

Tualatin Oregon... Going to the Dogs with Blue Mountain Pet Food

BY LOYCE MARTINAZZI

Tualatin had no payroll jobs for local workers after the Smith sawmill and brickyard closed down around 1915. Then in 1948, the Westward Packing Company set up shop along the south side of Nyberg Road, crowding out the town's baseball team, who moved their games to the community park.

The company processed horse meat for human consumption on one side of the plant and pet food for dogs and cats on the other side.

Jason Hervin purchased the business in 1952, and expanded the operation to include 60 pet food items. He hired up to 220 employees who produced 250,000 one-pound cans and 200,000 pounds of Blue Mountain dry pet foods daily. People foods were phased out early on.

Willie Crossway went to work for Hervin Company in 1952 as a meat grinder and started driving the local delivery truck in 1955. Soon he was driving long-haul semis which sported the marketing slogan "Going to the Dogs" and delivering products to all six western states. Noxious odors from the plant caused "lots of nose holding," according to Crossway, who had worked for Hervin Co. for 34 years.

Hervin made a deal with the City of Tualatin to install a tertiary sewage treatment plant on the property, which was built with a government grant, and a railroad spur was installed from Hervin Company to the Burlington Northern track.

Hervin Co. was sold to Nabisco in 1965 and in 1986 Alpo purchased the Blue Mountain trademark and label.

The City of Tualatin obtained the property with funds from the Urban Renewal Agency.

Hervin Company kept 20 dogs and 20 cats to taste test their products. When an animal turned his nose up at a particular flavor, that was a good indication that product would not be a good seller. The animals were adopted out after the plant closed.

The Century Hotel and parts of the Commons area are situated on former Hervin Company property.

Photos courtesy of the Tualatin Historical Society



Tualatin Fire Department puts out a fire at the Hervin Company plant.



Willie Crossway gives a Blue Mountain treat to a doggie.



Everybody for miles around would come to watch the Tualatin Town Team play baseball games on an open field along Nyberg Road. The white building on the right was the rest room facility. Hervin Company later developed this area into a pet food manufacturing plant.



Hervin Company's fleet of delivery trucks



Willie Crossway's first delivery truck