

NWT Mining Heritage



April 2012

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

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

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



More Work Scheduled for Rec Hall Repairs

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2012, another busy year of site work at the proposed mining heritage facility, located at the Giant Mine townsite.

In 2010 the NWT Mining Heritage Society began foundation repairs to the recreation hall building through the construction of a new concrete perimeter wall on its north side. This summer, we have again commissioned Nextreme Construction to continue with foundation repairs on the northeast section of the building where significant decay is evident in the original timber posts.



Support posts holding up a portion of the rear roof will be replaced, the perimeter wall on the east side (YK Bay facing) will be replaced where possible with concrete, and a geo-membrane layer placed where needed to prevent water runoff from entering the crawlspace. We thank

the financial support of our members and grants through the Government of the NWT, Education, Culture and Employment, without which it would not be possible to conduct this work. Also, thanks to Williams Engineering for preparing an engineers report on the building.

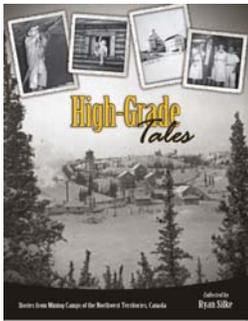
Remediation Work at Giant Mine This Summer

Work continues to conduct interim remediation at the Giant Mine Site. While the cleanup program is still in the middle of an environmental review, the Federal Government has the authorization to complete emergency remediation measures to protect public and site safety. This work will include the demolition

of the mill conveyor way which has become unstable. This work is not related to the Society's projects as it is far removed from our facilities. However, engineering and test work to evaluate the stability of a stope pillar beneath the Giant Mine townsite parking lot will restrict public access to a portion of

our outdoor mining display. An orange snow fence has been erected near the Log Cabin and rail display. We ask that visitors to our site be mindful of work crews in this area and to respect the fence. We apologize for the temporary inconvenience and hope the area can be reopened soon for your enjoyment!

“High-Grade Tales” - Now for Sale



“High-Grade Tales”
A new book on
mining history by
Ryan Silke

“High-Grade Tales: Stories from Mining Camps of the NWT” explores the cultural impact of mining in the North-west Territories on its early pioneers. Important events in NWT history are examined and given depth by personal experiences. The boom and bust mining cycle, the influx of Italian immigrants in the 1950s, the allure of the mining town, the participation of aboriginal people, and the excitement of a rich gold find...the book documents the groundbreaking

achievements of the common man and woman in the industry.

Fully illustrated from rare photographs never before published and stories never before told, “High-Grade Tales” is a testament to the rich mines that carved a modern Northwest Territories and the industrious pioneers, our mining elders, who made it all possible.

As the names of the north’s famous northern mining

camp fall off the maps and the ruins eradicated from the landscape, “High-Grade Tales” preserves for all time the important story of how the north developed.

Now for sale through the NWT Mining Heritage Society at a cost of \$20. Add \$3.50 for shipping. Contact Steve at 873-6078 or visit the Society office at the NWT Visitors Centre. Also available at the NWT Chamber of Mines in the Scotia Centre.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

Our members are important to us. If you haven’t **renewed your membership** yet, please do so soon. Last year we had a hundred members and we would like to repeat or increase that number. Please keep in mind that funding agencies and various levels of government use our membership numbers to gauge the support we have for our society and its projects. Our membership form is available on our website and can be mailed in or dropped off at our office in the **Northern Frontiers Visitors Centre**. *Memberships available for individual and corporate members at reasonable rates!*

*The Beer Barge
BBQ Party, the
annual fundraising
event of the NWT
Mining Heritage
Society, celebrates the
historic tradition of
the first summer
barge to arrive in
Yellowknife.*

BEER BARGE - Fourth Annual June 23

Mark June 23 in your calendars because the Beer Barge is again arriving in Yellowknife!

