

## MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – CHRISTMAS EDITION – DEC. 21, 2003

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Photo Courtesy of Doug Bell

### **THE CHRISTMAS GOOSE**

(A Yukon Love Story) By Gus Barrett

Klondike Jack lived in a shack in the suburb of Whiskey Flats  
Where Northern lights shone brightly through the gloom.  
And his thoughts they strayed to a dusky maid, a princess of her tribe,  
With whom he'd love to share his board and room.  
But she was wise to the ways of guys, and Christmas time was near,  
So she'd offer her favors the day he could produce,  
And bring to her, for holiday fare, a treat for which she yearned,  
A fat and tender succulent Christmas goose.

So Jack he swore that he'd rest no more, 'til he'd return to her,  
With a goose whose meat was tender and so fat,  
That the dusky maid with raven braids would leave her tribal home,  
And share his bed and board on Whiskey Flats.  
High and low through the ice and snow, he hunted day by day,  
The woods were rife with ptarmigan and moose.  
But never a sign could he ever find in that stark and frozen land,  
Of the thing he wanted most, a Christmas goose.

The days they passed until at last, he spotted on the trail,  
A raven perched atop a winter kill.  
Though the man was near, it showed no fear; it gnawed its frozen fare,  
It stood its ground and greedily ate its fill.  
It was big of bone and it weighed a stone, it's feathers black as night,  
It's raucous voice spewed out its bold abuse.  
"Its late" thought Jack, "I must get back, the Festive Season's near,  
I guess I'll improvise my Christmas Goose."

He quickly aimed, the rifle flamed, and the raven squawked and fell,  
He cleaned and plucked it featherless and bare,  
The skin was rough, the drumsticks tough, the breast meat thick and hard,  
So unappetizing Jack could only stare.  
And as he stared he greatly feared, the challenge he would have,  
To turn this gristly hulk into a treat,  
Then as he strained his fertile brain a sudden thought occurred,  
“Of course” he cried, “I’ll tenderize the meat.”

When Jack got back to Whiskey Flat, determined to succeed,  
In capturing his maiden, so aloof.  
He headed for the liquor store, with the raven in his hand,  
And bought a crock of Yukon overproof.  
He grabbed the bird without a word, and he spread the opening some,  
He thought of the maid and her promise of Christmas Day.  
He shoved a hose ‘neath the Papal Nose, and trickled in the rum,  
Then with a smile he hid the corpse away.

Christmas Day dawned cold and gray, at noon the maiden came,  
Her jet-black hair, in braids hung down her back.  
She marveled at the table set with the finest paper plates,  
And the plastic decorations ‘round the shack.  
When Klondike Jack retrieved the rack from out the oven hot,  
With wholesome smells, the maid was overcome.  
The pleasant scent of peppermint, of cloves and garlic salt,  
And over all the faintest hint of rum.

When the treat of roasted meat was served up on her plate,  
The flesh was browned and excellently done.  
Then until late, they ate and ate the tasty, tender meat,  
‘Till nothing was remaining but the bone.  
And when at last the evening passed he shyly walked her home,  
They kissed, and she was loath to turn him loose,  
With giddy head she turned for bed, to sleep, perhaps to dream  
Of her lover and his gift, a Christmas Goose.

Now Klondike Jack has sold his shack and gone from Whiskey Flats,  
No longer does he walk those hunting trails,  
He and the maid with raven braids with their children, half a score,  
Reside in luxury in Riverdale.  
And though as yet he won’t admit the cooking of that raven,  
His wife will smile and offer no excuse.  
Well-knowing she went willingly into his little haven,  
And happily received her Christmas goose.



**I'll be home for Christmas – If only in my Dreams!**

Snow Blower at Work - RCAF Hercules - 1970's - Whitehorse Airport  
Photo courtesy Doug Bell

**COWS FOR CHRISTMAS**

By Les McLaughlin [leslorn@rogers.com](mailto:leslorn@rogers.com)

It was one of the coldest winters in living memory in the Yukon. It was the winter that Snag, on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1947, set the North American record for the coldest day at minus 81.5 F. Our little clapboard house on Strickland Street in Whitehorse had sawdust piled between the walls for insulation.

Snow was banked up against the outer walls to cut down on wind chill or more likely wind seep since there was seldom wind when the thermometer bottomed out. Still, the unforgiving cold penetrated every clapboard crack and entered one's very soul.

Inside, the wood stove burned with a hot dry heat. Wood crackled and flames leapt toward the cast iron stove top ... flames so hot that a droplet of water would instantly vaporize. The galvanized Sears tub sat on the stove heaving off mists of hot steam. The Yukon was indeed a land of extremes. Outside, the killing cold; inside the suffocating heat.

In the early morning, when the fire had died down, the eternal cold attacked from all directions seeking every crack in the clapboard walls. The floors creaked with cold until the fire was rekindled and slowly, the little rooms would collect the heat rays from the wood stove and again the house would be enveloped in suffocating heat.

The Christmas tree stood by the living room window; a window my Dad always said was "scrounged " from the Canadian army supply depot. Ours was hardly the only home in Whitehorse to be built and maintained using a method known to everyone as scrounging.

As the Christmas approached, I delighted in helping decorate the tree. A wool sock was tacked on the wall beside it. Soon, presents were neatly positioned underneath the sagging boughs of the sweet-smelling spruce. When no one was looking, I began the search to find the "big present" which would be mine.

"To Leslie from Santa" said the brightly covered box. It measured about ten inches square, was quite heavy and rattled like a baby's toy. As a seven-year-old, I was certain Santa would not bring me a baby's toy, though I did wonder why he came to our house on Strickland street two days before Christmas.

Early Christmas morning, I reached for the sock pinned on the wall beside the tree. It was filled with mandarin oranges, a candy cane, a pair of socks and a hockey puck. We were always losing pucks in the snow banks during our endless games of street hockey so this gift had considerable value. Now it was time to open the "big present," the one Santa had been planning for a year to bring me. The brown cardboard box was stamped "Sears." Inside, amongst the crumpled tissue paper, the box contained cows! Metal cows! Black and White metal cows! Some sitting, some standing. Two would fit in the palm of the hand. There were about thirty metal cows in the tiny box.

In the Yukon, with cold hanging low on the land, the only cow I had ever seen was in our grade one Dick and Jane reader. Why on earth would Sears Santa bring me metal cows? What on this cold white earth would I do with thirty metal cows? I could scarcely disguise my displeasure with Santa. Surely he had never seen cows at the North Pole! I wanted to tell my mother that Santa must have made a mistake. The metal cows must have been destined for some farm boy in Alberta. Surely that farm boy got my skates or my Toronto Maple Leafs hockey uniform! He was probably as disappointed as I was.

As the darkness turned to dusk at mid Christmas morning, I walked a few doors down to the home of my friend Billy. He was sitting on the living room floor playing with his electric train. The train had an engine, a box car, a flat bed and a caboose. Billy was turning the transformer handle to speed up or slow the train as it circled endlessly around a small oval track. Billy asked me what I got for Christmas. I couldn't bring myself to tell him about the metal cows but desperately wanted to run Billy's train.

