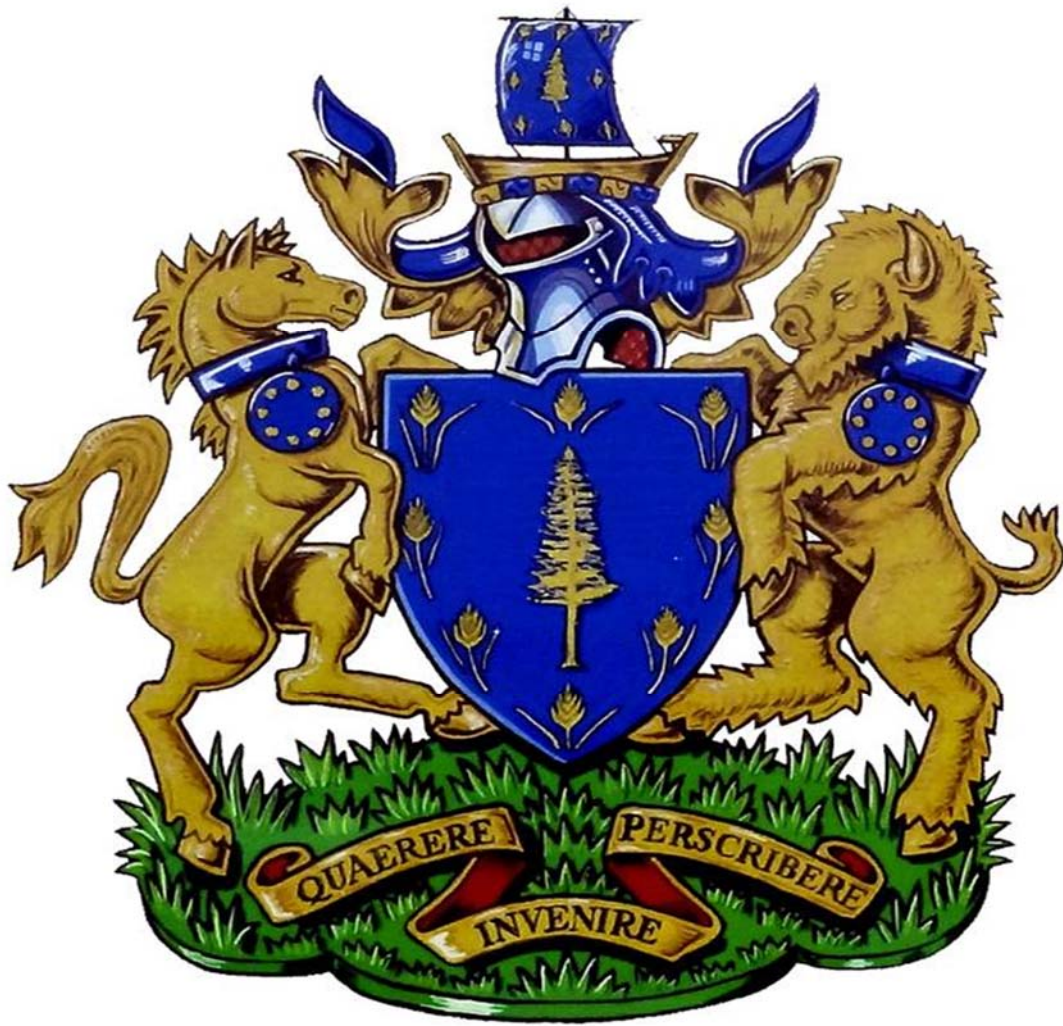


Alberta Genealogical Society



2015 Annual Report

PRESENTED AT THE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

23 April 2016

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

President	Susan Haga
Past President	Liam Hobbes
1 st Vice President	Lianne Kruger
2 nd Vice President	Jean Gray
Vice President of Finance	Jock Howard
Secretary of the Society	Mary Ann Legris

Directors:

Brooks	Robert Franz
Camrose	Janine Carroll
Drayton Valley	Connie Stuhl
Edmonton	Donna Shanks
Ft. McMurray	Tammy Grantham
Grande Prairie	Al Bromling
Lethbridge	Doug McLeod
Medicine Hat	Lloyd Robinson
Peace River	Joan Wahl
Red Deer	Linda Darby
Wetaskiwin	Diane Strohschein

Standing Committees

Finance (Chair)	Jock Howard
Nominations (Chair)	Jo Nuthack
Policy and Procedures (Chair)	Mary Ann Legris

Other Committees and Appointments

Archivist	Mary Ann Legris
Bylaws	Jo Nuthack
Cemetery Database	Shannon Cherkowski
Communications/Web Content Manager	Lyn Meehan
Conference Co-Chairs	Pam Forsyth
	Carolynne Ross
Electronic Services	John Hazelwood
Facilities	Wayne Harker
Gaming	Laura Turnbull
Grants & Other Funding	Marion Rex
Historian	vacant
Legal Advisor	Sharon Roberts
Library & Research Centre	Claudine Nelson
Membership	Vacant
Parliamentarian	Jo Nuthack
Publications	Norma Wolowyk
<i>Relatively Speaking:</i>	
Editor	Wayne Shephard
Associate Editor	Marilyn Hindmarch
Mailing	George Shreeves
Research Services	Norma Wolowyk
Social Media	Lianne Kruger
Translations	Sue Philips
Treasurer	Jock Howard

AGS Office

Office Coordinator	Linda Winski
Bookkeeper	Shirley Keller

OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIETY

- ✓ To promote the study of genealogy and genealogical research within the Province of Alberta.
 - ✓ To encourage adherence to accuracy and thoroughness in research.
 - ✓ To encourage and instruct members in ethical principles, scientific methods and effective techniques of genealogical research and defend the standards of genealogy from incompetent and disreputable persons.
 - ✓ To assemble a library of genealogical guides, handbooks, reference sources, family and local histories, and other books and materials which may assist the members, all of which will be available to members.
 - ✓ To publish such bulletins, booklets, pamphlets, or other documents as may be found desirable and expedient by the Board of the Society and to make the same available to the members and others on such terms and conditions as may be determined by the Board.
 - ✓ To establish friendly relations with other genealogical societies for exchange of ideas and information and the promotion of common interests.
 - ✓ To enter into arrangements with other genealogical societies for the publication of bulletins, booklets, books, pamphlets, or other documents on such terms and conditions as may be found desirable and expedient by the Board.
 - ✓ To promote seminars and workshops on genealogical research and methodology and such other studies as may seem helpful to the members.
 - ✓ To provide a centre and suitable meeting place for various activities of the Society and its members by rent or purchase or otherwise.
 - ✓ To encourage the establishment of Branches of the Society under such terms and conditions as the Bylaws of the Society may from time to time provide.
 - ✓ To achieve the foregoing objects, funds may be raised and donations, gifts, legacies and bequests accepted.
- Registered: 25 May 2001

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Alberta Genealogical Society
43RD Annual General Meeting
Saturday April 23, 2016 – 4:30 PM

AGENDA

Welcome – Call to Order – President Susan Haga

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes of the 2015 AGM

Introduction of the Executive and Directors:

- President – Susan Haga
- 1ST Vice-president – Lianne Kruger
- 2ND Vice-president – Jean Gray
- Vice-president Finance/Treasurer – Jock Howard
- Past President – Liam Hobbes
- Secretary – Mary Ann Legris
- Branch Presidents:
 - Brooks – Robert Franz
 - Camrose – Janine Carroll
 - Drayton Valley – Connie Stuhl
 - Edmonton – Donna Shanks
 - Fort McMurray – Tammy Grantham
 - Grande Prairie – Al Bromling
 - Lethbridge – Doug McLeod
 - Medicine Hat – Lloyd Robinson
 - Peace River – Joan Wahl
 - Red Deer – Linda Darby
 - Wetaskiwin – Diane Strohschein
- Committee Chairs – As Listed

Acceptance of Executive, Branch and Committee Reports

Financial Reports – Vice-President of Finance – Jock Howard

- 2015 Audited Financial Statement
- Adoption of Financial Statements
- Budget 2016 – 2017
- Approval – Budget
- Appointment of Auditor for 2016

Business brought forward from the Board:

- Dissolution of Peace River Branch – Mary Ann Legris
- Branch difficulties: filling executive positions – Jo Nuthack

Election – Jo Nuthack

- Result - Bylaws
- Result - Officers
- Introduction of new executive

Resolution of Respect – Frank Easton

Presentation of Awards – Susan Haga

Adjournment

MINUTES OF 42ND (2015) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, April 18, 2015

CHATEAU LOUIS CONFERENCE CENTRE– Edmonton, Alberta

ATTENDANCE OF 110 Members and 3 Guests

ALLRED, Sharon	GREEN, Joan	OLESKY, Pat
ALTHOUSE, John	HAGA, Susan	O'NEIL, Lesley
ANDERSON, Carol	HAGEN, Beverly	OSTER, Bev
ANEY, Sharon	HARKER, Wayne	PETTITT, Pat
ARNETT, Jeanne	HAWINKELS, Cathy	RAYNER, David
ATCHESON, Bob	HAZELWOOD, John	REX, Marion
BELL, Randy	HEDLUND, Arlene	ROBBINS, Merva
BENDER, Melvin	HESSEN, Edith	ROBINSON, Lloyd
BLACKLEY, Barbara	HOLMES, Ian	ROSS, Carolynne
BOELSTLER, Deb	HOWARD, Jock	ROTH, Barbara
BOUNDS, Gregory	HOYLE, Alice	RUMOHR, Donna
CATHCART, Gloria	IWAASA, Clara	SCHAU, Gail
CHOBAN, Belinda	JABUSCH, Patricia	SCHMITKE, Brenda
CHEREPANIK, Linda	JAVORSKY, Larry	SCOTT, David
CHERKOWSKI, Shannon	JOHNSON, Peter	SHANKS, Donna
COE, Terence	JOHNSTON, Sheila	SMITH, Sean
COUPER, Bonita	KALLECHY, Kelley	STEFANIUK, Nick
DAUBERT, Denise	KITZAN, Cheryl	STUHL, Connie
DIMITROFF, Doreen	KOOP, Carole	SCHWERING, Marilyn
DONNACHIE, Cheryl	LEGRIS, Mary Ann	THIESEN, Marg
DUIGOU, Lynne	LILLICO, Chris	THOMSON, Carol
DUNHAM, Iris	LOCOCK, Tony	TOMIAK, Sherri
DUNCAN, Grant	LOWE, Graham	TRUMPOUR, Ivy
DURIE, Gary	MACKENZIE, Dennis	TURNBULL, Laura
DYER, Sharon	MALLOCH, Claudia	VON LIPINSJY, Peter
EASTON, Frank	MAXWELL, Maxine	VANELDIK, Fred
ENNS, Sharon	MCINALL, Margaret A.	VANELDIK, Sandra
ETTY, Vivian	MCARTHUR, Lloyd	VILLETARD, Sandra
FEARNLEY, Ken	MCLEOD, Doug	VON LIPINSKY, Peter
FINN, Neal	MORGAN, David	WARDELL, Bev
FISKE, Lorraine	MORRISON, Nan	WARDS, Shona
FRANZ, Robert	MURRAY, Colleen	WILLIAMS, Andrea
FRENCH, Eileen	NASH, Dick	WILLOUGHBY, Vic
FRASER, Gordon	NELSON, Claudine	WOOD, Katherine
GAGNE, Louis	NELSON, Merna	WOROBEC, Dennis
GIBBS, Linda C.	NICHOLS, Janet	WOYCHUK, John K.
GLINKA, Ellen	NUTHACK, Jo	
GRAY, Jean	NUTHACK, Judy	

1. Call to Order:

The 42nd Annual General Meeting was called to order at 12:45 P.M. by Susan Haga, President.

2. Approval of the Agenda:

MOVED by Vic Willoughby that the Agenda be accepted as presented in the Annual Report.

Seconded by Marion Rex **Carried**

3. Approval of the Minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting:

Marion Rex asked that her name be added to the list of attendees.

MOVED by Bob Atcheson that the Minutes of the 2014 Annual General Meeting be approved as presented in the Annual Report with corrections.

