

Alex McFayden, from Islay, was a young lad eager for any kind of work after the Second World War. He remembers being paid to carry dynamite for men who wanted to straighten out the river so that low-lying marshland would drain more thoroughly.

Holes for the dynamite were made by stabbing the damp soil with a sharpened fence post and rotating it until a big enough space was made. When the dynamite went off, mud and plants and rocks flew up and rained down on everyone.



Alex said the river did drain faster for a while, and some of the straightened ditches remained. He remembers working out from where Highway 893 crosses the Vermilion River.

In the springtime, before there were bridges across the Vermilion River in this area, Alex remembers people on the north side using boats to cross the river to get to school or to shop in Vermilion.

Billie Milholland Sept 23, 2015