

VALLEY HISTORY

AND THE WINDERMERE VALLEY MUSEUM

BOX 2315, INVERMERE, V0A IK0 342-9769 AUGUST, 1999

John Milton Hurst

Jack Hurst was born April 2, 1862 in Illinois, U.S.A. He and his two sisters were orphaned at an early age, so learned to work and take care of themselves. He came to Canada at the turn of the century and took a homestead of three-hundred and twenty acres twenty miles north of Wilmer. He named it "Fair-view Ranch." It was later named "Hidden Valley Ranch."

There was no road to this property, so all goods and implements were taken in by packhorse. All the wooden parts of farm machinery were made of jack-pine poles. Land was cleared by horse-power.

Jack built a log cabin and some outbuildings, hand splitting the shakes for the roof. As more homesteaders came, the road was extended to twenty miles from Wilmer.

The Snook Place was to the west of Fair-view, Stark's to the north, Ball's to the east and to the south was Bob Winfield. Four miles south was Jack Barbour and Harry Oglestone. These two properties are now Kirsches. The others long deserted.

H.E. Forester started a sawmill nearby and Jack worked there for lumber and cattle. He built a two story log house and had the cabin for the hired man. One man was Jack Lundy and later, an old timer, Billy Bennett.

On April 20, 1915, Jack married Ursula Ferriera and the couple had three children., Enid, Vera and Mervin. When the children

reached school age, they were boarded with their grandmother in Wilmer.

The road was built through to Brisco and several mines were operating near the headwaters of Francis Creek. Jack sold hay to the mines and hauled it by team and sleigh or wagon... a two day trip.

Jack Hurst was a versatile man. Able to do all the jobs on the ranch. He also trapped or took out hunting parties. He played the fiddle and was a good storyteller.

He died on December 1, 1924 of rheumatic fever. Ursula remarried and was widowed again. She now lives at Trail B.C. Enid (Hanson) lives at Port Coquitlam and had five children. Vera (Wikman) lives at Edgewater, B.C. and has four children and Mervyn lives at Sidney, B.C. and is a bachelor.

There are many descendants in the valley, but none to carry on the "Hurst" name.

Vera Wikman
Edgewater, B.C.
June 25, 1982.

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Athalmer Liveries 1912

Athalmer Livery, Feed and Sale Stables
Proprietor-Thomas E. Barry.
Manager- Joe Davis.

Rocky Mountain Livery and Stage Lines
Proprietor- J.L. McKay

Out of The Past.

From the Valley Echo, 1962

May, 1912- Athalmer foraging ahead says Frank Richardson.

“While all the towns in the Columbia Valley are at present the scene of considerable activity, none of them have anything on Athalmer,” said Frank Richardson. one of the best known men in the upper country, who reached Golden Tuesday evening en route to the coast where he will spend about ten days on business.

“ Considerable building is going on in Athalmer and there is a most noticeable increase in all lines of business. Many new settlers are coming in, all of whom have money with which to make improvements on the land they are taking up. Most of them are inclined to regard the districts capabilities as nothing less than wonderful. We have the country around Athalmer. All we need is the people and the capital. And they are coming.” concluded Mr. Richardson. And it was easy to see he meant what he said.

“Lake Windermere Notes” from the Cranbrook Courier August 1938

Windermere, July, 1938:

R.G. Newton, Superintendent of the Dominion Experimental Farm in Windermere, is progressing nicely after his unfortunate accident recently when he was injured by a bull. Mr. Newton hopes shortly to be fully recovered from what might have been a very serious accident. He was thrown completely over one of the stock enclosures.

We are happy to see Mrs. Harry Munsen driving around recently in Windermere and Fairmont.

W. H. Cleland, Audrey, Bud, and Allison left the week of July 19, 1938 for Ottawa and

Mr. Cleland’s home in the Province of Quebec.

The Columbia Valley Times

The first issue of The Columbia Valley Times, published at Athalmer was dated September 1912. Editor and publisher was Charles Johnston.

Did you know that.....

In 1898, there were only six white women in the Village? They were Mrs. William McKay, Mrs. O.A. Brown, (Browns Bay, now Windermere Beach.) Mrs. R.A. Kimpton, Mrs. Walker Tegart, Mrs. Sam Brewer, and Mrs. Freeman, (house-keeper to Ed Johnston, first settler in Invermere.)

The Ford Tractor- By Elizabeth Watkins.

In 1939, a field day was held at Eric Smiths farm at Edgewater.

(Now belonging to Dennis Tegart.) They were demonstrating a new Ford tractor. Charley Watkins decided that he would like to buy one, so that winter, he and Lloyd cut ties on their small mill to pay for it. IN the spring of 1940, Charley bought the tractor. In a few years he bought a larger one and Lloyd bought the smaller one ,using it for many years until he got a new one.

