



Volume 31  
Winter 2013

# Seniors Today

# We Remember



## Our Vets

Harley Crowe

Dusty Miller

Brock Parsons

Ruth Spence

Jan Stirling

**2012**

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Cover by  
Bob Carr



Royal Purple 143

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The Yellowknife Royal Purple 143



From the Desk of the Executive Director

Well, I have been here for almost 3 month now, and this has been the most amazing job that I have ever had. Thank you for choosing me for the role of your new Executive Director. Everyone has opened their arms to me and made me feel so welcome.

With different events happening at the Baker Community Centre, I truly want to make it an amazing year for everyone.

As you know, our fall & winter programs at the Baker Community Centre and in the City of Yellowknife are back in full swing. Without the continued support of our members and volunteers, none of this would happen.

What a privilege and honour to serve as your Executive Director.

Kimberly Doyle (Don't forget to renew memberships in January)

# We Remember

## The Korean War

We should be remembering the Korean War 1950-53.

Canadian troops first saw action in February 1951. The Korean War is recognized on almost every cenotaph and memorial in Canada, but we don't seem to think about that conflict and concentrate only on "the big ones", or even Afghanistan. Canada sent 26,791 troops to fight in Korea. There were 1,558 Canadian casualties, including 516 dead, a battle that had no clear winner. Since it ended with a ceasefire and a demilitarized zone, that war could easily flare up again. Canadian Major Campbell Lane, living in Ottawa, is the oldest Commonwealth veteran of the conflict (in charge of the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers). South Korea issued a postage stamp in his honour in June 2012 . Bravo South Korea.

October 20, 2012

**SEOUL (Reuters) - Impoverished North Korea threatened on Friday to open fire on South Korea if it allows activists to go ahead with plans to drop anti-North leaflets on its territory, its most strident warning against its long-time foe in months.**



**We will Remember Harley Crowe, Who left us November 3**

## WWII, Did the Dieppe raid really have a reason?

A disaster took place 60 years ago, on August 19, 1942. 6000 men, mostly Canadian troops from the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division, attempted an amphibious raid on Nazi-occupied France. More than 4,100 were killed, wounded, or captured. Since then, many wondered why they were sent to Dieppe, with a single beach flanked by steep cliffs topped by German defenses. Were Canadian troops sacrificed for some British-planned maneuver? Was it a failed dress rehearsal for D-Day?

70 years later, after sifting through documents and newly declassified material, in a documentary "Dieppe Uncovered", Canadian military historian David O'Keefe discovered the main goal of the raid was to provide help and cover for a top secret commando unit that was to enter into Dieppe and steal highly valuable intelligence material from a German naval headquarters. It was believed that, had the mission been successful, the war could have been altered.

Before 1942, experts at Blechley Park, England were very successful at decoding German communications sent via Enigma machines. But on Feb 1, 1942, the Germans started using a new more complex Enigma machine. Messages sent to U-boat submarines could no longer be decoded and therefore "the Battle of the Atlantic" in 1942 went very bad for the Allies. Merchant ships were torpedoed and suffered tremendous losses.

A special commando unit of 15 to 20 highly trained personnel was formed by Ian Flemming (later became author of James Bond series). They were assigned to storm Dieppe harbour with the Royal Marines onboard the HMS Locust. The Locust was a flat bottomed gunboat that could be used in shallow water. First the Canadian troupes were to capture and hold Dieppe, then the commando unit would land into the mouth of the town's harbour. They would raid the German naval headquarters located in Hotel Moderne, situated at the end of the harbour, seize Enigma equipment and codebooks, rush them back to Ian Fleming who was waiting in a ship a short distance off-shore. He would rush the material back to a British port and then to Bletchley Park.

Had the raid on the German naval headquarters been successful, the war could have likely ended sooner. After 70 years, many Canadian vets seem to be relieved that their comrades "didn't die for nothing".

(Maclean's Magazine and the History Channel)



**Canadian Troops taken prisoners at Dieppe**

## OUR NORTHERN ADVENTURE

Every place on earth has its' peaks and valleys, as far as economy goes. In 1971, Saskatchewan was in a deep valley, or recession. With two small children, and me being a full time household engineer, we were forced into making the decision to move from Saskatchewan, and for Dan to seek work elsewhere.

Dan applied for a job in different places, and within a short period of time, had three job offers. One job offer was at Nanaimo BC, another at Williams Lake BC, and the third, at a settlement in the Northwest Territories. We soon ruled out the job in Nanaimo, as the union was asking for a \$4.00/hr. raise. That big of a raise seemed ridiculous at the time, and we figured that we would just move there and Dan would be walking the picket line. The decision was then to accept the job in Williams Lake, or a Northern settlement.

Dan remembered reading a story about the North in grade five or six. During reading period, he was so absorbed in this book, about the North, that he didn't hear the teacher say that the period had ended.

Needless to say, the teacher was very upset with Dan; so upset, that he yanked the book from Dan's hands, threw the book across the classroom, and broke a window pane. Dan never did finish reading that book. Maybe that is why Dan was always intrigued with the North, and decided that we would experience the North, and finish the story in real life.

We tried to research the North, by going to the library in Regina. To our dismay, the only information we could find about the North, was that the Inuit (Eskimo as they were known as in those days) still lived in Igloos. When Dan had his interview, we had prepared well over one hundred questions to ask the interviewers. Apparently there was only an hour slotted for each interview, and Dan spent two and a half hours asking questions. Many of these questions went unanswered. In spite of not knowing a whole lot about the North, we mutually decided to take a giant leap of faith, and accept the Northern position. We had no idea what to expect, so went with an open mind. Rankin Inlet, Northwest Territories was to be our home for the following two years. Dan's and my parents thought that we were moving to the other end of the earth, and who knew when they would see us again.

We made a trip to Sears in Regina, to buy skidoo suits for all four of us. We had a few weird looks when we asked to buy skidoo suits in July. At first we were told skidoo suits wouldn't be available until fall. When we explained our situation, and why we needed skidoo suits in July, we were given a lovely senior lady who had the experience of having lived in northern Saskatchewan. She understood our plight, and helped us. She also gave me some wonderful advice of keeping a diary.



An Igloo with land transportation

August 2nd 1971, we began our Northern journey. Our little family of four left Regina by plane, (our first flight) for Winnipeg, Manitoba. The next day, we flew from Winnipeg to Churchill, Manitoba. We became weather bound in Churchill for two days. This was a blessing in disguise, as it gave us an opportunity to meet several families returning to Rankin Inlet from their summer holidays, and introduced to hords of blackflies and mosquitoes. The families wisely advised us to grocery shop for fresh meat, fresh vegetables and milk to take up with us to Rankin Inlet. The Rankin Inlet Hudson Bay store had limited supplies until the sea lift orders arrived in September. This delay allowed us to open up a bank account, meet the doctor, who would be visiting Rankin periodically, and for Danny to meet his supervisors based in Fort Churchill.

