

My Story of Hazel



By Carl Wood- 2022



If you are reading this story your perspective is likely to be different than mine. I knew Hazel Wood as my mother and as a grandmother to my boys, and as a great-grandmother to my grandchildren. Your interaction may have been as an aunt, a shirt-tail relative, a friend. In any case, this is a compilation of my memories and reflections, thinking about the life Hazel lived. I hope you enjoy the story and perhaps gain some new insight into her life. As with anyone's memories, mine are probably not completely accurate, but I like to think I did pay attention.

Carl Wood

For more family history visit <http://kdubdub.com/WoodFamilyTree/index.html>

1

Down Home

Born on May 3, 1926 near Preston Missouri entered Hazel Lee Hackett. Her parents were Frank Ocy Hackett and Othella Owsley. For perspective this meant Mom was a toddler at the beginning of the Great Depression and spent her growing years as the whole country suffered through the effects of that event. Rural Missouri was poor anyway and the depression only made conditions worse. She was the third child of what eventually grew to be a family of 8 siblings. The 1930 census states they lived on 40 acres in Jordan Township, listing Frank as a farmer. Frank registered for the WWI draft in 1918 but apparently did not serve. This census incorrectly lists the family name as Hasket.

Hazel walked to the New Haven one room school attending first through eight grades. Preston is located at the intersection of what later became US Highways 54 and 65. The New Haven school house no longer exists but was located 1.9 miles north of Preston on Hwy 65. Hazel contracted whooping cough early in second grade and spent most of that year recuperating, so had to repeat second grade (antibiotics were not available). For the remainder of her life she continued to cough and choke frequently.

New Haven school population was apparently very small in number, as she was the only student in her grade for the entire time she attended. As a result, she began playing softball in fourth grade so that they could have a full team of nine. Hazel did not say what positions she played or if this involved playing anywhere but at school recess. Traveling to play was not likely due to the cost and the limited transportation options. However, we all know that Hazel developed a love baseball and became a huge Colorado Rockies fan when the team was formed in 1991.

Father Frank apparently struggled throughout his life with mental illness and was not around the family consistently. Hazel's right big toe was about twice as wide as the left. Her story why went like this: while they did not wear shoes much of the year, and had no money for new items, she wore a hand-me pair of shoes that had one sole completely loose around the front of the foot bed. In order to walk she had to kick that foot forward with each step to swing the sole back in place before placing her weight on it. Soles in those days were held on with nails that pointed up. She wore these long enough that the points of the nails irritated the big toe and it became infected. A short time later, red streaks began migrating up her leg. It was understood to be "blood poisoning". We

would now understand what she had to be a lymphatic system infection. Hazel remembers Dad (Frank) loading her on a horse and leading the horse and her to the doctor. Again with no antibiotics available the doctor treated this by slicing her toe open (underneath from front to back) to drain the infection. This was successful, but when healing the toe remained very wide. This event occurred around age eight (not definitive).

Another significant event that Hazel recalled was “boating” in a nearby stream using a wash tub “boat”. It was cold, late fall, and the creek was swollen due to fall/winter rain. I am not sure who else was along (perhaps a brother?) but the tub overturned dumping them into the water. She is not really sure how she survived. Hazel could not swim and she was trapped underneath the overturned tub. After getting out of the creek they were so cold they barely made it to home to warm up. Guardian angels have their work cut out for them. For the remainder of her life Hazel had absolutely no interest in playing in the water or swimming, although she did like to fish in a small stream with brook trout. Date unknown but perhaps ten or eleven.

As Hazel neared teenage years, she became rebellious. The issues seem to center not so much around poverty, but rather her mother, Othella being content with living from handouts, coupled with her mother’s tenancy to live in “pig sty” conditions. You know how important living in a tidy, clean household was to Hazel. As a result she “ran away” a time or two and was brought home by the sheriff. The 1940 census shows that by that time Hazel was living with her Aunt Grace and Uncle Homer Owsley in Stark Township. She was listed as “lodger” for that census. Interestingly this census also shows that Othella and the other siblings were living very near to Homer in Stark Township, as there is only one family accounted for between them and Homer on the census sheet. Othella is listed as the head of household. Frank Hackett is listed at that time as patient at state mental hospital #3 in Washington Township, Missouri along with 40 other men. Frank lived out his life there, passing in 1968.

Homer told Hazel that she could live with them as long as she would work, and Work She Did! Homer and Grace had four boys older than Hazel (William aka Bud, Berry, George, Maurice) as well as an infant granddaughter Virginia (aka Ginny) in their house hold. As expected, Hazel helped Grace with cooking and house work, learning sewing skills along the way. However, since Homer also had a herd of dairy cows. With the brothers being mostly grown, Hazel would milk cows everyday before helping prepare breakfast, change, grab a couple apples for lunch, attend school, then milk again in the evening, help prepare dinner, then do dishes. Milk required cooling, Homer built a trough and Hazel would lift water by hand with a pail on a rope, from the well to immerse containers of warm milk in the cool water. Makes me tired just to write this down! Homer’s approach certainly proved the merits of working a troubled kid so they are too tired to get into more trouble. Hazel loved worthwhile work! A brother once teased her about watching as just her head could be seen bobbing up and down above the edge of the stream bank as she washed bedding with a washboard in the running stream.

