

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – 296th Edition – November 1st, 2009

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The Mounted Police graveyard at Dawson City, Yukon Territory
Photo courtesy Gus Barrett sourdoughs2@shaw.ca (In Qualicum Beach BC)

AN ODE TO OLD COMRADES

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

More than one hundred years they've lain,
In lonely graves on Midnight Dome,
They took the blows and bore the pain,
And died, so many miles from home,
But they're a major part, it's said,
Of Dawson City's storied past,
Brave young men in coats of red,
Who did their duty to the last.

They came to serve their country's needs,
Enforce the law, maintain the peace.
And demonstrate by word and deed,
The essence of the Mounted Police.
While miners scrambled o're the creeks,
To find the richest streak of pay,
The Mountie toiled in "boots and breeks,"
To earn his fifty cents per day.

Then through the years, this little band,

Performed their duty to their Queen,
Brought peace and order through her land,
Law, where anarchy had been.
And if the Master called the role,
If one or more should have to go,
The scarlet rider gave his all,
And simply answered -“Be it so.”

They helped to tame the last frontier,
We walk the trails where they have led,
And so, today I visit there,
And pay respect unto the dead.
So now they lay here on the Dome,
For them, the final sun has set,
In tended graves, so far from home,
Long gone, but still remembered yet.

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Flying the Yukon’s Bush:

By Kit Cain soulfulstories@gmail.com (In Yarmouth NS)

Story section - continued

Operation Porcupine

On May 19th, Ernie and I left Dawson to work with the Canadian Geological Survey’s “Operation Porcupine“, whose primary purpose was to make a geologic map of the stratigraphy of the upper half of the Yukon Territory lying north of 65 degrees latitude—an expansive, expensive, and time-consuming job even under the best of conditions. In 1962, it was the most ambitious exploratory expedition the Canadian Geological Survey had ever undertaken.

Together on the expedition worked nine Doctors of Geology; their assistants; two cooks; and a radio operator—plus our two helicopters, two pilots, and two engineers. A DeHavilland “Beaver“, and its two-man crew were also on constant call to fly in supplies from Dawson City or Whitehorse. Against all of us worked the forces of nature, and the element of time. Certain objectives had to be met in order for the mapping to be completed, and we never knew until the end of the operation if the weather would allow us to meet them.

First stop: “Hungry Lake”

The first expeditionary encampment lay on the edge of Hungry Lake, 200 miles northeast of Dawson City. Tents, men, and supplies had been flown from Dawson City out to the snow-

covered ice of Hungry Lake in a ski-equipped DC-3 several days before we left, so camp was already set up by the time Ernie and I left Dawson. After four hours of navigating our way with topographic maps across the wilderness, we landed on the melting snow at the lake shore and walked up the path, a trickling stream, to the cook tent for lunch.

The base camp Ernie and I found on our arrival was set up in roughly the same pattern each time it was moved to a new location. The two cook tents went up first; then everyone pitched in with axes and cut spruce saplings to be fashioned into benches, tables and washstands. Propane stoves cooked the food and the two Swedish cooks kept our bellies full of the finest cooking throughout the summer.

After the cook tents came the raising of the office tents where the geologists used folding aluminum tables to examine maps, study aerial photographs, and write up their voluminous notes. Two-man Mount Logan tents went up last to serve as sleeping quarters for the thirty members of the party. Each tent had a Coleman lantern for heat and light, and each man had his own spring-steel “safari cot”, air mattress, and sleeping bag.

Once the tents were raised, the assistants set to work clearing trees from a point of land in the lake to make spruce-log landing pads for the helicopters. Bright red ten- gallon and fifty-gallon barrels of aviation gas lay by the pads—flown in the previous winter by ski-equipped DC-3 from the Imperial Oil refinery at Norman Wells, 375 miles to the east in the Northwest Territories.

The Pilot’s Biggest daily problem: Fuel Load vs. Rock Samples

As the snow gradually disappeared from the ground exposing rocks for the geologists to study and sample, the two helicopters set to work putting two-man teams out in separate “fly-camps” to study the most important single outcroppings of rock or sediment. Other two-man teams flew “traverses”, which meant two geologists flying a broad 180 mile loop out from base camp and back again with as many as sixteen stops on different outcrops to sample the rock type and note its approximate age and fossilization. As the helicopter’s gas load decreased, the rock-sample load increased. At the end of the season, tons of samples had to be shipped to Ottawa and Calgary laboratories for closer micro-fossil examination and testing.

Ernie and I lived in an 8’X10’ canvas wall tent which had been set up on a platform made of spruce tree poles to keep the tent floor up off the melting snow and mossy, eternally-wet muskeg ground surface. We slept on folding canvas camp cots in bulky down sleeping bags around which we had wrapped a heavy canvas tarpaulin for additional warmth and moisture protection. Ernie had made an ingenious table with bench on one side out of aluminum “angle-iron” which I had recovered by landing the helicopter on several mountain peaks where survey instruments had once been mounted on stands for land surveying. The table and its attached bench came apart easily for transport when we moved camp. The table top consisted of a piece of 1/2-inch plywood I had lashed to the bottom of the helicopter at an abandoned exploration campsite.

I carried a spinning rod in the hollow tube of one of the helicopter’s side-mounted cargo racks, and decided to try a little fishing one day while waiting for the Geologists to collect

rock samples from an outcrop not far from a reed-covered lake shore. On my landing approach I had noticed some large-size swirls in the water indicating the presence of feeding fish.

I set up the rod and reel, put a shiny metal spoon on the thin filament line and flipped the lure out into the lake just beyond the line of reeds. It had hardly touched the water and begun its flashy trip back in my direction when WHAM! My rod bent almost in half, and there was a huge swirl where the lure had landed. Just as suddenly, the line went slack and drifted back to me minus its spinner!

I thought I had broken the line in my attempt to set the hook.....or else my knot had come untied..... so I put on another spinner and damned if the same thing didn't happen again. I looked carefully at the fishing line. It had been cut as clean as a razor. Not until I later put on a steel leader and hauled in a few of those huge and ferocious Pike, Pickerel, and Muskies of the Northern Lakes did I realize what a wicked set of teeth they have.

A Lesson In Critical Path Planning.

Planning Operation Porcupine took Dr. D.K. Norris, head of the expedition, and the other eight doctors of Geology over a full year. Dr. Norris spent a period of time the previous summer flying over the country to be mapped picking campsites and getting some idea of the problems he would be faced with. Last winter, in Ottawa, every phase of the operation was planned almost to the hour. During the summer of the actual operation, each day's progress was plotted on graphs to indicate which phase needed more emphasis. The routine day lasted fourteen hours—seven days a week!

Geologists moved their fly-camps to new locations approximately every four days. They were so busy they didn't have time for days to wash their clothes; at other times, when the weather turned bad, they often went for a day or two without food until the helicopter could get fresh supplies to their campsite. Even at that, one geologist kept complaining because he couldn't get the helicopters to move him often enough.

Unpredictable difficulties threw the time schedule into a tailspin throughout the summer. Weather, an element as impossible to prophecy as to regulate in the far north, constantly threatened the operation's success. Ground fog, low clouds, snow, rain, or extremely high winds limited flight in the helicopters and meant that during these bad periods everyone sat until the weather cleared sufficiently to fly. Several times during summer, the saturated air cooled and suddenly condensed itself into a dense fog bank or low cloud layer which blocked the mountain passes and forced the helicopter to land. One daylight night, after a forced landing to wait for the Arctic ground fog to lift, I woke up to find myself staring through the helicopter bubble into the intense, yellow eyes of a coal black wolf. As I sat up, the wolf slowly backed up to join his several comrades, and they all disappeared into the thick fog.

Helicopters are cantankerous contraptions.

The helicopters themselves, being still in the pioneering stages of development, had mechanical difficulties that slowed our progress down. For example: my machine had a cooling fan fly apart 30 miles from camp. Another time, a cylinder head went bad 120 miles out. Operations had to cease until we could be flown back to base, and it meant the machine became inoperable until repaired. The second helicopter on Operation Porcupine sheared a generator shaft and later had a connecting rod break while in flight and loaded with Geologists and rock samples. Fortunately, when the engines failed or malfunctioned the helicopters were both either on the ground or over a clear landing spot when the difficulties occurred.

The engine failure on the second helicopter occurred over a swampy area filled with knee-high grass and about six inches of water. It was the only break in miles of solid tree cover and enabled Stu, the pilot, to auto rotate to the ground without damage to the rotor blades or tail rotor. However, in order to change the engine right there in the wilderness, 20-miles from base camp, some extraordinary gymnastics had to be performed.

First, a tripod of tree logs had to be built over the central shaft of the engine and a chain hoist attached. A platform had to be built out of logs to keep the two mechanic! engineers out of the water, and to hold the replacement engine when it arrived. Both blades, the transmission, and all engine accessories had to be stripped off the engine to minimize weight, and then the engine lifted up and slid down a log ramp to one side of the helicopter's skids and frame. All this while being constantly covered with, and bitten by, mosquitoes so thick we had to scrape them off the top of each cup of tea each time we took a drink.

Meanwhile, about 500 miles away in Whitehorse, Pat Callison, owner of Klondike Helicopters and a true legendary figure of the Yukon, loaded his float-equipped Cessna 180 with a new engine, all essential tools, and a second engineer! mechanic into the tiny area normally occupied by the passenger seat. It was essential to crowd weight forward in order to maintain the aircraft's proper center of gravity or she would have been unable to control and crashed. Despite the fact that the aircraft was way overloaded and the floats nearly submerged save for about a third of their forward length, Pat managed to fly that load off the Yukon River at Whitehorse and land on the twisting, turning, tree-lined Porcupine River close to base camp. Removing 500 pounds of dead-weight engine from the Cessna onto the river bank with a log ramp was no easy job either.

It was my job to hover the helicopter about ten feet above the new engine while Ernie attached a long sling line to it. The helicopter then picked up the engine, flew it to the damaged ship and lowered it gently onto the log platform so it could be slowly chain-hoisted and bolted precisely onto its engine mounts. Then I had to fly out the damaged engine and land it on the log ramp leading into the Cessna, which was still waiting and tied to the river bank. How Pat Callison ever managed to raise that Cessna 180 off the Porcupine River loaded as it was with engine, tools, and mechanic remains a minor miracle to me to this day.

Mountain Flying: the pilot's nemesis.

Nine-tenths of the geologists' field work was done in mountainous regions where thick sections of rock had been exposed by erosion and the shifting of the earth's crust. This was largely because in the lowlands and valleys, inaccessible expanses of trees and muskeg covered the rock from the geologists' view and prying pick-hammers. In order to map the underground stratigraphy of the earth, frequent samples of the rock strata have to be taken in order to determine what sub-strata layers have been lifted up, shaved off by glacial action, sheared by fault lines, or forced into contorted positions by the actions of the earth crust movements.

