



Keeping History Current

ON WINGS OF DISCIPLINE:

Most Improved NCO Award - This award is given to the NCO that has demonstrated growth in their capacity as an NCO over the past year.

Junior NCO Leadership Award - This award is given to a junior NCO who best demonstrates the leadership skill of "Taking your people" while always having a positive attitude and keeping others motivated.

Bill Beattie Toy Junior NCO - In memory of Bill Beattie, this award is given to a Corporal or Flight Corporal that has shown most development in their leadership and followership skills over the past year. They must demonstrate overall competency in their role as a junior NCO.

Most Improved Drill Cadet - This is awarded to the cadet whose drill performance has improved the most over the past year.

Most Outstanding Drill Team Member - This is awarded to the cadet that has shown great commitment to the Drill Team and has consistently excelled in drill performance and has been instrumental in the success of the team.

Best Squadron Drill Cadet - This award is given to the cadet who has shown the highest standards in drill, dress and deportment over the training year. This cadet must be a member of the drill team, drill instructor and be a competent parade commander.

Junior Range Award - This award is given to the junior cadet who has shown the most improvement in marksmanship and for being an excellent shot on the range.

Dumont Senior Range Award - This award is given to the senior cadet who has shown the most improvement in marksmanship and has provided assistance to develop the squadron.

Most Improved Band Cadet - This award is given to a band member who has shown the most improvement in music skills, band drill and is a real "team player".

Most Outstanding Band Cadet - This award is given to the cadet who has shown the most improvement in aspects of band training, including music & drill skills, while showing leadership.

Most Outstanding Survival Team Member - Awarded to the cadet who has shown the most improvement in self to be proficient in all aspects of survival training and has been a team player and a member of the Squadron's Survival Team.

Most Outstanding Junior Cadet - Awarded to a Junior cadet who has stood out during the past training year as being a "step ahead" for their level of cadet experience and are already showing strong development in the areas of drill, dress, deportment and leadership skills. This award is decided by the Squadron Warrant Officers.

Most Outstanding Senior Cadet - Awarded to a Senior cadet who has stood out during the past training year as being an overall well rounded cadet in all areas of cadet training, with specific emphasis on drill, dress, deportment and leadership skills. This award is decided by the Squadron Warrant Officers.

James McDermid Award - This award is in memory of James McDermid, a Commanding Officer of this squadron for 5 years. This award is given to an "unrecognized" cadet who has been outstanding in portraying a positive attitude, no matter what the situation.

Miller Memorial - An NCO must be able to cope with the infrastructure and responsibilities of their rank as it relates to other cadets, staff and friends. This award is given to a cadet that has received the best overall in all activities, attendance and unselfishness in the past training year.

Grant Memorial Award - Awarded to a cadet who in the face of adversity has the ability to smile and have a positive influence on those around them.

Adner Memorial Award - This award is given to the cadet who best exemplifies the ideals of Air Cadet training. This cadet truly embraces the Air Cadet Motto "To Learn, To Serve, To Excel".

Flight Award - Awarded to the flight who has had the highest attendance percentage for the past overall uniform marks throughout the training year.

Region Medal of Excellence - This medal is given to a senior cadet that has shown the most improvement in citizenship, goodwill and morale. This cadet promotes a positive squadron reputation and participation in many community activities. This medal is jointly decided by the Provincial Selection Committee.

Strathcona Trust Fund Medal - The Lord Strathcona Trust Fund Medal is the highest award given to a cadet in recognition of exemplary performance in physical training. This medal is jointly decided on by the Squadron Staff and the Strathcona Trust.

Unselfish Giving Award - This award is in recognition of considerable, unselfish giving to the squadron and as decided by the Commanding Officer.

Volunteer Award - Awarded to the cadet who stands out in the service given to the good of the squadron, as decided by the squadron staff.

GRANDE PRAIRIE ALBERTA ROYAL CANADIAN AIR CADETS

SEVENTY YEARS OF AIR CADETS IN GRANDE PRAIRIE

Events

1. The video presentation titled "On the Wings of Discipline" is now available for viewing. Go to the PCHS website. On the Home page click on the link in the middle of the picture. Alternatively, you can find the PCHC YouTube channel, and bring the video up there.
2. It looks promising for a PCHS tea at the Forbes House this summer. Once we have dates we will contact you about a good cup of tea in a historic setting.

Presidents Message

Hello;

This is the summer edition of our Newsletter. The saskatoons have been in full bloom, and It looks promising for a berry pie come picking time.

Here's hoping that the summer of 2021 will allow some return to normalcy. It would be great to meet in person and find some interesting historical places and topics to see and discuss. Your Board is developing ideas for tours and speakers in anticipation of an improved situation.

This newsletter contains information from the Annual General Meeting for the year 2020. The meeting itself was held virtually, a first for our Society. Also included is a notice from the South Peace Regional Archives regarding the Executive Director moving on.

The stories in this edition are all in regard to anniversaries of Peace Country historical events.

Enjoy.

Regards

Pat Wearmouth, PCHS

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NOTICE

The Historic Society of Alberta has enacted a policy on membership dues. Members will be reminded to renew after three months, and removed from membership after six months if no renewal is forthcoming.

