

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – Ninety-Eighth Edition – Jan. 23, 2005

Created by Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca (In Vernon BC)

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



Ice Fog

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

**January 22nd is Gus & Blanches' 50th Wedding Anniversary
Happy Anniversary you two and many more !!**

GROWING OLD TOGETHER

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

I've known you almost fifty years,
And it's still beyond my ken,
How you can look the same today,
As you used to way back then.
You don't seem any older,
And I really don't know whether
It's because you have eternal youth,
Or we're growing old together.

We've passed a lot of milestones,
Since those days when first we met,
And I'm sure we'll pass some others
'Cause we're not finished yet.
We've still a lot of dreams to fill,
We're two birds of a feather.
And nothing's going to stop us now
From growing old together.

We still have many hills to climb,
And many sights to see,
The future holds no terror, just
As long as you're with me.
And when we're feeling weary,
We can stop and smell the heather,
I have no fear of aging, for
We're growing old together.

And some day, down the road a piece
When we are forced to stop and rest,
When the body and the spirit
Can no longer stand the test.
We'll stay at home and reminisce,
There's naught I'd rather do,
Than remembering the fun I've had
While growing old with you.

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HEELS & HEROS

By Jeanne Harbottle, formerly Connolly.

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THREE MEN IN A JEEP

Sitting under the fly and having our morning coffee, we were somewhat surprised to see a jeep fly up to the bridge approach. Gawking open mouthed, we beheld three of the best-dressed tourists in the Yukon. Donned in Marine khakis, oxfords and battle jackets, they looked like they had just stepped out of Esquire. While waiting for them to come up to the tent we wondered what in God's name they were doing in this neck of the woods. They must have taken off from the Alaska Highway and gotten on the wrong road.

Aware of our amazement they proceeded to shock us further with the news they were on their way to Norman Wells. Norman was only another 261 miles, over seven divides and numerous rivers.

Chan Wilson and Jim Chase represented different companies interested in the heavy equipment on the Canol Road and hoped to itemize what was left so they could bid on it for salvage. Les Mensinger was the representative of Foster and Davidson, the original bidders. Clay Carmen had told them they should be able to make it to Norman in the jeep and Les Mesinger had told them he had flown over the road a few days prior to their arrival and the road was in fair shape. A few of the bridge approaches were missing and

there were lots of washouts, but nothing that would hinder the jeep and they should be able to make the round trip in five days.



Chan Wilson, Jim Chase & Les Mesinger
Photo courtesy Jeanne (Connolly) Harbottle

This photo is not clear, but tells more of a story than no photo at all.- Sherron

Bob Thorpe bellowed with rage. He would have to get them across as soon as possible; they had given him a letter from Clay. He told them in no uncertain terms they were crazy, that the road had been abandoned for over four years and was impassable. Bob had been as far as 222 himself and if they made Norman in a month they could consider themselves lucky. Tom and I fully agreed, and, being female, I could just picture them in about two days. Their attire was for anything but a ride on the Canol Road.

Bob thought he could put the jeep on the one pontoon and haul it over with the cable from the opposite bank. It would take some time, but he told them he would cross them in the morning if all went well.

Chan and Jim were a little annoyed at the delay, but unless they could do it faster they would have to wait. In the meantime it was two more mouths to feed and I had better plan on doing it now. To add to the hilarity it had started to rain again.

Lunch, was a question-and-answer game with everyone getting in the act. What was I doing in this God-forsaken country, where was I from, was I crazy? This last one stumped me: I assumed some of the time I was. Bob and Tom spent the time explaining the hazards of the trip and what happens to the roads in the north when they are not maintained, the effects of freeze-up, break-up, glaciers, frost heaves, etc. It was interesting but fell on deaf ears. Bob grunted disgustedly and went back to the job at hand. The Deacon had said little and thought much. Poor Chris was as lost as the tourists so held his peace. They were interested only in the thousands and thousands of dollars lying idle in the North and the profit to be had if they could salvage it.

After dinner we sat long over coffee, and after hours of talking these fellows started doing a little thinking. None of them had any bush experience nor had they any idea of the country. It was fall and we could have a snowfall any day, especially in the higher terrain. They were poorly equipped both with supplies and with clothing should they have any difficulties, and we were unanimous in thinking they would have their share of trouble. While the discussion was running hot and heavy, Chan asked Tom if he would consider guiding them. I nearly choked and hoped they would continue talking all night so I could talk to Tom before he gave them his answer. I should have known that it would be useless; any challenge was exciting to Tom.

I thought of a thousand reasons why we should not go, but I could not come up with a logical reason to my objections. I just knew we were making a mistake. Lord knows it wasn't the time it would take, we had nothing but time. The hours passed and I was like a flea on a griddle waiting to get my complaints off my chest.

I spent two hours being female and logical, but Tom had long before made up his mind and was going to be a hero. Chan had made the mistake of offering him a thousand dollars, plus the fact that Tom really felt a responsibility to them. He was as sure as God made little apples they were in for trouble and if he could help he would do so, with or without the money. I will never forget the consequences.

