

Happy Valley Orchard



Happy Valley Orchard 2014

Heritage Register - Site

- 1) **Historical Name:** Happy Valley Orchard
- 2) **Common Name:** Happy Valley Orchard
- 3) **Location:** below Kootenay Columbia Mountain, in Happy Valley
- 4) **Date of Construction:** c. 1910

SIGNIFICANCE

This orchard is a visual reminder of the time in Rossland's early history that the growing of fruit trees was seen as a potential way to sustain the community after its inevitable decline when the mines ceased producing ore and jobs.

Background Information **(from Ron Shearer's essay on the Chinese of Rossland)**

In 1904 the Provincial Fruit Inspector visited the area and commented favorable on four fruit ranches in the valley south of Rossland, one with 700 trees and another in greater Rossland with 60 trees. In 1910 the provincial government announced it would establish a "demonstration orchard" in Rossland to promote the growing of fruit trees and to teach potential farmers techniques suitable to the mountain environment. Following a competition, the orchard was established northeast of town in 1911, (perhaps the Happy Valley Orchard?)

City Council was very proactive in promoting fruit farming. The City offered to purchase 500 fruit trees in 1907, both apple and soft fruit, for sale to residents and 350 were actually ordered and we presume, planted. Displays and sampling of Rossland's high altitude fruits were made both at a London agricultural show in 1907 and at the Canadian National Apple Show held in Kaslo in 1910 and received much favorable comment.

Ron Shearer comments that little was heard of fruit growing on a commercial scale in later years and as a youngster, (1940s) he remembers many abandoned orchards around the city. This would include the fruit trees grown by the Chinese in the Chinese Gardens area below Thompson Avenue.

From the Rossland Centennial Album, page 184.

"The Rossland Progressive Association was formed in 1910 to promote the growth and stability of the City of Rossland and for "purposes of assisting the City's general welfare". Among other things it was successful in getting the Department of Agriculture to establish an experimental fruit orchard in Rossland. (The remains of that orchard still exist on the north slope of the Happy Valley area.)