

LYTTON MUSEUM

and ARCHIVES

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420 Fraser Street, Lytton, B.C.

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A Piece of Lytton History on the Road Again



The governess cart, being pulled by volunteers Al Graw and Richard Forrest, once again travels the streets of Lytton as it is moved from storage to the Museum for display.

Photo courtesy Dorothy Dodge

The Museum has received a Governess cart from Olga Floyd. This cart was originally bought by Mr. Spencer of Earls court Farm. It was given to the Floyds sometime in the late 1940s or early 1950s and was a featured entry in the Lytton "British Columbia Centennial Parade" of 1958.

The cart has been in storage for many years and was stored with an amazing group of items from the estate of Nan McMillan given to us by Jim McMillan.

The new items include wooden postal boxes, probably from Brophy House, several small items from the Esso bulk

plant Jim's father used to run, several family items including a bicycle, a tri-cycle, a doll carriage, a baseball trophy and many, many more items. We will be detailing some of these items in future newsletters.

We would like to extend a huge expression of thanks to Jim and his family for donating the items to the Museum, keeping them in Lytton and enriching our local history.

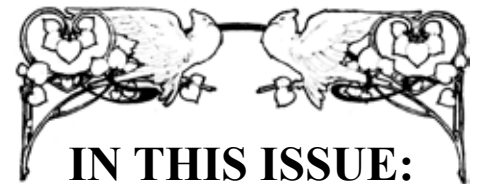
A Governess cart is a small two-wheeled horse-drawn cart.

The Governess cart was a development

from several carts used for excursions and travel during the last half of the 1800s. Generally it was driven by a Governess taking her charges for trips and that is where the name comes from.

The purpose of the Governess cart was to be small and light enough to be drawn by a pony or small horse, and to be of suitable size to be handled by a lady.

It was designed with safety in mind – it



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has a low-slung body, usually with the lower half made from wood and the upper half from wicker. The rear of the body has a low door, allowing easy access to the seating area. Often they were equipped with a rear step to make entry and exit even easier.

These carts were considered to be a great improvement over the “jaunting cart” or “dogcart”, both of which had a poor safety record, and quickly became very popular.

It has two seats, each made to hold two people, facing each other. The driver usually sat in the back of the right seat, in order to keep an eye on the children.

The wheels were fairly large and while research indicates that they were always fitted with mud guards, there are many photos of them without. We do not know if this cart was fitted with mud guards from the factory. The axle was generally dropped, giving a low centre of gravity.

Presently, the cart is in original fair condition, typical of items being stored for extended periods. It needs to be assessed to find out what restoration will be needed. There are many special needs and skills needed if we are to return the cart to like-new condition:



The Cariboo Wagon Road - Jade Springs to Kumsheen Rafting Rafting resort.

Photo courtesy Peter McArthur

the woodwork needs refinishing, as do several metal parts, the rear door needs repair, the wicker needs cleaning and may need some re-caning, the wheels need to be rebuilt.

submitted by Richard Forrest



The Cariboo Wagon Road, built in the 1860s, ran from Yale to Barkerville, more or less following the current highway.

The old road suffered from neglect and was mostly destroyed by the construction of the railways and the highways. There are a few stretches of the wagon road that still exist, including through the center of Skihist Park Campground.

I have heard that a remnant of the wagon road also existed from Jade Springs to Kumsheen Rafting Resort and I had never seen it so I thought it was worth exploring.

On a previous day I walked along the CPR tracks from the north town entrance CPR crossing to Jade Springs. There are a few curious flats and a trail apparently down to the river. There are no signs that the Wagon Road nor old highway could have existed along that section of the CPR, partially because there are a couple of spots where there



The governess cart in front of the hardware store and Floyd's Meat Market during the Centennial Parade in 1958. Jim O'Dwyer and Olga Floyd are riding in the cart.

Photo from Lytton Museum and Archives Art Kent Estate Fonds



is a steep drop off to the river and cliffs above the tracks.

I also explored along the highway and could see no room for a roadbed except about where the current highway is.

At the north end of Jade Springs, across the CPR tracks, there is a large 5 to 10 acre flat. The land has apparently been farmed as indicated by the rock clearing piles and likely building locations, and there is an Indian Reservation at the north end of Jade Springs. I have



not confirmed the ownership nor status of the flat.

However, on to my story.

