



# ROOTS & BRANCHES

**Wetaskiwin Branch  
of the**

**Alberta Genealogical Society**

*BRINGING THE PAST .....  
TO THE PRESENT .....  
FOR THE FUTURE! ©*

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**APRIL 2020**

**VOL. 18. #2**

## **EXECUTIVE**

**President:** Alice Hoyle  
**Vice President:** Lorraine McKay  
**Secretary:** Patty Caputo  
**Treasurer:** Leroy Koop

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## ROOTS & BRANCHES

is published three times a year by and for the members of Wetaskiwin Branch of AGS. It is emailed to members and it is posted on our website.

## BRANCH MEETINGS

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, except July, Aug & Dec  
7:00 pm at LDS CHURCH

## BRANCH LIBRARY

At City of Wetaskiwin Archives  
4904 – 51 Street  
Tues. Wed. Thur.  
9:00 am – 3:00 pm

## COMMITTEES

- **Newsletter**  
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- **Library**  
Robin Sheehan
- **Webmasters**  
Leroy Koop  
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- **Volunteer Research**  
Alice Hoyle  
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- **Membership**  
Leroy Koop
- **Programs**  
Claudia Malloch
- **Publicity**  
Alice Hoyle
- **Historian**  
Rosella Plaquin
- **Youth**  
Patti Caputo

## FAMILY DISCOVERY CENTER

Closed due to Covid-19  
Until further notice.

## CANCELLED!

April 21, 2020 Regular Meeting  
of Wetaskiwin Branch, AGS  
due to the Covid-19 Pandemic  
We will keep you posted  
re: the May 19, 2020 Meeting

## CONGRATULATIONS!!

### LEROY (LEE) KOOP

has been awarded the  
AGS Peter Stavely Award  
for Excellent Material submitted for  
publication in Relatively Speaking

### SHARON ANEY

has been awarded the  
AGS Kenneth Young Award  
for Best Original article in a newsletter

## PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

Alice Hoyle

There is so much going on, yet I feel at a loss for words!

When I wrote the last "Ponderings" ramble for Sharon to include in our branch newsletter, we were all looking forward to 2020 and enthusiastically planning GenFair 2020 that Wetaskiwin branch was going to host for AGS.

In the space of two months, society as a whole has gone from an open, socially close group of people to one in which we have to practice social distancing in order to stop or slow down the spread of Covid-19. This practice of distancing ourselves from others does not come naturally to us: however, I am pleased to see that most people understand the necessity of this drastic measure.

As we stay home as much as possible, and are removed from family and friends, we should think about our ancestors who lived through the Spanish Influenza of 1918-1919. They lived at a time when there weren't any medicines that could assist them, most people did not have a telephone or a vehicle and there were no daily updates from government officials advising of the status of the pandemic. For some of them (like my grandmother) they were also trying to survive while their husbands were overseas fighting in WWI. In letters my grandmother wrote to my grandfather when he was stationed in France, she tells of the situation here in Wetaskiwin: people quarantined, schools closed, everyone wearing masks, and she also tells of her worries regarding the safety of her 4 children.

We are so lucky to have the ability to communicate with each other by phone, emails, text messages, video chats, etc. I hope you are all able to connect with your family this way.

We could also use the enforced 'stay home' time to work on our genealogical research. I am very impressed with the number of free webinars various companies and genealogical societies are offering to everyone, not just their own members. Kudos to them all! I have watched several of the free webinars – a lot of learning, in the comfort of my home.

In closing, I would like to recognize and congratulate Sharon Aney and Lee Koop: their literary talents are being recognized at the Alberta Genealogical Society's AGM on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The Virtual meeting starts at 3:00 pm and although they will not receive their awards in person at that time, we can only hope that in the near future we, as a branch, can applaud them and show our appreciation for their creative works.

I hope you are all well, managing to obtain essential supplies, and catching up on some of those to-do lists that were waiting "until you had extra time". The time is now! ☺

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## EDITOR'S CORNER Sharon Aney

It has become a trite phrase...