I spent a restless night and was glad when I heard the fire crackling in the stove and could keep myself busy cooking, cleaning and packing. It was a gloomy morning, but the sky was breaking up so we might have a nice day. The roar of the river was deafening today. It had been muffled by the weather but this morning it sounded ominous.

By the time breakfast was ready Bob had the jeep rigged to cross. He would cross the whole kit and caboodle at once, dogs, people and gear. The jeep was on the pontoon and after breakfast we would pack and get aboard.

Chan was a likable, quiet fellow, tall and thin and somewhere in his thirties. Jim was jolly, short, plump and middle aged. Les was young, tall, important and obviously in charge. I doubt if he thought our being asked to guide them was at all necessary and somewhat of a nuisance. However, he was to keep Jim and Chan happy, and if they wanted to throw away a thousand dollars, who was he to complain.

Tom gathered up the mutts, who were so excited at being on the go again they literally dragged him to the river. I had most of our gear packed and put on a stew for Bob and his crew. They would be here for a few more days.

Getting into the pontoon, Bob wished us luck and thanked me for the good cooking and full coffee pot. The Deacon said he would see us this fall when we got back and they were hauling from 222. Bob started up the cat and slowly pulled us across the river. The beginning of our trip to Norman Wells and the sun came out!

Les drove the jeep off the pontoon and with much wiggling and scrunching we managed to get all five of us, and four dogs settled. We had two planks tied across the back of the jeep. I sat in the middle on my imagination and wore the gearshift on my knee for most of the trip. Then of course if Les needed four-wheel drive I don't know if my leg could have done as good a job, but it always seemed to be preferred. Chan sat along side of me with one leg hanging out and Tom, 'Whammy' (Jim) and the mutts draped out and around the back seat. It was a sight for sore eyes: what with tails, feet, arms, heads and gear there was very little to be seen of the jeep.

We climbed steeply away from the river and everyone seemed to be holding their breath. Most of the hills on the Canol were straight up, some of them so steep that the truckers would go up them in reverse if they had a heavy load of long pipe. Two or three of the trucks had had to reverse down the hills when they powered out and, because of inexperience or other reasons, had driven the pipe through the cab. So, if in doubt, they would go up in reverse.

The roar of the river died away and with spirits soaring we toodled up the Canol to our cabin ten miles away.

Tom had insisted on one thing if we were to go. We would stop at the cabin, outfit our new acquaintances in proper clothing, and fill the larder with good old staples. The grub steak in the jeep was delicious--eggs, bacon, canned fruits vegetables, bread and pound butter. If we ended up on shanks mare we would be burdened with heavy supplies and out of food shortly. With two more people and four dogs to feed the grub steak would be depleted in less than a week.

The road to the cabin was good and we were soon there. I was anxious to see if our cache had been bothered. It wasn't likely, as we had stored everything in 45-gallon drums before pulling out last spring. Even a bear would have a problem breaking into one of these. He might roll it around awhile but that is all. The cabin was nestled in the high spruce trees about a quarter of a mile off the road. It looked cozy and friendly when we came in sight. I was secretly wishing this was as far as the Connolly's were going. The dogs went crazy sniffing their old houses and digging for precious bones. The roof of the cabin had been lifted off and moved a few inches on the top round. It must have been the same old bruin as this was the way we found the cabin last winter. I guess it was easier to lift up the roof than to tear down the door.

We had plenty of good heavy clothing on the cache and doled out socks, mitts, insoles, moccasins and long johns. I'm sure all three of them thought we were mental and only took the things to be agreeable. It was hard to convince them that it might snow any day and they certainly were not prepared for a good old Yukon storm.

Tom got a couple of dog packs off the cache. At this they really set up a howl. "*What in the world are those?*" asked Les, and when he was told he said we wouldn't need them. Tom ignored him and went about gathering some staples. He packed rice, flour, tea, dry milk, sugar, canned butter, beef fat, cracked wheat for man and dog, baking powder,

dried fruit, soap, candles, the 22 rifle and shells, extra 270 ammunition. I hauled out my long johns, heavy socks, mitts, sweater, boots and an extra pair of pants and shirt. I packed my pack sack, and got a queer look from Jim and Chan. Tom had his packsack tied on the board and, getting a grub box off the cache, we beaded back to the jeep. All Les could think of was where we would put all this extra junk.

Tom loaded the grub box and tied it on the hood. The men put their extra clothing in their suitcases. I wondered what would happen if they had to carry them very far. It was getting late in the afternoon and we hoped to get to 222 today. Our cabin was at 252 and thirty miles was a long day on a poor day.

OPERATION PLANK

Our spirit of adventure had returned; with a whoosh of dust and wagging tails we jilted up the Canol. The first mile just flew and then...operation plank, there were six washouts within 100 yards. Off with the planks, Tom and Chan on one and Jim and Les on the other, lay them out in front of the wheels, then Les would drive the jeep over, pick up the planks, place them on the jeep and drive to the next washout. It took about two hours to cross the first bunch of washouts. We only had another 250 miles to go and one of the five days was nearly gone.