There is a short access road to the CPR immediately north of Jade Springs. The wagon road appears immediately across the CPR tracks from this access road heading north. It is lost going south but my guess is that it crossed the CPR and approximated the current highway toward the north entrance to Lytton.



The Wagon Road is a nice easy walk - the worst spot is crossing the tracks, but there is no hill climbing.

There is a small amount of plant growth on the road and a couple of short areas where the bank has sloughed down, but the trail is well established and it is a nice walk.

Due to the occasional tree the road cannot be driven on.

The Wagon Road follows the railway but substantially below it — around 50 feet lower — and continues for about 1.5 kilometers. It obviously dropped down to avoid the cliffs north of Jade Springs.

After about 1.5 kilometers, the Wagon Road again crosses the CPR. At this point there is a railway signal access road up to the Highway, but the Wagon Road continues following the railroad, now about 20 feet higher than the tracks.

The land at this access road also surprised me, which is 5 to 10 acres of reasonably flat land.

The Wagon Road continues past this access road, for about half a kilometre.

At this point there is a flat 2 to 3 acre clearing which looks like a homestead, but there is no sign of water nor buildings.

The Wagon Road continues past this flat but quickly peters out due to highway construction above. From this location there is a path to continue the walk to the sharp corner before Kumsheen Rafting Resort, but at times it was almost a scramble.

Here my walk ended.

I know that the wagon road crosses the highway and goes up to Skihist and that the old highway went through Kumsheen Rafting Resort, continuing down to the CPR at the far end. But at this point there is easy access to the Highway, and I decided to return home.

The Cariboo Wagon Road from Jade Springs to Kumsheen Rafting Resort is a gentle easy walk, mostly through a Douglas Fir forest. The road is easy to follow and there are some nice stone walls supporting the roadbed.

You can easily imagine the miners carrying all their winter's supplies on their back and heading north to the goldfields.

Peter McArthur, 2010



Thanks to the Village of Lytton

We would like to express our thanks to the Village of Lytton for their generous support of the Museum.

The Council is in the final stages of approving funding for the replacement of our old oil burning furnace with a new electric furnace and heat pump. This new unit will allow us to maintain much better temperature control in both the summer and winter months.

The Village crew and staff have been especially helpful during the back yard reconstruction.

They planned their regular maintenance — mowing lawns and maintaining the sprinklers, taking the construction into account, and making the whole process much less stressful.



A Good House



This postcard view of the Village from south end of town shows Meghan's house, the Community Hall, Totem Motel, etc.

Village of Lytton Collection

I live in a house, a good house.

I open the front gate and walk to the steps, past the blooms of a rosebush that careful hands planted long ago, past a cluster of poppies that were once a small pile of seeds in my own hand. Up the steps, through the front door. I close the door behind me.

How many other people have stood at this front door, I wonder, and looked around at this house, this good house?

Bill Stack must have, pausing here on the threshold to admire the product of his labour, criticise imperfect angles, admire the lay of the fir floor.

His son Ernie must have, impatiently kicking off his boots and looking through to the kitchen to see his young mother kneading dough.

Five years later, pretty Dora Raspberry must have, staring with wide eyes at this house, this good house, which was so much bigger and brighter than the army barracks in the Hollow.

Her father Fred must have, stopping to wonder whether he would be able to save enough at the school to call the house his own.

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A decade later, Aileen Rebagliati must have, clasping her husband's hand for a moment as he closed the door behind them in this house, this good house.

Bill Stack recorded the first words in the

history of this house with a hammer and the cover of a magazine. King George VI, the Royal Visit. Bertha wasn't sure that he should tear the cover off the *Maclean's* but he had done it and there it was, nailed to the inside of an exterior wall in the room that would be Ernie's. A room with a view of the mountains to make the boy sleep well.

The King was soon covered by insulation but the date would still be there if these new walls came down again. May 15, 1939. The beginning of the story.

Those new walls, old now, came down again sixty years later. King George VI was uncovered and then covered over again with new insulation, new drywall, new colour.

The staircase that little Ernie Stack once crawled up on hands and knees is hidden beneath layers of new laminate flooring, old stained linoleum, and even older plywood; the new staircase is bigger, wider. It would have been easier for crippled Ernie, but not such a steep adventure. Ernie had mountains to climb.



This aerial view of the Village from south end of town shows Meghan's house at the lower right, the Community Hall, and the Rebagliati house, top center, almost hidden by the trees.

