



Black Diamond Historical Society and Museum

Printed Quarterly



April 2010

PICTURES OF THE PAST

JOHN D. JONES (JAC Y CIGYDD – JACK THE BUTCHER)

By JoAnne Matsumura

John D. Jones, a man of true Gof) a blacksmith in South Wales in community of Franklin, WA in about other miners picking coal. He died on tle, 1904 Minor Ave.

Mr. Jones performed with in Black Diamond, WA to a throng of strong. “Every town for miles around ers to compete. The rafters rang and some influence in the 1894 Eisteddfod schoolhouse.

With his wife and children he served as constable to Justice P. V. E. Carroll.

Living in Walla Walla, WA by was the third vice president & stockholder of the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (A.Y.P.E.) and was “keeper of the doctrine” for the Eisteddfod and “cyFarfodydd y pwyligor” and through his generosity the committee was assured a very comfortable place to hold the weekly meetings in the Court of Justice Carroll.

Mr. Jones was a winner at the A.Y.P Exposition 1909 Eisteddfod for his recitation for children under 16 years of age. As a prize for his adjudication of the essay “Cymru Talaeth WA” he won \$20.00, and would win an additional \$10.00 upon its completion.

“Y Cigydd” has been connected with every Eisteddfodic movement on these coasts from the Black Diamond Eisteddfod more than twenty years ago until the 1909 A.Y.P. Eisteddfod, the largest of all the Eisteddfodau on the Shore of the Pacific. Doubtless one will hear more of him in literature and song after the A.Y.P.E. Eisteddfod.”

Mr. Jones was a noted singer of Welsh ballads and verse in the Cambrian Tongue. On the last night of the 1913 Legislature he sang the old Welsh ballads and other songs that “aroused the crowd with great enthusiasm.”

Mr. Jones wrote under the pen name of Jac Y Cigydd. In 1914 the Welshman of the Northwest gave him the title of “The Knighted Welsh King of the Pacific Coast” at the annual March St. David’s Day celebration.

John & Mary J. Jones had one son, Thomas H. Jones and five daughters, Mrs. C. H. Nichols, Ruth A. Stowe, Mrs. Wm. B. Peake, Mary A., and Raye Jones. Brothers David D. Jones and Isaac D. Jones, and one sister Mrs. Sara Kitcher.



talent, was born to Richard N. Jones (Y 1847, and emigrated to the mining 1885 at the age of 39 and joined the November 8, 1915 at his home in Seat-

song and verse at the 1886 Eisteddfod peoples celebrating of nearly 4000 sent soloists, choirs, quartets, and read-it was excellent.” He most likely had in Franklin, WA held in the little

moved to Seattle in 1902 wherein he Davis and later to that of Justice John

1909 “Jac Y Cigydd (Jack the Butcher),

(Photograph from the 1909 A.Y.P.E. Welsh Eisteddfod Program courtesy of Jackie Cedarholm)

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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Newsletter articles due June 10th, 2010.

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Society Officers

President: Keith Watson
 Vice President: Don Malgarini
 Secretary: Dee Israel
 Treasurer: Clayton Mead

Directors

Harry Berry, Don "Doc" Botts, Howard Botts, Gomer Evans, Don Mason, JoAnne Matsumura, Anna Morris, and Conrad "Coke" Roberts

Museum Hours

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


CONTACT INFORMATION

The Museum is located at 32627 Railroad Ave
 Black Diamond, WA 98010

The mailing address is:
The Black Diamond Historical Society
PO Box 232, Black Diamond, WA 98010

Information, Tours and Lectures: 360-886-2142
 For Franklin Tours: 253-852-6763

E-mail Address: museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org
 Web site: www.blackdiamondmuseum.org



We thank 4Culture for the support that helps to keep us operating.



Thank You, City of Black Diamond, for the operations support.

EDITOR'S CORNER



Dee and I traveled to Phoenix in December, and we returned in January. During our travels we visited a couple of museums.

First we visited a museum in Clayton, CA near where the Black Diamond Mines were operating until about 1902. (In the 1880's, they began mining in Washington, founding the town of Black Diamond, WA.) Many of the coalminers that worked in the Black Diamond Mines in those days lived in Clayton. The museum is housed in an old residence that was owned by Joel Henry Clayton, and moved to the current site in 1976. The building is similar to historic houses in Black Diamond, WA.

The Clayton Museum made us feel like we were visiting a long lost relative, because of the connection to our town. Even the artifacts were similar to what we have, covering mining and family life from another century. We were treated to a special tour, and even felt like we were family. I expected to be invited for supper, but that didn't happen.

Upon our return trip from Phoenix, we visited the Kingman Museum, on historic Route 66. They have 2 sites, and I think the best one is housed in the old power house.

The Kingman Museum includes gold mining, travel, and Andy Devine. (The actor was from Kingman, and even has a road named after him.)

I come home to our museum with a new sense of appreciation.

Thank you.