"No, said Billy, you might make it go too fast and run it off the track. Then it could break and I wouldn't have a train to play with."

So I watched as Billy's little electric train circled and circled and circled. After a while, I thought it was a little boring. I could see that Billy was thinking the same thing.

"You should pretend the train is going through something like a farm," I said.

"Sure," he said, "but where can I get a farm?"

"I'll be right back," I said to Billy.

A few minutes later we had black and white metal cows all over his rug. We had some of the laying down cows lying down on the flat bed car and some of the standing up cows standing up in the boxcar. We built a barn out of a small cardboard box and made fences out of toothpicks and string. Just as I had seen in the Dick and Jane reader.

"Don't drive too fast," I said to Billy," or the cows might fall off the train and break."

Billy looked up at me with a broad smile, his cherubic Yukon coloured cheeks ablaze with crimson that only comes from days of playing street hockey at twenty below and looking for lost pucks in the mounds of snow piled high on the edge of the road and he said....

"Do you want to drive OUR train Leslie?"

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### THE BREADENS & BLACKS - CHRISTMAS 1918



You may find this one interesting. It is **Christmas 1918** in the mess hall where they are celebrating. **Near left is my Dad** and **next to him is Mom**. **Near right is Martha Louise Black** and that has to be **George** next to her. Cameras and film was no great shakes in those days? Pat and I got copies from the Yukon Archives.

Cheers, **Henry Breaden**

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(This is a chapter taken from my soon to be published book, *Yukon Memories*).

### A YUKON CHRISTMAS

By Joyce Hayden

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It was 1953, and our first Christmas in the Yukon. We were in our own Yukon home, after living in a tiny riverside shack on Moccasin Flats for the summer. Our new home

was a little twenty by twenty-foot house that the previous owner had built from old US Army buildings. It had shavings for insulation, donna conna (rough pressed fibre board) on the walls, little windows in very odd and inconvenient places and interior trim painted in dark, army issue green. The house sat crookedly on a 50 by 100 foot lot, not far from the clay cliffs and Puckett's Gulch, above Eighth Avenue on Black Street. We paid \$3,800 dollars for that house and lot. It wasn't much, but it was home, and we loved it dearly.

Just in time for Christmas Earle brought home a perfect little spruce tree from somewhere along the Alaska Highway, as he made one of his many long-haul truck trips for John MacIsaac Construction. We decorated it with inexpensive little ornaments that either came from Simpson's catalogue, or that we had made ourselves. Our daughters, Sandi and Pat, were tiny and our son Terry had not yet arrived. My mother, Irene Larson, known to all our children and their friends as Gramma Irene, came north to spend the winter with us, and we visited often with my brother Neil (Red) Johnston's family. That first Christmas set the pattern for many years to come.

Early each Christmas Eve we dropped in on Neil and sister-in-law Gert's home, arriving with arms full of gifts and good wishes for them and their daughters Judy, Bernice, Darlene, Janice, and later Colleen (and much later granddaughter Brenda). We ate, drank and had a wonderful time. In turn, they came to our house laden with gifts and laughter. We also called on our best friends, exchanging gifts and eating from wonderful trays of food that included smoked oysters and shrimp. (All seafood was a novelty to 'born in Saskatchewan during the Depression' people).

It snowed often enough on Christmas Eve for Sandi to declare, many years later, that "it always snows on Christmas Eve," even though on that first Christmas, it rained in Whitehorse. In the late hours neighbours would often stop in -- sometimes with many friends in tow. When they left, we cleaned the house and made room under the tree for Santa's gifts. Then, in exquisite quiet, by the soft warm glow of candles and tree lights, Earle and I would spend a peaceful hour sipping wine and exchanging our special gifts to one another.

One of those early Christmases he gave me a set of pale mauve rhinestones -- necklace, bracelet and earrings -- in a delicate silver setting. I had been admiring them in Jamieson's Store, but thought them too extravagant for me. I felt so elegant, wearing that jewellery. They are now part of our daughter Pat's keepsake collection.

Our memories tell us that Christmas Day usually dawned cold and bright, and we would glory in the pale gentle sunshine of mid-winter in Whitehorse. The air was crisp and clear, with little or no ice fog. (That came later, with the building of the hydro dam over Whitehorse Rapids). Christmas brought the fun, laughter and excitement of small children and young parents. Our family's delight in simple gifts was something to be treasured forever. (The year the girls opened all of their gifts before we awakened, and without knowing whom the gifts were from, brought in the rule of 'Santa gifts only' before mom and dad were up). That, too, was a year to be remembered, if only for the embarrassment of saying, "thank you, but we're not sure for which gift." After that Santa's gifts always sat under the tree unwrapped, waiting for early morning adventurers. Small hands and excited voices tugged us from deep sleep, but when Sandi learned to tell time, we were allowed the luxury of sleeping until 7.00 A.M. She was the keeper of the tree until then.

Christmas Day began with wrapping paper and ribbons everywhere. Earle gathered them up, while I made stuffing for the turkey, cooked cranberry sauce and put Christmas puddings on to warm. Neighbour kids dropped in to see what treasures lay under our tree, and our kids in turn went off to visit them and share in their excitement.

After gifts and breakfast, with the turkey in the oven, we again made the rounds of family and friends, admiring gifts, saying thank you, and wishing everyone in sight a Merry Christmas. Christmas night we played Canasta with Gert and Neil, worked on a new jigsaw puzzle, ate more turkey, shelled peanuts, and ate homemade fudge. Sometimes we made pull-toffee, with everyone helping pull it until it turned white and could be cut into small pieces with a pair of well-buttered scissors. Gramma Irene supervised this family tradition. Only those who passed her 'clean hands inspection' were allowed to slather their hands in butter, take a piece of hot toffee and begin to pull it out over a tub of snow, like silly putty. Of course we all sampled it.

The impromptu skits our children organized entertained us immensely. They wore creative costumes and drafted innovative scripts. Their costumes were made from curtains, lace tablecloths, bathrobes, nightgowns, jewellery, hats, high-heeled shoes and whatever else they could find. As they paraded before us, giggling and singing off key but with great fervor, I never knew whether to laugh, worry about what was happening to my clothing, make-up and jewellery, or applaud enthusiastically. The latter was most appreciated by those small performers.

Not all Christmases proceeded as planned. One year the twenty-five pound Christmas turkey escaped our grasp as Earle and I tried to maneuver it onto a platter. It went skidding in its gravy juice out of the roaster and across the kitchen floor. In panic and embarrassment, we scooped it up, dusted it off, and served it to our guest, anyway. But the gravy was irretrievable, and the gravy mixes now so easy to find were unknown to us. We were not mature enough to see the humour in the situation, so we had a very dry, subdued Christmas dinner that year.

