

Keith's Corner/McGill News

March 12, 2021

McGillites Are World Wide

Anyone passing thru McGill, might possibly think that this little town in the middle of nowhere was of little importance. They will, probably, never know how wrong they were. There are many examples of the extraordinary influences, made by McGill kids, all over the world.

Take for instance, one young man, Charles Overfelt, about to enter his senior year, at White Pine High School. As he so eloquently told me on the phone the other day, he decided not to get on the school bus one day. Instead, he climbed aboard the Hiskey Bros. bus to Sal Lake and eventually to Ft. Douglas. He joined the U. S. Army, vowing to get into the war with Japan. He was sent to Texas for basic training. He said the Army base there was formerly used to train cavalry. After basic, he was soon on a troop transport to Japan. However, the war ended before he made it to Japan.

He was assigned to the Sugamo prison under a Lieutenant. Charles couldn't remember his name. This was the prison, that held the many Japanese war criminals, being tried by an international court for crimes against humanity. The main one, was Hidaki Tojo. He was Japan's War Chief. He ordered the planning of and the cowardly attack on Pearl Harbor, which cost thousands of lives and started WWII. He also ordered the Rape of Nanking and the Rape of Manilla. Hundreds of thousands of innocent people, young and old were slaughtered, yet the United States is the bad guy, in a lot of quarters.

At the end of the war, many high ranking Japanese officers committed suicide, but used a gun instead of the ceremonial hari kari knife. Tojo, shot himself in the chest on September 11, 1945, but missed his heart. An American, Dr. James B. Johnson, operated and saved Tojo's life. An American Sargent, John Archin, donated blood for the operation. Ironically, Tojo was in agreement with the

Japanese military draining all the blood out of American P. O. W., until they died. The blood was for the Japanese wounded.

The young man from McGill on the other side of the world, was assigned to guard Tojo. He took him a razor and shaving cream every day and watched Tojo very carefully for any suicide attempt. One day Charles brought Tojo a pack of cigarettes in exchange for Tojo autographing 3- one dollar bills.

Later on, with the war ending, the military was able to release many of our troops. Charles finished his enlistment and was rotated back to the U.S..

Tojo was eventually found guilty, after 3 years and the longest and most costly trial in history. He was hanged at the prison on December 22, 1948.

A few years later the Korean War started and Charles was once again called to serve his country. He reported to a base near Pittsburgh, Cali. Ironically the officer in charge was the same man that was over Charles in Japan. He was now a Captain. Charles had always heard that this man was the hangman of Tojo and the other war criminals, but didn't dare ask if that was true.

Charles had married and he and the Mrs. Rented an apartment. He put his Army stuff, including the dollar bills in a trunk and stored them in the basement of the apartment building. Late they bought a house and moved. Much later, Charles remembered the trunk and went back, but it was long gone. Maybe someone still has the dollar bills somewhere.

Author's note---I remember the Overfelt family. Mrs. Overfelt was one of my grade school teachers. Mr. Overfelt was an accountant at KCC. Charles had a sister, Marilyn . Both Charles and Marilyn were lifeguards at the McGill pool.

McGill News

Nothing new on the empty lot north of the Post Office. Nothing new on the IOOF Hall or the Theater. Everything seems to be in limbo.

Due to the lack of activity I am going to add some old stuff. I have been researching the origins of each business in McGill in preparation for a new book on the actual progression of main street. I get asked a lot, about the date of a photo. I hope the book will help get rid of the confusion of when things

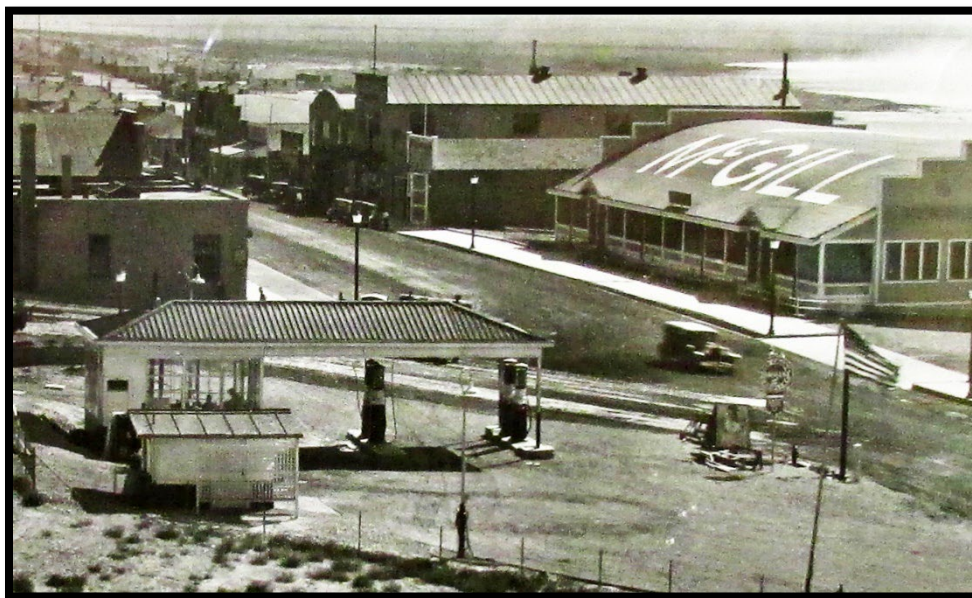
happened in McGill. I am always looking for old photos. If you have some and would share, email me at barbqr35@gmail.com.

I will start a new heading—McGill Oldie. And that doesn't mean me!!!! Hope you like it.

McGill Oldie

January, 1929---The Standard Oil Service Station on the NE corner of main and K Ave. was set to open for business. It has been called the Red Crown Station in many newspaper and WPHS yearbooks up to 1943 I don't remember hearing that before. My Mom worked there during WWII along with June Robb.

I found this a few days after I sent out Newsletter94 with a photo of the station and Commissary dated 1925. This is an example of how easy it is to mis-date a photo. Here is the full photo—



The Commissary and the Theater, both built in 1925-26 range, are present. So, this photo must be in 1929 or later. I have made the correction in NL94. One has to be very careful and above all accurate.

Old Photos



View of the Club 50 from the south side, in 1938. I believe it was owned by the Linnell family of McGill.