

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – TWENTY FIRST EDITION – JULY 13, 2003

Hi Sherron, here's a little story - if you'd like to publish it in the MocTel. I'm not sure what building is on the lot today, but I believe T&D Motors later built their business there. Joyce Yardley

The Skating Rink in Whitehorse

When I was a small girl in my “home- town” of Whitehorse, Yukon, the winter population consisted of around 350 hardy people. In the 1930s and ‘40s, our skating rink was a hub of activity in the winter months, and the main nucleus for meeting and socializing with friends every weekend. Located in the south end of town, it was within easy walking distance from almost everywhere. When snow was cleared off the ice, it was thrown over the four-foot high fence, which surrounded the rink. Gradually, the snow would build up and settle, until the piles became quite hard and packed. They served quite effectively as bleachers, and a row of cheering town folks watched the hockey games from this vantage point.

The only building in the vicinity was a small lumber cabin. It had a wooden floor and benches to use for pulling on and removing skates. Hockey gear hung from spikes in the walls, and a red-hot pot-bellied wood heater kept the little cabin warm.

On cold days, rosy-cheeked men, women and children took turns around the stove, rubbing their hands and stomping the snow from their boots or moccasins - their breath turning to misty vapour. Hockey games were always well attended, and between periods the kids could get out on the ice to skate and push the puck around.

The high packed piles of snow served a double purpose. When I was around six years old, my friend and I used to dig tunnels through them, crawl inside and create cosy living quarters for our dolls. This had to be *between* hockey games, of course. Why we were allowed to engage in this dangerous activity, I’ll never know. It is possible, I suppose that our parents never realized just how many hours we spent pursuing this fascinating game. We had (what seemed to us at the time) long, long tunnels, with secret alcoves going off here and there, and mysterious turns and twists along the way. We brought our dolls to live in the crystal snow palaces, and toy stoves to keep them warm. Beside the stove we placed little piles of kindling. We even had spades for the dolls to dig out their trails in case of slides.

The shadows on the walls and ceilings of our snow palaces were icy blue, but it felt warm as toast inside.

If “Guardian Angels” really exist they must have been looking out for us, because those tunnels never did cave in on us!

© Joyce Yardley

BURNS HILL

As we struggle to keep our small children or grandchildren always under the eye of a responsible adult, I often pause to think of how different it was for small children growing up in Whitehorse. Not that it was safer, but that attitudes towards child survival were so different.

When I was very small, the St. Jean boys and I played with the many children of the Burns family at the base of the hill. We climbed to the top, played in the foxholes, watched planes taking off and landing. In the late forties, there were lots of planes to watch. We picked crocuses, wild strawberries, and lupines in season. In winter, we tobogganed down the street near Mrs. Hunter's cabin. I have often wondered where the Burns tribe ended up. Do present-day Whitehorse people still call the treed part of the hill below the airport, Burns Hill?

I know how young I was because the St. Jeans left Whitehorse before Perry and I started grade one. With the Burns and St. Jeans kids gone, and my being only six, I saw no reason not to climb the hill when I felt like doing so. However, I had not appreciated the intense rivalry for dominance on the hill that existed among the older children. Without the big kids to shield me, I had to deal with those who considered me an outsider. I set about recruiting new friends to come climbing with me but few were willing to brave the Watson kids and their friends. Occasionally, I was quite literally thrown off (down) the hill.

If we happened to come down the hill in the wrong place, the blue clay behind the graveyard could be a problem. At times, we could walk across it; at others, it was a very sticky stream and a child could get stuck.

When I was six, the White boys took me up the clay cliffs a few times. One winter day, we were playing cowboys and Indians across the face, when I became part of a mini-avalanche and landed on a pile of pipe at the bottom. Had to take a pillow to school for a week. How Mom ever got all the blue clay off my blanket cloth snowsuit, I do not know. By the time I was eleven, and the slides on Burns Hill were starting to worry parents, I had become quite adept at roaming the cliffs and conducting "tours" to the Indian graveyard up there.

I loved to walk out to the Whitehorse rapids, lie on the river bank, and watch the whitewater by the hour. Alone, of course.

