

# Mar. 6/87 PEPP-ALK

with  
Harry  
Pepper

When one starts thinking back it brings memories of certain times and people whom you knew way back then. I first saw the streets of Trail and Rossland in the early part of 1946 and it really doesn't seem like 40 years ago. But that's what the calendar says and a person would be rather foolish to argue with it. Someone a lot wiser than most of us got the idea to keep track of time that way and it has proved to be a pretty good idea ever since.

I got off the bus not far from the Douglas Hotel which my older readers will know was across the road and up the block a little from where Super-Valu is today. Its wide front stoop and open door welcomed me and I spent the next week or so there while house-hunting.

The next day I visited the bakery where I was destined to work. It was situated on the ground floor of the Italo-Canadese hall. I found an available house on the way there and met the current shop foreman whom I got to know as one of the golf pros at the local course.

His name, which you all know, was Roy Stone. I said, "Hi, my name is Harry Pepper and I've come to take over your job here". As was his habit, Roy didn't say anything, he pulled out the loaves he had on the peel and handed me the peel, saying "There you are, you now got the job and the tools that go with it."

In the Montana I ran into another guy I got mixed up with. In the world of soccer, Jimmy Stewart was a pretty good full-back in his day. It also led to me going out to play with the Colombo's team and from soccer it lead to softball and baseball. Don Fleming, who later moved to Edmonton, was the editor of the Trail Times at that time, to be followed later by Eric Bishop, Jack Fisher and at least a couple of others.

Getting in with this group of guys led me to my becoming vice-president and finally president of the City-Wide Men's Fastball League and watching guys like the Wanless brothers, Gerry and Cliff, who as a battery were among the best of their era.

Many and long were the battles we had in the board room as they represented Castlegar's interests while Trail had Bill Anderson and other powerful voices on their behalf. We started to bring in the touring teams like the King and his Court and some of the top colored aggregations.

Trail had some dandies of its own in those days

too, big Slivers Decembrini, Tick Hall and one real little rabbit of an outfielder. Ken Stanton's name is very well-known in Rossland today as he has produced a number of pretty good hockey players who made Rossland one of the better hockey towns around. I don't think I've ever watched a better outfielder in this calibre of ball anywhere. He beat more guys out of home runs in Butler Park than any other guy I ever saw.

On softball, not many towns had a ball park like the little old box called Victoria Park. Many were the games I watched there while learning to keep score.

Still on ball, not many people in this area know how the Rossland ball team got their name Capilanos. It seems that a Vancouver club of that name was travelling through town and Gerry Long, a well-known scribe for the Rossland Miner, was also a member of the Rossland group and also a pretty good gambler. At a poker game in the old Allan Hotel Gerry took the Vancouver manager for all his available cash and that worthy put up the team uniforms as bond for what he owed Gerry. When he left Gerry kept the uniforms which were never redeemed. They also lost the ball game.

The game of soccer in the Trail district is well-developed today with leagues for kids as soon as they can walk. You can still play when you practically have to use a pair of crutches.

Back in the early days when we got the idea to give the little guys a chance we had lots of coaches. In Rossland the late John Hughes and several others got things started and the ladies of the town, "God bless 'em", did a fine job transporting and mothering ten or a dozen kids every Saturday morning. Now we have leagues for every kid that ever dreamed of being another Stanley Matthews. Guys who played with us in those days were Jim Shearer, Robbie Robertson, Reg Hastings, Jimmy Morris, Wish Milburn, Gord Sinclair, the Paterson boys, Jimmy Peat and a number of Italian boys who came to Trail at that time.

Another sport which had its share of heroes but which seemed to have faded away from the present scene and I'd love to see come back is lacrosse. Rossland was a hotbed for years with the Lafaces, Scotts, Bileskys, Marcus Smith, Buddy Dupperon and a dozen more who were just starting to hit their stride.

This has been a chance to reminisce about the old ones and their heyday. With Canada Games and one thing and another taking the spotlight, I thought it might be a good time to give them some of their due.

So until next time, I'll say, bye for now.