



Volume 50 Issue 2

BLACK DIAMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Summer 2026

◆ NEWSLETTER ◆

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Banner Photo: New Black Diamond Mine-c – Coal miners gathered in front of the Pacific Coast Coal administrative office and shop building, circa 1927. Photo courtesy of Eric B. Williams, a Renton-based history enthusiast.

BLACK DIAMOND AMERICA 250 HERITAGE DAY EVENT

You're Invited!! The Black Diamond Historical Society invites you to join us for a fun-filled family event. Activities include kick-off by George Washington, parade of country flags led by the SAR Fife & Drum Corps, antique car show, youth writing and art contest, visitor costume contest, group drone photo, ribbon cutting for the renovated simulated coal mine, annual celebration of Welsh Heritage, 50th year celebration of the Black Diamond Historical Society. Food, face painting and cookie decorating, fun and more!



Join us as Railroad Avenue will be closed for this event (32617 Railroad Ave, Black Diamond, the historical district by the museum and bakery). **FREE!**

A primary mission of our museum is to preserve and disseminate our local history, which is rich in culture due to not only our historic coal mining industry, but also because our community is rapidly changing. We are now the fastest growing area of the state. This event will bring our community together with ample opportunities to share our history and our cultures. The town of Black Diamond, founded in the mid-1880s and incorporated as a city on February 19, 1959, has contributed proudly to the history of Washington State and the nation for more than 143 years. Come celebrate with us!





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

The 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).

PRESIDENT Edmund Shaw

VICE PRESIDENT Jeff Montgomery

SECRETARY Jeannette Coppess

TREASURER Sherrie Evans

Immediate PAST PRESIDENT Steve Israel

DIRECTORS

Linda Arden

Elaine Parks

Greg Lichty

Janice Ranton

Don Mason

Susie Thompson

Sheri Montgomery

Keith Watson

MEMBERSHIP Jeannette Coppess

EDITOR Leih Mulvihill

FEATURE WRITER William Kombol

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
Due dates are January 15th, April 15th and July 15th

CONTACT

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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 2 p.m.

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



100th Anniversary

1959-2059

"Celebrate the opening
of the time capsule"

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES

By Jeannette Coppess

Fall 2026

Due: July 15, 2026

Publication: Mid-Sept

Spring 2027

Due: January 15, 2027

Publication: Mid-May

Summer 2027

Due: April 15, 2027

Publication: Mid-June

We are always looking for articles to add to the newsletter; members are welcome to submit articles about the history of the Black Diamond area. Please share your memories and interesting stories with us! Submissions are accepted via email or in-person before the Article Due date(s) so we can proofread them and can contact folks if we need more information. We look forward to reading your stories!

Email: museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

By Sherrie Evans



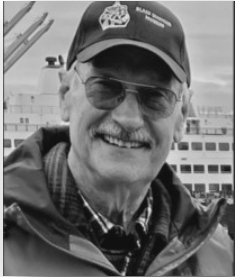
Elaine Parks is another one of our amazing volunteers. This year she has taken on the project of coordinating our Heritage Day event which will be held on June 6th. Elaine also volunteers at the Community Center, is an active member of DAR (Daughters

of the American Revolution), and serves on the Labor Day committee. Her energy is unmatched and she is fantastic at juggling so many things at one time. You will always find her wearing a smile! Thanks, Elaine, for all your hard work and the hours you contribute to making our museum and our activities a success.

Please consider sharing a few hours of your time on a Saturday or Sunday when we are open from 11-3. Just once a month or every other month is a big help. Stop by or contact us at 360-886-2142 or by email at museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org for more information or to folks if we need more information.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

A MESSAGE *from the* PRESIDENT



ED
SHAW

As newly elected president, I am still in training, learning the ropes on this well-oiled machine we call the Black Diamond Museum. A lot has been accomplished by our volunteers in the past few months. For instance, we have reorganized our tool and shop facilities to make them safer and more efficient for our volunteers to work in. We also have installed a piece of railroad memorabilia, known as a block signal, to the exterior of our building (a must-see on your next visit to the museum). The locomotive engineer's seat has been reupholstered (a big thanks to Greg Lichty for taking on this project).

The founding of our museum coincides with our nation's "America 250" celebration and Black Diamond will be celebrating these great events from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. June 6, on Railroad Avenue, with food, face painting, a flag parade and special guest, George Washington, as well as many more activities. Our volunteers are working hard to make this a wondrous event. In closing, I stand in awe of our dedicated volunteers who conduct museum work like bees in a hive working together

for one goal in mind, making your visit to our museum an experience you and your family will enjoy!

The new block signal has an interesting history. Patented on October 27, 1885, a year before the rails were laid to Black Diamond, the block signal was how a train master signaled an oncoming train to stop for passengers or cargo pickup. The original lantern on the block signal was fueled by kerosene and later electrified for convenience.

The signal arm was operated from within the depot with a cable through the wall, and had two settings. At the bottom of the signal is the large red butterfly-style flag. Both the flag and the lantern could be turned to indicate to the train engineer to stop or go. If the lantern was green, and the flag was turned parallel to the track, there was no reason for the train to stop. If, however, there were passengers or cargo to pick up, the station master would turn the signal so it was perpendicular to the tracks, and the light would be red.

