

**MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – Forty-Sixth Edition Jan. 4, 2004**

Created by Sherron Jones [sherronjones@shaw.ca](mailto:sherronjones@shaw.ca)



**Haines Road Waterfall**

Photo courtesy Doug Bell

**YUKON WINTER**

By Gus Barrett

Christmas time has come and gone.  
We're into winter's lull.  
Long, cold nights of darkness,  
Days so short and dull.  
Water pipes have frozen up,  
The car has packed it in,  
Walked to work this morning,  
The wind as cold as sin.

Staying close to home tonight,  
The fireplace aglow.  
Through the window, northern lights  
Are shimmering on the snow.  
Kids tucked in one single bed,  
Sleeping feet to feet

Husky sleeping in between,  
Grateful for the heat.

Nothing on TV to watch,  
Better hit the sack.  
I dread that frigid moment  
In the biffy way out back.  
I kneel beside my feather bed  
And pray for just one thing.  
Oh lord, tomorrow, when I wake  
Please, please let it be spring.

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## **MY LIFE AS A DOG MUSHER PART II**

By Donna Clayson with the assistance of Richard Ross [ytdogteam@telus.net](mailto:ytdogteam@telus.net)

It was hard work managing all the dogs I used for sprint racing but also very rewarding. We lived at 907 Grove Street in Porter Creek and kept fifteen dogs scattered around the yard. Once the females began having pups the population started growing rapidly and it was time to find another place to keep the older dogs. It was early fall when we found a spot on what is now known as the Dump Road leading off Rabbit's Foot Canyon. Gathering up all the males we loaded them into the dog box on the pickup and headed to their new home. We only kept newborn pups with their mothers in our yard.

Just the year before the City dump had been moved from the back of Porter Creek to this location so we figured the City would keep this road plowed and easy for us to get to our dog lot everyday to feed and water them. After the move it only took a few days before our dogs developed a "smokers cough". On days the wind blew in their direction the poor animals had to breath in the toxic fumes. Good thing the wind wasn't blowing that often in their direction.

Every day around 6:00 p.m. the 5-gallon pails and water were loaded into the back of the pickup and we headed to the lot. Of course it was always dark during feeding so we used the beam from the headlights to shed a little light on most of the animals. It wasn't long before we had added close to 45 dogs to the compound. One time we noticed a young black female developed the habit of sniffing the ground whenever we were around. She seemed quite intent on whatever the snow yielded to her tender nostrils. For three weeks we observed this strange new habit and even used a flashlight to try to figure out what the attraction was. No luck there. Approximately two months later I managed to get some free time on a weekend so it was still daylight when I fed them. This gave me the opportunity to have a good look around the doghouse of this female. Again, the dog had her head to the ground but she didn't lift it up when I placed her food in front of her. That's when I noticed a large band of raw skin completely around her neck. The 1" leather collar had been cutting into her neck and after a couple of months had buried itself down to her neck bone. It was a terrible site

and she must have been in tremendous pain for at least two months. In the darkness the wound was not obvious. As I held the dog Rick did some quick surgery, digging the collar out and I poured hydrogen peroxide in the large wound. Believe it or not the wound healed and the dog wasn't any worse for wear.

It was Christmas Eve in 1976 when we lost three dogs. With our trusty flashlight we called out their names with no success. As I dished out the meals Rick searched the entire area. Three 6-foot chains were lying lifeless in front of the doghouses. One of the chains still had the thick leather collar attached. It's well known in the dog-mushing business that if the weather has been quite cold that a dog can lose weight rapidly from shivering so we determined that this is what happened. The dogs lost weight and slipped out of their collars, except there was only one collar. Once we were done feeding and cleaning up the area we decided to search on the other side of the valley. We called their names and looked for tracks in the snow. No luck. We spread the word around that three of our sled dogs were missing. Exactly one week later, New Year's Eve two more dogs were missing. Again, no luck in finding them. New Year's day we decided to go back and search the area in daylight. What confronted us will be burned into my memory forever. It wasn't a pretty sight. There were splatters of blood around each doghouse and where a young male had been tethered was the worst. Blood was sprayed on everything, including the spruce trees nearby. The young dog had put up a terrific fight and obviously lost. We searched the outskirts back in the bush and found where the timber wolves had divided up the carcasses. Everywhere were patches of hide and we even found bits of heavy leather collar in the stool. Everywhere there were wolf tracks. We called the wildlife experts in and after their investigation they informed us that there were approximately six to seven wolves and one with only three legs. The normal feed for these predators were rabbits and other game but due to the lack of snow they were forced to prey on healthy tethered dogs. Unfortunately we had chosen to tie the dogs on the regular circuit the wolves used. The wildlife personnel said the wolves' route would be approximately 250 miles round trip and take seven days. This was of course proven as we had already lost 3 dogs one week previous.

Other interesting facts about these wolves is that they chose healthy animals, not the old, not necessarily the young or feeble. They were opportunists – they began their meals on the outer part of the compound and worked their way in. They took the easiest meals. Also, they said a dog's jaw pressure is approximately 100-lbs./per square inch and a wolf is 1,000-lbs./per square inch! That would explain how they were able to bite through the thick leather collars. We even found some heavy metal rings in the stool. We had buried a newborn pup in the area in the summer months and that was also dug up. We needed to move all the dogs in the next six days or suffer more casualties. We began the search immediately for another location.

An angel in disguise by the name of Elmer and Frieda Bankhead appeared and offered us their yard on the Dawson Road. It took quite some time to move everything and clean up the area with no time to spare. Everything was done the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> day since the last attack. Thus began another chapter and more experiences.

