

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – Ninety-Ninth Edition – Jan. 30, 2005

Created by Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca

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



Whitehorse - Yukon River

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

HIGHER EDUCATION

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

My better half decided I could use a little knowledge,
As always, I'm the very last to know it,
She said if I get serious, and enter Elder College,
Who knows, I might become a famous poet.

Now heaven knows, I'd love the wit to write a better verse
A story that the reader could enjoy.
But I recall with terror, all the days I used to curse
My confinement to the schoolhouse as a boy.

The years I spent within those walls, I now recall with dread,
Of memorizing history books and maps.
This time, if I'm in error 'cause I'm deaf and haven't heard,
I wonder; will the teacher have a strap?

Will I be asked to state by rote, those dreaded twelve-times tables,
To draw the map of Newfoundland to scale?

Or maybe name the boat that laid the Trans-Atlantic Cable,
Or organize a classroom candy sale.

But this is Elder College, just a bunch of seniors clowning,
We suffer from a short span of attention.
If my concentration falters will the tutor get to frowning,
And sentence me to after school detention.

I quickly put such thoughts to rest, and signed up for a session,
Thinking that, at least it cannot harm,
But when I entered college, from the day of that first lesson,
My instructors moved to fill me with alarm.

They preach a type of poetry I just do not understand,
They talked a lot of metering and timing,
Then when I stood before the class, my poem in my hand,
I found that they do not believe in rhyming.

They talk of writing poetry with feeling and with insight,
They write a lot of tragedy and gloom,
But when they mentioned Haiku, I politely said “gesundteit”
I was quickly banished from the room.

I packed my books and headed home a little disillusioned,
College makes me very tense and nervous.
I found that Elder College caused me panic and confusion,
As for rhymes, I’ll take my cue from Robert Service.

©2004 Gus Barrett

HEELS & HEROS

By Jeanne Harbottle, formerly Connolly

Copyright belongs to Jeanne Harbottle, Vernon, BC

WHAMMY

We were on the divide between the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. The area was famous for the abundance of moose, caribou and grizzly. Jim wanted a grizzly hide so bad it was pitiful. Tom tried to convince him they were heavy and bulky we didn't have time to stop and dry it and not enough salt to keep it until we got to Norman. Jim still wouldn't take 'no' for an answer. Tom finally gave in on the condition he was a good shot and he had to prove it. I knew Tom wasn't anxious to skin out and pack a bear and he must have known Jim couldn't hit one. However, to keep peace Jim started putting up staggered targets. He loaded his 30.06 and took aim at the farthest, about 150 yards. He missed with three shots and continued missing until he was down to the 50 yards target.

"Jim," Tom said, "if you miss this target you won't get the opportunity to give a bear or anything else the double whammy and we'll leave the rifle right here. It's too heavy to pack if we need to and you won't need it." Jim agreed, and with careful aim fired missed fired missed cussed then swore the barrel had a bend in it. I was inclined to agree, he was a terrible shot. We hung the rifle on a pole and would pick it up on the return trip. In the mean time Jim had gotten the name of "Whammy" and from that day on the name stuck. Les and Chan were not interested in shooting a bear and we were just as happy that Whammy wouldn't get the opportunity.

The black flies were out in force and chewed away happily on the hot, weary men and panting dogs. We hoped we would get a breeze but the weather was just like summer with no relief in sight. Whammy and Les kidded us about the winter gear as if to say, "I told you so." Tom took it kindly, but we had only been on the road two days and we had a few more to go, knowing the north. Twenty-four hours can make a difference from 70 above to zero with blowing snow.

Chan was not strong and I noticed Tom was trying to ease his load by doing more. Whammy, being short-winded and older, was forgiven for not doing too much but Chan just wasn't able physically. He never asked for help or complained about anything. Les was still running the show, so to speak, but when Whammy asked him if this was a sample of a few washouts, what would he consider to be a lot????? The silence was deafening.

We made 222 by afternoon, eight miles in five hours. The camp was a big one and there was lots of equipment. Whammy and Chan spent the better part of two hours writing down particulars on equipment and starting up trucks, welding machines, light plants and anything else they could get going. They were having a ball and couldn't contain their enthusiasm. Even the horror of the planks didn't bother them at the moment. Tom and I scrounged the bunk houses and found some real good books. Being avid readers this was as wonderful as the equipment was to Jim and Whammy. Wherever we looked there were odd boots, dirty socks, old mitts and bats. It seemed everything had been soaked in diesel. Most of the mattresses on the beds were filthy and even dirty dishes were in the sink, left by the crews leaving in haste.

Les honked the miserable little horn on the jeep and we were off again. It seemed unbelievable, but we must have made two miles before it was Operation Plank. The first two washouts were a breeze, but the third was a dilly. There was a soft, wide river bottom, only a little water because of the dry weather, but nonetheless it looked impassible. Les stayed with the jeep and the rest of us walked to the other side. He gunned the motor--took a run. About ten feet from the bank he sank out of sight. We all breathed again. Tom got out the Come-a-long, an ingenious invention of the devil. It is a never-ending chain on a pulley and is designed to play out the best of men. Les joined in the game and hour after hour we played, inch by inch the jeep moved.



No road as usual.

Photo courtesy Jeanne (Connolly) Harbottle

Tea was not our favorite drink, being coffee fiends, but I made numerous pots and all were downed with relish. The dogs were snuffing and snorting thru the bush, chasing anything that walked, crawled or flew. Chee Chee led the pack and even Jeep and Sam were getting along. They were living it up and enjoying their freedom.

It was getting dark when the jeep was finally out of the ooze. There wasn't a hope of reaching a camp tonight. We crawled back on the jeep and headed for the first shelter. There is one every five miles on the Canol. It shouldn't be too far to the next one.

Whammy as usual got us laughing. He was sitting there going click, clack, click, clack. He swore he would hear the sound of the come-a-long till he went to the grave. Les shifted, whacked my knee for the umpteenth time. I prophesied water on the knee in my old age.

The shelter loomed in the headlights. It looked like a palace. We were still on the divide and wood was scarce but Tom managed and soon the stove was a snapping and popping. Les had shot a bunch of gophers during the stop at 222 so I didn't have to cook for the dogs. Tom settled Jeep and Sam for the night and Chee Chee waited patiently for my bedroll.

