Volume 28, Spring/Summer 2011



Seniors Today



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Seniors who have rendered outstanding service to our community and brought honour to the Yellowknife Seniors' Society.

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Editors: Bob Carr Marg Green

Cover by Bob Carr

HONOUR ROLL

Don Hunter

David Wind

Esther Braden

Lauren McKiel

Dusty Miller

Mabel Collinson

Cito Domingo

Ed Jeske

Gladys Eggenberger

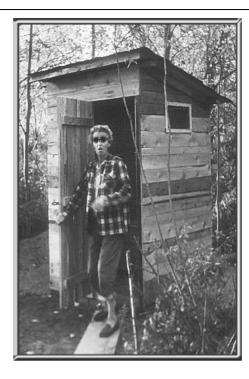
Barb Bromley

Jan Stirling

Bishop Jack Sperry



From the collections Of Donald Hunter



House of Relief

I often think back to one certain spot And a house on the rear of our lot. T'was chosen for comfort, also for speed, Clothesline to duck-there was really no need. T'was a place that was welcome and guite a relief When you were hurried and warnings were brief. It was cozy with holes built for three Two for adults and one for the wee. In winter t'was airy' in spring, summer and fall Its perfume wafted on the breeze to all. In winter the seat was oft covered with snow And shivering you'd sit as the north wind did blow. A box of ashes, catalog and an old broom And over the door was a star and a moon. Granny'd cut paper with care and to size Which was hung on a nail for use by the wise. At night for a visit oft a lantern we'd use To scare off mosquitoes and darkness diffuse. We now have our bathrooms with fixtures bright No darkness to scare us. No skeeters to bite. But I'm glad I lived in those days as a kid When we knew of a vacancy by the drop of a lid. Oft I think of my childhood with its joy and grief And the fond memories of that House of Relief.

Congratulations to the Newsletter Team for the amazing job they do, compiling and producing the Newsletter for seniors.

Welcome to the New Board of Directors of the Yk Seniors' Society.

Thank you all for your warm welcome back, to the Yk Seniors' Society.

You all are the greatest teachers and I learn so many valuable lessons from you. Your actions, demonstrate to

Yellowknifers the importance of active living, keeping seniors connected to each other and to the community.

Your dedication, commitment, and leadership are a tremendous contribution towards improving the lives of seniors and elders and the well-being and enjoyment of the City of Yellowknife.

The dedicated volunteer work by each precious senior makes the Baker Community Centre,

such a vibrant, active, fun place for activities and fellowship.

Vivian Squires

Dates To Remember:

June 12:	NWT Elder Abuse Week,	Opening Ceremony	a Church Service.	2-4pm at Baker (Community Centre
			, ,		

June 15: Elder Abuse Day 12 – 2 pm with a picnic at Baker Community Centre

June 21 Aboriginal Day join in the festivities in the City of Yellowknife

Jun 16-18 Drums of Hearing North of 60 - 2011 C.H.H.A. National Conference at Explorer Hotel

June 22 Multi-Cultural Day 2 – 4 pm at Baker Community Centre

July 1 Canada Day Celebrations

July 8,15,22,29 12 noon BBQ and Salad at Baker Community Centre

August 1 Baker Community Centre CLOSED

Aug.5,12,19,26 12 noon BBQ and Salad at Baker Community Centre

Sept . 2 Lunch with the Bunch POT LUCK Sept. 5 Baker Community Centre CLOSED

Sept. 11 Grandparents' Day at the Baker Community Centre

September 27 Computer Classes start

October 10 Thanksgiving Baker Community Centre CLOSED

October Seniors' Flu Shot Clinic to be

announced

Student volunteer Kieran McKiel, seen here working on the office computer to update charts etc. for the Executive Director. He was working at the Baker Community Centre the first and second week of April, to help him complete his community hours (100 hrs) of volunteering, which is a requirement that has to complete before he can graduate in June 2011.

Kieran is the son of Carey McKiel.



Birding Spring 2011

Early April: ptarmigan move north. Ravens nesting.

April 25: eagles, redpolls, gulls, cedar waxwings spotted.

May 8: Lots of snow on ground. ducks arrive

May 18: Snow gone. Robins, white-throated sparrow, and other song birds are heard singing. Arctic terns, sandhill cranes, swallows, geese & swans are back. Trees along Ingraham Trail are budding out.



