

Brummet has ideas for tourism

By DAVE NAGY

North Peace MLA Tony Brummet has ideas for a five-year plan for the region that would revolve around historical occasions and the possible tourism benefits from them.

He says people might call him a dreamer for it, to which he says, "You're darn, I'm a dreamer."

Brummet says a lot of the things needed for some of his "dreams" are already here. All that needs to be done is for people to "count their assets" and go to work on them.

With a number of important anniversary dates for Fort St. John and

the north in the next few years, the senior cabinet minister has some ideas that could be the ones that many people might be looking for.

HISTORICAL OCCASIONS

Fort St. John's centennial (1994) Alexander MacKenzie's bi-centennial, 1993 and the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Highway in 1994 (possibly beginning in '92), could be combined in a long-term plan for tourism and development of the North Peace.

Reflecting further on the future following his party's victory at the polls last week, Brummet said about

historical locations, "We didn't get to Victoria until 1843."

He was hinting about using historical locations as tourist attractions since many events such as the recent provincial Lions convention in Fort Nelson are due to people "looking for something different."

An Historical Society-sponsored meeting last week heard about artifacts found at Charlie Lake, which experts believe could be the second or third-oldest settlement in Canada.

Brummet naturally wants to see the north developed and is excited

about the possibilities.

"And we don't need to cut each other's throats to do it," he said, adding many communities could cooperate in bringing say up to 100 thousand tourists through the north in the years ahead.

And there are people here who could put it all together. Brummet suggested planning begin right away so the north could be sold as a package deal.

Other amenities are important. While the city already has the capacity to host the most common size convention — under 500 — a

theatre here would be another benefit for offering cultural activities.

A number of conventions have been held in Fort St. John in 1986 — the B.C. Shriners and Alberta Kinsmen fall conventions recently.

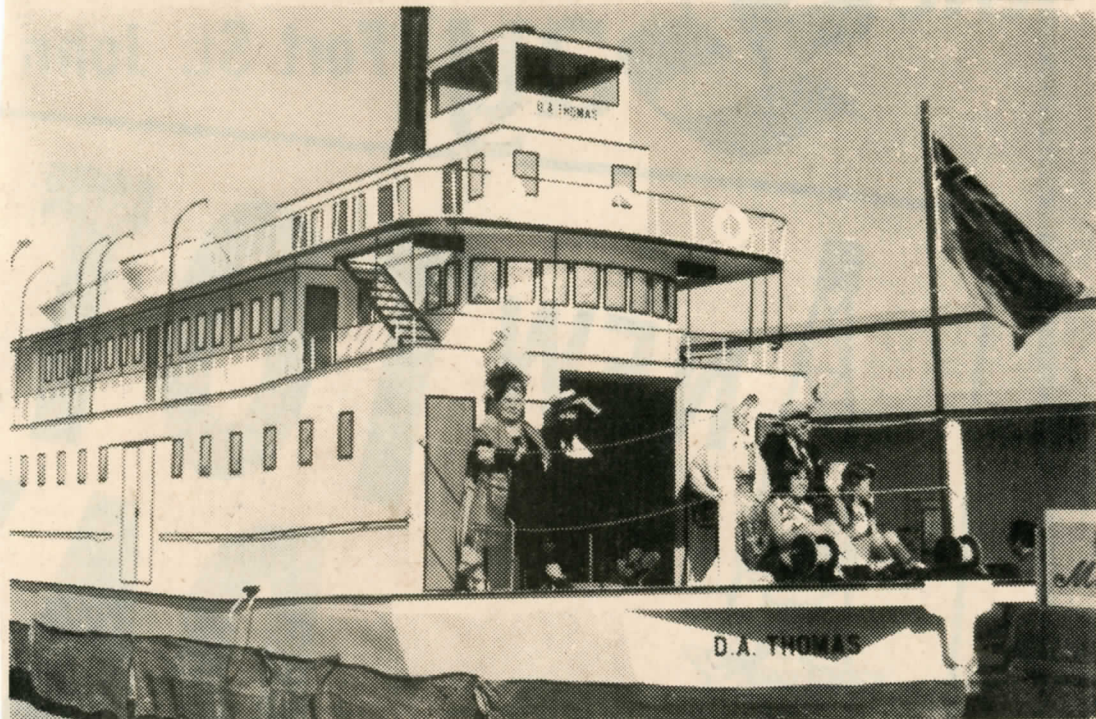
Fort St. John obviously can't compete with Vancouver for conventions for 2,000 people, but should get in on the action on the smaller ones.