We ate ravenously. Tom kept Chan and Whammy amused and interested with some of his wonderful stories of the north. Les was inclined to take everything cynically and his popularity was fading darn fast. Whammy just fired questions steady; I sometimes wonder how he dreamt them up. He was seldom quiet regardless of the circumstances. Chan was the exact opposite, quiet and content to listen.

Because only four beds were in the shelter and it was a lovely night, Tom and I put our bedrolls outside under the stars. It was nippy and the Northern lights were putting on a fantastic show. I called Whammy and Chan to come witness the glorious spectacle. They were entranced. Neither of them had seen the Northern lights before and they were going all out to please the tourists.

The silence of the night was soothing. I lay watching the dance of the rainbow, my thoughts skipping from people and places. Sleep came quickly, the end of the third day.

Again the sun was shining brightly and we were blessed with another beautiful day. Tom brought me a cup of coffee and Chee Chee crawled out to face the day. She rushed over and said good morning to Jeep and Sam, then she and Major rushed off to pester the ptarmigan.

CANDIDATES FOR SHOT-PUT

I thought Whammy would strangle when I asked him at breakfast if he thought he could make it to Norman and back in two more days, counting today. Les was getting better and better at changing the subject, but he still maintained the road looked good from the air and we would make it without any more trouble than we had experienced.

Black flies were swarming around us and we quickly loaded the jeep and jerked away. Even driving slowly the breeze was enough to give us relief. The dogs were running alongside and enjoying the chase. When it got warm we let them ride as the hot gravel wore the pads off their feet.

After planking a few washouts we came to a bridge that was gone on one end. The river was too wide and too deep to ford and there was not a hope of rafting across. Tom and Les were studying the situation and came up with a brilliant idea: if they chopped down the far end it would just reach the bank and they could block the jeep down the steep ramp. The bank was fairly high and would have to be dug out to drive the jeep out, but that was just a minor problem.

There was little Whammy and Chan could do as we only had the two axes and they couldn't dig the bank away until they knew where they would be driving the jeep out. So we sat and gabbed and drank tea. Whammy and I picked berries for a pie. The low and high bush cranberries were ripe and the hills were loaded with them. We tried to find enough blueberries but they were scarce so we gave it up as a lost cause.

Chan was stretched full length out on the road when we got back and I was shocked at the pallor of his face. He was thin anyway, but he looked ill. I asked if he felt O.K. and he assured me he was fine, but I had my doubts.

Tom and Les kept up a steady rhythm chopping down the piles. It would take half a day to do the job and if we made 208 that night we'd be lucky.

The mutts finally played out and came to lie down beside me. I looked at Sam's feet and they were pretty tender. He would have to ride from now on. Jeep's feet were still O.K. Sam was a huge, ugly mutt; he was part wolf and his only fault was laziness. If he got tired you could kill him and he wouldn't work. The other dogs were afraid of Sam and

gave him a wide berth, but he was a good mutt and we loved him. He was the only dog we ever owned that would fight back. If you went for him with a stick you'd better be prepared to use it, as Sam would come at you with all pearly whites showing. Most dogs cowered at the threat of a whipping but not this 120 pounds of fighting fur and fangs. He could pack a terrific load and enjoy it, but he never was fond of pulling in harness. Sam was 15 years old when we had the old fellow put away. He was one of the family.

Suddenly there was a terrific whoosh and down went the bridge approach. It made a good ramp to drive down and fell in such a manner that a small amount of digging would suffice to drive the jeep back on the road. Tom and Les stopped for a cup of tea, and they also remarked on how tired and wan Chan looked.

Refreshed, T.O. and Les went back to the job of digging a road. They were in a hurry to get going and the dirt flew in clouds.

Whammy and Chan were discussing the possibility of an airplane coming to look for them if we didn't show in Norman soon. Both men had advised their families they would be home within 10 days, and had left explicit orders with Clay Carmen that if they were not in Norman Wells in a week they were to come looking for them. Under the circumstances there seemed little to worry about, except getting to Norman soon.

We had a short snack after the fellows finished the road, and Les drove the remarkable little jeep across the precarious bridge, down the ramp and back on the Canol Road. Chan wearily lifted his carcass off the ground and slowly walked to the jeep.

The next few miles were almost like a boulevard, what with only four small washouts to plank. For the first time in many miles we could ride along and enjoy the scenery. Since leaving 222 we were on the downhill grade. The rivers were all running north now, so we were in the Northwest Territories. Small bunches of balsam dotted the terrain and it was great to see trees again, even if they were stunted and sparse.

The sun was setting as we pulled into the yard at Camp 208. We all sighed and sat looking blankly at nothing for a few minutes. Well, another day another blister.

Tom took the grub box into the kitchen and Whammy started the light plant. The camp lit up like a Christmas tree: yard lights were blazing, every bunkhouse winked out of the darkness, and for all the world you'd think we were in the city.

As tired as Chan was he helped unload the gear and get things squared away. He and Whammy rushed around getting the big oil stove going, and you'd think I was going to cook for a regiment. The blowers were all going and the stove itself was a good 20 feet long. I gathered everything into one corner and ignored the other 18 feet.

I checked the grub supply and found that tomorrow would be the last day of bacon and eggs and store bread. It may be Operation Plank for the men; it would be Operation Bannock for me. We still had some canned vegetables and fruit, but in a few days we

would be on a trapper's diet. Needless to say the tourists now looked like trappers, but I had severe doubts if they would take kindly to a trapper's larder. At least it was food, and if they got as hungry as usual it would taste like caviar in a day or two.

Everyone smoked but Tom and the cigarette cache was getting pretty low. I think I would rather go hungry - - not that I smoked any great amount, but when I did I enjoyed it. Tom had always maintained that I should give up cigarettes and I agreed that I would when I couldn't keep up to him in the bush. That day never came to pass so I still enjoy my cigarettes.

Tom was not worried about the cigarettes, but when I showed him the grub supply he was concerned. At the rate we were going and the amount of food we had consumed he was sure we would run out of grub soon. He was all for rationing what was left.

