



SOUTHERN ALBERTA PIONEERS

AND THEIR DESCENDANTS NEWSLETTER

Southern Alberta Pioneers and Their Descendants • 3625 - 4th Street S.W. • Calgary, Alberta T2S 1Y3 • Phone 243-3580

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Website: www.pioneersalberta.org

Email: southernalbertapioneers@shaw.ca

June 2008

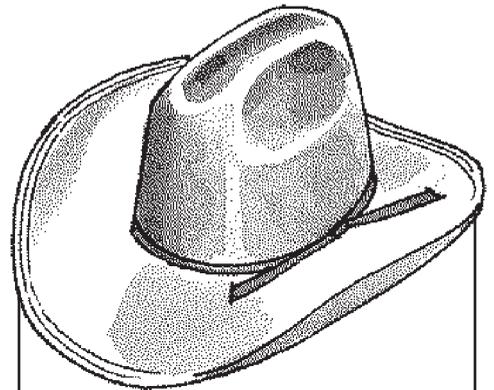
President's Message

I hope that the winter went well for all members. We actually had a fairly mild winter in this part of the country. We have spring weather as evidenced by flocks of robins, pesky gophers and pussy willows. However, we are now back to winter, but hopefully not for too long.

Coming up in July will be our Stampede events. I hope that you will be able to get out to these functions and I look forward to seeing you there.

Now to continue with some excerpts from the book *Hill Top Tales* by Dan McCown.

— Beryl Sibbald



THE STAMPEDE BARBECUE

Saturday, July 5/08

Memorial Building

Cocktails 6:00 p.m.

Dinner 6:30 p.m.

\$22.00/person

(age 11 and over)

Children 11 and under FREE

Convenor: Laurie Jacques

Tickets must be purchased in advance. To order call:

Gwen Hanna

279-5621

Pat Rodriguez

279-6435

Catering by Downtown Rotary Club

Volunteers Required for our 2008



STAMPEDE EXHIBIT

Volunteers may view this years display and pick up their passes at the Memorial Building on Monday June 16th, 2008 from 2 - 5 pm or from 6 - 8 pm

Remember!
To volunteer your services
Contact
Ken Thompson
at 289-4636



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Hours: Monday - Friday 8 - 6, Saturday 9 - 3
Closed on Statutory Holidays



Casino Volunteers Needed

Our next casino is on Tuesday, November 4 and Wednesday, November 5, 2008. This major fund-raising event requires 35-40 volunteers. It's a bit early to commit for November, but if you think you'll be able to help, please

call me at 279-6435 or email to pat.rodriguez@shaw.ca. This will be the only newsletter notice, as the volunteers need to be in place before our next newsletter in September. Thank you.

– Pat Rodriguez, Casino General Manager



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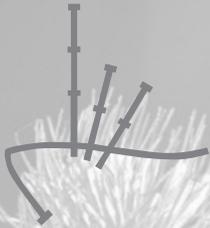
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Treasurer's Report

The 2006 audits are now complete for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2007.

Operations for the Foundation were very satisfactory, reflecting an excess of revenues over expenditures of \$70,012, an increase of nearly \$19,000 over 2006. The biggest contributor to this surplus is from the March 2007 Casino which realized net revenue of \$94,397. Rental revenues exceeded the previous year by about \$10,000. This increase was offset by higher operating costs, particularly in the areas of major repairs and maintenance completed in the year.

The Board has approved an increase in rental rates to be charged which will help to offset increased operating costs such as janitorial, security and utilities. The revised rates should soon be available on our Website.

The Southern Alberta Pioneers and their Descendants (The Association) incurred a small loss on operations for the year of \$1,203. There was a surplus of \$6,760 last year. A number of factors contributed to this – the net cost of Social events increased by \$1,700, there was a decline in book sales and investment income declined.

Both the Association and the Foundation remain in sound financial shape with combined net cash assets available of \$244,000.

– Respectfully submitted,
Joe Ferguson, Treasurer

Please Note:

Our events will be outside, rain or shine. This includes the BBQ, Pancake Breakfast, etc.

Large tents will be set up at the Building for the Stampede activities this year.

Memorial Service and Tea

Sunday, July 6th – 2 pm
at the Pioneer Building

Convenor: Gwen Hanna 279-5621

Membership Report

The Newsletter can be read and printed from www.pioneersalberta.org.