"We are living in unprecedented times".

In other massive emergencies when our country was faced with such a fearful threat, young men joined the military and prepared to go overseas to give their lives, if necessary, in order to protect us.

Today it is up to every one of us, young and old, as individuals, to stay home in order to protect ourselves and each other. It does not often happen in a lifetime that I / we have an opportunity to act to the direct benefit of our community, indeed of the country.

I found a slogan that I think applies:

"Not **Stuck** at home, but **Safe** at home"

As family historians we can and should be keeping some sort of record of how Covid19 is affecting us, physically and mentally, socially and economically, and how our outlook has changed over the weeks and months.

I have opened a Word document to use as a journal. I just pop into it once in a while. Despite all of the well documented information "out there", perhaps my descendants will appreciate notes of our personal experiences in this historic time.

**\*PS.** A page numbering gremlin has hit this issue & I don't know how to get rid of it. Sorry!

## MEETING PRESENTATIONS

### February 18, 2020

Claudia showed us some of the interesting Legacy webinars that could be accessed. She showed the members how to search for free webinars on the Legacy site.

Just before our February meeting, My Heritage had previewed their new 'Colorize Your Black and White Prints' option on their website. Claudia demonstrated how to do this, and she and Dan DeWolf showed some of their photos that had been colorized. Although the colours didn't always convert to the original colours, we were all amazed at how sharp and crisp the photos looked after being 'colorized'.

### March 17, 2020

Meeting Cancelled due to Covid-19 virus

### April 21, 2020

Meeting cancelled due to Covid-19 virus

## GENFAIR 2020 – Cancelled



Thanks to the GenFair Committee: Lee Koop, Alice Hoyle, Claudia Malloch, Lori McKay, Sharon Aney & Robin Sheehan. They put in many hours planning the event which unfortunately had to be cancelled.

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## VOLUNTEER RESEARCH Alice Hoyle

### JOHNSON, AUGUST AND CAROLINA –

Request from Cheryl who lives in Minnesota.

She saw Carolina's name in the Moore Funeral Home records that Sharon indexed a few years ago.

Cheryl wanted to determine if this particular Carolina Johnson was her Great-Grandmother's sister. I found the information in the Moore records, as well as Carolina/Caroline's obituary in the obituary records at the City Archives. Based on the obituary, I determined that this family lived west of Millet, so I looked in the Millet and District local history book – found a write-up about the August Johnson family as well as their descendants who still live in the area.

I sent all this information to Cheryl, as well as answering her questions about Naturalization records, how to access Swedish records, etc.

A quirk to this request: when reading the local history book about the Johnson family, I realized that August and Carolina's grandson is married to my husband's first cousin! Small world.

**RUD, MARY** – Another request based on the Moore Funeral Home records.

Marilyn N. saw Mary's name in the database on our website. Mary Rud is Marilyn's grandmother. She said she had been searching for information about her grandmother's death. I copied all the information from the Moore records; also found obituaries for Mary and her husband Kristian Rud.

Based on the obituaries, I determined that the family lived in the Millet area and was able to find their write-up in the Millet and District Local History book. I sent Marilyn

the Moore information, copies of the obituaries, copies of the local history book write-ups, and I also advised her how to request the death records of her grandparents by using the website at the Provincial Archives.

**ERMINESKIN –**

Last year I had a request for information about an Ermineskin family. This request came from Toronto, and it was the husband of someone who is a descendant of the Ermineskin family.

He wanted to document his wife’s ancestral information but his wife didn’t have a lot of information. I reached out to one of our former branch members, Anne W., who has a wealth of information about the past members of the Ermineskin Band.

As of March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Anne W. has been in touch with the Toronto researcher and has been able to provide him with a huge amount of information about his wife’s ancestral roots.

