



Birds, Beasts and Botany in Bergen

by Bob Griebel, photo by Sandy Easterbrook

Purple Martin (*progne subis*)

In 1750 James Isham, who at that time was chief factor for the Hudson Bay Co. at York Factory, brought the preserved specimen of a hitherto unrecognized North American bird back to England. The English naturalist, George Edwards, recognized the bird as a martin because of its similarity to the common house martin found in Europe and described Isham's bird in his book, *A Natural History of Uncommon Birds*. He named the bird the Great American Martin which has subsequently come to be called the Purple Martin.

Trusting the mantra "if you build it, they will come" from the 1989 movie, *Field of Dreams*, two years ago I built a Purple Martin house and hoisted it 15 feet atop a yard light pole in our yard. All last summer the bird house sat empty but, to my delight, this spring a single pair of Martins took up residence in one of the small condominiums of the house. Hopefully, this pair signals the start of a new colony on our premises.

Purple martins are among the largest members of the swallow family, of which there are some 90 different species world-wide and seven here in Alberta. The name Purple Martin is something of a misnomer, given that the males' colouring is a glossy iridescent blue-black. Females are a dowdy blue-gray with occasional patches of sheen and white abdomens. The birds average seven to eight inches in overall length and have a wing span of twelve to fifteen inches.

Purple Martins eat and drink on the fly. They snap up insects in a feeding range of 160 to 500 feet above ground and the bulk of their diet includes moths, dragonflies, horseflies, wasps and flying beetles. Contrary to popular opinion, mosquitoes form only a very small portion of the Martins' diet as mosquitoes usually dwell much closer to the ground. Martins drink by skimming over a pond or creek and scooping up water with their lower bill.

Purple Martins have had a long, interesting, and close relationship with humans. Prior to the arrival of Europeans on this continent, some native tribes in the Eastern United States (Cherokee, Chickasaw



Female Purple Martin on her new premises

and Choctaw) hung hollow gourds for the birds near their crops to create nesting colonies—an early strategy of insect pest control. This practice evolved into the building of apartment style birdhouses by settlers, and today most Purple Martins east of the Rockies are totally dependent on man-made housing. West of the Rockies, they tend to use natural cavities such as woodpecker holes.

The birds are drawn to nest boxes with multiple compartments and prefer white houses, presumably because they are cooler. The houses should be placed at least ten feet above the ground and sixty feet away from trees or buildings. Nests in these compartments are constructed by the birds in three separate layers—firstly, a layer of twigs, mud and pebbles, then a layer of grass and finer twigs. The final layer is composed of fresh green leaves, on which three to

On My Bluebird Trail

by Karen Fahrlander, photos by Karen Fahrlander

As I drove along one of my favorite roads in Bergen, I wondered if the boxes that I noticed attached to fenceposts were cleaned. I hadn't seen as many birds in this area in recent years. I was determined that this was the year I was going to do something about this! I contacted an experienced Mountain Bluebird monitor, Diana Halliday, and together with her husband, Lonnie, we set out on March 25th to clean the boxes on what would become my Bluebird trail.



Many boxes had at least four or five years worth of nests all stacked up to the entrance hole, making it difficult for a bird to nest inside the box. Diana pointed out that Chickadees like to use moss to make their nests. A thick layer of twigs indicates that a Wren has built a nest in the box. Mountain Bluebirds use grass. Often Tree Swallows will come along and make the grass nest their own



by adding feathers they find in the field.

After cleaning one particular box, Lonnie commented, "I think I hear a Bluebird." We laughed because it was far too early for Bluebirds to be in our area. But as we turned to leave, a pair of Mountain Bluebirds were waiting on the fence so they could inspect the premises! March 25th was the earliest I have seen Bluebirds in Bergen.

I contacted the Calgary and Area Bluebird Monitoring Society and registered my trail with them. This organization prepares detailed data summaries each year from Bluebird trail monitors. It is interesting to compare data from one year to the next and watch for trends occurring in Bluebird populations.

Diana showed me and Cathy Crighton what to watch for and how to record the data. This is the data collected for May 22nd:

- 13 boxes with 6 Mountain Bluebird eggs
- 2 boxes with 5 Mountain Bluebird eggs
- 38 boxes had evidence of Tree Swallows
- 15 boxes were empty
- 3 boxes contained a dead Tree Swallow



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EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY

by Jessie

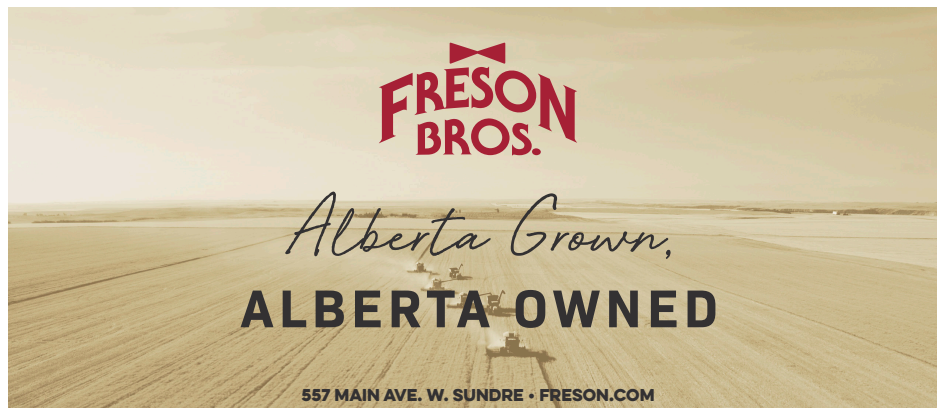


Yahoo! Spring at last! I love being among the flowers and trees and birds—which I diligently chase out of the lilacs by the house when my person drives in just to show that I am on the job—and the bees, oh yeah, lots of bees, but that is another story.

