

Newsletter251

## Keith's Corner/McGill News

March 1, 2024

### The Tailings



The tailings are the left over sludge from the concentrator process at the mill. The ore from the Ruth mine is dumped into the giant jaw crusher at the mill. The massive jaw crusher makes short work of large boulders. The ore is then crushed in several different crushers and is then put into the ball crushers. These have small iron balls that roll around and crush the ore to a powder. The powder is mixed with different chemicals and water and is dumped into small ponds. The oils adhere to the minerals and formed bubbles that float on the pond. The pond has large skimmers that rake the foam off the pond. This sludge is then dried and sent to the smelter.

The left over sediment (tailings) is dumped into a stream of water and sent down the hill to the flat below McGill.

The tailings area is over 10 square miles in size.

When the water settles out of the sludge, the result is the large dust bowl that McGill is famous for over the years.

Not too many of us old McGill heathens left that can remember the huge dust storms that came off the 'flats'.

I can remember many times when my Mom told us to close all the windows and help get the clothes off the clotheslines outside. It seemed like it was a daily occurrence about 10 a.m..

I remember being at the swimming pool during such storms. The sand would pelt your skin without mercy.

One time while playing baseball at the old McGill ballpark. A large dust storm came upon us and we ran into the visiting team's dugout by third base. We watched the wind roll a large garbage can across the field. The home team dugout by first base was tipped over.

A lot of McGillites called the dust storms, the fog off of Kennecott Lake..

Some of the folks that lived next to the tailings ditch claimed they lived on prime 'river front property'.

## McGill News

Rio Tinto, the company that bought Kennecott, is considering doing something with the tailings and Bassett Lake. They have been interviewing some of us local heathens by phone. If you would like to contribute, let me know and I will arrange for them to call you.

We have all been on the side of fixing the Lake up to where it originally was, instead of taking it out.

Rio Tinto is also going to look at all their buildings and decide to fix them or remove them. I don't know what buildings that are being looked at. I mentioned that I am looking for one to be made into a McGill Heritage Center.

I have been getting some items for such a place. I welcome any documents, family histories, photos, scrapbooks etc. We need to establish a place for such history before it is too late.

## Old Photo



I don't know what year this was. The Northern Hotel is there and across the street is the O'Neil Café. Anybody know?? Looks to me like it was not easy to cross the street.



Look at the two gents on the board above the water on the right side of the photo. Looks like they are on a makeshift bridge.