The Society keeps the master membership list, and receives dues on our behalf. Please go their website, www.albertahistory.org, to renew memberships or to join.

Or contact them in the Calgary office at:

Phone 403-261-3662 or Email
info@albertahistory.org

The office is open for phone calls Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in the first and third week of each month, from 9:00am to 3:pm. Payment options include sending a cheque or paying by credit card over the phone.

Peace Country Historical Society

*P.O. Box 687 Station Main
Grande Prairie, AB T8V 3A8*

Vision: To encourage the appreciation of the history of the Peace Country.

Mandate: The mandated area of the Peace Country Historical Society is the Alberta portion of the Peace River Country.

Board of Directors

Pat Wearmouth –President
Charles Taws - Vice- President
Susan K. Thomson – Treasurer
Janet L. Peterson – Secretary
David Leonard – Director
David Rhody – Director
Al Bromling – Director
Duff Crerar – Director
Ron Thoreson - Director

PCHS Committee Chairs

Irene Nicolson – Phoning
Susan Thomson – Heritage Fair,
Education Kits
David Leonard – Advocacy & Land
Settlement
Pat Wearmouth – Newsletter
Charles Taws – Web presence

Contact Us

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What We Can Offer

- A chance to help set direction for our Peace Country Chapter, and to learn about Peace Country history, at membership meetings.
- A chance to meet other people who enjoy history.
- A chance to contribute as a volunteer in various projects that we carry out.
- A chance to advocate for the history of our area,
- A chance to get out and see various historical sites in the region

We hope that you choose to continue your membership in our Society.

And if you are not a member yet, please consider joining. The same contacts work for you as well.

Report

Peace Country Historical Society

Annual General Meeting for 2020

The Annual General Meeting of the Peace Country Historical Society was held via a virtual (Zoom) meeting on May 19th, 2021. This was a small historic moment in itself, as this is the first time that the Society has conducted a membership meeting in the manner. It is a legal requirement to have the meeting within six months of the year end, so it was good to have it done.

Eighteen members were in attendance. The meeting followed the agenda which all of you would have received in a package sent via email or post. After accepting the agenda and approving the 2019 AGM minutes, various reports were given.

Tim Marriot, the President of the Historical Society of Alberta brought greetings and explained some of the initiatives being undertaken by the organization. Following that, the reports of various PCHS committees were given, all included in the aforementioned package. This included finances, both approval of the year end statement for 2020, and the projected budget for 2021. The Board feels that our Society is in relatively good financial shape given the cutbacks in funding that have occurred.

Next, a bylaw change was approved. This allows us to hold virtual meetings in the future, and aligns with the recently passed Alberta Bill 53, which says the same. Previous to this, the PCHS could only meet and vote in person, which did cause some difficulties during the ongoing pandemic. Hopefully, in person meetings will resume in the near future.

An announcement was made regarding our posted video which appears on the front page of this newsletter. We hope you have a chance to view it.

And finally your 2021 Board of Directors was acclaimed. The names and positions appear on the previous page.

The meeting was then adjourned.

South Peace Regional Archives News

Alyssa Currie is leaving the position of Executive Director for the South Peace Regional Archives. Her last day was June 4th, 2021. She has served in that position since Mary Nutting retired from the Archives.

Alyssa will remain in the history community of the Peace Country. She is taking a job as the Executive Director of a new facility to be centered on the Charlie Lake Caves, just north of Fort St. John, BC.

Known as Tse'K'wa (Rock House) in the Dane-zaa language, the Cave is a National Historic Site. Artifacts have been discovered there, going back to at least 10,500 years.

We wish Alyssa the best of luck in her new endeavor. She has assured us that once things have developed to some point, a PCHS tour would be welcomed.

Grande Prairie Museum's 50th Anniversary

Charles Taws - Curator

You may remember the Grande Prairie Museum celebrating a 50th anniversary in 2011. That was the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Grande Prairie Pioneer Museum Society. They met in 1961 to establish a local museum, but their dream wasn't achieved until 1970. Last year, 2020, marked the golden anniversary of the Grande Prairie Museum being open to the public. The anniversary was not forgotten but with the pandemic it was hardly noticed. That's too bad because a lot has happened in those 50 years.

On August 10th 1970, Alberta Premier Harry Strom cut the wide red ribbon on the east side of the Bear Creek foot bridge to signal the opening of the Pioneer Museum of Grande Prairie. It was noted, at that time, the logical choice for as his predecessor, Ernest Manning, had first sod on the construction of the building in 1967. It too long to list all the who made this achievement possible,



Premier Harry Strom opens the Museum

that he was
this honour
Premier
turned the

Museum
would take
volunteers

but three

individuals stand out: Mel Rodacker, Isabel Campbell, and Gerald Carveth. With the support of the Oldtimer's Society and the City, these three, helped make this dream come true.

