

Father in posse

Son recalls how dad involved in Mad Trapper's death 81 years ago

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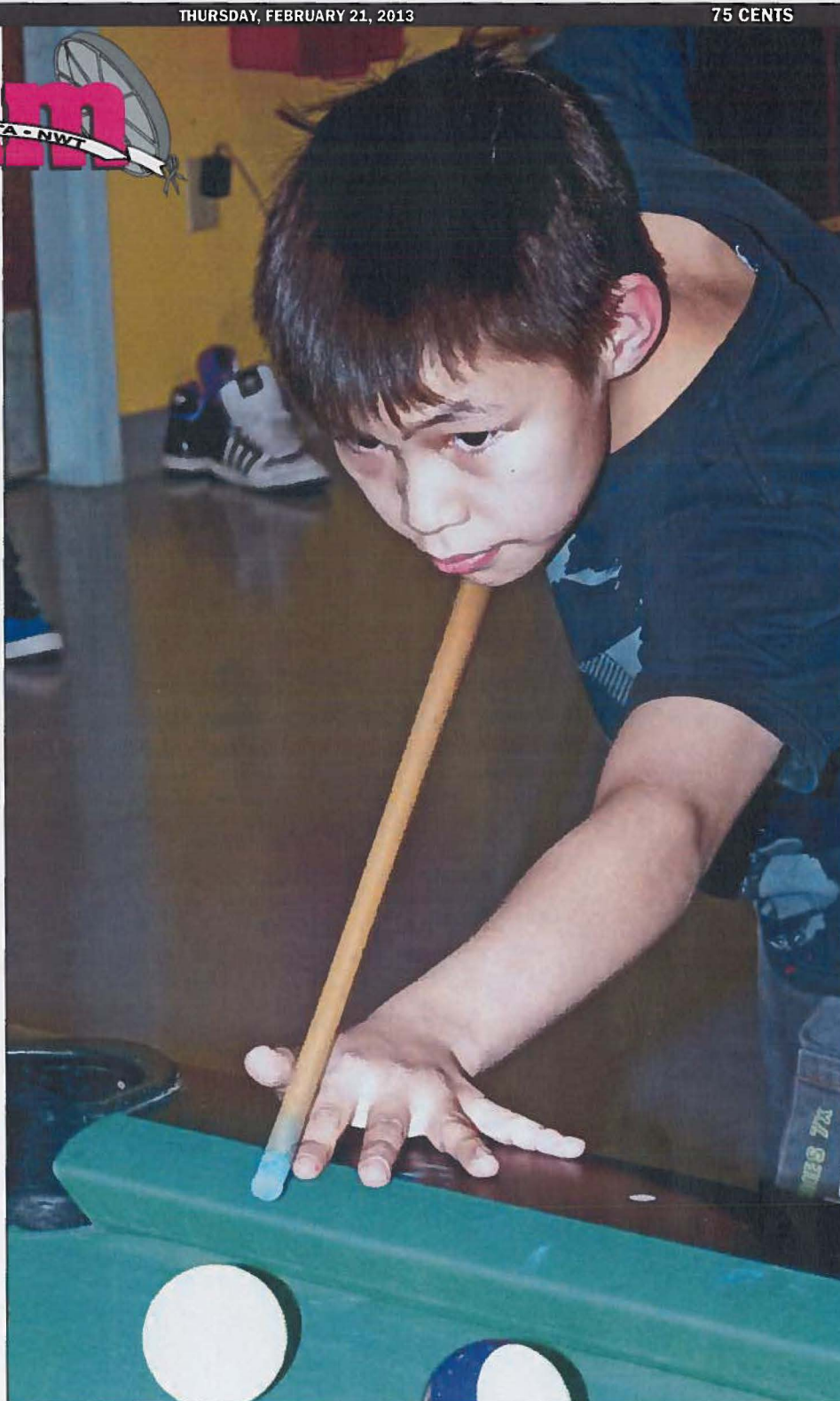
Tuk team takes title at IRC Cup



Edward Lennie surprised with jubilee medal



Youth chosen for page duty in legislature



Robin Raddi, 10, tries his best to win the Inuvik Youth Centre's informal pool tournament last weekend. See inside for more photos.