Elmer had over 30 dogs and along with ours the noise could be deafening at feeding time. The Bankheads did not tolerate any noise unless there was good reason such as a loose dog or wolves getting too close. Elmer lived quite a distance from the lot and he could tell by the way the dogs barked if there was a problem or not. If not, all he would have to do were to crack a whip while standing in the doorway and complete silence would be immediate. It was quite the system and very effective.

As members of the Yukon Dog Musers Association our names were added to a list to receive road kill for our dogs. On one occasion a horse had been hit on the highway and since our name was at the top of the list we were made recipients of some valuable feed. We cut the horse up in our yard and filled quite a few cardboard boxes. There was enough meat for several feedings and was a boost to the mothers and their pups. One cool winter day I was carrying a box of meat through the dog lot. The dogs could smell the aroma and were in a frenzy for their share. I had told Verena, who had just turned 3 years of age, to stay in the truck. As I made my way on the narrow trails amongst them the dogs were stretched as far as they could reach on their 6-foot chains. There was only enough room to walk on the trails without the dogs touching me. Suddenly I heard terrible growling sounds behind me accompanied by screams. Verena had been helping me load the boxes at home and some blood was on her mitts that were dangling from the arms of her jacket. She wanted to help some more and had followed behind me. The dogs smelled blood and attacked her. When I turned around one of the animals was shaking her violently, then another dog reached out and grabbed her. She was being tossed around like a rag doll amongst four dogs. Her yellow winter jacket was bloodied and soon ripped from her body. It took but a few seconds to reach her and took all my strength to free her from the mass. I rushed up to Elmer's house and got there just as he was rushing out the door to see what the commotion was. He grabbed Verena and poured salt over her hand. She had two fangs wedged in one of her hands and with all the blood it was hard to tell how badly she was hurt. We were miles from Whitehorse General Hospital but with Elmer at the wheel while I cradled a very quite child it didn't take long to get to Emergency. After a thorough check up Verena was released from hospital within the hour – minus the teeth that were lodged in her hand. The doctor said the salt was the best thing we could have done as it kept the bacteria down to a minimum. She had numerous bite marks but had no scars thanks to the quick action of Elmer and his “medicine”. To this day salt is the number one medication in our house. Verena has no scars and no fear of animals. In fact, she is currently taking a Veterinarian Technician Course at Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and loves it.

Road kill was a valuable asset to mushers. Should a female not gain weight or regain her health after birthing it could mean death to the mother and her pups. Andrea was in grade 1 and her responsibility to feed the dogs after school. As I already had the food ready when she got home it only took 10 minutes to feed a dozen dogs. One particular day it was very dark so Andrea had to use a flashlight to maneuver the trail to the end of the lot. In one hand was the flashlight and in the other hand the metal ketchup can we used for feeding dishes. I forgot to tell Andrea that while she was at school a moose that had been hit on the Alaska Highway had been delivered to us by Government

Roads Division. With a chainsaw the head was cut away from the body and dragged down to one of the pens. It wasn't until I heard a blood-curdling scream that I remembered the head. As Andrea bent over to place the can onto the ground her flashlight illuminated the head. With the eyes bulging and the tongue hanging out it gave Andrea a terrible fright. With the light and the can still in her hands she backed up and tripped over the ledge of the kennel and out the door. She didn't spill a drop of food I might add. I didn't know a 6-year old could swear and scream that loud and it took a long time before I was forgiven for not telling her. It's been 28 years and I'm not sure if she has forgiven me yet.

We used to compete in the dog races at the Sourdough Rendezvous. It took all year to condition the dogs for this race. Excitement grew as February rolled around. Pompoms had to be made for the dogs and sled. Harnesses were cleaned and the dogs brushed and made ready. The dogs sensed our excitement and, in turn, they too were anxious to get going. On the second day of the three-day race in 1976 all 8 dogs were at the gate and very excited. As the Race Marshall counted down the seconds the dogs began jumping and barking. As the number two was shouted out Rick crunched down low onto the runners to give the dogs an extra boost and cut down on wind resistance. As the number one was shouted he raised his foot off the snow hook and I released my hand from the leaders' collar and the dogs were away in a flash. As I proudly watched from the sidelines, impressed by the after-burner start the dogs began turning left and heading to the Regina Hotel! Rick went along for the ride, as the ice hook could not be jammed into the ice. They determined they didn't want to run after all. Even with all the coaxing from the driver the team would not head down the trail. Disappointed, Rick had to come back to the starting gate, disqualified. A full year of training and preparing was ended – just because the leader refused to lead. Such is life in the world of sprint racing.

One year during the Sourdough Rendezvous I had the dogs fed and watered and settled down for the night on their hay. I wandered back to First Avenue along the Yukon River wanting to watch the flour-packing contest. One of the mushers pulled up in his 8-dog team and yelled at me to climb into the basket. I had no idea what this man was up to (naturally I felt the name should be withheld) so I went along for the ride. The team headed to the Edgewater Hotel Pub. The door to the pub was propped open and the place was packed with loud, drunken partiers. In through the door the lead dog took us. Chairs and bodies were trying desperately to get out of the way of the team. Tables were dumped over onto their side as we flew over the carpet toward the bar. The musher yelled out for me to grab a keg of beer and as I jumped out of the moving sled I then realized the place had grown silent. The customers were standing there, not believing what they were seeing. In a blink of an eye I was back in the basket, keg on my lap and out the door we flew. I couldn't believe what I had participated in and if it had been planned I never would have agreed to it. There was a group of mushers waiting for us on the river ice. I must say the beer went down pretty good. For the rest of the Sourdough Rendezvous our escapades were the talk of the town.

