

Newsletter268

## Keith's Corner/McGill News

June 28, 2024

### Reverb-Re-building

A reverb is made of fire brick and even though it can withstand very high temperatures, it still needs to be re-built after many years of operation.

The waste heat boiler tubes also need to be replaced.

This re-building is a long drawn out process. It takes a lot of time, just to cool things down so workers can get inside and start cleaning and removing old bricks and slag.

There is a second reverb that is used while the other one is being re-built.

The one time I was “fortunate” and “lucky” to work in the reverb area, was when #2 reverb was being re-built.

It had been cooling for some time and now we were the first ones to work inside. It was miserable to say the least. Because the slag floor was still very hot, we wore wooden sandals tied to the bottoms of our boots. We went in through a small hole, one at a time. We were allowed to stay inside for a very short time and then had to get out. It was stifling hot.

Since the floor was still too hot to jackhammer, we worked on the side walls. You had to cradle the 110 lb. jackhammer in your left arm and use the right hand to push the handle. If you held it just right, the cold exhaust air would cool your face. It wasn't the cleanest air, but it was cool.

When the floor cooled enough, we had to drill blast holes with small 40 lb. rotary drills.

Then Tali Mellos would load the holes with sticks of dynamite and connect all the fuses together, into one main one. Then we had to drag a huge rubber mat over the dynamite to contain the throw rock. Tali would light the fuse after we were

all out. The blast would fracture the slag and allow jackhammers to work properly.

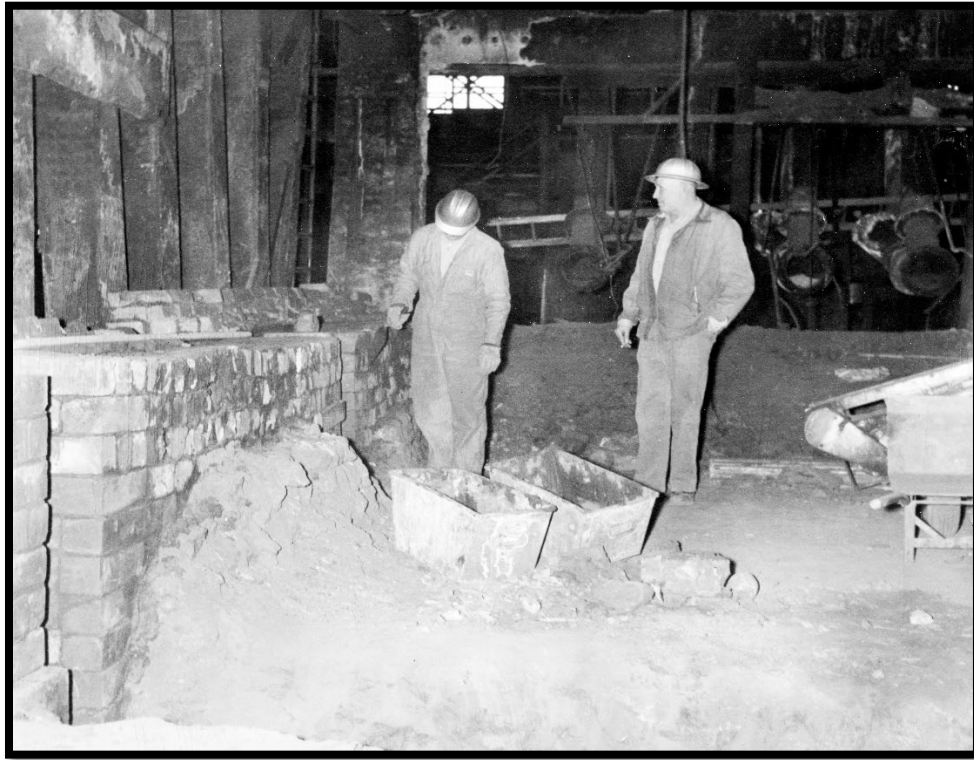


The worker is not identified in either photo.

You can see the build-up of the slag on the floor. This can interfere with the 'tapping' of the reverb to drain off slag/copper.



After the slag and other debris were cleaned up and out of the way, the bricklayers went to work.



The brick mason is Gene Peterson and the Foreman is Jim Elliott.

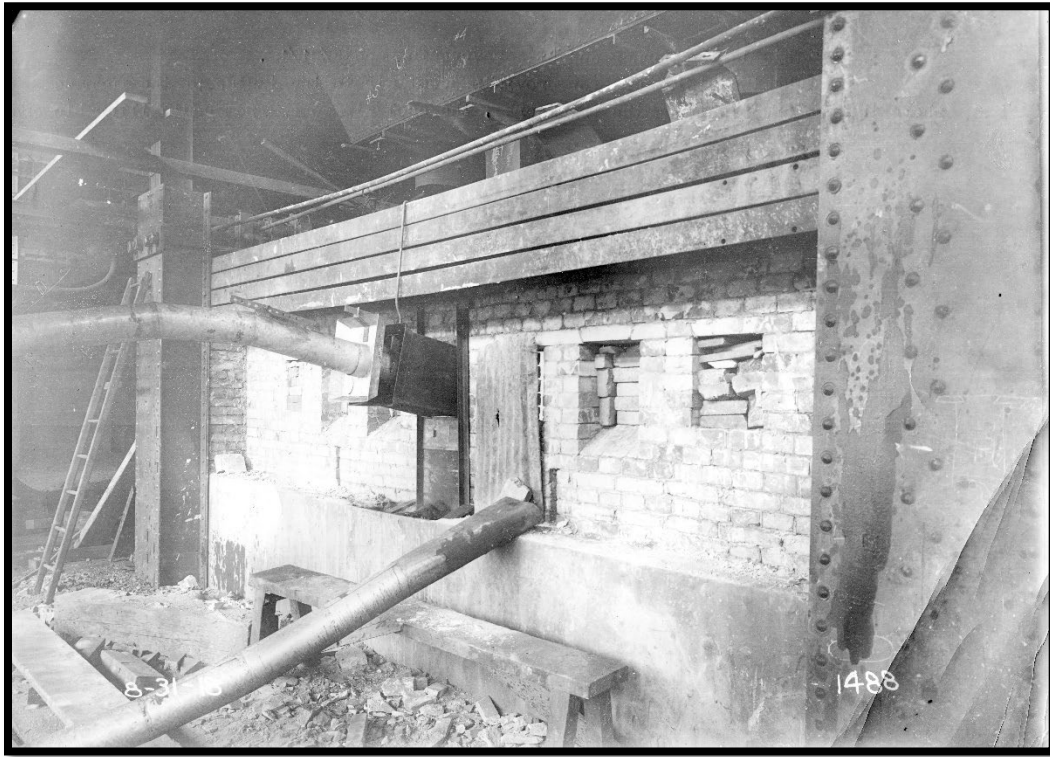
It is quite an art to build a reverb furnace. There many different kinds of brick used and they have to be place just right. There are intentional spaces in critical areas to allow for the bricks to expand and tighten in a particular manner.

Some of the brick masons that I knew were, Andy Anderson, 'Gummy' Papez, Jim Elliott, Pete Poulos, to name a few. I can't forget Aristotle 'Zip' Assuras. He drove the forklift to deliver bricks to the brick masons. I remember when he drove the forklift down to the McGill Club one day to get a cold beer. How he didn't get fired was a mystery.

## McGill News

The Drugstore is sporting a new coat of paint on the outside walls.

## Old Photo



This is the end of the reverb where the coal dust is blown in through the square holes. These pipes are blowing in cool air at this time to make it more comfortable for the workers that are inside cleaning out the slag. This photo was taken on August 31, 1918