

Black Diamond Historical Society



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Black Diamond, Washington

Volume XI Issue IV

B.D.H.S. Newsletter

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

Editor: Ann Steiert 886-1168.

MEMORIALS

Louis Capponi.....Father of Charles,  
Robert and Penny, a longtime resident.  
Marie Birmingham (Sternig) a former  
Black Diamond resident.

Note: In the last Newsletter the name  
of Inez (Costi) Aden was omitted as  
the sister of Frank Costi. Our very  
deepest apologies....

Memorials received:

- Frank Costi from Joseph Fosnick and  
Evelyn Nichol
- Muriel Wing from Evelyn Nichol and  
Mr. & Mrs. Bud Simmons
- Marie Birmingham from Pat Sternig
- Louis Zumek from Evelyn Nichol and  
Mr. & Mrs. Bud Simmons

- Arthur Winbeckler from Mr. & Mrs. Bud Simmons
- Louis Capponi from Lois Zumek and Family
- Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Tokin      Albert & Rose Tokin
- Arnie & Parma Johnson      Lena Church
- Raymond Rosso from Louis Rosso

- Carl & Ann Steiert
- Jewel & Mike McCloud
- Donald & Joyce Furman

MEETINGS



The last General meeting was held on October 12. There were 20 persons in attendance. A review was held of the past month's accomplishments and goals for the future were discussed. The need for more space was noted and plans for adding the extra room were discussed. The next General meeting will be held the second Sunday in February, at the Museum at 2:00 p.m. Please put this on your calendar.



CHRISTMAS PARTY



The annual Christmas Get-together will be held on December 7. At the Museum. It will begin at 2:00 p.m. We would love to hear any suggestions you might have or people we might contact. Write to us at Box 232 or call 886-2327 or 886-1168. Usual Christmas treats are in order.

LABOR DAY



The Historical Society's entry in the annual Labor Day Parade featured the Thursday Crew with their tools. Bob Eaton and Ted Barner represented the Crew with the help of Shelly & Kelly Troop, Andrea Steiert, Amy Franklin and her friend Melissa Nelson. The Float won a first prize. After the parade the Museum was open for viewing and over 200 people went through the premises. Most were amazed at what they saw and very enthusiastic comments were heard.

The past six months have seen a great deal of progress around the exterior of the Museum. The Memorial Garden has been completed. The railroad track has been laid. A robust railing has been built at the top of the Garden to keep the sliding vehicles from coming down into the Depot area during icy weather.

The Memorial Garden was completed when the bronze plaque bearing the inscription "In Memory of Frank Guidetti and other Members" was installed. The plaque was purchased and donated by Rose Guidetti. The Garden has gotten many favorable comments from Museum visitors.

The track is the result of much hard labor on the part of the Thursday Crew. It would have been necessary to have watched each week to fully realize how much was involved and what labor went into its installation. It, too, gets a lot of good reports. Everyone can envision a red caboose sitting on it waiting for passengers!

As reported in an earlier Newsletter, the hill by the Confectionary was a real bummer during the icy weather. Many cars tried to stop at the bottom and slid on over into the Memorial Garden. Now there is a very sturdy railing made of treated poles. They were donated by Dan and Nancy Nicholas and the Palmer Coking Coal Co. They are somewhat larger than the usual railing poles but worked out great to make the kind of railing needed. We thank the folks that donated them. Thanks are also due to Ed Gokey who donated his hole-digging equipment and to Charles Capponi who volunteered to run it. The ground was very firmly packed after many years lying undisturbed. Joe Kuzaro and Joe Romedo helped the Thursday Crew. The men got a real workout! One person remarked that it would take a locomotive to dislodge it!

The Black Diamond Grade School had a very large school bell which they have donated to the Society. It came from the Selleck School and is similar to the one which hung in the original Grade school in Black Diamond. There has been a belfry built to simulate the one on top of the old grade school and the bell has been installed. It is next to the jail. The bell is secured so that it can be rung when desired but not at random. It inspires lots of questions from our visitors.

