



B.D.H.S. Newsletter

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a non-profit Corporation

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Send dues to: Box 232
Black Diamond, Wa. 98010
Editor Ann Steiert

In Memorium

- Lloyd Winbeckler, Husband of Esther and brother of Arthur.
- Tony Susnar, Husband of Ruth
- Helmi J Ransom Born in Black Diamond 1904, sister of Arthur Koski, Esther Slusser, Anna Johnson and Joan Peters.

Memorials Received

- Ivy Davies Adams in memory of her parents.
- A. (Bud) Simmons in memory of Vivian Petchnick.
- Carl Steiert in memory of Tony Susnar and Lloyd Winbeckler.

Depot Doings

The past months have been extremely busy times at the Museum. During the last part of May and the first of

June, there were many school tours. There were as many as 75 at a time. They were all very interested and appreciated the small sack of coal which was given to them. We received some very interesting letters from them as follows:

Dear Black Diamond Museum,

Thank you for inviting us. It was neat there. I wish we could go again. The old people who shovled us were nice. They even gave us a sample of coal. We went in the pretend mine under the Museum. In the Museum, we saw some old dresses. signed Jessica.

another :

Dear Black Diamond Historical Society:

Thank you for letting us go through your Museum and see all the things in it. I especially liked seeing the neat tools you had. I also thought it was interesting to see one guy graduate eight times from your high school. Sincerely, Justin Marcoto.

Note:

Upon some reflection, we decided that the student who graduated eight times was the Principal C. Maury Nelson. It proves that children are observant each in his own way. The letters will be on file and anyone interested in reading them will be free to do so.

Seminar Held

On July 13 & 14 Seattle Pacific University held a seminar on the history of the area. It was held in the meeting room of the Depot. Under the guidance of Diane Olson, 18 people, many of them teachers were given a very concentrated dose of the history of Black Diamond and Franklin.

After slides and oral discussion the students were taken on a tour of the town, the mine yard and on the second day were taken to Franklin where under the guidance of Don Mason the area was explained and visualized. A bus with a speaker system was provided for the tours. On Wednesday a discussion by Mark Abernathy and Joan Easton was held regarding the proposed John Henry mine. The whole session was deemed a huge success. Plans are in the making to do it again next year. The following members represented the Society: James Vennarelli, Verna Thompson, Louis Zemek, Ted Banner, Rose and Frank Guidetti, Evan Morris, Don Mason, Carl and Ann Steiert, Cory and Diane Olson. The Society was paid \$100. Carl and Don Mason received checks which they turned over to the Society making a net of \$175. for two days. Diane Olson is to be complimented for her excellent job of teaching and coordinating activities.

Construction Proceedings

The meeting room is nearly completed. Thanks to Ray and Sheila Drury the spackling and stripping the sheetrock has been completed. They were also responsible for the fine finish on the ceiling. Shawn Cole helped finish the ceiling. The spray painting of the meeting room was done by Ed Gokey thus saving many hours of brush painting. The office space is nearly ready to paint. The storage area has been framed and paneled. Ceilings are being put in and an attic stairs installed. The Thursday Crew is working diligently and accomplishing much. There have been many things stored in the "pool Hall" which we have had to move since the building has been sold. Now that the meeting room is usable for serving lunches the noon hour on Thursdays is much pleasanter. Still needed: Volunteers for serving lunch.

###!?!??? One Big Nuisance?%#@##!!

One constant and irritating chore is the constant cutting of weeds and grass a round the Museum. Ted Banner and Carl Steiert have been trying to keep ahead of the growth. Plans to get rid of the grass and plant Ivy on the bank have been discussed...in the manner of that Ivy planted under the freeway in Seattle. If anyone has any knowledge that they are willing to share concerning what might be involved, we would appreciate hearing from you.

A Real Treasure

Notice the big benches that are on the platform and in the meeting room. They are pews from St. Barbara's Catholic Church. They have been stored at the Selleck School for many years. Thanks to Beth Sprau, they were directed to the Museum. They will be weatherproofed and serve as a spot where people can stop and visit.

King County Fair

As usual the King County Fair was a huge success. Part of the success was due to super b displays such as the King County Historical Display tent. Under the able guidance : of Charles Payton many interesting photographs and artifacts were displayed. They were done in such a manner that each was self-explanatory and really created interest among those who attended. The Black Diamond Historical Society submitted some artifacts and photos. Verna Thompson, Diane Olson and Carl and Ann Steiert spent time working in the Display. For our participation we will receive some monetary reimbursement.

Happy News

In the last Newsletter, we reported that the Society had been turned down by the Boeing Co. when it requested funds for a Photo Multiplex and insulation for the ceiling. We are very happy to say that the item was noted by Dwight Garrett who immediately decided to donate the requested amount in memory of his parents, David and Lillian Garrett. The amount of \$2000. has been received. There are no words to express our appreciation. just thank you, thank you. The multiplex has been ordered and is on its way. It will enable us to display many pictures and tell the history of the area in much better fashion. The insulation will be purchased and installed before the winter season.

