

History of



The Place We Call Home

Author
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FORWARD

Have you ever wondered how a community gets started? Why the area was picked? What was the dream of the developer? What is was like to be here 30, 40, 50 or more years ago?

I do.

I especially am curious to know about things like this because I am now a part of the community. I want to connect to the roots of my land so that I too will have stories to share with those who are yet to come.

My brain overflowing with questions... I decided the best way to learn about our community of Little Black Tail Ranch Park, was to just jump in and start asking questions from every possible person willing to give me a little time to be interviewed and share their best memories. The more I asked, the more I wanted to know, the more interesting the story got.

I have noted and listed the memories of all contributors to the best of *their* memories.

Please note – I was not able to interview EVERY resident of LBT, but tried my best to connect with as many as I could “catch” and who were willing.

So let's Begin!

We will start with the big picture and keep winding ourselves down till we get right into our neighborhood.

Carmen Johnson

Chapter One

The History of Idaho

As Obtained by Triposo App for Idaho

Humans may have been present in Idaho for 14,500 years. Excavations in 1959 at Wilson Butte Cave near Twin Falls revealed evidence of human activity, including arrowheads, that rank among the oldest dated artifacts in North America. American Indian tribe's predominant in the area in historic times included the Nez Perce and the Coeur d'Alene in the north; and the Northern and Western Shoshone and Bannock peoples in the south.

European exploration

Idaho was one of the last areas in the lower 48 states of the US to be explored by people of European descent. The Lewis and Clark expedition entered present-day Idaho on August 12, 1805, at Lemhi Pass. The first expedition to enter southern Idaho is believed to be a group led by Wilson Price Hunt, which navigated the Snake River while attempting to blaze an all-water trail westward from St. Louis, Missouri, to Astoria, Oregon, in 1811 and 1812. At that time, approximately 8,000 Native Americans lived in the region.

Fur trading led to the first significant incursion of Europeans in the region. Andrew Henry of the Missouri Fur Company first entered the Snake River plateau in 1810. He built Fort Henry on Henry's Fork on the upper Snake River, near modern St. Anthony, Idaho. However, this first American fur post west of the Rocky Mountains was abandoned the following spring.

The British-owned Hudson's Bay Company next entered Idaho and controlled the trade in the Snake River area by the 1820s. The North West Company's interior department of the Columbia was created in June 1816, and Donald Mackenzie was assigned as its head. Mackenzie had previously been employed by Hudson's Bay and had been a partner in the Pacific Fur Company, financed principally by John Jacob Astor. During these early years, he traveled west with a Pacific Fur Company's party and was involved in the initial exploration of the Salmon River and Clearwater River. The company proceeded down the lower Snake River and Columbia River by canoe, and were the first of the Overland Astorians to reach Fort Astoria, on January 18, 1812.

Under Mackenzie, the North West Company was a dominant force in the fur trade in the Snake River country. Out of Fort George in Astoria, Mackenzie led fur brigades up the Snake River in 1816-1817 and up the lower Snake in 1817-1818. Fort Nez Perce, established in July, 1818, became the staging point for Mackenzies' Snake brigades. The expedition of 1818-1819 explored the Blue Mountains, and traveled down the Snake River to the Bear River and approached the headwaters of the Snake. Mackenzie sought to establish a navigable route up the Snake River from Fort Nez Perce to the Boise area in 1819. While he did succeed in traveling by boat from the Columbia River through the Grand Canyon of the Snake past Hells Canyon, he concluded that water transport was generally impractical. Mackenzie held the first rendezvous in the region on the Boise River in 1819. Despite their best efforts, early American fur companies in this region had difficulty maintaining the long-distance supply lines from the Missouri River system into the Intermountain West. However, Americans William H. Ashley and Jedediah Smith expanded the Saint Louis fur trade into Idaho in 1824. The 1832 trapper's rendezvous at Pierre's Hole, held at the foot

of the Three Tetons in modern Teton County, was followed by an intense battle between the Gros Ventre and a large party of American trappers aided by their Nez Perce and Flathead allies.

The prospect of missionary work among the Native Americans also attracted early settlers to the region. In 1809, Kullyspell House, the first white-owned establishment and first trading post in Idaho, was constructed. In 1836, the Reverend Henry H. Spalding established a Protestant mission near Lapwai, where he printed the Northwest's first book, established Idaho's first school, developed its first irrigation system, and grew the state's first potatoes. Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Hart Spalding were the first non-native women to enter present-day Idaho.

Cataldo Mission, the oldest standing building in Idaho, was constructed at Cataldo by the Coeur d'Alene and Catholic missionaries. In 1842, Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, with Fr. Nicholas Point and Br. Charles Duet, selected a mission location along the St. Joe River. The mission was moved a short distance away in 1846, as the original location was subject to flooding. In 1850,

Antonio Ravalli designed a new mission building and Indians affiliated with the church effort built the mission, without nails, using the wattle and daub method. In time, the Cataldo mission became an important stop for traders, settlers, and miners. In addition to acting as a place for rest from the trail, the mission offered needed supplies and was a working port for boats heading up the Coeur d'Alene River.

During this time, the region which became Idaho was part of an unorganized territory known as Oregon Country, claimed by both the United States and Great Britain. The United States gained undisputed jurisdiction over the region in the Oregon Treaty of 1846, although the area was under the de facto jurisdiction of the Provisional Government of Oregon from 1843 to 1849. The original boundaries of Oregon Territory in 1848 included all three of the present-day Pacific Northwest states and extended eastward to the Continental Divide. In 1853, areas north of the 46th Parallel became Washington Territory, splitting what is now Idaho in two. The future state was reunited in 1859 after Oregon became a state and the boundaries of Washington Territory were redrawn.

While thousands passed through Idaho on the Oregon Trail or during the California gold rush of 1849, few people settled there. In 1860, the first of several gold rushes in Idaho began at Pierce in present-day Clearwater County. By 1862, settlements in both the north and south had formed around the mining boom.

Settlement

Mormon Settlers

Mormon missionaries founded Fort Lemhi in 1855, but the settlement did not last. The first organized town in Idaho was Franklin, settled in April 1860 by Mormon pioneers who believed they were in Utah Territory; although a later survey determined they had in fact crossed the border. Mormon pioneers would go on to establish the majority of historic and modern communities in Southeastern Idaho, with Mormon settlers reaching areas near the current-day Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming.

English

Large numbers of English immigrants settled in what is now the state of Idaho in the late 19th and early 20th century, many before statehood. The English found they had more property rights and paid less taxes than they did back in England. They were considered some of the most desirable immigrants at the time. Many came from humble beginnings and would rise to prominence in Idaho such as Frank R. Gooding who was originally from a rural working-class background in England but was eventually elected to be the seventh governor of the state. Today people of English descent make up one fifth of the entire state of Idaho and form a plurality in the southern portion of the state.

German

Many German farmers settled in what is now Idaho at the same time. German settlers were primarily Lutheran across all of the 18 west, including Idaho, however there were small amounts of Catholics amongst them as well. In parts of Northern Idaho,

German remained the dominant language until World War I, when German-Americans were pressured to convert entirely to English. Today, Idahoans of German ancestry make up nearly one fifth of all Idahoans and make up the second largest ethnic group after Idahoans of English descent with people of German ancestry being 18.1% of the state and people of English ancestry being 20.1% of the state.

Irish

A significant number of people from Ireland immigrated to North America after the Potato Famine, and some migrated west searching for land for agriculture. Many ended up in Montana and southern Idaho. Because the Catholic Church already had a presence in the northern and eastern portions of the state, many Irish Catholics settled in Boise as well as in Butte, Montana. Today, 10% of Idahoans self-identify as being of Irish ancestry.

African

York, the helper of Lewis and Clark on their expedition to the Pacific, was the first recorded African American in Idaho. There is a significant African American population made up of those who came west after the abolition of slavery. Many settled near Pocatello and were ranchers, entertainers, and farmers. Although free, many blacks suffered discrimination in the early-to-mid-late 20th century. The black population of the state continues to grow as many come to the state because of educational opportunities, to serve in the military, and for other employment opportunities. There is a Black History Museum in Boise, Idaho, with an exhibit known as the "Invisible Idahoan", which chronicles the first African-Americans in the state. Blacks are the fourth largest ethnic group in Idaho according to the 2000 census. Mountain Home, Boise, and Garden City have significant African-American populations. However, many major cities, such as Boise, have a small population of African Americans.

Basque

The Basque people from the Iberian peninsula in Spain and southern France were traditionally shepherds in Europe. They came to Idaho, offering hard work and perseverance in exchange for opportunity. One of the largest Basque communities in the US is in Boise, with a Basque museum and festival held annually in the city.

Chinese Settlement

Chinese in the mid-19th century came to America through San Francisco to work on the railroad and open businesses. They suffered discrimination due to the Anti-Chinese League in the 19th century which sought to limit the rights and opportunities of Chinese emigrants. Today Asians are third in population demographically after Whites and Hispanics.

Idaho Territory

On March 4, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed an act creating Idaho Territory from portions of Washington Territory and Dakota Territory with its capital at Lewiston. The original Idaho Territory included most of the areas that later became the states of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, and had a population of under 17,000. Idaho Territory assumed the boundaries of the modern state in 1868 and was admitted as a state in 1890.

Statehood

When President Benjamin Harrison signed the law admitting Idaho as a U.S. state on July 3, 1890, the population was 88,548. George L. Shoup became the state's first governor, but resigned after only a few weeks in office to take a seat in the United States Senate.

Miners' Uprisings

During its first year's of statehood, Idaho was plagued by labor unrest in the mining district of Coeur d'Alene. In 1892, miners called a strike which developed into a shooting war between union miners and company guards. Each side accused the other of starting the fight. The first shots were exchanged at the Frisco mine in Frisco, in the Burke-Canyon north and east of Wallace. The Frisco mine was blown up, and company guards were taken prisoner. The violence soon spilled over into the nearby community of Gem, where union miners attempted to locate a Pinkerton spy who had infiltrated their union and was passing information to the mine operators. But agent Charlie Siringo escaped by cutting a hole in the floor of his room. Strikers forced the Gem mine to close, then traveled west to the Bunker Hill mining complex near Wardner, and closed down that facility as well. Several had been killed in the Burke-Canyon fighting. The Idaho National Guard and federal troops were dispatched to the area, and union miners and sympathizers were thrown into bullpens.

Hostilities would again erupt at the Bunker Hill facility in 1899, when seventeen union miners were fired for having joined the union. Other union miners were likewise ordered to draw their pay and leave. Angry members of the union converged on the area and blew up the Bunker Hill Mill, killing two company men.

In both disputes, the union's complaints included pay, hours of work, the right of miners to belong to the union, and the mine owners' use of informants and undercover agents. The violence committed by union miners was answered with a brutal response in 1892 and in 1899.

Through the Western Federation of Miners union, the battles in the mining district became closely tied to a major miners' strike in Colorado. The struggle culminated in the December 1905 assassination of former Governor Frank Steunenberg by Harry Orchard (also known as Albert Horsley), a member of the WFM. Orchard was allegedly incensed by Steunenberg's efforts as governor to put down the 1899 miner uprising after being elected on a pro-labor platform.

Pinkerton detective James McParland conducted the investigation into the assassination. In 1907, WFM Secretary Treasurer "Big Bill" Haywood and two other WFM leaders were tried on a charge of conspiracy to murder Steunenberg, with Orchard testifying against them as part of a deal made with McParland. The nationally publicized trial featured Senator William E. Borah as prosecuting attorney and Clarence Darrow representing the defendants. The defense team presented evidence that Orchard had been a Pinkerton agent and had acted as a paid informant for the Cripple Creek Mine Owners' Association. Darrow argued that Orchard's real motive in the assassination had been revenge for a declaration of martial law by Steunenberg, which prompted Orchard to gamble away a share in the Hercules silver mine that would otherwise have made him wealthy.

Two of the WFM leaders were acquitted in two separate trials, and the third was released. Orchard was convicted and sentenced to death. His sentence was commuted, and he spent the rest of his life in an Idaho prison.

Mining regions

Several others—Boise Basin, Wood River Valley, Stibnite, Blackbirg, and Owyhee—range considerably above the other big producers. Atlanta, Bear Valley, Bay Horse, Florence, Gilmore, Mackay, Patterson, and Yankee Fork all ran on the order of ten to twenty million dollars, and Elk City, Leesburg, Pierce, Rocky Bar, and Warren's make up the rest of the major Idaho mining areas that stand out in the sixty or so regions of production worthy of mention.

A number of small operations do not appear in this list of Idaho metallic mining areas: a small amount of gold was recovered from Goose Creek on Salmon Meadows; a mine near Cleveland was prospected in 1922 and produced a little manganese in 1926; a few tons of copper came from Fort Hall, and a few more tons of copper came from a mine near Montpelier. Similarly, a few tons of lead came from a property near Bear Lake, and lead-silver is known on Cassia Creek near Elba. Some gold quartz and lead-silver workings are on Ruby Creek west of Elk River, and there is a slightly developed copper operation on Deer Creek near Winchester. Molybdenum is known on Roaring River

and on the east fork of the Salmon. Some scattered mining enterprises have been undertaken around Soldier Mountain and on Squaw Creek north of Montour.

Progressive policies

Meanwhile, some of the mining towns were able to reinvent themselves as resort communities, most notably in Blaine County, where the Sun Valley ski resort opened in 1936. Others, such as Silver City and Rocky Bar, became ghost towns. Idaho proved to be one of the more receptive states to the progressive agenda of the late 19th century and early 20th century. The state embraced progressive policies such as women's suffrage and prohibition (1916) before they became federal law. Idahoans were also strongly supportive of Free Silver. The pro-bimetallism Populist and Silver Republican Parties of the late 1890s were particularly successful in the state.

After statehood, Idaho's economy began a gradual shift away from mining toward agriculture, particularly in the

south. Older mining communities such as Silver City and Rocky Bar gave way to agricultural communities incorporated after statehood, such as Nampa and Twin Falls. Milner Dam on the Snake River, completed in 1905, allowed for the formation of many agricultural communities in the Magic Valley region which had previously been nearly unpopulated.

1950s to Present

In the north, mining continued to be an important industry for several more decades. The closure of the Bunker Hill Mine complex in Shoshone County in the early 1980s sent the region's economy into a tailspin. Since that time, a substantial increase in tourism in north Idaho has helped the region to recover. Coeur d'Alene, a lake-side resort town, is a destination for visitors in the area.

Beginning in the 1980s, there was a rise in North Idaho of a few right-wing extremist and "survivalist" political groups, most notably one holding Neo-Nazi views, the Aryan Nations. These groups were most heavily

concentrated in the Panhandle region of the state, particularly in the vicinity of Coeur d'Alene. Although Idaho is a conservative state politically, the vast majority of its residents reject such ideologies.

In 1992 a stand-off occurred between U.S. Marshals, the F.B.I., and white separatist Randy Weaver and his family at their compound at Ruby Ridge, located near the small, northern Idaho town of Naples. The ensuing fire-fight and deaths of a U.S. Marshal, and Weaver's son and wife gained national attention, and raised a considerable amount of controversy regarding the nature of acceptable force by the federal government in such situations.

In 2001, the Aryan Nations compound, which had been located in Hayden Lake, Idaho, was confiscated as a result of a court case, and the organization moved out of state. About the same time Boise installed an impressive stone Human Rights Memorial featuring a bronze statue of Anne Frank and quotations from her and many other writers extolling human freedom and equality. A recent poll found that Idaho citizens accept people of different cultures and ethnicities. The demographics of the state have changed. Due to this

growth in different groups, especially in Boise, the economic expansion surged wrong-economic growth followed the high standard of living and resulted in the “growth of different groups”.

Nuclear fallout from Nevada test site

Idaho was one of several states that received the brunt of nuclear fallout from tests at the Nevada Test Site during the 1950s and 1960s. Reports published by the U.S. government indicate that many Idaho citizens perished and continue to suffer as a result of these tests. As of September 2007, there were continuing efforts in the U.S. congress to compensate victims.

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CHAPTER TWO

The Fire of 1910

So there is your history lesson on Idaho as a whole. And so let's move on. Next a little lesson about a big thing! The fire of 1910.

The first thing I learned about this area is that there was a fire in 1910. I have gleaned over information I have found on the internet and would like to share it with you here.

The West is Burning Up!

THE 1910 FIRE

By Jim Petersen

Evergreen Magazine, Winter Edition 1994-1995

It was the largest forest fire in American history. Maybe even the largest forest fire ever. No one knows for sure, but even now, it is hard to put into words what it did.

For two terrifying days and nights – August 20 and 21, 1910 – the fire raged across three million acres of

virgin timberland in northern Idaho and western Montana.

Many thought the world would end, and for 86, it did.

Most of what was destroyed fell to hurricane-force winds that turned the fire into a blowtorch. Reconstructing what happened leads to an almost impossible conclusion: Most of the cremation occurred in a six-hour period.

A forester named Edward Stahl wrote of flames shooting hundreds of feet in the air, "fanned by a tornadic wind so violent that the flames flattened out ahead, swooping to earth in great darting curves, truly a veritable red demon from hell."

Among the 86 who perished were 28 or 29 men – no one knows for sure – who tried to outrun their fate in a straight up-straight down canyon called Storm Creek.

Two men too terrified to face death took their own lives. One jumped from a burning train and the other shot himself when he feared an approaching fire would overtake him. Two fire fighters fled into flames before the very eyes of horrified comrades huddled in a nearby stream.

Hundreds more survived, many by the grace of God. Ranger Edward Pulaski, who became a hero at a place called the War Eagle Mine, led men with prayers on their lips through a pitch-black darkness punctuated by exploding trees and waves of flames that arced across the night sky.

Perhaps, Edward Stahl would later say, "the men thought the small fires flickering dimly in the darkness were candles burning for the dead."

"The fire turned trees and men into weird torches that exploded like Roman candles," one survivor told a newspaper reporter.

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Depending on who was doing the counting, there were either 1,736 fires burning in northern Idaho and western Montana on August 19, or there were 3,000. It did not much matter which number you picked because on August 20 it seemed like there was only one fire burning, and it was the sum total of all the others that had been burning the day before.

