



Central Alberta Historical Society Newsletter

Central Alberta
Historical Society
Newsletter

Summer
2011

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The Artist Behind Alberta's Coat of Arms

One look at Alberta's crest and you know it is Alberta's and no one else's. What could sum up an image of the province better than this?

It's an image that has represented Alberta for many years and is part of the social fabric that defines who we, as Albertans are.

The endless sea of wheat, rolling parkland and dramatic Rocky Mountain backdrop captures every facet of Alberta's natural topography. Was it the product of some far off graphics firm or royal printing company? Not at all.

It was created by Barbara George, an Innisfail artist who painted the view she saw from her studio window in 1906.

Due to a lack of official provincial records from the period, she is not given much mention as the creator. In fact, there is more documentation available concerning the appropriateness of the image as a royal emblem than there is about George's involvement.

That Barbara George even had time to pursue her creative outlets, especially painting is amazing.

Barbara May Bernard was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1867.

In 1888 she married a young English Doctor, Henry George who one year later left for Fort Calgary to assume the position of Acting Surgeon for E Division of the



North West Mounted Police. She followed soon after.

In 1893, the Georges moved to Innisfail to set up private practice there. It was during this time that the Georges and their twelve children were able to pursue their shared interest in nature.

Dr. George was always fascinated with wild birds and started collecting

eggs gathered on his travels. Mrs. George reproduced these eggs in a sensitive series of small paintings, some of which are now in the Red Deer and District Archives collection.

The Georges became charter members of the Territorial Natural History Society in 1903.

In 1905, as the collection grew, they opened the first natural history museum in the province by building an annex onto their home. In 1908, Dr George became founder of the Alberta Naturalist Society.

Their museum soon out-grew the annex and after deciding his collection should be in a larger community, the Georges moved to Red Deer in 1907.

Their house in Innisfail is now an historic site.

**Continued on page 3
See Barbara George**



President: Sheila Bannerman

CAHS Report on Spring Programs

Wow. We've really had some interesting topics this season. Red Deer celebrates its Centennial in 2013, and it is pretty clear that both the early years, before 1913, and the years since have provided us with many and varied subjects to study and learn from. Since our last newsletter, we have welcomed presentations about Canadian University College, and about the Red Deer Industrial School, both charged with educating a particular population, each with its own particular stories.



Denise Herr Edith Fitch

CUC began as a transplanted Seventh-Day Adventist secondary school and grew into the present day degree granting Canadian University College. Denise Herr and Edith Fitch provided us with a lively presentation including many anecdotes and "inside" stories.

The Red Deer Industrial School had quite a different history. The Methodist sponsored school opened with good intentions, based on a certain point of view. While it purported to train its largely aboriginal students for a role in society, its history is one of inadequate funding, inadequate schooling, misunderstanding, sadness, and ultimately, closure.



Don Hepburn

Speaker Don Hepburn, carried us through a thoroughly researched journey of understanding and compassionate evaluation of the evolution of the school, and its impact on the children and their families. The CAHS hopes to work with Don to have his research on our website, which we hope will be up and running by the fall.

CAHS Board

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Central Alberta Historical Society ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

September 21, 2001

Agenda:

Minutes of 2010 AGM
 Financial report
 Receive committee annual reports
 Election of officers

Speaker:

The Immigrant Experience, Past & Present

Fabulous snacks

We've had a good year, I think, and those of us involved in planning are looking forward to the next one already. Here is our line-up for the 2010-2011 season:

September 21: AGM. Program – The Immigrant Experience, Past and Present. (This presentation will be enhanced by fabulous snacks!)

October 19 (or April 18): NFB film and speaker on aspects of the groundbreaking programs and history of Lindsay Thurber School.

November 16: Jewish Settlers in Central Alberta

December 14: A fabulous Ukrainian Christmas: a film, food and fun!