The original museum building still exists but has long since been swallowed up in multiple additions and renovations. Its first appearance was a simple rectangular 96' by 76' blue and white steel building. When first built it was really just a shell, but it quickly became a repository of local artifacts and papers that locals had been collecting since the 1950's. The Museum's location was donated by the City and coincided with the development of Centennial Park. The Museum sits in a former residential neighborhood, called "The Flats", which was cleared away for the park.

Improvements to the building were quick in coming as well. By 1972 insulation, two furnaces and a security alarm had been added. Almost all of the work done by dedicated volunteers. In the 1980's numerous additions created a large community room and kitchen to the museum's facilities. Headlines of the day read, "Pioneer Museum- A Great Place for the Family to Spend the Day" and "Pioneer Museum full of Hidden Treasures". A popular event that began then and continues today is the Fiddler's Jamboree.

Early exhibits were noted for their variety and quality. In fact, the name "Pioneer Museum" did not do justice to the museum's diverse collections. Back in 1961 local pioneer Robert Cochrane voiced his opinion, "it is not only desirable to collect pioneer material such as diaries, private documents, photographs, household and farm equipment and other locally historic items but also the prehistoric traces of the district's beginnings". He felt that rock and mineral samples, dinosaur fossils and indigenous stone tools were needed to tell the complete story of the region. Obviously those in charge listened for at the opening it was noted that a Provincial official said, "too many museums try for overall general displays but healthy ones devote themselves to a specific area...an area [your] city museum could shine would be in fossils. [You] have a good base already and this could be built up." Over the years the Grande Prairie Museum has been adept at showcasing the many different aspects of our region's history and In 1995 decided to remove the term "Pioneer" from its name.

By the 1990's the museum had really hit its stride. Important work in tape recording seniors, collecting more artifacts and the creation of a regular newsletter made effective impacts with members and in the community. The Museum also established the Pioneer of the Year Award (Henry Monkman was the first to receive the award in 1991) and the monthly salute to local pioneer families. Popular events developed at this time included the Harvest Festival and Living Village Celebration.

Beginning in the 2000's the Museum established the Miss Isabel Campbell Heritage Preservation Award and developed its well-remembered nighttime Lantern Tours. These tours remain popular as the Folktales Tours today. More building additions in 2005 gave the

Museum its current look and form. In 2007 the City took over the running of the Museum. With their goal achieved, the Museum Society dissolved in 2017. The last Society board consisted of Daryl White, Laverne Sorgaard, Ernie Pellerin, Joan Godbout, Dwight Logan and Charles Taws. The Grande Prairie Museum is now part of a triumvirate of historical sites operated by the City. The other two are the Heritage Discovery Centre and the Rev. Forbes Homestead (a Provincial Historic Resource).

A big part of the Grande Prairie Museum's appeal is its Heritage Village. This began in 1974 with the acquisition of the 1934 Tempest Family log home from Kleskun Hill. It had been used as a granery, so volunteers worked very hard to bring it back to its original appearance and it opened in August of 1976.

In that same year the McQueen Presbyterian Church, one of the oldest buildings in the City, was moved to the site with the support of the United Church Canadian Girls in Training group. From the start it has proved a popular attraction and each year many couples choose to hold their marriage ceremonies here.

The Hermit Lake School and the Government Forestry cabin arrived in 1977; as did the Edson Trail Caboose. In 1979 a protective metal fence was installed around the village.

A replica of Grande Prairie's first Fire Hall followed next in 1984. In 1987, a large Machine Shed was built. The Museum had acquired a growing assortment of farming equipment, notably from Ernest Watt and Alton Peebles, and this structure was built to house them. Many of these pieces were lovingly restored by a large dedicated band of volunteers. A log blacksmith shop followed in 1988.

The 80's finished with Isabel Campbell sponsoring a replica of her childhood Elmworth area log home. It was built by John Stark and Frank Stoll and included windows from the original structure. Miss Campbell called this her gift to the Peace River Country.

The 1990's saw the addition of the Pipestone Creek store, two windmills and the Wendt Barn.



In 2000 the Hudson Bay Company Post from near LaGlance was brought down and restored with the help of Roy Bickell. It is the oldest building in the area, built in 1896 and the only remaining purpose-built Hudson Bay Company Trading Post in the Province of Alberta. The Museum's emphasis has always

been our local pioneers. In the early years it was known as the Grande Prairie Pioneer Museum. In 1995 the “pioneer” term was removed to reflect the diversity of the Museum’s collections. Obviously, all these important events and episodes didn’t happen without countless hours of dedicated volunteer and staff work. Here is a list of some we have not yet mentioned: Bert Tieman, Frank Stoll, Clarence Boyer, Alice Fortier, Peter Goertzen, Doug Clarkson, Robert Guest, Ida Rowe, Walter Konevecki, Charlie Wales, Paul and Paulette Pivert, Colin Hrychiw, Peter Goertzen, Garry Thate, Julie DeWinter, Ellen Craig, Mary-Ann Thurber, Carol Gray, Bev Edy-Larson, Willie Braun, Sharon and Jim Brooks, Lorna and Don McIlroy. This is just a sampling of the many people who have devoted their time and talents over the years.

