

BIG ARM ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

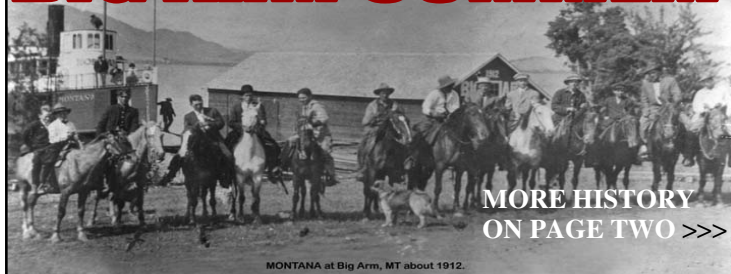
February 2010 www.BigArmAssociation.org

PO Box 11, Big Arm, MT 59910. 849-6628 Alison, Ross 5568, Amy 5209.

COFFEE HOUR
Thurs Mar 11th, 10:30am
At the Fire Hall, Join Us!
Informal and Fun



BIG ARM COMMEMORATING 100 YEARS



The above photograph was taken in 1912. These are obviously some of the young gentlemen of Big Arm. Was it a parade? What do you think they were about to do? We would love to hear your thoughts and will print the best story in next month's newsletter. Be creative!

2010 is going to be a Fun-Filled year of commemorating the **100 year centennial**. The County-wide events kick off with "A Sampler" at the KwaTuqNuk from 2-6pm. Big Arm will hold its first event at the historic school on May 22nd. A committee is being formed to organize this living history event and we welcome everyone's help. Call Alison at 849-6628.

Calendar: February 19th, 6pm potluck with a 7pm presentation from Christi Buffington from the **Flathead Lakers**. Christi will be sharing all kinds of information concerning the quality of our wonderful lake and will offer suggestions on how we can best protect these precious waters. Come along, it is a wonderful opportunity to meet your neighbors.

March 26th, 6pm potluck with a 7pm presentation on the ecology and recovery of the **Bald Eagle** in western Montana by Chris Hammond from Wildlife & Parks.

April (no date yet), 6pm potluck with, hopefully, an opportunity to meet candidates running for local offices.

April 17th, Spring Cleanup on Big Arm's Highway 93.

May 22, Living History at the Big Arm Historic School

June, tentatively the Firefighters' Annual Family Day with the Despot Dictator's famous water wars and the Association's old fashioned carnival.

July 24th, The History of One Room School Houses given by Joyce Decker Wegner along with another guest speaker.

Augustto be determined

September: 4th Annual Barn Dance with an historic twist.

Historic School: We guess with the grant no news is good news. We hope to hear in about 4 weeks. If successful then work on the outside of the school will start in earnest. New roof, replace and repair the siding, repair the woodwork etc. We could use some help on the inside; please call Ron Roberts at 849-5133. Donations of money are very welcome.

Truck Traffic on Highway 93 and 35:.... by Paul Maurer
Due to the ongoing controversy about truck traffic on these

highways, I had the opportunity Feb. 11th to do some monitoring of traffic with a MT Trucking Assoc. representative. We used a radar gun to monitor speed and listened for Jake brakes on large trucks at 3 different sites. The first was next to the peat moss plant south of Big Arm. At this sight we found most of the traffic within 5 miles of the speed limit and as I recall 2 trucks might have lacked adequate mufflers. We next moved to the national landmark in downtown Big Arm which is the Sailing Wolf Tavern. There we found approximately 35% of the traffic exceeding the 45mph speed limit by more than 10mph. With one dump truck doing 71mph. Our next stop was the hill north of Lakeside. There we found 3 times the traffic with 95% of the traffic within 4 miles mph of the speed limit. Over the next 6 months monitoring will take place at various sites without any announcements as to the date or location. The information will be shared with MDOT to help the State with their studies so appropriate action can be taken.

Christmas Party Thanks: Belated thanks to all who helped the Big Arm Firefighters put on their children's party. Thank you for the decorations, the food and helping serve, the Roberts, Amy Edward, Trish Friez, the Watermans, the Eddys, Alison Meslin, Lester Johnson, Deb Raunig, Julie Sisler.

Firefighters: We also take this opportunity to thank our wonderful Big Arm firefighters who dedicate so much of their time to keep us safe: Ron Friez, Jeff Meslin, Tom Sadecki, Steve Doll, Arnie Gomke, Martin Sago and Matt Sisler. They could really use more help; please call Ron for more information 849-5131. All ages, male or female, flexible duties. We also thank the Polson Firefighters who are always ready to come to Big Arm for our emergencies.

Lake County Conservation District organizers are proposing spring workshops for small acreage landowners. They are offering classes on weed control, landscaping, wildlife, forests, drought management etc. Please contact 676-2842 or Tim Beebe for more information. There is a questionnaire postcard I will forward for email addresses.

Health Tip: Detect Signs of a STROKE. Use **S T R**....
Smile, **T**alk (speak a sentence), **R**aise both arms, now a 4th .. stick out the **T**ongue if crooked it could be a sign of a stroke.