Seconded by Lynne Duigou **Carried**

4. Introduction of the Executive Committee and Directors of the Board

PRESIDENT – SUSAN HAGA

- 1ST VICE PRESIDENT – LIANNE KRUGER
- 2ND VICE PRESIDENT – MAXINE MAXWELL
- VICE PRESIDENT FINANCE -JOCK HOWARD
- SECRETARY – MARY ANN LEGRIS
- PAST PRESIDENT – LIAM HOBBS
- DIRECTORS:
 - BROOKS – ROBERT FRANZ
 - CAMROSE – JANINE CARROLL
 - DRAYTON VALLEY – CONNIE STUHL
 - EDMONTON – LYNNE DUIGOU
 - FORT McMURRAY – TAMMY GRANTHAM
 - GRANDE PRAIRIE – JEAN GRAY
 - LETHBRIDGE – DOUG McLEOD
 - MEDICINE HAT – DOREEN SHANK
 - PEACE RIVER – JOAN WAHL
 - RED DEER – DIANE LEHR
 - WETASKIWIN – DIANE STROHSCHIEIN

5. Executive, Branch and Committee Reports:

MOVED by Laura Turnbull that the Executive Reports, Branch Reports and Committee Reports be accepted as presented in the Annual Report.

Seconded by Claudine Nelson **Carried**

6. Audited Financial Statements for 2014, the 2015 & 2016 Budget

Jock Howard, Vice President of Finance, has been the acting Treasurer since March. In December a bookkeeper was hired. The position of Vice President of Finance has not been filled. Jock has agreed to act as interim Vice President. The Executive has recommended that the three positions (Treasurer, V.P. Finance and Bookkeeper) be reviewed over the next few months to

HOWARD SIM	2016	Edmonton	June 28, 2014
DWAIN SEBELIUS	4538	Edmonton	July 30, 2014
PETER WILLIAMS	3772	Edmonton	July 30, 2014
ANNE KNIGHT	2946	Edmonton	August 14, 2014
JUNE HUGHES	5450	Wetaskiwin	August 28, 2014
JOHN LUCIUK	2317	Edmonton	August 30, 2014
HERBERT ALBRECHT	1904	Edmonton	September 06, 2014
SHIRLEY YURKEWICH	3862	Edmonton	September 11, 2014
PATRICIA JEAN WOODMAN	2355	Edmonton	December 18, 2014

And do stand in silent tribute to their memory.

MOVED by Frank Easton that this Resolution of Respect be made a part of the minutes of this meeting.

Seconded by Jo Nuthack **Carried**

8. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS – SUSAN HAGA: Attachment

9. ADJOURNMENT – Susan Haga @ 2:15 PM

Respectfully submitted:
Mary Ann Legris, Secretary
Alberta Genealogical Society

SOCIETY AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE 2015 AGM

KENNETH YOUNG AWARDS

Kenneth Young was a member of the Society from 2003 to 2008. During the relatively short time he was a member, Ken contributed a great deal to the Society. He was very interested in the branch newsletters and had been promoting the idea of a newsletter award. In 2008, during his term as President of Lethbridge Branch, he passed away. Following his death, the Kenneth Young Award was set up by the Society Board. The award consists of three categories.

The **Award for Best Local Content** is based on news of local records, sources and research aids, and primary material that might not be otherwise available. This award goes to Lethbridge Branch newsletter *Yesterday's Footprints* February issue based on David A. Norris' "Finding Your Ancestors in Hotels and Boarding Houses", reprinted from *Family Chronicle*, Sept/Oct, 2012.

The 2014 Award Certificate for Best Local Content is presented to: **Susan Haga, Editor**

The **Award for Best Original Article** is judged on originality, style, organization, readability and interest. The winning article: "Inspector Maigret, Hercule Poirot! Step Aside" appeared in the May 2014 issue of Wetaskiwin Branch newsletter *Roots and Branches*.

The 2014 Award Certificate for best Original Article is presented to: **Alice Hoyle, Author**

The **Award for Best Overall Newsletter** is based on quality of writing and editing, informative articles and features, graphics and photos to enhance or illustrate, quality of reproduction, layout and design, size and readability. The winning Newsletter is Grande Prairie's *Heritage Seekers*.

The 2014 Award Plaque for Grande Prairie Branch Library is presented to: **Patricia Greber, Editor**

LONG TERM MEMBERSHIP AWARDS FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

Certificates to be presented to:

Edmonton Branch Members: Joan Parker, Deborah Was, Patricia Rooney, John Wright, Claudine Nelson, Pamela Forsyth and Frank Mayner

Lethbridge Branch Member: Frances Vanderbeek

Medicine Hat Branch Members: Kathy Gleisner

SPECIAL MENTION AWARDS

Certificates to be presented to:

Jo Nuthack - In recognition of your leadership and dedication in making GenFair 2014 a successful Society event.

Lyn Meehan - In recognition and appreciation of the acclaimed website created by you in 2014 for The Society.

President's Award

Drayton Valley Branch - In recognition of Drayton Valley Branch for twenty years of diligence in maintaining the Branch and making significant contributions to The Society.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

President

Susan Haga

As I write this report I have a lot of mixed feelings looking back over the past two years, and realizing this is the last Annual Report I will write as President. It has been a rewarding experience for me yet it has not been without its challenges. I want to recap what has happened in the past year to show what has been accomplished in 2015.

In February I had the opportunity to attend and give two presentations at Grande Prairie's Family History Day workshop that was held at the Montrose Cultural Center in Grande Prairie. The workshop was hosted by Grande Prairie Branch, the South Peace Regional Archives (SPRA) along with the Grande Prairie Public Library where GP AGS Library is housed. The first year this workshop was held, there were 50 people who attended, the following year there were 80 people and this year 125 people! The event was free and ran from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. with notable guest speaker Dr. David Leonard who gave an insightful presentation on the Genealogical Resources at the Provincial Archives. He is a Peace Country historian who was the Provincial Archivist of Alberta from 1993 to 1996.

Earlier this year AGS received an invitation from Alberta Historical Resources Foundation to make a presentation in Drumheller on 28 February to include all our activities since 2012. Every three years, AHRF invites the Provincial Heritage Organization (PHOs) that they sponsor to report on their activities, accomplishments and challenges. In particular AHRF asked for membership numbers, volunteer hours, amounts of other grants received and any other metrics that could be reported. Since I was busy chairing the AGS Board meeting that day, Marion Rex agreed to go on my behalf. Her report was given in both print and PowerPoint form. In 2015 we received \$36,200.00 from AHRF, down from \$38,000 the year before. With the economic climate what it is, we were told to expect a decrease in the next year as well.

On April 18-19 we held our AGS Family History Conference 2015, "Discover Our Roots; Share Our Stories" that was a great success with 251 people in attendance. At the AGM a new bylaw was passed to add Young Adult Membership (age 18 to 23) and Student Membership (school children from grade 7 through grade 12). This was something I had wanted to see happen since I was 2nd Vice President.

The conference was an incredible learning experience for me as this was the first time I was part of the Conference Committee. I want to thank all those members of the committee for working so hard on the Conference and for all the assistance that Shannon Cherkowski gave me in arranging the speakers and presentations.

On May 14th I traveled to Brooks and District Branch to visit with them. They have a cozy library and a great comradery with each other. As part of my visit I was asked to give a presentation on the Genealogical Resources at the Lethbridge Family History Center. After I finished speaking they scheduled a field trip to the Lethbridge Family History Center in June. I did meet a few members of their Branch there at that time to assist them in doing some of their own family history research.

On May 23rd we saw the passing of our dear friend Peter Staveley, Editor of *Relatively Speaking*, after a long illness. During Peter's illness, the R.S. Committee realized they were in need of assistance. Previously, during the GenFair held in Red Deer, Peter, Marilyn Hindmarch and Wayne Shephard, then the Editor of *Chinook*, worked together on a successful project. Wayne was an obvious choice and began assisting with the May issue. During this time he conducted a survey of members about content and distribution of RS. He prepared and presented a report for the AGS board: 'State of Affairs of *Relatively Speaking*'. During this period, Wayne took on the responsibility to assist Marilyn with the production of the August issue. On June 19th he formally applied to be the Editor; the Board readily agreed by offering him the Editorship. In August Wayne assumed full editorship upon the publication of the August issue (announcement was made in that issue of him becoming RS Editor).

Through 2015 900 copies per issue of RS have been printed. In May 2015, 124 members (19%) had chosen electronic delivery, up from 97 in mid-2014. Some distribution totals: in August there were 616 print copies mailed and for November there were 584. It is anticipated that most members will be receiving electronic copies by 2017. Of course, there will always be paper copies available as required.

In June the Edmonton Heritage Council invited its grant recipients to attend a 2-day workshop held June 12-13, 2015 on writing an effective strategic plan. I had the opportunity to attend with Marion Rex. An effective plan would include aim and objectives of the organization with

performance measurements. As an organization operationalizes its strategic plan, it unifies the organization to work towards common goals. The AGS Strategic Planning committee was struck, under the leadership of Marion Rex, to develop a strategic plan. The draft plan was discussed, modified by the Board members, and approved by the Board at the September Meeting. The three main goals of our organization include:

- Strategic Priority A—Education on Genealogical Research and Methodology
- Strategic Priority B—Facilitate Genealogical Study and Research
- Strategic Priority C—Strong and Healthy Organization

On September 18-20 we held our annual Retreat at the Providence Renewal Centre in Edmonton. Friday evening we held our usual social gathering and had a get-to-know-you session that was fun plus a bit intriguing. A lot of the members in attendance said they appreciated learning more about each other.

On Saturday morning we held a two hour Branch Sharing Time moderated by Maxine Maxwell. This was a time for Branch Presidents to have uninterrupted discussion regarding concerns and goals for the future. It's a great sharing time for the Presidents to discover solutions for problems, group activities and programs that have met with success in the other Branches.

Our AGS Board Meeting began at 1 p.m. on Saturday. This year we decided to try something new; at 5 p.m. we decided to call for a recess and reconvene Sunday morning to complete the Board Meeting. Everyone was happy with this arrangement as it allowed for all agenda items to be addressed.

The new Membership Kit and Membership Cards were approved for use during 2016. The Membership Kit went online that day! Each Branch received membership cards and pins. This system will allow for kits, pins and cards to be available at each Branch thus eliminating the constant increase in mailing costs.

For our Saturday evening presentation at the Retreat we had invited Provincial Archivist, Michael Gourlie to make a presentation on the Genealogical Resources at the Provincial Archives. He gave an excellent talk discussing the many resources available in particularly the vital records. After he concluded his talk many in attendance continued asking more and more questions.

In October I attended the 'Energized Heritage Conference' held by the National Trust of Canada and co-hosted by Alberta Historical Resources Foundation. Historical and genealogical societies all across Canada joined for a conference at the Fairmont Palliser Hotel in Calgary. It was a great opportunity to meet with leaders of other organizations as it isn't often that this Conference is held in Alberta. There were many sessions held in discussing historical topics in general, particularly concerned with preserving historic buildings across Canada and how we as organizations can help to preserve history in all of our communities. I met a few people there who work at the Provincial Archives in Edmonton and a friend who volunteers with the Lethbridge Historical Society in Lethbridge. During one of our breaks I even met Brooks President, Bob Franz's son Doctor Kyle Franz who works as Manager of the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation in Regina.

On November 7th the Grande Prairie website went live on our AGS website. The website is energetic, informative and modern, presenting local genealogical resources available in the Grande Prairie region. In November Lyn Meehan and Mediashaker began working on the new website for Wetaskiwin Branch to be launched February 2016.

For our November Board meeting we had hoped to have another video conference with the company that we had rented from last year, but, due to a number of problems, this was not possible. We ended up having a face-to-face board meeting at the AGS Library instead. At that time, the board approved the purchase of a license with *Blue Jeans*, a video conferencing company recommended by Jock Howard. The license was affordable and will give the Society many opportunities for use such as committee and board meetings as well as educational programs.

At the November Board meeting, a unique concept, 'Members Helping Members', was proposed and approved. 'Members Helping Members' is a fund to sponsor AGS members in financial need who wish to attend an AGS conference or workshop or to renew yearly membership. Funders are anonymous and do not receive tax-deductible receipts. A webpage is available for information. A wonderful concept assisting genealogists!

Thus ended 2015 -- my last year as President of the Society. As I mentioned, my term has not been without challenges; the challenges have led to some very rewarding programs and events, and for that I am grateful. Grateful as well for having the opportunity to be your AGS President for it afforded me many pleasant hours working with dedicated members. I have a new appreciation of the work accomplished by the Branches. The amount of research, individual and group, being accomplished across our Province is amazing!

