

# The Duthie Mine—Threads

When Irma Bannister sent us the picture of the mine road, little did she realize that a chapter of our history would unfold.

Interested people donated pictures and related their first-hand experiences. The Heritage Club has attempted to put together a story of life at the mine.

## Part One:

In the early 1920s two prospectors, Jack and Jabe Ashman, struck a rich vein of ore at timberline on the western slope of Hudson Bay Mountain. They knew it was a good prospect and tried to raise money locally for a road. Druggist, Mason Adams was the only one interested. It was J.F. Duthie, an American mining promoter, who bought the property from the Ashmans and hired Jack Turner of Seattle as head engineer to develop the mine. The upper tunnel yielded good grade ore — lead, zinc, steel galena and silver. The work continued from the upper tunnel at No. six stope into No. two level which assayed very rich ruby silver.

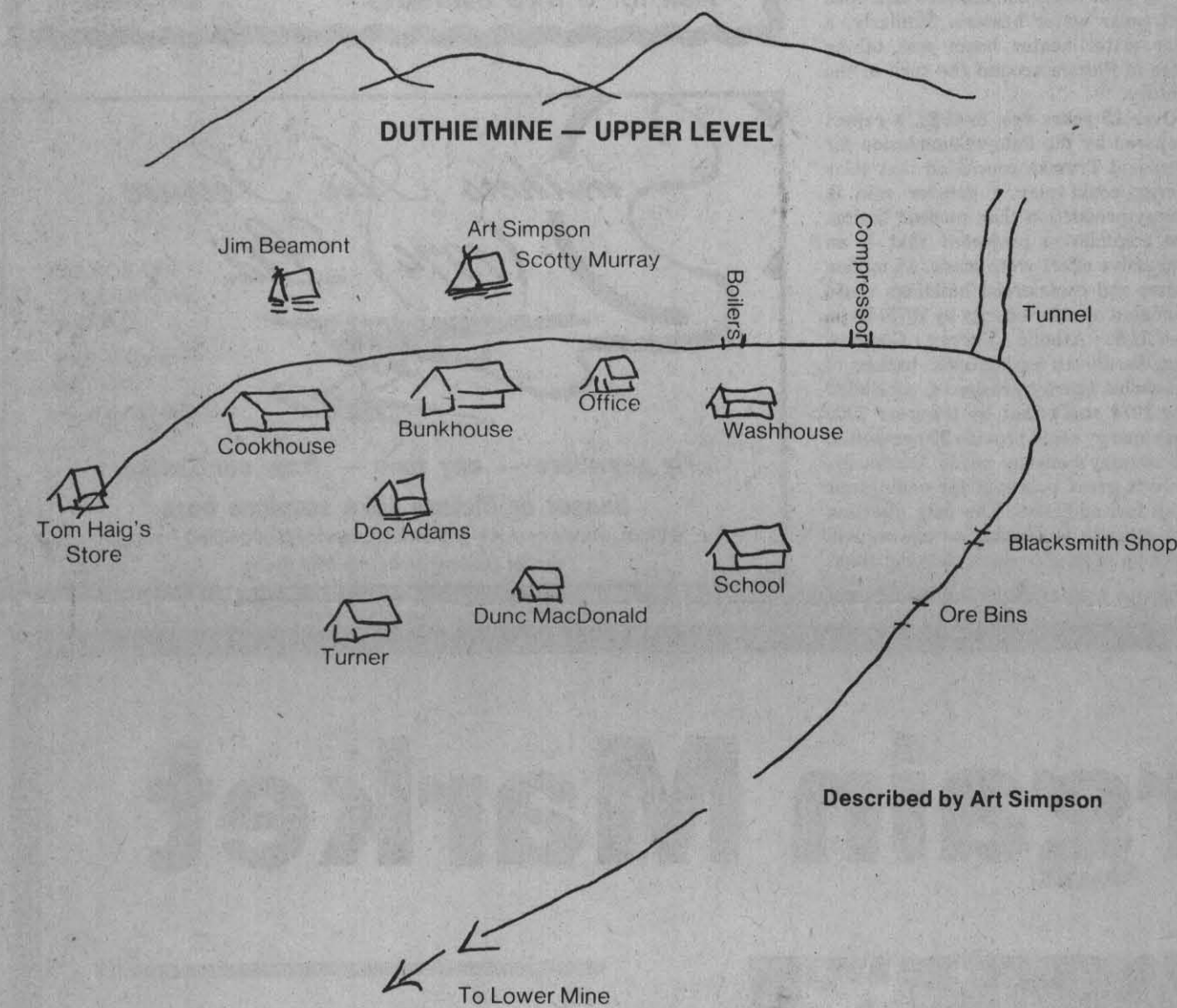
## Another Heritage Club feature

The City Transfer climbs the road to the upper mine and meets the mine truck coming down with ore. The buildings are at the lower level.

