



ROOTS & BRANCHES

WETASKIWIN BRANCH

Alberta Genealogical Society

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

Website: www.abgenealogy.ca/wetaskiwin-branch

Email: wetaskiwin@abgenealogy.ca

APRIL, 2025

VOL. 23 #2

EXECUTIVE

President: Alice Hoyle
Vice President: Nelda Layton
Secretary: Pam Cooke
Treasurer: Leroy Koop

BRANCH MEETINGS

Third Tuesday of the Month.
Except July, August, December

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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 posted on our website.

COMMITTEES

- **Newsletter**
Sharon Aney
sharonaney@gmail.com
- **Webmaster**
Leroy Koop
- **Volunteer Research**
Alice Hoyle
Leroy Koop
- **Membership**
Leroy Koop
- **Programs**
Claudia Malloch
- **Publicity**
Alice Hoyle
- **Historian**
Rosella Plaquin

BRANCH LIBRARY

Located at City Archives
For access call 780-352-0227
(Heritage Museum)

If a local researcher is required
contact
wetaskiwin@abgenealogy.ca

LDS FAMILYSEARCH CENTER

Wednesdays: 6:15 pm - 8:15 pm
Thursdays: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm
Closed July & August

CONGRATULATIONS!

WETASKIWIN BRANCH

DOMINATED

AGS AWARDS AT

APRIL 26, 2025 AGM

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

LEE KOOP – for services to our Branch: Treasurer, Membership, Volunteer Research, web master, etc.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

ALICE HOYLE – "In Appreciation for Exceptional Volunteerism in Service to the Society". Presented by AGS President Lianne Kruger.

KENNETH YOUNG AWARD

ALICE HOYLE - FOR BEST ORIGINAL ARTICLE, "PICK A NAME, PICK A PROFESSION", January 2024 Roots & Branches

KENNETH YOUNG AWARD

LEE KOOP – FOR BEST LOCAL CONTENT, "THE HODGSON STORY", January 2024 Roots & Branches

KENNETH YOUNG AWARD

SHARON ANEY, EDITOR: FOR BEST OVERALL NEWSLETTER, January 2024, Roots & Branches: "It inspires readers to conduct family research".

IN ADDITION: Wetaskiwin Branch received a certificate recognizing our 25th anniversary.

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

Alice Hoyle

True Confession: I am a big Dictionary person. When I see a word I'm not familiar with, I immediately go to the very large (and heavy) Webster's Dictionary my late husband and I always kept near the table. Why the table, you might ask: well, when we were sitting at the table reading a newspaper, that's when questions arose. "Do you know the meaning of this word?" "No....let's look it up in the dictionary." Over the years, we came across some very obscure words and were surprised at their meaning.

Where is this going, you may ask. Well, I decided to look up the word "Ponder", since I am using it in my blurbs in Sharon's newsletter. Definition of "ponder" – "to weigh mentally, to think deeply about, to consider carefully". I think that correctly sums up my mind set when I sit down to create President's Ponderings.

What have you pondered about lately? Are you worried about the state of the world right now? Are you thinking about the next research project you want to tackle? Perhaps you are thinking about your ancestors and all the trials and tribulations they had to encounter in their lives. Maybe you are pondering about a vacation you want to take, a project you want to start (or even one you want to finish). As we go through our daily lives, I think we should all take time to 'ponder'. Pondering was perhaps the earlier version of what meditation is today.

Freeing our minds from the daily turmoil we all experience due to overload of media, emails, phone calls, commitments, text messages, etc. can give us an opportunity to reflect on our lives and the direction we want to go. Perhaps it's time to allow yourself some "pondering time" in your life.

You don't need permission from anyone: just do it. ☺

EDITORS COMMENTS

Sharon Aney

We all begin our genealogical research with the desire to find out who our ancestors were, where they lived and what they did. But do we go beyond the data entered on a census or other record that stated their residence or occupation in one word?

We might say that it is too difficult to find that information because dozens, perhaps hundreds, of years have passed. And so we regret and complain that our ancestors did not leave us diaries or journals.

Recently I had a thought... "Who is my ancestor?" I answered, "my grandparents or great-grandparents".

And then it hit me that as of 2022..... I am a great-grandparent!! I am an ancestor!

