

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – 110th Edition – April 24, 2005

Created by Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca

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



Ben-My-Chree

Photo courtesy Doug Bell dougbell@yknnet.ca

ON WRITING POETRY

By Gus Barrett sourdoughs2@shaw.ca

I often wonder where I got
This sudden urge to write.
There's never been a poet in my clan.
I've never studied poetry
I just wouldn't think it right.
I'm really not an educated man.

Then I read a book of verse
That Robert Service wrote,
About old Dan McGrew and Sam McGee.
He was just a teller then,
Not anyone of note.
So I thought; if he can do it, why not me.

Then I took my pen in hand
Or to be more precise,
I sat at my computer in the den,
And after several failures,
A cuss word once or twice,
I wrote one which my critic gave a ten.

Now I write for pleasure,
And, indeed, that's what it is.
I try to write of fun and happy things.
And though I won't get rich at all,
The real reward is this,
The inner peace I find that writing brings.

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Here's a story I wrote for the Ottawa Citizen. Run it if you wish. Certainly enjoy the Moctel and hope you are able to maintain the service.
Regards to all,

Les McLaughlin leslorn*rogers.com

Ice Worms

by Les McLaughlin
for the Ottawa Citizen,
January 25th, 2005

In the land of the pale blue snow
Where its ninety-nine below,
And the polar bears are dancing on the plain.
In the shadow of the pole,
Oh My heart, my life, my soul,
I will meet thee when the ice worms nest again.

Robert W. Service (in the novel) The Trail of '98 (written in 1909)

Ice worms? As if it wasn't cold enough in the Klondike through the turn of the 20th century, the legendary Yukon poet had to create a mythical creature that nested on glaciers. A fanciful tale indeed!

So fanciful that Stroller White, a brash reporter with the Whitehorse Star and friend of the famed poet, after reading "When the Ice Worms Nest Again," faked a newspaper interview with a one hundred-year-old Yukon native, who told him the life history of the enigmatic worm.

The ancient native, said White, described a slithering worm one and a half meters long with a head on either end of its body. The creature only appeared when the temperature dropped below minus 74 degrees F.

So gripping was White's tale, that the esteemed Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. wrote him a letter calling for more details. White, ever the humourist, continued to fabricate whoppers about the worm and the weather.

They chirped like a big bird, he wrote, but only when the blue snows fell and that was only when the wind howled across the glaciers from the east and the temperature fell to -74F.

The recent cold snap he replied had caused the worms to:

"crawl out of their holes in a nearby glacier in order to bask in the unusual frigidity in such numbers that their chirping was seriously interfering with the slumbers of Dawson's inhabitants."

That there are no glaciers near Dawson did not deter Stroller White.

Not to be outdone, Robert Service, again took up the ice worm challenge and penned a rakish poem. In "The Ballad of the Ice Worm Cocktail," Major Brown, a pompous British military man on a Yukon big game hunt, had bedeviled the dwellers of Dawson and some were itching for action.

"Now Skipper Grey and Deacon White were sitting in the shack,

And sampling of the whisky that pertained to Sheriff Black.

Said Skipper Grey: "I want to say a word about this Brown:

The piker's sticking out his chest as if he owned the town."

Said Sheriff Black: "he has no lack of frigorated cheek;

He called himself a Sourdough when he'd just been here a week."

Said Deacon White: "Methinks you're right, and so I have a plan

By which I hope to prove tonight the mettle of the man.

Just meet me where the hooch-bird sings, and though our ways be rude,

We'll make a proper Sourdough of this Piccadilly dude."

The "hooch-bird" was a local saloon where a cluster of squirming critters were stored on ice.

"Their bellies were a bilious blue, their eyes a bulbous red;

Their backs were grey, and gross were they, and hideous of head."

A worm was dropped into Major Brown's gin drink, who, on downing the concoction, hightailed it out of Dawson to the delight of those who had grown tired of his pomposity.

Service ended the poem with the truth about the practical joke:

"For that ice-worm, so they told him, of such formidable size,

Was a stick of stained spaghetti with two red ink spots for eyes."

Today, nearly one hundred years after Robert Service penned the parody, visitors travel to Alaska and the Yukon in great numbers to gaze at glaciers, marvel at the mountains and toast their trip with a cocktail named for a mythical worm.

Mythical, however, it is not! In truth, the only ice worms near dear old Dawson town would have to be of the spaghetti variety since there are no appropriate glaciers nearby. And glaciers are where the real ice worms live.

They do exist. By the millions on some coastal glaciers of Alaska, British Columbia and Washington State and are possibly the least studied creature on the planet.

Dan Shain, a biologist at Rutgers University in New Jersey, is one of a handful of scientists in North America studying the remarkable life of the ice worm. His interest began ten years ago when he travelled with his Dad on a fishing expedition to Alaska. Like other tourists, he listened to locals tell tall tales of giant worms living in ice caves. Like everyone else, he did not believe it.

Today, Shain not only believes they exist, but has seen millions on Alaskan glaciers. A few years ago, he spent the summer trekking over coastal glaciers determined to find out everything he could about the life of ice worms. He has jars of the critters in his lab in New Jersey where his DNA sampling has shown that the ice worm might be the most highly adapted multi-celled creature on the planet.

"Ice worms are remarkable," said Shain. "You can be walking along a glacier near dusk and it is completely white. Then all of a sudden there are so many ice worms coming to the surface, the colour of the glacier changes to a dark plaid. You can't move without stepping on hundreds of them."

About one to two centimeters long, they look like pieces of dark thread in the ice. For tiny creatures, they have big mouths which is all the better to eat the single celled red algae and bacteria that grow on glaciers.

Surprisingly, ice worms have a relatively small temperature tolerance and unlike worms in the story concocted by Stroller White, they cannot live at -74F.

Their ideal habitat temperature is about 0 celsius. If the temperature drops below minus 7 oC (20 oF), they will die of the cold and at plus 10C they can live for about a week. At room temperature, they survive for about an hour.

Ice worms usually stay in small water pockets amidst the ice crystals at or near the glacial surface and spend their days tunneling up and down through the ice.

Luckily, Pacific coastal glaciers have a moderate climate. By burrowing into the ice, the worms can find temperatures near the freezing point, even in midwinter.