A circle tour or even figure-eight tour through the region are other possibilities, all designed around projects the MLA says are now in progress.

35 YRS AGO, APR 25, 1947

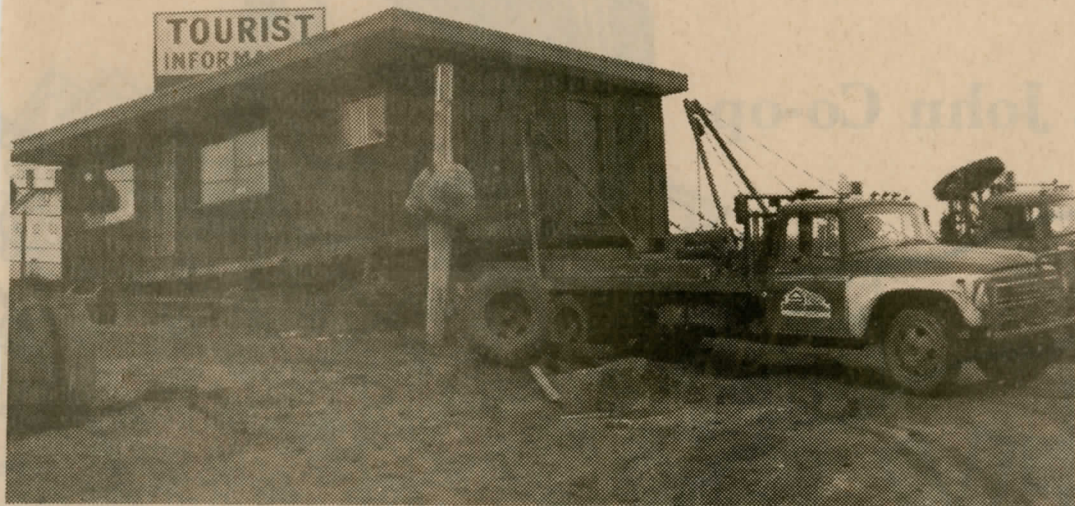
BC'S TOURIST industry benefits everybody, they say. The tourist dollar is split up: retail merchants 30 cents; restaurants 22 cents; accommodation 17 cents; gas stations 12 cents; theatres 9 cents; transportation 7 cents and incidentals 3 cents. The industry is estimated to be worth to the province some \$30 million a year.

TOURISM 1947



SCHEDULED EARLIER FOR A DOCKING BOOTH in front of the Mackenzie Street tourist information booth, the accurate replica of the Peace River's mightiest sternwheeler — the D A

Thomas — was spankingly on view in the parade . . . but then it was right back to the mothball fleet in the department of public works' yard.



THE TOURIST INFORMATION BUREAU has served the community, travellers and essay writers for a number of years. On May 26 the bureau was lifted off its foundations on 100 Street

and moved to the Alaska Highway. Shown here is the bureau in its original place and then the first operations of moving.