While all this work has been going on the good cooks of the Society have seen to it that the men have a good noon meal. The following have donated their time and efforts:

<u>Lucille Barner</u>	<u>Marlene Bortleson</u>	<u>Betty Luke</u>	<u>Dorothy Botts</u>
<u>Frank Manowski</u>	<u>Rose Guidetti</u>	<u>Norma Gumser</u>	<u>Ann Steiert</u>
<u>Gertrude Botts</u>	<u>Rachel Fagnon</u>		

If other cooks are available please give Rose Guidetti a call at 886-2858

#### MEMORIAL TIES

The response to the "Memorial Ties" has been phenomenal. There are 78 ties available. To date 76 have been spoken for. Plans are being made for the plaque which will be installed on the outside of the Museum for all to read. A complete list of donors will be published in the next Newsletter when the project will have been completed. The response is gratifying.

From the Key to Black Diamond Good Eats, circa 1913:



#### Pumpkin Pie



1 quart rich milk, 3 cups mashed pumpkin, 2 cups sugar, a little piece of butter, 4 eggs, a scant tablespoon Nutmeg, same of cinnamon. Beat the yolks thoroughly before adding and stir in well-beaten whites just before putting pie in oven. Have a rich crust and bake in a quick oven. This recipe is sufficient for three pies.

Mrs. H. Campbell

From an interview with James Poalucci by Diane Olson:

My First Thanksgiving.

Early in this century, Black Diamond was in its coal mining heyday. This created a demand for more people to work the mines. It drew many European immigrant families, seeking relief from the poverty of their home country. When they arrived here, they continued their traditional celebrations. However, they, also, experienced the holidays unique to their new country. The United States of America. Jim Poalucci recalled, in an interview for the Historical Society, his "First Thanksgiving."

"My first Thanksgiving, I must have been about the eighth grade. Remember Ronald McClain? His dad was ~~connected~~ in Olympia. He was in the same class--- --the eighth grade. He invited me to come down for Thanksgiving dinner at their house. Never had been to one."

"I went down there to Clay Mine (Ron's home). His Mom put on a NICE dinner. She had a big goose and all the trimmings. I still remember that. His dad was there, too, and his brother.

Italians celebrated Christmas, New years and , of course, Easter---that was a big one. Fourth of July was American. That's about it. In Italy, they celebrate some Saints days which you don't celebrate here.

But, that's the first Thanksgiving that I actually saw. Otherwise we had the regular. We might have had chicken, maybe but Thanksgiving didn't mean much to me until Ron.

I don't know how he got the idea. Evidently, his folks just picked out someone at school and invited them for Thanksgiving dinner. They were nice people. After that I had a lot of Thanksgiving dinners."

Jim's parents arrived in Seattle on St. Patrick's Day in 1909. Jim was born the following December in Black Diamond. Jim has lived in Seattle for many years but has never broken his ties with his home town. He became a baker and each Black Diamond Day has baked and donated a special cake for our celebration. The past few months have been very sad for he lost his wife after a prolonged illness.

From the Pacific Coast Bulletin dated January 25, 1923

World's Great Need

A little more kindness and a little less creed.  
A little more giving and a little less greed.  
A little more smile and a little less frown.  
A little less knocking a man when he's down.  
A little more "we" and a little less "I".  
A little more laughs and a little less cry.  
A little more flowers on the pathway of life;  
And fewer on graves at the end of the strife.

Calendars

As mentioned in the last Newsletter the Society will not be publishing a calendar this year. Dave Sprau a member from Palmer is publishing a railroading calendar. He has agreed to let us have it at his price. It will sell for \$5.00. It is interesting in that it has photographs of many railroad depots etc. in our area.

The following article taken from a Pacific Coast Bulletin dated Jan.25, 1923

How Henry Becker Makes it Pay

Nothing is more refreshing than to find an individual whose example is a model for others and whose industry and frugality commend his affairs to the Community in which he lives. Such a man is Henry Becker, Fireboss at Black Diamond Mine. Let us cite an instance.

The day's shift is done and the Company Store is crowded with the boys in to stock up before closing time. Among those who crowd up to the cashier's window is Henry Becker. Instead of paying out money he's taking it in, for the store is paying him the market price for 10 dozen eggs which he has just delivered.