The long hard days were beginning to take their toll and after dishes were done we all sat in the warm cookhouse and yakked. Whammy was sure that a plane would be along any day now, and I was hoping he was right. Chan was getting weaker but none of us had any idea at the time what a sick man he really was. Les said the road would get better as we got closer to the McKenzie, that the altitude was nearly sea level and the snowfall would be much less, consequently the road would be in better shape.

Chan quietly said, "Les, this road is bad, not that it couldn't be repaired easily with the proper equipment, but we haven't the time to build road if we could. I must be in Oregon in another week, and it is imperative that I get there."

I watched Les. Bold faced he told Chan he would be there; he didn't have a worry in the world. We still had 208 miles to go, and how we would make Norman in a week at this rate was beyond me.

Whammy suggested we call it a night; it would be another day tomorrow and maybe a better day.

Tom was concerned and said he was sure things would get worse as the miles passed. He said we still had four divides to cross and three major rivers. The Keele was a nasty fast river of white water, the Twityia was wide and deep, he said, the Carcajou just out of Norman was over half a mile wide and if the bridges on any of these rivers were gone we would be on shanks mare. He was afraid that Chan wouldn't make it on foot and although Whammy was in good health he certainly couldn't walk well. Tom was above all else determined to get us all to Norman safely. He was convinced that Les was full of prunes, that he had no idea what the road was like, he had told a wild tale and we were getting the proof of that. T.O. said he didn't have any worries about Les, he was young and strong. He grinned, looked at me, and said, "*You gotta be tough, Mrs. T.O.*" It was a compliment from Tom; he wasn't worried about me either.

After the last of the eggs in the morning we all piled in the heap of a jeep, tails, legs, butts and arms hanging out all over, and with a whirr and a crack on the knee we were off.

Tootling along in fine style we suddenly stopped and looked at the road in front of us. There just wasn't any. As far as we could see in any direction, except up, were boulders and rocks. A huge wash had come out of the mountain and for the last 1,000 years had run over the valley.

There was nothing to do but start throwing rocks out of the way and just hope the axles and tires held up on the noble little jeep. The dogs took off for the nearest water and I was all for joining them. It had been hot ever since we left the cabin. The black flies were still hungry and I thought a swim would be heaven. Not that the water would be anything but comfy, I could care less. However, there was work to be done and it would take all hands to get us across this mess.

When I was sure our arms would come out of their sockets and we would be badly bent permanently, Tom called a halt for a cup of tea. Appreciation shown in all our eyes, he was human. Les had been doing all the driving so he wasn't very excited.

The water wouldn't boil fast enough. We could hardly wait for the refreshing brew. We munched on raisins and patiently waited.

"It's boiling!" someone shouted, and we all reached for the pot. Why we didn't dump it in the fire I will never know, I never saw so many eager hands. It was the best cup of tea I ever drank, in fact we made two more pots before we went back to the boulder throwing. I believe any of us would have made excellent shot-put candidates after this.

Many times since I have wished I had a movie camera on this trip. I was sure it would have been priceless to the Willys Company. The places this jeep had gone and the things we had done with it were unbelievable. I think it would have been wonderful in later years to have a record of this trip in movies. At the time it was the last thing in the world I would like to have had. The jeep, though, had become a part of us all, it seemed almost human and we had a soft spot for it in our hearts.

The hours passed and we were numb. I don't know how we kept going. When we thought we couldn't lift another rock or bend down once again, a new strength would come and away we would go. The speedometer on the jeep had registered 10 miles when man and jeep finally made the Canol Road again.

None of us could say a thing. We sat numb, stunned, bent, beat and defeated. I couldn't muster enough strength to pet Chee Chee who came to say hello, and had she been on my lap I wouldn't have had to lift my arm more than six inches. If she had stepped on me I would have fallen apart.

Tom put on another pot of tea, and one of the few times, I again noticed the compassion and concern on his face. Les got out of the jeep to join us and I felt a rising tide of fury pass over me. If this man had lied and we were in this because he had, I would never forgive him. Emotions run rampant when you are tired and worried, but we had lived together as one in the last few days and you get to know a person pretty well. You could live in one house for 10 years in the city with a person and never know them, but not so in the bush; every lousy little quirk in a person's make-up comes out in a hurry. There isn't any place to hide it. You're as naked as a babe. Even good friends can come out of the bush hating one another.

The tea seemed to help a little and we all fell into position in the jeep once more. The Old Boy must have known we would be incapable of doing anything further, even the lifting of planks, so for mile after mile and over one divide we cruised. Speechless and afraid to remark on our good fortune, we relaxed and enjoyed the ride.

We crossed a couple of small bridges and everyone's spirits rose. I may have been too quick to judge Les. We were in heavy timber and the road was lined with tall Jack pine. The jeep purred along and all was peaceful.

(To be continued.)

THE TRAIL OF `98

By Al Oster alosteryukon*jetstream.net (In Salmon Arm BC)

There were a number of routes into the Klondike. The Yukon River by Sternwheeler from the Bering Sea port of St. Michael on the Alaska west coast was the easiest, but the longest and most costly. The Edmonton overland trail was almost impossible to navigate, as was also the Ashcroft trail from central B.C. The Dalton trail over the Chilkat Pass from Haines, Alaska was used quite extensively, but the most popular and shortest routes were the White Pass or Chilkoot Trails from Dyea and Skagway.



Drawing by Bill Oster. Copyright © 1992

The Chilkoot trail started at Dyea and extended 34 miles over the Chilkoot Pass to the tent city of Bennett on Lake Bennett; and the White Pass trail started at Skagway and also ended at Bennett, a distance of 45 miles. From Lake Bennett the Trail of `98 continued another 550 miles by water over a series of adjoining lakes and rivers on to Dawson City and the Klondike goldfields.

The Chilkoot Pass route was more popular than White Pass because it was open all year round, although subject to heavy snowfall at times, and it was a few miles shorter to Bennett. The highest elevation was 3740 ft. and 20,000 to 30,000 gold stampederes climbed the "GOLDEN STAIRS" to the summit on their way to the Klondike during the winter of 1897-98. Each person was required to have 2,000 lbs. of food and supplies before being allowed to proceed and a North West Mounted Police check post was located at the Chilkoot summit to ensure compliance.

