Dan Highway:Kuehl's pencil Canada Warbler Henry Linklater Gutskin Rainsuit

# northroots

June/July 2015

## Thompson's
Aboriginal Accord

## Charlie Morgan
Part 1

## #10 HWY
Part 1

## one-man bank
of Henry Stevens

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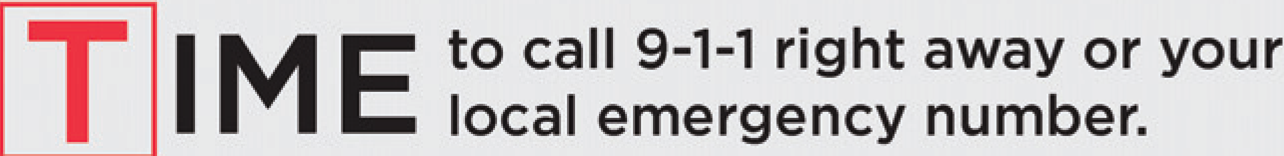


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# WILD RASPBERRY TIRAMISU

- 1 pkg. (250g) Philadelphia Brick Cream cheese, softened
- 3 cups milk
- 2 pkg. (4-serving size each) Jell-O Vanilla Instant Pudding
- 2½ cups thawed Cool Whip Whipped Topping, divided
- 48 Nilla Vanilla Wafers
- ½ cup brewed strong Maxwell House Coffee, cooled, divided
- 2 oz Baker's Semi-Sweet Chocolate, grated
- 1 cup fresh raspberries

---

– Beat cream cheese with mixer until creamy. Beat in milk and pudding mixes. Stir in 2 cups whipped topping

– Line 2 ½ liter bowl with 24 wafers: drizzle with ¼ cup coffee. Top with half each of pudding mixture and half of the chocolate. Repeat all layers.

– Top with remaining Cool Whip and raspberries

– Refrigerate 2 hours.

– Substitute sliced strawberries or blueberries for the raspberries.

– Substitute chocolate milk for the coffee, great for the kids.


**northroots**

Celebrating
life in the north

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- Photo by:
Dawn Sands

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## From the editor

In looking to find a common theme for all the stories in this issue, I realize that once again it's all about the ability of northern residents to make the most of their circumstances.

Charlie Morgan came from Wales, ending up in The Pas organizing the first great dog race there. He was a gambler who played hard and worked harder. Part one of his story sets the scene for his remarkable exploits.

Henry Linklater was busy on his trapline when Inco arrived in northern Manitoba in the 1940s, searching for nickel. Linklater made a career with Inco as an Axeman and valued Explorationist.

When roads were constructed to the remote communities surrounding the mining City of Thompson, the people flooded in, creating a new hub for services that had little to do with mining. Now they are creating a better place for everyone, through The Thompson Aboriginal Accord.

Highway #10 stretches from the U.S. border to Flin Flon. The last hundred miles took forever but things really changed when the long awaited ribbon of gravel reached Flin Flon in 1951.

Dan Highway of Brochet has traveled a different road, he is Tomson Highway's brother and he is the subject of Kuehl's pencil.

Tim Worth has researched an obscure rainsuit made from a seal's intestine, that is as good as Gore-tex and as light as a feather.

Speaking of feathers, your chances of seeing a Canadian Warbler this summer will go up, if you read our birdman's description of it's unique call.

Henry Stevens' one-man bank in Bowsman was the last private bank in Canada. It was all about trust and ingenuity.

Finally when you get a couple of cups of wild raspberries this July, consider making a wonderfully cool batch of Tiramisu. Your friends and family will love it.

– Frank Fieber

# The Thompson Aboriginal Accord

## Building on trust

by Frank Fieber

The Thompson Aboriginal Accord is a ground breaking document that recognizes the role of Aboriginal people in Thompson's history and affirms the commitment to strengthening relationships with Aboriginal governments and peoples. There are only three Aboriginal Accords in Canada, with the first one originating in Fort McMurray, AB and the other in Edmonton, AB. Its creation played a vital role in Thompson's transition from a single industry mining community to a vibrant and progressive regional service centre for northern Manitoba.

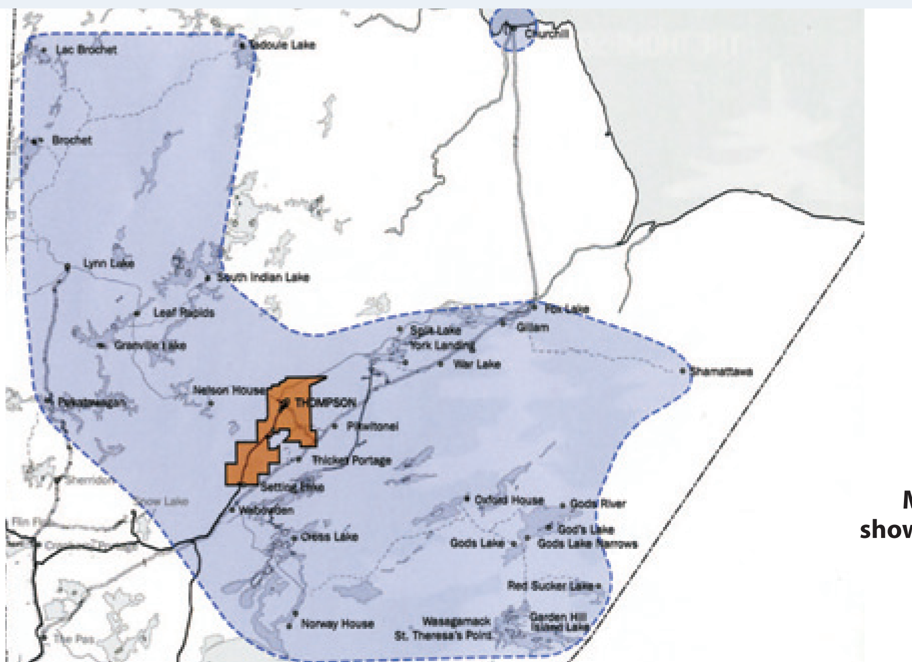
The city of Thompson lies within the Traditional Territory of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and has been home to Aboriginal people for over 10,000 years prior to the establishment of Thompson and the nickel mine in 1956. While Thompson flourished as a model mining community and attracted people from all over the world to work in the mines, many of local Aboriginal residents were left out of the growth and prosperity. This pattern of exclusion resembled what was taking place all across Canada.

Former Mayor Tim Johnston, a lifelong Thompsonite and son of Thompson's first Doctor and Town Councillor, has seen countless examples of development that failed to benefit Aboriginal people and communities of the north.

"As a kid I saw the construction of the Longspruce Generating Station, as a university student I saw Limestone [Generating Station] and as Mayor in 2010, I saw Wuskwatum," says Johnston. "We have to change the paradigm of how others see the north. The elephant in the room is the relationship between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people… we have to begin with respect–taking away all prejudice, with a commitment to principle," said Johnston, speaking at a conference in 2013, video-linked between the University College of the North in The Pas and the University of Winnipeg. The conference was convened to discuss Models and best practices for sustainable northern development.

By 1985, the city of Thompson had grown from a single industry mining community to a regional service centre for northern Manitoba and had the highest percentage of Aboriginal residents of any city in Canada. Residential schools across the country were now closed and Aboriginal culture and ceremonies are no longer illegal. However, many still carry the pain and scars of the failed forced-assimilation policies of the Canadian government–manifested in high rates of mental health issues, addictions and substance abuse and, subsequently, homelessness. The community found itself face to face with deep rooted systemic issues, with very few tools and resources to address them properly. Many Aboriginals still faced barriers when attempting to access housing, employment, education or services needed to heal their intergenerational trauma. It became a frustrating and perpetual cycle and in order to break the cycle, a different approach was needed.

The Mayor and Council of the day understood that in order for Thompson to be a vibrant and thriving community for all its residents, they needed to be part of the solution through collaboration with Aborigi-




**Map of Northern Manitoba shows the range of the Accord.**
COURTESY: CITY OF THOMPSON

nal governments and peoples in and around the area of Thompson. How they were going to accomplish that, still needed to be identified.

In 2008, Thompson was at the height of an economic boom. In an effort to be proactive in managing the effects the boom was sure to have on Thompson, it was decided to send a delegation from Thompson to Fort McMurray, Alberta to see how that city was managing its own economic boom and all of the challenges that come with it.

"We were at City Hall and we noticed a document on the wall," says former Mayor Tim Johnston. "It was a type of accord and when we got home we began thinking a similar type of document might work in Thompson…. so I always say we stole it from Fort McMurray." When the delegation returned, The City of Thompson partnered with the Thompson Urban Aboriginal Steering Committee to develop its own homegrown accord.

In 2009, on National Aboriginal Day, Mayor Johnston was joined by the other signatories to sign the Thompson Aboriginal Accord (see pages 8 and 9) into existence. The other Signatories include: Grand Chief Arnold Ouskan, Keewatin Tribal Council, Grand Chief Sydney Garrioch, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, Julyda Lagimodiere, Vice President, Manitoba Metis Federation, Chief Jim Moore, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Reg Meade, President, Northern Association of Community Councils and Charlene Lafreniere, Chair, Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy. All the people who were in attendance at the celebrations that day also signed a corresponding guest book to bear witness to such a monumental event.

"The Accord recognizes the fact that Thompson is located on traditional territory of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) and there is a mutual need for all residents of the area to be involved in all aspects of the community, with shared values of honesty, respect, mutual sharing and contribution," commented Johnston. Since its inception, The Thompson Accord has spawned an avalanche of change in northern Manitoba. According to former Mayor Tim Johnston the Accord has been a marker for aligning diverse projects… "people and organizations bring what they are doing themselves already, to the table and then they align their project to the Accord–so it works. For so long we've had inaccurate assumptions in terms of how others would act. Now we find out we have more in common than we have in opposition," says Johnston. "Before the Accord was approved I used to say that Thompson was sitting on lands within traditional NCN territory–and I would get challenged on that! I'd say, 'I deal in fact and that's a fact.'"