A little ways further and more washouts, operation plank was put into effect. The sun was shining brightly and it was unusually warm. Everyone was puffing and the tourists were getting pooped. We got to 246 late in the afternoon. Chan and Jim scrounged around the dead line, trucks lined up in rows. They took a look at the cats and equipment and then decided to try for 222.



Mile 246 Camp – Canol Road
Photo courtesy Jeanne (Connolly) Harbottle

Well, we didn't quite make it. We were just coming over the hill to camp 230 and it was getting dark. A bunch of caribou came over the hill opposite us and stood looking at the contraption toodling down the road. The men were thrilled to death and quite excited, but because we had lots of food and no room we let them go. It was the first caribou they had

ever seen and were surprised they were so tame. As a rule caribou are more curious than frightened. They really like to travel with a pack train and graze with the horses. Often wished in later years I was packing caribou instead of horses when the latter got ornery.

All the camps and shelters were well equipped with stoves and beds so the problem of cooking was cut to a minimum. I quickly got the dog pot on and started dinner while the men reviewed the events of the day. If we had lifted the planks off and on the jeep once we had done it 100 times. The heat and the bugs were getting us down and I listened with interest to the comments of our party.

Jim had a million dollar sense of humor and he had it in high gear as he groaned and moaned trying to get his weary, roly-poly figure comfortable. Chan groaned less but he was tired. I had the coffee brewed in short order and got a great cheer as I poured us all a cup. It was a delicious nectar of the gods.

They discussed the condition of the equipment they had seen and how little deterioration was in evidence. They were enthusiastic with what they had seen, how little it would take to repair the road and the fantastic profit they could make stateside.

We sat around talking after dinner until our eyelids needed toothpicks. Someone finally suggested we hit the hay and they didn't need to say it twice. Tom and I hunted up a bed, checked on the pot hounds, and before I could get my boots off Chee Chee was curled up at the foot of my bedroll. She showed me the whites of her eyes as I snuggled into the soft down, trying hard not to disturb her too much.

Another beautiful day, clear and sunny. Somebody had the pot on and the fresh aroma of coffee wafted thru the shelter. Tom whistled in with a hot cup in his hand and I blessed him.

The conversation at breakfast was mostly about sore muscles and blistered bands. None of the men were used to this kind of labor and they were paying for it. Jim was wishing for a bottle of liniment and hoped we wouldn't have as many washouts to plank today.

We whirled away from 230 before eight and hadn't gone a mile when it was Operation Plank. The washout was deep and Tom and Les had to pile 45-gallon drums one on top of the other to strengthen the long planks. Les got in to drive across and my heart settled in my mouth, it would spend considerable time in my mouth or stopped. Everyone let out a deep sigh when he got across. We were away again, but not for long. The washouts were coming thick and fast and small creeks were adding to the challenge. Most of them were narrow but deep and fast; the bridges across all of them were half washed away.

We had crossed miles of barren divide, not a tree, just miles and miles of buck brush and willow as far as the eye could see. The low rolling hills were a blaze of fall golds and reds. Sparkling blue creeks tumbled out of the draws turning to silver in the sunlight. A

painting only mother nature knew how to make. It was beautiful and in spite of the planks we marveled at it.

(To be continued)



Dredge #4

Photo was taken before restoration, likely mid 60's.

Photo courtesy Al Oster [alosteryukon*jetstream.net](mailto:alosteryukon@jetstream.net)

BUCKETS OF STEEL

By Al Oster [alosteryukon*jetstream.net](mailto:alosteryukon@jetstream.net) (In Salmon Arm BC)

The first dredge to be built in the Yukon was assembled near the mouth of the Big Salmon River in the fall of 1899, and moved to Bonanza. 35 dredges were built in the Yukon, the largest of which was #4. It was the biggest wooden hull dredge in North America with a capacity to excavate 16 cu. ft. of gravel in each bucket.

#4 was constructed in 1912 and operated in the Klondike Valley from May, 1913 until 1924 when it sank. In 1927 it was refloated and moved to Hunker Creek where it was operated by the Klondike Mining Company until 1940. In 1941 it was moved to Bonanza Creek by the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation where it worked until 1959 when it was forever silenced on Claim 17 Below Discovery.

The #4 dredge was 140 ft. long, 65 ft. wide, 76 ft. high, and weighed 3,000 tons. It was able to dig 57 feet below water level and 17 feet above water level, and process up to 18,000 cu. yards of gravel in a 24 hour period. It was very efficient and recovered about 90% of gold from the gravel. There were 75 buckets on the chain and each bucket weighed 4,600 lbs. The total chain of buckets weighed 172 tons. It was powered by electricity from a power generator on the Klondike River about 30 miles away. It operated 24 hours a day for an average of 200 days a year starting in late April or early May after the ground had thawed, until freeze-up in November.

