

OKE NYVALL AND TEXADA LOGGING LTD

Thanks to Bill Nyvall for providing information.

At age 16 Oke Nyvall (1912 - 2001) immigrated to Canada from Finland with his aunt and uncle. On the train from Halifax to BC Oke's diet was limited as the only food he knew in English was "apple pie and coffee."

In the 1930's Oke worked at several logging shows on Vancouver Island. He soon found out that his street shoes and city suits were not appropriate. "Good lesson," he said. "Look to the future and prepare."

Logging shutdowns during fire season on the coast prompted Oke to join Alberta's wheat threshing crews where he met farm girl Mabel Israelson. They were married in 1940 and relocated to a logging camp at Port Neville, BC where he became foreman.

In 1944, along with partners Walter Edlund and Dave Maitland, Oke bought Charlie Klein's logging operations centred at Mouat Bay. Thus began Texada Logging Ltd.

Two linked fish boats floated the couple's home, offices, possessions and Mabel with 3-year old Bill down the coast to Texada. This home would be an improvement over the ramshackle bunkhouses left by Klein at Mouat Bay. Their lack of insulation meant the 45-gallon drum burner provided little winter warmth. In the summer, however, the heat was unbearable. Aromas from the 2-hole outhouse added to the "ambiance."

Mabel was camp cook. All supplies were transported from Union Steamships in Van Anda via Oke's sputtering truck. Crews came from the hiring hall in Vancouver but were later supplemented with locals (photo - Oke (L) with faller Toby Hanson).

The 1950's saw great improvements. More rock was added to beef up Klein's original breakwater. New camp houses were built by Albert Rairie while others were barged up from North Vancouver.

The new accommodation was sorely needed as the family's cabin burned to the ground in 1948 when a babysitter, attempting to re-light a coal oil lamp, accidentally started a fire. Young Bill had to jump out a window and run for help.

Texada Logging "opened up the centre of the island," said Bill. Their hauling roads extended Bell Road to Bob's Lake and later linked up with roads from Anderson and Cook Bays.

In 1966 Oke sold Texada Logging to the German prince's syndicate and retired to Delta.



Peter Lock

Texada Island Heritage Society