

Cornish Water Wheel at Quesnel, BC: Original Drawing by B. Patenaude

# CARIBOO NOTES

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## FROM THE EDITOR:

Rootstech replays are probably in everyone's headlights for awhile. Remember to send your learning insights to the editor for future newsletters.

We are sad to see the last installment of The Gook Chronicles this issue, stories of the Gook family of Quesnel submitted by Lillian Gook.

The Australian Picnic, the longest-running event in the Quesnel area, is featured on page 18.

I hope the summer brings opportunities for genealogy vacations and family reunions. I expect a report on each one, haha.

-Leanne

<https://quesnelgenealogicalsociety.wordpress.com/>

We're on [Facebook](#)

# THE GOOK CHRONICLES

Stories of the Gook Family of Quesnel, BC—Submitted by Lilian Gook

## SUMMERTIME — — 1947

With the date for the wedding set work began in earnest. Peter as a veteran was receiving \$60.00 per month for living allowance and required books and had the University tuition fees paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Whatever a veteran could do to augment that amount he did. Jobs were quite easy to come by if a person was not too fussy. In off University hours Peter was able to get work at the docks as a stevedore, loading and unloading ships mostly at night. And the B.C. Electric which operated the streetcar transportation system always hired hundreds of students whenever there was a snow storm to shovel and sweep the streetcar rail switches clear of ice and snow. Every intersection where a streetcar turned a corner the switches had to be continually monitored. As student workers were required night and day during such weather one could always fit in a few hours after classes or at night. The 1936 Chevrolet car was used for several ski trips to Mt. Baker but soon became classified as being an unneeded luxury and was sold. With the flow of so many discharges from the armed forces the University buildings were filled to the overflowing point so several dozen so called temporary buildings were constructed to handle the expanded student population. Student numbers climbed from the war year enrollment around 5000 to 12,000. It also became possible to arrange ones courses so that you did not get any break for the summer. A person could then complete a four year degree course in less than three years. Genevieve lived with Kae Evans in the basement suite at 1625 West Twelfth Ave and spent a very uncomfortable spring and early summer in 1947 due to the complete body cast. As the wedding date drew closer Kae made arrangements to move out so that Peter and Genevieve could continue to rent the suite from the owner, Dr. Riggs. For the wedding held at St Augustine's Catholic Church, Kae was the matron of

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## Gook Chronicles cont'd

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honour and Peter's brother Hugh was best man. For the honeymoon Peter and Genevieve rented a car for ten days and spent the first night at the Harrison Hot Springs Hotel then drove through the Fraser Canyon northbound. The trip through the Canyon was a scary one for Genevieve as Peter had to back up a couple of times at some narrow places in the road to allow approaching vehicles to pass. And the trip from Lytton-Lillooet and over Pavilion Mountain was hairraising to Clinton.

The road from Clinton to Lac La Hache was rough and unpaved and it had been a long day so Peter and Genevieve overnighted at Twilight Lodge getting away reasonably early the next day and made Quesnel where they first stayed at the Cariboo Hotel. Genevieve caught the only fish, and a large one at that on a fishing outing at Vernons Resort on Six Mile Lake. A trip to Barkerville which was still all privately owned was a high light. The "Lucky Swede" put on a real show of how to find gold in his claim and from that date onward Genevieve showed the signs of being bitten by the gold bug. Back to Vancouver and into the final lap for the degree. A job with the B.C. Electric came up so Peter drove a bus on the line Sasmat-UBC about four mornings a week and during the evening whenever there was something going on at the University to warrant extra drivers. As well a job driving a taxi for Sasmat Cabs came up so that also filled in the time and made the budget easier to meet. During the last few weeks of the university year and optimistic that the passing grade had been made Peter and Genevieve arranged for their departure from Vancouver for Quesnel. Most of the other students graduating at the same time in Commerce were planning on a future with either Woodward's Dept. Store; Eatons or the Tax Department. City living did not appeal to either Genevieve or Peter so plans were made. A wood kitchen range stove was purchased from Wosks and a large plywood



## Cook Chronicles cont'd

frame bedstead was made and springs and mattress bought. When time came to move Hugh brought down the soft drink truck from Quesnel and Peter then loaded what they had and filled the truck with other supplies that Hugh wanted and the exodus was started. They did not wait for the graduation exercises and the Bachelor of Commerce Degree (sheepskin) was mailed to Peter later in the summer. Peter and Genevieve moved into a small two room building that was located on the rear of the lot where Hugh operated the Cariboo Dry Ltd. bottling works, the 1993 location of the Petro Can service station at the corner of St. Laurent and Reid Street. It was handy as Peter was working for Hugh, Driving truck, running the bottling machine and just about everything that had to be done in the operation.

Copy of one page of detailed budget kept by Peter & Genevieve during the first years of their life together.  
 Note: Rent on basement suite at 1625 West 12th Ave, Vancouver was \$32.50 per month; cigarettes were .33 per pack of 25; church donation .35 per week; ice for refrigerator .45 for 25# block twice a week; haircut .70

Date	Food	Med	Rent, gas, utilities 9 people 7 mice	Church	Insurance
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2-1-22					
3-1-22	.46	.43			
4-1-22	1.61		1.00		
5-1-22			3.25		
6-1-22	5.50	.38			
7-1-22	.16	.62			
8-1-22					
9-1-22	Swimming, books, water				
10-1-22					
11-1-22					
12-1-22	.35				
1-1-23	1.88	.19	3.20		
2-1-23	Swimming				
3-1-23	.25				
4-1-23	1.57				
5-1-23	1.67				
6-1-23		.37			
7-1-23	Swimming, 2.84				
8-1-23	.48	.38			
9-1-23	1.01				
10-1-23	2.30	1.50			
11-1-23	.37				
12-1-23	1.29	.70			
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## Gook Chronicles cont'd

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### THE FIRST ARRIVAL

During the summer and early fall of 1948 Genevieve made the small house at the rear of the "coke" plant a comfortable place even though it was a hotbox in the summer days and was beginning to be a refrigerator in the winter months. She also found out from the doctor that she was pregnant with the due date set for the first part of February 1949. The job with Hugh and Cariboo Dry Ltd. was not working out the way it was first imagined and with the expected arrival of a first child several decisions were made. First another job and secondly a bigger place in which to live. There were not too many choices of jobs but Peter did work as a carpenter's helper for Vaupel Construction on the new Public Works Building which was being built in the area of the new (1993) R.C.M.P. building. One day during the winter of 1948-49 Peter met Mr. Ted Winder on the street and asked him if he knew of any jobs. Ted ran an insurance and real estate office along with his brother-in-law Eric Fleming under the name of E.A. Winder Insurance Agencies. Ted told Peter that Eric wanted to return to the Royal Canadian Navy and that if I could do accounting there may be an opening for him. That's the way it turned out. Peter did the bookkeeping for the Creamery (Cariboo Farmers Coop Assoc.) Hec-Ray Lumber Co. (Ray Williams), Soroke Bros. Sawmill and did income tax returns in season. Eric Fleming left the business for the Navy and during the early months of 1949 Peter worked into the insurance and real estate end of the business as well getting the real estate licence on May 5 1949 and the insurance licence on 30 June 1949. During the winter of 48/49 the opportunity to rent a slightly bigger house came up when Paul and Stella Werbicki (an accountant for H.J. Gardner Lumber Yard) moved from the house just behind the lumber yard which was owned by Mrs. Ivy Stapleton. The Stapletons were caretakers of the firehall and had accommodation there. The house had a living room, bedroom, kitchen, and a bathroom. The bathroom only had a toilet, no bathtub and there was only cold water to the house. no

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## Gook Chronicles cont'd

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telephone. Genevieve made it a comfortable home and waited. The winter of 1948 was a real Cariboo winter and there was plenty of snow. During the early hours of 6 February 1949 Genevieve went into labour. Peter donned his snow boots and parka and went to find transportation.

