The membership newsletter of the

Historical Society of Alberta

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History NOW

No. 2
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In this issue

HSA Pin

The Historical Society of Alberta pin is available. You can pick it up from the office or mail your cheque or money order in the amount of $5 plus $.50 postage and handling to:

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Have You Registered for the Conference?

ALBERTA'S CULTURAL COMMUNITIES: A DIVERSE HISTORY

A Special Conference Presented by HSA and CCHS
MAY 29, 30, 31, 2009

Carriage House Inn
9030 Macleod Trail SE, Calgary

If you haven't registered, please do so, for the Banquet to be held at Heritage Park in the new Gasoline Alley facility on **Saturday, May 30, 2009 commencing at 6 pm.**

Information about the Conference and Annual Awards Banquet can be found by visiting our website at: **www.albertahistory.org**

OR, contact the Conference Co-ordinator,

Trudy Cowan, at
403.984.8185
cowant@shaw.ca

The Historical Society of Alberta is a registered charitable organization.

Donations are gratefully received to help further the work of the Society which includes the publication of *Alberta History* and this newsletter, *History NOW*. Donations are tax deductible and will be acknowledged in *History NOW*, unless otherwise requested.

History NOW is published quarterly. We welcome information about your upcoming or past events, activities, publications, etc. They should be in the hands of the editor prior to deadline.

Submission deadlines:

Mar 1 for Apr-Jun issue
Jun 1 for Jul-Sep issue
Sep 1 for Oct-Dec issue
Dec 1 for Jan-Mar issue

Send copy to:

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Welcome to new members/subscribers

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Royal Alberta Museum
Joni E. L. Griffin
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Gail Holland, Lethbridge
Marlene/Jonahtan Dean, Lethbridge
Vicky Summrs, Lethbridge
Lori Harasem/Duane Petluk, Lethbridge
Amanda Donst, Lethbridge
Claire MacGillivray, Lethbridge
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Mary C. Switzer, Calgary
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Irene Nicolson, Grande Prairie
Roy Bickell, Grande Prairie
Pat Wearmouth, Beaverlodge
Lucie Campbell, Grande Prairie
Lavern Sorgaard, LaGlace
Judith/Ross Campbell, Grande Prairie
Dorene/Robert Binks, Grance Prairie
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Karen Burgess, Grande Prairie
Beth Sheehan, Grande Prairie
Susan Bansgrove, Grande Prairie
Suzanne/Alana Dunn, Grande Prairie
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Thank You for Your Donation to the HSA and/or Chapter

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Legacy 2009 donations

Legacy 2009 Campaign donations will be published in the October issue

President's Report

by **Linda Collier**

Unbelievable as it seems to me, my term as President of the Historical Society of Alberta is nearing completion. I have enjoyed my two years immensely and the time has simply flown for me. I shall miss the opportunities to be "a social butterfly" as I traveled about these past months, meeting friends old and new in all corners of our province and attending a variety of events hosted by our four chapters.

I have learned a great deal in my role as President but the one that stands out foremost in my mind is discovering the absolutely huge volume of volunteer efforts that are the backbone of our activities. Over the past two years, I was constantly awed by the people, either in groups or individually, who put in hundreds of hours promoting, preserving and protecting the history of Alberta. From a volunteer who works regularly at the HSA office to the multitudes who work at chapter historic festivals, events and programs, our society is truly blessed by the diligence and devotion of its volunteers.

Did you know that over the past many years, those volunteers working at chapter-level programs, as well as those putting in hours with the HSA activities, have consistently logged over 25,000 man-hours each and every year? That's the equivalent (according to granting agencies) of $250,000 yearly! Such a feat is truly a wondrous accomplishment and personally, I am not aware of any other organization that can boast such statistics.

Without the splendid efforts of all these volunteers, our society could not exist, so I want each one of you to give yourself a pat on the back (don't break any bones, we need you to volunteer again). Better yet, let's all go and "shout from the rooftops" to inform the public of our great work! Bravo, everyone! And thank you!

Speaking of "social butterfly" as I did earlier, I want to thank the Lethbridge Historical Society for inviting me to their extravagant dinner at the Galt Museum on February 24th. What a beautiful setting the Galt is, even in the snowy cold of winter, and we enjoyed the views of the coulees and the city beyond. I must also thank the Mayor of Lethbridge, Bob Tarleck, for his extraordinary hospitality. The plane was 2 hours late leaving Calgary and both the Mayor and I spent the time waiting at Gate 9 (it's in the basement of the airport). I had met the Mayor at the Lethbridge HSA Conference a few years ago, and as we chatted, he realized I was going to be late for the dinner at the Galt. Ever the gentleman, he offered to drive me from the airport to my hotel. Now, how nice is that! I'll bet there are hundreds of folks living in Lethbridge who haven't had the joy of riding with the Mayor. Nice car, too! Thank you, Mayor Tarleck.

The guest speaker at the dinner was Brian Brennan, the best-selling author of several books, the latest one being *The Good Steward,* which is the story of Ernest Manning. Brian's presentation was not only informative, it was laced with good humour and even some songs. Although I'm a native Albertan and lived here through the Manning years, I certainly gained many valuable insights on the life and career of Premier Manning. Thank you, Brian, and thank you, too, to the organizers in the Lethbridge chapter for such a wonderful evening.

On March 24th I attended the Chinook Country Historical Society's Annual General Meeting. Once again, I was treated to a splendid dinner and had a great time seeing old friends and meeting new ones. The speaker was Ken Lima-Coelho, Manager, Visitor Experience of the Glenbow Museum, CBC Radio Guest Host and member of the Heebee-Jeebees a-capella group, and his presentation was very unique and most enjoyable. Of course, the food and setting at SAIT were perfect. Thank you to all the organizers of this exciting evening.

Are you wondering if all the HSA President ever does is go to dinner parties? Yes! For my third dinner in as many

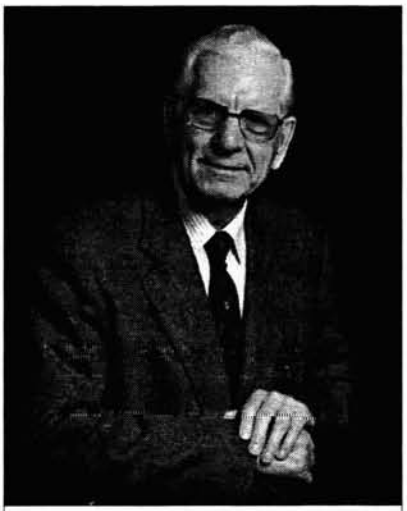
months, I will be attending the Edmonton & District Historical Society's John Rowand Night and Annual General Meeting on April 28th. This annual event is always held at the University of Alberta Faculty Club, on the banks of the Saskatchewan River, overlooking downtown Edmonton. Picturesque indeed! The guest speaker will be Gordon Steinke, a veteran broadcast journalist and author, who will be talking about his travels to rural Alberta communities to profile the hidden gems and stories of our province. His show, "Your Town"—a look at the colourful communities and history in Alberta, appears regularly on Global TV. I'm looking forward to listening to his presentation and filling up on Faculty Club fare!

The culmination of my provincial gallivanting will be the HSA conference in Calgary from May 29 to May 31st.

Do you have your copy of the brochure/registration for Alberta's Cultural Communities: A Diverse History? Have you registered yet? Be sure to call the office or visit either the HSA or Chinook Country websites for more details.

The organizers of this conference, members of the Chinook chapter, have gone all out to provide the best conference yet for you. The diverse variety of speakers and activities is amazing. The award winners are especially important this year, but I'm not going to give out secrets here. You'll have to come to see for yourself! I hope you are all planning to attend, as this weekend will be a blockbuster! My thanks to Chinook Country and their conference

continued on page 5



William (Bill) Eldon Peters
August 26, 1911-December 24, 2008

William "Bill" Eldon Peters of Calgary, beloved husband of Florence, passed away quietly on Christmas Eve at the age of 97 years.

Bill was born on the family homestead near Etzikom in southeastern Alberta. He graduated from the Agricultural Technology Program at SAIT in 1929 and a varied career followed. After working in his Uncle George Bittorf's grocery store in Edmonton, he established his own successful grocery store. Subsequently, he was the Massey Harris representative in the Peace River country, where he met his wife to be, Florence Elizabeth Banks.

Bill and Florence were married in 1942; just days after Bill got his call to enter the RCAF. Following the war, Bill worked as a mining expediter and purchasing agent in Yellowknife, NWT. Later he moved to Edmonton and shifted careers to selling investments, eventually managing the Lethbridge branch and later the Calgary branch of Western Savings and Loan. After this company was sold, he served as Federal Returning Officer for Calgary Centre and worked for Statistics Canada. A life-long Liberal, Bill was always ready to debate politics and worked actively in numerous campaigns.

Bill was passionately interested in Alberta history. Two accomplishments that were very special to him were the return of the Manitou stone from Ottawa to the Royal Alberta Museum and the establishment of the Canadian National Historic Windmill Centre, to preserve historic prairie windmills at the Etzikom Museum. For these endeavors and others, Bill received numerous awards, including the Award of Merit of the Alberta Museums Association. Bill took special delight in his windmill and Alberta history friends, especially Al Mogridge, Len Mitzel MLA and Len's wife June.

