

Mayo Legion Hall

This publication was produced with the help of Mayo residents, past and present, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, the Silver Trail Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Association and the Village of Mayo. If you have additional information or corrections, please contact the Cultural Services branch, Government of Yukon at 867-667-3458.

A history of Mayo can be found in "Gold & Galena", published by the Mayo Historical Society in 1990, which is available at the Binet House and at the Village of Mayo.

Binet House has displays on the history and geography of the Mayo area. It is also the site of the Mayo Veterans Monument, the Pioneer Gardens and the trailhead for the Prince of Wales Trail.

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MAYO WALKING TOUR


Yukon

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A Brief History

The Village of Mayo lies at the confluence of the Mayo and Stewart rivers in the heart of the Traditional Territory of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. Originally named Mayo Landing after one of the early riverboat captains, the town was established in 1903 to service a growing number of prospectors who had discovered gold on nearby river bars and creeks. Mayo grew rapidly after Louis Bouvette discovered silver at nearby Keno Hill in 1919; starting an economic boom in the area. The town grew to include docks, a sawmill, large-scale warehouses, stores, livery stables, hotels and beer parlours.

Silver ore was brought overland from mines in the region and stockpiled at present-day Galena Park for shipment on the White Pass & Yukon Route riverboats.

After the Second World War, another silver boom spurred the development of Yukon-wide infrastructure to support the industry. In time, the sternwheelers that transported the ore were replaced by a newly constructed highway and bridge system. Its completion in 1950 turned the focus away from the town's riverfront, however, Mayo continued to thrive as a service centre for the mining industry until the Elsa mine closed down in the late-1980s. The Village of Mayo was incorporated in June 1984 and is home to over 450 residents, many of whom are members of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun.

Historic Sites

Historically, the Northern Tutchone people lived and trapped throughout the area surrounding Mayo. In early times, people lived off the land using the rich supply of game animals, fish, birds, and numerous plants for food and for medicinal purposes. At various times of the year, people traveled throughout their Traditional Territory to hunt, fish and gather food. In the Northern Tutchone language, the Stewart River is called Na Cho Nyäk, meaning Big River.

In 1915, Julius Kendi, a First Nations Anglican minister, opened a school and mission in, what is now called, the Old Village located downstream and across the Stewart River. Many people from the Old Village moved back to Mayo in 1958 and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun became self-governing in 1993.

Amongst residents, there is a deep connection to the waterfront and you can see smokehouses and waterfront activities as you walk around town. The newest subdivision overlooks the Old Village, an important historical place for citizens of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, and includes the FNNND government's new administration buildings, built in 2010.



Binet House



Gene Binet lived in several gold rush towns in Yukon and Alaska before arriving in the Klondike in December 1896. Soon after, he heard rumours of plans for developing the Mayo Landing townsite. The site was surveyed in 1903 and Binet bought lots to build a hotel and homestead. The log walls and the roof of the Binet Brothers Hotel were erected before the spring melt in 1904. Binet grew potatoes in commercial quantities, kept a cow, chickens and several pigs and sold local produce in his store, built onto the hotel.

Binet hired carpenter John McDonald to build a home for him and his wife, Jewel; Binet House was completed in 1922. Jewel and their son spent the winter months in California and, after he retired in 1938, Binet left Mayo and joined them there. Binet House was renovated in 1990 and is open during the summer as a visitor reception centre and museum. Binet House is owned and operated by the Village of Mayo.



RCMP Commanding Officer's Residence



This house was built in 1922 for the local commanding officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). It came to be known as Sergeant Dempster's house—Dempster was the building's first resident and commander of the Mayo detachment from 1922 to 1932. The Imperial Order of the Daughters of Empire (IODE) purchased the building in 1937 and converted it to a meeting hall and library. In 1953-54, the building was a temporary classroom for grades four to six to accommodate the growing number of school children. It was eventually sold and moved to its present location. Ed McCrae added the metal Quonset hut and used it as a store. The building was used as a games centre up until the 1980s.

