

RBC PENSIONERS' NETWORK

BRITISH COLUMBIA CELL

Email RBCPENSIONERSNETWORK@SHAW.CA

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2 – APRIL 2007

NOTICE

We regret to advise there has been a massive shakeup at Phantom Publications. The synergy expected as a result of moving the operation to Kelowna has not materialized.

The latest financial information records a dramatic drop-off in earnings. The company has responded by examining all aspects of the business and the following program has been developed in an attempt to turn the business around. The *Phantom Initiated Salary Savings* operational task force is now fully underway. Many of the staff that moved to Kelowna must either take a 25% reduction in salary, or resign and return to Vancouver.

Unionized employees met recently in Kelowna to consider their options. The result was they formed an organization to represent them in negotiations with the company. *Facilitators' Against Repressive Tactics* is now a reality.

The Executive Committee and the legal department are not affected.

Charlie Merrick has advised us that his entertainment expense budget has been so severely cut, he is now in crisis therapy.

Does anyone remember this signature? For those who recognized Steve Allen's signature in the last edition and earlier Doug Gardiner's hand writing - then you are indeed retired.



Walter Penner lives in West Vancouver, B.C.



Wells, B.C.

By C.W. Merrick

In the late 1920's a chap by the name of Fred Wells discovered gold approximately three miles west of Barkerville – and the Town of Wells was born (The Town of Wells was incorporated in 1933).

The two principal mining Co's formed were Cariboo Gold Quartz Mining Co. and Island Mountain Mines Ltd. The Royal Bank opened a branch in Wells on January 15, 1938 with a staff of three- the original Manager was J.O. (Jack) Lennie. On September 23, 1952, Wells became a sub-branch to Quesnel (where Ray Commons was Manager). The Wells B.C. Sub-branch was closed on January 23, 1954.

Charlie Merrick remembers being transferred to Quesnel Branch as a Teller from his hometown, Penticton, B.C. At that time 2-3 staff from Quesnel Branch, including D.J. (Doug) Brown as "O.I.C" and H.C. (Hugh) Burnett as Teller operated the Wells sub-branch twice monthly. (I took Hugh's place on the Wells trips in the fall of 1953). The usual practice was to leave Quesnel around 7:30 am (on the two mine paydays per month) and arrive in Wells at approximately 10:00am/open the office for an hour or two then to lunch at the Wells Hotel. The sub. would re-open at approximately 1:00pm and wait for the rush, when miners' shifts ended at 3:00pm. It would remain open to 6:00pm.

The road to/from Wells to Quesnel (60 plus miles) was virtually the same/original road from the 1860's – loose grave (nothing was paved), narrow/twisting and many hills- and the trip took at least 2-2 ½ hours each way. (More than that in winter as there was virtually no traffic to/from Quesnel/Wells and we were basically "breaking trail" through the snow covered road, all the way). Great adventures for a young man in Quesnel. ("Details" re some of our trips to follow next issue...).

GORDON JENKS - MEMORIAL SERVICE

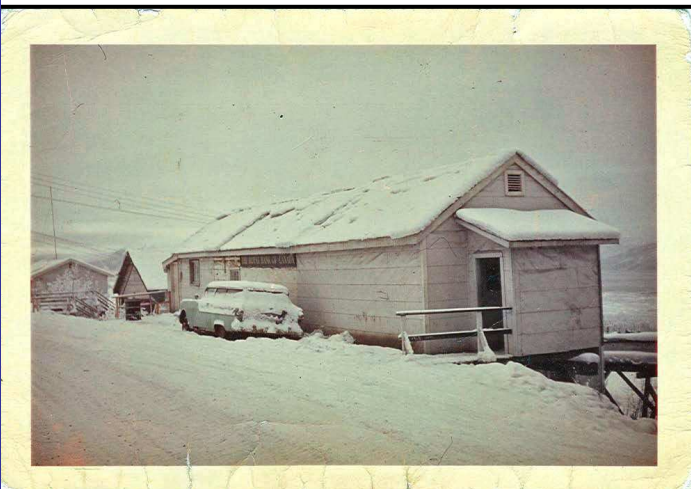
Those who were unable to attend the service celebrating Gordon's life are advised that a very sensitive and moving tribute was given by his family and the Reverend Ray Waller at the Boal Chapel in North Vancouver on January 27th, 2007.

Along with many others, the following RBC Pensioners were in attendance:

Dave Jenks, Peter and Pat Briscoe, Gerry Conly, Don and Mary Morris, Bill and Alice Anderson, Tom and Kaye Bleackley, Jack MacFarlane, Charlie Merrick, Dave and Leona Lattimer, Don Steele, June Milner, Hugh Burnett, Lillian Pollock, Marg Siborne, Rand MacNeill, Dave Lawson, Fred Lyseng, Eve Johnson and Jim MacNaughton.



Herb Mitchell, seen at a recent Pensioners' luncheon in West Vancouver.



The first pensioner to identify this RBC branch will receive a "GOLD" prize. If you can provide a story to go with it, even more Gold.



