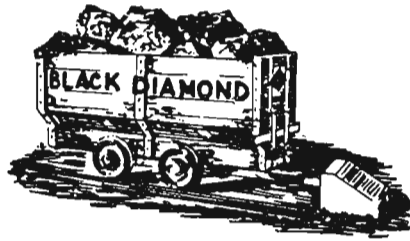


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Black Diamond Historical Society

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P.O. Box 232
Black Diamond, Washington 98010

B.D.H.S. NEWSLETTER

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Black Diamond, Wa
98010

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Black Diamond, Wa. 98010

In Memoriam

"Oldtimers" who have recently passed from
our ranks are as follows: Ann Elizabeth
Davies (96), Jack Richter, Dave Menighini
Frank Vincenzi and Louis Herrin.

What's Happening?

The lumber for the platform at the depot has
arrived. The arrangements for having this
lumber cut over in Sand Point, Idaho were
made by Dave Garrett. Joe Androsko drove a
truck loaned by TRM Wood Products over the
mountains and brought the long-awaited load
back to Black Diamond. A crew will begin
work soon if the weather holds out.

At the Nov. 13 meeting, we were pleased to

have as our guest speaker, Norma Kelling. She is a teacher at Skagit Community College
with a great interest in the history of the Black Diamond Coal Co. She has studied with
a geology class from the University of California at the site of the original B.D. mine
in Contra Costa County California. As most of the records were destroyed in the San
Francisco fire and earthquake, there is little information available. Even the old
mining towns of Nortonville and Somersville and others have disappeared, the terrain
returning to its native state. Only the badly vandalized cemetery is left to remind
visitors of the times gone by. The area is a Regional Park, and John Watters, the manager
has done a great deal to restore the mining shafts so that visitors can have an idea what
it was like for the men who made their living in the mines. We hope to be in touch with
the Contra Costa Historical Society and see if we can be of assistance.

On November 19, Chuck Holtz and Carl Steiert showed our slides after a Pot-luck
dinner at the Presbyterian Church in Enumclaw. The slides are made from old photos
either donated or loaned to the Society. We appreciate receiving any photos and some
will be included in our next slide collection.

Election Time

Don't forget March is election time for new officers. It is not too soon to begin
thinking about candidates.

A Word from the President

As 1978 gives way to 1979 it is time to stop and reflect on the "State of the Society". During the past year progress has been made on the Museum project with a few faithful workers showing up each workday. In the Spring, the Antique Appraisal was a success. It is hoped to make it an annual event. Calendar sales were good with only a few left over. I would like to thank everyone who took part in these activities.

However.....in order that the Society continue to exist, it will be necessary for more active roles be taken by it's members. The above mentioned activities were mostly sparked by a handful of people. We now have a new editor for the newsletter. She will appreciate any memories and recollections that you can share with the membership. Workday at the depot is still on Thursday at 9:00 a.m. and help is needed. With any luck we can think seriously of the day when it will open. In the meantime, let us collect any items or pictures worthy of display. Because we are many years late in doing this project much has been lost and we have to dig a lot harder....Please help.

Carl Steiert

The Fire along Railroad Avenue

(From a recorded conversation with Dooda Verrarelli)

" I was 6 years old, the fire started early in the morning in early Spring 1907. We were in the front room around a little pot-bellied stove and all at once the Butcher's house, the big window in the kitchen exploded! The whole house was on fire and in no time the Butcher Shop too. Before the store fire got too bad, they were taking all the stuff outside, throwing shoes, boots, clothes and anything from the windows upstairs. People were carrying off everything they could find. And Oh the blaze!

My Dad was up on the roof of our house with a trickle of water from the hose keeping the roof and himself wet. The wind was coming from the North and we could feel the heat on our faces. We carried all our valuables and pictures down by a stump by the Butcher's barn; it used to be a slaughter house down by the creek. For a week the fire burned. we could smell the meat from the Butcher's Shop ----like a big barbecue. They thought they could save two houses. They put a cable around the store and tried to pull it down with the train, but that didn't work. The train wheels just spin.

Then, Mr. Bremmeyer built a new Butcher Shop. The wood came on the railroad and all the kids helped unload it and then he took us for a treat to the Candy Shop. Twenty kids, we empty that boxcar quick! People came around and tried to match up the shoes and boots. I had a nice little pair of boots--too small--I finally had to give them up. They were for a four-year old and they pinched my toes!"

1979 Dues are Due!!!!

As we are nearing the end of 1978--we remind you that it is time to renew your membership. We value our members and think perhaps a membership might make a very thoughtful gift to a friend or relative.

Oregon, Washington and Idaho Gazetteer
Business Directory
1891-----1892

Black Diamond. The location of coal mines on the Col.S.P. S.R.R., in King County 31 miles southwest of Seattle, the county seat and banking point. Population 600. One non-sectarian church. Tel. W.U. Exp. Northwestern mails, daily. Isaac P. Calhoun postmaster.

Abraham I & Co., saloon

Klinker, J., Meat market

Atkinson & Calhoun, general store

Krouse & McLean, saloon

Black Diamond Coal Mining Co.

Mills, Mrs. E.A. millner

Calhoun, Isaac P, postmaster

Spaight & Duncalf, meat market

Dinkerspiel A., general store

Stone, D.M. Phycian

Hanson, Alexander G., exp. tel. & R.R. agent

Thomas, Henry, Shaemaker

Hughes, Rev. H.P. (Baptist)

Vestings, Peter, carpenter

Excerpt From Washington's Green River Coal Co. By C. William Thorndale

When James Steel spotted the body it lay for up the chute near the unfinished second crosscut. He tried pushing his way up the 25 degree pitch but his naked light turned a sickley yellow and sputtered out. There was black damp in the mine. Driven back by the poisonour gas, Steel tried again at great personal risk, groping his way in the dark until he finally pulled the body down to good air. But John Sholtz was already dead.

In Leary that October evening in 1900, John Sholtz had plenty on his mind. Forty years old, married with four children, and desperate to keep his job, he was new to underground work and timid about standing up to the boss. Like most miners he earned two to four dollars a day when the mine ran full time and that Friday shift he and a dozen others were at their places. In slack times the miners tried to spread the work around but the Company preferred small crews working full time and hired that way. If a man did not dig his full share, he would be fired, and with a family to feed, Sholtz compensated for inexperience by taking dangerous chances. A man around danger soon grew callous to the risks, especially when they were invisible like gas or hidden like loose rock and as for the rules and regulations a miner had to follow, they were good if he could afford them but the company paid for coal and not caution. And so John Sholtz for the sake of fifty feet of canvas wall and the time to put it up, lost his life.

Christmas Long Ago

"Remember the excitement of going to the "Show Hall" and getting the bags of candy!! Did anything ever taste so good!!! How many remember the names of the "Santas" during the Years?

P.S.

How many remember the thrill of going to the "Show" paying the 10¢ admission and very impatiently waiting for Mr. Glenn to step out onto the porch and yell, "Let' go." And the cliff-hanging serials!! What excitement from week to week!!!!

Calendars! Calendars! Calendars!
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N. GUMSER

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