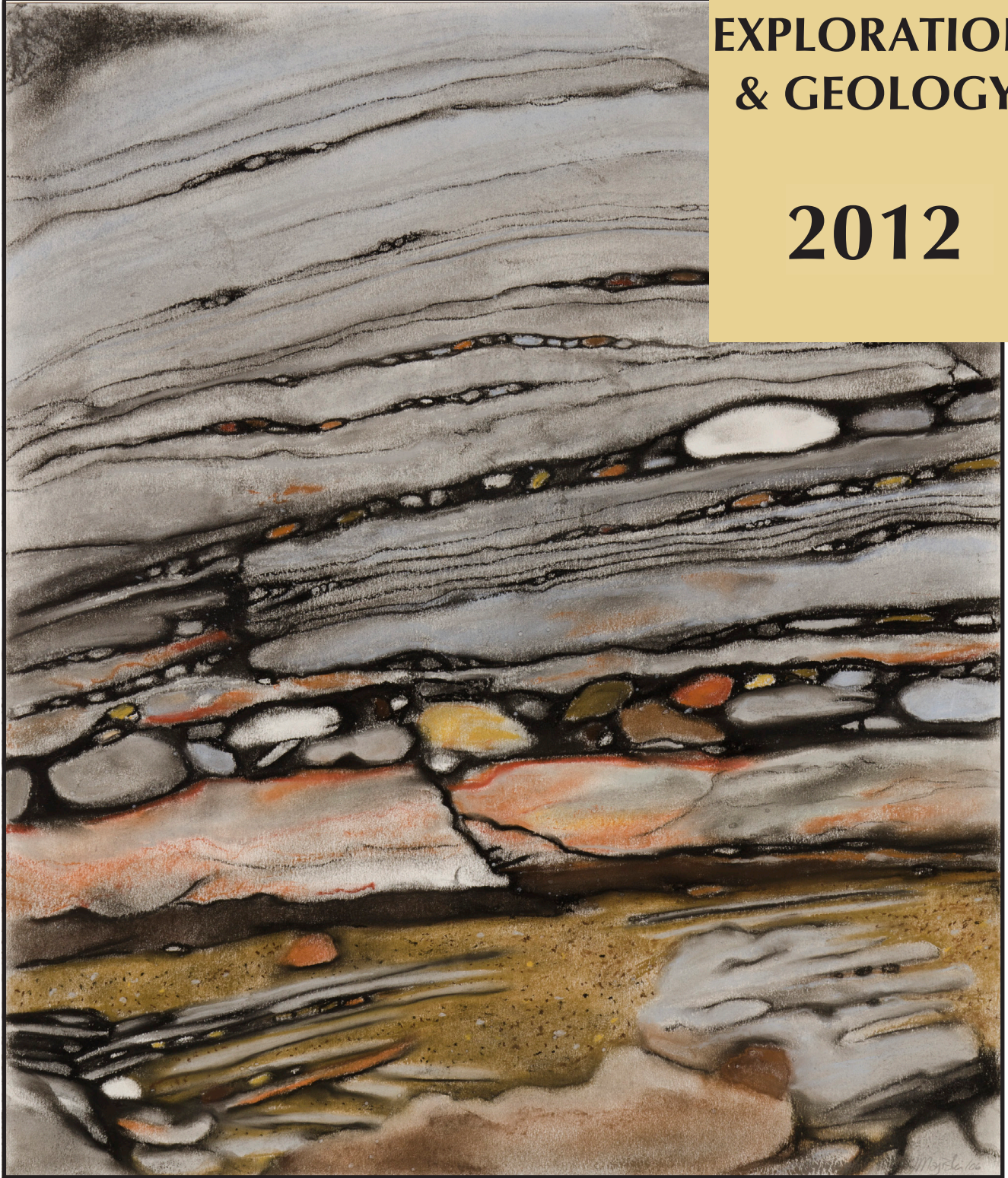


Energy, Mines and Resources • *Yukon Geological Survey*

# YUKON EXPLORATION & GEOLOGY

## 2012





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Edited by  
K.E. MacFarlane, M.G. Nordling, and  
P.J. Sack

Yukon Geological Survey  
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Front cover photograph: Copy of an original chalk pastel drawing by Joyce Majiski. The image was inspired by the geography and geology of the Firth River area, northwest Yukon. The piece was selected to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Yukon Geological Survey.

## **PREFACE**

Yukon Exploration and Geology (YEG) and the Yukon Exploration and Geology Overview continue to be the main publications of the Yukon Geological Survey (Energy, Mines and Resources, Government of Yukon). Individual YEG papers, with colour images, are available in digital format only and can be downloaded from our website. The YEG Overview is available in print and digital formats.

