

**VALLEY HISTORY**  
**AND THE WINDERMERE VALLEY MUSEUM**  
**BOX 2315, INVERMERE, V0A IK0 342-9769 NOVEMBER 2003**



**Jack and Marguerite Barbour**

John ( Jack ) Barbour was born at the Township of Darby, Grey County, Ontario, August 19 , 1860. Jack and Marguerite ( Kreutter) had 4 children all born at Wilmer,B.C. John Edward– 1903  
James Albert– 1905  
Henry Theodore– 1907  
George Gilbert Grey– 1909

This Statement given to B.G. Hamilton,  
May 11, 1932 at Invermere, B.C.:

“ I drove into the Windermere District in August 1899, by pack horses over the Wells Pass of the Purcell Range ( now called the Earl Grey Pass ) ( Selkirk's ) from the Lardeau Country where I had been packing. In the fall of 1899 I went back to Grey County, Ontario to visit my people who were at my old home. My home at the time was near Kalispell Montana but in returning West I went down to Iowa where I married my wife. I came back to the Windermere District with my bride in May 1900. I entered for a pre-emption up Toby Creek in June, 1900 where I continued packing for

Silver Queen, Delphine, Paradise, Swansea, Sitting Bull and Pretty Girl. About this time the Boer War got under way and things tightened up.

Earl Grey, Governor General of Canada and Mr. Oliver came in one evening in 1909 to my camp at the end of the Toby Creek road. I had been packing ore from the Hot Punch at the time. Mr. Oliver had proceeded to Windermere for a conveyance to bring his party there but Earl Grey was still accompanied by Mr. Lowther, a brother of the speaker of the House of Commons. He had a horse ranch in Montana and was with Earl Grey by chance. He kept referring to Earl Grey as ‘His Excellency.’ I questioned him regarding this. He said they had come in from Nelson on foot. He also said the other man was Governor General of Canada. I had expected two mining experts from Nelson and thought it was them. I asked him how the Governor General of Canada happened to be packing his blankets over the pass? He explained they had had to leave their escort of NWMP and other riff raff ,but near the divide got caught in a slide. The others were no good on cutting timber. I left them behind. Mr. Oliver said my distance to Windermere was only eight miles so I set out. We walked and cut all day yesterday and today and are pretty well tired out. I said I had a contract for packing ore and could only afford time to take him as far as my house but could get a rig for him there. He said he would help with my packs. I agreed to this but saw his hands were soft and white and told him so. He laughed and passed the word on to Lowther. I took them to my house where they had

they were met by Albert White of Athalmer. He was the liveryman who took them to Windermere that night. It took me the remainder of the night to get back to camp. Jack Leveque packed with me.

Signed J.S. Barbour  
May 10, 1932.

Kaslo, B.C.  
November 3, 1910  
Dear Wife,

Your letter of Oct. 16 arrived yesterday. I was glad to hear you and the Boys were well. We are getting along all right and are camped at the Compressor about 6 miles from Argenta. Myself and horses are camped at Argenta on account of feed as there is none at the compressor. Old Pinto and Chuff are both very stiff. I think it is rheumatism. If the snow comes down much lower, we will have to quit as it is dangerous for the men. Several of the old crew have quit on account of the danger. Mr. Sharpe visited us last week. He camped with me at Argenta. He says it is worse further ahead so I may be home before long but it is a good job and I would like to stay a while longer. The snow will not bother for a long time. It never gets deep in the bottoms. You do the best you can to make Old Tom cut the logs for your heater. Don't let him cut them too long.

Your Loving Husband,

J.S. Barbour.

## “REMINISCING”

( By Ron Ede Sr.)

1930's- Christmas at home started with the plucking of the turkeys outside, coincided with the feverish round of baking indoors. The tree was tinsel and the house decorated. Verbal invitations for a party Christmas night had been extended to everyone in Windermere. The benches and tables from the community hall had been transported via horse to our living room.

Christmas Day- Sampling the content of stockings in the middle of the night, the opening of presents first thing, doing the round of farm chores and getting the wood and water in, then off to church at 9:00 a.m. After church Dad made his rounds of nearly everyone in Windermere to wish them a Merry Christmas and to make sure they would be at the party Christmas night.

The Party— What a meal and what a crowd!! A double table the full 20 foot length of the living room. Turkey with all the vegetables, jellies, Christmas cake, plum pudding covered with farm fresh whipped cream and loaded with lucky coins. After the supper cleanup, everyone did his or her bit. Always an orchestra of local musicians and wandering minstrels. George Okell and his guitar, Walter Fredericks on the violin, Abe, a professional drummer from Vancouver. There was always an assortment of accordions and mouth organs and everyone danced.

One of the men decided it was time I learned the “two-step”. We got started but somehow he had forgotten how to stop—until we came into violent contact with the Quebec heater. Heater, stovepipes and dancers all ended up in a sooty heap. This didn't slow the party up long. After a few laughter-filled minutes, all were back at it.

Then at another Christmas party, one gentleman danced so hard that he broke his leg and barely got it out of the cast for the next year's party.

At another Christmas party, a blizzard was blowing and it was many degrees below zero. The door banged open and two snow-covered apparitions appeared. When the outer clothes were removed, the apparitions turned out to be Windermere residents, Rose Trachsel (Olson) and her Dad Fritz. Their truck had got stuck near the Hammond Ranch land. Rose and her Dad got thawed out and stayed to enjoy the party.

