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[Pete Hester](#)

[May 16](#)

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In 1948-49 time frame, Coalfire was jumping with business. The rail spur was still being used, Burgess Store was alive with shoppers, well, kinda, Mr. Estes was cutting and hauling logs as was Mr. Lowe. Hugh Bell had his farm going good and still made syrup for people all around that area of the county and Uncle Dee had a sawmill located between the track and the J. I. Bonner place there on the hill (where Alan and Monica lived just lately. Cecil and I had the privilege of working for Uncle Dee. First, he had us doodling sawdust. That is where the chain brings the dust from sawing the logs to a pile away from the mill. The chain is made higher and higher as the pile grows but at the time someone had to keep the chain clear of all the dust. That is where Cecil and I came in. Shoveling that sawdust away from the chain. We were good at it and Uncle Dee paid us each 2.00 dollars a week. Pretty good salary back in those days. But by 1949 we had graduated to stacking lumber. Uncle Dee's mill could turn out about 12,000 board feet a day, when it was humming, and Cecil and I could keep with stacking all the one by and two by lumber coming out. He also cut lumber for rail road ties that we did not stack. But we kept up with that mill and Uncle Dee always bragged on us and how well we kept up. I well remember Cecil and I standing in the pay line on Friday afternoons. By then we were being paid 4.00 a week. You talk about a couple of young men standing tall on Friday afternoon, in that pay line with the rest of the workers.....We were pretty proud of ourselves and looking back, we should have been as it was hard work and there were plenty of kids still being kids. I'm glad Uncle Dee took the time to train us, and work us and have the patience's for a couple of kids working at his mill....We learned the value of a dollar very early in life....We were very good buddies also and the work was fun.....Spending it was the most fun, however...[1](#)

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