"They function on some sort of Circadian rhythm," says Shain, "moving up when it's dark and down when it's light."

Thus, their scientific name *Mesenchytraeus solifugus*, "the sun-avoiding worm." Ice worms have the same basic physical structures as earthworms. They live in glacial colonies of a few hundred thousand to many millions and a colony can cover an area as large as 12 hectares (30 acres.)

They seem to have few predators and their only real threat may be from global warming.

"Alaska's coastal glaciers are about 0 degrees Celsius and most are retreating," said Shain. "If it gets any warmer, they're going to start melting even more quickly. If their habitat disappears, so will the ice worms."

Understanding global warming is just one of the many scientific breakthroughs awaiting discovery from the study of ice worms that have evolved a way of functioning in the cold by an as yet unknown mechanism. Polar bears and humans can live in an icy environment, but only with natural, thick fur coats or manufactured cold weather gear. All living things require a continual supply of energy that is used for all the processes involved in keeping the organism alive. Animals obtain their energy by oxidation of foods while plants do so by trapping the sunlight using chlorophyll.

However, before the energy can be used, it is transformed into a form that the organism can handle easily. This special carrier of energy is the molecule ATP (adenosine triphosphate).

According to Professor Shain, ATP levels go up dramatically in ice worms when they get cold. How this happens is a key to understanding how the worms beat the cold conditions of their icy environment.

"If we can unravel the ice worm's secret, we might learn how to keep human organs alive on ice longer than at present to serve organ transplant patients," said Shain.

The ice worm might also reveal clues about life in the solar system.

"Conditions on Europa, the icy moon of Jupiter which may harbour an ocean of water, are similar to those on an Alaska glacier," hinting that worm-like creatures may not be any more fanciful on some distant solar body than they were in the poems of Robert Service.

Shain is hopeful that NASA, the American space agency, agrees that the ice worm may be the first multicellular creature worth studying in the quest for life elsewhere and is waiting to hear if his request for research funds will be accepted.

At the moment, he says that NASA is more interested in studying simple single celled organisms believing that they are more likely to exist elsewhere than a complex creature like the ice worm.

And Shain is still haunted by the ice worm mythology created by the Klondike poet. At times he has trouble getting people to believe his stories. Even some park wardens in Alaska question his sincerity when he tells them about the massive worm populations on nearby glaciers.

Native legends may not help either since they tell of giant ice worms that appear on the glaciers of the St. Elias Mountains of the southwestern Yukon.

When the midnight Sun disappears from the northern sky, they terrorize humans who dare trespass inside their mountain lair and woe be got any human caught. The giant worm attaches itself to exposed flesh and sucks the heat from the body, leaving behind a grey trail of dead skin.

While feared in native legend, the ice worm is celebrated at winter festivals in northern communities like Cordova, Alaska where the first February welcomes in the "Cordova Ice Worm Festival" with a parade led by a one hundred foot long worm.

Of course, on old time country radio, you can sometimes hear the distinctive voice of Canadian cowboy legend Wilf Carter belting out that country classic written by Robert Service in 1909;

"In the shadow of the pole,
Oh My heart, my life, my soul,
I will meet thee when the ice worms nest again."
And that will be very soon.

REMEMBERING MAYO

Below is one of Harvey's 1964 flood pictures that I think carries a lot of information. Tight on the right you can barely see the old Treadwell Office and garage where they used to store the 10 Ton Holt Cat. After T.Y., Bud Fisher had it for the same purpose till he put up a new building. Next building on right is the old Mayo power house that first housed Treadwell Yukon till 1942, then the Jim Mervyn group to 1945 and the Kunze Brothers, Bon and Ed, till it was taken over by the new hydro in 1952. The next building

was the original YTG garage and shop just before 2nd Avenue. The other side of 2nd you can see the RCCS residence and the 150 foot tower for their antennas. Still on the right beyond the flood between 2nd and 3rd is the Jack Andison residence where Mary Laing grew up. On the left is the original T.Y. garage where they used to store the Morland trucks, and where Alex McCarter worked out of. It later was the YTG garage. The building beyond 2nd used to be just beyond the garage, and was the residence of Pete Briba and family. Pete was Master Mechanic for T.Y. In the latter 30s it was moved to the present location, and McCarthy their accountant had an office and living quarters. After the war when UKHM took over the camps, they used it as their Mayo office and Nancy Moulton (Whitney) was secretary for them. Our old home was to the left on 2nd, about 3/4 block. At the far end is what used to be Joe Longtin's feed warehouse, for he had the water delivery with "Eli" his horse for Mayo. I will Cc: Harvey for authorization should you ever wish to use the photo.

Cheers,
Henry Breaden



Mayo Flood 1964

Photo courtesy Harvey Burian hburian*telus.net

Good on you Henry, for pointing out what all those Mayo buildings were used for, and by whom, in the past. There are probably not that many still around who could identify all those buildings the way you have done.

With exception of the building on the left in the front of the photo (the former YTG Garage) and the RCSC (and later Department of Transport [DOT] residence, unfortunately all the landmarks Henry mentioned are now gone, including the towers. If you are interested in a comparable photo that I took in the summer of 2003 during the Mayo Centennial, I am enclosing a copy. (*posted below*) You can see that the view from this corner (1st Ave looking down Congdon St.) has changed considerably over the 39 years between the two photos (1964 to 2003). The former YTG garage is on the left and the roof of the former RCSC residence is showing just above the grey building on the right.

The one thing that is the same...and will likely stay that way for some time to come...is the view of Mount Haldane (Lookout Mountain as we locals called it) showing in the background (partially obscured by the trees in the newer photo.)

Oh yes.....I'm happy to have you use of these photos in the MocTel whenever you want to do so.