Bill is survived by his younger brother, Harry, of Vulcan, Alberta. He will be missed by his son Bill and daughter-in-law Celeste, his grandchildren Will and Brette and the nieces and nephews in whom he took such delight. Bill was predeceased by his wife Florence in 2001.

A Memorial Service was held at McInnis & Holloway's Chapel of the Bells (2720 Centre Street North) on Saturday, January 31, 2008 at 2 pm. Condolences can be made through www.mcinnisandholloway.com. The family wishes to extend a very special thank you to the staff of Carewest Colonel Belcher, many of whom became Bill's special friends as they provided extraordinarily kind care during his last years.

Please make donations in Bill's memory to the Etzikom Museum, Box 585, Etzikom, AB T0K 0W0 and to the Friends of the Colonel Belcher Fund at www.focb.ab.ca. In living memory of William Eldon Peters a tree will be planted at Fish Creek Provincial Park by McInnis & Holloway Funeral Homes, Chapel of the Bells, 2720 Centre Street North Telephone: 403-276-2296.

Bill and Celeste Peters 403-289-2481 email: bill.peters@shaw.ca

HSA Members News

Remember Highway #4?

In the January issue of History NOW (page 4) there is a reference regarding the Highway being opened by the Prince of Wales. Perhaps a comment on the Title "Prince of Wales" would be of interest.

The title, Prince of Wales, is bestowed on the eldest son of the sovereign. It is an independent creation in each case and is not automatic. There have recently been extended periods when the title was vacant.

The Prince Edward who became King Edward VIII was created Prince of Wales shortly after his father ascended the Throne in 1910. He was HRH the Prince of Wales for 25 years until his own accession to the Throne on the death of his father, King George V, in January 1936.The title, Prince of Wales, was then vacant as Prince Edward had no son.

King Edward VIII abdicated the throne in December 1936. 1936 is the year of 3 Kings — George V who died in January; Edward, who abdicated in December; and, George VI who became King in December.

The title Prince of Wales remained vacant as King George VI had two daughters, but no son. When Queen Elizabeth succeeded her father as Queen in 1952, she did not immediately create her son Prince of Wales as she felt he was at 4 too young to take on a public role. She did create him Prince of Wales 5 years later on the occasion of the Empire Games being held in Cardiff, Wales.

Prince Charles was publically presented as Prince of Wales and began to perform official functions in that role when he was 19.

For the period 1936 until 1957 there was no Prince of Wales.

I hope this note is of interest.

.— Ron Williams

Hudson's Hope Historical Society

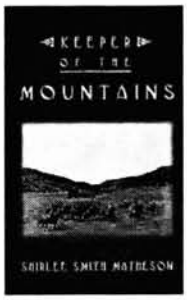
by **Rosaleen Ward**
Museum Manager

"Our Hudson's Hope Cowboys: Packers on the Trail – a 75th anniversary celebration of the 1934 Bedaux Expedition"

Charles Bedaux was captivated with the country surrounding Hudson's Hope after embarking on a hunting trip in 1932. His attempt, two years later, to take five motorized vehicles across the northern wilderness of British Columbia is known throughout the world. This "Champagne Safari" gave much needed employment to local cowboys during the Depression. In 2009, it will be the 75th anniversary of the Bedaux Expedition and the Hudson's Hope Historical Society plans to celebrate the role the Hudson's Hope cowboys played in Bedaux's adventures with a special summer exhibit "Our Hudson's Hope Cowboys: Packers on the Trail — a 75th anniversary celebration of the 1934 Bedaux Expedition".

These men, along with more than 100 packhorses, transported the fuel, food, supplies and personal gear that was necessary for the 1934 adventure. Hudson's Hope cowboys were part of the advance freight outfit and others from the region accompanied the Bedaux outfit as packers and wranglers. Up until this time, they had led the life of trappers and local horse hands but were keen for adventure and typified the pioneering spirit of the people who came to the Peace River area at the beginning of the 20th century.

Funding, through the BC150 Heritage Legacy Fund of BC, has enabled the Hudson's Hope Historical Society to procure previously unpublished photographs and correspondence from the Library & Archives of Canada as well as the cowboy's families. This material will be used to develop the summer exhibit and an online virtual exhibit and educational component on the museum's web site www.hudsonshopemuseum.com. Maps -3



The summer exhibit will be officially opened on Sunday, May 24th with readings by Shirlee Smith Matheson one of whose books, *Keeper of the Mountains*, is based on the Bedaux Expedition. Nadine MacKenzie, who has recently published a French language book on Bedaux, will also give a reading. Financial assistance for these readings has been received from Canada Council through The Writer's Union of Canada.

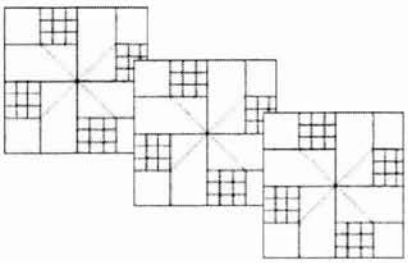
Bob White was one of the Hudson's Hope cowboys who participated in the expedition and subsequently wrote about his adventures in his book, *Bannock & Beans*. With the generous permission of his family, BC author Jay Sherwood has edited the manuscript and added more photographs and anecdotes. This new edition, published by the Royal BC Museum, will be launched at Hudson's Hope Museum on Friday, July 10th. Also planned for this weekend is participation in the "Paddle for the Peace" event and a cowboy family reunion.

The Historical Society is interested in hearing from any family members who may have material that could be used for research or exhibition.

Please contact Rosaleen at the museum:
Rosaleen Ward
Museum Manager
Hudson's Hope Museum
9510 Beattie Drive
Box 98
Hudson's Hope, BC V0C 1V0
phone: 250.783.5735
fax: 250.783.5770
email: hhmuseum@pris.ca
website: www.hudsonshopemuseum.com

HSA Annual General Meeting and Conference Calgary May 29-31, 2009

ALBERTA'S CULTURAL COMMUNITIES: A DIVERSE HISTORY



A Special Conference Presented by HSA and CCHS
MAY 29, 30, 31, 2009
Carriage House Inn
9030 Macleod Trail SE, Calgary

Fabrics of all sizes, shapes & colours create a warm, comforting quilt, much like the gathering of cultural communities from around the world has created a strong, vibrant province

Look for your AGM/Conference package with this newsletter.

QUESTIONS?
Trudy Cowan, LL.D.,
Conference Coordinator
403-984-8185

President's Message

continued from page 3

coordinator, Trudy Cowan, for hosting such a momentous conference for me to mark the end of my term as President. I'm going out with flare!

In conclusion, I wish to thank all of you for your support and good fellowship during the last two years. I have been truly fortunate to be President and I thank all of you for honouring me with this privilege. I know my successor, Bill Baergen, will enjoy his term as well, and I extend my congratulations and best wishes to Bill.

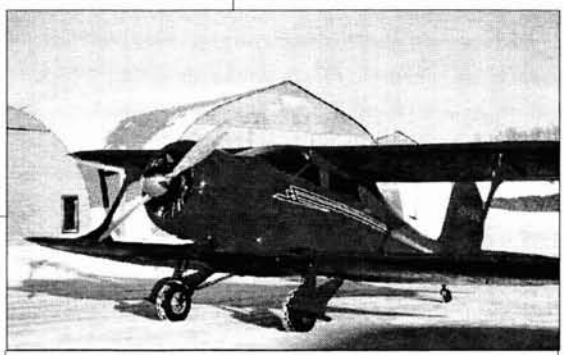
Keep up the good work, my friends – our history is important to all Albertans and we should celebrate it with excitement and verve!

Website: http://culture.alberta.ca/museums/historicsiteslisting/reynolds/default.aspx

The Reynolds-Alberta Museum in Wetaskiwin, Alberta, interprets the impact of technological change in transportation, aviation, agriculture and industry from the 1890s to the present. Visitors will see a wide variety of vintage automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles, trucks, stationary engines, tractors, agricultural implements, aircraft and industrial equipment.

1942 Hawker Hurricane fighter plane. Donated to the Reynolds-Alberta Museum 2002

Reynolds Alberta Museum



1943 Beechcraft D17S staggerwing biplane CF-BKQ. Donated to the Reynolds-Alberta Museum by Stan Reynolds

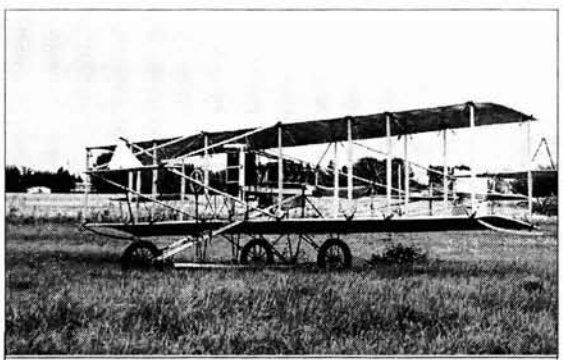
Website:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reynolds-Alberta_Museum

Featured exhibits include:

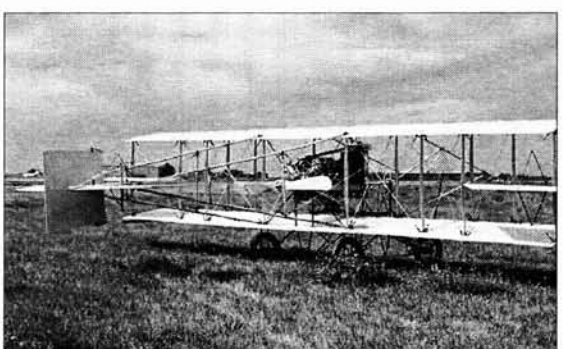
- a one-of-a-kind 1929 Duesenberg Phaeton Royale Model J
- the world's oldest known production Chevrolet, a 1913 Chevrolet Classic Six
- the world's oldest dragline, a Bucyrus Class-24 built in 1917
- a 1928 American Eagle biplane, the only surviving Canadian example
- a full-scale replica of the Avro Arrow
- a half-track vehicle used in the infamous Bedaux Expedition, the subject of the film "Champagne Safari"

The Museum also serves as home to Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame, a national organization paying tribute to the men, women and organizations who pioneered and advanced aviation in Canada.