Milking was a big part of their lives. Twice a day, 365. At one point older brother Maurice (I didn’t know that this was how Morse was spelled until just recently!) who was married and had his own 20 cows to milk came down with appendicitis. While he recuperated from surgery his cows were

brought over for Homer and Hazel to milk for a month or more, adding to the 25-30 they were already milking!

Another story from these years was that a man from Arkansas came on the Friday before Labor Day weekend to buy a milk cow. He found one he liked and paid Homer with a check, loaded the cow and went home. Check could not be deposited until Monday. The check bounced and the guy was never heard from again (FYI--checks in those days listed only the bank they did not have name and address on them). Arkansas'ers were not to be trusted!

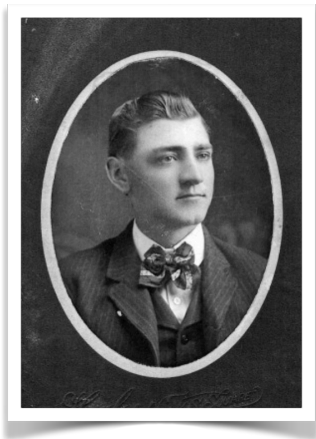
Hazel attended and graduated from Preston High School in 1945. Sounds like she had to walk a bit of a distance to catch the school bus. She had one close friend Myrtle Odenbaugh, whom she said had been in with her beginning at New Haven and then all the way through high school a (bit of a conflict with this story as she said she the only one in her grade while attending New Haven ??--Myrtle was about six months younger than Hazel, but with the whooping cough incident, (that very well could have put them in the same grade), a graduation photo of the two seems to indicate that Myrtle graduated a year ahead of Hazel [since only Myrtle is wearing a cap and gown]. Myrtle had a twin brother Burt as well. These three would troop through the woods as a short cut to reach the school bus. The 1940 does show Myrtle and Burt living in Stark Township. The Odenbaugh family is listed next down the census list (Owsley's, Cook's, Hackett's, Odenbaugh's--so they lived near to each other). Sounded like Hazel (and Myrtle) both put up with Burt, but described him as a slow thinker and prone to ask anyone anything such as "how much money do you have in the bank". In a tragic event affected all three, during these high school years Myrtle's father Archie was either killed or committed suicide. UPDATE! I recently found that Archie died in 1949 so this event was actually well after Hazel was married and in Colorado, so it must have still impacted her greatly as Archie's passing came up often when she recounted the other tales of herself and the Odenbaughs.

Hazel's only school story was that she loved playing basketball in girls PE class, but was frustrated that most of the girls only wanted to goof around and show off for the boys rather than playing competitively. Since the future appeared to be secretarial work, one of the topics Mom learned at school was how to type (more on this later).

Hazel attended a church that was nearby, or just down the road. I never heard a name, searching nearby locations may indicate that it was a precursor to the current Olive Point Church.

I believe some time during high school, Homer and Grace officially adopted Hazel, but I have not found documentation for this yet. Hazel always referred to them them "Pa" and "Ma"





Frank Hackett



Milking Cows



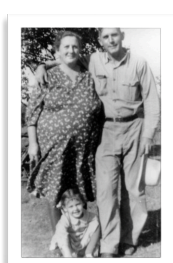
Myrtle's Graduation



Burt
Odenbaugh



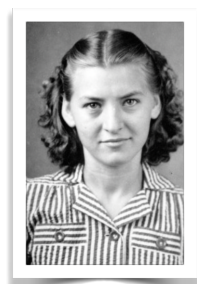
Myrtle
Odenbaugh



Ma and Pa



Homer Owsley



2

“My Sister is a Nice Girl, Write Her”

With the outbreak of WWII the Owsley boys joined up to serve their country. William “Bud” ended up in the US Army Signal Corp. While I am not sure where, but probably at the base near Oklahoma City, during training, he befriended a Colorado boy that was in his unit. The bases being very large, as new Hollywood movies would be released, they would be begin showing at one end of the base and then over a few weeks time, progress to different locations across the base. These two young men couldn’t wait for the movies to come to them, so they would hoof-it clear across the base to catch the first releases. Apparently they got to know each other quite well. As the story goes, this friend, Leonard Wood complained to Bud that “there just no nice girls to write home to.” Bud replied “my sister is a nice girl, write her”. And so it began. Leonard and Hazel began writing to each other. This probably started during 1943 as Leonard as shipped off to England in March of 1944 in preparation of the coming D-day Invasion.

Mom said she wrote every day, even though it might takes weeks for the letters to arrive. Writing that frequently she said “I really didn’t have anything new to say, but wrote anyway”. Dad said he had “terrible handwriting after school” but also said “one day I just decided that I was going to start writing better” and as evidenced by a few surviving letters back to the family at home, he did just that, his handwriting is beautiful. Hmm...now I am thinking that perhaps there was a desire to make a good impression to a certain young lady in Missouri??

