

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – 165th Edition – June 25, 2006

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



Sunset at Kathleen Lake, June 17/06, about 11:30pm
Photo courtesy Bev Buckway balc@yknet.ca (In Whitehorse)

THE END OF INNOCENCE

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

We watched in stunned silence,
On that morning in September.
A day of such destruction,
That the world will long remember.
We saw the vivid pictures,
And we heard the panicked screams,
As that thunderous explosion
Marked the end of many dreams.

We watched the wild inferno,
As the bricks and rubble fell,
And prayed as rescue workers
Walked into that flaming hell.

Then the final tragic moment
A world of smoke and sound.
When those two gigantic towers
Came cascading to the ground.

We watched as smoke and ashes
Formed into an inky shroud,
And we saw the fear and horror
On the faces in the crowd.
Then as we watched policemen strive
To re-establish order.
Our thoughts were with our many friends
Who live across the border.

We've always felt apart from strife,
Protected and secure,
But that feeling of security
Is dashed forever more.
The age of peace and innocence,
That marked this land of ours,
Was ended in that moment
When the airplanes hit the towers.

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The marching picture is Grade 4, 1953-54, "Anchors Aweigh".
Photo courtesy Maribeth (Tubman) Mainer mainerml@shaw.ca (In Burnaby)

WATSON LAKE WINTERS

By Aksel Porsild yukoner1@shaw.ca (In Courtenay)

It was a cold and snowy period when I lived at Watson Lake. The snow piled up around married quarters so that by March we had to use bulldozers to clear the areas around the houses. Cold, too; the night my son was born, December 2, 1961, it was almost 50 below (F) and the only vehicle running was the RCMP's cruiser which never got shut off. Some statistics: average snowfall: 220 Cm (about 85"), mean January temperature in 1962: -36 (F). It was also rainy with almost ten inches of rain for the normal summer, but summer's another story.

I worked for the Canadian Army (DND) on Alaska Highway maintenance. The camps were one hundred miles apart in the Central Area (Lower Liard to Whitehorse, so there were four maintenance Camps in this area: Coal River, Watson Lake, Swift River, and Brooks Brook, later moved to Teslin. In addition, the Central Area Headquarters was at Watson Lake where Harry George, CA superintendent held sway.

During the summers, I worked as a Central Area Pool equipment operator, running various roving crews along the length of the Area, but in winter I drove snowploughs for the Watson Lake section, Contact Creek (Mile 588) to Transport Café, mile 687. It was a full time job plowing snow and we used underbody blades on FWD trucks for the centre part of the road, while the one-way front mounted plough on the following FWD picked up the "windrow" from the underblade and threw it off to the side, often making large snow banks along the way when the plow was unable to get a lot of speed up to chuck it up and over. During December and January we ploughed snow almost every day.

The area around Watson was virtually wind-less during winter and the snow seldom drifted. Sometimes the snow would build up on the roadside telephone wires making them four inches tall and fat, increasing pressure on poles and insulators. It would affect transmission quality as well, and the CN linemen would often have to go out on snowshoes and hit the poles with sledgehammers to knock the snow off the wires in the worst places, a cold and unpleasant chore.

Winter activity in Watson Lake was as in other semi-isolated communities. We had almost no radio at that time although sometimes on clear winter nights we could pick up some west coast stations in the Vancouver area, even Seattle and Portland. Curling was the main activity and almost everyone curled. Round robin tournaments; as well as the winter-long campaigns, often weekend bonspiels. The highway 'spiels were held every weekend from about January 15 to the end of March. Watson Lake had four or five sheets of ice so could mount a more or less major event, with about 30 rinks participating and it was usually a fun time. The other main one was at Cassiar, and this was the highlight bonspiel of the winter, most years. The Cassiar Asbestos Company paid for most of the accommodation, meals and such and also provided fabulous prizes for the

successful rinks; they were a wonderful host for curling bonspiels, and in summer often hosted softball and badminton tournaments.

Other bonspiels were held up and down the highway, also in Whitehorse and Fairbanks, although most of us could not attend these last ones because of the time involved; we worked six days a week on highway maintenance. The smaller maintenance camps like Coal River, Swift River and Brooks Brook held sixteen rink bonspiels over a weekend, with only one sheet of ice. The games started Friday evening, usually with host camp rinks starting the tourney, since some teams could not leave their home camps until after quitting time. Often Saturday would have to be taken off, usually without pay, but this was the price you paid for entertainment in those days, those places.

Curling at a one-sheet bonspiel went on round the clock, starting about six Friday evening, with a two hour break for the banquet on Saturday evening. The last draws were finished about midnight, and only the final game or two would be played Sunday morning, followed by the prize presentation and “closing ceremony” with trophy and prize presentation. Prizes were usually donated by local firms like trucking companies, Highway lodges and so on, and were merchandise items like car robes, small appliances and lamps, and often curling related items like tams, brooms and sweaters. Each club had a lapel pin and the exchange of these between curlers took place throughout the weekend. The host curling club would provide the trophies and miniatures, as well as some of the Second or Third Event merchandise prizes. A few clubs also had a “bonspieling” prize for the team that had the most fun (read “got drunkest”). This was a crudely built home made trophy, usual consisting of an old bucket with embellishments, and when presented, the bucket was filled with beer in bottles. There were many vying for these prizes, the first of which originated in Teslin, called the Dewhirst Trophy, after Johnny Dewhirst, a local ardent curler (and party type). Winners were required to add a device or accoutrement to the trophy before returning it the next year.

