



### From Pat's Desk...

Happy Fall Everyone! I hope that you had a healthy and enjoyable summer! The leaves are starting to turn colors, days are getting shorter and the weather is getting cooler, especially in the evening. Baseball season is winding down and it's time for football...so here's to the many adventures and possibilities Autumn has to offer!

Did you notice our Newsletter has a new name? It was updated from "Retirees Newsletter" to "Alumni Newsletter" because many of our members worked for Bucyrus® (or Caterpillar®) but never retired from there. We wanted our newsletter's title to reflect everyone's status when they ended their career at Bucyrus®.

We have only two more luncheons left on the calendar for 2022—September 29th and October 27th. Please consider joining us, it's always a good time.

In this newsletter you will find the reservation form for our annual Christmas Dinner/Dance on December 8th. New to the menu this year is your choice of 3 different entrées: a 6 oz. Filet Mignon and 3 breaded Shrimp \$30.00, Pan Seared Salmon \$25.00 or Bourbon Glazed Chicken Breast \$20.00. And as in the past, music will be provided by Roger Boll. All are welcome! Reservations must be received by Thursday, December 1st.

With our upcoming election of officers, there's a mail-in ballot for those who would like to vote but won't be available for the October's luncheon when the in-person voting will take place. Or you may email your vote. There's also an article on our Candidates...check it out.

Til next time...stay safe and healthy!

*Pat Merkovich*

#### Contact info:

Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA

Attention: Pat

P.O. Box 563, Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564

or oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com



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### JOIN US FOR OUR LUNCHEONS & EVENTS

Reservations are appreciated by calling Dolores Page at (414) 768-9437 or Pat Merkovich at (414) 617-2796.

This will enable us to accommodate all our members and guests.

Refreshments starting at 11:30 a.m. and Food will be served at 12:00 noon **(\$15.00/person)**

All luncheons are sit-down meals except for the June picnic which is buffet style.



1919 12th Avenue  
South Milwaukee



#### SAVE OUR LUNCHEON DATES:

September 29 • October 27, 2022

#### 2023 DATES:

January 26 • February 23

March 30 • April 27

May 25 • June 29 (Picnic)

September 28 • October 26

#### EVENTS:

Fireside's "White Christmas" - November 9, 2022

Christmas Party Dinner/Dance - December 8, 2022

We always welcome anything from a short note to tell us how you are doing to a Bucyrus® story that you would like to share in a future newsletter. And the Association is still seeking the help of a member or group of members who would be willing to take on the responsibility of publishing the newsletter. Please contact us if you are interested or need more information.

## SHIRLEY BORGIE HONORED AT JUNE 30TH LUNCHEON



Shirley has been President of the Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association for approximately 25 years. We couldn't let her resign as president without acknowledging her dedication to the Association. That happened at our June 30th luncheon. She was presented with a silk floral arrangement of Sunflowers and an enlarged copy of the article that was in the Summer Newsletter about her resignation. The South Milwaukee Industrial Museum also presented her with a Bucyrus® Museum Mug.

Shirley was "roasted" by Bob Jelinek when he shared some heartfelt stories from years gone by along with some

very amusing tales about her being a practical joker at B-E! And to quote Bob: "She worked as hard on pranks and rude comments as she did keeping the machine shop production records straight. She worked very hard to lead this Oldtimers Association Board even harder in keeping the group together and active after the CAT purchase of Bucyrus in 2011."

For the hard work, dedication and devotion to making Bucyrus® Oldtimers what it is today, we "Thank You Shirley" and wish you the very best in your retirement from the Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA Board of Directors.



Shirley with her 3 daughters and granddaughter



## OLDTIMER MEMBERSHIPS

Do you know anyone who has ever worked for Bucyrus but is not part of our Association? If you do, we need you to encourage them to join today! Many are still not aware that you didn't have to retire from Bucyrus to belong. Membership in the Bucyrus Oldtimers Association UA is open to anyone who was at one time employed by Bucyrus-Erie or

Bucyrus International.

