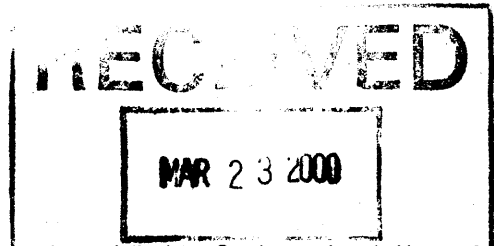


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties ~~NATIONAL REGISTER~~. See instructions in ~~How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A)~~. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Black Diamond Cemetery

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number Cemetery Hill Road

not for publication \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Black Diamond

vicinity \_\_\_\_\_

state Washington code WA county King code 033

zip code 98010

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally. (\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Oliver Paul*

2/14/00

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. (\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
X entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

*Edson H. Beall*

4-21-00

\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the  
National Register

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the  
National Register

\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

=====

**5. Classification**

=====

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)		<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>  1  </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<input type="checkbox"/> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>  1  </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N.A.

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N.A.

=====

**6. Function or Use**

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: FUNERARY Sub: cemetery

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: FUNERARY Sub: cemetery

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

=====

**7. Description**

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

N.A.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_

roof \_\_\_\_\_

walls \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

other \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

**8. Statement of Significance**

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>Exploration/Settlement</u>	<u>1882-1900</u>	<u>1886</u>
<u>Industry</u>	<u>1884-1936</u>	<u></u>
<u>Ethnic Heritage</u>	<u>1884-1950</u>	<u></u>
<u></u>		
<u></u>		
<u></u>		
<u></u>		
	<u>Cultural Affiliation</u>	
	<u>English/Welsh</u>	
	<u>Italian</u>	
	<u>Austrian/German</u>	
	<u>Finnish</u>	
	<u>Slavic</u>	
	<u>Serbian/Croatian</u>	

Architect/Builder N.A.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing  
(36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: King County Office of Cultural Resources

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**10. Geographical Data**

=====

Acreage of Property 3.5+/-

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	<u>10</u>	<u>574430</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5239970</u>
2	_____	_____	4	_____

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Starting at a point 1257.03 feet south of the NW corner of Section 14 (Township 21), the northern boundary is at an angle N71-59'W measuring 346.57 ft to the NE corner with the eastern boundary at an angle N1-57'E measuring 453.24' to the SE corner with the southern boundary at an angle of S73-42'10" E measuring 325.57' to the SW corner with a western boundary at S0-12'03" E measuring 468.83' returning to the NW corner starting point.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The proposed boundary is both the historic geographical and the current legal boundary limit of the Black Diamond Cemetery.

=====

**11. Form Prepared By**

=====

name/title Katheryn H. Krafft, Landmark Coordinator

organization King County Office of Cultural Resources date December 15, 1999

street & number 506 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Rm 200 telephone (206) 296-8636

city or town Seattle state WA zip code 98104

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====

**Property Owner**

=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Black Diamond

street & number P.O. Box 599

telephone (253) 631-0351

city or town Black Diamond

state WA zip code 98010

=====

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Description**

Location

The Black Diamond Cemetery is an evolving community cemetery that was initially established in the mid-1880s. The cemetery is a 3.5+/- acre trapezoidal site measuring approximately 325'x468'. It is situated one-half mile northwest of the historic commercial center of the town of Black Diamond and is immediately adjacent to the south side of the old Cemetery Hill Road. The cemetery is linked to the historic center of this former mining company town by way of Morgan Street, the historic route between the company townsite, its extensive mining operation and the settlement area known as Morganville.

The Black Diamond Cemetery was established at a pastoral site on a southwesterly sloping hillside in the far northwest corner of Section 14 of Township 21. This land parcel was acquired by the Black Diamond Coal Company, possibly from homesteader Timothy Morgan Sr., in c.1882. The first of the local Black Diamond mines, No. 14, was established elsewhere in Section 14 in 1884. Although the cemetery was located a mile from the opening of the initial slope, by 1920 the fifth and sixth levels of the No. 14 Mine were within this hillside and directly below the town cemetery.

The placement of the cemetery at a hilltop site in a pastoral surrounding is deeply rooted in Judeo-Christian traditions and typical of cemeteries found throughout Britain, France and Western Europe, as well as some Native American cultures. A hilltop location is clearly the most preferred cemetery site, being closer to heaven for religious and spiritual reasons. Such locations were also preferred for ecological reasons, being less susceptible to flooding and erosion even where flood threat was minimal. Such sites may have also been traditionally preferred because the land was less likely to be valuable for agrarian uses. However, the traditional hilltop cemetery remained within the main pattern of a settlement rather than entirely isolated at a high point.

