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Frank Selleck's home is in the foreground while the Selleck School is in the background. (Photo courtesy of Lloyd Qually.)

Pacific States Lumber Company

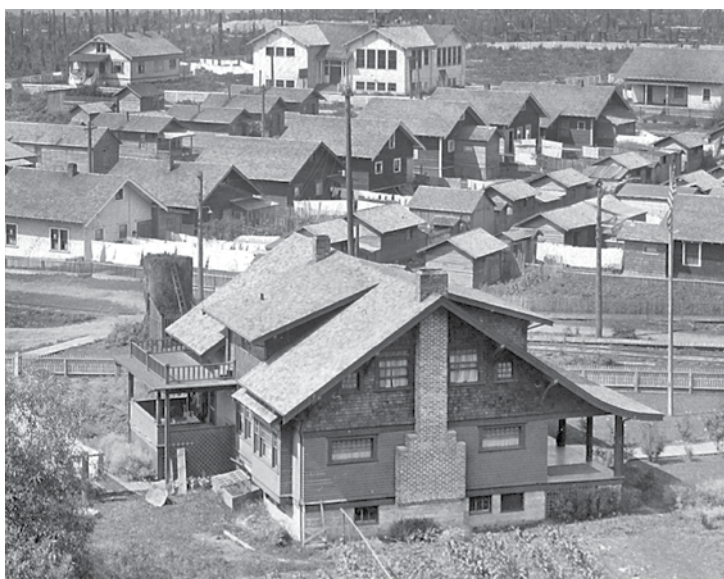
Booming mill in Selleck cut down by depression, labor disputes

SEPTEMBER 1, 1923—11:58 A.M. The Great Kanto Earthquake struck Japan, immediately followed by a 40-foot tsunami. And if that wasn't enough, firestorms roared through what was left of the mostly wooden homes of Yokohama and Tokyo. In all, 140,000 dead; nearly 500,000 homes destroyed. Devastation unseen—that is, until an eerily-similar scene unfolded in Japan in

March 2011.

As one of the largest inland mills in the Northwest, the Pacific States Lumber Company in Selleck landed a contract to produce the lumber required to help rebuild the shattered remains of the Japanese capital.

It was the roaring '20s and Selleck was booming. The town had two hotels, a hospital, a school, company houses, a dance hall, several saloons, a number of stores, and of course all manner of mill buildings. About 900



folks called Selleck home—600 to 700 working in the mill at its peak. Three shifts produced 150,000 board feet every eight hours.

Each day two passenger and four freight trains served the burgeoning population and the mill.



BULLETIN

WINTER 2012/2013

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.

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Clayton Mead
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David Watson

EDITOR Ken Jensen

PHOTOGRAPHER Bob Dobson

ARTICLES

Black Diamond Bulletin invites articles for publication. Articles may be edited for style, length, and clarity. Please contact the editor if you wish to submit an article. BlackDiamondHistory@comcast.net

CONTACT

Black Diamond Historical Society and Museum
P.O. Box 232
32627 Railroad Avenue
Black Diamond, WA 98010

PHONE 360-886-2142

E-MAIL museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org

WEB

www.blackdiamondmuseum.org
www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondHistory
www.blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com
www.twitter.com/BD_History

HOURS

Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday, 12 to 3 p.m. (winter);
12 to 4 p.m. (summer)

100 years of Selleck history

A MESSAGE from the EDITOR



**KEN
JENSEN**

When you ponder the history of Black Diamond—approximately 130 years—and realize that its coal mining days lasted about 40 to 50 of those years (depending on who's counting) ... and that we've had a historical society for 37 years ... and that we've published 148 newsletters, primarily about Black Diamond history—this being number 149—and that we've published a book about Black Diamond that only covers the town's first 60 years ... and that we have the material available to publish yet another.

And then you consider Selleck. It's been around for approximately 100 years and its logging days lasted about 30 to 40 years of those years (once again depending on who's counting) ... and yet, it has no book, no historical society—but its town is a county landmark and on the National Register of Historic Places.

Go figure.

So did we try to capture its entire history in these pages? Nope. Not even close. Consider this an introduction of sorts.

When I started this project—all the way back in September (*wink*)—I thought, "How hard could this be?" *A mill. A town. A story.*

But it was much more complicated ... Selleck's history is far richer than I ever imagined.

I want to take this opportunity now to thank all the people who made this issue possible and apologize in advance for how *little* of their information I was actually able to use. There are only so many pages.

People like **Tim Schaefer** and **Barbara Daugherty** at Selleck, Inc.; Selleck residents **Martha Makela**, who talked with me even though she was under the weather, and **Dennis** and **Gloria Johnson**, who invited us into their home—not once, but twice; **JoAnne Matsumura**, who did the lion's share of the research and wrote the fabulous article on the Japanese camp; **Bill Kombol**, whose family tree runs through Selleck; **Dan Hutson**, who joined me on my many tours of the town and its mill ruins; and lastly, **Lloyd Qually, Jr.** who served as our guide.

Thanks to all. And for all the people I didn't contact about the town's history—there's always next time.

I hope you enjoy our latest issue of the *Black Diamond Bulletin* and I'd love to hear your feedback.

— Ken

BlackDiamondHistory@comcast.net

P.S.: We apologize for the mailing problems associated with our fall 2012 issue of the Black Diamond Bulletin. If you didn't receive your copy, please contact Dee Israel at 360-886-2142 and she'll put one in the mail.