I am leaving with many fond memories so a very big "Thank You" to one and all.

First Vice President

Lianne Kruger

Social Media

Being on the following social media has given our society more exposure.

Facebook

Laura and I continue to post in Facebook. We have 542 "likes." We made our milestone of 500 Likes! We are getting out there. If you have a Facebook account please 'like' us and share our posts with others to help promote our profile.

The following branches have a Facebook page: Brooks, Drayton Valley, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer. The link to their Facebook page is on our website [<http://www.abgenealogy.ca/branches>]

As part of the backups I have requested that Laura change my status to Admin as well. I would like to have a couple other people as editors

Pinterest

In Pinterest we now have 878 pins on 36 boards with 48 followers. If you have a Pinterest account please follow us and share our posts with others to help promote our profile.

Twitter

We have 512 followers and we are following 715. Most Tuesdays I am part of the #AncestryHour which helps share our account with others doing genealogy. Also some Friday evenings. Brooks branch has a twitter account. If you have a twitter account then please follow us and retweet our posts. That will also help advertise our group.

FamilySearch Wiki

I have made AGS a contributor to the FamilySearch Alberta website page. Our logo and website are on the page. Changes are made through FireFox not Google Chrome. I will upload more information so people know where to find research help.

familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Alberta

Second Vice President

Jean Gray

This was my first year of my 2-year term. I have enjoyed my time on the executive and look forward to the continued work of AGS in 2016.

There are three committees in my portfolio.

1. Translations

Sue Phillips is the chairman of this committee. A request to update the translation list was put in *Relatively Speaking*. That created three volunteers offering services in German, French and Latin. There were no requests for translations this year.

2. *Relatively Speaking*

With the support of the AGS board, Wayne Shephard took over the editorship of the Journal. The future plans for the Journal include revamping the layout and visual image. Specific topics for each quarterly edition is planned, including collaboration with the Saskatchewan and Manitoba Genealogical Societies. The Editorial Board continues producing an outstanding Genealogical Journal for AGS. Thank you for all your time and commitment. The transition toward electronic/digital copies continues.

Please read Editor Wayne Shephard's *Relatively Speaking* report for the more information.

3. Membership

I have served as the Membership Chairman for 2015. The office staff continues working towards mastering the new Shout program. This program provides the society with numerous statistics and information the Board needs to make decisions and for the society to function in a digital world. The efforts of the office staff is appreciated in this steep learning curve.

The 'New Member Kit' was approved and distributed to branch presidents at the September Board meeting along with pins and membership cards. Each Branch is now responsible from presenting the kits to new members.

The membership drive was started in October 2015, a month earlier this year. The use of the online membership via our website was well used. The membership form was updated to include new membership categories and to reflect the same information as the website.

The volunteer portion was removed from the membership form and was replaced by a 'Volunteer Information' page on our website.

The Membership for 2015 was 705. The board continues to have discussion on how to attract new members and retain the ones we have.

Vice President of Finance

Jock Howard

Bookkeeping

This year is the first full year for which we have used a professional Bookkeeper (Shirley Keller), and it has proven to be a good decision. She has developed an excellent working relationship with our Office Coordinator (Linda Winski) and the Chair of Fundraising and Grants (Marion Rex). Very much the perfectionist, Shirley works on inconsistencies until she is satisfied that they are resolved.

Casino

Our casino revenue this year was one of the largest in recent memory. My personal thanks go to Laura Turnbull for chairing this important revenue stream, and to all the volunteers who make this event possible. Revenue from our casino activity will fund rent for our Edmonton facility, as well as insurance coverage for all of AGS until the next anticipated casino.

Grants & Fundraising

Marion Rex has put in a stellar effort working with our major government partners: Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, and Edmonton Heritage Council. Through her efforts, their contribution covered about one third of our revenue.

Membership

Although we do not have an official membership chair, Jean Gray has stepped in. Our revenue is about 5.5% over budget and we are getting new members through our website initiative. Thanks to Lyn Meehan for her efforts in making it online registration possible.

Research

The research team reported that the number of research requests they receive went down significantly when we moved to the new website. They are working through the challenges of our new interface making it easier for patrons to request printed copies of the homestead records and other research. My sincere gratitude goes to Norma Wolowyk and her entire team for their efforts for continuing to provide high quality assistance to breaking down those brick walls that stymy so many; we have realised over \$6,000 in revenue from this service.

Summary

When I accepted this position five years ago, I had no notion what lay ahead of me. I have tried my best to keep my focus on what is best for the Society, with advice from our very capable

auditors (Kouri | Berezan | Heinrichs), wisdom from the Finance Committee both past and present (Lynne Duigou, Jean Gray, Val Peden, Marion Rex, Donna Shanks, Norma Wolowyk), and support from the Executive Committee both past and present (Les Campbell, Susan Haga, Liam Hobbes, Lianne Kruger, Mary Ann Legris, Maxine Maxwell).

I owe a debt of gratitude to Linda Winski for her knowledge of the day-to-day operation of our society as well as her assistance with the membership and donations.

Secretary

Mary Ann Legris

This was my fifth and final year as Secretary of the Society. In addition to taking and preparing the minutes of the Finance Committee, Executive Committee, Board of Directors and Annual General Meeting, I also served as Chair of the Policies & Procedures Committee and as Archivist.

Annual Meetings

During the past two years I represented the Executive on the GenFair and Conference Committees. My involvement consisted of planning the dinners and preparing the AGS Annual Report.

Archivist

I have collected archival materials such as Branch Newsletters, AGS publications, reports and minutes dating 2008 through 2015; all have been organized for submission to the Provincial Archives in 2016.. All financial records have been sorted, placed in storage for the mandatory seven years, or shredded. During the course of sorting, I placed all materials of historical value in a separate container awaiting someone to take on the role of Historian.

Policies and Procedures Committee

The members of the P&P Committee: Jo Nuthack and Sandra Vaneldik – both Past Presidents of the Society and very knowledgeable regarding the *Operations Manual*. During this past year, much has been accomplished in reviewing position descriptions and policies defining protection of personal information and security measures. During the development of policies, the committee was assisted by members involved in positions and programs as well as the recommendations that are often made by our Auditors. The work of this committee, as has been discovered during these five years, must be ongoing. To this end, the committee met once a month to complete work being prepared between the meetings by the individual members.

The role of Secretary is extremely interesting. It is much like being the passenger in a touring car (the Society) sitting beside the driver (President), taking notes (Minutes) about all the stops (Meetings) along the way, studying the map to plan the course of the trip (Agenda), checking with all the other passengers (Directors and Chairs) for their suggestions (Reports) regarding their participation during the trip (Term). Hopefully, at the completion of the trip (End of Term) everyone (AGS Members) is satisfied with all the visits (Accomplishments) made.

Thanks for inviting me to take the trip with such delightful passengers. It most certainly was an eventful time. Being secretary was interesting, but, it required quite a lot of devotion, time and energy. I am still devoted to the Society, but I now need my time and energy for other important projects such as recording my family's past history and making new history with my grandchildren.

BRANCH ANNUAL REPORTS

Brooks &
District



Robert Franz,
President

Members: 17
Volunteer hours:
2358

January. We kicked off the year with members sharing with each other their research activities. Bob Franz reported on his attendance, in June, at the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Hillcrest Mine explosion. Both his grandfather and his grandfather's brother worked in the Hillcrest mine, and his grandfather's brother was one of the casualties. Bob shared the publications about the explosion, "Snowing in June" which provides a biography of each of the miners killed in the explosion, and "The Devil's Breath" which provides a detailed description of events leading up to the explosion and the investigation following.

February. Members Eileen French, Clara Iwaasa, and Karyn Norden have submitted DNA samples for their genealogical research, and in February the three provided very different and very informative presentations on their results. Branch members also shared their ongoing family research and Clara Iwaasa updated the group on the numerous research requests she has answered. Also in February the branch held its annual general meeting and elections. Bob Franz was returned President for a second term and Glenn Michell was elected Secretary for the Branch. Karyn Norden was re-elected as Treasurer and Eileen French will continue as Past President. Other members volunteered to remain in their present positions for another year: Carol Anderson - Publications, Clara Iwaasa Researcher, Brian Dunlop - Finance, Henry Najda - Membership, Mary Burkholder - Library and Website, Bob Franz - Historian, Eileen French and Karyn Norden, and Brian Dunlop - Casino.)

March. Members gathered at the Brooks Public Library to hear Lorraine Lohr Cathro speak on the topic "Using Short Stories to Write Family History/Memoir". She shared her experiences in writing her self-published book *Roots and Adventures: A Prairie Childhood*. She gave tips on 'bringing your ancestors to life on the printed page' using short excerpts from her book about growing up in a rural Alberta community in the 1950's and 1960's. This most enlightening presentation was followed by several members buying her book and the branch purchasing a copy for its library.

April. Members each brought a family pedigree, and, selecting one of the members, discussed the research and what they learned of that member's life. A most diverse and interesting discussion! Also in April four of our members travelled to Edmonton to attend the AGS Conference. As in past years members will be gathering their thoughts and sharing the information from the conference with the rest of the membership. It also provided a great opportunity for members to socialize and get to know each other.

May. We were visited by AGS President Susan Haga who gave a most informative and interesting presentation entitled "Between Censuses: Newspapers, Directories and Tax Records." A detailed handout accompanying the presentation will provide members with

many enjoyable hours in the days to come. Susan also provided the membership an overview of what is available at the Lethbridge Family Center, resulting in the branch deciding to visit the center in June.

June. The Brooks and District Newsletter, *B and D Heirlines*, was published, the first joint effort by Editor Carol Anderson and Copy Editor Glenn Michell. Also in June several members carpooled to Suffield in response to their Historical Society's invitation to see their inaugural display. It was most extensive and impressive, and a good time was had by all. New contacts were made with a reciprocal invitation to attend our next general meeting in September and to look at participating in more joint activities. Also two members travelled to the Family Research Center in Lethbridge where we were welcomed and hosted by AGS President Susan Haga, enjoyed a piece of birthday cake, and spent the day searching for ancestral information.

July. On July 1 several members exhibited branch and AGS information at the church on the Brooks Museum Grounds as part of the Brooks celebration of Canada Day. Much interest was shown, many questions answered, and several promises were made to attend our September meeting and join the society.

September. We dispensed with the business portion at our general meetings and, as a result, dispensed with minutes at our general gatherings so we could focus on the social and program aspects of the society. We began in September with a most interesting slide presentation by one of our members, Karyn Norden, on her overseas trip to Scotland where she was able to do some family genealogy research - a great beginning after our summer break.

October. Members came with reports on their research including the breaking through of brick walls and smashing up against new ones with fellow members celebrating, commiserating and ready to offer advice. We invited our new Public Library librarian to our general meeting to view our holdings and learn more about our group. She is in the process of weeding out their reference section and invited us to assist. Our editor, Carol Anderson, and President, Bob Franz, took her up on her invite and as a result we have obtained for our own library a number of new resources. The City of Brooks is in the midst of replacing the old arena in the center of town with a new field house which will also see the local library move into the new building. Our branch is currently in discussions with the librarian regarding the branch accessing one of the adjoining rooms to house our growing collection. Having our meetings there would give our Branch more visibility in the community and help to increase our membership

November. We were lead through an interesting (confusing?) exercise by another member, Glenn Michell, in which we took our family trees and renamed our family members using the Scandinavian system. This was followed by a most informative illustration of the Scandinavian names in Glenn's own family.

December. We rounded off the year with the second edition of our Newsletter which is now going digital. Our traditional Christmas dinner was held at the Brooks Golf Club - a

time of good cheer and good company. This year we added a fun event, a gift draw, with the proceeds going to the local Food Bank

Throughout the year members have been busy carrying out their various responsibilities with the branch. Mary Burkholder has spent many hours cataloguing our library acquisitions. Local obituaries have been scanned and cemetery data has been added to our website under the leadership of Brian Dunlop. Two issues of our newsletter *B and D Heirlines* was produced by our most capable editor Carol Anderson and copy editor Glenn Michell, memberships have been promoted and members reminded of meetings and upcoming events by Henry Najda, and our webpage has been updated and maintained under the leadership of Karyn Norden and Mary Burkholder. Past President Eileen French has been kept busy serving on various committees and filling in for absent executive members.

