

Black Diamond Historical Society



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VIII Issue II

B.D.H.S. Newsletter

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

Editor: Ann Steiert 886-1168

IN MEMORIUM

Carolina Morganti—Mother of Ruelle, John
Margaret Vernarelli

Ed Johnson—Husband of Artie
Brother of Evan

Jessie Meneghini(Jardine) former resident

Milton Bagby—Early resident

Memorials Received in Memory of:

Frank Greens—Mr. & Mrs. Bud Simmons

Jack Darby—Mr. & Mrs. Bud Simmons

J.W. Norman—Homer & Jeanne Norman

Alice Mae Evans—Mabel King

Royce Murkowski—Crescent Temple Phythian
Sisters


Angeline Goldsberry—Muriel Wing, Mr. & Mrs.

Charles Thielken, Jewel McCloud, Carl & Ann

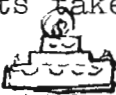
Steiert, Joe & Eileen Zumek, Margaret

Blanchard, Past Presidents' Drill Team, Ladies Auxilliary F.O.E.1490

Albert and Selma Franz—Charles and Dorothy Corlett

Meetings Scheduled 

The next General meeting will be held on June 10th at 2:00 at the Depot. We hope that all who can will attend and see what has been accomplished. Plans will be discussed for the annual "Old Timers" picnic. With everyone's help, it can be the biggest and best one ever. It will be held on July 15th, the traditional third Sunday of July. Please mark the dates on your calendars as this will be the last Newsletter before the events take place.

Happy Anniversary! 

Members celebrating their Golden Anniversaries this year are: Carl and Beatrice Unick, Frank and Rose Guidetti and Joe and Anne Sergi. She is the former Anne Pennacchi. Our very best wishes go to them and we hope that they will make their 75th anniversary.

New Officers

At the March General meeting a new slate of officers was elected. They are:

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| President— | <u>Robert Eaton</u> | Treasurer— | <u>Elaine Griffin</u> |
| Vice-President— | <u>Rachel Fagnon</u> | Secretary— | <u>Diane Olson</u> |
| Museum Curators— | <u>Carl and Ann Steiert</u> | Newsletter— | <u>Ann Steiert</u> |

All the newly-installed officers have worked hard on the whole historical movement since it began. Bob Eaton is one of the "Thursday Crew" and has given unselfishly of both time and money. Rachel Fagnon lives at Normandy Park and travels the distance to take part in activities here. She is the daughter of Pete and Beatrice Frederickson and has roots deeply imbeded in Black Diamond. Elaine and her husband Les, have restored the old confectionary and made it

Officers (cont'd)

into an Art Gallery which is a credit to our Town. She, too, has worked hard on the making of a successful Museum and Historical Society. Diane Olson is very interested in the area's history. She has been working hard doing interviews and compiling information. She does many tasks all geared to the interest of the Historical Society. Carl and Ann Steiert will now be free to concentrate on the Museum and to make it into an ever interesting place to visit.

Thursday Activities

If you haven't seen the old baggage room recently, you will be pleasantly surprised. The men have worked very hard and accomplished much. The storage cupboards in the meeting room are completed. Louis Zumek is the officer painter in the group and has done a fine job of staining and varnishing. It will house the slide show equipment and extra slides along with a section for coffee pots and lunch supplies. It is a far cry from the room we started with.

Martin Moore, Bob Eaton and Frank Guidetti have been working on the last part of the baggage room, making a workshop where painting, restoring and other jobs can be done.

Ted Barner, aided by Herman Trover has been excavating and leveling space under the building. A floor of old boards will be put down and articles which are not affected by the elements will be stored there. Much banter is exchanged when the men ask Ted about putting in the "charge" and filling the "Chute". It is hard work and he is to be complimented on it.

Carl Steiert serves as the official greeter to the many visitors on Thursday and serves, also, as the "go-fer" when supplies are needed.