Situated at a prominent and high point, the northwestern corner of the Black Diamond Cemetery is relatively flat while the western and southern portions are sloped to the south and west. The upper portions of the cemetery retain southwesterly views to the Rock Creek area and the Green River Valley below. The sloping site is asymmetrically bisected to the east and west by a central ribbon-type gravel roadway. This roadway is connected to a gravel perimeter roadway that runs along the eastern and southern edges of the cemetery and near the western boundary. The modern cemetery is geographically organized into five numbered sections. However, the current numerical identification of these sections does not correspond with the historic physical development of the cemetery. [See Figure 1]

The cemetery is currently enclosed by a chain link fence along the west, north and east boundaries. Three large chain link gates provide access from the approach road along the northern boundary. The southernmost portion of the cemetery is undeveloped and densely covered with low shrubs and well-established deciduous and evergreen foliage. Adjacent land areas to the north and west of the cemetery are also undeveloped and relatively densely wooded. A residential area is situated to the east of the cemetery site.

The cemetery grounds are primarily sloped areas of mowed grass sparsely accentuated by low shrubs and scattered trees of various species. Particularly prominent site features include a very large Monkey Tree [*Araucaria araucana*, an exotic] near the cemetery entry gate, a flagpole adjacent to the central roadway near the middle of the cemetery and a towering Douglas Fir near the south end of the central roadway. A small nondescript shed, that serves as a utility shop, is located in the southwest corner of the cemetery site and a large concrete sewer flush tank is located near the northeast corner of the cemetery,

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adjacent to Cemetery Hill Road and outside the cemetery fence. Rock retaining walls, incorporating a small area for mausoleum crypts, are situated in the southern portion of the cemetery and appear to be of relatively modern construction.

The oldest portion of the cemetery, the location of the oldest gravemarkers, is a trapezoidal area situated at the highest, northeastern corner of the cemetery and encompassing all of Section 2 and the northeast portions of Section 3. Although the majority of the cemetery is laid out with uniform 12'x12' plots, its geography and the placement and variety of gravemarkers give an overall appearance of randomness. Along the east side of the central roadway the plots run parallel to the roadway, however to the west they follow a north-south orientation and run parallel to the western boundary. Later additions to the cemetery follow this basic fragmented grid, excepting narrower plots within Section 5.

A wide variety of gravemarkers remain in place marking individual and family burial places. The gravemarkers typically include inscriptions, epitaphs or decorations that richly commemorate the deceased members of this ethnically diverse mining community. The Black Diamond Cemetery gravemarkers represent a variety of recognized monument forms and vary through time, reflecting the cultural values and the social history of the community.

Variety in design and height are typical distinguishing features within most late 19<sup>th</sup> C. cemeteries. The earliest gravemarkers and nearly all of the headstones in the earliest portions of the cemetery are oriented toward the east following the Christian tradition in western cultures. The marker orientations vary in the newer portions of the cemetery, possibly due to the sloping topography.

Gravemarker Typologies

Based on limited field examination the following gravemarker typologies have been identified:

- Simple Headstone: An upright marker placed at the head of the deceased
- Simple Footstone: An upright marker placed at the foot of the deceased
- Ledger: A large rectangular gravemarker set parallel with the ground covering the grave opening or surface of the grave
- Gothic or pointed: A tall upright monument averaging thirty-four inches in height and resembling the pointed arch, an essential element in ecclesiastical architecture
- Obelisk: A tall vertical four-sided tapered shaft reminiscent of the obelisks of ancient Egypt rising about fifty inches and topped most often by a pyramidal point, ball or other top ornaments (often damaged or removed). This type was very common between 1880 and 1900 and its verticality parallels the picturesque eclectic architecture of the era.
- Cross-vault obelisk: Similar to the obelisk spire, however topped by a cross-vaulted rather than a pointed cap
- Tablet: Marble or stone slab terminating in a rounded arch or a simple rectangular slab and ranging in height up to thirty inches or greater
- Pulpit: Marble or granite slab with sufficient depth for an inscription on the slanted top edge with a typical height of thirty inches
- Scroll: Typically granite and resembling a broken column or scroll form lying relatively low to the ground.
- Block: A tabular block approximately two feet in height and width and six inches in depth with slightly rounded top

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- Raised Top: A simple stone or concrete rectangular monument rising approximately six inches in height
- Lawn or plaque type: A plate usually of granite or bronze with top surface nearly flush to the ground level
- Crosses: Wooden and cast concrete monuments of varying size

Typically, the materials used to create gravemarkers vary according to the specific time period and individual's or family's economic status. Plain white marble or local stone

markers were most common during the late 19<sup>th</sup> C. However, these materials did not hold up well in many American climates and granite gained in use. Low granite markers became common by 1930 and in the latter part of the century ground level plaques which require minimal maintenance and are easy to mow around have become most common.

