

1930 - 1950



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Much has been written about the Depression. Everyone who lived through those days remembers them. Images of despair still haunt us: men jumping from buildings or bridges to their deaths, children selling apples on a city street, long bleak breadlines.

The Hubbard State Bank closed in 1931. The experiences of the people of Hubbard ranged in severity.

ROY KENAGY: *I lost some money in the bank when it broke. It never did open up again I guess. I didn't lose very much money. I mean, it was a lot for us at the time when I worked for 20 cents per hour and had a family.*

They were really hard times. But we got through somehow. You could buy a pair of overalls for 98 cents. You could buy a loaf of bread for a nickel and gas, part of the time, was six cents per gallon. I bought some for five and one half cents to put aside in a barrel.

I worked at the cannery. We canned everything then. Cherries, strawberries, millions of cans. I made a little extra that way because it was piece work and I could almost make double what the hourly men were getting. They wouldn't let you stack unless you could stack at least 25,000 cans per day. I'd stack anywhere from 25-30,000 cans. My thumbs here would just about break off because you'd pick up two cans in each hand and they got heavy toward the end of the day. I'd wake up at night and my thumbs would be aching.

EDWARD VOGET: *One night in the middle of the night, dad woke me up and told me to get my gun because there had been a break-in at the creamery. It was rainin' cats and dogs. We hurried over there and were pussyfooting around There was nothin' movin'. We could see wet footprints on the floor. I followed the footprints into the boiler room where they ended. I opened up the boiler, which was turned off that night, and here was the guy lookin' at me! I hollered to Dad and Dad hollered back, "don't shoot, don't shoot!" The fella came out and told us he had a family and they were starving to death. My dad told him to go on home and we wouldn't call the sheriff. He also told him to be back in the morning and he'd put him to work. Dad wouldn't let*

anybody starve. Well, the fella came back, went to work and stayed a couple years.

HOWARD JONES: Boy, do I know about the Depression! I hope to tell you about it. It didn't effect us much because we lived on the farm and sure, we didn't have a lot of money. We raised a litter of hogs twice a year. In the fall, that went to pay the taxes. The ones we sold in the spring went to pay the mortgage. We had a cream shed We had eggs we took to town. That's what we lived on. And we had a garden. We never suffered during the Depression. Didn't have a dollar in our pocket, but didn't suffer anything. I think it was good for us.

ED SCHOOR: The Depression did affect the town. The people who came to see my father for medical services couldn't pay their bills, but they wanted to pay. They'd bring in chickens, wild game, anything to pay the bill. They supplied us with firewood. They'd fell the trees to pay off the bills. One man owed my father money from the bank out here. He would never speak to my father until after World War II when he finally paid the debt. After that he spoke to him just like an old friend.

LESTER BARRETT: I lost \$100 when the bank failed It was a lot of money. If you had \$100 you was lucky.

VIRGIL PEACE HOSTETLER: We came back from the hop yard It was the year it rained and rained I was supposed to start to high school and didn't get back to Portland til the end of October. No money to buy books or a pair of pants. Two miles to school My dad got a job sorting potatoes and told me he could get me on, or I could go ahead and go to school That's when I went to work. There was a long winter coming and I could make \$1 a day.

MARIE de LESPINASSE COVEY: My father was awfully good about somebody who. had a toothache at night or after dental hours. They'd just come to the house, and he'd get up and take care of them. My dad did all his own dental laboratory work. He'd make plates for them and take it out in trade. Teeth were something that people would let go until it was so bad that they couldn't stand it.

Money was so tight that my father would take chickens, sometimes a half a pig as payment for bills. Mom would have to can all that stuff. We didn't have freezing then. Oh, what a job! At least we had a meat supply.

ED SCHOOR: We used to make our own sauerkraut. There is a cellar in the home, where my father kept all his drugs to keep them cool. We had a regular slicer, like an oversized grater. You'd run the cabbage head back and forth and slice it up real fine and put it in these big tubs, which in looking back on was dangerous, because they were zinc coated tubs, and zinc nowadays being poisonous, you wouldn't do that. We had a wooden lid which sat on top of the tub. In fact, there were wet rags kept on the outer edge of this to keep it all sealed in so the gasses wouldn't escape. I remember while the sauerkraut was being made, over a period of two weeks or a month, you'd lift the lid and scrape off the green mold that formed and you'd keep it

clean and put the lid back on. It would compact and by the time you were ready to put it in jars, it was half way down the tub.

