

VALLEY HISTORY AND THE WINDERMERE VALLEY MUSEUM

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**Ernest and Maud Boker
1935**

My Dad left Germany in 1929 to immigrate to Canada. His home town was Rothenuffeln (near Minden). He embarked on the S.S. Thuringia from Hamburg on June 5, 1929. A friend that was to travel with Dad was turned back when they were about to board because of a cold sore. Dad must have been very determined to have continued by himself. He arrived at Pier 23 in Halifax on June 17, 1929. His sponsor was Mr. Huninger of Ponoka, Alberta where he was to report as a farm labourer and work for two years. While working in this area, he met mom, Maud Phillips.

Sarah Maud Phillips was born on November 9, 1910 in Cardiff, Wales. Mom's whole life revolved around family and home. She loved to garden, cook, bake and she had a great passion for dancing.

In 1932 Dad came to the valley. He had a job with the C.P.R. cutting railroad ties at the Luxor Station. He met Willie Penner and Karl Knudel in Edgewater and the three lived together for awhile. Dad built a small house at the west end of Vermillion St.

On October 24, 1934 Mom and Dad were

married. They had four children. Frances, Don, Doug and Geraldine.

We lived in Edgewater until 1939, then moved to the Upper Ranch. In 1942 Don and I should have started school, but were not able to get to Edgewater. In September 1943 we went to live with the Thompsons for the start of Grade 1. At Christmas time, we did not want to go back, so mom moved into a little shack beside Buffe's. We lived there until the end of June. We travelled back and forth to the Upper Ranch in a Bennett Buggy.

In the fall of 1944 Dad decided to try farming in the Ponoka, Alberta area. He rented a box car to carry some livestock and our household belongings. Dad built a wall at one end of the box car to hold the hay. This is where we were hidden, unbeknown to the C.P.R. We had to be very quiet. We had a German Shepherd dog named Queenie. She guarded the door on the box car so no one dared to come in to inspect.

Farming was not for Dad. He had fallen in love with the Columbia Valley, so we moved back in 1945. On December 15, 1946, we moved into the "brown house" in Edgewater.

From 1933 to 1943 Dad worked as a Pastry Chef at Chateau Lake Louise. He probably took the Cranbrook/Golden stage which travelled to Golden every Tuesday and Friday. He worked from June through to September. While working at Lake Louise, he talked about walking to two tea houses behind the Chateau. These two tea houses are Lake Agnus Tea House and the Plain of Six Glaciers Tea House. If you continue for 1.6 km beyond the Plains of Six Glaciers, you will hike on the exposed crest of a lateral moraine overlooking the Lower Victoria Glacier.

On October 5th, 2001, I was excited to hike the trail that Dad probably hiked many

times during his 10 years at Lake Louise.

From 1945 to retirement, Dad worked in the Christmas tree industry and had his own portable sawmill located in various places throughout the valley.

Dad's chef training also included cake decorating. Dad decorated many wedding cakes over the years. The last one being my wedding cake in 1958. I still have the top portion of the cake.

(By Frances (Boker) Jamieson)

Ernest and Maud celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1984.

Ernest passed away in 1993 and Maud in 2004.

(Museum Files)

November 1945– Edgewater

“The Christmas tree business is in full swing with G. Ferguson in charge of this district, while Ernest Boker has charge of the whole district for Kirk & Company with his headquarters in Invermere. E. Johnson is inspecting here and Mr. Beamish is hauling.” Each community would have “Christmas tree” entertainment for the children. It would begin with the children doing recitations, songs, or playing musical instruments. Often adults from the community would share their talents, too. Then later in the evening, Santa Claus would arrive with a gift for each child with apples and candy too. The community would provide the gifts.

Personalities of Windermere

(Winnifred Weir)

Accompanying Samuel Brewer into the Windermere Valley in 1883 was Tenas Bob, so called because of his short, stocky stature and more formally known as Robert Jackson. Brewer himself knew little about his companion for it seems there was an unwritten law among the early settlers, they were accepted at face value, with few questions asked about where they came from or where they were going.

