A Walking Tour of Yukon's Capital
WHITEHORSE HERITAGE BUILDINGS
A Walking Tour of Yukon’s Capital

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Cover photo shows Front Street north of Main decorated for holiday celebrations 1902 or 1903. Businesses from left to right include Hotel Grand, White Horse Hotel, Arctic Cafe and Arctic Trading Company.
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Come . . . walk with us.

Welcome to the real Whitehorse . . . the city of people and places and a golden past . . . a city of memories which has much to offer the visitor who is willing to get off the bus, out of the car and onto the feet for an hour or two of pure history.

Walk with the young bank clerk who composed his first verses strolling along the Yukon river bank in the evening. You will find a bronze reminder of Robert W. Service downtown today, and in the Old Log Church Museum you can see his handwritten minutes of the Vestry meetings there.

Walk with Bishop Stringer, Bishop Bompas . . . walk with George and Martha Louise Black, whose retirement home on First Avenue is gone, but whose memory is kept green in the library and archives, street names and mountains. Walk with the Taylors and the Drurys, whose families still live here unto the third and fourth generation. Walk with the Klondikers and the Highwaymen who broke trail to the gold creeks and the Alaska Highway of today.

Walk along the old tramline from Canyon City, past outlines of log cabins and campfires, listen to the voices of the rivermen and native guides and hunters . . . it's all there waiting, for you.

We congratulate the people who have put this walking guide in your hands; Bill MacBride would have been pleased too!

Flo Whyard
Mayor
History of Whitehorse

Euro/American settlement of the Whitehorse area began in 1897. That summer, Norman Macauley began construction of a wooden tramway on the east bank of the Yukon River to enable stampeders to portage around Miles Canyon and the White Horse Rapids. By 1898, 25,000 people had entered the territory hoping to make a fortune in the Klondike. During the first few days of ice breakup in that year, 150 boats were wrecked and five men were drowned at Miles Canyon. A small town called White Horse City sprang up at the northern terminus of the Canyon and White Horse Rapids Tramway Co. The townsite provided a place for miners and speculators to rest and to make preparations for the final stretch to Dawson City. It was unceremoniously dubbed, "the place where people stopped to wash their socks."

In July 1900, the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway from Skagway, Alaska to White Horse City was completed. Its terminus however was on the west side of the river. The potential for development of a permanent settlement at the rail-
Whitehorse 1900.
A virtual tent-town.
road terminus was immediately apparent. During the winter of 1899 residents of White Horse City moved across the river to the new settlement of “Closeleigh” at the railhead. “Closeleigh” was named after the Close brothers of London, England who were major stockholders of the White Pass and Yukon Railway. The completion of the railroad forced Macaulay’s tramline to close down after 2½ years of operation. The rail terminus was referred to as Closeleigh for a brief period until the government announced that White Horse City was already established at the rail terminus in the area, and so the new townsite would also be called White Horse.

Until WWII, the existence of Whitehorse depended on decisions made by the White Pass and Yukon Route Corporation. Their rail division was the only system for moving large quantities of goods and people into the territory and Whitehorse was its major operational base. The settlement was a company town. The White Pass river division, the British Yukon Navigation Company or B.Y.N. Co., was formed in 1900. It had more than 20 sternwheelers operating during its peak years and controlled transportation from Whitehorse to Dawson. The Royal Mail Service, which carried mail, freight and passengers on the Overland Trail from Whitehorse to Dawson until
1921, was purchased by the B.Y.N. Co. in 1901. It was a scheduled horse-drawn stage service that operated during fall, winter and spring when the Yukon River was frozen. The W.P. & Y.R. Corporation provided jobs and attracted other commercial venturers to the community. New settlers who required land had to purchase or lease it from the British Yukon Land Co. (B.Y.L. Co.), another subsidiary company created by the Corporation in 1900. It was not until the 1950s that ownership of the streets was transferred from the B.Y.L. Co. to the City administration.

Whitehorse outlived the Goldrush due to the discovery and development of copper mines in the vicinity from 1900 to 1915. At this time the community began to supply goods and transportation to the silver, lead and zinc mines in the Mayo area. The tourist industry was also beginning to be explored and cultivated by the W.P. & Y.R.

WWII brought an economic revival to the city. As the transportation hub of the Yukon, Whitehorse was the logical site for the American Army to locate their major base during the
construction of the Alaska (Alcan) Highway. Almost overnight, 20,000 airforce and military personnel, the men who worked for the Public Roads Administration and its subcontractors descended on the 350 residents of Whitehorse. By 1943, every street in Whitehorse was torn up for sewer work making much of the city’s water unsafe to drink. Housing was so scarce that servicemen were forced to sleep in shifts in the local hotels, or on the riverboats that tied up overnight until tents and barracks were put up.

The construction of the Canol Pipeline from Norman Wells to Whitehorse in 1942 caused another boom in Whitehorse. The capital of the Yukon was moved to Whitehorse from Dawson City in 1953. This move, in combination with the worldwide demand for northern mineral resources, allowed Whitehorse to bounce back from the brief period of economic inactivity after the completion of the Alaska Highway and the abandonment of the Canol Pipeline Project. Prosperous times continued until the recent slump in world metal prices caused the Yukon mining industry to decline. At present, the mining industry is tenuous, while the chief means of employment in Whitehorse is the civil service and the rapidly growing tourism industry.
Architecture in Whitehorse

The various types of architecture represented by Whitehorse heritage buildings reflect different stages of development in the city's society.

The first Euro/Americans, who arrived in the Yukon during the 1898 Goldrush, brought with them a get-rich-quick attitude. They wanted to go where the money was, make a fortune as quickly as possible and go home. This philosophy, added to the reality of having to hike the Chilkoot Pass carrying the requisite ton of goods, made canvas tents the most practical shelter.