January 18: Don Smith, speaking on the Steinhauers, a family intensely involved in the Red Deer Industrial School story.

February 15: Film and discussion on the Beaver aircraft

March 21: Speaker from the Provincial Archives – how do we use these online resources? A walk through the website, and tips for pursuing research interests.

April 18 (or October 19) Gordon Tolton, author of *The Cowboy Cavalry: The Story of the Rocky Mountain Rangers*. “The Cowboy Cavalry tells a gritty tale, where frontier mentality mixes with gunpowder, fear, corruption and gross media sensationalizing and brings to life an often overlooked part of Canadian history” (press release).

May 16: Alberta Labour History

June: possibly a day tour exploring and celebrating the multi-cultural nature of local places of worship. We hope to finish up with a fabulous feast.

Remember, the new season begins with the **Annual General Meeting** on September 16, at 7pm, in the Snell Auditorium at the Red Deer Public Library Downtown Branch.

Have a great summer, and see you in September!
Sheila Bannerman, President

Barbara George

A larger stand alone museum was built to house the collection on Ross Street, near what is now the city's centre.

For health reasons, Dr. George sold his museum and moved he, Barbara and the youngest children to Victoria in 1922.

Dr. George passed away in 1932 and Mrs. George died in 1936. Barbara George's painting career was largely overshadowed by the other outstanding accomplishments of this notable couple.

That she was able to paint at all is remarkable considering the circumstances of the times. She was a women with a large family in a land that was still sparsely populated, very wild and lacked many amenities.

She also worked alongside her husband managing their collection of birds and mammals of the province.

Her works are testaments to her creative passion, particularly painting.

Competent and well executed, as a whole they reveal the range and mastery of her talents.

From the small vignettes of the bird's eggs to the panoramic scope of the Alberta crest, it is apparent she was interested in portraying both the microscopic and macroscopic elements of her surroundings

Recognition for an artist often comes from how well their work stands up to the test of time. While not many of her works may still survive, the ones that do, especially the Coat of Arms, attests to her success as an artist.

Contributed by Pat Matheson
Rainy Creek

A History of Local History Book Projects

The first writings of Red Deer history commenced in the 1930's, primarily with the Golden Jubilee celebrations of settlement in 1934. Now that they were starting to become senior citizens, the pioneers and early residents decided to start recording their reminiscences and anecdotes, largely from memory. With the Great Depression gripping the country, they also were reflecting back to a happier, more prosperous time.

F.W. Galbraith, owner and publisher of the Red Deer Advocate and the first mayor of the City of Red Deer started the process by writing a series of columns entitled *Fifty Years of Newspaper Work*. After his passing in the spring of 1934, these articles were reprinted in a booklet.

In July 1934, in conjunction with the Red Deer area's Golden Jubilee celebrations, the Advocate printed a special forty eight page souvenir edition that included extensive write-ups on the growth and development of the City and surrounding districts. This special edition became a major source of history over subsequent years.

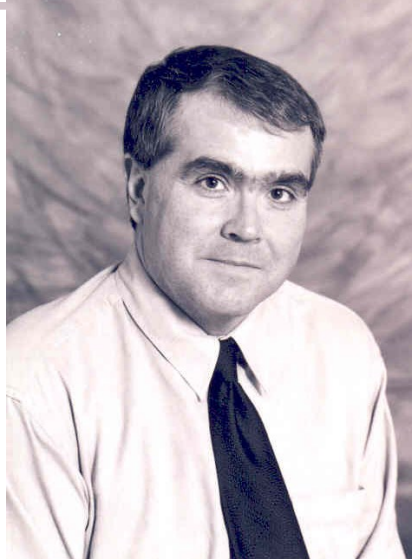
Following the Second World War, Annie L. Gaetz became a frequent writer of history, mainly in newspaper columns. In 1947, the Red Deer Quota Club, an organization of professional and business women, underwrote the publication of Annie L. Gaetz's *The Park Country*. This was the first published history book on Red Deer and recounted many anecdotes and reminiscences. Because of a lack of access to primary sources of information, unfortunately many of the dates in the book are incorrect.