There was about 10 inches of fresh snow on the ground and it was very cold out. Peter knew that there was only one car that was used as a taxi in town but if he could not locate it the chances of catching someone with a car was better downtown by the Fraser Bridge so he made his way over to Front Street. By the Telegraph office Peter could see the taxi coming across the old Fraser Bridge and as luck would have it the vehicle turned north towards him so he was able to flag it down and within minutes Genevieve was in the old Quesnel Hospital amongst the trees across from the present Esso Service. Nurses at the hospital made Genevieve comfortable and as the custom then was to keep the husbands as far away as possible told Peter to go home as the birth would probably not be until the afternoon. Back to bed and as there was no telephone Peter was awakened by Hugh pounding on the door to say that a daughter had been born. What excitement!! The name given was Rita for Genevieve's 2nd name and Marie chosen by her mother. Life changed with the arrival of the first born. No matter how much we had read about bringing up a child everything seemed to be different than what we had read when confronted by the reality.

### THE START OF A FAMILY.

Rita was born at about 6:30 a.m. on February 6th 1949 weighing in at 8# 3oz. after a normal pregnancy, and was delivered by Dr. Frank Avery in the "old" Quesnel Hospital. As the living conditions in the small cabin that Peter and Genevieve occupied were pretty



## Gook Chronicles cont'd

primitive they kept their eyes open for an upgrade<sup>d</sup> in living quarters. Rita was bathed in a portable plastic, folding bath which she seemed to enjoy by the amount of splashing around she did. In the summer of 1949 Peter was now working with Ted Winder in the real estate and insurance business. Ted had built a new home so would be moving out of the apartment immediately behind the office. Peter and Genevieve jumped at the opportunity to rent the place and settled into what to them was a modern living quarters. The building itself was a very old building having been the original office of Vaughan Realty and before that The Bank of British North America. The foundations were gone and the floors had settled unevenly but it had a modern bathroom and to get to work Peter merely had to pass through a doorway into the office portion of the building. For Genevieve it was a very short walk to Frasers Grocery Store and the Post Office was just around the corner on Carson Avenue.

Genevieve found herself pregnant again in the summer of 1949 and like February was the month to produce was put into a cab on the 22nd February 1950 while Peter stayed to look after Rita and after what was another normal pregnancy gave birth to a boy weighing 8# 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  oz. on the 22nd February 1950. As Dr Avery was out of town on holidays the new doctor, Dr Jarvis Tompkins attended the delivery. Genevieve did not know Dr. Tompkins and can remeber<sup>\*</sup> looking up at this very tall stranger. Little Robert had a little of a bad start in life as he could not sleep and could not hold milk down so lost alot of weight. It was an old remedy that seemed to satisfy him, the use of barley water did the trick and Robert started to gain weight in the normal way, and at six months weighted in at the respectable 17# 4oz.

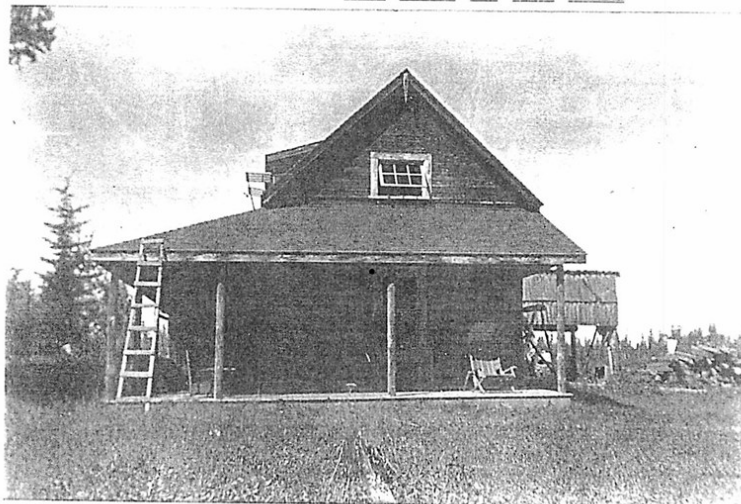
In the summer of 1950 Genevieve once again made the discovery that she was pregnant and by now the blame was considered to be that the annual insurance agents meetings<sup>WHICH</sup> were held in May which Genevieve and Peter tried to attend each year. Although this time the expected arrival date was around the end of March. Genevieve was getting some severe pains about six weeks early and as X rays taken had shown that twins were in the offing she went to the hospital early when she went into premature labor. Dr Avery attended and two boys were born on 14 February 1951

## Gook Chronicles cont'd

The twin boys were named David John, who came first, and Donald Ernest. There was a lot of rushing around when Donald was born as he was in the "breach position" which carried with it a certain amount of danger. David weighted in at 5# 12 oz. and Donald, much smaller at 4# 12 oz. There was a flu epidemic in town so the hospital was full and it was considered best that Genevieve and the boys be taken home after four days which was a very short stay for premature babies. So behind the office they came and this sudden doubling of the family made the apartment look and sound like a commercial nursery. Eileen Ramsey, the health nurse would drop in daily as the new boys had to be kept from water and wiped off instead with oil for several weeks until they started to gain weight in a normal way. Even with two parents to attend to all there were many times that David and Donald received their bottles propped on pillows. It was not long before Donald caught up to David in weight and from then on there was never any time that they were much different in the department.

Even though there was quite a lot of room in the apartment Genevieve and Peter were getting restless to move out, and preferably into the country. As Peter's father had gone to retire in Kent England leaving the property at Dragon Lake for sale they both started looking very hard at the possibility of acquiring it.

THE HOME ON THE HILL



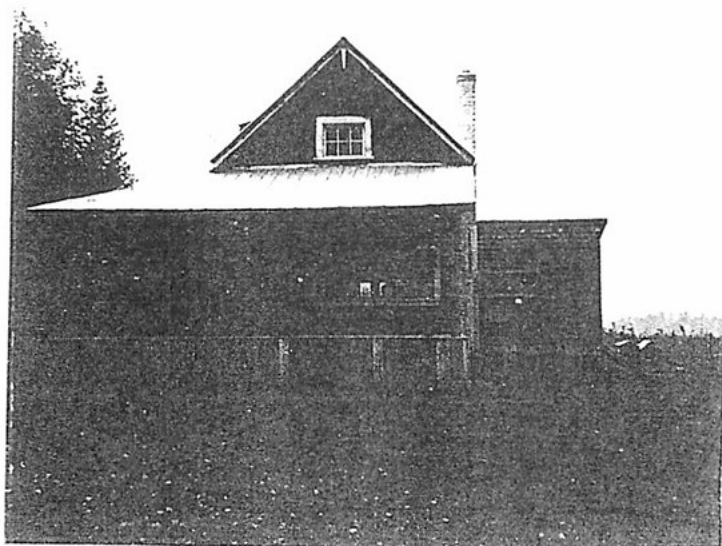
House on the Hill-1952  
Note: ground level; small front window; back covered area; stump in foreground; shingle roof; no electric lead in.



