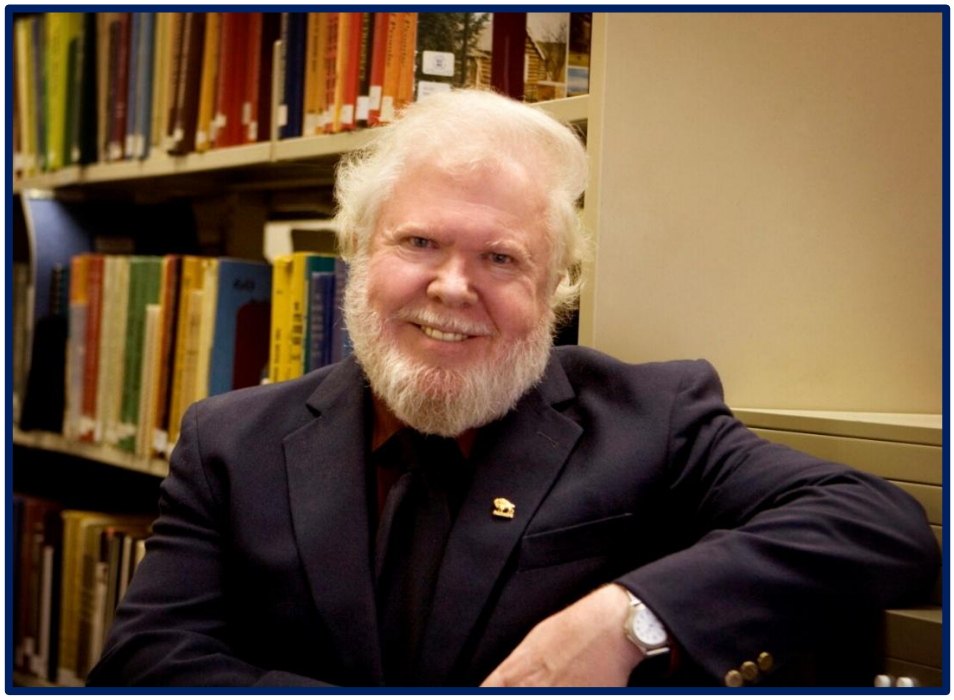
Peace Country Historical Society
Lower Level, Centre 2000
11330 106 Street
Grande Prairie, AB, T8V 7X9

June, July 2025
The Summer Issue
Volume 15, Issue 2

Promoting, Preserving, Publishing Our Heritage



David William Leonard 1945-2025

https://edmontonjournal.remembering.ca/obituary/david-leonard-1092975423

Upcoming Summer/Fall Events – see details on PCHS Forum | Facebook

Additional podcasts have been added for your enjoyment! Our first six video podcasts with reviews of the historic major fires from our region, the organizing of area Royal Canadian Legions, an appreciation of the Grande Prairie Museum, the 2024 Heritage Fair, Mounties as community builders, and local hockey greats, are all now uploaded. Bookmark our YouTube channel and enjoy it at **The Peace Country Historical Society Podcast - YouTube**

2025 Events will be emailed to members and posted on the PCHS Forum | Facebook page.

August 2nd Heritage Day Celebration at the Grande Prairie Museum
August 21st PCHS Summer Tea at the Forbes Homestead 2:00 PM
November 9th PCHS Remembrance-Themed Event
December Christmas Event, with Generations Readers Theatre.

More details will be added as planning and participants are confirmed.

Peace Country Historical Society

Vision: To encourage the appreciation of the history of the Peace Country

Mandate: The mandated area of the Peace Country Historical Society is the Northwest region of Alberta

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Our New Mailing Address:

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11330 106 Street
Grande Prairie, AB, T8V 7X9

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What We Can Offer

A chance to help set the direction for our Peace Country Chapter at membership meetings or other communication means.

A chance to learn about Peace Country history during presentations and tours, through Facebook, the Newsletter, the Website, and at membership meetings.

A chance to meet other people who enjoy history.

A chance to contribute as a volunteer in various projects that we carry out.

A chance to advocate for the preservation of the history of our area.

Qualify to submit applications for HSA grants to fund special projects.

We hope you choose to join, or continue with our Society.

Editor's Message

On Tuesday, July 22nd, we held an initial small meeting for a couple of hours at the Archives with some past contributors to the PCHC newsletter, and others looking for guidance or discussion on how they could also participate. Whether that would lead to a small article for the newsletter or putting down some thoughts for their family, it was a promising start, and we'll set another date soon for more discussion. Contact your editor if writing, mentoring, or discussing historical topics might be of interest. Our thanks to the Archives for welcoming us to their facility.

There is a possibility of adding a new contributor for an article or a possible series on the historical aspects of trapping and its importance in the early days in the region. It would provide our members with a glimpse into a lifestyle that most folks have not experienced, and a timely addition for our fall issue.

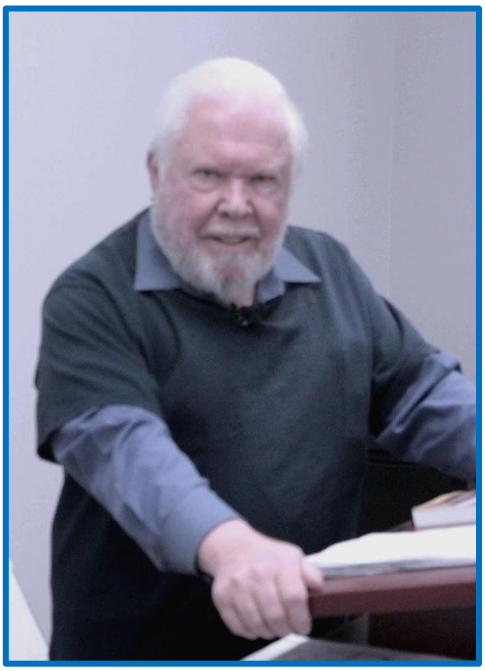
As a young man, my father had a trapline south of the Wapiti in the early '30s, which he again returned to after retiring from farming. My own "trapline" at the age of ten or eleven provided some spending money or savings for tools of the trade. Though weasels were a typical catch, they were better than nothing. They were found in nearby snow-covered windrows of brush when our home quarter was being cleared.

