





# **THE BUCHANS MINERS**

A MINING AND HOCKEY LEGACY

Garry Cranford

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# Dedication

Dedicated To My Parents, Gerald and Rita Cranford.

Thank you.  
*Garry*

Dedicated also to the other Buchans Miners, who chased the time office whistle for our welfare.

And to the Buchans Miners Hockey Team, who chased the referee's whistle to entertain us through the long cold winters.

Thank you.  
*The Sons And Daughters of The Buchans Miners*



## Foreword

When I began *The Buchans Miners* I was aware that in my immediate family, there were three generations who had lived at the central Newfoundland mining town of Buchans. My father began working there in 1946: I moved there when I was three years old, and my son Justin was born there (the only born-in-the-blood Buchaneer of the three). However, I soon found out that there was a fourth generation connection: My grandfather Harry Cranford worked there for a winter, operating a team of horses, delivering coal and ice.

I finished my schooling at Buchans, graduating from the Regional High School in 1967 and moved away to university, returning to work seasonally in the bush as a prospector. I had dreamt of becoming a geologist, returning home to Buchans, discovering a motherlode and working there until retiring as the hero who saved the town!

There was something about the security of home and steady work that I liked, I guess. However, this was not to be: I became disillusioned with geology as a career. By 1973 I was married, and needed a job. In January of 1974 Employment Officer Johnny Williams hired me on as a mucker at MacLean Mine, where I assisted the veterans Nath Saunders and Jim Whalen, on the timber hoist, as a trainman hauling ore off the ore chutes, using a sledgehammer to pound ore through the grizzlies, delivering explosives or blasting caps to drillers and dozens of other odd jobs. My father worked underground as mine electrician before moving to the mill, and therefore, I guess we both qualify as “Buchans Miners”.

On balance, my generation had a good life at Buchans. While our parents were not paid as well as those miners on the mainland, there were many intangibles that enriched our lives. The greatest intangible came through steady employment: A stable family life in a community with a complex social fabric that catered to our spiritual, social and intellectual needs. Welfare was an alien concept and the social problems associated with unemployment were non-existent.

There were dozens of social fraternities centred around church, service clubs and sports. It was at one of these organizations – the Boys’ Club – that I practised typing on a sheet of paper on which the keyboard was mimeographed. I was fascinated with manufacturing letters and words. The time eventually came when I needed motivation to pass grade nine in high school – I was spending too much time at the same Boys’ Club playing

ping-pong and pool and practising typing! – my parents offered me my own choice of “carrot” should I pass. I went from failing miserably at Christmas to fourth place in the class by June. My “carrot” was expensive, but it worked: I wanted a typewriter, and true to their word, Mom and Dad ordered a “Speedwriter” from the Sears catalogue. The point of this anecdote is this: Through the Boys’ Club, I mastered a fundamental skill to facilitate writing. All of us young Buchaneers took away something important — friendships, memories and skills — from our involvement with clubs and associations at Buchans.

There was also a sense of a supportive community that transferred from an outport heritage, and Buchans was a melting pot of baymen. If a family found itself in trouble with a husband and father off work through illness, the whole community rallied to the help of their neighbour with the necessities to see the family through. I recall one food drive held when my father came down with rheumatic fever that laid him up for four months one winter. Seventeen dollars a week from “sick and accident” was not enough to support a wife and three children, so the families of Buchans filled hampers from their own shopping baskets to make sure that our kitchen cupboards were full. When it was someone else’s turn to fall on hard times, my parents returned the favour.

Another positive feature of Buchans was education. A solid education was given to all of the children of the Buchans Miners. As a result, the cultural and economic life of the province has been greatly enriched by graduates of the two high schools, who went on to become professionals or tradespeople with a solid work ethic patterned after our parents. Supporting this effort was ASARCO, who gave summer jobs to all students who had gone on to university or trades school.

This book was inspired by the fact that a local committee was organizing a Buchans reunion for the John Cabot 500th Anniversary, and I wanted to add this dimension to the festivities. The co-chairs of the committee, Norma Ivany and Sean Power, were very supportive of my decision to go ahead with it. While it is written with the reunion in mind, I have tried to tailor the material for the information of those readers with a general interest in history, especially mining and social history. Part One deals with the discovery of the minerals and the successes and setbacks before the secrets of mineral chemistry were unlocked. Part Two describes the formation of the town.

Part Three outlines some of the major labour problems associated with working in this closed town, leading to major labour-management conflict in the 1970s.

Part Four takes a different approach. Here are the personal perspectives of individuals who came to Buchans by different means and for different reasons. One thing is common to them all: They stayed and became Buchaneers. Part Five continues the theme of personal recollections, but from the point of view of Buchans balladeers and poets. Here also is the account of “Clarence” the caribou.

Part Six deals with the other miners: The Buchans Miners Hockey Team of the Newfoundland Amateur Hockey Association. There is a brief introduction followed by interviews with two individuals representative of the composition of the hockey team: One player was born in Buchans, while the other was an import hockey player.

An appendix contains a list of fatal accidents, anecdotes and community trivia and the list of families from the 1959 telephone book.

### Acknowledgements

Present and future generations of researchers and students of the history of Buchans owe a great debt of gratitude to George Neary of ASARCO, whose ground-breaking introduction to the book *The Buchans Orebodies: Fifty Years of Geology and Mining* meticulously details the historical, scientific and economic background shaping the discovery and growth of Buchans. I thank him for his generous approval to adapt it for this publication and for the use of ASARCO’s photos. I understand that he is working on a more comprehensive history of the town, which I feel will be the definitive work on Buchans. Another key individual in collecting information is my researcher Vera McDonald, whose long hours in the archives ensured that enough interesting material was collected in time to meet the publishing deadline for the 1997 Buchans Town Reunion, and who was proofreader of several drafts of the manuscript. I am also greatly indebted to professional photographer Albert Hillier of Grand Falls, whose photographs taken on assignment for ASARCO at Buchans are used in this book. Those who shared their life stories with me have greatly enriched and influenced the shape of this work, providing the bulk of the material used, and I think, provided the most interesting and most useful information to construct a sense of the living history of the town.

There are many other people who contributed advice, photographs, historical documents and various services. I would like to thank the following people for making this book possible: Pete and Wayne Bennett, Wilson Burke, Wayne and Brenda Butt, the family of Newman Caines, Derm Corbett, Boyd Cranford, my sons Justin and Jerry, my parents Gerald and Rita Cranford, Michael Crummey, Ron and Linda Dawe, Jessie Elliott, Ed Hamilton, Jean Harnum, Mark and Pat Hiscock, Bill Holt, Norma and Sandy Ivany, Pat and Laura Kennedy, Angus Lane, Henry and Hetty Lane, Selby LeDrew, Hayward and Ruby Locke, Ray and Sadie Luscombe, Paul O'Brien, Ned and Emma Pretty, Sean Power of Steelcor, Pete and Loretta Quinlan, Reg Rideout, Pat and Bride Scott, Ern and Audrey Simmons, Eric Swanson, Fred Thorne, Hughie Wadden, Charlie Walsh, and Bill and Marjorie Wilcox. Special thanks to my wife Margo for her assistance in proofreading and editing

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# **A BROWN ROCK IN A RIVER**



## A Brown Rock In A River

In the middle of the island of Newfoundland, a subterranean ore deposit lay in waiting; waiting for the evolution of a species intelligent enough to recognize its qualities and harness it for creature comforts. The deposit, pushed to the surface by tectonic movements, was truncated by the glaciers and exposed to the sun and wind and rain, to be later buried with the detritus of organic matter that formed a protective soil to become a floating bog, or if dry enough, a droke of spruce or fir.

Not all of the minerals were hidden from sight. Running out of a large lake, a river stripped away some of the ground covering the orebody, exposing it to water and oxygen, turning the grey metal sulphides into bright reddish-brown and yellow oxides. For thousands of years after the glaciers had receded, humans criss-crossed the land. In the lore of the Mi'kmaq Indians, there were strange-coloured rocks in the interior. They may have known of the brown rock in the river that flowed south to empty into the long body of water that was the homeland of the ancient people, the Beothuks, who smeared their bodies with red ochre. The great lake of the red ochre race was known to the Europeans as Red Indian Lake.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Exploits River as far upstream as Red Indian Lake was exploited by timbermen employed by the Exploits Lumber Company. In 1900, Scotsman Lewis Miller came to Newfoundland, establishing major sawmills at Millertown on the shore of Red Indian Lake, and another at Glenwood. Miller's operations were part of Sir Robert Reid's wish to diversify, since his railway empire in Newfoundland was not profitable. Reid Newfoundland Limited attempted to expand its operations by identifying and developing the resources on its large tracts of land granted in exchange for developing the railway. However, Lewis Miller soon found out that the pine stands in Newfoundland were not suited for such a large-scale sawmilling operation.

England's newspapers at the turn of the century were greatly dependent on northern European sources for its pulpwood and were worried about any interruption in the supply should war break out. The owners of *The*

*Daily Mail*, Alfred and Harold Harmsworth (later Lords Northcliffe and Rothermere, respectively) sent a delegation to Newfoundland to investigate the possibilities of using the colony as an alternate source of newsprint in 1902. In March of 1903, the Harmsworths began negotiations with the Newfoundland government for the timber rights in the Red Indian Lake watershed.

While these talks were ongoing, a parallel development was taking place. Promoter Harry J. Crowe formed a partnership with William D. Reid, General Manager of the Reid Newfoundland Company, under the business Newfoundland Timber Estates, to acquire the unprofitable Miller sawmilling operations in Central Newfoundland. Crowe was a business visionary: He and Reid were long-term, strategic thinkers. They were sure the timber was not suited for lumbering – the pine stands were substandard – but, rather, perfect for pulpwood, and pulpwood was the raw material of newspaper production.

### The A.N.D. Company

Purchasing the Millertown operations was just one step in a long-range plan. Crowe also aggressively snapped up many of the unprofitable sawmills (with their all-important timber licences) in Notre Dame Bay. With the purchase agreements finalized, Newfoundland Timber Estates Limited had consolidated control over enough timber stands to support a pulp and paper operation. Crowe next embarked on a mission to England to meet with the Harmsworth brothers.

Crowe came to terms with the newspaper magnates, who incorporated the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company (A.N.D. Co.) in January of 1905. Further agreements with Reid Newfoundland Company Limited and the Newfoundland government culminated in the 1905 legislation “An Act to Encourage the Manufacture of Pulp & Paper in this Colony”.

The A.N.D. Co. acquired land rights for 99 years:

“All the lands, and lands covered by water, situate in the districts adjoining Red Indian and Victoria Lakes in the Island of Newfoundland, which said lands are bounded or circumscribed by the height of land and include the entire area of watershed which from the height of land aforesaid drains either directly or indirectly into the Exploits River at or above a point on that river situate about 20 miles below the outlet of that river from Red Indian

Lake...; together with, by way of grant, sale or demise, and not of exception, all timber and trees being on the said lands, *and also all mines and minerals therein and thereunder.*”

Importantly, the terms of the legislation demanded that the A.N.D. Co. conduct a survey and inventory of the land to determine its boundaries and assets. The A.N.D. Co. hired partners Michael S. Sullivan and William F. Canning, Chemists and Surveyors, of St. John’s to conduct the survey. Sullivan headed up the overall project; Canning’s responsibility was for a geological survey.

The primary mineral that the A.N.D. Co. was interested in finding was sulphur, an important ingredient in the process of newsprint manufacture at their proposed Grand Falls mill. This would avoid the expense of having it imported, but of course, any other mineral find on its property would also greatly please the directors and shareholders. In forming the survey party, the A.N.D. Co. assigned one of its own workers to guide the Canning geological crew; this was Matty Mitchell, a prospector in his own right, a woodsman descended from Mi’kmaq and Montagnais lineages. All of Newfoundland was Matty Mitchell’s backyard.

It was mid-September of 1905 when Canning and Matty Mitchell traveled from Millertown to the mouth of Buchans River (then referred to as Sandy River) as part of the survey party for the extensive land holdings. Canning’s geological notes recorded the discovery of a geological anomaly on the river..

“...We first paid a visit to Sandy River, which we examined for about five miles from Red Indian Lake to a large pond from which it takes its rise. About three miles from its mouth the first indications of mineral *in situ* were found....

...About a mile above, a second outcrop of mineral was located which was found to be lead and copper in barytes gangue. We called this outcrop No. II; whilst about 150 yards above this was found...a third outcrop of the same ore as the last mentioned, or No. II outcrop. This we called outcrop No. I. Here we found lead and copper ore with barytes over a distance of 100 feet in the river-bank, separated apparently by walls of rock, so that the appearance was that of several veins....”

Canning and Mitchell continued their geological inventory along other rivers flowing into Red Indian Lake but in October, with a third man

picked up at Millertown, returned to the promising Buchans River location to investigate the two outcrops.

### Outcrop No. I (Upstream)

After stripping off the overburden, digging pits and trenching, Canning concluded that the vein in outcrop No. I was in fact a continuous vein underground and connected with outcrop No. II, downstream. He described the find: "...Here is an outcrop largely lead and zinc ore, with barium sulphate and a little copper pyrites. The rock over the orebody, along the whole cliff practically, is shot through with sulphides. The width of cliff face carrying ore is 8 feet, measured up and down the face of the body."

Canning's assays of the mineralization in outcrop No. I were very encouraging: Zinc 37.40 %; Lead 20%; Copper 0.74 % with silver and traces of gold. Where copper mineralization was more obvious, the assayer reported: Copper 4.65%; Lead 5.62%, and traces of gold and silver.

### Outcrop No. II (Downstream)

Of the other find, Canning stated "...Here the vein was found to be about 40 feet wide, the centre for at least 30 feet consists of barite sulphate, with mineral sulphides on either side."

This vein's assay was also impressive: Lead 9.0%; Copper 3.60%, with silver and gold (trace) and zinc.

The signs were all good: Heavy mineralization over a distance projected to be more than 420 feet. "From the examination of the accompanying sketch with this report it will appear that a prospect of considerable promise has been located," Canning noted. "It remains now to prove the property."

### Matty Mitchell

While William J. Canning was the first to recognize the significance of the mineralization along the Buchans River, *he* was not the discoverer. This honour falls to his Mi'kmaq-Montagnais guide, Matty Mitchell. The written and oral sources state that Matty was having a mug-up in Buchans River when he noticed that the campfire had melted the rock next to it,

and brought it to the attention of Canning. The assayist neglected to note any story about Matty Mitchell's campfire in his journal, but on the other hand, did not claim the glory for himself, either.

Matty Mitchell may have known of the outcrop for some years. In the previous century, Mi'kmaq oral traditions are reported to have included knowledge of minerals along the Indian traverse route from Conne River to Hall's Bay in Newfoundland, and it is possible that Matty Mitchell, aware of this, kept his eyes peeled for rusted bedrock.

### The Buchans River Prospect

That next year the A.N.D. Co. set out "to prove the property" as Canning had phrased it. From 1906 until 1911, the company spent considerable time in the area to determine the viability of the prospect, under the supervision of Mr. William Scott, one of the firm's civil engineers dispatched from Grand Falls.

Outcrop No. II, to the south and downriver, proved to be the surface expression of a heavily-mineralized vein dipping to the northwest and had a combined assay up to 41 per cent zinc, lead and copper, and all efforts were concentrated on developing this site. An inclined shaft was sunk and three exploratory levels drilled at selected distances, so that by 1908 the massive sulphide deposit was sufficiently delineated.

In that year, the A.N.D. Co. assigned all its mineral rights to its subsidiary, Terra Nova Properties Limited to manage its mining activities. The A.N.D. Co. determined that the Buchans River Property was marginal, since it might not cover the large amount of capital required to develop it and transport the concentrates to a smelter.

There was also one other major stumbling block: The nature of the mineral deposit itself. The sulphides of zinc, lead and copper were mixed with a barite gangue and of such a fine-grained composition, that the metallurgists of the day could not effectively separate the various components. Samples of the ore were sent to various laboratories in England and the United States, but none could solve the problem.

Under the direction of George F. Laycock, a bulk sample of ore from the Buchans River orebody was extracted in 1910 and transported to smelters operating in Scandinavia, where electric smelting techniques were being developed. The ore was hauled by horse and wagon to the shores of Red Indian Lake, from where a scow towed by a motorboat

brought the ore to Millertown. The ore was loaded onto train flatcars, taken to Botwood, loaded on a ship, and sent to Sweden. The European technology was found to be suitable for the Buchans mineralization, but the large capital cost outlay, combined with transportation costs, either down Red Indian Lake or along a railway from Buchans to the Millertown branch line, provided a very meagre return on the shareholders' investment.

Despite a report submitted by a New York consultant, who recommended further exploration based on fair assumptions, Terra Nova Properties cut its losses and let the Buchans River Prospect revert to nature: Within days of the shutdown in 1911, the hard-driven tunnels were flooded with groundwater.

### Return to the Buchans River Prospect

The key to the development of the Buchans River Deposit rested with the scientific community's ability to develop a method to separate complex, fine sulphide ores from waste rock, initially, and in a subsequent process, separate the various metal sulphides from one another. The solution to the problem came from the United States, in the laboratories of the American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO) based at Flat River, Missouri. In 1916, one of its mining engineers, Harry A. Guess, contacted William Scott of the A.N.D. Co. and requested a sample of the Buchans ore for testing. Guess began subjecting the Buchans ore to various geochemical experiments, year after year, until 1925, when his staff finally achieved a breakthrough. Using their own findings and incorporating the results of experiments in other laboratories around the world, they succeeded in developing a selective flotation process, whereby one sulphide – either zinc sulphide or lead sulphide, for example – could be selectively floated out of a chemical brew without one contaminating the other.

Harry Guess, with ASARCO, and William Scott of the A.N.D. Co. realized right away that their companies complemented each other. ASARCO had the metallurgical technology, the mining expertise and the marketing contacts, while the A.N.D. Co. owned the minerals in the ground, along with considerable capital in the bank. Harry Guess, representing ASARCO, and George Laycock, representing the A.N.D. Co. worked out an interim agreement, subject to ASARCO sending someone to Newfoundland to examine the prospect. Their representative calculated a potential of 110,000 tons of high-grade ore, enough to generate a profit. The execu-

tives of the firm decided to follow through with a twenty-five year agreement with the A.N.D Co. that was signed on March 18, 1926. The basic plan provided for ASARCO to manage the mining operations, add capital to the venture, and reimburse the A.N.D. Co. for the capital it had already spent. After that, the profits would be split 50-50.

### A Proper Mine is Begun – 1926

Harry Guess lost no time in developing the Buchans River Prospect, assigning the responsibilities to J. Ward Williams, who reached the abandoned site on May 1926, just two months after the final deal was inked by ASARCO and the A.N.D. Co. Mr. Williams requested diamond drillers for late May and a geophysical prospecting team headed up by Hans T. Lundberg arrived in June to do surface testing in a one square mile area around the immediate vicinity of the Buchans River Deposit.

The main orebody, represented by the old Outcrop No. II was exploited, as well as the Outcrop No. I zone, given the local name Conglomerate Zone. The hand steel technology of the earlier years was replaced by jackhammers, which made the work progress much more quickly.

J. Ward Williams had a combination cottage-office built overlooking the Buchans River Prospect and set about delegating the various tasks required to get the mine in working order. Mr. Denny Glavine, a Newfoundland miner home on holidays from the United States, was rehired, this time as mine captain. Glavine had been at this site in 1910 to extract the bulk sample that had been sent to Sweden for electric smelting. Under Glavine, Newfoundland men with surnames Byrne, Head, Martin, Quirke and Tilley set about drying out the mines. One fellow, Billy Tilley, was a veteran of the Buchans site by now: He had been there in 1907, operating mine equipment. J. Ward Williams hired Gordon Pollett as cook and Pollett's wife – the first female resident – as his housekeeper. Pollett was from New Harbour, Trinity Bay, and with the other key men of this pioneer town, initiated a pattern of migration of friends and relatives from their outport communities as the town grew and the management asked, "Do you know any good workers?" Consequently, many outport villages developed strong familial connections to Buchans.

The town took its name from Buchans Island in Red Indian Lake, named after British Navy Lieutenant David Buchan, who made several attempts to establish friendly relations with the Beothuk Indians in the area.

## Electrical Surveying

Restricting the mining operations to the Old Buchans Prospect was just not a palatable proposition. The great expenditure of capital would turn a profit, but just marginally so. The great gamble was calculated on the premise that more mineralization would be found nearby and thereby secure the future of a long-term, lucrative venture.

Hans Lundberg, the Swedish pioneer in the field of geophysical exploration spearheaded the prospecting team. By applying electrical current to electrodes set in the soil, he could measure the conductivity of the ground. He placed the electrodes in a grid pattern and plotted the measurements to construct a diagram which easily pinpointed "hot spots". His initial contract was for the survey of one square mile around the Buchans Prospect. West of Buchans River, the instruments showed a reading of high conductivity. Similarly, east of the Buchans Prospect, the ground probes indicated positive readings.

J. Ward Williams decided to explore the first anomaly more extensively. He ordered Lundberg to complete the western extent of the original one square mile contract. As soon as he placed the electrodes in the ground, the instruments registered strong conductivity, and as he moved to the western boundary of this new block of land, the readings kept getting higher and higher!

Manager Williams had a dilemma on his hands. It had been originally intended to relocate the Lundberg crew to Wiley's Brook, several miles away, but his better judgement dictated otherwise. West of the latest anomaly, he laid out a fourth square of land and authorized further investigation.

## Square 4

The eastern edge of this new block of land was adjacent to the zone found by Lundberg previously, and Williams had re-assigned all the men from the river location to begin trenching. Lundberg's journal stated:

"Although this was the beginning of July, there still were patches of snow

here and there on the big bog to the west. Because of the wetness underfoot, the muggy atmosphere, and thick swarm of black flies which made it difficult to see the pickets through the telescope, work was almost unbearable.

But our reward was to come soon. While finishing the survey of the anomaly a trench near the east electrode had disclosed promising lead-zinc mineralization. This location was appropriately named Black Fly.”

Unfortunately, overburden and water made this “Black Fly” trench too difficult to explore.

Meanwhile, Lundberg’s crew was busy setting the electrode pots and taking readings farther west of the “Black Fly.” The instrument’s needles recorded the strongest currents. Three hundred feet away, and 5,000 feet west of the Buchans River Main Mine, on July 14, 1926, another trench revealed a motherlode of lead and zinc mineralization!

It was the very thing needed to ensure the permanent success of the Buchans venture.

J. Ward Williams dashed off a note right away: “Stripping strong lead zinc orebody five thousand feet west indications point to it being larger than Main mine... Believe successful outcome of enterprise assured suggest early visit.”

### Lucky Strike

Hans Lundberg was extremely excited at the readings on his scientific instruments. He left an account of how this new sulphide deposit was found, after moving off the Black Fly mineralization:

“Then we searched for a favourable place to reach bedrock on the major indication in the middle of the square. The area here was flat and even, like the bottom of a dried-out lake, and appeared easy to get through. Just below the surface bright yellow and red clay with a few boulders of lead-zinc carbonate was encountered. The bedrock, about 2 or 3 feet down, was massive lead-zinc mineralization. Throughout the night my assistant and I kept on digging, sometimes with our bare hands, convinced that our indication was going to make mining history by the discovery of this large lead-zinc deposit. During the night my assistant, Hjortzberg-Nordlund, said in his broken English, ‘this is sure a lucky find.’

“Williams corrected him, ‘not a lucky find, but a lucky strike.’

“The name Lucky Strike has remained with the mine ever since.”

Lucky Strike was indeed a strike of good fortune. When the orebody was eventually fully delineated, and exhausted of all its riches, it yielded 6,893,000 tons of ore, over sixty times the size of the Old Buchans deposit!

Other good news followed quickly on the heels of the Lucky Strike discovery. Williams moved a diamond drill crew to the site of Lundberg's *first* anomaly, east of the Buchans River Prospect. Over one hundred feet down, the drill intersected a vein of sulphides seven feet thick. The drill was moved and intersected the same vein 100 feet deeper, but here the vein had swollen to 55 feet thick, and was similar to the concentrated mineralization found at Lucky Strike! Because this discovery lay to the east of the Buchans River Deposit, it was appropriately dubbed "Oriental." The Oriental Deposit held 3,663,000 tons of ore, just over half as much as Lucky Strike.

From west to east, there were three orebodies located: Lucky Strike, the Buchans River Prospect and the Oriental Deposit. In 1926, it was not necessary to determine the exact size of the orebodies since the limited drilling was enough to conclude the obvious: ASARCO now had a viable mining venture.

Up to this time, ASARCO had centred its future planning around the Buchans River Prospect. However, when it was discovered that the Lucky Strike orebody was only six feet below the overburden and held 119 feet of massive sulphides, ASARCO quickly decided to place its production facilities near this larger orebody. The Buchans River Prospect quickly became referred to as "Old Buchans."

Events moved very quickly in 1926. A development shaft on the Lucky Strike orebody indicated a need to accelerate plans for the construction of a dam on the Buchans River to provide hydro-electricity. The orebody was a flat oval about 500 feet by 800 feet, up to 170 feet thick in the middle. This was enough to plan the construction of a mill near the Lucky Strike shaft, which was collared on November 15, 1926. The mill was designed to handle 500 tons of ore per day and there was enough known ore to last twenty years. ASARCO's head office dispatched George G. Gilchrist to oversee the mining development, and Williams turned his attention to the mill construction and design of a townsite to handle the anticipated work force. George F. Laycock, engineer with the A.N.D. Co. oversaw the survey of a railway route over the 22 miles from Buchans to the Millertown line.

## The Buchans Mining Company Limited

Initially, the production estimate of the Main Orebody and Conglomerate Zones in the Buchans River Prospect was estimated at 110,000 tons, but with the discoveries of Lucky Strike and Oriental, the ore reserves had mushroomed to 3,000,000 tons. Now that ASARCO had “proven the project”, it consolidated its Newfoundland activities by incorporating The Buchans Mining Company Limited, registered on January 29, 1927.

Each major benefactor in the great enterprise undertook those tasks that fit their expertise and personnel. ASARCO built the mill, mine and townsite while the A.N.D. Co. developed the hydro-electric power complex, the railway and shipping facilities at Botwood.

In 1927, ASARCO turned a moose, bear and black fly paradise into a fully-operational mining town. To ease the financial costs, the company vigorously pursued negotiations with the Newfoundland Government to exempt it from import duties on all material and equipment brought into the country, not only for the mill and mines, but also for the construction of the townsite. The company was assured that the Bill would be passed, and in May, months before the Bill was ratified, allocated two million dollars to build a “mine, mill, power, housing, equipment and railroad to place the Buchans mining property on a producing basis.” It is obvious from this that the Buchans mines were profitable even without the customs exemptions. If the Bill were defeated, it would simply require a longer period to recover the capital investment. The “Buchans Agreement” was finally passed in the House of Assembly in September and the directors were extremely happy.

**A TOWN IS BEGUN**

## **A Town Is Begun**

With the money budgeted to develop, Manager J. Ward Williams proceeded to transform a rough, dirty mining camp into a mining town with all the modern conveniences. An old survey base line driven from the Old Buchans site to Lucky Strike developed into a footpath, then horse and cart trail, until surveyed as Main Street, the backbone of the town development. In 1926, one of the men in the prospecting crew had been chased down this base line by a bull moose, until others in the party scared it off with gun shots. To tame the wilderness, a third bunkhouse and four large tents were erected to handle the construction crew for the mill and support structures.

Buchans was to become a colony of whistle-chasers, whose lives were prescribed not by the variable, hesitant seasons of nature, but the rigid clock of the main office. Nomads of the high seas, forests and the ice-fields – fishermen, lumbermen and swilers – now found a promised land where a man could see cash for his labours.

The Buchans townsite construction proceeded concurrently with the other major projects. The trail used to haul supplies and equipment from the Old Buchans diggings to Lucky Strike was upgraded to a corduroy road with a wooden sidewalk built to one side. Streets were laid out from this Main Street and by the end of 1927, twenty-six houses were completed and occupied. Since the town's sole purpose was to supply manpower and services to ASARCO, the company controlled all aspects of construction and occupation. Before the end of 1927, the company built a retail premises and leased it to the Royal Stores. A barber shop and laundry was established.

By the end of 1928, the number of housing units for families had doubled. This, supported by several bunkhouses, a staff house and an apartment building, housed the work force. To support the bustling little frontier town, the company also finished a school and hospital. By 1929, the town

boasted a theatre, athletic facilities and permanent church buildings.

The *Newfoundland Quarterly* ran a feature on the Buchans operations in its Christmas issue of 1929, concisely capturing the essence of the little town:

“The modern town was started in 1927, and there are now over eighty buildings in Buchans, all supplied with electric lights, running water and sewerage systems. Two general stores supply the residents of Buchans. There is also a jewelry shop, barber shop, boot repair shop, modern laundries, bakery and bank.

Moving pictures are shown daily at the Town Hall. During the summer season excellent tennis courts are in service, as well as an athletic field, where football and baseball are quite popular. During winter season the huge concentrate storage building at Buchans is flooded, which makes an excellent skating and hockey rink. A new ski run has been cut on Laycock’s Lookout Hill and this is open to all.

The Company maintains a school which is a modern, steam heated building, sanitary and very comfortable for the children. A night school for workmen is being started.

The Church of England, Roman Catholic and United Church organizations have their buildings practically all completed, and also the Salvation Army and Loyal Orange Association are completing their buildings.”

The scene just described contrasts greatly with the countryside of just a few years before. The book *Metal Magic* describes the wilderness that greeted Hans Lundberg and his assistant in 1926:

“[They]...arrived at Millertown, the nearest railroad point to the property, and proceeded by boat and wagon to a camp near the Buchans River, not far from the original mine. The country was wild and remote, and it proved difficult even for two Swedes accustomed to the rigors and hardships of northern Scandinavia. Large bogs and thick scrubby bush made progress slow and difficult. Wild animals were plentiful. Beavers, building their dams, often flooded the campsites. Bears abounded. Their insatiate curiosity frequently impeded traffic. In the first encounter with them it was difficult to determine which was more frightened – the prospectors or the bears. As soon as the bears became accustomed to the sound of the transmitter used by the men, they refused to leave the party.”

Designing, planning, equipping and constructing a fully-operational mining town in the middle of Newfoundland in 1927 was an incredibly com-

plex enterprise. The logistics of supplying the mill and mine equipment and materials to the remote site was staggering, since most of the supplies had to be brought in from the United States through a circuitous route. For instance, structural steel had to be loaded aboard ships on the east coast of the U.S., shipped to St. John's, trucked to the Reid Newfoundland warehouse, taken hundreds of miles to Millertown Junction by train, and transferred to the A.N.D. Co. train at Millertown Junction. From there it was hauled to Millertown where it was unloaded and transferred to scows, pulled by steamer to a landing site on the opposite side of Red Indian Lake, and finally hauled five miles to the Buchans site on trailers pulled by Linn half-tracks. Before spring breakup, a long dock had been built, and a crew of men camped out at the Buchans landing on Red Indian Lake all summer long, to be on site 24 hours a day to unload the boats arriving from Millertown with their critical supplies for the Buchans development.

### The Mill

Plans called for the construction of a mill with a 500-ton-per-day capacity. The project engineer was Amos Vandergrift, who arrived at Buchans in April of 1927, with mill plans designed at ASARCO's Salt Lake City office. Structural steel work and the construction of a 100,000 gallon water tank were subcontracted to U.S. companies. By the end of 1927, the foundations for all the main buildings at the plant site were poured, and a large concentrate storage shed was well underway. The structural steel was erected on the Lucky Strike hoist house in early November, followed by steelwork on the other plant buildings.

All the steelwork at the Buchans site was completed by June of 1928, when the crew moved to Botwood to work on the ore trans-shipment shed, overseen by the A.N.D. Co.'s staff.

### The Mine

As noted earlier, the Old Buchans deposits were abandoned in favour of the more lucrative Lucky Strike orebody. In 1927, the mine development manager, Ellsworth Dougherty had pushed the men to drive a main shaft 317 feet into the bedrock and developed haulageways beneath the sulphide deposit. Underneath the orebody, a drainage tunnel was driven

towards the Buchans River.

J. Ward Williams felt that the mines could begin feeding the mill raw ore by August 6, 1928, and all seemed on target until July 30. On that day, the Buchans operations suffered a major setback. It was a miracle that there was no loss of life.

There would be plenty of time for that later.

To supply the mill complex with its hydro-electric power needs, a rock-filled wooden-crib dam was built across the Buchans River at Sandy Lake. Below the dam was a forebay, trestle, and a mile-long penstock that snaked its way downstream to the 2,500 horsepower generating plant, which began supplying electricity in January of 1928.

On July 30, 1928, just days before the operation was scheduled to feed the mill with ore, the dam burst!

### I Witnessed the Flood!

Henry Lane was from a small farming community on the east coast of Newfoundland, and was working in Buchans at the time. In the summer of 1928 he boarded the train at Makinsons for the main rail connection at Brigus Junction, en route Millertown, where he hoped to find work at Buchans – any kind of work – but eventually he hoped to work in the mines. He had obtained a job as cookee in the cookhouse, but when he got there, refused the job. Instead, he worked as a handyman around the premises, and on the morning of July 30, he was cleaving splits and sawing wood junks for the cookhouse. He had just turned nineteen years old.

A number of the men had just come off shift and after a meal, had gone to the bunkhouse to sleep, when Henry heard a rumble come down the river valley. Looking up, he saw a wall of water carrying trees and boulders approach the mining campsite. He rushed to the bunkhouse where the men had turned in and roused them from bed to run for dry ground. Just as they reached safety, they looked behind to see the bunkhouse smashed to smithereens and carried away in the flood down Buchans River.

Ned Pretty was another Newfoundlander working in Buchans at the time of the flooding. He had gone there in 1927 when he was eighteen years old, and retired from Buchans on his sixty-fifth birthday. On the day of the flooding catastrophe, he was about six miles in the bush in a surveying camp, taking elevations near the Notched Mountains, northwest of

the town. The crew used a total of seven tents, including a cook tent. On the morning the dam broke, instead of receiving their weekly provisions, they heard upsetting news. “We were in...big canvas tents,” Ned recalls. “The dam broke a Monday morning, see. The first thing each morning, a couple of teams of horses would arrive, bringing in the grub for the week.