<u>Friendship</u>

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, a group of young ladies in Yellowknife casually got together about once a month to share stories, have a few laughs and usually food would be involved at these gatherings. (As we've always loved our food).

We too believed that 'Girls just want to have fun' and so, the "Birthday Girls' group came into being.



The way we were back in those days:

As we have grown older and matured, we are now sometimes referred to as 'The Old Biddies Birthday Group'. Unfortunately over the years some from the group have moved to different parts of Canada and beyond, but there are still a number of us that have remained in Yellowknife and continue gatherings to celebrate each others birthdays and sometimes going for sleepovers at a friends' cabin which is always a highlight for us. But for the retired ladies of the group that are no longer in Yellowknife, we have still managed to keep the strong bond that has grown between us over the

years.....



Nine of us were able to meet up in Hawaii in 1996:

...and in 2007, twelve of us took a cruise to the Panama Canal:



...and in February and March of this year, thirteen of us ventured over once again to the beautiful island of Maui for a reunion and also to celebrate some milestone birthdays - with one from the group turning 85 years young while we were there. And throughout 2011 we have one turning 84, one turning 78 and five from the group will turn 70, one will be 68 later this year with one turning 65 in the summer. We also had our three youngsters with us ranging in age from 58 to 62 years old! Where have the years gone since those early days!

www.yksenior.ca

Sleeping Well As You Age



As we age we often experience normal changes in our sleeping patterns. We may become sleepier earlier in the evening, wake up earlier in the morning, and enjoy less deep sleep. However, disturbed sleep, waking up tired every day, and other symptoms of insomnia are not a normal part of aging. Sleep is just as important to our physical and emotional health in our senior years as it was when we were younger.

http:// www.helpguide.org/life/ sleep_aging.htm



While we were on Maui, we also enjoyed visits from friends: Ruth and Gerry Reimann, Susan Finlayson, Brian and Rena, (Mary Hamilton's grandson and his wife), Allan and Meryl Falconer, their daughter Melody along with her two young children, Leslie Muyres and Judy Pawlak, (Jackie Lockett's daughter). And we also made friends with a young family from Anchorage, Alaska who were our next door neighbours for part of the time that we were there.



As we experienced the Tsunami from Japan, the bond of the "Birthday Girls" grew stronger. At around 9:00PM on March 11th, we got an early warning to start

preparing to evacuate our condos...water, snacks, blankets, pillows, flashlights, passports, airline tickets, pills and purses were quickly loaded into our cars and with the warning sirens sounding, we headed off to the Evacuation Centre on higher ground where we were relieved to see porta potties arriving. And for people without vehicles, police and buses came to their rescue.

During the night a couple of the girls thought it would be a good idea to have a nap on the grass under the stars. However, at around 4:00AM, they had a bit of a rude awakening when the sprinklers went off unexpectedly to



lots of screaming and laughing. We managed short naps throughout the night in our cars and at around 8:00AM, we had a lovely picnic on the hood of one of the cars.

Thirteen hours later we were allowed back to our condos... tired but thankful for our minor inconveniences as compared to

the people over in Japan...God bless all those folks for what they've been through and for what they continue to go through.

'The Birthday Girls'

Barbara Bromley, Berníe Pínto, Bonníe O'Connor, Della Lewis, Elaíne Richinger, Eve Comrie, Irene Johnson, Jan Stirling, Jenny Neil, Jo MacLeod, Joyce Williams, Loretta Abernethy, Marilyn Paradís, Mary Hunter, Maxine Avery, Pat Moore, Pat Muirhead and Peggy Radcliffe.





'The loveliest memories that we know were made with good friends long ago.

The warmest thoughts we ever send are those that go from friend to friend.'

'Friendship is the glue that bonds you to another soul.'

Joyce Williams

Boys

Three boys are in the school yard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, and they give him \$25."

The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, and they give him \$200."

The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight men to collect all the money!"



