

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – 113th Edition – MAY 15, 2005

Created by Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca

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



Spring Bog

Photo courtesy Heinrich Lohmann heinrich@lohmann.ca

MY JOURNEY

By Gus Barrett sourdoughs2@shaw.ca

When I depart on that final trip,
Where each must go alone,
I want no empty platitudes,
No sad and mournful tone.
Just have a little party,
With friends all gathered near,
Laugh at all the good times past,
But never shed a tear,

No tales of sadness do I want,
No words of doubt or fear,
For though in body, I'll have gone,
In spirit, I'll be there.
I've lived a good and fruitful life,
Blessed by the lord above.
Been fortunate in family,
Been loved, and given love.

So gather at the water front,
To say farewell to me,
Place my ashes in a box
And send it out to sea.
Just point me at the north star,
Put whiskey in beside me,
Then good friends who have gone before,
Will raise their glass to guide me.

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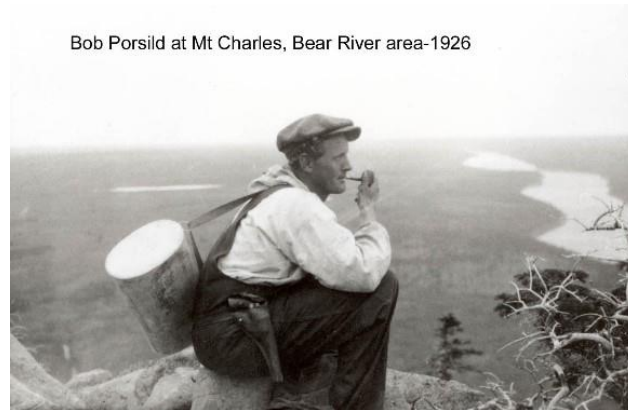


Photo courtesy Aksel Porsild

The Arctic Reindeer Caper – 1927-35

By Aksel Porsild yukoner1@shaw.ca

A Royal Commission was established in 1919 to investigate why the caribou herds of the western NWT had changed their migration patterns. The results of these changes were adversely affecting the indigenous Native peoples' livelihood in terms of food, clothing and other benefits which the caribou supplied in one form or another. In addition to being their staple food, caribou furnished skins for clothes and boots, sleeping robes, sinew for sewing clothing, and bones for various tools and implements. A disaster was in the making since the animals were not only scarce, but non-existent in some areas, forcing long travel to obtain alternate food supplies.

The upshot of the Commission was that for unknown reasons, the migratory caribou herds simply could not be depended on to be available to the people who needed them, and that an alternate food supply of some sort should be arranged for. It was noted that a similar situation had occurred in western Alaska and to combat this, 1200 reindeer, **which are simply domesticated caribou**, had been imported from Soviet Russia in 1892; they had grown into a huge herd, and were thriving wonderfully. It was decided that a like solution be tried in the Mackenzie Delta region with reindeer imported from Alaska.

Before such an undertaking could take place, however, it had to be determined that the

food supply for these animals was appropriate in the region they were to be established in, as well as forage along the trek eastward since it had been proposed that a herd of these reindeer be driven from the Seward Peninsula to the Mackenzie Delta. The Federal Department responsible, Interior, under the direction of O. S. Finnie, hired two Arctic biologists, Dr A. E. Porsild, of Ottawa, and his brother Bob, who was also in Canada at the time, to do a survey of the route of importation of a proposed herd. These brothers had been raised in Greenland, where their father, Dr M. P. Porsild had established a scientific station for Arctic study on Disko Island, off Greenland's west coast. They were trained and well versed in the botany of the Arctic regions.

Erling and Bob were to do the feasibility study survey during the years of 1926-28 and the brothers embarked on a two year odyssey taking them some 24,000 kilometres in Alaska, Yukon and the northwestern NWT, as far east as Paulatuk, and south to Great Bear Lake, using as their means of travel canoe, motorboat, dog team and on foot. Firstly, they were to determine the sustainability of feed for permanent year round nutritional needs of a large herd of reindeer. Then they made a dog team journey across the northern coasts of NWT, Yukon and Alaska to the Nome-Kotzebue area and observed the existing herds there, as well as the environment the animals were living in. Then they mushed back along the proposed route, in the middle of winter, with numerous side trips to determine the extent and quality of graze for the animals, and were back in the Delta by Christmas, with thousands of botanical specimens of grasses, vascular plants and mosses.



Porsild brothers dog team, North Slope, winter 1928

Photo courtesy Aksel Porsild

A herd of 3,000 animals was purchased from Loman Brothers, owners of the Alaska reindeer herd, in the fall of 1929 on the recommendations of the Porsild brothers' surveys; Erling in fact represented the Canadian Government in the herd selection in Nome and stayed in the area until the beginning of the drive of some 1500 miles which got under way on Dec 26, 1929. A Lap herder, Andrew Bahr, was "trail boss" with a crew of other Lapps and some Native Inuit from Alaska.

While Erling was negotiating with the Americans for a "seed herd" of reindeer to begin a reindeer husbandry industry, Bob remained in the Delta area to prepare an area for the animals. He built corrals, herder accommodations and fences in a reserve of 17,000 square kilometres which had been set aside on the east side of the Delta. Much work was

done on the east side of East Channel as well as a summering area on Richards Island in the northern Delta, where predators were less likely to be prevalent.