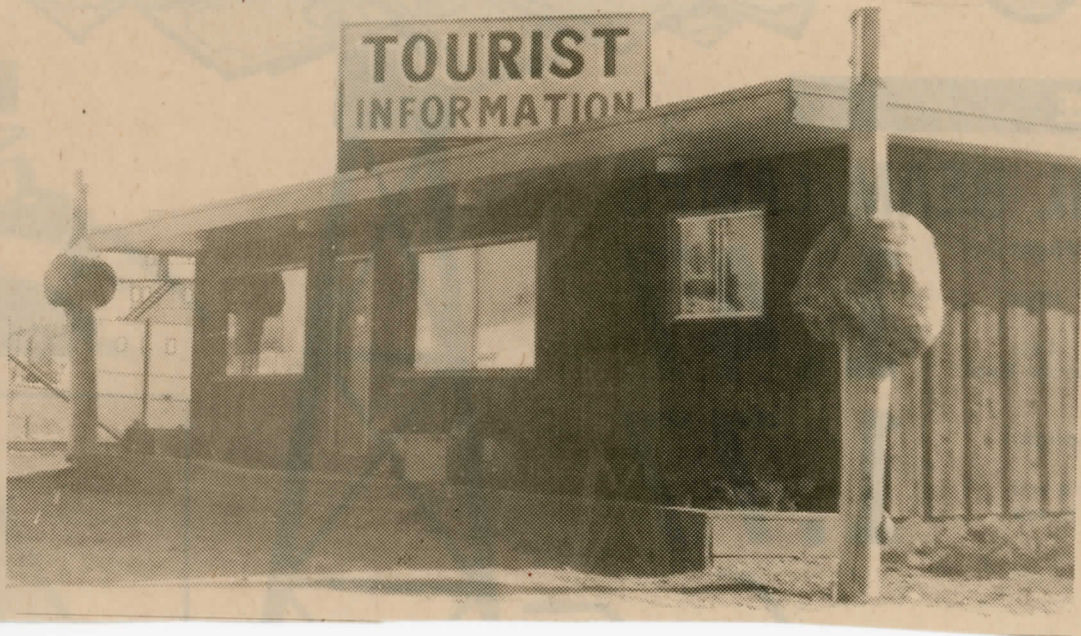
JUN 20, 1973

Tourist information bureau

The Fort St John information bureau in relation to communities is widespread in its purpose.

Locally, the tourist bureau gives information on road conditions and how far away a destination is. Jeanne Clelland says she mails "out more than I give out." She gives information on possible places that might employ and pamphlets to students doing research on the area.

Mrs Clelland sends out information to would be tourists and researchers all over North America. She also does a little promoting. She says that whenever people from Fort St John go to a convention she gives them information about the community that can be given out in the town of the convention.



Sue Popesku named to Tourism BC board

FORT ST. JOHN (Staff) — Longtime Fort St. John volunteer Sue Popesku has been named to the board of directors of the new Tourism BC Crown corporation.

Tourism Minister Jan Pullinger announced Friday that Popesku and 14 other tourism industry leaders from throughout the province will provide Tourism BC with diverse experience in such markets as accommodation, adventure tourism and culture.

"This new board of directors represents the diversity of the tourism industry and British Columbia will be well served by its members' knowledge and expertise," said Pullinger.

The Tourism British Columbia Act will allow Tourism BC to operate closer to the private sector, said Pullinger, "giving industry more responsibility and opportunity in marketing B.C. as an international tourism destination."

Popesku, who has served on the B.C. Arts Board and the Peace River Alaska Highway Tourist Association, has worked as a volunteer in the B.C. cultural sector for 23 years.

Currently employed by the Fort St. John Hospital Foundation, Popesku is a former teacher who has also been associated with tourism development in the North Peace for 14 years.

Popesku is on vacation in Africa and could not be reached for comment.

TORCH 14, 1997

PUBLIC MEETING PLANNED

Tourism

City wants tourism initiative

By Bruce Lantz

FORT ST. JOHN - The city is planning to develop its own tourism initiative - with the public's help.

Council Feb. 26 approved holding a community meeting to get public input on a proposed tourism plan, and directed staff to develop terms of reference for a tourism task force. The move came after an extensive report from Sarah Tittmore, the city's new director of marketing and communications, who said it's time to develop tourism as an industry in the city.

"To date much of the focus has been regional and we now need to drill down a level and focus on the city," she said.

In the past, most local tourism initiatives have been handled by the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association (NRAHTA) or by individual business operators. In 2005 NRAHTA developed a Tourism Essentials Plan for them but little has been done with it, other than to place general-type advertisements encouraging tourists to come to Fort St. John and take in some city events. Tittmore said

acknowledged that the city already partners in tourism with NRAHTA and Northern BC Tourism, and she said those partnerships may well continue.

"We're not an island. We'll maintain relationships but depending on what the task force develops, these may be parallel tracks, they may crisscross or they may be separate."

In her report she suggested that next steps would likely include:

- building a new visitor centre on the Alaska Highway;
- using the new tourism plan;
- maintaining and developing relationships with stakeholders in the city and region;
- developing an internal awareness plan to communicate the tourism message;
- providing leadership and support to community tourism developers; and,
- ensuring adequate financing for city initiatives.

In other business:

- City council will join other area

stakeholders in meeting with the board of School District 60 to discuss issues for the future which may include the need to find more space for expanding schools.

School board chair Gary Gamble said that while the school district faces growth issues it's important to coordinate their planning with other area governments and organizations, with a view to developing joint projects "or at least to determine where we can either accommodate your needs or you ours".

