

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – Ninety-Seventh Edition – Jan. 16, 2005

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To use an e-mail address from the MocTel, substitute the * with @.



YTG Tourism Bldg - Whitehorse

Photo courtesy Heinrich Lohmann heinrich@lohmann.ca (In Alberta)

PEOPLE WATCHING

By Gus Barrett sourdoughs2@shaw.ca (In Qualicum BC)

I sit and watch my neighbors pass,
As in review,
Professionals and working class,
There's quite a few.
Some sit to rest an aging frame
Upon a log,
While others spurn to do the same,
And walk their dog.

A husky gent goes rushing past
With pigtail flowing
Followed by a tiny poodle
That he's towing.
Close behind, a little lady
With a cane,
Is being dragged along the walk by.
Her great dane

In the evening, as the sun is sinking
O'er the bay,
Younger couples strolling, hand in hand

And out for play.
Will sit and coo upon the grass,
Closely entwined.
And enjoy their time together
Sipping wine.

Younger women oft demand
A second glance,
While jogging in Bikini bras and
Spandex pants.
A threat of dire harm to aging
Eyes like mine.
I have to go, the wife is paging,
I toe the line.

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HEELS & HEROS

By Jeanne Harbottle, formerly Connolly.

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FRUSTRATED HUNTER

The morning was clear and cold and the Itsi Mountains stood high and lofty in the distance. It won't be long, I thought, and we'll be breaking trail around the base of those peaks. Bob took off as soon as breakfast was over. We could hear the rumble of the cat in the distance.



Majestic Itsi Mountains
Photo courtesy Jeanne (Connolly) Harbottle

Bud, Tom and I took our time drinking another cup of coffee and getting the gear on the truck. The dogs were wagging and happy to be going again. I never ceased to wonder at the good dispositions of these mutts. Hot or cold, early or late, tired or hungry, they could always wag. Too bad the human race wasn't as pleasant in greeting a neighbor.

We passed Sheldon Lake but didn't see any sign of the Peter's, a family of Indians from Ross. If they had heard the truck they would have been around for a handout. Four or five miles further on we caught up with Bob. Chris wasn't what you would call a speedball and Bob was busy roaring at the poor guy. Being a farmer from the Peace River, Chris had never been around heavy equipment before, so he was never sure just what Bob wanted. However, he did his best. Why he was never caught in a cable or clobbered by a tree was a wonder to us.

We had lunch on the side of the road and while we were getting ready to pull out Bob let out a heck of a roar. He waved frantically towards the ravine and took off on the dead run yelling, "Grizzly!"

Tom grabbed a rifle and went up the road while Bob tore thru the brush at breakneck speed. I stood transfixed, as did Bud. We were sure he would run over the bear at the rate he was going and would get well thrashed for his efforts. Tom was standing on a hummock trying to see what was going on. He was fit to be tied, as people just didn't go tearing thru the buck-brush looking for grizzly. I felt sure if the bear ever got a look at Bob, he would still be going, what with all the shouting and crashing thru the brush added to the size and color of Bob, the bear would think he'd been sent for. Bob stumbled back to the road, huffing... puffing... cussing and mumbling. He sure would have liked to have that grizzly. He jumped on the cat, put it in the big wheel and rumbled up the road.

The weather was still holding and we hadn't had any rain, the sky had been overcast most of the day, and the trip from Ross had been dry. Bob was snorting right along. We had to stop every so often but most of the time he had the washouts filled in short order. There was one washout ten miles from 280 that you could drop truck, cat and a few other items in without touching bottom. I thought we would be sitting on the side of the road the rest of the night. I underestimated Thorpe and his bulldozer. After numerous trips in the bush and what seemed hundreds of trees and tons of dirt, in two hours we were ready to cross and finish the journey to 280.

We had a good dinner and Bob told Bud he would lead him in the morning for his trip back to Johnson's Crossing. Bob said he would sure miss having a cook on the return trip. Tom was busy wondering how we would get our supplies to the cabin. We could cache our gear at the camp in a couple of drums and get them when the trucks started hauling, or we could use dog packs. The hour was getting late, so with goodnights and yawns we headed for our kips (beds).