The Black Diamond Cemetery does not appear to include examples of some common 19<sup>th</sup> C. gravemarker types; tree stumps, zinc markers, sarcophagus or sculptural figures. Many of the remaining markers are commercial marble or stone products including numerous examples with carved lambs used for children's graves. Headstones were typically imported to Black Diamond, however some of the Italians within the community are known to have handmade markers. (Steiert) Several handmade markers of sandstone, wood or concrete, that are unusually shaped and incised, remain in place. The ground surface within several plots in Sections 2 and 3 has settled and no markers remain in place. It is known that numerous wooden cross markers, and possibly some stone markers, have been removed or stolen.

As noted above the Black Diamond Cemetery includes numerous children's gravemarkers that feature a carved lamb, a form that was traditionally used across America during this era. (Meyer, *Voices*, 204) Children's markers were typically elaborate and sentimental, reflecting Victorian attitudes toward the innocence and sanctity of childhood. There was a large trade in Victorian children's markers and the most frequent motif for a child's headstone was the lamb, a stock form that expresses the vision of the child as close to nature, peace and virtue. (Meyer, *Voices*, 20) Other symbols associated with childhood including a rose with a broken stem and a finger pointing upward can also be found in the cemetery. While more elaborate three-dimensional sculptural representations were available to the more affluent families via trade catalogs, such expensive monuments are not present in the Black Diamond cemetery.

In addition to the variety and height of gravemarkers, the Black Diamond Cemetery is distinguished by a variety of fence or plot enclosures crafted from wrought iron, concrete and stone. During the 19<sup>th</sup> C., it was a common practice to surround an individual, family or fraternal gravesite with a low fence. This was done in part to protect flowers and memorials from destruction. Such enclosures also isolated and clearly distinguished the plot in contrast to the communal ground of the larger cemetery. While many fences have been removed or altered for ease of lawn maintenance, several particularly distinctive wrought iron or concrete fences and family plot enclosures with concrete curbs remain in place.

The greatest alteration to the Black Diamond Cemetery is the installation of the modern chain link fence that replaced a wooden picket fence. Originally the cemetery was enclosed by a tall wooden picket type fence and included a double gate hearse entrance at the central roadway and a stile (a set of steps passing over the fence) which pedestrians used to enter and leave the cemetery. A wooden arch resting on square side columns with wooden caps



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maintenance cost reduction purposes. With the exception of this alteration and the removal of the family plot enclosure fences, the Black Diamond Cemetery is a well-maintained and preserved example of a unique mining company town and community cemetery. As such the cemetery continues to exhibit intriguing cemetery geography and particularly distinctive gravemarkers which are indicative of the rich ethnic heritage as well as the social and cultural landscape of the community.

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**Statement of Significance**

The City of Black Diamond is one of several extant small towns in the mining districts of King County and Washington State that were initially established as part of late 19th century coal mining operations. While its primary coal mines ceased to be actively operated nearly seventy years ago, a few features of the cultural landscape of Black Diamond continue to reflect the industrial, environmental and social factors that shaped the community. The Black Diamond Cemetery, an evolving community cemetery dating back to the early 1880s, represents nearly 120 years of use and exhibits physical characteristics that can be understood in a broader context.

Due to the loss of several historic buildings associated with important social institutions (the Show Hall, schools, community church and Masonic Hall) and the ephemeral nature of mining operations, the Black Diamond Cemetery is a particularly illustrative historic resource. It illustrates historic and cultural patterns indicative of coal mining communities and company towns elsewhere in the American West, and the nation as a whole. Furthermore, it records patterns and events that are not evident elsewhere within the community and its historic resource base.

General Cemetery Context

Burial places throughout the American West include a wide variety of cemetery types and reflect many aspects of American technology, demographics, cultural norms, social relationships, economic variations and material culture. Cemeteries are far more than merely elements of space sectioned off and set aside for the burial of the dead, they are essential cultural texts that can be read and appreciated. Cemeteries with strong ethnic associations, like the Black Diamond Cemetery, represent large untapped resources for the study and understanding of the evolving patterns of ethnicity in American culture. (Meyer, *Ethnicity*, 3) Similarly, cemeteries that are directly associated with company towns and mining communities reflect important aspects of social, industrial and labor history. Evolving cemeteries, as is the Black Diamond Cemetery, are dynamic features of the cultural landscape and reflect broader trends and values within the fabric of American life.

The cemetery, derived from Greek and meaning sleeping chamber, is a characteristically 19<sup>th</sup> C. landscape feature. As a separate designed environment set aside by the living in order to cope with death, the 19<sup>th</sup> C. cemetery is distinct from earlier graveyards. (Ames, 642) The Rural Cemetery Movement began c.1830 with the creation of Mt. Auburn Cemetery, a specialized park-like setting, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which became a prototype and was replicated throughout the nation. Several factors contributed to this movement; the overcrowding of older urban graveyards, a rapidly growing population, the greater knowledge of disease, romantic ideas about the healthfulness of nature, an increasingly secular society as well as the increasing value of urban land.