The weather in the mountains grew to new levels of unpredictability and ferocity. Clouds formed around landing sites in seconds forcing us as pilots to play cat and mouse games with the weather to get food and supplies to a fly-camp, and return to base camp with the Geologists' rock samples. Clouds often obscured the geologists' landmarks making it impossible to walk a hundred yards from the tent without getting lost.

Navigation by memory, by guess, and By Gosh!

As pilots, we had no maps to navigate by. The only maps of the area covered too large an area to be of any value. The Geologists had aerial photos of the entire area to be studied and so they found the way to each base camp site, but we had to navigate outward from base camp locations by memorizing watershed systems, rivers, lakes, unusual mountain formations and landmarks. When the clouds dropped down to near surface level, or the ground fog moved in, it became very difficult to find out where we were going or coming from. I must say, though, that neither one of us ever got lost. We often had moments of disorientation, but always managed to find some familiar landmark which directed us to our intended destination. This was terribly important because every trip was planned with just the right amount of fuel to reach the destination and return. Weight is critical — to the pound, in fact — in a helicopter, so extra fuel meant that rock samples had to be left behind. Needless to say, that was not an option. Too many times I landed at base camp and Ernie would exclaim after looking in the fuel tank: "Hey.....Bunky! D'you know you were flying on fumes?"

I didn't want to hear it because I knew only too well what the very accurate fuel gauge had been telling me for far too long! It was because of too many similar situations that I decided not to make a career of bush flying!

The Wind is a ruthless teacher!

Clouds were not the only kind of problem weather. Wind is as much a part of life in the north as trees, mountains, and mosquitoes! Strong mountain winds are not like the strong, steady winds that blow from the ocean or over flat land. In mountainous terrain they're turbulent downdrafts and updrafts that bash a plane or helicopter around like a leaf in a thunderstorm. When the winds do blow this way, they're the scourge of every pilot who, against his better judgment, is pressured by circumstance to venture forth into the teeth of the gale.

I learned my lesson about when not to fly in the mountains in a mild but forceful way. I was moving slowly toward a jagged ridgeline in the Richardson Mountains one day in a strong, gusty wind, approaching the ridgeline from an angle in anticipation of the inevitable downdraft or updraft, when I suddenly felt an updraft grab the tail and wrench it up until the damned helicopter stood almost straight up on her nose!

Now, the problem with that happening is that if I were to react a little too quickly and haul the cyclic stick back into my lap, as would be my instinctive impulse to correct for that extreme an action, I would automatically chop off the tail rotor of the helicopter and everything would instantly turn into a real can of worms! The only thing I could do was sit there like an unmoving rock and let the wind do what it wanted with the helicopter and me. When the wind finished with us, we had been blown up a hundred feet and then downward toward the mountain at such an extreme rate of descent that it was almost as if there were no air at all under the rotor blades. By heading down the mountainside like a skier, and remaining no more than just a few feet off the ground, I managed to remain in “ground effect” (wherein the wind had “bottomed out” against the mountainside, so to speak) until I could gain enough forward speed to pull up and out of danger. Gingerly, I turned around and flew back home—my expression more than a little sobered. If discretion is indeed the better part of valor, the message to me was very plain: find some other way to make a living while the odds are still in your favor!

Further to a similar subject, determining wind direction as it blows over a bald mountain top or a saddle between two peaks is at times next to impossible, but nevertheless an absolutely essential part of flying a helicopter. The helicopter must be headed into the wind when it lands, especially in the mountains with a load—otherwise all kinds of hair-raising and unpleasant things start to happen! The geologists frequently—in fact, daily—had to be landed in these kind of spots, so I was constantly on the lookout for the direction in which the wind was blowing blades of grass or plants so as to give me some indication of wind direction. Often times I had to circle gingerly across a sharp ridge line to try to feel the wind change or see it in the helicopter’s airspeed indicator. Just as often I had to take my chances, and the landing became a sort of “controlled crash” with full power on and maximum lift to soften the landing impact.....but no chance at all of aborting the landing or changing my mind. Sometimes, in order to get back out of such a situation, I would have to ask the Geologists to walk down the mountain side to a safer landing site so the helicopter would be light enough to take off with adverse wind conditions or the lesser power available to the turbo-charged engine at 8,000 feet elevation.

The wind was not just a problem to us as pilots, either. Not infrequently, the high, gusty, mountain winds tore tent ropes out of the canvas of fly-camp tents or drove rain through the joints where two layers of canvas tent and wall were joined so that it dripped down and wet everything inside.

The Story in Pictures section – continued

Operation Porcupine

During the winter of 1961 and 1962, preparations for the largest Geological survey undertaken in the North—called Operation Porcupine—were underway with fuel and camp supplies being flown in to the various base camp locations designed to give helicopter mobility to the nine doctors of Geology who formed the backbone of the expedition. The very ambitious goal was to map the underground stratigraphy of the entire northern half of the Yukon Territory from Dawson City to the Arctic Ocean, and from the Alaska border to the McKenzie River .



CF-CPY - Connelly Dawson Airways - 1962
Photo by Kit Cain

Douglas DC-3 aircraft tires were the primary means of freighting equipment onto frozen lakebeds. Base camp sites were chosen so that in the late Spring, Summer, and Fall, DeHaviland Beavers and other amphibious aircraft could bring in fresh supplies, parts, and be available for emergency evacuation services.



CF-CPY – Connelly- Dawson Airways – 1962
Photo by Kit Cain

Built in the late 1930's and early 1940's for World War II, these DC-3's seemed old to us at twenty years, but there are thousands of them flying all over the world today, though they've been completely rebuilt many times over.



Hauling camp supplies ashore - Photo by Kit Cain

Once the supplies had been landed on the lake, manpower then hauled the camp supplies and equipment on make shift sleds to the base camp locations at the edge of the lake or river.



Slinging Fuel - Photo by Kit Cain

In some cases, the DC-3 was unable to land on a nearby lake, as was the case for the Porcupine River base camp, so the fuel supply had to be landed on the snow-covered tundra and heli-lifted to the base camp on the river bank. Due to the helicopter's maximum weight limitations, it was all the ship could do to haul two fuel drums at a time. Fuel weighs 6# per US Gallon; 55 gallons per drum; 660# for two drums—the maximum load for a Hiller 12E.



Heading Out – early May 1962 - Photos by Kit Cain

All 24 or so members of Operation Porcupine climb aboard the DC-3 bound for the first base camp at Hungry Lake. Note the short hair as there are no barbers in the bush! The

brightly colored parkas were essential, making it easy to spot anyone lost or injured out away from base camp or on the tundra. The weather had begun to change and it was necessary to land on Hungry Lake before the ice became too rotten to support the weight of the DC-3. This was early May of 1962.



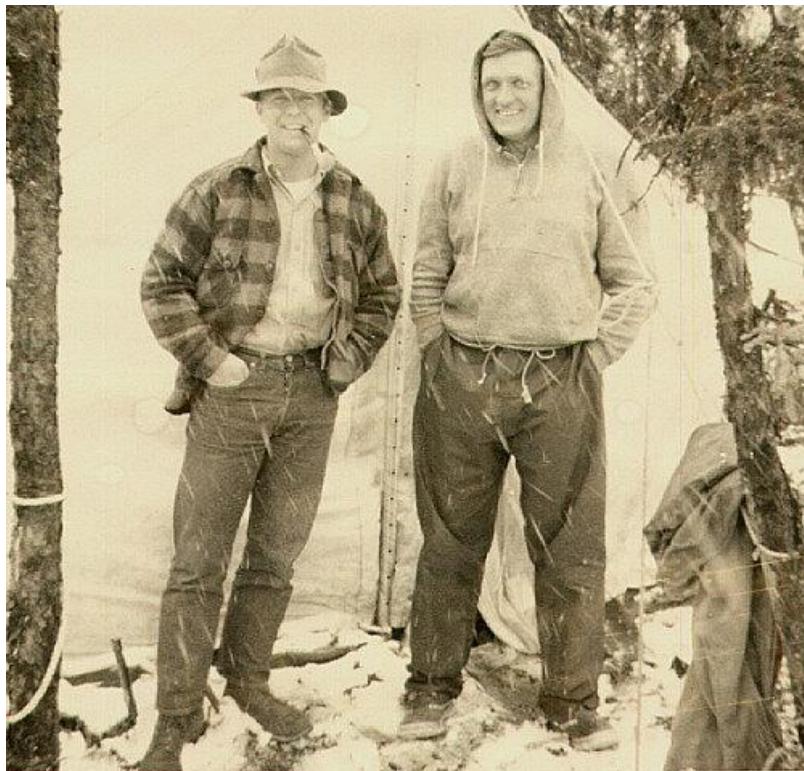
Setting up tents – Photo by Kit Cain

The Canadian Geological Survey team chose brightly colored Mount Logan tents because they were lightweight, roomy, only needed one central pole, and could withstand the wild winds and weather of the mountains and Arctic coastal plain. Ground was still snow-covered on arrival and during the setup of camp, but the weather grew rapidly warmer over the next few weeks.

As the weather warmed, water replaced snow everywhere as the frozen permafrost did not allow the moisture to disappear into the water table. The cook tent is the largest structure in the picture and each Geologist had a yellow Logan tent along with his assistant. The Geologists spent little time at base camp, being constantly relocated by helicopter to new locations. These satellite camps were known as “Fly Camps” (aptly named) and were set out at the limit of the helicopter’s fuel capacity in an arrangement resembling the spokes of a wagon wheel.



Hungry Lake Camp - Photo by Kit Cain



Kit and Ernie

Photos by Kit Cain

A self-made Polaroid shot of me with Ernie wearing his perpetual smile. We heated the tent on very cold or damp evenings with a propane heater, but used it seldom, sleeping on canvas cots in double down-filled sleeping bags wrapped in heavy canvas. That's snow

falling about us....on May twentieth! (To be continued)

PHOTOS TAKEN BY ELEANOR MILLARD



St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church of Lake Bennett
Photo courtesy Eleanor Millard emillard@northwestel.net (In Carcross)

*An Extract from the book **Mission: Klondike** by James M Sinclair*

This book was written by the son of the Minister who spearheaded the building of the Bennett Church. The book was compiled using diaries, photos and further unpublished writings that belonged to his father Reverend John A. Sinclair.

Creating the Church at Lake Bennett

Water was covering the ice of the Yukon River by early **April, 1899**. Traffic over the ice had halted to await the opening of navigation. As a consequence, a great crowd of men was congregating at Lake Bennett.

