



Central Alberta Historical Society Newsletter

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Historical Society
Newsletter

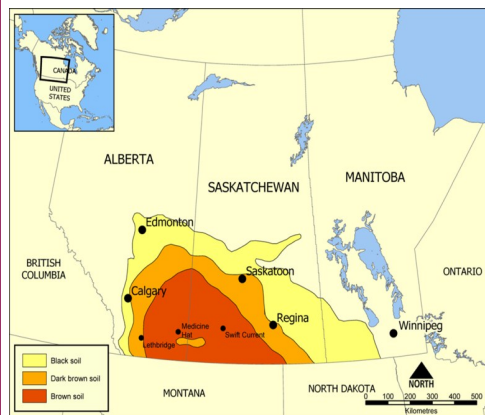
Spring
2011

Layout &
Edited by
Shirley Dye

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Living in the Triangle A Central Alberta Historical Society Tour June 7, 8, 9 and 10, 2011



When Captain John Palliser travelled the West in 1857 appraising its suitability for settlement, he marked out a huge area as unsuitable for civilized habitation. The arid, treeless area known as the “Palliser Triangle” should never be settled, he said. But in the decades that followed it WAS settled and, while it suffered greatly in drought and dustbowl years, it also produced bumper crops and became famous for its dryland wheat producing capability. How did that happen?



The story of the Triangle, some would say, is the story of Western Canada writ large: rugged homesteaders, ethnic and religious bloc settlements, irrigation, innovations in farming methods, railways, law and order and the Mounted Police, mega ranches, ambitious (and sometimes unrealistic) farm settlement schemes, and much more.

For details on this exciting tour and how you can take part, turn to page 3

Note from our President



Hello all!

It may be frosty out, but the quality of the sunshine is warming to the soul, always a good sign at this time of year.

I feel as if there is a lot happening for the CAHS right now, and it is all good! We've finally joined facebook, which is a very visible and fun way to publicize our events as well as keep linked to other like organizations,

and advise all of you of events related to our work and speakers that might be of interest to members and others. This is a really good way for members to introduce others to the Society, and for the public to find out what we do.

One does not have personally be 'on' facebook in order to view the page, and anyone can see it at www.facebook.ca/ca.history. This is a precursor to our webpage, which we are currently developing, and hope to launch by the beginning of the fall season.

The Red Deer 2013 Centennial Committee has begun working with a design company on a logo and formatting of a mission and slogan for the centennial. Watch for updates on facebook. There will be times when we will be seeking input and this is such a good forum to work through.

The CAHS publications committee is in the process of working on a book tentatively titled "A Blackfoot Geography" which will be an exciting contribution to academic libraries. It is a challenging work, as it was originally written in French, and the maps are the old Palliser maps, requiring considerable updating so the modern reader will have current reference points for the places named in the book. Challenging, but very rewarding. Bill MacKay and Bill Baergen have both put many, many hours into this manuscript.

Our tour committee, consisting of Don Hepburn and Bill MacKay have designed a tour inside the Palliser triangle. There will be a wide variety of historical investigation which will cover aspects of cultural settlement and archaeological interest, aboriginal tradition, museums, interpretive sites, and agricultural history. More information can be found on our facebook page.

I was determined to keep this note short, so rather than elaborate, I will just say keep an eye on facebook!

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Sheila Bannerman, President

CAHS Board 2009—2010

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Visit our website

www.albertahistory.org Link CAHS

Spring Programs

March 15

Denise Herr and Edith Fitch

Canadian University College: The Hilltop Story

April 20

Don Hepburn

Remember The Children

The Red Deer Indian Industrial School

May 18

Lawrie Knight Steinbach

Helen Belyea, an Alberta Maverick

All programs start at 7:00 pm in the Public Library

There is no fee at the door

Everyone is welcome, come and bring a friend.

June 7,8,9 &10: "Living in the Triangle" Tour

Living in the Triangle

On this tour, (our fifteenth) travelling by highway motor coach and staying in comfortable hotels, we'll visit sites that will help tell the story of "Living in the Triangle".

