

Black Diamond Historical Society Newsletter

Museum Hours

Thursday	9:00 - 4:00
Sat. & Sun.	
Summer	12:00 - 4:00
Winter	12:00 - 3:00

Printed Quarterly



July 2003

32627 Railroad Ave P.O. Box 232 Black Diamond, WA 98010 360-886-2142 Bdmuseum@foxinternet.com

For Special Tours, Call 253-852-6763 Visit our web site! [Http://mytown.koz.com/community/blackdiamondmuseum](http://mytown.koz.com/community/blackdiamondmuseum)

PICTURES OF THE PAST



Black Diamond Historical Society Special Collection-Ethel Duncan Estate

LABOR DAY-1952

The 1952 Labor Day Soap Box Derby line up is showing off their trophies on the ball field. At one time some of the soap box autos reached a speed of 35 mph. First Place winners in each of the three classes were, "Bill Petchnik in the airplane, Class B event. Jack Todd in the #7 auto, Class C event. Jack Johnson, Class A event (not shown)." In the background to the left is the BD High School and the gymnasium is on the right.

If you know who is in the autos of the two on the far left and the one on the far right, please call, write or e-mail us. Keep those cards and letters coming. We love hearing from you!!" ♦

The mission of the Black Diamond Historical Society shall be the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of the history of Black Diamond and environs, as it relates to King County and the State of Washington.

The Black Diamond Historical Society Newsletter is published by and for the members of the Black Diamond Historical Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3), Washington Corp.

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Society Officers

President: Don Mason
 Vice President: Darryl Buss
 Secretary: Dee Israel
 Treasurer: Clayton Mead

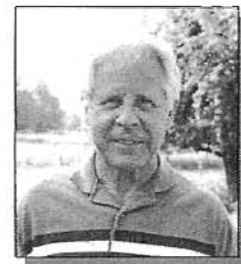
Directors

Don Botts, Howard Botts, Jackie Buss, Jackie Cedarholm, Steve Israel, JoAnne Matsumura, Anna Morris, Joe Zumek

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Don Mason



On June 18th I took forty-four third graders from our Black Diamond Elementary School on a tour of Franklin. A good time was had by all and as far as I can tell the four most important things for the kids were: (1) dropping rocks down the 1,300 foot mine shaft. With forty-four rocks dropping at the same time, it was hard for the kids to determine when their individual rock hit the bottom of the shaft - we then had to have them take turns to solve that problem. (2) They enjoyed finding and reading the headstones in the cemetery, and due to underbrush it was sometimes a hunting game to find the headstones. (3) Finding and eating the salmon berries along the trail. (4) Finding pieces of coal in the roadbed and locating a seam of coal.

One of my favorite remembrances with the children was last year. About a dozen preschoolers were at the Museum, and I was trying to tell them what Black Diamond was like one hundred years ago. I told them there was no electricity and asked them what in their homes would not be there one hundred years ago. After prompting them by asking "what do you plug into the walls", they got the idea. One child said "no TV", another said "no lights" and a third said "no puters!" I then asked the class how many had "puters" at home and they all raised their hands. Their parents, standing in the back of the room, all smiled and chuckled.

As you can tell I really enjoy the days spent with these young people and look forward to more such times.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
July 13, 2003, 1:30 PM

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held the 3rd Sun. of each month at the Museum at 1:30 PM. Meetings are open to the Membership, although participation is limited to Board Members. The General Membership may be allowed to join discussions as time permits. To have business placed on the agenda, please contact the Secretary in advance of the meeting date.



FROM YOUR EDITOR

Steve Israel

We have lots of news again for this issue. Reports on past events; ads for upcoming activities; announcements for new members; thank-yous for new acquisitions; and the part that I always find so difficult: memorials for those members we have lost.

Sara Morris writes on May 10, 2003:

“Dear Historical Society,

I wanted you to know how touched I was by your kind memorial to my brother, Evan Jr. I miss him very much every day.....”

It’s never easy to loose a loved one, and the void they leave can never be filled. Others may take over their position on a job, or in some other capacity, but they can never be replaced. They will always be missed.

Our hearts and prayers go out to those who have lost loved ones.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Sunday July 13, 2003 1:30

**Tell us how you want your
Museum to operate.**

WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS

By Don Botts, Volunteer Coordinator

We thank each of our volunteers for their commitment and support no matter how small or large. Each of you make a tremendous impact in the lives you touch volunteering for the Black Diamond Historical Society. Those who have recently joined our volunteer family are:

- ◆ John Lynch
- ◆ Bruno Nedergard
- ◆ Laura Olsen
- ◆ Bill Parkin
- ◆ Randy Roberts

SECRETARY REPORT

Dee Israel

APRIL, MAY & JUNE, 2003



Besides the Black Diamond Historical Society’s Newsletter, we also advertised our Welsh Day Celebration, on June 7th, in the Newsletters of the City of Black Diamond and the Welsh and Finnish Societies. Articles were also put in the *Voice of the Valley*, *Tacoma News Tribune*, *Courier Herald* and the *South County Journal* in advance of the celebration, resulting in a very good turnout for this popular event.

Our Archivist, JoAnne Matsumura is working on a new catalog system to help with photo security. She has also distributed to the Board Members a copy of her “Collections Handling Policy” for archival preservation techniques.

