

## **MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – 191<sup>st</sup> Edition – January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

Created by Sherron Jones [sherronjones@shaw.ca](mailto:sherronjones@shaw.ca)

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



**Sunset**

Photo courtesy Betty Sutton [elizabethsutton@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabethsutton@yahoo.com) (In Whitehorse)

### *Night Herd*

by Alf Bilton

The glaciers grazing on gray granite heights  
Are wont to stop feeding and stargaze such nights,  
Ensorcelled, enchanted, entranced between bites:  
Medusa's own light show, these bright Northern Lights.

Pastel silken slithers slip-slide hue to hue,  
Unfurling and swirling, then shifting red-blue.  
Eternity's dancing, and even the stars  
Are humbled, reminded, how short-lived we are.

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[Alf Bilton](#)

Whitehorse, Yukon

# Pack Dogs to Helicopters

Author Pat Callison – copyright

## CHAPTER 21 Cont'd

### DAWSON CITY

From **1947 to 1957** I serviced several gold dredges in the outlying districts of Dawson, Clear Creek dredge was 70 miles east of Dawson, Henderson 60 miles and Thistle 85 miles upriver from Dawson, the Sixty Mile River 60 miles west of Dawson. We serviced them about once a week by air, which meant a fair amount of flying, all on wheeled aircraft.

Basically the dredges were floating structures with buckets on a conveyor chain scooping gravel from the stream bed, moving it through its innards with the gold held in massive mats by its specific gravity and the waste coming out the other end (the stacker) in the form of tailings. In other operations the ground was stripped by caterpillar tractors, the gravel shoved into sluice boxes filled with flowing water and again by its specific gravity the gold would settle onto the matting held by cleats while the gravel was washed out into a pond.

Every spring about April 1st I would fly the men out to the dredge camps anywhere from 25 to 40 men to each camp. At that time of year the aircraft would be on skis and the runway would be covered by 3 or 4 feet of snow. The first three or four weeks were spent with the crew thawing the ice around the dredge, getting the camp cleaned up to be ready to start dredging around the first of May. In the fall they would keep the dredges digging just as long as possible, til they were frozen out, around October 20th.

The season was short so once the mining got underway nothing else had priority and often that certainly seemed to apply to airstrips which were built by the crew, laid out on smoothed dredge tailing piles. They were the bare minimum for landing a wheeled aircraft, sometimes less than minimum.

In one case someone had told the camp boss that an aircraft could take off on a run of 800 feet, so he thought that was all the runway that was needed.

They had just built a new airstrip and it was short about 1,000 feet, which was alright if you were empty but carrying a load, as I usually was, that was a different story. I kept complaining and stressing the need for more length on the runway. I would make sure the boss was watching when I took off, even though I had an empty aircraft, I would hold it down until I was about 10 feet from the end of the runway before lifting off. I did this a few times and when I came back to camp and we were all sitting around the dinner table I would tell the whole crew about the hard time I had taking off. The men would look at the boss and finally after a few of these sessions he had the cats build another 500 feet of runway and everyone was happy.

\* \* \*

The mining operation at Glacier was quite a large one. Besides the one dredge being operated there was also a large "cat" operation.

The Glacier Creek Company built a small airstrip about 1500 feet long on permafrost ground that was frozen all year round. The caterpillars disturbed the surface when making the airstrip, exposed the frozen earth to the air causing it to thaw and the whole strip became a sea of mud. Draining the water off the site and firming up the strip for an aircraft had turned out to be a big job. One of the first landings I made on the strip was about December 1st and I was flying a ski equipped Fairchild 24. The only part of the strip that was smooth enough to land on was about 30 feet wide down the centre, not much margin for variance. The mud had been piled on either side of the strip while they were constructing the runway, cold weather set in, and the mud froze solid.

When I landed, the snow was about 4 feet deep and with a covering of that depth, everything looked tabletop smooth. I turned the aircraft around at the end of the runway, taxied it up over a pile of snow, but when the propeller hit the snow it turned out to be frozen mud under the snow and my prop was wrecked.

I had a spare prop at my base at Dawson but the radio in the aircraft wasn't functioning so I couldn't make contact with the army signal corps who had radio stations at Mayo, Whitehorse and Dawson. I was totally cut off.

The watchman and postmaster at the mining camp was Harry Sagoff and he unearthed an old Army tank radio, a "19" set. I fiddled about with it but got no results and was beginning to get a little desperate. I knew Ethel would be wondering what had happened and I was getting a bit up tight about the whole situation. Harry scratched around some more and came up with an operating manual for the radio and I read it through and realized that the radio needed a different aerial.

Harry got me some wire and I slogged around in the snow, climbed up a few trees a little distance off the ground and finally got an aerial strung around. You can imagine my relief, after two days I made contact with Dawson. At least Ethel knew I was alright but I still couldn't get home without a prop replacement. I asked Signals to contact Boundary Alaska and have the pilot there fly to Dawson to get my prop and bring it in. Usually an aircraft would be landing at Boundary every couple of days but this particular time there was no flight for a week, and there wasn't much I could do about it.

In the meantime I came to know my host pretty well. Harry, born in Russia, had lived in Canada for many years but somehow the English language had eluded him, but that didn't stop him from telling stories. He told me he had been born in Georgia, a province in Southern Russia, the area where he had been raised most of the people lived to a great age - his grandfather, at 150 was still riding a horse. One thing I did appreciate was the way Harry could cook frozen potatoes. All my experience with frozen potatoes was to finish up with a pot of mushy goo which invariably got thrown out.

Harry kept his potatoes buried out in the snow, frozen hard as rocks (just as solid as the mud my prop had hit). When he wanted to cook potatoes he would fill a pot with water, put it on the stove and get it boiling furiously, bring the frozen potatoes from the snowbank and drop them into the boiling water. The result was the best boiled potatoes I had ever eaten, they tasted as though they had just been dug out of the garden. Harry told me that the secret was to keep the water boiling, never let it stop while adding the potatoes or while they were cooking. So the ten days I was stranded at Glacier Creek were not a total loss.

