

**MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH –Seventy-Ninth Edition- Sept. 12, 2004**

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



**Tatchun Gold**

Photo courtesy Heinrich Lohmann [heinrich@lohmann.ca](mailto:heinrich@lohmann.ca)

**DEATH WATCH**

By Gus Barrett [sourdoughs2@shaw.ca](mailto:sourdoughs2@shaw.ca)

He stood there in his prison garb,  
Before the judges throne.  
Just a boy of nineteen years,  
So scared and all alone.  
I saw his body stiffen  
And tremble as from cold,  
As the judge decreed, “may God  
Have mercy on your soul.”

He’d gotten in an argument,  
And by too much booze, inspired,  
When things were getting out of hand

He drew a gun and fired.  
The judge and jury now have found.  
He freely chose to kill,  
And so must face the penalty,  
The gallows on the hill.

I led him to his prison cell  
Where he would now repose,  
And I would be his guard until  
That final sun arose.  
For days we talked, as young men do,  
Of girls and dates and cars,  
And played an endless game of cribbage  
Through the prison bars.

He never spoke about his deed,  
No comment of regret.  
Showed no sorrow for his victim,  
Or the way he'd met his death.  
He kept his feelings hidden  
In a soul so dark and deep,  
But late at night I'd often hear him  
Sobbing in his sleep.

Throughout the passing days I watched  
For some sign of remorse.  
For some sign of regret for taking  
Such a destructive course.  
But he maintained his silence,  
Unrepentant 'till the day  
I watched a grim old padre come  
And lead the boy away.

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### **Bud Harbottle Manuscript (Copyright 2004)**

Property of Jeanne Harbottle, Vernon, B.C.

*Jeanne has just phoned me to ask me to make a note for Chapter 20. She said although Bud did not mention the names of those left in the bush for the winter it was in fact Tom Connolly and Johnny Dewhurst.*

*Jeanne had decided that after not returning to her family in California for four years she would go home during the winter of 1949. She remembers it was that winter that Tom said he would go trapping with Johnny Dewhurst and did.*

*As was mentioned in last weeks chapter, George Milne was to return to Niddery Lake in December with the balance of their supplies. He forgot and so when he remembered in*

*April he sent Bud to retrieve them. Bud had no idea he was heading into a “hornets nest” of angry trappers. The two had been without supplies for several months and had they not been experienced “bush men” they would not have survived.*

## Chapter 21

On the fourth of October 1954, a date I will never forget, George and I were both going to Ross River. I left in the morning and George would follow later. I was to wait for him at Ross and take part of his load onto another destination. I waited all day and when he did not show up, I returned to Whitehorse in the evening. There, I found out he had left just after lunch.

It froze very hard that night so our first thought was that he might have sat on a high lake due to weather and was frozen in. Next day Gordon and I went out and searched all the high lakes on the route but there was no sign of him. Search and Rescue were alerted. They set up a headquarters in Whitehorse with a search master to coordinate the project. All the private and commercial airplanes in the area were offered, from two place ones to an Air Force DC-3. Many local people offered to go along as observers so every plane carried its capacity load of passengers. The more eyes the better. We had many volunteers to service the aircraft and monitor the radio.



Adelaide Robertson from the Bank of Montreal and George Milne, 1954  
Cessna – Yukon River - Whitehorse

As the days went by and no sighting yet we had fuel caches put on Quiet Lake and Ross River for the float-equipped planes. We had clear weather for six days and then the ceiling came down to four thousand feet above sea level, which prevented us from searching the higher elevations. Each day the search master gave each pilot a designated sector to work in so we would not be overlapping each other. I carried six passengers and flew from dawn to dark.

On the eighth day we had a report from Blind Creek that a man had gone outdoors at eight o'clock at night and had seen a bright glow in the sky to the south. He called the others out to see it. One of them took a sight on it with a compass and determined two hundred degrees from the camp and about twenty-five miles away. There were very high rough mountains in that area and with the low ceiling we were unable to get up to those elevations. By this time we were getting the feeling that something very serious had happened to George because if the airplane was still in one piece it would surely have been seen.

It was not a big area to search, as it was only one hundred twenty-five miles direct Whitehorse-Ross River. Putting twenty-five miles on each side of that line did not give a large area as most searches go. However, it was very rough country as the Pelly Mountains lay across the route. The Air Force brought in a large helicopter called a Banana. I have forgotten the official designation, but it did not last very long as it landed at the gas cache on the Canol Road at Quiet Lake and flipped over on its side washing it out completely. That was the only casualty of the whole search.