Annie L. Gaetz wrote two more books *Trails of Yesterday* and *Footprints of the Martin Gaetz Family*. By the author's own description, the first was a recounting of the "folklore" of the district, while the second was mainly a family genealogical work.

Meanwhile, Edgar "Kerry" Wood, a talented local author and journalist, who had also served as the secretary to the 1934 Golden Jubilee celebrations, began writing books on Central Alberta history. Two, *The Map Maker* and *The Great Chief*, won Governor General's Medals for Juvenile Literature. In the early 1950's, he wrote *The Sanctuary*, a recounting of the story of the Gaetz Lakes Sanctuary as part of an attempt to have it designated as a provincial wildlife park.

Kerry Wood's books owed much of their success to his emphasis on story-telling and frequent use of humour.

The mid-1950's, with the celebrations of the Alberta Golden Jubilee, there was even more attention paid to history. Mina Cole wrote a series of history columns for



the Red Deer Advocate, but unfortunately these were never reproduced in a book. Wellington Dawe wrote his master's thesis on the history of Red Deer, which became the first academic history of the community. The Red Deer Advocate printed a new seventy two page souvenir edition in July 1955 on the history of the City and district, using back issues of the newspaper as the primary source of information. This souvenir edition was updated and published in 1963 for the Golden Jubilee of the City.

The Canadian centennial in 1967 brought another wave of historical writing. The Red Deer Advocate published a year long series of articles on the pioneers of Central Alberta. The Red Deer Kiwanis Club printed W.B. Dawe's thesis as a book. Kerry Wood wrote *A Corner of Canada*. The Alberta Teachers' Association published *Schools of the Parkland*.

Other books followed such as Essie Prudhomme's *Yester years of the Hays Municipality* and Kerry Wood's *Red Deer, A Love Story*. Bruce Batchelor wrote a master's thesis on the history of Central Alberta in 1971, but this has not yet been published in book form.

In the early 1970's and for the next 25 years, a number of rural communities began publishing history books on their communities. One of the first was *Buried Treasures*, a history of Pine Lake and Elnora areas, which went into three printings. Others were *Along the Burnt Lake Trail*, *Wagon Wheels to Hardtop*, *Mingling Memories*, *Through the Years*, *Homesteads and Happiness The Districts' Diary*, and *Sod Tracks and Wagon Tracks*. All of these books concentrated on family and school histories.

In the 1970's, Mr. E.L. (Ted) Meeres, the first chair of the Red Deer and District Archives, wrote a series of detailed history articles for the Red Deer Advocate. These articles were based on thirteen years of review of all of the newspapers that published regular columns on Red Deer up to the time when regular local weekly newspapers began being published. With the help of the Red Deer Rotary Club, Mr. Meeres research up to 1905 was published in the book *Homesteads That Nurtured a City*. Unfortunately, there is no index to this book.

David Grove wrote an self-published book on the history of hockey and sports in Red Deer, *The Puck and I*.

In 1980, as part of the 75th anniversary of the province, the Red Deer Museum and the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce jointly produced a new, largely pictorial history of Red Deer.

Continued on page 5 See History Book

History Book Project

The author was Georgan Parker and the book was entitled *Proud Beginnings*. Much of the text for this book was taken from the 1955 Jubilee edition of the Red Deer Advocate.

Proud Beginnings remains the best selling book in Red Deer's history (5000 copies) and demonstrates the appeal of heavily illustrated publications.

Because of the strong sense of community in north Red Deer, the Northside Community Association published *The Little Village That Grew* to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Village of North Red Deer in 1987.