(see website:
http://www.cahf.ca/About%20Us/AboutCAHF.htm)



1910 Curtiss Pusher biplane (front view). Replica of first airplane to fly in Alberta. Built by the Reynolds restoration crew, supervised by Bryron Reynolds and donated to the Reynolds-Alberta Museum at Wetaskiwin.



1910 Curtiss Pusher biplane (rear view).

Cultural Resource Management Program

The Cultural Resource Management Program at the University of Victoria, in collaboration with the Architectural Conservation Programme of The University of Hong Kong (http://acp.arch.hku.hk/), invites you to experience first-hand the heritage conservation resources and professional context of Hong Kong, Macau and Fujian Province, China.

This upcoming field school offers an extraordinary opportunity to learn from, compare and engage in heritage conservation practice in a Chinese context utilizing the remarkable heritage resources of the region. Join participants and instructors from the University of Victoria and The University of Hong Kong and engage in this highly interactive immersion learning experience. Site visits to Hong Kong, Macau and Fujian Province with leading experts and professionals provide rich experiences for considering, hands-on, a range of contemporary heritage management issues for World Heritage Sites.

Instructors: Dr. Lynne D. DiStefano and Dr. Lee Ho Yin, Architectural Conservation Programme Department of Architecture, The University of Hong Kong (HKU) and Alastair Kerr, Manager of Heritage Programs, Heritage Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Dr. Lynne di Stefano and Dr. Lee Ho Yin recently gave a public lecture "Hong Kong: Cultural Heritage Conservation in a City of Change,"

(http://www.sfu.ca/city/fpl2popup.htm)

through Simon Fraser University's City Program, showcasing the region's incredible heritage resources and diverse context for heritage conservation planning and management.

For more information on this learning opportunity, available both for credit and non-credit participants, please visit the course description at:

http://www.uvcs.uvic.ca/crmp/courses/ha489e-field.aspx, or contact:

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SPERO-L: Bringing Hope to Places of Faith in Canada

Dear Places of Faith Advocate,

I am pleased to announce the launch of the new online discussion list for issues related to historic places of faith administered by the Heritage Canada Foundation SPERO-L.

SPERO-L literally means to bring hope in Latin. From this idea, SPERO-L is a free email-based discussion tool to help users share solutions and ask questions about endangered places of faith in Canada. Connect with peers across the country and share stories and challenges about how places of faith are kept alive. How are they reused? What are innovative divesture policies? What are strategies for engaging with multi-faith groups? What awareness and fundraising events work? Ask questions and find possible solutions without ever leaving your desk. By subscribing to SPERO-L, you will automatically be connected to colleagues who've faced similar projects and challenges. The stories collected will also help shape HCF's website section on Endangered Places of Faith. To join, write to spero-l@heritagecanada.org and follow the simple instructions.

Information about this new tool, visit http://www.heritagecanada.org/eng/spero-l/index.cfm.

Camille Girard-Ruel,Officer, Heritage Planning & Development
Heritage Canada Foundation
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www.heritagecanada.org

About Don Edgecombe

interview by Janet Walter

Don has written his life stories for his children and grandchildren to provide them with information about their Edgecombe roots. Don has no written accounts from his father/grandfather and resolved to leave his own written legacy for those who follow him. Through his own efforts, Don has researched genealogical records going back nineteen generations and to a house in Devon, England built in 1292. From oral sources, Don knows that his great grandfather emigrated from England to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia and that his father, Harold Edgecombe, came West as harvest help. He did not return to the Maritimes and eventually became a fur trader for an American fur trade company in Grouard, Alberta. Harold was transferred to Fort Vermilion but when the American company sold to the Hudson Bay Company he resigned and became an independent trader. Don was born there, in 1926.

The famous, Dr. Hammond was the physician at Fort Vermilion and also Don's godfather. This is the doctor, who in 1929, ordered diphtheria vaccine from Edmonton to prevent a diphtheria epidemic at Little Red River a settlement over 50 miles from Fort Vermilion. Wop May and Vic Horner delivered the serum in an open cockpit plane in -30 degrees F. weather. This eighty-year-old event was re-enacted in January of this year. Bush pilots often stayed over at the Edgecombe home and Don remembers being up on the planes of Wop May and other bush

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Where the Heck is Habay? Part I

by Don Edgcombe

The Hudson's Bay Company trading post named Habay was formerly known as Hay Lakes, but when a post office was opened a new name was needed as there was already a postal outlet in the small town of Hay Lakes, Alberta. The name Habay was chosen in recognition of Roman Catholic missionary Father Habay who first came to the area in 1913. He served many years in the Fort Vermilion area and in his later years was instrumental in establishing an Indian Residential School at Assumption about ten miles east of the HBC post. Habay is in northwestern Alberta about 60 miles west of High Level and about 400 miles northwest of Edmonton. It was a very primitive community when I was transferred there in February 1952.

Of the 500 odd residents less than a dozen spoke English, the native language being Slavey. Prior to my transfer I had managed the Hudson's Bay store at North Vermilion, just across the Peace River from my home town, Fort Vermilion. I had recently married Velma Sanderson, also a Hudson's Bay employee, and a former school mate. As a newly married couple we were considered ideal candidates for an isolated posting. The reasoning was that the isolation was a learning experience for any young aspiring manager, and being a young couple in love we wouldn't become victims of loneliness that often drove single HBC managers to nervous breakdowns. Also such a posting was not practical for a couple with school aged children. So we were selected for this job in the wilderness, serviced only by airplane and a winter trail if and when oil exploration companies happened to be working in the area.

I had just completed a three day seminar for several store managers in Grande Prairie. The Company plane dropped the Fort Vermilion and new North Vermilion managers off, picked Velma up and flew us to Habay. Velma was waiting at the airport, and after bidding goodbye to her family and mine, we were airborne to a new adventure. Our plane landed on skis on the meadow at the edge of Hay Lake about one hundred yards from the Company store. To my surprise there were over twenty native men waiting to welcome us. They formed two lines at the foot of the airplane steps, and solemnly shook hands with both of us as we walked between them. The chief, Harry Chonkolay welcomed us first and in his limited English advised that I would be called meh-caw-thee which meant boss in Slavey. and Velma would be known as meh-caw-thee tsay-wu, Boss's wife. We were immediately accepted as friends and while commenting on it that evening, we realized why. Velma's Swedish-born father had been a very successful trapper, and although he couldn't speak Slavey he was well known and well liked by the Hay Lakers. Also my father, being an independent fur trader for many years in Fort Vermilion, had bought fur and sold supplies to many of the locals.

After supper Velma and I were unpacking our luggage and trying to familiarize ourselves with our new home. We had to be careful using electricity as our supply was from a 32-volt system, consisting of 16 large glass two-volt batteries, that were charged by a wind-charger atop a fifty foot tower. When lack of wind failed to keep the batteries charged, we fired up a 32-volt Onan gas powered generator. We were in the living room putting family pictures into a drawer in a small writing desk, with only one small desk light turned on. The clerk, who had been acting manager after George Ferrand my predecessor had taken ill and was evacuated, was Doug Mingo, a Newfoundlander. He had gone over to the store to write a letter home. The radio was on CBC the only station we could receive until late at night when the big American stations would reach Habay. A spooky soap opera called "Only the Shadow Knows," was on. Suddenly out of the darkness of the living room a hand appeared in the small circle of light projected downward by the desk lamp. Velma screamed, as she was engrossed in "The Shadow" spook opera. The hand belonged to Lonison Chonkolay, brother of the chief, who had come to welcome us. I soon learned it was local custom to simply walk in any unlocked home without knocking, and we didn't hear him close the door or walk softly through the kitchen to the living room in his moccasins, until he was standing right behind us by the desk, and offering his welcoming handshake. We made coffee and although he spoke almost no English, I began the process of learning his language. Slavey proved to be a relatively simple language, in which one word was often used to describe several nouns. I took some coins out of my pocket and was informed they were sat-so-nay. One quarter, clea-satsonay three quarters, tie sat-sa-nay, etc. nickels and dimes were sat-sa-nay tsil-ya, or small iron. Skates were called sat-sa-nay keh, or iron feet. A paper bill was cleh and a book was edeh-cleh, or school book, which I later learned was the only type of book the locals had ever seen. Little did Louison realize that getting me started learning Slavey would lead to my relieving his nephew Victor of his job as interpreter in less than a year as I no longer needed him.