Canadian Forces Helicopter "The Banana" tipped over at Quiet Lake.  
During search for Milne - October 1954

On the thirteenth day, an Air Force DC-3 flying near Pony Creek was able to get up high enough to fly through a gap in a mountain ridge. As he did, one observer reported he thought he saw an airplane wreck. The pilot went out into the Pelly Valley to turn around, and then came back through the same gap and sure enough, there was the airplane totally destroyed up at the six thousand foot level. There was no sign of survivors so the DC-3 returned to Whitehorse and gave us the compass coordinates.

The Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting Company had a Sikorski S-55 helicopter at Ross River so it flew to the sight and picked up the four bodies and returned to Ross River. Gordon and I flew to the sight with the intention of going on to Ross to pick them

up and return them to Whitehorse. While we were over the wreck the helicopter pilot called us on the radio and told us he was going to stay at Ross overnight and would bring the bodies to Whitehorse the next day, which he did.

This was a great shock to the whole community as George was well known and very popular. He had been married only a few years and had one young child and another on the way. He was buried in the Whitehorse Cemetery and his funeral was attended by a very large crowd.

As it was hunting season at the time many local people were out looking for their winter meat and saw him at many different points. We were able to piece together a pretty good map of his flight. After leaving Whitehorse, he was seen over Livingston Creek, seventy miles on a direct course going north. In a short time, he returned over Livingston going south and up the Teslin River. A private pilot was on Rosy Lake and saw him turn east towards Quiet Lake. He was seen there going down the Salmon River but returned in about an hour and flew towards Ross following the Canol Road. He was seen turning west again into the mountains, which would take him to the head of Pony Creek. That was the last sighting but he must have gone down Pony Creek to the north fork of the Big Salmon River where he turned north again and in a short distance crashed. He must have been under a low ceiling and thought he could go through a low gap in a mountain ridge. That would have put him in a deep valley that would have led him to the Pelly River. For some reason he stall-turned at the last moment.

The plane fell several hundred feet onto a smooth rock shelf leaving two aluminum streaks from the floats. He had hit so hard both water rudders broke off along with the paddles and engine exhaust stack. It must have then bounced into the air and rolled inverted striking the ground upside down fifty feet from a vertical drop-off of many hundreds of feet. One wing went over and was a way down below. The four occupants must have died instantly. The glow in the sky the people in the camp had seen eight days after he went missing must have been the aircraft burning. The fuel tanks were in the belly, which was now above everything. The fuel must have leaked out of the filler pipes onto everything below. Of course, there were many broken electrical wires dangling everywhere so the wind probably blew one against some metal and the spark would set it on fire.

What I could never understand was why he had such a problem. I went right across the same area in the morning and again at night and never saw any bad weather. Gordon and I were now left to carry on the business.

Pacific Western Airlines was a large company based in Vancouver with scheduled runs down the Mackenzie River and many small charter bases. They had wanted to get into Whitehorse for some time so they could compete with C P Air on a scheduled Vancouver-Whitehorse run. Using Whitehorse as their base, they thought they would have a good chance of getting it. We started negotiating with them and in December, Gordon and I went to Vancouver and completed the deal.

We both agreed to stay on as employees for a period of time until they were established. They would put in their own manager. I would be chief pilot and Gordon would be chief engineer. They would give us more planes and personnel. We received a new Beaver right away. Lloyd Romfo was now flying charter so they sent Ron Connoly and his wife Dawn both commercial pilots to Whitehorse. Ron was to fly charter and Dawn would run the school as she was an excellent instructor. I rode around with Ron until he was familiar with the country and I could see he would not have any problems as he was used to this type of work.

After breakup, they sent us a Junker's low wing monoplane with corrugated metal skin and a Pratt and Whitney engine. It was a real vintage machine and built like a tank. I was supposed to fly it but after looking at the cockpit, which seemed to be all iron, I could visualize myself flying this thing into the ground somewhere, sometime and ricocheting around amongst that iron so I said, "*No thanks*". Ron said he would fly it. He did and had good luck with it all summer. At freeze-up in the fall, he flew it back to Vancouver. It is now in the Aviation Museum in Ottawa.

In June 1955, I went to Edmonton to pick up a twin engine Anson which was a war time trainer and light bomber. The construction was all plywood with a fabric covering, two Pratt and Whitney Wasp Junior' engines and a retractable undercarriage. It could carry ten passengers or a ton of freight and was an excellent plane for the bush type strips we would be using.



