

Newsletter228

Keith's Corner/McGill News

September 22, 2023

September-Remembering

September in my early part of life as a McGill urchin. Was not my favorite. It meant the end of the summer and therefore, the end of my freedom for another 9 months. Why is the usual school term 9 months? That is the same time for human pregnancy. Just an odd thought.

After I some how made it thru several years of being subjected to the school routine, I actual started to like school. Going from the 5th to the 6th was a big jump. We felt more grown up and were learning stuff that made sense. Like making things in wood shop. It also meant playing on sports teams, like football and basketball and in the spring, track. Also, learning to play a musical instrument and being in the band and wearing a uniform. We felt we belonged to something. It was the beginning of learning about pride in our lives. Girls were becoming more interesting than in the K-5. The one exception was my long time friends, Jerry Larsen and Howardean Merritt. They got engaged in the 3rd grade. Probably a record.

Starting high school was an even bigger step. We McGill heathens had to ride a bus to school every day. The bus driver of the freshman and sophomore boys was old Oscar. He let us have some 2x2 pieces of plywood to play the game of old Maid or Hearts. Four of us would sit at the aisle end of our seat and balance the board on our knees. It helped pass the time spent riding the bus. High school was filled with many things to learn and enjoy. We learned about chemistry, math and science. The enjoyment part besides learning stuff was that we could actually enjoy being around girls. Can't explain it, but it happened.

I had learned to love music in the 6th grade. Even tho it was primitive. Each year it got more and more complex, but at the same time more enjoyable. In high

school, I was in the marching band, concert band, dance band and a pep band. Several of us formed a jazz/Dixieland small band. We practiced in the gym after school. It was fun. One night as I was putting my trumpet away, our music director Al Sonne stopped by and gave us a few pointers. Later he sat at the piano and was in deep thought as he played some classical music. He saw me watching and started to tell me how much he loved music and how that in later life he couldn't enjoy it. He had a degree in music and I thought that would make it more enjoyable. He told me that he can't listen to music now, without analyzing it and that lessens his enjoyment. I never forgot that.

Many years later I was living in Duck Creek valley. I was taking care of the dentist, Dr. Barkly's place at the end of the oil road. I was starting to write stories on a Brother word processor that my friend David Robb loaned me. It was so much better than a typewriter.

In the evenings I would sit on the deck and watch the mountains East of me, such as Timber Creek, Berry Creek etc. I could watch storm systems start and mature into a rain or snow storm.

One late September day I was scanning the large groves of Quaking Aspen on both sides of Timber Creek. I noticed that they were starting to change color. I also noted that they didn't all change at the same rate, I started to read about them. They reproduce by roots. Their root systems weave back on forth through the whole grove. Since they are different families, they change colors differently and at different times. I wanted to learn more, but then I remembered Al Sonne's advice. If you love something don't analyze it to a point that you don't enjoy it anymore. So I just looked the Quakies and enjoyed them.

Crazy thoughts and memories? Maybe, but, having them and remembering them, has made my life much more enjoyable. We learned a lot of lessons and things as we strived to become a better and more knowledgeable person.

We shouldn't discard them in later life.

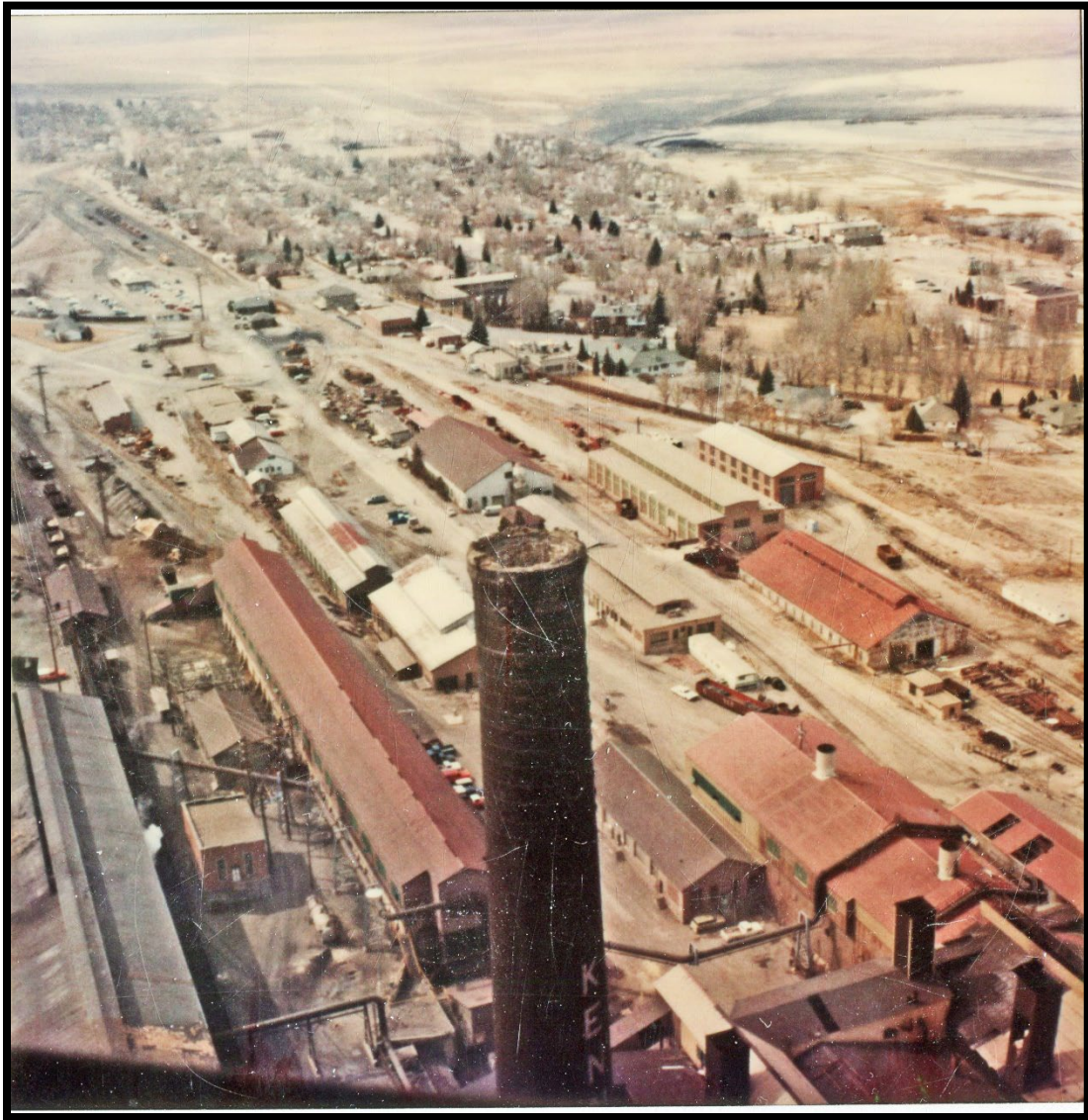
September has meant a lot of different things to me. Such as going back to school, hunting season and of course the beginning of the change to the cold snowy months of winter.

Old Photos

Ever wonder what it would be like looking down from the tall smoke stack in McGill. Yes, the big tall one, 750 ft. The others are 300 ft.



Well, wonder no more.



I think this is not from the top, but about 2/3 of the way.
This photo was loaned to us by the Neil Greenwell family.