Tom & Jeanne Connolly at Trappers Cabin fall 1956.
Photo courtesy Jeanne (Connolly) Harbottle

While Tom and I scrounged around the camp in the morning Bob was busy loading Bud's truck. We could always find something that would come in handy around these abandoned camps.

Another truck drove into the yard and we wondered who in the world it could be. We walked over to where he had parked and learned he was the Deacon, a long, lanky, soft-spoken fellow. He told Thorpe that he was to go on to the McMillan River and put in the bridge, using the pontoons that were stored here at 280. Bob looked like he was sure the fellow had lost all his marbles - - he knew he was a good man but he was pretty certain he couldn't build a bridge by himself and with Chris as his helper he was positive. The Deacon said he was to help and told Thorpe there was nothing to putting in pontoons.

When I made lunches and put something to eat in a bag for Bud I thought how lucky T.O. was. He had been stewing about our gear and now it looked like we'd be at the cabin, bag and baggage, in a few days. The Deacon had brought a new supply of groceries so we would have plenty to feed the crew while the work was being done.

Bud was loaded and ready to pullout, and Tom and I thanked him again for his kindness. It seemed we were always in debt to Bud and hoped some day we could repay him for all his help.

T.O. and the Deacon loaded the dogs and our gear on his truck and while Thorpe snorted ahead of us we all left for the Macmillan. It was a cool, crisp, autumn day but the scenery, as usual, was lovely and the mountains were bright red in color. The buck-brush and willow splashed the side hills and draws with bright gold, yellow and amber. I was enjoying the ride and thought how glorious the Yukon is in the fall.

It was 18 miles to the river so Bob was rumbling right along. When we got to the river it was low, but just boiling white water where the bridge had to go. We all just gaped, as only a short way above the rapids was dead water. I sometimes looked at the road and the

bridges in this country and thought - the G.I.'s must have made bets to see if it could be done or not. It surely wasn't the work of an intelligent engineer. Bob took one look and decided he would need a pile of cable and timbers from 280. While Bob and Deacon took off Tom and I set up camp. There was a good shelter across the river (naturally), however there was a small powder house on this side the three men could use.

The time passed and, as we were busy, we hadn't noticed the sky darkening. Right in the middle of our work it started to rain, and it started to rain in earnest, making up for all the nice weather we had had. The dogs were settled under heavy spruce trees except for Major and Chee Chee and they were housedogs, they told us they were. The tent was up and Major made a beeline for shelter. He was pooped; he had spent hours chasing a squirrel in one direction, a ptarmigan in the other and a gopher in between. His short little legs were almost worn down to his belly and he needed a rest. We promised to get the stove up and lit real soon so he could dry off. He acknowledged with a shake.



Tahl Tan bear dogs, Chee Chee and a friend.
Photo courtesy Jeanne (Connolly) Harbottle

While Tom was off in the bush getting a few days wood supply I got the stove up and lit. We had been living on steak (no complaints) but thought it might be nice to have a stew for a change. With the rain pitter-pattering on the roof it just sounded good. The tent was warm and cozy; the fire crackled in the stove and I felt content.

Tom dumped a load of wood by the stove, and said, "Here comes the truck, Mrs. T.O. Those guys are going to have some job getting the pontoons in the rapids. Now that we are getting rain the river will rise like mad." I asked Tom to tell the fellows soup was on.

They trooped into the tent; heads bowed under the flap, and sat down. We all knew that if you touch a tent when it is raining it would leak in that spot, so all were careful to avoid the roof. Noses were twitching when I put the stew and hot bannock on the table.

"You couldn't have found anything that tastes and smells so good, Jeanne," Bob said. Everyone ate heartily and the pot was clean when I poured the coffee. Leaving the men to their chatter, I fed the family and did the dishes. I sat in a chair under the tent fly and

listened to the river tumble over the rocks on its way to sea many thousands of miles away. The drizzle hushed most of the night sounds but it was peaceful and I wondered how our friends in civilization were and if the mutts were lonely.

Bob, Chris and the Deacon were just leaving when I went in and, saying good night, they headed for their little wicky-up. Tom picked up a book, so I crawled into my bedroll and let the music of the river lull me to sleep.

Tom had lit the fire and it was snapping cheerfully when I wakened. It was still raining and I thought, "Those boys are sure going to have a miserable day working on the river in the rain." There isn't anything as cold as a wet fall day. At least snow in the Yukon is dry.