Harvey Burian



1st Avenue looking down Congdon Street,
has changed considerably over the 39 years between the two photos (1964 to 2003).
Photo courtesy Harvey Burian hburian@telus.net

VIC FOLEY

The April 10th piece on Vic Foley brought back many memories. Vic cooked for *us* during the summer of '63 at the Silver Titan camp near Cecil Poli's cabin on Galena Creek a few miles down the road from Elsa. He also cooked for us during the winter of '65-'66 at the Dynasty Vangorda Creek camp during the first year of the Dynasty-Faro discovery. When I get around to scanning my Yukon slides, I will send you some 1963 pictures of Vic along with some of the other characters who worked with us like Ted Skonseng, Cecil Poli (and Gladys), Dinky Mervin and Murray Hampton (Murray's first year as a geologist in the Yukon). Vic was as good a bush cook as he was a raconteur. On occasion, after long Saturday nights in the Chateau Mayo bar with the Silver Titan crew, there would be some confusion as to choice of Sunday's menu.

A problem related to working in the land of the Midnight Sun when 6:00 AM can look like 6:00 PM, which meant that we got a full course dinner for breakfast.

More later,
John Brock

*I sent along some further research that Greg Nesteroff recently completed, on Vic Foley, in Victoria and asked John if he would likely tell me who 'us' was in the message above. If anyone else is interested in the research Greg did on Vic Foley contact him at [gregnesteroff*yahoo.ca](mailto:gregnesteroff@yahoo.ca)— Sherron*

“Us” was:

John Brock, geologist-geophysicist, first went to work in Yukon the summer of '63 with Aaro Aho who then headed up Silver Titan Mines.

Aaro, who was killed in a farm tractor accident in 1976 I think, was a well-known geologist who first went to Yukon as the geologist for White Pass.

When he left White Pass, his position was assumed by Charlie (“Curly”) Brown.

Aaro then explored the Yukon as a principal of public companies such as Peso Silver, North Limb Mines, Silver Titan, Dynasty, Atlas, AEX and Canadian Natural Resources. He was a co-founder of Dynasty along with Al Kulan and Gordon Davis and served as its president when Faro was discovered in the summer of '65.

In 1964 I joined Dynasty as a geophysicist and was part of the team that discovered Faro. I continued working in the Yukon with Dynasty and Atlas Explorations while living in Ross River during the late 60's.

In 1973 I left Dynasty to co-found Welcome North Mines with Al Kulan. I am still in the exploration business and still have interests in a few Yukon projects but my main effort, through Western Prospector, is directed to Mongolia where we have an advanced-stage uranium project.

John Brock [jsbrock*shaw.ca](mailto:jsbrock@shaw.ca)

Thanks for the Vic Foley research. I think that in the late '60's Vic used to stay with his daughter (?) somewhere in Burnaby. I have no recollection of a son.
jsb

PIANO RECITAL – MORRIS DEAN - 1958



Image courtesy Anne Domes [octavia13*yknet.ca](mailto:octavia13@ykn.net)

Going thru my endless boxes, I found the ticket to a concert of Morris Dean. I wonder, how many people remember him. Perhaps somebody even was at that concert, it was held at the school gym on 4th. Ave. There were about 60 people in attendance.

Morris was a musician, lived in our house and had a Baby Grand in his basement suite. Remember, when it was moved down? Just inches to spare on each wall. George will remember and Bill Oram.

Morris played classical music, directed plays - one of the most famous "Mikado" and he was the first Yukon Artist to get a grant from Canada Council. He did his studies with that grant in Germany. He worked for the White Pass and it would be nice to hear from people, who had connection with Morris. If I am right informed, he died in his fifties.

Anne M. Domes [octavia13*yknet.ca](mailto:octavia13@ykn.net)

(I gather there may be some good stories here about Morris, the name of his piano, his association with White Pass. Who knows what? Was there engineering design work involved in this piano move, did the piano have a pet name? Did this concert pianist show some promise? – Sherron)

A MESSAGE FROM CHRIS MAYLOR

I would like to share a piece of **Texas spring** with the folks if I may. Texas is famous for bluebonnets in the spring - and the folks here in Texas (Tejas for the spanish speaking) spend a great deal of time looking for the "perfect" patch of bluebonnets. I had the opportunity to get a picture last week on Monday (the 5th) which I consider to be worth the 450 mile motorcycle trip just by itself, and would love to share "**Texas spring**" with the Yukoners, from a (former) Yukoner!



"Texas Spring" - Bluebonnets
Photo courtesy Chris Maylor maylorc*excite.com

The Bluebonnets are actually a Lady Bird (wife of President Lyndon) Johnson thing. She loved them and many were planted in Texas in honour of her. Their ranch is about 3 hr south of where I live - have been by it once or twice.

He's Gone

By Chris Maylor maylorc*excite.com

I don't live in Canada at the present,
One doesn't have to live there to know.
That the people, the country, they make it.
Whether parched, or arid, or snow.

Through life we are thrown many challenges
How to pass them we don't even know
But the people, with their hurt and their wisdom
Help to make it a better place, don't you know?

We don't know the tools when we get them
They can help us or kill us, we don't know

But if we should learn to mis-use them
Our neighbours, off the planet they go.

So grant me the knowledge to know better
To understand the pace of life is not slow
We all have a purpose on this planet,
And can't serve it when buried below.

It's normal not to have all the answers
My friends may disagree, I don't know
But in any event it's their opinion
And the judge of my actions, just so.

But heaven forbid we go crazy,
And take away life and its flow.
Leaving people who have only memories
Of the past, leaving them feeling so low.

I doubt I'll be famous for long, anyhow
Not longer than winter brings the snow
But the peace that you'll hold as you lie there
Is a peace that I will never know.



Another Albino Moose

Forwarded by Doug Bell, who received it from a site he had signed up to receive information from them. The photo came with the following information.

Submitted by Alaska Fish and Game

We invite you to visit the North American Moose Foundation website for more fabulous photos!

www.moosefoundation.org

A MESSAGE FROM WELDON PINCHIN

Please thank Jeanne for the stories.

I have been up the Canol road many times, but never to the end.

As for the Boyd & Perchie family they have a ton of stories. Maybe they will send us something???

Yes the fishing at Quite Lake was great.

Cheers Weldon pinchin@gulfislands.com

Memories from the Cake Box Number 8

My parents E.F. (Ted) & Rosena (Dode) Pinchin owned and ran the Cake Box Bakery on Main St. The exact spot that Macs News is now sitting.