Tenas Bob went on with Sam Brewer to the St. Eugene Mission, where Brewer introduced himself and made

arrangements to stay. The authorities naturally asked the name of his companion, a little detail that had apparently not concerned Sam. However, he went out to his pal and asked him his name whereupon he received the reply, “Just call me Bob.” Sam pressed the question explaining that it was necessary to give a formal appellation but for all his insistence the only answer he could get was “Just call me Bob.” Now Sam, not to be outdone, returned to the enquirers and described his companion as one Robert Jackson, and Robert Jackson he remained until the end of his days in Windermere.

With Paddy Ryan, who had arrived in the valley at the same time, Tenas Bob owned what was later known as the Hammond Ranch. When they sold out, Tenas Bob remained in the valley. He did not interest himself in any particular venture but was always around. An amusing anecdote is told of him in later years.

It was the custom for those who had no other form of entertainment to gather in the evenings at the “Tin House” in Athalmer, known as the Coronation Hotel. Occasionally as the evening waxed merry, it was quite a sport when Tenas Bob was getting talkative to stand him on the desk and let him orate on whatever subject happened to occur to him. Treated to a few extra glasses of beer, he would soon become immersed in his subject while the onlookers would encourage him. One evening while his mind was strongly occupied in a harangue which had worked him up to a certain pitch of oratory, a few merry fellows proceeded to stuff his pockets with paper. Tenas Bob was too worked up with his subject to pay them any attention until smoke and an unpleasant warmth in regions of his person put a quick stop to his oration. The merry makers had finished their task with a lighted match applied to the paper stuffed in his pocket. Tenas Bob took the joke as well as anyone and with the genial spirit of generosity that was one of the attributes of the rough and ready old timers, the perpetrators of the joke took him down the road to Lake's store and fitted him out in a brand new suit of clothes.

Myrtles

Historic building's storied social life continues today

(By Lynda Harrison)

Janice and Ken Mitchell, grandson of Windermere Valley pioneers Howard and Ethel Cleland, will continue the family tradition of welcoming the neighborhood into the manor when the restaurant, Myrtle's, opens for business. (1994)

The Cleland Home was built in 1925 by Alex Dobbie and Gilbert Cartwright Sr., the only construction workers in the valley at that time.

Howard Cleland moved to the valley in 1910 to work for the Columbia Valley Irrigated Fruit lands Ltd., and later was the private secretary and business partner of R.R. Bruce, for whom Pynelogs was built.

When Bruce became Lieutenant Governor of B.C., Cleland managed his affairs here while Bruce was in Victoria. His office was next door to his family home.

Ethel Wood arrived in 1911 from Vernon, clutching her newly acquired nursing degree. She was the only nurse at the hospital in Wilmer, responsible for cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening and running the hospital.

She gave all that up to marry Howard Cleland in November 1912. They raised four children: Audrey, Gordon (Bud), Allison and Marion.

"There were no restaurants or theatres then, so everybody gathered at our house, either around the dining room table or in the basement," said Audrey (Cleland) Osterloh.

Many teas, parties, meetings, and other social events, including all three daughters' wedding receptions were held in the big garden.

It was no small task to mow the lawn with a push mower, but all the children had to have such chores done before they could play, she remembered.

All four children slept in one bedroom while the parents had the other until 1934, when a sun porch, den, and two more bedrooms were added.

"It was always a comfortable home, full

of laughter and friends," said Charles Osterloh, who courted his wife there.

Howard died in 1949, but Ethel stayed on until 1957, when she sold the property to Des and Myrtle Askey.

Myrtle painted the cream-colored house red with white trim, and decorated the yard with wagon wheels, wooden barrels and wash tube.

"I took a lot of kidding," she said. She recalled collecting the items from the former postmistress, Gladys Pitts, and a wheel from a horse-drawn buggy used by the fire department.

"I had them up against the house and they looked quite nice."