CF- GLY Anson  
Photo courtesy Jeanne Harbottle

I had to get a twin endorsement for my license so P.W.A.'s chief pilot made two circuits and landings with me on the Edmonton airport. Then I took up the D.O.T. inspectors. I had the chief pilot sitting in the co-pilot seat and the two Department men standing behind me looking over my shoulder. It was a hot day and with all this brass along and a strange airplane, I was pouring sweat. We did some single engine work and everyone on the plane seemed to be pulling or pushing levers and controls to confuse me. I managed to keep the airplane flying so the inspector said, "*Okay, go in and land.*"

On approach, I did not know how the airplane felt near stall speeds so was going in quite quickly. I did not want to squash all these V.I.P.'s on the runway. The inspector pointed out a place on the runway where he wanted the airplane stopped. We touched down right on the end of the runway and then I stood on the brakes, which were very severe so we shuddered to a stop right on the mark. The inspector asked me if I always approached that fast and I told him, "*Not necessarily*", and let it go at that. He told me to taxi into the ramp and after we were parked, he signed off my license for twin engines.

The next day I was asked to take five V.I.P.'s to Yellowknife in the Anson. They were all pilots as most all P.W.A.'s managerial people were. They sat back in the cabin leaving me to get them there. The only way I could do that was by map reading as this was strange country to me. I was good with maps and we made it okay. The V.I.P.'s had their meeting in the bar of a hotel where it seemed to me all aviation business was conducted. The place seemed to be swarming with bush pilots.

The next morning we loaded up. We had an additional passenger, a famous pilot who had flown all over the Arctic for many years named Stan McMillan. He had been flying a Norseman up north for P.W.A. when he blew a jug and had to sit down on the ice. He was eventually picked up and flown to Yellowknife. I was now taking him to Edmonton. I felt that I was among royalty.

The next day they wanted me to take a man to Prince Albert to look at and if acceptable buy another Anson. My passenger was Bob Dellart, an engineer I had known in Carcross when he worked for Northern Airways, the company we had bought out. He was now chief engineer in Edmonton for P.W.A. We set off and as this was also strange country, I was on the maps again. He accepted the Anson so we went back to Edmonton.

Sandy Welbourne the base manager in Whitehorse had asked me to bring his father to Whitehorse on my return. So the next day, I loaded him and "a young engineer and his tools aboard and set off for home. We made one stop at Watson Lake to refuel and were in Whitehorse in early afternoon.

A rough landing strip had been built at Blind Creek on a sloping hill so the landings had to be made uphill and the take-off down it. There was also one at Ross River on the north side of the Pelly just below the bridge. It had been Connolly's hay field but had been smoothed out by dragging heavy timbers behind a jeep. It was very short for the Anson but I used it okay. With those two strips and the bigger ones at Dawson, Mayo and Burwash, we were able to keep the Anson quite busy.

I went to Ross River one day and picked up Jeanne Connolly. Then I went on to Blind Creek for more passengers. When I went to start the engines, the batteries were dead. There was nothing to do but hand-prop it, as there was nothing around for me to jump batteries. I set the brakes and piled rocks in front of the wheels so it would not get away if the throttles were set too high. Then I put an empty gas drum in front of the engine to

stand on, as the blades were too high to reach from the ground. This was a very hairy way to do it but I could think of no other.

I had instructed Jeanne how to handle the switches and what to do if the engine started too fast then got on the drum to pull the blades through. The right engine caught right away and I thought it would generate enough juice to start the other but it did not. I had to repeat the performance. When they were both running I got rid of the drum and rocks and we were away. I would not recommend that procedure to anyone.

\* \* \* \* \*

I was taking Ted Chisholm and his supplies to Ross River in the Anson one day. I was holding a burning cigarette in my right hand and while talking I was waving my hand to emphasize a point. When I hit the magnetic compass that was suspended from the roof, the cigarette flew out of my fingers and disappeared. The Anson was built with plywood and covered with fabric and would burn like a torch. The cockpit floor did not go to the walls. There was a four inch gap all the way around. Loose objects such as pens, pencils, charts, microphones, gloves, sun glasses, gum and chocolate bar wrappers all went down there in turbulent weather. The Lord only knew what was down there, as I never saw anyone clean it out. I was also sure there must be some hydraulic fluid spilled from the system that was under the floor and flammable. That is where I figured the cigarette had gone. I had Ted squirt the pyrene fire extinguisher down there as it might put out the butt. There was nothing else to do. We were just halfway to Ross so it did not make any difference whether we went on or back to Whitehorse. There was no where else to land so we kept going all the while watching that gap like a pair of eagles for the first whiff of smoke. We were wound up like clock springs.

