

LONG CREEK

Continued from Page B1

"Families were close in those days," she said.

Smith's roots stretch back to 1875 when her great-grandparents, William and Pernice Paralee (Blackwell) Carter, moved to Long Creek from Oklahoma and Arkansas. Post-Civil War turmoil in that area drove them to seek more peaceful environs. They soon brought over his mother, Berthanna Carter, who settled in Fox. Her cabin is preserved in the Beech Creek area.

Smith's grandparents, Sam and Martha (Harryman) Carter, and parents, Benton and Loraine (Kelly) Carter, all lived in Long Creek.

Growing up, horseback riding and fishing were among Smith's favorite activities. She reminisces their father piling her and siblings into the truck for Fourth of July trips to the Desola-



Courtesy photo/Reiba Carter Smith
Reiba with her mother, Loraine, in 1943.

tion mining camp.

Other ventures included mountain picnics as well as swimming trips to the Joaquin Miller pool, where she

first learned to swim, and Ritter and Lehman hot springs.

And then there were the mud pies. "I kind of enjoyed making mud pies," Smith said, adding they sometimes swiped eggs from the kitchen and their mother's bottle of Jergens lotion to help firm up the mud pie mix.

Smith was active at school too, especially high school, where she played softball and volleyball. In the latter, Long Creek's team was "the top dog," she said.

School plays were common every year, Smith said — both a senior and junior one, often followed by a dance afterward. An annual spring music festival was held in May, hosted by a different school each year and attended by all the other area schools. Each would prepare a musical program to present for the event, which included a maypole dance.

After World War II, Smith recalls a veteran visited the school

and taught tumbling to the students, resulting in an active tumbling team for several years afterward. Smith said missionaries and members of the Gideons sometimes visited the school and brought Bibles for the students, which she thought would be unheard of today.

She did confess to one incident in Mitchell during softball season, in which she and three "chums" took the machine that makes the chalk lines on the field. The mischievous group soon returned it, but in the interim, Smith said she "didn't sleep at all."

As in any community, Long Creek has seen many changes to the number and variety of its businesses. Those Smith recalls during her life there include a hotel, drug store, three gas stations, two mills and two "pas-times" — or saloons. In the 1940s, a local man with a projector set up a movie theater of sorts in a white building near the park. During different time periods, there were also a

couple of general merchandise stores — Moore's, which was converted into a movie theater in the 1950s, and Sherm Kahler's.

Smith, in a class of seven students, graduated in 1958. She earned a degree in education from Eastern Oregon University, and went on to teach at Long Creek, Condon, Cove and Grant Union schools.

Her aunt, Estella Carter Boyer, served as Grant County School superintendent.

Smith and her husband, a 1957 Prairie City School graduate, have been married for 53 years — a union that resulted from a blind date. They have three grown children — two are teachers, and one is a plumber — and eight grandchildren.

She's lived in the same home, which was a mill house, for almost 50 years.

Smith summed her life in "community-oriented" Long Creek with one word: "Freedom."

Old-fashioned Grant County recipes

These old-time recipes, and many more, can be found in the Grant County Genealogical Society's compilation called "Through the Spokes of Time: A Collection of Recipes," along with bits of Grant County history. The society's library and research center is located at 281 W. Main St. in John Day.

Gold Town Pasta Salad

- 4 cups cooked pasta
- 1/2 cup ham, diced
- 4 slices processed cheese, cubed
- One 12-ounce package frozen vegetables
- Dressing: 1/2 cup salad dressing or mayo

- 1/4 cup 1,000 Island dressing
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Directions: Thaw frozen vegetables; add ham and thawed vegetables to pasta. Mix dressing, celery, and salt. Add pasta mixture to dressing mixture. May be served right away, but can be refrigerated for flavors to blend. Very popular at restaurant salad bar and buffets. Above recipe makes a family-size amount.

Contributed by Betty Elliott who owned Gold Town Pizza in John Day with her husband, Dean.