The meeting will take place March 13 with representatives from the districts of Taylor and Hudson's Hope, the regional district board, Northern Lights College and the University of Northern BC invited.

• Council has approved spending \$2,599 for the mayor's chain of office.

The sterling silver chain, to be worn for official occasions, will carry the city's crest and 1 3/4-inch medallions honouring all former mayors and chairmen of Fort St. John dating back to 1948.

tourists to come to Fort St. John and take in some city events. Tittlemore said the new plan should "develop experiences" and encourage tourism operators and business people to promote the northern and outdoors experiences available here.

"In the past this hasn't necessarily been targeted," she said, adding that it's time the city became "market ready", focusing on tourists already known to be travelling the Alaska Highway.

"The community meeting will take the Essentials Plan, identify opportunities and how to exploit them," Tittlemore said, adding that she hopes city residents and those from the surrounding area will attend the meeting, likely to be held in the next 1-2 months.

T i t t l e m o r e

General

For April

MAR 16, 1988

North effort for highway

FAIRBANKS, Alaska (AP) — The leaders of Alaska, British Columbia, and Yukon said Monday they agreed to work more closely together on energy, tourism, and education issues.

Alaska Governor Steve Cowper met for two days with B.C. Premier Bill Vander Zalm and Yukon Government Leader Tony Penikett. The trilateral meeting was the first since September 1984.

The leaders agreed to have their energy officials review the possibility of connecting power grids, the statement said. They also agreed to adjust regional tourism marketing to attract more travelers who would drive through Western Canada on their way to Alaska.

The three men also agreed to ask their federal governments for funding to upgrade the Alaska Highway. They also promised to work toward joint commemoration of the highway's 50th anniversary

and the 1996-1998 centennial of the Klondike gold rush.

Another topic was the White Pass Railway, which starts in Skagway, Alaska. They agreed to create a joint committee to study extending operation of the narrow gauge line. The privately owned railroad is scheduled to begin service this summer between Skagway and Fraser as a tourist attraction.

The leaders also agreed to joint membership on an advisory board to monitor development of a Canadian studies program at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

"The Fairbanks meetings identified a number of specific areas where common regional problems and opportunities can be pursued cooperatively," Vander Zalm said.

"We share important human and geographic interests with our Alaska and British Columbia neighbors," Penikett said.

Township

APR 17, 1989

Tourist attractions

Spring is springing, Fort St. Johnees are outside doing some early raking and tidying and everywhere people are thinking about travel. The travellers we're most interested in up here are the ones from down there who might consider coming out this way.

The province — that means people from down there who show and tell us up here what we should be doing — has sent a travelling instructor around to help communities determine how they can attract tourists — those other people from down there.

Over the weekend we were told, from a Victoria point of view, what might make us interesting to tourists. Industry.

Is anyone surprised?

There was only really one dissenting view on this — Ald. Norm Dartnell — but he was just one voice out of about 30 invited to attend this meeting.

Mr. Dartnell thought the main focus of our area should be the fresh air, the scenery.

But the man from Victoria said everyone had those features (really?) and that the really unique thing about our area was the oil industry — The Energy Capital of Canada.

Well, that's fine, but no one is going to come up here solely to see a pumpjack. A brochure on the subject explaining how oil and gas are produced and a few words on how it affects our city is all that's necessary.

But the man from Victoria said

what we needed were industrial tours — trips to Taylor, trips to see the dams around Hudson's Hope.

Does that mean there's nothing to see in Fort St. John? We have a fine Museum, a lovely lookout onto the Peace River at the foot of 100 Ave., Canfor is a fairly interesting place to see, as is the College, and if you want to go outside of town, we have a provincial park at Charlie Lake and the Peace Park in Taylor with the Goldpanning championships every year.

We're sure these weren't meant to be demeaned by the group as they considered tourism, but a few more public opinions could have offered some fresh insights. We understand they wanted to narrow the focus of tourism into something they could promote to the rest of Canada, but someone sitting down in Toronto considering where to take the family for the summer isn't going to be turned on by a hydroelectric dam (when Niagara Falls is so close); and someone in Calgary isn't going to plan a trip around seeing a PetroCan plant or a pulp mill. They'd probably be happier with a day on the water, or camping in the bushes.