Settling into our new and totally different environment required considerable adjustment for Velma and me. Firstly communication with the rest of the country. We had a radio but no newspapers. Our mail arrived once a month by plane from Peace River. I was postmaster, one of

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my easier extra duties as I had the same responsibility at North Vermilion. We communicated twice daily with the Canadian Army Signal Corps on a short wave radio and morse code arrangement. The army base in Fort Resolution, NWT, called about ten HBC posts on a 9 am and 3 pm schedule. With their normal 110-volt electrical service they could transmit on short wave voice radio. But the HBC posts with only 32-volt power, could not respond by voice so we used morse code. Fortunately I had learned this in Air Cadets while in Peace River for grade twelve, and it came back to me quickly. In ten days I was taking all the skeds, and then arranged a transfer for Doug Mingo, without a replacement. Our mail arrived once a month from Peace River by Associated Airways. The pilots often stayed overnight at our place and frequently made chartered side trips in the area. Sometimes a medical evacuation to Fort Vermilion hospital, or sometimes a supply run to an oil exploration camp, or a survey crew in the area. The pilots were a great group of guys who all became friends. Guys such as Don Knox, Don Landell, and Dale Harris appreciated our hospitality and in return offered us free flights to and from Fort Vermilion. I had to decline most of them because of work, but Velma was able to go home and visit her family quite often.

Our staff grocery selection, or The Mess as it was called, was quite different than the groceries we sold in the store. Canned meats, fruits, and vegetables were every day items, as were dehydrated foods, powdered eggs and milk, plus a daily vitamin supplement Once each month when our pilot friends arrived, they brought a large box from a grocery store in Peace River containing fresh milk, meat, fruit, vegetables etc. After a couple of days it was back to the can opener. In summer we caught fish and shot ducks for a bit of variety in our diet. Freight arrived by truck in winter over the oil company trail from Meander River on the Mackenzie Highway. Tony's Truck Service of Peace River had the contract and driver Doug Stramaghan became a frequent overnight guest and a close friend. We had occasional visits from the Indian Agent, Game Warden and Mountie from Fort Vermilion, who sometimes stayed at our place, or at the Residential School. Our fur trading competitors were Ralph and Anna Brugger who lived next door. They were considerably older than Velma and I but we enjoyed each other's company, usually getting together for a card game at least once a week. Ralph and I did some goose hunting together, using either our motor boat or his pickup truck. Anna and Velma enjoyed knitting and sewing so the two couples were fairly compatible socially but fierce competitors in fur trading.

I was surprised to learn upon my arrival that in addition to my regular duties as store manager, postmaster, and telegraph operator, I was also expected to be the medical officer and welfare officer for the Department of Indian Affairs. A huge locked cabinet located in the back room of the store was filled with medical supplies and a few reference books owned by the government. With many freezable items in the cabinet it was imperative that I keep the wood heater in the store burning at least 20 hours daily. I had no formal medical training but had learned a bit of first aid as a Boy Scout. Fortunately, we didn't have many serious medical problems to deal with in the first few months before I learned the local language and was better able to diagnose a situation. I had authority from the government to call for a mercy flight in extreme emergency but only recall having to do so twice.

On one occasion I was called to see a young Slavey woman who lay critically ill in her parent's teepee. As I entered I noticed several freshly cut notches in the tent pole next to the door flap. I asked what they represented and was told that each day she had failed to speak or eat was recorded by a notch in the pole. I counted ten. Velma and I poured over our manuals and concluded we had a very serious illness to deal with. We suspected meningitis so I radioed for an air evacuation and she was flown to Edmonton that evening. She lived for six days at the Dr. Charles Camsell Hospital but eventually succumbed to meningitis. When Dr. Falconer from the Camsell arrived for the annual tuberculosis xray program he confirmed our diagnosis, and suggested that the ten-day delay by her parents in requesting help probably cost her life.

The locals were very independent and self reliant. Once I got a request to examine a little boy about three years old who had his finger accidentally cut off. His father George Didzena was splitting firewood and the little guy attempted to reach for the wood just as his dad swung the axe. Fortunately only the tip of his middle finger was severed. I was told later that his parents spent almost an hour finding the severed fingertip amongst the wood chips and grass. They repositioned it on the stump after applying chewing tobacco for disinfectant, and wrapped it in a dirty old rag. After a week it began to smell horribly so his father decided to request my help. I soaked the finger in warm water to remove the filthy blood stained rag. The severed finger tip had turned black and was the source of the offensive odour. I cleaned up and dressed the wound, discarded the black finger tip and visited him each day to change dressings, using the Company motorboat for the three mile trip up the river. Amazingly his little stump finger healed beautifully with no stitches and after a few weeks appeared more like a professional amputation than a chop job with a trapper's axe.

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Remembering James H. Gray

by **Brian Brennan**

James H. Gray, the great social historian who died in Calgary in November 1998 at age ninety-two, was our best chronicler of the manners and mores of the Prairies. That is to say he knew more about boozing and whoring between the Rockies and the Pas than any social studies expert around.

He was also a brave and principled man. When he was fired as Ottawa correspondent for the *Winnipeg Free Press* in 1948, it was because Gray disagreed with the paper's editorial stand on Canadian trade policy, not because he was a drunkard or a laggard — the usual reasons for reporter dismissals in those days. For Gray, a pay cheque was not enough. The job also had to grant him dignity and autonomy. He would be an anomaly in today's workplace.

Gray wrote the first draft of his first book, *The Winter Years*, during the unhappy year he spent working for the *Free Press* in the Ottawa press gallery. That book, which failed to find a publisher for twenty years, set the tone and the style for all the books Gray wrote about the history of the Canadian West.

He had the great advantage, as a social historian, of being on hand for much of the action. "I am a little bit of everyone I have ever met," he said, and he wrote accordingly. He saw the First World War years and the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike through the eyes of a poverty-stricken youngster who sold newspapers and blocks of ice, and stood in line for food vouchers. His father's alcoholism resulted in a life of deprivation for the family. Gray learned early to live by his wits.

He quit school after finishing Grade nine, landed a job as office boy at the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, and worked his way up to bookkeeper and stockbroker's clerk. During the Depression, he lost his job, spent five months in a tuberculosis sanatorium, and then lived on unemployment relief with his wife, Kathleen, and baby daughter, Patricia, in a rundown boarding house.

The Winter Years tells that story. It tells not only about the impact of the Depression on the farmers and city workers of the Prairies, but about the struggle of a 25-year-old husband and father searching desperately for work after the stock market crash, and scrounging to support his family. Gray finally landed a clerk's job but found his suit too big after years on relief diets. He conned a tailor into chalking on the alterations, and had his wife do the sewing.

Gray spent eight months during this period upgrading his education at the Winnipeg Public Library. That's when he decided to become a journalist. He researched and wrote an article about racehorse doping and sold it to the *Winnipeg Free Press*. He would have framed the ten-dollar cheque, he said afterwards, but he needed the money to buy groceries.

That was in 1933. Two years later, Gray started work at the *Free Press*, first as a reporter at twenty dollars a week, then as an editorial writer and eventually as Ottawa correspondent.

His focus was clear after he left Ottawa and moved to Calgary in 1948. He had spent a year, as he put it, "in a state of outraged indignation" over how little eastern politicians and journalists knew or cared about Western Canada. He became editor of the *Farm and Ranch Review*, and began supplying the eastern dailies with a regular column on western affairs.

During the years that followed, Gray continued to interpret the West for eastern readers. He worked in journalism until 1958, when he left his job as editor and publisher of the *Western Oil Examiner* to work for Home Oil as public relations manager.

He made good money at Home Oil, but he missed writing. He resubmitted his outline for *The Winter Years* to Macmillan, which had rejected the manuscript twenty years earlier. With publication finally a certainty, Gray took early retirement from Home Oil just to, as he said, complete this one book.

The book came out in 1966 and Gray — at age sixty — was on his way to becoming a best-selling author. By the mid-1970s, with a series of graphic, unconventional, social histories of the Prairies under his belt, James H. Gray had become well established as Western Canada's leading popular historian.

Over a 26-year period, Gray produced a dozen books, many of which became classics. They investigated aspects of Prairie life that until then received scant documentation. *Men Against the Desert* (1967) recorded how farm families fought drought, dust, insect infestations and crop failures during the 1930s. *Red Lights on the Prairies* (1971) covered the story of prostitution in the frontier West. *Booze* (1972) took a critical look at the tradition of heavy drinking on the Prairies, refuting the long-held liberal view that Prohibition was a disaster.

His trademark was a vivid, eminently readable style, solid research to

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counterbalance the personal reminiscences, and a sprinkling of sarcasm and mischievous wit.

In *Men Against the Desert*, Gray declared, "More lies have probably been told about the weather of the Dirty Thirties than any other subject except sex; yet most of the lies could have been true."

In *Red Lights on the Prairies*, he observed wickedly that, if other historians were to be believed, "monks, eunuchs and vestal virgins" had settled the West

Gray was unusual among historians in that he wrote chronicles of the common people rather than catalogues of politicians and acts of Parliament. "I don't give a damn about politicians," he said bluntly. "Ordinary people go through life without any awareness of politics at all."