Pressure to revive the mission at Bennett and the demands on Sinclair's time by the work camps along the construction line became a considerable concern. [Rev. Sinclair had been ministering along the building of the WP railway.] He was disturbed in hearing from the Church in New York that his successor for the Skaguay mission, a Mr. Harrison, would not arrive until mid June. Replying, he urged that Harrison be directed to relieve him no later than the first week in May, Lake Bennett could not wait, the establishment of a mission and the erection of a church must be proceeded with immediately. He Wrote:

“Without further delay I must devote my full time to Bennett and to the construction camps. By June the railway will have tapped the head of the Yukon line of navigation at Bennett. Then the town shall become the principal distributing point for both the Klondike and the Atlin gold fields until some shorter overland route is found into Atlin. It will continue so until the railway is pushed further toward Fort Selkirk. And so Bennett must have a missionary there at once and it is there I propose to make my headquarters.

“As it stands now, I am compelled to attend to two missions, forty-three miles apart, of which some twenty-nine miles must be made on foot or by horseback over mountain terrain. That is far from doing justice to this important work. I will not sacrifice the fine prospect that awaits me at Bennett; but, meantime, I shall do my best to hold the ground pending the arrival of Mr. Harrison.

“The mission in Victoria Hall is progressing most favourably. There are no vacant seats at our Sunday Services. Last night we had 165 chairs filled and the men were sitting on the edge of the platform and some were even perched on the woodpile in the corner – about 225 in all were present. We have a splendid board, a grand group of elders and our Christian Endeavor numbers fifty members. The Junior C.E., starting with 35 members has, in a few weeks, outgrown the annex. Our very active Ladies' Aid is now planning an elaborate 'May Day Festival' and our treasurer reports that over \$500.00 is already subscribed to the 'Building Fund'.

“The mission is now firmly established, the transition from Union Church is completed and interest and activity is increasing daily. My successor will find that the major problem he will continue to face is the transitoriness of people here. They are forever on the move. Ours is not so much a 'congregation' as a 'procession'. It is a situation peculiar to Skaguay as the gateway to the Yukon. I admit it adds to one's work and presents many problems but it is most interesting and exhilarating.”

The saloons and gambling dens are proving to be a popular lure to the footloose young men on the streets of the city. There was a very evident need to provide a counter attraction. The situation was met by the missionary in inviting the Y.M.C.A. to occupy Victoria Hall and to

provide reading and writing materials for the transients. In addition the Y.M.C.A. worked together with a committee of the church to provide social evenings of entertainment throughout the week, and Victoria Hall soon became a popular rendezvous.

Arthur Copeland, the young Scot whom Sinclair had befriended, took a leading role in the activity and soon became an invaluable assistant to the missionary. Copeland evidently was of fairly independent means from an inheritance. He was an Arts graduate from Glasgow and, in addition, had had considerable accounting experience. This he had put to profitable use as a free-lance accountant and he gave his services to the church as treasurer for the new Presbyterian congregation.

With unremitting demands on the missionary's time to minister to the sick and injured and to counsel and aid the unfortunate, it soon evolved that Copeland was taking the occasional service both at Victoria Hall and at the hospital. Thus Sinclair could get on with the work at Bennett as well as make his weekly rounds of the construction camps.

Arriving at Bennett in early April, he found that the old church site on which Grant had erected his log "manse" and Dickey had set up his church-tent, was now a mile away from the centre of activity. He selected a new site, obtained signatures of representative residents to a petition asking the British Columbia government to grant the newly selected site to the Presbyterian Church.

The church-tent had been stored by Dickey in the shack at the old site prior to his leaving for Eldorado. Upon opening the tent he discovered that thieves had cut it up and had carried away over half of it. [Wonder how many sails for the awaiting boats were made from the canvas of church tent.] The tent gone, Sinclair obtained the use of the dining room in the Portland Hotel. He writes:

"A church building is urgently needed to accommodate our large attendance at services. A third of those who came to my last service at the hotel dining room had to go away because they could not get inside the door. At that service I announced my intention to build, calling for money and men. The next day I drew my plans and ordered, on my own responsibility, 7,500 feet of rough lumber at \$100.00 per thousand with which to lay the foundation and floor upon which to pitch a tent."

As a tangible expression of their gratitude to Sinclair for his work among the men of the camps and his contribution in negotiating a settlement of the labor dispute, the railway officials approved free transportation for all his requirements for the Bennett church.

The lumber at the site, and with land title granted by the B.C. government, Sinclair called for volunteer carpenters. There were men at Bennett who had built their boats and were now waiting in idleness for the opening of navigation. Several of these men, skilled carpenters, willingly gave their services and the missionary records:

"In two weeks we had the site prepared, the floor laid and the framework up. We pitched a borrowed tent on the floor and here we held our services during the course of building." And what services! Rough-clad men singing heartily the Gospel songs, the old hymns that were to many the soul's song of "Home, Sweet Home". And their faces exhibiting not only simple reverence, but a manifest hunger which must have been an inspiration to the

minister. No one in that congregation disparaged the nature of the furnishing, nor debated whether the seats should be straight or curved or whether the decor was in the best tradition. Unplaned boards were the pews, resting on a log at one end and on a stringer at the other, seats were without back, but no complaints about the oversight. A stripped poplar pole was fastened to the floor with a candle-box on top for a pulpit. There was no echo organ, or grained ceiling or preludes or recessionals to catch the eye and ear. But the joyous sound of the Gospel hymns, sung to the accompaniment of a small portable organ (which the missionary had “packed” with him) was heard throughout the town and many, in their lonely tents, sang along with them.



Taken from behind the church in 2009.

Photo courtesy Eleanor Millard emillard*northwestel.net (In Carcross)

Meantime, the Reverend N.D. Harrison from Sheldon, North Dakota, representing the American Presbyterian Church, had arrived accompanied by his wife, to take over the Skaguay mission in late May of 1899. He brought with him funds from the American church to augment the building fund already started by his predecessor and sufficient to commence the erection of a church building and a manse.

On May 24 [1899] the corner stone of St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church of Lake Bennett was laid by John Hyslop C.E. of the Railway Company. The Bennett Sun reported the event:

“On Queen’s birthday at 8 p.m., after the festivities of the day, a large congregation of people gathered together to witness the laying of the corner stone of the Presbyterian Church being erected on the hill overlooking the harbour. Mayor Hyslop, of Skaguay, to whom was assigned the honor of laying the stone, made an appropriate address and enclosed in the box a copy of the Bennett Sun, the Daily Alaskan, a list of the member of the Dominion and Provincial government, the N.W.M.P. and a description of the work of the Presbyterian Church in Alaska. After this was done, Mayor Hyslop stepped down from the temporary platform and placed in the stone the tin box containing the various records referred to, took the trowel and cemented the corner stone.”



View of **St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church** coming into Bennett **2009**.
Photo courtesy Eleanor Millard emillard@northwestel.net (In Carcross)

Captain John Irving, a member of the Provincial government gave the address, paying tribute to the work of the Presbyterian Church and “to such energetic pioneers as our worthy minister, the Reverend J. A. Sinclair.” Captain Irving concluded:

“Years hence, as man passes through these natural gateways to the North, possibly when we may all have passed away, may this edifice still stand as a monument to the pioneers of Christianity in this wilderness of mountain, lake and stream.”

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the crowd moved into the tent where a program of music and other entertainment inspired good fellowship. Sinclair was to write:

“A building committed, including a Roman Catholic, a Congregationalist, two Episcopalians and two Presbyterians, was appointed. I emphasized that it was to be a

Presbyterian Church but all were anxious to have a church, regardless of the denomination, and they quite agreed that the first demonization on the ground should receive the unanimous support of the community.

“About **June 1st [1899]** we had it ‘closed in’ and roofed, and our borrowed tent returned. The roof was of rough lumber and tar paper, the walls of tar paper and slabs, the floor of rough lumber and the windows of cotton, and the seats and pulpit were built of slabs. But rustic as it was, I never have seen people so attached to their church. Captain Reid, an Episcopalian lay-reader, remarked to me, ‘In spite of the denominations represented we have all felt equally at home and I have never sensed one breath of friction.’”

Millwork, casements, trim, frames and mated lumber to complete the interior of the church are not obtainable in the hinterland. The nearest source of supply was Vancouver or Victoria.

Sinclair wrote on **July 12 [1899]** to the minister of St. Andrew’s Church in Victoria, “I send you herewith photos of a new church which we have in course of construction at Bennett. These generous people have contributed about \$1,250.00 toward it already, although the resident population is approximately 500 and we only started construction two months ago. The church, with its attractive rustic exterior and its fine location is admired by all. As a rendezvous as well as a place to worship it is greatly prized.

“I am offered free transportation by steamer and rail for all the millwork, windows and doors from Vancouver or Victoria. We cannot make them here for want of suitable material and it occurs to me that possibly a sufficient number of Victoria people could be induced to donate them.

“We shall require seven mullion windows to fill openings 3’ 10” by 5’ 10”, three single ones to fill openings 22 ½” by 5’ 10” also a large triple window for the front to fill an opening 4’ 10 ½” by 9’ 8 ¾” also a large triple window for the front to fill an opening 7’ 10” by 9’ 0”. We also require a door with a gothic transom to fill an opening 4’ 10 ½” by 9’ 8 ¾”. They will require no facings on the outside as they must be fitted with rustic slab-facings to correspond. Our building is 24 feet by 50 feet and a 10’ by 10’ tower and vestibule.

“If your people can find it in their hearts to put their mark on our new church here in the frontier, I shall be happy to send you the detailed specifications.”

The appeal brought a quick and encouraging response and the missionary was invited to come to Victoria and Vancouver to preach and lecture on his Yukon experiences.

Coincidentally, Reverend R. M. Dickey stopped off in Bennett in early August. He had had a fortunate recovery from typhoid fever but, suffering from recurring attacks of malaria, he had been obliged to relinquish to his successor, Reverend D. G. Cock, the work he had pioneered so vigorously on the Bonanza and Eldorado creeks. Now he was returning to Winnipeg and thence to Ireland for the long-deferred reunion with his aging mother.

Dickey's arrival gave impetus to Sinclair's decision to accompany his friend as far as Victoria and Vancouver where, together, he and Dickey would share with the people their Yukon experiences in the pulpit and on the lecture platform.

