

**Title: Risk & Adventure: Community Development in Northern Alberta (1955-1970)**

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Available at the Calling Lake Historical Centre, [callinglakehistory@gmail.com](mailto:callinglakehistory@gmail.com), and in the Calling Lake and Wabasca libraries. Copies can also be ordered from Isaac Glick, [imglick52@icloud.com](mailto:imglick52@icloud.com).

## Overview

A memoir recounting the work of Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) participants in and around Calling Lake from 1955 to 1970. Written by Isaac (Ike) and Mildred (Millie) Glick, initial leaders of the work, the memoir includes stories photos, maps and several first-person narratives from former colleagues.

The following excerpts from a review of the book by Donald Schrock, who was part of the team’s Indian Arts program from 1964 to 1966, provide a glimpse of the initiative and its leaders:

Ike and Millie Glick stayed in Calling Lake for 10 years beyond their two-year term. They lived in the isolated village of about 300 inhabitants at the end of 72 kilometres of dirt road surrounded by the bush land of northern Alberta. He learned to fly a plane to reach settlements without road access. Millie learned to cope with wood stoves.

Those 12 years changed their lives forever. “It was not difficult, it was different,” Ike says.

The Glicks, along with many other MVS members, engaged Indigenous communities in much of northern Alberta, helping to build and teach in schools, build and staff public health centres, and create sustainable economic opportunities.

Significantly, the volunteers built relationships in ways contrary to the traditional treatment of Indigenous families at the time. Mike Cardinal, the first Indigenous Albertan to serve in government office, recalls the Mennonite influence on his childhood in Calling Lake, as does Professor Emma LaRocque, a Métis who benefited as a young girl from alternative schooling opportunities and who remains a lifelong friend of the Glicks.

The Glicks raised five children in Calling Lake, as they responded to what they termed “unexpected compelling opportunities.” Eventually, Ike was offered a position with the government, working with First Nations people on an economic opportunity project that had grown from MVS support into a larger business called Teamwork Enterprises of Alberta and McKenzie (TEAM). For this position, the family moved to Edmonton.

In 1970, Ike enrolled in a master’s degree program in community development. He often felt affirmed about voluntary service initiatives, since he could now relate theory to practice. He continued to work with Indigenous people for the rest of his career.

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## Chapter summaries

The following chapter-by-chapter summary of *Risk & Adventure* is augmented by information gleaned in 2023 interviews with Ike Glick at his retirement home in Edmonton as well as other resources.

“In our minds the road that ended at Calling Lake was more like a spoke extending from a hub in the south. Had someone told us that Calling Lake would itself become a hub connecting by short wave, plane, logging trails and trains to more isolated settlements, we might have asked for such a ‘prophet’s’ credentials!” – Ike Glick

### Historical Context, p 4

The United States began offering alternate service options during the Second World War, the result of negotiations by Historic Peace Churches seeking alternative assignments for conscientious objectors. Assignments included smoke jumping, tree planting, dairy support, milk and drug testing, working in mental hospitals. The positive effects of those civilian public service assignments, for volunteers as well as those assisted, led the Mennonite church to continue a voluntary service program, for women as well as men, through the Relief and Service arm of the Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. Northern Alberta was chosen as one location, and between 1955 and 1970, more than 100 young volunteers served Aboriginal communities there. Examples of their work:

* Teachers in public schools (**Calling Lake,** Marlboro, Imperial Mils, Anzac)
* Assisting several other remote communities (Sandy Lake, Chipewyan Lakes) in negotiating with the Department of Education for schools prior to the birth of a Northland School Division
* Setting up and managing a dormitory for the Northland School Division so children living along the Northern Alberta Railway between Conklin and Fort McMurray could attend school at Anzac, returning home every second weekend
* Nurses and physicians
* Pilots
* Boys and girls club organizers, youth leaders
* Gardeners, including a trained agriculturist
* Supplementary employment and marketing assistance for bush land resources, including Native arts and crafts, canoes, wild berries, fence posts, fish boxes, chicken crates and pallets

Working in scattered communities, some without phones, electricity, plumbing or roads, volunteers used shortwave radio and a “Smoke Signals” news sheet to communicate, and a small plane to deliver mail and supplies. Looking back, the Glicks recall “a remarkable sense of solidarity and friendship” with each other and their neighbours.

### Part A Beginnings: On the road to western Canada, p. 7

Ike Glick was granted a student deferment from the Second World War draft while studying for a degree in biblical studies and theology at Eastern Mennonite College. The war (and conscription) had ended by the time he graduated in 1955, but Ike and his wife Millie (who had completed one year of college) decided a two-year Voluntary Service experience might offer a broader perspective on life and provide clarity for their future. After training at program headquarters in Elkhart, Indiana, they returned to their family homes in Pennsylvania (Ike) and Virginia (Millie) to prepare.

They purchased a 1941 Buick ambulance for $300, named it Gypsylyn (“wanderer”), and filled it with supplies. Camping their way across country, ages 26 and 24 with one-year-old John, they found driving an ambulance, even minus its top light, garnered respect from other drivers. On the downside, they were soon paying for repairs.

The threesome arrived in Edmonton in mid-August 1955, and from there traveled 150 miles north (the last 45 miles from Athabasca on dirt road) to Calling Lake, where the road ended. Their assignment? “To help people help themselves.” Their supporters included the Mennonite Church, Mennonite churches of Alberta (most located far from Calling Lake) and Ellefson Lumber Ltd.

Sawmill owners A.B. and Roland (Slim) Ellefson were instrumental in the Mennonite’s decision to use Calling Lake as a base for a voluntary service unit. While making plans to relocate their sawmill to Calling Lake from Smith, AB (where they’d used up the ready timber supply), they learned as congregants with the Mennonite Church in Smith that a voluntary service unit from the United States was coming to northern Alberta. Knowing that Calling Lake had no regular church services, the Ellefsons suggested the Mennonite volunteers locate in Calling Lake in hope of having a place to worship and attend Sunday school. (There was a small Roman Catholic Church, but it had no resident priest, and services were rare other than at Christmas and Easter.)

The sawmill’s arrival was delayed, but Ellefsons had deposited a load of lumber along the road near the mouth of Calling River for a 12x14-foot granary. Once built, the granary housed the Glick family for three months.

When the sawmill arrived, Slim Ellefson built a hall for staff meetings and invited the service unit to use it as a chapel; this continued for 35 years. Some local residents attended sporadically, and anyone was welcome, but the Glicks say the unit’s other involvements were more significant to the community. Over time, the Ellefsons supported the service unit in countless ways; for example, by providing and clearing a site for a house, creating an airplane runway, helping to build a hangar and giving counsel.

Richard Gingerich of Canby, Oregon arrived next; while sleeping in the ambulance, he helped build the granary and a house for the service unit. RN Elma Riehl of Quarryvill, PA, arrived in February 1956 to serve as a nurse. Then came Richard’s new wife, Shirley Steckly from Carstairs, AB, who volunteered as part-time cook and housekeeper. Teacher Anna Rose Nafziger joined in August 1956, bringing the team to six.