But he did care about one politician: R. B. Bennett. That was because he felt Bennett had been given a bad rap when he was characterized as the heartless villain of the Depression; the penny-pinching Methodist who told Canadians they could resolve their economic problems by taking in one another's washing.

Gray didn't believe that Bennett's tightwad image was in accordance with the facts. The author had accidentally discovered, while researching a book about Alberta lawyers, that Bennett in private was the soul of generosity; a philanthropist who gave away thousands to worthy causes. How could such a man have earned a reputation as a destroyer of Canada? Gray vowed to rehabilitate the image, and he put forward the case that Bennett was "the most generous politician that ever lived in Canada." Like other Gray books, his *R.B. Bennett: The Calgary Years*, was hailed by reviewers as a landmark contribution to the catalogue of Canadian history.

But Gray will be remembered best for his other books, the books written for people who loved history and who didn't demand that it come with footnotes. His books are still in print, and they are still read. They always will be. It's not difficult to understand why Canada's National History Society awarded Gray the Pierre Berton Award for popularizing Canadian history. When it came to telling the history to ordinary Canadians, nobody did it better.

Brennan's full-length biography, *How the West was Written: The Life & Times of James H. Gray*, is published in hardcover by Fitzhenry & Whiteside. Originally priced at $24.95, it is now available for $17.95. It can be ordered directly from the publisher through this link:http://www.fitzhenry.ca/detail.aspx?ID=9912

On Sunday May 31, 2009, at the special conference presented in Calgary by the Historical Society of Alberta and Chinook Country Historical Society, Brennan will present an illustrated talk about Irish immigrants to Alberta.

Where the Heck is Habay?

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One of the more serious emergencies occurred during our first summer at Habay. On a Sunday afternoon I had gone duck hunting on horseback with one of the locals, about eight miles from the post. In the middle of our hunt another young man came racing on on his horse and asked me to come home at once, Henry Mercredi had been shot. I raced home as fast as the horse could run, and found several people gathered outside our house. I rushed in to find Henry lying on our kitchen floor. Velma and Anna Brugger were busy removing shot gun pellets from his upper right chest with tweezers. Henry had been out hunting geese alone and sat down to wait for the next flock to fly over. He leaned his 16 gauge loaded shotgun on a willow bush beside him and was smoking a cigarette when a gust of wind stirred the willow bush causing the shotgun to fall against him and discharge. He was found by other hunters who fortunately had a team and wagon and brought him to the village. He had lost a lot of blood, but Velma used her Girl Guide training to stop the bleeding and clean up the wound. I got on the morse code transmitter and ordered an emergency evacuation immediately. Henry was air lifted to the Camsell hospital in Edmonton and was returned home in less than a week with a letter from one of the Camsell doctors complementing Velma on her fine work. The trajectory of the gunshot was at a gradual enough angle that a deep penetration of Henry's chest was avoided. Obviously a direct blast at close range from a shotgun would have been fatal.

End of Installment 1 — to be continued

Dancing in the Sky

by C.W. Hunt.

Dancing in the Sky is the first complete telling of the First World War fighter pilot–training initiative established by the British in response to the terrible losses occurring in the skies over Europe in 1916. This program, up and running in under six months despite enormous obstacles, launched Canada into the age of flight ahead of the United States.

The results enabled the Allies to regain control of the skies and eventually win the war, but at a terrible price. Flying was in its infancy and pilot training primitive. This is the story of the talented and courageous men and women who made the training program a success, complete with the romance, tragedy, humour, and pathos that accompany an account of such heroic proportions. A valuable addition to Canada's military history, this book will appeal to all who enjoy an exceptional adventure story embedded in Canada's past.

About the author: C.W. Hunt, a former history teacher, business executive, and entrepreneur, retired from business to devote his energies to writing in 1996. He has written six books on the history of the Belleville area including Booze, Boats and Billions and Gentleman Charlie and the Lady Rum Runner. He lives in Belleville, Ontario.

Softcover
IBSN 978-1-55002-864-5
Pages 358
Price $28.99
Published by Dundurn Press, 2009.

University of Alberta Press

The Importance of Being Monogamous: Marriage and Nation Building in Western Canada in 1915
by Sarah Carter
Copublished with UofA Press (April 2008 (0-88864-490-6) SC $34.95
eBook 978-1-897425-19-

Sarah Carter reveals the pioneering efforts of the government, legal, and religious authorities to impose the one man, one woman model of marriage upon Mormons and Aboriginal people in Western Canada. This lucidly written, richly researched book revises what we know about marriage and the gendered politics of late 19th century reform, shifts our understanding of Aboriginal history during that time, and brings together the fields of Indigenous and migrant history in new and important ways.

We Are All Treaty People
Prairie Essays
edited by Roger Epp

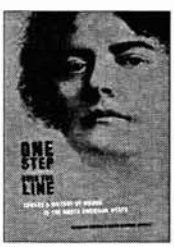
ISBN: 0-88864-506-6
CND$ 26.95 December 2008

In his collection of Prairie essays — some of them profoundly personal, some poetic, some political — Roger Epp considers what it means to dwell attentively and responsibly in the rural West. He makes the provocative claim that Aboriginal and settler alike are "Treaty people;" he retells inherited family stories in that light; he reclaims the rural as a site of radical politics; and he thinks alongside contemporary farm people whose livelihoods and communities are now under intense economic and cultural pressure. *We Are All Treaty People* invites those who feel the pull of a prairie heritage to rediscover the poetry surging through the landscapes of the rural West, among its people and their political economy.

Books & Websites

Fur Trade Letters of Willie Traill 1864-1893
William Edward Traill
Editor K. Douglas Munro
Foreword Michael Peterman
ISBN: 0-88864-460-4
CND $ 34.95 Dec 2006

Son of Catharine Parr Traill and nephew of Susanna Moodie, William Edward Traill, better known as Willie, came by his literary talent naturally. He found employment with the Hudson s Bay Company in what was to become the Canadian West. His letters home are a rich and detailed portrait of domestic life in the fur trade of the Northwest between 1864 and 1893.



One Step Over the Line Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests
Editor Elizabeth Jameson, Sheila McManus
ISBN: 0-88864-501-5
CND $ 34.95 May 2008

This eclectic and carefully organized range of essays from women's history and settler societies to colonialism and borderlands studies is the first collection of comparative and transnational work on women in the Canadian and US Wests. Out of the talks presented at the "2002 Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West through Women's History," Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus have edited a text for pioneering scholars of this emergent, interdisciplinary field.

Son of the Fur Trade
The Memoirs of Johnny Grant
John Francis Grant
Editor Gerhard J. Ens
ISBN: 0-88864-491-4
CND $ 34.95 Nov 2008

Born in 1833 at Fort Edmonton, Johnny Grant experienced and wrote about many historical events in the Canada-US north-west, and died within sight of the same fort in 1907.

The Irregulars

Roald Dahl and the British Spy Ring in Wartime Washington

Author: Jennet Conant
Review by
Ron Williams

A very interesting look behind the official version of events during a very important period of history. When war came to Britain and Europe in 1939 the majority of Americans were isolationists. They did not want the United States to become involved in Europe's wars.

After the sprint of 1940 when Britain and her Commonwealth and Empire stood alone against a fascist dominated Europe with her very existence threatened by the submarine menace, Churchill saw that it was imperative that America be brought into the war.

British Security Coordination, BSC, was set up under the Canadian William Stevenson to bring this about. This organization's purposes were to gather information about American affairs, gather information concerning foreign agents in the U.S. and to influence American opinion.

Roald Dahl came to Washington at this time. He was a 24 year old who was working in Africa when war broke out. He immediately joined the R.A.F. While flying over North Africa, and in Greece, he crashed and was injured twice; the second time so severely that he could not fly again. He was sent to Washington as an assistant air attaché mainly to act as a poster boy for the RAF. He was tall, very handsome, dashing in his uniform and so became popular in social circles. He met and became almost a son to Texas millionaire oilman and newspaper owner Charles Marsh.

He gained access to many important people right up to the White House. Eleanor Roosevelt was impressed by him and he was invited to dine several times as well as to spend weekends at Hyde Park. Dahl was soon brought into the BSC network and worked throughout the war gathering information and influencing opinion in many ways.

The tall, handsome, charming war hero was very attractive to women. He had affairs with the wives of several important government people. Pillow talk enabled him to gather information and to influence opinion. One such contact was Claire Booth Luce. Her husband was editor of *Time* magazine and she was a recently elected isolationist Congresswoman. Shortly after they met she invited him to spend a weekend in her hotel suite. She was thirteen years his senior but very passionate; hardly allowing him up for air during the three days. When he reported on this event he said: "I don't know if I can keep this pace up." The Ambassador replied: "Close your eyes and think of England!". Mrs. Luce's anti-British attitude was noted to soften.

It provides another view of history to read of this behind the scene influence of British intelligence in American politics. As the 1944 Presidential election approached, the British wanted Henry Wallace replaced as they felt his attitude towards Russia was too naïve and that he didn't see the danger of Russian expansion in Eastern Europe. While the British influence in the dumping of Wallace was not decisive, it was influential as Dahl was often used as a means of direct unofficial contact between Churchill and Roosevelt.

This book gives a very interesting view of this important time. The author, even though she is American, does bring out the British successes. The book could be shortened by omitting rather tedious details of Dahl's after war life. He did become a rather well known author, finally moving into children's literature where some of his work, e.g. *Thomas and the Chocolate Factory*, are classics.