Ain't it the truth – by Charlie Merrick

PENSIONERS' NORTH SHORE LUNCHEONS

Phantom Publications recently appointed Marje Keller as Vice President, Special Events. Her first responsibility is to establish a monthly luncheon for RBC pensioners who live on the North Shore. The next event will be held at Pats Restaurant in West Vancouver (445 – 13th St, West Vancouver) on Thursday, April 5th. Call Marje at (604) 922-5143 or email marjekeller@shaw.ca. In the event Marje is away on assignment, reservations may be made to (604) 922-7445. All pensioners are welcome, providing they let Marje know at least a couple of days prior.



Brigitta Hager is not happy to have her picture taken.

JIM LAUGHLIN - AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I joined the bank in Vernon on July 2 1965 - Don Reed was the Manager. Thus began a journey that over the next 35 years took me to some rather interesting places.

Like most of us, I started as a Junior and then graduated to cash a few months later when my predecessor, Brant French, was transferred to Fort St. John. For some reason, I didn't stay on cash for very long, moving into the Accountant's Department to perform various and sundry duties, the most notable of which was making circular and rule book changes. We had quite a cast of characters during my 18 months in the branch: in addition to Brant, Ted Bradshaw and then Larry Remsberry were the deputies; Arnie Seib and then Barry Anderson were the Accountants, Ken Westling and then Mike Finch were the Senior Assistant Accountants, and Harry Dodyk and then Bill McLeish were the Second Assistants.

In January /67, I was transferred to Chilliwack where Ron Harwood, one of the most wonderful people I have ever known, was the Manager. I won't say that Ron taught me everything I know about drinking, but anyone who remembers Ron will catch my drift. Those I remember were Art Bouman, Roger Dyck and John Goodwin.

In January /69, I was transferred to Salmon Arm. The branch had only been open for 6 months with Ernie Wiest in command of the corner office. But I wasn't in Salmon Arm for very long - 9 months later I was transferred to Aldergrove where I worked with another dear man, Emory Fraser. But again, my time was short because in June /70, I was transferred on to Inspection. And that's when the fun began. Seriously, though, working on Inspection offered a great opportunity to meet lots of people, learn about the Bank and see our beautiful province. I have said many times that I wouldn't trade my days on the road for anything.

After living out of a suitcase for 2 years, I went to Scott Town Plaza for awhile where I enjoyed working with Graham Gerrie, George Rushton, Dwayne Peverett, Bruce Morrison, Dave Peterson and Denny Lien.

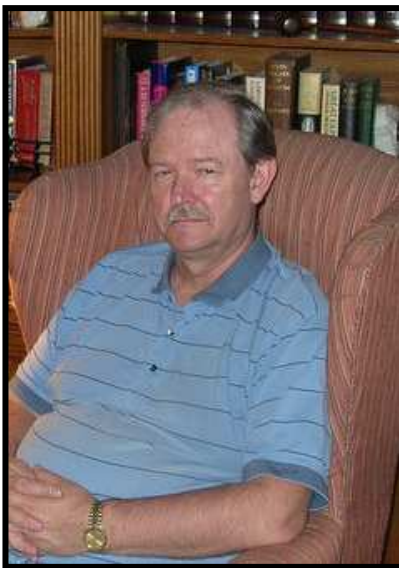
In February /74, I was transferred into Corporate Development. I had always loved sales and marketing so it was like I had really found a home.

My transfer to Royal Centre coincided with my election to the Presidency of the Mens' Forum. Over the next 2 years, we staged Casino Royale, Masquerade dances, spring and fall golf tournaments, a fishing derby, annual car rallies (remember The Breakers?), and regular monthly dinner meetings featuring interesting guest speakers, such as Earle McLaughlin, Rowlie Frazee, Jack Webster, Babe Pratt, and Bill Bennett, to name a few.

The next 24 years of my career were spent in Royal Centre Branch (Jim Johnson, Les Edmonds and then Tom Bleakley were the VPs), District Headquarters in Metro Toronto, Ontario and

Alberta, and finally Head Office, all in variations of Corporate Development, Corporate Marketing, Corporate Banking, Commercial Marketing, and Business Banking. I had some great sales and marketing jobs which meant trips to New York, Chicago, Boston, Phoenix, San Francisco, Washington DC, Atlanta and even Cleveland. But the American city that I visited most often was Houston.

Why Houston? Well, RBC Visa had a small orphaned credit card product that was used primarily by small jet owners and the Bank was in a partnership arrangement with a company in Houston that sold a variety of flight services that were charged to the card. But because it wasn't retail, Visa was looking to dump the product and asked us in Business Banking Financing Products if we would take it over. By happy coincidence, I've always loved aviation and I was intrigued by the potential of the product. So after meeting with the folks in Houston, I renamed the product The Royal Bank Jet Card. You would be amazed at the number of private jets there are in the world and who flies in them. (The Sultan of Brunei was probably our best known cardholder). In support of the sales initiative, I traveled to Frankfurt, Germany for a sales and strategy conference and then on to Bahrain in the Persian Gulf for a week of hob-knobbing and to deliver a speech to a group of airport executives from around the world who were attending their annual International Air Transport Association (IATA) conference.