Many years later, I signed on as a partner when my father's health and his solitary winter excursions became a family concern. Despite efforts, however, I was never considered a decent cribbage opponent, as he had little patience with cribbage amateurs. Some trappers appear to be happier without partners, but then they have no audience for their yarns.

Since I've given up chasing them, I've had a wide variety of critters come to visit the acreage, and it's much simpler to list those that have not shown up near the house:

Not Yet Visited: Mountain Goat, Mountain Sheep, Wild Elk, Grizzly, Beaver, Geese, Swans.

Visitors: Weasels, Deer, Black and Cinnamon Bear, Moose, Fisher, Cougar, Coyotes, Grouse, Hawks, Eagles, Owls, Blue and Stellar Jays, Flickers, Robins, Varied Thrushes, Chickadees, Pileated and Smaller Woodpeckers, Groundhogs, Squirrels, Flying Squirrels, Crows, Ravens, Magpies, and Hares. There's no point in planting a garden; something always gets it first.



Remembering David William Leonard A.O.E.

Always ready to share his research from a long career as an archivist, historical preservation advocate, and author, David always had an urgency to gather and present the results on the many project files in which he was involved.

At the podium, above, he was ready to start his presentation of the updated information on the Peace Country Land Settlement Database at our 2023 PCHS Annual General Meeting. It had been a massive project to bring to a conclusion.

Whether meeting a new resident of the region, an early homesteader, or families of the original people of the land, David was able to connect people to the early events that have shaped our region, for good or ill. He was a realist and certainly not an apologist for the past failings of early governmental policy decisions that visited hardships on native peoples or less-favoured ethnic groups.

David felt deeply that many historic figures should be preserved in the records or public venues, but also be fully understood and remembered for their failings on a human and moral level. Long-established codes of conduct or accepted notions of right and wrong from years past often unsettle us today, when we judge past generations' actions by today's more enlightened standards.

David's contributions to the province of Alberta and even nearby regions will be further documented in an upcoming retrospective issue of Alberta History magazine. His legacy of work encompassed over half a century. In archives, historical site designation, writing, and public presentations, he touched many lives, past and present. We were honoured by his contributions.

Beyond his family, close friends, and his collaborators on books and presentations, his loss to the historical community may be most widely felt throughout the Peace region, where he was raised as a boy. Those roots were the source of many of his books and articles on the history of our region.

As a historian trained to read and research historical records, he was keen to expand and safeguard the regional archival records for future historians. It was difficult to challenge him on a subject, as he typically had not only three confirming data sources to support his view, but also the context at hand to refute further argument. His recall of major league baseball statistics was legendary.

When he encountered a lack of written history, he encouraged the collection of oral history to add to those important archival records. A planned workshop on conducting and preserving oral history material is only one of many events he encouraged for our region that has been derailed with his passing.

Our last bus tour on May 24th extended to Charlie Lake, B.C., and the Tsekwa Cave, with David's historical road commentary. He would map, then drive a route, plan the itinerary with local hosts, and provide photocopies of early-era photos and maps for handouts on points of interest. He had pre-planned and then completed the trip despite some health issues. Back in Edmonton, by June 12th, he was in the hospital for diagnostic tests and had expected a resolution.

On the 17th, he notified me that he was diagnosed with inoperable liver cancer with only about a month left, "so no more trips to the Peace River Country." I was able to spend some time with him on the 21st and 22nd, and for a final visit on the 27th. There was some possibility he could transfer to a hospice around Canada Day, but he remained at the U of A Hospital, where he passed on July 3rd.

His family is fulfilling his wishes by sending his working papers and collections to provincial and regional archives and museums. A memorial is expected to be held in October, and we will send out a notice when a date is finalized.

David's Alberta Award of Excellence (from 2007): https://www.alberta.ca/aoe-david-leonard

You will be missed, David.

Ron Thoreson

Peace Country Historical Society

EIGHT SECONDS

FOUR PEACE COUNTRY RESIDENTS AND A NATION BUILDING PROJECT

By Pat Wearmouth

A Warning and Introduction

"Gentlemen, if the system loses power for more than eight seconds, you will be out of a job because your employer will have lost the contract".

That statement was made in June of 1961 by a military officer who was part of the North American Air Defense organization (NORAD). This was the Cold War era, and NORAD, whose headquarters were in Colorado Springs, required an extremely reliable communications system with the military in Alaska. Alaska was the first line of defense in detecting threats from the Soviet Union.

The officer was speaking to a group of people in Dawson Creek. They had just completed a course in the maintenance of electric power for a recently built microwave network that provided this. It was called the Grande Prairie to Alaska line (the GPA), which ran from Grande Prairie over 1200 miles to the Alaskan border, where it connected with Alaska's system. The line followed the Alaska Highway. Canadian National Telecommunications (CNT) had managed the construction phase and would employ the graduates as the line became operational.

Two Peace Country residents who heard that statement were Rudy Jacobs (52) from Beaverlodge and Earl Smith (26) from Ft. St. John. Rudy had come to Canada from Germany in 1929, trained in the mechanical trades. After working as a farmhand for a time near Sexsmith, he established himself as a blacksmith in Rio Grande. Rudy soon developed a reputation for being able to fix anything.

He also owned a truck with which he hauled grain for local farmers and supplies for the Monkman Highway project in the late 1930s, as well as supporting a lodge he built at Stony Lake.