Then there was the year we replaced our propane cook stove with a brand new electric one from Hougen's. It was 1961, and the White Pass Hotel on the corner of First Avenue and Main Street burned to the ground on Christmas morning. The power went off all across town and stayed off for much of the day. It was a bitter fifty-seven below zero (F) at our house, and no vehicle would start. I wrapped the turkey, roaster and all in a wool blanket, my face in a wool scarf, and hauled that turkey on a toboggan to Gert and Neil's house, where they still had a propane cook stove. As I walked the four blocks to the corner of Eighth Avenue and Wood Street, I prayed fervently that the pack of dogs that roamed down town Whitehorse wouldn't discover my precious cargo and me. The fire and electricity outage caused many inconveniences and hardships in the residential area of Whitehorse, but it took its greatest toll on First Avenue, or Front Street, as it was known then. As well as destroying the White Pass Hotel, it burned McPherson's Drugs, the Hollywood Café, a taxi stand, Seely's Pool Hall, a shoe store and Nelson's Hardware. That day we wished we still had our propane cookstove.

Of course using propane had its drawbacks, too. We had a tiny blue budgie bird named Jimmy Joe who understood that our house was really his, and we his servants. The Christmas tree was his to perch on while pecking at the ornaments, the cuckoo clock held an old friend, and jigsaw puzzle pieces were wonderful things to steal when he wanted attention or a treat. The cuckoo clock still bears his beak marks where he tried in vain to

open the door to visit the bird inside. One evening, as he perched on the roof and pulled at the door, the clock struck eleven and frightened him half to death. But one night the power went off, as it often did, cutting off the power to our oil furnace. We turned the propane oven on for heat and went off to bed. In the morning we found Jimmy Joe toes up in his cage. The fumes from the propane had proven too much for him. We had many budgies after that, but none as smart and sassy as he was.

Jigsaw puzzles have always been a part of our Christmas. For years we exchanged puzzles with my brother's family, always trying to find the most difficult puzzle. Gert was our family's champion puzzle builder, but even she was stumped by the thousand-piece puzzle I found one Christmas. It never did get put together. In February or March, she finally gave up and pitched it out.

Gert was an excellent cook, and butter tarts were her specialty. I tried always to visit on the day she began her Christmas baking. I loved to watch the buns, cookies, tarts, pies and cakes that seemed to appear spontaneously from her oven. I ate, drank tea and visited while she baked. Little kids swirled about our knees unnoticed.

Gert and Neil are gone now, and three of their six daughters live south of sixty, but many of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren still live in Whitehorse. Our family all left the Yukon, but after several years all but Sandi & Darrell and their two daughters, Jennifer and Stephanie returned home to Whitehorse. They live in Prince George and Houston (BC). In 2002 Pat and Dan moved to the Okanagan Valley, and their children, Jessica and Adam, are in Langley and Victoria. Terry, his wife Pat and their two boys Mike and Nick live near us in Whitehorse. Terry's older children, Steve and Andrea, are in Edmonton and Ottawa.

We still try to gather at Christmas, and hopefully will continue to do so for many holidays yet to come. No doubt when we get together we will dig out the old family slides, and laughter will fill our hearts as we revisit those early years on Black Street when we were all so young and unaffected, much like the little town we lived in.

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## **MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS 1955**

By Maribeth (Tubman) Mainer

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It was our second December in the apartment behind the Rexall Drug Store on Main Street. If you lifted up the floorboards, you could see down to the frozen earth a couple of feet below. Mocassins and wool socks were already standard winter dress in our home. We had running water in the bathroom but, during the winter, you did not linger long in the tub. We achieved running water in the kitchen by filling a basin in the bathroom and running up the hall to the kitchen counter with it to wash dishes or bath my baby sister.

The long rail strike was over and we had finally received the shiny Thistle pram with its huge wheels that made it so easy to push through the snow. We no longer needed the plywood sleigh pram that my grandfather had built for my brother.

My grandparents, John and Gladys Hoggan, were "outside" on vacation. Every day we would bundle up and trudge across town to their house to check that everything was all right. They didn't have running water so there were no pipes to freeze. For a while that winter, the temperature went to 72 below, making the trek over to Jarvis Street all the more necessary. Mom would bundle the baby into the pram, drape shawls over the hood opening to trap warm air inside, and off we would go. On one of the 72 below days, Mom asked me why I wasn't cold. When I described what I had on, she was amazed I was walking but not that I was warm. Let's just say that I had discovered the principle of layering.

Just before Christmas, we received word that Dad's father had died. Dad made the difficult decision not to fly outside for the funeral. The weather being too cold for the usual family outing to find a Christmas tree, Dad went out alone that year. Unfortunately, his valiant attempt to salvage some Christmas cheer was not quite the success he had hoped. He got the tree but....

At the time, we were looking after my grandparents' Springer Spaniel. She had had some lumps on her for a couple of years that we treated as abscesses from foxtails. They must have been tumors because suddenly she became paralyzed from her midsection back. Dad arrived home in the cold and the dark, with Christmas tree; only to have to get out rifle, bundle up paralyzed dog, and head out once more into cold and dark, to euthanize his in-laws' beloved pet.

Remarkably, the pictures taken that Christmas show a family enjoying the celebration. The oil stove that heated the entire apartment (when it felt like it) must have been having a good day so the meal all got cooked. There were times that winter when the meal got finished in the stove in the drugstore coffee bar or even over at the grandparents' house.

We did not know at the time that this would be our last Christmas in the Yukon. At the time, it was just my first Christmas without my brother and my first with my sister. I hadn't known my paternal grandfather but I really missed the dog. And it was really, really, really cold so we could not skate anywhere in town until it warmed up. When you are eleven, these are the things that matter.

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**Christmas Eve Dilemma at  
Northern Canada Power Commission's  
Mayo Hydro Plant**

Submitted by George Howell [howellgm@shaw.ca](mailto:howellgm@shaw.ca)

Ed Kunze, the Superintendent of Northern Canada Power Commission's hydro generator station, 8 km north of Mayo, was not having a good day on December 24<sup>th</sup> 1964. The temperature was typical for this time of year, hovering around -45 to -55C.

Their main, high-voltage power line, feeding United Keno Hill Mines operations at Elsa and Calumet, 50 km north, was down. One or all 3 of the high-tension conductors were broken, causing a total shutdown of mine production. Standby power at the townsites was sufficient to provide domestic household needs for the homes, but the mill and mine site were totally disabled.

NCPC linemen (all two of them) had done cursory patrols along the highway where the line was visible, were unsuccessful in spotting the break. Aerial patrol was out of the question due to the extreme cold.

To add to Kunze's problems, the water level at the forebay at the damsite above the plant was slowly starting to rise (because of the reduced demand from Keno Hill due to the downed line) and getting dangerously close to flooding over the spillway. At  $-55^{\circ}\text{C}$  the resulting overflow into the Mayo River could have disastrous results. One option would be to partially open one of the spillgates to lower the water level. Investigation at the dam structure showed that both spillgates, which were totally closed, could not be raised due to ice buildup on the side of each gate caused by slow leakage, prevented any movement. The ice would have to be chopped out by hand.

After consulting with his crew of operators, i.e. Archie Lampman, Louis Kazinsky, Mike Bamblett and Al Tucker and Danny Jurovitch (to name a few employees who come to mind), he came up with a plan.