On the morning of the third day, passengers bound for Rankin Inlet made their way from the Churchill town site to the Fort Churchill airport, a former military base. A shiny "Trans Air" DC3 airplane was parked in front of the airport terminal building. The weather delays caused a back log of passengers and freight. Because there was a new school being built in Rankin, the passengers included carpenters, plumbers, with their tools, and building supplies. For several hours, everyone anxiously waited to board the DC3 for Rankin Inlet. Finally the "Trans Air" agent called passengers to board the DC3. Our family was not on the DC3 boarding passenger list. The agent assured all remaining passengers, another aircraft was scheduled for Rankin Inlet.

Again 3-4 more anxious hours were spent entertaining our 2 children, ages 2 and 4, waiting for the promised flight to Rankin. While waiting, Dan took our children for walks outside the terminal building. Dan said there was no other airplane on the tarmac except a derelict looking airplane parked way off to one side. Dan saw 2 men carrying 5 gallon pails, with what appeared to be oil. The men climbed up a ladder and emptied the contents into the engines. Surely this wasn't the airplane scheduled for Rankin!! At about 5 PM, the Trans Air agent began calling passengers to board the second flight bound for Rankin Inlet. We walked outside the terminal building and found no other airplane in sight, except the oil hungry antique looking plane. Later we learned the name of the airplane.

We made our maiden voyage to Rankin Inlet, in a Canso; an amphibian World War II time airplane. During the war, the Canso was primarily used for hunting submarines, plying the coastal waters of North America. The agent lead the passengers to the Canso, then pointed to a narrow metal ladder. We climbed up, then through a small oval hatch door, stepping over tool boxes, building materials, mail bags, suitcases, and miscellaneous freight; finally reaching our seats located at the rear bubble windows. The bubble windows gave us a spectacular view of the landscape below us. The children were particularly excited, asking questions, many which we could not answer.



**World War II Canso & bubble**



The plane began to descend to land, for what we anticipated would be Rankin Inlet. There was no land below us just water. The Canso hit the water, with water splashing inside thorough the deteriorated window seals and other openings. We landed on the Hudson Bay at Eskimo Point. Soon a boat from the community glided along side the Canso. The crew tossed the mail bags and supplies out of the window. Some things missed being caught by the boat crew and landed in the water. The boat crew later retrieved these soggy items. We were soon in the air once again, making our way to Rankin. We landed on the airstrip at about 9:30 pm, to be greeted by practically the whole settlement. We thought we were getting the Royal welcome; but found out that all planes were met to see who and what had arrived. We were taken to our home, which was a double wide mobile, all furnished with Villas furniture. We had running water and a flush toilet; unlike an outdoor toilet or honey bucket that we had prepared ourselves for.

Before our personal things arrived on sealift, it was getting rather chilly, so people were very kind in lending jackets for all of us to wear. Each home had a storage room, which would hold the year's supply of groceries that one would order to come on sealift. This would prove to be a challenge, as the most groceries we had ever purchased in the past, was for one week. Where would we begin? There was a family of eight that lent us their sealift order sheets, and we began by dividing by two, to accommodate our family of four. We then substituted brand names that we liked best, and sent off our order. After we received our sealift order, we found out that different brands have different case lot sizes. Certain brands may have a case lot of twelve, twenty-four, thirty-six, or forty-eight. Some things ran out quite quickly, where as some things lasted the two years we were there. There was no worry if you had any leftovers when you were leaving, as people were on your doorstep wanting to buy the groceries you hadn't used up.

Many stories I told my mother, reminded her of pioneer days. One learned to make do, improvise or do without. I learned to bake bread, and was always told how good it was. People soon became like family. We learned to make our own fun, by getting together and playing cards, having fun evenings with music, and visiting. At the time, there was no television and only radio phone. A family skidoo ride to the airport was a big event.

Because there was no bank in Rankin in 1971, Dan's paycheque was automatically deposited in our bank account in Churchill. The Bay store acted as a little bank in Rankin. We would write a cheque and get cash. Because there was no bank in Rankin, money became very dirty and torn, as it only circulated within the community. Coin was very limited, because it was heavy to ship. Pennies were at a real premium. When you would buy something at the Bay, you would have a choice of penny matches or bubble gum as change. We would get bubble gum for change, as the children loved gum. One night our daughter threw up bubble gum, as she had swallowed big wads of gum.

In 1973 Dan got a transfer to Hay River, working out of Enterprise with the Department of Highways. In 1974 Dan transferred to Yellowknife, where he traveled extensively throughout the North advising the GNWT what type of vehicles to purchase for the different settlements, as well as setting up a preventative maintenance program for all the vehicles in all the settlements.

In Yellowknife, Dan and I had our third child. We have since been blest with two grandchildren, who both reside in Yellowknife.

Two years have turned into forty-one years in the North. Many people say I should write a book about our Northern experiences. Maybe this is a start.

Ann Costache

## Our Members Out and About

### A very sad situation:

On July 31st, Mary & I decided to drive to Behchoko to spend the day exploring and site seeing. The area is on the border between the Canadian Shield and the Northern extension of the Western Canada Sedimentary Basin, a great inland ocean, some 350 million years old, that includes the Mackenzie Valley and beyond south into the USA. The land goes from granite to limestone so the flora differs greatly from the Yellowknife area. We near the bridge over Frank's Channel around noon and decide to have lunch at the North Arm Park. As we approach the park, we see a herd of bison just beyond the park's entrance. Tourists are standing near them taking pictures. Some bison are eating the grasses just off the highway in the ditch, while several young calves are running around playing and enjoying the bug-free afternoon. Several large bison are lazing in pits they have dug in the peat-moss.

Not far from the park entrance we see a big bison lying in the ditch on the right side of the road, about a thousand yards from the herd. It doesn't seem to be moving. We stop and back up, stopping not 20 feet from it. There is movement. It is not the normal movement. The bison is grunting and sort of twitching as if trying to breath. I know something is wrong, so we continue on to the park. We return to the bison location some 20 minutes later. Now the bison is laying on its side with its feet out straight. Dead. A car passes by, the driver doesn't go far but makes a "U"ey. I flagged him down, asking him if lives in the area. We told him there was a dead bison in the ditch and he said he would report it. About an hour later we saw men in the ditch roping off the area and installing a danger sign "**Do Not Approach**", as the bison would have to be checked for anthrax. We continued on down the highway but we were saddened to think that this huge majestic animal would die so quickly from a disease living in the soil, where it roamed a couple of days before, as a healthy majestic bison.

