

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH –Eighty-Second Edition- Oct. 3, 2004

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Whitehorse Sunrise

Photo courtesy Heinrich Lohmann heinrich@lohmman.ca

FISHING WITH HARRY

By Gus Barrett sourdoughs2@shaw.ca

We left the dock up at Deep Bay,
For our yearly one night stay,
Deciding 'ere we left the dock,
To fish right off of Norris Rock,
That is our favorite place to go
For fishing on the "Sourdough".

Things started on a sour note,
Both losing salmon at the boat
Then Harry couldn't catch a thing,
While Gus brought in a twelve pound ling
And though it can't be classed a winner,
Gus also caught rock-cod for dinner.

Then anchoring in Tribune Bay,
With gear all stripped and stored away,
Relaxing 'neath the starlit skies,
We dined on fish and tater fries.
Then we reminisced a lot,
While sipping wine and brandy tots.

A good night's sleep, then out again,
Fishing on the bounding main.
Though Harry had an idle rod,
Gus brought aboard another cod.
And though we tried and tried in vain,
Alas, poor Harry, skunked again.

Then moored again at Deep Bay dock,
The Sourdough shipshape and locked,
We critiqued the trip that we'd just made
And though, in fish, it had not paid.
It was successful in the end,
In fellowship of two old friends.

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(Many Yukoner's will remember Harry as Inspector Harry Nixon of the R.C.M.P.)

Bud Harbottle Manuscript (Copyright 2004)

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Chapter 24

The middle of February **Don Cannon** had some winter work to do so I went back flying the 195. One project was to stake six hundred mining claims about fifty miles from Telegraph Creek on a place called Mess Creek. This meant I would have to stay at Telegraph and haul seventy-five people to and from Mess Creek. As each person was allowed only eight claims it would take many trips for the six hundred claims.

Telegraph Creek was predominately an Indian village. It had a Hudson's Bay store, a school, a church and a Mounted Police post. The population was about two hundred men, women and children. Only adults of legal age could stake claims. As there were many children, it meant that practically all the adults would have to be persuaded to take an airplane ride. They, of course, were paid for their service. Most of them had never been in an aircraft so it was going to be some fun. The airstrip was short and very rough. The worst feature was that it had four bumps and hollows near one end so when taking off in that direction the airplane would be going over them at sixty miles an hour. This was not comfortable to say the least.

The first thing to do was fly in six of Don's regular prospectors. They would set up a camp in the centre of the staking area with a large cook tent and sleeping tents for the prospectors, who would do the actual physical work of staking the claims. Each morning I had to go up a hill to the airstrip; then spend an hour or more thawing out the engine, gassing, oiling and

checking the aircraft. Then I would take four passengers to camp. They would go in the cook tent where the transfer and staking papers were made out. After signing them and having coffee and some food, they were loaded back in the aircraft and taken back to Telegraph. Then I would take out four more for the same procedure.

At the same time another operator **Bill Harrison** who owned a base at Burns Lake, B. C. and a mining man named **Bill Dunn** were doing the same thing for a mining company called Silver Standard. He was using a Piper Super Cub that could only carry one passenger but they were not staking as many claims as we were. Their area was quite a few miles from ours so it was legal for them to use the same people. Their area was in the mountains bordering the Mess Creek valley. It meant landing on glaciers, which the Cub was ideal for. As there was no hotel, we were all staying together in a large private house owned by an elderly couple whose family had grown up and left home. The lady of the house was an excellent cook and kept us well fed. At night we played poker or crib or just sat around reading. There was no other form of recreation in town. The temperature stayed around twenty-five below zero with bright blue skies every day for the month we were there. I had never seen such good flying weather for so long before.

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Bill Harrison was a great one to play pranks on people but I had one of my own that always shook him up. My airplane was a lot faster than his. When he left ahead of me I would search for him. When I could see him ahead, I came up right behind him in a blind spot. Then I would slow down to his speed and suddenly appear about ten feet off his wing tip. He always had a curved stem pipe in his mouth and when he discovered me there he had to grab the pipe to keep it from falling out of his mouth. He would shake his fist at me so I would put on power and go on my way. Another surefire way of jolting him was to come from behind very quickly, dive under his tail and zoom up right in front of him. He was getting the twitch from these antics and would try to hide by flying right close to the hillsides where he would not be silhouetted but I would manage to find him.

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Another pilot named **Stan Bridcott** was flying in the area. He had landed his Piper aircraft high in the mountains on a lake that had no shelter from the wind so had very big and hard snowdrifts. It was called Arctic Lake. He had broken the undercarriage off the aircraft and ruined his prop. I do not remember how he got out of there but he arrived in Telegraph, with a new undercarriage and prop and asked me to fly him and a helper into the lake to repair it. I had time to spare so agreed. We loaded up everything including the two men and started the take off. It was a heavy load and I did not get off before I was at the bumps and hollows of the runway. I almost had flying speed when I bounced off one bump, flew across the hollow then hit the other bump right on its leading side. There was a tremendous crack and I knew with a sound like that something had to be damaged.

We were in the air now so I looked down at the ski-wheel on my side. It was okay so I asked Stan to check his side. He said the ski-wheel was off the spring steel strut, which it should have been attached to, and it was hanging below the aircraft held only by the two check cables. There was now nothing to land on, on that side, except the steel leg that was only four inches wide by one inch thick at the bottom. It would really dig into the ground when the weight of the aircraft came on it. We were in a great mess. For sure we were going to have to land because the gas would not last forever. While flying around above the airstrip, I racked my brain for a way to get down without hurting anyone. Also, I wanted to save the airplane if possible. We flew around for a long time thinking up all kinds of schemes but nothing was feasible except to go back on the strip and hope for the best.

The townspeople realized something was wrong with all the flying around we were doing so had arrived at the airstrip to see what was going to happen. After we all agreed there was nothing else to do but land and take our chances, I set up a long approach with the idea of sitting down right on the end of the runway as slowly as possible and holding up the wing on the bad side as long as I could.

We landed on the one good ski with the wing staying up until we had lost quite a bit of speed. It finally settled and the leg started to drag. The airplane turned around completely and started sliding backwards, losing speed rapidly. When it came to a stop we got out and wonder of wonders it looked to be in perfect shape. But on close inspection we found a six-inch tear in the belly that the loose ski had made. Also, one blade of the propeller was bent forward about eight inches from the tip. What had saved everything was that the ground was frozen solid and the leg had slid along without digging into it. Four nuts and bolts that held the wheel-ski assembly to the leg had sheared letting it fall off.