Old Timers Picnic

The Pioneers picnic was held on July 17 at the Depot. We know that many people had reservations as to how it was going to turn out. About 100 people showed up during the course of the day. Much visiting went on and enthusiasm built up for next year's gathering. The possibility of getting awnings to shelter from rain or sun is being looked into. Most of the tables went unused this year but it is hoped they will be filled next year. Please feel free to express your thoughts and suggestions on the Picnic. We'd appreciate knowing how everyone feels.

Membership

Statistics: 275 total memberships. 108 regular Life members, 43--80 yrs. or over.

Newest Life members: Margaret Blanchard (May Clark) Arthur Jones, Bertha Ingalls

Dennis DiJulio

Jack Reeves

Ivy Adams 80+

Mrs. Cecil Robinson 80+

Depot Docents

Attendance and interest is still good at the Museum. There have been 5000+ signatures on the guest book since we opened last year. It is very interesting to read the names and places from which people have come. Since May we have had the following places represented:

Shreveport, La.

Oslo, Norway

Murrieta, Cal.

Champaign, Ill.

London, England

Victorville, Ca.

Fayetteville, Ariz.

Shawnee, Okla.

Long Beach, Ca.

Dawson, Minn.

Taiwan

Oldham, England

The members who have been tending the Museum on its open days have been doing a fine job.

Elaine Griffin, who is the coordinator of the program is to be complimented. The following people have volunteered for one day a month:

Howard Botts

Louis Zumek

Frank Guidettis

Nancy Nicholas

Sheila Drury

Don Mason

Black Diamond Quilters one weekend a month.

Substitutes:

Ted & Lucille Barner

Frank Costi

Sue & Chuck Capponi

Dave and Florence Garrett

Diane Olson

Tanya Grant

Frank & Lois Zumek

Verna Thompson

On Thursdays business is sometimes brisk so everyone takes a turn at nosting along with their regular chores.

A few things we are looking for:

Photos or information about Lawson Hill when it was a town. Information about the school Finn Hall, and was there a Post Office there.

We'd like to do an article on the origin of some of the many nicknames which we published earlier. Do you know why some of these nicknames came about?

Breaking the Ice

We had some offish neighbors once that moved in down the road.
 We reconed they was about the proudest folks we'd ever knowed.
 An' when we passed 'em then we held our heads up high
 to make dead sure they could't snub us if they was to try.
 It really made me nervous, so I jes' braced up one day
 an' thought I'd go ahead an' show my manners anyway.
 On Sunday 'stid o' turning round and gazing at the view,
 I looked at them an' says "Hello" and they says, "Howdy do!"
 It wan't the cold an' formal greetin' that you've sometimes heard.
 They smiled an' said it hearty, like they meant it, every word.
 It's solemn to reflect on what we miss along life's way
 By jes' being natural and good humored day by day.
 There's lots o' folks who fling the simple joys of life aside
 because they dread the shadow of unconscious pride.
 and nine times o'ten you'll find the rule works right an' true
 Jes' tell the world "Hello!" and it'll answer, "Howdy Do!"

Note: The above verse was published courtesy of the Lewis County Log taken from
 the Lewis County Advocate August 14, 1903

Next General Meeting

The next meeting of the Historical Society is to be on Sept. 11 at 2:00 at the Depot.
 It will be a great opportunity for all to come and see what has been accomplished during
 the summer since the last meeting. We are hoping to be able show an excellent slide show
 owned by the King County Office of Historic Preservation which shows much of our County
 as it was many years ago. Don't forget circle September 11 on your calendar.

From the May 24, 1922 issue of the Pacific Coast Bulletin:

John Koerner has leased from the Company a building at Black Diamond, formerly known as the
Bank Building, in which he will operate a first class drug store and ice-cream parlor,
 carrying all incidental lines.

The building is to be modernized in every respect including living quarters overhead and
 will probably be ready for Mr. Koerner to start business after June 1.

The drug store will be equipped by the tenant with up-to-the minute fixtures and a very
 complete stock, We are satisfied this will prove a very attractive addition to the business
 community of Black Diamond.

Did you know that:

Genevieve Rossi and Harriette Rossi (Manowski) were both Dr. Smith Babies?

Donna Gauthier, Karen Beers, Charles Barclay, Ruby Dunn, Florence Upton, and May Garrett
 all worked at the "Company Store".

Franklin was also known as Pacosco?

In 1922 you could buy 15 bars of white soap and 10 bars of Palmolive for \$1.00

Death at Noon: The Franklin Mine Disaster of 1894 and Reactions to It

The first mining disaster to occur in the Puget Sound region was the fire in the Franklin mine which caused thirty-seven deaths on August 24, 1894. Only the explosion at Roslyn, east of the Cascades, which took forty-eight lives in 1892 caused a greater loss of lives.

