

HEARTH & HOME POST

INTERIOR WEEKLY

Tales from mountain and valley

VOL. I ♦ NO. IW-SAMPLE

Okanagan Apple Crop Forecast Looks Strong



Okanagan Valley orchards above Osoyoos

KELOWNA, BC. Okanagan orchardists predicted a strong apple crop in 1968 after a warm spring and steady summer irrigation, the Kelowna Courier reported. Packing houses along the lake scheduled extra shifts for September, and rail cars were reserved to move fruit to prairie markets. Growers said Spartan and McIntosh blocks showed heavy set, while early varieties already moved to local stands. The paper noted new cold-storage capacity in Winfield would help extend the selling season. Tourism remained brisk along the lakeshore, with motorists stopping at roadside fruit stands on the highway south toward Penticton. Co-op warehouses offered bins and wax paper for smaller growers who still shipped by truck. Agriculture extension officers warned pickers to watch for late-summer heat and to start ladders before dawn when temperatures climbed. Hotel owners in Peachland reported full bookings from visitors touring orchard country before the main harvest rush. Rail officials confirmed refrigerated cars would be staged at Kelowna yard by mid-September. Coldstream growers said irrigation ditches ran full through July without the shortages seen in earlier dry years. Penticton fruit inspectors added weekend shifts to grade early cherries bound for Alberta markets.

Adapted from Kelowna Courier, August 14, 1968

This Week in Western History

1956

FLOATING BRIDGE OPENS AT KELOWNA

The Okanagan Lake floating bridge linked Kelowna to Westbank, cutting ferry waits for commuters.

1963

ROGERS PASS HIGHWAY COMPLETED

The Trans-Canada Highway opened through Rogers Pass, linking the Interior to Alberta year-round.

1970

SILVER MINING REVIVES IN KOOTENAYS

Higher metal prices brought new investment to historic mining towns near Nelson and Trail.

Memories

1965

LAKE DAYS

August evenings on the lake were warm and still. Motorboats pattered home before dark while orchard rows cooled on the hills above the water.

1961

HARVEST

Pickers filled ladders in the orchard before breakfast. The air smelled of ripe apples, and cold pop bottles sweated in the shade between rows.

1964

HIGHWAY DRIVE

The Trans-Canada climb through Rogers Pass meant stopping to cool the radiator and watching snow linger on the peaks in late June.

From the Archives

Irrigation Ditch Modernization Reaches Vernon



Okanagan lakeshore near Kelowna

VERNON, BC. The Penticton Herald reported that irrigation districts north of Okanagan Lake began lining earthen ditches with concrete in 1962 to reduce water loss during hot summer months. Farmers along the Vernon creek system said the work would help orchards and pasture hold moisture through August. Crews worked in short sections so water could flow to downstream properties each night. The project followed similar upgrades near Kelowna and Summerland. Agricultural officials told the paper that better delivery would support tree fruit expansion without drawing extra water from the main lake outlets. District engineers posted weekly schedules at post offices so irrigators knew when their lateral lines would be shut off. Vernon council approved a small tax levy to match provincial grants for the concrete work. Fruit growers near Coldstream said the lined ditches would protect young trees planted on sloped blocks. District records showed water use dropped eight percent after the first concrete section opened. Orchard foremen said night irrigation runs finished faster once seepage along the old earthen banks stopped. Vernon hardware stores reported steady sales of gate valves and pipe fittings through the summer construction season. Summerland crews shared forms and mix recipes with Vernon teams working the hillside laterals above the lake.