About 30 km down the highway, we saw a roped off area only 20 feet from the road. Again a caution sign, but smoke was rising from a bison that had been burned a day or so earlier. Across the road, not far away was a baby bison, all alone, feeding in the ditch.

We took no pictures since we needed no reminder. Over 450 similar bison were now being burned from Fort Providence to Behchoko. Tests from the bison we saw were confirmed. It again was anthrax.

Bob Carr

**A Victoria Cross was awarded to 20 year old Pte. Timothy O'HEA, who was a member of the 1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own). The Irish soldier was serving with the British Army in Danville, Quebec on June 9, 1866, when a railway car containing 2000 pounds of ammunition, to be used in the war against Fenians, caught fire. He quickly took charge, opened the locked railcar, and single handily brought the fire under control. His Victoria Cross was unusual in that it is the ONLY one awarded for bravery on Canadian soil.**

## Ship Me, Please!

**A romantic prankster almost suffocated when he shipped himself to his girlfriend in a sealed box and got lost in the mail. Hu Seng, from Chongqing city, southern China, paid a courier firm to deliver him to partner Li Wang as a joke. But couriers mixed up the address and instead of 30 minutes in the sealed box, gasping Seng was trapped for nearly three hours. (BBC)**



## The Christmas Tree Saga

It is nearing Christmas in Yellowknife and we have a northern Christmas tree this year (2010). By that I mean that we have a local tree that we went out and cut down ourselves.

Tradition for us (Lesley, Dylan and I) has been that on December 10 (plus or minus a couple of days) we buy a 10 or 12 foot Christmas tree – a balsam fir tree that was grown elsewhere and manicured monthly for years. It is perfectly symmetrical and so thick that Tony our cat can't climb it although he always makes a valiant effort to do so. We have a 40 year collection of decorations that are put on it in a carefully choreographed sequence- the lights, then eggnog, certain ornaments, then more eggnog, icicles, eggnog, etc, etc, until finally the placing of the angel on the top. When finished it is a thing of beauty indeed and the envy of the neighbourhood.

December 10, 2010 - the Christmas trees had arrived in Yellowknife and were unloaded in the fenced area of the Co-op parking lot. It was very cold - almost minus 40. I thought about waiting a couple of days for the warmer weather that was forecast as the trees would be less brittle I picked Dylan up after school and swung by the store. The people running the tree lot were not there and the sign said **Open 6-9pm**. I had a plane to catch later that afternoon but there were lots of trees and I was only going to be gone two days. Wrong! About there being lots of trees. Two days later -no trees left.

To buy or not to buy an artificial tree?? I think not. And besides I would have to brave the mob scene at Wal-Mart. Time to have a tree-hunting expedition. Dylan had a badminton tournament coming up on the weekend, and there is almost no daylight at this time of year, but after school it would have to be. Fortified with a thermos of coffee and a dozen of Timmy's best, Lesley and I picked up Dylan from school and headed out. Twenty minutes out of Yellowknife and the trees all looked lopsided, scruffy, shabby, deformed, dead. Charlie Brown's Christmas tree would be lush in comparison with anything we saw. And I should remind you that all we had to choose from were black spruce and jack pine trying to eke out a living on bare rock. Even Tom Thompson wouldn't do a painting of these trees. We leave the Ingraham Trail and take the road to Vee Lake.

By now it's really dark. Hunting for a Christmas tree reminds me of hunting moose – after hours of peering intently but not seeing any, everything looks like a moose. We see a cute fluffy red fox on the edge of the road (and no, it didn't look like a moose). Out by Vee Lake I stop, get out of the truck, and scan the ridge hoping to spot a decent tree against the moonlight. There are a couple of likely candidates at the top of the ridge. A Black Spruce Christmas Tree. It has come to this. I take the saw and wade off through the snow and climb the ridge. Up close the trees look don't look so good. They didn't look great from the truck, but now they look even worse. Oh well. I choose a victim and tap it sharply with the back of the saw. A brief snowfall follows. It had looked better before I knocked the snow off. Maybe I should buy some artificial snow? The tree is almost 30 feet tall. No branches on the bottom 15 feet, a bit of plumage at the 16 foot mark and some branch-like appendages towards the top. I kill it quickly and Dylan drags it down the slope. I cut and take the top 12 feet or so and put it in the back of the truck. I take the bottom for firewood.



There is a fresh wolf track on the edge of the road as we drive along a bit further and look around before heading home. Still scanning the road edge and hoping for a better tree. A short while later the road peters out. We turn around and head for home.

A couple of kilometres later Lesley sees a tree that she thinks looks good. Dylan and I are not convinced as she thought every tree was wonderful on the way out of town. I back up and angle the truck to shine some light on the subject. It's spindly; sparse. But it's a balanced sparseness, equally sparse on all sides, no thick areas at all, a Charlie-Brown-like –tree but with branches not yet drooping. So sparse that there is no snow on it. Dylan and I cut it down. We place it in the back of the truck with Tree One. We talk about perhaps tying the two trees together at home to make a fuller looking tree. We head for home. Back past Vee Lake, back to the Ingraham Trail.

As I get the truck up to cruising speed on the Ingraham Trail, Dylan looks out the back window at our prizes as we go over a frost heave in the road and says "Dad, the tree just fell out". I look in the rear view mirror and see a shadow on the road and the lights of another vehicle approaching the shadow. The following vehicle swerves around the shadow and I do a quick internal assessment and tell myself- *I still have Tree One; Tree Two is likely damaged if not demolished; I should make sure Tree Two is not a traffic hazard; why didn't I tie those trees down; where can I turn around; this would be hilarious if it was happening to someone else.*

"I stop and turn around."

Tree Two is on the road and seems to be in great shape, all things considered. A few broken branches on one side, but we have to put it against the wall anyway and it's not like the good side got damaged as there is no good side, but now there is a bad side so we know which side to put against the wall. It must be a sign. I put Tree Two back into the truck and tie it down. Home we go. The tree is not even in the house and already we have memories and stories.

Tree Two becomes our Christmas tree. We rationalize -it's so airy; it's so easy to see all the ornaments; it hardly has any needles to shed; it was so easy to decorate; we won't hide any presents in it and forget where they are; we will be able to find all the fancy icicles and decorations when we take it down. It's a great tree.

Tony the cat remains aloof and shows no interest in climbing the tree or knocking ornaments off of it. No challenge for him is my theory.

Tree One is relegated to the yard and becomes a temporary roost for the ravens. Perhaps we will decorate it for them with turkey bones and such treats after Christmas dinner.