The block signal was installed by volunteers in April 2026. This is something new for you to check out on your next visit to the museum.

Thank you.

Ed Shaw
President

JUNIOR VOLUNTEER AWARDS

By Sherrie Evans

On February 28, 2026, we honored our 2025 junior volunteers in an award ceremony. Each of them received a certificate and a black and gold service pin. These young individuals contribute immensely to our operations. They serve as docents, provide art work, clean everything imaginable, scan documents for archiving, help with programs like Hometown Christmas and much more. If you have an interest to be a junior volunteer just contact us: museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org or 360-886-2142. You can ask them, it is a lot of fun!



Pictured left to right are Braedon Reyes, Jillian Curtiss, Olivia Olson, Hunter Sandberg, Lindsey Carillo, Jillian Mason and Inha Paik.

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

By Sherrie Evans

The Society has continued to be busier than ever.

Geology of South King County, February 28, Zach Pratt

Geologist, and our volunteer, Zach Pratt, kicked off his first presentation of the year with a wonderful session where our visitors learned of the unique geology of the Pacific Northwest.

The Bridges of White River, March 15, Bill Kombol

It was no surprise we had a packed house as Bill Kombol talked about the White River bridge which had recently closed for major repairs. Bill Kombol presented the story of the railroads and highway connections between Enumclaw and Buckley and how solutions to river flooding shaped the hydrology of King and Pierce counties.



The Ghost's Grave March 28

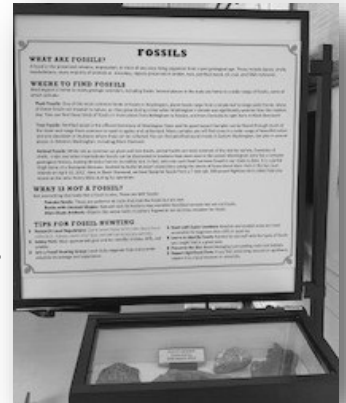
Children were provided with "The Ghost's Grave" book, a lively adventure by Peg Kehret. Many of the activities remind the reader of things that



happened in Black Diamond's early days. The children came back to the museum on March 28 and King County Children's Librarian, Gretchen Monaco, entertained them with questions about the book's story. Then we were off to the Black Diamond Cemetery to find Willie's leg bone and the money the banker stole. You should read the book to find out why!

Fossils of Western Washington, April 4, Zach Pratt

Zach was back with his 2nd learning adventure, this time focusing on fossils. For the first time the Society offered this session over Zoom as well as in person attendance.



New Fossils Display in the museum.

Black Diamond and How It Came to Be (Steve, Dee, Sherrie)

This lively musical and narrated "show" was presented at the Sno-Valley Senior Center in Carnation on April 15 and on April 18 at our own museum. Hats off to Steve Israel, Dee Israel and Sherrie Evans for their time and energy in making these presentations. People love hearing about our history in this way.

How Whiskey Won Washington, May 2, Becky Garrison

What a treat as the author of the book, "Distilling in Washington", shared the history of whiskey distilling in Washington, including a piece about the prohibition days and our very own Rum-Running Queen Mary Draghi. Becky is a graduate of Yale Divinity School and Columbia University.

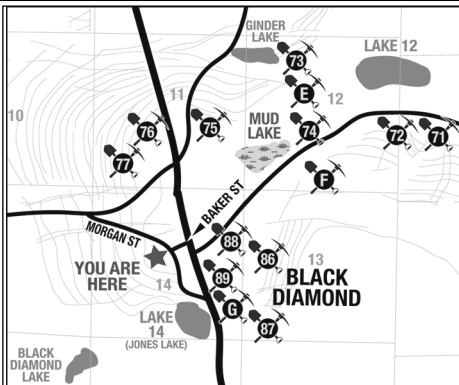


Becky Garrison, Author

DOINGS Continued on page 12

CHAPTER 10: BLACK DIAMOND COAL MINES – NEW BLACK DIAMOND MINE

By Bill Kombol



Black Diamond's Coal Mines - Map –
New No. 12 is numbered 74, and McKay
Section 12 is F on this map of Black
Diamond area coal mines.

This is the tenth 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, No. 11, Lawson, No. 7, Mine B, and New No. 12.

By the early 1920s, the coal mines of Black Diamond and

Franklin were struggling. Statewide production peaked in 1918, due to increased demand during World War I. That year, the combined Black Diamond-Franklin field saw just 353,000 tons of coal mined, less than half of what was sold 15 years earlier. And during the 1921 company lockout and labor strike, only 75,000 tons were extracted. The following year, mining in Franklin ceased, and what remained of the town withered away.

Pacific Coast Coal Company (Pacific Coast or PCC), which controlled the Black Diamond mines, had a problem, and they knew it. Though their Newcastle and Burnett mines were still active, the company hadn't produced a winner in decades.

