

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – 209th Edition – June 17th, 2007

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The Commissioner's table, with Mr. and Mrs. Yukon (Rudy and Jan Couture), Chief Justice and Mrs. Veale, Commissioner Van Bibber and her aide, Inspector John Brown.

Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

THE COMMISSIONER'S TEA

by Palma Berger fpbrgr@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

The trees were a rich green, the Commissioner's Residence was resplendent in draped and flowing union jacks. The grounds were alive with colour as so many people, most in period costume, moved around the grounds, followed of course by quite a few photographers.

This was the occasion of the annual Commissioner's Tea; a tradition started during the Yukon's 75th anniversary and now continued to its 109th, for this is also the celebration of the territory's birthday.

Rob Watt, Superintendent of Dawson Historic Complex, in his opening remarks brought out the facts that at the first Commissioner's Tea there were 1000 sandwiches served, as well as 40 cakes. The only odd thing about the commissioner's tea then, was that it was presided over by the famous Martha Black, a lady from Chicago, and a lady who had

probably been associated with the Daughters of the American Revolution and was now a key figure in the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire.

At that time, the Federal Government was represented by the Commissioner of the Yukon for whom the Official Residence was built in 1901.

The present day Commissioner is a Dawson girl, Geraldine Van Bibber. Although the office of Commissioner no longer carries the weight of representing "Peace, Order and good government" for the Federal Government, the position is still the Queen's representative in the Yukon.

As the Tea is traditionally put on by the IODE, Joyce Caley as representative of that group welcomed everybody to the event. Joyce explained that the organization is no longer referred to as I.O.D.E., but has become IODE, just one word; as ideals, politics and times change, so did the title of the organization. It is still a group of Canadian women working together to improve the lives of children, youth and citizens in need. She quoted from the Queen's Commonwealth Day Speech, which deplored what the world of today has become and urged everybody to "find our diversity a cause for celebration and a source of strength and unity."

The M.C. , Rachel Wieggers, next introduced the Commissioner, Geraldine Van Bibber. Geraldine had spent quite a few years of her life growing up in Dawson. She remembered as a young girl learning the proper etiquette of serving tea. Silver was polished, and fine china cups were taken out. Lump sugar was served for the occasion. Such a treat.

Desserts were made, "something to wow the guests with their gooeyness". Gold nugget teaspoons were taken out of safe keeping to be used. But even washing up was an event, she said, as one rarely handled these precious household items.

She introduced her special guests who included her son and wife, two former commissioners Jim Smith and Art Pearson and their wives, her Aide, Inspector John Brown, Minister of Tourism Elaine Taylor, Supreme Court Judge Ron Veale, and wife Katherine, and Mr and Mrs Yukon 2007, Rudy and Jan Couture.

The entertainment of the day was from singer/ pianist Wendy Perry and sax player Fred Ossen.

Parks Canada's Johnny Nunan advised us all that Robert Service first wrote his Songs of a Sourdough one hundred years ago. To honour that occasion he recited "Spell of the Yukon" as Robert service wrote it in 1907.

The highlight of the day was the presenting of the commissioner's awards. These are chosen by a committee from the submissions sent to the Commissioner. There are two categories; one for Voluntary Public Service, and the other for Bravery.

Mayor John Steins spoke on the Voluntary Public Service Award which was to go to Dan Davidson for his many years on the local volunteer community newspaper, The Klondike Sun. Steins thought he should also get the bravery award as he is a newspaper man, and not everyone agrees with the views expressed in a newspaper.

But he is a communicator, Steins said. He goes to City Council meetings after meetings on his own time, covering anything of consequence; also making sure the paper is put together in time and delivered to the public on time. Dan has been with the Klondike Sun for 19 years.

After accepting his award from the commissioner, Dan reflected on receiving an award like this. The problem, he said, is that there are many other people who do it with you, and he named many who have been involved with, or still are involved with the paper.

“It is also strange to receive an award for an activity one enjoys doing”, he said. Some are addicted to cigarettes or alcohol, whereas he is addicted to writing.



Commissioner Geraldine Van Bibber presents Dan Davidson with Commissioner Award for Public Service.

Photo by Michael Davidson

The award for Bravery was announced by Dawson Fire Chief Jim Regimbal. He said this was for outstanding acts of bravery. These individuals saved the life of another usually in hazardous circumstances and at great personal risk. These people chose to take the risk to save someone’s life. It is not known if these people make the decision with their hearts or their minds.

He commended Janice Kormendy, Margie Baikie, Anna Claxton, members of the Dawson Ambulance crew, for showing bravery of a high order. They risked their own lives by entering a burning building to rescue Mr. Joe Vigneau who was trapped inside. The house was filled with smoke. Burning toxins can paralyze anyone within seconds. Visibility can deteriorate rapidly.

Regimbal said he has known risks but they were part of his job. What Janice, Margie and Anna did was not part of their job as ambulance workers. They put their lives on the line to rescue Joe.

The Commissioner presented each with her award.

After the high of the awards, the cutting of the cake took place and all settled down to a

tasty treats to follow on the treats served earlier.
And the sun came out again.



Commission Geraldine Van Bibber presents - Anna Claxton, Janice Kormendy and Marjie Baikie – with Commissioners Awards for Bravery while working as volunteer ambulance crew members who saved a man in a burning building.

Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

Andover-Harvard Yukon Expedition 1948

Continued

Field Notes of Elmer Harp Jr. Dartmouth College North to the Yukon Territory via the Alcan Highway in 1948

8 May

Lunch .25

Gas – 14.1 gal. @ .266 – Fargo, North Dakota 3.75

Dinner 1.70 Telegrams 1.81

Stopped at Grand Forks, N.D. after terribly dull run north down Red River valley from Fargo. Flat as a pancake. Should have stayed at the Hotel Dacotah in Grand Forks, but we missed it going thru town and finally ended up in a rather smelly tourist cabin where we damn near froze under cotton blankets.

The Dakotah is fine and modern-looking.

Sunday 9 May

Starting Mileage = 2948

Breakfast .85

Gas – 13.2 gal. @ .273 3.60

1 qt. oil .40

Dinner at Minot, N.D. 1.85

Cigars .25

Tried to make Williston, N.D. on our gas (all intervening places shut down because Sunday), but ran dry just as we came into outskirts. Filled from spare can.