Anne has also volunteered to communicate with him to explain some of the lineage. Anne has been such an amazing source of information for this researcher. As a branch, we would not have been able to access this much data on our own. We are very grateful for her help.

**SALD**

Near the end of March, I received a research request from Tammy G. from BC. She saw, in the Moore Funeral Home records, information on her ancestors John Johnson Sald and Ida Kristina Sald Anderson. Unfortunately, due to the closure of all City facilities I was not able to go to the Archives and view this record.

However: in further communication with Tammy, I was able to discern that she was

looking for information on her great-grandmother Annie Kristina Pettersen, born December 1, 1882 in Halden, Ostfold, Norway, and her great-grandfather Godthard Johnson who was born in Sweden in 1880.

I have sent her some information regarding Scandinavian research. She also wanted to obtain the 2 volume Pioneer Pathways, and I directed her to the Heritage Museum as I believe they still have copies for sale.

I have suggested that she obtain copies of the original marriage registration for Annie Kristina and Godthard and she said she planned to do that.

I also directed her to the Peel collection at the U of A: there are several articles there relating to her family.

We continue to be in touch with each other as I am interested in her progress with the family research.

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## MEMORABLE MONARCHY MOMENTS

by Carole Koop

My family "connection" with royalty occurred long before my time, but surfaced during my genealogical research:

*The Mitchell Advocate* of Logan Twp., Perth County, Ontario reported on 17 March 1865 that Her Majesty Queen Victoria had come out of retirement. She had retreated from her duties and grieved deeply for years after the death of her husband, Prince Albert in 1861.



What struck me was that the royal news column was immediately beside the column stating that **William Bickford** had been fined for running through the Logan Road toll gate without paying.

My great great grandfather, William Bickford and the Queen made news on the same page. WOW! He's my elusive ancestor; no Canadian record can be found that tells me where in England he's from so that's my 'brick wall'.

An antique which I inherited from my



grandmother is the 1901 souvenir funeral card for Queen Victoria.

In 1953 in Winnipeg there were three hospitals in a cluster: the Princess Elizabeth, the King Edward, and the King George Isolation Hospital, the latter being where I was a patient as a preschooler for a month during the polio epidemic. I was not allowed any visitors. In spite of my young age at the time, I have

very vivid memories of my experiences there. I had no toys except for a colouring book. I loved it and I didn't have to share. The whole book was of Queen Elizabeth. On the cover she was featured in regimental ceremonial clothes sitting side saddle on a horse.



I thought this peculiar because my only experiences with horses were with the ones we had on the farm: Prince the huge work horse and Tony the pony. "Queens don't ride horses", I thought.

That same year was her coronation. A beautiful chocolate box lid was designed which showed Queen Elizabeth on a horse, again! I own one of those boxes and seeing it always reminds me of *my* 1953.

Her portrait had replaced her father's (King George VI) on the postage stamps.



During my teenage years I was an avid stamp collector. It always astonished me how many countries around the world had *our* queen on their stamps. During Queen Victoria's reign the British Empire grew to cover more than a quarter of the world, so I guess that explains it.



The one-room school near our farm was called Ste. Elizabeth S.D. 1072, nothing to do with the monarch. However, her portrait was gorgeous to me and was centred high above the front blackboard.

We sang "Oh Canada" at the start of the day and "God Save the Queen" at the end.

In 1970, the year of Manitoba's Centennial, Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Philip, Prince Charles, and Princess Anne had a full slate of appearances sometimes all together but more often in pairs.

My sister, who was 12 years old at the time, recalled that Mom took her on the ½ hour trip from the farm to St. Pierre so they could see Queen Elizabeth and Prince Charles on an outdoor walkabout.



My now husband, Lee, just newly graduated from University of Manitoba in 1970, had moved into the Tweedsmuir Apartments on Broadway Avenue in Winnipeg with his sister until he could find his own accommodation. When the Royals travelled down Broadway on July 15th in a horse-drawn state carriage en route from the CNR station to the Legislative Building he & his sister had ringside advantage because they could see the whole show from their second floor windows.