By age ten, a nice winter walk for me was a circuit from our apartment on Main, across the temporary bridge to what would become Riverside, exploring the road and all its wildlife tracks and dens, the icebridge to the shipyards, and then home. Of course, it was dark for most of the walk! As long as I was home VERY shortly after the whistle blew, no one worried.

Where was that whistle anyway? Was it at the shipyards, the refinery, or where? It was the call for all kids to go home for supper.

I know now that I was more at risk from the roaming packs of dogs than I was from wild animals; or from human predators, than from animals. I realize that the river was as dangerous where I accessed it as it was in the stretches my parents made off limits. But my time as a free-range child gave me valuable experience on which I have drawn for a lifetime.

Maribeth (Tubman) Mainer

Thought for the Week

Attitude is contagious, is yours worth catching?

LILLIAN ALLING

Sherron:

Go ahead and use the Alling story by Don. Don died several years ago. I know he'd be pleased to know his work is still being read by Yukoners. Would you put an appeal for information at the beginning - or the end - and see if we can dig up any info at all about the lady.

We know she stayed in the Regina Hotel here. Her name is in the registry, and she spent the winter at Dawson, some of it in the hospital under the care of a nurse named M. Dyment, and some time with some Nuns on an island in the river where they had a convent or a hospital - those are some of the stories associated with her there.

I have a collection of slides of the Yukon such as that of Little Atlin Lake. If you'd like more I could scan some in and send you one or two whenever you needed them as an opening or closing for the newsletter or whatever. ????

Thanks, Doug Bell



Little Atlin Lake - Photo by Doug Bell

Does anyone know of any further information about the woman outlined in the story below? If so, please reply to Doug Bell or myself and I will pass it on. – Sherron

One determined woman
by Don Sawatsky
Yukon News columnist

Lillian Alling was a young slip of a woman of about 30 back in 1927. Where she came from or who her family was is, to this day, still a mystery.

In fact, there are still people in the North who met her and helped her and who wondered whatever became of this indomitable spirit who set off from New York City on foot in an attempt to reach her homeland of Russia.

One report has it that Lillian Alling was of Polish origin and is said to have come from Renfrew, Ontario.

Another is that she was Russian and had come to the United States only to become so incredibly homesick for her homeland that she could think of nothing else but returning. No one will ever know the full background of this young woman but her epic odyssey of 4,000 miles or more on foot caught the imagination and sympathy of northerners throughout British Columbia and Yukon.

Lillian apparently did not fit in at all with the gigantic city of New York. She was frightened of the teeming people, the noise and the impersonal almost hostile attitudes of urban North America.

She was a peasant girl who longed to return to the quiet and safety of her own people. But, she had no money for passage back to Russia. She worked at odd jobs, such as dishwasher and cleaning woman, and this brought her barely enough on which to exist. She had only one other alternative. She would walk to Russia!

Today, more than a handful of young people have hitchhiked, not only north into Yukon, Alaska and the NWT but around the world.

But one must remember that in 1927 there were no roads, and except for the odd trading post or telegraph station, there was nothing but an unbroken stretch of wilderness that even bush-wise men thought twice about tackling without extensive supplies and preparation.

Lillian Alling took off from New York City early in 1927 with a few hoarded dollars and a couple of loaves of bread.

By the middle of September of that year, she appeared at Second Cabin on the now defunct Yukon Telegraph Line that ran from Hazelton, B.C., to Dawson City, Yukon. She had averaged between 30 and 40 miles a day through some of the toughest mountain and bush terrain to be found anywhere, sleeping in the open and surviving on a meagre diet of bread, wild berries and some tea.

Her arrival in Hazelton in the late fall caught the attention of the local B.C. provincial police who tried to convince her to stay the winter.

They argued that she was heading north at a time of year when temperatures could suddenly drop and early storms could descend out of the mountains within minutes without warning.

But she was adamant. She must keep going. Nothing the police could say was going to change her mind.

She had three loaves of bread, some tea, two ten-dollar bills and an 18-inch iron bar which she carried, she said, in case some man should get in her way.

The general feeling was that she was a man-hater, although ironically throughout her northern journey it was men who came to her aid.

The sergeant of the Hazelton detachment decided he simply couldn't allow this young woman to go on with winter just around the corner.