Unlike earlier common graveyards that were situated within towns and cities and usually adjacent to churches, the typical Rural Cemetery of the mid-nineteenth century was planned as a picturesque environment and was owned and operated by a private secular organization. While earlier family or small community cemeteries typically have no regular pattern, later town and rural-focus cemeteries were laid out on a strict compass oriented grid with blocks and sections and a plot numbering system. The Black Diamond Cemetery fits within this typology with its basic rectangular geometry. The Black Diamond Cemetery also follows a typical pattern of expansion with grid system plots, the oldest section situated at the top

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of the hill and sections of growth in several directions below it. While the highly fragmented townscape of Black Diamond does not follow the typical grid of the Western town, the somewhat fragmented cemetery is more indicative of this standard geographic grid feature of planned settlements.

The cemetery is considered a particularly important feature of the cultural landscape of mining towns. Such cemeteries vary through time, reflecting both cultural values and social status. They are typically located at the edge of town at a serene vantage point, a distant from the mining operation. Typical cemetery features include a wide variation in gravemarker design, quality and materials and the partitioning of graves and plots with elaborate wooden or iron fencing. It is common for some gravemarkers to contain information about individual miners, however they are usually of a standard commercial design that can also be found in other cemeteries. The specific location of graves and the design and setting of the individual gravemarkers can often reveal aspects of ethnic and economic status within the community. (Francaviglia, *Hard Places*, 58)

Upon close scrutiny, the cemeteries often reveal aspects of the broader social landscape of a mining community and its social stratification; the separation of groups by fences and the architecture of their monuments or markers. (Francaviglia, *Hard Places*, 111) Most importantly, gravemarker inscriptions and epitaphs, often in a native language, provide a rich list of ethnic surnames and reflect deep ethnic traditions, verifications of place of birth, and personal ties to other mining areas of America. Black Diamond Cemetery gravemarkers acknowledge westward migrations from other mining communities in Iowa, Colorado, and Pennsylvania. The cemetery appears to be a outstanding example of a mining town cemetery.

Community Historic Context

The town of Black Diamond was established in the early 1880s as a result of the relocation of the Black Diamond Coal Company from northern California. An ever-increasing market for bituminous coal during the late nineteenth century prompted the company to acquire land where it could establish a new company town and mine high-grade coal.

By the late 1870s the coal mining potential of the Green River District was well known. Black Diamond Coal Company geologist Victor E. Tull traveled to south King County and identified high-grade coal from the McKay seam in July 1880. In June 1882 chief engineer Morgan Morgan and company president Pierre Barlow Cornwall traveled to the site to examine the deposit. The company then acquired land and mineral rights above the find in Sections 11 and 14 of Township 21. The company utilized the much-abused Homestead Act to acquire the land, paying homesteaders to "prove up" the claim and then turn over the government deed to the company. Between 1882 and 1884, the company relocated equipment and personnel from California to establish the No. 14 Mine, situated within the eastern portion of Section 14 of Township 21. They also resettled a group of their Nortonville, California employees, primarily foreign-born Welsh and Italian coal miners and mine operators, to the town site.

Black Diamond Company officials engaged the Oregon Improvement Company to extend the narrow gauge Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad link from Renton to Black Diamond. Constructed principally by Chinese laborers, this effort also began in 1882 and was completed in late 1884. Completion of the C & PS Railroad line (later known as the Pacific Coast Company Railroad) made possible the delivery of necessary mining equipment and heavy machinery to the coal fields. It also provided a means of shipping to the coal dock (situated at the foot of King Street) in Seattle. Commercial coal production and shipment began as soon as the railroad line was completed in late 1884. Wives and family members who had remained behind in California moved to the townsite once railroad service became available. An

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estimated 200 to 300 individuals immigrated northward to Black Diamond once the railroad line and the townsite were established.

During this same era, three nearby sites were also developed for bituminous coal mining. Eugene Lawson, an early independent prospector opened his initial water level mine at Old Lawson, where a settlement including 50 company homes was also established. In 1895, he established the New Lawson Mine, an incline slope above the prior operation that also included a settlement of approximately 40 company-built homes. The Northern Improvement Company (a subsidiary of the Northern Pacific Railroad) established mining operations and a company town at nearby Franklin that was also served by the Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad link from Renton via Black Diamond.

The original Black Diamond townsite developed around the C & PS Railroad line running to Franklin and the Bruce Spur serving Mine No.14, No.2 & No.12; the various mine operations and the principal county road, known as the "New Road." The townsite descended in a fragmented pattern along the hillside between Mud Lake and Lake 14 (Jones Lake), primarily within the eastern half of Section 14. The commercial street, Railroad Avenue, paralleled the main railroad line in close proximity to the depot and defined the town's western edge. Mine No. 14 defined the town's southern boundary and Mine No.2 defined the town's eastern boundary. After 1896, Mine No. 11 defined the town's northern boundary.

