

Keith's Corner/McGill News

February 5, 2021

Sheriff's Deputies In McGill

The town of McGill at one time had a WP Deputy Sheriff on full time duty and a couple of retired ones, Jim Browning, Bill Merrill (Hockshaw), manning the little office during the night. When I went down to the office 5 a.m. in the morning, to get my bag full of Salt Lake Tribune papers to deliver, one of these two gents was always there.

The deputies were always involved in the funny badger fights. They would play it to the hilt. (see Newsletter58)

Some of the deputies that I remember were, Jim Browning, Bill Merrill, Cliff Drietzler, Ed Hand, Blythe Jones, James Bell and the last one, Harold Moorehead..

I remember, as a little McGill monster kid, a large Great Dane at the sheriff's office. I was small enough that the deputy let me ride on it. I think the deputy was Simpson, but not really sure. Since it was during the day, it might have been Cliff Drietzler.

Bill Merrill all so known as "Hockshaw" used to drive his black coupe around town at night. He also liked to check out the swimming pool. He would pull up to the front entrance and shine a spotlight, (it was fashionable to have a spotlight on the driver's side and sometimes on both. Some pickups had one on the roof of the cab.) The kids in the pool could hear his car coming down the pool road, and would swim over and hide under the diving boards. One Halloween some pranksters found out that he took the bus to Salt lake for a few days. They decided to do something with his car. His garage was never locked, so they pushed it out into the alley. They knew that some folks down the alley were on vacation and left their garage unlocked, so they pushed Bill's car down the alley

and into the vacant garage. Bill looked all over the place and reported it stolen. When the neighbors got back from vacation the mystery was solved.

My Dad told me one time that when he was a kid, some pranksters took the sheriff's car down below McGill and buried it in the sand with only the top showing.

I don't remember much about Cliff as he died when I was only five years old.

All I remember about Ed Hand was that he had been in a shootout with some crooks somewhere and had several bullet holes in his car. We McGill urchins, of course, had to see and touch them.

Blythe Jones was a no nonsense type with the criminals, but very nice to us kids. He was involved in a shootout at the Hotel Nevada in the 50s.

James Bell had run the McGill Dairy for years and was a deputy in the 50s. Early, one October morning, Andy Kulas and I were going deer hunting. Andy was driving and he stopped at the Victory Club. It was still dark and I asked why the sudden stop. He said that he was the night janitor and had a key so we could get some candy bars. He said we could leave the money for the candy with a note. We got the candy, left the money and note and were heading out the front door. As we opened the door we were met with a blast of light and a pistol aimed at us. We were scared out of our wits. It was Bell. He asked what the hell we were doing. Andy explained and Bell said that the next time to stop at the sheriff's office and tell him. Thank goodness for small town deputies that know everyone. He showed us the newfangled electric eye just inside the door and about 6 inches above the floor. It rang an alarm at the sheriff's office. Needless to say, we desperados didn't ever do that again. The end of that pistol barrel looked like a cannon.

Moorehead was a close friend of rother Paul. We all went deer hunting several times.

All in all we had some very good men as McGill deputies in my youth.

McGill News

Not much happening in the old town. Weather is cold, warm, wet, dry as usual. Several houses have been sold and we are getting more new people. Hardly know anyone these days. Rudy had not done anything with the IOOF or the theater. Don't what is going on.

Old Photo



Eureka Pit at Ruth Nv. Circa 1930s??

