

LYTTON MUSEUM

and ARCHIVES

March 2000

420 Fraser Street, Lytton, B.C.

Issue Number 2

MOVIES, MOVIES, MOVIES!



“The Pledge” has really taken over! The excitement of taking part as extras, of seeing Jack and Sean and Vanessa, and all that snow being trucked back and forth, to say nothing of the new “old” buildings at G’wsep Gas station, have kept us all carrying cameras.

As exciting as this is, it is not the first time Lytton has been involved in movie-making.

In 1925 the “Winds of Chance” was filmed here, with Victor Mature,

Ben Lyons, and Anna Nilsson.

The 1968 Centennial Committee put great effort into securing a copy of this movie, but, alas, no prints were to be found. Joe Chute tracked down several ‘still’ photographs and Anna Nilsson sent an autographed portrait. We have copies of all the letters written in the search, just waiting for you to come and see.

In the 1960’s another film was made: “The Rainbow Boys” with Donald Pleasance and Kate Reid.

They used the old Earls court mansion as their base and we used to go over and watch Donald Pleasance rehearsing all by himself, out on the grounds, flailing his arms around and shouting. It was truly hilarious.

It was a really slap-stick, crazy movie, even using Tony Loken’s old shack along the Westsyde road. They had a three-wheeled contraption that would roar through town with every dog in the country chasing it - our big white Samoyed



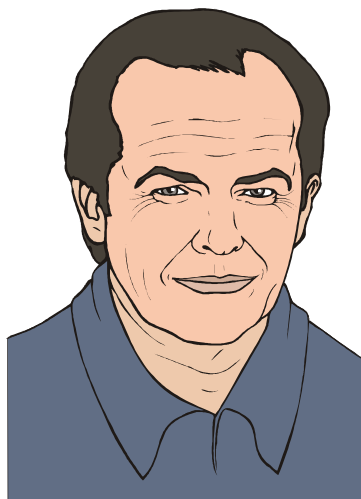
FRANK LLOYD — 'WINDS OF CHANCE' A FIRST NATIONAL PICTURE

also chased it but he ended up on the cutting-room floor!

This movie preserved images of buildings on Main Street. that no longer exist, and also has excellent shots of an old mine up on 3300 in Botanie Valley. The Prospectus for this mine (1917) was donated to the museum by Bud Wells.

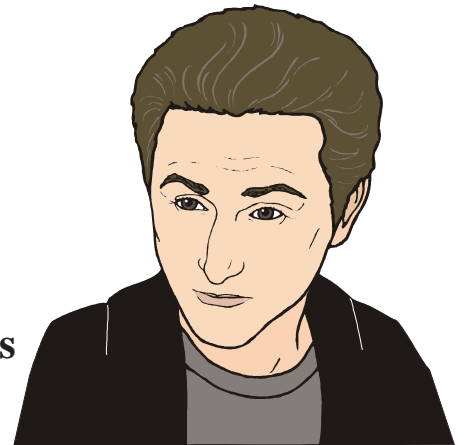
These movies have a certain historical value, if only for the background scenes!

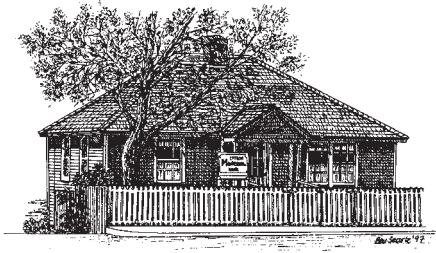
Dorothy Dodge, Curator



**Have you seen these guys
around town lately?**

Jack Nicholson, the star, and Sean Penn, the director, of the major film production *The Pledge*, have been staying in Lytton lately.





MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

We have received Chinese artifacts from Graham Everett and a beautiful embroidered Chinese tapestry from Isabelle Glasgow and her daughter, Nellie Peters.

The Archives now has materials on the Pinehurst Park Fur Farm (Pudney Flats) and family trees for the Baillie/McKnight families and the Loring family, both pioneer families of Lytton.

We have managed to purchase a 3-drawer filing cabinet for our reference files. This cabinet holds many interesting items - the BNS Bank robbery! the runaway Lytton ferry! - and much, much more. Come in and browse through the files.