Since its launch, the Accord has experienced substantial growth and became a key document for the City of Thompson. The Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group (TEDWG) process is a prime example of how the accord has positively influenced Thompson's growth. One year after the Accord was signed, Vale (formerly Inco) the largest employer in the region,

**Continued on page 10**

# Thompson Aboriginal Accord

**Whereas** *the City of Thompson is dedicated to strengthening its relationship with Aboriginal governments and peoples in and around the Thompson region;*

**And whereas** *the Thompson Aboriginal Accord has been drafted to provide the overall framework upon which the City will build agreements and action plans in partnership with Aboriginal government and peoples;*

**Now therefore be it resolved that:**

*The City of Thompson lies within the Traditional Territory of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation. People from around the world have come to call Thompson home and our community prides itself in its* ***cultural diversity****. The First Nations, Métis Nation, and Inuit peoples have always been part of this diversity and play an integral role that deserves recognition.*

*The City of Thompson acknowledges the* ***significant contributions*** *Aboriginal people and organizations have made to this community.*

*Together, we acknowledge and honour our ancestors, traditions and the spirit of this place that first drew Aboriginal people together. We acknowledge and honour the long history of service to the community that continues to be embodied by the City of Thompson and its employees. We acknowledge that we reside on Treaty 5 territory and together call upon our traditions and spirit to maintain a strong special and lasting relationship between the City of Thompson and Aboriginal peoples.*

*We believe that all people in the north are served well by* ***positive relationships*** *between the City of Thompson and Aboriginal communities. We have a mutual need for Aboriginal people to be involved in all aspects of the community and to ensure the ongoing development of culturally sensitive municipal services that meet Aboriginal community needs.*

*We believe that good relationships must be based upon a foundation of the shared values of* ***honesty, respect, mutual sharing*** *and* ***contribution****. These values enhance our community as well as our collective social, spiritual, economic and physical well-being. They also serve our shared interests within the guidelines of accountability, transparency, inclusiveness, responsiveness and shared stewardship.*

*This principle-based relationship agreement between Aboriginal communities and peoples in the Thompson region and the City of Thompson establishes **commitments** and **objectives** to be put in place in order to make Thompson a better place for all residents and visitors. Milestones shall be set and our progress reviewed.*

*This accord shall provide the framework for the development of agreements regarding, but not limited to, the following:*

- *The recognition and respect of the various levels of Aboriginal governments and aboriginal cultures and peoples;*
- *Leadership in Canada, demonstrating how municipal and Aboriginal governments can work together;*
- *The development of protocols to establish open and improved lines of communication;*
- *Supporting Aboriginal culture and the development of recreational activities that are culturally appropriate;*
- *Encouraging Aboriginal investment in Thompson in areas including, but not limited to, people, culture, business and community and social participation;*
- *Increasing Aboriginal participation in our local economy;*
- *Improving our community by making it more economically vibrant and sustainable;*
- *Celebrating our shared northern lifestyle and respecting and understanding our differences relating to it;*
- *Investing in our youth, the future of our community, by ensuring cultural, recreational, educational, and career opportunities are readily available; and*
- *Addressing root causes relating to public safety, so that all residents and visitors feel safe in the community and region.*

*Original signed by*
**Mayor Tim Johnston, City of Thompson**
June 21, 2009, National Aboriginal Day.

*Witnessed by:*
**Grand Chief Arnold Ouskan,** Keewatin Tribal Council
**Grand Chief Sydney Garrioch,** Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak
**Julyda Lagimodiere,** Vice President, Manitoba Métis Federation
**Chief Jim Moore,** Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
**Reg Meade,** President, Northern Association of Community Councils
**Charlene Lafreniere,** Chair, Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy

**Three sisters: Emelia, Nellie, and Lottie Tate – smoking fish and mending nets near Nelson House, circa 1960.**
PHOTO BY LARRY STEFANIUK

announced they would be unable to meet new Clean Environment standards with their refinery and therefore they would be transitioning operations in Thompson to mining and milling only, by 2015 (this has since been postponed to 2019). This announcement resulted in TEDWG. With $2M from Vale, this working group, comprised of the region's stakeholders, underwent 20,000 hours of community consultations and applied the principles of the Accord in the development of five action plans. As a result, the action plans produced from that process are inclusive and ensure that the needs of our regional residents are a priority in the implementation of the plans.

Since 2009 thirteen organizations, business and institution have signed on as a partner. They include: Community Futures North Central Development, Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre, Manitoba Hydro, Northern Regional Health Authority, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, School District of Mystery Lake, Thompson Airport Authority, Thompson Chamber of Commerce, Thompson Housing Agency, Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, Thompson Unlimited, Vale and University College of the North.

The City of Thompson promotes the Accord at every level from government to grassroots. Meetings are held quarterly and conducted through the "lens of inclusiveness." Each year signatories and partners to the accord report on their progress and the results are impressive.

The Accord has been instrumental in the development of Cultural Proficiency, an inside-out approach to understanding how people use their own experiences to make decisions and judgements about what and who they encounter in their daily lives. This innovative work is led by the School District of Mystery Lake and has had participation from all of the Accord partners with promising results.

The spirit of co-operation among the partners resulted in a tri-partnership between Manitoba Hydro, the City of Thompson and Men are Part of the Solution (M.A.P.S.) and created jobs for residents of Phoenix House, which offers sober housing for men, who are mostly Aboriginal and are recovering from addictions.

The Accord has inspired some of Thompson's largest employers like the Northern Regional Health Authority, Vale and Manitoba Hydro to develop programs aimed at achieving a representational workforce, while other organizations such as the Thompson Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures North Central Development and Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation focus on supporting business and entrepreneurship development.

Thompson has also seen improvement to its affordable housing stock thanks to Keewatin Tribal Council and University College of the North finalizing the construction of its new Thompson campus, complete with family housing, child care and programs aimed at meeting the needs of northern employers and residents.

Another noteworthy project, Project Northern Doorway, is a result of a partnership between the Thompson Housing Agency and the Canadian Mental Health Association/Homeless Shelter. Together they acquired a 16-room supportive housing facility that operates similar to the Housing First approach to homelessness.

The current Mayor of Thompson, Dennis Fenske was a Councillor in the formative years of the Accord.

"Thompson is a proud northern city and our relationships with our

**A crowd at McLean Park during the Manitoba Indigenous Summer Games, 2008.**
PHOTO BY FRANK FIEBER

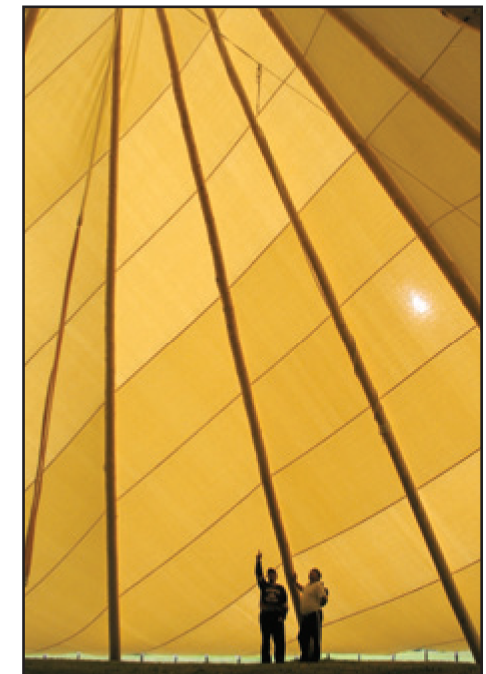
Aboriginal residents and neighbours are a source of great pride," Fenske commented. "We are in a period of growth and transition and we want all residents of our region to be a part of that. The Thompson Aboriginal Accord acknowledges the significant contribution of Aboriginal people, and lays the foundation for us to continue to build relationships based on shared values of honesty, respect, mutual sharing and contribution for the benefit of all."

For the city, the Aboriginal Accord forms part of the operations and planning. The two mayors, former Johnston and current Fenske grew up in Thompson and they both promote the Accord with equal vigour… and both are quick to point out they haven't done it alone, acknowledging the hundreds of volunteers who have contributed thousands of hours, outside consultants and planners that have packaged the plan and signatories that have each bought their organizations to the table.

Many of the signatories and partners acknowledge Charlene Lafreniere as the driving force behind the accord. As an Aboriginal woman, past Chair of the Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy and a two-term Councillor, her leadership was responsible for the development and implementation of the Accord.

"The Thompson Aboriginal Accord was never intended to be just a plaque on the wall, or a one-time event. It is a living document and an ongoing responsibility adopted by signatories and partners," stated Lafreniere. "The accord provides an opportunity to share our successes with others, collaborate, consult and share resources. We are no longer working in isolation from each other, but in partnership with each other. As a result, we have a common purpose that we can focus on and achieve remarkable results."

The Accord partners continue to meet quarterly, hosted by the City of Thompson. The annual report is presented to the community at the National Aboriginal Day Celebrations in Thompson. It continues to grow and mold itself to the needs of the partners while establishing itself as a best practice for building meaningful relationships. The original Accord can be found proudly on display in the main foyer at City Hall in Thompson. ■



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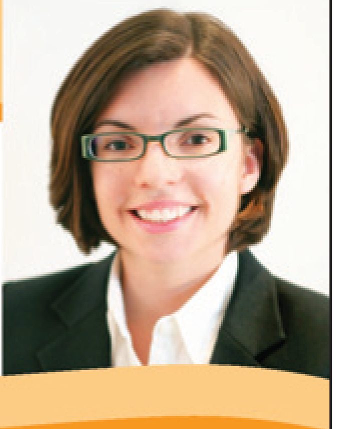