The volunteers left many modern conveniences behind. The outhouse was around back, “running water” was fetched from the river, and a Maytag with a gasoline engine aided with the wash. Orientation, kindly tutored by locals, included skills for surviving winter, a time-consuming reality. As in trappers’ cabins, heat was provided by an Air Tight stove that needed tending and ash removal. Starting cars on bitter winter days with no block heater meant burning kerosene-soaked ashes under the oil pan. “In retrospect,” the Glicks write, “what we first experienced as frustrating delays helped protect the community from premature initiatives based on imported ideas.” In that time rapport developed, and a local agenda began to emerge as the team heard about community concerns.

In 1955, Calling Lake was an isolated end-of-the-road hamlet of about 300 people. Some were Métis who were said to prefer being called “Half Breeds” or “Breeds” because media accounts using “Métis” were mostly negative. A small Bigstone Indian Reserve lay at the north end of the hamlet. Primary means of livelihood were hunting, fishing and trapping, plus some seasonal work – in sawmills, and with farmers near Athabasca during harvest. Ellefson Lumber’s sawmill and planer operation would come to employ 30 to 50 men in winter.

School was a one-room log building with grades one through seven taught by one teacher. Most Native children dropped out by Grade 6. Their poor school attendance was due in part to English language difficulty on entering Grade 1. In hope of addressing this by offering preschool English classes, Anna Rose Nafziger was recruited in 1956 to start a kindergarten for Cree preschoolers, but at the last minute was drafted to teach in the public school. The kindergarten began several years later, taught in the early years by Sandra Nafziger (Cardinal), then Inez Wyse (Uchytil), then Ila Jones.

Ike Glick observed that primary leadership in the community seemed vested in James McIntosh, who had been there for 40 years and was sometimes referred to as the “White Father” – not always with affection, especially among mink ranchers who resented his power. McIntosh controlled commercial fishing in the region, drawing fish from several northern lakes and flying or trucking them to market. He also was a rancher, had long been the only fur trader in the settlement and continued to run one of the trading posts, which also served as a postal outlet with weekly mail delivery on Sunday.

There was no formal community association, but occasional dances were arranged by some non-Natives. Community meetings were rare, and the “White Father” reported that they were poorly attended by Natives. Those who did come usually stayed silent, their views not solicited.

Much of the housing was grossly inadequate by outside health standards, but the community’s primary concern was lack of accessible health services.

### Part B Medical Service at Calling Lake, p. 24

Other than a local Cree midwife who attended home deliveries, public health services were mostly out of reach. There was a health unit in Athabasca, but vehicles were few, and the road there was impassable whenever it rained much. Venereal disease, children’s skin diseases, infant mortality and tuberculosis were prevalent. Tuberculosis x-ray service was available to everyone on annual Treaty Day (assisted by MVS nurses in these years). Also on that day, a federal agent paid $5 to Treaty Indians – but not to Métis. “They didn’t pay much attention to Calling Lake’s situation, and didn’t need to because the Minister of Health at the time was quite racist,” Ike would later observe.

Ike was asked to help negotiate with Alberta Health Department for a clinic with a resident nurse. At first, the potential for improvement could be described as “tapweh masgoots” (Cree for “truly perhaps” or “for sure maybe”). “Naïve as a hayseed,” Ike went directly to the Minister of Health, who said things like, “If those people choose to isolate themselves in the north, they’ll have to accept the consequences.”

With no space available in the heart of the hamlet, the MVS nurse, RN Elma Riehl, operated out of the service unit’s residence at the sawmill site, five miles south. She started with home visits, mostly on foot. Initial reluctance to call on her diminished as children’s skin conditions responded to treatment, and as the midwife reached out for help with complicated deliveries with good success. By spring 1956, when one Indigenous person raised a complaint about the nurse, another (Joe “Grasshead” Cardinal, father of Mike Cardinal, who would become an MLA) observed that no infant graves had been dug in frozen ground since her arrival.

The next step in seeking local health services was a petitioning brief. Signed by Calling Lake ratepayers (not Métis, as they were not ratepayers and came under Welfare Department jurisdiction as “indigents”), the brief was submitted to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Welfare. The stock answer, received several times over the next few years: “There is not enough tax revenue coming from the community to justify services.” Ignoring the oil, gas and timber revenues coming from the region.

Shortly after Elma Riehl arrived, local Indian Chief John Baptiste Gambler died at age 103. Local carpenter Paul White crafted the casket; lacking a resident Roman Catholic priest, the family asked the Mennonites to conduct a graveside service. Apparently, this breached Roman Catholic protocol. Soon after, rumours circulated that a resident priest would come to Calling Lake. A log church had been built decades earlier with bequest monies from a lady of unknown origin; a new church would now be built, and people were warned about “the wolves that have come among you.” Wishing to head off religious jealousies, the MVS unit organized a community grocery shower as a housewarming for the priest.

By early summer, Joe (Grasshead) Cardinal suggested having the nurse work from within the settlement rather than several miles south. Asked if he could organize a meeting to discuss the idea, in a few days he gathered about a dozen men on the shore of Calling Lake outside his house, including an interpreter-translator. Grasshead Cardinal, who was quite fluent in English, volunteered to donate logs to build a clinic – logs originally gathered for a new house that wouldn’t get built that summer anyway. Jeremy Nipshank made a similar offer. After discussing requirements, the longer logs (Cardinal’s) were chosen based on the sizes needed, removing personalities from the decision. Bob Logan, experienced in log construction, was hired to notch and assemble the log walls. Men with a slashing job for a new forestry road volunteered $5 each to pay Grandpa Logan.

Ike Glick had a similar meeting with the non-Native part of the community to raise funds for the roof and interior. Another appeal was made to the Department of Health for a propane heater to sustain even temperatures for medications; with negotiating help by the district MLA, the required $600 was granted. Women in the community also became involved by making curtains for the windows.

The new Calling Lake Nursing Service opened its community health clinic in March 1957. More accessible to the community, it required fewer house calls, offered regular hours and improved the quality and range of services. The community also saw other benefits. The clinic’s electricity was tapped on occasion to show audio visuals, and its interior construction (e.g., painted plywood floors rather than linoleum, which tended to disintegrate) influenced several houses built soon after.

The Calling Lake Nursing Service Association registered under the Provincial Societies Act on March 20, 1958. Initially no Indigenous people were on the board since the application needed to be made by “ratepayers.” But by 1970, Jeremy Nipshank was serving as board chair.

Surrendering the initial dream of a modern Department of Health-blueprint health centre and instead joining hands to create a homebuilt solution led to a sense of community ownership and a clinic that fit its context, the Glicks observe. “Economically, the project was realistic for the local economy. Culturally, it respected the contribution of elders and involved the community as a team. Sociologically, it recognized the presence of two racial groups and found ways to involve both by consulting with and engaging informal leaders in each.”