- Day One will feature a visit to Blackfoot Crossing and the new and stunning interpretive centre of the Siksika people, followed by an investigation of the role of irrigation in farming the dry land. The first night will be spent in Swift Current, situated at the junction with the old Battleford Trail.
- On Day Two we'll meander south of Highway 1 from Swift Current to Regina, visiting the French settlement of Gravelbourg with its magnificent cathedral. Wood Museum Post near where Sitting Bull and his Sioux followers took refuge after the Battle of the Little Big Horn and Willow Bunch, begun in 1870 by Metis settlers and the home of ranchers and rustlers in days gone by.
- On Day Three we'll visit the famous Round Barn on the old Bell Model Farm near Indian Head and the recently revised RCMP Museum before heading for Saskatoon, with a stop along the way at the eco-village at Craik. To end the day we are planning a special evening at Wanusekewin, sacred site and interpretive centre of the Plains Cree people.
- Day Four; We'll stop at a century-old sod house and possibly a Hutterite colony before leaving Saskatchewan, and then we will make the long drive home through the heart of Alberta's part of the Triangle, we'll pick by-ways that will sample the flavor of the grasslands.

All this and more for the price of \$590 per person (based on double occupancy) which covers the costs of transportation, all site admissions, accommodations and nearly all meals. The deadline for registration is May 2, 2011. A minimum of 30 passengers is required for the tour.

Triangle Agreement form, Registration form, waivers, are on the email with this newsletter as an attachments. You may fill out the forms before May 2/11 and send them along with your cheque to: Central Alberta Historical Society, 4525 - 47A Ave, Red Deer AB, T4N 6Z6 Attn: Don Hepburn

You may also pick up forms at the Museum or the Golden Circle.

For more information:

Don Hepburn, 403-342-2245 dhepburn@telus.net

Bill MacKay, 403-227-3563 bmackay@telusplanet.net

An Excerpt from
Ted Meeres book

The Homestead That Nurtured a City

CHAPTER 3 PAGE 35
THE PRE-REBELLION YEARS

On August ,1884, the G.C. King & Co. store at the Crossing was purchased by Rev. Leonard Gaetz., who placed it in charge of his son Raymond L. Gaetz.

The first and apparently only advertisement inserted in the Calgary Herald relative to the business under the new ownership was as follows

IF U WANT

A-xes, Alarm Clocks
B-iscuits, Bacon or Blankets
C-anned Goods, Crockery or Coal Oil
D-ry Goods, Drugs or Draw Knives
E-arthware, Envelopes or earrings
F-ruit, Fancy Goods or Fiddles
G-roceries, Gingham or Gloves
H-andaws, Hosiery or Handkerchiefs
I-ndian Sashes, Ink or India Rubber
J-ellies, Jams or Jumpers
K-nobs, Knives or Knitting Needles
L-ocks, Latches or Looking Glasses
M-ackeerel, Mixed Paints or Matches
N-ails, needles or neckties
O-vercoats, Oilcloth or Oysters
P-ants, Pickles or Pocket Knives
Q-uilts, Quinine or Quince
R-opes, Ribbons or Razors
S-hirts, Suspenders or Sardines
T-ea, Tobacco or Traps
U-lsters or Underwear
V-egetable Soup or Vermicelli
W-ashtubs or Wire
Y-ellow Chrome or
Z-ero

You can find them and 100 other articles at the store of the undersigned.

Leo Gaetz
Red Deer

The Central Alberta Historical Society is working on getting Meeres book digitalized and put on the internet for everyone to read.

2010 Volunteer Medallion: Dr. Bill Baergen

Most of you will know that the Historical Society of Alberta has several ways of recognizing the outstanding efforts of volunteers. Each spring at the AGM and conference, two provincial awards are given. The “Annual Award” is presented to an **individual** who has given outstanding service over a period of years, and the “Award of Merit” is given to an **organization** that has made a major contribution to the preservation or promotion of our history and heritage. Also, in many years, an honorary life membership is given to some person who has rendered extraordinary service to the Society.



Bill Baergen and Sheila Bannerman

In addition to these awards, each chapter each year awards one Volunteer Service Medallion to someone whose service as a volunteer deserves special recognition. It is my privilege and pleasure to make that award at this time.

