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SPOKANE AND LUCKY STRIKE SHARE A

110-YEAR-OLD NOSTALGIC LINK

In 1871, the year that Spokane was settled, a new brand of smoking tobacco was registered on the other side of America. It was called Lucky Strike and was made by R. A. Patterson in Richmond, Va.

Now Spokane has been chosen as one of two cities in which new Lucky Strike Low Tar Filter cigarettes are being introduced.

The famous Lucky ^{Strike} name really took hold in 1916 when the American Tobacco Company launched a unique blend of Burley tobacco under the Lucky Strike name. The Chief of Sales, George Hill, knew that his good tobacco and the old name might not be enough to insure success. He needed an idea that would suggest a special taste to anyone who smoked a Lucky Strike cigarette.

P. Hill
He knew the tobacco was prepared by a special cooking method, but "cooked tobacco" didn't sound especially inviting. So he asked a subordinate, "What do you think sounds appetizing to which heat is applied?" "Morning toast" came the reply, and the Lucky Strike slogan "It's toasted" was born.

In era when 35 billion cigarettes were rolled by hand from Burley mixtures compared with only 21 billion ready-made cigarettes, the new Lucky Strike was ^{soon} selling six billion "toasted" cigarettes a year, and billboards with a familiar toasting fork appeared nationwide.

Throughout its 65 years, the brand has been in the forefront of innovative advertising. One of the first breaks in tradition was using women in testimonials. Other tobacco companies had skirted the question of women smokers by occasionally showing foreign opera singers or veiled Orientals, but Lucky Strike came out with the first direct message to American female smokers in 1928 with its "Reach for a Lucky instead of a sweet" campaign.

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In two years, the pictures of slim, sophisticated women smoking had lifted the brand ahead of its rivals with sales of 42 billion a year.

Though advertising played a big role, taste was always a major factor in Lucky Strike's success. Blindfolded, it was easy to identify a "toasted" Lucky.

The promotion of Luckies continued, using such activities as a cigarette rolling exhibition in a New York City storefront and nationally-broadcasted radio shows in 1930. The "Lucky Strike Radio Show" featured such artists as Frank Sinatra, Kay Kyser, Eddie Duchin, Jack Benny and Phil Harris. Later, Lucky Strike sponsored "The Lucky Strike Theater," "Your Hit Parade Show," Ann Sothern in "Private Secretary" and "The Jack Benny Show" on television.

When the chromium essential for the green used on the Lucky labels became a much-needed war commodity on 1942, the brand turned it to an advantage and launched the new red bull's-eye on white pack, just as American soldiers invaded North Africa, with the slogan "Lucky Strike Green Has Gone to War." That same year, the phrase "Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobacco" or L.S./M.F.T. first appeared on Luckies packs and in ads.

Like all tobacco brands, Luckies have changed to accommodate the tastes of the American public. Now, with an advertising slogan, "Lucky Strikes Again -- The Moment is Right for It" come Lucky Strike Low Tar Filters.

And to think it all began when Spokane was just a sawmill!

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