

Written By Doris Bunker

Pages From The Past



FORT DUCHESSNE brought many enterprises and activities into the Basin. Pictured above is the Fort Duchesne Band.

Chinese laundryman comes to Fort Duchesne in 1889

Wong Sing, a Chinese immigrant, came to Fort Duchesne in 1889, three years after the Fort was established. The enterprising Oriental, though he could speak hardly a word of English, established a "primitive laundry" on the bank of the Uintah River near the Post. His laundry was greatly patronized by the two troops of cavalry and the company of infantry established at Fort Duchesne at that time. As his business expanded, he obtained a supply of chinaware which he sold to the wives of the officers and the settlers of Uintah Basin.

The English language proved difficult for him to master, and there were some words the command of which he never did obtain. The Indian language, however, was completely mastered by him. In their tongue he could converse with great efficiency.

An enterprising pair of troopers rented a room in the hotel at Fort Duchesne and opened up a poker game. Wong Sing became a master artist at the game, and his earnings flourished. It was said he could hold four aces and still hold a straight face. After he had accumulated sufficient capital, he opened a restaurant at the fort. It proved to be very profitable, and he was later able to set up a little store. He wanted to annex the Indian trade along with the soldiers. By fair dealing and honesty he won their entire patronage. The band known as "The Fort Duchesne Band" was organized with the

Maesser
Eloise Allen Parker
Phone 789-2178

Jenkins recovers from accident

Cody Jenkins had a bad accident recently when he was taking a load of cattle to Ogden. On the way he thought something was wrong with his truck and got out to check it. The truck ran over him, passing over his right arm. He spent two days in the Brigham City Hospital. No bones were broken and Cody is recuperating at home.

Timothy Cody was returning to his home in Dry Fork Thursday night of last week on his motorcycle when he ran into a large pile of unmarketed asphalt about 5000 west 1500 North. His cycle flew up approximately 15 to 20 feet. He has been in the Ashley Valley Medical Center for a week in traction until surgery was done this past Thursday and pins were placed in his broken femur.

Tim is from Fullerton, Calif. He works for W.J.M. Wall Head and Service. He is a service representative for the company. He plans to buy a home in Vernal.

Milo and Ellen Johnson and son, Paul, from Neals, Calif., visited friends and relatives in Vernal last week. Ellen is a sister of Edna Hatch and Ted Williams. They spent time with her aunt, Zina Anderson and a cousin, Betty Eaton.

Phillip and Thora Hall has some special company last week; their daughters Wanda and Vera from Roosevelt.

George and Vera Murray and daughter, Vera Lynn, born on May 13, were here Friday.

Norman and Wanda Larsen and their

two-year old daughter, Charalee, were here Thursday.

Recent guests at the home of Wayne and Helen Collier for a week were Mary Brower and son, Brian, of Salt Lake City; Cliff and Sissy Prestwich and their son Tom and his wife Beverly and their four children of Pleasant Grove. Mary and Susan are sisters of Mrs. Collier. They were all in for the reception of Tarr Jackson and Stuart Parker.

Recent visitors at the Lora Merkley home were Wayne and Robin Merkley and daughter, Melissa Cole of Sandy. Robin also visited with her mother, Romie Millecam.

J. Marlon Allen was released from the Wasatch County Hospital and Convalescent Home on June 26 and is back home in Maesser.

Bobbie and Lou Ellen (Siddoway) Hunt of Grand Junction, Colo., were guests at the L.Y. Siddoway home last week. They were here for Bobbie's 30th class reunion.

Mrs. Merlin (Kaye) Riebens is spending some time in Ogden with her father, Paul Prototzman.

Millon and Florence Woolley have purchased a new mobile home. They have set it up on the southwest corner of the Drollinger ranch.

Glen and Marlene McKee have a new baby son, born June 8, weighing 5 lbs. 13 1/2 oz. He will be named Dallen Glen. Grandparents are Reed McKee and Thelma Taylor and Stanley and Loa (Hoopes) Whiterocks. His great grandmother is Dela Nyberg.

Bruce and Cheryl Preece have a new son born on June 24, weighing 7 lbs. 5 oz. and will be named Christopher Jordan. The Preeces have two other children.

Paternal grandparents are Reed and Pearl Preece and the great grandmother is Lella Preece McNaughton. The maternal grandparents are Paul and Pat Jensen. Drey a Sherry (Webb) Firth have a new son born June 25, weighing 6 lbs. 13 oz. He will be named Michael Boyd.

John, Shanna and Heather Hacking of St. George came by the Marlon Allen residence on the 4th. They also visited with Johnny and Eloise Parker. John is the Allen's grandson and Eloise is his aunt. John is the Dean of Business at Dixie College. He was in Vernal for his 25th class reunion. He is the son of Gordon and Olive Hacking.