Steve

CALENDAR FOR 2010

April 25 Sun. 1 PM General Membership Meeting at the museum

May 29 Sat. 1 PM Memorial Day presentation at the museum

June 2 Wed. 11 AM Black Diamond School Reunion Luncheon at the Black Diamond Community Center **RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**
PHONE 360-886-1011

June 5 Sat. 1 PM Welsh Day at the museum

July thru Aug. Every Thursday 10 – 10:30 Children's Summer Programs at museum

July 17 Sat. 10 thru 4PM Miners Day on Railroad Avenue (Museum open 10 – 4PM)

Sept. 6 Mon. Labor Day Celebration (Museum open 11 – 4 PM)

Oct. 24 Sun. 1 PM General Membership Meeting at museum

Nov. 6 Sat. 1 PM Veterans Day Presentation at museum

Nov. 25 Thurs. Museum Closed for Thanksgiving

Dec. 11 Sat. 1 PM Christmas Open House at museum

Dec. 20 thru Jan. 5 Museum Closed for Holidays

Jan. 6 Thurs. 9 – 3 PM Museum Reopens for 2011

As the event dates get closer, more details will be published in the newsletters and on the web site.

FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

We will have a link from our web site soon to Facebook and Twitter. Here is how you can find us now:

- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Black-Diamond-WA/Black-Diamond-History/229708362554>
- Twitter: http://twitter.com/bd_history

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Keith Watson

It is sunny February as this message is being written. Hard to believe that we can have so much good weather while so much of the rest of our Country is suffering with terrible weather.

The street where the museum is located is named Railroad Avenue. In days past the street had three sets of train tracks on it with one set continuing Southeastward to Kummer and Franklin. The look of the street has changed through the decades. Missing are buildings, houses, and the train tracks. This year the look will be changing again; this time for the better. There will be new pavement, new street grades, new sidewalks on both sides of the street, new ADA cross walks, angle parking on both sides of the street, street lights, and new wood barriers in front of the museum. The City plans to have this renovation done before Memorial Day. The merchants will need our support during these challenging times; we encourage you to patronize them as much as possible. When the project is completed Railroad Avenue will be more people friendly than it has been in years.

This Memorial Day will be observed at the Museum Saturday May 29, 2010 at 1 PM with a presentation about the Honor Guard at the Tomb of the "Unknown Soldier" in the Arlington National Cemetery and information about the Tahoma National Cemetery in Kent, Washington.

The Annual Black Diamond School Reunion will be held on Wednesday June 2, 2010 at the Black Diamond Community Center beginning at 11 AM. Reservations are a must. If you wish to be on the address list for this event simply phone the Museum at 360-886-2142 or call the Black Diamond Community Center at 360-886-1011.

Welsh Day at the Museum will be held on Wednesday June 5, 2010 at 1 PM. No reservation needed.

Miners Day will be celebrated on the "new" Railroad Avenue on Saturday July 17, 2010. There will be the Pacific Northwest BBQ Association's Bar BQ Cook-Off and "People's Choice Chili Sampling Contest", many vendors, with live music and interesting happenings. Look for more details in future issues of our newsletter.

Gomer Evans, along with many volunteers, has been working hard on the cosmetic restoration of the Plymouth Locomotive that we acquired in September of 2009. The window frames, cab floor, cab interior parts, engine compartment doors, engine cowling, smoke stacks, grab bars, and other exterior parts have been removed and are in the various stages of restoration or replacement. The new paint schemes and the naming of the locomotive are being decided with a contest at the Black Diamond Elementary School. This project has had many helpers, advisers, and volunteers. Here are some of their names: **Steve Pausheck, Steve Israel, Ken Jensen, Brian Mead, Clayton Mead, Bob Duncan, Tom Daniels, Howard Botts, Fred Weston, George Christensen, Joe Zumek, John Morris, Bill Bremmeyer, and more, as well as help from the City Staff.** Many Thanks to you all!

There is a new look on the exterior of the Museum. The three benches have been repaired and painted by Gomer Evans and Tom Daniels. The new look is train station green. Thanks guys!

The museum has some new lighting in four of our rooms that is brighter, more energy efficient, and has a negligible output of destructive ultraviolet rays. The rooms are the Parlor, the School Room (where the desk is located at the entrance), the Train Ticket Room, and the large Kitchen Room next to our office. We can now actually see to do our work.

The Franklin Tour in February was incredible. We not only had great weather but we had an attendance of 231 people and some dogs. **Don Mason** did his wonderful job as tour director but was hampered with the lack of a good megaphone and the need of larger pictures of Franklin. We would like to encourage donations for these improvements.

PS: The March Franklin town site tour was equally blessed with fine weather and we had 166 attendees. We will try to improve on our presentation during these tours. The reason we pick the pre-spring time for these tours is because the underbrush has not grown yet and we can see the cement foundations more clearly.

(Continued on page 7)

**GWYNNETH ANDERSON PRESENTS
'STONES AND BONES'
APRIL 25TH AT THE
BLACK DIAMOND DEPOT MUSEUM
By JoAnne Matsumura**

Special guest speaker, Gwynneth Anderson, a Bellevue photographer and writer will present "Stones and Bones: Discovering Secrets in King County's Oldest Cemeteries" on Sunday, April 25 at The Black Diamond Depot Museum, 32627 Railroad Avenue, Black Diamond, Washington, 98010 during the Society's General Membership Meeting beginning at 1 P.M.

Anderson will talk about local cemeteries and how people can learn about local history and culture by looking at the stones, symbols and carvings found in the cemeteries. Anderson will present photos during the presentation and will answer questions following her talk. She will convey there is beauty and history in each grave marker or headstone.

Anderson has exhibited her photographs in U.S. Embassies, the San Francisco Bay Area and the Pacific Northwest. Her most recent display was at Sea-Tac Airport as part of the "Spirit of Flight II" exhibition.

Join us in welcoming Ms. Anderson for her informative and educational history of "Stones and Bones".