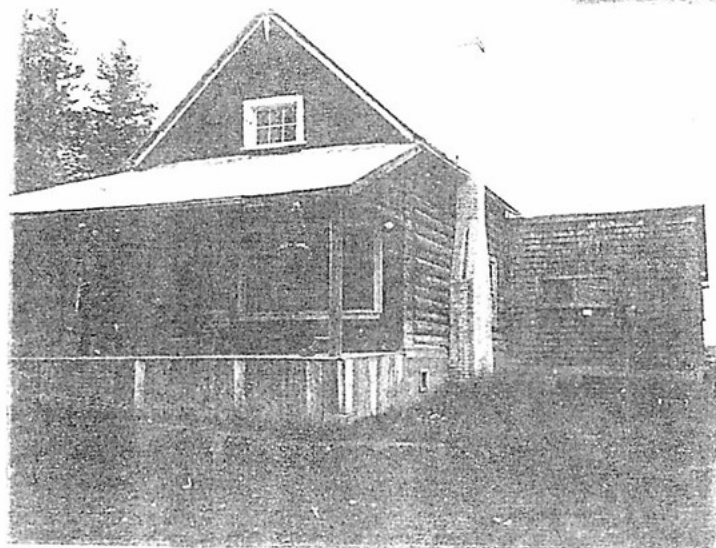
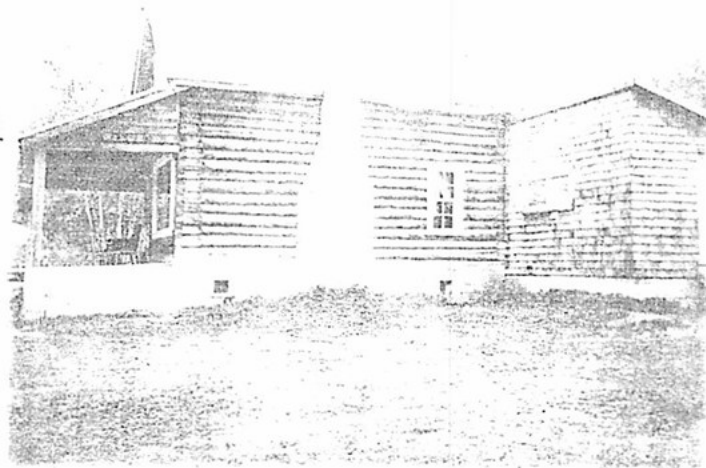
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Gook Chronicles cont'd

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House on the Hill-1954  
After having house  
jacked up; metal roof;  
fireplace; back porch;  
large front window;  
basement. Still no electri  
lead in.



## FACEBOOK FINDS

### *The Burnt Bridges Obituary*

By L. Broughton

There seem to be several types of people on Facebook: those who believe everything they read, those who don't believe anything they read, and the fence-sitters.

I am one of those fence-sitters who will try to look for reputable sources before I decide which side of the fence I'm falling off of.

In this case, a genealogy Facebook page posted this humorous obituary claiming it was authentic. I thought it would be a great newsletter

article if it was, so you know at this point what side of the fence I landed on.

I found some background on the obituary on the New York Post website, which reported on the story August 31, 2024. The written obituary is authentic, although the accompanying photo was not part of it. The photo did appear in a later article in People.com, when they covered the story 7 September 2024. It is a picture of Harrelson provided by her daughter, Christina Novak.

The written obituary first appeared in the Kennebec Journal and Morning Sentinel papers (Maine, USA) on 26 August 2024, and was purchased for \$86 by Novak. She also



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## Facebook Finds cont'd

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posted the obit to Facebook, captioned with the line, “Ding, dong, the witch is dead.’

Novak confessed that she giggled to herself while composing the obit. She intended on writing a traditional obituary, but kept drifting off into sarcasm. She added that the obituary was so concise because they are priced by the word and she “refused to spend another dollar on that woman.”

This prevented her from listing the ways her mother wronged her relatives, but some news agencies later reported that Novak stated her mother “took sport” in ruining birthdays and Christmases. Harrelson also allegedly dangled a young Novak by the legs off a bridge, threatening to throw her into the water below. She was also accused of raiding her brother’s home after his death.

Novak last spoke to her mother over ten years ago. She discovered the death only after she and a friend were talking about how things “were too quiet lately.” She Googled her mother’s name and found a death notice from a crematorium, which she confirmed.

The obituary sparked a viral reaction and lots of comments. I personally found the sarcasm to be quite funny and it offset any discomfort I may have otherwise felt from someone speaking ill of the dead. We’re not all good people, after all.



This is another item that popped up on a genealogy Facebook page. I searched Findagrave for Harlynn Douglas and found this exact headstone in the Pecan Grove Cemetery at McKinney, Collin County, Texas. A Findagrave memorial is dedicated to Fred, and does include BMD information and an obituary, which I also found in The Bellingham Herald (Washington) from 8 Aug 2019. So it’s real, too!



# What the Heck?

## *What the heck is a "cat's meat-man?"*

The "cat's meat man" was an itinerant vendor who sold pet food on the streets of densely populated cities in England like London, Manchester, and Liverpool. They existed mainly from the mid-1800s to the early 20th century before commercial pet food was widely available.

The vendor, with his handcart or basket slung over his shoulder, would shout, "Meat, meat!," the signal for



householders and domestics to come out and buy their pet food. An article appearing in several American newspapers in 1893 stated "the cry of the cats'-meat man is as well known as the tinkling bell of the muffin man, or the hoarse roar of the wretch who peddles coals."

Pets came to know the scent and sound of the daily cart. The sight of animals lining up patiently for their meal was a common part of Edwardian street life.

The meat—often boiled horsemeat from knackers' yards—was sold on small wooden skewers for a penny or

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## What the Heck is a Cat's Meat Man? cont'd

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two each. Over 400 horses were slaughtered every week in London.

The trade was not only a livelihood for the seller but also a community service. Domesticated animals played key roles in urban households as mousers, guards, or companions, so their well-being was important to many families.

At the peak of the trade, there were a thousand vendors in London alone, serving about 300,000 cats. A vendor could walk between 30-40 miles every day and feed no less than 150 cats.

London was divided into numerous routes or “walks,” each the domain of a particular cat’s meat man (later self-named “Domestic Animal Providers”). To obtain a walk, it was necessary to wait until the provider retired from business, and then pay for his route, or inherit it if you were a son. The worst walks in London cost £20, while the best could run as high as £150 or £200.

With the rise of mass-produced pet food in the 1920s and 1930s and improvements in sanitation and health regulations, the street butcher’s trade slowly declined. By the mid-20th century, companies like Spratt’s and Ken-L Ration revolutionized pet nutrition, offering canned and dry options that became the new norm.

The image of the cat’s meat man remains a nostalgic reflection of a bygone era—a testament to how even the smallest trades contributed to the rhythm of daily life in historical urban England.



<https://publicdomainreview.org/essay/the-cats-meat-man/>

Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette 27 May 1901

Images from Wikimedia Commons and Internet Archives

## HAVING FUN WITH GENEALOGY

A Look at Genealogical Humor by the late Carolyn L. Barkley

[Posted](#) on April 22, 2024 by Genealogical Publishing

(This article first appeared in the September 4, 2008 posting on the Genealogical Publishing blog)

I'm a firm believer that genealogy should be fun. If we lose sight of the enjoyment of solving puzzles and discovering new information, genealogy simply becomes work. To me having fun while researching takes many forms: talking to myself (statements like "well, it's about time, there he is!"), pumping my fist enthusiastically into the air when the elusive bit is found on an almost unreadable microfilm reel, and finding that three hours have passed in the blink of an eye.

I often look around me to observe other researchers to see if they too are having fun. This week I have been at the Federation of Genealogical Societies annual conference in Philadelphia, and I have observed conference goers as well. It's easy to pick out those who are enjoying themselves while they learn, but it is equally easy to spot those who are way too serious. This article is for all of us who have been too serious – lighten up! It's also for those of us who love what we do and have fun while we do it. Here are some ways to leaven your passion with some humor.

The following example [slightly edited due to space limitations] came to me from a friend. The attribution is unknown, but I think it provides a humorous confirmation that there are forces in the universe that appear to converge to make our genealogical research challenging (challenging is a fun way to say difficult).

"It is New Year's Eve 1852 and [ancestor's name redacted to protect the not-so-innocent] sits at his desk by candlelight. He dips his pen into the ink well and begins to write his New Year's resolutions:

1. No man is truly well-educated unless he learns to spell his name at least three different ways within the same document.
2. I resolve to give the appearance of being extremely well-educated in the coming year.
3. I resolve to always alternate my kids' and wife's first and middle names when the census



taker comes and to call my children by odd names which he is unable to spell incorrectly.