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It was called "The Great Lone Land," and those who first rode it for the old Division of Forestry were said to

be “hitting the high lonesome.” Indeed it was. For as far as you could see, there was nothing but mountains and more mountains, divided by deep canyons, roaring rivers and forests so thick you had to hack your way through them.

Those who rode the high lonesome were cut from a different cloth. Frontiersmen, cowboys, trappers and woodsmen – they were the last of a breed trailing after the last thin edges of what remained of the American wilderness. There were no roads across this great expanse, and until 1905, when the old Division of Forestry became the United States Forest Service ` it didn’t even have a name. Then it became District One, and those who rode it were called Rangers. Their job was to tame the high lonesome. It would not be easy.

On a frosty September morning in 1908, the first District One district forester stepped off the train in Missoula, Montana. Suitcase in hand, he walked briskly to his new office a few blocks away. His name was William Buckhout Greeley, and he would go on to become the third chief of the U.S. Forest Service and one of the most influential men in the history of forestry.

W. B. Greeley grew up in California's Carmel Valley, the son and grandson of New England Congregational ministers. Except for Sundays, he spent his boyhood days exploring nearby woods, fishing and swimming in the Carmel River. The Sabbath was reserved for reading *The Life of Christ*, or a Sunday school lesson laid out for him by his father. Much later in life, he confessed to still having "a terrible New England conscience." He never smoked or drank and rarely swore.

Greeley graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, where he became a Phi Beta Kappa scholar and earned honors as a member of the college's debate team. He taught school briefly, but his boyhood love of forests overcame him, and he abandoned teaching in favor of a graduate degree in forestry from Yale University.

On July 1, 1904, Bill Greeley went to work for the Bureau of Forestry, a renamed version of the old Division of Forestry. He quickly became one of "Gifford Pinchot's boys" – a name given to young lions hand-picked by Pinchot, who headed the Bureau. More important though was the fact that Pinchot was a great friend of President Theodore Roosevelt, who in 1905

engineered the creation of the U.S. Forest Service, and named Pinchot its first chief forester.

Allies at first, Pinchot and Greeley later became the chief protagonists in a bitter and frequently very public debate over the Forest Service's relationship with private forest landowners. Pinchot did not trust them, and wanted their every move regulated by law; Greeley's experiences with lumbermen convinced him they could be trusted. Whatever doubts he may have had were erased by the 1910 fire. And looking back now, it is clear no single event did more to mold the U.S. Forest Service in its historic image than did the 1910 fire.

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In 1908, District One included 22 national forests and spanned 41 million acres in four states. Its eastern boundary was in South Dakota and its western edge in northeast Washington state. Between these outer edges stood some of the greatest stands of virgin white pine and western red cedar in the world. So vast was this land that each man under Greeley's command was directly responsible for 600 square miles of wild land, most of it unmapped.

In her 1956 book, *The Big Blowup*, Betty Goodwin Spencer interviewed the last men to first ride the high lonesome for Bill Greeley. Their answers to her questions reveal much about what it was like to work for the U.S. Forest Service when it was all new and still trying to figure out what to do and where to begin.

How did you join the Forest Service?

"By tests." The written test consisted

of questions pertaining to the knowledge of cattle, horses and sheep, and knowledge of the different brands and locations of ranches and the different ranges where stock were run; also how to cook, the making of baking powder bread and how to take care of oneself in the mountains and woods. The field test included timber estimating, riding and packing a horse, shooting with rifle and pistol, surveying, mapping, pacing a measured distance, cutting down a tree with an ax and compass reading."

Where did you live?

"My first headquarters was an old guard cabin which hadn't been used since the preceding fall, and in the meantime a family of skunks had made a home under the floor. We got along fine together, but finally the

skunks couldn't stand it and moved out I felt real lonesome for some time until a pack rat showed up and filled in the niche in my existence."

What were you paid?

"Forest guards, rangers and supervisors had to furnish their own horse and equipment, our own subsistence and lodging, feed our horses and pay all of our own expenses, whether we were at headquarters or in the field. Forest guards received sixty dollars a month. The only equipment furnished was an ax, a notebook and a book of regulations called the Use Book."

What types of work did you do?

"We had a swarm of timber homesteads to check on, and most of those so called claims we knew to be fraudulent, but it was our job to get the evidence. In the Little North Fork, Marble Creek and Big Creek, we were extremely unpopular as rangers and had to use discretion and diplomacy. We never knew when a bullet might meet us in a thicket or on the trail."

How much country did you patrol?

"The supervisor gave me a double bitted ax and a box of ammunition for my 45-70 and told me to 'go to it and good luck.' He said, 'The whole country is yours

from Belton to Canada and across the Rockies to the prairie of Waterton Lake and the foot of St. Maries Lake.' It comprised nearly all of Glacier National Park. Instructions were to look out for fires, timber thieves, squatters and game violators. I sure had my hands full and then some."

What did you look like, or wear?

"Take Ranger F. Herrig, for example. Herrig was originally one of Roosevelt's Roughriders, and quite an imposing figure. He generally rode a dark bay horse, decked up with a silver-studded bridle and martingale. He wore mostly high-topped boots, a big 44 strapped on his belt and a 45-70 in a scabbard, and he wore a ranger's badge always in plain sight, and a big Russian wolfhound was his steady companion."

Did you fight fires?

"...I'd been fighting fire up there for two days with nothing to work with but my hands. Skinned both of my knees climbing up there over the rocks. Both of my hands were burnt and skinned, too. My God, I thought, how much longer can I stand it? Got the fire under control. My knees scabbed over and felt pretty good but my hands were in a hell of a shape. Damned if I'll ever fight fire with my bare hands again."

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By Bill Greeley's count there were three thousand fires burning in his district by early August of 1910, with less than one man per fire to put them out. Equipment was scarce, too. At Avery, Idaho on the Coeur d'Alene National Forest, Cliff Theriault reported his inventory of firefighting tools included forty hand shovels, ten axes, five crosscut saws, ten grubhoes, four horses, bedding for four men and no supplies. Still, Greeley's men managed to see it through. By August 19, most of the fires were under control. The worst seemed to be over.

Then, on Saturday afternoon, August 20, all hell broke loose. Hurricane-force winds, unlike anything seen since, roared across the rolling Palouse country of eastern Washington and on into Idaho and Montana forests so dry they crackled underfoot. In a matter of hours, fires became firestorms, and trees by the millions became exploding candles. Millions more, sucked from the ground, roots and all, became flying blowtorches. It was dark by four in the afternoon, save for wind-powered fireballs that rolled from ridge top to ridge top at seventy miles an hour. They leaped canyons a half-mile wide in one fluid motion. Entire

mountainsides ignited in an instant It was like nothing anyone had ever seen before.

By noon on the twenty-first, daylight was dark as far north as Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, as far south as Denver, and as far east as Watertown, New York. To the west, the sky was so filled with smoke, ships 500 miles at sea could not navigate by the stars.

Before it was over, 10,000 men were on fire lines that stretched from eastern Washington across the Idaho panhandle well into western Montana. The names of the fires they fought sounded more like the names of Civil War battlefields than anything else: Big Creek, Setzer Creek, Stevens Peak, Storm Creek, Bullion Mine, Cedar Ridge and Little North Fork. In some canyons, you could not tell where one battlefield ended and the next one began.

Every able-bodied man fought the fire. Most were Idaho loggers, miners from Butte, Montana, and skid row bums brought in on trains from Spokane. The pay was 25 cents an hour, plus a bedroll, sourdough pancakes, coffee and canned tomatoes.

Even the army was called up, including members of Company G, Twenty-fifth Infantry, an all-black regiment that fought the fire near Avery, then buried the twenty-nine Storm Creek dead in a sixty-foot-long trench. So impressed by them was Ranger Thaddeus Roe that he told a Seattle Times reporter he had “never known a whiter set of men to breathe.” What may seem awkward and insensitive now was then considered a high compliment for men who had fought with the best of them and done as much as any man could.

The 1910 fire burned three million acres and killed enough timber to fill a freight train 2,400 miles long. Eighty-six people perished, most burned beyond recognition. When it was over, W. B. Greeley told a colleague he now understood “in cold terms the size of the job” confronting the fledgling U.S. Forest Service.

A ranger put one pathetic sight he had seen into words not easily erased from the imagination. “If you could see a little black bear clinging high in a blazing tree and crying like a frightened child, you could perceive on a very small scale what happened to the forest and its creatures.”

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No official cause was ever listed for the 1910 fire. A bad electrical storm the night of July 15 touched off more than 3,000 fires in District One, but by August 19 – the night before the big blowup – the worst seemed to be over. But 1910 was also the driest year in anyone’s memory. Snows melted early and the spring rains never came. By August, normally swift running rivers had slowed to a crawl and many streams had simply disappeared into bedrock.

“There was a burning dryness in the air,” Orland Scott would recall years later in *Pioneer Days on the Shadowy St. Joe*, a book he wrote about turn-of-the-century in northern Idaho. “Everywhere the heat was intense and stifling.”

By June, the woods were on fire in a hundred different places. Some of the blazes were started accidentally by loggers, homesteaders and campers. Others were thought to be the work of arsonists. However, it appears the largest single contributor was the newly constructed Chicago, Milwaukee and Puget Sound Railway, which followed the St Joe River east from St. Maries to Avery, Idaho, then disappeared into the

densely timbered Bitterroot Mountains, emerging again near Taft, Montana.

In a 1911 report, Roscoe Haines, who was acting forest supervisor on the Coeur d'Alene National Forest, estimated more than 100 fires were started by coal powered locomotives that frequently spewed red-hot cinders into tinder-dry forests. The railroad hired spotters to walk the tracks and douse flare-ups, but as summer wore on the inevitable drew near.

It did not help that there were no lookouts from which to spot new fires, and no roads for speeding men and equipment to the scene. That summer, some crews spent more than a week hacking their way through dense timber stands, just to reach the fires they had been ordered to put out.

Although the 1910 fire was the largest ever to burn in America, it was not the deadliest. That distinction belongs to the Beyond its size, the 1910 fire burned its way into the American conscience as no other fire had done. "Not ever before had a forest fire been given headlines so big or so black," wrote Stewart Holbrook

in Burning an Empire. "It managed to burn its way through public indifference and to emerge as what most conservationists consider a charred but positive landmark along the road to forest protection."

Journalists of the day took considerable license with the fire. Their headlines were bold, the drama gripping, and – in the style of the day – the details were frequently over-exaggerated. A story in the October 1910 edition of everybody's Magazine typified the amplification of real events.

"...the poor roasting wretches took many means to preserve from the flames letters, cards, trinkets by which they might be known. Some scraped with the last strength of their burning hands little holes in the earth, put their papers in them, then flung their shriveled bodies down upon the cache to die..."

Ever the opportunist, a politically savvy Gifford Pinchot managed to focus public anger on who he felt deserved most of the blame for the 1910 fire: the United States Congress.

“For the want of a nail, the shoe was cast, the rider thrown, the battle lost,” he told a reporter from Everybody’s Magazine. “For want of trails the finest white pine forests in the United States were laid waste and scores of lives lost. It is all loss, dead irretrievable loss, due to the pique, the bias, the bullheadedness of a knot of men who have sulked and planted their hulks in the way of appropriations for the protection and improvement of these national forests.”

There is no complete record of how much dead timber was salvaged. The best estimate is about 300 million board feet, less than 10 percent of what was killed. Most of the salvage work was completed by 1918, though the Forest Service did sell some cedar burned in 1910 as recently as 1979.

It took years to clear away dead timber that clogged trails. My father worked on a CCC crew in the 1930s and recalled walking across narrow canyons on the backs of huge logs left behind by winds so powerful trees were sucked from the ground, roots and all, and tossed into the bottoms of canyons. In one place he

estimated the wreckage was 50 feet deep, with a creek running beneath it

There is also no clear record of the amount of land that was replanted, though it is known that the Forest Service and major private landowners planted millions of seedling trees; but there were few nurseries operating then, so it was not possible to grow enough seedlings to replant all that had been lost

Years later, Elers Koch, who fought the 1910 fire, described the aftermath in a book he wrote about his 40 years with the Forest Service. The fire was only the beginning, he said. Between thirty and forty percent of what burned in 1910 burned again in subsequent fire seasons, destroying a good deal of what had been replanted or had grown back naturally. Where once there had been great forests, there were now great brush fields.

Erosion was also a problem. "The fall rains brought down a vast amount of sheet erosion and many steep gullies were scoured out to bedrock," Koch wrote. To

make matters worse, “nearly all of the scorched trees were immediately attacked by bark beetles.”

By 1914, the beetles had moved into green timber. What Koch called “the vicious circle of fire” went on for thirty more years.

Most of what was burned black in 1910 is green again; but even now, one hundred and four years later, there are still places in northern Idaho where forests that rode ash clouds into the heavens have yet to float back down to earth.



EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS FROM THE 1910 FIRE

Evergreen Magazine, Winter Edition 1994-1995

Editor's note: Many books have been written about the 1910 fire. Reprinted here are excerpts from what we believe are the five best books. These eyewitness accounts describe the terror experienced by those who fought the fire and lived to tell about it. Reading these accounts, it is easy to understand why an outraged citizenry subsequently demanded action from a Congress that had been reluctant to appropriate money to fight forest fires.

Excerpts from an interview with a Mr. Swain, taken from *The Big Burn: The Northwest's Great Forest Fire of 1910*, by Don Miller and Stan Cohen, Pictorial Histories Publishing Co. Missoula, Montana, 1978.

"Our Worst Fears"

Before three o'clock p.m., it became so dark from smoke in Mullan, Idaho we were obliged to turn on the lights... The air became hot and oppressive and the reflection of fires all around us made danger feel

uncomfortably near. The failing fragments were now veritable brands, many of the great twigs bearing live fire; and all agreed that our worst fears were about to be realized...

The wind came up with a fury. It seemed to blow in whirls carrying sparks in every direction, but the general trend was northeast. As if by magic, new fires would spring up, there and everywhere. In every direction, a mountain of flame faced us. One side of our gulch would be aflame and in an instant the fire would be borne across to the other side, and by leaps and bounds from tree to tree, the terrible destruction continued...

It took courage to start more fires with surrounding country already a sea of fire and the wind a veritable fury, but it was our only chance; so a line of men was stationed just a few feet apart, forming a letter "s", from the Morning to the Hunter mills, just a few feet in the rear of the buildings. At the signal each started a blaze. These fires united in less time than it takes to relate it, and traveled up the mountains, leaping, rippling over the brush and grass, then bursting into

crimson towers as they passed over stately pines and fires. It was a most beautiful sight yet a most terrible one ... Midnight was as light as day.

Excerpts from Joe Haim's account. Halm graduated from Washington State College in 1909, and worked as a surveyor on the Coeur d'Alene National Forest. In a 1938 radio interview, he was asked what had been the greatest handicap faced by those who battled the 1910 fire. "There were no trails or roads, and we had to go in 65 miles to get to the fire when we were first sent out," he recalled. "In those days one spent the first week trying to get to the fire. It took more time to get into the country than to put out a small blaze." He did not mention that he held his terrified 1910 crew at gunpoint to keep them from fleeing a fire they could not possibly outrun.

"Deafening and Terrifying"

The wind had risen to hurricane velocity. Fire was now all around us, banners of incandescent flames licked at the sky. Showers of large flaming branches were falling everywhere. The quiet of a few minutes before had

become a horrible din. The hissing, roaring flames, the terrific crashing and rending of failing timber was deafening, terrifying. Men rushed back and forth trying to help. One giant, crazed with fear, broke and ran. I dashed after him. He came back, wild-eyed, crying, hysterical. The fire had closed in; the heat became intolerable.

All our trust and hope was in the little stream and the friendly gravel bar. Some crept beneath wet blankets, but falling snags drove them out. There was wet air over the water. Armed with buckets, we splashed back and forth in the shallow stream throwing water as high as our strength would permit, drenching the burning trees. A great tree crashed across our bar; one man went down, but came up unhurt. A few yards below, a great log jam, and acre or more in extent the deposit of a cloudburst in years gone by, became a roaring furnace, a threatening hell. If the wind changed, a single blast from this inferno would wipe us out...

"Melancholy Wreckage"

The green, standing forest of yesterday was gone; in its place a charred and smoking mass of melancholy wreckage. The virgin trees, as far as the eye could see,

were broken or down, devoid of a single sprig of green. Miles of trees – sturdy, forest giants – were laid prone...

Men, who quenched their thirst from small streams, immediately became deathly sick. The clean, pure water running through miles of ashes had become a strong, alkaline solution, polluted by dead fish, killed by the lye. Thereafter we drank only spring water..

“Finally Death”

On Big Creek, thirty men lost their lives while others lay prone for hours in the chilling waters of a tiny stream, great forest giants falling around and across them. Here three men were crushed by a falling tree. One of these unfortunates was caught only by the foot. Men a few feet away heard his cries and prayers, but were powerless to assist. He dug and fought to tear away, but the thing which he had come to save held him fast until coma and finally death relieved his sufferings. On Seltzer Creek the ghastly human toll was twenty nine. An entire crew was annihilated. The men fell as they ran before the merciless fire.

“Excerpts from Ed Thenon’s harrowing account describing what happened to his crew on Moose Creek in Idaho’s Clearwater River drainage. Thenon was the Ranger on what was then the Selway District of the Clearwater National Forest. His boss, W. B. Greeley, described him to a tee. [He was] “tall and spare with a little sandy mustache. A very fine type of frontiersman... the ideal type to put in charge of a bad ‘situation.” Excerpts are from *Forty Years A Forester*, by Elers Koch

“A Candle Flame to a Mosquito”

The fire was coming on fast, already it was beginning to throw shadows in the camp, and we could hear a rumble like a railroad train crossing a bridge. I roused the men up and ran out into the creek to see what our chances were...

“Whirlwind of Fire”

It was light as day now in the camp, and the timber on the mountains on both sides of the creek was all afire.

