

For The Record

Yukon Archives 1972-2012



... just to be in this place -
& would rather be here than any place
I know - It is so different to what
I was accustomed to, here, before

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Acknowledgements

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Diane Chisholm, President, FOYAS

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Photo credits *A photograph taken by Whitehorse photographer E.J. Hamacher in his studio, dating from the early 1900s. By the late 18th century, a school of animal painting had been established in Britain and portraits with livestock reflected a particular fashion of that time. This whimsical photograph of an unidentified man includes a view of the studio itself, giving the viewer a sense of the creation of this portrait "for the record." The studio cat appears again on page 40.*
YA, E.J. Hamacher fonds (Margaret and Rolf Hougen collection), 2002/118 #510

Background, top: This atlas is the oldest item in the Archives' holdings (see page 25).
YA, Rare Atlas #1

Background, bottom: Letter excerpt from Mary Tidd to her mother, 1927 (see page 13).
YA, Claude and Mary Tidd fonds, 91/112, MSS 365, file 11

Back cover: This 1972 press release announces the official opening of the library-archives complex.
YA, GOV 2395, file 7

Photos of Territorial Archivists: Brian Speirs, 1974, YA 82/417, file 9, #8; Miriam McTiernan, 1988, YA 82/417, file 3 #2; Linda Johnson with George Dawson, late 1970s, YA 82/417, file 10 #1; Diane Chisholm, 2008, personal collection; Ian Burnett, 2011, Government of Yukon

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

As premier of Yukon, it's my pleasure to present *For the Record: Yukon Archives 1972–2012*.

Yukon had been a territory for more than 70 years when Commissioner Jim Smith first championed the concept of building a territorial archives. Thanks to Mr. Smith's vision, the commitment of many archivists and the support of the heritage community, Yukon Archives is celebrating its 40th anniversary.

The Archives is important to Yukoners for many reasons. It keeps the records of government and the evidence of decisions that shape our society. It holds the photographs, films and correspondence of families who lived in Yukon and created its communities. It preserves the voices of First Nation elders, political leaders and local heroes. These historical images, sounds and words form our collective memory and the foundation of who we are today.

I'd like to commend the Friends of the Yukon Archives Society, archives staff past and present, and the many businesses, families and individuals who donated their records to create this irreplaceable documentary legacy. *For the Record* is a tribute to all those who have helped to safeguard the Archives' unique collection and a reminder to all Yukoners of their place in history.



Darrell Pasloski
Premier



A THANK YOU

Jim Smith, former Commissioner of the Yukon, had a pivotal role in the planning, creation, development, care and sustenance of the Yukon Archives. For over forty years he has been Yukon Archives' biggest supporter, all the way from his instrumental role in the building of an archives for Yukon, to his continual quest to convince people and groups to donate their material to the Archives.

He has donated his own personal papers, photographs and films to the Archives and was a founding member of the Friends of Yukon Archives Society (FOYAS).

In a November 2011 interview with Linda Johnson, Mr. Smith recalled the challenges and successes in the establishment of the Archives. In the end, he attributes Yukon's success to this: *"We were operating with the Lord's arms wrapped around us. Everything fell into place; we got the right people at the right time."*

Yukon Archives is thankful that Jim Smith was in the right place at the right time.



Jim Smith at the Yukon Government building, late 1960s or early 1970s.

YA, Yukon Public Affairs, 90/58R #28



Laurent Cyr and Jim Smith at the Yukon Order of Pioneers dedication at Forty Mile, July 1, 1973.

YA, Finnie family fonds, 82/414 #1

CHAPTER

1



Before the Yukon Archives



THE BEGINNINGS

YUKON PEOPLE HAVE a long tradition of recording the details of people, places and events significant to their lives. They take photographs, keep diaries, draw maps and write letters. Government administrations in the Yukon created and continue to create records. These need to be preserved in order to ensure that governments are accountable and human rights are protected.

Prior to 1972, a safe place to preserve records did not exist in the territory. Because of this, the Yukon's documentary heritage was occasionally destroyed by fire, flood and other disasters. Records were sold to dealers from outside the territory and documentary sources were taken from the Yukon to be located in archives, libraries and museums far away, which limited opportunities for Yukon residents to study and understand their

history. In addition, the Public Archives of Canada removed thousands of files from the Old Territorial Administration Building in Dawson for safekeeping in Ottawa. Yukon Commissioner Jim Smith obtained a promise from the National Archivist that the original records would be returned to the Yukon — after being microfilmed in Ottawa — once the territory had its own archives.

These factors formed the foundation for Commissioner Smith's initiative to establish the Yukon Archives. He understood the importance of records from his experience in business, and was a firm believer in heritage preservation, a value instilled by his high school history teacher, Willard Ireland. Ireland was Provincial Archivist of British Columbia from 1940–74. Smith sought Ireland's guidance and assistance in order to model the Yukon Archives

Six women pose for a photograph beside the paddlewheel of a moored sternwheeler, Whitehorse, ca. 1945.

YA, Teresa Chanatry fonds, 99/68 #58

on existing best practices and required legislation, including a robust *Archives Act* with a broad mandate to acquire, preserve and make available all forms of documentary sources. Commissioner Smith incorporated Ireland's advice, along with expertise from B.C. Archives staff, to draw up the design of the archival facility and archival programs. The result was the territory's first purpose-built heritage facility — a place all Yukoners could trust to preserve their unique and irreplaceable documentary heritage.

Yukon First Nations and oral history

For countless years, Yukon First Nations people have been keeping their history and traditions alive by way of storytelling. Relying on oral tradition, elders pass stories down to the next generation. These narratives are part of what makes Yukon



Kitty Smith and George Dawson, July 1980. YA, Grubstake Co-op 1981 Ltd. fonds, 91/1R #10

First Nations people who they are; they are part of the foundation of their cultural heritage.

Modern technologies enable oral histories to be recorded. These recordings can be transcribed into written accounts. The oral histories — both recordings and transcriptions — fix stories into permanent records, which preserve them and allow those interested to learn about First Nations histories and cultures.

Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank is one of the people who paved the way for Yukon First Nations' oral history tradition to be recognized as significant works of history. Cruikshank worked extensively with Yukon First Nation elders, most notably Angela Sidney, Annie Ned and Kitty Smith.

"We learn from Grandma, Grandpa, what they do, and they explain to us... They tell you stories to make your mind strong."

ANNIE NED

Cruikshank recalls of one of the first times she interviewed Angela Sidney. At the end of one of their interview sessions, Angela Sidney finished speaking and concluded: "Well... I have no money to leave to my grandchildren. My stories are my wealth."

Storytelling is a way of explaining and arranging history. It passes down valuable messages to younger generations. It also contributes to our collective understanding of natural history in the north. Storytellers explain and interpret

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their world as they see it. Preserving these works, and allowing public access to them, incorporates a different type of significance to the recordings.

Recorded histories can be donated to public archives so that others can share and enjoy them. The sound recordings of Yukon First Nation elders and their time-honoured stories are a treasured part of Yukon Archives' holdings.

Photography and the gold rush

A revolutionary new photographic technology converged with one of the world's largest industrial migrations, the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898. The gold rush left behind a fascinating photographic record of ordinary people being transformed by the experience.

Thousands of people joined the wild stampede north to Yukon by whatever means they could arrange. Among the hordes were many photographers and journalists as well as amateur shutterbugs, equipped with the newest hand-held cameras introduced by the Eastman Dry Plate and Film Company. These cameras, which used roll film, replaced the expensive and cumbersome models that used glass plates. By the end of the 1890s, faster films, better lenses and hand-held cameras had made it much easier to capture a wider range of everyday life. Probably the biggest impact on photography at the time came from the introduction of the box camera, which sold approximately 13,000 units in its first year of production.

"Snap shooting" on Black Lake, September 1898.
YA, H.C. Barley fonds #4800

During the gold rush, dozens of enterprising professional photographers headed for the Chilkoot Pass and to the gold fields to document the struggle of the intrepid stampeders. Many more amateurs would focus their lenses on everyday life in camps, on the creeks and in fledgling towns.

The boom and bust of the Klondike was like many other gold rushes: some returned home with fortunes; some with broken dreams. Few traces are left today of the tens of thousands who made it to Dawson City or to other communities in the Yukon. While the Klondike Gold Rush was one of the most photographed events of the time, many of the original images were spread to the four corners of the world once the boom was over. Fortunately, a few Yukoners and others with keen eyes and a love of history ensured that some negatives and prints were rescued or returned. The Yukon Archives holds more than 150,000 negatives and prints, many created during the Klondike Gold Rush.



Feature: Oral History

This tape contains an audio recording of an interview conducted in the Tlingit language. Listening to the recording is permitted by the creator, but copying the tape is not. Fortunately, this recording is accompanied by a printed translation, also seen here.

YA 93/14, Mabel Johnson interview, 1993, Cassette, SR169-2



The Chilkoot Pass

The Klondike Gold Rush is one of the events that defines the Yukon. Between 1897 and 1899 thousands of men and women made their way to the Klondike gold fields. The Chilkoot Trail from Dyea to Lake Bennett became the most well-travelled route for gold-seekers on their way to Dawson. The Chilkoot Pass — more than 1,000 metres above sea level — was a formidable challenge for the stampedes, who were required by law to carry with them a year's supply of goods.

These facts are all part of the lore of the gold rush and are rarely questioned when people talk about these historic events. But who is the authority on what actually happened?

A single event such as the gold rush can be seen from many perspectives. While we have come to accept certain details of the gold rush story as “facts,” the truth is that these events can be interpreted in different ways using the evidence that was created during the event. The photographs of the Golden Stairs are a case in point. The same event — a stampeder carrying a load of goods over the Chilkoot Pass — has been photographed from a variety of places.

There are many ways to interpret what each image tells us about the gold rush. These photographs don't explain what is happening (even when they have a title embedded



into the negative); the explanation comes from the researcher who constructs a narrative about the past by consulting the record. Yukon Archives recognizes the importance of preserving primary sources so that researchers can come to their own conclusions.

A multitude of perspectives of the Chilkoot Pass, including a print from a cracked glass plate negative and a stereoscopic view. Top: YA, Peter McCarter fonds, 89/46 #1; Centre: YA, Anton Vogee fonds #60; Bottom: YA, Robert Coultts fonds, 78/69 #4

CHAPTER

2



The 1970s



THE IRELAND REPORT

WILLARD IRELAND, Provincial Archivist of British Columbia, was asked to investigate the feasibility of a Yukon territorial archives and the appropriate mandate for such an institution. His report* was presented to the Commissioner of the Yukon on August 10, 1970. It emphasized the inter-connectedness of archives and records management and recommended “that a Yukon Archives should be established by ordinance defining its responsibility and powers; that a Public Records centre should be established; [and] that regulations for effective records scheduling should be devised.” Ireland also recommended that a professional archivist, a records centre director and the necessary clerical support staff be hired.

A final key component of the report was the recommendation that an archives building be constructed, planned in

accordance with an expansion of the Library Services Branch building. Ireland’s report was received favourably by the Government of Yukon and work was undertaken throughout the remainder of 1970 and into 1971 to finance and implement its recommendations.

The Archives Act

Following a review of relevant legislation from other jurisdictions, *An Ordinance Respecting the Preservation of Archives of the Yukon Territory* was passed in 1971. This *Archives Act*, as it later became, defines public records, allows for records management regulations, and outlines the objectives of a Yukon government archival institution. Although the Act enables the Archives to create publications, curate exhibitions and produce oral histories, the institution’s primary objectives are to identify, acquire, preserve, describe,

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The Archives reading room in the mid-1970s. YA, Libraries & Archives Branch, 82/417, file 14 #4

* YA, Yukon Records Office files, GOV 2395, file 7



Territorial Archivist: Brian Speirs

During my time as Territorial Archivist I was able to secure support for and foster an environment that allowed the Yukon Archives to become recognized as a relevant and accessible resource. I focused my efforts on two icons: the Klondike Gold Rush and construction of the Alaska Highway and Canol Road. This enhanced the visibility and public awareness of the Archives.

The return of federal government records from the Public Archives of Canada, which documented territorial administration under Commissioner William Ogilvie,

was a significant acquisition, as was the transfer of extensive Mining Recorder records from Dawson City. Negotiations with the White Pass & Yukon Route resulted in receipt of its records, including the glass plate negatives of H.C. Barley, the official photographer of the railway's construction. Photographic images of the Klondike Gold Rush were copied from various archives to create a photograph collection for research and reference. From the beginning this collection proved to be extremely popular, especially since access was facilitated by a visual finding aid, copies of which were deposited with contributing archives. Without these historical photographs, Yukon Archives could not have prepared a major travelling exhibition on the 75th anniversary of the Klondike Gold Rush.

The most compelling challenge was the fundamental need to build and sustain public trust in what the Yukon Archives did and why. It was crucial to ensure that the Yukon Archives was not too closely identified with a particular organization or segment of society to the perceived detriment or neglect of others.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to serve as Territorial Archivist. That experience so early in my career increased my involvement in all elements of archives development and administration. It certainly broadened my perspective on what archival programs and services can be. My time in the Yukon also convinced me that my future was to be in finding ways to use innovative programs to achieve the desired results.

1972–1976

The Coutts Collection

In late 1977, Robert Coutts of Atlin, British Columbia, contacted Yukon Archives to determine the level of interest in acquiring his private collection of early Yukon manuscripts, photographs, books, pamphlets and maps. The collection comprised materials on northern topics acquired from book dealers and other sources throughout the world. It included a wide range of titles, with some copies annotated by the author or by Robert Coutts. It also included one of the largest collections of Robert Service publications in Canada.

Although the Archives was keenly interested in acquiring the collection, it had to obtain funds to do so. The cost was in excess of \$100,000. Former Commissioner Jim Smith contacted several private companies in the Yukon as well as the Devonian Foundation and managed to obtain the necessary amount to sign the purchase agreement. The remaining funds were contributed by the territorial and federal governments. In September 1978, the Archives was able to place the collection on display and formally thank Robert Coutts.



The Coutts Library is maintained as a separate library within Yukon Archives. In 1989, the Archives obtained a grant from the federal government's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to catalogue the library materials (newspapers, periodicals, books and pamphlets) in the collection. The project started in early 1990 and ended in 1992. The grant enabled two librarians to catalogue the collection as part of the newly automated library system of the Yukon government's Library and Archives Division.

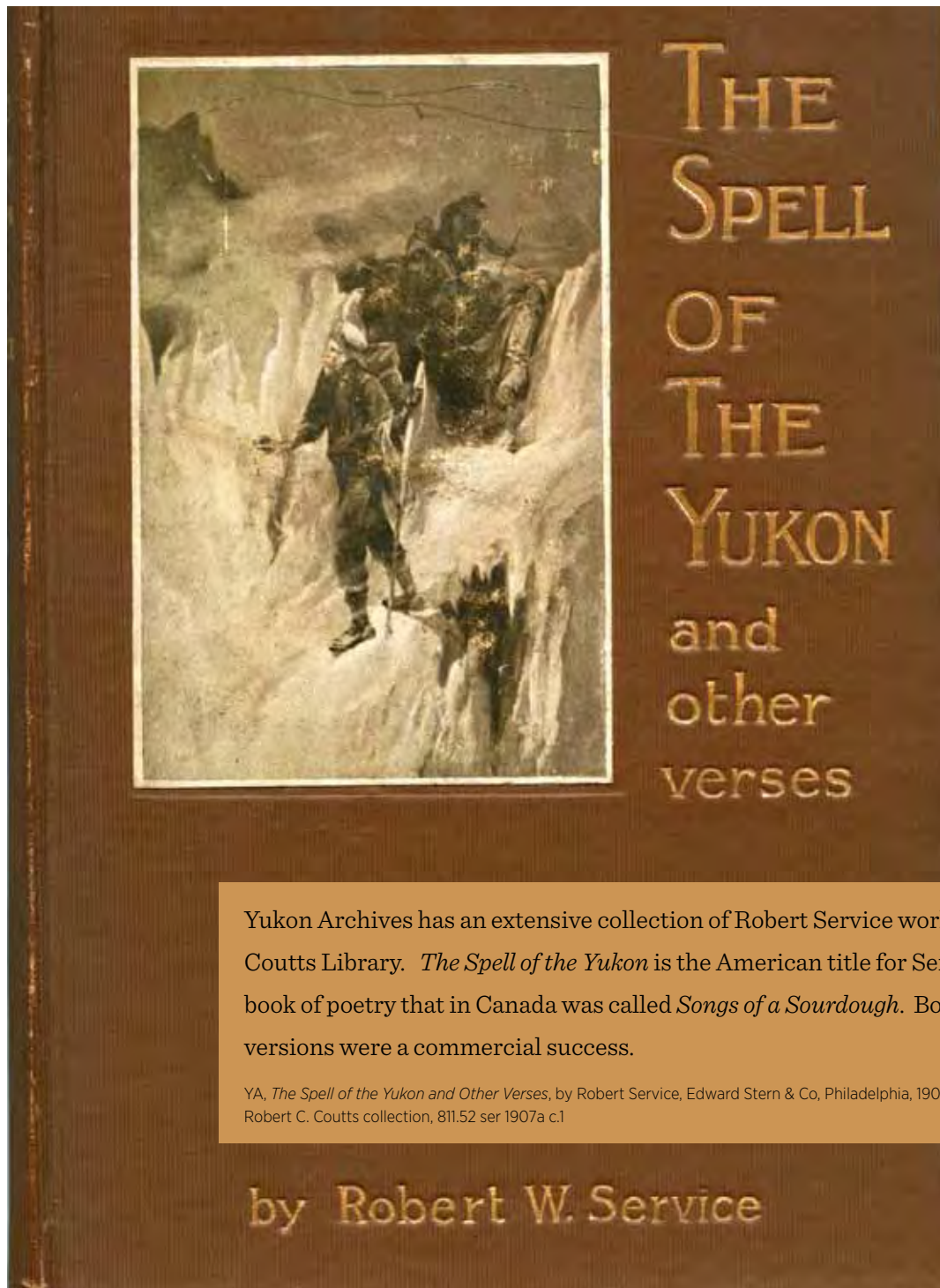
Robert Coutts continued to collect. Until his death in January 2004 he regularly arranged for the Archives to acquire more of his fascinating finds.