4. My age is no one's business but my own. I hereby resolve to never list the same age or birth year twice on any document.
5. I resolve to have each of my children baptized in a different church – either in a different faith or in a different parish. Every third child will not be baptized at all or will be baptized by an itinerant minister who keeps no records.
6. I resolve to move to a new town, new county or new state at least once every ten years – just before those pesky enumerators come around asking silly questions. I also resolve that I shall be absent on the night of the census, or if unable to be absent on census night, I shall endeavor to be enumerated twice.
7. I will make every attempt to reside in counties and towns where no vital records are maintained or where the courthouse burns down every few years.
8. I resolve to join an obscure religious cult that does not believe in record keeping or in participating in military service.
9. When the tax collector comes to my door, I'll loan him my pen which has been dipped in rapidly fading blue ink.
10. I resolve that if my beloved wife Mary should die, I will marry another Mary.
11. I resolve not to make a will. Who needs to spend money on a lawyer?
12. I resolve to not clutter up good farm pastures with headstones that will just get broken or fade with time anyway.
13. I resolve to come from Ireland (where there are no records or if there are, they can only be examined by visiting the exact village, pleading with the local clergyman – who is hostile to anyone not of his belief – you) and/or require you to hand over a fee equal to or exceeding your yearly income, for one hour's research which may not find anything.
14. I resolve that not only shall I not die in my country of birth, but neither shall my children (yea verily) unto the sixth generation.
15. I resolve that I and most of my family shall die suddenly just before death certification is established, in a parish where easy access to the records ceases the previous year.
16. I resolve that when I die, my children/wife are instructed to give the wrong details for my death certificate.

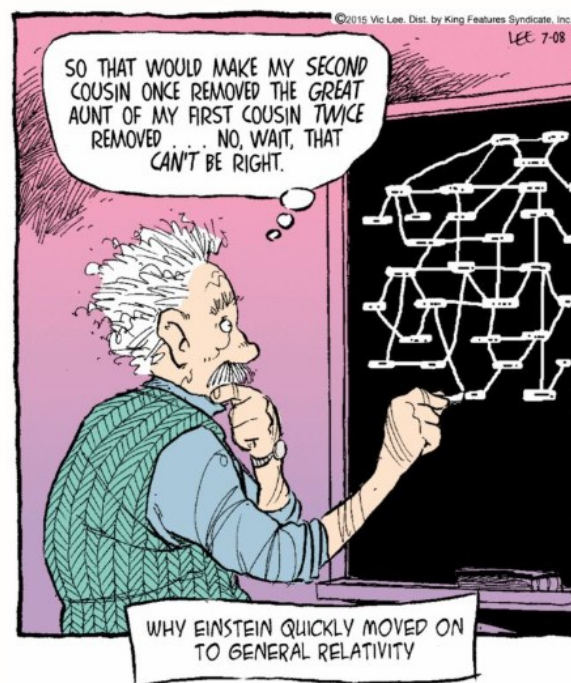
Sound familiar? Like the Hawkeye and B. J. on MASH, we must see the humor of the situation, or we will lose our minds.

Sometimes the humor is found in the records themselves – you can tell by the giggles at the microfilm readers. The General Register House of Scotland web site includes genealogical gems from old parish registers. For example: “George Something lawful son to what-ye-call-him in Mains of Barskimming was baptized April 9th 1704.” (Ochiltree, 1704 OPR 609/1. page 9). Another register provided the following written exchange: [Note by Session Clerk:] “Any person that wants a child’s name in any of the three preceding pages may scarcely expect to find it in the proper place. They being wrote by Mr King, late schoolmaster depute here without any regularity or order.” This observation was followed in different handwriting and ink by: “The above ill natured ungentlemanlike observation was written by Mr James Whyte and stands as one mark of his own distinguished Idiotism.” (Dunning, 1764; OPR 3510/1, Fr 124)

Needless to say, genealogical humor abounds on the Internet. Cyndi’s List provides links to a variety of sites including a genealogical chart for Barbie, Donald Duck and various studies of the genealogies of Disney characters. An entire mailing list is devoted to genealogical humor. One site that I particularly enjoy is My Elusive Ancestors ( **this site is no longer active**) as it includes a variety of humor and trivia including several lists: how to tell if you’re addicted to genealogy, top ten genealogical one liners, towns with unusual names (how about Lizard Lick, North Carolina, or Idiotville, Oregon), county names most commonly used (Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Jackson and Lincoln), states with the most counties (Texas with 254, Georgia with 159, Kentucky with 120, North Carolina with 100 and Virginia with 95) and those with the least (Delaware tops the list with only three).

***Have fun!***

Do you have any ancestors who seem to have adhered to the resolutions listed in this article? If so, please consider submitting them to the editor for inclusion in a future column, which will likely be called *Hide & Seek: Ancestral Edition*.





## Learning Opportunities

**RootsTech** is over for another year, but you can access many sessions in the library. The filters can narrow your search to exactly what you're interested in viewing.

May webinars are also posted, such as *Finding Original Records: The Real Game of Hide and Seek* 22 May 2025 at 9:00 a.m. PDT <https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/>.

**Legacy Webinars.** Upcoming webinars include:

- *Unscramble Haplogroups: Beginner Guide* 07 May 2025 at 11:00 a.m. PDT.
- *Shared DNA Matches Find Ancestors* 14 May 2025 at 11:00 a.m. PDT
- *Hidden in the Newsprint: UK Edition* 04 Jun 2025 at 2:00 a.m. PDT.
- *Exploring Library and Archives Canada Online* 20 Jun 2025 at 11 a.m. PDT

<https://familytreewebinars.com/upcoming-webinars/>

**The International Society for British Genealogy and Family History (ISBGFH)** has free webinars every month. June 23 focuses on Caribbean research. [Events - International Society for British Genealogy and Family History \(isbgfh.com\)](https://www.isbgfh.com/events)



## Web Bytes

Websites of interest

<https://familytreemagazine.com/podcasts/discovering-your-irish-heritage-with-rootsireland/?> Family Tree Magazine has a podcast interview with Dr. Brendan Scott: Discovering Your Irish Heritage with RootsIreland.ie

<https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid/help/> This is the How to Search page on ArchiveGrid, an online finding aid which accesses over 1000 institutions and 5+ million archival records including personal papers, family records, old documents and original manuscripts. They have listings for mostly the US but also other countries. Many of the repositories do not have online databases so might provide some new avenues of research.

<https://www.rootsireland.ie/newsletters/> The Irish Genealogical Research Society has uploaded indexed and scanned images of their newsletter, which has been published since 1982, free of charge to view.

<https://bettersoldiersandsailors.com/> The US National Parks Service database, "Soldiers and Sailors" has been defunded, so is no longer supported. This alternate site for US Civil War ancestors has more reliable search results with its more modern search engine and will refer you to other options if the records you're seeking aren't online.



# THE AUSTRALIAN PICNIC

A Longstanding Tradition by Leanne Broughton



The first Australian Picnic held in July 1904. Reading from L to R, starting with the man holding the jug, those facing the camera are: George Broughton; Charlie Foyle; Jim Fuller (seated at table end); J.M. Yorston; Chas. Leonard; Bill Broughton Sr.; Ella Windt; Mrs. Emma Foyle; Mrs. Anders (in lace collar); Mrs. Geo. Windt Sr.; Rev. C.A. Mitchell. Reading R to L, those with backs to camera are: Mrs. Gladstone; Mrs. and Mr. Harry Moffat Geo. Windt Sr; young Henry Moffat; Bob Yorston. Children seated on the grass, L to R: Tom Windt; Roddy Moffat; Bert Foyle; Frances Moffat; Aveline Moffat; Aggie Moffat; Bessie Foyle; Georgina Duclos; Lily Windt; and Alex Moffat. It is believed young Henry Windt took the picture.

The annual Australian Picnic held south of Quesnel, British Columbia, is a longstanding community tradition that dates back to the turn of the 20th century.

It is called such because the event originated at the Australian Ranch, which was established in 1863 by Australian gold prospectors Andrew Olsen and Steve Downs. They transitioned to farming in the area.