The original White Horse City on the east bank of the Yukon River was viewed as a temporary stopping-place on the way to Dawson City. As a result, this transient community was little more than a tent town. Permanent buildings were few and were generally of crude log construction. Even when the roots of a settlement were beginning to take hold, transportation problems limited architecture to what could be fashioned with canvas and log.
With the completion of the White Pass and Yukon Railway, Whitehorse residents realized that a permanent transportation and distribution centre for the Yukon was growing in their midst. The railroad made it possible to acquire badly-needed building supplies. What happened next was a building phenomenon peculiar to Whitehorse. People started to put frame additions on their log homes. Those who still lived in tents framed them in with lumber, often leaving the canvas intact for insulation. As families grew and incomes increased, the owners continued to build additions to their homes. What began as a temporary log cabin or tent grew into a family homestead. This then is the architectural history of Whitehorse: tent, log and frame put together to create one building. The McKinnon House is a prime example of this phenomenon. It began as a humble cabin and was transformed into what was regarded as the "showplace of Whitehorse" in its time.

"More finished" and quite formal log buildings were constructed in the new townsite in 1900. The appeal of these buildings lies in their symmetry and simple but sturdy forms which were dictated by the nature of the materials used. Note the Log Telegraph Office on First Avenue (1900). It possesses as much of a sense of order and elegance as could be imparted
to it. This building uses the French/Swedish "log on log" style of construction with its fairly sophisticated vertical corner logs rather than the cruder overlapping technique of saddle notch corners.

The first frame houses were as soon as dimensional lumber became available and affordable. They are particularly interesting for their small scale and simple charm. Unpretentious in every way, these buildings represent the first statement of permanent settlement for early Whitehorse residents. By 1905 houses were being built a little larger, perhaps with greater care and certainly with more flair. About 1908, a Victorian atmosphere emerged within the established business community. Elaborate casings were added to doors and windows and fretted brackets to balcony and porch posts. Roofs were decorated and some stained glass was used. Two fine example of this are the Scott and Captain Martin houses.

During the 1930s and 1940s, logs became fashionable again. Their aesthetic appeal is shown in both the T.C. Richards Building and in the Taylor House on Main Street.

During the early 1950s the Canadian Army built Camp Tak­hini for the officers and men of the Northwest Highways System. This was a turning point in Whitehorse housing standards. It was the first southern style settlement in the North, complete with semi-detached dwellings, well-tended lawns, painted stones and fully serviced with sewers, water and power. People were neatly ranked by size of dwelling and senior staff had separate houses. It was a glimpse of a new kind of life, and one that was immediately confirmed when the R.C.A.F. and C.N. Telecommunications built their staff quarters.

The history of architecture in Whitehorse is not one of discovery or of innovation. It is rather an illustration of what an isolated community can do when trying to maintain a lifestyle comparable to the one they left behind.

Whitehorse Post Office - Exterior of Post Office on southwest corner of First Avenue and Elliot Street. Photo taken at midnight June 1911.
MacBride Museum

The MacBride Museum, built in 1967, was named after William D. MacBride as a tribute to his founding of the Yukon Historical Society in 1950. MacBride was the driving force in establishing the city’s first museum which was opened in 1952 in the Log Telegraph Office. Due largely to his interest and hard work, the museum became a prominent Whitehorse attraction.

Born in Montana, Bill MacBride came to the Yukon to work for the White Pass and Yukon Route. He was not the first of his family to travel north. His father headed for the Klondike over the Stikine Trail in 1897 and his uncle was the first conductor on the White Pass railway. Soon after MacBride arrived in the Yukon, he began collecting old books and historical records of the North. He also wrote most of the historical advertising material for White Pass.

The museum features an extensive Yukon wildlife display, early native handicraft and artifact exhibits, Yukon memorabilia and many historical photographs.
Photo at left shows museum founder W.D. MacBride in front of Royal Mail Stage #9 in 1956. At right is MacBride Museum grounds in 1983.
Log Telegraph Office

Constructed in 1900, this log building was the second telegraph office in Whitehorse.

The first telegraph office was built in 1899 across the river in the first townsite of White Horse City. It was a 40' square structure built by J.C. Tache, superintendent in charge of river improvements and other public engineering for the telegraph construction. When the town moved to its present site in 1900, the original office remained vacant in the vicinity of the Whitehorse General Hospital until it was torn down in 1945. In 1901, when the Mounties discovered a few cases of smallpox, the office was used as a quarantine area. Its location made it ideal for patients with infectious diseases and the "Pest House," as it came to be known, was refurbished to be used as a hospital.

The second telegraph office was built on its present site when the town moved across the river. It was used as a residence for various telegraph operators until 1927. The Yukon Historical Society leased it for use as a museum from 1952-66.

Built on this site in 1900, the old Telegraph Office has been restored. The Tutshi sign is an original from the Sternwheeler "Tutshi" beached at Carcross.
Sam McGee's Cabin

"There are strange things done
in the midnight sun
By the men who moil for gold;
The Arctic trails have their
secret tales
That would make your blood run
cold;
The Northern Lights have seen
queer sights,
But the queerest they ever did
see
Was that night on the marge of
Lake Lebarge
I cremated Sam McGee*"

* From "The Cremation of Sam
McGee," Songs of a Sourdough, by
Robert Service

The poetic license of Robert Service made Sam McGee's name famous as a prospector from Tennessee who could never get warm in the Yukon. However, the real Sam McGee came from Ontario via San Francisco to the Yukon in 1898. The following year he settled into this rustic log cabin. Known as a "roadhouse king," McGee operated lodgings at Canyon Creek, 80 miles north of Whitehorse. He was also a miner, a teamster, a sawmill operator and a leading road builder. McGee left the Yukon for British Columbia in 1909 and only returned for a brief prospecting trip in 1938.

The Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire (I.O.D.E.) acquired and renovated his cabin in 1940. In 1954 they gave it to the Yukon Historical Society and the cabin was moved to its present site on the MacBride Museum grounds.

Built in 1899, Sam McGee's cabin was typical of early Whitehorse buildings.
The part of this building now housing the Horwood Mall was constructed by the merchandising firm of Whitney and Pedlar about 1905. P. Whitney and W.C. Pedlar were partners in Juneau in 1895, later moving to Dyea, Bennett, and finally to Whitehorse. In 1900 they opened a general store on the corner of First Avenue and Lambert Street.