Our big projects this year will be the completion and installing of the new windows, and painting the outside of the museum building.

Harbour Publishing is putting together an encyclopedia of B.C., and asked that we supply photographs of Lytton, past and present. A selection was sent, so we will see if we make the big time!



Remember this picture from our last Museum Newsletter? We asked if anyone knew this man. Well, someone did!

We received the picture courtesy of Mrs. Gwen Miller, but Gwen couldn't remember the fellow's name.

Mrs. Sylvia Rebagliati tells us she couldn't remember his name either, but she remembered him.

He was sent to Lytton during World War II to recruit people to act as sky watchers, to identify planes flying overhead. He invited volunteers to go to Vancouver for training, and they, on returning to Lytton, would watch for, identify, and report any unusual planes. Sylvia was one of these volunteers.

The war was actually a little closer than any of us thought or worried about. Besides having guards on both railway bridges, Mrs. Rebagliati tells us that incendiary fire bombs were found in our mountains by hunters. They were attached to tiny parachutes and drifted over with the air currents, but as far as anyone knew, no fires were ever started by these contraptions in this area.

HERITAGE WEEK FEBRUARY 21-27, 2000

We had a very busy week at the museum with many visitors.

We started a few weeks earlier with the Grade 9 History class from Kumsheen paying us a visit. A few of the students came in the next week for information on their assignments. On February 21, three classes from Stein Valley School (grades 4-12) came in, looked around and asked many questions. During the week students came in for more information. On February 25, the Kumsheen Grade Sevens and the Grade 8 Socials class came in.

Because our museum is so small we tried to limit the class numbers to 15, and it became very obvious why, when one class came down with 21 students!

Thanks go to Joe Chute, Mona Crowston and Dorothy Share for being on hand to help. We were all very impressed with the excellent behavior of all the students in sometimes very crowded situations.

On February 22, we had our first "Tea and Talk" afternoon. It was very well-attended. We served tea and *lots* of goodies, donated by the museum membership. Our photograph albums were passed around, creating a good deal of interest, and much story-swapping took place. This was lots of fun and very informative.

We hope this will be an annual affair, so if you missed it this time be sure to come next time!

Profile:

Antonio Medori.

Tony and his wife, Nita (nee Rebagliati) built the present Lytton Hotel in 1934. As Tony is an important part of Lytton's history, we feel you might enjoy knowing something of his life.

Tony was born in Pietracamela, Italy, on Nov. 23, 1894. He was the second eldest of 7 siblings and attended school in Italy from age 6 to age 12. He also helped to herd cows, card sheep wool, thresh wheat and cut wood. The 'work ethic' was instilled in Tony at a very young age!

In 1906, at 12 yrs of age, Tony came to America with his uncle. His father, who had been in America since 1900, was working in construction and found Tony a job — \$1.00 per day for a ten hour shift. They went from job to job, eventually doing many jobs from black smithing to the milk business, to running a steam drill, to bartending.

Tony's father decided to go back to Italy for a visit but Tony stayed in America. He worked on a farm for \$10.00 a month, but after a few months decided to go back to construction where he was made foreman over 6 men — he was only 13 years old!

In 1907, his father returned to America and they went west. Tony tried his hand at logging, store clerk, rock drilling, and anything else that he could find. Jobs were hard to



Photographs courtesy Dorothy Dodge.

come by but he always managed to find something. Tony finally struck out on his own and by 1910 he was in Victoria, B.C. He drove taxi for awhile, and when that job died, he somehow scraped up enough money to go to Lillooet. He got a job driving the Lytton-Lillooet Stage, which also took in Pavilion Mountain and Clinton.

In 1916 he became the night clerk for the Lytton Hotel. It was at this time that he met Nita Rebagliati, and 'the spark was ignited'! After a few months, he took another job driving truck for the Pioneer Gold mine, hauling freight over Mission Mountain.

There was a 'pull' to go back to Lytton however, so he returned and set up a taxi business. He also hired on as night clerk for the Globe Hotel, and in his spare time he did auto repairs and wired the Globe Hotel for electricity. Even with all this activity,

he found time to do some serious courting of a certain Miss Rebagliati. Tony and Nita were married Dec. 27, 1921. After a short stint in Shalalth, they settled and built their home in Lytton. In 1923, a son, Kenneth, was born.

