

LYTTON MUSEUM

and ARCHIVES

February 2006

420 Fraser Street, Lytton, B.C.

Issue 7 Number 1

Lytton's Old Buildings



Rebagliati freight shed (circled) in 1890, and being torn down in 2006 (inset).

This year's National Heritage Theme is 'Old Heritage Buildings'. Although not heritage buildings, Lytton has a few old buildings left and I thought it might be interesting to talk about them.

Lytton lost many old buildings over the years due to fires, especially the fires of 1931 and 1949. Therefore I have limited what I'll refer to as old buildings to those that pre-date 1931. Rumour has it that the Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a 'walk around' this summer during the tourist season, so watch for the notices. We have a very interesting history for such a small community.

The first building will be the old Rebagliati freight shed at 339 Main Street. I'm a bit late on that one, as it was

torn down January 14, 2006. It was in danger of collapsing and had become a hazard.

For those of you who still have your copy of "Lytton, A Story in Pictures", on page 21 the old shed is right in the centre, complete with wooden sidewalk and roof. This photo is dated 1890. The shed was owned by the Bernardo Rebagliati family, who first came to Lytton in 1888. This shed served as a way-station for goods being imported into Lytton as well as for products being exported from the area around the world.

Next to the freightshed (339 Main) stands the 'BR House'. Bernardo Rebagliati hired local carpenter Charlie Mills to build this beautiful home in 1913.

The BR Rebagliati family lived there until the last of the descendants left ca 1960's. There have been many changes to the building since then.



Bernardo Rebagliati House on Main Street.

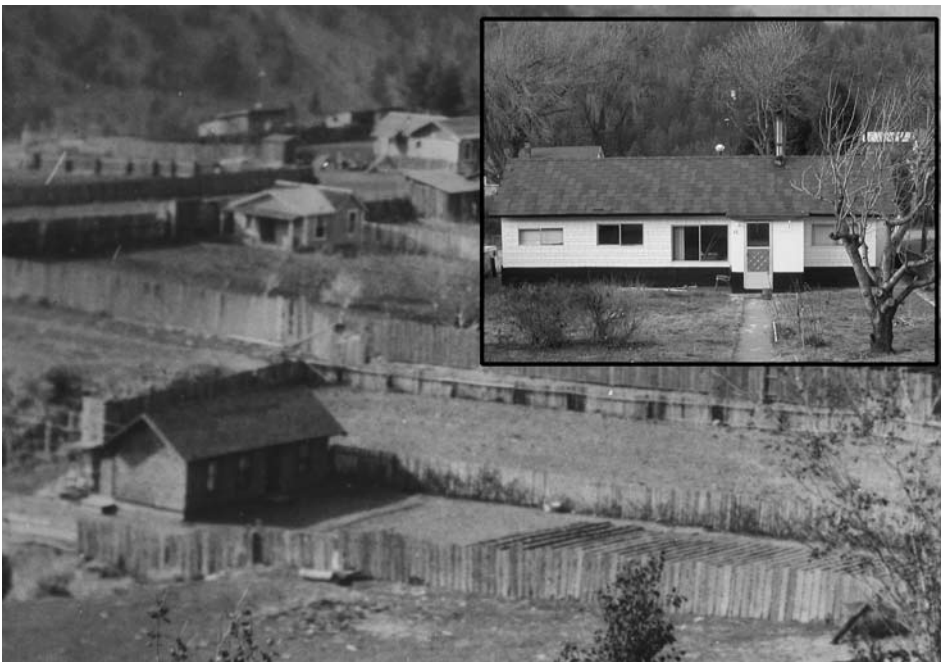
On the west side of Main Street, starting at the south end, structures built from ca 1900 -1925 include the house at 44 Main and the old Seward house at 68 Main. Les Seward hauled an old bunkhouse on to this property (ca 1920's) and it has been added to many times over the years. His descendants, the Devery Loring family still own the property.

At 164 Main, a man named Jim Murphy built this little house in 1917. He lived there after retiring as a prospector.