Our business was cyclical, and we've had so many friends who were not afforded the opportunity to continue with the company due to business downturns, but who still fondly remember their time there. The Association's website has a link to the membership form. One can also be picked up at the Bucyrus

Museum or at the monthly luncheons. Visit <http://beoldtimers.org> to learn more, or email [bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org](mailto:bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org) and request a form via email.

So please help get the word out to those friends and former co-worker to join our group. And remember, it's absolutely free to join!



## A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL AT THE “FREE” JUNE 30TH PICNIC LUNCHEON

Our picnic and last luncheon before the summer break was a huge success. It marked the one year anniversary of the Oldtimers' venue at the Bucyrus Club with 69 members and friends attending this event. It was also the “surprise free” luncheon that was promised earlier this year. As in the past, the food was a typical buffet style picnic faire with grilled brats and burgers (with all the fixings), baked beans, potato salad, broccoli-cauliflower salad, garden pasta salad, watermelon

slices, chips and pickle spears along with the usual beverages of coffee, soda and beer. Many thanks go to those who made and donated desserts for our picnic: a carrot cake by Karen Bonchek, an almond puff pastry by Jan Haag, mini ice cream cake cupcakes by Sue Rogosinski and sugar cookies and brownies by Judy Woreck. We would also like to thank Elsie Stroik and Scott Streich for the monetary donation to the “dessert fund” which will be used to purchase desserts for future luncheons.

Every month we have two lucky door prize winners who receive a “free lunch certificate” to a future luncheon. June was no exception. Prize winners were Paul Todd and Harry Maass.

There are only two more luncheons before we say “good-bye” to 2022—September 29th and October 27th. Mark your calendars and please consider joining in on the fun. Call Dolores Page at (414) 768-9437 or Pat Merkovich at (414) 617-2796 with your reservations!



Paul Todd



Harry Maass



# 2022 BOGIE GOLF OUTING RESULTS



The 2022 BOGIE event was held on June 9th at the New Berlin Hills Golf Club in New Berlin, Wisconsin. Forty-four golfers showed up to tee off in a 'shotgun start' at 9:00am, and participate in the 4-person best-ball scramble. There were four holes with prizes for various accomplishments, and modified rules like teeing up the second shot on par 5's and playing the 5th hole with only a 5-iron from start to finish.

After golf, the group enjoyed a buffet luncheon in the clubhouse and shared tall tales about their golf skills. The traveling Bucyrus-Erie Golf League Champions plaque was also present. The plaque was started 50 years ago in 1972, and featured the names of all champion teams of the Bucyrus golf

league through 2011. After the company was sold, it has been maintained by the BOGIE committee with the names of the Oldtimers outing champions. There were 18 event participants at this year's BOGIE event who were named on the plaque as a past champion, starting as early as 1973.

This year's winners were the team of Terry Honeck, Bill Zolandz, Dave Simunceck, and Derk Vander Molen with a score of three under par 68. Second place went to John O'Connell, Bob Zywicki, Don Behlendorf, and Mike Lussier.

Prizes were awarded to four players for their skills shown on the course. Longest putt on hole 4 went to Steve Lockwood, the closest to the pin on

hole 7 was won by Jeff Truettner, Debbie Koepf smashed the longest drive on hole 13 and Andy Schell dropped his second shot closest to the flag on hole 17.

Congratulations to the BOGIE champion and runner up teams this year and to our hole prize winners.

A special thank you also goes out to our hosts at New Berlin Hills for the great course conditions, warm welcome at the start of the outing, great lunch, comfortable club house venue and the generous door prize contribution of Pro Shop gift certificates and a four person round of golf.

If you missed this year's golf outing, be sure to **mark your calendar** to attend the 2023 event or luncheon which will be held on June 8, 2023. Same four-man scramble format with a shotgun start at 9am, and luncheon right after golf. Green fees, cart, beer, prizes, and lunch will be included in the event pricing. Watch for complete details and the entry form in December's newsletter.