Sunday afternoon was spent driving home, usually with hangovers, tired but happy if one got a prize but happy anyway to have participated. Places like Swift River and Coal River had limited commercial accommodation, and often the camp families would put up visiting curlers in their homes for the weekend. I can remember vividly at Swift that at least three males were billeted at our place. We had three small children but my wife was away in Whitehorse delivering the fourth. Around one AM on the Sunday morning after the banquet and dance, I arrived home to find two of the men snoring on our double bed while the other was trying to pull on a sleeping bag like a pair of pants, and staggering around the living room (difficult to pull it onto two legs at the same time!). The two oldest kids, eyes like saucers, were standing in the doorway, silently watching the performance, and I just burst out laughing, later showing the guy how to enter a sleeping bag properly!

The other thing I remember about highway bonspiels was the cold; normally every weekend from January 15 to the end of March had a spiel somewhere or other, and of course January and February in those days were sub-zero cold, cold! Care had to be taken driving in minus 30 to 40 degree temperatures and if you had substandard heating systems in your car, as Norm Paulson did one year, you froze not only the mix but the booze as well in the back of a Volkswagen. If it was really cold, you phoned ahead to let

the host club or camp know when you would arrive; if you became overdue by very much, someone set off to meet you. This was standard procedure at the isolated camps even on non-bonspiel times when it was very cold.

.to be continued

Source: True West, July-August, 1964

Retyped by Donna Clayson (nee Storing) ytdogteam@telus.net (In Ardrossan AB)

There's nothing like a bunch of seasick steers and a "pilot" who can't find his own hat to make a man wish he'd never started a -

YUKON CATTLE DRIVE

By Ernest J. Shaw as told to C.V. Tench

Not all fortunes made in the Yukon during the Klondike rush were made by digging or washing raw gold. For those not afraid to take chances there were scores of ways of making money fast, though the odds were heavy against a man's getting through with a whole skin. I made a worthwhile stake myself by taking fifty head of beef steers overland from Bennett to White Horse, and thence by scow down the Yukon to Dawson. In those days two and three-year-old beef steers could be purchased in southern Alberta, western Canada, for an average price of \$22.

In 1902, at age twenty-four, I inherited \$3,000. The money released me from a job I detested, for in those days hours were long and wages extremely small. Working for the other man was a miserable business.

The White Pass Railroad had been completed as far as Bennett, and I had 700 miles by steamer and a half-day's journey by train. With a helper, I drove the steers over the mountains to White Horse in two days. The weather was good but the traveling was not, for the young steers, frisky after long days of confinement, would keep scattering.

Monday morning found us down at the river's edge bargaining for a scow on which we loaded the animals. I hired a pilot who swore he knew every inch of the Yukon River – which later was to prove a lie – and another man to help with the sweeps.

First we had to build an enclosure five feet high around the hold where the cattle were, then put up a covering at one end to protect the baled hay, and one at the other as shelter for ourselves.

I soon learned to use the sweeps as well as my helpers, and also learned what a tough job it is to steer a heavily-laden barge down the turbulent waters of the Yukon. We were swept along at a fast clip, and obstacles were plentiful. Making a sharp turn we would come upon a great rock thrusting itself out of the water, or a fallen tree whose branches were spread out just under the surface like a net to catch the unwary boatman.

But I looked upon the risks as a challenge, being thrilled at being on my way to Dawson, where men made fortunes between sunrise and sunset. I'd heard men were so careless with their gold dust that many dollars' worth was salvaged from the sawdust swept off the saloon floors.

Late that night we ran out of the river into a broad lake. La Barge was noted for its furious storms which would spring up unexpectedly, but I had no idea it was so large. It was three to four miles wide and thirty miles long.

We tied up that night because we could not find the channel. I fretted over the delay, for I was in a hurry to get my stock to Dawson. Ours was not the only cattle-scow on the way downriver, and the earlier we arrived the better price our steers would bring. I began then to have doubts as to Manley's ability as a pilot. The next day and the next, we found our course only to be driven back by a terrific headwind. The third day we were joined by another scow with a cargo of hay and, favored by a fair breeze, raised our sail at noon and left the mouth of the river far behind.

Soon the breeze began to freshen and the sky became overcast. A riverboat coming toward us with a full steam up, panted hard against the wind and current. As she passed, a crewman megaphoned, "Better try and make shore! A big storm coming!"

I did not fully appreciate the treacherous nature of the lake and as Manley, the pilot, agreed with me, we continued straight ahead, although the hay-laden barge began to tack. Then I saw my mistake. The wind increased rapidly, piling water into heavy waves which smashed against our boat. We were soon drenched. Too late, we endeavored to make the shore.

The worst of all craft to handle in a storm is a sixty-foot scow, with thirty feet of almost unmanageable canvas and a hold full of frightened, stamping cattle. Neither did I like the way Manley was acting. All color drained from his face and he gave so many contradictory orders that Jones and Simmons, the other two men, did not know what to do. Finding it impossible to make land, I ordered the barge to be turned about. Letting the wind fill the sail to bursting point we scudded along through great waves that threatened to engulf us.

Presently, through the storm, we saw another steamer approaching. She passed very close. The glass in her pilot-house was broken and even as we watched, the wind swept her deck clean of several chairs and a bucket. Trying to recover against the brass railing of the stairway leading to the upper deck, and collapsed. Simultaneously a huge wave boiled full across our own deck, knocking down Simmons in the bow and crashing against the enclosure about the hold.

The cattle were lowing pitifully so I crawled along the deck and looked into the pen. They were being flung about from side to side and many were seasick but none had suffered broken legs.

Then Manley shouted, "Oh hell! Look behind!"

We looked. Far in our rear and nearer the land we saw the hay-laden scow, her sail in ribbons. Then down into the trough of a wave we plunged, rising in time to see the other barge being smashed against the rocky shore and a few dark, struggling specks in the water.

The little steamer turned from her course and fought her way slowly toward the wreck. After that, everything was swallowed up in the darkness of the storm. It was raining hard, a rain that was half sleet and chilled us to the bone. Water continued pouring in through the enclosure to the hold.