Above: Robert Coutts transfers his collection while Commissioner Doug Bell and Territorial Archivist Linda Johnson look on.

YA, Libraries & Archives Branch, 82/417, file 6 #10

Left: *Northern Times*, September 15, 1978

Feature: The Coutts Collection

Yukon Archives has an extensive collection of Robert Service works in the Coutts Library. *The Spell of the Yukon* is the American title for Service's book of poetry that in Canada was called *Songs of a Sourdough*. Both versions were a commercial success.

YA, *The Spell of the Yukon and Other Verses*, by Robert Service, Edward Stern & Co, Philadelphia, 1907.
Robert C. Coutts collection, 811.52 ser 1907a c.1

by Robert W. Service

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catalogue and make available public records, private manuscripts, newspapers, maps and imprint sources that pertain to the history and development of the Yukon.

This mandate was seen as encompassing records relating not only to the Yukon, but also to those regions that border the territory and which are intricately connected to it (northern British Columbia, eastern and southeastern Alaska, the western Northwest Territories). The role and purpose of Yukon Archives has remained much the same over the years, although acquisition priorities have changed to reflect significant territorial, national and international events, issues, and concerns, including Yukon anniversaries, northern oil and gas exploration, and research on cold climates.

Archives and records management

In preparing his report, Ireland surveyed the volume of territorial government records in Whitehorse, calculating that it totalled 3,916 linear feet. He acknowledged that he may have missed some locations in Whitehorse, that he had not included several “records-producing activities” (such as land titles), and that additional records existed in the communities. Ireland estimated that approximately half of the records surveyed were eligible for transfer to a records centre and for appraisal to determine whether they warranted being retained by the Archives.

Progress was made in addressing these records with the passing of the *Archives Act*, which established the role of the

Territorial Archivist in determining the final disposition of Government of Yukon records.

The Act recognizes the close relationship between archives and records management and the need for Yukon Archives to be a key part of the government’s records management activities. The Act stipulates that no public record can be destroyed or permanently removed without the concurrence of the Archivist, and that anyone in the possession of a public record must deliver it to the Archivist on the request of the Minister or an authorized officer.

The government’s records management program continued to develop throughout 1972 and Records Management Regulations were adopted in 1973. The regulations created a Records Management Committee to advise on

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Visual finding aids being packed for shipment to one of the Yukon’s community libraries by Regional Services staff member, Joy Wickett. YA, Libraries & Archives Branch, 82/417, file 10 #2

Feature: Tidd Collection



Claude and Mary Tidd lived in the Yukon Territory during the lean years between the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897–98 and the construction of the Alaska Highway in the Second World War. The population of the territory fell drastically and there were few on hand to document the changes in Yukon culture. Claude, a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, came armed with his camera and an insatiable passion for photography. Mary was equally productive; an indefatigable correspondent, she sent many detailed accounts of life in the North back to her family in the United States. We are very fortunate to have the Tidds' records at Yukon Archives, which consist of manuscripts, films, phonograph recordings, and many precious photographs.

pt. 10 to (Page 1 - 2 of section)

The climate here seems to suit me 100% better than it did in England - the air is not so damp - we get more sun - light - and are higher, more open - is splendid, and looks improved in weight - now weighing 115 - a gain of 10 lbs. - which was just what I needed - to be able to live here - and not so high up, and get so much occid - that the time passes very rapidly.

Oh mamma - I wish you could come to visit us here - we have the dearest little home imaginable. Of course - in our school - it was very little - being a teachers' quarters - and in such an out of the way place - but we worked very hard - and are still working at it - but the change is remarkable. I would be a very enthusiastic and true friend - every day possible to help make it comfortable and convenient - and - now that we are seeing results - it is a joy to hear him say - a dozen times a day "I just love this place" - "I would rather be here than any place I know" - It is so difficult to what you are accustomed to, but - happy - etc. - etc. - Of course it is a

Top: Claude and Mary embracing on their wedding day in the centre of Fort Yukon. The wedding was a big event in the tiny community; almost the entire town came out to witness the nuptials of the Mountie and the nurse.

YA, Claude and Mary Tidd fonds #7873, "The Day Aug. 2, 1925"

Centre: Letter excerpt from Mary to her mother, 1927. YA, Claude and Mary Tidd fonds, 91/112, MSS 365, file 11

The Yukon Archives Library

The objectives of the *Archives Act* include the collection and preservation of books and other documentary material of general interest to the Yukon. Work to establish a reference library within Yukon Archives began as soon as the Act was passed and the Whitehorse Public Library building was expanded in 1972.

The Whitehorse Public Library gave Yukon Archives one copy of every title in its Yukon Room holdings, and the Archives continues to collect other library materials: books, pamphlets, newspapers and periodicals. Most notably, the purchase of the Robert Coutts Library in 1978 significantly expanded the quality and extent of the holdings of the Yukon Archives Library.

In 1988, Public Library Services and the Yukon Archives started to plan for the conversion of their card catalogues to automated format. In 1990, the Archives moved into its own modern facility and the library was again able to expand its holdings and improve public accessibility. With this, the Yukon Archives Library began to convert its card catalogue. By late 1992, an automated public access catalogue was available within the territory. This CD-ROM-based catalogue was used throughout the Yukon in community libraries, Whitehorse Public Library and Yukon Archives. By 1995, the catalogue was available for public access on the internet.

In 2002, as part of the Government of Yukon's reorganization, Yukon Archives was separated from Yukon Public Libraries and transferred to the Department of Tourism and Culture. The relationship between the territorial archives and libraries has remained strong, however. The Yukon Archives Library constantly improves public accessibility to its holdings by adding e-book links to its catalogue records, developing the Yukon Digital Library and by cataloguing and indexing the Yukon's community newspapers and periodicals.



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retention and disposal schedules and to approve the adoption of records management standards. Departments were responsible for managing their own records; the Territorial Archivist and other records management staff (hired as the program developed) would provide advice, expertise and assistance.

The Yukon Archives building

The remodelling and expansion of the six-year-old Library Services Branch building, in downtown Whitehorse, included space for a new Archives. The renovated building also included an enlarged reading room, an art gallery and the Yukon's Land Titles Office. The Archives was allocated 150 square metres of environmentally controlled space as well as offices and working rooms.

The Archives also secured 235 square metres of records storage space in the basement of a separate building. This space allowed the Archives to provide the necessary custody and security services for public records.

The official opening

In the early winter of 1972, after almost a year of construction, the Yukon Archives facility was complete. Invitations were sent throughout Canada to provincial archivists, librarians and historic sites officials, requesting their attendance at the unveiling of the "most up-to-date and comprehensive system of its type in Canada." Members of the press were given an advance tour of the facility; the Yukon Archives was officially opened to the public by Commissioner Jim Smith on December 10, 1972. Approximately 70 people attended as the Commissioner turned over the keys to the Archives to Brian Speirs, the Yukon's first Territorial Archivist. A steady stream of people came by all afternoon to see

In 1960, the S.S. Keno made its last trip down the Yukon River. These images are taken from the CBC film about the journey. YA, CBC, Footage from "Last Voyage of the Keno," 1960, 16mm, 16-20



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Yukon Potpourri

In September 1974, the Young Women’s Christian Organization (YWCA) in Whitehorse invited organizations to a community service fair to talk about ways to combat “cabin fever” during the coming winter. At the time, the Yukon Archives was a new organization working hard to reach Yukoners with its resources and services.

At the suggestion of the YWCA, the Archives presented a Yukon history course as part of its community outreach. The course was an informative and entertaining blend of heritage information called Yukon Potpourri. It involved five Sunday evening lectures and launched in January 1975. The topics included Kluane National Park & Reserve, Yukon highways, First Nations history, White Pass and Yukon Route and mining. Elders, seniors and others who had lived Yukon history shared their stories and the Archives contributed archival films, photographs and other sources.

Yukon Archives staff set up a table with treasures from the vault: copies of documents, photographs, films, maps and newspapers. People saw photos of family members or marvelled at places and events from the territory’s storied past. The scrutiny confirmed the intense interest in Yukon history shared by old-timers and newcomers alike.



Linda Johnson, Kitty Smith and Judy Gingell at the YWCA.
YA, Libraries & Archives Branch, 82/417, file 3 #1

The Archives anticipated 30 to 40 people for the first session at Whitehorse Public Library, but a half hour before start time all the seats were occupied and there was a line-up out the door. The operation shifted to the YWCA gym. The following Sunday, at 40 below, that event attracted a crowd as well. Archie Gillespie wrote in the *Yukon News*: “Congrats to the Yukon Archives for their potpourri of speakers, films and documents, spreading the spell of the Yukon over the cold months of Jan. and Feb. This series is really something!”

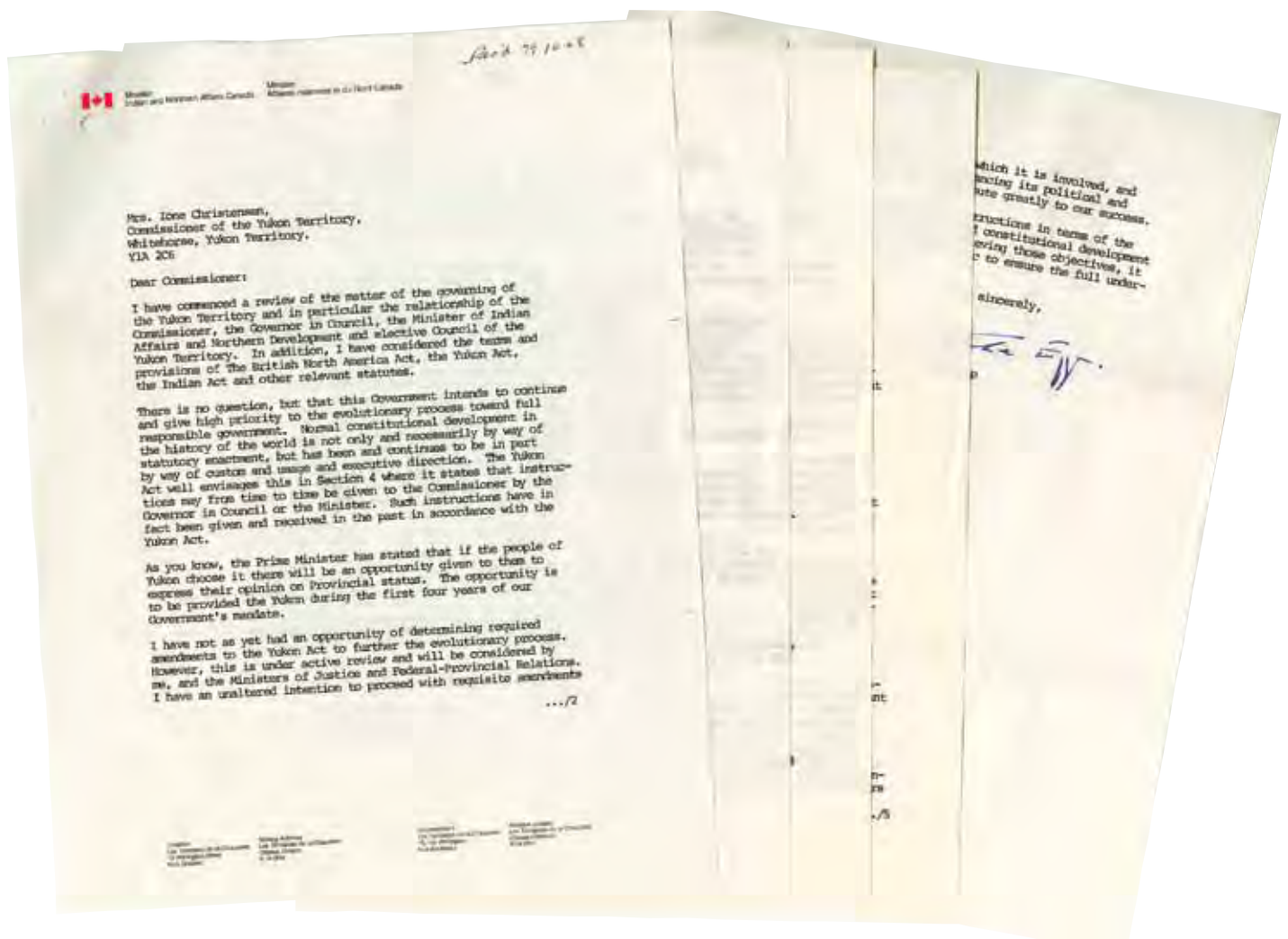
Yukon Potpourri ran for four seasons. First Nations Elder Kitty Smith recounted meeting non-aboriginal people for the first time in the 1890s. George Dawson and Don Jones talked about Yukon sternwheelers. G.I. Cameron described RCMP winter patrols by dog team; his wife Martha recalled chasing a wolf out of their doghouse with a broom. Victoria Faulkner told stories of Dawson’s social and political life. Pauline LePage remembered arriving at husband Happy’s wood camp as a young bride in the 1920s; their 30-square-metre log cabin had one window and hundreds of mice.

CBC Whitehorse broadcast the series throughout the Yukon. Most listeners had never heard Yukon history told by the people who had been part of it. Many listeners were inspired to contribute their records to the Archives.

Feature: The Epp Letter

In 1979, Jake Epp, the federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada, wrote to Ione Christensen, the Commissioner of the Yukon, issuing new instructions that considerably reduced the Commissioner's powers. The significance of the Epp letter to the Yukon's constitutional development has been a matter of some debate, but it is a key document in the history of Yukon governance. Many copies and different versions of the Epp letter can be found in government files; this original signed document was transferred to the Archives as part of the government records management program in 2001.

YA, 2001/164, Box 510/18



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the new facility and view displays of Yukon archival material.

Structure in the early years

From 1972 to 1983, Yukon Archives was part of the Library Services Branch within the Department of Tourism, Conservation and Information Services. The branch also administered the art gallery that was part of the Whitehorse Public Library. In 1974–75, the branch was restructured in order to create divisions that could better address the growing amount of technical and media-specific work required. In 1977–78, the branch was moved to the Department of Information Resources (later renamed Library and Information Resources). Yukon Archives became the Yukon Archives and Records Services Branch.

The initial placement of Yukon Archives and its subsequent movements within the government reflect its broad mandate and diverse interests. In its first decade

Yukon Archives was joined, moved and recombined with a variety of other government functions or services. The desire to find the most appropriate placement for it continued for the next thirty years.

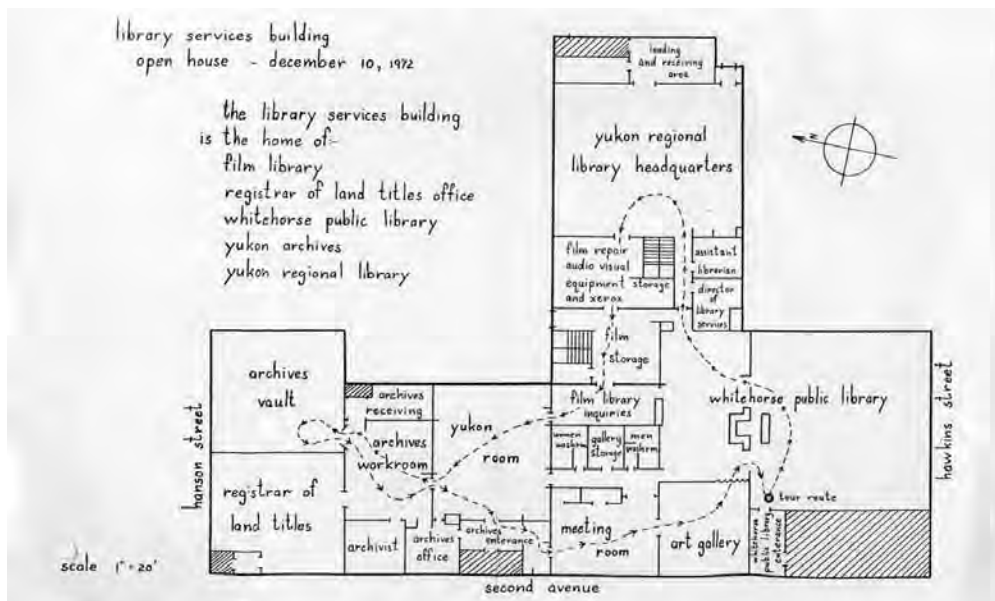
Early staffing and growth

In September 1971, a Records Administrator was appointed to assume operational responsibility for records management. Brian Speirs left the Archives in 1976; Linda Johnson, hired as an archivist in 1974, succeeded him as Territorial Archivist. Diane Chisholm and Miriam McTiernan, both future Territorial Archivists, began working at Yukon Archives in the 1970s.

