



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
July 23, 2014

A week ago a neighbor, David Robinson, brought me a copy of an Edible Wasatch magazine. He told me there was a story in it about a lady who was connected to Millard County. Oddly enough, I had a cousin give me a copy of that same magazine. This must be a sign, I thought, and began some extra research about this amazing woman. It turns out that not only did she have Fillmore connections, they were very close connections to people I know.

One of the first people we became acquainted with when we moved to Fillmore some 40+ years ago was Beth Scottorn. She was the secretary at the BLM where my husband worked. Beth is the daughter of Alice Lee.

Alice Morrison Lee came to Fillmore from her native Brigham City as a matter of necessity. During the Great Depression her husband passed away, leaving her with five children to raise by herself. She “dusted off” her home economics degree from the Utah State University and went job hunting. She was offered a job teaching in Brigham City, but the pay was not enough to support her young family, so she looked elsewhere. That elsewhere was Central Utah and so, within the year, she had relocated her family in Fillmore to be in a central location for her job as a home supervisor for the Farm Security Administration.

The family lived at 145 Center Street, the home now belonging to the Gregersen’s. It was here she called home base as she traveled extensively around a several county area with her work. Beth, being the oldest child home at the time, became the caretaker of her younger siblings while her mother was away.

Mrs. Lee was criticized during that era for working outside the home. In fact, in 1932 a bill was introduced to the Utah State Legislature requiring all married female state employees to resign from their jobs.

The move to Fillmore was difficult as they knew no one in the area and had left many extended family members behind in Brigham City. As soon as they were settled, Mrs. Lee got right to work driving her grey Plymouth over the back country roads in Millard, Juab and Beaver Counties – from Highway 91 on the east to the Nevada border on the west. She took care of the maintenance on her car herself, changing tires and oil. If she didn’t show up to an appointment in some remote area, the farmer would go looking for her in case she needed help.



The FSA, for whom Mrs. Lee worked, had a major effect on the people of our country during the Depression. The supervisors spread out across the land teaching families in the rural areas how to survive during this time. They helped them manage their money, as well as helping them find cooperatives where they were able to sell their crops by working with other farmers in the same situation. They helped them get machinery and pipelines for irrigation. They were taught how to organize herd roundups and crop harvests.

Mrs. Lee traveled all over her part of Utah teaching the women to bottle their produce and meats in Mason jars with the new pressure cookers, as well as many other homemaking skills like budgeting, sewing, quilting and mattress making. Her knowledge became a great help to countless women in the area.

The article in the Edible Wasatch was written by Mrs. Lee's granddaughter Kim Duffy and is a great tribute to the self-sufficiency, hard work and community involvement of her grandmother who died over twenty years ago.

The picture of Mrs. Lee is the one that appeared in the magazine article.