“(But) the first thing come in was a Swede. He said, ‘we got to jack up, and go out, the dam is gone. We had to take up our tents.’ We had to turn around and take everything – six canvas tents – seven, because we had a cookhouse, too.”

The tents were requisitioned to be set up on the high banks overlooking Old Buchans, to shelter the men who had lost their bunkhouse and personal belongings.

And what of the men in the mines at the time? As luck should have it, the drainage tunnel section driven from the Old Buchans site towards Lucky Strike was completed that very day, linking the tunnel driven from the opposite direction. A number of men had walked in from the Old Buchans opening that morning and when the water reached them, they were able to scramble through the rough connection, where the Superintendent, J. Ward Williams, down inspecting the job, led them away from the water and up an intermediate shaft.

Upon inspection, it was learned that part of the dam cribwork had been built over a soft, unstable bottom, and that it had collapsed. The loss of the dam also meant the loss of hydro-electric power. With that, there was no chance the superintendent could meet his milling target date of August 6. However, with everyone working on dam repairs, in an incredibly short time, just one month later, on September 1, 1928, ore was fed into the mill! Five days later, the mill spewed its first sample of concentrate. It was time to test the transportation network designed as an integral element in the overall planning of the mining operation.

### The Buchans Railway

A final survey – one had been done in 1908 – of the railway line linking Buchans with A.N.D. Co.’s Millertown branch line was completed in 1926 and the track bed, rail ties and rails were finished and serviceable by October of 1928. The timing was perfect, since the mill was up and running. On October 9, the first ore cars rattled across the trestle over Buchans River, swayed around Tin Can Curve and sped down the grade

towards Middle Branch and East Branch, en route Botwood, where the ore would be transferred to a ship headed to market in Belgium and Germany.

### Perils Of The Sea

In planning the mine and its infrastructure, all care was taken to cover every contingency. The mine was finished, the mill had successfully produced the ore and the train network had delivered it to the seaport of Botwood. However, the contingencies the engineers had no control over were the vagaries of the sea. The first attempt to ship ore out of Botwood was nearly a disaster. The Swedish vessel *Kiruna*, loaded with concentrate, left port bound for Europe on December 1, 1928, but by the next day, after bucking strong headwinds, found herself foundering helplessly with a 35 degree list due to shifting cargo.

The *S.S. Prospero* and the *S.S. Kyle* were in the area and ordered to stand by. Captain Ljungberg swung the *Kiruna* about, and escorted by the *Kyle*, crippled into Botwood but fearing she was sinking, beached her at Peter's Arm the next day. The concentrate was returned to the storage sheds at Botwood and the *Agga* was chartered, but the skipper of her declared the cargo too dangerous to ship. Because of this delay, the concentrates were stuck in Botwood over the winter due to the seasonal freeze-up and did not leave until June of the following summer.

With the shipment of ore, all the disparate elements of the Buchans mining operation were now synchronized and operating as one, with a smooth flow of raw ore from underground, through the mill, down the tracks, and outward bound from Botwood for markets overseas.

### The Great Depression – Prices Slump

By the end of 1929, when the three orebodies were more fully delineated, the life of the operation was estimated at forty years. The future looked bright, except for one thing: World metal prices slumped, making the Buchans operations a losing proposition. Management projected that revenue from the current level of production was not adequate enough to

cover both the fixed and operating costs and leave a reasonable return for the shareholders. By infusing a further \$1,500,000 of capital, they estimated that by increasing the mill production to 1,200 tons per day, they could reduce the cost per ton sufficiently enough to recoup the investment and make the whole operation economically viable. It was a gamble: If world metal prices went down too low, both the initial capital outlay and that provided for expansion could be lost, but the decision was made by the directors to “do or die”. Head office dispatched three personnel to work on the mill expansion, and the company signed an agreement with the International Power and Paper Company to transmit additional electric power by a transmission line from Deer Lake.

The decision turned out to be the right one. Prices did continue dipping until 1933, when lead and zinc fetched only one-third of their 1928 prices, but by then, production had already reached the target of 1,200 tons daily. As a result, the cost per ton of ore was significantly reduced. It had cost \$3.98 to produce a ton of ore in 1930, but two years later, with doubled production, the cost per ton was lowered to \$2.20. Besides increasing the production to reduce the cost per ton of concentrate, the company took another, more drastic step: It instructed the paymaster to reduce salaries. On the other hand, there was full employment in Buchans, which was considerably better than the majority of Newfoundland communities. Metal prices were slow to recover during the Depression of the 1930s, but the production cost per ton remained low enough to cover the bills, and the town’s future was assured.

Like the law of physics that states for “every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction”, the board of directors’ resolution had its negative side. While increasing the mill capacity ensured the success of Buchans, it shortened its life span from forty years to fifteen years. However, fifteen years’ work was better than shutting down the operation altogether. The amortization on the capital costs was met, as well as the yearly operating costs, but it was not until 1937 that the directors could declare dividends to the shareholders.

The authors of the Newfoundland Royal Commission Report of 1933, had visited Buchans and were greatly impressed, noting that the town “of Buchans is remarkable as being one of the few settlements in the interior of Newfoundland. So far removed from the sea and from other towns, the people are thrown to a large extent upon their own resources. The Company has provided them with facilities for education, recreation and

amusement, and we were struck by the progressive spirit which prevailed. The town has been attractively laid out and is equipped with an excellent water supply, modern drainage and electric light. The Company maintains a school, and there is also a night-school for workers in the mine. A cinema theatre serves also as a town hall. There is a flourishing athletic club. A hospital, with a resident medical officer and two nurses, is maintained by the Company.

“The population of Buchans is about 1,000, of whom about 300 are employed in the mine. Wages are good and relations between the employees and the management are excellent. Prices in the stores are high, owing to the distance of the town from the coast and to discriminatory railway freight rates.

“As at Grand Falls, the high birth-rate at Buchans gives rise to some anxiety. Indeed, the future of the town itself may be said to hang in the balance, since, if no further bodies of ore can be discovered, the mine will be exhausted in 1947. The problem of providing for the coming generation of Newfoundlanders is one to which we have referred elsewhere; the solution of the special problem of Buchans will, it is hoped, be found in the discovery of other workable deposits.”

The importance of Buchans to the economy of Newfoundland during the Dirty Thirties cannot be underestimated. The Commissioners noted that “From the standpoint of tonnage Botwood handles more business than any other port in Newfoundland.” Of the 320,000 tons exported through the port, 200,000 tons, over 60%, were concentrates from Buchans. In a year when the total revenue received by government was \$10,000,000, the little town of Buchans was responsible for 6%, or \$600,000.

### Rothermere Mine

One of the great difficulties the workers at Buchans had to face when confronting the company for higher wages, was the psychological restraint of knowing that the orebodies had a limited life span. The company could always rationalize not upgrading the bunkhouses, or relieving family stresses by building more houses by arguing that such an expenditure would be frivolous and wasteful, considering that the town's days were numbered. Through the 1930s, as orebodies were completely delineated and new pockets of sulphides found, the mine's life was extended beyond

the early estimate, but by 1947, the ore would be depleted in just four short years.

Fortunately, in 1945, a concerted effort was made to concentrate exploration efforts in the immediate vicinity of the known orebodies, and in late 1947, the results proved most gratifying. Just west of Lucky Strike, surface drilling found another mineral deposit large enough to develop into a producing mine, though it was deeper than Lucky Strike. This became known as Rothermere Mine, named after Lord Rothermere, founder of the A.N.D. Co. This mine was accessed by a 2,505 foot shaft and extended the ore reserves by ten years.

### MacLean Mine

Surface drilling found another orebody northwest of the new Rothermere Mine in February of 1950. Because it was deeper than Rothermere, an exploration drift at the 2,330 foot level was drilled from Rothermere to the new orebody, and diamond drilling conducted from below ground to delineate and develop this new deposit. It's tonnage was nearly the same as Rothermere Mine and was named MacLean Mine, after Geologist Dr. H. J. MacLean, who lost his life in a plane crash while prospecting.

In 1953, the exploration efforts at Buchans turned to the old Oriental Mine. The geology of the area was reexamined and new drilling initiated, resulting in the discovery of enough ore to add two years to the life of the town.

With the discoveries of these new orebodies, the 1950s brought with them an air of optimism, so ASARCO and private businesses began spending new capital and the face of Buchans changed dramatically. Two new retail stores opened, and the chronic housing shortage was alleviated by the construction of enough houses to accommodate 140 families. A new hospital opened in 1957. During the previous year a road linking Buchans to the Trans-Canada Highway was opened, ending the isolation of the town.

Despite the major phase of new housing construction, it was not enough to meet the demand. In 1956, Miner Merrill Reid built a house near the Buchans River on the main road. Many others followed his example, until a bustling community of about 60 houses was established at the satellite town called Pigeon Inlet. Expansion was halted in 1960 when writs prohibiting home improvements were served on the residents, who then lob-

bied government for solutions to the dilemma through local political activists Melvin Penney and Graham Flight. In the end, government decided to expropriate land adjacent to Buchans where it laid out a planned townsite, and moved the houses. Not sated by his involvement in municipal politics, Graham Flight went on to the provincial area, where he is perhaps best remembered more recently as the kingmaker who resigned to provide a district vacancy so that Premier Clyde Wells could take a seat in the House of Assembly.

The 1960s brought more improvements. The social infrastructure was greatly improved with the construction of a new stadium and curling rink, fire hall and library.

Unfortunately, by the early 1970s, the end of Buchans was in sight. As a result, the miners' union attempted to extract as much benefit from the operation as possible for its members. There were two bitter strikes, and in 1973, government commissioned an industrial inquiry, headed by university professor Howard J. Dyer. His second report, published in 1974, made it clear that Buchans, as a one-industry town, was in for a rude shock within six years when the ore ran out. It pressured government to commission a Buchans Task Force to examine the social and economic issues looming in everybody's future and provide solutions to make the process as painless as possible. One thrust of its recommendations was to have ASARCO relinquish ownership of the town's housing and municipal administration. The sale of houses began on July 25, 1977 and a local improvement district board appointed until 1979, when the old town of Buchans amalgamated with the new "Townsite." Another thrust of the Buchans Task Force was to explore new economic opportunities to support those who wished to remain in Buchans when the mines closed.

The Red Indian Lake Development Association, established in November of 1974, and headed by Ed Hamilton also began investigating social and economic programs for the development of the Buchans region.

Changes occurred rapidly. On June 30, 1977, the Buchans train made its last trip to Millertown Junction with ore. From that point until the mines closed, the ore was hauled directly to Botwood by truck. Valiantly, ASARCO, with the aid of government money, attempted to undertake barite recovery from the town's tailings, thereby extending the life of the mining and milling operation until August 1, 1984.

One person who was at Buchans through the difficult 1970s and 1980s was Mr. Carl Powell, one of many individuals on various committees that lobbied governments for programs to help the people of Buchans facing ninety per cent unemployment. His memory of the time is clear.

“Of all the history and memorabilia that I have from my days in Buchans as a mining/metallurgical engineer during the early sixties to the late eighties, the most outstanding facet is the high quality of human values of the people,” says Powell.

“Their intelligence, moral values and strong family values sustained and nourished the area through good times and bad. This little baliwick that operated a mine/mill/infrastructure complex for some sixty years of processing a very complex ore was a world-class adventure. It was known as the fruitcake ore, since it had a little of everything. Many innovative ideas and processes were pioneered there, with a lot of them later being used worldwide. Finally, those hardworking, ingenious Buchaneers were instrumental in developing the recovery of barite from the tailings. There is only one other orebody in the world that closely resembled Buchans, and that is on the side of Mount Fujiyama in Japan.

“The approaching closure of the mines gave rise to the Dyer Commission Report, the Red Indian Lake Development Association, the Buchans Task Force Report, and the formation of the Buchans Action Committee, to maintain public interest in the town’s fate, and Buchans was instrumental in the formation of the National Committee On Single Industry Towns in Canada, another unique pioneering project.

“There is very unlikely to be another class of people anywhere that would surpass those wonderful women, men and children of our home town.”

**THE UNION MAKES US STRONG**

## The Workers And The Company

On February 4, 1929, Mr. K. M Brown of the Department of Agriculture and Mines made a surprise visit to Buchans, to investigate conditions concerning "housing and general sanitation provided for workmen."

Brown's report is preserved in the Provincial Archives in St. John's. In it, he had several disturbing observations.

"I found conditions in the cookhouse intolerably bad. Tables and floors were in a wretched condition with dirt and filth. There was not even a bit of oil cloth on the plank tables, the seams of which were filled with a nauseating accumulation of debris. I cannot too strongly condemn conditions here, which bore out the numerous complaints voiced to me by the men in this connection.

"On the whole the quality and quantity of food supplied appears all right, but it was represented to me that the cooking was bad and that the allowance of potatoes was insufficient, while the quality of potatoes was very poor. I noted that the cooks were untidy looking and none was equipped with an apron."

"RECOMMENDATIONS: Recommendations should be made by the Government immediately to the management at Buchans, that conditions be radically changed, both as to cooking conditions and the serving of food to the men. Attention should be called to the class of cooking utensils and tableware, most of it utterly unfit for the purposes for which it is now being used."

### The Bunkhouse

"The bunkhouse when I first saw it reminded me almost irresistibly of conditions as I have seen them in the sleeping quarters of a sealing steamer just returned from the icefields. The bunkhouse itself is a low, one-storey structure, altogether too congested. It contains a row of bunks on each side and one down the centre. The bunks are double, a most objectionable arrangement, for a number of reasons. The aisles between the rows of bunks are only about three feet wide.

"The aisles themselves are mopped up occasionally and are the only

portion of the bunkhouse that can be said to be at all clean, and then only relatively so. By that I mean that there is no attempt at all made to clean up under the bunks, where there is an accumulation of filth, brushed in during the mopping process, as well as dirty garments and other objectionable things.

“There is nothing whatever about the sleeping quarters of the men to induce in the workmen themselves any desire for personal cleanliness. From what I have remarked about the congested nature of the bunkhouse, it will readily be perceived that arrangements for daylight lighting and for ventilation are altogether insufficient.

“The general washroom for the workmen is at one end of the bunkhouse and is reached through a door leading off from the sleeping quarters. Washing up is done in pans which are laid in a wooden trough about ten feet by four. This trough is of unlined plank and it will readily be appreciated what sort of condition it is in through numerous pans of dirty water being dumped into it. This arrangement is unsanitary and utterly objectionable. It is injurious to the morale as well as the health of the workmen.

“I have no fault with the lavatories. These are kept clean through the flow of a constant stream of water.

“The dry house is situated off the mill and about a half mile from the men’s living quarters. It is to this house that the miners go after they come out of the working. They clean up with shower baths, where hot and cold water are available. Hot water must, of necessity, be used in most cases to secure any satisfactory degree of cleanliness. After using the shower baths, the men have to walk to their sleeping quarters. The result of this it that there is a great deal of sickness, ascribable to men going out into the cold air from the shower baths, with their pores open. Some change, more in keeping with the health and convenience of the men, should be made in this connection.

RECOMMENDATIONS: “I strongly recommend that the use of the present type of bunkhouse be discontinued. They should be replaced by bunkhouses two storeys high. The lower storey can then be used for bathing facilities for the men coming from the workings... The top storey could be used for sleeping quarters.

“The men instead of being herded together as is now the case, should sleep about four in a small room, the sleeping quarters being divided up for this purpose. Proper segregation, comfort, light and ventilation could thus be

assured all the inmates.

“Zinc-lined washing troughs should also be substituted for the present filthy plank contraptions. Running water should also be provided. I cannot too strongly urge the necessity for the Government insisting on such a change.”

“Living costs are, in my opinion, altogether too high for the workmen. For instance, they are charged \$15.20 a ton for coal, whereas the charge made for the same article at Grand Falls is about four dollars per ton less. Food costs and the costs of other necessities supplied by the company’s stores are also altogether too great. An explanation of the prevailing high charges may be found in the fact that the company charges as much for freight transportation over its thirty-odd miles of branch railroad as the government does for hauling the same goods over the main line from St. John’s to Millertown Junction, a distance of over three hundred miles. The rents charged by the company for its bungalows are, in my opinion, far too high to demand for the use of such a type of house.

RECOMMENDATIONS: “I suggest that the Government, through the medium of the Newfoundland Railway or otherwise, should bring such pressure to bear on the Management at Buchans as to force them to lower their freight charges over their branch line to a reasonable basis.

“During the summer of 1928, when the Company’s dam burst, the men had to flee for their lives, some of them only partly clad. Many of these men have received no recompense for their loss, and appear to be unable to force any claim for settlement. The loss of belongings was very serious for some of the workmen totalling, in some cases, upwards of one hundred dollars.”

RECOMMENDATIONS: “The Government, in my opinion, should at an early date take such steps as are necessary to secure justice for the men who lost their belongings through the failure of the company’s dam and who, to date, have been refused compensation.”

“About a couple of months ago a Mrs. Dobbin (widow) and her daughter went to Buchans to keep house for Mr. J. W. Williams, the manager of the company. They did not like conditions in his household and Mrs. Dobbin, a daughter of Capt. Winsor, of the Central Fire

Hall, decided to return to St. John's, while her daughter obtained a place with the Royal Stores Staff House. She was ordered out of town by Mr. Williams, by whose orders she was, later on, prevented from returning to the same employment. This is information received by me from reputable and dependable residents of Buchans."

RECOMMENDATIONS: "The case of the daughter of Mrs. Dobbin is cited here to stress the extent to which the Management are inclined to carry their authority in Buchans as a 'closed town.' The Government may, or may not, be inclined to interfere in this connection and to state what it regards as a fair and reasonable policy for the Management to adopt and enforce."

The Minister, Honourable J. F. Downey, submitted Brown's report to the government, with a covering letter stating that he felt conditions were so intolerable that the Department of Health might be the more appropriate agency to consult. As for the case of Mrs. Dobbin, the Minister felt nothing should be done. She had recourse to legal action, and in his opinion, "from information which has reached me indirectly I am inclined to think that the matter was rather strongly pictured to Mr. Brown."

### A Parliamentary Subcommittee Visits

The Department of Agriculture and Mines subsequently initiated an investigation by a Parliamentary Subcommittee into working and living conditions at Buchans. Management was informed of the visit, and the subcommittee arrived on March 24, 1929, when it invited workers to outline their concerns in its private railcar. The company did not look favourably on anyone who entered the car, and the turnout was low. It is no wonder. The subcommittee reported, "We were rather disappointed that a large number of men did not avail of the invitation and the opportunity. Those men who did visit us on the car to state their case, expressed their opinion that others were deterred from following suit through fear of losing their jobs.

"One young man, Clyde Lockyear, of Woody Island, Placentia Bay, straightforwardly expressed the opinion that he was sure to be discharged because of coming to interview us. We have since been advised by him of his dismissal."

(Clyde Lockyear's dismissal supports the original findings of Inspector

Brown regarding the shabby treatment of Widow Dobbin's daughter, who was deported and banned from returning to Buchans. The representations made by "reputable and dependable residents in Buchans" to Brown regarding Miss Dobbin were not "rather strongly pictured" as the Minister of Mines and Agriculture had concluded one month earlier.)

The subcommittee inspected the cookhouse, which it found adequate, though poorly lit, and visited the mess room where it found the tables covered with "white oil cloth." This was the high point: On other matters, the subcommittee found that the company ruled with a high hand.

### The Bunkhouses

The subcommittee noted that there were four bunkhouses, each accommodating forty men. Each building was 60 feet long and 30 feet wide, with a wood stove at either end. A centre aisle ran down the middle of each barrack, with double-deck bunks, each with double springs, arranged along the length of each wall. When the subcommittee objected to the arrangement of two men sleeping on each bed spring – there were no mattresses – the company offered the lame, self-serving rationalization "the men preferred to sleep doubles, anyway."

As for mattresses, management reported that the men did not have the sense to keep them clean. The subcommittee noted that even the timbermen in the roughest logging camps had mattresses provided and that the Buchans management could provide them at negligible cost, and easily hold the individuals responsible for their hygiene.

Management further diminished criticisms of the bunkhouses by insisting that this was a temporary arrangement. Its intent was to "house all its workmen and their families on the town site." The inspectors noted that there were 55 bungalows built, but the rate of construction planned by the company was inadequate. It would take fifteen years to have all the bunkhouse men housed in family dwellings.

The inspectors, in making its report, used Grand Falls as a base for comparison purposes. Coal to heat houses in Buchans was unreasonably high, but the company forbade anyone to alleviate this cost by harvesting the ample forests nearby, as did people in the pulp and paper town. Also, families of the employees had to pay for each visit to the doctor: On the other hand, families in Grand Falls received this service free of charge.

Regarding the technical operations of the mines and mill, the subcommittee, perhaps a bit outside its expertise, could only make general, common-sense recommendations on safety conditions.

However, it did take exception to the company's forcing men to work on the Sabbath for straight time. "Sunday work at Buchans should be paid for at a much higher rate; certainly for no less than double time. That is the rule everywhere else. The management of Buchans should not be permitted to exploit its position of advantage in a closed town," it proclaimed.

On the matter of the cost of retail goods, the workmen and their families were gouged. The Royal Stores was required to charge St. John's prices, adding only freight. However, the freight charged by ASARCO for just over thirty miles in distance from Millertown Junction to Buchans was more than that charged by the Newfoundland Railway to haul freight hundreds of miles from St. John's to Millertown Junction! The exorbitant Millertown Junction to Buchans rate was actually based on the A.N.D. Co. rate. The A.N.D. Co., of course, owned half of The Buchans Company and any scheme to recover a portion of the salaries paid out was a good thing – for the shareholders.

The key recommendations of the subcommittee included the following:

- (1) More care in the preparation of food for the men using the bunkhouse and messroom.
- (2) Better supervision of the bunkhouse cleaning crew.
- (3) One bunkhouse be put aside for mill employees, and the practice of sleeping two men in a bunk be discontinued immediately.
- (4) Mattresses to the bunkhouses be provided by the company.
- (5) If possible, to build enough housing within two years to abolish the bunkhouses.
- (6) That the company be invited to show cause why electricity and coal prices were high and to permit people to gather firewood.
- (7) Work to reduce freight rates on consumer goods.
- (8) Improve working conditions by reducing shifts in the mine from ten hours to eight hours per day; pay no less than \$4.00 per eight hour shift in the mines;

Sunday work be reduced and paid at double time;  
and pay the Botwood workers no less than fifty cents per  
hour, in no more than eight hour shifts.

### The First Wildcat Strike

The Buchans Worker's Protective Union was officially organized on July 31, 1934. Two years later, to the month, it pulled the workers out on a wildcat strike. The following article appeared in a St. John's paper on July 24, 1936:

GENERAL STRIKE. – "In protest against the dismissal of a miner named Dwyer the labor union at Buchans ordered a general strike which took effect yesterday afternoon. The whole plant closed down as a result. The manager of the mines, Mr. P. W. George, issued a bulletin asking the men to return to work pending a settlement of the trouble. Last night the miners' union held a meeting and decided to return to work on condition that Dwyer was reinstated. *The Telegram* was advised this forenoon that operations had resumed and that Dwyer had been given work in another section of the plant pending an investigation into the trouble which will take place when the mines' superintendent returns from a vacation."

The final outcome of Dwyer's case is unclear, and whether the union had successfully negotiated a written collective agreement up to then is equally unclear. However, by December of 1937, both parties had hammered out an agreement, but with one major flaw: The agreement did not make the union the sole collective bargaining agency. Many miners had not signed on.

### The Strike of '41.

On a Friday night in the summer of 1941, on the first of August, the miners of Buchans went on another wildcat strike. Unlike the strike of five years previously, this one was not initiated by the local miners' union. However, many of the wildcatters, not in the union up to that point, immediately signed on, quickly swelling the membership to about 700. It was a brave act of defiance and with numbers on their side, the union assumed leadership of the strike action. There was a world war in

progress, and this became a legal and psychological weapon to try to persuade the men to return, but they refused, agreeing only to allow the shipment of ore already stockpiled. No more ore would enter the mill.

On the following Tuesday, the Union presented its demands to the Company:

- (1) 10 cents per hour increase in all wages;
- (2) Time and a half for overtime on regular shifts (that is above 9 or 10 hours);
- (3) Sunday work to be considered as overtime work.
- (4) Company should, in so far as they are able, maintain cost of living at a certain level.
- (5) Company should employ only Union men.

The only point on which the company agreed was (2): Time and a half for overtime on regular shifts. It also would consider some sort of bonus. The union stood its ground and informed government that it would return to work only if an arbitration tribunal came immediately. Government refused, and the men stayed out, blocking all shipments of ore to Botwood. At a minimum, they would stay out until the Arbitration Board arrived. Government's response was to dispatch a special trainload of 75 policemen, who arrived in town a week after the strike had begun. The police used the same argument that the company used: It was unpatriotic to strike in a time of conflict when the metals were essential to the war effort.

But the Buchans miners would no longer be intimidated. It would take another week before the men went back in the pits.

The Honourable Wilfred Woods, Commissioner for Public Utilities went to the town and pleaded with the union executive to return to work, otherwise there would be no tribunal. The executive refused, and upon Woods' request to meet the membership directly, agreed to a general meeting. The men's answer: No!

The company next posted a notice requesting that the men load and ship concentrates but, to a man, the union held its ground. Not one person crossed the picket line.

Two weeks after the strike began, the tribunal wired the union, announcing its arrival. Included in the telegram was a statement of urgency:

“We understand Union has promised Government to return to work as soon

as we arrive. We understand also that strike besides delaying supply of zinc which is essential war material has probably already rendered useless certain steamer movements ordered in advance by Britain. Any waste of ship movements greatly hinders the vital Battle of the Atlantic. In these circumstances Tribunal feels that characteristic Nfld. patriotism and common sense would be displayed by Union if it returned to work now and got concentrates on way without awaiting our arrival, thus saving valuable time. This is friendly suggestion from Tribunal and not an order and is our own idea without referring to Government. Sincerely hope it will be acted upon."

The tribunal's mandate flowed from "The Defense (Avoidance of Strikes and Lockouts) Regulations, 1941" formulated under The Emergency Powers (Defense) Act of 1940.

The union was at last satisfied. Its promise made two weeks earlier – to go back to work if Government had sent a tribunal – was as sincere as the wishes of the arbitrators to end the matter fairly, and the men immediately voted to return to work. The board made an extensive report to Government on its findings in September. While the union wanted the basic hourly wage increased, the tribunal recommended a cost-of-living bonus of sixty-seven and one half cents per day of 8 or 9 hours, retroactive to the beginning of the war. Overtime beyond a nine hour shift should be paid at time and one half. Determining the difference between essential and non-essential work on Sundays proved too difficult for the tribunal to figure out, so it left it to the parties involved to work on it further.

Perhaps the biggest breakthrough out of the strike of 1941 and the tribunal's investigation dealt with union recognition. No longer would workers have to cower in fear of losing their jobs should they accidentally look at a shift boss sideways or make fair comments on the company's practices and policies. The company agreed to recognize the union's exclusive right of representation and would permit the union to post notices at the workplace. The notices would inform the workers:

- (1) that the union is recognized as the sole collective bargaining agency by the company;
- (2) that all workers are urged to join it;
- (3) that this is done by permission of the company;
- (4) that the recognition extends so long as the union has a paid-up membership of two-thirds of the workmen and elects its officers and executive by secret ballot.

The strike of 1941, and the minimal demands that the company refused to meet should be viewed against a background of increased profits for the company, suggesting that it was being very stingy in paying a decent wage. The operation was profitable with only zinc and lead concentrates separated, but on December 1, 1936, the company was reaping an additional benefit from the fact that technology advances also permitted the selective separation of a copper concentrate, resulting in a windfall profit. This was on top of another great advance: In 1934, a gravity concentrate that contained the elements of gold and silver was developed that continued to add to ASARCO's revenues until 1974. While the strike of 1941 did little to raise substantially the quality of life of the miners, ASARCO and the A.N.D. Co. recorded pre-tax earnings of \$5,600,000 in the previous year from Buchans.

The tribunal was also presented with many other matters of concern to the miners, but in most cases the investigators felt they were outside their terms of reference and left it to the company and the union or individuals to work out. Some of these issues included opening the town up to other businesses, hiring another doctor, eliminating the cost of the employees' monthly fee for free medicine, and opening a drug store. There were petitions for better sewerage, faster repairs on houses, better fencing, a supply of storm windows and doors by the company, wiring of woodsheds, and placing electric meter cards in all houses.

Closer to the work situation, it was noted that there were men working alone in pits, the cage tenders were not always available in cases of emergency, while underground, some miners had to boil their own kettles while others did not. These and other issues were either considered trivial by the investigators, or the parties decided to sort the matters out themselves. Issues concerning working in the mill and on the surface, conditions in the cookhouses and bunkhouses and the cost of freight on consumer goods were also aired, but generally speaking, on these matters, the tribunal was nothing more than a sounding board.

One of the great issues was that of fumigating the bunkhouses, to rid them of vermin and insects. This was carried out once a year, if at all, but unfortunately, the men had no place to go while it was being done. The tribunal recommended that a separate building be made available for the

bunkhouse men to move into while their buildings were being treated, on a quarterly basis, however, the recommendations were not binding.

### The Walkout of 1944

Fifteen years after the Department of Mines and Agriculture had investigated the horrible conditions in the messhall, there was some improvement, but apparently, not much. On July 4, 1944 the miners stopped work over a “dispute which arose at Buchans concerning the quality of food served to the men there,” said the Grand Falls newspaper. The work stoppage lasted just long enough to send a telegraph message to government, giving the required 21 days’ notice of a trade dispute, after which the men immediately returned to work.

Before the 21 days were up, government dispatched a labour relations officer who mediated a successful agreement between the union and management. Another long walkout had been averted.

### The Christmas Riot of ‘49

In December of 1949, the isolation that nurtured occasional outbursts of cabin fever in the bunkhouse men erupted into an epidemic and drove some of the men mad. They staged a full-fledged riot. The train schedule out of Buchans did not permit the men to leave for a few days and return in time for their after-Christmas shifts. When the company refused to change the timetable to accommodate them, many of the men rushed the train station, to find the train slowly moving out. Jumping from the railbed, and clinging onto the train, they found that the crews on board had locked the doors, but stubbornly, several of the men hung onto the train as long as they could, hoping that the engineer would take pity and stop. He did not stop, and the last man, no longer able to take the strain on his arms, fell off at Tin Can Curve.

Later that same day, the messhall erupted into a riot when the Assistant Manager, E. M. Martin arrived to address the crowd. Martin was greeted by a flying turkey leg that smacked him in the side of the face!

The men were thwarted from getting home that Christmas, but sensing some urgency to resolve this issue, both the union and company met with government in the new year to press for a road linking Buchans to the

Trans-Newfoundland highway at Badger. In the meantime, the company rescheduled the trains the following Christmas to accommodate those who wanted to spend the holidays with their families on the outside.

### The Strike of 1955

On June 15, 1955, Union President John Quinlan led the 280 miners of the Miner's Protective Union in a strike for a ten cent an hour increase, across the board. The miners had broken away from the Buchans Workmen's Protective Union the previous year, splintering the workforce, thereby reducing its effectiveness in dealing with the employer. The work stoppage lasted three weeks.

Recognizing the disadvantages of not working together, in 1957, the two unions merged under the auspices of the United Steelworkers of America, and formed Local 5457.

### The Strike of 1971

The year 1971 was a watershed year for the worker-company relationship in Buchans. For the first time, all the workers, including the Local 974 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, went on strike as a united body in a strike vote of 98.9 per cent. The walkout began on June 21st.

The men were looking for respect from the company, the respect that comes with a decent wage. The workers were no longer cut off from the outside world. The international union, with its worldwide network of contacts for information gathering, could easily stockpile the ammunition needed to present a reasonable argument to the mining company. The ammunition came in the form of comparative figures that the company paid its workers in other locations around the world. The union felt a raise of one dollar an hour was fair, but the company offered only 36 cents. Despite the impasse, the union made sure that essential services such as garbage collection, checking on mine flooding and operating the central heating boiler service carried on as usual.

Once the facts of the union's case was made to the local media, the general editorial consensus was that the company was heavy handed. By August, ASARCO had not bothered to send in a negotiator from head

office, and a local paper stated, "There can be nothing but public outcry at the way the American Smelting and Refining Company Co. are handling the situation. Alas, they are not handling it."

The strikers dug in their heels. An oil tanker was refused permission to cross the main picket line, but sneaked onto company property by going around a chained-off road. It remained trapped on the premises for six days, until a court injunction was served. Mid-September, after negotiations between the company and the union broke off, the union withdrew around-the-clock services to the central heating plants, forcing the schools and the hospital to close. Patients were transferred to the hospital at Grand Falls. Organized garbage collection was discontinued and each household brought its own refuse to the dump, where it was left above ground, creating a feast for the fat vermin. The department of health was called in.

By September, Union President Don Head was fearing that the Buchans strikers would face a long, hard winter.

The local Parish Priest, Father Raymond Hawco said that "things appeared a bit brighter before the latest round of talks" but now, the situation was "pessimistic." He thought the time had come for someone to step in and mediate the conflict.

By now the union demand was reduced to an hourly raise of 80 cents an hour, but the company was still stuck in the mud at 36 cents. The same company had signed an agreement with their Arizona workers giving the lowest paid \$3.49 per hour, while the lowest paid in Buchans was receiving only \$2.24. On strike, a family of four received only \$24 a week in strike pay, but the men were determined not to go back for only 36 cents more per hour. In late September, the national and international representatives of the Steelworkers began a campaign to explain the plight of Local 5457 to the membership employed by ASARCO around the world.

October and the cooling weather brought on speculation that the two schools in Buchans would have to be closed for the winter, if there were no resolution in the strike. The company announced that the temporary heating would be discontinued on October sixteenth, leaving the education of 800 students in jeopardy. It looked like there would be a long, bitter winter on the picket line, so the Toronto office of the Steelworkers initiated a drive to raise \$500,000 for the Buchans miners by sending a local representative across North America to meet with the Steelworker brotherhood and pitch the cause of their poor "cousins" in Newfoundland.