Ten whole long days! Finally a new CP Air pilot, Don Grey, flying a Norseman from the N.W.T., arrived in Dawson and the radio operators at the Signals asked him to fly the prop to me at Glacier Creek. I had the airstrip all leveled out and marked and Don landed just at dusk.

As soon as it was light enough next morning I installed the prop and was on my way, 11 days after I had left on a routine 1 day flight between Dawson and Glacier Creek 60 miles from my base.

Just a short time ago I met Don Grey at a Quarter Century in Aviation Club meeting and again told him how much I appreciated his effort.

Glacier Creek airstrip remains a memorable one, but not for pleasant reasons.

About one year later, **1949**, I landed at the same airport using the same aircraft. The temperature was 20 below zero. It was a mile from the airstrip to the camp post office and I put the engine cover over the engine and placed my bedroll on top of the cover to help keep the engine warm. I was gone about an hour and a half and when I walked back to the aircraft the new postmaster and camp caretaker, Joe Castonquay, walked back with me. Joe had come along to assist my get off by helping me turn the aircraft at the end of the runway where the snow was deep and the runway narrow. The strategy was to tie a rope to the tail of the aircraft and Joe would pull sideways. This would turn the aircraft very fast on a small area, to get it lined up for takeoff. When we got to the aircraft I asked Joe to sit in the aircraft and we would taxi to the end of the airstrip where the lining up performance would take place, and I would take off, down Glacier Creek.

Before Joe got into the aircraft he told me he was a good prospector, but knew nothing about airplanes or cars. He got in and I pulled off the engine covers, looked inside to make sure the switches were off. In those days when using a radial engine, one made sure there was no oil left in the lower cylinders before starting to pull the prop through at least once. If a fair amount of oil had drained into the lower cylinders and one started the engine without a pull through, (turning the prop manually) it was possible to break a connecting rod.

This was going through my mind as I waded through the snow to reach the prop. Because of the snow I had to stand very close to the prop to pull it through. I reached up and pulled, the engine caught, the prop spun, hit me on the leg and I found myself stretched out on the snow. I felt the pain in my right leg, and when I looked down my heavy pant leg looked as though it had been cut with scissors, a neat slice about 4 inches long. There was no blood at first but when it started to flow I knew I was going to have to control the bleeding quickly if I were to be able to fly the airplane out of there. By the time I got into the aircraft I knew the cut was deep so I pulled the cover off the back of the pilot's seat, put it round my leg, tied it and shoved a crescent wrench through the loop to make a tourniquet. Poor Joe Castonquay wasn't sure just what had happened, it had all been so sudden. "Joe, you are on your way to Dawson, whether you had planned it or not."

I told him to take hold of the tourniquet and if I started to bleed more heavily he was to tighten the wrench handle.

I got off the ground and realized that the weather had turned bad and I couldn't get over the summit between the Sixty Mile and Yukon Rivers so that meant following the Sixty Mile at a lower altitude to its confluence with the Yukon then follow the Yukon River to

Dawson- an extra thirty minutes flying time. Instead of a thirty minute flight it was an hour later that I reached the Dawson Airport.

When I had shut down the engine and tried to get out of the airplane I found that my leg was completely stiff and Joe had quite a struggle getting me onto the ground and over to the truck. Joe had been right; he didn't know anything about trucks and couldn't drive. I drove straight to the hospital and fortunate for me, the doctor, was Barry Duncan, ex-army and experienced in this sort of accident. After he had cleaned and stitched the wound he told me that if the prop had hit any deeper and reached the bone I could have lost my leg.

In about a month I was walking and within 2 months I was flying the aircraft. I had time to think about the accident and how it had happened. The ignition switches had been turned off, but the engine started and turned the prop sufficiently for me to get hit. This is pre-ignition; a piece of hot carbon caused the engine to fire. From then on I left the switches off, pulled the engine through with the starter. Too many people didn't live to tell their story about the prop that was faster than they were.

.....To be continued .....

## OLD PHOTOS



Toad river area, Mile 442 Alaska highway.  
Photo courtesy Mike Paolera [mpaolera\\*telus.net](mailto:mpaolera*telus.net) (In Osoyoos)



Toad River lodge, mile 422 Alaska Highway.  
 Photo courtesy Mike Paolera [mpaolera@telus.net](mailto:mpaolera@telus.net) (In Osoyoos)

## SANDY'S HIGHWAY STORY

Sure enjoyed Sandy's tale of the highway lodges. Isn't it something how that sort of thing gets the memory wheels going. Right away I started thinking about all the lodges I stayed in while with the Game Branch. I can picture Ellen Davignon baking bread at my favourite Lodge, Johnson's Crossing. Sandy mentioned curling and didn't that bring back memories of bonspiels at 1016, curling with lucky Herb Taylor and Mabel, who was my aunt. At Teslin trying to beat Bob or Jo Fleming, who were such great curlers. Watson Lake and, of course, the International in Whitehorse. Those were the days.

Sure looking forward to the Vancouver Yukoners. Will be going with Blanche and Gus. We were delighted to hear Rudy and Janet Couture are going to be there.

