf to place other belongings and your lunch sack or lunch bucket. The boys' restroom, a drinking fountain, a janitor's closet, the girls' restroom, etc., extended along the back of the building and the main north-south hallway to a short hallway leading to the rear of the building. At the north end of the main hallway and to the right was a short west-east hallway where there was the door to the basement and near the rear exit door was a door to the right leading to the book storage room. I always like the smell of new books in this room. Near the north end of the main hallway was the second door to the front of the lower classroom and the rear entrance door to the upper classroom. Also, at the north end of the main north-south hallway was a door to a kitchen of sorts. And through the kitchen there was another door to the very northeast corner where there was a room of unexplained purpose. It was a kind of separate study room I guess. I seem to recall there were benches around part of the perimeter. There was a front entrance door to the upper classroom from this room.

The basement access was from the short hallway at the north end of the main north-south hallway. A long wooden stairway extended down and south to the cement basement floor below. Only the southern half of the basement was open and finished. The wood furnace was generally in the center of this portion. Upright wooden beams supported the main floor from the basement floor. Since the

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building main floor foundation was 3 - 4 feet above ground level there was ample head room in the basement. On the southern end there were one or two large wooden doors that could be opened to throw large mill-end firewood through into the basement area. It was then stacked for use in the furnace.

During the day it was the responsibility of the teacher or the oldest boys to feed the furnace.

The northern half of the basement area was not excavated. It was all dirt and a crawl space that was basically used for storage. For the adventuresome it was also a big place to explore.

There were two classrooms. One was for the upper grades, and one was for the lower grades. The configuration was basically the same for both. Both rooms were facing the north. The teacher's big oak desk was in the front of the room together with a number of folding chairs suitable to accommodate the maximum students in any of the 4 grades. The north, east and south walls were covered with large blackboards. The old school desks were mounted on wooden slats in a row instead of the floor proper to allow for floor maintenance. Later, I believe, they were replaced with the individual separate metal desks with formica-covered wooden tops and lids that opened.

There was at least one piano in the building that may have been moved from room to room. There was little, if any, audio-visual equipment. I am not sure there was even a slide projector. There may have been a movie projector though. I do recall a Sawyer brand circular viewer.

The two restrooms were much as today with running hot and cold water, toilets, etc.

There was no permanent stage in the building. The stage had to be constructed from materials for the Christmas program.

Concerning the bell. There is no missing bell. There was no such central large bell that I can recall. I am fairly certain of this fact. There was no such bell tower such as were present on earlier schools. I do not recall if there was a small bell tower on the older Hemlock School building either. Here again, I do not think so. The old school building was totally vacant being used for a play shed . . . actually a basketball or ball court during the 8 years I was there. It still had a covered porch of sorts running across the front. The actual play shed was right beside the old building with a walk front to back between. Both buildings were right behind the existing building approximately 75 feet. The old school was right up against the south property line. The bell that I recall teachers calling students from the playground was a rather small 3 - 4 inch variety with a handle straight up from the top. The teacher would appear at the front and rear schoolhouse doors and ring the bell vigorously. There were occasionally the lame excuse that "I didn't hear the bell!" But that was met with little sympathy, and we students soon realized that it wouldn't work. As for the hand bells, I do not know what would have happened to any of the material, furniture and fixtures when the school closed. I would assume much went to the Beaver Grade School.

It was during my early years I learned the importance of proper handling of the flag. The flag pole was just to the side of the front entrance to the school. It was one of the assigned duties to see that the flag was raised properly in the morning and taken down properly, folded and stored in the afternoon at the end of day.

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Mrs. Cross taught grades 1 - 4. She would call out the grade to stand in unison and "Come to Class!" parading to a row of chairs at the front of the room facing forward toward the board. One of the benefits of this arrangement was to pick up information or items of interest during the other classes.

Another teacher that came to cover for Mrs. Cross during a problem with her credentials was a Mrs. Margaret King. She was of English backing and talked of the language differences with England. Terms like "rich" and "keen" were discussed.