Re: Moc. Tel. # 106

Thank you for the up date on the Boyd's & Perchie families. As I went to school with all of them it brought good memories. Maybe the Boyd's might tell of their chicken farm and egg business out at McRae ???

Dave or Madeline Perchie, I am sure, have many stories on their mom and dad. Howard was one of the few that stayed in Whitehorse in the winter, after the paddle ships were up on land for the winter.

Now Mrs. Perchie - 'Gussie' - Frances, was a one of a kind lady. I can remember her cutting my hair in the kitchen of her house. It was one of only a few that had the well pump right at the kitchen sink. That was damn modern in that day. She always had the best treats for Halloween. I must say I have many good recalls of the Perchie family. Maybe Dave might share a story or two of his time with C.P. Air Lines in the early days???

The MocTel. must be doing a good job in reaching out. I say this because Rolf Hougen is now contributing. I went to school with Rolf as well. He is as much as you will get as a living historian, with all the contacts.

Vancouver Moc. Tel. Convention #107

Thank you very, very much for all the pictures of the folks.

Most of the people I knew or remember.

Re Donna Needham question on Bob and Marg Sheardown; they had a dry cleaning and small laundry right next to the C.P.A. Staff house. You entered off the lane on 4th. This was the back of the house. Standing at the kitchen sink looking out of the staff house window you looked down at the whole 9 yards.

The C.P. staff house was run by Nancy Hogg. Her son was blind and used to come to Whitehorse once a year to tune pianos (ours was one of them) I was always impressed

with him doing his work. I spent many hrs. Sitting on the front room floor watching him tune the piano.

Across the lane out the back of C.P. House still on 4th was Scotty Coutts house, they had 5 girls. Last one was to be a boy for sure. She was named Wilhemena (Billy) for short.

Just another place Pinchins' bread was delivered from the Cake Box Bakery.

This can all be confirmed by Aksel Porsild as I used to con him into helping me from time to time.

Now I am asking for help on my mom and dad's time in Whitehorse, this on the political side of things good or bad.

Dad was involved with Aubrey Simmons election, and the Elks.

Dode was involved with the I. O. D. E. and the Eastern Star.

As you might know they are gone now so what you chose to say good or bad can't matter now. Any stories on my brother (Dennis) who is also gone would help.

Thanks in advance

Cheers Weldon Pinchin pinchin@gulfislands.com



L – R Back Row: Mary Agnes Smith, Darlene ----? (not Howatt), Unnamed girl, Curtis Gislison (boy in tie), Donna Cowling, Lois Sheardown,
In front: Unnamed girl, Benny Sheardown

Photo courtesy Donna Cowling, dj_mclean@shaw.ca

Scanned and forwarded by Ralph Lortie rlortie001@sympatico.ca

From the apparent ages of Benny & Lois, perhaps 7 and 11-12, I would guess that the photo was taken in about 1951-52. The photo was taken in Donna's side yard. The house

was on the NW corner of 4th Ave. and Hanson St. (facing Hanson), at the end of the row of CPA houses (perhaps PanAm originally).

The view east across 4th Ave. gives us a rare look at a building used by the YPA (see sign over door) at this time. It was probably once an army club. The building was gutted by fire in about 1954.

After the fire, on my way home from school, I went in and found a box of books, a little wet and smoke-stained. I took home 6 or 7 books, most of which I still have, including : Of Mice & Men, The Hurricane, Wuthering Heights (all classics), The Conqueror (about Alexander Hamilton), and Van Loon's Geography. A Tarzan book was discarded years ago.

If anyone would like to lay claim to the books, please let me know. Seriously.

Donna & her mother lived on the NW corner of 4th and Hanson. Their house was at the east end of that row of houses. Directly across Hanson from Donna's house was the CPA staff house. Sheardowns' place was immediately west of that staff house. West of Sheardowns' place was another row of houses similar to Donna's. On the south side of Hanson, between 4th & 3rd Avenues, was another row of similar houses, occupied in the late '40s- early '50s by Canadian Army officers and their families. At the 3rd Ave. end lived Major Coward and his family. Brother Grant & I were friends with the Coward boys, Gary and Neil. Between 1948 and 1951, we lived in the little house at 304 (or 302) Hawkins (beside John McIsaac's garage), so we were practically across the lane from the Cowards. I also recall a kid named Brian Akerley (sp?).

Regards. Ralph Lortie [rlortie001*sympatico.ca](mailto:rlortie001@sympatico.ca)



This photo looking north on 4th Avenue from Hawkins Street
Photo courtesy Ralph Lortie

This photo looking north on 4th Ave. from Hawkins Street shows a parade, perhaps a May Day Parade, but it might have been on the occasion of the Queen's visit. In the background is the CPA staff house. Donna's home was beyond it. On this side of the CPA building are a little white house (mostly obscured by the yellow road sign), once

occupied by the Coutts family, and then the Saunders family, and the Chapman's house on the corner. Chappie, Fran and daughter Pat (who's on the MocTel subscribers list) were good friends of my parents and the Sheardowns.

I've seen a Chappie Chapman mentioned in the MocTel, probably in Jeanne Harbottle's saga, but I don't think he was the man who lived here.

Cheers. Ralph

A MESSAGE FROM DON MACHAN

Dear Sherron and all MocTellers: My apologies for my failure to contribute during the past several months, but they have been rather hectic months. For the month of January I was farm sitting for some friends while they vacationed in Hawaii, and did not have access to a computer. I had 100 chickens, three cattle, three cats and a dog to care for. The day my friends left for Hawaii, it snowed 1 1/2 to 2 feet, and I was snowbound for a week.

From the beginning of February to March 15th, I chaired the Property Assessment Review Panel (PARP), hearing appeals of property assessments, and it was one of the busiest in the last dozen years I have been involved.

Following that, I experienced a severe bout of "Flu" for ten days.

