



Rectory and School House at Fort Selkirk

What is happening at Huchá Hudän / Fort Selkirk

CHANGES AT FORT SELKIRK DUE TO COVID-19

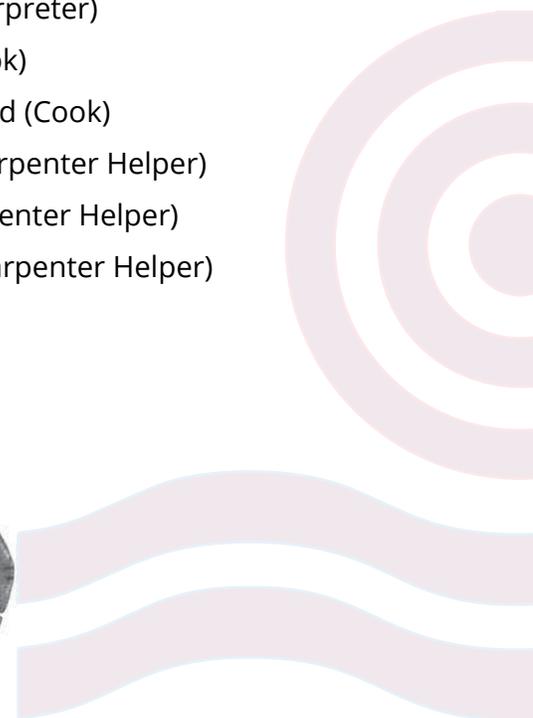
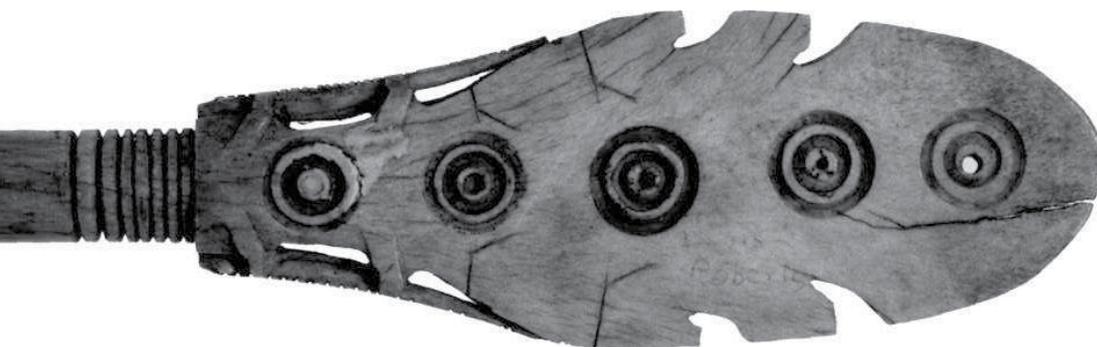
The Fort Selkirk work season started on May 28 and ended September 12, 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff numbers at Fort Selkirk were reduced to ensure social distancing and other health precautions could be maintained.

Additional cleaning and sterilizing of the campground and work camp facilities were performed to ensure a safe environment for staff and visitors.

This season's team consisted of:

- Franklin Roberts (Project Manager)
- Don Trudeau (Project Manager)
- Freda Alfred (Interpreter)
- Kiesha Baker (Cook)
- Miranda Blanchard (Cook)
- Dion Edwards (Carpenter Helper)
- Hank Hager (Carpenter Helper)
- Leslie Johnson (Carpenter Helper)



With a smaller number of restoration staff on site this season, the focus was mainly on smaller projects around the site such as regular maintenance, stabilization and minor repairs.

