

COLUMBIA SALOON MYSTERY SOLVED

Many of you have seen the old picture of the Columbia Saloon showing many Weinhard beer advertising signs and lovely ladies hanging from the upper floors. Almost as many have assumed it was located somewhere in the Portland area. Recently one of the prints was sold on Ebay and the buyer provided some much needed information.

-Editor.

Frances, WA is in the southwestern part of the state. It is 10 miles west of Pe Ell on hwy. 6 that runs west from Chehalis to Raymond.

At the turn of the century Frances was quite a thriving little town, but now all that is left is the beautiful little Catholic Church on the hill by the highway. The saloon was built in the 1890's by Louis Christen. He and his family of 12 children ran the saloon, operated a mill and manufacturing plant, ran a timber company, farmed and had a cheese factory.

The saloon had a large boarding house above it and the addition on the right side of the picture contained a bowling alley where they bowled Swiss style 9 pin bowling. Louis Christen also served as the town dentist. Anyone with a serious toothache went to the saloon, had a few drinks to numb the pain and then had the tooth extracted. The saloon burned to the ground in the late 1920's, but parts of the cement foundation are still visible. We have an old picture of the saloon when it was being built, a postcard photo like the one you have, plus a picture of grandpa Christen standing behind the bar in the saloon.

My youngest son has a picture of the saloon on his Ebay about me page. He collects tokens and advertising items from this area.

Thanks again,

Gloria Christen

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