The ladies of his Bennett congregation had, through home baking sales, raised over one hundred dollars toward the purchase of an organ. This amount he helped to augment by gifts from friends in Victoria, Following his trip, he wrote:

"I found everyone very interested and most cooperative. The Christian Endeavor Society of St. Andrew's Church in Vancouver donated all of our windows which are leaded cathedral glass. In addition, from our lectures, I received over five hundred dollars in money and materials. The ladies of Dr. Clay's church in Victoria contributed the balance required to complete the purchase of a remarkably fine organ.

"The C.P.N. Company brought up the flooring and matched cedar lumber at \$5.00 per thousand. The Captain of the steamer, Rosalie, carried all my other materials including the organ, windows, doors, frames, glass, mouldings and other building supplies, absolutely free. The White Pass and Yukon railway have carried everything free from Skaguay to Bennett. All of this represents a gift of at least fourteen hundred dollars.

"in addition, I have three thousand feet of dressed lumber at Caribou Crossing ready to commence operation at White Horse next Spring."

With the opening of navigation his volunteer help had left for the gold fields, so Sinclair continued on his own in the construction of his church. He was able to engage the occasional itinerant carpenter at \$5.00 per day which, as he remarked in a letter to Presbytery, was "more than the preacher costs the church."

Sinclair, from early life, had shown a great love for all work of a mechanical nature. His father, a homesteader in the **County of Lanark**, had trained his young son in the use of tools. Together they had designed and built most of their farm buildings and repaired and even designed some of their farm implements. Inheriting his father's mechanical ingenuity, Sinclair enjoyed working with his hands and now his knowledge stood him in good stead.

"Since July 1st I have been fully occupied getting the building closed and ready for winter," he writes. "Owing to scarcity of money and skilled labour I have done much of the work myself. So I have been working ten hours a day at carpentry as well as drumming up money and materials. In addition there is my pastoral work to do, meetings to attend, sick and injured to visit, hospitalization to arrange and all the other attendant duties."

In a letter to his father, written New Year's Day 1900, he expressed pleasure over the warmth and comfort of the church: "Last Sunday night we had to open the door for cool air even though the church is heated with only one small box stove. As you well know, the secret of good construction lies in providing a dead air space of four inches in all the walls. I caulked the door and the window frames with oakum and all the ventilations draw the air from the floor, thus saving heat. All of the material between the outside and us is one tier of matched lumber, two tiers of mar paper and one tier of saw jointed slabs. I saw to it that the paper was well over-lapped and put in tight. So we are sublimely comfortable even though the temperature is at a brisk thirty degrees below zero."

For more of this story – read the book *Mission: Klondike* by James M Sinclair



Bennett Station - 2009

Photo courtesy Eleanor Millard emillard@northwestel.net (In Carcross)



Bennett Train Station - 2009

Note the replica boat near the picnic table (then see next photo and message).

Photo courtesy Eleanor Millard emillard@northwestel.net (In Carcross)



Replica boat – on lake shore at Bennett train station.

Photo courtesy Eleanor Millard emillard@northwestel.net (In Carcross)

Replica boat:

When I took the photo I thought this boat was one my friend Claire Desmarais made but it isn't one of them. She had the contract to build six of them to go down the Yukon River on the hundredth anniversary of the gold rush (I think that was the occasion). The guide on this railway trip said it was one of hers, but she says no, it's quite different. I think White Pass must have gotten someone to build it. It's supposed to be a replica of the boats that the stampedeers made to cross Bennett and sits in front of the railway station at Bennett.

Thanks for the Moc Tel. The trees are beginning to change and I'm looking forward to going to Haines on the long weekend to see the alpine red and the bears fishing in the Chilkoot River. I should have some photos. Montana is turning red now too and I'm trying to convince anyone I know with a 4x4 to drive up and then hike. But a lot of the leaves on the trees are dead and brownish this year. Last year was gorgeous. I'll see what I can dig up. I mistakenly deleted my first photo files last fall but I did keep some of the email attachments I sent to people.

Eleanor Millard emillard@northwestel.net (In Carcross)

MOCTEL 293 & 295

Just a note on the above two editions - very interesting !!!

Firstly, I believe the Freight Hauler that is shown in the pictures from Kit were originally brought into the North by the contractor who built the DEW Line, to haul equipment into the isolated sites they had to build at. The people who had the contract to supply the Eagle Plains exploration project in the late '50s tried unsuccessfully to rejuvenate them for that purpose. As Kit stated, they experienced various problems with them - including the uncoupling on sharp vertical changes of direction, and also the heavy loads on the electric motors burned the motor brushes to a crisp ! ! ! The attempt was less than a success ! ! !

Secondly, the MocTel story on the trip through the Dempster Highway following the Fitzgerald trek reminded me of another 'lost patrol' that happened in the early summer of 1960 (I believe). Kit may also have been involved in it, and Lloyd Romfo of the Yukon Flying Club was also involved. Lloyd will probably be able to supply you with the names of other people involved.

It started with the hiring of a Mayo/Keno hunting guide to take four hunters into the Bonnet Plume area camp for a week of big game hunting. As it was the first of the season, the guide was to take his herd of pack and riding horses in to the camp from his wintering area in the Keno area. His wife was to take the hunters, by chartered aircraft, to the camp and drop them off to meet the guide. She did so, leaving them with supplies for a few days and, as her husband had not arrived with the horses and other supplies, left the hunters alone at the camp with the understanding that her husband would be along shortly. She bid them goodbye and said she would be back in a week to pick them up.

A week later, she flew back into the camp to find the hunters, overjoyed with their experience, but still no guide. The hunters had bagged a moose, which had made the mistake of walking into their camp, and also a bear. They had eaten well, thanks to the moose and bear meat, and a plentiful supply of fish from the lake. She was obviously worried about her husband, who by this time was nearly ten days overdue and no word had been received from him. She notified the authorities, and a search was initiated. A base camp was established on (I believe) Bonnet Plume lake near a creek with a flat area for a helicopter to land. (This is where Kit may have been involved.) The search area included the Bonnet Plume river valley, Wind river valley and the Snake river valley, as well as the originally planned route from Keno area. There was one helicopter, a Beaver on floats, and Lloyd Romfo's Cessna 180 on floats. Because of the distance from the nearest fuel, the helicopter crew stayed at the camp site, and the float planes, who returned to Mayo at night, delivered fuel for the helicopter each day. The helicopter engineer, who spent the full stay at the camp, supplied the camp, and the shuttle plane crews with fresh fish which he caught at the mouth of the small creek.

The search of the area proved unsuccessful and was called off after (I believe) three or four days. On the last day, the guide was located just a few miles out of Keno. Apparently, he had become disoriented in a snowstorm on his way into the camp, got lost and decided to head back towards Keno. A pack of wolves had got wind of the horses and he had been forced to sacrifice one of the pack animals in order to keep them away.

As a Bard once said, "All's well that ends well !"

Lloyd and Kit may be able to fill you in on some of the other details. I rode "spotter" for Lloyd on a couple of the flights into the headwater areas of the Wind and Bonnet Plume

rivers - quite and experience. (I don't know who paid for all the fuel and flight time for the search ! ! ! ! I imagine it was substantial ! ! !)

Cheers ! Have a good winter.

Ira Saunders [sandisaunders*rogers.com](mailto:sandisaunders@rogers.com) (In Ottawa) (RCMP Tech in Yukon 1958-61)

Sherron: 1960 was slightly before my time. I was in the Yukon for a period of time beginning March of 1962 until October of 1962. If Ira was stationed in Old Crow during the summer of 1962 -- probably late June or early July -- he would have been the RCMP officer I spent several days with during my engine failure out on the Old Crow Flats. The RCMP maintained a very nice farmhouse-type home in Old Crow. There was an RCMP officer stationed there -- he was about my age (26) -- and we talked for many hours. Fortunately for both of us, there wasn't much for him to do, so my entire knowledge about Old Crow and its inhabitants came directly from him. It would be interesting to know if it was Ira.

Keep me on your mailing list .. and thanks.

Kit Cain (In Yarmouth)

Hi Ira

Kit Cain's comments below [above]. He was in Yukon for the summer of 1962. Do you happen to recall who was in Old Crow when you left in 1961 ?

Sherron

I personally didn't get into Old Crow until I returned north to Inuvik in the winter of 1962 and spent four days installing the "new" sideband radio. There were two members there - a single man by the name of Lynn (?) and a married man by the name of Lyle (?). The single man lived in the log detachment building and the newly married man lived in the new "prefab" that had been erected that summer. I might have run into Kit on some of my travels with the RCMP single Otter out of Inuvik with our pilot Ned Carnie. I've attached a couple of pictures of Old Crow for Kit's info. The first one is me in front of the log detachment and the second is from the Otter of the settlement. Enjoy.

Ira Saunders [sandisaunders*rogers.com](mailto:sandisaunders@rogers.com) (In Ottawa)



Ira Saunders in front of the Old Crow Log Detachment building – winter 1962.
Photo courtesy Ira Saunders sandisaunders*rogers.com (In Ottawa)



Center - Old Crow RCMP Detachment from the air in winter of 1962.
Photo courtesy Ira Saunders sandisaunders*rogers.com (In Ottawa)

LARRY CHALMERS AT THE MASTERS GAMES IN AUSTRALIA

Greetings from Sydney Australia. Having a great time down here and even winning medals. I won a Gold Medal in the Long jump and a Bronze in the hammer. Still have to do the Weight Pentathlon tomorrow but don't expect to win anything. Competition is pretty stiff. Bumped into Myrt [Raymond] the other day and she had a Silver for the Discus I think. Weather is not that great.

I picked up another Bronze this morning in the Weight Pentathlon. Myrt got her silver in the Javalin and not the Discus. Off to the big party in Darling Harbour tonight and head home at 3:45 tomorrow and arrive in Vancouver 40 minutes before I have left Sydney. Will be home on the 20th.

Larry Chalmers aksala49@telus.net (In Sydney Australia)

TED HARRISON AND THE PRIME MINISTER

Hello Sherron:

It's me, Katherine Gibson, who sent in the bit about 24 Sussex [below]. I was travelling with Ted to do the Central Canada launch of his biography, Ted Harrison: Painting Paradise (I'm the author).

You might want to add in this bit

Prime Minister Steven Harper received a copy of Ted Harrison: Painting Paradise in August when he was in Whitehorse. Over tea at the Prime Minister's Ottawa residence, Laureen Harper told author Katherine Gibson they keep their copy on the coffee table of the Calgary home. The Collector's Edition and the soft cover edition are available by visiting www.tedharrisonbiography.com

Katherine Gibson hello28@shaw.ca

Ph: 250-370-2785

Author of "Ted Harrison: Painting Paradise"

Learn more at: www.tedharrisonbiography.com

A Hanging at 24 Sussex



Artist Ted Harrison visits Laureen Harper at 24 Sussex Drive where a collection of his paintings hang in the front foyer on October 14, 2009.