This year's recipient is Dr. Bill Baergen. Bill has been a member of the Central Alberta Chapter since its inception in 1995. In fact, he was the guest speaker at the inaugural meeting, speaking about the Ku Klux Klan in Central Alberta, the subject of a manuscript that he was preparing at the time. He became a member of the Board of Directors of the Chapter in 1997, and has been a member ever since.

Dr. Baergen's contributions to the study of the history of Alberta have been wide ranging. In 1967 he completed a master's thesis titled “The Fur Trade at Lesser Slave Lake”. In 2000 CAHS published his major work, *The Ku Klux Klan in Central Alberta*, a book which has been widely used as a resource for high school students studying racial and religious intolerance.

Bill also brings history to life. Many of you will have seen his portrayal of Louis Riel making his final address to the jury during his trial for treason in 1885, a performance which Bill has delivered on over 75 occasions around the province. If you have had the privilege of being present for one of these performances, you will know that he brings great passion and conviction to the role.

More recently, Bill compiled and in 2005 published his huge work, *Pioneering with a Piece of Chalk: The One-Room Country Schools of Alberta 1885-1982* which provides information about every one-room school ever registered in the province. This work has just recently been digitized and is freely available to everyone online. But our award is not just for these activities. It is also for his contribution to the Historical Society of Alberta and in particular to the Central Alberta Chapter.

As I mentioned earlier, Bill became a member of the Chapter's Board of Directors in 1997 and has served on it ever since. He served as Chapter President from 1999 to 2002 and, as such, was also Chapter representative on the Society's Provincial Council. While he has not really been a member of the Bus Tour Committee, he has been a valued participant in a number of the tours. His ready wit, some would say his bizarre sense of humour, has brightened the day for many a tour participant.

Bill has been particularly active on the Publications Committee, serving as chairman for several years. In a sense he was the initiator of the committee. Early in the Chapter's history, Bill had a manuscript that he wanted to publish, and the Publications Committee really was formed to undertake that project. *The Ku Klux Klan in Central Alberta* was our first publication. During his chairmanship and under his guidance, the Committee's terms of reference were developed and approved, and he has played a key role in our subsequent publications, particularly *West of the Blindman* and *Settlement Tales of West Central Alberta*.

At the present time Dr. Baergen is playing an important province-wide role as Chairman of the Historical Society of Alberta, and still continues to be a valued member of our own Board of Directors. It is with great pleasure that we award him this year's Volunteer Service Medallion.

Submitted by Sheila Bannerman

December Revisited.

Our Christmas party was a great success, with almost all tables full – about 48 attendees.

Tables were required to tally their total years of membership in the CAHS and although I didn't keep track of all, one table was the clear winner with 106 years!! Thanks to all who have been supporters, both new and long-term.

We enjoyed a quartet of singers from the Lindsay Thurber Jazz Choir, who circulated during dinner and serenaded each table with a carol or seasonal song.

After dinner, we listened to readings from three historical works, competently read by volunteers Janet Walter and Torben Andersen. Thanks to both of you!

Our carol sing was accompanied on the piano by Barb Brown, who kept us in tune and in time in spite of not being able to see the projected words, which I didn't know until too late. Kudos to Barb for a terrific sense of humour, and many thanks from all of us.

For those of you who particularly liked the imagery in the off-beat Canadian Twelve Days of Christmas, the book is as follows:

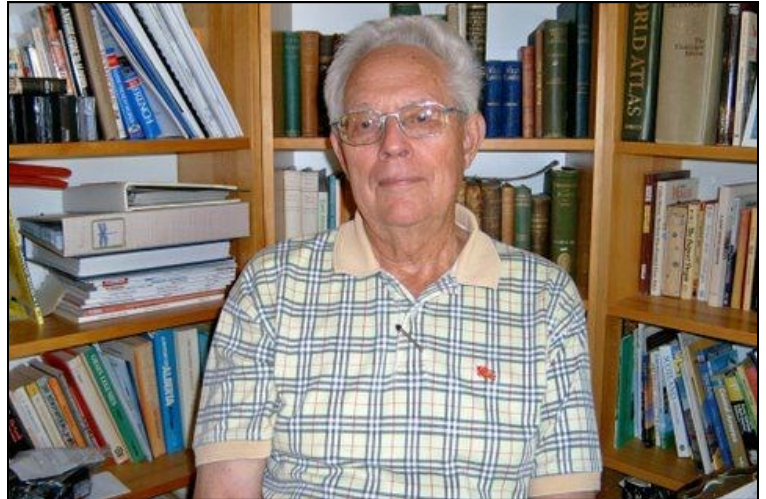
A Porcupine in a Pine Tree

A Canadian 12 Days of Christmas

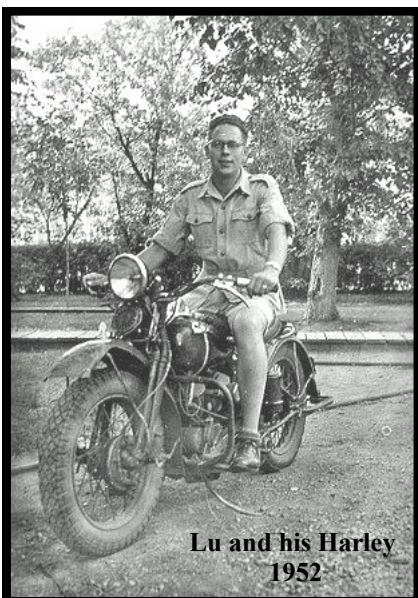


Biography for Dr L. Piening

Lu (Ludwig) was born in Germany on a family farm that had been in the family for over 500 years. Political and economic instability in the late 1920s and my father's spirit for adventure were probably the reasons why my parents emigrated, Canada being their first choice. I was two when we arrived in Alberta where my parents bought a farm south east of Calgary. They arrived just as the depression and the dry years were starting. I began school in a one-room country school, not knowing English, and was the only one in my grade. My teacher at the time was impatient and I frequently got strapped and my ears pulled. Shortly after she was fired. My transport was a Shetland pony as we lived 2 miles from school. The pony and I were not psychologically suited to one another and I was constantly bucked off.



My father, an ardent horseman, decided a larger horse would be more suitable. The only problem was that I now had farther to fall; and so it appeared horses and I were not compatible. After 4 years in the country school, my mother took my sister and me back to Germany for a year. After our return from Germany I attended the four-roomed Carseland High School, graduating in 1947. During my school years I became very much acquainted with all aspects of farm work on a mixed farm. Probably the least desirable job was milking cows at 6 am every morning and evening. I do believe that farm work provided me an excellent foundation for my entry into adulthood and the academic training to follow. I entered the University of Alberta in 1947 in the faculty of Agriculture, graduating in 1951 specializing in Plant Pathology. Having inherited my father's spirit for adventure, I applied and was accepted by the British Colonial Service. Further training consisted of one year as a postgraduate student at St Johns College in Cambridge, earning a diploma in Agricultural Sciences and one year in tropical agriculture at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad. Following my training I was assigned as a Plant Pathologist to the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1954. Before proceeding to West Africa, I came home to marry my professor's secretary, Joan. We took a slow freighter from New Orleans taking 6 weeks to arrive in the Gold Coast and then took the train inland to Kumasi. I established a Plant Pathology laboratory from scratch and Joan had to learn how to handle servants to run the house. This was a challenge for Joan; being married a few months and never having run a household. Our eldest son was born in Ghana in 1956. My job was to investigate and develop controls for diseases of peasant food crops, a job



Lu and his Harley
1952

that took me all over the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast was the first British colony to achieve independence in 1957 and I felt that my future would be affected by the "africanization" of the civil service and also the colonial empire was rapidly becoming like a "dodo bird". We returned to the University of Alberta in 1958 to continue my studies. Two more children arrived during this time, a son and a daughter and I earned my MSc. In 1960 I joined the Agriculture Canada Plant Pathology laboratory in Edmonton. It soon became apparent that further training was essential to continue in my field so I enrolled in the Plant Pathology program at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, graduating with a PhD in 64. The two years at NC State were probably the most stimulating and exciting years because of a great variety of professors and a stimulating student body from all over the world. Following graduation we returned to the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Lacombe where I established a Plant Pathology laboratory and began research into cereal diseases.

