



*This was Penticton in the summer of 1908 taken from the Penticton Hotel on Vancouver Ave. showing the business district of the town with the exception of a few shops in the 200 block of Main Street.*

# Penticton

## Now, Then & Way Back When...

*A pictorial & anecdotal history of Penticton*

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Compiled and written by Doug Cox  
Edited by Joyce Cox  
Graphic arts and Cover Design by Marv Peters

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## Forward

Trying to capture the full history of a city like Penticton is a task only the foolhardy would embark upon, surely to be disappointed when they realize the impossibility of such an undertaking. At best we can capture a sense of the community, the temperament of the people, and some of the highlights. Then, if we're lucky, present them in a form that makes those people familiar with the place say, "That's the place I remember!" and make those who aren't that familiar, feel as if they were, and wish they had been there.

Over the past thirty-five years I have been seeking out, audio taping, and transcribing interviews with those people who participated in some way in the development of Penticton from a Municipality in 1908, to the City of Penticton in 1948, to a vibrant economic and social community in 2008.

Penticton's economy is reflected in the current transportation mode of the time, be it a new freight road, the starting of a stage coach line, introducing a new sternwheeler on the lake, the coming of the railroad, a new highway, or even a new bridge that changed the traffic patterns in the city.

The people interviewed represent an era, a lifestyle, or a unique perspective in the time of a developing community. Penticton is a different place to different people, depending on the era with which they are familiar. A year can make a change to the character of the town, a decade can make it a totally different community.

This publication highlights the recollections and experiences of some people who lived and worked in Penticton over the past number of years. Those interviewed come from all professions, and were able to infuse a personal perspective on the development of this vibrant community celebrating one hundred years of progress.

*Those who were there tell it best.*

Doug Cox



*Penticton in the winter of 1908-09 showing L.C. Barnes, later W.R. King's store on Ellis Street, J.A. Schubert's general store, Delong's blacksmith shop, the bridge over Penticton Creek, and the businesses on Front Street.*



*Super Valu on Martin Street, since removed, featured a classic arch lam beam construction. D. Cox photo.*



*Obadiah Marmaduke McGuinness' drug store, on the corner of Nanaimo Ave. and Main Street, has experienced several alterations. D. Cox photo.*



*Burch's Hall has been incorporated into the Bank of Hong Kong. D. Cox photo.*

### Pat Duncan and Jim Grasswick

Pat Duncan started with the Western News Advertiser in 1974. "At that time Mrs. Hunt had just sold the business to Fred and Veronica Miner. I was the third sales rep. with Al Tyhurst and Dave Singer. It was difficult as there were very few accounts left that weren't taken by the two senior account reps. My first and biggest challenge was the I.G.A. with Mr. Johnson as manager. I started the store with a classified ad. and before long had him advertising a page a week.

Back then there was no such thing as type-setting equipment. We used a Remington and an Olympic typewriter for any copy or editorial, and a strip printer for the newspaper headings. Everything was cut and paste. By 1974 we were using an offset press to print. From 1974 I branched out on my own for three years as a partner in Trainor-Duncan Advertising. I was asked to come back and work for the paper. By 1983 the paper was bought by Bowes Publishing, a very people-oriented company. I became the General Manager and editor for the Western News Advertiser and was there till 1997, when I was the General Manager of the Summerland Review, which had been in operation since 1904.

Jim Grasswick was manager of Bowes until he retired. "The paper was being printed by Roger Taylor of Moira Press. Bowes bought the offset web press, which was at that time located at the end of Government Street in one of Adam Baumann's buildings. I came in 1984 to get the press running efficiently and retired in 1998. Ian McGeachie took over as manager at that point. Bowes had purchased the Nielsen's Roofing property on Dawson Avenue and Camrose Street,



and built a new press building. In 1996 the Western News sold the property on Vancouver Avenue, presently the Waterfront Eyecare Centre, and built onto the Camrose property. The Western News then joined the Webco Press building."

Pat continued, "The Western News Advertiser started the On Stage TV Guide, in the paper, which was free to everyone from Summerland to the border. We would run a black and white photo courtesy of Doug Cox on the cover. People started collecting the cover photos and to this day there are some people who have those photos framed and up on their walls. At that time these photos were dot matrix PMT's, photo mechanical prints.

Bowes Publishing sold to Sun Media, who sold to Quebecor, a large conglomerate out of Toronto, who then sold to David Black who owns many bi-weekly papers in the Lower Mainland. Jim Bowes was a self made man, a prince of a fellow. He bought small papers throughout western Canada. When Bowes owned forty-five papers he could name every employee in every branch."

### Lars Larsson

Lars Larsson was for a time the manager of the Pacific 66 service station at Bennett and Main Street. The gas station has been removed and is now a Human Resources building.

"The Pacific 66 station was at Bennett and Main Street in Penticton. It was beside St. Ann's Catholic church. There were two sets of gasoline pumps and two doors, plus two service bay doors. I was the manager of the Phillips Station for seven years until Petro-Can closed the station. Petro-Can bought Phillips 66 and then Gulf Oil and amalgamated the companies. Petro-Can closed this station and the Gulf Station on Westminster Avenue. They left a Petro-Can station open on Eckhardt Avenue near the golf course, and Cherry Lane Petro-Can at Warren and Main Street.

When I became manager they let the pump island on Bennett Ave. become an air station, and installed two sets of pumps on the island facing Main Street. The station closed in 1988 and is presently the location of Human Resources."

Lars Larsson presently operates the Shell Service Station on Government Street.

"The present Shell Station on Government Street was built in 1958 by Shell Oil, and sold to Manufacture's Life Insurance on a lease back arrangement. It was closed as a Shell station for thirteen years and for part of that time was Austin Megyesi's Auto Barn as a repair shop and Rent-a-Wreck franchise. I bought the property from Manufacture's Life and Shell and I arranged a contract to open as a Shell Service Station in 1988. It is presently the only Shell station in Penticton."



*Lars Larsson at his Shell Service station on Government Street is one of the last independent operators in Penticton. D. Cox photo.*



*Ron Boerboom had his photo processing business in the Pines Centre on Main Street. D. Cox photo.*



*The Three Gables Hotel on Main Street burned on February 29th, 2000. D. Cox photo.*