



# Yukon Prospectors' Association

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## JAKE HUNDERE AND PETE RITCO Brief Prepared by Jane Gaffin

Jake Hundere and Pete Ritco were both British Columbia prospectors who came north as employees of the Yukon-based Frances River Syndicate. For many years, Hundere prospected for his friend, Dr. Aaro Aho, the co-discoverer of the Faro mine, who created a string of mineral exploration companies and syndicates during his career as a geological engineer.

On Hundere's and Ritco's first week-long field trip in 1962, they found galena showings on surface in the Watson Lake mining district. The mineral discovery glittered with such sparkle, they named the hill "Jewelbox".

The find encouraged Frances River Syndicate to undertake an extensive staking program. The first claims were staked in July 1962.

Over the next 20 years, a number of Dr. Aho's companies conducted extensive trenching, geochemical, geophysical, electromagnetic and legal surveys.

A feasibility study recommended a small open-pit operation and a 250-ton-a-day mill. Between 1979 and 1982, 72 holes were drilled.

In 1984, Canamax purchased the property outright, remapped, and conducted more geochemical sampling. Canamax staked more claims. Over the next three years, Canamax identified more mineralized zones. By the end of 1988, more claims were added, and the mineral inventory had increased to some five million tons.

In 1989, Mt. Hundere Joint Venture purchased the property and continued advanced exploration on the Jewelbox Hill and North Hill reserves.

The Mt. Hundere Joint Venture was owned 80 percent by Curragh Resources, the company mining the Faro, and 20 percent by Hillsborough Limited. Both companies had Toronto head offices and jointly operated the Mt. Hundere mine for a brief period of time, starting in the spring of 1991.

The small lead-zinc-silver deposit at Mt. Hundere, located 32 miles (54 km) north of the highway community of Watson Lake, was very high-grade material. It was mined mainly for the purpose of mixing with and increasing the grade of slumping Faro ore.

The mine was called the Sa Dena Hes.