ISBN-13: 978-0-74329458-4
Hardcover, 416 pages
US $27.95 Cdn $32.00
Simon & Schuster, New York, Toronto

Books & Websites

The 11,000ERS of the Canadian Rockies

by Bill Corbett

Winner of the Canadian Rockies Award at the 2005 Banff Mountain Book Festival

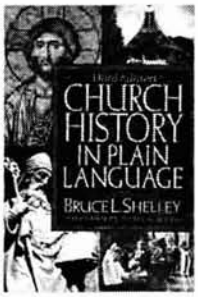
This comprehensive climber's guide and history of the 54 11,000-foot peaks in the Canadian Rockies celebrates in words and images these breathtaking summits and the wilderness settings over which they tower. It is book that uniquely captures and distills the lively-and frequently forgotten accounts of the pioneering climbers and their various routes.

Each entry provides a vivid description of the peak, an extensive history of the early ascents of it and a detailed description of moderate to intermediate routes, including access and approach information.

Now extensively updated, the text is illustrated with route and climbing photos, both contemporary and historical, and includes detailed area maps.

Bill Corbett is a native Albertan and has been a full-time writer for 27 years. He has spent countless weekends and holidays mountaineering, backcountry skiing, hiking and taking photos in the mountain ranges of the Canadian West. In 2002, he became the third person to climb all 54 of the 11,000-foot peaks in the Canadian Rockies.

Rocky Mountain Books
Climbing / History
978-1-897522-40-0
6.625 x 9.625, 224 pages
colour & b/w photos, maps
$29.95, softcover



Church History In Plain Language
Third Edition
by Bruce L. Shelley
Review by **Ron Williams**

A very large topic; the history of the Christian church, is covered in this large book, 532 pages of text. Few insights are given, mainly a recitation of events, people and ideas. Difficulties are encountered as there are many contradictory trends present at the same time so there is plenty of opportunity for disagreements on many facets of the story. Dr. Shelly is an American scholar and this is made clear by his choice of material.

In dealing with the early Christian movement one question is not dealt with. Why is the Old Testament being of a different religion made a central part of the scripture of the new faith? A dismissive answer is that the Old Testament presents prophesy and the new was the fulfillment of that prophesy. This, however, is far from complete as a great deal of the Old Testament has little, if anything, to do with prophesy.

Much of the Old Testament was written over a long period of time and was written for a specific purpose. The Book of Leviticus, for instance, was written at the time of Babylonian Captivity to give the Hebrew people guidance in resisting absorption into the larger society. It has nothing to do with prophesy but a great deal to do with conduct.

Why is this book used to condemn certain acts but not all condemned therein? It contains the homophobic comments which are used by many to condemn homosexuality. What of its rules about diet; or about isolating women during their periods? This selective approach to Scripture is not dealt with. The whole question of the whole message of the gospel versus selective portions is not dealt with. Another fundamental question is individual faith versus institutional. This is dealt with, but not conclusively.

Dr. Shelley's American background shows in that it would seem the history of the Christian Church was only a prelude for the present situation in the United States. Many contradictions are not explained. How could a Christian nation condone slavery for so long and then for longer condone racial prejudice?

He deals with the ebb and flow of the Protestant portion of Christianity, but here too the Contradictions are not adequately dealt with. While society has become more secular and more tolerant, why has Biblical fundamentalism become political powerful in the Republication Party and maybe now why is that power ebbing? He accepts the right wings statements about moral decline as fact rather than opinion. Why is being more open and tolerant as a society a sign of moral decline? It needs to be clearly understood that democracy means both majority rule and respect for the human rights of minorities. If there is not that respect, it is tyranny of the majority; not democracy. Putting the question: should a basic human right be withdrawn from a minority to a vote is not Christian and not democratic?

Also, inadequately dealt with is the black period of the 1930's. Why were Christian leaders so silent in the face of the horrors of Fascism?

Generally, this is a worthwhile overview but not the source of real insight into the topic.

Publisher: Thomas Nelson, Inc.
ISBN: 9780718025533
$29.99 US/544 pages
Softcover

Books & Websites

Zion's Promise Vol. 3: ***Amidst War's Alarms*** by Chris Jefferies, the long-awaited Third Volume in the Western Trilogy Chronicles

A meticulously researched novel based on actual characters and events in Utah Territory. Set in the early 1860s and based on painstaking research by master storyteller Chris Jefferies, Amidst War's Alarms is a true western novel set in the fascinating Mormon society and culture of Utah Territory.

Reuniting readers with the Mormon emigrant family that traveled from England to Zion and settled Utah Territory's wild frontier, volume three of the Zion's Promise Trilogy tells of the drama and dangers the family faces as the Civil War breaks out. Caught between the warring sides, Adam Weldon's faith, as well as his love for his fiancé, are tried in ways he cannot imagine. Outlaws, Indian trouble, and imminent hostilities between the Mormons and the US Army only fuel the excitement in this stirring, suspense-filled novel.

Zion's Promise Vol. 3: Amidst War's Alarms, together with Vol. 1: The Quest Begins, and Vol. 2: Will Mercy Rob Justice? are available at:

www.zionspromise.com,
www.brighamdistributing.com,
and at major bookstores.

To contact the author, send an email to colj2@sbcglobal.net or author@zionspromise.com

Zion's Promise Vol. 3: Amidst War's Alarms
by Chris Jefferies
Fiction; Soft cover; $17.95 US
ISBN: 978-0-9778562-2-0

Peace Country Historical Society

Write to
10105 - 94 Ave
Grande Prairie, AB T8V 0K7

by **Fran Moore**

Peace River Country-Region Joining the Historical Society of Alberta. 'Spirit of the Peace: Museums Network, by Fran Moore

At the Grande Prairie Regional Heritage Symposium, October 3 & 4, 2008, interest was shown in our area to become a branch of the Historical Society of Alberta. An organizational meeting was held at the Grande Prairie Museum on November 15, 2008, where the initial plans were drawn up (adopted our name, collected memberships and set up steering committee). A second organizational meeting was held on February 8, 2009, (to approve by-laws, develop a slate of officers, and suggest projects).

Our area is a distinct region, separate from the rest of the province: **historically and geographically**. It is a large area in the northwest portion of Alberta, and the northeastern portion of British Columbia. It has great wealth in agriculture, forestry, petroleum and tourism. It has great beauty in it's deep river valleys, lush with flora and fauna.

Historically it is separate in that it was settled later than many parts of the provinces to the south. Getting to the Peace over the very difficult trails before the railroad, which arrived in Grande Prairie in 1916, was ever a challenge.

From even earlier, in late 1700's, the area has unique stories that tell about some of the earliest fur trade and missionary history of the province, when the rivers were the transportation when travel was from Fort Chipewyan and south up the Peace River to Fort Vermilion, Peace River, Dunvegan and Fort St. John — this even before southern Alberta settlement began.

Geographically the region still has a forested strip to drive through before you reach 'the Peace,' no matter which road you choose. With paved roads and modern transportation methods, this poses no problem, but in the pioneer days it took much time and effort to reach 'the Peace.'

Putting the geography and the history together, our region has a 'spirit of being one,' a sense of belonging. Therefore, back in 1989 when the museums of 'the Peace' came together to host the Alberta Museums Association annual meeting in Grande Prairie, we formed a network that has continued to this day.

"Spirit of the Peace: Museums Network" has been in existence since the fall of 1989, and has about 40 Museums and/or Historic Sites within it's area. Meetings are held quarterly somewhere in the area, followed by a newsletter. The 'network' has done many joint projects (advertising and promotion, brochures, displays and exhibits, a video and signs). The museums are mostly in Alberta, but there are eight on the BC side of the Peace, and all the museums are working toward telling our unique stories.

Fran Moore (nee Bodeker)

Biography: Fran Moore (nee Bodeker)

Peace Country Roots Peace Country born, in maternal grandfather's (Stenseth) log cabin, Valleyview, Alberta in 1938 — oops, now you know. Early educated in Valleyview (first two years a one-room school), and yes I walked to school — three miles. No — it's actually true.

High School in Grande Prairie and Nanaimo, BC, followed by Business College back in Grande Prairie. Bookkeeping in Grande Prairie and then coming full circle back in Valleyview. I married Marv Moore on February 20, 1959, (yes, 50th Anniversary this year), and we moved to DeBolt (Marv's home town) and built an Esso Service Station and ran it for 10 years.

We have three children, nine grand children and one 'Great One.' We still live in DeBolt and operate our farm, which over the years became KLB Bison Ranch. We enjoy the bison and have been in that business since 1993. Marv had been MLA for this area from 1971 through 1989, and I was busy with the home, family and developed other interests.

I was on the local community board for many years in many capacities: secretary, curling board, and golfboard. In 1975 we started a small museum in DeBolt, which was my mother-inlaw's dream (the community was named after her family; the DeBolts). I got 'hooked on history,' I

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Chinook Country Historical Society

Write to
311, 223 12 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB. T2R 0G9

by **Tom Hamp, President**

Greetings All!

Program Meetings have dominated Chinook Country Historical Society events this Winter, with thanks for Laurel Halladay for arranging this excellent and entertaining series of presentations.