Faced with this two-fold problem, Kunze prevailed upon some of the Mayo Fire Department volunteers along with 6 very experienced, bush-wise local native men and enlisted their help late in the afternoon of Christmas Eve. In total, 12 to 14 volunteers, including the undersigned, along with NCPC personnel, mustered at the Mayo Hydro compound well after dark on a cold, crisp, moonlit Christmas eve.

Before leaving home and as I was getting suited up, my wife dutifully reminded me that "Santa" had a couple of items requiring assembly before the all important "awakening" of our "gang" next morning. No pressure.

We were divided into teams of two, and assigned segments of the powerline, to walk, in search of the elusive break. Each segment was about 8 to 10 km. It was estimated that it would take each team approximately 4 to 5 hours to walk their assigned line segment. A nighttime stroll on showshoes in 2 to 3 feet of snow at  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$  was not a trip for the feint-of-heart. I was paired off with Sam Peters, a very respected local native elder, who was very long with bush experience and very short on conversation. (By coincidence, I was wearing a pair of mukluks handmade by his wife Ella).

Hand-held radios for the patrollers were non-existent, so they had no means of checking in with a central dispatch or to contact the road vehicles (who had originally dropped each team off) for pickup. The drivers therefore had to continually patrol the highway to pick up the walkers once they had completed their section and walked out to the highway.

When Sam and I stood by the road and watched the reasonably comfortable and cozy Hydro truck drive away from us that crispy, moonlit night with ice crystals shining vertical columns in the truck's headlights, its frozen tires crunching on the compacted road, the "cheechacko" in me wondered just what in blazes I had gotten myself into! The air was heavy. The sound of exhaling breath was like a small roar as the vapour turned into instant ice. We tied our snowshoes with "lampwick", climbed over the graded windrow and set out across the ditch for the "highline". We trudged the right-of-way with occasional short breaks when we would change off from breaking trail and following. The quiet in the woods was very immense. Keeping warm did not seem to be a problem as long as we kept moving. A deep hooded parka over my toque, along with a heavy wool sweater and windpants over "longjohns", 3 pair of heavy wool socks and felt insoles inside Ella's mukluks seemed adequate. Feet, in spite of the socks were the only extremity that did feel the cold if we stopped for any duration on the trail. The tranquility and hard work of trudging served to quell my panic of getting home to "assemble".

Our hike ended when we intercepted the tracks of the team ahead of us, which we followed back to the highway. When we were picked up, we were told that the break had been found.

When we re-mustered back at the Plant waiting for transport back to Mayo (and that "assembly job") awaiting me, Mr. Kunze told the 4 or 5 of us there that everyone else had been sent home, we being the last to be picked up. He went on to mention he would appreciate us staying behind to help chop ice away from the edges of the spill-gate they need to open at the forebay. The water level at the dam was threatening to breach the spillway, and even though the linemen would have the highline spliced soon, and the plant back to full turbine operation for Elsa's demand, it may not be in time to avert "spilling" which at -55 could have disastrous downstream results. The ability to open one of the gates to control the water level was becoming a necessity. The gate cannot be opened until such time that the ice formed by water seepage on each side of the gate was chipped away. Being the "last ones standing" we reluctantly "volunteered" to the chore. Bring on the ladders and the axes!

The one incredible experience I recall, from when the 4 of us descended to the bottom of the chute and start chipping ice, was the warmth. The temperature change was unbelievable! We worked from ladders on each side of the gate. As we chipped ice away, more water trickled out, the relative warmth increased even more. Here we were, outdoors on Christmas Eve, (actually Christmas morning) with an ambient air temperature of -55, working in a concrete trench in rubber boots and shirtsleeves and sweating!

End of story. . .

Ultimately, the line-crew spliced the highline. The plant returned to normal output. The water level stabilized at the forebay with the resumption in power demand. The gate did not have to be opened.

“Santa” at 5:30 in the morning of December 25<sup>th</sup> with a couple of hot rum toddies under his wide belt, was having a very difficult time trying to quietly assemble a “Radio Flyer” wagon before the “horde” descended to see, what Santa left and oh yes, if he ate the cookies and drank the KLIM.

Mr. Kunze appeared on many doorsteps on Christmas day to distributing “thank you” envelopes to his temporary help. Where he managed to obtain the monetary contents of those envelopes on Christmas Day will always be one of life’s little mysteries.

A true story!

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## CHRISTMAS TREASURES FOUND IN ATLIN

By Alice Breaden

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Many years ago on our first trip to Atlin, B.C., we were looking at the old townsite of Discovery and the cabins. I was more interested in old equipment, but Alice found a gold mine of her own which are shown in the scans of the two sides of an old scrapbook page. The date is 1875, and isn't the handwriting beautiful? The initials must be the persons that they were received from. Without doubt, a lady wrote them as she put the cards into a scrapbook. I certainly wish I had handwriting of that nature.

You should be able to read the lines from the scan, but if not, they were written as this;

### *A - Merry - Christmas*

The holly, the holly, Oh! twine it with bay!  
Come give the dear holly a song.  
For it helps to drive stern Winter away  
With its garments so sombre and long.



The second card -

**A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU**

**ALL** - had glitter on the card that still can be seen after all these years.



The second scan is the other side and the remnants of a card and must have contained a photograph. Unfortunately the left side lace is gone and so is the photograph.

We hope that you enjoy these beautiful thoughts of yesteryear being about 128 years, and thanks to Alice for storing them away.

Henry Breaden [Breaden@shaw.ca](mailto:Breaden@shaw.ca)

## **A Christmas Carol of the Yukon**

By Sandy Campbell [northernlyght@shaw.ca](mailto:northernlyght@shaw.ca)

Our Christmas' were always rather a quiet event. We would rise as soon as the first kid would wake up and then bug Dad until he finally relented and got up. I think sometimes he pretended to be asleep for as long as possible, just to see how long it would take before we would lose our patience. I really think to this day, that it was a game to him.

It seems to me that it always snowed on Christmas Eve, and as that is Mom's birthday, we always figured that she got the jump on the baby Jesus, and beat him into the world. Of course it was not possible as it would have made her over a thousand years old, and we all know that it not likely to happen.

But we would have hot chocolate and cookies before bed, and watch the snowflakes come down. Then Dad would chase us off to bed, because Santa had a lot of stops, and we might be holding up his deliveries.

So off we would go, reluctantly of course, and try to wait until Santa flew overhead so that we could hear the bells...but as luck would have it...we would always fall asleep.

One Christmas when we were still in Teslin, Dad had a friend of ours stand outside with some old horse bells he had, ringing them, while he raced into our rooms saying Santa was flying over. As we all ran to the window where we could get the best view, the bells diminished, and then he told us that we were looking out of the wrong window.

But one Christmas stands out from all the rest.

We were living in Beaver Creek, and it had been an unusually cold November and December. There was not a lot of money to be spending on new things, but all of us had cut out the one thing we wanted from the Sears catalogue, and had "sent" them to Santa Claus. There are four of us kids, Myself being the eldest 9; my brother Ian 8; Lorraine 6; and the baby, Deana, 4. We placed the letters beside our milk and cookies that we had left out for him, and went to bed.