Our dedicated researcher Clara Iwaasa has spent many hours fielding research requests to the branch and sharing her findings with the executive. Karyn Norden and Brian Dunlop have ensured we are in good financial standing and Glenn Michell has dutifully recorded the business of our executive meetings. Members have throughout the year shared with each other their research and provided assistance to each other.

And, President and historian Bob Franz has documented the year's activities of members in the branch's history book and has scrambled to keep up with the executive. We were saddened this year by the passing of one of our former members Patricia Peterson.

Camrose	Janine Carroll, President	Members: 23 Volunteer hours: 2037
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Current membership has increased by 5 members from 2015. We had some excitement having a member join from South Africa and immediately started working on a plan to make him president.

A short bio for Dave Mitchell prepared by our Vice President Fay Carlson: Dave is a 13th Generation South African with an Irish grandfather. His connection with Camrose began with his search for his Irish roots. He contacted Jack Cunningham, one of our past members who initiated our Branch Newsletter. Dave had seen an article that Jack had published in Camrose Roots and Shoots Winter 2004 and was able to link his family to the Cunninghams. It is amazing that our local Newsletter could have such results. Welcome, Dave.

PROGRAMS:

“Skeletons in my Closet”

“My Genealogy Trip to Ontario” - presentation by member Joan Conley

“Summer Genealogy Successes”

“Methodology: Getting to the Bottom of Basic Genealogical Research”

“Lest we Forget”
“Traveling at Christmas”
“British Home Children”
“Helping each Other”

Special Project: Genealogy Challenge - All members will be challenged to complete a genealogical project outside their usual interests over the summer. In September each will have opportunity to present a 10 minute report.

Ongoing project: BMD from the Camrose Canadian, Volume 3, 1941-1946 will be expected out in 2017.

President - Janine Carroll
Vice President - Fay Carlson
Secretary - Adele Goa
Treasurer - Alora Nelson
Librarian - Bev Webster
Newsletter Editor - Joan Conley
Website Manager - Deb Trout

Drayton Valley



Connie Stuhl,
President

Members: 9
Volunteer hours:
426

In 2015 Drayton Valley continued to assist members with research and promote genealogy in our community.

Meetings, Speakers and Presentations

In January we headed over to the Family History Centre for some research.

February we gained some interest and reviewed what our resources were in our local Library.

March we did a cleanup in our Library, going through some of the newsletters that needed to be filed and gather up any obituaries that had been cut out of the local newspaper..

April 19 we were surprised at the AGS Conference to be awarded by Susan Haga with the President's Award. The plaque holds a special place in our Library. Also in April we received a query from a gentleman in England who was looking for family who were past residents of Drayton Valley. One of our members lived on the farm that once belonged to these residents and another member remembered cutting their hair at the Seniors Lodge! They were very pleased to receive any information we could provide.

In May we reviewed the Library resources with some of our new members. Also in May I joined the Salt Lake Trippers on a bus trip to Salt Lake City to do some research there, which proved to be fruitful.

In June we toured the Anglican Cemetery, the oldest Cemetery in Drayton Valley. It was interesting to note the different styles of headstones and the variety of information engraved on them.

In October one of our members gave a slide show with some of the photos of her vacation.

In November we had a community member as a guest speaker. She spoke about being born in India, attending private school in England, and her experience there when WW II started. Listening to her speak a person could visualize what it was like to be there at that time. She brought some of her family members along so we had a good group!

Projects

Drayton Valley Branch continues to collect obituaries and place them on index cards for research. We also maintain a Facebook page.

Two members are involved with the Legacy Project with other community groups for Drayton Valley and area. This project is to preserve the oral, written and photographic history of Drayton Valley and area. We felt this was a good fit with what we promote.

Outreach

March 21 we hosted a workshop with guest speaker Deanna Bullock who spoke about what was new with Family Search and Ancestry.com. I am sure Deanna will not forget this day. She hit a deer with her car on the way to Drayton Valley. Some people following behind her were kind enough to deliver her to Drayton Valley for the workshop. We gained two new members from this workshop.

June 4 I made a presentation to Drayton Valley Town Council as part of their Community Spotlight segment, outlining what the Drayton Valley Branch of AGS was about and some of the activities that we conducted to promote genealogy.

November 4 I attended a meeting at the Town of Drayton Valley as part of a group that reviewed the Town's Cultural Strategy. I wanted to ensure we had a voice.

December 3rd one of our members attended a Legacy Project meeting at the Town of Drayton Valley. The Town recognizes that history is a resource that requires careful stewardship. The plan is to archive video, audio, photographs and text to record the history of the community. By preserving the past we can build a strong sense of community and deeper engagement with visitors to Drayton Valley.

As President of the Drayton Valley Branch, I am a member of an Inter Agency Group. Through this group we can share activities that get fanned out to members of the community.

Our goal remains to continue to offer programs that may entice new members to join our Branch.

Edmonton



Donna Shanks,
President

Members: 473
Volunteer hours:
9860

President - I have had a very busy first term as Edmonton Branch President. I represented Edmonton Branch at Executive and General Meetings and carried out the various functions required of the president. I was also *Clandigger* editor until June and filled in for our bookkeeper when she was working out of town for two months. I am a SIG co-coordinator, give presentations and am part of the Tracing Your Family Tree team. I have attended AGS Meetings and also represent the branch on the AGS Finance Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee.

Vice President - Margaret McInall has been a welcomed addition to our executive. Margaret has a wealth of knowledge about the branch and experience that she has shared with the board. Margaret is also an active SIG member gives SIG presentations.

Past President - Lynne Duigou takes care of hospitality for our general meetings. Lynne is co-coordinator for the Canada/US SIG and has given presentations for other groups as well, she is also on the FYFT team. Lynne and husband Lou have given a presentation on publishing a family history to several SIG and to the Société historique francophone de l'Alberta.

Treasurer - Emily Hines has been working to convert to Sage accounting and getting our chart of accounts to match AGS. Emily kept us up to date and informed and has handled our finances in a timely manner. We appreciate her efforts as this is not an easy task.

Secretary - Joyce Willard is also a library volunteer, SIG coordinator and gives presentations, often with a medical twist and she looks after hospitality for TYFT.

Library Committee of Arlene Borgstede, Heather Harper, Leanne Templeton and Lynn Fogwill continue to do an excellent job for the branch and AGS. A Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was held to honor and thank the library volunteers for all their work. Arlene also gives a Library introduction for TYFY. Heather continues to provide

Clandigger with listing of “New to the Library”. Lynn has revised the Manual for Library Volunteers and in that process has updated the information regarding emergency procedures and important contacts regarding the facility itself. Leanne attends board meeting and is also our archivist.

Membership Director Janet Cooper follows up with new member packages and welcoming new members and letting them know what we have to offer. Janet also volunteers in the library.

Clandigger Newsletter - John Althouse began as the new editor in July. John is also a SIG coordinator and produces the German SIG newsletter which is available to all on the Edmonton Branch website. John does outreach in the community doing presentations and being part of the TYFT team. John is responsible for AGS Genealogy for Children and Youth series.

Courses and Outreach Director Colleen Murray organizes Tracing Your Family Tree and referring presenters for community groups. TYFT is currently scheduled of April 2016.

Branch Genealogical Research Committee is headed by Norma Wolowyk. Norma has been an active branch member for many years. Norma is also part of the TYFT team and represents the Research Committee on the AGS board. Please read AGS Research Committee Chair Norma Wolowyk’s report for more information.

Programs director - Margaret Bendickson has held this position for 16 years and is now retiring. Margaret has also been a part of the TYFT team and done outreach to various community organizations. This year’s presentations

- January – Margaret Bendickson, presented “*Give my Love to Johnnie Wattie.*”
- February - Desmond Wynne, Ireland SIG leader, family history on using online resources.
- March – John Althouse presented a touching story of “*How I Finally Discovered Poor Helen: How an Article in a Small Town Newspaper Stirred a Dormant Memory,*” and Clayton Sauv  demonstrated “*Identifying Faces in Old Family Photos with Picasa Software.*”
- April - Denise Daubert, “*Greeting Cards of Yesteryear,*” and Colin Acker and Allison Martens, grade five students from the class of Marion Rex. Colin and Allison are cousins who spoke about “*How our Family Emigrated from the United States.*”
- May - Heritage Consultant, Historical Researcher, and young mother, Sandi Ratch, guest speaker for the General Meeting continued the theme of *Historical Treasures* with “*Dear Jack.*” Sandi’s grandmother’s collection of postcards.
- June - Marion Rex, introduced two of her grade five students who presented the results of their research on their own family history.
- September – Guest speaker, Ronald Kelland, MA, MLIS; the Geographical Names Program Coordinator for Alberta presented “*Place Names as a Genealogical tool - the Alberta Geographical Names Database and Place Name*

Sources.”

- October - John Althouse, discussed the Genealogy for Youth project.
- November - Edmonton branch member, John Chalmers, Historian for Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame, described the search for the remains of Captain Arthur Roy Brown in “*Looking for Roy Brown.*”

Publicity director -Sharon Dyer keeps the public informed sending over 50 monthly meeting notices to various public libraries, senior centres, archives and other organizations. Sharon also contributes to the Facebook page with “*Library Sharings with Sharon*” reviewing library books as well.

Correspondence Secretary Sheila Majeau sends out cards to the families of deceased members' and those members who were ill. Sheila also send a report to *Clandigger* each month and also volunteers with the research committee

Electronic Resources – John Hazelwood. During the Christmas break John with the assistance of Bruce Boelstler, Fred Vaneldik set-up the four new Edmonton Branch Computers in the library. The new Asus computers have been playfully named Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, McIntosh and Royal Gala. One new monitor was purchased and a printer. The computers have replaced the former XP computers. One XP computer, called “Crabapple” has been put at separate workstation for the Cemetery Database, a printer is also at this workstation. John also looks after ongoing maintenance on all our electronics.

Webmaster - Debbie Pietrzykowski also takes care of the Edmonton Branch website and the Facebook page which is a good source of branch information and research tips. The Facebook page now has 234 likes.

AGS Conference 2015 is “*Discover Your Roots, Share Your Stories*” was very successful under the leadership of Edmonton branch member co-chairs Pamela Forsythe and Carolynne Ross. The conference was held, April 18, April 19, 2015 at the Chateau Louis Hotel. Edmonton Branch donated \$1500.00 in addition to the many hours of volunteer work needed to make the conference a success. Thank you all who were part of the team for your hard work.

Fort McMurray	Tammy Grantham President	Members: 8 Volunteer hours: 635
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Our Executive for the year was as follows:

- President: Tammy Grantham
- Vice President: Laverne Cormier
- Treasurer: Cathy Marriott
- Secretary: Catherine Whelton

As I reflect on the previous year, I have reached the conclusion that we have been very, very, busy. I guess, in a way, we had to make up for the two previous years spent in limbo as we waited for our new location to be built. And make up for it we did!

We started off our New Year with our casino being held on January 11 and 12th. As anyone who has done a casino knows, this involves calling up all your friends and anyone who owes you a favor and convincing them that they have nothing better to do then spend at least 6 to 8 hours of their time helping out a cause as worthy as our Genealogy Library. The Casino is our only source of funding the expenses of our Library. We have always manage to find the help; to this end in mid-May we received \$55 171.72.

Following the Casino, we were told our new location would be ready for an April occupancy. Before we could fully commit we received the lease, had it approved and signed by AGS President. During this process, we decided to take the bull by the horn and to pack everything up in anticipation of a move. Our current location had been expropriated and was slated to be torn down in June, so we really had to move somewhere. It took a lot of trips to our local stores to get the many, many boxes needed for our very heavy books. We spent February, March and April packing and deciding what we were going to keep, what we were going to donate to other non-profits, and what we were going to leave behind to be demolished with the building. We had many work bees and everyone worked so well together - we were like a well-oiled machine.

Our lease showed up, and much to our dismay, we saw our rent was going to increase almost 200%. We crunched our numbers and decided that we would be able to squeak by with our Casino proceeds. We signed the lease and May 1st we moved on over.

We had a local Church youth group agree to help us with our move for a donation of whatever we felt was appropriate. Well, let me tell you, about 24 young teens, and some parents and group leaders showed up, along with a few pickup trucks, and within two hours everything was out of the old location and sitting in our new home. The move went smoother then I could have ever imagined. We made a substantial donation to their group (and we all felt it was a well-earned donation) and both of our groups were happy with the outcomes.