The White Pass route began at Skagway and wandered through bogs, marshes, deep narrow canyons, high mountains, dense underbrush and forests, and areas of large boulders from landslides. It was somewhat longer than the Chilkoot trail and therefore not used as much. Pack horses were used extensively on this route and an estimated 3,000 animals perished on the trail while crossing the precipitous and dangerous canyon that became known as Dead Horse Gulch. The White Pass trail eventually became the route of the White Pass and Yukon Railroad which reached Bennett from Skagway on July 6, 1899, and was completed to Whitehorse, Yukon on July 29, 1900 for a total of 110 miles.

By the spring of 1898, over 10,000 stampederes were waiting in Bennett for the ice to leave the Lake so they could launch their make shift boats and be on their way to the Klondike goldfields, and Bennett became the largest tent city in the world. An Armada of over 7,000 boats left on May 29, 1898.

This was the beginning of the famous Trail of `98. The rest of the way to the Klondike was by water. Some would suffer disaster and fail to complete the journey. Others would make it, but too late because all the creeks had been staked. And some would find enough fortune to stay in this land and become the foundation and pioneers of a developing Yukon. They would all become a part of Yukon frontier history and Legends of the Klondike. ★

NINETY-EIGHT TRAIL

(Key of "D" * 3/4 * Moderately *

Words & music by Al Oster * Copyright 1960 by Northland Music Co)

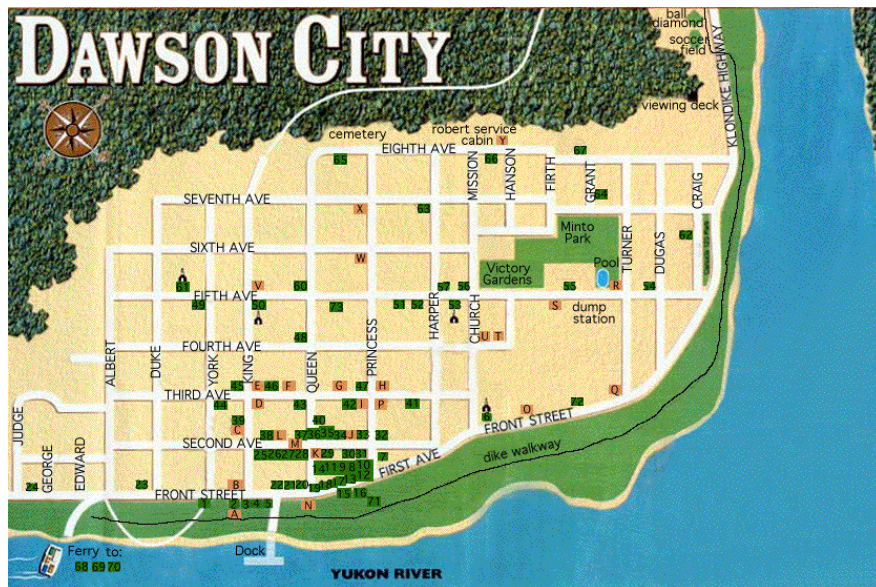
- (1) I'll /d tell you a / tale, of the / Ninety-Eight / Trail
When the / Klondike was / mined for it's /a7 gold /
Of the /d miners that / came, to seek /g fortune and / fame
And the /a7 hardships they / suffered un /d told / .
They /g came far and / wide, like an / incoming / tide

In / Skagway they / shouted "Oh / Hail" /
 With a /d loaded full / pack, settled / high on their / back
 They /a7 left on the / Ninety-Eight /d Trail / .

(2) They / started their / climb, up the / mountain in / cline
 And the / song that they / sang was for / gold /
 And / higher and / higher, their / lungs seemed a / fire
 Their / faces were / numb with the / cold / .
 They / slipped and they / fell, they / screamed and they'd / yell
 Their / faces turned / haggard and / pale /
 They / cried help me / please, as they / fell to their / knees
 Some / died on the / Ninety-Eight / Trail / .

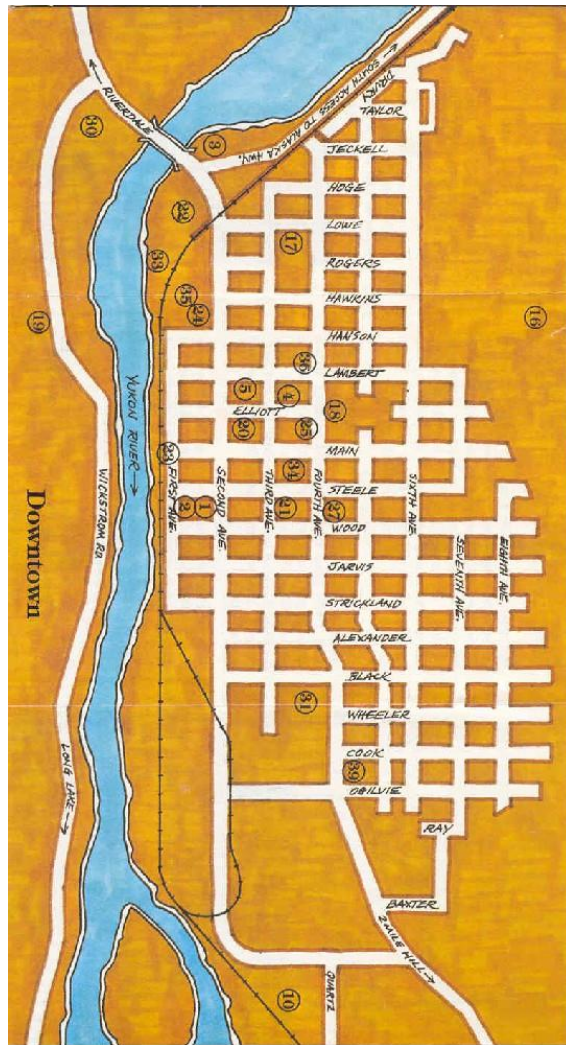
(3) Like a / long flowing / mass, they / came o'er the / pass
 All / covered with / ice and the / snow /
 And the / mountains so / high, / rang with the / cry
 Lake / Bennet was / down there be / low / .
 On the / shores of the / lake, / boats they did / make
 The / rest of the / way they would / sail /
 No / time for a / rest, had to / leave on their / quest
 For / gold on the / Ninety-Eight / Trail / .