As it was the first Ford tractor in the district, Lloyd said he would fix it up and donate it to the Museum. After several years went by, he took it all apart and did the necessary work to have it in running condition. Winter came before he could get it painted, so I had someone paint it and put it together but by now, a few pieces were missing. I don’t think it would take much to get it in running order. I

am pleased to donate this tractor to the museum for Lloyd.
(History of the Ford tractor in the implement shed.)

What's Happening at the Museum

It has been a busy summer at the museum. The opening at the beginning of June was well attended with much interest shown in the display of dolls and Teddy bears The museum won't be the same when they return to their owners at the end of the summer.

The museum hosted Darryl Fuller, son of Joe and Eileen, in August. Darryl is an amateur paleontologist and gave an excellent talk on fossils to an interested crowd.

Also in August, the Historical Society and the local branch of the Canadian Legion co-hosted a slide show presented by Chris Weich, author of a book on early day aviation.

Thank you to our summer help, Kristen Vogel and Sara Oslie. We've enjoyed having them at the museum and they have completed many projects. Dorothy Blunden, Curator, and Kristen and Sara are having 2 programs for children in August. One is "Christmas in August" and the other is a day of Animal Legends and mask making. Those who attend are bound to have fun.

In June, we had an excellent field trip to the Benches to visit "Westlake", former home of the Laird Family. Nancy Newhouse and Trevor Kinley kindly showed us through the house and around the property. We had afternoon tea on the lawn and enjoyed the opportunity to talk about the "old days". After the visit to Westlake, we visited the former home of Major and Mrs. Young. Mike Illingworth, present owner, invited us into the home. Both homes visited date back to the beginning of settlement on the Benches. The Young property still has the original barn and

the huge cast iron pots and fire pits for rendering pig fat. It was a most enjoyable day.

Evening workbees will be starting after the end of September. If you are interested in helping and learning some local history, please contact Marg Christenson - 342-9434.

From the "**Lake Windermere Valley Echo**" Friday, November 16,1956.

Invermere Notes: Mr. Orr Newton, MLA, is at the coast attending a party caucus and taking up a number of matters if interest in the Columbia riding.

Miss Frances Croft spent the holiday weekend with her parents Mr. and Mrs. Frank Croft. She returned Monday to Revelstoke where she is a grade X111 student.

Frank Futa has returned from the coast where he has completed a course in barbering.

Miss Christine Weir of Creston, spent the holiday weekend with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. T.N. Weir.

Lieutenant Robert McKay of Edmonton is on leave visiting members of his family in Invermere.

Large Crowd at the Firemans Ball

The annual Firemans Ball at Invermere was a successful event recently. Staged at the Lake Windermere Memorial Community Center, it was a fund raising effort of the fire brigade to provide new equipment and protective clothing for volunteer fire fighters. Fire Chief Gordon Lake, assistant Fire Chief Rudy Hecher Jr., and crew members George Watt, Jack Solinger, George Thouret, John McLeod, John Pawless, Fred Heban, and Henry Lim were all on deck to assist in organizing the event.

Dinner at Invermere Honours Seven Pioneers.

From the Lake Windermere Valley Echo,
November 30, 1967.

The Pioneer Dinner, honouring seven
Invermere Pioneers, eligible to receive
Centennial Medals, attracted nearly 200
persons to the Community Centre Sunday
evening.

Presented with their medals by Village
Chairman Marvin Tunnacliffe, were Mr. and
Mrs. O.A. McGuinness, Mrs. Charlie
Thornton, Mrs. W.H. Cleland, Fredrick
Foyston, W.R. Coulter, and Hope Brewer.
They were congratulated also by James
Chabot, M.L.A. and Centennial Chairman,
Joe Conroy. Pioneers had to be resident in
Canada 75 years ago or more to receive the
medal.

Although plans to have the honoured guests
piped to the head table did not materialize,
they entered the hall to the applause of the
assembled guests. They were welcomed by
Mr. Conroy as Master of Ceremonies, who
introduced them and other head table guests
to the gathering.

Mr. Tunnacliffe described Invermere's
Centennial Project as a park at Kinsman
Beach which is now completed and for which
the dedication plaque is ordered. The park
will have a spray pool for children and tables
and benches for picnics.

In a brief address Mr. Chabot reminded the
children present that they had the privilege of
knowing some of the pioneers of the district
and added that he was proud, himself, to have
known them.

A brief biography of the honoured pioneers
was given as they each received their medal.

I would like to thank everyone who
donated to the Museum in memory of
my brother, Bud Cleland.
Unfortunately, we were unable to get
a list of donors from the bank so we
can't thank you personally. Bud loved

local history and had a wonderful
memory for past events and loved to
tell stories from the past. Your
donations to the Museum would have
pleased him. Thank you on behalf of
all the Cleland family.

Audrey Osterloh

*Thank you to Sandy McKay who has taken
over the newsletters. If you have any ideas
for future newsletters, let her know at the
address above.*