Long before I was such an "old" ancestor ☺, I have been writing about our ancestors and their families as I have found their stories.

Although they were just ordinary people doing what they had to do in their times... whether it was to build the fur trading fort called Ville Marie in 1653 (later Montreal), or to claim and develop homestead land in Saskatchewan in 1905, they worked to make a living, they contributed to their communities, and built this country.

I hope that by leaving these stories for my grandchildren they will have an idea of who our families were, and what did we did!

If we are putting off writing our own stories, we can be inspired at our Branch's 25th Anniversary celebration on May 31.

Bob Layton will be the keynote speaker.

**See the information about our
Branch Anniversary on page 4.**

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# WETASKIWIN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

*25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION*  
**MAY 31, 2025**

*SENIORS CENTRE*  
*5216 - 54 Street, Wetaskiwin, AB*

**10:30 am**

Welcome

**11:00 am :**

*KEYNOTE SPEAKER*

***BOB LAYTON!!***



Bob Layton is an avid advocate of preserving your family stories. He will encourage you write your stories in an entertaining and informative way.

Mr. Layton's presentation will be followed by lunch and a short program. There will be displays by our Branch, individuals and organizations to showcase their accomplishments and resources.

***ADMISSION IS FREE!***

***BUT***

***Pre-registration is required***

***Phone - 780-360-7332***

***Email- wetaskiwingenealogy25@gmail.com***

## MEETING PROGRAMS

### JANUARY 2025 –

**MY HERITAGE: YOUR FAMILY STORIES ARE JUST ONE CLICK AWAY** BY MELISSA BARKER, THE ARCHIVE LADY, Facilitated by Claudia

A 5-page handout with valuable websites was forwarded to members.

Evidence and records to validate our family stories are important.

### FEBRUARY 2025

#### **"VALENTINE'S DAY: LOVE STORIES IN FAMILY HISTORY"**

**Mavis** recounted her own 60 years long love story beginning with her engagement to Neil on Valentine's Day, 1964.

**Alice** spoke of an uncle's unsuccessful love story from the WW2 era.

**Bob** discovered that his grandparents lived next door to each other in Sussex, England. They were married and had 12 children.

### MARCH 2025

#### **"ROOTSTECH FAVOURITES"** Facilitated by Claudia

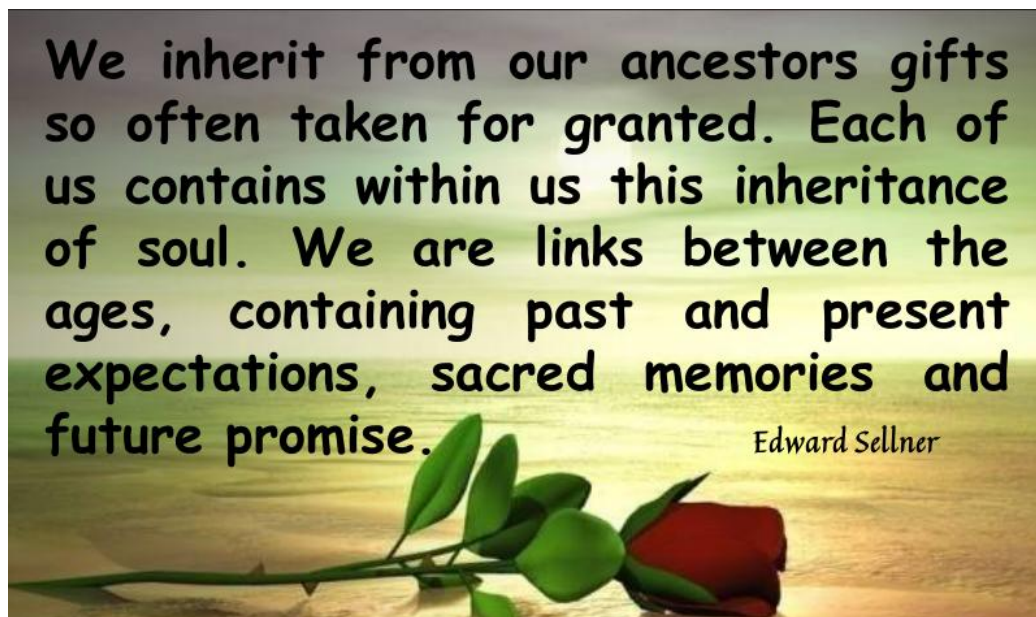
Nelda, Claudia and Alice shared their favourite RootsTech 2025 presentations. Claudia sent a handout to all members outlining the presentations that they watched. Many of the presentations are available at [RootsTech.org](https://RootsTech.org) or YouTube.