There was an old crawler tractor in town and I knew the track pad bolts were made of good steel and were the exact size so we soon had the wheel-skis back on but the propeller was something else. I figured that by blocking up between the undercarriage legs and the top of the bend and taking the tractor to the front and backing it up close to use as an anchor, I could use a hydraulic jack to bend the tip back into line. After we were all set up and started jacking we found that being an aluminum blade it had to go far beyond the incline to gain on the bend. Sometimes I thought the blade would break for sure but by making adjustments in our set up we finally had it back to where it looked straight. I did a tracking check by putting a fixed object so that the good blade just touched it. The bad blade was brought around to see if it touched also. When it did, we knew we were right on. I ran up the engine and there was no vibration at all. I took it up empty for a flight check and it was perfect. The only thing now was I did not want to work it until I had the proper bolts in the undercarriage. I flew it to Whitehorse, had the bolts installed, and the belly repaired. The aircraft was inspected, a new propeller put on and I was back in business. On returning to Telegraph I carried on the business of flying claim stakers.

When that job was finished I parked the airplane in Whitehorse and in the middle of March set off with my family to drive to Mexico. We went out the Alaska Highway to Vancouver, then down through Washington, Oregon, California to Escondido. We traveled through Arizona and crossed the border at Nogales. We drove down the west side of Mexico through

Mexico City to Acapulco, then came back to Mexico City and up the interior to Texas, through Utah, Montana, Alberta, the Alaska Highway and back to Whitehorse. We were gone six weeks and traveled twelve thousand miles. Then it was back to the flying business and I soon became very busy doing a lot of flying into Wasson Lake and Telegraph Creek.

At the end of May I changed over from wheel-skis to floats. The ice was gone from the lakes and rivers so I was able to work all over the country from Telegraph Creek in the south to Dawson and Mayo in the north. We had many parties of prospectors out and they all required servicing by air.

A geologist had told Don of a showing he had found south and east of Ross River. He wanted him to look at it. He said he had food and supplies on a cache. McNeil Lake about ten miles from the property was the closest place a float plane could land. One morning Don and I went to a prospecting camp he had in the Pelly Valley and picked up two prospectors and flew to McNeil Lake.



Pelly Valley

Photo courtesy Jeanne Harbottle

As we were just going to walk in, look at the property and walk out, we did not take anything with us except my rifle, a pound of coffee and a pail to boil it in. There would be grub in there so we could have lunch. It started to rain soon after leaving the aircraft and in no time we were soaking wet as no one had any rain gear. It was slow going as there was no trail and the buck brush was thick. The man in the lead was the wettest of all as when he hit a patch of brush all the water fell on him. So we took turns. About three hours later we stopped and built a big fire, put on the coffee pot and thawed and dried out a bit. On leaving the fire

we were refreshed so stepped up the pace. I did not go twenty feet before I hit a big bush and I was just as wet and cold as I had been when we stopped.

Being the pilot I did not have to go with them as I would not serve any purpose but the exercise would do me good as I sat a lot. Also, I liked seeing a new showing and I was out here now so might as well keep going. Eventually we arrived at the site where the cache and mineral should be. After searching for an hour there was no sign that a human being had ever been on that particular piece of ground. We built a big fire, put on the coffee pot and started to dry out again. We were all thoroughly disgusted with the guy that had sent us on this wild goose chase and I am sure all of us had hanging in mind if we ever ran into him again.

It was late afternoon when we started back to the airplane and soon after I noticed Don was faltering and lagging behind. I suspected that he was not well as stomach ulcers had bothered him for as long as I had known him. On the diet we had that day of no food and straight black coffee they were probably chewing him up. Previous to this if we were going to be out for any length of time he would take a box of Milko powdered milk, which always relieved the pain. But there was no such thing today. Later on it became obvious that Don was in real trouble, as he would fall down once in awhile. The guy in the lead saw a flock of ptarmigan, took the rifle and picked the heads off two of them before the others flew. We built a fire; put the pot full of water on, cleaned the birds and dropped them in the water to make soup. After they had boiled for a while, Don tried some of the meat but could not keep it down. He tried the soup and managed to hold some of that but very little.

I suggested that the two prospectors go ahead as fast as possible, get the emergency rations out of the aircraft and come back with them. I knew there was oatmeal, rice, and raisins and might even be some milk although that was a luxury we seldom carried. I would stay and look after Don. This was agreed upon and away they went. Don had a bit of strength back so we started out under slow bell.

After dark it was much harder going as we could not see the underbrush and there was much tripping and falling. I could not help him because of the brush and trees so I just kept him pointed in the right direction. Eventually he was making only a couple of hundred yards before stopping to rest. Then it was down to a hundred yards. After a couple of hours there was still no sign of the other men so we kept plugging along; two more hours and no one. I could not figure it out. They were both excellent bushmen and young and strong. I could not possibly leave Don as he may wander off into the bush and we might never find him so between long rests and short walks we were gaining. It was midnight when I finally saw the campfire. When we got to it our two heroes were sitting by it eating. They had put up a tent and had a sleeping bag in it. Don was too far gone for anything except to crawl into the tent and cover up. I took some food into him but he would not have any part of it. He said he just wanted to rest.

I had some supper and the three of us fixed up beds around the fire. Before lying down I went in to see Don and by the light from the campfire I thought sure he was dead. His face was pure white. I could see no sign of breathing and did not want to touch him to find out because if he was dead there was nothing I could do and if he was not there was still nothing

I could do so I went back outside. I sat by the fire for a long time after the others had gone to sleep and after another look at Don who had not changed I lay down and dozed off.

In the morning Don was a little better but still could not face any food. As soon as it was light enough to take off we did. We took the prospectors back to their camp then flew down the Pelly River. At Ross River he suggested we land at Jeanne and Tom Connolly's and get some milk. It was a long time before he was able to keep anything down but once he did he improved rapidly. We stayed overnight and in the morning he was in much better shape. But it was a long time before he was back to good health again.



Tom & Jeanne Connolly's Ranch at Ross River
Photo courtesy Jeanne Harbottle

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I was very busy flying every day and putting in long hours. The airplane was doing a wonderful job and getting in and out of all the lakes and rivers we wanted to land on. The engine was just singing like a top and never gave me one bit of trouble. Apart from changing spark plugs, no parts had to be replaced. Before I bought the Cessna 195 many pilots had warned me that it was too fast for the bush. They said it was blind meaning it was hard for the pilot to see over the engine. This is a bad thing in the bush where you have to land in so many strange places. They said the Jacob's engine was unreliable, an oil leaker, had lubricating problems and was subject to seizing up. I knew these things were all true of the L4 and L6 engines, thousands of which had been built and used during the Second World War. There were many horror stories about them. I had flown airplanes using the old style engine and had also worked along side other aircraft that had them so I knew what they were like. But what I had was a brand new model and all the old bugs were built out of it.

