

## Steelhead Trout Display

Two wild summer run steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) were captured at the mouth of the Skeena River on August 1, 1998, by Robert Johnson aboard the Tyhee Test Fishery gillnet vessel, Silver Token.

The weights of the fish are estimated at 40 and 41 pounds, very close to that of the 42 lb 2 oz. world record steelhead captured at Bell Island, Alaska.

This display was made possible by the BC Ministry of Environment – Skeena Region and the specimens were preserved by Artist Jack Gibson of Richmond, BC.



*Information for this brochure was taken from the Smithers Regional Airport website at: [www.smithers.ca/airport/features.html](http://www.smithers.ca/airport/features.html)*



Smithers District Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 2379  
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0  
[www.tourismsmithers.com](http://www.tourismsmithers.com)

E: [info@tourismsmithers.com](mailto:info@tourismsmithers.com)  
P: 250-847-5072  
F: 250-847-3337



## The Stories Behind the Displays at the Smithers Regional Airport



Your way up.

# The Hungry Hill “Phantom” Grizzly Bear

This bear was captured by local Conservation Officers in the fall of 2001. It is believed that this bear was responsible for killing upwards of 30 head of cattle in the Hungry Hill area, which is between Smithers and Houston. The killing of cattle, which occurred in calving areas as well as grazing areas, took place over a three year period.

Some of the cows killed weighed as much as 1500 lbs. (682 kg). Conservation Officers responded to the kills and set snares and traps, but this bear managed to avoid capture for more than three years. He was able to trigger snares and grab the cow carcass without being caught on more than one occasion.

In October 2001, after a rash of new kills, Officers were finally successful in capturing this bear in cable leg hold snare. This snare, consisting of a spring-loaded cable anchored to a tree, captured the bear by the leg.

As the two officers, Kevin Nixon and Brad Lacey, approached the area cautiously, this bear managed to break the snare cable and charge at the officers. The bear was 24 metres from the officers when the snare broke and he made it within 7 metres of them before being shot.

Although everyone involved knew there was a large bear responsible for the predation on the cattle, the size of the bear certainly surprised everyone. This male Grizzly Bear weighed 1012 lbs. (460 kg) and appeared to be healthy. It is suspected that he was able to break the snare cable due to the fact that he had weakened it with his teeth.



An exhibit has been welcomed at the Smithers Regional Airport. Reflecting the pioneer spirit of the past, a canoe has been unveiled-restored and resplendent.

Considered the Rolls Royce of Canadian watercraft in its time, this canoe was owned by Martin Starret, a pioneer who established a trading post in Fort Babine in 1912. In the same year, Starret ordered this canoe from Peterborough Canoe Company in Ontario for \$127. Like any pioneer, he put the canoe to good use. He said, “If I had a nickel for every moose that had ridden in the canoe, I would be pretty well off.” When asked how he kept it in such good condition, he replied, “It never touched the bottom. Whenever I came up ashore, I stepped out into the water, unloaded, then carried the canoe up the beach.”

The canoe was considered the Rolls Royce of Canadian watercraft because it was a cedar ribbed canoe constructed entirely of tongue & groove ribs, held together by a keelson, internal stringers and gunwales. It took four times as long to build as conventional planked models and was priced accordingly.

By the 1930s this model was no longer manufactured. Today these models are in the hands of collectors and museums. In 1948, one was especially manufactured as a wedding gift for the royal couple, Princess Elizabeth and Prince Phillip.

Thanks for this exhibit are due to Michael Poole of Halfmoon Bay, BC, a friend of Martin Starret who restored his canoe and donated it to the Town of Smithers. Bandstra Transportation Systems generously brought Starret’s canoe north from Vancouver to Smithers. The late Imbert Orchard, CBC Radio Producer, who did interviews and made the programs that brought Martin Starret the recognition he deserved.



## NW Outfitters Display

The NW Guide Outfitters have loaned the airport a collection of Marquette sculptures by world renowned sculptor, Rick Taylor. These are miniature, to scale sculptures of life-size statues. The following five Marquette sculptures are on display at the Smithers Airport:

- The “Chadwick Ram” (Stone Sheep-Fort Nelson)
- “High in the Northwest” (Rocky Mountain Goat – Smithers)
- “Crossing the Cassiar” (Mountain Caribou - Smithers)
- “Heading for Radium” (3 Bighorn Sheep – Radium)
- “Under the Midnight Sun” (Dall Sheep – Whitehorse)

Rick’s artistry, stemming from countless hours of observing wildlife in the rugged wilderness areas of the world has gained him international recognition. To date, he has created more than 150 original works of art which are sought after by both corporate and private collectors and which adorn many public buildings. More information on Rick Taylor can be found at [www.ricktaylor.com](http://www.ricktaylor.com).