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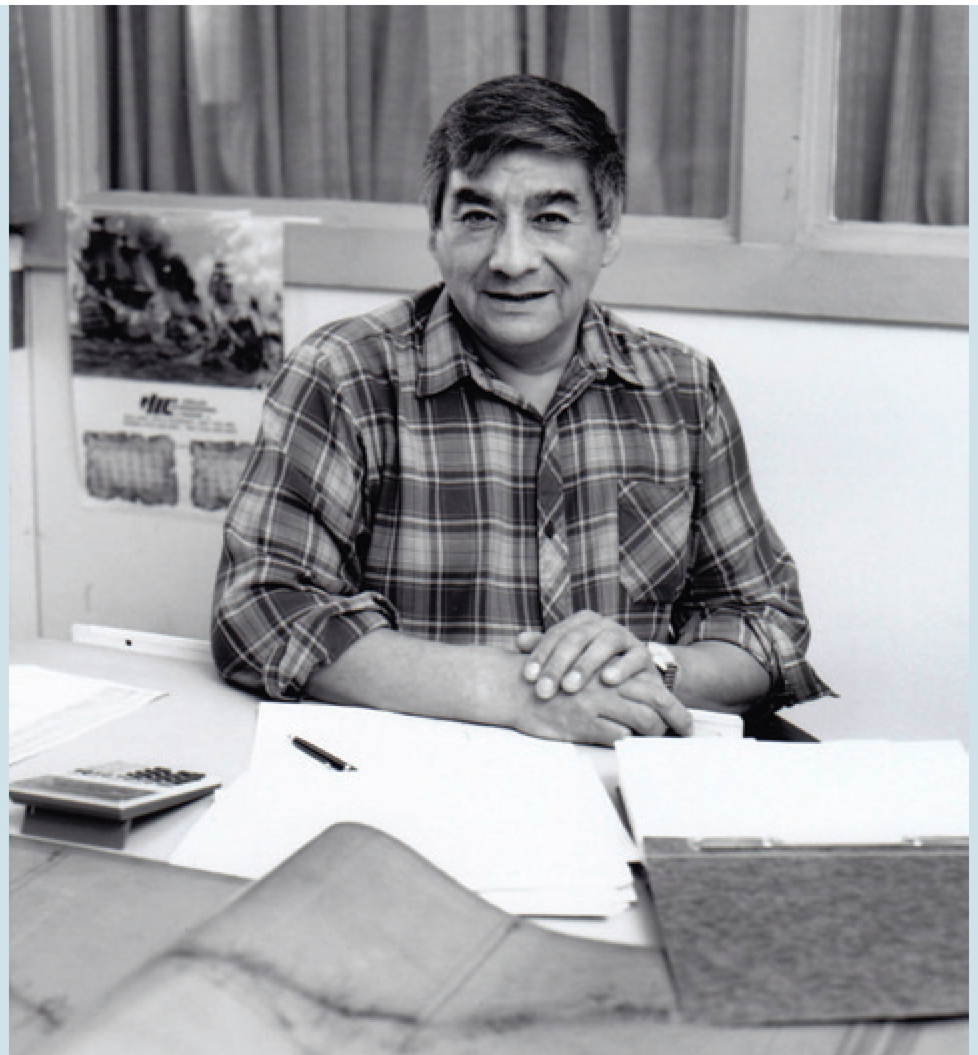

**Henry Linklater in his Inco office, 1980s.**
PHOTO COURTESY: HENRY LINKLATER

# Henry Linklater

by Penny Byer

Covert operations carried out in swamp and deadfall in the dark of night sound like a setting for a war novel on another continent. But for Henry Linklater, it was just part of the job exploring for a mining company in northern Manitoba more than a half-century ago.

Henry grew up on Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and was just 18 when he applied for work with Canico, an exploration arm of the International Nickel Company of Canada (later known as Inco and now as Vale). He had no work experience in industry, but he had considerable experience working in the bush trapping, and he always had an interest in 'hunting rocks'. He started work March 1, 1955 as an Axeman, before there was even a hint there would one day be a city called Thompson.

"All our work was in the field back then," he said. "They would fly us to places, usually high ground in summer and frozen swamp in winter, and we would set up camp. We would cut lines through the bush, stake claims and make maps by hand. We had no GPS or cell phones those days. We used compasses and two-way radios, and quite often those didn't work."

Henry explored just about ev-

**Henry Linklater talking with Al Proulx at Birchtree Mine. Henry remembers Al starting with the company as a geologist. Al is now Superintendent of Birchtree Mine. Henry was part of a 'covert operation' to stake claims where Birchtree Mine sits today.**
PHOTO BY CHRIS SUNDEVIC

ery part of the Nickel Belt, which extends approximately 80 miles from Moak Lake to south of Setting Lake. The work was not without incident. "We were north of Moak Lake, on Rocky Lake," he recalled. "We weren't supposed to spend the night, but the weather closed in and the plane couldn't pick us up. So the three of us had to stay overnight without proper shelter, one can of soup, some lunch meat and bread. We built a big fire and kept it burning all night, which was a feat with the wind blowing."

On another occasion, they were flying from one lake to another when the motor on the plane stopped in midair. The pilot had forgotten to switch tanks. Luckily, he turned the switch and the motor caught.

When they travelled by land, it was mostly by snowshoe in winter and occasionally by bombardier. In summer they used small canoes with a three horsepower 'kicker' motor. They carried axes and swede saws, which enabled them to build just about anything. "We had tents, but had to make our frames at each camp," he explained. They experienced just about everything nature could throw at them – frost bite, wolverines, biting insects and bears.

Employees were sworn to secrecy. "We were told that when we wrote letters home, we weren't to tell our families where we were. When we used our radios, we would switch to a different channel to ensure employees from other companies couldn't hear us, he said. "There were a lot of mining companies and private prospectors exploring and staking claims in northern Manitoba and they didn't want each other to find out if they were onto something good."

The competition between mining companies was intense. One evening in late October in the early 1960s Henry was camped in the Ospwagon Lake area where the quarry is today. The crew's supervisor came into camp, laid a map on the drafting table and pointed out an area. "He told us the claims in that area belonged to Canwest, but that the claims were coming open the next week. He then outlined a strategy for us to get those claims," said Henry. The strategy involved bringing together crews from other camps, putting two people on each claim line and staking the claims all through the night.

"We had nothing but compasses and flashlights," recalled Henry. "There were no cutlines, just deadfall and bush and swamp. Canwest's claims were done [expired] at midnight, and we were out working one minute after. We had to make sure the time and date were on each claim post, and we worked all through the night. Canwest had a camp in the area, but they didn't realize we were there. It was about seven in the morning when their camp cook heard us and started yelling 'Inco! Inco!'. They only had time to stake two claims. We got the rest."

That covert operation proved to

**Henry Linklater at Foootprint Lake near Nelson House, 2015.**
PHOTO BY CHRIS SUNDEVIC

**Henry with his grandson Ross Francis Jr at his grandson's school in Nelson House.**
PHOTO BY CHRIS SUNDEVIC

have major significance, as it is the site of Vale's Birchtree Mine today.

Henry had a hand in the discovery of every mine the company put into operation, including the major nickel discovery at Cook Lake February 5, 1956, which led to present day Thompson Mine. "There was a lot of snow that winter," he said. "Hugh Fraser spotted the hole and another fellow and myself broke trail to get to the spot. Just one anomaly was staked. It was just a test hole. But when Hugh and Sac Crandall saw the drill core, they immediately called their bosses in Copper Cliff [Ontario] and then took the core to Winnipeg."

Not all of Henry's career was in outdoor exploration. He moved into mine exploration in the early 1970s working as a geology technician, geology assistant and geology analyst. He spent more time working on geophysics and interpretation, interacting with miners and mine planners. He was well respected by his peers and highly regarded by his supervisors. He was described as being conscientious, solution-oriented and dependable.

In 1980, Senior Geologist John Taylor wrote that Henry "continues to be one of the most valuable people in the office both by virtue of his attitude and experience." And in 1985, R. S. MacLean wrote in his employee evaluation that Henry's "experience and rapport with all his co-workers shows up in the excellent results achieved."

Bear in mind that Henry excelled in his career while being a devoted father and husband. He married his wife Amelia in September 1958. They had seven children of their own and adopted two others. It was most important to him that his children got good educations, and today, all of his surviving children have solid careers in fields such as civil engineering and education.

Henry retired in 1992, but continued to work on a contract basis until 2006. He continues to take his geology hammer with him wherever he goes. He still attends the annual mining conference held in Winnipeg each November. And he remains active on the Manitoba Mining Board, along with fellow long-time prospector Ernie Guiboche. "Between Ernie and me, we have 80 years experience," he smiled. "We are still friends and go to the mining conference each year."

Today, Henry can take pride knowing that during his career, he helped build a nickel mining empire that not only provided employment to thousands of people, but also helped move society forward by providing a valuable mineral necessary for today's technology.

But more importantly, he can take pride in knowing he has left a legacy for his children and grandchildren to follow. His 10-year-old grandson Ross Francis Junior proudly says he has "the best grandpa in Nelson House. He is wise and likes to spend time with me. We talk about all kinds of things. He helps a lot of people and lots of people know him. He also reads a lot – now I know where my Mom gets that from!" ■

*Penny Byer has a background in broadcasting, employee and corporate communications. She currently freelances and teaches communications courses.*

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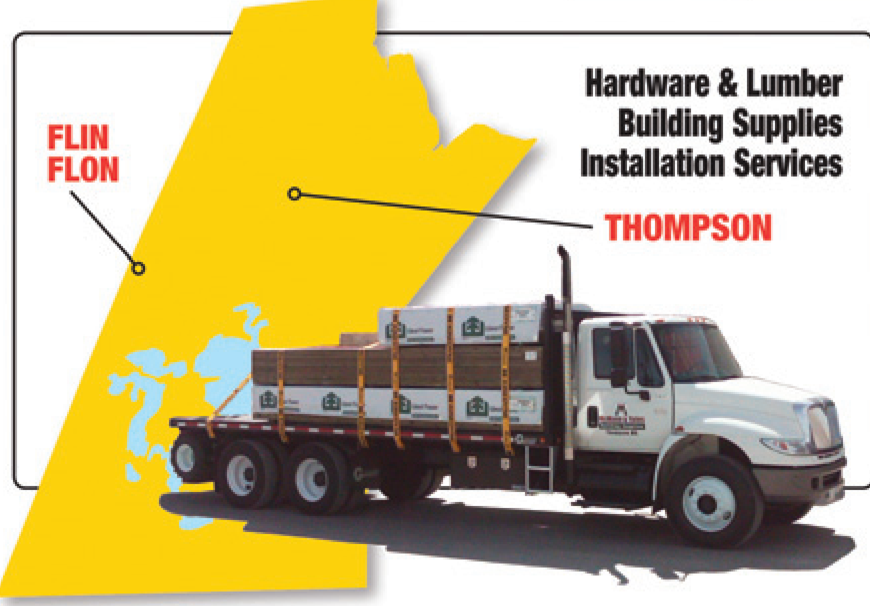


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**Henry and Marian Stevens, 1960s.**
PHOTO COURTESY: CLIFFORD COOK

**Henry Stevens.**
PHOTO COURTESY: CLIFFORD COOK

# Henry Stevens
# The last one-man bank

by Frank Fieber

The stately old brick building stands alone and vacant now, but it's bricks hold a story that speaks of a time when Bowsman, a town of 500 people on the northern edge of the Swan Valley was a prosperous farming and logging centre. Bowsman River, as the town was called until 1949, was inevitably eclipsed by the town of Swan River, more centrally located in the Swan Valley. Bowsman still has the rich farmlands surrounding the valley's largest inland grain terminal but the solid brick bank building now serves as the only reminder of its prestigious days when the Henry Stevens one-man bank was the last private bank in Canada.

Henry Stevens was born in Oak Lake, Manitoba in 1898, about the time when the Swan Valley was just opening up for settlement. T.A. Burrows was the MLA for Dauphin and he was on the first train into the Valley. Burrows was involved with several sawmills in the region before he built a large sawmill on the Woody River, in 1919, to take advantage of his timber berths to the north and west of Bowsman.