Now Becker will tell you that he has only 40 hens, laying some two and one half dozen eggs daily, but with plenty of space to care for them and the little time it takes to look after them. There is no little revenue to be derived from such a source. Of course, Henry gives Mrs. Becker most of the credit for managing that end of the business.

Becker came to this country from Germany in 1907, where as a boy he drove a mule in some of the very mines which the French have just taken over. For ten years he worked in the mines at Butte and acquired a home of his own. But since he came to Black Diamond more than a year ago, he decided to cast his lot permanently with the Pacific Coast Coal Co. and to make his future home in Black Diamond. The Beckers have five children, the eldest ten years of age.

At the time of the last severe Bump in the Black Diamond Mine just before Christmas Becker earned the undying respect of some 20 men in his gang, as well as the hearty commendation and praise of the Company. When the Bump occurred on the 9th level, the men found their means of exit cut off completely. Becker, alone, however knew of another passageway leading up to the eighth level through which he led his men to safety.

Note: Mr. Becker was the father of Emma Sigmund and Ann Eddy. Their brother was, also, Henry and sisters Mary and Ethel. He was killed in the mine in 1925. Mrs. Becker lived to be 91 years of age.

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Recent acquisitions:

Joe and Alice Kock donated a Glass slide projector.

Elizabeth Plass sent a photo of large home at Clay Mine which had belonged to the Superintendent and later lived in by the Plass Family.

William Petchnick brought in two chamber Pots...different models. He, also, brought two clothes wringers.

Duda Vernarelli's daughters, Virginia and Donna donated the scale which was used in their Grandfather's produce business circa 1913.

Verna Thompson donated a very good picture of the first Confectionary building.

E.S. Lotson donated a gas motor for our Maytag washer and a new Mystery tool!

William Ribovik of Renton donated 6 briquets retrieved from Lake Washington

Rick Miller brought in several interesting bottles.

Mary Ungherini brought in an interesting bottle from Italy and a school record of Amos Ungherini.

Elsie Marchetti donated a child's wall desk and an unusual bottle.

MUSEUM ATTENDANCE

There have been 1195 signatures counted in the guest book at the Museum from June 15 until October 15. Since we are told that only 40% of people going through sign the register we have had nearly 3000 people through during the summer months. It is interesting to read the signatures and to see where the people come from. The State of Washington is well represented.

Other places are:

<u>Boulder Colorado</u>	<u>Roshanon, Texas</u>	<u>Honolulu</u>	<u>Anchorage</u>
<u>Simsbury, Conn.</u>	<u>Church 8, New Zealand</u>	<u>Norwalk, CA.</u>	<u>Mesa, Arizona</u>
<u>Boise Idaho</u>	<u>Newmarket, Ontario</u>	<u>Saskatoon, Sask.</u>	<u>Syracuse, N.Y.</u>
<u>Minneapolis, Minn.</u>	<u>Atlanta, Georgia</u>	<u>San Diego, CA</u>	

Attendance normally slows down during the winter months. The past few weeks there have been several school groups going through. Maple Valley, alone, has had 75 children.

Elaine Griffin and her "sitters" have done a great job of manning the place. She reports that she could use some more members willing to substitute when the regulars have emergencies and can't make it. Please think about it and if you can spare three hours periodically to help out. Call 886-2663 or 886-1168

FIRE SIREN

The Museum has acquired the first fire siren in the Town of Black Diamond. It was mounted on top of the Old Confectionary building. Before the advent of this siren the whistle used to blow at the mine to alert people of a fire. The siren was donated by the Black Diamond Fire Department. The Thursday Crew is planning to install it somewhere on the Museum premises.

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The following letter was said to have been found on the street in Kansas City in the 1800's. Published courtesy Lewis County Log

Dear Son:

Your pa has a good job now, the first one in 48 years. We are a great deal better off than we were. Your pa gets \$14.95 every Thursday, so we thought we would do a little fixin' up.