In Black Diamond, every operation except Mines 11 and 14 faced challenges. Mine No. 2, on the inferior Fulton #12 seam, closed after a decade. Mine No. 12 lasted barely seven years. Though reasonably successful, the Old Lawson mine suffered an explosion in 1902 that claimed 11 lives. New Lawson's mine ended in a 1910 disaster when 16 men perished from a huge explosion that shut down mining. Mine No. 7, though technically a Franklin mine, but located near Mine No. 12, never lived up to its potential.

Then, in the early 1910s, Pacific Coast opened Mine B, next to Mine 11, but on the lower-grade No. 15 coal seam. It lasted four years and during its entire lifespan produced what Mine 11 yielded in six months. The New No. 12 mine closed within a year and shipped less coal than Mine 11 did in three days. Over in Franklin, the Cannon mine, named after Pacific Coast Company's former president, Henry W. Cannon, was lavishly built with few expenses spared. It opened with great promise in 1913 and operated on the proven Gem seam crossing the Green River over an impressive bridge. But the Cannon mine never approached its potential, closing nine years later, yet another discouraging flop.

Still, the biggest threat to coal's long dominance in Washington lay a thousand miles south in the oil fields around Los Angeles. Steam locomotives were increasingly converting from coal to diesel. Fuel oil began replacing coal for heating buildings and powering industrial machinery. And San Francisco's demand for coal, the originating source of Washington's coal mining boom since the 1880s, was finished by 1919.

The New Black Diamond Mine wasn't anywhere near Black Diamond

This chapter covers the New Black Diamond mine, because it shares the town's name and was Pacific Coast's last big coal mine. Yet, the mine's name belies its location – it wasn't anywhere near Black Diamond. The mine was 12 miles north, located halfway between Renton and Maple Valley, adjacent to milepost 20 on Highway 169. The Black Diamond name was chosen because New Black Diamond was opened to replace Mine 11, the town's most successful. Black Diamond coal was considered among the best in the state, primarily because of the McKay seam, which buyers coveted above all others. Pacific Coast even implied the New Black Diamond mine was on the McKay seam, though it wasn't.

The New Black Diamond Mine, originally known and often called the Indian Mine, was located in what was historically called Cedar Mountain. When the Black Diamond Coal Mining and Oregon Improvement companies convinced the Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad (C&PS RR) to extend their rail line from Renton to Black Diamond and Franklin, coal was discovered along the route at Cedar Mountain. In fact, the Cedar Mountain Coal Company, managed by James Colman, an investor in the C&PS RR, shipped its first coal in 1884, before Black Diamond, because the railroad reached Cedar Mountain a year earlier. Cedar Mountain was a viable coal-bearing area, and that's where Pacific Coast Coal went looking for coal in the early 1920s.

New Black Diamond's early beginnings

In 1919, two Welsh brothers, Tom and Ed Jones, discovered a new seam of coal and opened their mine near Lake Desire after obtaining a lease from Fred and Edith Cavanaugh. The Jones Brothers called their operation the Indian Mine, named for the coal seam they were mining. It was a small mine that produced about 1,000 tons in its first year, with four employees, and 2,500 tons in 1920, with eight miners.

In 1921, Pacific Coast bought the Indian Mine from the Jones Brothers and began planning a much larger operation. The company's annual report cheered the decision,

MINES continued on page 8

Join us!

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

By Sherrie Evans



The events of the Black Diamond Historical Society, including admission to the museum, are always FREE! We are supported by 4Culture of King County and have received 2 grants for 2026 that allow us to offer these programs



for our community. Thanks 4Culture!

June 3 School Reunion 11 am to 3 pm Black Diamond Community Center

Anyone who ever attended school in Black Diamond is welcome to join us for the annual fun. Join us for a fun day of memories. Refreshments & goodies provided for BD alum! Registration is required. <https://www.blackdiamondmuseum.org/events/bd-school-reunion/>

June 6 Heritage Day 10 am to 3 pm. Museum and Railroad Avenue

Annually we have celebrated Welsh Heritage Day on the first Saturday in June for over 30 years now. This year we are combining that event with a celebration of Celebrate America's 250th, the 50th anniversary of the Black Diamond Historical Society, and a ribbon cutting for the renovated coal mine. A great community event with lots of fun activities for all.

June 13 The Town of Franklin 1 - 2 pm at the Museum

Come learn about the history of Franklin, our neighborly "ghost" coal mining town. Zach Pratt will tell its storied and interesting past.

July 11 Miners Day - 9 am to 4 pm on Railroad Avenue

Join us for the annual festivities that celebrate our history and the merchants of Black Diamond. Railroad Avenue will be closed and filled with booths, vendors, and lots of fun. There will be food, music, a fashion show, games, face-painting and the popular chalk-in contest. The Black Diamond Hysterical Society will perform one of their ever-famous skits!

August 8 - Washington State Museum Day 11

am - 3 pm

Come visit the award winning Black Diamond Museum as Washington State honors its museums.

August 15 Cemetery Tour 1 - 2 pm

Join us for a "haunting" tour of the historic Black Diamond Cemetery.