So for her own safety, he charged her with vagrancy and had her sent to Oakalla Prison Farm near Vancouver.

She was to spend three months there. But before too long it was discovered she had money hidden in her clothing and she was released only to head directly back to Hazelton.

She looked up the police again and told them: "I am going to Russia. Please do not stop me."

There was nothing to do but let her proceed. But the sergeant made her promise she would check in at every telegraph station.

They were located about every 15 or 20 miles along the way. He promptly contacted the line operators to tell them to expect her.

By early June of 1928, Lillian resumed her trek. By the time she had reached Cabin Number Nine, her clothes were in shreds.

Jim Christie and his partner Charlie Janze, who were in charge of the station, went to work on some of their old clothes and altered them so Lillian could get into them.

She rested for three days and then pushed on, this time with a dog given her by Christie. (The dog later drowned while crossing a stream.)

She had roughly 600 miles to travel from Hazelton to Dawson City. She left with her new remodelled clothes and a few supplies that Christie and Janze had given her.

It was one of the toughest stretches of country she would ever cover. Towering mountain passes, swirling streams, fog and rain stood in her way. But she refused to give up.

The weather was particularly bad as she neared the Echo Lake telegraph station.

Telegrapher Scotty Ogilvie was worried when she was overdue, so he set out along the trail south to find her.

They missed each other, and when Lillian reached the station, Ogilvie's partner set out to bring him back.

The partner found Ogilvie. He was dead although it is not clear how he met his death.

At any rate, Ogilvie was buried on the trail and it was the only time that Lillian Alling showed any emotion.

She wept over Ogilvie's grave and left a bunch of wild flowers on top before resuming her journey north.

Lillian's sudden arrival in Whitehorse caused a stir of interest but no one could find out who she was or where she was actually going.

All she would say is that she was "going a short distance north." Questions from strangers seemed to disturb her.

One couple, Mr. and Mrs. George Wilson, overtook her in their car between Carcross and Whitehorse and offered her a ride.

They were concerned over her welfare and warned her that she would have to ford many streams on her trip north. She replied that she would float across them on a log.

She stayed overnight at the old Regina Hotel in Whitehorse and left the next morning for Dawson.

The Whitehorse Star kept a running commentary on her progress and reported on September 14, 1928, that the "mystery woman" had passed through Carmacks, 100 miles north, "but she maintained her silence."

Some time later, she arrived at Pelly Crossing. Then it was over the Pelly and Stewart rivers.

At Stewart, a survey party was camped "and the boys cared for her for three days during a bad storm."

She arrived in Dawson on October 5.

"She left Whitehorse, on the morning of August 28, and as far as was known the only provisions she had was a loaf of bread which she had cut into three pieces, as she said she was not carrying a knife," The Star reported.

It took her 39 days to walk the 330 miles from Whitehorse to Dawson, sleeping in the open in the fall of the year without sleeping bag or tent.

When she reached Dawson, she had a different style of men's shoe on each foot.

"Her general demeanor resembles that of a haunted person who is ever trying to get farther away from the object of her fears," said The Star.

"If she continues her journey at this season of the year, disaster is almost sure to overtake her."

An oldtimer, the late Helmer Samuelson worked for the Dawson News in those days.

He said the "mystery woman" was last seen heading down the Yukon River in a small boat for Eagle, Alaska. She was never seen or heard of again.



Early Morning

By Henry breaden@shaw.ca

This is the Nasutlin in the early morning at the mouth of the Stewart River where it meets the Yukon. Something to note, is the posts on the barge with rods between them. These were called "Hog Posts", and the rods between them were called, "Hog Rods." These were used on many of the barges to stop sagging of the bow and stern. If you note on photos of the boats, there were Hog Posts and Hog Rods for the same purpose, but are not prominent because of the cabin work that surrounds them. On some of the old boats they used chain between posts, and these were called "Hog Chains", but served the same purpose. In this photo, if you look closely you will see that there are 2 barges on the inside of the Nasutlin. Without doubt we were waiting for a main riverboat with freight for Mayo.



