



◆ NEWSLETTER ◆

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*Banner Photo
2023 Board Members
Names on page 2*

ELECTION RESULTS

By Sherrie Evans

In accordance with our Bylaws, elections are held every three (3) years. This was done at our annual membership meeting last October. Here are the results:

PRESIDENT Steve Israel

VICE PRESIDENT Stacey Wehus

SECRETARY Laurie Evans

TREASURER Sherrie Evans

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT Keith Watson

DIRECTORS: Linda Arden, Gomer Evans, Jr., Greg Lichty, Don Mason, Janice Ranton, Susie Thompson, David Watson, and Sue Watson

Steve is our new President, filling that role as Keith Watson stepped down after 15 years as our President. Keith will assume a new role on the Board as the Immediate Past President.

Rosemary Konoske-Bigelow and Elsie Parkin are leaving the Board. They are longtime residents of Black Diamond and we have cherished their valuable input during our meetings, along with their great smiles! Thanks ladies for your service. You will be missed on the Board, but we know you both still serve as do-cent/greeters. Stop by sometime on a weekend and you may see them at the front desk.

New to the Board as directors are Linda Arden and Janice Ranton. Linda is a newer volunteer for us but has quickly stepped in to help with many projects,

Continued on page 2



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.

Black Diamond Newsletter is published three times a year by and for the members of the Black Diamond Historical Society. The society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. (TIN51-0170304).

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Gomer Evans, Jr.

Greg Lichty

Don Mason

Janice Ranton

Susie Thompson

David Watson

Sue Watson

MEMBERSHIP Laurie Evans

EDITOR Leih Mulvihill

FEATURE WRITER William Kombol

PHOTOGRAPHER Bob Dobson

ARTICLES

Black Diamond Newsletter invites articles for publication. Articles may be edited for style, length, and clarity. Please email the Society if you wish to submit an article, at museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org

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www.blackdiamondmuseum.org

www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondHistory

www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondMuseum

www.blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com

www.twitter.com/BDHistory

HOURS -

Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

ELECTIONS *continued from front page*

including our display design work and Hometown Christmas. Janice may better be known to many of you as Janice Goldsberry. She grew up here in Black Diamond and still resides here. You may also have run into her at Johnsons Home and Garden where she has worked for many years. Janice loves gardening and will be assisting with keeping our Honor Garden in its wonderful condition. Welcome to both of you!

Beginning February 2, 2023, our Board will meet bi-monthly on the first Thursday of the month. If you have questions or information for the Board please do submit them. Our Executive Board meets twice yearly, having just met on January 29th. We are beginning a review of our 5-year Strategic Plan.

BANNER PHOTO: *From left to right: Steve Israel-President, Greg Litchy-Director, Sherrie Evans-Treasurer, Laurie Evans-Secretary, Keith Watson-Immediate Past President, Sue Watson, Dave Watson, Gomer Evans, and Don Mason-Directors. Missing are Stacey Wehus-Vice President, and Directors Susie Thompson, Linda Arden and Janice Ranton.* ◆

WHERE'S MIKE?

Keith Watson has been writing a series of fictitious articles about a Mike Short who comes to Black Diamond via the train many years ago. Mike's story will be continued on our website at www.blackdiamondmuseum.org. We will post both the past and the future series for those who enjoy reading those fun travels.

DID YOU KNOW?

By Sherrie Evans

Our Railroad Depot/Museum is a popular spot for visitors. During 2022 a total of 4,519 visitors (including 1,537 children and 2,982 adults) visited us. It truly was a banner year, as it almost doubled our numbers from 2021. We are open Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and open on the weekends 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The visitor comments are varied but the most common message is "we didn't realize everything you had here - wonderful place." So please stop by. Admission is always FREE and we have a great treasure hunt (with prizes) for the kids.

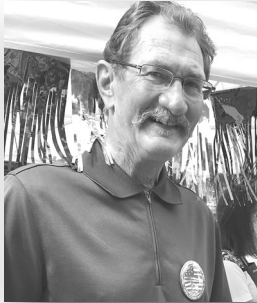
DUES REMINDER

If you have not yet renewed your annual membership, this will be the last newsletter you'll receive. We're sure you do not want to let this happen, so please send in your payment as soon as possible.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

A MESSAGE

from the
PRESIDENT



**STEVE
ISRAEL**

My Tenure

I am pleased to announce, I am starting my three-year term as president. I have been a member since 1999 and have held several positions throughout the years. I was newsletter editor for 10 years (2000 – 2010); president for 2 years (2004 and 2005); and board member for 19 years.

A Bridge

In my first few years I was very fortunate to work with many of the “old timers” like Bob Eaton, with his extensive knowledge of the museum building; Charlie Corlett, the creator and builder of the working model mining town display; Jackie Cedarholm, with her passion and generosity for keeping history alive; Gino Pacini, Joe Zumek, Doc Botts, Clayton Mead, and so many more who are no longer with us. With these people in mind, I feel like I am a bridge to the past.

The Struggles We’ve Faced

When I joined the society, we were struggling to pay for much-needed equipment and to find enough volunteers to fill key positions. It’s a real pleasure to look back over the progress we have made. With the hard work of talented volunteers, we are now in a much better state. We have many people to thank, and I could never list them all, but I would like to thank our outgoing president, Keith Watson. Keith has served us well for the past 15 years. Thank you, Keith.