In the upper classroom I can recall Mrs. Lewis, not my teacher, Mr. Robert Loucks, Mr. Price, etc. You must understand there were only two teachers in the school at any one time. One taught grades 1 - 4 in the lower classroom, and the other taught grades 5 - 8 in the upper classroom. So in my 8 years at Hemlock School there was not an opportunity to have very many teachers. Mrs. Cross and Mrs. King were my only teachers in grades 1 - 4. I believe Mr. Loucks and Mr. Price were the only teachers I had in grades 5 - 8.

Mrs. Martha Cross was my first teacher and taught me up to the 4th grade, I think. I am not sure of her age, but she always had long snow white hair that she would comb and fasten up on her head. She was always so nicely dressed and well-groomed and wore the black "granny shoes" with heavy heels. She was the prim and proper school teacher. Conversely she was married to a nice fellow, but a rough and tumble and bit of a rough-talking logger.

Mrs. Cross had talked of coming to Oregon in a stage coach when she was very young. She lived in a small cabin along Highway 101 next to the southern edge of the school grounds with her husband Homer Cross. He was a logger, keeper of hunting dogs, etc. In fact, for a period of time Dad worked in the woods with Homer. There was a time when apparently Mrs. Cross' credentials expired probably due to requiring more refresher study, and she was then required to postpone her teaching for a time. I remember kids coming to the corner of the school grounds on their free time and talking to her from her kitchen window during this period. I can't remember if she actually regained her credentials and came back to teacher, but I think she did.

During her tenure she would read to the classes after lunch or recess if we had been good, if not, no reading. The students so enjoyed the period when Mrs. Cross would bring a story to life. There were at least several occasions when the class, 4 grades in the room, would be unruly or misbehave in some way, and she would respond in kind with a statement that only worsened the situation. She would say, "It's your fault and nobody's but!" The students thought this phrase was so humorous and would begin snickering. It was a response she didn't understand and would infuriate her more. Generally this behavior would result in a penalty of no reading for a time or two.

Mrs. Cross had at least one son who was in the military during this period. She talked much about her children.

After Mrs. Cross retired from teaching Homer and she built a new home south of Cloverdale and lived there until their passing. Our family visited Homer and Martha a number of times at this place.

More about Hemlock School . . . In the fall firewood would be delivered to the southern end of the building. The wood generally took the form of rough-sawed slabs or mill ends. I seem to recall that

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some student labor was used to move and stack this week, but I'm not really sure. Hard to believe. Anyway, it did get stacked in the basement sent in through opening doors in the foundation. During the winter school hours the older boys were assigned to stoke the wood furnace in the basement.

In the worst weather of the winter months recess was consumed by roller skating in the basement around the furnace. It was great fun, and there were water leaks in the basement further enriching the entertainment. One would slide around corners, and it was a challenge to stay upright while being whipped around in a serpentine fashion. Seems there were games invented based on the skating environment down there.

At one time there was at least one contest where the object was to develop a list of words: synonyms, antonyms and homonyms. I remember that Mickey Phelps, an older classmate, and I were in collusion and copied from one another to get those words that the other did not have. I think we each won for our respective grades. I don't remember what we won.

As far as jobs in the classroom, it was an assigned duty to clean blackboards and the erasers. Attending to the flag was also an assigned duty as was feeding the furnace. There may have been other jobs.

For subjects as I recall, the curriculum was pretty basic during my tenure with reading, writing and arithmetic basics. There were studies in geography, history, sciences, etc. There was not a broad selection as there is today.

I shall attempt to identify and place students at their rural homes by geographic areas. Understand that there was a moving target over the 8 years I attended Hemlock School. I am sure many of the older students when I was very young went unnoticed. At any rate, since each class was only 4 - 8 students, and there were 8 grades, the maximum number of students was probably not more than 45 - 50 students. Below is loosely the students from about 1946 - 1954.