Reindeer might have excited some, but we don't have reindeer.

We do have a taste of the wilderness and the pioneer and we have it right here in Fort St. John. And one of these days we'll have a beautiful new Arts Centre to offer entertainment to local people and tourists. We should be promoting these.

WLC

Popesku promotes Pavilion show

AUG 23, 1985

By Shelley Browne

Peace Country people have good reason to be proud of their area of the province — and the time has come to show that pride.

The B.C. Pavilion, a 6039 square-metre exhibit space on the Expo 86 site, will showcase the different regions of the province during the world transportation and communication fair being held in Vancouver May 2 to October 13, 1986.

Each of the nine tourist regions in British Columbia will be highlighted in a regional week in the main plaza of the B.C. Pavilion. Themes or storylines which make a statement about the unique and indigenous character of each area will be portrayed by regional performers during these weeks.

Communities in the individual regions will have 15 to 20 minutes

to show the rest of the world why their area of Expo's host province is so special.

POPESKU HIRED

Regional Program Producers have been hired to assist each region in the preparation of its show. Region H, the tourist area into which Fort St. John falls, is represented by producer Sue Popesku.

Popesku is responsible for locating talent to represent Region H at the world fair next summer.

Since being hired in July, Popesku has already introduced many communities in her region to the opportunity they have to showcase their areas at the B.C. Pavilion next summer.

She has been travelling throughout Region H — the area of northeastern B.C. north of McLeod Lake and south of the Yukon border — and encouraging in-

dividuals and groups to become involved in their region's week at Expo.

"It is very important to make people aware of the regional weeks being held at the B.C. Pavilion during Expo because we want everyone who wishes to have an opportunity to audition," Popesku said in an interview last week.

AUDITIONS HELD

Auditions for regional week programs will be held in the January to March, 1986, time period. Applications for regional auditions must be submitted to regional producers by September 30, 1985.

The audition deadline doesn't mean performances must be ready for the stage by end of September, Popesku said. Performers will still have until January to refine and polish their acts.

"We want to start scheduling

auditions for the New Year so we must have all names in by the end of next month. People still have four or five months to work on their performances, however," Popesku said.

Other than the stipulation that performers reflect the theme or nature of their region, there are few restrictions on performance proposals.

MANY CATEGORIES

Performance categories can include music, dance, theatre (short sketches), native, multicultural, storytelling, sport performance (figure skating or gymnastics, for example), and general entertainment.

In addition to presenting their individual 15 to 20 minute performances at various times throughout the week, people representing the different communities of each region will also

join together for their Regional Show, a communal extravaganza in which all the performers from each region participate.

REGIONAL SHOW

Regional Shows will be interspersed throughout the various community group and individual performances during each regional week.

While these shows will be researched and produced by Pavilion staff, regions are encouraged to suggest themes for their area's show. As with the individual performances, themes which reflect the unique nature of each region are being sought.

As well as coordinating talent for the individual and group performances, Popesku is also responsible for canvassing Region H for ideas for its Regional Show.

Continued on page two

Popesku.....

AUG 23, 1985

Continued from page one

MAGNITUDE

"Region H is known for magnitude, for big things," Popesku said. "The oil industry, the Bennett Dam, the Alaska Highway, our big game hunting — all of these things represent largeness."

"We're looking for ideas that we can call our own, ideas that specifically reflect the unique nature of our region and its people, places and activities," Popesku said. "The more creative and imaginative these ideas are, the better."

In suggesting possible theme concepts, Popesku said that Region H is widely known for its magnitude.

"The oil industry, Bennett Dam, Alaska Highway, wide sky country and our big game hunting — all of these things represent largeness."

Popesku also referred to the northern lights and festivals such as Mukluk Rendezvous as potential ideas around which to build the script for Region H's show.

WELL-KNOWN PLAYWRIGHT

John Gray, a well-known Canadian

playwright who penned such pieces as 'Billy Bishop Goes to War', will write the script for Region H's show. Gray met with representatives from the various communities in Region H earlier this week to discuss script ideas for the Regional Show.

Fort St. John will be treated to a special preview of all the skits and acts, including the Regional Show, being performed at the B.C. Pavilion next summer by Region H representatives. Heritage Festival '86 will showcase all Region H Pavilion appearances next July.

Approximately 300 performers and technical support crew will represent each region during its week at the Pavilion.