All the best, Ron and Colleen Butler [ronb11@telus.net](mailto:ronb11@telus.net) (In Parksville)

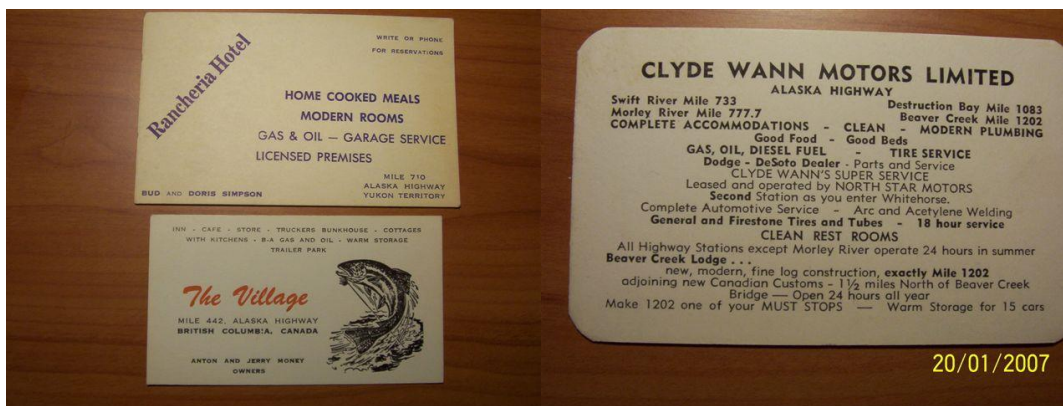


Image courtesy Bert Scholl [bertandevlyn@shaw.ca](mailto:bertandevlyn@shaw.ca) (In Ladysmith)

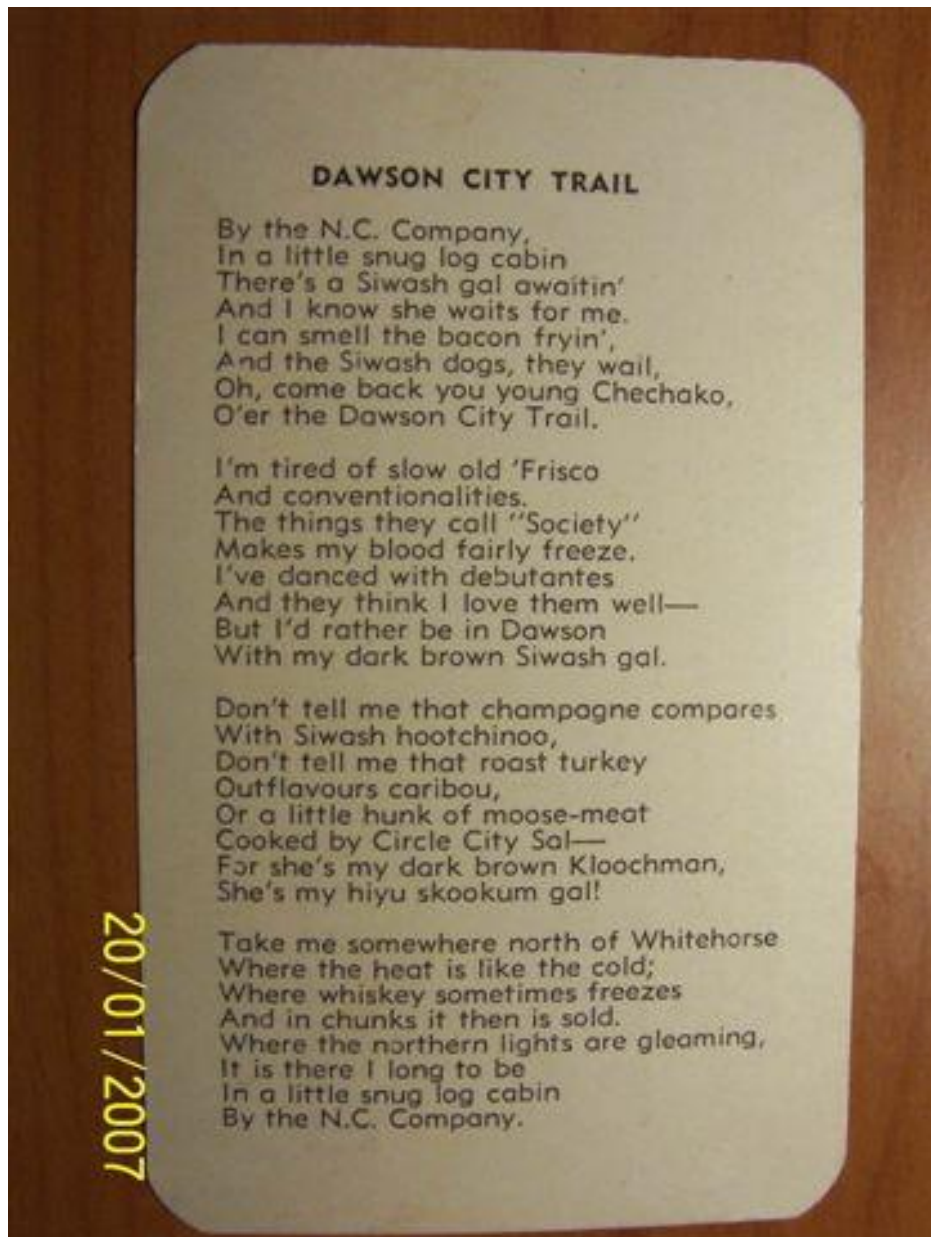


Image courtesy Bert Scholl [bertandevlyn@shaw.ca](mailto:bertandevlyn@shaw.ca) (In Ladysmith)

## WORKING AT HIGHWAY LODGES

Sandy it was a great article and made the old memory kick in. I started working at the lodges in 1966 first for Betty & Leland at Burwash for 100.00 a month plus R&B. Later I worked for Hank & Doreen Perillo at Destruction Bay Lodge, this being before Peter & Marge build VanderVeen's. From there I went to White River and worked for Tom & Norma Bradley then down to Mountain View to work for Mike & Jan Williams, then up to Pine Valley for Dad & Diane. So that whole highway was very familiar to me, as I worked for Dad at Brewster's cafe in 1962.

