



Josephine Edwards

(1868-1958)

“You have no idea the delight in living here, particularly in the old days when the land was full of life.”¹

Early citizen and pioneer, Josephine Virginia Edwards (1868-1958) was a resident of the Mission area for eight-four years. Born in Lilloet in 1868, Josephine was the daughter of the Honorable Thomas B. Humphreys, a Member of the Legislative Assembly who was first elected as a pro-confederation candidate in 1868.

When her father remarried, Josephine was enrolled at St. Mary's Indian Residential School. She was 6 years old. There she met Pat Edwards (1861-1941) whom she married when she was 16. She and her husband first lived in Dewdney before moving to Wells Landing in 1885. With a small amount of money they had saved and the furniture, cow and calf given to them by the Bishop, they homesteaded on 160 acres adjacent to Hatzic Lake and had nine children: William, Thomas, George, Arthur, Clement, Mary Lucy, Myrtle, John, and Matilda.

In 1894, Josephine was awarded the coveted Matsqui Hotel Cup for winning a three heat horse race held on Horne Avenue which at the time was simply a dirt road.¹ This was a remarkable feat as she was riding side saddle!

Besides her responsibilities at home, Josephine was an active member of the Hatzic Women's Institute (est. 1914) until it disbanded in 1957, serving as a director and participating in quilting bees in the early days. During World War II she joined the Red Cross to support the war effort by knitting socks and sweaters to send overseas for local soldiers. She was also an avid gardener and “gracious host with a wonderful sense of humor.”²

Reminiscing about her life just prior to her 84th birthday, Josephine recalled: *The deer were everywhere, and it was a common sight in the spring to see mother bear and her cubs lumbering by. Money did not have the importance then that it does now. We built our house from the logs my husband felled. Our land provided us with vegetables, we had a cow and few chickens, the lake was full of fish and game was plentiful. From our sheep we cut the wool which we washed, teased, spun and knit into garments and there not much we needed from the store. We are off the beaten track up here but I have never been lonely. Hatzic is a lovely place to live.*¹

Highly respected by all who knew her, Josephine died in her 91st year, survived by 5 of her children, 12 grandchildren, and 22 great grandchildren.

¹ Fraser Valley Record, February 20, 1952 ; ² Fraser Valley Record, October 15, 1958

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