In 1904, Jack and Bob Yorston bought the Australian Ranch. That was the year they decided to host the first Australian Picnic, which was more or less a family affair including Moffats, Windts, Foyles, and their relatives. Most of these families were from the same area in England.

Annie Gallant has written several articles about the history of the Australian picnic for the *Quesnel Cariboo Observer*, two of which included the photo of the food preparation tent (see next page). The photo above was provided to the *Quesnel Advertiser* in April 1958 by Mrs.

## Australian Picnic cont'd



At the first Australian Picnic in 1904 the women dress up and the men donned aprons and everyone helped in the preparations. Shown here from left to right are Alick Windt, J.M. Yorston, Ethel Yorston, Mrs. Champion, Eva Johnson, Mrs. Montgomery and George Johnson.

Photo contributed

Robert Yorston, and all the attendees' names were listed. A small original photo is still in the possession of the Broughton family.

The picnic that year was held in July, but every year after, under the stewardship of the Yorston family, the picnic has been held on the Victoria Day holiday (Queen Victoria was still the English monarch). In the early days, it was an occasion to dress up.

The ranch site was chosen due to its large clearing next to Olsen and Downs' abandoned

Palace Hotel and its access to the local road. Tents and tables were set up for the picnic crew.

It is not known if that first event involved any activities besides the actual picnic, but over the years, races and contests became hugely popular. These included track and field events—foot races, high jump, long jump, etc., pillow fighting, tug-of-war, egg throwing, nail driving, horseshoe pitching, and ball games. The Quesnel-Alexandria rivalry, later Kersley-Alexandria, could be fiercely competitive in the ball games.

A dance was held at Windt's in the evening during the early years, and in later years at the Kersley Hall. Dance proceeds often went to worthy causes, such as aid for Cariboo service men, the Red Cross, and the local hospital.

Alvin Johston wrote about the Australian Picnic in 1960:

*"I can well remember attending the picnic along about 1908. We would take the farm team and buggy and pack as many of our young friends as possible in the rig and leave home about 8 a.m., arriving at the old picnic grounds about 2 p.m. The clearing made*

## Australian Picnic cont'd

*an excellent spot for sports of all kinds.*

*Lunch and dinner in the evening would be served on tables, as bugs and ants were not welcome. After dinner most of the parents would leave for home to take care of the chores, and the young people would climb into any available rig and head for the Windt home.*

*Dancing would get under way as soon as we arrived, usually about 9 p.m. and carry on until 7 in the morning. Then, after a good breakfast, we would start for home and anyone not too sleepy would drive the team."*

A couple of remembrances were in the *Quesnel Cariboo Observer* 19 Mar 2003 paper. Mary Edwards' recalled her first picnic in 1938 or 1939:

*"I was dating Ernie at the time. He had been going since he arrived in the Cariboo in 1933. We played softball and there was always a dance. One year it was in Kersley and the next year in Alexandria.*

*People didn't get around so much, they didn't see their neighbours very often, so the picnic was a chance to catch up."*

Jean Davis attended the picnics from 1955 onward. She recollected her husband bringing their race horses and Penners, their Welsh ponies. She also spoke of the activities:

*"The kids could hardly wait for the picnic. They loved the races and the baseball games. After the sun went down, many were suffering from sunburns and at the dance, the kids would fall asleep under the benches while their parents danced into the wee hours of the morning."*

### Alexandria Items

May 27th, 1912.

Quite a large crowd gathered at the old Australian ranch yesterday, to participate in the Alexandria picnic. The weather was all that any one could desire, and those present thoroughly enjoyed themselves with games and other forms of amusement. The principal feature of the day's amusement was the baseball game between Quesnel and Alexandria, which was won by the former by 22 runs to 17. A triple play by the losers was the outstanding feature of the game. Lunch and supper was served on the grounds, the tables looking very pretty with their loads of good things. In the evening a goodly number drove to the home of Mrs. H. T. Windt, where a most enjoyable dance was held, which lasted until five a.m. We all hope to enjoy as good a time next 24th of May.



## Australian Picnic cont'd

The 50th anniversary of the Australian Picnic saw a record crowd of 500 in attendance. Several oldtimers from the first picnic were on hand, and of the group who had posed for the official photo at the third picnic in 1907, 17 were at the anniversary and received ribbons of recognition: Charles Leonard, Alex Moffat, Henry Moffat, Alex Windt, Henry Windt, George Windt, Tom Windt, George Johnston, Mrs. Eva Allen, Mrs. Robert Yorston, Mrs. Jack Yorston Sr., Mrs. E. Johnson, Bert Foyle, W. Broughton, and Alvin Johnston. I believe the picture below is the “official” 1907 photo referred to. Young Willy Broughton would have been just under two years of age in 1907 and he looks to be about that.



Front row from left: Lily Windt, Mrs. Bob Yorston holding her daughter, Ethel, Mrs. Theodore Windt, Ada Broughton (later Aiken), Mrs. W.J. Anders with Willy Broughton on her lap, and Mrs. Gladstone.

Middle row: Mrs. George Broughton, Ella Windt, Mrs. Jack Yorston, Emily Webster, George Windt, and Henry Moffat.

Back row: W.J. Anders, Tommie Roddie, Henry Theodore Windt Sr., John Webster, Frank Broughton, William Webster, Henry Windt Jr., Jack Yorston, Tom Windt, and Fritz Menzinger.

Also in 2003, Kath Yorston, who attended the picnics from 1935, related some of the happenings from the 1958 Centennial Australian Picnic.

## Australian Picnic cont'd

*Over 1000 people came to the event which had occupied organizers for an entire year. Activities began with a parade into the picnic site. This included the local scout troop dressed as Indians (whose scout master was our club president's father), an authentic trundle barrow pulled and pushed by Don Yorston and Roddy Moffat, chuck wagons, covered wagons, local ranchers and their wives in period costumes, along with many other creative and curious parade participants.*

*Fake buildings were erected, a full fledged play was presented including burning Gordon Hayward at the stake, dance hall girls performed, and the annual north against south baseball game. It was a picnic of mammoth proportions.*



Recollections from our genealogy club president, Kathie Edwards:

*We always went and had a packed lunch, it was the one time of the year we were treated to an Orange Crush pop—that was our favourite. And we also used to have an ice cream cone. The concession was always busy but if not very busy. The pillow fights were always good, some lasted seconds and others went for a longer bout. I believe people with longer legs seem to have an advantage as they seem to be able to balance better and sometimes crossed their legs underneath the bar they sat on. There were also the running races, eggs on a spoon races, sack races, three legged races—if the pair were not coordinated, there were some funny scenes, for all different ages, including adults. There was a softball game in the late afternoon. And lots of visiting with neighbours and friends one did not see too often. I do not remember my father taking photos at any of the picnics. My mother never had a camera.*

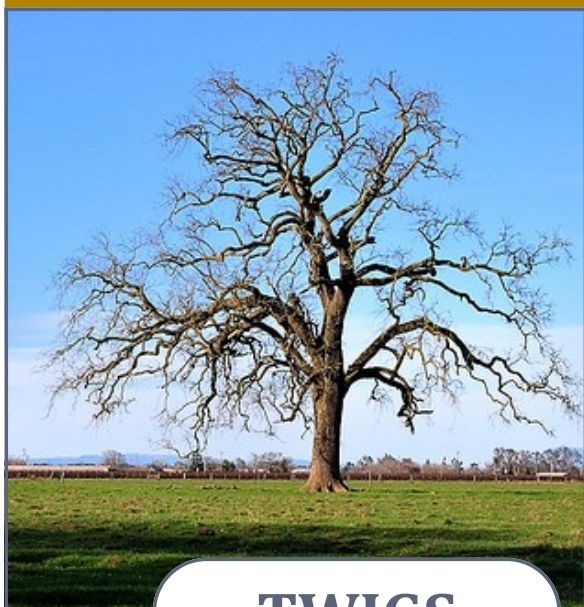
Some of the many other special events included Highland dancing, a maypole dance, and anyone not wearing a “beard” was heaved into a water trough in the center of the “town.”