Word Seach

RUCNKARTGROUPBLL G B T P B U L C K O O B P U I G NLEIDNOFDKTXNVHN IAXXDLRVNPGCICCI CNARRWCKVWHCSAIL N E G V H W V P M W O I E R A W ABOKNVYCIFENIPTO DOYYMJUTFYABTEOB EWGHIRHEAIHBITUN N L P F L A E Y G Y B V V B C W IIGIBBBNIVSTIOWA LNNURJRIWGMNTWUL FGNECMIHDFOKCLLF D C A B Q R D A R S P P A I X X HKJZDHGUGTYLCNOC K N L K H E E R Q W O U U G X F

art group
book club
bridge
carpet bowling
coffee break

curling

activities

lane bowling
lawn bowling
line dancing
lunch with a bunch
tai chi

yoga



Playing Computer Games Improves Brain Power of Older Adults

 Psychologists discovered that playing video games exercised the mind and improved memory and alertness.

- It also reversed "cognitive" decline making the brain more agile, allowing it to carry out and switch between tasks more quickly.

I just wanted to learn how to get the most of my computer. The computer classes at the Baker Centre were the place for me. It was way more fun to learn with other people. I learned many new things, but most importantly (1) IF YOU DON'T USE IT, YOU LOSE IT, and (2) DON'T BE AFRAID TO EXPERIMENT - Not much is lost forever.

I tried some of the games that came with my computer. "Bedazzled" was my favorite, followed by some of the card games. My daughter came over with her Game Boy and I tried the game "Tetras". I understood the game, loved it so I went out to purchase my own unit. Alas, Game Boy's were discontinued and the next thing was Nintendo DS. I bought the unit with grandiose ideas of playing the same games that my grandkids (eight and four years old) play. I still have not found a "Tetras" game and I have not mastered any other games. I have trouble remembering which key makes the characters run, jump or blast the enemy into oblivion. My grandkids get a little (NO, a lot) impatient when they try and explain it to me for the 10th time. I guess that means that I really will have to read the manual.

Mental stimulation does improve brain function and slows the process of cognitive deterioration as does physical exercise. I did learn that before Grandma goes out to master "Super Mario", video games are not some magical anti-senility exercise, but they can be mentally and intellectually stimulating. There are many things that produce the same effect, such as doing crossword puzzles, enjoying the ARTS, arguing with the in-laws or playing bridge. Pursuits that call upon critical thinking all produce the same results. The Baker Centre has lots of things to help you get off the couch, socialize with others and thus engage in life. It is so worth it.

Written by Helen White



More in an upcoming issue



You may have driven your entire life, and take great pride in your safety record. But as you age, it is critical that you realize your driving ability can change. The keys to driving safely are to recognize that changes can happen, get help when they do, and be willing to listen if others voice concerns.



Joys of Door-to-Door Salesmen

Recently the doorbell rang. and behold a man at the door offered to clean carpets in 2 rooms for \$70 and a third room free. "Come in." I led him to our linen closet (2 x 2 feet). "I am willing to have the bedroom cleaned for \$35 and this room for \$5 because it is so small. and for the free room." I waved my hand around the 400 sq ft living/dining room. "No way," he snapped—and was gone.



Gordie Howe, My Idol

Growing up as a youngster in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, the Detroit Red Wings was my hockey team, while my dad rooted for The Montreal Canadiens. In the early 1950's we listened to Hockey Night in Canada on CBM Radio, Montreal (CBC) every Saturday night. As there were only 6 NHL teams in those days, Detroit & Montreal met quite often. Gordie Howe was my idol.

Gordon "Gordie" Howe was born in Floral, Saskatchewan, March 31, 1928, one of 9 children. He learned to skate at four years old on a rink near his home. He was a very shy boy at age 14, playing hockey in Winnipeg, but didn't mix well with his team mates. At 17, he was sent to play in Omaha, Nebraska, a Red Wings affiliate, scoring 22 goals. Jack Adams, coach of the Detroit Red Wings brought him into the National hockey League at age 18, in 1946. With sweater #17, he scored 7 goals and 15 assists in 58 games. The next season (1947-48) Howe was issued the famous #9 and he doubled the points to 44, with 16 goals, playing on the production Line with Sid Able and Ted Lindsay. Howe was badly hurt in a collision with Ted Kennedy (Toronto Maple Leafs), which nearly ended his career (1949-50 season elimination rounds). Gordie came flying back on the ice with 43 goals in 1950-51. In 1962 Gordie played a record 1000 games and scored his 500th goal. He scored his 600th goal in his 20th season (1965-66) in Montreal against Les Canadiens goalie Gump Worsely.

