

contracting side of the business. However, it also gave a boost to sales and appliance servicing. With more electricity in the area more people wanted appliances and with the old "tube-type" radios and televisions there was always a lot of repair business.

The continuing electrification of the area, and general increase in affluence, also brought an increase in the number of refrigerators in service. Tommy once again expanded the business by qualifying as a air conditioning and refrigeration technician.

The building housing the business (built sometime around 1913) was the former site of the Athabasca Pharmacy which was owned by Fred Mills. Mills sold the building to Tommy and Helen and constructed a new and larger drug store on the lot just to the North (that building is now occupied by Granny's Pantry Bulk Foods). Soon after the purchase, the McLeans started modifying the building. With Steve Kaspersky acting as the general contractor, the barbershop which was operated by Steve Wasel was removed, large display windows were installed, and the door was moved to the south side to make a better entrance to the store. The back of the store was redeveloped many times over the years as the business grew - eventually ending up with two levels for storage and appliance servicing.

In the 1950s the name of the business was changed to McLean's Electric, but by the early 1960s the business had expanded to include giftware, china, and jewelry so the name was once again changed to McLean's Electric and Jewelry. When the business was incorporated the name was finally changed to McLean's (Athabasca) Ltd. "McLean's" still occupies the building purchased by Tommy and Helen.

Corinne and Wayne

Tommy and Helen had two children: Helen Corinne (Cori) McLean was born on December 28, 1943 and Wayne Thomas Roy McLean followed four years later on October 28, 1947. Both children obtained their early schooling in Athabasca.

Upon graduation, Corinne took her nurses training at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. After receiving her diploma as a Registered Nurse, Corinne continued with post-graduate courses from the University and specialized in operating room nursing. She was married to Peter Chapman a broadcaster with CFRN in Edmonton in September of 1965. Shortly thereafter Corinne and Peter moved to Toronto. She obtained work at the Toronto Western Hospital and was on the medical team that performed Canada's first heart transplant. Today Corinne has three children and is still in the medical field. She is currently the Administrative Director in Program management at the Credit Valley Hospital in Mississauga, Ontario.

Wayne worked weekends and summers for the business helping his uncle Herman on various wiring projects and the installation of TV antennas in the area. After graduation from high school he enrolled at the University of Alberta but left after one year to attend the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in Edmonton in a course leading to a Diploma in Architectural Technology. After graduation from N.A.I.T. Wayne returned to the U of A to take a Bachelors of Commerce and then, in 1973, he graduated with a Masters of Business Administration.

Wayne stayed at the University of Alberta until 1975 teaching courses in the Faculty of Business Administration and Commerce and operating a market research firm with a colleague. He left the U of A to work for Alberta Government Telephones in their Market Research, Planning, and Development Department. In 1980 he joined QCTV - Ed Polanski's Edmonton-based cable television company. That job eventually led him to Ottawa as the first Director of Planning for the Canadian Cable Television Association. Today Wayne lives in the Vancouver suburb of Delta with his wife Holly and their two young sons Phoenix and Seaton. Wayne continues his involvement in cable television and is currently the Executive Director of the BC/Yukon Region of the Canadian Cable Television Association.

Herman Leicht

On January 17, 1949, Herman Leicht (Helen's youngest brother) came to Athabasca on a winter hiatus from his job as a cat skinner clearing land in the Wandering River area. The plan went awry however, he began working for Tommy and Helen in Radio Electric Service - and he never left.

Herman was born on April 16, 1932 in Hay lakes - where he took his early schooling. He proved to be a hard worker as a boy but also showed a bit of entrepreneurial flair. He happened to be the only boy in town with a bicycle and to share his treasure he would treat his friends to a ride - for ten cents a trip. His friends were standing in line - and Herman had his first taste of making some money.

Herman was a perfect match for Helen and Tommy's business. Shortly after he arrived in Athabasca he enrolled in the Electrical Apprenticeship Program. He took courses at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Calgary and worked in the business between school sessions. He was soon qualified as a Journeyman Electrician. Tommy and Herman wired the new Athabasca hospital in 1952 and Herman eventually took over management of the electrical contracting part of the business.

He followed Tommy by studying radio and was awarded a Diploma as a Radio Technician from S.A.I.T. He also received a license as a Projectionist and filled in for the regular projectionist at Richard Hall's theatre - Jim Holroyd.

In 1960, Herman married Doreen Wilkinson, a nurse who was in training with Richard and Hazel Hall's daughter Sharon. They had two children: Kevin, born on January 6, 1963; and, Gail born on August 18, 1965.

Herman and Doreen became partners with Helen and Tommy in 1964 and became full owners in 1970. Under their direction the business continued to expand. Electrical contracting was extended to more industrial clients and more electricians were hired. Appliance servicing also expanded and Herman hired on staff to help in this area. The giftware and sales side of the business was also enlarged when Herman added an engraving service and took on a Radio Shack franchise to supply radios and other assorted electronic equipment and components.

In 1981, Herman and Doreen sold the business to Philip Brown, an electrician who had been working in the business.