

ORAL HISTORY
2017-01-12

Bea, Benny Lingle, Mike O'Daniel
12/6/2009
Skagway, AK
Skagway Oral History Project
Bea and Ben, son Mike.

- **Ben Lingle:** Ben's father was in Skagway, and in 1944 Ben moved north. Ben was born in North Carolina then moved to California. When he came to Skagway he worked for the White Pass Railroad and was very busy.
- **Bea Lingle:** Bea was born in Skagway, and her grandfather was in Skagway during the gold rush and was a Faro dealer.
- **Lingle Work in Skagway:** Ben bought the Skagway Hardware Store from Bill and Dorothy Doer in the 1940's. Ben also had a hand in starting the Skagway Air Service. Ben worked on the number 73 train unit. Mike, Bea and Ben's son also worked for the White Pass railroad for a time, until 1982.
- **Mike's employment in Skagway:** During high school, Mike did section work for the W.P., then worked as a baggage handler, a brakeman and a conductor. He worked as the assistant agent for the wharf. After that, he worked for (and is still working) the hardware store and Skagway Air. The air service and hardware store are 24/7 jobs- if someone needs something at 3am, or a medical emergency occurs, Mike is the man who is there to handle or help the situation.
- **Bea Lingle:** Bea is an artist- she took art classes in high school, and made use of her education by beach combing and painting Eskimos on pieces of driftwood. She then sold these to tourists and people who were interested in them. She also painted stationery and envelopes. She was one of the original "Can Can" girls for the "Days of '98" show, and at the time the women were all volunteer. They would go down to the docks and put on dancing shows for visitors right after WWII. Then the Chamber of Commerce got active and helped make the show bigger. Bea was in Seattle during the war.
- **Changes in Skagway:** There are houses on the hills around Skagway. In the past, there were no houses on the hills. The city is expanding. There are also huge ships now. In the past, they were much smaller, and came less frequently. Up until the 60's the only way in and out of Skagway was by railroad or ferry. Television came in the early 1960's and they had 2 theaters until TVs came. They had a very social city in the past- there were club dances, dinners, and people made their own fun.