In 1912, Whitney and Pedlar amalgamated with their chief competitor, Taylor and Drury. Isaac Taylor came to the Yukon in 1898. Pooling his resources with another Englishman, W.S. Drury, they bypassed Dawson City for the new gold strike city of Atlin, B.C. With $200 and a 12’ by 14’ tent, the two men quickly set up business and turned a profit by buying outfits from disillusioned gold seekers and selling them to new arrivals. When the railroad reached Bennett in July 1899, they moved the shop from Atlin to Bennett. Drury, formerly a shoemaker, made sails for boats going to Dawson City. Then, in July 1900, they caught the first train to Whitehorse and set up their business in a tent on First Avenue. In less than a year, they had expanded their business to
include the Bon Marche Men’s Wear Store.

The merger of Taylor, Drury and Pedlar lasted five years. Whitney withdrew to devote himself to his mining interests and fox ranch. In 1969, Taylor and Drury acquired the Northern Commercial building next door and joined the two buildings together. Although the interior has undergone many alterations, the exterior is basically unchanged.

This building housed the last of 18 stores operated by Taylor and Drury during their 75 year partnership. In that time, the business grew from a little trading post into a company with annual gross sales of $3 million and 85 employees. When it closed in 1974 it was the Yukon’s oldest merchandising firm.

The Taylor and Drury building was constructed after the 1905 fire. Their expansion into the automotive business began in the 1920s.
The White Pass and Yukon Railway depot at the foot of Main Street was originally a frame building, built in October 1900. It accommodated the company’s offices, a customs house and the North West Mounted Police station. In May 1905 this landmark was destroyed by fire but it was immediately rebuilt. In the early 1950s, an extension was made to the second storey and log siding was added.

Construction of the White Pass and Yukon rail link between Skagway, Alaska, and Whitehorse began in May 1898. Battling metal-fracturing temperatures, deep snows and driving winds, work crews reached Lake Bennett by July, 1899. The railroad extension to Whitehorse was completed on 29 July, 1900. There, freight and passengers bound for Dawson City were transferred to sternwheelers. That fall and winter, White Pass organized its own river division, the B.Y.N. Co., to complete its network for moving people and goods in and out of the Territory.
Between WWI and WWII, the rail division’s freight transport dropped from 30,000 to 12,000 tons annually. However, during WWII, the American Army leased the railroad to carry almost 1,000 tons of supplies daily for use in the construction of the Alaska Highway.

The B.Y.N. Co. operated more than 20 sternwheelers at its peak of activity in the 1940s. These boats were used to carry passengers as well as thousands of tons of equipment and supplies. They were gradually beached as highways opened throughout the territory. The last regular sternwheeler trip on the Yukon River was made on 4 July, 1955.

All rail service was suspended in October 1982 when the territory’s largest mine, Cyprus Anvil, shut down. Freight from the mine represented 80% of the railway’s business.
White Pass and Yukon Route depot 1983.
P.A. Burns & Co. Ltd. Building

The first P.A. Burns & Co. Ltd. building was constructed in 1900 on this site. It was burned by the May 1905 fire which destroyed most buildings on Front Street between Steele and Elliot Streets. A second two-storey wood frame building was constructed in 1905. During 1928, Bert Bates made an addition onto the west side of the building and a facade front was added.

During 1898, Pat Burns began shipping cattle to the miners in Dawson. Animals were shipped from Vancouver, driven inland over the Dalton Trail to be slaughtered along the Yukon River and then the meat was delivered by steamer to Dawson. When the White Pass and Yukon Railway was completed in 1900, Burns Meats set up a store on Main Street in Whitehorse and built a slaughterhouse in the shipyards area. By the late 1920s, Burns Meats no longer shipped live cattle to Whitehorse. The company began to bring meat to Whitehorse by refrigerated railway cars. The retail store on Main Street also sold Pacific coast fish and for a period in the 1960s offered Buffalo meat to its customers. It was sold in 1969 and remodelled for office space.

In 1969, the company changed their name to Burns Meats Ltd. They closed the retail store on Main Street that year and continued wholesale operations in their new Hillcrest location.
Old Firehall

Whitehorse's first firehall was erected in 1901 beside the White Pass depot. Considered by most Whitehorse citizens to be a waste of time and money, this volunteer department was about to be dismantled when most of the business community was destroyed in a two-hour fire on 23 May, 1905. Almost $300,000 of property was burned to the ground within two hours. Firefighting equipment had arrived the previous day but no one knew how to use it. The fire engine broke down after working only a few minutes. It was the largest fire in Whitehorse history.

The firehall was modified in the 1940s to accommodate the Yukon Electric plant. Until 1942, there was no firetruck and the department operated a two-wheeled hose cart which drew water from the river.

The arrival of large numbers of airforce and army personnel in the 1940s created the need for better fire protection. In 1943 a firehall was erected on the present site of Super Valu and was taken over by the Canadian Army in 1945. An American Army firehall was located behind the log telegraph building on Front Street. In 1967, the present Whitehorse firehall was built as part of the community Centennial project.

Although the building now standing south of the White Pass depot bears no resemblance to the original building, some believe part of the older structure remains. The original tower bell, which once called firefighters, is on display in the MacBride Museum yard.

Old Firehall
November 1901.
Berrigan Cabins

These log cabins were built by Martin Berrigan during the 1940s. They were used as rental units when wartime highway construction caused accommodation shortages. Once the predominant type of architecture in this neighborhood, these cabins are still in use. In spite of their rustic appearance they are sturdy and in good condition.

Born in Ontario, Berrigan came to the Yukon over the Goldrush trail in 1898. He worked as a miner on the dredges in Dawson City. In the 1930s he started spending his winters in Whitehorse building log cabins until he retired from mining in 1939 and made Whitehorse his permanent home. He said mining drained his energy and gave him headaches: “Life is too short for getting sick, so I started to build cabins for rent.” He continued to build log structures, including the log “sky-scrapers” until he died in 1950 at the age of 78.

The cabins are presently owned by Dr. Don Branigan.