Along the way Hazel had shared a photo or two with Leonard, and after a couple of years writing, they decided to get married after the war was over, without ever spoken or met face-to-face! Can you imagine such a thing?? Probably good for Dad, as he was very timid and might not have been able to muster enough nerve to ask in person. So after returning from Europe (late 1945? early 1946?) Leonard talked his younger brother Frank into accompanying him on a road trip to Missouri to meet Hazel. Homer Owsley was quite protective and offered Leonard \$500 (a lot of money back then—equal to ten months of army pay) to just go home and forget the whole thing. Dad thought it was not because Homer didn’t like him, but rather to see if he truly committed, because with so many returning soldiers looking to get married, it would have been easy to part once they finally met. Also consider that Homer would have been aware this was the couple’s first time meeting one another. Hazel states that apparently Leonard didn’t get scared off because after he and Frank returned to Colorado, Leonard returned to Missouri and he and Hazel were married May 5, 1946 with Hazel’s brother Bud and his wife Electa as attendants. The ceremony was held across the state line in Ft. Scott, Kansas. Why?—something about the nearest, available justice of the peace—I don’t quite remember. They honeymooned in Bennett Springs, AK and returned to Preston to meet and greet family. During this time Hazel was directing Leonard where to drive to meet a nearby relative, but with the thick timber, while they could see where the intended to go a ways off, they could not figure out how get there, so returned home when it got dark—Ha - Ha.

A few days later, as they said goodbyes, Hazel put the past behind, and only returned home to Missouri three times. Once after they had been married a year, they made a trip in July and about died from the heat, thinking never to return to that. A second trip was when “Ma”, Grace passed away, and a third time in the late 70’s to visit Bud and Electa. I always thought that her lack of returning back home was quite sad, seemingly leaving her life behind, however, Mom having developed the art of letter writing, continued writing to her folks at least

weekly during their life times, and they wrote in return, so she stayed in touch. Hazel also maintained a subscription to the weekly local Preston area newspaper “The Index” for the next 62 years.

Homer also sent along one of his well trained cow herding dogs- “Pup Dog”.



Wedding Day
Electa, Hazel, Leonard, Bud



Would you let your daughter marry this guy?



3

Out West

A late winter storm had passed through the midwest just prior to Mom and Dad heading back to Colorado. One story of the trip home went like this. As they traveled across Kansas they encountered snowdrifts across the highway, while some only covered one lane and were easy to avoid, they came to a big one that covered both lanes. Being the Colorado boy, Dad figured that with a bit of steam, they could plow right through it, so he wound up the car and charged in. Well apparently snow drifts in Kansas are much harder than those in Colorado. The car made it over, not through the drift, both Mom and Dad smacked hard against the roof! A second memory was made as they got less than a mile from home. That same late storm had dumped snow and then being May, most of it had melted. The county road in those days was just a two track trail with the ranch at the end of the road. The road was rutted and mostly red clay mud. They got stuck. Dad had to walk home in his “dress” clothes, harness a team, go back and drag the car out of the mud. Quite a way to welcome your new bride! Mom was not deterred and stayed, rather than hopping the next train back home.

Once home, they joined Leonard’s mother Lillian “Gram”, and Dad’s younger brother Frank. Due to medical restrictions Frank had been disqualified from WWII military service, and had instead cared for Gram and kept the ranch going. Just in case you have a romantic image of coming to the ranch please refer to the picture at the end of this chapter. A creamery story----while producing cream, they relied on the birth of heifer calves to replace aging milk cows, so they hoped for heifers rather than bull calves. Chance says the ratio should be about 50/50. One year they experienced a calf crop that was 100% bulls!! all 28!

The Taussig brothers Willard, Paul, and Carl secured the old Peter Stein ditch during the 1940’s. They rebuilt and increased the capacity of the Stein ditch, utilizing a water right named the Big Lake Ditch. These construction efforts made a very visible impact through the ranch, but a positive outcome as that Dad and Frank were able to purchase additional irrigation water from the Taussig’s.

Frank was a good keeper of records. The ranch income (cream sales) amounted to about \$30 per month.

Leonard and Hazel had a rough beginning to starting a family when their first child Gary Allyn arrived stillborn (at full term) in 1947. Frank, being that ever faithful supporter, took care of burial, placing him by the big rock outcrop on the peaks.



Road Home



Home Sweet Home!



Leonard, Hazel and Uncle Frank



Mom & Pup Dog



Kelley & Cousin Dan



4

Changes, Changes

Nina Sue was born in 1949. Gram moved to the “pink” trailer house in Parshall next door to Kenneth’s in 1951. Frank left for a future in construction work in about 1950. Kelley was born in 1952. Carl was born in 1956. Horsepower was upgraded from horses to tractors. Dad bought one new tractor during his life, the 1953 Ford Jubilee [restored and owned by grandson Doug].

After a severe drought 1953-54, Denver Water began planning for the enlargement to the existing dam located in the canyon through Cedar Ridge [I believe the original dam had been constructed in 1938 and operated by Public Service Company for power generation]. The new dam would result in inundation of some of the ranch property, therefore they negotiated for purchase of about 100 acres that they required. However, this included the land where the house and all the ranch building were located.

Two major events then simultaneously occurred. Frank and Dad applied the sale proceeds to purchase a larger nearby ranch from Bill and Zoe McQueary [\$42,000] doubling the size of their holdings. Dad then purchased the ranch house and buildings back from Denver [\$5000] and began the arduous task of moving them up the valley back onto existing ranch land.

Denver contracted a road building crew to establish a new county road [now known as CR33] above and around the perimeter of the new reservoir. As these fellows worked at building a dirt fill for the road across Grainger Creek, Dad hired them to cut a driveway and level a new spot for the headquarters [a dozer and 2 scrapers for \$60/hr]. With that accomplished, Dad hired Dewey Carr from Parshall to help move the buildings. The house was jacked up and hauled on a truck to the new site. A concrete block partial basement foundation had been built [by Nelson Keifer, also of Parshall]. The partial foundation allowed the truck to be driven down through the basement and set on the foundation walls. Brother Kenneth milled a large one-piece wooden 10”x10” beams 35’ long to support the middle of the house. The house was remodeled in it’s new location by Uncle Ray Black.

