

# Tualatin Experiences War, Growth & Change

**WRITTEN BY: LOYCE MARTINAZZI**

Tualatin weathered the Great Depression of 1929, emerging bone thin and weary from the deprivation suffered during those difficult years. John Nyberg had been mayor for many years and under his administration and with financial assistance from the Federal Government an artesian well was dug and water was delivered to local homes for a cost of \$1.50 per month. During the 1930s a City Hall was built next to the Methodist Church on Boones

Ferry Road. Wages ranged from 95 cents an hour for skilled labor to 50 cents for common work.



The old Tualatin river overflowed its banks big time in 1937, and children were delivered to school in a rowboat.

War in Europe and Asia called the young men to serve their country, and Tualatin sent its finest. Local folks were hired to work at the shipyards on Swan Island. Workers gathered at Kamp's Feed Store and rode to work in Ted Saarinen's old Buick, with what Ted's daughter Yvonne called "suicide back doors." Others rode a bus to either the Oregon shipyard or Kasier. Both my parents worked at the shipyards, different shifts, of course. Dad was a rigger and mom was a burner. They managed to keep the farm going, and with the extra money they, like many other farmers, were able to pay off the mortgage on the land they had purchased on Jurgens Road.

Families were issued ration books, as many commodities were in short supply due to the war effort. Gas, sugar, and even shoes were rationed. People were instructed to put black shades on their windows at night in case enemy planes were flying overhead. Civil defense groups were formed, and the siren rang from the City Hall at 9 pm every night signaling a curfew. At school kids bought liberty stamps for 25 cents, and pasted them into a little booklet. Tin foil was saved from gum and cigarette

packages, even cooking oil and scrap metal was saved. Everyone with a bit of land grew a Victory Garden.

The economy slowly improved in Tualatin after the end of the war. Matt and Kate Herberholz purchased Clow's lunchroom (later The Spot, and now the C. I.) and turned it into a tavern. Folks got together after town team games, or for any old reason, to enjoy a beer and a little gossip.

In the summer the river parks provided enjoyment to young and old alike. Picnicking, swimming and boating were great fun. Although the swimming hole in Tualatin Park closed down, other parks opened along the river. Elsners, Roamers Rest, Avalon, Louie's and Slawsons all offered R and R to local folks. Most of us saw our first moving pictures at the Joy Theater in Tigard. And in the summer movies were shown outside on the side of a wall in Sherwood on Thursday evenings. Store owners provided the entertainment, enticing folks to shop in Sherwood, then watch a free movie.

Charlie Roberts was Tualatin's town marshal, and it was he who remembered the big bones in the swamp. "Yessir", he would say, "elephants used to roam around here." I remember him so vividly, in his striped bibbed overalls, and mutton chop mustache.

Then in 1948 the Hervin Company purchased a meat packing plant along Nyberg Road, and the city had its first real payroll in decades.

**Loyce Martinazzi** was born and raised in Tualatin and is passionate about Tualatin History. She is currently Master of Winona Grange, Co-Founder of the Tualatin Historical Society and Co-Author of *Tualatin... From the Beginning*.



Winona Grange hall was built in 1940. Previously the organization held meetings in the upstairs of the old store in Old Town, then the High School gymnasium.



The Shake Shop was between the white store and Hawkhurst's meat market.



Tualatin's swim park in the 1930s. Located close to where the boat ramp is now, and close to the Southern Pacific railroad trestle.



The City well was just off Nyberg Road.



Wilbur "Red" Nyberg, on the left, joined the navy and his nephew Walter John Eames joined the U. S. Coast Guard during the second world war.



The town team played baseball in this field along Nyberg Road. The Hervin Company would later occupy the site which is now part of the Commons.



The new brick school under construction in 1939. Plans were borrowed from Collins View School on Palatine Hill. Clarence Itel was hired to dig the basement.



Boones Ferry Road was flooded in 1937. On the left is the Sweek House, on the right is Buswell's garage and on the corner stood the brick store.



City Hall was also the home of the Tualatin Volunteer Fire Department