Students from the south on the Hwy 101 route included the following:

- Near the southern district boundary south to north was the Passwaters family with Earlene, Ken and Marion.
- The Bio (?) family with Dixie plus one boy.
- The Guthrie family with Bill, Gwen and Danny
- The Murray family with Bob, Gary and Linda
- Near East Beaver was the Glawe family with Gerry and Jim. Alene was in high school.
- Then there was the McFall family with Billy McFall.
- Later there was a family that lived in a big house southeast of the school, but I do not recall their names. There was 1 boy and 1 girl.
- There was one boy and one girl in the small cabin next to the school.

Students from the north Hwy 101 route included the following from the north district boundary (Swede Hill) south to the school. Note that this boundary changed early on from a bit further north to the top of Swede Hill:

- In an earlier district boundary there was a Darwin Pearson (Oar Factory), the Bonnins, Melvin, Ken and Bob and one other family (2 boys) beyond Swede Hill
- The Gilbert family with Gilbert, Deanna and Donna

Students from the Blanchard Road route included the following from the end of the road to Hwy 101:

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- The Blanchard family with Bobby and Linda
- The Doering family with Beverly and Joan

Students from the Sandlake Road route included the following from the top of the hill west back to Hwy 101:

- The Webb family with Larry, Loretta, Ronny, and one or two others
- The VanderZee family with Rudy, Sammy and one girl
- The Hussey family with Lester and one or two others
- The Hintz family with Albert, Raymond and Linda
- Prior to 1951 the James family with Vernon, Marion, Ilene and Arlene
- After 1951 the Westley family with Donna, Bill, and Georgia who moved from East Beaver Creek Road in 1951

Students from the East Beaver Creek Road route included the following from the end of the road to Hwy 101:

- The Stuart family with Mike, Larry, Danny and 2 girls
- The Phelps family with Sonya (Sunny) and Margaret (Mickey)
- The Porter family with Henry and Dale
- The Westley family prior to 1951 with Donna, Bill and Georgia
- The Piper family with Mickey (girl) and Bobby
- The Finnell family with Larry, James and 1 girl

The Tillamook County Library would travel on a schedule to the many schools to allow students to go out to the bookmobile and check out books. I remember that for a number of years it seemed I was afraid to go to the bookmobile. It must have had something to do with the uncertainty of the interior. I so wanted to go out there and check out a book, but I was just too scared. In time which seemed like year I did get the courage to go to the bookmobile and check out books.

I can recall one time when I was invited from the lower classroom to the upper classroom by the upper class's teacher, Mrs. Lewis, whose birthday was also on February 2nd. It was great fun!

There was a tradition at the Hemlock School of putting on a number of programs by the students. The biggest event was for the Christmas Program, but there was also a Spring Program and maybe others. One Spring Program it was my duty to recite a poem called *My Aunt Miranda Slocum's Got a Brand New Upper Plate*. I do not remember much other than the title, and that it had some catchy verses and was rather a hit.

One time I can recall when we had a pie social, and there was, of course, bidding on the particular pies that had been brought by the children. One particular event one little girl named Arlene James from a certain family of limited means had brought in a raisin pie for the social. No one was bidding on the raisin pie. Mom, sensing the situation somehow got into it and had me bid on the particular pie. Of course I got it, and the routine was to eat the pie with the person who brought it. I didn't like the girl, and I sure didn't like raisin pie; but I weathered through. It was a lesson learned.

There was a great deal of preparation required for the annual Christmas Program, and the play was the main attraction.

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Cedar boughs for decoration were brought for the stage. The stage was put up from boards and material in the basement. It was the responsibility of the older students to go to the nearby wooded areas to collect cedar boughs to be used for decoration and carry them back to the school.

The wooden stage was constructed from a series of sawhorse devices at the northern end of the upper room. The sawhorses were raising the stage to about 2 - 3 feet off of the regular floor. There were boards of a sort to nail down to the sawhorses, and thus a stage was formed from the materials stored in the basement. The boards were tattered from all of their use over the years. many were split with pieces missing and lots of nail holes. Across the front the cedar boughs were nailed to the edge to conceal the underside of the stage. Cedar boughs were also used to decorate throughout the building. For the program proper the large floor to ceiling folding and sliding doors which normally separated the 2 classrooms were opened, and the area became 1 large room for the audience seating.

