

of Silver history

Told by those who remember

"Jack McEwen was bookkeeper. Joe (Doc) Adams had a store — lots of credit but he never made any money.

"A Japanese couple ran the cookhouse — the grub was good. There was a big bunkhouse — two to a room and maybe 12 homes — cabins built in the trees. Dunc MacDonald unloaded wood and kept the boilers going. He and a group of men cleaned out a shack for a school. They took up a collection to buy lumber for a new floor.

"Robert Bruce Wallace was hired as teacher. He started a night school for adults (Fred Bayson for one) to brush up on their schooling and tutored newcomers who wanted to learn English. Later, Wallace married Edith Strimbold of Topley.

The school was the social centre of the mine and many Smithers residents headed up the mountain on Saturday night.

The miners had to guarantee transportation for the Smithers musicians — John Gray on the violin, the Gazley's, Clary Goodacre on drums. Doc Adams played the piano and Jack Haggart the Jew's harp. Often when Jack had had a few he would step outside and the whole gang would leave the hall to listen to him. Clary reports that a good fist fight was often part of the entertainment.

Dr. Dunn, a young intern sponsored by Dr. Hankinson, gained much experience as the mine's first aid man. He distinguished himself equally well as a fist fighter — taking on a Smithers' teacher, Mr. Elsie, in a dispute over a lady. According to May Simpson the school often became over crowded, so to make more room the fellows would throw the big heater out in the snow.

Every Monday, Clary Goodacre, who worked for Watson's, drove a 1½ ton truck loaded with groceries to the mine. Fred supplied food on credit until the families on the mountain had become "established". The depression hit, the mine closed and it almost spelled bankruptcy for Fred."



Ore chute and Blacksmith Shop, where Tom Haig and Ridsdale sharpened the drill steel.
Photo courtesy John Bovill



Mike Mesich, with team Babe and Prince, hauled 4' cordwood and stockpiled it beside the road.
Photo courtesy Mike Mesich