Looking at the white, set faces of Manley, Simmons and Jones, I knew they shared my thought that it was only a question of minutes before a huge wave would swamp us and end everything. We clung desperately to our sweeps, for all that, and waited grimly for the inevitable.

The shoreline had vanished and we were scudding wildly along in almost utter darkness when the rain abruptly ceased and the wind lessened. I heard breakers beating hard against something ahead.

"We're heading straight for wreck!" I shouted.

"Hard-a-port!" Manley ordered. "Hard-a-port!"

With everything we had we bent to the heavy sweeps. Suddenly the clouds blew away from the moon and we saw that we were entering the channel of Thirty Mile River, the banks protectingly high on either side. That night we tied up near a wood camp.

At breakfast the men cutting cord wood fuel for the river steamers tried to dissuade us from going farther. "Better wait for the next boat sailing for Dawson and transfer your stock," the foreman told me. "Even at that you'll get a small fortune for your beef. But you'll never make Dawson in your scow. Almost a dozen barges have smashed up on Thirty Mile alone this spring."

I could see that my helpers were none too anxious to continue the journey, but I had no intention of paying half the worth of my cattle to a steamboat company after what we had already come through. It was sobering, however, as we set off down the foaming river, to come upon scow after scow stranded on a rock or a sand bar, smashed and the cargoes sunk or else floating around in the water.

Manley began to talk about Five Fingers, he being the only one of us who had been down the river. Two or three times a day he would tell us that we were taking our lives in our hands if we attempted to shoot the rapids. I was disgusted with the man. He had lost what little nerve he had ever possessed and was scaring Simmons and Jones.

“What other boats have done we can do,” I told him angrily. “Why did you undertake this job if you didn’t mean to see it through?”

He had no excuse to offer, but whenever he had an opportunity he would talk with Jones and Simmons, taking good care that he was not overheard by me. Just before we left Thirty Mile, Manley came within an inch of losing his life.

It was always difficult to tie up close to the shore because of rocks and uprooted trees. This particular night we had steered to the bank. Jones had leaped ashore and I had tossed the rope to him. After slipping the noose about a stout stump, he turned away to hunt for firewood. At the same time a swift current caught us and the scow commenced to swing around. Manley jumped forward to lay hold of the line and slipped on the rapidly uncoiling length of rope.

His booted leg was caught in a knotted loop and, in a flash, he was being dragged across the deck and over [the] side, screaming in pain and fright. Simmons reached the pilot as he was half suspended over the water and caught him under the arms. For a few moments Manley endured real agony. It was worse than useless to cut the rope and we expected to see his leg torn off. I pushed with my sweep to bring the scow around and slacken the line. Fortunately, the high boot was wrenched off by the rope and Manley hauled himself back aboard.

There were no more close calls until the morning we came in sight of Five Fingers, the most dangerous point on the whole river. Here five huge rocks block the turbulent water, the widest point between any two barely permitting a small river steamer to pass.

It has been the scene of many a wreck and many a drowning. Manley had done his best to frighten us and, when half a mile away I stared through the rainbow-mist of that morning on what seemed a solid wall of rock, I realized that the slightest miscalculation would finish us. My heart sank.

“The opening to the right looks widest,” I called to Manley as we rapidly approached the falls.”

“No, to the left,” he shouted back.

The water was sucking us along at a tremendous rate and its dark, oily surface looked menacing. Then we were plunging down that hill of foam and, in spite of all our strength upon the sweeps our barge was flung like a piece of driftwood against the jutting teeth of the rock on our right. The deck rail splintered and force of the blow sent me flying over my sweep. Ironically, by the time I could sit up, we were out in the wide stream again, the danger over, and the rapids thundering far behind us.

A great hole above the water line had to be mended and the fence rail pieced together, but for a day and a half after that I thoroughly enjoyed the trip. The weather was fine and

daylight lasted until quite late. We met a steamer whose crew gave me the cheering assurance that the price of meat animals was sky high in Dawson.

My cattle were well fed and in top shape again, but there was more trouble and danger waiting.

Where the Stewart River joins the Yukon there are several channels, all broad and misleading to an inexperienced navigator. Trusting Manley, we took what we supposed was the right one. It wasn't. When I later angrily asked where we were, he told me we were in a blind slough.

"Well, you are certainly one hell of a pilot!" I blasted him.

Dropping his sweep, Manley came up to me.

"I'm through with this job," he scowled. "I won't work for you any longer. This blasted barge is about finished, anyhow." Simmons and Jones were standing behind him.

"Are you supporting Manley?" I asked them.

They both nodded, and Manley said, "Now pay us what you owe us and we'll go ashore as soon as we can land!"

The pilot and Simmons were both wearing revolvers. I had considerable cash on me. I could easily become the victim of one more of Yukon's many tragedies, for probably nowhere else in the world at that time, could you encounter as many hard and utterly unscrupulous men as in and around Dawson.

"The main channel is there on the other side?" I asked.

Manley nodded. I then suddenly drew my revolver.

"You two toss your weapons overboard," I ordered sharply. There was a moment of hesitation, then they complied.

"Manley, return to your station at the bow, and you two others to the stern. You'll see this job through or you'll never leave this slough alive."

To the other men I made clear, "You'll take no orders from him. I'm in charge and we're going to get this boat out of here and have the cattle in Dawson within three days. If we do, you'll each get an extra \$100."

At that Jones and Simmons bent to their tasks willingly. I went forward with Manley and working together we soon had the scow out into the main channel again.

That evening we were overtaken by another steamer. A crewman shouted that there was a double barge not far behind us loaded with livestock. If we wanted top prices, we had to beat them so we traveled that night to lose no more time.

“We should reach Dawson in about six hours,” Manley told me the next day. There was fresh breeze blowing, the sun was bright and warm, so we raised our sail and made good time. His whole manner had changed since I had disarmed him – and had told him he also would get an extra \$100 if our cattle sold well.