I believe that last month I promised to give you an in-depth discussion of my glorious tail, so here goes. My tail, like the rest of me, is covered with long, glossy black hair. But it was not always so—I don't mean it wasn't always black, which it was. But when I was just a teenager, growing into my adult self, my tail fell behind. Yes, I know it is *still* behind me, but for a few months it wasn't nice and fluffy. It was a long, short-haired whip, more like a bird dog's tail. This caused my person fits as she definitely favoured fluffy tails. It didn't worry me any;

God was making me a perfect dog and God doesn't make mistakes. And voila, my tail is now a lovely full-haired fan. (Note from person: Which is always tangled up with twigs and briars and you-know-who is ungracious about having them pulled out.) Just like chrome on a car, I have about three white hairs on the very tip of my tail for added flash and dash.

Anyway, my tail has many uses, though at the moment I can think of only two. The first, purely practical, is to help keep my bottom warm in winter. The other, of course, is for the pure joy of wagging. I can make quite a swoosh if I put my mind to it. This is not a popular feature with the person when I come in for a visit and one or more cookies on a cold winter day. She says if she wanted a fan chilling the air she would have plugged in an electric one. How's that for gratitude?



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The Bergen News is very grateful for the rural community grant received from Mountain View County to assist in our operating costs. Thank you for your continued support.

What A Great Month is June

by Pat Gibbs

Why? Think about it, folks. The days are longer, everything is so green and beautiful and the gardens are peeking through the soil. There is life of some kind or other moving and shaking, plus we are outside, right in the middle this wonderful setting God has given us to enjoy.

Two very special events took place in this lovely month and others have been added over time.

First came the wedding of my mom and dad back in 1950. Wild roses, along with other garden flowers from my gramma and aunts' gardens decorated all the tables. The bride and groom were a very good looking couple indeed.

Life was busy from the get go for them both. Dad loved the farm, and his family and friends. We kids learnt a lot about work on the farm. Dad taught each of us to drive the John Deere tractor when we turned twelve, as long as our feet could reach the pedals and brake. I only remember one incident where I failed to get the brake on in time to stop before hitting a corner post. Dad, in his best teaching voice, mentioned the obvious factor of speed, and I quickly improved my skills.

It was 50 years after leaving home before I drove that wonderful tractor again. A very good mechanic restored it back to running condition and I shed tears of joy when I turned it on and drove it around our place. It felt like Dad and home. Father's Day is always a time of fond reflection for me.

They say behind every successful man is a good woman. My mother fit that bill. For many years Dad was away at work on the Mjolsness brothers' sawmill and Mom made sure that things on the farm kept running while he was away. Thanks, Mom.

June held another special occasion for Al and me. It is the month that our son was born. We gave him his grandfather's first name, James, as his middle name. The bond they had over the years was very special.

My husband is the one in our family who our children and grandchildren come to for advice about pretty much anything that life might throw their way. I'm very thankful for his wisdom. I offer food, love and hugs and many prayers to the Heavenly Father who delights in guiding and caring for all His children. May He bless all the fathers, grandfathers and uncles who have or have had an important impact on the lives of their own children or someone else's child.

Happy Fathers Day, gentlemen.

Til next time.....

Note from editor: It has suddenly come to Kate's attention that she should be working on her all-important "country school Christmas concert" so Sunday morning has been spent searching her books for materials and trying to match students to the right pieces for them to recite.

Teacher

by Marilyn Halvorson

By the time Mr. and Mrs. Mac returned from church, I had a pretty good idea of how my Christmas program would go, and a rough idea of who would do what but one problem remained. What would Tom Nickleson do? Trying grade one for the second time, he still could not grasp the idea of how shapes on paper could turn into words that could be read to become something meaningful. And he was very little better when it came to writing. If I printed a couple of 'a's for him he could go on to fill whole pages with lovely, artistic 'a's but, if I then gave him a fresh page and asked him to make an 'a' he would give me a totally blank look and shake his head. I was fairly sure that learning lines to recite was beyond him and I was doubly sure that he was too shy to stand up in front of a crowd to speak them. What could I find for him to do to share in the program?

I was so deep in thought about this as I finished my dessert of canned wild blueberries drowned in thick, fresh cream that Mr. Mac had to say my name twice before he could get my attention.

"Oh, sorry, Mr. Mac," I said. "I was thinking."

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A Welcome Gift

by Phyllis Cormack

And the rains came. And the spruce tree branches waved and bobbed in the wind that accompanied the moisture. Were they dancing with relief? All plant life must surely be overjoyed at the arrival of this life-giving water. I love hearing the rain falling on the roof. It lulls me to sleep at night and is such a welcome visitor. We often say that when it starts raining in this country it doesn't know when to stop. Well, the ground needs a good soaking and we will take what we get. After all, we have very little control over when it starts or stops.

Flood warnings have been issued. Last time I looked there was still snow in the mountains, so perhaps some places are in danger of rising creeks and rivers. Let us not grumble and complain. Too much is much better than too little. I know—some people will possibly lose crops, or worse yet, their homes. That was very evident with the reports from B.C. last year. A very sad situation. Many places have experienced such events and, hopefully, have taken steps to prevent such devastation. For now we set up our rain barrels and enjoy the reprieve from watering cans and hoses.