Gas – 18.0 gal. @ .288, Williston, N.D. 5.18

Supper 1.00

Met a [native] and family stalled on road with “new” second-hand jalopy—gave him some gas, but apparently his fuel-pump was bad, so took one of his party on with us for help. We pushed on to Wolf Point, Montana and ended up in a very lush and brand new cabin with Hollywood beds, rugs, private bath, plenty of heat, etc. Most attractive at 6.00 for the 2 of us.

Monday 10 May

Starting Mileage = 3387

Breakfast .80

Decided to detour and have a look at the Ft. Peck dam. Wasted most of the morning on this junket which turned out to be somewhat of a fiasco.

Gas – 12.5 gal. @ .305 – Glasgow, Montana 3.80

1 qt. oil .40 Chassis lubrication and grease 1.25

Lunch .60 2 Pocket Book mysteries .50

Gas – 10.0 gal. @ .295 – Havre, Mont. 2.95

Shopped around Havre for half-hour. Much the same as in 1937 but some new buildings—place seems more modern and bustling than before.

Would have seen Geo. Bowery if more time.

Kodachrome (2 rolls of 20 exp.) 6.64

About 50 miles out of Havre in middle of nowhere the engine began to cough again—more fuel line trouble. Just made the next small town where a mechanic in International Harvester station checked and we found a plug in the line—apparently same one that had troubled us back in Mass.

Blowing out fuel line .70

Postcard .10

Dinner (Shelby, Mont.) 1.10

Beer .60

Jukebox .10
Gas – 7.2 gal. @ .293 – Shelby, Mont. 2.12
4 qts.oil @ .40 1.60
Paper .05

Tuesday 11 May

Starting Mileage = 3725

At the border it took us about an hour to clear customs. The main thing we lacked was a list of items carried in the car, equipment, etc. Raining there at Coutts.

Gas 5. Imp. gal. @ .39 –Lethbridge, Alta. (3825)

1.95

1 qt. oil .55

Very bad stretch of road between McCleod and Calgary–recent floods and washouts have shelled hell out of the pavement.

Gas – 6.8 Imp. gal. @ .36 –Calgary, Alta. 2.45

Lunch .95

Stamped envelopes 1.85

Dinner .90

Ale .50

Stopped in Red Deer, Alta. for the night. Couldn't get into a hotel—all full but landed in a pleasant tourist cabin.

Wednesday 12 May 1948

Starting Mileage = 4053

Breakfast and paper 1.00

Began collecting poplar trees this am—hell of a long job. Takes close to an hour/ tree (P. tremuloides and P. tacamahaca): measure height, DBH, height to first live branch and diameter at that height, take a core sample and count age, take a photograph, dig up root samples for airmailing back to States, take twig and bud specimens.

Lunch .50

Stopped in Edmonton, Alta. All hotels jammed: no reservations at the MacDonald; nothing at the Corona, or King Edward. No other hotels any good and all full anyhow. Finally got a room at the Roseberry, a middle class whore-house which stank of disinfectant. Spent a rather uncomfortable night there. All this bustle in town because of new oil field which opened a few miles to the S a year ago, and the town is filled to overflowing with commercial men, oil men, laborers, camp followers, etc. A mess.

Car lubrication 1.25

Gas – 10.4 Imp. gal. @ .376 3.90

Dinner 2.05

Paper .05 Movie .65

Strolled around the place, putting off going back to the Roseberry as long as possible.

Enjoyed the show: Spencer Tracy and Lana Turner in “Cass Timberlane.”

Overnight Car Storage (Bribed a patrolman to let us into garage) 1.00

Drury (airmail for poplars) 10.00

Thursday 13 May 1948

Breakfast .82 Art supplies 8.75

Checked all over Edmonton for info. On road to Dawson Creek, but all news was conflicting. The AMA said stay off and ship across by rail, but from what we could learn, some cars were getting thru. Checked with CNR on freight rates: \$94.00 for the car and about \$20.00 apiece for us, to and the next train across wouldn't get us thru until Tuesday 18 May. Quite a stew. Ran out a few miles to see what the beginning looked like, and when a new Studebaker with Alaska plates passed us by, that settled it! If they could do it—so could we!

Turned back, stocked up on grub for 7-10 days, checked out of the Roseberry, lunched and shoved off at 1 PM.

Lunch .60

Wire – Fred at Milwaukee 1.86

Wire – Elaine - Hanover 1.87

Starting Mileage from Edmonton = 4180

Road fine, Mostly dirt and very dusty, but highly passable and we rolled along without any trouble, making about 160 miles good in the afternoon.

Occasional beer stops will help a lot to cut that dust.

Beer .50

Gas – 6.9 Imp. gal. @ .427 –Athabasca, Alta 2.95

Stopped at Smith, Alta. on the Athabasca R., and found a tiny hotel back in the bush a 1/2 mile from the road. Damn little else there except a beer parlor and R.R. Station. No running water here, but clean and comfortable rooms and chemical toilets.

Dinner .70

Beer .50

Drury (change-making) 1.00

Friday 14 May 1948

Last night at 9 it began to rain, and it kept up all night, and all thru this day. Road, with very little gravel on it was a slough and extremely bad.

Starting Mileage = 4325

Breakfast .70

After crossing the Athabasca R., just beyond Smith, had to back down the big hill twice before getting over the top the 3rd time. Made about 40 miles in first 3 hrs. Then stopped in Slave Lake for refreshments.

Coffee and cookies

Picked up a Mountie here, Constable Eagleson who wanted to get thru to High Prairie.

Let him take the wheel for about 30 mile—a shattering experience. Stopped in Faust for mid-afternoon. Lunch and gas.

Gas – 10.0 Imp. gal. @ .45 4.50

1 qt. oil .50



Lesser Slave Lake, Alberta

Continued beyond Faust for 10 mile until we came to a truck who had been deeply mired in the center of the road since morning and it was no longer possible to get around him, so turned back to Faust. This is a tiny village on the southern shore of Lesser Slave Lake, and I guess its excuse for being is the commercial white fish in the lake.