The operation of the dredge appears complex but in reality it was quite simple and efficient. It floated in a reservoir of water which it would excavate from the front in an

almost 90 degree semi circle as it moved up the creek. The buckets brought the gravel into the dredge where it was dumped into a large meshed revolving steel drum called a trommel. The gravel was tumbled in the revolving trommel and washed by high pressure water jets. The smaller gold bearing gravel and sand were washed through the trommel mesh to a series of water fed riffled sluice ways below called gold savers. The heavier gold would wash to the bottom of the sluiceway and get caught in the riffles and recovered from there. The rocks and gravel too large to fall through the trommel mesh along with any of the larger gold nuggets would tumble out of the lower slope of the drum on to an endless 4 foot wide belt called a "stacker" at the rear of the dredge, where it was carried 130 feet to the edge of the dredge reservoir and dumped into tailing piles. This in turn created the miles and miles of tailing ridges that are evident today in the valleys of Klondike creeks.

Dredge #4 has been restored as a heritage site and rests silently on Bonanza Creek Claim 17 Below Discovery. Other dredges also rest silently and undisturbed under the deep blue Yukon Midnight Sun sky. Their BUCKETS OF STEEL will no longer rumble and roar into the bedrock of Klondike creeks. The era of the dredge has been replaced by huge bulldozers, front end loaders, trucks and other modern equipment.

The search for the Klondike mother lode of gold still goes on --, and on --, and on --, and on —, and on. ★

BUCKETS OF STEEL

By Al Oster alosteryukon@jetstream.net

(Key of "C" * 3/4 * Moderate Waltz * Copyright © 1967 by Northland Music (Socan))

(1) /c Buckets of / steel, /f rusty and /c old
 / Finished their / dredging and /am digging for / gold
 /c Mountains of / gravel on the /f river bank /c lay
 The /f old Yukon /c dredge is /g7 silent to /c day / .
 /am Gone is the / gold, the /f engines are / cold
 /c Rusty and / old, /g7 buckets of /c steel / /
 /f Rusty and /c old, /g7 buckets of /c steel / .

Tag /f Rusty and /c old, /g7 buckets of /c steel.

(2) /c Buckets of / steel, for /f sixty long /c years
 The/ engines were/ humming and /am turning the / gears
 /c Grinding and / straining the /f chain goes a /c round
 /f Taking those /c buckets /g7 deep in the /c ground / .
 /am Digging on / down, /f searching a / round
 /c Deep in the / ground, /g7 buckets of /c steel / /
 /f Rusty and /c old, /g7 buckets of /c steel / .

Tag /f Rusty and /c old, /g7 buckets of /c steel.

(3) /c Buckets of / steel, that /f rumble and /c roar
 / Digging up / gravel from the /am river bed / floor

A /c fortune they've / carried from /f bedrock be /c low
/f Now it's all /c over the /g7 old dredge must /c go / .

The /am bedrock be / low, is /f empty we / know

The /c dredge must / go, /g7 buckets of /c steel //

/f Rusty and /c old, /g7 buckets of /c steel / .

Tag /f Rusty and /c old, /g7 buckets of /c steel.

(4) /c Buckets of / steel, are /f empty and /c still

The / engines are / silent, no /am buckets to / fill

/c Resting there / under the /f blue northern /c sky

/f We will re /c member as /g7 we say good /c bye / .

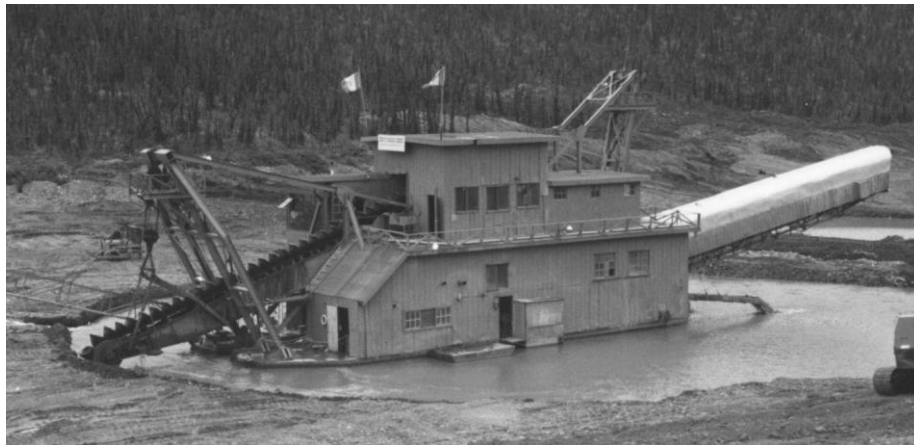
/am Empty and / still, no /f buckets to / fill

Re /c member we / will, /g7 buckets of /c steel //

/f Rusty and /c old, /g7 buckets of /c steel / .

Tag /f Rusty and /c old, /g7 buckets of /c steel.