As you know coffee time up there meant a twenty minute drive in one direction or the other for company, and that was done two, to three times a day by me as I loved the country and driving. There were always a few good fishing holes in between to stop at for a few minutes along the way. Then when I got there I always ended up pumping gas for them or some other small chore that needed doing, dishes whatever, I 'm sure you did the same thing as everyone just jumped in and helped everyone out. Freight day could be bad, one could help unload freight at two or three lodges if you didn't hit it right as everyone jumped in and helped unload freight when the truck arrived.

Well kiddo now that you have started hope to hear more stores from you and your life up there.

Take care and keep them coming Mogeys Mogensons [elgolfo@shaw.ca](mailto:elgolfo@shaw.ca) (In Cranbrook)

*Wow!!!! I had no idea that this was going to take off so well....*

*I did not think that I could get any high in the atmosphere, but emails such as Mogeys's, now Ron's and all the others have sent me over to the Mars orbit....I cannot tell you how excited I am to be able to start reading all the stories that you are going to be inundated with now....Likely material for the next year...LOL*

*Thank you to all who have made this a wonderful, exciting, memorable journey to add to the history books.*

*Just heard from David Alexandrovich, to whom I have not seen or spoken to since the summer of 1986, in the parking lot of the Yukon Inn.*

*Wow!!! is all I can say.....*

*Thank you again*

*Sandy Campbell [northernlyght@shaw.ca](mailto:northernlyght@shaw.ca) (In Langley)*

## **CRACKER CREEK – Thanksgiving Dinner 1955**

Part of my Thanksgiving Weekend adventure on the Alaska Highway consisted of the following. I had been traveling with three teachers around the loop. We couldn't make it across Boundary because of a glacier being across the road. This was the Thanksgiving weekend of 1955. A man said he'd pull us across with his tractor but if we started to slide we'd end up six-thousand feet down. We turned the car around and had a weiner roast in the snow at the old dredge and then carried on back to the Alaska Highway. (Two of the teachers' names were Ruth and Marion. It was Ruth's car. She changed the flat we had just out of Whitehorse.)

Anyway, I had to hitch a ride at Destruction Bay where the teachers were stopping. Two

were from there including Ruth and I think one from Johnson Crossing. They found me a ride with a middle-aged prospector (who offered me a job as a cook when he was prospecting) and a painter who painted the signs along the Alaska Highway. For instance, he'd paint a sheep's head to warn of sheep and so on. It was Thanksgiving Sunday.

They said we'll stop in Haines Junction. Everyone will be in the bar which they were. The painter fellow said he'd get me a drink. I wondered why everyone was looking my way and smiling, including at least one member of the RCMP who was in civies. When my eyes started to bang together, I realized I had been the brunt of a joke. I'd have parted with my companions were there another way to get back to Whitehorse. When we got back into the half ton, the prospector said, "we'll stop at Crick-A Crack Inn at Cracker Creek for Thanksgiving dinner." I thought this will be a life saver.

We got to Crick-A Crack Inn at Cracker Creek at about 4 p.m.. A buxom lady waited on us. She advised us that Thanksgiving dinner was all gone. My heart sank. Then she said, "I can give you some bread and cheese." We said we'll take it. It was a great Thanksgiving meal with the thick slabs of her home-made bread and large pieces of cheese. I felt so much better. After being stopped by a member of the RCMP enroute and after dark--someone had shot a female moose out of season. I was dropped off at the Whitehorse Inn at 8:30 p.m. feeling none the worse for wear.

The more I think about it, the more I think it could have been "Krik-A-Krak" Inn.

Emily Stillwell [eistillwell@hotmail.com](mailto:eistillwell@hotmail.com) (In Moose Jaw SK)

## **REMEMBERING HORST SCHEFFEN & FATHER HUIJBERS**

I do remember Horst Scheffen, although not really well. I think he may have worked for my dad a short while when he first arrived in the Yukon, or at least the Mayo area. I think he either cut wood for the steamboats or timber for our sawmill. I remember he could tell stories quite well. I remember him marrying Fannie, living a bit out of Mayo and some children being born, but that's about all I'm afraid I remember of him. I was still quite young and so perhaps that's why I can't remember many details. I had forgotten that they moved to Dawson City.

I very much enjoyed reading Sandy Campbell's account of the lodges along the Alaska Highway between Beaver Creek and Whitehorse. Although I have only visited a couple of them, I know some of the people from the locations she mentions and so it brought back memories. I'm amazed that she remembered the names of all the people who ran the lodges and so much detail about them. Good job, Sandy!!

One particular person that Sandy mentioned that I do remember well is Father Henk Huijbers, a Catholic priest who spent most of his ministering years in the Mayo area,

with, as Sandy has noted, a number in the Haines Junction - Beaver Creek area. My first memory of Father Huijbers was when he first drove to our home at, 26 Mile, on the Stewart River. To give you an idea of the effort involved in getting to our home, I need to give you a bit of background about the road into our home.

The 26 Mile designation of where our home was located stems from the fact that it was located 26 miles down river from Mayo. This is where my parents and I lived for the first 9 years of my life. It was the home base for my father's string of woodcamps that supplied wood for fuel for the British Yukon Navigation (BYN) steamboats that plied the major rivers of the Yukon in those days. In about 1950 a highway from Whitehorse to Mayo was built and it reached our home in the summer of, I think 1950. In fact, to be more accurate, it passed by our home on the hillside behind where we lived, a distance of about 5 or 6 miles away. Since my father had already created some rudimentary roads, perhaps better described as "bush trails" in the area below the highway, he extended them to the creek that was between the hillside where the highway was being built and the flat area leading up to the hill, built a bridge across the creek and a very steep trailway up the side of the hill to meet the highway. The section of the "bush trail" close to the creek went through an area of permafrost and muskeg such that even though my father used "corduroy" (placing small logs crossways on the roadway and covering it with gravel), there were portions of that part of the roadway that required either a 4-wheel drive vehicle or one with large wheels (such as our old 1927 Chev One-ton truck) to be able to travel over it.