Trees were crashing down all around us, and the sight and sound of the fire was something terrible. The smoke lifted a little on the west side of the creek, and there, half-way up the mountain, was a whirlwind of fire just like a waterspout only it was all fire and burning gas and a thousand feet high. It moved back and forth and up and down the slope, and the roar of it was like a million blow torches. If it had ever moved down on us we would have gone out just like when you touch a candle flame to a mosquito...

Excerpts from Arthur Hogue's letter to his mother, August 25, 1910. Hogue worked for the Milwaukee Lumber Company, which lost 100 million feet of virgin white pine in the Big Creek drainage. The letter appears in *The Big Blowup*, by Betty Goodwin Spencer, Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho, 1956; reprinted, 1994, by the International Association of Wildland Fire, Fairfield, Washington

"A Continuous Stream of Fire"

Looking down the valley, one could see the fire coming on with a rush and a roar that once seen and heard can never be forgotten, and the flames leaping 300 feet high meet in an arch extending from one hill top to the other. A fierce gust of wind would strike the summit

and flames would leap clear across from one summit to the other in one continuous stream of fire for a distance of over a half mile. It would have been a most beautiful sight had one not realized that in the next moment you might be caught in its fiery folds and know no more...

Excerpts from W. G. Weigle's report concerning the deaths of 18 members of Lee Hollingshead's crew on the West Fork of the Big Creek of the St. Joe River. Panic stricken, they fled into Henry Dittman's cabin, where they perished when the cabin exploded in flames. The rest of Hollingshead's sixty man crew worked its way to safety in a burned over area.

"Hissing Shower of Sparks"

Smoke, gagged and breathless, they wrenched open the door and crowded into the one small room. In utter terror they huddled on the floor until the burning roof caved in with a hissing shower of sparks and blazing shakes. Then, knocking each other aside, they shouldered madly out of the cabin and tried to beat their way through the line of fire, but the terrific heat

brought eighteen of the men to their tragic death only a few feet from the cabin...

Excerpts from Ranger Edward Pulaski's accounting of the fire on Placer Creek near Wallace, Idaho. Pulaski was a Ranger on the Coeur d'Alene National Forest in 1910. His personnel file included this evaluation, written by his boss, Forest Supervisor, W. G. Weigle: "Mr. Pulaski is a man of most excellent judgment; conservative, thoroughly acquainted with the region, having prospected through the region for over twenty-five years. He is considered by the old-timers as one of the best and safest men to be placed in charge of a crew of men in the hills."

True to form, Ranger Pulaski guided his crew through darkness and a raging inferno driven by hurricane-force winds, to the safety of the War Eagle Mine tunnel. In the years following the fire, he was lionized for his heroism, perhaps in part because he was everyone's vision of what a hero ought to look like. He bore a remarkable resemblance to the actor, Gregory Peck, stood six-foot three, had steel-blue eyes, and struck a commanding presence everywhere he went. When he retired from the U.S. Forest Service in 1930, a story in

the Missoula, Montana Sunday Missourian bore this headline: "Hero Of Great Fire Will Leave Service." Shortly after his retirement, he died from injuries suffered in a car accident.

"Some Crying, Some Praying"

The mine timbers at the mouth of the tunnel caught fire, so I stood up at the entrance and hung wet blankets over the opening, trying to keep the flames back by filling my hat with water, which fortunately was in the mine, and throwing it on the burning timbers. The men were in a panic of fear, some crying, and some praying. Many of them soon became unconscious from the terrible heat, smoke and fire gas ... I, too, finally sank down unconscious. I do not know how long I was in this condition, but it must have been for hours. I remember hearing a man say, 'Come outside, boys, the boss is dead.' I replied, "Like hell he is." I raised myself and felt fresh air circulating through the mine. The men were all becoming conscious. It was five o'clock in the morning...

"Shoes Burned Off "

We had to make our way over burning logs and through smoking debris. When walking failed us we crawled on our hands and knees. How we got down I hardly know. We were in a terrible condition, all of us hurt or burned. I was blind and my hands were burned from trying to keep the fire out of the tunnel. Our shoes were burned off our feet and our clothes were in parched rags...

Excerpts from Thaddeus Roe's description of the wall of flames he faced in the fight to save Avery, Idaho. Roe was a member of the rescue team sent to Storm Creek to bring out the bodies of 29 men who stood their ground, rather than flee the raging fire. Later, a man who knew him described Roe's appearance at the rescue scene.

"His outer garments had been burned from his body. His heavy woodman's boots had been burned through and only a remnant of a hat hung from his scorched head. His arms and legs were a mass of burns, the scars of which he will carry to his grave. He was thirty-two years old when he went into Avery six weeks ago.

Today, he looks like a man of fifty, and gray has marked his hair.”

“Babbling Incoherent Thanks”

In order to save anything at all we had to begin firing the buildings on the outskirts of the town, and then the terrible work of forcing the backfire towards the big blaze began. I will never forget the sight An impassable wall of fire was eating its way down the hillside. Our backfire, which had assumed huge proportions, was creeping up towards it. In exactly four and one-half minutes after we started our fire, the two met. Never have I seen anything like it Plunging at each other like two living animals, the two met with a roar that must have been heard miles away. The tongues of fire seemed to leap up to heaven itself and after an instant’s seething sank to nothingness.

We had won, but the strain of those four and a half minutes had exhausted us and we sank down and lay there in the ashes babbling incoherent thanks to God.

The rest of the world didn’t know what we were going through. It couldn’t, and that was the terrible part of it We might have been the only men in the world for all it

mattered. Alone, we were left with nothing but our bare hands and the help of our Creator to bring us out alive.

A description of the scene on Storm Creek, where 29 firefighters were burned to death, from *Up the Swiftwater*, by Sandra Crowell and David Asleson, published by the authors, 1980.

"Helpless Flight"

The main part of the large crew headed for Avery around 6:30 that evening, the flames traveling so fast after them that at times trees above their heads were on fire. They were singed and burned, and one man's shoes had burned through when they arrived at Avery.

They were the lucky ones. Pat Grogan and his followers were cremated within seconds after the fire struck them. Grogan and his dog stood their ground at the camp site and died; his watch stopped at 7:27 p.m. The remains of the others dotted the canyon for half a mile. The one the longest distance from the camp had added seven minutes to his life by running. His watch

stopped at 7:34 p.m. Some had attempted to climb the canyon wall in their helpless flight. Burned flesh, skulls and skeletons were all that was left of most of the men. A few were found with their faces turned grotesquely backward toward the oncoming fire. Even the silver found in their pockets was melted, along with their watches and pocketknives.

"Cooked Alive"

David Bailey survived at Beauchamp's cave by diving into a creek instead of the cave. Here he describes what he saw.

"It was while holding a covering over my head that I burned my hands. We were in the creek for about two hours, I believe, and we were all shaking from the cold as though we were suffering from the fever when we piled out. It was pretty tough up on the summit without any covers and soaked to the skin. One of the boys contracted pneumonia."

Bailey and the others who survived had their hair burned off, and seven comrades who fled into a cave were, in Bailey's words, "cooked alive."

All of them tried to get at the very end of the small hole and they were piled up in an awful heap," he recalled. "It was impossible to take out their bodies, for. they would fall to pieces."

Excerpts from chapter titled, "A Ride Through Hell," describing one of three daring rescues involving trains that raced through blazing forests to rescue townspeople surrounded by fire.

"A Ride through Hell"

Bridges behind them were crackly with fire; way ahead another burst into flames. There was no way they could make it back to the St. Paul Tunnel or Falcon and Marshall. Tunnel 22 was closest, a short bore but their only hope. They opened the throttle wide – it was now or never.

The train pushed through the first wave of fire, the varnish on the coach blistering in the intense heat. Would they be able to make it through the second wave? They were blocked – the fire was too thick! They had to turn back. The first furnace had expanded, and now the train could not get through it, either. They were caught between fires!

Lieutenant Lewis in his report noted: 'The scenes of the fires, the dense smoke, the intense, blinding heat and the crackling flames were indescribable. The flames seemed to be over a mile and a half high. We traveled back and forth, attempting to get through at one end or another, but it was impossible. Progress was constantly impeded by landslides or rocks, or burned logs.

Finally at 5:30 a.m. on Monday, August 22, the train made it back to Avery, It was their last chance.

Orland Scott describes the scene around St. Maries, Idaho, the afternoon of August 24, 1910. The account is taken from a book he wrote titled Pioneer Days on the Shadowy St. Joe, published in 1967 by Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho. Scott grew up on the St. Joe

River, and lived for many years in St. Maries, a logging and farming community on the banks of the St. Joe. Reading his description of how panicked St. Maries residents reacted to the wall of flames they faced, it is easy to see why pioneers living in frontier timber towns feared forest fires more than anything else.

"Lullabies and Prayers"

Frightened people moved many of their valuables out of their homes, down to the riverbank below the town. Some set up temporary quarters in tents and took their families to the riverside for safety. Silver and other prized possessions were buried in yards in town, or basement cellars, for preservation. Bedding and cooking utensils were moved along with other household equipment. Amid falling sparks and shrieking treetops in the wind of flame, the whole world seemed afire that first desperate night Mothers held their babies close, muttered lullabies and prayed, while their husbands and sons fought to halt the roaring tide...

"Merciless Velocity"

The wind swept up the main valley from the west and south that late afternoon of August 24. It drove the red hot flames in searing blasts across the dividing ridges between the creeks, leaping from crest to crest across mile wide chasms in walls of flame. The generating heat from these ridge fires created vast heat-chimneys with terrific suction from the bottoms of the creeks upward so that roaring furnaces of fire, hot ash, smoke and exploding fumes from the thousands of burning trees, shrubs and brush moved with merciless velocity up the narrow gorges, generating infernos of heat and suffocation beyond description...

"Seething Caldron"

It was then that we saw a wall of bright-red flame leap from the west ridge to the east ridge of Thomas Creek, a mile wide jump, in a moment of time. Then the flames sucked down into the depths of the canyon of Thomas Creek and swept upward toward Round Tom Mountain in a seething caldron of falling trees, with soot and smoke and flaming branches soaring high into

the air. Acres of timber went down in a flash and no power on earth could save it...

“Appalling Desolation”

In all directions there was nothing left but the burning stumps of once-beautiful trees; a downed monarch of the forest, fallen to the ground, fed the fire along its entire length. There were hot ash-heaps where trees had criss-crossed in failing and met hot destruction together. Appalling desolation everywhere.

WAS THE 1910 FIRE THE LARGEST?

Evergreen Magazine, Winter Edition 1994-1995

Parts from The Big Blowup

No one can say for certain that the 1910 fire was the largest forest fire ever, but if size alone is the measure, it was indeed the largest forest fire in U.S. history. Other U.S. fires – including some listed below – were more deadly, but none moved as swiftly or as savagely over such a vast uncharted expanse as did the 1910 fire.

1825 – The Miramichi fire in Maine and New Brunswick; three million acres burned; 160 people killed.

1846 – The Yaquina fire in Oregon; 450,000 acres burned.

1853 – The Nestucca fire in Oregon; 320,000 acres burned.

1865 – The Silverton fire in Oregon, one million acres burned.

1868 – The Coos fire in Oregon; 300,000 acres burned.

1871 – The Peshtigo fire in Wisconsin; the most deadly in U.S. history; 1,500 killed; 1.2 million acres burned.

1876 – The Bighorn fire in Wyoming; 500,000 acres burned.

Parts of this chronology are taken from The Big Blowup

1881 –A Michigan forest fire destroyed a million acres of timber and killed 138 people.

1894 – The Hinckley fire in Minnesota; 160,000 acres burned; twelve towns wiped out; 418 lives lost.

1903 – The Adirondack fire in New York; 450,000 acres burned.

1910 – The great fire of 1910, Idaho and Montana; more than three million acres burned; 86 lives lost.

1918 – The Cloquet fire in Minnesota. Cloquet, a thriving sawmill town of 12,000 was gutted; timber land and property losses estimated at \$30 million; 400 perished.

1932 – The Matilija Canyon fire in California's Santa Barbara National Forest; 256 square miles burned; 2,500 fire fighters on the lines; no lives lost

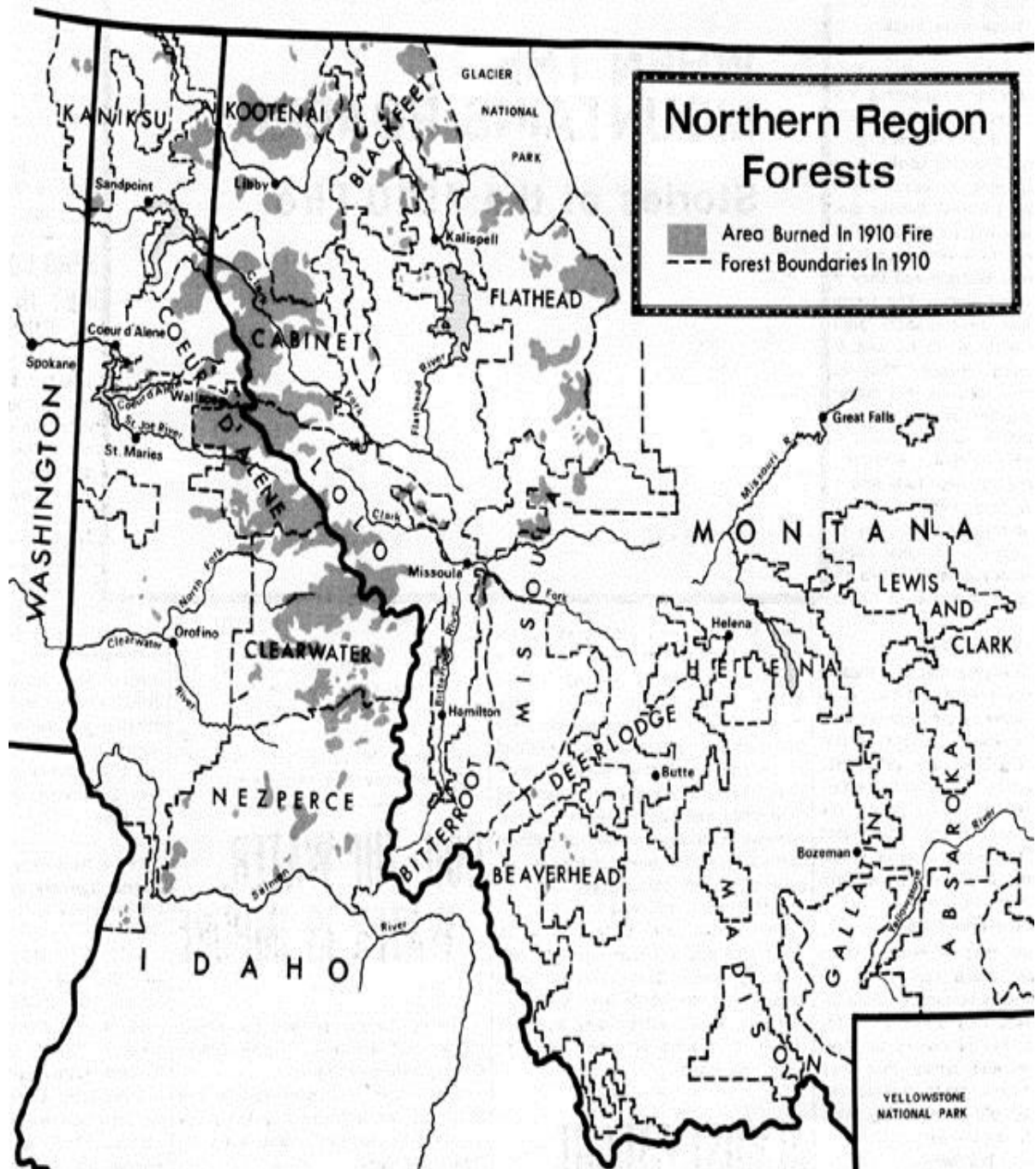
1933 – The first of four Tillamook burns, in the Oregon coast range; subsequent fires burned in 1939, 1945 and 1951. In all, 355,000 acres of some of the finest timber in America were destroyed.

1947 – Texas; in September and October, 900 man caused fires burned 55,000 acres of timber in eastern Texas; losses exceeded \$ 1 million.

1947 – Maine; series of disastrous fires raged for ten days; 16 died; nearly 10,000 required first aid; 175,000 acres burned; Red Cross spent \$2.4 million on disaster relief.

1988 – Yellowstone National Park, Montana and Wyoming; a fire that was being allowed to burn broke out of the park. In all, more than one million acres of national park, national forest and private forest land were burned.

Areas effected by forest fires (1910)





1910 FIRE



CHAPTER THREE

BONNER COUNTY



Bonner County has not always looked this way. It was twice covered by Sea, folded and vaulted, eroded 20,000 feet, shifted and cracked, influenced by nearby volcanic action, covered by fine windblown deposits and more recently, uplifted 2,000 feet and covered with ice.

Bonner County is truly a land of many resources. It is a land of mountains, rushing waters and forests wherever you look. It is a land of people too... people who have sought its riches, its beauty and its peace.

Bonner county has not always looked this way. It was twice covered by sea, folded and faulted, eroded 20,000 feet, shifted and cracked, influenced by nearby volcanic action, covered by fine windblown deposits and more recently uplifted 2,000 feet and covered with ice.

Bonner County is truly a land of many resources. It is a land of mountains, rushing waters and forests wherever you look. It is a land of people, too -- people who have sought its riches, its beauty and its peace. How has man's use of his environment developed in Bonner County? How have we changed this place or been changed by it? These exhibits will briefly attempt to suggest answers to these questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

CAREYWOOD

Contributed by Bonner County Historical Museum

Careywood goes back at least to 1909. It was established in 1911 by a man named John F. Carey, owner of the White Pine Lumber Company.

