

Inventory to the records of the

HAMLET OF ELSA

held at the Yukon Archives



March 2001

Yukon
Education

Libraries and Archives

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Cover photograph: View of Elsa townsite. Yukon Government Photograph #C9-79-2

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Yukon Archives

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“Hamlet of Elsa – 1985-1989” -- Fonds description.
Includes an index.

ISBN

1. Elsa (Yukon) -- Archives -- Catalogs.
 2. Elsa (Yukon) -- Politics and government --
Sources -- Bibliography -- Catalogs.
 3. Yukon Archives -- Catalogs.
- I. Yukon Territory. Yukon Education.
 - II. Title.

~~CD3645.Y8T68 1997 016.351719 1 C97-980147-~~
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Note on Inventory Format:

This inventory has been created according to the *Rules for Archival Description*. Some of its conventions may not be familiar to researchers:

- [] - square brackets enclose material in a file title that did not appear on the original file folder, but is needed to elucidate the contents of the file, or to place it in its correct alphabetical order. Square brackets also enclose dates that were not taken directly from the material.

FONDS DESCRIPTION

HAMLET OF ELSA FONDS. — 1985-1989

Physical Description:

.4 m of textual records.

Administrative History:

Prior to 1985, Elsa was viewed by the Yukon Government as a company town and therefore not entitled to government funding for its recreational facilities. The locally formed Elsa Recreation Association organized all of the activities in the community including the building of facilities, with materials supplied by United Keno Hill Limited. During the early 1980's members of the community lobbied the Yukon Government to provide financial assistance to help upgrade the recreational facilities in Elsa. In order to receive territorial funding, Elsa had to be given a community status recognized by the government. It was given hamlet status, based on its population base.

Under the provision of the Yukon *Municipal Act Sec. 18 (1)*, the Hamlet of Elsa was established in 1985 by Order In Council 1985/235. Pursuant to the *Municipal Act Sec. 20 (1)*, the people of Elsa were to elect an Advisory Council made up of a Chairperson and four council members. The Advisory Council was responsible for running the day to day affairs of the Hamlet and advising the Minister of Community and Transportation Services on matters regarding the operation of the Hamlet.

Due to falling silver prices United Keno Hill Ltd. was forced to shut down its mining activities in 1989. Most of the inhabitants of Elsa were forced to leave due to a lack of alternative employment.

Scope and Content:

The fonds consists of three series: Council Records, Capital Projects and Financial Records. The records were generated from the administrative and operational activities of the Hamlet between the years 1985-1989.

Source of Supplied Title:

Title based on provenance of the fonds.

Source of Acquisition:

Ross Know – former Municipal Advisor for the Hamlet of Elsa.

Arrangement:

The records had no discernable arrangement. The three Series were imposed according to functions and activities generating the records. Due to small volume of records, no attempt was made to arrange the files within series.

Restrictions:

Some files containing personal information are restricted.

Accruals:

Further accruals are not expected.

Related Records:

Elsa Recreation Association Fonds Acc. #93/97R

Financial Assistance Note:

This project was made possible by financial assistance from the federal government through the National Archives of Canada the Canadian Council of Archives and the Yukon Archives.

Accession Number(s)

92/64

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

COUNCIL RECORDS. — 1985-1989

Part of:

Hamlet of Elsa fonds.

Physical Description:

.13 m of textual records.

Scope and Content:

The series consists of a variety of administrative and operational records. There is correspondence between the Hamlet Council and several Yukon Government agencies, the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, the Association of Yukon Communities, and United Keno Hill Mines Ltd. Many of these files are general correspondence files created by the Council Chairperson. The series also contains minutes and agendas from Council meetings. The records relate to various community issues such as Elsa recreation facilities, teacher housing, planning, budgeting, and wastewater discharge.

Source of Supplied Title:

Title based on the contents of the series.

Selection Note:

Reference material and transitory records were removed.

Restrictions:

Access to some files with personal information is restricted.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Title / Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
GOV 2732, f. 1	[Correspondence]	1985-89
	<i>Note: Reference material and transitory records such as YTG publications removed.</i>	
GOV 2732, f. 2	[Administrative Issues]	1985-87
GOV 2732, f. 3	[Correspondence]	1985-86
GOV 2732, f. 4	5 Year Plan	1986
GOV 2732, f. 5	Regulations	n.d.
GOV 2732, f. 6	Bill of Rights	1985-86
	<i>Note: Reference material removed.</i>	
GOV 2732, f. 8	Teacher Housing	1986

GOV 2732, f. 9	Mosquito Spraying	1986
GOV 2732, f. 10	EDA Economic Development	1986
GOV 2732, f. 11	Budget 1986	1986
GOV 2732, f. 12	Correspondence Sent	1985-86
GOV 2732, f. 13	Minutes of Meetings	1986
GOV 2732, f. 14	Agenda for Meetings	1986
GOV 2732, f. 15	Meeting with Yukon Chamber of Commerce	1986
GOV 2732, f. 16	[Correspondence]	1987-1989
	<i>Note: Reference material and transitory records removed</i>	
*GOV 2732, f. 17	Correspondence	1985-89
	<i>Note: Contains personal information.</i>	
GOV 2732, f. 18	Correspondence Received	1988-89
GOV 2733, f. 1	[Correspondence]	1988-89
GOV 2733, f. 2	[Correspondence]	1983-89
*GOV 2733, f. 3	U. K. Industrial Adjustment Services Committee – Elsa H	1989
	<i>Note: Contains employment and education history.</i>	
GOV 2733, f. 4	Municipal Act	1985
	<i>Note: Contains Order in Council and Elsa Hamlet Policy. Removed four YTG reports related to the Municipal Act.</i>	
GOV 2733, f. 5	[Reading File]	1987
GOV 2734, f. 2	Hamlet of Elsa	1986-87

CAPITAL PROJECTS. — 1986-1988

Part of:

Hamlet of Elsa fonds.