A similar cooperative mindset emerged as the youth club discussed ways to improve their community. Together, they identified a need for bulletin boards at the store and post office as well as signs along the main road marking access to the “spring” a mile south of the lake and to the “Nuisance Ground.” Halloween pranks such as outhouse upending also declined that year.

Year One brought the following UCOs (unexpected compelling opportunities):

* February – need for a nurse and an accessible clinic
* May – offer of a roadside plot on the edge of the village for a demonstration garden
* June – arrival of summer MVSers Eddie Miller and Delmar Yoder to launch the gardening project and help with youth activities
* July – request to intervene in the violent behaviour of a community leader having a “nervous breakdown”
* July – family request to conduct a graveside service for Chief John Baptiste Gambler
* July – written request from Sally Auger, delivered by husband Toma of Sandy Lake, 50 air miles north, to help negotiate with Alberta Education for a school, prompting a multi-day wagon trip to Sandy Lake with Toma to gather information, with return on horseback
* August – desire to start a kindergarten for Cree preschoolers, leading to the arrival of teacher Anna Rose Nafziger, who ended up being needed by the school

Before the first year was up it was apparent that the Glicks wouldn’t be leaving after one year because of things that had been initiated during that first year.

MVS supplied nurses in Calling Lake for nine years. In order, they were Elma Riehl, Barbara Ann White (Wicker), Hilda Eby (Crawford),Sylvia Leonard, Marianne Roth (Schlegel) and Virginia Wenger.

By 1965, Hilda had returned to Calling Lake as a permanent resident and provided part-time nursing service. A renewed appeal was made for funds to hire her permanently. Nine years after first being asked, the department agreed to pay a half-time salary with benefits, mileage and nominal rent to the association for use of its building. But the government didn’t want to issue funds to the Nursing Service Association (even though it had wanted the association formed and registered to “qualify” for heating funds). Now it wanted to work through a “recognized organization,” which the MVS had become by that point. Ike still considers that demand a backward step in local control. Yet the community benefited as Hilda was hired and served as resident nurse for decades – until retiring in 1995.

### Part C On Call from our Neighbours, p. 41

“In our minds the road that ended at Calling Lake was more like a spoke extending from a hub in the south. Had someone told us that Calling Lake would itself become a hub connecting by short wave, plane, logging trails and trains to more isolated settlements, we might have asked for such a ‘prophet’s’ credentials!” – Ike Glick

#### Sandy Lake

Sally dreams a school – drawn in part from “A school is born,” written by Millie Glick in 1979.

Sally Augur of Sandy Lake, 50 air miles north of the end of the road in Calling Lake, had sent several letters to Alberta Education seeking a school, but got no answers. Most residents had resisted sending their children to the residential school at Wabasca. Sally had gathered some desks, but had no building. Hearing how Calling Lake got its nurse, she wondered if the MVS might help. She wrote a letter to Ike Glick, which her husband Toma delivered July 25, 1956 while fetching a hay rake, coming by team and wagon over several muskeg crossings that put him knee-deep in boggy water.

Ike accompanied Toma home for a six-day fact-finding trip that included several insect-laden nights in the woods and taught him lessons about eating from the land. Little more than two weeks later, a request for a school went to Education Minister A.O. Aalborg (who was receptive), Registrar D.R. Cameron, and Head of School Administration Dr. John W. Chalmers (who became a strong ally).

Chalmers first suggested a residential school; when greeted with silence, he suggested a trial private school to test whether the community could sustain a public school. The community swung into action. Ruby Taron, who operated a trading post near Sandy Lake with husband Bert, delivered an application for a private school to Dr. Chalmers, and on August 9, 1957, Minister Aalborg approved the plan, subject to buildings being available for a classroom and a teacherage. Two log shacks near the lake shore were restored with help from MSV summer volunteers from Calling Lake, gaining windows and craft papered interior walls.

Ike Glick had obtained a pilot’s license in June 1957 and was using a three-seat Piper Cruiser plane PA12-FIS owned by pastor Linford Hackman of Carstairs, who’d had to give up flying. Thus equipped, Ike could fly teachers, supplies, etc. to Bert Taron’s air strip, from which they’d hike or get picked up by horse or horse and wagon. Arrival was a bit easier in winter, when the plane could land near the school, its wheels replaced by skis.

The voluntary service organization found a teacher for Sandy Lake: Fred Gingerich, newly married to Elsie. They arrived early September 1957. On September 13 in the makeshift 22x24-foot classroom, Mr. Gingerich faced 17 pupils, 6 to 15 years old, all but four in Grade 1. Average attendance for the first four months: 98.6%. The children asked why they couldn’t also have school on Saturdays, and more wanted to attend.

Impressed, officials virtually promised to organize a school district if the initial full year was a success. Bert Taron argued that was too late to decide, as supplies needed to be brought in before spring break-up in eight weeks. Given that, Sandy Lake was invited to apply immediately. Chalmers also provided a blueprint for a one-room school plus a list of materials needed to build it, and authorized purchase of the supplies and delivery to the end of the road at Calling Lake.

Fortunately, a caterpillar operator from a seismic outfit wanted to walk his cat to his next assignment north of Pelican Mountain, near Sandy Lake, thus opening the way for building supplies to pass; another outfit further improved the trail. Now the supplies could be transported by a four-wheel-drive surplus army truck and trailer owned by a Calling Lake neighbour rather than a fleet of horse-drawn sleighs. Even so, delivery required numerous 18-hour round trips just as spring breakup was threatening, leading to much frustration and heroic efforts.

With technical support from builder Paul White of Calling Lake and the combined efforts of the Sandy Lake community, the red-roofed schoolhouse was ready to open September 1958. And Pelican Mountain School District #5088 was established, with funds for classroom and teacherage.

After teaching there three years, Fred became the first teacher at Chipewyan Lakes in September 1960, and Paul Landis and his wife Suzanne succeeded him at Sandy Lake.

The success of Sandy Lake school, coupled with a request in 1959 from former residents of Chipewyan Lakes who wanted to return to their homes and traplines and needed a school there, inspired the birth of the Northlands School Division just a year later.

#### Chipewyan Lakes, p. 69

A Hudson’s Bay trading post operated from a log building in Chipewyan Lakes as a Wabasca sub-station from about 1902, becoming a full trading post with a new store in 1948. Each September, Department of Indian Affairs sent a pontoon plane to take any new school-age children to residential school at Wabasca. To avoid their going, families disappeared into the bush.

In 1953, Ottawa moved the entire settlement 90 air miles south, near Wabasca residential school, and self-reliance gave way to dependent social assistance. Each year some men would return the 90 miles by dog team to tend traplines; those who remained for spring trapping of muskrats, beaver, lynx and other furs faced the hazard of getting their pelts to Wabasca when dog sleds were useless – either by prior arrangement with a plane, greatly depleting their earnings, or at the risk of getting their furs wet by crossing the Wabasca River on horseback.