Most airplanes, except the Beaver, that worked on floats on a hot day were subject to over-heating engines. I put many hours on Beavers and never had an over-heat. But the 195 would over-heat the oil if a take off was aborted for some reason and a second attempt was made without letting it cool for a while. The problem was the oil cooler radiator was too small. Some operators put two coolers on their engines and that solved the problem. I had that problem once while making an extra long take off run and then aborting because I had much

too heavy a load. But after shutting down and unloading some freight I got off okay. As long as I flew that airplane I never had a serious engine problem.

The one weak feature of all models of Cessna aircraft built at that time was the undercarriage attaching bolts. I had sheared them at Telegraph Creek and many of them were badly wrecked.

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Don Cannon and I were in Watson Lake one fall day with the Cessna 195, which was still on floats. He decided he wanted to go to Whitehorse, which was about two hundred fifty air miles away. It was a clear sunny day so we started out.

At Wolf Lake about seventy miles out we saw a solid line of cloud from left to right and down to the ground in front of us. I took it to be a snow shower that we could quickly fly through and come out the other side in good weather again. I would have to find something to follow on the ground while going through it. It never entered my head to turn around and go back to Watson as I had flown through hundreds of those fall snow showers by following a road or river for navigation. A river was the best as it held a steady gradient whereas a road went up and down hills. The Wolf River was just below me and I knew it flowed into the Nisutlin River just before it flowed into Nisutlin Bay on Teslin Lake. This route would take us in a round about way to a little settlement on Teslin Lake where we could stop if we wanted to and have food and shelter.

I had to drop down rapidly as I entered the storm to keep in sight of the river. I was soon only twenty feet over the water. We were committed now as I could not possibly turn around due to the high hills on both sides of us which I could not see but knew were there. I knew the general terrain we were flying through having seen it many times from higher elevations but never as intimately as I was seeing it now. There were surprises every few seconds. I could only see about two hundred yards ahead as the snowflakes were large and heavily concentrated. At one hundred twenty miles an hour which was the slowest I could fly the airplane and keep positive control, the turns were coming up very fast". I was flipping from wingtip to wing tip to follow the turns as this river was very crooked. We even flew through a canyon but fortunately the walls were wider than the wingspan of the aircraft and it was straight. I was really sweating this one out, as I knew I was in something I should not be in.

Don, of course, was watching from his side of the aircraft and if he could see that we were going to hit a hill he would shout and I would do something. I did not know what it might be. We had about twenty-five miles of this and then came to the Nisutlin River, which was wider and not quite so crooked. The Wolf River went into the Nisutlin at a ninety-degree angle so when I got there I made a sharp left turn to go down it. Don did not know we had reached the other river and when I made the left turn all he saw was a river going off to his right, which was the upstream portion of it. He shouted, "*You missed it!*", thinking I had lost the river and was flying off into the brush. Then in a moment he saw the water in front again and started to breathe.

It was only a few more miles to Nisutlin Bay, which was a large body of water several miles across. We could land there with no problem. What I did not know was at what kind of angle the river met the lake. If it went straight in, there was no problem. I would go straight ahead until I was in deep water and land. But if it met at a shallow angle I could fly into a hill while waiting for deep water. On entering the lake I elected to hold my heading. After a short interval I started slowing down in preparation for landing when a large ragged tree stump showed up right in front. I put on power to get speed up again and went over it. I waited a few seconds to see if there were any more and then slowed again. A grassy island about twenty feet across went under us. I was really sweating it out now wondering what I could be getting into. A few more seconds of clear water and I was determined to sit down. Suddenly the air was full of ducks. I shouted to Don to duck and got my head below the instrument panel, as I felt sure many of these heavy birds were going to come through the windshield. None came through but many hit the aircraft on other leading surfaces. This piece of water was where all the northern ducks and geese on their fall migration stopped to rest and feed. As a rule there would be thousands of birds in the area. The thudding of the birds hitting the aircraft lasted only seconds and when I looked up none could be seen. I plopped the aircraft on the water and let it slow to a stop then shut off the engine. We sat looking at each other wondering why we had ever got into such a serious situation. That had been the longest and most dangerous ride I had ever had.

I did not want to stay in the middle of the lake so started the engine, took a northerly heading and at a slow taxi started looking for the shore. It was snowing very heavily so the slow taxi let snow build up on the windshield. I could not see through it, but eventually we were able to see a fuzzy shoreline so turned left and paralleled it. I knew it was about ten miles to Teslin so I tried to taxi on the step. I was doing about forty miles an hour but it soon became apparent that that was too dicey. We had to settle for six or seven miles an hour. It was a long slow ride until we saw the bridge, which crossed the bay at the village. We secured the airplane and went to the motel for lunch. It snowed all afternoon and was still coming down when we went to bed. In the morning it had stopped and there were eighteen inches of fresh snow on the ground. That was some shower as I thought it to be when we entered it.

At the end of September I changed over to wheel-skis but only put in about thirty hours to the end of the year.

(To be continued)

SOME MISSIONARY EXPERIENCES IN THE YUKON

Written by

REVEREND LESLIE GEORGE CHAPPELL

Story submitted courtesy Judith (Chappell) Parkes jparkes@telus.net

Ice break-up

There is a realistic illustration of Rudyard Kipling's words to be seen in the spring break-up of ice in the Yukon River. Kipling stated that nature in the raw is seldom mild, and that statement is most applicable to this occurrence. To clarify the picture of this fantastic disintegration of winter's accumulation of ice it must be remembered that when the ground temperature falls to 30, 40, 50 degrees below zero for weeks at a time the river is cooled to such an extent that the surface water has continued to freeze downwards until the ice is probably five feet in thickness. With the coming of the warmer days in spring, and the melting of snow on the hill-sides, rivulets of water finally reach the frozen river, increasing - even slightly - the depth of water between the river banks. Together with the melting of the river ice on the shallow banks, and this extra water from the hills, the mass of river ice slowly frees itself and becomes a floating non-moving mass. Under this mass the river continues on its normal down-stream course, but now there is the tendency to drag the floating ice with it. This is a most unstable situation; the ice chokes the river on its lower reaches while it is continually under a side pressure from the mass of ice up-river. Finally' pressure cracks appear forcing masses of ice to be thrust upwards out of the water, and so starting the slow movement down-stream of the entire ice mass. As the movement increases further chunks of five feet thick ice with the square area of an average sized room will be tossed around in the flow as though they were as light as empty match-boxes. With this movement of the ice there is throughout the whole mass the noise of the continuous grinding of the great chunks as they collide together, slowly, but effectively reducing the mass until stability of movement is restored with ice and water travelling downstream together. It is often more than a week before the river assumes a normal summer appearance allowing the launching again of small boats. The ice break-up is an experience that has to be seen and heard to be really appreciated as one of nature's routine activities that is anything but mild in its performance.