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### **BUGABOO RIVER THUNDERS OVER FARM AT SPILLIMACHEEN**

(Columbia Valley Echo—Nov. 25, 1955)

“What’s the use of trying to farm that now?”

That’s the way that Mrs. Agnes Sutherland described the situation as she surveyed the 30 acre plot that she and her sister, Miss Jessie Montgomery farm about four miles from Spillimacheen, at the side of the Bugaboo River.

Last week the Bugaboo thundered over its banks, covering 20 acres of the 30 acre farm with up to seven feet of ice, and flooding Mrs. Sutherland’s small frame house, ruining much of the furniture and damaging the land for farming.

“We’ll never get a crop on that next year.” said Mrs. Sutherland.

The flood—caused by slush ice—came roaring down the canyon, which faces the end of their farm, at about 11 o’clock Sunday morning, Nov. 12, 1955.

” It sounded like thunder.” Mrs. Sutherland described it.

Twenty minutes later the ice and water had travelled the 250 yards from the bank to the house. Mrs. Sutherland and her 10 year

old son, Stanley, had only time to rescue themselves, before three feet of ice water was swishing around the house. They moved in with Miss Montgomery who lives in a second house higher up on the farm.

Next day they chopped away three feet of ice before they could open the door to retrieve the water soaked and ruined furniture, bedding and clothing and load it on their horse-drawn wagon.

Homesteaded in 1886 by their father, James Montgomery, the two sisters have lived on the farm all their lives, and have run it since Mr. Montgomery’s death in 1929.

“ It flooded once before, 30 years ago—but nothing like this.” explained Mrs. Sutherland.

“ I had thought in a few years I’d let my son take over it-but what’s the use now that the river’s taken over?”

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### **ANGLICAN CHURCH BAZAAR DRAWS GOOD CROWD AT INVERMERE**

(Columbia Valley Echo—Dec 9, 1955)

The annual pre-Christmas bazaar of the Guild to Christ Church, Invermere was held Saturday afternoon in Lake Windermere Memorial Community Center.

Red candles set in berried juniper clusters were an attractive touch to the tea tables. Tea arrangements were in charge of Mrs. Ernest Bryant, Mrs. Jessie Lewis, Miss Madeleine Turnor and Miss Diana Bengough.

Mrs. Chong Guey and Mrs. Gilbert Taynton looked after the home cooking stall and Mrs. G.H. Cartwright and Mrs. H.H. Peters looked after the sewing stall.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

There is a lonely grave up Spring Creek, which runs into Toby Creek, overgrown and forgotten. Perhaps it could not be found today, perhaps no one remembers the hapless prospector whose bones lie there. But because one was interested enough to write a few lines of verse as an obituary at least the grave is on record.

The writer was apparently one F.F.C. of Kaslo but he cannot at the moment be further identified. The verse entitled "Initial Post" was found in an old notebook which belonged to the late R. Randolph Bruce and bears the date 1897. A sketch of the monument erected at the grave is also in the notebook. The verse follows:

" We, the prospectors on Toby Creek,  
Locate this claim to be known as Old Man  
Brown's claim.  
Number two post lies Southerly six feet,  
One and a half feet lies to right  
And one and a half to the left of the location  
line.  
Prospectors pause and drop a tear,  
For Old Man Brown lies buried here,  
For gold he'll prospect now no more,  
He's patented the Golden Shore.  
Bye Friend,  
This day I now locate this ground,  
What man is there to stake the earth around  
This swiftly flowing creek.  
Alas! Poor Brown such cruel plight  
No miner could foresee  
The only claim you own tonight,  
Just measures six by three."

F.F.C. Kaslo, B.C.

( Museum Archives)

## MINERAL KING MINE

### Town site-

40-50 family homes

1 large staff house

2 small bunk houses

1 small bunk house

The Mineral King Mine truck came up from Invermere with the mail once a week. At first, school was held in the Community Hall until a small school house was built. Teachers were Miss Bernice Porcine, and Mr. and Mrs. R. Evans. Movies were held once a week at the Community Hall. Parties, dances, and dinners are all community events.

### Church Services

Anglican services.....Rev. Job and Rev. G. Rumsey.

Anglican-United.....Rev. H. Costerton

Sunday School.....Mrs. W. Cummings

A library service was also held in the Community Hall.

The Mine closed in 1968.

To mention a few Mineral King residents:

Mr. J. Magee.... Supr.... And Mrs. Magee

Mr. J. McIntosh.... Sheep Creek. Supr...  
and Mrs. McIntosh.

Webb Cummings..... Mineralogist... and  
Mrs. Cummings.

H. Reesor... Bookkeeper and Store purchaser and Mrs. Reesor.

Mr. Avison.....Mill Supr.

Mr. D. Edwards..... Engineer

Mr. D. McSpadden..... Geologist

Mr. B. McConnakie..... Electrician and  
Mrs. McConnakie

Mr. Berrington.... Assayer... and Mrs. Berrington.

Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs.

Hallbauer, Mr. and Mrs. Edwards,

Mr. and Mrs. Tofelt, Mr. and Mrs. Odarich,

Mr. and Mrs. Tovanni..... And many more.

( compiled by – Sandy McKay )