As an aside; Bob Porsild, while at Aklavik completing his labours for the Government, imported a bride from their native Denmark. Elly Rothe-Hansen made an odyssey almost as long as her future husband had just done, with several means of transport: steamship from Copenhagen to Montreal, train to Edmonton, thence to Waterways (Ft Mc Murray) then steamboat down the Athabasca and Mackenzie Rivers to Aklavik arriving in September of 1930. They were wed there on Sept 18 of that year; she was the first white woman married in the Delta area. (But this is another story!)

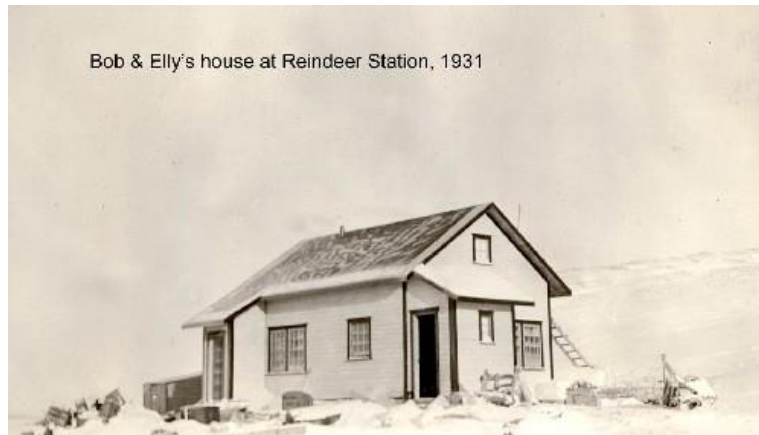


Photo courtesy Aksel Porsild

Bob set up his headquarters for the herd's reception at Reindeer Station, on a high bank above East Channel, some 90 kilometres south of present-day Tuktoyaktuk and lived there for a couple of years before leaving the employ of the Government, his herd preparation work done.



Photo courtesy Aksel Porsild

Meantime, the herd made poor time moving through mountain passes and across the tundra. Blizzards, carnivore depredation and intense cold slowed progress, and some

stampeding also took place. Distraction of some parts of the herd with migrating groups of native caribou also happened and several times the herd had broken up, necessitating round-ups and searches for strays. But the animals did make progress and they arrived at the Yukon-NWT boundary in late 1933, about a year behind the anticipated schedule, but the herders were not able to get it across the Delta for almost two years, and it didn't arrive on the eastern side until the Spring of 1935. Three thousand animals started the drive and 2370 were delivered, but only 600 were of the original group, the rest born along the trail.

However the reindeer thrived in the Delta area and by 1936 the herd had exceeded the original size and growing to almost six thousand animals at one point. Management of the herd was done by the Federal and NWT governments with Native herders for many years and the animals did what they were designed to do: give local Inuit not only an industry but to feed them as well.

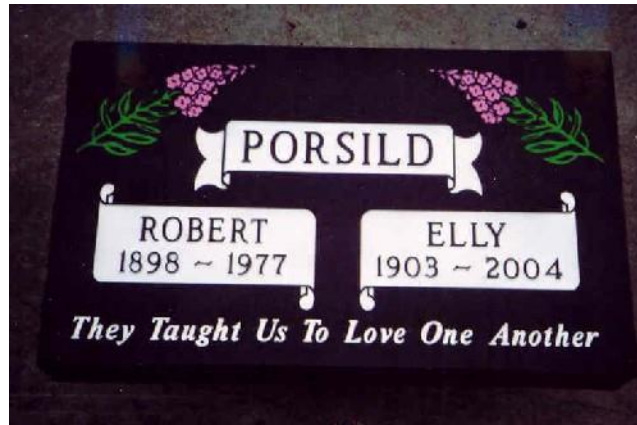
In the event, however, it proved very difficult to herd these animals in the traditional way. It was hard work, and for little pay, Inuit herders moved with the animals in all kinds of weather, all seasons, often away from families for long stretches at a time. The herds often intermingled with native barren-ground caribou herds, interbreeding in many cases. In the late sixties the herd, now several smaller herds, were slated for sale to Inuit herders, and in 1974 the remaining animals were sold to Bill Nasogaluak and Silas Kanagegana, who established Canadian Reindeer Ltd., eventually becoming a million dollar industry. The Nasogaluak family still owns and manages them in the Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula.

After the completion of the reindeer project, Erling Porsild returned to Ottawa, where he established a permanent home and became chief botanist for the National Museum. He led botanical and multi-discipline excursions throughout the Arctic and the Canadian Rockies, has represented the National Museum in international scientific congresses in such far flung locales as Norway and the Soviet Union, and was Canadian Consul in Greenland during World War II. He was awarded the Massey Medal in 1966, joining such other scientists and explorers as Henry Larsen, of St. Roch fame, Hugh Bostock, who mapped most of the Yukon with Geological Survey of Canada, and Captain T. C. Pullen, arctic navigator extraordinaire.

His brother Robert, eschewing the scientific life, moved first to Vancouver, where the mild climate disagreed with him, then to the Yukon, where he remained until his death in 1979. He and Elly tried their hand at trapping (in the Sixtymile River area) gold panning (Stewart River) and as dredge carpenter at Bear Creek. In between they raised four children, two of whom are still in the Whitehorse area, and established Johnson's Crosssing Lodge in 1947, which they operated for almost 18 years, then sold it to daughter Ellen and her husband Phil Davignon in 1965. After retirement, Bob and Elly travelled three summers in northern Yukon, collecting plants and grasses along the Dempster Highway for Erling and the National Museum. They lived quietly in Whitehorse until Bob's passing, Elly following her beloved "Bubi" in 2004.

