



## ◆ NEWSLETTER ◆

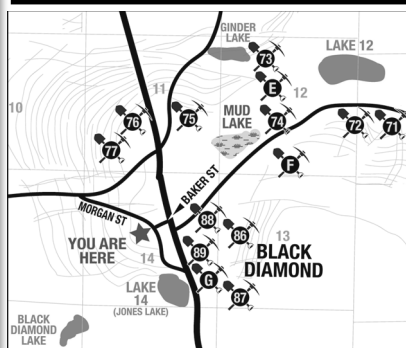
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### MINE NO. B - SKUNK CABBAGE

By Bill Kombol



**Black Diamond's Coal Mines - Map** – Mine B is number 77 on this map of Black Diamond area coal mines. The faint gray lines mark the extent of underground mining.

*This is the eighth chapter in the BDHS Newsletter series describing Black Diamond's coal mines. The first installment provided a brief history of the discovery of coal, chronologically followed by Mines #14, No. 2, No. 12, #11, Lawson, and No. 7.*

By late 1910, Pacific Coast Coal Company had three successful coal mines operating in the Black Diamond area – Mines 11, 14, and Lawson, plus the Gem Mine in Franklin, and the highly successful Newcastle Mine further north.

Things changed dramatically on November 6, 1910, when the New Lawson mine exploded killing 16 miners. Five of those miners' bodies never recovered.

A new mine was needed and within weeks, a portal opening was being developed 500 feet west of Pacific Coast's most successful – Mine 11, which originally opened as Morgan Slope in Section 11. The new name took hold in the years following the 1905 death of

Black Diamond's longtime Superintendent, Morgan Morgan, after whom the slope was named. The new portal was called Mine B and operated on a coal seam that overlaid the famous McKay seam, by 300 feet stratigraphically (800 feet in another contemporaneous source). The new slope was down 548 feet by the end of 1910, though no coal had yet been extracted.

Mine B's slope and bunkers were located directly adjacent to the Columbia & Puget Sound



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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**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](mailto:museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org)

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#### WEB

[www.blackdiamondmuseum.org](http://www.blackdiamondmuseum.org)

[www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondHistory](https://www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondHistory)

[www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/BlackDiamondMuseum)

[www.blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com](http://www.blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com)

[www.twitter.com/BDHistory](https://www.twitter.com/BDHistory)

#### HOURS

Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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

## UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES

*By Laurie Evans*

We continue to look for future articles for our newsletter. Almost every day we are open, we have a visitor stop in and tell us a wonderful story of Black Diamond. We delight in these stories and encourage our members to submit them for our newsletter. If you are interested in submitting an article, our schedule is as follows:

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Articles Due</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>
Spring	January 15	Mid-March
Summer	May 15	End-May
Fall	August 14	Mid-September

## DID YOU KNOW?

*By Sherrie Evans*

In its early days, music made Black Diamond famous. In 1925 the Black Diamond Band took away many championship trophies. The band had been a long tradition in town as was music of all sorts. Captured in this photo in front of the school are top row (l-r): Orren Lyle, C. Kravagna, Bill Jenkins, Van Manchester, Ed Crossman, Fred Carroll, Bill Trethaway, Ray Packard, Harold Parkinson. Center (l-r): Dave Davis, A. Lind, Tommy Hughes, Frank Carroll (director), Al Winkler, Lloyd Thompson, Barney McDonald. Front row (l-r): Bernad McVicar, Bill Hughes, Harry Serrala, Ted Rouse, Earl Manchester, A. Rossi.



**Please note correction from Spring Newsletter. Donna Gauthier's obit should have read January 17, 1931 - September 30, 2024.**

# PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

## A MESSAGE *from the* PRESIDENT



STEVE  
ISRAEL

With hats off to our volunteers, we continue to improve our displays in the museum, maintain our building and grounds, and connect with our community. Here are some examples of our progress:

The original wood floors on the main level of the museum were in need of an update as it had been a long time since that had been done. We utilized the services of "The Maids" to do a deep cleaning of our floors and then our volunteers

painted the entire floors. The finished job is amazing - the floors look like new.



The crawl space under the museum was cleaned out and then insulation and a new vapor barrier were added. Shelving was installed where surplus lumber is now stored.

On May 1, 2025, we watched two of our junior volunteers receive awards for participating in the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program at the Black Diamond Elementary School. Way to go Lindsey Sanchez and Hunter Sandberg!

We have exciting new photo displays of coal miners at work and the coal mines of our area. The Design Team continues to do exceptional work.



We continue our connections with Black Diamond Elementary School. Three 3rd grade classes will be visiting us on May 29th for their annual tour of the museum and then the cemetery. In the entrance to the school there are three photo-

graph boards that tell the history of Black Diamond, Franklin and our community. We recently upgraded those boards. Principal Bull is leading the pledge of allegiance at the school reunion June 7 and a group of students will also be singing for us.