The Mayans were wrong

We're still here and we have lots to do in 2013

If you're reading this then I assume the world did not end on December 21, 2012, as the Mayans were said to have predicted.

Welcome to 2013 and an update on what your Black Diamond Historical Society is doing.

First, I would like to thank all of the volunteers who helped us in the year 2012. You're the power who helps the society go to new heights. We

have increased our membership in 2012.

A MESSAGE *from the* PRESIDENT



**KEITH
WATSON**

Tom and Katherine Daniels have turned the area around the museum entrance, the jail, and the school bell into a

wonderful green presentation that shows great taste in shrubbery and flowers that has been turning heads of many visitors and members alike. Thank you for your hard work and artful direction of an area that is an awesome companion to the Coal Miners' Honor Garden.

Speaking of the honor garden, I wish to thank all of you who've ordered the donation pavers and given donations. The Coal Miners' Honor Garden is on schedule: the cement foundation is in place, we've ordered the granite walls and the pedestal, and



MURAL: MIRA HOKE / PHOTO: BOB DOBSON

The memorial will feature a cascading wall with a life-size bronze coal miner statue surrounded by a paver walkway. If you'd like to purchase a paver to honor a loved one, a coal miner, or if you'd like to show your organization's support for the memorial, contact the historical society at 360-886-2142 or Museum@BlackDiamondMuseum.org.

the bronze coal miner's statue is being sculpted by the artist **Paul Crites**.

One granite bench has already been sold, and there are still many donation pavers and benches available for purchase.

I'm often asked by donors, "What should I put on my pavers?" Well, people are honoring coal miners and coal mining communities as well as members of their own families who made Washington State what it is today.

So anything goes on the paver. I would suggest being as innovative as you can be. Also ask family members what they'd like others to read on their pavers when visiting the honor garden.

The plan is to have the granite installed in April when the weather is better along with the statue and the pavers. The ribbon cutting ceremony will be July 6 during Miners' Day.

Thanks to **Gomer Evans** and **Steve Israel** for shepherding this project and for your hard work and enthusiasm.

One of the other projects that we're really enthused about is the restoration of the 1947 Ford fire truck built by the Howard-Cooper Corporation. The truck was used by our volunteer fire department during the 1940s, '50s, and '60s. This restoration project is a labor of love as the truck was saved from the junk heap by one of our members, **Joe Androsko**.

LOTS TO DO, *continued next page*

LOTS TO DO,

continued from page 3

We hope to have the truck in running condition by July 2013 so it can be shown to people who attend the Miners' Day event and to drive it in the Labor Day parade and other events.

We do need more financial support in purchasing an engine, transmission, brakes, upholstery, paint, and all sorts of replacement parts.

Thank you for all the support that has been given to this worthy project. A special thanks to Joe who is coordinating this project with his special gang of wonderful specialists and donators. Great job!

Another project that is being accomplished is the reorganizing of the archives and records of the museum. The digitizing of these items is in full swing with our archivist, **Dave Watson**.

As items are digitized, they're backed up on a portable device. That device is then removed from the museum and placed into a bank safe deposit box. This is an enormous project that will take time but is so important in preserving our history. Thanks, Dave, for taking on the leadership of this project.

The historical society would like to send messages and announcements to you by way of e-mail. Please let us know if your e-mail or mailing address changes so that you don't miss out on announcements or our newsletter.

Steve Israel is in the process of setting up PayPal for the society's web site. This will allow people to become members, renew membership, order products, order pavers, and make



PHOTO: KEN JENSEN

Thanks to the Lake Sawyer Christian Church for participating in "Make a Difference Day." Here's a photo of volunteers working on the museum's boardwalk railing, once again in the rain and cold.

donations to the society.

As you know the museum is open on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The volunteers do all sorts of upkeep

in the museum and on the grounds and take a break for lunch. We wish to thank the following folks for supplying food for our worker bee

Mark your calendars

- February 2** Franklin tour. Meet at the museum at noon for sign up and orientation. Leave for Franklin at 1 p.m. A \$5 donation per adult is suggested. Seniors, veterans, and children under 12 are free.
- March 2** Franklin tour. See above.
- March 31** The museum is closed for the Easter holiday.
- April 28** General Membership Meeting at the museum, 1 p.m.
- June 5** Black Diamond School Reunion at the Black Diamond Community Center, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- June 8** Welsh Heritage Day at the museum, noon to 3 p.m.

Need more info? Call the Black Diamond Museum at 360-886-2142.

volunteers: **Mr. & Mrs. Bang** at Black Diamond Bakery; **Bill Bremmeyer** of the Bremmeyer Logging Company in Ravensdale; **Mike Deicher** at Black Diamond Pizza & Deli; and **Nancy Mead, Elsie Parkin, and Marlene Bortleson**.

Thank you for the wonderful support and great food.

If you would like to be members of the Thursday crew, give us a call or drop by to see how you might fit into this fun-loving group. We need folks who can vacuum, clean, paint, swing a hammer, weed the garden, pressure wash, clean windows, and more.

We need more assistant greeters on the weekends. All that's required is a warm smile and the ability to have fun.

The hours are noon to 3 or 4 p.m. on Saturday or Sunday. The pay is greeting people from all over the world and showing your interest in history.