Lake is still frozen over now and fishing is supposed to open Monday. Nice new little hotel here with pleasant furnishings and reasonable rates running water, lights, etc—the main income coming from the Beer license. Eagleson called this the toughest little town in the NW and said more fights occurred here than anywhere else. The whole place is a flooded morass, what with the rain, which finally let up toward 6 pm and the snow melting down from the hills. Road thru town completely under water and washing out fast. Cleaned off our feet in the flooded basement of hotel before going up to our rooms. One drunken Indian passed out and fell into a 3' deep flood pool in front of hotel and would have drowned if not dragged out.

Beer .50

Dinner 1.00



Beyond High Prairie, Alta

To be continued

Commissioner's Klondike Ball Celebrates Service Centenary

by Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

June 10, 2007

Did Robert W. Service get a bad rap at the Commissioner's Ball? To be the judge of that you would have to have heard the presentation made by Johnny Nunan and Fred Ossan during the second half of the Commissioner's Ball on the evening of June 9. Their rendition of "The Cremation of Sam McGee" gave a whole new twist to the idea of strange things being done 'neath the Midnight Sun

Since Service and the celebration of it being 100 years since the publication of Songs of a Sourdough was the centerpiece of this year's Ball, it figured that there was lots of Service on tap.

In the first half of the evening emcee Johnny Nunan donned his other persona, reciting "Bessie's Boil" (that's "bile" when done with a Scot's accent) and acting out a high energy recitation of "The Shooting of Dan McGrew".

Commissioner Geraldine Van Bibber welcomed everyone to the 2007 Klondike Ball and introduced its theme.

"When he wrote "Spell of the Yukon" 100 years ago I am sure that he had no idea of the impact of his poetry, or that a ball would have a theme related to his words. I use 'The Spell of the Yukon' many times in my presentations because I just love that line 'and some would trade it for no land on earth - and I'm one.'

Van Bibber told of her own fascination with the history of her home town and spoke with pleasure of seeing some of these same events celebrated during the Historical Fair held in Whitehorse in early May. There were projects on the Palace Grand, the Commissioner's residence and the old Bank of Commerce, among others.

"I told them of the gold dredges, big noisy creatures clanging and banging, leaving big huge caterpillars behind them strewn along the Klondike Valley; of the dust and cobwebs in old Palace Grand Theatre before it was restored; of the events that must have happened here: fancy balls, the who's who in town, to the miners who came to see the fine life, and perhaps pay dearly for a dance with a dance hall girl, or to hear Klondike Kate; of doing our banking at the now neglected and sad looking CIBC bank, where my nose just came up to the edge of the counter when I pushed my bankbook across to the teller peering down at me; where Robert Service spent his working days before heading home to his cabin on Eighth Avenue to write."

Klondike Visitors Association chairman Jorn Meier spoke of the living tradition of the ball and how happy the KVA was to be involved.

"It is part of our mandate to keep tradition alive in the territory."

The evening continued with a fine meal - a return to the banquets of old - the Robert Service recitations mentioned earlier, and a lively dance with music by the Swamp Donkies, who provided a slightly country/rock tinged sound ranging from interpretations of hits by Blondie, Dire Straits, to the Beatles, Great Big Sea, Nancy Sinatra, Chubby Checker, and many more.

Guests were invited to attend Peabody's Photo Parlour on the second floor of the theatre to obtain a free souvenir photo of the evening and to take home a wine glass etched with the name of this year's ball. Finally, on the gift list, Natasha Burian won the door prize of a Princess Tours Cruise.



Commissioner Geraldine Van Bibber reminisces about life in Dawson as a child.
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)



Johnny Nunan and Fred Osson reinterpret Robert Service as a rap artist for the 21st century.

Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)



The Swamp Donkies kept the dance floor full and hopping.
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

MAD TRAPPER STORY – more to the story!

Submitted by Pat King patkingis@shaw.ca (In Penticton)

Note: (Page 10 – The Vancouver Sun, Friday **May 19, 1972**)

40 year old Mad Trapper riddle in no mystery to city couple.

By Moira Farrow



An elderly Vancouver couple are convinced they know the answer to one of Canada's greatest mysteries -- the identity of the Mad Trapper of Rat River.

The Mad Trapper was the meaning given by the news media in 1932 to a man who defied the RCMP for 54 days in a cross-country chase in the Arctic weather from Rat River, NWT to Eagle River in the Yukon. During this time, the man whom police believed was named Albert Johnson, engaged in four shoot-outs with the Mounties killing one and wounding two others.

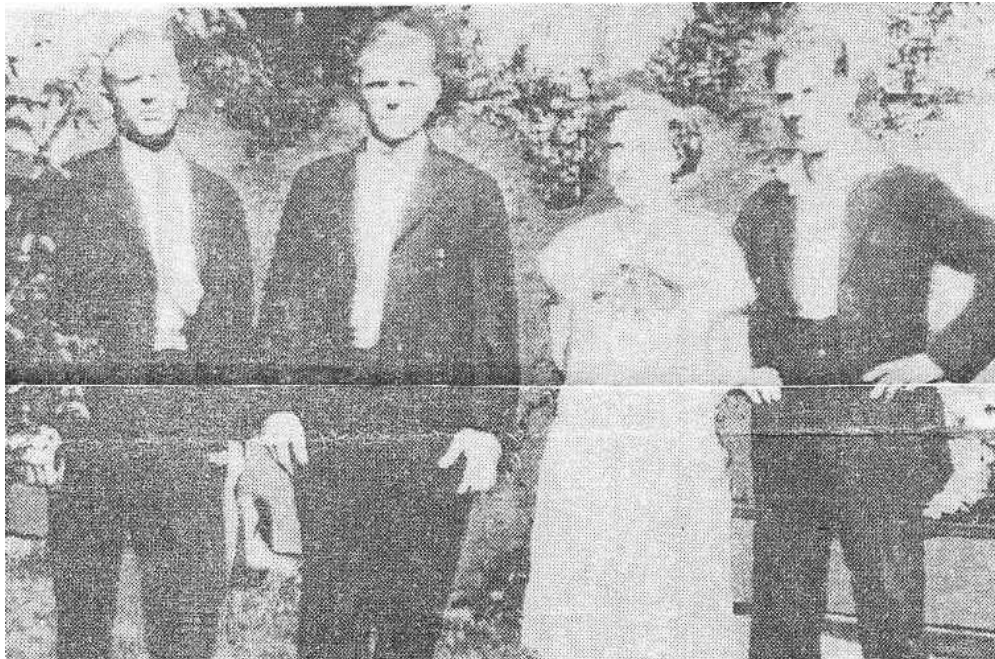
The RCMP pursued him with nine dog teams supported for the first time in a police chase by a plane and a portable two-way radio.