Our deepest condolences to the family of Senator Bill Ramos, both a member of the Society and a strong supporter of our programs.

Steve Israel  
President



# WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

By Sherrie Evans

On **February 2** Bill Kombol made a presentation about the history of the Kummer Bridge (Highway 169 between Black Diamond and Enumclaw). The house was packed as he shared fascinating information and photos about the building of the bridge and its history.



*Kummer Bridge Presentation by Bill Kombol*

Volunteer and geologist Zach Pratt made four presentations. On **February 22** he told the story of Mr. Rainier (Tahoma). On **March 22** it was the Royal Reward Mercury Mine - interesting facts about a little known mine on the Green River. On **April 26** Zach amazed us with information about Black Diamond's water. Who would have known all of that? Then, on **May 18** Zach hosted a Volcano Lab for kids. Each event continues to further our goals to share our history and we thank



*How it Came To Be - Shepherd Lutheran Church*

Zach for his time, unbounding knowledge and awesome presentation skills.

Tours Galore! On **January 23** we hosted a senior group of 20 from Issaquah. On **March 7** a local homeschool group with 60 children toured the museum. It was so successful that they definitely want to come back. Members of the Shepherd of the Valley Church came to visit and students from Green River College visited on **March 25**. Both groups enjoyed the Black Diamond How It Came to Be presentation.

The next day on **March 26** we hosted a group of exchange students from Kentlake High School. Then on **March 27** we hosted the Sumner Senior Center group who truly enjoyed the tour of the museum, and had

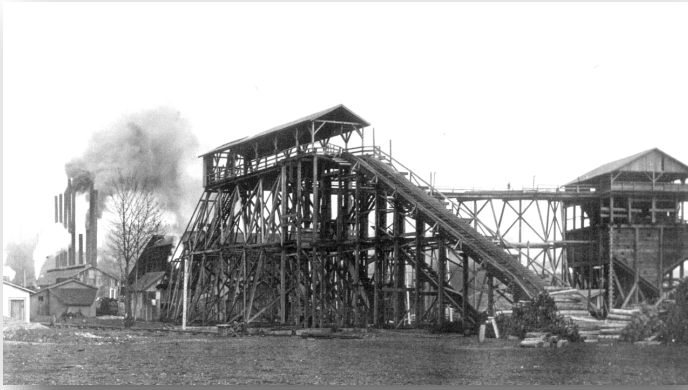


*One of many special events: Japanese exchange students at Gomer Evans, Jr. Park with volunteers Greg Lichty and George Sato*

lunch at the bakery after that. A special shoutout to our Volunteer and Tour Coordinator, Elaine Parks and the many volunteers who are present and provide important information during these visits.

Yup, we have been busy but love being able to preserve and share our history. Be sure to check upcoming events on our website:  
[www.blackdiamondmuseum.org](http://www.blackdiamondmuseum.org).





*Mine B's slope, or portal opening is seen in the foreground. Storage bunkers built over the C&PS RR are to the right. Mine 11's steam plant smokestacks are to the left.*

Railroad tracks that carried Black Diamond and Franklin's production to market. Mine bunkers were a term for the surface facilities where coal was processed and stored prior to being loaded on rail cars. Mine B's bunkers were impressively constructed befitting Pacific Coast Coal's high hopes for their new mine, located next door to one of the state's most profitable.

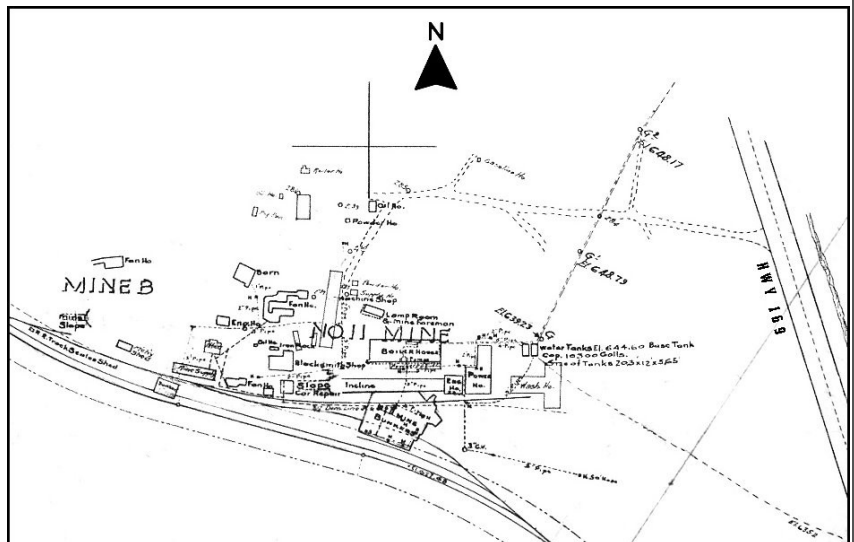
During its first year of production in 1911, Mine B operated for 344 days with 31 employees, 22 underground, and nine working surface jobs. Yet with all that labor and effort Mine B produced a modest 6,123 tons of coal. The mine also suffered three injuries, including mine foreman, Fred Ring, age 32 of Finnish descent, whose fourth finger on his right hand was scratched by a nail that resulted in blood poisoning.

