

MUSEUM MUSINGS FOR JULY 2010

One of our main functions at the museum is to collect archival material and we wish to express our appreciation to Kevin Spenst and Texada Quarrying Limited/Lafarge for making material pertaining to Texada Mines available to us through Harold Diggon. Harold worked for Texada Mines from 1962 to 1976 when the mine closed. He continued to work for other companies who mined limestone on the same property until his retirement in 2007 for a total of 45 years service. Well done Harold.

Texada Mines operated from 1952 to 1976 but they were only one of many companies and groups that were associated with this property. Remember Harry Trim who is credited with discovering the claim in 1871. Remember Amor De Cosmos who was forced to resign as premier of BC because of his allegedly illegal connection with this property. Texada Mines shipped about fifteen million tons of iron and copper concentrates mostly to Japan and mostly in the company owned ore carrier MV Texada. Our picture today is of the Texada shown here tied to the loading dock at the mine site. This ship carried approximately 65,000 tons of concentrate and did the round trip to Japan in 28 days. As many as 350 men were employed at the mine at the peak of its operation. Gillies Bay became a company town as Texada Mines established bunkhouses and a commissary for its employees. The company also put in the Gillies Bay water system, installed street lights, built the community hall, the health clinic and the tennis courts all of which were turned over to the community when the mine closed. Texada Mines was justly proud of its safety record and its mine rescue teams. In 1970, the team won the Provincial title for the sixth time and went on to win the National title which they won again in 1971. Members of those winning teams still living on Texada include Keith Hughes, Mave LeClair and Harold Diggon.

Until next time take care of each other and remember to think and act green.

Norm MacLean