Advocacy

Commissioner Smith continued to be a strong advocate for the Yukon Archives. In early 1973, he appealed to the Vancouver Yukoners' Association, speaking to the 500 people in attendance about the

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*Walking tour maps for
the Library Services
building Open House
December 10, 1972.*

Yukon Archives, Reference
Room search file

Sternwheelers

Before the Yukon's network of highways was built, river travel was a main mode of transportation. In 1869, the small steam-powered vessel, the *Yukon*, was the first commercial vessel on the Yukon River.

It wasn't until the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897–98 that the first sternwheelers appeared on the Yukon River between Whitehorse and Dawson. By 1900, 23 sternwheelers were operating on the upper Yukon River, but only a handful of them remained in operation until the 1950s.

Eventually, highways replaced rivers as the primary travel routes in the territory. The *Keno* and the *Klondike* became dry-docked Parks Canada exhibits, reminders of a bygone era. Some ships have been lost to fire, including the *Whitehorse* and *Casca* in Whitehorse and the *Tutshi* in Carcross.

The Yukon Archives holds a significant number of photographs of sternwheelers as well as other records relating to their construction, operation and retirement.



Top: Lounge of the *Klondike*, circa 1957. This sternwheeler was launched in 1937.

YA, Rolf Hougen fonds, 2009/81 #837

Centre: Moving the *Klondike* in 1966 from the Whitehorse shipyards to its current resting place as a Parks Canada National Historic Site. The boat was moved on wood logs greased with eight tonnes of soap flakes.

YA, Mervyn-Wood family fonds, 98/87 #17

Left: Workers pose on sternwheelers *Whitehorse*, *Dawson* and *Selkirk* after construction was completed, Whitehorse shipyards, 1901.

YA, H.C. Barley fonds #5550

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importance of Yukon Archives to the future of the territory. Smith encouraged members of the association to contact Territorial Archivist Brian Speirs to donate records important to understanding the Yukon's past. He also encouraged them to record their impressions and experiences of life in the north and to give these to the Archives as well. His appeal was successful, leading to several donations to Yukon Archives. He also set an example by donating several rare pamphlets and other records in 1976.

Outreach

In its early years, Yukon Archives took several steps to familiarize Yukoners with its work and with the types of resources that it was acquiring for preservation and research use. Staff held frequent film showings in Whitehorse and throughout the Yukon. This reflected the desire of Yukon Archives to ensure that it was a truly territorial institution, not just a Whitehorse facility. These well-attended community events allowed people to reconnect with their history; they also helped Yukon Archives staff identify the people, places and events depicted in the films. On occasion, films were shown in conjunction with International Archives Week.

The Archives also produced an annual exhibition of photographs, maps, newspapers and manuscripts from its collections. These included *Whitehorse Remembered* (1975), celebrating the 25th anniversary of the city as the Yukon's capital; *Days Gone By* (1976), depicting Yukon First Nations peoples

over the previous 80 years; *Lodes of Silver* (1977), documenting the communities of Mayo, Elsa and Keno; *The Force in the Yukon* (1978), chronicling the mounted police in the territory from 1894 to 1938; and *Safe Harbour* (1979), the history of Herschel Island. The exhibitions were held in Whitehorse and circulated throughout the territory and to other locations in Canada.

"The Voice from the Vault" was a monthly column in the *Yukon News*, a local newspaper. It began on November 5, 1975, and kept Yukoners abreast of Archives' acquisitions, programs and services. The column was begun by Brian Speirs and continued by Linda Johnson.

The popular and long-running Yukon Potpourri series began in January 1975.

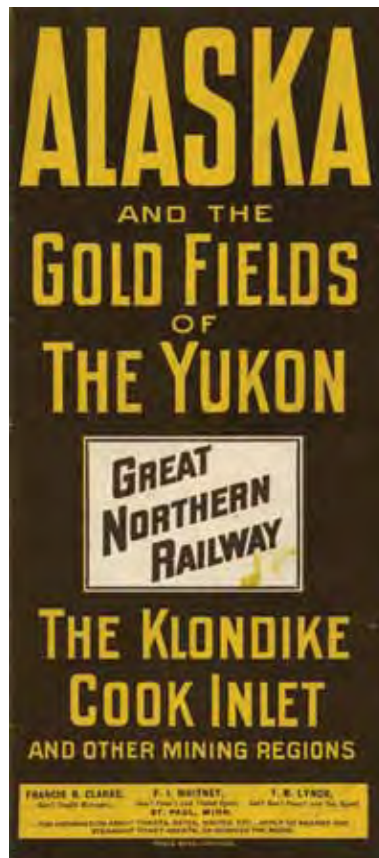
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Feature: Gold Rush Brochures

Commercially produced brochures and maps such as these were produced in large numbers following the discovery of gold on Bonanza Creek on August 17, 1896. Their ostensible purpose was to provide stampeders with objective information about the Klondike and various routes to the gold fields. Closer examination of the maps, however, suggests that their real aims were not necessarily so transparent or altruistic. Manipulation of scale, projection and fonts — as well as blatant misrepresentation and inaccuracy — indicate that profit was the likely motivation.

Left: YA, PAM 1897-80c; Centre: YA, PAM 1897-82c; Right: YA, PAM 1897-82c "The Klondike Mining Region." 1897



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This annual lecture program had presentations by experts on various topics of interest to Yukoners. The diverse subjects included First Nations crafts, Laura Berton (mother of Pierre) and Martha Louise Black, game management in the Yukon, Dawson City, the *S.S. Klondike*, early aviation and farming in the territory. A joint initiative of Yukon Archives and the local *Young Women's Christian Association*, the series was an early example of the community partnerships that became increasingly important to the Archives.

Visual finding aids

In July 1975, work began on compiling a visual finding aid of catalogued photographs. More than 5,000 photographs were photocopied and arranged by subject headings. In many cases the same photograph was photocopied and filed numerous times, depending on how many subject headings it had been given. The project was completed in November and copies were provided to institutions such as MacBride Museum, Dawson City Library, Yukon regional libraries (circulating), Alaska University Archives in Fairbanks, Alaska State Library in Juneau, Vancouver Public Library, Provincial Archives of British Columbia in Victoria, University of Washington Libraries in Seattle, and Public Archives of Canada (PAC) in Ottawa.

As new photographs were catalogued, updates to the visual finding aid were created and sent to the institutions that had originally received copies. This system continued until the finding aids contained almost 14,000 images. The growth of the

photograph collections and the labour required for individual subject indexing of images eventually made it impossible to maintain the visual finding aids, although they remain a key research tool.

Return of records from Ottawa

While the Archives was being planned, the Yukon Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner and the National Archivist in Ottawa carried out lengthy negotiations on the return of government records to the Yukon. The records, comprising approximately 37 linear metres, had been temporarily deposited in the PAC because there was no secure place in the Yukon to house them. Yukon officials had been assured that the records would be sent back once the Archives was established and an appropriate facility was completed.

With these two conditions met, arrangements were made to return the records. They included a wealth of information: General Correspondence Files, 1896–1934 (regarding churches, townsites, education, post offices, transportation, mines and industries, surveys, newspapers, exhibitions, associations and government administration); Commissioner's Office Letterbooks, 1899–1902; Gold Commissioner's Office Letterbooks, 1899–1914 and 1920–1924; Comptroller's Office Letterbooks, 1899–1902; and Territorial Court records, 1898–1906.

PAC also agreed that Mining Recorder files — although they were federal records — should be retained in the Yukon rather than transferred to Ottawa. Yukon

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Winter recreation



Gertrude Siedel and Gudrun Sparling, Copper King, February 1943.
YA, Gudrun Sparling collection, 91/15 #53

In the Yukon, for a good portion of the year outdoor recreation means winter recreation. Skating, tobogganing, sledding, skiing, dog-sledding and snowshoeing have all been popular since the territory's early days, first as hobbies and activities and later as organized sports.

Yukoners have always been adept at making the most of

their leisure time. Dawson had an Amateur Athletic Association and a hockey league by 1902. The Northwest Mounted Police had a rink in their compound at Whitehorse by the early 1900s. Over the years, winter sports and competitions have improved people's athletic skills, fostered friendships and helped build communities.

For generations, many First Nations people welcomed the winter solstice as a time when the sun began to move back toward their home. People continue to celebrate winter at events like the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous Festival, the Frostbite Music Festival and the *Rendez-vous de la Francophonie*. These celebrations bring people together and celebrate the skills and talent that are found here.

Living in a cold climate requires skill and ingenuity, particularly for people living on the land. Severe temperatures, little or no daylight and scarce game are just some of the challenges they face. The skills and stamina necessary for survival were well suited to athletic competition, and endeavours like dog-sledding, snowshoeing and shooting eventually developed into organised sports. Dog-sled races continue to be a lively component of winter sports throughout the territory.

Yukoners of all ages make the most of the winter months by embracing the season. Evidence of their enthusiastic participation in sports, volunteerism at events and attendance at competitions can be found in a variety of collections at Yukon Archives.



Bella Bruce and Josephine Netro, Old Crow, ca. 1965. Oblate priest Father Mouchet developed a cross-country ski program for young people in Old Crow in the 1960s.
YA, Father Mouchet fonds, 91/51R #110

from page 22

Archives received approximately 56 linear metres of Dawson mining records from the period 1895–1971 as well as records from the Whitehorse, Mayo, and Watson Lake Mining Recorder offices. They include placer and quartz mining records; the former is by far the more extensive, and includes all the creeks and tributaries in the Klondike gold fields.

The placer mining recorders series consists of such records as applications for grants and renewal grants for placer mining, registered documents related to placer mining, certificates of work, record books for placer mining claims, indexes of original locators and free miners certificates, royalty ledger books and water rights record books. Given the importance and impact of mining to the development of the territory, the research value of these records is tremendous. Their retention in the territory was a great early success for the Yukon Archives.

Early acquisitions

Once Yukon Archives had become established, donors had an institution and expert staff in the territory who could preserve and care for their records. Consequently, the Archives made

numerous large and significant acquisitions of important records in its early years.

In August 1974, the Yukon Order of Pioneers (YOOP) donated its records – from 1894 to the 1960s – to Yukon Archives. The records included minutes of meetings, correspondence, membership applications, and other documents of great significance to Yukon history. Yukon Grand Lodge President Laurent Cyr saw the Archives as the appropriate institution to care for the files after a fire at the Dawson City Lodge in 1967 destroyed some records. Cyr also encouraged YOOP members who had records in their possession to donate them to the Archives.

In 1975, Yukon Archives acquired 19 linear metres of White Pass and Yukon Route records. Most of the records were donated by the Alaska State Library in Juneau; others came via the Yukon Historical Society. The records provide a comprehensive overview of the company and its operations.

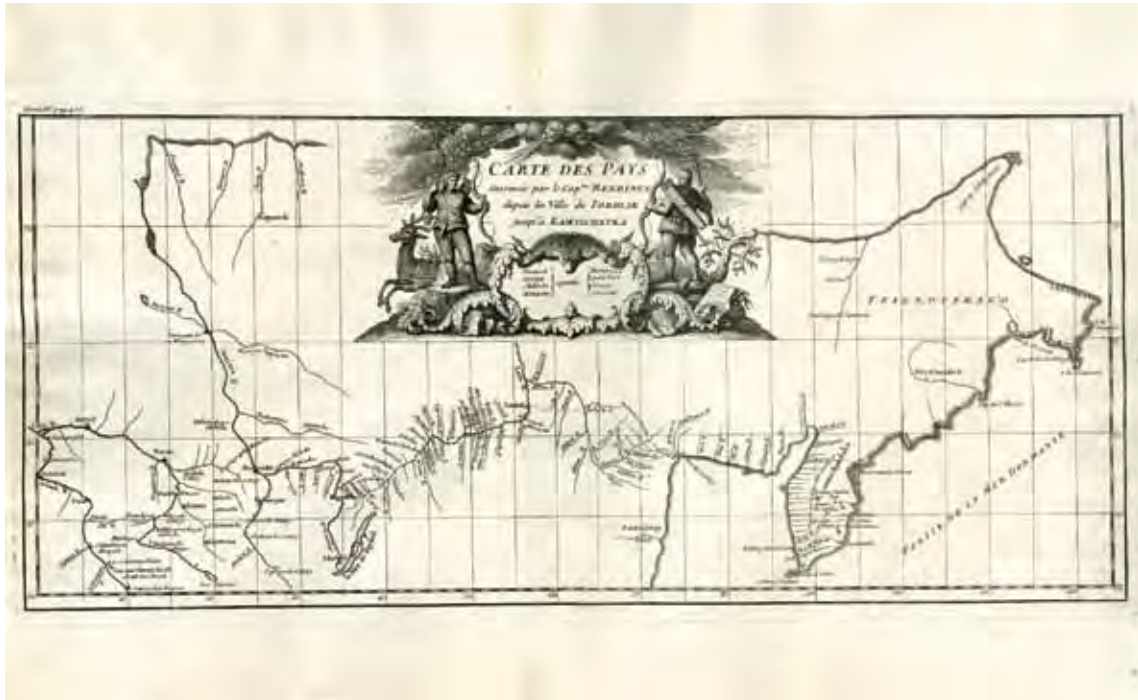
On September 27, 1978, the Archives became the owner of the Coutts Collection. This compilation of thousands of books, periodicals, maps, memoirs and

photographs was purchased from Robert Coutts, a resident of Atlin, British Columbia and a longtime student and collector of Yukon history. This collection is one of the most comprehensive compilations of gold rush and Yukon historical materials anywhere; its acquisition was a considerable achievement.



Two Klondike gold miners checking a sluicebox, circa 1898. Dawson mining records were returned to YA in the 1970s. YA, Gillis family fonds #4512

Feature: Maps and Atlases



The oldest item in the holdings of the Archives is this atlas, which details Danish navigator Vitus Bering's voyage through the strait that now bears his name. This French folio edition of 1735 contains Bering's report of his expedition and his manuscript map of present-day Alaska. YA, Rare Atlas #1



Left: This 1897 map promotes the so-called overland route to the Klondike via Edmonton, the Mackenzie River and the Peel River. YA, PAM 1897-85c

Above: San Francisco's Alaska Trade Committee promote their city as a departure point to the Klondike; this 1897 map gives the false impression that San Francisco is close to the gold fields. YA, PAM 1897-88c.1

Trivia

Number of hours Yukon Archives was open to the public in 2010: 1,777

Ratio of male to female employees at Yukon Archives: 3 to 7

Greatest number of archival accessions in a year: 568

Linear extent of mobile archival vault storage: 7,809 m

Linear extent of processed government and corporate records: 878 m

Volume of a Records Centre banker's box: 0.0285 m³

Thickness of the nitrile gloves provided for handling photographs in the Research Room: 4-mil

Area of the largest item in Yukon Archives' holdings: 6.93 m²

Weight of nitrate negatives in Yukon Archives' holdings: 5.2 kg

Last photograph number catalogued before method of numbering was changed: 18,817

Average number of photocopied pages provided to researchers each month: 1,100

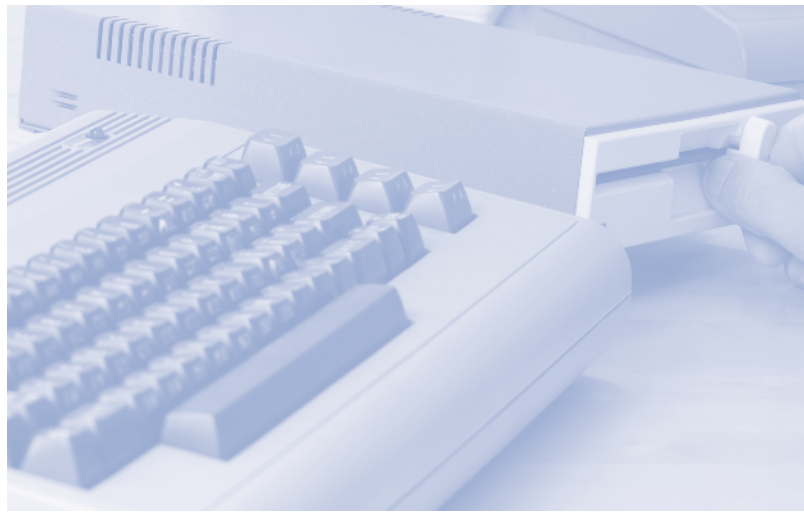
Number of photograph reproductions provided to researchers since 2000: 25,000

Average number of formal requests received through the *Access to Information & Protection of Privacy Act* each year: 25

Yukon Archives is open 35 hours per week on Tuesdays–Saturdays • Staff list from June 2011 indicates 6 male and 14 female staff members • A large backlog was accessioned in 1982 • 7,809 shelves in 1,114 bays in 87 aisles, roughly the distance from Yukon Archives to the Whitehorse Dam • September 2011 vault space statistics: 50 m taller than the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa in Dubai, UAE • A box can hold 3,500 letter-sized pages • N-Dex disposable gloves • Item is a genealogy chart for people of Tlingit and Haida descent (R-273) • Yukon Archives possesses approximately 1,680 nitrate negatives, each about 3.25 g • Erik Nielsen fonds (the method of sequentially numbering all photographs ceased in the 1980s; photographs are now numbered sequentially within their own accession) • Since April 1997, more than 185,000 photocopies have been produced • This is equivalent to approximately 1/6 of Yukon Archives photograph holdings • Since 2001 more than 250 formal ATIPP requests have been completed by Yukon Archives

CHAPTER

3



The 1980s



ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

YUKON ARCHIVES underwent frequent and significant organizational change in the early 1980s. The Yukon Archives and Records Services Branch had been responsible for the government's records management program since 1977. The intent was to ensure coordination and consistency between archives and records programs. The branch, a part of the Department of Library and Information Resources until 1982, became part of a new Department of Heritage and Cultural Resources. The following year the Yukon Archives and Records Services Branch was dissolved, and the records management function was transferred to the Supply Services Branch in the Department of Government Services. Yukon Archives — now without responsibility for records management — became a branch of the new Department of Tourism, Heritage and Cultural Resources.