Joe Zumek and his crew have rebuilt the steps for the caboose and we have purchased a set of cargo doors to replace those in the basement. The existing ones are not energy efficient as they not only let the cold air in and warm air out, but water from the street runs under the doors. The new doors are steel and should be secure and energy efficient. They will be installed soon.

We have been honored to have many school children and senior citizens schedule tours of our museum this year.

Newsletter Editor Steve Israel announced that his last newsletter included 16 pages, which seemed to be a good size.

As you know, we have made many requests for you to help out as cooks and docents these past few months. Since we still don’t have enough cooks, our coordinator has announced that the third Thursday of each month, there will not be a lunch served to the working crew.

The Riding/Walking Tour brochure and the 4th printing of *Black Diamond: Mining The Memories* book are both about ready to go to press.

We have come up with a new idea of a money-maker for the Museum. We are going to have tiles made with the picture of the Museum on them. These tiles can then be sold as hotplate tiles or wall decorations.

Dee Israel has volunteered to be in charge of making an entry for the Labor Day Parade. If you are interested in helping, call Dee at 360-886-2582.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

During this past quarter, The Black Diamond Historical Society has received the following in Memorial Donations:

IN MEMORY of Ethel Duncan, donations were made by Dorothy Corlett and Joe & Eileen Zumek.

IN MEMORY of Evan Morris Jr., donations were made by Doug & Julie Geiger, Donald Botts, JoAnne Matsumura, Marlynn M. Molnar, Sara Morris, Diane Sherwood-Palmer D.C., Ralph & Lois Estby and Joe & Eileen Zumek.

IN MEMORY of Donna Gouchenur, donations were made by Mary Chilcott and Mt. Rainier Rebeka Lodge #106.

The Black Diamond Historical Society would like to thank those of you that made these donations, and offer condolences to the families and friends of the deceased.

MONITARY DONATIONS

We wish to thank **Mr. & Mrs. Chris Pieren, Gina Luisi, William Bisyak, Frank & Eleanor Roulst, Crestwood Elementary School, Seattle Welsh Women's Club and The Puget Sound Welsh Assoc.** for their generous donations to the Black Diamond Historical Society's general fund.

The Black Diamond Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the Law. All donations are greatly appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SUNDAY JULY 13th 1:30

What are we doing right?

What are we doing wrong?

THE BLACK DIAMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY WELCOMES OLD PHOTOS OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR DONATION OR LOAN. OTHER ITEMS ARE ALSO WELCOME, BUT THE PHOTOS ARE BECOMING MORE RARE, AND GIVE US A VALUABLE "LOOK" INTO THE PAST.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Dee Israel

April, May and June 2003

The Black Diamond Historical Society now has 248 memberships. That is now 126 individual-life memberships, 13 couples-life memberships, 64 individual-annual memberships, 39 family-annual memberships and 6 business memberships. I'm sorry to report that since our last newsletter, 6 memberships have been dropped due to death or non-payment of dues. However, we have had 7 new memberships. These new memberships are for: **Donald & Janice Greggs, Paul Goldsberry, Ruth Picini, Bob Smith, R. Marie Theilken, Richard & Mary Lou Toth and Don & Lorraine Winsor.**

We are happy you have all joined us and hope you are as excited as we are to share knowledge of this area's memories and people. We also want to thank those of you who have recently renewed your membership. The support of the members is what helps keep our museum alive.

Look to see if there is a red check on the mailing label of this newsletter. **A Red check on your label indicates your membership is due.** If it has been checked, please send me your membership renewal form and your membership dues; or let me know why you feel it is in error. Otherwise, you may be dropped from our membership and I don't want that to happen anymore than you do. **(2 red checks mean your membership is past due and this is your last newsletter.)**

Are you looking for that special gift for a close friend or relative? If they are interested in the history of Black Diamond and it's surrounding area, you can purchase a membership to the Black Diamond Historical Society as a gift for them. It is only \$10.00 for an individual or \$15.00 for a family membership, for the whole year.

GUESTS

Don (Doc) Botts

During the months of **April, May & June** we had **1055** visitors to the Museum. There were visitors from **21** States: California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Virginia and here in Washington. There were also people visiting from far off places, such as Denmark, Mexico, and Venezuela.

REMARKS MADE BY OUR GUESTS

Our guest book this quarter had so many nice comments, here are many of them: Enjoy seeing the historical items & imagining days gone by, Great displays, Great job, Fine Museum, Exciting, Very Full, Love the pictures & mining stuff, Very interesting, You have done an awesome job on this museum, Lovely place, Great, Really enjoyed it, Very cozy museum, Extra wonderful, My son loves coming here, Love it, Beautiful antiques, Muy Bonito Y Muchos Recuerdos (Very pretty & good memories), Very-Very interesting, I love the exhibits – the antiques were awesome, You are so lucky to have Don telling the story, Wonderful history - it's absolutely great - thank you, Impressive, It's charming & wonderful, Enjoyed very much, You need more people to operate the coal car, Interesting - well thought out, lovely arrangement - well done, Very nice display - nicely kept town, Very interesting & educational, Welsh Heritage Day is fun & rewarding.

ARCHIVES WISH LIST

- ◆ Labor Day Program with photo entry of Louis Zumek, 1979, for the Archives
- ◆ Log Cabin Syrup tin, pre 1941, for exhibit
- ◆ Crocheted potholders, early era, for exhibit

IN MEMORY

Society loses partner of long time Steward

Donna M. Binns Gouchenour, long time Docent and Cook partner with Ethel Duncan, passed away on April 25, 2003. Donna was born January 9, 1922, and is survived by her son, William C. Gouchenour, daughters Sharon Seek and L. Ward, brothers, Bob and Glenn Binns.

