

## The Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard

I find it fascinating as I research local history for ideas for the Face of Fillmore that often something happens to connect stories together. This happened as I was talking to Justin Teeple at the forest service office about my last column. Justin forwarded me a few interesting pictures of forest service buildings of the past. Among them was a picture of the house that had once been part of the deer experimental station at Maple Springs.

You may remember the story. In 1940, this deer experimental station was built at Maple Springs a few miles east of Fillmore. It was the largest of its kind covering 700 acres. It contained the home where the station manager, Everett Doman, lived with his family, a detached garage, a few other structures and several large pens where deer were kept. It became known "The Deer Pasture".

Early in the afternoon of September 16, 1942, a few local farmers in Meadow were burning brush to clear some privately owned land and the fire got away from them. They had started their project on a calm day, but weather conditions soon changed and a stiff wind began to blow the fire out of control. It burned across the face of the mountains heading northeast, and all along the foothills and into the mountains, finally burning itself out in Chalk Creek Canyon as the wind abruptly changed. Nearly 10,000 acres burned along with 60 power poles belonging to the Telluride Power Company. Residents described the fire as looking like "the whole world was on fire".

Luckily, the Doman family were safely in Oak City at the time. The house and garage were bypassed by the flames but all of the other structures were destroyed, as well as several deer, which were found in their pens.

The forest service had the house and garage moved from their location at Maple Springs. It is still possible to see the outline of where the home stood. The house was transported into town in sections and was reassembled at its present location at 245 South 200 West. At first it was occupied by forest service employees, but was later sold and used as a rental property.

Pictured here is that move in action showing the largest section of the home as it was put into place. The garage can also be seen in the background.

Jack Peterson called me after the original story about the Big Fire of 1942. He was a young boy at the time but remembered it well. In 1962 when the forest service wanted to make some improvements to the lot on Second West and the garage was in the way. Jack bought it for a very reasonable price and saw its next move. It was raised on jacks and Jack drove a diesel truck underneath it to move it to its third location, a spot behind Jack and Mary's

new home on Fifth South. Jack planned to refurbish it and use it for storage, but other projects took priority. The garage remained in its original state until a few years later when Chester Baker, Jack's neighbor to the east, decided he could really use it for storage. Once again, the same truck and jack system was used, and the garage moved across the street where it is today.