Mine B's paltry volume was dwarfed by the nearby Mine 11 which yielded 237,327 tons, or nearly 40 times more. Mine B was also called the Skunk Cabbage Mine because it was located in a swampy area where the foul-smelling plant grew. Cows sometimes wandered into the low-lying area and after eating the leaves of the skunk cabbage plant their milk would take on an unpleasant taste.

The skunky name might have been reinforced by the lower grade quality of the coal being mined. While Mine 11 extracted the

famous, low-ash, hot-burning, McKay coal seam (No. 14 in the Franklin series), Mine B likely mined the No. 15 seam that likely was never before mined or since. Fifty years later from January through March 1961, exploratory drilling by the United States Smelting, Refining, and Mining Company (USSRAM) encountered the 'B' coal bed in drill hole #9. The 'B' coal seam was 9.6-feet thick with a calorific value measured in British Thermal Units (BTUs) of 9,000, far lower than the McKay seam's typical 13,000 BTUs. Mine B's minimal output of lower-quality coal was surely blended with McKay coal so most customers wouldn't notice the difference.

By the end of 1912, Mine B's output more than quintupled to 34,923 tons, after operating 285 days with 68 underground miners and 12 outside employees. That equaled 1.53 tons of coal per miner per day. By contrast, Mine 11 produced 246,042 tons over 267 days with 373 workers yielding 2.47 tons per man per day, 60% more prolific than its little sister. That same year's Coal Mine Inspector Report noted that Pacific Coast's other Black Diamond mines were the deepest in the United States, with Mine No. 14 nearly 988 feet below sea level, and Mine 11 on the 10<sup>th</sup> level 1,090 feet below sea level. Mine 11 would go another 300 feet deeper in the coming years. Mine B suffered the usual number of injuries but



**Mine B surface map K226-1919-North** – A 1919 map shows the location of Mine B in relation to Mine No. 11's surface facilities. Highway 169 is seen to the right.



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

By Sherrie Evans

Volunteers are 99% of why we received the "Best Museum in the Pacific Northwest" award recently. We have volunteers from age 9 to 90! Some come just on Thursdays, our volunteer work days, and others help greet visitors on our other open days including the weekends. Each person brings a special background and as a group are an incredible talent. Pictured here are three of our newer volunteers: Ed Shaw, Jeannette Coppess and Geri Darby Davis. Ed has already made such an impact with his carpentry and painting skills. With her administrative background, Jeannette is a huge help with our archives. Geri was born and raised here in Black Diamond and her historical knowledge is remarkable - and she is a hoot! Thanks to these three and to all of those who commit their time and energy to making us great!



Pictured L-R Ed Shaw, Jeannette Coppess & Geri Darby Davis

*Join us!*

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

By Sherrie Evans



Keeping up with our educational/outreach goal is definitely keeping us busy. Please join us for these fabulous events; and as always, they are free!

### **JUNE 14 CEMETERY TOUR**

Begins at 12 noon. Join us for an informative and interesting

tour of the historic and landmarked Black Diamond Cemetery.

### **JUNE 15 ANCIENT FLOODS OF BLACK DIAMOND**

Join us for a 1-hour presentation that begins at 1 pm. When you think of ice age floods, we often think of Eastern Washington, but Western Washington experienced them just the same! Let's visit the spots and learn about our ice age floods. (Presenter Zach Pratt)

### **JUNE 25 PUPPET DAY FOR KIDS**

Come and listen to our very special "Puppet Lady" and then learn how to make your own

puppet. Materials will be provided. There is a limit of 15 attendees so please register soon! Event is from 2 - 3 pm.

### **JULY 12 MINERS DAY**

Come join our community as Railroad Avenue is turned into a full day of celebration with vendors, skits, music and food! 10 am to 4 pm. You will definitely not want to miss the Black Diamond Hysterical Society annual production directed by volunteer Zach Pratt and performances by other museum volunteers.

### **AUGUST 16 CEMETERY TOUR**

Starting at 11 am and open to everyone. Led by our tour coordinator, Dee Israel, and a host of volunteers who tell the stories of our pioneers.

