HOW DID YOUR STREET GET ITS NAME?

PLACE NAMES OF THE
BEAVER & PEND D'OREILLE VALLEYS

Introduction

So often a person lives in an area knowing little or nothing about its history. Even an area such as the Beaver or Pend d'Oreille Valley has a rich and sometimes colourful past. This booklet contains a brief account of the stories behind the place names, streets and creeks of the area. It is but a prelude to what we hope will be a book on the history and development of the two valleys.

Place Names

COLUMBIA GARDENS
Columbia Gardens, in 1982, existed only in the form of a steamer landing called Sayward Landing which was situated just below the mouth of Beaver Creek. It was established to land the supplies that were needed to construct the Nelson & Fort Sheppard Railroad through the Beaver Valley. After the construction of the railroad was completed, Sayward existed only as a train stop until the early 1900's when it was bought up by a syndicate who sub-divided the land into blocks suitable for fruit orchards and re-named it Columbia Gardens. James Hunter of Rossland, one of the sub-dividers, installed an irrigation system at Columbia Gardens in 1906 at the cost of $12,000 – quite a large sum of money for those days. The orchards in Columbia Gardens were more successful than the ones in Fruitvale but these were destroyed by the smelter output in the 1930's.

FORT SHEPPARD
Fort Sheppard was a Hudson Bay post situated on the west bank of the Columbia River, just above the mouth of the Pend d'Oreille River. In 1856, Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson Bay Company, issued instructions to build a post in Canada as close to Fort Colville as possible in order to capture the trade of the area. James Sinclair was originally appointed to build the post but unfortunately he was killed by Indians before the completion of the fort in March of 1856. As a result of this untimely death, Angus McDonald was ordered to establish the new fort, then referred to as Fort Pend d'Oreille.

Fort Sheppard was never a very important trading post. It was managed by a succession of Hudson Bay employees, most of them clerks. In 1870, Chief Factor Finlayson reported that the Colville district was not profitable and ordered the fort to close. In that same year, all the supplies were removed and the fort was abandoned. In 1872, it burnt to

the ground. Fort Sheppard was named after John Sheppard, governor of the Hudson Bay Company from 1856 – 1858.

A small creek that flows past the historical site of Fort Sheppard to the Columbia River serves as a reminder of the Hudson Bay Trading Post that once stood there. It bears the name Sheppard Creek.

FRUITVALE

Fruitvale was originally named Beaver Siding because it was a railway stop for the Great Northern Railroad. Then, in 1906, a land corporation called Fruitvale Limited, purchased a great deal of land on both sides of this stop and changed the name to Fruitvale. This name played an important part in the propaganda scheme which depicted Fruitvale as the best fruit growing area in the West Kootenays.

KOOTENAY

Kootenay was first applied to the local Indians by neighbouring tribes after their arrival from east of the Rockies. In Dene language "coo" means water and "tinneh" means people. Therefore, one gets the translation "people of the lakes" or "water people." The Kootenays were sun worshipers who would endure cruel tortures of various kinds to please their Sun God. To gain blessings of "unseen spirits" they often chopped off part of a finger before joining in the skirmishes and battles with their rivals, the Lakes and the Blackfoots. They were very skilled in the use of the coup stick and flat bow. The Kootenays were not farmers as they grew no crops other than a little tobacco. Instead they hunted and fished, supplementing their diet with berries, seeds and nuts. Father de Smet referred to the Kootenay Indians as "simple, dignified, modest and scrupulously honest."

PARK SIDING

Park Siding is an old station stop that was owned by the Nelson & Fort Sheppard Railroad. It is situated just outside of Fruitvale at the point where Bell Creek joins Beaver Creek. The siding is located near Andrew Park's land, hence the name Park Siding.