The company town developed along a hillside in a fragmented pattern. Its layout was defined by the main railroad line and a looped spur line, the mine workings and the principle county road, the "New Road." By 1887, the settlement had developed a distinct physical character. The railroad depot and several nearby false front buildings formed a commercial hub. Ethnic enclaves developed within the townsite, reflecting mining traditions and national waves of immigration. During this era the Black Diamond Coal Company mine superintendent managed the town and four mines in a manner that earned him respect and avoided labor disputes. By 1900, the town included a range of commercial businesses and community facilities serving a diverse population of 3500, the largest community in King County outside Seattle.

In 1904, the Pacific Coast Coal Company (PCCC) acquired the entire Black Diamond mining operation and townsite. The PCCC was a subsidiary of the Pacific Coast Company, which controlled large land holdings and a variety of coal-dependent railroad and shipping lines and industrial plants throughout the American West. PCCC operated several coal mines and company towns within the Green River Coal District and initiated more rigid control over the Black Diamond mining operations and the town. An explosion at PCCC's Lawson Mine in 1910 killed sixteen men and forced the permanent closure of that mine.

The original No. 14 Mine was closed in 1917 and the looped spur line that had served it and three other previously closed mines was abandoned. During 1921-1922, a major labor dispute occurred and PCCC forced striking miners to sell homes situated on PCCC land. The labor dispute was never resolved and, along with a national downturn in the coal market and safety issues, led to the 1927 closure of the only remaining (and largest) Black Diamond mine, No. 11. During the early-1920s, the PCCC began to sell off land parcels on the periphery of the townsite. After 1927, company employees continued to reside in Black Diamond and commute to other PCCC mines in the district; however, by the late 1930s many homes were left unoccupied.

Mining has traditionally been an industry characterized by an ethnically diverse work force. In the American West, this tradition began with the California Gold Rush (1849-1855) which proved to be one of the largest single mass migrations in world history. Hard rock (subterranean) mining in the American West received an initial influx of Welsh and Cornish

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miners when the Cornish copper industry collapsed in 1866. Germans, with a history of hard rock mining in the Hartz Mountains, also came to the West. The diversity of the coal mining labor force parallels the history of immigration to the United States. Prior to 1890, the majority of immigrants were Northern and Western European, with a subsequent influx of Eastern and Southern Europeans. The changing ethnicity of this labor force had a significant influence on coal mining and the character of coal mining communities throughout the nation, including Black Diamond.

A safety warning sign [undated and now located in the Black Diamond Museum] written in sixteen languages reflects the diverse work force employed at the Black Diamond mines. The Black Diamond work force was primarily northern, central, and eastern European immigrants, and included individuals of English (Welsh), Finnish, French, Austrian-German, Greek, Italian, Lithuanian, Yugoslavian (Montenegrin), Norwegian, Polish, Russian, and Swedish origin. Welsh and Italian immigrants and their descendants constituted the largest ethnic populations in the town because they were predominant within the original work force relocated from California.

Immigrant groups tend to cluster together in ethnic enclaves or neighborhoods for a variety of social, linguistic, economic and familial reasons and this was the case in Black Diamond. The English and Welsh, who typically filled managerial positions, lived in the center of town along the New Road (now SR169). Those of Italian descent resided in two Italian immigrant enclaves--"lower Dago town" (located on a hillside below the main railroad tracks) and "upper Dago town" (situated on the hillside above No. 14 Mine and near St. Barbara's Catholic Church). A Finnish community that included a Russian-Finn Hall was established at New Lawson, to the east of the Black Diamond town site, and German-Austrians settled at Old Lawson, to the south and below the Lawson (Hill) Mine.

Anecdotal and physical evidence indicates that while there were distinct ethnic enclaves in Black Diamond, the community as a whole was close knit. The 1920 census records indicate that families from a range of ethnic origins resided within each enclave. Furthermore, the graves within the Black Diamond Cemetery are commingled. The fact that the graves are not isolated by ethnicity or ethnic-based fraternal association, may indicate the degree to which individuals of various ethnic origins worked and interacted together within the community. It may also indicate the conflict-free approach the Black Diamond Coal Company took toward the control of the community.

Black Diamond Cemetery Historic Context

A panoramic view of the Black Diamond townsite that was prepared in 1887 clearly identifies the cemetery in the distance. The inclusion of the cemetery in this view is indicative of its value as one of several essential features within the townscape. During this era at least four nearby mining communities also established cemeteries: the Green River Gorge (Franklin Catholic) Cemetery, and the Franklin Cemetery, the Ravensdale Cemetery and the Krain (Catholic) Cemetery west of Cumberland.

The earliest death date on a gravemarker in the Black Diamond Cemetery is that of Rachel Williams on Feb.10, 1880, noted on a shared marker that includes subsequent family death dates from 1890, 1891 and 1893. However since the 1880 date would predate the establishment of the company town, it seems likely that the Miss Williams may have been reinterred with other family members at a later date. The next oldest gravemarker death date is that of David J. Davis on March 25, 1886. This tall marble marker, near the west side of the central road and gate, appears to mark the earliest known grave site following establishment of the townsite the prior year.