Adapted from Penticton Herald, June 22, 1962

Questions of the Week

I. *Did you ever pick fruit or work in an orchard?*

II. *Which lake in the Interior do you remember visiting most?*

TALK ABOUT IT

- ◆ How did you keep cool during hot summer weeks?
 - ◆ What did the first highway trips through mountain passes feel like?
 - ◆ What local fair or fall supper do you recall?
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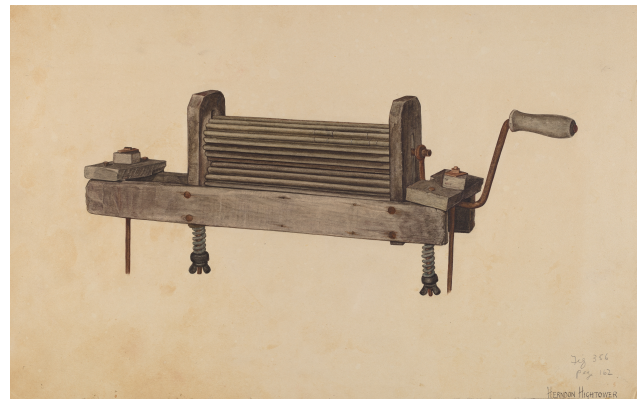
From the General Store



Clamp-On Meat Grinder

Circa 1940s

Many farm kitchens clamped a hand-crank meat grinder to the edge of the table. It ground beef for patties, apples for sauce, and leftovers for casseroles. The handle turned slow and steady while a bowl waited underneath.