Some of the work accomplished included:

- chinking historic cabins
- documentation and recording of historic artefacts
- installation of a new propane stove for the work camp
- installing new chimneys in some of the work camp cabins
- Fire Smarting around the historic site and work camp
- clearing trees and brush for the new septic system
- hauling and cribbing logs for next year's building repairs
- stabilizing the roof of the Coward's Machine Shop
- miscellaneous minor repairs around the historic site and the work camp



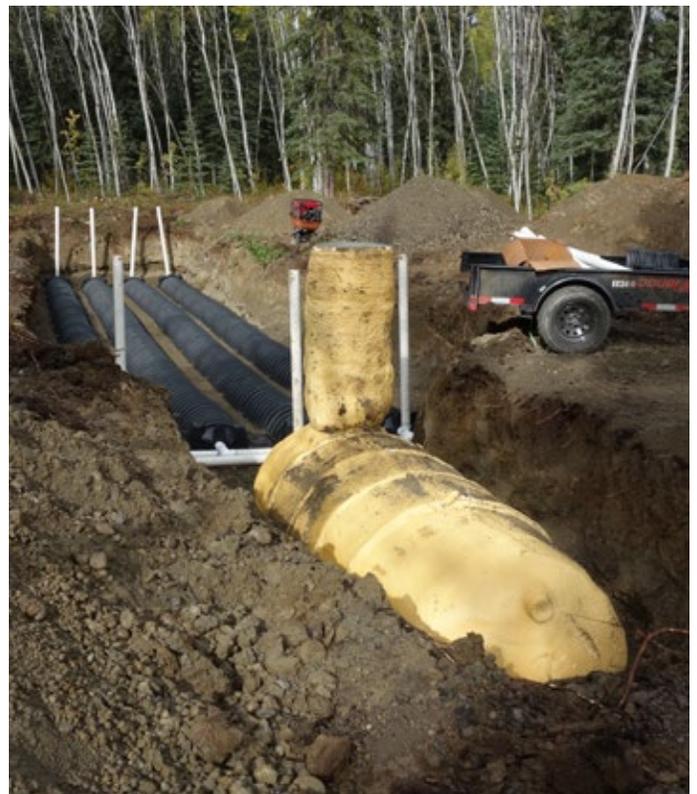
Stabilizing Coward's Machine Shop sod roof retaining log

VISITORS

Fort Selkirk welcomed 243 visitors this season, 236 of whom were from Canada, mostly Yukon and BC. Due to COVID-19, site tours could not be provided. Instead, the Site Interpreter greeted guests and provided information on the COVID-19 precautions at Fort Selkirk.

WASHHOUSE

Construction of the new work camp washhouse started this year, with the installation of the septic system. In May, archaeologists performed test excavations at the work camp to ensure that the new septic field would not impact any cultural resources. Trees and brush in the southwest corner of the work camp were cleared to make room for the excavation equipment to operate. An additional excavator and plate compactor were brought in by boat, along with the septic tank and other building materials. The septic system was installed in early September and a permit to use the system has been issued. Construction of the washhouse is slated to begin next season.



Installation of septic system for new work camp washhouse.



Installing decking



Stone House roof at end of 2020 season

STONE HOUSE ROOF REPAIR

Due to the impacts COVID-19 had on staffing and contractors this season, it was not possible to complete the scheduled work on the Stone House roof, however, three staff from Yukon government's Historic Sites Unit were still able to remove damaged shingles and roofing paper, install new decking and peel-and-stick underlayment, and caulk the chimney. These repairs will help protect the Stone House until the new shingles can be installed next season.

HSU staff also spent part of the summer hand cutting red and green rolled roofing to make the historic hexagonal shingles needed for the Stone House's distinctive roof. Additional shingles were cut for future repairs on the Larsen/Lankin cabin, which is also clad in these unique red and green hexagons.

Any SFN contractors interested in construction, plumbing, electrical or roofing contracts for the washhouse or Stone House next year should contact SFN Heritage Manager, Teri-Lee Isaac.

SUMMER WEATHER

Like much of the Yukon, the weather at Fort Selkirk this summer was much wetter and cooler than usual. The cool, wet weather meant that much more firewood had to be cut for the campground and work camp. The Pelly and Yukon Rivers were running very high for much of the season, however, erosion monitoring at Fort Selkirk this year did not show any significant increase in bank erosion.



Above and below: Cutting the shingles

Father Bobillier Coll. Fort Selkirk townsite looking downriver during spring break up. 1940. Photo credit: Yukon Archives.



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This newsletter is provided by the Fort Selkirk Management Committee.
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