The cow barn had sheds attached to each side. These were removed and placed on log skids and pulled into location. Hand mixed concrete was placed under the log walls for foundation. The process was repeated for the main section of the barn. The blacksmith shop [aka the Duke Dunbar cabin], the work shop [later named Uncle Ray’s cabin] remained on their log skids where they were unhooked. A nice open front shed was sold and moved to Doc Schoffner’s place [aka Dan Hilty’s]. The old boy’s bunkhouse had been moved earlier down the hill to Uncle Tine’s place—now it was moved to the new ranch location to function as a chicken house. The wood shed was moved to the McQueary place.

At the end of dam construction Dad (and Tine too) each purchased steel buildings that had supported that work [Dad’s cost \$1200]. Dewey Carr again helped get it moved to the ranch. Dad said he and Dewey each completely wore out a ¼” drive ratchet wrench taking out, then reinstalling the screws that held the roof panels on. This is true, for we had just one of these wrenches in the shop growing up. It should have been thrown away for it no longer worked.

What was Hazel doing you ask? Well cooking, cleaning, laundry, cow milking, irrigating, and hay harvest didn't stop during pause during this time. She was the rock – before it was all completed Dad spent a few days in the hospital with what they then called a “nervous breakdown”. All of this was hard on Mom too!--she recounted in just the past few years, that she didn't think she would live to past 29... why? she didn't really know...”I was just depressed I guess”. Fortunately she did survive, for I was born when she was 30!

Many these changes appear in hindsight “providential”. Electric refrigeration, food regulations, and changing urban lifestyles were bringing small dairy cream sales to end. Beef production was now the opportunity. Please understand that the climate and elevation [dry, cold and high—maybe a 60 day growing season] render the Williams Fork Valley unsuitable for any crop except grass]. The enlarged ranch provided sufficient grazing and irrigated hay meadow to raise about 100 cows year round, raising their calves from birth to about 400 pounds in six months. Calves would then be sold to feedlots to further grow them to market size, with a new calf “crop” produced each year.

There was a change in schooling during this time too. Nina and Kelley both began attending the Columbine one room school where Dad had also attended [Columbine was located at the current intersection of CR33 and CR331]. With post WWII “modernization” all the one room schools in the west end of Grand County were centralized in Kremmling as the West Grand School District. Dad served on the first district school board. School bus service was established and we 3 kids then caught the school bus at the end of the driveway for a 45 minute ride to Kremmling.

An additional need after relocation of the house was to establish a new home. I mentioned that the new location was literally carved out of the hillside. This hillside was a bank of hard red clay, that when whetted turned to very tacky muck. They hauled in dirt and planted in a grass lawn around the house, transplanted trees, hauled more dirt and planted a new garden. Then hauled gravel, hauled gravel, and hauled more gravel for the driveway and around the buildings. Us kids (particularly me) loved playing on the clay hill just outside the backdoor. I can't tell you how many times she scraped out clay that had worked down inside my shoes and then packed into a hard layer that required a table knife to break it loose, yet I don't ever remember getting scolded.

In her “spare” Hazel darned socks, made shirts for us, and repaired blue jean knees that were worn through. To this day I wear patched pants proudly, not with shame, because of the work she would pour into those—not wanting us to look ragged and not having to spend money for new clothes.





Kelley & Nina



Pitching Hay



Nina, Mom, Carl & Kelley



All of us



1956 Homestead

5

All work, But Finally Some Play Too!

During this next phase of life brought some fun with it. Hazel said, “I never really enjoyed winter until we got snowmobiles”. Snowmobiles were not just sport, but rather something brought the neighbors together. At snowmobile parties families would gather around a campfire in the snow for food and fun. Just a few people had purchased snowmobiles and would bring them to share. Locations included Scholl’s, the Mule Creek Cabin, the McQueary Place, Ute Park. [I even had a snowmobile party as an eighth grade class outing at Ute Park. Twenty-five or so eighth graders charging around as fast as we could go—sure wouldn’t be possible anymore!]

It was soon discovered all snowmobile brands did not perform equally in the deep powdery snow. In addition some people just did not have the balance and the little bit of wildness required to ride well. In time as more people got snowmobiles the gatherings changed into day trips of enthusiasts riding together to places they had never been able to see except in the summer; Elk Mountain, Corral Creek, Copper Creek, Lost Creek, Keyser Creek all offered spectacular winter scenery. Here are some of the people that shared this special time: Bill Taussig, Doc and Ruth Schoffner, Jack and John Taussig, brother Manny Wood and Henrietta, John and Ida Sheriff, Pat and Duane Scholl, Roy Hilty, Joe Spacek. It all depended on who had time to go ride on a given day.