Photographer: McPhail, North Battleford - Gwen Miller Fonds

In the 1980s, Jack Regetti added his chapter to the story.

Light fixtures, wainscoting, wood panelling. In a new house on the road named after his father-in-law, he admired circular stained-glass windows, sunbursts; he had identical windows installed on either side of the chimney in the spacious living room that Alonzo Rebagliati had built twenty years before. Sunbursts, transforming northern light into golden fire. Warmth.

I once lived in a new brown house on the road named after John George, prankster, fiddler, farmer.

Now I live in the house that Bill Stack built and those sunbursts cast golden light on my piano.

I pause on the threshold, look around at this house, this good house, and smile.

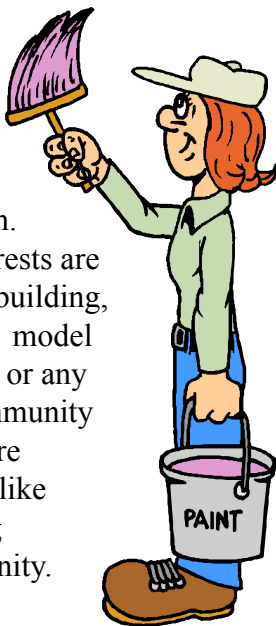
Meghan Fandrich
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VOLUNTEER!

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!

The Discovery of Gold in B.C.

Although not the first location where gold was discovered, the Thompson was pivotal in creating the Fraser River Gold Rush of 1858.

The first discovery of gold in what is now British Columbia occurred in 1833, at a stream that flows into Okanagan Lake. This finding predates the epochal discoveries in California (1848) and Australia (1851), but news of this find did not spread to the outside world. David Douglas, an eminent biologist who discovered this Okanagan gold, died the following year in Hawaii; news of his gold discovery seems to have died with him.

It was almost two decades before the next discovery (1850), this time by local natives in the Queen Charlotte Islands. The find so excited them that they slipped the gold into a canoe, paddled south to the Hudson's Bay Company fort on Vancouver Island, and started bartering with the chief trader. The HBC traded supplies for the gold and encouraged the natives to continue the search for more.

Early the next year, a native woman unearthed a nugget on the beach at Moresby Island, also in the Queen Charlottes. It was a huge nugget and so interested the HBC that they immediately sent a ship to look into the discovery. The *Huron* returned with just a sampling of gold quartz, but that was enough to send more ships to investigate and to mine some of the ore.

The word spread quickly and two American ships from Puget Sound and six from San Francisco sailed north to investigate the quartz vein. The vein (7 inches wide and traceable for 80 feet) was blasted and the ore removed. Unfortunately, this was contrary to the wishes of the local natives who had made the original discovery.

The next location of importance in the search for gold was the BC interior.

Gold extracted by natives from the Similkameen River and from the Deadman River (113.1 km) arrived at Fort Kamloops in 1852.

A Victoria Daily Times story on August 21, 1919, entitled *Gold shipped from here as early as 1853*, relates the firsthand account of a Victoria resident who visited a gold-bearing ship in 1853. Onboard the *Norman Morrison*, the young girl was shown a secret keg full of gold that was on its way to the Hudson's Bay Company in London.

A few years after the 1853 secret shipment to England, the Nicomen natives found gold and carried it to Chief Trader Donald McLean in Kamloops. McLean then rode his horse down to Nicomen, inspected the gold-rich ground near the Nicomen find, and was suitably impressed with the potential for finding more of the precious metal. This probably occurred in 1855.

McLean wrote to Roderick Finlayson, Chief Factor at Fort Victoria, describing the extraction of the gold: "They pick it out with knives, or . . . use their fingers for that purpose." McLean requested "iron spoons to be used by the Indians for the purpose of extricating the nuggets from the crevices in the rocky beds of the creeks" (qtd. in Rickard 11). The spoons would serve as pry bars and tiny shovels, making the natives more efficient in their mining efforts. The spoons arrived, and McLean further encouraged the natives to search for and trade gold.

The next milestone in the history of gold was the discovery of a huge gold nugget on the Thompson River, just downriver from the mouth of the Nicoamen River. Most historians surmise that this took place in 1856; however, the exact year of the nugget's discovery is difficult to verify. A 1938 British Columbia Historical Quarterly article by T.A. Rickard dates the discovery as "probably in

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1852” (9). Some historians have dated it as late as 1857.