Old Timers

Several years ago, I was talking to Clayton Mead. He said someone asked him about a past event. He told them “You’ll have to ask an old timer. I’m not an old timer, I wasn’t around back then. But I think all the old timers are gone now.” I told Clayton I think we are the new old timers. Now we can repeat the stories from the old-old timers. It sounded like it could be a song, so I wrote a song about it. Come to some of our events and maybe I’ll sing it to you.

Steve Israel,
BDHS President



IN THE MUSEUM

We have several reference books and a computer available in our research center. Visitors can use the computer to access our records on several items and information. We have plans to expand these resources for our public to use.

- Accession Log – items that have been donated
- BDHS Newsletters – index of all articles
- Black Diamond Cemetery – list of graves
- Display Catalog – location of all items on display
- Honor Garden Pavers – location of bricks
- Mine Fatalities in Washington State 1885 - 1960



D'Ann Tedford at Computer



People who wish to donate artifacts need to make an appointment with Archivist Dave Watson to look at the items. Phone: 360-886-2142 email: swatsondc@gmail.com Please come on a Thursday after making an appointment with Dave to examine the items.



BLACK DIAMOND'S COAL MINES

CHAPTER 1

By Bill Kombol

Starting with this issue of the Newsletter, we will be providing a brief history and description of each of Black Diamond's coal mines generally in chronological order. But for background on how it all started, we start at the very beginning, in 1880, about 32 miles northeast of San Francisco at a coal mine supplying that city with much of its energy needs.

When the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company of Nortonville, California realized the fast-growing San Francisco area needed more and better-quality coal, they sent Victor Tull to the Washington Territory to prospect. Tull found coal just above a lake, named for Section 14 where it's located. It would soon be renamed Jones Lake.

Tull found the outcrop of a seam of coal, likely where Lawson Creek formed a gully before it flows into Lake 14. Tull sent samples back whose tests were encouraging, so the company sent B.B. Jones, a coal expert from its Nortonville mines to confirm the discovery. The company kept the news quiet so its allies and strawmen could buy up or homestead quarter-sections of land.

By January 1882, the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company had a crew of men cutting trails and opening the vein of coal. On April 7, 1882, Victor Tull loaded an 800-pound box of coal for more exhaustive analysis in San Francisco. Those tests proved so promising that P.B. Cornwall, company president, and Morgan Morgans, company superintendent traveled to Black Diamond in June 1882 to confirm plans for moving their operations 650 miles north.

But one thing was missing – a railroad. Both Cornwall and Morgans realized that without a railroad extension to Black Diamond, there could be no coal mine. Fortunately, the growing city of Seattle, stung by the North-

ern Pacific Railway's 1873 decision to establish its West Coast terminus in Tacoma, decided to build its railroad. The Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad reached Renton in 1877 and then Newcastle but went no further. The railroad venture failed and was purchased by Henry Villard's Oregon Improvement Company. He renamed it Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad.

Villard had also gained control of the Northern Pacific Railway including their government land grant of every odd section extending 20 miles from both sides of the track. Two miles west of Black Diamond in Section 19, a coal exposure was discovered by Bailey Willis, a prospector working for NPRR, along the Green River. It turned out to be the same seam that

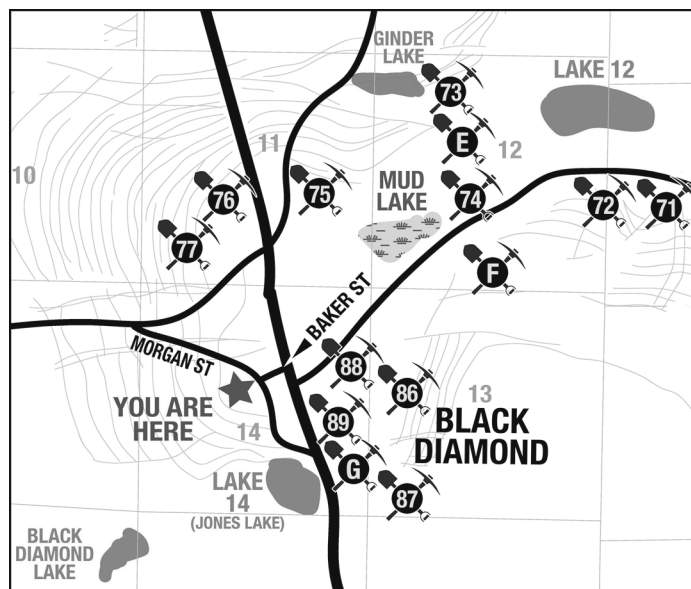
Tull had unearthed in Black Diamond. Willis named the coal seam McKay and the town that sprung up around it was called Franklin.

So Henry Villard now had two south King County customers for his railroad – the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company plus the Oregon Improvement Company's mines in Franklin.

Following the visit by Cornwall and Morgans, Villard's Oregon Improvement Company sent Harry Whitworth and a crew to survey an extension of the Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad from Renton to the prospective mines

about 18 miles south. The survey was completed in June 1882 and within a short time construction work started on the new rail line. It followed a path that generally mirrors today's Highway 169.