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Seward/Loring House in 1912 (lower left) and in 2006 (inset).

Farther up Main street (424) there is a fence surrounding a roof!

Only in Lytton!

This was the site of the old Gammie General Store, nee Anthony General store, nee Buie General Store. Gammie's store burned down twice but the gold scales were always saved and now reside in the museum. The store was never rebuilt. The property was sold, a roof was built over the basement area and the property was fenced.



Murphy House on Main Street.

At the north end of Main St. we find the St. Barnabas Anglican Church, built in 1922. The inside of the Church was renovated several years ago because of an infestation of termites. Yes, we do have termites here, and black widow spiders, and rattlesnakes!



St. Barnabas Church on Main Street.

Starting from the north end of Fraser Street and going south, we have the Crowston residence at 541 Fraser. It



Crowston House on Fraser Street.

was built about 1920 and has had additions over the years and has been recently renovated. Memory fails us as to who built the house, but a man named Drewett lived there for many years. His job was to deliver the mail to and from the CPR station four times a day!

St. Ann's Catholic church is next on our list. It was built in 1912, burned down later that same year, and was rebuilt in 1913.

Continuing south, we come to the Brophy House, now called the Totem Motel at 320 Fraser.

Michael Brophy owned the Van Winkle Mine across the Fraser River. He built this house in 1911-1912, and Mrs. Barbara Brophy ran the post office from the lobby. She was Lytton's postmistress for 44 years and retired in 1948 when she was 85 years of age.

Next door (280 Fraser) is the old



J.H. Anthony Store in 1930 and in 2006 (inset).



St. Ann's Church on Fraser Street.

Sutherland place, built in 1912-13, and now owned by Mr. Bains. This building has changed hands several times, and has had many renovations. The floor plans for the Brophy and Sutherland buildings are essentially the same and

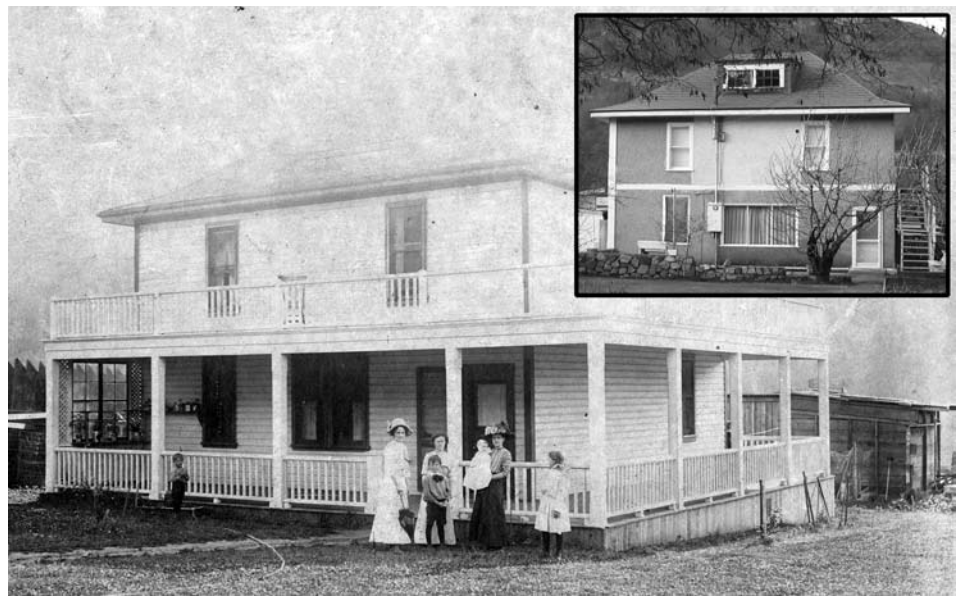


The Totem Motel, formerly Brophy House.

one wonders if the resident carpenter, Charlie Mills, also had a hand in the construction.

At the corner of Fraser and 2nd Ave. sits the old Taverna House and kitty-corner across the street at 224 Fraser lives Lytton's oldest citizen, Mrs. Nellie Russell.