Accommodation was so scarce during the construction of the Alaska Highway that Martin Berrigan built these cabins to serve as rental units.
Yukon Territorial Government Complex

The territorial capital of the Yukon was transferred from Dawson City to Whitehorse in 1953. Initially, government departments took offices in whatever space was available but the need for centralization prompted the construction of this building. It was built in three stages. The Regional Library, completed in 1966, was expanded in 1972 to include the Land Registry and Yukon Archives. The Administration building was constructed during the next four years and opened in 1976.

The exterior of the complex is finished in oxidized aluminium and stained cedar. Pine, cedar and oak are used predominantly in the interior. The mural in the main foyer portrays the historical evolution of the Yukon people. The inviting atmosphere of the foyer has caused "The Friends of the Gallery," a group of Yukon art enthusiasts, to choose it as a display centre for the Yukon Permanent Art Collection. The collection was established in 1981 as a heritage for all Yukoners. The base...
for the collection is the Yukon Tapestry and can be viewed from the balcony in the executive suite. These tapestries were created by Yukoners to mark International Women’s Year in 1975.

The Yukon has a sixteen member elected Legislative Assembly patterned after its provincial counterparts in the south. An Executive Council is chosen by the leader of the majority party in the Legislative Assembly and these ministers are responsible for administering the affairs of government departments. The Commissioner of the Yukon is appointed by the federal government and performs duties similar to those of a provincial lieutenant-governor.
The first “S.S. Klondike” was built by the B.Y.N. Co. in 1929 to carry cargo from Whitehorse to Dawson City. In 1936 it ran aground and was damaged beyond repair. Over the winter an identical sternwheeler was built to replace it. However, by 1953, when the all-weather road to Mayo opened, it was no longer needed. Roads gradually replaced rivers as transportation routes and sternwheelers became obsolete. Although the “S.S. Klondike II” was substantially renovated in 1953 and put into service as a cruise ship in 1954, there was not enough business to keep it operating. In August 1955 it steamed into Whitehorse on its last run upriver.

The “S.S. Klondike” was donated to the Government of Canada in 1961. In 1966, using eight tons of Palmolive Princess soap powder, a crew of 12 people and three bulldozers took three weeks to pull the boat through downtown streets to its present site. During the 1970s the boat was restored to its 1930s freighter status by Parks Canada. It was commemorated on 1 July, 1981 as a National Historic Site.
Garside House

This log house was probably built about 1910 at the Whitehorse Copper Mine site north of the city. It was moved to its present location in the 1930s. During the 1960s two bedrooms were added to the front of the house, a porch to the west side and the interior was completely renovated.

In 1942 Yukon Southern Air Transport bought this house from the territorial government and rented it to employees. Canadian Pacific Airlines took over the house in 1947 when the two companies merged. In 1961 the house was purchased by Cal and Norma Waddington. Mr. Waddington worked for CBC for 20 years as an announcer and producer.

In 1965 the house was purchased by Ron and Nora Garside who retired to Whitehorse after working at the Choutla Indian Residential School for more than 10 years.
Scott House

Although many believe this house was built between 1908 and 1910, it appears in a photo taken in 1906. It is known that the house was built and occupied by a Maritimer, Albert E. Henderson. Henderson was an officer of the Canadian Development Company. The C.D.C. organized a Royal Mail Service and operated river steamers to Dawson City until 1901. At that time White Pass bought the company's contracts and equipment to form the B.Y.N. Co. Henderson was also shipyard foreman in charge of building and repairing steamers and later became superintendent of the river division of White Pass.

This building has been the home of H.G. MacPherson, general merchant and druggist, J.C. Newmarch, bank manager and H. Daglish, postmaster.

In 1927 the house was purchased by John Henderson Scott, a miner who had tried his luck in all the major gold stampedes to the Klondike, Nome and Fairbanks. Later, Mr. Scott worked as an insurance agent, clerk-cashier and fuel agent for White
Pass. In 1954, the present owner, John Scott, son of J.H. Scott, moved in. Scott is a mining engineer responsible for reopening the Venus mine and, in partnership with John Phelps, ran the Yukon Electric Company from 1948-58. His home has undergone many alterations. The foundation, originally a shallow dugout constructed of lumber and dirt floors, was deepened to allow for a concrete basement. This house is representative of the Victorian architecture that appeared in Whitehorse after 1905.
Chantier House

This little log house appears in a photograph dated 1906. In 1909 William Chantier, a carpenter and prospector, was the registered owner of the house. Dr. A.P. Hawes later resided here. Dr. Hawes was employed by the White Pass Royal Mail Service. As their veterinarian, he cared for the 300 horses required to maintain the stage line. Dr. Hawes also ran an office and clinic for pets from the house. Captain “Paddy” Martin moved here from his Wood Street home in the mid-1930s. An ex-riverboat man, Captain Martin established the Arctic Trading Co. in 1900. The company consisted of general merchandise and grocery stores in Whitehorse and in Conrad City, 20 miles south of Carcross.

During WWII and the construction of the Alaska Highway, this building was divided into 21 rooms and was used as a boarding house. Mrs. Jessie Marshall, the present occupant, moved into the house in 1972. When she had a rear addition removed, an old still and a number of empty bottles were uncovered in the dug-out basement.
Grant House

Between 1901 and 1902 two identical houses were built at this location. Each house was 20' by 20' and filled the lot to within six inches of the property line. One of them burned down in 1909 and the charred wood remained on the site until the early 1930s.

The remaining house was originally owned by George Armstrong, an accounting clerk. Fred Vey, a machinist employed by the O.F. Kastner Royal Mail Service and engineer on the riverboats, occupied the house in the 1920s and 30s. Hugh Grant, a former archdeacon at the Choutla Indian Residential School in Carcross, purchased the house in 1948 when he began work for Canadian Customs and Immigration in Whitehorse. In 1953 Hugh Grant’s son, Moe, purchased the house for his bride Cora. They added a front and back porch and installed modern plumbing to replace their 45 gallon water drum. Cora Grant now uses the front porch to display antiques and collectibles.