Of course, Bob and Elly were my parents, Erling my uncle. I am quite proud of all three of them!

Further reading: Arctic Exodus, by Dick North, Macmillan of Canada, 1991
Also; CBC and NFB did a film in 1999, titled “The Herd”, which chronicles the trek; it was written by Peter Lynch and Nicholas McKinney



Bob & Elly Porsild's Headstone (In Whitehorse)
Photo courtesy Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca

ANNE DICKSON

Bruni Hoenisch ran into Anne Dickson in Mexico this winter and when Bruni and I had lunch recently I inquired about the possibility of contacting Anne. Bruni was able to find a phone number for her in Oliver and although I have tried a few times I wasn't able to make contact. So I left a message and my phone number and Anne called back. Anne worked at City Hall with us in the 1970's. When she left Whitehorse she and her husband moved to Williams Lake. He has since passed away and Anne is now living in Oliver.

I had no idea until we were talking that she had once worked at Koidern. She has also been up in recent years to work for her son David on a hunt on the White River. She says he took over his dad's business and runs White River Outfitters.

When I mentioned I had read the book written about the hunters attempting to go down the White River in the 1920's or 30's to catch the sternwheeler to Whitehorse, she said I have that book and met the daughter of the man who wrote it.

When I mentioned the Jacquot family she replied that her husbands' sister had married a Jacquot.

Small world, another little piece of the puzzle. – Sherron

CARIBOU – NOT REINDEER PHOTOS



Caribou Bulls winter range along the Dempster about 1964
Photo courtesy Ron Butler ron_but*shaw.ca



Caribou Migration July 1974
Photo courtesy Ron Butler ron_but*shaw.ca

THE SUBZERO SAMARITAN

By Earl L. Brown milepost*pris.bc.ca ('The Milepost Man' from Fort Nelson)
(Formerly submitted to CBC Radio in Prince George – A true Story.)

January. Cold. Too damn cold!

Mercury cowering at -45 C. Ice fog devouring anything more than sixty feet away.

It's said that if you ever see a raven and a husky cuddling together for warmth... its too cold, and that's how cold it was.

After an evening college course, Mother was driving a friend home the five miles out of town, across the Muskwa River to the residential area on the other side.

It's common for many, vehicleless travelers to thumb a ride between town and their home on the other side of the river.

This wretched night, at the edge of town and to the side of the road stood a motionless soul, dressed in red, too cold to even extend a hand with pleading upturned thumb to hail a ride. And then Vanished into the enveloping ever-present fog.

Compassionate, but by no means a habitual hitchhiker picker upper, Mom turned to her companion, and without words, both knew that the only civil thing to do was to offer a ride on this brutal evening.

By now, they were at the crest of the hill and had no chance to turn around. So across the river they went, drove up the other side, and stopped at the first side road at the top of the hill. Good conscience demanded a return to the near frozen stranger and safe transport to their own home. Good conscience could not be disobeyed.

Back down the hill, across the river and up the other side they went.... Eyes straining to find their quest in these miserable conditions.

“There !” In fact, it seemed no stirring had taken place from where it had been seen some minutes ago.

A rolled down window, a blast of arctic air, and an unanswered call to the stranger.

And then – realization, relief and laughter.

Mother's compassion had been extended towards a snow clad fire hydrant.

I'm proud to have a mom like that.

Earl L. Brown
Box 904, Fort Nelson, BC V0C 1R0 (250) 774-3488

And then the rest of the story.

February 9, 2005
(from another message to folks at CBC in Prince George.)

Warm today, above freezing... sun shining... roof snow drooling off the building, a real fine day.

Good guy Wayne Sawchuk – up from Chetwynd 360 miles south, author and photographer of coffee table book – “Muskwa-Ketchika” called to advise he was in town, and could we get together around 5 pm.

Should work just fine.... Busy until then anyhow.

Mom and Wayne had both served on some committee for the Muskwa – Ketchika management area a few years back... they have mutual respect for each other.

Mom’s Massage Therapy Clinic just so happens to be in the same building, same floor as where my Milepost/Autumn Images/number wrestling office is located.

Five o’clock arrives. Wayne shows up, carrying some very nice flowers and a card for my Mom, and they just happen to meet up outside my office.

Mom agrees, the flowers are very nice... but obviously puzzled what the heck they’re for, and if indeed they should be hers?

“You bet” says Wayne – “You’ll have to read the card.”

So she does... and then cracks up... a bit hug exchanged and more laughs.

Okay? I’m in the dark... what the heck is going on?

The card is handed to me.... Yup, I read it and crack right up too.

“To Mavis – the only lady I know of, that would extend compassion to rescue a fire hydrant in distress” it reads.

Seems Wayne was listening to CBC radio in Chetwynd.

I’m proud to have a Mom and good friends like that.

Earl.

GEORGE CARMACK

By Al Oster alosteryukon@jetstream.net

(Excerpt from Al Oster Song folio. Copyright © 1992 by Northland Music Co)

George Carmack was born Sept. 24, 1860 in Contra Costa County, California, U.S.A. and was raised on a ranch by his aunt and uncle under very strict and disciplined rules. In 1881, on the day he attained age 21; he enlisted in the USA Marine Corps and in February, 1882 was assigned to duty in Sitka, Alaska. One year later in San Francisco he deserted ship and never returned. In March, 1885 he returned north to prospect for gold. He landed in Skagway where he met Skookum Jim and his half brother Tagish Charley. The trio became good friends and agreed to a partnership in prospecting for gold.