Mrs. Russell says that the Taverna family built both of these houses and actually owned most of the property in that area (ca 1900's). The Russell family moved into the house at 224 Fraser



The Sutherland House then (1910-1915) and now (inset).



The Taverna house on Fraser Street.



The Russell house on Fraser Street.

in the 1940s.

Across Fraser Street, from 2nd Ave to 3rd Ave, there were four houses built by Clarence Rebagliati. Only two, 243 and



One of the Rebagliati houses on Fraser Street, built in the 1920s.

279 Fraser Street, are said to be original and built in the 1920's or 1930's.

If anyone out there knows more about these places, please let us know!

Now let's go up Station Hill from Main Street towards the CPR. The old Whitley house (625 Station) was built in the 1920s by Mr. Whitley when he was the CPR station agent.

Next is the old Allen house at 665 Station road. Mr. Allen was the Shell Oil distributor for Lytton and he built this house in the 1920s.

Mr. Allen kept two lawn bowling greens at the front of his yard, which are still evident to this day.

At 725 Station road there is the old Keeble house, built by Walter Keeble (ca 1920).



The Allen house on Station Street.



The Whitley House in the 1920s and now (inset).

Walter ran the Automobile Transportation business in Lytton, and later on his son and daughter-in-law ran Keeble's General Store where the ambulance station is now, at Station and Main St.

Some of these buildings still look much the same as they did nearly 100 years ago, but most of them have been added on to, and do not look anything like the original.

We have tried to stay within the time frame 1900 to 1925, so maybe the buildings you think we've missed are not as old as they look! However, in some cases we are relying on old memories,



The Keeble house on Station Street.

so if you disagree with any dates or memories, or can add any interesting facts or anecdotes, please let us know. It is important to keep our history as true to fact as possible.



MUSEUM NEWS

"Thank you" to all who attended our Annual Xmas Luncheon in December. It was a great success, as the hum of much conversation attested to.

Also, many thanks to all those who renewed their museum memberships. Memberships for 2006 are \$5.00 and can be purchased at the Museum or from Joan Craig at 455-6658.

Speaking of memberships, we have several families who have recently moved

to Lytton that we would really welcome to our membership.

We are all volunteers and there are many ways to keep everyone busy. We really need interested history buffs that would help us keep the museum open a few hours more a day or week, we have need for volunteers that like making up displays, and we have lots of 'muscle work' or carpentry for the men.

If you are interested, please contact Dorothy Dodge at the museum (from 10 am to 1pm most weekdays), or phone

455-2268 and a visit can be arranged at a more convenient time.

We had a wonderful class visit in January from Sheryl Sadorski's Grade 3/4 class from Stein Valley School.

There were 12 children, each with a worksheet and a purpose! They were very curious about everything and a joy to work with.

Ms. Sadorski is to be congratulated on having such a well prepared, well-behaved group of students.

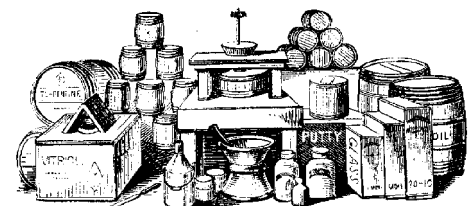
A new item has come in - a very interesting pair of snowshoes, said to have been hand-made by Mr. Art Loring of the old Loring Ranch. We estimate the date to be approximately in the 1930's.

At the risk of repeating myself (this has to be the third or fourth request!) I'm still looking for pictures of the following for a display. These can be copied at the museum and returned to you immediately : (from the 1934 era)

John Michell	George Thomas
Harry McKay	Henry McCarty
Jimmy Stone	Arthur Skuki
William Sampson	George Wish

The Museum Commission Executive for 2006 is:

Richard Forrest	Chair
Joe Chute	Vice-Chair
Irene Steer	Secretary
Joan Craig	Treasurer
and:	
Dorothy Dodge	Curator/Archivist



LYTTON MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES CURATOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

November 29, 2005

This year we had over 700 visitors to our museum, down considerably from last year. Our visitors were from all over the world, which makes working in the museum interesting and exciting.