The Grant house is one of two identical homes built side by side between 1901-02.
Drury House

This log home was built during the early 1940s by Albert Taylor. Isaac Taylor, his father, co-pioneered the chain of Taylor and Drury trading posts in the Yukon. Albert Taylor was a department manager for the T&D store in Whitehorse until 1951 when he left to act as their Vancouver expediter. In 1949 William T. Drury and his family moved into the house. William Drury and Bill Taylor formed Taylor and Drury Motors which was later divided into Yukon Motors and Taylor Chev/Olds.

The Drury family lived here until 1979 when the building was renovated to serve as law offices for the firm of Cable, Veale, Cosco and Morris. The front of the house remains unchanged but an extension has been made to the rear. The interior has been almost completely gutted and rebuilt to provide office accommodation.
Swanson House

During the winter of 1938, using only a broadaxe, Oscar Swanson cut and milled the logs for this house. He constructed the building in three months during the fall of 1939. In 1944 he added a washroom and a front porch.

Born in Sweden, Swanson joined a group of prospectors and left Alberta and farm life in 1934 to seek gold in the southern Yukon. In the spring of 1935 he moved to Whitehorse where he worked as a woodcutter. When the sternwheelers were beached in 1955, Swanson worked in the White Pass warehouse. He retired in 1969 after 34 years of service. In 1980, the house was sold to Erik "Red" Nielsen, a local businessman (not the federal MP) who converted the building into an office.

Oscar Swanson now lives in Macauley Lodge.
Log Skyscrapers

During the construction of the Alaska Highway every hotel and home in Whitehorse was overflowing with army and air-force personnel. Even the riverboats that tied up overnight were used to accommodate construction crews. The shortage of rental units and space prompted Martin Berrigan, then in his early 70s, to begin building the log skyscrapers.

The three-storey skyscraper was the last of Berrigan's many log buildings and was completed in 1947. It is 58 logs high and is made of logs weighing at least 300 pounds each. It was originally founded on the ground but concrete footings have been recently added. Both skyscrapers have been insulated, drywalled and equipped with plumbing and electric heating. The original five rental units are still leased as apartments.
Mast House

This house was built in 1901-02. It was originally owned by Dr. F.J. Nicholson, the superintendent of Whitehorse's first hospital. In 1911, the house and its contents were purchased by the hospital trustees to be used as a doctor's residence. It has been the home of Dr. Waldo B. Clark, medical superintendent for White Pass, Dr. Norman E. Culbertson, doctor for the R.C.M.P., natives and physicians, Doctors Reginald John Wride, Allan C. Duncan, William Stewart and Frederick Burns Roth. The little room on the west side was used as an office and a waiting room.

In 1961, the house was purchased by the Mast family who still live here. Ivor Mast is one of many R.C.M.P. who remained in the Yukon after his discharge.
In 1900 the "Apostle of the North" Bishop William C. Bompas sent Whitehorse its first resident Anglican priest. The Reverend and Mrs. R.J. Bowen arrived on August 1st and held a service in their tent on the first Sunday of that month. They continued to live and hold services in the tent until October of that year when they completed a log church with a sleeping loft. Although plans to build a new church were made as early as 1915, both the Log Church and Rectory remained in use until 1960 when the new cathedral was completed. The Log Church is now used as a museum during the summer. Poet Robert Service was secretary to the vestry in 1906 and his minute books are on display there.

The foundation of the Rectory was laid on 4 January, 1901 when the temperature was -33°C (-28°F). Originally a square two-storey house, an addition was made to the rear during Bishop I.O. Stringer's term. It was used to accommodate the first Indian day school in Whitehorse. Recently, both the church and the rectory have undergone extensive refurbishing.
Photo at far left shows the Tent Church with Rev. R.J. Bowen in 1900. Next photo shows church in 1979.
Royal Canadian Mounted Police Compound

The North West Mounted Police came to the Yukon in 1894 and, in the early days, played many roles in addition to law enforcement. They were responsible for the transfer of asylum persons, acted as mining recorders and inspectors, timber agents, royalty collectors, gold dust inspectors and mail carriers. The Force logged 70,000 to 120,000 miles annually on patrols by foot, dog team, horse and boat. The last winter patrol by dog team was made in 1969.

During 1900 the Mounties had headquarters in Whitehorse and Dawson City. The Whitehorse compound was located on the same site which the R.C.M.P. buildings now occupy but extended for four city blocks. By 1902 the 20 buildings which made up the compound were completed and could accommodate up to 200 men. The self-contained community of log buildings included the headquarters, pumphouses, a guardroom, quarter-master's and supply store, a harness room, saddler's shop, hay storeroom, stable, a carpenter/black-
smith/tailor shop and an icehouse. Frame buildings included the hospital, barracks, and officers', surgeon's, sergeants' and Sergeant Major's quarters. The compound also contained a canteen, a library, and a curling and hockey rink.

During 1910, the Whitehorse and Dawson posts merged with headquarters in Dawson City. By 1936, only four R.C.M.P. buildings were left in the Whitehorse compound.

The R.C.M.P. is still the sole police force in the Yukon. The present administration building on 4th Avenue was built in 1977.

N.W.M.P. Inspector Fitz Harrigan and police-doctor Dr. Pare in first automobile (battery operated) on First Street, Whitehorse, June 29, 1903. Photo of RCMP Whitehorse Town Station is undated.
A N.W.M.P. officer reading the proclamation of accession of King George V to the N.W.M.P. detachment in front of their barracks in the Whitehorse compound, 1910.
Taylor House

This log building was constructed in 1937 by city works foreman Frank McKay. It was a residence for the Bill Taylor family until 1969 when it was converted into an office building. Its barn style roof was unique in Whitehorse. The building is complemented by leaded pane glass windows. Though the main floor has been renovated, the second storey and exterior have not been altered.

Bill Taylor was a bookkeeper for the Taylor and Drury merchandising firm and later ran Taylor Chev/Olds. The Taylor family sold the house in 1969 to the Yukon Chamber of Mines.

The Chamber of Mines was established in 1958 to promote, assist and protect the development of the Yukon mining industry. The Whitehorse office was relocated several times before this building became its home in 1971.
McKinnon House

Like many homes in Whitehorse, this house began as a log cabin. A tent was added to the back and was later framed in. Over the years, the building has received several other additions. It was built by Angus D. McKinnon in 1901. McKinnon was the prospector who staked the “Best Chance” copper claim on the Whitehorse copper belt in 1899. He was a blacksmith by trade and later became a businessman. In 1908 he sold the house to the Rickett family.