* * * * *



Yukon Clear Creek Dredge

Photo courtesy Al Oster alosteryukon@jetstream.net

This is the Clear Creek dredge. When I went on board to do the video filming there were 2 operators running the unit. One of the men was the son of Ed Jacobs (former Mayor of Whitehorse). The other man who seemed to be the one in charge I didn't know. Both were very helpful in explaining the dredge operation. My 30 minute documentary, if someone needs proof that such a dredge did exist on Clear Creek, is a 3 to 4 minute section in my video entitled "Yukon Gold", featuring the entire operation including the 2 men operating it. All they need to do is buy the video from Hougens, Claim 33, Gold Poke or Maximillian. The unit was being operated by Queenstake Resources. I have about 1 hour or more video film of the dredge while in operation. And the road signs leading to the location read Clear Creek.

Clear Creek is about a 2 to 3 hour drive off the Klondike Highway about 50 miles south of Dawson City. Beautiful scenery.

Al Oster

CLEAR CREEK DREDGE – from the Foth's

This photo is the CLEAR CREEK DREDGE. We have the same photo in a Christmas card that was sent to Pete from the following gang: Gordon Gutrath (the boss of Queenstake) Wayne Lerner (brother of Jeff Lerner) who bought the dredge from Hoggan and Foth, Don Sharp, and Bev Downing. There was snow on the ground and it reads: "Queenstake's bucketline dredge at Clear Creek, Yukon working in a late season snowfall -- October, 1984". Then at the bottom it says: "Merry Christmas from your friends at Queenstake." We used to go in to their Christmas party every year and meet all these fellows, in Vancouver. I think I once told you that Jeff Lerner bought the dredge from Hoggan and Pete and then sold it immediately to Queenstake. (Jeff's wife, Judy, is our Treasurer of Van. Yukoners' Association.

On the plaque it reads "John W. Hoggan Dredge" (in his memory). This dredge had not worked for 20 - 25 years after the purchase by Hoggan and Foth. It is a smaller dredge and not in as good condition as many other dredges. Hoggan and Foth got a good deal when buying this dredge and camp and because the price of gold was so low, they were not in a hurry to find a buyer. Pete examined your picture and our Xmas card and found it certainly is our Clear Creek Dredge. There were always at least 3 men working on a shift on small dredges at all times.

#1 -- Winchman; #2 -- Oiler; #3 -- deckhand, but on larger dredges they had 4 deckhands.

Pete started working for YCGC (Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation) in 1940, then a few years later he quit and began working for Clear Creek Placers an entirely different company. At first he worked on Clear Ck. Dredge then Henderson Ck. Dredge and then was superintendent of Thistle Creek Dredge and camp. When Thistle Creek dredge was shut down in 1952, Pete was transferred to Clear Ck. Dredge. John Hoggan was the manager. It was at this time around 1956 - 1957 when the dredge and camp were sold to Pete and John.

Pete then went back and worked for Y.C.G.C in the Gold Room. This job entailed going around the Loop cleaning up 2 and sometimes 3 dredges per day, then returning to Bear Creek Gold Room where he and 2 other men would clean the gold and make the bricks. Pete did this until he entered Customs in 1964 - Whitehorse and Beaver Creek, returning in 69 to run the Dawson Custom's office and retired in 1977.

Brownie Foth lfoth@shaw.ca

There are 2 lines on the sign. The top larger print says John W. Hoggan Dredge. The bottom line I can't quite make out in my 35MM photo, so I'll find the raw video footage and see if it is a bit clearer. If I can see what it says I'll mail you the results. You're quite a sleuth when it comes to digging out facts. Those were very interesting stats you sleuthed out from the Foth's, and I'll preserve them in my records also. The day that I was in there filming it was dark and cloudy and forecast for snow beginning around 6:00 PM so I had to make haste and get the filming done and

get back out. There were if I remember correctly 2 fairly high mountain road summits to cross before the highway, and I might get stuck in there all winter by lingering too long. On the way back to Whitehorse that evening the snow caught up to me at Pelly, and it was really coming down with a strong north wind. But the weather warmed up and the snow melted in a few days, so I would have probably been OK in there, if someone would have cared to feed me that is. And there were only 2 men operating the dredge on that day. They informed me all strategic operating locations were monitored by several TV cameras that displayed pictures on individual TV monitors situated in the control room. They also suggested I stick around to watch the sluice cleanup process, but my eye was on the weather. One of the most interesting days I ever spent researching Yukon history.

Good sleuthing Sherron,

Al Oster alosteryukon@jetstream.net



Got it on my scanner. The sign says John W. Hoggan Dredge. Small print reads Queenstake Resources # 1. Attached is a photo. – Al Oster

I sent the Buckets of Steel article up to this point to Al, Brownie, Henry, Maribeth and Les Sommerton to see if I had it right and if it brought any more comments.