A year later, in 1977 after a successful run at the Rendezvous I had the dogs loaded into the box on the back of the truck and with the sled on top secured firmly to the box I headed home to Porter Creek. The race was over three days so I kept the dogs that were being used at my house, hoping the neighbours would understand and not complain about the extra mouths to feed. There would naturally be extra noise as they were being fed. I was in Rabbit's Foot Canyon when I ran out of gas. I was alone as Rick wanted to stay and celebrate with the rest of the mushers. The dogs needed to be fed and watered and I was glad to do it for him. Here it was around -30F and I was stranded in the Canyon with a truck full of dogs and no way to get home. What to do? Well, I reasoned, I have a sled; I have dogs and, therefore, a means to travel to the gas station in Porter Creek. I unhooked the sled, unloaded six of the eight dogs and hooked them up and grabbed the gas can. As I pulled into the gas station the attendant didn't bat an eye, as if this was a common occurrence. As I waited for the gerry can to fill a tourist pulled into a pump beside me. The looks on their faces were priceless. Out came the cameras, as it was probably the only time they had seen a real-life northern dog team filling up at the gas pumps! Only in the north .....



Donna driving the team during a race at Mile 928 on the musher's trail.  
Photo courtesy Donna Clayson

## **OBIT**

Obituaries (12/29/03) Vancouver Sun/Province

**QUONG \_ James Y.C.**, born August 18, 1917, passed away peacefully December 18, 2003. Survived by Diamond, his loving wife of nearly 60 years; four devoted children, Meiyen (Jeffrey), Meilin (Jim), Meijane (Raymond), and Ken (Kathleen); and four grandchildren, Ben, Cameron, Lauren, and Spencer. Jim will always be remembered for his fabulous photographs of the Yukon where he lived and worked for 40 years. He will be sadly missed by many friends and relatives. A celebration of Jim's life will be arranged at a later date. Flowers graciously declined.

Donations may be made in Jim's memory to the Canadian Diabetes Association, 360-

1385 West 8th, Vancouver, BC, V6H 3V9, or to St. Stephen's Anglican Church, 9887 Cameron Street, Burnaby, BC V3J IM3.

Just some sad news to pass on. Don't know if any of your subscribers remember **Adam Styba**, many years in the Yukon and his last position was as the accountant I believe for Taylor Chev, he had a heart attack and passed away while on a short Christmas holiday in the States on Monday the 29<sup>th</sup> of December. There's a memorial for him at Parkview Funeral Home in Penticton tomorrow Jan 2nd at 11 am. My wife and I helped find he and Joan's new home here in OK Falls when they moved some years ago, we used to do craft shows together in Whitehorse and here in the Okanagan area.

Vic Hoy [vichoy@vip.net](mailto:vichoy@vip.net)

Hello to all of Jake's friends and fellow members of the Okanagan Yukoners' Association

I am sorry to report that **Jake Melnychuk** (my father) lost his battle with cancer and passed away on Dec 30, 2003 at KGH. There will be a small family memorial on Saturday (Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>) followed by a celebration of Jake's life (and what a life he lived) at The Bunkhouse on KLO Road in Kelowna starting at 5:00 p.m.

All of his friends wishing to pay their respects and have a drink in his honour are welcome.

Thanks,

Eileen & Mo [eileen@businesslanguage.biz](mailto:eileen@businesslanguage.biz) (Eileen Melnychuk)

## **THE HISTORY OF THESE BURLS?**

Hi Sherron Here's the scoop on the burls, built by Harvey White prior to '69. Harvey worked at Destruction Bay Lodge for we're not sure how many years, not when I was here as a kid in 55-58 but some time after that. Another old fellow who prob. came for the highway building and stayed on or ? I have a friend I can call. Any way he lived at the lodge during the winter when weather got better moved south of town 1 mile to a little cabin he built. He built the burls. They were painted the first time by a nurse named Claire (?); then repainted by Yvonne McBride and her 2 girls sometime during the 80's. They slowly deteriorated and when they reconstructed the highway for the Shakwak Project 18 months ago, they disappeared. By that time they had rotted, or as things do here, just dried up.

Thx Sherron, and have a wonderful new year, I am still trying to get the Bonspiel stuff together hopefully shortly.

Regards Marsha Flumerfelt [MJFlumerfelt@yt.sympatico.ca](mailto:MJFlumerfelt@yt.sympatico.ca)

The burls were put up before anyone ever thought of making anything out of them they are not related to the selling of burls in any way. I do believe they were they were

repainted in the early eighties before repainting all the first paint job had worn off. These may have been put up by Hank & Doreen Perillo the owners of Destruction Bay Lodge in the 1960's. Moge Mogenson [elgolfo@shaw.ca](mailto:elgolfo@shaw.ca)



**Burls across from Destruction Bay Lodge**

Photo courtesy Moge Mogenson [elgolfo@shaw.ca](mailto:elgolfo@shaw.ca)



These burls were there before 1962. – Moge

Am going to try to e-mail this over to Garry Van der Veen and he might be able to help you more than I can. Although I spent 27 years looking at those burls I never did hear the history about them that I can remember anyway.

I've known Marsha for years so the info you got from her is probably true to form. Garry lived there for eons also and is still there so maybe he can add a bit more about them, know we owned the property they were on and that little shack in the background used to be a fishing shack at one time. It was also staff quarters when I first went out there.

Cheers, Sheree Newell [svannew@polarcom.com](mailto:svannew@polarcom.com)

## **ANOTHER BURL ENTHUSIAST**

I asked John Obermeier about the burls at Destruction Bay. Below is his answer. Also, please contact John about signing up. – Donna Clayson

Hi Donna:

These pictures (*above*) are from Destruction Bay; it's an old Boat rental shack with coloured Burls in front. Since 2002 the road construction (widening of the old highway) took these out. They were there for quite a few years and are no more, sorry. All in the name of progress!!!! :-)

As a matter of fact, I build a large Log house for a German on this property last year; the house is about 300yds off the road, towards the lake. We left the old Boat rental house standing; you drive right by on your way to Burwash. It belonged to Gary Van der Veen's father, who owns the Talbot Arm Motel in Destruction Bay. Gary still operates the Motel you can't miss it. The place is visible from the Motel on an angle to the right towards the west. I will send you a picture of the new Log house on the Lake. Most Old-timers dislike the new highway, it's become a Raceway to Alaska and much Brush was cleared on the highway right of way.

