

## Turkey Day

*By Pete Clark*

In the fall of 1955, my best buddy was Don, a long, tall, wiry fellow who was as strong as an ox. His family had originally come from the Ozarks of Southern Missouri and moved to Shoshoni from Chugwater, where his father had owned a blacksmith shop. Don was old enough to have a driver's license and always had a junker to drive, so we spent a lot of time running around in the sagebrush, ostensibly prospecting for uranium. All we ever found with the Geiger counter was a bit of radon gas. Once, we went up the switchbacks above Sinks Canyon, now called Loop Road, southwest of Lander, in an old Studebaker truck. We had completed our journey and were at the speed limit in Shoshoni, when a tie rod broke and the steering was gone.

One evening Don and I were walking down the sidewalk along Shoshoni's main drag when we came to a small café. We walked over and looked into the café through the street side windows, to see if our folks were in there having coffee. They weren't there, so we continued on down the street. Very quickly, the new Highway Patrolman in town pulled his cruiser up to the sidewalk, got out and asked us for our names. We told him and then he opened the rear door of the car and told us to get in. Once we were in the car, he drove around town until he found Homer, the Deputy Sheriff. He stopped next to Homer's car and told Homer that he had spotted two kids acting suspiciously. Homer looked into the back of the cruiser to see who the patrolman had caught and barked out a guffaw. Homer told the confused, embarrassed state cop that he had caught the most suspicious pair in town and to take them back to where he found them and turn them loose, which he did.

Thanksgiving Day that fall, the weather was clear, cold and sunny, with no snow falling or lying on the ground, so Don and I went roaming on foot. We wound up at the agate bed about a mile northwest of town. We found a few small moss agates, but nothing to write home about. On the way back into town, we stopped at the rifle range just across the road from the northern city limit of Shoshoni. We had our rifles, but no targets. We improvised. We fired a few rounds apiece at clods of dirt. Next, we set the empty .22 casings on a wooden post and fired at a range of roughly ten feet. Don hit most of his and I hit about half of mine. Then we headed for Don's house.

Don's family ate Thanksgiving dinner early, so we partook of the feast of turkey, dressing and all the other accoutrements that went with the meal. When dinner was finished, we said goodbye to Don's parents and sisters and went to my house and ate dinner again. After dinner, we all had a glass of my Dad's rhubarb wine and then Don waddled off home.