It was widely rumoured that families would return to Chipewyan Lakes if the trading post were reopened and a school provided. Hearing that, James H. McIntosh of Calling Lake, fur trader and pioneer of flying fish from northern lakes, asked Ike Glick to intervene with the Department of Education. The two flew together to speak with trappers in January 1959 and found interest, so McIntosh negotiated with HBC for use of its buildings during the spring trapping season, to do business and interact with trappers and thus learn more. Ike contacted Dr. Chalmers at the Department of Education, who promised support if residents brought at least 10 school-age children. And if MVS provided a teacher, as teachers were in short supply, especially for remote areas.

The Glicks agreed to operate the trading post for six to eight weeks in spring. They arrived March 15, 1959 with 10-week-old Jan Maria and four-year-old John and, with trappers’ help, enjoyed immersion in fur buying, Cree speaking and living off the land. Learning that locals wanted the store to remain open so they could bring their families for the summer, Ike agreed to come once a month with supplies if a landing strip could be carved out near the lake, since the plane he used did not have pontoons.

In fall, the Glicks returned for the full winter and spring season and collected signed commitments from trappers to bring their families home by September 1960 for school. That summer, School District #5128 was registered for Chipewyan Lakes with Mr. I.N. Glick as Official Trustee and Fred Gingerich transferring from Sandy Lake to teach. Classes were held in the store for the first year, with opening delayed until November due to delay in delivery of desks and teacher supplies by chartered Pacific Western Airlines Otter aircraft.

When interviewed, Ike mused, “It was interesting how three completely unrelated interests came together to restore the community.” McIntosh needed a local population of trappers and fishers; the families needed a school and store so they could return to Chipewyan Lakes; the Glicks were seeking an immersion in the Cree language and culture.

Meanwhile, Chalmers pressed ahead with his vision of offering alternatives to residential schools in other northern settlements, despite a prevailing myth that the people were too nomadic to warrant such expenditures. The Northland School Division was formed by Order-in-Council December 31, 1960, with Dr. J.W. Chalmers as Official Trustee.

#### Anzac, p. 87

An early challenge for the new Northland School Division was how to serve scattered families, Aboriginal and section men lived along the Northern Alberta Railway between Lac La Biche and Fort McMurray, too few in each hamlet to warrant a school. The railway, school division and MVS teamed up to seek a solution.

To gauge interest, Ike Glick rode the one passenger car at the end of a freight train in frigid weather from Edmonton north, stopping at each siding north of Conklin to determine how many school age children lived there. Although his findings were sketchy due to translation issues, uncertain train schedules and other complications, further investigation found enough likely students to consider how they might be served. The best option seemed to be adding a classroom to the Anzac school, coupled with a school residence for railway children. Unlike in residential schools, children would return home every second weekend during the school year, using the train’s regular northbound schedule on Mondays and southbound on Saturdays. Thus students would spend nine days of every 10 in school, missing Mondays. All holidays at Anzac School were moved to Mondays, reducing missed school time to just 7.5%. In September 1962, Ike Glick and Northlands Superintendent of Schools Leslie R. Gue took an open self-propelled “Speeder” with railway Road Master Mr. Roleau on a two-day round trip to make the first accurate count of prospective students, confirming the project’s feasibility.

An exceptional three-way collaboration between the railway, school division and MVS resulted in what *Trainman News* in 1963 termed “the most unusual school on this continent,” supported by Chalmers as Northlands Trustee and Aalborg as Minister of Education. Roles in this three-way collaboration:

* Northland School Division assumed administrative responsibility, providing a second classroom and staff, plus finances for a student residence and staff.
* The Northern Alberta Railway added a second passenger car to the end of the regular freight train with a large banner on each side saying ANZAC SCHOOL COACH, exclusively for students and their chaperones.
* Mennonite Voluntary Service developed the “Anzac Dorm” and found staff to operate it and provide supervision and recreation. Children from the community often joined in those adventures, which included fishing, snaring, hiking and other outdoor excursions. One of the community children, Carol Plews, later took the name Tantoo Cardinal and became an admired actor and director.

Temporary housing for the “experimental” first two years was assembled by stringing together bunkhouses from the nearby Stony Mountain site of the Mid-Canada Radar Line, which was being dismantled. The school experiment operated successfully for four years, but a permanent dormitory was never built due in part to “sea change” oil sands development, resulting in commercial investment, better road access and school facilities in Fort McMurray. At the same time, the railway shifted to more electronic management, reducing the number of section men families along the line. Some of the school’s students went on to become community leaders, including several teachers. Dr. Emma LaRocque, for example, became professor in native studies at the University of Manitoba.

The Roman Catholic bishop based in Fort Smith, NWT, whose diocese included parts of northeast Alberta, vigorously objected to the dorm being supervised by non-Catholics. Ike Glick attempted several times to meet with him, but the offers were sidestepped. Fortunately, Ike observes, a more open and tolerant spirit would soon emanate from Pope John XXIII’s Vatican Council.

#### Three other school sites, p. 102

**Marlboro:** A request for MVS teachers came from Joe and Thelma Garber of Edson, Alberta. Joe was teaching in Edson while Thelma commuted to Marlboro to teach. Bill and Doris Lauterbach volunteered and taught in the two-room school 1962-1964. In fall 1964, Bill began commuting to Edson to initiate music programs in the public schools; Doris continued to teach at Marlboro until their twins were born in May 1966. In October 1968, the Lauterbachs moved to a home in Edson “with running water – yay,” where Doris started kindergarten programs in Edson schools.

**Imperial Mills:** Adolf and Eileen Loeffler arrived in 1963 to find an incomplete teacherage and two-room school. Construction crews vacated the old teacherage so the Loefflers had a place to stay. The new buildings had piped propane ceiling lighting and diesel fuel furnaces. Propane also fueled the cooking stove and fridge. The couple taught 45 to 55 pupils grades 1-9. A train track passed alongside the school, but no road ran into the hamlet.

**Slave Lake:** Hearing of a need for medical service in Slave Lake, about 130 miles northwest of Calling Lake by road, the MVS envisioned an airborne medical service to isolated communities from a base at Calling Lake. Although an appeal to the Alberta Health Minister for funding was rejected, the team hoped funds would become available for Dr. John Rutt to offer that service from Slave Lake. John Rutt and his wife Becky, a registered nurse, had joined MVS after he was drafted by the military. They worked out of the Calling Lake nursing station before moving to Slave Lake. The airborne service didn’t begin while the Rutts were in Slave Lake, but their presence did enable the town to get a 40-bed hospital. The Rutts spent three years in the north, during which they adopted a daughter, Kathy.

The government eventually implemented airborne medical service. They hired Alice Auger of Sandy Lake, one of the first students when the school there opened, who had meanwhile become a Registered Nurse. That service continued even after many communities gained road access.