RootsTech is a tremendous **FREE** resource.

### APRIL 2025

#### **"FAMILY SEARCH FULL TEXT SEARCH: WHY AREN'T YOU USING IT?"**

Claudia presented the Family Search webinar



## CONNECTING THE ALEXANDER FAMILY AND THE BOYDS AT WEST KILBRIDE, SCOTLAND

Alma Alexander Daigle



NEWS & EVENTS

### Visit from Boyd Family members

September 10, 2024

On the left are Mitch and Alma Daigle from Alberta, Canada. Alma is 7 x great granddaughter of Robert Boyd of Ardneil & Portencross (1634-1721). Rear right are Jonathan and Adrian from Co. Tyrone. The group visited the Castle for a tour on 6th September 2024. Front right are Ann, a FOPC Director, and Isobel a FOPC volunteer. Isobel is thoroughly knowledgeable about the Castle and its history and helps with visits such as this one.

**PORTENCROSS CASTLE**, overlooking the Firth of Clyde near West Kilbride in Ayrshire, is a scheduled ancient monument, a recognition of its national importance. A post on September 10, 2024 on its website includes a photo of Alma and Mitch Daigle who were visiting from Canada.



I started doing my dad's (Robert Kent Alexander) family tree seriously in 2000. The family always had stories to share about the bad, the good, pirates, killings and hatred between siblings. My dad was always the family peacekeeper and I wanted to figure out what were rumors and what was the truth.

When I started to research, I was unable to find anything on this Alexander branch. It was a long hard road to find anything. The most difficult part was that we moved to Alberta from New Brunswick in 1995 and that is where all my research needed to start from. Needless to say it consisted of lots of phone calls, emails, questioning of family members and the help of Provincial Archives of New Brunswick. Later in 2005, my husband and I made a special trip just for grave yard hunting, records research and lots of photos. I needed my own visual



confirmation of the information I found. I found the proof that I was on the right path to figuring all this out.

Now that I had confirmation that I was on the right path, I had to find them in Scotland. I found a passenger list with my Alexander family who first arrived here in 1834 in New Brunswick from Scotland. They were as follows: William Alexander (father), Robinah Fullarton Alexander (Mother), and children Archibald, Mary, William and Janet.

Thankfully it was late enough in the timeline of record keeping that I was able to find the marriage of William Alexander and Robinah Fullarton and the births of all the children. This is where I had proof they all resided in West Kilbride, Ayrshire, Scotland.

At that time I had no idea of any connection to the Boyd family through Robinah Fullarton's side. I was having a hard time finding any concrete proof of who William and Robinah's parents were. I was at a brick wall for many years.

I then focused on the Alexander and Fullarton Family here in Canada, started doing my mother's side and both my husband's side. I never really gave up on the big brick wall that was in front of me. Every year I would see if there was any new research for this Alexander/Fullarton branch, which always came up with nothing.

The only solution that my husband and I thought of was planning a trip to Scotland and doing the footwork like we did in New Brunswick many years ago.

Jump to the future, post Covid, and we were finally ready to plan our trip to West Kilbride Scotland. At the time I had no idea of the connection between Robinah Fullarton (my 3rd Great Grandmother) or Mary Tarbert (4th great grandmother) and the Boyds of Portencross. I had her parents' information and I was satisfied with that. Remember my focus was finding out the tales of the Alexander's and specifically William Alexander who first arrived here in Canada.

A few months later, starting my day as always, coffee in hand and heading to my computer for some research. I saw I had a message on Ancestry from a member named Jonathan. The message was inquiring how I was related to my 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandmother Robina Fullarton and her mother Mary Tarbert, my 4th great grandmother from West Kilbride, Ayrshire Scotland. To be honest I was a little intrigued, I was not usually asked about my Dad's side of the family by other researchers.

