

# LYTTON MUSEUM

## and ARCHIVES

December 2011

420 Fraser Street, Lytton, B.C.

Issue 12 Number 1



*The Inland Automobile and Transportation Company operated between Lillooet and Lytton in 1912. It was owned by David Craig and managed by Walter Keeble.*

### First Cars Along The Cariboo Wagon Road

The Cariboo Wagon Road is, after all, a road. Travelled on by humans, horses, oxen, mules and camels, it is fitting that, in the 20th Century, automobiles also travelled along the Wagon Road.

A few vehicles owned by private freighters shuttled people along the road between Ashcroft and Soda Creek as early as 1907. Then, in 1910, the largest freighting company in British Columbia, Barnard's Express decided to run automobiles on the Cariboo Road in addition to their teams of horses.

Two cars, manufactured by the Winton

Motor Carriage Company, a pioneer US automobile manufacturer, arrived from a Seattle outlet. They had a base cost of \$1500 each (about \$36,000 in today's money) plus additional features such as a battery-operated horn (\$50), kerosene lights (\$75), and special tops (only \$150). The Winton Company provided two drivers who also acted as trained mechanics, and sent them to Ashcroft to help keep them on the road.

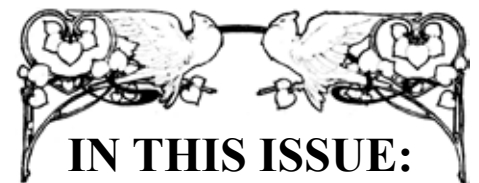
There was not a service station on every corner back then, so Barnard's Express built one at Ashcroft, along with a machine shop, to service the fleet. They made an arrangement with Imperial Oil for a supply of gas and oil in drums out

of Vancouver. The drums were stationed at key locations along the Wagon road between Ashcroft and Soda Creek, the route assigned to the two autos, to provide fuel.

Soon, the company had a fleet of eight of these popular vehicles; advertisements guaranteed departures from May to October, regardless of the weather.

To keep the cars on the road, a large

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*The Inland Automobile and Transportation Company fleet in 1912.*

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crew of mechanics and drivers stayed on staff.

The company cars grossed \$67,233 in 1913 (about \$1.6 million today); however, expenses were also very high with tires alone costing \$15,835 (\$375,000) and in the end they netted only \$3,337

(\$77,000). Barnard's Express soon disbanded the red and yellow vehicles (the company colours) because the risk and investment did not justify such an insignificant profit.

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## Did You Know?

The English “museum” comes from the Latin word. It is originally from the Greek “Mouseion”, which denotes a place or temple dedicated to the Muses (the patron divinities in Greek mythology of the arts), and hence a building set apart for study and the arts, especially the Musaeum (institute) for philosophy and research at Alexandria by Ptolemy I Soter about 280 BCE. The first museum/library is considered to be the one of Plato in Athens.

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## “The Mystery Clock”

This article has been inspired by our museum volunteer, Tom Peglow. To quote Tom: “Since my first visit to the Lytton Museum I have been curious and intrigued by one of the exhibits, a small round clock which no one seemed to know anything about. I turned to the internet and the following is what I found...”

Tom attached the information and photos from the internet, and this is a shortened version of what he found.

It was invented in 1935 and is often called the “tape measure” clock.

It operates by having the round top holding the linear or “tape measure” scale rotate around the fixed base that holds a pointer. The top makes one revolution every 12 hours and keeps excellent time.

It was made by the Lux Clock Mfg. Co., Conn. U.S.A.

The clock does not belong to the Museum, but is actually loaned to us by Rollie Thoms, Lytton, B.C. It was given to him many years ago by a relative who lives in a little town called Hearts Content in Newfoundland, and he has very generously shared it with us.

This is just one of the many wonders that you will marvel at on your visit to our Museum.