The program consisted of small Christmas-time skits or programs re-enacting the great historical occasion. Also, it included the normal Christmas carols. Generally there was a poem recital. It was a community event. I recall any movement on the old stage resulted in a good deal of noise from the boards shifting on the sawhorses.

Each spring near or at the end of the school year there was a community gathering of the students' parents and family members and the teachers at the East Beaver Creek Park above the Phelps' place and into the Siuslaw National Forest. It was a beautiful setting between the road and the creek and a bit off of the road. Generally it was cool with only the sun peeking in through the lush forest canopy. there were lots of old picnic tables fashioned from 1/2 log rounds. There was also a very large swing made totally from logs. I can recall creaking noises from its large metal hinges on the main cross bar. Even the 2 lengths that might normally be chain were made of two large poles. There was a teeter-totter also made from logs. It was a magical and lush green place with the sound of flowing water in the East Beaver Creek nearby. The place was abuzz with the sounds of children playing and parents visiting and greeting one another as families arrived.

To the rear of the school and school property were the 2 play sheds. Actually there was only 1 play-shed, and the other was the former one-room Hemlock Grade School that was the gym of sorts. The ceiling had been removed, and it was pretty much open to the rafters. The doors had been removed so there were walkways into the building. There was a covered porch on the front. Right next to the "gym" with a wooden walkway between was the play-shed, a building with walls about 5 - 6 feet high and an open space all around with a roof supported on outer posts above the walls. The wind would whistle through the winter.

I recall one time when I was in the 5th or 6th grade there was a boy named Vernon James. (The James family lived in the house that Dad & Mom eventually bought from Charlie Gilmore.) who was an 8th grader, I think, who chose to climb up in the rafters of that old school house to the very peak of the roof. He slipped and fell on his head. He was in great pain. He was, of course, crying and saying, "Oh Mama!" over and over and over again. We were sure he was a goner. I don't remember much more about it, but he survived. I don't think there was an emergency option at that time with no ambulances nearby.

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During the late spring the young adventuresome boys would play in the soft cool dirt around and under the old school house/play-shed. It was up off of the ground a good deal on vertical posts leaving an ample amount of crawl space. There were lots of possibilities "playing in the dirt".

Over the years when I was very young I longed to be able to go up on the roof of the main school building like the big kids. The roof on the school had a mansard roof of sorts with a flat area on top that I had only heard about. You could not see it from the ground. I was sure from that vantage point I could get a new perspective on the world. In time I was given or took the opportunity to make that trip up through the ceiling somewhere in the building to the roof to check it out. Once up there it must not have been that impressive because I do not recall much about it.

Baseball was really softball, a fact I learned some years later. Baseball rules were on the honor system, and the older kids taught the younger ones "the ropes". There was a baseball diamond of sorts to the rear of the building and on the northern portion of the play field. Home plate was near the building, but the outfield was a swamp. In the spring and fall it wasn't too bad, but in early spring it was water. It was a real challenge to catch a fly ball and remain somewhat dry. I can remember times when some kids would just give up and be soaked from head to toe. During the drier periods was not much better because of the rough terrain and the tussock grass. Another game was "500" which consisted of one person hitting fly balls to the field, and through a method of scoring you would work your way up to the pitching and then hitting.

It seems there were other ball games in which the end result was to get soaking wet in the swampy area of the playground. I am sure there were other less organized games of which I do not recall. Also, I'm sure there were games played inside during the worst weather.

Sometime during a period when I was in the upper grades there was a nice new large metal series of swings placed in the front playground area just to the left of the main walkway. Also associated with the swings apparatus was a large metal slide near the end by the front fence. Then off to the north there was another device called a glide or the like which was a series of chains hanging down in pairs that could be used to swing around a main pole either by one's own effort or to have someone else assist.