On March 28th, I departed for a two week vacation in Cuba, and am still getting caught up. My visit to Cuba was awesome and I would recommend Cuba without hesitation. It is a beautiful and historic country, populated by beautiful people. They have accomplished so much under the most difficult circumstances and oppressive measures by the Americans. The beaches are incredible, with pure white sands stretching for miles, and excellent tourist hotels. I spent 10 days in the historic city of Havana and stayed at a "casa particular", a bed and breakfast, for Thirty Pesos (approximately \$33.00 Canadian), for a room with shower, air conditioning, refrigerator and fan. I immediately became a member of the family, and what a loving family they were. I had most of my evening meals there also, and very fine and ample meals they were, for 5 or 6 pesos, or for 10 pesos for lobster. Old Havana has buildings dating back to the beginning of the 16th century. The architecture throughout the city is very ornate with Doric, Ionic and Corinthian pillars and elaborate iron grillwork, frescoes, etc. There is a great deal of restoration underway. Cuba has one of the highest literacy rates in the world. That's "LITERATE" not "ILLITERATE" I'm talking about, and I can personally vouch for their medical system because I fell in the shower and caused a slight fracture of my left shoulder and received attention at one of their many hospitals. One of the hospital I visited had 620 beds and 800 doctors. Doctors undergo at least seven years of training. There were thousands of Canadian tourists and Canadian currency is the most predominant foreign currency. I had the good fortune to attend a Masonic Lodge meeting in a Lodge located in the Grand Lodge of Cuba, a ten or eleven storey building in Havana. Three candidates received the EA Degree, and although the ritual work was somewhat different than in my Lodge, Concord Lodge, I had no difficulty in understanding the procedure, despite the fact that it was entirely in Spanish, and my

Spanish is limited to the most basic necessities. I did not at any time feel concern for my safety and I was surprised at the number of single females who were touring in Cuba, and who indicated that they experienced no concern for their security. I have prattled on far too long. I will endeavour to be more contributory in terms of my Yukon experiences when I get settled in.

Sincerely, Don Machan demachan@telus.net

A MESSAGE FROM RICK MORTIMER

I told Rick that I thought he may not think his experiences from 30 years as a trapper in Yukon may not be any big deal, but that many of us would enjoy hearing of some of his experiences. – Sherron

Well, thanks for your compliments. I'm not sure how much people want to hear of my experiences really. No, I'm not trying to be humble or self depreciating, I just think a lot of others shared the same Yukon lifestyle and so what I did wasn't so special. The people I met where though!

Yes, I know Ruby Van Bibber. She lives in Whitehorse and I believe is Dan Van Bibber's daughter. (I am probably wrong on that one though.) Dan of course, was Alex's brother. He died a few years back also. Ruby is one fine lady. I believe she still works with Alcohol and Drug Services. She is from Pelly and would probably be one of your best sources for info on the Van Bibber family. On second thought, I believe I am wrong.... she is probably Archie's daughter. Archie was another brother to Alec. He had a black belt in Karate.

Alex's parents' names were Ira and Shorty. Ira came from Virginia I believe it was and Shorty was a Pelly Indian. They raised their family in Pelly River. Fine people. I've seen pictures of Ira plowing the family vegetable garden with a dog team.

I know for sure Alex's wife's name was Sue. She is a Chambers, and sister to Babe Southwick, (of mushing fame), Grace Chambers of Burwash, and Belle Derosier (outfitter). The Chambers and Van Bibbers of course are Yukon names that go way way back..... along with the Dicksons and Hendersons.

I remember one time when I was still pretty 'green' in the bush; I was camped on Raft Creek on Kluane Lake. It was plenty cold too, and these 4 Yukon ladies came skidooning by, saw how poorly set up my camp was and never even stayed for tea! Before they left though, they gave this greenhorn some tips on Yukon winter camping. That probably saved my life, as it went down to -68 F that night and stayed there for a week.

I don't know what the origins of the Chambers are, but I would guess Southern Touchone or Tlingit maybe. I've never thought about it much, but I'd bet on that one.

Old Jimmy Kane and Alex were both involved in a film as you say. It was starring Mike Mazurkie and was a fictionalized film of the Albert Johnson story. (The mad

trapper of Rat River). Alex played the sharp shooter and he never lived down the fact that he shot Albert in the back. The name of the movie escapes me at the moment, but I've seen it in video stores in recent years. Jimmy Kane was a very highly respected fellow when I knew him in the '70s and I always have regretted not knowing more of his history and stories. He played the part of a tracker in the movie. A fine old man who has many relatives around Haines Junction, Dezadeash, Champagne, etc..

Alex had been filmed and photographed many times by hunters also, with probably the most 'famous' piece of film being taken while hunting with Fred Bear (of archery fame) whom Alex Guided on a bow and arrow Grizzly hunt. I believe that was back in the '50s or early '60s even. Fred put an arrow right through that bear it was so close.

I hope you get to see that film with Mike Mazurki. It was not the 'big' production of today's films, but it had some great scenery and sure enough had some great Yukoners in it!

Rick Mortimer trapper*nemontel.net

CORRECTION

I made the correction to the online copy and the download copy about 2:30 on Sunday, Apr. 17th but for those who read MocTel 109 before that, I mislead you by writing Alex Van Bibber when it was Archie Van Bibber and his wife Jessie (in 1996) that I have prepared headstone designs for. – Sherron

MORE FROM RICK MORTIMER

Hey, it happens! I thought *I* was dead one time too, but the bear turned and went up the creek.

I was sure I would have heard of Sue's (Alex's wife) passing before this.

The Van Bibbers truly represent the end of an era, with the passing of the family members now in their elder years. They were the one's that saw the raw territory turned into what it is today. From river travel to highways and jets, they were a major part in that change. They are the one's that saw the hard times in the 1930's and forties, and the change from a truly bush life, to our modern era.

They were the one's that knew the country and the run of the rivers. Families like the Van Bibbers, the Chambers, Vances (from Telegraph Creek), Callisons, Dicksons, and many others. These people saw it happen; along with all the native families who found themselves forced into a way of life many of them had no desire to become part of. I used to love listening to the old people in Burwash talking about those times. I remember Moose Johnson in Burwash telling me many people ran for the bush screaming when the first airplane flew over them. Copper Lily had many stories of those times.

Johnny Johns used to tell the story of when he was a kid sitting on the dock in Skagway when a white guy went by on a bicycle. Not knowing what in tarnation that contraption was, one of the older fellows commented "Look at that lazy white man! He is so lazy he has to sit down to walk!" Things were different then, and understanding came hard sometimes. Not so with misunderstandings.