Photo by Jillian Propp

Globe and Mail article by [Jane Taber](#)

Published on Friday, Oct. 16, 2009 6:44PM EDT Last updated on Monday, Oct. 19, 2009

Ted Harrison's paintings hang prominently in galleries around the world: in the United States, in Kobe, Japan, and even at 24 Sussex Drive. **Laureen Harper** ensured that would happen as she is a big fan. But the 83-year-old artist, whose vividly colourful portrayals of the Yukon are so distinctive, does not have any work hanging in the National Gallery of Canada.

On Wednesday, he was having tea with Mrs. Harper at the Prime Minister's official residence and at least was able to see his works on display in Ottawa.

“I think a gallery that purports to represent the whole of Canada has missed a very important slice of the country because the Yukon is almost forgotten except for the gold rush,” he said in an interview.

He said those who hail from Yukon want to be thought of as Canadians. “When they're shut out of the gallery, what have you to think? You could be living in Swaziland.”

Mr. Harrison, however, said he was “entranced” by Mrs. Harper, who had brought her daughter Rachel's class in to meet him.

Mrs. Harper said she first realized that there was a Harrison available when she saw one in **Maureen McTeer's** book on official residences. Ms. McTeer is the wife of former prime minister, **Joe Clark**. Mrs. Harper found it in an upstairs room at 24 Sussex Dr. and had it moved to the dining room. As well, there is a series of Mr. Harrison's paintings, depicting the country, hanging in the main entrance.

Mr. Harrison is celebrating his 40th anniversary as a Canadian painter – he was born in England and came to the Yukon to teach in 1968. He was in Ottawa also to celebrate his new biography, *Ted Harrison: Painting Paradise* by **Katherine Gibson**.

In the book, Ms. Gibson focuses on the fact that Mr. Harrison is not in Canada's national gallery. She describes this omission, “Ted Harrison - loved and snubbed, adored and ignored.” Ms. Gibson, meanwhile, who is accompanying Mr. Harrison, said that **Stephen Harper** was given a copy of the book when he travelled this summer to the Yukon.

The North is a big part of the Conservative's strategy. As for the National Gallery: The curators are aware of the “important gap” in their permanent collection and “are working to fill it,” says **Marie Lugli**, a spokeswoman for the gallery.

Kluane Glacier

Sherron, I have attached a fantastic photo taken by Erin, our tenant. Erin is a pilot and has taken quite a few awesome photos. This photo was taken last week. She and Whitehorse Air Service have given permission to use this photo in the Moctel if you wish.

Donna Clayson bdclayson*northwestel.net (In Whitehorse)



Whitehorse Air Service's Cessna 206 over the Kluane Glaciers.
Photo courtesy of Erin Schnyder goneflying*live.ca (In Whitehorse)

GUARDING THE OLYMPIC TORCH

Ken Jones will be working security and technical aspects of the travels of the Olympic Torch for a good part of its travels over the next few months. So when I heard it was lit October 22nd and leaving Olympia Greece for Victoria Canada I sent Ken a note. Here is his reply. – Sherron

Hi Sherron

Yes the torch is lit and it arrives in Victoria on Oct 30. Our team heads over to Victoria on Oct 28. We stay on the Island until Campbell River on Nov 2 when the Flame goes by Air North through the North including Whitehorse and arrives in St John's Newfoundland on Nov 12. I will be delivering our truck on Nov 2 back to the LMD to be shipped by rail to the East and will have time at home until Nov 14 when I fly out to Newfoundland and begin the trek across Canada arriving in Vancouver Feb 12, 2010 !

Am I not the most lucky person that you know ???

Will be in touch.

Ken Jones k29j32@shaw.ca (In Chilliwack)

Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:41 AM

Subject: CKNW Breaking News

The Olympic torch has been officially handed over to Canadian officials in Athens, Greece. It will now be flown to Victoria for tomorrow morning's start of the 106-day trek across the country.

Friday, October 30, 2009 6:47 AM

Subject: CKNW Breaking News

Poor weather has delayed the arrival of the Olympic Flame. It is now expected to land on its flight from Greece at 8:30 this morning at the Victoria Airport.

Friday, October 30, 2009 9:07 AM

Subject: CKNW Breaking News

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson has carried the Olympic Flame off a Canadian Forces jet onto Canadian soil at Victoria International Airport.

Sent: Friday, October 30, 2009 11:12 AM

Subject: CKNW Breaking News

The 106-day Olympic Torch Relay has officially begun at the B.C. Legislature with the first torch bearers being Catriona Le May Doan and Simon Whitfield

My apologies in advance for including politically sensitive material in the MocTel. I was given the heads up on the project and decided to just include all the information available in case anyone wished to make their thoughts known to the City of Dawson. – Sherron

Dawson Debates the Future of a Park and a Hospital assembled with commentary in italics by Dan Davidson

Sherron has requested that I provide information about the current debate over the future of Minto Park and the development of a new hospital here in Dawson. I've tended to skip local political issues in these postings because they inevitably have roots that run deeper than many people will want to delve. I fear that may be the case here, but I've pulled together my own reporting on this subject and a detailed critique of the site selection from a former town councillor and current member of the soon to be defunct Planning Board (another story for a later time.)

Let's start by noting that the land where the government and the Yukon Hospital Corp. propose to build the new hospital (whatever that nebulous term may mean) belongs to the government and has only been leased to the town for other purposes (a children's playground) for the last several decades. I've been here 24 years and it predates my arrival.

Any previous discussion of a replacement for the Health Centre (formerly, the Nursing Station and before that Father Judge Memorial Hospital) has assumed it would go there. The last set of building plans for a "multi-level health care centre" were developed when our recently elected mayor, Peter Jenkins, was the territorial Minister of Health. It would have been built in that same spot, though Mr. Jenkins neglected to mention this during our recent mayoralty election forum in October.

That plan died a well deserved death, rejected as a blueprint by every health care provider in the town. Mr. Jenkins resigned (or was removed - it depends on who is telling the tale) from the Yukon Party caucus and from the government, and busied himself with rebuilding the top floor of the Eldorado Hotel after a disastrous fire. He returned to municipal politics this fall.

In the forum it should be noted that both the incumbent mayor John Steins, and challenger Jenkins (who was mayor here from 1980 to 1995) indicated that they did not like the site, but were not prepared to chance losing the hospital project by opposing it. The federal funding has a time limit on it.

DD

Dawson promised New Health Care Facility to begin Construction next year

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

June 28, 2008

Consultation with local health care professionals and geotech work on a proposed site will be the first stages of a two phase project announced by Health Minister Brad Cathers and Klondike MLA Steve Nordick in front of the Dawson City Health Centre over the noon hour on June 27.

Nordick announced the government's intention to replace Dawson's aging Health Care Facility as phase one of the project, to be followed immediately by the replacement of the MacDonald Lodge Seniors Home.

"Originally, we had committed to replacing MacDonald Lodge," Cathers said, referring to promises made during the last territorial election.

"Today, we are pleased to announce that the Yukon government will build a new health centre in Dawson City and a new care facility to replace MacDonald Lodge."

"This is the first time that the government has committed to replacing not only Macdonald Lodge but the Health Care facility," Cathers said.

"The Department of Health and Social Services will be contacting Dawson health care professionals shortly to discuss plans for the new health centre, as well as working with them to enhance services provided to residents of Dawson," he added.

Consultations actually began in a meeting with health care staff held just prior to the press conference, though Cathers indicated that some planning had already been done at the department level.

Klondike MLA Steve Nordick said he was very pleased with today's announcement.

"A new health centre and new care facility are both very important to my constituents and my community. I am pleased that my colleagues are supporting this important step in addressing the health and long-term care needs of Dawson City," Nordick said.

Cathers indicated that the Health Care Centre project had been added to the original election commitment, and changed to the first phase as a result of input from Dawsonites as filtered through Nordick.

This appears to be a vastly different project than the one announced by Premier Fentie during a meeting here in 2003 and subsequently presented to the community as a set of design and elevation plans during former MLA Peter Jenkins' tenure as Minister of Health.

In that project, termed a "multi-level health care facility," the nursing station and the lodge would have been combined into a single two-story structure which would have included Emergency Medical Services and would have been heavily dependent on the functioning of a pair of elevators.

This proposal was roundly condemned by doctors, nurses and paramedics in town, who indicated that they had had little input in the design.

Apparently that mistake will not be repeated with the present project.

Cathers indicated that there was no intention to merge the facilities, though there might be easier access between them in the new designs. Presently the two buildings are about a block apart, but their replacements would probably both be located, if the geotech work proves satisfactory, on a plot of YTG owned land that sits behind the current Health Care Centre and behind the Dawson City Museum.

Much of this area is currently a community playground.

There are other YTG properties in the town that could prove to be satisfactory if this land is not. Cathers said.

Cathers had no estimates of costs at this time. The last project was to have been between \$11 million and \$14 million, but that was four years ago and costs have increased, as the government's health care centre project in Watson Lake has shown.

Construction for phase one of the project is scheduled to begin in the 2009-2010 fiscal year, with phase two to follow immediately thereafter. Completion dates are not known yet.

Cathers conceded that staffing issues are as critical as facilities issues when it comes to designing enhanced medical services for the years to come and said that these issues would be part of the planning discussions.



The Dawson Health Care Centre is to be replaced over the next two years.
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net (In Dawson)

DD Note: This announcement was as far as this project got. The next evolution of the discussion would not come for almost a year. By that time Cathers was no longer the Minister and the government was well on its way to handing management of hospital facilities in Dawson and Watson Lake over to the Yukon Hospital Corp., a crown corporation which already managed the Whitehorse General Hospital.

New Hospital Planned for Dawson City

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

April 13, 2009

Minister of Health and Social Services Glenn Hart and Klondike MLA Steve Nordick announced on April 9 the start of a process to build a new hospital in Dawson City. This announcement follows the signing of a letter of intent with the Yukon Hospital Corporation to oversee the construction of the new facility and then to assume its operation.

This announcement is a follow-up to one made on June 27, 2008, when Nordick and the former Health Minister, Brad Cathers, met the press to announce that the Dawson Nursing Station would be replaced as phase one of a plan to upgrade medical services here.

At that time the plan included a phase two, the replacement of the MacDonald Lodge Seniors' Home, but there was no mention of that in the most recent announcement.

At that time, construction for phase one of the project was scheduled to begin in the 2009-2010 fiscal year, with phase two to follow immediately thereafter.

“I am pleased to be working together with the Yukon Hospital Corporation in providing increased access to health care in Dawson City,” Hart said on April 9.

