

MANSON BLOSSOM FESTIVAL 75TH YEAR

DIAMOND EDITION

1921

Wednesday, May 11 was the first Blossom Festival. Nearly 500 guests responded to Manson's "Farm Bureau" invitation. According to the Chelan Leader, "Chelan "shut up shop" to attend, as well as Lakeside and the turnout from each place was large." The exercises were held in the Manson Pavilion, beginning at 11:00. Mrs. E. A. Butterbaugh presided at the piano, while senior members of the Sunday School opened the program with a chorus. M. E. Field delivered the welcome and spoke of Manson as it was 30 years ago and some of the struggles the early settlers had undergone to make Manson what it was. He also spoke of what they hoped to make it in the future, provided water could be obtained. Under the direction of Mrs. Frank Butterbaugh, 13 little girls gave a blossom drill with song. Some of these girls were Marvel Burrow King, Margaret Schultz Freer, Beuna Brown Miller, Elizabeth and Olive Ward, Eva Stutsman Weisbrod, Margaret Enslow Allen, Helen Winslow, Grace Campbell Stull, and Martha Joy Field Gills. At the close of the program Reverend J. A. Longston requested all to form in a group so that W. E. Gurr could get their picture. Then came the unique banquet at the new Manson Fruit Growers packing room nearby. The paper covered tables and apple box seats were soon occupied, and "coffee from a real cafeteria served efficiently". There followed an auto parade of 125-200 autos through the orchards. From the Chelan Leader, "To many the perfect part of the day was provided in the dance at the pavilion later. To an onlooker, the celebration was significant of more than blossom - it gave promise of fulfillment."

1922

M. E. Field was again toastmaster for the Blossom Festival which took the form of a sumptuous picnic held at the Growers Union Warehouse. This was followed by a lively game of baseball between Chelan and Manson boys at the Mission Church diamond, and a dance at the pavilion in the evening.

1923

According to the Chelan Leader, "the people of Lake Chelan Valley left their business for the day and gathered at Manson Wednesday forenoon expressing thereby their appreciation of the Apple growing industry as the basis of the prosperity of this valley." About 700 people gather at the Manson Growers Warehouse for a basket lunch. The programs, "Johnny Apple Seed" and "Mid Summer Eve", were presented by both high school and grade school students, as well as community members. J. O. Killian was general chairman.

1924

April 30, 1924 was the first festival held at the new Community Hall. Around 600 people were in attendance and the abundance of cars that gathered was worthy of note. Mr. A. N. Banks was the general chairman.

1925

The Chelan Leader contained the following proclamation, "To all the People of Chelan: Be it known that Friday, May 1st, is the day set aside for the Manson Apple Blossom Festival and therefore the afternoon has been proclaimed a holiday. All business establishments are requested to close during the Festival and join with Manson in celebrating their Apple Blossom Festival." The festival was once again a basket lunch at the Community Hall, attended by an estimated 1000 people. After the ball game played near the old Indian Church, everyone returned to the hall for the evening program. A dance followed with approximately 300 attending.

1926

Friday, April 23 saw the largest crowd to date at the festival. J. O. Killian, entertainment chairman, introduced A. N. Banks who gave the welcome. School children performed "Yankee Doodle" and a pageant depicting various episodes in American history. Wenatchee's queen was in attendance. The afternoon baseball game between Wenatchee and Manson was followed by the evening program with various entertaining selections, including a May Pole Dance. By ten o'clock the floor was cleared and the dancing commenced.

1927

The Manson Grange conducted the festival this year (and many to follow). To remind Chelan folks of the upcoming festival, the Manson Military Band attired in their new uniforms, appeared on the streets of Chelan on Wednesday, playing lively military marches. Wenatchee's Queen Beatrice and Princesses Marjorie and Ruby were in attendance for the afternoon program. Mr. Wellington Pegg of Wenatchee addressed the program audience, and "went so far as to predict that time would see 10,000 people living on the shores of Lake Chelan." The usual evening program and dance followed.