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Most of the early graves are located near the central roadway or at the highest point in the northernmost and eastern part of the cemetery (now known as Section 2 and a portion of Section 3). All of the graves dating from prior to 1910 are located in this area as well. Approximately twelve graves date from between 1886 to 1889, sixty-five from 1890 to 1899 and seventy-two from 1900 to 1910. This tabulation does not include plots that are now unmarked due to vandalism, deterioration or removal of wooden or stone markers. Based on an examination of gravemarker dates, the area now known as Section 1 appears to have been added to the cemetery after 1910. A Pacific Coast Coal Co. plat map dated October 1919 delineates a further addition to the original cemetery. This last addition encompassed approximately 90 feet along the western edge and about 100 feet along the southern edge of the current cemetery and constitutes the western and southern portions of Section 3 and all of Sections 4 and 5.

It is interesting to note that very few Italian or Eastern European surnames are included in the cemetery prior to 1910. While numerous Italians were part of the earliest work force, they do not appear to have been buried in the cemetery. It was not until 1911 that a Catholic Church was constructed in the community. Thus, one explanation may be that they were buried elsewhere and nearer to a Catholic church where they worshiped. Significantly greater numbers of Italian surnames appear on gravemarkers after 1910. Nearly 90 graves were added within Section 1 after 1910. This growth is most likely related to an increased population base and death rate as well as the presence of individual Catholic, Presbyterian and Congregational churches in the community.

Design, Use and Operation

Just as the Black Diamond Coal Company provided the company town with a church building, the Show Hall and Masonic Hall, land was specifically set aside for a community cemetery. While it was established in the same section of land as the company's original No.14 Mine, it was situated a sufficient distance away to provide a serene environment and hilltop view. The cemetery was both a company and a community cemetery, since those who did not work for Black Diamond Coal Company (or later the Pacific Coast Coal Company) were also buried there. The

typical variations in the cost or size of a cemetery plot associated with private 19<sup>th</sup> c. cemeteries are not applicable given the company town role of this cemetery. There is no clear separation of plots by religious belief, ethnic origin or fraternal association. Less obvious to the casual observer is the near absence of Italian, Eastern and Southern European surnames prior to 1910, when for religious reasons they were most likely buried nearer to a Catholic church in another community.

The only known historic photograph of the cemetery dates from c. 1920 and shows the original pointed picket fence with a hearse entrance and stile. The simple wooden stairs with handrail were situated to the east of the hearse entrance and allowed pedestrians to walk over and into the cemetery while keeping the neighboring horses and cows out. (Olson, 114) Similar fence designs and protection were typical throughout the entire company town. The wide hearse entrance was distinguished by wooden picket entry gates under a wooden arch with a keystone and supported on square columns with caps. It is likely that the arch included the cemetery name on the side facing Cemetery Hill Road.

Dan Weston served as the undertaker for the town funeral parlor (Black Diamond Undertaking Co.) that was situated on Railroad Avenue across from the railroad station. The funeral parlor (now demolished) was also near Morgan Street, the route leading to Cemetery Hill Road. Until 1911, the company town had one church building that was used by all denominations for religious purposes. Funerals were typically open casket and often held at home or in the church building. They would usually be followed by a procession to the

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cemetery. One of the town's several bands would often lead the procession and the church bell would toll until the horse drawn, glass-walled hearse reached the cemetery. The whole school would march in processions for children who often died of smallpox, diphtheria or other childhood diseases. Until the early 1920s funeral processions were common. Pallbearers accompanied the hearse, which could be fitted with kerosene lamps for night processions. (Steiert) In later years a Pierce-Arrow hearse was provided by the Diamond Stage Company. The cemetery was also used for picnics, community and holiday events and decorated for special memorial occasions.

The coal company is known to have regularly deducted a fee from the miners' paychecks in order to operate and maintain the cemetery. City cemetery records include a seven-page list of names identified as the "Cemetery Fund" with the notation that "Each man listed here paid \$2.00 pay Roll Deduction to the Cemetery Fund, taken off on 2<sup>nd</sup> 1/2 Feb. Pay Roll 1921." That year the deductions equaled a total of \$910.00. Black Diamond Cemetery Association logbooks c.1935 to 1970 indicate that a \$1.00 annual fee was still being collected. It also appears that until c.1948 the cemetery was operated by the company and/or a cemetery committee with an individual serving as sexton; being responsible for the digging of graves and the supervision of burials. A community member, Jack (John C.) Jones served as sexton from c.1948 to 1970 and regularly solicited private donations to sustain the operation. Since 1977, the City of Black Diamond has been responsible for the maintenance and operation of the cemetery.