The next morning we woke to a new covering of snow and great big white flakes falling down. We ran through the house to the Christmas tree, and what a surprise.

The whole tree was covered in one-dollar bills. Just about every branch had a dollar bill on it. As we were not permitted to get into the presents before Dad got up, we all ran and jumped on Dad to get him out of bed. You can imagine if you are in a "dead" sleep, and all of a sudden you have four kids from the ages of four up to nine, jumping all over the bed and occasionally making contact with body parts.

I think about it now, and I really feel sorry for Dad. He nursed those wounds with a smile, and didn't say a word.

Anyways, he got up and for our sakes, acted really surprised that the tree was covered in one-dollar bills. After several countings, being careful not to knock any of the ornaments off the tree, and being especially careful not to double count, we all agreed finally, that there were exactly forty dollar bills, and divided by four, well that could only mean that there were ten dollars for each of us. Wow!!! That was really cool, and really neat. I bet there was not another tree in all of Beaver Creek that had money on it. And one dollar bills to be exact. But then the questions that begged to be answered.

Where did the money come from? Who put it there, and why was it there? There were presents under the tree from Santa, from Mom, from Dad, and from each of us kids to Mom and Dad. But who put the money there?

The question would be later answered that evening at the supper table.

Johnny Hoffman had become a dear friend of the family. He worked along side of Dad, as his assistant forestry warden during the summer.

He lived by himself in “no man’s land”, between the town of Beaver Creek, Mile 1202, and the American Customs, Mile 1221, eleven miles west of Beaver Creek, and 9 miles east of the American Customs. He lived in a cabin that he had built himself, when he first came to Beaver Creek in around 1968, I believe, right beside a beautiful little creek called Mirror Creek, and many times we were privy to catching Grayling right off the porch.

Anyways, Johnny usually spent Christmas with us as well as all of the other holidays, and so was a regular fixture in our home. Like a grandfather figure, and though I think we irritated him more than anything, I really believe he had a soft spot in his heart for us.

So it was no surprise when Johnny showed up at the door for Christmas dinner. Though he was not a big man, he had a special presence. He had a quiet way, but endured the swarming of us as we showed him the presents that we had received. Then, while dragging him by the hand, began to tell him about the money on the tree, he started to laugh.

We could not understand what was so funny, and finally he confessed. He had given Dad the 40 one-dollar bills to hang on the Christmas tree, ten for each one of us. Well, in one way we wanted to believe that Santa had left them for us, but this was the first time Johnny had ever given us kids anything as wondrous as this. Somehow, it seemed more special, so we all agreed that we would leave them there until we took the tree down in January. Everyone that came to visit us throughout the holidays, were graced with the vision of seeing the only money tree in all of Beaver Creek.

Christmas is always a special season to everyone, but there are some Christmas’ that are more special than others. They are the ones that remain in our hearts for years after, and are always the ones that will bring that tear to our eye or the warm hug when we think

that life has let us down. Cherishing life's journey is always special, and those that are always close at hand, are the ones that from a child's eye. They show the true beauty that we as adults sometimes lose sight of.

Blessed be all of you in this season of rebirth, and of joyous reunions. May you all have prosperity and love, with the coming of the Year of 2004,

Sandy Campbell  
Written Dec 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003



**Wishing everyone a " Happy, Safe and Wonderful Christmas." ...Gilly...Mrs.Claus! hohohohohooohohohohoh!!**  
Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell (& husband Edward Thompson)

## **A DAY IN THE LIFE OF NCPC EMPLOYEES DECEMBER 24, 1971**

By Henry Breaden [breaden@shaw.ca](mailto:breaden@shaw.ca)

(We were two years away from two-way radios.) Nearing Carmacks on the way back, Breaden was getting sleepy, so Witt took over the driving. The road was extremely icy, and rounding a curve there was a wolf pack of estimated 18 wolves. We hit one as they were having trouble on the icy road as well as ourselves.

Witt did the unmentionable of hitting the brakes and we went out of control turning end for end. We slid over the bank and there was that moment of seeing nothing but snow flying. It was about 25 feet to the bottom of a 45-degree slope, and when hitting the

bottom the truck rolled on its side. I checked the truck for fire, and we decided to check the highway, for if another vehicle hit a dead wolf they could slide in on us.

As we proceeded, I "Breaden" said, "I think we are crazy!" Witt replied, "How so?" I said, "With the bush around us full of howling wolves, all we have for a weapon is a flashlight!" At that moment we saw the beady eyes of the wolf we had hit and Witt gave it a kick to make sure it was dead. Minard said, "You put us into the rhubarb, and I am going to have you stuffed!" We pulled the wolf back down to the truck and the pack really put up a ruckus of howling, for had we not, they likely would have eaten him.

We decided, as we had no protection it was a good idea to build a campfire. Every time we threw more wood on the fire and the sparks would fly, the pack that had quieted down would start to howl again!

The Anvil haul had stopped at midnight for their Christmas, and there was not a vehicle on the highway. We sat around the campfire, for although we had a Skidoo it had tipped on its side and all the gasoline had run out of the tank.

At 5:00 AM, Vern came by with his service truck, but we could not get the pickup back up the bank as the truck had an electric winch that powered out. At least it was right side up and by driving up the ditch we were eventually able to make the highway.

Due to snow, the only damage was a bent rear view bracket, and we headed to Whitehorse to start a proper Christmas Day!

But first a few short hours of needed sleep.

I guess I should know as I was there!



Photo Courtesy of Webshots

## **MY FIRST CHRISTMAS IN THE NORTH**

By Donna Clayson [ytdogteam@telus.net](mailto:ytdogteam@telus.net)

I was 11 years old when we moved from Dawson Creek, B.C. to Haines Junction, Yukon. It really wasn't much of a shock leaving what I considered a "big place" for a small

community at the base of the St. Elias Mountains. I had adjusted well to the move and was looking forward to my first Christmas in the north.

As the days got colder and the snow fell and hid the lines and crevices on the mountains I had memorized during the summer, the excitement of the school Christmas pageant kept me occupied. I had no idea what to expect. I was used to seeing houses decorated with lights and wooden cutouts of Santa on his sleigh being pulled by Rudolph and the rest of the reindeer. It was always exciting going to the stores in D.C. and finding just the right gift for my parents. There was none of that here. It seemed something was missing.

On the morning of December 1<sup>st</sup> the thought struck me and I panicked. Where was I going to buy gifts with the money I had earned working at my dad's gas station over the summer months? More importantly, where were my folks going to buy me a gift? There was Marvin's Store that had everything including the shoe box that the mail was kept in, a little bit of clothing and, of course, food. Nothing that would constitute a gift!

I decided now was the time to take action. I approached my parents to ask about driving to Whitehorse to buy gifts. "No," I was told. "Too cold to travel that far." "Well, there had to be somewhere to shop!" "No" I was told, "This year would be different, we would make our own gifts." I was horrified. Maybe moving to The Junction wasn't such a good idea after all.

I had no gift, and my parents seemed to think I could make something. Me? Make something? Were they nuts?

