



## Mining

Princeton has a long and rich history in the mining industry. The first Europeans in the Princeton area were explorers, and were quickly followed by gold miners hastening to the latest gold rush. Copper and coal mines came some time later, leading to the building of the Great Northern and Kettle Valley Railways.

### Black Wednesday at Blakeburn

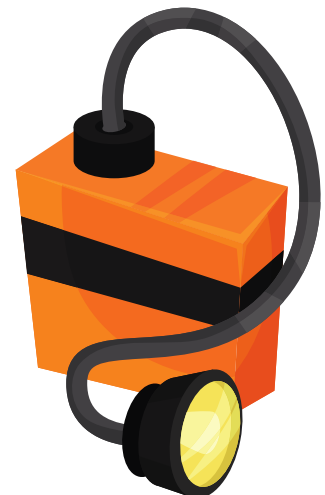
On Wednesday, August 13th, 1930, an underground explosion occurred at the Blackburn No 4 mine. Out of the 46 men present in the mine that day, only one person survived the shift. Most of the men that were deeper in the mine survived the initial blasting effect - some died from burns, others from rock falls, and asphyxiation overtook the rest as collapsing mine roofs blocked off the airways. Later evidence indicated those who came through the first explosion lasted only a matter of minutes as their air supply dwindled. Today, this tragedy is still regarded as one of the blackest days in B.C. history.

### Copper Mountain

Copper was the third most abundant mineral found in the Princeton area, being extracted on and off since the 1920's. Twenty kilometres from Princeton, at the aptly named Copper Mountain, a separate community developed around the underground mine. In 1957 the deep mine was abandoned in favour of an open pit operation. With the mining method change, 600 inhabitants had to abandon their homes at Copper Mountain.

### Did You Know?

Miners have a special safety lamp that provides illumination in coal mines. It is designed to operate in air that may contain coal dust or gases, both of which are potentially flammable or explosive. It was often carried by the Fire-boss who inspected each working area in the mine for poisonous gases which could ignite.





## Ranchers

The first ranch in the Princeton area was started by John Fall Allison. By the end of the 19th century, the grasslands and open woodlands of the valley bottom were divided up into ranches.

### John Fall Allison

In 1858, John Fall Allison settled in the Princeton area becoming the first European settler. Allison was also one of the original ranchers and prospectors. He left England to strike it rich along with a flood of other Europeans during the California gold rush. Following his dreams, Allison eventually ended up in Canada after hearing of gold found along the Fraser River. Word of yet more gold inland led Allison to stake claims along the Similkameen River.

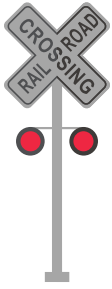
### Importance of Horses

Prior to 1949 and the opening of the Hope-Princeton Highway, isolation was always a keyword in Princeton's history. Much like the First Nations tribes of the area, who had spent generations training horses for personal use, the newly settled community relied heavily on the horse for transport. Whether it was Bill Garrison's freighting, Pat Wright's guiding service, Doug Currie's cattle horses or Luke Gibson's race horses, the horse was king. To this day, ranching and horses play a big part in the area's economy and culture.

### Fun Fact

Kenny McLean was a Native American Rodeo champion from Hamilton, Montana, who made a huge and immediate impact on rodeo on both sides of the Canadian-US border in the 1960s. McLean also spent 10 or 12 years in Princeton training horses and mentoring young people who were interested in horses and the lifestyle.





## The Princeton Railways

In 1909, a subsidiary of the American Great Northern Railway, the Victoria, Vancouver and Eastern (VV&E), raced into Princeton headed by a Canadian, James Hill. Interesting to most Canadians is the fact that an American by the name of William Cornelius Van Horne headed the Canadian Pacific Railway.

### Railway Rivals

Van Horne and Hill were involved in an out of control power struggle for territory between their rivaling railways, creating fierce competition and bitter animosity between the two. Both anxious to establish a route across the Southern Interior, fighting between the rival Canadian Pacific Railway and the Great Northern Railway extended into ugly deeds of destruction. At the worst of it, stations were destroyed and rival workers used their tools as weapons in gang-like fights. While the two railways fought a bitter feud to the finish line, their purpose was the same: to bring the train to Princeton and unite coastal B.C. to the interior and the rest of Canada. Finally, on November 9th 1909, the Great Northern Railway sprinted ahead of its competition and reached Princeton before the Canadian Pacific Railway. The resulting railway was named the Kettle Valley Railway.