My first parishioners

I am always so thankful that I had the experience of being a white man living alone with the people of that village. From the outset they looked upon me not as an outsider but as a brother and helper. I never found them lacking in offers of help if and when help was needed. The spoken language was English, except among a few of the older people who were unable to converse with visitors from other villages miles away because the spoken native languages differed so greatly from village to village. It soon became apparent to me that the early missionaries had given these people a good approach to the Christian religion. It only required the ringing of the church bell to ensure a good congregation, together with a surpliced choir of men and women, and an aged blind native deacon named Richard Martin, who was competent in reciting in the Tukadh language the Anglican prayer book service of Mattins or Evensong.

All of those people loved to sing, and because of this I learned to reproduce the melody of the hymns on base and treble octaves of the pedal organ. If the music was quiet there would be a whisper from the choir, but, if all the stops were in use the choir would match the organ volume in expressions of praise. There was one big problem. They knew many hymns which were not in the hymn book, hymns which I had never heard sung. After some investigation the problem was resolved. The discovery of an old copy of the Sanky and Moody hymn book led to the awareness that these were the hymns they had been taught as youngsters. It was not

long before they were again filling the church with the words and tune of "Master, the tempest is raging;" and other words and tunes from the same source. They may not have known the meaning of some of the verses, but they loved to sing them just the same. At Christmastime I was, asked if I had any objection to the people themselves decorating the church. On Christmas morning the interior of the church building was not only festooned with spruce boughs from side to side, but the green decorations were interspersed with multi-coloured home-made paper blossoms, while on the Altar there were twenty-seven vases of coloured flowers, - one vase each from almost every family in the village. Who will criticize the use of paper decorations in church when the outside temperature is 50 below zero, and fresh flowers are completely unavailable? On Christmas Eve a tree was set up in the centre of the community hall and all the presents for family and friends - including the white brother - were placed under it, and duly distributed by one of the young men in the traditional Santa Claus costume.

Weather-wise that first winter in Moosehide was consistently rough. From the middle of December to the beginning of the following February the temperature remained a steady 55 below zero - day and night - except for a freak break in temperature on January 7th. At nine o'clock that morning the thermometer registered 55 degrees below zero, at four o'clock the same day the same thermometer registered 50 above zero, 105 temperature variation in seven hours. It remained at 50 above for twenty-four hours when the thermometer again dropped to 55 below. It was not a welcome break in the weather for - during the thawing period - we lost all the snow insulation on the roofs and around the base of the buildings, so that the cold penetrated deeper, making the buildings harder to warm until more snow came which could be banked around again as insulation.

During the Christmas season a dance was held each evening until the New Year in the Community Hall to which white people from Dawson City were invited. Regulations required the police to be in attendance while white people were present in the village for the dances, so, each evening a mountie with his sleigh and dog-team was on duty in the village. Perhaps it could be anticipated that much of that duty time' was spent with me in the mission house where the policeman and I would chin-wag together while sampling Christmas goodies I had received or made. At other times during the winter I would welcome a mountie for an hour. The police found the mission house was at a convenient distance from their barracks for the exercise of their dogs and to visit me.

Early in 1935 I encountered a complication that taxed my wits as well as my strength. Quite suddenly members of different families became very sick. It seemed as though they were afflicted with a 'flu' bout, but there was also something else. This was a situation that needed to be reported to the Territorial medical officer of health, who was also the only doctor in Dawson City. When Dr. Nunn heard of my problem his reply was "That is too bad, I've got the same thing here. Your people are down with flu and measles. I'll come down and make the diagnosis, after that it is up to you. We'll have to put the village in quarantine." It was six weeks before everyone was well again. Most of the people had been ill, but not all at one time. In most instances families were too ill to care for themselves so it became necessary for me to be doctor, nurse and cook - when they felt they could eat. There was the satisfaction of getting everybody back on their feet. Only one old man refused the medications. He preferred

to squat on his haunches before a wood fire so that the smoke would swirl around his head which was adorned with a ring of coloured beads. I was never convinced that this recuperative process had any beneficial results, but that was only my opinion. One lad of 19 who was down with a bad dose of measles created an additional problem for me as his sickness was accompanied by a mild form of delirium and he would wander aimlessly around the village. We were a little afraid for his safety so I journeyed to Dawson to report this case to the Doctor. When I explained the case, and mentioned the patient's urge to wander near the river Dr. Nunn prescribed as a remedy a dose of two tablespoons of epsom salts dissolved in warm water. I mixed the dose at home as a precaution and took it to the lad's cabin with many misgivings. To my utter surprise and relief he was as right as rain the next morning.

School lessons and church services were maintained as far as was possible during this sickness episode to counteract the irritation of the quarantine on those who had regained their health, particularly among the men. When they were sick they were very sick, but when they were well again they thought up every possible excuse to get out of the village. They hated that necessary quarantine. As it happened the outbreak of sickness came at the very time I was in the midst of re-papering and re-painting the mission house rooms. Looking after the sick - as well as the healthy - and trying to get the mission house into some semblance of order, left me little time to prepare meals for myself. During that six week period my most frequent meal was fried moose liver and potatoes. Not the best diet health-wise, but one that was quick and quite nutritious.

An outcome of that quarantine period that left me puzzled was the awareness that not one of those many patients offered any words of thanks for my help. That omission did not seem to be in character with their nature, and it is only in recent years that I learned from a native priest that there is no word in an Indian language comparable to the English words 'thank you'. Doubtless in this for such an expression is unknown to their culture. However, more will be recorded of this in a subsequent paragraph.

(‘surpliced’ refers to the gowns that Choir members wear.)
(To be continued.)

OUR TRIP BACK HOME TO THE YUKON – PART III

By Donna Clayson ytdogteam@telus.net

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

Note: all km’s are approximate

We left Muncho Lake on our way to Liard Hot Springs at Km 746. This is one spot Bryan always looks forward to. He enjoys soaking in the hot water but with the temperature pushing upward to 49°C I wasn’t sure it was such a good idea. As we pulled into the overflow parking on the south side of the highway I was surprised at how quiet it was. We gathered up our swimsuits and towels and headed for the walkway to the pool.



