

## The Good Ol' Days

We live in a great time. Our lives are enriched by many "things" which were not even heard of in my youth. To give the younger generation a perspective of what it was like some 54 years ago here in Paradise Utah, I record some of my memories of that time and how we lived.

At my earliest recollections we lived in a two room house, that had no insulation in the walls nor ceiling. The house was heated in winter by a wood burning stove. We also used coal in the same stove. It sure didn't take long for the house to cool off as the fire died down on a cold night. We all kept slippers near the bed as the floors were so cold.

There was no bathroom. The outhouse was about 100 feet from the house. We bathed in a round tub. The water was heated on the stove. At this point I best mention that we had electricity, and there was an electric range for the cooking of food and heating of water. The only other electric appliances I recall was an electric iron, a radio, a refrigerator and a washing machine. There were 3 electric lights in the house, and three outlets.

There was cold water piped to the kitchen sink, but no water heater. Clothes were washed in wringer type washing machines or hand washed in a tub, and hung out to dry.

This may sound pretty grim by today's standards, but it was better than some families in the area had. Many had no running water and packed water in a bucket from outdoor wells or irrigation ditches. Indoor bathrooms and flush toilets were just catching on in the area, and it was many years before most people had that convenience. We seemed fortunate to have the refrigerator, as many families did not have one. Many homes in the area had only bare wood floors, not even sanded and varnished. Windows were single glazed, and cold and drafty. A house with insulation was rare. If the wind blew, you wore a sweater indoors.

There were no telephones, computers, television sets nor tape recorders. A few crank up record players could be found in the area.. Many homes used wood burning kitchen ranges for cooking. Cooking pots and pans were different than those used today, made mostly from cast iron, galvanized iron, glass, and enameled iron. The age of plastics had not arrived yet and table settings were of china, glass, or tin. The use of aluminum for pans was just catching on.

Clothes were mostly made from cotton fabrics. Some woolens. (Makes my skin crawl yet thinking of those itchy woolen pants.) There were no wash and wear fabrics. Everything was washed and ironed. Some clothes were starched before ironing. If you didn't have an electric iron there were heavy cast irons that could be heated on the wood burning stoves.

If the gals wanted curly hair, they would put their hair up in curlers, bobby pins or rags, and sleep on those lumps, then undo it and brush it out the next morning.

Hair cuts were given with scissors, or hand operated clippers. Most of the older men had one of those old time razors that looked like a miniature cleaver, and had to be stropped on a leather strap to keep the edge, but safety razors were available. Not quite like today's super sharp double bladed disposable razors though. Those old leather straps served double duty; if you were in need of discipline.

Much of the food consumed by the families was raised at home or nearby. Potatoes, bread, meat, milk and home grown vegetables were the staff of life.

At the markets food was packaged much differently than it is today. Tin cans and glass containers were common, but many things like cheese, bacon, bologna, and meat was sent to the grocer in big chunks. The grocer would cut off the amount you wanted and wrap it in paper and tie it with a string. Milk was shipped in glass bottles. Many dry articles were wrapped in cellophane, or waxed paper. Flour was shipped in 50 pound cotton bags. Some of the bags had colorful prints on them. After the bag was emptied the bag was used for making clothing or dish towels.

I had never heard of a fast food store, nor eaten in a café, until I was in my teens. There were no TV dinners, Spaghettios, Pizza, Submarine Sandwiches, Kentucky Fried Chicken, nor BIG MACS.

Automobiles were scarce. Many families didn't have one. I don't remember anyone having two. Horses, bicycles and "Shanks Mare" were the main ways of getting around.

There were no paved roads in this area in the early 40's but that didn't take long to change when autos became more abundant.

Wives and Mothers seldom had full time jobs. Some would take part time jobs in the canneries during the harvest season, or other types of part time work. Their skills were needed at home to make things run. Much physical labor was required of all family members just to survive.

Now in contrast; take a good look around you today and make note of all the automatic gadgets, electronic devices, time saving appliances, automobiles, space age fabrics and plastics, the variety of foods we enjoy, and the houses we live in. How things change!

Never in all of history has a people had it so good. Indeed this Thanksgiving season we have much to be thankful for. When you hear Grandpa talk of the "Good Ol' Days" be assured the best things about those days were; that then Grandpa had his youth, Mother could stay at home, and the Government didn't have it's nose in every pie.

Happy Thanksgiving!