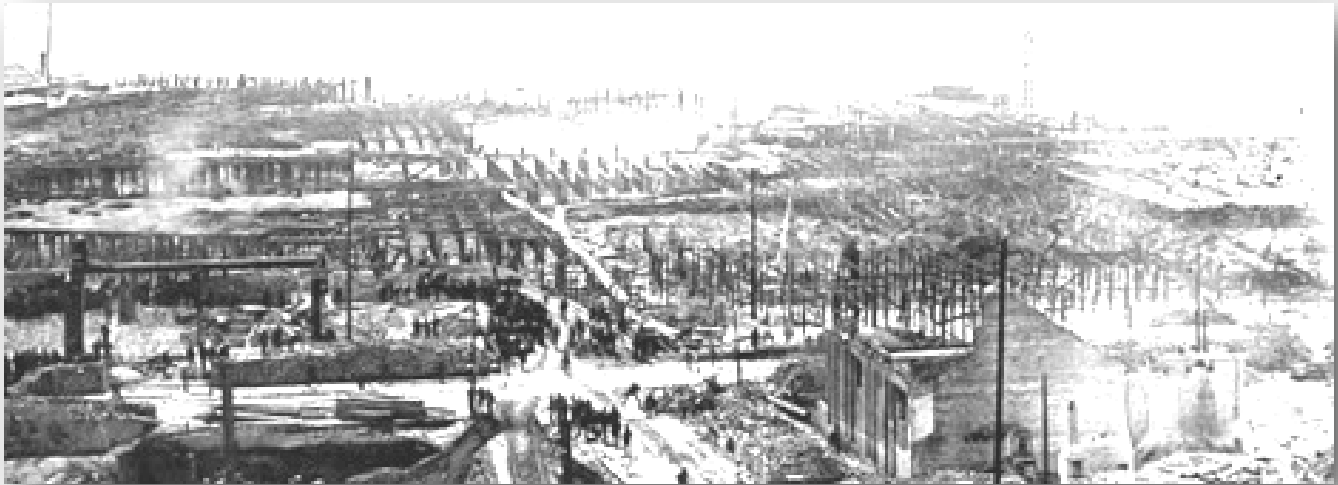
### **AUGUST 31 & SEPTEMBER 1 LABOR DAY CELEBRATION**

This annual weekend event is so fun-filled. Sunday is vendors, games and activities at

*UPCOMING continued on page 9*

# FIRE! FIRE! NOT OKAY

*By Keith Watson*



The railroad that served Black Diamond in 1886 was named the Columbia and Puget Sound Railroad, whose base offices, roundhouse, machine shop, train station, coal bunkers, and wharf were located at the waterfront on Elliot Bay in Seattle. These were located above the tide flats on wooden pilings as were most of the seafaring businesses in those early years. Black Diamond coal was shipped by train to that location to be unloaded onto ships or to be sold to local users who would use horse drawn wagons to haul coal to local users. The train rails were also located above the tide flats on pilings.



The two-story white building was the office and train station and the large dark building across the tracks from it was the six-stall train engine roundhouse where maintenance and repair of the engines occurred. Notice the train tracks on pilings in the background in front of Seattle's Beacon Hill.

On June 6, 1889, a fire, known as the Great Seattle Fire, wiped out much of the waterfront and business district including the railroad facilities of

the Columbia and Puget Sound Railroad.

The top picture shows the amount of damaged area that burned that day. The fire devastated the shipping of coal from Black Diamond and Franklin coal mines to their customers.

About this time in 1900, the North Pacific Railroad extended their rail system to Ravensdale and to Henrys Switch, halfway from Black Diamond and Maple Valley. It could have been used to ship coal to the Tacoma waterfront wharfs and coal bunkers. Coal could have been shipped to Renton for local customers. It's unclear how this shipping progressed. However, the city of Seattle started to rebuild the waterfront wharfs at top speed and within a year 465 buildings had been built.

Black Diamond had its own great fire. On June 6, 1913, 24 years later, the area across the street from the depot caught fire destroying the Black Diamond Hotel, the Gibbon Hotel, the meat market, the Bowen residence, damaging the Post Office, ice cream parlor and many other businesses. Some years later this same area became the location for the Pacific Coast 67-room hotel and today is the location of the Black Diamond Eagles Hall. The cost of the loss was estimated by the Seattle Times to be \$10,000. No fire insurance was held on any of the buildings. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company mapped the Black Diamond community in 1912. The buildings were on the property of the Pacific Coast Coal Company.

thankfully no deaths during its four years running. In 1912, Joe Podican, an Austrian, age 39, had his left thumb amputated by a falling rock. August Gravelli, Belgian, age 47, sustained a bad scalp wound by a falling rock. And Steve Olshavsky, Austrian, age 32, had his face, hands, and neck burned by gas.