During WWII, Rudy drove a truck on the construction of the Alaska Highway and eventually moved to Beaverlodge. Ever the entrepreneur, he developed a variety of businesses, largely revolving around fixing things. In 1961, he heard about the microwave course from a friend and immediately registered.

Earl grew up on a farm in the North Pine district northeast of Fort St. John. His father farmed but was also a trucker and a mechanic. From a very early age, Earl was taught the basics of these skills. As Earl entered the workforce, he favored trucking, but employers knew of his mechanical knowledge and persuaded him to focus on mechanics, as there was endless work available. He obtained his mechanics license by the time he was 21 years old and was working in a Fort St. John repair shop when he heard about the course and also registered.

Rudy (L) and Earl at Watson Lake

We'll get back to Rudy and Earl and also introduce two others into the mix. But first, some background on microwave systems themselves.

The Wonderful World of Waves

Canada was one of the first countries in the world to embrace communications using microwaves. It was a big country, distances were vast, and Canadians were using long-distance communications in ever-increasing numbers; some of the highest usage in the world. Up until the Second World War, telegraphy and telephones provided this service via physical wires. But wires were limited in the number of messages that could be handled at any given time. Long-distance lines were often jammed.

By the end of WWII, microwave technology had improved to the point where it was feasible to transmit large numbers of telephone and television signals simultaneously using waves rather than wires. Canada was ready for the next step in communication technology.

In some respects, building microwave systems was as big and complicated as building a transcontinental railway or highway. The waves would serve as another nation building project, bringing people together as they communicated.

The first long distance microwave system (called the Trans-Canada) was built by a consortium of regional telephone companies and opened in 1958. It stretched 3980 miles from Sydney, Nova Scotia to Victoria, B.C. via a southern route above the American border. Among other things it allowed Hockey Canada to be heard and seen across the country.

One of the next lines built was the GPA. The new line was able to connect at Grande Prairie because Alberta Government Telephones (AGT) had built the Alberta section of the 1958 Trans-Canada system. AGT then continued building networks inside Alberta and had extended a line from the American border all the way to Grande Prairie by the time a link was required for the north. The connection was made on the tower at the east end of 108th Avenue in Grande Prairie. NORAD's Ballistic Missile Early Warning System had absolute top priority of use, but commercial traffic utilized the balance of the capacity.

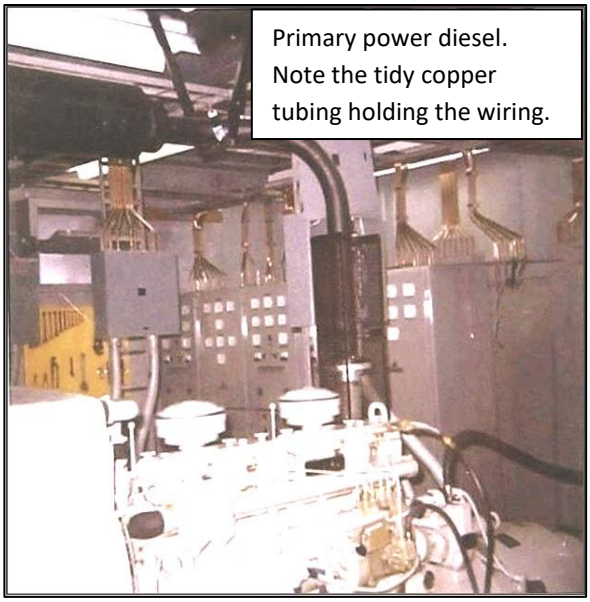
Microwaves can be thought of as radio waves but at a very much higher frequency than an AM or FM radio. As mentioned, they have much greater capacity for multiple transmissions, but the price to be paid is that these waves only work within a direct line of sight. In other words, each site must be able to "see" the previous and next one. A lot of tower sites must be built.

The major reason for this is the curvature of the Earth. If you stand at the edge of the ocean and look out, your line of sight is only about three miles to the horizon. If you were elevated 100 feet, the horizon would be 15 miles away. One of the preliminary jobs in building a microwave network was to decide with surveys, on each tower's location and tower height to ensure reliable transmission. In the mountains particularly, this was a complex and time- consuming surveying exercise. The average distance between sites was between 30 and 40 miles.

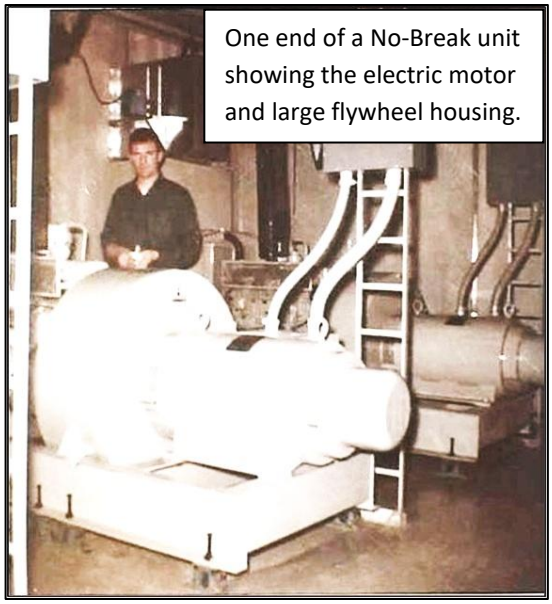
Each site consisted of a tower upon which the disc or horn shaped antennas were mounted. At the base of the tower, there was a building that housed the equipment required to receive and send microwaves.

The building was divided into two rooms. One contained two banks of steel cabinets that held the transmitter and receiver equipment. Both banks were operated continually, broadcasting/receiving identical signals concurrently. If one bank failed, the message still got through to the other bank. Incoming and outgoing microwave signals were sent to the antennas in the form of waves, rather than wires, inside square tubing wave guides.