I don't recall just what if any equipment was placed in the area just to the back of the building proper, but I think there may have been another glide-type unit. Most of the rear playground was open and used for baseball.

One great sport in the 6th or 7th grade was to sit on the front fence near US Highway 101 and tempt the log truck drivers to honk their airhorns as they passed. During those days there were a good deal of traffic from the log trucks and other regular carriers. To attract the driver's attention we would hold out our arms and simulate pulling the airhorn cable. Sure enough it worked, and we were encouraged. It would even work on any truck that had an air horn.

One day in the middle winter there was an old dog that ran loose in the neighborhood that may or may not have had a home. He was always around the school, and the kids knew who he was. At any rate, one day he was apparently hit by a vehicle and killed across from the school. It lay there alongside the road. When I went home that evening I had communicated this event. My mother had said that I should take a shovel to school the next day and give that poor dog a proper burial. All I

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can recall was that I wasn't too hot on the idea, but I concurred and went off to school the next day with a shovel. Once at school my outlook changed because there was growing curiosity and general interest. The teacher was involved and supported the venture. A group of boys about my age were assigned or volunteered to help. The team of interested boys were sent across the road in the plain view of the whole student body. It was a great success. We were performing a public service not to mention the proper respect to the dog. And I had my mother to thank for that.

As I said before, Homer Cross was married to Mrs. Martha Cross, my teacher. In those days they lived in a very small cabin next to the school on the very south edge of the property. Homer had hunting dogs. Several hunting dogs. Homer was a very colorful character. He was a lanky fella as I recall and very outspoken. He was ready and willing to tell a story. He liked to go bear hunting. Dad liked bear hunting. In those days the Bonneville Power Administration was placing high tension power lines across the terrain over hill and dale. The result was open right-of-ways where these power lines had been installed making an excellent place to look for bear. On one or more occasions I would go with Dad and maybe sometimes Homer to look for bear with or without the hounds. It was late summer in the late evening still with sunshine and the sweet summer smell of salal berries. I can recall it all now in my mind's eye. Homer had also been Dad's timber cutting partner.

It seems originally that Ralph Bentley drove a 1940s vintage 2 door Pontiac to take kids up East Beaver Creek Road. The school bus was originally not a bus at all, and when it was a bus it was a GMC Suburban. The Suburban was a tan color and had no special emergency or flashing lights. In time it was equipped with a large STOP sign on the driver's side just behind the door. It was controlled by a lever behind the driver's seat that when pulled forward caused the sign to swing out and display the bid red STOP sign. Helen Phelps, Sunny & Mickey's mother was the school bus driver. Phelps lived above us on East Beaver Creek Road, so we would be picked up on the beginning of the morning route and pretty much at the end of all the routes in the afternoon. I think Helen Phelps actually used the family car originally to transport the students and later replaced it with the Suburban. She drove the school bus for most of the years I attended the Hemlock School until the district merged in 1954.

At one time I recall when Ralph Bentley was hauling school kids, and at a time when we were nearly to our place we came upon our dog Timmy along the road. There must have been a conflict because I refused to bring the dog into the car and chose to walk with the dog on home.

I had a run-in with Ralph Bentley in later years when I was riding my bike to the Holgate barn just up the road to pick up a gallon of milk. As I approached a corner just south of the barn he came around the corner spraying rocks in that 1940s Pontiac and ran it up on the bank. It turned over into the road. I didn't wait or anything but high-tailed it for home and told the whole story. I don't remember the story behind the story.

One Halloween night the Nazarene Church was holding a party in the play-shed. My best friend, Jim Glawe and I were there and were in some way harassing the troops. All I could remember was that we could see through cracks in the play-shed walls and that they were performing stunts in front of a light casting shadow images behind the sheets. I suppose they were intended to be scary. We must have known we were spotted in the dark because we headed for the wooden board fence to do a flip over, and as we did Don Hodgdon, who would have been at least 10 years older, came down on top of us and made it clear we needed to move on.

