

Black Diamond Historical Society



MUSEUM HOURS

Saturday & Sunday ————— Noon to 3:00 p.m.
Thursdays ————— 9:00 a.m. to 4:00
For special arrangements or tours —————
Call: 886-1168 or 886-2327
Museum No. 886-2142

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Black Diamond, WA.

XVIII Issue III

B.D.H.S. Newsletter

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Family , Annual	_____ 7.00
Lifetime	_____ 50.00
Family Lifetime	_____ 75.00
Annual Business	_____ 15.00

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

Editor: → Ann Steiert 886-1168

In Memoriam

Mary Grgurich: Lived in Black Diamond since 1927. Mother of Frank, Two Grandsons , Peter and James. Sister of Ann Steiert.

Memorials

Mary Grgurich — Donald Botts, Olgs & Everett Swann, Mr. & Mrs. Mason, Florence Garrett, Mr. & Mrs. Deryl Sleight, Muriel Waldo Vern & Ida Satrau, Carl & Ann Steiert.

People living here 1925



Our last Newsletter discussed some of the names of persons who had been living her in 1925 and earlier. The following names have been added to the list: Tom Zumek, Livia Lombardini (Vernarelli) and Joe Kuzaro. If you know any others please, let us know..

OCTOBER MEETING

There is going to be a meeting on October 2. It will be held at one in the afternoon. It has been a long time since we have had a real business meeting and there are many things that need to be talked about and the input from all members is needed. At this point there are a few people making all the decisions and doing most of the work. The membership needs to be aware of what is going on. We need suggestions and opinions from all members. Please try and come on October 2 at 1:00 p.m.

Labor Day Coming Up.



It will be on us before the October meeting. We are in need of any ideas to help us take part in this important Celebration. Right now we are trying to think up an idea about a parade entry. Does anyone have any idea about what we can enter to represent the Historical Society? For the past years Carl has had his Model T's decorated and represented the Society. He has not been feeling too well for the past few weeks and doesn't feel like doing it this year. He says that he has always been in the parade and has not been able to watch a parade for many years. Any suggestions will be appreciated. Labor Day is a very big Day in Black Diamond and we should be represented.

Museum

The Museum is as busy as ever. There have been over 4,000 persons through since the first of the year. They come from all over the world. We ask all who come in to sign the guest book and we are delighted by the places we see on it.

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MUSEUM (cont'd)

Almost every State has been named. We had people from Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Austrailia and many others. There are many from our nearby states. Texas and California are often seen on the pages of the guest book.

The Bakery has been doing a big business and many of the people who go there also drop in to see us. We actually help each other.

We are delighted with the attendance but this compounds our problem of not having enough people to help on open days. We have a few who are very faithful and sit the place often. After all the years that we have been open there are times when we really need someone to help. We have asked in the Newsletter for volunteers but so far we have not had one offer. We'd like to ask all of you to give it some thought and give us a hand.

We'd like to thank Donald Botts and Charles and Dorothy Corlett for all that they do. Carl and I spend many hours there. On some weeks we spend time almost every day of the week guiding tours and special groups through. We do need help.

THURSDAY DOINGS

The Thursday Gang has been busy doing outside work as well as some inside. After the many years that we have been working on the building there had been an accumulation of things under the buildings which were of no use to us any longer. It was beginning to be an eyesore. They yarded most of it out to where they could handle it and with the generous help of Emil Rossi were able to have him take it to a disposal place and actually get paid for it. We thank Emil for helping us. It really looks a lot neater and cleaner in that area. They worked on the sidewalk in front of the Wash House and made that area look a lot better.

The few days of scorching weather did not help their production. The way the Museum is situated allows the sun to pound down on it all day long. Scott Sena has been finishing the painting of the outside.

We thank our loyal crew for showing up each week and working so hard. We thank Joe Kuzaro, Gerald Bainton, Don Botts, Ted Barner, Carl Steiert, Bob Eaton and Bob Burdic work real hard each Thursday. Charles Corlet is always on the job

They are partly paid by receiving the good lunches brought in by the Cooks. Since the last Newsletter in May the following ladies have brought lunches for them: Diane Olson, Cindy Jarvis, Linda Maks, Jewell McCloud, Vivian Bainton, Marlene Bortleson, Rose Guidetti, Elsie Parkin, Had Rossi and Ann Steiert.

It is a pleasure to feed these men. They are like a big family. Everyone is so appreciative and good friends. We would still like to have some volunteers to help relieve the present ones. If each one of us who could would help Nobody would have to do it very often. How about it???????

CHILDREN

The Museum has a lot of children as visitors too. During the school year we have many of the kids going to school. They come in bus loads. We had a bus load come down from a school in Bellingham just shortly before school was out. The other day we had a group of children with their minister and a chaperon who were studying what it would be like to be imprisoned. They asked permission to use our jail and get the feeling of being "locked up". They were allowed to sit in one cell while they discussed the jailed feeling. We told them about the history of our jail and they finished with a short tour of the Museum. They went away looking very pleased.

There are many children who are "home schooling" who come with their folks and discuss displays. Many of the adults who come with them lead them from one

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display to another and we can hear them discuss items. It is a good way for them to see first hand what different things look like.

