

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Historical notes from the Big Butte Historical Society
Recollections of Charleen Brown

The decade of the 50's was known as "A time of tranquility and prosperity." During this period, the changes in our Town were the result of changes in technology. When I tell the grandkids that we didn't have television or video games when we were kids, they say "what in the world did you do?" Well, do you remember the radio? It was not just music and talk like it is today. Oh, no! It was wonderful entertainment. Anyone from that era will undoubtedly remember some of these favorite radio shows: *The Shadow Knows*, *The Green Hornet*, *The Lone Ranger*, *Sky King*, *Inner Sanctum* (the squeaking door), *Fibber McGee & Molly*, *Jack Benny*, *George Burns & Gracie Allen*, *Kraft Theater* and many more. People visited with their neighbors and attended church, community and school events. Teenagers had parties at each others homes or at Scotties Cafe, (always chaperoned) where we would pull taffy and play cards.

Television came to Butte Falls in the early 50's but it was only one channel. Channel 5 started first and the broadcast day was from 4:00 p.m. until 11 or 12 p.m. The programs included, *Howdy Dowdy Time*, *Captain Kangaroo*, *News*, *George Burns & Gracie Allen*, and *Jack Benny* to mention a few. My parents were one of the first families on our block to have a television set so the neighbors would drop over to see their favorite shows. On Tuesday night our house was pretty full because many would come to watch professional "Wrestling" which was very popular.

This was a fabulous time to be a teenager! Rock 'n Roll was getting its start and who could ever forget the Elvis' and Beatles debuts on the Ed Sullivan Show. The styles of the period included cool "duckbill" haircuts and rolled up jeans for the guys and the girls all had saddle shoes and poodle skirts. What girl from that period will ever forget the scratchy crinoline petticoats. We wore several so the skirts would stand out as full as possible. Invariably someone would forget how to sit down in these very full skirts. If not negotiated properly, the stiff petticoats would cause the skirt to fly up in your face. It only happened to you once because after that you spent most of the time standing.

Also in the 50's, more and more people put in telephones. At first these were party lines which meant that you would have two or more families sharing one line. Any time a call came through for any family on the party line, every phone on that line would ring. So, each family would have a different ring pattern such as 3 short rings or 1 long & 1 short ring or 2 short & 1 long ring, etc. You had to learn your particular ring but you also knew when the other people on your line received a call. When you wanted to make a call, you would pick up the phone and listen to see if someone else was already using the line. If they were, you had to wait for them to finish before you could use the phone. Of course if there was an emergency, we would break in and ask them to let us make a call, otherwise we would simply wait. Another problem was that you were never completely sure that someone on another phone on the same line was not listening to your conversation. Did you hear that click?

MEMBERSHIP FORM - \$5.00 per household

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

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