All the kids in the school were kept busy practicing for the pageant. There were skits planned and singing of Christmas Carols. If my parents weren't concerned about a gift for them, then so be it. I wouldn't worry about it either. That would sure teach them! With all the hard work everyone had done preparing for the pageant I knew the parents would all be pleased with the performance. It was Christmas Eve and as we walked to the school the sound of our boots on the crisp snow reminded me of walking on sharp glass. The Northern Lights lit up the sky all around us and were so close that we could hear them crackle and hiss. I swear I could hear them singing "Silent Night".

I don't remember a lot about the pageant. I felt strange somehow. It seemed I was closer to a religious experience than I had ever been. We never attended Church or talked religion in our house but it felt like God was speaking to me from the mountains and whispering to me through the Northern Lights. It's really hard to explain. Later that evening as we walked back home I felt at peace, and truly happy. A calmness I have never felt since.

In the morning there was a gift from my parents. A drawing board that dad made out of plywood and two yardsticks. I could draw an exact duplicate of a picture by moving the yardsticks. My mother had burned into the wood the names of family members that couldn't be with us along with the year of our first Christmas in the north. My gift to them? I did make something after we had come home from the school pageant – a thank

you card to my parents for bringing me to Haines Junction. For teaching me that material things are not important. It's the closeness of family and the feeling of God that I swear I felt the night before on, Christmas Eve.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **CHRISTMAS AT HOUGEN'S DEPARTMENT STORE**

By Donna Clayson [ytlogteam@telus.net](mailto:ytlogteam@telus.net)

I could hardly wait for the Whitehorse Star to arrive Monday night. The paperboy usually dropped it off around suppertime and he was late. Hougen's was running a contest before Christmas and I just knew I could win my Christmas gifts! For several weeks numbers would be printed throughout the newspaper, then the following Monday a new set of numbers. Take the numbers and match them up to the same number on items scattered throughout the store.

All the next day I could hardly wait for school to end so I could take my numbers to the store and see what I had won! Well, it wasn't too difficult to find articles with numbers attached to them. There were skis, winter coats, ornaments, records, lots of stuff, but nothing with my numbers on them!

The following week, again I waited for the paperboy to drop the Star on our front step. New numbers. I just knew I was going to win something this time. Right after school on Tuesday I literally ran to the store from F.H. Collins High School and, with trusty numbers in hand, started my search. I couldn't believe it, nothing! Christmas was fast approaching and I didn't have enough money to buy gifts.

The following week was the last chance to search for my prizes. I can't remember how many weeks the contest ran and I was faithful. Hougen's had become my best friend over the several weeks. I considered them my buddy, how come they didn't return the favor by letting me win?

The following week, I figured the heck with it. I wasn't lucky so why bother? There were just too many people in Whitehorse doing the same thing. I was tired of bumping into people, straining to see some of the numbers that were so high.

I didn't feel like bothering with the contest the last week. On Thursday as I threw the newspaper into the garbage pail the pages flipped open, exposing the numbers. I walked away, stopped, turned around and just couldn't resist. Friday, after school I slowly walked to Hougen's. I knew they'd be closing soon but what did it matter? When I pushed the doors open I couldn't believe how many people were searching right up to the last minute, numbers in hand.

As I stood there, listening to the Christmas music playing in the record section I glanced up at a number on some skis. I looked at my number, and BINGO! It matched. I could hardly contain my excitement. The clerk in the sports department verified my number

and told me I only had 15 minutes until the store closed. I'd better check my other numbers. Into the clothing department, and BINGO! I won a winter jacket. Number verified and started using my elbows to get through the throngs of shoppers. Into the record section, BINGO! I won a 45 (can't remember the title, it didn't matter). Number verified and I had one more number to go. I found that number and had it verified in the perfume department. Every number had won! With Christmas shopping done and no time to spare I walked out with my prizes and heard the door "click" behind me.

Thanks Hougen's you sure made my Christmas special that year!

## LIGHTS

By Fred Aylwin

Blue and yellow, red and green,  
round the windows over doors.  
Upon the rooftops, through the trees.  
along the sidewalks, on the eaves.  
Shining through the darkest nite,  
drops of colour sparkling brite.  
Bringing joy, The Christmas lights.



Photo Courtesy of Webshots

## LONELY CHRISTMAS TURNED INTO SOMETHING SPECIAL

By Donna Clayson [ytdogteam@telus.net](mailto:ytdogteam@telus.net)

We were relocated by Manpower from Whitehorse to Yellowknife in 1971. As my former husband winterized the 1969 Chevelle Malibu for the drive I loaded Tuppins, the cock-a-poo and Andrea, our 13-month-old daughter into the car. It was December 17 and the interior of the car was cold so I cranked up the heater as we huddled under a blanket. What an adventure this would be and I was excited about getting started!

The miles flew by but I was getting rather concerned that the defroster wasn't keeping the ice off the windows. I kept reaching over scrapping the ice off the windshield so Rick

could see the road. The car kept trying to stall and I knew we'd be in trouble if the motor quit. According to the thermometer on the outside of the windshield I knew we wouldn't last long in the -65F weather.

We were tired but afraid to stop except for gas along the lonely Alaska Highway. In 36 hours we were in Dawson Creek and the weather was quite a bit warmer. We still had a long way to go to get to Yellowknife, our new home.

Needless to say it truly was an adventure. Driving on the ice bridge and alternating between -25F and -65F became the norm. It was a long, cold trip and when the lights of Yellowknife appeared on the horizon Christmas Eve it was with great relief! There weren't any hotels or motels open as it was only a few hours until Santa would arrive but did find an after-hours telephone number on the door of one of the motels. A nice sounding man on the other end answered, "Merry Christmas!" We explained we had just spent a week on the road and had a baby in the car and were looking for a room. This very kind gentleman arrived in less than 10 minutes and escorted us to a small room. One bed, one small dresser and a very small heater. We hadn't eaten much for the last two days and enquired about a meal. We were told, as it was Christmas Eve there wasn't anything open and wouldn't be until Boxing Day. With no food we knew this was going to be one lonely Christmas.

Before leaving Whitehorse the week before I had wrapped in brightly coloured paper a gift for Andrea. A pull toy in the shape of a bee whose wings would twirl and buzz when pulled. Christmas morning we awoke famished and decided to walk around town. Just maybe, a small store would be open. No luck. Dejected and feeling quite lonely we headed back to the hotel. At least I had lots of milk and cookies for the baby.

As we sat on the bed pondering what to do there was a gentle knock on the door. Surprised, we were a little apprehensive about opening the door to someone we didn't know. There stood the motel owner, meal in hand and a gift for Andrea. He had put together a splendid meal for his young guests and even for our dog. As we ate and he visited with us, our first Christmas in Yellowknife turned into a precious memory for some lonely travelers and a truly special gift of friendship and goodwill from a complete stranger.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **Christmas Memories in Dawson**

By Vivan (Lelievre) Stuart [lornellis@shaw.ca](mailto:lornellis@shaw.ca)

This is not a story as such about Christmas, but rather bits and pieces of wonderful memories as a child in Dawson at that magical time.