Duane and Jody Allen and two children of Lapoint also stopped by to

Currently Speaking

by Peggy Zeller
Moon Lake Electric Association, Inc.

FACING OUR ENERGY FUTURE
The problems facing electrical distributors today are many. One of them is adequate supply.

You see, the problem is that the cooperative, as well as any other electrical supplier, just can't keep consumers standing in line. Sure you'll wait in line at the supermarket, or line up at a gas station, but nobody wants to wait for the lights to come on or for their food to cook. And, in case you

The Firths now have three children. Paternal grandparents are Boyd and Dora Firth, great grandparents are Glen and Thelma Oaks. Maternal grandparents are Melba and Ralph Sharp and the late Clayton Webb. The great grandmother is Mrs. Margaret Lloyd, Roosevelt.

Proud parents of a new baby boy are Kirbin and JoDeena Bullock. He was born June 24 and weighed 7 lbs. 8 1/2 oz. and will be named John Wayne. Grandparents are Wayne and Shirley Bullock and Floyd and Welma Gray all of Vernal.

Edna Raines has returned home from her mission in Columbus, Ohio. She will report her mission on July 11 in the Maesser 3rd Ward. On July 18 she will report in the Maesser 4th Ward. Her two daughters, Darlene Burns, and Adreana McDonald, flew to Ohio to drive home with her.

Mary Ellen Hatch, daughter of time Boyd Hatches has moved to Phoenix, Ariz. She is teaching school in a junior college there.

you're on the right

When he announced he would put up a store on the strip away from the center, he was laughed at by his competitors who were in the merchantile business and had licenses to do business with the Indians. Fairness, right prices, and knowledge of human nature soon won for him a place no one ever could down. He drew trade from every section of the Basin, especially after the opening of the reservation in 1905. His reputation for integrity grew, as did his business. As his enterprise grew, additional space was needed. Wong Sing began building one addition after another onto his store.

When Wong first started his business, he thought everyone was as honest as himself. A number of residents, however, thought it was funny to trick him. William Tenbroek, who had a store and a saloon on the opposite side of the military reserve, was a good friend of Wong's and told of one incident. A family who lived down toward Randlett would drive up to his place and tell him they were on their way to Wong's and ask if they could buy something for him. He would give them a list of goods he wanted and the money to pay for them. Then they would buy the goods for him, charge them to their own account and pocket the money. They were that much ahead as they did not intend to pay Wong. After a few experiences of this nature, Wong altered his point of view toward his fellowmen and purchasers paid cash—in a few cases where Wong was convinced of their responsibility—paid every thirty days.

After his establishment in the merchantile business, Sing—which was his given name—soon learned that he Indians and soldiers loved the wonderful mufflers, shawls, and robes made of silk and fantastically embroidered.

Sing's word was his bond. His credit from every section of the nation was the best. His method of accounting was a mystery to all. One day an adding

machine was brought in and he was cash at the U. S. post office. Post Master Wilson at Fort Duchesne related the fact that six to nine hundred dollars taken in at regular intervals was exchanged to Wong Sing for his personal check and the Federal Post Office in Salt Lake City never refused to accept it as cash.

In 1934, Wong Sing was killed in an automobile accident on his way to Salt Lake City for supplies and medical attention. Wong Wing, son of Wong Sing, was notified and arrived in Park City that afternoon to make arrangements for the body. His body was taken to Denver for cremation. There were no funeral services as the Chinese are averse to such rites and prefer to bear their grief alone. Sing had conducted welfare work in a practical manner among the Indians and assisted them in their business transactions. The Salt Lake Tribune headlines stated—Indians mourn the death of Wong Sing Pioneer Fort Duchesne.

The business of Wong Sing was continued by his son, Wong C. Wing. The last store still remains on Highway 40 and is now operated by Brothers. He walked in his father's shoes and had a large business and many friends. His wife, Jenny, was a special lady.

During the Second World War in the 1940's, many things were hard to buy, but Wing had connections all over the country. If he liked you, he would find what you wanted somewhere. He would say, "No, I don't have it but I have it next time." The next time you were there, it was there. I remember one instance when my father, Victor Karren, a rancher needed a 30-30 rifle. You could not get guns at that time, but we got one "next time."

If you have any information on old blacksmith shops, the strip, saloons, horse races, or other history items, please contact me at the Uintah County Library or at my home.

Information for this article was taken from: Utah Historical Quarterly, Fall 1964, by Thomas G. Alexander and Leonard J. Arrington; Reed Morrill 1934 Thesis: Vernal Express Microfilm.