(4) More / heartaches and / pain, for the / miners there / came
 On the / waters that / boil and / churn /
 And / they never / knew, if they'd / ever get / through
 Round the / bend of the / river's next / turn / .
 The / strong shall / stand, was the / law of the / land
 And the / weaker shall / perish and / fail /
 They / made the next / bend, to / Dawson and the / end
 The / end of the / Ninety-Eight / Trail / .



Dawson City Map

Henry Breaden found online at <http://www.tourdawsoncity.com/Townmap/townmap.htm>



Whitehorse City Map – early 1980's

4th Wheel Project – Whitehorse Dam

By Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca (In Nanaimo)

In the Whitehorse Star of March 17, 1982 was a photo of me taken in the plant viewing the proposed New 4th Wheel project. Bill Fox was the engineer in Head Office overseeing the project and I was the one on site to keep track of it. Of course I was quite interested in the original drawings to make sure that there were not any bugs that would torment us in operation of the new plant. The original dam had two large spill gates and a control gate that gave us fine adjustment of water flow. The new 4th wheel would use the control gate as their intake, and any adjustment of flow was done with the two large ones.

As the work progressed I was on site often following the construction. When the turbine was ready to roll and the generator to be dried out before being connected to the grid, it gave us a chance to get used to the new equipment and all of the built in protection. Dry out is completed with a short circuit bar between output conductors which heated the

windings. From time to time resistance readings were taken as the insulation on the windings dried out. When the readings were satisfactory the conductors were connected to the unit breaker and ready to synchronize to the system. Once on line the unit was gradually loaded in stages for several hours at a given load before going up to the next stage.

I have explained that turbines have a peculiarity at about 78 per cent gate opening where the governor is pushing to open the gates up to 78%. About that point the governor had to hold back while going to 100% gate opening. As we gradually increased load over a period of time, here is where our first problem showed up. I had a call from my Chief Operator, Peter Garside that at about 78% the gates went to 100% and he could not bring it down. In effect we had a run-away turbine like having a tiger by the tail. I went down into the control room and had them start all the diesels as we were going to have to pull a "Swiftie!" The only way to shut down No. 4 was to shut the headgate and have enough capacity to assume that load from No. 4. It worked better than we expected, and Whitehorse was not aware of how close they had come to a mix-up! Our governors in the lower plant were operating on 300 pounds per square inch pressure. But No. 4 operated on 200 PSI. In effect, there was not enough pressure in the operating rams to overcome the turbine. Now it was back to the drawing board.

Phone calls to Head Office and they in turn to Dominion Turbine who had manufactured the turbine. Many weird and wonderful ideas came forth, but none to my satisfaction. In my mind was two things: either increase pressure to 300 pounds if the system would stand it. Or larger diameter rams to replace the smaller ones to give a greater surface area and power for the rams to work at 200 PSI if the oil pump could supply sufficient volume. Of course Dominion Turbine wanted us to accept the turbine so that they could be paid, and everything would be taken care of. They were not aware that Bill Fox and I had an agreement that neither one of us would accept until all deficiencies were taken care of. When I retired, they were still fooling around with this problem, and it would be interesting to hear how they made out.

The next thing to arise was that a wicket gate link had broken, and they could not shut down the turbine. A replacement link had been installed while at "Speed, No Load" and it broke also. At least they were off line and the headgate could be dropped to shut the unit down. With the crew I was down in the scroll case and we did what normally was done, to encircle the wicket gates with a cable and tighten with a come along. I checked the link on the headcover and found that the pin was misplaced in the operating ring. How this ever happened I don't know, but here we go again. Dominion still was trying to get me to accept the turbine so that they could be paid, but my answer was always the same.

They decided to send in an engineer from Dominion, and meanwhile I had Ed Jacobs have a look at it. He suggested welding in the original hole, milling it off and re-drill in place. So by the time that the engineer arrived in Whitehorse, I had everything arranged with Jacobs to supply what was needed and to do the work. This was where I could not help but smile and even a chuckle! I arranged for the engineer to be picked up at the airport, a hotel room and anything that he would need. I was as normal on site with a hard

hat on when he came into the plant. They must have told him at Dominion that the Supt. at Whitehorse was a tough SOB and be careful with him! So I introduced the engineer to Ed Jacobs and advised him of everything that he would need. I think the engineer was from Switzerland, and he said, "And who might you be?" I replied that I was Breden, to which he responded, "But you are such a nice man!" I could not help but smile as I shook his hand and said, "I am not a bad fellow really, just a perfectionist." Ed did a wonderful job, everyone was happy and the turbine went back on line again. With a new plant you have growing pains and they have to be eliminated one by one. This one was eliminated without too much fuss, and the engineer found that we were not such a bad bunch of fellows to work with.

A TRIBUTE TO JOSIE SIAS AND HER FAMILY

By Rusty Reid rustyreid*northwestel.net



The Sias Family's – Kluane Bed & Breakfast at Silver City

Photo courtesy Rusty Reid rustyreid*northwestel.net

Yukoner thanks family for prestigious honour

by Sarah L. Taggart

A **Whitehorse Star** Archive story originally published August 22, 2003

Josephine Sias received the Order of Canada earlier this month but she doesn't take credit for the honour.

Instead, she thanks her family, especially her mother and her penchant for storytelling, for leading her on this path of seeking and sharing her knowledge.

"The knowledge I've gained has been from around me," Sias said in a recent interview in Whitehorse.

Sias, who goes by Josie, was born in Kluane in 1927; Sias' mother was of the Kluane First Nation, while her father was a French settler from Alsace-Lorraine.

While her father told her the tales of how he and his brother left their employes as pastry chefs at the turbulent turn of the century, her mother shared her centuries-old stories and

wisdom of the local first nations.

Sias' father and uncle, Eugene and Louis Jacquot, established Burwash Landing in 1904 to hunt, prospect and set up a trading post. Both men started families with Kluane women, Eugene marrying Sias' mother, Mary Copper, while Louis joined the Dickson family.

Through her travels between home and Whitehorse for primary school and later down south to Vancouver for secondary school, Sias built a vast repertoire of stories, from varied backgrounds, perspectives and in very changing times.