Perhaps my most interesting and challenging experience was my last job. One day, John

Cleghorn decided that the Bank had too much commercial real estate exposure and that we had to quickly reduce the book. So, I was chosen to form a team that would package up and sell commercial mortgages to investors. This had never been done before and it was an exciting challenge to start from scratch and put all those years of sales and marketing experience to good use. The investors were understandably suspicious because they were our erstwhile competitors in the commercial mortgage business - the life insurance companies and pension funds - so the most challenging aspect was to convince the investors that there was nothing wrong with the horses we were selling. After many promises and much hand holding, we moved hundreds of millions of dollars of real estate risk from the Bank's books - which made everyone very happy.

Throughout my career, I enjoyed the privilege of working with some wonderful people and a small few who were a challenge. On the Bank's dime, I lived and worked in different parts of Canada and traveled to the high spots in the U.S., as well as to Europe and the Middle East. I am a better person for this and through it all, I stayed warm and dry. I retired on January 31st, 2000 as Senior Manager, Asset Sales, Head Office Business Banking.

All things considered, not a bad run. The icing on the cake is that today, I'm living a happy retirement with my wife Jo, in Blind Bay, a suburb of Sorrento, B.C. on beautiful Shuswap Lake.

MEMORY TEST

Phantom Publications would like the Newsletter to be somewhat more interactive. They have authorized us to offer a prize to those who submit the correct answers to the following questions. A distinguished panel of judges, headed by the Eminent Historian and Linguist, Charles J. Mayne, will decide the most accurate responses and a winner will be announced in the next Newsletter.

Head Office Interest? Shortcast? Crosscheck? R255?

Sight Balance? Form H (green)? Reversion? 13th & 28th?

Verifications? Le 110? Supp Sheet? Green Cheque List?



Muvvy McConnell, with Bob Craig, on her 92nd birthday.

This publication is dedicated to stories and pictures about various B.C. Pensioners. We also want to remember those women of the Bank, who happened to be wives of Bankers. While supporting their husbands, they endured the endless moving, the changes in their social lives and often the relocation of children into new schools etc. etc. Miraculously, all was accomplished, often on a limited budget. A courageous bunch, who each in their own way made an enormous contribution to the Bank. Muvvy McConnell is just one such woman. She married *James Thomas Howard McConnell* (Jimmy) in Winnipeg in 1935. They moved about and landed in Roblyn, Manitoba and then in 1951 they were transferred to Terrace, B.C. In 1956 Jim moved on to manage the Prince George, Main Branch. Jim retired from Vancouver, Broadway and Granville after 42 years of service. He died in 1998 at age 89.

Muvvy lives in a North Vancouver retirement community, where she continues to contribute to the social activities of that group. She recently celebrated her 92nd birthday. Bob Craig, also a Royal Bank pensioner who Jim had hired in Terrace, keeps in touch with Muvvy. He, along with several other retired Royal Bankers, helped to celebrate her recent birthday.

HORST KUEHNEL

Everyone knows about Horst's Management stints at Vancouver, Robson & Bute, Marine & 70th and Fraser & 49th, but you may not know about his early training and activities before joining Royal Bank.

Horst started his banking career in 1952, as an apprentice with *Commerz Bank* in Frankfurt, Germany. After 2 ½ years of apprenticeship, during which he attended a commercial school for bankers and further in-house training sessions. He passed an examination before the *Government Department of Commerce* to qualify to be permanently employed by the bank. He was then assigned to the Frankfurt Stock Exchange where he performed as a Trader, for a further 3 ½ years.

In 1957 Horst married Margarete or Gretel, as she was known, and they honeymooned in Vancouver. The same year, Horst joined The Bank of Nova Scotia in Vancouver and was trained as a Teller at their Dunsmuir & Howe branch, and later was transferred to New Westminster as an Assistant Accountant. He left that Bank in 1959 and worked for a short period in Vancouver, as a professional photographer.



In 1959 they decided to return to Germany to visit family. They took the cruise from New York City to Bremerhaven, in Germany. Horst decided to go to work for the large conglomerate company, *Farbwerke Hochst*, in Frankfurt, as a foreign correspondent. He was not happy with events that were happening in Germany and they returned to Canada in December 1960.

In 1961 Horst joined Royal Bank, in Montreal, starting at 360 St. James Street, in the Securities Department. In 1962 he moved to Vancouver and the Bank placed him in the Securities Department in the Main Branch at 685 West Hastings Street (with Phil Ford as Manager.)

Horst retired from Vancouver, Granville and Robson in February 1994.

Horst and Gretel have two children and five grandchildren. They are both enjoying retirement and live in North Vancouver, B.C

Horst is also an accomplished painter and musician. Furthermore he is very knowledgeable regarding all aspects of computer operations.