I saw something out of the corner of my eye and when I focused on it I saw my cigarette wedged into a V on the end of a device, which fastened the side storm window on Ted's side of the cockpit. It was still burning. I shouted, "*Ted*". If it had not been for his seat belt I am sure he would have hit the roof. I pointed to the cigarette and when he saw it, he just slumped in his seat. Finally, he reached out with both hands; one under the cigarette and the other to grasp it. When it was free, he jammed it into the ashtray. We were so relieved we just sat there and laughed at each other. He said when I shouted he thought I had seen fire for sure and he almost panicked.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the fall of 1955 I was going to leave the company. They sent up an Anson pilot from Vancouver. He had many hours flying time so I was taking him around to the various landing strips to show him what they were like. When I landed at Ross River his remark was, "*My God, this is just a calculated crash.*" Then I took him to Blind Creek and he said, "*This is getting worse. I don't know if I want to stay here and do this.*"

After a few circuits and landings on his own he thought he would stay awhile.

(To be continued)

## OUR TRIP BACK HOME TO THE YUKON – PART I

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

Note: all photos courtesy of Donna Clayson except where noted.

We had a late start getting away from home July 11, 2004 for our trip to the Yukon. I wanted to get an early start but there was so much to pack and then to find room in our Jimmy. We planned on camping for the next three weeks as I wanted to really feel the “land” in its entire splendor. It had been 4 years since I was last “home” and didn’t want to miss anything on this trip. The food was in the coolers and the canned goods in the special plastic containers I had found at Wal-Mart. I even intended to give the brand new propane cook stove a good working over. We were going to eat, sleep and generally live in our truck for three weeks. At noon we were ready and said our goodbyes to our house sitter, Dave and a big farewell to the three cats. I couldn’t wait to leave and begin our experiences. Even though I’ve been away from the north since 1978 I have tried to return every few years. I just knew this trip would be different from any I’ve had before.

The real trip actually began in Dawson Creek, the start of the Alaska Highway and my birthplace in 1950. I remember when, in 1961, my dad, Doug Storing, announced he would be leaving in May for a place called Haines Junction, Yukon. Neither my mother, Alfield (aka Al), nor myself had ever heard of the place and wondered why in the world anyone would want to leave Dawson. It was during the construction of the Alaska Highway in 1941 that Dad had fallen in love with the north, particularly, the Yukon. He worked for Okes Construction, a private contractor and when he saw the mountains and beautiful lakes it was love at first site. For 20 years he pined for the north, never comfortable living anywhere else. Both my mother and I thought he had ‘lost it’ but he was determined to make a go of the garage he would manage and he was going with or without us.

In July, 1961 after a long, hot ride on a Greyhound Bus (which is another story) we arrived tired, cranky and smelling of smoke from the forest fires we had to endure from Muncho Lake. It wasn’t until September that I knew I was hooked and the “Spell of the Yukon” had me tightly in its’ grip. My mother confided she felt the same.



Dawson Creek Monument

Now, after a quick stop in my old hometown I was ready to get on my way up the highway and begin experiencing new adventures and of course, familiar ones. And so, with the Alaska Highway monument at our backs we were on our way.

In no time at all we arrived in Ft. St. John. Bryan's brother, Don and sister-in-law, Wendy were expecting us. A delicious supper and comfortable feather bed ended our first leg of the trip. Wendy has plans of opening a bed and breakfast in the near future and couldn't wait to practice on us. Our not so comfortable foam in the back of the Jimmy would have to wait. Again a wonderful meal in the morning and off we were again.



Don Clayson



Wendy Clayson

As we drove by Charlie Lake I recalled a picture my dad had taken around 1941. The last time I spent time at the lake all I saw were a few cabins and boats on the water. I recalled a picture my dad had taken around '41 or '42 and there were actually buildings in this location.



Charlie Lake – 1941 or 1942  
Doug Storing photo

At km 185 we spotted our first wildlife – a black bear. I'm not known for taking great pictures but at least I got one.



Black Bear

As the miles rolled by thoughts of Suicide Hill at km 239 came into mind. During highway construction in 1941-42 my father took a picture of this treacherous part of the road. The stories he told were of caterpillars waiting at the top and bottom of the hill, prepared to tow the unfortunate vehicles to the top.