Donna was a lifetime member of the Society and a resident of Black Diamond since 1971. Like Ethel, Donna too was a dedicated and faithful volunteer. Donna and Ethel joined forces as partner cooks and their meals became menu standards. Ethel's hearty and filling soups with Donna's flaky crust apple pies.

We will miss her. Donna and Ethel are together again, serving as needed. ◆

Dr. David C. Botting, Jr. passed away May 2, 2003. He was born September 30, 1918 to David C. Botting and Sara Turnball Botting, and is survived by sons David C. Botting III, Paul V. Botting and Mathew C. Botting.

Dr. Botting was a lifetime member of the Society having joined in 1980. Dr. Botting's father served as state mine inspector, circa 1928, and played an important part in the history of Black Diamond. ◆

Thelma Gladys Griffith passed away February 22, 2003. She was born January 30, 1916 to Eldon D. and Mary (Gust) Lapham, in Enumclaw, WA. She was the sister to Carl Steiert, Donald Lapham, Jack Lapham, Ralph Lapham and Mary Lapham.

Thelma was a lifetime member of the Society. We are honored to have received her handcrafted embroidery work of the Black Diamond Deport and train, earlier this year prior to her death. ◆

The Black Diamond Historical Society expresses condolences to the families on behalf of its membership. ◆

If you become aware of the passing of a Society member or former member please let us know so that we may extend our sympathies. Thank you.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Sunday July 13th, 1:30 PM

FROM THE ARCHIVES

JoAnne Matsumura

As the Society's Museum collection grows, we have the awesome responsibility of ensuring the long-term safekeeping and preservation of these priceless objects.

We are confident that your investment, whatever your generous gift is (artifact or monetary) in the Black Diamond Historical Society Museum's collection, will pay dividends in the future, as we evaluate and utilize it to most effectively share the coal miner's experience.

Please know that your contribution will support building history through the collection in three important ways: improving by preserving the collection, sharing the collection through education and interpretive exhibits.

We thank you for investing in the Black Diamond Historical Museum and appreciate your continued support.

The photographic exhibit of former Black Diamond physicians in the Museum's "Doctors" room is now complete, having recently located and exhibited a photograph of Dr. William Frances McCormick.

The Memorial Plaques' all-name Public Index has been completed. In the process of this work, it has become evident for the need of birth and death date information as it is frequently being requested. If you have an obituary or funeral document, please share a copy with us so that the information can be added to the Public Index and then archived.

The Children's Heritage and Activity Book, Educational School Kit #3 has been completed and was unveiled and demonstrated for media press release to inform educators in the area of this new book of fun projects and teaching students about coal!

New to the public "Around Town" series is the Community Album. This new volume is dedicated to the men and women of the Black Diamond business community, past, present and future. We cordially invite you to submit a one or two page history of a business you or someone you know owned, worked in, or have knowledge of. Remember it is people who make history, and it includes the butcher, the shoemaker, and candlestick maker! The latest additions are Palmer

Coking Coal Company, histories of Black Diamond Lake (Chub Lake) and Jones Lake (Lake 14). So send us your business history story and get into it-*The Around Town Community Album!*

A Collection and Handling Policy was presented at the May 18, 2003 Board of Directors meeting. Upon approval it will then be included in the Society's Manual.

So until next time THANK YOU!! ♦

JoAnne Matsumura, Archivist

TREASURES AND TRINKETS

New Accessions

We thank the following individuals for their donations and generosity.

♦ **Darrell Anderson**-Black Diamond Lake Fishing advertisement and news clippings of the Black Diamond Bakery.

♦ **Gil & Marlene Bortleson**-Embroidered tea towels handcrafted by **Helen Stanger**

♦ **Howard Botts**-*The Mining Catalog, 1923*, Coal Edition

♦ **Paul Botts**-Business cards of John E. Davies, Ernest Moore and S. J. Landwehr

♦ **Jackie Cedarholm**-Protective glass for map exhibit

♦ **Doris Christensen**-Miniature coal dust carving of the bust of a miner with hat and lamp

♦ **Bob Davidson**-1938 Class ring and print of Lake Wilderness, circa 1937

♦ **Lois Thomas Estby**-Photograph of the **Evan John Thomas** family, circa 1893

♦ **Frank Grgurich**-WW11 Observer button, iron, kerosene lamp circa 1949, roll top black-board and 1982 Centennial belt buckle, flour sifter, sewing baskets, "Gunsmoke" lunch pail circa 1959, commemorative plates of St. Barbara's church and First Presbyterian church, handcrafted plate by **Ann Milautz Steiert**, spatula, photo Christmas cards of **Sharon Jean** and

ARCHIVE TIP

After airing out your heirloom quilts and linens change the pattern of the fold; use acid free tissue paper and box. Then store on a closet shelf, not the attic or basement. Textiles like the same conditions we do ♦

Karen Joan Tonkin, age 8, oval framed picture of Frank as an infant, circa 1920, "Duffy's" soda bottle, Diamond Garage bottle opener, ladies aprons, potholders, tea towels, 1970 Commemorative plate "Little brown church in the Vale"

