

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – 394th Edition – July 27th, 2014

Created by Sherron Jones sherronjones*shaw.ca

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



Waning lupine, a sign of the shortness of a Yukon summer.

Heather Jones hpj50*me.com (In Whitehorse)

COURTESY WHITEHORSE STAR – YUKON HISTORY SECTION –

Whenever there was a lull in local news or the overland telegraph broke down, Star editor "Stroller" White lapsed into memories of the deep south, or "interviews" with local colourful characters whose authenticity was left to the readers imagination.

By **Whitehorse Star** on **July 18, 1990**

This article appeared in the Whitehorse Star's 90th Anniversary edition.

Ice Worms & Blue Snow

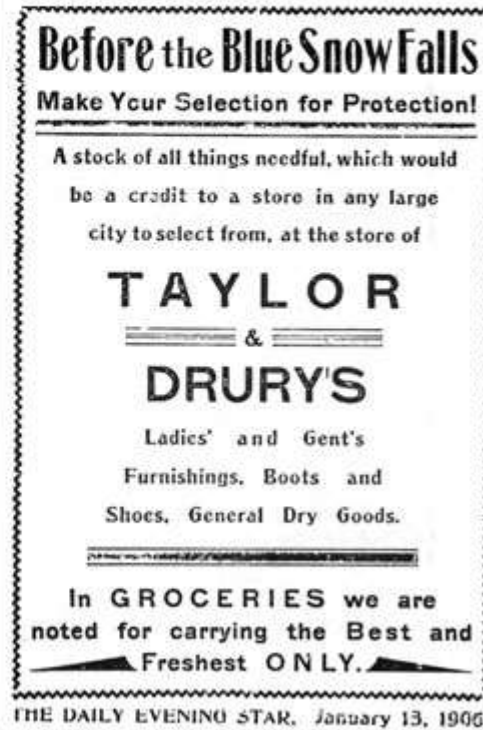


Photo by Whitehorse Star

Left: 1906 Whitehorse Star editor "Stroller" White. Right: Taylor and Drury Department store goes along with the Ice Worm story and advertises "Before the Blue Snow Falls - Make Your Selection for Protection!"

Whenever there was a lull in local news or the overland telegraph broke down, Star editor "Stroller" White lapsed into memories of the deep south, or "interviews" with local colourful characters whose authenticity was left to the readers imagination.

He brought up many subjects in his columns and many of them are with us to this day.

Here then was Whitehorse's introduction to those greasy little critters "Ice Worms", from the Stroller's column January 20, 1906. Incidentally, the actual temperature in Whitehorse on that date was -68(F).

"It is not generally known that the father of the venerable Indian who resides in the village across the river from Whitehorse, and who is known as "Canadian Doctor" is still living. As "Doc" claims to be 88 years old his father must, at the least calculation, be 108 and, judging from his looks , the Stroller would not be surprised if he was even 30 years older; in fact, from information gleaned from conversation with the old man, he is evidently not less than 120 or 125 years of age."

"Hearing of the existence of this venerable member of the primeval race, the Stroller sought the village one day recently and, by means of a plug of T.& B. bribed "Canadian Doctor" to show him his father, which he did by unrolling a large bundle of furs in which the old man was wrapped, finally revealing the most unique specimen of bric-a-brac the Stroller had ever seen."

"Not until the Stroller had operated on the old man with his hypo-gun could he get any thing out of him, but no sooner had the "hop" began to work than a spark of life asserted itself in the eyes, which before had resembled burned leather work, and he became quite communicative. Asked for some ancient history regarding the weather of winters of this locality one hundred years or more ago, the relic of two centuries of the past said:"

"Many snows ago when I stood six foot three instead of three foot six, as I do now, the figures having been reversed by the ravages of time and the great weight of years upon my shoulders, there was weather here that was worth talking about."

"I recall an incident of the cold of the first winter after I had annexed my wife, Sore-Eyed Sage Hen, she was called. I had gone out to pole rabbits and toward evening I returned to find Sore-Eyed Sage Hen firmly fastened to a tree."

"She had stepped out of the wigwam to see if I was coming and had breathed against a tree where it had froze and anchored her right there. She had neglected to back up while emitting her breath and if I had not arrived just when I did she would have been frozen stiffer than a wedding reception and as cold as a pastoral call on wash day."

"The only way we kept from freezing to trees and other fixed objects that winter was to eat plenty of ice worms which, being very greasy, made the breath so slippery that, while it would freeze, it would crumble easily, the grease serving as a sort of shortening."

"The winter of 1821 was also a cold one... a veritable corker. Then the ice in the river froze solid and by spring there was none, as it had all been eaten up by ice worms. Me and Sore-Eyed Sage Hen dried enough ice worms that winter to make soup for the next fifteen years. In fact, that boy Doc was raised principally on ice worm soup."

"Since 1850 I have seen ice worms but seven times and blue snow only four times oftener. Not for thirty snows have I been forced to drink carbolic acid to keep my innards warm... The above statement by me to the Stroller has been read over by him to me in my own language and I hereby certify that it is correct in every detail."

The Stroller had already introduced his readers to "Blue Snow" in a January 12, 1906 story headed "Tenderfeet Think It Cold".

In the article The Stroller said that although first year residents might think the present -45 degree weather was cold they could count themselves lucky that blue snow hadn't fallen because "when it comes it's time to combine the family bedding. Perry Davis' Pain Killer freezes, and rabbits freeze so stiff they run in a straight line because they cannot turn their heads gee or haw." But it could still come, warned the Stroller, and when it does everyone will know that the temperature is at least 74 below, for that was as warm as blue snow ever fell.

Quick on the uptake, in the next issue a quarter page ad from Taylor & Drury's department store trumpeted, "Before The Blue Snow Falls - Make Your Selection For Protection."

Much to the Strollers surprise the temperature DID fall to below -74 degrees on January 22 and he quickly ran the following column under the headings "Regarding Blue Snow - It Only Falls When The Wind Blows From The East - Numerous Ice Worms Reported Short Distance North Of Town".

"In explaining to its chechako friends the peculiarities of blue snow, the Star neglected to state that it never falls except when the wind blows from the east; therefore, notwithstanding that the temperature for the past several days has been favourable to blue snow, the wind has not been right. We are sorry to not have explained this before as we learn that several of our chechako friends have lost considerable sleep by staying up to look for blue snow."

"Numerous ice worms are reported in the neighborhood of the steamer Monarch about a mile below town. While they are not yet larger than vermicelli, they are growing rapidly and if the weather should remain for a month as it was last night, they will have rattles and a button."

"Should the cold weather continue one more week Burns and Co. may as well close up as everybody will be eating ice worms."

"They may be stewed with dumplings, fried, fricasseed, roasted or eaten raw with salt, pepper and vinegar."

"Ice worms have no scales until after they obtain a length of four feet. They grow a head on each end."

Calls "We" a Liar

The following from the Philadelphia Ledger was reproduced in PUCK of March 27, 1907:

IN THE YUKON

Whitehorse Y.T. Jan. 25 1907.- Last Sunday at Yukon Crossing the temperature went to 82 below zero...Nearly an inch of blue snow fell at Tantalus... At Minto ice-worms began to chirp at midnight Saturday, and many of them attained a growth of several inches by Monday, when the temperature rose to 45 below, causing them to die of heat. If the temperature rises many more degrees, the suffering caused by the intense heat will be terrible - News item, Whitehorse Star.

Oh, liar, we address you, in humble awe,

And pray that heaven bless you, with tardy thaw.

