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Medicine Hat and District Branch



Alberta

Genealogical Society

SAAMIS SEEKER

MARCH 1993

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Membership:
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Address all correspondence to:
 Medicine Hat & District Branch AGS
 Box 971
 Medicine Hat, Alberta,
 T1A 7G8

The purpose of the Saamis Seeker is to inform members regarding A.G.S. and Medicine Hat & District Branch affairs, to print material to further member's research to publish local resources and research.

Publication dates are the first day of March, June, September and December. Submission deadlines are the 15th of February, May, August, and November.

Final authority regarding the acceptance of material rests with the editor. Neither the editor nor the Branch accept any responsibility for the opinions or errors on the part of contributors.

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Library Report for 1992
submitted by Betty Padfield

We moved into the Medicine Hat Museum and have our books and material set up on new shelving. Its much easier to get access now and the members seem to use it a lot more.

We did a lot of reorganizing & numbering of material to make it easier for the membership to use.

We are working on a complete list of Library holdings and it will be available soon.

We've added several new newsletters from Ontario, Alberta Saskatchewan & Manitoba to our library. We have also purchased a few new books, such as Parish Chest, USA County History, Guide to Salt Lake British Sources, census & summary forms, French & French Canadian Sources.

The following were donated to us. Eichendoref Bessaiabria, Redcliff Early History, Liuthanina, Past Years in Pickering, Moncton, and The Little White School House. We also received from A.G.S. several Cemetery Transcriptions and Master Data Index.

So our Library is shaping up quite well. Thanks to all who have helped out over the past year.

ARTICLE FROM MEDICINE HAT MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

To the families of Medicine Hat, families of diverse ethnic, cultural and religious origin, the museum and art gallery provides documentation and information on the community's business, recreational, military, medical, educational and political development, to mention only a few. Serving academics and professional researchers as well as individuals researching individual family histories, the Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery is the major archives serving southeastern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan. It is the only archives between Regina and Calgary.

A PART OF MEDICINE HAT'S FIRE - FIGHTING HISTORY

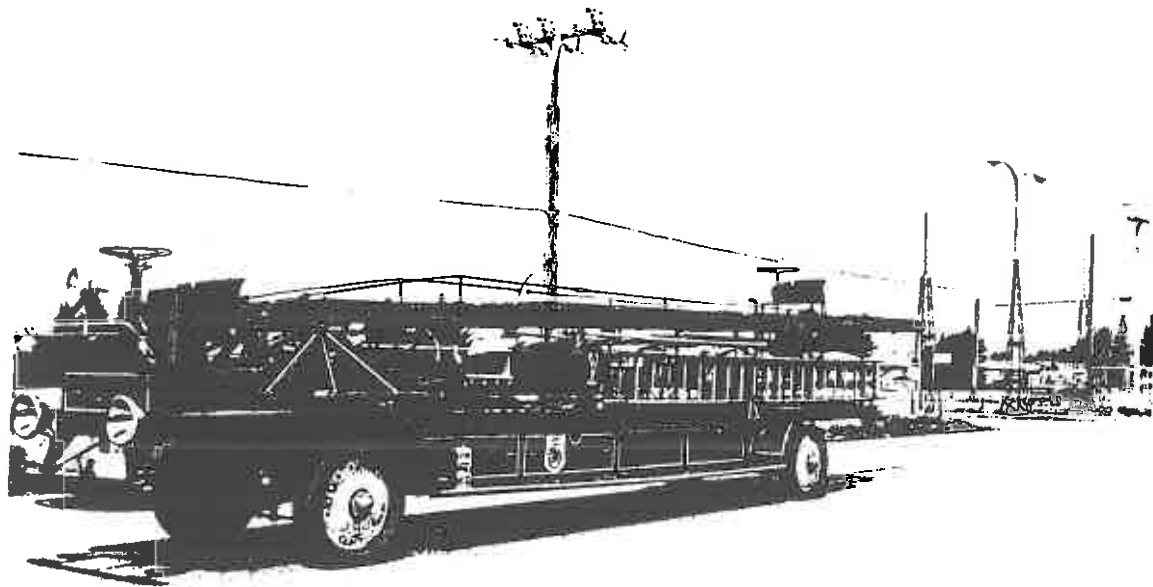


The City of Medicine Hat purchased their first Aerial Ladder Truck in 1913. This Ladder Truck was in use from 1913-1949. From here the fate of the truck went from retirement to scrap heap. In late 1987, because of the Medicine Hat Vintage Vehicle Club, this fate took a decided turn for the better.

