

Keith's Corner/McGill News

September 27, 2019

Keith's Corner

Labor Day Parades/Unions

Each year on Labor Day, I harken back to the days when the unions were very strong in McGill. I remember the huge Labor Day parades, with all the union members marching. All the grade school bands, the WPHS band, various floats all decorated to the hilt with banners and flags and of course the groups of horses. Remember the guy (I think he worked for Culligan) and his son that had on their overalls and armed with a large broom, scoop shovel to clean up the fresh horse "apples"? Can't remember his name. Anybody??

There were events at the City Park after the parade, such as foot races for all ages. Sometimes a boxing ring was put up. I remember one wrestling match that featured the "Swedish Angel" and his opponent "Crusher Kowalski". It was referred by McGill labor leader, Val Theissen (sp). Years later while living in Salt Lake I met the crusher. He was cooking in a place called Zooms Lounge in Sugarhouse. What a character.

It was at one of these City Park events in the late 40s that I saw a demonstration of TV. It was put on by the U.S. Army Signal Corp. It was a closed circuit deal, but to us small town hick kids, it was right out of Buck Rogers.

As time went by the parades seemed to fizzle. Some small parades were held
Photos of a parade in McGill and some union leaders. Courtesy of Sharon (Tom Jones) Williams.



Labor started forming into unions in the early 1900s. In McGill they got started after the Con Copper plant was in full operation. Around 1908. They had many grievances to overcome. Long hours of back breaking work, low wages and poor living conditions. In 1912 the unions called for a large strike. It was accompanied by several serious confrontations. Several men were killed. The Nevada Governor was called to the scene. He threatened to send for the Nevada National Guard. The strike was settled. The unions got stronger by banding together with other copper mining operations in Utah and Arizona, etc .



The unions after WWII went on strike for a shorter workweek, from 6 days to half a day off on Saturday. I remember that my dad had more time with us, and then the work week was shortened to 5 days which meant that the Dads could take us heathens fishing and hunting. Lots of picnics for the family etc.

Parades were so much fun and colorful back in time, as compared to the (in my opinion) drab and noisy ones now.

McGill News

We has a new business venture. Mike, the locksmith and Thrift Store owner, has acquired the U-Haul dealership for McGill.



Figure 1-Mike Nass in front of his Thrift Store in the old bank building.

He is all set up with U-Haul and open for business. No need to go out of town to get a rental trailer.

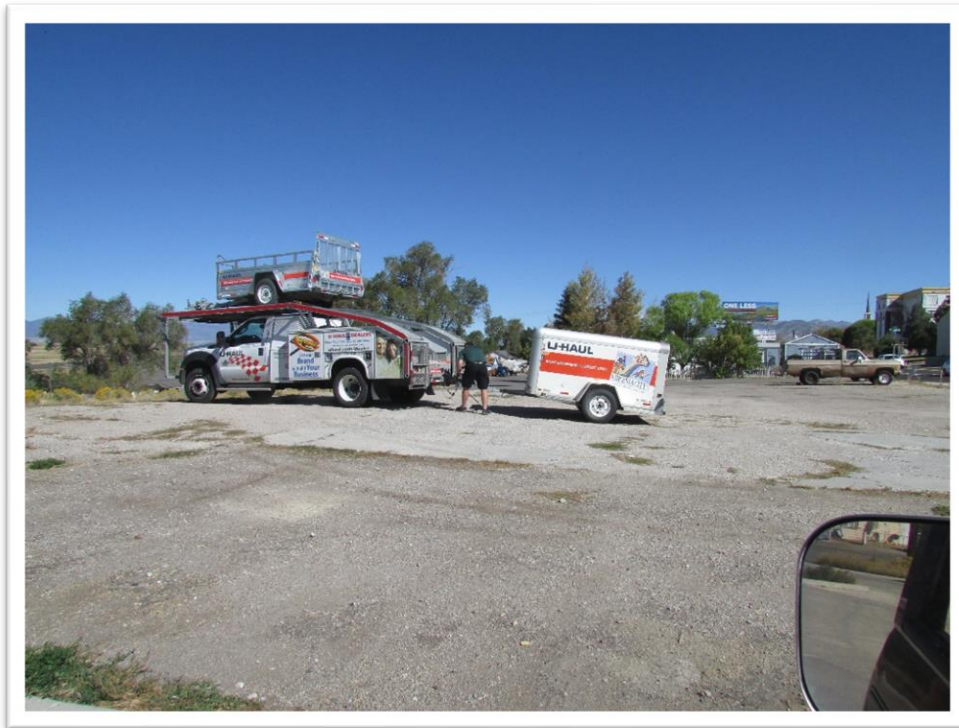


Figure 2--Salt Lake U-Haul Manager, Jayden unloading the first of the trailers.



Figure 3--Steptoe City circa 1909.