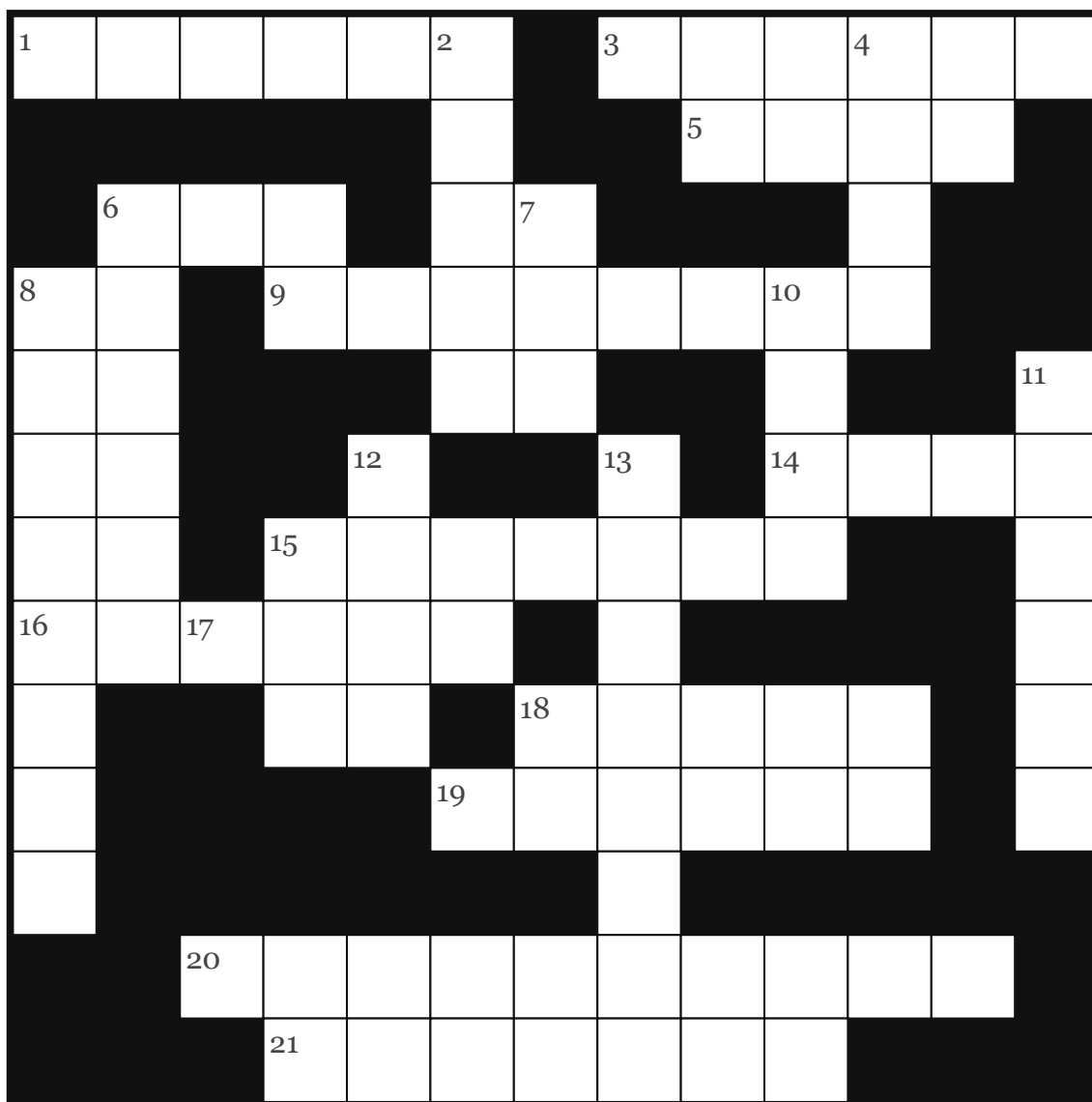


Clothes Wringer

Circa 1930s

Wash day meant feeding wet sheets through a hand-crank wringer clamped to the tub. The rollers squeaked as they squeezed out water before the lines were hung in the yard. Children learned to keep their fingers clear early.

Weekly Crossword



Across

1. Book of songs in the pew rack
3. Hero of Saturday matinee serials
5. Animal warned about at the campsite
6. Mattress where you slept each night
9. Board game that lasted all evening
14. Letters sorted at the kitchen table
15. Head vegetable for coleslaw
16. Vinyl spun on the hi-fi
17. Wire from the lamp to the outlet
18. Strip sizzling beside the eggs
19. Church sale of crafts and baking
20. Practice of neat handwriting
21. Overshoes worn in the rain

Down

2. Borrowed money for a new car
4. Infant in a crib by the window
6. Button shirt worn with a skirt
7. Tied on a gift or in hair
8. Chores and a trip to town
10. Green fruit for a summer punch
11. Whiten whites in the wash tub
12. Afternoon that drew folks to the porch
13. Read in the waiting room or living room
15. Holstein milked at dawn

Then & Now

THEN

In the 1960s, many orchard ladders were wooden and trucks hauled fruit in loose boxes to local packing houses. Pickers rose before dawn when August heat settled on the bench land.

NOW

Today, bins and hydraulic platforms speed harvest, but roadside fruit stands still appear each September along the old highway routes.

THEN

Irrigation ditches were earthen channels watched by turn masters who walked the laterals with a shovel at dusk.

NOW

Concrete linings and district schedules still govern summer water, but neighbours still compare notes at the post office when lines are shut off for repairs.

A Little Laughter

- ◆ Why did the orchardist go to bed early?
He wanted to pick up the early McIntosh.
- ◆ How do Interior farmers beat the heat?
They stand in the shade of their own peaches.
- ◆ What do you call a lazy vineyard worker? A grape procrastinator.
- ◆ What did the lake say to the houseboat?
Nothing, it just waved.
- ◆ Why did the scarecrow win an award?
He was outstanding in his field.

Did You Know?

- ◆ Okanagan: The valley produces most of BC apples and many of its wines each harvest season.
 - ◆ Lakes: Shuswap Lake has over 1,000 kilometres of shoreline for summer cabins and boat traffic.
 - ◆ Heat: Summer temperatures in the Okanagan often reach the mid-30s Celsius by late July.
 - ◆ Orchards: Kelowna became known as the Orchard City in the early 1900s.
 - ◆ Mining: The Kootenays produced silver, lead, and zinc for decades before orchard growth expanded.
 - ◆ Sagebrush: The Thompson Okanagan includes semi-arid grassland hills between irrigated bench land.
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Poetry Corner

Okanagan Morning

The hills hold heat before the dawn,
Irrigation ditches hum and flow.
By noon the orchard rows run on,
With apples ripening row by row.

Lake Heat

The dock planks warm beneath bare feet,
While motorboats drift from the shade.
The valley haze and orchard sweet,
Mark August hours that slowly fade.

Crossword Answers