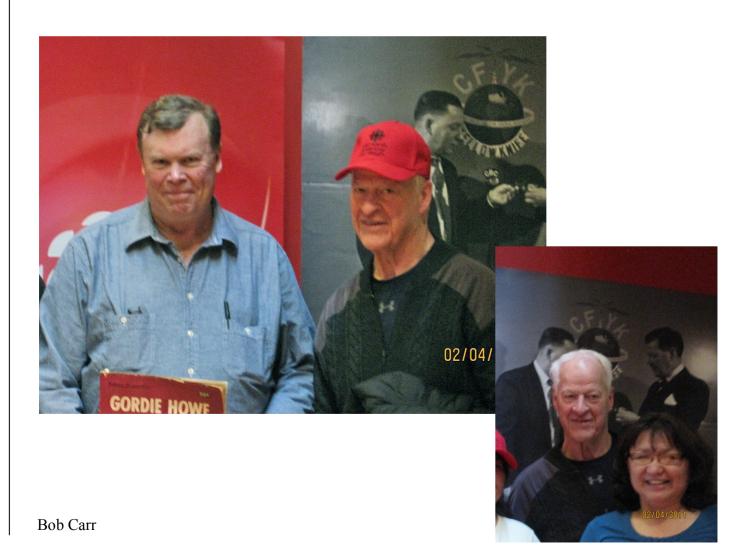
Mr. Hockey came to Yellowknife in early February 2011, to take in the 4th annual RCMP-YKFD Memorial Hockey Game on Saturday. Gordie would be guest coach of the Yellowknife Fire Department. I had plans to attend the RCMP/YKFD hockey game Saturday afternoon in hopes to get Gordie's autograph & have him sign my scrapbook and my rare copy "Gordie Howe" magazine, which I have carried with me since 1967, when I left home to work for CBC in Montreal. But, what would the line-up be? Would he have time to sign everyone's requests?

On Friday afternoon, my wife and I were driving home from "Lunch with a Bunch" when she told me Gordie Howe and his son Marty were invited to the CBC for a TV interview for Northbeat and to be a guest on a CBC Radio phone-in show. Hey, I worked over at CBC North for 25 years. Maybe my old fiends there would help me get to see him. I guess I was feeling like a kid again trying to see my hockey hero. Paul Andrew was announcing on the radio that Gordie was expected in the studio soon, so I ran into the house to pickup my Howe souvenirs and head over to CBC.

Gordie and Marty were about to go on the radio when I arrived and my CBC friends told me I could see him when they were finished in about an hour. I was invited to watch the interview from the control room. I knew the rules of being in a live broadcast situation from the many years I spent as an audioman / technician.

I watched for awhile and went back to the lobby to wait. Radio host Norbert Poitras wondered what I was carrying and when he discovered my scrapbook of Howe, he grabbed his tape recorder and invited me to meet Gordie in the studio, followed by an interview for his 4PM show. Gordie signed both my items then we had a short visit following the phone-in show. When I showed a picture of him lying on the ice after being "clocked" by Eddie Shack, he responded by saying "Eddie Shack couldn't even hit himself". As he had been to Yellowknife in 1970, he knew that televised hockey in the north at that time was tape delayed and aired several days later. I reminded him that it was recorded on Saturday night in Edmonton and rebroadcast on Monday night in Yellowknife. His arthritis was giving him some discomfort. He showed me his knuckles on his right hand, which showed evidence of the arthritis. His knees (they felt like a bag of loose bolts) and old shoulder injuries were giving him problems too. We talked about the heavy parka he was loaned (it was heavy, as he asked me to lift it). I noticed the heavy parka was difficult for him to put on so I offered my help.

I found Gordie very easy to talk to and I only wish I could have spent more time but others were waiting to take him to other events. I certainly won't forget his visit to CBC North.





Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person(s) you want remembered.

Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

Miss Charlene Mason sang, "I will not pass this way again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.



The Singing Swede

Shortly after I arrived in Yellowknife, I was sitting in the Gold Range Bar with a couple of locals. I was having a beer and taking in the local sights and sounds.

I noticed this one old timer sitting at a table all by himself, but despite the fact that he was alone, he was carrying on a spirited discussion with no one. Occasionally he would tell himself a joke, slap his knee and roar in laughter.

