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HISTORY OF WYOMING
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INTERVIEW WITH PEARL D. LANE

PEARL LANE

Pearl D. Lane was born in November of the year 1900. She was born in Burnt Fork, Wyoming. Her family moved to the Rock Springs/Green River area because her father sold their cattle ranch so they had to move on. Both of Pearl's parents were from America, her father from Illinois and mother from Utah.

Her first impressions of the area was the same as a person would view it today, a lot of open space and not a lot of trees. But she adapted to the setting and learned to like it. As a child Pearl had things tough being in a family of ten. Everyone had their chores to do around the house but she lucked out because she was the youngest. Although she still had to carry in wood and coal for the stove. She played with many types of children, she didn't care as long as she was able to play. They use to enjoy games such as hide and seek and kick the bucket. She obtained her first job when she was 14 as a switchboard operator. She worked from eight at night until eight in the morning and to top that off she had to go to school also. The school was in the old masonic building and it had one classroom for everyone with one teacher for three or four grades. Kids of today would go nuts if they had to celebrate a birthday back then. Pearl didn't receive a gift until she was ten years old. She used to enjoy playing baseball when she was younger, she had

to play with the boys so that made her tough. She couldn't date until she was fourteen. Going to the picture show was a favorite thing to do on a date. They didn't go parking simply because they didn't have a car to park in.

Pearl's family lived on the west end of town. They got their supplies such as groceries, medical drugs, and meat. Most of the businesses were on the south side of the railroad tracks and the homes were mostly on the other. The family never heard radio for a long time. Then in about 1926 they bought their first radio. They couldn't believe the music coming out of it. Then in 1956 they had there first television. The only other type of fun they had was going to dances. There was an open air dance at the pavilion. The younger kids went in the day and the older ones went at night. At the dances a band would play the music. Once Lawrence Welk came to town. This was before he became famous. Pearl enjoyed going to the dances and she can say that she danced to Mr. Welk. That was the only entertainment they family had. Water supply and indoor plumbing were not as convenient as they are today. The water was brought in from a hydrant outside and the plumbing, well there was an outhouse outside and it was like that until about 1920 when Pearl got plumbing in her house. Before that they had to take baths in wash tubs.

Right after World War 1 a flu hit the town that killed several of the population including some of Pearl's brothers and sisters. Pearl herself was down with the flu. With very little

doctors available you were lucky to make it. The only doctors in town were Dr. Hoch and his wife Dr. Scarlett. When her husband asked Dr. Hoch what to do, he told him that every she wakes up to give her a shot of whiskey and that pulled her out of it. Most of the medical needs were taken care of in the persons home. The babies were delivered right in the livingroom. Even some surgeries were performed in the house. Those that couldn't were done in Rock Springs at the hospital but transportation was hard to come by. Pearl's family didn't own a car. She saved up Liberty bonds so she could buy a car. Her first car was brand new chevrolet that she in Rock Springs in 1918 for five hundred dollars. Where have those prices disappeared to?

Bars and burlesque shows are something Pearl did see a lot of. She rarely went into and bar and she has never seen a burlesque show although some may have been present. She said, "A woman just didn't go into a bar in those days. You would think the violence in the town would be bad but according to Pearl there really wasn't much violence. The town had two cops, one for the day and one at night. She did recall one incident that occurred in the eating house of the Union Pacific. A black man assaulted a waitress and when he was forced to leave, he went and got a gun, came back and shot the switchboard operator. After this some men formed a mob, went to the court house and got him. They put a rope around his neck and drug him behind a car to the depot and hung from a telephone pole. The weird thing about it is Pearl saw the whole thing. I can just imagine what

that was like. There were very few black people but there was still plenty of prejudice among some people.

The holidays were somewhat different then they are today. Christmas was celebrated with family and friends but Easter was celebrated only in the church. Halloween was Pearls favorite holiday. She said they would walk around and tip over peoples outhouses. Once they tipped over one and the guy was still in it.

Pearl met her husband while on a train going to Rock Springs for a circus. The wedding was a small one held in his sisters house and attended only by other family. She was married twice and both of her husband worked for the railroad so neither of them had to go to war. This was good because there was more money to be made. Both belonged to the union but neither were very serious about it. In her first marriage she had three kids. Since then all of them have past away except one daughter which she visits in Arizona. But she says she always likes to get back to the four seasons of Wyoming.

Politics were rather calm compared to today. The candidates didn't have the money like they do now but they did manage with what they had. Pearl was forced to be a Republican as she stated. When she was twenty one and finally able to vote she was denied the right by a strong Democrat lady that didn't think she was old enough to vote. This made her made so she has been a Republican ever since. On Dewey's campaign for president he past through the area and Pearl was fortunate to meet him. Also she

had the privilege of meeting President Roosevelt.

Although many people don't like the area around here. Pearl Lane is one of those people that enjoy Wyoming and Sweetwater County. She is one exceptional lady. Pearl is eighty nine years old and she still drives and enjoys the other fine things that the senior citizens of Wyoming offer. It is my privilege to know one of Wyoming's finest people!