Through her mother's people and the importance of family-oriented, traditional storytelling coupled with her father's insistence on education and development of her French-language background, Josie was exposed to a demanding but rewarding environment.

As an adult, Josie fully began to understand and cultivate the rich background her parents had afforded her. Josie married Frank Sias in 1948, a man she met in Richmond, B.C. They returned to her homeland of Kluane Lake and eventually established the home that now anchors her small community.

She and Frank still live in that house they built in 1972, and in the summer, four generations of the Sias family romp the rocky shores of Kluane Lake.

The year 1972 is where the Governor General's office begins its citation of why Josie was chosen for the award. Josie doesn't know who nominated her; that's part of the award's policy.

Sias received the country's highest honour for lifetime achievement for her efforts in maintaining and passing on the history and stories of the Yukon.

"Widely respected for her leadership of the Parks Canada Youth Corps, she helped young people from various economic and cultural backgrounds to foster teamwork and mutual understanding," said a statement from the governor general's office.

From the beginning, Frank and Josie wanted to set up a wilderness recreation site for youth. In that regard, Josie believes the pair basically succeeded.

They have from time to time taught courses to adults, including employees with renewable resources, though they usually return to the 15- to 18-year-olds.

The Order of Canada, as far as Josie understands, is based heavily on community service. Josie doesn't see her work as community service; it is simpler than that.

"I do what I want to do is what I do," she said. "The many people around me have provided me with my knowledge of the area."

That knowledge stems from a lifetime surrounded by the details of an area rich in history, but changing very rapidly. Josie shares what life was like then and contrasts that with what we know today.

As a child, she travelled a trail between Whitehorse and Kluane twice a year: once in the fall at the beginning of the school year and once in June to come home when school was out.

She speaks from a first-hand perspective of the limited means of transportation and communication in the remote areas during the first half of the 20th century.

"I was born in that setting," she said. "I've been able to interpret that history, that way of life, to youth groups (and) in any other group-type situation that called for the basic history and knowledge of that time."

Josie and Frank ran the Parks Canada Youth Corps for its first five years in the area.

For seven weeks during the summer, Frank and Josie hosted the group of 15- to 18-year-old boys or girls, depending on the year. After two weeks at the camp that still exists today, though in a posher, bed and breakfast form, the group would travel out into the bush.

“It was the most marvelous program ever,” said Josie. “It was one of the most unique programs.”

The program taught motivated youth outdoor survival and leadership skills, including firearms safety and trapper training, with input from local RCMP, environmental scientists and forestry officials. Through it all, Frank and Josie gained the support and respect of the parks superintendent and chief warden.

“With their encouragement, it was so wonderful,” she said. “I can’t begin to tell you how wonderful it was.”

But Josie remains modest and states simply and respectfully that it was the people who came before who helped her reach that stage and move beyond.

“I’ve been lucky to have had the input from my own family and my mother most especially for that first nations part,” she said. “(I’ve had) the absolute backing and encouragement of my family.”

Josie touches only lightly on the topic of her mother, a woman she admires and respects for the sacrifices she made during her lifetime.

As children, Josie and her two siblings were often away from home. When Josie was two years old, her older brother and sister left the Yukon for France, where they lived with family and were immersed in French education and culture.

They were gone from home for eight years. In that time, Josie herself began school and spent 10 months of the year in Whitehorse while she attended school.

It simply wasn’t feasible to travel back and forth. And though Josie’s five cousins were also of schooling age, her father and uncle couldn’t entice a teacher to come to the community to teach the children.

When Josie was 10, she and her father travelled to France to fetch her brother and sister. Both siblings had lost their native English and Josie spent the following four months learning French to communicate with them upon their return home, in 1937.

A year in Dawson City saw the family together but secondary school put further demands on the children’s education. Josie and her siblings, along with several of their cousins, travelled to Richmond in 1941, where they completed their high school education.

“We had a wonderful home away from home,” said Josie of the house where a guardian cared for Josie, her siblings and her cousins. “My mother used to call her ‘your other mother.’”

Josie finds it hard to imagine the loneliness her mother must have gone through.

“That was a very heartbreaking time for her,” she said. But Josie’s mother had faith in what her husband said. “My father explained when the children grew up they would be living in a totally different time frame.”

While Josie’s father may have asked a lot of his wife, he understood that she came from a very different background.

“He taught her his way of life (but) he never robbed her of her identity, which was nice,” said Josie from her home. “She was quite comfortable in both worlds ... She continued with her way of life. And he was gentle with her, in that respect.”

But she spent much of her younger life without her children at home.

“It was very, very devastating for my mother. I feel as though she made a great sacrifice on our part. I don’t think I could’ve done that.”

Through secondary school, Josie lived on then-Lulu Island, now known as Richmond, among the largely Japanese population. Shortly after the Jacquot family’s arrival, the children watched their schoolmates shipped inland during the Japanese internment.

“That was the most horrible thing that has ever happened,” said Josie. “We are kids, standing there as we watched our friends being moved out on the trains. It was horrible.”

This story is just one that Josie tells with the voice of experience.

She holds an audience through her years back in the Yukon and then relates how in 1989/90, she and Frank had to “change horses in midstream.”

The camp that had once housed eager teenagers ready to tramp through the wilderness was converted into a cushier, more attractive site.

Frank and Josie started the Kluane Bed and Breakfast and ran it until 1998, when they transferred it to their son and daughter-in-law.

Lately, Josie has begun putting the pressure on the local first nation government, YTG and the federal government for funding for a project she strongly believes in: a seniors’ home in Haines Junction.

These days, Josie’s daughter-in-law, Cecille, greets visitors who drive down the gravel roadway, past the remains of Silver City. Cecille’s daughter pulls her baby-toothed 14-month-old girl in a sturdy plastic wagon.

“It’s not the best in the world, but it’s our kingdom, it’s our castle,” said Josie.

This is a place where Josie flourishes, surrounded by what is most important: family.

“What I would like to convey (is that) this has been passed on to me by my family and by important people that have lived in the area,” said Josie, drinking tea at her kitchen table.

“For me, it’s a tribute to these people.”

