

### Dittriches write

## Letter from Inuvik tells of change to bustling town

The 10th news letter from the North-West Territories has been sent out by the Rev. Douglas Dittrich and his wife Jean, telling of their work and life there. Mrs. Laura Dittrich has just returned to Acton after staying in Inuvik with them due to her daughter-in-law's difficulty in recovering from a broken hip.

The Dittriches have a new baby daughter as well as Ruth, 8, Christina, 6, and Keith, 4. Jean broke her hip a year ago and is still suffering the effects of the fall.

Highlights of their long letter, of general interest, follow.

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Doug ran for Inuvik Town Council along with nine others. Although having a long-time interest in politics he had never before tried for public office. He topped the poll (by one vote!) and gained a 2-year term on Council. There are eight councillors, half of whom are elected each year. The mayor is also elected for two years. In connection with his Council duties Doug attended a meeting of the N.W.T. Association of Municipalities at Fort Simpson (located at the forks of the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers) in November. As there is no minister at the church there right now Doug stayed to hold Sunday services.

Many people will be familiar with the Prudhoe Bay oil discovery on the north Alaska coast to the west of us. Doug joined a tour in March which flew over the tremendous facilities built there but which lie virtually idle awaiting a decision by the U.S. Government to allow a pipeline across the State. There are several test facilities in operation for studying the feasibility of building pipelines in Arctic permafrost conditions. They are financed by many of the major oil, gas and pipeline companies. On the Mackenzie River there are three such establishments: at Inuvik, Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Research Ltd. for oil; at Norman Wells, Gas Arctic Systems Study Group for gas; and at the Sans Saule rapids near Fort Good Hope, The Northwest Project Study Group, also for gas. At these sites various tests are being made, utilizing the 48-inch diameter pipe proposed for carrying oil and gas to southern markets.

**Bustling town**  
Inuvik now has a somewhat different atmosphere from the place we came to in 1967. It is a growing, bustling town of over 3,000 people. The traffic, equipment and activity past our door (we are located on the main street) is unbelievable at times. The airport can be hectic; in a two week period this month there were 300 flights in and out by giant Hercules aircraft supplying oil camps. One petroleum company alone is spending \$17 million this winter to drill eleven test wells in the Mackenzie Delta.

In a few years Inuvik will be joined to southern Canada by road. Work has begun south on a gravel road to link with the Dempster Highway coming north through the Yukon. Doug travelled the completed portion of the Dempster in August when he took two weeks' holiday and visited the Yukon Territory for the first time. Flying to Old Crow, the most northerly Indian settlement in Canada, Doug stayed with the Rev. Ron Ferris for eight days. He continued on by air to Dawson City and spent

two days with the Rev. Ken Snider (who opened the Inuvik mission in 1957), seeing some of the fascinating sights associated with the famous gold rush of 1898. From Dawson he went out through beautiful mountainous country to Mile 123, the end of present construction on the Dempster Highway. This road will eventually go another 200 miles north to Inuvik, and then to Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic coast. Getting a ride by car from Dawson to Whitehorse (there are many more roads in the Yukon than the N.W.T.) Doug spent Labor Day weekend in the Yukon capital. There was also a side trip to Carcross in the extreme south of the Yukon—a beautiful and historic location. Doug visited the graveyard where Bishop Bompas, a pioneer missionary, was buried, along with some of the original discoverers of the Yukon gold. He returned home by direct flight from Whitehorse. Doug has been invited to preach at the Cathedral in Whitehorse on March 5 as he may be there during the 2nd Arctic Winter Games to assist with some of the special events and native cultural displays.

**Unhappy trip**  
When Doug and Jean were in Yellowknife for the Ball Doug preached at Holy Trinity Church, which brought back memories of the first time he had worshipped there in the summer of 1953, nearly 18 years before. While in Yellowknife in March on Church business he accompanied the Rev. Steve Collins of the Canadian Bible Society to Fort Rae, a large community of Dogrib Indians about 60 miles west of Yellowknife. An unhappy trip was one in March to Fort McPherson for the burial of a young daughter of the minister there, killed when she was attacked by a team of husky dogs.