This program is supported by 4Culture, the Allied Arts Foundation of Seattle, the City of Black Diamond and the Black Diamond Historical Society.

The program is open to the public and admission is free, however donations are gratefully appreciated and accepted.

For more information, call the Society at 360-886-2142 or visit the website:

<http://www.blackdiamondmuseum.org>.

DONATIONS

By Dee Israel

We wish to thank the following for their generous donations to the Black Diamond Historical Society.

**MEMORIAL DONATIONS IN MEMORY of:
Ior Davies, by Ellen Vieg.**

Rudy Zinter, by Joe & Eileen Zumek.

Shirley J. Mead, by Carol Campbell, Carl & Virginia Campbell and Keith & Judy Watson.

David Zumek, by Joe & Eileen Zumek.

Sara Eileen Morris, by Deanna & Milt Harper, Tom & Mary Hodgson, Aileen Ward, Joe & Eileen Zumek, Kristie, Kaylee & Dan Staber, and Thomas & Arlene Hope.

John, Livia, Gerald & John III Lombardini, by Bert J. Lombardini.

Anton (Tony) Kombol, by Barry, Becca, Bill, Jennifer, Daniel, David, Jeanorie & Pauline Kombol

Richard Toth, by David & Nancy Grant.

Jewell McCloud, by Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Boxx & family

GENERAL FUND DONATIONS BY:

Anna Thirsted

David & Marjory Velthausen

Robert Morgan Smith

Henry DeLauro

Paula Perkins

Ellen Vieg

Slovene National Benefit Society

Joan Traylor

In honor of Dorothy Corlett's 90th birthday, by Ralph & Betty Uhrig.

ARCHIVE PRESERVATION FUND BY:

Vicki Nelson

These donations are greatly appreciated. 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.

WELCOME MEMBERS

The Black Diamond Historical Society now has a total of 313 memberships. We are pleased to announce that during this past quarter we have acquired the following new memberships:

Chuck & Elaine Evans
Edward Hamilton
Pat & Susan Noon
M.L. Shukis



Inez Aden
Joe Androsko
Miss Edith Banchemo
Ralph Banchemo
Gil & Marlene Bortleson
Donald Botts
Gertrude Botts
Howard & Dorothy Botts
Bill Bremmeyer
Mrs. Lyle Bremmeyer
Jackie Cedarholm

We would like to thank the following members for renewing their membership this quarter:

Betty Blakeney
Bob & Jodine Burke
Richard Cecchi
Beth Deady
Robert & JoAnn Doyer
Louis & Rosa Draghi
Carl & Georgia Falk
Carolyn Herrera
Jerrine Hope
Dick & Lori Hoyt
Steve & Dee Israel
Becky Jack
Steve & Diane Kitz
Virginia Lindstrom
Josephine Long
Don & Joan Malgarini
Julianne McNeeley
Ed Opstad
Scott & Mary Peterson
Terry Picini
Jeanne Riggs
John & Kathi Roulst
Ship & Laura J. Shipley
Robert Morgan Smith
Dave & Johna Thomson
Anne Thorsett
Joan Traylor
Ralph & Betty Uhrig
David & Marjory Velthausen
Keith C. & Judy Watson
Chris & Raeann Webb

I would also like to thank the following business that has renewed their membership this quarter:
Taff Roofing, Inc.

At this time I would like to congratulate the following members that joined the Society during its first 10 years and became Life members:

Walter & Joan Clark
Dorothy Corlett
Don & Marilyn Covey
Joe & Evelyn Dal Santo
Leo Del Santo
Douglas Danley
Robert Eaton
Lois Estby
Mrs. Joseph Fosnick
Doris Garrett
Norma Gumser
Mark Hesselbach
Ruth Evers Hofto
Mrs. Jennie Johnson
Mary P. Keehner
Francis Kincaid
Rosemary Konoske-Bigalow
James Kuzaro
Betty Luke
Lynda Maks
Helen Manowski
Don & Lynn Mason
Audrey Mendenhall
Ivor & Betty J. Merryfield
Archie Morgan
Cory & Diane Olson
Charles Payton
Gino Picini
Jerry Pierce
Marian Short
David Sprau
Margaret Stanley
Dr. & Mrs. Jerry Steiert
Mrs. Tony Susnar
Catherine Truman
Margaret Vernarelli
Loretta Vencenzi
Thomas & Lois Wieltschnig
Joe & Eileen Zumeck

GUESTS

By: Doc Botts



During the month of **December 2009 we had 208 guests, January 2010 we had 88 guests and February 2010 we had 293 guests.** Making a 3-month total of **589 guests** to the Museum. There were visitors from **9 States:** Alaska, California, Idaho, Illinois, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and here in Washington. There were also people visiting from other places, such as Japan.

REMARKS MADE BY OUR GUESTS

Here are a few of the nice comments that were in our guest book this quarter:

This museum brings back memories of my childhood.

It was nice to learn about the history of Black Diamond.

Extensive artifacts! I was very impressed.

The coal cart model was awesome.

Love all the history presented here.

Fascinating, interesting period of history.

Thank you for preserving the past.

What a wonderful place to learn about our past.

It is the best museum I have been to!

What a charming walk into history.

A walk down beautiful memory lane.