I asked one of the locals "Who's that?" and got the reply "Oh that's the Singing Swede. He's harmless but if he gets enough beer in him he sings." Then, since the barmaid was there, he sent a beer over to the Swede who accepted it with a nod.

Apparently the Swede had been around for years and had worked a number of jobs in town and out in the bush, so a lot of the lads knew him and would send him a beer now and then. That was a fairly common practise in those days, that drillers, miners or crews in from the bush, would send beers over to the local characters that they saw and knew. It was a sort of, share the wealth with those who had fallen on tough times, concept.

I never did see the Swede sing but he certainly seemed to enjoy his own company. If he was really feeling good he would get up and do a little dance around the table. Apparently he spoke at least three languages fluently and when he was a little drunk spoke them simultaneously. A couple of times he even shared a table with us and I had no idea what he was saying, but he did seem to be enjoying himself.

Now, I never met anyone who had anything mean or nasty to say about the Swede and several told me that back in his day, he had been a good worker. Life in the north can be hard and a lot of the jobs back then were physically brutal by today's standards. There were a lot of guys who were good worker for twenty, thirty or even forty years but they would eventually wear out or burn out and then they spent more time in town drinking, then out working, until eventually they became "bar flies". They would live in little squatters shacks in old town and get by on hand outs, odd jobs or small pensions. As far as I could tell, the Swede was one of these.

In the spring of 1975 I had a contract to go out and "sit on" a drill job that Titan Drilling was doing out at Mosher Lake. That meant I had to spot the drill holes, log the core and split the samples. I arrived at the camp and after the plane left was shown the bunk house. It was a 14 by 16 foot tent with six beds in it. Since I was the eighth person in camp that was supposed to sleep there, when I wanted to sleep I was supposed to pick a bed of someone who was on shift drilling and use it.

Luckily I could just throw my sleeping bag on top of theirs but this was far from ideal and I am sure today would be forbidden by any number of rules. It also meant that if the drill was shut down for any reason, I might be sleeping on the floor or outside. The good news was that they were just getting things set up and a couple of more tents were suppose to arrive, in the not too distant future.

After I checked on the drill, I went over to the cook shack to get a coffee and do some paper work because that was the only table or flat surface in camp that I had to work on and I had to draft up and calculate the footage for the first hole. I walked in and there was the Swede. He had been hired to do the cooking.

He was standing by the stove and had just made a fresh pot of coffee. He asked if I wanted some, so I said sure and picked up a cup. Then to my horror I saw him grab the pot and come gyrating towards me. I had visions of being scalded by

coffee, so put the cup on the table and jumped back. The Swede still had the shakes...bad. I will give him credit though, he did manage to get some of the coffee into my stationary cup before he gave up, set the pot down and told me to pour it myself.

People who become dependent on alcohol, when they go cold turkey like the Swede was, get the shakes, the tremors, the sweats and can feel dreadful. They can also have trouble sleeping, nightmares and even hallucinations. A full blown case of the DTs or Delirium Tremens can even kill a person so it is really not something you want to see or experience, which explains why alcoholics can be so desperate for another drink to avoid the shakes. He was certainly suffering but he was trying to do a good job and to keep busy.

I should also explain that the cook shack was a 14 by 16 foot tent fame. It was the kitchen, it had a table for the crew to eat at, it had shelves for most of the food and a bed, because this was also where the Swede or the cook lived. There was also an oil stove for heat but his wasn't working so he had the oven on, to keep the tent warm. He had asked the drillers to fill up the stove and they said they had, so he didn't know what was wrong but he asked, if I could check it out for him.

I checked the stove and regulator and it all look fine. So, I went out to the back of the tent frame where the oil barrel was and tapped on it. It certainly sounded full and in fact looked like a brand new drum. I checked the top bung and it was so tight I couldn't budge it. So I looked around until I found a bung wrench, which wasn't hard to find in a drill camp and went back to loosen the bung. When I did, you could hear the air rushing in. The drum couldn't breath and an air lock had stopped the flow of oil.

So I went back inside, turned the regulator on and lit the stove. The Singing Swede was amazed. In a couple minutes, I had restored the heat to his world and he just couldn't get over it. I had a friend for life or at least for as long as he remembered who I was.