Who knows what the next 50 years holds for the Grande Prairie Museum? The Museum was recently awarded with a renewal of its Alberta Museum Association Recognized Museum status and has plans to grow again with expanded collections facilities and a new exhibit gallery. But for now, we’re concentrating on surviving the pandemic with more online content and outdoor summer programs. _____

Freemasonry at Lake Saskatoon 105 Years On

Ron Thoreson



South Peace Regional Archives

When settlers arrived in the Peace River country, they brought the social and family traditions of their earlier years with them. For the settlers in the Lake Saskatoon townsite and region, this meant the urge to revive a social bonding they had known from the homelands of their birth, earlier settlements, or even military postings around the world.

Freemasonry is believed to have begun its evolution 500 or more years ago in Scotland among the bands of working, skilled builders in stone. As the earliest origins of “speculative” Freemasonry evolved from early guilds of these “operative” or working craft stonemasons, the members drew on the guild values to apply to their moral development in many walks of life. There was a recognition that support mechanisms to assist

the family of members who were injured or lost to their companions, was a central pledge of their association.

Before the day of benevolent paymasters, or a social safety net of government programs, it was the masons' brotherhood that offered relief to the widow and the orphaned child. As valued craftsmen throughout the enlightened world, the construction of cathedrals and public buildings drew a variety of men who had knowledge that extended over many borders and rulers of the day. The masters of the craft needed to be able to recognize the worthy among them, despite language and heritage. A variety of signs, symbols, passwords, and pass-grips were closely guarded by men proven worthy, as it was their passport for employment and survival in difficult times.

With this oral tradition, the passing on of bona fides of confirmed competence and character seemed a good basis for men who formed the speculative outgrowth of masonry.

Documentation from more than 400 years ago showed the organization growing to fill a need for men to be able to vet new contacts when traveling widely, or across national boundaries. The ability to have contacts sharing common values of brotherhood, relief and truth in dealing was highly prized and maintained through the lodges as it had been in the stonemasons' guilds.

Like the working stonemasons, the Freemasons worked from an aural method of passing on their teaching, and still do. Like physical lessons for apprentices, newly joined Freemasons are instructed with lessons teaching upright morality and social responsibility. They are given from memory and similarly confirmed by the new member in proving their proficiency and understanding of those obligations. Manners of recognition between members are privately guarded, but support for educational scholarships to deserving youth and community outreach place the fraternity fully and openly in the public eye. Through this series of progressive degrees, signs, and symbols, Freemasonry passes on moral and social lessons that reinforce civic responsibility and encourages members to personally practice every domestic and public virtue. As the membership is a worldwide brotherhood, each member is encouraged to honour their Creator as they understand that Supreme Being, while always respecting the welfare of their fellow-creatures. Within the lodge, however, there is a strict rule to abstain from any topic of religious or political discussion to preserve harmony and mutual respect. A lodge is run under the Masonic equivalent of Robert's Rules of Order and has often led members to greater civic involvement.

Worshipful Brother - W.S Percy. South Peace Regional Archives

In 1916, in the village of Lake Saskatoon and the surrounding countryside, the number of Freemasons from a variety of prior provinces, states, and countries led residents to follow a time-honoured tradition of petitioning the provincial Grand Lodge of Alberta to form a lodge in

Lake Saskatoon, as was also done by residents in Grande Prairie. As the lodge historical register records, this process was successful by 1918. The joint ceremony for Grande Prairie Lodge 105, and Lake Saskatoon Lodge 106, for permission to operate under dispensation was instituted in Grande Prairie Lodge in early 1918. The formal ceremony of Consecration and Constitution was then held for both lodges at Lake Saskatoon in their facility in June of 1918. Customs and manner of recording the proceedings are taken directly from the historical register of the time:

"In 1916 it was found that there were sixteen Masons resident in the area within ten miles of the then Lake Saskatoon, Alberta. These brethren having previously resided in several of the other Provinces of the Country and of the United States, Brother William Stanley Percy and the late Ralph Wright Thompson undertook to interview these brethren, and following these interviews they contacted the Grand Lodge of Alberta with the view of making application to form a Lodge at Lake Saskatoon.

After having forwarded to Grand Lodge the required documentation, a meeting was called and the required Dispensation to Form a Lodge at Lake Saskatoon was granted. The then Grand Pursuivant representing the Grand Master of the day, Very Worshipful Brother Colonel W.F.W. Carstairs, in the Grande Prairie Lodge Room, Instituted Lake Saskatoon Lodge under Dispensation in the year 1918. Worshipful Brother William Stanley Percy being appointed Worshipful Master to preside over the fifteen members who were later to become Charter Members of the Lodge to be known as Lake Saskatoon Lodge #106.