Meanwhile Henry Stevens had enlisted in the army with the Cameron Highlanders as a 17-year-old and when he returned from WWI in 1919, he entered the banking world with Merchants Bank. They sent him north in 1921, to relieve a teller–accountant at the Merchants Bank in Bowsman, for two weeks. Stevens fell in love with the valley and eventually with the daughter of the manager of the T.A. Burrows sawmill.

"After four years at the bank, I was making $44.66 a month so I moved

down to the Burrows people where the wages of $150 a month looked considerably better, and as a result I married the manager's daughter, Marian Hedderly," said Stevens in a 1975 interview with Ed Dobby, Swan Valley Historian. "I was the bookkeeper at Burrows and it was a booming operation. The sawmill would saw about 150,000 feet of lumber per shift and the planer put out about seven to eight railcars a week. A lot of this lumber went to build elevators in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and a lot of the finished stuff was shipped all over the United States."

The hundreds of men employed a the Burrows mill needed a place to cash their paychecks and do their banking and that's where the brick building in Bowsman found it's purpose. For a decade the mill and the bank prospered but by 1932 the depression took the price of lumber so low that the mill was no longer viable and Henry Stevens was put in charge of disposing of the assets of the company. Finding himself without a job Stevens opened an insurance agency in the back of a local drug store. The bank, now owned by the Bank of Montreal who took over Merchants Bank ten years earlier, was not profitable without the lumbermen's accounts and the bank closed the doors. Many of the men employed at the mill also had farms in the valley so they stayed on. They knew and trusted Stevens and they needed a place to do their banking.

" I collected for the lights and implement companies and was paymaster for the elevators and gradually started to build up a bit of business and after about a year I bought the bank building," wrote Stevens. "I also looked after collections from machine companies and farms for the Great West Life Company who had mortgages on 400 -500 farms in the valley." (Excerpted from Country Banking in Manitoba – a letter in 1969 by Henry Stevens.) "… as things progressed I began keeping a few dollars on hand besides the elevator funds, which had to be kept separate and used only for elevator business and subject to periodical checks by the inspectors at any time. I felt if I was not able to cash the odd farmers stock cheque, etc., he would go to Swan River and possibly that is where he would spend his money." (Country Banking letter.)

In the 1940s farming and stock business picked up in the Swan Valley and Stevens's friends wanted to leave extra money with him until they needed it. "Henry you keep this money for me and when I need it I'll come and get it, they'd say, and I would give them my personal receipt for the same." Over the years this practice grew until in 1965 Stevens had over 400 depositors or people with overdrafts.

**Brick bank building in Bowsman, 2014. It may soon be renovated into a Museum.**
PHOTO BY FRANK FIEBER

**Stevens as a 17-year-old in his Cameron Highlanders uniform, 1915.**
PHOTO COURTESY: CLIFFORD COOK

**Stevens (right) when he worked for the Burrows Lumber Company, 1924.**
PHOTO COURTESY: SWAN VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES

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**Stevens 'bank' cheque from his private bank.**
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"I had to supply cheques drawn in my name and eventually made arrangements with local banks that they would accept these cheques drawn on Henry Stevens and charge them to my accounts in their banks. I was able to cash my clients cheques at par value at any of these points depositing their cheques in whatever point they were drawn on; and in paying my insurance companies' accounts I could use the bank funds to keep monies in deposit as I wished in various points. I had a very young chap and a girl helping me in later years and we were kept very busy – 9a.m. to 6p.m. daily."

About 1963 or so, I thought I'd better form a company because if I kicked the bucket I was going to leave the business in pretty dire straights, so I formed Henry Stevens Ltd. and took on a young chap by the name of Clifford Cook. After running with him for a while I sold the business to Stevens and Cook and took Mr. Cook in as a partner.

"We had about 500 depositors on average," says Clifford Cook who joined Stevens as a 20-year-old, "and they were all working people…all the business people in town dealt with us, they treated us just like a bank. If they needed a piece of machinery or another chunk of land, they would come in and negotiate with Henry to have the money. Back in the '60s a good quarter section of land sold for six or seven thousand dollars – we were probably handling $250 - $450,000 of money on hand at all times," says Cook.

"Regarding investments," said Stevens in his Country Banking letter, " you don't handle money for very long before many want to borrow money. I did not pay interest on deposits and advised clients if they intended it for savings, to put it in a chartered bank in a savings account. Still, funds did accumulate and I lent small amounts, which at peak seasons (before harvest) could grow uncomfortably high. Being soft I lost considerable bad debt, as I did not believe in taking mortgages etc."

"I've had numerous ones come in and leave $5000 and say 'Look after it Henry, I don't trust them damn banks,' which was rather amusing."

Stevens sold his one-man bank to TD Bank in 1965 after 32 years – closing the last private bank in Canada. The insurance side carried on in the brick building until 2000 when then owners Cook and Cooke moved to their present location in Swan River.

Henry and Marian Stevens had four children and numerous grandchildren. Henry's wife Marian passed away in 1968. Henry Stevens retired completely in 1979 and died two years later in Vancouver at age 83.

He had been awarded the Manitoba Golden Boy for service to the province and he was honourable Parade Marshall for the Swan Valley Rodeo and Fair in 1972. He was presented the 50-year jewel for Freemasonry, was active in the Lutheran Church and was an avid hunter, fisherman and curler. His one-man bank was never chartered but his trust was never in doubt.

"The only security my depositors had was my initials or signature on the deposit slips I gave on receipt of money. When they withdrew funds they signed a cheque which was my receipt." ■

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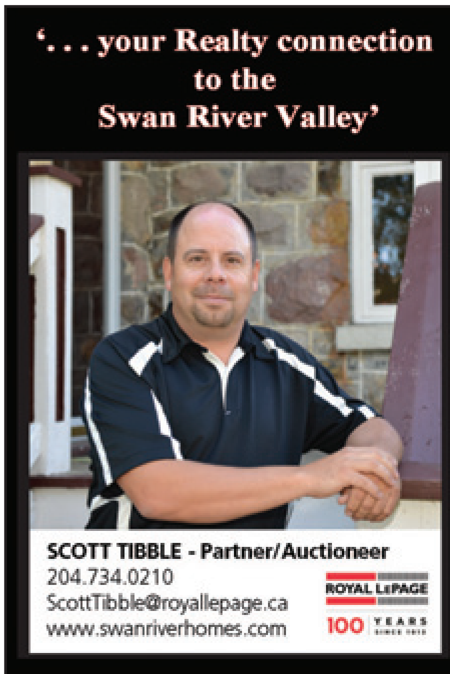

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# Community Health Assessment Released

## Another Milestone for the Region

Following a robust process of research, community and stakeholder consultation and inquiry, the Northern Health Region has released its first Community Health Assessment since amalgamation. Community Health Assessments are conducted every five years as part of a process of information gathering that includes in-depth statistical review of internal and external data, community interviews with patients, families, staff, and community leaders.

The process takes place over a two year period and culminates in a report which is more than 600 pages in length. It supports and informs the work of the Region's Board of Directors, our Executive Leadership Council, our senior leaders and health planners in meeting the health needs of the citizens who make up the Northern Health Region.

The Community Health Assessment report is available for viewing or download on the Region's website ***(www.northernhealthregion.ca)*** in the publications area either in its full form, or, as an easier to digest executive summary. Readers of the report will find background information about our health Region, information about the determinants of health, the health status of our population, and information about our health system's performance and quality.

Each chapter of the report contains information which includes key findings showing areas of progress and areas of challenge. By recognizing where we are now, how we have moved forward and the areas that need additional work, the Region is able to create plans which will include specific goals, strategies and anticipated targets in which to measure our progress. These are all vital in achieving our Vision of *Healthy People* in a *Healthy North*, as we deliver on the promise of our Mission to be ***dedicated to providing quality, accessible and compassionate health services.***

# Board Strategic Planning Results

A strategic Planning session took place involving the Region's Board of Directors, Executive Leadership Council members and other senior staff in April 2015. Presentations on the Community Health Assessment, a review of the outcomes of the Board's 1st Annual Health Summit in 2014 and presentations on the Region's performance in each of its four Strategic Directions helped inform the Board's work reviewing the Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Directions to determine their ongoing relevancy for the organization and the people we serve.

If we look at the Vision as the very foundation we build the health Region upon and the roof being the Mission that encompasses why we exist and what we strive to deliver every day, then the Strategic Directions are the pillars grounded in our Values, and the foundation of our Vision and supporting our Mission with specific, measurable goals. The illustration below depicts that model.

One of the major outcomes of the Board's Strategic Planning Session was to reaffirm our Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Directions. In doing so, the Board confirmed that these would drive our decisions and the way we conduct ourselves as we carry out that important work as a health Region.

# Message from the Board Chair

*"... with the ongoing support and encouragement of our communities, our partners and the people we serve, we will achieve our goals to the benefit of the health of our citizens."*

## Doug Lauvstad

The Board of Directors takes its role in governing the Northern Health Region very seriously. One of the most important tasks we have is to establish the overall direction of management of the health system in our Region by setting the Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Directions for the Region.

In doing so, we then charge the Region's Chief Executive Officer and her leadership team with putting in place plans, strategies and programs that will support achieving the Vision of Healthy People in a Healthy North.

During our recent Strategic Planning Session the Board reviewed a wealth of information from our information management systems, our Community Health Assessment, our stakeholder consultations, discussions with our senior leadership, our staff and plenty of discussion amongst our Board members.

As a result of our deliberations throughout the session, the Board reaffirmed our Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Directions. These foundations of our organization are still very much relevant and accurate and resonate with our staff, our management, and most importantly with the members of the communities that we are here to serve.

Our Strategic Directions are to:

- Improve Population Health;
- Deliver Quality, Accessible Health Services;
- Be a Sustainable and Innovative Organization; and
- Be an Employer of Choice.

Improving Population Health means that we will continue to be focusing on prevention and promotion activities, as well as improving health equity throughout our region.

Our commitment to deliver Quality, Accessible Health Services means that we will continue to strive to improve access to health services as well as promoting a culture of patient safety.

Being a Sustainable and Innovative Organization means ensuring we are financially responsible and accountable. We will also strive to increase access to services as close to home as is appropriate.

Finally, being an Employer of Choice means creating and maintaining a workforce committed to achieving both our Vision and Mission in a way that is consistent with our Values.

I believe that with the ongoing support and encouragement of our communities, our partners and the people we serve, we will achieve our goals to the benefit of the health of our citizens.

# Message from the CEO

*"The Northern Health Region is full of opportunity for qualified job seekers!"*

I would like to share some thoughts on what it means to be an Employer of Choice; one of our Board's Strategic Directions.