In 1887 Carmack met Skookum Jim's sister Kate and a common law marriage began. In March, 1889 Carmack and Kate arrived in Forty Mile near Dawson and started prospecting down the Yukon and Porcupine Rivers as far north as Rampart House and Fort Yukon in Alaska. They found some gold and in 1892 returned upriver to a spot above Five Finger Rapids on the Yukon River and set up a trading post at the location known today as Carmacks. He also built the Anglican Church at Fort Selkirk in 1892, and discovered the coal deposit near Carmacks. On January 11, 1893 a daughter they named Graphie Grace was born, and for the next three years Carmack and his wife operated the trading post and mined coal. In 1896 they moved back to Forty Mile where they were joined by Skookum Jim, Tagish Charley, and Charley's 17 year old brother whom Carmack re-named Patsy Henderson.

In June, 1896 Carmack, and his two Indian companions, Skookum Jim and Tagish Charlie began prospecting on the Klondyke River and met Bob Henderson working on Gold Bottom Creek. Henderson had an intense dislike for Indians and did not want Skookum Jim or Tagish Charley on Gold Bottom. He advised that traces of gold had been found on Rabbit Creek just over the next hill and they should try that location. On August 17, 1896 the three prospectors discovered a significant deposit of gold on Rabbit Creek. Carmack renamed the small creek Bonanza and staked the Discovery claim including the #1 claim below Discovery. Skookum Jim staked the # 1 claim above Discovery, and Tagish Charley staked #2 claim below Discovery. Yukon mining regulations contain a provision allowing the first registry of a placer claim as a Discovery can also register a second adjoining claim above or below Discovery.

Carmack invested his gold earnings from the Klondike in Seattle real estate, hotels and apartment houses. In 1900 he divorced Kate and married Marguerite Softig. Graphie married Marguerite's younger brother in 1910.

Skookum Jim organized the Skookum Jim Indian Trust Fund with his earnings, the interest proceeds of which was to be used to furnish medical supplies and other comforts to needy Indians. The Bishop of the Anglican Church and the Commissioner of the Yukon were appointed Trustees and signing authorities. In 1965 the Skookum Jim Indian Friendship Centre was built in Whitehorse from the Trust Fund and is a very active institution to this day.

Tagish Charley sold his mining interests on Bonanza in 1901 and returned to Carcross where he operated a hotel. He became heavily addicted to alcohol.

Skookum Jim continued to prospect for gold in the north until his death on July 11, 1916 at age 60. Tagish Charley (AKA Dawson Charlie) drowned on December 26, 1908 at age 42 while crossing the Carcross railroad bridge. He was highly intoxicated when he reeled off the bridge into the icy waters of Lake Bennett and was washed under the ice before he could be rescued.

Bob Henderson was finally recognized as co-discoverer of the Klondike by the Canadian government and awarded a small pension. He continued to prospect for gold in the north until his death from cancer in 1933.

Carmack died at the Roycroft Hospital in Vancouver on June 5, 1922 at age 61. His widow Marguerite inherited a wealthy estate of real estate holdings in Seattle and Vancouver. Marguerite died in California in 1949. Carmack's first wife Kate died in Carcross March 29, 1920 from influenza at age 62.

Patsy Henderson passed away on February 11, 1966 in Carcross from a stroke at age 87.

PLACER MINING

By Al Oster alosteryukon@jetstream.net

Placers are deposits of loose ore minerals formed by natural stream action. Normally a placer deposit is a result of weathering, landslides, earthquakes, or other element of nature that promotes particle erosion of dust, flakes, or nuggets from a solid ore body; these particles are carried into creek bed cavities by rushing water action caused by heavy rains, melting snow, or receding glacier movements. Placer mining is the extraction of these ore deposits from the gravel by washing operation methods such as gold pans, rockers, sluices, hydraulic water pressures, and dredges. ★

THIS `N DATA

By Al Oster alosteryukon@jetstream.net

James Ogilvie, official surveyor for the Canadian Government calculated the mileage to Dawson City and the Klondike over the Chilkoot Pass from Dyea via Tagish Lake and Yukon River as:

Chilkoot Pass Summit =	15 miles
Bennett townsite =	28 miles
Carcross =	56 miles
Whitehorse =	126 miles
Five Finger Rapids =	345 miles

SKI BOWL – WHITEHORSE

It is surprising how history is lost over the years, for Ralph Lortie mentioned about the Ski Bowl across the river. The American Army never made use of it at all, but the locals used it over the years for downhill skiing. It was like Ice Lake where the locals used to skate before there was any real artificial ice down town. It was before a rink was created at 4th Avenue and Main and before the Federal Building. Arnie Anderson, a carpenter from Mayo came to Whitehorse when Mayo Wernecke camps went down and

Whitehorse was booming. In Mayo, Arnie was an excellent skier along with John Backe who later had a lodge at Haines Junction. When John and Sally were married in Mayo, they were another couple that we chivalried when they came out of the church.

In 1945 the first Whitehorse Carnival was held, and Arnie being a booster with others built the timber ski jumps. He held the title on the jumping events as he was a professional on skis. They used the log structure as a take-off hill, over the existing road and land on the down slope. I used to ski the bowl, and during the Carnival was jumping myself, but broke my maple skis by improper landing. As I was too busy with life, I sold my harness and the rest of the equipment and never got around to getting a replacement.

In the following years the Whitehorse Carnival gradually seemed to fade out, but was renewed under the Sourdough Rendezvous banner that is still in existence today. It is nice to have been a teenager in those days and see all the progress that has taken place.

Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca

MAYO AGAIN

I have been into Harvey's photos again that capture a lot more recent history. You will find this in the Mayo Centenary 2003 photos part 3 at:
<http://community.webshots.com/user/hburian> .

This particular photo (posted below) is of Mount Haldane, and as Harvey said, better known by us as "Lookout Mountain." Wareham Lake (in the foreground of the photo) was created when the new hydro dam above Mayo was built, but during my growing years that area was small spruce trees as it is a lower swampy area. The area was not cleared and burned as it likely should have been before flooding, but that is again part of history. In the early years after the land was flooded all those small trees broke away and floated down to the dam where they had to be hauled out. Ed Kimbel and his crew are ones that I know of, that did a lot of work in the 1950s and beyond on the project.

Your first glimpse of Wareham Lake would be at the top of Glacier Hill about 6 miles from Mayo. To the right not seen is a small stream called Bottle Creek, and who knows, maybe that is where the old-timers cached their bottles? The far edge of the lake would be about mile 8 from Mayo, and the Mayo River itself follows upstream on the left side of the valley to Minto Bridge. Over the centuries the Mayo River would have worked back and forth across this valley, and that is what accounts for the low areas. During the latter 30s, the Whitney family for sure, and possibly Fishers' skated the Mayo River on the overflow from Mayo up through the canyon and to Minto Bridge through what is now Wareham Lake.

The name Wareham Lake came from Rev. Wareham who was minister of the Church of England in Mayo. He and his friends used to fish lake trout in Mayo Lake at the headwaters of the river. During what was a fateful trip, who knows what really

happened? But the boat swamped and sank, and he was wearing hip waders that took him to the bottom. His drowning was a great loss to Mayo as he was a spark plug to the community. At one time there was a Wareham's Hall that he was an instigator in getting built when the old Pioneer Hall became unsafe due to age. So it seems fitting that this lake is named after him. You can imagine the stress this created for his family to have lost a husband and father, and to have to pick up life from there.

The road to Haggart Creek where Ed Barker used to placer mine was to the left of Mount Haldane. As a youngster I biked all those roads with my close friends, David and Alex Mervyn, including to Haggart. No traffic to bother and live pretty well off the country with fish and the odd grouse. We only carried a blanket, fishing line and flies and basic supplies on our bikes. There were plenty of new fishing rods in the bush! We carried a 22 calibre rifle for grouse and did not waste cartridges. The road crosses the McQuesten River which originates in the valley above Elsa and flows behind Mount Haldane, and it is quite some ways to Haggart Creek. We had all the mileages figured out from Mayo, Mile 1 the big bend and swamp beyond the Mervyn home, two mile the air strip, 3 mile Devil's Elbow, 4 mile Huffman's farm, 5 mile, Five Mile Lakes, 6 mile top of Glacier Hill, 7 mile Bottle Creek, 8 mile where YTG stored their Holt 5 ton cat, 9 mile in the boonies and 10 mile Minto Bridge. The old road to Keno branched off at mile 12, and we covered all those old roads. Just our bikes and no gas pedal to push, but it was a good experience of growing up with a sense of responsibility. These days those roads are straighter than they used to be.

Henry Breaden hjbreaden@shaw.ca



Wareham Lake with Mount Haldane in the background.

Commonly called Lookout Mountain.

Photo courtesy Harvey Burian hburian@telus.net

This lake is on the way from Mayo to Elsa, and about 20 miles from the base of the mountain. The Mayo hydro dam and hydro plant supplied UKHM at Elsa with power is situated about 4 miles from Mayo.

A MESSAGE FROM DAWSON – MYRNA BUTTERWORTH

Hello Sherron and all MocTellers, its Spring in Dawson, The Ice has gone in both Rivers The Klondike on Wednesday 27th of April and the Yukon on Friday the 29th a bit early but its gone. The ferry for the Yukon River is going in, in the next few days. The mosquitoes are out in full force and the swallows are swooping around doing their best to catch them all our spring birds are back. The birches and cottonwood are just about in full leaf. Everyone is eager to get in the garden and start planting but we know that we could still get a few good frosts. We haven't had any precipitation for a long time and the snow went very fast, here's hoping that we don't have another dry summer. I heard on the radio that the long range weather is for above normal temperatures AND above normal rainfall. Maybe we will become a rainforest.

Here's hoping everyone has a great summer, and keep up the good work, I am enjoying the items about Vic Foley I remember him when I was little girl and he used to visit my Mom and Dad in Dawson.

Thankyou for great reading. Myrna (HADLEY) Butterworth myrnab*northwestel.net

JIMMY McGARRY

Prepared by Ralph Lortie rlortie001*sympatico.ca

Does anyone remember Jimmy McGarry ?

In trying to find out about the singing career of Jimmy McGarry before he came to Whitehorse in 1955-56, I subscribed to the chat line on the Ruby Murray website (<http://www.rubymurray.org>), and posted a request for information about Jimmy. What follows is a conversation I had with Bernie Burgess, Ruby's former husband. Ruby Murray was a huge star in the 1950's, singing Irish traditional and pop music. In 1955, she had 5 songs in the UK top-20 at the same time. Ruby died in December, 1996.

My first chat-line message

"Hello. When I was a boy growing up here in Canada, I knew an Irish singer whose name was Jimmy McGarry. Jimmy had a marvelous voice. He had toured with Ruby Murray in the early '50s, and was billed as "Ireland's Al Jolson".

Jimmy showed me programs or posters for the shows.

He gave up show business to play professional football (soccer) in the United States, and then came to Canada, where he entertained on a casual basis in my hometown, Whitehorse, Yukon.