YEG 2012 contains up-to-date information on mining and mineral exploration activity, studies by industry, and results of recent geological field studies. Information in this volume comes from prospectors, exploration and government geologists, mining companies, and students who are willing to contribute to public geoscience for the benefit of the scientific community, general public, and mineral and petroleum industries of Yukon. Their efforts are appreciated.

I would like to thank my YEG co-editors Monica Nordling and Patrick Sack for not only producing great work, but also providing comic relief and laughter throughout this process. As always, appreciation is extended to Yukon Geological Survey staff who take the time to edit earlier versions of manuscripts; this year I thank Carolyn Relf, Lee Pigage, Maurice Colpron, Steve Israel, Tiffani Fraser, Charlie Roots, and Don Murphy.

We welcome any input or suggestions that you may have to improve future YEG publications. Please contact me at (867) 667-8519, or by e-mail at [karen.macfarlane@gov.yk.ca](mailto:karen.macfarlane@gov.yk.ca).

Karen MacFarlane

## IN MEMORIAM



### JOHN DAVID WITHAM

On December 14, 2011 the Yukon lost a mining industry legend and friend, Mr. John Witham.

John David Witham was born in Mohall, North Dakota on March 6, 1954. When he was 12 years of age, John and his parents Burt and Louise moved from North Dakota to the wilds of Fort McMurray Alberta, relocating a few years later to Smithers, B.C.

One of John's first real passions in life was flying, and soon after graduating from high school in 1972, he obtained his commercial helicopter licence.

In the early 1970s, at the height of the mineral exploration boom, John moved to Ross River where he met and married Cindy McClymont. Cindy and John raised two children in Ross River, Zackary and Kristen.

Over the course of the next couple of decades, John worked primarily in the Yukon's mining industry. As a testament to his love of flying and dedication to the industry, he proceeded to log almost 30,000 hours of fixed wing and helicopter time.

In 1990, John met Bernadette Etzel, and in 1994 they were married. John and Bernie were loving parents of Vashti and Rafe, and proud grandparents of grandson Drake and granddaughters Deliehla and Danisha.

Drake, who was the apple of grandpa John's eye was born during John's last term as President of the Yukon Chamber of Mines, during the 2006 Yukon GeoScience Forum.

In spite of the many hours he spent flying, John always made time to share with Bernie, the kids, and grandkids some of his many other passions, which included hockey and gardening. When it came to hockey, I am told he had two things in common with Gordie Howe, they both wore skates and they both knew what elbows were really for.

John was also a very accomplished musician, who was always ready and willing to bring life to a party. Whenever he was around, there was usually a guitar, a piano, a harmonica or on occasion even a set of drums somewhere close by. If there wasn't, John would find one or the other and the party was on. Rest assured, if there was music happening, John could be counted on to enthusiastically add one or more of his very accomplished vocal renditions. If he couldn't find a musical instrument nearby, John could always be counted on to entertain with one of his many fairly corny jokes!

Another well-known fact about John is that he was a master story teller, with an uncanny ability to make a story just a bit more interesting and intriguing every time he told it, which was usually quite often.

John's first venture into the private airline industry came as owner/operator of Witham Air Limited. Following that, he spent many years with Trans North Helicopters functioning as Base Pilot in Ross River and Smithers, B.C and subsequently Operations Manager and Marketing Manager in Whitehorse. John was the first CEO of the Kaska Minerals Corporation, he spent several terms as President of the Yukon Chamber of Mines and was also Secretary/Director of the Yukon Chamber

of Commerce. It was as President of the Yukon Chamber of Mines, where along with many other accomplishments, he was instrumental in establishing the Yukon Mine Training Association.

John's list of friends and acquaintances was far reaching, and to a person, they all remember him as a passionate supporter of Yukon's exploration and mining industry. Members of the chamber also remember John as a president that insisted on playing a role in the public consultation process, a trait that he insisted on in private life as well. While John was never shy about providing his own insightful, and always well researched, input on any topic, he was just as eager to consider the perspective of others.

Long-time friend and business associate Rob McIntyre described John as "a class act" and a man of great integrity. He recalls his most enduring memory of John being that while he was plying his profession as a superb helicopter pilot, he always had his ears open to the in-cabin conversations amongst his geologist and prospector clients. While flying, he would often ask meaningful questions and make helpful observations about geological formations, pointing out anomalies in vegetation and weathering patterns. John knew about landscapes, and was well aware of the changes that had taken place in those landscapes from year to year. But, whatever 'gems' of knowledge John picked up from those many years of in-flight cabin conversations, one could be safe in the knowledge that he would never divulge secrets from company to company, or use that information for personal gain.

On May 8, 2012, the Hon. Brad Cathers, Yukon's Minister of Energy Mines and Resources paid tribute to John in the Yukon Legislative Assembly and quoted from one of John's many Letters to the Editor. "There are many of hundreds of families in the Yukon that depend upon mineral exploration in order to make their mortgage payments, feed themselves, and ensure a proper education and a bright future for their children."