Christmas started in our household on November 1<sup>st</sup> – day after Halloween. That is when the Eaton's Christmas catalogue would come out and my sisters and I would mark all the items that we really wished Santa would bring. The lists would all be compiled and sent

off to Santa in the mail. Speaking of lists – my Mom was a great one for them and that is how I found out there really was no Santa Claus. I “found” one of her lists and on it was a ring, which I got in my stocking. That really confirmed my worst fears that Santa was a myth. I never passed that information onto anyone for many years.

We also had the traditional visit to Santa at the NC Store, though I vaguely recall this one. We all walked into the store and said...”Oh, Dad is here”. We heard his voice. By the time we got to sit on Santa’s knee, he was all but forgotten. It must have been hard for him to disguise his voice so we would not realize that Santa that year was actually our father.

As in all households, there was the usual flurry of baking and preparing for that very big day. Every year my Mom would bake bread, loafs, cookies, tarts and homemade chocolates and along with that made up a gift bag including a knitted pair of socks for all the Old-timers in town.

On Christmas Eve the sleigh was loaded up with all these parcels and off we would go to deliver them. For many, if not all, that was the only gift they received at Christmas. My Mom kept up that tradition for many years.

We also had the thrill of trekking through the woods to find that perfect tree. Always cut down two and used the second one to fill in the empty spots on the first. Would bring it home, stand it in the woodshed until it partially thawed and finally came the day when it was decorated.

There was also the excitement building at school in preparation for the annual Concert at the AC Hall, which today is known as Gertie’s. Going to the catholic school we always had that honor of doing the last play of Baby Jesus. The eldest girl in class generally got the title roll of Mary. Likely we didn’t look too fondly on it at the time but it does bring back great memories. I can also recall playing the triangle in a small band we had.

Christmas Eve was also my cousin Marie Comadina’s birthday. Our Mom used to tell us that we really didn’t like going to her party – likely thinking we were missing out on all the good preparations at home. My Aunt Adele always made sure she had a “real” birthday party and did not combine it with Christmas. I can also recall their tree where my Aunt had the beautiful talent of spinning the angel hair around the lights and everything just twinkled. I have tried doing that over the years – but, my creation never looked quite the same.

On Christmas Eve my Mom always went to Midnight Mass and played the organ. In the morning, off we would go to mass with my Dad. Always, always, without fail we had to have breakfast before any gift opening. Then it was the excitement and wonderment that Santa really did read our letters. He didn’t quite bring “everything” we asked for but we were very happy. A tradition back then was that everyone took a turn at opening a gift instead of just ripping open the packages. That tradition has remained with our family ever since. Sometimes we can drag gift opening out for 4-5 hours, stopping in between for coffee and muffins. Oh Yes! We also have breakfast first!



Anticipation – Courtesy of Webshots

## **The Night before Christmas 1954**

By Gus Barrett

'Twas the night before Christmas, nineteen fifty four  
We were waiting for Santa Claus, chilled to the core.  
There was just you and I, I remember the date,  
We were out at Ear Lake for a crisp winter skate.  
Then you in your snow suit, and me in my breeks,  
Sat up on the snow bank, and smooched cheek to cheek.  
And wondered aloud at just what sort of thing,  
To us, in the morning, old Santa would bring.

When out of the glow of the northern lights,  
There arrived such a vision, a marvelous site.  
A little old man, well into his cups,  
Riding a sleigh drawn by eight husky pups.  
They were frisky and young and they pranced and they capered,  
As they roared into town o'er the Yukon skyscraper.  
And we sat there in awe, as he ordered them down,  
And they dashed through the brightly lit streets of the town.

The sled it was loaded with all sorts of things,  
From overproof rum to sweet vermouth and gin,  
Those were just for the adults; there were all sorts of toys,  
For all the good children; little girls and young boys.  
We watched as he dashed, never leaving his seat,  
To each snow-capped roof top, on each icy street.  
We were just astounded at how quickly he flew,  
As he stuffed gift wrapped packages down every flue.

When he got to the barracks he circled and stared,

And I thought, "oh my God, there's no chimney there".  
He could leave my present outside the front door,  
But no, he continued his rounds as before.  
He sorted his parcels, readjusted his rig,  
I can see he's approaching your hospital digs.  
As he reached for the box where your presents were at,  
The lead dog detected the scent of a cat.

Well the roof it was slippery, old Santa Claus fell,  
The team they took off like a bat out of hell.  
And Santa hung on with his belly aquiver,  
As the cat made a dash through a hole to the river.  
Then our gifts disappeared with the sleigh and the team,  
And Santa Claus too, in the wild raging stream,  
And I heard him exclaim, as he went round the bend,  
"Merry Christmas to all, this is surely the end.

© 2003 Gus Barrett



**Stan & Lorna Baron – Christmas 2002**  
Photo by Bill Jones

## **OBIT**

Stanley Gilbert Baron of Vernon, BC died peacefully at Hospice House on Dec 13, 2003 at the age of 80 years. Stan was born in Poland and came to Canada with his family settling on a farm at Mundare, Alberta. He served in the Royal Canadian Airforce in World War II. On Jan 23, 1942 Stan joined Canadian Pacific Airlines. During his 35-year career with the airline he worked in several cities in Northern BC, Whitehorse, Vanc, Edm, Winnipeg and Calgary. After retiring, Stan and Lorna moved to Vernon in 1985.

## **I'M BACK (new e-mail address)**

Gradually getting back in shape here - Marnie's death while expected was still a shock - after sixty one years married it leaves one hell of a big hole - we moved back to Whitehorse as one of our daughters (Lee #6) works here in the hospital and we figured

she could do more for Marnie here than we could do in Port Alberni - Marnie had wonderful treatment both at home and in the hospital and we owe a lot to our many friends here in the north - Ruth McIntyre printed out the Moccasin Telegraph for us each week (that's a big job now isn't it) and "this was really appreciated Ruth".

Thought it was time to try and get back in action and would appreciate getting back on the list - and will try to get caught up here. I lost all my addresses when my computer broke down and only got it back in action last night - for now Sherron I will say good-bye and will keep in touch.

Les Somerton [lsomerton@northwestel.net](mailto:lsomerton@northwestel.net)  
203C 37 Lewes Blvd Whitehorse Yukon Y1A 4S5

## **PREVIOUS ADDITION TO THE LIST**

Dear Sherron, Thanks for adding my name to the list. I went to high school in Whitehorse, graduating about 1964 or thereabouts. I have received a couple emails from people checking the list, interesting voices from the past. Prior to moving to Whitehorse in 1959 or 60, I grew up in the NWT, in Aklavik, Fort Smith and Yellowknife. I don't know if you want to add that to my information. Thanks again, Sherron. Keltie McCall

## **NEW ADDITIONS TO THE LIST**

\*\*My friend Alexis Hill forwarded this to me as I am considering moving back to the Yukon. I lived in the Yukon from 1986-1991. I lived in Whitehorse, Dawson City and Watson Lake in that time.