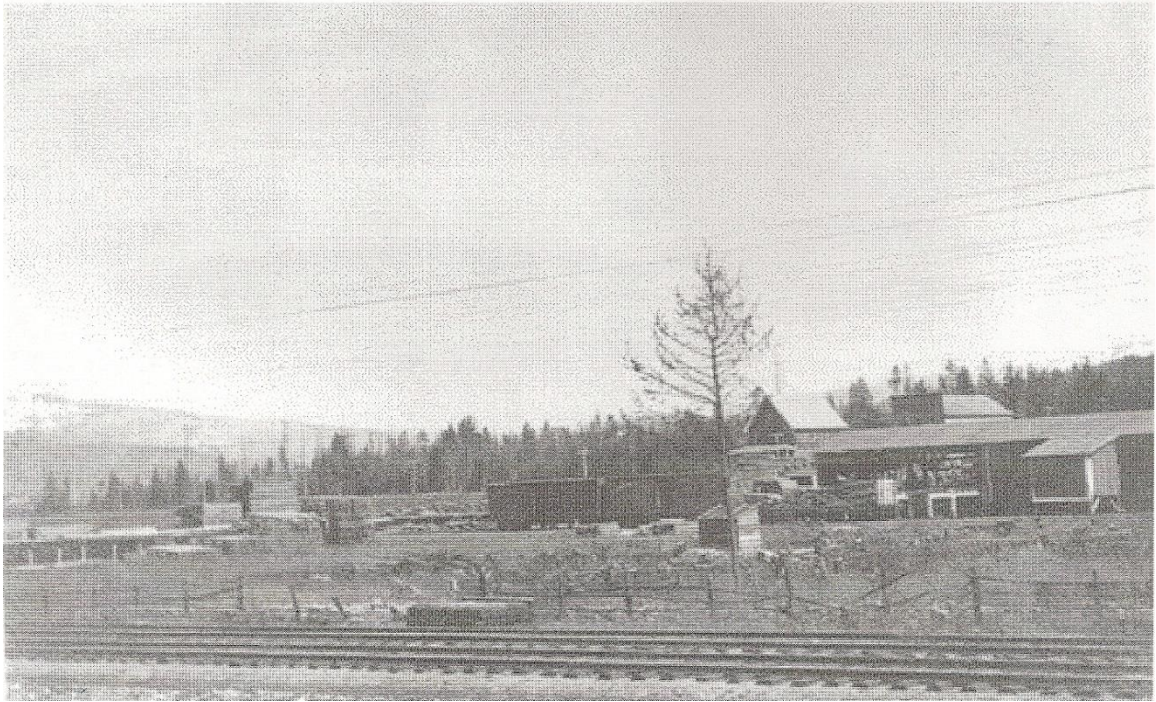
An article in the local paper reads

"Michigan Land & Lumber Co., headed by John F. Carey, of Spokane is clearing 5,000 acres of land 20 miles from Sandpoint, where it will establish a town, called Careywood. Two thousand acres will be planted to apple and pear orchards and the remainder utilized as a timothy ranch and stock farm. The company's headquarters is at Careywood, where a sawmill of 20,000 feet daily capacity is under construction. Thomas F Clark, formerly a resident of Michigan is vice president and general manager, the secretary treasurer being John F. Carey. The tract is on the line of the Northern Pacific.

Carey built the Careywood School House located 4 miles north of the Kootenai County line on Hwy 95 north of Bayview Rd.

It was built with one room for all eight grades about the turn of the century. The Careywood School district #29 was closed because of the consolidation in 1952. It was then used by the community club, Sew & Sew Club, Careywood Eager Beavers 4-H and church services.





Careywood, Idaho, around 1912. This large field is still there with the big shed at the right end used as a hog barn.

Hwy. 95 is now on the right hand side going north...a spur to the lumber yard. In the background the top part of both the hotel (on the left) and the post office are visible.

1315 Copied Print Negative

Bonner County Historical Society



Careywood, Idaho, Hotel and post office in 1912

CHAPTER FIVE

Black Tail & Little Black Tail

Contributed by Philipp Barnhart:

Mrs. Barnhart (Patsy Delano) originally from Burlington, WA. (Wife of Phillip Barnhart) has been here since **1947**. She was about 7 years old and attended the Careywood school 1st and 2nd grade. Her father was in the Navy in Farragut.

Phillips parents came here in 1952. His father was a minister and there were 13 children in the family. Phillip was 14 at the time. They moved here from Spokane. When they moved here everyone was poor and do-it-yourself type, so his father went back to something he knew which was working in the woods.

He went to work in Athol in a place where pulp wood was stacked. They would unload you with a crane and put in box cars which would go by rail to the coast. This was a livelihood for many farmers. Three years of the four that he worked in Athol, they hauled logs to the mill for the Donnerberg project.

Patsy and Philipp were married in 1958. They bought his dad's property. The night of the wedding rehearsal the house burnt down to the ground and he lost a little

brother in the fire. They were married Nov 16. He was 20 years old at that time.

Phillip estimates that early day logging began at the turn of the century and he found evidence of the old rail track spurs that went off to Black Tail Rd.

He worked the Black Tail area 6 – 7 years logging pulp wood and stud logs which were sold for framing lumber. They specialized in 8 foot sections.

A man named Mr. Gripnaws owned the land on the flat in Black tail and Black Tail Hill.

Phillip actually lived in a leased home turning onto Cross White Rd and where the road forks to the right and they leased from a family called Peterson. (the Dolly Suel property)

They moved out in 1956 to their own property acquired by his father down the Bayview Road on Sunset Rd.

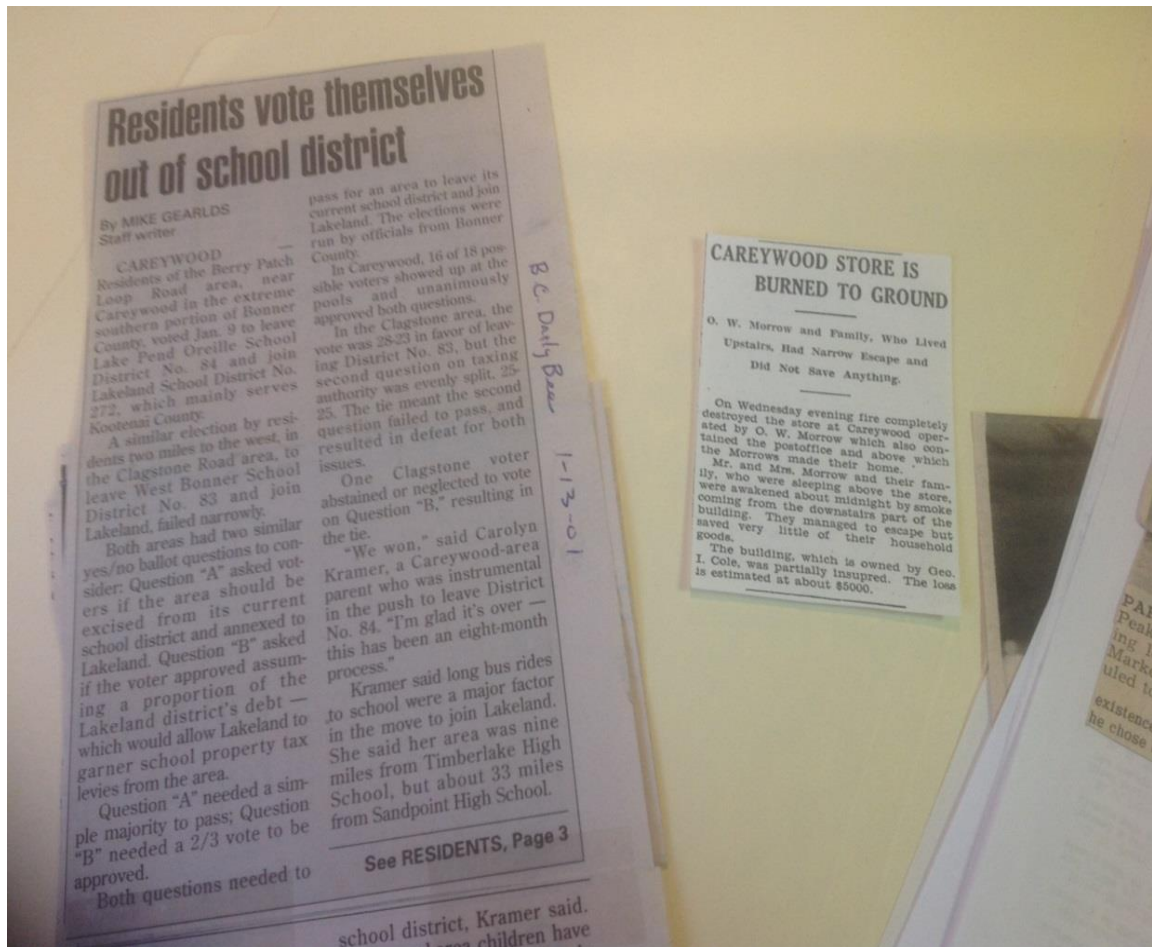
The Gary Cain place now known as Ernie Combs place was one of the lots originally owned by Donnerberg.

Phillip says It's possible that there were more than one or two original owners to Little Black Tail prior to Donnerberg.

It's been a couple of years since he was last here to visit the area. It amazes him how it has changed.

He fondly remembers the little Black Tail Hill. He had sled riding parties with other people from the community and hay rides.

I could have listened to him all day long with every story he could remember, but am very pleased to have this much.





Description

Barnhart family in 1975. In back row, left to right, Bob, Chuck, Paul, Phillip, John, Jim and David. In front of them, left to right, are their wives, Vickie, Carol Ann, Trudy, Patsy, Sherry, Jan and Rosemary. In front are Don, Ruth, Demsey, Mary and Time. Gary and Linda are not pictured, as well as Benny, deceased.

People

Barnhart, Bob
Barnhart, Chuck
Barnhart, Paul
Barnhart, Philip
Barnhart, John
Barnhart, Jim
Barnhart, David
Barnhart, Vickie
Barnhart, Carol Ann

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Barnhart, Trudy
Barnhart, Patsy
Barnhart, Sherry
Barnhart, Jan
Barnhart, Rosemary
Barnhart, Don
Barnhart, Ruth
Barnhart, Demsey
Barnhart, Marion
Barnhart, Mary
Barnhart, Tim

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CHAPTER SIX

Ron – Careywood Postmaster

Ron has been at the Careywood Post Office

for **42 years**

Upon my visit to the post office; I could not help but ask Ron if this was the original building for the post office. He said it was but originally the post office itself was located in the other room which now resembles more of a forgotten mercantile. The room where the actual post office is now was added years later.

Says Ron "The woman who ran the post office at the time also made draperies. So you walked in the other door and the post office area was very small, but the rest of the room was filled with these really big tables and sewing machines for making draperies."

He also told me that there used to be gasoline pumps right in front and that the tanks however empty were still in the ground. There was a Shell Station at that location.

Ron said that up and down Hwy 95 every couple of miles or so there were all kinds of little gas stations, but that as the big companies came in with new ideas,

they pulled out all the mom and pop stations to make way for advancement.

1309 Copied Print Negative

Bonner County Historical Society



Post Office in Careywood about 1912

1315 Copied Print Negative

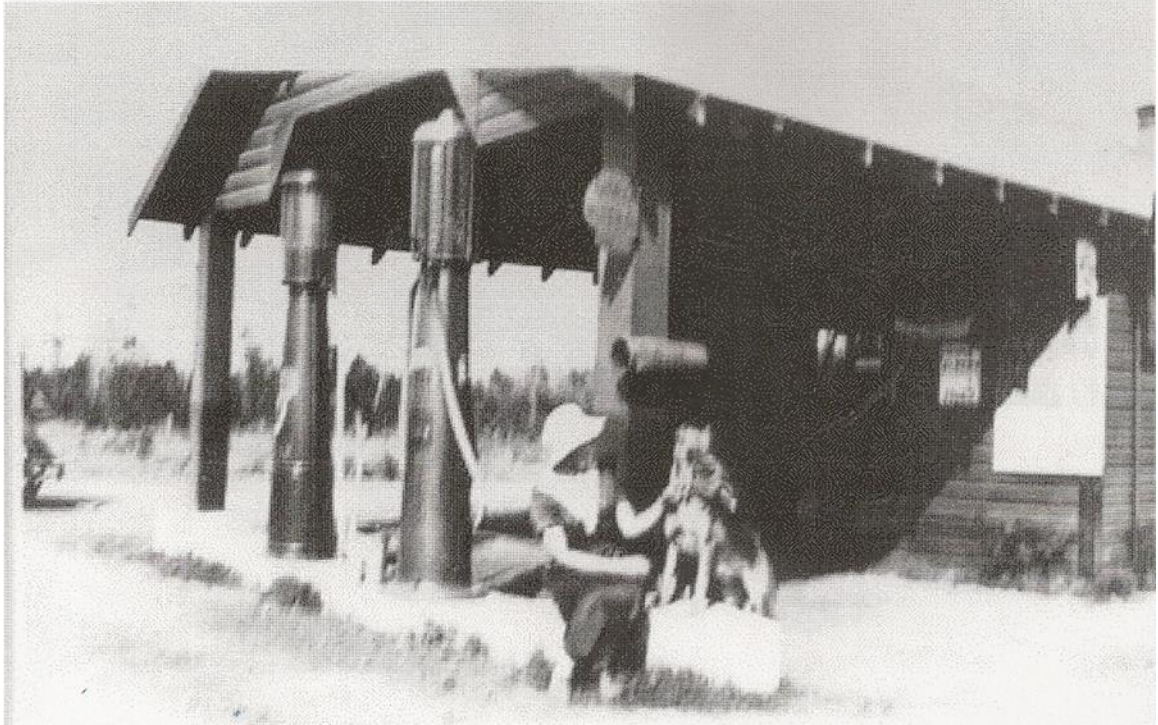
Bonner County Historical Society



Hotel and Post office in 1912



Wallace Brothers Service Station in Careywood in 1930.
Living quarters were built later. Notice they have only
one pump.



This is not a clear picture.

The Original Wallace Brother's Service Station in Careywood in 1930. Unknown girl and dog in front of the picture. This is now the site of the Careywood Post Office.

Notice now there are two pumps!

This is a model of what the original bridge across to Sandpoint looked like.



CHAPTER SEVEN

A Brief History of Little Blacktail and the surrounding area.

Contributed by Thomas M. Sandberg – Historian

The area includes from the 3 Sisters to Maiden Creek and from just west of Highway 95 to Lake Pend Oreille.

LANDFORM

Glaciation and Missoula Floods

During the last ice age, 18,000 – 12,000 years ago, the area was covered by ice almost to the top of Little Blacktail Mountain. The terrain was sculpted by glaciers and with resulting deposits and melt water redeposits. The Purcell Trench lobe moved from north to south in the valley but ice also moved westerly from the Pend Oreille basin between Little Blacktail and the Three Sisters and between the Three Sisters peaks as well (notice the gravel deposits along Little Blacktail Road as you drive up the hill). There is a mixed, unsorted gravel, sand, cobble all over the area just below the surface as well as sorted material along Cocolalla Creek and the highway. The glacial lake

Missoula flooding did not reach this area but there was a lot of melt water flowing especially at the end of the ice age. The mountains and outcrops include Precambrian sedimentary rock (over 1000 million year old shallow sea floor deposits) and Cretaceous granodiorite an intruded granite over 66 million years old.

PEOPLE

Native Americans Indians certainly made use of the resources in the area but no sites have been recorded. There were better places to hang out like Lake Cocolalla and the rest of the valley. This is part of the traditional area of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe although people from the Kalispel Tribe of Indians and the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho would have utilized the area as well.

Non-Indian settlement

It is doubtful there was much activity aside from some minor prospecting before 1880.

Northern Pacific railroad (NPRR) Construction 1880-1881 and Realignment 1891

1872 was the year the Northern Pacific line was surveyed. Construction took place in 1880-1881 first with clearing and grading. Many, many railroad ties* were needed to lay the track and this was a good area for tie making. Several tie roads, trails and camps were noted during the Government Land Office (GLO) surveys in 1890: ...'5 or 6 more tie camps than those mentioned in the body of the notes in the northern portion of the Township.' (T54NR2W), and ...'large tracts of timber destroyed by fire or cut for ties and wood' (that would be firewood) 'which are shipped in large quantities each year.' (1890). So the tie and firewood cutting must have started around 1881, probably continuing through and was renewed by a major realignment of the NPRR in 1891. Several sections of land in the area were granted to the NPRR by the Federal Government.

*At this time, tie making involved falling a tree with a crosscut saw, hewing (flattening) the log on 2 opposing sides with a broad axe, then, bucking the log into lengths of 8 feet. After an appropriate number was made, the ties would have been hauled by wagon or sleigh to the nearest railroad access.

Settlers in North Idaho often had to supplement their income with outside employment or with the manufacture of ties, firewood and fence posts (split from dead, old growth cedar).

Settlement

The railroad construction brought a few settlers to the area (3 were noted in T54NR2W in 1890 –

Peter A. Ferbrache, B.C. Probst and Henry J. Linton). P.A. Ferbrache was probably a tie hack. He and H.J. Linton received patents for homesteads in 1899 and 1892. Another early settler, Abner Curtis was also likely a tie hack and received a patent for a homestead in T55NR2W in 1898.

With the convenience of railroad access to the area and because there were many tie roads and trails facilitating the search for land, several homesteaders moved in. Including the above mentioned, there were over 14 settlers before 1900, at least 13 more by 1905, +24 added by 1910 and +17 by 1918. Some of the settlers purchased land (some were timber speculators) and some homesteads may have been filed with the timber in mind. It appears that most of the

homesteaders "Proved Up"* Additional settlers bought land from the NPRR.

*The Homestead Act of 1862 opened Federal land for settlement. Up to 160 acres could be acquired by filing entry forms, making improvements to the land such as clearing and cultivating, building a dwelling and residing on the land for 5 years.

Prospecting and Mining

Thousands of prospectors/miners traveled through the area during the 1860s-1870s on their way to mineral strikes in British Columbia and Montana. Many drifted back through and may have wandered around prospecting but there is no record of activity in the Little Blacktail area. There was some mineral excitement during the 1880s through the early 1900s around Lake Pend Oreille. During that period there was some prospecting in the Little Blacktail area but nothing developed. There was developed mining at Bay View (limestone), Lakeview (silver/lead) and Talache (silver/lead).