◆ **Dee Israel**-Bottle embossed "Maywood", Easter decorations on loan, miniature bottle "Pyrex 29"

◆ **Carol Jones**-Souvenir card of Aberystwyth, Wales

◆ **Jane Jones**-Rug beater

◆ **Bernice Jorgensen**-Commemorative plate with image of Black Diamond's First Presbyterian Church

◆ **Ruth Mills Kerkes**-All occasion post cards, obituary of **William Edward Lewis**, copy of a photograph, snapshot of accompanying *Picture of the Past*, April 2003

◆ **Bill Kombol**-A chronicle of the Palmer Coking Coal Co., titled "Our Company's History", copy of a photograph of their headquarters when it was the **Martin & Magdalena Hock** home. A photographic collection of the Properties of the old Pacific Coast Company; Seattle, Newcastle, Black Diamond, Franklin, Burnett, Issaquah, Tacoma, Portland, California and Alaska, two volumes of copies of thesis documents provided by the University of Washington Library System.

◆ **Rhidian Lawrence**-Plaque of the Welsh Dragon, framed picture of a scene in Wales, Authentic brass Miner's oil lamp from Wales with Certificate of Origin

◆ **Don Malgarini**-Courtesy loan, framed photograph of a 1947 Labor Day parade entry. Also a Bayer Aspirin instruction booklet in seven languages

◆ **Helen Strom Manowski**-BD school jersey letters, 1955 school pin, souvenir program 1959 and 1961, Soccer-Football Exhibition.

◆ **Jim & Dottie McCrary**-Snapshot of George Eipper

◆ **Clayton Mead**-Scripto leads and box, "Wear-Ever" pot promoting S.O.S. pads, Lipton tea tin, crock used by his great grandmother **Nellie**

Newman, handcrafted spice rack and tea towel rack

◆ **Gino Picini**-Solid brass plate for light switch, recent snapshots of the Roslyn, WA Museum building

◆ **Janice Goldsberry Ranton**-Chinese checkerboard, 1934 Class ring, Knights of Pythias ring and pins from Sister City Black Diamond, Canada

◆ **Merle Davies Romedo**-Two photographs, historic Labor Day programs, news clippings

◆ **Beth Botts Van Buskirk**-Easter decorations on loan

◆ **Muriel Botts Waldo**-Easter decoration on loan

IT WAS A GOOD YEAR 1927

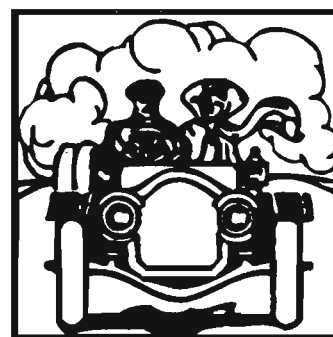
Contributed by **JoAnne Matsumura**

It was a very good year in 1927. Charles Lindberg makes his solo Atlantic flight. The NY Yankees won the World Series over the Pittsburgh Pirates and everyone's talking about the 60 home runs by Babe Ruth. Alabama ties the Rose Bowl 7 to 7 with Stanford and Gene Tunney is the Heavyweight Boxing champ.

The best movie was Seventh Heaven, Al Jolson and Greta Garbo won best Actor and Actress. People danced the slow fox trot, the varsity drag and Clara Bow was the "it" girl.

A new Ford cost \$495.00 and gasoline was 21 cents a gallon. If this is the year you got married a new 3-bedroom home cost \$4,825.00. Milk was 56 cents a gallon and bread was 9 cents a pound. The average annual income was \$1,554.00. Writing letters to loved ones cost you 2 cents in postage.

It was the good ole days! ◆



GENEALOGY TIP

Sending a query for information about your ancestors should be brief and specific to what you want to know. Remember to include your donation and a SASE ◆

SNIPPETS 'N SMIDGENS

Contributed by **JoAnne Matsumura**

Did you know:

◆ THAT-The S.O.S. soap pad logo means “Save Our Saucepans”. Invented in 1917 by Ed Cox and named by his wife.

◆ THAT-The ice cream cone was born in 1904. At the St. Louis World’s Fair an ice cream vendor used a Persian waffle rolled up and filled it with soft frozen cream.

◆ THAT-The Black Diamond Library moved into the Depot in 1945.

◆ THAT-The 1933 school skit, **Annabelle Milautz (Steiert)** and **Elizabeth Manowski** played The Snozzle Sisters.

◆ THAT-Our membership family means a lot to us: friends who take the time to stop by or write to us and give us the pleasure of making them feel at home.

This space is reserved
for your article!



MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Sunday, July 13th

1:30 PM

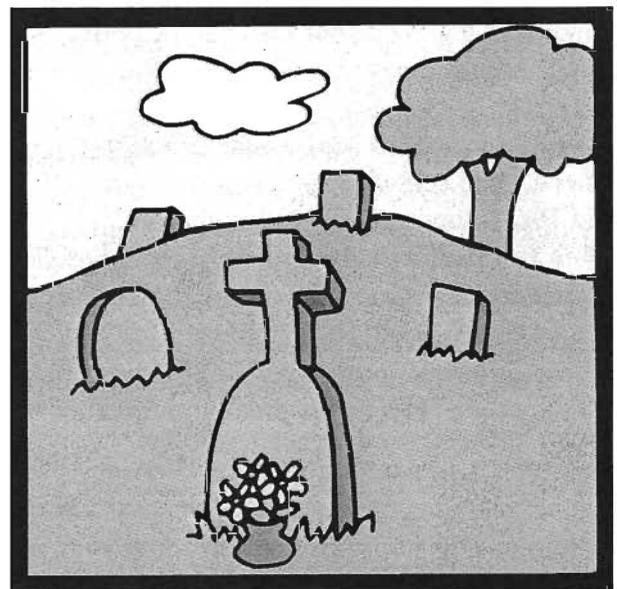
You are invited to the Quarterly Membership Meeting of the Black Diamond Historical Society.