Photo courtesy Irma Bannister



Jimmy Live and Art Simpson have unloaded wood for the boilers at the upper tunnel. The boilers burned 10 to 12 cords a day and supplied steam for the compressor room at the right. Art drove the mine truck and worked at the ore bins. Photo courtesy Art Simpson



## NEW RICH ORE STRIKE IN DUTHIE MINE WORK

Another surprise discovery made one hundred feet short of point expected

Duthie mine was closed tight for the double holiday and the entire force came down to Smithers to celebrate Canada's Diamond Jubilee, but they also celebrated the opening up of a strong vein of rich ore in the lower workings of that property. Samples of the new ore brought to town indicate very high silver values with ruby silver standing out prominently. The latest discovery is important and highly enhancing around the mine from the fact that it proves the high values continue at depth, but the particular showing was encouraging through its discovery at a considerable distance short of the point to which they are driving the long tunnel for the purpose of tapping ore showing in strength in the higher levels.

The new ore was encountered in the course of driving the long tunnel from the mill site, this tunnel to have a total length of 800 feet and a raise of 200 feet for the purpose of tapping the big ore body being developed simultaneously by shafts from the compressor tunnel. The work had progressed about 700 feet when the new ore came in to give further promise to that property.

Mr. and Mrs. J.F. Duthie are expected to arrive at the property in a few days and will spend a couple of weeks on the hill. Clipping from Interior News, 1927. From Phil Davidson's scrapbook.

There were about 20 woodcutters, Walter Chapman, Percy Davidson, Fred Bayson, Black George, Bill Hansen, Ben Mueller, Jim Carson were a few. Wages were \$2.70 a cord, piled, and \$9 a day for a man and team.

There were about 20 miners and muckers. George Haggart pushed cars from the mine to the ore bin. Conrad Stordahl and Gawn Moffat, a gifted cartoonist, worked underground. Bill Leach, using horses equipped with carbide lamps, pulled ore cars in the tunnel. He and Al Bannister hauled ore to the CNR with four-horse teams.

## Jas Carson is victim of woods mishap

Jas Carson is a patient at Smithers hospital, being brought down from the Duthie mine on Thursday suffering a broken leg. Jim was employed on a wood-cutting job near the mine. He was bringing down a tree, which lodged, and in freeing the timber he was caught in the fall. He was pinned down for some time before being observed and the mine truck made a fast run to the hospital. There was so much noise in the bush with all the sawing and chopping that no one heard Jim's shouting. Art Simpson found him and drove him to Smithers. Interior News, 1927.



Gus Lind and Dunc, MacDonald haul the 4' wood to the upper level. Photo courtesy John Bovill

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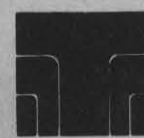
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## Told by those who remember

"Jack McEwen was bookkeeper. Joe (Doc) Adams had a store — lots of credit but he never made any money.

"A Japanese couple ran the cookhouse — the grub was good. There was a big bunkhouse — two to a room and maybe 12 homes — cabins built in the trees. Dunc MacDonald unloaded wood and kept the boilers going. He and a group of men cleaned out a shack for a school. They took up a collection to buy lumber for a new floor.

"Robert Bruce Wallace was hired as teacher. He started a night school for adults (Fred Bayson for one) to brush up on their schooling and tutored newcomers who wanted to learn English. Later, Wallace married Edith Strimbold of Topley.

The school was the social centre of the mine and many Smithers residents headed up the mountain on Saturday night.

The miners had to guarantee transportation for the Smithers musicians — John Gray on the violin, the Gasley's, Clary Goodacre on drums. Doc Adams played the piano and Jack Haggart the Jew's harp. Often when Jack had had a few he would step outside and the whole gang would leave the hall to listen to him. Clary reports that a good fist fight was often part of the entertainment.

Dr. Dunn, a young intern sponsored by Dr. Hankinson, gained much experience as the mine's first aid man. He distinguished himself equally well as a fist fighter — taking on a Smithers teacher. Mr. Elsie, in a dispute over a horse. According to May Simpson the school often became over crowded, so to make more room the fellows would throw the big heater out in the snow.