“The mandate of the corporation is to operate one or more hospitals and continue to provide acute care services to all Yukoners. We are excited about providing hospital services for Dawson City and the surrounding area,” Hospital board chair Craig Tuton said.

The next step in the process will be to complete a functional assessment of the community’s acute care needs. The government and the Yukon Hospital Corporation will host community meetings to discuss the needs of the community. Meetings will include health centre staff, other health professionals in the community, the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in First Nation as well as community stakeholders.

There have not been any meetings held on this topic since last year’s announcement, and comments at the Health Care Review meeting held here on March 30 revealed that those in attendance believed the project had stalled and would quietly disappear, just as several earlier initiatives have done.

The April 9 press release says otherwise, as does the budget allocation of \$1 million for work on the project.

“This government clearly recognizes the need for a new facility in Dawson City to replace the aging health centre. Our intent now is to build a hospital to serve the people of the Dawson district that would be operated by the Yukon Hospital Corporation,” Nordick said.

The involvement of the Yukon Hospital Corporation is not something that has been discussed publicly in Dawson up to this time but Steve Geick, head nurse at the Dawson Nursing Station, says that it does not come as a surprise and could be a good thing.

“The government has committed that current staff will be guaranteed employment either in the new hospital or with the Yukon government,” Hart said.

Since it could be at least two years before there were any changes, Geick says there would be plenty of time to work out the details, but that there had been some quiet discussions over the last year.

There are many things missing from the current press release.

What would be the future of the doctors’ offices currently attached to the nursing station?

Would there be some attempt to relocate the dentist’s offices to a room in the new complex?

Would staffing be increased to allow for such things as overnight stays at the hospital?

Would the hospital be equipped to deal with such things as local births and palliative care?

Presumably these issues will be discussed during the promised public consultation meetings.

Mayor John Steins welcomed the news in an entry on his personal web log.

“That’s what I call great news,” he wrote. “This initiative really recognizes the potential Dawson has for becoming a service centre for our region.”

In an interview Steins indicated that there have not so far been any discussions with his council, nor had he been made aware of this press release in advance.

The press release made no mention of a budget. The last time a project of this scale was announced for here, it was in the range of \$11 to \$14 million, but that was five years ago.



Nursing Station. While previous announcements have been about replacing the nursing station, this one refers to building a hospital.

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



MacDonald Lodge. Replacing McDonald Lodge was previously announced as phase two of a health services upgrade for Dawson City

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

Seniors Advocate Location Change for New Hospital

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

April 25, 2009

If there's one thing that anyone proposing any sort of major development in Dawson City should know by now, it's that some residents will disagree with the proposed site of the project.

Over the last decade every major undertaking in this town, from the recreation centre, to the bridge, to the sewage lagoon, has met with one constant comment: put it somewhere else.

While it has been understood locally for some time that any replacement of the current nursing station, whether it was to be called a nursing station, a multilevel health care facility or a hospital, would be built behind the current building, on the YTG property that extends in the direction of Minto Park and behind the Museum, it would appear that no one has had enough confidence in the reality of these projects to raise that default objection.

That silence ended on April 20, when a group of seniors, about seven in number, met with a panel from the Resource Planning Group and the Yukon Hospital Corp.

One message that was loud and clear during that meeting was that these seniors, who said they represented the views of more than their number, want the proposed hospital to be built elsewhere, on land that YTG owns along Turner Street, about a block away from the currently favoured site.

The Turner Street site would run from the corner of Fifth Avenue almost to the Old Courthouse on Front Street for the hospital portion, while a new seniors' lodge could be built extending north on Front Street, opposite the Museum.

Seniors also pointed out that using the proposed site would eliminate the children's Park along Seventh Avenue, shrink Minto Park in general, cut down on green space and place the new hospital right next to the site of the annual Dawson City Music Festival, which can hardly be thought of as a quiet zone during the third weekend in July.

The present facility's location, said retired archdeacon Ken Snider, was never one favoured by the community and was the result of a poor consultation process decades ago. This process separated the hospital (as it was at the time) and the seniors lodge, partly because the former was a federal facility then while the lodge was territorial.

Any proper consultation now, he continued, should start with the assumption that the two buildings should be combined in some way, on one level, in a location that served both well and led to some efficiencies in their operation.

Any planning, he went on, should include both facilities, even if the other was only to be built later on.

For a proposed seniors' lodge, Fifth Avenue would be the best location, Hanulik and Snider maintained. Currently residents are able to set out on a deck in good weather and watch comings and goings along the busy street as well as see the local parades and special events, many of which take place along Fifth Avenue.

Former town councillor Shirley Pennell queried the actual designation of the building as a hospital, saying that would raise unrealistic expectations in everyone's minds. Better, she said, to call it a medical centre. Cottage hospital and health care centre were other alternate terms that came up during the lively discussion.

Hanulik said that whatever it was called, the new building needed to be one where a sick person could stay overnight, or perhaps for several nights, as long as the condition did not require a higher level of care. This used to be the case here when the building was known as the Father Judge Memorial Hospital, but since it was downgraded to a nursing station overnight care has been rare, with most patients being medivaced to Whitehorse if they need more than a few hours' care.

Several seniors present at the meeting had given birth to children at either the present nursing station or when hospital facilities were located in the Old Court House, and wondered loudly why this was no longer possible in cases where there were no complications, especially when problem cases could be flown out if necessary.

At present, most expectant mothers spend weeks in Whitehorse prior to their delivery dates.

It was mentioned that it would make sense to have offices for a visiting dentist located in the new hospital, and that ambulance bays and a training area for staff, including EMO volunteers, should be part of the package.

Palma Berger, who has been conducting art classes for seniors out of the Oddfellow's Hall, suggested that a multipurpose room could serve as a classroom space and also as extra space for beds in the event of a serious flood, forest fire crisis or a bus accident.

RPG representatives Sharon Ritmiller and Ruth Vargas indicated that their report would not necessarily be tied to a particular site for the new hospital, and that the new facility would certainly have to be one that fit the needs of the community in terms of size, location and services. There was not, for instance, likely to be a surgery here, but such things as palliative care and limited physiotherapy should be possible.

Sufficient staffing, it has been noted from the beginning of the discussion some weeks ago, is crucial to making a hospital work here.

DD Note: A subsequent report from RPG discussed at town council indicated that the consultants cast considerable doubt on whether the playground area would be large enough to contain the footprint of the new facility.

Hospital location protested at Council

by Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net (In Dawson)
September 3, 2009

Mayor John Steins will be telling the territorial government that the council would like it to consider other locations for the new hospital that the Yukon Hospital Corporation will be building in Dawson.

So far the town has not seen a design, a development proposal, or a footprint for the project, but has been told that it will be built on the site of an existing children's playground behind the current health centre. The land there is owned by YTG but has been used as a playground for over three decades.

The government has committed to replace the park at another location.

Be that as it may, Minto Park, as it is known, is seen by many as a recreational site (playground, ballpark, site of the Dawson City Music Festival and a number of other annual events) that should not be lost to the community.

At the August 18 council meeting, former town councillor Shirley Pennell pointed out that the use of the area as a park actually extends well beyond a generation, with many historic photographs showing events taking place in this location.

At a Yukon Hospital Corp. meeting held here on August 27, YHC chair Craig Tuton was unwilling to discuss alternative locations, indicating that YTG had made this land available for the project. Any change in location would, he said, be a political matter which should be taken up with the local MLA and the government.

Yukon Party MLA for Klondike Steve Nordick is on the record as saying that the hospital location is fixed and cannot be changed. Reports from the meeting indicate that Nordick came under considerable verbal criticism at the YHC meeting.

Pennell attended this meeting and was distressed that the YHC board came to talk rather than to listen.

Sylvia Burkhardt was so upset after the meeting that she penned a lengthy handwritten letter on a sheet of yellow legal paper and posted it in the Canada Post office, exhorting any readers to save Minto Park, and “register opposition to this at City Offices...”

Not content with that, she arrived in delegations for the September 1 meeting and presented council with a lengthy critique of its own shortcomings in raising opposition to the hospital’s construction in the YHC’s proposed location.

She was unaware that council has been discussing this matter intensely since it was first raised earlier in the summer and has been delaying its own response to proposed projects by both the hospital corporation and the Yukon Housing Corporation because the requests appear to conflict with the existing Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw.

(DD Note: The Housing Corp. announced plans to replace the decrepit Kobo Apartments in the middle of the summer. While the corporation originally had at least three sites in mind for this project and was leaving it up to council to choose, it subsequently announced that it wanted to build on Turner Street, pre-empting discussion of that as a hospital site. Could the two YHCs have been talking to each other? One has to wonder.)

Just as importantly, so far the requests for approval from both crown corporations amount to requests for a blank cheque from council, since neither group has yet to produce a site plan or architect's concept sketch. In spite of constant hints that speed is of the essence due to the timelines for accessing stimulus funding, neither organization has begun to submit a request for a development permit.

Coun. Ashley Doiron proposed that Steins write to the ministers in charge of Health and Community Services.

Coun. Rick Reimer noted that council is aware that there are citizens who support the construction of the new hospital in the government’s proposed location, as well as citizens who do not, but had reservations about supporting nebulous projects.

Coun. Diana Andrew said that asking the government to reconsider locations is something of a risk, but one she felt ought to be taken.

For Mayor John Steins, it is simply a matter of respect for local governments for the senior level to make some attempt to consult and to be in compliance with local bylaws rather than using Orders in Council to brush them aside as it did in the case of the Front Street paving project.



The official Yukon Government and Yukon Hospital Corporation position is that this is the location for the new hospital. The current Health Centre is just behind those trees at the far end of the playground.

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



One popular suggestion for a joint hospital and seniors' residence here, wrapping around the corner of Turner St. and Fifth Ave.

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

DD Note: Burkhardt has gone on to post extensive handwritten protest letters in the Post Office and has organized a petition which Liberal part Leader Arthur Mitchell will be presenting in the Legislature when it reconvenes in November. Council would subsequently give in to the territorial government on the issue and agree to support the location in spite of misgivings.

Reconsider the New Hospital's Location

(A letter to Klondike MLA Steve Nordick, published in the Klondike Sun)

By Shirley Pennell

Dear Steve:

I truly chastise myself for not contacting you sooner on the issue concerning the land site for the future hospital.

On Sunday morning, I heard that at your BBQ, a constituent asked you if the site for the hospital chosen by the government was final. Your answer was, 'Yes.' I feel that I must state my reasons why the "given" piece of property for the future hospital is fraught with problems.

