

The Bread Lady (continued)

Most of these cabins were owned by weekenders, but there was a small group of young men calling themselves "the ski bums", who worked when and where they could, pooled their resources, and lived there "year-round". The names I remember were Jack Pratt, Bud James, Eddie Oakley, and Fred Burfield. Two of these ski bums, Jack Pratt and Bud James, contracted to build my mother's cabin.

Our new residence-to-be was a typical Hollyburn mountain ski cabin with a barn style roof, one main room for living, and a ladder up to a sleeping loft that extended over the entrance porch. Later, my mother enclosed the porch and made it into a kitchen. I remember as a child, supposed to be sleeping, creeping forward so that I could look down into the cabin and listen to the fascinating conversations that were taking place below me. Unfortunately, unless I was very careful, the boards would creak and I would be caught.

Once the cabin was built and the furnishings (such as they were) installed, my mother started on her new career as home bakery proprietor, Hollyburn Mountain.

Before I continue I should tell you how the furnishings, including a big iron woodstove, got to our cabin. In addition to his duties as municipal Ranger, Ted Russell was also the mountain's moving company. He and his horse Baldy would, for a pretty low price, undertake to carry whatever the mountain residents needed to keep them in the style to which they were accustomed. I do not remember what other goods we had, but I do remember the stove on Baldy's back, and wondering how it got there, how it stayed there, and if both the stove and the horse would make it all the way to our cabin in one piece. They did, and the bakery business started.

Home made brown bread, white bread, buns and coffee rings were the items my mother (Mrs. Hughes or the "Bread Lady", to everyone but me) made for sale. When fresh, they were delicious.

Unfortunately, my mother and I seldom ate them

fresh. Fresh was for customers, Whatever did not sell was for us.

We had two types of customers – the drop-ins and the residents. The drop-ins were mainly the people who came up on the weekend, and were lured to our cabin by the sign on the main trail: - "The Bread Cabin", with directional arrows every so often,



The Burfield family inside the Hollyburn Lodge, 1946 – (759.WVA.HHS.BUR)

along our trail. The drop-ins were very important to us. Without them we could survive, but just barely. With them we might have a few extras, like some jam on our bread.

Most of the residents had standing orders for so many loaves of bread each week (or buns or coffee rings) so my mother had some idea of what she would need to bake. Some of them came to our cabin themselves to pick up their week's supply of baking, partly, I believe to socialize, since a transaction might take two hours or more for a couple of loaves of bread. I would enjoy these sessions very much since they would break up the monotony of the week, take me away from my correspondence school studies and if I was lucky, I would hear an interesting story or two. The mountain people were great story tellers.

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