While the railroad crews pushed south along the Cedar River, back in Black Diamond workers were building and developing an underground coal mine. At the time there were only tents and a small cabin occupied by two men. Clarissa Davis was the first woman to arrive



This map of Black Diamond's historic mines is a portion of a larger version occupying a wall in the Black Diamond Museum ('You Are Here' star). Each mine is indicated by the traditional pick & shovel. Pre-1945 mines are numbers while Post-1945 mines are letters.

HISTORIANS OF RAVENSDALE

MICHAEL & DONNA BRATHOVDE

By Bill Kombol

On a small clearing in the forests east of Ravensdale, Michael and Donna Brathovde set forth eight years ago to write a proper history of Ravensdale. There, on an 11-acre ranch situated on the other side of the railroad tracks, they've been collecting every scrap of historical documentation and photo they can find. The couple figures the completed history project is still a couple of years away, but their dedication to volunteering is still going strong.

Michael grew up in Ephrata, a 1968 high school graduate who enrolled in the forestry school at the University of Washington. He received a B.S. in Forest Management going on to earn a Master of Forest Economics a year later. He soon gained employment with Weyerhaeuser at their recently built Federal Way headquarters, visible east of the intersection of Hwy 18 and I-5. He retired from the company in 2007, a month shy of his 35th year with the forest products company after having worked in units of the company's timberlands division including forest inventory, strategic planning, and acquisitions & divestitures.

Donna Fishwood grew up near Vancouver, graduating from Battle Ground High School in 1969. She too joined the forestry program at the U.W. Fittingly, the two first met at the nearby Washington Park Arboretum in a forestry class there. Arboretum is derived from Latin and translates as "a botanical garden devoted to trees." Donna eventually switched majors, receiving her B.S. in Psychology. The two married in 1972.

Donna found employment in banking, spending most of her first career with Seattle First. Three children followed, then Donna went back to the U.W. where she obtained a Master of Social Work specializing in drug and alcohol treatment, from which she established a private practice. Raising teenagers convinced her to spend more time with her children, so she turned to bookkeeping, a job she could do from home.

Following Michael's retirement, the couple became serial volunteers and at one time had 14 jobs assisting local organizations. At the request of the Ravensdale

Park Foundation in 2014, Michael agreed to research Ravensdale's history, and design a series of 15 interpretive signs to tell the town's story from its earliest years to the arrival of the railroad through its company town days with additional chapters on logging, schools, recreation, and parks. Donna soon got drawn into the project.

The signs were dedicated on the 100th anniversary of the Ravensdale mine explosion that claimed 31 lives on Nov. 16, 1915. These interpretive signs now dot a trail that makes for a terrific walking tour through Ravensdale Park and its many athletic fields, starting at the Community Meadow just south of the Post Office.

For their efforts, the King County Council presented Michael and Donna with the 2016 Martin Luther King Medal of Distinguished Service award.

Researching the history of the area led them to several realizations. First, history is fragile and if not preserved will easily disappear. Second, there's a lot of information out there, but it's scattered all over the place. Michael and Donna decided to assemble as much of this material as possible into one place, which led to a

week's long trip back to St. Paul where they scanned through 130 boxes of Ravensdale documents held at the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) archives housed in the Minnesota History Center. NPRR and its mining division, Northwestern Improvement Co. (NWI) were the driving forces behind Ravensdale's foundation and the growth it experienced beginning in 1899.

While they were researching Ravensdale's history, the Brathovdes were also living on a small patch of ground with its own interesting story. In 1906, an Italian immigrant named Louis Charles traded land he owned on Lake Retreat to NWI, owner of the Ravensdale company town which needed a better water source to supply the town's needs. He received in return a triangular property on the generally inaccessible side of the railroad tracks.

In time, descendants of Louis Charles began manufac-



Michael and Donna Brathovde at their kitchen table, Jan. 2023

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP MAKES HISTORY

By D'Ann Tedford

In Maple Valley and Black Diamond, it doesn't matter who you are or how old you are, no one should miss out on visiting the heart and soul of these towns. Their heritage is in their museums. Black Diamond was a coal mining town; its museum is located inside a train depot built in 1886. It sits alongside a train and railroad tracks that delivered coal from Black Diamond to the Puget Sound waterfront from 1884 to 1931.

Maple Valley has two museums. Both capture the 1800's lifestyle while living in and around Maple Valley, Ravensdale, and Hobart. Their Gibbon/Mezzavilla Store Museum is in a store built in 1894. Maple Valley's Fire Engine Museum depicts life in the era of vast forests, stump farms, and lumber mills.



Hard Hat Harry, a coal miner, stands next to a coal-burning stove in the Black Diamond Museum.

Historical societies operate the local museums. Maple Valley Historical Society (MVHS) celebrated its 50th birthday in 2022; Black Diamond Historical Society (BDHS) is close behind for a cumulative total of 96 years of preserving and disseminating local history. The two organizations made their own history this month when eight historical society representatives partnered to share facts, goals, personal stories, and ideas on what is accomplished at each organization and what does not seem productive. Along with discussion about a variety of programs that are free to the public, the historical society partners shared views about marketing, budgets, leadership roles, advertising, docents, and volunteers.