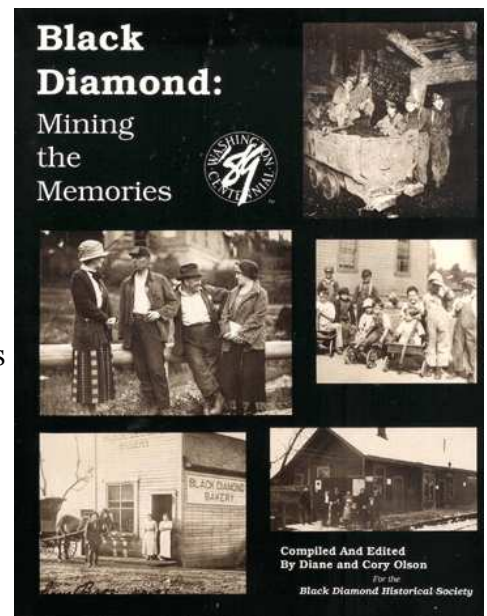
(Continued from page 4)

We wish to thank **Bill Kombol** for his mentioning the Franklin tours in his "Voice of the Valley" newspaper articles "When Coal Was King". Want to know more about Franklin's history; an entire chapter is devoted to Franklin in the book: "Black Diamond: Mining the Memories" which can be purchased at the museum. This book was compiled and edited by **Diane and Cory Olson** for the Black Diamond Historical Society 21 years ago and is in its 4th printing. It is a great read!

I hope this Spring finds you and yours in good health and spirit. Keith

Black Diamond: Mining the Memories is a book of memories of the coal miners that worked in Black Diamond and other near-by coal mines. This unique collection of interviews takes us back to a time when life was so different than it is today. In their own words, the miners tell tales of hardships and friendships, tales of toiling in the underground mines and dancing on Saturday night.

This book can be purchased at the museum, and makes a wonderful gift.



IN MEMORIAM

✿ Gone but not forgotten ✿

By JoAnne Matsumura

✿ **Margaret Lombardi Chamberlin** a Lifetime Member passed away on February 3, 2010 at the age of 90 years young. She was born October 6, 1919 to Dario and Rosa Lombardi of Black Diamond.

Margaret, a member of the High School Alumni graduated from Black Diamond High School, one of 12 in the Class of 1937. After graduation she worked for and retired from Frederick & Nelson. She lived in Bellevue, WA for many years before moving to West Seattle.



In 1999 Margaret penned a letter to the Society of a few of her memories-----“I’ll always cherish the many fond memories growing up in Black Diamond. My sister Jenny and I often reminisced of this great time in our lives. The volunteers should be very proud of the attractive museum created from the old train depot. I love it!!”

Survivors include her son Clark and family.

✿ **Ruth Mills Kerkes** passed away on December 28, 2009 at the age of 99. She was born on June 23, 1910 of Welsh ancestry.

Ruth attended the Black Diamond Schools and was a graduate of the Class of 1929 and is listed on the roster of the High School Alumni.

Ruth has been a lifetime member of the Society since 1981. Her presence at the Society’s Welsh Heritage Days celebrations were made more pleasant as she mingled with the other Welch in attendance and shared stories.

Her Sister Virginia survives her.



✿ **William ‘Bill’ Luke** passed away on February 6, 2010 in Harrison, Montana. More information will be included in a future issue of the Society’s newsletter.



✿ **Jewell McCloud**, a Charter Lifetime Member of the Society passed away on December 16, 2009.

The McCloud Rose Garden is remembered



by many, is a historic place in this fair city, and the Society is pleased to have on exhibit images of The Rose Garden and specially designed wood carved marquee of “The McCloud Rose Garden”. The roses continue to bloom----a living memorial.

Jewell penned a greeting several years ago to the Society “Enjoy the newsletter. It was so much fun helping out at the Museum. I’m doing OK. Think of all the old friends there.”

✿ **Richard Charles Toth** a frequent visitor to the museum and member passed away on November 10, 2009. He was born September 7, 1926 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

He served in the U. S. Navy, then attended and began a life long career in printing and business forms. After a time he became president and general manager of Pioneer Business Forms, then the oldest continuously operating business in Washington State—for 13 years.

Richard married Marylou Carl on October 19, 1957. Three daughters and one son soon joined them. They traveled extensively enjoying the theater wherever they went. Richard enjoyed golf along with making kolacs.

Richard and his wife Marylou fell in love with the museum nearly seven years ago, and the number of people they brought to see the museum and share memories is immeasurable. The Society is appreciative of their dedication to having the Museum one of their ‘tour stops’ as they showed the Black Diamond community to their family and friends.

Richard’s wife, Marylou, daughters and son survive him.

✿ **Kenneth Edward Williams** passed away on November 26, 2009, Thanksgiving Day, and was born on December 27, 1929 in Erie, Colorado.

Kenneth attended elementary and Junior High school in Lafayette, Colorado. The family moved to Black Diamond, WA in 1944. Kenneth graduated from Enumclaw High School, Class of 1947, where he was known as “Sonny and Willie”.



He enlisted in the military and served 22 years, attaining the rank of “T/Sgt”.

While Kenneth was a recent member of the Society, his membership and support is gratefully appreciated.

His wife Judith preceded Kenneth in death. His Brother William & wife Sachiyo of Union, WA, and brother Dennis & wife Judy of Spokane, WA, and several nieces and nephews survive him.

THE BLACK DIAMOND SMOKER

By Opal Warden, Black Diamond, age 13

“Hurrah, for the Black Diamond Smoker;
That’s the place to have real fun.
Oh! Boy, they even have music
Beside all the boxing that’s done.

You watch for the big fellows’ uppercut
That knocks the other one cold:
You see the big fellow get a surprise
He didn’t know “Shorty” was bold.