It was therefore to the amazement of my parents that one day, Father Huijbers arrived from Mayo, having come over the newly constructed and not yet fully completed highway, down the steep hill, and across the very difficult "bush trail" to our home. I think he had borrowed a four-wheel drive vehicle from the military or someone else to make the trip. Though we were not Catholics that did not seem to bother Father Huijbers. He always treated our family as old friends and, as I recall spent several days with us, working with dad, before travelling on to visit other outposts of his pastorate.

Somewhere about this time Father Huijbers took a trip back to his native Holland and upon his return he once again arrived at our doorsteps. This time he had some gifts for us, three pairs of genuine, Dutch, wooden shoes. There was a large pair for my dad, a slightly smaller pair for my mother and a child sized pair for me. I kept those shoes for many years and wish that I still had them.

When we moved into Mayo, Father Huijbers would come to visit us quite often. We did not attend his church but again that didn't matter to him. He always had a compliment for my mother's cooking and was willing to lend a hand to dad whenever he might need it. He also liked to tell stories and he and dad would exchange stories by the hour. Over the years Father Huijbers left Mayo for a time and then came back in later years. He never seemed to change. One of his abilities seemed to be that he could obtain almost anything that was needed for his church or for those who might ask him for assistance. Just give him a little time and he would find it.

When my parents retired and moved to Whitehorse, Father Huijbers was also by this time in Whitehorse and living in the Catholic home. His legs would not allow him to get out much so my dad would stop in on occasion and visit with him and the two of them would reminisce about "the old days". On one of these visits in the 1990s I had the privilege of accompanying my dad. Father Huijbers was his old self. Full of vim, vigour and vitality and telling stories of the days of yore. When my mother passed away in 1998, Father Huijbers wrote a very nice letter to my father and until my father's passing in 1999 sent my parents a yearly Christmas card.

I'm sure others who had the opportunity to come across the path of Father Huijbers will have many remembrances of him as well. Hopefully this brief account of some of my memories of him will spur other to tell theirs as well.

Harvey Burian [hburian\\*telus.net](mailto:hburian*telus.net) (In Parksville BC)

Hi Sherron, Am sending a little story on Jack and Hazel Meloy, after Don Frizzell's mention of them in Moc Tel 190. I hope it comes through to you intact, with proper spelling, because I am relegated to my old laptop while my PC is being repaired. The laptop is my backup and doesn't have all the up to date features. Word keeps wanting to correct my spelling on words that are spelled correctly!!!

I enjoyed Sandy Campbell's article on the highway lodges. Having lived in Whitehorse for five years (many years ago), I had visited most of them. In 1996, I travelled back from Dawson over the Top of the World Highway and down the Alaska Highway to Whitehorse. My daughter and grandchildren were with me and we stopped at each and every one and visited the museums and information centers. We spent the night at Beaver Creek, in a cute little motel across the street from the Westmark.

Margaret (Burian) Underwood (daughter of Rudy and Yvonne Burian.)

*Have explained that the dictionary associated with Word can be change between Canadian and American English (or other languages). – Sherron*

## **Jack and Hazel Meloy of Kirkman Creek**

Don Frizzell's mention of Jack and Hazel Meloy in the last Moc Tel prompted me to write about this wonderful couple, who were our closest neighbors 30 miles up the Yukon River from Stewart, for many years during my childhood.

Each spring, after the river was clear of ice and the boat went in the river, a visit to the Meloy's was our first trip on the river. After the long winter and very few visitors, other

than Monty Alford and his Water Resources crew once or twice over the winter, our trip to Kirkman was a much anticipated event.

Jack and Hazel would be on the beach, awaiting our arrival, when we pulled in. After hugs and greetings, we would walk the short distance to their house where Mrs. Meloy would serve either coffee and treats, or lunch, depending on what time we arrived.

Being kids and having been taught that “kids should be seen and not heard,” we would sit patiently and quietly while the adults discussed the events of the past winter and presently Mrs. Meloy would notice that we were becoming a little antsy after sitting for so long, and she would take us outdoors and find something fun to occupy our time.

Jack and Hazel’s place at Kirkman was a real showplace as they would plant flowers in among the hills of potatoes and there were flower gardens everywhere. Their place was very well and lovingly tended.

As Kirkman was our first spot to visit in the spring, Stewart was the last place Jack and Hazel visited in the fall of the year. Each July or August, they would travel to Idaho to visit Hazel’s elderly aunt. Upon their return in September, they would stop in and spend the night with us before travelling the last river miles to Kirkman for the winter. They always brought us a case of some fruit for the winter; apples, plums or whatever they had brought back with them.

After they moved to Dawson, sometime in the 1960’s, Jack would travel each fall before the ice started running, to Kirkman to check on the place, or to go moose hunting. He passed away during one of these trips and it was believed that he had a heart attack while on the river. My brother, Robin, who had set out to check on him when he didn’t return on schedule, found him and his boat. His passing was a very sad day for the Burian family and, I am sure, for everyone who knew him.

I returned to the Yukon for a visit in 1966 and Jack and Hazel were then living in Dawson; I was pleasantly surprised that they knew who I was when I went to visit them as I had been a teenager the last time they’d seen me. They both had wonderful memories, for the ages they were at that time. I never saw Jack again but when I resumed returning home after an absence of thirteen years, I would visit Mrs. Meloy and she always knew who I was. She had to have been well into her eighties by then and her constant companion was her little dog whom she took everywhere she went. One never saw Mrs. Meloy without that dog, whose name I have forgotten.

Mrs. Meloy was a strong true pioneer lady, having “packed in” with her first husband, during the Chisana Stampede. Details of her early life in the Yukon are somewhat blurred in my mind, so I am not going to elaborate for fear of making an inaccurate statement. She and Jack will always stand out in my memory as two of the most wonderful people I have had the honour to know in my lifetime.

