

Laura's interview with Grandma on Rendezvous

Me - Gram, what can you tell me about the Rendezvous?

Gm - Well, I can tell you it was built many years ago by your great-grandma, Delma Rock.

Me - When was it built and where to?

Gm - It was built around 1930-31 in the Greenwood location. It's on what they call the Diorite Road now, but then that was the 41 highway.

Me - What else can you tell me?

Gm - Let's see? I didn't know your grandpa Rock then, but I remember him telling about it and how it was then, later on.

Me - Like what?

Gm - Like how it was right in the Depression, when they built it. Loads of people were out of work - there weren't ~~any~~ jobs. They put a call out for workers to build this huge place. They were swamped with people who wanted to work, the pay was a dollar a day.

Me - Then what?

Em - I don't know - ah - I'm trying to remember when they had the grand opening or open house. It was in the late summer - 33 or 34 I can't quite remember.

Me - Was it a big event?

Em - Yes, it was a big crowd with a band and all. There was absolutely no room, it was so packed, everything was taken - no chairs - no tables.

Me - What was it like inside?

Em - A small bar in the front part. Gosh, they used to be so deep to get their drinks. Nickel beers and a shoot and beer for 15¢, 10¢ for a glass of wine. There were hands waving like crazy to get the bartender's attention. There was a check-room too, a place for them to put their coats and things.

Me - A place for coats?

Em - Yes, we used to take their coats and fold them up real nice and put them in a box. They were numbered. Then they got a tag with their number on it. It cost 10¢.

me- What else was it like?

Em- There was a huge dance floor. The floors were hardwood. Along the dance floor, on three sides, were tables and chairs. At the far end there was a stage right in the center. It was really called a bandstand.

me- About how many could fit in there?

Em- Well, there were three rows tables on one side, and two rows on the other side. On the south end there were two rows. So, I would say they could seat between 400 to 500 people.

me- What else?

Em- There was a big arch between the front part and the ballroom. On each side of the big arch was a wall and then two smaller arches. In front of one of the walls between the arches was a jukebox. There was a huge thick, thick velvet drape hung on the arches. It was a deep, deep dark maroon. It was beautiful! They drew the drapes shut when there was no dances to shut that area off.

me- Anything else?

Em - That was the Big Band era. One of the most, well known was Franklin Yankeovich. We always had a huge crowd when he played. Another one was a Swede Band, Ollie "Larsholmen". The place used to be just loaded!

me - What else can you tell me? I'll bet you had fun cleaning up after a big dance!

Em - It was a big job alright. We first used to take up all the chairs and tables and sweep. Then we'd put them back, then we'd do the dancefloor. We never swept that. We used a special type of long-handled outfit. It had a big bar on the bottom covered with real thick flannel. We used to push that across the floor. We went over it a couple of times, just before the next dance ^{then} they used to toss about a special waxing powder. It would be rubbed into the floor and it made the floor just beautiful!