As often happens at the start of jobs like this I didn't have a lot to do until they got the drill up and running and started to producing core for me to log and split. The bunk house was crowded and used mostly for sleeping. It was spring but cool outside so the kitchen was the only place where I could do some paper work or read. So I spent a fair bit of time there and got to know the Swede better. Most of the time I could understand most of what he said, so we swapped tales of life in the north because in his younger days he had gotten around.

I brought water up to the kitchen for him because he wasn't really capable of that and I even helped him cook because the first time I saw him trying to cut up vegetables with the shakes I was afraid he was going to lob off a couple of fingers and throw them into the stew. He was really trying but he was going through withdrawals and like a lot of people who drank too much, he was a little rum-dumb even sober.

Some of the younger members of the crew were complaining about the grub but I warned them to be careful what they wished for. As a bush cook of that era, I would have given him a four. I've had better food but also had a whole lot worse. A few days later the foreman got word that a plane would be coming out and the Swede told him to get a new cook. He had had enough and was too old for camp life, so he would be heading back to town. (next page)

Do You
Remember?
(From the 1961
Yellowknife
Phone
Directory)





Alzheimers:

Early diagnosis is important in order to start treatment, ensure an environment in which the person is able to function safely, and to allow them to make their own plans for the future.

There are several medications that work by increasing levels of acetylcholine in the brain, improving symptoms in mild to moderate AD. These medications delay the inevitable. improving brain function during earlier stages of disease. The substances used by the body to manufacture acetylcholine have been tried as supplements without success.

Treatment should be supportive. Create a simple, safe, and controlled environment. Ensure proper nutrition, exercise, and physical comfort. (singing Swede continued)

I am sure that the complaints helped to make up his mind.

Well, we got another cook and those that had been complaining, soon had to admit, that they would have taken the Swede back. The new cook was hiding out in the bush because someone had taken a shot at him in town. Probably because he was messing around with some one else's old lady. Also he had learned to cook in jail and had the

best selling cook book "Institutional Cooking For Fifty" to prove it, but that is a whole other story.

When the job was over, around a month and a half later, I returned to town. When I went into the Gold Range, there was the Singing Swede sitting at a table by himself and having a wonderful time. I sent him over a beer, because it seemed the right thing to do. And I thought, maybe when I am old and grey, sitting in the bar all by myself, someone I no longer remember, will send a beer my way. So here's to The Singing Swede. A man that truly enjoyed his own company.

Walt Humphries



Linda Hough is a great painter...the two paintings below are in a proud Seniors' collection.

Heaven's Very Special Child

A meeting was held guite far from Earth "It's time again for another birth." Said the angels to the Lord above, "This special child will need much love. His progress may seem very slow, And he'll require extra care From the folks he meets down there. He may not run or laugh or play, His thoughts may seem guite far away. In many ways he won't adapt And he'll be known as **Handicapped**. So let's be careful where he's sent. We want his life to be content. Please Lord, find people who, Will do a special job for you. They will not realize right away The leading role they're asked to play But with this child sent from above, Comes stronger faith and richer love And soon they'll know the privilege given In caring for this gift from Heaven. Their precious charge, so meek and mild, Is Heaven's Very Special Child."

Submitted by Pat (Moose) Balsillie

Some of our seniors out and about...



Some of our seniors have a Thursday morning 'coffee break' in the lounge at Northern United Place. Left to right: Cito, Peter, Tim, Ed, Pat, Marg, (back) June, Gwen, and Larry We thank our volunteer contributors to this newsletter. Without them we could not have a newsletter.

Marg Green, Bob Carr, Merlyn Williams, Moose, Walt Humphries, Mary Carr, Vivian Squires, Helen White, Joyce Williams



The Book Club had the pleasure of Alice Blondin-Perrin speaking to us after we read her book, "My Heart Beats Like a Drum"





#2 5710 50th Ave. Yellowknife, NT X1A 1G1

Tel: (867)873-9475

Fax: (867)873-4318

E-mail:

ykseniorsociety@theedge.ca

Web site:

www.yksenior.ca

Lounge Tel: 766-3250

A full colour version of this publication is available from our web site.

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YK Seniors' Society Board Meetings second Tuesday of each month



Drums of Hearing North of 60°

Past President.....



CHHA National Conference June 16 to 18, 2011 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Merlyn Williams