The power supply equipment was situated in the other room. It consisted of either connections to an outside power line or two diesel-driven alternators, the second being a standby. These were considered the primary power source for the site.



Primary power diesel. Note the tidy copper tubing holding the wiring.



One end of a No-Break unit showing the electric motor and large flywheel housing.

Should the primary power fail, they were backed up by an ingenious system called a “No-Break” unit, which provided the required uninterrupted power supply (8 seconds, remember). Again, there were two units for reliability. The No-Break was built on a rectangular frame. On the frame were mounted an electric motor, an alternator, a very heavy flywheel, an automatic magnetic clutch, and a diesel engine, all connected by a rotating shaft.

Normally, the main power source ran the electric motor on the frame, which turned the alternator and the flywheel, as well as the clutch when it engaged. This was done to allow the No-Break alternator to modulate the electric power going to the antennas.

Microwaves require a very stable power source to send a clear signal. The main power source also ran the lights and the furnace fans in the building.

If the control system sensed a drop in the main power, the automatic clutch would connect the kinetic energy of the rotating flywheel to a smaller diesel engine, which started instantly and powered the alternator, which continued to provide the stable power. It would do so until the primary source became available again.

The majority of sites had this configuration. However, there were some remote sites on the top of mountains. In addition to the tower and building located there, a tramway with its own power supply was built from the end of a road to the site. Staff and equipment, including motors and fuel tanks, were sent up and down with these.

This was the world that Rudy and Earl were about to enter, and where they would make their mark.

Working on the GPA line

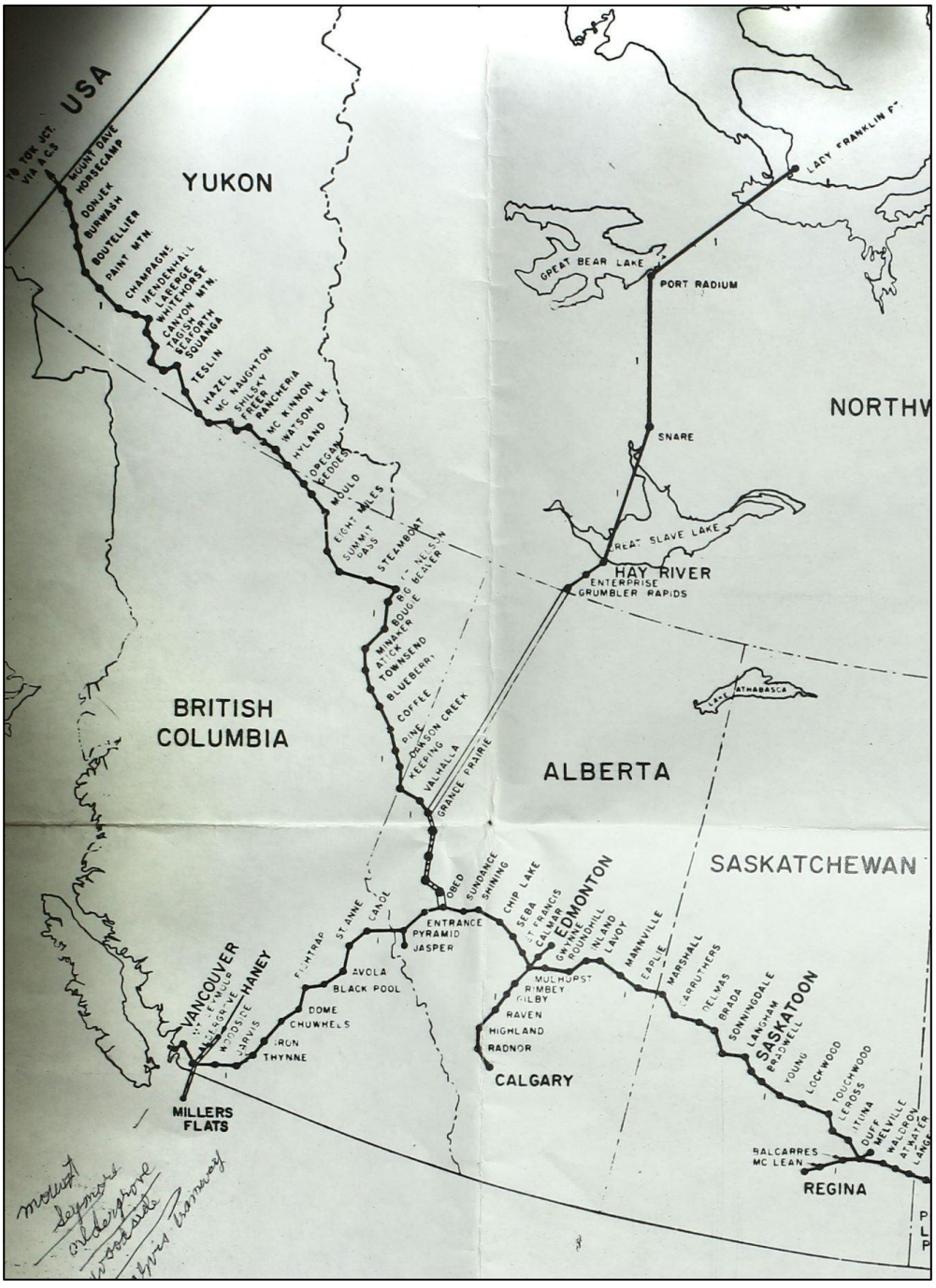
After completing the course, class members were sent up the Alaska Highway, four to a car. They viewed all the sites and made choices as to where they would prefer to work. The conventional sites were grouped into sections of three adjacent sites, which one person could maintain. The tramways on this particular line were close enough to one another that one mechanic could service both.

