

# TERRACE BAY NEWS

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LARGEST CIRCULATION IN TERRACE BAY

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## GHOST TOWN

By Charles W. Dill, Field Conservation Officer, Dept. of Lands and Forests

(So widespread has been the devastation caused by forest fires in recent weeks that the following timely article, ably written by Mr. Dill, is reprinted with permission in this issue of Terrace Bay News. The article has appeared recently in a number of newspapers. Editor-in-Chief.)

It's the lonliest place in the world, now--a Ghost Town--a dead and empty shell. Once it was different--once it was a thriving community where people lived and planned for their future and the future of their children. Everywhere were marks of progress--comfortable homes lined streets shaded by stately trees. There were stores and workshops, a school, a savings bank, a theatre, and a well-stocked public library.

The backbone of the community's financial life was the big mill on the shore of the lake at the edge of the town. Hundreds of logs that had come down the river in the big Spring drive lay in the boom, waiting their turn to be hiked up the jack-ladder, cut into merchantable planks and timbers by the screaming saws and go on to the great pile of lumber, seasoning out in the yards.

Most of the men in the town worked in the mill, on the booms, at the jack-ladder, in stockrooms and office, or stacking the lumber, loading or trucking and shipping. Quite a few of the women, too, were employed in the office.

Money came to the mill when the lumber was sold and much of this money passed to the people in wages. Their savings grew at the bank, the storekeepers prospered, a new electric light plant had just been installed and they were thinking about paving the main business street.

And then, one day, a moment's forgetfulness--a single careless act--brought tragedy. It was a beautiful Autumn day, and a party of men had gone fishing just up the river. At mid-day they stopped to have lunch and to fry fresh caught trout over an open fire. They built the fire on a rock in a place free from over-hanging foliage and they cleared away some dead branches. So far they were careful.

After lunch they lay back for a moment to smoke, then carefully crushed their cigarettes, stepped into their canoe and moved on.

And back on the point where they had lunched, a vagrant breeze fanned a dully glowing ember into life. A tiny flame appeared in the seemingly dead lunch-fire--a spark or two flew high in the air--then another. A stick on the fire burned through and sent up a small shower of sparks. A hot coal rolled down the sloping face of the rock, helped by the rising wind. It stopped at a small pile of dead leaves.

A squirrel foraging for crumbs saw the birth of this forest fire, but whether he lived to tell the tale to his friends no one knows, for no one ever went back there--there's no fun fishing in a burned out forest.

The fire grew fast that day and spread to the forest. And after the fire had passed, there was no town--no mill--no work for the men--just ruined buildings and much despair.

So the people all moved away. There was no reason to live there now. The forest was gone.

It is said that Man is a creature of habit. If a man gets the habit of rising at seven in the morning when he is a boy he will likely continue to do so. Some men habitually work others habitually loaf. Some men habitually smoke--others habitually read themselves to sleep. Some men habitually kiss their wives when they come home from work; this is a good habit--it makes for a happy home, especially if a man has good work habits, earns steady money and is therefore, free from worry.

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