September 6 and 7 Labor Day

Black Diamond has been celebrating Labor Day since at least 1947. In its early days the town's celebration was on the 4th of July. It was through the efforts of Evans Morris, Carl and Ann Steiert, and many other volunteers that the Labor Day celebration became the old-fashioned, family oriented festival that it is today. View their website for additional information. <https://www.blackdiamondlabordays.org/>

September 17 Bells Across America 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm at Museum

The Mary Fell Stevenson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution is hosting "Bells Across America" in observance of Constitution Week. Bells will be rung to celebrate the signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787, honoring American heritage and unity by mimicking the church bells that rang out in Philadelphia upon its signing.

Sept 19 Science Day, Zach Pratt 1 - 2 pm

Join us young and old for a fascinating day of SCIENCE with some fun hands-on activities! It is always a "blast" when Zach is here to do anything with science and kids!

Sept 26 Black Diamond How It Came to Be 1 - 2 pm

Join us for a musical and photographic presentation telling the unique history of Black Diamond. Steve Israel will perform songs of Black Diamond that he wrote, while Sherrie Evans narrates and Dee Israel provides the photo displays.



BLACK DIAMOND AMERICA 250TH HERITAGE DAY

By Elaine Parks

History Comes Alive on Railroad Street! Mark your calendars for **June 6, 2026**, when Historic Railroad Avenue transforms into a bustling celebration of heritage, culture, and community during Black Diamond America 250 Heritage Day. This fun-filled, family-friendly event brings together national history, local pride, and exciting new milestones - all in one unforgettable day.

At the center of the celebration is America 250, commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States. This once-in-a-lifetime milestone honors the ideals, perseverance, and people who shaped our nation. Black Diamond's own history - deeply rooted in coal mining, railroads, and immigrant communities offers a powerful local connection to this national story.

Adding to the excitement, 2026 also marks the 50th Anniversary of the Black Diamond Historical Society and Museum. For five decades, the Society and Museum have preserved the stories, artifacts, and traditions that define Black Diamond's unique past. This golden anniversary is a tribute to the volunteers, historians, and supporters who have kept local history alive for generations.

One of the day's most anticipated highlights will be the ribbon cutting for the Black Diamond Historical Society's renovated simulated coal mine. This immersive feature invites visitors to step into the world of early coal miners and experience firsthand the industry that built this community. It's a thrilling new way to connect with Black Diamond's mining heritage while honoring those who worked beneath the ground.

The celebration proudly includes Welsh Day, recognizing the Welsh miners and families who played a vital role in the town's development. Their language, music, traditions, and strong sense of community helped shape Black Diamond, and Welsh heritage will be celebrated throughout the day with cultural displays and festive flair from the Puget Sound Welsh Association.

Adding stirring sights and sounds to the event, the Sons of the American Revolution Fife and Drum Corps and Color Guard will march along Railroad Avenue at 11:30 a.m., leading a proces-

sion to the renovated mine exhibit for a ceremonial ribbon cutting. Their period uniforms, rousing drums, and colorful flags will bring the Revolutionary era to life, reminding visitors of the spirit and sacrifice that gave birth to a nation 250 years ago.

Set against the historic charm of Railroad Avenue, Black Diamond America 250 Heritage Day promises a lively atmosphere filled with history, celebration, and community pride. Whether you're drawn by America's 250th birthday, the 50-year milestone of the Historical Society and Museum, the excitement of the renovated simulated mine entrance, Welsh Day festivities, or the powerful pageantry of the fife and drum corps, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Join us on June 6, 2026 for a day where the past meets the present and history truly comes alive. *Black Diamond America 250 Heritage Day* is more than an event, it is the celebration of who we are, where we came from and the legacy we carry forward together.



"This new property—known as the Indian Property—promises to be one of excellent earning power and will, as well, provide additional revenue for the Railroad." The purchase and development cost was \$250,024, an enormous amount to spend on a mine back then.

The Indian Mine's biggest problem was location – Lake Desire was over a mile west of the railroad, which meant trucking and handling costs would be high. Due to extremely poor coal markets, no work at Indian in 1923. The following year, Pacific Coast acquired nearly 600 acres from Cedar River Coal Company to consolidate their holding. That acquisition allowed planned processing facilities to be built next to the Pacific Coast Railroad tracks (formerly C&PS RR). PCC began digging two 3/4-mile tunnels from opposite directions to connect the mine's portal to the railroad.

The nearly 1.5-mile-long tunnel was completed on October 16, 1925, to great fanfare with company officials and members of the Renton Commercial Club among the invited guests. The mining engineers' calculations were precise, and the two tunnels met exactly as planned, "an engineering feat which will stand out prominently as one of the largest accomplishments of its kind ever attempted in this district," crowed the October 22, 1925, *Pacific Coast Bulletin*. The tunnel needed "to battle through glacial gravel from a prehistoric river channel encountered 300 feet under-



Company officials and local businessmen celebrate the opening of the "Million-dollar tunnel." Photo #1966.044.0736 comes courtesy of the Renton History Museum.



Tom Jones, left, and Ed Jones at the Jones Mine slope, Oct. 1925. Photo #1996.044.172 comes courtesy of the Renton History Museum. Photo enhancements by Boomer Burnham.

ground."