Blue Snow we all admire, But seldom see,

For news of it, great liar, We look to thee.

The ice worms here are dumb, No chirp have they;

Yet in our ice are some, Bad germs, they say.

To Yukon, land august, Where zeros burn,

The local liar must, With envy turn.

YUKON NUGGET

A CKRW Yukon Nugget by Les McLaughlin

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

Bill Reid

In the days before there was a TV set in every room and the constant blare of *Much Music* tormented the ear drums with another pseudo song, those of us lucky enough to live in the Yukon, were entertained by Bill and Rusty Reid and their fancy swing band appropriately called *The Northernaires*.



Bill Reid, left, with a group at the 2005 Vancouver Island Yukoners picnic.

[Northernaires Dance Band Reunion - Bill Reid, Corky Repka, Dan Bereza, Drummer ?, Ron Shortt, Rusty Reid, Ian Parsons]

With the passing of Bill Reid, a truly important member of the Yukon music scene is gone. But his memory will linger long in the hearts and minds of those of us fortunate enough to swing the sixties away dancing up a storm to the creative melodies of this celebrated Yukon band.

Bill was born in Wallace, Nova Scotia - the last of 12 children in a musical family. Bill played in his first band when he was 14. Growing up in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Rusty began playing the fiddle at the age of 11.

In 1949, when he was 18, Bill said farewell to Nova Scotia and ended up in Vancouver, where he met Rusty. It was the beginning of a life long love. The pair headed to Whitehorse in 1951 and were married in the old Log Church that May.

Soon word got around that Bill could play a mean piano and he was asked to get a band together for a dance at the Elks Hall. He agreed, but only if Rusty would accompany the band with her fiddle. It was the beginning of more than a half-century of entertaining in every corner of the territory. Unique with *The Northernares* was their manner and dress. Professional is one way to describe an event staged by Bill and Rusty Reid with *The Northernares*.

On time, dressed to kill, short breaks and a musical repertoire to satisfy every dancer's taste. These were the hallmarks of *The Northernares* in a musical career that spanned more than 50 Yukon years.

Wayne Smyth joined the band as a 13-year-old high school drummer. His memories of band leader Bill are filled with delightful stories of dedication to the craft and of travels to every Yukon community under often dicey travel conditions to entertain. Never late or unprepared is the way Wayne Smyth remembers his years with *The Northernares*.

Smyth recalls that as the band leader, Bill never talked down to him even though he was just a kid, but rather treated him as an equal with other member of *The Northernares*. Smyth said the reliability of *The Northernares* fostered by Bill was a big part of the band's success.

But there was more than music that kept Bill Reid busy. The list is long. He was a member of the Whitehorse fire department. With Rusty, he formed and kept the Whitehorse Women's softball league up and running.

Together, they helped form the Yukon Sports Federation. Both were inducted into the Yukon Sports Hall of Fame. The couple was instrumental in organizing the Yukon's branch of the Civilian Aircraft Search and Rescue Association. Bill was the president of the Yukon Flying Club for seven years and sat on the executive for another three years. He was instrumental in getting the DC3 weather vane aircraft placed on a pedestal at the Whitehorse airport. Rusty and Bill flew their own plane, joined air searches and often put on training searches.

Fittingly, their son Dave became an Air Canada pilot.

Bill and Rusty were involved in the [Sourdough Rendezvous](#) Fiddle Contest and competed in and judged the contests on many occasions.

In 2003, Bill and Rusty Reid received the Commissioner's Award for public service, one they justly deserved. With his passing, Bill Reid has left a substantial legacy of community involvement that has made the Yukon a better place.

A CKRW Yukon Nugget by Les McLaughlin

[Rusty keeps in touch and recently let me know that she was flying back to Yukon to spend the summer at her cabin at Marsh Lake. She was waiting for her daughter to pick her up to take her to the Airport when Shelly was delayed due to a rock slide on Highway 97 – so her planned departure was delayed a few days.] – Sherron Jones

Remembering Bill Reid 1930 – 2006

[**Compiled** by Rusty Reid and Sherron Jones – **in 2007** – not published until now - 2014]



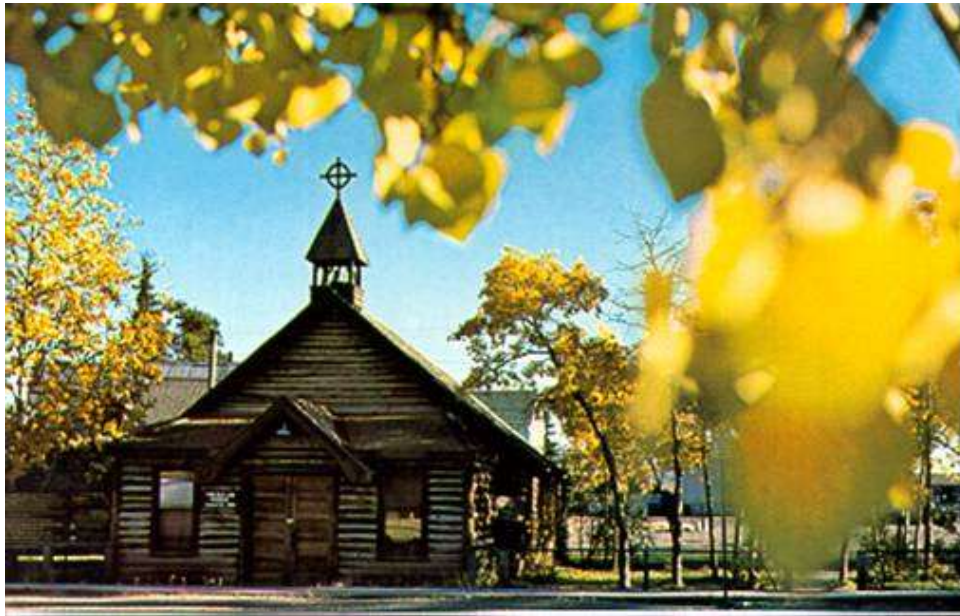
Bill with his pet rabbit at his home in Wallace, Nova Scotia
He always did love something to cuddle



Bill on a horse when he was a kid back at his home in Wallace, N.S.



So, he went out West to Lynn Valley, North Vancouver, B. C. where he found something else to cuddle, and stole her away to Whitehorse, Yukon where he married her and settled down.



Bill & Rusty got married in the Old Log Church
In Whitehorse, Yukon November 21, 1951



Bill worked with a crew of painters when he first arrived in
Whitehorse but soon got a job with Fire and Ambulance services.
That department split into to two departments,
Fire and the Ambulance Services.
He chose the Fire Hall where he worked until he retired.



Bill started the Northernairs Dance Band in 1951.
There are other pictures that go back further than this one.
(Right to left) Bill Reid (piano), Rusty Reid (clarinet & fiddle)
Corky Repka (guitar), Ian Parsons (trumpet)
Gordon Healy (drums)



Bill Reid (piano) Rusty Reid (fiddle & clarinet) Dave Reid (trumpet)
Rendezvous Dance at the Legion Hall – February, 1983,



Northernairs Dance Band
L to R
Merv Bales, guitar
Len Alexander, bass & vocals
Dave Reid, trumpet
Wayne Smyth, drums
Mel Johnson, saxophone
Rusty Reid, clarinet, fiddle, vocals
Bill Reid, piano, manager



Bill & Rusty Reid
Playing a few tunes at home downstairs by the wood heater.