The birds don't seem bothered—too much. Hummingbirds are still coming to the feeder even though it's in the open. Something like water off a duck's back—all birds have feathers to repel the rain to protect their eggs or young in the nest.

I am reading a book by Phil Callaway. I find him very humorous. Anyway, he has a list of 50 things to help you leave your worry behind. One of them is to walk in the rain. I think I might do that. Not that I have worry to get rid of, but just because I think it's kind of fun. Besides, I want to go find the rain barrel I bought years ago and get it set up. It's been “waiting” to be put to good use. What better time than now with this moisture pelting down on us? Our Father in heaven has given us this valuable gift.

This is the month we remember our earthly fathers. They are the ones who gave us advice, encouragement, support, and love. Goodness knows all the things we learned from them. Take some time to reminisce and be thankful for the valuable gifts your Dad gave you. If you are able, make contact and let them know they are appreciated and loved. Thanks, Dad—you aren't forgotten.

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“So I could see,” he replied, with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes. “And from the way you had your forehead knitted up, I’m thinking it was downright painful. What I asked you was if you’d like to do a little errand for me?”

“Sure, Mr. Mac. What do you need me to do?”

“Well, since it’s still chinooking like everything out there, I’d like to use the warm weather to patch up the corral fence but we’re behind in picking up the mail again. At church Mrs. Arneson told me that Leif rode down to the store after the party yesterday afternoon and picked up our mail along with some for the rest of the neighbours in this corner of the district. She meant to bring it to church but she forgot, so we need to go down to their place and get it. Would you care to saddle up old Dynamite and have a little ride?”

Saying the word “ride” to me is like offering catnip to a cat. It makes me go a little silly. Even the thought of riding Dynamite wasn’t enough to deter me. No, Dynamite was not as dangerous as he sounded. In fact, the name was a family joke. He may have been exciting as a colt but now, in middle age, he was the slowest, laziest, orneriest horse that ever carried a saddle. But it was a beautiful day—and I could get away from mulling over that pesky program for a while.

“Give me ten minutes,” I said, and then remembered that I should help Mrs. Mac with the dishes. “Make that twenty,” I said, starting to gather them.

Mrs. Mac shooed me away. “Never mind those, child. Go change your clothes. A little fresh air will do ye good.”

So it was that, a short time later, I was in the saddle urging the deadly Dynamite into the shuffling stride that passed for a trot in his mind. It was only about two miles to the Arnesons’ so, even at Dynamite’s pace, I had plenty of time. Chickadees were singing in the spruce trees along the road and the snow sparkled with diamonds in the bright winter sun. This was living, I thought, as Dynamite, who had successfully sneaked back into a slow walk, trudged along a short distance from the Arnesons’ yard.

What happened next was the last thing I was expecting.

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BIDDULPH, COLUMBINE AND GWENWYN

by Noreen Olson

In a book that I am currently reading, the central character is named Mira. This is a whopping large book with 687 pages, and good old Mira is with us right to the end. By counting the number of times the word "Mira" occurs on a given number of pages, dividing by that number and multiplying by 687 I have estimated that Mira will come before my eyes approximately 2,748 times before I finish this book.

Why is this important? It's important because every time Mira (the name) appears I am momentarily irritated. I lose my train of thought, because I don't know how to pronounce "Mira" and there is no way for me to learn how. Was she named for her old aunt Mirabel? Then her name would sound like Mere-ah, or for her grandma Miranda, which would make it Mur-ah. Maybe her mother loved the book Myra Breckinridge but couldn't quite bring herself to name the baby after a fallen woman, and so settled upon Mira, in which case the pronunciation would be My-rah. It's confusing, and stupid, and will irritate me for 687 pages.

Years ago, Fred Stenson won a Chatelaine Contest with a story whose main characters were Jaques and Giles. I had read half the story before I realized that Giles was a woman. I had been pronouncing it Giles like the English butler's name and to rhyme with miles. Shortly after the story came out I attended a workshop where Fred Stenson was a speaker, and I had the opportunity to ask him why he had chosen such an awkward name for his heroine. "I was just being cute, I guess," Mr Stenson replied, "I liked the idea of the couple being called Jack and Jill." Good grief, Giles was supposed to rhyme with peals. How is a body to know these things?

As a child, I read about heroines named Deirdre. No one I knew, knew anyone named Deirdre and no one knew how to pronounce it. I'm still not sure if it's Dear-dree or Dear-draw. According to our encyclopaedic dictionary, Deirdre means "the raging one." And no wonder with her name being mispronounced by everybody. Isolde is another one. Is it Ice-olda or Iss-old?

Naming a child is a tremendous responsibility, and thoughtful parents try their best to find something just right for their beloved baby. While I was looking up Isolde, I found a few beauties and I offer them here for the use of new parents.

Biddulph means commanding wolf. Columbine, I thought would be a flower name but it means dove-like. Gwenwynwyn is Gaelic and means thrice fair. Does that mean Gwyn is once fair, Gwynwyn is twice fair and supposing you wanted to name the baby five or six times fair. It boggles the mind. Erasmus is a great old name, it means I love. Hilaria means cheerful, nearly hysterical, I'd think. Finella is interesting. It means white shoulders.

If you didn't find anything that you liked there, I have a few old family names that no one is currently using. Some of them are about as awful as Biddulph.

