

VALLEY HISTORY

AND THE WINDERMERE VALLEY MUSEUM

BOX 2315, INVERMERE, V0A IK0 250-342-9769 May 2013



D. Charles and Catherine Howell
August 6, 1924

My parents, David and Jane Howell, to some extent encouraged by Mr. E. Mallandaine of Columbia Valley Irrigated Fruit Lands Ltd. when on a promotional visit to Liverpool, England, arrived at Invermere from Wales in May 1912 with their five children. They immediately purchased two lots from the C.V.I on which stood a cabin formerly owned by Edmund Johnston. We occupied the cabin and built two rooms onto it. It's location is approximately where Jim Frater lives today. (1980).

Mr. B.G. Hamilton, then Secretary-Treasurer of the C.V.I seemed to take a particular interest in me. Anyway, I was the only teenage boy living right in Invermere. He and Mrs. Hamilton then lived in the old Gallop House by Lake Windermere and which later became the C.P.R. section house. Each morning I used to get their fires going, and start some of the break-

fast. I kept them supplied in the kitchen with split wood and also water for 50 cents / day. One Sunday, he asked me to split an additional supply of wood but my Welsh religious upbringing caused me to refuse, so I was fired. Two days later I was given an apology and a request to resume my work for them.

I clerked for Pitts and Hankey in 1913 and usually was in charge of the store and post-office because Mr. James Hankey had other interests in the district. I was paid \$2.00 per day. In late 1913 I advised them that I would join the staff of Imperial Bank of Canada at Invermere on January 2nd, 1914. (at \$25.00 per month) I was succeeded by Roy Stoddart.

The bank at that time was managed by I. C.Wedd and his assistant was J.A.Friesen. I am not sure when the bank started but it had branches to Invermere and Wilmer open on alternate days. The first manager was W.R. Grubbe who was later manager at first Golden and then Cranbrook. He was followed by C.W. (Shaky) Read and later by Mr. Wedd.

I was the first junior to join the bank at Invermere and some who joined there later were Gilbert Taynton, Tommy Walker, Duncan Murray, Noel Stewart, Charlie Crook and Annie Frater. The bank at Wilmer was in a log cabin on the intersection where Wilmer mercantile Co., Delphine Hotel and Balls Store were located. The branch closed in 1914 and at the same time the bank opened a new branch in Athalmer in the building which was an addition to Peake's Hardware (next to the Windsor Hotel)

Hotel.) That branch also opened on alternate days with Invermere. The transportation provided by the bank between Invermere and Wilmer was a horse (Alpine) and buggy. The Wilmer bank property was eventually sold for \$50.00 and the building is still in Wilmer.

In April 1914, I bought my first suit with long trousers at Peterborough Trading company in Wilmer for \$8.00. The store was owned by Harold E. Forster. The store was then managed by T. Van Hook.

The McKay House in Athalmer was started in 1911 but not completed until 1913. In mid 1912, Fred Wallace, a professional lather, was brought in by Jack Taynton, the plasterer, to lathe the house but after a good start, he took an extended holiday at the Coronation Hotel. Mr. Taynton got so fed up waiting for the lathing to be done that he came to me (age 13) and said "Hey kid, I've got a job for you ". So he provided me with a lathing tool and showed me how to lathe. In due course, I finished the job for which I was paid five cents per square yard. The going rate at the time. Percy Docking was Mr. Taynton's helper.

After finishing lathing the McKay house , I lathed the new Col. T.A. Pope house on the Benches overlooking Toby Creek and the Columbia Valley. In connection with that there was an incident I still recall. At five cents per square yard I earned \$45.00. It was a lot of hard work and I had to walk to it from Invermere each day. I was to be paid by the C.V.I. but Mr. Mallandaine tried very hard to settle for less which I refused to allow.

Back again in 1912, Mr. Mallandaine brought two race horses to run in the race meet that year on the track located on the flat below Invermere and adjacent to Toby Creek. Mr. Nicholson (father of Mrs. Charlie Crook) trained the horses and for \$1.00/day I watered and groomed them. The horses were stabled in an old barn immediately

south of the Hotel Invermere property.

After our family arrived at Invermere we attended the Presbyterian Church at Athalmer when the minister was Rev. Gillen. I believe it was the only church there or at Invermere at that time. In 1913 some of it's supporters were the Joe Lake family, the Grieves (jeweler) , the Lawrison family, the William Stewart family and ourselves. Years later the Catholic church purchased the church property and occupied it. I still have a bible presented to me in 1913 by Mrs. Peake.

My first wife, Catherine Stewart of Invermere, (.... Jessie Lockhart's cousin) and I were the first couple to be married in Anglican Christ Church at Invermere (Rev. Atkinson) on Aug. 6th, 1924 and I have the bible presented to us then.

My parents moved to Huxley, Alberta in 1917 when I was on active service in France. However, in many years during the hungry thirties I relieved Arthur Ashworth, manager of Imperial Bank of Canada at Invermere when he took annual vacations.

By D. Charles Howell—August 1980

Did You Know ?

... that there was a concentrator at Thunder Hill in 1892 ? It was erected on the shore of Columbia Lake about two miles south of the Columbia Hill Ranch to process ore from the adjacent mine. Unfortunately the ore in the mine petered out and the concentrator never operated. It stood there for many years and during World War 1 was dismantled. The machinery was sold for scrap and the logs were purchased by the late R. Randolph Bruce to erect his home " Pynelogs " at Invermere .

