

Newsletter233

Keith's Corner/McGill News

October 27, 2023

Fall of 1953 Memories

Way back in ancient times, around 1953, fall arrived in McGill with beautiful weather. The sky was a deep blue color and the famous McGill hurricane winds and Sahara desert sand storms had calmed down.

It was a great time of the year. The trees were starting to change into their fall clothes. For us McGill heathens, it meant that the deer and duck hunting season was coming up soon. It also meant football was back in season. Back then football came after baseball was over and before basketball started, unlike today where all sports are almost year long.

Fall meant going back to school. In grade school that meant giving up our freedom to be stuck in school. However, now I was starting my senior year at good ole White Pine High School. Things were different now and I actually looked forward to school. Being a senior meant that there were no more upper classmates lording over us. We were finally at the top of the chain.

The previous year I had broken in as a stand by school bus driver, working under Oscar Seigle. Now as a senior I was a steady driver of the freshman and sophomore girls bus. The bus was old and had a 5 speed gear shift and a 2 speed range (high and low) shift. They were next to each other on the floor.

There were 3 of us regular drivers. Jim Bell drove the junior and senior boys and Bill Spane drove the junior and senior girls.

Jim also drove the Bobcat athletic teams and I drove the Tomcats on trips. During the fall and spring, when the band was practicing in the mornings before school, I drove the McGill band members. Bill and I drove the band on some trips to Elko for football games.

I had to take the Tomcats to play a game in Austin one time. We stayed at the International Hotel. The coach and I shared a room. After the game, the coach put the team to bed and then asked me to drive him back up the Austin summit and down to a roadside bar. I hesitated, but he insisted and said he would take the blame. I drove up and over the summit to the bar and stayed in the bus while he picked up 2 six packs and we headed back. He drank a couple on the way down and at the room asked if I wanted one. I refused.

The next morning at breakfast, the coach and I were sitting in a booth waiting for the cook to make some pancakes. We looked over at the cook. He was a large bald headed man and he was leaning over the pancakes frying some bacon. We could see some sweat dripping off the cook's head onto our pancakes and so we both got up and left. Oh, such memories.

Another time I drove the Tomcats to Gabbs, Nevada. It was out in the middle of nowhere. It was a hot day and while the team was playing I took the bus over to the only gas station to fuel up. The engine was overheating and so I had the attendant put some water in the radiator. When I paid the bill I noticed that a gallon of water cost twice as much as the gas. He told me they had to truck all their water in and it cost more than the gas.

Driving bus was a great job. I made \$44 a month which was great. I had a 13 year old 1941 Chevy coupe and a 17 year old girlfriend. They both cost money, so the \$44 came in handy.

I could hear every conversation, unless the girls whispered. I knew who they thought were cute boys and wanted to go out with. I also heard language that would embarrass a sailor. All in all, I loved it and am thankful for the memories.

So, the Senior year was a lot of fun and one of the best years of my life.

McGill News



The back of the Drugstore looked like this. The attic door was rotted and the siding was some cheap corrugated plastic with a coat of paint. There were holes and cracks that let in a lot of air, making the heat pump and furnace work harder. Cody Nelson did a great job of covering the plastic with corrugated metal sheets. He re-built the door and covered it also.



The Drugstore had a unique visitor on Oct.21. Her name is Nikki and she is from Conn. She does videos interviews that she puts on her You Tube site. She did a 2 hr. interview of the place and some other McGill sites, like the McGill Club, swimming pool, depot, etc. She is very professional and I look forward to seeing the result.

Old Photo



Older McGillites will remember the “slag ditch” flume that crossed over the highway at the north end of town and the “black sand” that resulted. The “black sand” went as far down as the McGill pool and us old time heathens remember getting those “black sand” slivers in our bare feet. When you tried to pull them out with some tweezers, they would break, because they were like glass. There were iron pyrites. This “sand” soaked up the sun’s rays and was very hot. We could bury eggs in it and they would cook like they were boiled.

The above photo shows where the slag came from. The man has ‘tapped’ a hole in the side of the reverb furnace to let the slag-like lava flow out into a chute and then into a stream of cold water. This broke up the slag into the tiny glass fragments.

