

Newsletter306

Keith's Corner/McGill News

March 21, 2025

Old Tailings Ditch

When the concentrator (mill) was first put into operation in 1908, there were 2 tailings ditches in use. These ditches carried the waste from the mill down to the tailings area below McGill. Duck Creek water was used to carry the waste. The ditch on the northend of the mill ran down the hill and went under the freight yard tracks and then down through middle town. It went in a straight line from the outlet below the tracks to the tailings area. It went under 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th (main) streets via large tunnels.

The other ditch came out of the south end of the mill and ran down the hill and under the tracks and down what is now F row in front of the grade school. It continued on down and then joined the north ditch and went under 4th street.



When the new mill was built after the fire in 1922 the southern ditch was eliminated. The northern ditch was re-routed half a block to the south. This caused it to turn a sharp corner just below 1st street. It is still visible.

Here is a photo showing the ditch being filled in and the picket fence torn down.

This photo was taken from the front porch of my Grandparents home at #20 first street, over their front gate. The new mill (1922) is visible .



The ditch then went under 1st. Street and down alongside our yard. This is a photo of my Dad, as a bat boy for the McGill Town team, standing in the upper corner of our yard. The tunnel under 1st. Street and the fence are visible.

The slag ditch tunnel is just over his left shoulder. Behind him is the fireplug, that I think is still there. Taken in early 1922, before the fire destroyed the mill.



Old Photo

This is for the newcomers that don't believe us old timers that talk about the big snows. This is the top of the alley between A and B Rows in townsite in 1952. In 1949-50, the year of the haylift, those garages would have been covered. I remember that the only thing visible on the A Row houses, was the chimney.