Bill loved to fly and was the Director of Yukon Search & Rescue
As well as the Whitehorse Flying Club for many years. He was one
The main instigators that helped get the DC3 up on its pedestal.
Here he is with our black van that we used to drive to dances.
He has with them the guest fiddler and his band that we had up
from Edmonton to play for the fiddle show.
Bill flew them up to Braeburn in his plane for a cinnamon bun.
Some drove up in the van.



Bill Reid
Was honoured at the Directors Meeting of
Civil Air Search and Rescue



Bill & Rusty flew Blair Corley's mum
Up to Braeburn for a cinnamon bun
In his plane a Piper Warrior G-NQF



Bill would land his plane on the frozen lakes in front of our cabin at Marsh Lake as well as at Atlin, B.C.



Bill would often fly up to Haines Junction or to Atlin to have a coffee or a meal. He loved to fly.

He had a Citabria float plane for a few years. He used to land it in front of his cabin down at Army Beach, Marsh Lake. When the water was shallow and a way out, he would land over by the island and taxi back as far as he could go.



Bill owned many different cars over the years. He always kept them washed, waxed and shining like new. The upholstery and the inside of them looked like they just came out of the show room. He used to wash them at the Station 2 Fire hall at the top of Two Mile Hill when he was on shift and when things were quiet. He made sure that the Fire Hall was kept nice and clean too.



Bill was a great believer in getting the work done as well. Here he is splitting the wood to prepare for winter while Rusty stacks it.



He got smart and rented a wood splitter



Bill loved the great outdoors. He always looked forward to the annual trip they made up to Sheep Mountain in Kluane Park with their neighbours, Ken and Sandra Mason.



They would stay at Silver City in the Kluane Bed & Breakfast operated by Doug and Cecile Sias and Frank and Josie Sias. In the evening they used to play some music Ken and Sandra Mason would join in with them on their guitars. They often took their instruments with them when they went places. Cecile would cook up a great breakfast for them all the next morning.



Bill & Rusty hiked up the hill at Silver City to work up an appetite for the good meals they were having. They usually go there in the month of May when the scenery is so beautiful. That's the time of year when the lambs are born and the ewes and the rams separate to different areas of the mountains.



Bill liked his toys and loved to go boating in the summer months. He would take off from their cabin at Army Beach, Marsh Lake. All the family water skied and he was kept busy during the summer months driving the boat and gassing it up.



Like I said, Bill liked his toys.
He really knew how to operate the wave rider.



Bill & Rusty scooting over to McClintock Bay



Bill & Rusty Reid were with the organization that sent Team Yukon to the Summer Games in P.E.I.

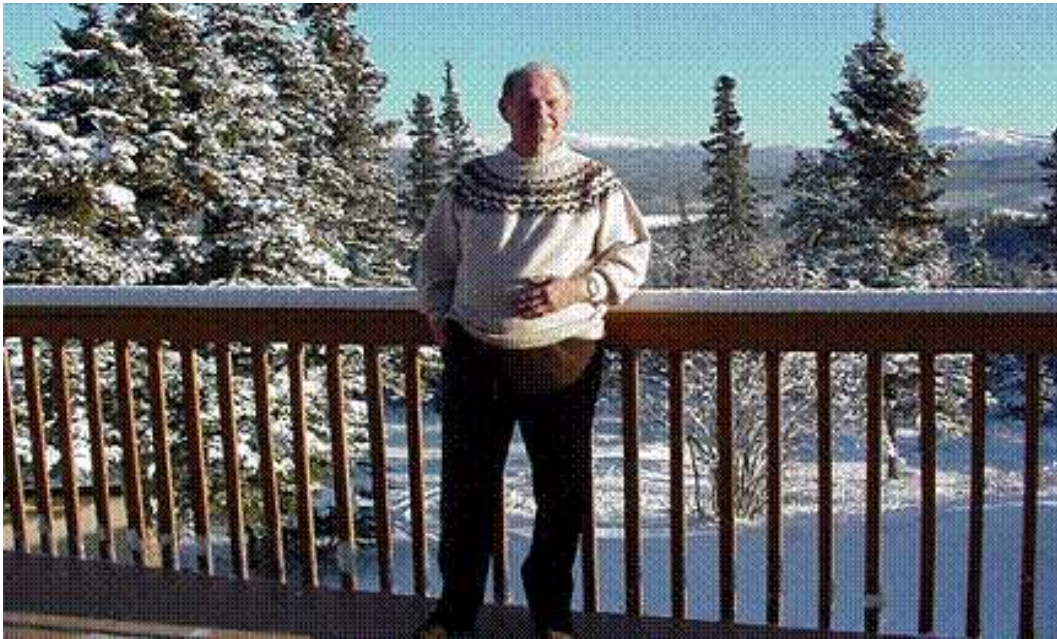
Bill was also involved with the Canada Winter Games as well as being President of the Yukon Ski Club for so many years.



DAVE and BILL
(father and son)
SKIING MOUNT ALEYESKA, ALASKA 1976



Bill & Rusty loved to snowmobile and went on some great trips and saw places you would never get to without a snowmobile.



Bill, standing on the deck of his home in Whitehorse, Yukon.
There is nothing Bill loved more than his home and all his family & friends.

Bill always said that the only reason he left Nova Scotia was because he couldn't bring it with him.

Bill and his son Dave built a light house down at their cabin at Army Beach, Marsh Lake to make him feel like had a bit of Nova Scotia with him.



This is the lighthouse in Bill Reid's home town of Wallace, Nova Scotia where Bill's grandfather and father used to tend to lighting the lamps. Bill was very young when he used to go with his father and finally took over lighting the lamps.



This was house where Bill was born and raised in Wallace, N.S. There were 12 children and all but the first baby was born in this house. There were four bedrooms upstairs and two living rooms, a dining room and kitchen downstairs. His parents used to burn gas lamps and used a hand pump at the kitchen sink for water. When Bill became a teenager and got his first job he got the electricity put in for his mum and dad, George and Retha Reid. Later on he had a telephone put in to replace the old hand crank one that they had been using. Finally he got them a TV.

This house is right across from the Wallace Harbour where his grandfather, Captain William (Willie) Reid used to bring the big sailing ships into the harbour and tie up at the dock.

There is a large lobster pound and cannery right by the dock and the fisherman can come in with their fishing boats and unload their traps there.

Down the street is the little community hall where Bill's dad used to play the fiddle with a few other musicians. Bill used to call the square dances and finally learned how to chord on the piano. Don Messer and his band used to come and play at that hall and Bill loved to dance.



This was the old cabin that Bill first bought at Marsh Lake as well as the first boat we ever owned over forty years ago.

There have been a lot of changes since then.

Soon there will be a nice new cabin and guest house for the family to enjoy.



[2008]

Yukon Agricultural Association finally secured lease of land

The Yukon Agricultural Association (YAA) evolved from the Yukon Livestock and Agriculture Association (1974) through an official name change in February of 1993. Regardless of name, the group has continued to foster agriculture development in the Yukon. The constitution and bylaws were revised and updated in update in 1997 and 2013 respectively. The office is located in the historic T.C. Richards building.

Paul LaBrash was the 1974 President, and James Dillabough one of the directors—a position he holds today. In the mid-1980's there were three chapters-Whitehorse, Klondike and Stewart Valley. These were melded into one in the early 2000's. Current president is Mike Blumenschein.

Since 1994, federal funding programs changed names from CARD, CARD II, ACAAF, and CAAP, which wrapped up this year. Yukon producers have benefited greatly from these federal funds over the years. One example is the five pieces of agricultural equipment available for rent at non-profit rates— an aerator, mower, no-till-drill, manure spreader and a reversible plough.