In 1988, Windsor Publications, a company out of the United States, persuaded the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce and the Red Deer and District Museum Society to back the publication of a general history book on Red Deer. Entitled *Red Deer, An Illustrated History*, it was authored by Michael Dawe. Because of many shortcomings with this commercial venture, the book was re-edited and republished by the Red Deer and District Museum, the Red Deer and District Archives and the Red Deer Visitor and Convention Bureau in 1996,

Other local history books published included *The Alpha Heritage, A History of the Central Alberta Dairy Pool*, by Judith Hazlett, *100 Years of Progress, A History of Red Deer Fairs and Exhibitions* by Judith Hazlett and Michael Dawe, *A History of the Parkland Savings and Credit Union*, and *Rock of Ages, A History of St. Luke's Anglican Church* both authored by Michael Dawe, *Schools at the Crossing*, a centennial history of the Red Deer Public School District by G.H. Dawe and *Out of the Blue*, a history of sports and recreation in Red Deer, which was published in conjunction with the Alberta Winter Games being hosted in Red Deer.

There was a brief attempt at publishing more academic histories of Red Deer and area with the publication by the Central Alberta Regional Museums' Network of *Aspenland* and *Aspenland II*, *Women's Lives and Work in Central Alberta*.

Meanwhile, the Publications Committee of the Central Alberta Historical Society has published a number of excellent books of regional history and/or biographies of local residents.

These have included *A Prisoner of War Diary* by Ray Heard, *What Lies Behind the Picture* by Vern Wishart, *Settlement Tales of West Central Alberta* by Carl Morkeberg and *West of the Blindman* by Fred Schutz.

In 2007, Michael Dawe wrote *100 Years, The Red Deer Advocate 1907-2007* for the Red Deer Advocate. Because the intent of the book was originally to cover the biggest news story for every year that the Red Deer Advocate had been published, this book tended to cover major events and trends that shaped the growth and development of Red Deer, while still retaining some chronological history of the community.

However, the trend in the past several years in historical writing has been to move towards an analysis of historical trends and themes rather than the more traditional chronological recounting of events and developments and the family genealogy approach of most of the local history books.

An expression of this approach to Alberta history came in 2005 with the Alberta government's publication of *In Time and Place, Master Plan 2005 For the Protection, Preservation and Presentation of Alberta's Past*. This publication laid out a thematic framework for researching, analyzing and writing Alberta history and laid out eighteen specific themes that could be used in historical work.

Hence, in keeping with this trend in historical writing, it is proposed to produce a centennial history of the City of Red Deer in 2013 that will use a thematic rather than chronological and/or genealogical approach to history. This thematic approach is in keeping with current historical interpretation in museums and interpretive centres and in the documentation of historic sites and buildings.

Moreover, the centennial history will have a heavy emphasis on illustration in recognition of the enormous popularity of "visual" history.

Michael Dawe
May 15, 2011



Biography for Robert Lampard

It's a pleasure to respond to Shirley Dye's request to continue this series of articles on CAHS Board members. This is the first time I've been asked for a longer biography than for a dust-jacket. That said, the exercise has uncovered a natural reticence to adventure into one's past, particularly for highlights, but after six decades there have been a few experiences, and the germination of a few ideas.

Along with an identical twin brother (Doug), I was born in Red Deer, a small town of 2,500, most of whom lived in the bowl that is now downtown Red Deer. It was the divisional or halfway point in the 1892 built C & E (CPR) railway. Its importance was reflected in the six grain elevators that dotted its horizon.

Into this milieu came my parents, two young optometrists Sadie and Jim, from Winnipeg. So exciting was their arrival that Sadie went into labor at 32 weeks' gestation and delivered one son, and an hour later, another son. Together they weighed seven pounds. Survival was in question so the second newborn didn't receive a name for a week. Following father Jim's enlistment and wartime service, a few more boys were born: Toby (1948), Bill (1952), Tom (1953).