The Mounties finally cornered Johnson on Eagle River, 150 miles from where the chase began, and the trapper died fighting on Feb 17, 1932. He carried no papers and for forty years his identity has been a mystery.

But it's not a mystery to Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Benson of 2962 West Fifteenth.

"The Mad Trapper was the man we knew in Vancouver in 1927 as Albert Johnson." 80 year old Benson said in an interview. "There's absolutely no doubt in my mind."

For proof he produced a photograph of the Johnson he knew taken in a Vancouver garden before the man returned to his traplines up north and vanished forever from the Bensons' life. Benson compared it with an RCMP photograph taken of the Mad Trapper after he was killed.



ALBERT JOHNSON, second from left . . . in city garden

"That's the Johnson we knew." Said Benson. And his wife, Helen, added her firm agreement.

The Bensons were married in 1926 and their first home was in the 2100 block West Sixth where they lived with Benson's Swedish-born mother.

Work was hard to come by and Benson started a small shipyard on False Creek which he later moved to Coal Harbor. The business is run today by his nephew, Bob Benson.

It was a boat that brought Benson and Johnson together in the first place.

"Johnson and his partner, who was a French Canadian, had put a deposit down on a fishboat and they asked me to look it over." Benson said.

“The boat was OK but I told them it wasn’t big enough for two men to go trolling in, especially when they didn’t know the BC Coast. I advised Johnson not to buy the boat and so he didn’t.”

That meeting between Benson and Johnson Developed into a friendship which lasted for only a few months in 1927 but has remained in Benson’s mind ever since.

“I asked Johnson to the house because I felt sorry for him,” he recalled. “Johnson and his partner – whose name I don’t remember – had been trapping in the Northwest Territories and when they made some money they quit and came down south to get into business and start a different life.”

But things didn’t work out that way. Johnson and his partner bought into a fuel (wood and coal) business but were swindled and lost their money. It was after that that they tried to buy a fishboat and met Benson.

“They really got gypped on the fuel business because Vancouver was lousy with sharks in those days – men who’d take you for all they could get,” said Benson. “But I gave Johnson solid, sound advice and he talked to me a lot.”

“He told me he was from Karlskrona, Sweden, and I don’t know how old he was when he left but he’d been to school there and done his army service before he left.”

Many versions of the Mad Trapper story state that Johnson was believed to be a Scandinavian.

“Johnson spoke English very well but he like talking Swedish to my mother,” Benson said.

Said Mrs. Benson: “I made Swedish meatballs when he came to dinner because he said his mother had made them. He had great strength, that man. He had arms and legs like tree trunks.”

Benson said the RCMP statement that the Mad Trapper was about five feet nine inches with sandy hair was “near enough” a description of the Johnson he knew.

“He was a damn good man with an axe and he had a huge chest,” said Benson. “But he was very quiet and didn’t say much. He didn’t have any friends that I knew of. My wife and I felt sorry for him because the shysters had roped him in.”

Benson said he believed Johnson lived in a small hotel in Vancouver but he never asked him where “because it was none of my damn business.”

After failing to get a job or buy into a successful business, Johnson and his partner finally decided to return to trapping in the north.

“But he went back with a big grudge,” said Benson. “I never heard from him again but I learned that he and his partner split up when they got to Edmonton. I don’t know why.”

According to RCMP records, the police chase began when some Indians complained in December 1931 that a man named Johnson had been springing their traps along Rat River. It’s a story that Benson doesn’t believe.

“I think the Indians didn’t like the competition they were getting from Johnson,” he said “I think they were after his trapline and that’s why they told a false story about him to the police, I’m sure Johnson was an honest man.”

The Bensons have great admiration for Johnson’s endurance in the chase that captured the imagination of the world.

All the time he was tracked by the Mounties, Johnson travelled on snowshoes that weighted 10 pounds each, carried a heavy pack, and snared rabbits and squirrels for food.

He dared not use a rifle to obtain food for fear of the posse hearing the shots. And in temperatures of 45 below he could not build a large fire for fear of the posse seeing the smoke.

“They’d never have got him if it hadn’t been for the plane,” said Benson who has never told the police of his knowledge of Johnson all though he has read all he could about the Mad Trapper story.

CORRECTION – HOWARD CRONKHITE AND DEACON PHELPS

Hi Sherron just read the latest MT and noted a picture in the article "Deacon" Phelps. I believe that the RCMP inspector on the left to my uncle inspector Howard Cronkhite the caption has his name with a K it should be a C.

We are still enjoying the MT and reading about lots of old friends.

Thank you for your great effort.

Bill and Colleen Chapman cwchapman*tbwifi.ca (In Devon AB)

MILES CANYON BRIDGE formerly LOWE BRIDGE

In reading this week's edition of Moc Tel I thought I might be able to provide some information regarding the Miles Canyon bridge. In Yukon Archives material, the August 16, 1922 edition of the Dawson Daily News gives this account of the August 13, 1922 Dedication Ceremony for the bridge:

"LOWE BRIDGE IS DEDICATED AT WHITEHORSE

Officers of the steamer Whitehorse, which was in port today, reported that at 9 o'clock last Sunday morning His Excellency Lord Byng dedicated with appropriate ceremony the new footbridge just completed across Miles canyon, four miles above Whitehorse. Introductory remarks were made by William Galpin, of Whitehorse, and a suitable address was made by His Excellency, after which he christened the bridge the "**Lowe Bridge**", after Robert Lowe, pioneer of Whitehorse and member of the Yukon council for the Whitehorse district. Despite the early hour several of the officers of the Whitehorse and about twenty Whitehorse citizens were present. The bridge is eighty-five feet long, and suspended from wooden towers on wire cables anchored at each end. The bridge was built by the government and Whitehorse people, under direction of Bert Peterson, chief wharfinger at Whitehorse. After dedication the train, with Their Excellencies, proceeded for Skagway....."

