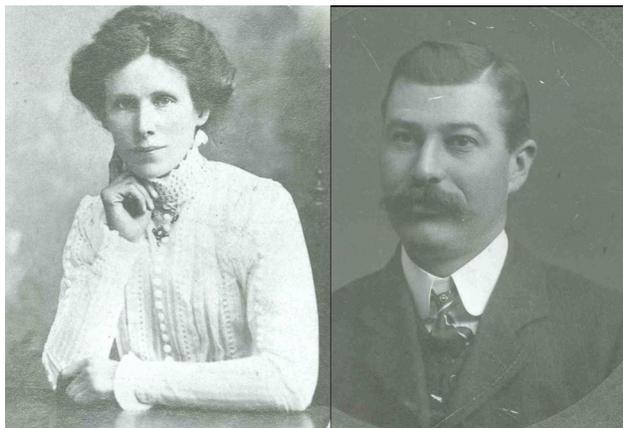


VALLEY HISTORY

AND THE WINDERMERE VALLEY MUSEUM

BOX 2315, INVERMERE, V0A IK0 342-9769 AUGUST 2006



THE PETERS FAMILY

How many people remember when morning wasn't morning until the Peter's had made their daily milk delivery? The 'milk kids', Joe, Joan and Ruth, would be up every morning to make sure their holsteins were relieved of their burden and young Joe became a familiar sight with his milk urn and the 1922 model T.

The Peters' farm overlooked the Columbia River from the Toby Benches. John Murray Gibbon, the CPR publicity Agent had first purchased the property in 1911 and then had decided that what they needed was a hardworking farmer to turn it into a prospering venture.

A young couple from Somerset, England, Harry and Amy Peters arrived in March 1912. They embarked on their new life complete with English chickens and even a plough.

Their trip from Golden to Invermere was quite a memory for them, along the hardly

used trail that was later to become a major highway. They even had some musical accompaniment in the form of a man named Gifford, who sang "Daisy, Daisy" throughout the entire 3 day journey.

Two weeks after they arrived, young Joe was born, and two years later his sister Joan came along, and two years later again, baby Ruth was born.

Not long had passed before Harry Peters proved that with a little water and ingenuity even lush orchards were possible, and not such a dream. Harry had cultivated three orchards with over 500 apple trees. He planted Wealthies, Crab Apples, Duchess and White Transparents, in between which he planted rows of red and black currant bushes, to act as snow holders in the winter months.

All the Peters' children grew up participating in the local valley sports. Softball, basketball, badminton, hockey and curling—those were the days before television and even radio, and community events were the major recreation. Tournaments of various kinds meant piling into someone's two ton truck, "often Dickie Lim's father's," said Joe and off they would go to Cranbrook, Kimberley or Fort Steele.

The Peters family attended school in the one room school house in Athalmer, although Joe would rather have forgone that experience. He remembers in-particular when his entire Grade 8 class failed the year, a class of 15 pupils, "and the whole lot of us didn't make it" he laughed, "and Joan caught up to me!" Joan went to business college in Nelson, Ruth became Invermere's first hairdresser and Joe spent a year in

Vancouver at U.B.C. completing an agricultural course. Harry Peters passed away in 1952 and his wife in 1961. The farm was purchased by Hans and Rosa Hefti, then later sold to George Deck. (1980's)

(From Lake Windermere Valley Echo-1981)

Golden Star– August 30, 1929

On Thursday last, the 1st Lake Windermere Guide Company visited the Fairmont Hot Springs for an all-day picnic. With them went six of the members of the Lake Windermere Ranch camp for girls. On arrival at Fairmont, the Guides formed into the customary 'horse-shoe' and Joyce Johnston, a member of the Bluebird patrol, was led forward by her patrol leaders to be enrolled into the great sisterhood of Guides by Miss Joyce Bright, a Commissioner from England, currently living and working at Fairmont. The guides and their friends spent the remainder of the day engaged in sports, both in the swimming pool and on the land."

" Perfect weather with green fields and fir covered mountains make auto-mobiling a very great delight at this time of the year. Saturday and Sunday were banner days in this respect. The extension of the Banff-California highway as it passes through Windermere was marked by an almost constant succession of touring automobiles. The garages and stopping places were crowded to capacity."

(Museum files)

COLUMBIA VALLEY ORCHESTRA 1941

F. Archibald– violin
Gladys Archibald– Piano and accordion
Dorothy Mosley– Piano
George Okells– Drums and Banjo
Bill Neild– Saxophone
Joe Fuller (1942) -Trumpet

THE RISING TOWN

By Willie Ball– Sept. 1st, 1911

Wilmer, a little village in East Kootenay, is very prettily situated . It stands on a bench above the Columbia river which can be seen from the village winding lazily through miles of rich meadow lands. Farther east stand the bold and rugged Rocky Mountains like sentinels. Away in the west rise the Selkirk's even taller than the Rockies though not so abrupt. The scenery around the mountain districts of Wilmer is very beautiful and has been said by people who have travelled a great deal to surpass even that of Yellowstone Park and Banff.

The Selkirk's are very rich in mineral and it was this that in early days attracted the miners and prospectors; the founders of the village. Later, two mines opened up and for a time Wilmer was a very busy little settlement. But with the closing of the mines on account of poor transportation a great many people deserted Wilmer. Lately the C.V.I.F. Lands Co. have purchased all the land surrounding Wilmer and have put in a system of irrigation by which it can all be watered. This land is well adapted for growing crops of all kinds. It is now on the market and settlers are coming in fast to prepare for work in early spring. Wilmer will be the distributing point for all the farmers. The Kootenay Central Railway will be completed next summer, and the mines will again be opened. It will then be only a few hours running from Calgary making it easier for tourists who come in to spend the summer months. During the past summer an up-to-date water system has been installed in Wilmer and an electric light plant will also be installed very soon.