***note this article implies Eugene was Josie’s father and Louis Jacquot her uncle.**

Jim Sias told Rusty Reid that Louis Jacquot was Josie's father and Eugene is her uncle. Also this confirmation from Buffy. Hi Sherron, Louis was Josie’s father. Mary Copper married Louis. Buffy Sias



JOSIE SIAS - Cooking breakfast at Silver City - May 1997

This was when **Josie** used to do the cooking. Now, her daughter-in-law **Cecile** does it.

Photo by Rusty Reid



Bed & Breakfast at Silver City

They call it the **Kluane Bed & Breakfast** and they have a mobile telephone number
2M 3294

Photo courtesy Rusty Reid



Breakfast in Silver City

Ken and Sandra Mason, Bill & Rusty Reid

Photo courtesy Rusty Reid



TWO SHEEP May 2000 - Sheep Mountain, Kluane Park, Yukon

Photo courtesy Rusty Reid

Just to let you know that we really do see sheep when we climb up Sheep Mountain at Kluane Park (across from Frank & Josie's place). This is an annual trip for us every May,

to stay at the Kluane Bed & Breakfast, photograph the sheep during the day, eat wonderful meals, and play music at night.



RUSTY - May 2000 - Picture by Bill REID

Here is a picture Bill took of me taking pictures of the sheep on Sheep Mountain, Kluane Park. We look right across the lake where we stay at the Kluane Bed & Breakfast that Frank and Josie operated for years, now Cecile and Doug Sias operate it.



Josie Sias, Rusty Reid & Bill Reid talking over old memories. Rusty & Josie used to play basketball together when Josie was their neighbour in Whitehorse.



Kelly Wroot (left), Bill & Rusty Reid, Ken & Sandra Mason, Cecile Sias
May 2002 at the **Kluane Bed & Breakfast**

These pictures were taken in the month of May when we go up to take pictures of the sheep at Sheep Mountain, Kluane Park. We always stay at the Kluane Bed & Breakfast operated by Frank & Josie Sias. Their son Doug and his wife Cecile are operating it now. Bill Reid takes his electric piano, Rusty Reid takes her fiddle and Ken Mason takes his guitar while his wife, Sandra enjoys the view. Sometimes Bill Matiation will bring his fiddle and drive up to join in the music. – Rusty



Bill Matiation, Pat, Sandra & Ken Mason, Bill Reid
Photo courtesy Rusty Reid

JOSIE & FRANK SIAS' 55 WEDDING ANNIVERSARY PARTY

I phoned Josie this morning and found out that their anniversary date was 12 November 1948 and this was their 55th Anniversary. **Cecile Sias** should really receive a hearty 'thanks' for all the hard work she did organizing the **55th Anniversary Party for Frank & Josie Sias**. Great food. – Rusty



Josie and Frank cutting the cake and **Liz Hofer** leaning on the fridge.



Josie & Frank (left) dancing. Rusty Reid (fiddle) Ken Mason (guitar).



Doug & Cecile SIAS dancing (Frank & Josie's son & his wife)



Linda (Sias) Alderson & her husband Ken Alderson



Cecile Sias dancing with **Jordanna Sias**. **Linda Kelly** (right with back turned).
(Behind counter) **Ken Alderson, Doug Sias & Jim Sias**.



Jordanna SIAS sitting on the floor playing.
Jim & Buffy SIAS' (Doug & Cecile's son & daughter-in-law) daughter.



Lea Bjork (left) **Josie Sias**, **Theresa Smith** (middle) **Frank Sias** (right)



(Lady unknown) and **Dave Smith** (Carcross) (center), - (back behind the counter doing dishes) **Doug Sias, Cecile Sias & Ken Alderson.**

COMMENTS ON SILVER CITY

Hi Sherron, sorry I haven't gotten back to you sooner. Let me know if I can add anything to your Silver City stuff. I was just re-reading your old email and you asked how the name was chosen. I don't know for sure, but I have heard the creek was named for the "silver" looking silt in the creek. It flows dirty all year, grey looking, turning to brown at high water times like now or during rainy periods. I did some archives research a few years back; I can pass on some of that info if you like. I think Silver creek was first staked in 1904, but people were working the area in April 1903 according to the mining recorder's records. First record I saw of Morley Bones there was Jan. 1922. I don't think the RCMP were ever there, seems like from the archives they were out of Whitehorse. In Feb 1908 there were "...balance of the year fifty to seventy-five men...." According to the "Yukon Places and Names" book there were over three thousand people in the area in 1903, between there and Bullion Creek up the Slims Valley, about five miles away. Hard to imagine. Look forward to more exchanges.

Cheers, Bruce Williams awilliams*northwestel.net

WISHING GUS & BLANCHE MANY MORE YEARS OF HAPPINESS

What a wonderful tribute, in Moc Tel 98, that Gus gave to his wife, Blanche on the celebration of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. It is always a delight to open the Moc Tel every week to read Gus's latest literary triumph :)

I am sure that all our Moc Tel readers join in wishing Gus and Blanche many more years of happiness.

Vivian (Lelievre) Stuart lornellis*shaw.ca

A MESSAGE FROM MARIBETH

Thank you to all who contributed to Buckets of Steel. That issue will become a family treasure, background for our copy of "Yukon Gold" and reminder of the stories that my grandfather, John W. Hoggan, told to my sisters and I, and to those of our children who were old enough to listen to the stories and go through the many photographs he had of the whole process of placer mining.

I especially salute the way you engage us all in the process of fleshing out these stories. What a wonderful service you provide for us: keeping us connected and keeping our brain cells firing.

Maribeth (Tubman) Mainer mainerml@shaw.ca

NEW ADDITIONS

Hi Sherron, met Henry Breaden yesterday, and he told me about your news from the Yukon, and suggested that I "sign" up with you so here goes with the info that he said you require:..... We arrived (Larry and I) in the Yukon in August 1963, with the RCAF and lived first at the Kopper King and then in PMQ's at Hillcrest. I worked for the Whitehorse Star for a while, then DPW until we went to Elsa in '66. On arrival in Whitehorse I joined the Drama Club, and had many lead roles with them. In Elsa I started a club and we put on quite a few plays, until I left in 72. At that time Larry had accepted the job of Judicial Administrator with YTG and I was the first female Inspector in the Territorial Sec's office and later moved to Probation Officer. I rejoined the WDC and did many more productions. In 1980 we relocated to Qualicum Beach and have been here ever since. Of our 5 children 2 sons are still in Whitehorse, so we visit about every 2 years. Hope this is the kind of info you are looking for, and I look forward to getting on your "list" June Stubbins jrstubbins@shaw.ca

Hi Sherron;

Can you please sign Michael and myself up for the newsletter please? We have been getting some to read via Madeleine Gould and decided we would like to be part of the "Telegraph".

