Juliaetta's Ed Groseclose has lived to see six generations of descendants grow up in the Potlatch Valley. Today, friends and relatives honor Groseclose as he observes his 90th birthday.

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west to the Potlatch Valley from the same 30-square-mile region of Blaine County in Washington in search of free land.

The descendants of those families will be among those who attend an open house today from 1:30 to 4 p.m. at the Jullietta Community Church to celebrate the 90th birthday of Ed Groscease.

Steve Kimbrel was probably the first from Virginia, taking up land in the valley after he lost a place on the Palouse during the terrible, wet years of the early 1900s.

Groscease said his three brothers came West in 1901, looking for land to raise cattle. They landed first at Oaksdale Wash., and then drifted down to take a look at the lands that had opened up on the Nez Perce Indian Reservation in Idaho.

The brothers arrived at the Potlatch Valley in January. "There was two feet of snow up on the top of the canyon, but down in the valley the grass was up to the tops of their shoes," Groscease said. "The wild horses was all fat and there was good land for the taking," he said.

The Groscease brothers decided they had found what they were looking for, and each took up 160 acres. "But in all the time I've been here, there's only been 10 or 15 years of good grass the like that in the fall of the year," Groscease said with a laugh that echoed back in his chair. "But we never had money enough to leave again," he said, leaning forward again with a big grin.

Groscease loves to tell of the early days in the valley, particularly stories with a laugh in them. His memory is sharp, and tends toward the lighter side of making a little off small parcels of steep ground, and then 20 years of pick-and-shovel work for the railroad.

He's also an encyclopedia of the places and happenings that are the history of the valley. He ranged all over the area on foot and on his pinto poney as a boy, living and working at times in his folks' places on Ridge above Jullietta and then on his brothers' farms along the river. He attended school at Lapwai, on Fix Ridge, at the Arrow School and at the old Pilot Rock School near the mouth of Little Potlatch Creek.

His starring running cattle up to summer pasture at Teakean, a thickly-forested area east of Cavendish when he was a young man. Thousands of sheep and cattle were driven up the Potlatch Valley and into the mountains each spring, and then down again in the fall.

He married Dixie Baugh Wilson the day before Christmas in 1916.

Their families had been friends back in Virginia. The newlyweds lived for a year on her brothers' homestead in the valley. The little, square gray-boarded house stands empty beside the highway now.

The Grosceases lived at Teakean for 10 years, horse logging, cutting poles, making shoes and posts and raising a family. Teakean in early years was slotted with sawmills and supplied rough lumber used to build the barns and houses in the treeless lowland reaches of the Clearwater and Pothlatch rivers. Groscease said logs were brought down from Teakean to the Clearwater River near Peck on a flume in those years, and then lashed together in rafts or floated down river.

He remembered that a man named Jim Jump shot 80,000 railroad ties down the flume in about 1916 and floated them down the river. That was more than 15 years before the Clearwater Timber Co., now Potlatch Corp., started the log drives from the North Fork country.

Groscease said he and his family burned out at Teakean in the winter of 1928, so they moved down to warmer climes at Asotah, a community on the Clearwater River near Lenore. One of the children was sick with scarlet fever, and the whole family was immediately placed in quarantine that lasted for weeks, he said.

Those were the hard times, but Groscease said he managed to land a job with the railroad in 1938.

"The job was supposed to last 10 days, but then a man got sick and I ended up working 151 days," 10 days short of the amount of time a person needed to "get rights" (security) with the railroad. Groscease was 43, and the railroad didn't want to hire a man that old, he said.

But then a car jumped the track between Lenore and Peck and the railroad called out every available man. Groscease put in another 20 days, and that was the beginning of his 20 years on the section crew for the Cassia-Prairie Railroad.

Groscease returned to the railroad junction at the mouth of Potlatch Creek. But by this time there was a depot there, and store and a service station and even a lunch counter at what was now called Arrow Junction.

Groscease said the same Potlatch section caused shipments to be routed there instead of to the town of Potlatch, so the name was changed to Clearwater. But that caused confusion with the town of Clearwater, up the line near Stites, so the junction was renamed Arrow, perhaps for the wealth of arrowheads that had been picked from the sand and gravel at the mouth of the Pothlatch River.

Groscease and his family lived for the next 20 years in the little green section house, located near by in the same spot where one of the monolithic concrete piers of the Arrow Bridge stands now.

He and his wife moved to Jullietta in 1938, when he retired from the railroad. His wife died in 1988, and Groscease moved with his son, John, and his family at Jullietta. His other children are Virgil of Lewiston, Lon Butler of Jullietta, Peggy Wunderlich of Orofino and Bonnie Morgan of St. Louis, Wash.

Groscease had cancer surgery just before his wife died, but he has recovered. He planted a large garden last spring, and has some plants started for this year. He also tends some chickens and a few rabbits and is surrounded by grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren — the sixth generation of Grosceases in the Potlatch Valley.