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As I was almost ready to turn into the Arneson's yard, I spotted some activity near the house. It was Leif, out there splitting wood. With his coat was off, his shirt sleeves rolled up, and blond mane blowing in the wind, he looked exactly the way I had always imagined a dashing young Viking would look. Fascinated more by the historical resemblance than by the man himself, of course, I was concentrating entirely on him and totally ignoring my plodding steed when the bomb went off. At least, that's what it seemed like, a sudden whoosh and whirring almost directly under Dynamite's front hoofs. It was actually a ruffed grouse, doing that bird's usual trick of pretending to be invisible until a threat was right on top of it, then taking flight with a noisy beating of its wings. I caught just the quickest glimpse of it flying away before both Dynamite and I were also flying. In that moment, I finally understood the reason for the horse's name. In one gigantic bound, he went from comatose to Kentucky Derby. It wasn't a buck, just a leap, but it caught me totally unprepared. To my credit (I think), I didn't go off. Oh, no, not me. What I did was land *behind* the saddle. I still had the reins but that fact interested Dynamite not in the least as he pounded around the corner and up the lane, seeking sanctuary at the farm he regularly visited. With each of his mighty bounds I slid a little farther back, my death grip on the reins the only thing holding me on. Another slip and I'd end up hanging off his rear end, getting my teeth rearranged by his flying hoofs. I gritted those teeth and let go, surrendering to the inevitable. The

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Bergen Church News

by Phyllis Cormack

The Bergen Church is located on the Bergen Road one mile west of the Highway 760 intersection. For Sunday morning services online, please go to our website <http://bergenmissionarychurch.ca/> then click on the Facebook page where alternative services will be listed.

The Bergen Church is open for services every Sunday starting at 10:30 am.

It's so good to have people returning to services. Being together to worship and give each other support is what we all need. As we are told in Hebrews 10:25, "Do not stop meeting together ...but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

The Children's Feature presented before the message is entertaining and a good learning experience for all ages. Thank you to those who take the time to prepare and share. Toddler time and Sunday School for the younger kids follow the Children's Feature.

There are Bible studies in progress and others are planned for the future. Access this information on our website which can be found at the top or bottom of this report.

If you are interested in Friday night youth group, the contact person is our youth pastor, Adam Elliot. His phone number is 403-586-3598. Adam encourages kids enrolled in Grade 7 through Grade 12 to join in and take part in the activities he has planned, as well as in the short Bible lesson.

"The Den", or Sundre Youth Centre, provides various activities for our youth who are looking for a place to "hang out" after school and in the evening. It is open Monday to Friday. 3-6 p.m. for Grades 7-9 and 6-9 p.m. for Grades 10-12. During these times there are special events happening. A contact person would be Adam Elliot at 403-586-3598.

In support of Ukraine, Bergen Church held a fundraiser and information evening on June 18th.

A Sunday School wrap up took place June 19th which was also Father's Day. The church provided the BBQ meal and the dessert was potluck. Games followed.

UPCOMING is a FAMILY FUN NIGHT happening August 4th from 6 – 9 p.m. There will be a BBQ and games. All ages are welcome. If you are planning on attending please RSVP by August 1st to 403-636-1419. These events have been very popular and well attended. Lots of fun for everyone.

Prayers go out to so many families and acquaintances who are experiencing health struggles or bereavement. Should you or someone you know need prayer, please see information for our prayer chain contact, Leila, at the bottom of this report. It's always a blessing to hear of answered prayers or praise items of everyday occurrences where God's hand is evident.

Praise God for the rain! That's an answer to prayer!

The Sundre Ministerial is a team of churches in the Sundre area which is available to help, whether the need is physical or emotional. Please feel free to contact this number where someone will be able to direct you to an appropriate resource: 403-636-0554.

You can also go to the Sundre Ministerial web page — sundreministerial.blogspot.com — if you'd like to contact a church directly. Click on 'Church Listings and Links'.

If you want to donate food to the McDougal Chapel food bank, it can be taken to the Chapel. There is a door bell you can ring to alert them that you are there. A phone call will let you know if there is someone there to open the door for you. Their number is 403-638-3503. You can also donate by e-transfer. Contact McDougal Chapel or check their website for information. Times have been hard for a lot of folks who depend on this food bank.

If you have prayer needs, please call or email Leila Schwartzenberger at 403-638-4175 or leila@processworks.ca. Thank you to those who faithfully lift these requests to God.

Pastor Rob Holland's number is 403-672-0020.

Olwyn is in the church office Tuesdays and Fridays, 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. The church's number is 403-638-4010 and the fax number is 403-638-4004.

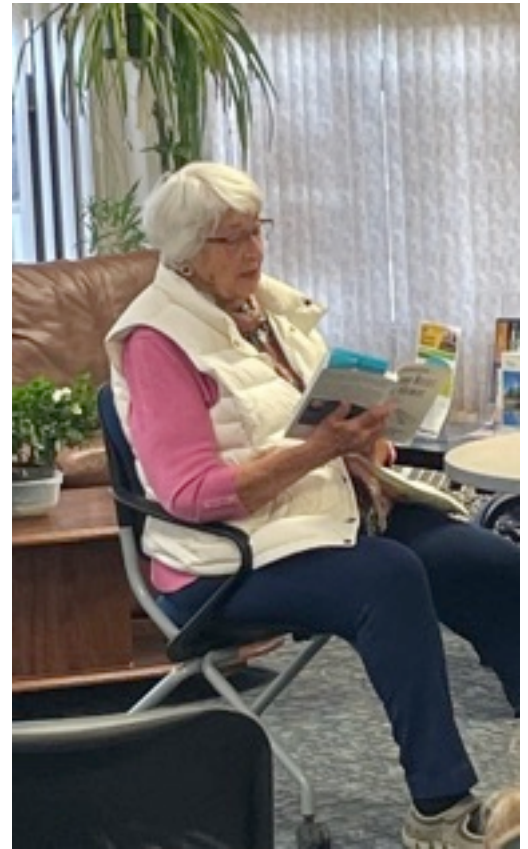
The email address for Bergen Church is office@bergenchurch.ca

