

A Bit of History

Beside Still Waters Farm is located in an area known to locals as “Sherwood Valley”. At one time, Sherwood was home to a grocery store, post office, hotel, two saloons, a one-room schoolhouse, “The Octagon House”, and an Indian reservation. It was visited by two passenger trains, two logging trains and two stagecoaches per day – which meant the mail came twice daily. Most of the ranchers in the area raised dairy cattle until margarine became the rage and then they switched to beef cattle. Timber was harvested and sent by train through the valley to the Diamond D Mill that was in what is now known as Brooktrails Township (you pass through it on your way from Willits.) Old timers tell stories of redwood trees that took three weeks to cut and that were so large, a cabin could be built on the stump.

There was a large dance hall and residents would regularly gather for dances – with all of the musicians playing by ear as not one of them could read music. Picnics and parties would be held at the “Underhill Ranch” – which is now part of Spring Valley Ranch, directly behind Beside Still Waters Farm (we share a spring!) Because of its distance from Willits, there was no electricity available to Sherwood residents, but they made use of wood stoves, kerosene, and gas lamps.

In the 1950’s, a forest fire swept through the area, completely destroying the town. If you drive up Sherwood Road a bit further, you’ll still be able to see the Sherwood School (reopened in 1984 and teaching K-6th grades) and The Octagon House. The reservation is still there, as well. Most of the old shacks have been replaced with modern homes and the area now has electricity.

The flat area located between Rose Arbor Cottage and Meadowood Guesthouse that goes up our mountain is said to be an old logging trail. The large fir tree that is lying in the woods still shows evidence of the 1950’s forest fire.