

Newsletter113

## Keith's Corner/McGill News

July 16, 2021

### McGill Emergency Hospital



The hospital is one of McGill's greatest links to the "good ole days". The last time I was inside the place, was in 1955 while working at the smelter. I had been splattered with hot, molten copper while hand punching a converter. A small blob hit my left eyeball. We didn't wear safety glasses in those days. The foreman rushed me to the emergency hospital entrance under the canopy. A quick knock

on the door and Miss Bruce let us in . Now, Nettie Bruce was a legend in her own time. All kids from that era will remember one of her favorite sayings, “oh, it can’t hurt that bad”, as she stuck a gigantic needle in your arm. The needle was modeled after a railroad spike. I think the pipe shop, actually made the needles.

She had me get on the table so she could prep the area around my eye. Dcc. Ririe came in and put some ointment in the eye, then a piece of gauze and then a black eye patch. At that moment someone knocked on the door. Miss Bruce opened it and John Kinnear Sr. “the old man” came in to visit with his old friend, Dr. Ririe.

He was the President of KCC in New York and was visiting McGill. He asked what was wrong and Doc said he needed to get me to the Steptoe Valley Hospital in Ely, for further treatment.

Kinnear had me get into the limo outside, then he told the driver to take me to the hospital and stay with me until the Doc was done and then to take me home. That my friends is the kind of person “old man Kinnear” was.

The next time for me, to visit, was in 2012, when I went there to a meeting. The whole place was different. The first thing I missed was the smell of the disinfectant. The next thing missing was the huge table in the middle of the waiting room, with the magazines all over the top.

The little room hidden on the south side was now gone. That was the room that had a chair much like the electric chair used for executions. Horrible memories of being in that chair and having a long piece of ¼ inch diameter cotton rope stuffed up my nostrils into the sinuses. It was thought that if the sinus was packed then the nasal draining would stop. Actually it made it worse. It sure felt good when it came out though!!

I looked for the double doors with the frosty glass, that led into the main examining room, but they were gone. Those were the doors that would suddenly open and Miss Nettie Bruce would stand there looking over the rims of her glasses for her next victim. A shudder of fear would go thru each kid sitting on the hard wooden benches. She would pause to enhance the effect and then call out a name. Once inside the examining room, the calm voice of Dr. Ririe, Dr. Ontie Hovenden or Dr. Noah Smirnoff would soothe us back into the real world.

The west side of the waiting room was for the dentist, Dr. Tawney. I don't remember who his nurse was. I do remember sitting there and hearing the screams of kids above the whine of Dr. Tawney's drill. That drill, I think was developed to drill for oil in Texas. Next to the chair was the basin with the running water, that you spit the blood and tooth fragments into. I think a small charge of TNT would be easier and quicker.

When he finished with the torture he gave us a small toy. The smaller tykes he would hold up by the ankles until they giggled. Most of us still have the original fillings he put in for us, over 70 years ago. Think about that! We had some terrific medical people to take care of us. The Docs made house calls back then. There was a very personal relationship between patient and doctor.

Lots of memories in that place. One that may surprise the young of today, was seeing the gas station across the street as you walked out onto the front porch. It was run by KCC and took the KCC coupons.

I recently found evidence that the back of the hospital had an apartment for the doctors.

## McGill News

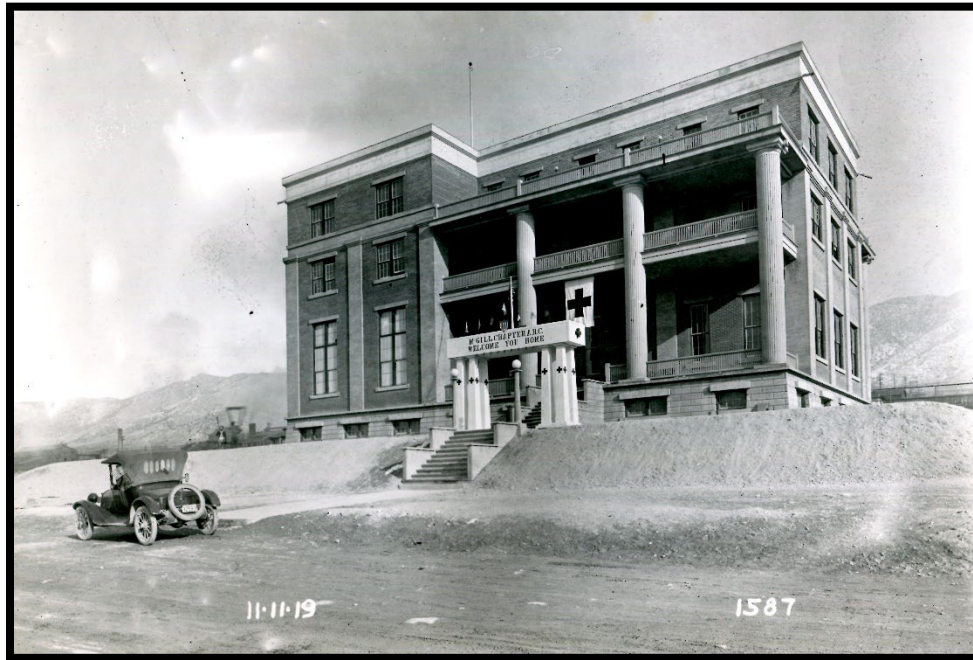
Work on the IOOF Hall and the theater and the RV park are all at a standstill. The theater and the IOOF Hall are on a work stop order by the state fire marshal. It is becoming a joke with this stuff. First of all the square footage of the Hall does not require an expensive \$100K fire suppression system. Then the marshal inspects and tells Rudy what else has to be done. He has this done and when the fire marshal re-inspect, he comes up with something else. This has gone on for almost 2 years and thousands of extra dollars. Time for this crap to stop.

## Oldies

1912—March 12—V. F. Henry, buys Steptoe Drug in McGill and changes name to McGill Drug.

1908- November 27—Graham Mercantile Company, in Smelter (McGill), runs an ad in a local paper.

## Old Photos



Clubhouse on November 11, 1919.