This is a photo of the Str. Nasutlin when we were fitting out in the spring. Being that I worked in the shipyards before the crews came in, I had an inside track to get things done for us. After a season's work, our snatch blocks and other stuff would get twisted from use and need the care of a blacksmith. The blacksmith was a Scott by the name of Harry Robinson, and could be ornery if you did not approach him in the right way. Of course, the mates on the other boats wanted blocks and such straightened out "Right Away!" When we took ours in, I said, "Harry, when you have the time, would you see what you can do for us?" We would get a grunt, and, "Well, put 'em over there!" I would tell the crew to stack them up neatly in the corner, and as we headed for the door, another grunt, and, "Bring 'em over here!" We would help if asked, and end up with all of our equipment repaired, and take it back with us to the boat. The other mates were fit to be tied, and would usually say, "We've had our stuff in there for 2 weeks and the old bastard has not even looked at it!"---- I guess the right approach did work for us, but I never let on to the other mates! Take care,

Henry Breaden breaden@shaw.ca

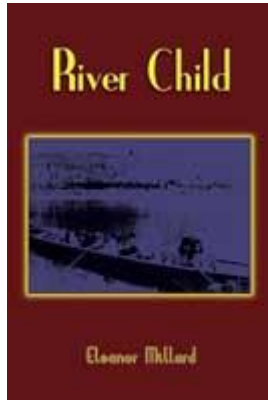
THIS IS A MUST SEE

If you are interested in the history of what the communities and sternwheelers looked like in the early days, take a look at this site. Well done! Carcross Community School.

<http://www.yesnet.yk.ca/schools/carcross/graphics/paddlewheelernew3/photoshopgallery/index.htm> Just 'click' on each photo to enlarge and then click on 'back' on our top task bar to return to the previous page. – Sherron

River Child

Eleanor Millard



In this first novel, author Eleanor Millard leads the reader down a fascinating path--through the thicket of aboriginal/white relationship, around historic Dawson City, and into the question of acceptance, both by oneself and by one's community.

Eleanor herself is a remarkable person-- she has earned two Masters degrees, worked as a teacher and social worker, and regularly visits Central America as a social activist for the indigenous people there.

0-920576-94-X

224 pgs, paper, 6x9, fiction/first nations

\$19.95

http://www.caitlin-press.com/cpress/catalogue_new.html

I was successful in being able to order a copy at this address:

caitlin_press@telus.net They mail the book and invoice to you. - Sherron

Some have written in as a result of the Moccasin Telegraph – Special Edition - Flying

Really enjoyed reading your story, about flying into Old Crow.

I could certainly relate to it, as my first trip to Old Crow, I thought we were going to crash in to every mountain, and there was no one else on the plane with me. There was a low ceiling and he had to fly low, and looked like I could touch the mountains as they were so close, and I was scared to look sideways....

I lived and worked in Old Crow from Jan 87-Jan 89, as the only Nurse there.

Thanks for a great story.

Rose Scrivens

Sherron: Wonderful story of Eleanor's. While I was working for Social Welfare in Dawson, I had to go to Old Crow also. I was supposed to return the following day, but as it happened so often, the plane could not fly because of bad weather. I lived at the Nursing station while there, and was grounded for 4 days.

Finally on the fifth day, which happened to be my birthday, Dec. 9th, we arrived in Dawson safe and sound, but a little shakey. Our two girls and Pete were, I think, happy to see Mom get off that plane and the party began.

Thanks Eleanor, Brownie Foth

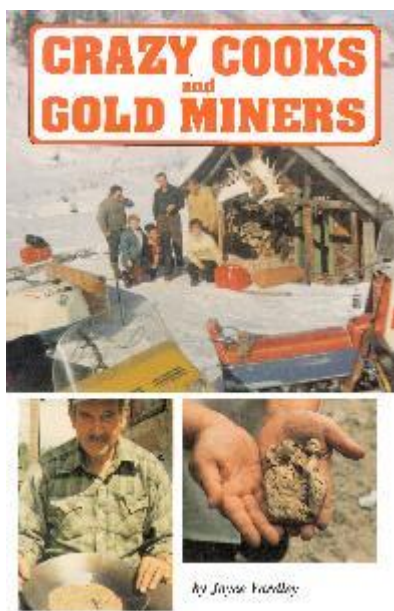
The downed DC 6 flight she describes is the one that Mike's parents were on. (Mike Kerry). - Mary Lang