Maybe we should do this every year. **Maybe not.**

Merry Christmas,  
**Ron Allen**



## Health News

When you are **strength training**, you build more muscle if you lift more weight, but not if you do more repetitions. At least that's what scientists used to think. But more reps make a difference for older people, says a new study.

Researchers had 12 young men (average age: 24) and 12 older men (average age: 70) do either three or six sets of leg extensions. The scientists then took biopsies of the men's leg muscles to measure whether they were making protein, which is important for repairing and building muscle.

In the younger men, doubling the number of sets had little or no impact. **But in the older men**, doubling the sets resulted in greater protein synthesis. And it didn't matter whether the men were using lighter or heavier weights. (The sets with lighter weights had more extensions than the sets with heavier weights, so the total muscle exertion was the same.) The less-sensitive muscles of older men need to do more work to activate their protein-making machinery, suggest the authors.

### What to do:

If you're around 65 or older, try boosting not just the weights you lift, but the number of times you repeat the lift. Scientists haven't studied women or middle-aged men.

**Nutrition Action Healthletter, October 2012,**  
<http://www.cspinet.org/nah/canada.htm>

## The Bridge Club is just called "The Bridge Club"



Cappy Elkin, Lib Lowing, Marg Green, Jan Stirling

It started in 1967. It has been going for 45 years. It has been running continuously since that time - every two weeks all year except for the summer.

The original members were:

Grace Thorburn, Betty Johnson, Marion Reaburn, Phyllis Watson, Betty Stewart, Fay Million, Joan Bower, and Helen Law.

The current members joined as follows:

Cappy Elkin	1973	39 years
Lib Lowing	1974	38 years
Loretta Abernathy	1983	29 years
Jan Stirling	1988	22 years
Barb Bromley	1988	22 years
Sandra Taylor	2006	6 years
Marg Green	2011	
Ann Wind	2011	

Over the years there have been 36 members of this club. As they left town or were deceased, a new member would replace them. Some long term past members were:

(Back) Jan Stirling, Margaret Woodley, Lib Lowing, Joan MacNeil, Sandra Taylor

(Front) Loretta Abernathy, Barb Bromley, Cappy Elkin



## Hearing Aids and Hearing Loops

If you have a hearing aid, a "**t-coil**" or "telecoil" can improve your hearing. Most hearing aids (and all cochlear implants) now come with "t-coils", or, in some cases hearing aids can be retrofitted in older units. The "t-coil" was designed to allow you to hear better using a telephone. The t-coil could be turned on from a switch located on the hearing aid which is usually marked "T". In recent years "**hearing loops**" are being installed in many public places such as banks, theatres, lecture halls and places of worship. A person can even install a loop in their home that can be connected to a TV. Select the "T" position on the hearing aid and voila better tv sound. Switch it back for everyday conversation.

Ask your local CHH branch for more information on Hearing Loops (ask them how to upgrade your unit if it doesn't cover by Medicare? Are there financial assistance programs? Where can you buy one? Ask your audiologist for help of a hearing loop system in your home, on a telecoil or a Hearing Loop installed.



## YK Royal Visit in August 1994

A crowd of a thousand or so people gave the Queen and Prince Phillip a joyous welcome on Aug 20, 1994, despite the cold wind. Sunday was warm and sunny and the Royal Couple did a "walk around" on the streets of Yellowknife, following the church service at the Anglican Holy Trinity Church. I was President of the Yellowknife Seniors' Society at the time and had the pleasure of welcoming Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip, and introducing them to our Seniors'. Many residents of Yellowknife were able to get near enough to take good pictures, enjoy the excitement of seeing them so closely, and have good memories of their visit. ... **June Van Dine -Arden**



Photo by Don Hunter

Queen Elizabeth with June.

## Autumn

Find and circle all of the Autumn words that are hidden in the grid.  
The remaining letters spell a secret message - an Albert Camus quotation.

L O N G E R N I G H T S N A A U C N  
 T O R U E S T U N Y R O K C I H R I  
 M S O A Y Q E N I S I A O T R W O K  
 R C Y H N E U V S T E R F H E O P P  
 C E A A C G K I A S N O A A B R S M  
 K N D N D S E R N E D S R N M C O U  
 S C Y L N R G L U O L P M K E E C P  
 Q R A K E I E R E T X G I S V R T S  
 U Y D T M A N T S A E F N G O A O E  
 A D Y D S I V G R T V S G I N C B P  
 S N R N G Y W E H O E E N V W S E T  
 H I E L P P A E S P H A S I V O R E  
 B W T Y L L I H C T E S P N R F L M  
 F T S E V R A H Y E L O I G C R E B  
 A A U H A L L O W E E N E F I O S E  
 A F L S E V A E L W O L L E Y S L R  
 L O B L W E C H E S T N U T S T R D

### Did You Know?

In the United States, presidential campaigns last longer than all pregnancies and most wars. Even before the 2008 campaign had ended, candidates were laying the ground work for 2012. (Maclean's)

- |                |               |               |                |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| ACORN          | EQUINOX       | NOVEMBER      | SEPTEMBER      |
| APPLE          | FALL          | OCTOBER       | SHORTER DAYS   |
| BIRD MIGRATION | FARMING       | ORANGE LEAVES | SQUASH         |
| BLOWING LEAVES | FEAST         | PIE           | SWEET POTATOES |
| BLUSTERY DAY   | FROST         | PUMPKIN       | THANKSGIVING   |
| CANNING        | HALLOWEEN     | RAKE          | TURKEY         |
| CHESTNUTS      | HARVEST       | RED LEAVES    | WINDY          |
| CHILLY         | HAYSTACK      | SCARECROW     | YELLOW LEAVES  |
| COLD           | HICKORY NUTS  | SCHOOL        |                |
| CROPS          | LONGER NIGHTS | SEASON        |                |



See page 15 for secret message

## Canada 55+ Games.

At the end of August, a stalwart group of Yellowknifers and others from throughout the N.W.T. went down the Sydney, Cape Breton, to take part in the 2012 Canada 55+ Games. The Yellowknife 55+ Games Society are to be congratulated for the considerable effort and hours they put in to fundraise for the team's participation, helped out by a further grant from Sports North.

The N.W.T. team numbered more than 60 and as well as our city there were competitors from Hay River, Fort Smith, and Inuvik taking part in Lane Bowling, Track and Field, Swimming, Ice Hockey, Bridge, Darts, Cribbage and Golf. Although many of the other teams were bigger, Team N.W.T. are to be congratulated on their performances and came fifth out of the eleven provinces and territories with a total of 24 medals. The swimmers contributed most of the medals with a total of eighteen Gold, one Silver and one Bronze.