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In the community just north of the Hemlock Grade School was a community church. We attended that church for summer Bible School. There was also another association with that church. The pastor, Lloyd Johnson? also was the leader of a Boys Clubs of America group. He would take us on camping trips and organized a fairly elaborate basketball schedule through the Boys Clubs of America for a couple of levels, A and B, of teams. We would play around the area mostly in the Tillamook area.

One time we went on a camping trip to Hebo Lake above Hebo, Oregon. It had the usual camping facilities, etc. Most all I recall is I had a case of pink eye. I was pretty self-conscious about it, and I'll never forget an older kid named Rolly Becker who told me that he thought I would live through it. I guess it lessened the load. I do recall having fun on that trip, too.

Another time I recall camping overnight at Whalen's Island. Another time we took a week's camping trip to the East Fork of the Hood River in the Mount Hood National Forest. There were quite a number of persons on the trip of all ages, Lloyd, Paul Hodgdon, Marion Passwaters, Rudy & Sammy VanderZee are just a few of the name I can remember. I would think there were a total of 10 - 12 people on the trip. We took 2 or 3 cars and drove from the Hemlock area to the Multnomah School of the Bible near 82nd and Glisan Street in Portland. Apparently there were friends of Lloyd's living or teaching there. They may have accompanied us to the camping area. From there we journeyed on to the East Fork of the Hood River area.

We drove quite a ways to get to a point where the 2 or 3 cars were parked, and then we hiked in a good distance. I remember the 2 cars. Lloyd's was a 1953 or '54 Ford, and Paul Hodgdon's was a 2 or a 4-door 6 cylinder 1938 vintage Chevrolet. The campsite was a gravel bar along the East Fork. There we camped for about a week, I think.

Lloyd really liked to fly fish, and that consumed most of his day. As I recall he fished with Paul Hodgdon, Don's older brother. They would be gone most of the day. I recall if we even ate lunch. Anyway, we would have something called kabobs which were basically a cross between a pancake and a biscuit. They were fixed in a number of ways, but it was basically kabobs, kabobs, kabobs. We had kabobs for breakfast, kabobs for lunch and kabobs for dinner. I remember Lloyd warning against getting into the food. I also remembered that one got pretty hungry from meal to meal, and I'm still not sure we did lunch. Anyway, I could remember actually eating my toothpaste for a little flavor and nourishment. One day either Rudy or Sammy decided they were getting too hungry to wait and got into the supplies. Punishment that evening was the belt line. Members all lined up and the VanderZees were run through the gauntlet.

I wasn't particularly interested in fishing all day. Several days, one or two others and myself would explore the area. This was logging by rail country. The tracks had all been removed, but the railroad ties and many, many spikes remained. We located an old logging ghost town like the old frontier days, but the main street was the the railroad tracks. There were still the old buildings lined up along the tracks with board sidewalks. The row of houses might run for several hundred feet or so. It was as though it had been abandoned only a short time ago. We had great fun going into the old buildings and looking around. There wasn't anything of value and probably only remnants of the prior inhabitants. We were picking up railroad spikes for a time and carrying them to camp. And then we realized that there was little value in that because we would still need to carry all of them way back

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to the car. There were a lot of areas to explore. I don't recall the exact persons that were with me on those explorations; but I think one was Marion Passwaters. I can recall we were all pretty glad to be heading home.

Over the years I recall the efforts that Pastor Lloyd Johnson had given to the community in the church-related activities, the Boys Club activities, etc. He was a very nice man and good to all the kids. Even at that early age, I knew he had a bigger purpose than the good time and experiences he afforded the young people in the community who would have gone without exposure to the experiences.

We attended the Nazarene Church many times during the years and mostly during the summer Bible Schools organized for the children.

My earliest experiences at the Hemlock School were in the spring of the year prior to my attending first grade. The Glawes lived just about two blocks south and across Hwy 101 from the school. Jim had two older sisters, Alene and Gerry. His father's name was Alvin. His mother had died for a reason unknown to me some time in the prior 6 years.