The next few months were spent designing the new layout, ordering, and then waiting for bookshelves and new furnishings to come. We unpacked what we could, when we could, and cajoled husbands and sons to build bookshelves, and desks and move cabinets about as they arrived. We are all so happy with the final results. We have a new home that we are very proud of.

Now that we had a new home that was all set up and looking like a library again, we had to turn our attention to getting some new members to utilize our Library. We contacted several different local resources to let them know of our move. One magazine came and did a story about our Branch. The local Shaw Cable folk arrived and filmed a short program of a member as he talked of his experience in exploring his own genealogy. We also have done a lot of talking and promoting our library to our own personal friends.

These methods have resulted in our membership almost doubling by the end of 2015 (as these new members were considered early renewals for 2016, I did not include them in our membership number for 2015)! We are so happy that all of our hard work has resulted in more members and more visits to our Library.

Our goal is to keep promoting ourselves and increasing our membership even more during 2016. So it has been a very busy year. A lot has been done by very few people, but I must give a great big, huge, Thank You to all our in town members who gave all they had to make this year end with such a beautiful library. We hope the Library inspires new patrons with feelings of friendliness, curiosity, and the resources to be able to walk down their own path of personal discoveries. So thank you Dick, Laverne, Cathy, and Catherine for all you have done, and continue doing. You make being the President a pretty easy job!

Grande Prairie
& District



Al Bromling
President

Members: 48
Volunteer hours:
2657

An Overview of 2015 Projects and Achievements

Family History Day

We hosted this event with our partners, the Grande Prairie Public Library and the South Peace Regional Archives, on February 14. We had a steady attendance although the number of participants was less than expected. I hope this annual event will continue to be a core project that helps our Branch show a commitment to inspire and support the family history research activity of residents in this region.

Global Family Reunion

Our Grande Prairie Branch and the South Peace Regional Archives assisted the Public Library in hosting a site of the Global Family Reunion Project on June 6, 2015. Branch volunteers set up information tables, genealogical displays and three research mentoring tables to serve the public. The program included live streaming of speakers (Henry Lois Gates, A.J. Jacobs, and NPR's Ophira Eisenberg) and activities from the central site in New York.

The 2015 Spring Conference

Kudos for the folks that put together the wonderful spring conference "Discover Your Roots: Share Your Stories" in April. Ten of our Branch members, plus two family members attended and found it to be an excellent experience.

Clan of the Day Presentation

Volunteers from our Branch and the Regional Archives prepared the family history of the Stewart family for presentation as "Clan of the Day" at the Highland Games in June.

The new Website

Four Branch members have been involved in Branch Website development work with Lyn and the folks at Mediashaker who have developed and are maintaining the site. It was a large, but very exciting, undertaking for our members. Many hours of collecting information, writing, editing, and re-editing went into this project.

At the September meeting, Lyn Meehan presented the website to the membership and the website went live in November 2015. A lot of work in a short 5 months!

Our members find the new site attractive and easy to use. The Search function for both Obituaries and Grave Markers of the Northwest is simple and easy, having eliminated the use of wild cards. As the website is used adjustments are being made to fine tune functionality. It is an ongoing process.

Patricia Greber is our webmaster and is beginning the process of managing, loading and editing material for the website, under Lyn Meehan's guidance. We thank Patricia for taking on this challenging work. We thank Lyn for the skill and enthusiasm, and the incredible volunteer hours that she brought to the project. Special thanks to Laura Turnbull for her years of maintaining and contributing many volunteer hours to our old website. And a very special thanks to Jean Gray for her leadership and long hours to bring this site on line.

Branch Member Story Published in *Relatively Speaking*

Congratulations to Branch member Jane Savage Cowley whose family research was selected for publication in *Relatively Speaking*, February 2015 issue. The article "Notations from a Diary of a WWI Veterinary Officer" shares Jane's story of her father's life and especially his service at the veterinary hospital in La Harve, France.

Obituaries and Gravemarkers of the Northwest

Thanks to our dedicated volunteers the indexing of obituaries and the collection of photo images from our cemeteries continued in 2015. These collections were moved to our new website. We are fine tuning processes for accessing them. The Cemetery database is having information added to each image that includes birth/death date, civic address, legal address, GPS location, citations on markers, created by, created date. The Obituary Indexes will continue to be added to each year.

Heritage Seekers Newsletter – Recipient of the Kenneth Young Award for Best Branch Newsletter presented to Patricia Greber, Editor at the April AGM

We publish an outstanding quarterly newsletter: Heritage Seekers. We have been sending it out electronically to most of our members with very little problem. This ease of distribution has cut costs as well as making the web links used in the newsletter 'live' for our users.

The newsletter came together quite well. This year, a series of articles by Jean Gray on meeting our members has been well received and it is a great way to feature our members and their research.

Wednesday Evening Genie Service

Wednesday evenings at the Isabel Campbell Room were active in 2015. Volunteers provided 60 hours of mentoring for 15 individuals during the year. We encourage service by appointment but continue to serve walk-in traffic when necessary. As well, the Wednesday evening is an opportunity for Branch members to seek advice or just visit and share stories with each other.

Rural Libraries Conference

A Branch representative presented a First Steps Genealogy workshop to 20 rural librarians at the fall conference of the Peace Library System in September.

Volunteer Researcher Activity

The year 2015 was a growth year. Our Branch had a request for more obituaries from the old Grande Prairie Newspapers than ever before. In total, we supplied twenty newspaper obituaries and replied to nine other people who inquired only about the possibility or the availability of an obituary. Two news items and a family story from the old newspapers were used to answer three other queries.

We also responded to general queries

- Location of the Gimi Cemetery (west and south of Albright, AB);
- Information on the deteriorated Spring Lake Cemetery near Wembley AB;
- Information on the location of a grave at the Grande Prairie Cemetery;
- Established a family contact to a freelance writer in Calgary who has taken on a project of writing a book about the sixteen WWII Pilots who died serving with the RCAF. One of these Pilots was from Hythe, AB, near Grande Prairie.
- Supplied family information to a WWII baby born in England, now 70, who wanted information on her Grande Prairie Canadian Soldier Dad who she had never met;
- Received a query from a lady in Norway looking for family information. This query was forwarded on to the Medicine Hat Branch since the research subject had been born and married at Medicine Hat, AB;
- Replied to a lady looking for information on her Great Grandfather who once lived at Lake Saskatoon, near Grande Prairie and who had abandoned his family in 1906.

Awards in 2015

Our Heritage Seekers Newsletter received the Kenneth Young Award for Best Overall Branch Newsletter with a plaque for the Library.

On behalf of President Susan Haga, we presented a 25 year membership award to Verna Hockey.

Membership Report for 2015

Our 2015 membership held steady at 48 members. We lost a few members due to retirements but gained new members from Beaverlodge, Edmonton, Fairview, Grande Prairie, Hythe, Hotchkiss, Okotoks and Regina.

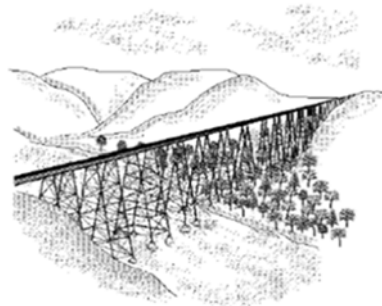
We also send our sincere sympathies to the families of long term member Bill Lappenbush who passed away on January 10, 2015 and Arthur (Wes) Murphy who passed away on June 19, 2015. We shall miss them.

Meeting Programs in 2015

The following programs were held in 2015. A varied and interesting collection:

- January – Members Helping Members to take down brick walls
- February – AGM – Leslie Gordon, Archivist at SPRA presented “Taking Care of Family Photos”
- March - Global Family Reunion, presented by GP Library Staff
- April – AGS Conference Reports, passing on what we learned
- May – Video “Famine and Shipwreck”, an Irish Odyssey; a CBC production from Doc Zone
- June – Tour of Glen Leslie Cemetery
- September – Unwrapping the New Website with Lyn Meehan
- October – Research Discoveries – members shared finds about their family research
- November – Duff Crerar – Accessing WWII Military Records from Library & Archives Canada

Lethbridge &
District



Doug McLeod
President

Members: 40
Volunteer hours:
3378

The Executive Committee from February 2015 to February 2016 is as follows:

- President: Doug McLeod
- Vice President: Susan Haga
- Secretary: Alma Berridge
- Treasurer: Pat Barry
- Past President: Nestor Martinez

Lectures and workshops presented at our monthly meetings were as follows:

- February: Elections were held. No one volunteered or was nominated, thus the present executive agreed to stay on. We then all learned how to read Latin records, thanks to a presentation by David Tyler.
- March: We visited the Galt Museum Archives
- April: We learned about Find-a-Grave with a presentation by Yvonne Sugmoto. It was an interesting talk, but unfortunately, we had a poor turnout of members.
- May: AGS member Nestor Martinez will give an update on DNA and Genealogy at our May meeting.
- June: We had Lorraine Cathro and her presentation “Bringing Your Ancestors To Life Through Short Stories”.
- July – August: we closed up for the summer break.
- September: We held our semi-annual meeting in September and had Jim Hillyer do a presentation on “Voice & Handwriting Recognition”.
- October: We held our annual ‘International Supper’. Members and guests were invited to bring an ethnic dish from one of the countries they were researching. Our member Ken Lievers gave an interesting after dinner presentation on genealogy as he sees it.
- November: Belinda Crowson gave an very interesting and informative presentation on “Prohibition in the Lethbridge Area”.
- December: We do not meet in December.

On a sad note: We lost a member – Sharon Allred #5921 passed away on Friday September 4, 2015.

Branch members continue to collect and preserve family and genealogical information. Obituaries and funeral cards are being collected and digitized.

Our research volunteers had a busy year responding to requests for information which generated substantial revenues for the branch.

Members also took part in some events held by the LDS and attended the AGS Conference in Edmonton. We continue our Monday afternoon Legacy Family Tree sessions.

Medicine Hat
& District



Lloyd Robinson
President

Members 49
Volunteer hours:
3810

2015 proved to be a very active and successful year for the MHDGS. Although we struggled until April to elect a new executive, we did manage to put that behind us and continue on to a very exciting year

Highlights by our members for the year included:

- Receiving and taking ownership of 100 years of AGT and TELUS phone books for the province of Alberta
- Organizing and sponsoring a bus trip to the Family History Center in Salt Lake City Utah.
- Working at the Casino in June for our branch.
- Having a table and exhibit on July 1st Canada Day in the park.
- Holding our first ever electronic vote in our branch concerning the purchase of an overhead scanner.
- Organizing and running a successful Grey Cup pull ticket and bake sale fundraiser for the branch.
- Holding an open house at our library in Oct for the community to come and view what we have to offer them as they search for their family history.
- Purchasing 3 new computers for our library, from the funds raised by the Grey Cup pull tickets and bake sale.
- Holding our yearend Christmas party at the Elks hall (we needed more room) our own library is becoming very crowded.
- Our library added 34 books/resources to our shelves.
- Eighteen queries were successfully dealt with during the year

Our branch was promoted to the community through two speaking engagements by the president at the Historical society of Medicine Hat and to the Saamis Rotary Club, as well as seven columns published in the Medicine Hat newspaper.

I would like to thank the many members of our club for all the work they do to keep Genealogy alive and well in our community. It is a pleasure to be part of this group.
Thank you all

Red Deer &
District



Linda Darby
President

Members: 61
Volunteer hours:
1580

Executive for 2015

<u>President</u>	Linda Darby	<u>Publicity</u>	Joan Schmelke
<u>Past President</u>	Diane Lehr	<u>Cemetery</u>	Vacant
<u>Vice President</u>	Vacant	<u>Genealogy Queries</u>	Vacant
<u>Secretary</u>	May McKinnon	<u>Newsletter</u>	Vacant
<u>Treasurer</u>	Vic Willoughby	<u>Library</u>	Joanne Allen
<u>Membership</u>	Betty Barnhill		
<u>Program Committee</u>	Peter Darby, Mary Joan Cornett, Lianne Kruger, Betty Barnhill, Vic Willoughby, and Diane Lehr		

2015 Meeting Program

- January – Allen Cameron “Veterans Voices of Canada” project to document military veteran for historical and educational purposes.
- February – Annual Meeting followed by presentation by Peter Darby “Finding Your British Roots”.
- March – No regular meeting. Many members attended and helped with the Red Deer Family History Fair.
- April – Lorraine Cathro – Roots and Adventures – A Prairie Childhood.
- May – Roxanne McCue - Free Premium Website available at Family History Library.
- June – Annual Pot Luck Supper 45 people attended.
- September – Deanna Bullock Ancestry.com the New Look.
- October – Gravesites Online – Nancy Archibald, a member, gave an excellent presentation.
- November – Three members shared their recent successes in finding family members. Peter Darby gave a presentation on using the website “Find Your Past”.
- December – No meeting.