The hill was one of the most treacherous on the original highway and bore the greeting "Prepare to Meet Thy Maker." How I wish the sign were still there. Today the hill poses no problem, and only a sign commemorates the original grade of around 25 percent. The steepest grade today is only 10 percent. A sign at the site reads as follows:



Suicide Hill Sign

*The pioneer highway completed by United States soldiers in 1942 was a rugged, boggy trail that tested the skills and determination of even the most experienced driver. One of the most notorious sections, located just a few miles northeast was given the ominous name "Suicide Hill". The original highway veered to the east across the southend of the Sikanni Chief flight strip, built by the army for survey aircraft and, later, construction supply planes. After passing the airstrip, the road climbed to avoid a muskeg bog over which the new highway now runs. Within a short distance, a sign announced "Suicide Hill", followed by another more descriptive warning, "Prepare to Meet Thy Maker. The hill claimed countless vehicles and at least one driver before the highway was re-routed*

*several years later. The original road from the north end of Suicide Hill joins the present highway at Historic Mile 156. The south end, from the airstrip, is now closed to traffic.*



Suicide Hill - 1942  
Doug Storing photo

This section of the highway sure looks different now. I tried to determine where dad stood to take this photo and wanted to stand in the same spot but there have been so many changes over the years it's impossible to find the location.

We continued on our way and stopped for lunch at Buckinghorse River campground, km 175. What a beautiful spot to stop and enjoy the view. The scenery speaks for itself:



Buckinghorse River Campground

Buckinghorse River Campground

After a delicious lunch (on our brand new camp stove and brand new camping dishes) we packed up the Jimmy. Things didn't go back in as well this time but it was still reasonably organized. Fort Nelson was our next stop.

To be continued .....

## **COMMENTS ON PENNY SIPPEL SPECIAL EDITION**

Sherron: This is a great SPECIAL edition on Penny Sippel's growing up. I am only sorry that she left out that her Mom was the greatest berry picker in the Yukon. When blueberry picking time arrived, she used to take her little dog (I believe) and she would drive out to the Clinton Creek turn-off and pick those beautiful big blueberries by the ice cream

containers all day, remain there at night and begin picking early in the morning for another all day session. I believe she used to sell them in Dawson to those who did not or could not pick them, themselves. There were enough for all of us to pick if we had time, but I'll never forget her arriving back in Dawson with that little car so loaded with these sweet blueberries. After she left Dawson, many people missed this yearly episode.

A Great Edition, Brownie Foth [lfoth\\*shaw.ca](mailto:lfoth*shaw.ca)

## YUKON POLLY

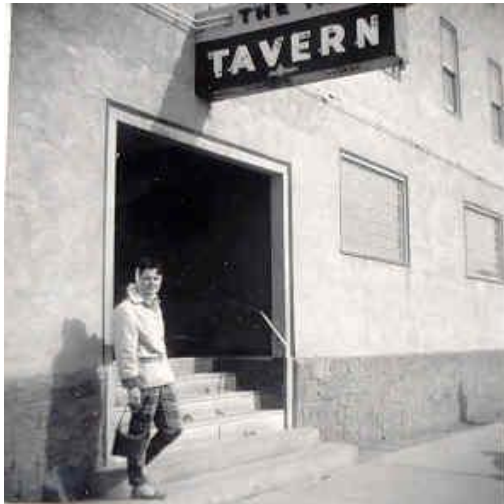
I came across an old weathered newspaper clipping in the dark recesses of my closet, in a box I hadn't opened for years. It was from a friend in Phoenix, Arizona, (of all places to have an article about Carcross, Yukon.) Here it is:

Yukon Polly II, a four year old successor to the "World Famous Carcross Polly, (the oldest, meanest, cussingest, ugliest, booziest bird in the Yukon Territory), has laid two eggs, but neither of them will hatch into Yukon Polly III. One of the eggs bounced out of the cage (splat!) and the other is just rolling around like a loose miniature football.

"She's not trying to hatch it," said Beverly Bear, an employee of the Caribou Hotel in Carcross where Polly II lives. "All she does is squawk a lot. Some mother!"

The Original Yukon Polly was brought to Carcross during the Klondike Gold Rush. She became a resident of the hotel in 1918, swearing fluently in several languages, singing operatic arias and quaffing beer and whiskey provided by sourdoughs and trappers.