Mr. Park panned for gold in Wild Horse Creek near Ymir and in the Big Bend Country. Later, he settled at Park Siding, having bought his land directly from the Nelson & Fort Sheppard Railroad. His land was later left to his niece who was from the United States. Mr Park's niece, however, did not think that the land was worth paying taxes on and eventually, the land went up for tax sale.

PEND D'OREILLE

There are three plausible reasons why the French word, Pend d'Oreille, meaning "earring" or "earlobe" was applied to the Pend d'Oreille River. Firstly, the lake formed by the river in Idaho State is shaped like an ear. Another possible reason is that the first French Canadian fur traders linked the word earring to the river after the Indian tribe who lived along its banks and who wore pendants from their ears. A third possible purpose behind the name is a meaning that is again connected to the Indian tribe, but this time

with the intention of remarking upon their elongated ear lobes deformed as such by wearing heavy shell earrings.

ROSS SPUR
Ross Spur is named after Sid Ross, who along with his partner Barnet Archibald, formed a logging company at about the turn of the century at what is now known as Ross Spur. Mr. Ross continued logging in the area until about 1923, when he built a shingle mill which unfortunately burnt down before a single shingle was produced. In 1901, Mr. Ross ran the general store in Salmo with one John Benson.

WANETA
There are two possibilities for the naming of Waneta: one is that it is from an Indian word meaning "rushing waters" and the other is that it is the misspelling of Juanita, a mineral claim in the area. Waneta came into existence when the railway was put through in 1893 and a customs house was established. For years Waneta boasted a hotel, a post office, and a store, and served as a meeting place for the scattered residents of the Pend d'Oreille Valley.

Streets & Roads

BEAVER STREET
Beaver Siding was the original name for Fruitvale. The name Beaver was first applied to this area because of the large population of beavers found in the district when the first people came through. Long-time residents can remember the beavers building dams to such an extent that they caused the creek to overflow and flood the road. Downtown, Beaver Street runs beside Beaver Creek, parallel to Main Street. It runs between Columbia Gardens Road and Maple Avenue, jumping Beaver Creek on its way.

BLUEBIRD ROAD AND CORNER
Bluebird Road was named by Miss Marjorie Castle who operated a teahouse in 1928, on what we now call Bluebird Road. Miss Castle chose that name because bluebirds built nests in all four corners of the house. During this time, the bus that ran between Fruitvale and Trail stopped at the teahouse to let passengers on and off. The road and corner were not as yet named but the passengers on the bus began calling the corner Bluebird Corner in honour of Miss Castle's teahouse and eventually it appeared as such on the bus schedule. When the village was incorporated, the road was named Willow Road, but the public was so accustomed to Bluebird Road that it was eventually changed. At her teahouse, Miss Castle served homemade ginger beer, which she put up in old-fashioned beer bottles, as well as homemade cakes and cookies – a truly wonderful combination.

CHRISTIE ROAD
Christie Road is named after George Christie who moved to the area after W.W.I. As a returning soldier, he was eligible to take advantage of the government's special offer whereby they paid for a parcel of land and the veteran gradually paid them back. Mr. Christie bought 40 acres of land in Beaver Falls this way. On his property he grew alfalfa

and hay to feed his stock, as well as an acre and a half of fruit trees. Mr. Christie used to play the drums at local dances. Christie Road, now officially called 12th Avenue by the Village of Montrose, runs across Mr. Christie's original property.

COLE STREET
Cole Street is named after Mr. E. Cole. He once owned a chicken farm on the north side of Beaver Valley. Mr. Cole sold some of his property to the Nelson Lumber Company for their sawmill. He and his wife were active members of the Fruitvale Agricultural Association in the early 1920's. The road bearing his name runs parallel to Highway #3 between Kootenay Avenue and Nelson Avenue, which runs through his original property. The road then continues on past Nelson Avenue as First Street.