The ladder truck was picked up from the Saskatoon museum in a very sad state of repairs. As you can tell from the picture above, it was a pile of scrap heaped upon two long rusty beams in between four tires. The members that first saw it had a sinking feeling that they took on something that was impossible.

They started with the engine and generator. The 1.5 metre red and black four-cylinder engine ran the generator which in turn powered the four individual motors at each of the four wheels. There was no direct mechanical connection from the motor to the wheels. The wheels ran independently making the driving of this monster a very unique experience.

Bit by bit, work on the electric wheels, sandblasting of the frame, the huge ladder turntable reinstalled, the steering mechanism redone, painting of wheels and frame, the truck started to take shape. On and on for four years the members with all their combined wealth of knowledge, and of course the very welcome donations from the Federal government's New Horizons Program, City of Medicine Hat, and businesses and individuals from Medicine Hat, the ladder truck slowly took on the look of new and original.



1991 was a big year, in that the ladder truck was first mobile. The ladders were polished, the chrome was buffed, and every bit of dust was removed. The Club showed it off to the city by taking it into the Medicine Hat Stampede parade. 1992, more work and more pieces were added and the Lethbridge parade became the next achievement, especially when the club won first place in the Antique Car competition. The Vintage Vehicle Club also made a big entrance when the Ladder Truck brought in the seniors for the Alberta Senior Games in August 1992.

The aerial ladder on this 1913 Webb Ladder Truck extends to 75' and is the only one of its kind on the road in North America. It is also one of only two known to be left in captivity. The truck still needs work done on it to make it totally complete, but as you can see from the second picture, there has been a dramatic change. A raffle was organized to obtain funds, with the winning ticket going to one of the members of our own Genealogy Society, Ferdinand Schabe. Collectors pins picturing the ladder truck are also being sold to help complete this bit of our heritage.

Compiled by Teresa Parasynchuk
Member of the Medicine Hat Genealogy Society and the Vintage Vehicle Club

WILLIAM PARKER INSPECTOR OF N.W.M.P.
&
EARLY MEDICINE HAT PIONEER
submitted by Adele Johnson

William PARKER was born 15 August 1853 at New Romney, a short distance from Dover in Kent, England. He was the son of Rev. Henry PARKER and Anne (MILTON) PARKER.

William left home in April 1871 and came to Canada where he found employment as a farm worker in Southern Ontario. He saw an advertisement that men were being interviewed in London, Ontario for the N.W.M. Police. He applied and was one of the twelve Candidates selected.

After a brief training period at New Fort, Toronto, Parker was posted to "D" Division and on 6 June 1874 he was part of the contingent that departed for the West. William Parker was promoted to Sergeant on 20 Sept 1876, - and after having been posted at various places throughout the West, he was transferred to Fort MacLeod and was present at Blackfoot Crossing in Sept. 1877 for the signing of Treaty No. Seven.

In 1878 he was granted a furlough and he returned to England to visit his family. On returning he was posted to Shoal Lake and then in May 1879 to Fort Qu'Appelle. In 1880 he was transferred to Battleford and remained there until 1882. During much of this time he was involved with an on-again off-again romance with a Metis girl named Mary Margaret CALDER. They were married on the 22 August 1882 and began a long and happy life together.

Mary Margaret CALDER was the daughter of William CALDER (1840) and Maria SINCLAIR (1833-1903) Maria SINCLAIR'S family were prominent in the Hudson's Bay Company and were known throughout the West for their contribution to its settlement. Maria SINCLAIR'S father and mother were William SINCLAIR II - Chief Factor for Hudson Bay Company (1794-1868) and Mary (WADIN) MCKAY (1804-1893) William SINCLAIR II's father was William SINCLAIR I (1766-1818) born in the Orkney Islands, Scotland and his mother Margaret Nahovway NORTON - whose father was the first native born Governor for the Hudson's Bay Company - and her mother a Cree Indian.