Taylor & Drury Warehouse



Isaac Taylor and William Drury met during the stampede to the Klondike in 1898. They started a trading business in Atlin but soon moved to Bennett and, after the railway was completed, to Whitehorse. From the main store in Whitehorse, the Taylor & Drury chain of stores and trading posts spread across Yukon. A store and warehouses were built in Mayo in 1921 to supply the town and the surrounding mining camps.



Andison House



This house was built from two sections of a bunkhouse from the 1951 Mayo hydroelectric dam project. The sections were moved to town and assembled to create the home of George and Christina Andison. The house was sold to John Klassen and later to Toby Anderson, a resource management officer. In 1950, Anderson switched from working in the Elsa mine to hauling and selling wood. He was the local fire chief until the 1980s when he retired and sold the house to Beverley Blanchard.



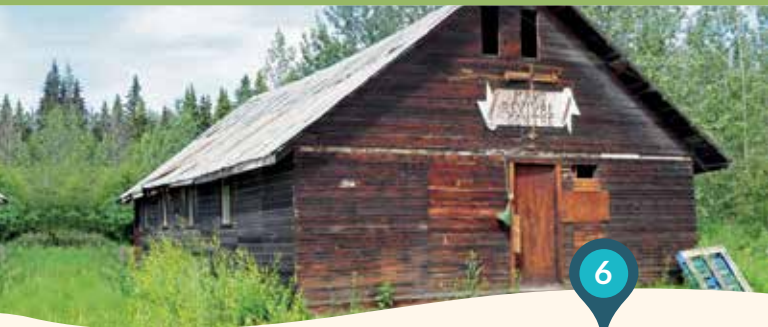
Ministry of Transport Office



Built in 1956, this building was the office for the Ministry of Transport and was located on Second Avenue between Congdon and Centre streets. Alan McDiarmid purchased the office building and later sold it to Barry and Marcia MacDonald. The MacDonalds moved the building to its present location and converted it into a residence.



Revival Hall



The Revival Hall was the scene of many religious meetings in the mid-1960s. It became a meeting hall and, in the 1970s, briefly served as a school for First Nations children.



Treadwell Yukon Warehouse



This structure was built and owned by mining company Treadwell Yukon, and used as a storehouse. Formed in 1921, the company closed in 1941 after the death of its general superintendent, Livingstone Wernecke, in a plane crash. The building was sold in 1949 and became a Government of Yukon highway maintenance garage. The building is now privately owned.



Taylor & Drury Store



Two of Isaac Taylor's sons ran the Taylor & Drury store in Mayo. Charlie Taylor took over from his older brother Bill, in 1932. Charlie married Betty MacLennan in 1936 and they lived in Mayo until 1942, when Charlie was called back to the Whitehorse operation. Earl Graham's family owned and ran the store in the 1970s and 1980s; they sold it to Rick Cocks.



Royal Bank Building



In 1937, Gene Binet contracted James Mervyn to construct this building; he used rough lumber from local sawmills and imported doors and windows. The Bank of Montreal rented the building; it housed the bank, offices and living quarters. On the main floor was an L-shaped counter, desks for the teller and the manager and a separate vault. The basement held a furnace to heat the office and living quarters on the main and second floors. During the grand opening, the manager A. T. Hall, and the accountant C. W. Harrison, handed out cigars and chocolates to the customers. In 1947, the Royal Bank took over the building and in the early 1960s they moved the branch to Elsa. The building was recently renovated and is home to the Mayo office of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board.



This log building is the oldest structure on First Avenue, and was designated a Yukon Historic Site in 2006. It is the only Red River Frame-style building remaining in the Mayo area and is a prominent landmark on the waterfront. Alex Nicol started construction in 1936, but the building was not completed until around 1950. The Yukon government rented it as storage for the liquor store and in the mid-1960s, the Djukastein family owned and ran a dress store from the building.