Walkway to the Liard Hot Springs

Liard Hot Springs is such a beautiful spot to relax and ease away the aches and pains as the water reaches a temperature of 53°C in the Alpha Pool. The source waters are slightly alkaline and contain the strong smelling compound called calcium sulphate. Alpha Pool water mixes with the cooler PSI Spring waters to produce pleasant temperatures ranging from 40° to 49°C.

It's a tropical valley. Many plants prosper near the hot springs. Ostrich Ferns and Cow Parsnip grow so tall in the warm, rich environment that they gave the area the name it was known by in the 1940's – the Liard Tropical Valley.



Lush Fern beside pool



Main Pool

Many hot water fish that you see as you walk on the walkway to the pool are Lake Chub who were isolated from others of their kind thousands of years ago. The unusual population has adapted to life in the hot springs where they feed on the abundant invertebrate life, plankton and algae.

The springs could accurately be called thermal springs, hot springs, mineral springs, or all three. Thermal springs have water which is 5°C warmer than the average air temperature; hot springs have water warmer than 32°C; mineral springs contain solids in concentrations higher than 1000 parts per million. The origin of the springs is unknown but may be related to a major geological fault that parallels the valley on the southside of the Liard River.

The next morning we filled up on pancakes and sausage and were on our way. Bryan didn't want to say goodbye to the hot springs and was already looking forward to our return stop. At km 815 we stopped to view Smith River Falls. It was a 2 km drive off the highway on a very rough one-way road but the drive was certainly worth it for the view. From the parking lot

we followed the dirt pathway that was quite steep in places. Delicate fern tickled our ankles as we stepped over massive tree roots to the distant falls. Sounds of fast, rushing water greeted us the last 100 yards and as we walked down the numerous wooden steps to the bottom of the falls the view took our breath away. Well worth the time it took us to get here.



Smith River Falls

It took me awhile to climb back up the steps and was ready for a rest as we carried on with our journey.

The first hint of smoke from the forest fires was at km 897 and at km 910 was the first evidence of the fire jumping the highway. This immediately brought back memories of my first trip in a Greyhound Bus in 1961. I was only 11 when we left Dawson Creek to move to Haines Junction. As the bus took us closer to our destination smoke from the numerous forest fires started hurting my throat. As I looked out the window all I could see was smoke and fire along both sides of the highway. The driver stopped at a place called “Fireside” to get wet cloths to hold on our mouths so we could breathe easier. At the time I thought “Fireside” was an appropriate name.

We stopped at Watson Lake to see if we could locate our niece, Janet Clayson. It was very smoky and difficult to breathe. Janet was working at one of the hotels but we couldn’t find her so decided to leave, hoping the smoke would dissipate further up the highway. It did, in fact get a little better.

There was a terrible accident at km 1225. We sat and waited for 3 hours while the emergency crews tried desperately to free the woman driver. As the helicopters left carrying the mother and her 7-year-old daughter to Whitehorse General Hospital word reached us that her 14-year-old daughter had been killed. As we passed by the accident scene it brought one to realize how very precious our lives are and I determined I was going to appreciate every single moment for the rest of my life.

(To be continued.)



Marsh Lake

Photo courtesy Heather Jones hjones@klondiker.com



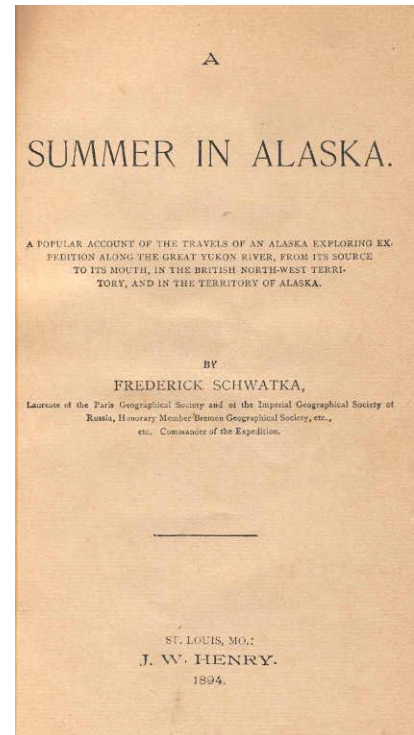
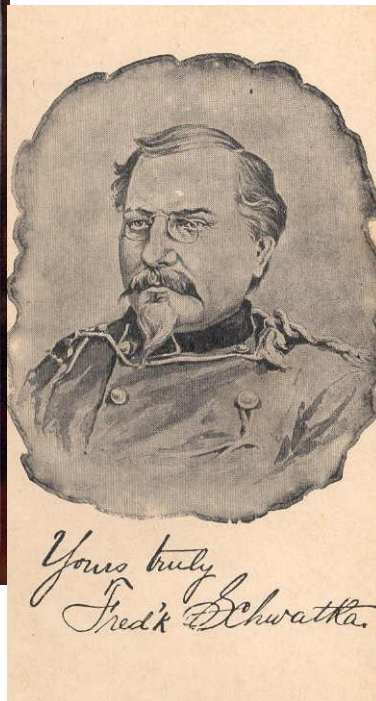
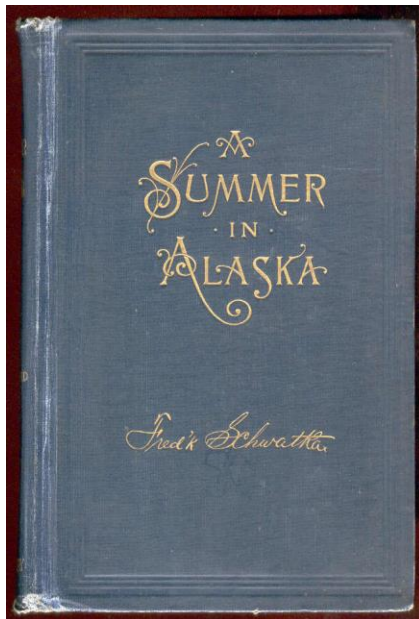
Marsh Lake

Photo courtesy Heather Jones hjones@klondiker.com

A Summer in Alaska – by Frederick Schwatka

Hi, Sherron. Harvey Burian's article in MocTel 81, about Frederick Schwatka, reminded me that I have a book on the subject. In 1974, my first summer in Toronto, I often browsed through the little stores on Queen St. E. In the window of one shop, I saw this book, and immediately went in and bought it - for \$17. I haven't read it for years, but treasure it for its historical significance. Brother Grant, still in Whitehorse (Cowley Lake actually), has told me that the McBride Museum (or Yukon Archives) has a copy, but that mine is in much better condition. I plan to donate the book to the appropriate institution in Whitehorse at some point in the future.