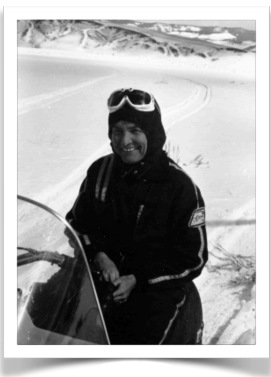
Dad bought a small, lightweight Ski-Doo brand, Elan model that she could really handle (pictured). She only got in a pickle with it a few times. On one occasion on the top of Elk Mountain, where the trees get scattered and the wind blows snow into huge drifts much fun was had playing on the drifts. Doc was lead over a drift and around a tree. Hazel was going a bit faster, she popped over the drift but didn’t get turned. As Dad described the scene “Mom and her Elan were sitting in the top of the tree”. No harm no foul, they got her down and off they went. Another time on Copper Creek in a place called Osborne Park, it was great fun zipping around in, out, and around the widely spaced timber. This time Hazel didn’t quite judge correctly, and she came to an abrupt halt as the Elan straddled a tree. Her knee struck the carburetor. By the time supper was over that evening, her knee swelled up like a football and Dad carried her to bed. Fortunately by morning the swelling was gone and she was fine to ride again.

A second fun activity, which involved the same friends plus a few others was square dancing. Al Jarrell from Granby enjoyed calling dances for several of the local guest ranches. Since the guests changed weekly the dancing was very rudimentary. Some how the group convinced Al not only to call once a week, but to help them learn the basic 25 dance moves. They always had a blast teasing

one another when someone couldn't remember their left hand from their right. However, they all learned together and became smooth, fairly advanced dancers. This group added Al and Dorthy Jarrell, Bob and Phyllis Quick, Ken and Pom Ainsley, Gilbert and Rose Cox, John and Alice Gehring. They named themselves the WestWind Whirlers. Dad hand made wooden name tags for everyone—seems like he must have made about 50 all told.

Mom served as a 4H leader teaching the neighbor girls to sew.

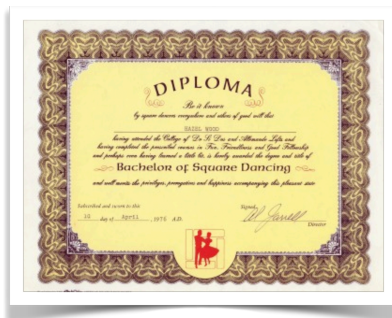
Mom also served as a precinct election judge. She was asked to register as a democrat when she when she arrived on the Williams Fork because nearly everyone was Republican that it was very difficult to have enough democrats to complement the election board. Oh how abused I felt when mom was not home to fix supper on election day! Dad always made biscuits and gravy. He was a good biscuit cook so we survived - HA



Great Catch!



Who is this guy?



6

Bitter and Sweet

There is absolutely no greater blessing than grandchildren. However, in order to achieve grand parent status means that you and those you love are growing older too. It also typically means you become an “empty nester” too and so it was.

Frank and Mary managed to coax Mom and Dad into a trip to Hawaii they truly enjoyed. This was probably the only vacation they ever took as a couple.

As a family we were able to join together to celebrate Uncle Kenneth and Aunt Josephine’s 50th anniversary.

With a group of friends, family Hazel and Leonard celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary.

Then Doug, Kendra, Becca, Travis, Rhonda, Heath, and Sam all combined to bring that spark of youth back into Hazel’s life in her new role as grandma. Hazel was a wonderful grandmother, playing with the kids: be it allowing them to play in a bucket of water, baking cookies, and color coloring books. She like to color, saying she never got to enjoy anything like that as a child.

She continued to use her sewing skills, making shirts for the boys and dresses for the girls.

Joe and Sue Shields were especially supportive during these years being “next door” neighbors (about a mile away). She always made Leonard feel special and provided friendship for Hazel through the remainder of her life.

Leonard’s health required “tethering to oxygen” during the later part of these years. Yet he was able to continue with small shop projects like windmill models only because of Hazel’s assistance.

Then in February of 1989 Leonard passed away after 43 years of spending life together.





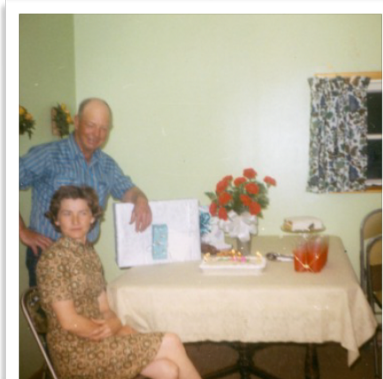
Hawaii
Leonard & Hazel
Dorothy & Frank



Hawaii



Kenneth & Josephine
50th Anniversary



40th Anniversary



Mom Dad's 40th Anniversary

Back Row: Frank Russell, John Sheriff, Henrietta Wood, Bill Taussig, Virginia Taussig

Middle Row: Roberta Russell, Baby Samuel, Ida Sheriff, Hazel, Leonard, Sue Shields, Joe Shields, Jerry Wright

Kneeling: Deb Wood, Carl Wood, Travis Wood

Photo by Jean Wright



7

Later Years Episode I

Knowing that the chores required at the old ranch house, especially the stoker fed, coal fired furnace, required daily attention, in the fall of 1989 Deb and I swapped houses with Mom. She moved into our newer, lower maintenance “Blue” house on County Road 34. This worked out to be a nice setup for Hazel as she could still tend to a small yard, and yet be free to travel around. Travis and Samuel, since we lived close by, got to entertain and to be entertained by Hazel. They spent a lot of time together, she would take them to the boardwalk at Sugar Loaf Campground or to the large river road crossing culverts on County Road 3 where Sam might try to fish and Travis would throw rocks in the water.