Our bed was made of spruce boughs and they smelled so fresh and clean, I stretched lazily and got a dirty look from Chee Chee. I had disturbed her. Major was steaming in front of the stove. He was a water spaniel and was taking it quite literally. Tom handed me a cup of steaming coffee and I knew when that was gone I'd better get crack in'. Better to have two dogs mad than four men.

I couldn't hear any activity on the river; even the roar of the cat was drowned out by the rapids. I quickly got the breakfast going, thinking that if they were working they must be ravenous. Tom called them, and what a sight they were. Between the rain and the spray from the rapids they were soaked to the skin when they trooped in. They rubbed their cold hands in front of the stove, and when I said, "It's getting cold," they shuffled to the table.

Bob asked Tom if he thought they could get a line across with a boat. I knew Tom wouldn't have any trouble. He had spent years on some of the worst rivers in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon and was considered an excellent white water man. Bob wasn't sure what he would do with the line; the current was so swift only something stationary would hold, but he thought he might be able to get a heavy cable across to keep the pontoon from ending up in the arctic once he got it in the river. Tom said sure, he could have waded the river half a mile upstream before it rained, and it was dead water just above the rapids. In fact Bob could have forded the river with the cat before it started raining. This of course made Bob groan. I promised to keep the pot hot all day and they trooped out mumbling thanks.

By noon it was still dark and raining. The cable was across the river but Bob was in gloomy spirits. He said it would take him a week to get the bridge in, pontoons or no pontoons.

We knew it bothered the men but it certainly didn't bother us. Tom and I had lots of time, we could have galloped off and picked our stuff up later in the fall, but they had all been so good to us that we felt the least we could do was help. I think they were pleased to have a cook, and Tom was a pretty good hand on the river.

Three days later it was still raining. The river was raging, the men were raving and little had been accomplished. One pontoon was in the water and the decking on, but they still had three to go to bridge the Macmillan. In spite of all the handicaps they were a good bunch and had remarkable senses of humor. Half the time they were laughing. I found this to be so with most people in the North. You need a sense of humor to survive.

Four days later and still raining. The old boy had really cut loose with this pail full. The sky was laden grey and gloomy but the tent as usual was warm and cozy and sitting under the fly was comfortable. Everyone had added a few layers of clothes and it felt like snow in the air. I kept the coffee pot full and it was getting overworked.

If nothing else, Bob was getting washed, not that the rain could do a thorough job but he looked a little lighter. Drying their clothes was the biggest problem. Tom and I were fine as we had our winter gear and could change but Bob, Chris and the Deacon were not prepared for spending the fall on the McMillan and of course didn't bring a wardrobe. There was a stove in their little shack, but when they had it going full blast to dry duds they were cooked out. In spite of it all the work progressed.

(To be continued)



YUKON CHEECHAKO

"Hey look what I found on my claim up on the hill," screamed Oliver Millet. "Gold, gold, it's pure real gold."

*Drawing by Bill Oster
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Only a handful of the 30,000 Gold Rush Stampeders struck it rich. Most wished they'd never left home and returned penniless. Many perished in the harsh environment, and some stayed to pioneer the development of the Yukon to what it is today. There is a saying that some became sour on the country and never made enough dough to ever come out, -- hence the name "Sourdough".

*Drawing by Bill Oster
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THE YUKON CHEECHAKO

By Al Oster alosteryukon*jetstream.net (In Salmon Arm BC)
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OLIVER B. MILLET left his home in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia when he was 14 years old to work as a deck hand on a sailing vessel. After a number of years on the sea he decided to embark on a land adventure and pursue a fortune in the western USA. He was working in a sawmill in Seattle when the S. S. Portland arrived from Skagway, Alaska on June 17, 1897 with a ton of GOLD from the Klondike on board.

The call of new adventure beckoned and Millet quit his job at the mill and headed north to the Klondike. He arrived in Dawson in early October, 1897 poorly equipped but eager to begin prospecting. He was now 33 years old, and a greenhorn to the north, but stubborn and full of ambition.