Your input is valuable to the operation of your Museum and your Historical Society’s affairs. With your ideas and participation, we will know what is important to you.

If you are unable to attend, please drop us a line to let us know your thoughts.

After the quarterly membership meeting on July 13th, we will have a break for coffee and cookies, followed by a walk through the historic Black Diamond Cemetery.

Gravesites of some of the coal miners and residents from days gone by will be pointed out, and a brief history will be given on a few of the families that lived and died during the coal mining era and still have descendants in the area.



WELSH HERITAGE DAY 2003

Jackie Cedarholm

The fifth annual Welsh Heritage Day, held on Saturday June 7, 2003 at the Black Diamond Museum, sponsored by the Puget Sound Welsh Association and the Black Diamond Historical Society, was attended by many with Welsh Ancestry connected to Black Diamond. JoAnne Matsumura was busy talking to the people and getting their stories.



The program, announced by Don Mason, began with the Red Dragon Band: Jackie Cedarholm and Philip Ages playing Traditional Welsh folk music; followed by women of the Seattle Welsh Women's Club wearing Welsh costumes with Eileen Wyke telling the history and purpose of the women's costume - very interesting and informative. Robert Smith closed the program with a showing of his wonderful collection of replicates of Celtic swords.

The Puget Sound Welsh Association Welsh Craft Table, by Carolyn Bell, was an interesting and successful

part of the day. It offered a good opportunity to purchase Christmas gifts.

Welsh refreshments were served by the Seattle Welsh Women's Club, coordinated by Gerri Parry, who brought her delicious Welsh Cakes.

At the Black Diamond Cemetery, 100 graves of Welsh people were marked with Welsh flags, placed by David and Jane Jones. What a beautiful sight. There is a lot of history of Black Diamond there which is an on going research project.

Many people were responsible for the organization and



success of the day and are thanked with much appreciation by the Black Diamond Historical Society.



EXPERT SAYS

COAL MINE WATER GOOD

By Rusty Garrett

For those who like to think outside the box, this article may interest you. -Bill Kombol

Expert Says Coal Mine Water Good [hyperlink to article which appears below.](#)

Posted: Wednesday, August 28, 2002

TIMES RECORD

RGARRETT@SWTIMES.COM

GREENWOOD — It has been nearly a century since miners were hauling coal from beneath the ground in Greenwood. Today city officials are studying a plan to extract drinking water from one of the abandoned mines.

Tuesday University of Arkansas professor Van Brahana reported the first year's progress in an 18-month study to determine the feasibility of using water in a flooded coal mine as a municipal water source.

"The water quality appears to be good," Brahana told members of the Greenwood Water Committee.

Brahana said the quality of the water was comparable to that of Vache Grasse Creek. That is understandable, he said, because water moving through the mine likely comes from the creek.

"There is water moving through the mine from an outside source," he said. "It is a dynamic system. It's not just sitting there," he added.

Brahana said the water was low in dissolved minerals, except for some concentration of iron and manganese, which can be removed in treatment of the water. "It is certainly treatable," he said.

The mine, located just off Arkansas 96 near Arkansas 10, has ample water, Brahana said. Earlier estimates put the amount of water there at 650 million gallons, an amount he said should be

adequate for city needs "for many tens of years."

Brahana said once a permit is issued by the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, he intends to conduct a "draw down" of the water source, to test its capacity and to determine the movement of water through the system.

During a three-day period, 500 gallons of water a minute will be pumped from the mine, a rate Brahana told city officials "will give you a sense of what you can expect under stress conditions."

Pumping the water will also provide researchers information on how quickly the water level in the mine will drop, what effect that will have on the system, and how quickly it will recharge.

At this point in the study, Brahana said the prospects of using the mine for a source of drinking water are favorable.

"We are continuing as if it is going to work for you," he said. "The further we go the more optimistic I am. But we want it to be guaranteed, essentially."

Brahana said the study is fallen six to eight weeks behind schedule, but should be completed no later than the end of March. "That should let you come online by next summer," he said.

The committee also discussed regulatory hurdles that must be cleared before the mine could be tied into the city water system. They recommended Mickle Wagner Coleman Engineers submit a proposal for conducting preliminary engineering work on the project that would include working with Brahana's crew during the draw down. They also discussed sending some of Brahana's water quality data to the state health department so it could begin its review of the

REMEMBER

.....when you point your finger at someone to pass the blame, you have three more fingers pointing back at yourself.

OUR COMPANY'S HISTORY

Contributed by **Bill Kombol**



Palmer Coking Coal Company, Inc. (Palmer) was established on August 14, 1933 by John H. Morris, Jonas Morris, William Morris, Edward

Morris, Joe Kieulak, and J.G. Raley. However, Palmer's roots in the coal mining industry date back to the 1880's when Welsh immigrants first came west to open, operate, and work the mines in

Communities like Wilkeson and Black Diamond. In 1880, Joshua Morris (1856 - 1929) father-in-law to John H. Morris (1894-1973) was part of the first prospecting party to discover the famous McKay coal seam in the Green River-Franklin mining district. John H. Morris's parents moved to Wilkeson in the 1880's.