The Australian Picnic was little unchanged for over 75 years. Then, in 1983, the party was

## Australian Picnic cont'd

crashed. “Young hoodlums” set fields on fire, broke beer bottles everywhere, and generally created mayhem. This resulted in the picnic being removed from the very public home ranch location to the ‘by invitation only’ private Yorston property. The baseball games are gone, the dances are no more, and the crowd is considerably smaller.

The spirit prevails, however, as the Australian Picnic continues to the present day. It stands as a testament to the region's rich history and enduring community bonds, celebrating the area's cultural heritage and the legacy of its early settlers.



### TWIGS

Snippets of interesting genealogical news

**FamilySearch** has added over 126 million new records from 38 countries, including significant collections from France, Germany, Honduras, Italy, Palau, and the Philippines. These additions enhance access to civil registrations, social security records, and oral genealogies, particularly from African nations.

**Cold Case Genealogy.** Modern DNA testing is being considered to re-examine the infamous 1932 Lindbergh baby kidnapping case. A lawsuit seeks permission to test mitochondrial DNA from ransom note envelopes, potentially shedding new light on the nearly century-old mystery.

## Did you know?

The Quesnel and District Museum and Archives has over 25,000 photographic images in its collection, dating from 1860.

One highlight is the C.S. Wing collection of 123 glass negatives and about 40 prints taken between 1907 and 1928.



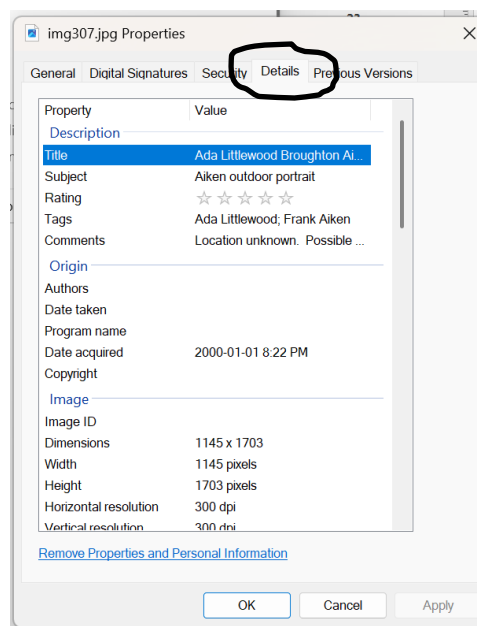
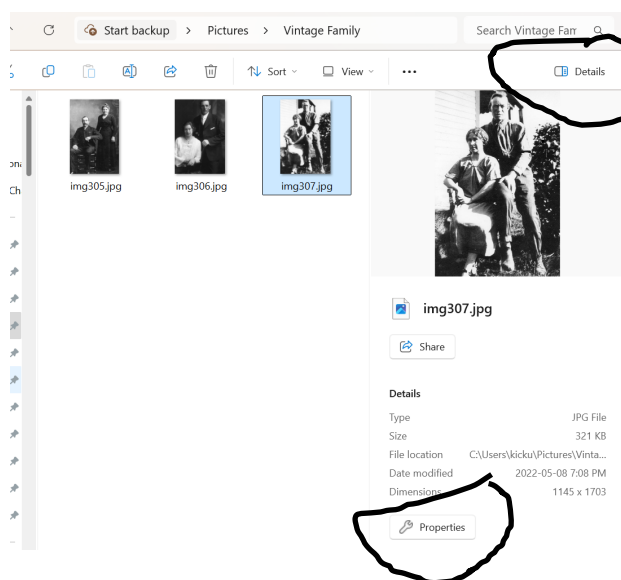
## Twigs cont'd

### Tips for Digitizing Photos

The Quesnel club was fortunate to have Ross Mitchell, local genealogist and photographer, recently present a photo repair workshop.

While the actual repair component was very informative, he also provided helpful tips for beginners digitizing old photos:

1. Scanning is preferable to taking photos of photos. Scan at 600-1200 dpi.
2. Be aware that scanner light wear will affect photo quality after awhile and be prepared to upgrade to a new scanner every few years, depending on usage.
3. If you do take photos, try to have light sources coming in from the sides at an angle.
4. Save the photos in .tif or .tiff format to preserve the original image quality. Jpegs lose data every time the file is saved, resaved, or edited.
5. Only ever edit copies.
6. Use available options to add digital tags, comments, etc. to each photo. E.g. In your Windows Pictures file, click on 'Details' then a picture file's 'Properties,' and open 'Details' to edit.





## in **The Quesnel Cariboo Observer**

Quesnel, British Columbia

*23 May 1925*

\* \* \*

Quesnel's second annual crowning of the May Queen was held last Saturday. The proceedings started with a procession, headed by the Boy Scouts, which escorted the Queen elect, Miss Freda Pinchbeck, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Pinchbeck, from the Court House to the recreation grounds, with her attendants—Misses Vivienne Duclos, Betty Petrie, and Mabel and Betty Hamond. The ceremony of crowning the new Queen was performed by last year's Queen, Miss Juanita Locke.

\* \* \*

FOR SALE— Three heifers, two years old, fresh; four heifer calves, two months old. All bred from fine dairy stock. Will sell the lot for \$200 cash, or may be purchased separately. Apply to Ed. E. Gray, Australian P.O.

*30 May 1925*

The meeting on Thursday night to consider the question of stock at large in the town, decided to have the pound bylaw enforced, and it was arranged to have stock owners attend the June meeting of the Bd. Of Trade, to re-define the limits of the pound district..

Owing to the visit of the Prince George contingent last week end (to play ball and try out the new highway nearing completion), there was not the usual attendance of our citizens at the Australian picnic this year, but the deficiency was made up by visitors from the northern city, and the picnic was, as usual, a successful affair. The weather was ideal, there was a good program of sports, with lots to eat and drink, and to cap the whole proceedings a very enjoyable dance at the home of Mrs. H.T. Windt in the evening.

\* \* \*

The water in the Quesnel and the Fraser rivers commenced to subside last Saturday night, and had gone down a yard by Monday night. All danger from high water is over for the present. So much driftwood accumulated against the piers of the Quesnel river bridge that the public works officials kept a crew of men busy there until Tuesday night, dislodging the debris. While the flood was at its peak the garden of Fred Brown and the floor of his home were under water, but a very slight damage resulted.

**Quesnel Area Land Records 19** Over 20 years ago, several databases were prepared for our society. One was comprised of land records. Pages from this database will be featured in each edition of Cariboo Notes.