Medal winners from Yellowknife included Heather Leslie (Swim), Len Haener (Bowl), Barb Macdonald (Swim), Joan Hirons (Swim), and Chris Williams (Swim).

A number of the competitors took the opportunity of the Games to spend further days enjoying the many beautiful places in Cape Breton and the wonderful Gaelic hospitality.

Visits included Fortress of Louisburg, Glace Bay Mining Museum, the Cabot Trail and Rita McNeil's Tea Rooms. Those who didn't go to her Tea Rooms had the opportunity to enjoy Rita McNeil at the Closing Ceremonies as well as a performance by the Men of The Deeps.

For the first time, thanks to sport North, Team N.W.T. , had the support of a Chef de Mission and Bill Othmer was a great support and encouragement as were a number of spouses who came along for the trip.

Congratulations to all who represented the N.W.T. with such distinction, whether or not they came home with medals or just fond memories of the 2012 Canada 55+ Games.



## Did you know!

**This years drought is causing an unusual problem for one U.S. festival:**

**a shortage of "cow chips." The Wisconsin State Cow Chip Throw & Festival in Prairie du Sac in southern Wisconsin uses hundreds of flattened and dried cow pats for the annual competition. Organizers said the quantity and quality of manure were poor because of the heat and dry weather, and they hence had to dip into reserves. One of the organizers said she had never experienced such a shortage in her 24 years at the festival.**

## 80 years ago, an NWT Stampede

Summer 1932, Great Bear Lake, Gilbert LaBine had discovered a huge pitchblende deposit on what became LaBine Point. The rush was on. The Department of Mines in Ottawa had updated its geological report on Labine's find. It stated "Beyond any question, the pitchblende deposits at LaBine Point constitute a very valuable source of radium". The Government set up a radio communications station at Cameron Bay. Around the radio station the men put up a tent city, which they named Radium City. Eldorado Gold Mines (president Gilbert LaBine) built a mine that same year. Radium City soon became Port Radium officially. The Radium Cafe, and Port Radium Hotel, a post office, and the Lake Shore Inn were built. The rest is history.



Punch Dickens on left (from files of Don Hunter)

## Yellowknife Gold is paved with roads

In the early 1970s I was working for PMSL. That stood for Precambrian Mining Services Limited and at the time Bill Knutson and Shorty Brown were in charge. Their office building was located where the Bellanca Building now stands.

Shorty was in charge of expediting and Bill looked after the contracting and consulting end of the business. Mineral exploration was their main focus but they also did bush work for mining and construction companies across the NWT and Nunavut. That means, they covered over a third of Canada.

One spring, in the slow time over break up, Shorty decided to reorganize and clean out the warehouse. This was a second building beside the office and piled to the rafters with bush and engineering gear. In a corner, he came across several large sacks full of several hundred pounds of crushed up rock, that had been sitting there for years. They had no labels or markings on them.

He told Bill about them. They had a quick look at the sacks and since they had been sitting there for years and no one knew what property they were from or why they were storing them, they decided to just scatter the crush over their gravel parking lot. Seemed like the logical thing to do at the time.

A few days later, one of the geologists or prospectors heading to the office noticed something shiny and picked up a handful of the gravel to have a better look at it. It contained quartz, some sulphide minerals and believe it or not visible gold. A lot of visible gold. The bulk sample must have come from one of the properties or mines that PMSL had done work for in the past. Probably Discovery or Tundra. A mini bulk sample had been sent to town and stored in the warehouse but it had never been processed.

Well in no time, everyone in the office and people who just happened to be walking down the street, were going over the parking lot, picking up pieces of gravel that had sparkles of VG. It made for a little morning entertainment but this was Yellowknife and after people had found a few pieces, they usually went on around their business.

We developed a little game. If after work we decided to go for a beer, each person would scoop up a handful of gravel and the last person to find a piece of VG would buy the round. Yellowknife was a much smaller place in those days and word got out that pieces of gravel with visible gold in them could be found in the parking lot. School kids, locals and visiting tourists would periodically come by and ask Bill or Shorty if they could go prospecting in the parking lot.

Also since some of them didn't know the difference between gold and fools gold often the prospectors or geologist hanging around the office would have to give them a short course in mineral identification. Now for any of you reading this, who might want to know, one of the easiest ways to tell them apart is gold is very soft so you should be able to scratch it with a pin or point of a knife, while fools gold is hard or just flacks apart.

We often joked that if the price of gold went up, PMSL could mine the parking lot. When Precambrian Mining Services moved their building and the Bellanca building went up I have no idea what they did with the gravel in the parking lot but chances are it is still around Yellowknife somewhere.

However, its not just that gravel that contained gold. When new town was being built a lot of the rock fill that was used was waste rock from the mine hauled into town by Smokey Heal and other truckers. At a mine, often a bit of ore gets mixed in with the waste and vice versa. So it wasn't uncommon for someone to find a rock in the fill or along the side of the road that contained visible gold. I have seen some pretty good samples of gold that people just picked up off of the ground and I am certain there are still a number of them out their lying around just waiting to be discovered.

So, in Yellowknife, the gold really is paved with roads and you just never know what you may find if you take the time to look.

Walt Humphries

Autumn Word Find message:

Autumn is a second spring when every  
leaf is a flower



# Voice of the Golden North

## CFYK, the Good Old Days of Radio (Part 2)

One of the first pioneers of CFYK radio was **Natalie Herrick** (now Slager) who came in each day at 5:45 pm to bring listeners the CBC News, followed by playing the Department of Education disc (very large records) programs for the children, handing off to the evening announcer at 7 pm.

In 1956, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, **R. Gordon Robertson**, submitted a brief to the Royal Commission of Broadcasting. In part he said

"comparing the north with southern Canada, the north had no telephone, limited telegraph, no local daily newspapers and only one weekly newspaper in an area of a million and a half square miles..". The Royal Corps of Signals are finding it difficult to maintain the equipment in the limited

volunteer stations across the north and are therefore shutting some down. In winter, listeners of radio are tuning into stations from the United States and Radio Moscow. Also, by the mid 1950's there was recognition that radio was a more useful channel of mass communication in the north than print.

In 1958 the Government of Canada took action by allowing the CBC to set up a northern service.

During a Sunday evening ceremony December 7, 1958 CFYK's President **John Milton**, handed over the keys to CBC northern service director **Andrew Cowan**. CBC would take over broadcasting in Yellowknife at 7 am. After the CFYK volunteers signed off, the equipment was replaced by newer technology to ready by the 7 am sign on. CBC technician Peter Radcliffe and Lloyd Moore from Ottawa worked all night. CBC staff at the time were **Ivan LeMesurier** (announcer), **Sandy Stewart** (manager), **Mabel Bignell** (secretary/announcer), and **Peter Radcliffe** (tech).