Continued on page 7

Lu's Bio continued

It was a dream job, doing interesting research, doing extension work with farmers and liaising with the agricultural industry. My research was primarily in cereal leaf and root diseases and winter survival of winter cereals. In 1984 I became section head of the Plant and Soils Section and so became familiar with administering research. I was appointed the acting director of the Lacombe Research Centre from 1989 to 1990, which was primarily the administration of personnel, working with industry and the farming public.

While with Agriculture Canada, I was seconded in 1973 - 1975 to a University of Manitoba wheat project in Njoro, Kenya as a plant pathologist where I and my family of three teen-agers spent two very happy years. Our children attended a private school in Nairobi and we were located at Nakuru, upland in the rift valley. My primary focus in Kenya was to help develop rust resistance in wheat, which was widely grown in the highlands. In 1990- 1992 I was again seconded to an Agriculture Canada project in Tanzania at Arusha where my job was to provide disease resistance technology into the local cereal program on some large government wheat farms. Conditions on these farms were not unlike those on the Canadian prairies. I retired from Agriculture Canada in 1992 after two delightful years in Tanzania and we returned to our home in Lacombe. With all the experience I had gained over the years, I felt that I should continue in my field and was able to offer my services to CESO (Canadian Executive Services Organization) that is made up of professional volunteers in all professions. CESO offers volunteers to clients in the under developed world to assist in projects to enhance food production, improve health, improve infrastructure, tourism, etc. My first posting was to Honduras to set up a computer based system of identifying, cataloguing and advising farmers on disease problems in their crops. Since I had only recently become familiar with computers, I had to engage in a steep learning curve to keep ahead of the staff at the agriculture station. I found that in most cases I learned more than what I probably taught in all of my CESO postings. Subsequent postings were, six in China, a fascinating country and peoples, to an orchid farm in the Philippines, and probably the most interesting and most difficult was to Cobija, Bolivia, located on a tributary of the Amazon river on the border with Brazil. I advised my client on how to minimize moulds in Brazil nuts collected in the wild. My wife and I spent three months in a very remote and isolated town that was accessible only by plane during the wet season. I made many trips into the raw jungle to meet with collectors. I developed a protocol suggesting a small research laboratory to study ways to collect and store the nuts to prevent rotting which caused the nuts to be rejected by foreign markets because of the carcinogenic danger of such nuts.

Our second son became an International banker and spent his career in Hong Kong and Singapore and so Joan and I would spend a part of each winter in the Orient. About 7 years ago my wife developed Parkinson's disease, a neurological condition treatable with drugs. A year ago her condition became such that I could not provide the needed medical care and she had to enter a Continuing Care facility in Lacombe. With help of our neurologist we have been able to adjust the medication to a point where my wife can spend much time at home and still enjoy outings looking for mushrooms for the table. Mushrooming has been a hobby started 40 years ago that had opened up a new world to us in the fungus family, including obtaining antiquarian books on fungi and plants. Other interests that compete for my time include Rotary International, silver smithing, gardening, weight training and of late genealogy. Another very interesting activity of recent times has been acting as secretary for the Central Alberta Historical Society, where I have met very interesting and stimulating people. I have also gained an insight to the history of this part of Alberta.

Life as been good to Joan and me and advancing age has not yet impacted my life. Health permitting, we will continue to seek new and exciting areas of interest.



Lu and Joan Piening

North Red Deer a Century of Change

North Red Deer became a small thriving community once the C & E Rail crossed the river in 1890. The railway line was completed to Edmonton in 1891. The grade out of the valley is one of the steepest grades for a non-mountainous area. The CNR built their line into North Red Deer down through the valley along the north side of the river below the Pines in 1909, crossed the river into town with a station on 47 Ave. & Ross St. They later moved the terminal to the north side of the river.

The railroad bridge was used as a traffic bridge when the river took out the traffic bridge. The first traffic bridge was built in 1894 by the McKenzie brothers.