Things could hardly have been going better when we felt a sudden shock and heard a grinding, tearing noise under us.

“Oh, hell, we’ve struck!” Manley shouted. We were on top of a sand bar, and the barge was listing heavily to starboard.

“Water is pouring into the hold,” Simmons called out. He had run to the cattle and I climbed down beside him.

There was a hole in the port side of the boat, but, listed as she was, the water was only creeping in. She must have struck a rock and slid off again, I decided. Only six hours from Dawson and then to be stuck like this! My heart dropped to my boots.

We hurriedly patched up the damage, but it was not a good job and I realized it would not hold for long. Then for three hours we sweated and swore. When she at last floated free, water began pouring into the hold.

Leaving the other two at the sweeps, Simmons and I went down into the cattle pen. For almost four hours we stood knee deep in water bailing for dear life. Manley and Jones, relieved us but the boat started leaking even worse. It was dark, too, for the moon had gone.

An hour later, while Simmons and I bent all our strength to the sweeps, Jones called strainedly, “We’re about swimming down here. It’s no use. We’re all going to drown.”

“Keep bailing,” I shouted back, and a moment later added, “I see lights!”

“Why, it’s Dawson!” yelled Simmons, “Dawson!”

“Bail like hell for a few more minutes,” I urged them.

Simmons and I swung the barge to the right and glided along close to the bank. Then leaning on the sweeps with all we had, we made a sharp turn just in time, and nosed onto the beach. Within a few minutes the scow would have floundered.

I sold my cattle the next morning. They brought me \$500 a head and the profit over and above all expenses amounted to a little over \$20,000. I earned it.

Millie Jones has confirmed that Don Jones was the first in his family to come to Yukon, so the Jones in this story is not his family. – Sherron

Sherron, the following picture of the cattle barge from Henry was used in the MocTel June 27, 2003. The story is:

TRANSPORTING CATTLE ON THE YUKON RIVER

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

Your photo of Cattle on a barge on the Yukon River just came in, and before refrigeration was available that was common. T. C. Richards of Burns & Co. drove a full herd to Mayo overland and they had a slaughter house down by the Mayo River. The same applied to Dawson where the cattle were shipped and left to feed in Dawson till they were needed. In later years when freezers became available, it was common to see a large freezer on the barge which was run by a self contained engine and compressor. The boat crews used to maintain the engines while the freezer was in use. There have been stories of a cattle barge being wrecked and the job of rounding up all the pigs and cows. I did not have to wonder which boat this was, for the spars on the Whitehorse were set each side of the foredeck. Other boats had a central mast and booms for handling the spars.



Cattle on barge in 1914.

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

THE BISHOP WHO ATE HIS BOOTS

Today, as I mined the last of the things on the dining room table that needed to be dealt with, I got to the item in the May 2006 Anglican Journal, "Filmmaker turns lens on his own family", that I saved to pass on to MocTel readers.

Apparently Bishop Isaac Stringer's grandson, George, is putting together a documentary on Bishop Stringer, an Anglican missionary in the North, and his family. Although Bishop Stringer died in 1934, his wife and family must have stayed on in Dawson because Mrs. S. Stringer signed my parents' wedding guest book in 1943. It looks like George expects the documentary to be finished for the HotDocs festival in 2007. As one who grew up listening to and reading stories about "the Bishop who ate his boots", I look forward to seeing the documentary.

Maribeth (Tubman) Mainer mainerml@shaw.ca (In Burnaby)

Sherron;

I am sure there are many on the list who can tell the story better than I. Maybe someone you meet in Dawson or Whitehorse on your trip.

I believe I first heard about the bishop-saving boots in a Pierre Berton book. It wasn't a story that I heard from people who knew him, or from Bishop Greenwood, one of his successors.

I have, however, packed the Anglican Journal article into my Vernon-going suitcase to give you next trip. A later issue reminded me that there was actually a whole book, titled *The Bishop Who Ate His Boots*.

Enjoy your loooong days!

Maribeth

This is the third of three tributes read by Kluane MLA Gary McRobb in the Yukon Legislative Assembly last month.

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, May 24, 2006**

In remembrance of Fraser Ralston Pollard

Mr. McRobb: I am honoured to rise today in remembrance of Fraser Ralston Pollard, formerly of Haines Junction, Yukon. Fraser was born on March 20, 1941, in Springhill, Nova Scotia and was raised in nearby Pugwash. At age 16 he joined the Canadian Army militia and served as a private for two years until he was honourably discharged from

Camp Gagetown, New Brunswick. A few years later, Fraser became an able seaman in the Royal Canadian Navy based out of Montreal, Quebec. He was honourably discharged about five years later. On April, 1967, he ventured to the Yukon where he lived for the next 38 years, enjoying Yukon experiences, including trapping, hunting and fishing. Soon after his arrival in Haines Junction, local townsfolk dubbed this likeable character after his hometown. He became known as “Pugwash”, or simply “Pug” to people throughout the Yukon. Pug became well known for his downtown log home and yard full of treasures. His fame and fortune grew as a result of his careful and skilful scavenging at the Haines Junction landfill. Pug pioneered the practice of reusing and recycling long before it became popular with the general public. He found treasures discarded by others and literally filled his home and yard with colourful and unique relics. Simply put, Mr. Speaker, Pug lived the saying, “One person’s garbage is another person’s treasure.” Pug’s cabin became a featured attraction in Haines Junction’s walking tour brochure. For your convenience, Mr. Speaker, I will file a copy of this now. To quote from the brochure: “the way in which he could pursue hunting for ‘treasures’ from the dump changed from when the Yukon government and the village invested in a compactor as part of a new waste management project. In a typical Yukon solution, Mr. Pollard obtained employment running the compactor.” Perhaps Pug’s eye for treasure was sharpened while he worked in a jade mine in British Columbia before coming north. He was also an underwater diver, a skill he learned while in the service. He would often dive to retrieve lures from the Kathleen River and distribute them among friends. Pug worked at the Blanchard Highway maintenance camp and began scavenging as a hobby to supplement his income. Pug was an avid gun collector and became a dedicated and proud member of the Canadian Rangers. Along with his passion for the outdoors, Pug enjoyed photography, Yukon history and talking to the elders and seniors about the old days. For many years his Labrador Retriever dogs were his companions. Pug’s zeal for collecting was surpassed only by his regard for friendship. He was a loyal friend to many people, helping them through tough times. He continued to socialize among friends at the local bar, long after he gave up drinking. Throughout his nearly four decades in the Yukon, Pug had the pleasure of hosting his siblings who each took the opportunity to discover the north. In true Yukon fashion, Pug’s colourful habits gave him popularity, notoriety and even fame among Yukoners and highway travellers alike. His many friends will miss this loyal fellow dearly. He passed away August 8, 2005.