She enjoyed working outdoors, especially when the crabapple trees blossomed, but didn't keep up the garden the Cleland's had.

The Askeys raised three children: Gordon, Roger, and Karen. After living in the house for 16 years, they sold it to Roger, who lived there and made it into a gift shop. (1978) When he and his friends were contemplating what to call it, someone suggested Myrtles, since it was she who had begun collecting things.

Myrtles was in business for several years, but after that the home sat vacant until architect Mark Hendrickson bought and renovated the historic house, moving his office to the upper floor.

The new Myrtle's will carry on a family tradition as it is also a Cleland family name, belonging to Howard's sister, Myrtle Love, and Ken Mitchell's mother, Allison Myrtle Mitchell.

(Museum Files)

The building was owned by Doug McIntosh and was leased to Mike Smith / Angus McToogles bar and restaurant (2003-2013). Gerry Taft bought the Cleland Home in the fall of 2013. Saftas, Israeli cuisine, operated from 2013-2017 and in 2018 Spice Hut took over the lease.

Thankyou Gerry Taft for updating this information.

B.G. Hamilton Files

May 30, 1925

I had a long conversation this afternoon with Martin Morigeau, son of Baptist Morigeau, born on the east side of Windermere Lake in June 1888. He was educated in the Mission School at St. Eugene Mission and later attended the first school ever erected in Windermere, B.C.

I told him that I had heard that he had been the discoverer of the Indian burial ground on Mrs. Adami's point, on the East side of Lake Windermere. (2021-Terra Vista) He said that was true. He told me the circumstances were as follows:

"It must have been 1904 when out practicing with my .22 rifle one day I shot at a fish hawk. I hit it and the wounded bird sat down on a round stone. I went down the bank to pick the bird up and found that the stone was a skull. The other bones of the body were lying about. The body lay between bark with the head up towards the top of the hill. There were other bones lying about and remains of other bodies. They all appeared to be between bark. I went over and told Jimmie Mcleod, the man who owned the place, as to what I had found and also told him that there were things lying about.

Amongst other things there seemed to be ornaments of copper, brass and such like around the necks of the skeletons. I do not think they were Shuswaps. I do not know whether they were the Kootenays or not, but I am inclined to think they were members of a tribe who were here before the Kootenays and some of them remained and were here when the Kootenays came in. They and the Kootenays were deadly enemies. They are supposed to be all dead now except possibly for two. One of them is a fellow called Bert Stone of St. Eugene Mission who is said to be descended from them through his mother. His father was a Kootenay. The other was a woman who was the wife of Chief Louis Arbel, her name is Madelaine.

About two weeks after my discovery of the bones, I went back with Percy Lake of Athalmer and gathered up some fourteen of the skulls of the skeletons I had discovered in 1904. We took them to Athalmer.

January 28, 1929

Bert Stone was the son of a Kootenay Indian named Shott and was originally known as Moses Shott. Later he adopted the name of Birdstone. Old Shott's wife died and he married another.

Birdstone had two half brothers, one of whom still lives on Tobacco Plains and the other lived at St. Mary's Mission. The one at St. Mary's Mission was known as Paul and he died about 1913. The other one who still lives at Tobacco Plains is known as John Shott Nana.

(Museum Files)

Windermere District Historical Society

2022 Elected Executive

Margaret Christensen- President
Shelly Hopkins- Vice-President
Josette Jarche- Treasurer
Donna Tunnacliffe-Secretary

Directors:

Louise Frame
Audrey Mantyka
Sandy McKay
Sherry Dewey
Sandi Jones
Sue Macdonald
Paul Yezovich
Greg Scott

A GoFundMe fundraiser has been created by members of the Gold Trails and Ghost Towns Facebook Group to help support both the Lytton Museum and Archives and Lytton Chinese History Museum. These two museums were burnt to the ground in the Lytton fires of 2021. Find it at:

www.gofundme.com/f/please-help-the-lytton-museums-lost-in-the-fire

(From British Columbia Historical Federation Magazine)

(Compiled by Sandy McKay)