Performers will be provided with honorariums for travel expenses, free admission to Expo each performance day and a complimentary three-day pass to the exposition site.

Further information about B.C. Pavilion activities and auditions may be obtained by contacting Sue Popesku at Fort St. John's B.C. Pavilion Office at 785-1986.

Less arsenals, more urinals!

Apr 21, 1960

THE PARKS AND recreation people through their minister, the Hon. E. Westwood have indicated although they are interested in campsites along the Alaska Highway that they have no funds available.

Surely funds should be forthcoming to underwrite the tourist influx this year. The tourists this year will determine the whole future of the industry, the most lucrative in B.C. when tens of thousands are expected to travel between Alaska and the USA mainland.

The money they bring into the province will run into millions of dollars and they are offered no camping sites for hundreds and hundreds of miles along the Alcan on which Fort Nelson is a center.

We should bring pressure to bear on federal facilities if our provincial departments are not going to take action. Failing this we should appeal to Highway 93 or the governments of Alaska, California, etc., whose residents will be caught high and dry on the heaviest travelled, longest stretching road in the country. This must not be neglected or we defeat the whole thing. It would be a shame to have to appeal to the United States for facilities to take care of the necessities of their citizens in our rich land. Yet they will suffer if we stand

idle.

There is some hope however, that the federal government in their historic site marking grant will be able to alleviate the "disaster area" where "pathetically few existing facilities" are at present.

It does seem a shame that the provincial people who have netted some \$50 million recently in lease sales in this area could not spend a few paltry dollars on providing just fresh water, garbage containers, bathrooms however primitive, and cooking facilities for an industry regarded as the leading industry of this province. The tourist industry.

Just think of the ridicule and embarrassment we subject ourselves to and the curtailment of travellers who have invested great sums in the camping line. The trend is to camping throughout the continent. They will go elsewhere if we do not act immediately. They will not tolerate our dearth of facilities.

It's all very well this great defence spending and hush-hush installations, but maybe we will have to appeal to the American government to protect their innocents abroad and remind them it might be better to have less arsenals and more urinals. (Fort Nelson News)

NOCAN ALONG THE ALCAN APR 21, 1960

As once again the highway's clear,
We start another tourist year.
From Texas and the Alamo
They come a-shouting "Northward Ho."
Alas they stop for one short beer,
Refreshed they hit the road again,
Alaska bound—this tourist train
And soon they feel that nature's cause
May force them one by one to pause.
But on and on they drive in pain.
For hours they bite their lips, and pine
To sight a welcome Campsite sign.
There is no other choice indeed—
Step on the gas—and up the speed.

In any case they'll risk a fine.
There should be more facilities
Than shady trails and poplar trees.
Man shouldn't need a hollow log
To see a man about a dog,
When he should relax at ease.
Your government must surely know
That tourists—say from Mexico,
Would sure appreciate a space
Along the road from place to place,
Where they can park and camp—and GO.

(Fort Nelson News)

NORTHSIDERS, THAT IS

How to win friends and influence people

By BRIAN R MARTIN
Editor, Alaska Highway News

I'm not sure if the map reprinted on this page is an example of erudite journalism or a guide to making friends and influencing people . . . people living in Fort St John, that is.

A close look will reveal that the editor of this special supplement of the Peace River Block News of Dawson Creek left Fort St John out in the boondocks . . . or at least so far out in the sticks that the artist didn't think it rated a mention. And just to rub it in a little more, our airport disappeared, too. (Last year it was rated the 16th busiest in Canada.)

The supplement which tells the story of the circle tour starting at Dawson Creek to Chetwynd and Hudson's Hope and on to Taylor to return to the Centennial City is sponsored by the Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce, if you don't mind! I am sure that Don Leach and his stalwarts must have been out of town when proofs were checked. Either that or they are reverted to those old feudin' days when CJDC would pinch our oil well with monotonous regularity.