### James Jerome Hill

James Jerome Hill was a Canadian-American railroad executive. He was the chief executive officer of a family of lines headed by the Great Northern Railway, which served a substantial area, earning him the nickname "The Empire Builder".

### William Cornelius Van Horne

Born in 1843 in rural Illinois, Van Horne began working on railroads in 1857. He rose from the general manager of the Canadian Pacific Railway to president in 6 years and is most famous for overseeing the major construction of the first Canadian transcontinental railway.

### Fun Fact

The railway was once the primary means of transportation for people as well as other goods such as cattle and lumber. However, over time the need for rail transport dwindled and in January of 1964, the last passenger train ran from Merritt, through Princeton to Penticton, Midway, and finally onto Nelson.

## Hudson's Bay Company 1849 Fur Brigade Trail



In the early 1800's fur trading began in Western Canada. In June 1846, Alexander Caulfield Anderson undertook the first recorded trip through the Cascade Wilderness seeking a new route for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). Anderson's goal was to link Fort Kamloops with the Pacific Ocean without crossing the 49th parallel as the new US boundary blocked access to the HBC's previous route.

### The 1849 Fur Brigade Trail

The path followed by the Hudson's Bay Company 1849 Brigade Trail was originally a hunting, fishing, gathering and trade route used by the First Nations people of the Similkameen. Blackeye of the Similkameen and his son were the ones to show Anderson the shorter, easier route over the Tulameen Plateau. For more than a decade, the HBC's fur empire depended on this route.



### Nora Yakumtikum

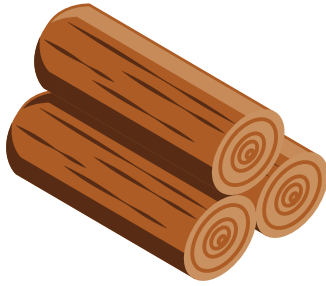
Nora Yakumtikum, daughter of Chief Quinisco of the Similkameen and the first wife of John Fall Allison, ran a pack train along the HBC. This resourceful woman also ran an express mail run from the HBC to Princeton and Keremeos using an HBC provisions restocking spur.

### Did You Know?

The buffalo coat was part of the cold-weather uniform of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, along with a fur cap, mittens and long woolen stockings. In 1931, it replaced the cowhide and horsehide coats that had been worn from 1873. Each coat required its own buffalo hide, bought by the RCMP for \$13 apiece. About 65 hides were purchased per year while the coats were being issued, then tailored by Montreal furriers for around \$90 per coat. Today, the buffalo coat acts as a traditional emblem of the RCMP in ceremonial settings, including by guards on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.



## Logging History



The logging industry has played a large part in the development of Princeton's history. Names recorded in the annals, but now long gone, include: Kettle Valley Lumber Company, Taylor Lumber Company, Huff Brothers Sawmill, W.T. Squelch and Son of Tulameen. Today, the main operator, Weyerhaeuser Canada, is Princeton's largest employer.

### The Trees of Princeton:

#### Ponderosa Pine "pinus ponderosa"

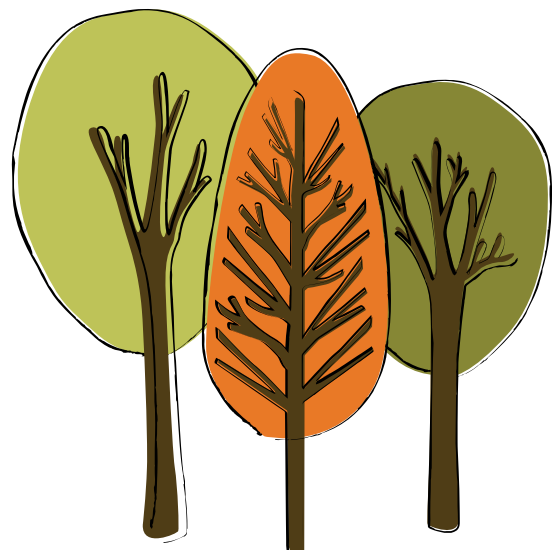
The Ponderosa Pine averages 25 to 30 metres tall but can reach as tall as 50 metres and measure 2 metres in diameter. A long and deep root system stabilizes the tree and enables it to access deep underground water. It is the only native British Columbia pine with bundles of three needles and can live as long as 500 years.