Being an employer of choice means maximizing the engagement of the staff that we currently have, while enhancing our recruitment strategies so that we can attract and retain the best workers and professionals to achieve our Mission of providing quality, accessible and compassionate health services.

The Northern Health Region is full of opportunity for qualified job seekers! We offer the perfect setting for a diverse and rewarding practice environment. This is a place where your professional ambitions can be realized. Our friendly and supportive staff will help make you feel right at home.

We provide information and resources in a supportive and encouraging environment, with a workplace integration program that helps ease the transition into a new career in the Northern Health Region.

We are progressive in supporting our staff through continuing education. We encourage ongoing education as a way to foster personal and professional growth.

Financial rewards are a part of the package. The Northern Health Region is not only professionally advantageous, but our staff also benefit financially from competitive salaries, retention allowances for qualifying positions, relocation assistance, northern living allowance and a comprehensive benefit package.

If an active lifestyle appeals to you, you'll love our Region. Crystal clear lakes, seemingly endless boreal forests and more are less than a five minute drive from our major centres. Our four season playground was made for everything from golf, hiking, skiing, boating, sailing, fishing, hunting and snowmobiling. The possibilities are only limited by your desire and imagination. Where else can you find such progressive towns and cities?

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## Helga Bryant

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**Charlie Morgan with his baseball team. Lloyd Bunting (Batboy), Morgan with cigar, WF Hughes in sweater.**
PHOTO COURTESY: SUE LAMBERT

# C.B. (CHARLIE) MORGAN, NORTHERN ENTREPRENEUR

## *– Part 1 –*

by Phil Keddie

When I was a teen in The Pas in the late 1940s and early 1950s a story was going around about how Charlie Morgan lost his house to Harry Premachuk in a poker game. Some elaborations maintained he first lost his watch, then his diamond ring, his fur coat, and finally his house. This was unbelievable, sad, intriguing. Although I never met him personally, I knew that Charlie Morgan lived with his wife in an apartment in the Northern Mail Building, and that Harry Premachuk, a local businessman and storekeeper, lived in a nice house on Larose Avenue. I also recall that in winter Mr. Premachuk wore a handsome, full-length sheared-beaver fur coat. Was it true? Did he lose his house? And who was Charlie Morgan?

One account I read referred to Charlie Morgan as a "well-known Northern entrepreneur". I discovered that from 1919 to the early 1940's Charlie was into a wide range of activities, from haymaking to mining, and most significantly organizing long distance winter freight hauls. This is what I discovered about Charlie Morgan.

### The Early Years

Charles Blathwyat Morgan was born in Wales in 1883, and arrived in Canada as a twenty year old in 1903. He farmed near Carman, Manitoba for a few years, and according to his obituary in the Winnipeg Free Press homesteaded in the Tisdale area, and then alternated between farming and

road building, still in Saskatchewan. At some point he joined one of his brothers in contract work for Mackenzie and Mann. They were building a branch line of the Canadian Northern Railway from Hudson Bay Junction to The Pas around this time. It is speculation on my part that the Morgan brothers contract work for Mackenzie and Mann was related to this project, and that this led Charlie Morgan to The Pas.

## Charlie Morgan, Resident of The Pas

The first record of Charlie Morgan's presence in The Pas is from the voters' list for 1915 that records him as a butcher. He is again listed as butcher in 1916. He is on the voters' list in 1917, but with no occupation identified. Unfortunately the Sam Waller Museum archive has no voters' lists from 1918 to 1921, but in 1922 Charlie Morgan is still in The Pas, his occupation now identified as contractor.

On February 20, 1918 Charlie and Lila Mae Hughes were married in Winnipeg. Lila Hughes was the sister of Winona, wife of William Bunting. Mr. Bunting was an established merchant in The Pas. William Bunting had arrived in The Pas in 1909, and by 1910 the construction of his general store on Fischer Avenue had been completed.

Even before his marriage Charlie had involved himself in the public life of The Pas. In 1915 a group of men, including Charlie Morgan and William Bunting, met in the Opasquia Hotel to discuss the possibility of organizing a sled-dog race. They acted quickly. The Pas Dog Derby, as it was called, was held for the first time in 1916. Due to the First World War the winter festival was not held in 1917 or 1918. The dog sled race and related winter events were staged in The Pas each winter from 1919 to 1931. The Depression and the Second World War brought an end to the event until it was revived as the Northern Manitoba Trappers' Festival in 1948.

**Charles B Morgan in his early 20's.**
PHOTO COURTESY: SAM WALLER MUSEUM , PP84.173.1

Morgan had a keen interest in the town's winter festival in those early days. Dog teams owned by Charlie Morgan won the 200-mile dog sled race, the main event of the annual winter festival, in 1921, 1922 and 1923. However Charlie himself did not drive the team. In 1921 his driver was Bill Winterton. In 1922 and 1923 Bill Grayson was his winning driver. In 1921 Charlie's team seems to have had some advantage over the other teams in the race. A report on the 1921 race by Theo Dupas, another dog sled driver, says that:"The only man who had copper shoeing on his jumper was Winterton, driving Charlie Morgan's team.

**Bill Winterton ran Morgan's dogs in the 200 mile dog race in 1921.**
PHOTO COURTESY: DIANA GRAYSON

All other drivers had oak runners and birch runners. Toward mid-day it's turning warm. Morgan has a great advantage over all of us." (S. J. Allen, ed. ***The Pas, Gateway to Northern Manitoba***, 1983, p.154)

In 1916 and 1919 the purse for the race was $500. This increased to $1,000 in 1920 and to $2,500 in 1921. For Charlie the risk and its associated costs were well worth the gamble.

Charlie Morgan was soon involved in service to his community. He was elected to the town council in 1919, and again from 1932 to 1935. During this latter period there are two letters, on file at the Sam Waller Museum and dated 1932, that request town council to excuse his absence from council meetings. The earlier of the letters explains that he needed to be at the mining operation he had in the Herb Lake district. Charlie also served on the town's Board of Trade, although the record is not clear as to when this was, or for how long.

From 1930 to 1939 Charlie Morgan's telephone listing indicated that he was a contractor, his business office was in the Northern Mail Building, on Third Street. What were Mr. Morgan's contracts and businesses? What did he actually do?

Next issue: Morgan's contract to haul the ore from Mandy Mine, the first copper mine to operate in northern Manitoba.■

*Born and raised in The Pas Phil Keddie, retired Guelph geography professor is now focusing his research on The Pas and northern Manitoba.*

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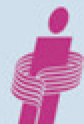

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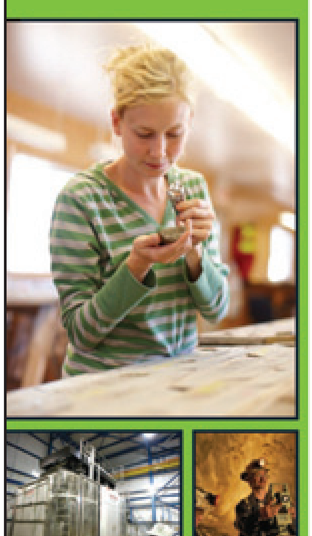

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"Dad, is my kitten a man or a lady?"

"It's a man kitten, it has whiskers."

silly scratch art by Hugh Howat

**Cutting a copper "ribbon" on the West Baker's Narrows Bridge, 1951. (*L–R*) F. Wildgoose, representative of the company supplying the torch, Lieut. Gov. R.F. McWilliams, and Flin Flon's Mayor Cyril Stevenson.**
PHOTO COURTESY: THE FLIN FLON ARCHIVES

# #10!

By Vincent Murphy-Dodds

What is a PTH? In Manitoba, at least, PTH is the common acronym for Provincial Trunk Highway. Anyone who drove the section of PTH #10 north of Swan River in the 1950s rarely used that term of reference. It was simply called Number Ten - or just 'Ten'. That early wreck of a road, however, was often referred to in less complimentary terms. Ask anyone who drove it!

Today PTH #10 - the section north of Swan River - has evolved from its early status as a bush track, to a rutted, rocky, ramblin' road and then to one of Manitoba's finest highways. What was once a challenging motoring adventure fraught with loose gravel, dust, washboard, mud holes, sinkholes, potholes and other 'added attractions' is now a breezy drive of comfort and ease. The transformation was a truly monumental engineering challenge that ended the road isolation of Flin Flonners.

**Flashback!** Vehicles were a rarity in Flin Flon from the town's founding in the late 1920s to the late 1940s as getting a car to Flin Flon was no easy task. In pre-highway days, people, vehicles, or any freight for that matter, either had to be brought in via the CNR train or over the winter roads from Cranberry Portage. The exception for people was to fly in –

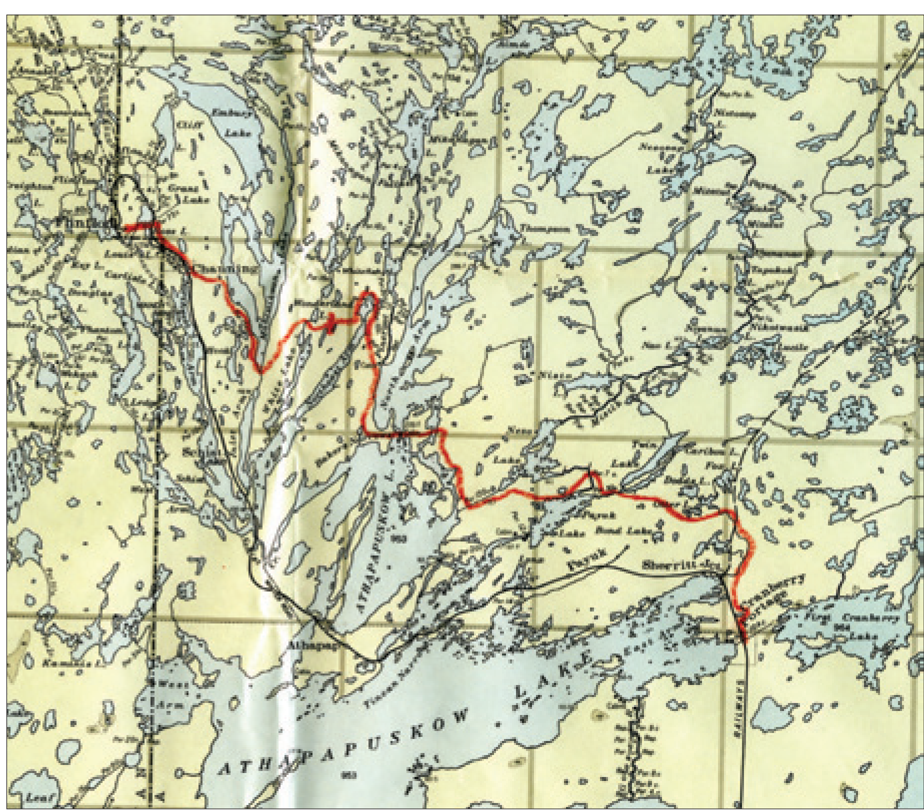
either by charter plane or Canadian Pacific Airlines DC3 service from Winnipeg. Thus, the railway station was a busy hub of interest and activity for passenger and freight arrivals and departures.