CAREYWOOD

King's Spur may have been the first name.

A railroad spur line ran from near the Blacktail Road/Highway 95 junction, up the hill and east, across the bench for about ½-¾ mile to a sawmill and possibly a small community called White Pine. This development was started by at least 1905 by The Lewis Co. Log & Lumber Company (as noted on my property title search). Up to 100 men were employed by the company in 1905. I believe the company adopted the name White Pine Lumber.

The Mystery of White Pine

A community called White Pine has been described by Old Timers as being north or northeast of Careywood about 3 miles and having a population of up to 400 (seems exaggerated). A schoolhouse has been included in the stories suggesting families were included in the number. In addition to the sawmill and community, reportedly 7 logging camps were scattered around with the largest located in T54NR2W Section 4.

Severance

In 1903 a community called Severance, located roughly where Careywood is today developed which included a small sawmill. A Post Office was added in 1907 and

given the name Severance. Sometime after 1907 the Michigan Land & Lumber Co. bought the original 160 acres of the community as well as surrounding large tracts of timbered land. The post office and town's name was changed to Careywood after the Carey brothers, owners of the company. A new sawmill was built along the railroad and started operations in 1911.

The company went bankrupt in 1913 but the town survived with a store, post office and, later a school.

Pend Oreille National Forest

The Forest was established in 1908. Little Blacktail Mountain Lookout, built in 1935, was an 'L-4' type on a 40' pole tower. The L-4 was a 14' x 14', hip roof frame structure. Fire detection from lookouts was replaced by air patrol and the lookout was destroyed in 1963. A trail system was built by the Forest Service across the mountains and ridges along the west side of Lake Pend Orielle. The trails were used to supply the lookouts using pack strings and by the lookout personnel to patrol and to reach fires. The road to the top of Little Blacktail was built in 1935. There were no Forest Service timber sales in the area until the 1980s.

The Pend Oreille Forest combined with the Kaniksu Forest in 1933. In 1973 the St. Joe, Coeur d'Alene and Kaniksu Forests consolidated becoming The Idaho Panhandle National Forests.

Fires

A traveler going from Spokane to Lake Pend Oreille before the tracks had been laid, noted that the air was filled with smoke and that there were fires all along the right-of-way and beyond. This was part of the clearing process. There was more fire between 1892 and June-July 1910 as noted in the GLO notes. (burned and fallen timber, trees killed by fire and missing survey corner posts and bearing trees). 1898 has been described as a bad fire season.

Place names

By 1881 Granite Station (original)

By 1890 Granite (new, current location) and Cocolalla Lake & Creek

@1910 Careywood

By 1910 Little Blacktail & Blacktail Mtns. and Maiden Rock (Maiden Cr. had been Smith Cr.)

Homestead Patents for the Homeowners Association

William Kreiger 1913NE ¼ Sec. 3 T54NR2W

Andrew Nelson 1913SE ¼ Sec. 34 T55NR2W

Fabe Carroll 1919NW ¼ NW ¼ Sec. 2 T54NR2W
& S ½ SW ¼ SW ¼ Sec. 34 T55NR2W

CHAPTER EIGHT

My next couple of leads came from

Mr. Barnhart.

Contributed By: Nova Jo Kellogg

Nova Jo has lived here since **1948**. She attended school with Mrs. Patsy Barnhart at the old Careywood schoolhouse.

There were six families living on the Black Tail Rd when she lived here.

Her property was originally 1400 acres but due to a feud in the family, the father of her father in law, a man by name of Spencer parceled off land and sold it while she was gone on a trip. By the time she got back she had only 145-150 acres left. Yikes huh?!

Her parents place sets across the street on Black Tail and Hwy 95 and you can see it when look across the tracks before you turn left or right. It is still in Nova Jo's family.

Nova Jo married in 1964 and 4 years later his parents and grandparents both lived in the house she lives in now, built as a duplex.

She recalls a union 76 station at the corner of Black Tail and Hwy 95. It was little and it burned down. Where the fire station is now to the north is where The Careywood store/Candy Shack was.

Emily a French lady and her husband Ralph Bower, ran the snack shop and kids and teens catered to her place a lot.

She had red hair and wore spike heels and was a revelation to the people of Careywood.

The old barn on Nova Jo's place is over 100 years old because the White Pine Saw Mill used to sit on that place and it operated until the 1910 fires ripped thru Idaho. That was the end of the saw mill operation because most of the good marketable trees had burned up. That old barn you see from the street was there since before the turn of the century. Nova Jo recalls she was 5 years old when she saw workers tearing down the shingles on the barn roof and replacing with what you see today.

The Winter of 1949 on Friday the 13th was her worst memory of a bad winter. The store thermometer read 42 below zero for 11 days straight. Nova Jo was in the first grade.

She said the winter was so bad that you would see deer just laying there because they could not get to any food. Her father came down with flu so horrible that he became delirious and her mother who was a city girl and had never tended a farm would have to run back and forth from the bedroom getting directives from her husband, so she could go out and do the tasks that needed to be done. This included, getting food out to the horses and checking their shelter. Also many other things that were needed in order to keep their household from perishing.

She recalls that on one occasion her mother went to feed the horses and that for some reason the horse reared and when he came back down, the horse stepped on her foot crushing her foot. But she still had to keep going and going she did.

Black Tail did not get electricity until 1950- '51 but they had purchased a washer and fridge a whole year ago and they sat there just waiting for the day they would have electricity.

Before the 1910 fire someone Nova Jo knew by the name of Wallace said the meadow across the creek had 500 people living on it. They were the men operating

the saw mill and there was a rail horse spur and the 100 year old barn was a draft horse barn Belgium, etc used to pull logs out and haul back to the railroads.. Very few people owned tractors in those days and most people owned a team of horses.

About a month after I interviewed Nova Jo on the phone I decided to go over to her home and thank her personally for talking with me. I found her a tiny and delightful lady to talk to. She had so much history to talk about. I could have talked to her for hours. The day I met her she had just found an old bottle intact in the deep areas of her property.



Careywood in 1913.

There are houses in the background,
lumber mill yard in front

CHAPTER NINE

Contributed by: Ray Delay Jr.

Ray's family lines on Black Tail go back as far as 100 years He recalls that there was mining going on at the Three Sisters Mountains for Ore. He also mentioned that the land not owned by Donnerberg was and is still owed by Stimpson Lumber Company which has been in business since 1850. Ray Jr. said that in the early days, the first newspaper was mostly a gossip rag. Individuals from different neighborhoods would go around the neighborhoods listening for "news" and then rush back to the "printer" to submit their findings and that was the first life of the early newspaper here.

(Photo – Ray Delay Sr)



camp at Cabinet; Henry Fields, of Sandpoint, will log at Cabinet for the Dover Lumber Co. The A. C. White Lumber Co., of Laclede, has four camps. The Sandpoint Lumber & Pole Co. has bought a tract of timber from the Menasha Wood-
enware Co.

Michigan Land & Lumber Co., headed by John F. Carey, of Spokane, is clearing 5,000 acres of land 20 miles from Sandpoint, where it will establish a town, called Careywood. Two thousand acres will be planted to apple and pear orchards and the remainder utilized as a timothy ranch and stock farm. The company's headquarters is at Careywood, where a sawmill of 20,000 feet daily capacity is under construction. Thomas F. Clark, formerly a resident of Michigan, is vice-president and general manager, the secretary-treasurer being F. Carey. The tract is on the line of the Northern Pacific.

Progress is being made on the Milwaukee Lumber Co.'s steel frame sawmill under construction at St. Maries. The skeleton structure which is the largest in the West, was erected under

feet annually.

The Copper River
expects to cut
cott, Alaska,
the end of the
tion on this
distance of
880 feet long

The River
about seven
are about
their entire

The Copper
retail yard
Wash.
offices here
headquarters
20th of

This barn is over 100 years old. It belongs to Nova Jo Kellogg.

No matter which way you are driving, the views of her property are beautiful.



If this old barn could talk....
ohhhhh the stories we would hear.



Autumn Day 2013

Photos By Carmen Johnson

Here are a couple of photos of stuff she has found on her property which is well over 100 years old

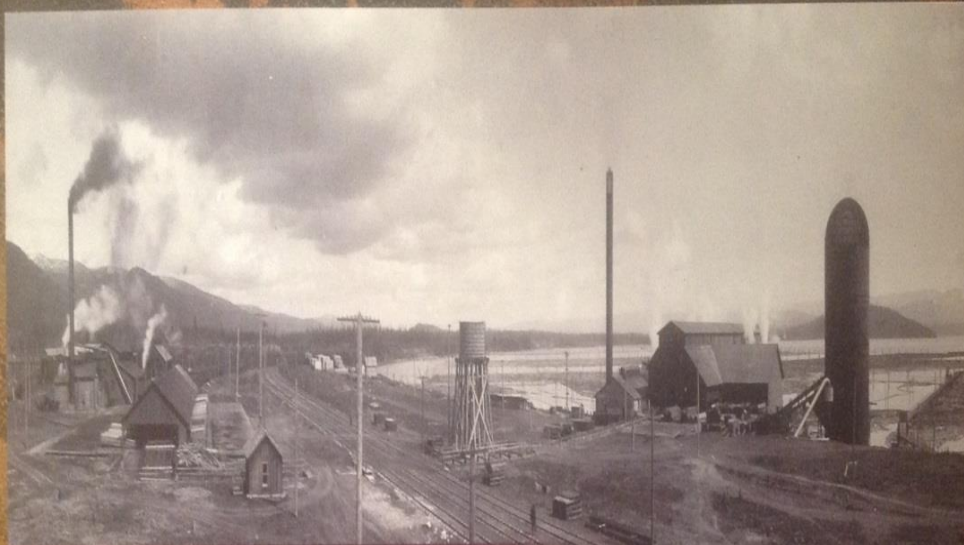


On the day I visited Nova Jo, she showed me this old bottle she had found intact in the deep part of her woods.

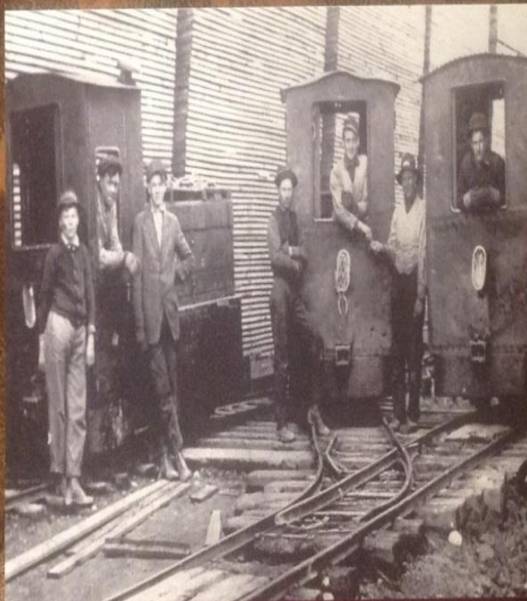


Here you can see what some of the tools of the trade looked like for the loggers in the area.





The Humbird Lumber Company purchased the old Sand Point Lumber Company site along Lake Pend Oreille and quickly updated facilities and added a new planing mill west of the tracks.
(Collection of Benewah County Historical Society and Museum)



Horses were ultimately replaced with mechanized cars that ran on tracks throughout the Humbird mill yard.
(Collection of Benewah County Historical Society and Museum)

9-27-73 SNB



Early Careywood area residents had reunion

By Mrs. Howard Hensley

The Suings farm on Little
east of Carey
Fairy Delany
their lives in
now opera
Careywood
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CHAPTER TEN

Let there be Light!

Northern Lights, Inc., (NLI) based in Sagle, Idaho, is a member-owned rural electric cooperative serving northern Idaho, western Montana and northeast Washington. It's their job to deliver electricity and other energy services to more than 2,700 miles of distribution line to the rural residents of one of the most beautiful and rugged areas in the country. Formed in 1935, we're the oldest rural electric cooperative west of the Mississippi River.

Leslie, From NLI, contributed that the main electrical lines to Black Tail were installed in 1947. Other work was done 1947 to 1950 and other extras were added in 1967.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

We live in the Kaniksu Forest

The Kaniksu National Forest (pronounced “Kuh-NICK-su” or if pronounced phonetically Can I kiss you Forest) is a U.S. National Forest located in northeastern Washington, **the Idaho panhandle**, and northwestern Montana. It is one of three forests that are aggregated into the Idaho Panhandle National Forest, along with the Coeur d’Alene National Forest and St. Joe National Forest. Kaniksu National Forest has a total area of 1,627,833 acres (6,587.6 km²). About 55.7% is in Idaho, 27.9% in Montana, and 16.4% in Washington. The Little Blacktail Ranch Park is located right at the heart of the Kaniksu Forest in the Idaho portion.

Kaniksu National Forest was established on July 1, 1908 from a portion of Priest River National Forest. On September 30, 1933 a portion of Pend Oreille National Forest was added, and on July 1, 1954 part of Cabinet National Forest was added. Kaniksu was administratively combined with Coeur d’Alene and St. Joe National Forests on July 1, 1973.

The forest headquarters are located in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. There are local ranger district offices located in Bonners Ferry, Priest Lake, and Sandpoint.



CHAPTER TWELVE

Home Sweet Home

Finally we have arrived to our own neighborhood,

Little Black Tail Ranch Park

Once again, thank you to all who contributed their best memories of living here. Please note – Not all residents were available for interviews at the time of this writing.

And now...the stories of our own

Contributed by Joan Spencer:

(Daughter of Developer Larry Donnerberg)

Larry Donnerberg, was the developer of Little Black Tail Ranch Park. Mr. Donnerberg's saw mill was called Arrow Tie Mill in Ponderay.

He developed it in four phases. The county road divides Phases One & Two. Phases Three and Four came along a bit later towards the Lake Pond Oreille and there are Four lots a piece in those phases.

He bought the land in the late **60's early 70's**. Phases One & Two were just one parcel at the time (a farm).

Originally, but not officially (before the land was platted it was called LAREDO... LAR for Larry...E for Edith and DO for Donnerberg.

"Brownie" Ballison did the logging and his brother MOE, did much of the road building. A man named Valentine also did some road building later on.

The big equipment operators were Valentine and possibly MOE and that would include the putting of the water pipes. Valentine was bought out by Randy Evans, who used to live here at the corner of Little Blacktail where the park begins (4 corners). The corner that now has a white modern fence on it.

Joan still owns four lots in Little Black Tail Ranch Park and loves to come and spend time here.

Her father had a beautiful vision for this area we now call home and he named all the streets. Little Black Tail Ranch Park was his dream.

Thank you Mr. Donnerberg.

First Winter Storm of 2013



Johnson Meadow – Winter 2013

Photos by Carmen Johnson



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Jess Bennett

Contributed by Bonnie Cavanaugh

So who were the early “settlers” of Little Black Tail Park Ranch? Let’s start with Jess Bennett.

Jess Bennett, also known as “old man Jess” moved on the mountain in **1949**. He died a few years ago at the age of 96. He lived on his property just up beyond the Carey residence at the top of Little Blacktail where the forest service road starts up to Babinski’s and he was not in the HOA. He was a wealth of knowledge and so many neighbors asked him to write down the history of this area which he never did. Tess Hahn bought his property and house and now have sheep up there. Jess was a logger among other things and logged his area, and his main hobby was building train engines to scale for his RR system which completely filled the top floor of his house. He was well known in the RR hobby industry and people would pay dearly for his hand made engines. He also built many structures in his train layout. Fred Meyer was probably his closest friend here and he would know much more about Jess than anyone else. Fred and Jess used to hike down to Evans Landing to fish.

A Spokane TV station aired a story on him and his RR layout. It was taken in the summer before he died that fall.

Jess was quite a character. His memory was so sharp, who owned what properties way back, and the history. There was an old homestead at the Pettit place that was physically moved he said.



Photo from a newspaper article

Color photos contributed by Bonnie Cavanaugh

Jesse Bennett on his 95th birthday.

He died October 29, 2010.





CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Patrick & Vicki Marron

Patrick and his wife Vickie moved here from Columbus, Ohio in **1978**.

They found this area from publication called Mother Earth News.

They were looking forward to coming and seeing trees and forest, but were disappointed when they arrived at Wallace because there was a "smelting" going on at the time.

They bought their property here from the Dannenberg's before the Association was formed. So the roads were still very much logging roads when they first arrived. And since they came in the winter, the only way to see the property was via snow mobile and they had never driven snow mobiles. They were aided by the real estate agent assigned by Donnerberg. They had 40 acres of just trees.

The worst winter they remember was when their log house was complete and they had 7 or 8 visitors come to visit and the outhouse was frozen so putting "stuff" in it was not going any place!

Their most favorite thing is to come back into peace and quiet after a trip or traveling.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Bob & Yvonne Jaqueth

Bob & Yvonne bought their property in **1987** and started building/moving in in **1990**. Originally he came from Vermont and she came from Bayview.

After 20 years in the military, they had plans to find a home in Boise, but they could never get a realtor's response to any inquiries, so they stopped looking there.

Bob found some property ads in Mother Earth News publication and came out to look with the help of Dave Freeman Realtor who was a realtor on behalf of Mr. Donnerberg.

Bob remembers that at the time of his first coming out here, the area where my house and garage now sit was just a vast hay field. At some point there was a mobile placed on my property (not the manufactured house we live in now), but says Bob, that mobile was torn down because the roof caved in after a bad winter. (Yikes!)

Also, bob remembers that in his early days here, Blacktail was a VERY narrow road designed only for one

car at a time. In the Spring time the road was just one muddy mess.

The graders would come and get stuck on the first corner as you come off Hwy 95. The road curves to the right and that's as far as the graders would get. He believes the road got paved in 1997.

About a year or so after they moved here, Bob started up his little engine repair to keep him occupied...and he's still pretty occupied!

Their worst winter memory was the winter of 1996-1997. He estimates that year brought 221" inches of snow. There was so much snow that his wife could walk right up to the roof from the ground to shovel the snow off.