Historians also link the Nicomen discovery with a gold find near the Hudson’s Bay fort at Colville, WA, just south of the Canadian border. Writing in 1889, George Dawson, a distinguished Canadian geologist, explained his understanding of the link:

It seems certain that the epoch-making discovery of gold in British Columbia was the direct result of the Colville excitement. Indians from Thompson River, visiting a woman of their tribe who was married to a French Canadian at Walla Walla, spread the report that gold, like that found at Colville, occurred also in their country, and in the summer or autumn of 1857, four or five Canadians and half-breeds crossed over to the Thompson, and succeeded in finding workable placers at Nicomen, on that river, nine miles above its mouth. On the return of these prospectors the news of the discovery of gold spread rapidly. (qtd. in Rickard 4)

The Thompson natives that went to Walla Walla in 1855 or 1856 might or might not have been from the Nicomen Band. It is also difficult to say whether they were referring to the Thompson River gold found near the mouth of Deadman River in 1852 or to that found near Nicomen. Regardless, after the Walla Walla visit by Thompson natives, a small group of people came directly to Nicomen to search for more gold.

Not long after his request for iron spoons, Chief Trader McLean reported that the “Indian tribes... having tasted the sweets of gold finding, are devoting much of their time and attention to that pursuit” (qtd in Rickard 11). Apparently, not every gold collection and shipment from HBC forts was reported; thanks in part to the diligent Thompson natives, however, an official shipment of 300 ounces of gold left McLean’s Fort Kamloops in October 1857.

Governor Douglas considered the discovery of nuggets on the Thompson below the Nicoamen significant enough to mention four years after the event took place. In his private papers of 1860, he wrote, “Gold was first found on Thompson’s River by an Indian ¼ of a mile below Nicomen. He is since dead. The Indian was taking a drink out of the river. Having no vessel he was quaffing from the stream when he perceived a shining pebble which he picked up and it proved to be gold. The whole tribe forthwith began to collect the glittering metal” (qtd. in Rickard 9).

When Douglas’ gold stockpile, coming no doubt from a variety of sources, reached 800 ounces in late 1857, he shipped it all to San Francisco, where it arrived in February 1858. Shipments of gold would normally have gone straight to England, but the timing and destination of this particular shipment were calculated.

Douglas knew that the California gold rush was over and that the idle men who remained there were easy bait for another gold discovery. He anticipated that the news of the precious metal’s arrival in San Francisco would provoke significant interest and the arrival of miners in B.C. These miners would head to the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, establishing settlements in the Interior, which in turn would justify the British claim to the land.

Instead of a reasonable trickle of miners heading north, suddenly the biggest human flood in the history of the new Crown Colony of British Columbia began.

Accounts differ of the number of miners that headed north that year, because no precise figures were recorded. Historian Alexander Begg made an educated guess in 1894 in his often-quoted *History of British Columbia*. He estimated that by July 1858, only five months after the 800 ounces of gold arrived in San Francisco, thirty thousand miners had

arrived in the Crown Colony.

Normally the men would have come overland, following fur brigade trails; however, the US Army was currently waging an indiscriminate war against the natives in the interior of Washington State, and it was extremely dangerous to be anywhere near the area. Therefore, 23,000 men travelled by sea, while just 7000 men worked their way overland.

Begg estimates that by January 1859, all but three thousand of this first influx were back in the U.S. Many returned north the following spring, accompanying a second flood of newcomers.

The Crown Colony of British Columbia was never the same again.

*Bernie Fandrich
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Museum Back Yard Wheelchair Friendly

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able. We have plans to rebuild the tool/speeder shed to look like the old fire hall, which was taken from Lytton in 1958 and never returned.

Finally our public space is accessible by everyone! We hope you will come and enjoy it!