Within the Phelps/Scott Family fonds at Yukon Archives is a wonderful photograph of Lord and Lady Byng on the bridge at the time of the dedication (YA Acc#89/31 #42)

Iris Warner also published an interesting account of the dedication ceremony and the bridge in the souvenir issue of Klondike '73. She calls it "First Tourist Project--When they built the Miles Canyon bridge".

Thought this might be of interest!

We have the fans running full blast today at YA, attempting to cool us as we enjoy a spectacular June day!!

Heather Jones hjones*northwestel.net (In Whitehorse)



Lowe Bridge / Miles Canyon Bridge

Photo courtesy Gina (Hughes) Span ginaspan@yahoo.com (In Coquitlam BC)

DONNA ASKED ABOUT THE BRIDGE AND NOW ABOUT THE BELL

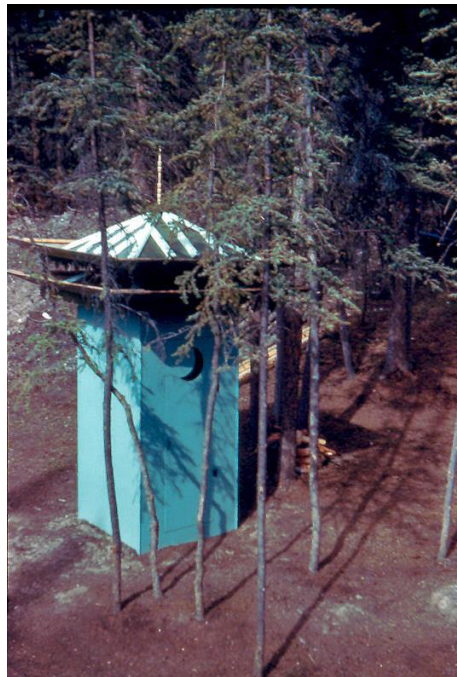
Hi Sherron it was me that asked about the bridge. That [Heather's message above] will be of interest to a lot of us old timers.

Next question...there was an old tower with a bell on it when I started school...Goodie Erickson may remember it too.. Don't know why it was there. Know Anne Taylors family lived in a lovely log house down the way. Great fun for us kids to ring the bell and run. I don't think anyone chased us..we just ran... I remember lifting little Benny Sheardown up so he could ring it. Hmm maybe I was a bad influence. Lol

Take care Donna (Needham) McLean keebird*shaw.ca (In Victoria)

OUTHOUSE COLLECTION, etc.

Thanks for all your work. I have been enjoying all the issues and stories. Love your "outhouse" collection. Don't know if I've sent this to you for your collection already, but worth sending again. This was our real outhouse at Kookatsoon Lake from 1956 until it was sold in 1968. My mom so fondly called it the biffy but I always called it the Pagoda.



Pagoda / Biffy – at Kookatsoon Lake

Photo courtesy Gina (Hughes) Span ginaspan*yahoo.com (In Coquitlam BC)

Whitehorse Named Capital City

By Les McLaughlin

It was a day for celebration in Whitehorse back in March of 1951. But for the people of Dawson City it was a black day not soon to be forgotten.

The news came by way of a telegram from Yukon Member of Parliament Aubrey Simmons. On **March 12, 1951**, the federal government announced that Whitehorse would become the new capital of the Yukon. Dawson City residents were none too pleased with the prospect.

A new federal building would be constructed at the corner of Fourth and Main Street... the site of the town's ball diamond. To make matters worse in Dawson, the federal government said the National Employment office there would be closed and business out of that office would also be moved to Whitehorse.

But the move would take some time. Office space and accommodation had to be found for the new territorial administration. **Whitehorse officially became the capital a little more than two years later on April 1st, 1953.**

The first session of the wholly elected territorial council was held on April 8th, 1953. The councilors included Alex Hayes of Carmacks, Vincent Mellor of Dawson, Alec Berry of Mayo, John Phelps of Whitehorse east and Fred Locke of Whitehorse west.

What kind of business was on the agenda? Well, Alec Berry said public works might not be able to do any road work because of the poor condition of the equipment... Vincent Mellor urged completion of the Dawson road. Fred Locke said the territory needed more money from Ottawa saying taxation in the Yukon was at the limit.

Well, the Dawson road was eventually completed. Public works equipment was updated. Ottawa sent more money. And taxes continued to grow.

A CKRW Yukon Nugget by Les McLaughlin.

Courtesy Rolf & Marg Hougén marg*hougens.com (In Whitehorse)



Whitehorse 1950 Army barracks in the foreground – Lambert Street School right – Above school the court house and post office. Centre: Whitehorse Inn that was expanded in 1948. Left: Ball park and T.C. Richards residence.

Courtesy Rolf & Marg Hougen marg*hougens.com (In Whitehorse)

A LETTER FROM DAD - 1946

A busy time of year and I am alone now and what used to take me a day to do now takes a week. My son-in-law and one of my granddaughters are with me now for a while and he has been a big help raking the yard and handling the cleanup. Now I have planted the greenhouse and the veggie garden and still too cold for the bedding plants. So a good day for me to catch up on all the things and indoor things that I have fallen behind on.

I enclose a letter I got from my Dad in 1946. If you think you can use it feel free to do so.

The jest of the story is I was sent to Dawson, as I was nine years old to have my tonsils and adenoids out. I travelled with Arthur Johanson and Andy Éclair, two nice old timers who were going as well for health reasons. The hospital was closed down in Mayo at the time due to war years.

I was strapped down with the seat belt at once and remained that way until the p[lane] landed in Dawson. I think we traveled in a DC 3 so I didn't enjoy my first ride.