By the time I received a response it was just a few months to our trip to Scotland. Little did we know that this response would change the trip and help take some bricks out of the wall.

Jonathan started off by introducing his research partner Adrian Boyd, sharing some of their connections to the Boyd's of Portencross and how they believed I was the 7th great granddaughter of Robert Boyd. They were excited to see that Robinah Fullarton and William Alexander had ended up in Canada. They went on to say they have confirmed my research as well. With all the records that were destroyed during war and just time I was lucky that they

could confirm the marriages and children of William and Robinah. In their research they shared journal entries and legal documents of Robert Boyd of Portencross confirming their finding.

Needless to say our agenda changed a bit in Scotland. Jonathan and Adrian together planned a trip to Portencross Castle for all of us and a presentation at the West Kilbride Genealogy Museum, sharing the findings. The town of West Kilbride was intrigued and excited to see the proof of our connections to their beautiful town.

The connection of the Boyd family from the Portencross Castle in West Kilbride Scotland came clear when we arrived in West Kilbride, Scotland. We were given a private tour of the castle, exchanged information with historians and were invited to the West Kilbride Heritage Museum for a presentation on my new extended family.

The history goes like this: Robert Boyd, Grizel's father, lost his only two sons in wars; they were to be his successors. He approached his oldest daughter, Grizel, wife of Alexander Fullarton, with a plan to help everyone. Robert offered to them that their oldest son William Fullarton be his successor when he passed, but William would have to use the Boyd name only and for his future generations. William Fullarton and his parents agreed to the offer.

Robert Boyd also wrote for his estate that, if no male successors were in the future, they were to approve of the female line of successors. This was written in Gaelic and translated for us. One big step forward in the time of Robert Boyd for sure!

The following is the information I have collected and what Jonathan confirmed was correct.

William Alexander (my 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandfather) and Robina Fullarton married in West Kilbride Ayrshire Scotland on December 23, 1805. This marriage connected the Alexander family to the Boyd family of Portencross Castle.

They had 7 children all born in Ayrshire Scotland. My 2<sup>nd</sup> great grandfather Archibald came with his parents to New Brunswick, Canada about 1839.

Johnathan, at the time, did not have any documentation of the Alexanders/Fullartons moving to Canada. So, when he and Adrian came across my tree and documents of Robinah Fullarton they were just as excited as we were. We had been like a lost family in history when it came to Alexander and the Fullarton families.

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RESEARCH REQUESTS

Alice Hoyle

AMBLER FAMILY: I received a request for research assistance for a Thomas Ambler and his family. Thomas was in South Dakota after 1881 (he appears on the 1881 Canadian census in Ontario) and then is on the 1901 Canadian census in Alberta.

The researcher had several names of extended family, with many of them noted as buried in the Old Wetaskiwin Cemetery. Some interment information was missing, and some discrepancies were noted in information sourced from various records.

Leah, from City of Wetaskiwin Archives, was able to confirm burial plots and/or birth and death dates for the following: Thomas Ambler, Jane Nichols Ambler, David R. Ambler, John "Jack" Ambler and Samuel Ambler. All are buried near the main entrance to the Old Wetaskiwin Cemetery.

Using the book "Alberta index to Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths 1870 to 1905, Volume I", I was able to find records for six Ambler family members. I sent this information to the researcher, along with the Box, File, and Reg. numbers necessary to request records from the Provincial Archives of Alberta. In the Millet local history books "Tales and Trails of Millet" I found a write-up for Robert and William Ambler, but the researcher wasn't sure if these two men were connected to her family. I sent the article to her as information.

DESCHAMPS/ALLARD: I received a request for research assistance from Brenda V. She was looking for information about her Paternal Grandmother, and Paternal Great-Grandparents. Her Grandmother was born in July 1908, in what was then called Hobbema. Because of some of the surnames mentioned, I reached out to branch member Pam Cooke and her husband Brian Wildcat to see if they could assist with this request. Pam was willing to have Brenda V. contact her and Brian: they may be able to provide more details about the family. This request has now been handed over to Pam and Brian.