Born in Missouri William A. Puckett came to the Yukon over the Chilkoot Pass in 1898. That same year he staked the “Anaconda” copper claim, one of the earliest in the Whitehorse copper belt. Mrs. Anna Smith came to Whitehorse from Kentucky in 1900. A widow with three children, she operated a small fruit and confectionary shop on Main Street. In 1902 she married Puckett. By 1905 they owned four roadhouses and were known locally as “roadhouse magnates.” By 1910 they owned and operated the Unsworth Hardware Store on Front Street. While the Puckett family lived in this house it was considered the showplace of Whitehorse with its huge flower garden.
Harvey House

Miner Richard Harvey bought this lot from the B.Y.L. Co. in 1903. The log house, now covered by aluminium siding, appears to have been built in four stages.

The house was occupied by the Frank Berton family in 1919-22. Berton was a mining recorder in Dawson City before WWI. He was transferred to Whitehorse in 1919. His son Pierre, now a well-known Canadian author, was born that year. Frank’s wife Laura tells the story of the Bertons’ life in the Yukon in her book I Married the Klondike. In 1922, Berton was transferred back to Dawson City and later to Mayo.

The next occupants, the Gus Muirhead family, added a fireplace which has chunks of native copper ore built into it. Muirhead was chief clerk for White Pass.

This home is now owned by George and Sherrill Law.
Chinery House

This cozy log home is a favourite in town. It was built in 1908 by riverboat Captain Charlie Coghlan. Except for a small addition made to the side of the house at least 50 years ago, the exterior has not been changed.

Charley "Chas" Chinery lived here in 1908. He was employed during the winter as a stage driver for the White Pass Royal Mail Service and in the summer as a purser on the riverboats. The next occupant, Jack French, moved into the house in 1919. He was a carpenter and worked out of a shop at Second Avenue and Steele Street.

The house is now co-owned by jewellery designer Jane Mathieu and performing artist/carpenter, Bernard Phillips. Both work out of their home.
Cyr House

The stucco on this two-storey house covers handhewn squared logs. Built between 1908 and 1912, it was regarded as a "very imposing structure" in its time.

Antoine "Tony" Cyr constructed the house and lived here until 1917. He and his brother Mike were famous for rafting freight through the treacherous Miles Canyon Rapids during the Goldrush. Antoine Cyr operated a wood and water delivery business up until the early 1940s. The next owner was Norman Murray, a carpenter who lived in the house in the 1930s. From 1953-1955 it was used as housing for single teachers. At that time the only other accommodation for unmarried women teachers was the T.C. Richards building.

In 1965 Earle and Margaret Waddington bought the house and refinished the exterior walls with stucco. Since the Waddingtons sold this home, it has been used for rental accommodation.

This photo, taken in the 1960s, shows the two-storey log house before it was stuccoed.
Homer House

This simple log house was erected probably in 1910 by Stephen Homer, a ship's carpenter. The front of the house has not been altered but the rear has had several additions.

This home was owned by George Webster in 1913. Webster came to the Yukon in the 1890s with the Mounties. He took his discharge in the summer of 1904. Webster was among the famous "skinner" or teamsters for the Royal Mail Service and also worked as a stable foreman. He later became the assistant to the general superintendent of White Pass and Yukon Route.

In 1917 Webster sold the house to his brother-in-law, William S. Drury. Drury, who co-pioneered the Yukon's oldest merchandising firm, lived here until 1923 when the house was rented to Taylor and Drury employees. In 1959, the Drury family sold the house. After changing hands several times, it has been unoccupied since 1974.
Captain Coghlan House

Charlie "Dummy" Coghlan built this log house for himself about 1913. He was a stagedriver for the Royal Mail Service in the early 1900s. In 1913 Charlie was a shipmate and later a master for the B.Y.N. Co. on the steamers "Casca," "Canadian," "Whitehorse," "Klondike I" and "Klondike II."

In 1925, he was employed by the O.F. Kastner Royal Mail Service. This company used tractor-trains and travelled non-stop for three to five days on the winter run between Whitehorse and Dawson City.

The house is now owned by Donald McArthur and Debbie Mauch. The front porch, a dormer window to the side and the extension at the rear of the house are later additions.

Exterior of Captain Coghlan home before additions were made c1924. At far right, Charlie Coghlan standing in the doorway of his home. Man in other photo unidentified.
Captain Campbell House

Built between 1907 and 1912, this house was originally a three room log cabin. A frame addition was made soon after its completion. Major additions and stucco added later have hidden most of the original structure. Although it is not known who built the house, Dr. Frederick Warren Cane, Whitehorse's first postmaster and relief doctor, had title to the property in November 1906.

During the 1920s the house was occupied by riverboat Captains J.J. Campbell and Daniel McKay. Captain Campbell was a Yukon River pilot. He was employed as early as 1900, in command of the Steamer “Bailey.” Cptn. McKay was in charge of the Steamer “Casca.” The “Casca” and the Steamer “Whitehorse” were beached together in the White Pass shipyards and burned in an accidental fire in June 1974. In 1947 the house was owned by Gordon Armstrong, the first Mayor of Whitehorse. Mr. Armstrong was the longest serving Mayor and remained in office from 1950-58. The home is now used for rental accommodation.
Ryder House

This frame house was built shortly after 1907. The front and back porches and an extension on the left side have been the only alterations over the years.

The first owner was local carpenter and tinsmith Daniel Gillis. In 1912 he sold the house to Ivan Williams and Isaac “Ike” Seavers. Williams was a storekeeper for White Pass and Seavers was a stage driver for the Royal Mail Service.

In 1921, George and Edith Ryder bought and moved into the house. Ryder had come to Whitehorse in 1907 to join his father Roland who came during the Goldrush. Together they operated a dray business, delivering water and wood by horse. Later, George drove horses for White Pass. He also ran an undertaking business out of this house from 1930-45. In 1950, Ryder was elected to the first city council.

