

JANUARY 1997

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

from B.G. Hamilton diary:

March 31, 1937

“You will be interested to hear that our first group of Swiss settlers, consisting of five families, 32 persons in all, are to arrive tonight. So far I have been able to learn they have a minimum of \$1000 per family. They are the first contingent of 300 families - 150 of whom are to go to the CPR and 150 to the CNR to be settled in the Smithers area. The entire 300 families are to come to British Columbia.”

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May 13, 1937 Coronation Day

“The day opened with a very largely attended Coronation Service in the Canadian Legion Hall at Athalmer at 10:00 AM which was well attended by the Legion Members and the Masonic Lodge in a body. From there we moved to the school grounds where a Coronation tree was planted by the school children. The parade of decorated cars and floats assembled in front of the Invermere Hotel at 1:30 PM, made a tour of the town and ended at the hospital grounds. It was half a mile in length and a very creditable showing. “

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October 12, 1938

“Jack Taynton has just finished erecting the David Thompson Monument on the site near the Cuthbert place. They brought in cut stone from the Coast. The official unveiling will not take place until next year.”

(it was unfortunate that Mr. Hamilton died before the official unveiling. He had

researched and located the actual site of the David Thompson encampment, had purchased the site and had lobbied the government to recognize it as an historic site J.M.)

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How times have changed!

R.R. Bruce Diary

January 14, 1903

“At my mail all day. Wrote 42 letters. Got finishes at noon.”

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Letters from W.H. Cleland to R.R. Bruce:

December 28, 1938

“Monday, December 26, we gathered at the hotel. There were 75 adults and 15 children present. After dinner they danced in the large dining room where most of the rest of the town joined us until the place was fairly packed. They all seemed to have a very happy time and all delighted with the way Kathleen Dunn very skillfully handled the affair. ‘Mayor’ Mac Craik filled his usual place at the head of the table. He has missed but one Christmas dinner at the hotel since it was built.”

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December 17, 1938

“You will be pleased to learn that Harry Peters made a nice clean-up of prizes in potatoes and field crops at the Vancouver Winter Fair. He got a first and second in Netted Gems, Certified Seed and fourth in Commercial potatoes, also one first, two seconds and a third in turnips and mangels. Kenneth Marples got a third in Columbia Russett certified seed.”

Thomas King Recalls Early Days

Invermere. Thomas King, Golden old-timer, addressed a gathering of the Windermere District Historical Society Sunday, entertaining the members with tales of the pioneers. Many present were descendants of the old-timers whose names he mentioned.

Mr. King told of the two old-timers who stayed over night at Hotel Windermere in the good old days when money had some value. Next morning they came to pay their bill which they were told was 75 cents. Each reached for his money. Not 75 cents each they were told, that was for the two of them.

“How do you figure that?” one of them asked the proprietor, Edgar Stoddart. “Well,” they were told, “It was 25 cents for the bed and we don’t care how many sleep in it, and your breakfast was 25 cents each.”

He described sorting mail in the post office at Golden when mail for “the upper country” wayside farms was put into cotton sacks. The mail was carried by horse stage and as the stage passed certain designated spots, the driver would toss off the cotton sack appropriate to that locality. Mr. King said in those days every farmhouse was a stopping place for the stagecoaches or the wagons that travelled the length of the valley. He recalled the two school teachers, Miss Kimpton at Windermere and Mr. Bates at Golden, in an area which today has probably 80 teachers.

He spoke of the snow-shoeing, the canoeing, the early day dances and the horseracing that provided entertainment, and the travelling road shows with their melodramas.

Mr. King was accompanied by Mrs. Mabel Neville and his son, Mr. Howard King. Mrs. Neville was one of the first children born in the Columbia Valley.

(the date of this news clip has not been recorded.)

did you know that...

The village of Invermere, incorporated in 1951, has a population of 670 people - a school population of 489.

The first Windermere District Fall Fair was held in 1911.

J.S. Johnston, pioneer resident of Invermere was the first president of the Farmer’s Institute which sponsored the Fall Fair and C.D. Ellis, another pioneer, was the first secretary.

The only lapse in Fall Fairs until its demise was in 1952 because of the severe polio epidemic.

The greatest number of entries ever exhibited at the fair was 960.

One year in the 1930’s 75 head of local cattle were exhibited.

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