Hi Sherron:

Do you ever sleep?? I notice your Email draft re: "Yukon Dredges" and "Buckets of Steel" was sent 11.56 PM. It reads good to me. There's a lot of interesting information available "out there" as a result of a bit of sleuthing. A further bit of interest to you might be the incentive to write the song "Buckets Of Steel".

When YCGC (Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation) decided to forever shut down the Klondike dredge operations, in I believe around 1966, Les McLaughlin from Whitehorse CBC contacted me with the query, "Can you write some music or songs that I could use in a radio documentary I'm producing about the history of YCGC dredges in the Klondike?". As a result I wrote the song "Buckets Of Steel" and "There'll Always Be Somebody Looking For Gold" for his CBC production, and subsequently recorded "Buckets" on a CBC album at Expo 67, and on my "Yukon Ballads" CD. Hank Karr has also recorded the song. It's been good to me. Thank you Les.

Al Oster

Hi Sherron

Just finished reading the buckets of steel - you've come up with another good one - memory wise that is - I never had the pleasure of meeting Al Oster but I sure know Clear Creek - I started work there in 1939 and eventually left to join the air force - my ham licence got me a letter from Ottawa stating if I joined I would have three weeks training and then would be a sargent instructor - I imagine these letters were sent to all hams -

I was hired by Bill O'Niel ("spelliing?" ever try typing with a cat on your knee) - Bill was working for Ernest Patty Dean of the University of Fairbanks - Patty worked for General McCrae - as well -

I was hired as radio operator - it wasn't legal as I used my ham station number VE5ABH but anything went in those days - my main contact was with VEA the RCCS station in Dawson and VEB the station in Mayo -

Pete and Brownie probably never knew I worked there - this was before they ever thought of a dredge - we were drilling the ground - man! that ground was rich - they had brought their own drill crew, driller and panner, but neither man lasted very long - so I was taught to pan -

I'll have to sign as the cat doesn't like me typing and parks in front of the monitor and if I kick her out she gets mad - see youLes Somerton lsomerton@northwestel.net

PS - I'll carry this further if you want but I don't want any alterations to my email
PPS - Tim is just what I needed -

I had asked Tim Kinvig if he could help Les with scanning photos. – Sherron

Morning Sherron - having a hard time getting organised but we'll make it -

Al mentioned getting out of Clear Creek As there was a storm brewing - he was right on there - the snow can really pile up in a hurry -

Bud Holbrook and I were the last ones in camp one fall - Bud was finishing up some work on the last of the three TD18 international tractors - the rest of the crew had already left (found out later they had been eleven days waiting for a plane to land as icing conditions on the wings of the planes made them leary of landing - your pay stopped as soon as you left camp - so the crew wasn't very happy -

Anyhow Bud finally finished up the repairs (I was there because of the radio) we shut things down and headed for the airfield - the snow had drifted rather badly and several times Bud drove around the drifts (we were using the Model T pickup as I had stripped all the rubber of the tires off the dodge pickup when I got stuck in a glacier - at last we came to a drift about three quarters of a mile long and as it was well frozen Bud decided to take a chance and ride on top of the glacier - it was just like a paved road and we were sailing quite nicely until we were about thirty feet from bare ground and the darn pickup broke through the drift and we were high and dry and going nowhere - we had to dig that cussed machine out of there and that packed snow was something again - the rest of the way Bud drove around the drifts -

We stayed at Barlow Creek (old way station on the Dawson Trail) and the next morning it was thawing and there was about eight inches of wet snow - anyhow we left for the

McQueston field - about ten miles away and waited all day but no plane as they knew we were there as I sent a message to Dawson letting them know we were on our way out - it thawed all day so we left some pretty good ruts to follow and that nite it froze and next morning Bud just set the pickup in the ruts and let her go - once in a while it would jump out of the ruts - something was wrong with the steering as Bud would steer in one direction and that darn machine would go in the opposite direction - at one point one wheel went one way and the other the other way - anyhow we made it to the field and waited all day again with no luck - the next morning as we were headed for the field "Wasson" buzzed us so there was no more panic about reaching the field in time -

I went to look for the crew and the first guy I saw had a dandy shiner - apparently there had been quite a Donny Brook so being a lover and not a fighter I went home and let things cool down - so Al see the fun you missed.....Les Somerton

Hi Sherron,

I don't recall that particular trip, but I certainly remember that old Model T. When I was a little girl I used to spend my summers out at camp with my dad and to get me out of his hair he would let me go and grease that truck. I would wind up with grease dripping from everything that moved and a lot of things that didn't. I also remember Les and all of the great guys who worked Clear Creek, Thistle Creek, etc. Wonderful times.

Blanche (Holbrook) Barrett sourdoughs2*shaw.ca

Good morning Sherron!

Brownie and Pete will be the experts on the Clear Creek dredge. I only met it the summer of 1955 and have already related the story of my experience with the dismal "clean-up" of that summer. My grandfather was delighted when his portion of the sale of the dredge in 1979 was more that he and Pete paid for the whole "show".