### Part D “Indian Arts”, p. 110

Moose, deer and caribou leather crafts were still found in most northern Aboriginal communities in the 1950s. Moccasins, gloves, mukluks, mitts, vests, jackets were part of the traditional wardrobe –decorated with beadwork, dyed horse or moose hair, porcupine quills and even fish scales for dress-up occasions. Some of this handiwork sold, but the makers lacked both a reliable sales outlet and a favourable source for beads and threads. Writing in a denominational newsletter, Ike describes the scene: “In all the communities where VS personnel became involved, an unorganized ‘cottage industry’ of Aboriginal leather crafts was apparent but there was a huge disconnect between producers and markets. For immediate cash, whenever they went to town, the producer ladies were at the mercy of random buyers in bars or on the street.”

Envisioning more widespread sales, the MVS encouraged local production and facilitated sales under the name “Indian Arts.” The name was registered under the Societies Act in February 1964 with Edmonton Barrister Alan Collins providing volunteer legal expertise. News of that fledgling enterprise prompted the Federal Department of Indian Affairs to send Vic Vokes from Ottawa and Bill Wacko from Alberta to investigate. They offered to underwrite the initiative if Ike Glick would work for them. But Indian Affairs could serve only Treaty, not Métis populations. Ike countered that he would consider the shift in roles only if some arrangement could be made with the Alberta government, so Métis craftspeople would not be excluded.

As new product ideas surfaced, the initiative’s identity became “Team Products,” highlighting the importance of working as a team because “Teamwork Efforts Accomplish More.” Surplus hides or skills of one community could be shared, and the entire enterprise benefited from the shared identity and marketing. Among the products made:

* **Calling Lake – fish boxes, pallets and chicken crates** under **Paul White’s** leadership
* Marlboro – chickens, fence posts, slashing for seismic access roads
* Sandy Lake – canoes
* Anzac – jams and jellies by the Meensa (berry) Products Co-op led by Elaine Wideman and teachers Ted & Arlene Walter (Prior to disturbance of surface lands by oil sands, wild berries grew in abundance most years, an important dietary supplement for local people.)

Finally, both governments agreed to include both Treaty and Métis peoples, and Ike became managing director of Team Products on September 1, 1965. Bi-government funding of $103,000 over three years was approved, but with an unrealistic assigned territory: Alberta and Mackenzie District North West Territories. TEAM became Teamwork Enterprises of Alberta and Mackenzie. Edmonton lawyer Alan Collins proved very supportive in helping to set up TEAM Products and for years after; he and his wife frequently hosted Ike overnight when he needed to make trips to Edmonton. At the request of the board set up to handle the government funds supporting the initiative, the Glick family moved to Edmonton for better access to markets and transportation. It was good timing, as John, their eldest, was nearing junior high, which the local school did not offer then. TEAM Products opened retail outlets, operating a few years at 105 St. and Jasper Avenue in Edmonton and on 8th Avenue SW in Calgary.

From the first, Ike said he would step aside when an Aboriginal successor became available. A few years later, Dave Ward of Inuit background became managing director, with Ike staying on as community liaison and production manager until late 1968. Having grown up in Edmonton, Dave Ward didn’t have the same connections and rapport Ike had established with the northern communities making the products, putting him at a disadvantage as he sought to inject his own ideas into the mix. “His vision of handicraft was to modernize women’s moosehide and beadwork garments, which didn’t really catch on. It was too big a leap,” Ike says. The TEAM board decided to restrict its focus to “Indian Arts” to serve Indian and Métis peoples, to cope with restricted funding. The berry co-op operated several years, but then was shut down by a National Health and Welfare inspector, ostensibly because the operation lacked stainless steel sink and counters, despite impeccable sanitation.

#### Bush Tale – 8: Northeast Alberta Party Line, p. 131

After two years in the MVS unit house the Glicks moved to a rented house, and then, in 1959, into a log house Ike built along the lakeshore at the edge of the village. They installed a power plant, which made it possible to communicate via shortwave radio phone. No longer would community members need to travel 25 miles to La Porte’s Store to access the nearest phone. Millie describes how that phone changed their lives:

Since we were located at the edge of the hamlet, to use the phone was now within walking distance. The phone was in the northeast corner of the room nearest the front door. Of necessity, it was also our young son’s bedroom. Having the phone changed our lifestyle. Our kitchen, dining and living room was an open area. A knock at the door and “whoever” walked in.

As seismic work reached into the area north of Calling Lake, oil company employees made considerable use of the phone. It was not unusual to have two to four fellows sitting in the living room in sock feet awaiting their turn for the phone while interacting with our kids playing on the floor.

Having a mobile phone was like having a party line for northeastern Alberta. What you heard was what you got – a woman talking to a doctor about her possible miscarriage or a child with a concussion or a boss chastising an employee.

We didn’t get a newspaper. We didn’t need one!

Ike harvested trees for the Glick house from an area just east of Calling Lake where a fire had gone through a decade earlier. “They were well dried,” Ike explained when interviewed in 2023. “And some had fallen on other logs so they didn’t touch the ground, so they were also good logs.” From the sawmill operator, he learned how to notch and fell the trees. “We hired a local man with a horse to drag them out to a roadway, and then I dragged them behind our pickup to the sawmill when it snowed, so they could slide without damage, and had the sawmill square the logs on three sides, so we’d preserve the log effect on the outside wall. That was a great learning experience.” It turned out the inside wall was not evenly squared, so 1x4s were added vertically every 16 inches to ensure a flat surface to attach the insulating wall board. “That turned out to be a blessing, as it provided additional airspace worth of insulation. And some years later, when electricity became available, it provided a space to run the wires through.”

In 1967, when the Glicks moved to Edmonton, they rented their log house out for several years. But they had difficulty getting reliable renters, so they used it themselves several summers, with Ike traveling back to Edmonton when needed. “The kids really enjoyed our summers there,” Ike recalls. The Glicks have since sold the home to someone who uses it as a holiday spot.

#### Bush Tale – 11: Keeping in Touch, p. 137

The remote settlements of Sandy Lake, Chipewyan Lakes and Anzac begged for a regular communication system. With no power lines into Calling Lake, that meant purchasing a power plant. The sponsoring organization approved, and a power plant was located on the Glick property. A two-way radio was set up at each location, with Calling Lake as the primary base. Each morning at 9 a.m. and again at 1 p.m., the Glicks would check in with each location if atmospheric conditions allowed. It was a lifeline for roadless communities.

The service greatly relieved Ike’s concern while weathered in at Anzac on April 8, 1964. Despite marginal radio transmission that morning, he received news of son James’s successful delivery at the clinic, and that Millie and the babe were doing well.