*The “Mystery Clock” - generally known as a “Tape Measure Clock”.*



# LYTTON MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIR

### 2011

When I look back on the last eighteen years as president of the Museum and then Chair of the Commission I have a great sense of accomplishment. Not my accomplishment alone, but that of a group of dedicated people working towards a common goal.

From the first day that Joe Chute, then Mayor of Lytton, asked Joan and I to come to a meeting “to see what could be done to turn the old house into a Museum”, to the present, it has been a series of endless projects. Each of these projects has required a different set of skills and has provided its own unique challenges and rewards.

The first meeting of what was to become the Museum Commission was held in the Museum in 1994. Joe had called the meeting and Joan, Hedley Crowther, Tom Wright, Kim Huculiak and I attended. Peggy Chute dropped by to lend her support as well. At that meeting, we decided to take over the Museum project, which had been started earlier, but was abandoned after the rails, speeder shed and signal stand were installed. The building at that point had a ramp entrance and the interior renovations had been started, but left unfinished.

We decided to continue with the project and Tom Wright, Joe and myself volunteered to do the structural renovations, including sealing off the tiny dining room from the kitchen and opening it into what is now the front room.

Hedley had some experience with refinishing floors, so we decided to tear up the old flooring and refinish the hardwood it was covering. That required patching where it was too worn and where the renovations changed the walls, leaving no flooring in strips

across the new rooms.

Hedley and Joan were appointed to select colours for the interior. One of the final decisions of the first meeting was Joe talking me into being appointed President.

During the next several months, the Museum building was transformed. Walls were rebuilt, changing the rooms from residential rooms with closets to exhibit areas, floors were repaired, sanded, filled and varnished, molding was made to help make the interior more period and dozens of other details were looked after. During this time, Val Ablett, a former member of the earlier Lytton Historical Society, joined in and lent her skills and time to the project. The building changed almost daily as the volunteers put their various talents to the task.

In the early part of 1995, we had completed most of the renovations and had what we thought was a nice looking building, but no exhibits. Joe said he thought he knew where we could get some artifacts and soon we had the beginnings of a collection.

We decided to have an open house to show the Village what we had been up to. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be an official record of the Open House, the people who came or what exactly happened, but items started to appear from around the area – small artifacts, offers of larger ones and pictures – lots of pictures.

It became apparent that we needed a system and the skills to catalogue our collection before it got out of hand. At our official opening on the July 1<sup>st</sup> weekend, I talked to Dorothy about joining us as Curator of the Museum.

By 1999 we had over 1000 pictures in our archives, 21 paid members and we published our first newsletter. In 2000 we hosted our first Tea and Talk, the Village had the building painted and we built and installed new windows. In 2001, we hosted a two day Museum Conservation and Emergency Management seminar. Several of us attended including Dorothy, Val, Joan and I. By 2004 we had our outside display area built and had grown to 43 members. In 2005, we put a brick floor into the display shed and filled it with items that could withstand the weather. That helped temporarily with the space problems we were encountering. 2008 saw us come into the internet age with our website and early in 2009 the Village had the building re-sided with HardiPlank. 2010 saw us remove the track beside the building and install new pathways and cement pads for displays as well as the Village obtaining a grant for a new heating/cooling system and its installation. The back yard finally became accessible for wheelchairs. In 2011 we replaced the front fence and gates and poured a new, permanent, cement ramp and porch. We now have 74 members.

All of this history is to illustrate a couple of points:

First, today is a snapshot but history is a movie, that is, when someone comes into our Museum, be they a visitor or new Commission member, they see a snapshot of what is here now. Only by knowing the history of something can they understand what has been done in the past by a group of dedicated volunteers and how far we have come to get to this stage. We, as a group, have built a Museum for the entire community to

*...continued on page 4*

be proud of.

Second, we have come a long way, but today is only a point on our journey. We are planning new projects: getting the artifacts pulled from the river into our displays, building more display space in the back yard, replacing the collections database and even expanding the building itself. Some of these seem easy and some more difficult. Our history shows that each will take a special set of skills and each will take its own time to complete.