In 1983–84 Yukon Archives became part of the Library and Archives Branch in a new Department of Tourism, Recreation and Culture. In 1985 this branch was transferred to the Department of Education, where it remained until 2002.

Space demands

By the mid-1980s, the young Yukon Archives was already pressed for space due to a rapid increase in the number and size of its collections. To alleviate some of this stress the Archives expanded into the public library area; it also acquired the floor space previously allocated to the Land Titles Office. In addition, Yukon Archives secured off-site storage with the audio-visual section of the branch. In the late 1980s the growing demand for space led to plans for the construction of a purpose-built archives facility.

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Education Minister Piers McDonald and Government Leader Tony Penikett at the site of the Yukon Archives, 1988.

YA, Libraries and Archives Branch, 82/417, file 3 #26



Territorial Archivist: Miriam McTier

In my term as Territorial Archivist, the construction of the current archives building stands out as an extremely satisfying accomplishment. About a month after my appointment, I was asked to work with the architects on the new building. Over the next six years, we went through many stops and starts, but the building was completed on time and on budget.

Another major accomplishment was the Yukon's first *Access to Information Act*. Very few jurisdictions in Canada had such legislation at the time, and it was a challenge to develop an effective Act without examples to provide guidance. The Yukon Archives was an important part of the Act's implementation.

One of the most memorable acquisitions during my tenure was the Erik Nielsen papers, since he was such an important local and national politician. Nielsen was always very supportive of having his papers at the Yukon Archives, but the sensitivity of the collection posed many challenges. Indeed, I was required to obtain federal security clearance in order to accept the donation.

Another much smaller but memorable acquisition came about through serendipity. Tucked into the back pages of a book we had acquired was a letter from NWMP Inspector Charles Constantine's wife, Henrietta (MSS 129). Written in the 1920s, it described at first hand what had happened in the early days of the gold rush.

Probably my greatest challenge came in 1982. The territory was badly hit by the recession. Public servants took a ten percent pay cut and had to take every other Friday off. The Archives had no money for travel or supplies. As always, however, we came up with innovative solutions and survived that bleak time.

To this day, I look back at my time as Territorial Archivist with pride and affection; it was my most rewarding archives leadership position. The staff members were a great group of people, totally committed to the work and the community. We were able to interact with our community in many engaging ways, including travelling displays, film nights in community halls and speaker presentations. We also had fun and shared our families and our lives over Monday coffee breaks and home-baked goods.

1980–1990

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Staffing

In September 1980, Territorial Archivist Linda Johnson resigned and was replaced by archives staff member Miriam McTiernan. In the mid-1980s the position of Territorial Archivist was subsumed within the responsibilities of the Director of Libraries and Archives Branch. McTiernan remained as Territorial Archivist (Director, Libraries and Archives) throughout the 1980s, resigning in March 1990 to take a position as Assistant Deputy Minister with the Department of Government Services.

With the creation of the position of Director, Libraries and Archives Branch in the mid-1980s, another senior position was needed to oversee administration and management. This position — Assistant Territorial Archivist — was filled by Diane Chisholm, who had been with Yukon Archives since shortly after it was founded.

During the 1980s, Yukon Archives hired a First Nation Programs Reference Assistant, its first position under the Native Training Corps. Yukon Archives continues to hire through this program and to provide internships and training in archival theory and practice for First Nations people.

Growth of donations

Throughout the 1970s, public awareness increased about Yukon Archives and it became known as a place where records important to the territory's history could be donated. Collections from donors were acquired at a pace that exceeded the Archives' ability to process them.

In September 1981, with space at a premium, Yukon Archives implemented a focused approach to deal with the backlog. The Archives closed to the public each Monday, allowing staff to spend the day processing the collections. To this day, Yukon Archives remains closed on Mondays in order to allow staff to attend to an ongoing — and growing — backlog.

Northern Oil and Gas Action Program

The federal government's Northern Oil and Gas Action Program (NOGAP) was established in 1984. This federal/territorial program comprised socio-economic, environmental and technical research and planning and supported policy and regulatory readiness for northern

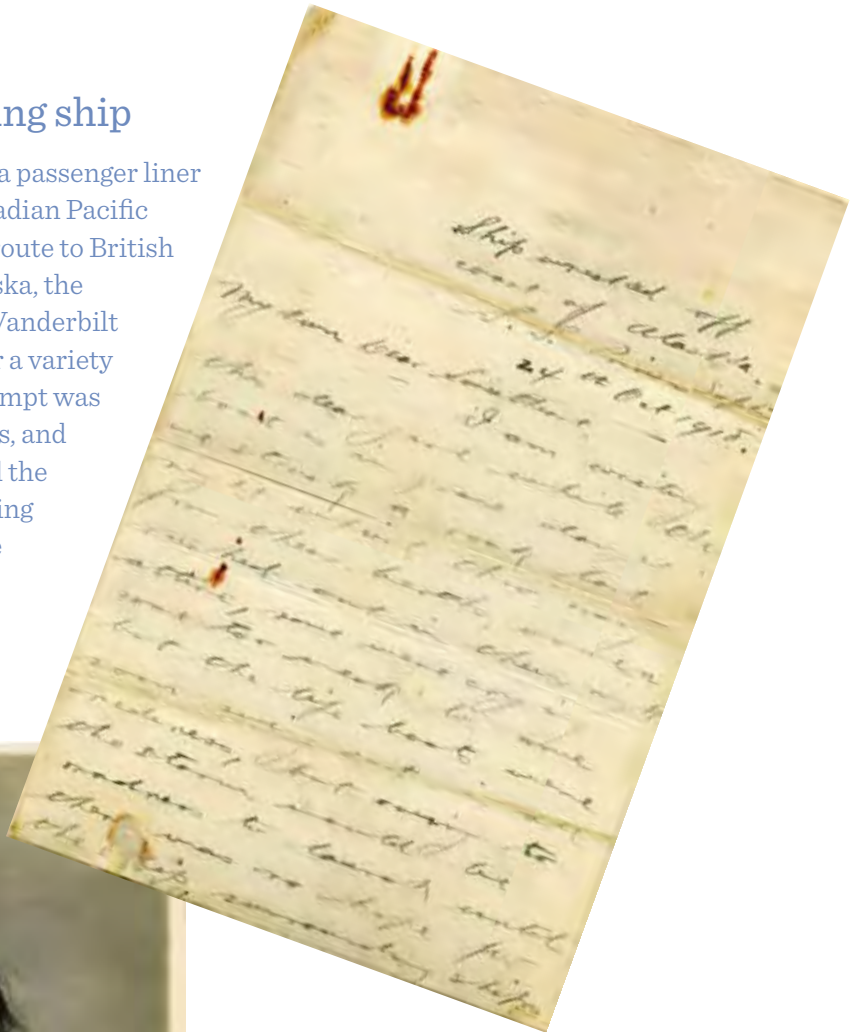
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A letter from a sinking ship

The *S.S. Princess Sophia* was a passenger liner in the coastal fleet of the Canadian Pacific Railway. In October 1918, en route to British Columbia from Skagway, Alaska, the *Sophia* became grounded on Vanderbilt Reef near Juneau, Alaska. For a variety of reasons, no immediate attempt was made to rescue the passengers, and storms and heavy seas caused the ship to sink in the early morning hours of October 25. All of the 353 people on the vessel died, including many Yukoners.

Below: Portrait of Dorothy Seddon.
YA, Dorothy Seddon fonds, 87/22 #43



On board the vessel was John Maskell of Dawson City, on his way home to England to marry his fiancée, Dorothy Burgess. Aware of his coming fate, Maskell spent his final hours writing to his sweetheart, telling her what had happened and making his final will. When his body was recovered, the letter was found and forwarded to his “wife who was to be.” The letter, along with associated documents and photographs, was donated to Yukon Archives in 1986. Additional records from this tragic story are available from the John Maskell estate file at Yukon Archives.

Above: The first page of a letter written by John Maskell to his fiancée. The rust stains and washed-out appearance of the writing are evidence of the letter's exposure to water.
YA, Dorothy Seddon fonds, 86/49, MSS 197

Alaska Highway and CANOL

The building of the Alaska Highway in 1942–43 was an enormous construction project that involved both civilians and military staff. Many of these individuals documented their experiences. They wrote diaries, took photographs, made films, drew maps and recorded the sounds of their experiences. They captured the challenges of cutting a 2,400-km route through an isolated and inaccessible region. They also recorded the after-hours activities of the road crews and support staff, the impact of the construction on the Yukon's land and people, and many other aspects of this huge project.

Yukon Archives has a vast number of records pertaining to all aspects of the Alaska Highway, from its conception and creation through to its use and maintenance in more recent times. These records have been acquired by the Archives through transfers from government, by purchase and as bequests and donations from private individuals. Many generous individuals and companies have donated their records to Yukon Archives to ensure that they are preserved and to make them accessible to the public.



Cutting the ribbon at the dedication ceremony opening the Alaska Highway at Soldier's Summit on the shores of Kluane Lake, November 20, 1942. YA, Aubrey Simmons fonds, 82/192 #9



George Blondin and Little Edward Blondin, Sheldon Lake, 1943. The two men were hired to find a route for the Canol pipeline from Norman Wells over the Macmillan Pass to Ross River.

YA, Finnie Family fonds, 81/21 #688

The Archives also has records from the federal and territorial governments pertaining to their responsibilities for the highway, as well as microfilm copies of records from the United States National Archives and Records Administration.

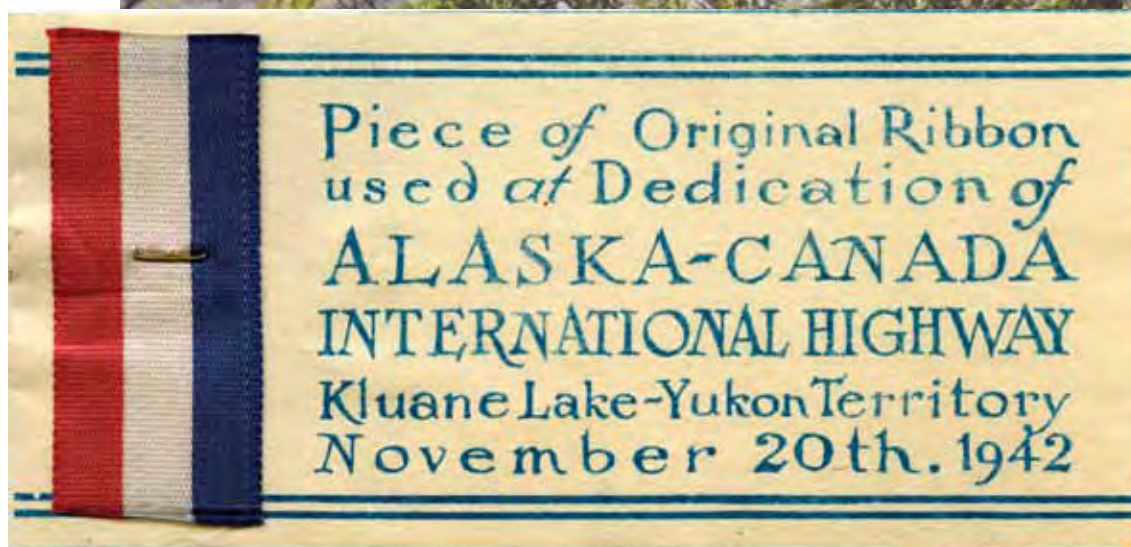
The CANOL Pipeline and the Northwest Staging Route, wartime projects related to the Alaska Highway, are also well-documented in the holdings of the Archives. Researchers have used these records to study the impacts of the massive projects on Yukon's First Nations people and the environment, and the changing role of women in society.

Archives staff have launched a range of initiatives to provide access to these records, including a web exhibit in the style of the golden age of comic books.

Feature: Alaska Highway



CHAPTER 3



Above: Laying a corduroy road on top of wet ground, ca. 1943. YA, Phillip Neal fonds, 93/9R #68

Below: A piece of ribbon from the dedication ceremony at Soldier's Summit, Nov. 20, 1942.

YA, Aubrey Simmons fonds, 82/192 MSS 122

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hydrocarbon production. From 1984 to the early 1990s (with some breaks) Yukon Archives received a significant amount of funding from NOGAP to staff new library positions. The Beaufort Librarian and Beaufort Library Assistant were responsible for identifying and purchasing publications pertaining to northern hydrocarbon development in the territory, cataloguing these acquisitions into the Yukon Archives holdings, and compiling and publishing bibliographies of the available materials. A broad interpretation — including social, environmental, heritage and land-use issues — was given to northern hydrocarbon development. By the end of the project Yukon Archives had developed a significant hydrocarbon library, including two annotated bibliographies with more than 2,000 entries for use by researchers, members of the business community, interest groups and the general public.



Archivist Miriam McTiernan in the Archives' vault in 1980. YA, Libraries and Archives Branch, 86/19, file 11 #32

Access to Information

The *Access to Information Act* came into effect in April 1984. This legislation created a new and important role for Yukon Archives. Under the Act, the Archives was the single point of entry for people who wished to submit an access to information request to the government. After receiving a request, the Archives would assist the person with identifying the records likely to be of interest and the department that would probably have these records; ensure that deadlines for response were adhered to; inform applicants of departments' decisions regarding access; and inform the person of his or her rights under the Act.

To familiarize the public with the new Act, Yukon Archives produced a brochure for distribution throughout the territory. The Archives also completed a multi-year project to produce an access guide that assisted the public to identify records that are relevant to their searches. Yukon Archives retained these same responsibilities under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* of 1996. With the government's 2002 reorganization, however, these responsibilities were transferred to the Records Manager in the Information and Communications Technology Division.

Yukon Council of Archives

In 1985, the Territorial Archivist represented the Yukon at the formative meeting of the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA). With the founding of this national body, it was recognized that a Yukon council was required to coordinate the growth and development

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Yukon gardens

When people think about the North, visions of vast, wild lands are more commonly invoked than images of gardens. But there is plenty of evidence at Yukon Archives of efforts to cultivate the territory's land.

Growing non-indigenous edibles and decorative greenery in northern climates has a unique set of challenges, but can be incredibly rewarding. Many people take pleasure in learning about and adapting to these challenges in order to encourage crops to explode during the long daylight hours of summer. Northern climates have a short but intense season for gardening.

Finding records relating to gardening in the Yukon has its own set of challenges. Other than more obvious groupings of documents that revolve around the subject of gardening, such as a donation by Whitehorse's Downtown Urban Gardeners Society (DUGS) in 2001, records that document gardening activities in the Yukon require a fair bit of research to unearth. This is because the Archives aims to keep records of a particular creator together and apart from those of other creators, whether the records are from an individual, corporation, government department, or some other entity. Unless gardening was a central function of that entity, such as DUGS, a researcher would have to do a lot of digging to find these records.



Top: Mary Tidd, Ross River, 1930.