The website is <http://bergenmissionarychurch.ca/>

Bergen Writer, Noreen Olson at Sundre Library

by Cathy Crichton

On June 15th, Noreen Olsen read from her new book, *Love and Kisses from Paul Hiebert*. The event took place at the Sundre Municipal Library and was well attended. Hiebert, a chemistry professor at the University of Manitoba, was the author, most famously, of the hilarious literary sendup, *Sarah Binks*, written in 1947. The correspondence between him and Noreen definitely brought his personality to life. Copies of both Hiebert's and Noreen's books are available at the Library. The Bergen News is proud to have Noreen as one of our contributors.



Bergen Ladies Aid Report

by Phyllis Cormack

It was a lovely day near the end of May when we met in Maureen Worobetz's home for our meeting.

In Donna McGregor's absence, Phyllis Cormack read scripture from Philippians 4:6-9. We then prayed the Lord's Prayer.

Nine ladies responded to roll call with what they liked best about spring.

Betty Josephson read the minutes from our last meeting followed by Maureen filling us in on our financial standing. Shelley Ingeveld had no goodwill visits to report.

Betty read a poem regarding dirty dishes and how blessed we are to have them compared to many others in the world.

Phyllis brought the Ladies Aid photo albums that past member, Dora Wilson, initiated putting together. They were enjoyed by those present. Many memories.

Betty and Patricia Ball have taken the yarn to the Thrift Shop as we no longer have knitters in our group.

Lynn Whittle had sewn around the wool quilt that we tied earlier this month. Betty had sewn the top together two years ago before the Covid interruption.

The up coming cemetery clean-up day was discussed. Patricia will bring coffee and fixings. Pat Cummins and Pat Ball will clean up the spruce tree that fell in the cemetery. Fortunately it landed parallel to the fence and gravestones so nothing was damaged.

On scripture for our June meeting is Sue Vollmin. Olwyn Gale has offered her new home for the meeting and Liz Cunningham will help her provide lunch. Gwen Gochee is the alternate.

We sang our theme song "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" to close the meeting.

Maureen and Janet Cummins provided us with a lovely lunch which we thoroughly enjoyed along with a good visit.

Queens, Crowns and Curtseys

by Shari Peyerl

It's a party to remember.

On February 6th, 2022, Queen Elizabeth II became the first British monarch to mark 70 years on the throne. In honour of the Platinum Jubilee, a four-day holiday on the first weekend of June was packed with events. People the world over joined the celebration, just as they have for many royal milestones.

The patriotic people of Glenbow participated in their share of royalist ceremonies. For example, at the end of Queen Victoria's 64-year reign, Glenbow quarry worker, Arthur Bottom, had been a sailor in Her Majesty's Naval Service. He had proudly served as one of the Royal Naval Guard that lined the route of her funeral on February 2nd, 1901. Arthur had watched as her son, King Edward VII, marched past with the many other royal members of the assembly.

When King Edward VII died a decade later, his son George V took over. At Glenbow, on June 22nd, 1911, "Coronation Day was loyally observed ... Sports were held during the afternoon for the school children, at the conclusion of which they gathered in the schoolroom and sang the National Anthem."



Coronation Day at Glenbow, 22 June 1911. Ellen Dickson: back row, far left. Photo Courtesy of Cathy Ehlers Metcalf.

A photo commemorates the day: the smiling children gathered below the quarry in the noon sun. Flanked by two older girls holding flags, the schoolchildren wear special Coronation Medals supplied by the local Member of Parliament, R.B. Bennett (later Canada's eleventh Prime Minister). The medals are most noticeable on the lapel of the little girl's sailor suit (front right) and the sweater of the boy seated on the far left.

The family who supplied this photo found a Coronation Medal among their family heirlooms. It was given to Ellen Dickson (the flag-bearer on the left). George V's cypher is affixed to a red, white and blue ribbon, from which hangs the portrait of the new king and his wife Queen Mary.

One of Glenbow's children eventually met the Royals. Constance Blytha Pearkes (née Copeman), born at Waverley Ranch in 1902, was in London in 1937, just after King George V's second son was crowned as King George VI. Blytha was formally presented at court; wearing a periwinkle blue gown, she curtseyed to the King and his wife, Queen Elizabeth.

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snow-covered ground came up to meet me with a hard bump as I made a perfect one-point landing on a well-padded part of my anatomy.

For a moment I just sat there, taking stock of the situation. Dynamite had come to a stop over by Arnesons' corral and was busy telling their horses about his near-death experience. All of my parts and pieces seemed to be intact and functioning. This was all good. Then I noticed Leif, standing frozen and staring as if a Martian had just landed in the yard. This was not good. Suddenly he came to life and started running toward me with a horrified look on his face. That was my cue to get up before he thought I needed rescuing. As I thrashed around trying to get my feet under me, I realized that I had landed in a snowbank about three feet deep and I was making about as much progress as an overturned turtle. That was when the look on Leif's face began to change. He looked like he was about to choke on something. And then I realized what it was—laughter.