Minister Cathers went on to say "John's letters were always well-written, well-reasoned and often very insightful. In the midst of sometimes very emotional debates, many of us appreciated his thoughtful and always fact-based contributions on our behalf."

In John's honour later that day, Minister Cathers tabled the following Motion in the House;

***"Mr. Speaker I rise to give notice of the following motion:***

***THAT this House urges the Yukon government to continue to respect the fact that there are many hundreds of families in the Yukon that depend upon mineral exploration in order to make their mortgage payments, feed themselves, and ensure a proper education and a bright future for their children; and:***

***THAT this House urges the Yukon government to continue to support responsible mineral exploration and responsible mining as key elements of a strong diversified Yukon economy."***

At the time of his passing, John was Whitehorse Base Manager for Vancouver Island based Peak Helicopters.

Dave Austin

A Long Time Friend

Whitehorse



## **JIM MCFAULL**

On April 14, 2012, the Yukon exploration community lost, well known geologist and prospector, Jim McFaull. Born in Regina in 1952, Jim was raised on the road with his family throughout Saskatchewan, Sault St. Marie, Winnipeg and Vancouver. His love of adventure and wild places led him into geology at the University of British Columbia, and he never looked back.

He began working with United Keno Hill Mines in 1970. During his time with UKHM, he was a key player on the mine site exploration team. He helped block out millions of ounces of silver in overlooked resources to supplement production from the Bellkeno, Silver King and Husky underground mines. He was happiest when digging into the archives in the “vault”, looking for overlooked or missed ore shoots. Jim stayed with Keno through thick and thin until the final shutdown in 1990, after which, he began working as an independent, consulting geologist and prospector. He went on to stake and explore ground in the Mayo and Dawson Mining Districts, with a particular passion searching for the source of the Klondike’s rich placer gold deposits.

Jim was a valiant defender of the mining industry, serving as director, vice president, and president of the Yukon Chamber of Mines and the Yukon Prospectors Association. He was a forceful and effective spokesman for the industry during the dark years of the 1990’s.

Jim had a wealth of stories and a truly magnetic personality. He loved the blues and fine Irish whiskey. A lifelong bachelor, he was a generous surrogate uncle to kids in a number of Yukon mining families. He was a true Yukoner in the tradition of the sourdoughs - always on the trail of the next discovery.



## ROBERT WILLIAM STROSHEIN

1949-2012

It is with great sadness that we honour the passing of Robert W. Stroshein, a well known and respected geological engineer who spent most of his career in Yukon.

Robert was raised in Wadena, Saskatchewan, the third child in a farming family of six boys. In high school he joined the Wadena army cadets, eventually becoming commander of his cadet corps in grade 12. For three summers following high school, he was a lieutenant working as an instructor at the cadet summer camp held in Vernon, BC.

He graduated from U. of Saskatchewan in 1973 with a BSc in geological engineering. Hiring on with Hudson Bay Exploration and Development (HBED) in Manitoba right after school, he came to Yukon in 1974, and stayed with HBED until 1986. As the project geologist for the last HBED prospecting program using pack horses in Yukon, he witnessed the passing of an era.

Robert's wide field of experience included exploration, feasibility studies, mine development and mining, where he contributed both from a managerial and from a technical perspective. His most significant contributions in Yukon exploration and mining were made in the Whitehorse Copper Belt, in the Mount Nansen and MacPass districts (including the Mount Nansen Mine and the Tom deposit), as well as at Grew Creek, Ketz River and in Yukon Tanana terrane.

He worked for a number of companies in various capacities, as well as for the Yukon government. Since 2003, he worked mostly as a successful independent consultant and contractor through his consulting firm, Protore Geological Services. He served as a director and vice-president of the Yukon Chamber of Mines, and was also a member the Association of Professional Engineers of Yukon Territory, CIMM and SEG. He also served on a number of boards of directors of junior mining companies.

A family man, Robert was married to Breta Chippitt until her death in 2002. Her children became his. With Susan Rousseau, his present spouse, his family grew again. She and her children will miss the partner, father, and grandfather that he so lovingly became.

Robert enjoyed life in the moment and found contentment in the simple pleasures in life. His beautiful Marsh Lake home offered the perfect canvas for good meals with family and friends, walks with the dog, watching the seasons change with a cup of good coffee in hand, listening to his favourite music.

He will be remembered as a very kind man, whose quiet self-confidence, skill, humour, easy-going nature and love of life touched those fortunate enough to be around him. Many good memories and funny stories will hopefully soften the loss of one so dear to many.







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Missing from photo: Sue Roy, Derek Torgerson, Lee Pigage, Patrick Sack, Panya Lipovsky, and Don Murphy.*