The land in the SE quarter of section 20 was purchased by Howard Douglas and a syndicate that included Leonard Gaetz, the site became the Village of North Red Deer.

North Red was established as a hamlet in 1894 and was mainly French speaking. It became a village February 17, 1911. The first Reeve was Walter Webb. Even in the early days north of the river was considered to be an industrial community.

The first sawmill on the north side of the river was built by George Bawtinheimer in 1904 west of the train bridge, but the river was never kind to the sawmill business, he sold the mill in 1905 to the Great West Lumber Company.

The mill developed the log raceway and mill pond, which is still visible by the Great Chief Park and BMX Track. The mill was so efficient that it was supplying electricity to run the mill and was going to supply the Village until an accident that killed the sawyer, caused by an expulsion that sent parts all the way to the North School.



Great West Lumber Mill in North Red Deer, looking east (downstream) 1913
Photo courtesy of the Red Deer and District Archives L Tippie Fonds mg-472-30.



Sunday School group in front of the old North Red Deer Village Hall, c. 1945
Photo courtesy of the Red Deer and District Archives, Margaret Lyons collection, L-549-1

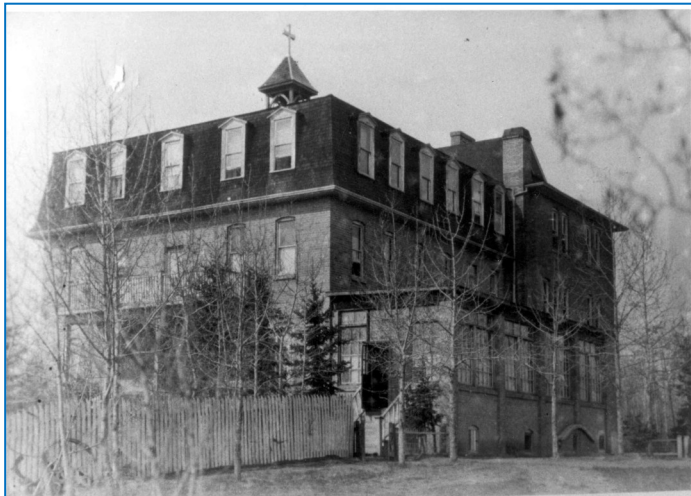
The mill took over a year to recover, then the flood of 1915 happened and then the war. The mill closed in 1916. It was reopened by the Card family in the 1930's and operated with a water wheel. The mill was destroyed by a fire in 1941.

The Blue Ribbon store was in operation in 1905 where the Tinchebray Priests first held church services. The store was owned by Mr. Martin then purchased by Charlie Snell and Gaetz, then Percy Jarvis who also owned a Automotive Shop across the street. The store was open until 1947 when the new traffic bridge and highway 2 opened a block east where it stands today. The old C & E highway had gone right past the store. The bridge abutment is still there.

The Freytag Tannery was built on the Riverside Meadows Park (57 St. & Kerry Wood Dr.) site in 1911, the specialty was horse & cow hides, that were made into variety of clothing & blankets. The Tannery closed in 1914 when Mr. Freytag was charged with sedition.

The Valley Ranch (Red Deer Golf & Country Club) was first homesteaded by Walter & Alfred Reade in 1885, then sold to George and Francis Wilkins. Francis Wilkins was the first Red Deer resident to be elected to the territorial government in 1891 and the Red Deer town council in 1901.

The Priests of Tinchebray, in 1908 established a mission and convent for the Daughters of Wisdom and St. Mary's Apostolic College. The Convent became the catholic school and boarding school for many families outside and inside the community that wanted their children to have an education. The first public school on the North side of the river was built in 1911 and opened in 1912, the water well on the site served the community until 1949. A new school was built on the same property in 1954. The North School has been restored and used as an alternative High School. It will be 100 years old in 2012.



St. Joseph Convent
Photo courtesy of the Red Deer and District Archives - Daughters of Wisdom collection

Prominent families built large brick homes from the Piper Brick yard on the brow of McGregor Hill (Highland Green) & Michiel Hill (Oriole Park)

Many of the early men in North Red Deer were pioneers in their business, Willard Trimble built signs, fixed radios and flew a plane, and built a Dance Hall on 54 Ave. during the war. He had his own band.