We were very fortunate to have a major helping hand from the Lytton First Nations, as they funded our summer student this year. This enabled us to hire Bryce Johnny, a Stein Valley student in grade 11. He was definitely a big ray of sunshine for us, hard working, a quick learner, the tourists enjoyed his humour and knowledge of the community, the kids loved him, and I certainly could not have done without him. Many thanks to Lytton First Nations!

The Village of Lytton continues to support the museum fully. We rely on them for building expenses, maintenance needs and the Village crew is always there when we need them. The museum building and grounds require a great deal of work, and we just do not have enough volunteers to keep everything up.

Last year, with Village help, we were able to add a new museum display to our grounds. This year we laid most of the bricks for the floor and next Spring we hope to have displays up for viewing. We have some interesting items in there now, but we have not had the time to organize properly. We also need to winterize this building - anyone like to help?

We have received several research requests this year, including genealogical and historical information. You would be amazed at the number of requests we get for information on St. George's School!

We published 3 newsletters this year, including articles of Native dancing,

pioneer trappers, sunken dredges, and lots of other good stuff! These newsletters are available for sale at the museum, either by single edition or in book form.

We now have 1667 photographs in our collection. The latest photograph is a very interesting image of an old Chinese store, run by a man called Tun Kee. This store was situated on the west side of the Fraser, between the ferry road and the entrance to Earls court. There are eight full binders of copied photographs available for your perusal.

We really rely on the generosity of our community when it comes to volunteering, and we have many generous people! Thank you's go to Lois Brooks and Marie Heaster, Valerie Ablett for her faithful gardening, Delores Lines for recovering the wicker chairs from the hospital collection, Eli Makiev for all his shelf building, Wayne Brooks and Wayne Sutherland for answering my calls for help, and of course, the faithful museum Board members for all the work they do. If I've missed anyone, and I probably have, please chalk it up to a Senior's moment - I have many!

The museum has received some very generous donations this year, from former Lyttonites and from local people. These enable us to plan for display cases and other needed materials. We are very grateful. One of these donations was given specifically to bring us "into the 21st century" and install internet! We have internet now - all I have to do is learn what to do with it!

A little unwelcome excitement came our way this year. Someone tried to break in to the museum, not just once, but twice! We still have not figured out what they could possibly have wanted in a museum, but they couldn't make

it past the airconditioner - maybe they were trying to steal that. It was pretty hot here at that time!

The museum has received many more articles this year: snowshoes made many years ago, an old stove, an old wooden icebox, a neat Globe Hotel register from 1912, a big metal milk can, and so much more. We also have boxes of CNR artifacts stored in the Parish Hall that will be moved to the museum in the Spring, also a box of Native artifacts taken from the area in the 1920's and returned from Penticton, and let's not forget the three branding irons we have not yet identified!

We also received a generous donation of time and cost from Peter McArthur, who finally tracked down the movie, the Winds of Chance, shot here in 1925.

This year we have asked that the Village include in their capital budget the painting of the outside of our building. We are also looking into a better form of fire protection for our building, but this is a very expensive item.

Our only form of fundraising is our museum Christmas Luncheon which has always been very successful. The posters are already up for our Luncheon next month (December 8) so please come — we serve an excellent lunch, and the Hospital Auxiliary has their Bake Sale at the same time - all in the Parish Hall.

Finally, our Annual Heritage Tea and Talk last February was very successful, and a lot of fun. (Our Tea and Talk afternoon this year will be on Wednesday afternoon, February 22nd, at the Museum) Everyone is welcome.



How Much Have We Changed?

In the late 1960's residents of Lytton were 'up in arms' about the ferry service being provided by the Provincial Government.

Here is Part One of an article by Reporter Clay Stacy from a 1967 Kamloops Sentinel Newspaper.

LYTTON – This Fraser Canyon community of 400 is two blocks wide, six blocks long, and really not much bigger than a football field.