Dockray, Hiram.	3223 NE 1/4	1955	Canyon ck.
Brown, Clement W.	3223a	1950	Fraser R. E
Roddick, James Archibald.	3224 SE 1/4	1949	n/a
Roddick, Glen George.	3224 SE 1/4	1949	n/a
Allen, George H.	3224 NW 1/4	1929	n/a
Thomson, Thos. McAlpine.	3224 NE 1/4	1940	n/a
Sanford, James.	3225 SE 1/4	'58	Quesnel area
Anderson, Griffith W.	3225 W 1/2	1951	n/a
Price, John L.	3225 W 1/2	1951	n/a
Nadeau, James Wilbur.	3225 E 1/2	'63	n/a
Begg, Chester Wilson.	3225 E 1/2	'63	n/a
Sanford, James.	3225 NE 1/4	1939	n/a
Standbridge, Chas. R.	3226 SE 1/4	1955	Fraser R. W
Piebinga, Cornelius A.	3226 SW 1/4	n/a	n/a
Standbridge, Charles R.	3226	1970	n/a
Higgins, Carlyle.	3226	'75	n/a
Gordon, Crick.	3226	'79	n/a
Anderson, G. W.	3226 NW 1/4	'61	n/a
Buchman, Edmund.	3226	1968	n/a
Standbridge, Charles R.	3226	1970	n/a
Crick, Gordon.	3226	'79	n/a
Higgins, Carlyle.	3226	'75	n/a
Hiemstra, Harvey.	3226	'75	n/a
Hiemstra, Raymond.	3226	'75	n/a
Hiemstra, Sidney.	3226	'75	n/a
Hiemstra, G.	3226	'75	n/a
Standbridge, Anna May.	3226 NE 1/4	1955	n/a
Higgins, Carlyle.	3227 SE 1/4	n/a	Whittler ck.
Crick, Gordon.	3227	'79	Whittler ck.
Higgins, Carlyle.	3227 SW 1/4	n/a	n/a
Crick, Gordon.	3227 SW 1/4	n/a	n/a
Higgins, Carlyle.	3227 NW 1/4	n/a	n/a
Crick, Gordon.	3227 NW 1/4	n/a	n/a
Higgins, Carlyle.	3227 NE 1/4	n/a	n/a
Crick, Gordon.	3227 NE 1/4	n/a	n/a
Buchman, Edmund.	3229 SE 1/4	1966	Whittler ck.
Cochran, Arnold H.	3229 SW 1/4	1968	n/a
gravel reserve.	3229	1970	n/a
Woodward, Donald W.	3229 SW 1/4	'71	n/a
Woodward, W. D.	3229 Blk A	'70	n/a
Buchman, Edmund.	3229 NW 1/4	1966	n/a
Woodward, Donald Wm.	3229	n/a	n/a
Woodward, Wm. Donald.	3229 NW 1/4 of NW 1/4	'70	n/a
Buchman, Edmund.	3229 NE 1/4	1966	n/a



## Land Records cont'd

Woodward, Donald Wm.	3229 NE 1/4	n/a	n/a
Shuttleworth, John D.	3230 N 1/2 of SE 1/4	1953	Whittler ck. W
Anderson, Griffith W.	3230 S 1/2 of SE 1/4	1956	n/a
Anderson, Griffith W.	3230 SW 1/4	1956	n/a
Porter, William Keith.	3230 Lot 2 of Lot 323	'76	n/a
Porter, Nadine Ann.	3230 Lot 2 of Lot 323	'76	n/a
Piebinga, Cornelius A.	3230 NW 1/4	n/a	n/a
Baity, Earl Shaw.	3230	'62	n/a
Buchman, Edmund.	3230	1966	n/a
Quesnel Snowmobile Club.	3230 (10 acres)	'73	n/a
Hiemstra, Harvey.	3230	'75	n/a
Hiemstra, Raymond.	3230	'75	n/a
Hiemstra, Sidney.	3230	'75	n/a
Hiemstra, G.	3230	'75	n/a
Veteran's Land Act.	3230 NE 1/4	1953	n/a
Buchman, Edmund.	3230	1966	n/a
McIntosh, Sanford George.	3231 SE 1/4	1922	West ck.
Baity, E. A.	3231 SW 1/4	1922	n/a
Baity, E. A.	3231 NW 1/4	1928	n/a
Milles, Alfred A.	3231 NE 1/4	1926	n/a
Sanford, James.	3232 SE 1/4	'70	West ck.
Sanford, W. J.	3232 SW 1/4	'65	n/a
Sanford, James.	3232	'70	n/a
Wynne, S. J.	3232 NW 1/4	'60	n/a
Malin, Donald R.	3232	1969	n/a
Schumacher, Nixon E.	3232	'70	n/a
Sanford, James.	3232 NE 1/4	'70	n/a
Prestage, J. and B.	3232 E 1/2	'74	n/a
Industrial Diatomite Ltd.	3233 SE 1/4	'63	Fraser R. W
Litke, Raymond Henry.	3233 S 1/2	'76	n/a
Katzel, Edward.	3233 SW 1/4	'61	n/a
Bow, David Alexander.	3233	'63	n/a
Industrial Diatomite Ltd.	3233 NE 1/4	'63	n/a
Katzel, Edward.	3234 SE 1/4	'61	Whittler ck.
Bow, David Alexander.	3234	'63	Whittler ck.
Amiot, Jennifer.	3234	'69	n/a
Wynne, S. J.	3234 SW 1/4	'60	n/a
Amiot, Jennifer.	3234 SW 1/4	'69	n/a
Wynne, S. J.	3234 NW 1/4	'60	n/a
Amiot, Jennifer.	3234 NW 1/4	'69	n/a
Amiot, Jennifer.	3234 NE 1/4	'69	n/a
Wynne, John A.	3235 SE 1/2	1955	Fraser R. W
Palmatier, Ernest W.	3235 W 1/2 of E 1/2	1948	n/a
gravel reserve.	3235 E 1/2 of SW 1/4	n/a	n/a
Beaven, John F.	3235	'78	n/a
Dodge, Dwight H.	3235 NW 1/4	'62	n/a
Dodge, Dwight H.	3235 W 1/2	'63	n/a
Dodge, Dwight H.	3235	'64	n/a
Dodge, Dwight H.	3235 NE 1/4	1969	n/a



# Member Lookups

[bakersleyfarmer@gmail.com](mailto:bakersleyfarmer@gmail.com)

*Kersley Pioneers*

Cottonwood ledgers

[broughtonl@shaw.ca](mailto:broughtonl@shaw.ca)

*A Tribute to the Past* (Quesnel & area 1808 to 1928)

*The Family Tree of Robert and Euphemia Beath* (Lillian Bowdery et al)

Pre-1855 Fife Death Index (Scotland)

*The Long Line* (Benjamin Dye/Sarah Lemley family – by T. Bryan Campbell Hope)

*The Wattie Family* (1650-1996)

Kinross-shire Pre-1855 Monumental Inscriptions (Scotland)

*Chilcotin: Preserving Pioneer Memories* by the Witte Sisters

[rose23@telus.net](mailto:rose23@telus.net)

*Quesnel Pioneer History*

[guldbransentammy@gmail.com](mailto:guldbransentammy@gmail.com)

*Our History Our Heritage* (100 Stories Celebrating 100 Years) by Kelowna Branch of Okanagan Historical Society

*Destination Canada* (A guide to 20th century immigration records) compiled by Dave Obee

*Geographic Names of Saskatchewan* by Bill Barry

*Age Shall Not Weary Them* (Saskatchewan Remembers its War Dead) by Bill Barry

*Story of Broadview and Area* (Oakshela-Broadview-Percival) Centennial Tribute 1882-1982

*Whitewood and Area: 1892-1992 Volume II*

Gravestone inscriptions of Greenwood Cemetery, Orangeville, Ontario to August 1989

East Garafraxa A History

*The Golden Bridge* (Young Immigrants to Canada 1833-1939) by Marjorie Kohli

*The Little Immigrants* (The Orphans Who Came to Canada) by Kenneth Bagnell

*A History of Simcoe County* by Andrew F. Hunter

*Irish Migrants in the Canadas* by Bruce S. Elliott

Eidsvoll Bygds Historie (in Norwegian)

*Åkersjön—Högrun: 200 år på Åckrens Afradsland* (in Swedish)

Lewisville Pioneers (by the Malmo Women's Institute on early pioneers of an area near Wetaskiwin)

Pioneer Pathways (Rural Wetaskiwin) - Volumes 1 and 2

*Whoever said "seek and ye shall find" was not a genealogist.*

[wayter@telus.net](mailto:wayter@telus.net)

*Past Endeavours*, a collection of biographical histories of people from these areas: Bear, Beaver Bank, Cheremosz, Endeavour, Lilian, Midland and Peerless. This area is 75 miles north of Yorkton, Sask.

*Mamornitz Revisited: 100 years of a Ukrainian Pioneer Settlement in Sask.* There are several histories of pioneers who settled in this area east of Canora.