Maple Valley's museums are open on the first Saturday of each month or by appointment. Black Diamond Museum is open three days a week. Considered a rarity, fees are not charged for entry to any of them. They are supported primarily by personal [and estate] donations, plus grants. After being shut down due to Covid for the past two years, renewing relationships with the community was a key topic as BDHS and

MVHS exchanged agendas. Since town gatherings are on the rise in 2023, they promoted hosting "traveling displays" to show at community events. Displays of Cedar River boat racing, veteran memorabilia, and fire department artifacts could trigger interest in visiting the museums. A "Celebrate Them Day" was considered, where interest groups like the local car club or retired teachers would be honored at the museums. King County Library System's unique story time for kids was suggested as an enticement to introduce children to life "way back then" at the museums.

Thanks to historical society leadership, a partnership in progress was evident at what was once referred to as the "sister cities" of Maple Valley and Black Diamond. At the meeting, BDHS leaders included Immediate Past President Keith Watson, President Steve Israel, and Treasurer Sherrie Evans. MVHS was represented by President Dick Peacock, Vice President Karin Roney, Secretary Sue Pilgrim, Treasurer Dave Pilgrim, and Teresa Reese, a board member.

Attracting community volunteers to the museums, for minor chores or heftier projects, was considered essential to keeping history and heritage intact. Children with their parents, youth, teens, and adults are encouraged to join the crew of volunteers. Those who are knowledgeable about the past also learn how to adapt to the future.

~Photos by Steve Israel



Mannequins like a lady cleaning her kitchen are popular with museum visitors



Tahoma School District's history is captured in displays of schools, sports, trophies, and photos.

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

Our newsletter is published 3 times annually (March, July, and October). We want our members to know about activities we have been doing in case you were not able to join us. This section of the newsletter will now be devoted to what we have been doing!

- For many years the **Model Train Show** has happened in October at the Gracie Hanson Building in Ravensdale. Again this year we participated with a booth and displays sharing our railroad history. Thanks to Keith Watson, and Jeff & Sheri Montgomery for handling our booth.

- For **Halloween**, A Trunk or Treat, coordinated by the Black Diamond Eagles, we handed out candy bags to trick-or-treaters and they got their card stamped. They visited the businesses along Railroad Avenue. When their stamps were collected they headed to the Eagles for a special treat.

- Thanks to Mike Androsko for driving our restored 1947 Howard Cooper Fire Engine in the **Enumclaw Christmas Parade**. It was looking great all lit up and with kids aboard. Thanks also to Joe Androsko for his continued work to maintain the vehicle. The fire engine was also parked at the museum for Hometown Christmas day.

- The biggest event we hold each year is **Hometown Christmas** with almost 400 in attendance. Everything was free for kids as always. They visited the Bakery for an art activity and face-painting; stopped at the Smoke House to find a Treasure Hunt item and received a treat (Thanks Gina and Dan.), visited the Antique Store for cookies and cider (Thanks Brenda), stopped at the popcorn tent for a free bag of popcorn, visited our BDHS S'mores tent and had fun making smores outside and searched for the treasure hunt item across the street at the Black Diamond Grill. Heading to the museum they could walk around the fire truck or stop at the Honor Garden to sit in the sleigh or behind the Frosty for photos. Along the way, they probably ran into our very own Frosty (Ian Nitsche) and

our Elf (Hunter Sandberg).

A stop on the sidewalk meant hopping aboard the Hay Wagon for a great ride through the area. Thanks to Lenny Folino and Sam Kamphuas for doing this every year. Sam also provides his antique tractor for the event.

Then off to the museum to complete 2 additional treasure hunts and an activity with the King County Library (reading and a take-home activity). Thanks, Gretchen Nelson.

The longest line of course was to see Santa. Santa was in the caboose this year following our "Polar Express" theme. Thanks,

Tom Mulvihill for continuing to spread joy to the children of our community.

This year's event was chaired by Lacey Frye. Committee members included Linda Arden, Gomer Evans, Laurie Evans, Sherrie Evans, Janice Ranton, Susie Thompson, Judy Watson, Keith Watson, and Sue Watson. MANY thanks to our maintenance crew for all the setup and take-down work: Carl, Crystal and David Goetz, Greg Licthy, Jeff Kauffman, Jeff and Sheri Montgomery, Jim O'Rourke, Ian Nitsche, Dennis Richardson. Lastly thanks to our Mayor Carol Benson for doing the kick-off and to Superintendent



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

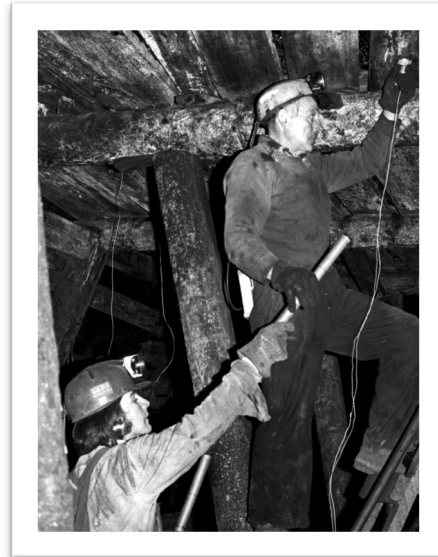
Is There a Mine in Your Backyard? Sunday, April 2 2023 - 1-2 p.m.

By Bill Kombol

Local resident and mining historian, Bill Kombol will join us on Sunday, April 2, 2023, at 1 p.m. to share his presentation on local coal mine hazards. The program was previously shown to the Northwest Geological Society. While rarely in the news, coal mine hazards have reminded property owners that hidden underground dangers sometimes make their presence known. Though Washington's last underground coal mine closed in 1975, abandoned subsurface workings still remain.