We’ve a Dempsey the second, also Carpentier,
When it comes to boxing, you bet;
And Caruso the second between every act
Best singing that I have heard yet.

Oh! Never forget that the motto is this:
“When there’s a will there’s a way,” yes you bet,
And when Diamond says that she’ll do a thing,
It’s the best that the world has had yet.

Some people may think because Diamond is small
Her smokers are not worth a cent,
But you go to the city and pay five dollars or more
And I’ll bet you’ll regret that you went.”

From The Archives: *Pacific Coast Bulletin*,
February 1, 1923, VOL 3 No. 5, Page 6

✿ THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES ✿

Gone but not forgotten

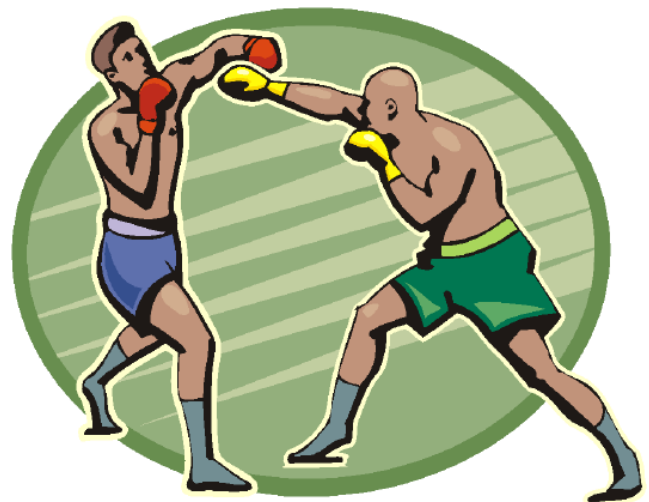
By JoAnne Matsumura



✿ Tom Landis

March 7, 1948 – December 15, 2009

Father of Lauren, Gia and Will



**BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
TO SOCIETY MEMBERS**

FOR THIS QUARTER OF THE CALENDAR:

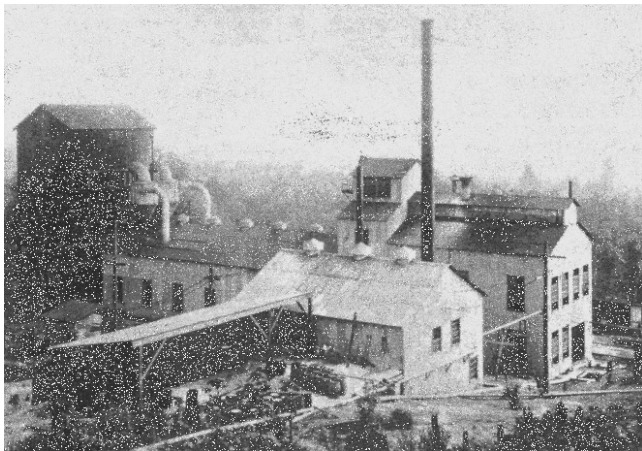
(If your birthday is this quarter & you don't find your name on this list, it's because we don't have the date. Let us know when it is so it can be included next time.)

- Apr. 01 Louis Draghi
- Apr. 02 Joan Malgarini Traylor
- Apr. 03 Joe Androsko
- Apr. 05 Paul Goldsberry
- Apr. 06 Jennifer Lewis
- Apr. 06 Betty Malgarini Manieri
- Apr. 07 Inez Costi Aden
- Apr. 08 Clyde William Johnson
- Apr. 09 Mike Malgarini
- Apr. 03 Kay Traverso
- Apr. 10 Joseph Lombardini
- Apr. 12 Howard Botts
- Apr. 12 Joan Zita Clark
- Apr. 12 Glenn Fredericksen
- Apr. 12 Marsha Smith Mott
- Apr. 14 Ivor Merryfield
- Apr. 16 Leasha Tyerman Janet
- Apr. 16 Ralph Uhrig
- Apr. 20 Mark Witman
- Apr. 23 Roy Callero Jr.
- Apr. 23 Marlynn M. Hope Mulnar
- Apr. 29 Priscilla Hill
- Apr. 30 Dave Thomson
- May 01 Ted Barber
- May 02 Jack Cartwright
- May 03 Gino Picini
- May 04 Lois Gormley Wieltschnig
- May 05 Tom Erath
- May 05 Jerold L. Thompson
- May 06 David J. Morris
- May 08 Joyce Dal Santo Lyons
- May 11 Gertrude Haworth Botts
- May 13 Ruth Ayers Hofto
- May 13 Susie Thompson
- May 13 Kenneth W. Unick
- May 16 Gale Hendrickson
- May 22 Steve Kitiz
- May 24 Brian H. Mead
- May 25 Bob Hannus
- May 25 Edward Hamilton

- May 27 Esther Pennacchi Birch
- May 27 Jeanne Norman
- May 29 Arlene Guidetti Hendrickson
- Jun. 01 Beth Barber
- Jun. 01 Mary Darby
- Jun. 01 Arthur L. Johnson
- Jun. 01 Junette Larson
- Jun. 02 Bob Burke
- Jun. 03 Audrey Petchnick Sellman
- Jun. 05 Julianne Dal Santo McNeeley
- Jun. 06 John Roulst
- Jun. 06 Terry Williams
- Jun. 09 Carolyn Herrera
- Jun. 11 Frank Fosnacht
- Jun. 13 Virginia Givens Kessner
- Jun. 14 Jake Logar
- Jun. 14 Bunny McKnight
- Jun. 15 Southport Land & Commercial Co. Inc.
1861
- Jun. 17 Margaret Franz Pearce
- Jun. 18 Anna Morris
- Jun. 19 Tom Taff
- Jun. 23 Bob Smith
- Jun. 23 Lois Thomas Zumek Estby
- Jun. 24 Marilyn Bradford Covey
- Jun. 27 Mary P. Keehner
- Jun. 27 Keith C. Watson
- Jun. 28 Ralph E. Dockham
- Jun. 30 Steve Israel



