

Obituary for Brad Taylor Ore Gange President 1975-76

First private developer remembered for his kindness

By **Stephanie Waddell** on **March 20, 2009 Whitehorse Daily Star**

He was the first private land developer in the Yukon, but ask most anyone who knew Brad Taylor and it's his big laugh and kindness they remember.

"He just had a heart as big as the Yukon," Roy Slade said this week, recalling his friend as someone you could always "take your troubles to."



Taylor died on March 12 at the age of 62 from a heart attack.

Slade is part of an extensive list of friends in the territory Taylor has had for upwards of 30 years.

Taylor grew up in Swift Current, Sask., but spent most of his life in the Yukon.

When Slade first met him, Taylor had yet to move into the private development world. He was spending his days working for the federal Department of Public Works.

More than a few evenings at the time were spent with co-workers playing slo-pitch ball for a team called the Feds, which would later become the KK team.

"He was a real good (ball) player," recalled Wally Hiding, who got to know Taylor through both work and ball.

It didn't seem to matter what play was made, Taylor would make a point of sliding into bases throughout each game, said Eamonn Campbell.

As Taylor told him, you weren't really playing ball if you didn't get dirty.

Though Kelly White never played on the same team as Taylor, their friendship was one of those that began from the time spent hanging out at the ball diamonds after the games.

"He was an amazing, an amazing friend," she said.

Never hard to find at a gathering, if you walked into a room and didn't see Taylor it wasn't long before you heard his booming voice and laugh.

"It's a laugh nobody could impersonate," White said.

Even just passing him on the road, friends recall the huge smile and wave from Taylor, who never had a bad thing to say about anybody.

"He was bigger than life," Campbell said, arguing Taylor could easily be part of the newer Colourful Five Per Cent.

While Taylor got along with just about anyone, he also wasn't one to back down from saying what he thought.

As White pointed out, he had a strong determination, and if he thought something could be done, he'd make sure it was.

That was the case even when it came to getting in touch with someone.

"There was no escaping Brad," White said as she remembered his unique way of finding friends if he couldn't reach them by phone.

At times, White would be driving down the road, wondering at first who was tailing her only to spot Taylor signaling for her to pull over.

He left an impression that nothing can wipe away, she said.

"He'll be much missed," Slade said.

Taylor also leaves a legacy in the territory through his development work.

While the Pineridge subdivision in south Whitehorse was the first privately developed subdivision in the Yukon, it has also served as a benchmark for future private developments, Slade said.

It was in the late 1980s that Taylor left his government job to work in the private sector. He would go on to work with Yukon Engineering Services in 1991 on a road project north of Watson Lake.

His work would take him to New Brunswick at one point, but he eventually returned to the territory, Hiding said.

Among his most recent projects, Taylor has been working to develop the former tank farm area that borders Hamilton Boulevard.

His four children - David, Amber, Leah and Brittany - are asking friends to wear Taylor's favourite colour - blue - at a celebration of Taylor's life set for 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday at the Westmark Whitehorse Hotel.

Note by Allan Willy: Brad Taylor was President of the Ore Gangue during the 1975-76 year. I went to school with Brad Taylor in Swift Current and knew his sister Barb. Brad played lots of sports in Swift Current including hockey which translated well for the Ore Gangue. Brad was also in excellent shape by being on the Elks Aquatic Team. Brad's father died much too early in his 40's of a heart attack and this made a teenage Brad justifiably resentful. Brad became quite well known for his fisticuffs at local dances and parties. I even was on the end of this on one occasion. I later got to know Brad as he worked on the Soils Team for the Saskatchewan Department of Highways, whereas I was a summer rodman student on a Preliminary Road survey crew. Brad went on to work in public service in the Yukon but he needed a degree to advance in the Yukon public service so, with his wife Marj and kids, Brad moved to Saskatoon. Brad was thinking of entering Engineering in some capacity but somehow got introduced to the Ore Gangue and tried first year geology out and joined the Ore Gangue. Well, Brad just loved the Ore Ganguers and entered Geology. Brad quickly fit in with the activities and especially loved being on the Ore Gangue hockey team being a menace on the ice with his fellow players

especially Jim Parres. In 1975-76 when Brad became President of the Ore Gangue, I was back at the U of S taking Dr. Caldwell's new Postgraduate Diploma in Geological Sciences along with John Pearson, we both being the first and only inaugural students. It was during Brad's term as President when the Ore Gangue bus was purchased and the bus was well used by several following generations of Ore Ganguers to travel to field excursions and the WIUGC trips. Brad Taylor made many friends amongst the Ore Gangue and went on to become a well-liked Yukon land developer. Brad never directly made use of his geology training but certainly made use of that Ore Gangue comradery and that Southwestern Saskatchewan friendliness, Rest in Peace fellow Ore Ganguer BradTaylor.