

Black Diamond Historical Society



February 1984

Black Diamond, Washington

VIII Issue I

B.D.H.S. Newsletter

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Lifetime	—————30.00
Family Lifetime	—————40.00
Business Annual	—————15.00

Send dues to: Box 232

Black Diamond, Wa
98010

Editor Ann Stelert 886-1168

In Memorium

Jack Darby A longtime resident
Frank Grens, A longtime resident who was
employed as watchman by Palmer Coking
Coal.

Suama (Sunny) Johnson, sister of Evan
and Ed Johnson.

Serafino Collecchi, Ravensdale, aged 91
Robert Duncan, father of Robert

Memorials received:

In memory of:

Vivian Petchnick—from—Pauline Kombol

Ruth Zumek—from—Louis Zumek

Mr. & Mrs John Banhero
from—Edith Banhero

Frank Grens—from—John Stranz
Family, Morton Mann Family and Palmer
Coking Coal Company

A Birthday Donation was recieved for Val Sternig from Pat Sternig.

Christmas Party

On December 4th a group of members met for their annual Christmas Party. There were about 75 who attended. The afternoon was spent visiting and viewing a slide show on "How things were". The annual raffle drawing was held during the afternoon. The winning names were drawn by Jennie Edwards. She was born in Franklin and spend her childhood in this area. She was to celebrate her 95th birthday during the next week so the group sang "Happy Birthday" to her. She has an exceptionally clear memory and shared many great stories with everyone. The first place winner of the raffle was Jacqueline Dial, a member from Lafayette, Ca. It was a beautiful afghan made by Edythe Hall of Oakland, Ca. Jackie was delighted and immediately decided to get in touch with Edythe who lives nearby. She has been very interested in the migration of the Nortonville people to the northwest and has supplied our Society with much valuable information.

The second prize went to Ernest Moore who lived in the Franklin area and wrote the book "The Coal Miner who came West" Joe Androsko, who has lived in Black Diamond all his life, won the third prize

Many good cooks brought plates of Christmas goodies which everyone enjoyed with their hot cider. A beautifully decorated cake was brought by Jim Poalucci.

Next General Meeting

It will be held on February 12 at 2:00 p.m. at the Museum. There will be a program. Everyone is invited to attend. If you haven't had a chance to view the pictures in the multiplex it would be a good chance.

Raffle Notes

By whatever scale the annual raffle is judged, it has to be declared a smashing success. Many wonderful letters accompanied the ticket returns which gave us all a good boost. Many contained donations to further the work of the Society. The vital statistics on the raffle are as follows:

	\$952.00—tickets sold	
<u>Expenses:</u>	-26.48—ticket printing	
	-46.00—stamps	
	-35.00—cash prizes	\$25. E. Moore \$10. J. Androsko
	- 5.57—cost of mailing afghan to California	
	<u>\$838.95</u> ticket profit	
	195.00 donations in raffle letters	
	<u>\$1033.95</u> Grand total.	

The names of persons who donated were published in the November Newsletter. Additional donations have been received from: George Savickes, Emil Rossis, Concelia Picini, John Maragliano, Mary Bisom and Edythe Hall.

Life Membership Savings

When the Historical Society was first founded and Life memberships were discussed no one thought that they would reach the proportions that they have. There are 139 Life members, counting family memberships. We have the wonderful figure of 43 over-80 members. The Life membership fees amount to \$3200.00 since we started in 1976. James Vernarelli was our first Life member.

Because this money is a one-time payment with the obligation continuing, we felt that it should be put into a separate account and earn interest so that as the years go by there will be funds to continue the services which these members have a right to expect. Over the years we have earned the sum of \$804.27 in interest.

Memorial funds have been put into this account also. They will be used for special purchases. Now that the major reconstruction of the building is mostly completed, we will be concentrating on materials to preserve and upgrade our materials used in and for displays. We want to make it a place where people will want to keep coming back to.

The total in the savings account is now \$5479.27

Calendars

The 1984 calendars are here and still selling. They have had good acceptance. Since the first issue came out in 1976 we have paid \$13,512.11 to publish the nine issues. It has been a very interesting experience for all who have been concerned with the work. We are very interested in your opinion of this year's issue and would appreciate hearing from you. We still have a few back issues still available. They are slowly filtering out through the Museum where they are sold for their pictures.

Advertisers

Please read the cover page and remember the firms who have chosen to renew their ads for this year. They deserve our patronage.

The Snow that Stopped the Northwest ColdPortions taken from the Seattle Times:

The recent bout of bad weather around Christmastime had led to a lot of discussion about weather in past years. Sixty-Eight years ago, in 1916, snow fell off and on throughout western Washington. In Seattle a staggering total of 23.3 inches was compared to the average of 4.9.

But...the worst was yet to come.