## Officers, Board of Directors and Staff

### President

To be Determined in October

Dolores Page, Vice-President  
414.768.9437

Pat Merkovich, Secretary/Treasurer  
414.617.2796

### Board Members:

Bill Haag, Betsy Hodson,  
Debbie Polzin, Ken Tangen

### Newsletter:

Pat Merkovich

Email: [oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com)

### Webmaster:

Ken Tangen

Email: [bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org](mailto:bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org)  
[www.beoldtimers.org](http://www.beoldtimers.org)

### Alumni Newsletter & Correspondence

Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA  
P. O. Box 563  
Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564

We are always appreciative of our Oldtimers members and Museum friend's generosity for any and all donations. The Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA and the South Milwaukee Industrial Museum LLC are both separate non-profit organizations, and therefore have individual accounts. Since we both rely solely on free-will donations, we have partnered in this newsletter to reduce costs for both of us, and provide everyone with the latest information on events, activities, and news updates in both groups. We hope you continue to find the combined quarterly publication enjoyable and enlightening. Thanks for your continued

support of our organizations and welcome any feedback you may have.

For future reference, please keep the following addresses handy for all your correspondence and donations:



Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA  
P.O. Box 563  
Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564



South Milwaukee Industrial  
Museum LLC  
P.O. Box 84  
South Milwaukee, WI 53172-0084

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# LETTERS TO 'BIG MUSKIE' FROM FELLOW OLDTIMERS

June 30, 2022

Hi!  
Everything good up-north in Three Lakes, WI. Enjoying the summer. Enjoyed the Bucyrus' Museum 1st time there in December 2021.

P.S. Hope this money will help keep the newsletters coming.

Leroy Passehl



June 30, 2022

Dear Oldtimers,  
I do enjoy the letter. The most recent letter was quite interesting. I hope you can continue to publish the printed version. Enclosed is something to help.

All the best,  
Fred Shew

July 13, 2022

Ron Asselin, proud BE retiree with 40+ years of service passed away on July 10th at 77 years.

My Dad and I went to the Western Minnesota Stream Thresher reunion must be 15-20 years ago ([www.rollag.com](http://www.rollag.com)) and they have a BE model 50B steam drag line if I remember correctly. Anyways, my Dad was like a kid in a candy shop watching this machine since you can be very close to it as it moves dirt. Anyways, the machine stopped and a gentleman jumped off it. I stopped him and explained to the gentleman my Dad worked at BE. When the gentleman returned, they got my Dad back on the machine and showed him around as they stoked the furnace and moved dirt. I happened to take a picture of this machine as it was under load, black smoke bellowing out in front of a beautiful blue sky. According to my Dad, he showed someone in the headquarters the picture and he was asked if they could enlarge the picture and hang it in the BE world headquarters.

My Dad was proud to have worked at B-E.

Robert Asselin

## OFFICIAL VOTING BALLOT



### VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

Must be a current member of the Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA. Vote by placing one checkmark for each available elected office. **One ballot per member.**

Print your name and return the mail-in ballot to: **Bucyrus Oldtimers Association UA, P.O. Box 563, Oak Creek, WI 53154.** OR email your vote to [bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org](mailto:bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org). **Must be received by September 30, 2022.** In-person voting will be held at the October 27th Luncheon.



### PRESIDENT:

☐ Kenneth Tangen

☐ Dolores Page

☐ (WRITE IN) \_\_\_\_\_

### VICE-PRESIDENT:

☐ Betsy Hodson

☐ Dave Kieck

☐ (WRITE IN) \_\_\_\_\_

### SECRETARY/TREASURER:

☐ Pat Merkovich

☐ (WRITE IN) \_\_\_\_\_

**VOTING MEMBER'S NAME (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

# MEET OUR CANDIDATES

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## CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT:



**Dolores Page** worked at Bucyrus for approximately 40 years. She had various positions including Parts Customer Service and miscellaneous in Service and Credit departments. She retired in 1994 but was called back in 1997 when she worked for another 12-1/2 years. She has served on the Board of Directors for 15 years as Vice-President.