In Memoriam:

Arthur Patterson, Lillian Webber, Raymond Culley, Marion Hansen, Barbara Talbot & Elizabeth Lockwood

Welcome to New Gold Card Members:

Allan H. Petrie, Kinnaird Shaw, Helen White, Catherine Harradence, Frank Arnold, Buster Schwieger, Virginia Klatzel, George Heaton & Brian Clarke

Welcome to New Members:

Alan Campbell, descendant of Alexander Galt, Lethbridge, 1880
Paul Gray, descendant of Malcolm Tanner Millar, Calgary, 1885

James Quinn, descendant of John McCaffary, Calgary, 1885

Connie Cherniak, descendant of D.W. Davis, Fort Whoop Up, 1869

Judy Bazant, descendant of Hugh McNeill, Calgary, 1887

Alix Love, Descendant of James Whitely Clarke, Calgary, 1884

Welcome to New Associate members:

Kari Sibbald & Paul Nixdorff

Thanks again for keeping me informed of Address/Phone Changes.

Call me at 271-5483 or e-mail me at sap.membership@shaw.ca.

– Maureen Peckham
Membership Secretary

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

We have a great opportunity for someone interested in gathering articles and assisting with the publication of the Southern Alberta Pioneers Newsletter. We publish three times a year, January, May and September. The work is enjoyable and rewarding. If you are interested in giving a few hours three times a year contact Kerri at 271-9581.



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Pioneer Days in the Foothills – Howard Sibbald

Continued from February 2008 Newsletter

In those early days (1875) all our supplies had to be fetched from Fort Benton on the Missouri River over four hundred miles distant. As but one trip was made annually a large train of carts was needed to export buffalo hides and furs and to bring back the necessary foodstuffs and other materials on which the Morley settlers depended. In the spring of 1876 I was greatly excited over the prospect of going to Benton with the teamsters. Our caravan was formed of some forty vehicles and had attached to it, in addition to the animals in harness, a number of unbroken steers. These were to be occasionally yoked and gradually accustomed to work so that on the homeward journey they would provide haulage for our more bulky and weighty imports.

“These wild steers at the outset could only be successfully handled when coupled with a steady old ox long used to the hauling. I was appointed tutor to an animal hailing from Texas. Its horns were long but a list of its good qualities when we first met would have been very short. I commenced the training by giving it a lesson in behaviour when being led. Hitching the prosaic old ox to a cart I tied the steer to the rear end of the vehicle by a rope. I was then only 10 years old and fear had a mortgage on my soul and body. When the cart ox started ahead Mister Longhorn reared violently on his hind legs and first thing I knew he was beside me in the cart. After recovering from fright I persevered with the clumsy brute and before long had him as docile as any draught animal in the outfit.

“An ox team consisted of six animals hitched in a string and driven by one man. Its progress depended largely on the behaviour of the leader. Crossing rivers which were too deep to ford on the hoof proved a tedious undertaking on such a trip as that to Benton, and with such a large outfit. The carts, with their contents, had to be ferried on a raft fashioned from cart wheels covered over with buffalo hides. By means of long rawhide ropes this primitive ferry boat was pulled to and fro until the crossing was completed, usually an arduous task.

“On this trip, which to me was novel and thrilling, I was left, together with two teamsters, on an island in Sun River

where the oxen were turned loose to graze while the other members of the party proceeded to Helena. There they hoped to procure material necessary for building the additional carts needed to freight our goods home to Morley. This island was the home of large numbers of skunks which, to while away the time and to impress the teamsters with my prowess as a hunter, I proceeded to exterminate. The men were impressed all right and said so plainly in no uncertain terms whenever I got to windward of them.

“When our people returned from Helena they brought with them a number of used cannon wheels upon which we made and mounted cart bodies, and with our augmented caravan went on to Fort Benton. At that time Benton was a bustling frontier town. It depended almost entirely for its prosperity on the Missouri River, which was navigable up to that point. It also formed a base for prospectors scouting the Black Hills country in search of mineral wealth. While we were at Benton news was received of the Custer massacre. Consequently on the return journey we were all armed. My weapon was an old rim-fire rifle, almost as great a menace at the butt as at the muzzle. However, we saw no Indians, either hostile or friendly.

“At the time we came West the buffalo had already dwindled rapidly and the vast herds one read about were no longer to be seen. I recall now an experience on the boyhood trip to Benton, one that still remains vivid in spite of the passing of many years. This incident had the Sweet Grass Hills for a setting. There, one morning at very early dawn, I sleepily went out with one of the men to round up the oxen. On locating the animals we were somewhat surprised to see an old bull bison quietly feeding in their midst. I ran quickly back to camp and got an Indian of our party to come and shoot the great shaggy beast. One of our cart wheels had given way and so the hide of this bull was put to good use in repairing the damage. The green pelt was stretched and bound over the fracture and when the rawhide had shrunk and dried the wheel was again serviceable. We took with us part of the meat of this buffalo but hot and sultry weather soon spoiled it.