The house is still occupied by the Ryder family.
T.C. Richards Building

This log building was constructed in 1943 for the Thomas “T.C.” Richards family. It was built and furnished to Mrs. Bernardine Richards’ specifications with no expense spared. The home with its three stone fireplaces, hardwood floors and Persian rugs became one of the most prominent social centres of Whitehorse.

Richards came to the Yukon in 1915 to manage Burns Meats. During 1921 he oversaw the first cattle drive to the Mayo area. In 1928 he and W.L. “Deacon” Phelps inaugurated a winter tractor-train freight and passenger service to Dawson. This service continued until the Mayo road opened in 1950. In a 1937 poker game, Richards won $20,000 from the owner of the Whitehorse Inn. Using his winnings as downpayment, T.C. bought the hotel which was described as the most modern hotel in the North.

In 1951, the Richards’ family home was acquired by the Yukon government and used as teachers’ housing. It later housed various departments of the Yukon Territorial Government until the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce took it over in April 1976.

Exterior of the T.C. Richards building after it was acquired by the Yukon Territorial Government. The building underwent extensive exterior and interior renovations in 1982.
Donnenworth House

Built between 1900 and 1904, this house was originally a small frame building with a tent attached to the rear. The land was owned by William “Hobo Bill” Donnenworth who in 1911-12 drove horses for the Royal Mail Service stage between Whitehorse and Dawson City. He was a purser on the steamboats “Canadian” and “Nasutlin” from 1913-15. Mrs. Donnenworth operated a small millinery shop on Main Street and later ran her business from this building. During the 1920s, it was the home of the Austin family, one-time owners of the Caribou Hotel in Carcross.

The house then changed hands many times until 1963 when it became the residence of A.R. “Happy” Lepage and family. Lepage and his wife Pauline operated wood camps on the Yukon River for the B.Y.N. Co. from 1928-49. By that time most steamboats had been converted from wood fuel to oil. The Lepages remained in the house until 1978. The Yukon Historical and Museums Association is taking steps to preserve it.

City Hall

After 17 years and six different locations, the City Hall was permanently established here in 1967. When the city was incorporated in 1950, the first city council conducted its business in offices above the Northern Commercial building on First Avenue which now houses Food Fair. In the 1950s City Hall was moved to 3rd Avenue and Main St., in the building that is now Northern Outdoors. For a time, municipal offices were located in the government liquor building which existed on the site of the present City Hall.

Whitehorse City Hall was built by Whitehorse taxpayers with the help of a federal Centennial grant. It opened on Canada Day, 1 July 1967 as part of a civic complex which includes the firehall.

The City Hall has functional space, modern efficiency and attractive surroundings for civic functions. The centennial Yukon mural, hung in the reception area, depicts the animals, birds and landscape of the territory.
Photo at left shows Whitehorse City Hall as it stands today. Her Royal Highness The Princess Anne visited City Hall during her 1982 Royal Tour.
Klondike Airways Building

Although the construction date of this building is unknown, a bakery tent appeared on the site in a 1901 photograph. The current building appeared as a wood frame structure in a 1906 photograph. At some later date it was enclosed within galvanized iron.

The Klondike Airways sign on the side of the building was an advertisement for a mail and freight delivery business acquired by T.C. Richards and Willard Phelps in 1929. The name "Klondike Airways" is misleading. Although they hoped some day to buy a plane, they never did. Using snowmobiles and caterpillars, they carried about 110,000 pounds of mail to Dawson each year. Before 1921 only first class mail was delivered in the winter. The remaining mail waited in Whitehorse for the ice to break up and the steamers to sail sometime in May. When Klondike Airways won the mail contract in 1929, all classes of mail were delivered weekly without fail. If the weather made overland travel impossible arrangements were made with White Pass to deliver mail by plane. In the 1930s the building was owned and used as a carpentry shop by Jack French.
This little frame house was built about 1906 for Dennis "Dinny" O'Connor. O'Connor was a teamster, a jitney driver and a blacksmith during the winter for the White Pass Royal Mail Service. During the summers he worked as a commissary driver, transporting supplies to the B.Y.N. Co. steamboats. O'Connor is best remembered as a truck driver for the White Pass when there were few vehicles in the city. One of his many duties included dumping lampblack, a derivative of soot, on the Yukon River. The lampblack absorbed the heat of the sun, hastening the melting of the ice and enabling steamboats to travel a little earlier in the season. After O'Connor's death, just before WWII, the house was occupied by Jack Elliot, an engineer on the riverboats and proprietor of the Yukon Ivory Shop. The house is now owned by Archer, Cathro and Associates Ltd.
Krautschneider House

This house first appears in a photograph dated 1913. It was occupied at that time by a man named Cooper who made and sold small boats. During 1918 it was the home of seamstress Mrs. O. Sharp.

Harry “Shorty” Chambers and his wife Annie were the registered owners in 1923. They paid the British Yukon Land Co. for the house by making installments in cordwood. The Chambers operated the Pioneer Stables, one of the best liverys in town. From 1904 to 1940 they ran teams between their trading posts in Champagne and Whitehorse. “Chambers” became the second vice-president of the Whitehorse Board of Trade in 1901. He was also known as a “hustling and irrepressible newsmen.”

During the 1930s Bob Butler, the “Robin Hood” of Whitehorse, lived in this house. Butler was an engineer on the Taylor and Drury boat “Yukon Rose.” It is said that he had the keys to every store in town and during the Depression stole groceries and gave them to the poor. He was eventually caught and sentenced to three months of hard labour.

In 1947, the house was sold to Edith Krautschneider. Her son George and his wife Vi live here now. The house is a good example of the small scale and compact design of the early Whitehorse houses.
MacPherson House

This frame house was built during the spring of 1907. Except for an addition on the side and a back porch, the structure remains unchanged.

It was built by local contractor and carpenter Daniel McAuley who shortly thereafter sold it to Frank Slavin. Better known as “The Sydney Cornstalk” and “The Sydney Slasher,” Slavin was a one-time heavyweight boxing champion of the British Empire. Born in Australia, he came to the Yukon with Joe Boyle, then a bigtime promoter in early Dawson.