Dolores has many family members who also worked at Bucyrus—her husband served his apprenticeship in Electricity. Other family members who worked there were her dad, her brother, her brother-in-law, her sister-in-law, her two daughters and her granddaughter.

Dolores likes to travel, play cards and do things with her family.



**Ken Tangen** worked for Bucyrus 49 years and retired in 2009. He started out as a journey machinist, then moved to maintenance and accepted a position of Maintenance Supervisor. He has been on the Board of Directors since 2011. He updated the mailing lists to help reduce cost to publish the newsletter. After Caterpillar purchased Bucyrus, he worked with the Vice President of Legal Services for Caterpillar to receive a waiver for the Oldtimers to use the word Bucyrus and its subsidiaries. He purchased and maintains the beoldtimers.org website in which the newsletters and other Oldtimers functions are posted. He took over as editor of the newsletter, upgraded it to a new format and renamed it “Retiree Newsletter”. He maintains the Legacy List by recording all employees who worked at Bucyrus with a form for Oldtimers and Bucyrus Museum.

## CANDIDATES FOR VICE PRESIDENT:



**Betsy Hodson** worked at Bucyrus for 25 years. During that time she was in Assembly Production Control, Traffic Expeditor, Master Scheduling and Manufacturing Engineering. She retired in 2013.

She has been serving on the Board of Directors of the Association since 2016.



**Dave Kieck** worked at Bucyrus for 9-1/2 years as a Production Control Supervisor. He left Bucyrus in 1982. He is interested in serving on the Board, as Bucyrus has played an important role in his life. From his grandfather Herman Kieck who died before he was born worked at Bucyrus over 35 years, to his father Ted Kieck who worked at Bucyrus retiring after 43 years, to his wife and himself working at Bucyrus early in their married life. He feels it is extremely important to keep the Bucyrus legacy alive especially for generations to come.

## CANDIDATE SECRETARY/TREASURER:



**Pat Merkovich** worked at Bucyrus for 19 years. She started as a part-time Secretary in the Machine Shop, then went full time as their Timekeeper, retiring in 2010. Pat has served on the Board of Directors since 2011. She has been Secretary/Treasurer since 2014. In that position she not only maintains all financial records and correspondence, she also creates the Board's agendas and minutes. She also organizes the monthly luncheons, the Fireside Theatre outings, and continues to maintain all updates for the Oldtimers activities and their mailing lists. She is currently the editor of the Oldtimers newsletter and plays an active part in its publication.



**BUCYRUS® OLDTIMERS ASSOCIATION UA**  
**PROUDLY PRESENTS THEIR**  
**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER/DANCE**

**THURSDAY - DECEMBER 8, 2022**  
**AT**  
**THE BUCYRUS CLUB & EVENT CENTER**  
**1919 12TH AVENUE, SOUTH MILWAUKEE**

**Music by: Roger Boll**

**Dancing and Refreshments: 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Dinner Served: 4:30 p.m.**

**CHOICE OF 3 ENTRÉES**



**6 oz. Filet Mignon & 3 Breaded Shrimp - \$30.00**

**Pan Seared Salmon with Citrus Glaze - \$25.00**

**Roasted Bourbon Glazed Chicken Breast - \$20.00**



Also includes a tossed salad, bread basket, twice baked potato, green beans,  
coffee, soda, beer and dessert

Please pay at time of reservation **no later than Thursday, December 1, 2022**  
so that we can have an accurate count of participants. Friends are also welcome!

Send Reservation Form below to:

Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA - Dinner/Dance  
P.O. Box 563, Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564

**Checks should be made payable to Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA**

**If you have any questions call Dolores Page at 414.768.9437 or Pat Merkovich 414.617.2796**

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**Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA 2022 Christmas Dinner/Dance Reservations**

**NAME(S):** \_\_\_\_\_ **ENTRÉE CHOICE:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Person's Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ email address: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Note for Large Groups:** If you would like us to reserve your seating placement, please mention on  
form or contact Dolores or Pat





## **Memories of a Steam Shovel Operator**

The Isthmian Canal Commission for the Panama Canal construction project awarded their first steam shovel bid to Bucyrus. Bucyrus continued to win bids from the Canal Commission until Secretary of War and Ohio native, William Howard Taft, intervened on behalf of Bucyrus' Ohio-based competitor, the Marion Steam Shovel Company. By the end of the project, The Bucyrus Company supplied 77 of the 102 shovels purchased. Marion Power Shovel was awarded bids for 24 shovels, and the Thew Automatic Shovel Company supplied one 32-ton excavator.