Rudy chose the two tramways, probably because he felt these would be the biggest challenge on the line. Rudy was known for his interest in figuring out and making complicated things work. One tramway was located at Paint Mountain east of Haines Junction, the Yukon; the other at Horse Camp Hill, just before the Alaskan border. The two sites were 200 miles apart.

He was also assigned a house at Canyon Creek, close to the Paint Mountain site.
His first task at the tramways was to understand how they worked. They had been built by a Norwegian company whose staff left immediately after completing the install. They left the necessary diagrams and instructions, but they were all in Norwegian. It was quite a job, but he eventually managed to translate the information on how the equipment worked and what maintenance was required.

Rudy also found other things to do in Haines Junction, among them repairing the church organ and the local café's jukebox. He spent a year or two at the tramway sites before returning to Beaverlodge to oversee the first three sites outside of Grande Prairie. The site just behind the Blooming Valley Hall was one of them.

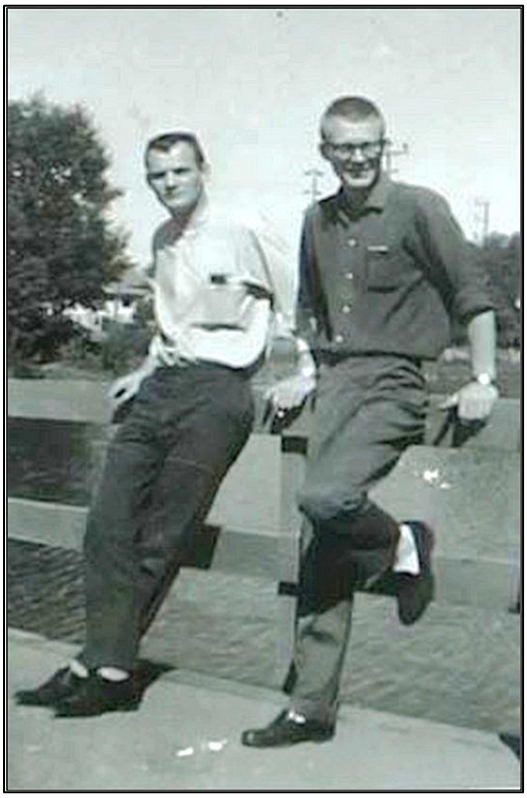
In the meantime, Earl chose three conventional sites much closer to his home in Fort St. John. He was raising a family and needed to be nearby. Even living there, though, he was often away for long periods. This was because, in addition to his three sites, he was the relief mechanic for several others and had to travel long distances at times.



A map showing the route from Grande Prairie to the Alaskan border, and the route from Eastern Saskatchewan to Vancouver

In some manner, both men caught the eye of CNT's upper management, and early in their careers, they were promoted to positions of network inspectors and supervisors. For Earl, that meant moving to Whitehorse in 1962, where he was responsible for all the sites from Watson Lake to the Alaskan border. In 1963, he moved to Dawson Creek with responsibility for the entire GPA line.

Rudy went farther afield. In 1964, he was asked to join CNT's next project, which was building the western half of a second Trans-Canada line. It ran from Montreal to Vancouver, going by a more northerly route through Saskatoon, Edmonton, the Yellowhead Pass, and then down to Vancouver. CNT was constructing the line from the SK/MB border to Vancouver. Rudy was to be responsible for that construction.

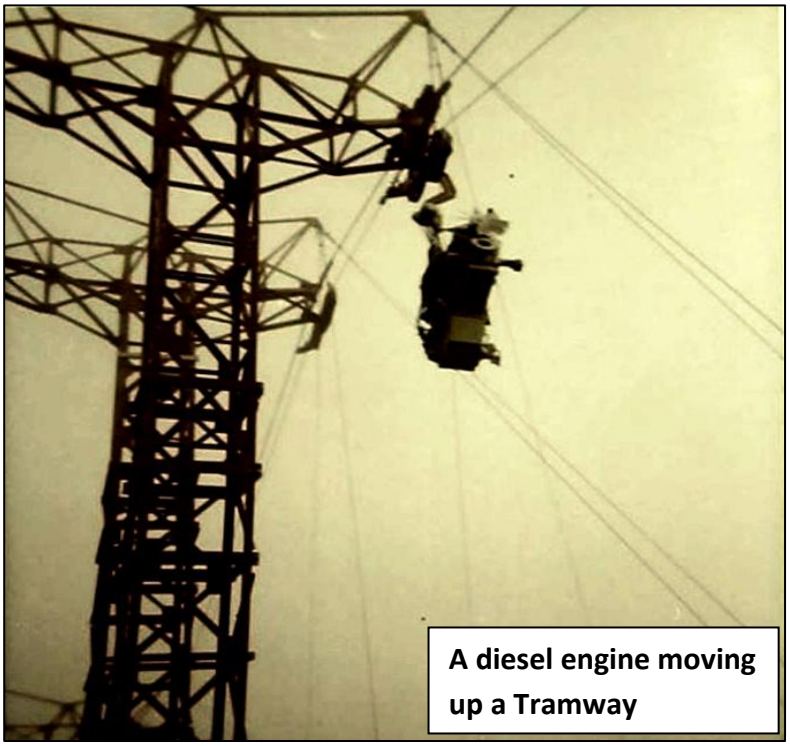


Francis (R) and Clem Jacobs

When Rudy arrived in Saskatchewan, he quickly realized that more staff would be required to install the power equipment. He phoned his sons in Beaverlodge, Francis and Clem, and told them about the work available. Both were looking for a new adventure and were soon in Ituna, Saskatchewan, working on separate power installation crews.