DAVIS AVENUE
Davis Avenue is named after a well known pioneer of the area, Mr. H.C. Davis. Mr. Davis came to Fruitvale in 1907 where he was part of the original survey party. After that job was finished he bought a piece of property for himself and cleared a stump ranch. Four years later he purchased the general store in Fruitvale from M.B. Williams. In 1916, Mr. Davis lost his store when the town site burnt down. He rebuilt immediately but swore never to let anyone build next to him for fear of another fire. His wish was fulfilled until the Shell Gas Station was built, which is now the Esso Station. In early days, Mr. Davis' store was the meeting place for the people of Fruitvale and many hours were spent by the old bachelors and fellows of the town in back of Howard Davis' store arguing about the politics of the time.

GREEN ROAD
Green Road is named after a resident of Fruitvale, Mr. Stanley Green, who bought five acres in the area of the road in 1946. He started a small farm, raising chickens, pigs and cattle. The Corporation of the Village in 1952 forced Mr. Green to sell and sub-divide his land and move to the outskirts of Fruitvale where he could continue his farm. Green Road passes through Mr. Green's subdivision. It is the first street that branches off to the east from Mill Road.

HEPBURN ROAD
Hepburn Road is named after an early pioneer family, the Hepburns. The Hepburns came here in 1919 from the Prairies where Mr. Hepburn had traded a section of land for 19 acres here. Mr. and Mrs. Hepburn were both very active in the community. In 1939, Mr. Hepburn donated the land on which the United Church was built. The church is still standing there today. Mrs. Hepburn was a charter member of the Women's Institute, as well as a member of the school board and the cemetery committee. In addition, Mrs. Hepburn taught the first sewing classes at the school. Mr. and Mrs. Hepburn were both active members of the Fruitvale Agricultural Association. Hepburn Road is a dead-end road which runs parallel to the railroad tracks branching off from Railroad Street and continuing to Beaver Creek where it stops. It begins again on the other side of the creek, continuing past Atco Lumber for a short distance where it again stops.

MILL ROAD

Mill Road was named as such because there were once two sawmills along its course. One sawmill was owned by Mr. Frank Varseveldt, and the other one was owned by Mr. Alfred Endersby. Mr. Varseveldt's mill was approximately 1.5 miles from the Fruitvale town site, near the present location of Nipkow's Greenhouse. This was actually the second mill he built in Fruitvale. He sold his first mill on the town site to a Calgary contractor. The second mill, which was improved by electricity, started in 1932. Unfortunately, just as he was doing well, the mill burnt down. Mr. Endersby's mill was situated 3 miles from the town site. He leased the timber limit after selling his farm to the CM&S Company. Later, he bought the limit from the Great Northern Railway. He started his sawmill in the 1930's.

Mill Road begins at the intersection of four roads: Kootenay Avenue, Columbia Gardens Road, Old Salmo Road and Mill Road. It then travels up the southern mountainside past Lewis Street, Galloway Road and DeBruyn Road.

MOLLER ROAD

Moller Road is named after Niels Moller. He moved to Fruitvale from Annabel in 1945. He once owned the largest chicken ranch in Fruitvale, possessing a high of 8,000 chickens. Later, in 1952, he began the only hatchery in this area which lasted for more than 15 years. Mr. Moller also had a feed mill in which he processed feed to be distributed among the local farmers. Mr. Moller was active in the Fruitvale Agricultural Association, serving for a time as president. Mrs. Moller was active in the local PTA. Mr. Moller's chicken ranch was situated east of the Beaver Creek Bridge, directly opposite Atco Lumber. Moller Road runs through this property, extending from the highway to Old Salmo Road.

MUIR STREET

Muir Street is named after the Muir Brothers, Andrew, John and Bill, who were established ranchers of goats, sheep and cattle in Fruitvale when it first opened up. John Muir, realizing the potential that Fruitvale held, bought up 20 ten acre tracts when Fruitvale was first put on the market. He then sold 18 of them "for the benefit of those who wished to settle close to town", at what we assume was a handsome profit. Muir Street runs through part of John Muir's original property.