Joyce Yardley [joyceyardley\\*shaw.ca](mailto:joyceyardley*shaw.ca)



**Debbie Kelly – Whitehorse Inn – early 1960's**  
Photo courtesy Debbie Kelly [debbiekelly\\*on.aibn.com](mailto:debbiekelly*on.aibn.com)

## **A MESSAGE FROM MYRNA IN DAWSON** - Sept 5, 2004

Hi Sherron, Just a note to let you know that life is going on in Dawson City. Yesterday we had rain pretty near all day .Today the sun is shining and we can actually see blue sky and the hills in all their colorful glory. However this afternoon the clouds are rolling in again and it looks like more rain, but we are not going to complain. We know what the alternative is. My daughter emailed me from Tok Alaska and said that snow was down to the tree line and there was snow on the Taylor hiway .They call the first sifting of snow Termination Dust, that's when all the summer people quit their jobs and head south. I've just read a book written by Rose Toole of Watson Lake. It's called A Promise Fulfilled [My life on a Yukon Trapline]. It was a very interesting story of life in the bush in the winter, in modern times. Rose and Gordon were Mr. & Mrs. YUKON 2003. They are a very interesting couple and love the Yukon. I also enjoyed Harvey Burians' story of life in the Yukon. Just goes to show, you can take the boy out of the Yukon but you can't take the Yukon out of the boy. Glad to hear that Joe Langevin is doing so well. Joe and Marion were great people real joiners in the community. Both of them were great cooks. Joe had an excellent collection of pictures that he took during his years in the Yukon, and Marion was an excellent curler. She took a Team of Dawson Girls to Curling Playdowns in Nova Scotia, I believe the girls came in 3rd. Keep up the good work I enjoy all the reading.....Myrna Butterworth [myrnab\\*yknnet.ca](mailto:myrnab@yknnet.ca)

You can read a preview or order Rose Toole's book at  
<http://www.trafford.com/4dcgi/view-item?item=5154&222195649-28665aaa>

## **A MESSAGE FROM JEAN IN EAGLE** — Sept 5, 2004

About the fires -- they've still been smoldering, but not too much right around Eagle. One woke up about 60 miles north of us, and they've still been having problems along the Taylor Highway between Tok and Chicken. We did get a nice, steady day-long rain yesterday, so maybe things have calmed down now.

We can't see any burn areas from the City of Eagle, but from the riverfront in the old Native village, you can see some burn across the river. We were very, very lucky -- and have a lot of people to thank too.

No overnight snow yet. It was so cold and rainy yesterday, I thought maybe we might get some last night, but nope....it stopped raining before nightfall.

Thanks for asking -  
Jean Turner, Eagle Alaska [njturner\\*aptalaska.net](mailto:njturner@aptalaska.net)

## **A MESSAGE FROM KARREN CROWLEY**

While rummaging through a box of old Yukon pictures yesterday I came across a few that might interest you. The picture below was taken at the Whitehorse Airport Fire Hall , where Bob worked with Bill Reid. I am sure the year was 1961.

Karren (North) Crowley [kbcrowley\\*telus.net](mailto:kbcrowley@telus.net)



**Bill Reid's Secret Band**

Al Martens, Joe Cottrell, Bob Crowley, Bill Reid

Photo courtesy Bob & Karren Crowley

## **A MESSAGE FROM JOYCE YARDLEY - Sept 5, 2004**

To the Porsild family and friends:

My heart goes out to you and the family at this time. Elly will certainly be missed by a great number of people, but her memory will last for the lifetime of all of us who knew her. Thanks to Ellen, and her excellent book, "The Cinnamon Mine," she will be remembered by many others as well.

What a dear little "fireball" she was. Tiny body and huge heart. With all the many chores involved in running a lodge, she always took time to sit down and visit with us. I remember her infectious laugh and boundless energy.

Every year, from 1945 to the late 1980's Gordon and I would stop by the Lodge at Johnson's Crossing, both coming and going on the Alaska Highway.

In the early days, we'd be hauling yearling cattle and horses from Fort St. John to Carcross, in the truck. Later, (as our lodge and mining operations were seasonal) we'd be heading to or from California, in our car or motor home. At Johnson's Crossing we could always be sure of a warm welcome, the wonderful smell of bread and cinnamon rolls baking in the kitchen. Gordon would tease her unmercifully just to hear her laugh.

After Elly retired, Ellen and her family carried on the tradition in the style which we'd been accustomed to; (remember those eagerly awaited columns in the newspaper each week, entitled "Lives of Quiet Desperation"?) I still have most of those in a scrapbook somewhere. (I hope they didn't get lost in one of our moves) I think it would be a good time to republish them all for us, Ellen. I'll bet your parents were very proud of their family.

Wish Fred and I could be in Whitehorse to help celebrate Elly's life, but we can't make it at this time.