Many individuals, disillusioned by work and living conditions in Buchans had taken advantage of the period off work and cast about for work elsewhere in Canada. Many workers found that their skills were more valuable outside, where their employers showed their appreciation with fatter paycheques. As the opportunities on the mainland became known to those back home, there began a slow exodus of skilled labour out of Buchans.

Out of the frustration and anxiety of the long period without work, Hazel Flight and her sister Fronie wrote a poem called “Buchans’ Song” that later became famous around town as the “The Buchans Strike.” It succinctly describes the situation in which many families found themselves, considering that maybe there was no future in Buchans. The Buchans strikers, at their union meetings, began singing the ballad to the tune of *The Bell Island Song*. Hazel has recorded her thoughts on writing it:

“The poem came to mind when the strike was on at Buchans. My father who was affected by the strike was preparing to move his family elsewhere, as making a living was very far from sight. I was helping to pack some of the belongings and began to think about how many others were in the same situation. Many men had to leave to seek employment elsewhere. Some had to leave their families behind. All our family, my sisters, brothers and I were born and raised in Buchans. The poem began to form, so we simply wrote it on paper.”

*Buchans’s Song (The Buchans Strike)*

*Surrounded by thick forest, just east of Red Indian Lake,  
There’s a place called Buchans, where things are not so  
great.  
For up in Buchans there’s an ore mine, that’s breaking the  
hearts of men,  
Because they think it will close down, and never work  
again.*

*There are people on the welfare, and men on the picket line,  
There are people leaving Buchans, who lived there a long,  
long time.  
But as they leave their old hometown, I only hope they’ll*

*find  
 Another place like Buchans, that they are leaving far  
 behind.  
 On the day of June twenty-first, in the year 1971  
 The people at Buchans, they were having lots of fun.  
 Then things came to a standstill, and now we just exist,  
 For little did we know that day, that things would come to  
 this.*

*Some men have left their families, to find a job elsewhere  
 Some have gone to the mainland, some gone to Stephenville.  
 Some have left to settle down, quite against their will  
 Meanwhile up in Buchans, the strike continues still.  
 With the help from other unions,  
 And with people on our side,  
 Our town won't become a ghosttown,  
 But still remain alive.*

(Used with permission)

Negotiators representing both sides had been meeting throughout October and a package was presented to the strikers in early November. It was rejected by a narrow majority and both sides began talking in earnest, culminating in an agreement that was accepted on the twelfth of November, by 64 per cent of the membership. The union did not get its 80 cents per hour, but only 55 cents over the life of the two-year contract. Minor improvements saw two extra holidays per year and other benefits costing an additional 11 cents per hour to implement. After twenty weeks on the picket line, and winter closing in, it was better than nothing.

As events evolved, the strike of 1971 turned out to be one step in a learning process, a training ground to toughen those who stayed behind. They were soon to be on the picket line once again, and compared to 1973, the strike of 1971 was a garden party.

Come Hell or High Water

The Buchans strike of 1971 was the longest labour dispute in the history of Newfoundland – up to that time – but a general strike by the same union in 1973 lasted two months longer. The seasoned veterans of the Battle of ‘71 were ready to charge the enemy again. This time there was violence on the picket line: Union President Don Head was fined \$5,000 for contempt of court.

The contract signed in January of 1971 was due to expire at the end of February 1973. In January, before negotiations began on a new agreement, the union had already staged a short wildcat walkout to protest the lack of medical staff at the hospital. The men were feisty and in the mood to fight. Events moved quickly. In February they were negotiating for a new contract: Within a few days the union requested conciliation assistance from government. The conciliation officer found that the company was not bargaining in good faith and by March 15, Local 5457 was on the picket lines again.

Nothing happened around the bargaining table in April, but something major did happen outdoors on the picket line. On April 18, the courts served an injunction to limit the number of picketers on a line to four persons. The union promptly ignored it. The president of Local 5457, Don Head was quoted as saying, “Come hell or high water, law or no law, nobody is going to cross that picket line until the company names a date for resumption of contract negotiations.” A pattern began to evolve that continued throughout the duration of the strike. Daily regular meetings were scheduled at the union hall, after which the assembled crowd, waving signs, shouting slogans and singing songs, led by the union executive, hit the streets in a march through town.

Tensions reached a new high with the report that company geologist Kenny Larsen had driven through the picket line, carrying Jim Peddle and Tom Ricketts on the bonnet of his car, slightly injuring Ricketts. The same fellow had aggravated picketers in the strike of 1971, and the men were furious. Observing the incident, a group rushed onto company property, where they overturned Larsen’s beloved muscle car, a Delta 88, onto its bonnet and roof. A driller who had considerable experience with explosives underground proclaimed, “The situation here now has reached the point where it’s a powder keg with a very short fuse.”

He would know.

Frustrated with the lack of seriousness on behalf of the company, the

men went on a rampage. In late April, a mob ransacked the main office, overturned company vehicles, and set fire to a railway caboose that blocked the main entrance to the mill. They had not forgotten Larsen's transgression: His overturned car went up in flames.

Seeing the situation rapidly deteriorate, Premier Frank Moores initiated a meeting between the two parties to take place on neutral territory, in St. John's. Both sides agreed and met, but in the end, nothing was accomplished over the bargaining table. The Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations, Hon. Joseph Rousseau commissioned University Professor Howard Dyer to examine all the issues in the Buchans strike and make recommendations for the parties to consider. Throughout the months ahead, there was little doubt that the provincial government took a very active, but frustrated role in trying to bring about a resolution. The parties just were not seeing eye to eye.

By mid-May, President Don Head was served notice to appear before the Supreme Court on contempt of court charges, arising from the fact that following his statement that nobody would cross the picket line, more people than was legal were manning the line. On May 26th, he was fined \$5,000.00, to be paid by May 31st, or face three months in jail. Union solidarity prevailed: The provincial Federation of Labour canvassed its members and covered the fine before the deadline.

In June, Professor Dyer's report was submitted to government, and on June 12, an overwhelming 87 per cent of the union membership voted to accept it. It called for a twenty per cent increase in wages over a two year period, but the company mulled it over until June 28, at which time it turned it down flat.

The strike dragged on through the hottest months of the summer. In September, the company presented the union with a proposal very similar to the Dyer proposal, but for three years instead of two. It was accepted by the union on the third of October: The following day, the miners were back to work.

The strike of 1973 was brutal, tedious, and initially very violent. Through the long months, the morale of the unionists was bolstered by union-organized events every day, at the union hall, and in the town streets, with noisy, well-attended marches during which time the men sang songs for inspiration. These were either original ballads or ballads adapted to well-known melodies by one of the strikers, Angus Lane. During the strike, Memorial University folklorist Peter Narvaéz recorded

the songs live at the union hall and released them in a recording entitled "Come Hell Or High Water." Included in the collection was an adaptation of the 1971 strike song of Hazel and Fronie Flight.

Here is one of the songs of Angus Lane sung by the strikers. It was sung to the tune of "Thank God We're Surrounded By Water" written by Tom Cahill and made very popular by Newfoundland singer Joan Morrissey.

*All Because of ASARCO*

*5457 is now out on strike,  
We seek from ASARCO what we deem is right,  
'Til hell freezes over, we'll continue to fight,  
We won't beg or plead from ASARCO.*

*Chorus*

*Our plea, our plea is for you and me,  
To demand what we want from this company,  
No one here will go down on their knees,  
To beg or to plead from ASARCO.  
We cut off the heat to the plant and the staff,  
The schools had to suffer on our behalf,  
The hospital too was caught in the draft,  
All because of ASARCO.*

*The company makes millions on concentrate tons,  
While miners end up with lead on their lungs,  
Mining makes old men out of our young sons,  
Producing ore for ASARCO.*

*A decent wage is all that we need,  
A few extra dollars our families to feed,  
A reasonable employer to our cause would give heed,*

***First Class Electrician: Gerald Cranford***

*But we have to deal with ASARCO.*

*The welfare man he came here today,  
He asked us to show us our previous pay,  
When he added it up, he had this to say,  
There's nothing here, try ASARCO.*

*Stick to your guns boys and never relent,  
Don't go back for a few paltry cents,  
To boost the wages of those New York gents  
Who get god damn well paid by ASARCO.*

The strike of 1973 greatly compounded the social upheaval begun during the walkout of two years earlier. During the strikes, many of the men looked for temporary work outside the town, and came to realize that a much better living could be made in other mines across Canada. When the final ratification vote was taken in October of 1973, it is estimated that of the original membership voting to strike in February, approximately two hundred were working temporarily outside the town, and one hundred had quit outright.

# **PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES ON BUCHANS**

My father, Gerald Cranford, was born in the Trinity Bay outport of New Harbour in 1926. He found work at Buchans in 1946, after working at the Argentia naval base and Torbay airport. When the mine and mill at Buchans closed down, he stayed on a while longer, doing electrical cleanup, recovering all the copper wiring for scrap metal, and then he retired to his home town of New Harbour. Some years before the mines closed, he had foresight enough to buy a house there and spent his summer holidays readying it for the inevitable day of reckoning.

While my father worked in the mill, his brass number was 410, a number that will stay with me forever. It was the number penciled on the outside of his pay envelope, filled with crisp fifty dollar bills each payday, and in addition to my allowance, I got to shake out the loose change and keep that too. If it contained ninety-nine cents in coin, I was the luckiest fellow in Buchans!

That number – 410 – stays with me for another reason. It was the calibre of my father’s beloved compact little shotgun that he sometimes let me use to hunt partridge in the great alder beds that grew at the end of the abandoned Buchans airstrip.

Here is what I learned about how my parents came to Buchans.

When Gerald Cranford moved to Buchans in 1946, living conditions for transient, or unmarried workers had not improved much from the reports made to government in 1929. He moved into bunkhouse Number 7, near the mess hall. The old practice of double-stacked double beds was still in use in this one-storey tar-papered shack. There were washbasins but no flush toilets. When the urge hit, there was a long pit in an outbuilding.

“It was about twenty feet long. A concrete block: You’d sit up on it, like a hen roost. You had a big pit on the back of you. It was fairly wide, too, and deep, you know. If you happened to fall in, you’d drown!

“There was no such thing as privacy. They had a shower down there, in the end of the outhouse.

“I was nineteen when I went there, in October of 1946. My Uncle Harold March of Green’s Harbour worked there in the Royal Stores at Buchans when I was thirteen years old, and father tried to get me a job in the back store. But Uncle Harold figured I was too small and not able to lift a sack of

flour or a sack of spuds.

“I was fourteen when I went to Argentia to work as a pin boy in the bowling alleys. I got fired there, at that. I hit the old fella, a bully. He used to push the boys around, and this day, the three or four of us had our alleys cleaned up and polished. We were waiting for them to open, for the soldiers to come in and play. Anyway, there were three or four of us in the washroom, getting a wash or combing our hair or something.

“Anyway...Chuck Taylor came in. He was about three hundred pounds, with a big potbelly. We all started to leave the washroom when he was coming in. He pushed a couple of the boys, and pushed me, so I hauled around and I let him have it. I hit him in the stomach with my fist, but I didn't hurt him, to tell you the truth, but anyway, he fired me.

“I was home about a year and then father got me another job in Argentia in the tinsmith shop. Father was a tinsmith on the base and I worked with him, and then with Uncle George Jones, from Notre Dame Bay.

“Next, I went to Grand Falls to find work. I met Len Pollett on the train. He asked me where I was going, and I said, ‘Why, I'm not going anywhere particular. I'm going to Grand Falls now, as far as I know.’

“‘Well,’ he said, ‘why don't you come up to Buchans with me. You might get a job up there.’

“‘Yes b'y, I've got nothing to lose.’

“Anyhow, when I got down to Millertown Junction, I was supposed to have a pass or a message saying I had a job, in order to go up. Martin Snow was there then. I said, ‘Well, I got no job.’

“He said, ‘well, I can't let you go up.’

“I said, ‘I've got relatives up there, I'll go up and see them, now.’

“‘Okay,’ he said. So he let me go for overnight. I was supposed to come down the next day. So I went up to Andrew Thorne's, where I stayed that night. And Lemuel Cranford came up and asked me if I had a job. I said, ‘No, b'y.’

“‘Well, why don't you come up to the electrical shop. You might get a job up there.’

“The next morning I went up. Gordon Pollett was in charge of the surface, then, manager of the surface department. I met him up there, and asked him if there was any chance of a job.

“He said, ‘No!’

“I went on. I never even stopped to talk. After dinner, I went up to the electrical shop. Maddigan was the superintendent then, a fella from St. John's. So, I went in. There was no one else around, not a soul. So, I went in the office and asked him, ‘Was there any chance of a job?’

“He asked me where I worked before, if I had any recommendation or anything. I had one then, from the base, Argentia, as a tinsmith. He said, ‘I don't

know. The best thing for you to do is go down to the main office. There might be something doing.'

"Now, in the time I left him, until the time I reached the main office, he had phoned down and told them to hire me. I went down and told them (I was looking for a job.) Jim Harding was there then, as employment agent. He asked me if I had any references and I showed him. He said, 'Tinsmith! You're in the wrong department.'

"'I don't know,' I said, 'I'm lucky to get in any department, as far as I'm concerned! I'm not very particular, the surface, or anything, labour work.'

"But anyway, they hired me on thirty days trial. So, I went back to the electrical shop then... cleaning up and learning about electrical work.

"After a year I went underground with Clarence Higdon. I don't know how long I was working with him at Lucky Strike and Oriental. Anyhow, Clarence quit and went to Corner Brook, and I took over from him as underground electrician. One electrician and a helper, underground. I had to look after Oriental, and Lucky Strike, then."

## Underground Shock

One day, while on the job, Gerald Cranford's name came close to being added to the list of mine fatalities. He was underground, hooking up a scraper for miner Ray Luscombe.

"We had the three-pronged plugs, 440, to hook up the scraper. We had a little piece of board, with a starter and a switch on it, for the motor. And we had this made up, so you could take it around anywhere. And you had two plugs – one on top, to hook up the main line, and one in the bottom, for the motor. The cable was all wet, of course, and my hands were wet, and there was a breach, or leak in the cable. When I pushed them right together so the prongs would meet, it hit me!

"And I would never have got out of it, only I had the presence of mind to fall back. All I saw was a ball of fire! And when I fell on the broad of my back, that broke the connection. My son, what a feeling, I'm telling you. If the cord hadn't come apart, I would have been electrocuted.

"It burnt all my fingers, and thumb, where I had the cable nipped, because it paralysed my grip. I couldn't let go. Burned the skin on both hands.

"I wasn't off work, I worked on. We used to have to look after the tunnel from Lucky Strike going out to Oriental. We used to look after that, putting the clips on the trolley wire. We put them on live! 250 volts D.C. – put them on live. When the new laws came in, all this changed. You weren't supposed to even tap on a light to it.

“Then, Rothermere opened up. I was still underground then, and went in to Rothermere with Roland Pinsent. Four of us. Wilfred Mullins was helping with me, and Jack Morrissey was helping with Roland Pinsent.

“And I worked in Rothermere for six or seven years, and then I went to MacLeans and was there when Stan Higdon took me out to go in the mill.

“I went in the mill around 1960, I suppose it was. I don’t know how long I was in the mill – twenty-five years, I suppose. There was only one electrician and a helper with me. Tony Head was helper, and Reg Pardy, and Billy Chapman, Norm Higdon, all them fellas. And Leo Kennedy. I don’t know, seven or eight of them.”

Gerald Cranford and Rita Higdon were dating back home in New Harbour when Gerald got the job in Buchans. Her childhood friend in New Harbour, Phyllis Higdon, was working in Buchans and in 1948 told Rita that the butcher in the Royal Stores needed a babysitter. She went down in March to babysit, but in August went to work as a domestic with ASARCO’s Assistant Manager E. M. Martin.

The manager’s cook got \$120.00 per month, and his maid \$75.00, their salaries paid by the company. On the other hand, the assistant manager received a stipend for only one employee. The salary for the other help – my mother – came out of Mr. Martin’s own pocket: \$20.00 per month. However, *that* did not include doing ceilings: Rita Higdon’s mother had cautioned her before leaving home: “Don’t do ceilings for anyone!”

Gerald Cranford and Rita Higdon were married at Buchans early in 1950 and moved in with Adolphus and Amanda Pinsent. That summer, Rita moved back to New Harbour. Like many men who worked in Buchans, Gerald also had a house around the bay. He moved into No. 10 bunkhouse, a step up from the old No. 7 he had moved into in 1946.

From 1950, until December of 1953, Gerald Cranford pestered his boss for a house in Buchans. Clarence Higdon, the mine electrician he had replaced, had moved away, leaving a bungalow, but it went to someone else. Gerald Cranford was an angry man, angry enough to quit, and he threatened to do so. The housing shortage was a chronic problem in Buchans, in spite of the Company’s stated intention thirty years earlier to provide family housing for as many as possible. Despite the illusion of stability in relations between the firm and its employees, this issue fuelled an ongoing undercurrent of tension.

Quitting over not getting a house was a much more reasonable solution

than putting a gun to the manager's head, which is what another young, newly-married man did. It was in 1946, the same year Gerald Cranford went to Buchans, that Aloysius Green decided to take the manager hostage.

On St. Patrick's Day of 1940, the Star of the Sea Association at Buchans held a reception for Aloysius Green and five other recruits who had joined the navy for duty in World War II. Green did his country proud and after the war returned to his old job to resume his duties.

His marital status had changed while he was overseas: He had married an English girl and he was anxious to see her settled in Newfoundland. Mr. George Thomas, ASARCO's Manager was walking home after work on the evening of March 16th, when Aloysius Green accosted him in the street, demanding a house for his war bride and child who were soon to arrive from England. Thomas said there was nothing he could do for him.

Green insisted that Thomas hear him out one more time, but Thomas managed to shrug him off. Later that evening, Mr. Thomas was upstairs in his bedroom when Green entered the room, emotionally upset, livid with anger and frothing at the mouth. In his hands he held a shotgun, and in a fit of rage, struck Thomas, breaking his nose and injuring an eye.

Mrs. Thomas arrived home and managed to calm Mr. Green down. She had established a rapport with Green, because while he was overseas, she had sent him parcels and he remembered her kindness upon his return by showing up at her house one night to thank her. Mrs. Thomas summoned help, and shortly, the local policeman, Constable Bond arrived, but he was also taken hostage. The situation was resolved by a quick-thinking local miner, Neil McIsaac, who ran into the house and shouted, "the mine just caved in!" All hands were startled by the news, and in the confusion, Constable Bond was able to wrestle the gun away from Green.

The ex-serviceman was arrested and tried in the Supreme Court at St. John's. The defense argued that Green was somewhat emotionally incompetent, or temporarily insane at the time, but the ploy did not work. After deliberating for fifteen minutes the jury returned with a guilty verdict and Green was sent to prison for twelve months.

There were two houses vacant in the town at the time, but Green worked in the mill, and those houses were held for workers of a different class, Thomas explained.

## “I Quit!” – Gerald Cranford

There was a quota system in place, but if you were a member of the Buchans Miners hockey team you were bumped to the top of the list, especially if you were a star goalie. This was the situation Gerald Cranford found himself up against seven years after the Aloysius Green incident. Rather than play second fiddle to a hockey jock, my father quit.

“I quit in ‘53 in December because I couldn’t get a house. That’s when Sham MacGinnis, the goaltender was helping in the shop. He got a house, but I was there four years then, working as a mine electrician and I couldn’t get one. That put the finishing touch on me. I complained to John McComb. I said, ‘If a helper is more important here than a mine electrician, that’s good enough with me. You can consider me giving my notice now.’

“‘Oh, hang on ‘til the spring. We’ll get you a house the spring.’

“I had been put off a couple of years then. ‘Cause I took Clarence’s (Higdon’s) job. He had a house. And they put me off, put me off, I couldn’t get a house. So anyhow, when a couple or three weeks were up, I never went to work, I dressed and went up and quit.

“Oh! They thought it was terrible.

“‘Hang on ‘til the spring and you’ll get your house.’

“‘Sir,’ I said, ‘I’ve been hanging on now for the last couple of years and I still haven’t got a house. I’m going to quit.’

“Anyhow, I quit. So I asked McComb, the electrical superintendent if there was any chance of a recommendation.

“Well, yeah. But I’m drove for time right now. It’s pretty short notice, but I’ll tell you what I’ll do. I’ll send you one.’

“Now, I never thought I was going to get one but it was only a month or so after that I got the letter from him! He turned out to be a fine fella, John McComb did.

“Anyhow, in the spring, I decided to try and get back, so I wired for another job. And they offered me one for four to six months, but only at the second class electrician’s rate. But the day I was ready to go, I got a message from George Carter over in St. John’s. He was wiring a hangar out in Torbay and he offered me a job as first class electrician. So I wired back to Buchans and told them, no, I had a better offer and I wouldn’t be accepting.

“I said, ‘This is it. I’ll never get back for sure, now.’

“Anyhow, I was over in Torbay about a month and they shift us then to Argentina to a hangar on the navy side, wiring a new hangar. So I worked there that week. I came home to New Harbour on the weekend and Lemuel Cranford was home from Buchans on holidays and he told me they were

looking for an electrician.

“Lemuel said, “B’y, you never know, you might get a job.”

“That spring, being off on unemployment and getting a few temporary jobs, I was getting pretty fidgety.”

There was another reason to feel anxious about getting work. Their first child – yours truly – was born with severe facial clefting problems that needed medical attention, in the days before universal medicare. Dr. Newhook at Whitbourne sent me home to die, but I was lucky enough to hang onto life until my maternal grandmother, Emma Higdon, an oldtime outport midwife found a solution to my feeding problems.

Gerald Cranford dismissed any chance of getting back to Buchans. “I’ll never get on with them,” he said. “They’ll never notice me now, but Rita said, ‘Well, I’m going to send them a message anyway.’”

“So, she sent the message to Buchans Monday morning, and that night she called Argentia to tell me I had a job!

“When I got to Buchans, they had the job for me, and another big surprise. A house! They gave me a first class rate and house! You talk about a cantankerous bunch!”

Rita Cranford continues the story. “When he left New Harbour, he didn’t know about any house until he got to Buchans and went to the main office. They told him, ‘You know you got a house?’

““No.’

““Well, you have.’

“I wasn’t long packing up, either. He wrote and told me about it, but he said, don’t pack up yet, because it’s going to take a while for them to get the house done. Usually they’d go in and paint through the house. But our luck, we never got it painted. But, I didn’t care, anyway. Bill Forward was still in the house. He was moving to another, bigger house, over in the new houses.

“We took off, then. Max Cranford took us up to the Whitbourne train.”

Settled in their new house, my parents added to the family, with my brothers Paul and Boyd, who like me, had their schooling in Buchans before moving off to trades school or university. Now retired, Mom and Dad live back in their hometown of New Harbour, keeping active lives. In July of 1996 there was a new addition to the family, a Newfoundland pony called Dan.

*A Poet For The Strikers: Angus Lane*

Angus Lane was born at Fortune Harbour in 1922. His father Patrick worked in Buchans from 1928 to 1938. Mrs. Lane and the family, including Angus, who was the second youngest child in his family, moved into Buchans in November of 1929. Angus was seven years old, and they arrived just in time for the children's names to be added to Santa's list for his annual visit to the company-sponsored Christmas party at the town hall (Basha's theatre).

Right away, Angus' older brother Jim found work with the company, but within two years, Mrs. Lane tired of Buchans, and moved the family back around the bay, but Patrick and Jim stayed behind. When Angus was fifteen, his father died, so Angus stayed out of school to work around the house, literally "to keep the home fires burning." He worked around the family property, while another brother, Gordon, went to Buchans to earn enough to send back home to support his mother, Angus and the rest of the children.

During World War II, Angus enlisted in the Royal Artillery, which was recruiting at the time, but ended up attached to the Royal Canadian Signal Corps. After signal training in Sydney, Nova Scotia, he returned to Shamrock Field in St. John's before a permanent posting to Bell Island with the 1st Coast Defense Battery, to instruct signaling and to take up observation post duties.

Right after the war, Angus applied for work in Buchans and hired on at the warehouse. From there he went as weighmaster with the railway, and after converting to truck transport, stayed on until Buchans closed down in 1984. Angus and his wife, Rose (Hennessey) are a well-known, jovial couple who raised a fine family and added a great deal to the social life of the community. Angus is the "Poet Laureate" of the town, having written many ballads about its people and events, especially those arising out of the bitter strike of 1973, when the strikers kept their morale high by parading through town singing anti-company songs penned by Angus. Besides his writing pastime, Angus finds time to take up the artist's brush and easel.

Angus Lane has a very interesting family tree, very short, but very, very interesting.

“That might not be interesting to you. I can’t get anywhere with my family tree because my father was adopted, and my mother was adopted, also. They were adopted by James and Anne Bingham of Fortune Harbour. He was the merchant. He had a big business, big for those days. My mother came from Renewals on the Southern Shore, and my father came from Tilting Harbour. So Mr. Bingham got the two of them in St. John’s. It is in his will that he would give them everything if they married. Reared as brother and sister, but no blood relation, the two of them married, and he left them the business in his will.”

“My father was Patrick Lane,” says Angus. “He came here in 1928. I guess you heard the story that Williams was sent down here to begin the thing. He was looking for experienced miners. Denny Glavine had been up in the States and he came home to move his family back and Williams nabbed him. So he offered him the head job of captain, if he picked up experienced miners. So that’s what they did. My father, the Glavines and the Byrnes had worked on Bell Island...they had worked at Tilt Cove, too, so that’s how they got picked. The Glavines, the Byrnes and the Lanes.

“Sam Byrne and Mickey Byrne, they were old time miners here,, and their brother Jim, the three of them. Pat Byrne, here, is Old Sam’s son.

“Fortune Harbour was also the home of the Quirks. They come in here early, Dick Quirk and Bill Quirk, they’re both dead now. Father had worked down at Old Buchans when it began, with old Billy Quirk. Old Billy started down in Old Buchans, before Buchans started, actually, and then his sons Jim and Dick came here after it started and got work in the mill. But Dick never stayed. Jim stayed until he died, in fact. His family grew up here.

“And the Lannons moved in here, some of them. Sam Lannon. Jim Lannon worked in Buchans as a shift boss before Sam came in. He’s Sam’s first cousin.”

“Luke Glavine, Denny’s brother Lukey, he ran the glory holes all the while. That’s where he spent all his time. He started it and worked at it until he left. That’s the big one, up where Lucky Strike is. Johnny Glavine, came in at the same time, he was a carpenter.

“Pete Mooney. That’s another fella from Fortune Harbour. He came here in the beginning. Lou Lyver came in at the beginning. They came in the old days when they came up from Millertown on the lake there.”

“There were no holidays in my father’s time. In fact, people were afraid to go on holidays, afraid they wouldn’t get back. Back in those days, in the 30s, there were no actual holidays. Unless he went and said I’d like to go home, my wife is sick, or something. There was no union then, so, no holidays. You just worked, and if you felt like time off, I suppose you could ask for time off for some particular reason, but there was no vacation. You had no time. “And the trouble in Christmas of ‘49, that’s just something that had to happen,

I guess.”

Here, Angus Lane is referring to the Christmas revolt of 1949, when the bunkhouse men, affected by cabin fever, rushed the train out of Buchans, clinging to the sides as she rolled out of town towards Millertown Junction. Angus wrote this ballad about the event:

*The Christmas of '49*

*“One Christmas I remember, 'twas 1949,  
The miners they were angry  
When they came up from the mine.  
They wished to be with loved ones  
Out around the bay  
To enjoy a family dinner  
With the folks on Christmas Day.*

*So they gathered at the station,  
Jack Cuff stood by the door,  
All around the town of Buchans  
You could hear the miners roar.  
We figured there'd be trouble  
So to the station all hands hied  
To see just what would happen  
If old Thomas they defied.*

*And so the crowd did gather  
And as the miners milled about  
Above the din and clamour  
You could hear a miner shout.  
“Here comes Martin down the track,  
His face a fiery red,  
The old man will not face us,  
But sent his stooge instead.”*

*Martin jumped upon the stand  
And began to make his plea;  
“Mr. Thomas has some news for you*

*So listen now to me.  
Down at messhall number one  
There's turkey there galore,  
Plum pudding, all the dressing  
You couldn't ask for more."*

*The men politely heard him out  
While Martin ranted on.  
Meanwhile aboard the engine  
Something else was goin' on.  
Jack Cuff had sneaked aboard the car  
And locked each door, the lout,  
He stuck his head out through the window  
And signaled to pull out.*

*Number two began to move  
Amid a burst of steam  
The black smoke pouring from her stack,  
The whistle gave a scream.  
The men jumped right off the stand  
And grabbed the baggage car,  
They clung to doors and railers  
But they didn't get too far.*

*Most of them fell in the snow  
Down by the storage shed.  
Some of them lay motionless  
We thought that they were dead.  
The strongest and the boldest,  
They must have had some nerve,  
Stayed till they crossed the trestle -  
Fell off at Tin Can Curve.*

*That evening just at twilight  
In remorse they turned about,  
And converged upon the messhall  
Where bloody hell broke out.  
Drumstick and plum pudding  
Were hurled upon the floor,*

*Martin got one in the gob  
When he came in the door.*

*In the end they gained a victory  
For on next Christmas Day,  
They were allowed to leave the town  
With families for to stay.  
Jack Cuff got off quite easy  
But Martin had a shiner.  
We guess they learned a lesson:  
Don't face an angry miner.*

The ballads Angus Lane wrote for the strikers of 1973 are compiled in the musical recording "Come Hell Or High Water", recorded live at the union hall. Included with the album was a songbook with the lyrics to the songs. One of those ballads is included in this work under the section "Come Hell Or High Water" and the ballad is titled "All Because of ASARCO."

### *I Witnessed The Flood!:* Henry Lane

Henry Lane is a slight, spry man of eighty-eight years, living in retirement in Makinson's, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. He was born in 1909, on the sixth of June. Many people in Buchans today cannot remember Henry, since he left there in 1948, but his brother Nicholas Lane stayed on for many years after. Also present for this interview was Henry's wife, the former Hetty Brenton of Bishop's Falls who went to Buchans in 1939, the year the Second World War started. The year before the interview they celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

As a teenager, Henry Lane worked around the family farm, cutting and hauling hay, looking after the hens, sheep and cows, since his father was away working on the highroad. Henry went to Buchans in the fall of 1928, finding out about work there in the usual way, by word of mouth. "There was an old fella here, he used to work up there and he got a job for three or four hands," recalls Henry. "One got a job for the other, like that. That's how all them got there. Old Harry Fowler, and Uncle John Mahoney.

"I got the train here in Makinsons, on the side of the ridge there. They had a station there, on the line to Brigus Junction. You'd get aboard and go on.

"I went up there to go cookee in the cookhouse, and I wouldn't go (as cookee). I started sawing off wood, there first for a week, or a month or so and I was going to go down in the mines, but she flooded and that was it!"

### The Day The Dam Burst

At about 8:30 on the morning of July 30, 1928, the dam holding back the waters of Sandy Lake burst, sending a torrent of tidal wave strength down the river valley towards the company cookhouse, bunkhouse and mine workings. Henry Lane was working outside, cutting up wood for the cookhouse when he saw a wall of water come over the treetops.

"When I looked at the ridge, I saw the water come down over the trussel," says Henry. "I called the boys out of the bunk, see, they'd just gone to bed:

Norm Makinson, Fred Bursey and Jim Brinston. They was just home, had a lunch and a wash and were turned in and covered up, about eight or half past eight. I bawled out to them *The Buchans dam is gone!* Just as they got to the door the water started coming up around their legs. The bunkhouse went out just like it was made of match sticks.

“I saw the water, I daresay, about seventy-five feet high! I saw this coming along, I ‘lowed it was a cloud, first.

“The bunkhouse (went), and the men, they lost everything. They only just got out. There was one fella got washed out in the river. He got to a little island on the river and a big tree. He caught hold of the big tree, and that’s where he sove hisself. They got the ropes and got him in out of it, after.

“And there was a big pine growing up in the mountain, a big, dry pine, and that’s where Jack Dixon’s trunk hooked up. The belt hooked in the limb, twenty feet up. It was up there two weeks before he could get it down! His trunk with all his clothes, and three hundred dollars. And the only one (trunk) saved, was his.”

Jack Dixon was working on the glory hole and was from Henry’s home town of Makinson’s.

“He only sove it then!” Henry recalled.

“The belt went through an old dry limb. I dare say he was twenty feet up from the shore. There was only one tree under the cliff, the mountain down by the brook, there was one little cliff there with one pine tree on it, and he was almost right up, and that’s where the trunk hung up! He tried to get the ladder. I said to Jack, ‘Don’t be so God Blessed foolish. The water’ll go after. Run a little ladder up, and get it then.’

“Anyway, he never bothered...the water went down and he got a ladder and went out and got it. Not even a drop of water in it!

“There was a fella come from Toronto, only had a trunk about that height, and about that length, four big belts around it, and clothes! It was blocked with clothes of all descriptions. He come from the States, somewhere. He was there two days, I think it was, and he lost it all! Only what he had on! All hands lost, regard to that part of it. Only what they had on.

“I never saw so much water. Blessed God! Talk about going! It cracked off posts and took pine trees as big as a fridge.

“And one fella just got out of the tunnel, when she flooded! He just come to the form, when the water come. He had to grab the edge of the machine to get up.

“I can see it coming now. And rocks! Oh Blessed God, rocks as big as trunks, rolled over. And sods, and gould (shrubs) and trees.

“She flooded in ‘28, and we were up there a month and a half, got our

orders to come home. I went back the next year and went in Lucky Strike (1929). I was there 'til '39, and shifted to Oriental.

“All in the mines, that’s all I worked. So many drillers got shifted out to Oriental from Lucky Strike: Norm Makinson, Jack Crowther, Harry Fowler, and Uncle John Mahoney, Joe Clark, Bill Clark...all them got shifted out.”

One of Henry Lane’s fondest memories of Buchans is making home brew with Levi Hollett, a mill worker, and a decorated World War I hero from New Harbour, Trinity Bay. “They used to make some home brew, up at Levi’s, meself and others,” says Henry. “We’d bottle it.”

Mrs. Lane recalls that during the 1940s, “We were rationed that time, when the war was on. They’d get the sugar and save it all, and hide it away from Aunt Suse.”

