

NWT Mining Heritage



November 2011

The NWT Mining Heritage Society is a group dedicated to building a mining museum in Yellowknife. It was officially incorporated in July 2002.

The group owns several buildings at the old Giant Mine site and plans to renovate the recreation hall first, followed by buildings at the A-shaft area.

The society has also begun development of outdoor displays at Giant, surrounding the public boat parking lot.



Collections Management - Ideas for the Future

This issue of our newsletter has a certain theme, one that the NWT Mining Heritage Society is in the process of promoting to a larger audience: Collections. It is tough to display our collections when we still don't have a home to set them up, but we are researching how to properly manage our collections and finding creative ways to showcase to the public.

In October, members of the Board attended workshops and meetings sponsored by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Center.

One of them was on Collections Management. Tim McShane from the Esplanade Museum of Medicine Hat came up to explain the essentials of how to best acquire, catalogue, store, and dispose of artifacts from a museum collection. It was a fun and informative workshop and gave us a lot to think about.

While the Society has extensive lists of what we have and where they came from, it has been impossible to create a system where collections are properly catalogued and stored,

although we have accomplished a lot as a volunteer-driven group. For example, all of our photographs have been scanned and catalogued.

We still have lots of work ahead of us, but our main priority is to renovate and convert the Giant Mine rec hall into an exhibit space. After that is completed, we will have lots of room to display our collections.

Until then, please enjoy this brief glimpse of what we have to offer from the annals of NWT mining past!

Baker Creek: A Living Exhibit

After years of planning, a working group of the City of Yellowknife, Giant Mine Remediation Project, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the Fly Fishing Foundation has completed an outdoor exhibit on Baker Creek, adjacent to our mining museum site at Giant Townsite. A series of information placards now

sit along the banks of the creek to inform residents and visitors of the unique biology of the creek and its marshlands where it enters Yellowknife Bay.

Baker Creek is in the process of rejuvenation as remediation at Giant Mine helps rebuild the natural habitat of Greyling, a fish that disappeared from the

watershed because of mining activity. The exhibit highlights conservation issues and acts as a living classroom. It is a great addition to the Giant Townsite area and it is our Society's vision to integrate a network of trails along Baker Creek to combine history, geology, and ecology into one great tourist experience.

FACES OF MINING - New Photo Galleries Online



The NWT Mining Heritage Society maintains a large collection of photographs documenting the places and faces of mining in the NWT and Nunavut from the 1930s to the present, and we are showcasing a select number of them in search of your assistance!

To honour the men and women who worked for the mining industry and lived in its camps, we want to identify

the people in our photographs so that they will be remembered for generations. So to all those former workers and their families, we seek your help.

In partnership with the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, the Society has built a new website photo gallery with images from, primarily, Con and Giant Mines, but also from Negus and Thompson-Lundmark.

Browse these galleries and email us the names of anyone you remember! Each gallery is divided by mining project and each photograph is numbered for easy reference.

Since it was launched in October, we have had an overwhelming response from the mining public and we thank everyone for their ongoing support as we preserve mining history on the NWT!

The NWT Mining Heritage Society currently maintains in its collection over 10,500 images from about 110 collections, and we have scanned and catalogued all of them.

Visit 'FACES OF MINING' at www.pwnhc.ca/nwtminingheritage/

Last Issue's Photo Contest - WINNER

Congratulations to Penny Kocik for winning the photo contest last issue. She was the first to guess a majority of the names. Special mention also goes to Max Rivett, Sandy Hamilton, and Keith MacDonald who provided names. The complete list of names from this mechanic crew at Giant Mine can be found on the 'Faces of Mining' website.

Spotlight on the Collections - Carbide Lamp



A 'Justrite' carbide lantern, a common tool for miners.

One of our long-time supporters, Don Helfrick, brought us this lamp some years ago and told us it came from Jack Stevens old campsite up the Yellowknife River. Stevens was a prospector most famous for staking the mineral claims that became the Ptarmigan gold mine (in 1936) and Rayrock

uranium mine (in 1948). Much later in the 1960s and 70s, Stevens mined the Mon gold deposit located about 50 kilometers up the YK River. Don Helfrick found this lamp hanging on a tree near his camp in 1997.