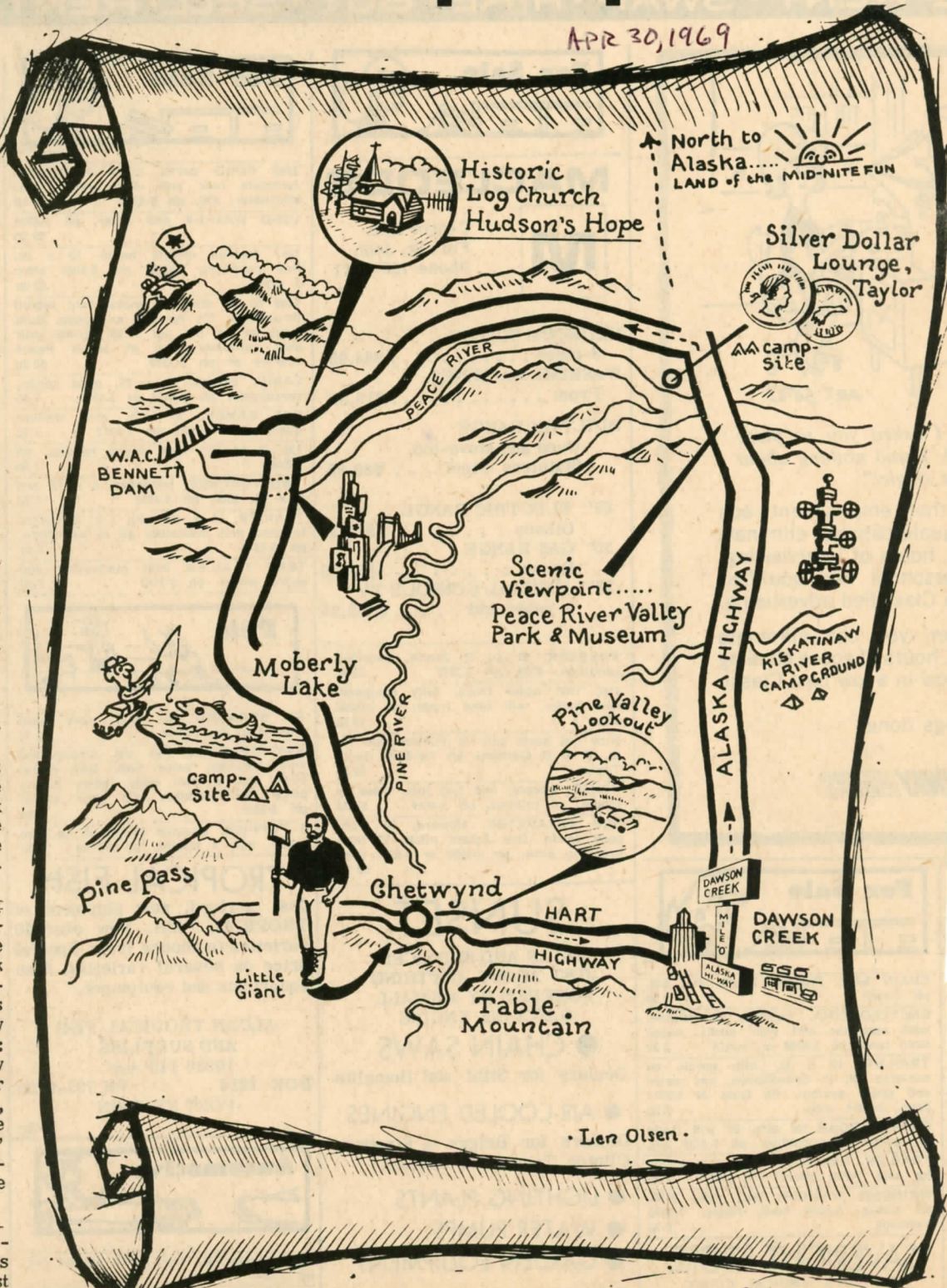
This sort of thing doesn't make for good neighbors and we hope that the Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce and the Peace River Block News will be quick to heal the breach by reprinting a proper map.

Doing this may also help smooth ruffled feathers over another item appearing in the same edition of the Peace River Block News which quotes the industrial co-ordinator of the city as saying in reference to the new industry projected at Taylor: "The establishment of a new industry . . . will, like all other activities in the South Peace, have a beneficial effect on the City of Dawson Creek . . ."

Please, Mr Industrial Co-ordinator, leave Taylor on the north side of the Peace.

Archibald Lampman, the Canadian poet, was for some years a clerk in the Canada Post Office earning at one time about \$720 per annum.

APR 30, 1969



THIS IS A MAP of the scenic Circle, published Dawson Creek. Fort St John has been left off and last week by the Peace River Block News in no mention has been made of our airport.