Rose Guidetti has been chairman in charge of getting hostesses to serve the "Thursday Crew's" lunch. She has been doing an excellent job and she, also, is to be complimented. Lunch time is a very important time for the men in that it allows them to relax and visit. Much wonderful comradery is formed. The men have thoroughly enjoyed the cooking of the following ladies:

Patricia EarleyFlorence GarrettRachel FagnonDorothy BottsEsther BabbAnn SteiertLucille BarnerMarlene BortlesonRose GuidettiHelen ManowskiNancy NicholasMuseum Doings

With the weather getting better and people moving about more the attendance at the Museum has picked up. We will soon be having our second anniversary of the opening day. In that time there have been 7,000 signatures on our guest book. As mentioned in previous issues, we are told that 40% of visitors sign. If that is indeed true, then we have had almost 17,500 persons going through. Much interest is shown in our roots and whole history. The multiplex has 298 photos with legends on them. That alone tells much of how it was in early times. The names on the guest book read like a travelogue. We recently had visitor from Australia, Sweden, Norway and Wales. The book is well-filled with U.S. visitors. We have been having school tours during the week. We open by appointment and Carl gives them a guided tour. We give each student a small sack of coal. During the winter we had a group of history students from Green River College spend an evening with us and view the slide show. They were with their professor Nigel Adams. The most recent visitors were a group from a private Jewish school in Bellevue. We, also had a group of High School students from Enumclaw lead by Diane Franchini. We were very pleased with the behavior of each of these groups.

More Museum

They showed real interest in what they were told and what they viewed. We have been getting new artifacts and photos right along. We would like to thank:

Vern Habenicht for having the composite of the victims of the 1915 Ravenscale mine explosion reproduced into a larger size and framed. It hangs in the meeting room at the present.

Ruth Kerkes (Mills) for bringing in the framed charter of the Knights of Pythias dated 1897. It is valuable. She also, let us have a photo of her father, Luther Mills who served as a school janitor for many years.

Joan Decker (Prisk) for the two tin candy cans from John Davies Candy Store. Ken Romano for helping with our gumball machine. Ken gave us the machine, a 1923 model. He keeps it stocked with gum and does the servicing of the machine. Hardly a parent escapes without spending a penny. Grow-ups have been seen chewing also!!

Larry Hoffman for the excellent job he has done in reproducing the pictures and making slides from them.

Memories of Mommas

By Diane Olson

It happened at a Black Diamond PTA meeting, back in the twenties. Dora Shafer, the wife of the new eighth grade teacher, was playing a violin solo for the group. She had selected an old European folk song. When she played her last note, she looked up to see the women crying. Had she played off-key? She was most upset. Then she found out that the old song was only too familiar to the women. It reminded them of the Old Country and how far away they were from the security of their family and their homeland traditions.

But crying for these women of the miners was not a common occurrence. They simply didn't have the time. As Louie Callero said of his mother, "She just worked her fool head off."

Jenny Edwards recalled, "My mother would be up at four in the morning to light the fire in the wash house, because that's where the men changed to go to work. She would go to bed somewhere around ten or ten thirty."

"Every woman with a family had plenty to do." Jenny continued, "There was no bakery. There was nothing. You had plenty of washing. You had plenty of ironing and you did all the baking. My mother had four men that boarded and roomed at our house. With four boarders there was plenty for every woman to do. And then, of course, you had your days for these things. Monday was washing. Tuesday was ironing, Wednesday---sometimes you would take that as the idle Day. Friday, of course, was cleaning day. Saturday was baking day. They all followed the same pattern. Then with your fraternal organizations and the Ladies of the Church, both the Baptist and Congregational, they always had a dinner in the old Town Hall. Everybody in town came to the dinner. My mother was the one from the Baptist church that would go around and solicit. They would have that dinner maybe once a year."

The women usually spent their day of leisure helping others. If they weren't working at home that was leisure. "Everybody cared about everybody else." said Cecil Gwilym Robinson. "My mother used to help the doctors because she was very good at nursing although she wasn't trained. She was just a natural. If any tragedies happened, they'd call Mother and she'd go."

Memories of Mommas cont'd

Many of the women supplemented the family's income. Jim Poalucci's mother trained as a seamstress. She not only sewed up the clothes for the family, but took in sewing. "All day long, I can still see her busy sewing," recalled Jim, "Sewing, repairing, sewing and repairing." She was noted for her culinary skills too, and could cook for banquets for the mine officials."