Doctors had cars for house calls. Business people, 'Company Row' executives and a scattering of ordinary citizens had cars. There were the ubiquitous 'Company trucks' and a handful of commercial vehicles, but, for the most part, cars were scarce amongst the working class. 1940s era kids living Uptown got to 'know' the local vehicles and it was some big deal when a new arrival was spotted in the collection of cars on Main Street. Shanks Pony, bicycles and the Doxey Bus were the common means of travel for most people. Personal vehicle use was often limited to the spring-to-fall seasons as many cars were garaged for the frigid winter months.

Due to the town's isolation, those Flin Flonners with cars in the pre-highway days had somewhat limited travelling opportunities. The road universe included ramblings to Phantom Lake. You could drive to Beaver Lake, (cruising through the roadside squatter homesteads along Beaver Lake Road – the future Creighton) that is, if you didn't mind eating dust at the rate of five hundred curves per mile. Okay, it only seemed like five hundred curves per mile. Many a traveler to Beaver Lake also suffered car sickness from being swung back and forth in the back seat.

You could dangle out to Channing and then a short jog to Mandy Mine. That was fun! Once at the Mandy Mine gate, you turned around and went home - unless you were on an August blueberry hunt along the power line cut.

Another travel option was the eight mile trip to the south end of Big Island Lake - a popular alternative site for lakeside cabins. (Interestingly, there was a bus service to Big Island in the late 40s) The scope




**Map showing the proposed route for #10 from Cranberry Portage to Flin Flon, 1948.**
PHOTO BY FRANK FIEBER

of out-of-town travel on this narrow gravel road with its limited vision due to winding curves and dust was increased marginally when The Company (H.B.M. & S.) opened the mining road to Cuprus in 1948.

The opening of the Cuprus Mine extension also meant being stuck behind big ore-hauling dump trucks as they struggled with the curves and hills - especially on the slow gear-grinding journey up Big Island Hill.

For the more adventurous, or perhaps foolhardy, one could amble north on the winter road to Island Falls or south to Cranberry Portage – or take a chance on a gravel haul ice road down Schist Lake.

As for in-town travel, there was the familiar 'upsey – downsey – all around the corners thrill of the Uptown roads. The Uptown itself was connected to the subdivisions by a single strand of road over Ross Lake. Ross Lake Hill (Third Avenue) and Sipple Hill were the lifelines from Uptown to anything else 'below the hill'.

And so it was, and so it went. But not without complaint. Northerners are rather straightforward about their expectations from their governments. Thus, following the end of World War II, the demands for a highway were a constant irritation to the Winnipeg-centric provincial government. Northerners are also persistent and as a result, those in the provincial capital finally in 1948 agreed to take up the monumental task of building the road connection from Cranberry to Flin Flon.

The building of a highway through and over the Pre-Cambrian Shield was not an entirely new engineering experience as similar challenges had been faced and overcome in Ontario and Quebec. Similarly, the railroad line from Cranberry to the mine site at Flin Flon had set the benchmark for the extreme challenges of the Pre-Cambrian terrain,

the weather, the miseries of blackflies and the mysteries of muskeg.

The initial highway survey was completed and, for the most part, the process of clearing the right-of-way was a mystery to the general public. The crews struggled unseen through the worst of conditions of the dense northern forest, over rocks, around lakes and muskeg bogs – all out of sight of common man. Out of site, that is, save for the hole in the tree line that eventually appeared at Cuprus Mine. Then, a rough form of a roadbed appeared. Not that you could drive on it, but the impending arrival of a 'road out' of Flin Flon held such interest that the locals with vehicles would load up family and friends to make the drive out to 'roads end' at Cuprus - just to see where the crews had cut the swath of trees for the new highway. People would park their cars and walk over the muck and rocks of this 'virgin' roadway – just to say that they had 'been south'. South of Cuprus – even if it was just a short, mucky walk 'south'.

The terrible trials and tribulations that encompassed the tortuous process that created the link to Cranberry Portage included the four seasons of hell and never-ending hope as the hardy crews bulldozed, blasted and backfilled their way through the wilderness. The unrelenting cold of winter and the blistering heat of summer would take their toll on men and machinery. Heavy equipment would either fall through the winter ice or be swallowed up in the summer muskeg. Ninety above or forty below – the crews hacked, slashed, dynamited and swore their way through, around and over the Shield as they fought off hordes of blackflies and mosquitoes and bone-chilling cold, frostbite and failed equipment.

In time, the struggle turned to achievement. Achievement turned to accomplishment and as work progressed, a brave and foolish few decided to meet the challenge of the partially completed open road.

Meanwhile, the streets of Flin Flon were burdened with shiny chromed cars in anticipation of the new highway. Business at Flin Flon Motors, Uptown Motors, Northland Motors and Gayle Motors boomed as the dream of travel was soon to become a reality.

As for the open road? It was a rough trail of muck, rocks and massive potholes. But it was a 'way out'. Some brave souls tried it. Some made it 'south'. It was 'news' in the Daily Reminder when someone drove from Flin Flon to Cranberry or The Pas and returned – 'alive'. It was almost cause for a civic celebration when vehicle and driver made it to Winnipeg – and return. Some didn't make it: their cars and trucks 'hung up' in the wilderness in some sad state of disrepair. Many drivers carried two spare tires and if there was a blowout it was repaired at 'the next town' thus ensuring mobility. Some carried a can of gas – or were sure to 'fill 'er up at the Pas before venturing any farther. Some scheduled their departure ahead of the highway bus. Thus, if the car got hung up in the muck, the bus would eventually arrive to pull it out. (Northern survival ingenuity!) Sadly, there were lives lost in collisions, rollovers and ditch drownings as the result of carelessness, fatigue or driver inexperience.

The finishing touches of grading and gravel culminated in 195l when the Provincial Trunk Highway 10 link to Flin Flin was officially opened.

The effects were immediate. Lake Athapapuskow became a boomtown of sorts as cabins began to line the shores – much to the chagrin of Albert 'Blondie' Hopkins who had earlier established his peaceful domain on the shores of what became known as Blondie's Beach.

Flin Flonners were now free to travel! Down to Cranberry, The Pas, Swan River and ever onwards to the farm and a visit with the folks at Gilbert Plains, Pelly or even go on all the way to Winnipeg or Regina in a day. A long day. Road speed over the ruts and washboard was about 30 mph (50 kph) at best. Road speed depended on the seasonally adjusted factors of dust, slush, snow, rain, loose gravel, sink holes, incidental construction, detours, disabled vehicles, driver skill and pure luck. Travelers to Winnipeg would often

## An admission of guilt.

Thanksgiving weekend, October, 1956. My dad, Art Dodds, and I left Flin Flon at 5 pm to visit his brother on the farm at Elgin, Manitoba. We were well south of Wanless. It was dark and we were 'stuck' eating dust behind a car that hogged the centre of the road. Idea. We had one of those flashlights with the white, green and red lenses. I flipped the red lens on, held the flashlight to the windshield and flashed the red light on and off. The car ahead slowed down and pulled to the right. My dad gunned the car past and I gave the driver a sheepish wave. We were guilty, yes. But Northern Innovation cleared the way – and the air.

stay overnight in Swan River or Dauphin to break up the agony. A trip to Regina could be made in 12 hours of steady driving on mostly gravel or narrow paved roads with a scarcity of highway signs. Many a vital turn was 'overshot' especially at night.

The opening of #10 also revolutionized life in Flin Flon. Men, for the most part, drove the cars. The vehicular emancipation for women was yet to be fulfilled. Unfortunately, many of the men hadn't driven on a highway for years, and in most cases many had never taken a driving lesson. They had paid five dollars for their driver's license at the drug store 'down south' and now had a ton of steel on wheels. So they just got in and let go! To add to the mix, Flin Flon's burgeoning youth population was now of driving age thus creating the phenomenon of cruisin' kids and cars on the Third Avenue Hill drag strip.

Weekends on #10 became a motorized mania. Friday. Get off shift at the mine, load the family and let 'er rip. Hit the road Friday afternoon, arrive at the farm in the early morning hours. Stay over Saturday and then leave Sunday afternoon for the tortuous journey home. (Long weekends were a generous bonus.) Home by midnight – or later. Back to work and school Monday morning. Exhausted, perhaps, but joyful in the achievement. ■

***There's more adventure in store!***
*Next, we'll experience the mid-fifties days of # 10 reconstruction.*

***Comments? Memories? Highway Photos***
*Email vincent.murphy@sasktel.net.*

*Regina-based Vincent Murphy-Dodds was born and raised in Flon Flon. Following a career in radio/television broadcasting and project management he is now active as a professional playwright, story performer, musician, presenter and EAL tutor.*

# Flin Flon Wants Ro...

**"Missing Link" of of Fifty Miles Is no "Monkey Business"**

*BY FRED JOHNSON*

WHEN Flin Flon residents engage outsiders in conversation these days the topic is sure to be switched to the missing link. This has no reference to any monkey business. It is their way of describing the 50-odd-mile stretch of country between Wanless, 30 miles north of the Pas, and the Cuprus Mines, 10 miles south of Flin Flon, through which there is no road link with provincial highways.

The people of Flin Flon are frankly disappointed and peeved at the apparent disinterest of the Manitoba government in the completion of the highway to Manitoba's fourth largest town. They were not backward in voicing their protests to the members of the Winnipeg Board of Trade goodwill tour which spent the better part of two days in the northern mining town last week.

They claim that Flin Flon, a town of 10,000 population, produces much of the wealth of the province. They are convinced that they deserve and have earned the highway; that the difficulties of building the road and the estimated cost have been greatly magnified.

The arguments put forward were convincing and before he left the area, W. M. Grant, president of the Winnipeg Board of Trade assured the northerners that the board would support in every way possible their fight for the road.

Government authorities have suggested there are almost insuperable difficulties to be overcome before such a road could be completed. They say there would be long detours around lakes, enormous fill-ins, for some of the soft spots are 45 feet deep, and that there are cliffs almost 100 feet high—to skirt them would mean steep grades.