Everybody made root beer, but I don't remember how they made it. Mother had a root she must have boiled. I remember her pouring it into bottles. We had a capper, hand operated, to cap the bottles. We'd use some of my dad's medical bottles, maybe a gallon or so. We also used to get medicine bottles by the case, two ounce, three ounce, which are a rarity now.

We ate a lot of German type food; sausages, sauerkrauts. We'd come home Saturday night and listen to Red Skelton and Fred Allen on the radio, Jack Benney. Mother did a lot of cooking. I'd come home from school and can remember her making noodles. She'd roll the dough out real thin and roll it up and slice it. Lots and lots of soups in the Depression days. I can remember handpicking the chickens. We raised our own chickens and also pigeons, and after we quit raising pigeons, we raised rabbits.

Families "made-do" to survive. Kids could have fun at very little expense.

ED SCHOOR: As far as fun goes, there was a lot of marble playing in the alley between our house and the neighbor to the south. Every evening. Course, we always played Big Ring marbles over at the school grounds. Big Ring, as I recall, was about four foot in diameter and they would pui the marbles in that, but you would have to stay back outside the ring. If you knocked a marble out of the ring, you got to keep it. In a way, it was sort of like pool

Halloween was a big thing. I can remember one year they took a farm wagon completely apart and took it up, piece by piece, on top of the school and put it back together again. Course they had outhouses all over the place. That was one of the biggest things, and one time one of the saloons up the street, near the Fire Hall, there was an old fellow who was quite a drinking fellow and he was there, probably every day of the week. He had an old Model A coupe, and they put blocks of wood under the rear axle so the wheels were just barely off the ground I remember seeing him wind the engine up, but he couldn't go anywhere. Finally, there was enough rocking that the car fell off the blocks, and he let her roar down the street!

MANTON CARL: A snipe hunt of course, at least the version that I have is: You take someone that you want to pull a trick on, give them a flashlight and a gunny sack. You station them someplace and have them hold the flashlight in the gunny sack for a light and the rest of the people would go out and scare up the birds and they'll fly for that light. The victim is always the one holding the bag and everybody else goes home. It was a trick that the country kids could pull on the city kids.

When swimming on the river was a great pastime, or whenever we could and if we were working down near the river, we'd try to run off for a few minutes and jump in the river. If we waited until the work was done in the evening, it was cool Course it was skinny-dippin'. That's the way we swim on this place. And course it was just the boys. If girls showed up,

we'd go off someplace else or go home. One or the other. Most of us didn't have suits.

A Hubbard band was organized in the 1880's, perhaps as the Aurora Colony Band dispersed. The band went through a few transformations, but was playing loudly and clearly, as well as marching triumphantly during the Depression.

FRANKLIN de LESPINASSE: *My father was a fine musician. Before World War I, Dad directed the Hubbard Band. He had a pretty decent band and then the war came along and the band broke up. When we moved back to Hubbard in about 1925, some representatives from the Commercial Club, an organization like the Chamber of Commerce, came over and asked my father if he would start a new band. He did and that was the start of the Hubbard Community Band. I think the bass drum is still in City Hall. Dad taught everyone in the band to play. My mother played the trombone.*

The band marched in the Rose Festival Parade every year. We played concerts in the summertime and always put on a couple concerts in the winter. And we put on concerts for ice cream socials. We'd string lights up in a huge tree on an empty lot facing the Commons between E and F Streets. People would sit in their cars and listen to us.

MARIE de LESPINASSE COVEY: *One thing we did that was good, anybody who belonged to the band really had their social activities well tended to, chaperoned and everything. They'd all come to our house for little dances and parties. It was real nice that way.*

And on March 17th, we always had a concert for St. Patrick's day and played Irish music. Different ones would play solos. Sometimes we would have guests from other groups to play. It was quite popular and we sold tickets. We needed money for instruments and music. The Commercial Club financed us for awhile, with music and things like that.

The band would play on Memorial Day. We would meet at the band hall, which was the lower floor of the Odd Fellows building, facing G Street between 1st and 2nd. We would get in formation and march to the City Hall. We would file into the building and play a concert, always the war songs of the Civil War days which included songs from both sides. After the program, we'd get back information and we'd march clear to the cemetery to funeral dirge time. Going back, we'd play a regular march in march style.

They used to have ice cream socials, and sometimes the band would play before that and then they'd sell the ice cream. Sometimes we'd take the whole corner of the street. Cars would line up, we'd play our number, and every horn on the block would honk.