It is an awesome read and fits in nicely with our research projects that are always on the go...nice to hear about folk who are still alive and kicking out there...mind you....our temperatures and down south temperature right now, might remind them of days gone by up here !!!

Cheers

Kathy Gates/(Kathy Jones-Gates) Michael Gates

kmgates*northwestel.net

Hi Sherron;

Mike, myself and our daughter Megan were in Dawson City for many years....Mike and I go back to 1971 and 1972 respectively.....I began working for Margretta Gaundroue at the Museum and ended up becoming its director etc. until 1982. Mike first came north as an Archaeologist in the S.W. Yukon in 1971 and always wanted to move here to work, and accomplished that by working for Parks Canada as Curator of Collections for Klondike National Historic Sites. He also has a very successful book published...which has sold out 3 printings....**"Gold At FortyMile Creek: Early Days on the Yukon." published by UBC Press.** His current research project is to gather as much information about the history, and who worked and who lived on Gold Run Creek over the years...and has amassed quite a bit of history, as well as interviewing a good number of folk who actually worked or lived there. He needs more names and contacts....

Megan was born in 1987. Our car accident left her with a Traumatic Brain Injury, near death it was followed by months of rehab in Vancouver to recover enough to go home, get her voice back and learning to walk and talk etc. all over again. She was 8 years old at the time. At the time we were told that she would never learn beyond Age 10...she has fooled all the specialists and ourselves too, I might add. This year she will graduate..and has made either the Honour Role or the Honour Role with Distinction in each year of High School.....how time flies!

Megan, since her accident, has saved recyclables and turned all the proceeds over from that to the Rehab. facility which is part of B.C. Children's Hospital...so far she has raised \$13,000 that way. This year, Whitehorse Barber, Murd Nicholson has climbed aboard and hopes to have a HUGE fund-raiser for her. He has lengthy hair and intends to get it cut off by the highest donor to the project!!!! Megan's money goes into an account for the Brain Injury group at Sunny Hill. When there we saw that many families could not be there for their children when they were so badly needed....= expense, no one to care for other siblings...on welfare etc. So Megan's money has enabled the Brain Injury Unit to defray costs of transportation for one parent; money to buy special items for the injured child, covers Taxi costs, you name it. She has acquired two brand new bikes to donate to the unit so they can, if necessary, be modified to accommodate the needs of the injured child. She is an awesome fund raiser too and really hustles!!!

In Dawson, I am sure many folk will recall me...I was involved in many non-profit organisations, including KVA, The Museum, The Nutty Club etc. I was a founding member of the Klondike Sun Newspaper, and I also submitted work free lance, for a number of years for the CBC radio Yukon and for both Yukon's major newspapers. In my spare time I had my own darkroom and did passport photos amongst other stuff. Both Mike and I were heavily involved in the famous Dawson Film Find back in the late 1970's.

After our big car accident back in 1995, we considered the need to move closer to medical care, should it be needed, for our daughter. She did surprise us all with her recovery, but the time was right in 2000 to make the move south to Whitehorse. We live in Porter Creek and close enough to Porter Creek Secondary School, which has been an awesome place for Megan to attend High School.

Mike continues to work for Parks Canada where he is now Historical Integrity Expert. I am just getting back into the workplace after all the years helping to get Megan back on her feet...myself too. I am still slowly working on the history of the Carnegie Library building in Dawson and also on helping research the life of George Black, for a biography about him.....about time too!!!!

Today I got appointed to the Yukon Transportation Hall of Fame committee and during the course of the discussions and nominations for this year's awards, the talk moved to how to better expose everyone to the fact that this award is available. I saw a reference to the newsletter but the committee is somewhat new and so I described what the newsletter does...so was asked to get address etc. and possibly the Chair of this committee can subscribe also. This year's awards have been decided...can't speak about that at present, but there is next year etc...and I believe there is an online copy of the application for nominations. I know there are a wealth of ex-Yukoners out there who would be equally equipped to know who might be deserving, live or dead....

Anyway, that got me motivated to help. I know Madeleine has been absolutely wonderful sending me a couple of copies of the newsletter and I love it.....just haven't got around to asking about a subscription....which is why I came right home from the meeting and e-mailed Madeleine for your address. so here I am.

Unless we were totally forced out of the Yukon...not sure why....I can never see us moving again. This place has given us all wings to fly and encouraged us to be creative and involved. It has also been a wonderful place to raise a child. The Yukon gets right into your veins and you can never 'leave' it for long!!! This is HOME!!

I shall leave you to warmer weather...I hope...it seems to be crazy wherever you look these days....But SNOW is just fine...at least for now!!!!

As you can see, I am never at a loss for words!!!!

Cheers

Kathy Gates

Sherron, we would like to be added to the list to receive the Moccasin Telegraph. My name is Sheila Parkin and I was born in Dawson City and we are now living in Whitehorse. My maiden name was 'Coell'. My husband is Vern Parkin and he has been

living in the Yukon since he was about seven years old. My husband brought home a copy of the paper so that we could read it. Our e-mail address is:
bichon@klondiker.com.

Thank you.

Sheila Parkin

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

When fate shuts the door, come in through the window.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

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

Ham Spread

8 oz cream cheese
¼ cup mayonnaise
2-8 oz tins flaked ham
2 tbsp chopped parsley
1 tsp minced onion
¼ tsp dry mustard
¼ tsp tabasco sauce
½ cup walnuts

Mix all ingredients together except chopped walnuts.
Divide mixture in half and roll into 2 balls.
Roll in chopped walnuts. Freezes well.
Tastes better after a couple of days in the fridge.
Serve with your favorite crackers

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