## Appendices

### Mennonite Voluntary Service Participants Alberta, 1955-1970, p. 152

Members listed for these communities: Anzac, Sandy Lake, Calling Lake, Chipewyan Lakes, Edmonton, Imperial Mills, Marlboro, Rob, Slave Lake

#### Calling Lake members

Nellie Alger

Willis Amstutz

Elvin Blosser

Verna Byler

Robert Christophel

Sanford Christophel (S)

Norma Detweiler

Hilda Eby (Crawford)

Richard Gingerich

Shirley Gingerich

Isaac Glick

Mildred Glick

Betty Good

Ray Good

James Hartzler

Roy Hartzler (S)

Bonnie Jantzi

Leo Jantzi

Ila Jones

Dana Kauffman (S)

Floris Kenepp

Paul Landis (S)\*\*

John Leonard

Sylvia Leonard

Glenn Lind

Pearl Lind

Wilbur Litwiller

Mary Ellen Litwiller

Laverne Martin (S)

Roy Martin (S)

Eddie Miller (S)

Anna Rose Nafziger (Kiesow)

Dora Nafziger (S)

Paul Nafziger (S)

Raymond Nafziger (S)

Sandra Nafziger (Cardinal)

Elma Riehl (Knapp)

Marianne Roth (Schlegel)

John Rutt \*\*

Rebecca Rutt \*\*

Donald Schrock

Stuart Shank (S)

Laura Troyer

Omar Troyer

Carolyn Ulrich

Leo Ulrich

John Wenger

Virginia Wenger

Barbara Ann White (Wicker)

George Wicker

Elaine Wideman (Hershberger) \*\*

Donald Wiest

Rosanne Wiest

Inez Wyse (Uchytil)

Julia Yoder

Delmar Yoder (S)

S = summer service

\* = served in more than one location

### Outcomes and Testimonies

#### Ray Brubaker, teacher, Calling Lake, p. 154.

*The Country Guide* featured Raymond Brubaker in its May 1966 issue. It describes how a county school superintendent warned him not to expect much of his students – and how they proved the superintendent wrong. His Grade 9 students not only coped successfully with provincial exams but bested the county average. Ray, his wife Virginia and later Harvey Burkholder, although not in MVS, became a significant part of the team’s presence.

#### Mike Cardinal, child from Calling Lake, later minister in parliament, p. 155

Decades after taking part in Boys’ and Youth clubs led by MVS volunteers, playing sports and working in a demonstration garden, Mike Cardinal recalled that time as a turning point in his own boyhood at Calling Lake. In August 1995, then Alberta’s Minister of Family & Social Services, he called Leo Jantzi and Ike Glick to his office to share his concern about Native families that drift to the city being at risk of having their children placed in foster care, saying government makes “a very poor parent.” He asked: “Would the Mennonite churches in Edmonton be willing to help find a better way?”

Decades later, Ike would observe that from Mike’s youth he was adept at seeing and taking advantage of opportunities. Leo and Bonnie Jantzi, who followed the Glicks as leaders of the Calling Lake MVS unit, went on to Slave Lake, where they were employed by Alberta Housing and hired Mike Cardinal. Premier Ralph Klein later invited Mike to run for office and appointed him a cabinet minister for Family and Social Services.

Mike Cardinal lost his memory in later years and died January 12, 2023. But Ike observes that Mike has a brother and sisters who may have Calling Lake memories to share. Two of the sisters became teachers, as did others who were students during the MVS decades. “That’s what can happen in a community when there’s opportunity,” Ike says. “I became convinced that the redistribution of opportunity is more important and more effective in the long run than redistribution of funds through social assistance.”

#### John Glick, son of Ike and Millie Glick, p. 156

John recalls the winter and spring when his family lived in Chipewyan Lakes. Learning to use snowshoes and steer a sled to the lake, fish, watch planes land – or when they couldn’t land, drop bags of mail, supplies and yes/no questions to make sure everything was okay.

#### Fred & Elsie Gingerich, Sandy Lake, p. 157

#### Sherman Kauffman, Anzac and Marlboro, p. 158

#### Bill Lauterbach, Marlboro, p. 159

#### Aaron Lehman, Sandy Lake, Slave Lake, p. 160

#### Adolf and Eileen Loeffler, Imperial Mills, 1963-1965, p.m 161

#### George and Barbara Ann Wicker, 1957-1959, p. 162

George reflects on the emphasis Aboriginal people put on relationships rather than material things. Barbara Ann says she grew to love public health nursing and served as a nurse for Indian Affairs for three years. “In 1973 I applied for a public health position in Fort McMurray and the nurse who hired for those positions was in Edmonton. I did not have a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, which was usually required but the nurse in Edmonton said if this is Barbara Ann who worked at Calling Lake she is hired.”

#### Harvey and Ellen Yoder, Anzac, p. 163

### A Métis Afterword, p. 164

Emma LaRocque, professor of Native Studies, studied at Anzac School and recalls how life in the dorm (while rigid in some ways) was a lifesaver for her. She reflects on the many ways Ike and Millie Glick have welcomed her home through the years, and muses: “To be sure, there are issues here that in another context could be pursued. The history of missionaries among Indigenous peoples is not always one that can be celebrated. There are questions related to voluntary service to peoples in involuntary circumstances. What is outstanding and unique about Ike and Millie is that they have modeled ‘the power of respectful presence’ not only in their various ministries throughout the years, but also in their friendships and relationships.”

### The authors reflect, p. 172

Ike and Millie Glick reflect on all they learned and gained from their time in and around Calling Lake. Noting how memory can be “capricious and selective,” they say they were fortunate to draw from many written sources for the book, including letters to Ray Horst, the Elkhart VS director, formal reports, the pilot logbook, copies of *Agape* and letters to parents inherited when they passed on.

## Life after Calling Lake

Taken in part from “Opportunity, Risk and Adventure” by Ike Glick, Newsletter, Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta, Volume XIX Number 1, March 2016

After leaving TEAM Products, Ike Glick accepted work with the Human Resources Development Authority (HRDA). As assistant manager of the HRDA Indian-Métis Liaison Group, he continued working with Indigenous communities, but in socio-economic development more broadly. This included work to assess social impacts of industrial developments in the Fort McMurray and Slave Lake regions and at Grande Cache in 1970 when a coal mine and new town were being developed.

At Grande Cache, the grandchildren of a population that had been evicted from Jasper Park when the Park and town were being developed in 1915 were once again in danger of being evicted to make way for a town to serve a coal mine. Ike assisted with land tenure negotiations and helped hone residents’ leadership skills for engaging with the town council. In the end, the Indigenous people of Grand Cache were granted land tenure on several plots, so they didn’t need to be moved.

HRDA was shut down after Peter Lougheed’s Progressive Conservatives defeated the Social Credit government in 1971, and attempts were made to find alternate assignments for staff. Taking advantage of an offered education leave, Ike enrolled in a new community development stream at the University of Alberta. With a former colleague, a sociology professor and his wife, the Glicks formed Co-west Associates, a not-for-profit specializing in social planning, research and training with Native communities.

#### A Fork-in-the-Road Opportunity

After Ike completed graduate study in psychology in 1983, a personal friend and CEO of a laser technology company of 100 employees offered a position as director of human resources. The company’s lasers could cut materials 40 inches per second and were just the thing for cutting slippery materials such as the ones used to make automobile airbags, which tend to slip from a shearing knife.