The first big change to the community came with the amalgamation with the City of Red Deer, January of 1948, now the residents could have sewer and water, no more need for the honey wagon.

Alec & Keith Sim started the first weekly auction market outside of the big cities. The auction mart was on the Village Mall site and brought many people to the City.

Mr. J. T. Harding establish 2 acres next to the rail line on 60 Ave that were filled with peonies & shrubs that are now part of the Devonian Gardens.

Hannigan's was the first fast food drive thru in Red Deer, next to the river was owned by Ray Hannigan. He encouraged Tim Horton to become involved in fast food outlets. Bus service owned by Dan Donaghy and sold to Gordon Sorensen. The Bryant mink farm next to the Pines.

Rio Vista Garage owned by Louis & Audrey Janko who also developed Mustang Acres.

The development of Parkland Mall in 1972, changed the way people shop. Some of the other businesses in North Red Deer: Sash & Door, Tire Shop, Meat Market, Poultry Breeding, Welding Shop, auto repair, trucking, auto wreckers, taxi, Harpers Metals, these are only a few of the many businesses that operated in North Red Deer. Valley Park Manor nursing home opened in 1970.

There were a few recreational places - Curl a Roc, Crossroads Race Track, skating rinks, Women's Institute, Moose Hall, the Dawe Center. The Cronquist House was moved across the river March 26, 1976. The 2-11 Drive-In started showing movies in 1949.

Another big change for the Village area was the name change to Riverside Meadows in 2000, this happened through an Area Redevelopment Plan.

People living and working in North Red Deer have come from a varied social economic background and this is still the same today. Changes to the community have been significant over the years and will continue for many more.



Rio Vista Motors 1930.TIF

OUR PRECIOUS HERITAGE

REMEMBER

You have to be a certain age to appreciate this. I can hear my mother now

THE BASIC RULES FOR CLOTHES LINES:

(If you don't know what clothes lines are, better skip this)

- 1 You had to wash the clothes line before hanging any clothes - walk the entire length of each line with a damp cloth around the lines.
- 2 You had to hang the clothes in a certain order, and always hang "whites" with "whites" and hang them first.
- 3 You never hung a shirt by its shoulders - always by the tail! What would the neighbours think?
- 4 Wash day on a Monday! Never hang clothes at weeks end, or Sunday, for Heavens sake!
- 5 Hang sheets and towels on the outside lines so you could hide your "unmentionables" in the middle (perverts and busybodies, y'know)
- 6 It didn't matter if it was sub-zero weather clothes could "freeze dry."
- 7 Always gather the clothes pins taking down the dry clothes! Pins left on the line was "tacky!"
- 8 If you were efficient, you would line the clothes up so each item did not need two pins, but shared one of the pins with the next washed item.
- 9 Clothes off the line before dinner time, folded in the clothes basket, and ready to be ironed.
- 10 **IRONED!!** Well, that's a whole other story!

A POEM

A clothes line was a news forecast
To neighbours passing by,
There was no secrets you could keep
When clothes were hung to dry.

It also was a friendly link
For neighbours always knew
If company had stopped on by
To spend a night or two.

For then you would see the "fancy sheets"
And towels upon the line;
You'd see the "company table cloths"
With intricate designs.

The line announced a baby's birth
From folks who lived inside -
As brand new infants clothes were hung,
So carefully with pride.

The ages of the children could
So readily be known
By watching the sizes change,
You'd know how much they had grown!

It also told when illness struck,
As extra sheets were hung;
Then nightclothes and bathrobes too,
Haphazardly were strung.

It also said, "Gone on vacation now"
When lines hung limp and bare.
It told, "We're back!" when full lines sagged
With not an inch to spare.

New folks in town were scorned upon
If wash was dingy and gray.
As neighbours carefully raised their brows
And looked the other way. . . .

But clothes lines now are of the past,
For dryers make work much less.
Now what goes on inside a home
Is anybody's guess!