Our history also shows that a group of volunteers can accomplish all of these things, as it has in the past, if we continue to participate, each lending a hand with their own skills when they can.

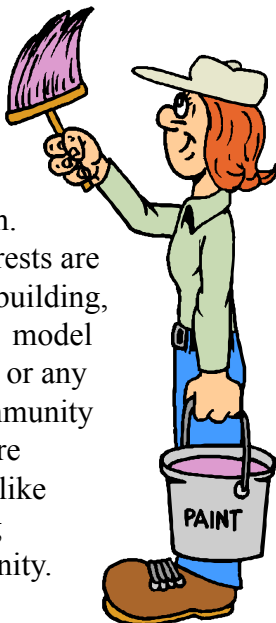
Thank you all for participating in our shared dream.

Richard Forrest, Chair  
Lytton Museum and Archives Commission  
November 29, 2011



## VOLUNTEER!

Lytton has many volunteer groups, including the Museum. If your interests are gardening, building, collections, model railroading, or any type of community service, there are people like you helping our community.



**JOIN THEM TODAY!**

## Curator's Report

**November 29, 2011**

This report will be short, mainly because I've been away from the museum most of the year. Consequently I am relying on the Chairman's report for the museum happenings.

Through the summer we had two very capable salaried workers, thanks to the generosity of the Village council. Our Board contracted the jobs of building two new wheelchair entrances, a new front fence, and also moving the sheds around in the back yard. Our heating system is now electrical instead of oil, again thanks to the Village. Many thanks go out to Sheila and Robert Bolan for caring for the gardens, and to others for doing the "weeding and worrying" necessary to keep the grounds in excellent shape. I understand that most of the Board members were here over the year doing what needed to be done, whether it was cleaning or keeping the computers and internet operating or just checking in once in awhile to see if help was needed.

Since I've been back my right hand person – Marie Heaster – comes in once a week at least to keep me honest! She has reorganized the office and filing systems and assisted with cataloging.

At present, and for quite some time in the future, you will be hearing from us about expanding the museum building. We know there is no money, but we have plans anyway! Marie is presently working on a building sketch and rearrangement ideas that look quite exciting and will give us much more working and display room. You will hear more (trust me!) in the new year.

Marie also searched the Internet and added 5 more years of Births, 15 more years of marriages, 12 more years of deaths and all the Lytton Baptism records available.

Jobs that are currently pending and hopefully can be taken care of soon are

as follows:

Mount the Ferry wheel: we are hoping to extend the outside display shed and the wheel will be mounted out there.

The outside display shed needs a shelf support built.

The new railway shed (new to us!) needs to be cleaned out so that displays can be mounted there.

Set up a centre in corner of office for research – to view videos, DVDs, listen to interview tapes, etc. All our videos are now on DVD's – we just need equipment – Gunnar Merit has kindly done this for us, and has also donated a DVD player.

In summary, although our visitors' numbers are down, we seem to have had a busy year, met many interesting people from far and near (our local numbers are up) and have sent several people researching their family trees away as happy customers.

We've sold several books and have about 10 more copies of Scheideman's "Tragedy on Jackass Mtn" in stock, which will be available for sale at our luncheon on December 14, 2011.



## Did You Know?

The first truly public museum was the Louvre Museum in Paris, opened in 1793. It enabled free access to the former French royal collections for people of all stations and status.

The fabulous art treasures collected by the French monarchy over centuries were accessible to the public three days each "décade" (the 10-day unit which had replaced the week in the French Republican Calendar).



## New Stuff

We received two account ledgers this year that give us a peek into how things were in the 'early days'. These ledgers are both very frail and must be handled with great care.