Just got back on line and have things up and running again. Obie

I have a pamphlet that says: (*from Donna Clayson*)

### **Black Spruce Burl Bowls**

Yukon Burls, often called "knobby wood, lumpy trees or bumpy logs", etc. are found within a 20-mile radius of the area around Burwash Landing. Black Spruce, Cottonwood and some Pine trees can all have burl growth, Black Spruce being the most available. A genetic deformity caused either by high mineral content or a bacterial irritation seems to be the cause. They are found in patches along ancient, dry creek beds in the foothills. We have our work "cut out" for us just to locate them. Green trees are used for mailbox posts, plant stands and table bases, etc. Dry Burls are made into beautiful bowls, spoons, walkin' sticks, candleholders or anything the mind may conceive.



**Burl Bowls** photo courtesy John Obermeier

**"Diamond Willow"**, not a species of willow. It is caused by a fungus that attacks the branch exit and does not allow new growth to form, leaving a distinct diamond shape, reddish brown in colour, which is the heart of the wood then contrasts nicely with the new growth, which is white. Epoxy Resin is used as our main finish, because of its durability and high gloss, although other finishes such as Varathanes, Tung Oil and Varnishes may be used.



**Obie and Karin and Burl Bowls**  
Photo courtesy John Obermeier

**Burlbilly Hill** Mile 1093 P.O. Box 32 Burwash Landing, Yukon Y0B 1V0  
Telephone/Fax: (867) 841-4607 e-mail: [obie@yt.sympatico.ca](mailto:obie@yt.sympatico.ca)  
Located 100 yards north of the Kluane Museum, next to the gas station.

## Alaska Highway 2003



### Alaska Highway east of Haines Junction heading west 2003

Photo Courtesy Heinrich Lohmann [heinrich@lohmenn.ca](mailto:heinrich@lohmenn.ca)

*When Marsha mentioned the **Shakwak Project** above it occurred to me that I didn't know anything about it. So I went looking for an answer. The following are extracts from a Yukon Government Web page. – Sherron*

### **Shakwak Highway Reconstruction Project**

Partial Extraction from

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/transportation/highways/shakwak.html>

The Alaska Highway has been unique from the beginning. Its story is an exciting one. It was built in the incredibly short time of ten months to meet American defense needs during the war. That event has become as much part of the history of the Yukon as the gold rush is.

#### **The need for reconstruction**

Typically engineers consider that the life span of most highways is somewhere in the neighbourhood of 20 years before upgrading or major repair work is needed. But the Alaska Highway was never typical. Because it was built in a tremendous rush, corners were cut and engineering standards not followed. However you can't really fault that. Wartime meant it was hastily constructed for slow moving military convoys to haul supplies.

So the upshot was the Alaska Highway has been under reconstruction since the day it was built. It became virtually impassible in a number of places immediately following construction and contractors were brought in behind the military engineers. This trend

continued with the Canadian Army and Canadian Public Works Department as these organizations took over responsibility for the highway.

There were a number of problems. The road had frost heaves, settlements and mud holes. The alignment was poor too. The original construction took the path of least resistance and the engineers went around any obstruction they encountered. This resulted in lots of curves and bends throughout the length of the highway.

Although there was road repair and upgrading, the alignment remained basically the same in the decades after the 1940s. The many curves on the road, which had been fine for slow moving military convoys, created hazards in faster moving vehicles. People either had to drive slowly or risk losing control. It was the same thing with the hills on the road. The grades were steep and the visibility over the crests wasn't adequate for the speed that people were driving.

It's fair to say over the years the road became a source of enormous frustration to motorists. Vehicles were damaged, mufflers lost, tires wrecked or worst people got into accidents. As well transportation trucks had their cargo damaged as they bounced over the rough surface.

The Alaska Highway continued to be of huge interest to Americans even though it had been turned over to Canada. That's because once you drive north past Haines Junction its about 85 % American traffic.

Although Canada was doing a lot of work upgrading the Alaska Highway, efforts were concentrated on the southern sections with the result that the highway north of Haines Junction received little attention. The condition of this northern section and of the Haines Road and its importance to Alaska led to the Shakwak Agreement between the United States and Canada in 1977.

Ultimately it made good sense to Congress to give Canada some \$260 million to reconstruct the north end of the highway and the Haines Road. Of course the Shakwak Project itself has been, and is of tremendous benefit to, the Yukon.

### **Engineering goals**

The Shakwak Project got underway in 1977 and involves reconstructing 500 kilometres of highway. The Yukon Government became involved with it in 1992 when responsibility for the Alaska Highway was devolved to us from Canada.

The goal of the Shakwak Project is to reconstruct the highway to a modern two-lane 100-km/hr standard. Overall what we have done is to closely follow the existing road with re-alignments where needed to meet standards.

The project has presented some unique challenges related to construction in permafrost terrain. The soils along the north Alaska highway are of glacial origins and are what we

call ice rich--incidentally we have had to dispose of millions of cubic meters of this material as its not suitable to put into the road embankments. Achieving a stable road then, on the ice rich relatively warm permafrost, has been the challenge. We expect the bulk of the roadwork to be completed by 2004.