**Diamond Junction: Where Yesterday Meets Today
Briquetville**
By Ken Jensen



Briquetville occupied 20 acres east of the Shuffleton steam plant—an area today that partly encompasses Gene Coulon Park.

Drive by the south end of Lake Washington and the change is dramatic. What once was the blue-collar domicile of heavy manufacturing behemoths PACCAR and Boeing now includes The Landing, Fry's, Lowe's, and luxury condos and apartments. Though Boeing's facilities still occupy the lion's share of the lakefront, gigantic, nondescript buildings have given way to lively restaurants, a fitness center, and a 14-screen movie theatre.

Boeing's former neighbor to the west, the 1929 coal-fired Shuffleton power plant, met its demise in 2001.

But just up the street, Gene Coulon Park's still there—a part of the social fabric of Renton for what seems like *forever*. But *before* the park, *before* the area was a dumping ground for logs and boats—go back nearly a century and that's where Black Diamond coal enters the story.

Circa 1910. The Pacific Coast Coal Company had a problem—two problems, actually. First, oil was rapidly displacing coal as the fuel of choice to power locomotives, steamships, and steam plants. And second, it needed to create a demand for its “screenings,” or fine grades of coal, from its mines in Black Diamond, Franklin, Issaquah,

Newcastle, Burnett, and South Prairie. The fine coal is actually the purest in the vein—not to mention the best—in terms of heating potential. Perhaps briquetting was the answer?

The Pacific Coast Coal Company sent its chief engineer to briquetting plants in the United States and Europe to find out. After a three-year investigation, the company hired the Malcolmson Briquet Engineering Company of Chicago to both design and build the plant at Briquetville in present-day Renton. The \$225,000 plant began operations in August 1914.

Briquetville was located in a triangle of tracks formed by the Columbia & Puget Sound and Northern Pacific railroads. A 1928 *Pacific Coast Bulletin* described its location as “nestled back against the green hills which form the southern shore of Lake Washington and adjoining the boulevard which circles the lake.” It occupied 20 acres east of the Shuffleton steam plant—an area today that includes Gene Coulon Park.

The plant consisted of 10 buildings and three tanks: the raw coal bin, dryer building, press building, transformer station, boiler and kettle house, laboratory and office, briquet storage bin, demonstrating station, watchman's cottage, and pump house.

Radiant!
—glowing warmth, ready at a moment's notice, yet capable of sustained heat over long hours behind closed draughts. Scientifically blended from the finest coals mined in the West. Rendering full satisfaction in thousands of happy homes. Ideal for furnace or fireplace.

DIAMOND BRIQUETS

Under our new One-Profit sales policy YOU save approximately \$2 per ton on your coal bill. A further saving of \$1.25 or more per ton can be effected by burning **Carbonado Furnace Coal** with Diamond Briquets or the higher priced lump coals.

MARKET TO CONSUMER PRICES
DIAMOND BRIQUETS . . . \$10 per ton
CARBONADO FURNACE COAL \$6.50 per ton
Delivered anywhere within the city limits for \$1.00 per ton in 5-ton loads.

No household or business accessories necessary for use of Diamond Briquets, and every ton of coal, wherever you place satisfaction in you, as we will ensure the utmost fuel and highest per purchase price to you.

Your Credit is Good if Your Credit is Good.

Pacific Coast Coal Company
Office and Lager Coal Company in Washington.

MAIn
4403

“Your Credit is Good if Your Credit is Good” claimed this 1927 *Pacific Coast Bulletin* ad for Diamond Briquets.

A Diamond Briquet was a rounded block of compressed, clean coal formed into a convenient size, 10.5 oz, for domestic use. Asphalt was used during manufacturing to bind the finely pulverized coal together. This process actually improved on nature's design—first by increasing the coal's heating value and then by removing

impurities, resulting in lower ash content.

“The adjective ‘Diamond’ was a bit of marketing genius, capitalizing on the great quality associated with Black Diamond coal as well as a bit of bejeweled aura to sell an otherwise common fuel product,” says BDHS Member **Bill Kombol**.

Before, and for some time after World War I, most homes would’ve had a coal or wood stove for cooking and, in many cases, heating. Briquets were quick to light, specifically adapted to furnace and stove use, and could be delivered directly to your home. It was an early twentieth-century convenience; certainly much easier, cleaner, and *more ethical* than mining it in your own backyard, as I’ve been told many an early Black Diamond pioneer did!

But briquets were used for more than just domestic purposes.

The US Army ordered thousands of tons in 1916 for its military installations as far north as Fort William H. Seward at Haines, near Skagway, Alaska, and to the south, at the Presidio in Monterey, California. And Diamond Briquets were shipped to the Yakima Valley to protect orchards, too. “One-hundred thousand briquet heaters are now playing their part in the production of bumper crops by radiating the warm glow of red hot briquets against the heretofore invulnerable attacks of Jack Frost,” claimed a 1925 issue of the *Bulletin*.