An October 16, 1925, *Seattle Times* article announced that the mine, formerly known as Indian, would henceforth be called New Black Diamond. The company also led the *Seattle Times* reporter to believe, "The mine will tap the famous McKay seam that has been worked for 40 years or more at Black Diamond." That year, the New Black Diamond produced 6,470 tons of coal compared to Mine 11's output of 251,417 tons. The new mine had a long way to go to match the mine it was intended to replace.

The New Black Diamond mine also made news nationwide. The December 10, 1925, issue of *Coal Age*, the country's leading coal mining magazine, ran its story under the headline, "Million-Dollar Tunnel Puts Mine Nearer Seattle." The subheading added, "Mile-Long Drift Under Cedar Mountain Gives Old Black Diamond Operation an Outlet Only 17 Miles from City for 2,000-ton Output." The magazine detailed PCC's achievement, "The project cost a million dollars, but it brings out coal much cheaper and in better condition than that from the company's older operation at Black Diamond, while reducing the distance from the mine to Seattle from 33 miles to 17 miles."

Coal Age also repeated the fabrication that the New Black Diamond mine was on the McKay coal bed. And stretched the truth for the quantity of reserves, claiming, "Its extent is such that it is calculated that 2,000 tons can be extracted each day for 50 years before the mine will be worked out." Multiplying that claim suggests 36.5 million tons of underground reserves. Two years later, in an April 1929 article for *The Mining Congress Journal*, George Watkin Evans, Washington's pre-eminent coal geologist, stated, "It is rather difficult to make an estimate of total tonnage," and guessed at about 11 million tons.

Exaggeration is a good reason for the wisecrack often attributed to Mark Twain, "A mine is a hole in the ground with a liar up top."

Though the connecting tunnel was completed in 1925, four miners lost their lives through accidents at the New Black Diamond Mine that year:

- Fedrick Casteel, 27, American, single, fall from the tipple;
- F.E. Adams, 45, English, married with three children, fall from the tipple;
- Henry Becker, 38, American, married with five children, powder explosion;
- L.W. Foster, 26, American, single, powder explosion.

Pacific Coast Coal also added a new and nearby operation called the West Coast Mine. In 1926, the two Cedar Mountain mines generated less than 48,000 tons compared to Mine 11's 237,000 tons. Yet in 1927, during their first year of full operations, the combined New Black Diamond and West Coast mines appeared to be Mine 11's worthy replacement, shipping nearly 234,000 tons of coal.

As Mine 11 prepared to close, Pacific Coast transferred many of its miners to New Black Diamond and its sister

RAILROAD BLOCK SIGNAL INSTALLED

By Keith Watson



A railroad block signal was an important piece of equipment used by the railroads. The station master was in charge of movement of the trains in Black Diamond and Franklin. The station master used the block signal to tell the incoming train engineer to go straight or switch to the left, going uphill to the

mines.

The signal is heavy cast iron, with wings that are in the shape of a bowtie, which can be adjusted to be parallel with the tracks or perpendicular to

the tracks, indicating and signalling to trains up to a half mile away. In 1886 the depot had no electricity so a kerosene lantern was attached above the signal; later, when the depot received electricity, an electric light with red and green lenses was used.

The whereabouts of the original block signal are unknown. However, Carl Steiert obtained one from Northern Pacific, although it did not have the light atop. We were able to locate a top piece.

Our President, Ed Shaw, refurbished it with a new coat of paint, added the light piece and devised a plan to fasten it to the depot in the approximate location where the original signal was in the mid 1880s. It was then installed in April by our enthusiastic volunteers. The installation was a 6-man job, with much planning and muscle to lift and secure this heavy signal. Congratulations on a great job, accomplished by Clif How, Greg Lichty, Keith Arnold, Kurt Watson, Rick Kauffman, and Ed Shaw. ♦

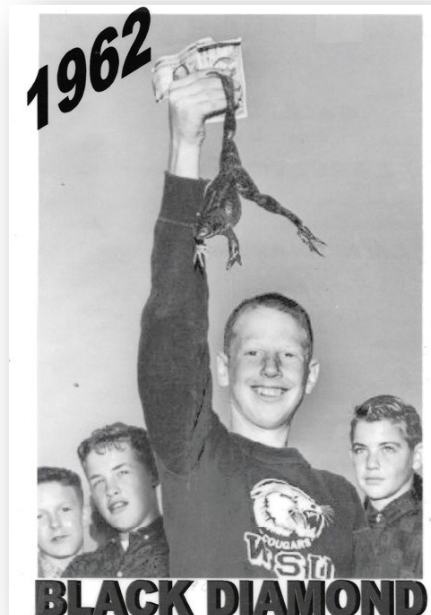
JUMPING JACK FROG!

By Ed Shaw

Black Diamond has long celebrated its history over the Labor Day weekend. In years past one of the more popular events was the frog jumping contest. Kids would collect frogs from one of many ponds, swamps, lakes and whatever water source they could get to.

