

Oh, to be a kid again at

# Garland Mineral Springs.

- - - Don Janssen

I was too young to join in the fun of rebuilding the pipeline that brought water straight down to a very large DC electric generator. I didn't have to do much. I took out the garbage from the hotel and from the cabins. I'd load the stuff onto a wagon and pull it down a little back road that went about 1/2 mile through the woods and out onto a long gravel bar where I'd add to a pile of junk that would mysteriously disappear each winter. Little mice would make homes in the cardboard, paper and bones. Very large snakes lived in the pile too. I captured them for my own snake zoo.

I was also to greet new arrivals and help them to their room or cabin. If there were children, I was to befriend them. Show them the woods, the river, the pool, the springs – all my world.

I met wonderful people who came to Garland for relaxation or in some cases healing. For one man I collected floating masses of minerals from the springs. He would pat the dark orange batter onto his skin. He was hoping to stop the cancers that he had.

Some people got in the pool hoping there was restorative power. Some drank the water from the springs.

One of the springs was a soda water type that I delivered to people who wanted lemonade or a mix for whiskey. One fellow had me bring him two quarts of soda water every morning and evening. I got 50 cents a day for this chore. He was a Fire Chief from Oak Harbor. He told me stories of

the sea where he toiled for many years. He told me of old Seattle where he worked loading ships off to Alaska, where a man could make a fortune or lose his life to cold or water or ice or bear or to a cut of the card or to anger or stupidity.

A couple days a week kids came up from Index. We charged them a quarter to swim all day up until 7:00. The rules were – No smoking – No screaming – No running. For minor infractions you were out for an hour. For larger misdeeds you were out for a day.

Once in a while Dad would dive in and show the kids how to really swim. He had been a contender to go to the Olympics. Could he swim? Like an otter or a seal or a salmon or an eel. The kids would watch as

he quick streamed past them. Back stroke, breaststroke, any kind of stroke – fast as a speed boat. Underwater like a submarine, two laps on the bottom; then up to the surface going round and round in a tight circle making his own whirlpool. He'd give a quick lesson on how to swim right. Then he'd go back to some other job on the resort.



Garland Pools and swimmers circa 1950 Photo Credit: The family of Cameron Sharpe

Every so often Mom would put buckets in our hands and tell us to fill them with berries and we'd get a piece of pie. Now, Mom was the best pie maker in the world. So, off went up and down the road, in open spaces in the forest, by the river across the log jam onto the other side where the picking was really good. By nine-o'clock we were back with full to the brim buckets of berries. Blackberries. Huckleberries. Orange salmon berries. Pinkish thimble berries. Wild raspberries.

And, when Mom heaped the berries all mixed like that into the waiting crusts, each pie looked like some Tiffany brooch. She cooked the pies in a wood stove most of the day, and about four-o- clock she put a sign by the road which read, "Berry pie, \$1 a slice." By five-o-clock she was sold out. After dinner Dick and I had a thick slice of heaven for dessert.

The people: I learned how to play checkers from a checker champ of Spokane. The cook that brought his family to stay through our second summer had an 18-year-old daughter who enchanted the whole place. All the surveyors and engineers were in love with her.

Bears, beware of bears. I only saw one out in a swamp I was exploring, and when I saw him I turned and started running as fast as I could. I flew over downed trees and bounced off fern bunches. I hit the road and streaked into the end of the resort where the cabins were and threw open the door, ran inside and slammed the door. Then I ran to the window and looked up the road. Not a bear in sight. That was it for bears.

Other than the possible black bear there wasn't much to fear unless you got yourself into some kind of mess. There were no rattle snakes. You'd have to go over the high mountains into dry country to see those. There were no black widow spiders. They liked drier climates. But there was the river. Don't drown in it. There were the mountains. Don't fall off the cliffs.

Our closest neighbors were in Index, about 11 miles away, so it was hard to get into a squabble with them. The Forest Service road could be dangerous if you drove too fast. Horses could be scary under certain circumstances.

There was a guy who ran a pack train, and sometimes he stayed at the resort with his horses. Dick and I both curried them and petted them and talked to them, and sometimes we exercised them. Dick would climb on the lead horse, and we'd go up some close-in backroads. I'd follow up on the bare back of "Birdy," the gentlest horse there ever was. We'd go around like that for about an hour then on back to the paddock.

One day I was over being with my friend, Birdy. I had climbed up on her back to give her a good currying. One big logging truck went by and for no reason gave out a long blast on its air horn. Birdy's ears went up, her tail went up, and she took off in the opposite direction. When she bolted I grabbed onto her mane and held on for dear life. Birdy galloped up the resort road and then took a game path through a forest of alders. Alder twigs and leaves scourged me

as we careened through the trees.

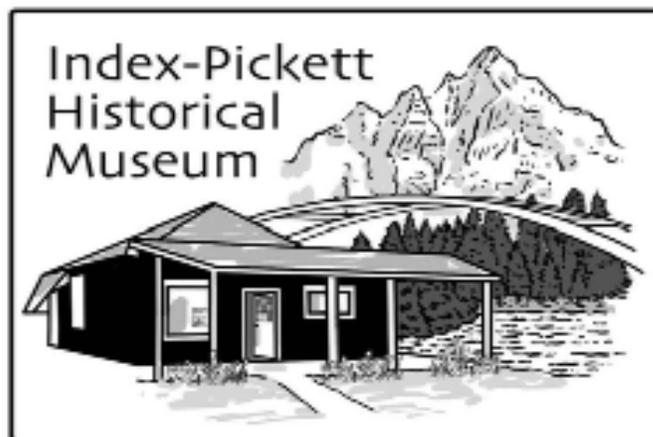
Birdy ran full tilt until we came to the river. She stopped and took a long drink then looked around as if to say, "What the hell was that?!" I got down on the ground and shook for a while. Then I led her back to the paddock. She was a good friend, that Birdy.

Some relatives came up. Uncle Walt knew all sorts of things. He helped rewire old lines into the hotel. He helped rebuild the bridge to our house. He worked on the kitchen stoves and helped get the freezer going again.

Uncle Ross and Emma stayed in a cabin for a few days. Ross left a box of chocolate flavored Exlax out on the counter, and a mouse that couldn't read ate most of the medicated squares. As he ran across the counter it hit him and from there to the edge of the counter was a trail of mouse poo to where he died. Dick said, "He was all pooped out."

Cousin Jerry came over, and he and I had a ball fishing and hiking. The North Fork of the Skykomish River had some nice fishing places. I became an expert on many miles of the river by the resort. A lot of times when I caught a fish, I let it go.

I found where a huge steelhead lay in a snag filled hole. I caught 10 grasshoppers and floated them one at a time over the hideout. A little green hopper brought him out. He nailed it, broke into the air, and splashed down. My pole bent double. Then he ran back into his hideout and broke me off. At least I'd had him on. What a wonderful place to be a kid!



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