In 1914, several of the "Wilkeson" Morris brothers participated in the start-up of the South Willis Coal Company, which operated mines in Pierce County. In 1921, the Morris Brothers Coal Mining Company was formed to operate the Durham mine and later the Occidental mine near the present day community of Cumberland. In 1937, Palmer acquired all of the assets of Morris Brothers Coal Mining Company, Inc., which was owned by several of the same Morris brothers who founded Palmer. In the 1930's and through the 1940's Palmer operated underground coal mines in the Durham, Occidental, Danville and Landsburg areas of southeast King County. In the early 1950's Palmer was presented with the opportunity of purchasing most of the land and mineral assets of the Pacific Coast Coal Company, a subsidiary of the New Jersey based Pacific Coast Company. In 1953, Palmer signed an agreement by which it ac-

quired over 6,000 acres of property in southeast King County, including substantial holdings in Newcastle, Ravensdale and Black Diamond.

Throughout the 1950's Palmer continued to operate underground and surface coal mines in the Black Diamond, Landsburg, and Franklin coalfields. With its newly acquired land base, Palmer expanded into timber sales and other extractive uses such as red cinders, clay, silica sand, and gravel. In 1958 several land sales and trades were consummated with the Weyerhaeuser Company to consolidate Palmer's land and resource base.

In the early 1960's, the second generation of Palmer owners assumed management of the company. They consisted of John H. Morris' four children: Jack A. Morris, Evan D. Morris, Betty (Morris) Falk, Pauline (Morris) Kombol and Jonas Morris' son, George Morris.

During the early 1970's several Palmer properties in the Green River Gorge area were sold to Washington State Parks and became the centerpiece of the Green River Gorge Conservation Area. In the mid 1980's Palmer sold most of its 1,800 acres of land in the Newcastle area, and this property became the focal point of the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildlife Park. Palmer's tradition of working closely with park and open space agencies has continued to the present with the recent acquisition of the Lake Sawyer Regional Park by King County Parks and Open Space. Other completed and proposed parklands from Palmer's land legacy include 1,400 lineal feet of Cedar River waterfront near Landsburg, 2,800 lineal feet of prime Lake Twelve waterfront, and important resource lands in and around Icy Creek near the Green River.

Over the past 70 years of history (1933-2003) Palmer's business evolved from exclusively underground coal mining to include surface coal mining. By the mid. 1950s Palmer was also involved in timber sales, cinder, clay, silica sand, and gravel production as well as the sale of surplus land, and

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

lots. With the increasing availability of cheap oil, inexpensive electricity and, abundant natural gas, coal mining diminished in importance. In 1975, Palmer Coking Coal Company closed the last underground coal mine in the state of Washington: the Rogers No. 3 mine, near Ravensdale. Palmer continued surface mining and reclamation work at several sites around Ravensdale, Black Diamond, and Franklin. Palmer ceased surface coal mining operations in 1986. In 1997, Palmer was recognized by the Washington Department of Natural Resources with the first ever "Special Recognition Award" for reclamation work done at our last surface coal mine: McKay - Section 12 in Black Diamond.

Over the past two decades our company expanded into new business opportunities in sand, gravel, top soil, landscape products, and land development. Today, our company's retail and wholesale product line includes over 20 sand and gravel products, 18 landscape products, 4 different topsoil mixes, firewood, and stream restoration materials.

Post Script: Many have asked about the origin of the name "Palmer Coking Coal Company". The name was coined by company founder, John Henry Morris. "Palmer" was a well-known junction on the Northern Pacific's important east-west railway line. A "coking coal" was typically a superior burning, low ash coal which had gained favor with home heating customers. With thirty or more coal companies competing for a small share of a declining coal business, Palmer's coking coal, mined in nearby Durham and Occidental, provided the company with the marketing edge it needed to survive the 1930's and the Great Depression.



1897-1898 COAL MINE REPORTS

by Bill Kombol

Beginning in 1887, Washington's State Inspector of Coal Mines began issuing an annual report of their inspection of the coal mines and ventilation of coal mines. This series of articles for the Black Diamond Historical Society Newsletter is a verbatim transcript of those portions of the annual reports dealing with the coal mines of Black Diamond and Franklin.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COAL MINE INSPECTORS OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1897 AND UP TO DECEMBER 10, 1898

by R. H. NORTON, Coal Mine Inspector

FATAL ACCIDENTS

February 2, 1897.—John Backaa, a native of Finland, was killed at No. 7 mine. He had driven the angle through up to the counter and was working the counter.

February 11, 1898—Howell Powell, aged 16, was seriously injured by being caught between loaded mine cars as he was uncoupling them at the top of the slope at No. 7 mine, Franklin, operated by the Pacific Coast Company. He was employed as cager's helper. The cager uncoupled the rope from the trip of three cars as they came out of the mine. Powell's duty was to uncouple the first and second cars, and the cager uncoupled the second and third cars. No one saw the boy get hurt, and he was too badly injured to explain the matter himself. He was removed to the hospital at Seattle, where he died in a few days. Several improvements were made on the landing at the top this slope, and the liability of further accidents materially reduced.