Henry recalls, “We bottled the beer in them glass acid bottles. I brought that one when I come back here to Makinson’s and he’s under the stairs now, and I brought 300 stoppers and 300 bottles! All white bottles, you can see them now, in the clothes closet. There’s been a thousand asking for them. I said, ‘No, you’ll never get them!’”

Henry and Mrs. Lane will tell you that Henry doesn’t make home brew anymore. Henry explains that he had to give it up for the last three or four years, since it gave him heartburn. But home brew was his drink of choice. “Sure, what’s in them controller’s beer, that’s no God Blessed good! There’s no taste to that! You could take three bottles of home brew (and) you’d be loaded.”

When the interview was over, I asked Henry Lane about drilling in the mines. “We used to drill dry, if you had to, you know, what I mean, but I didn’t get sick, thanks be to God. I was twenty-two years down there. Just about all was up there had old stuff on their chest. I had a little peck there, not enough to notice, not enough to hurt, we’ll say, that’s all. And I’m very lucky.”

**Selby LeDrew: *Shift Boss***

The following interview with Selby LeDrew was conducted in his house on Prospect Street, Buchans, August 10, 1996. Also present was his wife Lillian, who is a Buchans girl from one of the oldest families to be established in the town. Her father was Herbert White. Selby and Lillian had six children at Buchans, five boys and one girl. Their son Bob was a member of the local country and rock and roll band The Buchaneers.

Selby LeDrew was from Lush's Bight, Newfoundland, and worked in the lumber camps before he came to Buchans. "My father had a lumber camp," says Selby. "He ran the lumber camp for Bowaters, used to have a contract in Roberts' Arm, and I didn't like the woods, anyhow. Not in the summertime. So anyhow, I went fishing, in the summer, as a shareman with a fellow from Lush's Bight, trapping.

"In 1941, I came in here, in the fall. I had a sister Mabel who worked up here with Aubbie Martin. So anyhow, she got me a job. She said I *would* get a job if I came up here. I was nineteen years old. I was born 1922, 18th of December.

"Anyhow, I came in here in the fall of '41, the 8th of December, 1941. I believe it took me two days to get here. I had to come to Springdale by boat and then I had to hire a boat at Springdale to come to South Brook and take a taxi from South Brook to come to Badger and get the train and come to Millertown Junction. Finally I got here.

"I came to Number One Bunkhouse, on the side (of the road) overlooking Old Buchans. When I came here first, the cookhouse was down under the hill there. The cookhouse had burned that year, in the spring or summer. When I came here they were building the last one was there. It wasn't finished, but was started. They had one down under the hill, some kind of a cookhouse."

"I was down there in the bunkhouse until 1943. I married Lillian White, Herb White's daughter, in 1943 and I moved in with them."

Selby's first taste of Buchans was in a job that he hated, working in the woods, cutting timber. It was to get away from that type of job that he had come to Buchans in the first place.

"In 1941, the first job I had was with the timber yard, in the woods

with Dan Luscombe and Tom Lyver, loading the sleds. At that time they were cutting...I think 'twas blasting timber. They cut their own blasting timber, that time, in around Lake Seven. I just went in with those guys, loading sleds hauled out by a small tractor. I was there three days at that. I was going to quit, because that's what I gave up, the woods.

"I went to see Bill Luscombe, the foreman, and told him I had a mind to go in the mine. So, I went over to see one of the shift bosses over the whole operation, Mine Captain Denny Glavine. He gave me a requisition to go down to the warestore and get a belt, a hat and a carbide lamp. That must have been around the 13th or 14th of December, 1941.

"I worked underground from 1941 until January of 1983 when I got laid off.

"First I went helping. The first shift I worked, I worked with Pete Quinlan, mucking in Lucky Strike. I worked in Lucky Strike, Rothermere, and MacLean. I never worked in Oriental.

"I really liked underground. And I worked at it all, I guess. I was helping for about a year, with different buddies and then I went pipe fitting, helping pipe fitting, underground with a fella by the name of Johnny Follett from Western Bay. I must have been with Johnny Follett a year or two. And then I went on my own, pipe fitting. I was at that, oh must be ten or twelve years, I s'pose, then I went drilling, drifting and raising.

"On the last, I was shift boss, in MacLeans. I was shift boss on 18, 19 and 20 level, I guess. When she was going full swing in MacLean's, there were, I guess, four shift bosses, plus a mine captain. The mine captain was over the shift bosses. The mine captain was Ed Kelly. And then you had the mine foreman, Albert Simmonds.

On company time...it's hard to explain, you know, in the mines. You could be ditching, you could be on motors hauling ore and you could be doing a bit of timber and stuff like that. There was lots of things you could be doing.

"Well, once you go on contract... Say you went in a stope and start cutting a stope, or you went in a drift, start drifting...when you start drifting, you went on contract, until the job was finished. Raising, drifting, stoping, pillars...that was contract. There was places that were done, not on contract, too..."

I asked Selby who were some of the top miners in there in the forties, and risking leaving most of them out, he did mention a few.

“George Ivany, I know. He was good. Dave Head. Walt O’Toole. Then there was more, like Joe Fry, Charl Fry and two or three of the Lyvers from Fortune Harbour, they were all good.

“When I first went in the mines, there was no water used. Dry drilling. And dust!

“The wet drilling, I guess, came in during the late forties. You wouldn’t get that much dust, drilling with water.

“You had your engineers to keep you straight. Say your stope was as big as this room. You had a set of lines on this side: you had a set of lines on that side, and you had two wings. The engineers would keep you straight, and the shift boss would make sure you were scaling down, scaling the back.”

Selby LeDrew had about twenty years at hard rock mining before he became a shift boss. Over the years he knew many of the men who died in the course of their work.

“I knew a Ralph Clark. He was drawing off ore in a chute, into a car, and she give out up on top. The chute never collapsed, but there must have been water on the back of the muck, and when he rose the gate, it all came out, and he went down between two cars.

“Claude Elliot: He was gassed. He was up in a raise. They were going to work. That was on thirteen level. They had to go about thirty feet to a sublevel and then go up again. I don’t think they got (all the way) up in the raise. They were back to the sublevel when I got to them. Me and my buddy were up, trying to get them down.

“George Mayo worked in MacLean. At that time the tram used to come from MacLeans out to Rothermere. And when it was slowing down, he jumped off, but he bounced off the rib, and went back down underneath the car. That was at Rothermere.

“Bill Ricketts: That was when a sand pillar gave out. There was a stope cut up on top, and then she was covered over and filled full of sand. They were square-setting in a pillar when all this collapsed.

“Dominic Ricketts was killed when they were sinking MacLeans. He was working in the drum of the hoist and she started to move. If he had stayed in the drum, he’d have been alright. Instead of that, he tried to get out The bars going around it, caught him.”

In 1944, Selby LeDrew nearly met his end in Lucky Strike. He was fortunate, but his co-worker, Pat Flynn was not so lucky. “Pat Flynn was from Norris Arm. That was carbon monoxide gas. You can’t see it and you can’t smell it. That was in Lucky Strike. We went down one morning. Someone wanted some air and water lines put on and we had to go down a raise. When we were going down, the two fellas who were working down there were coming up. I said to one of them, Walt O’Toole, he didn’t look well. ‘Boy, I’m sick,’ he said.

“So anyhow, we went down, and we had to put up a pipe there and go across. ‘Twas too quick to think about it. Anyhow, one of us passed out and the other fella start to shout for someone. Whatever happened, by the time they got there, Pat Flynn was dead. They got me up, but I never come to until I got in hospital.

“It was carbon monoxide gas, from the blast. They were blasting the night before, or the day before. They never had any gas detectors those times.

“I was only off a few shifts. That was on 440 sublevel. I know it was between two level and three level.”

Selby LeDrew remembers his badge number, 808. “I’ll never forget it, 808.” When asked if he would go back in the mine if he were starting over in life again, there was no doubt. “Oh yeah. I’d go mining. I liked it.”

### ***A Worthwhile Risk: Hayward Locke***

I interviewed Hayward Locke at Ruby's Restaurant, Buchans, August 9, 1996. The restaurant is owned by Hayward's wife, the former Ruby Ball.

Hayward Locke is a second generation hardrock miner in Buchans. His father Herbert Locke came to Buchans from the Springdale area in 1933. Herb came to the bunkhouse first, but eventually got a house and raised fourteen children. Herb's brothers Tommy and Ned Locke and a step-brother Parmenius Locke also worked in Buchans.

Hayward Locke recalls his family's history:

"Father had two brothers that were here. One was Tommy Locke, Uncle Tom. He was here before the old man was. I don't know what year, now, it could be '30, or something like that. Then he had another brother worked here, Uncle Ned. He was killed here on a glory hole...(Lucky Strike). It was over fifty years ago. He was 36 years old. It was a rainy day, (and) all the stuff come off the top and rolled down. A piece of ground come down and hit him in the back and bust him up.

"Father come in to the bunkhouse. He was twenty-one. He was born in 1912 and came here in 1933. He was fishing before that. He worked in Oriental Mines for a good many years, then he went with Rothermere Mine and then he went in MacLean's and that's where he worked until he retired, MacLeans. He had 44 years and so many months, that's what he had with ASARCO.

"I don't know who his buddies were. But, father worked with a man, a man worked with him, rather, and the old man went to the can, and when he came back, the fella was killed. Just as quick as that, he was killed! In Oriental. The old man worked in on the pumps a lot, after he give up drilling. Then he went and did repair work, right up to the time he retired.

"I often heard him say this, that they were out fishing and they got sick and tired of it, so they left to come in here. I don't know but they walked a good bit of it, from Springdale to Badger, anyhow, before getting the train. Old Tom was here earlier. He had five children, including Audrey who married Ern Simmons, and Shirley, who married Graham

Flight...that's his family.

"Now, when Uncle Ned Locke got killed, he also had a family of five or six youngsters in here."

### Following The Old Man's Footsteps

Hayward Locke hired on with ASARCO in 1954, on the surface, and two years later transferred underground as a mucker. In all, he worked 31 years in the mines. To the time office he was brass number 868.

"When I worked in the mines, I went down as a mucker, then I went as driller, then went as a development miner. A development miner is a man who is driving drifts and driving raises, stuff like that. That's what I worked at up to the end.

"When I got down in the mine, the mines were more modern than when the old man worked there. When he worked there, they drilled dry, no water, no nothing, and when I went to work in the mine, they had all that done away with, drilled with water.

"You couldn't see the other fella for dust when you drilled dry. It wasn't healthy, but the old man lived to seventy-five and he drilled (dry) for years and years."

One way to get out of Buchans was to get yourself "broke up" badly enough; then you got airlifted to a hospital. With the isolation of the mining town and the demands of the bosses, for months the only way to get out alive was to be nearly dead – on a stretcher – airlifted to the General Hospital in St. John's.

Sometimes a miner did not get out alive. Buried under a fall of ground, he was dug out and brought up into the daylight, only to be placed in the darkness of another hole at the edge of town, where more clay and rocks were dumped over him, but this time more ceremoniously, in a plot in the cemetery. Or he could be washed and salted like a codfish, placed in a wooden pine bin and shipped around the bay to his grieving relatives.

Another Buchans miner had gone home.

### The Accident.

Hayward Locke went to work on July 29, 1965, expecting a routine shift with his partner Jim King, in a stope on eighteen level at MacLean Mine,

but within hours of starting, a rock fall nearly killed him.

“When they got me out of the mine, my leg was gone up behind me. So they called up the old man and they called Harold Steers. Doctor Dingle give me six needles in the arm. I remember everything. The needles didn’t help much.

So, he said, someone had to grab me and hold me down. So, Ed Kelly grabbed my back to hold me down, and Dingle gave my leg a pluck down! My leg was smashed to smithereens. It had four breaks and fourteen fractures. It was turned around the other way, the muscle was torn off, my left leg, and this arm here, the left, was beat to smithereens, everything was broken up. And I had a crack in a bone in my back.

“I was airlifted from Buchans to Gander. I remember all of it. Semi-conscious, I suppose you could call it. I was seeing stars, anyhow! As soon as I got in St. John’s from Gander, they were down waiting by the door. It was all done by phone, I guess. All I had to do then was sign a slip. I didn’t know what I was signing, (but) I signed a slip. I didn’t know anything else ‘til I was up in the bed after surgery.

“Doctor Shapter came up. I was twenty-nine years old. He said to me, ‘I don’t know, yet, if we got to take your leg off, or not. I won’t know for two weeks time. I got a lot of muck out of your leg.’

“Anyhow, I waited the two weeks. It was on my mind a lot, you know. So I waited two weeks, then I went down to O.R. again. When I came back the leg was a quarter of an inch shorter than he was before, that’s all. I never had anything done with my back...just put together the way it was. The same with my arm, but it’s still dead there in the forearm. My back, still hurts sometimes.

I was in a cast, from July to January, I think it was. That was ‘65. What they did with the back, was just rest, rest until it grew together.

“I went back in the mines...I did have about a month, going around on easy work, before I went back to normal work. They gave me a month of easy work, then I was back at the same work I was at (before). Yes, I was back and worked just as hard, or harder.”

Hayward Locke was as tough as nails!

## Someone Else's Turn

In 1981, it was someone else's turn to pay the price for the dangerous underground work, and it was Hayward Locke who searched for a miner trapped under a fall of rock. "The time that Bill Ricketts got killed, we went in mucking for him, you know. I don't know what time it was, it was about three o'clock in the morning, or something, we found him. Myself and Ed Kelly found him. I could reach up my hand and touch him. And I said to Kelly, 'I got to tip him over, now, to get him down.' So, I tipped him over and hauled him out through. Then we got a blanket to put over him. Then we brought him out on the stretcher. This was at MacLean Mine, on the eighteenth level."

Hayward's best years in the mines were in the early 1970s. His brother Gordon was on the opposite shift, and that, Hayward attributes to them doing so well on contract. "They gave so much a foot. You go to work and they give you this area. They'll bring down a contract and give it to you. That's your price. Now, you'd go to work and take a brest. A brest could be thirty holes, ten feet long. Three up and down and ten across. And you'd drill out and blast that. The man will come on in the night, the opposite shift, he'll clean her down, bolt her up, get her all ready to drill another brest tomorrow. That's the way they operated the mining."

If he had his youth back, he would be working in a mine today. "Yes. Definitely would. I'll tell you why I would go for it. I always liked mining. Mining was mostly what I worked at. It's a high-paying job. Very high. About the highest pay there is around.

"Mining today is big money. Great big money."

For the potential rewards, a job underground is to Hayward Locke, a worthwhile risk.

### *A Buchans Oldtimer: Ray Luscombe*

When I was casting about for names of some of the senior miners in Buchans to interview for this project, the name that came to everyone was “Ray Luscombe, he’s one of the oldtimers”. And they were right. Ray Luscombe and his wife Sadie Brinston both came from the Notre Dame Bay community of Loon Bay – two loonies, they call themselves!

Sadie came to Buchans in 1931 and Ray in 1932. This is the interview I had with them on August 9, 1996.

Mrs. Luscombe set the scene. “He’s 82. His birthday was the 17th of July 1914. He was 82 in July, and he worked over 40 years in the pit.”

#### Millertown

“I was fourteen years old when I went in Millertown with the A.N.D., with a bucksaw!” said Ray. “Cutting pulpwood. Seventy-five cents a cord! Seventy-five cents a cord, that’s what we got, me and my brother Bill. Boy oh boy. You get two cords, and you’d still have nothing. I believe it was seventy-five cents a day for your board! You had to get a cord of wood to pay for your board!

“Of it all, that lumberwoods was the worst, the woods, the flies and the heat. Cutting. You’d saw down a tree and get 3, 4, 5, and 6 lengths out of it. In the hot sun you brought them on your back to pile them up at the road.

“I worked up to Lake Ambrose with my brother and old Pete Rowsell and Sel (Selby) Woodman. I don’t know where they are now.”

#### Buchans

“I knew the mines was open and I had a sister working servant with the manager, Gilchrist, his name was,” says Ray Luscombe.

“I worked in Millertown with the A.N.D. Co. and I left that and went home for a while. Then I came here intending to stay for a month I suppose. That’s all the work I wanted. They hired me on then and I’m here now!

“My brother Bill Luscombe was here before I was, as a miner. He was a miner for years, and then he went foreman on the surface in the timber yard.

“I started in the glory holes up there (Lucky Strike), full of water now. I started there when it was a small hole. You can see how big it is now.”

Ray and Sadie were “born together in the one place, thirty families when we left there,” says Ray. They were courting before they both came to Buchans. They have been together so long now that to Ray, it seems “we were courting before we was born!”.

### *Sadie Brinston*

“We’re married sixty-one years the 15th of June,” recalls Mrs. Luscombe. “We were married in June of 1935. We got married here in Buchans, but we were going together for years before that, going to school.

“We got married and I went back to Loon Bay for a couple of years, then we got a house in here.

“My brother Albert Brinston worked in Buchans. I had two sisters married here at the time. Sister Elsie was married to John Hancock and my sister Bessie was married to Harold Anstey. I used to come in with them for a while and go back home again. I used to work with them, housework. Elsie had boarders. I used to help her, or help Bessie with her family. That was 1931.

My sister Joyce married Clarence Goodyear.”

### Company Time

“I’ve worked for years at 40 cents an hour, when I first come here, me on company time,” recalls Ray. “Now, when I was contracting, it was the same way, 40 cents an hour. I had to make me company time, and when I make over the company time, I’d get it, \$100, \$200, or a thousand dollars extra.

“When the war was on I had my best years, on contract. ‘Cause for two months, I got a thousand dollars a month. That was when the war was on. They wouldn’t pay you the thousand dollars all at once. They’d split it up and pay 500 a month at a time.”

Ray Luscombe learned his mining trade the old-fashioned way as an apprentice.

“I went helping a few times, took it over and learned from that myself. I

helped with poor old John Mahoney, he's dead now. And Dave Head.

"Most of the men came here from the east coast. They were here years and years, the one crowd of men, but when the war started, every day they'd be hiring on new men.

"We was, well, we was the drillers. We'd go at anything, raising, drifting, cutting stopes, back stoping, and do everything what had to be done. We'd take the machine and go and do it: Driving the tunnel, eight by eight, or anything. We'd take the drill and go on with it.

"I worked in Lucky Strike, Rothermere and MacLean's, but I never worked in Oriental. I cut out the three of them. After I left Rothermere, they put me out in Lucky Strike, then on the long hole, mucking for the long-hole man, because the stopes were all cut then. Everybody had their stope mined and finished and there was neither one for me."

### Dry Drilling

In the early days at Buchans, drilling was done without water to lower the dust levels. Ray Luscombe had no problem with dry drilling.

"I started down the glory hole, the first time I started, drilling dry. That's the best way to drill anyway, dry.

When they started drilling with water, it'd go on down to your gut. That's what happened to me. I told the doctors up here. My son, when you were drilling with water, sir, your feet'd be wet and when you'd take off your boots, the muck would be there, it'd go right on down through you. 'Twas fierce, water was."

### I Quit!

In 1950, Ray Luscombe quit. He simply got tired of working in the mines. For the next year and a half, he had a completely different job, up from the dark, dusty mines and out into the woods, cutting and hauling logs and working in Ches Linfield's sawmill back home, in the fresh air and daylight. But the work in the mill and woods was brutally hard, in spite of the fact that Linfield had one of those new-fangled worksavers, a Hornet chainsaw. Having tasted work above ground, Ray decided to return to Buchans in 1952, declaring, "I'm going to get me pension out of this." And that is what he did.

## An awful dose of them!"

"I got hurt a couple of times, sir. I had my nose broke, my toe broke up and my hip all beaten up, with rock falls.

"Two fellas I had there, buddies, they got killed. Matt Mercer. Charl Coombs was with him for a while and the ground fell down and killed Matt.

"Art Perrier the same way. He got killed the same way as poor Matt Mercer. We were working together, but they split us up when they were short of drillers. They took Art and put him drilling.

"I went back with (where) Poor Art was killed, finished his stope and I went back where Matt Mercer was killed and finished his stope.

"Sid Gillingham got killed in Lucky Strike. He drilled into a miss hole. They blast in the evening, see and they never listened to their shots going, you know. They might have had ten, twelve, eight or nine, or whatever many holes. They're supposed to stay and count them – one, two – according as they go off. Now, when they come back to get up on the bench in the stope, they cleaned it off with the shovel in order to begin to start drilling. And when he started drilling they struck the powder!

"His buddy, was a long time before he got better, his face all blowed off."

"One of the Ricketts, I believe, got powdered, putting a charge of powder up in a raise."

Mrs. Luscombe has another memory of a miner getting killed.

"There was one young fella got killed, Harold Antle, from Carbonear. This night two or three of them from Carbonear, were up to the house. It must have been twelve o'clock or more before they went home and the next morning about nine o'clock, someone came in and told us Harold got killed out at Oriental. It was sad. He was a only a young fella in his twenties."

Ray recalls other miners who died.

"Dominic Ricketts... He got killed on the hoist. See, they got bases in them, with oil. He had to get in it and clean it out. There was nobody there only the hoistman and him. When he was cleaning it out he got (crushed).

Claude Elliot. He was married to Jessie Cranford. He got gassed. Claude and Reg Rideout worked together. He got gassed. Reg (recovered).

"Mike Kelly...Rothermere. He got killed in a stope in a rock fall. They was hauling a juice cable up through the stope, up the raise and the back fell out of her.

"George Mayo...got killed by the tram. The tram squat him up ag'inst the

rib, hey. That's where you go down to Rothermere, and take a tram and go in to MacLean, underground on thirteen level. There was no door, open both sides, and three men together. She was still going when he jumped out.

"Joseph Roach. He got killed on the glory hole. He was married to Mrs. Jerritt's daughter. They drew him out through a chute, down in the pit. Down bottom of the glory hole, going stripping, blasting the rock off, the ore, see, and they had tunnels, trussels built down, a track on 'en, see, come up, and they get up and dump it. They had two-ton cars. Well now, when the cars come up, there had to be a man go up the trussel with him to turn the car over. When he took hold of the car to turn it over, the pan came off and he went with the pan, right on down the raise and come out through the glory hole. Frankie Byrne, I think, was scraping in a stope, and he thought he seen a man come out, frightened him to death! Boy, you'd get some awful frights, like that.

"Fellas ask me about this (how many killed). (I said) I don't know how many got killed, but it was an awful dose of them!"

### Gerald Cranford's Shock

Interesting to me, Ray Luscombe has a specific memory of an incident involving my father, Gerald Cranford, who was nearly killed by electrocution:

"I can see poor old Gerald now. Boy oh boy. He was the electrician. He came down where me and my partner Matt Mercer were having trouble. Something happened to the scraper when we shifted, so Gerald was sent down.

"When he put the two electrical cables together, his mouth, my son, was over there (gesturing with a facial expression). He drew right up, oh my son, he swell out, and went out a cold junk.

"That was in to Rothermere, I think, that was.

"And boy, look here, when he got up out of it, by and by, oh, the oaths come out of him! I didn't mind then, when he start swearing, I knew he wasn't dead.

"It must be a hundred times I'd think about poor old Matt Mercer. He was frightened to death when Gerald got electrocuted."

“I’d Like To Be Going Down There Tomorrow.”

Ray Luscombe looks back with no regrets on his life as a miner. In 1952 he was happy to get a house that cost only \$32.00 a month to rent, and the price of coal to heat it was reasonable.

“Yes boy, it was a good place to work, I’m going to tell you,” says Ray. “You were more or less your own boss, see. You had a boss alright, who tells you where to go to work and what had to be done, but from that on you were on your own.

“Now, I’m alright...short winded, hey, that’s all. Regards everything else, just as good as ever, you know. Gets short winded. It’s my lungs, I suppose, from the dust, hey. If they put me through the mill, with my clothes on, they’d have made millions of dollars on me! With the old lead and zinc and gold!

“I’d like to be going down there tomorrow morning sir, indeed I would, to go at it again. Yeah. It was a nice place. You worked hard. (But) you were eating a lot of dust.”

### *Tumbling Down A Shaft: Ned Pretty*

Ned (Edmund) Pretty was another outport Newfoundlander to make the upland trek to Buchans to find work in 1927. He was eighteen years old when he left Dildo, Trinity Bay, to find a few months employment, but he ending up staying for 47 years. He met Miss Lucy Gates of Summerford, Notre Dame Bay, who was working for Evans, the chief electrician. Ned and Lucy married, and since jobs were scarce in the Depression, they remained and raised a family of five children.

Ned had a number of jobs out of Millertown before going up to Buchans. Bobby Woodman, employment agent with the A.N.D. Co., was a distant relation from back in Trinity Bay and he gave Ned a job on the boat hauling goods across Red Indian Lake to Buchans in May of 1927. "They had two big boats, and barges. Each boat had a scow. One boat coming and another boat going. It's a mystery how things were done that time. You take, they had the powerhouse built, and the mill built, practically finished, before the railroad got up. All that stuff went up on the lake. It didn't make no difference, summer or winter. They had two 10-ton Linns, half-tracks; and they had two 10-ton Holts bringing in stuff."

From there Ned got a pick and shovel job with Rodey John Kennedy's surveyors who were putting the grade on the Buchans rail line. He quit that and got hired on by the crew working on another section of track nearer Buchans. "Goodyear put me teaming the pair of horses," recalls Ned, "bringing the grub in from the lake. And the flies! And the stouts! Three days, I think I worked, and I quit again! I came down to Foote at Millertown again."

### A New Cookee

"There was a job open for a cookee so I took that. All this was in 1927. I

only took the job as cookee to get up to Buchans. I was in the cookhouse for about a month. Then, Wells was the master mechanic there so he offered me a job on the intermediate boilers, but the superintendent over the cookhouse, Cleary, wouldn't give me a transfer.

"When they found Lucky Strike, then I got a job with Lundberg. Well, the fella running the cookhouse couldn't stop me, 'cause that wasn't with the company. Electrical prospecting. I come out of the woods that fall and I went to work with Gilchrist. He was the mine superintendent and they used to make tests of ore and what the grain was. In the spring of 1928, Lundberg came looking for me again and meself and Jim Thorne were together as buddies that year.

"We started off the next year with the company, putting the elevations on the hills like Notch Mountains and others around Buchans.

"When we come out in 1929, Gilchrist gave me a job down in Lucky Strike sampling. The next year I went in the engineering office, helping the surveyors underground, then I went surveying myself. J. Ward Williams was the manager. P. W. George came in 1930 and took his place because Ward was construction manager, and P. W. George was a mining manager. He come in, and he was supposed to be pretty shrewd at that. In the Depression he did everything he could do. He didn't want Buchans to close down, because ASARCO had mills all over the world closing down, but he didn't want to do it. Rather than close down, we took three cuts in pay."

### Death By Prospecting

"P.W. George died while down with me, prospecting in the woods. Charlie Perrier found some ore about four miles back of Buchans Junction. He gave the samples to Ern Higdon, the road master on the railroad and Ern brought it up to Jack Mews. Jack Mews brought it out to the engineering office where we had that big pan for panning stuff."

Gilchrist always called Ned Pretty by his formal name. "Edmund! Were you looking at this?"

"'No.'

"'Come have a look.' I went over and had a look at it."

Mr. P. W. George, who had been tormented that the Duharts and Perriers were "squatting" on A.N.D. Co. land, was very suspicious of the find, came in the office.

"That Charlie Perrier got some of that off the footwall out at Oriental,

where we were stripping it off. Out around the glory hole.”

“‘No,’ I said, ‘he never got that around the glory hole.’ Of course, they looked at me then. ‘Cause when I worked in the assay office, I studied that a lot, the ore, the grain, and everything, and took guesses on the grade. ‘No,’ I said, ‘That’s a different type of ore altogether, a different grain. Our ore, our main grade ore is 8% lead and 13% zinc. That’s about 20 and 30.’ And they looked at me.

“So, they got talking, and when it was all over, he said to me, ‘Would you contact Charlie Perrier to see if he’d take you in and show you where he found the ore?’

Within a few days, Ned Pretty was on his way to Buchans Junction where Charlie Perrier took him into the country. They spent a night in Charlie’s shack and set off in the morning to look for mineralization.

“We got (samples) and then eleven o’clock in the day I said, ‘Charlie, I’m going to get a cup of tea, build a nice fire, and get a cup.’

“‘Oh, my God,’ said Charlie. ‘I’m not going to stay here if you make a fire.’ Because the A.N.D. Co. was trying to get something on him, to get him moved out of the Junction.

“‘Alright, I’ll make it. I’ve spent two or three years doing nothing else but the woods, summer and winter. I never did without a cup of tea while I was in there.’

“I had a little kettle that held about two cups of tea. Down by this big rock there, the water was running alongside it. It was dry on one side, so I got some little twigs and made a little fire and boiled the kettle.

“‘Come on, Charlie, the kettle is done. Bring that can we threw away there.’ I started to dout the fire. I threw the can of water up on the fire, and of course, it splashed up on the rock. And look, if I got a whiff of sulphur from Grand Falls, it wouldn’t be any stronger than what that was! I went over and I saw a little crack. Charlie had his axe and I had a little prospector shovel. I said, ‘Charlie, use the axe.’ He turned around and put it in this split in the rock. There it was, just the same thing as if it was a boulder that Charlie had...the same kind of ore!”

This scene was reminiscent of Matty Mitchell’s original find on the Buchans River with William Canning in 1905: Melting a metal-laden rock by campfire.

“When I brought it in, P. W. George drooled over that!

“That boulder was right square, then, while all the stuff in the river was

right round. That was all very well. I told him about this rock, the big rock, a square one, so two or three days later he come to me and said, ‘That stuff never came very far (from the motherlode). I’m going to go in. I want you to take me in.’

“‘My God, it’s a hard walk, boy, three and a half miles, anyway.’

“‘Go on, get a tent and that, and I’ll go in.’

“I got Charlie Perrier, Max Perrier his son, and Ralph Wells, that’s (Premier) Clyde’s father, and they carried in the stuff for us, two big canvas tents, grub and that. It took us just about all day to go in, because P. W. George was diabetic and he only had one eye.

“When we got down I showed him the (round) rocks in the river, that we had broken. And then I took him over to where we had this fire and I told him what happened.

“‘Why,’ he said, ‘that never come far. Why, we got to look into this.’

“So that was all very well. We had lunch and I told him that two or three miles away, there was porphyry rock, ore-bearing rock, stuff (similar) to our hanging wall, in Buchans.

“‘Well, I want to go.’

“‘I’ll take you over.’ Now there was a big bog, running up. Looking at it from where the camp was, it only seemed about a mile across, but it was actually three miles walking. You had to (zigzag) to get across him. It wasn’t like most bogs, it was just something floating.

“I said, ‘It’s a day’s work to get over there.’

But P. W. George was determined to go.

“We got about half a mile. I walked ahead. When I looked around, I thought *The Old Man is backing up..he’s not feeling too good now*. It seemed, crossing a little brook, coming off the bog, he was down getting a drink.

“Charlie Perrier sung out, ‘Ned!’ And I saw where he had Mr. George by the canvas coat that he had on. So I ran back and turned him over, caught his tongue and hauled it out and reached down in his pocket to get candy, and smeared it over his lips. Streaks went up his face and his heart made one last jump.

“I said, ‘He’s gone.’”

## The Strike Of ‘41

Ned Pretty was never in a union, since he worked in the engineering office. He was on staff when the miners shut down the mines and mill in

1941, forcing an investigation by a Tribunal and the occupation of the town by a police force.

“That was over wages. Thomas gave the men five cents an hour raise. He had another fifteen cents to give them and never give it to them.

“In forty-one they had no union there, only men getting together and appointing a spokesman. (There was a union with only a portion of workers signed up but the company did not recognize it as the sole bargaining agent.) Say, nine o’clock in the morning, they were all up standing around the Royal Stores.

“Thomas, the manager, came out, and said he was going to get a train in and ship them out of Buchans. They threatened to put *him* on a train! Thomas made the threat at 11 o’clock and by six o’clock that evening, every hourly-paid man was in the union! They had a union formed!

“Gilchrist could have come out and straightened everything out. They even asked for him. He could talk to them. They hated Thomas.

“When the police came in, they never had it so good, going around to all the houses, enjoying everyone’s home brew!”

### Tumbling Down The MacLean Shaft

“When they started Rothermere Mine, sinking the shaft there, the company put me as engineer looking after the company’s interest. Paddy Harrison was the contractor, doing the job, from Quebec, well, he was an Irishman.

“Then, when they sank MacLean, they brought Bill Stooly in as engineer. Paddy Harrison come in and went to the manager and asked if they’d swap. I’d take Stooly’s job and he’d take mine in the engineering office. The company used to pay me, but Paddy Harrison gave me \$150.00 every two weeks additional.

“The worst job ever I had in my life was when I was engineer in MacLean Shaft. See, it was something new to Canada. This was a circular shaft, sixteen feet in diameter, with twelve inches of concrete all around, outside, down four thousand feet.

“For thirty-two hours one time, I never got home. Into trouble with different things, I’d just have my meals in the cookhouse. I remember one of the closest times ever I had, to getting killed. I was doing the plumb lines. They blasted this time, and there’d be a break for three quarters of an hour, or something like that. I was going to move my lines down another fifty feet, from the steel. The steel was eight feet apart, see. I went in and told the leader and the hoistman not to move anything.

“That was all very well. I had the lines down and all straightened away (doing) the last check. I was standing on the edge of the bucket and I was

leaning out over, looking down a line when all of a sudden the bucket moved up and of course I went headlong, down the shaft.”

### Saved By The Bell!

Tumbling towards the shaft bottom, four hundred feet down, Ned Pretty’s arms tangled in the bell cord.

“Whatever happened, I hung up on the bell line and my feet landed on the next steel set below me!

“The bell cord went all the way through the shaft. It’s a rope with a steel wire into it. I don’t know how I grabbed it. That’s a mystery to me. All I know, my feet touched the next set below me, and I stood up on that. I rinded off one of my hands. My buddy, who was up on the crosshead thought I was gone, because in falling, my light came lose and tumbled down the shaft. He thought *I* had gone down but it was only my light that fell.

“When I swung on the bell cord, I automatically signaled the *lonnnnng* bell and the hoistman knew something was wrong.