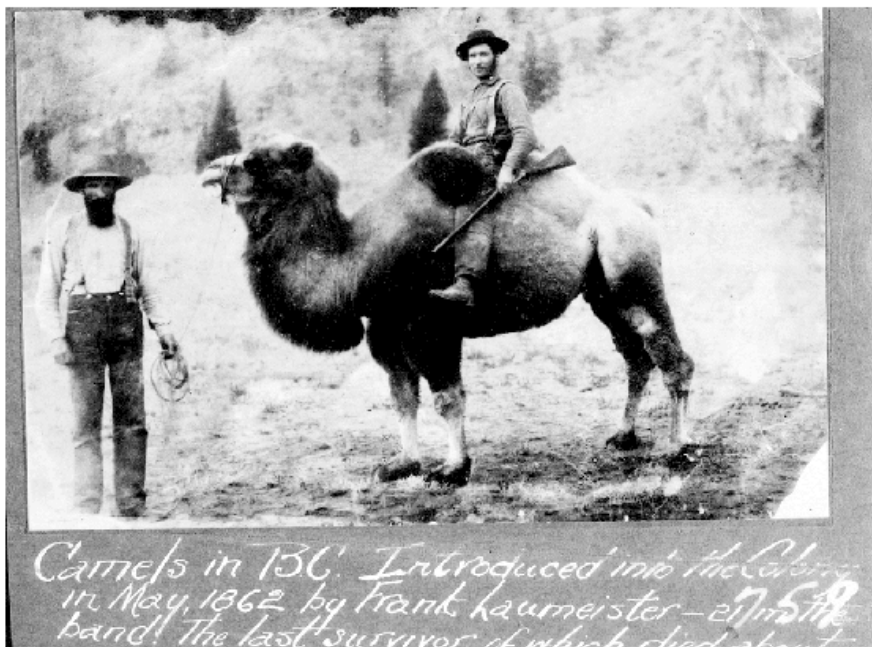
The following people generously donated funds which were used in this project:

Dr. and Mrs. Ian Strang
Dale and Roberta Dodge
June Koropecki
Arthur and Joan Bullen
Angela Greto
Olive Giles
Ruby, Bob and Mike Belknap
Mary and Hugh McCallum
Mr. Frank Rowluck
LFN – Ambassadors
Larry Williams
Isabelle Glasgow
Nick and Darlene Gidney
Georgia Lesley and Alice Munro
Claire Carter
Cornelius and Marlene Hallisey

submitted by Richard Forrest



Here Come the Camels



In 1862, three ranchers from the interior and a businessman from Lytton decide to put their heads and money together and purchase 23 two-humped Asian camels from a camel dealer in San Francisco. They pay \$300 for each one, twice the cost of a good mule.

The plan is to use them as pack animals along the Cariboo Wagon Road. Camels are bigger, faster and stronger than packhorses or mules; the proud owners reason that they can quickly recover their investment. First, because the dromedaries can carry very heavy loads; second, because they walk much faster than the competitors' mules and packhorses; and third, camels stop less frequently to catch their breath.

The camels are loaded onboard ship in San Francisco and arrive in Victoria on May 2, 1862. Then, half the town watches the parade as they are carefully herded from the steamer into a pen in downtown Victoria.

The Victoria Colonist newspaper has a lot of fun with the event and reports that one female camel "fired through her nostrils about two gallons of dirty water" onto an ill-mannered spectator,

and then fled into the wilderness with her calf (qtd. in Ramsey 62).

The remaining 21 camels are shipped via boat and barge to the north end of Harrison Lake where the Douglas-Lillooet Trail starts, and then are marched on up the road to Lillooet.

In no time at all, the Asian camels are loaded with 400 lb. packs and are trudging along the Wagon Road on their way to Barkerville. They have barely begun the journey when one spooks, falls off a cliff and dies. Now there are twenty camels, and the trouble really starts.

A little further along, the camel train and a pack train of mules are nearing each other on the road. Long before they must pass each other, the mules get a sniff of the camels. Panic ensues.

A cook, who rides the bell mule (she is the favourite: the other mules always follow her), has all his kitchen paraphernalia hanging around him. He is immediately bucked off, and the entire mule train stampedes into the woods in hot pursuit of the bell mule and the kitchen gear.

The owners, learning from the experience, douse their big two-humped pets

with perfume to disguise their smell. Guess what? It doesn't help. All the mules and horses encountered along the trail still bolt; even well-trained stage-coach horses go crazy at the smell of a camel, whether it is perfumed to smell like a cheap prostitute or not.

Famous "Hanging Judge" Mathew Begbie also has a bad experience with the camels. His story is later reported in Vancouver's Province newspaper: "Judge Begbie was riding his cayooosh [horse] leisurely along when the cayooosh espied the camel train and despite the most strenuous efforts on the part of the rider carried the judge into the jungle, making havoc of his unmentionables" (qtd. in Ramsey 65). Begbie too becomes a camel-hater when he is no longer consumed by his swollen unmentionables.