In the 1950s one of Red Deer's highlights was its high school education system under principal D.C. Dandell, Mr. Whitney's three semester system, and Lindsay Thurber's merger of the industrially orientated rural Riverglen school with the academic Red Deer high school. A secular school, LTCHS attracted some of the best teachers in the province. Fifty percent of the students came from outside Red Deer and lived in the adjacent dorms.

A university education was an unwritten family expectation that began in 1958 at the UofA. Within a year I uncovered my preference for medicine. Maximizing my marks in second year, I began the four year medical program in 1960. Like many students I majored in fun and minored in extracurricular activities, but unlike others I went overboard. I joined the promotions committee, became its chairman in fourth year and organized the Golden Bowl football game between UofA and Queens. Alberta won 26 to 6, to the surprise of everyone. That game started the east/west intercollegiate football competition, which has now evolved into the Vanier Cup.



After a year's internship at the UAH I took a masters degree in surgery, followed by a two month residency in hospital administration, as I had decided to take an MBA at the UWO. Graduating in 1968, I accepted the medical directorship at the partially opened Foothills Hospital in Calgary. Over the next 13 years I contributed to the opening of the hospital from 385 to 766 beds, and the development of the postgraduate medical programs from start, to include an internship and a broad range of residency trainings programs. Undergraduate medical student training began as a three year program in 1970. It was an exciting time. No deadlines were missed, although

each one was contingent upon achieving the previous goals. Extracurricularly, I accredited over 100 hospitals across Canada, which gave me a broad understanding of Canadian healthcare.

After a decade, I began to increasingly miss medical practice. Looking ahead I decided that the one specialty that had always interested me was ophthalmology. Accepted into McGill, I started the program not fully realizing it would be another four and a half years of training, difficult exams and several years to establish a practice in cataract surgery. That reality check returned me to Alberta where I accepted the medical directorship of the 1,385 resident Michener Centre, and returned to Red Deer in 1983.

One of my first extracurricular decisions was to decide which Flewwelling I should join, the library one (Hazel) or the museum director one (Morris). The latter needed more help as the former was under the well-directed management of board chair Harold Dawe. Appointed to the museum board, I participated in autotomizing it from the city, as the Fort Normandeau Historic and Cultural society in 1989.

After serving on those boards during some challenging fiscal times, and reigning in some environmental control issues like gophers around KWNC, I was pleased to be one of a small group including Messer's Dawe, Flewwelling and Armstrong to initiate the chartering of the fourth (CAHS) regional historical society in Alberta, after Calgary, Edmonton, and Lethbridge.

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Robert Lampard

I had been an HSA member since 1968, and had nominated neighbour Kerry Wood for the HSA annual historian of the year award in 1964. The CAHS prospered under the able leadership of Ron Williams, Don Hepburn and Bill Baergen. All three subsequently became presidents of the HSA. While CAHS president, I was able to find representatives from Rocky, Bowden and Lacombe to ensure the board represented all of Central Alberta. The same board successfully nominated me for the Spaulding award from the AMS/Hannah Foundation for significant contributions to the history of medicine in Canada.

During one of my always informative chats with Michael Dawe, he mentioned the Michener family donation of a fountain for the CPR garden park, noting it had been saved from destruction in the early 1960s and acquired by Ken Martin of Penhold. It stood in his front yard. Negotiations to return it, initially to its original site, and later to the historic arches park site were successful. The city approved the park which complemented the Centennial Park at the other end of the block.

My latent interest in books and book collecting began in 1976 during an evening of raconteuring with Dr. Earle Scarlett. Uncertain whether I would ever hike or climb again, he suggested reading books on the Rocky Mountains as an alternative. With that he recommended reading *Climbing Days* by his Oxford friend, Dorothy Pilley. The Canadian Rocky Mountain collection expanded to include Western Canada. The Alpine collection stimulated international climbing adventures, which eventually including climbs of Mts Victoria, Hector (AB), Black Tusk (BC), Rainier, Baker, Longs Peak, Little Teton (USA), Kala Patar and the Annapurna Circuit in Nepal and Mt Kilimanjaro in Africa. My diary count of ascents of 3,000 feet or more now exceeds 275.