Margaret (Burian) Meloy [yukonl80@hotmail.com](mailto:yukonl80@hotmail.com) (In San Jacinto CA)

**CAN YOU GUESS WHAT THIS IS?**



This is a 5 Meg Hard Disk in 1956.

In September 1956 IBM launched the 305 RAMAC, the first computer with a hard disk drive (HDD). The HDD weighed over a ton and stored 5MB of data.

Start appreciating your 4 GB memory stick!

## **YUKON MEMORIES**

By Ted North [ttnorth@telus.net](mailto:ttnorth@telus.net) (In Edmonton)

After reading the latest 'chapter' of "Pack dogs and helicopters" by Pat Callison - I fell to remembering one of my most enduring memories of the Yukon.

It was the summer of 1959 and Mel O'Reilly and I roomed together with Gerry McAllister. We were both just out of the RCAF and single and life was one big

adventure. I'd taken a job as an Announcer with the CBC Northern Service - CFYT Dawson City. I couldn't know it at the time but it was just the beginning of a 32-year career that had all sorts of twists and turns ahead.

Mel was Assistant Ranger with Yukon Forestry and was gone most of the summer - fighting forest fires and such. One day in early July he sent word to me that I should join him on a particularly interesting fire that was threatening an oil exploration camp (do I remember that it was called Chance Camp?) near the Arctic Circle.

This sounded too good to pass up, so on my next few days off from broadcasting I hitched a ride North with a Beaver - taking off on floats on the Yukon River - in time to see the girl I was dating, driving away with the local Mountie. (OK, so I later got the girl and we've been married nearly 48 years and now have 4 grown kids who've given us 9 grandchildren - - but I digress)

It was one of those marvellous Yukon summer evenings and we flew steadily North following a river that took us quite close to Tombstone Mountain - it was a spectacular flight! We landed at a small glassy smooth lake (do I remember it was called Palmer Lake?) where a helicopter pilot was patiently catching grayling while waiting to ferry me into the fire site in his Bell G2.

As we neared the fire it was close to midnight with the sun high in the sky and so much smoke we had a tough time finding any sign of the crew fighting the fire. After searching for awhile the pilot spotted a hose-line running through the trees and he landed nearby and dropped me off with instructions that when he flew away I'd be able to hear the scream of the Wajax pumps and simply follow the noise to find the crew.

As he clattered away into the distance I strained for any sound of pumps but instead heard the most profound silence I've ever experienced. There wasn't ANY noise except occasionally the soft sound of burning trees. The smoke kept the bugs at bay - which was a mercy since I suddenly realized how ill-equipped I was. Had a grizzly bounced out of the trees - I didn't even have a axe or a knife. The helicopter pilot had tossed me a can of peaches before he left, but I had no way to open it.

I flipped a coin to decide which way to walk, following the hose-line and hoping to sooner or later run into someone. I stumbled over very rough terrain, through the smoke and scrub brush, for a couple of hours. Still, no sounds to guide me. I was now very tired and so decided, like Rip Van Winkle, to stretch out under a small tree and have a nap. I cannot know how long I slept but was awakened by a roaring noise that startled me awake and caused me to jump up - just in time to avoid being run over by a D8 bulldozer that was plowing along right to me, full-tilt, cutting a fire break.

When I leaped up in front of him - I scared the bulldozer driver so badly he nearly fell out of his seat. He hadn't seen another human for miles and certainly wasn't expecting me! We had a good laugh and he opened my peaches with a screwdriver and we shared the

only liquid we had. Hitching a ride with him, it seemed to take only a few minutes before there ahead of us were the modular buildings of the oil drilling camp.

The fire had been controlled to a degree and diverted - the drilling camp was safe and so after a wash-up, a bite to eat and a good sleep, it was time to pull the crew out and head back to Dawson.

That was the full extent of my forest fire expedition to just south of the Arctic Circle!

Looking back on it now, close to fifty years later - it's a 'shaggy-dog story' but still one of my cherished memories of life in the Yukon. Something to tell those nine grandchildren.

Ted North

## **UPDATE FROM Donna Mclean**

Well the move is physically done and the consensus is I HAVE TOO MUCH STUFF. Some of which I haven't seen since 2000 when mom asked me to come to Kelowna and give her a hand. It's been in storage all that time.....yikes I didn't have a clue what I have but I Sally Anned a lot in Kelowna (I was on a first name basis with the receiver there). Now in unpacking I find that there still is stuff to go. Wonder if everyone has that problem at moving time.

Funny my old apartment had too little kitchen space and my new one scads. Still got it cramped to the gunnels though. Next move will be with a knife and for if needed and off to a good nursing home. Meanwhile I intend to enjoy my second childhood...my first left a lot to be desired.

Carol is looking for door prizes for the banquet..the old committee worked so hard and the new one is doing wonders for us.