Scotsman John MacPherson bought the house in 1909. MacPherson climbed the Chilkoot Trail in 1898 and mined in Dawson for the next 10 years. He married, settled into this house and began working for White Pass as a blacksmith. When the Royal Mail Service stopped using horse-drawn stages in 1921, he opened his own blacksmith shop on Front Street.

The house is still owned by members of the MacPherson family.

Mrs. MacPherson, children and a playmate in front of their home c1916.
The Regina Hotel is the oldest commercial lodging establishment still operating in Whitehorse. Built in 1900, it was originally a two-storey log building with restaurant and bakery facilities. By 1901 proprietors Frank M. Walter and Charles H. Johnston had added a two-storey frame building to the side of the hotel. The larger building, later covered in tar paper, became the main hotel. In 1903, the owners built a false front across the two buildings to make them appear as one building.

A.E. Dixon bought Walter’s half of the partnership a year later. Dixon was an ex-North West Mounted Police officer who made his fortune piloting boats through the treacherous Whitehorse Rapids at the peak of the Goldrush. He co-owned and operated the hotel until 1925 when it was purchased by Olaf and Kristina Erickson.

Born in Sweden, Erickson was working his way around the world on a sailing ship when he landed in the bustling port of Seattle on the eve of the Goldrush. By 1900 he was mining in Dawson City. In the early 1920s, “Ole” came to Whitehorse.
to work as a stage driver on the Overland Trail between Whitehorse and Dawson City. On a brief trip home to Sweden, Ole married and brought his bride, Kristina, to the Yukon.

Up until 1925, the Regina Hotel maintained its 1903 appearance. The Ericksons made several alterations to the hotel. In the 1930s, the old R.C.M.P. annex was acquired and moved to the rear of the building. The bottom floor functioned as a garage and storage area while the second floor housed hotel staff. During the construction of the Alaska Highway, this two-storey rear addition was renovated to house servicemen working on the road. Accommodation was so limited during this time that people were required to sleep in shifts, seldom able to keep the same bed for more than one or two nights.

During the 1950s, the hotel was covered in imitation brick siding. The old hotel was demolished in 1970 to make room for the Regina Hotel as it now appears.

The original hotel was located in the parking lot area of the new Regina. The present establishment is managed by the Erickson’s son, John, and their daughter, Mrs. Gudrun Sparling.

A view of the Regina Hotel looking north along Front Street, May 1942.
Pioneer Hotel

Originally a hotel and restaurant in White Horse City, this log building was constructed by ex-N.W.M.P. officer A.E. Dixon. Dixon was a river pilot and later became a part owner of the Regina Hotel. Early in 1900 the building was moved across the river to Front Street and was named the "Hotel Pioneer." The *Weekly Star* refers to it as "the first building in Whitehorse." Six months after the hotel was built Dixon sold it to another ex-N.W.M.P., Sgt. Pringle. Pringle operated the hotel for six months before he sold it and opened Pringle's stables on Main Street. The hotel was later known as "The Pioneer Rooms" under many different owners.

It was eventually moved to the White Pass shipyards area where it was divided into cabins. Whitehorse photographer John Hatch lives in one part and local historian Len Tarka uses another as a workshop. The owner, Ed Jenni, is restoring the building.
Catholic Rectory

In the summer of 1900 this little house was one of four frame buildings in Whitehorse. For many years it had a kitchen tent attached to the back which was eventually framed in. Later additions were made to both sides of the building. In 1981 it was moved from its original site near the corner of 5th and Main, to the City of Whitehorse compound where it awaits relocation.

The Catholic Church built the house as a Church rectory. Father E. Gendreau, the Vicar General for the Yukon and parish priest in Dawson, sent Father Camille Lefebvre to establish the first Catholic Church in Whitehorse in 1900. He built this rectory and later the church. Joseph Clifton, a post office clerk, lived in this house until his transfer to Dawson in 1917. The principal of the Lambert Street School, Mr. Galpin, and his family lived in the house until 1923. The well-known sculptor Lilias Farley lived here for 22 years and was one of the last inhabitants of the house. The Pine Medical Clinic now occupies this site.
Captain Martin House

This two-storey house, completed about 1915, was the home of Captain "Paddy" Martin. Some believe this house was built in two stages because government records indicate that Mrs. Martin made her final land payment in 1903 and pre-1915 photographs show a one-storey building on this site. Born in Newfoundland, Captain Martin had been a sea captain before coming north. He was skipper of the Steamer "Canadian" in 1898 when it sailed from Victoria, British Columbia to the Aleutians and up the Yukon River to Whitehorse. The captain made one return trip to Dawson City and then retired from steamboating. During 1900 Martin established the Arctic Trading Co. which operated general merchandise and grocery stores in Whitehorse and Conrad City. Later, the captain raised fur and mink. He was also the government fish inspector.

The Martin family moved out of the house in the mid-1930s when the captain became ill. It was sold just before he died in 1940.
Captain P. Martin's cigar tent-store after the fire 1905.
The Yukon Historical & Museums Association

The Yukon Historical and Museums Association was formed in 1977 as an umbrella organization for Yukon museums, historical societies and interested individuals. Since its creation, the Y.H.M.A. has worked with other organizations on a local and national level to preserve, interpret and protect the Yukon's historical resources. In doing so, the Y.H.M.A. sponsors a newsletter, conferences, exhibits, workshops and the Heritage Buildings Committee.

The Heritage Buildings Committee was established in March 1982 to consider issues relating to the identification and preservation of the Yukon's built heritage. The committee has been working to promote the development of legislation, community plans, and special programs to preserve and interpret this heritage.

In February, 1983 the Heritage Buildings Committee received federal funding to hire researchers to update and complete information compiled on heritage buildings.

The researchers interviewed long time residents, utilized records at the Yukon Archives and located many old photographs. Volunteers and local historians contributed photographs and other information.

The Heritage Buildings Committee would like to thank all those persons who helped with this book, and to acknowledge the companies who contributed to the production.

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Donnenworth House - Home of the Y.H.M.A.