Meanwhile, back in Red Deer the library expanded to 8,000 books plus Alpine and Prairie journal runs. As collecting progressed to reading I identified Alberta's medical history as being addressed once in a small 1947 book. After joining the Alberta Medical Foundation board in 1991, President Dr. D.R. Wilson asked me to write one column biographies of early medical pioneers for the Alberta Doctors Digest. Thirteen were published and eventually 35 were written and compiled in a book on Alberta's Medical History.

My association with the AMF and its precursor archives committee went back to 1980 when I succeeded Bill Parsons. One fertile idea I had was to establish a chair in medical history at the University of Calgary.

Another was to establish and help fund the on-line medical history collection at the UofC's www.ourfutureourpast website. During my research I discovered that the precursor of Medicare in Canada was a health insurance proposal, proposed by the AMA/CPSA and approved by the Hoadley Commission (1932) and the Alberta government (1935).

Another diversion came from the study of Dr. James Hector, who was kicked by his horse in the now named "Kicking Horse" river and pass in 1858. It culminated in a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the incident at Wapta Falls in 2008, and a recent trip to New Zealand to encourage the writing of a full length biography on him, as the first scientist of New Zealand for over 40 years.

A third diversion led to joining the Rotary Club. The study of the Red Deer club's incorporator, Jim Davidson, confirmed that he had incorporated clubs from Athens to Shanghai. Retracing his steps and meeting the Rotary clubs he chartered that still exist, should lead to another book or two on him.

A total of seven books, with two more in process, and another 110 articles have been published in various journals. It has proven that it's a lot more fun to make a little history than just to study it. Developing a complementary collection of Canadian mountaineering postcards has helped add pictures to the books. In the process historical studies have uncovered many noteworthy physicians and friends, both past and present. Numerous awards and acknowledgements have been secured for them.

Curling has been another passion since age 15. Highlights have included winning the Ontario Medical Bonspiel five times in six years and the Western Canadian Bonspiel three times.

As always the real highlight of one's life is their family – Allison, Geoffrey, Bruce and Sharon. Bruce and Geoffrey have or are studying emergency medicine. Bruce is vice-chair of MSF Canada. Allison has completed a degree in modern languages. Sharon is slowly retiring from a long teaching career, and several years as an educational consultant in professional development. I retired from Michener a year ago.

We now spend our time divided between Red Deer, Canmore and Mesa, Arizona. Snow in April was not factored into the equation, but that's Alberta.

Robert Lampard.
April 25, 2011

Alberta and Great Waterways Railway Scandal

The Alberta and Great Waterways Railway Scandal was a political scandal in Alberta, Canada in 1910. It resulted in the resignation of the provincial government of Alexander Cameron Rutherford over allegations of conflict of interest in the government's involvement in the financing of the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway. The scandal was instigated by the resignation of Public Works Minister William Henry Cushing from Rutherford's cabinet over disagreement with the government's railway policy, and its agreement with the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway company in particular. The Legislative Assembly of Alberta soon heard revelations of government favouritism towards the company, which had received a government charter to build a railway in northern Alberta, and a failure to oversee its operations properly. These revelations brought a large portion of Rutherford's Liberal caucus into revolt against his government, and he narrowly survived a sequence of attempts to topple his government. After his cabinet suffered further resignations, Rutherford placated the legislature by establishing a royal commission to investigate the affair.

Though he had bought peace within the legislature, machinations to bring Rutherford down continued outside of it. George Bulyea, the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, had harboured doubts about Rutherford's suitability as Premier since appointing him, and began to search for a replacement. He eventually settled on Arthur Sifton, the province's chief judge, and secured the agreement of most factions of the caucus for Sifton's ascension. Reluctantly, Rutherford agreed to resign, and Sifton took office. Shortly thereafter, the royal commission reported. While Rutherford and his allies were formally cleared of wrongdoing, the commission's majority report was critical of their actions during the crisis and before it (a separate minority report offered a more sympathetic interpretation of events).