William PARKER was posted to various places throughout Saskatchewan & Alberta. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant Major on 01 May 1902 and was made an inspector one year later. At that time he was transferred to Battleford where he provided great assistance to the BARR Colonists. In June 1905 Inspector Parker was transferred for the last time, taking charge of a large district in southern Saskatchewan & Alberta with the headquarters at Medicine Hat. On Oct 31, 1912, Inspector Parker decided upon early retirement after more than thirty-eight years of service.

By this time he became fond of Medicine Hat and he opened a real estate and insurance business which he operated until 1938. William PARKER died in Medicine Hat 16 May 1945 and is buried beside his wife Mary Margaret who predeceased him, and was buried in Hillside Cemetery on 4 Dec 1944. They had three children.

ARTICLE TAKE FROM MEDICINE HAT NEWS
ALBERTA GOLDEN JUBILEE EDITION - 50 YEARS OF PROGRESS
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1955

TORONTO STREET FIRST SCHOOL HAD COMMON DRINKING BUCKET

Medicine Hat's first school was set up in 1883, seventy-two years ago or twenty-two years before Alberta became a province. That was the year the railway reached here and with it the first influx of settlers.

The first classes were held in the First Methodist Church, a little white building on the corner of Third Street and Sixth Avenue where the Royal Bank now stands. A fee of two dollars was collected from each townsman to get things going. As time went on monthly fees were paid by each family.

A Mr. Winnett was the first teacher, according to records of the Historical Society. He was followed by two sisters, the Misses Sheaffer. Only one teacher was needed, so the story goes, but two were hired because the local cowboys felt the frontier town needed more single women to attend dances.

On September 22, 1886 a meeting was called for the purpose of forming the Medicine Hat School district. W. T. Finlay as returning officer called the meeting and presided. George McCuaig, who managed a store for several years here, was named first school board secretary. Present at the organization meeting were W.T. Finlay, George McCuaig, T. Tweed, L. B. Cochran, W. Cousins, A. Cameron, E. Walton, James Norquay. All present voted approval of a motion to form a school district and thus District 76 came into being.

Messrs. Cochran, Walton and James Hargrave were elected trustees with Mr. Walton being named chairman and Mr. Hargrave secretary of the board. J. K. Drinnan was appointed the first teacher to be hired by the new board.

School was held, still rent free at this time, in the Presbyterian Church, a small frame building on the site of the present St. John's Church. In 1887 the board contracted to pay \$15 a month rental.

In 1887 the need became apparent for a school building. The present site of Toronto Street School was selected and it is believed that a two room building was in operation in 1890. J. Ewart was secretary of the school district in 1890 and a Mr. Sharp was first principal of Toronto Street School. By 1892 a third room had been completed. In 1895 school taxes amounted to \$1,900 with a school grant of \$1,400 from the government rounding out the required revenue.

In those days, it is recalled that a pail of drinking water with a common dipper was placed in the hall for refreshment.

In 1895 a fourth room was completed and in 1896 a basement placed under the school. In 1897 W.H. Gee was engaged principal at a salary of \$1,000 a year.

While construction of an addition was pushed in 1897 a woodshed on the grounds was fixed up as a classroom. In 1900 school was connected with the town water main and the pump water vanished. In 1902 the old Presbyterian Church building purchased and moved to the present site of Montreal Street School where it was operated under the name of Ward School.

A high school department was begun in 1902. In 1903 there were 528 school pupils in Medicine Hat and the fee was set at \$1 for the first term and \$5 for the second for all pupils in Standard Grade Five. A truant officer was hired in 1904.

Montreal Street School was built in 1904, money borrowed from the Merchants Bank. After it was built all children attended there while alterations were made to Toronto Street School. The original building was razed and the present building was erected.

The staff of Medicine Hat schools in 1904 included J. Brown, J. E. Loucks, Miss T. Davidson, Miss J. A. Fraser, Miss Morrison, Miss M. M. Neice, Miss W. G. McCallum, Miss E. Harrison, Miss E. M. Wood, Miss N. Cox, and Miss T. H. Rhoads. Mr. Loucks later taught at the Calgary Normal School for many years.