After all these years, Bob and Yvonne still are in love with their land. it's pretty and we have "a good bunch of people" here.

Following is the muddy, mucky mess Bob was talking about... Blacktail Rd heading towards LBT.

Marker: The round steel container on right foreground



CHAPTER SIXTEEN

JACK & JOAN BABINSKY

Jack and Joan Babinsky bought their land parcel here in **1989**. Originally from North Dakota, they moved here from So. Calif.

They created a Earth Shelter Home and they came out here because of their love for the climate, trees and people.

The Board was formed in late '91 or 92 and they were the first board members. Mr. Babinsky served as the Treasurer.

Mrs. Babinsky had a special newsletter that she would put out. It was called "Little Tales" of course!

In it she included Spring and Summer news and tidbits and welcomed new residents coming in.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Fred & Carol Meyer

Fred and Carol Meyer bought their property on Labor Day of **1990** and moved up to their property in March **1995**. They came from Phoenix, Arizona

They had the shop built while they were still in Arizona, then they came up and spent a summer and came back and forth in their 5th wheel for about 5 years. They moved into their finished house in 1999.

When they saw this property; for them; it was their dream come true. They had looked at 3 or 4 other properties in the association. The realtor who was showing them around told them he was going to save the best for last and when they saw that property, they knew right away that this was exactly the place for them.

They were sold on the view and totally saw this as God's Heaven. Fred had always wanted to live in the country and although Carol was already from the NW;

living out here was like a dream come true for both of them.

Their worst winter memory was in 2005 or 2006. Carol remembers trying to look out her kitchen window but the snow had slid off the roof and when she looked out she only had a space of 3 or 4 inches to look out of!

Fred remembers that year there was 196 inches of snow. Fred would go out with a measuring stick in his driveway and measure how much snow there was on a daily basis at 4 a.m.

Fred was good friends with Jess Bennett (the man with the trains) and said Jess was more like a father figure to Fred. When Jess died it was a terrible loss. Fred remembers that Jess died October 29, 2010.

Carol enjoys the beauty of the snow and how it all looks like outside. Carol says that Fred loves the snow even more than her.

When he got his first tracker, which was a crawler he would tell Carol "see you in 45 minutes". 45 minutes would turn into 4 hours! That's how much he loves to be outside.

Their most favorite thing about living here is everything!

Wonderful neighbors, they love the nature and they put out the bird food for the tiny daily visitors. They love the wildlife.

Carol loves to garden and he loves to work in his mechanic shop.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Cathy Oliver

Cathy has been here since **1991**.

There were only three other families when Cathy arrived here.

The families that came before 1991 were:

Steve & Charlotte Tenberton lived where Tyler Petit lives now.

Tom & Charlotte Burton lived where Jesse & Carrie Carey live now. And a third couple named Randy and Angela.

In 1984 Cathy was going from the horse business to driving trucks; and she had not taken a vacation in a long time so she took AM-trac from Martinez, CA to Salt Lake City. From there she went north to Montana and a few days driving around and then came into CDA just looking around and enjoying from the scenic views.

At the time she moved here there were only 26,000 people in the whole Bonner County.

In 1991 she came up to look at property with a friend and found her property.

She was intrigued with how out doorsy it is here. You can hunt, fish; the people are wonderful. People were more respectful and willing to help here than in California.

She remembers the lack of traffic on Hwy 95. She could travel with her high beams on at night, and she remembers how down to earth people were.

There were quite a few locals that came when the area was not really developed for hunting and wood gathering. The hunters were not used to seeing people living here and they could not just drive down the road and shoot at will any more.

In her early days here, she had 4 horses and a rail fence and she would go out and turn the horses loose and a dog named Jack who was a herding dog named Jack. At the end of the day Cathy would send out the dog to go herd the horses back.

The ice storm of 1996 was both her worst and best winter that she remembers. They had no power for six days at Thanksgiving time.

With no power; they heated with wood and a wood stove. A friend, Lori & Kurt and family and Cathy split their thanksgiving dinner preparations together, each

cooking on their wood stoves and fire pits. She said they had a great meal and playing of cards and other games that cold thanksgiving night.

There was lots of snow and lots of ice. It would snow six inches then melt three inches, then snow six inches, then melt six inches over and over again.

One day as she was coming home in the early morning she witnessed the transformer near Tyler Petit's house explode. That Thanksgiving storm brought snapped lines and snapped poles.

On Blacktail Road you could do 5 mph. and no faster. It was a sheet of ice and in those days there was no pavement. No amount of weight or studded tires helped if you were on the S curves.

Cathy remembers the sign for our neighborhood was placed in 2012.

There was a fire storm October of 1991. It started on the west side, north of Athol in Granite Hill. It was started with lightning and when the fire got to the top of the hill on the north side, Cathy could see the glow of the fire at night From where she lived. The fire storm lasted 3 days. People were turning their livestock loose as the fire came closer to our area.

Near the trash dumpsters on Hwy 95; there is a small strip of old buildings. They were called the Careywood Condos. Randy Powers owns them now and he lives in Sagle. Just in front of it was a store called Stop and Eat. It burned down at the time of those fires, possibly brought on by an electrical malfunction of a light. It was owned by a Ken and Dolly.

Cathy likes the neighborhood and the people that are here and is always available and ready to help neighbors in need.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Ron & Stephanie Mozley

Ron & Stephanie Mozley bought their property here in **1991**. They had their house built in **1998-99**.

They were looking in this area primarily because they love to ski and because of Switzer Mt. Primarily. They had checked out Colorado, and were close to buying near Mt Hood, but Ron found a publication called Snow Country Publication for Sandpoint. On the back of it was a realtor for Century 21.

He contacted the realtor who then sent him an information package and his eyes got wide open! He came out and looked at several houses. He knew once he got here that this was the area he wanted to be. They had looked at about 5 or 6 other places before finding their perfect home here in LBT. it had a beautiful view of the Northern Pan Handle and the mountains. Coming from the rat race of California, he was thrilled at the lack of people! (I know that feeling, Ron!)

They stayed in his 5th wheel for 14 months while his house was being built.

The worst winter memory Ron talked about was 5-6 years ago(2007-2008). He had to shovel snow off his barn roof quite a few times in 3 days. Five days of snow and 3 ½ feet on the roof of heavy snow was a very big concern!

Another worst memory winter about 7 years ago... he was on his way to Switzer and he hit black ice near cocolalla on Hwy 95.His Ford Ranger flipped over several times and totaled it.

Ron and his wife love the quiet and nature. Not as expensive as Calif. People are nice and neighborly.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Don & JoAnn Anderson

The Anderson's moved here on **July 1, 1991**

They were vacationing through the area as well as Canada and the Coast and happened upon this area in the fall.

They very loved that the area was removed from the city as they were coming from a place in California called Canyon Country; in or near the Santa Clarita mountains.

They also had lived in Sylmar at the time of the Sylmar Quake. Small world! We lived not far away, in North Hollywood at the time of that quake.

They absolutely love being out of the city life. They love the trees and snow here and there were only 5 or 6 other families here when they moved here.

Their first neighbor was Old Man Jess whom they met the first day they moved in. JoAnn fondly remembered him as Mr. Careywood.

Don & JoAnn live the driveway across from Jess & Mary.

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

Warren & Taryn Grant

The Warren's bought their property in **1992** and built their home in **1997**. They came from Bethel Alaska.

They picked this area because they wanted property, and a place to retire to, Originally they looked in Central Oregon but it was too expensive.

There was a friend showing/selling real estate and Warren & Taryn spent three days with them looking for property. Their property was the last one they saw.

They really loved the beauty of the area. Tall pine trees! Seeing black spruce in Alaska, these trees were different; and here they loved also the mountains. You could drive around here much more so than Alaska.

At the end of 1992 you could drive to the end of his cul de sac and you could look across and it was just a field. No trees. Hay used to be harvested on these fields. Between 1992 and 1997 trees started to polulate the fields and by the time they started building their home; the field was no longer a field but a forest with trees 6 feet plus tall.

Their worst winter memory was about 2007. The snow did not start to snow meaningfully until January but when it did start... snow just kept coming and there was no place to push or put the snow as he was running out of places to put it. It was a record snowfall of 196 inches.

The best thing about living here? Still rural but close to both cities; rural but not remote, nice and quiet, no traffic , nice place to live and have privacy.

In addition to Lanny & Carole Wigren's story about about the building of the fire house in LBT, Warren adds this...

The Fire Chief (Sagle/Timberlake) at the time was exploring the idea of giving meaningful fire protection for LBT. There was some association land that were slivers that were not considered lots and owned by the HOA that could be used for a fire house.

Garage sales and other fund raisers were done to save money for building a new fire house.

From the vote to the beginning of building it took 4 years. The fund raisers were getting eaten up by all the permit cost and other fees, and there was a grant by a

private foundation that gives fire districts money to help themselves.

One of the residents who lives in a pole building, kept the fire truck in his living room and that's where the truck stayed until the station was built.

Once all permits and grant were in hand for a pole building package then many in the community participated in the building of the fire station.

Over the years the volunteer participation in the LBT fire Dept. has waned. Grant expressed the need for others and newcomers to step up and be part of this important aspect of our little community.

Following are some photos (courtesy of Bonnie Cavanaugh) that show the building of the fire house as well as the Community Sign.





Current Volunteer

Byron Burrows is currently our only volunteer fire fighter/EMT for our Fire Station. He has been a volunteer fire fighter and EMT for 3½ years. At one, time Ernie Park was also a volunteer and he asked Byron if he would like to go with him to a meeting.

Byron started going to the wed night meetings and they were starting an online course for EMT. The EMS chief from Northern Lakes Fire Dept. was organizing the course. The course was self-paced and Byron took about 9 months to do it.

Then he did an internship which took a couple of months. The internship involved taking care of 10 patients; after which he became certified EMT.

At the time of his certification; Ernie Park, Carter Sandahl, Greg Ranson and Byron were the people from LBT who were the volunteers for LBT Fire Station (Timberlake Fire Protection Dist – Station 6.

At the time of this writing Byron is our sole Volunteer Fire Fighter. Asking Byron how he would reach out to our community. His response:

“Communities get better when people contribute”.

THE FIREHOUSE, THE SIGN AND THE PEOPLE WHO MADE IT HAPPEN

Special thanks to all the residents who worked together and made the firehouse come to be reality. And also for our fabulous sign:

Barney Philips	Rick & Carolyn Peterson
Carter Sandahl	Steve Berg(moved)
Rocky Grasser	Clyde Murphy(moved)
Ernie Park	Greg Ranson(moved)
Fred Meyer	Warren Grant
Jack Babinski	Tuck Cavanaugh
Lanny Wigren	Tyler Pettit
Lee & Ronee Gray	
Mike & Linda Tinsley	
Matthew Park (Ernie's grandson)	

The following are a few photos contributed by Bonnie Cavanaugh about the time our famous rock sign was official.





Rocks are from Larry Donnerberg's lot which he donated.





CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

Tuck & Bonnie Cavanagh

Tuck & Bonnie have been here since **1993**.

Tuck gives us an overview of how our water system came to be:

"The Little Blacktail Ranch Park Homeowners Association was chartered by Larry Donnerberg. He owned the land and decided to subdivide the property. Mr. Donnerberg designed and installed the water system in about 1986 to make the lots more attractive to buyers. The water system initially got 100% of its water from the Spring Source Lot which is located at the lowest point along Forest Lake Drive. Later Mr. Donnerberg added two wells to the system drilled on a parcel he owned outside of the Homeowners Association in an attempt to meet demands being made by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). By the end of the 1990's, Mr. Donnerberg no longer wanted to own and run the water system. By the early 2000's, Mr. Donnerberg deeded the water system over to the HOA after arbitration. DEQ demanded that the water system install filtration plant for the Spring Source. In order to qualify for the needed government-guaranteed loan, we had to

establish a Water District. At that time, families had the option to opt-in to the Water District. Forty-six lot owners elected to join the new Water District which was approved by the courts in January 2005. Then the Water District owned the water system, and became a totally separate from entity from the LBRP Homeowners Association. In July 2005, a loan of over \$495,000 was given tentative approval and guaranteed by the U.S. Agriculture Department, Rural Development for building the required filter plant. The engineering firm of Welch Comer out of Coeur d'Alene was awarded the contract to design and supervisor the construction of a slow sand filter. Building began in January 2007, and the slow sand filter was fully online by October 2007. Final cost was about \$552,515. Each member of the Water District had an assessment of \$11,266 payable either immediately or over 30 years. Today the Water District still gets most of its water from the Spring Source. It also has easements to the two deep wells, which are used as backups during the fall and winter when the flow of the Spring Sources slows."

Bonnie remembers...

We first visited North Idaho in 1984 on vacation, and bought our lot here in 1993. Each year we visited our

property at a time we could attend a HOA so we could get to know the area and neighbors. Building started in May of 1996.

In the late 80s and early 90s we toured many of the NW states on vacation and found this area best met most of our requirements, including the cost of living and natural scenery.

Bonnie moved into a rental in March '96, and waited to break ground on the house until road limits (new to us) were lifted late, May 2nd that year. Blacktail Road at that time was all gravel and before her arrival a heavy truck had driven on the road illegally and its weight split open Blacktail Road before the first 90 degree curve (a picture is attached). It split open and was a 6-8' deep trench. People had to park on one side, walk through the mud, and have a car on the other side. It took over 100 loads of fill to repair the road.

Tuck arrived early November and he started burning a slash pile of building waste, and left his tools out that day when it started snowing and we did not see the ground or those tools until spring. That year we measured 196" of snow. We did not have a snow blower and Tuck shoveled the driveway daily so Bonnie

could get out to go to work. We also did not have enough wood split for our first winter.

We invited a neighbor for Thanksgiving dinner with the agreement we could cook the turkey in his oven since our kitchen was not done. Then the electricity went out for 2-3 days at Thanksgiving time, so we had to eat in Sandpoint. We did not have a generator that first year either.

“ What was this area like when you first came here?”

Blacktail Road was all gravel, there was not a turning lane at Highway 95 and Blacktail road which made for some interesting experiences coming from Sandpoint. There were 11 full time owners in LBRP and everyone knew everyone, their pets and vehicles. Phases 3 and 4 did not exist. There was no fire protection. If there was a forest fire, you could call the Bureau of Lands. If a home caught fire, you could call the Bureau of Lands to indicate a house was on fire and that the fire was going to spread to the woods and then they might respond. When we bought in '93, there was a Stop and Eat restaurant on highway 95 near Blacktail Road. We ate there on our vacations here, they even had take out, but it burned to the ground when the fire truck stored in the Careywood station was frozen and the building

was not here when we built in '96. The road to Schweitzer was gravel, and there was only the Green Gables lodge there.

Their first Worst Winter memory was the first one, the winter of '96-97, highest amount of snowfall, 196", since they have lived here. They were not as prepared as they should have been, no snow blower, no generator, not enough wood cut.

Most favorite thing about living here... Living in a wooded area gives the impression of being in the back woods but neighbors are close by and willing to help.

CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

Jess and Mary Bennett

Jess and Mary have lived here for 20 years since **1993**.

His son-in-law had just come up to look for property right after the Landres earthquake in California (in San Bernardino Mountains.)

Jess came up a couple of months later after the earthquake and saw another property that was for sale and loved it. His son in law actually ended up not moving here at all.

Jess, wife and sons built the house completely after the foundation was poured.

They loved how peaceful and quiet and beautiful it was and there were very few homes here at the time.

He found out that there was another Jess Bennett, already living here! Not only did he have the same name but this same Jess had his mail box next to him in California 30 years ago. What are the odds of that to come up here and end up having mailboxes side by side again. Amazing! He and train man Jess became great friends and he remembers that Train man Jess or as he was known "Old Man Jess" was famous through

the entire USA for his trains and his building of all kinds of trains and train parts.

Jess and Mary were actually gone on a missionary trip for their worst winter memory. The storm hit while they were away. Bonnie wrote them and sent them photos to show them how bad it was. He said, he recalled that his freeze pipe had broken. (I'm not sure what that means)

Jess Enjoys peace and quiet and the best neighbors in the world. He feels happy that in an emergency he can call on neighbors. Fred Meyer is a great mechanic, Bonnie knows CPR....etc.

CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

Carter & Christine Sandahl

The Sandahl's acquired their property in **1996**. I'll let Christine tell her story:

"We first visited this part of North Idaho when we fished for kokanee in Lake Pend Oreille with Carter's family who lived in the area. Years later when we were looking for property, land near this beautiful lake was our first choice. We hiked around our property in winter snow before we made the purchase in **1996**. Phase two of LBRP had few structures at that time and it seemed extremely remote. The road from highway 95 to our property was all gravel and dust. Winter plowing to our property was not done in those days because no one lived that far off the county road year round.

For the first few years, we vacationed in tents then built our little cabin, lovingly called the "Unabomber shack", with the help of family and friends. Our goal was to eventually design a home to suit our needs and the south facing building site. It took job changes and twists of fate to be able to move to our LBRP property year round. House construction took much longer than we planned – over 2 years. Living in the Unabomber

shack was cozy in a rustic way – carried water, solar lights, and outdoor shower - by **2004** we were relieved to move into our new home.

After settling into our jobs and home we both have devoted time in our community as Timberlake Fire District volunteers, LBRP Association board members, and helped with fundraising events for improvements to fire station #6. Getting to know our neighbors as dear friends has been among the best experiences of our time living here in North Idaho.



Photo of Carter and Christine at training burn

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

Lanny & Carole Wigren

The Wigren's moved into their triple wide manufactured home after it was set up on their lot in **May 1998**. They had to cancel their house building plans after Carole's husband's stroke in mid-1997 when they lived by Bridle Trails State Park in Kirkland, WA.

They bought their land here when they visited their friend Gabe Gabel who they had purchased several bronze sculptures from. She had a real estate friend who brought the Wigren's up to LBT since she knew they had horses.

Their first memories are of the beautiful meadow and the trails right out their back door. They had been avid Backcountry Horsemen and had two mountain horses.