A major goal of YAA for decades was to secure a land lease that would provide for a “home for projects that could not be located elsewhere.” In 2012 this became a reality, with a 65-hectare parcel of land on the North Klondike Highway leased courtesy of Yukon Government. A Conceptual Site Plan is underway to determine the future of the land, knowing the top priorities are: 1) building a heated storage facility for a mobile abattoir and ancillary facilities, 2) building a community fairgrounds and community building, 3) hiring a caretaker to manage the lease and infrastructure, and 4) bulk storage for agricultural products.

The Yukon Farm Products & Services Guide www.yukonfarmproducts.ca provides listings of many of the agricultural producers, businesses, organizations and agencies ready to assist in today's environment.

If readers have a story to share about the YAA from days gone by, please drop a note. There must be some favourites in the minds of Moc Tel readers.

Bev Buckway
Executive Director
admin@yukonag.ca
www.yukonag.ca

Picture courtesy by D. Andrew



MOCTEL GIVES A CHANCE TO SAY THANK YOU AFTER 57 YEARS !!!!

Hi Sherron. Photos from the Okanagan Yukoners Picnic showed a, "Sophie Armitage". Would that be the lady who along with husband Ernie ran the "98" Hotel in Whitehorse about 1956/57?

I had arrested a chap for assaulting another sometime after 2:00 am. In those days one member of the Force policed the town from 2:00am until 9:00am. I got the chap out of the Hotel to the police car but when I let him go so as to open the car door he grabbed me from behind. Well as we wrestled about, Sophie was standing on the sidewalk and warned me, "look out Bill he's got a rock". Well that saved my bacon; I was able to kick the rock out of his hand. In a few more minutes another member arrived and we were able to get him to the cells.

I would like to thank Sophie; it's something I'll always be grateful for.
Bill Dawson.

Hi Bill

I just phoned Sophie and asked the question --- and yes it is she who worked in the 98. I asked if it was okay to give you her phone number and she said yes. I have also sent her a copy of the last MocTel just a few minutes ago.

So for you info her phone number in Kelowna as found on Canada 411 is -- R & S Armitage (250) 763-4776 956 Nassau Cres Kelowna BC V1Y4T3

And her email address is --- sopharmy@shaw.ca

Congrats on the great memory.

I would like to place your message in the next MocTel so perhaps you would authorize that and make a comment about your contact with her.

All the best to you both.

Sherron

PS I will send a copy of this message to Sophie.

Thanks to you and your "MOC/TEL" I was finally able to give Sophie THANKS for her help to me during a difficult arrest in 1957. You are welcome to make use of any of my material in your next MocTel. You may wish to seek clearance from Sophie too. Sophie and I had a great conversation yesterday. Kindest regards, Bill

Bill Dawson yhuree@sympatico.ca (In Burlington ON)

Hi Sophie. It was great to finally get a chance to talk with you yesterday. Your warning to me outside the "98" hotel way back in 1957 that my reluctant prisoner, JOA had picked up a rock during our tussle no doubt saved me from some serious injuries. Thanks to you that never

happened. JOA had a criminal history of assaults, one of which resulted in the death of a man. In addition to this he was a professional, "card shark" who in criminal code terms "made his living in whole or in part by gambling." I remember JOA becoming exasperated that a prisoner in an adjacent cell could not grasp the technique of dealing off the bottom of a deck. JOA loved to teach his craft to others.

For the assault in the "98" JOA was sentenced to six months in jail, to be served outside the Yukon. Imagine my surprise three months later, while in a Vancouver hotel someone tapped me on the shoulder, it was JOA. I jokingly asked if he had escaped jail. "No" he said with a chuckle, "got out early for good behaviour!" JOA for all his faults had a sense of humour.

For all the years since this incident I have never forgotten that I owed you a heartfelt THANKS for saving me from possible serious injuries. So pleased that Sherron Jones' "Moccasin Telegraph" was the medium by which we were able to make contact.

Sincerely, W.J (Bill) Dawson, Insp. RCMP (retired).
2131 Owen Lane, Burlington, ON. L7M 3H9
(905) 335-1873

PS: Sophie, you may remember me because in 1957 I still had hair, it was flaming red.

Sophie did phone me last evening to say thank you for making the connection. It is so gratifying to have a happy ending. – Sherron Jones



Gwich'en man near Moosehide Village Yukon Terr.1908

Alan McDiarmid posted (on Yukon First Nations History – Facebook page July 9 2014)

The picture of the old man sitting under a lean-to titled; “Gwich'en man near Moosehide Village Yukon Terr.1908” brings to mind an old First Nation couple who lived a nomadic lifestyle in an area north of Keno. They were originally from the NWT and spoke a dialect uncommon to the Yukon. In time they made their way to the Lansing area up river from Mayo. When the early prospectors and traders came into the area the old couple decided they wanted to be elsewhere. They retraced their steps until back in the area north of Keno. In earlier life their seasonal wanderings likely took them all over the Peel, Bonnet Plume and Wind River's area, but eventually age kept them closer to Keno. In time when they could do little more on their own, other than perish, the RCMP likely arranged with the Indian Agent for their move to a small cabin in Keno. No one knew much about them and only a very few of the elders in the Mayo area could understand or speak a little of their language. The couple did not understand or speak Tutchone or English; the common languages of the area. I first knew of them in 1952 after we moved from Dawson to Mayo. People said they thought the old man was somewhere over 100 years and his wife not far behind. No one knew for sure and I doubt they had any idea their selves how old they really were. The 1941 Indian Census for the Mayo area had them simply listed as: Atchisaw, “Old Man” and “Old Woman”. By the time I knew of them they were living in the cabin in Keno. The cabin had a stove a small table to work on a few shelves and not much else. They slept on the floor being used to doing with little. Their government cheques were sent to the Taylor and Drury Store in Mayo. Someone in Keno checked on them once in a while and would let the store manager know what supplies they needed sent to them. My dad delivered wood to the couple when ordered through Taylor and Drury's. When dad was taking wood to them as part of a load we would sort through our piles to find the best size for them to use. We would split some as we were loading or dad would take an axe along and split some there. One day the manager at Taylor and Drury's told dad that the couple was not using all their money. He said he had been trying to think of what else they could use instead of eventually having to send the money back to the government. He had decided on a new bed and asked dad to take it up to them with his next load of wood. Dad said as he couldn't ask the couple where they wanted the bed he took it into the cabin, moved their sleeping place aside and set the bed up for them there. He said while he was doing this, the couple seemed confused and were quietly discussing something between them. A few days later dad made another trip to Keno and when he drove by their cabin the box spring and bedframe were laying out in the yard. I guess they figured they could adjust to the mattress but sleeping up in the air off the safety and comfort of the ground (floor) was too much. Sometime later a decision was made that the couple could be cared for better in Mayo and they were moved to Joe and Louie Cauntin's (spelling) cabin there. This old couple interested me. I would often see the old woman walk the old man around to the sunny side of the cabin, sit him down on the ground against the cabin wall, fill and light his pipe, then make her way around and back inside. In a while the old man would fall asleep and slip sideways to the ground. She must have been checking closely because it wouldn't be long till she came out again. She would sit him up; re-light his pipe then return inside, only to come out again in a while to take him back in. This old couple shared a long independent life; maybe because they were there to care for each other. The old man passed away but there was someone who stepped up to care for the old lady. The old lady was moved to another cabin right beside where Sam and Lucy Peter lived on the sawmill road. Lucy had again stepped up as

community caregiver. The old lady's passing was tragic. Her cabin caught fire and she perished. The suspected cause was her spilled pipe. No idea when this picture was taken. The caption at the bottom says: Yukon's Oldest Couple - 98 yrs. and 105 yrs. from Lancing - donated by: David Mervyn



The caption at the bottom says: Yukon's Oldest Couple - 98 yrs. and 105 yrs. from Lancing - donated by: David Mervyn
Posted to Facebook by Alan McDiarmid amcdiar02@hotmail.com (In Whitehorse)



Gillian Campbell – Seattle – July 17, 2014
Klondike Gold Rush – 1897-1898 – National Historic Park
Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)

Seattle Mayor Proclaims Klondike Legacy Day [Press Release]

July 17, 2014 is now Klondike Legacy Day in Seattle, Washington. The mayor of Seattle made a proclamation to ensure that the Klondike history and its importance on Seattle is recognized annually.