FOR THOSE BORN BEFORE 1940

YOU ARE SURVIVORS

You were born before television, before penicillin, before polio shots, frozen foods, plastic, contact lenses, Frisbees and the Pill . You were here before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens. Before pantyhose, dishwashers, clothes dryers, electric blankets, air conditioners, and before man walked on the moon.

You got married first and then lived together. Bunnies were small rabbits and rabbits were not Volkswagens. Designer jeans were scheming girls named Jean and having a meaningful relationship meant getting along with your cousins!

You thought fast food was what you ate during Lent, and Outer Space was the back of the Riviera Theatre. You were before house husbands, gay rights, computer dating, dual careers and commuter marriages. You were before day-care centers, group therapy and nursing homes. You never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electronic typewriters, artificial hearts , yogurt and guys wearing earrings. For you, time-sharing meant togetherness.... Not computers or condominiums. A chip meant a piece of wood. Hardware meant hardware, and software wasn't even a word.

The term " making out " referred to how you did on your exam.

Grass was mowed, coke was a cold drink and pot was something you cooked in. Rock music was a Grandmas lullaby and aids were helpers in the Principal's office . You made do with what you had. And you were the last generation to think you needed a husband to have a baby.

BUT YOU SURVIVED !

Seniors are now 11% of the population. By 2031 it will be 23%

Flowers

(By H. E. Richardson)

Nearly sixty years ago (approx. 1914) Miss Anna Beatrice Mackenzie was teaching school in Windermere. At that time she taught all classes from the first primer, through the second primer , the first reader, the second reader and several pupils studying the third reader. That was away back before the grade system came into being in that area.

Besides teaching these various classes she was very interested in , and active in the collection of all plants in the Windermere area which included the Windermere Creek area, the Fairmont area and the Toby Creek area through to the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers. As she collected these various plants they were sent out to be named and recorded. When the results came back she would have a fresh collection in the school class room and would give us a study in plant collection, with their common and Latin names. Over these many years, there are few left who can recall the work and time put into this collection of plants and the recording of them by this teacher.

One of the first flowers to appear in the area is the Crocus. (sometimes called the Rocky Mountain Anemone). These vary in colors from light blue to deep purple and in one area I have found pink crocuses. The next flower to make it's appearance is the Shooting Star. Followed closely by a small white flower which we children called White Daisies. These could be found on all the hillsides from Adami's to the head of Lake Windermere.

Incident in E.J. Johnston's Life

I was having tea at the house of Mr. Eric Gustavus Erickson this afternoon. We were alone and at some point came up relative to early days in the East Kootenay. Mr. Erickson is now a retired official of the C.P.R. who held important positions at the front during the building of the road from the city of Calgary west. He at once became reminiscent.

"I remember," he went on "the first time I saw Old Ed Johnston." (Edmund T. Johnston.) I was in Calgary and had received instructions to take a hand car and go through to Donald in order to report as to the feasibility of opening the line for traffic. This was in March 1885. At that time the railroad was not in operation during the winter from Calgary west. I arranged for three section men to take me with a hand car and was about ready to start when two men who afterwards turned out to be Ed Johnston and Manual Dainard from Golden or near there came and said they were anxious to get back to the Columbia Valley and could they travel with me. It appeared on enquiry that they had been down to Winnipeg or some place about there as witnesses for the Crown in the attempt to convict Bull Dog Kelly of the murder of Baird the whiskey peddler.

I looked them over. Johnston was a big tall rawboned man and looked a likely fellow for hand car work so I consented. The six of us started west. It was up hill work in the face of a heavy wind. We made Morley the first day and stopped there over night. The next day we made Banff and stayed there for a couple of days to rest up. The going was very heavy with snow on the track, deep and soft and many places where slides had come down over the rails. In these spots we had to get to work and drag the hand car over by main force. We made Laggan the next day and then stopped over one night at Hector. When we reached Field we were pretty well out of bread. We had plenty of

canned stuff left but no bread. We went into a saloon kept by Mrs. Jamieson and her husband. I asked the old lady if she could sell us any bread. She said "No. Sorry I cannot." There was a small cupboard at one side of the room with a light curtain before it. This the wind blew to one side and we spied seven loaves of fresh bread. Ed Johnston whispered to me "Take the old girl and the old man into the bar and give them a drink. I'll meet you with the hand car two miles west of here out of sight."

I took them in and paid for drinks all around. Then we had another. Meantime Johnston and the others left. When I came out I raised a devil of a row about them going off with the hand car and leaving me. I started off after them on foot and about the first turn of the track met them coming back for me. They had four of the old woman's fresh baked loaves on board and so we were supplied. I shipped them at Golden and went on to Donald. Johnston never forgot the episode of the stolen loaves.

When I finished at Golden, I turned back on foot and with the three section men walked to Laggan where I was met by a train with a snow plough. I sent in my report some twelve hundred words by wire. It was years before I saw Johnston again.

(B.G.Hamilton-December 10, 1924)
Invermere, B.C.

The Windermere Valley Museum opens June 1st, for the summer. It will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., daily.

On June 1st, a tea at 2 p.m. will start the summer .

The on going theme for the summer is "Music." If you have any history to share with us, please do so.

(compiled by Sandy McKay)