Vancouver Island Yukoners Association

With our 26th Annual Vancouver Island Yukoners Picnic coming up in August, I just thought that some of our members might be interested in how this all got started. Originally there were two parties per year held here in the Parksville/Qualicum area, one at Christmas time and one on or near Aug. 17th. The Christmas party was a dinner and dance affair in the evening and the picnic was a beach party held at Rath Trevor Beach. Both had always been pot-luck affairs except that for the first few years the picnic included a salmon barbecue for which a massive \$2.00 fee was charged to cover the cost of the salmon.

The August picnic was originated by Ron and Colleen Butler, who had retired to Parksville along with Rolph and Joe Bailey and Rick and Dianna Griffiths. The Christmas party by Gus and Blanche Barrett who had moved here a few years previously as well as Jim and Helen Hunter. Since that time some of those have died, some have moved but the Butlers and Barretts remained. A little later Stan and Aileen Hegstrom retired to the Parksville area and since that time all of us became very active in both parties. In more recent years Alice and Henry Breaden have been very actively involved also. Of course there has been a lot of help from many others. Because of the nature of our "Association" nobody knows for sure which party started up first, but since we have a list of those who attended the first picnic in 1981, lets call that the beginning of it.

The annual Christmas party carried on into the mid nineties. We changed halls three different times as attendance increased. It was very successful, with attendance ranging from about sixty at the original party in the little Knights of Pythius Hall, to 180 at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall. The 180 occurred when Rusty and Bill Reid from Whitehorse, and a number of local ex-members of the Northernairs paid us a visit and played for the dance. Eventually through a combination of factors, advancing age of the group, uncertainty of winter travel conditions, the cost of staying over after the party, etc., attendance declined and eventually it was discontinued.

The August picnic has been held every year since its beginning in 1981. Attendance has varied widely due to weather and other factors from a low of 24 in 1999 to a high of over 180 in 2005. Interestingly the high in 2005 was again a result of being visited by Bill and Rusty and the Northernairs. That must say something about their music. For many years the picnic was held on the beach at Rath Trevor Park, but in more recent years has been held at the Anglican Church Hall and grounds in Nanoose Bay. This seems more acceptable now as our older members like to get out of the sun, and of course there is no longer that long walk through the bush to the outhouse.

There has been a lot of friendship, fellowship and fun at those parties. I remember one incident which started rather tragically when one of our senior members fell and broke a hip. Dale and George Webber were "the life of the party." Unfortunately they slipped while on the dance floor and Dale went down pretty heavily. The ambulance arrived and as they were taking her away the attendant asked her name. George replied for her – "Dingbat". The following year they were back at the party in fine fettle and when they got up to dance they were both wearing bicycle helmets, and carrying a first-aid kit, causing a standing ovation. Another "older" couple who thoroughly enjoyed their Yukon get-togethers were Cec and Mary Dugas, who were regulars for many years. Sadly, they have all since gone down the trail to wherever old Yukoners go, leaving behind an army of friends and many, many fond memories.

Now a few words about our Vancouver Island Yukoners "Association.". There is no such thing. From the beginning we have deliberately set it up that way. There has never been a joining fee, or membership, and no dues to pay. When we need a little cash to keep going we simply raffle a couple of used Yukon books or pass the hat at the next

picnic. We have no meetings, no officers, and no elections. We have never had a head table or a guest speaker. (Unless someone gets up to tell a joke.) Once in a while four or five of us regulars will get together at the picnic and decide who will be “Treasurer, Secretary, and President” just so that people will know where to go for information on the picnic. We have reps in the various communities and if something important comes we contact them and let the moccasin telegraph (not THE Moccasin Telegraph) take over. Very simple, very casual, but it has been successful for us for many years.

As Shakespear once said (Maybe it was George Bush or some other great orator) “The old order changeth, yielding place to new.” So it is with our “Association”, we on the committee are not getting any younger. Some of us are experiencing a few health problems etc., and we feel it is time to move on. Fortunately during the last few years a new group of younger senior Yukoners have retired to the Nanaimo area. Most of them are old friends who grew up together in Dawson. They have lots of free time and have offered to take over the operation of the picnic for the next decade or so.

So, after this years picnic we will pass the torch. The exact makeup of the new group will be announced at the picnic. Then the Barrett’s, the Butler’s, the Hegstrom’s, the Breaden’s, et al will don their mukluks, sit on their asses and ride off over the rainbow and right into the Northern Lights. No doubt to return again each year on the Saturday before the 17 of August to partake of the fun and frolic.

Many thanks to all those who have supported us over the years, and many thanks and good wishes to the new order. We leave it in good hands.

Blanche Barrett – President
Henry Breaden – Secretary
Stan Hegstrom – Treasurer
Colleen, Alice, Gus, Ron – Able assistants.