Joyce Yardley [joyceyardley@shaw.ca](mailto:joyceyardley@shaw.ca)  
<http://members.shaw.ca/joyceyardley/>

## **OBIT**

Here is a kind of obituary that you may want to run in the next MocTel. We will be up there all next week; a funeral service will be held on Thursday, Sept 9, in Whitehorse.  
Aksel Porsild [yukoner1@shaw.ca](mailto:yukoner1@shaw.ca)

### **Elly Porsild -A Life**

It is with sadness that we mourn the passing of Elly Porsild, of Whitehorse. She went peacefully on September 1, surrounded by caring and loving Macaulay Lodge staff, as well as her two daughters. She had lived over 101 adventuresome years, most of them in the North. Surviving her is son Aksel (Lorene) of Courtenay BC, and daughters Ellen Davignon, and Johanne Brown (John), of Whitehorse. An older daughter, Betty Seaborne died in July 2004 in Camrose AB.

Elly was born in Denmark in 1903, the second surviving child of well to do parents. She was raised there and worked as a ladies maid and children's governess, later as housekeeper for various families and as a companion for elderly ladies. Around the age of 20 she took a secretary's course and worked for a large shipping firm, living in a boarding house in Copenhagen, until she emigrated to Canada.

She met Bob (Thorbjorn) Porsild early on, while she was still at home; later when she was with the shipping firm he popped the question. Bob, who was working in Canada by then, went back to his job with the Federal Government in the Mackenzie Delta, and didn't return; instead, a year or so later, he sent for her and she complied, travelling across the Atlantic by steamer then by train to Edmonton. Another train ride took her to Fort McMurray where she boarded a paddle wheeler and finished the last few hundred miles of her odyssey by this means. It was late summer of 1930, and they were married in Aklavik on September 18.

After many adventures in that region, they moved to Vancouver briefly, then to Whitehorse,

and down the Yukon river to try bar mining and trapping on the Sixtymile and Stewart Rivers. She was a mother of four by 1940, when the family moved to Dawson. After three lean years there, Whitehorse was again her domicile and they lived there for a few years, before building and operating Johnson's Crossing Lodge on the Alaska Highway, which they ran until 1965. After she and Bob retired they did further adventures in Bob's first discipline, botany, and travelled the Dempster and other north Yukon areas collecting plants and flowers for the National Museum in Ottawa.

They lived in downtown Whitehorse until Bob died in 1977; a few years later she moved to apartments, then to Macaulay Lodge three years ago. She had a million adventures and these few paragraphs do little justice to this feisty and adventurous woman, who followed her often flighty husband all over the North. We mourn her passing; a true Northern Lady.

*How beautifully the leaves grow old; how full of light and colour are their  
last days.* --John Burroughs

## **OBIT**

### **NANCY PARENT**

JULY 28, 1930 – AUGUST 31, 2004

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of Nancy Parent at the age of 74.

Nancy was born in Abbotsford, BC, and spent her childhood there and in Vancouver, BC. At the age of 21, she made a second trip to the Yukon to visit her brother and she met her soul mate, Bob. They were married July 1, 1953, and raised their three children together in Whitehorse.

Nancy worked for many years at T.A. Firth & Sons and at Bailey-Richardson Insurance and after retiring in 1992, she and Bob moved to Vernon, BC, where they enjoyed 13 years with both old and new friends. Sadly Bob passed away in July, 2001. They had been inseparable for fifty years. Nancy moved back to Whitehorse two years later to be closer to her family.

Nancy regularly entertained everyone with her quick wit and wonderful sense of humour. She was very creative and enjoyed painting, writing poetry, and gardening. She loved to spend time with family and friends. The cabin at Marsh Lake was a place of great joy for her and held many of her fondest memories.

Nancy was blessed with a gentle spirit and she lived her life with great dignity. Always a classy lady, she was loved by all who knew her.

Nancy is survived by her children, Jay (Mimi), Charmaine (Rod), Duane (Monica), and six grandchildren: Shaun, Matthew, Kristin, Jeffrey, Kyah, and Tellyse, and sister-in-law Rhea (Don), brother Alex (Kay), sister Margaret and many nieces and nephews.

“NANNIE” will be greatly missed.

A Celebration of Life will take place at the Masonic Hall on September 13, 2004, at 2 PM.