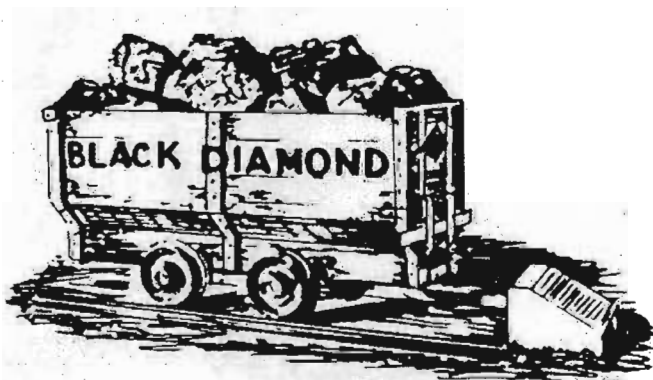
March 12, 1898.—F. Kline, aged 28, assistant foreman, at mine No. 7 Franklin, operated by the Pacific Coast Company, was killed by being caught by a car at the bottom of the slope. Kline, it is claimed, coupled the cars and gave the trip rider orders to give signal to hoist. The trip rider did so and after the cars had been hauled several feet, when they struck the steep grade of the slope, the last car broke loose and running back into the gangway, caught Kline between the car and the wall of coal on the lower side of the gangway, crushing him so severely that he died two hours later. The mine inspector was at Black Diamond, three miles away, at least as early as 8 o'clock A. M. on March 13 (a few hours after the accident happened), no effort was made to notify said inspector, until after 1 o'clock P. M., and about that time said inspector left for Seattle. It was noon Sunday,

March 14, before inspector was notified. In the meantime, Coroner Yandell, of King County, had been notified and had left for Franklin on a train leaving Seattle about one hour before notice was received by mine inspector. A telegram was sent by mine inspector to superintendent of Pacific Coast Company's mines at Franklin, to postpone inquiry until arrival by train on Monday. No notice was taken of this telegram, and on arrival at Franklin, the mine inspector met Coroner Yandell, who informed him that the inquest had been held and a verdict of accidental death returned. The mine inspector immediately repaired to the scene of the accident and on examining the car and coupling, did not hesitate to say that there was room for a grave difference of opinion as to the cause of the accident. The superintendent of these mines was seen later, and personally warned by the mine inspector that unless future accidents were promptly reported and every facility afforded for investigation, he would be liable to get into serious trouble.

June 6, 1898.—Fedora Lodovitch, aged 55 years, was killed in the Morgan slope at Black Diamond, operated by the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company, owing to the breaking of a car coupling when in company with the mine foreman and other workmen. He was riding up the slope to dinner at noon. The coupling was in a very defective condition and must have been so for months. Ordinary care in observing the rules by the men handling the cars at the top of the slope, should have prevented this accident. The coroner's jury returned a verdict of accidental death, and at the same time warned the company to enforce more rigid inspection in future.

NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS

July 30, 1897.—Thomas D. Lewis, a miner, age 55 years, was hurt by a fall of rock at No. 7 mine, Franklin, operated by the Oregon Improvement Company. The state mine inspector saw Lewis the day after the accident happened and he admitted that the accident



was in a great measure attributable to his own carelessness.

April 27, 1898.—J. D. Lloyd, a miner, age 30, had the bones of his wrist broken by a fall of coal in mine No. 14, Black Diamond, operated by the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company.

April 28, 1898.—Frank Prosintz, a miner, age 40, was seriously injured in the Morgan Slope, Black Diamond, operated by the Black Diamond Coal Company. He had lighted a shot, and after waiting the usual time for it to explode, finding that it did not do so, went to see what was the matter, when the shot went off. In doing so he manifested an utter disregard of the ordinary precautions that should be taken in such a case.

May 31, 1898.—Henry Terrel (colored), a miner, age 36, was injured by a fall of coal in No. 17 breast, fourth west level, No. 7 mine, Franklin, operated by the Pacific Coast Company. He had been in the service of the company five years. A little more care on his part would probably have prevented the accident.

May 31, 1898.—Frank Pruet, laborer, age 30, (colored), was injured by falling into the tippie at No. 7 mine, Franklin, operated by the Pacific Coast Company. He was pulling an empty car off No. 2 tippie and walked backward into No. 1 tippie. He had only commenced work for the coal company that morning.

July 1, 1898.—Andrew Sorenson, trackman, aged 25, was injured by being struck by flying pieces of coal, from a trip of three cars that ran down the slope, owing to the breaking of a chain, on the main slope at No. 7 mine, Franklin, operated by the Pacific Coast Company. He was injured about the head and face, and middle finger of his right hand was broken.

July 23, 1898.—Peter Olsen, cager, age 24, had his left shoulder dislocated at No. 7 mine, Franklin, operated by Pacific Coast Company. Three cars (two empty and one loaded) with props ten feet long were on the trip. Olsen uncoupled the two empty cars and gave the signal to switch the cars containing props onto other side of slope, the props caused the car to tip up and Olsen thus received injury stated.

July 28, 1898.—Bolda Rosa, miner, age 52, had his collar bone broken, in No. 2 breast, third level east, No. 7 mine, Franklin, operated by Pacific Coast Company. Rosa and his partner were propping up a piece of loose bone or slate, when part of it fell, injuring Rosa as stated.