It is a carbide "Justrite" hand lamp and has been

reconditioned using spare parts from another similar lamp. These lamps were commonly used in the mines up until the 1960s. A chemical reaction of water and the calcium carbide power creates acetylene gas from which a open flame can be created and produces light, made brighter by the reflective disk.

Historic Photo Gallery - Camlaren Mine 1937/1938

From the Frank Jalonen collection is a series of prints from the Camlaren gold mine from 1937-1938, provided by his son Rudy Jalonen to the Society in 2006. Camlaren was a very small gold project in the original gold rush to Yellowknife before World War 2, and finding photos from this mine is rare. It was unfortunate that Frank had passed away some time ago as it would have been great to attach stories to these images, but here are a few things we know about Camlaren in those early years.

The mine is located at Gordon Lake, 50 kilometers northeast of Yellowknife, a large body of water that attracted prospectors in the fall of 1936. Sure enough, a series of quartz veins running north-south up the lake contained rich gold. Camlaren was staked by Don Cameron and the McLaren brothers and



Photos from Camlaren Mine taken by Frank Jalonen. Left: Zenith Island shaft. Right: Heavy manual labour

in 1937 Mining Corporation of Canada took control of the claims and began development on two shafts and erected a permanent camp and mine facility. The main shaft was put down 250 feet and miners explored the rich 'Hump' vein on two levels.

It was an isolated place only accessible by bush plane and was home to 50 men and a few families. Kay Muir was the wife of the mine manager Ken Muir, and she wrote about her experiences in a collection of stories published

in "Women who Lived and Loved North of 60". (see excerpt right)

Camlaren closed during the war and never produced gold until many years later when another company rehabilitated the shaft and plant. The mine was cleaned up in the 1990s and little is left there today except a stone-chimney from the mine manager's house and ruins of log cabins where miners and their families lived. We now honour the hardy and adventurous pioneers of the past through their photos.

"It was truly a canvas compound. The 50 or so men, the staff, even the cookhouse were all contained in tents. It was surely a new experience for me as before I married a mining engineer I lived only in big cities. But it was very exciting - the beginning of the Yellowknife Boom."
- Kay Muir

New Public Display Open for Geoscience Forum

There is a new display of mining artifacts, photographs, and rock samples at the Northern Frontier Visitors Centre in Yellowknife, put together by the Society as part of a temporary exhibit. The display is open in time for Geoscience Forum in mid-November and we hope it will be a great draw for delegates

and tourists to the city this month. On display is a collection of mining tools, miner's gear, assay lab material, cookhouse dishes and food stuff, a type writer, and a gold bar mold - a tiny selection of the artifacts in our collection.

The display will be up until the end of November at the earliest

and then make way for renovations at the Visitor's Centre.

Check it out and let us know what you think! We are looking at the possibilities of additional temporary exhibits in the coming months, so stay tuned for more news.



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We're on the Web!
www.nwtminingheritage.com

This newsletter is published periodically as events are planned and organized.
Edited by Ryan Silke



RECOGNIZE THESE FACES??

The first person to correctly guess all the names of these five fellows from the Giant Mine Senior Staff, posing here with the 1000th gold brick in 1953, will win a prize!

Email your guesses to: info@nwtminingheritage.com

Christmas Season is Upon Us!



Schedule of Events

Baker's Centre
Christmas
Bake Sale,
November 26

Society Christmas
Party at the
Baker's Centre,
December 17

Yellowknife
Heritage Week,
February 20-25

The Mining Heritage Society will celebrate the Christmas season in style this year with an open house event at the Baker's Centre on the afternoon of December 17th. Members and our friends from the general public (who we strongly urge to sign up as members!) are welcome to enjoy the company of the mining community as we share Christmas treats (with a mining theme) and stories and a historic slideshow.

The Society will also have a table set up at the Baker's Centre Bake Sale on November 26th.

We leave you with some holiday images from the mining past!



Opening presents at Con, 1960s. (courtesy Bob Morris)



Drinks at Giant, 1950s. (courtesy Bruce Nikiforow)



Christmas time at the Giant Mine cafeteria, 1950s. (Bill Case Collection)