FRANKLIN de LESPINASSE: *We would have our family band in my dad's waiting room in the evenings, or afternoon on Sunday, something like that. Across the road from our house, which was on 7th Street, was a pasture. Those cows we're just entranced with the sound of that, and they would come up to the fence and just listen. Must have been good music! Since then I*

have observed that cows are particularly attracted to the sound of a trombone.

School classes were held at the Hubbard School, located at the northwest corner of Pacific Highway and J Street. Frances Leffler Byers described the building and some of the games she played:

I remember the old shed and playing games when it was rainy. We used to play down in the basement part. It was actually a three-story building, with a basement and two stories above. Down in the basement, as I remember, there was a walkway that came in from the front of the building and there were two side doors that were kind of under the stairway and we used to run back and forth there and the one in the middle would try to catch you. Well, we played "Run Sheep Run," "May I Mother, that used to be a fun one. We had to stop and then say "May I" before we could go ahead. If you moved, why you had to go back and start all over.

LESTER BARRETT: *The first gym that was here was built by farmers. My uncle Bill Barrett, he drew up the plans and the farmers, they volunteered their work and they put up a building. Along about 1938, it burnt down.*

LEONARD BIZON: *I remember the fire in the gym very well. I remember I was on the football team. The school board bought us a set of nice uniforms. That day it was wintertime, fall weather and the uniforms were all wet. We hung our uniforms up close to some heating duct, I'm not sure what. They all burned up that night. The uniforms didn't cause it, I think it was the furnace. They used cord wood in the stove. After that they bought us another set, which wasn't as nice as the first, but they couldn't afford any better.*

A genuine sense of community was felt throughout the land during the Depression. People pulled together. At no other time were church organizations, lodges, and service clubs so well attended.

As hard times of the Depression gave way to a more prosperous economy, long shadows from the Far East darkened the Western horizon. The United States was propelled into war when Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was attacked by Japan. Once more, young men put on military uniforms.

LESTER BARRETT: *December 7th, in '41 was Pearl Harbor. We was havin' dinner at one of my aunts here in town. It came over the radio that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. I was about 25 years old. It wasn't but a few days and I was gone. I was in a parachute outfit.*

A "roll call," which listed all the men who were in the military, was erected near the old fire hall, on 3rd between F and G Streets. A hero emerged from Hubbard. Marion Carl participated in the battles of Guadalcanal and Midway as a Marine fighter pilot. He received numerous decorations for bravery and accomplishment. Hubbard citizens followed his career with interest and pride.

MANTON CARL: *There was a multitude of things written about my older brother, Marion, because he was the first Ace out of the State of Oregon. In June of 1942, as a Marine fighter pilot, he was in the Battle of Midway. That was the start toward being an 18 plane Ace during World War II. Later he became a test pilot and held the speed record, the altitude record, and was the first to land a jet on an aircraft carrier. He was also the first to fly the X-15 that is now on display with his name on it at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C.*

Those of us on the ground around Hubbard would occasionally get a private, one-man air show during the time he would visit home or be traveling as a member of the Blue Angels.

During World War II, a few local Mennonites served in the Armed Forces. Joining the military or serving the country in a non-violent capacity was a choice that caused personal anguish for Conscientious Objectors. It also became a dividing point among believers.

VIRGIL PEACE HOSTETLER: *I was raised separate from Mom's church, but it was still a hard personal decision to go into the service during World War II.*

MARY JONES: *We were married at Zion before it was rebuilt. Hopewell Mennonite was also in the neighborhood.*

When the war came on, if you went to armed service you were excommunicated. There were a group of us who did not approve of that. There was one minister who believed in praying for the young people in the service and allowing the young men to go. We decided rather than to create a problem or be unhappy, we'd just leave Zion. There were some 30 of us. We formed Calvary and met at a former Methodist Church in Barlow. Our group joined the general conference.

Farms were vital to the nation. Agricultural deferments in the area around Hubbard were commonplace. As they did during the first World War, some Hubbard area residents volunteered their time and talents to the war effort without actually serving in the military.

ED SCHOOR: *We had scrap drives. That was a big thing. Going around, the local farmers would donate their trucks and we'd go around getting old farm equipment and scrap for the war effort. The housewives all turned in their aluminum cookware. We kept that separated out for the aircraft, they said I heard later that they never used it.*

After the war started, they never knew where the Japanese fleet was after Pearl Harbor. There was always a big rumor that they were headed for the coast and everybody was quite fearful of Seattle being attacked, or San Francisco, and they started this aircraft observer corps. They were volunteers, and we used to go to the fire hall on weekends and I remember I'd go early in the mornings before school. We would phone into a center in Portland and report any aircraft that went over and which direction it was going. We'd guess at the altitude. As the war progressed and moved farther east in the Pacific, we disbanded. We felt secure enough that we

didn't need it anymore.

