



Basil



Ivey



Eagle Bay

Homesteader





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As you visit big and small communities, you often notice roads are named for indigenous trees or description of location. Shore lines are inevitably dubbed Marine Drive and high roads Hilltop Drive or Mountain Drive. These names are imaginative, descriptive and common. Then there are the communities who choose to number their roads. North-south are streets and east-west are avenues with a few heritage names for major arteries. Eagle Bay chose another route, (pardon the pun!), by naming the roads for homesteaders who lived on them, and likely as not developed them. This is not an unusual idea and it whets the curiosity of newcomers and visitors.

One can go from Eagle Bay to White Lake thence to Salmon Arm by traveling up Ivey Road. At present it is a rough trip, but with all the development predicted for the area, and with all the development already in place, this could become a major route in and out of our community. Over the years Ivey Road evolved from a footpath to a wagon trail to a road, and one cannot help but wonder about its namesake.

Mary and Frances Turgeon kindly told me of the gentleman, Basil Ivey, who in 1923 homesteaded a section of land west of the present Ivey Road and south of Cameron Road. Born in 1886 and a Great War veteran, Mr. Ivey told stories of rat-infested trenches where lives were cheap and just staying alive was a difficult task. While serving, he was wounded in the back by shrapnel, an injury that would plague him for the rest of his life.

As did many Brits, Mr. Ivey chose to immigrate to Canada, and made no bones about the fact he wished to be known as a Cornishman rather than an Englishman. He was a blacksmith by trade but worked as a miner in the Britannia Beach Mines, returning to the homestead between mining jobs. Unfortunately on one of the mining trips he broke his back, and that, coupled with the war injury made life uncomfortable. He applied diligently for compensation, but bureaucracy then as now, passed the buck back and forth; one claimed the war injury most damaging, the other claimed the mining accident most damaging. In the end, he received a grand pension of fourteen dollars a month!

When his mining days were over, Basil Ivey developed his section as



a small farm with a few cows and chickens. For 25 cents, he was able to send cans of cream out with the mailman each week. He, in turn, put the cans on the train at Notch Hill for shipment to the Salmon Arm Creamery. If the cream became sour enroute, it was made into butter. There was no power or refrigeration.

Few people had cars, but in 1935 Mr. Ivey bought a Dodge which became the joy of his existence. It shone like a mirror and one dared not put a finger mark on its surface. Mary (Whitehead) Turgeon recalls walking home from school, and if she and her friend were offered a ride in this wonderful machine the day was instantly special!

However, there were days when Mr. Ivy wished to go to Salmon Arm and felt he might just have "one over the eight", as my mother used to say. On such occasions he would come to the Turgeon home, hand Frances the keys, and tell him the car was his for the day, along with the job of chauffeur! In the early 1950s, Mr. Ivey gave up driving, got rid of his car, and bought a John Deere tractor which he used for transportation to the post office and store. This was unique and amusing, especially to the children of the community.

Frances remembers Mr. Ivey as a good neighbour and a man who never had a bad word for anyone. His diary, now in the possession of a nephew, was filled with pleasantries and weather reports. If displeased, he may call you a "blighter", but never anything more demeaning or insulting.

When he and his cronies gathered at the post-office on mail day, boasting and telling tall tales kept everyone amused. These gentlemen vied for the position of greatest story teller. After a particularly high wind storm Mr. Ivey related his one, "You know how Mr. Turgeon always boasts about the size of his strawberries, well.....last night one got loose from my vines in that strong wind. It was so big it rolled down the garden and broke my fence post"!

Mary and Frances tell me Mr. Ivey would have been delighted with today's transit service to Eagle Bay. He probably would have agreed the small amount paid on his taxes for the service was money well spent. Soon there will be more seniors hesitant about driving to Salmon Arm and the bus is their key to independence. However, we doubt if they will whistle out and buy a tractor for local transportation

-this article appeared in "A View From Eagle Bay", written for 'The Shuswap Market', February 5, 1994 by Renee Hester.

There is a spooky tale that goes along with this story. When I visited Mary and Frances Turgeon to gather information for this article, it was a foggy day with quite a lot of snow on the ground. Mary and Frances were not in agreement over the spelling of Mr. Ivey's name, nor could they remember the year he died. I told them I would pop over to Eagle Bay Church Cemetery and confirm these details from his headstone. There was too much snow on the ground to see where the gravestone was located. I remembered, from other trips to the cemetery, that Mr. Ivey's grave was near one belonging to Mr. Viche. I stood on tiptoe under the trees and tried to remember exactly where Mr. Viche was buried. As I looked over the expanse of snow I could see two dark areas, rectangular in shape. When I moved closer to investigate, I looked at both bare areas. It looked as if someone had taken a large cookie cutter and cut out the shape of each stone. The hair rose on the back of my neck. There was not another foot print in the cemetery and the gravestones were far away from the grove of trees. I left in a hurry, not even pausing to get the information I was seeking. As I passed Frances Turgeon on Eagle Bay Road, he said, "What's wrong, did you see a ghost"? I went back for the date and spelling the next day. When I related this story to my friend, Agnes Bourne, she forbade me to ever step foot in the graveyard again without company!

R.H.

Many thanks to Mary and Frances Turgeon for relating the stories of Basil Ivey to me and for providing me with the picture of Mr. Ivey in his younger days. As I recall, Bonnie Jeffries passed on her memories of Basil Ivey as well.

The rest of the photos are scenes of the derelict buildings on his homestead as they looked in the 1990s. Pat Schofield and Bedrick Student restored his old cabin when they owned the property. The land became a development and the old cabin was used as a real estate office.





A Youthful Basil Ivey





Remains of Basil Ivey  
Homestead. - photos 1990's.







Likely the remains of Basil Ivey's barn.



Replica of Basil Ivey's cabin restored by Pat Schofield and Bedrick Student. Used as a Real Estate Office.