The configuration of the microwave sites on the Prairies was very similar to those on the GPA. The first task of the crew was to find the railway siding to which their equipment had been shipped. This was not as straightforward as it sounds, as sidings were sometimes out of sight of the highways. It often took considerable time driving the rural roads looking for the one with their freight. Once there, a flatbed truck with a winch was used to haul the heavy equipment back to the site. Over the next week, the crew would install all the power equipment and hook it up to the microwave side. The work was meticulously done, and everything was left tidy and clean. Then on to the next one they went. Francis remarked on the repetitiveness of the process across the Prairies; it was like using a cookie-cutter, he said.

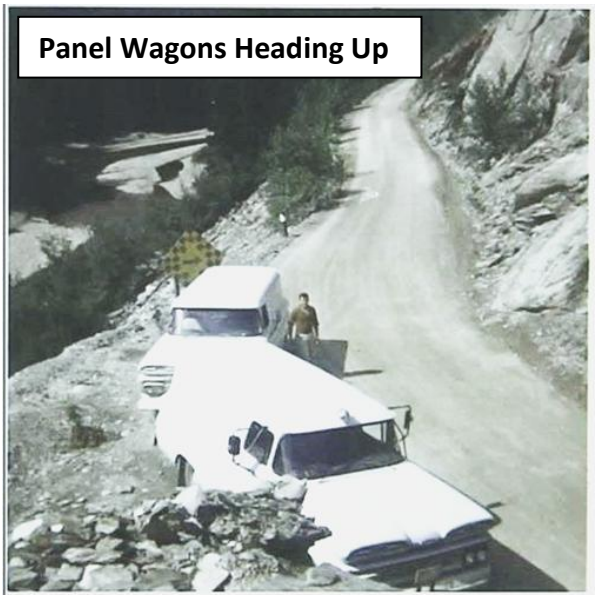
However, this all changed once they reached the Rocky Mountains. The first site was on top of Pyramid Mountain, a 9,000-foot peak just north of Jasper. It was serviced by a 10,000-foot-long temporary tramway while the permanent one was being completed. Since the crew's equipment had not yet arrived at the Jasper rail yard, the crew moved on to the next site on Canoe Mountain, just south of Valemont, also at an elevation of 9000 feet.



A diesel engine moving up a Tramway

This site was accessed all the way to the top by a roughed-out service road. Using their Panel Wagon from the Prairies, with an automatic transmission and two-wheel drive, they drove up the road with some trepidation. They found the tower up, but only the floor of the building was finished. Realizing they would not be working there for a while, the crew turned around and began making their descent. The Wagon's transmission was of little use in slowing the vehicle, and soon the smell of burning brakes and smoke prevailed. When they reached the bottom, they took the wagon to a garage. They were informed that not only had they burnt out the brakes, but had ruined the spindles and axles, all of which needed to be replaced. Crews in the mountains were soon using four-wheel drive units with manual transmissions and a low-speed first gear. The road up Canoe Mountain still exists, and it is the highest drivable road in the Rocky Mountains and all of British Columbia today.

Panel Wagons Heading Up



From then on, the power installations crews were directed by Rudy, who had scouted ahead and found sites where the tower and building were up and ready for the

installations. As well, he or the crew dealt with the same railway siding location issue that had plagued them on the Prairies. Francis remembers that finding the Albreda siding north of Blue River was particularly frustrating.

There was a need for speed, as CNT wanted the system ready for the Queen's Christmas speech to the Commonwealth. The route from Great Britain to Australia was planned to go via the Trans-Atlantic Cable to Canada, across the country by the new microwave line, then via the Trans-Pacific Cable to the destination. There were still some temporary and unreliable sites in the mountains, and the crews were quite worried about reliability. They left it in the best shape they could and went home for the Christmas holiday. The Queen's message was heard in Australia, but Rudy said that had she known how tenuous the system was, she likely would have spoken much faster.

Winter conditions in the Mountains

<u>Winding Down</u>

Francis and Clem worked until 1967, finishing the B.C. section of the line. The last mountain top site with a tramway was on Jarvis Mountain near Hope. The line then ran down the Fraser River valley to Vancouver.

Eventually, Clem resigned and headed home to become a dairy farmer. His silo is a well-known sight at Huallen, west of Grande Prairie. Francis remained with CNT for a bit longer, performing maintenance work to correct corrosion issues that developed in the No-Break diesels. He returned to Beaverlodge and became the owner of Morgan's Jewellery, which operated there for many years.

Earl remained in Dawson Creek supervising the GPA line, but in 1966, he was also asked by CNT to move south and be responsible for the day-to-day operation of power on the line from Saskatchewan to Vancouver. He moved his family to Sherwood Park and travelled extensively, supervising work and mentoring mechanics until 1974. At that point, CNT downsized its western offices. Earl was offered a position in Toronto, but declined and left the Company. Because of his interest in power generation, he worked for many years as a salesman and then service manager for Waterous GM Diesel, which dealt in industrial generation systems. He then took the golden

handshake and started his own maintenance company. Ironically, not many years later, he was hired to do work on Canoe Mountain. Driving to the top brought back memories.

Rudy remained with CNT as the technical wizard and problem solver until his retirement in 1974. At some point during his tenure, he and his wife were awarded a trip to Germany using the funds that CNT felt they had saved due to Rudy's good work.

The beginning of the end of Trans-Canada microwave systems began in 1972 with the launch of Anik I, the world's first domestic communications satellite. It was able to "see" all of Canada and, therefore, transmit signals to the whole country. Despite launch costs, it was much cheaper to run than the microwave lines. The majority of sites were dismantled. Some, though, were repurposed for sending cell phone signals via microwaves over short distances. The Rio Grande area, for example, is served by signals that are sent from a tower on Saskatoon Mountain.