Before accepting the job, Ike asked what the company’s response would be if tapped to apply its leading-edge laser know-how and research to military use. Assured that under the current president the company would not be interested, Ike took the job. But within a few years things changed unexpectedly. The enterprise became a public company, cash flow was tight, and the Alberta government became a majority shareholder. These factors together set the stage for pursuing lucrative military contracts. What to do?

“In a strange way, the answer was the easy part,” Ike would later write. “Clearly, I needed to remove myself from hiring people for an enterprise I could not support. I had to resign. Coming to terms with resigning and its implications for the family was more difficult; I felt numbness, initially, and deep disappointment. Hadn’t I been assured before taking the job? I won’t detail the process here except to highlight the support of Millie and our children despite major implications financially and to say that, after delivering my resignation letter, I once again slept soundly.

“There’s a postscript. The company didn’t land any military contracts. The cold war began to wane; the Berlin wall came down (without violence); and the imagined need for this firm to devote its resources to the military vanished. As it turned out, I could have stayed, but, when I resigned, the rapid changes internationally were not foreseen. I could have kept my job, but without the life affirming experience of declaring myself: ‘This is who I am.’ In any case, I would have lost my job a short time later when the government ended its support, causing the firm to go under.

“I was inspired, at the time, by Amman Hennacy, a practising Catholic pacifist, who, while marching as a solitary demonstrator against nuclear testing, was asked by a reporter, ‘Do you really think you can change the world by doing that?’ ‘Oh, no!’ he said, ‘I don’t do this to change the world. I do this to keep the world from changing me!’ Sometimes one sees clearly; sometimes one hesitates or stumbles; but, still drawn forward by one’s aspirations.”

#### Innovative display stands

The CEO of the laser company had also founded a frame shop and soon offered Ike a job there. Noting that many of the frames were made of channeled metal, Ike devised a stand that could be snapped into those channels to hold photos up. The idea was patented after a patent search, and Millie wrote advertising ditties to help with marketing. The concept caught on, and uses were expanded to provide stands for books and magazines. Introduced to the idea at a trade show in Toronto, a framing company from Dallas bought 70,000.

The framing enterprise extended from approximately 1989 to 2009, Ike says. “So that was an interesting adventure for us in our semi-retirement years.”

#### Millie Glick’s final chapters

Millie was an imaginative writer who penned several stories about their journeys. In her later years, she wrote about the experience of enduring progressive hearing loss in a piece titled “Wrestling with my Deaf-icit.” In 2016, she was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s. Told that she would gradually lose her ability to speak, she wrote “A Fork in the Road” in stages as her memory loss progressed, relying on Ike to put the last portion into words. Ike shared those two pieces with the Calling Lake history team; they hold helpful insights for anyone else journeying through deafness and/or Alzheimer’s.

The couple had 69.5 years together before kidney failure took Millie’s life. “When I proposed to her my question was whether she’d be willing to celebrate her 50th wedding anniversary with me,” Ike reminisced. “She said yes. So when we had our 50th, she reminded me of that agreement and said I’d better renegotiate! She only agreed to 25 more, half of the original agreement in ’51!”

#### Pastoral roles

Besides serving as lay pastor at Calling Lake from 1955-1959, and for the scattered MVSrs, the Glicks were pressed by the then Alberta-Saskatchewan Conference to serve as interim pastor couple at Holyrood in Edmonton from 1960 to 1962. It was a reluctant move, being torn away from northern engagements. Plus the Holyrood congregation was just two years old and in the midst of tension and unhappiness after the original pastor couple was not reappointed.

After two years in Edmonton, the Glicks returned to Calling Lake for another five years. In the subsequent decades, they served the church in several ways, including multiple terms as elders, Sunday School teachers, planning Community Life events, and worship leaders. Inter-Mennonite engagements have included board opportunities with The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN), Canadian Peacemakers International (CPI), MCC’s Aboriginal Neighbours Committee and The Welcome Home Community, which carried a Calling Lake connection via Mike Cardinal.

#### The Welcome Home Community

In August, 1995, Mike Cardinal invited Leo Jantzi and Ike Glick to his office for lunch. Then Alberta’s Minister of Family and Social Services, he was concerned about dysfunctional families in Edmonton who were at risk of having their children placed in foster care. Current practice wasn’t working, he said: “Government makes a very poor parent. Would the Mennonite churches in Edmonton be willing to help find a better way?” Money was not an issue, he said. He was seeking people who could work with parents and his department to keep families together. Leo and Ike agreed to explore the matter with Mennonite leaders and get back to him.

Exploration began with the Ministerium, followed by a brainstorming meeting with 13 lay people who were professionally employed in a variety of human services. Minister Cardinal met with the Ministerium on January 30, 1996. Meanwhile, Dave Hubert prepared a concept paper for critique and refinement. A task force was assigned to develop a vision and proposal for what became The Welcome Home Community (WHC), designed to provide, in a community context, mentoring support for families at risk. Beginning on January 1, 1997, WHC operated successfully for five years (confirmed by two independent evaluations) under Vic and Kathy Thiessen’s leadership. Sadly, WHC suffered the same fate as the Youth Orientation Unit (YOU) for similar political reasons after Mr. Cardinal was transferred to a different ministry.

#### Concluding Reflections

Ike writes: “The arc of one’s life and the influences that shape it only become clear in retrospect. If “variety is the spice of life,” mine has been a life of spice, rich in opportunity, risk, and adventure shared with my life partner, Millie Alger Glick, five children and eight grandchildren.”

## Additional notes from 2023 interviews with Ike Glick

Ike Glick kindly agreed to be interviewed twice in early 2023, on January 13 and March 29. Below are excerpts from those conversations about topics not addressed above.

#### The Glick family’s grandfather clock

*During our first interview, Ike Glick had pointed out a grandfather clock that chimed hourly in his living room, saying it had an interesting history. As promised, he told me more about it when we met again.*

This particular clock was built in 1771 and goes back in our family at least six generations. When my grandfather was ill and not expected to live very long, he told me as a teenager that because I was his namesake, I was to have the clock after he was gone. I was not married then, so the clock stayed in my folks’ home a number of years, until after we moved to Alberta. We didn’t bring it with us on our first arrival, but after it was clear we were going to stay here, we went back for that and some other things. We had the papers indicating that they had been declared when we first came, so it shouldn’t have been a problem at the border, but we arrived just before midnight and the person at the border apparently wasn’t familiar with some important details. So we had to go back to a local hotel for the night and try again the next morning.

The man working at the border the next morning said there really was no reason we shouldn’t have been cleared the night before. But the hotel was an interesting experience. It was in a rural town near the border. When we went into the lobby there was a table lamp glaring without a shade, and a note by the lamp indicating what rooms were still available. Of course I had no way of knowing whether some others might have chosen any of those rooms, so I went upstairs and investigated. The hallway was not well lit. I opened the door to one of designated numbers and couldn’t find the switch and made my way to the bed and slowly dropped my hands to make sure there wasn’t anybody in the bed.