The briquetting process took quite a bit of technological know-how. Engineering periodicals of the day devoted countless pages to the ground-breaking processes and equipment used at Briquetville to crush, dry, and mix the coal and binder concoction.

To manufacture briquets, four major processes were involved: (1) grinding the coal to the right size, (2) drying it to remove moisture so that it could absorb the binder, (3) mixing or fluxing the coal and the binder (in this case, between 6% and 7% asphalt), and (4) stamping of the coal into a briquet. And all manner of machinery, from track hoppers and flight conveyors

to continuous-bucket elevators, were used to transport the sometimes sticky coal through the plant.

Each briquet made with Black Diamond coal was embossed with a small diamond brand. According to the plant’s chief engineer, “It will be worth the superintendent’s job to let that diamond brand be put on any Newcastle coal. At present your dealer can sell you Black Diamond coal and deliver you something else, but when you buy briquets, you will get just what you buy. We guarantee that, and all you have to do is to examine the brand.”



Diamond Briquets were delivered by the “Coal Dust Twins.”

A special loading spur connected to the Northern Pacific Railroad was used to transport the briquets to their final destination. And in 1916, the opening of the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks allowed the Pacific Coast Coal Company to ship its briquets, via Lake Washington, to Puget Sound and beyond.

You could also purchase Diamond Briquets at the Pacific Coast Coal Company’s sales office on what is now Duwamish Way S. in South Seattle. A 1927 advertisement in the *Bulletin* offered Diamond Briquets for \$10 per ton and were delivered to anywhere within the city limits for \$1.10 per ton in 5-ton loads. If you wanted to purchase your coal on credit, no problem—or as their slogan went, “Your Credit is Good if Your Credit is Good.”

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“Mr. A. Briquet” (*Ready to Serve You Anywhere*) and “Mr. Black Diamond” (*Singing a Song of Fuel Economy*), the Pacific Coast Coal Company’s marketing icons of the day, were always at the ready to remind you of the briquets’ qualities. “Feed your furnace a few Diamond Briquets, and you’ll chase the chill out of your house in a jiffy,” claimed one ad.



Mr. Black Diamond Singing a Song of Fuel Economy

Black Diamond Coal

Pacific Coast Coal Company marketing icon.

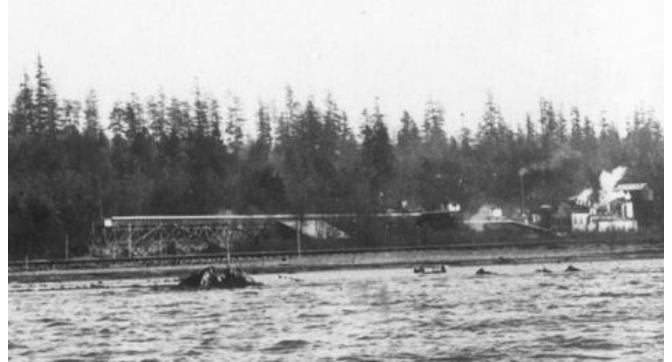
Delivery was accomplished, at least in 1925, by the “Coal Dust Twins,” as the company’s two Ford Model T trucks were called. The trucks were specifically designed to deliver Diamond Briquets, and because of their small size could get into back alleys and other tight places with ease.

And what if inclement weather delayed your shipment, leaving you in the cold? No worries, for the Sales Office—an ingenious bunch for sure, or so claimed the *Bulletin*—outfitted a tractor and delivered sacks of Diamond Briquets to customers while other coal companies’ trucks were blocked by snow or late in making delivery.

But sadly all things must come to an end. And so it was for Briquetville, which closed its doors in May 1939. Between “the introduction of coal stokers and oil burners, and the competition from briquets made from oil and gas residues, the future outlook for coal briquets is very problematical,” concluded a 1943 report on fuel briquets. In fact, by that year there were *no* briquetting plants still operating in the state.

It doesn’t appear, however, that Bri-

quetville went down quietly—though at this juncture of the story, details are hazy. BDHS Vice President **Don Malgarini** remembers delivering timber to the plant in 1954. He seems to recall that the plant had been converted to manufacture charcoal briquets, though I could not substantiate that.



This 1917 photo shows the briquet plant (right) and the shoreline of what will become Gene Coulon Park in 1970. Photo courtesy of **Bill Kombol**, Manager of Palmer Coking Coal Company of Black Diamond.

What I did learn was that the Briquetville property ended up in the hands of the City of Renton in 1955. In a complicated land swap, the Pacific Coast Railway, a subsidiary of the Pacific Coast Company, traded 20 acres to the city—including 1,000 feet of Lake Washington shoreline—in exchange for most of the undeveloped Mother’s Park on Park Ave. in Renton. (If you, like me, remember the Mother’s Park gymnasium, it too met an untimely demise—it’s now a Boeing parking lot.)

Amazingly enough, coal briquets are still being produced in parts of the world, especially in developing countries where oil and gas are scarce. One of the problems was and still is the use of asphalt binder and the smoke associated with its combustion. But I’ve read of one concoction that mixes fine coal with a binder of 5% to 15% molasses.

In the end, cheap oil and gas at the end of World War II won the day. But for a quarter century, Briquetville—against the overwhelming advance of progress—fought back the inevitable.

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SIDEBAR: Why Doesn't a Wye Look Like a Y?