### **Herman Peterson's Plane**

Photo Courtesy Maribeth (Tubman) Mainer [mainerml@shaw.ca](mailto:mainerml@shaw.ca)

Herman Peterson's first plane, the one he ordered through my dad, Gordon Tubman. The plane is at Atlin Lake, Herman Peterson, Brud Cyr in the picture. Dad took the picture when he and Brud Cyr went to Atlin to see the plane.

Dad was selling Caterpillar equipment for the NC Co. in Whitehorse when Mr. Peterson came in and asked Dad to order him a plane. Picked it out in a catalogue and Dad ordered it in. Only plane Dad ever "sold". I have the slide of Mr. Peterson taking delivery of it. Dad tells me that was Mr. Peterson's first plane.

The way Dad tells the story of Herman's plane is this. Herman came into the office and said, "Tubby, I want to buy a plane." Dad was managing the NC Ford/Caterpillar dealership in Whitehorse, had access to catalogues, so he ordered the plane. While Dad talks of the sale as the only plane he ever sold, he is always quick to add that there was really no selling involved. The picture was taken at Atlin. – Maribeth



### **Herman & Doris Peterson at Atlin**

Photo courtesy Jeanne Harbottle

### **PETERSON FIELD DEDICATED 1984**

By Robert C. Coutts [bcoutts@atlin.net](mailto:bcoutts@atlin.net)

Gerri Johnsen just asked me to contribute a story or a memory of Atlin. There are many things of local interest that could be written but I find it difficult to sort out suitable material off the cuff, until I know what you like and expect.

Here is one of my treasured memories of Atlin. It concerns Herman Peterson whom you have recently featured. I hope its content will make up for its lateness

In the summer of 1984 the new air strip had been constructed and was to be opened with a gala affair. The day was chosen and plans laid.

The day arrived and many visitors were in town including Alex Fraser, the B.C. Minister of Transport, who was to dedicate the new airfield. We all gathered at the field and ceremonies and speeches were begun under the able supervision of Lyman Sands our M.C.

A short while before Herman was asked to give a flight display in "Susie" which he himself built; a speedy aircraft in which he gave displays of aerobatics every 1st of July.

The ceremony began and Herman kept flying and flying and flying. The ceremonies ended and Herman was still flying. We sat for a further twenty minutes until he landed. He was immediately rushed to the podium where Alex Fraser dedicated the field "PETERSON FIELD" in his honour for his record and contribution to aviation in the North. The applause was long, loud and heartfelt as Herman was a popular man.

Herman was sitting beside me and at the height of the Applause turned and said to me "If I had known this was going to happen I would have worn clean overalls!"

Everyone in town knew weeks ahead that this was going to take place.

Impossible as it sounds, not a single person had leaked the secret to Herman and he was completely surprised. Only in the North.

Hope this little tale is of some use to you. Will try to help out.  
All the best, Bob Coutts



### **Suzy being built in 1964**

Photo courtesy Dan Bereza

Most of the pilots who read the MocTel know that Herman Peterson hand-built his beloved EAA biplane named Suzy. Here is a picture he took just before he finished putting the fabric on the fuselage.

Danny Bereza [danbereza@hotmail.com](mailto:danbereza@hotmail.com)

## **SHIPPING CONTAINERS**

By Jim Robertson [keepherafloat@shaw.ca](mailto:keepherafloat@shaw.ca)

Received, with great delight, your multiple pieces of E-mail. Surely this must keep you very busy. But please carry on. That bit of yours about containers hit home, and reminded me that I had promised to tell you about the origins of the container, and container ships.

Here are my thoughts on the subject.

Yes, the first true containers did not look exactly like the present ones. They came about because of the need to handle the asbestos from Cassiar that had to be shipped out by the White Pass and Yukon Company over an extension of it's narrow gauge railway. They had to contain the dust, thus they put the jute bags in "containers."

White Pass had plenty of flat cars, so, since the containers were weather proof themselves, they simply put them on the flat decks. All very simple, quick and easy to handle. They were readily handled by a ship's cargo winches, a five ton boom had been standard on ships for years. White Pass & Yukon built the Clifford J. Rogers in Montreal for the job. She came into service in 1955. It soon became apparent that a container similar to that hauled by trucks was a better configuration. The Frank H. Brown, and the Klondike followed, with the 40-ton gantry cranes that are now the world standard.

So much for recorded history. However it is my own personal opinion that the world owes the invention of the container ship to --- BEER ----. Or to be more accurate, the west coast deckhands' ingenuity when it came to pilfering it from the cargo.

Beer had always been shipped up the coast from Vancouver by C. P. R., and Union Steamships by being stacked on a palette, and lifted on and off by the ship's cargo booms. All cargo was "break bulk" That is to say, individual pieces of freight were loaded piece by piece into cargo nets, swung on board, lifted out piece by piece, and stacked in the hold. Unloading at the coastal ports was as painfully time consuming, and labour intensive. The sight of all that beer was an unquestionable challenge to the weary deckhands. No matter how carefully the mate tried, there would inevitably be a case or two short. The last thing the mate needed was all the paper work involved in reporting it. The paperwork was out of all proportion to the value of the beer.

On the C. P. R. ships, it was a bit easier for the lads, because the tween deck, or as it was called the freight deck, was readily accessible to the crew. It was the only recreational room available. Sitting around on some of the softer cargo, sacks of potatoes were lumpy, one could not miss dwelling on the sight of all that beer, just stacked there. On the old Princess Louise, the lads kept one big pristine clean enamel pot, especially set aside for this job. Simple. Jam one case corner side down into the pot. Then take a second case and bash the first. Presto. The suds flowed through the cardboard carton, filtering out the broken glass, and picking up the distinctive flavour of soggy cardboard. The contents were shared by all and no cases were missing. No problem. There was always some breakage to cargo wasn't there?