Regards. Ralph Lortie rlortie001@sympatico.ca



For larger images the frontispiece and the title page, click on [Front](#) & [Title](#) .
For images of the preface and a map, click on [Preface](#) & [Map](#) .

MADAM ZOOM

I have just finished reading MocTel #14. I am gradually getting caught up in reading the previous editions and thoroughly enjoying them. There was a request in #14 for information about Madam Zoom, and I will recount what I know about the lady.

While I was employed as Principal of the Mayo School, Madam Zoom was located at Keno, and my wife and I had the pleasure of meeting her. When we left Mayo in 1961, she had moved to Mayo and was living near the Wareham Hall, as I recall. If memory serves me correctly, she had passed away sometime shortly before we departed, but I may be in error on that point.

We moved from Mayo to Hudson Hope, B.C., where I was Principal of the Hudson Hope Elementary-High School during the period that the Bennett Dam (Peace Power Project) was being constructed. One of my staff members was Flora Sullivan. Her husband was an engineer employed on the project.

Prior to coming to Hudson Hope, Flora and her husband had lived at Wells, B.C., where her husband had been employed at a mine, and she as a teacher. The Sullivans knew Madam Zoom and her sister, Madam Zip, when they were both living at Wells. Madam Zoom left Wells and went to Dawson City, but Madam Zip stayed at Wells. Flora had some very interesting stories about these rather eccentric ladies.

As for the historical background of these ladies, according to my information, their father was a very prominent and wealthy doctor in Quebec City, and when their father passed away, he left them in a very financially secure situation. However, after travelling extensively around the world, their fathers fortune was soon depleted.

Madam Zoom (I have forgotten her given name) was an expert seamstress, and had the benefit of extensive training in that art, and as former residents of Dawson City, Mayo and Keno will attest, produced professionally tailored garments, including wedding dresses. I'm sure that many of you will be familiar with the story involving Madam Zoom, Montreal Mike and the wedding gown Madam Zoom was engaged to tailor for the daughter of the Dawson City Fire Chief. (I believe his name was Elmer Goundreau).

Madam Zoom was truly a Yukon character....one of many I came to know during my Yukon Adventure

Don Machan demachan*telus.net

With a little encouragement, Don came up with the story about the Wedding dress.

Good morning Sherron: The wedding dress story, as related to me, oh those many years ago, is as follows:

The daughter of the Dawson City Fire Chief was to be married, and Madam Zoom, being the highly reputable and professional seamstress that she was, had been engaged by the bride's mother to create the wedding gown. As the wedding date approached, and with no indication that the gown was materializing, and but a few days remaining, the mother of the bride insisted that her husband (the Fire Chief) go to visit Madam Zoom to demand that action be taken with regard to producing the wedding gown. With some trepidation the Fire Chief arrived at Madam Zoom's residence and knocked on the door. Madam Zoom shouted "Come in", where-upon the Fire Chief opened the door and was shocked to see Madam Zoom,

standing on the table, stark naked, and Montreal Mike, similarly attired and sitting in a galvanized tub in the middle of the room with a broom in his hand and making rowing motions, as Madam Zoom bellowed at the top of her voice, "Row, you S.O.B., row" As well you might imagine, the Fire Chief made a hasty retreat. A beautiful wedding gown was produced in time for the wedding, and another "only in Yukon" story was added to the annals of the lore of the Yukon.

I assume that Madam Zoom's extra-curricular activities kept her busy, and caused the delay in completing the gown.

Don Machan



Marsh Lake

Photo courtesy Heather Jones hjones*klondiker.com

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL

You have done a fantastic job of putting together your prior information on St. Mary's Hospital and the latest that Harvey sent. I think it does justice to history starting in 1897 to the loss of the building in 1950. And even after the fire to the hospital and old folks home established to cover the loss. It is nice that the Sisters of St. Anne have been covered from their time of arrival in 1898 to their departure in 1963 which is a great part of Dawson history. Thanks to Harvey for his research you have been able to flesh out for Moc Tel 81. I hope he can find that photo of his beginning at the St. Mary's hospital as I do not have one of

my own. The closest was a photo I remember of me about 6 months in one of those English wicker prams, but goodness knows where that went to.

It is interesting to note that they had an X-ray in 1907, for in Mayo there was no such thing till the 30s. About mid 1930s the people of Mayo sold raffle tickets to enable them to buy an X-ray for Mayo. The Doctor Allen Duncan who delivered Harvey was the doctor of Mayo in the 30s and went to Dawson from there. Dr. Duncan wrote a book of his adventures in the north, I think it was "Madams and Mounties". His brother Dr. Barry Duncan followed Allen in Dawson and was my doctor in 1946 when I was in St. Mary's.

In Mayo we also had another Doctor Nash, and it is amazing how history comes full circle. Dr. Nash had treated my sister Vera for a cut she had on her foot from her handling of an axe, and I was told to summon the doctor to take care of her. Returning from that I was in such a hurry that I got a sliver under my middle finger nail from the wooden front gate. Ow! That hurt, and now Dr. Nash had two of us to take care of. After taking care of Vera, he cut my nail back and got that sliver out of there. Now the unbelievable part; Alice was in Royal Jubilee hospital in Victoria for some tests, and who was the Head Nurse on that floor? None other than Doctor Nash's daughter! It was delightful and like old home week for all of us.

Cheers, Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca



Dawson Hospital 1897-98

Courtesy Alaska State Archives (see site mentioned above).

DAWSON HOSPITAL START – and many more HISTORICAL PHOTOS Go to:

<http://www.library.state.ak.us/gold/browseaction.cfm?CID=James%20Wickersham%20Photographs%2C%201882-1930s#> for 1,002 photographs that will blow your mind. We have read about the log hospital start on the hill, and attached is a photograph of the originals. In the group of 1002 you will also find a photo of the St. Mary's church with the hospital on one

side and the presbytery on the other. The flat area in the attached is the place that later St. Mary's Hospital was built in I think 1907. Have a peek? - Henry Breaden

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL FIRE

Just returned from Maple Ridge for a few days visiting kids and grandkids. Lots of good stuff in the Moc Tel this week. Enjoyed the special on the new riverboat at Dawson, also the info on St. Mary's hospital. The attached picture would be one of the last taken of that site.

Gus Barrett sourdoughs2@shaw.ca



St. Mary's Hospital Fire - 1950

Photo taken by Bud Holbrook submitted courtesy Blanche (Holbrook) Barrett
sourdoughs2@shaw.ca

NEW ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL

Here are a couple of pictures that go along with the stuff on St. Mary's Hospital.

