

Bloedel Fire - 1938

On July 5, 1938, during a period of extremely dry conditions on Vancouver Island a fire broke out when sparks from a train ignited a pile of logs at a camp operated by Bloedel, Stewart and Welch. The fire ultimately burned over 74,495 acres, employed every available young man from the area, as well as 211 unemployed workers from Vancouver and spewed smoke as far as Seattle.

This fire is not only renowned for its size and its ferocity but for the massive tree-planting project which resulted after the burn. Seventeen million trees were planted over the next two years. The area is now recognized as the Sayward Forest.