



The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard

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The Face of Fillmore this week shares some additional stories from Fillmore's past columns that were passed on to me because of previously published articles. Kind of "The rest of the story".

Just after the publication of the railroad depot history, Phil Robison called me. With help from Carl Camp, we had come up with an approximate date for the beginning of railroad service to east Millard County. Phil knew the exact date. "It was the day I was born!" he explained to me over the phone, May 3, 1923. There was a huge celebration at the depot and everyone in town was there, including the doctor. His mother was worried the doctor wouldn't get to her in time to deliver Phil. He went on to tell other details he knew of the railroad in Fillmore, which served the area for 60 years. Up until the 1950's, trains came and went everyday. Farmers sent grain to the grain co-op in Ogden. Turkeys and cattle were shipped to southern California. In the 1930's mustangs were shipped to Los Angeles to be made into dog food. Passenger service was also a part of the railroad.

In late November after the story about the McBride home, I received an e-mail from Vance Wilson in Phoenix. He says his family has many anecdotes to tell but one that sticks out in his mind at the mention of hauling the lumber off the mountain was about his grandmother Jane McBride Wilson, daughter of William and Erma McBride. Jane was a tiny thing, barely 100 pounds soaking wet and under five feet tall. It was she who drove the wagons of lumber down the mountain. The men in the crowd would walk rather than ride with her. Vance concluded with, "Fast forward a few decades and Gram refused to drive on the highway because it was too dangerous!"

One of my favorite stories of the lumber industry was told to me by Ross Melville. When the boiler for the lumber cutting operation was moved into Paradise Canyon in probably the early 1920's, it was quite a dangerous situation with the steepness of the terrain. The boiler was pulled to the top of the rim on slides with teams of horses. Francis David Melville, Ross's dad, along with Reuben McBride and Gene Ashby were then faced with a steep drop-off of several hundred feet to the canyon's floor. Hitching one team on the front of the boiler for steering purposes and two other teams on the back as "brakes", the group were ready for the descent. Francis Melville climbed into the boiler and laid down, and from that position rode in the boiler to the bottom of the canyon to steer the teams.

January 14, 2011, as I am writing this, a fire is burning behind Roper Lumber Company. Earlier today an old shed on the property was torn down and is being burned. Ross Melville explained to me that there is every possibility that some of the lumber in that old shed came from Paradise Canyon.

Thanks to readers who are willing to share their family stories for all to enjoy and to give us a better picture of what life has been like throughout Fillmore's history.