Alex told me one time that when he was 11 years old and had to go to school in Dawson City, the only way to travel was by river. Of course they lived at the Van Bibber homestead on the Pelly which runs into the Stuart and then the Yukon and down into Dawson. Someone asked Alex's dad if he'd bought his 3 sons tickets on the paddlewheeler so they could travel downriver to school. Alex said his dad's (Ira) response was "Hell no! The river runs that way, why would I buy a ticket to go downstream?" They built a raft in Pelly, 11 year old Alex was put in charge of his 2 younger siblings, told to be careful, and off they went to school in Dawson. I think Dan was one of the boys on that trip.

If you did that these days you'd be in prison. The courts treat 18 year olds as if they are infants now.

Anyway, Sherron, thanks for clarifying the issue for me. I'm really glad to hear that one of my mentors and a friend is still out there 'going strong'!

Rick Mortimer

MESSAGE FROM PHYLLIS (LePage) SIMPSON

I remember visiting the Van Bibbers on the Pelly River. Can't remember the year I think it was around 1947 or 48. I spent a month with the Cameron's. We joined up with Emile Forrest on the Loon and pushed a barge up the Pelly to the Pelly Crossing to be used as the ferry so vehicles could cross the river on the way to Mayo and on to Dawson City. That was a trip and a half--had a blast--Ione & I spent a few days with the Wilkinson's after coming back down river. They were the greatest people. Once the road was completed the Wilkinson's would visit with us in Whitehorse, after Mom and my sister & I were back in town for--yuck--school. I would have preferred staying on the river. But guess "kids" thought that would be better than "school".

We had 5 wood camps on the Yukon River and once I had to start school we would live on the River from the first part of June till near the end of Sept--Only Mom and my sister and I would come back to town--Dad would stay and work the camps getting wood out for the steam boats. One year BYN asked Dad if he would be willing to go and cut and haul cord wood on the Stewart as there where no "Woodcutters" working on the Stewart that year. So after we got our wood out that was where we headed. Interesting and busy year. Was also on another steam boat accident. I have been on three so have to think I'll never drown. One was the sinking of the Klondike, the second was on the Stewart River with a barge load of dynamite and the third was in the 30 Mile river.

I asked Phyllis if I could use the message above. – Sherron

Yeah you can use what is to do with my life on the Yukon River. I was born at Yukon Crossing and lived on the river till 1949 then went to Calgary to college. So I do have lots to yak about--how different life was then--and I do miss it.

Phyllis (LePage) Simpson [pingo*internorth.com](mailto:pingo@internorth.com)

BIG DIPPER ROUTE

Hi Danny, Thank you for the memories as they say. I flew the big dipper or at least part of it when I worked for Yukon Electric between 1965 and 1974. I made several trips to Old Crow to work on the power plant. On one occasion we ended up flying to Inuvik as the plane that was to pick us up in Old Crow to return to Whitehorse was unable to get us. We had a short visit in Inuvik and then flew direct to Whitehorse.

Some of your stories of trying to find a way to land under adverse conditions reminded me of one of my visits to Old Crow.

Myself and another fellow were sent to Old Crow just before Christmas I believe it was in 1968. We were to complete our work and catch the last scheduled flight to Whitehorse before the holiday break. As we understood there would be no more flights until after New Years. The locals including Stephen Frost (who also worked part time for Yukon Electric) had been teasing us about spending Christmas in Old Crow and we were invited to attend their Christmas feast. We said that will be the day but we will leave the surplus food we had brought for the feast.

We completed our work on time and were packed up down by the river waiting for our flight home. It was fairly socked in and as we stood there we heard the DC-3 fly over but could not land as there was no visibility. Everyone said see we told you that you were spending Christmas with us. As we stood dejected on the river bank we heard the sound of the DC-3 coming back up the river. The pilot had found a hole in the clouds and came down to make the landing. We were two happy campers that day. And in hind sight and after reading *The Big Dipper Route* it seems this scenario of mine was just another day for GNA and the pilots.

Great job on the book Danny. I really enjoyed reading of your exploits.

Hope that your book is widely read so that people will gain a better appreciation for the pioneers who opened up the North, and for what they went thorough on a day to day basis.

Dave Perks [birdsivu*telusplanet.net](mailto:birdsivu@telusplanet.net)

CHAPPED AND CRACKED SKIN

Sherron: After reading the last issue of Moc Tel and all the remedies for skin and hair care, I HAD to submit what works for me.

For Dry Skin, use the cream "GEORGE'S" Special Dry Skin Cream, It has been researched and carefully formulated by an Alberta pharmacist to help heal problem skin, approved by a leading Dermatologist, can be found in most Drug Stores across Canada. I started using this about 4 years ago, as I have problems with eczema. The other thing that I use at night before retiring is Bag Balm (Cow Tit Salve) it is healing on the hands, and use it on the feet as well.

I agree with the lady who submitted all of the Horse creams, interesting part of all of this, you will find the Mane and Tail in the shampoo section of the store and the HoofMaker in the lotion section. The other cream that I use daily and one that lives by the kitchen sink is called "CowBoy Magic", I purchase this from the store that I buy my horse feed, etc. from, it is formulated for OutDoor People that are exposed to sun, wind and rain. All of these products are excellent, and will work, I find, much better than the most expensive creams that are on the shelves. "Try it - you'll like it".....

You can find these items in any of the grocery stores, ie: Wal Mart, Super Store, just look in the Shampoo Isle and the Lotion - Potion Isle, for Mane 'n Tale and Hoof Maker.

Have a great day, keep up the good work.

Carol Buzzell buzzy.cj*shaw.ca

MESSAGE FROM MARY LOU CADDY

Marylou sent this letter via snail mail and I asked if I could use it primarily because of the family connections it includes but also the thank you to those who submit.- Sherron

My name is Marylou – wife of ex-Yukoner Chuck Caddy. First of all I must apologize for the lateness of this cheque! For some reason, I just assumed Chuck had done it, after 30 odd years I should have known better! Secondly, you have been doing a wonderful job of MocTel and your hard work is appreciated. Chuck follows it devotedly ever since his cousin, Dave Locke, put him onto it. I've yet been unable to coax any submissions out of him. But I too, enjoy it, having made several trips over the years. (the first in 1972) and hearing stories, for years, from Chuck, his family, and friends. Our girls favourite camping memories are primarily Yukon trips, which always include a 3 day fishing trip to Atlin Lake with "Uncle" Willie Nicholson and staying at Uncle Dave's (Locke) cabin on Marsh Lake, when everything out there was still just cabins!