*Cemeteries of Walsh county, North Dakota* (vol. 26)

[gonskiin@shaw.ca](mailto:gonskiin@shaw.ca)

*Deutsche Uniformen und Seitengewehre.* German Uniforms and Bayonets 1841-1945, Klaus Lübbe

*The Lanark Society Settlers*, Carol Bennett

*Cemeteries of Lanark County*, Kingston Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society 1997

*County Marriages Registers of Ontario, Canada 1858-1869*, Vol 30, Lanark County Index, Elizabeth Hancocks, C.G.

*The Lanark Era, Births, Marriages and Deaths*, Vol 1,2,3, 1895-1911, 1912-1936, the Missing Issues, to 1930, 1902,1916,1920-29, 1930, Peter E Anderson

*From Danaville to Standard Alberta, a Tribute to our Pioneers*, Standard Historical Society

*Twixt Hill and Vale/a Story of Rathwell and Surrounding District*, Compiled by the Rathwell Historical Society 1970

*Trail of Memories*, Trail BC 1895-1945, Trail History and Heritage Committee

*Historical Portraits of Trail*, by Jamie Forbes and Trail Historical Society

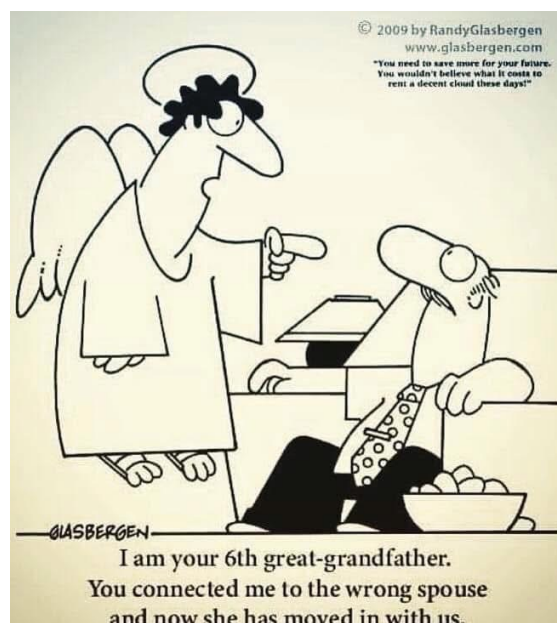
*Faces of the Past*, Vol 1, The History of the Arrow Lakes, the people and their lives. Arrow Lakes Historical Society and Milton Parent.

*Circle of Silver, Centennial Series*, Vol 4, The Arrow Lakes Historical Society in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Nakusp, 1892-1992

One request per person per week, please.

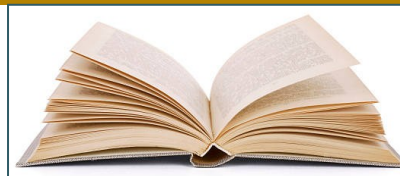


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# BOOKS FOR SALE



**Quesnel & Area Place Names.** By the Quesnel Branch of the BCGS. This brochure has been put together to provide genealogical researchers an introduction to Quesnel and area place names, and general sources of further information.

\$3.00 plus \$2.00 S&H. #1-453 Wilson Street, Quesnel, BC V2J 2W1

## HOW TO CONTACT US

*"I shook my family tree and out came a forest of friends"*

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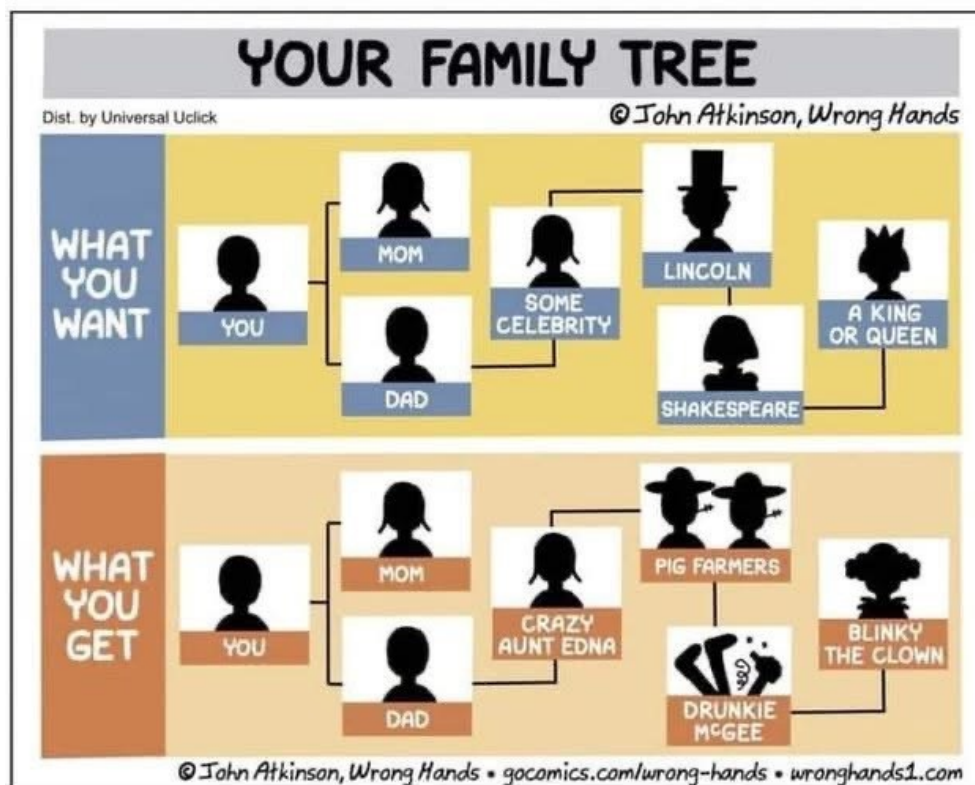
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# Quesnel Branch of the BC Genealogical Society

#1-453 Wilson Street, Quesnel, B.C. V2J 2M2

e-mail: rose23@telus.net

## EXECUTIVE 2023-24:

- *President* ..... Kathleen Edwards
- *Treasurer* ..... Dorothy Paul
- *Secretary* ..... Aleida Woollends
- *Librarian* ..... Kathleen Edwards

Positions are held for one year with elections at the September meeting.

## PROJECTS:

- *Webmaster* ..... Aleida Woollends
- *Newsletter* ..... Leanne Broughton
- *Newsletter* ..... Tammy Guldbrandsen
- *Cemetery* ..... Aleida Woollends
- *Births* ..... Kathleen Edwards
- *Marriages* ..... Kathleen Edwards
- *Deaths* ..... Leanne Broughton—discont'd

**OBJECTIVE:** to provide a local forum for genealogical research and discussions.

**MEETINGS:** held the second Tuesday of each month from September to June at 7:00 p.m. at the Church of the Latter Day Saints [Mormon] at 1490 Beryl Road, Quesnel.

**MEMBERSHIP:** \$20.00 (individual) or \$25.00 (family) yearly, due September meeting or \$10.00 basic plus \$1.00 per month until September. NOTE: Although a branch of the B.C.G.S., a specific membership is required to receive their newsletter, or for the use of their facilities.

**FACILITIES:** The Society presently has a small genealogical library, a microfiche/film reader and some research aids. Our objective is to increase our library holdings on general genealogical topics, and to develop specific holdings according to membership interest. These books, research aids and fiche may be borrowed by society members for local use for up to four weeks.

The library has a good collection of genealogical info related to the Cariboo Gold Rush, particularly for Wells and Barkerville.

**RESEARCH:** Inquiries for research will be passed to local members and charged at a rate of \$10.00 per hour + postage and photocopy fees, payable in advance. Black and white photos of headstones in the Quesnel Pioneer Cemetery and headstones in small cemeteries and memorial parks surrounding Quesnel are available from negatives for \$5.00 including postage.

**FUNDING:** This is a non-profit society. Yearly membership fees and other fundraising activities are used to pay for operational expenses.

**NEWSLETTER:** The society publishes three newsletters a year, in February (#1 Spring), June (#2 Summer/Fall) and November (#3 Winter). Subscription is included in yearly membership fees, available on a trade basis, or \$3.00 per year for non-members.