

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH – SPECIAL EDITION – LEPAGE PARK

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LePage Park

LePage Park is located at the corner of Wood Street & 3rd Avenue. This is two



LePage Park becomes a winter wonderland at 41 below. *Yukon News* photo by Mike Thomas blocks off of Main Street. It was named for **A.R. "Happy" Lepage** and family. The Lepage family operated wood camps on the Yukon River for the B.Y.N. Co. from 1928-49.

It contains 3 historic buildings, and an amphitheatre located at its core. 4 organizations operate out of the 3 heritage structures, they are, **Association of Yukon Communities** (www.ayc.yk.ca), **Yukon Arts Society - Art Gallery** and **Yukon Historical Museums Association's** (<http://www.yukonalaska.com/yhma>) historic walking tours.

The **amphitheatre** was constructed in the center of the park, by the **City of Whitehorse**, just 2 years ago.

*Thank you to **Yukon Historical Museums Association** website for the following information and photos on the 3 historic buildings, and **Yukon News' Mike Thomas** for his winter wonderland photo of LePage Park. (Permission received) – Samson Hartland grizzly@yt.sympatico.ca*

The buildings are:

**The Donnenworth House (1904)
Yukon Historical Museums Association**



Cultural History

Built between 1900 and 1904, this house was originally a small frame building with a tent attached to the rear, the land was owned by **William "Hobo Bill" Donnenworth**. Who in 1911-12 drove horses for the Royal Mail Service stage between Whitehorse and Dawson City. He was a purser on the steamboats 'Canadian' and 'Nasutlin' from 1913-15. Mrs. Donnenworth operated a small millinery shop on Main Street and later ran her business from this building. In 1963 the house became the residence of **A.R. "Happy" Lepage** and family. The Lepage family operated wood camps on the Yukon River for the B.Y.N. Co. from 1928-49 and remained in the house until 1978. In 1983, the YHMA secured permission from Finning Tractor to operate their walking tours from the building. In 1984, it was purchased by the City of Whitehorse, renovated extensively, and converted into the **YHMA office**.

Architectural History

The house is a wood frame construction with hip and gable roofs. The structure has a long H-shaped plan. Ship lap wood siding covers the exterior and cedar shake shingles cover the roof.

Between 1983 and 1985 the house was renovated extensively including a frame addition to the west side and the pressure treated wood foundation and basement.

The Smith House (1905) Association of Yukon Communities



Cultural History

The **Smith** house was named after **Jack Smith**, the original purchaser of the lot. It is presumed that he built the house (although he never finished paying for it), but there is photographic evidence suggesting the house may have been moved from White Pass land outside the town-site. In 1905, the year of its appearance on this lot, the house consisted of two sections, which were joined at a later date. Smith stayed only two years in the Yukon. "**Billy**" **Shaw** purchased the house in 1906. Shaw worked for BYN Co. as a port steward, a position he held for roughly twenty years. In 1907 Shaw further divided the half lot in two, selling the house and 1/4 lot to **William L. Lawton** and his family. Lawton worked as a stable man for White Pass, eventually becoming stable foreman.

In 1909, the house was sold to **A.P. Hawes**, a veterinarian for White Pass and inspector for the Department of Agriculture. In 1923, White Pass stopped using horses on the stage route to Dawson: Hawes remained without a job and left the Yukon shortly thereafter. **John E. French**, a carpenter and undertaker, owned the house until 1941. The house changed hands numerous times after 1941 until it was purchased and refurbished by the City of Whitehorse in 1984. It currently houses **Association of Yukon Communities**.

Architectural History

This wood frame structure has gable roofs constructed over a period of time. Galvanized steel roof decking and ship-lap siding are also part of the building.

The building has had extensive interior and exterior renovation in 1983 which added a new pressure treated wood foundation and basement along with the removal of shed roof structure attached to west side. Repair of the exterior siding, windows and trims were also part of the reconstruction.

The Captain Martin House (1915) Yukon Arts Society Art Gallery



This house was originally located at 208 Wood Street.

It is believed that it was built around 1915, although it may date from as early as 1900. Newspapers and early photographs suggest that it was originally a one-story house, to which a second floor was added in 1917.

It was the home of **Captain Patrick "Paddy" Martin** and his family. Originally from Newfoundland, Captain Martin had been a sea captain on sailing ships prior to his arrival in the Yukon.

After leaving the steamboat business, he opened a general merchandise and grocery store on First Avenue called the Arctic Trading Company. The Martin family occupied the house until the mid-1930s when they moved to the Chantler House at 204 Hawkins.

All of block 18 was purchased by Territorial Gold placer miners in 1980. Who in turn donated the Martin House to the City of Whitehorse.

The house was subsequently put in storage in the city compound, and was moved to its present location in LePage Park by the Lions Club in 1987.

The building now houses the **Lions Club and the Yukon Arts Society Art Gallery.**

LePage Park Panoramic View



L – R: Smith House, Donnenworth House, Captain
Martin House



L – R: Park facing East, Park Facing South



L - R: Boardwalk facing West, Mural on Oil Tank of Smith House (AYC)