

Preserving the Post War Memories

Editorial by David Barker

Ambleside has changed just as the society around it has changed. It is still the most densely populated part of the community but this too is slowly changing with the growth of the Western and Upper Lands development. Life and how it was conducted 50 years has changed and is now part of the historical record.

This is why I would like our readers to think of what West Van was like in the post War years. These times are as much part of our cultural history as were the pioneering days in the first half of the twentieth century. We have the obligation to record these times in words and photos for future generations just as the founders of West Van preserved the early days for us.

The Archives has only one photo of the Hollyburn Theatre. I think that is sad for such an important part of our youth. We all remember the theatre and its washrooms in the basement, it's second run movies, its Thursday night contests where kids competed on stage for prizes for chosen adults. It was here that I saw King Kong for the first time, Marlon Brando playing Julius Caesar and myriads of Roy Rogers movies.



Odeon Movie Theatre at 1563 Marine Drive in the 1942? It was built in 1946 and demolished in 1995. 242.WVA.TH0

Speaking of movies I remember the building of the Odeon Theatre next door to what was then Safeway and being escorted home by the police after my cousin and I were stopped for throwing mud balls at the new plaster on the west side. I remember seeing newsreels on the then current Korean War at the Odeon. I fondly remember the Odeon Movie Club with its Saturday matinees for



Odeon Movie Theatre after conversion to 3 screens — 1980s —045.WVA.GRI.

hundreds of screaming pre-adolescents eager to see old Tarzan movies and Superman or Buck Rogers serials.

How about swimming out to the raft at Ambleside or sitting on the chain of logs at 17th which tried to keep out the logs and bark that escaped from the booms being towed to the mills in False Creek.

Remember the bowling alley on 15th? Only place I ever won an athletic trophy. There was the hobby shop on the south side of Marine between 14th and 15th. There was Middleton's Dime store where the Salvation Army Store is now. I sold Christmas trees for a dollar in the parking lot next to Safeway (now Shopper's Drug Mart) for one of the Ray family.