

**DURING HIS LIFE, JIMMY PATRICK PARTICIPATED IN MANY
ESCAPADES
12/02/97**

I have covered many real characters in this column, but none more colorful than this week's subject has. He is Jimmy Patrick and, along with his wife, "Suzy," they were two of the first people to welcome us to the area. They treated the Allens as family, a kindness that was reciprocated on our part.

Jimmy had done it all in his time. He was what one would refer to as a man's man. He went from being a merchant seaman to working on the Alaskan highway. Bar proprietor and log truck driver also were included on his resume.

The Patricks managed Van Auken's Hotel during the lumberjack heydays. Many of his most memorable experiences occurred during his tenure as owner of the Bandbox, which was a local watering hole located where the present TOW Bar stands.

The following is typical of many escapades that took place there.

Frank Ritz and cronies jacked a deer on the Bisby Road and in their haste to flee the scene, yarned it into the back of the car before it quit thrashing. The blood flew and the perpetrators were sprayed with it. Not ones to waste an adverse situation, they quickly came up with a plan to improve their position.

Sliding into the backdoor of the Bandbox, they slipped into the back room and Frank stretched out on the floor in his best death pose. Jimmy was informed that Frank had accidentally been shot and his assistance was needed to tactfully report the incident. He nearly joined Frank on the floor when he came upon the scene and he believed that what he saw was for real.

Sue Patrick was a tender hearted lady who dearly loved her two terminally ill house cats. Receiving a teary phone call one morning, I was asked if I would drive Jimmy to Boonville to have them euthanized.

I agreed, knowing full well Jimmy would have no intentions of hauling the cats all the way to Boonville, so I prepared myself.

Jimmy sauntered forward with the cats ensconced in a sturdy cardboard box. A distraught Suzy watched from the back door. He slid into the front seat, uncorked a beer and asked, "We aren't going all the way to Boonville are we?"

Assuring him that we were on the same wavelength, we did the deed, and very mercifully too I might add. A sufficient amount of time was spent at Van Auken's spending the money Sue gave Jim for the vet and I dropped Jim off at his house.

I nearly spilled the beans a couple of days later while having coffee with Sue. She asked if I had gone into the vet's office with Jim while he did the deed. Absent-mindedly engrossed in the paper, I answered in the affirmative, but quickly corrected myself before I blundered further.

Suzy, if you should look down from heaven (where I am sure you are if anyone is) and read this, I am truly sorry. I can only say the cats did not suffer.

There is a lot more to Jimmy and Sue Patrick that time and circumstance do not allow for now. As I stated earlier, they both meant a lot to my family and me. To make a long story short, we will explore that further on down the ridge.