On February 1 it began to snow and continued unabated until the 3rd. It added another 21 inches. Roofs collapsed, traffic was at a standstill. It is said that Royal Brougham, then sports editor of the P.I. said, "The only sports event in town during the big snow was the 30-yard dash for any armchair close to the stove."

The outlying areas were hit harder than the metropolitan areas. It has been said that you could walk over any fence in Black Diamond. The lakes all became frozen. Cows and teams of horses were driven on them. It was truly a time to remember.

The big snow of 1916 rates as one of this region's five major storms of the century. The others were a wind of hurricane force on Jan. 29, 1921. a comparable hurricane velocity wind on Oct. 21, 1934, the blizzard of Jan 13, 1950 and the great Columbus Day Storm of 1962.

The 1921 wind caused 17 deaths on land and sea and blew down a big section of timber on the olympic Peninsula.

The 1934 storm, also, claimed 17 lives, blew some frail homes to bits, ripped off roofs of several industrial plants. The wind was clocked at 90 miles an hour in parts of Washington & Oregon.

the 1950 blizzard, Seattle's first in recorded history took 13 lives. The city put 19 snowplows to work. Sanding efforts were futile because the wind blew the sand away as fast as it was spread. The temperatures fell to 13 degrees.

The October 12, 1962 storm ranks as the worst in Pacific Coast history. It cut a path of death and destruction 1,000 miles in California, Oregon and Washington through British Columbia. It killed 46 persons, damaged 53,000 homes, wrecked thousands of industrial plants and blew down something like 15 million board feet of timber. Oregon was hit the hardest. The Naselle radar site in Pacific County recorded the highest wind speed of 160 mles per hour.

Nature, mostly kind and gentle here, can get her dander up when she wants to!!

Dues are Due

The 1984 dues are once again due. They are still \$5.00 per individual or \$7.00 per family.

Still Collecting

Very soon now, we will be able to move into the office space and organize the storage space. There are still many areas which we are getting no information on. We encourage everyone who has any artifacts, photos and general information to share them with us. Carl Steiert and Diane Olson are actively pursuing everyone they can tape. If you have not been interviewed and would like to share your memories please let us know. It is a big job and we need all the help possible. If you know of any person of any age who has information to share please call 886-1168 or 886-1635

During the 1920's the Pacific Coast Coal Company published a Bulletin which contained much informational material concerning the life in all the coal towns and around the mines. The Historical Society has been fortunate to have obtained quite a few of these Bulletins but we know that there were many more which we do not have. We would really appreciate it if we would be able to add more to our library of Bulletins. The following is a poem taken from a Bulletin dated December 11, 1922.....

Three Good Squares a Day

<p>A man can't live on love alone, A man can't live on thought. A man can't live on Liberty No odds how dearly bought. All these are nothing to a man, I don't care what you say, Unless he manages to get <u>Three square meals a day.</u></p> <p>A man can lose his pile entire and never turn a hair. But if the ham and eggs are cold There's brimstone in the air. A man can lose his hair and teeth And friends, and still be gay If he is fixed so he can get Three square meals a day.</p>	<p>A man can wear a smiling face Above a broken heart. A man can grin and bear the pain When fondest hopes depart. The only thing that downs a man and puts him out to stay. is separating him for keeps from <u>three square meals a day.</u></p> <p>Now some want gold and some want fame and some want liberty. But all mankind in every clime on one great want agree-- For be they slaves or emperors Young lads or sages gray, There's not a one of them but wants Three good square meals a day.</p>
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Do you remember:

During the big winter snows....the big boys would take their large sleds and sail down Lawson Hill. They would start at the top and speed down the hill. If they made the turn at the bottom known as Bussie's corner, they had it made. They would race past the Showhall, down the hill over the wooden bridge and travel nearly to the cemetery. It was a thrilling ride going down but a long hard drag coming back up. It was nearly a mile ride!

or

Hating to leave the school house during the snowy weather because the class bullies would throw snowballs and wash the girls' faces. It was great fun though, to be able to make snowmen, play fox and geese and flop in the snow on your back, wave your arms and leave an angel imprint in the snow.

or

How very cold it was in wintertime when you had to go out and milk the family cow? There were no heated barns! Later many delivered milk from house to house. It was often delivered in 5 lb. lard buckets. One of the fun things was to get ice from the creek and make ice cream...It tasted so very special!!

Did you know that:

The building which has for so many years been the school gym was built down at the Mine 11 yard to house the strike breakers. It was moved to its present site afterwards. It houses many memories for all who took part in the many sports events and civic gatherings held there.

The Kids and The Trains

By Diane Olson

The railroads of the old mining towns were essential to the transportation of the coal to its final destination. But they also played a significant role in the social life of the community.

Recent interviews with people who spent their childhood in Black Diamond at the turn of the century, have revealed a real love affair between the young people and the railroad.