The Ceremonies of Consecration and Constitution of Lake Saskatoon Lodge #106 and Grande Prairie Lodge #105 were held on Saturday June 15th 1918 AD, 5918 AL, by the Most Worshipful Grand Master Hiram Darling of the Grand Lodge of Alberta assisted by Rt Wor Bro Samuel Harris District Deputy Grand Master of Grouard, and Brother Judge Belcher of Edmonton Lodge #7. The new lodges sent the following message to the Grand Master:

"The Worshipful Master, Wardens and Officers and the brethren of Lake Saskatoon Lodge are now assembled in their Lodge and have instructed me to inform you that under the dispensation which you were pleased to grant bearing the date of June 3rd, 1918 AD, 5918 AL authorizing true to form and open a Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons in the village of Lake Saskatoon they have regularly assembled and conducted the business of Masonry accordingly to the best of their abilities and their proceedings have received the approval of the Most Worshipful the Grand Master, and they have obtained a Charter and are desirous that their Lodge should be Consecrated, Dedicated and Constituted, their Worshipful Master Installed, their Wardens and Officers invested to the Ancient Usages and Customs of the Fraternity, for which purpose they are now assembled and await your pleasure"

"The Most Worshipful Grand Master then assumed the gavel, and assisted by Right Worshipful Brother Samuel Harris conducted the ceremonies of Consecration and Constituting Lake Saskatoon Lodge #106 and Grande Prairie Lodge #105. At the close of which, the Most Worshipful Brother Darling assisted by Right Worshipful Brother Samuel Harris installed the Officers as follows:



W.S. Percy. SPRA Photo

Lake Saskatoon Lodge

W.S. Percy Worshipful Master

R.W. Thompson Senior Warden

H.W. Watts Junior Warden

A.W. Pentland

T.B. Nash

A.V. McLean Deacon

A.J. McElhiny Deacon

John Watson Senior Stewart

Wm Grant Inner Guard

James Langill

These being a joint installation, Grande Prairie Lodge officers were installed at the same time. The Lodge was closed in Peace and Harmony at 10.00 pm."

The First regular meeting of the Lodge was held in February 1918 in the first Lodge room which had been established in a room of the second story of the Lake Saskatoon Consolidated School District #56 building, which was located at Lake Saskatoon overlooking the lake itself. The Charter of Constitution was subsequently issued by the Grand Lodge on June 3rd.



South Peace Regional Archives 193.02.07.30

"The first Lodge meeting was held in the second story of the Lake Saskatoon Consolidated School No. 56, the building formerly being used as a mill and built for that purpose. The Lodge was ideally located looking over Lake Saskatoon and situated on its shores.

The district has been likened to and called after some of the beauty spots of rural England. It has attracted to the vicinity a superior class of farmers, a fine type of businessmen, and a patriotic citizenship with a long list of men that served overseas during the Great War. It was, for a time, the home of the best musicians of the Grande Prairie District, including such names as W. Brother W. H. Watts, his daughter, and the

wife of Brother Pentland. Lake Saskatoon had also the distinction of having the first Consolidated School in the Peace River Country.

The following donations were given to the first Lodge room held at Lake Saskatoon:

James Langill made and donated the pedestals. Robert Cranston, Hamilton, Ontario, Past Master and brother of George J. Cranston donated a gavel and square for receiving candidates in the 2nd degree.

Mrs. R.W. Thompson (later Mrs. W.S. Percy) donated the Volume of the Sacred Law which was still in use in 1930.

One of the most interested and enthusiastic Charter members of the Lake Saskatoon Lodge was Ralph Wright Thompson, the first Senior Warden and one who gave his very best and sincere efforts for the welfare of the Lodge. He attended the meetings of the Lodge regularly, was a friend and well-loved druggist, and the last meeting he attended was on the 16th day of October, 1918. This was the time of the influenza epidemic and on November 17th an Emergent Meeting of the Lodge was called for the purpose of attending the funeral of the late Brother Thompson. His widow, also an avid supporter, and ever willing to assist in any public functions of the Lodge, either by playing the piano or singing, subsequently became the wife of our first Worshipful Master, W.S. Percy.

Another Emergent Meeting was called for December 1st for the purpose of attending the funeral of Brother Michael Harland, who had just recently received the three degrees of Masonry. Both services were conducted by the Worshipful Master, W.S. Percy."

Like in Grande Prairie, a hospital for influenza patients was set up in Lake Saskatoon, which was doubtless a dangerous place for care-givers in late October. The mortality was greatest among people in the prime of their lives. The common thread of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic and our present situation with COVID-19, however, illustrates that a promise, made and fulfilled, can help us endure the ultimate hardship when a burden is shared. For the Masons, it was this solemn pledge of mutual assistance that bound these early settlers in a highly-valued fraternal moral contract. It offered some relief from the certain knowledge of a perilous and often short existence on earth. That peril was driven home by the loss of two of their members within short months of forming the lodge, leaving a member's widow with a young child, and other losses yet to come.

Little more than a year later, William Percy's wife Wilhelmine Catherine (Wickham) Percy passed away, aged 49 from influenza in May 1920. A degreed grammar teacher, she had also taught in the school that operated on the main floor of the building, with the Masonic lodge located upstairs. Their son Charles was, by then, on his own at 24 and homesteading south of the present village of Wembley.

William found a second purpose in his life that honoured his Masonic pledge of relief and support. He joined in marriage with Laura Thompson to be a father for Ralph's seven-year-old daughter Madeleine, and they added two sons of their own with Stanley (1924), and Gordon (1927) who today survives as an enthusiastic student of history and product of Masonic fidelity.