The schools held their first field day in 1906. In 1907 Alexandra High School was built and in the following year a street was made on Elm Street School. While the new schools were under construction cottage schools were pressed into service. School principals in 1911 were C. E. Peasley, Toronto St.; Charles Weir, Montreal Street School and J. T. Cuyler, Alexandra intermediate school. William E. Hay was appointed superintendent of schools in 1911. By the end of 1912 the Elm Street School had been completed and the corner stone of Connors School had been completed and the corner stone of Connors School and the basement was, in fact, put down near View Court. but the First World War intervened and school expansion ceased. except that Kitchener School was built to handle the needs of the growing primary department.

From the earliest days in Medicine Hat and until the middle of 1887 the upkeep of schools and teachers' salaries in Medicine Hat were paid by monthly fees paid by families of the town. Following are the names of those who paid \$1, \$1.50 and \$2.00 a month: (at a school board meeting April 18, 1887 it was resolved to replace the fee system by collection of school district taxes

R. McCutcheon, Mr. Porter, W. I. Finlay, George McCuaig Calder, Mr. Sage, Mr. Dunham, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Cavanah, S. Dempsey Bros., Mr. Horner, J. Ryan, R. Everson, Cousin Scatcherd, George Adams, Mr. Eddy, Mr. Harper, Mr. Einnit Veal, Mr. Bassett, Mr. Hayward, Mr. Spencer, Matt Miller Payton, Mr. Armour, Mr. Feehan, Mr. Perry, C. Rymer, Mr. Mr. Wilkins, Mr. Sutherland, James Fisher, Isaac Bacon, Tudor, Mr. Norquay, Mr. Leonard, Mr. McRae, Mr. Cameron, Hargreaves, Rev. Bridgeman, I. Ireland, Mr. Wellband, I. He Mr. Hay, Rev. Herald, J. Robinson, Mr. Trary, G. Cooper, Hargrave, C. Keeran, W. Adams, Mr. Shields, Dr. Ballender Lytle, Mr. Botterell, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Tweed, Mr. Sandersc Casey, E. Walton, Dave McNabb, F. Pope, Capt. Ross, Mr. Burbe Yates and Watts, Louis Lawrence, Mr. Whitehead, Mr. Cotte Vine, Mr. Barford, J. McLeod, Mr. McCord, Mr. Watson, Lineberg.

The above names read like a who's who of 1880's in Med Hat. The list was obtained from files of the Historical Soc

IRELAND INFORMATION COMING -

A Winnipge Free Press article June 1, 1991 reports Ireelan setting up 35 database centres with computerized church and records in order to attract the world's 70 million peop Irish descent. The centres are to have birth, marriage and certificates and even records of convicts sent abroad. centres are to have their records complete in three years. (M.G.S. GENERATIONS - Vol. 16 No. 2 June 19

 The "ODESSA FILE" Mennonite Archives found in UKRAINE-

In the past it has been difficult to undertake genealog research within the archives of the U.S.S.R. Glastnost created hope that things will improve and early reports are this is the beginning. The situation was so bad in some c that many archival deposits are completely missing or misplac

One example is in MOLOTSCHNA Mennonite archive assen between 1916 and 1920. Approximately half the collection c from the first half of the nineteenth century. This collection of Mennoonite records disappeared when it confiscated in 1929 by Soviet Authorities. Many people ass that it was gone forever, perhaps even destroyed. After being seen by the public for over 60 years, it was rediscov independently in the summer of 1990 by two researchers, Harvey Dyck of the University of Toronto and by Dr. George K. of Menno Simons College, Winnipeg. The collection was not li in the holdings of the Odessa Archives and nobody knew how collection came to be located there. Professor Dyck conclude agreement with Odessa Archives Director Vladimir MALCHENKO to the complete collection microfilmed in exchange for microfil equipment a photo-duplicating machine. So far over 67,000 p have been filmed. The microfilms will be available researchers in Canada after they are indexed and evaluated. (Mennonite Historian March 1991) (Taken from M.G.S. GENERAT Vol. 16 No. 2 June 1991)