AND THEN THERE ARE CHILDREN.....

This did not happen at the Museum but at a local Grocery Store:

One day while shopping I was pushing my grocery cart through a crowded aisle. Coming toward me was a young mother with two small boys in her cart. AS I passed her I drove carefully and looked at their cart lest I catch one of the boy's hand or something. AS I passed their cart, one of the boys said, "Whatcha lookin'at Old Woman?" We've been laughing ever since!!!

"EXPANSION GOOD OR BAD"

Black Diamond is in the process of growing bigger. There have been many new homes built already and from the reports are there is going to be a real boom of building. At a recent meeting a group of women were discussing the whole situation. There were a few of us who had lived through those "Good Old Days" and could remember what was different from these days.

When the first people came up to begin their Town they had to make their first concern a matter of getting their homes built and making the place a good place to live. They had to make the most of everyone's talents and abilities. That took some time because they did not have the wonderful tools and things to work with that are available now. They were not able to travel as far from home because there was no transportation because it was long before cars and good roads. They were enterprising and as time went by they learned to speak better English and could visit better. When the cars did come there were few who could afford them. They focused on the things they had to work with here and who could perform in any manner.

For entertainment they relied on local talent. There were men who organized a great Barber Shop Quartet. All the churches had good choirs. Many of the men had good voices. The Show Hall offered them a place to perform and they all took the opportunity to do so. Many men played band instruments. It was not long before the Black Diamond Community Band was playing a lot and went to play in State sponsored contests where they won many prizes. Many children took music lessons on various instruments.

The people were interested in Soccer and Baseball. There were teams in the neighboring towns and they would compete against one another. Because these were home Town players and not imports everyone was very supportive of each game and interest ran high. It is said that sometimes there would be fights after the game that surpassed the original games for excitement. Picnics were a real activity. Almost every weekend there would be groups of people going towards the "Gorge, Lake Twelve and Franklin".

Everyone was acquainted and enjoyed hometown pleasures. Hardly anyone ever got paid for performing. It was like a huge family and everyone took an interest in each other. Each success was shared by the whole Community.

The Masonic Hall had a dance floor and for many years Rufe Weston and his dance band played on weekends. The school had a wonderful teacher, Florence Porter who was great at putting on plays for the school kids. Mothers helped a lot and made many costumes. When crepe paper first came out we thought we really had it made!!!

What we wish for now is that some of the old spirit be revived in Black Diamond. We have many new people who we are trying to approach and get to know better. Times have changed but people still have talents and things they are able to do well. Let's get together as of old and have some local fun!!

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"JOHN DAVIES CANDY STORE"

In any Community as close knit as Black Diamond has always been, there is always some one or something that stands out special for everyone. In this case there are very few of the older generation who do not remember John Davies and his Candy Store. Children of all ages spent time in his Shop. There we were introduced to good Auburn Ice Cream, penny candies and such as Root Beer Barrels, strips of Bacon, Black Sambos, Jaw breakers, Licorice whips, Banana chews. Small children and girls were seen buying those treats. The boys stayed to play the slot machine. One man in reminiscing told of his prowess beating the machine. It seems he had a nickel with a hole drilled in it and suspended by a string. He was able to lower the nickel into the slot until it tripped the mechanism and then he would yank it out. He became quite an expert at doing it. The slot machine in question is on display at the Museum. Everyone remembers the delicious taste of Auburn Ice Cream. Evan Thomas worked for John when he was a young man, tells of the Ice Cream coming in by train, in huge barrels and having to bring it up the hill to the shop. It was a hard job because it was so heavy. On special occasions John would dispense so many cones that his thumb would go out of joint. Many men remember their teens and the time spent around the pot-bellied stove, listening to John's tales. When you entered his shop you lost your identity. Every girl was named Mary and all the boys Johnnie. He was a strict disciplinarian. When some "ruffian" broke his rules---out they would go. John and his wife Lizzie had two sons and three daughters. Although his business brought so much pleasure to many, within his own family he was fated to much sorrow. One small daughter drowned when she fell into a privy, a son was killed in a gun related accident and another daughter died in childbirth. His last son "skeeks" lived until he was a grown man but still preceded John in death. His last daughter Ivy Adams died last. Most people who knew John and his good works feel that what the youth of today need is more people like him who really care for them. He'd say, "By Jabber!"

Note for those who don't recall: John's Store was located half way up the hill on Baker St. and First Ave. Just before you turn right into the new Senior Housing area.

"SHOOL WILL SOON BE STARTING"

the following is a prayer for bus drivers:

Please, Lord watch over me this day. Please help me to remember to watch all five mirrors, two dozen windows, eight gauges, six warning lights, six dozen faces three lanes of traffic and to keep a third eye open for wobbling bicycles and daydreaming pedestrians, especially teen-agers wearing headsets who are in another world.

Please Lord, help me hear all train whistles, truck and automobile horns police sirens and two-way radios.

Please Lord give me a hand for the gear lever, the steering wheel the route book and the radio microphone.