Long ago its citizens nicknamed it "2x6".

The Village is squeezed between the Canadian Pacific Railway and Trans-Canada Highway on one side, and the Canadian National Railway and the Fraser River on the other. It almost appears as if the transportation lines serve to keep outsiders out and insiders in.

The boundaries of Lytton are not likely to expand nor are they likely to contract. It's not likely many new businesses will start up: it's not likely many of the old ones will shut down. It's not likely many new faces will move in: it's not likely many of the old ones will move out.

Lytton exists today almost the same as it did 50 years ago. And almost the same as it's likely to exist 50 years from now.

Although sparse housing developments are beginning to sprout up outside the Village limits, the town itself has grown almost to its full potential. Authoritative sources claim there are only 14 vacant lots available for development.

Across the turbulent Fraser lies a scattered Indian settlement of 260 residents who depend primarily on Lytton for their jobs, groceries, education and recreation.

The Indian settlement has stood for many generations. There are many deserted homes, and those that survive are

served by a primitive irrigation system installed by the Indians themselves.

None of the Indian homes are served with electricity, gas or water. And there is only one telephone to serve the entire community. The telephone is located near the west end of a quarter-mile-long CNR bridge which spans the Fraser about three miles downstream from a cable ferry.

The bridge and ferry are the only means of getting from one side of the river to the other.

Both sides of the river are flanked by rugged mountains which cast long shadows into the valley.

To the unfamiliar, Lytton looks about the most peaceful and contented place on earth. Yet during the last six months the Village has recorded a story with many dramatic chapters. It has been like a continuing television movie."

Village Familiar with Grief

by Reporter Clay Stacy

Part two of an article from a 1967 Kamloops Sentinel Newspaper.

Few weeks have gone by without the tiny community producing headlines. It has experienced fatalities and fires, murders and drownings, protests and boycotts, and goodness knows what else. It has shared tragedy, grief, and hardship.

Centred around the history of tragedies has been a determined struggle for better ferry service. Community groups have pleaded with the provincial highways department, parents have kept their children away from school and mothers have picketed the Kamloops home of Highways Minister P.A. Gaglardi.

The efforts of the community to date have only been in vain, although Mr. Gaglardi persists he is still looking into

the matter.

The community claims the ferry is antiquated and although a new bridge would be a welcome gift, residents would be satisfied with even an extension of the operating hours as a start.

The ferry operates daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., which is a sore point with the west side Indian residents who resent an arbitrary business and social cut-off. It is possible to arrange for a special after-hours run, although chief operator Johnny McKay is unenthusiastic about the idea since he works 12 hours a day as it is.

For about two months each year during high water, the ferry is closed down altogether. The only way of getting across the river is by walking a three-foot-wide causewalk on the CNR trestle.

The walkway itself aggravates all who must cross it. Because it is so narrow, it makes carrying groceries very difficult. And carrying five-gallon pails is an almost impossible chore.

In order to get to the bridge causewalk, residents must first cross the railway tracks. This often poses an awkward situation when lengthy freights sometimes block the path for as long as half-an-hour.

More than once during high water when the ferry is out of operation, children from the west side have been late for school because a train stood in their way.

One such incident was the spark that mustered residents to fight for a better ferry. Four small children who had waited 20 minutes for a train to move on, so they could get to school, decided to cross the tracks underneath the train. Seconds later the train began to move. And thus started the movement for a better ferry."

Town Seeks Better Service

by Reporter Clay Stacy

Part three of an article from a 1967 Kamloops Sentinel Newspaper.

A public meeting was held and parents decided to have their children boycott school classes. On June 11, only days prior to final examinations, the boycott occurred. At Lytton Elementary School, 183 were absent from an enrollment of 296. And at the high school 77 of 141 stayed away.

Highways Minister Gaglardi promised the people he would visit their village and look at their problem. When he failed to show up a large delegation of mothers from an "anxious mother committee" picketed his Kamloops home.