The picture of the hospital was taken in 1953. The accompanying picture is of the RCMP barracks right next door and is where your favourite poet hung his hat.

Gus Barrett arrived in Dawson in 53. I was the first person he met when he got off the plane.

Our daughter Leslay was born in St. Mary's on August 19th 53 and is a true "Soudough".

Tom Tait tom_tait@telus.net



RCMP Building – St. Mary's Hospital – Dawson – 1953
Photos courtesy Tom Tait knitted into one photo by Bill Jones

Re: TUTSHI LAKE PHOTO

Sorry I missed you at the get together on Van Island, but do look forward to seeing you along the way.

I just wanted to make a correction on the picture of Tutshi Lake. The picture is Windy Arm on Tagish lake.

The mountain on the left is Book Mountain, also there is a little Island on the lake that is near Conrad.

I took the first boat in to Tutshi Lake by horse and on foot in 1960. It was a pontoon boat that I built out of a set of old Fairchild pontoons. The boat was 22 feet long and 13 feet wide when assembled. I took the boat to the end of windy arm took it apart and pulled it as far as we could over the pass, 3 miles. From there we man handled it the rest of the way. The boat stayed in the lake for many years until some one got the pontoons for a museum some where. I also built another pontoon boat almost the same size, we could haul a pick up on it with other gear as well.

I spent many days traveling Windy Arm to get into the Tutshi area of my guiding territory, and battled some real bad seas, of which I will go into more detail some time.

Warm regards

Dave Harder [daveharder*telus.net](mailto:daveharder@telus.net)

Yes indeed the photo labeled "Tutshi Lake" should have been labeled "Windy Arm"...I will be more selective and careful with future submissions. But hey look how it generated some stories!

Heather Jones [hjones*klondiker.com](mailto:hjones@klondiker.com)

WIGWAM HARRY

Won't be attending the luncheon in the Interior as I am going back North again for my "fall-fix". Will visit there for a couple of weeks with family and friends and get some fishing done

in Haines, Alaska. The scenery is so beautiful up there at this time of the year, but it won't be long til the snow is on the ground.

I am enjoying reading the manuscripts that have been coming in. I remember "WigWam Harry", quite a character. I can't remember which end of town he lived in, seems to me that he had a "high cache" on his property, not so sure tho', it's such a long time ago. Keep up the good work, some of it I am printing off and sending it to some elderly friends of mine who lived in Whitehorse years ago and do not have access of a computer, but relate to all that are in the issues. Harry worked on the steamers out of Dawson City and in later years, drove truck for Clyde Wann, basically hauling groceries in the North or whatever else there was to be hauled. He has alot of stories to tell, which are so interesting with alot of laughter along with it. Have a great day, Sherron.

Carol Buzzell buzzy.cj*shaw.ca

(I replied to Carol with my recollection on Wigwam Harry's home.) – Sherron

Hi Carol

Was Harry on the steamers your friend, or Wigwam Harry?

For your info I recall looking for Wigwam Harry's famed home that I had heard of and found it at the north end of town in Sleepy Hollow which basically was an extension of Moccasin Flats. He lived in a piano crate. No kidding. I did not notice a cache, but certainly one could have existed. Gee come to think of it there will be lots that didn't know about his abode.

Thanks for your help.

Glad you are enjoying the current run of material coming in. Me too! I also just received permission from Joan Rodschat, Pat Callison's daughter, to run some of her dad's stories from his book. I just borrowed a copy of it last Sunday from Maribeth Mainer's dad who lives here in Vernon (Mr. Tubman). The book is no longer in print and with no plans to do a re-print. There are lots of stories in it that include lots of the old timers and places and events we have come to know about.

I hope you have a great trip home.

Sherron

Sherron: The - friend - Harry that I spoke of is Harry Griffin, now living in Lois Creek, out of Barriere. He is such a colorful man, with tales to tell. He drove taxi for a few years in Whitehorse, in the '50's, when Whitehorse was a very colorful place.....

My memory had a blank when I tried to think of the places that were part of Whitehorse, all I could remember was "Whiskey Flats" and "Sleepy Hollow", forgot about the "Mocassin Flats" Would be so fun to get some history on those places, wonder if there is anyone who remembers something about their existence? I know that my friend would, but will be awhile until I get to visit with them again, but will write to them and ask.

Thanks, yes, you can use some of the contents of the letter if you wouldn't mind making the changes about Harry Griffin, and Wigwam Harry.....

Carol Buzzell

OBIT

Submitted by Gary McRobb gdmcrobb@yknet.ca

You might have known John as the owner/operator of Kluane Village, mile 1118, Alaska Highway.

John Emerson Trout

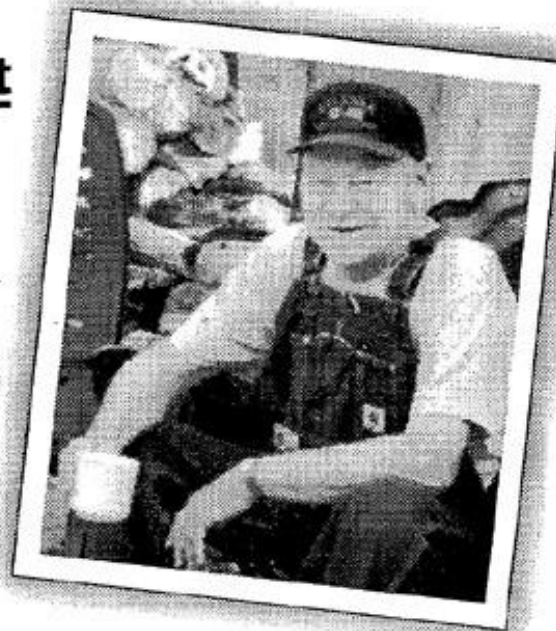
John Trout passed away Sept. 15th, 2004 at Whitehorse General Hospital at the age of 64 years. John will always be remembered with special love by his wife Elizabeth (Liz), daughter Terri of Edmonton, AB, sons Don (Kaya) of the Yukon and Jay (Patricia) grandsons Emerson & Everett. Stepdaughters Brenda (Dave) grandson Jason, and Andrea (D.J.) grandson Aidan Dawson, all of Vancouver, B.C.; and many relatives. John will also be sadly missed by his many friends, and everyone whose life John has touched.

Grace and Ross Ogram Trout, of Bashaw, AB and Stan of Vancouver, B.C. predeceased John.

A graveside service will be held in Bashaw, AB on September 22nd, 2004 at 2:00 pm at the Bashaw Cemetery, reception to follow at the United Church.