“When I got sense enough to get aboard the bucket I belled it up to where my buddy was and then we belled her to the deck to find out what the hell was going on. The hoistman (MacDonald, from Nova Scotia) couldn’t look me in the eye, he was so embarrassed. He thought I was gone.”

Ned Pretty has had a long and colourful life. At one time, ASARCO investigated the viability of reopening the LaManche lead mine on the Avalon Peninsula, and Ned Pretty was assigned to overlook that project. Over his eighty-odd years he has gone through and witnessed Buchans in most of its changes.

After his wife Lucy died, Ned remarried, to Mrs. Emma Reid, formerly Emma Rogers of Random Island, who recalls, “I came in 1929, the year of the tidal wave. There were plenty of houses in there then.”

Emma and her husband Robert Reid, a mill worker, were both from a small fishing town of Foster’s Point on the east coast of Newfoundland. Before getting their own house, Robert, Emma and their first child moved in with Willis Reid, a mill boss. Their next five children were born in Buchans. Well-known resident Merle Reid of the Buchans Townsite is the only one living there now.

Mrs. Pretty recalls, “We used to keep poor Old Tommy Garrett busy car-

rying women to the hospital, because every month there was two or three babies born. Poor old Tommy'd come with his horse. We were in a closed town then, no way to get out of it. When I went to Buchans there were no houses on the right side of Main Street, if you were facing the mill.

“Ben Basha had the theatre. It wasn't the talkies of course, and his daughter Eileen played the piano all through the movie. She married Hayward Simms. The first talkie that I saw, Loretta Young was in. At that time I was pregnant and when it was born it was a little girl and I called her Loretta because I liked the name.”

### *From Oars To Ore: Pete Quinlan*

Peter (Pete) Quinlan was born in the Conception Bay, Newfoundland community of Otterbury, Clarke's Beach, in 1916. At the age of 80, after spending 40 years underground, he is blessed with good health and perfect eyesight; he still has his home at Buchans and another around the bay.

Pete was sixteen years old when he went as a shareman on the Labrador aboard the *S. S. Kyle*, out of Brigus. For the fishing season down North, which lasted from May until October, Pete Quinlan received sixty dollars.

For several springs, Pete also participated in the greatest hunt in the world: The sealfishery on the ice floes off Newfoundland's northeast coast. One spring he went aboard the old *S. S. Ungava* with the legendary Skipper Billy Winsor, who brought home 56,000 seals that year. His share came to \$150.00.

Like most young men of Pete's generation, the jobs were varied and seasonal. He also worked in Bill Davis' lumber camps at Badger, in the days when the Exploits River was crossed by a cable boat.

Pete Quinlan went to Buchans in 1941. To get there was not too difficult. The Carbonear branch railway was running into Brigus Junction then, where a ticket could be bought for passage to Millertown Junction. From there, he went to Buchans on the ore train. As a single man with a come-what-may attitude, he checked into bunkhouse No. 7, but as soon as he could, he moved from the open stalls of No. 7 into No. 9 where there was more privacy with only two men to a room.

He met his wife at a hockey game. Of course, she wasn't his wife then, but a girl who caught his fancy at one of the Buchans Miners' hockey games in the old ore shed flooded for an ice surface. Loretta Walsh was

from Cupids, Newfoundland, only a few miles from Pete's outport home, but until meeting in Buchans, they hadn't laid eyes on one another.

Loretta was working in Epstein's hotel at the time.

Pete's father was not the typical fisherman of outport Newfoundland, but a railroader with the Reid Newfoundland Railway. In the late 1800s, he had driven the first engine over the Humber Canal. He then moved on to the Bell Island iron mines where he worked in the machine shop, so the mining world was not totally alien to him when he found work in Buchans.

Pete was still living in the bunkhouse "until he got tangled up with me", says Loretta.

They were married in 1946. Loretta returned around the bay, but had to wait only three weeks when Pete telegraphed her to get back as soon as possible: He had a house. It was a tiny house for a tiny family, but Pete and Loretta's household quickly grew and in 1950 they moved into a larger dwelling and a few years later into the bungalow on East Street, where they still live today. After working forty years for ASARCO, Pete retired at sixty-five years of age, a happy man with a large family of six sons and three daughters.

Pete's first job was on the motors, hauling rough ore off the ore chutes at Lucky Strike, until he became helper with Driller Dave Head. He learned the driller's trade by apprenticeship, and when Rothermere Mine was begun, moved there until he was needed at MacLean Mine. Over the years, he returned the favour by training other helpers who graduated to become drillers on their own. Selby LeDrew, who later was promoted to shift boss, had his first shift as a helper to Pete Quinlan at Lucky Strike.

As a miner, a driller on contract, Pete Quinlan could make pretty good money. "My brass number at Rothermere was #602, I think, that's the one I remember the most. One month, in particular, I made enough contract money to buy a used car down to Hayward Simms," he recalls. "I paid \$850 for him. A fifty-four Plymouth, only two or three years old. Sure, gas was only 39 cents a gallon, that's all."

### Pete's Only Accident

"When Rothermere started, I went there and when that finished, I went to MacLean.

"That's where I had my leg broken, in MacLeans. I was standing up by the side of the drift and probably I slipped and my leg fell under the wheel and

I broke the leg. I was off work for two years.

“It cracked off right above the ankle. No bone holding it together. It was only months before I was retiring.

“Before that, after forty years’s work, I never had so much as a cut finger!

Pete and Loretta have no regrets about their life together in the mining town of Buchans. There was steady work and Pete was a better than average driller, so when the contract money was available, there was always a bit of extra money coming into the household. Pete and Loretta raised nine children who graduated from St. Theresa’s High School, and who had a good start on carving out their own professional careers.

### *Dial 3333 for Pat Scott, Fire Chief*

In his first years at Buchans, Pat Scott was a mess hall helper, then a surface worker. He started with the fire department as inspector in January of 1951 and retired as fire chief and town manager on June 20, 1983. He and his wife Bride retired to New Perlican when Pat retired from the fire hall.

“I went there in ‘43, January, from New Perlican. At that time, there was a lot of work, because of the bases during the war: Argentia, and Gander, and places like that. I worked in Gander before I went to Buchans. I was down there seven or eight months. Then, I came home for Christmas and I sent a telegram back to Gander to go back after Christmas and I also sent one to Buchans. I had two telegram replies come the one day. So, I picked Buchans, because I was never there, so this is where I went.

“I worked in the mess hall. Gordon Pollett, he was in charge of the mess hall. Jim Thorne was the cook, but Gordon was the manager of the mess hall. That was, I think, where, practically all, I wouldn’t say all the men, but the majority of men, started off, at the mess hall. Now, when I started, the mess hall was where the old one was, the one that was torn down recently.

“I went there as a stranger. You had your telegram, and when you left the train and went to the mess hall, the guy there, Adam Rideout, would assign you to a bunk in the (bunkhouse), and the next day, you’d go to the main office and get hired on.

“The first bunkhouse I stayed in was what we called the mess hall cookee’s shack. They had a little shack there, a little bunkhouse and this is where all

the cookees stayed, and the cooks, as well. After I went on the surface, I stayed in No. 3.”

### Red Indian Lake

“Then I got transferred to the surface, and I was driving a truck to the lake, Red Indian Lake. At the time, I think, some company big shot came down from New York and said that it would be nice to have some conveyance going back and forth to the lake, ‘cause the men might want to go out for picnics, or take their families out. So, anyhow, that’s how I came to get on this bus, myself and Vince Seward. They start in May and you’d finish around the last of September, because there used to be a lot of guys going back and forth, hunting at that time.

“There were quite a few boats out there, motorboats, guys bringing in their motorboats on flatcars, by train. Then they get one of the company trucks to ship it out to the lake. They’d go across the lake, and picnic, and go fishing and things like that. The fare was 20 cents for an adult and a dime for youngsters, return.”

### Working With The Fire Department

“From the bus then, I went in the fire hall as a fire inspector, inspecting all the fire equipment around the plant and around the town, public buildings, schools and what not. That was in 1952. There wasn’t a full time fire chief. Ralph Colyer was the fire chief at the time, and me being inspector, was responsible for all the equipment and the fire truck and the fire hall, and everything. I also kept records of the fires, and so on.

Ralph Colyer was from St. John’s and after he left, Ron Delaney took over as fire chief. That wasn’t full time. They’d only go to the fire hall, when there **was** a fire. But I was permanently stationed there at the hall because the inspector’s position was full time.

There was only a small fire hall. I would say that it was built in the forties, attached to the house where we lived. And then they built the new one.

Buchans got a regular fire truck in 1947. “(It was a) Dodge, 1947. That was driven from Detroit to Sydney and Billy Warren and Lou Lyver went to Sydney and I don’t know what transactions they had, but they took it from Sydney across on the boat, and then, into Buchans by train.

“Before the truck, all they had was just a wagon with some hose on it. They used to link to the hydrants, and this wagon used to be towed behind

a truck, or in the winter, behind a horse. But what spurred the purchase of the truck was when the Ivany family died. A number of years later they purchased the truck.”

The fire department in Buchans was manned by volunteers from the general working population. Eventually a permanent position for fire chief was created, and Pat Scott assumed the job. Volunteers sometimes were sent outside for training. “They used to go out to St. John’s. The fire chief, he’d probably take a couple of firemen with him. The company would stand their expenses and take them out to St. John’s and they’d have probably two or three weeks training, then they’d come back and train the other crews in fire-fighting.

(First aid training) would be from the first aid officer who worked with the company. One of them was Jack Abbyss and others were Allan MacDonald and Pearce King, down through the system.

### Dial 3333!

To sound the fire alarm there were sirens strategically positioned around town.

“There were three. There was one situated on the fire hall, one situated on the main office and the other one was down by the public school, on a tower. Across the track would be one blow; that would be the plant. Two blows would be the centre of town and three blows would be the north side of town and four blows would be the new housing area. That’s the way it was planned.

“How it worked, anyone who had a fire would phone the fire alarm number. The fire number was 3333, I’ll never forget that, and that was set up at the time office, because there was somebody at the time office all the time. Then it would be relayed. The person in the time office would blow those signals, telling the direction of the fire, whether it was the centre of town, or the plant, and then contact the fire hall, because as soon as the siren went, everyone would go to the fire hall and by then I, or the fire inspector, would know where it was. Because it was a small town and you knew where everyone lived and you knew the nearest hydrant, not the same as the city.

“Later years then, we had a map in the fire hall for new members coming in and we had all the zones put in the map and...another board then, with all the names of the people that owned the houses, or, was living in the houses, and the numbers of the houses.

“We took care of the bush fires as well, if they were a threat to town. Otherwise, the forest fire patrol from Millertown would come up and take care of it.”

Mine rescue was handled in a different manner. “They didn’t blow the siren,” say Pat, “not for an emergency in the mine. They had mine rescue. But if they needed equipment or anything, now, they would contact the fire hall, like if they needed a fire hose, or whatever, they would contact the fire hall. But we had nothing to do with underground. Everything we handled was on top of the ground.”

Being a firefighter in a small town is a difficult job, since the fire chief and firemen knew everyone personally, and when the call came to go out to a house, there was always great anxiety about what was to be faced. “It was a big responsibility, and where there were no shifts on, you go to bed at night, and you’d probably be sound asleep, maybe, two, three, o’clock in the morning, and this siren’d go off! And you’d have to get out of bed, on with the clothes. I know, when I’d be getting dressed, my wife would be passing me along the clothes to get on, and half the time you wouldn’t be buttoning up your shirt or anything. You wanted to get there as fast as you could, because we were trained that the first five minutes was the crucial time of the fire.”

### Romance Blossoms

Pat Scott met his sweetheart in Buchans. She was Bridget (but prefers to be called Bride) Aylward from King’s Cove in Bonavista Bay. Bride’s brother Bill Alyward was working in Buchans and a sister also lived there. “That’s where I met her (Bride). I thought she was the prettiest thing ever I saw. She wasn’t a bad looking girl, I tell you that! I thought I had my fortune, and I did, too! 45 years married, in June past.”

They had to wait for a house: “About a year. You never get one right away. I don’t know why, but they always give a preference to the miners. But then, you have to have the support of the surface as well, for the mines to work. But they had a plan, that’s the way, the miners got the preference, but there were so many houses for the mill, probably, ten, or twelve, or fifteen, whatever, and so many for the shop, and if somebody in the shop quit, or in the mill, and left Buchans, then some other guy in the mill or shop would get that. That’s the way it worked, too.

My recollection of Pat Scott and his family, pictures them living in a house attached to the fire hall on main street, but that was not always so. “No,” says Mrs. Scott, “Our first house was across from the Anglican church. Fred Forsey lived in the other end of it. It was a small house, one bedroom, a kitchen and a bathroom and a porch. We were only there one year and then we moved over to the other one.”

Pat and Bride had six children, only one of whom is living in Buchans, Doreen. The other five moved away to mainland Canada to find work. Their son Pat continues to work in the uranium mining industry in Saskatchewan.

### ***Poppy On A Stick: Ern Simmons***

Ernest (Ern) Simmons, born in 1929, arrived in Buchans from Winterton, Trinity Bay when he was twenty years old, following the footsteps of his father and brother. His bunkhouse was the old No. 4, on the bank overlooking the Old Buchans excavation. As with many outport communities, Buchans provided countless seasonal jobs to other men and a few women from Ern’s old outport home, too many people to remember. But the Hiscocks were from Winterton. One of their sons, Mark Hiscock is a businessman in Buchans today. There was another man that reminded Ern of his outport connection – Johnny Pitcher – who had a little house down behind where the Salvation Army is now located.

Before entering the mining trade, Ern Simmons was a fisherman and logger. His earlier jobs included one at Lewis Piercey’s plant in Winterton, where Piercey was tinning codfish and turbot. “Then I spent two months in the lumberwoods before I came in. That’s where I spent my eighteenth birthday, in fact, in the lumberwoods, down in Bishop’s Falls. (I worked) up on the Rattling Brook. I was up there with Jim Rowsell. Cutting with a bucksaw.”

Working in the lumberwoods was no easy job. “It had to be about the hardest work, that’s in the lumberwoods. With the bucksaw. With the heat and the flies. August and September month I was there. I was only eighteen when I came to work, here in Buchans, and I didn’t work too many

places before I come here.”

It was in Buchans that he met a young local girl, Audrey Locke, daughter of one of the town’s pioneers.

### The Story Of The Lockes

Audrey Simmons is a true Buchaneer. Her father was Tom Locke, a steel sharpener, who arrived at Buchans in the 1920s, via Millertown, across Red Indian Lake by boat, and up the old corduroy road from the shore landing to Old Buchans.

“It was 1927. He was a cookee down to Millertown, somewhere and he heard tell of the work starting up here, so he came up here in the summer of ‘27. ‘Cause he used to tell me how they started the churches and everything, the same year, you know... The Salvation Army had an old tent rigged up first, and the next building was the one that the Oddfellows bought later.

“So, he told me he was here when they built the bunkhouses and everything. First when he came up they just had a couple of old rough places for a few men to stay.

“Dad was a steel sharpener. He sharpened steel for the mines for years. He worked in the steel shop. Whereas his brother Herb, he worked in the mines. He worked out at Oriental.

“My mother came in, I think it was four or five years later, in April. All our crowd were born here. I was born the 27th of January, 1936, and they had to get this sleigh and put mom on it and put blankets around her. Everybody went by dog team for everything the first few years.

Then they had horses. That was the next big thing. Horses for the coal and horses to bring ice to the people uptown for their ice boxes and horses for delivery in the store, horses for everything. We used to chase the horses – people used to try to get rides on them.

“Father retired here, and stayed there. He died only three years ago.”

The Locke family has paid its dues to the mining industry. In all, there were three brothers who worked at Buchans: Audrey’s father Tom, her Uncle Herbert and her Uncle Edward. It was Edward (Uncle Ned) who paid the ultimate price in the dangerous game of making a living from the mines. In 1941 he was killed in the Lucky Strike Glory Hole. In addition, the mines nearly claimed the life of Audrey’s cousin Hayward Locke, Herbert’s son. Hayward’s story is told elsewhere in this book under the title “A Worthwhile Risk.”

## The Shops And The Ice Cream Parlor

Audrey Locke worked in the Retail Store for several years in the early 1950s, sometimes called the Buchans Cooperative Store. It's major competitors included the Royal Stores (the Upper and Little Royal), Courage's Mart and occasionally, the Company Store. The manager of the Retail Store was Ern Bartlett, who had defected from the Royal Stores for a better position.

"The Little Royal had vegetables, groceries, food, and you could get envelopes and matches and stuff like that. But if you wanted clothing, or hardware, you had to go up to the Upper Royal. They had everything, from a yard of elastic to a yard of lace to nails, clothing, beds and mattresses, and furniture – chesterfields, lamps, dishes, shoes...everything, they had it. It was a big store, at that time.

"The Little Royal was just the one, long, narrow store: All kinds of biscuits. You could get salt meat, but you couldn't get fresh meat at the Little Royal. The meat market was in the Upper Royal, where you'd go and buy fish or fresh meat. But all they had (at the Little Royal) was barrels of salt meat and barrels of salt pork, and sacks of potatoes and all this kind of stuff. And I remember they had envelopes and matches and they might have for the men coming in there from working, cigarettes, candy and chewing gum."

In the Retail Store, "They had drygoods, but not as big a selection as the Royal. When you go in to the store, there was this little drygoods area. Then, when you go by the cash desk, 'twas all groceries, and the back store, where they had the salt meat and all this stuff. I suppose they had fresh meat, too. They had a showroom upstairs, with ladies clothes, and shoes and there were dishes up there. I know when I was small, I went up there and got mom a dish for Christmas. But I don't think they had furniture."

The Retail Store operated an ice cream parlor, attached to one side, and accessed by employees from the main store. Audrey remembers the ice cream parlor well.

"It was seasonal, 'cause it was opened in the summer. We would always go up the first of June when it opened and get ice cream, and it seemed (that) in September it closed again. "It was in the hot summer and they'd have the ice cream come in sometimes, in a great big leather insulated bag. And it tasted a lot better then, because you couldn't get so much, and it seemed like the big bricks tasted way better than what's in the tubs, now. Tasted some

good. And when you had a family, you had to slice the brick in six slices... You didn't get too much.

"People from the bunkhouse, a couple of fellas would go up, and buy a brick and split it in two: One fella'd have half a brick and the other half a brick, and then sometimes, they would have the sundaes with the three scoops and then they'd have the walnuts and the chocolate and stuff on top. That's where we also went to get the french fries."

Competition drove the ice cream parlor out of business. When Courage's Summit Restaurant opened, "The Retail couldn't make a go of it," says Audrey. "They ran it so long, then they opened it into the store."

Ernest Simmonds and Audrey Locke were the first to be married in the newly-built Salvation Army Citadel. (Then known as the "Barracks"). They did not have a house, so they moved in with Audrey's parents for a while, before purchasing a house in Windsor. Ern went home on the weekends, until people began building houses outside Buchans, along the highway at Pigeon Inlet. They built a house in this little "bedroom community", and their house was among the dwellings relocated to the Buchans "Townsite", and they live there today, in retirement.

Audrey Simmonds is a wonderful source of details about life in Buchans. Jokingly, a very good friend of hers once said, "Audrey remembers seeing things that happened before she was born!"

Audrey fills in the blanks left by Ern: "Before you went with the company, you were with Billy Walker's crowd – Sprague and Henwood – three or four years. Billy Walker was the manager."

"I started in '52 (with ASARCO)," Ern began. "I got transferred from the diamond drill to the company, in the mines. I was helping all the while I was working in the mine. I got married in 53, then I was out of Buchans four or five months. Then I came back and went back in the mines again, and I was helping then until '59.

"In '59, I had that accident. I was helping Max Stagg most all that time. He was the fella that drowned on Red Indian Lake that time when three men were drowned...Bill Hunt and Kelloway, and Max.

"I was off work about sixteen months, I suppose. I was in hospital for twelve months.

"The accident was 22nd of January, 1959."

On that day, Ern Simmonds was a miner's helper, working with Max

Stagg on thirteen level at Rothermere. Their task was to replace old timbers on the back of a drift.

“We were there taking down this old timber, and putting rock bolts up in the back and putting up this chicken wire, and we were going to use concrete to keep the back up. A piece of muck came down and hit me on the back and knocked me down.

“I was standing up on a five-ton car, about four feet wide. I had the car covered over with two 8 by 8 plank. So we were standing up, and I was helping out.

“It just hit me on the back and knocked me down in the drift. A big piece of muck came down and went across my leg. It must have been balanced on another piece of rock, because my buddy was able to move this big piece of stuff. I pulled my leg out. I never got knocked out or anything.”

The leg was badly damaged. Only one artery remained intact, but the doctor tried his best to save it. “Dr. Rutherford was here then. They brought me to the hospital where I stayed for three months, while they tried to save my leg. Then they sent me out by train to St. Clare’s Hospital in St. John’s and I was there until June before I had the operation, when they amputated my leg. I got home the 4th of December.”

It was not until October that the leg had healed enough to have an artificial limb fitted so that Ern could begin the physiotherapy needed to learn to walk. In December he arrived home to the welcoming arms of family and a warm reception by his friends.

When Ern recovered from the accident, he was not able to go back working in the mines, but was re-assigned to the lamp cabin. “I got bumped out of the lamp cabin about a year and a half before I got laid off. Then I went driving truck on the surface. I was driving an ore truck to Oriental up to the Lucky Strike deckhead. They were hauling ore from the glory hole at Oriental and dumping it on the deckhead at Lucky Strike and it’d go up the mill from there.”

The accident and the problems it created did not make Ern Simmons a bitter man. He had a good wife and another job to come home to and a religious faith that served him well over the years.

Years later, when his granddaughter was little, she put the whole thing into perspective when she saw her grandfather’s wooden leg. Out of the mouth of this innocent child came the unforgettable, “he’s my poppy on a stick.”

### ***Recollections of Khaki Dodgers: Charlie Walsh***

Charlie Walsh, now a retired Newfoundland and Labrador Constabulary policeman, worked at Buchans from 1937 to 1941. Today he is a distinguished-looking man, with many anecdotes and vivid recollections of personalities from his days of working at Buchans. Both his size and his recall of facts no doubt stood him well when he applied to join the St. John's police. He was a strapping young man in those days, and standing with his shoulders squared approached six feet four inches tall.

Charlie Walsh was born at Bellevue, Trinity Bay in 1919, and when he was old enough, fished with his father before leaving home to go to Buchans. His uncle Tony Walsh – railroader, machine shop and round-house worker – was living there. Another uncle, Leo Walsh, who worked there seasonally, was returning in the spring of 1937, so Charlie joined him, hoping to get a job. He got to Millertown Junction but had to make up the excuse he was visiting Uncle “Tone” on a holiday in order to get Martin Snow’s pass into town.

Uncle Tone put in a word for him and Charlie Walsh got a job. “One of the things I did was shovel coal out of an ore car for twenty cents a ton,” recalls Charlie. “God, that was in July too! Anyhow, I worked up there not very long, and I got laid off, the latter part of August and I went home.

### **Building Snow Fences**

Charlie Walsh returned to Buchans each spring for the next three years, doing labour and general surface work. Towards the end of 1940, he was assigned to a crew under Alex Oldford, cutting timber to replace snow fences.

“Every snow fence that they had, say 13 or 14 miles outside of Buchans, was burnt. So anyhow, we got a job contracting snow fence timber, twelve feet long, two inches in the top. That’s a fair sized picket. And we had to bring this on our backs out to the track, and we got three cents for each picket: Myself and Pete Burrige from New Perlican and a fella from Monkstown, Placentia Bay, Jack Pardy, the three of us lived in a canvas tent.

“Anyway we finished that. So then we went in to Buchans and we were hired on to build snow fences. Boy, you talk about frost! There’s a pond, or

a lake outside of Buchans, where they get the water supply. And the foreman used to send two fellas out to cut the ice to fill the kettle to get the dinners, we'll say. And when you'd go back to the lake, by God, you'd have to cut down through another foot of ice where you were after cutting it in the morning. Now, that was frost!

"And my job was up sitting on the top rail, with my feet on the shagging ladder, nailing the picket to the top rail!"

### Train Derailment At Middle Branch

Work on the snow fence was interrupted when the crew was re-assigned to re-rail part of the train track from Middle Branch trestle towards Buchans.

"Alex Rowsell was assistant road master at the time, and Johnny Barron was section foreman on that part of the railway," recalls Charlie.

"But after the ore train passed by going to Buchans, they took up, my God Almighty, I don't know how many lengths of rail. I had the real easy job. All I was doing, myself and Big Jack Healey from Fox Harbour, was dragging the rails up over the bank. Because when they unloaded the rails, whoever in the hell threw them off, threw them off on the wrong bloody side of the track. We had to drag them up on the roadbed and turn every one of them around because there was a flange that had to be on the right side.

"So anyhow, we were doing all this, and the boys were hauling up the old ones, hand over fist. So we got enough up and they started nailing them down on the ties. Now, the rails had fish plates to go underneath them. That's where four spikes were driven. Boy there was some of them I doubt if there was one spike in them. But anyway, they got them all down, what they took up.

"And Bill Lannon, road master for the A.N.D Co. was up the grade from Middle Branch, and the ore train, returning from Buchans picked him up. Alex Oldford, our foreman on the snow fences was with us, and he knew that Engineer Bill O'Reilly had to make the run down the grade before Middle Branch in order to make it up over the Summit on the other side.

"When they started off up on the hill, Oldford said to us, 'Boys, give her plenty of room, because God knows where that's going to go.'

"The next thing I saw was the coal tender go across the track. And away she goes out in the bog! The engine, and oh God, what a racket!

"Bill Lannon, who had just gotten aboard the back end of the caboose before coming down the grade, was killed. He must have been going in through the caboose when the train went off the rails. That's where they found him. He broke his neck."

### Johnny Barron's Flood

"And then, we got another day off the snow fence. We had all this frost, and on top of all that, we had a rainstorm. Johnny Barron was section foreman with a house at middle branch, up from the trussel, on the Buchans side. It was about the middle of December, dark until seven o'clock in the morning.

"The ice froze up in the brook, came down and blocked up under the trussel, and Johnny's house was just in from the brook. Johnny put his foot out of the bed, and cripes, he was right to his knees in water!

"Anyhow, we got the call to go out with , I don't know how many boxes of dynamite. We used to tie five on the end of a stick, and poke it down through the ice wherever you could, and let it go. I'm sure there had to be about two feet of water in his house. It must have been June before it dried out!"

That winter, when the snow fences were finished, Charlie Walsh was laid off once again.

### Working At Lucky Strike

Charlie went back in the spring of 1941.

"I got a job in the mine department, down in the Lucky Strike Glory Hole," he says. "Then I transferred down in the pit in Lucky Strike. That's where I was until I quit in December to join the police force.

"I'll always remember the first shift I went in the mines. I went down one o'clock a Sunday afternoon, came up at five, down again at seven, came up at twelve, down again one, came up again five Monday morning. That was my first shift. Lucky Strike.

"I was never what you would call a regular driller. I used to have different jobs. I'd be on the grizzly, they used to call it, that's where the ore was running down from the fellow that was drilling it up in the pillars or the stopes. There were two or three big junks of iron across, and you had to break the ore up small enough to go through the spaces between the iron rails, so it wouldn't beat up the car down below, where buddy was drawing chutes.

"And then I went with a fella, Sailor Jim Byrne, they used to call him, repairing chutes. I was with him a good while. And I was with a fella Micky Murphy, electrician. Micky was about four feet two and where I had to get down on my knees and crawl, Micky could go through right up straight.

"And I was with Bobby Green from over around Heart's Delight or Heart's

Desire, just mucking. We mucked down a place, that Gilchrist, Manager of the Mines, and Denny Glavine, Superintendent of the Mines, and Shift Boss Ben Carroll were outside, watching us. You'd dart in and you'd fill up the wheelbarrow, with the rocks creaking around you. It must have been half gold, what was in there, or something, but they had to get it out."

### Neddy Locke's Death In The Glory Hole

When asked if he knew anyone seriously injured, Charlie can immediately name half a dozen men he knew personally who died on the job.

"I witnessed a fella getting killed, one evening, as a matter of fact," he recalls. "When I was on the glory holes. I was using the jackhammer and this fellow was right over across from me, a fella Neddy Locke.

"They'd take a certain width of rock in the face, start mining at the top and go right down to the bottom. They drilled holes eighteen feet deep. But anyhow, this evening, it was raining. And he had eighteen inches left on a steel, on a hole.

"*You'd always get that warning, if you listen to it and heed it.* I was watching him when about half a wheelbarrow of loose stuff came down and struck him in the back. And he just turned around and looked up at it. Now, if he had to get out of it then, he'd have been alright. But instead, he turned around and started the jackhammer, and I had mine going.

"Boy, I heard him screech over the sound of the two jackhammers! A piece come down, I suppose, the size of a suitcase, and dropped right on his two shoulders, drove the jackhammer right through him. And I don't know if he lived to get to the hospital or not. I don't think he did.

"They say Neddy Locke had \$35,000 in the bank when he was killed. I don't know if it was true or not. But that was the rumour going around Buchans. Because he used to take down a lot of ore, boy. He could make it roll down the side of the cliff."

### The Strike of 1941

"I was on strike. As a matter of fact, I was working with a fella Jim Howlett, who belonged to the Goulds. He was a driller and I was helping with him. And he was president of the union. But the union wasn't very strong in Buchans, I tell you. A Friday evening, it was, he said to me, 'Buddy, we're not coming back in this one until we get a raise.'

"I said, 'What do you mean, Jim?'

"'Just telling you,' he said.

Anyhow, at seven o'clock, when the crowd was going down with the night shift, he stopped them. We were looking for ten cents an hour, see. That was what? Ninety cents a day. Well, anyhow, we got the manager up, he was an old bastard. But anyhow, he offered us five cents an hour, and Jim said 'No, we're not going to let them go to work.'

"A fellow from the Royal Stores went to Old Thomas the manager and said he'd get them to go back to work.

"'How are you going to do that?'

"'I'll cut off their credit at the store, and they got to go back.'

"That's what he did. Now old man Skinner was running the Co-op store, and he came over to a meeting. He said 'Men, I don't know how long I can get supplies in here, 'cause they could stop that train any time they want to but as long as I can get supplies in, I'll keep you going.'

"And it was all "Mr. Skinner!" you know.

"Great. So anyhow, they sent in an arbitration board. So they split the difference. We were looking for ten, the company offered five, and they give us seven and a half. But in the meantime, when they went back to work, they went back to the Royal Stores, and stuck poor old Skinner! I don't know how much. Nobody knows, of course.

"They sent in a whole load of policemen. Because the first evening they came in, they were down around the streets, and we were over on the corner, a bunch of us, looking at them, wondering, now, *how hard is that fellow? How many now, can he pitch in and think he can handle?* You had men up in Buchans, the underground miners, they were as tough as you could get. It would take a couple or three policemen to handle one, I guarantee you.

"The policemen had a ball up there. That's the first thing Jim Howlett said to us the day we were all over in the Star Hall, and everyone joined the union. He said, "Boys, I'm going to ask you one thing, one favour. Don't cause any trouble. Don't go beating up stuff, or smashing up this or doing that. Do the same thing as if you were working every day. Don't have anything to do with the company or beat up anything or tear it down, or anything else. *Then* we might have a chance."

## The Primitive Bunkhouses

"I lived with my uncle Tone. I never had to go in the bunkhouse, but boy, that was your spot.

"Blessed God in Heaven, hold your tongue, about that. You talk about primitive conditions. They had a bunkhouse, 48 men in those bloody little bunkhouses. I *suppose* they were fifty feet long. There was eight men in a cubicle, you'd call it. It was all open. Eight men, four bunks, two in a bunk: Two down under and two up on top. Now there was 48 in that place, and the

toilet facility was out on the back.

“They had a piece of concrete down on the floor, and through that concrete they had a trench, that went right through with water running through, and ‘twas forty-eight men. If they all had the diarrhea the one time, brother, there’d be some mess in that trench. And that was the toilet! It was just a trench where you’d quat down like you were out in the woods. There could be a dozen using it the same time.”

### The Armed Standoff

If Aloysius Green had been successful in making away with the company’s manager Thomas, very few people would have shed a tear. Charlie Walsh was not there at the time, but speaks of the event, aware of it through his relatives.

“Neil McIsaac was shift boss the night that Green was going to kill old Thomas. And by Christ, what a pity he didn’t! Mrs. Thomas called Bond, the policeman. Then she got in touch with the deck head, and Neil McIsaac happened to be the shift boss that night. Neil made the best of it. He knew Green was a miner himself, see, and came up with the real idea. Neil came down the street, came to Thomas’ house and to the bedroom where Green had the gun, to shoot Thomas’ head off. And Neil come in through the door. He said, *‘Mr. Thomas, we got an emergency. There’s a cave-in up there and I don’t know how many is killed!’*

“And with that, Green dropped the bloody gun and someone grabbed him. He went to jail. But poor old Constable Bond, he still seemed upset a long time after it happened. When Green was in St. John’s for the trial I saw Constable Bond up in the police barracks at the dinner table.”

Charlie Walsh’s social time was taken up with the movies at the theatre run by a Johnson. Johnson also had a beer parlour next to the theatre, where a man could get a drop of “Jakey”, beer spiked with Jamaica ginger and according to Charlie, “it would knock the bloody eyes out of you!”

Charlie recalls one racket in the beer parlour. “Mike Patterson was in the force before he went to Buchans. He got into a racket. There was a great big potbellied stove right in the middle of the place and Mick picked it up and threw it right out through the window, with the sash and glass going everywhere out into the yard!”

“When we were on strike that time, the police drank the homebrew, John Bull and the Pabst Blue Ribbon, my sonny boy.

“I’ve made barrels of that brew. You’d make an open brew, you know, the keg with just the cloth over it. Blessed God, how much of that did I make at all, I wonder!”

### Square Sets Coming Down

On one occasion at Lucky Strike, Charlie nearly met his end. He was square setting in a pillar, but as he contends to this day, if you listen and pay attention in the mines, there will always be a warning.