Pat and Duke Collins, Ron Butler all Dressed Up for one of the earlier Christmas parties.



Catching up on the gossip at a Xmas Party in the R.C. Legion hall.



One of the first Xmas parties.
Even the hotels knew about us but they
Couldn't spell worth a damn.



A Rath Trevor beach picnic. Don Machan
In red, Earnie Standish next to him,
Opposite The Dixons.



Rusty on the Violin while Bev Reber
Belts out "Remember Me". Danny
Bereza in background on guitar.



l to r Jim Boyes, Alice Boyes, Mary Jean
Morrison,
Karren Crowley, Harvey Burian, Ernie
Standish,
Pat Dixon. 2005.

MOC TEL 164

When Walls Forgot
by Alf Bilton

Wow! What a neat poem!

The whole Moc-Tel 164 was very interesting..Thanks so much ..Way before my time
there, but 'Real" Yukon stuff...

Cherio, Lois Trembley [granny9t*shaw.ca](mailto:granny9t@shaw.ca) (In Cedar BC)

COMMISSIONERS' BALL PHOTOS – ONLINE

Local photographer Jay Armitage, who takes much better pictures than I do, posted this link to his website's Commissioner's Ball scrapbook on the CityofDawson.com forum. MocTel readers might like to see the variety of pictures on display here.

http://www.mydawsoncity.com/commball_e/index.html

Dan Davidson (In Dawson)

COMMISSIONERS AWARD AND TRIP TO YUKON

Hi Sherron

Just reading up on your Dawson/Whitehorse trip. Congratulations again on being presented The Commissioner's Award. It was also great to see that you finally met Donna Clayson and so many other people connected to your Moctel. We were so pleased to see Brenda Caley also receive the award for her years and years of contribution to the community in so many ways. Was great seeing the photos too. Always nice to see more folks signing on. We appreciate your dedication to keeping us all "connected"!

Sincerely,

Bill & Jeri Weigand (In Steveston)

WONDERFUL..STORIES.. AND PHOTOS....CONGRATULATIONS AGAIN..
SHERRON....MADE ME FEEL VERY NOSTALGIC..NOT BEING THERE TO JOIN
IN...GERALDINE..LOOKED WONDERFUL.. SHE IS SUCH A NICE LADY...ALSO
LOVED THE TRIBUTE TO THE LADIES.. THAT ARE NO LONGER WITH US...
just lovely thank YOU love Gillian OX

Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate*shaw.ca (In Vancouver)

NEW TO THE MOCTEL LAST WEEK

Sherron was wonderful to hear from you again. Yes, your memory serves you right. Garth Holm married Lesley Grant in 1951 and my guess would be, beings I wasn't around yet, is that they met through Moe, as I think Moe worked for the N.C. Co. at the same time. Mom (Lesley) or Moe would be able to fill you in more on that.

I remember Millie Jones quite well although I haven't seen her in many years. If I remember correctly Millie, Don and Garth (Dad) and Mom (Lesley) were quite good friends when I was a child growing up. I have fond memories of birthdays and picnics with the Jones family. Millie would probably have some pretty good stories of us kids growing up together.

Was happy to hear you got a chance to visit Uncle Moe. I too hope his hip heals, but unfortunately as we get older our bodies tend to heal slower. One of my favourite memories of him is when I worked in the little coffee shop next to Whitehorse Motors when it was on Main Street. Him and all the guys from next door would come to the coffee shop for coffee breaks and I would serve them all, Moe would tell me his newest joke and he had a new one everyday, some of them were a little bit rough for me so I would give him a whack on the leg completely forgetting about his prosthesis's and would hurt my hand, that would make him laugh even harder. He'd get me at least once a week doing that. They would play bulls--t poker with dollar bills to see who would pay the tab and off they'd go back to work. He may lose some of his mobility, but he will never lose his sense of humor.

I think I will leave it to Mom to send in more of her bio, but you are more than welcome to add what I have above confirming that she is Moe Grant's sister Lesley.

Denise Moorcraft (Holm) moorcrt*northwestel.net



TAGISH AND BENGIE

Photo courtesy Fred & Barb Aylwin fbaylwin*shaw.ca

Fred and Barb Aylwin were kind enough to look after Bengie for the week while we went to Whitehorse and Dawson. Their dog Tagish gets his name from their obvious love for their summer home in Yukon. Our adopted Bengie came with his name. – Sherron Jones

ANGLICAN MISSIONARIES – ‘THE BROWNIES’

The "Brownies", Miss Hasell and Miss Sayles, parked their mission van on the property of my mother-in-law, Edith McFarland, at Hudson's Hope, B.C., every summer'. The Anglican Church at Hudson's Hope, a picturesque log church, was adjacent to my mother-in-law's property, and "The Brownies" used Mrs. McFarland's outdoor facilities and water source. We spent most of our summer vacations at my mother-in-law's, and consequently became quite acquainted with "The Brownies".

One summer, Margaret Twining, of the well-known Twining Tea Co. came from England to serve as chauffeur for the aging missionaries. Margaret and my wife became quite good friends during the week or two that the missionaries were conducting their Bible

school at the church. When Margaret returned to England she sent us a nice collection of Twinings Teas, and for a time corresponded with my wife.

While I was teaching at Watson Lake Airbase, "The Brownies" put in an appearance there, and, as I recall, used the school building for their mission work.

They were well respected by all who had the pleasure of their acquaintance I think that they may have visited Mayo, also, but I am not certain about that.

There were a couple of publications about "The Brownies" and their Mission that I am aware of, but cannot vouch that they are available. They are as follows:

"Missionary on Wheels: Eva Hasell and the Sunday School Caravan Mission". Vera Fast., Anglican Book Centre. Toronto. 1979.

