

Keith's Corner/McGill News

May 29, 2020

Memorial Day

Memorial Day this year falls on Monday, May 25. From 1868 to 1968 it was always observed on May 30. Congress changed it to the last Monday in May and made it official in 1971. It will be observed on May 30 in 2022. For many years it was called, 'Decoration Day.

It started out as a "Southern Holiday" and slowly merged into a National one, especially after WWI was over.

Many of us older McGill heathens still think of it as being on May 30th.

After WWII ended, Memorial Day was a huge deal. There were parades and lots of speeches. Patriotism was the order of the day. For us McGill brats it was a day of freedom from the regimentation of the local schools. It was also time to shoot off all the firecrackers and rockets we had ordered thru the US Mail. All we had to do was scrounge up a dime for a comic book at the drug store, then find a fireworks coupon in the back pages and send it off with a M.O.. Several days of intense waiting followed and then our arsenal of explosives arrived. There were two and three inch red firecrackers and the bigger ones we called ""cherry salutes/bombs". They were water proof and made quite an explosion. We had various methods of blowing tin cans high in the air and other fun things.

Another memory was the Memorial Dy posters the kids made for the yearly contest by the American Legion. They also sold the red poppies with the green stem and a tiny banner. The money went to a veteran's fund.

This tradition was inspired by the poem "In Flanders Field" written by a Canadian doctor. The poppy was indorsed by the National American Legion in 1920 as their symbol of remembrance to all those that served and died for our country.

I do remember being in the grade school and high school bands and marching in a parade on Memorial Day in full uniform. As a treat, after the parade, my parents

took us urchins to the Purple Sage drive-in for a delicious hamburger and a frosted mug of cherry root beer. They were served up on a tray that hung on the window of the car. Then it was off to McGill and change into our overalls and then off to Bird or Timber Creek for fishing, horse shoes, hot dogs and watermelon from the ice cold creek. Later we roasted marshmallows over a campfire. Lots of great memories from those days. There was no TV or other noise to clog our minds, just fresh air, good food and friends.

So let us all remember our heroes who have gone on ahead.

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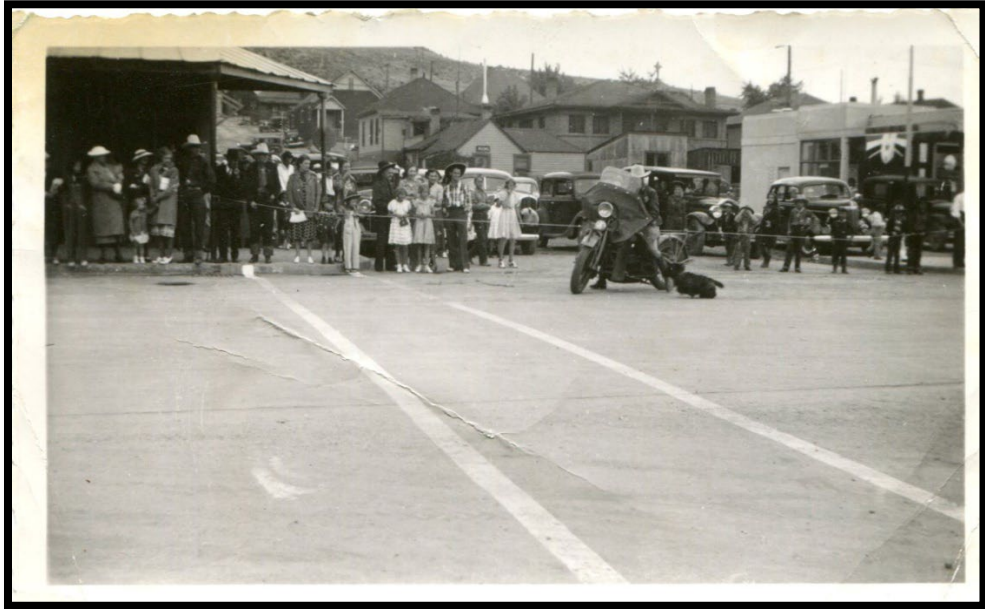
The old town is moving right along at a moderate speed. Mike Nass at the old bank has seen an increase in his U-Haul business and also the gun shop has been active. He is a licensed gun dealer and can ship and receive guns thru the mail. The other day I was in there and several folks purchased some coins from his collection.

The IOOF Hall is moving right along.

Roy Allen has been doing a lot of work in the McGill Club and hopes to reopen soon. Hopefully the old drug store will open soon. This weird shutdown has been hard on the town in many ways. The entire county has had only 3 cases and those were from people passing thru. There have been no deaths.

Author's note----Several people have sent me checks for the second year and I have sent them back because the subscription fee was for a life time, not year to year. Thanks for the thought, but a deal is a deal.

Old Photos



Early day parade probably late 1930s, or WWII. I remember Eugene Orrick used to ride a motorcycle. The dog is trying to pull him off the bike. I remember the gas station on the corner. Don't remember the awning on the drug store.



Here are some more photos of that parade.



Goodman-Tidball float.