This unidentified youngster is standing on one of the three "frogs," or switches, that make up the Franklin Wye.

In January's Diamond Junction column, I began with a few questions about Black Dia-

mond history. Well, it seems only fitting that I answer at least one of them here, so here goes.

How did trains turn around in Franklin?

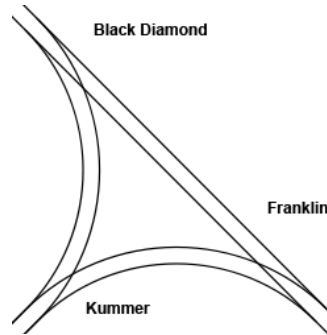
The short answer is that **they didn't**.

Trains were always backed into Franklin and then, once loaded with coal, were pulled into Black Diamond.

But there's always more to the story. Trains would leave Black Diamond heading south...so how'd they turn around? That's where the Franklin Wye, also called the "Y," came into the picture — *literally*.

Marc Robertson, a railroader and descendant of the Banchemo lineage of Black Diamond, explained that a wye is a *triangular-shaped arrangement of railway tracks used to turn a locomotive around and point it back from where it came*.

"If there wasn't a way to turn the locomotive around—especially in the steam days—the engineer had to run the engine backwards with the tender to the front of the movement. Some engines were fitted with a headlight on the tender, but it still would be hard for the engineer to run backwards for long distances," he said. The engineer wouldn't be able to watch his water gauges or operate the controls, and he'd have to lean out the window to see around the tender.



Now you know why a wye is used to turn railway equipment.
Wikipedia.org

So what's it all mean?

The train would pull on to the Kummer

Spur and then back up into Franklin from there, using the third side of the wye.

What I find interesting is that a wye, minus one side, looks like a Y, but a three-sided wye doesn't. Why's that?

And don't even get me going on what's a "frog." (You railroaders out there know what I'm talking about.)

If you find yourself on the Enumclaw-Black Diamond Road (SR 169) in the vicinity of the Black Diamond Gun Club, the long drive into the club is actually the old rail bed of the Kummer Spur, which is one side of the Franklin Wye.

NOTICE

Welsh descendents and the general public are invited to our annual Welsh Day Saturday, June 5th, 2010, at the museum. A program will start at 1:00 pm and will include Welsh music and a guest speaker showing slides.

If you know of other Welsh descendents, we would like to send them an invitation.

Call Don Mason, 253-852-6763

Or contact the museum.

Mark you calendars for
Saturday, June 5th

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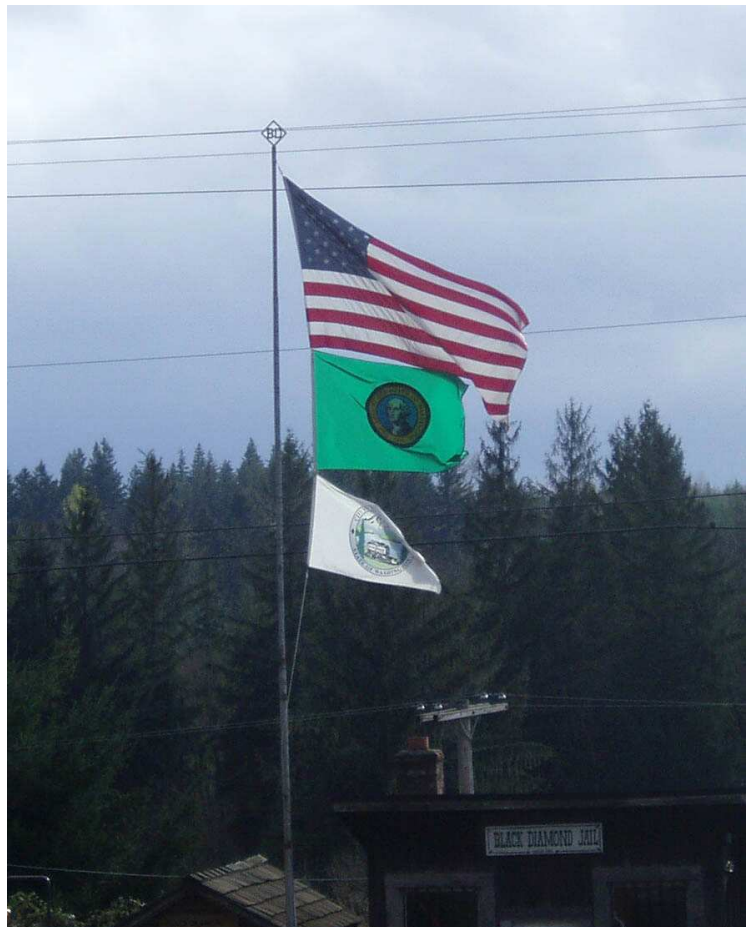
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ON THE GROUNDS

NEW FLAG!

We now have a Washington
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 June 14th!





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**SEMI-ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING**

**1:00 PM, Sunday April 25th,
At the Museum**

**GWYNNETH ANDERSON
PRESENTS 'STONES AND BONES'**
Discovering Secrets in King County's
Oldest Cemeteries

MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

**12:30 PM
3rd Thursday
Of Each Month**

**The Black Diamond
Historical Society**

**is a non profit organization.
Our funding comes mainly
from donations, dues, and
some grants.**

**The restoration and mainte-
nance of the Museum and its
contents are done by volun-
teers.**

**To donate your time or money
would be a great way for you to
help preserve your history.
Find out more in this issue!**