

RELATIVELY SPEAKING

Volume 42 Number 1 – February 2014

Summary of Feature Articles

“Pa’s Story” by Helen Vermeulen

Helen’s father was a unique and colourful character, a man of ups and downs related to depressive episodes. Her story is an endearing tribute to this man.

“An 1855 Valentine Card Found in a Wee Envelope” by Claudine Nelson

Claudine’s great grandfather sent a cutwork valentine card to her great grandmother in 1855. Amazingly, it has survived and is a special link to Claudine’s direct ancestor, a man about whom she has scant information.

“Ranch Romance” by Marilyn Lappi

Marilyn tells the tale of her grandparents, Henry and Della Hanson. Henry courted Della, his cousin, after he convinced her to come to cook for him and other ranch hands on the Meyers Ranch just south of Calgary. Despite that Della was intent on returning home, Henry convinced her to remain and become his wife – a happy ever after tale.

“From Scotland with – Regards? Love” by Marilyn Astle

Often we find items that raise more questions than answers about our ancestors. Marilyn has a postcard that has done just that and the questions she shares provide insight into genealogical problem solving.

“A Love Lost” by John Althouse

John chronicles the tragic love story of a young man who drowned when the Titanic sank, wondering whether his fiancé eventually found happiness.

“The Reluctant Immigrant” by Roger Langevin

Roger tells the story of his grandmother who came from Montreal to Lac La Biche, not by choice, but because her husband decided to relocate the family there to embark on a new beginning. While Roger’s grandfather was content, his grandmother remained bitter until her death.

“Ghost Signs; Wall Dogs” by Denise (Juchli) Daubert and Lesley (Dalrymple) O’Neil

This pictorial provides a glimpse into the past when signage was painted on the sides of buildings; remnants of some remain and bring back fond memories.

“What’s In A Name” by Thomas Alan Gray

Thomas tells us of his search to uncover the correct middle name of an ancestor. His conclusion is at odds with family lore and he wonders now how to convince them of the truth.

“Emily Gertrude Thomson – Artist” by Lesley (Dalrymple) O’Neil

Lesley grew up hearing about an aunt who was an artist. After much research, she discovered that it was a great aunt and that she was a very well-known and accomplished miniaturist whose work is in museums in Britain, and an illustrator of the books of Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll).

“Serendipity or God’s Guidance” by Gerhard (George) Kasdorf

This is an endearing tale of two immigrants to Canada who arrived on the same ship to Pier 21 as children, unbeknownst to each other, then met later as young adults. They married and are living happily ever after.

Book Review

Building A legacy, reviewed by Lesley O`Neil

As Lesley says in her review, “This beautiful book is a must for anyone in love with Edmonton and its legacy of historic buildings.” Well known author and historian, Ken Tingley, has compiled this tribute to how this city has grown.

“Late Dispatches from the Trenches” by John Althouse

John focuses attention on the PPCLI and British Army WWI Pension records 1914-1920.

Visiting Alberta’s Past

- 1) South Peace regional Archives
An overview of resources that can be found in this archive.
- 2) 2014 Alberta Centennials
A few of the many centennials that are being celebrated this year are listed here

From the Branches

- 1) News from Camrose Branch
- 2) Drayton Valley workshop
- 3) Edmonton Branch TYFT and other news
- 4) Grande Prairie & District Branch Margaret Kay Scholarship and other news
- 5) Peace River & District Branch opening some meetings to general public
- 6) Wetaskiwin Branch one day workshop (October 2013) summary

Marilyn Hindmarch/Peter Staveley
Co-editors – Relatively Speaking

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Volume 42 Number 2 – May 2014

Summary of Feature Articles

“Hillcrest Mine Disaster” by Anne Knight

This one page article commemorates the 100th anniversary of this devastating event in southern Alberta that resulted in the death of 189 of the 235 men who went to work at Hillcrest Mine on June 19, 1914. Anne’s paternal grandfather was one fortunate survivor; her account of his personal ordeal, then his return to help with rescue speaks to the dedication of these brave men.