Thanks, LeeAnn MacPherson [happlee@hotmail.com](mailto:happlee@hotmail.com)

\*\*Could you please put our name on your newsletter list? We are Ken and Claudia MacPhee. email is [erstenhorpel@hotmail.com](mailto:erstenhorpel@hotmail.com). My friend Brenda Cooper forwarded me your newsletter. She told me about it when she was up this summer. We currently live in Tagish, but I spent lots of years in Atlin and a few in the early 80's in Whitehorse. Am looking forward to reading your interesting news, Claudia MacPhee

\*\*Annie Graham passed your email on to us. We would love to be included in your mailings to keep up to date on old friends from the Yukon. We are still living in the Yukon (35 years now) but travel a fair amount now that we are retired. It's always fun to run into ex-Yukoners on our travels.

Pat and Maxine Kehoe [kehoe@yt.sympatico.ca](mailto:kehoe@yt.sympatico.ca)

\*\*I am interested in connecting to the Moccasin Telegraph. I've been in the Yukon since 1986 and am still in Whitehorse!

Thanks Roger Horner [Roger.Horner@gov.yk.ca](mailto:Roger.Horner@gov.yk.ca)  
Head, Lands Policy - Lands Branch, EMR, GY K - 320 - Box 2703 (320 - 300 Main Street) WH, YT Y1A 2C6 Tel: (867) 667-3178 Fax: 667-3214

\*\*My name is Bob Patterson. I was born in Dawson in 1946 but the family “came out” in 1948 and I grew up and have lived most of my life in the Lower Mainland or in Victoria, where I currently live. My mother is Isabelle Townsend (ne: Fournier) who was also born in Dawson (in 1918) and is married to George Townsend, born in Dawson in 1910. George left the Yukon for the gold fields of Columbia in 1941. Isabelle and George now live in Victoria – they are Life Members of the Vancouver Yukoners’ Association. I just

recently became aware of the Moccasin Telegraph. I would like to sign up so that I may share it with my folks, who do not have a computer, but are keenly interested in the stories and information that you publish about the Yukon.

Thank you. Bob Patterson  
e-mail: [bobpatterson709@hotmail.com](mailto:bobpatterson709@hotmail.com)

\*\*Please add our email address to the Moccasin Telegraph. We are Gwenne (nee: Carswell) and Joe Redmond. Joe was born in Dawson City and Gwenne was born in Whitehorse. We were married in Whitehorse and our 3 daughters were all born there as well. We left the Yukon in 1974.

Our email address is [yukon43@telusplanet.net](mailto:yukon43@telusplanet.net)  
Gwenne and Joe

Yes, we were the Redmonds from Alsek Road in Whitehorse. We now live in Sylvan Lake, AB. Our phone no: 403 887 6554

Hope this works.  
Gwenne

## **CHRISTMAS WISH**

I wish we could put the spirit of Christmas in jars and open one every month of the year.

## **QUOTE OF THE WEEK:**

A Christmas candle is a lovely thing: It makes no noise at all but softly gives itself away; while quite unselfish, it grows small.



Photo Courtesy Webshots

## CHRISTMAS RECIPES

Forwarded by Donna Clayson

### CHRISTMAS MORNING WIFE SAVER

16 slices	bread	¼ cup	minced onion
16 slices	ham	¼ cup	chopped green pepper
16 slices	cheddar cheese	1 tsp.	Worcestershire sauce
6	Eggs	3 cup	milk
½ tsp	salt	dash	Tabasco
½ tsp	dry mustard	¼ cup	butter
Crushed corn flakes			

Place 8 slices of bread in buttered glass dish. Layer on slices of ham then cheddar cheese. Cover with remaining slices of bread. Beat remaining ingredients except butter and cornflakes. Pour over the bread. Cover and let stand in refrigerator overnight. Melt ¼ lb. Butter and pour over top. Cover with crushed cornflakes or Special K cereal. Bake uncovered at 350°F for 1 hour. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. Serve with fresh fruit salad and cinnamon rolls.

### Roast Wild Goose

1	wild goose
½ cup	butter
½ cup	orange juice, fresh or frozen
3	Juniper berries

1. Rub cavity of goose with salt and pepper.
2. Roast for 3 hours at 325F. Baste frequently with orange juice, juniper berries and ¼ cup water. Prick lightly all over to allow fat to drain off.
3. Prepare dressing in a separate pan to keep it free from excessive fat and wild flavour.

## **Fruit Stuffing**

Stuff each duck with a mixture of 2 apples, cut in quarters; ½ cup raisins and orange juice. Baste frequently with orange juice.

## **Bread Stuffing for Duck or Goose**

- Dried breadcrumbs, enough to fill a 2 qt. Bowl
- 1 Large onion, chopped
- 2 Apples, chopped
- Salt and pepper
- Summer savory

Combine ingredients; and pour just enough boiling water over to soak the bread, so that it is slightly soggy. (Enough for 3 ducks or 1 goose)

## **SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE**

[sherronjones@shaw.ca](mailto:sherronjones@shaw.ca)

- 6 small sweet potatoes
- One half cup of sugar
- One half cup of butter
- 2 eggs - beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla
- One third cup of milk

### **Topping -**

- One-third cup melted butter
- 1-cup light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp flour
- 1 cup chopped Pecans

Bake or boil potatoes and mash. Mix in sugar, butter, eggs, vanilla and milk. Spread in a cake dish.

Mix and sprinkle topping over potato mixture. Bake 25 minutes at 350 degrees.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here is a recipe that I tried some time ago, and it was rather a nice ending of a meal...and the nice thing about it, is that it could be for thanksgiving as well as Christmas, but as it is pumpkin, I could handle it anytime of the year.

## **Creamy Pumpkin Pie**

Anita Jensen, BC

- 1 piecrust
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1/2 cup of cold milk
- 1 tsp pumpkin spice (cinnamon, nutmeg, and allspice, with a touch of cloves)
- 1 pkg instant vanilla pudding mix
- 3 1/2 cups of Cool Whip Topping

Use your favorite flaky piecrust or graham crust, using the recipe on the package. Cook and cool. Combine the pumpkin, milk, spices, and pudding mix in a bowl. Blend with a mixer or with a whisk for at least 1 minute. Fold in 2 1/2 cups of whipped topping and chill. Top with the remaining whipped topping, and sprinkle with chopped nuts.

I hope that this will whet your taste buds...I know that it did mine.

Sandy Campbell [northernlyght@shaw.ca](mailto:northernlyght@shaw.ca)

### **SIGN UP TO RECEIVE THE MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH**

If you have received this copy of the Moccasin Telegraph from a friend and wish to sign up to receive future editions yourself, the criteria is that you **are or were a Yukoner**.

**I need to know your name, e-mail address, when and where you lived in Yukon and which City you are living in now.** It helps me to maintain control over safety of the material to know **who** told you about this project. I wish to keep that control since not only are you signing up to receive the **Moccasin Telegraph**, but you are also allowing me to **share your e-mail address** with the rest of the group. The combined **list of everyone's e-mail address** is then sent out periodically to all members of the list.

The goal of this project is to provide an opportunity for folks to reconnect.

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