Fire was noticed by some of the drivers on the sixth level about 11:45 a.m. As soon as it was noticed several of the men in the gangway ran to notify those further back. Others rushed out to the main shaft. All the men reached the gangway. Forty of the seventy men at work in the sixth level north stopped at breast six where the fire began, in an attempt to put out the fire. Within a short period the flames spread to breasts sixty and sixty-one. As it became more ferocious a few men fled, but those who remained were asphyxiated. The deaths seem to have occurred because of the men's underestimation of the danger, rather than inadequate time to escape the fire. This is borne out by the escape to safety of men at work in the farthest breast, while those farthest from danger and nearest the shaft died. Apparently, they were asphyxiated while believing that they were in a safe area. All of the men were found within 125 ft. of each other in an area south of breast sixty-two. A few bore marks of injuries sustained when they ran into posts and timbers of the gangway in a desperate attempt to escape; but most bore no marks and their features appeared calm, as tho death had come quickly and painlessly.

As was usual when the alarm whistle sounded from the engine house, townfolks quickly gathered around the slope's mouth and the words, "the mine is on fire" quickly spread over the town. The mining superintendent was the first to reach the scene. He tried to allay the fear of the assembly of men, women and children by an offhanded, easy manner, and for a brief while the crowd joked and bantered each other. But in a short time a call for help came and the Superintendent's demeanor changed as he asked for volunteers.

George W. Smalley, a black man who had come to Franklin as a strikebreaker in 1891, was the first to volunteer. He was soon joined by two others and they were lowered down the 1100 foot slope to the sixth level. Men from the sixth level south had remained in the mine trying to rescue the men on the north side and were joined by the volunteers. Others followed and soon the first body was sent to the top of the slope. With the realization that some of the miners were dead, a mad scramble to identify the body ensued. Until this time none of the waiting people realized how serious the accident was. As more bodies followed, the crowd became frenzied and wails were heard throughout the crowd. Men wept as often as women. Rescuers surrounded by relatives asking questions about this or that person, only shook their heads.

The shutting off of the fan at the top of the hill which kept air flowing in the levels was blamed by many persons for the loss of life. Information introduced at the inquest indicated that the shut down of the fan alone would not have caused suffocation, but the combination of closing down the fan and opening the door in the rock cut produced a situation which blocked the men in between two deadly banks of smoke.

Franklin, Cont'd

Just how and why the fire started remains a mystery. Beginning the day of the fire and for a long time afterwards there was talk around the town of an incendiary who fired the Company's property for an unknown reason. The inquest jury's verdict was that the miners came to their deaths by suffocation caused by smoke emanating from a fire in breast sixty-two on the north side of the sixth level, said fire having caused by a party or parties unknown to us, and that said party or parties did willfully, knowingly and maliciously cause said fire with intent and purpose to do great injury and damage to the lives of the miners and property of the Oregon Improvement Company.

For several days following the disaster the entire town was in mourning. The incompleting Masonic Temple was converted into a temporary morgue, and several men and women kept all night vigils at the Hall.

The next couple of days following the fire were days of funerals. Burial rites were held for miners at Franklin, Black Diamond, Renton, Cedar Mountain, Newcastle and Seattle. The costs of the funerals, new clothing and costs of shipment for burial were borne by the Company. Men of the same ethnic or organizational affiliation were buried together or near each other if they were buried in the same town.

Public reaction was widely sympathetic. Despite the numerous reminders of the harsh economic depression that was then in its second year. The Seattle Post-Intelligencer fund had collected nearly \$2000. through public donations by mid September. The donors were, in general people whose earnings ranged from \$1.00 to \$1.50 a day; miners in Newcastle, Gilman, New Whatcom and Roslyn in spite of that town's Populist Newspaper editor's counsel against their contributing. Working people whose contributions totaled \$.25 to \$1.00 and the Black population in Seattle organized a fundraising presentation of the popular "Underground Railroad" play at Madison Park. A Seattle Athletic Club organized a program featuring local talent as well as a quartette of Black Franklin miners renowned for their harmony. The highlight of the program was a troupe of Black Franklin miners' children who had professional credits for their stage performances in other parts of the country. Their specialty of miner's songs and buck and wing dancing brought down the house.

(To be continued)

The foregoing article is taken from a book by Esther Mumford entitled:

Seattle Black Victorians 1852-1901

It is available at the University Book Store or by mailing \$8.57 (includes tax) to:

Anase Press, Box 22565, Seattle, Wa. 98122



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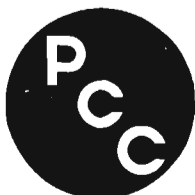
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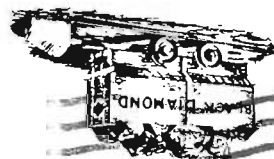
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