In 1913, Mine B gained steam and nearly doubled production to 61,045 tons utilizing 123 miners and outside workers over 273 days. The per-man output grew slightly to 1.82 tons per day. But in August of that year, Pacific Coast Coal's Black Diamond mines were shut down for ten days when the local union called a strike to protest the discharge of one of its members. The



*Mine B's storage bunkers were built above the train tracks. Judging by the amount of lumber in the foreground, this photo was likely taken while under construction.*

matter was submitted to arbitration and the company was upheld in its right to dismiss the man involved.

That year also saw management changes at Mine B. Rasmus Christensen was named superintendent, Joe Upton as outside foreman, while

Fred Ring remained as underground foreman. Pacific Coast Coal also drove another 4,387 feet of gangway, 198 feet of rock tunnel, and 412 feet of deepened slope, as well as installing a new screening plant, all at significant cost.

But the improvements were all for naught. Mine B closed down on January 12, 1914, after working only seven days into the new year and producing 1,583 tons. The reason given: "on account of coal market conditions." The following year the company announced, "Mine B will remain closed until market conditions improve." That was the last time Mine B was mentioned.

Over its four-year span, 1911-14, Mine B produced just over 103,000 tons of coal. It was a significant economic failure judging by the enormous cost of tunneling described above and the elaborate facilities seen in the accompanying photos. It also illustrated just how difficult coal mining was,



*Mine B's facilities are seen in the upper center. Most other outbuildings were associated with Mine 11. The hazy skies were caused by a smoldering slag pile to the left of the bunkers plus the power plant (not seen in this photo) that supplied the mines and town with electricity.*



the ball field. Monday kicks off with the parade down Highway 169 starting at 10 am and continues with a whole host of activities in the ballpark for the remainder of the day.

### **SEPTEMBER 13 AGATES, FOSSILS AND PETRIFIED WOOD**

This one-hour presentation starting at 1 pm in the museum auditorium is provided by ge-

ologist Zach Pratt. Come learn about these fascinating geological specimens and visit our new geological display.

Don't forget - the museum is open Thursdays 9 am to 2 pm and weekends 11 am to 3 pm. We also gladly accept requests from tour groups and can open on other dates for those activities.



## **DONATIONS THROUGH GIVING PROGRAMS**

*By: Sherrie Evans*

The Society has stood firm on ensuring that our museum, our programs, and events remain free for admission to our visitors. We are one of very few in the state that have continued this practice. We "survive" primarily from grants, donations and membership. Donations or memberships can be completed on our website at [www.blackdiamondmuseum.org](http://www.blackdiamondmuseum.org) (click on Miners Mercantile) or you can mail payments to us at P.O. Box 1, Black Diamond, WA 98010.

While you can join as a member or donate directly, you can also participate in programs offered by local businesses such as those listed below. We thank these businesses for offering these programs as we have already benefited from them.

### **King County Giving Program**

In 1988, King County employees launched a small campaign to support their favorite charities. In 2005, it was renamed the King County Employee Giving Program. If you are an employee of King County you can partici-

pate in this program and name the Black Diamond Historical Society as your non-profit of choice. Go to this link to start the program: <https://kingcounty.gov/en/legacy/audience/employees/giving/donate.aspx>

### **Costco Payroll Giving Program**

Costco allows employees to regularly contribute a portion of their salaries to their non-profit of choice to support organizations they care about. It is called Payroll Giving. The Black Diamond Historical Society is registered with this program. Costco provides a match to the employee's donation amount. Employees can sign up through their payroll program.

### **Fred Meyer**

Do you shop at Fred Meyer? Next time, just stop at the service desk and register to donate to the Black Diamond Historical Society.



## **MISSING LABOR DAY BUTTONS**

*By: Sherrie Evans*

Before you know it, Labor Day will be here with its annual tradition of Labor Day buttons. While we have a display of them, we are missing buttons from the following

years: **1955, 1956, 1957, 1959, and 1963.** If you happen to have one you would like to donate, please let us know. Thanks!



# DR. SMITH BABIES

By Sherrie Evans

We are always looking to make sure the signage we have displayed in the museum is correct. There is one in the doctor's office with a list of the babies brought into this world by Dr. Hiram Smith.

The current list includes:

*Mary Anderson (Fosnick)*  
*Alice Shanks (DeWinter)*  
*Marion Foster (DeWinter)*  
*Jules Dal Santo*  
*Roy Dal Santo*  
*Joe Kuzaro*  
*Tom Maks*  
*Emurys Williams*  
*Glen Frederickson*  
*Jessie Malgarini*  
*Harriette Rossi*  
*Genevieve Rossi*  
*Joseph Lapinski*  
*Victor Suffredini*  
*Bruno Suffredini*  
*Anna Ernesta Suffredini*  
*Ernest Tonda*

*Dr. Carl Lofberg*  
*John Minighini and*  
*Barney Carnino*

We have been asked to add to that list Della Giaccarini and Paul Car Rossi.