Hazel shot many, many gophers [seems like perhaps 400? in total] and one fall trapped 7 skunks around the blue house as well.

Mom had always desired to travel around the area like Uncle Ray Black always had, and for a time She and Ray did just that. Many short trips around Grand County were enjoyed, often times with Sam, who would find a way to get wet and cold, then ride home on the floorboard with the heater going.

Snowplowing was the only significant issue at the Blue house, and once Ray got to where he couldn't drive anymore, Mom moved to Kremmling. She began living at the Culbreath Apartments along State Highway 9, but was bothered by the exhaust fumes as cars backed up from the red light at the intersection with Highway 40.

She then located a duplex apartment just west of the high school. At this location she was still an anchor for Travis and Sam as they practiced wrestling after school. In the adjoining duplex lived Marjorie [Jesmer] Underwood. Hazel and Marjorie became fast friends. [Marjorie made fantastic cookies!] Here while treating trick-or-treaters, Hazel became acquainted with Darlene Recker who would come to play an important role in the future. Darlene's young son Tony dubbed Mom “Hazel Nut” since that was the only thing he was able to connect with Hazel's name. Mom seemed to like the title as she told the story of Tony's title often.





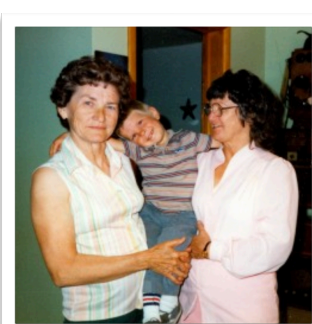
Doug & Leonard



Carl, Nina & Kelley



Doug



Hazel, Travis & Roberta



Hazel & Travis



Kendra



Grandma & Travis



Back Row: Deb, Carl, Hazel & Leonard
Front Row: Kendra, Travis & Doug



Travis & Grandma



Hazel & Becca

8

Later Years Episode II

After Marjorie passed, a fellow by the name of Fred Palmer became interested in Hazel. Fred had been born and raised and lived on a ranch south on the Blue River, later had purchased a ranch on the Williams Fork, nearby on Copper Creek, so they had known of each other for several years. Fred was a very outdoors person, having actively hunted all his life, including several trips to safari in Africa. Fred was also still in great physical condition too, so he and Hazel were able to get out and hike.

Fred and Hazel were married in January 2000. They continued to hike and added annual firewood gathering to their hobby list. Fred was a very enthusiastic trap shooter and hunter. He had made several hunting trips to Africa and he convinced Mom to go on safari. While not anywhere as excited as Fred she enjoyed the trip. They traveled to South Africa and she did bag a gamesuck. Guess that gopher shooting had fine tuned her shooting skills!

Fred had been treated for prostate cancer before they were married and it had returned. While preparing for a doctor visit in Steamboat Springs, he took his own life in the basement. Fortunately Fred's daughter was also at the house at the time. While Hazel could have stayed in the home, recognized and accepted the change in her life, and instead choose to move to the Silver Spruce Senior Apartments, housed in the former high school, located at the intersection of highways 9 and 40.



Uncle Ray Black



Mom & Carl



Rayner's Apartments



The Blue House



Rayner's Apartments

9

Silver Spruce

Hazel truly enjoyed the years living at Silver Spruce. The apartments are set up as single, fully equipped units, but with neighbors across and up and down the hallway. A group lunch meal was offered several times per week. This provided great opportunity to make friends and that is what Hazel did. There are two adjoining Silver Spruce buildings as well as the Cliffview Assisted Living Center next door. As Hazel was one of the most physically active of the residents she naturally help care for the others. When old acquaintance Rocky Bishop [aka Ruth Shore] suffered from shingles, Hazel took prepared food and helped Rocky deal with the pain. Friends at Silver Spruce/Cliffview included Florence Schoff, Pat Lynd, Speed and JoAnn Howe, Charlene Geek, Ken Wheatley, Mickey Johnson, Lee Nunn, Ron Harvey and especially Laura (McQueary) Russell. Several of these, having lived in Grand County even longer than Hazel, so she had known them her entire adult life and now was blessed to interact with them on an almost daily basis. She and Laura kept in touch via snail mail letters when Laura needed more care and moved nearer family in Idaho. Ron brought Hazel's mail from the post office everyday without fail.

Living with less active people Hazel developed a HUGE joy in closely following the Colorado Rockies baseball team. As mentioned in chapter 1, Hazel had played and thereby understood the rules of baseball. She followed the team every season from Arizona pre-season thru to the end. While she wanted them to win, it didn't matter when they lost. She knew every player by name and position for about 20 years, and remembered some like Larry Walker and Todd Helton even after they retired. Often the Rockies traded away a featured player, an example was Nolan Arenado. Hazel couldn't believe the manager would such crazy move, and exclaimed "anytime they get anybody good, they trade them away, the Rockies are a team of guys that nobody else wants---BUT I like em' anyway!"

During off-season she would watch basket ball and football, but because she didn't understand the rules of the games, they just never brought the same passion. But was always excited for opening day in April!

Right outside the apartment, Hazel enjoyed the Kremmling Days Parades and the 4th of July fireworks, events we had rarely made the trip to town to participate in, during life on the ranch. She also enjoyed the constant activity she going on just across highway 40 at the Kum & Go fuel stop and mini-market Just being able to see the world continuing to move about brought her a bit of entertainment. Perhaps lessening being alone.