Social Historic Context

Cemeteries are considered to be deliberately created and highly organized cultural landscapes that are often a microcosm of the nearby settlement or urban environment and reflect larger American settlement patterns. (Francaviglia, *Annals*, 501) They tend to reveal the society that produced them and reflect important aspects of 19<sup>th</sup> C. life. (Ames, 641) A preliminary examination of the gravemarkers and their locations within the Black Diamond Cemetery provides insight into the material culture of the community and reveals particular societal characteristics indicative of late 19<sup>th</sup> C. and early 20<sup>th</sup> C. life within the community. Due to the loss of several historic buildings associated with important social institutions (the Show Hall, schools, community church and Masonic Hall) and the ephemeral nature of mining operations, the Black Diamond Cemetery is a particularly illustrative historic resource.

The cemetery gravemarkers specifically reveal the history of mining explosions and accidental deaths associated with this dangerous industry. Graves associated with individual mining accidents are not necessarily marked as such and are somewhat difficult to identify. Evan J. Thomas was killed in an individual accident on December 7, 1895, at the age of 54, and is buried here. After his death, the Black Diamond Coal Company (and later PCCC) provided his widow with free rent and coal for the length of her life. Mrs. Thomas remained in the community, took in boarders, and was buried here in 1931. Several young men were buried here in 1894, however it is not known whether any of their deaths were associated with the worst mining accident in Western Washington history which occurred that year at the nearby Franklin mines.

A distinctive group of four gravemarkers appear to be directly associated with a deadly explosion in the Lawson Mine (then owned by PCCC) that occurred on October 1, 1902. Two of the inscriptions are in Finnish, one in English and one in Italian. Three of the deaths

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appear to have occurred over the following months. Up to possibly eight graves associated with the well-known November 6, 1910 explosion at the New Lawson Mine are situated at a prominent location near the flagpole and adjacent to the central roadway. This explosion killed sixteen miners and was the most deadly accident associated with the Black Diamond mines. Several miners' bodies could not be removed and the accident resulted in the permanent closure of the Lawson Mine. A group monument in Italian marks three of the graves and two other remaining markers are in an unidentifiable language, possibly Serbian or Slavic. Finally, a set of graves is located in Section 1 for two young men, both age 26, that were killed in the deadly Ravensdale explosion of November 15, 1915. Thirty-four men were trapped in the mine and only three were found alive. This explosion ended the coal mining operation there as well.

Fraternal and sororal organizations were a common and essential part of life in emerging communities throughout the American West during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Typically organizations such as the Masons, their sister organization the Eastern Star, the Elks, the Rebekah Lodge, the Knights of Pythias and the Independent Order of the Odd Fellows set aside specific plots of land so that fraternal feelings could continue unbroken into eternity. Fraternal orders also served as fraternal insurance companies. In contrast to Roslyn, Washington (which has twenty-six separate fraternal graveyards), or Wilkeson, Washington, where segregated fraternal graveyards are situated in fenced-off sections within larger cemeteries, the Black Diamond Cemetery is a community cemetery. There are no clear or obvious divisions in terms of fraternal association, ethnicity or social status. However, scattered throughout the Black Diamond Cemetery are gravemarkers with inscriptions and/or symbols for a wide range of fraternal and sororal societies that must have been an important part of community life. It should be noted that there are no extant historic buildings within the community associated with this aspect of community life.

An essential aspect of 19<sup>th</sup> C. cemeteries is the glorification of family and emphasis on kinship as reflected in cemetery layout and organization. (Ames, 653) The glorification of family is closely tied to the 19<sup>th</sup> C. ideology of domesticity and emphasis on family life. Typically, family plots will vary in size and number of graves as an indication of the family role and distinction within the community. Larger plots with impressive vistas are usually associated with the most notable families. Like fraternal orders, family plots are often enclosed in fences most frequently made of cast iron. Usually family plots are identified by a family stone that is inscribed with the family surname only. Around this central monument, smaller individual gravemarkers are clustered. Family markers are also often in the form of an obelisk type marker with multiple individual epitaphs on each side. Such family plots are indicative of value of the traditional extended family and individual kinship associations. Markers often indicate specific kinship and familial relationships with "mother" being most frequently identified.

The Black Diamond Cemetery includes approximately forty family plots or family group gravemarkers. Several 12'x12' plots remain enclosed by wrought (or cast) iron or concrete type enclosures. It was a common practice to surround gravesites with a low fence during the 19<sup>th</sup> C., in part to protect flowers and memorials from destruction. However, such enclosures also served to isolate and clearly distinguish a family plot in clear contrast with the communal ground of the larger cemetery and the company-owned town, as well. While such enclosures were thought to mar the natural park-like settings of cemeteries, they also served to some degree to define community and private property. (Ames, 653) An unidentified



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number of family plots fences have been removed from this cemetery since 1959, when aerial photography recorded a distinctive irregular checkerboard pattern of separate 12' x12' plots. While many fences were removed or altered for ease of lawn maintenance, several particularly distinctive wrought iron or concrete fences and family plot enclosures with concrete curbs remain in place.