Tony obtained the agencies for Imperial Oil and B.F. Goodrich tires. He and his brother-in-law were also partners in the Lytton garage, and with the taxi business, Tony was very busy. By 1926, business was doing well, they had a new car and money in the bank — Tony was walking tall!

Unfortunately, 1926 was also a year of tragedy for Tony and Nita — influenza struck, and took the apple of their eye, Kenneth.

In 1931, a disastrous fire destroyed the beautiful, 60-room Lytton Hotel. Tony's home and many other buildings in Lytton were destroyed. Nita was expecting again, so they immediately rented the Stevenson house while they rebuilt. They ran the businesses from their home and did not slow down one bit.

By late 1934, the car business had dropped off. They had previously bought the lot where the Lytton Hotel had been, so after much discussion they decided to build the New Lytton Hotel. Their good friend, Col. Victor Spencer, helped them enormously, and the hotel was built, furnished, and on its way to becoming very successful.

Nita and her nephew, Stanley Keeble, ran the hotel while Tony



concentrated on the car dealership and the garage. However, the hotel was so busy that he eventually had to give up both these enterprises and work in the hotel.

Tony and Nita ran the New Lytton Hotel from 1934 to 1956. They were solid community supporters and Tony's pride and joy was the Men's Baseball team. He supplied trophies for the tournaments and always put on the victory dinners at season's end.

Have you ever wondered how bandages were made before artificial gauze? They were cut from strips of cloth, and wound into rolls in preparation for use. We have a hand bandage winder in the museum!

Would you like to see how big a trophy elk rack is? Ours would be a top-ten world record, except that it

In 1955, the decision to sell was made. It was very hard on them, but the business was becoming too much. In 1956, they sold and moved to North Vancouver, to be near their daughter and her family. Not being one to sit still, Tony went back to visit his mother in Italy (the first time in 50 years), and Tony and Nita did a great deal of travelling. Tony took up lawnmower repairs, river fishing, woodworking and gardening, and, of course, baby sitting his grandchildren.

was road-kill! It is now beautifully mounted and on display.

Where did the Sunday organ music come from in the remote churches of the 1850's? Check out our still operational, collapsible pump organ, which was carried by horseback to church services around the area.

We attended Tony's 100th birthday in 1994, and he was still as spry as ever, confounding his neighbours with his incredible energy. He was still fixing their lawnmowers and cutting his own grass.

On October 10, 1996, at the age of 102 years, Tony passed away. His wife, Nita, passed away on March 8, 2000, at 103 years old. We miss them both.

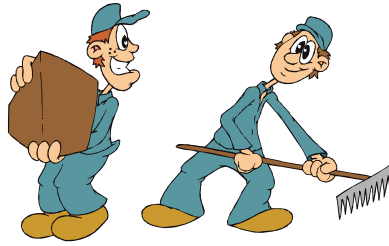
We could all take a very large lesson from this man. No matter what befell him, he always carried on, he always found work, and even with only six years of formal education, coming to a country where the language was unknown to him, broke most of the time, he persevered, and came out on top, a most loved and respected gentleman.

Dorothy Dodge - Curator



DID YOU KNOW...

- ✓ The Museum and Archives Christmas market luncheon in December, 1999, raised over \$300 for the museum? Many thanks to all who participated.
- ✓ The Museum now has a paid membership of 21 people? Memberships are available at the museum.
- ✓ We have the sharp-shinned hawk back from the taxidermist? Stuffed, of course! Come and see him.
- ✓ We have a framed Chinese tapestry that is 140 years old? This beautiful tapestry is compliments of Isobelle Glasgow and Nellie Peters.



The Annual Cemetery Cleanup is on Sunday April 2.

Everyone is welcome to volunteer
- we need all the help we can get!



The youngest and oldest visitors to our Heritage Week "Tea and Talk" — Austin Thoms and Nellie Russell. (Austin is the one carrying refreshments, Nellie is his great-grandmother.)



The afternoon was a real success, with over twenty visitors.

Read more about it inside.

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420 Fraser Street, P.O. Box 640
Lytton, B.C., V0K 1Z0

