

WATT, Erik August 26th, 1993 MN Peel Biography Book

Former News publisher sings praises of the North in book of poetry

By KAREN BRIDSON
Special

The former publisher of *The Mississauga News*, who fled to the Northwest Territories 17 years ago to get away from city life, has resurfaced with the release of his book of Northern poetry.

Erik Watt, who was the publisher of *The News* and the Bramalea (Brampton) *Guardian* from 1966-68, is celebrating the June-release of *McDougall's Bash*.

Watt says the book is a compilation of poems written about the greatest moments of his life, all of which seem to have occurred during his time in the North.

"I am hoping that by describing everyday events I'll be able to show what life up here is really like," says Watt, who

moved to Yellowknife in 1976.

"I've always wanted to live up here. Country life has always appealed to me," says Watt, whose love for the North began as a teenager working as a deck-hand on the Mackenzie River.

Watt began writing the poems for the book in 1983, and spent the following years editing and polishing them for publication.

'Flaming editorials'

Watt, who lived in Streetsville during his time with *The News*, says he gave up working as a publisher when he discovered that he was working towards the wrong goal.

"I realized that publishers didn't have much to do with

the news anymore," says Watt. "I was just the guy who looked after the mechanics of putting out the paper."

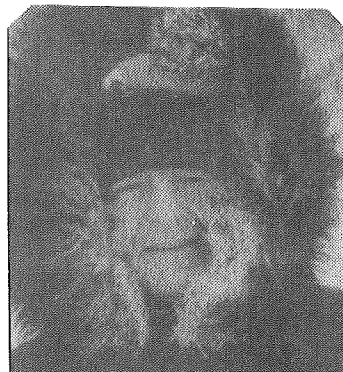
Watt says his passion was always writing "flaming editorials" about such things as government policies.

A fourth generation newsman, Watt worked in the newspaper business for 30 years before moving north to work for the government as the director of public affairs for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Watt has been working as an independent writer and media consultant since 1985.

In 1990, Watt's first book, a tourist book called *Yellowknife: How A City Grew*, was released and has since sold 10,000 copies.

Watt says *McDougall's Bash* will be available in the Mississauga area soon.



WATT