He began working on a claim located above #40 claim on Eldorado Creek but found only small traces of very fine gold. He wondered why the gold on Eldorado Creek was of a different texture and color than gold found on Bonanza. He studied the geographical structure of the hills and valleys in the Klondike, and formed a theory that possibly an ancient stream bed once traversed the existing Bonanza Creek at a higher level, and if so, the placer gold in Bonanza could have washed from the hillside gravel above the Creek.

Acting on his theory he prospected on the hillside above Tagish Charlies' Bonanza Creek claim during the winter of 1897 - 98. He worked like a man possessed in 2 feet of snow and sub-zero temperatures to prove his theory. He thawed the ground with wood fires and dug 3 shafts to a depth of over 20 feet. Prospectors working the creek beds below him thought he was totally mad and scoffed at this CHEECHAKO digging for gold on top of a hill. Then on April 14, 1898, at the bottom of his 3rd shaft at a depth of 26 feet he struck pure white clean sand with considerable traces of gold. He had discovered the now famous WHITE CHANNEL of sand that was once an ancient creek bed. Now he worked even harder and had little time to stop and enjoy proper food nourishment, and as a result became ill with Scurvy. He had no time to take treatment and worked even more feverishly on his claim. He panned out \$20,000.00 worth of gold and finally became too ill to work and realized that he must obtain hospital treatment. He asked Bill Norwood, a friend from Nova Scotia to register his claim for him as required by law and then he was hospitalized. Within a few days of his claim registry the entire hill was swarming with stakers and even Norwood was able to obtain only a small fraction by the time he returned from Dawson. Millet unable to work his claim sold it for \$60,000.00 and the new owner took out an additional \$500,000.00 worth of gold from the small 100 foot by 100 foot square claim. By summer every hill in the Klondike watershed was scarred and marred with claim posts, ditches, water flumes, etc. by newcomers and many of them were able to recover substantial amounts of gold from their hillside claims, particularly those who were fortunate enough to be on the WHITE CHANNEL.

The hill was named CHEECHAKO HILL by Bonanza and Eldorado miners because only a greenhorn or CHEECHAKO would look for gold on a hilltop. The SOURDOUGHS, still stubbornly maintained that gold could not be found high in the hills of the Klondike and would not participate in hillside staking. The entire hill has now been prospected over and over again and a wealth of gold has been extracted.

The YUKON CHEECHAKO, Oliver Millet, recovered from Scurvy and invested his \$80,000.00 Klondike gold fortune in Seattle real estate. As he grew older, perhaps from the after effects of Scurvy, his mind began to wander more and more and it was necessary for his family to appoint a trustee to manage his estate. He died a very wealthy man at a respectable old age.

YUKON CHEECHAKO

By Al Oster [alosteryukon*jetstream.net](http://alosteryukon.jetstream.net)

(Key of "A" * 4/4 * Moderately. Words & music by Al Oster.
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(1)

Well he /a came into the / Yukon, To /d look for wealth and /a fame
He's / going to the / Klondike, To / stake a mining /e7 claim
He's /a gonna find a / fortune, He /d knows not where to /a go
A /d stranger to the /a Yukon, They /e7 call him Cheecha /a ko.
/e7 Yukon Chee / chako you have /d got a lot to /a learn
/e7 Can you ride the / river where the /d boiling waters /a churn
/d Can you fight the / wind and cold at /a forty-five be / low
/e7 Yukon Chee / chako can you /d be a Sour /a dough / .

(2)

He /a went on to Bon /anza Creek, And /d up the trail did /a go
He / ran into a / mining man, A / real old Sour /e7 dough
He /a asked, "Where can I / stake a claim, Oh /d tell me if you /a will",
The /d Sourdough said with a /a twinkle eye, "Up /e7 there on yonder /a hill".
/e7 Yukon Chee / chako you have /d got a lot to /a learn
/e7 Can you ride the / river where the /d boiling waters /a churn
/d Can you stand the / winter with it's /a bitter wind and / cold
/e7 Can you fight the / loneliness while /d searching for the /a gold / .

(3)

For / many weeks Chee / chako dug, The / hill both night and / day
In / Dawson town they / laughed and said, He'd / dig the hill a / way
The / mining men and / engineers, They / laughed at Cheecha / ko
They / roared aloud said / he should dig, down / on the creek be / low.
/ Yukon Chee / chako you have / got to under / stand
/ Gold in the / Yukon is / found on lower / land
/ Stop your digging / in that hole, you'll / never rest un / til
You've / dug yourself to / China on that / claim up on the / hill / .