Jimmy was killed in an auto accident in 1957, and is buried in Whitehorse.

I was hoping to find some record of him on the web, but have not. Can you provide any information on Jimmy's singing career in Ireland?"

Bernie's posted reply

In reply to the rbl.ca enquiry

"Welcome to the Official Ruby Murray website.

Ruby frequently spoke to me about the artistes that she toured with in Ireland and how very much she enjoyed those days. I can remember the name of Jimmy McGarry being mentioned in her conversations but the one person who can give you much more information would be Ruby's life long friend - Marie Murphy (nee Cunningham). Marie is still living in Lisburn Co. Antrim so I will call her and get some more details and bring them to the website.

Adios Amigo. Bernie (Burgess)"

My response to Bernie

Hello, Bernie. I'm very surprised to get such a quick and exciting response.

Since this topic might be only of marginal interest to Ruby Murray enthusiasts, perhaps we should continue to explore this subject privately.

If you care to do so, please email me directly. If you're interested, I could tell you more about Jimmy's life in the Yukon, and describe the circumstances of his death and burial.

Regards. Ralph Lortie

Our private email conversation (edited)

Hello Ralph,

I don't think the fans on the website would really want to read these few details in connection with Jimmy McGarry so, as you suggest, we'll exchange details privately.

I telephoned Marie this evening and had a quick chat to her regarding Jimmy McGarry. I already knew that Ruby had done shows with Jimmy, and Marie couldn't add much to what I knew.

In her young days Ruby had heart flutters for a few of the artistes she worked with, but she told me that she had quite a crush on Jimmy. I remember, too, that she told me she was devastated when she got the news of his untimely death in an accident which happened before Ruby and I met in Blackpool in May 1957.

I assume that Jimmy must have continued his career in Canada. Was he successful? I would be interested to hear about his time in Canada and about the accident etc.

My very best wishes.

Adios Amigo. Bernie

Hi, Bernie.

One day when I was in 7th grade (1955-56), my teacher, May Nelson, ushered Jimmy into our classroom. She had seen Jimmy singing at a local cocktail lounge the night before and, like many other people in Whitehorse, was thrilled to have such a talented singer come to our northern town of 3000 citizens. Miss Nelson introduced Jimmy, and then he sang a song or two for us. We were all awe-struck. Even then I was an Al Jolson fan (one of the films about him having been my first movie), and Jimmy's voice was as good as or better than Jolson's.

I went home from school and was about to tell my mother about Jimmy, but she was already bubbling about having seen him the night before. Since Jimmy had just arrived in town, and had not yet arranged accommodation, Mom & Dad invited him to stay in our spare bedroom. And thus began our great friendship. Jimmy stayed at our house for a few months before moving into a room at the Whitehorse Inn.

During the summer of '56, Jimmy worked as a cook at a mining camp [Quill Creek] north of Whitehorse. Evidently, he was very good at that too. The following winter he was back in town, waiting or tending bar at a local lounge. He occasionally sang with one or two of the bands, but didn't want to commit to a rigorous schedule. He just liked the night life, and the young ladies.

Early in 1957, Jimmy took a trip to his home in Dublin [sic! it was Belfast] Ireland. He was gone for a few months, then returned to Whitehorse. On the final point, Bernie, I have to differ from the date you used to define the timing of Jimmy's death. The following is an excerpt from an article I wrote for the Moccasin Telegraph, a web newsletter for Yukoners, an article called "My Boyhood Brushes with Death":

In July or August of 1957, I had my closest brush with death. One Sunday, a friend of my parents, the Irish singer & bartender (or waiter) Jimmy McGarry, came to the house to see my mom. Although Jimmy was 27, he had never learned to drive. He had bought a car, and my mom was giving him lessons. This weekend, however, Mom was out of town, and Dad was at work at Yukon Motors (Dad often worked Sundays if a tourist or a trucker needed tires). Jimmy was anxious to go for a drive, even without an instructor, despite the illegality of it. So he asked me to go with him, and off we went, out to the Mayo Rd., then northward. Jimmy seemed to be doing well, as far as I knew. But he had been up late the night before, and was sleepy. Just as Fox Lake came into sight, Jimmy dozed off. We were heading off the big curve at the south end of the lake when Jimmy snapped to attention. He jerked the wheel to the right, but too far. Then he over-corrected again by jerking to the left. As we left the road, Jimmy said "hold on" to me. The car went off the high shoulder, and rolled 5 to 8 times (so the RCMP officer determined when I visited the site with him a day or two later). When the car stopped, on its wheels and facing the road, I was sitting upright in my seat, my baseball cap still on. The roof of the car had been crushed down within 18 inches of the seats, except for the area over my head, which was without a dent. I got out, and felt over my body for painful areas. Only one of my knees was bruised from slamming into the dashboard (no seatbelts, of course). I found Jimmy about 30 feet away. He was conscious, although bleeding from a bad cut on his forehead. He told me not to worry about his head – his main area of pain was his pelvic area. About 15 minutes later, a northbound car stopped. We put Jimmy on the back seat, and I kneeled on the floor to hold him steady. The man & his wife drove us back to

the Whitehorse hospital. I was not admitted. Jimmy fell into a coma & died of internal injuries a week or so later. He was buried in the old Pioneer Cemetery, which is now partly covered by a mud slide from the cliffs above.

The funeral was attended by a hundred or more. Jimmy's sister and her two children came from Montreal, Quebec [and stayed at our house, so I was sleeping in Sheardown's basement]. It was a very bad time for all of us.