We sincerely hope that MocTel does keep going, even if on a less frequent basis, because I can only imagine how time consuming it has become; and I'm certain that other, like ourselves, have thoughtlessly not let you and those who have submitted, know just how much it is appreciated!

Thank you again,
Marylou & Chuck Caddy ccaddy@telus.net

Hi Sherron

Feel free to publish it if you wish.

Chuck Caddy Sr. had 4 sisters & Dave's mom, Marge, was married to Fred Locke. As for Willie Nicholson - he was an honorary "uncle" to our girls when they were young. Chuck roomed at Willie's mom's place, along with Willie & his sister Mary, in his younger footloose and fancy free days! Willie & Chuck both loved fishing, so an Atlin fishing trip was always part of our agenda each trip north, and Willie always kept the girls fascinated - from making "roadkill stew" (rabbit hit by the van!), making "candy fish" (smoking their own over the campfire), and giving them goosebumps telling stories of the "Windigos", walking thru the bush.

Perhaps we'll get to meet at a Yukon picnic. Thanks, again, for all your hard work.
Marylou Caddy

As a point of interest to those who do submit stories, photos, poems, recipes etc. Many of the people who are writing me, are letting me know that they are enjoying the MocTel; the variety it includes and that we do have a loyal following. I have long since concluded that not every topic is for everyone, but at least there is a variety and we have you to thank for that. – Sherron

OH WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

OH! What might have been! When passing through Whitehorse in July 1962, I had occasion to take a taxi. The taxi driver asked me "Do you play ball?" I said "yes." He asked, "What position do you play?" I said "Catcher." (That was the last position I had played while in Aklavik.)

He said, "If you stay in Whitehorse and play for me, I'll find you a job." "Wow!"

What a temptation, and, I had to make a spur of the moment decision. (Jobs were hard to come by in Whitehorse at that time.) I regretfully said "No." I felt I had over-riding responsibilities in the south.

**I'd like to know who the taxi-driver coach was (assuming that there was only one,) what the name of his team was, and, whether the team was successful as a winning team.

Thanks Sherron.
Emily Stillwell eistillwell@hotmail.com

P.S. A friend, Judy Reichert, played ball in Whitehorse.

YUKON LADIES SOFTBALL PHOTOS

TOP ROW : Mary TOBACCO, -----, -----, -----, Don PARKER (coach), -----, -----, -----, Shannon REDMOND (Langford)

BOTTOM ROW : -----, Jean DIERK, Pat SIRMAN or SHERMAN?, Louise HOWATT, Rusty REID

FRONT : Donna COWLING (bat girl)

I've added a name between Jean Dierk and Louise Howatt.

I thought her name was Pat SIRMAN

My husband Bill thinks it is spelled SHERMAN.

We are close. Does anyone else have ideas.

Rusty Reid rustyreid*northwestel.net

YUKON LADIES SOFTBALL

Any information about the **slow pitch ladies softball team** that flew to **Juneau, Alaska**, in **July, 1971** ? Would love to hear from anyone who went on that trip - it was great. I remember seeing the ice fields for the first and last time and we all had a ball because none of us had ever played slow pitch. I have no pictures of that event. Hope somebody does. Where is **Keith Simpson**? **Marlene LaBar**?

Ute Ewert jewert*shaw.ca

NEW ADDITION

I just received a copy of your special edition of the Yukon Ladies Fastball (via Mary Lang/Julie Trueman), boy did that bring back lots of fond memories. I will study the pictures and see if I can recall names.

I also forwarded it on to a number of former Yukoners I still stay in touch with; Julianne Doyle, Judith Reichert, Ev Estacaille, Mable Walter, Judy Michaels, Sue Acorn and Shelly Bildfeld. I also have some team pictures I could forward if you would like. Really going to enjoy reading all your other articles. Thank you. Please add me to your mailing list.

Whitehorse - 1969-1978

Linda N. Anderson cwfa*telus.net
Calgary, Alberta
403-236-4573

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Sherron can you please add my new e-mail address to your list and delete the old one if you have not done so. Thanks.

Brent Hougen bhougen*northwestel.net

REMOVE FROM THE LIST

Jolene Lammers has been over quota for some time so I wrote to Hans Lammers and received the following reply. – Sherron

Thanks for the heads up.. Talked to Jolene and agreed that removing her from the mailing list would work the best...

Also on that note could you remove me from your list... Sincerely appreciate the time and effort that you put into this project, but at this time I cannot do justice to it.. It becomes a not enough minutes in the hour kind of thing..I think that I have at least the last 85 issues in a file waiting to be read... Maybe when I "retire" would then be able to contribute on all fronts, remind me OK!

In the mean time Best regards
Hans Lammers

LAMMERS, Hans & Betty hammers*telus.net (lived all over Yukon 1952-87) Delta
LAMMERS, Jolene jolene74*shaw.ca (In Whitehorse 1974 – 1987) Vancouver

I so appreciate the creation of MocTel and your tireless efforts to gather the stories and make the connections it is clear that you have been instrumental in bringing many old friends and acquaintances together. You have also provided a wonderful forum for some of the great stories to be told. Having said that I think it's time for me to allow the loving memories of those years in the North to weave their threads into the tapestry of all my life's story and sign off the list.

Your gift to the many MocTel readers has been enormous, and I really acknowledge you for all the work you put in. I hope you are successful in finding the help you need to keep this going.

Many blessings
Jan jmconachy*shaw.ca

McCONACHY, Jan (formerly BROWN) jmconachy@shaw.ca Whse 1972, 1981-86,
Dawson 1973-77,79-81 (604) 739-7387 Vancouver since 1991

Would you please remove my name from your list. Thank you for all you have done over
the last year or two.