Bill began working at Palmer in 1968, as a 15-year-old Saturday boy. He graduated from Enumclaw High School in 1971 and the University of Washington in 1975 with a B.A. in Economics. During his senior year of college, he worked the night shift at Rogers No. 3 mine. He joined the company full time in 1978 and rose to Manag-

er in 1982. He served in that role for 40 years retiring in 2022, though he still serves as a consultant to the Black Diamond based business.



RBNK184 - Bill Kombol, left hands a stick of dynamite to John Costanich in the Rogers No. 3 mine. April 1974 photo by Barry Kombol.



Nortonville, California

A Trip Home Where Black Diamond Began April 23, 2023 - 1-2 p.m.

Come join us on Sunday April 23rd for our spring open house event. The museum will be open at 11 am. At 1 pm a wonderful presentation will be made by Zach Pratt and Steve Israel: "A Trip Home - Where Black Diamond Began." The presentation will focus on Zach's recent trip to

Nortonville, California where the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company had its first operations. The presentation will go on to share information about Nortonville and the surrounding mining areas and how that company eventually moved here to establish our hometown, Black Diamond, Washington. Zach's presentation will be accompanied by coal mining songs performed by Steve Israel.

**The Ghost's Grave,
A great activity for kids of all ages
May 6, 2023 - 1-2 p.m.**

We are so pleased to once again offer this wonderful program that we originally did in 2018.

Students can check in with the Black Diamond Museum and get a copy of Peg Kehret's book "The Ghost's Grave", in advance of May 6th. It is a fascinating story that kids can't put down once they start reading. It tells the story of Willie, a local coal miner who lost part of his leg in a mining accident. Willie's ghost befriends a kid visiting this area for the summer and their adventures are awesome!

We will meet here at the Black Diamond Museum for a fun interaction starting at 1 p.m. After that we will be taking a visit to a local cemetery to see if the kids might be able to help find what Willie wants!

We hope you will join us for The Ghost's Grave adventures! May 6, 2023, at 1 p.m. at the Black Diamond Museum. Admission is free as always.



Shawn Olgesbee 2018

**BD Rocks... and Coal
Sunday, May 21, 2023 – 1-2 p.m.**

Ever wonder where coal came from? Ever wonder what is in those rocks you find? Ever wonder how long all of this has been around? If you have an interest in geology (rocks, coal, sediments or related items), come join us on May 21st at 1 pm at the museum.

Our volunteer Zach Pratt will be sharing his knowledge of this information with a focus on kids of all ages. It will include a hands-on experience to understand these formations and their

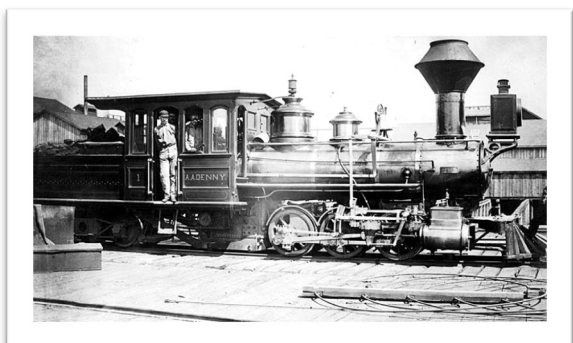
history, including how coal is found, mined and turned into electricity.

We hope you will join us to learn out about this fascinating information. May 21, 2023 1 PM at the Black Diamond Museum. Admission is free as always.



**Black Diamond Railroads
Saturday, August 12, 2023 - 1-2 p.m.**

Keith Watson grew up here in Black Diamond where he developed a love of trains that is now a life-long passion. Keith will be sharing information about the development of the railroad into Black Diamond and the surrounding areas as well as his knowledge of the actual engines and railroad workings.



Dr. Carey for stopping by to visit with us.

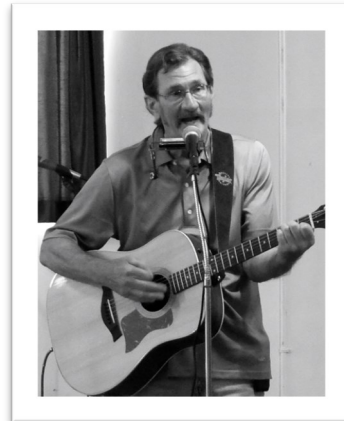


Shuvunda

• Every year our volunteers get together for a **SHUVUNDA**. Never heard of it? If you have received a holiday gift that you shoved under the bed, then you have a Shuvunda. We enjoyed pot-luck appetizers, a Shuvunda exchange, and a fun game. A great way for our volunteers to final-

ly relax and have fun.

• Our new President, **Steve Israel** performed coal mining songs and made a presentation for the Meridian Valley Ladies Golf Club on February 11th. Steve plans to do more of this around the community to promote information about our Society and the Museum.