It was a far less serious problem, but it was a loss just the same. That is until some spoilsport invented the first container, The BEER CONTAINER. Three quarter inch plywood was cut up to form a four-foot cube. By putting hinges on all sides it formed a box that could be opened readily by the hotel to which it was consigned, at their leisure. The sides and top could then be folded flat, taking up little space for the return journey when the ship called in on the way back. But the most important item was the seal that went on along with the padlock.

A padlock of itself, would have stopped no one, but a seal was a seal and breaking a seal was a sure way to getting a room in that grey bar hotel at Okalla. Also, because it was a handy package, it speeded up moving cargo where there was never enough time. Beer out of sight inside a plywood box just did not generate the same temptation. By such genius, we progress.

Well, for what it is worth, these are my thoughts on the subject.

Sherron, the hour is late. When you have to peck this stuff out with one finger as I do, it does not take many words to make a dozen. Will you give me a rain check on that poor rhyme I promised. The hour is late and I am off to me wee little bed.

Keep her afloat til daylight.

*(As I mentioned before Jim is an old family friend. He used to come home on "shore leave" with my Uncle when they were both in the Merchant Navy together. Later Jim*

*did relief work as an Engineer on the White Pass container ships. So I guess he speaks from experience here.*

*The solution of leaving the soggy beer case in place may have saved paper work at that end, but I can recall walking into my husband's office at the White Pass Depot in Whitehorse and hearing the grumbling of having to not only deliver the freight but also cut a cheque for the damaged product and deliver it. One incident that I recall clearly, was not beer it was rye, 'Crown Royal' to be exact. I guess it was tempting too. Even then the containers were in use and the mischief continued. Bottles would magically be extracted through a hole in the bottom of the box. – Sherron)*

## **NEW ADDRESS**

The early history of flying in the Yukon was most interesting - thanks for all your work and do hope you will continue the good work - but it must be mind boggling!!!

Have a new address - [issie@magma.ca](mailto:issie@magma.ca)

Happy New Year to you and yours. Isobel Cameron

## **NEW ADDITIONS TO THE LIST**

Deb Osborne has expressed as interest in joining Moc Tel. she was a Fordyce from Whitehorse [steve-deb@northwestel.net](mailto:steve-deb@northwestel.net)

Regards Marsha Flumerfelt

Hello Sherron:

Yes, I would be interested in joining your repository. I would also like to suggest a couple more names:

My sister, Marlee Larson lives just outside of Vernon, now. Her e-mail address is [marno@telus.net](mailto:marno@telus.net). She moved from Whitehorse to Vernon a few years ago.

My brother, Stan Fordyce, has just moved back to Whitehorse. His e-mail address is: *(no reply yet, Sherron)*

My husband, Steve Osborne, moved to the Yukon in 1972 and I was born in Whitehorse (a number of years ago... 50 to be exact.) We have lived in Haines Junction and area for 22 years and prior to that we lived in Whitehorse and on the Carcross Road.

Thanks Deb Osbourne [steve-deb@northwestel.net](mailto:steve-deb@northwestel.net)

It sure was great to hear from you the other day. I have run into Bruni Hoenisch several times and she always mentions you, and now we have finally made contact. I really enjoyed reading the Moccasin Telegraph and am definitely interested in receiving future editions, and would love to reconnect with other Yukoners.

I have lived in the Yukon from 1949 to 1997, and spent most of those years in Whitehorse. I worked for the City of Whitehorse where I met you Sherron. I have lived in Vernon, B.C for the last four years, although I really love the Yukon and still get homesick, I sure do love the Okanagan.

Sherron please give me a call, I would love to get together with you.

Marlee Larson Site 12A Comp G5 RR7 Vernon, B C V1T 7Z3  
(250) 260-4062 [marno@telus.net](mailto:marno@telus.net)

We have a couple of friends who would like to join up. Ron and Iris Wilson of Haines Junction. He has worked on the highway for the last 30 ish yrs. Their address is [irwilson@yknet.ca](mailto:irwilson@yknet.ca)

Regards Marsha Flumerfelt [MJFlumerfelt@yt.sympatico.ca](mailto:MJFlumerfelt@yt.sympatico.ca)

Hello Sherron

Thank you for the quick reply...we can't wait to see and hear how this turns out. We are Ron and Iris Wilson. We moved to Yukon on September 9 1968, lived in Whitehorse for 1 year and moved to Destruction Bay with YTG Highways dept in Oct 1969. Ron transferred to 75 mile Haines road in 1985 as highways foreman and I continued to live and work in Destruction Bay. In 1991 Ron transferred to Haines Junction. We sold our property in Destruction Bay and built a house in Haines Junction and we are still here. Ron retired from Highways in July 2001. If you would like a more detailed story please let me know as I have just done this in a hurry. Looking forward to hearing from you. Iris Wilson [irwilson@yknet.ca](mailto:irwilson@yknet.ca)

Hi Sherron. Frank is Roxy and Fred Taylors son and Francis is the daughter of Sam and Carrol Cawley. Both are born here I believe. Frank works at North 60 petro at the Highway Division and is in charge of all the mechanics and drivers and dispatchers I think. North 60 of course is all that remains of the old White Pass. I hope he contacts you. Regards Don Frizzell (*no reply yet, Sherron*)

Sherron, I talked to the owner, John Obermeier and he would like to add his name to the list. Also, he is going to be sending jpg pictures with descriptions. He and his wife have split and she has returned home to Germany so John is doing the business on his own, albeit, it's a quiet time during the winter months. He'll send the information in time for the next MocTel. John is familiar with the MocTel and had one sitting on his desk when I called. He's very impressed with the content. Donna Clayton  
[ytdogteam@telus.net](mailto:ytdogteam@telus.net)

Thanks Sherron,..use what I've sent as you see fit,...no problem. I'd be glad to be on your list. Wally Wallingham has given me your e-mail address last summer, but I was too busy to contact you,..sorry.