I have many memories of Jimmy. I sometimes stayed in his lodgings until late in the evening, listening to his great collection of records. I especially remember his Al Jolson and Ruby Murray LPs. He showed me memorabilia from his days of touring with Ruby Murray, which included programs and coloured posters. I'm sure that he had been in love with Ruby, and always thought that her turning him away was his reason for escaping to America [but it may have been a result of her huge success, but not his own].

As I mentioned before, Jimmy was also a terrific football [soccer] player. He had played professionally in the U.S. (in Seattle, as I recall), before heading to the Yukon.

I regret not hearing more of Jimmy's marvelous voice. Since I was only 14 at the time of his death, I didn't get the chance to hear him in the bars. I used to have a photo of him singing with a local band, but I lost it some years ago.

Well, Bernie, that's all I can think of for now. No doubt, more thoughts will come to me. If you like, I can find the URL of the city records showing Jimmy's burial date & site.

Best regards. Ralph

P.S. Here is Jimmy's burial record:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~canyk/lglq.html>

This record shows that Jimmy was 28 when he died. I don't recall his birthday.

I'll attach some photos. 1) an aerial view of Whitehorse, 2) the Whitehorse Inn (Jimmy's room was on the 2nd or 3rd floor, towards the back).

Best regards. Ralph

Hello Ralph,

I found your email quite fascinating. Congratulations on your academic achievements. As for me, I gave up on education simply because I wanted to follow my father into the entertainment profession. My Dad was on the technical side of show business, enabling me to learn absolutely everything about backstage, which proved to be invaluable throughout my 50 year career.

The car accident must have been a frightening ordeal for a 14-yr. old boy. I assume he was not covered by insurance, bearing in mind that he was not a qualified driver therefore driving illegally. You certainly had a miraculous escape by only sustaining a bruised knee in that horrific crash.

This year being the 50th anniversary of Ruby's world record of having 5 hit- records in the Top Twenty at the same time, the new-look website has been a hive of activity. I have had numerous contacts with friends and relatives from the past via the site. With the invaluable help of a couple of friends/fans on the site, I persuaded EMI to release a **GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY** album, which in turn prompted another record company, President Records, to release some tracks that Ruby recorded for them. In total that

represents about 114 tracks of Ruby's. Our son, (Ruby's and mine) Tim, is currently doing a 'Tribute' show to his mother in cabaret and, on the 31st, I'm flying home to England to help him with the presentation of a stage version of the show.

You have most probably read all of this information on the website so I am repeating myself, but that is due to the fact that I am extremely proud of both him and Ruby. The local council in her home town, Belfast in Northern Ireland, are in the process of erecting a memorial plaque in City Centre in Belfast in recognition of her magnificent achievement in the world of music and entertainment.
I would like to hear more from you.

For now, Adios Amigo. Bernie.

Bernie has explained his use of “Adios” to me. He has ‘retired’ to the Mediterranean coast of Spain.

I am hoping that this article will prompt some recollections of Jimmy McGarry’s life in Whitehorse in the 1955-57 period. I think that those folks with some memories of Jimmy would have to be in the 70-80 age group.

It’s interesting that Ruby Murray’s last hit song (1959) was “Goodbye Jimmy, Goodbye”, but Bernie has assured me it wasn’t about my friend.

AGNES McDONALD

Hello Sherron

Back again. Had a wonderful time looking after a friend who had surgery. Helped skid logs for ten days, using a 4 x 4. It was great to be outside.

Saw Agnes MacDonald former telephone operator in hospital in Rimbey. She was most interested in your paper though she has no computer.

Could you mention anyone who knows Agnes from up north can drop her a card.

Agnes MacDonald
Box 1422
Rimbey Alta
T0C 2J0

I’m sure she will appreciate it. She had a hip surgery but other than that is same old Agnes.

Donna McLean dj_mclean*shaw.ca

BIG DIPPER ROUTE

Bill and I (Sherron) have both just finished reading Dan Bereza's recent release 'The Big Dipper Route'. Bill suggested I drop a note to you, letting you know that for any lay person this is very interesting reading. We had no idea that these pilots were left to fly by the stars when gyroscopes failed and to fly hundreds of miles then depend on a beacon tone which did not have a very large transmission range, meanwhile not having extra fuel to be wrong. There is much to learn from these men and their skill, our sincere gratitude goes out to the whole group of them for keeping it shiny side up in these serious conditions when visibility became impossible. How they kept what they had been taught ahead of fear that sometimes came close to crippling them. They risked their lives based on good judgement and succeeded, even when the chances were 50 – 50 that one piece of equipment was correct and the other was faulty. Making 90 degree turns to correct. Unbelievable and well worth owning a copy of this book.

You will be able to arrange for a copy from Dan himself at danbereza@shaw.ca
Thank you Dan for recording your 'adventures' and giving us an insight into your life in the air and the people you trusted your life with, Lyle Coleman, Joe Redmond and the rest. Each a MocTel reader today. – Sherron

GENE BROWN – 'Breakin Wild Horses'

We received our copy of Yukoner - Gene Brown's new music CD – 'Breakin Wild Horses'. We were impressed at the variety of songs and the variety of musicians used on this CD. It is good listening for anyone who has a love for Country music or a love for Yukon and its people. Gene first met Hank Karr in 1964 in Alaska and joined his band a few years later. He has the experience of working with some of the big names in the industry and the talent to have written all the songs himself.

You will be able to arrange for a copy of the CD from Gene Brown at brown@northwestel.net

PUNCTUATION IS POWERFUL!