The answer to these arguments is that the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting company has almost completed a 10-mile stretch of road south from Flin Flon to Cuprus Mines which it is now developing. This is possibly the most difficult part of the entire route to the south, there being great sink holes and high cliffs. But today heavy trucks are negotiating the road without difficulty. Members of the Board of Trade party went by truck over part of this road and found no very steep grades and no soft spots. The cost of building it was $10,000 a mile.

The mining company has expressed its willingness to turn over this piece of road to the government as the first link of the highway to the outside. Continuation to Cranberry Portage would be difficult to build and unquestionably expensive but once Cranberry is reached the real troubles would be over.

An engineer who has built scores of miles of northern roads and who accompanied the party to the Cuprus Mines told *The Tribune* that the Flin Flon Highway could be completed for less than $1,000,000. Here is how he estimated the costs:

The road from Wanless to Cranberry, 36 miles at $7,000 a mile, $252,000.

From Cranberry to Cuprus Mines, 18 miles at $20,000 a mile, $360,000.

Improvement and widening of the road from Cuprus Mines to Flin Flon, built by the mining company, $10,000 a mile, $100,000.

This makes a total of $712,000. Add another $200,000 for unforeseen difficulties and the total would still be well under $1,000,000.

There is little question but that when completed the Manitoba Flin Flon highway will be one of the finest scenic routes in the world for it will run through a country of great and magnificent lakes and forests. It will open up unsurpassed sporting fishing grounds and attract tourists by the thousands.

Flin Flon people claim that as a Manitoba government investment it would pay great dividends in tourist traffic.

The Saskatchewan government has already started building the road out of Flin Flon to connect with existing Saskatchewan highways. Some members of the Board of Trade party saw bulldozers at work near Beaver Lake, 14 miles west of Flin Flon, filling in a long sinkhole. The task looks and is a formidable one, but the bulldozers are inching ahead and it looks as if the Saskatchewan highway will be through first.

But, while the people of Flin Flon welcome the start of work on this now, they are Manitobans and want a Manitoba highway.

In any event, they say, the Saskatchewan road is all to the good, for when the Manitoba road goes through tourists will be able to make a circle trip the like of which could not be found any other place on the continent.

**Clipping from the Winnipeg Tribune, 1946.**
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**Detail of bottom hem with the use of depilated seal skin edging creating a casing for a leather thong.**
ALL PHOTOS COURTESY: MANITOBA MUSEUM

# Gutskin Rain Suit

by Tim Worth

Museum collections often hold an untapped wealth of information just awaiting the informed curator or curious volunteer. During a recent review of artefacts in one of the Hudson's Bay Company Museum collection storage rooms, at The Manitoba Museum (TMM), a curious couple of artefacts were identified, that had little information attached to them. These two artefacts taken together formed a two-piece rain suit - kayak jacket (Figure 1) and trousers (Figure 2), made of seal intestine or gutskin. A little research showed them to be a rare commodity. Like any rain suit the primary purpose was to keep rain or seawater off the inner fur garments. Although similar garments were worn by many Inuit across the north, there are a number of different configurations as well as different names "…the Inupiaq call them imarnin, the Yup'ik call them immarenin, the Cup'ig from Nunivak Island call them imarniteg, the Nunavik from Quebec, Canada call them akuilitaq."[1] A garment, similar in nature but worn by the Aleutians, has been widely written about; there it was called the kamleikas. The kamleika was usually much longer than the gutskin kayak jacket in TMM collection and the gutskin panels of the kamlieka are orientated in horizontal bands instead of being orientated perpendicular to the bottom and waist hem as in the TMM gutskin garments. The translucent nature of the gutskin is one of the most descriptive qualities of this natural material following its extensive processing. Like other gutskin garments this one is extremely light in weight, but stiff in this dry form. "The dried out intestines are very light and an entire coat can weigh as little as twenty-one to twenty-four grams even though they were made very large in order to fit over a fur parka …"[2]

Processing gutskin to the point where it could be fabricated into garments was undoubtedly something borne out by time. E.Y. Arima quotes the processing of bearded seal intestine, as witnessed by early 20th century anthropologist Ernest Hawkes, "The contents are removed and they are filled with water and thoroughly washed out. The fat and other fleshy matter adhering are removed by means of a knife used as a scraper. This being done the intestine is inflated with air and strung along the tops of rocks to dry. When dry it is carefully flattened and rolled into tight bundles, like a spool of ribbon, and laid away until wanted. When required for use it is split longitudinally…."[3]

The Inuit chose to use sea mammal intestinal material due to its natural water repelling qualities. It also had the added benefit of being

**Front and back view of the gutskin kayak jacket with matching trousers.**

differentially permeable in allowing perspiration out like modern sportswear. “Thus gutskin clothing allows humidity to escape from the inside and is waterproof from the outside.”[4]

In addition to being aligned perpendicularly in the case of the gutskin panels of the TMM garments there is an apparent aim at an economy of seams. Less seams, especially for the jacket at the shoulder level, means less possibility of water penetration. The body of the jacket is composed of seven front chest panels, 11.5 to 12.5 cm wide, and seven back panels. Four of the front panels actually wrap over the shoulder into the back (Figure 3). A gusset was inserted on either side, at the bottom hem. Five panels make up each sleeve as well as another gusset under each arm. The width of each sleeve panel is more variable, ranging from 7.1 to 10.5 cm. Three back panels, bordered by the panels that continue from the front, extend up forming the main body of the hood meeting a single band of tissue that wraps around the face, (Figure 4) which is in turn inserted on either side of the central chest panel. In the back, two panels were obviously not quite long enough as a small piece of gutskin was inserted to make up the required length. The trousers are similarly constructed with seven gutskin panels per leg, approximately 11 cm at their widest but obviously trimmed to fit a tapered leg and an additional gusset on each inner leg seam joining at the crotch.

More than one comment has emphasized that these garments were fabricated with seams that were made waterproof by special stitching, “…Strips are sewed edge to edge with the exterior of the intestine to form the outside of the garment. The edge is turned down, so as to leave a width of a third of an inch, and turned to the right; the other strip is similarly folded, but turned to the left and laid on the other strip.”[5] In the case of the TMM gutskin garments, multi-layered gutskin appears to have been in use, with an average 0.8 cm edge overlap of gutskin material and a secondary 0.8 to 1.2 cm wide strip of gutskin added to the reverse side of the seam. (Figure 5) The thread, which for the most part appears to be sinew, passes through all three layers in a running stitch, averaging 5 stitches per inch. Lucien Turner comments that “The two strips are then sewed with stitches about nine to the inch,...”[6] To what degree the TMM kayak jacket is waterproof is unknown. In any case the use of the sinew is widely thought to add to the waterproof qualities of the stitching “… tight stitches allow little water into the seam area and when water does encroach, it swells the sinew, rendering the seams com-

**Hood detail of kayak jacket.**

**Detail of seam with sinew thread and overlapping layer of gutskin.**

pletely waterproof. [7]

The bottom hem of the jacket (152.4 cm long), waist hem of the trousers (125.5 cm), the wrist cuffs, leg cuffs and the front rim of the hood (61 cm) are all reinforced by a strip of depilated seal skin 1.5 cm wide (Figure 6). These strips of depilated seal skin have been double-sewn with a commercial thread. As well, the gutskin at the bottom hem and around the hood, as well as on the waist of the trousers, has been folded over creating a casing in which a leather drawstring runs. Tightening the drawstring around the hood reduces the possibility of splashed water entering the chest, while the drawstring around the jacket's bottom hem enabled it to be secured around the outer rim of the kayak's cockpit. "…when the weather becomes rainy or rough, the hunter dons the weather proof frock and the skirt is extended over the rim of the manhole in which he sits. A cord provided for the purpose is wound around the outside, fastening the border of the skirt down… When this cord is made fast … the occupant of the kaiak is safe from being drenched by the dashing spray, and no water can enter his boat.[8]

Where these gutskin garments originated is largely based upon one informational reference. In all likelihood the jacket and trousers were made by the Nunavimiut of the Ungava Peninsula (Quebec) as it has been suggested that the Nunavimiut were amongst the few Inuit to use gutskin trousers. E.W. Hawkes in "The Labrador Eskimo" indicates that "In Ungava Bay,…a kayaker's suit, consisting of a gutskin coat and trousers was obtained from Cape Wolstenholme. ...The gutskin trousers are not used by the western Eskimo."[9]

Wearing the gutskin garments in conjunction with the normal clothing the Inuit hunter stood a better chance at remaining dry and possibly more comfortable while sitting in his kayak. ■

*The author appreciates the assistance that he received from TMM and Amelia Fay, Curator of The Manitoba Museum - Hudson Bay Company Museum collection in preparing this article.*

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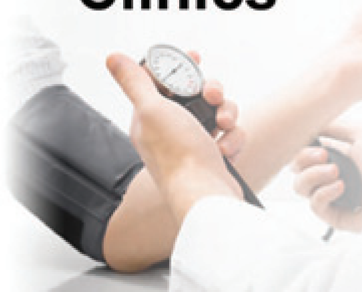

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# Portraits of the north

## Daniel Highway

by Gerald Kuehl

The Highways already had a brood of six girls when he entered the world in December 1947. Pelagie, a Metis from Batoche, and Joe, full blood Cree, named the boy, "Daniel Horis Louis Highway." Dan's arrival was a highlight. He had had twelve siblings but child mortality was high in those days. Dan was the only boy. He was spoiled because a previous brother died at birth, as did a sister born after him.

Dan's special place in the family changed four years after he was born. "I was upset when Tomson came along because I lost my special status. He was a boy and now youngest in the family." [Tomson went on to become a world-renowned playwright and pianist]

Dan's father, Joe was angry *his* father had allowed all his children to attend school but him, the eldest. "My dad thought education was very important. Also, as a strong Roman Catholic and the school being administered by the Catholic Church, he insisted I go to residential school." When Dan's sisters came home from school during summer they talked about the different foods they had eaten. "I remember thinking how exciting it would be going there and was actually looking forward to it. I left home at age seven."

He attended Guy Hill Residential School outside The Pas for ten years followed by three years in Assiniboia High School in Winnipeg. "We learned to speak English at Guy Hill. Everyone got their hair cut and wore similar clothes so we looked the same. When we showered, the nuns put powder on our heads for lice. We slept in a dormitory, all in bunk beds. There were about 50 of us. We ate in a cafeteria, boys on one side, girls on the other. The food was very different from home where we ate fish, caribou and moose."

