

Maxine (Brown) Rogers' Hugo Memories: 1923 - 2000

by

Mike Walker

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

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1923 Maxine Brown was born December 7, 1923 in Wilmington, California to Lawrence E. and Ellen (Markley) Brown. Years later Wilmington became known as Watts.

1926 In 1926 three-year old Maxine and her family moved to Hugo, Oregon. They were a family of six: parents Lawrence and Ellen, and kids LeNora, Carrol, Edwin, and Maxine.

There were no buildings on their Hugo land when they first moved there. There was a peach orchard and one prune tree. *"The best ripe prunes in the world"* is what Maxine said to herself as she climbed the tree and ate.

The family, with help from neighbors, cut logs and had a "Housing Raising" October 1926. The neighbors got the Browns in and roofed before November. In 2000 their old two-story log home is still where it was built off of Hugo Road (see Map One).

1928 Maxine started elementary school at Hugo in 1928 (see Photo One).

Her parents always planted an early garden of peas, radishes, lettuce, turnips, and little green onions. Later a BIG garden was planted for their summer and winter supply of food: onions to dry, tomatoes, beans, corn, carrots, cabbage, parsnips, lots of squash, also watermelons and cantaloupes. They canned about 1,000 jars of fruits and vegetables. Maxine's mother dried corn and prunes. They had racks built of 2x4s with a window screen on the bottom on which the fruit was laid and covered with mosquito netting. These were put out in the sun to dry. These had to be covered at night to



*Photo 1. Hugo School: 1926
Courtesy of Carrol and Martha Brown*

keep off the dew. Beans were packed in jars and placed in a copper boiler and boiled for three hours. Other vegetables were stored in a shed prepared for this: potatoes, squash, and apples. Her mother also canned meats. Her father, Lawrence Brown, smoked bacon and hams. Pork chops and sausage was packed in lard.

The Browns were really resourceful and hard working parents. And the kids all did their share. A lot of work! Maxine remembers her Mom's cucumber pickles and her speciality, watermelon pickles. Yum! Her mother also made sauerkraut. She baked their bread. The kids churned the butter. She also made the best cottage cheese ever; good cakes, cookies, and jams and jellies from the berries and fruit they picked.

Several times in the fall, Grandma Brown, came to visit her two sons, Uncle Ralph and Maxine's Dad, Lawrence (see Map One). Uncle Ralph lived less than a mile away as the crow flies on Tunnel Loop Road.

Out in the yard they had a large iron kettle with a bail on it so it could be hung over a fire pit. Grandma Brown made lye soap for washing clothes. She also made hominy. Edwin and Maxine were kept busy packing water from the well and he got the kindling and wood for these projects. Grandma Brown also made wool quilts which were put on a frame and quilted. She insisted on small stitches. These quilts were very warm, but very heavy. The children always enjoyed the visits from Grandma Brown who lived in Colorado.

1929 - 1931 This was the time of the Great Depression and the Brown's place was near

the railroad. They had a number of 'hobos' who came asking for food. These men were 'riding the rails' looking for work to support their families. Maxine's Mom asked them to split some wood while she fixed a large plate of food. This they would eat on the back porch. Maxine and the other children were never afraid of them. To Maxine's knowledge, no one was ever harmed by the hobos.

1931 In 1931 eight-year old Maxine's Dad let her go with him to setup his hunting camp. This was an all day trip south and west of their home. What great memories she had of this trip. Her Dad always got his deer.

Her Dad was a 'jack-of-all-trades' and did a lot of work with his mules, Maud and Kate. Most of the Hugo families had cars, but theirs was the only team of mules. One winter when they had a lot of snow, Maxine's Dad loaded his kids on Old Kate and they rode to school on him. Her brothers turned Kate loose and she went right back home.

Lawrence and his mules were always in demand for hauling and packing jobs. One of his jobs with which his son Carrol helped was getting a water supply to the fire lookout on Mt. Sexton. A good spring of water was found about three-fourths of the way up the mountain. From old U.S. 99, Lawrence dug steel pipe to the spring and up to the lookout, laying sections to be connected together and to a pump in the spring. Electricity was supplied by PP&L by bringing a line down from the top to the pump in the spring. Lawrence and his mules also packed needed supplies to the lookout.

One of the big deals was for the Brown kids to climb Mt. Sexton and visit with the lookout man there. They shared this fun with visiting cousins as they lead them through poison oak and watched for rattle snakes. Ug! To this day Maxine hates snakes. But what a view from up there. The kids often got home after dark to a good scolding.

Some of the Hugo kids learned to play musical instruments (see Photo Two). LeNora was no doubt the most talented of all the kids on her violin. She later played the violin in the orchestra at the Grants Pass High School. Maxine took piano lessons from Lily McKenzie, who taught any interested youngster in Hugo. No charge. She always walked, every Saturday, down to the church or the community hall to give these lessons. Carrol learned to play the clarinet. Maxine was not a great pianist, but she has always enjoyed good music.