I remember the "Caravan" as rather spartan, in terms of accommodations. I am sure that Miss Twinning must have found her summer accommodations much less comfortable than those she would have been accustomed to in her affluent family home. I believe that Miss Hasell and Miss Sayles were from rather affluent families, also.

I hope the above information may be of interest to those northerners who knew "The Brownies".

Sincerely,

Don Machan demachan*telus.net Qualicum Beach, B.C., (Watson Lake-1951-53; 1956-58; and Mayo-1953-55, and 1958-61)

Don, I made a point of looking in the back of the van on display in the Whitehorse Transportation Museum. The two bunks, one on each side did not look at all like they would be comfortable. There are no mattresses in them at the present time. Each bunk is only about 3 feet wide and built up just over a foot off the floor with wooden storage underneath each bunk. Lord only knows how 3 could travel in the van, let alone sleep; perhaps one slept between the bunks in the fairly narrow space. – Sherron

I REMEMBER THE BROWNIES WELL

I remember the Brownies well. It definitely was the summer event for kids. What a shock I got when I saw the photo of all the kids standing beside the caravan! That is my dear sister, Bonnie Bastien, 2nd from the left with the back row (the girl with the dark hair) then maybe Sally Backe, then my brother Norm, next maybe a Tomlin looks like Margaret Anne Backe there, not sure if Lucy Birckel is the girl with the curly dark hair, then maybe my brother Phil, and in the next row, can't put names to the first 3 but I know them all, then maybe Rhonda McPhail, Janice Tomlin, then either a Harris or Tomlin boy, then I think Jimmy Tomlin, and the next 4 can't tell. Looks like that could be my dear little brother Vankarl beside our cousin Billy Karman at the front. It's hard to make out everyone, but perhaps my brothers can help out with identification. I bet all the Tomlin kids are there, but just don't get a very good view of them. Probably all of the

McPhail kids,too. Anybody out there know who these kids are? Marg (Bastien) Arnoeld margarnoeld@shaw.ca (In Prince George)

*Can anyone help with identifying these children ? ? ? ?
I can send you a copy of the photo that is clearer. - Sherron*

It seems I was ALL wrong about those kids. Upon seeing the photo closer, I think that girl I thought was my sister Bonnie, looks like ME !! I am sure that the boy at the extreme right in the red shirt is my brother Phil. I think I see Gerry and Joey Desjardins there. But if that is me, then that photo would be dated about 1958. I hope some of the others out there will be of more help than I was! Guess we'll find out in the next edition. Cheers Marg Arnoeld

*Incidentally the wording under the photo in the museum was –
“The Vanners with children and Bishop H. Marsh in Haines Junction (1960’s). By 1970 this highway mission had been discontinued.”*

*The caption under the other photo read – “Miss Hassel and Iris Sayle being
“commissioned” by Bishop T. Greenwood for their Sunday School work along the Alaska Highway, a task they carried out themselves from 1949 to 1959.”*

ARTISTIC TALENT



"Just a Coffee Break?"

By Norm Paulson backrdhaven@shaw.ca (In Courtenay)

PACK DOGS TO HELICOPTERS

Hi, Sherron - I have been away for three weeks so am now catching up with reading the Mockett back issues. Just wanted to point something out regarding my Dad's book "Pack Dogs to Helicopters" - He was the actual author of his autobiography - Athol Retallack did the editing and typed the original copy. The email from kbCrowly sounded as if it was thought that Mrs. Retallack was the author.

Just want to set the record straight.

Tks.

Joan (Callison) Rodschat jrodschat@shaw.ca (In Penticton)

This week's edition was large enough without putting some Pat Callison's book in, but hope to have it back in next week. - Sherron

A SISTERS EULOGY

By Helen Fitch hmunro@shaw.ca (In Burnaby)

And so it comes to this. On behalf of Karen and the rest our family, we would like to thank you all for being here with us as we acknowledge the life of Norman Alexander Munro, the son of a Hebridean crofter and a Ukraninan immigrant girl; Norman, a first generation Canadian of mixed heritage. Most of you, of course, know him as Scotty, a nickname given him by dads' fellow miners who saw him as a little Scot. It boggles the mind to think what he would have been called had father been the Ukranian and our mother the Scot. You know now he was born in Atlin. He even spent two years in a private school in North Vancouver. Norman was 11 when I was born and 19 when sister Pat arrived in 1952.

We knew he was a good boy, a very busy boy in his youth, cutting wood and hauling water as all boys did around the Atlin creeks. He said he walked at 8 months which he reasoned explained his bandy legs. Fast on his feet but apparently slow to talk. We always laughed out loud when Mom told the following story. Mom had a friend, a Mrs. Nelson who had a daughter Sheila who was about the same age as Norman. But Mom found herself increasingly embarrassed when she found herself face to face with the mother and daughter because, as she told it, the little girl would say, ³ Good afternoon Mrs. Munro. How are you and how is Norman? ³ Mom, ever hopeful, would try to bring him forward from behind her skirt where he would be hiding but all he could do was to bob back and forth saying, ³ I see you . . . I see you ³ We're still chuckling.

My memories of Norman really begin in Whitehorse. I can see him striding into the yard at Fifth and Strickland, handsome and always smiling. I think his first crush was Lalila Palmer or was it Katy Lee? But I do know that his true love was our beloved Betty.

I clearly recall one sports day, I was bragging that my brother could outrun anyone - one

of those YPA sports days in the spring that memory bathes in sunlight. Big crowds, fierce competition with the day culminating with the final premier event, the mile race!! Much chatter on the sidelines, people muttering, "Where's Scotty", me on the verge of tears because he was nowhere in sight. Other runners were in their strip, warming up. And then, Norman boldly enters the ballpark, a girl swinging on each arm - he clad in dress pants, white shirt open at the neck, black loafers gleaming in the dust. I was so relieved but secretly, very angry - not at Norman but at those girls!! Not to worry little sister, I'll run. He borrows some runners and you can imagine the rest, his victory, my cheers, my victory, my hero!! You see my primary image of Norman, has always been of him as an athlete - a ballplayer, a basketball star, a track phenom and that may startle many of you but there is something about that time period, the early 50's that still resonates with me - a time of hope, innocence and dreams thought to be attainable. Cars parked around the perimeter of the old ball park at Main and Fourth. Long walks up Puckett Gulch to hockey games at B Hangar. All for the love of sport shared by both my parents and my brother. Who would not want to follow in his footsteps!