This proclamation comes as the Friends of the Klondike Corridor organized a Seattle block party on behalf of the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Pioneer Square, downtown Seattle. The block party was a day-long event featuring Gillian Campbell as Klondike Kate and her band, Robert Service readings by Buckwheat Donahue and DeLenn Larsen, gold panning, food, a silent auction, the Keystone Kops, old time photos, as well as booths from the Yukon and Alaska for Holland America, Air North, White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad, Tourism Yukon and Skagway AK.

Donna Larsen, the executive director of the Friends of the Klondike Corridor explained the purpose of the event was to increase awareness, in Seattle, Alaska and the Yukon, that there is a **National Park in Seattle** that is completely dedicated to the Klondike Gold Rush. “People we talked to had no idea that the rich history that the Yukon and Alaska share with Seattle is displayed

right in downtown Seattle.” commented Donna. **This National Park is an urban park, and is actually located inside a historic brick building – the old Cadillac Hotel.** There are no trees at this National Park, but two floors of incredible exhibits that not only talk about the start of the Klondike gold rush in Seattle, but carries the story all the way through to Dawson City. Many of the exhibits talk about Skagway, the Yukon, the First Nations and the experience – which is really cool to see in Seattle” added Donna. “I also think by inviting down Yukon tourism businesses, the vast marketing opportunities in Seattle are now more obvious. Residents and visitors who visit the National Park get very excited about the Gold Rush, and would love to help learn about tourism products that actually lets them see the real thing.”

“Thanks to our sponsors, Holland America, Tourism Yukon, Skagway AK, White Pass, Air North and 4Culture, the event was a huge success for us. I think that we introduced a lot of people to the potential of the Klondike Corridor.”

Throughout the day shows were performed by Gillian Campbell, a long-term Klondike Kate performer, and no stranger to the Yukon. She has performed throughout the Territory over the past 30 years. **Buckwheat Donahue flew down from Skagway** to share Robert Service poetry with audience, joined by 14 year old Delenn Larsen, an avid Service fan. A big hit at the event was gold panning for the younger crowd, and silent auction generated several hundred dollars. Even the Keystone Kops showed up to toss a few people into “jail”. Klondike Penny used the museum exhibits for old time photos and had a constant lineup all day. The day ended with two big reveals. First, the proclamation by the mayor of Seattle, making July 17, Klondike Legacy Day. And finally, the new signage for the National Park was unveiled, which will make the Park more visible in Pioneer Square.

The Friends of the Klondike Corridor, Inc is a non-profit corporation and a Yukon Society, created, organized and lead by Donna and Mike Larsen. The organization began as a Yukon Society to support the needs of Parks Canada Klondike Historic sites in the Yukon. However, after meeting with the U.S. National Service superintendants in Seattle and Skagway for the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical sites, it was agreed to join together to form the first international Friends group. “All the paperwork took a bit of time to sort through, but formal agreements are now in place with both federal governments.” The Friends group’s mandate is simple: support the National Parks by providing services that they are not able to or don’t have the budget to do themselves that assists in the preservation, management and delivery of programs for historical, educational, scientific and recreational purposes. . For example, in Seattle, the goal was to raise awareness and increase visitation in the park, but parks are not able to do marketing or advertising themselves, so a Friends group can step in and help with that need.

“Our next projects are to work with Parks Canada and the National Park Service superintendants to develop other initiatives to support them. Ideas we are exploring include help to restore the Atlin Barge (The barge that is docked next to the SS Klondike), opportunities at Bear Creek, a family game idea and building a facility to house the historic trolley in Skagway, and youth programs in music and art mainly, but not limited to Seattle.” The organization is hoping to build great projects that the residents and businesses of the Yukon, Skagway and Seattle all want to help out with. While they will require funding, they will also provide training programs and internships for people interested in quality restoration work, living history, and other skills that will be very valuable in the future.

Anyone interested in supporting the organization can visit www.GoKlondike.com, follow us on Twitter @GoKlondike, or FaceBook at Friends of the Klondike Corridor. Donna Larsen can be reached for comment at 575.415-4601

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Email klondikecorridor@gmail.com



Gillian Campbell in Seattle to entertain at the Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park located in this building.

Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)

On July 17, 1897 the steamship Portland docked in Seattle with what newspapers called “a ton of gold” for the Yukon Territory.

On July 17, 2014 we would like 2nd Ave. South, between S. Main St. and S. Jackson Street to come alive with sights and sounds of 1897. (noon till dark)



A mound of gold bars.

Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Site of the landing of 'the Ton of Gold' – National Park promotion
June 17, 2014

Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Yukon Promotional Material displayed
Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Buckwheat and Gillian at the White Pass & Yukon Route promotional booth
Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



National Park Information booth

Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Gillian with a local spectator

Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Donna and daughter Deleenn Larsen
Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Street performance in Seattle, July 17, 2014 – National Park promotion
Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



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Photo courtesy Gillian Campbell gillianklondikekate@shaw.ca (In Burnaby BC)



Photo courtesy GOVERNMENT OF YUKON

HISTORIC SITE CELEBRATED – Many Yukoners were on hand early last month to celebrate the territory's eighth historic site at the Watson Lake Sign Post Forest Historic Site plaque unveiling. Shown left to right are Watson Lake RCMP Const. Gregorash; Testloa Smith and John Firth of the Yukon Heritage Resources Board; Tourism and Culture Minister Mike Nixon; Teri McNaughton of the Watson Lake Historical Society; Patti McLeod, the Yukon Party MLA for Watson Lake; town Mayor Richard Durocher; and Const. Gossen.

Famed Sign Post Forest becomes a historic site

The Watson Lake Sign Post Forest was recognized as a historic site at a ceremony last month.

By Whitehorse Star on July 23, 2014

The Watson Lake Sign Post Forest was recognized as a historic site at a ceremony last month. Tourism and Culture Minister Mike Nixon and Teri McNaughton, the president of the Watson Lake Historical Society, were on hand to unveil the designation plaque.

“The Yukon government was proud to join with the community of Watson Lake to celebrate the designation of this treasured landmark as a Yukon Historic Site,” Nixon said.

“The forest has been visited by thousands of Yukoners and visitors, many of whom add their own signs to this unique site and to contribute to the history of the town, the Alaska Highway and the territory.”

Dignitaries and the public gathered at the celebration that marked the site as the eighth official Yukon Historic Site protected under the Historic Resources Act.

“Watson Lake is pleased and honoured to be part of this ceremony,” said Watson Lake Mayor Richard Durocher. The town maintains the site.

“We have always considered the Sign Post Forest as one of the community’s greatest assets when it comes to attracting visitors to southeast Yukon,” he added.