During her years at Silver Spruce Hazel began to develop osteoporosis, finally experiencing a several stress fractures in her spine. From that time forward pain from these fractures required medication for pain management.

I believe Hazel lived at Silver Spruce for 11 years and was the longest tenured resident at that time. In retrospect Hazel likely lived at Silver Spruce past the time that a move to Cliffview would have been better. However, having lived next door to Cliffview she wanted nothing to do with that, based on her opinion that all the staff did was spend time outside smoking [as I said Hazel became more vocal with her opinions as time passed].

When it was time for her not to be on her own any longer, she moved home to live with Deb and I. She enjoyed the familiar views at the ranch. At this point we helped with meals and medication, yet she was able to have her own space in the walkout basement. Unfortunately after just a few months Hazel fell during the night and broke her hip.



Hazel & Fred



Adventures with Fred



Another Load of Firewood



Wedding Day



Fred, Hazel, Carl, Deb, Nina,
Rhonda & Jim Yust

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Extended Care

Hazel's hip fracture was successfully repaired at Yampa Valley Hospital and after a bit of recovery we determined that to meet her daily needs, the Extended-care wing of the Kremmling Hospital would be the right place. Being a small facility it offers personal staff interaction as well as being located close to Nina and I. Later I learned that the survival rate for an elderly person with a broken hip, anesthesiology, and surgery is about 50/50, so it was truly a miracle and a testament to Hazel's toughness that she came through all of this with her faculties intact and even gained an increased sense of humor. Even though her world was changed to just what she could observe outside her room window, she stayed on top of the coming and goings. Her memory remained accurate, but she also became a bit more outspoken about her opinions and reflections of her life.

In contrast to most of the residents, and was able to interact, Hazel quickly became a staff favorite. She loved to joke and tease the staff, and enjoyed it when they teased her in return. Darlene Reckker watched over her like a nurse angel. Becky Manly filled this roll after Darlene moved away. Concerning Sally Betz [who mostly worked night shift] Hazel frequently praised for being skilled at applying lotion and putting on her compression stockings before bedtime. Theresa Vague was so very, very special. Not only was Theresa entertaining, but so skilled at assisting with showering that Hazel got to the point that she would not allow anyone else to help with a shower! How so? Theresa got Hazel showered quickly so that she did not choke on the steam [due to her breathing difficulties] and quickly enough so that Hazel did not get cold. These simple things were so so much appreciated. Hazel also noted and commented on Theresa's work ethic. Hazel of course was never one to not work with full effort and she recognized this in Theresa.

Since the extended care rooms are arranged as two per room, Hazel had a roommate. Dorothy Yust became mom's roommate. For a couple years they were able to enjoy each others company.

Visitors are also key to residents of extended care. To this end, Louse Henry and Joe McClure were consistent visitors who frequently brought home grown flowers.

And Hazel really enjoyed fresh flowers. Kelley and Carol and Doug and Steph made sure she received fresh flowers regularly and she wanted to enjoy them as long as possible, even setting them by the outside door where it was cooler to make them last.

When crazy crazy covid restrictions were rapidly implemented, first the only means of visitation was to go to her window and call her on the phone. That way between hearing and reading my lips we could converse pretty well. I got the heads up on one day that the long term care patients would likely have to be transferred to a nursing home in Craig, Colorado (100 miles away) or alternatively we could take them home. Deb and I decided if it came to that we would bring her home again. Then the very next day I got the call that we needed to come get her-now! And so we did. As a note you cannot over estimate how disruptive this move was to Hazel as well as the other residents. Older folks just cannot understand the why and the urgency of this abrupt change. This time we made a bedroom in the main floor office that was closer to our bedroom. I had the joy of caring for Hazel for the next several months [and got a small glance of how strenuous the roll as care giver

really is]. We shared pancakes and a fried egg every morning and Hazel would sit in front of the south facing picture window looking over the creek and the trees across the way during the day. Due to Hazel's limited hearing, conversation had to be slow and purposeful, but was a blessing.

When extended care restrictions were lifted Hazel was ready to return to extended care. Warning! Editorial Comment! The extended care rooms were never needed for covid patients, in fact many of the staff were furloughed due to the reduced patient loading during those months :(and the level of care has been never quite the same since.

I believe that Hazel recognized the load care giving put on Deb and I and as always, she willingly put our good above her own desires. Her desire to return to extended care is also a testament as to how much she valued the interaction with staff!



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The End and The Beginning

A After a time, life at extended care returned to a bit of normalcy again. Since I was still not allowed to visit, I vowed to talk with her by phone every night. The call provided something Hazel looked forwards to [as did I] and while generally not having much of anything to talk about, just hearing each others' voice was great. We generally closed each call with a line from the chorus to an old Doris Day song – "I love you a bushel and a peck, I Do! I Do!" She would then chuckle always try to end with the upper hand by saying 10 bushels or an even larger number. For a few months Hazel did not have a roommate and with restrictions they could no longer go to the lunch room to eat. So this was a more lonely time than before covid. Geneva Sherman then came as a new roommate. Unfortunately after such an extended time alone and aging, Hazel had begun to change and viewed Geneva as an intrusion or interloper in her space. The staff recognized this and moved Geneva to a different room.