He gave me my first bike, my first hockey stick salvaged from a Merchants game, my first ball glove and my first watch. When I was six, he decorated my tricycle and using those old stove top toasters made my trike into a PLANE. I won first prize. This is not nostalgia - these are just treasured memories that can be revisited at will and they bring me solace. Was I not the lucky one.

Sister Pats perspective is of Norman and Betty together. She was proud of Norman and often introduced herself as his much younger sister! She was on his arm walking down the aisle when she married Jim - a moment of particular love and support. And she is ever thankful that she could offer him some comfort during his last week at home. Her memories too will sustain her, she welcomes them and together, in our collective consciousness, he will be immortal.

Normans death, as my son Jason pointed out, is the end of an era for our family. A life long Northerner, a Yukoner, a man who never really accepted party politics in the Legislative Assembly, a man who hated the idea of a big box store coming to town. And the ³expletive deleted² traffic that grew with Whitehorse itself. A community man, as witnessed by the Lions tribute here today, a man willingly to unequivocally support his friends and family members through the good times and the bad times. I had more than my share of a need for his broad shoulder and caring ways.

He loved to croon, he was a great dancer - a passionate golfer; He looked forward to annual trips to Hawaii, the back porch at Marsh Lake, his nightly chats with John Erickson and road trips with Bill Richardson. I said, one time, what do you guys talk about? The million dollar question of women everywhere. He quoted Tom McLaughlin and I paraphrase ³ Sometimes we talk, sometimes we don't, sometimes we just think² They are philosophers of a kind!!

In closing I should tell you he instructed me not to be ³smaltzy². This from a man whose favourite song began, ³ If I could write a song and get the whole world to sing along, ³ , from a man who would tear up when the national anthem was being sung. He told us he didn't want to leave but he knew it was time to go. And we were grateful for his honesty

and courage. What do I say then, Norman, I asked. He said, ³ Just say Goodbye Norman². So be it. Goodbye Norman.

NEW ADDITIONS

Hi Sherron:

I met you at the Transport Museum in Whitehorse last week and you gave me your card. It was good to meet you. I understand that you do a email out (Moccasin Telegraph) - is it possible to put me on your email list? You had also mentioned something about some email pictures. If possible, would you be able to email them to me? Thanks much. Take care and hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you so much for the photos, I have not printed them out yet, but they look great on the screen.

As for my family, well you know that I am Phyl and Jim Simpson's oldest daughter. I was born in Whitehorse, Yukon and graduated grade 12 from FH Collins in 1975. I am currently employed with Correctional Services Canada as a Psychologist. I am living in Innisfail, Alberta and have been living here for almost 2 years. I am not sure what else you would like to know, or for that matter you likely know most of the history of my family, having spent time with mom and Auntie Amy. Thank you once again for the photos and have a great week.

Shannon Simpson ssdennis@telus.net

Hi Sherron:

It was so nice to see you and Bill at the Commissioner's Ball. Congrats on your award. You must have been surprised to be so honoured. I would love you to add me to your mail out list and is there anything else I need to do? Do you sell your CD's you made as I would love to get caught up on all you have captured?

Faye Eby fjeby*yukon.net (In Whitehorse)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

The following recipe from a recipe book mailed in by Dave Perchie. It had belonged to his mother. The book was compiled by O.E.S. Yukon Chapter No. 1 and Whitehorse Chapter No. 2. – Sherron

Almond Butter Crunch

1/2 lb. butter
2 tablespoons water
1 cup white sugar
1 tablespoon Karo

Melt butter and add sugar, stir constantly until sugar is dissolved (10 minutes), but do not let boil until sugar dissolves. Add water and corn syrup. Boil until hard (cracks), 300 degrees. Remove from fire, add 1 cup roasted almonds slightly salted. Pour out into pan. When nearly cool coat with chocolate. 4 squares chocolate beaten. Sprinkle with almonds chopped fine, 1/2 cup for recipe. When chocolate hardens turn to the other side and repeat.

Gladys V. Hoggan

*Sounds like Maribeth's Grandma knew all about Almond Roca from Brown & Haley. Found this information online " **Almond Roca** was invented, but they have expanded th business five times **since** 1919."*

I actually photocopied that same book last year.

That almond butter crunch is "to die for"! Lured many a bear to Nanna's screen door or window in various mining camps. Drew many classmates to my door when Nanna's parcels arrived at St. Paul's student nurses' residence. Nanna would shoot the bears, but I had to share the candy. I don't make it anymore out of consideration for my son who loves it but who is violently allergic to almonds.

Nanna was Gladys Viola Hoggan. Mom is better known as Peggy but her real name is Viola Margaret.

In that cookbook is a wonderful orange-date cake that I still make in cake or loaf form. Also, the Welsh biscuits are wonderful.

Maribeth (Tubman) Mainer mainerml@shaw.ca (In Burnaby)

DATES TO REMEMBER

Okanagan Yukoners Picnic June 25, 2006 Summerland Ornamental Gardens. For further information contact Larry Chalmers aksala49@telus.net

Island Yukoners Picnic Aug 12th at St Mary's Hall in Nanoose Bay.
For further information contact Blanche & Gus Barrett at sourdoughs2@shaw.ca

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**. The goal of this project is to provide an opportunity for folks to reconnect.

– Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca

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