PHOTO: BOB DOBSON

About 150 tourists—part of the Discovery Tour—arrived in retro Metro buses to tour the museum in October. The bus is parked in front of the Black Diamond Bakery.

Drop by and talk with our greeters to see if you'd enjoy this position or give me a call at 360-886-0778.

These are some of the highlights of what your society is doing for the year

2013. We can always use new ideas and advice in our ongoing effort of being caretakers of our history.

Thanks for your support.



— Keith

1,073

Number of guests visiting the museum during the fourth quarter of 2012.

Be our guest

During the months of September through November, the museum had 1,073 guests. Visitors hailed from 14 states—Arizona, California, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Montana, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, and, of course, Washington—as well as from British Columbia and Ontario, Canada; and Japan.

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



Very fun and informative

Friendliest people ever

Amazing history and knowledgeable people

Great display of town history

Cute town, yummy bakery, and lovely weather

Lovely museum

Thank you—keep up the good work

Unique

Brought back some happy memories

Am so excited to visit the town and mines where my paternal grandfather worked from 1888 to 1904

Amazing artifacts

You guys have neat stuff

Amazing pieces of history

Very informative, Love the old photos

Black Diamond—best town in America

SELLECK

continued from page 1

But prosperity didn't last. **Frank Selleck, for whom the town was named**, was born November 30, 1862, near Waupaca, Wisconsin. Married in 1892, he and his wife, **Laura Foster**, moved to Tacoma in 1900 where he became owner-manager of the Foster Lumber Co., along with his wife's two brothers.

A few years later businessmen from Portland, Oregon, and Tacoma approached Selleck, who by this time was managing a mill at Kapowsin in Pierce County, about building a mill near their timber holdings in King County. After numerous negotiations, the group incorporated the Pacific States Lumber Company with plans to build its mill on Taylor Creek in the City of Seattle watershed.

Selleck didn't think the city would object as the site was some 13 miles away from its Landsburg water intake on the Cedar River, so he and a small crew got to work constructing a dam for a log pond.

"We had been at work possibly a couple of weeks and had spent perhaps \$1,000 when one day who should appear but **R.H. Thompson**, city engineer of Seattle," wrote Selleck in his biography. "He asked what we were doing. I replied that we were building a dam and intended on constructing a mill. He said, 'Don't



Clockwise from top: Early photo of mill hands at Selleck; operations began in 1909 as soon as the mill was completed. Right: These Selleck loggers are gathered around a "steam donkey" or "donkey engine," a steam-powered winch used in early logging operations. (Photo courtesy of Art Van Bergeyk.) Left: A Selleck logging crew is riding on a flatbed railroad car to or from the logging camp.

you know that you can't build a mill here? This land is all in the Seattle watershed and the city will never permit it. Will you stop work on my say so or must I get an officer?"

Needless to say, Selleck acquiesced and the mill was built near Kangley instead. Operations began in 1909 after completion of the mill, but the site had more than its share of problems. For example, the stream to supply the log pond was inadequate,

especially in the summer months, and the pond had to be lined with clay to hold water. Domestic water was yet another problem: It had to be piped a mile and a half in a wooden flume from Kangley.

And then there was the threat of fire, especially in the dry summers of 1910 and 1911. Selleck, knowing that fire was the usual end to a mill, made sure that the power plant was made of concrete with heavy steel



Above, the Selleck Hotel would eventually grow to 108 rooms with new additions on both ends of the original structure before it was shuttered in 1939. Right: A 50¢ token for use at the E.S. Farley General Merchandise Store in Selleck.



New hotel at Selleck

Enumclaw Courier, October 20, 1911 — *The Pacific States Lumber Company at Selleck has just completed a fine modern hotel, which is to be formally opened with a grand ball and oyster supper on Saturday evening, October 21, under the auspices of the Selleck Band.*

For the convenience of people from Enumclaw and other points trains will leave Selleck after the ball at 12:30 and at 2:00 a.m.

A cordial invitation is extended to all, and a good number in attendance from Enumclaw would be most gratifying to the people of Selleck.

The new hotel is a modern, three-story structure, and would do credit to a town many times the size of Selleck.

It has a capacity of sixty rooms, and is finished in slash grain fir beautifully stained, the rooms being neatly furnished.

The building is steam heated throughout, and has toilets and shower-baths on the two lower floors.

The lobby is large and roomy, and the dining hall has a seating capacity of about two hundred and fifty.

SELLECK, continued next page

reinforcements to withstand an inferno.

Frustrated with his partners, who knew little about the lumber business and who were perplexed that their mill wasn't paying immediate dividends, Selleck sold his interests in the company and left the town that bears his name in December 1911. Leaving the lumber business behind, Selleck moved to Watsonville, California, where he remained until his passing in 1950.

In 1914—as if on cue—the mill burned to the ground ... for the first time.

The period following Selleck's departure saw continued growth of the town. "Between 1911 and the end of World War I, the Pacific States Lumber Company completed construction of all mill buildings, made improvements to the company houses (adding bathrooms in 1918), and generally concentrated

on increasing business and improving production" (National Register of Historic Places nomination).

Buildings consisted of a sawmill, planing mill, shingle mill, several dry kilns and loading sheds—one for the Northern Pacific Railroad and another for the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific Railroad—two incinerators—one of which still stands—and a variety of smaller buildings and sheds. According to *100 Years Along the Cedar*, the mill cut all kinds of lumber when it was running at capacity, and employed Welsh, Irish, Italian, eastern European, and Japanese laborers.