NELSON AVENUE

Nelson Avenue is situated on the north side of the Beaver Valley. It runs from Highway Drive to Mountain Street. Nelson Avenue was originally referred to as "Swede Alley" because of the large number of Swedes living in the bunkhouses along the road while working at the Nelson Sawmill. This alley was later renamed Nelson Avenue, after Mr. Andrew Nelson, the owner of the sawmill. Mr. Nelson originally owned most of the land surrounding this area. He was a very active member of the community. He ran a bus and taxi service for a few years, in addition to managing his own service station and store. Mr. Nelson was a charter member of the Fruitvale Rotary Club and the Lutheran Church for which he donated the lumber to build.

NIPKOW ROAD

Nipkow Road was named after an early resident of Fruitvale, William Nipkow. He emigrated from Germany to Canada, arriving first in Alberta and then coming out to Fruitvale in 1908. Prior to his arrival in Fruitvale, Mr. Nipkow was a travel companion to an adventurer and gold miner. When he arrived, he bought a tract of land near the town site, making a living by clearing land for others with a horse and stump puller. Since June frosts blackened his potatoes, Mr. Nipkow looked for land higher up away from the deadly frosts. At this new location, he started afresh, clearing the land, raising some livestock and then gradually starting a greenhouse business. Nipkow Road leading up to the greenhouse on the southern side of the valley did not exist when Mr. Nipkow first moved to his land and as a result, he had to carry his stove on his back since a horse and buggy could not reach his cabin.

OLD SALMO ROAD

Old Salmo Road was the original road to Salmo. Many old-timers remember this road as being narrow and winding, which is still evident today, and of course, dusty. Often times in the days before the road was built from Fruitvale to Salmo, one would simply put one's car on the train tracks and travel to Salmo that way. Old Salmo Road begins at the intersection of four roads: Kootenay Avenue, Columbia Gardens Road, Mill Road and Old Salmo Road. Old Salmo Road then follows the hillside along the outskirts of Fruitvale, finally joining up with the Fruitvale-Salmo Highway.

SHORT STREET

Short Street was named by the Rotarians. They chose that name simply because it was the shortest street in town, being only approximately 140 meters long. Short Street branches off Mountain Street at approximately a 45 degree angle. It is situated just above the junction of Kootenay Avenue and Mountain Street.

TREE AVENUES

When the streets and avenues of Fruitvale were first named in 1952, it was decided that the avenues perpendicular to Columbia Gardens Road should be named after trees. It should be noted that all of the trees after which the avenues are named can be found in the Beaver Valley. The trees that were picked are: Elm, Laurel, Maple, Pine, Tamarac, Cedar, Walnut, Juniper and Birch.

Creeks

BARCLAY CREEK

Barclay Creek is named after Mr. and Mrs. W.G. Barclay and family who settled in Fruitvale in 1921. Their land was originally bought in 1907 by Mrs. Barclay's parents who bought it from the Kootenay Orchard Association. Mrs. Barclay's parents came to Fruitvale and looked at their land but decided that Fruitvale wasn't for them and the land lay dormant till 1921. The Barclay's moved here from Alberta to begin a fruit orchid but

like so many others, they soon discovered that the climate was unfit for fruit. Their son, Duncan, can remember burning sawdust smudges during the night to save the cherry trees from freezing. Mr. Barclay Sr. was a photographer by trade and took many of the school photographs in the 1920's and 30's in Fruitvale. Mrs. Barclay was an active woman who was involved with the Women's Institute and the Anglican Church for which she played the organ a great number of years. The creek bearing their name flows through their original property along Columbia Gardens Road (lot 124) until it empties into Beaver Creek.