Before we update the sign please let us know if you are aware of other names that should be added. Just leave a message for us at 360-886-2142 or email us at [museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org](mailto:museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org). Thanks!



*Dr. Smith at his ambulance*

# BOARD ELECTIONS

By Dee Israel

As provided in the spring newsletter, we alerted our membership that the election for the next term of the Black Diamond Historical Society (BDHS) Board of Directors will be held at the annual General Membership Meeting on Saturday, October 25th, 2025, at 1 pm at the museum.

At this time, we are soliciting our membership to see if there is interest in running for one of the positions. All positions will be on the ballot. The positions are President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and eight (8) Directors. The position of President, Vice President and Secretary will be vacant; the other positions have incumbents that will run. However, all positions are available for you to consider.

If you are interested in becoming a Board Mem-

ber (Officer or Director) and placing your name on the upcoming ballot, please reach out to Dee Israel, Nominating Chair, or Steve Israel, President. Note that the ballot will be included in the fall newsletter with additional information. You can also visit our website for information. You may contact them by email at [museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org](mailto:museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org), by phone at 360-886-2142, by mail to P.O. Box 1, Black Diamond, WA 98010, or in person at the museum (32627 Railroad Avenue, Black Diamond).

Those elected will serve a three-year term (January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2028).

**Please consider running for one of these positions and contact us ASAP to place your name on the ballot.**



# 2025 Calendar



## Black Diamond Historical Society/Museum

Date(s)	Event	Location/Time
June 4, 2025	All School Reunion	Community Center, 11 am - 3 pm
June 8, 2025	Welsh Heritage Day	Museum, 11 - 3 pm
June 14, 2025	Cemetery Tour	Cemetery, 12 pm
June 15, 2025	Ancient Floods of Black Diamond	Museum, 1 - 2 pm
June 25, 2025	Puppet Day for Kids	Museum, 2 - 3 pm
July 12, 2025	Miners Day	Railroad Ave., 9 am – 4 pm
August 16, 2025	Cemetery Tour	Cemetery, 11 am
August 31 - September 1, 2025	Labor Day Celebration in Black Diamond - parade is Monday, Sept. 1, 10 am (starts on south end of Highway 169)	Museum open on both days. Event @ ballpark and Eagles (car show)
September 13, 2025	Agates, Fossils, Petrified Wood	Museum, 1-2 pm
October 4, 2025	Italian Heritage Day	Museum, 11 - 3 pm
October 18, 2025	Earthquake Lab (kids) - registration required	Museum, 1 pm
October 18-19, 2025	Model Train Show	Gracie Hanson Bldg, Ravensdale
October 25, 2025	Cemetery Tour	Cemetery, 11 am
October 25, 2025	General Membership Meeting/Elections	Museum 1 - 2 pm
December 13, 2025	<b><i>Hometown Christmas</i></b>	Museum 10 am - 3 pm
December 15, 2025 - January 7, 2026	Museum Closed for Holidays (reopen on January 8)	Museum

# Obituaries



**William G. Ramos III**  
**April 6, 1956 - April 19, 2025**

Bill Ramos (William George Ramos III), a respected Washington State Senator for the 5th Legislative District, beloved family member, and friend to so many, passed away suddenly on

April 19, upon completing his evening trail run near the home he shared with his wife, King County Councilmember Sarah Perry.

Bill was an extraordinarily kind man whose laughter and stories could warm any heart and his infectious smile could light up a room. He was driven by a passion for justice, guided by kindness, dedicated to making the world a better place, and always seeking to include the voices of those not in the room.

Bill was born in east Oakland, CA, to Lupe Arizu and Bill Ramos, raised in a grateful and proud union household. His deep sense of community connection and call to service was shaped by his extended Mexican and Spanish family, by their neighborhood church at St. Elizabeth's, and by growing up in the community of his mother's beauty salon.

Bill joined the US Forest Service after graduation as part of a federal outreach program to underserved communities. That turned into a 30 year Forest Service career - 16 of which were spent in the Mt Baker Snoqualmie National Forest.

Bill went on to serve eight years with the US Department of Transportation, before being elected to the Issaquah City Council, and later to the State House to represent the 5th Legislative District in 2018. This January, Bill was sworn in to the State Senate where he served as Vice Chair of Transportation Budget, leading on safety and infrastructure. Upon passing a bi-partisan Transportation budget on April 23, leaders dedicated its passage to Bill's work to find common ground and solutions for all Washingtonians. Serving in Olympia, as a proud member of the Latino Caucus, was the honor of his life. He led with humility, compassion, and commitment to

those he represented.