“The “AMavis” Race” by Mavis Nelson and Sharon Aney

The two authors present a unique activity to spark interest in family history research. They offer, in this story, a fun way to engage the entire family that all of us can use as a model to devise our own family research quest.

“How To Get Started [in Genealogy]” by Lianne Kruger

This is a very useful article for those who are embarking, or thinking of embarking, on a genealogical search. Lianne lists how to document what the budding genealogist may already have and how to proceed from that point. Accompanying the information are illustrations of useful charts to assist beginners.

“One Day, One Man, One Mill, One Million Memories” by Gloria Cathcart

Gloria, who has extensively researched the many branches of her family, chronicles how she uncovered the very interesting life of her grandfather and his ancestors. She considers herself lucky with the personal connections and discoveries she made but, as we all know, such good fortune only comes at the end of a lot of concerted effort. This story should inspire readers to travel and seek out descendants who might very well share their treasures and impart their recollections.

“A Little Walk in a Cemetery” by John Althouse, Gloria (Kennett) Cathcart, Marilyn Hindmarch, Lesley (Dalrymple) O’Neil, and Peter Staveley

Four members of our RS editorial committee have authored brief personal cemetery tales that are interesting and/or inspirational, an encouraging compilation to read for anyone planning to explore cemeteries this summer.

GenFair

Pictorial centre spread coverage of the Edmonton Branch hosted genealogical ‘mini-conference’.

“Find a Grave Exploration” by Gloria Cathcart

In her article, Gloria describes this free website pointing out how it works and what you can expect to find. She indicates that, while it is most useful to those residing in Canada and the US, many other countries are also included. She also cautions that, once tried, this website can be addictive.

“Addictive Indeed” by Lesley O’Neil

Lesley gives a brief enthusiastic account of some of her Find-a-Grave explorations, further supporting Gloria’s helpful article.

“Keepers of History – Seasonal Museums Around Alberta” by Denise (Juchli) Daubert

Denise has compiled a list of small to medium sized museums that are located in towns, villages, and rural districts around Alberta and are only open during summer months. This is a very useful tool for anyone planning to visit the area their ancestors came from to learn about the culture and view artifacts.

“Legion of Frontiersmen Enters the Fray” by Peter Staveley

Following an article he wrote about this group for the February 2006 issue of RS, Peter here gives us some informative insight into the group’s unfortunate thwarted attempt to participate in WWI.

“AGS Memory – Rug Rats” by Frank Easton

After last year’s series of recollections from the early days of the AGS, founding member Frank Easton returns once more with a heartwarming tale of John Hughes who was also a founding member and longtime editor of RS. A poignant tale, well worth taking the time to read.

Book Review

The Devil’s Breath, reviewed by John Althouse

This book compliments our opening article on the Hillcrest Mining Disaster of 1914. It is a comprehensive history of the event including chronology of events that place it in context. John writes that there are graphics, a glossary and several appendices to help readers full appreciate the magnitude of this occurrence.

Visiting Alberta’s Past

- Sexsmith
This community has retained its small town legacy and is a place to consider visiting to experience what much of Alberta was like many years ago.

From the Branches

News from the following branches:

- Drayton Valley
- Lethbridge
- Grande Prairie and District
- Wetaskiwin
- Edmonton

“Late Dispatches from the Trenches” by John Althouse

John presents a synopsis of three books about WWI that focus attention on:

- 1) boy soldiers,
- 2) animals in war, and
- 3) battlefield maps.

For anyone with an interest in WWI or who has an ancestor who was associated with any of these areas, these snippets could be of help in providing ‘meat on the bones’.

Marilyn Hindmarch/Peter Staveley
Co-editors – Relatively Speaking

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Volume 42 Number 3 – August 2014

Summary of Feature Articles

2013 AGS Awards

“A Centennial Family, William and Elizabeth Snell” by Linda McKay

This is a chronology with some biographies of the Snell family who lived in a village north of Red Deer in 1913 when Red Deer became a city. Linda McKay is their great granddaughter and her recounting of this family and their history won this year's Kenneth Young Award for best original article in a branch newsletter.