Tim Schaefer, whose company, Selleck, Inc., owns the remaining 15 company houses, dance hall, school, and the superintendent's house, was told that the company "brass" lived in company homes while the mill hands lived in the hotel.

SELLECK

continued from page 7

It was near the company hotel that two other “suburbs” of Selleck were located: Lavender Town—named after **John** and **Florence Lavender**—and the Japanese camp, or “Jap Town,” which was north of Lavender’s property along the Northern Pacific Railroad tracks.

Lavender operated a store, tavern, and pool hall and reportedly owned a large amount of land in the area. The Japanese, on the other hand, were generally left to fend for themselves, building their homes on company

The Pacific States Lumber Company’s power house, main sawmill, green chain, concrete incinerator, and log pond. (Photo courtesy of the Denshō Digital Archive, the Tokunaga Family Collection.)



land using whatever scrap lumber was available.

1929 was a landmark year for the Pacific States Lumber Company.

On July 29, “Fire of undetermined origin threatened for a time to destroy the mill and entire town of Selleck,” reported the *Enumclaw Herald*. The loss of between eight and ten million feet of lumber, three large dry sheds, and the loading docks was estimated at approximately \$350,000. Then on October 29, the stock market crash ushered in the Great Depression. And for a final blow, the Selleck School burned to the ground December 31, bringing to a close what had been a prosperous decade.

The “roaring ‘20s” couldn’t have ended any more abruptly for the Pacific States Lumber Company.

The mill buildings and the school were rebuilt, but the Great Depression, which would last throughout the 1930s, would take its toll on Selleck and the lumber industry in general.

“Work was cut to two shifts, then one, then three days a week,” wrote **Morda Slauson** in *100 Years Along the Cedar*. Frank Selleck returned to

On our grounds



PHOTO: BOB DOBSON

The bell from the Selleck School was donated to the historical society in 1986 by Black Diamond Elementary. It’s similar to the bell that used to grace the original Black Diamond grade school. The bell is on the museum’s grounds next to the jail.



This school was destroyed by fire on December 31, 1929. (Photo courtesy of Art Van Bergeyk.) The “new” Selleck School was built in 1930 on the same site.

the town in 1933, and noted in his biography that “the company had just levied a 35% assessment on the stockholders, which would indicate that they were not making any money.” Nor were any of the other lumber companies operating in the area.

“Then came the depression. Work was cut to two shifts, then one, then three days a week.”

Timber companies were especially vulnerable, even once the depression eased, noted **Linda Carlson** in her book, *Company Towns of the Pacific Northwest*. “Conflict in Japan and China had eliminated an important market: lumber exports to Japan and China had decreased by more than 80 percent between 1934 and 1938.” And the market wasn’t any better at home.

Also complicating matters for the Pacific States Lumber Company was the Timber Strike of 1935, which shut down mills in Washington and Oregon. On June 7, the *Washington State Labor News* reported that “striking timber and sawmill workers at Selleck, Wash., requested the Seattle Labor Council last Wednesday to aid them in their efforts for improved conditions and union recognition from the Pacific States Lumber Co., their employer.”

The strike quickly turned violent in Tacoma in late June, as state troopers gassed picketers. This in turn forced **Governor Clarence Martin** to call in the National Guard, effectively ending the labor strife.

According to Carlson, “In 1939 the Pacific States Lumber Company, exhausted by years of labor unrest and depressed markets, called it quits and closed down both its business and its town of Selleck.” Unable to meet its financial obligations, the property of the Pacific States Lumber Company,

Mystery fire razes Selleck grade school

Enumclaw Herald, January 3, 1930 — *Fire, which is thought to have originated in the furnace, completely demolished the Selleck grade school Tuesday afternoon destroying textbooks, gymnasium equipment, and desks. Only a piano, an electric stove, and a few books were saved from the flames.*

The loss is estimated at \$14,000. The building was a frame structure of seven rooms, accommodating more than 100 pupils.

Flames were first seen leaping through windows of the school at 1:30 p.m. An alarm was immediately spread, and the Pacific States Lumber Company closed the mill and sent 200 fire fighters, a chemical wagon and several hundred feet of hose to combat the blaze.

After two hours of vain effort to save the equipment, if not the building itself, the school was left a heap of smoldering ashes.

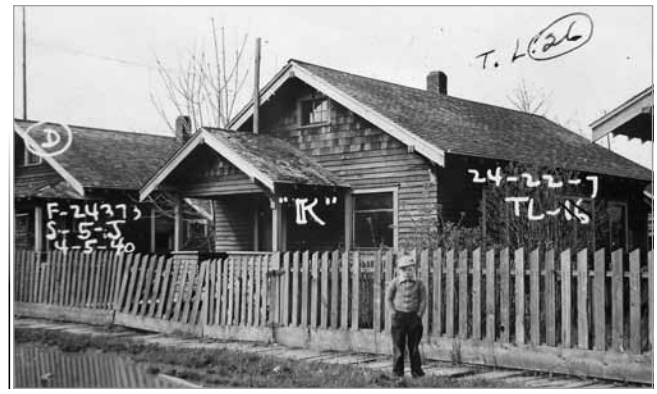
The Enumclaw volunteer fire department, upon being notified of the fire, set out at once with the pumper for Selleck, but before reaching there, word was sent back that nothing more could be done.