The 4 dredges that I grew up hearing most about were Dredge 4, Dredge 6 (both YCGC), the Henderson Creek dredge (Yukon Placers, Mr. Paty), and Clear Creek (Clear Creek Placers). I was never on any of them but the lore of them, particularly their breakdowns and their sinkings, were part of my childhood.

My uncle Frank Hoggan has the family mining pictures. He is on MocTel through his son Mark.

I actually have "Yukon Gold". Must have another look at it.

To clarify: the Clear Creek Dredge became the Hoggan-Foth dredge in the 60's when it had been "down" for a few years because of the low price of gold and poor yields. It was sold in 1979, by which time it had been idle for over 20 years. Part of the reason for not

being anxious to unload the dredge earlier was the reality that they had already recouped their investment through the sale of smaller equipment and the dragline.

Maribeth Mainer [mainerm1@shaw.ca](mailto:mainerml@shaw.ca)

Hi Sherron,

I think that this is as close as darn is to swearing. After all these years it is nice to see it put together. On the dredge there were 2 deckhands, a bow decker and a stern decker. When they were down to digging bedrock, the bedrock seemed sticky and would tend to stick to the lip of the bucket if not scraped loose. The bow decker had a square face shovel that he passed across the lip of each bucket to release the bedrock. If this was not done, it would be carried back down and likely lost in the pond. At the top of the bucket line in the hopper was what they called a "save all". The dredge Master could tell if the bow decker was doing his job by the amount of save. I am not sure of the stern decker duties, but I would think it was to watch the trommel and stacker belt to assure there was no pile up and the stacker belt was clearing OK. The stacker would have to be watched for freedom of the belt and no overheated bearings.

Henry Breaden

Hi Sherron, Hope this is not too long for you.

While it comes to mind, the gantry was the framework at the front of the dredge that held up the ladder bucket line. In the three photos that you have, you can see the difference where Clear Creek was the smallest, Hunker about mid, and No. 4 notice the huge gantry on that one.

The gantries were built for the amount of weight they would have to hold and lift the bucket ladder when they had completed a cut down into bedrock where the pay was. The ladder was lifted above ground and the dredge moved ahead so many feet with two winch cables on the bow. What they called the spud at the stern was lifted to move ahead and I had better explain.

The spud was an all steel huge pivot with a steel point. After the dredge was moved ahead, the spud was dropped and was the dredge pivot point for the next cut. There were four positioning cables to anchors on shore; one on each corner at the front, and one on each corner at the stern. All this was done from the winch room and the winchman handled it all.

At the bottom of a cut he lifted the ladder, lifted the spud and positioned the dredge with the four lines ashore. In position, the spud was dropped and the next cut started with the buckets. There were also two breast cables ashore forward and out the sides that were used to move the forward part of the dredge back and forth in the cut. One cut was made across at the start, and at the end of that cut the ladder was lowered so many feet still turning the direction was changed by the left and right cables to start the next cut across.

The pivot point was the spud in the stern, and that is why all tailing piles are curved from the stacker sticking out of the stern. The forward cut underwater would be concave if you could see it. The Dredge Master was in charge of the dredge and would have worked every job on it, but the winchman was the fellow of the moment who made all decisions on winching.

I mentioned the "Save All" box at the top of the ladder which was locked, and the Master was the one who had the key. But at any given moment the winchman was the one in charge of the dredge winching.

Sometimes there was a panner on the bow that would take samples by shovel from the buckets as the cut was made. After he panned the sample he would hand signal the winchman what the results were. This was done especially when digging bedrock which was not true rock but in the process.

When they had gone down to where there was no pay, the winchman was signalled and he would raise the ladder for the next cut.

There was also a gang plank sticking out the front of the dredge that could be lowered by the winchman. If you wanted to go aboard, you would stand ahead of the dredge and the winchman would lower the gangplank to about one foot off the ground. The dredge was still swinging but you could step up on the gangplank and go aboard.

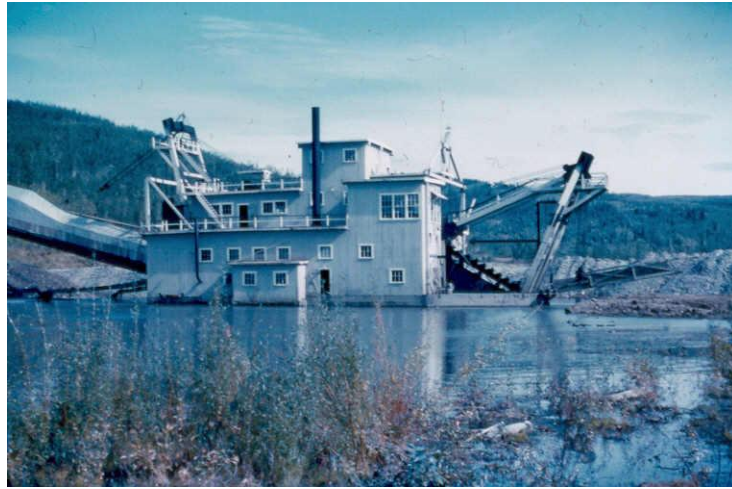
Henry Breaden

YCGC - DREDGE NUMBERS AND LOCATIONS

YCGC dredges out of Dawson and over to Dominion, Granville, Sulphur, Quartz, Bonanza and Hunker.