Research Support Available - The hour before each branch meeting, Peter Darby opens the Family History Library and helps members solve their genealogical problems. Plus we get some queries most months.

Special Projects - Dedicated branch members record death announcements found in the Red Deer Advocate and the Red Deer Express. Copies of records are located in the City Library, Red Deer Museum and the AGS Library in Edmonton.

Library Support - Numerous genealogical books, including many local histories, are located in the Archive section of the Red Deer Museum. A computer is also available to aid in your research.

Red Deer Branch Meetings are held the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Primary Room of the LDS Church 3002 – 47 Ave Red Deer. We do not meet in July, August or December.

Wetaskiwin

Diane Strohschein,
President

Members: 27
Volunteer hours:
1541

Projects:

In keeping with our branch decision in 2013, to concentrate on the education and training of our branch members instead of hosting genealogy workshops, etc. we did not take part in any branch fund-raising projects in 2015.

However, we did have rather a special ‘project’ within our branch! After AGS President, Susan Haga sent to the branches, a letter suggesting that AGS branches initiate a special project for Canada’s 150th birthday in 2017, branch member Sharon Aney came up with the idea that we should individually write down our memories of our school days. The decision to create a school memory was left to each individual. In the end, 11 of our members submitted their stories to Sharon. At the end of December, she compiled all the stories and created a coil-bound booklet, titled “School Days Memories” showcasing our creative talents. We are very thankful that Sharon’s initiative brought out some wonderful memories – and for many of us, it has provided the inspiration to continue on with stories/memories from our lives.

Field Trip

On October 30th, 2015, members of Wetaskiwin Branch, AGS, toured the City of Wetaskiwin Archives. Archivist Rachel Knudsen gave us an over-view of the holdings at the City Archives, told us what services they provide, gave us a tour of the “cold storage room” and advised what documents were being stored there, and then answered any questions that the participants had.

Programs and Presentations

January. CSI Session #3- In 2014, our branch member Claudia Malloch introduced a new 7-part program to our monthly presentation agenda – “CSI Family History”. This month, she showed us a learning module on ‘Organization’, and then gave us some good hints about using the Family Search website. We then went to the Family History Center

(Wetaskiwin has one) and using the computers there, we were able to use some of the tips Claudia had given us.

February CSI Session #4 – Branch members Claudia and Carole gave a presentation on using Timelines. Several different types of timelines were demonstrated; various online sources for creating a timeline were demonstrated; timelines from a variety of genealogy programs were shown.

March CSI Session #5 – Using the Library and Archives Canada Database in Your Research – Branch member Alice gave this presentation. She demonstrated the many databases on this website, and gave examples of how to access the information.

April CSI Session #6 – Ten Genealogical Lessons I Learned the Hard Way: this Webinar gave us all some very valuable tips on how to make our research time more meaningful. The presenter reminded us of some of the ‘genealogical research rules’ – citing sources, keeping organized, finding the source behind the source, etc.

May CSI Session #7 – Citing Your Sources, Part 2 of Thomas McEntee’s Boot Camp – This was a very in-depth presentation on the importance of citing your sources. Tomas McEntee explained the different methods; his personal preferences, and the different ways in which databases can be created and used.

June “*What I Found Out, while doing my Genealogy Research This Past Year*” and “*How to Preserve and Share your Family History*” – Branch members advised what they had learned/found out/researched, etc. during the past year. In the second part of the program, we had a “show and tell” – members shared the various ways in which they had collected, preserved and shared the family archives and stories they had been fortunate to view, hear about or have in their possession!

September Getting the Most from Ancestry.com – Claudia arranged for us to view one of the sessions from the Roots Tech conference. The topic and the information presented provided us with many suggestions about using ancestry.com and suggested ways to use it ‘smarter’.

October The Write Stuff: Different Methods of Recording your Family History - Guest presenter, Dan DeWolf, showed this session from the Roots Tech conference. We were shown several options for recording our family history; using journals, diaries; creating a blog; writing and keeping letters; creating digital history and storing it in the cloud; writing ‘chapter books’ etc. A lot of inspiring information!

November How are you Preserving and Sharing Your Family History? Several members brought to the meeting, fascinating documents, albums, books, photos, diaries, glass negatives, etc. – all examples of family archives and the ways that family history is being preserved and shared with other family members.

Displays

We had a table at the annual Parade of Programs held in Wetaskiwin. Our branch information along with newsletters from our branch and other genealogical societies were on display. We also displayed research material from the Provincial Archives of Alberta and from the Family History Center in Wetaskiwin.

Accomplishments

At the AGS Conference in Edmonton in 2015, branch member Alice was awarded the Kenneth Young Newsletter Award for Best Original Article, published in our branch newsletter in May of 2014. What a wonderful honour!

Visitors from Scotland

In September, a research request was received by our branch: the request came from Scotland, asking for the burial location of ancestors. Alice responded to this request, giving the plot numbers, name of the cemetery and the location of the cemetery in Wetaskiwin. Further 'digging' on Alice's part yielded more information which Alice sent along to the Scottish couple. They advised that they were going to be in Wetaskiwin on October 24th, and would be visiting the graves at the local cemetery. Alice then did further research, and found the land locations where the ancestors farmed and lived – all in the County of Leduc now! Detailed maps and instructions were created by her and sent to the Scottish couple – they had indicated they would be interested in visiting the farmland. Alice then volunteered to meet them in Wetaskiwin and drive them to the various locations where their ancestors lived. Branch member Carole Koop accompanied Alice; it was a wonderful experience and a reinforcement of the benefits derived from volunteering our research time.

Wetaskiwin Branch Website

In November, our branch decided to change our website provider to Mediashaker, the one used by AGS. We advised Lyn Meehan and AGS of this decision, and our branch member Lee Koop has been very busy working on this project in conjunction with Lyn. We look forward to viewing the new website once all the background work has been done. Our thanks to Lyn Meehan and Lee Koop for all their hard work.

The hard work of our dedicated branch members has resulted in a 'sharing of knowledge' that has benefitted all of us. We look forward to our genealogy journey in 2016.

Submitted by
Alice Hoyle, Secretary-Treasurer

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cemetery Database

Shannon Cherkowski

The AGS Cemetery database committee consists of Shannon Cherkowski (Chair), Adele Goa, Pat Pettitt and Norma Wolowyk. All meetings and discussions this year have been held by phone call or email. Few updates were received in 2015. We encourage everyone who photographs and/or transcribes information from headstones to please share that information with our committee to help keep the records up to date.

Communications, Public Relations & Publicity

Lyn Meehan

Highlights for the year:

- 2015 AGS Conference + Online Registration
- Submission to Alberta Historical Resources Foundation report
- Development of the AGS Sponsor logo strip
- Society Recognition for the Web --- 6 November 2014
- New Membership Kit, Membership Cards and Application Form
- Grande Prairie & District Branch website
- Development of the GP's Northwest Albert Obituary Index and Gravemarkers of Northwestern Alberta and their endorsement of Branch templates
- Alberta Newspapers Index webpage launched with GP website
- Children and Youth Genealogy webpage — Unit 1
- Reconstruction of *Relatively Speaking* webpage
- Society Recognition for Youth series --- 14 November 2015

January to March

The highlight for this quarter was building an eleven-page design for the 2015 AGS Conference. This was the first time the Society offered Online Conference Registration. Communications also had the opportunity to enter membership applications into ShoutCMS, including scholarship recipients and donations. This was an incredible help to understand Linda Winski, AGS Office Coordinator's, need in recording revenue and liabilities. And wrapping up this quarter, a brief summary of successes and challenges in designing and developing the web, praise and statistics, and the future of the AGS Website was submitted for inclusion in Marion Rex's AHRF Report in Drumheller.

March to May

The Alberta Genealogical Society website received kudos from Montréal blogger Gail Dever who writes Genealogy à la carte. Her title "Savoir faire [Know how]—Alberta Genealogical Society launches new website". *Relatively Speaking* conducted an online survey for member's feedback regarding overall layout, format and types of articles

members would like to see in RS. To support the survey, we designed a sharp looking page. Distribution was in print and at the AGS Conference Registration Desk.

A new logo and webpage was designed for Tracing Your Family Tree and advertised. Colleen Murphy informed Communications they had a full-house and hopefully the website helped in enrolling attendees. The tallies for the AGS Online Conference Registration came in. Of the 251 attendees, 67 were online registrations a total of 26.7%. Communications felt this was a remarkable achievement. And finally, a review into new desktop publishing software for *Relatively Speaking's*. Contenders were MS Publisher, QuarkXpress and InDesign.

May to September

Over the summer, much was accomplished. New membership cards designed and printed, the membership application form revamped, and a revival of a New Member's Kit was created which is available for online distribution in the **Member's Only** area. The AGS membership committee began the membership drive one month earlier in 2015, starting in October. By running continuous articles in print and online and in mass emails, it was very successful campaign. Social media icons were added: Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter.

On June 22nd, a contact form with captcha was added to the AGS Research Services page. This served two purposes: so potential clients have direct communication to the AGS Research Chair and to avoid spam. It has proven quite resourceful generating automatic statistics numbering 35 since June. *Relatively Speaking's* webpage was revamped, adding two new categories: "News from the Editor" and one feature article per issue. Looks 'mighty fine'. Two highlights for this quarter were the construction of the Grande Prairie website and their databases: Gravemarkers of Northwestern Alberta and The Northwest Alberta Obituary Index. Beautifully done with fresh information and artwork. An upcoming article will be published in February's *Relatively Speaking* talking about the design and functionality of a new concept in database interaction. And for the finale, the AGS Genealogy for Children and Youth. A very playful webpage featuring a series of progressive genealogical teaching module's for youth written by John Althouse, with free distribution. Finally the Contact page was changed to include icons for quick identification of AGS services and important information.

September to December

In September, the RS Editor and Communications teamed up to coordinate the journals content with what is offered on the AGS website. And again, the Contact page was changed. The Grande Prairie website went live on November 7th. The new website is energetic, informative and modern, presenting local genealogical resources available in the Grande Prairie region. A strategic plan for migrating the databases was developed in July 2015, and in September 2015, Communications published it in the Quarterly Report.

In November 2015, Communications wrote a piece on “Succession Planning” that volunteers are never in the same position forever and should harness their knowledge in a written plan. Whether Executive, Board or Committee Chair, please consider writing a summary on how your project works for your successor. The job description in the AGS Operating Manual outlines our responsibilities well, but does not portray the daily successes and failures we endeavor. A recap:

No volunteer will remain in the same AGS position forever. We inspire to—but there will always be that moment due to life events to say ‘it’s time to step down’. That’s why documentation is a vital part of Succession Planning. Knowledge brought to and accumulated in that volunteer position is an asset to the Society’s life expectancy. It’s essential for any AGS project manager: whether it’s indexing, managing workshops or web manager to assure all lines of communication are open with the Executive, and to harness that knowledge base in a written plan.

To those of you who are AGS Project Managers, Communications urges you to have some type of written summary of how your project was built, currently works and the implementation of long term solutions so successors can step up any time.

Finally in November, a two-year project called Members Helping Members, a bursary to sponsor AGS members in financial need who wish to renew their yearly membership or attend an AGS event that requires a fee, was founded. A new webpage, print form and banner were developed for this cause and now found online.

Yearend Statistics

In 2015, the Communications Chair / Web Content Manager worked over 1,834 hours for AGS. This includes 1056 hours on GP website, including databases; 74 hours working with Linda Winski; and, 23 hours working on the new Wetaskiwin site, plus time spent on budgeting and proposals, in meetings, reporting, emailing and working with Mediashaker.