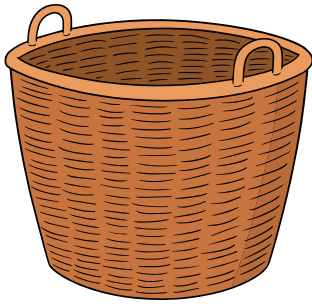
#### Lodgepole Pine "pinus contorta"

The most widespread tree in the province, Lodgepole Pine is British Columbia's only native two-needle conifer. A unique feature of this tree is that its cones need extreme heat, like that from a forest fire, to open and release seeds. The cones can remain on the branches for many years and provide food for small mammals that feed on the trees' inner bark.

#### Douglas Fir "pseudotsuga menziesii"

Despite its name, the Douglas Fir is not a fir at all but *Pseudotsuga* or False Hemlock. It is named after the Scottish botanist, David Douglas, who introduced many of BC's native conifers to Europe. The Douglas Fir is unique in its three-forked bracts between the scales on the cones. These trees can reach 85 metres in height on the coast and 42 metres in the interior.





## Indigenous Basketry

For thousands of years, First Nations women from the Pacific Northwest and the B.C. Interior practiced basketry and honed the technique. Today there are very few people who have the knowledge and skill to carry out the art of basket making.

### Materials Used

The materials used to create baskets were constructed from rigid and woven plant fibers, cedar root, splint material (known to be strong and rot resistant), tulle and cattail reeds, and even ponderosa pine needles. Sometimes spruce and juniper root were utilized when cedar could not be obtained. Grasses, willow, black and red cherry bark or tulle was used for imbricated designs. If the desired materials were unavailable to produce a basket, they were traded from one group to another.

### What they were Used for

Depending on what they were used for, baskets came in a variety of shapes and sizes. Baskets were commonly utilized for gathering, drinking, carrying and storing water, cooking kettles (using heated rocks), cradles, and serving and storing food.



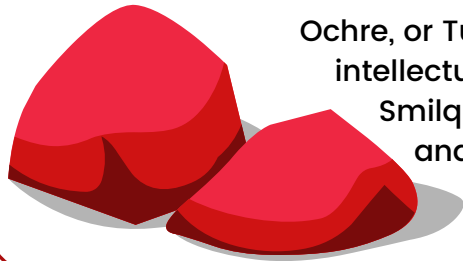
### Fun Fact

There is no archaeological evidence of pottery use in British Columbia, which indicates a heavy reliance on basketry for food and water storage throughout aboriginal history.





## First Nations and Ochre



Ochre, or Tul-mn (the Smilqmix name), has spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical significance to the Smilqmix First Nations. It is found in various shades and hues of cax (red), kwreiy (yellow), q'way (black) and pi'q (white).

### Significance of Ochre

Many Indigenous People connect the four colours of ochre to cultural concepts such as the four cardinal directions, the four stages of life, and four major ethnicities of human beings. Smilqmix peoples believe ochre is sacred and should not be used casually. An important trade item, ochre has been used in ceremonies as face and body paint, as well as for rock art and clothing dye. People came from as far away as the prairies and Oregon coast to barter for the sacred ochre, exchanging quill and beadwork, buffalo hides, eagle feathers, hemp rope and other goods.



### Did you know?

Ochre stratum begins as soil rich in iron ore and is found in a variety of geological formations. The strata are sometimes located near mineral springs, along sea cliffs or in an area where clay soils have been baked by thermal heat or an ancient lava flow. The process that creates these rich colours is known as oxidation.



### Fun Fact

Ochre was used in making the hundreds of pictographs found throughout the Similkameen Valley. Many scholars believe these ancestral artists were documenting territories, significant historical events, or images formed during a vision quest.

## Ice Harvesting in Princeton



Between 1915 and 1925, for a period of approximately 2 weeks each winter, fresh ice was harvested from nearby Otter Lake in Tulameen. The majority of this ice was transported by the Great Northern Railway to its many ice houses west of Spokane, Washington. From 1925-1938, Otter Lake continued to be harvested for its fresh clear ice for local use.

### How was Ice Harvested?

Icemen would wait until roughly a foot of ice had formed on the surface of the water in the winter. The ice would then be cut with either a handsaw or a horse drawn ice plow into long continuous strips and then cut into large individual blocks for transport by wagon back to the icehouse.