First a little history. Minto Park is a very important part of Dawson history. It was named after Lord Minto who was the Governor General of Canada from 1898 through to 1903. He believed not only in physical activity for what we now call a healthy life style, but later went on to be one of several people believing in the preservation of our history and later was instrumental in forming the National Archives of Canada.

1. We do not have a central green belt within our historic town site outside of Minto Park. Too, although the Government promises to replace the out-of-date toys in the children's playground, they will not be responsible for finding a suitable, alternative site for our children. That will be on the City Council's plate, and as we all know, land is at an extreme premium. This replacement playground will not be replaced as quickly as some of our citizens are led to believe, as proven by the length of time it took to replace the North End Park.

(DD Note: The North End Park was originally bordered by trees planted by Governor General Romeo LeBlanc, but both the park and the border were destroyed when streets in the north end of town were realigned. A new park was finally completed last year, nearly a decade later.)

2. At the last meeting of the Whitehorse Hospital Board, Thursday, August 27th, Craig Tuton mentioned that they will make the hospital on the area of land that the playground now takes up. They will also be asking for variance(s) in order to do so. What puzzles me, is that when a citizen of Dawson wants to build a structure of such a magnitude, they have to present a site plan showing setbacks, structure placement on property and if a commercial or public building, parking. We have seen none of this! Most people did not know that it would have part of the structure two stories high. Why did they not know this, is because there have not been any sketches of this building. As a citizen, I'm not asking for expensive architectural drawings, but a least some idea of how the building will be configured on the site, as well as showing allotments for parking.

3. Parking - that has always been an issue in town when it comes to commercial and public buildings. Have any government officials even considered the street configuration around this parcel of land? The Board is designing into the hospital other areas related to wellness. These features will have their own clientele and thus require parking. Then you have a larger hospital staff which most likely will have certain parking needs along with the general public. Sixth Avenue is narrow and not configured into a straight line. When it meets Mission Street, seeing traffic coming in either direction at present, is very difficult and one must be careful. If Minto Park will even be used for

Music Festival, the traffic will be even heavier in an area which is made up of the swimming pool, children playing in the park and going to the pool in the summer. Then add a screaming ambulance to this scene.

4. Minto Park and Music Festival. Do we honestly believe that during construction of this hospital, when building season is so short, they will stop to allow the festival to function while they discontinue to work for four days? I don't think so. Too, while I'm on Minto Park - if the ballplayers are already sending fly balls through the windows of the swimming pool, what will happen to the windows in the hospital? For that matter, isn't a hospital a 'quiet zone'? No quiet over the summer when our citizens want to play ball. Bottom line - what will happen to Minto Park as far as it's continued use historically? Again, I personally think that the Committee for the organization of future Music Festivals should really be concerned for their venue being held in the Park in future years.

5. Placing the ambulance bay with the hospital makes good sense. BUT, I go back to the street configurations. Not good for getting an ambulance out quickly and safely. Is the lane way going into the back of the museum part of the site of the hospital? Is that going to be used by the ambulance? With a site plan and a rough placement of various health related areas, including McDonald Lodge, one could see how the flow of traffic would possibly function. It's called long range planning.

In conclusion, the placement of the hospital on the corner of 5th and Turner would make more sense both for traffic flow and the maintaining of Minto Park as a treasured historic piece of property. How did Yukon Housing lay claim to this parcel of land when nothing has been discussed publicly concerning the final site? (And don't say it's contaminated ground. Good for Korbo, good for hospital.) Discussed with Council I assume, yes, but when there's a shortage of land for two major construction projects with a financial time restraint, I feel that the public has a right to know what's happening. These two parcels of land are owned by the Government and are front and centre in our Historical town and we should be very considered as players with a vested interest that should be valued. I don't feel that has been the case.

It has been dictated:

"The Government has given us this land for the hospital." Has the Government given the land on 5th and Turner, too, for the building of the Korbo? The citizens of Dawson, in my estimation and for that matter, our Mayor and Council, have been bullied into the present situation. Too, by the constant stressing of a window of time for the finances to be forthcoming and any delays means the window is lost, is another bullying tactic. In this whole process of meetings, the decision had already been made and we were only basically spectators. How sad for all.

Sincerely,
Shirley J. Pennell

DD Note: It's worth noting that nearly all the points raised by both Burkhardt and Pennell were subjects of discussion by council over a period of some months. Council fiercely resented being backed into a corner by YTG (which prefers to be known as YG these days) but ultimately felt helpless to do much about it. While there was a vocal group opposing the site selection, there appear to have been just as many people telling councillors not to risk losing the projects. That is where things stand at the moment. Both projects mentioned here will likely begin construction in the Spring.

Bear attack 2009

(from a forwarded e-mail)

Why you should always clean your plane.....

Apparently a bear attacked a plane while parked in a remote field up in AK. The pilot had not cleaned out the inside after a long fishing trip and the bear smelled it.

The pilot had 2 new tires, 3 cases of Duct Tape and several rolls of cellophane delivered. Then went about repairing the plane so he could fly it home.









We had a dream program this year, says Underworld's President

By Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net (In Dawson)

Underworld Resources held a reception in the Oddfellow's Hall ballroom on the evening of October 14 to celebrate what company president Adrian Fleming called a very successful exploration season. The company drilled 25,670 in its search for good core samples and added nearly 3,000 staked claims to its holdings in the White River area, about 90 kilometres south of Dawson City.

The 2009 operations cost in the neighbourhood of \$10 million dollars, of which approximately \$1 million was spent locally.

"We wanted to have a little gathering tonight to get you altogether with us," he told the 50 or so people in the room. "basically to say thank you for the terrific support that the town of Dawson has given us this year."

He also paid tribute to his assistant, Cheryl Lang, "the face of Underworld here in town" who had to be in Ontario at this point attending her mother's funeral. "Cheryl's been a terrific help to me, to the company and the project this year in running around town and bugging you all for bits and pieces and things that we need to run our project."

Underworld's involvement here began when it optioned the White Gold property from Shawn Ryan and Cathy Wood-Ryan in 2007. After some initial drilling that year, the 2008

work turned up what Fleming referred to as a “very nice gold discovery” which could lead to a hard rock gold mine by 2015 if all continues to go well.

“We ran a very big program this year and we’ve added a significant number of ounces to the deposit ... but we couldn’t have done that program without the help of all of you and the town of Dawson.”

That Underworld depends so heavily on Dawson is the result of a decision, taken two years ago, to “direct a significant proportion of our business to the nearest community. You are the nearest community. You’ve been terrific, and I would like to say thank you very much for your support.”

Fleming predicts that the 2010 program will be similar in size and effort to the 2009 year. As the prospects get to looking better, he and his wife have relocated to Vancouver from New Zealand for the foreseeable future. The commute was getting to be extreme.

“Mineral exploration is a very risky business,” he told the crowd by way of a cautionary note. “Many, many projects that see significant drill programs like the one that we’ve just carried out do not become mines - because they’re too far away, or it’s not rich enough, or the deposit doesn’t hang together, or there are permitting issues. ‘Any of those things may be a problem to us, although I doubt it. We’ve already defined a quite significant body of mineralization. We have quite a lot of work to do over the next six months - engineering work and other activities to try and measure whether this deposit is big enough to justify starting serious work towards developing a mine.’”

“We do not know that this point of time if it might be a mine. I would love it to be a mine, but there is no certainty. If the gold gods continue to smile upon us, I think the best outcome for us and the community would perhaps be a mining operation but I wouldn’t imagine that would start producing gold until 2015. That’s a long way off, but developing a hard rock mine takes a lot of activity.”

Interviewed after his talk, Fleming said that the excellent results from the drilling in May started something of a rush and the company was able to raise \$17 million in investments and see its stock rise to \$250.00 a share.

“We’ll finish this year with about \$8.5 million in the bank.” That’s before looking at money to be raised by the warrants attached to each share. If those are exercised by investors, which will bring in nearly \$10 million. That total amount would, he said, easily cover next year’s program.



The Underworld crew, photographed at the exploration site, as seen in the company slide show.

Photo courtesy [Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net](mailto:Dan.Davidson@uffish*northwestel.net) (In Dawson)



Watching the slide show.

Photo courtesy [Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net](mailto:Dan.Davidson@uffish*northwestel.net) (In Dawson)



The number on the cake indicates the amount of drilling done last summer: 25,670 metres.
Photo courtesy [Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net](mailto:Dan.Davidson@uffish.northwestel.net) (In Dawson)



Adrian Fleming, president of Underworld Resources.
Photo courtesy [Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net](mailto:Dan.Davidson@uffish.northwestel.net) (In Dawson)



Sean Ryan and Cathy Wood-Ryan
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

Dawson Council Takes on New Members

compiled by Dan Davidson

Here's a summary of events leading up to and following the recent municipal elections here.

Jenkins to Challenge Steins for Mayor's job

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

September 24, 2009

In a reversal of Dawson's last municipal elections, voters this time will only be choosing a mayor.

Incumbent John Steins, elected by acclamation in June of 2006, will be challenged by former mayor and former MLA Peter Jenkins.

Of the four council positions two will be filled by incumbents Rick Reimer and Ashley

Doiron. Reimer, a miner, was chosen in a by-election when Adam Morrison resigned to take up a new job in Whitehorse. Doiron, who works at the KIAC School of Visual Arts and owns Whitehouse Cabins with her partner, Doug Cotter, has served a full term.

New to council will be Stephen Johnson, who ran against Reimer in the aforementioned by-election. Johnson is a retired mining engineer and member of the Yukon Territory Water Board.

Returning to council will be Wayne Potoroka, who served a full term and six months of a second term under former mayor Glen Everitt. Potoroka works for the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and is also a freelance journalist

In the last municipal election there were 14 council candidates and only one for mayor.

Jenkins takes the Dawson Race

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

October 15, 2009

In a race that seesawed back and forth through the entire count, the unofficial report from Dawson returning officer, Bonnie Barber, is that Peter Jenkins has reclaimed the position of mayor by the slimmest of majorities, beating incumbent John Steins by a mere 8 votes. The five people counting up the tally sheets were on tenterhooks through out the hour that it took to tabulate the 529 ballots. Two were spoiled, leaving 527 cast.

The count was neck and neck up to about 60 ballots, after which Steins appeared to pull ahead, but never by more than 10 or 20 votes. Sometime after the 300 count the lead began to seesaw back and forth, changing hands 8 times with variances of just one or two votes, until Jenkins finally pulled ahead near the end of the second column on the sheets.

When the ballots cast on voting day were finished Jenkins had a solid lead of nearly 25 votes, but this dwindled rapidly as the 42 advance poll ballots were counted, and in the end he held on with 267 votes against Stein's 259.

Jenkins arrived at the polling station just after the count was finished and pronounced himself very happy with the size of the turnout and the closeness of the race, calling a sign that democracy was healthy in Dawson.