"Much of our Cree culture was already lost by the time I left for school. Both my parents were strong Roman Catholics. In 1816, Roman Catholicism arrived in Brochet. They built a church and immediately began preaching. Priests learned Cree and began preaching in Cree. The bible was translated into Cree syllabics. The elders learned the bible in Cree and were slowly converted. I believe in 25 years they accomplished their goal; everyone was converted."

"In the classroom we had to speak English. We could speak Cree outside but it was slowly replaced by English. Learning and speaking English was strongly encouraged." The school used a token system whereby every Sunday everyone received ten tokens. Whenever one child caught another speaking Cree, a token was taken from that child and given to the one who had caught the other. The child with the most tokens at the end of the week received a prize.

Dan's hockey career began at Guy Hill. It took time because the big lad was awfully shy. "One day the nuns said we'd be playing against the bigger girls. They had a talented 15/16 year old team. Not wanting to play, I hid in the boiler room with my hockey uniform on. After they found me I skated the last period and got over my shyness. I began dreaming of one day playing in the National Hockey League."

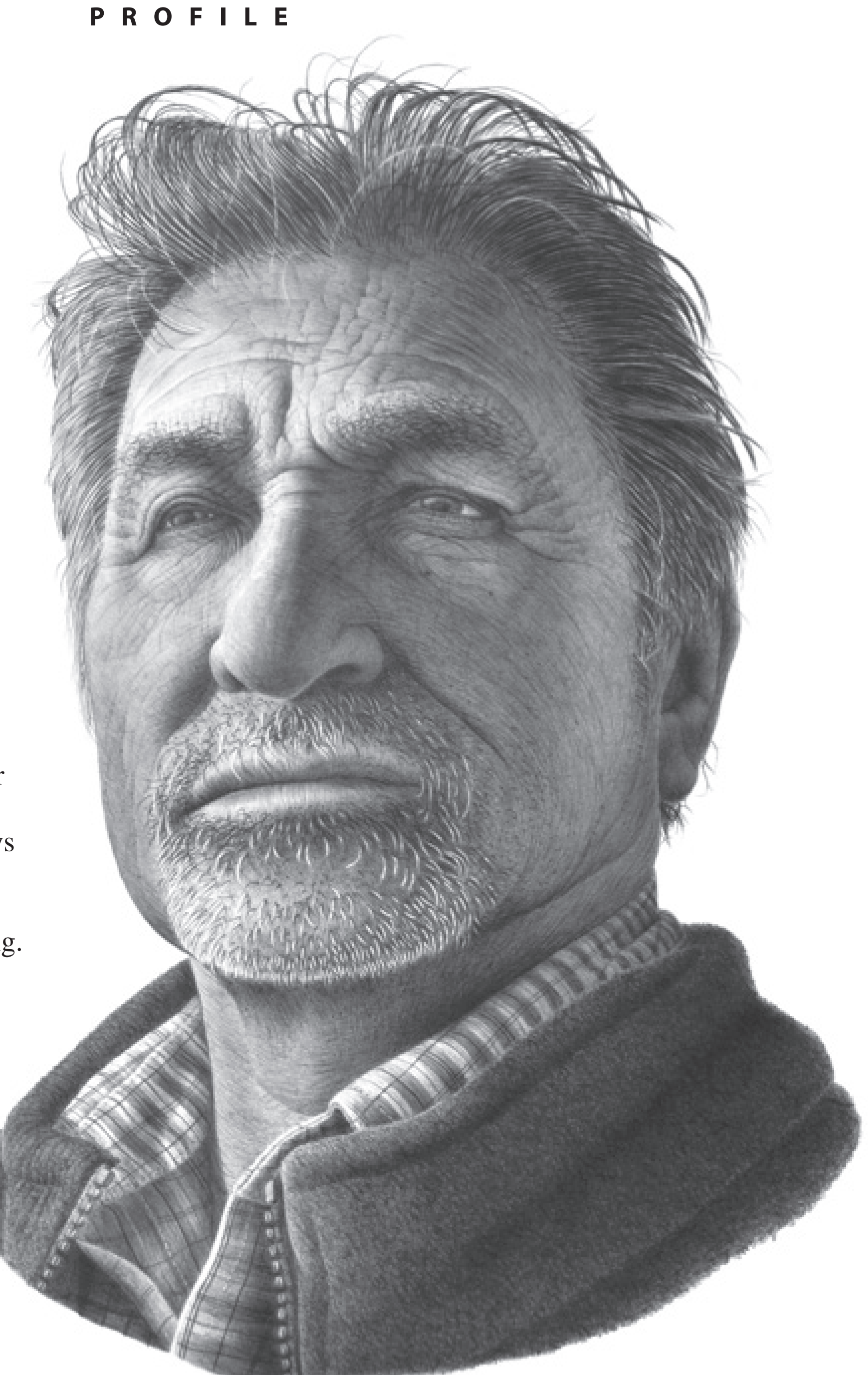
At age 16 he had a regular shift in a private school league in Winnipeg that included teams from St. Paul's and St. John's Ravenscourt. Dan contributed to a team that won the championship one of the two years he played. Hockey scouts began to notice the teenager's size and skill. While lacing his skates for the St. Boniface Diocesan High School, Dan was asked to try out for the St. Boniface Saints. Father Chaput, principal of the residential school, said, "No!" Dan had been taught to obey. His dream began to fade. "I finished high school at Charleswood Collegiate but didn't graduate, being short a few courses. I headed north at age 20." He later found out that while at school, Canada's Olympic

team had requested him to try out. The request never reached Dan.

Back in The Pas, he signed up for classes at Keewatin Community College; nights found him hopping the boards and skating for the local Blues team. Hockey fans still remember the solid right winger (just shy of 6 feet 2 inches and 210 pounds) whose puck sense and soft hands made him both a solid playmaker and consistent scorer. This was an exciting time for Manitoba hockey fans as the Winnipeg Jets had arrived. Dan was asked to try out. At 25-years-old and soon to be married, he declined. Dan and Gladys Constant were wed one year later in 1973.

With his competitive hockey career over, Dan moved to Leaf Rapids and joined the work force. He helped relocate aboriginal families who wanted to work for the local mine. Laid off in 1982, he landed in Winnipeg where the Provincial Highways and Transportation Division would employ him for the next 24 years.

Dan retired in 2006 and began consulting. That year he received a provincial government award created for his exemplary work: The "Dan Highway Equity & Diversity Award." Dan was recognized for his numerous hours volunteering in Winnipeg since 1982. Represented on the old $50 bills series, the Therese Casgrain Award was presented to one man and one woman each year in Ottawa by the Federal Minister of Human Resource Development. Dan is the only aboriginal man to have received the award.

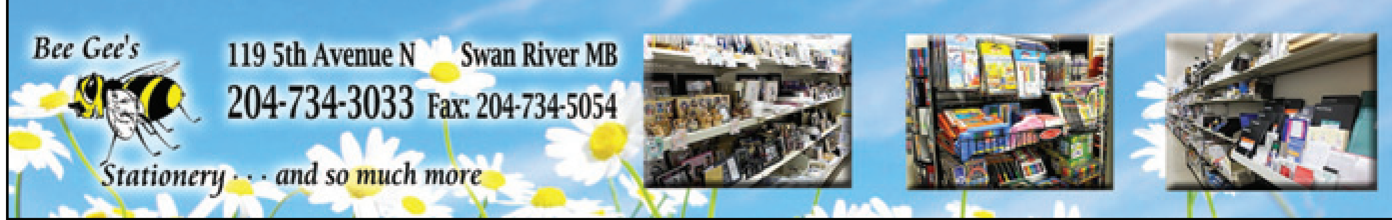


PENCIL DRAWING BY GERALD KUEHL

He was a model citizen but he bore the burden of a traumatic residential school experience. "I have a strong self-awareness. In residential school we were taught about perfection … for example, the concept of Sainthood. We went through trying to be perfect. You would beat yourself up if you made a mistake. We were indoctrinated with the concept of Heaven and Hell. I learned not to take risks and developed a fear of making mistakes. I carried this fear with me when I left."

For many years the specter of residential school shadowed Dan. "Our culture, our dress, even our language was deemed inferior. I once saw a couple of kids seven or eight years old, scrubbing their skin in the washroom, trying to remove the brown. Many of our people grew up with a lot of physical and mental pain as a result of this experience. We got involved in activities such as drugs and alcohol to avoid further pain — anything to evade confronting the anguish in one's life. I came to realize I am not perfect. I am going to make mistakes and will therefore feel pain regardless. It will come, but it will go too. By living, I will experience joy and pain. I couldn't accept myself as a human being. Now I can."■

*To view more of Gerald Kuehl's work, visit www.portraitsofthenorth.com.*



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# The Birds Around Us Canada Warbler

Photos and story by David Raitt

Canada Warblers can be found in southern parts of the Northroots readership area during a fairly narrow window in the summer. They migrate late in the spring – usually arriving at The Pas around the end of May or early June. Some other species already have young before Canada Warblers have started to build a nest.

The included photo shows an adult male Canada Warbler. He has striking plumage features that include bright yellow underparts contrasted by an unbroken steely blue/grey back (note the lack of wing bars), a black "necklace", and white eye-ring. Canada Warblers are well described as skulking warblers. They sneak reclusively through dense undergrowth (often near water) and are heard more often than they are seen. Their song is a hurried jumble of a few short phrases that is preceded by a short "chip" note a fraction of a second before the rest of the song. The chip note is fairly soft, so you need to be close to the bird to hear the chip. A common mnemonic device used to represent the Canada Warbler's song is "what, who me, not me, she did it", with the chip note represented by the "what".

In 2008 the Canada Warbler was listed as "threatened" by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. From 1968 to 2007, data from the Breeding Bird Survey suggest an average decline of 4.5% in the Canada Warbler population each year. This works out to an alarming 85% decline in the total population during that period. The cause of the decline is not clearly understood, but widespread loss of habitat on the wintering grounds is a possible factor.

Canada Warblers are here during a narrow window in the summer. They are one of the last warblers to arrive in the spring, and one of the first to depart at the end of summer. This window seems that much more narrow because of their skulking nature, and the relatively short period of the year when they sing. I hear Canada Warblers sing during about four weeks each year (more or less, in June). After that, I rarely detect them as they go about their secretive life before heading to South America for the winter.

In June have a listen for the Canada Warbler, and if you are very lucky you may even catch a glimpse of this handsome warbler in his preferred habitat of tangled underbrush – tread lightly as they are endangered. Be sure to check out the next issue as we continue to investigate the birds around us. Questions and comments can be sent to thebirdsaroundus@gmail.com ■

*David Raitt is an avid birder living in The Pas.*

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