(4)

The / northern lights were / shining, Chee / chako came to / town
He / walked into a / Dawson bar, And / laid his gold poke / down
"The / drinks are all on / me" he cried, "Oh / I will pay the / bill
For / I have found a / fortune, On my / claim up on the / hill".
/ Yukon Chee / chako now he / lives a life of / fun
He / lives a life of / pleasure neath the / Honolulu / sun
And / every mining / engineer and / every Sour / dough
/ Still recall the / gold he found, this / Yukon Cheecha / ko / .

* * * * *

NORTHERN ADVERTURE – CHAPTER V

By Don Machan demachan@telus.net (In Qualicum)

In 1953, after serving as teacher at the Watson Lake Airport for two years, I accepted an offer by "Pop" Hulland, Superintendent of Schools for Yukon, to assume the position of Principal of Mayo Elementary High School. My wife and baby son Terry remained at Hudson Hope, B.C. with her mother, until accommodations could be arranged. Mr. Hulland had advised in his letter of appointment that a house would be provided as part of the terms of employment. Unfortunately, during the summer, and subsequent to my acceptance of the contract, the Territorial Health Inspector had examined the proposed accommodations (Alex Wark's former residence), and condemned the place as being unfit for habitation. Such was the dilemma facing me on my arrival in Mayo, which was, in itself, most inauspicious.

I had purchased a second hand car from a friend....it was either a Vauxhall or a Vanguard, a small English manufactured car, and not the most reliable car by any stretch of the imagination. However, after various misadventures, I arrived at the stop sign at the entrance to Mayo's main street, Front Street, I believe, my poor little car gave up the ghost, and refused to go any further. "Chappie" Chapman had an office or place of business nearby and came to my rescue. He was the first Mayo resident that I met. I checked into the Chateau Mayo Hotel, which was operated by Alex Wark and Dale Robertson, with Roxy Carriere Manager.

The immediate problem was to find accommodations for myself and family, and that was not an easy problem to solve, as Mayo was "booming" at the time, with mining and prospecting. The Primary and Elementary teachers, Ruth Kerbs and Mae Reilkoff arrived shortly after my arrival, and they were equally unhappy with their accommodations. We jointly agreed that since the terms of our contract agreements, in terms of accommodations, that we would not commence our teaching duties.

We packed our belongings and drove to Whitehorse in Ruth Kerbs car. My car was still incapacitated.

When we arrived in Whitehorse, the Superintendent, having received a communication from Mayo that we were en route to Whitehorse, directed us to the home of Aubrey

Simmons, Member of Parliament for Yukon. Mr. Simmons received us very graciously and promised that if we returned to Mayo that suitable arrangements would be made to accommodate us.

While we were in Whitehorse, the citizens of Mayo were busy organizing a public meeting to deal with the problem. They requested that the Commissioner attend a meeting to be held in the Wareham Hall. Virtually everyone in the Village attended the meeting, chaired by Archdeacon Kirksey. The Deputy Minister for Northern Affairs happened to be visiting Yukon at that time, and the Commissioner and the Deputy Minister, on the request of Aubrey Simmons, attended the meeting.

During the course of the meeting, "Babe" (MacLennan) Smith was addressing the meeting, and indicated that their home was for sale and would serve as suitable accommodation for the Principal (me) and my family. While she was speaking, the Deputy-Minister rose to his feet and interrupted "Babe" Smith's presentation. Archdeacon Kirksey pointed his finger at the Deputy-Minister, and in a commanding voice said, "sit down, you're out of order!"

The Deputy-Minister's face went beet red and he slunk back down on his chair, totally shattered.

Before the Commissioner and Deputy-Minister left town that day, they had ordered the purchase of the Smith residence, and if my memory serves me correctly, they also promised to build a new hospital and various other Territorial facilities. We lived very happily in the former "Babe" and Alex Smith residence for the next two years.

Ruth Kerbs and Mae Reilkoff were provided with accommodations in the building that had been the Treadwell Mining Co. Office, and extensive renovations were ordered to be made to that building by the Commissioner and the Deputy-Minister, that day.