Our Society’s website statistics were phenomenal with greater than 19,000 users in 2015, viewing over 127,000 pages. A breakdown of web statistics will accompany Communications Quarterly Report in February 2016.

The Future of the AGS Website

The Society’s website is in very healthy condition. We have a good partnership with several Branches, *Relatively Speaking* and Committee Chairs. We hope more Branches will bring their inspirational stories, their projects and products, and advertise with us. Remember our strength is in teamwork and good communication.

As always, any correspondence made or received by AGS Communications / Web Content Manager is opened to any one or all Executive members for auditing. For

detailed reporting see Communications quarterly reports in the Members Area on the website.

Gaming

Laura Turnbull

AGS Casino event

- AGS was called to work a casino event on May 21 & 22, 2015 at Century Casino in Edmonton. Our proceeds from the event totalled **\$84,961.36**.
- We had a total of 45 volunteers to fill the 38 positions and I reported 325 volunteer hours to the AGS office for this event. A Very Special Thank You to all who were able to help.
- Our next casino event for AGS has been approved for the 2nd Quarter of 2017 (Apr/May/Jun) at Century Casino, Edmonton. We will receive actual dates in November 2016.
- This event helps considerably in raising funds for major operating costs for AGS including rent for our library facility and insurance costs for all branches.

AGS Raffle at Conference

We held a very successful 50/50 raffle as part of the AGS Conference on April 18 & 19, 2015. In total 1,251 tickets were sold resulting in a net profit for AGS of \$590.55. Thank you to our wonderful ticket sellers for their excellent efforts. A total of 64 volunteer hours were reported.

Branch gaming events

- All Branches (except Edmonton) may apply to hold casino events but some need to share with another branch. Each branch has to go through the application processes set up by AGLC.
- At present, Brooks/Medicine Hat, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, and Lethbridge have held or will hold casinos to help raise funds.
- Raffle or 50/50:
- Medicine Hat – has been holding 50/50 draws at local meetings to help raise funds.

Genealogy for Children and Youth Program

John Althouse

Completed first two resources and sent them to the website where they now reside. Both resources have been copyrighted in the name of the Alberta Genealogical Society. Continue to work on other resources for the series either making corrections or actually creating the resources. At Lyn Meehan's suggestion, created two supplementary reading lists of books that might be used to enhance and enrich the resources developed to date.

Continue to seek out and get permission to use resources for future resources. The third resource has been examined by a group of teachers who have suggested modifications to be made. Had a limited number of print copies of each resource created for display, promotional, and instructional purposes. Have created advertisements for the resources that are available.

Wrote articles related to projects for issue of *Relatively Speaking* on genealogy for youth. Made presentations on the resources to the AGS Board at their retreat, to Edmonton Branch at a branch meeting, and at the SGS at their conference. Requested to make a similar presentation at the AGS Gen Fair 2016 but the schedule was full so will provide a static display instead.

Made a related presentation to the England Wales Special Interest Group on projects for children and youth which could be carried out at home. These and similar projects will be the basis of the fifth resource of this series. Mention the resources to individuals that I meet and to groups that I address in my outreach sessions for Edmonton Branch who might benefit from them.

Outreach Program

It is difficult to distinguish AGS from Branches when doing outreach. Currently, Colleen Murray has assumed the role of coordinator for Edmonton Branch, and I am just one of the volunteers who carry out this work. This year, I personally have done two sessions of three evenings and a full Saturday at the Stony Plain Multicultural Centre. I have provided a session for the South West Edmonton Seniors. Other members have done other sessions. I act as one of the instructors in the Tracing Your Family Tree Course.

I have presented at an international gathering for the village of Norka Founders Day and to the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society. I did a radio question and answer on *Alberta @ Noon* on CBC Radio. I issue a newsletter on German genealogy every two months which is free and available to all on the Edmonton Branch website. I have also continued to develop the capacity of members to acquire new skills that will build their capacity as members of our society. Until this year, I contributed regular pieces for “**Visiting Alberta’s Past**” in *Relatively Speaking* drawn from places throughout the province. I also was a member of the AGS Conference Committee in 2015 and keep the AGS and Edmonton Branch bulletin boards current and in order in the AGS Library.

Grants/Fundraising

Marion Rex

Meetings Held

As Grants & Fundraising Chair, I attended the May, September and November AGS board meetings, as well as the AGM and Fall Retreat, as a guest, in order to be current with Board business. I also attended several teleconferences and face-to-face meetings held by the Finance Committee.

Grants - \$56,846.93

AGS is forever grateful for the funding received through sponsorship from the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation and the Edmonton Heritage Council. It also relies on casino funding, general donations, donations from research and miscellaneous fundraising.

- AHRF Sponsorship—In 2015, AGS received \$36,200 in sponsorship funding from Alberta Historical Resources Foundation (AHRF) funded by the Alberta Lottery Fund. The Sponsorship received from AHRF is applied to expenses incurred for our publications, genealogical training programs and workshops, business meetings and general administration.
- Edmonton Heritage Council Sponsorship—In 2015, AGS received \$18,904.43 in operational funding from the Edmonton Heritage Council. This funding helps provide staffing.
- Community Initiatives Program Grant—\$1742.50 for the purchase of computer equipment and software for the office coordinator and bookkeeper.

Grants and Fundraising at the Branch Level - \$4,417.71

Medicine Hat also reported local branch fundraising in the way of \$126.50 raised in a 50/50 draw, \$3,362.00 raised through 2015 Grey Cup Tickets and \$929.21 from miscellaneous fundraising.

Casino - \$136,658.00

Edmonton Branch worked a casino on behalf of the Alberta Genealogical Society head office on May 21-22, 2015. For more information, see Laura Turnbull's report on Gaming. Some of the branches also had casinos:

- Provincial Office: \$48,630.68 for 2015; more deferred for rent in 2016
- Brooks: \$14,663.89
- Fort McMurray: \$55,171.72
- Medicine Hat: \$18,191.71

General Donations - \$8,889.83

Thanks to the generosity of its members, businesses and other non-profit associations, AGS and its branches received \$8,889.83 in donations.

- Provincial Office: \$2,438.98
- Brooks: \$175.00
- Camrose: \$587.60
- Drayton Valley: -
- Edmonton: \$3,915.10
- Fort McMurray: -
- Grande Prairie: \$37.50
- Lethbridge: \$465.20
- Medicine Hat: \$945.45
- Peace River: -
- Red Deer: \$300.00
- Wetaskiwin: \$25.00

Thank you letters and donation receipts were mailed to all individual donors in February 2016. The names of individual donors are being published in this annual report and in *Relatively Speaking* (RS). Our sincere thanks go to Grande Prairie Branch for their kind donation of \$2,500 to help fund our annual conference.

Research Donations - \$15,305.90

In 2015, AGS raised a total of \$15,305.90 by answering research queries, for the most part by providing answers to family research questions, as well as hard copies of Alberta Homestead Records, Alberta Land records, cemetery records and obituaries as a result of finding aids that we put online. Thanks to all members of the research teams in the various branches:

- Provincial Office: \$6,066.47
- Brooks: -
- Camrose: -
- Drayton Valley: -
- Edmonton: \$5,250.68
- Fort McMurray: -
- Grande Prairie: \$228.81
- Lethbridge: \$3,537.40
- Medicine Hat: \$125.00
- Peace River: -
- Red Deer: \$97.54
- Wetaskiwin: -

Presentations

I missed the February board meeting at Susan Haga's request to make a presentation to the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation in Drumheller regarding our grant funding. In addition, I had meetings with the VP Finance and AGS Bookkeeper during preparation of various grant applications and reports.

The Alberta Historical Research Foundation and Edmonton Heritage Council were each invited to send a representative to attend the banquet, on 18 April 2015, at Conference 2015—*Discover Your Roots, Share Your Stories* and the dinner presentation *Once Upon a Time at an Antique Store: Telling the Story of Mrs. E.G. Stetson* by Gena Philibert-Ortega. At that time, certificates of appreciation for *Funding Support for Genealogical Resources and Programming* were presented to Matthew Wangler, Executive Director for the Alberta Historical Research Foundation (\$36,200) and to David Ridley, Executive Director for the Edmonton Heritage Council (\$18,904.43 in operational funding).

Our sincere thanks go to all donors for their support to help AGS continue as a strong and vibrant organization.

Library & Research Centre

Claudine Nelson

Twenty nine (29) local histories, new and used, were purchased and added to the AGS holdings. Local histories are one of the most used resources in the library. Kate Binder catalogued these books into the cataloguing program so the index can be searched on-line.

Mailed out one (1) request of three items to an AGS member; she made a donation back to AGS for the amount it cost to mail the package.

Attended the AGS Conference where table was set to promote AGS. Sold: 2 AGS memberships, 8 AGS pins, 5 AGS BMD books. Revenue was obtained from the sale of donated: Local History Books and Take and Donate. Total for the day: \$685.40.

Participated in 'Genealogy in the Park' event held at the Sherwood Park Wye Community Hall in November. Sold: 4 AGS memberships, 2 AGS pins, and 5 BMD publications plus 2 local history books. Total = \$185.00 plus memberships.

The AGS library is enhanced by the availability of 4 Edmonton Branch AGS computers and a photocopier, and the dedicated volunteers who give of their time to assist patrons in their quest to learn about their family.

Parliamentarian/Bylaws

Jo Nuthack

It has been an interesting year by attending the various meetings of the Board, committees and branch meetings. Although I am getting older, I cannot claim to be a 'wise old owl', yet was asked to share my opinions on several subjects over last twelve months.

The AGS Operations Manual received some tweaking by the Policies and Procedures Committee of which I am a member, and I urge every Board member to make good use of it. It often answers the very question one has to have and eliminates a fair amount of back-and-forth e-mail correspondence.

The Bylaws Committee, at the behest of the Board, was asked to present to this year's AGM an amendment to Article #4 which, if passed, will add two more categories to the types of membership effective with the membership year 2016.

Publications Committee

Norma Wolowyk

During 2015 there were eleven requests for cemetery burial listings from the AGS Cemetery Database. Files were converted to PDF format and sent electronically to the purchasers.

Copies of “*Alberta, Formerly the Northwest Territories: Index to Registrations of Births, Marriages and Deaths 1870-1905*” were sold at AGS Conference 2015 and Genealogy in the Park. Thank you to Claudine Nelson for overseeing these sales. One copy of the publication was ordered by post.

Often there were requests for printouts of cemeteries but when the person was contacted they were looking for specific burial record information and so the request was forwarded to the AGS Research Services Committee.

Relatively Speaking

Wayne Shephard, Editor

Several major events occurred during 2015 affecting *Relatively Speaking*.

The first was the loss of the journal’s past Co-Editor, Peter Staveley. Peter passed away in May after a long illness. He oversaw the publication, along with co-editor, Marilyn Hindmarch, from 2004 until 2014. Under their stewardship, the journal built an impressive record in the publication of important and valuable genealogical articles for AGS members, winning an award from the Federation of Family History Societies for the best overseas genealogical journal of 2008. Many innovations in the design and format were realized during their tenure. Peter is greatly missed by the *Relatively Speaking* Editorial Committee and many others within the general Society.

In July 2015, a new Editor was appointed. Wayne Shephard took over from Marilyn Hindmarch, who had been serving as Acting Editor for over a year. Wayne brought substantial experience in writing and editing of family history articles and publications. He was previously the Editor of *Chinook*, the quarterly journal of the AFHS, and has published a number of articles in various family history journals.

Marilyn remains on board as Associate Editor with Gloria Cathcart and Denise Daubert continuing as invaluable members of the *Relatively Speaking* Editorial Committee. Lesley O’Neil left the Committee after many years of exceptional service, primarily in the production aspects of the journal. Other frequent contributors also stepped back to pursue their own personal projects including, Grant Nicol, Les Campbell and John Althouse. The Committee extends its sincere appreciation for their past efforts.

The Committee decided to set themes for each issue of *Relatively Speaking* beginning with November 2015. The first was *Youth and Genealogy* which coincided with the

release of the AGS' new program, *Genealogy for Children and Youth*. Many authors contributed related articles and stories, including three school-aged children. Future themes have been established as:

- *Online Resources for Genealogists* – February 2016
- *Brick-and-Mortar Sources for Genealogists* – May 2016
- *Families of NWMP Members* - August 2016
- *Welcome to Alberta (Western Canada)* – November 2016

The August issue will be a joint project with the Saskatchewan and Manitoba genealogical societies. All members of the three societies will receive copies of the three journals.