Planting Trees and Shrubs

Is it true that you can add trees and shrubs to your landscape at any time of year? Yes, say the experts in the American Association of Nurserymen. Most living plants can be planted any time a hole can be dug.

This was not always the case. A generation or two ago the trees available at a nursery were "bare root," and could only be planted when they were in a dormant state—early spring or late fall.

To extend the planting period the nursery growers developed a system of dig-

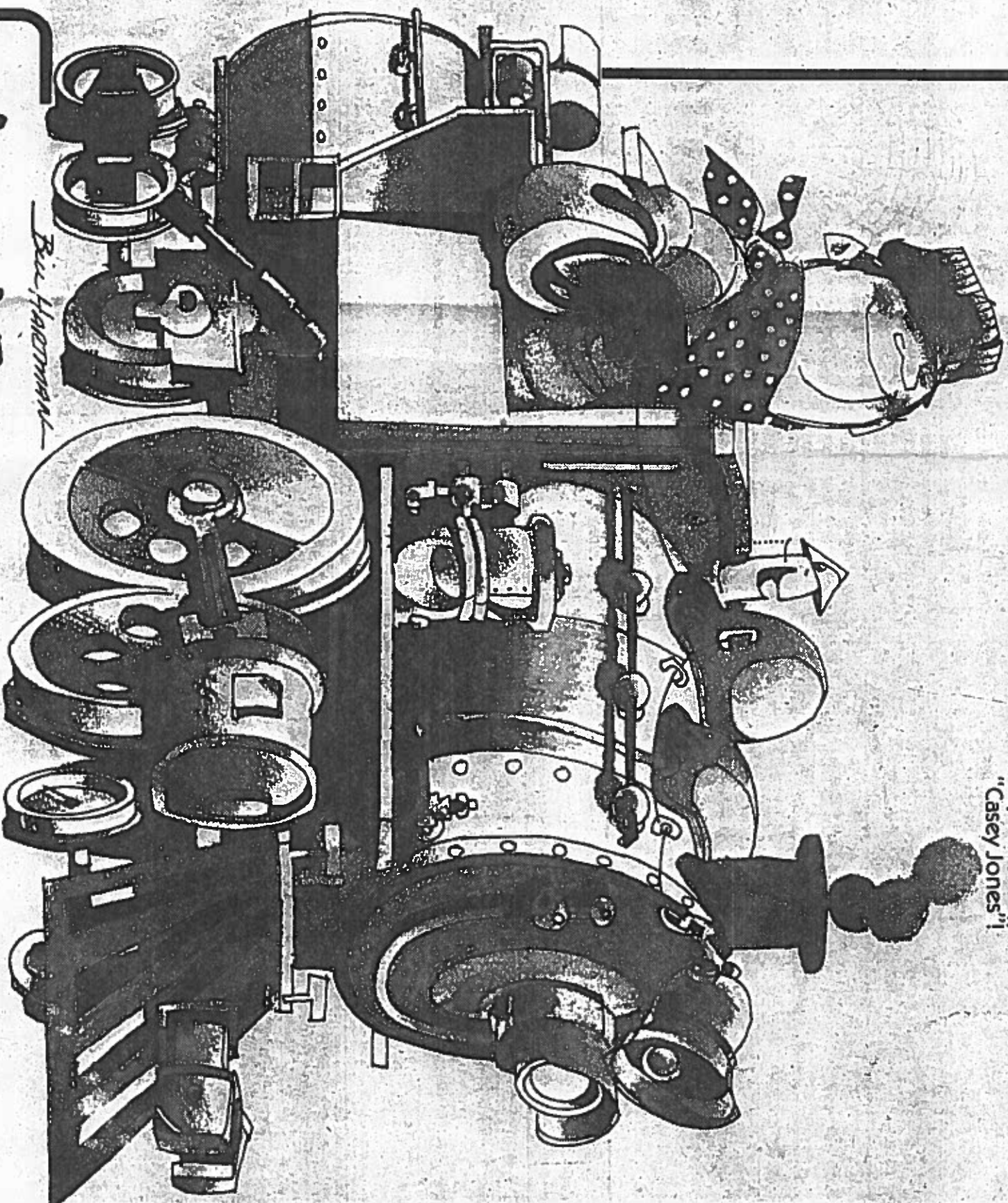
ging with a ball of soil around the roots, then wrapping that ball in burlap. These "balled and burlapped" trees can be maintained for extended periods at the nursery and can be planted just about any time.

A more recent development is the "container grown" trees and other living plants, already accounting for 28 percent of total nursery production. Their roots are in soil in metal or

plastic cans where they can be kept in a healthy condition for an indefinite

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