“Watson Lake will continue to invest in its upkeep and plans more space so it can grow.” The historical society’s nomination for the designation was evaluated and recommended for designation by the Yukon Heritage Resources Board.

“The Watson Lake Sign Post Forest is a unique landmark that helps us share the rich and varied stories of Yukon’s history and is an exceptional example of an evolving cultural landscape,” said board chair Anne Leckie.

“The board was pleased to have the opportunity to review the excellent nomination for this site and to recommend to the minister that it be designated a territorial historic site.”

“I’m so pleased to see our Sign Post Forest receiving this important designation,” Watson Lake MLA Patti McLeod said of the June 5 ceremony.

“Watson Lake is a unique community that takes great pride in this site. I was honoured to be a part of the ceremony.”

McNaughton added: “We are excited about this opportunity to welcome newcomers and visitors to Watson Lake to celebrate the Sign Post Forest as a Yukon Historic Site.

“The designation reflects the forest’s heritage significance, as well as the town’s contribution to the territory’s history and ongoing development.”

In 1942, Carl Lindley, a U.S. soldier from Danville, Ill., added his hometown sign to an army mileage signpost during the construction of the Alaska Highway.

At that time the area was a military air base and airport on Watson Lake.

Since then, tourists from around the globe have added more than 75,000 signs to the signpost forest, which is located at the junction of the Alaska and Robert Campbell highways.

Dawson provided uncluttered time and a cultural surprise

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

Clem Martini learned about Berton House from a number of residency alumni who were visiting as part of the Distinguished Writers Program at the University of Calgary, where he is a Professor in the drama department. The program sounded interesting.

“I knew that I had a research leave coming up, was spending some time researching some books, and I wanted to have some time when I would just be able to work on them,” he said near the end of his time in Dawson.

“I thought it would be great to have a designated site where I could just write and think about the writing, but also, I’ve always wanted to get up here and look about, so this seemed an opportunity to do both things.”

He called the residency “uncluttered time.”

“Everything in life will try to knock your writing aside – and pretty successfully. Some of it is yourself – but when you’re at home, all kinds of things, crises big and small, routines, all demand attention, whereas if you kind of clear the slate, you have an opportunity just to think about the writing”

That worked well for him. During his three months he finished a screenplay, a draft of a historical novel, and completed the first book in a young adult fantasy trilogy as well as finishing the rough draft of a textbook about Greek and Roman comedy theatre. Some of these projects had been under way before he got here, but this is where he was able to push them to new stages of completion.

“I got a lot done here,” he said. “I set up my days that way.”

He likes to write in the very early mornings because people are less likely to get to him about anything. Afternoons were for reading, or going off on a walk. Evenings he found were great for editing.

He is one of those writers who feels odd if he comes to the end of a day and hasn’t done any writing.

“Sometimes its effort and exertion and you don’t really want to do it, but you realize that if you don’t do it, it won’t get done, so you go in and you find your way there.

“The great thing is, sometimes you can’t wait to get there. You go ‘Oh boy, today I get to work on this’. Sometimes it’s just a blessing.”

Why come here?

“Most of Canada lives in an urbanized band in the south. I felt like I’d explored the country east-west, but the farthest north I’d been was Peace River. If you want to know your country then you should get out and see it.”

This, of course, fits precisely, with Pierre Berton’s reasons for wanting to turn his childhood home into a writers’ residence.



Clem Martini slaves over a hot crock-pot in preparation for his final evening’s open house.
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

Dawson was not what Martini expected. He was impressed by the cultural milieu in Dawson, particularly with the artistic mix that has been created by the Dawson City Arts Society. He attended lots of the events that were held at Oddfellows Hall, and was excited by the Myth and Medium week at the Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre.

His wife, Cheryl Foggo, was here with him for some of the earlier events, and one of his brothers was present during the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in’s Heritage Dept. events.

“I was surprised,” he said. “There’s a lot going on. When I look at other towns of a similar size to Dawson, I don’t find that same level of cultural activity. Both KIAC and the Cultural centre generate a lot of stuff that is interesting to a broad spectrum of people.

“There’s a music festival and a film festival and there’s KIAC. All those things seem to be a commitment the community has made that isn’t necessarily present in communities of a similar size.”

At the Dawson City Arts Society, president Peter Menzies and executive director Karen Dubois were impressed with playwright Martini's interest and his strong suggestion that some sort of drama festival could be organized using the performance spaces that there are in the town. Martini went so far as to play host to one of the home routes concerts that took place while he was resident here and really enjoyed doing that, the first time one of those has been held at Berton House.

He went so far as to host a chili night during his last evening at the house, serving up his own blend of chili along with his own home-baked apple pies.

Martini has made no secret of his intention to return to Dawson and sample some of its other seasons at some point, and his interest in the cultural scene provides that part of the town with another link to the world Outside.

Kokopelle Farm adds to the Klondike's homegrown food supply

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

When Otto Muehlbach and Conny Handwerk decided to put their personal garden onto more of a business footing, they looked for a name that would represent the ideas of farming and fertility.

Otto says that with most businesses in this area using north related words, they thought they would do something different to establish a distinct brand.

Otto had spent some time in the southwestern United States and had become familiar with the mythic figure Kokopelle (also Kokopelli). This iconic humpbacked flute player is a fertility deity associated with both childbirth and agriculture, whose image in caves and pueblo dwellings dates back at least to the nearly legendary Anasazi people.

Otto and Conny live across from Dawson in Sunnydale, and began farming on a small scale about 4 years ago, gradually increasing the amount of land under cultivation until they had about two acres around their house.

"Sunnydale was old farmland," Otto said, "and we're just going back to that."

Last year was the first year that they began selling regularly at the Saturday Farmers' Market on Front Street, starting with potatoes and vegetables. Their produce was also a popular item at the Bonanza Market. Prior to that, cultivation had been something of a hobby, providing some food for their own table.

"Last year was really successful and so we decided that one of us goes in full time during the summer and makes this work," Otto said.

Otto got to run the field garden while Conny works the house, herb garden and their poultry (five hens and a rooster). It's a division of labour they find congenial.

They have experimented with grains, with mixed results. Two years ago they had a successful crop. Last year there was that surprise snowfall on May 18 and then, just as the crop was recovering, the birds arrived.

“Our field was clear of the snow and then the migration birds come in, in the thousands. They were all going to head north, but they make a stopover, they see the little tiny sprouts and they cleaned out the field in an afternoon.”

He tried netting, scarecrows and even firing a shotgun into the air (not to kill) a few times, but the birds were so hungry they paid no attention.



Otto Muehlbach and Conny Handwerk
Photo courtesy Otto Muehlbach

“It was hopeless. The ground was brown from birds.”

The potato harvest was a bumper crop, and they sold out in just a few weeks. Aside from that they grew herbs, kale, lettuce, cabbage, rhubarb and carrots.

For Otto, who has also worked as a mechanic at Arctic Inland, farming is a return to his boyhood in Germany and Holland.

“I know what I’m doing. The only thing is that Mother Nature is different up here.”

Otto says the land is good, and his research into the history of the area has told him that farming was once a normal practice in the area where he and Conny live.

He has obtained permission from some of his neighbours to farm on their land and thinks he can increase his planted area to about ten acres. They would like to be able to farm enough land to set up a five-field crop rotation with a fallow field in the fifth year.

Otto says people should look for the little Kokopelle symbol in the future to know they are buying local crops.



Kokopelle Farm
Photo courtesy Otto Muehlbach



Kokopelli image



Kokopelle Farm chickens.
Photo courtesy Otto Muehlbach

Dawson firefighters revisit the scene of Tuesday’s fire

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

Sometimes the fire isn’t completely out.