AND WHILE WE ARE AT IT – JOYCE YARDLEY'S Book

CRAZY COOKS & GOLD MINERS - FULL SYNOPSIS

This book is a delight. It not only paints scene after scene of life in the Yukon, but it also reveals Joyce Yardley's love of adventure, and what it was like to be married at sixteen to Gordon Yardley, and engaging and thoroughly professional northern jack-of-all-trades. Together they ranched, fixed airplanes, logged, built and operated a northern lodge, and raised their kids. But these were just a few of their adventures - all of them loaded with challenge and excitement. Living in remote corners of the Yukon during the thirties, forties, and fifties was not easy. Not everything went right and when things went wrong there was not always help at hand. But you will not find a whimper nor a single word of regret on these pages; on the contrary, they are loaded with fun, thoughtful comment on life in Canada's Yukon, and, scattered throughout, are oases of rich dialogue covering everything from catching a crooked cook to hunting a marauding grizzly.

Joyce Yardley has recorded it all - and page by page reveals her adventures in the land of gold and the home of the Klondike. Her love of this land is obvious, and her ability to pluck the colorful details of her crowded life there makes her a notable northern scribe.



By: Yardley, Joyce

ISBN: 0-88839-294-X

Binding: Soft Cover

Size: 8.5" X 5.5"

Pages: 224

Photos: 39

Illustrations: 2

Price: \$22.95

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I have not been successful in ordering a copy of Joyce's book. – Sherron



Yukon Transportation Museum – Photo by Doug Bell

I was going to pull this photo and wait until a story comes in about the Transportation Museum in Whitehorse. Donna Clayson is expecting one soon. So instead here is just a lead to the story. Donna said she has a lot more photos to share. – Sherron

I managed to get a recipe from Frances McLeod, and I told her that I was going to forward it to you, for the next letter, or whenever you can fit it in.

Sandy Campbell

Rhubarb Jam
by Frances McLeod

5 cups Rhubarb, finely cut
5 cups white sugar
20 oz can of crushed pineapple
2 pkgs (85 gram) strawberry Jell-O

Boil rhubarb, sugar, and pineapple for 10 minutes. (*Do not add the required water on the Jell-O package....**only the powder***) Remove from the heat and add the jelly powder, stir to dissolve, pour into hot jars, and seal with paraffin wax.
Good for 1 year.

(This is a personal favourite of Neil's)

A Change of Address & Invitation to Visit

Hi All,

Well, we have our business name - **Horse Play at Work** -
and a new email address for **Horse Play at Work Farm**.

Please change our email contact to horseplay@junction.net

The business is really coming together, as Anna has been working at it full time on a HRDC grant for entrepreneurs. We have 8 horses, the newest colt foal just 2 weeks old, born on the farm. Anna is teaching riding lessons and natural horsemanship, and training horses with this method. She and I are also partners in equine-assisted growth and learning sessions, using horses with youth-at-risk and in corporate team building. It is very exciting and wonderful work! How people respond to communicating with horses in a fun and natural learning environment - and learning about themselves in the process!

We also have added a new "son" & "brother" to our farm - a 16 year old young man called Larry. He is trading room and board for farm work while he is in school for the next 2 years, and he brings much joy and sunshine to our operation! And he is a natural horse whisperer! I am still loving my work at Connections Youth Employment Centre, but hope by next March to be job sharing so that there will be more time for the personal and professional development work out of the farm.

Please do visit when you're in the Okanagan! If you were here this weekend, you would be gorging yourselves on the cherries and raspberries that are filling up the kitchen! We'll be here for the entire summer. Then Anna and I are heading off to France for daughter Sarah's wedding. Life is good. Hope you are all well and happy! Would love to hear from you.

Cheers,

Karen Heiberg horseplay@junction.net
Vernon, BC

New Additions

I understand you have organised a group of former Yukoners. Can I have info on this. I am interested in being a part of it.

Eric Rempel erempel@citytel.net

I lived in the Yukon from 1971 to 1978 mainly in Whitehorse but also some time in Mayo. I also covered most of the Yukon quite extensively. I probably know a lot of people on your list. I have had a couple of breakfast's out at quiet lake with Eric Nielson. I now live in Prince Rupert. Thanks for everything.