On my 2003 visit to England, my mother and I were on a mission to visit all the National Trust locations that had been used in the much loved 1996 BBC Home Video production of *Pride and Prejudice*. Our London friend, Mary, took us one day on an extra jaunt to Windsor. We approached the castle entrance and Mary boldly asked, "Is the lady of the house home?" The red-suited guard congenially replied, "Yes she is madam, but she's not receiving guests today; she's busy preparing for Ascot."

We chuckled about this monarchy moment for days. Windsor Castle has been the residence of royalty for over 900 years. As I walked the exterior walls I gave the massive structure a friendly pat and said, "Hang in there!"

In 2015, Lee & I travelled to Europe treating our 10 year old grandson to a taste of London and Paris. Mary, once again made Windsor one of our stops. On our walkabout near the castle our



grandson jumped the guard rail ignoring the KEEP OFF sign and said, "Take a picture of me sitting on the Queen's lawn." Cute, eh?

In Sept. 2016, the Queen's grandson Prince William and his family visited the West Coast of BC. Part of their commitment of time was spent in the Great Bear Rainforest. My cousin is an advocate of its protection; his son William of Heiltsuk ancestry has risen to ranks of tribal councillor and was an "on the scene commander" during the royal visit to these ancient native lands.

A plaque was to be unveiled on a particularly rainy day but the plaque had not been veiled. So cousin William shed his



raincoat and came to the rescue using it as the veil. After Prince William removed the substitute veil he said, "This coat must belong to a very large, very wet man." 😊

During my 2019 UK trip to Congleton in Cheshire, I had the opportunity to attend the Timbersbrook Women's Institute monthly meeting with my friend. The WI president appeared on time and said, "Sorry, I'm a bit rushed and dressed like this. It's because I was at Buckingham Palace today and didn't have time to go home and change." I immediately thought of our *Relatively Speaking* editor's request for "Queen/royal" stories and introduced myself to Pam Barrow.

She and I posed for a photo with her fascinator quickly applied to her head and her husband's MBE award displayed in her hand.

Her husband received the Member of the Order of the British Empire medal because of extensive charitable good works. The Barrow family arrived at the palace early, dressed according to instructions, and was coached on protocol.

A lapel magnet was attached onto each medal recipient prior to the ceremony so that the Queen wouldn't have to fiddle with pins while attaching medals. She was

coached by her Equerry and then chatted briefly with each award recipient.



I continue to keep busy with genealogy and family projects. The last four years have been intense with French Canadian research for a niece and a nephew tracing their French lines back to the mid 1600's in New France.

Most French Canadians descend from the "King's Daughters", 800 women, who were sponsored by King Louis XIV over a ten-



year span to sail to New France to marry fur traders and farmers, and so to ensure growth of the population. I have traced their lines back to about 80 of those Filles du Roi / King's Daughters.

But despite the name given to the group none of the women were of French Royalty!

However, I have enjoyed having our Canadian history come to life in this way.

In these several ways, as an ordinary Canadian I was able to "connect" with Royalty....albeit from a distance.

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## WHATZ-IT?

Alice Hoyle

For most people who look at this item, it's



easy to answer the question. It's obviously an old-fashioned weighing scale.

For me, this item brings back unique memories. I can close my eyes and recall how I saw my Mother using this item at our farm.

I grew up on a farm east of Gwynne: we did not have electricity or indoor plumbing – and the only “running water” we had was in the spring when all the run-off would come rushing down the hill to the north of us, creating these lovely little waterfalls that my sisters and I enjoyed mucking about in.



My mother used this scale to weigh her children and grandchildren!

I remember her wrapping them up in a receiving blanket; making sure to tie a very secure knot at the top. Then the

hook part of the scale would be inserted under the knot; a strong person (usually my Dad) would hold the ring part of the scale while the baby was hanging loose on the bottom part of the scale.