In 1972, the Royal Canadian Legion purchased the property and created a community centre. The BLADE (Basic Adult Development and Education) school was located here for three years. The building also functioned as a meeting hall and was used by YANSI (Yukon Association of Non-Status Indians) and, later, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun during the land claims process; the building has historical and cultural significance.

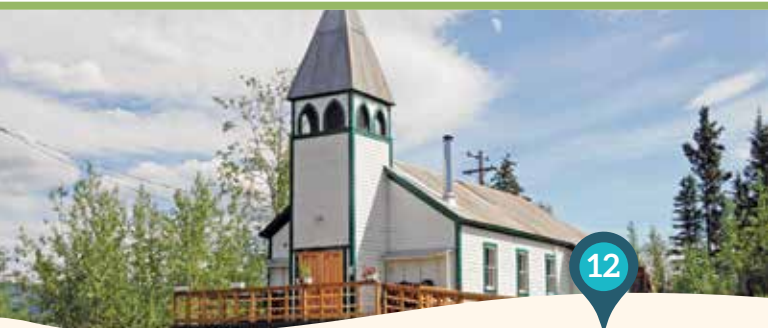
In 1975, it was leased to Yukon government to house a library and a kindergarten class. A hardware store and later a games centre operated here during the economic boom of the early 1980s. The building was purchased by the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun in 2004.

May Fairclough House



This house was originally built for Isabel Kimbel. May Fairclough, the daughter of Ira and Eliza Van Bibber, moved here in 1969, after she retired. May and George Fairclough owned and operated Pelly Farm from 1927 to 1940. George also operated a freight boat on the Pelly River and a wood-cutting business. The house remains in the family.

St. Mark's with St. Mary's Anglican Church



St. Mary's Anglican Church was built in 1922 and Reverend F. H. Buck conducted the first service, on October 15 that year. The church was constructed soon after significant silver strikes were made in the area and has been functioning ever since. During the 1936 flood, the church was one of the few buildings to remain above the high-water mark. When St. Mark's Church parishioners moved from the Old Village to Mayo, the church changed its name to reflect the combined congregations. A stained glass window is dedicated to Richard Martin and Rev. G.W.N. Wareham. Martin was a Tetlit Gwich'in deacon who served the Mayo region for many years. Rev. Wareham served as the Anglican Minister in Mayo from 1946 until his death in a canoe accident on Mayo Lake in 1951. Wareham Lake, created in 1951 when the Mayo River was dammed, is named after him.

➤ Besner House ➤



Veteran tinsmith Guy S. Churchward and his son-in-law, George Besner, built this house in 1928 for George and his family. Churchward operated the first tin shop in Dawson in 1898 and moved to Mayo in 1921. The standing-seam roof was commonly used in Dawson in the early 1900s. Besner later built an addition which Churchward moved into in the 1950s.

➤ Alex Nicol Outbuildings ➤



These log structures, constructed at the turn of the twentieth century, were used as outbuildings by Alex Nicol. Nicol is considered a founding father of Mayo. He came to Yukon over the Chilkoot Pass in 1898, when he was 18 years old. Even though he was one of the first prospectors to stake a claim on Duncan Creek, in the Mayo area, he did not have much success finding gold. Nicol was a pioneer of Mayo Landing and built the first house on the townsite in 1903. From 1910 to 1915, he freighted mining supplies to the creeks and he spent a year hauling ore from the Silver King mine. In 1922, Nicol and the Cantin brothers ran a freighting company in Mayo. Nicol was one of the first to stake in the Keno Hill discovery; he bought and sold various claims there until his death in 1965.



Churchward Tinshop



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Guy Churchward bought the Broadway Hotel in Klondike City, near Dawson, shipped the lumber to Mayo and built Churchward's Tinshop in 1921-22. Today, the shed still has Churchward's original metal roofing. The Churchward family lived in an apartment above the shop until the 1950s. Bert Klippert bought the shop from the Churchward family to use as a garage. He sold it to Bob Adair in the 1970s; he ran it as a garage and tire shop.