Pictured here is Jack Darby Jr., son of Jack and Mary Darby, with his winning largest frog from 1962. With him are Roger Greenfield, Jack Hope and Tommy Dodd. Jack's younger brother, Dan Darby, won for the smallest frog, keeping it in the family! We are sure Jack got his frog in Morganville, because we all knew that's "where the big ones were."

Be sure to add the Labor Day events of this year on your calendar. See you in Black Diamond on September 6 and 7th! Go to <https://www.blackdiamondlabordays.org> for more information on this year's events.



DID YOU KNOW?

By Sherrie Evans

The Black Diamond Historical Society was formed and incorporated under the leadership of **Carl and Ann Steiert**, our founders in 1976. As we celebrate our 50th anniversary this year, we acknowledge the tremendous contributions they both made.

Carl made arrangements with the City of Black Diamond to lease the then very dilapidated building to be used as a museum. He led a group of volunteers to restore the building and bring it back to life. Ann was always there helping. She worked so diligently on the displays and kept up the newsletter for years on end.

We are forever grateful to Carl and Ann for their vision. Our beautiful museum that preserves the history of our town, its people and our coal mining legacy is because of them. We thank all the volunteers, present and past, who have contributed countless hours to support our mission to both maintain and share our history. If you have not stopped by in a bit, you should. New things are

always popping up.



SAFETY FIRST

Poem published in Pacific Coast Bulletin, March 1, 1929

Never let your facies roam,
Never be "Nobody Home",
Keep a level-headed dome,
"Safety First."

Be sure the treacherous roof you test;
Be careful where you sit to rest:
Beneath a timber's always best,
"Safety First."

Don't open power with a pick,
It might explode, then death comes quick;
Never do this foolish trick,
"Safety First."

Look out for electric juice,
And see the timber's are not loose,
And beware the mule's caboose,
"Safety First."

Don't indulge in any booze;
Keep the car wheels off your shoes,
And be liber with your ,
"Safety First."

Study up that first-aid fad,
If you don't you'll wish you had,
Someday you will need it bad,
"Safety First."

There are no angels watching you;
Other guys have found it true
That God helps those who think and do,
"Safety First."

--EXCHANGE

MINES *Continued from page 8*

operation, West Coast Mine. While Mine 11's employment averaged 450 miners from 1913 to 1920, after the 1921 strike and lockout, the job count fell to about 300. Then operations ceased in March 1927. The New Black Diamond more than took up the slack, mustering 411 miners, working both inside and outside in 1927.

Since most of Pacific Coast's miners lived in Black Diamond, Pacific Coast Railroad began train service to the New Black Diamond mine timed for the three daily shifts. Passenger cars departed from the Black Diamond depot, then picked up additional men at the Mine 11 wash house, delivering miners for their 7 a.m., 3 p.m., and 11 p.m. shifts. Twenty minutes later, the train reversed course for the return trip to Black Diamond, carrying those who'd completed their morning, afternoon, and graveyard shifts. The round-trip fare was 25 cents, deducted from the miner's pay. After a wash house was constructed at the New Black Diamond mine for miners to shower, the Mine 11 stop was discontinued. Passenger train service ended in 1931, as most miners by then were driving to work.

Following the bitter conclusion of the 1921 coal miners' strike and lockout, Pacific Coast operated primarily with non-union workers. At the New Black Diamond mine, the company adopted the American system of operation, in which employees were not affiliated with unions such as the United Mine Workers.

Instead, the miners organized local councils and elected representatives who met regularly with company officials to govern all working conditions, both in the mines and at surface facilities. Differences of opinion were negotiated, and there were no work stoppages in the first seven years, according to George W. Evans. By 1929, there was a large waiting list for employment at the mine. Eventually, the United Mine Workers union was restored for those working in Pacific Coast mines.

Chapter 10-The history of the New Black Diamond Mine
is continued in the fall newsletter



The mine's coal bunkers were adjacent to the Maple Valley Highway. This March 1927 photo #1983.10.647.2 comes courtesy of the Museum of History and Industry.

Sources:

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

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

Seattle Times, Oct. 16, 1925.

Pacific Coast Bulletins, Oct. 22, 1925, Feb. 25, 1927.

Coal Age, Vol. 28, No. 24, Dec. 10, 1925.

The Mining Congress Journal, April 1929.

Pacific Coast Company's Annual Reports to Stockholders.

King County Landmarks, Parcel No. 192306-9026, June 11, 1993.

Voice of the Valley, Cedar Mountain by Angelee Warrington, April 23, 2019.

Black Diamond: Mining the Memories by Diane and Cory Olson, 1988.

When Coal Was King by Bill Kombol, published in the Voice of the Valley, various issues.

Palmer Coking Coal Company archives.