Gordon followed in his father's path to become Worshipful Master of Lake Saskatoon Lodge in 1962, District Deputy Grand Master in 1972 and collated the lodge records in a publication for the 100th year of the lodge in 2018. Although lodges across Canada are in a pandemic pause for direct meetings like most organizations, there is video conferencing and personal contact by telephone until common sense and careful science return us to some type of normalcy.

As noted on a Grand Lodge of Scotland public video, "The past should never be forgotten, but the future is just as important. No matter what problems one may face in life, being a Freemason means you don't have to face them alone."

Sources Referenced:

Lake Saskatoon Lodge 106, The First 100 Years

Historical Register, LSL 106

Constitution & Regulations, The Grand Lodge of Alberta

History of the Grand Lodge of Alberta 1905-1955, MW Bro Sam Harris, PGM

Family History, G. L. Percy Photos from Lodge Collection:

Right Worshipful Brother William S. Percy, DDGM 1919

Right Worshipful Brother Gordon L. Percy, DDGM 1972

Photo of First Lake Saskatoon Lodge building, courtesy of
South Peace Regional Archives

St. Pauls United Church On the Occasion of its 110th Anniversary

Margaret Bowes

The Reverend Alexander Forbes arrived on the Grande Prairie in 1910. His first church, McQueens Presbyterian, held its inaugural service in October of 1911, with a capacity crowd attending. McQueens is one of the predecessors to St. Pauls United. McQueens now is found at the Grande Prairie Museum Heritage Village. Margaret Bowes takes up the story.

In my recollections of St. Pauls I will mention a few of the highlights, but the church is very fortunate to have an excellent history written by the very talented Beth (Flint) Sheehan covering the period 1910 – 1961 followed by the period of 1961 – 1986 written by Pat Schneider. It is a very interesting history of the church but also includes wonderful stories of the settlers in the broader community. For example the story was told by Jessie (Wishart) Elliott of the grand opening of the Selkirk Trading Post in May of 1913. It took the form of a box social and dance. The Wisharts had just recently arrived from Manitoba and though Jessie was only four years old, as was the custom, she was taken. Her mother made up two box lunches, since there were few women and many men and the extra box would go to some hungry man. She put Jessie's name on one. Ike Nelson, who was then about twenty years old, bid on and bought Jessie's box, and she was sure he was greatly disappointed to find that his lady was only four years old! But he soon forgot his disappointment when he discovered two oranges in the box. Dancing went on to the late hours of the night while Jessie slept in the store display window. When it was time to go home, Ike insisted on carrying her. After she grew to womanhood, Ike delighted telling in front of her that he had carried this young woman home from a dance, making it sound as though she had over-indulged and was not capable of walking – and he never mentioned that she was only four years old! My grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. L.J. O'Brien came to Grande Prairie in 1918. Grandfather arrived ahead of the family and was involved with battling the 'flu epidemic. Later, Grandmother Alice O'Brien arrived with their five children – my father Herb who was thirteen, Uncles Gurth and Eric, Aunt Margaret and Uncle Hugh who was five years of age. Grandfather was the doctor for the mine in Nanaimo and had left the family to go overseas as a doctor in 1914. When he returned in 1918, after doing surgery in tent hospitals trying to save such badly injured soldiers in the war, he decided he would like to move to a new frontier. It was quite a move for my Grandmother who was used to some of the amenities of Nanaimo. Grandfather resigned as a member of the church Session in January of 1950 after 30 years of service. He and Grandmother and my mother Jean were three of those who signed for church union in 1925. As a personal note, my mother, Jean O'Brien, played the organ and often led the choir as well for nearly 20 years, even though she taught full time and was raising three daughters (who