In turn, the satellite era for domestic communication was replaced by fibre-optic cables starting in the 1980s. The plus for fibre is that it can carry an almost endless string of messages at high speed. Most communities in Alberta have fibre-optic cable running down their back alleys. And one now runs alongside the Alaska Highway to the Yukon in sight of where microwave towers once stood. The fibre-optic cables fulfilled the need for continued transmission of the many millions of messages that Canadians send. They still serve to bind us as a nation.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank Earl Smith, Francis Jacobs, Barry Sideroff, John Puckett, and Darrell Blimke for the many conversations we had on the subject. This could not have been written without your patience in passing along your knowledge.
It is very much appreciated.

References

Personal communications with all the above.
Wikipedia.
The book "CNT in the North"
Photos supplied by Francis Jacobs and Earl Smith

Do- It-Yourself Fancy Snacks from the Early ‘60s!

When families made their own doughnuts at home, sometimes there was a need for other special occasion fancy snacks decorated with powdered sugar, whipped cream, jams or jellies; or small cups filled with creamed vegetables, meat, fish, or with fruit or home-made ice cream.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING WAFFLE IRON

1. Heat the Waffle Iron by dipping into heated Swift'ning Shortening (365° F.) for about 10 seconds.
2. Remove the Waffle Iron and dip it into the batter absolutely even to the top. No batter should go over the top of the iron.
3. Dip the Waffle Iron back into kettle of Swift'ning Shortening.
4. As soon as batter starts to expand from the iron, gradually lift it up and allow Waffle to drop off. When Waffle is brown on one side, turn to brown on the other side. Remove Waffle. Drain on absorbent paper.

Hostess WAFFLE AND PATTY RECIPE

2 pounds Shortening for frying
1 cup sifted Enriched Flour
½ cup Pet Milk
½ cup water
1 teaspoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt
1 egg, unbeaten

Sift flour before measuring. Mix milk, water, sugar, salt and egg together. Stir slowly into flour, then beat until smooth.

This recipe is sufficient for about 60 Waffles, which will remain fresh and crisp if kept in a tightly covered can. They may be re-heated in a warm oven.

The batter should be smooth and about as thick as cream. You may decorate Waffles with powdered sugar, whipped cream, jams or jellies.

Fill Patty Shells with creamed vegetable, creamed meat, fish, chicken or sweetbreads (see recipe below). Or serve as a dessert, filled with sweetened fruit or ice cream.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING PATTY IRON

1. Heat the Patty Iron by dipping into heated shortening for about 15 seconds.
2. Remove the Patty Iron and shake off excess shortening. Dip iron into the batter absolutely even to the top. No batter should go over the top of the iron.
3. Dip the Patty Iron back into pan of shortening.
4. As soon as Patty Shell is formed and begins to brown slightly lift the iron and allow the shell to cook in the hot shortening. When patty is brown on one side, turn to brown on the other side. Remove patty. Drain on absorbent paper.

HINTS IN USING PATTY AND WAFFLE IRON

If Waffle or Patty Shell sticks to iron, this shows the shortening is too hot. Tap lightly with fork to remove. Best results are obtained by keeping the shortening at a moderate temperature (365°F.).

Several Waffles or Patty Shells can be made at the same time, as shown in illustration No. 4.

USE THIS RECIPE FOR CREAMING A VARIETY OF VEGETABLES, MEAT, OR FISH

1. Melt in saucepan
   1 tablespoon ..... SHORTENING
2. Blend in
   2 tablespoons ..... ENRICHED FLOUR
   ½ teaspoon ..... SALT
   few grains ..... PEPPER
3. Stir in
   ½ cup ..... WATER or vegetable liquid or meat broth
4. Stir and boil 2 minutes
5. Then stir in
   ½ cup ..... PET MILK

Add to sauce at serving time, 2 cups drained, cooked vegetable*, cooked or canned diced meat or flaked fish. Heat thoroughly but do not boil. Serve at once. Serves 4.

*Cabbage, carrots, corn, green beans, lima beans, eggplant, mushrooms, onions, potatoes, peas, cucumbers, radishes, wax beans, or a mixture of these can be used.

The “Pet Milk” was a US brand of condensed milk for the recipe, and not added for any veterinary purposes!

A Little Fur Business: Russian Refugees of 1924 in Homeglen, Alberta

THE DIRTY THIRTIES

by George Lebedkin

A rabbit epidemic, not due to disease, but rather to a tremendous increase of rabbits, bewildered everyone in the community as to where they had come from. This turned out for the best as it provided an unexpected little fortune for the poor. Rabbit pelts were in great demand, and rivalry among buyers caused prices to skyrocket from **nine to sixteen cents a pelt**! Without any exaggeration, in two days' hunting of approximately nine hours, it was possible to earn as much as one month's wages if working locally or for a lumber mill. After two days of hunting, men realized there was more to it than meets the eye.

To rabbit hunt, one had to cope with sub-zero temperatures, hours of constant walking through two feet of deep snow, eating a frozen lunch, and then carrying the dead rabbits out of the willows to where sleigh and horses were stationed, sometimes as far as three hundred yards away. The days in winter were short, but the hunting continued until the sight of the gun was no longer visible on account of darkness. It was time to pack up and travel home. Care of the horses was the first priority, chores were next, and after supper, the rabbits had to be skinned and stretched. The dry pelts from the previous day's hunting had to be removed from stretchers, separated into sizes, large and medium, and tied into bundles often. These were the buyer's requirements. The guns had to be cleaned and oiled, and the boxes of shells placed about a foot from the chimney to dry overnight. One must weigh the attractive income against the hardship of obtaining it. If conditions of hunting were normal, it would have attracted a greater number of participants, but many were discouraged from meeting the challenging conditions and abandoned the idea of hunting completely.

From *All This Shall Pass* by Polly Sidoroff Elder, page 110

Ed: Luxury rabbit fur-lined dress gloves are still sold ($$$), but now have touch-screen capability!