"A whole bunch of kids would go to the depot every night to see the train come in and to get the mail at the post office." remembers Cecil Gwilym Robinson. "We knew all the brakemen and were used to waving at them when we went to meet the train."

Jenny and Margaret Edwards, as youngsters, would hike up to Lawson Hill to fill their buckets with wild blackberries. But when they heard the train returning to Black Diamond from Mine 12, they would hustle down to the tracks, full bucket or not. The train would stop for the girls who jumped on for a free ride back down the hill.

If you weren't as lucky as Jenny and Margaret, you could always walk the rails for entertainment. Cecil remembers that Sunday afternoons were spent walking to Franklin. "The kids used to love to walk across the trestle that went from Black Diamond over to old Lawson," mused Cecil. "But they were scared to death, because it was so far down below to Old Lawson. We felt like it was miles down from the trestle to the ground. But it was great Sunday entertainment to cross the trestle and walk up to Franklin to meet the boys!"

Kids could also walk the rails out to Lake 12 where they could swim, fish, canoe and again, meet their friends.

Jack Brady tells of walking the rails with his school friends. If there was a night event at Black Diamond High School, all the Franklin students would walk the rails home together. "We'd walk all the kids over to Claymine." recalled Jack. "Then there was a track way over to what we called the "Y". That was halfway between Black Diamond and Franklin. We'd go all the way up to Franklin. There would be girls and we'd take them home and let them off at their house and go on. Oh! We were so happy---- singing and joking!"

According to Ted Barner, the rails to Franklin were perfect for a moonlight walk when you were courting!

Henry Jones recalled the admiration and respect that the young boys of the town had for Depot Agent Amos Ungerhini. Ungerhini kept a rope tied to the rafters of the baggage room. He encouraged the boys to practice climbing it in his effort to see that the youth of Black Diamond were physically fit.

Both Frank Callero and Cecil Robinson remember the exciting one day train trips they would make with their parents to Seattle.

For Cecil, it was an annual family buying trip, which began in the dark morning hours, when they bought their tickets. With anticipation they would remain in the waiting room, which Cecil described as "nice", until the train finally arrived and they boarded.

Although the journey took two to three hours, it was never too long for Cecil. It was a time for enjoying the rhythmic ride and staring, in quiet wonder, out the window at all the sights along the route. One

The Kids and The Trains Continued:

had to be careful, though, for if the window was open, you could get a cinder in your eye.

The train stopped at every milk and mail station. One of the first stations, was Henry's Switch, with its infamous collection of ladies. "We weren't to look out the windows there," laughed Cecil. "We couldn't even think about it!"

They moved on up the track to Maple Valley, where they passed the Henry Gibbons place on the west side of the Cedar River, and crossed the huge trestle. At one time, a wind storm blew down the trestle, said Cecil. So, a train took the passengers as far north as the Cedar. There they disembarked, walked down the river, crossed on a footbridge, and returned to the rail line on the opposite bank. Another train was waiting to take them on up to Seattle.

They passed through Renton, across the Black River, and then rode another trestle across the Duwamish Tide Flats to the Columbia and Puget Sound Depot located right at the end of Washington Street on Elliot Bay. It was a little depot, according to Cecil, located near where the Curiosity Shop is now.

We would get off and walk up the Street," said Cecil. "There would be Indians sitting flat on the street selling baskets. For five cents a ride, we could catch a Jitney to our Uncle's house on Capitol Hill. We could, also, take a cable car up Queen Anne Hill."

Frank Callero remembered his father taking him and younger brother, Andy, on the train to Seattle when they were about seven or eight years old. The ships, with their magnificent masts, sitting in Elliot Bay, are still a vivid picture in his mind.

If Cecil's family was in Seattle at night, they would watch the searchlights play in the sky with the searchlights from other communities.

Because it was a full day, they, also, dined out while in Seattle. But, Cecil doesn't recall that with such enthusiasm. Her father always returned to the same restaurant which served his favorite meal---liver, onions, and bacon. Unfortunately, it wasn't Cecil's favorite meal!

But, they also had to get to the purpose of the trip, which was to buy their year's supply of clothes in the big city. They shopped at Frederick and Nelson's----where her uncle was the elevator operator-----The Bon March and McDougall's. They bought hats, shoes, (white patent leather for Sunday), dresses, coats, underwear, and long underwear. "We hated long underwear!" Cecil added. Sometimes, they were allowed to wear their new duds home.

Once Cecil and her friend, "Sis Upton, accompanied by their mothers made the great train shopping expedition. They wore their new clothes home. "When we got off the train, we were all dolled up," smiled Cecil.

The brakeman, maybe even the engineer and the Depot Agent along with their friends, who came nightly to meet the train, were all there to hear of their adventures, admire their new purchases and welcome them home to Black Diamond.



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