The most evocative aspect of life within the Black Diamond company town that is revealed within the cemetery is the diverse and rich ethnic makeup of the community. Diversity is reflected in any cemetery depending on the traditions of the specific ethnic group or immigrant community and the wishes of individual family members. Funerary and burial characteristics brought from the old country may be strictly maintained, partially incorporated or abandoned entirely in favor of mainstream American monuments types and funeral practices. Thus, small details sometimes provide links with traditional imagery or ritual.

The gravemarkers in the Black Diamond Cemetery reflect the wide variety of ethnicity and national origins that were historically represented in the company town. Nowhere else in the community (other than within the Black Diamond Museum) is this diversity as evident or so distinctly recorded. Clearly identifiable graves of immigrants from Austria, Italy, Wales, England, Germany, Finland and Eastern and Southern Europe are situated throughout the entire cemetery. However, the oldest graves and those nearest the central roadway and Cemetery Hill Road are primarily those of the earliest English and Welsh immigrants.

The basic desire for continuity and cultural retention is typically mingled with assimilation, in order gain identity and stability in a new country. (Meyer, *Ethnicity*, 4) Within the cemetery setting, the desire of the foreign born and the children of immigrants to retain the cherished practices of their ancestors is most often reflected in such notable features as the heavy use of native languages, the identification of birth places and the inclusion of traditional epitaphs. Cemeteries with a concentration of immigrant graves also tend to be less garden-like burial places than the typical 19<sup>th</sup> C. Rural Cemetery prototype. The Black Diamond Cemetery exhibits all of these characteristics.

While the cemetery includes very few gravemarkers or family plots with Italian or Southern European surnames associated with the initial settlement era, there are a significant number dating from the period after 1911, after the establishment of a local Catholic church. More than other immigrant groups, Italians tended to follow particularly distinctive funerary and memorialization practices. The continued respect for deceased ancestors and on-going reverence for specific burial places, as well as the central importance of family, are deeply-rooted in Catholicism and Italian culture, particularly southern Italy. (Meyer, *Ethnicity*, 17) The common practice of surrounding the gravesite with a low fence to protect on-going memorial offerings from destruction and the placement of photographic images within gravemarkers symbolize continued contact and presence in the family. Such practices were often discouraged and were in sharp contrast to the dominant American ideal of an orderly, natural and serene cemetery environment.

Several Italian gravemarkers in the Black Diamond cemetery are situated in family plots with memorial monuments, low fences or concrete curb surrounds. At least ten gravemarkers include Italian epitaphs and/or identify Italian places of birth. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> C. until the period prior to WWII, at least five firms advertised porcelain portraits in monument industry trade magazines. (Meyer, *Ethnicity*, 23) Only two gravemarkers within the

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acknowledge places of birth in Wales, many from the mining areas of the south of Wales. At least seven gravemarkers list locations in England as the place of birth. The English have a long tradition of including epitaphs on their gravemarkers. They are the best known and the most prolific authors of epitaphs, especially the classic couplet that is commonly found

on 18<sup>th</sup> C. gravemarkers throughout Britain and the United States. They often included stern instructions that were not necessarily comforting to the bereaved, however during the 19th C. such epitaphs became gentler. Nearly forty epitaphs, of varied length and originality and all associated with Welsh or English immigrants or their family members, are included on gravemarkers within the cemetery. The c.1900 epitaph included on the south side of the Llewellyn family monument in memory of Idris, a beloved son, is particularly prophetic.

Do you hear us when we call you,  
Do you heed the tears we shed,  
Oh beloved—Oh, immortals,  
Oh ye dead who are not dead  
Speak to us across the darkness,  
Give us a glimmering hand,  
Tell us that we remember others  
In the silent land.

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**Photo 1**

Black Diamond Cemetery  
King County, Washington  
Katheryn H. Krafft  
September 13, 1999  
King County Office of Cultural Resources  
View South of central roadway  
from main North entry gate

**Photo 2**

Black Diamond Cemetery  
King County, Washington  
Katheryn H. Krafft  
September 13, 1999  
King County Office of Cultural Resources  
View to SW of gravemarkers  
from NE edge of Section 2

**Photo 3**

Black Diamond Cemetery  
King County, Washington  
Katheryn H. Krafft  
September 13, 1999  
King County Office of Cultural Resources  
View West of gravemarkers  
from SE side of Section 2

**Photo 4**

Black Diamond Cemetery  
King County, Washington  
Katheryn H. Krafft  
September 13, 1999  
King County Office of Cultural Resources  
View NW of family plot at  
SW corner of Section 2

**Photo 5**

Black Diamond Cemetery  
King County, Washington  
Katheryn H. Krafft  
September 13, 1999  
King County Office of Cultural Resources  
Group marker associated w/  
Lawson Mine explosion 1910