January 8, 1959..News of the North., by **Chris Koch**

The Editor,...our old CFYK is gone and the new one is here, which is not just new, but strange too, and we need some time to get acquainted and accustomed to it. Sandy Stewart himself is still experimenting to give something fitting to Yellowknife....Here in the north the radio is more important than in the far south. When we say farewell to old CFYK and welcome the new we would like to remind CBC that we expect more from a professional radio station than from an amateur.

Hi Ivan here...so here are my **ramblin notes about Yellowknife 1958**.

Lets see.. just 18, and heading north was my calling with the Hudson's Bay Company, so with 20 bucks, a suitcase and a Greyhound to Edmonton. The Corona Hotel on Jasper Ave and meeting with a guy Bernie, he asked what posting I would like to choose.. Mcleod's Landing, Uranium City or Yellowknife?





On a CP flight to Yellowknife cold, -38F and nervous, I landed and saw a long smoke trail. Off to the Bay to meet **Scotty Gall**, a tiny Scot, who had been on the RCMP ship that went through the NW passage in the 40s. Scotty sent me to the basement to price goods, and I was now wondering what the hell I've done. A year later I was assigned to the old town Bay to send out bush orders, and work with **Narce Bellrose**. In between I played hockey for the YK Indians against Con Mine, and Giant Mine clubs, A (lol) Miner league group, tough and mean, Louis Prince, Frank Horvat to name a few of the top notch players. I also curled with **Don Slager's** team and we won the briar that year. The last game on natural ice at Con club, fog came in and on the last few ends a waving broom was what we aimed at. Well Narce tried to teach me fur grading but to no avail.

The Busy Bee café had good food, and the YK inn for the daily specials. The only other spots were Betty's café, she'd drop the fried chicken, pick it up, wipe it off and you had better eat it, she was big woman. A stop off at Chings Pool Room, on the table, a lonely light bulb and the town toughs would dominate the table.. I was underage so Ruby at the bar would let me in with the warning, "Don't start a fight", and if I scored a goal I would get a free beer.. **Tom Doornbos**, was the town water bearer between the village, and other spots. Nice old guy. Looked poor and wore an old overcoat, big boots, and fur cap. I talked to him a lot, about the old days, he was interesting and filled in a lot of facts about who did what to whom and when. Turned out that when the town in later years became the capitol, He owned most of it. Land that is. During this time Gold Range hotel opened and was a decent hotel, good food and I believe, the first cocktail menu. Best Chinese food, egg rolls were huge..

I was asked by **John Radcliffe**, if I would consider being on the air at CFYK a volunteer station. Never having been on the air before I thought, well it beats drinking at the staff house,(housed 38 guys). At the first show, John said, here's the microphone, here's the switch for the turntable, here's some records, have fun, and left...so at 7 o'clock I opened the mike and said "Hi I'm Ivan and here's Harry James and Serenade in Blue, the old 78 scratches and all. And that was the start of my career. Not happy with one night a week, I wrote record companies for complimentary records and we received a lot of 45s. This led to the Nighthawk Show, at that time **Speed Taylor** joined me and we took requests all night long, early Rock and Roll, the new Elvis, Pat Boone, Little Richards, Ricky Nelson... The kids would call and in a way made me understand the power of radio. We did this for quite a while in the basement of the old government building next to the liquor store. The hosts of shows varied from Opera with **Don Gillam**, hymns and old 78s with **Chuck Crate**. And of course the TEENS AFTER SCHOOL. Just about this time CBC was about to take over. I didn't take it too serious and packed up my suitcase to head to Edmonton. **Sandy Stewart**, first manager of CFYK/ CBC, caught me at the airport and asked where I was going. I told him and he replied "You've got the job here", Wow I was flabbergasted, moved into an apartment above the News of the North, Ted Horton's paper. Small and 75 bucks a month, bed, a dresser, shared bathrooms, but Wednesday night the presses rolled, so no sleep.

First day on the air, new records, new console board, Peter Radcliffe chief tech had it already for my first show. The town was expecting a polished CBC approach, but it was just me and music, with chatter and weather. My first guest interview was **Pete Baker** from Fort Rae.. a grizzled old timer, later a territorial rep. The show went on for 15 minutes, and I was told Pete gets excited and swears a lot, so I was, to say the least, apprehensive. He told a great story about the barge that took dynamite to Great Bear Lake. Pete at this point was describing Vic Ingram sleeping below when fire broke out, Pete at this point said "I told Vic to get the hell of the god damn boat, this son of bitch is going to blow". I was white as a sheet, thanked him very much and finished the show with theme. The 'Red' phone rang, it was Sandy, he loved the show, but I thought I was fired. He added "so what the hell happened after the fire", I had to get Pete back the next week. I went to YK Hotel for a brew! Hans Viro a cab driver came over with a beer and told me there were bets all over town whether Pete could get through the show. Well Hans picked up a cool 'grand' for that next 13 mins... It was about this time that I realized interviews and radio were exciting events. I next was manager in Churchill, CBW Winnipeg (35 years at CBC). I'm still on the air at CJNU Winnipeg.

**Ivan Lemesurier** (AKA Lee Major) <http://www.cjnu.ca/major.shtml>

## RCMP Peeking in on CFYK.... Lauren McKeil

February 1962. Cst. **W.S. "Bill" Shopa** and I were working the 5 PM to 1 AM shift ( I was also a Constable) and the day of the week I think was a Sunday.....since our patrol duties were not very busy as no one was around. It was a snow blowing and falling night....not heavy but swirling around the buildings downtown including the new building that **Gordon "Smokey" Hornby** built and the one in which Peter Radcliffe and others were trying to get the station on the air. Bill was a great guy to work with so I remember the evening very well.

We saw some activity in the CFYK building and went to check it out. We found that Smokey Hornby was there himself with a couple of gallon jugs of Red "Catawba" Kelowna Wine from BC which he was dying to crack open once the station got on the air. Something tells me that Hazel Marceau, the station receptionist was there during the evening also. Bearing in mind that Hazel and Al then lived in the last house on the right side....being the same street as the Station.