Inuvik continues to be a centre for many interesting events. In April the annual Top of the World cross country ski meet was held. Some of the Inuvik skiers will be going to Japan in February to compete in the winter Olympic Games. This year the cultural scene was brightened with three touring groups appearing, including the Canadian Opera Company. Such gatherings at the Canadian Northern Science Conference and meetings about the University of Canada North, a proposed centre of higher learning, also took place. The 2nd annual Northern Games, which is a weekend of traditional native games, dancing, crafts, skills and displays, took much of Doug's time in July as he is still the secretary. This get-together of northern people from as far away as Point Barrow, Alaska in the west and Pelly Bay in the east was a huge success.

**Top drum dancers**  
The weekend following Northern Games Doug and Jean accompanied an Inuvik contingent, which included the Eskimo Delta Drummers and Dancers and the Inuvik Games Team, to the World Eskimo Olympics at Fairbanks, Alaska, a city of 25,000. It was our first trip to Alaska. We were billeted at the University of Alaska, situated in a lovely spot just outside the city. Jean was on crutches but still managed to see something of Fairbanks and attend the Olympic events which brought together Eskimo and Indian participants from all over Alaska. The Inuvik team did well and

came home with several awards. The drum dancers won over all other Eskimo dance groups for the top trophy.

A number of distinguished visitors came to Inuvik this year, although not as many as in Centennial Year 1970. In June a large group of M.P.'s and Senators was here. It was the 114th and final public hearing of the Parliamentary Committee on the Constitution, at which Doug made a representation. Doug also talked with Robert Stanfield, Leader of the Opposition, when he was here in July. Others visiting Inuvik included David Lewis, leader of the N.D.P., and General Sharp, the Chief of the Defence Staff.

**Tourists now**  
This was the first year that tourists in any number have been noticeable, and many people dropped in to the church. Some came on air charters and others on the new Mackenzie River cruise ship the 'Norweta'. Stamp collecting has brought Doug many correspondents around the world over the years. He is a member of the American Society of Polar Philatelists. The editor of this Society's magazine, Bernard Coyne of El Paso, Texas arrived on the 'Norweta' on September 10 and visited with us for a weekend.

July 21 was the 10th anniversary of the official opening of Inuvik by former Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. John Diefenbaker. As the small area around the monument in the Town square marking this occasion was rather neglected, Doug took it upon himself to landscape it (despite the hordes of mosquitoes) with rocks, topsoil, grass and flowers. The weather in June and early July was beautiful and we again started a little flower garden beside the house. But August was a bad month for weather and most of the plants were just beginning to reach their peak when the frost came in September. We brought some of them inside to complement the ones we grow under lights all year round. The snow came early this year and by mid-October we had 40 inches. Even the old-timers did not remember as much snow so early. The 1971 Christmas season, however, is one of the mildest on record with the temperatures a little below or above zero, instead of the 30 to 45 below we often experience at the end of December.

**New Construction**  
Inuvik's growth is reflected in all the new construction started this year: utilidor (water and sewer) extensions to most of the unserved areas were completed; a dairy and a drug store were opened; the million dollar recreation centre is now finished; a ten-room addition to the secondary school is underway; a new Forestry building is up across from our house; a 36-unit apartment building is nearing completion; 24 more units of row housing are under construction; and early in 1972 a senior citizens' home is to be built. Scattered around the whole community are over 50 trailer homes, brought in to supply immediate housing for the many new residents here mainly because of the oil exploration boom.

Doug still has 'Thought for Today' six mornings a week on alternate weeks on the radio. The Sunday School is a community one with teaching on a non-denominational basis.