The one is dated 1908 – 1909 and was used in the A.G. Rebagliati General Store. It records business done with the ranches along the Lytton Lillooet highway, Spences Bridge, Lillooet and town customers. Here we find the McGillvarys, Rebagliatis, Watkinson, Thomas Earl, R.G. Ditcham (St. Georges), Ruddocks, Brophys, even the Vancouver Brewery, and many more. There are notes included from ranchers requesting A.G. to give money to the bearer of the note, with repayment promised by the end of the month. One rancher sent the following:

*“ Dear Sir: Please send me the following by first chance*

*2 sacks flour, 1 sack sugar, 5 lbs tea, 5 lbs coffee, 1 can Dr. Price baking powder, and 1 can best lard.*

*Please send first team, as we are out, and oblige.”*

Prices were something else! 20 lbs sugar \$1.25; 1 pr. Shoes \$1.75; 1 sack flour \$2.00; 12 lbs. cheese \$2.40; 4 lbs. bacon \$.80!

The second ledger is dated 1944 -1948 and is the Cash Journal of the Mountview Bakery, Walter and Mary Sitko, Proprietors. This one lists the many businesses at the time in the Canyon, in Lytton, in Spences Bridge and in Lillooet. It is a marvelous historical record of the stores, ranches and eating facilities in this part of the country, where roads were rough and transportation was iffy at best.

As a change of pace, we also received a lovely brass 'chestnut roaster', although there seems to be some who think it might be a bed warmer – I'm not going to touch that one!



### Lytton Bakery, (c1934)

This photograph shows one of the early Lytton Bakery buildings, on the East side of Main Street, approximately where the Peoples Pharmacy is now. Standing in front of the building are (L to R): Jock Nichol, owner of the bakery, Maureen O'Dwyer, and Edwin (Ted) Haggerstone.

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## Museum Commission Elections Update

On November 29, 2011, the Lytton Museum and Archives Commission held its Annual Meeting.

The Minutes of the November 2010 Annual Meeting and the October General Meeting were read and accepted and the Chair submitted his Annual Report.

The Financial report was received and then the elections were called.

All positions were filled with the sitting executive being re-elected by acclamation.

Dorothy Dodge was appointed Curator for 2012.

Our thanks to Peggy Chute, our Election Committee, Jim Steer who presided over the elections and all of the members who filled the positions.

## KUMSHEEN HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOKS

What years did you attend Kumsheen?

Do you know if there was a yearbook published every year?

Do you know the early yearbooks were called "Two Rivers"?

Do you know the Lytton Museum already has 25 yearbooks, starting from 1956-57?

**But there are big gaps in our collection.**

Because they are so valuable as records of Lytton's history, it would be great to have a complete set.

If you can spare any of the following years, please consider donating them to the Museum.

We need: 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1970, 1971, 1974, 1974, 1976, 1981, 1983,

1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2007 onward.

And if you don't have any to donate, please do come in and look through the ones we do have. You never know who you might rediscover.

*The above article was published in the new Lytton Express Newspaper. Since then we have had donations of 2 yearbooks and a promise of a couple of others. Thank you very much to the people who responded to our plea.*

*Hopefully through this newsletter we will reach others who can add more books to our collection.*

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### Did You Know?

Early museums started as private collections of art and rare or curious natural objects and artifacts by wealthy individuals, families or institutions. These were often displayed in "wonder rooms" or cabinets of curiosities and were not open to the general public.

## Our New Look



Our new fence (at top), our new concrete ramp and new railings (above) and the new, wheelchair friendly entryway to the back yard (right) have made our Museum more appealing and easier for visitors to view our exhibits.

We hope to complete the addition to the back display shed which will enclose the speeders and the Lytton Reaction Ferry wheel. These important pieces of local history will be accessible during Museum hours for visitors to view up-close.

All of this has been made possible by the donations of our many supporters and the fund raising efforts of our volunteers.



# Gold! Gold! Gold!

Gold has been a regular topic in our newsletters. This is fitting because gold was the driving force that formed our province and the rush for gold started here in 1858.

Gold from the Thompson River near Nicomen was the source of the shipment sent to San Francisco by James Douglas, then Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. This shipment resulted immediately (in 1858 terms) in the rush of people northward into the interior of British Columbia to benefit from the discovery, which in turn precipitated the formation of the territory into a colony and the appointment of Douglas as the new Governor.