They had lived in the rat race of Seattle traffic all their life and did not know there was such a wonderful "laid back" lifestyle. Sandpoint is still nice, but they no

longer go to Coeur d'Alene unless they have to – it got too busy in the last years.

The worst winter was when they had so much snow that the hired guys who shoveled the roof off did not need ladders, they simply walked up the snow bank onto the roof. The dining room windows were completely covered.

Their fondest memories are of Lanny being able to get back on his horse even though partially paralyzed on the right side and enjoying the beautiful back country of Northern Idaho.

"We have great neighbors and there is always someone willing to help if you have a problem."

There is more to this story! I learned that; it is because of Lanny Wigren that we now have a fire station. Carole tells the story...

"We moved in to our home in May 1998. Our property had a lot of underbrush like most lots in LBT. We became a "Stewardship Forrest" and as part of their plan suggestions started trimming the lower branches from trees so they did not touch the ground for fire safety."

"My husband is paralyzed on the right side from a stroke but even so has cleared most of our land. After having mowed the tall grass for fire safety he was ironically in the back pasture on 9/13/01 trimming the lower branches on trees for fire safety when the lawn tractor caught the grass on fire. He could not put it out himself."

"Luckily Taryn Grant smelled and saw flames, called 911 and started a neighbor phone tree for everyone to come with shovels."

"Being outside both Sagle and Timberlake fire districts and Idaho Department of Lands being a long way away, it was up to us to stop the fire. Idaho Dept. of Lands did come and mop up, but they would have been too late."

"Timberlake Fire Dept. showed up even though it was outside their area and sprayed the ground, stopping the fire. They were so impressed with all the neighbors who had come and slowed it down from spreading."

"I wrote a thank you letter and other neighbors asked questions about fire control. Timberlake offered free training. Initially there were about 8 people who took fire training and became volunteer fire fighters and several EMT training. Taryn Grant and I became EMT's and Bonnie Cavanaugh being a nurse skimmed thru the EMT training and took Advanced Life Support training as well. I did it because the life I saved could have been my husbands with all his medical problems."

"In the next few years I remember 13 times we helped our immediate Blacktail or Little Blacktail neighbors with fire or EMT calls."

"During this time we legally voted to annex to Kootenai and Timberlake Fire Dist. and out of Bonner County for fire protection."

CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

Barney & Marcia Phillips

Barney & Marcia bought their home and property in **1998**. They came here from So. California.

They had looked in Arizona and Colorado and Northern Calif. they had friends who lived in Coeur d' Alene. These friends had a biker party and invited the Phillips, even though they were not bikers. One of the guest had just gotten his realtor license and he showed them his multi-listing book. They found their home in that book and they came out and looked at the house.

Their original intention was to raise Bison (Buffalo) and the property was perfect for it. they raised beef for a little while and decided that beef was easier to raise than Bison.

A couple of years ago, they stopped raising beef and started raising Trees. They decided Trees were easier than Beef! 😊

When they first came here there were fewer people but the community was still the same welcoming spirit.

One of the things that they treasure is the serenity of the area. They enjoy listening to the silence. I would agree!

Her worst winter memory was 2007 – 2008 when her convertible car which was parked under a canvas shelter collapsed from the weight of the snow and crushed her car. the weight of the snow also crushed an out building.

Their most favorite thing about living here is living away from the city and not having people right next to them. The comfort of having neighbors not too far away is great, but the ability to have solitude is great too.

CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

Bob Breuninger

Bob has lived in LBT since **2000**. They bought their house from the Newman's who had it about 8 or 10 years prior.

He came here from Arizona with his wife.

They had lived in Montana in the late 70's early 80's and been to Idaho and Washington and frequented these areas. They knew this area a little bit and he always liked this area.

He knew a framer who actually had property here in LBT so they came up for a long weekend and looked at his property and decided it was not for them but they came back on a Sunday and happened to stop at the driveway of his now property looking at a sign. The Newman's asked them if they would like to look at it. They came home that weekend and put an offer on the property. It was everything he could possibly want.

Bob has always loved the country and woods and liked what it had to offer, far enough away from the beaten path.

He recalls that there were a lot more vacant areas. Peterson's house not built yet.

He recalls the previous owners of the Pettit's house which was in really bad repair and had a bunch of old cars and school buses, and a basic junkyard. The person who bought the property after that totally got rid of everything and rebuilt a beautiful new house with horse property. He gave Bob the grand tour of the house when it was done. It was Pristine.

Bob has totally redone his own house since then, all inside and out.

He does not have bad winter memories but he remembers at least 3 or 4 winters ago (can't remember the year) there was 96 inches in 5 days. It started snowing and snowed for 5-6 days nonstop. 10 years prior there had been another record snow fall.

Bob never looked at the snow as an inconvenience. He looked at the snow as a chance to enjoy winter longer.

For whatever reason the turkeys love to congregate on Bob's property. He lives across from us. We always have the females on our side, but one day while talking to him at his driveway, I noted that all the male turkeys were over on his side!

He remembers early on, Hwy 95 - the roads were really in bad shape and there was hardly anybody out here. Hwy 95 was only half the size it is now. It was about a 20 year span when he came back that he learned about the hotel in CDA and well over 30 years ago CDA was also very small as well.

He remembers that the little row of buildings near the fire house was rentals and there was a little store and restaurant.

Bob said that around the time of WWII there was a 9 hole golf course up here, near by the area where the white horse stands. They were navy guys who trained in Farragut State park but used to come up here to a secluded safe ground to play golf.

CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

Michael & Linda Tinsley

Michael and Linda built their home in **April 2003**.

I had the opportunity to first meet Mike and Linda while we were volunteering for the second part of our brush back detail phase II, Burn Detail on East Ridge Rd. Linda a bubbly woman, so tiny that I was sure a breeze could lift her in the air and Mike a very warm and outgoing personality that welcomed you instantly.

They moved here from Fieldbrook, Calif in Humboldt County.

Their daughter Marie lived in Cocolalla and they came up to visit her. They loved it so much they decided after 26 years of living in Fieldbrook that it was time for a change.

I can't even imagine building a home up here much less one up high in the mountainous area (well, I think it's mountainous, but I'm from the city, remember?) Anyway, in Sept 2003 in their building process; they were ready to set the windows and did not have any siding up yet... just framed and fireplace in.

Michael was putting in windows and he was putting in the last window with the help of his son-in-law and Linda. He was up 30 ft. on scaffolding with ladders. She was inside on 3 rows of scaffolding guiding the window as they brought it up the ladders. Son-in-law Lance was outside on a second ladder.

The wheels on the ladders started to slip from the weight of the window and they both fell 30 feet down!

Thankfully the glass window came straight down and not on top of them.

Lance fractured his wrist, but Mike broke both upper arms and scapula and got a dent in his head from hitting a rock.

It was now up to Linda to keep building under the verbal direction of her husband. She recalls that it was the scariest time of her life.

When they first came here, it was more rustic. There were many houses that were not yet built. There was a lot more empty land.

The roads have been better maintained because of the HOA and the County has always been really good about taking care of the land.

2010 Worst Winter Memory.... Blacktail road had 2 ½ feet of snow at the starting point from Hwy 95. They were driving a Subaru and the snow covered the headlights was coming down so fast that they could not even see where the headlights were.

From Hwy 95 & Blacktail to their house took them an hour because the snow was coming down so bad. This is usually a 15 min. drive. They had to walk the rest of the way home and were snowed in for 3 days.

Mr. Tope (the road grader) finally was able to come and grade the roads. Their road was the last one graded because of the furthest location of their house.

There was so much snow on the barn, with metal roof of about 3 ½ feet that they worried about the weight of it as well as garage. It was so deep that they could put the ladder on top of the snow and the snow was so hard that the ladder did not sink in.

Their most favorite thing about living here is the absolutely beautiful summers.

They have a Clydesdale horse that she won with a raffle ticket for \$7.00 in a draft horse show in Sandpoint at the fairgrounds. She did not have a set up for the horse at the time. They kept him at a

friend's house, for 3 months while they logged their place and got fencing up.

Archie, (the horse) now 8 years old and she rides him. In the winter they put him behind a sleigh. Archie does not have plans to get married any time soon.

CHAPTER TWENTY NINE

Lee & Ronee Gray

The Grays came here in **May 2005** from Grass Valley, California.

For them this area is a lot like where they came from. They moved here because the atmosphere of the area was changing.

They were intending to move to Western Montana and came thru on the way there, and stopped in this area and then decided that they liked it here better.

They loved the atmosphere and the 4 seasons of the area and that the people of the association were very community minded.

Their first winter here was fairly mild, but since then there have been several heavy snow winters, but it has not been as cold as they expected.

They love the lakes and the rivers and woods and wild.

The flat area where they live were hay fields. There was a dairy there some place and the trees growing there are not genetically healthy, so they have replanted with Ponderosa pines and Larch and White Pine trees. They planted originally 1300 trees and have

lost about 200 or more. Since they moved here they have taken many forestry classes put on by the university of Idaho extension.

Lee is the President of the HOA. He started on the board in Jan. 2012, as member at large. In July he was voted President by the Board.

Says Lee:

"The main objective of the board is to maintain our common areas which are the roads and the trails and trying to promote a sense of community and unity of people in the association."

CHAPTER THIRTY

Byron & Susan Burrows

The Burrow's started building their home **May 2009**, and moved in later in the year in 2009. They moved here from Texas.

While planning where the house was going to go, they saw a bear right across the property and across their path into the forest service land! They were so excited to see the bear.... and then they continued on with their hike!

They were amazed at the color because in Texas they don't have four seasons, but here there is distinctive four seasons and variety of all the nature, trees and scrubs, mountains, lakes and topography. They find this very beautiful.

In 2009 while building they stayed in a 19 foot camper. There was an outage in early DEC. and the entire camper froze. They were fortunate that they had already set up the propane stove in time not to have to stay in town. This outage lasted a few days.

One of the things that amazed them was how friendly the neighbors were and how talented and knowledgeable.

They were here before Mitch Collins built his house (he lives up the hill from them.) There was hardly any traffic, A lot fewer homes here and the community was much smaller.

They already owned their lot but sometimes would have doubts if they should sell and move to some place like Bonner's Ferry, but every time they came here they were more and more convinced that this was the place for them. This was at the time when the property values were really high. They even had realtors wanting to buy their property but the more they looked at other possibilities, the more they realized that they had the most beautiful place they could have in terms of property.

In the winter 2012, Susan was heading out on her way to town and got on East Ridge only to find that there were many trees down so then she went the other way to make the loop but those sides were blocked as well. Many trees had come down because of the snow load. Byron initiated a brush back system. It has been

historically done by other neighbors in many years past.

Susan is the treasurer of our HOA. Byron is a volunteer fireman for our fire house.

They love beauty of the area and all the activities that are available and peace and quiet....and great neighbors.

CHAPTER THIRTY ONE

Roger & Carmen Hoskinds

Carmen & Roger Hoskinds and her family came here in **April of 2009** from the San Bernardino Mountains in Calif. Their first choice was in NW Montana near Whitefish. Pretty much her mother who lived in Careywood and Grandmother who lived in Cocolalla convinced Carmen to come and live here.

When they first moved in they had only been here for 3 months, when they saw a full grown bull moose. She went out and saw the biggest, huge Bull Moose standing 25 feet away. Where she came from she was used to seeing bear. She says she has heard about a certain bear here that likes to eat from the apple tree on the corner of E. Ridge and Sun Valley but she has never seen it.

She feels the HOA meetings are getting better in attendance and this makes her happy.

Worst winter memory was going down LBT. Her husband was going down with his pickup on what is known around here as the S Curves. The road had iced over and husband moved over for another car to pass

and when he did he slid off the road as his truck turned upside down and continued sliding right off the embankment. He sent her a text and asked her to get help and call for AAA towing. The car, a dodge ram pickup; barely had a dent on it but he was shaken up. It all happened in slow motion.

Carmen remembers that a neighbor across the street had the same thing happened to her in her jeep in the same year. Just as you approach Lily Lane and into the S Curves.

Her most favorite thing about living here is EVERYTHING! The people, excellent neighbors, they love the area and the nature and the animals. Her kids feel they are in a safe environment.

Presently, Carmen is part of LBT Welcome Committee together with Susan Burrows and myself. She makes sure every new resident coming in is welcomed with a loaf of hot baked bread.

CHAPTER THIRTY TWO

Dale & Shirley Carmen Johnson

We purchased our home on East Ridge Rd on **Feb 18, 2013** and moved in **April 1st 2013**.

The bad economy caught up to Kennewick, WA in 2011 and 2012 when hundreds were laid off from Hanford. What started as a successful dance business plummeted steadily as more and more layoffs occurred.

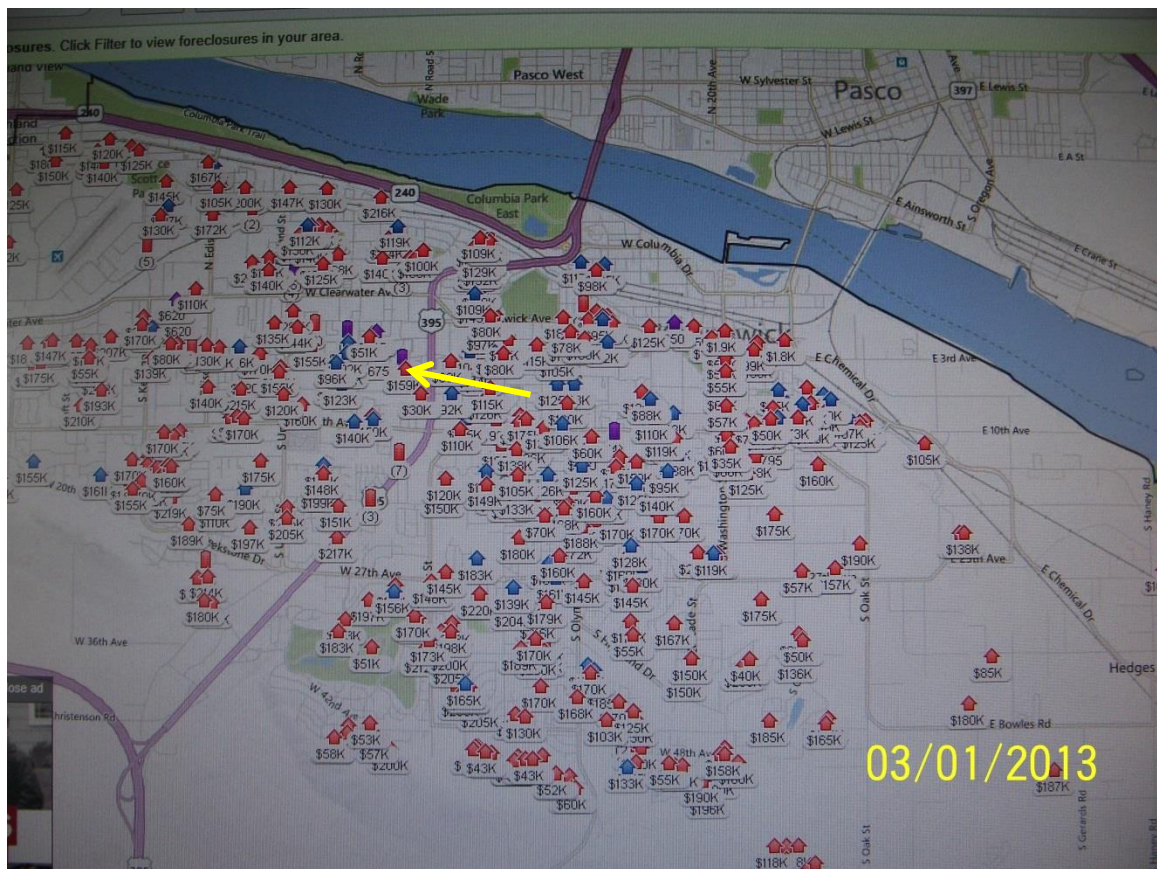
We finally made the decision that we wanted to move out of the city into the country, we just were not sure where. So we spent a couple of months combing the mountainous areas of Oregon. We went as small as Imnaha, Oregon deep into the Hells Canyon National Forest, but having to drive for 2 hours on a gravel road one way,(with no snow plowers) was way more than our 15 minute drive from here to Hwy 95.

Then we decided to widen our search and we started looking in Northern Idaho. A realtor helped us to view places that we wanted to see but it was by accident that we found our home here. Even my realtor had not seen this place.

Houses were not selling fast in Kennewick and there were houses for sale that are still for sale TODAY. Our

realtor in Kennewick told us that it could take as long as 5-6 months. We prayed for God to put our house in the front. Our house sold in 17 days. On the 18th day we purchased our LBT home!

The red house markers on the map show all the houses for sale in Kennewick. Ours was right in the middle....but in 17 days it was sold. Prayer answered. See for yourself.



As excited as we were to be out of the city and in the country, it was also overwhelming. There was still snow

on the ground when we got here. We had no clue as to what the property looked like under the snow.

Dale was in his 7th heaven, but for the first 6 weeks, I felt depressed and most overwhelmed.

Susan Burrows was the first friend I made here and her husband, Byron and my husband, Dale immediately hit it off. We attended the first HOA meeting and the people at the meeting were friendly and welcoming.

Of course, being city slickers, we arrived with our little garden tools which broke almost immediately and after several rounds of that, we had learned the lesson and started to invest in the "big boy" tools.

Our outdoor cleanup was moving pretty slowly from April to July until NLI came to remove the trees that were growing under the power lines on our property. I had requested from them to have 18 trees removed; but when the man in charge came to survey my request, he immediately scheduled us for the first Monday after the 4th of July. They were here for 7 days and took out over 100 trees. These trees were either growing right under the power lines or right next to the power lines. Not only did they clean up our property, but they followed the lines into the next two properties and cleared those trees as well.

Once NLI had cleared the trees, outdoor work started to move at a faster pace and Dale started to clean our tree stands and creek and pond, while I learned to mow the meadow with our field mower.

