

# PEPP-ALK

with  
Harry  
Pepper

April 29/83

Booty Griffiths is not, as I had always thought, a native Rosslander. He was born in Revelstoke and didn't move to Rossland until 1938. He lived in the turret of the Irwin Hotel which was a city landmark until a few years back when fire destroyed the hotel. Rossland has never been quite the same since for some of us older people.

For the next three years he worked for Cominco in Warfield in the Ammonium Nitrate plant and one of the highlights of his term there was to assist Fred Armishaw in turning out the first batch of Ammonium Nitrate ever made by the company.

He left Rossland in 1941 and worked in the Vancouver Shipyards on Burrard Inlet as a steel caulker. That was in the

days before rivetting came into vogue and all the ships seams were caulked. One day while taking a break he looked down and watched the fish boats plying the inlet and decided right then and there, that was the life for him. The way Booty describes it, all the guys on the fish boats looked so brown and healthy he just knew he wanted to fish. For 20 years that was the job he did during the summer season.

He left Vancouver and went north to Cape Meidge in the Campbell River area and fished with the Indians, many of whom became good friends of his.

On hearing that a chairlift was to be built on Red Mountain in Rossland he returned and worked on its

construction in 1946 and when it was completed he would spend his winter season in the ski business and return to his fishing life in the summer.

In the ski business he operated out of rented quarters for some time and then in 1962 he built a ski shop of his own. That shop was the one that is at present occupied by Dixie Lee on Rossland's main street.

A couple of years later Booty turned that into a Tasti-Freez business in summer and continued to operate it as a ski shop in winter until 1968 when he sold out and went to work for the Lange Ski Boot Co. After three years he switched affiliation to the Dynastar and Salomon Ski Equipment Co. for another three years.

During those years he was hard at work building cabins and making ski trails throughout the Upper Sheep Creek Basin and was instrumental in forming what is now known as the Ben Shaw Cross-Country Ski Society. Named after a well-known resident of the valley of the Sheep Creek.

In 1975 he started a ski rental for cross-country skiers in his own home. We toured this shop in the basement of his home overlooking Happy Valley

and Booty showed me the comparisons between the skis of today and those in use when he was a young boy just starting to ski around Revelstoke. Compared to equipment of those days, today's are as light as a feather but still remarkably durable. To me this is all very enlightening since my knowledge of skiers and their tools is very limited. To say the least, today, it seems from what I saw in Booty's shop that today's skier is part and parcel of his or her equipment, or vice-versa.

After our tour we sat down to talk and Booty told me about some of the people of the ski world he has known in his day. After having been at the sport for some 60 years I guess he has met quite a number of them. One of the most famous was Olius Jeldness who came to this area straight from his home in Norway and liked what he saw around Rossland's mountains. He was one of the people who started Rossland on its way to becoming the mecca for skiers it now enjoys.

Jeldness was a champion in every phase of skiing, jumping, cross-country, downhill, and slalom. In those days, Booty tells me, one had to be versatile in all

four categories to compete at any meet. It was known as four-way competition.

Booty himself was coached by a world's champ, Nels Nelson by name, and he competed in four-ways for 8-10 years before turning to his present love, cross-country.

Booty can tell many stories of the early days in Rossland, most of them concern skiing and one of these days he's going to tell me all about the famous Jeldness tea party held on top of Red.

# Community Comment

## CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 14

In business conducted at the general meeting of April 16 the donations by the branch to various charities and sports organizations were discussed.

The Legion-sponsored

teams in two ball leagues came in for the major share, dividing a total of \$900 between them. The Rossland Ladies' Figure Skating Club was helped on its trip to a provincial meet at Delta and minor hockey also got a helping hand from the

branch coffers.

Tullio Lenarduzzi suggested buying cigarettes and candy for hospital visits be dropped. The branch could use the money from charity and bingo accounts to buy two blood pressure machines at a total cost of \$400. This suggestion was passed. The regular donation of \$1,500 was made to the Cancer Society.

Correspondence ranged from an invitation to Castlegar's anniversary, through notice of the '83 provincial golf tourney to be held at Cloverdale July 30 with a June 1 deadline for entries.

In committee reports, Al Stinson reported good progress with his proposed CPR classes and looks forward to a large turnout. During the building report the need for an alarm system at the branch was put forward and a motion was passed to have this installed. In view of the recent break-in problems it is probably overdue.

A card sent to elder member Tom Anderson, now residing on the prairies, that marked his birthday, was answered by a nice letter to

the branch in return. Chairman Bob Letoria of the entertainment committee, stated that a western nite dance will be held with music by the Rhythmaires and a baron of beef supper May 7. Western regalia will be allowed, so doll yourselves up.

President Bernie Fourt attended the Grand Forks convention and reported 85 people present. Rossland won the membership shield for the zone and Fourt was on the membership committee for the convention. He further expressed concern that track is being lost of widows with regard to pensions and the committee would appreciate input from the branches in this respect. June 18 was named the date for the zone golf tourney and the Kaslo course is the site.

New zone officers named are as follows: zone commander, Jamier Hall of Trail; zone chairman, Earl Maffot, Nakusp. Sam Brown of Castlegar is deputy zone chairman; Harry Bate of Castlegar, zone sports chairman and Pat Rempel of Kaslo will be zone service officer. Congratulations go out to all of the above for a good term in office.

Three well-known Rosslanders will celebrate their retirement at the branch Friday evening. Jim Flanders, Jack Cox and Bernie Fourt will be starting a life of leisure than. Why not join the branch for a pleasant evening get-together?