*Was nobody in the bed?* Not until we got there.

The clock came with some instructions given by my grandfather. His grandfather had owned it but was already deceased, so the clock had gone to an uncle, his grandfather’s brother. The tradition was for the clock to pass from grandfather to the grandson who carried the Glick name. Whether the grandfather of my grandfather had gotten the clock and then it was given to his brother or whether there was another generation behind that I can’t say for sure. But it’s certainly been in the Glick family now for at least six generations.

Did I tell you about the Glick origins in the United States? The name Glick is not found on any of the ship lists of Amish or Mennonite passengers of the mid-1700s, but it’s a common Jewish name. A Jewish family was attacked during a conflict involving Indigenous people, and everyone in the family was killed except a five-year-old boy who had hidden successfully. He wasn’t able to give much information about the family, except that when asked how many were in the family he just said “viele, viele” – many. He was given a home then by an Amish family, and that’s how the Glick name came into the Anabaptist stream, of which I’m a descendant. So my European background and first American ancestor were actually Jewish.

The clock runs for eight days, to give you one day’s grace to remember to wind it. It has two 13-lb weights held by brass cables that are fastened to the works behind the face. In 1971 we had some people in to celebrate the clock’s two hundredth birthday, and I wrote something about that. I’ll give you a copy. The theme for the evening was time and the grandfather clock, but this includes the information about the birthday of this clock. (The essay, “It’s About Time and a Grandfather Clock,” is a separate document.)

*Who is next in line to receive the clock?* David Glick, my grandson, in Seattle Washington. He and wife don’t have any children; I don’t know how he will resolve that. It may need to go to a cousin with the Glick name. But that’ not my worry.

It took great care to bring it across the country. We had a clock specialist who serviced the clock with the new brass cable before we brought it, and he packaged the works to get it ready for the trip. The top slides off, and we brought it in the back of a pickup That in itself turned out to be an adventure.

The clock was in our living room in Calling Lake until we moved to the city. So it has been mobile, moving a number of times.

### Local stores

James McIntosh had come to Alberta 40 years before the Glicks arrived, in the early 1900s. Ike has heard that McIntosh drove some cattle north from Montana and eventually settled at Calling Lake and set up a trading post that also served as a store and post office.

Later, a Ukrainian couple also set up a store, so Calling Lake had two stores. When the latter had to close because of retirement needs, several volunteers who had settled in the community took it over and called it Moosehorn Market. Leo and Bonnie Jantzi operated it for a while. Ike believes it was Leo who came up with the name. Later, the Amstutz family took over the store. They operated it longer than Leo and Bonnie had, because Leo was given the opportunity with Alberta Housing, and the Jantzis moved to Slave Lake and finished raising their family there.

#### Ike reflects on his flying days

I started out with the Piper Cruiser. And then the Cesna 170 for floats, but it didn’t have the power needed for taking off with a load on floats. Then the way opened to get a 180 that had more muscle.

They were used planes. Lindford Hackman, who owned the first plane and whose health failed at the right time for us to get the use of his plane, continued to be supportive and helped us locate planes. He was more familiar with the field of aviation than I was. The 180 was purchased in Ontario, and then he and I went to Ontario and flew the plane back.

It hadn’t actually been an aspiration of mine to become a pilot, but the situation demanded it and the coincidence of the plane becoming available and even of being trained in the plane I would be using (with the cooperation of Chinook Flying Services in Calgary, which Lindford Hackman had negotiated) made it possible.

*Did you enjoy flying?* Yes, I did. It wasn’t something I wanted to make a career of, but in the situation, it was necessary and there was a lot of learning involved with that.

*Did you do mercy flights?* I had flown a grandmother and her granddaughter to Wabasca – this wasn’t so much a mercy flights as an accommodation for Christmas – and then schoolteacher Paul Landiss’s wife Suzanna and her two daughters flew back with me to spend Christmas with us at Calling Lake while Paul drove the car the long way, around Slave Lake and Athabasca. She was very pregnant and shouldn’t have tried riding in the car that distance, especially with the road conditions then. After a mail drop at Sandy Lake, upon take-off the children noticed that the one ski was hanging down unusually. I did sense a bit of yaw to one side, which one feels if there’s a crosswind, so I just assumed it was that. And the children had no way of communicating with me. Because Suzanna was seven months pregnant, when I got to the Calling Lake airstrip, I chose to land on undisturbed snow rather than the bumpy frozen track of other landings. In this case, it was the wrong thing to do. The ski that hung down buried in the snow and caught on the turf and flipped the plane over. Fortunately, nobody was hurt. One little girl began to cry; Suzanna, who was holding the youngest, tried to comfort her by saying, “Everything’s okay,” but she hadn’t asked my opinion!

A neighbour, Joe Logan, heard us coming in, and then the sudden silence, so he came running to assist. Meanwhile, I was fumbling in search of the door handle, to get out of my upside-down position and get out.

There was no fire, and no one was injured, which was amazing! The foot of the little girl on Suzanna’s lap apparently caught in the seatbelt clip and the belt unbuckled, so Suzanna wasn’t left hanging on the belt. She wasn’t hurt and the children weren’t either. Nor I.

The plane had to be partly dismantled to convey to Edmonton, where repairs were undertaken.

#### Roads opened beyond imagination

*Looking back on the family’s time in Calling Lake, Ike concluded our interview with these thoughts:*

It was a great chapter in the life of Millie and I along with nearly 100 volunteers. And things unfolded in amazing ways that Millie and I marveled at. Because we had no vision or forethought of what might happen when we came. The Calling Lake community helped to define our agenda locally in terms of their health needs and then the rumour of that reached Sandy Lake, and Sally Auger made the wild leap in her imagination thinking maybe the same outfit could help them get a school.

But then how the road opened to get building supplies to Sandy Lake, an unbelievable coincidence of events that made it possible to transport the materials. We had a vision together with Bert Taron from Sandy Lake, who thought he could recruit a number of teams and sleighs to converge at Calling Lake on a certain date and go north together with supplies that had been assembled for the building. Then the very day we got back from talking with Dr. Chalmers, a cat skinner had stopped and talked to Millie, looking for me as a pilot to fly him over the terrain going north to check the area, because his next contract was on the north side of the Pelicans. He could get walking time pay if it was possible to walk his cat to the next job rather than having a lowboy take his cat the long way to Athabasca, Slave Lake, into Wabasca and back to the Pelicans.

That coincidence opened the possibility of vehicle transport by getting his help in creating a road that made it possible to haul things in by vehicle. It took a number of trips, mind you, with their own adventure and uncertainty at one point. But the way things fell together, we felt we were watching a drama unfold before us. It was beyond our imagination to anticipate such possibilities.