Mom would check the weight, and it would be recorded in the baby's “Baby Book”.

The scale's measurements are 1.75 inches wide x 6.25 inches long. The maximum amount that could be weighed is 25 pounds.

It has been repaired: I see a screw has replaced a rivet that obviously broke off. The item has a number: 63719 – Chatillon's Improved Spring Balance, New York, Pat'd Jan. 6, 1891 and Jan. 26, 1892. On one side of the front of the scale are the words “FAMILY SCALE”.



My guess is that this originally belonged to my Dad's parents, who owned the farm prior to my Dad and Mom taking over the farm in 1935.

I have a few items that belonged to my parents and grandparents: this scale, the wooden utensil that my Mother used to punch down the cabbage in the crock when she made sauerkraut, my Dad's straight razors – nothing major or of monetary value. I keep this small collection on a shelf where it is visible every day when I walk by – a daily reminder of my ancestors.

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*A will is a dead giveaway.*

## **PREPARE!**

Sharon Aney

I have been reflecting upon the various emergencies that have hit communities in our own province in recent years and months.

People were required to leave their homes to the mercies of fire and flood while they saved themselves. They could take with them only what could fit into their vehicle. They had a very short time to decide what to take with them, and what they would have to leave behind to potentially be destroyed.

Most of us are more likely to face a house fire than a community disaster. But it is difficult to make rational decisions at the last minute.

Even if we make a plan now, would our minds be cool enough during the emergency to carry out the rescue of the important things on our lists?

Maybe we should ask ourselves:

**“ How I can prevent a total loss in case there is a total loss?”**

Regarding our genealogy, what will we hope survives?

### **1. Family History**

**Write it! Print it! Share It!**

We can do this in many ways, only some of which are writing our own memoirs, re-telling stories told to us by parents and other relatives, organizing the research and documents into a chronological or family order, or by writing the whole history as we know it.

And then we share it with others!

As long as it is printed off, even from our own printer and shared with family

members, the story remains. So if my house is lost, I still have my daughter's, or my sister's copy of the story.

Our family history is saved.

### **2. Important Documents.....**

**Make copies!**

We can and should make photocopies of birth, marriage & death certificates, immigration papers, land and property deeds so they can be handy for reference as we write and research.

But the originals should be stored in a place other than your "office", such as in a safety deposit box.

They will be safe.

### **3. Photos**

**Digitize!**

Whenever a house fire is reported on the news, we are struck by the folks, wrapped in a blanket, lamenting that of all the things lost, they regret the loss of irreplaceable family photos.

As genealogists we know how to, and we should have digitized our precious photos and saved them safely in our computer.

Another advantage of doing this right now is that, once in the computer it is easy to use them as appropriate inserts into the stories we are writing!

### **4. Computer**

**Back Up!**

What if we are not able to save our computer from fire or water?

That should not be a problem if we have saved all of our files onto an external hard drive that is stored at another location. (mine is at my daughter's house) or because our files are backed up into the Cloud, on DropBox, for example.

These back-ups are done regularly... right?

## **5. Community History & Reference Books**

### **Make a list!**

If we have made a list of our published resources (including the cute titles they might have) and filed it on our computer, after the disaster we will still be able to access the list from our external hard drive or the cloud.

We will then be able to access many of the books online and recover the pertinent stories.

## **6. Family Heirlooms Photograph & Describe!**

When it comes to family heirlooms, we all have something different, and so we will have to think about what is important, what is portable, and we must be prepared to leave it behind if safety is an issue.

In the weeks following the Ft. McMurray wildfire evacuation a woman who had been in touch with other evacuees decided that some levity was needed to ease the tension. She began a Facebook page for folks to post about the odd things they had grabbed on their way out the house.

She began by relating that she had taken with her 2 packages of Kraft cheese slices. Another post was that someone (on May 1) had brought her ski pants to safety.

Another posted pictures of a stuffed bear head! (no passport or computer).