Temporary housing for the school children has been provided by the Pacific States Lumber Company in the Selleck community hall, and if necessary, the motion picture theatre will also be used.

SELLECK, continued next page



Finished lumber awaits shipment at the Selleck mill sometime after 1929. Note the “new” Selleck School in the background. (Photo courtesy of the Denshō Digital Archive, the Tokunaga Family Collection.)



This home is one of 15 company houses that comprise the Selleck historical district. This April 5, 1940, photo is courtesy King County Assessor Property Card collection, Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Branch.

SELLECK

continued from page 9



including all mill buildings, lumber, and railroad lines, was seized by the IRS for nonpayment of taxes.

Former mill employees Lloyd Qually, Sr. and Gust Coukas bought the town in 1940 for just \$3,000. According to Qually’s son, **Lloyd, Jr.**—who was born in Selleck in 1935—no one else bid during the bankruptcy proceedings. Qually and Coukas began the process of salvaging the machinery and dismantling the buildings.

“It was literally a treasure trove of wood,” recalled Lloyd, Jr. “Most of it was sold to Alaskan fishing tribes.”

But the company houses remained.

Qually and Coukas improved those homes, then numbering about 40, during the World War II years. “When Seattle war workers were desperate for housing, many commuted the thirty-odd miles to rent in Selleck,” wrote Carlson in *Company Towns of the Pacific Northwest*.

The town would remain virtually unchanged for the next quarter-century, becoming what it is now—a rental community for commuters.

Qually and Coukas sold the town in 1965 shortly before the passing of Lloyd Sr. in 1966. The town sold twice more until **Robert Schaefer**

and several investors acquired the property in 1971.

According to a 2007 article in *The Seattle Times*, “Schaefer saw a wonderland in the wilderness, with paddleboats for families and a train running the perimeter of the mill pond. A logging theme park, staffed by students from the Christian college he planned to build.”

But those dreams were not to be.

The task of managing and maintaining the town is now the responsibility of Tim Schaefer, Robert’s son.

“It’s like keeping an old Model T running,” he told *The Seattle Times*.



The rebuilt Selleck School, completed in 1930, now serves as the Pacific States Condominiums. This April 10, 1940, photo is courtesy King County Assessor Property Card collection, Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Branch.



Frank Selleck's residence, also known as the superintendent's home. This Craftsman house features a full-length covered porch and a large shed dormer on this slope of the broad gable roof. (Photo courtesy of John Cooper.)



Wide-angle photo of Selleck, Washington, showing, from left to right, the Japanese camp; the shingle mill and brick incinerator; the Selleck Hotel; the power plant, concrete incinerator, and main sawmill; drying kilns and finished lumber; the Selleck School and teacherage; and the company houses and the superintendent's home (May 20, 1916).

“It’s a labor of love.”

The town of Selleck was designated a King County Landmark by the County Landmarks Commission on February 26, 1987. The designation includes the 15 company houses, the community hall, and the superintendent’s house.

An article in the *Enumclaw Courier-Herald* announcing its landmark status notes that though remnants of other mill towns still exist in the state, Selleck has the

“largest concentration of original ‘company town’ structures in relatively unaltered condition in Western Washington.”

Selleck was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. Also on that list are the Luigi and Aurora Pagani house in Black Diamond, the Black Diamond Cemetery, and the Neely Mansion on the Auburn-Black Diamond Road in Auburn.

“While the mill buildings and

attendant structures have disappeared, the town itself has remained as a viable community,” it was noted in its Historic Places application. “Single ownership has prevented the disintegration that has been the fate of other company towns.”

The history of Selleck illustrates the ups and downs of the local timber industry from 1910 to 1940—from those heady days of prosperity through the dregs of depression. ☒

— Ken Jensen

Exploring the ruins of the mill

I met **Lloyd Qually, Jr.** for the first time at his home just off the Kent-Kangley Road in Kent; the second time was at the other end of that same road, just north of Kangley in Selleck.

In between those two meetings I learned more than I thought possible about Selleck and the Pacific States Lumber Company—and yet, I barely scratched the surface.

I had planned on devoting an issue of the *Black Diamond Bulletin* on Selleck for some time now, but didn't have much to work with. Though Selleck is part of our historical society's environs, we only have a handful of photographs in our archives. The most visible artifact from the town is the bell from the Selleck School on the grounds of the Black Diamond Museum, next to the jail.

Lloyd's story seemed like a good place to start.

Lloyd's father, along with **Gust Coukas**, bought the town in bankruptcy court in 1940, but his family's connection to the town predates the purchase by more than a decade.

Lucille Bowers, Lloyd's mother, taught at the Selleck School for 7 years. In fact, she taught at three of them: the old school that was destroyed by fire in 1929; the Japanese school, where students were moved while the school was rebuilt; and the "new" school, which was completed in 1930 and still stands today.

Lloyd, Sr. took a slightly convoluted path to Selleck. After



*Above: The ruins of the power house.
Left: Lloyd Qually gives the historical society a guided tour of Selleck, the mill ruins, and the locations of Lavender Town and the Japanese camp.
Right: The towering incinerator looms as the forest tries to regain its former dominance.*

PHOTOS: BOB DOBSON

leaving the family farm in North Dakota and serving a stint laboring in the iron mines of Minnesota, he found himself in Detroit, where he worked for Pontiac and General Motors. In 1929, he packed up his Model A and made the journey to Washington State, where he was

hired as the head mechanic for the Pacific States Lumber Co. in Selleck.