MERCANTILE

Item	Amount	Item	Amount
Coal Car	\$20	Monte Cristo Railroad Book	\$20
Coaster	\$ 4	Shot Glass	\$ 4
Coffee Cup	\$10	Sweatshirt-Crew Neck	\$22
Echo CD	\$15	Sweatshirt-Hooded	\$25
Hats	\$15	T-Shirt	\$15
Mining the Memories Book	\$20	Train Package	\$ 5
Coal Legacy Book	\$20	Train Whistle	\$ 1

Date(s)	Event	Location/Time
May 2, 2026	Whiskey in Washington w/Becky Garrison	Museum, 1 pm
May 3, 2026	Chinese in Washington: The Legacy of the Chinese Exclusion Act	Museum, 1 pm
May 16, 2026	History of Ravensdale	Museum, 1-2 pm
June 3, 2026	All School Reunion	TBD
June 6, 2026	Heritage Day	Museum, 11 - 3 pm
June 13, 2026	The Town of Franklin	Museum, 1 pm
June 13, 2026	Maple Valley Days Parade	Maple Valley, 10 am
June 20, 2026	Cemetery Tour	BD Cemetery, 1 pm
July 11, 2026	Miners Day	Railroad Ave., 9 am – 4 pm
August 15, 2026	Cemetery Tour	Cemetery, 1 pm
September 6 & 7, 2026	Black Diamond Labor Day parade, Monday, Sept. 7, 10 am (starts at south end of Highway 169)	Museum open on both days. Events @ ballpark and Eagles (car show)
September 17, 2026	Bells Across America	Museum, noon
September 19, 2026	Science Day	Museum, 1 pm
September 26, 2026	Black Diamond and How It Came to Be	Museum, 1 pm
October 10, 2026	Italian Heritage Day	Museum, 11 - 3 pm
October 17, 2026	Cemetery Tour	BD Cemetery, 1 pm
October 17-18, 2026	Model Train Show	Gracie Hanson Bldg, Ravensdale
October 24, 2026	General Membership Meeting/Elections	Museum, 1 - 2 pm
November 14, 2026	Washington's Oil and Gas Reserves	1 pm
December 12, 2026	Hometown Christmas	10 am - 3 pm
December 13, 2026 - January 6, 2027	Museum Closed for Holidays (reopen on January 7)	Museum

DOINGS *continued from Page 4*



Trish Hackett Nikola

The Legacy of the Chinese Exclusion Act, May 3, Trish Hackett Nikola

We learned so much about the Chinese heritage of our area. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the first significant law to restrict immigration based on nationality. It specifically pro-

hibited Chinese laborers' entry for 10 years. Trish is a Certified Genealogist Emeritus who volunteers with the National Archives in Seattle. We feel blessed to have had her for this presentation.

Tours:

News of our tours is spreading! We provided five tours of the museum for senior, homeschool and church groups. Thanks to our volunteers for showing up on February 12, February 28, March 18, April 30, May 6 and May 13 to provide such valuable information for our visitors. success.



Obituaries



Doug Sikes
August 9, 1956 - February
26, 2026

For over half his life, Doug Sikes worked for Palmer Coking Coal and its affiliate, Pacific Coast Coal. He started out on the picking table in

1981, the first and lowest job at a coal mine. There, he sorted chunks of coal from rock and helped maintain the preparation plant that stood on the site of the famous Mine #11, once the deepest underground coal mine in the country.

Douglas Lynn Sikes was born in Pueblo, Colorado, to Billy L. Sikes and Darlene (Bodkin) on August 9, 1956. The family moved to the Renton area when both of his parents began working for Boeing. Doug attended Lindbergh High School, where he played football. While in high school, Doug worked at a service station and delivered newspapers. He graduated in 1974 and continued working at the service station for the next few years. He then found employment as an expeditor at Stetson and Ross Machine Shop, first in Seattle and later in Kent. Doug joined Palmer Coking Coal in 1981 and worked his way up to assistant shop mechanic under John Craughan.

In 1986, Doug transferred to the John Henry mine, working for Pacific Coast Coal. By then, he was fully operating the washing plant where he'd started five years earlier. When Pacific Coast's new plant became operational, Doug was the wash plant foreman and also worked in the shop under John Craughan. He worked at Pacific Coast until 2000, when the mine effectively shut down and most employees were let go.

Sikes became a self-employed general contractor, tearing out carpets and placing the underlayment. He also built several homes with Earl Fish-

er in the Seattle and Cumberland areas. In 2004 Doug began working for Rubenstein Contract Carpets as a delivery driver.

In June 2008 Doug came back to Palmer after a 22-year absence. He worked as a mechanic under Jackie Hope before ascending to chief mechanic upon Jackie's retirement. But throughout his career, Doug was the classic jack-of-all-trades employee, able to mend, fix, service, and operate practically any piece of equipment or machinery. It added up to 36 years of employment with both Palmer and Pacific.

Doug married Peggy (Lawler) in 1979 and together they had three children: Scott, Rachel, and Katie. He is also survived by their eight grandchildren, seven boys and one girl. Peggy preceded Doug in death, passing in 2021. In his spare time, Doug enjoyed hunting, fishing, remodeling his Black Diamond home, and playing with his grandkids. Doug's favorite saying was "get 'er done."

We are thankful to Bill Kombol, who wrote this beautiful tribute.



KEEPING HISTORY ALIVE SINCE 1976!

1,717

Number of guests
for the period Jan.

1 - April 30,

2026

Be Our Guest

By Jeannette Coppess

We have been busy visiting with lots of folks!! For the period January 1 through April 2026, we had 1,260 adults and 457 children.