This story of working on the Canal is told by one of the Bucyrus Steam Shovel operators back in 1944. Keep in mind that some of the wording used in references to the workers was acceptable then, and would likely be considered offensive today. It is re-printed from the 1944 war-time article, and makes reference to the importance of the Panama Canal in moving US ships from the Atlantic to the Pacific after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Thanks to Joan Lindstrom for transcribing this for us.

### *Milwaukeean Recalls Days Working on Panama Canal*

Big Ditch, Opened Just 30 Years Ago, Short Cut to Tokyo in This War

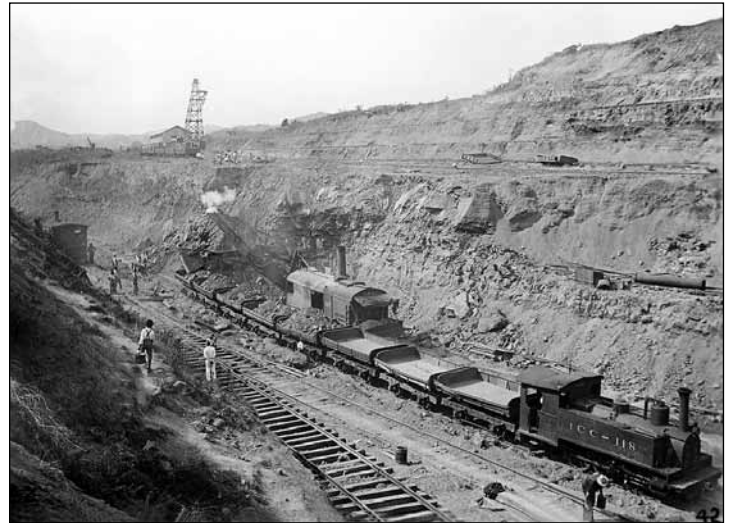
By: Annabel Douglas McArthur, Milwaukee Journal Green Sheet, August 14, 1944

Pirates, buccaneers, and conquistadores stealing along jungle trails in quest of gold are what some people associate with Panama. But to mention the Panama Canal Zone to Joseph P. Grass, 3024 N 2nd Street, is to conjure up memories not only of receiving his pay in gold on the floor of the canal, but of having three or four helpings of ice cream for dessert, or playing second base on the Corozal League ball team, and attending Saturday night band concerts where the Panamanian beauties promenaded in gorgeous gowns and shawls. The thirtieth anniversary of the formal opening of the Panama Canal is on August 15, 1944.

But to Joe Grass, the Panama Canal is not just a 50-mile waterway strategically linking two oceans, because Joe was one of the men who helped build the canal. He was one of the hundred-and-two steam shovel operators who fought Old Mother Nature for every cubic yard of brilliantly colored sand and clay and rock that his monstrous five-yard dipper scooped up.

### **Cut Off a Head**

When the treacherous Culebra slide began, Joe took up his dangerous post on a narrow terrace on the lofty shifting hillside on the fringe of the slide. It certainly was no place for a nervous tourist. "You just had to watch



yourself, especially when working at night. Crews were drilling all around you and exploding a few tons of dynamite at a time," says Joe modestly. "Some trap rock was being dug out at the Puerto Bello stone quarry for filling in the breakwater at Balboa harbor. The stone was on a slant, and one of the rocks sheared off, slid in on the engineer operating the shovel, and cut off his head just as clean as if it had been done with a butcher knife."