“On another occasion I went to Benton to meet my mother and on the return trip had a real mishap. We had bought a large can of coal oil, enough to light the Sibbald family lamps for a year. Unfortunately the jolting and jarring of the spring-less cart caused the can to spring a leak, with the result that when we reached Morley the oil was somewhere along the Benton Trail. All that winter we were entirely dependent on homemade candles for night-light. Nowadays with great electric power plants on the Bow River and at Morley furnishing light for half the province of Alberta, the loss of a can of coal oil seems a small matter, but to us it was a calamity. Later, when I.G. Baker had established stores at Macleod and at Calgary we were, one night say, almost next door to the grocery.

“During the late fall of 1877 I was permitted to go on a hunting trip with the men of Morley. We were after buffalo, which at that time were becoming comparatively scarce – only small bands of from fifty to one hundred ranging on the prairies. In search of these wild cattle we travelled long distance and after being out for several days finally sighted a herd some short distance west of the present town of Gleichen. It was then almost dusk and too late to hunt, so we camped for the night. Firewood was needed and with a half-breed Indian axeman, I went to the Bow River bank for dry poplar wood. No sooner had my companion laid axe to a stout tree than there was a most unearthly clatter and a shower of bones came rattling down about our ears. Unwittingly we had disturbed the last resting place of some long departed Blackfoot brave.”

Howard spoke of his mother in a wistful way which I could well understand. She died when he was but a lad of fifteen. Typhoid, then a scourge in primitive settlements, had broken out in Morley and she was amongst those stricken. There was no doctor nearer than Fort Macleod far to the south and no means of communication other than by courier. A young man named Boyd rode post-haste to the southern Police post for medical help. Despite a long detour made necessary by a prairie fire, the return journey, in a buckboard and with relays

Continued on Page 5

of horses, an estimated distance of one hundred and seventy-five miles, was made in eighteen hours and that over rough ungraded prairie trails. It was an heroic journey, but unfortunately without avail. By the time the doctor arrived at Morley the beloved wife of the Mission teacher and friend of all the Stoney was beyond all aid.

When the storm had cleared and the September sun was rapidly melting the sodden snow we broke camp, dried our canvas shelter, stacked away the tipi poles and presently wended our way homewards across Aylmer Pass and along the hillsides above Minnewanka Lake. Sibbald's flood of recollection still ran strong. He remembered taking part as a jockey in a horse race on open prairie where Hudson's Bay Store, Central United Church, the Herald and other prominent Calgary buildings now stand. The year 1882 found him freighting supplies for the engineers, then surveying the route of Canadian Pacific Railway through the foothills of the Rockies.

Three years later war broke out on the Western plains and Sibbald joined the transport division of Steele's Scouts, a force which took active part in quelling the Riel Rebellion. Then followed a tranquil period of ranching and a long term as Indian agent at Morley and Gleichen.

Thus far his train of recollection ran and it failed only when we had finally dismounted, unsaddled and stowed away our gear. The notebook then used to store these pioneer memories is open before me now, the yellowing pages somewhat foxed and considerably smudged with ash from a camp fire long gone cold. It still exhales the faintest whiff of wood smoke whose odour conjures up undimmed vision of a good companion and a trustworthy friend.

During the latter part of his long and useful life Andrew Sibbald lived in Banff where, as at Morley, he was greatly respected. On the occasion of his ninety-seventh birthday he was guest of honour at a special meeting of the Southern Alberta Old Timers Association in Calgary. This organization boasts of many members of Scots birth or ancestry and it was significant that at that gathering they made the venerable gentleman a Life Member. However, it proved no belated

tribute because the recipient lived for several more years and even after becoming a centenarian, he remained keenly interested in the affairs of the Association and in all current events.

He died in Banff and was buried on the Indian Reservation at Morley where in 1875 he founded the first school established in Southern Alberta. During the service in the nearby church, of which he had been architect and builder, there came an unexpected interruption, one which was profoundly touching. While the resident missionary offered a simple prayer and read a familiar chapter, an aged Indian, William Twin, walked slowly down the hill and across the meadow towards the building. In one hand he held a compact little bunch of foothills flowers, in the other he carried a single pinion feather. Pressing through the throng in the doorway and advancing up the narrow aisle, he halted beside the coffin and in the hush of the crowded sanctuary, gave voice to the sorrow of his tribe and paid tribute to the worth of the Good Teacher who had gone to sleep.