The Poaluccis had an outdoor oven that Jim and his Dad built. Jim's Mom's sponge cakes were so popular that people would order them for special occasions. Jim said the recipe called for 12 egg yolks, 12 Tbsp. flour, 12 Tbsp of sugar flavoring and a long stirring session. That was Jim's job. "I would stir with my right hand, and then I would stir with my left hand."

When he changed hands, Jim's Mom would say, "Oh, no no no no! Don't you do! You unwind it all!"

Jim continued, "You had to stir to build volume. It took about a half hour. It was a little bigger than an angel cake--and then put it in the oven. Oh! that oven made a beautiful cake! Come up nice and big and never a flop. More people asked for them at Easter."

Regina Marchx White^Hill's mom raised ten children (plus a few cousins) ran a chicken ranch (about 2000 chickens), canned all her own food in two quart jars, made and sold ice cream. Francis Marchx said many a Saturday night was spent squeezing lemons for lemon sherbet. The next morning, they would take the ice cream out on three different carts to Black Diamond, Cumberland, and to Kangley. To sell for a nickel a scoop. It was not in cones, people brought their own containers. Any leftover ice cream would be sold the following week. If it was left for more than three weeks, Mama Marchx would call in the neighborhood kids for a free ice cream feed.

Besides that, she was on the Black Diamond School Board. If she didn't like the way things went, she said so, even if it meant doing battle with the "Company People" that were on the Board.

Somehow the women managed to "create" the money needed to provide the special things they wanted for their children, Jenny Edwards remembered what happened when she wanted to learn to play the family organ. "I couldn't play the organ because my legs weren't long enough to reach the pedals. Tears were always right at hand. I cried. I couldn't play it."

"So my mother said, " We'll have to see. Maybe we can get a piano. "Ok, we got a piano...My mother paid \$600 for that piano...and so help me, \$600 in those days was something." To this day, Jenny still plays well at age 96.

Many women were left widows with young children at home. Henry Jones' and Bertha Jones Ingalls' father died during the great flu epidemic in 1920. Their mother had a little money set aside and they owned their own home. Eve Thomas' Mom, also, left a widow with six children when her husband was killed in the mines in 1896. She raised the kids and took in boarders.

Most of the early families came to Black Diamond as a group from Nortonville California. They shared their joys and sorrows. The new folks started arriving from the poverty of Europe around the turn of the century. They settled, for the most part, in ethnic communities and also took care of each other. Many of the women, working at home in their little community continued to speak their native tongue. If they didn't live in their ethnic community, such as the Italian section, life could be very lonely for them. It could, indeed, lead to tears and discouragement, whether they were busy or not.

Mommas (cont'd)

Cecil remembered one Italian family that was their neighbor. The lady took in boarders to supplement the family income. One day the woman's child fell in a tub of water in the wash house. Fortunately, Cecil's mother was there to revive the child. But evidently, there was too much for the family to cope with. They returned to Italy. Cecil's mom gave the woman a hat to wear on her trip in exchange for a string of garlic.

But most of them survived. Dreams becoming reality, and humor probably saved the day for many of them. It was a moment of high achievement in Rosa Callero's life when her son, Andy, graduated from High School. He was the first boy and the first child in their family to go beyond the eighth grade. And she was very proud of the fact that he was, also, the smartest boy in the class. And, if she was asked, she could admit that he was the only boy in the class.

So, thank you and a belated "Happy Mother's Day" to you women of Black Diamond. You left us a legacy of endurance, Initiative, strength and humor.

Old Tavern Reborn

For many years the old building stood getting more dilapidated all the time. Most people would have wagered that ~~no~~ way could it be salvaged. Three men, Jim McCray, John Foster and Dennis Phillips bought the building from Les and Elaine Griffin and proceeded to make our dream come true. It is one of the oldest buildings in town and steeped in History. It is said that it began as a store in a log cabin on the site. Then, a larger store was built around the cabin. The cabin was demolished as they needed firewood and burned that way. It served as a store for many years. When the Krause saloon went out of business during prohibition the store was converted into a Billiard Parlor. No hard liquor was served. It was then owned by Paul Medica and Morgan Davis. The whole complex of buildings served as many things through the years. Part of it was a gym, a meat market, a jewelry store, a car agency and during its last days it was a tavern, an auto repair shop and a stage office. It is being rebuilt in two phases. The first phase which will be in the old tavern section will house a saloon-type establishment which will specialize in serving Pizza. The second phase will be where the Garage had been and will be made into a green-house type restaurant facing Mount Rainier. Much interest is being exhibited already. Suggestions and stories are flying fast! We are all glad that yet another building has been saved.

