

Gary and Brianne Bremner confess their first date was fortuitous: Gary whisked Brianne off to Atlin, B.C., where he was contracted to photograph a wedding—she was coming along as his impromptu assistant.

Today, they run GBP Creative, a thriving photo and video business. Since the business started, in 2010, Gary and Brianne have departed from other work commitments, renovated their home to include a studio space, and filled their schedule with everything from baby portraits to government contracts.

“Photography was always a passion, so being an electrician was a Plan B anyway,” Gary says of his past career. “All of a sudden, we had two full-time jobs. We were shooting every night, every weekend, and going to work during the day.”

In 2005, Gary moved to the territory from Vancouver, B.C., and was initially inspired by the North’s incredible scenery.

“I was shooting nothing but landscapes, and it was ok, but I would go months and months without shooting a single photo,” he says. Then a friend asked him to take a headshot for her, which shifted his vision to portraiture.

“I got to interact with people, and I’m kind of a people person anyway,” Gary explains. “It went from there and kept growing and growing. People wanted us to take pictures of them and of their family.”

Born and raised in Whitehorse, Brianne, a self-proclaimed “science nerd,” says she had little to no background in photography, but brought knowledge from her time with government communications and marketing.

Gary and Brianne credit their burgeoning business to the supportive network of people in the Yukon who enabled them to evolve into editorial, commercial, and business work.

Judging by the whiteboards littered with notes and dates hanging in their home studio, GBP Creative is juggling a full schedule that now includes video production. And while the contract list is long, the duo says it’s the subject matter that fulfills them.

“In the midst of the craziness of owning your own business, we’ll sit down and talk about how we have done the most awesome things for work. The people you meet always have a story that you don’t really know they have,” Brianne says. “Pictures can be an intimidating thing, so you have to get to know someone to make them feel comfortable to get those shots. You end up chatting with them and hearing about their life.”

That is the inspiration behind this GBP Creative photo essay—people have stories to tell. Gary and Brianne feel that Whitehorse residents especially have incredible stories to share. This portrait series casts their lens on some of the people who bring this community to life and make the territory such a remarkable place.

Stories TO TELL

Inspirational Yukon people

Photos and captions by GBP Creative
Foreword by Tara McCarthy



DAKHKÁ KHWÁAN DANCERS: WOLF LADY AND RAVEN

“Never before has Brianne wanted to bust onto a stage and be part of something as when we’ve seen the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers perform. If you haven’t seen them yet, find out where they’re performing next and mark it in your calendar. The Whitehorse-based Tlingit group performs traditional drumming songs in stunning regalia, and they are extremely impressive. Their enthusiasm for sharing their culture is infectious. They are 25–30 members strong, and if Brianne can swing it, it’ll be 31 soon.”

VAL PIKE

"After 37 years working in health care, Val Pike is retiring, and even though she deserves to put her feet up, we know she won't be slowing down. Val has been a huge part of both Run for Mom and Mardi Bras, which are breast-cancer and breast-health-awareness campaigns that raise funds for Yukon women. Through the years she's played a major role in changing the stigmas about women's health through various events, educational campaigns, and fundraisers. Val has helped form a community that cares and isn't afraid to speak up. Go Val!"

**GARBAGE TRUCK SANTA
A.K.A. WAYNE HENDERSON**

"One of Brianne's favourite memories growing up in Whitehorse was hearing a deep, bellowing honk outside her window. That sound meant one thing: Christmas is only days away because Garbage Truck Santa is back! Wayne has been volunteering for the past 21 years, visiting local schools, daycares, seniors' homes, and a variety of local businesses to deliver candy canes and huge smiles from his giant, white garbage truck covered in Christmas lights. Garbage Truck Santa has become a Yukon staple every holiday season through the generous sponsorship of local businesses and hours of Wayne's time—he takes personal holiday leave to do it and schedules all the visits himself."



From left to right:

KATE WHITE

"Every time we walk into Whitehorse Connects—a local event offering free services and support to the Yukon's vulnerable populations—we hear a voice ring out: 'Are you ready for the best day of the year?' You can hear the smile in her voice because Kate White's energy and positivity are infectious. One day she's whipping up a Kanye West-themed cake (Kate is a Red Seal certified baker) and the next she's out ripping up the mountain-bike trails as an instructor. The weekend after that, she'll probably be performing a marriage ceremony. (Kate is a wedding commissioner and donates all fees to the Whitehorse Food Bank.) This woman is unstoppable."

STEPHANIE DIXON

"You'd never know that Stephanie is one of the most decorated Paralympic athletes in Canadian history when you first meet her. She's the type of person who is more interested in learning about you than talking about herself. Then, she'll invite you out skiing or ice climbing, and you'll struggle to keep up with her because she's so strong. Every story she has is inspiring, hilarious, or heartwarming. Not only is she still heavily involved in Paralympic sports, but she also works as an advocate for disability rights and self-acceptance."

DARRYL TAIT

"Darryl Tait has the best Instagram feed out there. (Look him up: @d_rail.) His love of all things adrenaline-inducing is unreal, and he's been riding sleds, dirt bikes, snowboards, and skateboards since he was four years old. In October 2009, he was paralyzed after a snowmobiling accident, but he hasn't let his injury slow him down. Darryl is kind, funny, and always doing something cool, like adaptive sit skiing, snowmobiling, mountain biking, and surfing. To top it all off, he's now learning the welding trade so he can make adaptive equipment to help others be more adventurous, too."





LEONARD GORDON SR.

“Whether it’s +20° C or –50° C, when you drive by Elijah Smith Elementary School on a school day, you will see 78-year-old Leonard working at the crosswalk. If you smile and wave frantically, he will smile and wave back, all the while keeping his eyes on that crosswalk because he’s got a job to do. In 2008, Leonard started his crossing-guard duties because he felt the kids needed a reliable person to keep them safe, and he hasn’t missed a school day since. He was awarded Canada’s Favourite Crossing Guard last year and received a plaque from the Whitehorse RCMP for helping keep our community safe.”



MYRNA KINGSCOTE

"Only in the Yukon will you find someone like Myrna, who can outfit up to 500 people in gold-rush-era clothes out of her basement. For the past 33 years, she's been renting out costumes ranging from tuxes and top hats to ball gowns that make anyone feel like they're straight out of 1898. For some of the best stories about the early days of the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous Festival, talk to Myrna and her husband, Jack. They've been a huge part of the festival for years, organizing after-parties in the past for Air Force pilots that featured homemade perogies. That's our kind of party!" **Y**