And Lord, please grant me the self-control to keep my hands away from Johnny's neck. And one more thing, don't let Mary be sick all over the bus.

MORE ARTIFACTS

The latest articles to come in for display are interesting and old:

A Conlon Washing Machine. It is different than any we had.

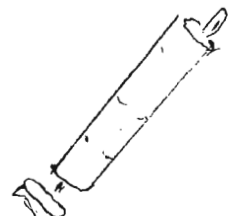
A Printing press, and a corn silage maker.

Robt. Barry brought numerous logging tools.

A wheel chair such as FDR had. It is an armchair with wheels.

A vacuum cleaner. It is manual and pumped by hand.

We are very pleased by the enthusiasm shown when people visit the Museum.



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The following is a "Memory" shared with us for the Mining the Memories book by Verna Thompson. It tells of some of the experiences her family had when they came to Black Diamond.

My Dad and his mother came here from Nortonville, CA. in 1883. They came to Renton and then they had to come by horse and buggy for a ways and then they had to walk. She was the first woman brought into camp. It was all tents, except two men had a cabin down here on this creek. They made them move and gave her the cabin.

My Dad got burned in a explosion in Nortonville. That's why he didn't have any hair. My Granddad got killed in that explosion. The cemetery at Nortonville has a plaque with all the men's names on it that were killed in that explosion. My Dad said he didn't know if my grandfather would have died but when he called to my Dad, he inhaled the flame and it killed him.

My Dad was born in Pennsylvania. I imagine his dad was a miner back in Wales. My dad only went to the third grade in school and then his dad took him into the mines. That is the way they did back there.

My mother came to Black Diamond in 1884 from Nortonville. She was two years old. They lived in a tent first, down behind where the store was. My Grandma had a hotel behind the depot. There was only three single girls in camp for a long time.

In those days they just had midwives taking care of the mothers. They didn't have a doctor. I remember Mrs. Boos and Lottie Kramer and Mrs. Reynolds. Old Grandma Watkins took care of everybody.

The first grave was in 1887. It was a little girl. My Dad said they carried the casket through the woods, from the house over to the cemetery. The Company gave them the plot now they claim Tim Morgan did-----Anyway somebody did.

My Dad said that there were a few Chinese here in the very early days. They put in the track. Mama said she used to sneak up past the store and watch them on the track. But my Dad said they never stuck around. They didn't like the mine. They had a regular settlement down on Lake 14 and out past Morgansville.

My Dad was a Democrat. There was nothing they could do wrong. The town big shots were all Republicans. Well, come election time the town would go Democrat and my Dad would get canned.

The people in town used to visit a lot. They would have bazaars and big sales. They used to have what they call "Round the World". They'd sell tickets and you'd go to different families---different nationalities---and they'd serve something from their country. You'd go from one house to another. A little bit at every house but be some little thing from each country. It was just like one big family. Different nationalities kind of settled in a different part of town. It still didn't make any difference. We got together.

Verna Thompson is one of few remaining members of pioneer families left in Black Diamond. We are grateful to her and the rest of the people who shared their stories and helped to produce the ever popular "Mining the Memories" put together by Diane and Cory Olson assisted by Carl Steiert. It is still selling. Many Museum visitors buy them. A lot of people tell us that they have already purchased one but have lost it to interested visitors. One lady said she was on her fifth book....her children had "borrowed" the others. We read ours a lot because there is so much in the book that one can't possibly remember it all.

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MINERS NOW AND THEN

When coal mining was in its early beginnings the miners worked in very primitive ways. Nobody had great experience, there were no fancy tools and machinery available. The men did the very best they could with what they had and learned as they went along. According to a book given to us by Barry Kombol of the Palmer Coking Coal Co. Things are much better now for the miners. The following is an passage from the book:

The coal mining workforce has changed greatly in recent years., becoming more compact, highly trained and productive. Technology, computerization and mechanization have transformed coal mining into an occupation of advanced skill. While still hard work, coal mining as a profession bears no resemblance to the job performed with pick and shovel earlier in this century.

In addition, sophisticated mining methods have combined with improved miner training, compliance with safety laws and regulations and conscientious effort to significantly reduce the dangers traditionally associated with mining coal.

The average production of a coal miner (how much coal each miner produces in one hour) has more than doubled since 1980 and tripled since 1950. The industry's injury incidence rate, meanwhile, has steadily improved and today ranks below that of many other professions, including lumber production, trucking, construction and farming.

At the same time, the coal industry's average earnings of more than \$17 an hour are among the highest in American Industry.

HISTORIC DESIGNATION

We are all pleased that there is a renewed interest in Historic places in the area. The People at the King County level are persuing the possability of declaring Black Diamond a Historic City, At a recent meeting of interested people we were told of some of the things they plan to do. If it is all done as we were told it will be a great boost for Black Diamond. They plan to name every spot in Town that has any historic value. They would like to make a tour where people could walk around and be told about the site's history. This will open up areas for funding and help us preserve them. We are especially glad that they might be able to save Railroad Ave. and not run a new road through. We are especially interested because of the effect it might have on the Museum.

#####

Don't Forget.....Meeting October 2.....At 1:00 p.m.It is important

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