Old RCMP Residence/Lockup



16

Jim Mervyn attempted to stake claims in Dawson and in Mayo without success. He was far more effective as a trapper and, in 1912, he was able to buy Lansing Post. His wife Julia, was originally from Fort Good Hope, N.W.T., and together they raised 11 children. Lansing Post flooded in 1936. The family moved to this house so that the children could go to school. When the Mervyns moved out, Corporal Ivor Mast and his family lived here from 1945 to 1949. Mast's wife, Martha, bought the house from the Mervyns and rented it to the RCMP as a residence, office and lockup. The jail was a small room off the kitchen and Mast added a porch with a separate door into the office. Located next door to their business—the Chateau Mayo Hotel—this house belonged to the Wallingham family for many years. The hotel burned down in 1986.



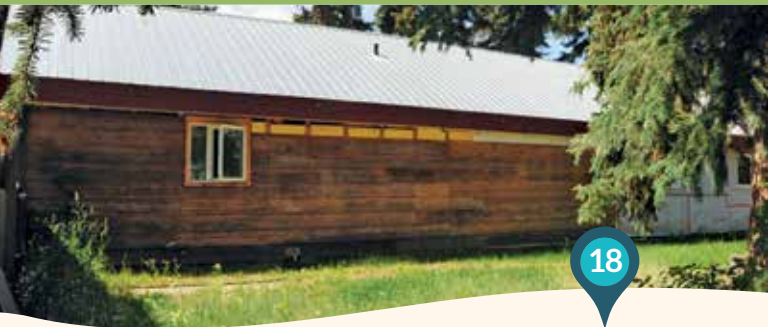
Kimbel House



Eddie and Carl Kimbel came to Mayo in 1920 to build a dredge for the Highet Dredging Company. Eddie, a skilled boat-builder and carpenter, constructed this house. In the 1920s, Eddie, Carl and Dick, their half-brother, operated the Kimbel Bros. Sawmill in Mayo. Eddie managed the mill until the 1950s and then sold it to the United Keno Hill Mines Ltd. Maisie and Raydor "Raider" Morberg lived in the house for a time. Maisie Profeit was Northern Tutchone and Raider was from Saskatchewan; he had come to Mayo during the 1930s to work in the Kimbel's sawmill.



Rose Zeniuk House



Sam Mason-Wood came to Yukon in the 1920s and drove a "Cat" for T. C. Richards's mail, freight and passenger business. On one of his trips he met Rose Turgeon, who was born and raised in Mayo. Rose and Sam married and raised three children here. At various times, Sam was the town's mining recorder, liquor vendor, territorial agent, justice of the peace and coroner. After he died, Rose married Bill Zeniuk. Rose Zeniuk was one of the original members of the Mayo Curling Club and an active participant in the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire (IODE). Her house became the home of Shann and Jim Carmichael who owned the Mayo Caselot grocery store, in the 1980s.



Jean Boyle House



Frank Cantin built the original portion of this house in the 1950s, reusing logs from another building. Frank, and his brothers Joe, Phileas and Louis Cantin were successful miners at the confluence of Dublin Gulch and Haggart Creek. The house was rented and later bought by Jean Boyle. Jean came to Keno to visit her uncle, Louis Bouvette, and she lived in Mayo, almost continuously, from the 1930s until 1980. Dan Sabo bought the house from Jean, and he built the addition on one side. The house remains privately owned.



Old High School



This frame structure has been sold and moved many times. It was built by Sam Blackmore in 1933, and was originally located next to Mabel McIntyre's house. It housed the mining recorder's office from 1933 to 1942. When the building was moved to Sixth Avenue in 1948, it was rented as a high school classroom and had indoor plumbing installed. Ruth Batty was the principal of the school and her sister Margaret taught the juniors. The classroom later became an annex to Ruth's novelty shop and is now used as a storage shed for a local contracting business.



Letourneau House



21

Gideon Letourneau was working as a carpenter in the 1920s when he built this house for his family. Since then, many families have lived here, including Evelyn and Gordon Lee, Chuck and Florence Beaumont, Ed and Jean Kunze, and the Grahams. Vicki Graham operated the Canadian National Telephone and Telegraph switchboard.