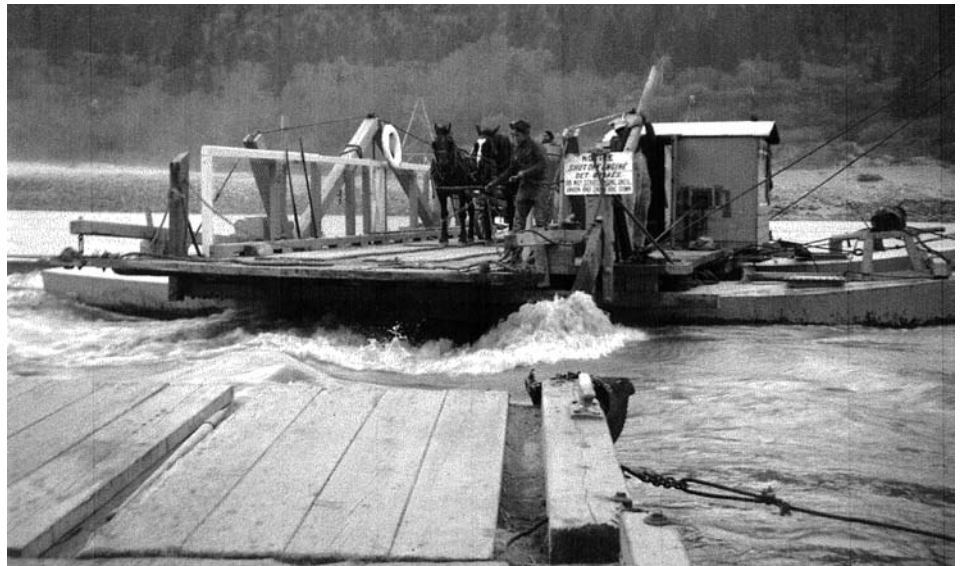
Following the mothers' protest, several telegrams were sent to the Minister. Mr. Gaglardi's only reply was that he would meet with the Lytton people in his office in Victoria.

Then, on July 21, the community was shocked into stunned disbelief. Four persons lost their lives when a car in which they were riding plunged off the ferry and into the river. The car apparently lost its brakes, jumped two wooden stop blocks (four inches high and rounded on all sides) and snapped through a chain which was the last means of protecting any vehicle from going into the river.

The incident brought a new wave of protest and the following day Mr. Gaglardi flew to Lytton by helicopter. The next day the Minister admitted that Lytton had a definite problem which needed looking into.

Action committees from the community immediately put on the brakes of further protests, to give the Minister sufficient time to work out some solution for improving the ferry service.

But the solution never came and citizens again began to apply pressure. Mr



The Lytton Ferry across the Fraser River ca. 1959.

Gaglardi's reaction was that he was still looking into the matter.

During the struggle for a better ferry, Lytton has been kept in the news with one tragedy after another. Apart from the four drownings, two persons (man and woman) were killed in separate incidents when struck by trains on the CNR bridge; two ferry operators were murdered on the ferry; the chief ferry operators house (located near the ferry) burned to the ground; a 13-year-old boy who sustained brain concussion after falling 25 feet from a swing was carried almost three miles to hospital on a brother's back because the ferry was not operating.

Residents make it clear that Mr. Gaglardi was not responsible for the mishap, but he is responsible for not allowing them a better ferry service.

The latest development on the ferry hassle was a recent announcement by Kamloops Labor Council that a public forum would be held Dec 21 at the Canadian Inn (Kamloops) regarding the ferry question.

Lytton people claim they will not stop fighting until their ferry service is improved. And they are optimistic it will be improved.

"...The ferry operators are now wearing sea captains hats," said one man. "which is more than they had when this fight started."



Museum Newsletter books

We still have several copies for sale. (\$15.00) These books are a compilation of the first five years of Lytton Museum newsletters, and contain much about the history and people of Lytton. They make wonderful gifts!

Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest

This contest has been running for many years and apparently the TNRD library system is involved.

Our own librarian, Georgia Lesley, ran the contest in 2005, so if you are interested, go to the library for details.