1971 was the year of the Jesus Movement, the Jesus Revolution, or the Jesus People, however you may wish to describe it. This summer six of these young people came to Inuvik (two are Californians, the others Canadian) and made their witness, particularly to the local young people, to their Faith. Their zeal and friendliness was a positive influence in the town. Two of the girls remained here and have been continuing their informal Christian work.

**Christmas time**  
On Christmas Eve in the

evening Jean, Doug's mother and the children went to the chapel at Stringer Hall, the Anglican Hostel. The school children in residence there are mainly Eskimo, Indian, or of mixed backgrounds. Each year they put on a Nativity pageant with lessons and carols.

After the stockings were hung and the children in bed, Jean accompanied Doug to the 11:30 p.m. Communion service. On Christmas afternoon we returned to Stringer Hall for the traditional arrival of Santa, and for a cup of tea. On Christmas Day, as on Sundays, Doug has a service at 10 a.m. at the hospital chapel, at 11 a.m. in English and 3:15 p.m. in Eskimo at the church. There was one service only on December 28 at 11 a.m. and that evening friends invited us to their home for a turkey dinner.



GLASS DOORS have been installed at the giving the building a bright new look.—(Staff entrance to the Acton Community Centre. Photo)

### 4-H members concentrate on dress

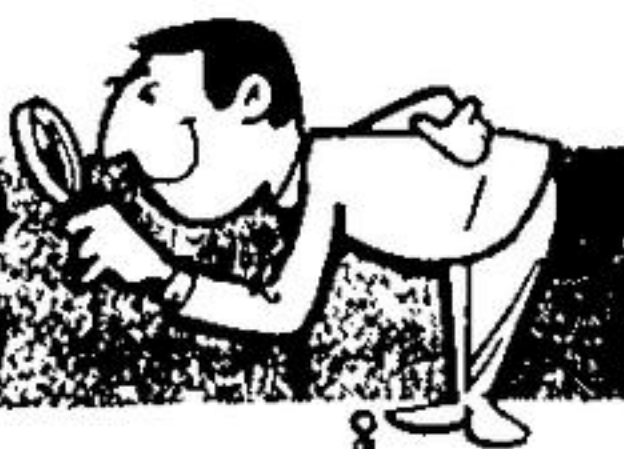
"Being well dressed and well groomed" is the project for Halton 4-H Homemaking Club members this spring. Training Schools for leaders will be conducted Feb. 8 and Feb. 9 at Iagny Hall by Mrs. Doreen Bannister, County Home Economist.

4-H Homemaking Clubs are open to all girls between 12 and 26 years of age. A club may be organized by a local leader and an assistant for a minimum of four girls. New clubs are always welcome and further details may be obtained from the Home Economist, Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food, 181 Main St., Milton.

During the course of the project members will discuss ways to achieve a well-dressed, well-groomed appearance. By planning and making an article of loungewear for themselves, they will learn selection of fabrics and patterns, as well as clothing construction techniques.

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### Suggest question period for press

Both committees of Acton Council will be asked to consider a proposal, made by Councillors Peter Marks and Norm Elliott, that a 15 minute portion of regular council meetings be reserved for members of press, radio and television to ask questions.

The question session would be part of the "enquiries" period. Marks and Elliott got the idea, after attending a meeting of Fergus council, as guests Monday night.

"There isn't a politician at any level, who hasn't questioned an article at one time or another," Marks told his colleagues. "If any of our statements sound ambiguous, they could be cleared up in a question period."

**Better information**  
Elliott felt questions could serve to better inform other members of council on some matters.

Councillor Earl Masales reminded the two members of the press are enlightened to a degree in that they are given copies of committee meeting minutes.

Marks replied that in Fergus the press are now being allowed to attend committee meetings on

a trial basis.

Masales suggested the proposal be referred back to committee. "I'm quite sure we'd defeat it right here," he said.

Members of Acton council were all guests of the Fergus town fathers for their Monday night meeting.

ONE bird watcher had 40 grosbeaks at one time in his bird feeder this week.

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