Christ the King Church



22

This building was originally St. Patrick's Church and was constructed in 1902 at Grand Forks, near Dawson. In 1922, it was dismantled, transported by barge up the Yukon and Stewart rivers to Mayo, and rebuilt at its present site. Bishop Bonozy celebrated the first mass in the newly reconstructed building in 1923, but it wasn't until the early 1930s that the church had its first resident priest, Father Monet. Father Henk Huijbers served in Mayo from 1948 until 1992, with the exception of a few years in other parishes. With others, he renovated the structure to its present beauty and attached a spacious and comfortable residence. Sister Angela Shea became the parish administrator and pastoral worker in 1992 and ran the Yukon Literacy program out of the church.



Old School/Masonic Hall



Before this building was constructed, the Mayo Landing school was in a cabin, rented from Frank Cantin. In 1941, Cantin built this new school and Mrs. Alice Carthum taught the first class. The building served as a school until 1959. In the 1960s, it became a Masonic Temple for Freemasons who worked at the mines. The Mayo Chapter of the Masonic Lodge closed with the mine.



McCoomb House



Bill and Florence McCoomb arrived in Yukon in on Bill's second trip north. He built a paddlewheel houseboat and they prospected the Teslin, Little Salmon and Stewart rivers. In 1948, they leased claims on Ledge Creek, near Mayo, and had success finding gold. They moved into town in 1951 and lived in a log house. Bill and Florence were long-time custodians at the school. After Bill's death, Earl Graham built this house for Florence, behind her log house which was then torn down. Florence outlived her husband by almost 20 years and she continued to live here until her death in 1989. Placer miner Bert Liske owned the house until recently. He used it in the winter when he was not working on the creeks.



25

Martin “Joe” Hoyne, a local prospector, built this log cabin in 1922 and lived here for about 20 years. The original flattened gas cans, which he used as roofing material, are still in place. Phoebe and George Reynolds bought the cabin in the 1940s. Phoebe, who had been decorated for her contribution to nursing during the Second World War, ran the Red Cross centre from her home in Mayo. The Anglican deaconess Dr. Hilda Hellaby briefly lived here. She taught in the Old Village and routinely walked the two miles back and forth from school. The cabin was renovated in the 1970s and the interior canvas-covered partitions were removed. A porch and a loft were added and electricity installed. Shanon Cooper bought the house and, for a short time, raised her family here. Since then, the house has been home to many young people starting out in Mayo.



Anglican Rectory



26

This house was built in the 1920s and was originally the Anglican Church Rectory. It was located next to the church until Harry Ewing moved it to its present location in 1976. Ewing came to Yukon with the Canadian Army's Royal Canadian Corps. of Signals. Harry was posted to Dawson where he met Elizabeth Grant, his first wife. Elizabeth was a niece of Robert Henderson, who was famous for his part in the discovery of gold in the Klondike. Harry was posted south but in 1942 he and his family returned to Mayo. He ran the weather station and registered Mayo's lowest temperature reading of -62°C (-80°F) in 1947. The house still belongs to the Ewing family.

Karkotka-Peter House



27

Mike Karkotka was originally from Poland and came to the area to work at Elsa. He worked primarily as a miner but was known also as a good barber and a not-so-successful gambler. Karkotka built this house with wood he had salvaged from Elsa. Mike and Ida Peter started out with a small shack and expanded the house as their family grew. Peter's children and grandchildren still live in Mayo and are actively involved in the governance of the First Nation.



George Besner “New” House



28

George Besner demolished the old Mayo hospital and used the material to build this house, in the late 1950s. The stone fireplace was constructed with quartz rocks hauled from the Klondike area. George arrived in Mayo when he was 15 and, two years later, he was working for Treadwell Yukon. Over the years he was a mucker, driller, timberman and a hoist operator in the mines. The house has changed hands a number of times over the years. Earl Graham's family lived here for a short time and sold it in the 1990s.