1 Shan Gels, NWI, photo

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Corrections

Errors appeared in the Feb. 14 edition of *Inuvik Drum*. In "No practice time for new team," Rita Arey was mistakenly identified as Judy McLeod. In the Sportscard, Leeanne Ocko was misidentified. *Inuvik Drum* apologizes for any confusion or embarrassment these errors may have caused.

NEWS Briefs

Truth and reconciliation in art

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is calling for artists to submit works that relate to experiences at, or the legacy of, residential schools.

The artwork can be related to direct experience or that relate to the impact of those experiences on former students, parents, future generations, communities, and on relationships within families and between communities.

The deadline for submissions is Dec. 31.

Weather closes down highway

Anyone expecting deliveries via the Dempster Highway Feb. 18 was disappointed.

While the weather wasn't bad in Inuvik despite a moderate wind, the highway was closed in the morning further south, from Fort McPherson to Eagle Plains in the Yukon.

More money for Children First

The federal government announced a \$500,000 cash injection for the Children's First Centre earlier this week.

The Children's First Centre combines four early childhood centres in Inuvik, and can provide childcare for 120 children.

Children First Society chair Melinda Gillis thanked the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and its minister, Leona Aglukkaq, who was in Inuvik Feb. 19 to make the announcement of the funding.

"We are all making an investment in the future success of our kids," said Gillis.

Hockey abounds

It's the second consecutive over-dose weekend for Inuvik's hockey fans.

The annual Gwich'in junior hockey tournament begins Feb. 28 and runs until March 3.

The competition is open for players aged 7 to 17 years.

Inuvik travels to Hay River

The Inuvik Delta Stars are travelling to Hay River for two games at the Don Stewart Recreation Centre arena in Northern Hockey Challenge action Feb. 22 and 23.

Inuvik last played Feb. 2 in Yellowknife and currently sits in third place in the Western Division with a record of one win and three losses. Elton Ruben and Mickey Ipana are the team's top scorers with five points each after four games.

The team's next home game at the Midnight Sun Complex is March 8 at 7:30 p.m. against the Yellowknife First Air Flyers.

- NNSL staff

Mad Trapper chase recalled

Inuvik man is son of RCMP officer who took down Albert Johnson

by T. Shawn Gillick
Northern News Services

While most people were celebrating Valentine's Day last week, resident Winston Moses was marking a decidedly more sombre occasion.

Eighty-one years ago on Feb. 17, Moses's father John, then a young man and still relatively inexperienced RCMP officer, was one of the posse involved in a violent shootout with Albert Johnson, the infamous Mad Trapper of Rat River.

John Moses played a large role in the outcome of that exchange, Winston said, and it haunted him throughout the rest of his life. The exact way the ordeal ended is something that may never be known.

"He said that everyone involved that day swore they wouldn't say what happened there," Winston said.

Most people in the North are familiar with the story about the first great manhunt in Canada in modern times. Johnson, whose identity and background remain mysterious to this day, appeared in the Aklavik area in 1931 and built himself a tiny cabin on the shore of the Rat River. By all accounts a taciturn and unfriendly man, Johnson kept largely to himself.