Bill and I checked a few times during our shift and they still did not make it on the airwaves. Around 1 AM when our shift was over we went back to the station and it was around that time that Peter managed to get out on the airwaves.....so Smokey cracked his Gallon Jug and all hands had a coffee mug full of the red stuff. Not really sure how much anyone drank but I think I got home around 3 AM. One of the early CFYK announcers was Cst. **Max Keeping** who was a member of RCMP Yellowknife Detachment when the station was in the basement of the Northern Affairs Bldg just up the street from the RCMP Detachment. I recall that Max was an excellent announcer and was very popular with Yellowknife folks since he was also very involved in coaching Basketball at Sir John Franklin High School, and if I remember correctly he was a baseball player in summer, and a Hockey Goal Tender in Winter (with the YK Indians Team if I recall correctly).

That was the last time I saw Gordon Hornby, however, I recall dropping **ceau** from time to time after the station opened in that new building.



**John Milton handing over the keys of CFYK to CBC Northern Service Director Andrew Cowan. December 7, 1958**



**Constructing the Hornby Building which CBC moved into in 1962.... Now a Subway restaurant**

## The One-Channel Universe

Although some people won't believe it, there was a time when there was no TV. That was when chairs in the "Parlour" faced the sofa so people could talk to or see each other. But then "it" appeared, the box and V-shaped appendage that worked only if it sat in one particular corner, forcing all the furniture into a circle around it.

It produced one channel of black and white pictures that struggled to peer out from a curtain of fog and 'snow' that was always threatening to bury it like a sandstorm in the Sahara advancing on a Timbuktu sidewalk artist's creation. Yes, we heard rumours of places with 2 channels and the American tourists boasted wildly about "color" TV. But that kind of thing was beyond our imagination.

That lone channel showed an amalgam of local programs underpinned by the CBC. As kids we rushed home after school at 4 to see the station sign on the air for the day and watch Howdy Doody (a puppet, not what it means today), followed by a local fellow reading the news. The idea that we could see the "National News" the same as Toronto was far from our wildest dreams. Then came programs all looking like they had been badly recorded from someone's set and delayed a week, which of course they had been. Our lives were ordered by the schedule, printed in the paper every night for the adults who hadn't bothered to memorize it like the kids had. Leave it to Beaver on Tuesday coincided with Cub night so we never saw it, but we were home Thursdays for Folio which we never watched. We were at a loss to know what to do with those hours of guys in tights and women with parasols on their waists jumping around blackened stages to music you never heard on our country hayride radio station.

Sundays were for Water Cronkite and "You are There" with that famous ending: "What sort of day was it? A day like all days, filled with those events that alter and illuminate our times ... and you were there!" And then the Ed Sullivan Show, watching as we sat, freshly bathed, in PJs and bathrobes, ready for bed and school tomorrow.

That's all changed now. There are satellites, cable and the Internet all hooked up to 52-inch high definition, 16:9, LCD/plasma, stereo, surround sound thin screens bringing us hundreds of channels. However, that's possible only if you buy the full "package" that forces you to take the divorce court, lost child and vegan cooking channels in order to get PBS and Knowledge Network that you really want to watch. And you get those only if you pay for the satellite, cable or internet service and buy the dishes, boxes, and cables that didn't come with your \$3,000 TV.

But that doesn't happen in our household because, you see, we get our TV programs the old way. Yep, off air! Remember that? You may think we're deprived and impoverished but it's free after you wire that V-shaped Martian antenna to the 19" TV that's backed into a corner to give the tube space to sit. And in Yellowknife we've had 2 or 3 channels to watch - CBC, Radio-Canada and sometimes APTN. Not 999 channels but not bad for free and the old rabbit auditory organs.

That is until someone said the stations had to digitize (something to do with a finger, I think). There are just too many people watching the programs on their phones' 3-inch screens instead of the 52-inch ones at home. So, as of this summer, our faithful old TV was getting only static and we had to buy \$75 of technology to part the "snow".

So, we now get only CBC. The national news is still from Toronto but Lassie is now called Clifford, there isn't even a sniff of ballet or classical music even in the darkest hours of the night. And we don't memorize the schedule or read it in the paper because even the CBC doesn't know what's coming next if there are no hockey games.

That's it. After 55-plus years of improvements, changes, conversions, upgrades and technological advances, we're back to getting only one channel again.

Such is progress. But I wonder. If nostalgia is when you stay in the past while things go forward in time, what do you call it when you change and things go back to the way they were?

... by Brian Latham

## Con Gardens

My earliest memories of the Con Gardens are of the gardens at Con Hydro, now known as Bluefish Hydro, the power plant for Con Mine at Bluefish Lake north of Yellowknife. Four operators lived there with their families, and by the time I was born in the mid 1950's, the gardens were already well established. The area was cleared during construction, in 1938-1941, and many summers of back-breaking shovel work were behind us. Each family had a garden and 'cold frames', small enclosures to help give plants an early start. There was also a greenhouse.

The gardens were a necessity rather than a hobby. Fresh produce was very expensive, if available at all, and pretty much out of reach in the relative isolation of Con Hydro. Supplies arrived once a month by airplane, boat or Bombardier.

The owners of Con Mine, Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company, (CM&S, later known as Cominco) encouraged gardening and provided a large root cellar to store crops like potatoes and carrots, as well as space for bulk orders of eggs and canned goods. CM&S also provided bags of their Elephant brand fertilizer to all Con families with gardens. Con Hydro had running water, so hoses and sprinklers ran from an outdoor faucet.

By the time I was a toddler, rototillers had replaced heavy shovel work, allowing us to enlarge and improve our gardens. The original soil was mostly clay, with a thin layer of black dirt; mostly decayed leaves and similar organic matter, upgraded with added muskeg, compost and soil scavenged from far and wide. No bags of soil from Wal-Mart or Canadian Tire! Jack Holtorf, one of the most experienced and ambitious gardeners, even used suckers, from the Yellowknife River, as fertilizer. The composting fish worked well, aside from its attraction to a number of black bears!

In general, the gardens were quite productive and all adults and children were involved with gardening. We had potatoes, carrots and peas year round. Throughout the latter part of summer, we had fresh lettuce and green onions. We also enjoyed turnips and dill. We grew enough cabbage and cucumbers to make our own sauerkraut and pickles. Jack Holtorf grew enough rhubarb to share. We also had flowers in raised beds, planters and window boxes.

Our family moved to Yellowknife in 1963, and over the years, as families moved away and became smaller, the gardens diminished as well. In the 1980's, Ann Littler had a garden and greenhouse at Con Hydro, which was probably the last of the big gardens there.

The Con Gardens at the Yellowknife mine site were established around 1939. I saw home movies from the late 1930's or early 1940's of Fred Mengersen ploughing the Garden Draw with a D-6 Cat. He then went out to Con Hydro, and had a garden there. Con Mine ceased operations in 1942 for the duration of World War II, but Fred Mengersen continued to work there as a watchman until the mine re-opened. His plough and harrow lay around Con for years. The mine provided water for the gardens from its main line coming up from the lake. Fertilizer was available at the warehouse every spring for as long as Cominco owned the mine.