1935 In 1935 Carrol bought Maxine her first piano when he was in the Navy making only 32 dollars a month.

For about ten years, Maxine taught beginning piano in Wyoming. Maxine and other put on a recital once a year. At one time she had four students on two pianos. She learned a lot from those students. Her Dad had a very good voice. His special songs were always Irish, which he usually sang when the family was going home from Uncle Ralph's house. Maxine loved this and still loves to hear "My Wild Irish Rose."

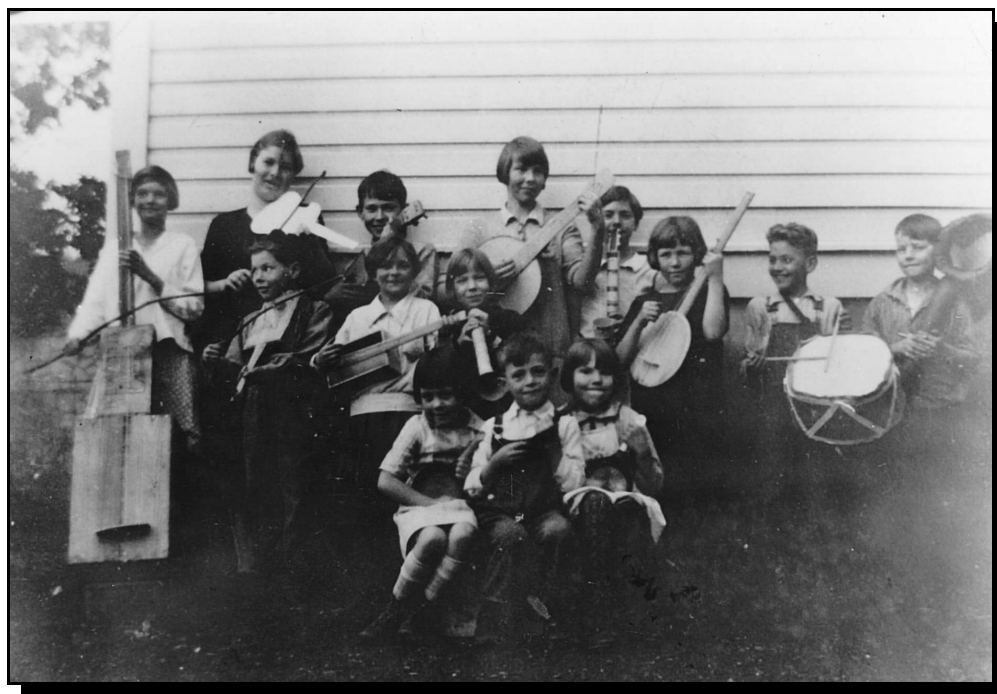


Photo Two - Hugo School Band: 1929
Courtesy of Carrol and Martha Brown

Back row, left to right: Margaret Brown, Edith Bagley, Clarence Summers, Willamal Metsuel sp.?, Metzler, Olson?, Max Buffington and Edwin Brown

Middle row: Courtney Metzler, Barbara Brown, and ?

Front row: Maxine Brown, Stanley and Ariel Metzler

Carrol Brown was not available when this picture was taken, but he was in the band with his sister, Maxine Brown.

Maxine's Uncle Ralph owned a pear orchard which the Browns helped to prune, thin, and

then pick. He sold pears to a cannery in Grants Pass. Once he and Carrol took a truck load to Klamath Falls and sold them off the truck to families. In the Spring when the pear trees were thinned, the kids and Paul Hutton, had some great pear fights. Believe it when one of those little hard pears hit you, it stung!

Maxine feels that she and all of the kids, LeNora, Carrol, Edwin, Maxine, Gene, and Bertha, had a wonderful place to grow up; and they were very blessed by very special parents in Ellen and Lawrence Brown.

1937 Maxine attended school in Hugo for nine years. She graduated from Hugo Elementary School in 1937.

1937 - 1941 She then went to high school in Grants Pass where she stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Lee, Martha's parents. She would come home on the weekends on the bus that traveled to Wolf Creek. She would get off the bus at Art Erickson's Sexton Mt. Auto Camp and walk home.

1941 Marine Brown graduated from Grants Pass High School in 1941.

After graduation, Maxine married and had a son, Darrel, and a daughter, Annabelle. Darrel, Annabelle and Maxine moved to Wyoming and Maxine has called Wyoming home every since. In Wyoming Maxine has continued to teach beginning piano and also worked as a clerk for the U. S. Forest Service and as a teller in a bank.

2000 Maxine and her husband, Lloyd Rogers, enjoy land developing by subdividing acreage around Saratoga, Wyoming. They spend their winters at Lake

Havasu City, Arizona where they are visited by family and friends seeking the sun.

Maxine and Lloyd Rogers' combined families have given them seven grand children and five great-grand children. They all live in the West — Porland, Oregon, Libby, Montana, and Pocatella, Idaho.