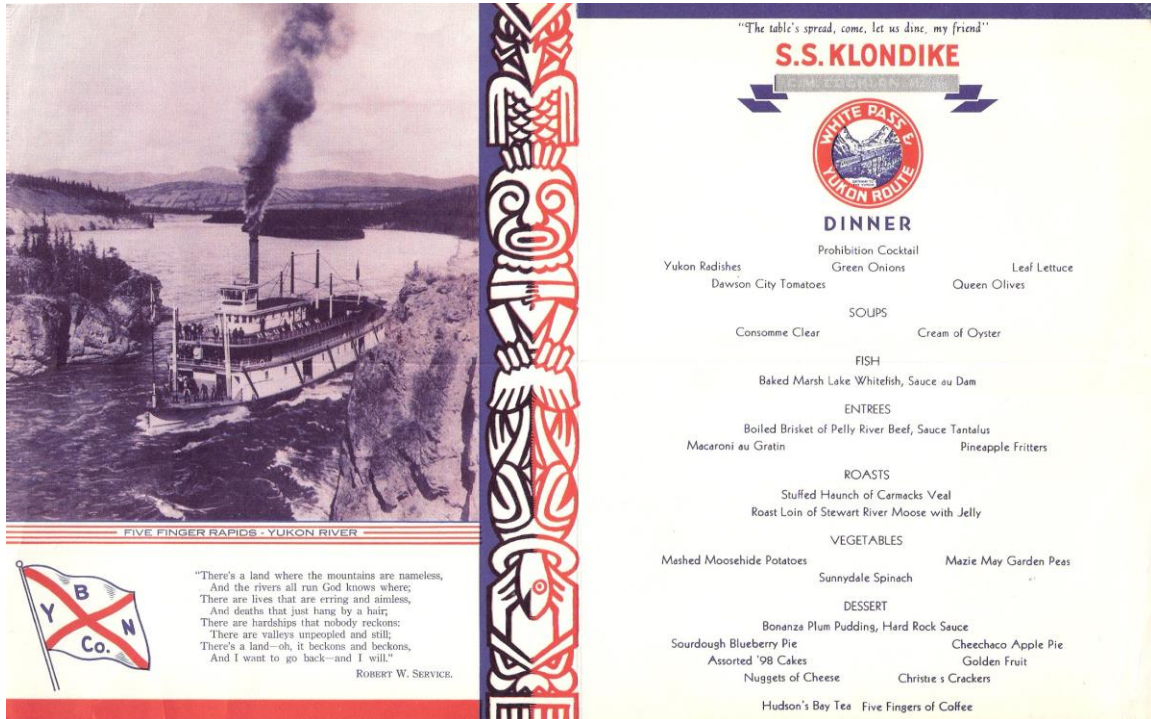
Someone mentioned Marie Fisher/Morgan. I saw Marie at moms funeral and she looks the same but with grey hair. She and Al still have their log building business although Al had a stroke and is supposed to take it easy will get a note to her and see if she would come down.

Well off to enjoy the sunshine before it rains.....I can now see the ocean - considering the apartment is 100 steps to it.....if anything I will have to get used to the dampness, while you and Bill enjoy the sunshine. Oh well you deserve it.

Donna Mclean [keebird\\*shaw.ca](mailto:keebird*shaw.ca) (In Victoria)

## SS KLONDIKE DINNER MENU

Submitted by Bill Weigand [bweigand@shaw.ca](mailto:bweigand@shaw.ca) (In Steveston BC)  
 Bill got it from Alex Seeley.



## GHOST OF ROBERT SERVICE ??

This was in a magazine I recently read.

About ghosts etc in Victoria.

In the 1950's a woman rented a room in the old building at Government and Fort Street in Victoria.

Over several evenings while preparing for bed she was unnerved to see a man staring at her thru the window across the street. She reported it to police and the room in question was investigated. The room locked in the old CIBC building had been unused for years, and was found to be vacant and the dust undisturbed.

Finally the ghost was identified as Robert Service the Yukon poet who once worked in the old CIBC building as a bank teller.

One dark and stormy night in 1904 service returned to his room above the bank where single men in those days did double duty as both teller and bank security only to discover the lights moving around in the adjoining funeral parlour.

Concerned that burglars might be attempting to break into the bank Service charged into the funeral parlour and fell squarely on top of the frozen body of a shipwreck victim who

had washed ashore in the Dallas road area hours before. Friends and family holding lanterns were busy identifying the many victims' bodies. Thoroughly scarred by this incident, Service returned to this traumatic rain soaked scene shortly before he died in 1952.

Does anyone have ghostly stories to share ?.....shiver !

Donna Mclean [keebird@shaw.ca](mailto:keebird@shaw.ca) (In Victoria)

## ARTISTIC TALENT



Photo courtesy Heinrich Lohmann [heinrich@lohmann.ca](mailto:heinrich@lohmann.ca) (In Airdrie AB)

*If anyone has any art work they have created and would be kind enough to share a photo of same – please send it to Sherron at [Sherronjones@shaw.ca](mailto:Sherronjones@shaw.ca)*

## Remember Fender Skirts and Steering Knobs ?

I came across this phrase in a book yesterday "FENDER SKIRTS".

A term I haven't heard in a long time and thinking about "fender skirts" started me thinking about other words that quietly disappear from our language with hardly a notice

Like "curb feelers"

And "steering knobs." (AKA) suicide knob

Since I'd been thinking of cars, my mind naturally went that direction first.

Any kids will probably have to find some elderly person over 50 to explain some of these terms to you.

Remember "Continental kits?"

They were rear bumper extenders and spare tire covers that were supposed to make any car as cool as a Lincoln Continental.

When did we quit calling them "emergency brakes?" At some point "parking brake" became the proper term.

But I miss the hint of drama that went with "emergency brake."

I'm sad, too, that almost all the old folks are gone who would call the accelerator the "foot feed."

Didn't you ever wait at the street for your daddy to come home, so you could ride the "running board" up to the house?

Here's a phrase I heard all the time in my youth but never anymore - "store-bought." Of course, just about everything is store-bought these days.

But once it was bragging material to have a store-bought dress or a store-bought bag of candy.

"Coast to coast" is a phrase that once held all sorts of excitement and now means almost nothing. Now we take the term "world wide" for granted. This floors me.

On a smaller scale, "wall-to-wall" was once a magical term in our homes.

In the '50s, everyone covered his or her hardwood floors with, wow, wall-to-wall carpeting!

Today, everyone replaces their wall-to-wall carpeting with hardwood floors. Go figure.

When's the last time you heard the quaint phrase "in a family way?"

It's hard to imagine that the word "pregnant" was once considered a little too graphic, a little too clinical for use in polite company.

So we had all that talk about stork visits and "being in a family way" or simply "expecting."

Apparently "brassiere" is a word no longer in usage. I said it the other day and my daughter cracked up. I guess it's just "bra" now "Unmentionables" probably wouldn't be understood at all.

I always loved going to the "picture show," but I considered "movie" an affectation.