SERVANT HENRI LEFORT: Researcher Carmen M. contacted me in February this year. She had contacted me previously (in 2021 & 2023) with this same request. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to find any additional information (other than what Carmen had). In February this year, I visited the City of Wetaskiwin Archives to look at old Wetaskiwin Times newspapers. I scanned the editions available for 1918-1921, without any positive results.

Carmen M., in her request of February 15, 2025, noted that Mr. LeFort was in Lac La Biche in 1925. I found two local history books about Lac La Biche: "Lac La Biche Yesterday" which was available to read online at the UofC online site, and "Lac La Biche Chronicles – the Early Years", which was available to read at University of Saskatchewan, Portage College. I sent this information to Carmen M.

She recently advised me that there is a picture in the book "Siding 16, Wetaskiwin to 1930", showing the blacksmith shop that her father had been part owner of in 1921. Her Father's name isn't in the Siding 16 book, but she was able to connect her Father to the owner, and in the 1921 Canadian Census for Wetaskiwin, her Father is listed as a boarder in the owner's home. And this is why we don't rely solely on the indexes in local history books. 😊

JOHN PEARSELL JOHNSON: In February, I received a research request from Jan W. regarding this man. He was her maternal Grandfather. J.P. Johnson was born in Hjørring, Denmark November 17, 1893. He was living in the Wetaskiwin area in 1915, as he enlisted in WWI in December of 1915, here in Wetaskiwin.

Mr. Johnson served overseas (France), married Jan W's mother in England on September 25, 1918. He returned to Canada in December, 1918 and his wife joined him in Canada, arriving in Quebec on the 20th of May, 1919.

A daughter was born in Wetaskiwin on the 17th of July, 1920 (Jan. W's Mother). Jan W's Grandmother and young daughter returned to England without John Pearsell Johnson. They are shown on the 1921 UK Census records. On this census, the form asks if the child's parents are both alive and the answer given was "yes".

The mystery is: what happened to J. P. Johnson?

Jan W. and her husband visited Wetaskiwin in 2015, researching at the City of Wetaskiwin Archives (Carolyn Hill and Angela Smith assisted them at the time), and went to the Provincial Archives of Alberta. The mystery questions were not solved with these visits.

On J. P. Johnson's Attestation Papers, he has noted that at the time of enlistment, he did not have a next of kin: he asks that if anything happens to him, the military contacts Joseph D. Cowan in Wetaskiwin. Joseph (Joe) D. Cowan is mentioned several times in the "Siding 16, Wetaskiwin to 1930" book. I have sent a link to the online book to Jan W. and her husband Michael (who is also assisting Jan with her research). Although J. P. Johnson isn't mentioned in the Cowan references, I thought it would give context to their family story.

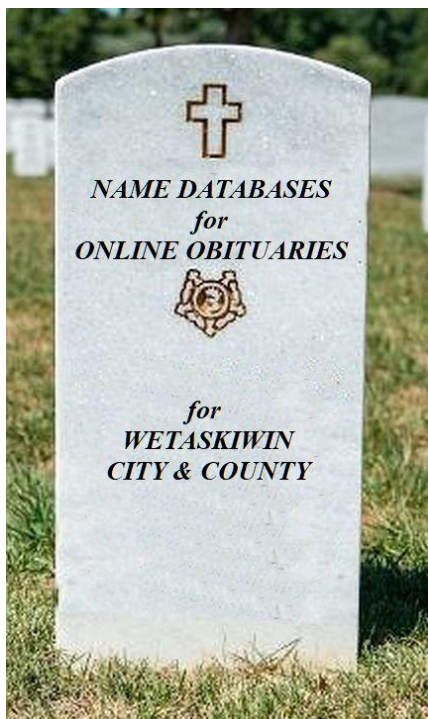
This is still a work in progress: Jan W. and Michael are continuing to research, and I will continue looking for clues.

LINGERING RESEARCH REQUEST: I have been contacted by someone regarding research I did in 2011. This gentleman would like to contact the daughters of someone I found for a German researcher. My files from 14 years ago are not easily accessed, but I will start digging through them in the next 2 months.

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## OBITUARIES FOR WETASKIWIN CITY AND COUNTY

by Leroy Koop



I have been wondering about obituaries online and what happens to them over time. Obituaries that show up in a "paper" newspaper may end up, if one is lucky, in some library or archives, well after the original publication date. But where do online obituaries end up when newspapers shut down, or funeral chapels run out of space on their websites, or the yearly purchase of web space becomes too much?