YA, Claude and Mary Tidd fonds #7959

Centre: Hand-tinted photo of bumper cabbage crop

in Dawson City, ca. 1925. YA, M.L. Black collection #3271

Above: Garden near Teslin, ca. 1925.

YA, Freddie Johnston fonds, 79/119 #59



Most of the records that an archives acquires are already arranged and organized in some manner. Archives staff do their best to not interfere with these systems to keep context and original order intact. Archives differ from libraries and museums for precisely this reason, since those institutions select and group their collections for the purposes of developing themes and subject areas.

Left: Poster created by Gail Eckert as promotion for the Mayo Local Improvement District Beautification Contest in 1978.

YA, Village of Mayo fonds, 84/67, P-284



Feature: E.J. Hamacher

E.J. Hamacher arrived on the shores of the Yukon River in Whitehorse in 1900. He lived in the Yukon for the remainder of his life, until his death in 1935. He became known as “The Whitehorse Photographer,” with his studio in a small, canvas wall tent on Main Street at East half, Lot 4 in Block 16. The scope of his work includes both conventional and exploratory approaches to photography. He produced pleasing images that conformed to traditional studio subjects and conventions, as well as many images that are well situated within a pictorialist tradition, which sought expressions of photography as artistic practice through romanticizing the image. Yukon Archives is delighted to have many of Hamacher’s glass plate negatives and prints in its holdings.



Studio portrait of unidentified woman with dog.
YA, E.J. Hamacher fonds (Margaret and Rolf Hougen collection), 2002/118 #555

Above: Women in Miles Canyon. YA, E.J. Hamacher fonds (Margaret and Rolf Hougen collection), 2002/118 #1091

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of the archival network in the territory. To this end, Yukon Archives participated in founding meetings of the Yukon Council of Archives (YCA) during 1988–89, working on drafting the constitution of the new body and encouraging its registration as a society.

CCA and YCA have made a significant impact on the ability of Yukon archival institutions to develop and support archival programs. Since 1986, Yukon archival institutions have received close to \$1.3 million in direct funding from CCA. These grants were matched by direct and in-kind contributions from the applicant institutions. A great variety of projects have been undertaken by member institutions, including training, conservation needs assessments, and arrangement and description projects. The member institutions of YCA include Council of Yukon First Nations, Dawson City Museum, MacBride Museum of Yukon History, Teslin Tlingit Council, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin Government, Yukon Archives and Yukon College.

Since the early days of YCA, Yukon Archives has contributed additional funds to help the society reach its goals. YCA has generally used these funds to assist the CCA in supporting the Yukon Archival Advisory Program, a service that provides help to member institutions for all aspects of developing their archival programs. Yukon Archives has also participated in the society's grants committee, reviewing projects from member institutions and

forwarding them to the national body with recommendations for funding.

Public programming and outreach

During the 1980s, Yukon Archives continued to produce a number of guides, bibliographies and other finding aids to facilitate access to its rapidly growing holdings. In 1983–84 two bibliographies were created: one listed Yukon Archives sources pertaining to Martha Louise Black and was used extensively by CBC television during the production of a documentary film about this famous Yukoner; the other was an annotated compilation of materials relevant to the Whitehorse Copper Belt.

Other bibliographies compiled during this time focused on the Dalton Trail and First Nations history. Finding aids were created for records from a number of communities, including Haines Junction, Watson Lake, Faro and Dawson City. Finding aids were also compiled for records of the Anglican Church and for the Arctic Winter Games Corporation, which donated its records to the Archives in 1985–86.

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Department of Information Resources staff party, November 1980. YA, Libraries and Archives Branch, 82/417, file 2 #4

Mining Records: Creek books

One of the more frequently consulted groups of records at Yukon Archives is “Series 10” — records of Canada’s Northern Affairs Program, Mining Recorders Records (Placer), which form a part of the larger group of Central Registry Files of the Government of Yukon.

This important group of records comprises more than two hundred books, giving access by creek and claim number to many of the other classes of records that were maintained by the Mining Recorder. These Record Books for Placer Mining Claims, 1896-1971 are more commonly referred to as the “Creek Books.”

Typically, each major placer creek has one or more books, with a page for each claim on the creek. The middle of the book was reserved for the first — or discovery — claim on the creek; all other registered claims were numbered 1, 2, 3, etc., either upstream (above) or downstream (below) from discovery and entered before or after the middle pages depending on where they were situated in relation to discovery. In some cases separate books were used for claims upstream (black indexes) and downstream (red indexes) from the discovery claim.

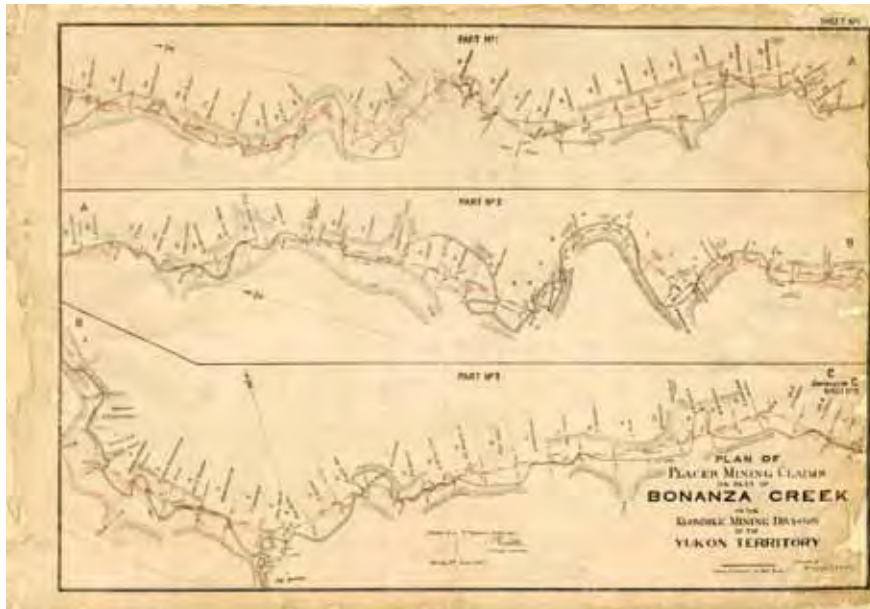
Each specific claim page records all of the various transactions, owners, mortgages, renewals, liens, etc., that were registered against that claim. These entries were frequently cross-referenced with the appropriate documents in related sub series: applications for grants, registered document numbers, certificates of renewal, and certificates of work.

Series 10 is a fascinating example of government record-keeping and is of great value to researchers. The Creek Books and associated records are heavily used by genealogists and miners. Genealogists are interested in relatives who worked on a claim and whose name and activities are recorded in the various documents; miners are usually concerned with tracing the history of a specific claim.

This page from the Bonanza Creek claims record book shows George Carmack's claim No. 1 Below Discovery.

YA, Series 10 Mining Recorders Records (Placer), sub-series 1-7 Record Books for Placer Mining Claims, GOV 2, page 2

Feature: Mining Records – Klondike Gold Rush



This map lists each miner's name and claim number for part of Bonanza Creek, as surveyed by William Ogilvie, Dominion Land Surveyor (later, Commissioner of the Yukon) in 1897.

YA, Plan of Placer Mining Claims on Part of Bonanza Creek in the Klondike Mining Division of the Yukon Territory, surveyor W. M. Ogilvie D.L.S., 1897, map # H-307

Index of Original Locators, Placer Claims.					65
NAME	SECTION	DATE	CLAIM NO.	REMARKS	
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	1	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	2	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	3	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	4	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	5	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	6	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	7	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	8	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	9	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	10	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	11	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	12	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	13	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	14	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	15	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	16	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	17	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	18	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	19	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	20	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	21	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	22	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	23	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	24	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	25	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	26	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	27	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	28	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	29	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	30	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	31	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	32	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	33	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	34	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	35	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	36	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	37	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	38	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	39	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	40	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	41	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	42	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	43	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	44	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	45	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	46	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	47	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	48	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	49	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	50	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	51	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	52	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	53	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	54	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	55	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	56	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	57	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	58	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	59	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	60	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	61	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	62	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	63	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	64	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	65	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	66	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	67	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	68	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	69	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	70	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	71	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	72	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	73	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	74	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	75	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	76	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	77	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	78	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	79	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	80	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	81	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	82	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	83	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	84	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	85	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	86	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	87	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	88	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	89	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	90	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	91	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	92	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	93	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	94	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	95	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	96	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	97	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	98	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	99	Discovery	CA
Carmack	Discovery	July 18 1897	100	Discovery	CA

This document is a page from a large bound volume containing the alphabetically indexed names of miners who were the first to obtain the grant from the Crown for a particular claim. Highlighted is George Carmack's entry for Discovery and No. 1 Below on Bonanza Creek. It includes the relevant facts about the registration of the claim, including the folio number 137, which is cross-referenced from the grant application (at right).

YA, Series 10 Mining Records (Placer), sub-series 1-8 Indexes of Original Locators, GOV 182, page 65

This is George Carmack's application for a grant from the Crown for No. 1 Below Discovery, Bonanza Creek. It is for the claim adjacent to the Discovery claim and marks the epicentre of the gold rush stampede. Miners who discovered the first claim on a creek were entitled to stake a second claim on the same creek. The form above was originally in use for quartz mining, but was repurposed for placer mine documentation.

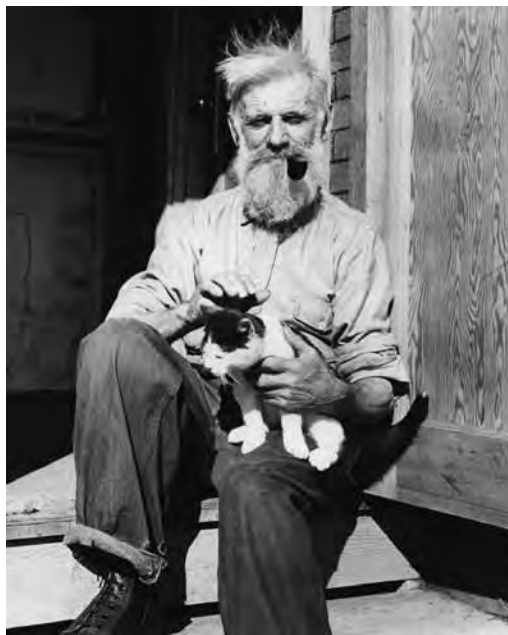
YA, Series 10, Mining Records (Placer), sub-series 1-1, Applications for Grants for Placer Mining, GOV 368, document #137



Yukon cats

Yukoners love their cats. The intrepid researcher can find cats appearing in photographs from the early days of the Klondike Gold Rush to more recent times. However, more patience and diligence is required than is needed for researching the seemingly ubiquitous Yukon dog.

Cats are present in two types of photographs. The first is where they seem to have wandered (as cats do) into the background of a scene



or portrait captured for other non-cat purposes. The second is the cat portrait — sometimes cute, often undignified — where the cat is the sole or a major figure in the image. Perhaps these types of images tell us something about the nature of cats; perhaps they also tell us something about the nature of Yukoners. In any case, they are evidence of the wealth of subjects and interests that can be pursued through research at Yukon Archives.

Left: Prospector Bert Cluett near Burwash Landing, 1949.

YA, Richard Harrington fonds, 79/27 #274

Above, left: Four Mounties and one man in civilian clothes at an unidentified NWMP post. Note the cat being held by the man on the right.

YA, E.J. Hamacher fonds (Margaret and Rolf Hougen collection), 2002/118 #427



This cat appears in several photos by Whitehorse photographer E.J. Hamacher (see p. 36), including the one on the front cover of this book.

YA, Harry W. Marsh fonds, 84/85A #2

from page 37

In 1987, Yukon Archives prepared *From Sissons to Meyer: The Administrative Development of the Yukon Government 1948-1979*. This study documents the expansion of the territorial government, tracing the progression of the administration from a sub-unit of the predecessors of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to its emergence as a separate government. This administrative history remains a key resource for understanding Yukon government records of the period.

During the 1980s, Yukon Archives produced a variety of exhibitions to showcase its holdings and highlight themes from Yukon history with a wide public appeal. Exhibitions included *Changing Lifestyles* (depicting major transformations in First Nations culture over the years); *Communities of Yesterday* (showing the once-flourishing settlements of Forty Mile, Conrad and Rampart House); *Early Yukon Businesses* (a broad view of enterprise in the territory from the 1700s to World War II, including the fur trade, mining, outfitting and transportation); *The Mad Trapper and Other Yukon Murder Cases*, (documenting the search for and shoot-out with Albert Johnson and the O'Brien and Fournier-LaBelle murder trials in Dawson City). These and previous exhibitions produced by Yukon Archives were circulated throughout the territory and in some cases installed temporarily in other Canadian locations (Fort Smith, Ottawa) and in Alaska.

Yukon Archives held an annual open house throughout the 1980s to promote

interest in and use of the facility. These events featured tours, film showings and presentations on topics of interest to the public. The 1986 open house, Archives in Your Attic, gave members of the public an opportunity to seek professional advice from archives staff and members of Heritage Branch on ways of preserving and storing their historical materials. About 90 people attended, bringing with them maps, books, photographs and personal papers. The 1987 open house was a special occasion; it also marked the institution's fifteenth anniversary. The event included showings of the Jim Wake films from Old Crow, tours of the vault, and the display of the Kohklux map, on loan from the Bancroft Library in California. In attendance were Piers McDonald, Minister of Education, former Commissioner Jim Smith and first Territorial Archivist Brian Speirs.

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Conservation treatments

In April 1981, a conservator carried out treatments on 40 records in a variety of formats, including glass plate negatives and paper (marriage certificates and sheet music). He also restored two ledgers from St. Paul's Church in Dawson City that had been damaged in a flood. In addition, Yukon's museums and heritage institutions benefitted from a one-day workshop given by the conservator.

During the 1980s, the Archives performed conservation work on some of its most significant historical documents. In 1983–84, George Carmack's application for grant of a second placer claim on Bonanza Creek (to which he was entitled since he had staked the Discovery claim on the creek, the event that launched the Klondike Gold Rush) was repaired, de-acidified and encapsulated in Mylar under the direction of staff from the Public Archives of Canada.



Conservator Brian March at Yukon Archives in 1981. YA, Libraries and Archives Branch, 82/417, file 3 #12

The Archives also conducted an assessment of the conservation care required for materials in its holdings and prioritized items for treatment.

Workshops

Yukon Archives has often coordinated and hosted workshops and training opportunities for its staff and other heritage workers in the territory. In 1982, the Archives held a week-long conservation workshop with staff from the Canadian Conservation Institute to familiarize museums employees with basic preservation techniques. In 1987, a one-day workshop on Basic Archival Principles, funded by the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA), attracted participants from the heritage and museums community in the Yukon and from institutions in British Columbia and Alaska.

In 1989, Yukon Archives hosted the workshop, Developing Native Archives, funded by the CCA. There were 21 participants, including representatives from eight First Nations organizations and four museums. In conjunction with the workshop the Archives sponsored a public forum on First Nations heritage. The forum featured a panel of individuals actively involved in the preservation of First Nations heritage, including Pearl Keenan (Teslin Tlingit Council), Ken Kane (Champagne and Aishihik First Nations) and Alice Abel (Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation) from the Yukon, and Gene Joseph (Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en) from British Columbia.

CHAPTER

4



The 1990s



THE NEW FACILITY

PLANNING FOR A NEW purpose-built archives facility began in the mid-1980s. CJP Architects consulted with Yukon Archives staff to identify needs and formulate design plans for the new building, which was to be located on the Yukon College site. The decision to move the Archives away from its downtown location was based on the best interests of the collection. At the new higher elevation, the Archives would be well away from the floodplain of the Yukon River.

The new location was also chosen in order to group together buildings that reflected cultural and continuing education resources in the community (Yukon College, Yukon Arts Centre, Yukon Archives).

The new facility was to contain 1100 square metres of fireproof and environmentally

controlled vault space for the storage and preservation of collections. It would also have 1200 square metres of public reference space and work areas, including conservation and photography labs.

Government Leader Tony Penikett and Minister of Education Piers McDonald officiated at the sod-turning ceremony on September 30, 1988. The facility, completed at a cost of \$4.4 million, was officially opened by Mr. McDonald on October 26, 1990.

Moving the Archives collections from downtown to the new building was a complicated undertaking that was the focus of staff during the fall of 1990. It took six weeks to move what amounted to two kilometres of government records, corporate and private records, books and pamphlets and other material.

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The Archives' Research Room during celebrations for the opening, October 26, 1990.

YA, Libraries & Archives Branch, 82/417, file 26 #4



Everything I accomplished at Yukon Archives I feel was part of a team effort. Acquiring the Coutts Collection in 1978 was a huge accomplishment for us as a small institution, both in raising the money and organizing the acquisition.