"Glad you could drop in so unexpectedly, Miss O'Rourke," he managed. "I think they might consider having girls ride broncs again at the Calgary Stampede if you showed them what you can do. Here, let me give you a hand." He reached out toward me.

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Bergen Ladies Aid Quilting Frolic Information Sheet

Following is a short list of guidelines/expectations that are common knowledge amongst anyone who has quilted with us—even once. This list was written in jest circa 2005 after a couple ladies joined our quilting group.

1. Since food is our main reason to go quilting it's good if you have a variety of yummy recipes to share with us.
2. Dedication—you mustn't let rain, snow, sleet, nor hail stop you from attending (illness or injury maybe—like slamming your fingers in a door)
3. Ability to talk and stitch at the same time is important. We want to get the job done so we can eat.
4. Able to withstand usually two (2) grueling days of chatting, stitching, teasing, and eating.
5. Don't expect to get sympathy if you poke yourself with the needle.
6. Don't be overly sympathetic if someone else gets poked.
7. Don't faint at the sight of blood. Some of us are on blood thinners so a small poke can be messy.
8. Don't get blood on the quilt. This is a BIG NO NO. If you do get blood on the quilt—spit on it*.
9. PLEASE DO NOT CUT THE QUILT WITH SCISSORS OR ANY OTHER SHARP OBJECT.
10. You must be able to withstand the criticism of our quality control person when they make their appearance. This could be any one of our group.
11. Remember—she who complains about the thickness of the seams or amount of stitching gets to sew the next top together.
12. Show interest in stories regarding calving since that's a common topic—that and grandchildren.
13. Be eager to have a fun time with a group of country ladies who enjoy each other's company and get along amazingly well.

If after reading this you are still interested in attending, you are braver than some—but then having a good time isn't for everyone!

*The remark to spit on blood does work to remove it as long as it's your own blood.

Ride With Me

by Donelda Way

Just north of the intersection of Twp Rd 310 and Fallen Timber Trail: Slow/stop/wait. A green headed, male Mallard Duck was placidly leading his brownish-coloured mate across the centre of the road toward the eastern ditch. Just like in the movies this was a slow motion, waddling scene.

Everywhere there are fields of dandelions and hedges of lilacs in bloom.

Hwy 27, Hainstock Cemetery: the flatbed trailer had a load of what looked like freshly cut, large poplar tree branches on it. It appeared the crew had been tidying up the cemetery and were preparing to take the bouncy, leafy branches elsewhere.

Business Garden Centres have bags and bags of mulch, seeds, potting soil and more stacked outside, within their fenced perimeters. Their annual and bedding out plants, on shelves and hanging racks, are gradually hosting 'sale' signs. My husband and I stopped at La Greenhouse (between Cremona and Carstairs) to purchase three cardboard trays of very healthy annuals. La Greenhouse also has an online purchasing service.

Rural home gardens are at varying growth stages. Some look like they have just been planted with stakes marking the rows. Others have green lines of new growth showing in the rows.

At a facility near Pine Lake on June 12th, the plants were supported with ties, rods reaching skyward. I was amazed to see actual tomatoes already formed. One plant had cherry sized fruit. The other one had two mid-sized tomatoes. As we prepared to leave for home, the sky was dark blue, almost black. I drove ahead of my friend and a semi-trailer unit along Hwy 590. The rain came in waves. I didn't know which wiper speed to use. I didn't know which speed was the safest to drive. This continued as we proceeded down the QEII. I exited at the Olds turn off and the weather improved.

The white canopy signage for Viyasit Thai Kitchen is positioned just above their entrance at the south end of the Didsbury Hotel. This establishment serves authentic dishes and has soft music playing in the background. As I waited for our delicious meal to be served, I wandered past the framed photos on the wall. Some of these photos had typed explanations of where in Thailand they had been taken, along with explanations of who the people in them were and what they were doing. There was a wooden shelving unit displaying artifacts of their cultural dress and dancing, an arrangement of turtles, liquid filled bottles of food items and more. If I understood correctly, one framed wall piece was made from metal taken from a prominent mine. It was a three dimensional, multi-layered scene of elephants among the trees which really intrigued me. The waitress told me it was handmade.

The TV news predicted rain and wind and both came with a vengeance.

We had replaced the battery in my quad so this day it started without hesitation. Out in the open, with the speed of the quad, the wind was cold on my head and hands. We circled the south and west perimeter of the field. I was quite cautious maneuvering the lay of the land along the north fence line adjacent to the field. We had been closing gates the whole distance. Six cows and their accompanying calves had found freedom. They were quite comfortable near the dugout chewing their cuds and resting peacefully with no wind or rain to bother them.

We rode along the fence between us and the northern neighbours. The larger posts they erected were there to reinforce the old deteriorating ones. I held my breath and clutched the brake handle going down some of the steep dips. I watched intently to see the track to follow through the water that had gathered in the bottom of the dip. The two of us were shifting a very rotted, fallen tree off the trail and fence. Thankfully, it broke into two sections. Giving the quad more gas, I urged it, under my breath, to make it to the top of the next hill. Further along, a semi fallen tree caused me to duck under the dried out, pointed limbs. We tried moving some moss-covered deadfall. In the end, we drove over what was left, hoping the quad undercarriage wouldn't catch any of it. Among the trees in this forest there was a calming, damp darkness.