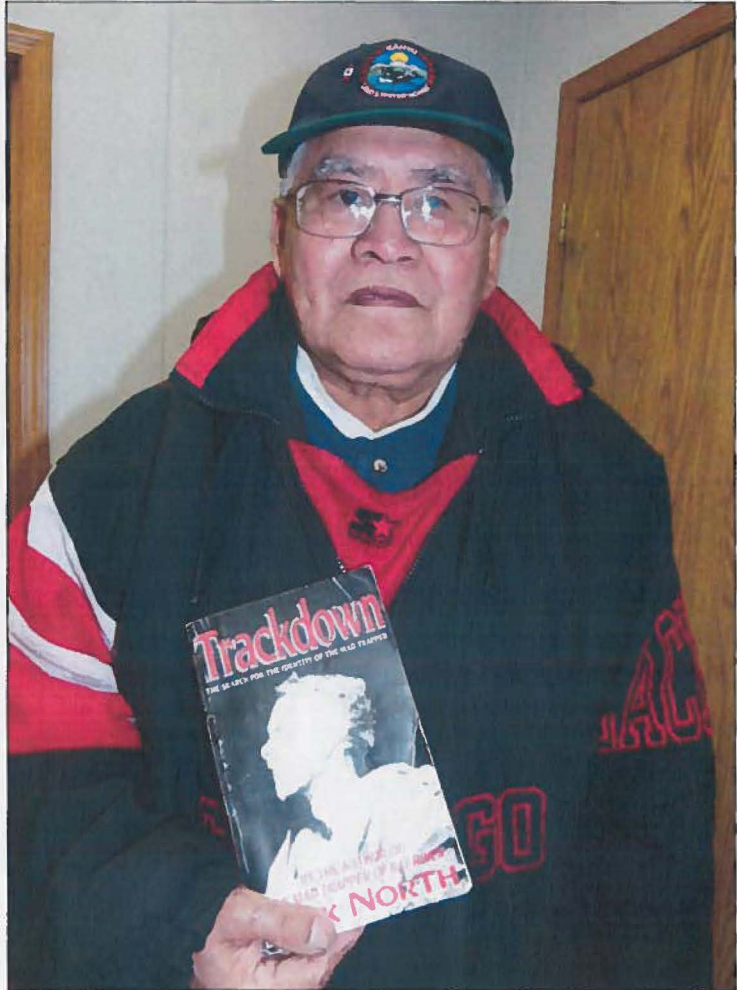
Interfering with traps

By December 1931, local trappers in the area, mainly Gwich'in, complained to law enforcement officials about someone interfering with their traps. Suspicion fell on Johnson, and chaos followed a visit by two RCMP officers who travelled from Aklavik.

Johnson refused to answer his door to speak with the two officers, who eventually headed back to Aklavik to obtain a search warrant. Five days later, warrant in hand, they returned to his isolated cabin and he again refused to answer. One of the officers, Alfred King, attempted to break the door down and was shot. Seriously injured, King was rushed back to Aklavik, and he eventually recovered.

In the meantime, a group returned to Johnson's cabin. He still refused to co-operate, and the posse eventually resorted to blowing the cabin up with dynamite.

Johnson survived the explosion and held off the posse for the better part of a day. They retreated, and he escaped into the wilderness, travelling an unbelievable distance in the process and climbing a 2,100-metre peak in the Richardson Mountains thought to be impassable in those conditions and weather.



Inuvik resident Winston Moses is the son of legendary RCMP officer John Moses, who was one of the chief participants in the final shootout with Albert Johnson, the Mad Trapper of Rat River. Moses said his father fired the fatal shot.

During another firefight, an RCMP officer, Edgar Millen, was killed by Johnson.

With the assistance of a pilot, the RCMP managed to catch up with Johnson near the Eagle River in the Yukon.

Cornered, Johnson still put up as many as nine times before being brought down. John Moses fired the fatal shot, although that's something rarely mentioned in many of the "official" histories of the chase, Winston said.

That's one of the reasons he came forward with his story. While he's not necessarily proud that his father killed someone, he doesn't want his role in the historic event to fade away either.

Most of the attention in modern times has been focused on trying to

conclusively identify Johnson and uncover his motives, but no one has succeeded yet.

Moses said the incident haunted his father. John Moses would rarely speak of it to his children, Winston said. Only older relatives knew much of the story directly from him, and there were details he wouldn't share.

"He told us they promised each other as they were wrapping his body up that 'What happened here stays here with us.'"

There's no clear answer today as to why there was such secrecy involved. Winston said he didn't know, but his father remained traumatized by what happened.

John Moses threw away the rifle he used that day, Winston said, and soon after resigned from the RCMP, leaving behind a promising career

that started in 1929.

He spent the better part of a year on his own in the bush, struggling to come to terms with his role in the pursuit.

"He said he didn't want to hunt with a rifle that had taken the life of a man," Winston said.

After he died in the mid-1970s, the RCMP recognized his service with a headstone. In 1973, Moses Hill, south of Rat River, was named in his honour.

Winston said he's far from the only person in the area with some kind of connection to the story. He said he has a friend in Aklavik who led a Discovery Channel film crew to Johnson's grave a few years ago, and still remembers the events.

Rita Arey, an Aklavik resident, said her grandfather built Johnson's casket.