Seneca Loggers Navy Bean Soup

- 2 1/2 cups dry navy beans
- 2 cloves garlic

- Two 7 1/2 ounce cans tomato sauce
- Shank end of smoked picnic ham
- 1 heaping tablespoon chili powder
- 2 large onions
- 1 bay leaf
- Pinch of sweet basil
- Directions: Wash beans and soak beans overnight. Cook beans with ham shank in water to cover until beans are almost done. Remove ham shank and cut meat into cubes. Dice skin and return to beans. Cut up onions, dice garlic cloves, add to beans. Add chili powder, basil, bay leaf and tomato sauce to beans. Simmer until onion is tender. Remove bay leaf. Salt to taste. Figure on 3 to 4 hours cooking time. Feeds a bunch.

Contributed by Elaine Husted, this recipe was by Albin J. "Al" Reynolds. His wife, Esma, was active in the Blue Mountain Hospital Auxiliary, and Al made this soup for many years for the Christmas Bazaar sponsored by the auxiliary. Esma was also a teacher at Seneca School and was director of the Seneca Jump Ropers in the mid-'60s.

Fresh Apple Cookies

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 medium peeled and grated apple (no eggs)
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda

- 1 teaspoon salt or less
- Mix shortening and sugar well. Add grated apple and vanilla. Mix well and add dry ingredients, mixing well. Roll into balls the size of a walnut and roll in this mixture: 4 tablespoons sugar, 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg, 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon. Place on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 10 minutes. Do not over-bake. These cookies keep well and they freeze well.

This recipe, which was contributed for the book by Mary Ellen Brooks of Mt. Vernon, is by Mary McKern. Brooks said when she was a child, McKern taught 4-H cooking in the old Grange Hall in Mt. Vernon that burned in the 1940s.

Hot Water Sponge Cake

- 2 eggs beaten
- Stir in: 1 cup sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla, 1 cup flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Directions: Add items in order listed. To this mixture add scant 1/2 cup boiling water. Pour into loaf pan and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

This recipe, contributed by Linda Holland of John Day, is by Pauline Corwin/Royse-Farra. She and her husband, Harley Farra, settled in Fox Valley around 1930, later moving to John Day where they started up the business Farra's Harness and Shoe Shop.

Historical society looks to the future

Long Creek group strives to build museum on fort site

By Cheryl Hoefler
For the Blue Mountain Eagle



Eagle file photo

"Fort Townsend" in Long Creek is the entrance to the future site of the Long Creek Historical Society Museum.

The gate at the stately Fort Townsend sign on West Main Street in Long Creek will one day lead to a museum for the local community.

That's the vision for the Long Creek Historical Society.

The group, which has been striving for years to establish a home for their accumulation of local artifacts, documents and other historical memorabilia, is in the midst of a five-year plan to solicit input from Long Creek citizens on the direction and future of the museum and site.

Annual fundraising events include the Founders Day Celebration on the Fourth of July and a St. Patrick's Day dinner in March.

The society recently hosted a successful eclipse dinner Aug. 18 and will hold a buck season deer bake and food sale at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 7, at the main intersection in town.

So, what's behind the "Townsend" name? Fort Townsend is named

for a local man, William "Billy" Townsend, who is credited with saving the Long Creek community during the 1878 Bannock and Paiute Indian War.

During the uprising, local people hastily built a fort east of town where settlers gathered to defend themselves. Townsend, a veteran of the Civil War, prevented members of the approaching tribes from entering the fort.

Townsend's great-grandson, Long Creek resident Dan Morrow is president of the Historical Society. Other members include Stan Metz, vice-president; Reiba Carter Smith, secretary; Marsie Watson, treasurer; Linda Hunt and Gaye Pruitt.

The group meets at 4 p.m. the last Friday of the month. For more information, contact the Long Creek Historical Society by mail at P.O. Box 153, Long Creek, OR 97856, or call Smith at 541-421-3165.

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