Besides their smell, the camels have other problems. Their hooves, designed for sand and not rock, soon crack; some animals go lame. The shoemaker arrives to make special protective camel booties out of rawhide. Guess what? They don't help.

The next problem is their appetites. Camels eat and chew anything and everybody within their reach. Hats, ears, fat noses, pretty noses, and even parts of other camels are all a potential meal. It doesn't matter what it is: in it goes. Muzzles are tried, but they only make the camels angrier.

In addition, when camels are angry, they spit gallons of gooey mucous through their nostrils at anything or anybody they do not like. The average camel is not fond of much. Camel Psychiatrists try to change their behavior but even well-educated psychiatrists cannot teach the old camels any new tricks.

By October, the owners are down to a dozen animals that are still willing to work. However, it is almost wintertime, and they are near Quesnel. No problem: the Asian camels spend their

Continued from page 7 ...

first Canadian winter on the outskirts of town, shuffling around in the snow and eating whatever they can get their mouths around.

The next spring, they are enticed back to Lillooet, but everyone, including the owners, has had enough.

The last straw for the owners is when the stagecoach drivers either threaten or initiate lawsuits to get the two-humped competition off the Cariboo Road. They chant, "The camels must go. The camels must go."

But what can be done with a bunch of ornery camels? There is a lot of money invested in them.

No choice: the camels must go. Therefore, some of the animals simply have their noses pointed in the direction of the wilderness and are kicked in the butt. Several others are adopted by neighbouring ranches; one poor long-haired beast, mistaken for a grizzly bear, is shot by a miner. (Alcohol is not a factor). After that, the miner's name is "Grizzly Morris." (That particular camel doesn't go to waste; instead, he appears on the menu at a local hotel in the form of a dinner special called Grizzly's Bear.)

One of the camel drivers leads three of the friendliest, hardest-working long-hairs to his farm at Westwold to help him clear land. They don't live up to expectations and soon after, 404 pounds (two animals' worth) of well-trimmed camel meat becomes the property of the Hudson's Bay Company in Kamloops.

The third cuddly, long-nosed, big-footed female—The Lady—becomes a family pet. All the farm boys of Westwold, and even an occasional brave farm girl, ride her. The Lady, sheared like a sheep every spring, donates her hair for pillow and mattress stuffing. Finally, in 1905, at a ripe old age that nobody knows for sure, the gentle critter leans against a tree, hangs her head, and dies of old age.

*Bernie Fandrich
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Lions Invade Merritt

The photo below was taken in the early 1950s at the Van Winkle Motel, now the Braeden Lodge.

The sign indicates the light heartedness of the Lytton Lions preparing for a visit to the Merritt chapter of the Lions.



Back row from left to right: Peter Forbes, owner of "The View" Store, Maurice Floyd, Floyd's Meat Market, Jim O'Dwyer, ESSO Distributor, Ifor Lewis, Lytton Hotel, -?, Joe Chute, teacher. Front row from left to right: -?, Louis Melanson, CN Agent, Dan Horning, CP operator; later became the Postmaster, Stan Coles, owner of Van Winkle Motel.

Museum Back Yard Wheelchair Friendly

Thanks to our many benefactors, we have been able to make the back yard of the Museum wheelchair accessible.

As those who have visited the Museum in the past will remember, there were railway rails and ties installed alongside the Museum building since we acquired the building to house the collection.

Over the years, we had a display shed built in the back yard and were able to display our two railway speeders, fire wheel and other artifacts in the back yard. The unfortunate part of this was that the railway tracks alongside the main building prevented any handi-capped access.

With careful planning over several years and funding from several people,

we have replaced a portion of the rails with a paving brick walkway and the step down from the sidewalk is now a concrete ramp. These lead into the back where visitors will find a bench and picnic table to relax at, the speeders, the display shed full of artifacts and the tool/speeder shed. A concrete pad has been poured to hold the dredge pulley rescued from the Thompson River and another to hold the CN tool shed, which was donated by the late Roy Lannon and is to be moved from Botanie Valley to the Museum later this year.

These and other artifacts will be added to our displays as time permits, and the display shed will be extended to cover the speeders as funding becomes avail-

Continued on page 6 ...