Jurovich House



29

Milo and his wife Annie Jurovich were the first Mayo residents of this two story frame building. Jurovich was born in Yugoslavia and immigrated to Canada in 1926 to find work. He arrived in Dawson in 1935 and worked for the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corp. He moved this house from Bear Creek, near Dawson, when the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corp. closed in the 1960s. Jurovich relocated to Mayo in 1951 and was involved in a number of local business ventures, including running the Silver Inn Hotel for many years.



Pat Van Bibber was one of 14 children born to Ira and Eliza Van Bibber in the Pelly Crossing area. He came to Mayo to work as the road foreman for the United Keno Hill Mines. In 1957, the Yukon government took over maintenance of the Mayo Road and Van Bibber worked as road foreman until he retired in 1987. He moved this house from Bear Creek, near Dawson City, after the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corp. closed in the mid-1960s. The family rented Binet House and lived there during the winter of 1969 while Pat cleared the property for the new house.





Burian House



Renny Burian and his son Harvey built this house between 1959 and 1963. The Burian family were long-time residents of the area. Renny came to Yukon in 1936 and operated several wood camps along the upper Stewart River, supplying wood to sternwheelers. He later owned a garage in Mayo and worked as a mechanic for United Keno Hill Mines. Renny's wife, Mary (Yoshida) Burian came to Mayo in 1931. They married in 1943.

The house was built from six-inch squared timbers cut in the Ewing Sawmill, near Stewart Crossing. It was originally heated by a converted gasoline drum wood-furnace. The garage was built using lumber from steam pipe boxes abandoned at Elsa. Emery and Eileen Shilleto bought the house in 1977 and added the front porch. The current owners, Esther Winter and Kent Sinnott, have undertaken renovations in keeping with the original structure of the house.





Mabel McIntyre House



32

Dick Gillespie moved from the gold commissioner's office in Dawson in 1921 to become the first mining recorder in Mayo. Sam Blackmore built this log cabin for Gillespie and it was used as the mining recorder's office until 1933. That year, Blackmore built a frame addition for the office and moved into the cabin himself. Mabel McIntyre, a member of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and a respected community member, inherited the cabin upon Blackmore's death in 1946. Mabel was the Mayo postmistress from 1942 until she retired in 1972. She lived in this cabin until 1981. The Mabel McIntyre House is a Yukon Historic Site, the first to be designated in the territory.



Matheny House



33

Thomas Collins built this house in the early 1920s. For many years, it was the only house in Mayo with hardwood floors. Charlie Matheny, a miner in the Fortymile District, purchased it sometime before 1923. Louis Brown lived here in the 1940s with Effie, his first wife. He came from Edmonton in the 1920s and worked for the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corp. as a teamster. Brown was a successful prospector and he and his second wife, Dolores, operated a big game outfitting business that employed many of the top First Nations guides from the area. Dorothy Allan and her family lived in the house in the 1960s. Mrs. Allan worked as a secretary at the Mayo Hospital for 17 years.



Clifton House



34

Eddie Kimbel built this house for Joe and Margaret Clifton in the early 1920s, when Joe came to work at the Taylor & Drury store. This may have been the first house with running water in Mayo. Ed and Flora Bleiler lived here in the 1940s after they started to mine on Hight Creek with Flora's father. In 1949, Ed started a trucking business but he returned to the family's successful mine on Hight Creek in the mid-1950s. The mine operated until 2003. The Bleilers sold the house in 1955 to Cliff and Maureen Greig. It remains privately owned.





Prince Charles opened the Prince of Wales Trail in 2001. This, approximately 2.5 km, route follows the dike along the Stewart River and then turns up along the Mayo River to end at the Silver Trail Highway at the north of town. Of historical interest along the trail is a crane used to unload equipment onto the shore at Galena Park. Inquire at Binet House for more information on the Trans Canada Trail.



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We welcome you to experience our history. Please respect the privacy of the property owners.