We now had the important things! A new wood burning stove... our hot tub set up from Kennewick, all the wood NLI had piled so neatly for us and an ATV to get around the property in.

We continued to meet our neighbors and make new friends and by September, I was no longer homesick for my ballroom floor. If I had the opportunity to go back to the city or stay here, now I could tell you that, I never wanted to go back to the city to live. I felt safe here and I felt privileged to be entrusted to God's beautiful creation of land, forest and nature.

I'm sure Byron and Susan, must have shook their heads many times, thinking "...those crazy city slickers..."

We were excited to be part of the HOA and I volunteered to be a lead for a new Welcome Committee but that was not enough for me. I had so many questions about everything here and the people and the land and it's beginnings...I decided to write my own history book about this area that I could present to our

HOA. The more I researched information, the more I learned and the more I fell in love with Little Blacktail Ranch Park.

By Middle October, we had met all our goals before winter and we even had our snow plow attachment ready to do its job.

Over the months, Dale had been learning to do brush back detail with Byron and he took a forestry class and applied the principals to our own tree stands.

When Susan announced that there was going to be a brush and limb burning party in the middle of the street higher up on our road, I was terrified! How can you burn brush in the middle of the road and not set the forest on fire?!?!?! Terrified, I tell you!

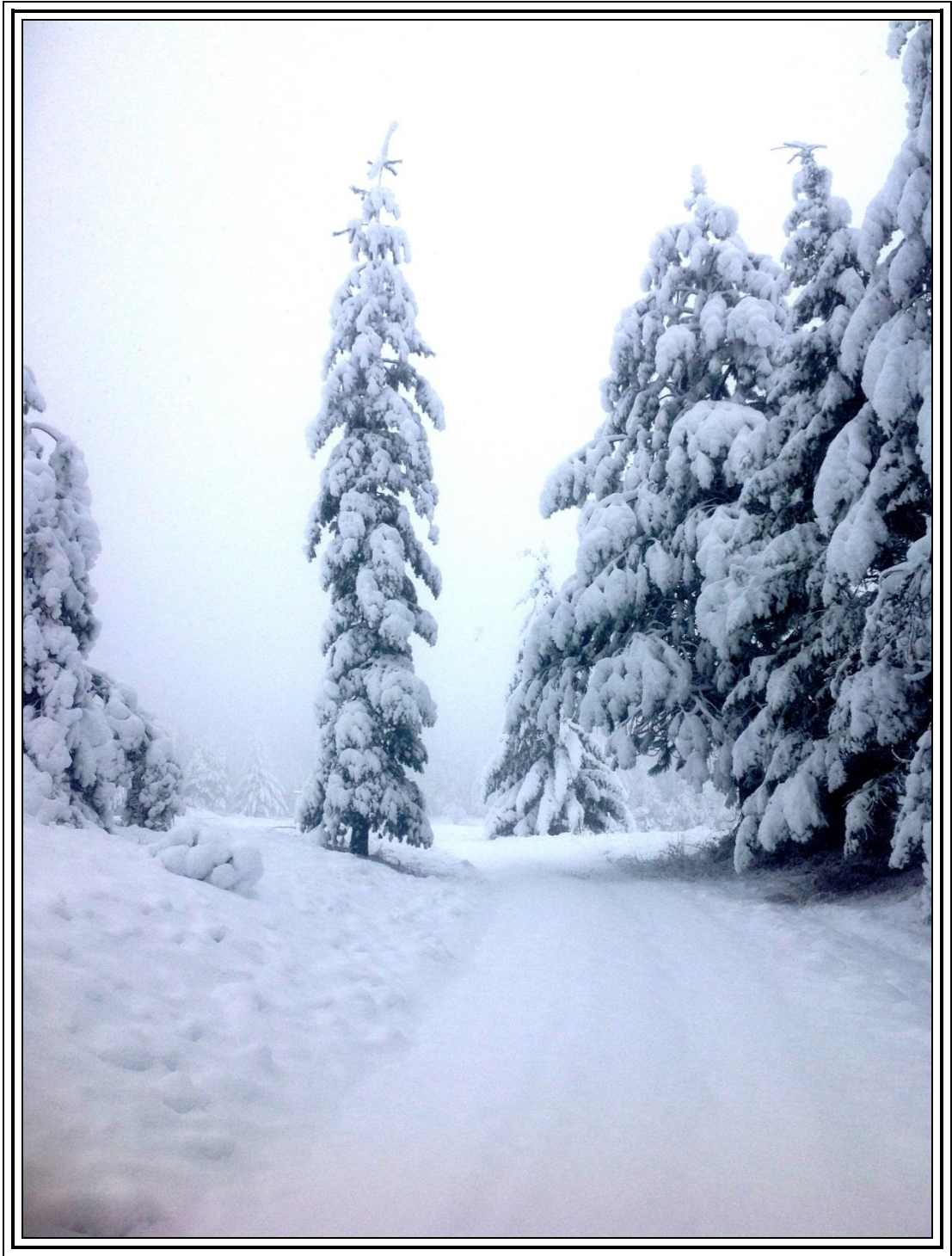
But we were there to do our part helping and learning and it was great fun. A couple of weeks later, Dale used his new skills to help another neighbor to do brush back detail between our home and his and another burning. And then!!! Dale felt confident enough to go to the little pile in our meadow and do his own first burn pile. With each new thing that we learned and did, that we would never do in the city; there was a great sense of accomplishment.... and gratitude.

Our first baptism into winter was a gentle one. We got 12 inches of snow overnight, lost power for about 8 hours, but we had our neighbors ready to help Dale figure out the generator for the first time.



First Winter Snow Photos 2013

Taken by Carmen Johnson



CHAPTER THIRTY THREE

LANDMARKS WE LOVE

We have a number of landmarks around us which I'm sure if you don't already know the history, you are still wondering and asking questions!

THE CROSS ON THE HILL

According to Nova Jo Kellogg, this cross was placed in memory of her grandson who drowned at the age of 14 at Farragut, while swimming. Originally the cross would be put out there at Christmas time, but after his death, it became a permanent memorial for her grandson.

THE WHITE HORSE

As you are driving down the road, how many times have you seen that white horse on the left side of the road; standing close to the fence with its butt facing the road, head facing in, standing posed and frozen in the same position? Yes, that horse!

Well that horse is Callie and 18 years old! And there is a reason that you will always find him/her in that exact spot...

Callie's owner, Pam said that Callie is deathly afraid of Moose!

Pam's husband told me that Callie was once chased in that area pretty bad by a moose and that ever since that happened that the horse never stands with its back turned towards the trees any more. It stands facing the trees so it can watch out for Moose!

Smart horse! Wow, this photo almost looks like a painting!

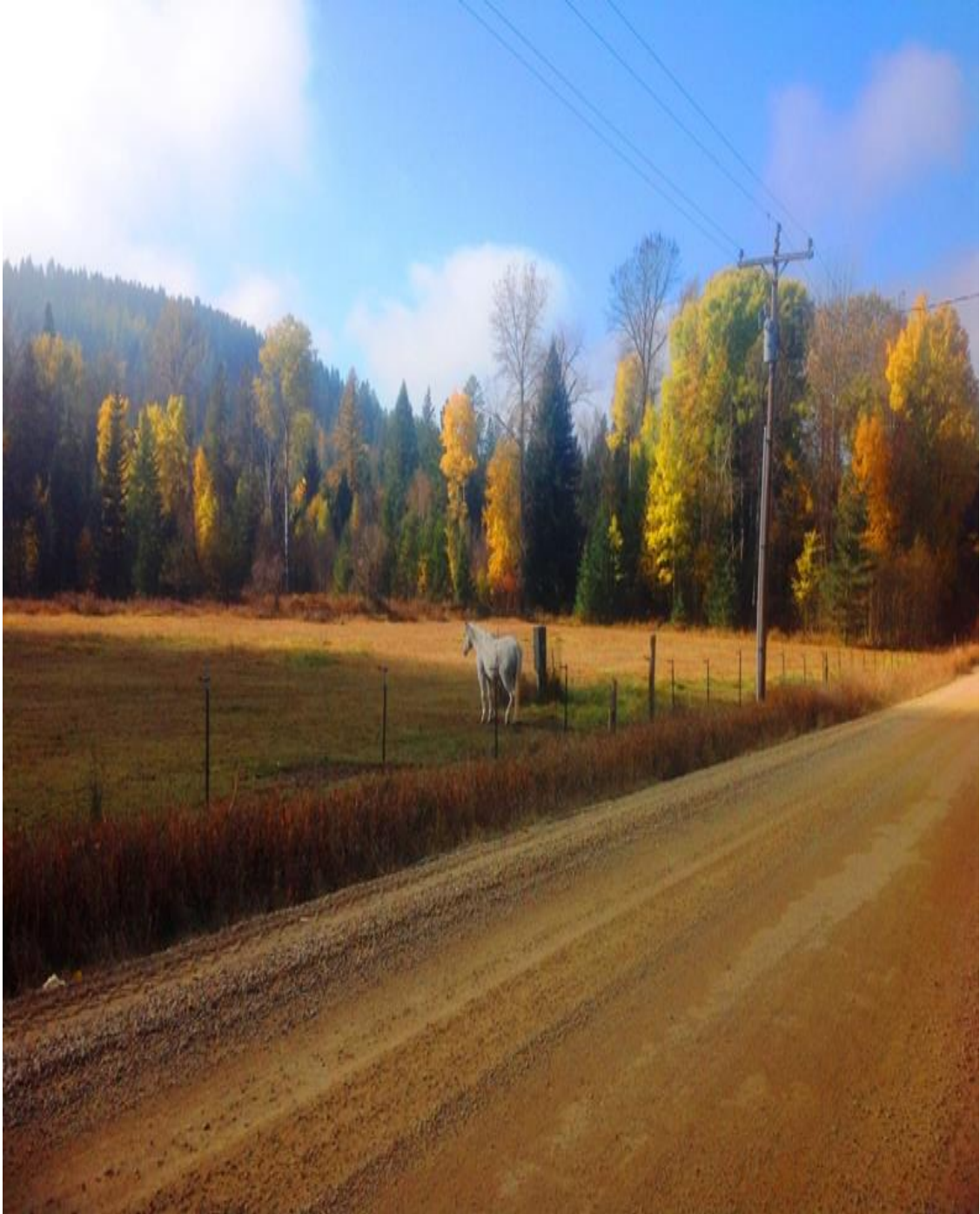


Photo By Carmen Johnson

THE BARN

The barn belonging to Nova Jo is well over 100 years old. She said it was already old looking at her earliest recollection of 5 years old. The barn is still very much in use today and amazingly it sustained the fires of 1910.



THE BOAT

Between the horse and the boat I don't know which one intrigued me the most.

Heading down LBT, just as you pass the corner of Sun Valley Dr. on the left you will see a little boat perched up on a little hill. (A.K.A. the gravel pit)

What is it doing there? How did it get there? Was it put there purposely? Did it get lost trying to find the lake? Better yet, was the driver of the boat lost trying to find the lake?

So itching to find out this information; I drove up to the property connected to this boat and the owner of the house referred me to the owner of the boat who is Mary Alderetti.

The boat has been there for about 13 or 14 years now.

Mrs. Aldretti and her husband had been invited to dinner to friends in Bayview. They saw the cute boat in someone's yard and the owners of the boat were getting ready to destroy/burn the boat. So the Aldretti's asked for it and got it for free. They brought it home and placed it where you see it now.

They named the boat "Ship Wreck" as they have a business called Shipwrecked in Idaho Ranch. They are Metal Art Artist, and they lived in the Caribbean for 7 years.

At one point they had ideas and plans to create a Metal Art Park-like setting there with the boat. Wouldn't that have been nice!

The boat called "Shipwrecked"



Photo By Carmen Johnson

...and in better times...



Photo By Christine Sandahl

Neighbors Who Become Friends...

After a day of burning brush in mid-September 2013, the volunteers are better friends than when they started.



Fred Meyer (on tractor)

Carter & Christine Sandahl

Dale Johnson & (Carmen – I took the photo)

Byron Burrows & (Susan –not in photo)

Ronee & Lee Gray

CHAPTER THIRTY FOUR

TODAY

If you came here in the birth time of this little community, then you have plowed the fields and felled the trees and cultivated your land, and helped your neighbor, and volunteered your time to make it what it is today.

Rest, and enjoy the fruit of your labor; old timers, for you well know...there is always work to be done.

If you are a newcomer to the community,
Be thankful for those who came ahead of you to make where you live a more comfortable place.

Find your nitch and dig your roots in,
But don't assume you are invisible,

Stand up and be counted as a new volunteer of our little community, so that in our joint efforts, our private forest will always be a thing of beauty and awe and the place we call home.

If you are a visitor with a mind to move here,

Here are some tips from the newest person on the
block...

Stand back and look at this land and see

What the creator had in mind.

Bring with you respect, peace, hope, and a thankful
spirit.

Respect the residents who live here;

For they have worked very hard.

Feel the peace that permeates the land

There is hope for new beginnings and memories here

When you give Thanks to The Creator,

The Lord of all Creations.

SUMMARY

When I stand in the middle of my meadow I am strongly reminded of the first verses in the Bible. In the book of Genesis; God created everything I am looking at.

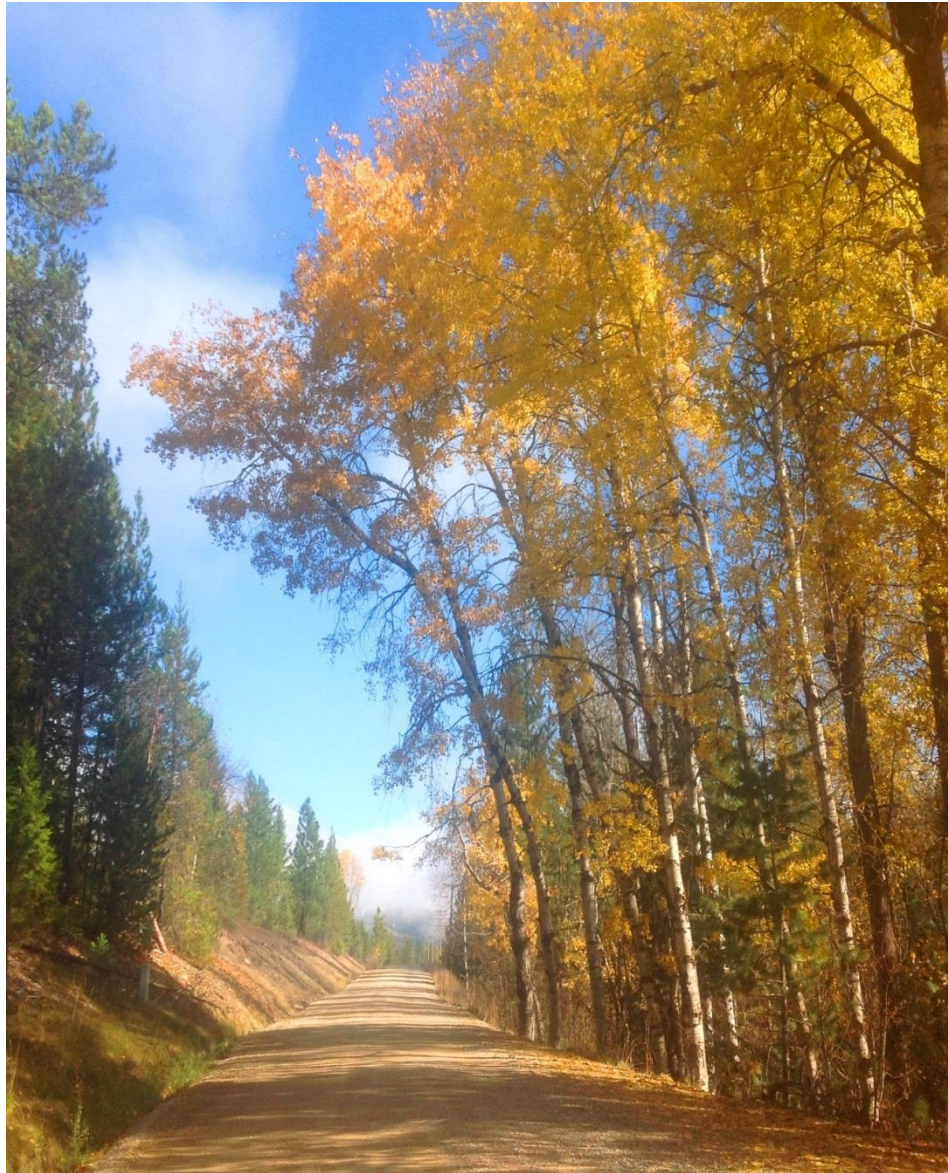
- The mountains and land
- The Creeks and Streams
- The Trees in so many shades of green
- All sorts of singing birds
- Chickens and Turkeys
- Deer and Moose
- The mural-like views everywhere I turn
- And the sound of peace and tranquility

At night I look up and see the sky exploding with stars by the thousands, and I am reminded of *Exodus 32:13* as God spoke to Abraham.

- I can hear the sounds of the forest at night, almost a lulling sound unlike anything I've ever heard in the city.
- God speaks to my heart and I hear him say

"Be still, and know that I am God." *Psalm 46:10*

Thank you, Lord, for making Idaho, but thank you most, for allowing us to find this little slice of Heaven on earth - THE PLACE WE CALL HOME.



The Journey

Photo by Carmen Johnson

Thank you for taking this journey with me.

May you be blessed.

The End

About the Author

Shirley Carmen Johnson, born and raised in San Francisco, California and a Seattle resident for 32 years; now resides with her husband Dale in the middle of the Kaniksu Forest, in a wonderful little spot called Little Blacktail Ranch Park.

Ballroom dance instructor for twelve years since 2002, Carmen & Dale opened their own dance studio called Carmen & Dale's Strictly Ballroom.

Author of a number of published books, Carmen's other hobbies include photography, cooking, photo journaling, raising Zebra Finches and her passion above all passions, ballroom dancing.

They live happily ever after with their Chihuahua's Twinkie and Lucy and their assortment of Zebra Finches.