METHUSALEH

Methuselah ate what he found on his plate,
 And never, as people do now,
 Did he note the amount of the calory count;
 He ate because it was chow.
 He wasn't disturbed as at dinner he sat,
 Devouring a roast or a pie,
 To think it was lacking granular fat
 Or a couple of vitamins shy.
 He cheerfully chewed each species of food,
 Unmindful of troubles or fears
 Lest his health might be hurt
 By some fancy dessert;
 And he lived over nine hundred years!

From the Steiert

Since the time in 1975 when the idea of a Historical Society was first conceived our interest has grown steadily. At first the dream of actually turning the Depot into a Museum seemed very remotely possible. As time went on, it got more exciting and then actually became a fact. In order to have this happen, it has taken a lot of work, money and interest on the part of everyone. We would like to thank all the members for being so supportive in each phase while we were officers of the Society. Without lots of help, it could not have been done. We felt that it was time to turn over the reins to someone else for two reasons. First, there was too much information vested in just the two of us. If a misfortune had befallen us, not enough people knew what was going on. We felt that was an unhealthy situation for any organization to have. The Museum is growing and we felt that we were neglecting areas which would make it a better Museum yet. Now as Curators we can concentrate on them. Thanks again to all of you who have helped so much. The new officers are good and interested people and we hope that you will extend your co-operation to them.

Carl Steiert
Ann Steiert

Questions and Answers

When contemplating our childhoods some of us expressed the "least favorite" jobs that we were assigned while we were growing up. Some of the following were expressed:

Gertrude Weston: I hated to carry slop to the hogs almost as much as I hated to scrub the bare wooden floors with a brush on my hands and knees

Patricia Farley Each day I had to feed a goose which didn't like me. I was terrified of it.

George Savicke My dad pruned our fruit orchard and I had to pick up the twigs I would pick and pick and look back, it didn't seem as though I had made a dent!

May Savicke I hated to go into the hen house and get the eggs. I just knew the hens were going to bite me.

Rose Guidetti I hated to go into the root cellar and get out fruits and vegetables. All those spiders, bugs and Cobwebs Ugh!

Carl Steiert I hated to clean the chicken coops. All that dust and "stuff" I always came out covered and dirty.

Louis Zumek I got the duty of emptying the chamber pots each morning. I'm sure it was a morning chore for many but I hated it.

Ann Steiert I hated to scrub down the privy each Saturday. It meant a lot of work carrying the hot soapy water and then buckets of rinse water. It was long before outdoor water faucets and hoses!

Jim Vernarelli I had to milk a goat who would not co-operate. I'd get so mad I'd sometimes give her a kick in the rear.

Washing Dishes was by far the least favorite of several people:

Frank Guidetti, Bob Eaton, Elaine Griffin, who says she still hates them.

Diane Olson said the only thing that helped was that she got to listen to the radio while doing dishes.

From the Editor

I'd like to encourage all of you to submit material for the Newsletter. Don't forget this is your Historical Society and your paper. We all have memories and experiences which others would like to share with you. Please keep the articles and materials coming for the Museum. I only wish I could tell you the great things that are said about the facility. Thanks....Ann



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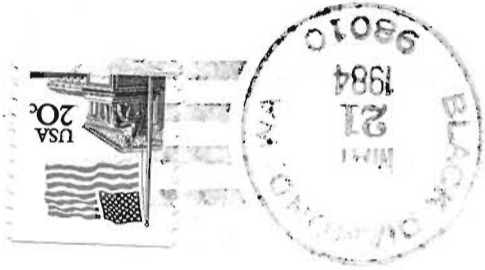
The Old Confectionery Art Gallery

- PAINTINGS
- DRAWINGS
- SCULPTURE
- POTTERY
- PRINTS

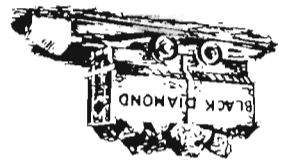
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