Steve Israel

THE A.A. DENNY - NARROW GAUGE LOCOMOTIVE

By Keith Watson

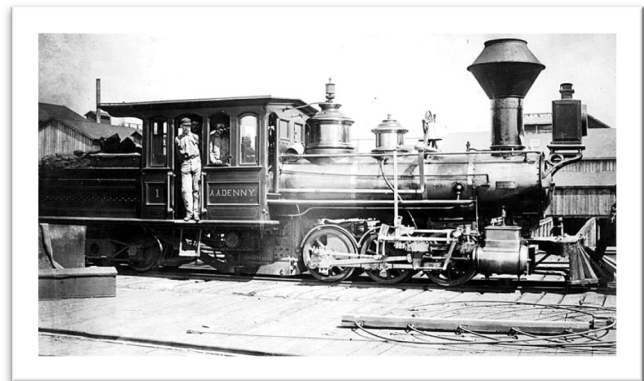
The A.A. DENNY Narrow Gauge Locomotive #1 of the Columbia and Puget Sound Railroad served Black Diamond from 1884 to 1890. It was built in August 1875 and named after Seattle pioneer Arthur A. Denny. It had a 0-4-4 wheel arrangement that was converted and improved to 0-6-4 in 1878. These numbers represent no leading wheels, 6 powered and coupled driving wheels on 3 axles and 4 trailing wheels on 2 axles.

As first built the locomotive was proven to be underpowered and was given enlarged cylinders with new wheels to meet its power needs. These were cast by the White & Tenny Foundry and believed to be the first such forged in western Washington.

This locomotive is believed to have been scrapped in 1893, after the Seattle Fire. The

boiler was used as a stationary steam source at the new railroad roundhouse.

Resource: Pacific Coast Seattle's Own Railroad, Author: Kurt E. Armbruster. This book is available at the museum.



A.A. Denny C&PSR. Narrow Gauge Locomotive (36" wide) 22 Ton

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

in Black Diamond in 1883, so the men moved out and Clarissa was given the cabin. About 35-40 carpenters were put to work building homes for the expected influx of workers.

The extension took more than two years to complete and was built mostly by Chinese workers who lived in a settlement on Jones Lake. An 1885 census of the area showed the majority of 175 laborers to be Chinese, but they departed shortly after the railroad was completed. The Columbia & Puget Sound's narrow-gauge railroad reached Black Diamond on December 12, 1884, and then turned east to Franklin. The first trainload of coal shipped from Black Diamond in April 1885.

Two railcars filled with 96 tons of coal left Franklin on July 21, 1885, reaching San Francisco in early August.

Over the next 20 years, both Black Diamond and

Franklin grew rapidly and were soon joined by other south King County coal mining towns, including Bayne, Cumberland, Danville, Durham, Elk Coal, Kangley, Kummer, Ravensdale, and Taylor, to name the most prominent. As coal mining's prospects dimmed at the end of World War I, some of these towns found ways to survive while others faded from view and memory. Today, only Black Diamond exists as an incorporated city while Ravensdale prospers primarily as a bedroom community in the Tahoma school district. The rest are now either ghost towns or shrunken versions of their former selves.

So now that readers understand the early events that form the area's coal mining heritage, each subsequent Newsletter will dive into specific underground coal mines that secured Black Diamond's place in history, starting with Mine #14.

MINES Chapter 2 next issue



BD HISTORICAL SOCIETY LEADERSHIP BEGINS ANEW

By D'Ann Tedford

Keith Watson has held the office of president for the last 15 years. With transfer of the gavel to Steve Israel, Keith will continue to serve on the Board as "immediate past president" while transition takes place. When Keith began his role, a president's term was one year. He was then voted in as president many times beginning in 2007. His term in office has been noteworthy.

Some major changes included: Coal Miners Honor Garden established, time capsule buried, museum murals installed, extensive building maintenance and painting, basement gutted and displays down there redesigned, locomotive acquired, volunteers and grants significantly increased and much more. Keith's love of Black Diamond history came as a youngster who witnessed the trains coming through town. And as the sign posted in the museum declares: "He continues to live out his passion for trains." Thank you Keith for your undying dedication to the museum.



Keith Watson (R) hands Steve Israel (L) presidential gavel.

As incoming president, Steve Israel is not a homegrown native of Black Diamond. However, his interest in preserving the museum and Black

Diamond history has been non-stop since he moved to the city in 1985. He previously served as BDHS president for a two-year term, 2004 and 2005. From 2000 to 2010, he edited a quarterly newsletter. They are now published three times a year. Under his leadership the newsletter ranged in size from 12 to 28 pages. In addition to official office roles, Steve considers his most effective accomplishment was in securing the artifacts by installing cameras. Steve was a relentless construction worker at the museum who built two firewalls in the attic, added support to the sagging roof, rebuilt the front porch, added a decent door, insulated the floor, and rebuilt workstations in the office.

The current term of office for those on the Board of Directors is three years. Board meetings are open to the public.



Obituaries



Clayton Hugh Mead
July 29, 1931-January 9, 2023

Clayton was born July 29th, 1931 to Charley and Elaine Mead. He was born in Auburn, WA and was brought home to Lawson Hill in Black Diamond, WA. Clayton went to school in Black Diamond and graduated from Enumclaw

High School in 1949. He played baseball in high school and grew to love the game and eventually became a lifelong Mariners fan. After graduation Clayton worked as a chokerman in the logging business. In 1952 he was drafted during the Korean Conflict and spent the next two years in the Army, most of this time stationed in Japan.