I came to the Yukon in 1986, worked at Yukon Electrical as a System operator in the Control room at the Whse. Rapids Generation Station. I was an Ocean going Marine Engineer (9 years at Sea) 3rd Class. Merchant Ships and Oil Tankers. I also worked in Power plants and Refineries across Canada. I quit my Job in 1992 there and moved up to Mile 1118. (Kluane Wilderness Village) where I met Scully who taught me the Burl trade. He felt fine about me setting up my own shop here in Burwash Landing. This is where it started and still goes on and on. I'm presently going through a divorce from Karin and as things go, change is the only thing that doesn't change. Too bad. I will continue to be of service to the Tourists with my Burl bowls, Canes and Burl posts,...it's just a way of life for me and I wouldn't change it for anything. From what I understand, you have my little Burl booklet, feel free to use it as you see fit and edit if you wish. With the highway under construction, things have changed a bit, not always for the best either. It's now a racetrack to Alaska. However, the pros outweigh the cons. If you feel that I need to elaborate a bit more on some things, please let me know. We have -32°C here for the last couple of days and it's too cold to go around here taking pictures, however if you need anything specific, I will do so when it warms up a bit. Don't hesitate to ask for anything.

Take care for now. Obie and hounds. :- ) (John Obermeier)  
[obie@yt.sympatico.ca](mailto:obie@yt.sympatico.ca)

Hi Sherron:

Would you please add our son's name to receive the Moccasin Telegraph. As you can tell by the pictures he played trumpet in our band. I have asked him to submit a few stories for your second edition. You might want to send him a message to encourage him on, and let him know how much time he has to get any information to you.

REID, Dave

E-mail Address(es): [dave\\_reid@dccnet.com](mailto:dave_reid@dccnet.com)

Here is the address:

Dave REID

977 - 52A Street

Delta, B.C. V4M 2A1 Phone: 604 943-3415

He is a Captain, flying for Air Canada on the 320 and 319 Airbuses and is away flying right now, but will probably get in touch with you as soon as he gets back. I will be phoning him.

We won't be playing for New Years Eve this year, but I will try and find some pictures of past years at New Years Eve.

We decided to fly out to Vancouver and spend part of our Christmas celebrations with our son Dave. Our daughter Shelley & her husband Mike, and daughter Crystal came down from Penticton and joined in the fun. They took us back up to Penticton with them where they booked rooms at the Hilton Hotel up at Apex Mountain. It's just an

18-mile drive from their place. They had reserved two adjoining rooms and she cooked a turkey dinner for Christmas Day up there. There was the horse-drawn sleigh rides, we went snowmobiling with a group, we went skiing...and had a wonderful time. The ski village was all lit up and Christmas Eve they had a torch light ski parade down the mountain to watch. There was a huge bonfire at the foot of the hill and free hot chocolate for everyone. Santa appeared to entertain the young ones. I will take my pictures in tomorrow to get developed and send you a few shots. We just got back this afternoon.

Bye for now. RUSTY REID [rustyreid@northwestel.net](mailto:rustyreid@northwestel.net)

I received your latest edition from Henry Lohmann. His son, Mike, my husband Rob, and myself worked at Air North in the early 1980's. My name is Debbie Pyde, (Moulton). I currently reside in Airdrie, Alberta with my husband Rob Pyde, and two daughters.

I was born in Whitehorse in 1961 and lived there until 1988, when Rob and I went to work for AirBC in Vancouver. The stories are terrific and I know of many of the people in them. Rob started flying out of Whitehorse in 1979. We would be pleased to receive the Moccasin Telegraph. Thanks very much and keep up the great work! Happy New Year.

Debbie and Rob Pyde [rdpyde@telusplanet.net](mailto:rdpyde@telusplanet.net)

Hi Sherron:

I just got off the phone from talking to Jack Earle who used to live in Whitehorse and was a trumpet player with the Northernairs Dance Band for many years. He said he would contribute to your special edition. If you would like to sign him up to receive the Moccasin Telegraph he would be most pleased. Maybe a few words to him to encourage him on, would be a good idea.

Jack EARLE  
2850 Alexander Crescent  
Prince George, BC  
Phone: 250 561-1394  
E-mail: [jearle@telus.net](mailto:jearle@telus.net)

Jack's grandfather (Old Doic Earle), as well as his mother & father lived in the Yukon (Jack Earle, Sr.) and I think Jack went to school here. Jack was married in the Yukon. His first wife (Laddie Earle) used to baby-sit our kids while we all were playing for dances.

I will go and see what I can find for past New Years Eve pictures now.

Bye for now.....RUSTY REID [rustyreid@northwestel.net](mailto:rustyreid@northwestel.net)

My name is Jack Parkin I lived in Whitehorse from 1947 until 1968. I have visited Whitehorse off and on since. I have relatives in Whitehorse -- Bobbie Morgan (who sent me this Mocket) . My e-mail address to be used is [jparkincfp@shaw.ca](mailto:jparkincfp@shaw.ca) I now live in Creston, B.C.

Jack Parkin Visit my website - <http://www.jackparkincfp.com>

Please sign me up to receive the newsletter. I've had 3 different friends forward it to me so I think it's time I signed up. My father moved to Whse in 1949 and the rest of the family followed the next year. My parents were Mary and Cecil Dugas. My Dad originally worked for the Army and transferred to DPW when the army left. I left Whse permanently in 1964 but my brother and sister still lives there - Cathy and Gerard Dugas and their families.

