Coal Tyee Research Project
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History 340
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White Rapids

White Rapids coal mine opened in 1943 and was the last mine to cease operations in the Nanaimo area; the last piece of coal was extracted in 1950. It produced good quality coal which was characterized as being “harder” than other coal. It was located up the Nanaimo River just past Extension, and it was considered an outcropping of the large Extension mine. White Rapids was considerably more modern than other mines. It maintained a wash station where miners could wash up after a day’s work and change their clothes. It also had a dedicated “jitney” which was a vehicle that transported miners to and from the mine. Right before it closed, White Rapids was in a state of disrepair that led to water leaking in and very damp conditions. Two miners died at White Rapids, one was killed instantly by falling rock in 1948 and one was struck by a large “haulage pin” in 1950.

Number 8 Mine

Number 8 coal mine also known as Extension number 8 was opened in 1926 and only operated for two years until its closure in 1928. Along with White Rapids mine, it was considered an outcropping of the larger Extension mine. It produced 35,206 tonnes of coal before it was reopened under a different name in the 1940s. The coal was of very excellent quality but the seam was very small, only 30-32 inches in diameter. All of the workers had to work on their knees at number 8 mine, because the seam was so small and embedded in the ground. It was located in the vicinity of White Rapids coal mine, just across the Nanaimo River and near McKay Lake. Because Number 8 was one of the later coal mines to operate in Nanaimo it was fairly modernized, utilizing electricity to improve the working conditions. It shared a “jitney” transport vehicle with White Rapids mine to shuttle workers to and from the area. There are no recorded deaths for the Number 8 Mine.
Bibliography

Interviews with Steve Armand, Johnny Sandland, George Edwards, Nelson Dean, Bill Crawshaw, Harry Dawes.

“Mine Deaths” http://www.nanaimoarchives.ca/online-resources/mine-death-accidents/


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