Upon arrival Mother Superior met me at the airport which seemed miles away from town. And took me to the hospital and got me settled in with my first glass of fresh milk from their own farm. The nuns had an island that was their farm. I was used to Klim or True-Milk.

I remember the nuns – Sister Mary Mark and Sister Lorena. The Doctors were Dr. Barry Duncan and Dr. Allan Duncan. I hadn't seen Dr. Allan Duncan since 1937 when I arrived in Dawson on April 16th.

The music of the day was "The Happy Gang". The nurses used to take me to their sitting room and let me play their gramophone.

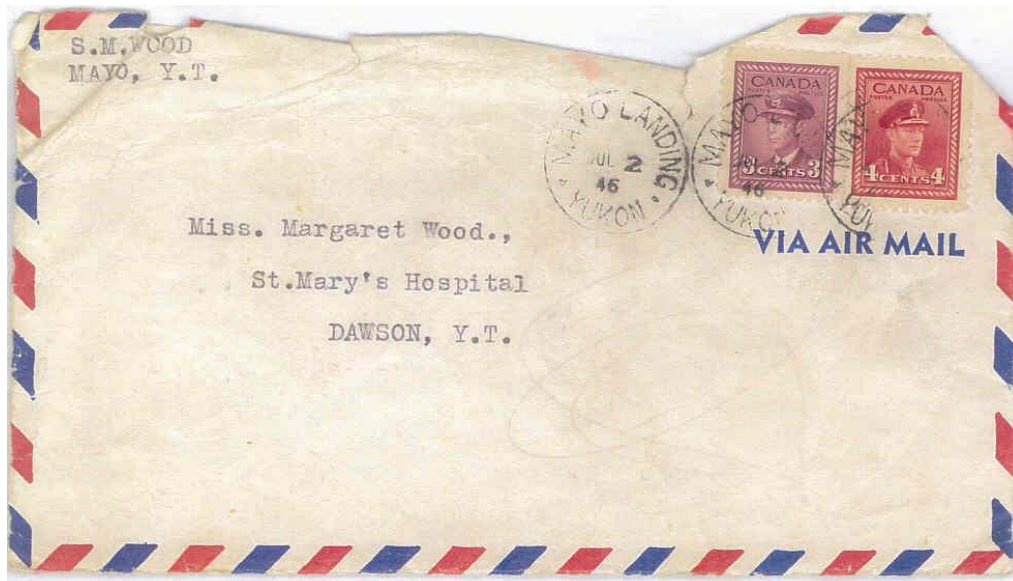
"They're coming in the windows, they're coming in the doors, it's the happy gang."

Then Mrs. Close was in the hospital and I saw her so decided to wait for after supper and then make my move. I found her in another wing and got into her bed. I was very home sick and she liked kids so she took me in, but I was soon discovered and waltzed back to the children's ward.

The letter tells the rest. Note the 7 cent stamp in those days.

Thanks again, as ever Maggie

Maggie (Wood) Wallingham wallingham*klondiker.com (In Whitehorse)



Mayo, Y.T. July 1st, 1946.

Dear Mag:-

This morning about eleven o'clock Bill Ropchan came over and gave us a radio message that we had asked for the night before and told us that you were being operated on this morning, it is now ten o'clock at night and we have decided that you must have made out O.K. because we have'nt yet had a wire telling us to pack the body away.

Today being Monday and a holiday Eileen and I helped Mum do the washing, then I had just started to hoe the spuds in Grandpa's garden and Connie and Vi came over with Pete Jensens car and wanted us to go for a drive, we left Mary McDonald and Eileen in charge and started out, Norman and Simon and I in the back, by the time we got to the top of the hill past the Huffman Ranch we in the back were so gassed from the old engine that we decided to come home before we all passed out. The Mary and Eileen wanted to cook supper out on the Yukon Stove, in our picnic grounds, they had a Whitefish that we got in the net this morning, and ate it all, We went out to the Cafe and had roast lamb and dressing, it wasn't bad.

Just as we got home it started to rain pretty hard, so Mary is staying with us tonight.

Last night Close's cows got into our garden and

(2)

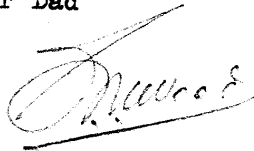
ate up all the beets and peas, so you won't have to pick any peas this summer.

I expect that you will be coming home on the ninth of July, but if you get along really well you might make it the plane before that, however I am going to put a copy of a wire for you to send so that we will know when to expect you and so that we will be there to meet you, when you know when you are coming just give one of the Sisters or Nurses the copy and put in the date that you will be here and send it before three o'clock the afternoon before you leave, we will then know by supper time that you will be home the day after.

Mag old kid, Mum is already in bed and I am pretty tired so I'm going to go there myself, we all miss you a lot, no one to blame for things not done and no one to holler at to cover up our own mistakes.

Simon I'll bet you sends his love and lots from

Your Dad

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. Wood", written over a horizontal line.

Dawson, Y.T. July _____

S.M. WOOD

MAYO, Y.T.

WILL ARRIVE MAYO JULY _____ MEET ME AT PLANE

LOVE

MARGARET

COLLECT

Hi Maggie I have the scans done and inserted into the next edition and am wondering if the Mary McDonald referred to in the message, from your dad to you in the Hospital, is the same Mary McDonald that became a nurse and worked in Hawaii and now resides in Vancouver and has been active in the Vancouver Yukoners Ass'n for quite some time.

Also could you tell me your fathers full name - I see S.M. Wood. I think we discussed before that Simon Mason Wood was your brother? I expect Eileen was your sister. What are the last names of Connie and Vi and Grandpa that "came over with Pete Jensen's car. Who did sister Eileen marry? Hope you are having a good day. Sherron

Dad's name was Simon Stanley Mason-Wood They called him 'Sam'.
Connie and Vi Lakness, Vi was Les Somerton's sister.
Norman Wightman was in the back seat with Dad and my brother Si.
My sisters' name is Eileen Shilleto.
Yes that is the same Mary Mac. We have been friends for over sixty years.

The garden it is referring to Charles Blaise Turgeon property it was next to our property and we used it for extra vegetables. He was our greatgrandfather.