A HUGE blessing, especially in light of Covid restrictions that came and went, was that grand-daughter Mikalya Shearer began working as a nurse's aid after she graduated from high school. Mikalya provided a crucial and caring family connection to Hazel when restrictions kept the rest of us from visiting. Hazel was pleased to tell me often that she observed just how good Mikalya was at completing her work [remember how important working hard meant to Hazel] as well as providing an ongoing personal interaction that they both treasured.

In early December I was informed Hazel had experienced a stroke. However the impact was different that any stroke that I had ever heard for. Hazel continued to be able to call me on the phone and talk, her only complaint was that she couldn't think of anything and that gave her a strange feeling, one of just having a blank mind. She was able to recognize staff and my voice so in many ways she did not seem much different. Covid lockdown was again in effect, so no visitation was allowed. Thank goodness for the phone and Mikalya! Then the call came early early on the morning of December 7th came the call informing me Hazel had gone to bed normally, and had passed peacefully in the few hours sense bedtime and when staff checked on her again. What a blessing! One could not ask or imagine an more gentle ending to Hazel's story.

Hazel's body was cremated, with the ashes interred next to Leonard at the Kremmling Cemetery.

However this is not the end, but the beginning, a beginning of eternal life. You see Hazel accepted Jesus the Messiah as her personal savior [I think this was likely attending the small church near home in Missouri]. So I do not grieve at her passing as the world grieves but rather celebrate her life as described in Scripture;

1 Thessalonians 13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.



I am number three from the top in a family of 8 children, 3 boys and five girls. I was 9 years old the last time I saw our Dad.

My brother two years older than myself, we used a cross cut saw to supply fire wood for the family. Cook stove in kitchen was the only heat we had.

We carried it to the house in our arms. Think we used creek water for everything, never boiled it.

We carried laundry to the Creek. Heated water in a barrel and used a wash board to scrub the clothes, no wringer so used our hands to wring the clothes, so was heavy to carry back to the house, all up hill, perhaps a good quarter of mile.

Food was government hand out.

We got small checks to buy a few things at the Country store.

We had a milk cow and some chickens, so that helped. Can't remember having any meat, not even a chicken. We did have a squirrel or rabbit in season. Weather cool enough depended on it.

Clothing from government hand out, never the right size, but little did that matter.

At 9 years old in summer I helped some aged neighbors with their chores. Shelled Corn for chickens, a tool sorta like a sausage grinder to shell the corn. Chickens can't get corn off ~~corn~~.

Weeded gardens, gathered eggs, picked up apple off grounds. Do what ever that needed done that I

Could do.

Went to a country school
always walked, maybe a mile or
more.

Four of us had whooping Cough.
I coughed the rest of the school
year, got it shortly after school
started, so took the second grade
over the next year. The only
medication was groundup slum.

I was the only one ^{of my family} to complete
12 grades.

On my 13th. birthday I walked to
the neighbor (Cousin) stayed seven
years. Wrote to a soldier for two
years while he was over seas.

I have been forever grateful
for that Cousin and his family, for
all they did for me.

I married that soldier in 1946.

Have since lived in CO on a
ranch. He passed away in 1989. I

now live in Kremmling, CO.
in the Senior Housing, I ~~am~~ have
been fortunate to say the least.

Hand Written Autobiography

Martin P - No. 47

Boones - 1

To	2	Greg Burke ⁴⁶ 78
Cuddyer	3	Richardson 65
Hongall	5	Martin 47
Dickerson	6	Nicasio P. 12
LaMalieu	9	Chacin P. 45
McBride	7	Bettis 35
B. Blackmon	19	Lopez 59
Rosario	20	Kahnle P. 54
Stubbs	13	Lyles P. 24
Rutledge	14	
Rex Bros.	49	
Paulsen	36	
Belisle	34	
Anderson P	30	
Boone Hogen P	49	
Dahl	67	
Pacheco catcher	58	
Ottavino	0	
Wheeler	16	
Baez C.		
Williams	72	
Morales Pitcher	56	
Arenada	28	3rd B.
Brown (Brooks)	61	
Priddy	26	
Chatwood P	27	
Morneau 1st	33	
Hawkins P	32	
De La Rosa P	29	
Culberson	23	



Hazel 1926 - 2021

I love you a bushel and a peck I do, I do



*I love you, a bushel and a peck
A bushel and a peck and a hug around the neck
A hug around the neck and a barrel and a heap
A barrel and a heap and I'm talkin' in my sleep
About you, about you
'Cause I love you, a bushel and a peck
You bet your purdy neck, I do
A doodle oodle, ooh doo
A doodle oodle, oodle, ooh doo
I love you, a bushel and a peck
A bushel and a peck though you make my heart a wreck
Make my heart a wreck and you make my life a mess
Make my life a mess, yes a mess of happiness
About you, about you
'Cause I love you, a bushel and a peck
You bet your purdy neck, I do
A doodle oodle, ooh doo
A doodle oodle, oodle, ooh doo
I love you, a bushel and a peck
A bushel and a peck and it beats me all to heck
It beats me all to heck, how I'll ever tend the farm
Ever tend the farm when I wanna keep my arm
About you, about you
'Cause I love you, a bushel and a peck
You bet your purdy neck, I do
A doodle oodle, ooh doo
A doodle oodle, oodle, ooh doo
A doodle oodle, oodle, ooh doo
A doodle oodle, ooh doo, doo*