“A Walk With Uncle James” by Grant Nicol

As a young man Grant travelled to Ireland to visit with his family there and trace his genealogical roots. He was warmly embraced by his aunt and uncle, and taken around the county by his uncle who also told him of family and county lore. Grant has taken his recollections of these events and spun an entertaining family history story. Grant shows how to be a good teller of family stories, something we all could learn from.

“Preservation of Gravestones and Monuments” by Janine Carroll

In this one-page article Janine outlines two levels, basic and advanced, of a workshop she attended to learn about gravestone and monument preservation.

“Liquid Fire’ Neon Museum” by Denise Daubert and Lesley O’Neil

Once again these two sign buffs team up to give us a glimpse, both night and day, of Edmonton's new outdoor neon sign museum. They also provide some general history of neon signs along with the history of the signs on display. This will be a nostalgic place to visit during the day and as night falls.

“1921 Canadian Census” by Sharon Aney

Sharon lists the questions asked in this census that is now fully indexed and online.

“Brownvale, Alberta” by Norma Wolowyk

RS received a query in March about a family that had come from the Scottish Highlands to settle in Alberta's Peace River country. As we often do, we sent this on to Norma and her research committee, thinking they might be able to assist. In this one page article Norma tells where the group searched and what they found for the person inquiring.

“Mauchline Ware” by Gloria Cathcart

Gloria shows pieces from her collection and tells us what Mauchline Ware is, its origin and its significance to her and her family.

“Old Postcards-A Glimpse into the Past” by Marilyn Hindmarch

Several years ago Marilyn became the recipient of her grandmother's treasured album filled with a fascinating collection of postcards dating 1903-1912. Marilyn discusses how these items provided insight into her grandmother as a young woman who travelled and collected these mementoes.

“My Life at the Tower of London” by Heather Louise Miller

What would it be like to live in a palace? Heather Louise got to find out when her husband was posted to the Tower of London. Here she recounts for us some of the benefits and drawbacks along with a uniquely memorable birthday party she arranged for her mother in that historic place – an engaging tale indeed.

“No. 5 Bombing and Gunnery School Revisited” by Lesley O’Neil

In last November’s RS (Vol. 41, No.4) Lesley wrote of her parents’ experience in this facility during WWII taken from letters her mother had written home to her brother in Montreal. This one page article focuses pictures from a subsequent visit her parent had made in the 1980s and one from Lesley’s search on Google Earth in 2014, showing us how the past can meaningfully be brought forward.

“The Sinking of the Empress of Ireland 100 Years Ago” by Mavis Nelson

Mavis’s mother-in-law was a young child aboard the *Empress of Ireland* on her maiden voyage to Canada and up the St. Lawrence in 1906, fourteen years before she sank with 1,012 people perishing on the same route. This past May 14th marked the 100th anniversary of this great maritime disaster.

“Relive the Harvest of Old” by John Althouse

John lists several locations where recreations of old time prairie harvests can be enjoyed, appreciated and learned about.

Book Review

Rosina, the Midwife, reviewed by John Althouse

This book tells the tale of Jessica Kluthe’s having found her 2X great grandmother’s photo in an old box of assorted memorabilia. From this artifact and travel to Calabria that resulted in more information, she subsequently wove together the bits and pieces she discovered about this ancestor into a loving tale.

Visiting Alberta’s Past

- “Father Lacombe Chapel”
The history of this chapel, the oldest building in Alberta, is chronicled here.
- “High level Bridge Lit Up!”
Following the success of this initiative, the bridge was lit up for this year’s Canada Day celebration complete with music and fireworks. More events are planned for the end of summer.