“You’d always get that warning. This big fella, Ralph Sellars, from over around Western Bay was helping with Charlie Lane, and when we went up Sunday night, Charlie Lane and my buddy were off. McIsaac or one of them sent me down with Ralph, where they were drilling in a pillar. They were up on one side of it, thirteen sets, square sets. We were right up on top.

“We drilled and we shot one o’clock. We came up for lunch. When we went back to clean it down (pry away any loose rock overhead), there were bloody great big slabs coming down. And about four o’clock, she made the first crack, and we didn’t pay too much attention to it. And the next one was like a groan, and by the God, Sellars said, ‘Come on, let’s get out of here!’

“We had to climb down over those thirteen sets, right down in the bottom to crawl out of the bloody place, see. Anyhow, my ankles were just in through the hole when she give out. Blessed Sweet God! What a racket! Timber breaking!

“One thing about it, you didn’t have to do any drilling for a while, with the mess of timber and ore to be cleaned up!”

### Freeing Up Chutes

“A lot of fellas’d get killed, too, when the chutes would get blocked up somewhere. The chute boss had to pour water down in it, or throw dynamite down it, to try to knock it out of it, you know. And the shift boss had to go up and get a place to get in a plug of dynamite. But the damn part of it was, you might take out a rock the size of your fist, and the whole damn works of it would give out.

“Sailor Jim Byrne and myself were in one night, repairing a chute. You’d get your orders from the deckhead, where you had to go. McIsaac was on then, I think, Ben Carroll was off on holidays. McIsaac was in charge that night, and he told Jim where to go, and Jim said, “Is that chute drained off now?”

“Oh yes.”

“Are you sure.”

“Yes, guaranteed.”

“We stuck down the bloody posts, with steel bars and bolts and every bloody thing, to keep them there. Every now and then, there’d be a piece come down, a piece as big as your fist, and if it struck you in the back of the neck, it would kill you.

“Jim said, ‘You know something? That damn thing is not drained, that’s not cleaned off! There’s ore up there somewhere.’

“But anyhow, we waited a while, and God, nothing happened. But it was just pure luck, that’s all. We just got the chute bar across when about fifty tons of ore came right down smack, right down into it. You talk about the oaths out of Jimmy Byrne! He gave the shift boss some going over. The two of us could have been squat to death.”

### Dry House Dangers – Khaki Dodgers

“Some of them miners were real hard cases. On night shift, you’d lunch up in the dry house. And down in the cookhouse they used to make little molasses buns they called dodgers, khaki dodgers. There were three of them used to sit together: Ned Brennan, Dominic Ricketts and I forget the other one. The three of them used to sit the one place. Cripes, they’d heave them buns. They’d save up their khaki dodgers until they dried out and after three or four days they were just the same as a castnet bullet! They kept them in their lunch tin, and they’d be throwing them.

“Poor old Jim Byrne, the fella I worked with used to have to wear the tin hat when he’d be getting his lunch because he was baldheaded! Them bloody dodgers would whistle off Sailor Jim’s hat!

“There was a fella George Pridham from Petty Harbour. George had a big mug, see. I was sitting with one bunch from Trinity Bay, and George Pridham was three or four fellas down from us, sitting down on a bench. George Pridham had a full cup of hot tea. He just had it up to his mouth when one of the bloody dodgers came by and struck the side of the cup. When he looked, all he was holding was the handle! One of the bloody dodgers came by and struck the side of the cup and took it right off the handle! Well, sweet God!”

## RECIPE FOR KHAKI DODGERS

For those who wish to make some delicious khaki dodgers, follow this recipe:

*Khaki Dodgers**5 cups flour**1 cup melted butter**2/3 cups boiling water**1 cup sugar**1 cup molasses**3 tsp. baking soda**1 tsp. allspice**1 tsp. cinnamon**1/2 tsp. cloves*

*Mix baking soda with boiling water and cool. When cool add melted butter and molasses. Fold in with dry ingredients. Bake at 350 degrees for twenty-five to thirty minutes. Put in plastic bags or containers while hot.*

*Reg Rideout and Claude Elliott*

One of the most tragic accidents to happen in MacLean Mine in more recent times occurred on February 28, 1962, when two young miners, both married and with small children, were gassed in a raise off thirteen level. Reg Rideout survived; Claude Elliott did not. This year, 1997, Reginald Rideout turns seventy years old, but thirty-five years ago he and his co-worker walked into a pocket of carbon monoxide because someone on an earlier shift did not turn on the air hose to blow out the gas.

Underground gas is odourless, but sometimes there is a short warning if a person is alert. It could come on quickly as a headache, or as tiredness in the limbs. Reg Rideout found his legs getting heavy and he and Elliott beat a hasty exit to thirteen level, but collapsed before reaching it. Medical attention failed to revive Claude.

After several weeks of recovery, Reg Rideout returned underground for a short period, but never returned to drilling. The company found him work above ground; however, the gas had damaged his lungs, causing future medical problems, resulting in a long-term stay in the sanatorium at St. John's after contracting a serious bout of pneumonia. The doctors concluded that the gas had burned his lungs, weakening them.

The *Grand Falls Advertiser* reported on the accident:

“Claude Elliott, 29 year old resident of Buchans and Reginald Rideout of the same town, both employees of the American Smelting and Refining Company of Buchans, collapsed from asphyxiation during their tour of duty in the MacLean Mine at Buchans around 9 p.m. last evening. Doctors and First Aiders worked over the stricken men for four hours, but Elliott failed to respond to treatment and was pronounced dead. The artificial respiration succeeded in reviving Rideout, who is reported to be improving steadily in the Buchans Hospital. An investigation into the incident is being conducted.

Mr. Elliott is a married man with five children and has resided in Buchans most of his life. Besides his wife and children he leaves to mourn his sudden and tragic passing, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hubert

Elliott and two brothers at Buchans and one brother in Corner Brook. Mr. Rideout is also married with two children, and he had been living in Buchans for some years.”

Claude Elliott’s wife, the former Jessie Cranford, was left to raise five children. “My oldest was eight and the youngest was two and a half,” she recalls. Some people advised her to sue the company, but her father, Lemuel Cranford worked with ASARCO, so she decided against this action, since it could make life very difficult for her father on the job.

“The day after Claude died, the company came down to get me to sign, to take a lump sum or a pension. Dad said, ‘She’s not taking no lump sum, she’s got five small children.’

“I still get workmen’s compensation, not a lot, but it helped, at least. I never did meet Reg. He couldn’t come to see me. But Dad talked to him. Reg told him that Claude had to carry him, and the doctor told me too, he said, “Jessie, if ever there’s a man gone to heaven, your man is there. He saved his buddy’s life.’

“He was a very strong man.”

**THE BUCHANS MINERS – THE HOCKEYISTS**

## The Buchans Miners – The Hockeyists

### OVERVIEW

Once the Buchans managers had the business end of Buchans straightened out, they immediately turned to building a recreation infrastructure. In October of 1928, the Buchans Social and Athletic Club was formed with ASARCO's resident manager as its Honorary President. The company's senior staff was very supportive of organized sports.

In March, *The Grand Falls Advertiser* ran a story under the heading "Good Hockey At Buchans." The reporter noted "The Company has furnished a splendid rink with an ice area of 185 feet by 58 feet and erected balconies on either side." The rink was an empty ore shed flooded to form a natural ice surface. From the start, hockey was the sporting heart of Buchans, and over the winter, three teams were formed: the Rangers, Crescents and Pirates.

An inter-town rivalry was begun with Grand Falls, as the latter visited Buchans for a game on March 2nd. The stage had been set for exciting hockey in the years ahead: Buchans won 6 to 5, in overtime! The newspaper scribe was impressed: "The chief feature of the game was the spectacular goal tending of Buchans goalie, Shea." (Grand Falls got even a week later.)

The Mill, Miners and Mechanics hockey teams played against each other until the 1950's. A company practice of inviting teams from around the province to come to Buchans, all expenses paid, was a regular feature of the winter sports scene. For instance, in January of 1937, the first outside team to come up the tracks that season was from Carbonear. (Buchans won both games). The following year, Bay Roberts was invited for a weekend series. (Buchans won those two games.)

One feature of the local hockey scene was the practice of bringing in coaching expertise from Canada. In 1937 and 1938, for instance, Harold Gross was brought into Buchans to share his coaching skills as part of a

cross-country itinerary. Buchans not only formed a traveling team from the stars of the Mill, Miners and Mechanics teams, but sweetened the team with imported players from around Newfoundland. In January of 1938, the Grand Falls newspaper noted that Buchans had added new players Charlie Godden and Ed Brophy of the 1937 St. Bon's team, and Gordon Edwards of the Fieldians. That year Buchans lost the West Coast Championship at Corner Brook, and the same paper reported that the team was without Slacker Brophy and Bob Godden. Charlie Godden was not available in that series because he broke his wrist in a game between the Miners and Mechanics. It is obvious that the ASARCO management made it standard policy to provide Buchans' residents with high-calibre hockey entertainment throughout the cold winter months.

From the time the rink opened each year, it became the central focus of social and sporting activities for approximately three months. *The Grand Falls Advertiser* reported in January of 1940, that the "rink opened for the first time this season on Dec. 23rd. There are quite a number of people as usual enjoying the general skating every night. There are three teams in the Senior League: The Miners, Mill and Mechanics. There will also be a few games with outside teams this winter." The girls came out to see the hockey players and the men came out to ogle the girls during general skating. Romance in Buchans unfolded as it should.

In 1948, ASARCO took the business of importing hockey talent one step further. Not content to "draft" players from teams around Newfoundland, management decided to bring in mainland talent to break the St. John's stranglehold on the Herder Cup. The first draft was from Kirkland Lake, but unfortunately the players arrived too late to meet the residency requirements and were disqualified. In the fall of 1949, however, they arrived in time and the strategy paid off with a Herder win in the spring of 1950. In November the *Advertiser* headlined "Buchans signs up nine players" and on March 22, 1951, matter-of-factly, "Buchans wins trophy." The team repeated these performances in 1952, 1954 and after a hiatus of nine years, in 1963.

In 1951, the Buchans Social and Athletic Club offered the NAHA a new trophy to promote and motivate hockey players in the province. The Veitch trophy was donated in memory of Cyril Veitch of Buchans, formerly of St. John's, a great hockey enthusiast who died in Dec of 1949. On the executive of the NAHA, Cyril Veitch had been working at Buchans for twenty years. The name of his brother John, also a Buchans

hockey athlete has been added to the trophy. The family hopes to add the name of Philip Veitch, a third brother and athlete to the trophy in the near future. The NAHA awards this trophy to the champions of the provincial junior hockey league.

The province has benefitted greatly from hockey import decisions taken many years ago. The benefits come in many forms, but who could have predicted that Chris Verbiski, son of hockey import Mort Verbiski and Buchans resident Cherry Pinsent would co-discover the Voisey's Bay nickel deposits?

In an interesting turn of fate, the Verbiskis, through the company Archean Resources Ltd. returned to Buchans in the winter of 1997 to conduct diamond drilling. The fallout from the discovery at Voisey's Bay also sparked increased exploration on the island by many other companies, some of whom have recently staked claims in the Buchans area for prospecting and diamond drilling. Perhaps one day, the sound of the time office whistle will blast, the drums of the deckhead hoists will lower men into the deeps, and the great ball mills will hum and roll once more.

And who knows? Maybe Buchans will be able to support a hockey team to bring the Herder home one more time.

### ***Three-Time Herder Winner: Pat Kennedy***

Pat Kennedy is a local boy who made the roster of the Buchans Miners hockey team, playing on three Herder championship teams. His father was Joe Kennedy, originally from Holyrood, who went to Buchans in the late 1920s and left in 1973 upon retiring. While in the mining town, Joe Kennedy met Margaret Vokey of Pope's Harbour, Trinity Bay, who was working in the Royal Stores Staff House. Joe Kennedy worked in the mines, then went as cagetender and finally went hoistman at Lucky Strike for thirty years. His son Pat was born at Buchans in July of 1931.

Pat Kennedy's first skates were bobskates that he wore skating on a pond behind the mill. "I can remember going in on the pond, in back of the mill, with a pair of bobskates on," recalls Pat. "You'd be in there a few minutes, and your feet'd get cold and you'd have to come home. Your toes would be frozen and you had to haul down the oven door, and when they'd come to life, the pins and needles would be going through them."

He was also very young when he tried on single-bladed skates.

"My first memory of being on regular skates?" answers Pat, when questioned. "I used to go up to the old ore shed, and I had to lean on the boards, because I couldn't reach the top. There was a man up there, foreman in the mine, Ralph Moore was his name. And he would hold on my hand and take me around, but what I remember first, when I learned to skate, I learned how to skate backward. 'Cause he used to hold out his hand, keep me skating backward. He'd push me and I'd go backward. When I went backward very slow, I could move my feet and (propel). And that's my first memory...I could skate backwards on the first of it, better than I could skate forward. That's the way I started. Then he'd get behind me and push me a bit, and keep my feet together and I'd glide forward."

Hockey was something boys did before they ever tried on skates. There were the streets, with street lighting after dark, and with very little traffic in the forties and fifties. "It was just with logans on," says Pat. "There'd be Tom Makinson and Rex Pretty, fellas like that. And Copper Leyte, Guy

Pinsent, Roy Mullins, Al (Mullins), Junior Courage, they always had a game going steady on the street.”

The next natural step in a hockey career was to join a school team. Pat played on the Catholic school team for a year, and then joined the Public School team when he transferred down the road. The Public School’s hockey team found its best challenge not up the road with the Catholic school team, but out of town. Pat was only eleven years old when he went with the Buchans Public School team to play Grand Falls.

### St. Bon’s, St. John’s

Pat’s final year of high school was as a boarder at St. Bon’s Catholic school in St. John’s. “We were up seven o’clock in the morning,” Pat remembers. “Nine o’clock school. Twelve o’clock go down for dinner, come back. Four o’clock school is over. We were allowed out ‘til five. When we left St. Bon’s over there, where could you go in a hour? Harvey Road or Rawlins Cross. Everything was pretty well supervised.”

Pat Kennedy was luckier than some of the others. Whenever there was an errand to run to the newspapers to place advertisements, Pat was called upon to do the chore. Brother “Killer” Kane was in charge of hockey, and if you could play, you were alright in his books. “He used to give me ads to bring down over the hill to the Daily News or the Telegram. He said, ‘Well, take your time, you don’t have to go rushing.’

“So, I mean, that was heaven to get the chance to get an hour, at least. Well, I’d be gone a couple of hours!”

Hockey made boarding school tolerable for a young man far away from home.

“After mass on Sunday mornings we’d have supervised study period from 11 to 12. The brothers would be looking at you, to make sure. And just about every Sunday morning, after 10 o’clock mass, St. Bon’s Seniors would have practice but there’d always be some fella’d wouldn’t show up.

“Brother Kane would come in and crook his finger for me to go out and practice with them. I got off that hour! I don’t know if it did me any good or no. It helped out a bit. Because it was awful boring in school. Especially a young fella. You know, when you’re sixteen or seventeen, eighteen years old, barred in like that.”

After high school Pat went to university in Nova Scotia for a year, but couldn't crack the lineup of the senior team. Instead, he settled for intramural hockey. After one year, he returned home to work. It was the summer of 1950. "I worked on the surface in the summer (after university), myself and Roy Mullins, but when it got cold, we quit. It was too cold for us outdoors," says Pat. "Now, we figured with the hockey started, it was always a possibility we had a chance at it, but they didn't know how many they were going to bring in. From Kirkland Lake. They could bring in enough so there wouldn't be any locals on the team.

### Hanging Out, Hoping To Play Hockey

"Roy Mullins and I always used to hang around the Upper Royal, up by the track. Every day, when ASARCO's Assistant Manager Aubbie Martin would be coming back to work at one o'clock, he'd always nod to us, 'Good day, boys.' We were doing that about a month, I suppose. So this day, when it was good and cold and the hockey was getting closer and closer, he stopped and came over and he said, 'You two characters, come up, I want to have a talk with you. He called us in his office. 'What in the hell do ye fellas want? You had a job and you quit.'

"It was getting too cold.' We said we wanted to be indoors, in the warm. We didn't want to be out in the cold. So he put Roy Mullins down in the Company Store with Dave Fairley and he put me in the time office. And that's where I started and I was there until '69. From the time office to the warehouse, to the general office. That's how we got the job (but) hockey certainly had something to do with it.

"Sometimes somebody'd get injured, or if they (didn't) feel like playing, or had the flu, Roy and I would fill in, but as the season went on, we were getting more regular shifts all the time. That March we had the Herder. And the next year (1952) we won it again. The next year we lost it and in 1954 we won it again. That year I played on a line with Roy and Al Mullins, the local line. And they never won it again until 1963."

Bringing in imports disrupted the local hockey league. Pat recalls that "there were fellas that were playing with the Miners or the Mill or the Mechanics and they were half decent hockey players and when those guys from Ontario came in, well, the fellows that they picked out of those company teams, you had to be some of the better players on the team. And a lot of them gave it up.

"The Miners and Mill and Mechanics more or less disbanded. It took a

lot of fun out of it, because all the emphasis then...everything was thrown to the seniors.

“Actually, a lot of people resented it, there was an awful outcry about bringing imports in Buchans. After a year or so, people around the league started looking at it another way: ‘Well our players are going to improve too. We’re playing against those fellas, we’re going to learn something.’ Then they started bringing in a few imports and after a few years it was competitive. But it always got down to whoever put the most in it, whoever spent the most. Frank Moores (later Premier) decided he was going to win it, and he got the CeeBees. And he took half the Grand Falls team and all the good players that Bell Island had. That was it.”

### On The Road And On The Rails

Traveling around Newfoundland in the 1950s to play hockey was not nearly as efficient as it is today. There were hundreds of miles of railway track.

“It would be a thirteen hour trip to St. John’s from Millertown Junction. And there was times we’d leave Buchans to meet the train in the Junction, and when we get down there, it’d probably be on the Gaff Topsails somewhere, stuck in the snow, and we’d be down there for hours and hours on end,” says Pat.

“But I think the worst trip that I can remember, we had to play Bell Island. We went over there and had a game Friday and Saturday, and after Saturday night’s game we were supposed to leave and come across the tickle, and go back on the train the next day. Before the game was over, a big storm came up.”

The team took their gear to the boat, but the road was blocked with snow, so the taxis could not get down the hill to the terminal.

“We lugged all our hockey gear down to the boat, and just before we got down there, the boat had pulled away. And she was out then, off Holyrood, for about two days, in the storm, and we were stranded on Bell Island for four days, couldn’t get off it. All the power went out, in the night, and that was gone for two or three days. Bell Island had to foot the bill for all our expenses, of course. Joe Byrne was coaching over there then, and he arranged for games with the juniors, to try to get a few fans out, you know, when they got the power back. They tried to get a water bomber over, to land

over there to get us off, but before the arrangements were made, they got the boat back.

“I’m sure that most of us, especially coming from a place like Buchans, somebody like me, born in there, stuck anchored off Holyrood out there, bobbing around, we would have died out there. ‘Cause I got seasick going across the tuckle! Believe it or not.

“We never got stuck on the train (Buchans ore train) but lots of delays of course, especially coming from Gander and places like that. We’d get in trouble sometimes, but we were never stuck on the train. Not in a snow storm. Because most of our games were out this way, and then Corner Brook started building up a powerhouse when they brought in Danky Dorrington and then they had divisions in the east and the west and the winner in the west played the winner in the east. No round robin or anything like that.

Throughout his career, Pat Kennedy was a forward at left wing. He quit in the 1961-62 season, because all the fun was gone out of hockey for him. Part of the problem was travel: Travel by bus, that is. He enjoyed the long, leisurely train trips, but with the road to Badger opened, the team traveled by bus, commandeered by Ron Holloway.

“We had a couple of close calls on that. If you had a game in Gander, you’d leave in the afternoon to go down, play the game, get on the bus and come back to Buchans. Traveling by train, you’d get a week out of a hockey trip.

“This particular night we left Gander on our bus when it started freezing rain. We were coming down this long grade and the next thing, here’s the express, the train going past, as we were coming to the railway crossing. Ron tried to stop the bus and she wouldn’t stop because of the freezing rain. She kept sliding, and sliding, and I’ll bet you, when we got within six feet of that train, the last car went by.

“Another experience we had with the bus, we were coming out here and Holloway was taking us to Gander to get an Air Canada flight in here to St. John’s to go to Harbour Grace to play the CeeBees. When we got probably 20 or 30 miles from Gander, the bus blew a piston. She died right in the middle of the road. Now, what to do?

“We had to get there for the flight, and we only had a couple of hours left. Some of the boys got out and flagged down a few cars, and got a ride into Gander. Some more of us didn’t, and of course we had all the hockey gear there. They had to rent a bus and take us into Gander but by the time we got into Gander the plane had left. They just couldn’t wait. So Gus Soper phoned back to Buchans, and they hired one of those old waterbombers, so we all got aboard of that. I think Norm Higdon was the only one who admitted he was

frightened to death. We crawled up a little old ladder going up to this little bubble, was it ever small. Buddy took off and Ron Holloway watched us going down the runway and said, “The boys are never going to make it.’

“But we got in here and it was a stormy day, a real stormy day. We got to the airport and taxied in to the terminal, and the pilot never even turned off the motors, but we had to pile out and it was drifting snow and everything and there was a bus there waiting to take us to Harbour Grace. And I don’t know what time it was, probably about three or so, and we got on the bus. There were mountains of snow up over the bus, we went all out around the bay the long way, and it took us over six hours to get out. There were times we were up on people’s doorsteps and everything, you know, going around the twisting road.

“We never got to Harbour Grace until nine o’clock that night, for all that. Now, we had to get ready for the game. The game started about ten.”

### A Grand Social Life

Hockey players were notorious beer drinkers, and the Buchans hockey players did their best to keep their end up.

“Everywhere we went, there was always a brewery would look after us after every game. We only drank after a game but the more cynical of the fans, who felt gyped out of their game admission, sometimes blamed their team’s losses on the partying. If the Miners lost, ‘it was because they were hung over.’ I always got a kick out of that.

“Back home everyone went in on the communal beer brewed at the Green Lantern, where the imports stayed. They had a room barred off, all steam heated, put a brew on and turn up the heat full blast, and it would brew off in two or three days instead of five. The smart non-drinker could always realize a profit by charging twenty-five cents a bottle, if he waited until everyone else had gone dry.

“We’d have lots of parties on the hockey trips. Grand Falls and Buchans would have a game, probably have a few fights, and then after the game was over, everybody would go up to the Oasis, for a party, both teams. Have a party together, sit down and argue about the game, or an offside, but there was never any rackets. Because I always said to myself and I still say to this day that the safest place at a hockey game was out on the ice!

“Because some of the fans that used to come down from Buchans when they had the train going down really took their hockey seriously. I remember one particular night we had a fight down there out on the ice. The next thing, two or three fans from Buchans came out on the ice. I remember one fella,

he came out and challenged a hockey player with his skates on and a stick in his hand. (The fan was) feeling no pain and had a pair of gaiters on, slipping and sliding, it was suicide. This guy came out, he was going to clean up on everybody. I can see him now, jumping over the boards. And this mountie was out there on the ice too, when the fan started up. He had one of them five cell flashlights about that long. He hit him over the head and knocked him out a cold junk!”

The fiercest on-ice enemy of the Buchans Miners was the Grand Falls team. “Oh, Grand Falls, most definitely. I suppose it goes right back, like you read an article there the other night, 1929, you see, they developed a rivalry. Even with the school team. Grand Falls Academy and Buchans Public School, there was a rivalry there, but I suppose there were only two teams on the go then, so, where you’re playing one another continually, you had to get high feelings.”

### The Playoff Train

ASARCO put on extra trains at playoff time, so fans could support the team when they played away from home.

This was much appreciated by the team. “There were times there was as high as three, four hundred, like that, going down. That was a big thing, when the playoffs started, you always had your fans. Buchans had their section reserved in the stadium for that and the place would always be blocked. In fact, there were a couple of years they had to build up extra stands in Grand Falls stadium. They put them around the rafters, everywhere they could get them.”

Buchans drew the biggest crowds.

“I suppose it was the imports, and people want to see how good they were and stuff. Hey, we went out there one year and had a game against Gander and it was just going through the motions, I suppose. No trouble, no worry about losing or anything, so that night, we were somewhere to a party and I remember this man saying to Frank Bowman, “Frank, that’s not a hockey team you got there, that’s a machine.”

“Frank said, ‘It’s alright boy, if the machine don’t break down!’ And the next night we went out and played Gander and Gander beat us! After winning by eight or ten goals the night before. So, you had your bad nights too.”

### Most Valuable Player

In all of Pat Kennedy's years of playing, being on three Herder Cups were highlights in his career, but one Herder in particular stands out. "In 1954, the last Herder I was on, I was voted the Most Valuable Player in the play-offs. So, I guess that's my biggest award, besides winning the Herder," he recalls. "And at that time we had quite a few imports."

### The Green Lantern

About fifteen hundred feet away from the old ore shed that served as the stadium, a building called the Green Lantern served as the team's dressing room. Pat recalls:

"All our hockey gear was there, including our skates of course, and we'd go up there and take off our street clothes and go over to the rink, take our skates with us. We'd walk over. Now in the early years, first when I started, you had it all home.

"The Green Lantern was where the imports stayed, just room enough for them. They built a piece on afterwards for some prospectors who had come over for the summer, then eventually we moved up there and we dressed there.

"The only thing about that was, you had winter. My ankles just about froze, because after the game was over, you had to walk from the old ore shed back to the Green Lantern to get a shower. By the time you'd get back you'd be frozen."

Pat Kennedy tries to keep in contact with his former teammates. Every time he goes to Buchans he looks up whoever is in town. Hughie Wadden, Bill Scott, Frank Walker, Bill Harris, Tom Loder, Tubby St. George and Wilson Burke are still there. "That's one friend I always had on the team, Hughie Wadden. I never had any problems with Hughie. I was small compared to him. Some of the rougher guys on the other teams, if they started roughing me up a bit, Wadden would always be there. And Frank Walker was another fella. Frank wouldn't let anyone pick on you, especially if you weren't into the fighting bit. Bill Scott married my sister Madeline (Sis) in 1951 so he took good care of me too."

Reflecting on the good days of senior hockey in Buchans, Pat is glad to have been part of it all. "It was quite an experience, especially what I

would call the glory days, say '49 to '54, it was really all hockey! I can see Lou Budden now. He'd come off work at four o'clock and he wouldn't go home for supper, but he'd go over and stand up by that door at that old ore shed. Lou would stand there until they opened the door at seven, or half past seven. He had one spot right at centre ice, where he'd always be every game. No trouble at all, you'd look up, and Lou would be there. Never miss."

While Lou Budden was one of Buchans' die-hard fans, some of the out-of-town teams had their own cheering sections, too. Pat recalls the CeeBee fans.

"Well, the CeeBees, particularly when they got into it big time, geez, seventy-five per cent of the fans'd be cheering against Buchans when Harbour Grace came to play. As far as they were concerned, the CeeBees were playing at home in Buchans. If we were playing Grand Falls, they cheered for us, but with the CeeBees they cheered for Harbour Grace."

"Bill Hunt, he was one of the CeeBees' biggest fans. I don't think Bill was ever on one of those train trips without he was in two or three shouting matches. Bob Gushue was a CeeBee fan. He'd never shout or bawl at a hockey game, but if you sat down talking over a beer, he was (argumentative)."

These days, Pat and his wife Laura live comfortably in St. John's. Pat has one unfinished piece of business concerning a player on the Buchans Miners. That player is Arthur Wilson "Copper" Leyte, a Buchans boy who made it in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League with the Quebec Citadels many years ago, and Pat believes he was the first to be approached to go away from Newfoundland to play at that level. Copper Leyte was only seventeen years old at the time, and he must have been good. His teammates included Jean Beliveau and Bernie Geoffrion. From there Copper Leyte graduated to the Quebec Aces. He never did crack the Montreal Canadiens' lineup, but played in their exhibition games and for five or six years was invited to the Canadiens' training camp.

Pat Kennedy's unselfish dream is to have Copper Leyte inducted into the Newfoundland and Labrador Hockey Hall of Fame.

*From Cape Breton to Newfoundland***Hughie “Red” Wadden**

Like many of his co-workers at Buchans, Hugh “Red” Wadden came from a small fishing village of about 1,000 people, but he was from a different island, the island of Cape Breton. His father worked with the coal mining company at Glace Bay, just six miles away from their hometown of Port Morien. ASARCO often invited teams from the Maritimes, like the Truro Bearcats or the Sydney Millionaires to Buchans, providing return transportation, accommodations and meals free of charge.

Hughie recalls the circumstances of his first trip to Buchans in 1952. “At the time, I was a bricklayer’s helper, in the construction industry and I was playing hockey for the Glace Bay Junior Miners. I happened to be playing junior hockey and this fella had an intermediate team, one of the merchants up there, and he needed some extra players and he said, ‘Do you want to come down to Newfoundland for the weekend?’ So I hopped in.”

The team was flown from Sydney to Buchans by the Central Maritime Airways, in a DC-3 that landed on the airstrip just outside the mining town. He spent the weekend and returned home, thinking nothing more of it. But the next year, he got a call to join the Buchans Miners, from the team manager Gus Soper. Hughie accepted the invitation, and as a young man, figured he’d come to Newfoundland for a year or two and then move on. That was forty-four years ago, and he is still here!

After fourteen seasons as a player, two more as a playing coach, and two after that as bench coach, Hughie Wadden now finds himself a member of the prestigious Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Hall of Fame.

**The Import Phenomenon**

Buchans was the first town in the province’s inter-town hockey league to systematically import players into the NAHA. It was done in response to the great St. Bon’s hockey dynasty at St. John’s. They had won the Herder at Grand Falls in 1948, beating the paper town, and disgusted by the townie dominance of the championship, the general manager of Buchans, Mr. G. G. Thomas decided once and for all to solve the problem and give

Buchans a fighting chance. He rang up his equivalent at ASARCO's mining operation at Kirkland Lake, Ontario and requested that he send along good players. He would look after their travel expenses, and pay them a salary while they played. Unfortunately, they arrived too late to meet the residency requirements of the Newfoundland Amateur Hockey Association. All except playing coach Frank Bowman left, but they returned in time to qualify for the next hockey season.

Mr. Thomas' strategy paid off the next hockey season. Buchans won the Herder in the 1949-1950 season and in the next two consecutive years. On the heels of the success of Buchans in winning it's first Herder, Grand Falls began importing hockey players, and other teams that could afford it, also followed suit.

### Hughie's Job

Hughie Wadden was brought to Buchans to provide strength up the middle of the ice.

"I was centerman," he says. "How the offer was made to all players, was, they'd pay you so much a month, plus your board, then offer you a job. In other words, the telegram did say that, 'must work when not playing hockey.'

"You'd just come on, and go up in the office and they'd put you somewhere, ask if you'd like it here, or like it there. You were only up there a couple of hours a day. The old Green Lantern, if you remember, was where we'd all dress and go on over to the rink and practice. We practiced at nine o'clock in the morning, Monday to Friday, whenever there was ice. We'd come home dinnertime, then at two o'clock you'd go on to work. You'd come off at four or five, when the whistle blew."

Shortly after he arrived, Hughie Wadden realized that he had found a marvellous opportunity. The town gave him the chance to survive beyond hockey, if he applied himself.

"It was good setup, ideal for a young fella: It was a chance to learn a trade. That's what really made me stay around here, job security.

"They stuck me up with Gus Soper in the office one day and somebody said, 'Well, boy, if you're going to learn anything around here, if you want to get ahead, or get anything around here, underground is the place to go!' Mining. Naturally, that's what the place was about, mining.

"As an import hockey player I was offered \$250.00 a month, plus my

board. That's what I was given. Well, the next year, as a surveyor's helper, I got \$200.00 a month or something like that. Well, that would be it, and no board! But you had a job, a fine job. It was a fair trade-off, as far as I was concerned.

"I worked in the engineering office. So I just started there, surveyor's helper, going down underground, holding the rods. At that time, the surveyors had to be mining engineers, so they brought them in. So then, another year, they decided perhaps those local fellas could do it. So they gave myself and Shorty Rideout a chance to do it ourselves. We were the first. From then on, they never bothered (to import surveyors) anymore. Just used the local fellas as mine surveyors. Then I ended up doing mine planning. Doing the drawings. Driving raises and stuff. It carried me right through for thirty-eight years. Even after Buchans closed down."

For Hughie, traveling from Port Morien, Cape Breton to Buchans was quite an adventure for a young man.

"We'd drive from Port Morien to North Sydney, about eighteen miles away. There I took the ferry," recalls Hughie. "The ferry then was the *Burgeo*. I remember I came across on that, I'll never forget that. *S.S. Burgeo*. So we'd come across there and we'd land in Port aux Basques, get on the train. You'd get on one of those cars, sit back, my son, it was really something. As you know, you went up to the famous Newfoundland train dining car, with the silverware, and the salmon dinners. I remember that!

"The next thing, the fella'd be calling out, approaching Corner Brook, and the Gaff Topsails. I didn't know any of that. The next thing was Millertown Junction. I thought, *Well, I'm supposed to get off here*. Boy, she pulled in, and when I looked out, there was a little light shining over the railway station. There was another train there, but that was the ore train. I got off that thing, and roamed around, went on in the station, and met Mr. Snow the station master.

"I came by myself that particular trip. Then two days later there was another fella came in, Fox MacNeil. He was another import from Glace Bay. The other two that first year...was an import from Ontario, Jerry Casey, and then, the return of Jimmy Hornell and Frank Bowman. Frank was the coach. But Jimmy Hornell had been here a few years before that, one of the original 1948 guys. So they were here for two or three years, then they left. They missed a year, and when I came here in '53, this Frank Bowman and Jimmy Hornell rejoined. There was five of us that year. Three from Kirkland Lake, Ontario and two from the Glace Bay area."

Sometimes it felt like home town week on the Buchans Miners, there were so many people on the team from back home. Even though they might not have known each other in Nova Scotia, groups of players shared a common hockey background. One player from back home stands out because he personally squared off against Hughie on Cape Breton rinks, but in Buchans fought on the same side. "I knew Frank Walker," Hughie recalls. "Frank played with the Sydney Millionaires, and I played with the Glace Bay Juniors, so we used to play against each other before we came here. But after we came here, Frank and I played together for a full ten years, until Frank got injured. But we were linemates for the whole ten year period in Buchans. He was left wing."