were never allowed to miss choir practice or church!). Bill and I were married in the white frame church, and our four sons were baptised in the new church. Following church union, the new church was named St. Paul's. The church purchased a house from Jack Redmond on the 'Boulevard' on 102 Street as the first manse. The Salvation Army Food Bank is now on that site. The cornerstone for the new church was laid on October 19th 1925 just east of the old McQueen Presbyterian church. Harry Shaver was the contractor and Ed Loven his assistant. The dedication was January 11th 1926. The new white frame church with a full basement and a bell tower served the congregations well until it was moved to construct the present church in 1956. As usual, the women of the church did a lot of fund raising with teas and bazaars to help furnish the church and the manse. The church has been fortunate to have many good ministers. The late Barbara Fedeyko was diligent in obtaining pictures of all those who have served St. Paul's, and those pictures line the south wall of the narthex. When Mr. Pritchard arrived in June of 1949 a study was built for him in the log church and an oil heater installed. There had been various uses for the old church over the years – it has been a dance studio for Miss Valerie Ellwood in the early '40s, and from 1942 – 48 it had been the home for the church caretakers, Mr. and Mrs. Broughton. It was also used for Sunday school classes, AA meetings, and later a Lutheran congregation used it until they were able to build Trinity Lutheran on 100th street. I remember that Mrs. Broughton often used to walk down the aisle during the sermon on a hot Sunday morning with a long pole so she could open the top windows. It took a while for the minister to regain the attention of the congregation! She was a tiny lady who wore her hair in a bun, had wire rim glasses, and wore a long black skirt with a white blouse and a cameo pin. The congregation, spearheaded by Carmen Edgson, determined to have the old log church saved and moved to the Museum grounds and was successful in moving it without much damage. It has a pump organ, some pews and some of the Presbyterian artifacts in it, and has quite often been used for small weddings. While Mr. Hugh Pritchard was the minister the congregation had saved \$13,000 toward building a Christian Education building. A contract was signed with Straub Brothers in August 1950 with Sid Ross as building chairman. A lot of volunteer work went in to finishing the building. The annual congregational meeting of January 1951 was held in the new building, though inside walls and partitions were not finished. By 1952 the building was complete. It was a two-storey structure with a full basement. The minister's study had a large meeting room, kitchenette, two washrooms and a large hall. The upper floor had four meeting rooms and the basement had an auditorium, stage, two meeting rooms, storage and furnace rooms and a well-equipped kitchen. Speaking of the stage – one of the many fund raisers was a 'talent show'. There was a full house in the audience and Cecil Morton (both he and his wife Gladys sang in the choir) was giving a recitation. Cec's mother was in the audience. The recitation was going along smoothly when Cec forgot the next line – his mother called out the forgotten line, Cec said 'Thanks mother' and finished the poem. It brought down the house! Costly manse repairs influenced the

decision in 1952 to build a new manse. The old manse was sold and the new manse was built on two lots at 94 Ave and 101 Street. It was an attractive two storey home with three bedrooms. Mr. Pritchard was called to a charge in Welland, Ontario in the spring of 1954. Rev. Bev Johnston came to St. Paul's July 30th 1954. He was young and full of enthusiasm, so that even though there was a sizeable debt on the CE building, in November of 1954 the congregation voted to start a drive for funds for a new church. By the next annual meeting \$60,000 had been raised. The frame church was sold and moved to a location on Clairmont Road north. On June 24th 1956 I.V. Macklin turned the sod for the new church. He was one of the three men who levelled the grounds for the log church in 1911. The cornerstone for the new church was laid on October 31, 1956. For the first six months church services were held in the local motion picture theatres. Christ Church Anglican offered the use of their church for funerals and weddings. The church was dedicated on April 26th 1957 with Rev. Pritchard as the guest speaker. In 1982 St. Paul's became a two minister charge and Rev. Brian Hunter joined the Rev. Doug Waite in the ministry of the church. A second manse was purchased at 11222 96th Street. Wes Milford and Louis Loewen donated their time and expertise to add a garage to the manse and paved the driveway in 1985. In 1986 when the Rev. Bob Hetherington was the minister, the church applied for, and received, a \$300,000 loan from Ventures in Mission to build a new Christian Education Wing. The old CE building was demolished and the present Christian Education building became part of St. Paul's church. Times have changed and as ministers began to own their own homes, first the manse on 94th Ave was rented and then sold, and then, after Joanna McQuarrie left, the manse on 96th street was sold. We have been fortunate to have had many great ministers over the years, as well as organists (beginning with Mrs. William Percy who played the pump organ in the old log church), Sunday School and Youth leaders, the UCW which followed the WMS and the Ladies' Aid, choir directors and so many in the congregation who have given of their time and talent leading CGIT, Explorers, Cubs, Scouts, Sunday School and Youth Group leaders and all those serving on church boards. The church has been involved in many community activities: having been involved with establishing the first Friendship Centre across the street; establishing Fraser House as a safe place for those who were mentally ill (this eventually had to shut down when the provincial government cut funding); establishment of Odyssey House; making space available for AA; at one time having a day care operation in the small basement of the church; a 'Mothers' Day Out' program; in 1957 the County invited the church to operate Wapiti Lodge for rural students attending high-school in town until school-buses began transporting children to school; in the '60's a flourishing drama group called 'St. Paul's Players'; the women from UCW who delivered Meals on Wheels for many years. We could go on and on with worthwhile projects the people of St. Paul's have accomplished over the last hundred and eleven years beginning with McQueen Presbyterian church in 1911, but we have been fortunate to have Beth Sheehan's interest in history and great anecdotes of the early

settlers. Beth's sister Madelon Flint Truax wrote a great history of the arrival of the early Beaverlodge settlers and the history of the church in Beaverlodge, Halcourt, Elmworth and Rio Grande. Beth's book is called *And We Come After*, covering the period of 1911 to 1961 of St. Paul's and followed by an update to 1986 by Pat Schneider. Madelon's book is called 'Celebrating our Roots' from 1910-1985.

**The 10th Anniversary
of the
Edson Trail's Centennial Celebration
The Trail Ride Project**

Doug Spry & Pat Wearmouth

This year is the 10 anniversary of a 2011 celebration that was held to mark the 100th anniversary of the Edson Trail.

