

GREYHOUND BUS TRANSPORTATION

in CHERRY VALLEY

Greyhound buses made many trips a day through our town. The Standard Oil station sold tickets. I remember if you were traveling some distance your ticket could be a yard long. I used to ride it to Belvidere to the Fox Roller Rink.

The bus stopped at the Julian Hotel and it was a long walk to the rink. The bus left at ten p. m. and the rink closed at 10:30, so we had to leave early to walk back to the hotel to get the bus. You didn't dare miss it for it was a very long walk back to Cherry Valley. In the cold weather the owners would let us stay in the lobby while waiting for the bus. It was great to get warm before the bus came. We still had a long walk to get home after getting off the bus.

There had to be at least six buses each way, every day in Cherry Valley. I also rode one home after work. Folks also used them for shopping in Rockford and Belvidere.

The main bus depot in Rockford was on Walnut Street on the west side of the river. It was open twenty-four hours a day and they had a restaurant. People use to 'hang out' there, including some of the 'seedier side of life'. I'm sure there many more stories about Greyhound buses.

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I recall the blizzard of 1933-34. I was in third grade and Harry Saylor went to each class room and took the kids home who lived up the hill (the west end of the present day state street). We got stuck right across from the present day Shell station but we still made our way home.

Dad walked back down town and warned the bus driver to put his chains on before trying to go up the hill. He said he didn't need to. He didn't make it all the way as he slid off the road. The road was actually steeper before improvements were made. After a couple of helping hands pushing, we got going. There were about twenty passengers on board the bus. They were housed with the neighbors until early the next morning when a tow truck got the bus back on the road.

Cherry Valley didn't have a regular snow plow, and the ones the county and state had were very small by today's standards. Nobody had salt for the roads. There was a man who shoveled cinders from the back of a dump truck on the hills. Before they had snow plows and used salt, the commercial vehicles had sand tanks in front of their drive wheels. In fact, they had kits you could buy and add the sand tanks to your truck.

Written by Lyle Wilt