Here is a little something to get minds going, add this to the next MocTel.
Fred Aylwin fbaylwin@shaw.ca

An English professor wrote the words on the chalkboard and asked his students to punctuate it correctly.

A WOMAN WITHOUT HER MAN IS NOTHING.

All of the **males** in the class wrote: "**A woman, without her man, is nothing.**"

All the **females** in the class wrote: "**A woman: without her, man is nothing.**"

PUNCTUATION IS POWERFUL!

OBITUARY

Gerald Mogenson

Hi Sherron, Hope all is well with you. Have enjoyed the Mocket very much. Just a quick note to let the people know that my Dad Gerry Mogenson, passed away on Sunday night May 9 at 10 after 12. He was 83 and had just arrived back in the Yukon after spending the winter in Mexico. He passed away at the Whitehorse General Hospital while in the presence of his close friends Ron and Helen Holoway. I know that there are several people on the Mocket list that knew him as he had been in the Yukon since the early sixties. He leaves behind 2 daughters, Marion (Mogy), and Phyllis, 2 sons Jody and myself and several grandchildren and great grandchildren. He was well respected and will be missed by many.

Thanks

Tyrone Mogenson tydonn@hotmail.com

MOGENSEN -Gerald Lenard. Passed away peacefully in Whitehorse on May 9, 2005 at age 83. Survived by his loving family: wife, Luz; sons Tyrone (Donna), Jody (Sherri), Edgar; daughters Marion, Phyllis (Wayne); eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and brother Bruce (Rheta). Jerry was born and raised in the Saskatoon / Vanscoy area of Saskatchewan. He then spent several years in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, before settling in the Yukon in 1961. He found success in many different ventures, with Gold Mining being his favorite. For the past 15 years he enjoyed spending his winters in Mexico and summers in the Yukon. At Jerry's request no formal services will be held. Published in the Saskatoon StarPhoenix on 5/12/2005.

Edward Steve Buksa M.D. March 26, 1932 - May 4, 2005 Dr. Edward Buksa died peacefully on the sunny morning of May 4, 2005 at the age of 73 years, with his loving wife Joyce at his side. His six children and their families had gathered in Prince George to comfort him and their mother in his final days on earth, Richard (Jackie); Randy (Carmelina and children Anthony, Olivia, Nicholas); Roman; Jewel (Jim Nelson and children Madison, Lindsay); Roger; and Ileana (Matthew Graham and children Caleb, Jenna). He is also survived by his siblings Donald (Rema), Irene Lacusta, Josephine Puderbach (Willie), Doris, Jeannie Carson (Doug), and Roy. He is predeceased by his mother Annie (2004), father John (1956), and sister Zelma (1938). Our father was born in Gratz, Alberta and was raised on a farm in Willow Range, in southeast Alberta. As a young boy, he ran a trap line for squirrels and hunted gophers for the bounty. Ukrainian was his first language; English he mastered while at boarding school. After finishing high school he moved to Edmonton, with his family, to study medicine at the University of

Alberta. He graduated in 1958, and the following year married Joyce Edey, the young nurse from Grande Prairie he met at the Royal Alexandra Hospital when he was a resident and she a nursing student. **During the first five years of their marriage, Eddy continued with his studies for another year doing a rotation in surgery and medicine. He practiced in McLennan, Alberta and then in Dawson City, Yukon where he made lifelong friends and earned the reputation as Fast Eddy - a rural physician who treated near everything, and was innovative, decisive and quick in doing so.** He returned to U of A to do a rotation in obstetrics and gynecology before settling in BC. During this time he and Joyce had their first two children. Eddy made his home with Joyce in Prince George in 1964, taking over a family medicine practice which over time grew to be one of the largest in the city, serving up to four generations of many families. He was passionate about medicine and caring for people. He tended those who required home visits; often purchased their medicines; came to them in the nights to tend to them and drive them to the hospital when needed; and sent packages of medicines to the old country for their loved ones. A memorial service honoring his life, followed by a reception, will be held on Saturday, May 21 at 3 pm, at First Baptist Church (483 Gillette St). In lieu of flowers, send donations to one of dad's favorite charities: Prince George Youth for Christ (PO Box 1806, Stn A, Prince George, V2L 4V7), a group that facilitates needs for junior and high school aged youth; or Cedars Christian School, Music Program Development Fund (701 North Nechako Rd, Prince George, V2K 1A2). ASSMAN'S FUNERAL CHAPEL - Prince George, B.C.
Published in the Vancouver Sun on 5/7/2005.

REMOVED FROM LIST

Recipient address: margaretvincent@rogers.com

Reason: SMTP transmission failure has occurred

VINCENT, Margaret margaretvincent*rogers.com (In Whitehorse 1979-96)

Recipient address: paulieann@wlake.com

Reason: Remote SMTP server has rejected address

RAVENHILL, Ann paulieann*wlake.com (Born in Dawson, lived in Whitehorse) (250) 392 7427 Williams Lake, BC

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

People don't plan to fail - they just fail to plan.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Submitted by Vivian Stuart lornellis*shaw.ca

Pineapple Angel Food Cake

This is so simple – your family will think you have spent hours baking

1 pkg Angel Food Cake Sponge Mix
Substitute 1 can 540 ml Crushed Pineapple for liquid
(do not drain pineapple-the whole can goes in)

Beat and bake as directed – add 10 minutes to baking time

Serve plain, with ice cream or dream whip

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 Breden hjbreden@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

CONTACT INFORMATION

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