Good day, Mag

Maggie (Wood) Wallingham wallingham*klondiker.com (In Whitehorse)



Yukon Electric still has the winter games sign up - well almost all of it. Now we know where winter comes from eh?

Doug Bell cheechako46*northwestel.net (In Whitehorse)

ANOTHER STAR IS UNVEILED – ON A BRITISH TALENT SHOW

Take a look at this budding opera singer Paul Potts of South Wales at -

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=i0dzZTPWrSM>

ARTISTIC TALENT

Here's the third in the Outhouse series. It's called "A Cold Place" and it is acrylic on canvas as are the others.

My web site is www.maxinehorner.com

Thanks,

Maxine (Fromme) Horner maxinehornerart@hotmail.com (In Vancouver)



“A Cold Place”

Photo courtesy Maxine (Fromme) Horner maxinehornerart@hotmail.com (In Vancouver)

Ostashek: ‘What you saw is what you got’

By Chuck Tobin - Whitehorse Star – June 12, 2007

Submitted by Bill Maylor bill_maylor@yahoo.ca (In Neilburg SK)

John Ostashek, who served as the Yukon’s government leader from 1992 to 1996, died Sunday night in Vancouver after having been medevaced there last week. He was 71. Friends are remembering the former Yukon Party leader as a no-nonsense, stand-up guy who was hard-working and true to his word.

“He was not a politician’s politician,” Doug Phillips, who served in Ostashek’s cabinet, told the Star earlier this afternoon. “He was just sort of a common guy who would just take a situation and deal with it.

“There was no grey area with John; it was only black and white.”

That’s not to say he wouldn’t listen and change his mind if he was convinced of another approach to a problem, Phillips said.

He said he was also a leader who believed in the skill of senior government managers and the need to let them do the work without micromanaging.

“I think he was respected by many of the deputy ministers who worked for him.”

Ostashek was appointed leader of the Yukon Party in advance of the 1992 territorial election, when his party unseated former NDP premier Tony Penikett.

He refused to take the title of premier from Penikett, and instead reverted back to what was back then the more traditional title of government leader.

Ostashek and his Yukon Party colleagues were defeated in 1996 by former NDP government leader Piers McDonald, and he served as leader of the official Opposition until his retirement in October 1999, prior to the 2000 territorial election.

Phillips described Ostashek as a self-made man who was quite successful in building his big-game outfitting business that he purchased in the Kluane area in the mid-1970s. He later sold the business but continued with the development of a small farm along Kluane Lake, and continued to fly passengers on tours over Kluane National Park. “He was a matter-of-fact guy,” said Phillips. “He was one of the old-time Yukon guys – what you saw is what you got.”

Ollie Wirth, owner of the Burwash Landing Resort, was friends with Ostashek for the last 25 years, since his arrival to take over the resort business back in 1982.

From the very start, Wirth said this afternoon, Ostashek was hospitable, and provided Wirth with a place to stay for a while.

“I’m going to miss him, because he was my old fishing buddy,” he said. “It was great knowing him. He was a hard-working guy, and he was a good guy.”

“If he said something, you knew it was OK and you could depend on it.”

Speaker Ted Staffen announced Ostashek’s death in the legislature when it convened this afternoon. MLAs observed a moment of silence for the late government leader.

Yukon pioneer, former mayor dies

By Matthew Grant

Submitted by Bill Maylor bill_maylor@yahoo.ca (In Neilburg SK)

The Yukon lost one of its pioneers last Sunday. [June 10, 2007]

Edmund Joseph Jacobs, former Whitehorse mayor, founder of the first machine shop in the city (Jacobs Industries), and a cancer survivor, died peacefully, leaving behind his son Bob and 13 grandchildren.

Jacobs was 91 years old and survived three of his children – Allen, Donald and Susanne – and their mother, Ina.

This morning, Bob said his father will be missed, not only by family but by a community he strove to serve.

“Everybody who knew him knew that money wasn’t a big thing to him, it was about service to people.

“Not that he gave away money, he gave away a service or product,” he said.

Bob said that as a child, he always remembered his father helping people, either by giving them a place to stay, a job, or fixing something that nobody else knew how to fix.

“If he didn’t know how to fix it, he would figure it out.”

Bob said there seemed to be nothing in the territory his father hadn’t touched, including machinery in the Whitehorse Dam.

Born in Calder, Alta. to a family of 12 children, Jacobs left school in Grade 8 to help support his family and worked as an aircraft mechanic and welder in Edmonton until his arrival in the Yukon in the summer of 1942 with his brother, Andy.

He opened his first business with his brother, a gas station and welding shop in 1943 at the corner of Fourth and Jarvis, the same year Bob was born, and later opened his own station at that location where he sold cars, tires, gas and parts.

Jacobs sold a variety of makes and models of automobiles from downtown Whitehorse, including Studebakers, Austins and Morris’.

In the early 1950s, Jacobs brought the first oxygen plant to the territory and became the

sole supplier of oxygen to the Whitehorse General Hospital for decades. He later ran for [City] office and was a councillor from 1959 to 1962 and mayor from 1962 to 1965.

Known to be industrious, Jacobs bought, enlarged and powered a river barge which could carry 80 tons of freight down the Yukon River between Minto Landing and Dawson City, a barge which is still in operation today by the Minto mine.

In the early 1980s, Jacobs built and erected the rotating support structure for the DC-3 which sits in front of Whitehorse International Airport and acts as a weather vane.

After being diagnosed with colon cancer in January of 2000, a year after his son Don died in his arms from an industrial accident; Jacobs underwent radiation, chemotherapy and surgery late that spring and lived without the illness until the time of his death.

Jacobs was recognized as the 2001 Transportation Person of the Year and inducted into the Yukon Transportation Hall of Fame.

Along with being industrious, said Bob, Jacobs was also a good friend to people, and an avid recycler.

“He didn’t throw anything away, he used everything,” he said.

“People often called his shop the junk yard.”

His dad, Bob added, also had a head for detail and could recall events from decades earlier like they happened yesterday.

“He was a fantastic story teller. He had a great memory.”

Longtime acquaintance Netta DesRosiers said this morning that she and her husband, John, knew Jacobs over the 50 years they have been in the territory.