Not only will a genealogy researcher have the task of finding birth and death dates for an ancestor, the researcher may also have to find out where the online obituaries are kept and whether a membership fee is required before access to the obituary is granted. Although looking at obituaries is always considered free, it may not be so for older online ones.

What is an obituary and how important is one? From a handout for an online presentation entitled ***Where Have All The Obits Gone***, by Gordon L. McBean, a Winnipeg genealogist, that I watched on January 7, 2025, Mr. McBean stated:

## **Quote "What is an Obituary?"**

An obituary is the final record of a person's life: their achievements, interests, passions and milestones. Obituaries keep the memory of those we loved alive. A basic obituary will state the birth and death date, as well as biographical information such as places lived, education, profession, predecessors, survivors, and funeral service details. An obituary will focus on the important moments that made up their life. It may include short anecdotes and stories about the person.

It can be a substitute record for birth and death information, when records cannot be found. Obituaries can be accessed when vital records access is restricted due to privacy laws.

## **Why are Obits important?**

Obituaries tell a story. They provide more than basic death details. They help us view a bit about the individual's life, their relatives and relationships. If thoroughly analyzed, they can provide answers to your genealogy puzzles. They range from simple one-sentence death notices to full-page biographies. Older ones tend to be shorter notices. Although they don't have as much information, they can still tell you the date, place, and age. Sometimes you may also find a cause of death."

**End quote**

This presentation encouraged me to believe that I was correct in doing what I started doing some time ago; to create name databases from obituaries that are still online and have free public access.

Several years ago I decided to go online for the 2 newspapers we currently have in Wetaskiwin, AB; The Wetaskiwin Times and Pipestone Flyer. I was concerned that if these newspapers closed or sold their obituaries to some rich individual or organization, genealogy researchers would lose access to obituaries unless a membership fee was paid. I began creating name databases, including surname, first name, birth date and death date. The Wetaskiwin Times website went back to November 2009 and the Pipestone Flyer only went back to March 2017. I concentrated on deceased persons' names connected to the City of Wetaskiwin as well as to Wetaskiwin County.

Last year I realized that many obituaries do not make it to the newspapers. We have two funeral homes in Wetaskiwin. Each is affiliated with a number of chapels and their websites are a combination of all chapels. The online obituaries for the largest, Wombold Family Funeral Homes, go back to December 2010, and the other, Serenity Funeral Service, goes back to June 2013.

In addition to accessing online obituaries, last year, I obtained memorial cards from branch members and from group organizations and created name list databases.

Here's the list of memorial cards/obituaries that have been dealt with:

|                                   |     |                        |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------------------------|
| Sacred Heart Church (Wetaskiwin)  | 104 | (Dec 2005 to Apr 2022) |
| Branch member's friends/relatives | 177 | (Dec 2007 to Feb 2024) |
| Indigenous people (Maskwacis)     | 93  | (Jun 1989 to Jan 2024) |
| Knights of Columbus (Wetaskiwin)  | 56  | (May 1979 to Jun 2024) |
| Buck Lake Ladies Club             | 54  | (Jul 1996 to Mar 2023) |

|                                   |             |                            |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| The Wetaskiwin Times              | 2681        | (Nov 2009 to Feb 22, 2025) |
| Pipestone Flyer                   | 366         | (Mar 2017 to Feb 22, 2025) |
| Wombold Funeral                   | 2415        | (Dec 2010 to Feb 22, 2025) |
| Serenity Funeral                  | 496         | (Jun 2013 to Feb 22, 2025) |
| <b>TOTAL obits/memorial cards</b> | <b>6442</b> |                            |

One must remember that this total number of obituaries and memorial cards is definitely going to have duplicates. If you are planning to do some research, I would recommend looking at the funeral home websites first, using a surname as your search engine, followed by searching the newspapers. The obituary content can be different. Despite duplications, the Wetaskiwin Branch now has access to name databases from over 6,000 online obituaries and memorial cards to aid genealogy researchers in the future.