After returning to civilian life, he went to work for Pacific Car and Foundry. Later that year he met his wife Nancy while roller skating and they married on May 14, 1955. One year later they had their first child Brian Hugh. Three years after that, they had a daughter Janet Arlene. Clayton eventually went to work for Weyerhaeuser as a faller. The family moved into a new home four miles away in Enumclaw where he lived most of his life until spring of 2022 when he moved with his wife to High Point Village in Enumclaw.

Clayton was an outdoorsman. He enjoyed fishing and could be found most Saturdays on the Green River casting for steelhead. He also enjoyed hunting and often went on hunting trips with his son Brian. Clayton was a great bowler and was a dead eye on the horse-shoe pit throwing ringer after ringer. He also enjoyed golfing and playing cards. Many nights you could find him and Nancy playing cards with friends. He instilled the love of games in his children and grandchildren. There was not much that Clayton wasn't good at and he could fix just about anything.

In retirement Clayton enjoyed giving back to the community where he grew up. He was a regular volunteer at the Black Diamond Museum and the Senior Center. He was a lifelong member of the Black Diamond Eagles and served as their secretary for many years. Clayton was a staple in the community and will be

missed by many.

He leaves behind Nancy, his loving wife of 67 years, daughter Janet Neigel (David), two grandchildren Sean Neigel (Jenalyn) and Shannon Van Dyken (Steven) and a great grandchild Jack Van Dyken. Clayton was preceded in death by his parents Charley and Elaine, sisters Shirley and Christine and his son Brian.

Interment was at Tahoma National Cemetery March 3, 2023 11:30 AM with a Celebration of Life at the Black Diamond Eagles Hall. In lieu of flowers donations can be made in Clayton's name to the Black Diamond Historical Society.



Marlene Bortleson
January 16, 1931-Dec. 23, 2022

Marlene passed away at age 91 and continued to do the things she loved, up until the last few days. She enjoyed exercising, entertaining, writing letters,

and being a community person.

She grew up in the small town of Windsor, MO, with her parents, Louis and Cloy Lingle. After graduating from Christian College in Columbia, MO, she furthered her music studies at University of Colorado where she learned to rock climb.

After moving to Chicago, she met her husband, Gil, on a group hiking trip. They married in 1965 and in 1969 welcomed their daughter, Cheri. After the birth of their daughter, they moved near Black Diamond, after Gil took a job with the US Geological Survey in Tacoma.

As Marlene liked to be involved in community affairs, she began to volunteer at the Black Diamond Historical Society and brought lunches to the other volunteers tasked with establishment of a coal mining museum from an old train depot. She loved the stories told by aging coal miners.

Marlene is survived by her husband, Gil, daughter, Cheri, and granddaughter, Emme, and other family. Memorial donations can be made to the Green River Coalition, Black Diamond Museum, or Washington Nature Conservancy.



**Charles (Chuck)
Thomas Kravagna**
Nov 17, 1935-Dec. 28, 2022

Chuck passed away peacefully, at age 87, surrounded by family on December 28, 2022. Chuck was born at home in Carbonado, Washington, to Hubert and Lottie (Pedrini) Kravagna. Chuck was

raised in Black Diamond, Washington, where he enjoyed growing up in a small town, including playing baseball, swimming with cousins at the local lakes, and helping out his grandparents on the family farm. He met the love of his life Rose (Silvestri), in middle school. Chuck graduated from Enumclaw High School in 1954 and they were married in 1956. He spent time in the Army, followed by a career with the US Postal Service. He also worked with the Lions Club and Enumclaw Chamber of Commerce. He was an avid golfer and loved gardening. He is survived by his wife, Rose, daughter, Kim (Richard), son, Nick (Stephanie), three grandchildren, Clark, Aleshia, and Nicole, and three great-grandchildren.



Duane Edward Cameron
March 22, 1945-June 19, 2022

Duane, age 77, passed away at his home in Buckley, WA, on June 10, 2022. He is survived by his wife, Linda Cameron, of 57 years, and their two sons

Steven (Desiree) Cameron and David Cameron, as well as sisters, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Born in Yakima, WA, Duane lived his early years in Black Diamond and later moved to Enumclaw where he went to school and met his wife, Linda. They planted their roots in Enumclaw, got married and

started their family. Duane was a hardworking man with a sharp eye for opportunity. He started his own company doing what he knew and loved, and he was good at it. Duane Cameron Bulldozing grew to be a cornerstone in a community he was proud to call home. Which must be why he had so much fun lighting up the street and pulling the food bank float at the annual Enumclaw Christmas Parade. Duane was a big kid at heart. In his “retirement years”, he enjoyed having more time to spend with his family and watching his grandkids and great grandkids grow.



Patricia (Bonnell) Weaver
June 12, 1944-December 30, 2022

Pat was born to parents Walt and Lynn (Evans) Bonnell. As a child, she often visited her grandparents Gomer Sr. and Alice Evans. Pat is survived by

her son Jimmy and her daughters Carol Carlson and Jamie Martinez, all of California. She is also survived by her beloved grandchildren, great-grandchildren and extended family of nieces, nephews, cousins and her Uncle Gomer Evans, Jr.