Lloyd's parents were married in 1934 and Lloyd was born in Selleck in 1935. While Lucille had to leave her job at the school—you couldn't be married *and* be a teacher in those days—Lloyd, Sr. worked at the mill

until its closing in 1939.

Some of Lloyd's earliest memories are of dismantling the mill buildings. In fact Lloyd learned to drive at the age of six, operating his father's truck as they were salvaging the valuable lumber and reselling it.

At Lloyd's home in Kent, **Don Mason**, **Ken Bakke**—a mutual friend of both Don and Lloyd's—and I rolled out an oversize copy of

the 1916 photo of the Pacific States Lumber Company operation (see pages 10 and 11). As we went from left to right, Lloyd pointed out the company store, the hotel, the tavern, the cemetery, and the company house where he was born.

When we got to the power house, Lloyd said that three of the walls were standing—at least they were the last time he was in Selleck. Next was the incinerator. "That's not still standing, is it?" I asked. "Sure is," said Lloyd.

"I want to go find it tonight."

"I'll go with you," laughed Lloyd.

And so the plan was hatched to visit the town en masse once Lloyd returned from vacation—actually several of them.

In the interim Dan and I met up with **Dennis** and **Gloria Johnson**. The Johnsons own the



PHOTO: BOB DOBSON

The Field Investigation team outside the ruins of a mill building. From left to right: Dan Hutson, Marvin Hardy, Keith Watson, Dave Watson, Gloria Johnson, Ken Jensen, Brandon Jensen, Lloyd Qually, and Joe Shuler. Right: Dennis Johnson, who owns the incinerator, and Dan Hutson examine its construction. The scraps and cut-offs were fed into the rectangular hole above using a "green chain."

property where the ruins of the incinerator and power house reside, along with the foundations of other mill buildings. The Johnsons' dining room table is covered with historical photos of Selleck's heyday, including the 1916 panoramic and the aerial on page 17, of which they donated a copy to the museum.


"Come on over anytime you want," Gloria told me on the phone. Now there's an offer I couldn't refuse—showing up on the Johnsons' doorstep on two consecutive weekends.

Which brings us to a cold, snowy Saturday in December. Members of the society and friends, along with Lloyd and the Johnsons, toured the mill ruins and the town site. There's nothing like experiencing



PHOTO: KEN JENSEN

history that you can see and touch with a guide who can explain the significance of the structures.

Not only did I get a good story and tons of great photos, but I also made some new friends, too. 

— Ken Jensen

Japanese Camp at Selleck

An enclave of creativity, ingenuity, and fortitude

Long before the area became known as Selleck, the North Coast Timber Company was logging on land not far from Kanglely and selling its logs on the Tacoma market. The company employed a crew of Japanese men—most likely single men living in bunkhouses, eating in the cookhouse, and socializing in the bathhouse.

The owners of the company, however, wanted a mill, so they

A PIONEER family ALBUM



**JOANNE
MATSUMURA**

approached **Frank Selleck**, then the manager of the Kapowsin mill. He agreed to build a mill and move the company into the manufacturing end of the timber industry.

The Pacific States Lumber Company was born as was the town that would bear Selleck's name.

Selleck, having a Japanese "house boy" at Kapowsin, brought him along with some of his crew to work at the mill, some of whom were probably Japanese. The house boy was trustworthy and hardworking, and Selleck had great respect for him, so he made him the manager of the Japanese crew.

The Japanese workers were housed in an area near Lavender Town called the Japanese Camp or more crudely, "Jap Town." It was just west of the



Above: The Selleck Japanese community poses for this 1920s photograph. (Photo courtesy of the Denshō Digital Archive, the Tokunaga Family Collection.)



*Left: The Japanese school house, ca. 1929.
Bottom right: Rice was purchased from the M. Furuya Co. of Seattle.*

Northern Pacific tracks and north of the millpond's outlet creek.

Houses were built among the stumps, most with porches and overhanging roofs with exposed rafter's bracket supports. Most had two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen with a laundry in the back, and many had their own *furos*, or bathhouse. The children preferred the community facility, however, because it was bigger and you could swim in it, said **Fred Nagai** in an interview conducted by *Denshō*, the Japanese American Legacy Project. "Used to catch hell, too, because we splashed water all over the place."

Sidewalks and portions of the streets were planked and some of the homes had picket fences and gardens.

Some residents lived in long shed-like buildings with a central bathhouse. While the Pacific States Lumber Company added bathrooms to all its houses in about 1918, the Japanese houses had no such facilities. One family, however, made their own toilet in the house since the water was free and it worked well. Kerosene lamps were used until they got electricity.

Like many camps, residents owned the house but not the land as it belonged to the mill.

Single men lived in boarding houses—the largest being the Selleck Hotel.

The women tended their vegetable gardens to supplement their diet. They purchased ethnic food, like rice from the M. Furuya Co., and *shoyu*, basic household necessities, and small trinkets from Asia Shokai, both peddlers from Seattle. There was McLean's store and post office nearby, but it was mostly the source of American food for the Japanese community.

There was also a Euro-American woman living along the tracks who sold geese, milk, and cream.

Mr. Brown delivered milk daily and let the Japanese fish for trout on his farm. Some families had fruit trees or picked apples in the fall in an abandoned orchard. They picked berries and found watercress from a spring deep in the woods.