Physical Description:

.12 m of textual records.

Scope and Content:

This series consists of records created through the Hamlet's implementation of several initiatives involving community improvements and construction projects in Elsa. Most of these projects were federally funded and administered by the Yukon Government through the Local Employment Opportunities Program (L.E.O.P.). The records document all aspects of the projects, including applications, correspondence with engineering firms, reports, and financial records, including personnel records, banks statements, invoices and receipts.

Source of Supplied Title:

Title based on the contents of the series.

Restrictions:

Access to some files with personal information is restricted.

Selection Note:

Where summaries of financial information exist, routine financial records were not retained.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Title / Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
GOV 2732, f. 7	Gazebo Project	1986
GOV 2733, f. 5	Capital Works Project	1986-89
GOV 2733, f. 6	[Elsa Rec. Club & Curling Rink]	1986-87
*GOV 2733, f. 7	[L.E.O.P. records] (Ski Hut facility)	1986-87
	<i>Contains: personnel records</i>	
GOV 2733, f. 8	L.E.O.P. Receipts	1986
GOV 2733, f. 9	L.E.O.P. (barbeque pit, picnic tables project)	1986-87
*GOV 2733, f. 10	L.E.O.P. (Ski Hut facility)	1987
	<i>Removed: Deposit book.</i>	
GOV 2733, f. 11	[L.E.O.P. – financial records]	1986-88
	<i>Contains: project ledgers</i>	

FINANCE. — 1986-1989

Part of:

Hamlet of Elsa fonds.

Physical Description:

.13 m of textual records.

Scope and Content:

The series includes records that document all aspects of the financial operations of the Hamlet. The files consist of general ledgers, financial statements, budgets, payroll records, records from funded work projects, invoices and purchase orders.

Source of Supplied Title:

Title based on the contents of the series.

Restrictions:

Access to some files with personal information is restricted. Files marked with R.

Selection Note:

Where summaries of financial information exist, routine financial records were not retained.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Title / Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
GOV 2734, f. 1	[Financial Records]	1987
*GOV 2734, f. 3	Employee Related Papers	1986
	<i>Note: Removed routine pay roll records. Contains Oath of Office for Hamlet of Elsa councilors.</i>	
GOV 2734, f. 4	[Financial records]	1988
GOV 2734, f. 5	[Financial records]	1985-86
GOV 2734, f. 6	[Hamlet of Elsa – Ledgers]	1985-1989
GOV 2734, f. 7	[LEOP Ledger]	1988-89

APPENDIX I: History of Elsa

Elsa was established in 1914 when large deposits of silver lead ore were discovered in the region. Elsa lies on the Yukon Interior Plateau, south of the Ogilvie and Wernecke Mountains. Nearby and to the north of Elsa is McQuesten Lake; to the south are Mount Haldane (6,032 feet), and Mount Hinton (6,755 feet). Elsa is situated on the slopes of the South McQuesten River Valley, near the site of Keno Hill Mines (14 km. away), km. 96.9 north on the Mayo Road.

Early mining activity in the region was primarily gold exploration; however, several promising silver deposits were found. Several companies undertook the mining activity. In 1920 Keno Hill Limited, a subsidiary of the Yukon Gold Company of Dawson, staked six hundred silver claims on Keno Hill and a few years later made discoveries on nearby Galena Hill. By 1932 deposits on Keno Hill were assumed to be exhausted. However, prospects on Galena Hill looked promising so the mill was moved to Elsa over the winter of 1932-33. The settlement gained importance in the 1935 when Minister of Community and Transportation Services Treadwell Yukon Company removed its mill at Wernecke and placed it at Elsa in response to discovery of the Calumet mineral deposits. Elsa had a school, a hockey rink and a Community Hall by 1938, with 186 men employed on a year round basis. With the outbreak of World War II and the U.S. government's announcement in 1940 that they would no longer buy foreign silver, Treadwell management decided to close their Mayo district operations. The mines were closed and the townsite abandoned from 1941 to 1946. In 1947 the Treadwell Yukon Company reorganized under the name United Keno Hill Mines Limited and reactivated the mines and town.

Elsa's population grew significantly between 1950 and 1966, in part because the population of Calumet was moved to Elsa so that services could be consolidated.

During the early 1980's the citizens of Elsa lobbied the Yukon Government to provide financial assistance for recreational facilities. The Conservation Party insisted that since Elsa was a 'company town', it was not entitled to assistance. Following the election to power of the New Democratic Party, Elsa was granted hamlet status and thereby became eligible for government funding.

On Nov. 18, 1985 Elsa became the first Yukon community to receive official hamlet status. Elsa's original hamlet council was declared elected by acclamation following the close of the nominations on October 28. The council included Claire Briand, Don Copper, Michael Janssen, Gerd (Chico) Scholz, and Christopher Thomas. The council would hold office for three years. The Council was responsible for advising the Minister of Community and Transportation Services on matters that normally would be under the jurisdiction of a municipal council. They are also responsible for managing government funding provided for hamlet purposes.

After nine straight years of losses and steady low silver prices United Keno Hill closed down its operations in 1989. The mines have not opened since then.

APPENDIX II: Hamlet Administration

1985 members of the Advisory Council

Claire Briand, Don Copper, Michael Janssen, Gerd Scholz, and Christopher Thomas.

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ORDER IN COUNCIL 1985/235

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