A Summer Tea at the Rev. Forbes Homestead

2:00pm, Thursday, Aug. 21st, 2025
10424 96 St., Grande Prairie

Cost is $10.00 per person and includes a scone with jam and butter, with tea, coffee or juice.

For more information, or to register, please call 780-830-7090.

Please let the booking person know you are with the P.C.H.S.

With the GRANDE PRAIRIE MUSEUM
Rev. Forbes Homestead

"WAIT FOR ME DADDY" - Warren Bernard

"There was nothing staged about the thing, it was an absolute moment in time," Warren said

A photograph taken more than 80 years ago on a street in British Columbia, provided Warren Bernard with a lifetime of fame.

Warren became famous as the 5-year old boy who reached for his father's hand in 1940 when he, Sergeant Jack Bernard, was leaving for war.

On that day, more than 800 members of the British Columbia Regiment's Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles lined along Eighth Street, heading off to war.

Warren managed to wiggle free from his mother, Bernice's grasp to run and reach for his father, Sergeant Jack Bernard's hand. His dad switched his rifle to his left hand so he could reach his right hand to his son as the soldiers behind him smiled.

The famous image, which hung in every British Columbia school during the World War II and graced everything from stamps to coins to Life Magazine, was taken on October 1, 1940 in New Westminster, B.C. by the Vancouver Daily Province photographer, Claude Detloff.

Claude captured the moment that has touched generations and poignantly represented the agony of separation that so many military families endure.

Years later when Warren met the photographer, he was told that Claude was setting up his shot to show the length of the line snaking over the hill when he saw the little blond boy getting out of his mother's grasp. It was the only image he took that was printed that day.

Warren remembers the pain of his father leaving and the attention he received after as his image appeared in newspapers across the country. From age eight to ten, he became the poster boy for Victory Bonds, leaving school to encourage Canadians to **"buy a bond today and bring my Daddy home."**

In the winter of 1945, after five years of war and battles in places like Caen and Falaise, Holland and Germany, Sergeant Bernard came home, "battle fatigue" scrawled on his medical release records. *Claude Detloff was there to photograph his return.*

After the war, Sergeant Bernard graded lumber before becoming a finish carpenter in his later years. Warren stated that the two men had a rich and fulfilling father-son relationship until Jack died in 1981 at the age of 74.

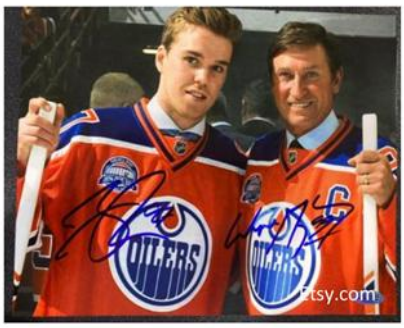
"Although he was not the same as before he left, we had a really good relationship. He went out of his way to make up for the lost years," Warren said, remembering his dad teaching him to fish trout, build cabinetry and stretch a dollar. "He was a depression era guy, there was nothing he couldn't do."

The photo has become such a part of our national history that the City of New Westminster commissioned a bronze statue honoring the moment. The city unveiled the statue, by husband and wife sculptors Edwin and Veronica Dam de Nogales, on 4 October 2014 at the bottom of 8th Street, in Hyack Square, right where it was taken. Warren was there for the unveiling.

"When they went to war in those days you were out of it, your family was really on its own. We had to wait for letters in the mail. It was a very serious separation," he said, adding he's saved all of his father's letters. "I was a little boy but I knew what was going on. I remember my mother being upset. It was a really emotional time. But I was also really proud of him because he was a soldier."

Excerpt from Veterans Affairs – July 2025
Complied by Wanda Zenner

HISTORY IN THE MAKING - THE "NEXT ONE". . . .



What pulls Canadians together more than anything else? From all corners of the country right down to the Peace District, hockey is front and centre from October to June. Of course July, August and September are a time for trades and next season's predictions. Predictions of who the "Next One" will be or who the "Next One" already is. There have been many "impeccable players" over the years but only one was ever given the title of the "Great One". "Great One" as in Wayne Gretzky but years later along comes a young hockey player with lightening speed, unmatched puck control, skilled playmaking and unbelievable agility. Yes, Connor McDavid makes his NHL debut and is dubbed the **"Next One".**

Connor McDavid, the 6'1", 194-pound native of Richmond Hill, Ontario, was selected first overall by the Edmonton Oilers in the 2015 NHL entry draft. Despite missing three months of his rookie season with a fractured clavicle, he was named to the NHL All-Rookie Team. At 19, he was appointed as the Oiler's captain – the youngest captain in NHL history. During the final game in the 2018-2019 season, McDavid suffered a serious knee injury when he tore the posterior cruciate ligament (PCL), along with other torn muscles, ligaments and a tibial plateau fracture. He opted for a rigorous knee rehabilitation program rather than surgery, from which a documentary "Whatever It Takes" chronicled his journey, showcasing his dedication and perseverance. Luckily he was declared fit to start the following NHL season, just seven months after the injury. With surgery, he would have missed the entire up-coming season and it would have been impossible to guarantee how the knee would heal.

4 Nations Face-Off Championship 2025

Connor McDavid fired a shot past the glove of the goaltender in overtime to win the final game 3-2 against Team USA. The game occurred at the TD Garden in Boston.

In 2015, Wayne Gretzky has been quoted as saying about Connor McDavid, "He's as good as I've seen in the last 30 years, the best player to come into the league in the last 30 years."

Quote from Connor McDavid – It's more fun to be playing hockey than doing anything else".

OILERS, let's bring home the Stanley Cup to Canada, Alberta, Edmonton, the Peace District . . . . . .

Reference:
Wikipedia
NHL.com
Hockey Canada

Written by W. Zenner, July 2025