Present on that occasion and though quite unfamiliar with the Stoney language in which William spoke, I was nevertheless as deeply moved by his eloquence as by his dignity. Having ended he laid the humble floral token on the casket and placed the feather, native symbol of immortality, on the breast of his departed friend. Then, gathering his smoke-stained and tattered blanket about him as a proud Roman patrician might have girt his toga, he silently took his leave.

Outdoors a gentle wind stirred the prairie grass and rippled the quietly flowing river. The clack of up-springing grasshoppers sounded strangely loud. William walked slowly up the hill and over the ridge where the old fir trees stand sentinel.

MISSING

A Silver Tea Service is missing from the Memorial Building. The set includes a Teapot with cream and sugar. Please contact Beryl @ 932-5584.

Historic Calgary Week

Southern Alberta Pioneers are hosting the first day of Historic Calgary Week on Friday, July 25, 2008 at the Memorial Building. The following SAP members will speak: Jack Switzer, Jewish settlement, Ralphine Locke, Norman Luxton, Patricia Cox, Kew area and Lloyd Hamilton, Frontiersmen in Calgary.

Come out and support your colleagues. A tour will be offered to members of SAP and CCHS in September 2008 to Banff and the Whyte Museum to see the display of artifacts from Norman Luxton, former SAP President and Adventurer extraordinaire!

A tour to the Crowfoot Museum in Cluny is being scheduled for Spring 2009.

Volunteer Hours

Volunteers, please submit the number of volunteer hours worked in 2007 to 2008. These will be entered into the log book at the building. Submit to Sandy Pedlar, 53 Deer River Green SE, Calgary, AB T2J 7A2. Email sgpedlar@shaw.ca.

**2008
Gentlemen's
Pancake Brunch
Toonie Breakfast**

**Saturday, July 12th
9 am - Noon**



2007 Board of Directors and Committee Chairpersons

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Memorial Bldg.

Caretaker – Sherry Toffin

SAP Office243-3580

SAP Fax.....287-2485

Hall.....287-2489

EVENTS

Friday, July 4 – Pre-Parade Breakfast for participants, Rotary House, 6:30am. Convenor: Kerri Fipke.

Saturday, July 5 – Stampede BBQ, Memorial Bldg., 6:00pm. Convenor: Laurie Jacques.

Sunday, July 6 – Memorial Service Tea, Memorial Bldg., 2:00pm. Convenor: Gwen Hanna.

Monday, July 7 – Sandwich Making for Rotary House, Memorial Bldg., TBA. Convenors: Moyra Ferguson & Linda Chudey.

Tuesday, July 8 – Pioneer Tea, Rotary House, 2:30pm - 4:30pm. Convenors: Moyra Ferguson & Linda Chudey.

Saturday, July 12 – Pancake Breakfast, Memorial Building, 9:00am - 12:00pm. Convenor: Danny Copithorne.

Sunday, Sept. 7 – Family Games/Potluck, Champion Park, 2:00pm. Convenors: Danny & Fran Copithorne.

Saturday, Oct 25 – AGM/Luncheon, Memorial Building, 12:00-3:00pm. Convenor: Kerri Fipke.

Saturday, Nov. 1 – Round-Up, Palliser Hotel, 5:00pm. Convenors: Danny & Fran Copithorne.

Saturday, Dec. 6 – Christmas Dinner, Memorial Building, 5:30pm. Convenor: TBA

Note: Games / potluck events; potluck dinner starts at @ 5:00pm.

Contact Bob Brewster or Moyra Ferguson if you can fill any of the "Convener Needed" functions.

THE NOTICE BOARD

Historical Committee

Please submit Family Histories to be entered in our archives. We would like to feature a family history for each newsletter publication. Contact Pat Cox, 252-4220.

Deadline

Deadline for newsletter copy and photos to be submitted in writing at monthly Board Meetings or left at SAP office. Newsletter printed January, May and September.

Historical Committee

Resumes regular weekly meetings on Monday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Contact Joan Davis, 251-4915.

Sick and Visiting

Please notify Alice Schwieger (287-0995) of any illness or death in your family or if anyone has need of a hospital visit.

Board Meetings

1st Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. (except July & August). Members welcome.

Card Night

2nd Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. (except July, August and December). Everyone is invited, members and friends. \$2.00 per person. Contact Fern Dorsch at 278-2793.

Advertising

To place an ad in this publication, please call Beryl Sibbald, 932-5584. Deadline to place a classified ad – SAP Board meeting prior to publication.

Members are encouraged to support the businesses advertised in our newsletter.

Memorial Building

Bookings phone 243-3580 (office) 287-2489 (hall), fax 287-2485.

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<http://www.pioneersalberta.org>

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