MY HOMETOWN
Traditions, Treasures and Reflections

BY ROBERT E. ALBERS

It all happened Feb. 6, 1936, when I was almost six years old. The only transportation to Hazen was by horses, and sometimes that was not so good.

There was a packed sled trail through the sand hills east of Hazen where my grandparents, Fred and Sophia Albers, homesteaded. Plans were being made as to how to get my pregnant mother, Ida, to the midwife in Hazen as time seemed to be getting nearer.

It was decided to use the wide truck sled with a triple box, fill it with straw and cover it with more straw and another binder canvas, leaving room for the team driver to stand.

Rocks and water in cream cans were heated overnight to be ready for the trip the next day. Mother was rolled up with a buffalo hide blanket and carried out for the trip.

The trip went well to the midwife. After giving the horses a rest, Dad Albers returned home where the rest of the family was waiting. Since mother was away, it was decided my two older sisters would stay home, go to school, and help around the house. My younger brother and I would stay with our grandmother about a mile away so she could help with keeping us busy.

My dad, Ed Albers, would ride to Hazen often on my mother’s horse, Turkey. Turkey would lop the entire 30-minute trip, and Dad would come home and report there was still no baby.

Finally, late that day, Dad came home and said we had another brother. Time went by and, three weeks later, he and Mother were brought home the same way they went.

I still have my school report card from 1935-1936 with words written across it that said, "not enough attendance for grades." It was a long, cold winter, but we eventually were back together as a farm family.

Brother Donovan Marvin Julius was born Feb. 6, 1936. He started grade school out in the country when he was six years old and later went to Hazen and graduated in 1953.

He worked at Knoll’s filling station and repair shop and raced cars in his spare time. Brother Don died from injuries received in an off-base accident Nov. 29, 1959, while in the Army Basic Training Program.

Don was buried in St. Matthew’s cemetery, Hazen, next to our parents, Edward and Ida Albers.

(If you have old photos or a short story (500 words or less) about anything Hazen or surrounding areas east of Beulah, we’d like to see them for our new section... My Hometown... Traditions, Treasures and Reflections set to run every week. Please email them to star@westriv.com or you may drop them off at the Hazen Star office on Main Street in Hazen. Old photos will be returned.)