“John came forward with a very strong campaign: buttons, the whole nine yards. I tended to kind of sit back and ride this one out a little bit.

Jenkins ran a campaign based on several key issues: the potential O&M cost of the new secondary sewage treatment plant that YTG is building here; the integrity of the potable water supply; and the need for new recreational facilities in the town.

In the public forum held on Oct. 7 he advocated building a new recreation centre.

Interviewed after the election, he said that facilities and programs to deal with the town's teenagers would be a major priority for him.

As for his first move on taking office, he said, “I'll have a look at the financial statements and see where we're at.”

Shortly after the election John Steins was considering the options he might have given the closeness of the race. On Friday he will seek legal opinions regarding a judicial recount and a possible scrutiny of the voters' declarations to see if everyone who voted was actually eligible.

There is no voters' list in Dawson and voting is on the honours system after filling out a form. Some people find this confusing. One American citizen was surprised to discover he did not qualify to vote here.

The turnout of 529 is much stronger than the 398 who voted when the council was restored in June, 2006, and even ahead of the 500 who voted in 2003.



John Steins and Peter Jenkins in conversation at the Underworld Resources community reception the evening before the election.

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

Dan Davidson Note: Initial scrutiny of the election declaration sheets revealed some 32 names of people that were not known to those sifting the forms. This was eventually pared down to 18 and then to about a dozen. Steins was not willing to subject people who

might have voted by accident to the potential for court action if they had made an untrue declaration. All Klondike Valley residents get to vote in both federal and territorial elections, but only those who live in the town's boundaries get to vote for mayor and council. While some outside of town complain about this, residents in these areas were very vocal in resisting the town's attempt to expand its boundaries to take them in the early 1990s during Mr. Jenkin's first run as mayor. In the end, Steins decided not to contest the vote.

Dawson's New Council Sworn in

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

October 21, 2009

Dawson's new municipal council was sworn in at a special session held on October 20 at 6:30 p.m. There was just a small group of family members and supporters in attendance to watch as notary public Rhonda Taylor administered the oaths to returning councillors Ashley Doiron and Rick Reimer and then to new councillors Stephen Johnson, Wayne Potoroka and mayor-elect Peter Jenkins.

Each member of council swears first to "be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, her heirs and successors according to law."

This is followed by a six point affirmation.

Following on the swearing-in ceremony the council held its regularly scheduled 3rd week of the month meeting. The timing of future meetings was one of the subjects of the evening's discussions.

Tuesday night provides some difficulty for Councillor Potoroka and discussion ranged around what other time might be suitable. Due to the Procedures Bylaw which was imposed on Dawson's council during the trusteeship, this is not as simple a matter as it might seem, and will actually require a bylaw change. This creates a need to state to the public the intent to change the bylaw, the drafting of an amendment and three readings before it can come into force. In it's original version the process would also have required the approval of the Minister of Community Services, but that requirement was dropped part way through the terms of the Steins administration.

Council postponed a decision to take action to assess a waste oil contamination problem at the Quigley Landfill, citing a need to see the government order and to decide whether it might not be more suitable to move straight to remediation. That decision will be taken at a noon hour meeting this Wednesday, no doubt the first of many additional meetings to come for this new group.

In addition to changes in elected officials, there are other changes at the town office. Eldo Enns has resigned as city manager and the city staff are seeking to unionize, under the umbrella of the Public Service Alliance of Canada which has applied for a certificate to do so.



New Council - Jackie Olson (acting CAO), Wayne Potoroka, Stephen Johnson, Peter Jenkins (mayor), Rick Riemer, Ashley Doiron

OBIT

I have been called upon again to inform the members of the Moc-Tel of another passing of a long time friend and Yukoner. Herbert E. (Butch) Miller passed away Oct 17, 2009 in Merritt B.C. There was no relationship between the two Miller families, mine and his. It all began with my mother Vera Breaden, and Doris Fisher growing up together in Mayo as young children. My grandfather "Spot Cash" (Jim Breaden) and Doris's father (Bud Fisher), "Yukon Bud", worked together on the cat trains that were the mainstay of winter transportation back in the 30's. My mother Vera married Carl Miller in Mayo in 1941 and Doris married Butch Miller in Mayo in 1944. The friendship has lasted strong all these years and still today. Butch's son Allan and I grew up together as kids also. Butch loved to camp and fish. Many family weekends were spent together in the Mayo country and later at Braeburn Lake where both families had cabins. Butch was like an uncle to me while growing up and was always there to give advice when needed. When my father passed away he was the first one there to see if he could give a helping hand. His words of wisdom are still with me today. As mentioned below after the war he worked at the Northern Commercial store in Mayo and later became the store manager for Taylor and Drury in Mayo. In 1958 Butch and family transferred to Whitehorse where he took on managing the Hardware Department for Taylor and Drury store on Front Street. His needs were simple and all he wished for was to be a good carpenter. His wish was granted. Well Butch, as the Irish say!

**May the road rise up to meet you
May the wind always be at your back
May the sun shine warm upon your face
The rains fall soft upon your fields
And until we meet again
May God hold you in the palm of His Hand**

"AS TIME GOES BY"

Copy of Orbit from Merritt Herald.

HERBERT E. (BUTCH) MILLER
March 13, 1922 - Oct. 17, 2009

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of our husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather Butch Miller.

Dad was born in Aberdeen, Sask. where he received his education. He played baseball and hockey for the "Millionaires" all star hockey team. Dad had a variety of jobs growing up. From selling gopher tails to chopping wood. He eventually moved on to carpenter work and working in a hardware store. In 1941 he enlisted in the Canadian Army. After basic training he became a cook in 1942. In 1943 he was drafted to the signals unit in Kingston, Ont. After many moves, he ended up being stationed in Mayo, Yukon. Dad met mom in Mayo and they were married on Oct. 21, 1944. In 1958 the family moved to Whitehorse. Dad managed the hardware dept. for Taylor and Drury. In 1973 dad and mom moved to Merritt. Dad worked for C. Pol Construction. He worked on the Valnic Hotel, Pharmasave and the Catholic Church, just to name a few. He retired in 1987. Dad always enjoyed music, sports and carpenter work.

He was predeceased by his parents Ambrose and Mary, older brother Frank and son Allan.

Survived by family and step-family. Wife Doris, daughters: Donna (Mike), Cynthia (Gary), grandchildren: Pam (Rich), Darlene (Ben) Lori, Dave (Shelley) James, Scott, Shea (Erin), great grandchildren: Keith, Baley, Corbin, Cameron, Drake, Camey, Ewan and new great grand baby due in Feb.

We will miss you Dad!
Love you forever
The family

NEW ADDITIONS

A friend of mine passed your email address to me about your magazine that covers the northwest (Whitehorse in particular). I resided in Whitehorse mid to late '50's and am interest in receiving it....Ron

Ron Livingstone
13 Graham Rd
Trenton ON K8V 5X5

I will return an email with info about my time in Whitehorse and am trying to locate some old pictures I know I have of downtown Whitehorse etc....Will get back to soonest (once I find my 'ol album' of many years ago).

I would very much so appreciate a copy of your latest edition and will join as one of your newer members. I am a bit preoccupied at the moment but will get this draft email to u in due course. My friend of many years, another "down homer" by the name of Ed Avery was the one who introduced me to your work. So until then.....enjoy and we will get back to you..... Ron Livingstone francis*kos.net

REMOVED FROM THE LIST

Reason: unknown user <cookie@whtvcable.com>
MORGAN, Shirley "Cookie" Cookie*WHTVcable.com (In Whitehorse)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Among those whom I like or admire, I can find no common denominator, but among those whom I love, I can: all of them make me laugh." - W. H. Auden

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Just made some VERY easy HEALTHY soup - you may want to share with your Mactel readers or just make for yourself. I make it when I am dieting as it has everything but fat in it and NO meat.

Healthy Soup

Submitted by Susan Andreeff erniesue*shaw.ca (In Parksville BC)

1 tbsp veg oil
1 onion chopped
1 clove garlic (I use about 6 or 7)

2 chopped carrots
1 tbsp. (or less) Chili powder
1 tbsp (or less) ground cumin
4 cups vegetable stock (or chicken)
1 can each 14 oz. black beans (lentils, kidney or any type you prefer) drained and rinsed
(I use 2 cans and sometimes more than 14 oz. cans)
1 can stewed tomatoes 28 oz.
1 can kernel corn (optional)
salt and pepper to taste

In large saucepan heat the oil - toss in onion, carrots and garlic - cook about 7 min until onion is soft - add the Chili powder and ground Cumin - stir for 1 min...add stock, tomatoes and beans.. and corn ..bring to a boil. Simmer for an hour...READY and delicious...prep time 10 min.

DATES TO REMEMBER

I promised to follow up with more information re the banquet as soon as we got the "bugs" worked out. I think this one should do it.

MocTel readers, check out Vancouver Yukoners' Association NEW website www.vancouver-yukoners.com for more information as it becomes available but here is your invitation to VYA Banquet 2010:



***The Vancouver Yukoners' Association invites
you to attend the 82nd Annual Banquet***

Date: April 17, 2010

**Place: River Rock Casino/Resort – Whistler Ballroom
Address: 8811 River Rd, Richmond BC – Free Parking**

Hotel reservations:

Telephone: 604-247-8900 or Toll Free 1-866-748-3718

Ask for Vancouver Yukoners' Rate – Best price before Feb. 1; next best before March 16, 2010 but our block of rooms is going fast.

Banquet Tickets:

**\$55.00 per person with cheque payable in advance to
*Vancouver Yukoners' Association***

Banquet Reception/Registration: Ballroom Foyer 5pm – 6pm

Dinner: 6:30 pm

Hospitality Suite: Open Friday evening and Saturday

Note: registration/pick up tickets at Hospitality Suite

FOR TICKETS CONTACT VIVIAN STUART:

email: lornellis@shaw.ca

Address: #217 – 3255 Cook St

Victoria BC V8X 1A4

Phone: 250-383-1349

(Maiden names too please – Helps to find friends of years ago)

For further information contact:

hmunro@shaw.ca

Phone: 604-937-3740

www.vancouver-yukoners.com

PLEASE PASS THIS INVITATION ON TO YOUR YUKON FRIENDS

**YUKON RESIDENTS – AIR NORTH IS OFFERING A DISCOUNT
PLEASE CONTACT THEM FOR DETAILS – Convention Code F8EHNP17**

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.

There is an annual subscription fee of (\$20 - \$25. your call) for the Moccasin Telegraph.

– Sherron Jones sherronjones@shaw.ca.

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH

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