Eric Rempel

Dear Sherron - am so delighted to see this list of Yukoners. I am still living here & was so curious as to the whereabouts of my past school buddies. Please add me to your list

Joy (Fraser) Denton
in Whitehorse

Whitehorse High School 1952 - 1961

joydenton2@yahoo.com

I lived in the Yukon 1958 to 1971. I graduated from Whitehorse Elementary/High School 1962. I lived in Whitehorse (mostly) and was married there.

My maiden name is Lang. My married name was Armstrong. I am no longer married. I have lived in Calgary since 1971

News for your letter: Mike Kerry died suddenly this last January very suddenly in Langley B.C.. He married Shirley Hall (also from the Yukon) Shirley was wanting to contact any of Mike's old friends. I have copied this email to her.

She was wondering where Carol Gordon-Cooper is. She married a fellow last name Riley (in Calgary)?

Thank you for your effort. I will look forward to a newsletter.

Mary Lang marylang@shaw.ca

Upcoming Events in Whitehorse

For coming events - the International Sourdough Reunion will be in Whitehorse this year 24 to 28th September. Goodey Sparling is handling the Whitehorse end.

The International Sourdough Reunion will be in Whitehorse, 24 to 28th Sept at the Westmark Hotel.

For more detail you can contact Don Murray, President of the Vancouver group at 604-574-5702 or in Whitehorse, Goodey Sparling at 867-668-3958.

Doug Bell

Copy your old Movie Films

Sherron:

I've just learned of a great service I'm going to take advantage of, and thought others might be interested too.

There may be some ex-Yukoners who have old 8mm & super 8mm movie film around they'd still like to watch but find it difficult because it's brittle, projector not available, or whatever - well it can be transferred to VHS so you can simply watch it on TV - and of course make as many copies as family and friends want. Imagine being able to show some of these at wedding anniversaries and other such gatherings I can't wait.

Anyway, cost is 30 cents a foot. (If you're into DVD it can be put on that too and the capacity of one DVD would be enormous in comparison to film.

richard@yknet.ca is his e-mail address. That's his work e-mail and is direct. His name is Richard Lawrence, his business is called Arcticomp.

Doug Bell

Sorry I forgot to post this message last week.

Hello Sherron --I better give you the answer to the quiz about the Miss Canada from the Yukon. I worked at the Whitehorse Inn- it was Sunday- when Esther Green came and said: we have a Miss Canada. And she put a big sign up near the cash register to let people know. Her name was **Dalyce Smith** - she worked at Taylor and Drury store upstairs in the Ladies dept. The year was either 1953 or 54 maybe even 55 as I worked over 3 years at the Inn and cannot remember the exact year. I wonder, who else remembers. This event surely put the Yukon on the map, as in these years, not many outsiders knew, where the Yukon was. Keep up your good work, one day I will write a story for the Moc.Tel. Warm Yukon Greetings and anyone who travels north and comes to Faro; please visit me at 611 Yates Crescent. Just ask for Anne.

Anne Domes - octavia13@yknet.ca

FOR PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THE MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH

Please contact Sandy Campbell northernlyght@shaw.ca

To date **twenty previous editions of the Moccasin Telegraph** have been produced, along with **six special editions**. One titled Sternwheelers on the Yukon River, one Basketball in the 50's, Fifty-six years ago the world looked at Snag, Camp Takhini and the Alaska Highway. For the time being I will send out copies of the Special Editions after each dozen or so new people sign on.

Sandy Campbell has kindly agreed to send out copies of the earlier editions of the regular Moccasin Telegraph upon request. Please be specific as to which editions you are requesting.

We have also come up with a way of placing the past editions into e-mail accounts online and we can provide you with the instructions and password, which will enable you to retrieve them yourself.

Sandy is a working girl and will get to the requests at her earliest convenience.

Contact Sandy at northernlyght@shaw.ca

DATES TO REMEMBER

Island Yukoners' Picnic - August 16 – Nanoose, St. Mary's Hall - contact Stan Hegstrom
seaair@bcsupernet.com (details to come)

YXYCP Reunion - September 26 – 28 – Parksville, Bayside – contact Pat Besier jpbesier@seaside.net
(see edition 5)