In 2017 the distribution of *Relatively Speaking* will change to all electronic. This is a major step forward that will allow the publication process more flexibility and make distribution easier and quicker. I will also save the Society substantial costs. In addition, readers will realize many other benefits of e-copies, including:

- photos reproduced in colour
- websites and email addresses accessible directly using embedded hyperlinks
- pages that can be enlarged on a computer or tablet for easier reading
- articles that are fully searchable for names, places and other information
- copies easily storable without taking up shelf space

The main goals of *Relatively Speaking* for 2016 include:

1. to transition smoothly into electronic distribution. This involves having the membership enjoy and enthusiastically support the idea of reading the journal in digital form. Latest numbers show that 38% of members (216 of 570, at time of writing) renewing for 2016 have chosen electronic delivery, up from 19% in just nine months. A review will be done to determine whether some members may still need printed copies, due to their lack of a suitable Internet connection, or for other reasons. Contact with current subscribers and exchange partners will also be done to insure they want to continue the relationship with AGS and receive electronic copies of the journal.
2. to expand the circulation of the journal. This may be accomplished through the exchange program or in just voluntarily sending copies to other organizations. Digital copies can be sent far and wide to organizations that, like AGS, do not have budgets to exchange printed copies not the shelf space to store them. Receiving digital publications from other societies may mean a change in how members are offered opportunities to read these publications. It might also mean instituting different Library procedures, perhaps dedicating one computer on which periodicals could be stored, possibly including commercial magazines for which the Society has subscriptions. Alternatively e-copies of other journals might be set up on the Members Area of the website. This is a subject that will need further consultation with other AGS committees and other organizations in order to properly and effectively implement.
3. to expand the list of contributors of articles from members and others. While there has always been some level of support by members, participation has fallen off in

recent years. We hope that by establishing themes for future issues and by sending out direct invitations to potential contributors, we may stimulate ideas and attract new papers from AGS members.

Research Services Committee

Norma Wolowyk

Committee Members - Marilyn Astle, Gordon Berdahl, Shannon Cherkowski, Gail Cockwill, Natalie Edwards, John Hazelwood, Sheila Majeau, Shirley Machan, Carol Martyniuk, Claudine Nelson, Pat Pettitt, Jeneane Roberts, Win Sebelius, and Norma Wolowyk.

Meetings - Committee members met each Friday throughout 2015 except for one Friday in December.

Project - Members of the committee responded to research queries which arrive, mainly by email, at the AGS Office each week. 177 queries (221 in 2014) were processed by AGS during 2015. As Edmonton Branch AGS processed 229 (262 in 2014), the total queries handled by the Committee was 406 during the year, this was 77 queries less than in 2014. Where did they come from? 44.5% of the 406 queries received originated from the old AGS website (abgensoc.ca), 30.5% from the new AGS website (abgenealogy.ca), 13% from the Edmonton Branch email address and 12% elsewhere (postal mail, previous researcher, AGS Library, and Alberta Government referral regards Century Ranch and Farm Award).

Besides using the resources of the Society's library to respond to queries, committee members used resources at Provincial Archives of Alberta, the Legislature Library, University of Alberta Library, Edmonton Public Library, City of Edmonton Archives, etc. to thoroughly complete the research. They also accessed family history information, on behalf of clients, through their own subscriptions to paid genealogical sites.

Charges billed were fifty cents per page of photocopying and two dollars per page of computer printout from the AGS Cemetery Index. Requests generated from the local history book and probate indexes were charged an additional five dollars and homestead files ten dollars. Postal charges were added to each query. Also, clients were encouraged to send additional monies to the Society in appreciation of the volunteer commitment given to their queries. These contributions continued to be a valuable source of funding for the Society.

Presentations - Members of the committee contributed articles relating to their research to *Clandigger*, the monthly Edmonton Branch AGS publication.

The Alberta Genealogical Society Edmonton Branch is very fortunate to have such a wonderful group of dedicated researchers. They have a commitment to taking up the research challenge and thus providing family history information to people from around

the world with Alberta roots. The committee has received comments on the superior research assistance provided stating results were beyond their expectations. In early December the Committee celebrated an appreciation lunch funded by AGS. Thank you AGS.

Thank you to Linda Winski, AGS Office Coordinator, for handling the mail for the Research Committee and collecting credit card payment information. Her prompt attention to informing Research Committee members that payment has arrived is very much appreciated.

Retreat

Maxine Maxwell

I'm pleased to report another successful AGS Retreat was held at the Providence Renewal Centre on September 18-20, 2015. Many thanks once again to my fellow Committee Member, Susan Haga, for her invaluable assistance.

Feedback was unanimous in attendees being satisfied with the Providence Renewal Centre as a venue. As a result, AGS has bookings in place for the 2016 and 2017 Retreats.

Twenty-three members, plus one other guest speaker attended, slightly less than last year.

Ten of the eleven branches were represented. Unfortunately, not a single branch was able to encourage another member to accompany them as a guest this year. The Retreat Committee strongly believes it very important to involve more members from the branches as an introduction to AGS under a less formal setting.

Fourteen feedback forms were completed and information recorded. The Friday night social activity was fun, giving an opportunity in getting to know fellow attendees and learn interesting aspects of each other's lives.

Thirteen members liked the new format of continuing the Board Meeting over both days, feeling much less pressured by time constraints. Two would like to see the Board Meeting begin at 9 a.m on Saturday & include the Branch Reports within the meeting.

The remaining votes indicated that they especially liked having Branch Reports separate and presented to the group with ample time for questions and discussion of the points raised, having their total focus on the branches during this informal time, outside of the Board Meeting. They favored starting Board meeting at 1:00 p.m. as the status quo.

On Saturday evening, attendees enjoyed hearing Michael Gourlie speak about his work digitizing the Alberta Court Records at the PAA. and of their accessibility to the public.

Food and accommodations were generally considered satisfactory. One comment was made regarding lack of variety in food and two comments that food was not warm enough when served (conveyed to the Centre). One comment stated that Meeting Room 166 was too noisy (noise from next room) and wished to be back in 165.

So overall, members attending the 2015 Retreat, had an informative and enjoyable weekend and wish to continue doing so in the future at the Providence Centre, along with a continuation of the new format.

Thank you to all who took the time to provide feedback that is so beneficial in planning for future AGS Retreats. Suggestions are welcome any time.

WITH SINCERE THANKS TO OUR DONORS

The Alberta Genealogical Society gratefully acknowledges those who donated \$10.00 or more to AGS and/or its branches in 2015 and agreed to have their donation acknowledged.

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Wright, Wayne
Youngman, Shirley
Yurkiw, Joseph

Alberta Genealogical Society

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Phone: (780) 424-4429 Fax: (780) 423-8980

Email: agsoffice@abgenealogy.ca Website: <http://www.abgenealogy.ca>

Brooks & District Branch

President: Robert Franz

Box 1538, Brooks, AB T1R 1C4

Phone: (403) 362-2732

Website: <http://www.agsbrooks.com>

Meets second Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Community Cultural Centre

Main Floor, Rm 122

327 Third Website Street West, Brooks, AB

Camrose Branch

President: Janine Carroll

4310 – 50 Avenue

Camrose, AB T4V 0R3

Phone: (780) 608-6243

Email: camrose@abgenealogy.ca

Website: <http://camrose.abgensoc.ca/>

Meets second Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Camrose Public Library, Downstairs Boardroom

Camrose, AB

Drayton Valley Branch

President Connie Stuhl

P.O. Box 115, Rocky Rapids, AB T0E 1Z0

Phone: (780) 542-2787

Email: ags.dvbranch@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.abgenealogy.ca/drayton-valley-branch>

Meets third Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Wishing Well Apts.

5102-46 Avenue, Drayton Valley, AB

Edmonton Branch

President: Donna Shanks

Phone: (780) 424-4429

Fax: (780) 423-8980

Email: edmontonbranchags@gmail.com

Website: <http://agsedm.edmonton.ab.ca/>

Meets fourth Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Unit 162, 14315 – 118 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5L 4S6

Ft. McMurray Branch

President: Tammy Grantham

#9B 10019 McDonald Ave,

Ft. McMurray, AB T9H 1S9

Phone: (780) 791-5663

Email: fmacgen@telus.net

Website:

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~abfmags/index.html>

Meets second Wednesday, 7 p.m.

#9B 10019 McDonald Ave, Ft McMurray, AB

Grande Prairie & District Branch

President: Al Bromling

P.O. Box 1257

Grande Prairie, AB T8V 4Z1

Phone: (780) 882-7671

Email: gp@abgenealogy.ca

Website: <http://www.abgenealogy.ca/grande-prairie-branch>

Meets third Tuesday, 7 p.m.

Grande Prairie Public Library, 101, 9839 – 103 Ave,

Grande Prairie, AB

Lethbridge & District Branch

President: Doug McLeod

Rm. 128, 909 – 3rd Avenue North

Lethbridge, AB T1H 0H5

Phone: (403) 328-9564

Email: lethags@theboss.net

Website: <http://lethbridgeags.theboss.net/>

Meets third Thursday, 7:00 p.m.

Provincial Admin. Building

909-3rd Avenue North, Lethbridge, AB

Medicine Hat & District Branch

President: Lloyd Robinson

25 Rossland Way SE

Medicine Hat, AB T1B 1Z7

Phone: (403) 529-6459

Email: mhgs@telus.net

Website: <http://mhdgs.ca>

Meets first Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.

974 – 13th St. SW, Medicine Hat, AB

Peace River & District Branch

President: Joan Wahl
9807 – 97 Avenue, Peace River, AB T8S 1H8
Phone: (780) 624-2369
Email: jfwahl@telusplanet.net
Meets third Thursday, 7 p.m.
Peace River Library, Peace River, AB

Red Deer & District Branch

President: Linda Darby
Box 922, Red Deer, AB T4N 5H3
Phone: (403) 227-2646
Email: rdbargs@gmail.com
Website: <http://rdgensoc.ab.ca/>
Meets fourth Wednesday, 7 p.m.
LDS Church, 3002 – 47 Avenue, Red Deer, AB

Wetaskiwin Branch

President: Diane Strohschein
#17 4202 – 45 Street, Wetaskiwin, AB T9A 2L3
Phone: (780) 352-3858
Email: wetaskiwin@abgenealogy.ca
Website: <http://www.abgenealogy.ca/wetaskiwin-branch>
Meets third Tuesday (except July, August and December)
7 p.m. LDS Church, 5410 – 36 Avenue, Wetaskiwin, AB

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015

OUR MISSION: TO PROVIDE SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR PEOPLE
RESEARCHING THEIR FAMILY HISTORY AND GENEALOGY.

Our Society is alive and well with all Branches involved in projects such as indexing, photographing tombstones, answering research inquiries, preparing genealogical programs for their meetings, writing articles for local newspapers, presenting workshops and taking part in community events of historical significance.

- Our membership for 2015 totalled **704**, with increasing numbers registering on the website.
- Our members contributed volunteer **33,200 hours** during 2015.
- Our quarterly journal *Relatively Speaking* was mailed to **50** libraries and Societies
- Our 11 '**special interest groups**' (SIGS), met regularly to research specific countries and topics.
- Our Library & Resource Centre received **3350** visitors in 2014.
- Our Research Committee responded to **372** research queries during the year.
- Our annual **September Retreat** for Board members was held at the Providence Conference Centre - a time to unify us as a Society and discuss our goals
- Our Library featured a full subscription to *Ancestry.com* for use by library patrons.
- Our new Editor of *Relatively Speaking* **Wayne Shephard** became a part of our Society in June.
- Our April Conference DISCOVER YOUR ROOTS; SHARE YOUR STORIES co-chaired by **Pamela Forsyth** and **Carolynne Ross** was a big success with 251 in attendance.
- Our **Grande Prairie & District Branch** launched their new **Website** in November.
- Our **Genealogy for Children and Youth** prepared by **John Althouse** continues to be used by many students.

Our **WEBSITE** continues to keep our members informed of society events in Alberta and across Canada as well as new services becoming available. Join us at <http://www.abgenealogy.ca/>

*The Alberta Genealogical Society appreciates the financial support given
by the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, Alberta Lotteries,
City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Heritage Council.*