As Joe's story progresses, you have more and more admiration for the alert eye, the keen mind, and the strong hand that guided Joe's steam shovel and his crew safely through months of danger. "One time a charge of dynamite went off prematurely, and 50 Negroes were blown up into the air with tons of rock and dirt." Joe was working on a job in northern Canada when he received a wire from Washington asking if he would accept a position on the Panama Canal. He arrived in the Canal Zone in August, 1912.

### **Protected Health**

Comfortable living quarters were furnished, and he purchased meal tickets for 30 cents. The food was wonderful, with all the ice cream you could eat; in fact, the more you ate, the better Uncle Sam liked it. The theory was that ice cream helped to keep the men healthy and satisfied.





Every possible precaution was taken to protect the health of the workers. "If there was a hole as small as a pencil point in the screen in your quarters, you were to report it immediately, and a carpenter would be sent over to repair it," Joe says. "Tanks of crude oil were set up along the river beds in the jungle, so the oil would drip onto the surface of the water. The mosquitoes could not push up through the oil, and consequently could not breed."

"We called Culebra cut the White House Yards, because it was only about a mile away from the office building of Colonel Goethals, who was the chief engineer of the Panama Canal. I liked it there a lot, because every morning the buglers from the 10th



infantry would go up into the hills and practice all their bugle calls." Colonel George W. Goethals was a prince, who never passed without a wave of the hand or a nod in greeting. Dressed in white, and always carrying an umbrella, he would walk miles through the canal bed on his daily stroll, observing every little detail. Nothing escaped him. The colonel made it a practice to sit in his office every Sunday morning from 9 until 11 o'clock, and any employee could come into make a complaint or talk about anything. He would sit and listen to your troubles, and offer advice." Joe says.

"Teddy Roosevelt was also a popular figure among the men in the Canal Zone. When he ran for president on the Bull Moose ticket, he drew about 99 out of 100 votes down there."

### Where Was Teddy to Be?

"Teddy paid a visit to the canal, and got right down on the shovels and talked to the men and got the inside story. Usually, when a big boss was expected, the men polished up everything, so when he came along, everything was the way it should be. But when the superintendent would say to Teddy, 'today we are going to Balboa,' Teddy would say, 'No, we'll go the other way to Cristobal. So, nobody ever knew just where Teddy Roosevelt was going to turn up.'

It was the historic race of the battleship Oregon on

a 10,000-mile voyage around Cape Horn during the Spanish-American war that aroused the United States to a full realization of the necessity of constructing the narrow isthmus. Ever since Columbus visited the Isthmus of Panama in 1502 searching for an interocean passage, European powers had entertained serious intentions of owning and operating such a canal. "There were 19 possible routes, and consideration was given to first one and then another."

President McKinley appointed a committee that favored the Nicaragua route; but when Teddy Roosevelt stepped into office, he bent every effort of his dynamic personality toward the building of a lock canal across Panama. Senator John C. Spooner of Wisconsin wrote the Spooner Act that convinced the French the United States wouldn't stand for a holdup and the French offered their properties and concessions to the United States for \$40,000,000. The transfer was made and construction began several years later.

### Pen Points in Concrete

"The French had bought steel pen points by the carload; so, the Americans, having no better use for them dumped the lot into the concrete to reinforce the locks. They had enough hand shovels to dig the canal without any other equipment," Joe said. "Some of the machinery was overrun by the jungle, and I saw a tree growing right up through the smokestack of a locomotive. Much of the equipment was worthless on the project, but was sold to the Chicago Wrecking Company for \$1,000,000."

On the wall of his real estate office, Joe has a piece of a French railway tie that his shovel dug up. It is a fine piece of hardwood, highly polished, on which is mounted a steam gauge from a steam shovel. The glass tube is filled with layers of the most beautiful colored rock from the canal bed. "I wouldn't take anything for that souvenir," Joe said proudly. "Every time I saw a bit of colored rock that I thought was pretty I climbed out and collected a little sample and poured it in on top of the last one. There are thousands of different shades of rock in the canal, and these are just a few that caught my fancy."