### Did you know?

Once the blocks of ice were delivered to a home, they were stored in icehouses that were covered in sawdust, which served as insulation and prevented the ice from melting too quickly before being delivered to a residence. These blocks of ice could last for months when stored this way!



### Tools

The Ice Plow was invented by Nathaniel I Wyeth of Boston in 1825. It was made up of cutting teeth fitted in a straight line, with each tooth longer than the one in front of it and was steered by plow handles along a straight line marked on the ice. An ice plow with short teeth was called a marker plow, and was used to mark the area in a grid pattern. Chisels, hooks, saws, sieves, break-off bars and tongs were also common tools used in ice harvesting.

### Fun Fact

A large operation would have a crew of 75 icemen and cut 1500 tons of ice daily!



## Fossil Eras



50 to 55 million years ago, during the early Eocene Epoch, British Columbia had a subtropical climate. In the interior from Princeton north to Smithers, however, at an elevation of about 0.5-1.2 km, there was a cooler upland region called the Okanagan Highlands, where volcanic activity had created numerous lakes.

### Trees of the Okanagan Highlands

The Okanagan Highlands in the early Eocene were home to mixed forests of conifers: cedars, fir, hemlock, pine, spruce and redwoods. Deciduous trees and shrubs such as alder, birch, cherry, elm, maple, beech, sassafras and sweetfern, together with ginkgo, rare palms and cyads were also found in the area.

### Species of the Okanagan Highlands

The floating fern *Azolla* covered quiet parts of the lakes, under which swam ancient salmon and other fish. Swarms of mayflies, scorpionflies (mecoptera), green lacewings (neuroptera), fungus gnats, and a myriad of other insects filled the air at a diversity normally expected in tropical forests. This ancient environment combined a warm temperate upland climate with mixtures of plants, of temperate deciduous and coniferous forests, including the Chinese euconmia, golden larch, and golden raintree. Many of these warm-climate plants are today only found in southern China.



### Fun Fact

To find fossils in British Columbia's Okanagan Highlands is relatively easy, but many sites remain hidden under forest cover or high on valley rims. The shales are easily split and reveal beautifully preserved leaves, seeds, insects, fish and rare feathers, and even rarer bird body fossils.

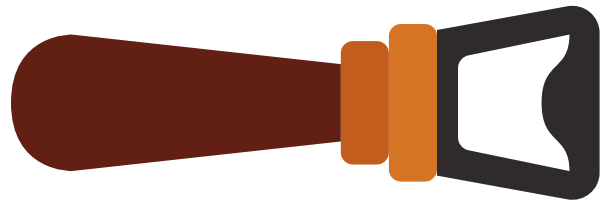


## Princeton Brewing Co.

The Princeton Brewing Co. was established from the old Nelson Brewing Co. after its Hedley brewery was moved to Princeton.

### History of the Brewery

In 1933, a new plant was built at the site of the present Bus Depot. At this site, there was a cave that was used to store bottles and other articles. The brewing company was in operation until 1961, when the company was bought by the E.P. Taylor group (Canadian Breweries). In June 1961, the last shipment of beer was made in Princeton, and the equipment was moved to the Ben Ginter Brewery at Prince George, and the buildings were demolished.



### Fun Fact

The beer used to be shipped from Princeton to as far north as Whitehorse and Dawson Creek during World War II. Wooden barrels were used, with individual bottles encased in a "sleeve" holding 13 dozen bottles per barrel.



## Granite Creek

For decades, prospectors extracted placer gold from the Similkameen and Tulameen rivers. In 1885, a nugget discovered by a cowboy named Johnny Chance near Granite Creek touched off a Gold Rush and the rapid development of the town of Granite Creek.

### Town Development

Johnny Chance started a boom town that grew to a population of over two thousand people. Granite had two main streets: "Government" and "Granite," and was home to two hundred buildings, thirteen of which were saloons, making it the third largest community in British Columbia. But by 1910, Granite Creek was panned out. Except for several ruins, a commemorative concrete cairn, and the eerily silent old cemetery, nothing remains to bear witness to the former glory days of the town. The Princeton museum holds many artifacts from these ghost towns, including a slot machine and a mechanical cocktail shaker.

### Did you know?

Chinese immigrants have a long history of mining in the Okanagan area. Their pre-established presence led to them running their own mining camps in Granite Creek, which further solidified their presence in Princeton.



### Fun Fact

In 1886, it was reported that there were 22 saloons in Granite City!