### Packing The Stadiums

On the road, the Buchans Miners generally drew the largest crowds. Hughie agrees. "Oh yes, nobody would dispute that. Our biggest rival was Grand Falls; which would be natural. We'd go to Grand Falls on the train, those days, but in the later years, when we had the regular scheduled league and a bus, we'd go down by bus. We'd fill the stadium. And Corner Brook. We had a big drawing crowd in Corner Brook. We were a big draw with the crowd in St. John's. The CeeBees were another big one. Because you can remember, there was an awful lot of people in here from Conception Bay. Some of them used to cheer for the CeeBees! I mean, they'd be playing Buchans, we'd go down in the corner, and there'd be a section down there, and look up, and see poor old Bill Hunt, going right mad. It made for a lot of rivalry and a lot of fun."

The imports made Buchans the team to beat. They gave the team strength and depth, making them a natural challenge for the other teams. And there was the added factor that so many of them were imports, or come-from-aways that it often got the dander of the other teams up. Everyone loved to beat Buchans because the team was so strong. "We only won the Herder five times, but we were always a contender. The first three years they won it, from '50 to '52, then the first year I came, '53-'54, and we only had one more after and that was nine years after, 1962-63. Then we finished in 69-70. We were always a contender. I know the four years I coached, the first years, we lost the Herder here, on Sunday afternoons, once to Corner Brook and once to Gander.

"We were in the semi-finals continually, playing off against the

Ceebees, one year, and advanced to the finals, that sort of thing.”

Being mainlanders made the players fun to embarrass. Wadden recalls this important feature in the rivalries. “I guess you’re right! Especially St. Bon’s and the boys out there, in the early days. I still have a lot of fun with Jack Reardigan over that. Jack and I are good buddies. When I get out there we get together and get talking. We still have lots of laughs over that. St. Bon’s beat Buchans, and so on.

“We were at the official opening of the Memorial Stadium,” recalls Wadden. “It had been opened for several months, I guess. Don Jamieson was announcing the game. That’s pretty far back. And John Doyle who used to be the goalie for St. Bon’s, was the referee; he was older. But then days they had Jack Reardigan, Merv Green, Noel Hutton, Hugh Fardy and the Gillies brothers. Ted Gillies was a famous hockey player out there in those days. So, we opened her the official night and they had her packed. They had her lined up, just packed. They beat us three to two. So they were pretty happy to beat the mainlanders, as you say. But that was really a memorable one. That was the official opening of the Memorial Stadium.”

Of highlights in his hockey career, there are a few others that stand out in Hughie Wadden’s memory. “There’s a lot of things, you could really say, but being on the two Herders were highlights.”

“And I guess you probably know, going through the history, we were in this plane crash in there. There was five of us in on that. A memory that would stick with you.”

Here, Hughie is referring to the plane crash of March, 1959, carrying himself, the team manager, three teammates and the pilot when they were returning home after playing the Corner Brook Royals. The *Grand Falls Advertiser* ran the following story in its March 25, 1959 issue:

**BUCHANS HOCKEY PLAYERS RESCUED FROM PLANE CRASH –**  
“Joy reigned supreme in the inland mining town of Buchans on Monday afternoon when word was received that the small single-engine Beaver aircraft which had crashed on Sunday evening had been sighted and that the six men on board were all safe. Enroute from Corner Brook to Buchans, the plane, piloted by Lee Franklin, was completing its third trip and had on board the team manager, Gus Soper and four members of the Buchans Miners Hockey team, Hugh Wadden, Tony Head, Bob O’Toole, Norman Higdon, when the weather began closing in and the plane iced badly. Advising D.O.T. of their predicament, Pilot Franklin tried to land the plane

on Hind's Lake but unfortunately was forced to land in the woods about two miles from the lake. An extensive air search immediately got underway but it was not until around 4:30 p.m. on Monday that the survivors were sighted.

Two Lancasters, one from Argentia and one from Torbay, searched throughout the day but it was the small EPA Beaver aircraft with Pilot Cooper and carrying Constables Gillingham, Baggs and Barton who on returning from a forty-mile sweep of the area saw the signal fire and markings on the snow. As they circled over the area the men ran into the clearing indicating they were all safe and well and the pilot immediately passed this information along to Gander and Torbay. Constable Baggs told *The Advertiser* that they dropped a note to the men with instructions to walk to Hind's Lake and then decided to return to Buchans where the Mounties would disembark in order to make room for all the survivors.

The RCMP stressed the fact much of the credit for this rescue must go to Pilot Cooper who searched unceasingly throughout the day for the downed aircraft. On the return trip to Hind's Lake the EPA pilot was accompanied by Roy Wellon's Cessna. Without delay the six survivors were picked up and flown to Buchans where the large gathering of overjoyed citizens gave them a sound welcome..."

### Hughie Versus Grand Falls

On the ice surface, there was one game in particular that is one of Hughie's favorites. The Miners were playing the Cataracts at Grand Falls.

"We were playing off against Grand Falls in the finals, playing for the right to go to St. John's. We were down two games to one and in them days it was the best three out of five. So we were behind 6-2 with about ten minutes to go in the third period, and it would have meant if they won, they'd go on.

"At the end of the second period they got the guys to phone the wives and all that and get the suitcases and all that ready to catch the train twelve o'clock at Windsor Station. Walt Davis used to tell me about it afterwards.

"It was ten minutes to go, and bang-o, by geez, I got lucky. Bang. Bang. Bang! Three goals. A natural hat trick! And Jack Cooper tied it up with a second or two to go!

"So we went into the overtime, and I had two more goals in less than a minute! So, we won that game, 8-6. So that tied it up 2-2. We had a day off and then we played for the final. So, it ended up, well, they won that one. But that was quite the story. The boys had to stay

behind for two more days!

“I’ll never forget that, because that was an upset. I remember looking out and seeing a fella leaping over the boards, his long coat flying behind him, and this was Pat St. George! I can see him now, coming out, rushing on the ice and cheering the players.” (Pat St. George’s brother, Tubby was playing on the Buchans team at the time.)

Though Buchans lost the series, Hughie took great delight in playing devil-skins for once. The ladies of Grand Falls would have to postpone their spring shopping at St. John’s for another few days.

Hughie Wadden’s contribution to the sport of hockey in the province was recognized by his induction into the Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Hall of Fame in November of 1983, following another Buchans hockeyist, Manager Gus Soper, who was inducted two years earlier. Hughie was also inducted into the Newfoundland Amateur Hockey Association Sports Hall of Fame, where three other Buchans Miners’ hockey players are members: Frank Finlayson, Bill Scott, and Frank Walker.

Reflecting on his life in Newfoundland, Hughie Wadden cannot believe how fast the time has flown. “I’ll be 65, now, in January coming (1998),” He says. “I got my old age pension forms the other day, and sent them all in. I sat down and said to myself, I can’t believe it.”

Buchans has provided Hughie with a good livelihood, strong memories of camaraderie on the ice, and most importantly, a family. He married a local girl, Helen Head, and they have one daughter. His decision to come and play hockey turned into a long-time commitment. He is a true Buchaneer and Newfoundlander. “I’m forty-five years here now,” says Hughie.” If I’m not a local now, I never will be.”

# POETRY AND BALLADS

*GOOD MEN HAVE PASSED BY THIS WAY*

*The wind gently blows through the old deckhead frame.  
To the day when this town had its mining fame.  
When men worked down in the depths of the earth,  
To dig up the minerals for what it was worth.*

*They worked long and hard by day and by night.  
In darkness they toiled by the beam of their light.  
They were the salt of the earth I heard someone say,  
That a lot of good men have passed by this way.*

*They came from the outports all over this land,  
To work in the mine they took a stand.  
They carved out a future on the side of a hill,  
With a pick and a shovel and a jackhammer drill.*

*The mines were working for fifty-seven years,  
And through it all they shared their laughter, joy, and tears.  
The fruits of their labour we still see today.  
To remind us of the good men that have passed by this way.*

*Their sons and their daughters are all over this world,  
The miners are proud of their boys and girls.  
The sacrifices made to help them on their way,  
Were long and were hard but they made it pay.*

*Oh how I like to go back in time,  
To remember the days when men worked in the mine.  
Just yesterday I heard some children say,  
Thank God for the good men that have passed by this way.*

Written By Wilson Burke  
Used by Permission (1990)

*MY FATHER WAS A HARD ROCK MINER*

*My father was a hard rock miner,  
He worked in the cool dark underground.  
He would work from eight to four, digging out that old grey ore.  
Yes, my father was a hard rock miner.*

*Though times were tough, our family  
had enough of the good things that made life worthwhile.  
By the sweat of his brow we managed somehow,  
'Cause my father he worked in the mine.*

*He was drilling in the mine when the drilling was dry,  
And the dust from the ore would fill his lungs and eyes.  
He never knew the health risk he was taking,  
But a few short years later from a cough he would awaken.*

*Then one day it struck him down and he came up from underground.  
Black lung has taken a hold of him.  
He would cough and spit all night and with no relief in sight,  
'Cause my father he worked in the mines.*

*Here is all our fathers who have suffered the same fate,  
Who found out about silicosis when it was too late.  
All good men who died before their time,  
Victims of working way down in the mine.*

*Yes, our fathers were hard rock miners  
Who worked in that cool dark underground.  
They would work from eight to four,  
Digging out that old grey ore.  
Yes, our fathers were hard rock miners.*

Used By Permission  
Wilson Burke, 1986.

Dedicated to Wilson's father, Hedley Burke and all the men whose lungs were "leaded" from working in the mines.

The Two-Twenty Line

*If you live outside of Buchans  
Then you'd better perk your ears  
Because the story of the two-twenty line  
You haven't heard in years.*

*The Company owns this mining town  
And Joey the extension  
But freedom with the kilowatt  
Well, I'm just afraid to mention.*

*Now take the case in Buchans  
With the staff – power galore  
A two hundred ampere service  
With circuits twenty-four.*

*The power costs to those lucky folks  
Practically is nil  
They do not have a meter  
So they burn away at will.*

*In the lower section of this town  
Neat rows of cottages stand  
Occupied by a lower class  
Known as the "Blue Collar Man."*

*Full service to his modest home  
Is nothing less than news  
Cause all that's in his humble house  
Are two fifteen ampere fuse.*

*Mother is busy with the toast  
Sis listens to the news  
Tommy wants to press his pants  
And "WOW!" there goes the fuse.*

*I've told you all a million times  
One appliance at a time  
Now you see you'll get no toast  
But get to school on time.*

- Newman Caines

(Reprinted with the permission of the Caines family)

*Ski Hill*

*On a clear day you could see the entire town from there,  
the rows of company houses and backyard fences,  
the Union Hall, the community pool,  
the cottage hospital where my mother worked  
off and on for fifteen years;  
three church spires, two small schools,  
the ballfield where my father slipped and broke his leg  
in a rundown between third and home before I was born*

*Down the hill's back slope the grey remains of a wooden ski run  
closed long before my parents married  
by lack of snow and the cost of keeping it running,  
unrecognizable as anything now but the scar of something human  
almost buried in shrubs and moss and blueberry bushes  
and beyond that the worthless sprawling beauty  
of the barrens.*

*The scrawl of mills to the south-east  
smokey-grey buildings stained yellow with sulphur,  
around them the train sheds and core-shacks  
the huge red warehouse where they laid ice  
every winter before the arena was built  
and housed almost the entire population on Saturday nights  
when the Corner Brook Royals came to town*

*The white staff office out front, a sign proclaiming  
**ASARCO: TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED;**  
the double line of railway tracks that marked  
the border of company property  
where strikers stood every four years  
with placards and cigarettes, occasionally  
burning a train caboos to the wheels  
upending a management car that had  
tried to cross the picket line*

*Out of sight behind the mills are the Glory Holes  
excavations the size of small lakes,  
and underneath it all the tangle of shafts  
where men worked eight hours a shift  
drilling the darkness for zinc and copper,  
eating a daily sandwich lunch*

*My mother watched them come in at regular intervals  
cursing ugly cuts or sprains  
or just the pain the goddamn pain  
of a limb suddenly missing or maimed  
by their machines or blind rock or a long fall in the dark  
And once every three years or so,  
a man she would know by name  
wheeled in beneath the white silence of a sheet*

*At the far edge of town the three grave-yards placed side by side  
a triptych of fenced cemeteries,  
most of the plots overgrown now  
with shrubs and weeds grazing high as the rowed headstones,  
tree roots cracking rectangles of concrete  
Homes standing empty, doorways and window frames  
turning grey with the weather,  
a few people left to small pensions and welfare  
and to memories like these,  
the scar of something human that's had its season  
something I've never known as intimately  
or seen as clear as I did those early summer afternoons  
watching it from the bare skull of Ski Hill*

~

Reprinted with permission, from *Arguments With Gravity* by Michael Crummey, winner of the 1996 Literary Award for Poetry from the Writer's Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador. Michael is a Buchaneer, son of Art and Maisie Crummey. Published by Quarry Press Inc., P.O. Box 1061, Kingston, Ontario K7L 4Y5.

*Cigarettes (2)*

*When my father gave up smoking  
 the thing he found hardest was knowing  
 what to do with his hands  
 the first fifteen minutes after a meal,  
 and driving into town is like that now –  
 what you notice first are the things that are  
 no longer here  
 the double row of bunkhouses torn down  
 the green clapboard mess hall  
 the old storage shed behind the pool  
 that had once been a stable for  
 the company horses  
 long before the road went through.*

*After supper Dad and I take a swing  
 onto company property, circle in behind  
 the fenced crater of the Glory Hole where  
 almost everything is missing  
 the deck heads at Rothermere and MacLean's  
 felled like trees  
 core shacks and warehouses bulldozed  
 the concrete stumps of the shower rooms  
 left naked in the ground where they were poured  
 fifty years ago*

*Only the mill is still on its feet  
 ash-coloured, useless  
 waiting to be taken down like an old photograph  
 and turned to the wall in an attic room*

*Thirty years my father says, turning slowly  
 and I remember a story about a horse he drove  
 when he came to work in '47  
 the mare nuzzling his shirt pocket for tobacco*

*first thing in the mornings  
snatching hand-rolled cigarettes straight  
from his lips if he tried to light up  
in front of her*

*Gone now, sold off by the company  
and dead somewhere  
Molly, I think her name was*

*Still, I have only a vague idea of what's been lost;  
my father is surrounded by more than  
the simple absence I can see here  
a life he's not quite finished with going on  
just beyond what he's able to touch  
like the impossible ache of a phantom limb  
of that craving, the automatic fumbling for  
the cigarette pack he's forgotten is  
no longer there*

~

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*This ditty was a Buchans standard, sung by the bunkhouse roustabouts while on their drunken sprees.*

*The Boys From Old #9*

*Lived in the bunkhouse most of our lives,  
We never bothered other men's wives  
Drunken miners are we all,  
We're the boys from old #9.*

*Oh, we never stagger, we never fall,  
We sober up on good old alcohol.  
Drunken miners are we all  
We're the boys from old #9.*

*Oh give us the whiskey, give us the rum,  
Give us the women, we'll make them run.  
Drunken miners are we all,  
We're the boys from old number 9.*

*“Clarence” The Caribou*

One day, in the spring of 1987, Jean Harnum looked out through a window of her home on the edge of the Buchans Townsite and saw a frail-looking caribou. It appeared weak and starved to death, so Jean prepared a hearty lunch of “lassy bread.” It was an immediate hit and sensing the animal was not satisfied, Mrs. Harnum went back into her house and filled a granddaughter’s baby bottle with a sweet corn syrup. The caribou grabbed onto the nipple and pulled until there was nothing left. That summer and into the fall, the caribou slept on Jean’s verandah. Children started coming by, bringing their own little snacks to share with their wilderness friend they called Clarence. By the fall, it had gained weight and strength, and glowed with a luxuriant coat of hair. The caribou followed Jean every she went, especially when she went to the corner store, because he knew that every time she came out, there was a sweet apple for her favourite pet.

Clarence quickly lost his shyness and the entire town of Buchans became his feeding range, not that he had to go looking for food, since he had more than enough admirers bringing it to him. The only foraging he did was for fun and recreation – in everyone’s flower beds! Day after day, Clarence roamed the town, entertaining the townspeople and flourished with all the attention. He began making daily treks up the middle of Main Street, where motorists would slow down and roll down their windows to pet him and feed him snacks.

Word of Clarence traveled outside Buchans and soon, strange vehicles showed up with eager sightseers taking pictures and enquiring at Mark and Patsy Hiscock’s store, “Have you got any souvenirs of Clarence?” Keith Courage of the Community Mart was deluged with similar requests, and within a short while, there were well-stocked “Clarence souvenir” displays at the local stores.

Clarence provided welcome relief to the boredom and depression that pressed on Buchans because the town’s major employer was gone, as were many residents, looking for a living elsewhere in Canada. Those remaining had little long-term prospects to buoy their spirits, but Clarence provided a diversion from everyone’s problems.

In the fall of 1989, Clarence began ranging into the woods bordering the town. It was the time of the year that caribou go courting and it seems that Clarence was answering the call of the wild. Very late in the fall, his first protector in Buchans, Jean Harnum, was the last to bid him goodbye

when she met him on the Red Indian Lake road.

Hopefully, Clarence found a mate and has mothered several generations of caribou calves.

Mothered?

Oh yes, I forgot to mention that Clarence was a doe. This became apparent shortly after she came to Buchans, when the locals noticed that Clarence was not sprouting antlers. Further inspection confirmed that Clarence should have been named "Clarice." However, the children had been calling her Clarence for so long that the name stuck. The following poem showed up one day at Jean Harnum's house:

### To All My Friends

I roamed into town one day  
 Not feeling very good.  
 I took a nap upon the hill  
 Behind the trailer court.  
 It wasn't long before I knew I must be getting better  
 For everyone who came around brought me lassy bread and butter.  
 The things I ate were awfully good,  
 I don't know what they were.  
 But it really didn't matter, I just ate more and more.  
 I took my naps upon their grass and ate a lot of flowers  
 And after I felt strong enough I went out on a tour  
 All the children followed me, each one with a treat  
 The life that I was living sure was hard to beat.  
 It wasn't long before they gave me a name.  
 Even though I was a girl they called me Clarence just the same.  
 I helped the Church, Community Mart, Council, Pat and Mark  
 I even paid a visit out to see Joe Duhart  
 People came from out of town  
 And took pictures, bless their hearts  
 I even made the movies and they made up songs without a doubt.  
 I roamed around their lawns and did a lot of "P"  
 But your lawn's still green and your flowers bloom.  
 I didn't do any harm you see.  
 I'm gone but not forgotten for I made a lot of friends  
 So if you should see a caribou, say "hi!".  
 It might be me, your friend.

*Clarence*

**ASARCO  
Buchans Unit 1926 – 1984**

FATAL ACCIDENTS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Year</u>
<b>MINE</b>		
Walter Vaters	Lucky Strike	1928
James Hearn	Lucky Strike	1931
William Maloney	Lucky Strike	1932
Sidney Gillingham	Lucky Strike	1933
Patrick A. Barter	Lucky Strike	1935
Leo Kelly	Lucky Strike	1935
Alexander Cooke	Lucky Strike	1935
Thomas Moore	Lucky Strike	1935
Lawrence Barry	Oriental	1936
Harold Antle	Lucky Strike	1942
Patrick Flynn	Lucky Strike	1944
George Wilcox	Oriental	1944
Ralph Clarke	Lucky Strike	1945
John Mallowney	Oriental	1949
Arthur Perrier	Rothermere	1953
John Ricketts	Rothermere	1958
Claude Elliott	MacLean	1962
Michael J. Kelly	Rothermere	1964
Matthew Mercer	MacLean	1965
Stanley Bartlett	MacLean	1969
George Mayo	MacLean	1971
Archibald Stacey	MacLean	1979
William M. Ricketts	MacLean	1981
<b>P. J. HARRISON EMPLOYEES</b>		
Terrance Cain	MacLean Shaft	1957
Gaston Pelletier	MacLean Shaft	1958
<b>SURFACE</b>		
Joseph Roach	Lucky Strike Glory Hole	1939
Edward Locke	Lucky Strike Glory Hole	1941
Dominic Ricketts	MacLean Hoist	1958
Ellis Kean	Carpenter Shop	1952
Edward Hawco	Railroad	1944
<b>EXPLORATION</b>		
George Pike	South Pond	1951
Patrick O'Keefe	South Pond	1951
Dr. Hugh J. MacLean	South Pond	1951
Ralph J. Barnes	South Pond	1951
Thomas J. Mattinen (pilot)	South Pond	1951
<b>LA MANCHE</b>		
Patrick Whiffen	La Manche Mine	1947

## ANECDOTES &amp; TRIVIA

**MATTY MITCHELL** – Matty Mitchell, discoverer of the Buchans ore, was the official guide for a group of Laplanders who herded 50 reindeer from St. Anthony on a 400-mile trek from St. Anthony to Millertown in 1908. A number of years later he was in the Straits of Belle Isle, prospecting for gold on St. John's Island.

**NOTES FROM BUCHANS, MARCH, 1929** – “Buchans now possesses two splendid government buildings to accommodate the Customs and Telegraph business.

“B. Basha who manages the moving picture theatre is conducting a watch repairing and jewellery shop in the building formerly used as a Postal-telegraph Office.

“Buchans has a splendid hospital, and Doctor Blackler is always busy attending to the cares of the people. Mrs. Cyril Courage, wife of the manager of the E. V. Royal Stores, underwent an operation for appendicitis at the hospital on Saturday.

“Although Buchans is a busy town, recreation is not forgotten. Through the courtesy of the Management, the ore storage shed has been used this winter as a rink.” *Grand Falls Advertiser (GFA)*

**WILLIAM MULLOWNEY** – May, 1932. – “William Mallowney of South River, Conception Bay, met death on Monday of last week. While working in the mine the ground he was standing on gave way and the unfortunate man was carried down with the rock and muck to the level below, where the body was later recovered. Victim was 47 years of age, married, six children.” *The Western Star (TWS)*

**KILLED BY EXPLOSION** – “Killed at Buchans Dec., 1933. Miner Alexander (Sidney) Gillingham was killed in the mine... Accident due to premature explosion while drilling into an old MISSED hole. 34 years old, married, 4 children, of Gander Bay. Another man, John Eveleigh was slightly injured about the face.” *TWS*

**FATAL ACCIDENT AT BUCHANS JUNCTION** – “Henry Penney of Buchans was accidentally killed at Buchans Junction when he fell headlong on the rails under the wheels of an engine. The engine was

shunting cars and the wheels passed over the man's chest. Engineer and conductor witnessed the accident but were unable to stop the train in time to avert the tragedy." *TWS*, May 1, 1935

**THREE MINERS KILLED** – “Three men were killed by a fall of rock in the mine at Buchans yesterday morning, according to a message received by the Chief of Police from Sergeant Forsey.

“The victims are Leo Kelly of Gambo; Alexander Cook, Bishop's Falls; and Patrick Barter, St. John's.

“Patrick Barter, who is 28 years of age, is the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Barter. He leaves a wife and two small children... Mr. Barter, who was educated at St. Bonaventure's College, was in charge of the electrical system in the mine where he had been employed for the past eight years...” Sept. 18, 1935. *The Evening Telegram*

**ANOTHER MINER KILLED** – “Another miner killed at Buchans, October 15, 1935, by a fall of rock in the mine this afternoon. Thomas Moore was instantly killed. He was 23 years old, a native of Goulds, Brigus. This is the second mining tragedy in about a month. In the previous accident three men were crushed to death.” *TWS*

**PAINFUL ACCIDENT** – “Eric Glavine of the Mine Dept. met with a painful accident on Jan. 22, when he was struck with a bar which broke his jaw bone. At the time he was engaged in the Mines, getting ore out of a chute. He had to proceed to St. John's for treatment and is now a patient in the Grace Hospital...” *GFA*, Feb 8, 1937

**RAISE IN WAGES** – On February 1, 1937, ASARCO granted it's employees a wage increase from 6% to 7%.

**ELECTRICAL PROSPECTING** – In the winter of 1937, Hans Lundberg's company was back, electrically prospecting Sandy Lake, near Buchans.

**WAGE INCREASE** – ASARCO announced that hourly paid employees would receive an increase of 2 cents an hour, from May 1st, 1937, with free life insurance covering each employee yearly, and if the majority of men approve of group health and accident insurance, this will also go in force in June.

**NEW CONSTRUCTION** – “Several new dwellings have been erected during the past summer by the Buchans Mining Company, as well as a new store in the East end of the town by the E. V. Royal Stores Ltd., also one three-family apartment house. Owing to the amount of business being done, the Co-operative store, which was opened on December 1st, 1936, had to build a third addition to the original store last month.

The Buchans’ Workmen’s Protective Union, which was organized in 1934, is making very steady and satisfactory progress. The Union is strong financially and in numbers. In October of 1937, Mr. J. G. Gillam of Robinson’s, was appointed as an independent delegate to work for the sole benefit of the Union...

A Workingmen’s agreement which has been drawn up in December last was signed on January 1st by representatives of the Union and the Company...” *GFA*, Jan. 22, 1938

**RUM DISCOVERED** – “On April 26 George Stoodly found a keg near the dam at the forebay with 1 1/2 gallons of rum in it. He reported his find to Sergt. Forsey who immediately took possession of it.

Mr. Thos. Hefferman, who was injured in the mines here last summer and who has since been in hospital and at his home in St. John’s, returned last week to resume his work in the mines, quite recovered from his accident.” *GFA* May 7, 1938

**THE TRESTLE** – “The steel and concrete trestle which was under construction on Mary March River, Buchans Junction, is now completed and all traffic on Buchans railway is on schedule operating time again.

Several cars of freight and timber, etc., which were held over at Millertown Junction during the tie-up on the railway, have now been removed to Buchans.” *GFA*, Jan. 29. 1938

**BUCHANS NOTES** – “The German steamer *Konsul Hendvik Fisser* from Emden, Germany, arrived at Botwood on Sunday last to load ore for Antwerp.

The first work was begun last week on the erection of 4 four-family apartment houses which the Company is building this summer. A new workmen’s hotel and an addition to the hospital is also being built by the Company. Mr. Sidney Wells, of Campbellton, N. D. B., who built several houses here during the past ten years, was awarded the contract. He

arrived in town with a number of men last week.

Mr. Joseph Kennedy recently purchased a bus and is now running a passenger service from Buchans to Red Indian Lake." *GFA*, June 25, 1938

**ICE CREAM PARLOR** – "The Buchans Co-op Society installed a new soda fountain, as well as tables and stalls in their Ice Cream Parlor a few weeks ago. This ice cream parlor, which was enlarged during the spring, is equipped with all modern facilities and is being well patronized by the public." *GFA*, Jul 23, 1938

**ORE SHIPMENT** – "The railroad yard men are kept busy this past few weeks and the engine crews and yard men are now working double shifts, making up trains and loading cars, as last week there were five ore trains from here to Botwood each day. There will be four or five every day this week and probably for the rest of August, or until all the ore that is stored here is shipped.

On July 20th Wm. Ivany who is employed on the surface at Lucky Strike Mine fell and rolled about 70 feet in the Glory Holes and was seriously injured. He is now in hospital and is on the road to recovery.

Another man who was injured the same day was able to return to work after a couple of days.

Mr. P. P. Fahey had his legs injured in Oriental Mine on July 30th and is now in hospital here. It is hoped he will be around again in a few days." *GFA*, Aug. 6, 1938

**FOUR MEN INJURED TRAIN-SPEEDER COLLISION** – "Buchans, August 9. – A forest fire started about 2 p.m. Sunday on Buchans railway, about 2 miles from here, and is still burning.

About 4 p.m. the same day when Messrs. J. C. Mews, Wm. Maher, James Hart and Alex Harris were returning from the fire on a speeder they ran into the yard engine in the smoke. All but Harris, who jumped before they collided, were injured. Mr. Mews and Maher received a few cuts, but Jas. Hart was hurt quite badly and was unconscious for several hours. He is still in hospital in serious condition. Hart is a Canadian and is employed as a mining engineer." *GFA*, Aug. 13, 1938

**FIRE** – "The forest fire which started on Buchans railway Aug. 7 was not extinguished until the heavy rain of last week. On Aug. 10, Labor Day, the fire crossed Buchans River, and the town and woods near the maga-

zine were threatened...

Mr. Wm. Ivany, who was seriously injured in the mines on July 20, is now improved considerably and has left the hospital; also Mr. James Hart who was injured in the speeder accident Aug. 7." *GFA*, Aug. 27, 1938

**FIRE BREAK** – "The B. M. Co., Ltd., have a few men employed this past few weeks cutting a fire break around the town. All of the brush, etc., in the vicinity of the yard railroad and town is being cut and burned. This will be a good help to prevent forest fires which start on the railway during the summer months from spreading..."

The houses that the Company were building are now completed and will be ready for people to move into in a short while. The extension to the E. V. Royal Stores, the B. W. Co-operative Store and the Hospital is also finished, as well as the new Working Hotel..." *GFA*, Oct. 15, 1938

**BEAUTY PARLOR** – "Work has begun this week on a new two department house on Jackson Street. One of these will be used for a dwelling house and the other for a hairdressing and beauty parlor which Miss Marion Goodyear is opening in the near future." *GFA*, Nov. 5, 1938

**SNOWFENCES** – "Mr. Alex Oldford, foreman with the B. M. Co., has a gang of men engaged during the past few weeks erecting the snow fences along the Buchans railway, replacing the ones that were burnt in the forest fires during the past summer." *GFA*, Nov. 19, 1938

**RABBITS** – "The veteran trapper and rabbit hunter, Mr. John Bugle, and his son of New Bay, Notre Dame Bay, arrived in town a few weeks ago and are once again stationed at their camp on Wiley's River to spend the winter rabbit catching. They find a ready market for their rabbits here." *GFA*, Dec. 17, 1938

**TRAINS SNOWBOUND** – "Trains were hung up on the Buchans Railway during the month of March. Both the Government Ore Train and Buchans Train were hung up several times, and on March 24th both trains got stuck in the cut at Middle Branch, two and a half miles from Buchans, and didn't get clear until March 27th. The mail had to be brought here on dog team, as well as some of the passengers..."

This cut is a mile long and from 12 to 14 feet high in several places.

Whatever men were around here were taken on at this time snowfighting. They got about two weeks work, but have been laid off again.

On Monday, April 10, the Ore Train got stuck in this cut again and didn't get clear until the next day. No Buchans mail reached the main line for a week...

At present a large number of men are in town looking for employment, but prospects for work here are not very bright at the present time." *GFA*, Apr. 22, 1939

**FALL OF GROUND** – May 13, 1939. Jacob Taylor seriously injured by a fall of ground in the mines May 13 and is now in hospital, St. John's. *GFA*

**HOLIDAY WITH PAY** – "As a result of negotiations between representatives of the B. M. Co. and B.W.P. Union, Mr. P.W. George, Manager of the B. M. Co. notified the men on June 5th that June 17th would be a Holiday with pay, and that men having to work on that day would receive double pay. This act on the part of the Company is very much appreciated by their employees." *GFA*, June 10, 1939

**WATCHMAN DIES ON DUTY** – "The whole town was shocked on Monday night when it was learned that Mr. James Whiteway, night watchman with the B. M. Co., took seriously ill on the street about 9 o'clock and went to the hospital to consult the doctor. He rang the bell and collapsed. When the nurse arrived he was dead in the hall..." *GFA*, June 24, 1939

**OBITUARY, BUCHANS MANAGER** – "Mr. P. W. George, Manager at Buchans Mine, passed away very suddenly of heart failure at 4 p.m. on Saturday, October 14, whilst out with a prospecting party some nine miles in from Buchans Junction. He was 59 years old..." *GFA*, Oct. 21, 1939. (At the time of his death, Mr. George in company with Mr. J. J. Thomas and two other men were in the country examining some mineralized boulders that were discovered there this summer."

**FATAL ACCIDENT** – Dec 29, 1939. – FATAL ACCIDENT BUCHANS. The first fatal accident for over 3 years...when Joseph Roche, a driller, fell about 80 feet in the Glory Hole and was injured. He died December 31. He was 35, married, 4 children and working at Buchans 12 years. Interment at Port Blandford, his former home. *GFA*.

**MINING ACCIDENTS** – On Dec. 31st, Mark Vaters fell about 100 feet in a slope while working at the Oriental Mine. He was seriously injured but is expected to recover.

Two other men, Newman Gilbert and M. Boone, also received minor injuries in the Oriental Mine on Jan. 3rd.” *GFA*, Jan. 13, 1940

**TRAGIC ACCIDENT** – Tragic accident St. Patrick’s Day, 1940, when John Andrews, 59, laborer, was killed by a yard train 3 miles from town. Train was en route to Middle Branch with some passengers. The body was badly mangled. He formerly came from Twillingate, employed by Buchans Mining Company.

**MOOSE AND BEER** – “Constable Bond had during the week two men before court charged with having moose meat in their possession on Dec. 16, 1939. They were each fined \$15.00. The fines were paid.

Another for drunk and disorderly. \$20.00. Paid.” *GFA*, Mar 30, 1940

**MIRACULOUS ESCAPE FROM DEATH** – “Mr. Mark Vaters recently returned to work, having spent a lengthy period of convalescence at his home, Victoria, following an accident here on Dec. 31, 1939. Mr. Vaters while working at the Lucky Strike fell a distance of 130 feet down an ore pass. Though badly shaken up, he miraculously escaped injuries of a more serious nature.” *GFA*, Apr. 16, 1940

**BICYCLING ACCIDENT** – Shortly before 7 p.m. on July 9, while cycling to his work in the Oriental Mine here, Mr. Bradbury collided with a man who was also on his way to work. At the time of writing Mr. Bradbury had not regained consciousness.” *GFA*, July 13, 1940 (Bradbury was still unconscious on July 23.)