Sifton would have trouble of his own when he introduced legislation to undo many of the Rutherford government's actions in relation to the affair. The legislation, which provided for the confiscation from the Alberta & Great Waterways company of money raised by the sale of government-guaranteed bonds, was first opposed by many Rutherford loyalists in the legislature and then successfully challenged in court by the Royal Bank of Canada, which held much of the money on deposit. Though Sifton's government survived and would go on to win two provincial elections, the divisions in the Liberal party caused by the scandal would not fully heal for years.

Historical Society of Alberta

HSA Musings

The Alberta Records Publication Board (ARPB) operates as a committee of the Historical Society of Alberta and was established by the HSA in 1977 "to select, annotate and publish primary sources relating to the history of Alberta." For some members of the ARPB, this mandate is too narrow and is making it increasingly difficult to create new manuscripts. For that reason a proposal will be presented to the ARPB meeting on May 14, 2011, to reconsider this mandate with the view to broadening it to include cultural/historical backgrounds of Alberta's multi-ethnic society. That would mean getting stories from recent immigrants from all parts of the world to Alberta and publishing them. This proposal is still in the development stage and will have to show clearly how these stories "relate to the history of Alberta" (current mandate language) in order for the Council and the ARPB members to be convinced, I suspect.

I am excited about this because it is directly in line with our own CAHS thinking as manifested in our Starting

Anew project. The stories collected by Don Hepburn, the late John Tobias and others on the committee are now in the Red Deer Archives, being sorted and catalogued, awaiting further development, either as a book, occasional paper or web entry.

That is the most interesting thing on the horizon for the HSA, other than the Historical Triple "E" Conference in Lethbridge, May 27-29 which I hope you find time to attend.

Go to Lethbridge Historical Society, P.O. Box 974, Lethbridge, AB T1J4A2 or phone Marion Snowden at 403 327 2662; or

Email: marion.snowden@xplornet.com

DON'T MISS THE DOT AFTER MARION

Submitted by Bill Baergen, president of HSA

Welcome Velkommen

The Danish Canadian National Museum

Exciting News!

On March 9, 2011, the Danish Canadian National Museum Society received an award from Canadian Tourism. The Museum's website, www.danishcanadians.com was nominated by Carson Pierce for the e-Tourism Award in the category of Best User Generated Content. Check out www.canadiantourismawards.com for more information



DCNM Museum

Read local immigrant stories on their web site.



See the building of this Viking Ship by following the link on DCNM web site to the TV show Daily Planet on the Discovery Channel.



A replica of the Little Mermaid from Copenhagen Harbour sits on a rock in the lake .



Made in Denmark, The Freydis Joanna Viking Ship arrives at Dickson

Criteria used in judging

WOW factor This award is all about making a lasting impact by thinking outside of the box.

Use of Technology and/or Media This award targets technology and/or media that enhances usability, convenience, and ease of use.

Consumer Relevance Application and strategies should not only be innovative, but also creates value to consumers, solve a problem, and take into account consumer and travel trends.



The gardens are beautiful all summer

Visit the Danish Canadian National Museum

**Open: Victoria Day to Labour Day
Monday—Saturday 10:30 to 5:30
Sunday - 12:30 to 5:30**

Go to the website for more information; www.danishcanadians.com

2011 Special events:

**June 19th – Father's Day Lunch
June 25th – Volunteer Appreciation
July 1st – Canada Day
July 10th – Æbleskiver 'N Jam
August 14th – Viking Day
September 5th – Season Closing**

OUR PRECIOUS HERITAGE



Janet and Ernie Walter: Farming in the Fifties
Submitted by Janet

When Ernie Walter and Janet Wiley married in July 1956 a key plan for this union was to build a farm family. We hoped for what could be described as a successful conjunction of livelihood and lifestyle, lived in a community of farm families. Ernie grew up in a farming community between Wainwright and Vermillion. His mother, a widow, had to hire men to work the land. I also lived in a farming community, eight miles north east of Rimbey. While we gardened and kept livestock for our own use, a meager cash income was earned off farm by my father's carpentry and sheep shearing circuit. I think each of us was inspired by childhood circumstance to be part of a farming family.