In their book, the Edson to Grande Prairie Trail, the Debolt and District Pioneer Society made an opening statement. "Thousands of people used this miserable trail". But as miserable as it was, it offered access to the Peace Country and the chance to build a new life. Local history books tell many stories of the settler's experiences on that Trail, and their subsequent lives.

In 2009 a celebration committee began to meet to plan some projects that could be used to mark the centennial. Five projects were chosen and carried out in 2011.

- An exhibit at Centre 2000
- Building a Homestead Rock Cairn at Kleskun Hills
- An Edson to Grande Prairie Trail Ride
- A Celebration at Evergreen Park
- Publication of a new book, *The Edson Trail Centennial Celebration*.

In that new book, Editor Fran Moore explains that although four of the projects were great successes, the Trail Ride had its problems.

“and this was because of Mother Nature. She took this opportunity to give us all the rain we’ve been asking for the last ten years, and she gave it all to us all at once. Flooded rivers and very muddy conditions – the riders were only able to accomplish the last half of the Trail. They all enjoyed the experience just the same.”

Unlike the other four projects which were attended by many members of the public, the Trail Ride was out of sight except to those who participated. Most of the public that saw the riders, did so at Evergreen Park when they arrived, very, very wet. Doug Spry takes up the story of the ride. It is extracted from the aforementioned celebration book, and Doug provided the accompanying photos.

My Trail Ride Story - by ‘Trail Boss’ Doug Spry

July 8, 2011: Finally after monthly meetings and planning since the end of September, 2010, we are loaded and off to Edson with three cargo trailers in tow with food and gear for two weeks on the trail.

It has been a wet summer and today is no exception. Leaving the east side of Grande Prairie, Alberta, the Department of Transportation calls and they require more detail on our map and a signature before we leave Grande Prairie. Sorry, I’m on the road and not stopping.

Arrive at Edson Rodeo Grounds in late afternoon, heavy rain and wind. Looking across the open pens, who in their right mind would want to pen, feed and prepare their horses in ‘this’. The arena is empty, so I make a call to Hugh Ashwell, asking can we go indoors and he says o.k. The group is happy to be able to get inside, out of the wind and rain.

Received a call from Bob Carter, 100th Centennial Parade in Edson has been postponed. I went to their meeting at the Legion Hall and it was decided to hold the parade on September 24th.

July 9, 2011: All saddled and ready to hit the trail by noon, to make the first ten miles as originally planned. Bill Finch and Kelsey Hogg are here with a team and wagon to start out with us. Another teamster Bob Patterson and Shirley had motored down to see us off.

A session of picture taking and in comes Hugh Ashwell, and he has taken his quad up to the Edson River Crossing and found that the small bridge was no longer visible. Plan B – load horses and head north of town and find out that roads are washed out. A bit of a let-down for Ben Poltorak and Eiry Sence, so they left us.

The group then went on to Whitecourt and to Fox Creek. Tried to get below Fox Creek on both sides, but found that more roads and bridges are washed out. It’s getting late and still raining and windy. We pull into the Fox Creek Airstrip and make camp for the evening.

July 10, 2011: We pack up all our wet belongings, load horses and had breakfast in Fox Creek and head for home. Decision was made to re-group again on July 18, 2011, at the Waskahegan River and leave from there on the morning of July 19, 2011, and make our way to Grande Prairie.

On **July 13, 2011:** some of our group got together and went for an afternoon ride in the Dunes east of Evergreen. Back in the late afternoon and had a barbecue at the Old Timers Cabin. This was a good day.

July 18, 2011: We arrived at the Waskahigan River mid-afternoon, camp was set up, and some riders went out for a ride and returned in the rain – keeps the dust and bugs away.

July 19, 2011: On the trail by 8:40 a.m., cool but a good day for riding. Set up camp at Grazing Lease SW of Valleyview.

July 20, 2011: Two riders got a bit muddy today and one loose saddle, no injuries. We ended up in a bog, had to retreat and go around. We arrived at Calais. Good ground to camp. Nice evening, visitors and picture taking.

July 21, 2011: On the trail by 8:30, headed for DeBolt, rain again. There was an unusual line-up for ice-cream at Crooked Creek Store (well why not). At camp that evening, we had three horses spooked by one other and they ended up on the hi-way with hobbles on - nobody hurt. A large tarp put up and a fire built, was some shelter from evening rain.

July 22, 2011: Again a good breakfast with our cook Helen and Mavis there helping, and with riders, from the list, helping where needed. We rode out through DeBolt on to the chain-up area on east side of the Smoky River. Horses are loaded and hauled across river to Crystal Creek Hall, where we were joined up with wagons, and rode into Carriage Lane for the evening. We enjoyed Pizza and more visitors. It rained through the night.

July 23, 2011: Wet morning, all units had to be pulled out by Jim Doll, with his tractor. Riders and wagons, plus all the support units were Bag-Piped in, along the front of the Tec Centre, Evergreen Park. A great reception was held with lots of people out in the rain.

The group had an excellent trip on the North End of the Edson Trail.



Waskahegan 2nd Start but still raining



Kerr's Stopping Place near Calais



Morning Camp



Riders on the Trail. The mosquitoes were fierce and the horses were not impressed.