Every Monday, Clary Goodacre, who worked for Watson's, drove a 1½ ton truck loaded with groceries to the mine. Fred supplied food on credit until the families on the mountain had become "established". The depression hit, the mine closed and it almost spelled bankruptcy for Fred."



Ore chute and Blacksmith Shop, where Tom Haig and Ridsdale sharpened the drill steel. Photo courtesy John Bovill



Mike Mesich, with team Babe and Prince, hauled 4' cordwood and stockpiled it beside the road. Photo courtesy Mike Mesich

"As knowledge increases, wonder deepens." Charles Morgan



Mrs. Arne Fredriksen

## Area pioneer passes in Port Angeles

Another link with pioneer days in Aldermere and Telkwa has gone with the death of Mrs. Arne Fredriksen (nee Sheila Hoops), on March 8 at her home in Port Angeles, Washington. Born in Hazelton in 1916, Sheila was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E.M. Hoops, valley pioneers since 1910. As a child she was a great favourite with prospectors and teamsters who enjoyed her gaiety and independence. In the 1920s she and her Shetland pony, Merry Legs, were a familiar sight on Telkwa

streets. Sheila was a lively and popular student of Telkwa's one room high school which opened in the old RCMP barracks in 1930.

She graduated from St. Joseph's Hospital and began her long and successful career as a nurse. While working in Port Angeles, she met her husband, Arne, who passed away six months ago.

The Fredriksens are survived by daughter Karen Langlois of Wisconsin, and son Tom of California.

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# Workshop acts on alcoholism

SMITHERS — Alcoholism is a very serious problem in Smithers among native and non-native people alike. It is time people confronted the problem.

This was the consensus of a workshop held here March 22 and 23 on alcohol and drug abuse in Smithers. Held in the Central Park Building, the two day workshop, sponsored by a Canada Works project — the Native Family — brought about 30 people together, some with the problem, others interested in helping, to try and steer a course towards a drier future.

According to Eric Robinson, director of the Gitksan-Carrier Tribal Council's

## Quick W.I. March report

The March meeting of the Quick Women's Institute was held March 9 at the Van Horne home. There were 18 members and three guests present. Donations were received for Red Cross.

Judy van der Meulen will prepare an entry for the Annie Coulton Shield. This is a report on the institute's cultural activities for the past two years.

Jean Tosrud reported on the amount of excess garbage that must be disposed of each year. Sometimes the plastic bags in which we buy vegetables cost more than the vegetables themselves. Mention was also made of the new feed store in Telkwa and the good service they are providing to the community.

It was again decided to sponsor a trophy for the junior baking section of the Fall Fair. A letter was received from the Town of Smithers that new washroom facilities are being installed at the Fall Fair.

Faye Van Horn was appointed a delegate to the provincial conference with Margaret Swift as guest. May Mauer will be our delegate at the district conference.

This month's competition was won by Barbara Jeffery with a beautifully knit sweater. The well supplied craft table also saw brisk business.

The April meeting of the Quick Women's Institute will be held at the Swift home. Roll call will be "Why I continue to be a W.I. member." Competition will be a gift for a girl 12 years old and under. See you there! (Contributed)

alcohol and drug abuse programme in Hazelton, who acted as a resource person for the workshop, the workshop endeavoured to identify the causes of alcoholism in Smithers, then suggested possible solutions.

"The number one solution is more awareness of the effects of alcoholism on the individual, the family and the community," Robinson said.

Among concrete solutions proposed by the workshop was a full time alcohol and drug awareness worker whose role would be to try intercepting people before they became alcoholics, as well as providing counselling and rehabilitation services.

"He would have to get into the schools, get information to the younger kids, tell them what alcohol and drugs do," Robinson said.

## Alternatives

Another solution was to provide more alternatives to drinking. The workshop decided that if there were other things to do aside from drinking, the individual would perhaps choose not to drink.

The workshop decided that a

detoxification centre was needed in the area. It was mentioned that often the Bulkley Valley District Hospital cannot provide the type of 24 hour service needed for someone suffering from delirium tremens. A detoxification centre serving the district could provide the more specialized service needed by someone who is "drying out."

Perhaps the strongest need identified by the workshop was for more seminars and workshops to increase awareness of alcoholism's effects. A committee of five people was set up to co-ordinate the next workshop. The aim of the next seminar would be to bring together representatives from the various community service groups — human resources department, health and welfare, RCMP — to determine how the community can work together to reduce the level of alcohol abuse.

Although sponsored by a native group, and involving many Indians, the workshop emphasized that alcoholism is not only an Indian problem and the solutions have to come from the whole community.



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