BATH CREEK
Bath Creek is named after Albert J. Bath who was born July 12, 1888 in Edinburgh, Scotland. He arrived in Fruitvale on May 21, 1907 and was part of the original survey party that mapped out Fruitvale. Mr. Bath went on to marry Anna Varseveldt, a pretty young woman who came to Fruitvale in 1911 with her brothers and father who began the first sawmill in the Fruitvale town site approximately where Doug Knowler's house is situated. During his life, Albert had a timber limit of 1,000 acres on the outskirts of Fruitvale, a farm of 300 acres on the south side of Beaver Creek, and a sawmill. He also owned the property on which the CRYSTAL DAIRY is situated where he planted an orchard when he first arrived in Fruitvale. Mrs. Bath has fond memories of the early days in Fruitvale, especially the dances and concerts which were held in the old school house in which Fruitvale old-timers, such as the Colbrooks and the Greenwoods would entertain with the wonderful songs that they brought with them from England. Beaver Valley remembers Albert Bath by Bath Creek which winds down from the mountains through his old property at the CRYSTAL DAIRY.

BELL CREEK
Bell Creek is named after John Potter Bell who was born in Kouchibouguac, New Brunswick in 1964. He came west to Vancouver in 1890 and in 1894 walked from Hope to Rossland on the Dewdney Trail in order to prospect in the Kootenays. He brought his family via Revelstoke to the Salmo area in 1897 where they lived at Erie until 1912 raising 8 children. John ran a livery stable in Erie hauling supplies to the Arlington Second Relief mines. At this time he was also mine foreman at the Molly Gibson mine. At the end of 1912 he moved to Park Siding onto a 102 acre ranch, where he ranched for 28 years. The first school house in the Park Siding area was built on his property in 1912 and was used until 1921. He helped build the first road from Fruitvale to Salmo. John was always active in the community and was a member of the school board and the Masonic Lodge.

CHARBONNEAU CREEK (12-MILE CREEK)
Charbonneau Creek is named after one of the colourful characters who lived in the Pend d'Oreille at the turn of the century, Morris Charbonneau. "Old Chauve" as he was commonly known, was a bachelor who had been a mule driver in the American Civil War. He owned 640 acres of pasture with his partner Hearn at what is approximately 12-mile Creek. Aside from working on his ranch, he also hauled supplies up to the Pend d'Oreille Valley for prospectors.

CHURCH CREEK

Church Creek is named after one of the oldest pioneers in the Pend d'Oreille Valley, Alfred E. Churches. He was an old country man from "Merry England" who came out to the Pend d'Oreille in 1898 and established a farm around the 9-mile point. He owned a beautiful garden orchard and ranch and also did a bit of prospecting at 15-mile point with his brother-in-law Alexander Lang. Unfortunately, neither of them ever struck it rich. The Churches' home was often a busy place, serving as a school for a while as well as being the centre for many enjoyable dances and parties in which people from up and down the entire length of the valley would attend.

HUDU CREEK

Hudu Creek runs through the bottom of Hudu Valley, until it empties into Beaver Creek near Park Siding. Its name reflects the bad luck and mysterious tales that surround the history of the valley. One such story tells about the many fatal accidents which occurred while men were lumbering there. A huge fire had once swept through the valley leaving the area covered with blackened stumps. When the loggers entered the area many years later, no matter which way they felled a tree, it would hit one of these many stumps. In turn, the stump would fall and knock over another stump, creating a domino effect. Even though the men would be standing a couple hundred feet away from the actual tree felled, many of them were crushed by a stump in the domino line-up.

WESBSTER CREEK

Webster Creek was named after Mr. James L. Webster because it ran though his original property in Fruitvale. Mr. Webster was the M.L.A. for this district for many years and the Webster School in Warfield is named in honour of him. Mr. Jim Webster was a brother to another early settler of Fruitvale, Mr. A.C. Webster. Mr. A.C. Webster first came to Fruitvale in 1907. He owned a fairly large orchard, consisting mainly of apple trees. He and his wife were both active members of the Fruitvale Agricultural Association.

RESOURCES:

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