Most of these words go back to the '50s, but here's a pure-'60s word I came across the other day - "rat fink." Ooh, what a nasty put-down!

Here's a word I miss - "percolator." That was just a fun word to say. And what was it replaced with? "Coffee maker." How dull. Mr. Coffee, I blame you for this.

I miss those made-up marketing words that were meant to sound so modern and now sound so retro.

Words like "DynaFlow" and "Electrolux."  
Introducing the 1963 Admiral TV, now with "SpectraVision!"

Food for thought - Was there a telethon that wiped out lumbago?  
Nobody complains of that anymore.

Maybe that's what castor oil cured, because I never hear mothers threatening kids with castor oil anymore.

Some words aren't gone, but are definitely on the endangered list.

The one that grieves me most "supper."  
Now everybody says "dinner." Save a great word.  
Invite someone to supper. Discuss fender skirts.

## **OBIT**

**MacINTOSH, Sylvia Jan** - 47, passed away in Whitehorse, Yukon, on Monday, January 22, 2007, after a brief illness. Sylvia was born in Sydney on April 20, 1959. She attended Sydney Academy and then graduated from Dalhousie Law School in 1984 and was called to the bar in Vancouver, B.C., in 1985. After a three-month trip to Europe in 1988, she moved to Whitehorse where she practiced law, first with the firm of Preston, Willis and Leitch and then with the Yukon Department of Justice. Sylvia is survived by her sons, Henry, Charlie and Louis; stepdaughter, Nicole, and their father, David Kedziora, all of Whitehorse; her mother and father, Ada and Murray "Mackie" MacIntosh, Sydney; her sister, Mona MacIntosh, Victoria, B.C.; and her brothers, Bradley (Valerie) MacIntosh and Murray (Darlene) MacIntosh, both of Sydney. She is also survived by nieces, Lindsey, Ashley, Krysta; nephews, Kelly and Keigan; her great-grandfather, Gordon Penny, Sydney; many aunts, uncles and cousins. An extraordinary woman, she will be deeply missed by all her family and all of her many friends who loved her. A memorial service will be held in The United Church, 601 Main St., Whitehorse, today at 2 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada, 620 Colborne St., Suite 301, London, ON N6B 3R9, or the charity of your choice.

## **REMOVED FROM THE LIST**

Invalid recipient: <[demachan@telus.net](mailto:demachan@telus.net)>

MACHAN, Don [demachan\\*telus.net](mailto:demachan*telus.net) (In Watson Lake 1951-53,56-58 In Mayo 19-55, 58-61)  
Qualicum

## NEW ADDITIONS

Hi Sherron I have not received a copy of the telegraph news yet perhaps you don't have my email correct, it is [ingriddick2000@yahoo.ca](mailto:ingriddick2000@yahoo.ca) looking forward to hearing from you.

Thanks Ingrid Dick (In Kelowna)

*I saw Ingrid at the Okanagan luncheon the day before we came south. I gave Ingrid a card with my address and my understanding was that she would e-mail me so I could get her address. So welcome Ingrid. Glad you e-mailed me now. – Sherron*

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*“Personality can open doors, but only character can keep them open.” Elmer G. Letterman*

## RECIPE OF THE WEEK

From the 1942 Eastern Star Cookbook:

Submitted by Maribeth Mainer [mainerml@shaw.ca](mailto:mainerml@shaw.ca) (In Burnaby)

### Orange Date Cake

I've made this from a later OES cookbook for years and never realized that it originated with Judge Gibben's first wife.

Cream together 1/2 cup butter with 1 cup sugar.

Add 1 beaten egg.

Sift 2 cups flour, adding alternately with 1 cup sour milk and 1 tsp. soda.

With last of flour add grated rind of one orange, 1/2 cup chopped nuts and 1 cup chopped dates.

Stir well and bake 3/4 hour in moderate oven. (375)

(Can be either a 9 x 5 x 3 loaf or an 8 x 8 x 2 cake. If you are going to ice it, do it as soon as the cake comes out of the oven!)

Icing:

To juice of 1 orange, add 1/2 cup sugar. Dissolve over slow fire and pour on top of cake as soon as it is removed from the oven.

(It is important to have the sugar well dissolved before icing the cake so start the icing before the oven time is up.)

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

**2007 Yukon Quest, begins Saturday February 10<sup>th</sup> in Whitehorse.**

<http://www.yukonquest.org/servlet/viewnewslist?null&resolution=1024&referer=>

**Canada Winter Games, February 23 – March 10, 2007.**

<http://www.2007canadagames.ca/>

**The Vancouver Yukoner's Association** plans for March 31st banquet are in full swing now and the response has been most gratifying, thanks, in large part, to the power of the MocTel and our own Carol Clarke's blitzkrieg email tactics!! There is a large group, led by Gus and Blanche Barrett coming from Vancouver Island, and we expect a good turnout from the interior as well.

Know that quite a number of present day Yukoners have made reservations at the River Rock, marking that weekend for a well deserved break from the cold weather of late. Larry Bidlake from Manitoba is even making the trip west for a good time with old school friends and his sister Diane King. Special guests are Commissioner Geraldine Van Bibber and her husband Pat along with this year's Mr. & Mrs. Yukon, Rudy and Janet Couture.

Time now to remind readers that if you can join us, send ticket monies - cheques please (\$55 a person) to:

Mary MacDonald,  
Apt.309 - 5166 Halifax St.,  
Burnaby, B.C., V5B 2N6

PREPAID tickets can be picked up at the door the night of the event. We need to have numbers early in March for the hotel catering staff. If you wish to stay at the River Rock Resort where the banquet is being held you can call them toll free at 1.866.748.3718 and remember to ask for the Yukoner's rate!! For more information you can email [clclarke@shaw.ca](mailto:clclarke@shaw.ca) or [hmunro@shaw.ca](mailto:hmunro@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](mailto:sherronjones@shaw.ca)

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