Altogether the near future of Wilmer looks very bright and promising.

(Museum Files)

Invermere Mercantile

Dry goods, Ladies, Gents and Children's Wear
By Liz Flowitt

The Mercantile store in Invermere has been a landmark for residents since the turn of the century. With the recent sale of the store the name might change but the building will remain.

The building has been purchased by Dave Delesalle and Bob Bach who own The Book Bar in Invermere. They purchased the property from Jim Kester.

Jim Kester owned the Merc from 1971 to 1988. He said that the Mercantile "is an old fashioned name", an alternative to the name of general merchant.

Kester changed the format of the store during the years that he owned it. He changed the merchandise he sold from yard goods and children's books to men's and women's clothing only. The back portion of the store is an addition Kester had built on in 1972.

Jim Kester bought the store from Des Askey in 1971. Askey owned the Merc from 1953 to 1971.

Askey originally purchased the store with his partner Pete Haman, whom he later bought out.

During those busy years Askey sold almost everything the general public would need to buy.

He stocked toys, dry goods, shoes, family clothing, wool and knitting and sewing supplies.

Askey remembers that there was a Robinson's store and two hardware stores in Invermere at that time. (1960's). He also recalls selling men's shirts for \$ 5.00.

Askey smoked cigars at that time. He laughs as he recalls women chastising him because they had to wash items they had bought at the store to get rid of the smell of the cigars.

Some customers complained that they couldn't surprise family members with the gift

of a hand sewn piece of clothing because the family could smell the smoke as soon as the material was brought home.

Askey bought the property from Charlie Osterloh and M.G.Tunnacliffe. The two men built the Merc in 1947.

The building housed both men's businesses. C.E.Osterloh Lady's, Gents' and Children's Wear offered dry goods, patent medicines and clothing for sale. M.E. Tunnacliffe Furniture and Electric sold and repaired radios, and also sold appliances, furniture, fishing tackle and gifts.

Prior to 1947 the Merc existed under a different name and in a different location.

Charlie Osterloh bought the E.M.Taylor Store from E.M.and A. Taylor in 1945. The store was a lean-to attached to the hardware store which is now Village Arts (2006). The hardware store was built in 1912 and the lean-to was added on around 1915.

The present day Merc is described by Dave Delesalle as " a prime retail location". The building is presently owned by Mary-Lou Delasalle and remains " Dave's Book Bar".

(2006)

(*Museum Files*)

Golden Star– May 25, 1928

" Mrs. Howard Cleland was the hostess of an informal afternoon tea which she gave in honor of Miss Helen MacKenzie, the niece of His Honour Lieutenant Governor Bruce on Friday afternoon. Miss Mackenzie is staying with her uncle at Pynelogs. Mrs. William Weir and Mrs. Herbert Chester poured tea while those assisting were the Misses Kathleen Sims, Maye Starke, Harrop and Patmore. Instrumental selections on the piano were given by Dr. P.W. Turnor and Mrs. A.J.Dobbie."

THE EDGELL FAMILY

The Edgell family came from Africa in 1912 with six children: Dick, Jack, Joan, Keith, Frank and Peggy. Dick was nearly grown-up when they came and served in the 1914 war. Their place was on a hill west of Lake Eileen with a beautiful view down the valley. The house was a two storey with a large water tank under it for water storage. Mrs. Edgell always called the verandah the “stoope” as in Africa. She was always very deaf but such a kind person. They farmed until the late 1920’s and one by one they moved away. The house burned down around 1925 but Keith and Frank stayed on in a shack for some time.

P.M. STODDART

Mr. and Mrs. P.M. Stoddart came in 1912 to the Benches west of Invermere. He was always known as P.M. They had no children. They built a two storey house north of La Coque’s and it burned down in the 1920’s. They had a nephew, Willie Guthrie, a short “know-it-all-man”. He had an old blue car in the 1920’s and drove like the devil. We all called it the “Blue Goose”! P.M. had worked in a candy factory in Scotland but farmed with the rest of his family. Mrs. Stoddart lived to an old age and much later gave the farm to my sister, Helen Annis.

CAPTAIN VICTOR MURRAY

Captain Victor Murray came to the Benches in 1912. He was a brother to Mrs. LaCoque. He had a small place next to the Stoddart’s. He went back for the 1914 war and never came back. His land went back to the C.V.I. Stoddart’s and the LaCoque place much later became George and Helen Annis’.

(Phyllis Falconer Files)

JOHN GEORGE ADAMI

Dr. Adami was vice-chancellor of the University of Liverpool and was also professor of pathology and bacteriology at McGill University, Montreal 1892-1919. He died in Liverpool, England, 1926.

Dr. and Mrs. Adami, with daughter Isabel and son Donald, owned “Edenhowe” on the East side of Lake Windermere. (early 1900’s) It was their summer home. Mrs. Adami was hostess to Earl Grey, the Governor-General of Canada when he visited this area.

Edenhowe was later “Rocky Mountain Boys Camp” owned and operated by Ted Zinkan and was later to be the subdivision known as “Timber Ridge”. (2006)

English History– Life in the 1500’s

Baths– The baths equaled a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, “don’t throw the baby out with the bath water”. Houses had thatched roofs. Thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm so all the pets... dogs, cats and other small animals lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying “it’s raining cats and dogs”. The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt, hence the saying “dirt poor”. The wealthy had slate floors which in the winter would get slippery when wet. They spread thresh on the floor to help keep their footing. A piece of wood was placed at the entry way to hold the thresh inside– a threshold.

(Museum Files)

(compiled by Sandy McKay)