HISTORIANS *continued from page 5*

turing liquor on his remote ranch on a scale that included a 1,000-gallon steam-heated mash vat. Washington State passed prohibition legislation four years before the 18th Amendment was adopted nationwide in 1919 (*and unincorporated King County went dry three years before Washington State*). Like most bootlegging operations, this business venture, though known to many locals, was never publicly discussed so most of the characters and their machinations are

lost to time. Michael and Donna purchased the property from Bill Bremmeyer in 1975 after he'd acquired it from one of the Charles' family heirs. The Brathovdes built their home on the site in 1978.

By the way, if you're struggling with how to say their last name, Brathovde is a Norwegian word meaning steep (brat) hill (hovde). Michael's family pronounce it brāth – ōvd, which sort of rhymes with cathode, with a v-sound thrown in for good measure.

DONATIONS

From August 31, 2022 - February 10, 2023, we received the following in donations

By Laurie Evans, Secretary

MEMORIAL DONATIONS \$ 345

Mark & Debby Campbell
In memory of Marie Evans
Gene & Elinor Kerr
In memory of Joyce Dal Santo
Bev Heusser
In memory of Ron Heusser
Ray & Kravagna
In memory of Chuck Kravagna
Julianne McNeely
In memory of the Dal Santo family

These kind donations make such a difference for the continued operation of our wonderful museum. Donations are always welcome for the following special funds.

GENERAL FUND DONATIONS OF \$500 OR MORE

Michael Brathvode
M. L. Shukis

GENERAL FUND DONATIONS OF \$100 OR MORE

Sherrie Evans
Traci Gibbons
Nils & Lois Ladderud

GENERAL FUND DONATIONS

Diane DalSanto
Robert & Anna Marie Duncan
Tom & Joyce Erath
Gloria Thompson

NEWSLETTER FUND DONATIONS OF \$100 OR MORE

Maureen Guidetti

NEWSLETTER FUND DONATIONS

Gil Bortleson
Stacey Chism
Robert & Anna Marie Duncan
Steve Fontana
David, Crystal & Carl Goetz
Nancy Kuzaro
Nils & Lois Ladderud
Richard Major
Marilyn Peterson
Beverly Read
Eric Solis

FIRETRUCK FUND DONATIONS

Cheryl Dubbs

HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS

MINERS DAY

WELSH HERITAGE DAY

ITALIAN HERITAGE DAY

SCHOOL REUNION

We are so appreciative, honored, and blessed to receive these donations. They enable us to continue to support our efforts to keep history alive!

Thank you to our generous donors!!

*Thank
You*



and



These donations are greatly appreciated. The Black Diamond Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.





2023 Calendar



Black Diamond Historical Society/Museum

Supported by 4Culture, the City of Black Diamond and donations BDHS is a 501(c)(3)
 IRS #51-0170304 Nonprofit Corporation
 Keeping History Alive in the Black Diamond Museum and Coal Miners Honor Garden
 Location: 32627 Railroad Ave (PO Box 1, Black Diamond, WA 98010
 Phone: 360-886-2142 email: museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org

Date(s)	Event	Location/Time
April 2	"Is There a Coal Mine in Your Backyard?"	Museum @ 1-2 pm
April 23	"A Trip Home - Where Black Diamond Began"	Museum @ 1-2 pm
May 6	"The Ghost's Grave"	Museum @ 1-3 pm
May 13	Italian Heritage Day	@ Museum @ 1-2 pm
May 21	"BD Rocks... and Coal"	@ Museum @ 1-2 pm
June 3	Welsh Heritage Day	@ Museum 1-2 pm
June 7	Black Diamond All School Reunion	BD Community Center, 11 am - 3 pm
June 10	Maple Valley Days Parade	Maple Valley, WA
July 4	Enumclaw Fourth of July Parade	Downtown Enumclaw
July 15	Miners Day	Railroad Ave 9 am – 4 pm
August 2	"Black Diamond Railroads"	Museum @ 1-2 pm
September 2-4	Labor Day Celebration in Black Diamond - parade is Monday, Sept. 4, 10 am (starts on south end of Highway 169)	Museum open on all days. Labor Day Festivities in Ball Park, Ten Trails and Eagles (Car Show)
October 14-15	Model Train Show	Gracie Hansen Building, Ravensdale
October 22	General Membership Meeting	Museum @ 1 pm
December 1	Black Diamond Community Center Tree Lighting with Santa	BD Community Center 5 pm
December 2	Enumclaw Christmas Parade	Downtown Enumclaw
December 9	Hometown Christmas	@ Museum 10 am - 3 pm
December 10- January 3, 2024	Museum Closed for Holidays (reopen on January 4, 2024)	Museum



Black Diamond Historical Society
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And make sure to tell your friends, too.

2265

*Number of guests for
the period September
1, 2022 through Feb
19, 2023*

2023

Be Our Guest by Laurie Evans

We had 2,265 visitors (1,574 adults and 691 children). We are so happy to have them see our wonderful museum!!

Lakewood, Prosser, Federal Way, Kent, Oak Harbor, Auburn, Ferndale, Lake Stevens, Renton, Black Diamond, Maple Valley, Buckley, Puyallup, Covington, and Graham, Washington; Portland, Oregon; Los Angeles, and San Diego, California, Juneau, Alaska, and the Philippines and Germany

C o m m e n t s

It is pretty cool! Amazing

Lots of memories

History was awesome

Great staff!

Glad we came

Great exhibits

Thank you - love the history

Super cool place

My toddler loved it!