Japanese residents played games and socialized in their own clubhouse. Entertainment, like stage plays,

came to town from Seattle. They also started a baseball team in the 1920s that competed against the local Caucasian mining and logging teams. Segregation was the norm.

Visiting ministers came



Selleck students, September 29, 1935 (grades 7 and 8), Miss Gillette, teacher. Seated left to right: Nadine Kombol, Louise Hunt, Myra Miller, Frances Nabernathy, Alvina Barton, Ethel Estby, Dorothy Michaels, Mary Gaffi, Miyako Sakakibara. Standing left to right: Jack Kombol, Carlyle Butcher, George Komoto, Earl Large, Bill Ozawa, Frank Komoto, Kunio Ozawa. (Photo courtesy of Bill Kombol.)

from Seattle about once a month for services in Japanese.

The residents of the camp were part of the nearly 2,700 Japanese workforce in Washington State's lumber industry in 1907, and by 1909, about 2,200 Japanese workers were employed in 67 mill and logging camps. The population in Selleck of 1911–1912 was 500.

The 1920 census recorded 147 Japanese men, women, and children living in the Selleck area—part of the Durham precinct. More people came in 1922 when the mill at Port Blakely closed and again in 1923 to help supply lumber to rebuild Tokyo after the disastrous earthquake.

By 1924 there were 12 families with 24 children living in Selleck. By 1930 the camp included about 25 families, including **Frank Ozawa**, the camp foreman from 1925 to 1939,

who had 9 children.

School census records show no Japanese children in 1908 or 1909. At one time there were 100 students in the regular school for grades 1 through 8.

“None of my Japanese pupils ever missed school,” remembered **Lucille Qually** in *100 Years Along the Cedar*. She also stated that many went on to college from high school and did very well. When the mothers would come to pick up their children they were always dressed in their beautiful colorful kimonos.

“We went to school.... It was within walking distance. We walked through the sawmill,” **Kay Aiko Abe** recalled in an interview. Parents paid for their children to attend the Japanese Language School from 4 to 5 p.m. one day a week.

JAPANESE CAMP, *continued next page*

JAPANESE CAMP,
continued from page 15

“We made our own toys. And when we would go fishing, we used a willow pole with a string on it and fished in the stream for trout. And we picked mushrooms in Covington,” remembered **Tosh Tokunaga** in a 2009 interview.

Hamako Ozawa Kawamura and **Joseph Sakakibara**, in their oral history interview, recalled their childhoods with fondness and felt lucky to have grown up in the Japanese camp at Selleck.

The 1929 crash touched everyone. Working conditions deteriorated and accelerated labor strife. Tensions were high. Japanese workers were willing to work long hours to survive at the mill.

Employment fluctuated as the crew manager would dismiss experienced Japanese workers and hire young



Japanese students pose for this 1920s photograph. (Photo courtesy of the Denshō Digital Archive, the Tokunaga Family Collection.)

Japanese at cheaper wages, pocketing the difference for himself.

As news spread that the company was shutting down and wages were going unpaid, the Japanese began leaving the camp for employment elsewhere. Families paid their respects

at the cemetery and to their friends and neighbors in a place they helped make a home.

Many moved to Oregon and California before World War II.



— JoAnne

pine2tree@earthlink.net

Frank Ozawa's pond and waterfall

Frank Ozawa's pond and waterfall were built in 1930 or 1931, just before his house burned. Shortly after, he moved his large family into two houses with a fence, a rock walkway, bamboo, flowers, a formal garden, and a vegetable garden. His was the only home with a pond.

Remains of a cobblestone fireplace may be associated with the first Ozawa home and is near the location of the community building where meals were cooked and served for bachelors.

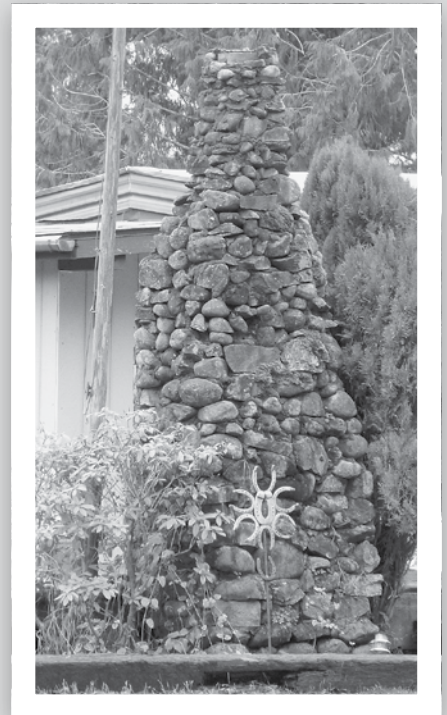
There was a natural spring about 40 feet west of the Japanese camp with patterned rock walls,

pathways, and trails leading to five oval-shaped ponds with waterfalls over earthen bridges in a terraced landscape. All were connected in a park-like setting with rhododendrons and other flowering plants.

There was also a levee to the entire pond complex. A narrow, cobble-lined streambed carried water from the eastern pond area to the western pond area with logs placed to act as dams.

A crescent-shaped trail led to the ponds. Cobblestone walls, from five to ten feet, were built into the hillside above the pond area next to the trails.

The artistic design, purpose, and function are of patterns of Japanese landscape.



Today only the cobblestone fireplace survives. (Photo: Ken Jensen.)