We welcomed visitors from Washington: Roy, Issaquah, Olympia, Puyallup, Ravensdale, Tumwater, North Pole, Alaska, Colorado, Oregon, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Mexico, and Virginia

Comments

Awesome place!
Super cool
Great, plenty of artifacts
Great place!
Great volunteers, very nice
Excellent!
Amazing every year
Fun to learn about things!
Wonderful
So amazing!!
My second visit
VERY INTERESTING!

Fun for the kids!
Very organized and informative; nice helpful local folks.
What a wonderful museum!
Really well organized; daughter loved everything
Need to come back with more time
GOOD MEMORIES
Amazing nostalgia!
Always a good place to visit

Congratulations on your 50th year—you're a wonderful museum!
Lovely place
Lots of memories from Black Diamond
Awesome collections and museum
Cool stuff!
Thank you so much; found some of our family stuff!
So interesting! Thanks!

DONATIONS

We are grateful for donations that we have received during the period January 1 - April 30, 2026

By Jeannette Coppess

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

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

\$1,040

In Memory of Jack Thompson: \$ 520
In Memory of Tom Dodd: \$ 50
In Memory of Howard Botts: \$ 20

In Memory of Doug Sikes: \$ 250
In Memory of Nello & Olivia Merlini: \$ 200

GENERAL FUND DONATIONS \$ 521
NEWSLETTER FUND DONATIONS \$ 60
FIRETRUCK FUND DONATIONS \$ 310
MINERS DAY SPONSOR \$1,000
KING COUNTY EMPLOYEES GIVING FUND: \$ 45

Thank you to our generous donors!!

*Thank
you*

4
CULTURE



King County

and



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

MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL FORM

(Renewals due January 1 of each year)

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Day Phone _____

Eve Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

☐ Gift? If so, who is it to/from? _____

How did you hear about us? _____

Annual Membership Fees

Individual	\$20.00
Family	\$30.00
Business	\$50.00

Lifetime Membership Fees

Individual	\$200.00
Family	\$300.00
Business	\$500.00

Donation

Newsletter Fund \$ _____

Other _____ \$ _____

Total Enclosed

\$ _____

New []

Renewal []

Cash []

Check [] # _____

Make checks payable to: BDHS

Mailing address:

Black Diamond Historical Society

P.O. Box 1, Black Diamond, WA 98010

or

online payments accepted on our website

(For museum use only) Referred by _____ Date _____ Posted by _____ Date _____

1/23/26

NEW MEMBERS

By Jeannette Coppess

As of April 30, 2026, we have 338 members, consisting of 310 individuals and 28 businesses. Many of our members used the Miners Mercantile page on our website or dropped in and used the Square to renew their membership for 2026. Thank you!!

A BIG Welcome! to new members *Steve Toschi and Joyce Doohan*, who recently joined the Historical Society.

Welcome

Please share membership opportunities with your family, friends, and neighbors and stop by to see the latest in our museum. There are new exhibits and improvements all the time and we'd love to see you! Remember, it's because of you, our members, that we're successful and have such an interesting museum; because of your interest and continued support we have the opportunity to share the fascinating history of the lovely town of Black Diamond and its surroundings. We hope to see you soon!!



Please note that the membership year is January 1 – December 31. The spring edition of the newsletter is the official notification that non-renewed annual memberships will be dropped and this newsletter will be the last one received. If our records indicate that a renewal is due, check your mailing label. We have put an asterisk (*) next to those names that are not yet renewed. If you paid your membership after the publication deadline, please disregard. If you have any concerns about your renewal, reach out to us. You are encouraged to renew your membership as soon as possible to avoid being dropped and missing out on the wonderful articles and information provided to you tri-annually.



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

POLICY AND PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES

Policy Changes

In a recent review of the Black Diamond Historical Society Policies at the bi-monthly Board Meeting, the Board of Directors were notified that there should be some changes to some of the wording on several policies in order to standardize the language that speaks to addressing the Society. Specifically, we have several policies that have been worded "...Black Diamond Historical Society ("BDHS")..." OR "...Black Diamond Historical Society ("Society")..." OR "Black Diamond Historical Society (Society)..." . At the April 2, 2026 Board Meeting, we voted to standardize the wording so all the policies are updated to be worded to say "...Black Diamond Historical Society ("Society")..."

We also modified the following policies to update procedures to current processes.
Financial Records and Reporting, Governance, Membership Standing, Memorials and Honor Roll Board, Mission and Goals, and Volunteers.

The Policies are available for your perusal at the Museum any time the museum is open.

Proposed Changes to our Bylaws

Our bylaws currently establish a Board of Directors with five (5) Executive Officers (President, Past President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer), along with eight (3) Director positions. Over the years we have not always been able to fill all 8 director positions. For that reason, we are proposing a change in the bylaws that would allow the number of director positions to be a minimum of six (6) and a maximum of eight (8), where two (2) can remain vacant if that situation arises.

A vote on this change will be taken at the fall membership meeting on October 24th at 1:00 pm at the museum. If you have input please attend the meeting and/or email us at museum@blackdiamondmuseum.org.