Hope all goes well.
Michael A. Robertson dromedaryhouse@shaw.ca

ROBERTSON, Michael romedaryhouse@shaw.ca (In Whitehorse 1956- 1959) (780)464-
1578 Sherwood Park, AB

Please remove my name from your list as a Subscriber. I find the stories interesting,
however, I just do not have the time to read them all! Keep up the good work.
With Kindest Regards,
Lauren F.W. McKiel

McKIEL, Lauren F. W. lmckiel@arcticdata.nt.ca (RCMP in Whse 1963-65) Yellowknife

You can drop me, Sherron, as I'm not able to keep up most times anyway.
Layne Marshall

MARSHAL, Layne Layne.Marshall@MLMarshal.ca (In Whitehorse 1986-92) Campbell River

I'm afraid I'm going to ask you to unsubscribe me. Thank you for letting me in, but I'm
just not the right kind of customer for MocTel. I thought I might want to share some
stories, but it's another kind of vehicle altogether than what I have to offer. And while I
admire and enjoy the contributions of others, I find I don't have time to read them all, and
the e-mails just slowly slide down the list.

So thank you again and good luck with your initiatives.

Terry Porsild tporsild@xs4all.nl

SMIT, Terry (PORSILD) tporsild@xs4all.nl (Born in Whse 1959) Holland

After having received these missives for a while now, I think that I can safely say that
you can drop me from the distribution list. As interesting as they are to many of the folks
on your list, they talk almost exclusively about people and events long before my time, in
many cases before I was born.

So, I wish you all good success and thank you for creating this wonderful way to capture
the oral and written history of the Yukon. I guess, not having raised children, etc., there,
it just isn't as meaningful to me as I would hope.

Bonnie Venton Ross [bonnie.ross*cgi.com](mailto:bonnie.ross@cgi.com)

ROSS, Bonnie (VENTON) [bonnie.ross*cgi.com](mailto:bonnie.ross@cgi.com) (In Whitehorse - 1977) **Grad 72** (905) 762-2800 ex 2973 Markham ON

I have so enjoyed every one of the MocTel issues. It is with much regret that I ask you to remove my name from your list.

Catherine Lidstone cathy.lidstone*whtvcable.com

LIDSTONE, Catherine cathy.lidstone*whtvcable.com (In Whitehorse)

Sorry Sherron, just haven't been reading your epistles lately, really don't know anyone anymore so you can take me off your list.

Thanks for all your work, it's amazing how you keep it up.

Regards Isobel Cameron

CAMERON, Bruce & Isobel (Jolly) issie*magma.ca (In Whitehorse 1946-50) Ottawa

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Even a fish won't get caught if it keeps its mouth shut.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Submitted by Vivian Stuart lornellis@shaw.ca

Lemon Bread

½ cup margarine
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
rind of 1 lemon
½ cup milk
1 ½ cups flour
1 tsp baking powder
dash salt

Mix all and bake at 350 for 45 minutes

Lemon topping:

¼ cup white sugar
Juice of 1 lemon

Spoon topping over hot bread before removing from pan

DATES TO REMEMBER

The **OKANAGAN YUKONERS' PICNIC** will be held at the **Summerland Ornamental Gardens** this year between 11 am and 3 pm on **SUNDAY, JUNE 26th**. Lunch will be at NOON.

How to get there:

As you come *south on 97* south of Summerland (down the Hill) you will come to a reduced speed zone. Just past that on your right is the entrance to the *Experimental station*. For people coming *from the south*, there is a left turn lane at the *beginning* of the 70 k zone to turn onto the road that takes you to the gardens. Look for the signs that say YUKONERS' PICNIC Follow the road right up to the end. On your left you will see a covered picnic area with a small parking lot (5 or 6 cars), just past that is the main parking lot. We use the covered area for our picnic. We should have the Yukon flag out front to identify ourselves. The lunch will be a Pot luck, so bring enough food to share. You will also need some eating utensils (knives forks plates, etc.). There is water available, but you will have to bring your own beverage. We will be collecting \$3 per person as a donation to the *Gardens* again this year.

Larry Chalmers, Secretary (*and holding it all together guy. - Sherron*)
[aksala49*cablerocket.com](mailto:aksala49@cablerocket.com)

Bill Jones has had a couple of signs made up. They are a little less than 2ft by 3ft and will be posted on both sides of Highway 97 just before the turn off. They are a black and white sign reading YUKONERS PICNIC with a hand as an arrow which will point in the direction (away from the lake). Conveniently they fit in his black iron real-estate sign bases.

Vancouver Island Yukoners' Picnic - St. Mary's Aug. 13th 2005 - Nanoose

The Yukoners' Picnic will be held at St. Mary's Hall in Nanoose, Sat. Aug. 13th, 2005. Bring your lunch with you along with utensils and any beverage. We hope that many will join us and as it will start at 11:00 AM, how about coming early so that we can chat with old friends and not miss anyone! If the weather does happen to be adverse, there is the hall to keep dry and chat, so please come one and all Yukoners' and enjoy getting together.

For those travelling from Nanaimo, at AULDS ROAD you will see the *Woodgrove Centre sign* on the mall on your right. From the Woodgrove intersection on the #19 highway it is 11.6 KM to the turnoff at Northwest Bay Road where there is a signal light and a Petrocan Service Station, turn right. From north, it is 11.5 KM from the overpass of the highway from Parksville-Coombs to Northwest Bay Road, turn left. Proceed east on Northwest Bay road for 1.2 KM . Just beyond the tracks to the right is Powder Road that

you turn onto and proceed ½ KM crossing another set of train tracks and you will see St. Mary's church hall to your right. Turn right into Rowland Road for the parking lot. Please set this day aside to get together with old friends that will be there.

Cheers, Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca Secretary, Island Yukoners.

The **73rd International Sourdough Reunion** will be held **September 26 - 30, 2005** at the Quality Inn 101-128 th St. Everett WA. For more information or registration forms contact Larry Chalmers @ P.O. Box 1095 Oliver, BC V0H 1T0 or E-Mail at aksala49@cablerocket.com By Phone at 250-498-6887 or Fax 250-498-6458. For hotel reservations call Toll free 1-800-256-8137

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

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