One memorable acquisition during my first term came as a result of a visit to the North Alaska Highway communities. After showing some of our movies and visiting with various people and

organizations to promote the Yukon Archives, I met Barb and Chuck Hume in Haines Junction. Barb saw some of the photos in the Photo Finding Aid volumes I was packing around and suggested that I visit her grandmother, Maggie Jim.

Mrs. Jim was well over 90 years old then; since she spoke almost no English our conversation was translated to and from Southern Tutchone by her daughters Mary Deguerre and Marge Jackson. She pulled out some photos, dating to the 1890s, when the earliest non-native travelers, including Jack Dalton, came to the southwest Yukon. The photos were among Mrs. Jim's most precious possessions, but when her daughters and grandchildren explained that I worked for the Archives and that we could make copies to ensure their long-term preservation she told me to take them and make sure they were safe.

When I came back to work as Territorial Archivist in 1990 I had spent a decade working with various First Nations and the Council for Yukon Indians (CYI). The CYI archives was stored in the basement of their headquarters and CYI staff members — and several Elders — were worried about its safety. Yukon Archives proposed an arrangement that would provide long-term secure storage in the YA vaults, with CYI retaining ownership and custody and setting terms for access. It was the largest single transfer of records in YA history to date. For me it was the most significant project in my second term.

I think the greatest challenge I faced as Territorial Archivist was the constant struggle to interpret and promote the institution's many roles and responsibilities within the Government of Yukon. Managing government records was much more difficult than private and corporate documentary heritage, due to a lack of staff, time and space, and because of fundamental misconceptions about our responsibilities.

One of my favourite memories is the YHMA Heritage Awards night in 1991, when Angela Sidney was recognized for her many contributions to Yukon heritage. Among the well-wishers was former Commissioner Jim Smith.

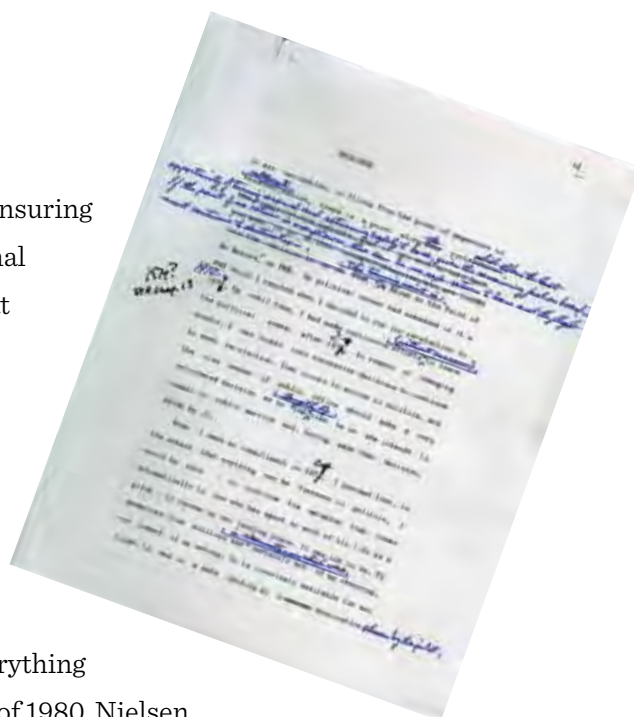
1976–1980
1990–2002

Territorial Archivist: Linda Johnson

Feature: Yukon Erik

People may not know that one of the proudest achievements of Erik Nielsen's working life was ensuring that the records documenting his tenure in national Canadian politics were safely stored in the vault at Yukon Archives. From the start of his career as Member of Parliament for Yukon in 1957 through to his resignation in 1987, Nielsen's intentions were clear: these records were to be located in his home of Whitehorse, not Ottawa.

He was meticulous in his instructions to both his Ottawa and Whitehorse staff — document everything and file it — and they did! Starting in the summer of 1980, Nielsen began transferring boxes of his records to the Yukon Archives; these shipments



continued until his death in 2008.

Yukon Archives is pleased to have acquired his records, recognizing his significant personal accomplishments and his important contributions to the political development of the territory and the country.

His records, comprising 160 linear metres, include paper documents, photographs, sound recordings, posters, maps, scrapbooks and



published documents. They reflect his personal, professional, and political activities and include the manuscript of his autobiography, *The House is not a Home*, published in 1989.

During Nielsen's long career he assumed many important responsibilities in addition to his MP duties, the greatest of which was his two-year position as Deputy Prime

Above: Erik Nielsen's annotations are visible on the first draft of his book, The House is not a Home.

YA, Erik Nielsen fonds, 95/101 Personal series, Box 1, file 1, page 4. Below: YA, Erik Nielsen fonds, 95/101 M-155

Minister of Canada in the Mulroney government. He also held other positions of differing duration: Minister of Public Works; Opposition House Leader; Leader of the Opposition; Chief of the Committee on Government Planning; Minister of National Defence; Minister of Fisheries and Oceans; and Chairman of the National Transportation Agency. As Nielsen advanced in political seniority, so did the complexity of his records. While he was Deputy Prime Minister he had three offices, each of which maintained records; they all came to Yukon Archives.

Archivists worked on the Nielsen records over a number of years and the vast majority have been appraised, arranged and described. They are available for research, with some access restrictions for privacy and national security issues. The finding aid to the Erik Nielsen fonds at Yukon Archives includes a detailed biography, career time chart and the context of the records.

Erik was most proud of two types of his records at the Archives. The first is what he called the “Purports,” which are copies of every letter he wrote in his career from 1958 to 1992, filed in chronological order. The second was a set of 62 scrapbooks dating from 1956 to 1986; they include photographs, newspaper clippings, press releases, political cartoons, invitations, Christmas cards, letters and political campaign paraphernalia. Both of these series of records provide a fascinating window into Erik Nielsen, the man, the politician and the Yukoner.



Campaign buttons:

Top: YA, Erik Nielsen fonds, 95/101 M-153; Centre: YA, Erik Nielsen fonds, 95/101 M-150; Left: YA, Erik Nielsen fonds, 95/101 M-149

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Records management

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, very few retention and disposition schedules were being created for government records. By the early 1990s, the Records Centre of the Department of Government Services was almost full to capacity. In 1992, archives staff devoted considerable effort to appraising boxes at the Records Centre and deciding whether they should be destroyed or transferred to Yukon Archives. The Records Management Committee, authorized under the Records Management Regulations, began to meet to review and approve these decisions. This methodology was not ideal, since appraisal should be comprehensive and cover an entire functional or program area, and should be carried out before boxes get to the Records Centre, but this 1992 project freed up significant space at the Records Centre and identified some significant records to be transferred to the Archives.

In 1993–94, Yukon Archives worked with Records Services to create a standard for the classification, scheduling and

disposition of government administrative records. This standard was promoted to departments and was widely implemented across the government. It was refined and improved in the early 2000s and in 2011.

In 1998, the Government of Yukon's Records Management Directive came into effect. It set out a clear responsibility for departments to dedicate resources to the care and maintenance of their own records. The roles of Yukon Archives were to provide expertise and assistance to departments and to sign off on the final disposition of records.

Outreach/film showings

The new Yukon Archives building included a dedicated space for displaying copies of the records from its collections. Throughout the 1990s, these exhibitions generally involved reproductions of archival records, captions and interpretive text mounted on foam board and displayed on large fabric display panels. This format was convenient for shipping throughout the territory (to public libraries,

schools, First Nation offices, etc.) and beyond and was versatile enough that exhibitions could be adapted to and installed in most facilities.

Exhibitions created in the 1990s demonstrated the growing partnerships with communities and organizations



The Hon. Piers McDonald cutting the ribbon in the new Yukon Archives building, with Diane Chisholm looking on, October 26, 1990. YA, Libraries & Archives Branch, 82/417, file 26 #3

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A day in the life

The stereotype of an archivist is a fastidious eccentric whose days are spent in dark basements with dusty old documents. The reality: archivists are engaged, community-minded people. They spend most of their time above ground with the donors who create the records that end up at the Archives and with the researchers and other individuals who are interested in those records.

The Yukon Archives keeps records in all media from both government and private sources. Part of the archivist's day is spent acquiring new collections. For the government records archivists this means determining the one to five percent of all records created by the Government of Yukon that will be permanently preserved. For the archivists responsible for private records this means meeting with long-time Yukoners interested in donating family photo albums, home movies or personal correspondence.

Once records get to Yukon Archives, the archivists want to make sure that they last, so that people have access to them for centuries to come. The archivist ensures that these precious records are stored in acid-free or other appropriate containers and that those records with special needs are sent to the conservation lab for treatment. The records are then placed in vaults with controlled humidity and temperature.

A primary focus of the Yukon Archives is making its collections available to the public. The main part of the archivist's daily routine involves providing public access to newly acquired records. This means adding descriptions of the records to the on-line databases and creating bibliographies and other finding aids. It also includes providing reference services to people in the Yukon and all over the world; copying documents, photographs and films for researchers; and producing exhibits for the internet, for the Hougou Heritage Gallery in the Arts Underground, for display at the Archives and for loan to community organizations.

What matters most to archivists is that the Yukon Archives' collections are valued and used by the public. If the Archives receives an acknowledgement in a newly published book, or credit in a local filmmaker's latest film, or appreciation from someone finding a long-lost relative, then the archivist has had a very good day.



Archives staff Clara Rutherford (second from right) and Anne Coates (right) with the donors of the John Dines fonds in 2007. John Dines formed the first orchestra in Dawson City in 1910. Photo: Yukon Archives

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throughout the territory. A 1997 exhibit, *Police for the People*, told the story of First Nations Special Constables who worked with the RCMP. Members of the RCMP and former Special Constable Andrew Tizya were present at the opening of the exhibit. The 1998 exhibition, *At Home in the Yukon*, opened to a large audience at a special evening of stories from Lone Christensen and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elder Percy Henry about growing up in the territory. Among the other exhibitions created in the 1990s was *Yukoners at War*, which opened at an evening of remembrance in November of 1998, and a 1999 display of the photographs of the White Pass & Yukon Route's official photographer H.C. Barley, commemorating the centennial of the arrival of the first White Pass train into Bennett, British Columbia.

Yukon Archives staff toured the territory to familiarize communities with its work and to showcase records that pertained to the history and residents of specific places. Staff also encouraged communities to value and celebrate their history and to

ensure that their stories were captured and preserved for the future.

Family History Night, on April 29, 1998, was an especially successful public event. Yukon Archives staff discussed and displayed examples of genealogical sources available at the Archives that could be used for family research. Special guests from Vital Statistics, the Yukon Genealogical Interest Group and a Post-Adoption worker from Health and Social Services spoke about their specific expertise on genealogical subjects. The archives also launched the revised Bibliography of Genealogical Sources Available at the Yukon Archives.

Workshops

During the 1990s, the Yukon Council of Archives, with support and assistance from Yukon Archives, coordinated a range of training opportunities for archives and heritage staff throughout the territory. In November 1995 the two-day workshop, "An Introduction to Archival Theory and Practice for First Nations," was taught by

the Territorial Archivist of the Northwest Territories. A March 1997 workshop, taught by records analysts from the Government of British Columbia, focused on records management. In April 1998, a two-day workshop on reference, access and the *Copyright Act* was offered.



Archives staff Heather LeDuc and Luanne Meyers in the vault in 1999.

YA, Yukon Archives staff photograph collection, 2011/98, file 1 #43

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Feature: White Pass & Yukon Route

The White Pass & Yukon Route (WP&YR) is a railway between Skagway, Alaska and Whitehorse, Yukon. Construction of the 110-km line began in May 1898, driven by the commercial possibilities of transporting thousands of goldseekers and their goods on route to the Klondike.

The company broadened its service base over the years and operated a transportation system through Alaska, British

Columbia and the Yukon. The WP&YR has continued operations, with some periods of inactivity, from that time until the present. The White Pass & Yukon Route fonds is one of the most voluminous and frequently consulted collections at Yukon Archives.

Above: Cutting grade for the railway on Tunnel Mountain near White Pass, September 1898. YA, H.C. Barley fonds #5283

Below, left: WP&YR diesel locomotive #92 in Seattle being loaded for transport to Skagway, 1957.

YA, White Pass and Yukon Route fonds, 94/58, Box 7, file 42 #1

Below, right: This menu from the S.S. Tutshi doubled as a souvenir postcard. In 1932 it was mailed from Carcross, Yukon to Camden, Maine. YA, PAM 1932-27



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Other workshops throughout the decade addressed automation, appraisal and the Rules for Archival Description (RAD). It was an extremely active period for developing the archival knowledge of Yukon workers and the capacity of Yukon archival institutions.

Paper to GenCat to M2A

Until the mid-1990s, a variety of paper-based systems provided access to the Yukon Archives collections. Fonds and series descriptions and file lists were arranged in binders according to media type. Where necessary the descriptions referenced records in other accessions and in other media that formed part of the same fonds. These descriptions were

supplemented by a variety of catalogues, guides and other finding aids.

In 1996, Yukon Archives began to automate access to its collections. After investigating how other archives were making the conversion, the Archives purchased GenCat software. As this was being implemented, the Canadian standard for description (RAD) was being finalized and promoted. Yukon Archives began the labour-intensive process of converting its descriptions to RAD at the same time as these were put into GenCat. The process involved numerous full-time and term staff over a number of years. The launch of GenCat as the new automated archives catalogue — along with the ten-year anniversary at the new facility — was celebrated at a special open house on December 9, 2000; Minister of Education Dale Eftoda officiated.

Although progress was made in automating access to the collections, in the early 2000s Yukon Archives switched to a new software application to manage its holdings. Minisis M2A had the added appeal of a built-in hierarchical structure to handle multilevel description. M2A was implemented for internal Yukon Archives operations in 2002 and its descriptive cataloguing functionality was made available over the web in 2004.

Friends of the Yukon Archives Society

The Friends of the Yukon Archives Society (FOYAS) was founded in 1997. A registered non-profit society, its goals are to assist and advise the Archives in preserving the records of Yukon's past. It does this



Postcard containing information about the move to the new Yukon Archives facility.

YA, Yukon Archives staff photograph collection, 2011/98 #68

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Kluane National Park & Reserve of Canada

The Yukon's first national park was established in 1972. The completion of the Alaska Highway, which runs along its eastern boundary, opened up the area and led to the development of a wildlife reserve in 1942. The park covers most of the reserve area.

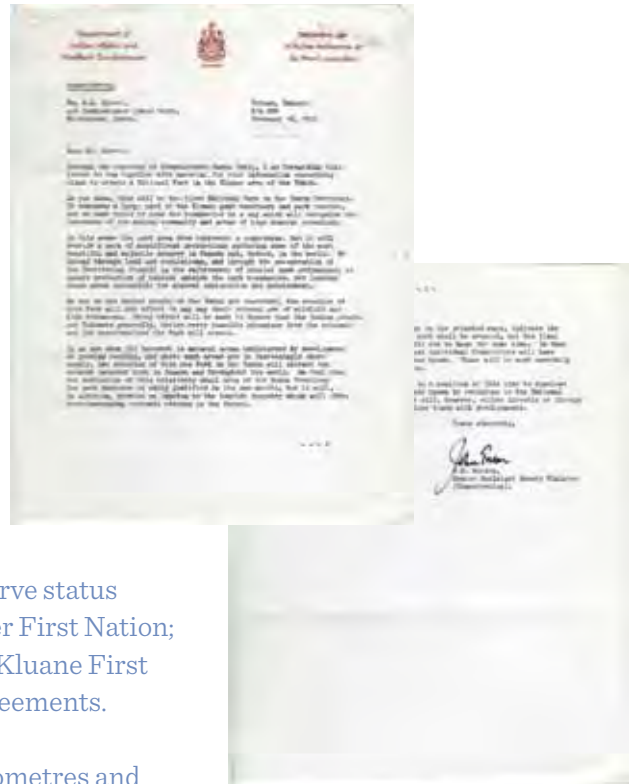
The development of the park coincided with a push for conservation that informed a joint initiative between the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) and Parks Canada called Byways and Special Places. The long-range program included the identification and preservation of a national network of land and water routes that had been used for centuries. Yukon Archives has records in its holdings that contain more information about DIAND's conservation programs in the early 1970s.

As part of the larger system of national parks and historic sites, Kluane National Park and Reserve protects a nationally significant region of Canada's northern Coast Mountains and associated regional cultural heritage. It lies within the traditional territories of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation, all of whom who have a long history of living in this region. Part of the park has reserve status until land claims are settled with White River First Nation; Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and Kluane First Nation have negotiated their land claims agreements.

The park covers an area of 21,980 square kilometres and is home to Mount Logan, Canada's highest peak (5,959 metres). It is a land of immense icefields, glaciers, rivers, mountains and valleys that yield a diverse array of plant and wildlife species. The park was declared a United Nations World Heritage Site in 1979.

Yukon Archives has many records from various collections that relate to this area. They include the Parks Canada Collection; national park reports; topographic maps; maps of the Kluane National Park & Reserve that include hiking trails; game ordinance records; and books and pamphlets in Yukon Archives Library that deal with topics of outdoor recreation and parks development in the Yukon.