Thank you.....Anne Chin (Dugas) [anne6240@yahoo.com](mailto:anne6240@yahoo.com)  
To answer your questions - We moved to Whse when I was a child. I graduated WHS in 1958. Lived in Montreal from 1964-1973 then moved to Bellevue, Washington and have been here ever since. Thanks for all your hard work.

Anne Chin (Dugas)

My name is Jim Ross I used to live in Swift River, also at Mile 928. My oldest son was born in the nursing station at Teslin. Sue Chadwick later Jackson, delivered and Sue Leary the Foresters wife assisted.

My e-mail address is [jimros@shaw.ca](mailto:jimros@shaw.ca)

Hope the above puts me on your list. I remain.

Good Morning, Sherron:

Just finished chatting with old friend Vic Hoy in Penticton a bit ago. Vic and I first met back in 1954 when we were with the RCAF in Whitehorse. While I transferred out of Whitehorse in 1961 I've been back many times since, both with Canadian Utilities/YECL and as an occasional truck driver or holidayer.

Vic tells me that you have a Web publication called "Moccasin Telegraph". Would appreciate finding out how I can be placed on the circulation list, if possible.

Thank you and have a super year 2004.

Regards,

Earle Smith [t16ru672@telusplanet.net](mailto:t16ru672@telusplanet.net)

Grande Prairie AB

Sherron I would appreciate if you would add me to your mailing list for the Moccasin Telegraph. I learned of your newsletter earlier this year from my older cousin Linnea Castagner and find it very interesting. I have been a Yukoner since moving to Whitehorse in 1954 with my parents Magnus and Marjorie Hougen.

Thank you

Brent Hougen [bhouden@yt.sympatico.ca](mailto:bhougen@yt.sympatico.ca)

Happy New Year Sherron, all the best to you and yours!!!

It finds us in Destruction Bay with temps of -35c and lows of -40 tonite, almost like the "good old days".

Here is a couple of people who are long time Yukoners who would like to hear from you re: the Moc Tel

Drew and Margaret Dunn "[madunn@marshlake.polarcom.com](mailto:madunn@marshlake.polarcom.com)"

Bryun and Shelley Dalziel "[sdalziel@yknet.yk.ca](mailto:sdalziel@yknet.yk.ca)"

Regards Marsha Flumerfelt MJFlumerfelt@yt.sympatico.ca

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*How a man plays the game shows something of his character; how he loses shows it all.*

## RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Bruni Hoenisch has asked me to send you our recipe for barbecuing the salmon we used to serve at our Yukoners August BBQ. I use the same recipe at our sports group BBQ's in Sept. where we serve anywhere up to 400 so I will give you the quantities for one salmon and for 60 fish for large groups.

**For one salmon, of 3 or 4 lbs.** cut each fish fillet into 3 or 4 pieces.

**MARINADE** (quantities are very approximate)

about 3/4 bottle of Mazola oil

juice of 1/2 lemon

garlic powder, dill weed, onion salt

one or two green onions, chopped

Shake all together well and marinate fish for 15 minutes to 3 hours

### **BASTE**

Equal portions (about 2 Tbs.) each of butter and brown sugar.

Garlic powder, dill weed, onion salt, portions are to taste.

One green onion, chopped

1-2 Tbs. lemon juice

some regular BBQ sauce or catsup, for color

Bring all above to a boil, then simmer slowly for awhile to allow the spices to blend.

**COOKING** (same for large or small quantities)

After marinating, place fish flesh side down over VERY HOT fire for 3 minutes. I mean very hot. There should be lots of flames (because of the oil). Turn skin side down over a much cooler fire for 6-10 minutes. Baste this side liberally. As soon as the flesh loses its translucent look it is ready to serve.

**Quantities for 50 or 60 fish** of about 3-4 lbs each, cut each fillet into 3 or 4 serving size pieces. We marinate quantities of this size overnight

## **MARINADE**

about 12 ltrs Mazola oil

4 ltr. lemon juice

1/2 cup garlic powder

3/4 - 1 cup dill weed

1/2 cup onion salt

2 bunches green onions, chopped

Mix all ingredients together. Marinade 15 minutes to overnight

## **BASTE**

5 lb. butter (not margarine)

5 lb. brown sugar

3/4 cup garlic powder

3/4 cup dill weed

1/3 cup onion salt

5 bunches green onions, chopped

2 cups lemon juice

1 bottle regular BBQ sauce for color

Bring all ingredients to a boil, lower heat and allow mixture to blend and thicken

If there are any questions you can reach me here on Shaw or my Hotmail address is the same at Shaw [ron\\_but@shaw.ca](mailto:ron_but@shaw.ca) , or [ron\\_but@hotmail.com](mailto:ron_but@hotmail.com)

Also, Sherron, could you include me on your list for the info you send other Yukoners. Gus Barrett tells me you are very active and send lots of interesting stuff.

Thanks, Ron Butler

## **FOR PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THE MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH**

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

To date **forty-five previous editions of the Moccasin Telegraph** have been produced, along with over **twenty special editions**.

**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.

It is important that you write **Moccasin Telegraph Request** in the subject line of your e-mail and that you give her a full name to reply to. Due to the fear of viruses she will not be opening mail from unknown people unless it is clear from the subject line and name that the request is not a spam or virus.

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

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

## DATES TO REMEMBER

For Vancouver Yukoners events check <http://www3.telus.net/yukoners/index.htm> or contact President Don Murray at - [donaldmurray@telus.net](mailto:donaldmurray@telus.net) or Secretary Nancy Moulton at - [nancymoulton@telus.net](mailto:nancymoulton@telus.net) The Banquet will be on March 27, 2004 this year. Regards: Lowell

## 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.

– Sherron Jones [sherronjones@shaw.ca](mailto:sherronjones@shaw.ca)