The Newshams, Gerald and Buelah, lived in that building in the mid to late 50's.

Such was my introduction to Mayo, and I must say that I was most impressed by the resourcefulness of the citizens of Mayo.

Don Machan, (In Qualicum Beach, B.C.)

The Watchers

By Alf Bilton abilton*polarcom.com (In Whitehorse)

All Watchers know they're not alone, but joining those before,
Those standing by as passing time just keeps recruiting more.

The watching peaks, seeing ice retreat from northern virgin land,

The glaciers slide, and mammoths tried, blinked back tears of sand.
Though reinforced since then of course, the granite guardians stayed
And saw migrations of Dene nations passing by their way.

While most pushed south to scatter about and even cross the plains,
The ones came last claimed northern lands and northern places named.
Their tiny bands explored these lands wherever they could go,
As guardians smiled knowing all the while what only Watchers know.

When Campbell came and hung the name on vee-shaped Francis Lake
Their trails were there and everywhere he discovered in their wake.
The Pelly (renamed) he rode to fame though fortune slipped his grasp,
But Selkirk's built on riverbank silt and Youkon's on the map.

Swatka too, in Yankee blue, renamed wherever he went;
Morass or moraine to him all the same on rivers that ran by his tent.
Dawson, more cautious, noted the losses and carefully drew up new charts,
Wrote of resources, questioned all sources, proved himself able and smart.

The sourdoughs came, again packing names to sprinkle like nuggets of gold,
And plucked from the ground the wealth lying 'round, usurping again ways of old.
Earning their pride for hardships tried and victories snatched from defeat,
New Watchers stayed; new homes were made, churches, businesses, streets.

These newcomers' eyes discerned the real prize worth inconvenience and cold,
Of lives that they led there are books to be read and many a tale still told.
But streets needed names, new roads the same, again old handles were tossed
And many new labels famed locals able to thrive in wilderness frost.

Yet a few Watcher words were still to be heard, so borrowed, then reapplied
To newcomer dreams of mountains and streams and trails on which they relied.
Then highways bored through the valleys they knew, planes leapfrogged the peaks;
So the land of the strong, who labored so long, was opened to casual peeks.

Cheechakos flocked in, multicultural twins, and grifters their purses to fleece,
As old-timers mourned not tourists just shorn, but loss of their freedom and peace.
Now desk muffins too can't seem to eschew the laying of new paper tracks,
Contempting old names more honestly gained to favor political hacks.

How Watchers must grin, hand before chin, to see us losing our grip;
For boats that come in will go out again - there's seldom a one way trip.

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The Moose, Alice Breaden and Daughter

Photo courtesy Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca (In Nanaimo)

The Moose is a Letourou transporter that worked north out of Dawson. The photo was taken in Bear Creek, and John Gould may have more on the location where they were transporting. That was Alice and our daughter Joanne.
Henry

Hi Sherron, It was better known as the "Snow Monster" it was built by Letourou for Alaska Freight lines in the 1950's. It was used by them during the construction of the DEW line. The freight was hauled by truck to Eagle Alaska, the snow train was parked across the Yukon River, it could not get into Eagle. From there it came over into Canada and then north to the Arctic coast and the DEW line stations with supplies. It caught fire on Eagle Creek the fire destroyed one of the engines. It sat there until 1962 when a crew came over from Alaska with another Letourneau machine. They went over to the train and were able to repair one of the engines so that they had some power. The train that came over from Alaska was used to help. The only problem was that its power was AC where as the other one was DC it took some smarts to get them to work. I was with them as guide and expeditor. We left Dawson on April 21 1962 and got back on June 22. The train was brought to the Black Stone river and Down the Dempster highway to the Klondike Highway and into Bear Creek where it sat for a few years then moved back to Fairbanks where it sat. I have pictures of it and will send you one attached to another e-mail.

Regards, John Gould jgould@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

OK Sherron,

Whatever you want to call them, there were diesel electrical generators in each engine and a motor in each wheel of the engine and trailers. The AC would mean alternating current and DC direct current. DC motors were far better as they were higher torque, and the more load put on them the harder they would pull. AC motors tend to fade out as load is applied. DC motors would keep trying and taking more current, and if the load were excessive they could burn the windings through over heating. I think you are right that

John was Guide and Expediter. Quite the machines as the wheels were about 10 feet high and massive.

Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca (In Nanaimo)

OUR TRIP BACK HOME TO THE YUKON – PART XV

By Donna Clayson ytdogteam@telus.net (In Ardrossan AB)

Note: all photos courtesy of Donna Clayson unless otherwise noted.

The night before we left Burwash Landing it rained but the next morning the sun shone brightly. During the night a tour bus parked right in front of the Lodge and blocked the path to the campground. Without a picnic table to lay our camp gear on we decided to eat in the restaurant. Dozens of tourists took a majority of the tables but the girls were fast and efficient in delivering breakfast. As we ate I admired the tables. They were carved out of wood and scorched into impressive designs. No two tables were identical and could seat six at a time.



Mural on the wall in the Lodge

After breakfast I had a shower. There are only two showers at the lodge that must accommodate all guests but well worth the wait as they are clean and just the thing after traveling such a distance. Obie mentioned the Lodge is for sale. Looks like a deal to me if I was looking for that type of business. Burwash Landing is a real nice place and I can well understand why Obie and Scully like to live there.

We met Obie at the fire station after breakfast and after another visit with Obie and the Hounds we bid farewell as he drove away on his quad. I was sorry to say goodbye as I felt we had sealed a close friendship.

We carried on to Silver City near Kluane Lake and with the St. Elias Mountains in the background. The mountains in this region are in the Kluane Range that includes Mount Logan, Canada's highest peak at 19,500 feet and other peaks that range from 5,000 to 6,000 feet. An interesting note is that Kluane National Park is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site that includes Alaska's Wrangle-St. Elias and Glacier Bay National Parks and British Columbia's Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park.

I understand Silver City was once an RCMP camp with only a half-dozen cabins remaining. The logs are hand-hewn and no two logs are identical. When looking closely at the logs on the cabins I noticed a powder type substance on them. Apparently embedded rocks in the base of the nearby Kaskawulsh Glacier grind against the underlying bedrock creating a fine grey rock powder called "flour". The wind then carries this powder and deposits itself on the logs.

By the time we got to Silver City it was plus 33C but the heat didn't stop us from exploring. Even though all the roofs on the cabins have collapsed we could still get a good idea on how the inhabitants lived.



Cabins at Silver City



One of the smaller cabins



Collapsed Roof on large cabin

I noticed a kerosene can crumbled and lying near one of the cabins. When looking at how the cabin was constructed I noticed these cans were used to line the wall just under where the roof joins. The cans were hammered flat and nailed into place.



Crumbled kerosene can



Notice the cans lining the wall under where the roof joins

A couple of buildings once held small animal pens, I'm thinking possibly fox. Perhaps our readers know and could e-mail me the answer.



Animal Pens

One of the more interesting buildings was what appeared to be a horse barn. You could see the where 3 stalls would hold one animal each. The rest of the building looked like a place to groom the horses and store the hay. It wasn't a big building but very well designed.



Horse Barn

We spent about an hour touring Silver City. It's a nice spot and even after 100 years plus you can still feel a sense of what it would have been like at the turn of the century. It's a shame it has never been kept up at least for the tourists' sake.

When we left Silver City this would be the end of our trip. After another day of visiting in Whitehorse we would carry on back to Alberta. I was sorry to leave and would never say "Goodbye" but "Farewell, I'll be back soon". The Yukon has been and will always be my first love. I miss the north but with the help of the Moccasin Telegraph the north will never be too far away. I hope you, the readers, have enjoyed the trip along with Bryan and I and that it has inspired those of you who have not visited for some time.

Cheers, Donna & Bryan Clayson

CARCROSS, DAWSON & WHITEHORSE WEBCAMS

The cams are available at: <http://www.explorenorth.com/webcam-ca.html> .

Henry Breaden

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Don't be afraid to go out on a limb. That's where the fruit is.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Submitted by Vivian Stuart (Lelievre) lornellis*shaw.ca

Cottage Cheese Pancakes

Serve with sour cream or jam

6 eggs – separated
2 cups 2% cottage cheese
6 tblsp flour
pinch salt
few drops lemon juice

Beat egg whites until stiff
Mix rest of ingredients together
Mix both together
Cook on griddle

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