I noticed my husband gunning his quad toward the last open gate near our house. The cows and calves we had encountered earlier were now also gunning it toward that last open gate! He got there in time to turn them back to the field. We worked together, keeping them in the field while at the same time closing that gate.

If you have comments on anything that you read in the Bergen News, send your response to The Bergen News, editor@thebergennews.ca or the Bergen News c/o Marilyn Walker, Box 21, Site 9, RR2, Sundre, T0M 1X0.

Teacher, continued from page 11

"I'm fine," I muttered, drawing back like an offended old hen and making another effort to get my feet under me. Once again, the soft snow offered no purchase and I found my efforts doing little but digging me in deeper. Suddenly the ridiculousness of the situation hit me and, in spite of my best efforts at being mad, I burst into gales of laughter. Leif also exploded into full-blown laughter and, this time, I accepted the extended hand and scrambled to my feet. My riding pants were feeling decidedly damp, coated as they were in melting snow, and I hurriedly began brushing them off.

"Here, let me help you," he gallantly offered again.

This time I held him off with a look. "Don't push your luck," I said.

He gave in gracefully—sort of. "Whatever you say, ma'am. Come on," he said. "Mother has coffee on. You could definitely use a cup. I believe the outlaw will be just fine where he stands for a while."

I gave ol' Dynamite a dirty look. "If 'the outlaw' heads for California it won't matter to me."

We headed for the house.

By the time we had finished coffee the afternoon was slipping away and I needed to be on my way. After many thank yous and hugs all around, Leif walked out with me to get my horse. For the first while there was a strained silence while I tried to think of what to say. Finally I blurted out, "Oh, Leif, I'm so sorry about your dad."

He nodded. "Ya," he said, for the first time slipping into a slight Norwegian accent. "So am I. Short years ago he was the strongest man in Lundhill. He could work from daylight to dark and still have enough energy to go dancing with Mama at night."

"It must be so hard for him," I said.

"Ya, mostly he worries about what will happen to the family when he dies." Leif turned to look into my eyes. "He will die, you know."

I blinked back tears. "Is there no hope for improvement?"

Leif shook his head. "The only hope I can give him is my promise that I will be there looking after Mama and the younger ones for as long as they need me. That means I will not be able to stake my own homestead claim for a very long time." His eyes searched my face as he said this and I wondered fleetingly why he was telling me all of this.

Then we were at the corral where Dynamite waited nose to nose with an old friend, one of Arneson's work team. Then I caught my breath. As well as the horses that had been by the fence when I arrived, there were two new ones in from the pasture. They were two of the most beautiful horses I had ever seen, chestnuts with white blazes, white stockings to their knees, and flaxen manes and tails. Leif smiled at my reaction. "Miss O'Rourke, I would like you to meet Silver." He touched one of the horses on the foreleg and the horse raised his foot and held it up politely while I reached down and shook it gently. "Pleased to meet you, Silver," I said, and Leif repeated the performance with Sailor, Silver's brother.

"Oh, Leif, I've never seen such a pair of beauties. Did you raise them?"

Leif shook his head. "No," he said ruefully. "I shouldn't have them at all. We have no more than enough hay for the other stock. But, in the fall, I worked for a month for a fellow out east stooking and threshing, and when it came time to collect my wages the man had no money, so he gave me these instead. I should have sold them but when Papa saw them he said no. I must have them for myself because everything else I have earned has gone to help the family and it was his wish that I should at least have these to show for my work.

As he spoke he was tightening the cinch on Dynamite and getting him ready for me to mount. "I don't know if you should ride this horse home. He doesn't seem safe."

I bristled like an offended cat. "Of course I will ride him home. That little incident was the first sign of life he's ever shown and, if I'd been paying proper attention, I never would have gone off. Hand me my reins please."

Leif shook his head. "All right, if you insist." But again he hesitated. "Unless you would rather ride Silver."

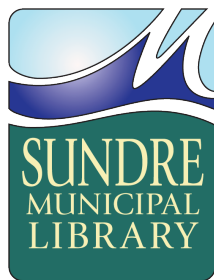
I stared at him. "What?" I asked, although I had heard him perfectly.

He nodded. "I could ride along with you on Sailor and lead Dynamite and then lead Silver home." Then, with that slow smile of his he added, "Unless, of course you would rather ride Dynamite."

I have heard it said that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. The way to at least one woman's heart is through a beautiful horse.

Continued on page 14

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE SUNDRE LIBRARY

**Sundre Library**

The library will be open:

Tuesdays 9:00 – 4:30 PM

Wednesday 12:00 – 7:30 PM

Thursday 12:00 – 4:30 PM

Fridays 12:00 – 4:30 PM

Saturdays 11:00 – 2:30 PM

Sundre Library (403) 638-4000, www.sundre.prl.ab.ca

Kids Reading Challenges (ages 4-12)

June 28 – Aug 26

Read books, count your minutes.

Logs & details on the website.

Shari Peyerel Author Talk

Wednesday, July 6th, 6:30 – 8:00 PM

Meet the author and hear about her new book.

Storywalks

Mid-May – Mid-September

Walking path along Main Avenue W

Read while you walk.

New stories posted every few weeks.

Adult Reading Challenges

July 1 – August 31th

In-Library challenges for adults. Prizes.

3D Print Introduction

Wednesday, July 13 & August 10th, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Learn the how-to basics of creating a 3D print file.

Teen Takeover Games Night

July 28 & August 26, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Games, food and fun for teens. FREE.

Tech Tuesdays

July 5 – August 23, 1:30 – 3:30 PM

Come as a family and try our tech (Sphero's, VR, and more).