I also observed that recent obituary content has changed. As more cremations take place, the obituaries may merely say that cremation has taken place and a memorial service will take place at a later time. Many obituaries state it will be a family only memorial or graveyard service. One needs to check the obituary website from time to time to see when the memorial service, if any, will take place. Seldom is a graveyard mentioned by name, so one wouldn't know where to look for a monument, if one exists. The deceased's ashes may have been spread anywhere.

Sometimes the birth date is missing and only the deceased's age in years gives one an indication as to when the person was born. Some obituaries refer to the survivors only as the spouse (wife or husband), X number of children and Y number of grandchildren, etc. with no names. Privacy concerns seem to be taking hold on obituaries, too.

So the gold mine of genealogy information from long ago obituaries is starting to wane in more recent online ones.

To continue this creation of name databases of online obituaries is a goal of mine.

I should also mention that the Wetaskiwin Branch has access to name databases for 14,392 deceased mentioned in newspaper articles starting from 1903 to approximately 2010. These original documents are still housed in the Wetaskiwin Archives.

The Wetaskiwin Branch also contains a name database of 824 deceased from the Moore Funeral Home card records from 1924 to 1937. This list is currently on the branch's website.

***Don't forget your ancestors.***

~~~~~

*I was told that I did not have to know how to spell...
... autocorrect would look after that for me.*

I am eternally grapefruit!

THE WOMEN OF ASPENLAND

Re-printed with permission from the
Women of Aspenland Exhibit at
Wetaskiwin & District Heritage Museum
<http://www.wetaskiwinmuseum.com/>

THE DAISY (NELSON) LUCAS STORY



Daisy Nelson was born on February 3, 1906 to Emma Weflin and Fred Nelson. Daisy was the first child born in Daysland. The previous year Emma and Fred had left Wetaskiwin and moved to the newly-established village of Daysland. Mr. E.W. Day, who was the mayor, called at the family home soon after her birth. He requested that she be named "Daisy" in honour of the new town, and offered the deed to a village lot in exchange. Her parents concurred and the baby was named "Daisy Mearl Laurretta Nelson".

The family, along with Daisy's two widowed grandfathers Henry Nelson and Tosten Weflin, eventually moved back to Wetaskiwin. In 1912 Daisy's education began at Alexandra School, a building which was built by her grandfather Henry. In 1919, Fred Nelson moved his family to a Soldier's Settlement Farm, in the Lucas District. The Nelson children named it "Sunny Hill Farm". Daisy and her four siblings loved the sense of freedom and space of living on a farm.

In 1923 at the age of 17, Daisy married Cortez Lucas, uniting two pioneer families. Cortez was born in 1899 and was the youngest son of Margaret and Frank Lucas, who had come to the area in 1884. Frank and his brother, Sam Lucas were employed by the government to assist with teaching farming methods to the Native people. A fort block house, Fort Ethier, was erected on their land in 1885 and still stands today.



Daisy and her new husband settled in the Lucas district, close to Fort Ethier and near Daisy's parents' home. Cortez owned a motorcar, one of only two in the district. The young couple loved socializing and often would travel out of town for dances. It was the era of vaudeville and they would attend the shows at the Pantages Theatre in Edmonton.

In 1924, the first of Daisy's eight children arrived. The family lived in a typical farmhouse with no power or indoor plumbing. Daisy's niece Colleen (Groves) Dickson recalls that their home had a "wonderful, loving family atmosphere". Eventually electricity came to the area, and the family's first radio had a horn speaker on a long cord. In the evenings, Daisy would turn on the radio in the front room, and take the speaker into the kitchen where she and her children would listen to Amos and Andy.

The Depression years overtook the family and, though life was hard, the resourceful couple always managed to keep their heads above water. During the 1930's for five years straight, the family was "frozen out, hauled out, dried out and blown out". Everything that could be produced, processed and prepared at home, was done by the Lucas family. Even vinegar and soap were made at home.

A truck load of home-grown wheat was ground into flour at MacEachern's Mill and was stored in the spare room. By Daisy's account, she was "so pleased to see the one hundred pound sacks of white No. 1 flour, one bag of No. 2, another of graham flour, cream of wheat and bran".

Although money was in short supply, good times were abundant. Friday night card parties were favourite pastimes as well as dances in the Lucas living room. Cort and Daisy's home became the meeting place for the young people in the district. Wintertime saw the family traveling to school concerts with everyone riding in the horse-drawn sleigh.