The Garden Draw was ploughed from where the existing road runs to approximately halfway down to Yellowknife Bay. For a relatively short time, Con Mine plowed the entire area until it was divided into individual plots, which the personnel office assigned along with the houses. By the time my family arrived, the bottom end of the gardens were growing back in, so after obtaining permission to expand our plot, my dad cleared ground and cut brush to make our garden bigger.

Besides the Garden Draw, there were gardens in other locations on Con property. In its heyday, there were about 80 families at Con Camp. They grew a variety of vegetables in their gardens, using different techniques, representative of their many backgrounds. The gardens were very abundant. Some people put tremendous effort into their gardens, which often became the target of raids as harvest time approached! People socialized as they worked in their gardens, especially in the evenings and on week ends. There were always lots of mosquitoes.

One of the things that made the gardens so practical was the space provided to store produce on the 900 foot level of the mine, where the temperature was perfect for storing vegetables over winter. We kept carrots in boxes of clean, dry sand down there, and wooden boxes of potatoes. The cage tenders took the produce down and brought it up when it was needed. The cookhouse stored vegetables there as well.

Over time, our dependence on garden produce lessened as vegetables became more easily available in town. The mine expanded and changes to the ventilation system meant the storage area for produce was lost. Without a storage area, or root cellars, it was harder to keep large amounts of produce over the winter.

My mother turned more and more to planting flowers. She always planted flowers at Con Hydro, but in town, she shared a greenhouse with her sister, Hildegard Gebauer, where they started as many as 5,000 bedding plants a season. Beginning in March, when strong sunlight returned to the north, every sunny spot in our house had containers of bedding plants. They transplanted them into the greenhouse, and then outdoors once the ice left Yellowknife Bay.

As Yellowknife grew, there were more opportunities for people to own their own homes instead of those provided by the mine. It also meant that Con could reduce its housing for workers, and as people moved away or off Con property, the houses in Con Camp were burned for fire practice or torn down. Fewer people gardened and gradually, nature reclaimed the Garden Draw. When the last people left Rycon Camp, the water was cut off, and only a few gardens remained.

The willows have since grown over most of the Garden Draw, but you can still find outlines of some of the plots, and even the odd stubborn rhubarb. At Con Hydro, the new power-house occupies the root cellar's spot. The penstock cuts through our former vegetable plot, dividing the land where our house used to be. Jack Holtorf's once flourishing garden by the river is now home to the thickest willows imaginable, but it is still frequented by the occasional black bear.



**Robert Tumchewics**



**View of Con Gardens  
September 2012–  
Old waterline Carr**

# Giant

**Hardrock** - that was what was mined at Giant and that was what the campsite was built on. Most houses sat right on the rock. Spartan vegetation clung to what little dirt there was in the hollows and crannies in the bedrock. There was no large valley or natural area where communal gardens could be developed but people were still determined to grow stuff. Fresh produce was available from a number of commercial gardens: Oliver's Gardens on Back Bay in Peace River Flats, Callaghan's Gardens on the flats below the Explorer Hotel hill, next to Niven Lake and Body Farm in the small valley on the lakeshore about halfway between Giant camp and Peace River Flats – the area where the Bailey family lived. As well, the mine commissary boasted a respectable variety of groceries for residents of the small community, however most people living at Giant also wanted to grow something during the long summer daylight – whether it was vegetables or flowers. Soil, or dirt as it was more commonly called, and a place to put it was a bit of an issue. A popular area to hunt for it was out the Crestaurum Road, named after the small gold mining operation to which it led. The road was renamed the Vee Lake Road in the early 70's. Scratching around the base of willow bushes produced a rich black loam to which sand and other amendments were added.

Most soil in the Yellowknife area is naturally acidic and requires some neutralizing to make it compatible with many plants. Lime is commonly used to adjust soil pH. At the mine, large quantities of lime were used in the milling process for pH adjustment so a ready supply was available to gardeners in camp!

Suitable land was scarce so people built raised beds on any flat spot beside their homes. When the natural terrain was too rugged for conventional gardens, small hollows in the rock were simply filled or rock gardens were built to hold the dirt.

Falconbridge was the company that owned Giant for most of its life. The company also acquired the neighbouring Akaitcho Mine from Supercrest Mines in the 60's. There was substantial mine infrastructure at Akaitcho so Giant hired Jim Poloski as a fulltime watchman. He lived with his wife, May, and they were avid gardeners. Their greenhouses and raised beds produced a plethora of fresh produce each summer. Jim also started flowers from seed as there was no local outlet for bedding plants. He often shared them with camp residents. Jim was also known for the beautiful flower beds that greeted staff and visitors at Giant's Main Office (*see front cover photo*).

As many Yellowknifers know, gardening beside a large lake like Great Slave can be a challenge. With the ice remaining on the lake into June and prevailing winds from the south, cold can be a concern for young plants. Gardeners at Giant had to contend with cold spring winds off Back Bay. Gardens, especially flower beds, were surrounded with clear plastic and large tin cans with both ends removed were set over smaller plants to protect them from the icy winds until temperatures were more favourable.

Gardeners at Giant produced a variety of vegetables such as potatoes, carrots, peas, cauliflower, cabbages. One year the crops were particularly successful – especially the potatoes – and storage became an issue. People simply didn't have room for hundred pound burlap sacks of spuds. Our garden produced 400+ pounds that year.



Someone came up with the idea that the hundred foot level underground at A-shaft would make an ideal potato storage site. So off they went, stuffing the cage (underground elevator) full of potatoes and hoisting them down to the first level where they were stacked along the wall of the drift in the cold and dark. Apparently cold, humid conditions are not favourable for potato storage as they soon turned soft and sweet and the whole works was rendered inedible. That was a hard lesson never forgotten!

Gardening in Yellowknife has been part of the community since the earliest days and the Giant camp was no different. A little bit of dirt, a few rocks, a lot of TLC and, **Voila** - greenery! Though the gardens at Giant were relatively small, they were nonetheless spectacular, often attracting sightseers from town (and Con!) when in-bloom or when ready to pull in the fall... **Ken Hall**



Photos from the Hall family

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Long nights of June speed up growth. In the area where the Bailey home is located. From: the 1960 DMS Cookbook





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**YK Seniors' Society Board Meetings  
On the second Tuesday of each month**

**Welcome to visiting Seniors.  
Come and join us for  
Lunch With A Bunch on Fridays at 12 noon,  
at the Baker Community Centre, 5710 50th Ave.**