There will be an opportunity to share your memories of Nancy.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation or Canadian Cancer Society

Obituaries (09/03/04)

**ANDERSON, Dennie William**, born Norquay, Saskatchewan, April 21, 1913, passed away peacefully at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital on June 25, 2004. Predeceased by his wife Betty and daughter Sharon, Dennie is survived by many loving family members and friends. Dennie had a successful career with Public Works of Canada and he particularly enjoyed his many adventures as Superintendent of Maintenance for the construction of 1300 miles of the Alaskan Highway. Dennie and Betty retired happily in North Vancouver, then in 1999, Dennie moved to Nanaimo to spend his final years at Berwick on the Lake where he has left fond memories with both the residents and staff. A memorial service will be held at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, September 11, 2004 in the Boal Chapel of First Memorial Funeral Services, 1505 Lillooet Road, North Vancouver. Vancouver Sun / The Province, Area Code 604

Obituaries (09/08/04)

**MINAKER, Russell Glen** - is with deep sadness that our family announces the passing of Russell Glen Minaker on September 1, 2004 after a year long battle with cancer. He was predeceased by his mother Edna in 1988. Russ is survived by his loving wife of 29 years Bev; his children Chris (Kim), Gord (Cindy), Debbie (Howie), Rob (Bonnie), Stacey (Sean) as well as 10 adoring grandchildren. He is survived by his father Glen and brothers Gordon, Lloyd and Ron (Ann). Russ was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba on August 22, 1937. At the age of 14, Russ joined the Air Cadets in Chilliwack where he acquired his private pilots licence at the age of 17. In 1956 he received his commercial pilots licence. Over the following 9 years he flew for Connelly Dawson Airways, Island Airlines prior to starting his long association with West Coast Air Services and later Air BC. Throughout his aviation career he was also on the Board of Directors for the Abbotsford Air Show as well as the BC Aviation Council. His final working years were with the flight department of BC Tel/Telus. After retirement Russ and Bev moved to the Shuswap where they were embraced by the community and made many good friends. The only way to have a friend is to be one and Russ had many; including his co-pilots in life Ed Paul and Lynn Kendel. The family would like to thank everyone for their continued support and a special thanks to the staff at the Shuswap General Hospital for their care and compassion. A celebration of Russ life will be held at 3PM, Saturday, September 11, 2004 at the Abbotsford Flying Club. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to the Shuswap Lake General Hospital PO Box 520, Salmon Arm, BC V1E 4N6. Cremation arrangements entrusted to Fischer's Funeral Services & Crematorium Ltd., Salmon Arm, (250) 833-1129 Vancouver Sun / The Province, Area Code 604

## **NEW ADDITIONS**

Thanks Sherron - this message was in my junk folder so I added your name to my safe list so I won't miss it next time. Thanks for the links - I'll look at them when I get to Australia so keep them coming!

Mark Peschke [markpeschke@hotmail.com](mailto:markpeschke@hotmail.com)

Hi Sherron,

We are interested in getting our names on the Ex-Yukoners List. Our information follows.

NAKRAYKO, Les & Joyce      [nakrayko@sunlite.ca](mailto:nakrayko@sunlite.ca) (1957-65 Whitehorse, ----Les - Koidern `53 & `55, Destruction Bay `56) Salmon Arm.

Joyce and Les.

## **QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

*A fool says, 'I can't'; a wise man says, 'I'll try'.*

## **RECIPE OF THE WEEK**

**BEET PICKLES** – from Carol Buzzell [buzzy.cj@shaw.ca](mailto:buzzy.cj@shaw.ca)

Brine:

3 cups sugar

1 1/2 cup white vinegar

1/2 cup cider vinegar

1 1/2 cups water

Put some pickling spices in a bag with the addition of whole cloves, cinnamon sticks etc. Boil the brine until it is very shiny, approximately 20 - 30 minutes. Pour over hot, peeled, sliced beets, layered with sliced, chopped onion (optional), in hot jars and seal. Very good.

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

The Okanagan Yukoners' AGM and luncheon will be held at the Best Western Hotel on the corner of Harvey Ave and Leckie Rd in Kelowna. It takes place at Noon on Sunday October 3, 2004. The cost is \$15.00 per person which includes lunch. People usually start to arrive around 11am and visit for a while before lunch.

The hotel has asked us to supply some numbers well in advance so they can prepare. If you wish to pay in advance so you don't have to wait at the door, you may send a cheque made out to Okanagan Yukoners' to me at; Larry Chalmers Box 1095 Oliver, BC V0H 1T0. If you are not paying in advance please contact me by Phone (250-498-6887) or by e-mail ([aksala49\\*cablerocket.com](mailto:aksala49@cablerocket.com)) or at the address above.

If you decide at the last minute to come that is OK too, but we will be much happier if you let us know in advance. Come out and enjoy some good old Yukon camaraderie and maybe discover a long lost friend.

Larry Chalmers

## **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.** If you are female and were unmarried in Yukon please include your **maiden name** as well. 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)