One document of particular significance is a letter from J.H. Gordon, Senior Assistant, Deputy Minister of Conservation, DIAND, to R.A. Rivett, then Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. YA, Yukon Council records, 91/63R, GOV 1314, file 2, 1972



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in three ways: supporting and promoting archives programs and activities; receiving and administering gifts, endowments and bequests; and helping to make Yukon Archives records more accessible.

Since its inception, FOYAS has been a valuable resource. It has been involved with summer film showings, the Yukon Archival Advisor Program, genealogy workshops and curation of exhibitions at the Hougou Heritage Gallery and other locations.

Association of Canadian Archivists Conference 1996

Yukon Archives staff worked diligently throughout 1995 and the first half of 1996 to bring to Whitehorse the annual conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA). The ACA conference, with the theme “The Frontier,” explored the many challenging issues confronting archives at the time. The conference opening featured a screening of some of the old films found in 1978 in Dawson City. Social events included the annual ACA

baseball game, held at stunning Bennett Lake beach in Carcross, and a banquet at the Mount McIntyre Recreation Centre. The ACA conference overlapped with the Rupert’s Land Colloquium, allowing delegates of both events to participate in sessions of shared interest.

Yukon Archival Union List (YAUL)

In 1999, as part of the Canadian Archival Information Network initiative, a subcommittee of the Yukon Council of Archives began to explore options for the creation of an on-line catalogue of the Yukon’s archival collections. The Archives Association of British Columbia worked with YCA to develop a union list prototype for the Yukon. The Yukon Archival Union List (YAUL) was eventually implemented, hosted first by the Archives Association of British Columbia, and since 2009 by the Archives Society of Alberta. Data from YAUL is added to the national catalogue at ArchivesCanada.ca.



Yukon Archives staff members in the Research Room of the new building, 1990.

YA, Libraries & Archives Branch, 82/417, file 26 #22

Preservation and Yukon Archives

The term preservation in archives work refers to all actions taken to maintain the research and reference value of records and other objects over time. Examples of preservation include developing and implementing preservation policies, stabilizing damaged material through conservation treatments, and managing records in secure environments.

Preservation is an integral part of all archival functions and programs. Examining donated materials when they are acquired, for example, may identify barriers to access such as mould or unreadable file formats. Instruction provided to researchers on techniques for handling records may prevent materials from becoming damaged. Preservation work needs to be supported by a sustainable program of technical resources and strategic planning.

All staff and clients bear some measure of responsibility for preservation of the holdings. Evidence of this responsibility can be seen in the work of the custodial staff to keep the building clean, in the actions of researchers who handle records appropriately and in the work of technicians and conservators who reformat records to prevent loss of information or apply treatments to slow the rate of deterioration.

At Yukon Archives the conservation treatment of individual damaged items became a priority after construction of the new facility, which included a paper conservation laboratory.

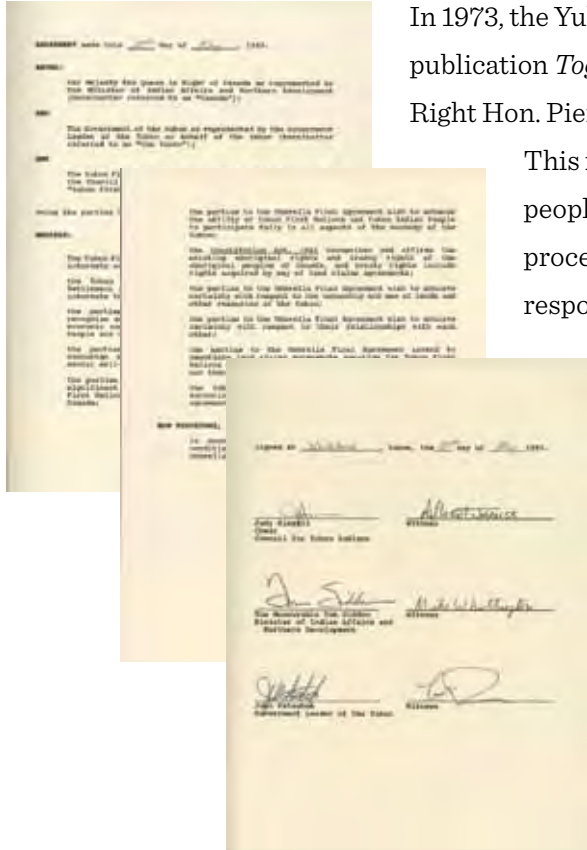
Although conservation treatments are still performed at Yukon Archives, time and budgetary constraints, the changing nature of records, and the sheer extent of materials mean that today much more emphasis is placed on preventative preservation activities. Such work, in keeping with developments in the preservation field, includes assessing risks to collections and undertaking preservation based on identified priorities, developing strategies for preserving electronic records, improving storage environments and preparing for disasters.



Restoration of a large poster from the gold rush era was carried out by a conservator at Yukon Archives in 1991–92 and 2006. The poster was assembled from existing fragments of six identical but incomplete posters donated in 1991 and 2006.

YA, Conservation file 4600-60

Feature: The Umbrella Final Agreement



In 1973, the Yukon Native Brotherhood presented the publication *Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow* to the Right Hon. Pierre Trudeau, then Prime Minister of Canada.

This meeting, held on behalf of Yukon First Nations people, prompted the beginning of a negotiation process to address the outstanding legal and moral responsibility of the federal government to deal with land claims in the Yukon.

Initially, Yukon land claim negotiations were a two-party process between Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada. Over time, the Government of Yukon became a full party to the process. Yukon First Nations were represented by the Council of Yukon First Nations and its predecessor, the Council for Yukon Indians.

In 1989, the three parties reached an agreement in principle for an Umbrella Final

Agreement (UFA); the final version was signed in 1993. It was a significant step in the negotiations between the Government of Canada, the Yukon Government and Yukon First Nations. The agreement is a template that is used to negotiate each First Nation's Final Agreement. Although the UFA on its own is not a legally enforceable document, all of its provisions are set out in the final agreements, which have lawful effect. Eleven of the fourteen Yukon First Nations have Final and Self-Government Agreements.

Yukon Archives acquired the UFA in 2010, along with a number of individual final agreements, self-government agreements and implementation plans for these agreements. Yukon Archives also holds other records relating to land claims, including signed land claim maps transferred from the Land Claims Secretariat and records acquired from Government of Yukon departments.

CHAPTER

51



The 2000s



RENEWAL

IN THE SPRING of 2002, Premier Pat Duncan's Liberal government implemented a restructuring of the bureaucracy, with an intention of improving services to the public and making government operations and administration more efficient. As a result of the Renewal initiative, the Libraries and Archives Branch of the Department of Education was split. Whitehorse Public Library and the community libraries formed the Public Libraries Branch in a new department of Community Services. Yukon Archives was joined with Heritage Resources, Museums, and Arts to form the Cultural Services Branch in a new Department of Business, Tourism, and Culture. In 2003, the "business" functions of the department

were transferred to a reconstituted Department of Economic Development; Yukon Archives was part of the remaining department of Tourism and Culture.

Under Renewal, the responsibility that Yukon Archives had as the single point of contact for the intake of requests related to the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (ATIPPA) was transferred to the Information and Communications Technology Division (ICT). One Yukon Archives position — the ATIPPA ACT Coordinator — was transferred to ICT to support this program transfer. Many of the Territorial Archivist's responsibilities for administering the Act were assumed by the Records Manager.

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Territorial Archivist: Diane Chisholm

As the shortest serving Territorial Archivist, but with the longest time working at Yukon Archives, I find my memories are a kaleidoscope of activities and events that transpired over the years. One of the most challenging but most rewarding aspects of my work was coordinating the physical move and transition into the new building. Although it was exciting to have a new purpose-built facility, I and the other staff had mixed emotions about the move. We obviously needed the increased space for staff and collections, but we felt nostalgia for the old building, with its convenient

downtown location. We had close ties with the public library and its staff and had memories of Jim Robb painting in the Reading Room.

The move went well, mainly due to the hard work and patience of the staff. New procedures were required because of the physical layout of the new building; distances were greater, so retrieval was no longer done on demand; we weren't in line of sight of each other, so new communication techniques were established. We were responsible for the whole building, including locking up and responding to alarms. But the end result made the changes worthwhile.

It has been remarkable to see the improved access to collections over the past forty years. The archives has moved from search files and staff memories to automated descriptions and digitized images. All of these developments have allowed researchers to locate pertinent sources on their own without having to rely so much on staff.

I was fortunate during my time at Yukon Archives to meet many long-time residents of the territory, who graciously shared their memories and archival materials. When I first started at the Archives there was a small collection of books from the Yukon Room of the public library stored under a table. The collections have grown exponentially since then.

One of the most memorable acquisitions during my time was the collection of E.J. Hamacher glass plate negatives dating from the gold rush. Hamacher, a commercial photographer, documented many aspects of day-to-day life in the Yukon at the turn of the century. The acquisition of this collection came to fruition over thirty years of discussion with the donor. As with other donations, it was deposited as a result of work done by many archivists over the years. This type of generosity and support from the public has helped make the Yukon Archives the first-rate organization it is today.

2002–2003

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Devolution

Devolution entailed the transfer of numerous resource-related functions from Canada to Yukon, along with all of the operational and administrative supports required to maintain these functions (including staff, equipment and records). The effective date of the agreement was April 1, 2003.

Yukon Archives recognized early on that devolution would have significant impacts on its resources and operations. These included the need to appraise and acquire the records of the devolving programs from their offices in Whitehorse, the federal records centre in Burnaby, or departmental offices in Ottawa. Another impact — less immediate but potentially more of a concern — was that with devolution the Government of Yukon would acquire many new programs and several hundred new employees. This would lead to an increased workload: more records would be created that would need to be appraised and potentially acquired by the Archives.

In recognition of these impacts, Yukon Archives was given ongoing funding to

hire an additional full-time government records archivist. Several years later, additional ongoing funding was allocated to government records. Money was also available through a fund to address the costs of implementing devolution. The fund was managed by Executive Council Office on recommendations received from Deputy Ministers.

Yukon Archives used the fund for a variety of projects, including the installation of mobile shelving for storing government records and the library collection, term staffing to catalogue publications received from downsizing government libraries, and a temporary position to research and write government authority records (these contain descriptions of departments, branches and units that have created records over time, how they are linked and how they have evolved).

Virtual exhibits

In 2004, Yukon Archives worked with member institutions of the Yukon Council of Archives to create two on-line exhibits: *Yukon Women and Children* and *Nothing is as Certain as Change*. These were updated and significantly expanded versions of existing static exhibits.



Yukon Archives then embarked on two large and comprehensive virtual exhibits. The first of these, *A Yukon Romance*, celebrated the lives of Claude and Mary

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Two First Nation men standing on a raft full of drying meat on the Pelly River, across from Ross River, October, 1922. This photo was part of the Nothing is as Certain as Change exhibit. YA, Claude and Mary Tidd fonds #7758

Fiction collection

The Yukon Archives Library contains a fascinating fiction collection, with everything from dime store novels, adventure stories and historical romances to children’s literature and novels that describe the frozen world of hard-scrabble life in the gold fields and strong men with determined women.

Part of the fiction collection at the Archives also reveals a push to expand cultural boundaries, particularly for women. An example is the 1942 novel *River House* by Barrett Willoughby (the pen name of writer Florence Barrett), initially published in *The American Magazine* under the title “The Captive Bride.” Although novels like these were hardly feminist manifestos, the female characters in them — like the male characters who were thrown into an extreme environment — found a depth of courage and stepped outside mainstream expectation of behaviour. In the public imagination, the Yukon was a place where convention was shunned and individual freedom was prized.

One of the most enduring characters created by a Canadian author was Susannah “Sue” Sheldon. Author Muriel Denison’s series of books (*Susannah of the Yukon*, *Susannah of the Mounties*, *Susannah at Boarding School* and *Susannah Returns*) inspired movie makers. In 1939 the film *Susannah of the Mounties* was released, starring Shirley Temple; the Yukon Archives Library has the Shirley Temple Edition of the book.

Authors such as James B. Hendryx trekked to the Yukon and then parlayed that experience into successful novels. Other well-known authors, such as Jack London and Robert Service, lived for extended periods in Yukon and clearly demonstrated their love of the place in their work. Their writing also inspired films based on their books.



Other early twentieth century writers, such as Rex Beach and Laura Berton, wrote stories based on their knowledge of the world around them. Current authors such as Will Hobbs and Yvonne Harris write about the past from a current viewpoint.

Left: Willoughby, Barrett. *The River House*, 1935, 1942. Cou tts, F Wil; Centre: London, Jack. *The Call of the Wild*, 1908, 1931. F Lon 1931d; Right: Hendryx, James B. *Man of the North*, 1929. F Hen 1929b C2;

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Tidd. It showcased the many wonderful photographs and films of Claude Tidd, a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who was posted to several communities in his time in the territory. It also presented many of the letters that Claude and Mary had written to each other and to their friends and family in the early part of the twentieth century.

In 2006, Yukon Archives created another significant virtual exhibit, *The Alaska Highway: A Yukon Perspective*. Designed as a comic book to appeal to a younger audience, the exhibit featured photographs, films and sound recordings from the large holdings relating to the Alaska Highway and the CANOL project.

All of these virtual exhibits were made possible in part through the Canadian Culture Online Program of Canadian Heritage, Library and Archives Canada and



Mountie Joe Kessler with his "favourite dog" at Forty Mile. YA, Claude and Mary Tidd fonds #8444

the Canadian Council of Archives. Yukon Archives also created a number of smaller virtual exhibits, focusing on the histories of the minority communities in the Yukon. These have often been celebrated in conjunction with static exhibits mounted to celebrate Black History Month (February) and Asian History Month (May).

Arts Underground

In 2005, Yukon Archives and the Friends of the Yukon Archives Society (FOYAS) began a partnership with Arts Underground to program exhibits in the Hougén Heritage Gallery in downtown Whitehorse. Under this arrangement, which continues to this day, the Archives programs three-month exhibits in the gallery twice each year (the other six months are programmed by the MacBride Museum). In the first five years FOYAS created and installed a number of highly successful exhibits in the gallery. These included *E.J. Hamacher: A Photographer's Perspective*; *Lantern Entertainment: Martha Louise Black's Romance of Canada's Goldfields*; *Klondike Maps: Selling Convenience and Comfort on the Routes to the Gold*; *The Art of the Ordinary: User-centric Photography*; *A Thrilling Narrative: Documenting the Klondike Gold Rush*; and *Buried Treasure: The Yukon's Rich Fossil Heritage*.

Growth and consolidation

The organizational structure at Yukon Archives was developed in the 1980s and evolved with only minor modifications until the 2000s. By then, however, the scale of operations and the challenges of archival work had expanded significantly

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Political records

Politicians create a variety of records and the rules that inform where those records end up are not explicit. Some documents that politicians create are considered government



Brochure for candidate Audrey McLaughlin during the 1993 federal election campaign. YA, Audrey McLaughlin fonds, 97/53, Box 27, file Audrey Biography

records; these are transferred to Library and Archives Canada or the appropriate provincial/territorial archives in accordance with a legal document that authorizes their disposition. However, most records created by our federal and territorial representatives are considered “personal political records” and they are the politician’s to dispose of as he or she wishes. These records consist of a wide variety of documents and can include speeches, photographs, letters and constituency files.

Yukon Archives has acquired the fonds of a number of individuals who have served the Yukon as members of the House of Commons or the Legislative Assembly. These include federal politicians Aubrey Simmons, Erik Nielsen, Audrey McLaughlin and Larry Bagnell as well as territorial representatives such as Eleanor Millard, Doug Phillips and John Ostashek.



In addition to the records of individual politicians, the Archives has a wealth of material relating to the political process: election posters, sounds recordings from the Legislative Assembly, election ordinances, records from the Chief Electoral Officer and School Board and Council records.



Centre: Erik Nielsen campaign button. YA, Erik Nielsen fonds, 95/101 M-156. Below: Aubrey Simmons, Yukon MP (second from left) in the Liberal campaign headquarters, 1949. YA, Rolf and Margaret Hougén fonds, 2009/81 #471

To keep governments transparent and individual politicians accountable, citizens need to have access to records about governance. Yukon Archives holds a significant body of material generated through the political process.

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and it became increasingly clear that the organizational structure was no longer effective. Archives staff faced new developments, including electronic records management, digital preservation, systematic application of Rules for Archival Description (RAD), automated accessioning and descriptive systems, and a proliferation of record formats. The organizational structure, staff assignments and job descriptions needed to be aligned with the changing requirements of the Archives.