“John worked for him years and years and years ago,” she said.

She said later when her family continued to do business with Jacobs, there were never any contracts involved, nothing more than a handshake.

“His word was as good as gold. We did our business with handshakes,” she said.

Mayor Bev Buckway said this morning the city and its citizens will miss Jacobs, a man she described as a person who gave a lot to the City of Whitehorse.

“I remember Mr. Jacobs when he was mayor, I wasn’t very old. He was probably one of the earliest recollections of what a mayor was,” she said.

“He was also a customer of mine when I ran the barber shop for those many years. He always had an opinion on things and never said anything bad about anybody.”

Buckway and her members of council commemorated Jacobs and his service at the beginning of their council meeting Monday.

OBIT

VAN DER VEEN, Maurits September 27, 1929 - June 8, 2007 After a long illness, Maurits died peacefully on the morning of June 8, 2007. He was a Renaissance man, loving animal's Chinese food, a good scotch, a lively political discussion, and music, particularly opera. Maurits was born in Shanghai, China and spent his early teens in a Japanese internment camp. He was repatriated back to Holland after the war and later followed his brother Leo to Canada. **In Canada he took a variety of jobs from mucker in a mine in Mayo, Yukon** to personnel clerk in Kemano, B.C. He moved on, signing on

an American freighter and then as purser on a B.C. coastal freighter. He attended U.B.C. School of Social Work, working as a field Social Worker in B.C. **Later, he became the Deputy Minister of Welfare for the Yukon Territory.** He moved south again and worked for the Federal Department of Corrections from where he eventually retired as warden of a Federal penitentiary. After retirement, he traveled and wrote his book, "Uriel's Legacy". Predeceased by his first wife Sally, son Paul and daughter Rachel, he is survived by his wife Joan; son Philip (Kelly) and granddaughter Katharine; granddaughters Joanne and Sarah Munroe; sister Stella in Johannesburg, step-children Stacey Berlow and Glenn Berlow, step-grandson, Micah Berlow; niece Jessica Van der Veen and family; nephew Leon Van der Veen and Family and cousin Dr. Jaap Hamburger and family. Maurits was buried on June 10, 2007 at Temple Shalom Cemetery. Special thanks go to the nurses and doctors of the PD Clinic and 6B at St. Paul's Hospital for their loving care. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Rachel Munroe Memorial Fund (604-850-3755) or a charity of your choice. Published in the Vancouver Sun on 6/12/2007.

MAIL RETURNED FOR MANY WEEKS NOW

Shannon Simpson

The recipient's account is temporarily over the maximum allowed mailbox size.

[<ssdennis@telus.net>](mailto:ssdennis@telus.net)

If anyone is in touch with Shannon, please ask if she has an alternate address.

REMOVED FROM LIST

Recipient no longer on server: dorjkar@northwestel.net

KARHUT, Doreen dorjkar*northwestel.net (In Whitehorse since 1972)

Could you please take my name off the list for I do not have much time to read all the articles.

I was back up in Whitehorse two weeks ago visiting my son and granddaughters. Had a great time and had a chance to go out and visit with Martha Collins and Penny Sippel. Also had good weather which made my visit great.

Thanks,

Claudette Moss

MOSS, Claudette (MADRAN) claudette*myway.com (Almost 30 years in Yukon) Osoyoos

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Life is pleasant. Death is peaceful. It is just the transition that is a trifle upsetting.....Issac Asimov

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Recipe from RCAF Women's Auxiliary.

Submitted by Florence Roberts yapper*klondiker.com (In Whitehorse)

Macaroni with Tomatoes and Bacon

1 lb bacon ends
1 large onion
1 large can of tomatoes
8 oz pkg macaroni or 2 cups uncooked
salt & pepper
1/4 tsp sugar
1/4 tsp cloves
1 tsp parsley flakes
1 tsp celery flakes

In a large pot of boiling salted water put the macaroni to boil. In a large frying pan put in the bacon that has been diced into 1" to 1 1/2" pieces. Cut up onion and add to bacon and fry until browned. Drain all the fat off. Add tomatoes, sugar, cloves, parsley flakes, celery flakes, salt and pepper. Simmer gently until macaroni is cooked. Place cooked macaroni in the frying pan and place in oven set at 375 degrees and bake until all juice has been absorbed.

NOTE: Pemeal bacon is ideal for this but more costly. With the pemeal I dice half of it to cook with the tomatoes and the remaining half placed over the top and baked. This is also a good meal for camping as the macaroni and tomato sauce can be stewed together on the top of the stove until all juice is absorbed.

Muriel Burbridge
Parry Sound, Ontario

DATES TO REMEMBER

Okanagan Yukoners' Picnic

Summerland Ornamental Gardens June 24, 2007. 11 am to 3 pm, Pot luck lunch at 12 noon. Be sure and bring your own eating utensils. (Knives, forks, plates etc.) And lots of food !!

International Sourdough Reunion

*Will be held at the Ramada Inn in Penticton from September 19 to 23, 2007
Rooms are \$99 per couple flat rate.
For reservations call :
Toll Free 1-800-665-4966 Code word is: Sourdough 3474*

ISR Registration is \$70.00
Registration limited to 175 People
Contact person is:
Larry Chalmers PO Box 1095 Oliver, BC V0H 1T0
Phone: 250-498-6887 e-mail: aksala49@telus.net

Island Yukoners Picnic – Saturday, Aug 11, 2007 at 11 AM at St Mary's Hall in Nanoose Bay. Bring your own picnic lunch & beverage, utensils and join in meeting old friends and acquaintances in an informal setting, which allows lots of time for chatting.

Turn off from highway 19 is at the Petro Can Station which is Northwest Bay Rd. Go about 1.2kms to Powder Road, turn right turn about 1/2km to the church on the right. Signs will be up thanks to Stan Hegstrom.

New committee this year are Carol Pearce, Sharon Redmond, Fay Ash and Harriett Butterworth.

For further information contact Harriett Butterworth at harriett@shaw.ca (In Nanaimo)

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.

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH

c/o Sherron Jones
9205 Orchard Ridge Drive
Vernon BC V1B 1V8