The annual fundraising event of the Society is now in its fourth year and going strong. First organized to celebrate Yellowknife’s 75th birthday in 2009, the Beer Barge is now a local favourite and celebrates

the fascinating traditions of when Yellowknife was dependent on the summer water freighting season, when that very first barge to arrive had the fresh stock of alcohol for those thirsty, bushed miners.

Live music, prizes, old costumes, and of course flowing beer are to be

expected! We also plan to celebrate the 10th birthday of our Society’s founding.

Planning is still in the early stages but tickets will soon be available, at a cost of \$40. Look for them at the Yellowknife Spring Tradeshow held at the Multiplex on May 12-13. We hope to see you there!



*Prospecting for gold on the barren lands, 1940s.
(Alex Mitchell Collection)*

**DO YOU HAVE PHOTOGRAPHS
TO CONTRIBUTE?**

EMAIL US! info@nwtminingheritage.com

The One Man Gold Mine

Louis Garskie struck it rich just as a prospector traditionally did - he found a gold deposit and spent his life picking away at it. Garskie went into the bush in 1947 and returning 19 months later, brought out bottles of beer full of gold dust and flakes, flashing them around the Yellowknife bars.

A small shaft was started on the bottom of the 'Million Dollar' pit, Garskie's most promising deposit. Mining it was slow, back-breaking work. All shot drilling was by handsteel or by using a small x-ray diamond drill rig. The blasted ore was pack-sacked out of the pits. He crushed the ore by hand using a small boulder which was fitted with a wooden stick, stuck into the rock through a small drill hole.

A flat area of outcrop was cleared and provided Garskie with an area to crush and grind the ore with his boulder. He then mixed the powder with mercury which absorbed the gold and left behind floated waste. The mercury 'amalgam' was then roasted over an intense fire, turning the mercury into vapour and leaving the gold beads.

In that first 19 months, Garskie recovered 195 ounces of gold. In a 1959 news article published by the Grand Prairie newspaper he estimated that over the dozen years, 19 beer/coke bottles each containing 75 ounces of gold, and one whiskey bottle, containing 150 ounces, were collected. This equals approximately 1,575 ounces in total mined between 1947 and

Exhibit at Prince of Wales

The Society has been offered temporary exhibit space at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre during May to June. Planning is still in the early stages but we hope to showcase some of the more interesting artifacts or documents from our collection.

This will also be a great opportunity to celebrate the 10th year anniversary of the NWT Mining Heritage

Society, incorporated in July 2002, by making available for exhibit those items we have strived very hard to preserve.

In the absence of a permanent exhibit hall, we are very thankful for the opportunity to display items at the PWNHC. Thank you to their staff and also to Society directors Deb Bain and David Jessiman for organizing the display. Be sure to visit it in May, and enjoy the history!



Garskie's old cabin today

1959. The whiskey bottle – which contained 'Old Parr Scotch' – was the original inspiration for the name of the 'Old Parr' mineral claims.

It was a one-man operation and lasted until 1972 when Garskie retired and abandoned his camp. He died in 1988. His old cabin and mine workings can still be found today north of Yellowknife and is a fascinating archeological site showing the tenacity of the early northern prospector.



**Schedule of
Events**

- Yellowknife Spring Trade Show
May 12-13
- Mining Week
June 11-16
- Beer Barge
June 23



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FROM THE COLLECTIONS

Con Mine senior staff review plans at the original office in 1970. We have been able to identify most of the people in this photograph, and with your help maybe we can learn the rest! Left to right: Alec Morris (chief electrician), Russ Vause (storekeeper), Len Nelson (mine superintendent), Alec Richardson (manager), Dave Johnston (mill superintendent), Harold Setso (accountant), Ted Jardine (mine geologist), and unknown.

More photos available at www.pwnhc.ca/nwtminingheritage/

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

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

OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS!

WE WILLIAMS ENGINEERING
CANADA

Avery, Cooper & Co.
Certified General Accountants