Sundre Books on Vacation

July 1 – August 31th

Take a picture of a Sundre book on your holiday. Fan favorite wins a prize.

Sundre Forest Products Summer Reading Club (ages 4-11)

July 5th – Aug 19

Themed stories, games, crafts and activities. FREE.

***The Bergen Farmers' Market***

Our very own farmers' market opens for its 12th season on June 25th. The market runs every

Saturday from 10:00 to 1:00

at the Bergen Hall

Enjoy a stimulating shop with friendly vendors
and stay for

coffee, music, and a visit with friends.

See you there.

Purple Martin, continued from page 1

seven plain white eggs are laid. Female birds do the majority of the incubating although, on occasion, males will sit on the eggs. Both parents provide insects to the hatchlings.

For reasons not well established there has been a dramatic drop in the population of Purple Martins since the 1980s. Competition for nest box sites by House Sparrows and European Starlings appears to be a factor, and starling populations are growing rapidly. Another reason may be that fewer nesting boxes are being provided by the current generation to host the birds. Humans, having made the Martins dependent on us for housing, will now have to take some responsibility for their future well-being.

Teacher, continued from page 12

My Sunday visit and wonderful ride home on Silver ended the weekend on such a high note Monday could only be an anticlimax. And it was. First of all, one glance at the thermometer told me the Chinook had departed. It was 10 below Fahrenheit and snowing a fine, mean-spirited snow. Despite my resolve to begin work on the Christmas concert, this day did not seem Christmassy. It just seemed miserable.

Nonetheless, fortified by a cup of strong coffee and a bowl of Mrs. Mac's good, gluey, stick-to-your-ribs Scottish porridge, I set off to tackle the new week. The children were thoroughly delighted when I announced that, rather than starting the day with arithmetic as usual, we would begin making plans for our Christmas concert.

I had sat up long into the night trying to be sure that each child would have an equal opportunity to shine in their moment of glory on the stage. I had chosen a number of recitations with various students in mind. Some were short and sweet—both the recitations and the children. These students, especially the tiny ones, often with large and appealing gaps in their front teeth could win oohs and aahs just by standing on stage and lisping out a few words.

Other longer recitations, some humorous and some serious, were assigned to pupils who I knew had both the ability and perseverance to learn a lot of lines. I gave this one to Billy McKelvey who not only could learn the part but actually looked the part.

And So Was I

Author Unknown

My name is Tommy and I hates that feller of my sister Kate's
He's bigger'n me and you can see he's sorta lookin' down on me
And I resents it with a vim; I think I'm just as good as him.
He's older and he's mighty fly but he's a kid and so am I.
One time he came down by the gate—I guess it must have been awful late
And Katie was there and they was feelin' nice and gay.
And he was talkin' all the while about her sweet and lovin' smile
And everything was nice as pie, and they was there—and so was I.
He didn't see me 'cause I slid down underneath the gate and hid.
And he was sayin' that his love was greater than the stars above,
In the glorious heavens placed, and then his arm got round her waist
And clouds were floatin' in the sky and they were there—and so was I,
I didn't hear just all they said but, by and by, my sister's head
Was droopin' on his shoulder
And I seen him holdin' Katie's hand, and then he drew her closer some
And I heard them kiss—Yum! Yum!
And Katie blushed and drew a sigh and kinda coughed—and so did I!
And then that feller looked around and seen me down there on the ground;
And was he mad? Well, bet your boots!
I gets right out of there and scoots!

(Author's note: This recitation was presented at the Eidswold, Red Deer Valley and/or Bergen schools during the 1930s, '40s, or '50s.)

On My Bluebird Trail, continued from page 14

On June 8th, my friend, Angela, joined me on the Bluebird trail. The first box we opened had six very well developed fledglings inside. According to my reference chart they were 13 or 14 days old. I was worried that I may have missed an important section in monitoring, especially if the other fledglings had already left the nest box. My worries were set aside as we opened the next few boxes and discovered the fledglings ranged in age from one to three days old to eight or nine days old. *See photos for age ranges.*

The goal for June 8th was to check Mountain Bluebird boxes, empty boxes and open a few Tree Swallow boxes to discover how far along they were with nesting. A total of 18 boxes were checked. Nine of these contained Mountain Bluebird fledglings and nine had Tree Swallow eggs inside. Photos show how beautiful the tree swallows make their nest with the addition of feathers.

Tree Swallows will hatch within two weeks so I will return to check all boxes for the latest progress report and to record data. As Diana said, "Opening each box is like opening a Christmas present. You never know what will be inside." Now I know exactly why Diana made that comment!



Queens, Crowns and Curtseys, continued from page

Eventually, Queen Elizabeth became known as the Queen Mother when her daughter Queen Elizabeth II ascended to the throne. Years later, Blytha met her again, welcoming the Queen Mother to her home at Government House when Blytha's husband served as Lieutenant-Governor of British Colombia.

The people of Glenbow included many emigrants from the British Isles. These loyal British subjects treasured their encounters with royalty, and passed their stories and memorabilia to their descendants. Who would have thought that the little working-class community of Glenbow would have had such strong links to the British Royal Family? In June, raise your teacup in a salute to the beauty and history of today's Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, which truly is Fit for a King (or Queen)!





From My Office Window

by Brian and Kim Allan

My good wife and I spent the first week of June in Jasper National Park. We've been there many times before and have seen one or two bears. This year there was a bonanza of bears! Over the week we photographed a dozen bears.