Joe explained that there were about 50,000 people living under the jurisdiction of Colonel Goethals, speaking 45 languages, and representing 72 nationalities. "The passenger trains were run in three sections, for the white, the foreign, and the colored. The whites, mostly American engineers, were paid in gold and were popularly spoken of as the 'gold employees'; The foreign and colored help were paid in silver in native currency.

### Dynamite on Their Heads

A steam shovel crew consisted of the American engineer at the controls, the craneman, the fireman and 15 Jamaicans, who were the pitmen to bring up the track and carry the ties around. "Each day a

*Continued on next page*



messenger would bring down ice and a pail of spring water for us. Sometimes we would send the messenger into the jungle and he would come back with a gunnysack full of ripe, juicy oranges."

"Large wooden boxes of dynamite were carried by the natives on their heads. There was a terrible fascination in watching a procession of 60 black boys, each jogging along balancing a heavy box of explosives." "There was an emergency train always at hand in the canal, because with the dangerous work and the thousands of workmen, somebody was bound to get hurt. If one of the men got burned with a hot rivet, the emergency train would rush him off to the nearest hospital where he received the finest of medical attention. A conservative guess about conditions when the French were trying to build their canal was that two out of every three died there."

"But Uncle Sam was ever on the alert to protect his workers. The competitive American spirit was fostered at every turn and after a nerve wracking eight-hour day on the locks or down in the canal bed, the men welcomed the diversion of a strenuous game of baseball. All equipment and uniforms were furnished by the government. During the dry season in the wintertime some of the professional teams would come down and play a game or two."

### **Tourist Trains in Canal**

"From the middle of December until the middle of April was the tourist season when sightseeing trains with bleachers were run through the canal bed. There was an announcer on board to explain everything. On one side would be the drillers, and on the other side the big shovels loading great dippers full of dirt onto trains. The dirt trains and the passenger trains were all operated on the same tracks, so everything had to run on schedule."

The YMCA furnished reading rooms, pool tables and every possible recreational facility. When Joe decided to bring his family down to live in the Canal Zone, he talked to Colonel Goethals about it one Sunday morning. All arrangements were made through the secretary at the YMCA; a government permit was obtained; then his wife and two little girls were assigned to a ship and living quarters were arranged in a hotel."

"The children loved watching the colored women carrying goat milk and loads of vegetables and flowers on their heads as they walked sedately down the paths leading from the jungle. The fruit boats would sail into the harbor at high tide and during the low tide the customers would swarm out onto the beach and make their purchases before the water rose again. It is a strange thing, but the Atlantic coastline has a tide of only about two feet, while the Pacific side has a tide of 21 feet."

"The native women did the laundry by sousing the clothes up and down in the stream and then beating

them with a club as they lay on the rocks. You never had any buttons left on a shirt after it came back from the laundry." Joe laughs.

### **The Panama Lottery**

The Panama lottery was held at Panama City every Sunday, and it was definitely the event of the week. "One of the army nurses who went down on the boat with me bought a lottery ticket and won \$7,500 the first Sunday she was there. She had bought the full ticket with five coupons for \$2.50. I bought one pretty near every week I was there and never won anything."

"Four times a year they have a double drawing and the winner holding a full ticket would win \$15,000. One of my engineer friends won and I went along to help him collect the cash. They asked him how he wanted it - - in gold or in silver. Gold would have been easier to handle; but they wanted to deduct 10% for the exchange rate; so I said, what the heck, that's \$150. Take it in native silver and we'll toss it in a cab and take it over to the post office and deposit it. After all, we could go to a little trouble for \$150."

When they shot the last dike Joe's job was over. He was a shovel man and there was nothing more for the shovel to do. The dredgemen came in and took over and before long the canal was opened to commerce. The steamer Ancon was chosen as the first vessel to go through the canal when it was formally opened August 15, 1914. Officers and men were spotless in new white uniforms and the good ship Ancon glistened with a new coat of paint. Flags of all nations fluttered gaily above the shining deck in celebration of the completion of one of the greatest engineering feats in the world.