Our January meeting presentation on the Danish Ethnic Communities by Kirstin Bouwsema brought to us the stories of Danish immigrants to Canada during 19031939, and how they coped with their new life in Alberta. Very interesting to understand the dynamics of this thriving community in and around Calgary.

The February Program Meeting, was lively and unusual, with pianist David Klinger presenting his talk on "Professional Jazz and Pop Musicians in Calgary, 1900-1950." Those who attended were treated to singalongs of songs from the period, accompanied by David on piano in period costume.

Our Annual General Meeting was held this year at SAIT on Tuesday, March 24, with the introduction of a strong new Board of Directors for 2009-2010 and a presentation by Ken Lima-Coelho on the Glenbow Museum. Our thanks to Shona Gourlay for arranging this event.

The 2009 CCHS-HSA Conference (May 29-31) is in excellent shape, under the outstanding direction of our coordinator, Trudy Cowan. This promises to be a wonderfully full and well-attended event with five sessions, tours, Trade Fair and HSA AGM. This is an exceptional bargain for the $100 HSA member price, especially considering the four meals included in the price, thanks to Trudy's fund-raising success. You will have received your registration brochure in the January mailout of the HSA's "History NOW".

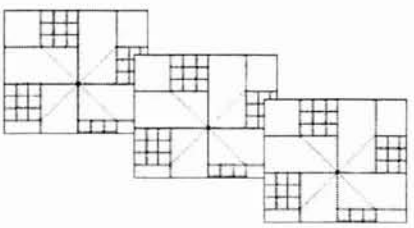
We hope to see you there!

Information about the HSA Conference and Annual Awards Banquet can be found on our website at:

www.albertahistory.org

From the Conference Co-ordinator:

Trudy Cowan, at 403.984.8185
cowant@shaw.ca



Fran Moore **continued from page 15**

volunteered to help, took courses and became the museum's curator. It was a 'life sentence' as I still have the job after 33 years.

During those years we've built up a fairly large museum, for a small community, and we tell the many stories in seven heritage buildings and a couple sheds. We have published four history books and have had two of them go into a second printing. All these projects were very hands-on, and interesting, or I would have quit years ago. Three of the books were 'local history' with family and community stories of our area (Sturgeon Lake to the Smoky River).

The fourth book had a wider scope and interest: 'Edson to Grande Prairie Trail.' I was the editor and did the research on this book which took three years of my life. It was the story of this infamous trail that only existed for five years, 1911 to 1916. It is a great story about thousands of families who came over the trail to homestead in the Peace. We are now getting ready to celebrate that trail's centennial in 2011.

Other interests and associations through the years have been: on 'regional advisory committee' to Government on Historic Dunvegan; trainer for the CCS Cansurmount program; served on Council of the Alberta Museums Association; member of the Grande Prairie Branch, AGS; member of the Brush Buddies Art Club and of the Prairie Art Gallery, Grande Prairie and Chairperson since 1989 for "Spirit of the Peace: Museums Network" (fascinating).

"Hooked on History" this I very much am. I enjoy my work with the local museum, and the regional network and my favorite reading is books on Peace, Alberta, Canadian history.

Lethbridge Historical Society

Write to
PO Box 974
Lethbridge, AB. T1J 4A2

by **Belinda Crowson,** President

It is the hope of every historical society that the work being done by its members and committees will matter – that the work being done day in and day out by devoted volunteers will spark the general public to get more interested in history, that it will get people discussing and talking about history.

This certainly happened over the last month or so with the work being done by our Plaque and Monument Committee. Over the past several years, the committee has been working with the Heart of Our City Committee (City of Lethbridge) and various site/building owners to research and install plaques to commemorate important buildings and sites in the downtown core. Over the past couple of years, sixteen buildings have had plaques erected and many more are on the list to get a plaque.

One of the sites that was deemed relevant and worth being recognized was The Point or Red Light District. It took several attempts to write a plaque that provided the facts of the area in an objective, historical manner. After the first draft, the plaque was read by several LHS and Heart of Our City members to ensure it was appropriate and balanced.

As the location of the old district is now city property, Carly Stewart on behalf of the LHS' Monuments Committee presented to City Council requesting permission to locate the plaque at the west end of 4th Avenue South. Well, this certainly got people — in Lethbridge and across Canada — talking about history but also the modern reality of the world's oldest profession.

This decision to put up the plaque garnered a lot of media coverage including the *Globe and Mail* (February 10, 2009 Bible belt flashes its garter belt), CBC Radio, Lethbridge Herald, CTV, Global TV and radio stations. The discussion around whether or not to put up the plaque even had the Lethbridge Regional Police talking about prostitution in the Lethbridge Herald (February 16, 2009 Drugs Fuel Sex Trade). The author used the discussion about the LHS plaque to highlight the reality of prostitution in Lethbridge today.

While much of the response was either that people had no idea this had existed in Lethbridge or that it's a part of history and a story that needs to be told, a few people also called the LHS to express their concerns about the plaque. One concern expressed was that the plaque was inappropriate as it glamourized this profession. But although not everyone agreed with us, it was a wonderfully gratifying experience to know that our Society gave people in southern Alberta and across Canada something to think about.

Lethbridge City Council gave permission for the location of the Red Light District plaque but it will be a while before this plaque is up. However, we invite everyone to come down in May during Historic Lethbridge Festival (May 2-9) for the unveiling of three other building plaques. On May 2, at 10 am plaques on the Alexandra Hotel/Alec Arms/Burns Block and Oddfellow's Hall will be unveiled. Then on May 7, 10 am the plaque on the Lethbridge Conservatory of Music/Spudnuts/Crazy Cakes will be unveiled. If you've never had a Spudnut, they will be available following the unveiling to those in attendance.

However plaques aren't all that is keeping our Society busy.

At our March 24 meeting, Rob Kossuth of the University of Lethbridge will highlight the history of sports in Lethbridge. And, at our April 28 meeting at a presentation titled "100 Years of Steel," Carly Stewart will speak on the history of Lethbridge's High Level Bridge. The Bridge is celebrating 100 years on June 22 this year.

Planning for fall program is under way. The plan is to have a winter of programs looking at what is history and who is doing history. More details to follow.

If you have a summer address, please send it to us at albertahistory@telus.net so you will not miss the July issues of *Alberta History* or *History NOW*.

Central Alberta Historical Society

by **Sheila Bannerman**

Write to
c/o Red Deer and District Museum
45–47A Avenue, Red Deer, AB T4N 6Z6

The Central Alberta Historical Society's spring program features a set of speakers the culturally diverse makeup of Alberta, reflecting early perceptions of the area and insight into distinct cultural groups. January through March involved the point of view of a Scandinavian newspaper columnist, Aksel Sandemose and a presentation about discovery of a fur trade era burying ground in the Rocky Mountain House area.

Involving our more modern history, we were also treated to an inside look at the dedicated individuals who staff remote fire towers, and learned about the Forest Fire Look Out system.

In the upcoming April and May programs, we will learn about the community building of Southern Alberta Jews, and the defining features of the distinctive blocks of Ukrainian prairie settlement.

May brings the Central Alberta Historical Festival, formerly Historic Red Deer Week. We are proud to reflect the richness of Central Alberta history in a broad range of activities. The Festival will kick off Sunday, May 24, and a preview of the festival as well as an overview of the Society's activities will be on view at our table at the Red Deer farmers market on Saturday May 23. For information on Festival events, visit http://www.historicreddeerweek.com/.

The pre-quel to the Festival, held May 1-2, is the Historica School Fair, an event that encourages young historians to develop an interest in history from a variety of perspectives. The presentations will be judged 6-8:30 pm May 1, at the Parkland Mall, and will be on display 10 am to 3 pm Saturday, May 2, to give all of us the opportunity to enjoy a youthful take on both new and familiar historical topics. Come and challenge your perceptions — History is not always what it seems!

Our spring bus tour this year, "Doukhobors, Diggers and Desert," will be to south central British Columbia. Here, we will explore the contributions made by gold seekers and culturally distinct immigrants such as the Doukhobours in their contributions in shaping the culture of the area. This tour will take place June 10-13, 2009.

The CAHS is very proud of its newest publication — *Settlement Tales from Central Alberta – The Markerville Story*, by Carl Morkeberg. This book was previously published as *The Markerville Story* but the new incarnation has been enhanced with delightful photos, and is selling well.

Work continues in our support of the efforts of the Heritage Preservation Committee to convince the City of Red Deer to consider alternatives to demolishing the Historic Arlington Hotel in downtown Red Deer.

The City has purchased the hotel with the intent to demolish it, even though the building has decided historical significance. Controversy centres around the lack of many of its original physical characteristics, so that the argument is based on the contextual significance of the hotel in Red Deer history. The elements of the building that remain, combined with exterior restoration, would preserve the only commercial craftsman structure in the history of the city. Our position, along with other organizations is that the considerably altered interior would be a good candidate for adaptive reuse, and this combined with sensitive exterior renovation would be a distinct contribution to both preserving history and environmentally sensitive downtown management.

Our Historic Arches project appears to be nearing completion. The contractor has promised the arches will be up this spring, and plaques commemorating historic people, events and places are in the planning stages. Final drawings will be available for public comment during the Central Alberta Historical Festival.

Wishing you all a sunny and productive new season — I'm sure winter will pack it in before long!

About Don Edgecombe

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pilots holding the hose while the planes were being refueled.