It was mid-afternoon the day after the 7th Avenue fire in Dawson when Craig “Chedda” Dunham and a couple of visitors were sitting on his front walk, talking about the hullabaloo of the previous morning, when one of his visitors said. “Isn’t that smoke?”

There had been a sort of heat haze coming off the building since the previous day’s action, but this was actual smoke – not a lot, but enough to worry Dunham, whose Yukon Housing unit had actually caught fire on its south side wooden siding the day before. He ran right in and called the fire department.

Fire chief Jim Regimbal had cruised by the house several times since the initial fire and hadn’t seen any signs of trouble but a crew was there in short order and, after some investigation, did find an out of the way spot in the crawl space under the building that was smoldering.

“I kind of thought this might have happened yesterday,” Regimbal said as they wrapped up operations several hours later. He’d been by to check for hot spots but had detected nothing.



Spraying down the outer roof to get to the original roof area.
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net (In Dawson)

“I think with the build-up of the wind today getting in underneath the crawl space, it reignited a bit. It was nice that the neighbour spotted it and called us in.

“We cut a few holes, put some foam on it. We’ve got fire practice tonight, so we’ll come back and check on it again.”

The original fire began from cigarette debris in the kitchen area of the house and witnesses described fire blasting out of the window on that north side.

Dunham’s unit is less than 10 metres from the one that the Reid family was living in and the south side of his house was on fire when the trucks arrived on Tuesday.

“When we got here yesterday with my first line that came off (the truck) I didn’t even worry about (the burning house),” Regimbal recalled on Wednesday, “we just aimed to get the one out on Chedda’s so it wouldn’t take hold. It was licking up the siding a bit and heading up, so we just knocked it down and made sure everything was fine.”

In that model of bungalow the south end of the building is where the bedrooms are located.

A further problem with these houses is that they’ve all been retrofitted with second roof structures over the original low-sloped roofs that created snow load problems in the past. Checking the condition of the original roof means having to peel back the outer tin roof to see what’s going on underneath that.



The smoldering was in the crawlspace on the west side of the building.
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

On Wednesday the small response crew rechecked everywhere they had gone the day before, extinguished the smoldering areas they did find, opened up more of the roof, sprayed retardant foam all around under the crawlspace.

They put another layer of retardant on the wall of Dunham's home too, just in case.



Soaking Chedda's. Making sure the house next door is okay.
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish@northwestel.net (In Dawson)

Potoroka to lead AYC for the coming year

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

It wasn't a hard fought election, but Mayor Wayne Potoroka of Dawson beat Coun. John Streicker of Whitehorse for the presidency of the Association of Yukon Communities at the May 11.

Potoroka has been acting in the position for some months due to the ill health of Elaine Wyatt of Carmacks. Both men gave short speeches indicating their enthusiasm for the organization and their respect for each other, but Potoroka did have the edge due to his time acting in the office.

Streicker could have challenged Coun. Gord Curran of Teslin for the post of 1st vice-president, but chose not to, saying he was content to continue serving from where he was for the time being.

There were two candidates for the 2nd VP position and veteran executive member Coun. Betty Irwin of Whitehorse won over Coun. Tara Wheeler of Carmacks.

The final position is that of VP at Large, and it went uncontested to Coun. Diana Rogerson of Faro.



Betty Irwin, Diana Rogerson, Wayne Potoroka, Gord Curran.
Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net (In Dawson)

Dawson celebrated the National Day of Honour

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

National Day of Honour celebrations were held in Dawson City on May 9 over the noon hour. Organized by Branch 1 of the Dawson Legion, the Canadian Rangers, the RCMP, the Dawson City Fire Department, EMS and Wildland Fire Management, the service took place at the cenotaph in Victory Gardens.

Fire Chief Jim Regimbal and Ranger Sgt John Mitchell marched in the Colour Party of RCMP and Rangers and Legion Member Diane Baumgartner read the official proclamation.

“Whereas Canadians, both at home and abroad, have honourably, courageously and loyally served Canada by participating in the Afghanistan mission from 2001 to 2014;

“Whereas March 31, 2014 marks the end of the Canadian military mission in Afghanistan;

“Whereas the strength and courage demonstrated by our men and women in uniform, serving on the battlefield and supported by personnel from other government departments, have advanced the national interests of Canada in the fight against terrorism;

“Whereas the families of our men and women of Her Majesty’s Canadian Armed Forces and Canadian communities from coast to coast to coast have admirably and consistently supported the sacrifices being made by those serving in Afghanistan;

“Whereas it is desirable to build and strengthen an appreciation in Canadians for their contribution to the Afghanistan campaign and to promote the special role our families and communities play when our sons and daughters are in foreign lands;

“Whereas it is desirable to recognize our appreciation for the sacrifice of all those who serve our great nation and all those who have paid the ultimate price for freedom;

“Therefore His Excellency, the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, orders that a proclamation do be issued declaring May 9, 2014 as a ‘National Day of Honour.’”

Mayor Wayne Potoroka, who actually has a cousin who has served in Kandahar, acknowledged the importance of ceremonies like this, which honour the effort “to bring the same freedoms which we enjoy to another part of the world.”

“I do know that it’s critical that we reflect on the sacrifices that families across the country made while their loved ones were away from home. Honour, sacrifice and service to country are just words until you realize that there are people who live these principles, whose work it is to defend them. That’s why we’re here today.”

Jay Farr, Deputy Chief of the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, added his welcome to the group assembled and his best wishes to those who have served and those who have waited for them to come home.

“I extend my gratitude to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice,” he said.

“Today we commemorate and recognize Canada’s military mission in Afghanistan,” said Premier Pasloski, “the service and sacrifice of the armed forces and employees of the public service of Canada who served there.

“During the 12 year mission ... over 40,000 members of the Canadian armed forces, along with hundreds of civilians, worked to provide a better future for a country that was in need. We believe

in fundamental freedoms such as the freedom of conscience and religion freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and other media in communication ...

“We have embedded in our nation’s constitution democratic rights, mobility rights, legal rights, and equality rights. These are not just words on paper to be admired; they shape our nation’s daily life and guide our foreign policy.

“Around the world Canada has a reputation as a sturdy prop in time of trouble. Because we believe that these rights and freedoms should be enjoyed by everyone ... our nation has consistently stepped forward to defend these principles, even from our earliest days.”

The Premier’s address was followed by Legion member Myrna Butterworth’s recitation of the Commitment to Remember.

“They were young, as we are young
They served, giving freely of themselves.
To them we pledge, amid the winds of time.
To carry their torch and never forget.
We will remember them.”

After the laying of a wreath by a Ranger and Junior Ranger, there was the traditional two minutes of silence, followed by a blessing delivered by the Reverend Laurie Munro and the singing of “O Canada”, led by Tracy Nordick.



Day of Honour

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

The George Black ferry is launched

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

The George Black ferry entered the Yukon River shortly at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14, ending a launching process that took about five hours this year.

The boat appeared to be stuck in its winter cradle and it took the effort of more machines than usual to shift it from its resting place and get it started on the slide down the rails into the river.

A small crowd waxed and waned during the procedure. In spite of the warm sun it was chilly standing in the cold breeze coming off the river as most people were warmly dressed.

West Dawsonites have been waiting to be able to come to town again since shortly after the ice bridge was declared unsafe just before Easter weekend.

The ferry was scheduled to begin regular 24 operations on Thursday.