We sent to Monkie Wards fer one of them new-fangled things called a bathroom, that your hear tell of in some houses. It is put in place by a man called a plumber.

On one side of the room is a big long thing like the pigs drink out of. Only you get in it and wash your body all over. On the other side of the room is a little white thing called a sinkm this is fer little washings. like your hands and face. But over in the conner, son, we've got something there, a little contraption that you put one foot in and wash it and then you pull a little chain and get fresh water to wash the other foot in.

Two lids came with the dern thing, and we ain't had any use fer them so I'm using one fer a bread board and the other one has a big hole in it, so we took it and framed Grandpa's picture with it.

They are awful nice people to deal with, they sent us a big roll of writin paper with it.

Take Kerr of yourself, Son.

Pa,

Busy Railroad Avenue  
1930 to 1940

---

Railroad Avenue was the hub of activities during the depressed days of the 1930's and 1940's.

The Pool Hall which was originally a store was now a tavern run by Grover Kertis. A familiar sight was a group of men sitting on the "Loafin'rail" which ran alongside of it. Here groups of men would gather after work and between shifts to discuss politics, cars, girls and whatever a bunch of men want to discuss. It was a popular spot for car salesmen to stop by and display their new models. Other salesmen, also, stopped by. Town Gossip was exchanged.

Across the street kindly Alice Davies held sway as she dispensed school supplies and Sodas at the Old Confectionary. She was a happy person who made everyone feel good.

Next door was the Pacific Coast Coal Company Hotel. It was the biggest building in Town. It had 67 rooms. It had a room which housed the Town's only Library. The girls in town would scoot out of there when getting books to read. The Hotel housed mostly single workers from Mine 11 and the Indian Mine. It was built about 1918 and torn down in 1943 after mining declined.

The Diamond Garage shared walls with the Pool Hall. Shorty Grove, Arvid Larson and Evan Thomas were propoetors. Bookkeepers were Mary Savicke, Lois Thomas and Elizabeth Brown. Carl Steiert was a very young mechanic.

At that time they were also a Ford Agency. Larson was very popular on his run of the stages to Seattle. That was one of the ways people did get to go to Seattle.

The big Company Store dominated the street. Here, because it was before the advent of shopping centers and autos as we know thm now, we did most of our shoppng. Harry McDowell was manager of the Store. Fred Strange, Lila Allen, Amos Ungherini, and Vi Campbell worked in the office. Others who worked there were Frank Cross, Tom Jardine, Bill Morgan, Mrs. Whipple, Mary Grgurich and Beatrice Fredericksen. It fascinated the children to watch them cut into a big wheel of cheese. It, also, made them glad when their parents paid their account and received a bag of candy.

The Meat Market was run by Pete Fredericksen. Persons who worked and got their start in the market were Joe Menalia, Ed Banhero. Later John Markus and Frank Zumek owned the Shop.

The Bakery was much as it is now. The Hadley Family and George and Leone Eipper were bakers. The Eippers were known for their special Date Bread.

The Show Hall held movies several nights a week. Prices 10¢ Kids 25¢ adults. Here the Community Club put on boxing matches called Smokers. Christmas parties and many special events were held there. Henry Babb was the Club präsident and kept the place hopping.

The Barber shop was next to the Showhall and had a pretty steady clientele.

The Depot no longer served as a place for trains to stop. The center portion was turned into a cafe run by Mrs. "Hoot" Gibson and later run by Pat Sternig. The front rooms served as many things such as a phone exchange, library, and water department office.

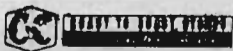
Railroad avenue is experiencing a rebirth. The Bakery has remodeled the inside and still sells all it can produce. The Pool Hall has been remodeled and is doing very well. The Old Confectionary building is now an Antique Mall with 14 small shops inside and really interesting. The MCB building is new since then and kept in good shape. The Lepot has contributed much to the charm of the area.

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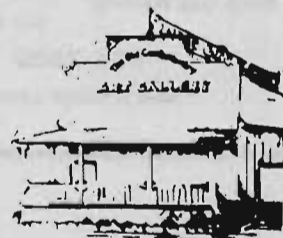
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