It was during these years on the farm, while raising her young family, that Daisy's interest in the history of the area heightened. Her father-in-law Frank Lucas would stop in to visit and he would talk at length about early pioneer days. At that time, it was hard for Daisy to listen and remember all the stories that Frank told her.

When their youngest son Larry was six years old, Cort joined the army and went away to serve in World War II. At this time, the family moved off the farm and made their way back to Wetaskiwin. For five and a half years, Daisy and her eight children worked hard to make ends meet. Daisy sold corsets for the Spirella Company which required her to fit the clients in their homes. She baked bread for the children to sell and always kept a large garden. The older children helped out by working at various jobs around town on weekends. Daisy began boarding young hockey players during the war years to add to the family's income.



With the end of the war, Cort returned home and found work as a heavy equipment operator, building roads. He began working for the Alberta Government, Department of Highways and continued until he died in 1959.

Cort & Daisy's 25th Wedding Anniversary, 1948

In the years when her husband was working on the roads, Daisy often travelled with him. She was in her early 50's when she became a widow.

Soon after Cort's passing, Daisy felt she was needed to take care of her elderly parents. Rising to the occasion, Daisy sold her home and purchased her parents' house and moved in with them. The three lived together and Daisy continued to look after her parents until they passed away in the late 1960's.

Daisy had always enjoyed gardening and growing flowers. She joined the Horticultural Society in Wetaskiwin. She often would show her gladiolus and other flowers in the Agricultural Fair. Soon she was asked to become a judge and served as Committee Chairman for Horticulture for the Agriculture Fair for fifteen years.

Daisy found time, in spite of her busy life, to belong to community groups and organizations. For 14 years she was Secretary of Unit II of the United Church Women. In 1952 Daisy joined the Royal Purple and belonged to the organization for 22 years, until 1974. She served as their chaplain during the late 1960's. Her strong sense of giving something back to the community was her legacy to her grandchildren. Darrol Lucas, her grandson, feels that Daisy's example helped to shape his life in a major way.

In 1960 Daisy helped to found the Wetaskiwin Historical Society. As President, she chronicled Wetaskiwin history as well as past events from the entire surrounding area. Daisy spent many happy hours gathering and corroborating historical information. Material was collected by way of interviews, letters, old papers, and by telephone. Many of the facts and photographs she collected were donated to the City Archives, as well as the Glenbow Foundation and Provincial Archives. She received an Achievement Award from the Alberta Historical Society in 1987 for Outstanding Contributions to Alberta History.



The material compiled by Daisy became the foundation for Wetaskiwin's "Siding 16" history book. The book was published in 1975, a monument to the dedicated efforts of Daisy in accumulating the basic material for the book. She gave generously of her valuable time and her limited financial resources to bring together the history of the area settlers in pioneer days. Daisy also made a significant contribution to the collection of data for "Pioneer Pathways", a history of rural Wetaskiwin.

In 1981, Daisy was named Citizen of the Year, sharing the title with Marie Eikerman and Blanche Recknagle. It was a fitting acknowledgement of Daisy for her years of garnering and preserving the stories of local seniors. The pictures and anecdotes she accumulated provided an invaluable resource to future generations.

With so many community activities crowded into Daisy's daily routine, it seems amazing that she still found time for a creative pastime she enjoyed doing which was quilting. She went into it with a sense of commitment, as she did with every other aspect of her life. Quilts were made for each family member and it was said that in one year, Daisy made 28 quilts. In the last step of construction, friends would join her to help tie the quilts. This afforded an opportunity for socializing which Daisy loved doing.

Playing cards was another of Daisy's favourite leisure activities. It has been said that occasionally she would have a card or two tucked away and though everyone knew, no one ever confronted her about it. Daisy and her friends maintained their "Birthday Club" through the years. It became a tradition to gather to celebrate each other's birthdays with cards, cake and friendship. Family members attest to the welcoming atmosphere of Daisy's home and how much she enjoyed entertaining.

On January 14, 1991, at the age of 84 Daisy Lucas passed away, ending a life that was dedicated to preserving the heritage of the area for future generations.

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