Heavy equipment is positioned to push the ferry free of its winter berth and start it sliding down to the river. Photo courtesy Dan Davidson uffish*northwestel.net (In Dawson)

Vancouver Yukoners Picnic and Gillian & Edward's 25th Wedding Anniversary Party

We are holding it at our House....in the "Secret Garden"....we will have tables and chairs, also Umbrellas'...BUT FEEL FREE TO BRING EXTRA chairs.. FOR YOURSELVES...just in case..... as we do not know who can make it.

Our address is...

7880 Meadwood Drive Burnaby, B.C. V5A-4E5....@... Noon ...to ??? August 16th YUKON
PICNIC also” Celebration of our Silver Wedding Anniversary” wowowo

There will be entertainment too.

We are inviting anyone that has lived, or worked in the Yukon....It’s a .. Picnic...Party.. and we ask people to bring either a Desert, or something Savoury

Contact for Food is Maribeth Mainer....she is in charge of that....a born organizer.. she is at: mainer1@shaw.ca such a nice sweet Lady, dots the eyes and crosses the T’s she does.

PLEASE NO GIFTS.....but we do ask for donations for the “Food Bank”... Thank you.

Thanks so much Sherron..... this will help a lot... wish you both could come too.

Love & Hugs..... Edward Thompson and Gillian Campbell Thompson

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Photo by Whitehorse Star
Don Knutson

Knutson remembered as tireless community volunteer

The territory has lost a “tireless volunteer, friend to veterans, friend to seniors, friend to his community, (and) friend to his fellow Yukoners” with the passing of Don Knutson.

By **Whitehorse Star** on **July 9, 2014**

The territory has lost a “tireless volunteer, friend to veterans, friend to seniors, friend to his community, (and) friend to his fellow Yukoners” with the passing of Don Knutson.

Whitehorse Legion president Darcy Grossinger made the statement Tuesday night following Don’s death early Monday morning, describing Don as a friend to him as well.

Don, who was 77, was perhaps best known for his lengthy service to the local legion, having served in each executive role over his 30 years with the organization, and his work to bring a seniors’ assisted-living housing project to the territory.

As his son Russ recalled in an interview this morning, Don worked tirelessly with the support of his wife Margaret on a numerous initiatives in the community.

While many slow down after retirement, after Don’s retirement from Northwestel in 1993 he seemed to only pick up steam.

Everyone from the snowboarding community to those who ride the trolley have benefitted from Don’s work. As Russ recalled, his father managed the Mount Sima ski hill the year it opened, brought in for his experience as an electrician.

That experience also helped him take on the role of manager of the waterfront trolley in its first season of operation.

“He liked to try new things,” Russ said, remembering his dad’s love of people.

Outside of a few politicians over the years, Russ couldn’t remember anyone his dad didn’t like. He didn’t judge anyone, or if he did he wasn’t open about it.

It may have been that which moved him to be so involved with his community, Russ said.

His work with the legion in so many capacities led him to what Grossinger described as a “well-deserved” life membership in the local. Don was behind both the development and naming of Veterans Square, organized countless annual events like Remembrance Day parades, dinners for veterans and the local legion’s Christmas Hamper Program, as well as working for years on the seniors’ housing project.

Even after the first attempt at the project failed, Don continued to work on it with the current initiative now moving forward.

Along with his life-time membership in the legion, Don received a commendation from the minister of Veterans Affairs for his support of veterans, a Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal and most recently a Yukon Commissioner’s commendation for longtime service to Yukoners and the territory.

Don’s history with the legion goes back much further than his 30 years with the Whitehorse branch.

Don grew up involved in legion activities as his mother was a legionnaire and his father served in World War Two.

“It’s been a bit of a second home,” Russ said, after noting many have been surprised to learn Don never served in the forces.

Rather Don’s career path was charted when he took on a part-time job cleaning out coaches for CNR as a teenager. That eventually led to an apprenticeship working in the electrical end for the company and then moving into the phone service branch for CN.

At the time, Northwestel was owned by CNT and in the late 1970s Don’s work brought him to the territory with his family, which had grown to include his wife and their four boys.

Russ remembered well the “outdoor spirit” both his father and mother instilled in him and his brothers as children.

Told as teenagers they were moving to the Yukon, Don assured his boys that they “would love it,” Russ said.

A man of his word, Don delivered and all four brothers have made the territory their home as adults.

Among the messages that have come into the family since Don’s death, Russ said everyone remembers Don as “a really happy guy.”

And though he was passionate with all he was involved in, he also brought a calm, logical approach to things.

As Grossinger recalled: “Don had a gift of communicating and empathizing with his fellow man. He was well-spoken and could be very charming. Whenever some of our more hot-tempered – myself included – executive members had conflict with an outside agency or government, we would send in Don to smooth things over. He had a way with people.”

It would be difficult to find anyone who lived life to the fullest extent his dad did, Russ said, pointing out just how much Don packed into the last part of his life, including drumming in the Midnight Sun Pipe Band along with his legion activities and work as president of the Vimy Heritage Housing Society leading the seniors’ housing initiative and so much more.

Of course, at the top of Don’s list of priorities was his family, which includes six grandchildren and his son’s wives.

Don had been scheduled to be part of a river trip with Russ’ three brothers when he became ill late last week. He told his sons to go ahead, thinking he would meet up with them in Carmacks to make the rest of the journey to Dawson.

His illness progressed over a few days and ultimately a heart attack sent him to hospital where he later passed away.

While all four of his sons were out of town (though a plan had been chartered to bring those on the river trip back to Whitehorse) when he passed away, they were in the outdoors, which their father had given them a great appreciation for.

Don was surrounded by his wife as well as his daughters-in-law.

Russ said his parent’s involvement in the community has inspired him and his brothers to be active in their own circles as well.

He went on to emphasize his mother’s role behind the scenes supporting his father’s work and their children’s activities as well.

As he recalled during his younger years, it wasn’t uncommon for Don to be away for work while his mother ran things on the home front.

Along with the memories many in the community have recalled of Don, Vimy Heritage Housing Society vice-president Bev Buckway said people have already put forward the idea of naming the seniors’ housing project in Don’s honour.

“It’s a sentiment a lot are expressing,” she said in an interview Tuesday afternoon.

While land has to be secured for the housing project and the building developed first, Buckway didn’t rule out the possibility, stating, “Everything we do will have Don looking over our shoulders.”

“It would be a wonderful tribute,” Russ said responding to the idea, pointing to the many hours Don poured into the project over more than a decade. It was something he saw a major need for, but had no intention of living in.

Russ added though he’s not sure how his dad would have felt about the housing project being named after him. Don was a “pretty humble guy,” though Russ also acknowledged his father’s ability to “roll with it.”

Regardless of whether the project bears Don's name, he will be remembered for his work on that and many other initiatives in the territory.

"Boy, he's going to be missed," Buckway said.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Gus & Blanche Barrett have moved from Qualicum to Port Alberni. Email address remains the same.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*Don't let petty fears and worries control your motion. Keep going!
When you rest YOU RUST!!*

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Rhubarb Dump Cake

1 pound rhubarb, cut into 1/4 inch pieces (between 3 and 4 cups)
1 cup white sugar
1 (3 ounce package) strawberry jello
1 package yellow cake mix
1 cup water
1/4 cup butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish. Spread the rhubarb evenly in the bottom of the baking dish. Sprinkle the sugar over the rhubarb, followed by the Jell-O, and finally the cake mix. Pour the water and melted butter over the top. Do not stir.

Bake for 45 minutes or until the rhubarb is tender.

"Dump" stands for dumping it all in without stirring.

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MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH

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