From the Branches

News from all branches is available this quarter:

- Brooks and District
- Camrose and District
- Drayton Valley
- Edmonton
- Fort McMurray
- Grande Prairie and District
- Lethbridge
- Medicine Hat and District
- Peace River
- Red Deer
- Wetaskiwin

“Late Dispatches from the Trenches” by John Althouse

John presents a synopsis of the following books about WWI:

- 1) The First World War in 100 Objects,
- 2) Canadians at War: A Guide to the Battlefields of World War I,
- 3) A Call to the Colours: Tracing Your Canadian Military Ancestors

and some magazines with articles on German and British war info:

- Discover Your History, May 2014,
- Your Family History, May 2014,
- Who Do You Think You Are?, May 2014

Marilyn Hindmarch/Peter Staveley
Co-editors – Relatively Speaking

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Summary of Contents
Volume 42 Number 4 – November 2014

Regular Features

- Editorial
- Quality Quirks – clarification of publication errors in previous issue
- Letters to the Editors
- Announcements
- Visiting Alberta's Past – featuring key landmarks that were instrumental in building our province
- Spinning Webs — websites of genealogical interest
- Tech Tips — technical insights on how to surf the net
- From The Branches – branch activities or acquisitions of interest that may benefit other branches or societies
- Queries
- Gleanings – highlights from articles appearing in publications recently received in the library

Feature Articles

- Uncle Art's War by Marilyn Lappi
War changes people, often drastically. Marilyn tells of her uncle's WWI experience. Her research uncovered an experience that is all too true but often unknown or undocumented. Uncle Art's correspondence to his sister revealed how his initial optimism soured and sadly left him a very different man.
- WWI and My Father by John White
In this one-pager with a group photo, John shares his recollection of the only time his father ever spoke of the war.
- WWI Maternal Grandfathers by Denise Daubert and Lesley O'Neil
Two authors each share a WWI tale of their maternal grandfathers. Denise's story revolves around a precious Christmas card signed by this man and sent to her grandmother. Lesley's treasure is a postcard written by her grandfather to her grandmother. These items open a window into the lives of our ancestors.
- A Collection of Christmas Memories compiled by Gloria Cathcart
Eight AGS members have written a brief recollection of a childhood Christmas: cheerful, thoughtful, and poignant.
- Banff-Castle Mountain Internment Camp, WWI by Lesley O'Neil
On a recent trip to Banff, Lesley discovered a museum dedicated to the internment camp and the internees who were housed there because they were considered enemy aliens during the WWI years, a sad commentary on government policy at that time.

- A Reunion – With a Difference by George Cathcart
While most reunions involve people, this one is between a retired RCAF pilot and the Canso aircraft he once flew. George interviewed Hal Burns to give us this unique look back to a wartime experience.

- Two Who Never Returned by Marilyn Astle and Roger Blinco
Marilyn is an AGS member, Roger a one-name-study researcher. Together they pooled their findings on two ancestors who met in Alberta, and later died overseas during WWI, giving us a comprehensive story of their pre-war camaraderie and the war experiences that led to their deaths.

- 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion transcribed by Lesley O’Neil
The man who contributed recollection of joining up for WWII wished to remain anonymous. We were happy to oblige and grateful for the opportunity to recount what seems to have been a common reason for why men joined the military and how they came to join the particular battalions they did.

- Military Folding Bicycles compiled by Marilyn Hindmarch and Lesley O’Neil with thanks to Colin Stevens
For anyone interested in military equipment, this little known piece of transportation is described along with its reliability – or lack thereof. A unique design, these are still collectable.

- Late Dispatches From The Trenches by John Althouse
This is the fourth and final piece for this year showcasing publications that have articles on WWI.

- Old Photos Found

While going through a box of old RS galley proofs, several old photos were discovered that possibly someone would like returned. We would be happy to do so if contacted by the owner.

- Visiting Alberta’s Past
 - 1) Stettler to Big Valley by Train
A colourful account of a historical train ride into Alberta’s past.

- From the Branches

A brief update on the recent activities of each branch.

- Library Notes and Research Committee News

A brief look at new acquisitions and a unique research opportunity that was undertaken.