August 16, 1898.—Antone Borgen, stable boss, age 32,

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

was kicked by a mule while passing it in the stall and had bones of his right hand broken, at mine No. 14, Black Diamond, operated by the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company.

August 18, 1898.—John W. Dunn, miner, age 40, had his right arm broken by a piece of coal falling from the face of the breast where he was working in No. 14 mine, Black Diamond, operated by the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company. Dunn had been 10 years in the service of this company.

August 20, 1898.—Joseph Berry, miner, age 34, was injured through coal falling on him while he was undermining in his breast at the Morgan Slope, Black Diamond, operated by the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company. Berry had been one month in the service of the company.

August 22, 1898.—Charles Neffin, miner, age 45, was burnt by a premature explosion of blasting powder, in fourth cross-cut, pillar 54, White Ash mine, operated by E. F. Lawson, Black Diamond. He was making a cartridge when the powder exploded.

October 22, 1898.—Jacob Jacobson, miner, age 45, had his left arm broken by a fall of coal at face of fourth east gangway No. 7 mine, Franklin, operated by the Pacific Coast Company. He was putting up a set of timbers when a piece of bony coal fell from the roof, striking him on the arm.

April 13, 1898.—Bart Costa and Felix Castrania, two Italian miners, were severely burned at No. 11 breast, third level east, No. 7 mine, Franklin. The fire boss in making the examination of the working places before the men went to work on the morning of April 13, as required by law, found an accumulation of gas in No. 11 breast, third level east. According to the rules adopted by the Pacific Coast Company, and approved by the mine inspector it was the duty of the fire boss to put a danger-board in the breast so that no one would incautiously enter; also to put a notice on the bulletin board at the top of the slope, the place where the men first enter the mine, and also to notify each man who worked in the place, of the danger and as soon as possible go with them to make the place safe. There is considerable doubt as to whether any of these precautions were taken, except that of putting a danger signal in the breast, and even this was of so temporary a character that it did not at all meet the intent and purpose of the law. Both of these men must have passed the fire boss at the top of the slope, yet he never warned either of them of the danger. Castrania was the first man to go up the breast, when he came to the notice the fire boss had left, he put his lamp in the cross-cut, and went up to the top of the breast and commenced "brushing" out the

gas. Meantime Costa had entered the breast with his open lamp on his head as usual, unaware of the danger that menaced him. Castania drove the gas down onto him and it ignited at his lamp. It was eight days before the state mine inspector was notified and in the meantime everything possible had been done to put the mine in good shape. The breast where the gas had accumulated had also caved in and it was impossible to make a proper investigation.

This case was considered so serious by the state mine inspector, that J. E. McElroy, county attorney, of King County, was consulted on Friday, April 29, as to the advisability of instituting criminal proceedings against C.C. Anderson, superintendent, for failure to notify as required by law, and also against A. Valley, fire boss, for permitting the men to go into danger without warning them thereof. After numerous delays complaints were filed on Saturday, May 14, in Justice of the Peace Ingersoll's court, at Seattle. After repeated delays and postponements the state mine inspector informed Governor John R. Rogers of the facts in the case and at the personal request of Governor Rogers, Assistant Attorney General Thomas M. Vance, made appearance in the case and on July 1 a trial was had. The case against the fire boss, A. Valley, was dismissed on the ground that the law was unconstitutional, in that the legislature had no right to delegate the law making power to the mine operators and the state mine inspector. The charge was brought for violations of the rules provided for in the act of 1891. The case against the superintendent, C. C. Anderson, was held to have been made out, and he was bound over in the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars to appear at the next term of the superior court of King County. Nothing has been done up to the present writing to bring this case to a final issue.

May 3, 1898.—Roland Jones, miner, age 35, was burned by an explosion of carburetted hydrogen gas, in chute 61, White Ash Mine, Black Diamond, operated by E. F. Lawson. Jones had been warned by the fire boss that his place was dangerous and that he must wait on the gangway until the fire boss had made it safe. Notwithstanding this, he deliberately went into the chute with his naked light and got burned. Had the county attorney of King County shown a proper spirit in prosecuting the case last previously cited, an information would have been laid against this man Jones.

(Due to the lack of space in this issue of the Newsletter, the remaining portion of the 1897-1898 Coal Mine Report will appear in the next issue.)

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Rev. 10/01/01

ON THE GROUNDS

Joe Zumek and his Thursday Work Crew has rebuilt the steps leading to the caboose.

Caboose Inspectors (shown in photograph) Nile Israel and Mason Vines test out the new steps.



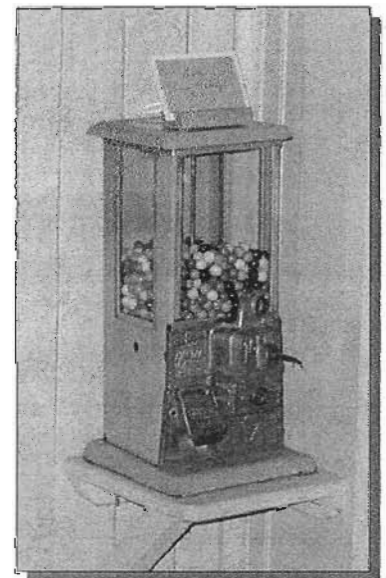
IN THE MUSEUM

This gumball penny slot machine, patented August 14, 1923 still delivers!

Gum, that is.

Gum to all who have a penny to put into the slot.

You will find it near the front desk. ♦





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