When I was in the lower grades there was a kid named Gene Bentley, a younger brother of Ralph Bentley. The boys lived in a trailer house just up the East Beaver Creek Road from the cheese factory with their mother. Gene was a husky kid and very gentle. The younger kids used to crowd around him. As I recall, he had a speech impediment.

Fellow 8th grade classmates were Bill Guthrie, Marion Passwaters, and Joan Doering. Other classmates that had moved away were Deana Wilson, Dixie Bellows and Raymond Watkins.

At some point we were given the opportunity to plant trees in the Tillamook Burn on the Wilson River. School busses were coordinated for the trip of 6th graders, I think, to plant trees all day joining other 6th graders from the county.

The community of Hemlock consisted of a country store run by Mick Shultz which was to the north about 1 mile and the Nazarene Church just north of the Hemlock Grade School. Just to the south was the East Beaver Cheese Factory.

I recall the Hemlock Store very well. Dad would stay awhile and talk to Mick Shultz from time to time that allowed me to investigate around in the store. There was lots of merchandise to investigate. Mick would later sell out to the Kermit and Helen Bestul family, and Mick would run another store in the Sellwood area on Milwaukie Avenue in SE Portland, Oregon.

There was a small community referred to as East Beaver where the creek flowed near US Highway 101. It was a very small settlement around the cheese factory just east of 101. Local dairymen would bring their milk in large metal milk cans to the factory during this period until the mid to late 50s when the large Tillamook Cheese Factory north of town was built. At that time many of the dairymen converted to Grade A requirements. In time the local cheese factories were closed.

Across the East Beaver Creek Road from the school was the cheesemaker's house. Both the factory and his house were painted the yellow cheese color. Behind the factory was Shorty and Susie

Hemlock School

by Bill Westley

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Bonnin's home and also Mick Shultz's mother's house. Jim Glawe was very fond of Grandma Shultz and visited her often. When I came to play with him we would make the rounds. Jim Glawe's home was just north of this intersection on Highway 101, and their barn was nearly across the highway from the factory.

At that time the East Beaver Creek Road was gravel. Across the road from the Bonnins was the county's several gravel stock piles where the supply of maintenance gravel was stored to be used as needed.

Occasionally we would go to the factory at just the right time when the cheese curds had been milled from the large slabs of new cheese and were being readied for the pressing operation towards the end of the daily process. We would be able to get a fist-full of curds. They would be warm from the vat and salty in flavor. I can recall their flavor even today. Most every chance I get to return to the Tillamook area includes a stop at the cheese factory north of town for a bag of the curds. They are not warm like the ones of old but are still curds just the same.

In the mid to late 40s there was a rather large sawmill right in the community of Beaver on the east side and just south of the bridge. It was a rather large operation, and I think it was referred to as the Beaver Saw Mill at that time (Angell's Mill was on the south side of Beaver south of the bridge. db). It was pretty well abandoned and removed by the early 50s I believe.

During the late 40s and very early 50s there were many small sawmills in the area. Some recalled were the Finnell Saw Mill just below East Beaver on Highway 101 owned by the Finnell Family. Further south about one mile was the Guthrie Sawmill owned by Raymond Guthrie. In Beaver there was the FanHandel's Mill just south of the bridge. Up the Big Nestucca there were a number of mills including one at Boulder Creek, the Boulder Creek Mill to name just a few.

There was a lot of logging and clear-cutting in those days. The surrounding hills would be scalped of all trees. Log trucks would be going to and from carrying logs from the sites to the assigned mill. Some would be trucked further to Tillamook sawmills or out over Three Rivers to Wilamina.

Sawmills would appear most anywhere there was an available crop of trees. Then when the supply dwindled they would be dismantled and moved on to other sites. The very largest mills were more of such a size as to be impractical to relocate. Much of the superstructure or covering would be from rough-sawed timber right at that mill. In some cases the sawing equipment would be removed, and the super-structure abandoned to the elements.