VERA KOCHER YODER: *It was what I did for the war effort. It was an observation post. I don't know where the building came from, but it was only about 10 x 10, very small and moved in from someplace, to the commons across from the fire hall. It was manned 24 hours per day and had a hand crank telephone on the wall. Whenever we would hear a plane while sitting inside during bad weather, we'd be outside during good weather, we'd go to the phone and report the number, type of plane, and approximate location from Hubbard, and what direction it was flying. It was kind of a sociable event too, because oftentimes people would congregate around the observation post. Something done by every little community, I presume.*

MILDRED SCHOOR: *It must have been close to the pool hall. Guys from the pool hall would yell over. Our shifts were maybe two hours.*

Life was not entirely devoted to the war effort. Young people, under any circumstances, find a social life.

VERA KOCHER YODER: *The Midway Roller rink was north of Hubbard on the highway. It was quite a gathering place for kids. There weren't that many roller rinks around, and I think we were pretty lucky to have that. Most people rented skates, but there were a few who were better skaters and went more often. They had their own skates. There were quite a few older people as well as kids who skated there. There was music, definitely. I guess it was a nickelodeon.*

Along about that time, there were a number of kids in town who had their own skates, and on Sunday afternoons they'd skate out to the Pudding River on the road now known as Whiskey, Hill Road. There would be ten or fifteen kids skate to Pudding River on the hard-surfaced road.

Another of the favorite haunts for the kids from Hubbard was the Bungalow theater in Woodburn. It was on Front Street. It wasn't very fancy, but they had good films and it was well taken care of. It was a respectable place to go. I remember I saw "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" there.

The United States entered and exited World War II dramatically. War in the Pacific ended after the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. When the war was over and done, not all of Hubbard's young men returned to their hometown.

MANTON CARL: *There was a lot of togetherness during the war itself. There were so many families that had children in the service that there was community spirit. There was a real change from before the war until after the war. I would have to guess it was that way in every community, but it definitely was that way in the Hubbard community. People were scattering and many of the fellows, those who weren't injured or lost, dispersed to other areas instead of coming back.*

Following World War II, public attention turned in other directions. Those military people who did return to Hubbard, as well as residents of all ages, became riveted to the radio listening to the exploits of local baseball hero, Bill Bevens. Bill had pitched baseball for Hubbard High School and the American Legion team in Woodburn. He went on the play for the New York Yankees from 1944 to 1947. During the 1947 World Series, Bill played an astonishing game in which he came one hit away from pitching the first no-hitter. Years later, Bevens reminisced: *I was just a farm boy from Hubbard. I never thought I'd get that far.*

Serving the needs of travelers, gas stations sprouted along 99E. One station lured customers by adding a zoo. Robert and Dixie Brandt owned and operated the Hubbard Zoo from 1945 until 1950.

ROBERT BRANDT: *We bought the zoo from Edgar Smith. The previous owner was named Earl Loney, and I think he had been there a real long time. They put signs along the road when people were coming from the south. A picture of one sign says "I 73 miles to free zoo in Hubbard "*

We had a variety of animals while we were there. We had bears, raccoons, monkeys, birds, skunk, deer. We had peacocks. We had an aviary. Love birds. We sold peanuts for people to feed to the animals.

DIXIE BRANDT: *And a coyote and a ring tailed cat. We raised hamsters in the Shell Station. There were two service stations, Shell Station, Standard Station. There was a gift shop that sold agates, myrtlewood and all kinds of jewelry. We served lunches, had a soda fountain, sold all kinds of ice cream. And in the center section was the grocery store. And it never closed Not one day, ever.*

ROBERT BRANDT: *And ten cabins.*

DIXIE BRANDT: *They rented for \$6.00 a week! In 1948, there was an advertisement for a newborn baby bear. For \$25. We brought him home. It was a tiny bear that weighed 20 ounces. I got so attached to that bear, I let him rule the house until he clawed all the furniture and the walls up to the doorknobs. At the same time we were raising a dingo dog from Australia. We also had red foxes.*

ROBERT BRANDT: *There was a woods behind the place and I built a nice cage for them, but I think the foxes got away the next day.*

DIXIE BRANDT: *There are some animals that you just can't cage.*

ROBERT BRANDT: *We must have had the zoo for about five years. The property was on the east side of 99E, just north of town. We swapped the zoo for our house. Maybe two years later he sold it to someone who sold it off in lots.*