Where are products made? Check the first 3 digits of the bar code: 00-13 USA, CA; 30-37 FR; 40-44 Germany; 49 Japan; 50 UK; 57 Denmark; 64 Finland; 76 Switz, Liench; 628 Saudi-A; 629 United Arab Em; 740-754 Central America; 480's Philippines; 690-692 China; 471 Taiwan.

Census Advice: Protect yourself from identity theft! The Census worker will have a badge, handheld device & a confidentiality notice. Do not give Social Security number, credit card or banking information to anyone. The US Census Bureau will not contact you via email..... >>>>page 2

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Settling of Big Arm by Roberta Culp from "In the Shadows of the Missions" compiled by Inez Siegreist and the Publication Committee..... Continued from last month

C.E. Vert was the best Model T mechanic this side of Detroit. An M.W.A. Local was organized which made for fun and fellowship. A farm grange grew and there were parties, picnics and dances.

Regular Sunday School and Church services were well attended.

The law forbade the sale of liquor on the Reservations for twenty years.

The demand for horseflesh created a field day for horse dealers. Nothing was more desirable in those days than a good horse and a few things more dangerous than a bad one. It was an outlaw horse that caused one of Big Arm's first tragedies when Mr. Peterson was killed when hitching up a stage team on the Bramer Stage Line.

The Big Arm and Loon Lake communities organized and built a rural telephone line. The community furnished its own professional linemen; twenty-four hours per day was the recognized limit a man to put in hard labor. Therefore, the line was built with speed and precision.

The Model T car came in with the telephone.

When little Catherine Rooney got her face terribly cut in the wire fence, Mrs. Rooney called on the party line and the news of the accident spread over the valley. Like a minute man, Addie LeDioux was on the scene with their new car, and in record time the little girl was in the hospital fifteen miles away.

Automobiles were not taxed or licensed. There were no roads, few garages, very poor gas and poorer tires.

Outstanding in the hazards of driving an automobile was the probability of having to walk back home. Yet everybody wanted a car. C.J. Sterling was one of the first to own a car and many a stranded traveler was helped on his way by the service in that car.

Grandpa LeDioux drove the old bay mare to the single buggy just as long as he could stand it. Then came the shiny new Model T.

Grandpa was stone deaf but smart as a whip and chock full of that Rocky Mountain pioneer fortitude. He caught on rapidly, and learned the art of cranking quickly. He couldn't hear the engine running, so he would give her a whirl and then step back and look at the car. If it was shaking all over, it was time to get in and go. If it was perfectly still, he would give'er another whirl. One day as his car stood in front of the Post Office, headed downhill, he gave the crank a flip. The car went into gear and took off toward the lake. Gramps barely had time to get out of the way—as he watched his treasure head straight for the deep water, a tangle of French and English rent the air with astounding, unmistakable and unspeakable clarity. However, just before the car reached the water, it veered sharply and crashed into the grain eleva-

tor. New headlights, radiator, fenders, and Clarence Vert had her looking like new and ready to go again.

Big Arm had a wonderful ball park. It was one mile wide and two miles long. The ball games, most every Sunday afternoon, were well attended; there was no admission charge. The grandstand seats were wagons, buggies, Model T's, saddle horses, and standing room. Sometimes the ball park was used as a race track. On these occasions the bunch grass stadium was packed to the limit for the Indians of the locality loved the races and they usually went away with most of the prizes. The Indians were respectful of the white folk's gatherings, but when invited were happy to come and take part in the games. The Indian is a lover of games; he catches on quickly and has great respect for the rules of the game.

The winter sports were also interesting. During the winter of 1911, under the supervision of Bill Sweet (the woodworking genius), a twelve man toboggan was built. From the highest point on Main Street they would take off, at breakneck speed down the hill and far out on the icy deck of the Flathead Lake. There were homemade one passenger sleds, barrels, stoves and scoop shovels.

Skating was a good sport, too, in spite of some bruises and chills. Sometimes when the ice was rough on the big lake, skating parties went to Loon Lake. A big bonfire on the ice served as a community center where sometimes sandwiches and coffee added to the fun.

In the spring of 1911 when the ice was softening, two men started across Big Arm Bay; a short distance from the shore the ice gave way and they went into the ice cold water. Oscar Myhre heard their cries for help and attempted to rescue them without success. They went under the ice and their bodies were never found nor were they ever identified.

Another near tragedy occurred in Big Arm Bay when Frank Ebel's team and wagon went through the ice. Mr. Ebel drove onto the ice with barrels in his wagon, cut a hole in the ice, dipped and filled the barrels with water. As the barrels filled, the ice gave and down went horses and wagon in eight to ten feet of water. He was warned by the cracking ice just in time to jump to the solid ice, but the horses went down where they stood. They seemed to realize their plight at once and started to fight desperately. A crowd of men gathered, some trying to break the ice toward shallow water, some trying to pull at the harnesses. The horses would get a foothold on the ice then slip back and go under. The broken chunks of ice rose up over their backs. Every minute was reducing their chances, then Albert Rude, who lived a quarter of a mile away, ran home, got his team and came with rigging, ropes and chains and succeeded in pulling them out.

.....continued next month

**If you have stories you would like to share please contact
Alison Meslin 849-6628 or send an email.**

PLEASE SAVE A STAMP FORWARD YOUR EMAIL