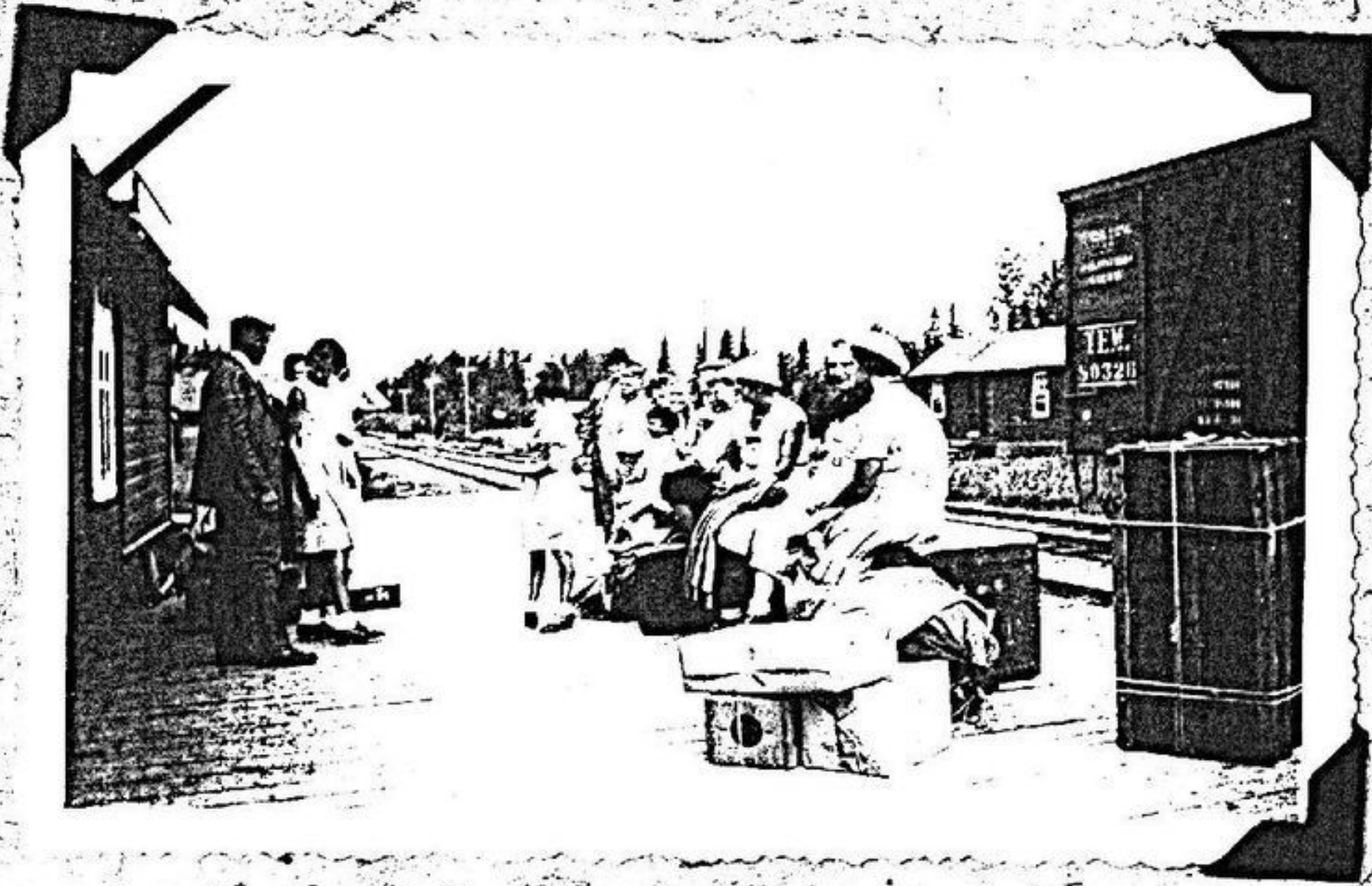




A group at the station awaiting the arrival of the Polar Bear. This is our only means of reaching Cochrane — there are no roads here.

Fall Fair Has Good Day 1950

The household science exhibits were excellent in both quality and number. Judge Mrs. L. H. Hanlan of Matheson rated the show as the best she has seen at any Northern fair this year. A feature of this section was an excellent display of needlework, supplemented by some pieces of costume jewellery and pictures, sent by the Island Falls Women's Institute.

ISLAND FALLS

The current issue of "Abitibi" Magazine carries the following story from Island Falls on the line patrol staff which keeps the power coming to Cochrane and the adjacent area served from the Falls plant:

OPERATION SKYLINE

To relay the electrical power produced in our small plant is 110 miles of transmission line atop 652 towers extending from Island Falls to Hunt, Cochrane, Iroquois Falls and Smooth Rock. Keeping this line in constant repair is the job of four patrolmen under the able guidance of line superintendent Joe Bamford.

Before Abitibi established itself in Island Falls, the Hollinger Co. owners of the plant, had the original line built to relay power to its mine in Timmins. This was done in 1923 by Lang & Ross Co. of Winnipeg. Working with this company were two of our present employees, Joe and Charlie Bamford. When Hollinger was forced to continue purchase of power from Northern Canada Power Co., our plant was bought by Abitibi. In 1925 when the line was rebuilt from Island Falls to Hunt, the Bamford brothers joined the company.

Joe Bamford, though considered of Island Falls' division, resides with his wife "Win" and four children in Cochrane from where he conducts "Operation Skyline."

Not a lineman, but very essential

to the job and hired by Abitibi is Earl Hartin of Cochrane, C.N.R. brakeman, who pilots the speeder operating on the C.N.R. between Hunt and Iroquois Falls.

Patrolling this distance of 47 miles by speeder is Alf Wiskin, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Wiskin of camp. Alf lives in Cochrane with his wife and children Gwenny and George.

Stationed at Hunt is Tom Kirkland, bachelor, who patrols towards Island Falls as far as the Driftwood River. This distance of 20 miles through the bush is covered on foot, snowshoes being an asset in winter, since dog teams were found inconvenient because of lack of trail.

Ronnie Macdonald, single, and resident of camp, has the job of patrolling on foot from here to the Driftwood River, about 20 miles.

Built in 1946 is the line from Smooth Falls to the Driftwood — a distance of 15 miles and consisting of 96 towers. This stretch is patrolled by G. Bryant — "Curly" to friends — who lives at Smooth Rock Falls with his wife and family of two children.

When trouble occurs on either the transmission or the telephone line, the direction of the fault is detected and the proper line operator is contacted by phone. From then on, the lineman is on his own. He packs his equipment and food and starts checking his part of the line, staying until the fault is repaired. For shelter between camp and Hunt is a lineman's shack at Driftwood — a welcome haven during winds or rains when most of the trouble occurs.

Living in camp is also another lineman, but a Hydro employee, Floyd Barkhouse. The Hydro line from the Canyon at Fraserdale runs parallel to our line for some distance and it is Floyd's job to patrol it as far south as Driftwood and for a few miles north. Floyd and Edith Barkhouse live in a Hydro-built home with their two daughters Lois and Connie.

So, if trouble troubles you, line trouble, that is — just tell "Joe" — he'll fix it.