Birdseye view of Selleck, ca. 1935



- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. <i>Selleck School</i> | 6. <i>Drying kilns</i> | 11. <i>Selleck Hotel</i> |
| 2. <i>Frank Selleck's home</i> | 7. <i>Main sawmill</i> | 12. <i>Shingle mill</i> |
| 3. <i>Loading track for railroads</i> | 8. <i>Power house</i> | 13. <i>Japanese camp</i> |
| 4. <i>Finished lumber</i> | 9. <i>Incinerator</i> | 14. <i>Lavender Town</i> |
| 5. <i>Paul Sweet hospital</i> | 10. <i>Company store</i> | 15. <i>Baseball field</i> |

In memoriam

Gone but not forgotten

Stanley Celigoy, a native of Black Diamond, was born August 4, 1922, to a Slovak coal mining family. He passed away on November 6, 2012, in Auburn, Washington, at the age of 90.

Stan, a 24-year member of the society, was a frequent and helpful museum visitor. His interest in our work in his hometown museum is appreciated and shall always be remembered.

He was the last survivor of the class of 1940 from Black Diamond High School. He loved sports, especially



baseball and basketball. "Sparky," as he was called, was a member of the Black Diamond Wildcats ball team, the 1949 Valley League Champs. The team was one game away from playing for the state championship in American Legion baseball.

Stanley and Pauline Jane See were married in 1950. They met when Pauline came to Bennett's Meats in Renton where Stanley was a well-known butcher.

Stan enjoyed outdoor sports, from fishing to volleyball, and continued to exercise and follow a fitness and health regime throughout his life. He also enjoyed socializing with fellow members at the Elks Club and charming the ladies with his love of dancing.

When Stan would visit the museum, he would always ask: "Have

you exercised this morning? You can't do anything until you exercise!" He will be missed.

He is survived by his daughter Candace, son Craig, and sister Anne. Stan was preceded in death by his parents, and brothers Hank and John.

Terrance "Terry" Steven Picini

a 10-year society member, passed away July 14, 2012, at the age of 63. Terry lived in the Skyway area near Renton. Terry was born January 23, 1949, to Daniel and Emmajean Picini.

Terry was a commercial painter and he also worked for Todd Ship Yards for 15 years.

The society is appreciative of his years of support and his interest in our work.

Terry is survived by his daughter Ruby Phillips, grandchildren Chloe and Jacob, mother Jean Delaurenti, brother Ron Picini, and uncle Gino Picini. He was preceded in death by his daughter Elizabeth and his father Daniel.

Donations

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



In memory of:

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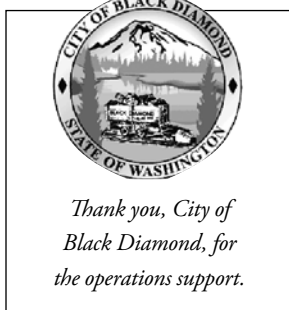
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Thank you, City of Black Diamond, for the operations support.

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Thanks for the memories

Francis Paul Brown

August 12, 1938 – September 19, 2012
Former Cumberland fire chief

Rose Baldi Callero

April 10, 1913 – November 30, 2012
Wife of Louie Callero (deceased)

Carlesta Capponi

November 1, 1916 – December 9, 2012
Born in Cumberland

Robert M. Miller

May 21, 1928 – November 20, 2012
Coal miner who grew up in Ravensdale

Sonia Preedy

Passed away September 15, 2012
Resident of Ravensdale

Brian Pius Sullivan

April 26, 1943 – September 2, 2012
Resident of Black Diamond

These donations are greatly appreciated. The Black Diamond Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Welcome new and renewing members

The Black Diamond Historical Society now has 353 members. We are pleased to welcome our newest members this quarter:

- Bill & Jean Boston
- Duane & Linda Camern
- Roy Dal Santo
- Amy & David George
- Clara L. Hall
- Lois Ladderud
- Bill Olson
- Roger & Linda Rivers
- Richard P. Robertson

- Dennis Stebly
- Jeanette Vanderhaydon

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

- Sherrie Acker
- Betty Blakeney
- Lynne M. Bonnell
- Bob & Jodine Burke
- Don & Carmel Camerini
- Lyliane S. Couture
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- Southport Land & Commercial Co.
- Joan Traylor
- Fran Wold



PHOTO: BOB DOBSON

A peavey is a logging tool used to roll, slide, or float a log to a new position. This one's on display on the lower level of the museum.

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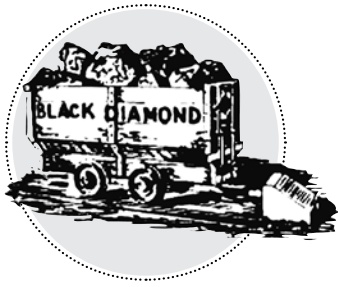
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And make sure to tell your friends, too.

Learn about livin' the 'bachelor's life' in Franklin

Saturdays –

February 2, 2013 &

March 2, 2013

We'll be leaving the museum
at 1 p.m. for Franklin (about
3 miles).

Check the web site for details.

www.blackdiamondmuseum.org



Company houses in Franklin came in two sizes: two-bedroom or these larger, two-story, four-bedroom homes. To make a little extra money, families would often convert their downstairs parlor into a bedroom and rent it out to two single miners. For the bachelors the food was better than the company hotel's fare and it was less noisy, too. This photo was taken in 1900. The company store is off to the right.