Ever since then, the rivers and mountains around Lytton have given up gold – sometimes easily but mostly grudgingly. The early miners cleaned the bars up and down the rivers and some earned good money. Most just made an average living after they bought the necessary supplies at the prices being charged by the stores that were set up to supply them.

As with most gold rushes, the retailers, freight companies, saloon owners and hoteliers were the ones that made the certain money. Only a lucky few miners made enough to retire wealthy.

In 2011, most people carry on with life and never give gold a thought. It is, however, still there. The rivers and mountains have not been scoured clean yet. One estimate, when gold was being traded at thirty-five dollars per ounce, was that the Fraser still had a million dollars worth of gold for every mile from Lytton to Yale. With gold at seventeen hundred dollars per ounce, that estimate would be over forty-eight million dollars per mile.

Of course, that is just an estimate and at best a guess, but for those seeking gold everything is a gamble. Tomorrow you just might find that riffle in the rock that

everyone else missed and you may walk out with gold by the pound!

The real story is that most who invest in the search for gold actually lose money in the process. Only a lucky few strike it rich.

Over the years we have found the remains of the Cobeldick dredge at the confluence of the Fraser and Thompson River and the “million dollar” dredge near Kanaka. Both of these were recorded in our newsletters. These dredges represented the ultimate in river mining machinery and in many areas similar dredges were very successful. Unfortunately for the investors, the Fraser was not so kind to these huge floating gold mines. They found gold, but never made their owners wealthy.

We have pictures of many other dredges, mostly smaller “scoop” dredges that lifted the sand and silt one bucketful at a time, but the only remains of these that we have found are the winch at the

rafting takeout (probably from a dredge) and a cable attached to a large rock in the Fraser upstream from the CN bridge that appears to be the anchor cable pictured holding a dredge in place in one of our photographs.

I was therefore very interested when Al Graw told me that the remains of another dredge were on the bank of the Fraser just south of Lytton. I had to see for myself so I arranged to go down to the site with Al.

Certainly there are the remains of a gold operation, just as reported, but it is difficult to determine from the remains we found if the miners actually had a dredge. There is a large straight-six motor with a bore of four and three-quarters inches. This indicates that something was being done that required a lot of power. There is also an a-frame pulley assembly, so some lifting was being done.

*...continued on page 8*



*The huge straight six motor that used to provide power for the gold operation lies derelict against a tree in 2011.*

*Photo courtesy Richard Forrest*



*The huge sluice above has a metal and wood bottom with the necessary riffles. The pipe across the top has holes to spray water down on the gravel as it was travelling through, ensuring all of the black sand and gold would be washed into the riffles.*

*continued from page 7 ...*

We also found the remains of a large sluice and a concentrator, so the site was being seriously worked.

When we were coming back up from the site, we met Richie Adams and a few friends. Richie mentioned that he used to go to high school with a girl who lived at the site, in a house long since burned down. So far, we have not been able to confirm a family name. Further conversations with others led to a very sketchy account of what was going on at the site.

It seems that the area has been a claim for many years, possibly for more than a century, and has had many owners.

The equipment we found probably dates from the 1960s or 1970s.

The general opinion is that the site was modestly successful, giving up enough gold to provide a living for the group working the site but not much more.

One comment was that the owners made more money selling stock to investors than by actually extracting the gold.

We did find out that there is more evidence of the operation spread further along the site than we were able to get

to with our limited time.

A springtime visit to explore the site further might help to confirm if the motor and a-frame were mounted on a dredge.

If we can find evidence that there was a dredge, it will be the third that we have confirmed along the shores of the Fraser near Lytton.



*Richard Forrest  
© 2011*

*The separated material from the sluice would be put into the concentrator (now in two parts, below). The heavy gold would stay in the bottom while the lighter material would work its way up and out at the top as the concentrator spun.*