My Uncle Fred was a bachelor and we as kids loved him a lot; he always had a special treat for us when he came to visit. He was a chiropractor. When he eventually passed away, his belongings devolved to my dad, including his massage bench / table which was a sturdy, heavy item of steel and wood. Possession of that thing weighed heavily on my dad. In order to ease his mental burden I bought it from Uncle Fred's estate and brought it home, much to my husband's dismay. But we owned a cabin, which by definition is a catch-all. So to the cabin it went.

A few years later, the cabin, now our daughter's, had an odor of something "hot" one evening. They checked everything and found that the wall around the fuse box was hot to the touch. They feared a fire and started taking things out of the cabin before it went up in flames. (It didn't).

The first thing out was Uncle Fred's bench. I asked why? and was told that it was important! It was Uncle Fred's! Our daughter did not even know him, but she knew the stories about him.

Sometimes that is how we make decisions about heirlooms. So maybe the bear's head really was the irreplaceable thing to come safely out of Fort McMurray.

But maybe there could have been a picture and a story about the bear's head and Uncle Fred's table...just in case.....

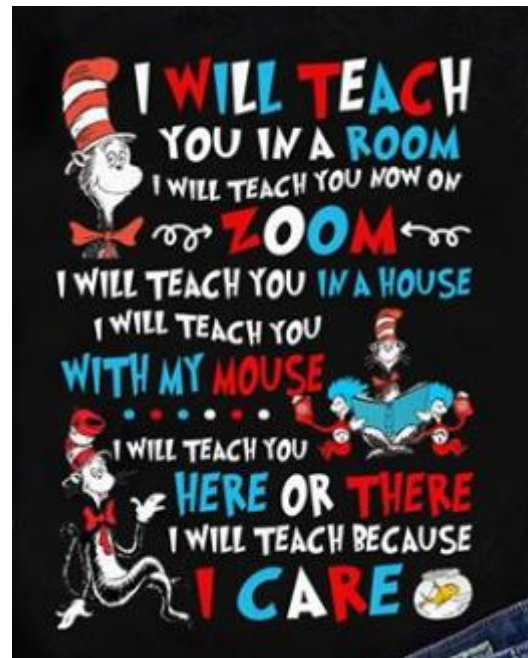
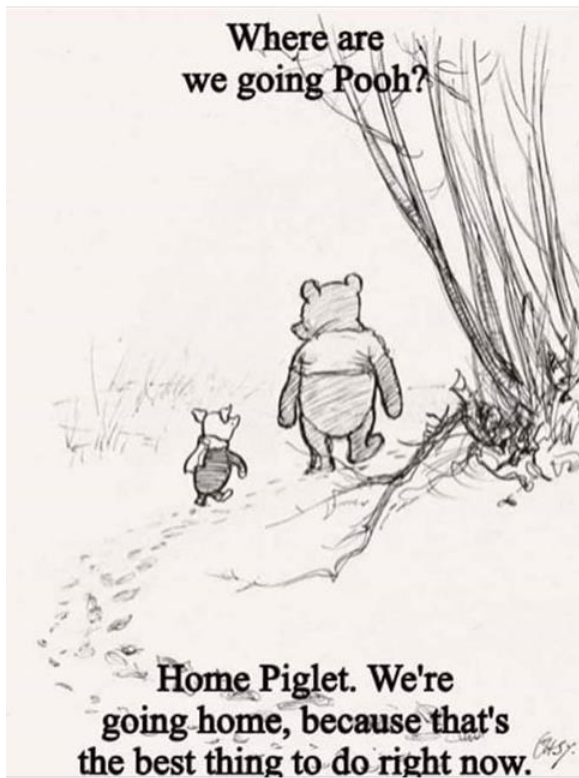
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*To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism; to steal from many is research.*

COVID-19



THAT MOMENT WHEN YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT THE ELDERLY AND REALIZE THAT YOU ARE THE ELDERLY. 😊



the show must go on...  
... just a bit later