Bill's legacy lives on through his dance partner in life, and in public service, Sarah Perry, their adult children Maya Rose and Maxwell Ramos (Katelyn Wayne), Luis Barreto, his sisters Lupe Finch and Dolores Ramos, his Brother-in-law Don Allgeier (Corinne, Satie, Odile, Penelope), Sister-in-law Kate Laughlin (Tim, Larkin, Rowan), Sister-in-law Beth Moore (Dave, Forrest, Laurel), Maya Delgado (Kaiya, Milo), many wonderful cousins. In addition, his legacy will live on through his many wonderful friends and the dedicated members of the State Legislature, and legislative staff, who serve tirelessly for a better Washington for all.

Many of us simply have the family we were born with. But Bill, his daughter, Maya, and son, Maxwell, were keenly aware that they had intentionally, and continually, chosen each other. He was the best dad anyone could have asked for, and they are deeply honored by his presence in their lives.

All who were friends to Bill knew of his deep devotion to his wife, Sarah. They both shared a love of public service and of using their time on earth to improve lives where possible. They lived their lives in full community, and are grateful to celebrate Bill's life in full community, on Sunday, May 18th in Issaquah at 3pm. Please RSVP here if you'd like to attend <https://shorturl.at/A564w>.

To learn more about Bill's life and legacy or to share your own memories, please visit <https://everloved.com/life-of/william-ramos/>



**Betty (Avery) Merryfield**  
**Dec 16, 1925 - January 28, 2020**

Betty (Avery) Merryfield, born December 16, 1925, passed peacefully at her home in Federal Way on January 28, 2020.

Born in Seattle, she grew up in the Columbia City district of Seattle attending Franklin High School.



She met the love of her life, Ivor Merryfield, in 1942 and they were wed May 19, 1944 while Ivor was home on leave from the Army Air Corps. Betty was blessed with two children and dedicated her early years to her family while also working outside her home, eventually becoming a small business owner in Hillman City. After spending her youth and working years living in "The Valley", Betty and Ivor retired and moved to Federal Way in 1986. In retirement, Betty remained an active participant in the lives of her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She and Ivor enjoyed traveling, particularly to her favorite destination, Hawaii.

Betty was preceded in death with the passing of

her husband of 68 years in 2012 and is survived by her children Linda (Doug) Petorak and Dan (Sharon) Merryfield; three grandchildren: Eric Siggins, Laura (John) Cameron, Janna (Dino) Annest ; and five great grandchildren: Jordan (Emily) Kruger, Zachary Siggins, Lindsay Cameron, Riley and Leo Annest, all of whom will remember and miss Betty's unconditional love.

A private graveside service for immediate family members was held at Washington Memorial Park on February 6th, 2020.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation to the American Heart Association.



## IN THE MUSEUM

*By Steve Israel*

We have many interesting artifacts throughout our vast collection at the Black Diamond Museum. Our docents are often amazed at what our visitors find the most interesting. One item at the top of this list is our refrigerator in the lunchroom. This General Electric refrigerator, circa 1920, has been painted and cleaned by volunteers Joe Zumek, Gino Picini, and Don Botts in 2002.

It still runs at 105 years old. The volunteers keep their lunches there.



Visitors often want to take a peek inside. One of the things they see is the freezer compartment needs to be defrosted. It gets a buildup of ice, unlike the modern freezers. But, they are in awe of how this appliance is still working after all these years.



**MINES** *Continued from page 8*

even when undertaken by one of the top companies in the state.

### Sources:

*Coal Mine Inspector Reports – Washington State D.N.R., Division of Geology.*

*Coal Mine Maps – Washington State D.N.R., Division of Geology.*

*"The Coal Fields of King County" by George Watkin Evans, Washington Geological Survey Bulletin*

*tin No. 3, 1912.*

*"Analyses of Washington Coals: The Coal Fields of Washington" by S.H. Ash, 1930.*

*"Black Diamond: Mining the Memories" by Diane & Cory Olson, 1988.*

*USSRAM's "Second Progress Report on Exploration for Coal in the Black Diamond-Franklin Area, King County, WA" dated Oct. 30, 1961.*

*Palmer Coking Coal Company archives*



# DONATIONS

We are grateful for donations that we have received during the period February 1 – April 30, 2025

By Laurie Evans

These kind donations make such a difference for the continued operation of our wonderful museum.

## MEMORIAL DONATIONS

GENERAL FUND DONATIONS

\$920

NEWSLETTER FUND DONATIONS

\$ 50

FIRETRUCK FUND DONATIONS

HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS

MINERS DAY

WELSH HERITAGE DAY

ITALIAN HERITAGE DAY

SCHOOL REUNION

## COMMUNITY FUND PROGRAMS

Costco \$ 800.21

Fred Meyer

*Thank you to our generous donors!!*

Donations are always appreciated and can be noted for special funds such as Fire Truck, Education, General, Memorial, and Newsletter. Donations are what allow this museum to keep doing the work that our visitors admire. We thank you!