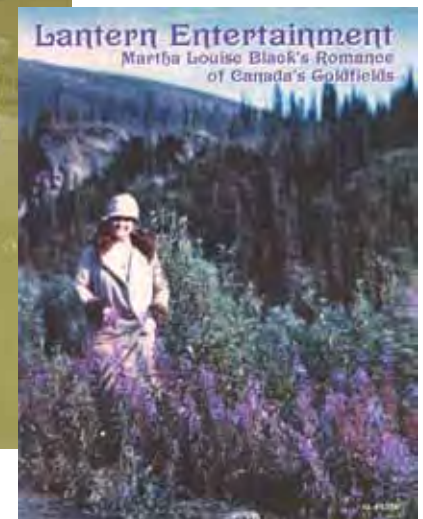
In 2007, several staff vacancies and retirements allowed Yukon Archives to revise existing positions and create new ones. The following year the Archives was able to hire a full-time Archives Conservator through the Devolution implementation budget. When this term position ended on March 31, 2009, Yukon Archives hired the conservator to an indeterminate position using its existing budget. For the first time, Yukon Archives was able to staff its conservation lab on a permanent full-time basis, giving increased attention to the preservation aspect of its mandate.

At the same time, the Photograph Technician retired. Given the changes in technology and public demand, the position was redefined to focus more on digital reproduction services. The new name for this position is Audio-Visual and Digitization Technician.

A third new position was created at this time: Digital Archivist. This position is responsible for acquiring and managing digital and digitized archival records. Additional changes around this time

included clarifying the job description of the Private Records Archivist and balancing the complement of private records archivists and government records archivists.

During the early 2000s, the position of Territorial Archivist was filled by several different people. In 2002, Linda Johnson left Yukon Archives to take a position with Yukon College. The position was then filled by long-term Yukon Archives employee Diane Chisholm. Diane stayed on as Territorial Archivist until her retirement in May of 2003. In September 2003, Ian Burnett became the fifth Territorial Archivist.



Brochures created to promote exhibitions. Many YA promotional materials are produced in English and French.
YA, Reference Room search file

Real-life CSI

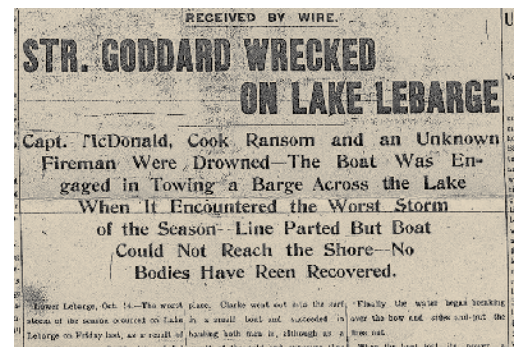
The Archives maintains records of all aspects of society and culture because what happened in the past provides context and precedence for the present. When people want to know who was involved in an event, what decisions were made, why those decisions were made, and how they were carried out, they come to the Archives.

A recent and highly visible example is the Dawson burials investigation. In November 2010, contractors came across a grave while digging for a new waste water treatment plant in Dawson City. A team of local archaeologists and other specialists launched a search to find out more about the grave. It was known that a number of criminals had been hanged during the gold rush, but their names and exact burial locations were not known. Members of the archaeology team investigating the case turned to Yukon Archives for historical evidence that might identify the bodies or provide clues about other graves.

The reference staff was able to find a government file entitled Burial Place of Murderers. This confirmed that the Nantuck Brothers — two men who were hanged for murder in 1899 — had been buried within the RCMP compound. Staff members also retrieved microfilmed RCMP records that contained maps and blueprints of police detachments in the Yukon at the turn of the century. The maps showed several previously unknown landmarks that helped the archaeology team determine where more graves were likely to be found. These records, in addition to information found through archaeological and osteological investigations, proved invaluable in helping to determine the identities of the buried men and to ensure that no more graves would be disturbed by the construction project.

The Archives recently contributed to local historical research related to the discovery of the well-preserved wreck of the *A.J. Goddard* by archaeologists in 2008. The little sternwheeler sank in a storm on Lake Laberge in 1901. Yukon Archives was able to provide, among other records, a written account of the ship's sinking in the 1901 report of the North-West Mounted Police, and an account of the disaster in the *Klondike Nugget* newspaper.

The Yukon Archives also has resources that can help applicants obtain the evidence required to receive the Common Experience Payment through the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The Archives holdings include some residential school registers as well as education records from nearly every public school in the territory.



Feature: Paper Fasteners



Included on this page are images of just a small selection of the paper fasteners that Yukon Archives staff have found on documents dating from the last 120 years. The design of a few of them is truly inspirational — the function of keeping related documents together is achieved with pizzazz.

Note: items not to scale

CHAPTER

6



The 2010s



FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

IN THE LATE 2000s, a number of projects were undertaken to improve and maintain the Yukon Archives building. The largest of these projects was replacing the halon fire suppression system in Vault A. This was necessitated by federal law, which required halon systems to be phased out by 2010, due to their contribution to greenhouse gases. In 2009, Yukon Archives staff worked with the Property Management Division to plan and tender the replacement of the halon system with Novek 1230 fire protection fluid. The project was quite disruptive to operations; contractors had to drill into the concrete of vault A and fit new pipes, and staff

consequently had to cover or bag all of the collections in the vault.

Another significant project, undertaken in 2010, was the replacement of the building's outdated heating and ventilation controls. In the same year, Yukon Archives also took measures to reduce the levels of radon in the underground vault. This included sealing cracks and seams and installing a sub-slab depressurization system.

The most significant building project currently underway is the design and installation of a mechanical solution to address temperature and humidity levels

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My most satisfying accomplishment as Territorial Archivist may be a bureaucratic one, but it is critical to Yukon Archives being able to fulfil its mandate into the future. It is this: establishing a modern organizational structure — including job descriptions, policies and standards, and strategies — that allows the Archives

Territorial Archivist: Ian Burnett

to meet the significant challenges it will face in the coming years. It also includes developing a complement of staff with the dedication, skills and commitment needed to meet these challenges.

All of the acquisitions by Yukon Archives are important to understanding the history of the territory and its peoples. Smaller and more specialized collections may be of immense value if they touch upon a poorly understood aspect of this history. Two of the more memorable acquisitions during my tenure were those of James Quong and Rolf Hougen. Consisting primarily of photographs, these two large collections cover similar time periods (1940s–60s) and are extremely valuable in documenting a variety of Yukon events, activities and personalities during those years.

The greatest challenge I face is acquiring, preserving and making accessible records in the variety of new formats (primarily digital) that have become prevalent over the past decade. At the same time, the Archives must continue to preserve and make accessible records in older formats. Managing this wide range of record formats poses considerable challenges in terms of budgets and resources, knowledge and skill development, and policy choices.

All of us who work at Yukon Archives are aware of Yukoners' great interest in the history and development of the territory. This is evident in the widespread and ongoing support for the Archives. In its earliest days there was public curiosity about the creation of this thing called an "archives"; in more recent times there has been an appreciation for Yukon Archives exhibitions and outreach. The use and enjoyment of the Archives by Yukoners is certainly one of the most rewarding aspects of our jobs.

2003–2012

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in the Archives facility. Other building priorities include the need for renovations to the main floor to address changing functional needs, such as information technology work spaces, digital storage and specialty labs.

In 2007, Yukon Archives and the Property Management Division explored options for expanding the Yukon Archives facility. The existing vaults are nearly full and more storage space is needed. Options included building an entirely new facility, creating an annex — either on the Yukon College campus or elsewhere — or constructing a new underground vault between the existing Yukon Archives building and the Yukon College gym. The third option makes the most operational sense and is the most cost-effective. It is still in the planning stage.

Partnerships with the Cultural Services Branch

In recent years Yukon Archives has entered into numerous and highly beneficial partnerships with other sections of the

Cultural Services Branch. In 2009, Yukon Archives and FOYAS partnered with the branch's palaeontology program to create the exhibit *Buried Treasure: The Yukon's Rich Fossil Heritage* for the Hougou Heritage Gallery. In May 2011, Yukon Archives and FOYAS installed the exhibit *Many Voices: Music in the Yukon 1896–1996* at the gallery. The Arts Section of the branch provided funding to allow musical programming at the exhibit throughout the summer of 2011. The summer of 2011 also saw Yukon Archives participate for the first time in the Department of Tourism and Culture's Passport Program. This initiative, which encourages participants to visit Yukon's heritage attractions, has been a success and has drawn many interested people to Yukon Archives.

Digital access and preservation

In 2002, Yukon Archives began a pilot project to digitize selected still images in its collections to make them more accessible. Photographs from the gold rush era — comprising the Anton Vogee,

H.C. Barley and Adams and Larkin fonds — were digitized with funding from the Government of Yukon, the Canadian Culture Online Program of Canadian Heritage, the National Archives of Canada and the Canadian Council of Archives. These images were made accessible to the public through a database on the Yukon Archives website. As other collections



Dawson City, Yukon. August 1957. Fossilized skull of bison, likely discovered during gold mining operations. Image found during research for the *Buried Treasure* exhibit. YA, David McCormick fonds, 2002/05 #122

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In loving memory

Not every Yukoner is as famous as Skookum Jim or Klondike Kate. Although most people's lives go largely undocumented, Yukon Archives holds hundreds of brief biographies of average Yukoners in the form of funeral programs.

Written by close friends and family members, these programs are sometimes spare, sometimes elaborate visual elegies to those who have died. Lives lived are fleshed out between documented milestones: graduations, moves, marriages, children and grandchildren, retirements. Some are fearlessly honest; others palpably restrained. All of them communicate the importance of the person who died.

Over the years, the quality of the funeral programs has evolved along with desktop publishing. In one, an Elder gazes from a field below the image of a wolf symbolizing her clan; in another, a round-faced baby peers out from a fur-lined hood in the arms of a war bride. There are stories of childhood traplines in Dezadeash, missionary work, partners found and lost, mountains climbed, festivals planned, highways built, and lives cut tragically short. Poems are written by cousins, hymns are printed next to potlatch details, along with lists of who will cook the food and who will carry the coffin. Most of us will leave this world without a book written about us. But if we're lucky, those who know and love us will commit our lives and our memory to paper, just once.



Left: Dorothy Wabisca was born September 2, 1938 and died August 11, 1997. YA, PAM 1997-0483 c.1

Right: Helen Louise Seipp was born October 6, 1946 and died September 29, 1999. YA, PAM 1999-0428



This 1961 photograph of Martha Benjamin and her mother Clara Frost was taken by Marjorie Merz near Old Crow. YA, Marjorie Merz fonds, 2011/36 #102.

Recent acquisitions

In 1987, the Yukon Council of Archives conducted a needs assessment and planning study on the state of archives throughout the territory. The study attempted to estimate the amount of archival materials in the territory, both processed and unprocessed. It estimated that 50 percent of Yukon Archives' textual collections were unprocessed. Although the statistics in the study are almost 25 years old, a significant percentage of Yukon Archives' material is part of a backlog and is therefore difficult for patrons to see.

Although access to unprocessed material is difficult, it is not impossible. Once records are accessioned, staff have some basic information about a collection that can

be shared with researchers; with assistance from reference staff, patrons can consult material before it has been processed. It's not an ideal situation, but it doesn't prevent researchers from being able to use the remarkable records in the vault. Listed below is a sample of the acquisitions received in the last several years.

Kluane-Chilkat International Bike Relay fonds (2007/175R)

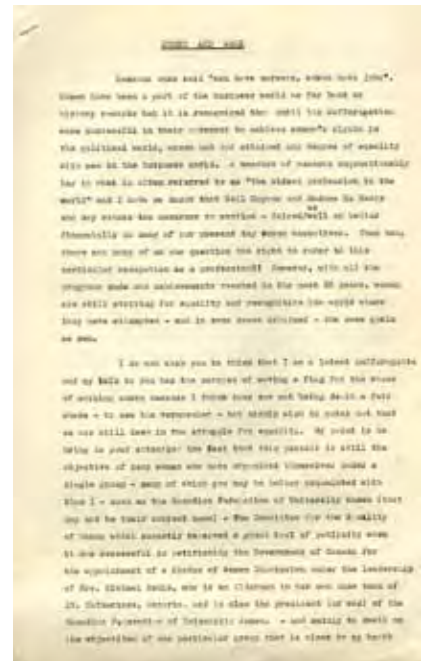
The corporate records of the Kluane Chilkat International Bike Relay — an annual 238-km bike race from Haines Junction, Yukon to Haines, Alaska — include minutes of board meetings, AGMs, income statements and correspondence, dating from circa 1992–2006.

David Silas fonds (2010/111)

David Silas's daughter donated nearly 200 black and white negatives taken in Pelly Crossing and Fort Selkirk between 1930 and 1960. The images are a particularly intimate portrayal of a region of the Yukon during an era which is not well represented in the Archives' holdings.

Land Administration and Land Tenure Series (2008/71, 2009/62)

These two accessions are from the records of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. They relate to land-use planning, land transfers and squatters on territorial land.



Above, right: Excerpt from a speech titled "Women and Work" ca. 1970.

YA, Whitehorse Business and Professional Women's Club fonds, 2011/93, in process, no file #

Bob Cameron fonds (2010/110)

This accession augments other donations to the Archives made by Bob Cameron over the years. It includes records relating to the Cameron family, including Willard “Pop” Cameron, former Whitehorse Mayor and Commissioner G.R. and Bonnie Cameron, and to the history and evolution of aviation in the territory. The material dates from the 1930s to the 1960s and includes a large number of photographs as well as also scrapbooks, textual material and a blueprint. Photo scenes include downtown Whitehorse, sternwheelers, boats, airplanes, and the Cameron family and friends.

Alan Innes-Taylor fonds (2011/45)

These records relate to historian Alan Innes-Taylor’s personal and working life in the Yukon, other parts of Canada, the United States and on international polar expeditions. Contents include correspondence, photographs, publications, diaries, maps and research documents.

Marjorie Merz fonds (2010/111)

When Marjorie Merz moved from Saskatchewan to Old Crow in 1960, she documented her journey and her teaching career with her camera. Many of the photos in this fonds document daily life in Old Crow.

Whitehorse Business and Professional Women’s Club fonds (2011/93)

This donation is an accrual to the club’s records already at Yukon Archives. Articles, newspaper clippings and speeches provide evidence of the club’s mandate to promote the interests of working women.



This donation came in to the Archives in September 2011. The fonds includes this patch.

YA, Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club fonds, 2011/95, M-157

Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club fonds (2011/95)

These textual and photographic records relate to the operation and history of the ski club and the development of cross-country skiing in Whitehorse.

Left: Archives Conservator Rob Ridgen and other staff members open a recent donation to the Archives from the estate of Aubrey Simmons, former Yukon MP.

Photo: Yukon Archives

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were digitized to support the creation of virtual exhibits, more images — from the Claude and Mary Tidd, Robert Hays and R.A. Cartter fonds — were added to the database. Subsequent pilot projects focused on the digitization of audio recordings of the Legislative Assembly (2009–10) and textual records of the Yukon Order of Pioneers (2011).

Yukon Archives is working towards digitization in support of long-term preservation. This has come about as a result of the knowledge gained through digitization efforts, a growing body of best practices in the profession, and the stability of appropriate formats and technologies. From 2007 to 2010, Yukon Archives completed a variety of policies, standards, procedures and specifications for the digitization of still image, audio and textual records. It also made an extensive investment in research and staff

development to support a movement from digitization projects to the creation of an ongoing digital curation and digital preservation program.

A major milestone in these efforts was the successful completion and initial implementation in January 2011 of the Yukon Archives Digital Preservation Management Policy. The policy establishes the principles of and objectives for digital preservation at Yukon Archives and creates an important foundation for the future acquisition and management of digital and digitized records from government and private sources as well as published materials.

Looking forward

As the Archives enters its fifth decade, the enthusiasm that established the institution remains. Its holdings honour past people and events, which are a resource for the

future. Yukon Archives will continue to be the place where the territory's collective documentary past lives on.

Archives Conservator Rob Ridgen examining a 35-mm nitrate film in the Archives' conservation lab, August 2009.

Photo: Yukon Archives



For your information.....

Submitted By

Yukon Dept. of Travel and Information
WHITEHORSE, YUKON, CANADA

RELEASE ON RECEIPT

November 27, 1972

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10-22

LIBRARY-ARCHIVES COMPLEX TO BE OPENED

WHITEHORSE, Yukon --- The recently-completed \$500,000 library-archives complex in downtown Whitehorse is to be officially opened by Commissioner James Smith on December 10, 1972.

A public tour of the complex will be laid on following the brief opening ceremony. Public viewing will be from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Garth Graham, director of Library Services Branch, said invitations have gone out to provincial archivists, librarians and historical sites officials throughout Canada to attend what has been described as the "most up-to-date and comprehensive system of its type in Canada."

The complex construction, which was started in September of 1971 and which includes about 1,600 sq. ft., includes an art gallery, film library, archives, book library, historic file system and land titles office. It includes such things as historical government records, photographs, maps, films and documents.

A preliminary press tour of the complex is scheduled for December 4th.

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Since 1972, Yukon Archives has been dedicated to preserving the irreplaceable documentary heritage of Yukoners. This book celebrates the forty-year anniversary of Yukon Archives and recounts the successes and challenges along the way.