### **Route to Tokyo**

But newspapers almost overlooked this triumph of man over nature because the headlines were given over to the invasion of Belgium and speculation as to the fall of Paris. Very little was said at the time about the indomitable Colonel Goethals battles with fever, mosquitoes and landslides, but the canal was completed at a critical time when naval strategy and the quick movement of ships through the canal might decide the destiny of nations. It was estimated that steamers in the Pacific would save 5,000 miles on a trip to Europe and vessels in the Atlantic would save 8,000 miles on a trip to the orient.

You are going to be hearing a lot about the Panama Canal during the coming months when we begin to withdraw our ships and men from the European theater of war and concentrate our armament in the Pacific. And every dipper full of dirt that Joe Grass scooped up with his steam shovel helped to widen the route to Tokyo.



## More on Evansville

by Fred Shew

The recent story on Evansville was very interesting to me. As Paul Harvey would say, “and now, the rest of the story”. In the early ‘60’s the CMD group was transferred to Evansville. This included product sales, field service, repair parts, and product training for Distributors and Service personnel. CMD Sales included cranes, excavators, and water well drills. For the first time, all the CMD functions were centered together in one location. It was great! We could work closely with our distributors and their customers at the plant to see how the machines were made and put on demonstrations.

The machine product lines were very good, and were well accepted in domestic and export markets. The 51B and 54B were replaced with the versatile 61B. It was a 3 cubic yd. shovel/back hoe, with a 150-ton lift crane capacity. It included a set of long crawlers and a suitable crane boom available for lifts up to 150 feet in length.

Other machines were the 71B, 71BWLE, and 88B. The 88B was the best profit producer of all the Evansville products. It was sold as a 5 cubic yd. shovel or as a HD dragline with 100 feet of boom and a 5-yard bucket. There were a number of these sold to build “Alligator Alley”, the Interstate Highway across South Florida, and yes, there would be times the bucket would scoop up an alligator and land them on the other side of the cut.

When Mt. St. Helens erupted in 1980, the US Corps of Engineers quickly ordered an 88BHD from stock to open up a couple of riverways. It was loaded on 5 low-boy trailers and trucked non-stop. Other 88B shovels

found their way into many Interstate Highway projects across the Rocky Mountain States. At one time we had twenty-two 88B shovels building new roads.

Evansville was also home to the Hydro-Crane, one of the first truck mounted all hydraulic crane. The H-3 and H-5 models had telescoping booms and were fitted with their own platform and hydraulic outriggers for stability. That made it possible to mount the Hydro-Crane on existing commercial trucks, providing lower initial investment costs for the owners.

Truck mounted cranes with telescope booms were becoming popular, and growing in size. The market pressure was calling for B-E to provide larger capacity machines. The decision was made for CMD to design four new cranes with new features to meet market demands. The “End of the Plain Crane” was the advertising introduction for the 35-C, 45-C, 55-C and 65-C machines. They had capacity ratings between 15 and 70 Tons.

Truck Crane marketing and sales had a lot more ‘razzle-dazzle’ than selling a backhoe or dragline. The new line of cranes was introduced at Roberts Stadium in Evansville at a huge ‘crane rally’. We put on a great show for Distributors and customers from all over the world who saw each model presented and demonstrated. Even the Mayor of Evansville was there to welcome and greet our guests.

Looking back, those were great years for all of us who worked in or with the Evansville plant.

The South Milwaukee Industrial Museum LLC is a 501c3 educational non-profit operating the Bucyrus Museum and is dedicated to the historic preservation of documents and artifacts relating to Bucyrus International and its merged companies.

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## "A BIG THANK YOU"

### TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Lila Brekke  
Gary Dillon  
James Konik  
Leroy Passehl  
Fred Shew

## *In Loving Memory*

*With Heavy Hearts  
we said "Goodbye" to:*

Harold F. Pauers - May 28, 2022  
Charles H. Chervenka - May 29, 2022  
Aquino R. Pasquale - June 1, 2022  
William F. Dondlinger - June 3, 2022  
Joy Sahagian - June 4, 2022  
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