Ernie was working on a seismic survey crew out of Ponoka and I was teaching a primary classroom there. He was already farming a rented quarter near his mother and step-father. He used their equipment during weekends to seed and harvest. In the spring of 1956 we used our savings, a loan from Ernie's mother and a private mortgage to buy the 190 acres where we still live. The purchase price was \$6,500. After spring work Ernie began building an 18x24 foot house.

Our honeymoon was short --- the summerfallow needed working but it did include a tour of the Reynolds Farm Museum in Wetaskawin. We lived for a few weeks in a bunk house on Ernie's parents place. While there the neighbours came over one evening to shiver us. They brought with them a gift of an unfinished set of table and chairs that had been made at the Lacombe Canadian Union College. As a new farm couple we were warmly welcomed into the district. I had to get use to using first names rather than the Mr. and Mrs. way of addressing anyone older. As a teen, Ernie had had summer and weekend jobs with two of these families. It was customary to be invited over for Sunday dinners or for an evening meal. Drop ins for coffee were common and often extended into an invitation to stay for the next meal. Such visiting

provided information exchanges about farming methods, markets and friendly support. Lifelong friendships were developed this way.

The community organization was the Farmers' Union of Alberta. FUA, and women did the social connecting of arranging baby and wedding showers, house warmings and farewell parties under a womens' FWUA. Women met every month in the afternoon while joint men and womens' meeting were held after harvest through to spring work. Ernie and I attended several FUA and later Unifarm annual provincial conventions. Operation funding came from farm sale catering and an annual Boxing Night Dance at the Aspelund Hall.

We moved into our little house in August of 1956. We used a \$30.00 kitchen stove for heating and cooking. A four gallon reservoir on the side of the stove provided warm water. Water was pumped and carried in by hand because we had no electric power, no telephone either. We did have a 1954 car that took me to a Red Deer teaching job at Riverglen. After harvest Ernie drove with me to work at a grocery wholesale for the winter.

The next spring we began to buy a second hand line of our own farm equipment: a John Deere D tractor for \$450.00, a cultivator for \$175.00 and harrows for \$35.00. Our crop was barley which sold for 69 cents a bushel with a 10 cent premium for a malting grade. That summer was our first garden. It was a stunted failure that had been planted too close to a poplar fence row.

We made a farmstead ground plan and with free government supplied seedlings planted half a mile of road side lilacs, enclosed our yard with a shelter belt and added hedges and specimen trees. In 1957 Ernie built a barn and bought two litters of pigs from a neighbour. Like the first garden this was not a successful venture. Two sows saved for breeding produced only one piglet. Cattle proved to be a better alternative. For many years Ernie bought spring calves in the fall, fed them hay all winter and pastured them through the summer to be sold for fattening the following fall. This fit well with field work and a crop rotation of keeping one-third of the fields in hay production.

Daughter, Ellen was born in September 1957, and I didn't teach again until she was three. Our good friends, Floyd and Laura Van Slyke cared for Ellen through the day while I taught at Sylvan Lake, 1959/ 60. Lisa completed our family in December 1960. I taught off and on for 17 years in total until retirement in 1980. The teaching income was assured and allowed us to borrow less for added acres and farm equipment. Since 1980 we have been debt free and have the good fortune to be among those who shared the dream of building a family farm and living our version of the happy ever after.