*Thank You*



*and*



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



# THANK YOU 4 CULTURE

By Sherrie Evans

You may have noticed that we have mentioned 4Culture in several past newsletters and there is a reason for that. We often say that without them we would not be able to sustain the level of operations we have today.

4Culture is the cultural funding agency for King County. We are the beneficiary of those funds through a variety of grants. These programs are also strongly supported by our King County Councilperson Reagan Dunn and we immensely appreciate that commitment.

Annually we receive a Sustained Support grant that allows us to keep up with maintenance of the landmarked railroad depot we utilize as the museum. It also supports our design and display work, educational outreach programs and our ef-

orts to embrace our community.

Just recently we were awarded a "Free Access" grant which helps to offset the fact that we offer all of our programs and visits to the museum without fees. We just concluded work to add insulation, vapor barrier and a much-needed cement pad in our basement/storage area with a 4Culture grant. 4Culture has also funded grants to replace the siding on the back of the building, remediate pest damage, and to digitize our "paper" historical maps. So a big thank you is definitely in order!



# NEW MEMBERS

*By Laurie Evans, Membership Chair*

As of April 30, 2025, we have 314 members (282 Individuals and 32 Business). Unfortunately, we lost 27 members due to non-renewal of their membership. We have recently welcomed these new members:

## **INDIVIDUAL**

David Struck

## **INDIVIDUAL LIFETIME**

Kari Rankins

Thanks for joining the Society! It's because of our members that we are as successful as we are! We hear from so many of our members that they love belonging to our wonderful organi-

zation and seeing the enhancements/improvements of the museum and also reading our newsletter. Please share membership opportunities with your family, friends and neighbors!

*Welcome*



# 1,164

*Number of guests  
for the period Feb-  
ruary 1 - April 30,*

# 2025

## *Be Our Guest*

*By Laurie Evans*

We have been busy visiting with lots of folks!! For the period February 1 to April 30, 2025, we had 1,164 visitors (762 adults and 402 children).

We welcomed visitors from the local area, as well as other parts of the State (both Western and Eastern Washington) plus Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, New York, Oregon, South Carolina.

## *C o m m e n t s*

*"Fabulous production."*

*"Extremely helpful staff."*

*"Great job at continuous redo."*

*"Charming."*

*"Wonderful experience with the kids."*

*"Super interesting."*

*"Beautiful displays."*

*"Loved it! So interesting."*

*"Remarkable."*

*"Thank you for letting me have access to the*

*"Quick Silver Mines of Green River" file!"*

*"Amazing history! I'll bring back my Corvette Club."*

*"Excellent - really love the artist and her work!"*



## **Do We Have Your Current Email?**

More and more we are hearing that our members are interested in electronic forms of communication. To this end, we now offer electronic payments, we are posting our events via our Facebook page and website, and also occasionally communicating via email. We would like to ascertain that we have the ability to continue to communicate electronically with you, so we would like to have your email in our records. For those that may have added email (or changed email) since becoming members, please send us an email ([museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org](mailto:museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org)) and we will be sure to update our records. Thanks!!



**Black Diamond Historical Society**  
PO BOX 1  
Black Diamond, WA 98010

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[www.blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com](http://www.blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com)

[www.blackdiamondmuseum.org](http://www.blackdiamondmuseum.org)

And make sure to tell your friends, too.

## HONORARY RECOGNITION FOR DONNA GAUTHIER

*By Dee Israel*

In the Spring newsletter we reported the passing of Donna Gauthier, longtime resident and a Lifetime member of the Society. On April 27, 2025, Donna Gauthier was recognized with a Women of American History certificate and medal by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

This organization honors women who have made significant contributions to their communities. DAR's Mary Fell Stevenson Chapter Regent, Marge Ramsdell, presented the honor to Donna's daughter Melanie Gauthier, at the Black Diamond City Council meeting. In attendance were Melanie's husband, Tim Nickson, other friends, and several Society members: Dee Israel, Rosemary Bigelow-Konoske, Arlene Parkin, Elsie Parkin, Elaine Parks, Janice Ranton and George Sato

Donna Marie Gauthier moved to Black Diamond, Washington, in 1945, when she was 14. In 1959, she became the City's first Clerk, serving for over nine years. At one point, her family's phone was

the City's contact number, and at another time the City Police scanner was located in her home. She vigorously advocated for the construction of a City Hall in Black Diamond. Although she later worked at, and retired from, the Boeing Company, Donna remained a significant part of the heart and soul of the City until she passed away on September 30, 2024.



*D. Gauthier Award Presentation  
(L) Melanie Gauthier receiving certificate/medal from  
Marge Ramsdell (R)*