In lieu of flowers, if friends so desire, memorial donations may be made to Lung Cancer Research, Diabetes Foundation, or to the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

A Memorial Service will also be held at the Mt. McIntyre Recreation Centre in Whitehorse on Saturday, Oct. 2nd, 2004 at 2:00 pm. Please join us for a Celebration of John's accomplishments and adventures, especially those along the Alaska Highway and in the Gold Fields.



KLONDIKE SPIRIT & OKANAGAN AGM

Would love to join all of you at the AGM luncheon - unfortunately my wife and I are attending week long meeting here in Trinidad (tough duty but someone has to make the supreme effort and do it!).

Thoroughly enjoyed the pictures you forwarded from Jean re the paddlewheeler.

Look forward to seeing it the next time I'm in Dawson City.

Regards to all.

Earle Smith - Grande Prairie Ab [t16ru672*telusplanet.net](mailto:t16ru672@telusplanet.net)
(ex Whitehorse RCAF 1954-1961)



Judy Adamyk and Debbie Kelly - Museum in Whitehorse in early 1960's.

Photo courtesy Debbie Kelly [debbiekelly*on.aibn.com](mailto:debbiekelly@on.aibn.com)



Ed Olsen, Penny North, Lois Cole, Alan McDiarmid

A warm winter day in **Mayo**, 1957. Friends, on our way to "Anne's Cafe" for hot chocolate.

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

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

I guess I finally have to admit that I have moved 'outside'. This is to request that you change my email address to [pebnorth*yahoo.ca](mailto:pebnorth@yahoo.ca).

I actually moved to Kelowna in April from Whitehorse but I guess I did not really want to say that I am no longer a Yukoner. I shall always be a Yukoner as this is my 3rd move 'outside'.

Looking forward to Okanagan Yukoners next week. See you there.

Beverley Whitehouse - now from Kelowna, BC

My incarnations in Yukon included:

1954 - 1969 (69-71 in Toronto) 1971 - 1974 (76-93 in Coquitlam BC)

1993 - 2004 (now in Kelowna) Graduated from FH Collins in 1966.

Can you double check that [mark999*attglobal.net](mailto:mark999@attglobal.net) is on your mailing list and markpeschke@hotmail.com is off? Not sure which one I'm getting it on as the former forwards to the latter at the moment as I'm on a trip and am mainly using the latter (hotmail) but have to delete them and want to have them for later so I want to make sure they're going to the attglobal address. Take my hotmail off as well as it is filling up too fast here on the road as I don't get in to often.

Thanks, Mark Peschke

REMOVED FROM LIST

Sherron: I have enjoyed the many months I have been receiving your publication. The time and effort you expend is to be commended. I have however determined that the many years I have been away from Yukon have distanced my knowledge of the items and people you identify. I, therefore am requesting the you remove me from your subscription list. I wish you the best in your future endeavours in this regard. Thank-you.

Stan Wilcox

WILCOX, Stan & Gloria sgwilcox@shaw.ca (In Dawson, Stewart & Whse 1945-60)
(250)954-0789 Parksville

NEW ADDITIONS

I just received the moccasin telegraph from my cousin and would like to be placed on your mail list.

Yvette Symes (that is my maiden name and the name I go by).

Born in Dawson City at St Mary's in 1945.

Let me know if you need other information.

Thanks.....Yvette ysymes@hotmail.com

I feel like I hardly qualify being a Yukoner but my whole life my mother and of course relatives have told me about the Yukon. I still have relatives that live in the Yukon. I left in 1947 and I now live in Vancouver.

I think we will be home long enough now to get on board your telegraph, please add us to your list and thanks again. Cheers Tom & Betty McLaughlin betmcl*silk.net

My good friend, Doug Marceau, Parksville, B.C., would be pleased to have you add his name to your list. His sister, Pearl Twigge and her husband, operated the Lodge at Carmacks during the 1950's, and Doug worked for them. The Twiggess latterly operated the Spirit Lake Lodge, and Doug visited with them several times. He was at Carmacks in 1954-55. His sister passed away a few years ago.

Doug Marceau's e-mail address is dougmarceau@uniserve.com

Thanks, Don Machan

Sherron! Please include me on the mailing list. I was born in Dawson City and lived in Whitehorse until leaving in 1957. Thanks. Roberta {CLOSE} Johansen robertaj@bcgroup.net

Thanks for the prompt reply!

Barb {Taylor} Conway mentioned the list to me last year and I forgot to do anything about it until now! Senility, I guess.

Mary Lou {Foster} also mentioned it to me and I must get in touch with her again.

I have not received any of the publications you mentioned and would be delighted to do so. If there is a cost, please let me know.

I live in Prince George, now, and play golf with Barb at least once a week.

My son just telephoned to tell me he is being sent to Whitehorse next month for a few days of work. I am wishing I could go with him. I expect his telephone call prompted me to get busy and contact you.

My dad--Bob Close--worked for Tourist Services. My sister, Barbara Close, and brother, David Close were both born in Whitehorse and went to elementary school there. My mom, Arline Close, worked selling candy at the movie theatre for a short time.

Regards, Roberta

I sent Roberta's message over to Fred Aylwin and here is his reply. –

Yes, I knew Roberta and her family. They lived on the 200 block of Jarvis when we lived on the 300 block. I also knew she lives in Prince George, but have never seen her in all the times I have been up there. Jack Earle who used to live next door to us on Jarvis played trumpet with Bill and Rusty Reid. He also lives in Prince George but have never seen him as well.

Fred

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

The best preparation for tomorrow is the proper use of today.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Mustard Relish – Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca

Delicious on hotdogs.

9 large cucumbers

4 large onions

Take out seeds and chop cucumbers and onions finely.

Sprinkle with pickling salt and let stand overnight. Drain in morning.

Mix together

2 tbsp powdered mustard

1 tsp powdered ginger

$\frac{3}{4}$ tsp tumeric

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups water

Add this to

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups vinegar

3 cups with sugar

Boil 5 minutes. Then add chopped cucumber and onions and boil for 10 minutes longer. Pour into jars and seal. (I use canning jars and heat the lids and close them tight while they are hot. – I do not boil the jars.)

DATES TO REMEMBER

The Vancouver Yukoners' Association will be having its Luncheon meeting October 14, 2004 at the Holiday Inn Downtown at 1110 Howe St., Vancouver. Members and friends usually assemble about 11:30am - noon. This is a pot luck affair (sandwiches, cakes, fruit). Coffee is provided. We look forward to seeing anyone with the north still in their veins.

Regards: Lyn Bleiler LynBleiler@aol.com

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