**RAILWAY ACCIDENT, 1940** – “A very serious accident occurred on Buchans Railway Sept. 5 when a speeder returning to Buchans with Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Price and Mr. and Mrs. Roland Compton, driven by Mr. W. Hennessey, left the rail about 100 yards west of East Branch. All occupants were thrown from the speeder. Mrs. Price was injured most seriously, the speeder falling on her leg and foot. Her leg is badly bruised and her foot is broken. She has quite a few bruises on her body, face and hands as well. About 5 p.m. Dr. Hill and Constable Bond were rushed to

the scene of the accident by the Company's No. 1 engine, and Mrs. Price was brought to the hospital where she remained until Sunday, when she went to Twillingate Hospital. All occupants were shaken and bruised and the speeder was smashed up." *GFA* (Part of Mrs. Price's foot had to be amputated later, at Twillingate Hospital)

**STREET ACCIDENT, 1940** – "While the electricians were putting up new wires across the street on September 10th, one of the Company's trucks ran into a wire that was lying on the street, tripping Mrs. W. A. Dawe, who was passing at the time. Mrs. Dawe had her collar bone broken and her face cut badly when the wire broke and sprang back." *GFA*

**SWALLOWS WHISTLE** – On October 14, 1940, "Helen, small daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Epstein, swallowed a whistle from a package of crackerjacks that she was eating. The Doctor was in doubt for a while about dislodging the whistle from her throat, but was finally successful." *GFA*

**SPEEDER ACCIDENT** – October 21, 1940..."about 7:25 Mr. Allan Andrews, en route to Millertown Junction in the B. M. Co. inspection car, had the misfortune of hitting a speeder owned and driven by Mr. Alex Rowsell. Mr. Rowsell had a trailer attached to his speeder taking men to work along the railroad. The men left the speeder when they saw the inspection car coming and none of them were injured, but it is understood that the speeder is damaged almost beyond repair... Mr. Andrews escaped without injury." *GFA*

**GEORGE FORSEY** – *GFA*, Dec 14, 1940 – "Mr. George Forsey had the misfortune of breaking a couple of ribs during the past week at the machine where he works. In hospital, coming along fine."

**86 RABBITS** – *GFA*, April 12, 1941 – "Resident of Buchans before Magistrate Hollett for possession of 86 rabbits (31 unfit to eat). He said they weren't his. Fined \$50.00 each on two counts."

**ACCIDENT ON BUCHANS LINE** – In December of 1941, three clergymen were aboard a line railcar on the way to Buchans when it derailed about 12 miles outside of town. Rev. E. M. Bishop of Grand Falls was hospitalized with a suspected broken rib, while Rev. Maidment of

Buchans was treated for a cut on the forehead. Bishop Abraham was uninjured.

**WINSTON SPENCER CHURCHILL SNOW** – “Wince” Snow was a well-known man in Buchans, one of dozens of recruits from the mining town who signed up to fight overseas in World War II. It seemed natural that he would volunteer, since he had the same name as the great wartime Prime Minister of Great Britain, Sir Winston Spencer Churchill.

On November 28, 1942, the *Grand Falls Advertiser* briefly covered our “Winston Churchill’s” exploits overseas:

“He had the Prime Minister’s name and he had the Prime Minister’s spirit – acting leading Seaman Winston Spencer Churchill Snow.

Today he is missing, but before he was lost in the fog of war he won the Distinguished Service Medal for bravery and Leadership at Tobruk.

The *London Gazette*, giving the news of his honour, said last night “his selfish devotion to duty cost Snow his freedom, if not his life.

#### Waited As Ordered

When the last party was prepared to leave Tobruk during the evacuation, the harbour was completely surrounded and there was heavy rifle, machine-gun, tank and field gunfire. Snow waited in the harbour for the return of an officer whom he had rowed ashore to try and get further orders.

Urged to go with the last party, he replied, “I have been ordered to wait and I intend to do so. That was the last his shipmates saw of him.

Winston Snow is a son of Mr. Martin Snow of the Buchans Mining Company’s Office at Millertown Junction.”

**FIGHTER PLANE NAMED “BUCHANS”** – In 1942, the Royal Air Force identified Buchans as one of twelve communities in Newfoundland that had given the best response to government’s recruiting efforts. In recognition of this contribution, each of the towns was honored by having a fighter plane named after them. The fighter plane “Buchans” would conduct strikes on Germany and Italy.

**NINE PERISH IN FIRE** – At about 6:30 on the morning of Thursday, Nov 25, 1943 a four-apartment house on Church Street went up in flames.

In one of the apartments, Mrs. George Ivany and eight of her nine children, and her father-in-law, Mr. James Ivany, perished. Only two survived: The husband, George Ivany, and a child.

Mrs. Ivany was only 26 years old at the time. The children who perished ranged in ages from eight years to three months and from the eldest to youngest were: Agnes, age 8, a twin, Catherine and James aged 5, George Jr. aged 4, Gerald aged 3, Gertrude aged 2, William aged 1 and another twin, Marie and Ann aged 3 months.

**FATALITY** – Fatality on Buchans Railway, Brakeman Edward Hawco killed while coupling cars. *GFA*, Mar. 8, 1944

**TAX EVASION** – Doctor Greene of Buchans was convicted and fined \$8,000 for tax evasion on two counts (\$4,000 on each count), having filed false returns.

**PILOT MAKES GRUESOME FIND** – In August of 1948, the pilot of the Buchans Mining Company aircraft discovered the December, 1943, crash victims of a plane out of Torbay that went down near Lloyd's Lake. The remains were taken out and buried at Gander.

**UNION PETITIONS FOR ROAD** – In February of 1950, a delegation from Buchans, headed by Buchans Workmen's Protective Union President Norman Munn and Secretary James J. Lane, in St. John's on labor business, also met with the Minister of Public Works to present a petition. At a recent union meeting, a resolution was passed for a road to link Buchans with the main highway at Badger. The union delegation noted that the town had been isolated for over twenty years, that the town was a major revenue generator for the Province and no such demand ever made in the past. A road would relieve the cabin fever of the bunkhouse dwellers who could go home to their families more often, increase access to the Buchans airport and open the interior for hunting and fishing. In a show of solidarity, the union was supported in this effort by The Buchans Mining Company and the Federation of Labor.

**BUNKHOUSE ROBBERY** – "Thousand dollar robbery in Buchans Bunk House. Conception Bay Man Charged In Court Here With Theft.

A thousand-dollar robbery took place in a bunkhouse at Buchans on

Saturday, and a 23-year-old native of Conception Bay is at present being held by the police in connection with the incident.

The sum of one thousand and eighty dollars, the property of a miner named John Ricketts, was in a wallet in the bunkhouse. Mr. Ricketts was working in the mines at the time, and on returning to the bunkhouse discovered that someone had been tampering with the trunk and had stolen the large sum of money.

Const. Barrett of Buchans was apprized of the robbery and as a result of his investigation the 23-year-old miner from Conception Bay was placed under arrest and brought to Grand Falls on Tuesday night.

It is alleged that the amount of \$995.00 was found on the man when arrested, and it is further alleged that he had sent the balance of the stolen money to his wife in Conception Bay, a few hours after the robbery.

Mr. Ricketts, victim of the robbery, forgot to remove the keys from his trunk when going to work, and it alleged the accused on entering the bunkhouse noticed the keys in the lock of the trunk and helped himself to its cash contents.

Const. Barrett arrived in town on Tuesday night with the accused in custody. Mr. Ricketts, owner of the money, came by the same train and gave evidence in court the following morning.

The accused was remanded for eight days." *GFA*, May 26, 1950.

**THE BANK OF MONTREAL** – On February 1, 1951, the Bank of Montreal opened a permanent branch at Buchans, after operating a sub-branch there since 1928.

**THREE DEAD IN HUNTING TRIP** – December, 1954. – The frozen bodies of three Buchans men – Scott Wheeler, Arch Brinson and Harold Wells – were found frozen under the tarp of their boat on Red Indian Lake. They apparently died of carbon monoxide poisoning: All were married and in their thirties.

**BRIDGE AT BUCHANS JUNCTION** – September, 1955. – A temporary bridge over the Mary March River at Buchans Junction neared completion. It was 130 feet long with seven piers, and was built by Charlie Perrier and his three sons. In January of the new year it was swept away by the current.

**ESCAPE SERIOUS INJURY** – October, 1955. – Halfway between Grand Falls and Badger, four residents of Buchans – Hayward Locke, Cyril Luscombe, Frank Carol and Ruby Ball – walked away from serious injury when their car left the highway, rolled over and was demolished.

**SERIOUS ACCIDENT** – June, 1957. – Stanley St. George, 46 years old, married with one child was injured at Rothermere Mine when a rock slide crushed both his legs, necessitating amputation of both limbs.

**FATAL ACCIDENT** – December 1957. – Terence Cain of Engelhart, Ontario, employee of Patrick Harrison Co. was killed instantly when he fell 238 feet into the new shaft being constructed at MacLean Mine.

**MINER KILLED** – “Jack Ricketts, a 42-year-old miner and native of Knight’s Cove, Bonavista Bay, died in Buchans Hospital around 5 p.m. yesterday as the result of a mishap in the mines yesterday morning.

The Chief Inspector of Mines, who happened to be in Buchans, is conducting an official and complete investigation into the accident...

The *Advertiser* learned that the unfortunate man met his death while doing routine duty in the Rothermere Mine yesterday morning. In some at present unaccountable manner he suffered injuries to his head while working on the drawing chute.” *GFA*, Jan. 16, 1958

**TRAGEDY AT MACLEAN SHAFT** – “Tragedy struck again in the MacLean Shaft at Buchans yesterday forenoon when 37-year-old Dominic Ricketts of Knight’s Cove was accidentally killed. His brother John was killed in the same shaft on January 7th of this year as was another worker a French Canadian a few months later.

Mr. Ricketts was engaged in cleaning a hoist drum which was mounted on a concrete foundation in the shaft. The drum was not in motion but in some unknown manner it began to roll throwing Mr. Ricketts out of the drum and crushing him between the drum head and the concrete foundation. He was killed instantly.” *GFA*, July 2, 1958. (Note: The same paper, in January, reported that Dominic’s brother was killed at Rothermere, not MacLean.)

**BRIDEGROOM SAVES BOY, FATHER FROM DROWNING** – A 19-year-old man, a few hours before he was to be married, saved a man

and his son from drowning in the Humber River last Saturday.

Kenneth Wiseman, aged 5, son of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Wiseman of Riverside Drive, Corner Brook, fell into the waters of the Humber River near his home Saturday afternoon.

The boy's father saw him being swept away by the strong current and immediately jumped in to save the boy, says the *Western Star*.

Mr. Wiseman got into difficulty and disappeared beneath the surface of the water.

Claude Clarke, 19, was driving along the highway at the time of the mishap. He saw the pair in trouble, stopped his car and jumped into the water fully clothed and swam around until he was able to locate the father.

He caught the man and swam back against the current to bring the man to safety. He then jumped back into the water and swam toward the boy who had drifted out among the pulp wood.

The boy was conscious enough to hold onto a piece of wood which kept him afloat.

Clarke swam with the boy to the shore where an ambulance was waiting and the boy was rushed to the outpatient department of the Western Memorial Hospital where he was treated for shock.

Mr. Clarke was married on Saturday night." *GFA*, Nov. 4, 1959

#### **BUCHANS NATIVE DIES IN LITTLE BAY MINE** – March, 1961.

"On Friday evening the sad news reached us of the accidental death of Mr. Clarence Woodford, a 25 year old resident of Buchans, who had met his death while working in the mines at Little Bay. The unfortunate young man had been caught in a mud slide, and passed away before his rescue could be effected. He was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Cyril Woodford of this town." *GFA*, March 30, 1961

**FORD ACQUITTED** – "Mr. William Ford, 41 year old accountant of Buchans, who had been charged with the alleged shooting of his 39 year old wife, the former Clare Horwood of St. John's, in their Buchans home on March 25th, was acquitted on Thursday night of the charge by a twelve man jury, which deliberated just one hour and fifteen minutes." *GFA*, July 17, 1961

**THREE MEN PRESUMED DROWNED** – August, 1964. – Newspapers reported that Maxwell Stagg, Herbert Kelloway, and William Hunt were missing and presumed drowned on a fishing expedition at Red Indian Lake. Hunt and Kelloway's bodies were later found.

**MICHAEL JOHN KELLY DEAD** – On July 29th, 1964, a piece of ore weighing one and a half tons fell and crushed Michael John Kelly, aged 38 years and married.

**FELL OVER MILLERTOWN DAM** – In September, 1968, Griffith Simms of Buchans fell over the Millertown Dam. His body was later recovered from the Exploits River.

**Buchans Telephone Directory, 1959. (709) 672-**

Andrews, A. A., 71B East Street	3325
Andrews, Robert, 74B East Street	3418
Aylward, Joseph, 15A Center Street	3416
Aylward, William, 16A Church Street	3648
Baggs, Thomas, 69C Williams Turnpike	3410
Bailey, Garfield, 47A Church Street	3514
Bailey, William, 1B Court Road	3461
Baker, Edmund, 87D East Street	3441
Baker, Isaiah, 113B Pine Avenue	3613
Barker, Michael, 27B Church Street	3502
Barnes, Major C. L., Lake View Avenue	3104
Barnes, Fred, 77A Williams Turnpike	3404
Barnes, George, 92D East Street	3603
Barnes, Glynn, 23B Jackson's Street	3832
Barnes, Thomas, 83A Williams Turnpike	3810
Barron, John, 107D Lake View Avenue	3618
Bartlett, E. G., 89D Church Street	3128
Bartlett, George, 93D Williams Turnpike	3524
Barton, F. E. S., Jackson's Street	3700
Beresford, Daniel, 118A East Street	3640
Beresford, James, 60 Jackson's Street	3860
Best, George, Main Street	3551
Blackwood, C. B., Church Street	3107
Boone, Elijah, 90D Church Street	3815
Boone, Joseph, 119D Pine Avenue	3621
Bridger, Roland, 88C Williams Turnpike	3544
Brockie, R. G., 85D Church Street	3134
Brown, Hubert, Church Street	3644
Buckley, Harry T., 105B Pine Avenue	3758
Budden, Llewellyn, 130A Center Street	3747
Burke, Hedley, 108D East Street	3661
Burry, Wilfred, 95D Church Street	3453
Burt, Clarence W., 83B Center Street	3401
Butt, George, 114A Lake View Avenue	3744
Byrne, Frank, 88A Williams Turnpike	3521
Byrne, James S., 129B Center Street	3716
Byrne, Patrick J., 110D Lake View Avenue	3710
Byrne, Patrick T., 114B Lake View Avenue	3647
Caines, J. A., 62B Jackson's Street	3822
Caines, Newman, 97D East Street	3857
Callahan, W. F., 87C East Street	3442
Carey, Gordon, 88D William's Turnpike	3543

Carter, A. W., 97A East Street	3439
Carter, Donald, 23A Jackson's Street	3833
Chaffey, Reginald, Church Street	3662
Chaplin, W. J., 95A Church Street	3427
Chaulk, Lewis, 118B East Street	3641
Churchill, Thomas, 109A East Street	3707
Clarke, Albert, 97B East Street	3605
Clarke, Parmenas, 106C Lake View Avenue	3624
Clarke, Silas, 96A East Street	3859
Clouter, J. W., 82A East Street	3526
Cluett, Herman, 70C Church Street	3546
Coffin, James F., 80A Church Street	3802
Collins, E. J., 122B East Street	3639
Collins, James, 117B East Street	3653
Collins, Michael, 120B Lake View Avenue	3741
Collins, Thomas, 68B East Street	3433
Cole, Baxter, 37 East Street	3806
Cooper, A. G., 73A William's Turnpike	3411
Courage, C. O., Main Street	3143
Cranford, Gerald, 35B East Street	3423
Cranford, Lemuel, 1A Court Road	3462
Cranford, Robert, 80C Church Street	3803
Croke, Michael, 98C South Street	3817
Cuff, N. L. G., Main Street	3114
Curran, E. R., 41A William's Turnpike	3510
Dalton, C. V., 129D Center Street	3701
Dansereau, C. E., 124D Jackson's Street	3658
Dawe, Ronald, 86B East Street	3443
Dearing, Leslie, 82B East Street	3541
Decker, Chesley, 120A Lake View Avenue	3646
Delaney, A. J., 122A East Street	3856
Delaney, R. J., 7B West Street	3865
Dixon, W. J., 96D East Street	3457
Doyle, Patrick, 98B South Street	3818
Duffett, Robert, 69B William's Turnpike	3528
Dunn, J. C., 115B Lake View Avenue	3102
Dunphy, Thomas, 131B Center Street	3756
Elliott, C. G., 9A Prospect Street	3560
Elliott, H. B., 112B Pine Avenue	3637
Emberly, John, 21 Jackson's Street	3824
Evans, G. W., 39B East Street	3415
Evans, Harold, 34 East Street	3500
Fahey, W. J., 129A Center Street	3715
Fairley, David, 67C East Street	3446

Fillier, Robert, 29B Jackson's Street		3426
Fitzgerald, Rev. L. G., Church Street		3113
Flynn, J. R., 112C East Street		3664
Flynn, Timothy, 128D Center Street		3718
Flight, Elijah, 113D East Street		3611
Flight, G. E., 116C Church Street	3719	
Flight, James, 12 West Street		3531
Flight, R. E., 109C East Street		3736
Follett, Edward, 126B Center Street		3738
Ford, Frank, 63A Jackson's Street		3816
Ford, Gerald, 40 East Street		3834
Ford, S. L., 115C Lake View Avenue		3610
Ford, W. J. W., 106D Lake View Avenue		3632
Forsey, Fred, 98A South Street		3451
Forward, Colin, Main Street		3563
Forward, H. W., 104C East Street		3609
Forward, Warrick, 112A East Street		3103
Frankham, Lee, 9A Prospect Street		3866
Fry, Charles, 113C East Street		3753
Fry, William, 93B William's Turnpike		3440
Furey, Patrick, 68A East Street		3434
Furey, Peter, 76B East Street		3808
Furlong, Thomas, 126D Center Street		3550
Glavine, Matthew, 119B East Street		3614
Goodyear, A. C., Jr. 105A East Street		3757
Goodyear, A. C., Sr., Main Street	3562	
Gosse, John, 48 Church Street		3518
Gregory, Michael 83C East Street		3565
Greening, Charles, 104A West Street		3630
Gushue, Robert, 39A East Street		3414
Hancock, Arthur, 5 West Street		3429
Harnett, Guy, Main Street		3650
Harnum, James, 81B East Street		3728
Hardiman, Chesley, 66C East Street		3408
Harding, J. H., 65 Jackson's Street		3820
Harris, C. J., Sr. 49 Church Street		3452
Hartery, Leo, 107B Lake View Avenue		3616
Hart, J. R., 2 Main Street		3335
Hawkins, George A., 97C East Street		3535
Head, A. J., 26B Jackson's Street	3506	
Head, Clarence, 50 Jackson's Street		3516
Head, David, 122C East Street		3830
Head, James, 82C East Street		3836
Head, P. A., 130D Center Street		3754
Hefford, Alfred, 67D East Street		3459

Hefford, Boyd, 118C East Street	3642
Hefford, John, 11B Prospect Street	3465
Hefford, Kenneth J., 91D East Street	3455
Hennessey, W. G., 133D Church Street	3714
Higdon, Hayward, 125A Center Street	3749
Higdon, Stanley, 8B Prospect Street	3332
Higgins, W. H., 12 Center Street	3863
Hiscock, Marcus, 109B East Street	3708
Hiscock, R. G., Main Street	3147
Hodder, Ivan, 47B Church Street	3515
Hornell, James, 3A Prospect Street	3726
Hunt, William J., 31A East Street	3527
Hunt, William, 90C Church Street	3730
Ivany, George, 123B Pine Ave	3762
Johnson, Harris, 77C William's Turnpike	3539
Kelloway, Eugene, 62A Jackson's Street	3819
Kelloway, Jabez, 111A Lake View Ave.	3663
Kelly, Edward, 2B Prospect Street	3600
Kennedy, Arch, 125C Center Street	3751
Kennedy, James J., 66A East Street	3409
Kennedy, Joseph, 38 East Street	3545
Kennedy, Patrick J., Jr. 63A Jackson's Street	3828
Kennedy, Patrick J. Sr. 88B William's Turnpike	3540
Kennell, Mercer, 8A Prospect Street	3430
King, James R., 83D William's Turnpike	3400
King, L. C., 127A Center Street	3721
King, Pearce E., 132D Center Street	3743
King, Wallace, 130B Center Street	3748
Kitchen, John W., 74C East Street	3421
Lane, A. A., 76A East Street	3807
Lane, James A., 118D East Street	3643
Lane, James N., 127C Center Street	3561
Lane, James J., 75A East Street	3814
Lane, Nicholas, 96B East Street	3823
Lannon, Samuel, 128A Center Street	3723
Lear, Allan, 108D East Street	3612
LeDrew, Selby, 114D Pine Avenue	3740
Leyte, Harold, 113C Church Street	3713
Leyte, Mark, 120C Pine Avenue	3742
Locke, Thomas, 115A Lake View Avenue	3634
Loder, Arthur, 93C William's Turnpike	3525
Loder, Eric, Main Street	3108
Loder, T. A., 24B Jackson's Street	3403

Luscombe, Raymond, 4A Prospect Street	3829
Lush, Pearce, 92A East Street	3449
Luter, Charles, 4 Main Street	3858
Lyver, Louis, 112D East Street	3636
Lyver, Patrick, 111D Lake View Avenue	3629
Lyver, Peter, 131 C Center Street	3703
MacDonald, J. E. A., 13B Court Road	3326
Maher, W. H., 3 Court Road	3329
Makinson, Norman, 117A East Street	3652
Marshall, William, 3A Prospect Street	3431
Martin, E. M., 1 Court Road	3336
McCallam, R. K., 8A Prospect Street	3324
McCarthy, William, Lake Road	3805
McIsaac, Neil, 117D East Street	3862
Mercer, Matthew, 119C Pine Avenue	3635
Merrigan, Anthony, 74A Church Street	3422
Merrigan, James, 87B East Street	3437
Mesh, Alexander, 116B Church Street	3649
Mills, Ralph, 113A Pine Avenue	3463
Mitchell, Brian, 69D William's Turnpike	3520
Mooney, Peter, 54 Church Street	3564
Moore, James, 105C Pine Avenue	3705
Moore, Victor, 108A East Street	3633
Mullins, Richard, 51 Church Street	3517
Mullins, Ronald, 134A East Street	3654
Mullins, Wilfred J., 85C Church Street	3547
Munn, Norman, 122D East Street	3638
Nabb, F. A., 14A West Street	3861
Near, George N., Main Street	3112
Noftle, Peter, 110C Pine Avenue	3709
Noseworthy, Ernest, 80B Church Street	3602
Oates, Frederick, 74D Church Street	3419
O'Brien, James E., 132A Jackson's Street	3659
O'Brien, John N., 134D East Street	3760
O'Brien, P. F., 7A West Street	3558
Ogay, Harry C., 66B Church Street	3406
Oliver, Frazer, 56 William's Turnpike	3554
O'Toole, Walter, 32 East Street	3501
Pardy, Jerry, 24 Jackson's Street	3732
Pardy, Maxwell, 16 Jackson's Street	3538
Parsons, E. T., Main Street	3157
Parsons, Harold, 132B Jackson's Street	3660
Payne, Leslie, 89C Jackson's Street	3154
Peckford, Roy, 25A Jackson's Street	3508

Peddle, James, 86A East Street	3444
Penney, Gilbert, 3B Prospect Street	3432
Penney, Herbert C., 9B Center Street	3556
Penney, Robert M., 67B East Street	3460
Penney, Solomon, 123D Pine Avenue	3606
Percy, Robert, 76C East Street	3809
Perkins, Edward W., 10A Prospect Street	3604
Perrier, Cyril, 75B East Street	3813
Piercey, Edgar, 104D East Street	3608
Piercey, Hayward, 70B Church Street	3435
Pike, H. M., 124A Jackson's Street	3656
Pike, W. H., 4 West Street	3328
Pinsent, Adolphus, 18 Jackson's Street	3557
Pinsent, Albert, 44 William's Turnpike	3555
Pinsent, Roland, 106B Lake View Avenue	3623
Pittman, George, 78 William's Turnpike	3549
Pollett, Ellis, 53 Church Street	3512
Pollett, Frank E., 26A Church Street	3530
Pollett, Gordon, 11 Center Street	3417
Power, William D., 128C Center Street	3717
Price, Donald, 95B Church Street	3428
Price, Herbert, 29A Church Street	3425
Pritchard, Llewellyn, 17 Jackson's Street	3537
Purchase, Clayton, 27A Church Street	3503
Purchase, Thomas, 107A Lake View Avenue	3617
Quinlan, Francis, 13B Center Street	3420
Quinlan, Peter, 33A East Street	3625
Quinton, Raymond, 90A Church Street	3731
Quirk, James, 95C Church Street	3454
Reid, Kenneth, 86D East Street	3445
Reynolds, Thomas, 127B Center Street	3722
Ricketts, Andrew, 132C Jackson's Street	3405
Rideout, Adam, 58 Jackson's Street	3142
Rideout, Cyril, 107C Lake View Avenue	3619
Rideout, Melvin, 81C East Street	3727
Rideout, Reginald, 99 South Street	3519
Rogers, Edgar, 134C East Street	3759
Rose, Herbert, 105D East Street	3706
Rose, Ronald, 126C Center Street	3657
Russell, Wilson, 96C East Street	3458
Rutherford, Dr. S. N., Main Street	3151
St. George, James V., 116 D Church Street	3720
Saunders, Nath, 128 B Center Street	3724
Sellars, Ray, 92C William's Turnpike	3522
Sceviour, M. C., 81A East Street	3529

Scott, William, 131D Center Street	3704
Scott, Patrick J., 100 Main Street	3746
Sharpe, A. G., 92B William's Turnpike	3450
Sharpe, D. M., 111C Lake View Avenue	3628
Sheppard, Wilson, 104B East Street	3631
Simmonds, Albert, 109D East Street	3645
Simms, H. C., 61 Jackson's Street	3138
Skanes, Harold, 82D East Street	3542
Smith, Harry, 13A Center Street	3464
Smith, James C., 66D East Street	3407
Smith, Kevin P., 77B William's Turnpike	3402
Snow, Arthur J., 124C Center Street	3826
Snow, Chesley, 28B Church Street	3504
Snow, David, 111B Lake View Avenue	3620
Snow, Winston, 106A Lake View Avenue	3622
Sommers, Harold, 86C East Street	3801
Soper, T. A., 94 Jackson's Street	3140
Southwell, Ronald, 108C East Street	3110
Sparkes, William, 131A Center Street	3536
Squires, Hallett, 25B Jackson's Street	3831
Stacey, Robert, 30 Jackson's Street	3509
Stacey, Willis R., 89B Jackson's Street	3811
Stone, Hayward, 28A Church Street	3505
Stratton, Joe, 133B Church Street	3712
Swanson, E. A., 6 West Street	3327
Taylor, James R., 8B Prospect Street	3532
Thorne, James, 90B Church Street	3729
Thorne, Leonard, 87A East Street	3438
Thorne, Robert, 123C Pine Avenue	3607
Tilley, C. R., 52 Church Street	3513
Tilley, Herbert, 91A East Street	3533
Tilley, Jack, 85B Church Street	3447
Tilley, Kenneth, 67A East Street	3548
Tremblett, Mike, 123A Pine Avenue	3761
Turner, Abraham, 36B East Street	3412
Veitch, James, 117C East Street	3651
Wadden, H. W., 3 Court Road	3115
Walker, Frank, 2 Court Road	3725
Walker, William, Main Street	3135
Walsh, A. J., 121D Lake View Avenue	3627
Walsh, F. J., 133A Church Street	3711
Walsh, J. E., 110A Pine Avenue	3739
Walsh, James F., 41B William's Turnpike	3511
Walsh, J. J., 70A Church Street	3436

Walsh, Richard, 73B William's Turnpike	3800
Walsh, William P., 46A Church Street	3825
Ward, Michael, 119A Pine Avenue	3615
Wareham, Harry, 114C Pine Avenue	3735
Watson, J. B., 5 Court Road	3334
West, Thomas, 81D East Street	3601
Whalen, James, 125D Jackson's Street	3752
Whalen, James R., 129C Center Street	3702
White, Austin, 35A East Street	3424
White, Donald W., 1 Court Road	3552
White, E. C., 85A Church Street	3448
White, Herbert, 10 Prospect Street	3531
Wilcox, Alan, 45 Church Street	3553
Williams, John C., 26C Church Street	3507
Woodland, Albert, 6C West Street	3755
Woodrow, James, 91B East Street	3456
Yetman, Azariah, 80D Church Street	3523
Yetman, James, 36A East Street	3413
Yetman, R. C., 71A East Street	3145

# The Buchans Miners

The mining and milling operations at Buchans were described simply, but thoroughly in an article that appeared in *The Daily News* in December of 1929. It was written by W. B. Temple.

## MINING BY "GLORY-HOLE" – Lucky Strike

The first level is at a depth of 137 feet, and is drained by gravity through a 3,600 feet tunnel out to the river bed. One method of mining is by what is known as "glory-hole," or inverted cone-shaped open cuts. At the point of the inverted cone, a shaft runs to the 137 feet level beneath. Mining is done by means of pneumatic drills, holes being put down a depth of six to eight feet. These holes are charged with dynamite and exploded at noon and six o'clock after the miners quit work. When shots are fired, the mineral is thrown down to the bottom of the hole, and from there runs down a small shaft to bins from which it is loaded into two-ton dump-cars. These cars are pulled by an electric locomotive to the foot of the main shaft from whence the material is hoisted to the mine head and stored in a huge bin from which it falls to the crusher as required. Occasionally the chutes below the glory-holes may become blocked with large pieces of ore and a small charge of dynamite called "bulldozing" is used to clear it, and permit the ore to run freely. In addition to the glory hole mining operation there is also started underground a cut and fill system of stoping, which will take care of all of the ore that cannot be mined through the open cuts, or glory hole.

## CRUSHING THE ORE

The process of concentration begins at the McCully crusher in which a huge steel cone revolves eccentrically in the centre of the mill, much on the principal of a coffee-mill. The ore is broken in this to egg size pieces and falls from the crusher onto a slow running belt of 42 inches in width on which it is automatically weighed by passing over a weightometer. This belt ends near a Simon's Disk Crusher where the ore is further broken to 1/2 inch size. To prevent any damage to this crusher through broken pieces of drill, hammerheads, nuts or nails, a magnetic pulley at the end of the belt catches and removes any bits of steel or iron that may pass through the first crusher. Boys are also stationed at intervals along the belt to pick out any pieces of wood or other refuse that may come in with the ore.

From the Simon's Disk Crusher the now broken ore is elevated by a bucket elevator and discharged into bins. Samples are taken at regular intervals

## APPENDIX D

from the ore, as it passes to these bins, by an automatic device for testing purposes.

### GRINDING TO THE LIKENESS OF FLOUR

The process of grinding to a flour-like consistency now begins in huge ball mills. These ball mills, some eight feet in diameter, lined with manganese steel are partly loaded with a large number of hardened manganese steel balls of about three and a half inches in diameter. Into these ball mills the broken ore is introduced accompanied by a free flow of water. As the mills revolve these hardened steel balls roll around and round with the broken ore, crushing it in the presence of the water, to the consistency of mud. As fresh ore is being continually introduced, the finely crushed material flows over as mud into a Dorr Classifier. By a very ingenious arrangement, all ore particles that are too large to remain in suspension, fall to the bottom of the classifier, and are raked up by the machine and returned to the ball mill.

### LIKE BLACK PAINT

From the classifier this mixed ore and water, of somewhat the consistency of a black water-paint, passes to flotation machines. In the process certain measured chemicals, or reagents, are introduced by an ingenious type of measuring cup and perform designed functions. Certain chemicals are used to depress the zinc sulphite called sphalerite, and others are used to enliven the lead sulphide called galena, and oils are used for making froth, and in the bubbles of this froth are held in suspension the fine particles of lead sulphide.

### LEAD FLOATS LIKE FROTH

In these machines Root's Blowers agitate the solution by means of a continuous stream of air bubbles from the bottom pumped in at a pressure of about two pounds to the square inch. As these bubbles laden with lead particles rise to the top, the froth is continuously scooped off by a series of revolving paddles and this froth containing the major part of the lead sulphide is again passed through another flotation machine to be cleaned and re-cleaned until the lead has been concentrated sufficiently for shipping purposes.

The balance of the solutions which were pumped to the first flotation machines and in which the zinc had been depressed by the use of reagents, after passing through these machines is given a treatment of copper sulphate which enlivens the zinc particles and makes them amenable for floating. This solution is then pumped to the zinc flotation machines and other reagents added to assist in the process and the zinc is brought up to the top of the tanks in the froth and scooped off with paddles, as was done in the

## The Buchans Miners

lead process. This froth is again put through other machines for recleaning until the zinc content has been sufficiently concentrated for shipping purposes.

It can be easily seen from this how very carefully the process must be watched, and all operations exactly gauged, to protect intermixture of the lead and zinc crystals in the concentrate.

### THICKENING TANKS

After being scooped off this now wet concentrate passes to thickening tanks one of which is for lead and two for zinc, each tank having a diameter of 44 feet. The concentrates after being automatically sampled, fall into their several tanks and the sulphide particles naturally settle to the bottom of these large tanks and some of the lighter gangue remaining from the previous flotation operations floats off with the overflow water from these tanks.

Large revolving rakes work these thickened concentrates in the bottom of tanks, to a common center from which they are pumped to the filters.

### SUCKING OUT MOISTURE

The new type of Dorrco filters are used, in which the filter cake is collected on the inside of large cylindrical drums by a vacuum process exerted on these drums which are lined with canvas. The vacuum process pulls the water through the canvas leaving the concentrates sticking to it. As these drums slowly revolve, the vacuum stops at a point near the top of the drum and a blower gently shakes the canvas, causing the concentrates that are stuck on the canvas to fall to a conveyor belt which carries them from the interior of the filter to a chute outside of the filter. The concentrates have now been dewatered to a point in which they carry only about 10% moisture, but this is not sufficiently dry for shipping in bulk. They, therefore, are fed down chutes to mechanically rotating Ruggles Cole dryers from which they are finally discharged to bins and railroad cars, with a moisture content sufficiently low to make the concentrates a safe shipping product.





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