One of our own Lytton citizens, IRENE BUTTULS, sent in an entry and got Honorable Mention! Because the entries are copyrighted we can not print her entry here, but check with the library or the internet.

The entries are hilarious and you, too, could become famous!

Did you know..?

I had an interesting phone call from a Lytton citizen of the past, prompted by the Hot Spot controversy he read about in the Province paper!

John-Fife Spencer, son of Col. Victor Spencer, formerly of Earls court, told me the article got him to thinking of the old times.

Among other things, he spoke of how Thomas G. Earl used to ship his apples across the Fraser River before the railway came through. He used a scow (boat) with a sail; they would wait for a good wind, load the boat with boxes of apples, and away they would go.

He also mentioned the old Chinese store on the Westside, run by old Tun Kee. Apparently a man named George McGee would buy vanilla extract from Tun Kee, and that on June 28, 1928, a man walked in and shot 81 year-old Tun Kee dead.

(Since hearing about this, Mrs. Chute



The Tun Kee Chinese store on West Side between the ferry and Earls court in 1930.

brought in a photo of this old store, found in her mother's Estate papers.)

John also told me there used to be an Indian burial tree on the Earls court property.

He also told me about the time his mother and sister nearly drowned on the Lytton ferry. Apparently the river

was pretty wild, and the hatches on the ferry had been left open - the ferry sank, but the cables did not break, and the passengers were able to get to shore.

Lots of details missing here! Can anyone add to the above? Does anyone remember the Indian burial tree? the old Chinese store?

Kinsella to read in Lytton February 17, 2006

W. P. Kinsella has published over 30 books; six novels, fifteen books of short stories (245 in all), two books of poetry, two of non-fiction, plus several chap-books and collector's editions.

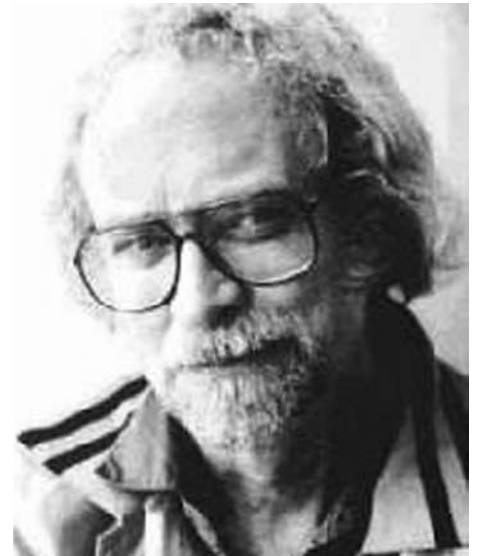
He is best known for his baseball writing, and for his eight collections (115 stories in total) told in the voice of Silas Ermineskin. His novel *Shoeless Joe* (one of the most honored novels in Canadian History) was turned into the Academy-Award-Nominated movie *Field of Dreams*. His book *Dance Me Outside* has also been made into a feature-length movie. A story in *Red Wolf*, *Red Wolf*, "Lieberman in Love," won the Academy Award as best Short Feature in 1996.

Several other properties, including *The Iowa Baseball Confederacy*, *The Dixon*

Cornbelt League, and his most recent novels, *If Wishes Were Horses*, and *Magic Time*, have been optioned by Hollywood. He has been awarded honorary degrees by Laurentian University and The University of Victoria.

Kinsella received the Order of Canada, and received the Order of BC in 2005. He has been Distinguished Alumni Lecturer at the University of Iowa. He is a winner of The Stephen Leacock Medal for Humor for his book *The Fencepost Chronicles*.

Kinsella has three grown daughters and four grandsons. He lives in Yale, BC with his wife Barbara Turner Kinsella, on an acre of land overlooking the Fraser River. He travels extensively across North America performing readings and telling stories at colleges, schools and



conventions. He is an avid Scrabble player and attends tournaments all across North America. He also reads every First Novel published in Canada and writes a column for *Books in Canada Magazine*. He is also a weekly columnist for the *Vancouver Province*.