- No. 1 No longer in existence
- No. 2 Dismantled at Bear Creek, equipment used to build new No. 3
- No. 3 Klondike Valley - **Hull the same as No. 4 but bucket line not as long.**
- No. 4 Bonanza Creek - **Largest dredge of the fleet**
- No. 5 Granville about the confluence of Sulphur Creek and upper Indian River. - **Mid size dredge**
- No. 6 Lower Sulphur Creek - **Mid size dredge**
- No. 7 Quartz Creek - **Smallest dredge of the fleet**
- No. 8 Middle Sulphur Creek - **Mid size dredge**
- No. 9 Upper Sulphur Creek - **Mid size dredge**
- No.10 Dominion Creek - **Mid size dredge**
- No.11 Hunker Creek - **Mid size dredge**

Over from Granville there was a ditch from Australia Creek to Indian River and what they called a siphon, actually a large pipeline across Indian River to another ditch and up Sulphur Creek to augment the flow.



Dredge #11 foot of Hunker Creek.

Photo courtesy Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca

My photo was No. 11 at the foot of Hunker Creek where it connected with the Klondike valley. This would be about where the old Arlington Hotel used to be. This one below looks like No. 4 that is on Bonanza Creek after it shut down and sunk. I seem to have heard that No. 4 has been raised and the old pond filled in to make a tourist attraction. Most of the dredges were built the same and looked the same, although all YCGC dredges were painted grey. I don't know what colour the ones were at Clear Creek and Thistle Creek. The last time I saw No. 4, it was sunk in the mud and the bucket line was strung out ahead of the dredge. Can you imagine the weight of just a bucket pin? They were about 3 feet long and I would say about 10 inches in diameter. A hoist was used to lift them and a ram used to drive them in place. No. 4 dug 59 feet from the top of the water, but as the sluice tailings and sluice water dumped out the back of the dredge it filled a lot of the pond under the dredge. Were it not for that, when No. 4 sunk it would have been down further. If this dredge was said to be at Clear Creek, no, the one at Clear Creek would have been far smaller. But they all did look similar except for size. No 4 the biggest, and No. 7 at Quartz the smallest.

Did you ever hear of the YCGC Lone Star hardrock mine? I hauled into there, and they thought maybe that was the mother lode. But it never did prove up to that.

The last year that YCGC operated was 1966. They ran to about November 1966 before shutting down permanently. I went in to Dawson in September 1966 to install the diesel plant and was there till the first week in December. The electrical load was gradually shifted from the North Fork YCGC hydro plant to the Dawson diesels. Gordon Walmsley who was in charge electrical for the dredges came over as Supt. of NCPC in Dawson, and we took over the Dawson City Light and Power office on 3rd Ave.

Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca (In Nanaimo)

Hi Sherron, I never worked on the dredges; I had three brothers who had. I have been on them while they were working what noisy places they were. While I worked for Parks Canada I did a lot of research on the dredges especially No.4 on Bonanza. The information that Parks has on No.4 was what I researched. Brownie Foth and Pete should be able to give you info. Pete operated the Clear Creek dredge for a short while.

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

MEMORIES

It seems the more Moc Tel you read the more memories it brings back. Wasn't the old hospital bought by Norman Chamberlist for wrecking and the material used to build his hotel on Second between Alexander and Black Streets? The material would be solid and likely better quality for length than was available. When he decided to leave, the hotel was sold to the Lattin brothers, and Jeff Lattin ran it till his passing. After Jeff passed away, Con took over management and it is likely still part of the Lattin holdings.

As I was building on Hoge Street at the time, I bought some of the material from Norman. The year would be the summer of 1959 that the old hospital would be torn down.

Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca (In Nanaimo)



Breaden residence in Moccasin Flats 1954 – 59.

The photo you have is the one we had in the flats from March 1954 to spring of 1959 when I tore it down. I used the material from that home to build on Hoge Street, and bought some material from Norm Chamberlist at the old hospital. Attached is a photo of our new home at 303 Hoge Street. I started work on Hoge Street about February 1959 clearing the snow and getting ready for the foundations, and we moved in July 1959. In

the interval of the two buildings we used my dad's garage to set up housekeeping when we didn't have a roof over our head!

Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca



Breaden residence 303 Hoge Street – built in 1959

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

You'll learn more about the road by travelling it than by consulting all the maps in the world.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

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

Chicken Dish – Easy and Elegant

Chicken breasts – coat with any Mrs. Dash seasoning
Add: 1 or 2 cans tomato soup – depending on amount of chicken
Add: feta cheese

Simmer 15-20 minutes or so – until cooked

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