As a young man Don spent ten years working for the Hudson Bay Company, first at a post in Fort Simpson followed by Fort Smith, Hay River, North Vermilion and last at Lower Post in BC. Leaving his Bay employment, Don's livelihood was selling men's clothing; beginning as manager of a store in Cassiar, BC, then in Whitehorse, for fifteen years as owner of a men's wear in Grande Prairie and before retiring ten years as a salesman to stores in western Canada.

Don and his wife, Velma moved to Sylvan Lake in 1987. Since coming to Sylvan Lake, they have built and sold two large lakeshore homes. They now live in a third new house, back from the lake. This smaller, open design home is large enough to welcome their six children and their families of 26 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Edmonton & District Historical Society

Write to
Queen Alexandra School,
7730 106 Street NW,
Edmonton, AB, T6E 4W3

Lisa Maltby
President, EDHS

Since last report in December 2008, EDHS has enjoyed a fairly quiet winter. The History Centre program continues and has been running smoothly; the Speaker Series has been well attended and well received. The historic festival is proceeding on schedule.

Because of the high demand for History Centre sessions, the program may be expanding. The Grade 7 & 8 sessions, two off-site sessions per week when a teacher visited schools on request, were fairly successful and we are looking forward to improvement next year. Consideration is being given to expanding the program with more sessions for grade 4 or 5 at the Centre.

The board is progressing toward its goal of articulating existing policy and developing an administrative structure and guidelines. Terms of reference for committees and guidelines for general operation of the society are under review. Although the task is not as simple as the board may have hoped, we feel it is an important process that will provide us with operating instructions vital to the sound operation of EDHS.

EDHS is preparing for its Annual General Meeting, which takes place in late April. The meeting itself is preceded by John Rowand Night, a celebration of the history of Edmonton. (John Rowand was the first factor of Fort Edmonton and served the Hudson's Bay Company in that capacity for over 30 years.) This year's after-dinner presentation is by Gordon Steinke, broadcast journalist and best-selling author, who will talk about his travels to rural Alberta communities. The EDHS Award of Merit presentation and the Annual General Meeting, including the election of new officers and board members, follow.

This year's historic festival takes place from July 24 through August 2. The brochure is currently in production and EDHS hopes to have it available before the beginning of June. For the past few years, the graphic designer for the brochure has managed to make each edition better than the last, so we are eagerly anticipating this year's version!

Heritage Canada Foundation / La fondation Héritage Canada

Two Ontario Towns Pass Resolutions Supporting HCF's Landmarks, Not Landfill Campaign

Ottawa, ON – March 12, 2009

This past February, the towns of Collingwood and Markham, Ontario joined the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and over a dozen other cities and towns in passing resolutions endorsing the Heritage Canada Foundation's Landmarks, Not Landfill campaign which calls upon the federal government to establish financial incentives to encourage private sector investment in the rehabilitation of historic properties.

"HCF was encouraged to hear about Collingwood and Markham's actions," said Natalie Bull, HCF's executive director. "We commend the federal government for earmarking $20 million for the National Historic Sites of Canada Cost-Sharing Program as part of the economic stimulus package announced in February's Federal Budget. The next step, however, should be to introduce tax measures to stimulate private sector investment in locally and provincially recognized historic properties."

Studies in Canada, the US, and elsewhere demonstrate that the rehabilitation of heritage buildings stimulates the economy, revitalizes communities, and creates jobs. In the US, the 30-year-old Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program has helped the private sector rehabilitate over 34,000 properties, leveraged $45 billion in private investment (with a 5 to 1 ratio of private investment to federal tax credits), and created an average of 45 new jobs with each project.

"If ever there was a time to create this practical federal measure to help to further stimulate the economy and protect the environment, it is now," stated Ms. Bull.

HCF encourages other municipalities to take action to support the call for federal financial incentives for historic places. To see a sample letter to council and a sample resolution, click the following link: http://www.heritagecanada.org/pdf/Background_and_Sample_Resolution_Mar09.pdf

The Heritage Canada Foundation is a national, membership-based, non profit organization with a mandate to promote the preservation of Canada's historic buildings and places.

For further information:
Carolyn Quinn,
Director of Communications
cquinn@heritagecanada.org
Telephone: 613.237.1066 ext. 4;
Cell: 613.797.7206

HSA Calendar 2009

Apr 16	**CAHS** Jews in Alberta, 7:30 pm. Red Deer Museum
Apr 21	**CCHS** The Aerial Adventures of WWI Flying Ace Freddie McCall, 7:30 pm, Fort Calgary
Apr 28	**EDHS** John Rowand Night and AGM – Your Town; 6 pm, Faculty Club, University of Alberta
May 2-9	**LHS** Historic Lethbridge Festival week.
May 1-2	**CAHS** Historica School Fair.
May 21	**CAHS** Ukrainian Immigrants on the Prairies 7:30 p.m. Red Deer Museum
May 24	**CAHS** Central Alberta Historical Festival, Red Deer
May 26	**CCHS** Nursing on the Prairies 7:30 pm. Fort Calgary
Jun 10-13	**CAHS** Bus tour "Doukhobors, Diggers and Desert," south BC.
Jul 24-Aug 2	**EDHS** Edmonton & Athabaska District Historic Festival
Jul 24-Aug 3	**CCHS** Historic Calgary Week

HSA Crossword

This crossword puzzle devised by Jennifer Prest

Answers to January newsletter crossword:

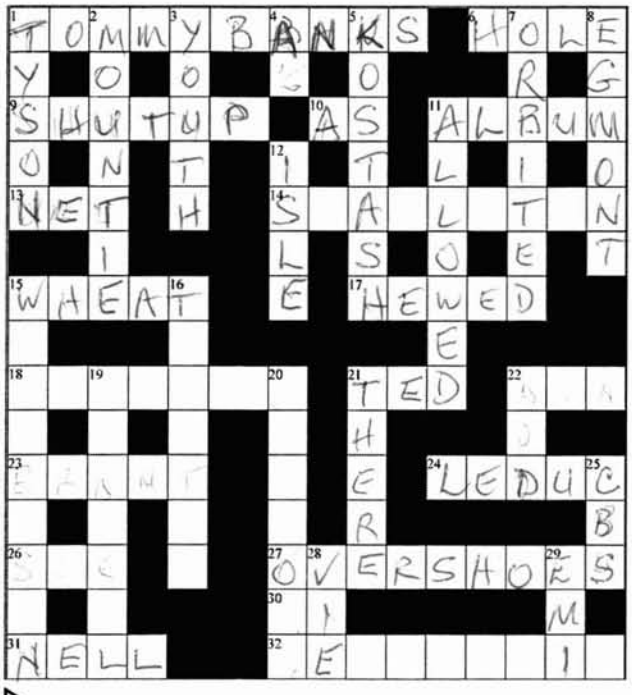
Across

1. Fescue; 4. Grey Cup; 8. Years; 9. Black; 10. Ron; 11. NDP; 12 Round; 13. Kayak; 14. Widow; 16. Stewart; 19. Rocky; 20. Tripe; 23. Ollie; 25. Edsel; 27. Bok; 28. Broil; 30. It; 31. Rat; 32. Res; 33. Ich; 34. Thee

Down

1. Fay; 2. Stampeder; 3. Unser; 4. Grand; 5. Elk; 6. Carly; 7. Ponoka; 9. Blues; 11. New; 13. Kayak; 15. Wacke; 17. Ernest; 18. Twin Butte; 21.Eskimos; 22. Bomber; 24. Lions; 25. Edith; 26. Larch; 29. Lei.

You have plenty of time to complete this crossword puzzle which was devised by a member of HSA. The answer will be published in the next issue of *History NOW*



Across

1. Appointed a Senator in 2000, he was Edmonton's 'Mr. Music' (2 wds)
6. Previous Lt. Governor, Lois _
9. "Be quiet!" (sl.) (2 wds)
10. A popular preposition
11. A collection of pictures, or tunes?
13. A surfer's location?
14. Rancher & owner of Lone Star Ranch, North of Brooks, 1907-38, Jim_
15. Once the staple crop of the prairies
17. Chopped down
18. Founder of REAL Women of Canada movement in the 1980's, Gwen_
21. Founding member of Alberta Labour History Institute, _ Morton
22. Calgary philanthropist, ___ Smith
23. A hamlet on 22x, 17 km southeast of Calgary
24. Site of the Imperial oil strike in 1947
26. To observe, sight
27. Galoshes
31. Famous English actress and friend of Charles II, _Gwynn
32. Early missionary, Father Alphonse _

Down

1. Balladeer and rancher, Ian _
2. A member of the RCMP
3. Being young, collectively
4. Artist, _ Leighton, (2 wds)
5. Prominent writer, feminist and activist, Myrna _
7. Circled around
8. The reluctant peer, Fred Perceval, Earl of _, 1914 - 2001
11. Permitted, let happen
12. The _ of Skye
15. Social activist of the '30's & member of Social Credit party, Rose Owens _
16. Edmonton Journal writer in the 1930's, D. Walter _
19. The _ Brothers from Calgary who invented an automatic reset for gasoline pumps in 1944
20. The name of the lake in 24 Across
21. "Not here, _!"
22. To total
25. An American TV station
28. To compete
29. A manufacturer of LP's and EP's (abbr.),